

**WATER AND ENVIRONMENT JOINT SECTOR REVIEW (2011) CONCLUDES;  
*ENVIRONMENT SECTOR UNDER THREAT!!***

The third Water and Environment joint Sector review concluded on Friday 21<sup>st</sup>, September 2011 at Imperial Royal in Kampala and it emerged that environment sector is under threat through encroachment and degradation on natural resources for settlement, development among other reasons

**Environment and Natural Resources**

The environment in this country remains under threat from natural and man-made drivers of change including poverty, unsustainable use of resources, lack of enforcement of laws, rapid population growth, urbanisation, agricultural expansion, industrialisation, and the impacts of climate variability among others. All these arise out of inadequate prioritisation of environmental sustainability in our development

**Wetland resources management**

In 2008, wetlands in Uganda covered about 10.9% of the land surface area down from 13% in 1994. There has been a general decline in wetland coverage with Lake Victoria and Kyoga drainage basins having been affected most. This can be largely attributed to encroachment for expansion of urban centres, settlement /industrial developments and extension of agricultural land. Wetland management is carried out to ensure the sustainable conservation and management of wetland resources to optimize the socio-economic and ecological benefits to international, national and local communities.

The Wetland Management Department reviewed and evaluated 86 EIAs, 55 wetland sites were inspected in Kampala and 18 in other urban areas, 14 notices were issued to non complying entities, compliance assistance was provided to 37 stakeholders, and cases of encroachment on wetlands were reported to police for investigation and prosecution in court.

A management plan was developed for Sango-Bay Ramsar site.

In order to address **boundary issues and assumed ownership of wetlands**, it is recommended that the Wetlands Management Department in consultation with the Wetlands Advisory Group finalises the strategy for wetland boundary demarcation and gazettement, which is being prepared, after which implementation should start immediately.

In order to address **regulation and enforcement issues**, it is recommended that Wetland Management Department (WMD) and districts scale up compliance monitoring, inspection and auditing of the communities and other developers. Furthermore, it is recommended that inter-sector coordination and collaboration with other stakeholders specifically be strengthened in order to harmonize land use planning, and reduce the leasing out of wetlands. In addition, it is recommended that the Wetland Management Department (WMD) of the MWE strengthens technical support to District Local Governments to formulate by-laws specific to district and sub-county challenges. WMD has to intensify monitoring, inspection and review of project briefs and EIA reports on

wetlands, to enforce compliance to the policy, laws, standard and guidelines of the regulated communities. Finally, WMD is to explore ways of engaging the private sector in wetland management.

It is recommended that **institutional challenges** are addressed by harmonising the mandate and roles of institutions involved in wetlands management. This process, which is ongoing, should be prioritised.

#### Signs of wastewater from Bwendero brewing factory, Hoima District



**A lagoon over filled with waste water**



**A channel with steaming effluent**

**River Manafwa in Mbale District affected by mining sand from the riverbed**

