

TOWARDS RIO+20 CONFERENCE: UGANDA'S ROAD MAP

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil in 1992 was a landmark event marking international commitment to provide public and political support to address environment and development issues in a holistic and integrated manner, for the attainment of sustainable development. It was during this Conference which is otherwise known as the Rio Summit, that Agenda 21 and Rio conventions (CBD, UNCCD and UNFCCC) were adopted.

Uganda which was represented at the Earth Summit at the highest political level joined the World leaders in endorsing the principles of Sustainable Development as espoused in Agenda 21. Since 1992, Uganda has been able to put in place elaborate policy, legal and institutional frameworks to guide its growth towards a sustainable development path. A ten-year review conducted in 2002 revealed that some progress had been made in implementing Agenda 21 including the Rio conventions, however, significant challenges still remain and

The Rio+20 Conference

On 24th December 2009, the UN General Assembly adopted resolution (A/RES/64/236) agreeing to hold the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (UNCSD) in 2012, on **4-6 June , Brazil** also referred to as 'Rio+20' or 'Rio 20'. The Rio+20 summit is also to mark the 20th anniversary of 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) in Brazil and the 10th anniversary of 2002 World Summit On Sustainable Development (WSSD) in South Africa.

Objectives of the Rio+ Conference

Against this background, the upcoming Rio+ 20 Conference is set to achieve the following objectives:

- (i) Secure renewed political commitment for sustainable development;
- (ii) Assess the progress to date and the remaining gaps in the implementation of the outcomes of the major summits on sustainable development; and,
- (iii) Address new and emerging challenges.

THEMES

The Rio+20 Conference focuses on the following themes:

- (i) A green economy in the context of sustainable development and poverty reduction; and,
- (ii) Institutional framework for sustainable development

Sub-themes

In discussing the above themes the Rio+20 Conference focus on the following sub-themes:

Transport – as a central component of sustainable development and economic growth will be discussed with focus on:

- (i) Optimization of transport infrastructure,
- (ii) Sustainability and promotion of transport technology,
- (iii) Provision of basic rural transport infrastructure,
- (iv) Public-private partnerships in transport systems,
- (v) Enabling environment for sustainable transport,
- (vi) Financing the transport sector

Waste Management – is another critical area that will be discussed with focus on:

- (i) Development and use of instruments for waste management and infrastructure,
- (ii) Social and poverty issues related to informal waste management,
- (iii) Reduction of the amount of waste disposed off into landfills,
- (iv) Handling emerging challenges such as e-waste,
- (v) Collaboration and partnerships in waste management,
- (vi) Information, Education, Communication and Capacity building for waste management

Agriculture – is the mainstay of the economy and the preparations discuss:

- (i) Agricultural infrastructure,
- (ii) Value addition,
- (iii) Marketing
- (iv) Reforms and institutions
- (v) Technology
- (vi) Enabling environment

Mining – as an “essential economic activity for modern living” will be discussed and will cover the following:

- (i) The critical link between mining and other economic, social and environmental activities,
- (ii) Legal and regulatory frameworks and policies for sustainable mining,
- (iii) Promotion and protection of the rights of local and indigenous communities,
- (iv) Governance and policy framework for the mining sector

National Preparations

In order to ensure high quality inputs to the Rio+20 Conference, efficient and effective preparations at both the local and national levels, there is a need for active participation of all major groups and stakeholders at all stages of the national preparatory process. An effective national preparatory process is therefore essential to effectively guide and prepare the country to articulate its concerns and priorities within the framework of the regional and African preparatory processes and to ensure that these are adequately reflected in the outcomes of the Rio+20 Conference.

The national preparations for participation in Rio+20 will be led by the National Focal Point who is the Executive Director of NEMA, Dr. Tom Okurut. Wide stakeholder participation and consultations involving Government Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs), Local Governments, the Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), the Private Sector and the Development partners among others will be carried out.

Objectives of the Rio+20 National Preparatory Processes

The overall objective of the national preparatory process is to produce a well-informed Report on progress made towards sustainable development in Uganda since the UNCED in 1992. However, the specific objectives of the national preparatory process include the following.

Specific objectives

- (i) To coordinate and facilitate effective stakeholders' participation in the national preparatory process and to ensure that their concerns in regard to advancing the country's sustainable development agenda are articulated and captured in the national position paper.
- (ii) To provide well-articulated documentation of national progress in the implementation of Agenda 21 and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation (JPOI) commitments, the constraints and challenges faced and well-informed recommendations to enhance implementation progress;
- (iii) To ensure that national preparatory processes are integrated within the framework of the regional and African position at the Rio+ 20 Conference.
- (iv) To ensure national participation in the Rio+20 Conference including the mobilization of the required resources.

Planned activities

In order to realise the above objectives, the following activities are planned:

- (i) Formation of a preparatory core team comprised of relevant representation from NEMA, MWE, MFPED, NPA and MOES;
- (ii) Participate in the Addis Ababa meeting to obtain guidance on national, regional and African preparations for participation in Rio+20

- (iii) Form thematic working groups/teams on the basis of the Rio+20 thematic areas to spearhead the preparation of respective inputs and identify appropriate MDAs to lead the thematic areas.
- (iv) Conduct specific thematic studies in line with the themes of the Rio+ 20 Conference to generate the required data. All the reports and documentation will be done within the format and guidelines of the Conference. The recently created National Sustainable Development Think (NSDTT) will be involved in the studies.
- (v) Reports generated from the studies will be discussed and endorsed at national level conference including obtaining high political commitment prior to the Conference (June 2012). This activity is planned to take place in April, 2011.

Terms of Reference (TORs) for the core team, each of the thematic groups and the specific studies will be drawn to guide their activities.

Duration

The national preparatory process starts from 1st October 2011 until July 15th 2012 immediately after the end of the Rio+20 Conference. However, modalities for implementing the recommendations of the Rio+20 Conference will be put in place and communicated to the relevant authorities.

Budget

A proposed working budget of US\$ 390,000 is required to carry out the national preparatory process including; carrying out wide stakeholder consultations at thematic and national levels, publication of the report and national, regional and African coordination meetings as indicated below.

No	Item	Unit cost	Quantity	Total (US\$)
1.	Coordination Meetings of the core team within Uganda and at regional and African levels			40,000
2.	Consultancy Studies	20,000	7 sub- themes	140,000
3.	Stakeholder consultations	20,000	7 sub- themes	140,000
4.	National Sustainable Development Forum		1 for 200 participants	60,000
5.	Publication of National Reports		1 report for all the sub-themes	10,000
6.	TOTAL			390,000