

PROJECT PROFILE

<u>Sector</u>	Environment and Natural Resources
<u>Sub-sector</u>	Wetlands
<u>Code</u>	0146 - formerly NR 07(B)
<u>Title</u>	National Wetlands Management Programme
<u>Implementing Agency</u>	Ministry of Water, Lands and Environment
<u>Location</u>	Countrywide
<u>Total Plan Expenditure</u>	US\$ 28.1m
<u>Donor Funding</u>	US\$ 13.8
<u>Funds Secured</u>	US\$ 1.1446m
<u>GoJ Contribution</u>	Ush 2.25bn
<u>Funding Gap</u>	US\$ 25.68m
<u>Starting Date</u>	July 2001
<u>Completion Date</u>	2010

Background

Wetlands in Uganda cover about 13% or 35,000 sq. km of the land surface area and include areas of seasonally flooded grassland, swamp forest, permanently flooded papyrus and grass swamp and upland bogs. Wetlands contribute to human welfare by providing a source of goods that support subsistence, income-generation, and employment. They also provide services upon which human welfare depends: water supply, storage and purification; climate regulation and flood control. Wetlands, while constituting ecosystems in their own right, also form part of larger ecosystems and are vital to their health. In particular, they are linked hydrologically and ecologically to areas upstream and downstream. They also support biological diversity in terms of genetic, species, and ecosystem variety. Nevertheless both roles of wetlands - sustaining human livelihoods and upholding the quality of the environment - remain under threat.

These challenges will be met by the National Wetlands Programme which constitutes the implementation structure for the Wetlands Sector Strategic Plan (WSSP) 2001-2010. The WSSP strategy is to ensure that Uganda's wetlands are able to more effectively fulfil their roles and ensure that the "contribution of Uganda's wetlands to human welfare and the health of the environment increased". This will require judicious use, conservation, and, in some cases, total protection of the wetlands.

Project Objectives

- Enhance knowledge and understanding of ecological processes and socio-economic values of wetlands;
- Increase public and stakeholder awareness of wetlands and their beneficial products and services;
- Build and maintain a strong institutional framework for wetlands management;
- Develop and enforce appropriate wetlands policy and legislation;
- Enhance and improve the planning and management of wetlands systems at district levels;
- Protect vital wetlands and conserve their characteristics and functions;
- Establish and strengthen community based regulation and administration of wetlands resource use;
- Mobilise local and international financing mechanisms for wetland management and conservation in Uganda.

Expected outputs

- A well established, equipped and manned national lead agency for wetland management;
- The Wetland Bill submitted to cabinet for approval;
- A wetland monitoring and surveillance system in place, including the ecological and socio-economic processes in wetlands;
- A well informed general public about wetland issues;
- District officers trained in wetland assessment and management;
- All wetlands in Uganda surveyed and mapped by district officers;
- Planning and management of wetlands enhanced;
- Community-based regulation and administration of wetlands resource use established and strengthened.
- Improved livelihoods for wetland users of specific wetlands products and services, with special attention for livelihoods of women;
- Guidelines for wetland resource use developed and disseminated to local communities;
- Critical wetlands gazetted and protected, and managed according to accepted management plans.
- Long term internal and external-funding mechanisms secured.

Performance indicators

Whereas progress in some areas can be easily measured, improvements in areas such as capacity building and increased knowledge are more difficult to quantify. The National Wetland Programme has identified a series of monitoring indicators under each of the above mentioned areas. The key indicators are:

- All district wetlands inventories reassessed, revised, and reissued at intervals of at most five years
- 8,000 datasheets entered in the NWIS and available to districts for planning purposes
- A research strategy in place: research findings, conclusions, and recommendations available and disseminated
- At least 65% of the population aware of wetlands' functions and benefits, as measured by repeat KAP surveys
- Wetlands-related topics taught as part of the curriculum in primary and secondary schools
- Adequately staffed and equipped national lead agency established
- District-level wetlands management structures established, staffed, and equipped in accordance with prescribed standards
- Wetlands Act on the Statute Book
- Comprehensive wetlands-related by-laws in place at district level
- Increased awareness of wetlands policy and legislation among key stakeholders
- Effective wetland compliance monitoring system in place both at district and national levels.
- District Wetlands Action plans prepared and integrated into District Development Plans in all districts
- At least 75% of vital critical wetlands gazetted;
- 500 Wetlands Management Plans in place for valuable critical wetlands

Technical Description

The Programme is to promote wise exploitation of wetlands and maintain up to date inventories. It will involve research on the nature and value of ecological and hydrological functions of wetlands and their products and services. It will also equip District Environment Officers to undertake wetlands management, and encourage District Local Governments to include wetlands management functions in their recurrent budgets.

The project will prepare and disseminate guidelines on wetlands policy and legislation, to enhance awareness and understanding by stakeholders, train and equip law enforcement agencies to apply the legislation, and monitor compliance. Critical wetlands will be identified and gazetted, their management plans prepared and ecological monitoring systems and procedures developed. The project will undertake targeted awareness campaigns and strengthen NGO collaboration in to raise community awareness on wetlands management issues.

Key focal areas for the project activities are:

- Promoting of sustainable use of wetlands to maintain important hydrological and ecological integrity of the wetland ecosystems;
- Advocating management options that require minimal or no modification for fragile and unique wetlands, or where use may lead to irreversible loss of biodiversity, and/or ecological and hydrological functions;
- Proposing wise use of wetlands within the context of conservation and sustainable use of the wider ecosystem of which they are part, such as catchments or river and Lake Basins.
- Improving management of wetlands and carrying out research to test wetlands management options, applying the precautionary principle where information is incomplete;

Financing

The initial funding from the Royal Netherlands Government ended in December 2002. GoU continued to solely finance the programme till new funding arrangements with the Royal Government of Belgium materialised in 04/05 FY.

Plan of operation

The project is implemented by the MWLE, Wetlands Inspection Division. Implementation structures are spread out to Local Government levels as per the Laws and the decentralisation process.