

**MASINDI DISTRICT COUNCIL AND THE NATIONAL
ENVIRONMENT MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY
(NEMA)**

MASINDI DISTRICT ENVIRONMENT POLICY

DRAFT 03

FOREWORD

Masindi District is one of Uganda's moderately developed Districts and it also possesses a large section of Uganda's most important Natural Resources in the Murchison Falls National Park. In addition, the District has a large section of commercial agricultural enterprises in Kinyara sugar estate and a large section of tobacco farmers. However, in recent times the District has grown weary that the state of its environment and natural resources may not be sustainable in the long-run. The District cutting off Buliisa District, which took away the important waters of Lake Albert, and recently there has been an influx of pastoralists and other inhabitants from other areas. In the past and up to today the District is one of the major producers of charcoal in the country. All these factors combined with the clearly visible high rate of soil erosion means that a lot of the poor people in the rural areas who rely directly on the natural resources may not be able to sustain their livelihoods in the long run. Masindi is also one of the Districts with the growing and already high population. The pressure from the reducing resource base in some areas will be transferred to others. For instance, the District is proud to host one of the country's most important centres of the biodiversity conservation in the country in the national park. Indeed, under the revenue sharing schemes the communities neighbouring the National Park also benefit from the gate collections. However, all these efforts will fail if the communities can no longer live on their lands and are forced to use part of the national park to ensure that they have sustainable livelihoods. To prevent all these from happening forward planning is needed. This environment policy for Masindi District provides one such opportunity. Having agreed on the policies we shall next turn to the legislative framework and the action plans and operationalisation of all these undertakings.

The development of this environment policy has been a long-term effort that started with the District Environment Action Plan (DEAP) and several other documents for instance the Masindi District Production and Environment Ordinance of 2002 this policy should open the door for a lot more initiatives in improved environment management. One of the immediate issues of concern will be the molasses that are got from the sugar factory and dumped in the District waters, the development of lead environment households and generating sufficient financial resources that are sustainable to ensure that adequate and appropriate environment management always fosters within the District.

We are grateful for this effort and we look forward to support the operationalisation of the issues articulated in the policy

Mr.

District Chairman

Masindi District

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

CBOs	Community Based Organisations
CSOs	Civil Society Organisations
DDHS	District Directorate of Health Services
DEAP	District Environment Action Plan
DPTC	District Technical Planning Committee
ENR	Environment and Natural Resources
LAKIMO	Lake Kyoga Integrated Management Organisation
LEC	Local Environment Committee
NBSAP	National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan
NBSAP	National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan
NEMA	National Environment Management Authority
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organisations
STIs	Sexually Transmitted Infections
UNCCD	United Nations Convention on Climate Change and Desertification
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Status of Environment and Natural Resource in Masindi District

1.1.1 Location of District

Masindi District is located in the mid-west part of Uganda 130 miles from Kampala and borders Gulu in the north, Apac in the east, Nakasongola in the south-east, Kiboga in the south, Hoima in the south-east, Kiboga in the south, Hoima in the south-west and the democratic republic of Congo in the west. The district is at an average altitude of 1295 metres, situated between latitudes 1° 22' and 2° 20' North of the equator, longitude 31° 22' and 32° 23' east of Greenwich. The district comprises of a total area of 9,326 sq.km of which 8087sq.km is land area, 2,843 sq.km is wildlife protected area, 1,031 sq km under forest reserve, 14.4sq.km under water. The arable land covers a total area of 7,332sq.km.

1.1.2 Climate.

Masindi has a favourable climate and its rainfall pattern is bimodal. The District receives an annual long-term average rainfall of 1304 millimetres (mm). The District has three main climatic zones: high rainfall zones: These are areas, which receive more than 1000 mm of rainfall per annum. These include, Budongo, Pakanyi, Karujubu and Nyangahya sub-counties; medium rainfall zones: These are areas with total amount of rainfall ranging between 800mm – 1000mm per annum i.e. Kigumba, Kiryandongo sub-counties, and Bigando and Isimba Parishes in Miirya Sub County; and lower rainfall zones: These are areas, which receive less than 800mm of rainfall per annum. These include Masindi Port, and Kimengo Sub Counties.

Major Economic activities carried out in high rainfall zones include: pitsawing especially in Budongo Forest, maize production, cassava production, sugar cane production, tobacco and banana growing. This has contributed to increased household incomes enabling the population to sustain their livelihoods. Similar activities are carried out in areas receiving medium rainfall. On the other hand the major activities carried out in low rainfall zones are: Pastoralism, fishing and cotton growing.

1.1.3 Vegetation

The natural vegetation of Masindi comprises of forest, dry and humid Savannah with Elephant grass prolific throughout the area. This type of vegetation provides a diverse habitat for a variety of birds and Animals.

1.1.4 Water Resources

The District has got adequate surface and sub-surface water reserves. However some parts of the District are devoid of such water reserves especially during the dry season. Severe surface water shortage is experienced in Kimengo and Masindi Port Sub-Counties. The drainage system in the district consists of numerous wetlands in several localities.

1.1.5 Geomorphology

Masindi District is generally a plateau land with an altitude of 1295 meters on average above sea level. Undulating hills with some pronounced high points are spread out in the District. Examples of these high points include Kigulya (4529ft) in Miirya Sub –County, Fumbya in Bwijanga and Kaduku in Kigumba.

To the West is an arm of the great Western Rift Valley, which descends up to Mozambique. There are also several features associated with Rift Valley formation to the West of the District. The land towards Murchison Falls slopes down suddenly and remains flat in the Murchison Falls conservation area.

1.1.6 Soil types

Soil type patterns in Masindi are more or less the same through out the district. Sandy loam soils predominate with clay loams found in Budongo excluding Nyantozzi Parish. Sandy soils are more pronounced in Kimengo, Masindi port and some parts of Bwijanga Sub-Counties. Soil types in Masindi District, determines the type of Crops grown in various areas.

1.1.7 Water and Sanitation

The total population with access to safe drinking water is estimated to be 52.2 percent. The percentage of households with acceptable latrines is 38% as reported by Water Office. Up to 3,719 households have safe drinking water on their premises, 65,952 households access water about 1 km away from the household and 22,128 move a distance greater than 1 km to get safe drinking water.

The District has about 313 boreholes 78% are functional and 22% are non-functional; 315 protected springs 98% of these are functional; 328 shallow wells 85% of these are functional and 15% are not functional; and 12 valley tanks 12 tanks are functional and 4 are non-functional. Of all the 968 water facilities available just under 86% are functional and 14% are non-functional.

1.1.8 Health Situation

According to the District Development Plan (Masindi DC, 2007), there have been some efforts to improve the health situations, however, the health status of the population of Masindi is still

poor. A high prevalence of infectious and communicable diseases and Malnutrition among the general population especially in children under 5 still contributes to a heavy burden of disease. Malaria is the major disease in the District with morbidity at 37% in 2005/06, followed by coughs (17%), intestinal worms (6%), and skin infections (4%). Other environmental health issues include acute diarrhoea affecting 2.6% of the population, pneumonia, eye infections and genital infections (Masindi DDHS, 2007)..

1.2 Cross-cutting issues

1.2.1 Gender

Gender issues that are of common concern for environment and natural resource conservation in Masindi District are dominance of men in decision making concerning natural resources at household level and the few women owning land. This has been brought about by traditional cultures which consider men as superior to women and the perception that family assets belong to men. In turn this has led to limited participation of women and children in the decision making process; and income inequality.

1.2.2. Environment and Natural Resource specific issues

Masindi District has diverse natural resources, which when properly utilized provide a high potential for sustainable socio economic development. However, the unplanned increase in population has asserted pressure on the limited resources. In a bid to increase productivity and Household income, various socio economic activities have greatly affected the state of natural resources and environment in Masindi. Lack of soil conservation practices has led to soil erosion and land degradation. Overgrazing, charcoal production, lumbering, clearance of trees for Agricultural production and bush fires have all aggravated the problem. The opportunity cost of not investing in environmental management will be the continued degradation and exhaustion of natural resources, the main stay of the people of Masindi.

Massive destruction of forests and wetlands for charcoal and timber and alcohol distillation has led to increased poverty, landlessness, search for free wood and timber, search for pasture and hunting wild game. This has led to weather changes, soil erosion and death especially of slow moving organisms.

1.2.3 Land

Masindi district covers 7,216km² of which 7020.4km² is curable land 195.65km² is palm wetland including open water and swamps. Masindi district has three forms of land tenure, leasehold, lubinja in a customary tenure characterised by bonafide occupancy and customary tenure characterised by bonafide occupancy and customary ownership. Lease hold tenure exist for

parental organisation of Uganda livestock industries, Bunyoro growers co-operative union and Kinyara Sugar works Ltd (Masindi DC, 2007).

The customary land tenure and bonafide occupancy under customary tenure are inter-related but disfunction is in light of ownership. Kibanja owners (land occupants) were issued certificates of ownership until the 1950s when the process was stopped due to exercise abuse (Masindi district council, 2003). On the other hand, customary land lords were given official land holding obengenze a kind to Mailo in Buganda. The officials (chiefs) of the Bunyoro kingdom could derive remuneration in the form of commissions that that total land area of Masindi District is 3424.47 sq. km with four land tenure systems. These include; Leasehold 3%; Mailo Land 41%; Free hold 9%; and Customary 47%. Prior to the 1992 Ranch Restructuring Scheme, there were just a few Ranchers owning very huge chunks of land. The Restructuring saw several land owners emerge albeit with small acreages i.e. the result of splitting huge ranches into several smaller portions. There are several landowners now, all with Leasehold land. Absentee Landlords largely own the Mailo land. Much of this land was estates of big acreages. The situation is now changing with many of these Mailo land estates being apportioned into smaller areas.

The distribution of natural vegetation types in Masindi District are influenced by climate, soils and topographical factors. The largest land use cover is woodlands (41.2%) followed by savanna grasslands and bush lands (24.6%). Notable also is the significant clearing of natural vegetation for purposes of establishing farms, which are often covered by various post-cultivated vegetation.

1.2.4 Environment information

Lack of awareness has repeatedly been pointed out as the cause of most environmental problems in the district. However the office in charge of providing environment information is not adequately facilitated in terms of transport, budgetary allocation and staffing. Decentralized environmental management is a relatively new concept, therefore calling for a lot of capacity building among the practitioners. There is need to train and strengthen the various institutions and structures that the district has set up to handle environmental management. These include LECs from village to sub-county level, the District Council, the District Executive Committee, the District Technical Planning Committee and the Sister Sectors.

1.2.5 Waste management

In rural areas in Masindi district, 27% Of the households use rubbish pit as the means of solid waste disposal whereas 20% of urban households use burning method. In rural areas, 27% Of the households use rubbish pit as the means of solid waste disposal whereas 20% of urban households use burning method. However, this poor environmental sanitation favours the existence of disease vectors in the district, most notably mosquitoes. Other forms of pollution include: siltation of the lake (gradual/increased soil-water run off); encroachment (settlement & cultivation in the lake reserve); Ferrying sandbags to anchor moving suds; soils washed in into the lake & increased hailstorm disasters leaves bare parts hence siltation at the on set of rains.

This leaves no buffer zone for filth filtration hence all waste ends in the lake; and catchment degradation and siltation and pollution of the lake. The communities have no waste disposal systems and generally have inadequate information on lake pollution (lack of awareness).

1.2.6 Other cross-sectoral environment issues

a) Works and Technical Services

Uncovered pits where excavation took place, and Limited tree planting around most facilities, poor disposal of used oil and vehicle filters (Burnings), and District roads not gazetted thus cause encroachment on road reserves. This was brought about by lack of awareness and technical expertise and Lack of funds, Lack of disposal pits around the workshop and no provisions for road services and always in conflict with the community. The effects are Increase in stagnant water and roofs blown off structures, air pollution and high conflicts with the community

b) Education

Environmental concerns include: Classroom and staff-houses construction causing soil erosion Wind/storm disasters; and construction of Pit latrines Disturbances of the topsoil stratum. Deposition of the sub soils over the topsoil leading and a terrible smell.

c) Management Support Services

This has led to the depletion of vegetation and land degradation due to sugar cane growing at Maiha leading to the exposure of soils to erosion and vulnerability to change in climate condition for the local population surrounding the area.

d) Community based services

Extensive bush cleaning from groups in need of big lands for their activities lading to soil erosion and soil exhaustion in the areas of Budongo, Bwijanga, Karujubu and Kimengo sub-counties

e) Health Services

Poor medical waste disposal negligence Ignorance and Lack of proper disposal facilities; Poor human excreta disposal due to Attitudes, Ignorance, Laziness, Unstable soils; Poor hand washing practices Lack of adequate hand washing facilities, Ignorance. This has led to Accidents. Infection of H/Ws, patients and attendants, Water source contamination Oral faecal diseases, and oral faecal disease.

f) Crop and livestock production

Soil erosion brought about by overgrazing and poor land use; and Reduced rainfall brought on in part by deforestation for agriculture production , which in turn lead to low food yields and malnutrition. In commercial plantations environmental health concerns include lack of protective wear, which is brought on by laxity and ignorance among workers and has resulted into poisoning, irritation and cancers for plantation agriculture workers. mill workers, welders, and factory employees (Masindi DC, 2007).

Massive destruction of forest cover, wetlands and marginal land Search for land for cultivation and firewood for tobacco curing due to ecological disequilibrium; toxicity arising from spraying pesticides and acaricides cheap alternative method for killing weeds and the expensive acaricides Environmental contamination and contaminated food items; soil erosion uncontrolled livestock movement along path and overstocking, and monocropping and burning bushes & overpopulation, which has led to Land degradation and low production due to poor soils.

g) Planning

High population growth rates in Masindi district have been brought about by Limited family planning practices at household level, ignorance on the consequences of population increase, prestige by some families dictated by culture, polygamy especially among Moslems, influx of internally displaced persons from Kibanda and Internal migration. This has led to increased pressure on limited resources both material and natural.

1.4 Poverty and the environment in Masindi District

The poverty levels in Masindi District still remain high. Masindi District is ranked 19th in the country among Districts with the lowest human poverty index. It has a Human Development Index (HDI) of 32.2 (UNDP, 2005). Based on the material and non-material things possessed by individuals as well as the community, different categories of people in Masindi perceive poverty differently. The major factors which have contributed to high poverty levels in Masindi District include: Ignorance, high illiteracy levels, lack of knowledge, lack of awareness, powerlessness, influx of IDPs and Refugees, HIV/AIDS, lack of productive assets, lack of market, disability, orphans and dependants.

1.5 Strengths, weaknesses opportunities & threats to environment & natural resources - Masindi District

Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
Forest			
-Well trained staff -supportive policy	-Inadequate staff - limited awareness -lack of -management plans and committees -inadequate funding -failure to control immigrations -inadequate legal frame work	-Existence of the new structure -Trainable staff	-Un regulated forest resource exploitation -conversion of forests to other land use forms -poor management of forests -influx of IDPs, Refugees and immigrants -land shortage -insecurity in neighbouring countries and northern Uganda -High poverty levels -Lack of regulations and guideline for management of forests on private land
Environment			
-Well trained staff - Environmental plans – DEAP, SEAP, PEAP	-Inadequate staff - limited awareness -weak LECs at all levels	-Trainable staff	- limited awareness -weak LECs at all levels -over dependency on environmental resources -lack of IGAs -high levels Poverty - lack of natural resource and environmental database - limited manpower, funding and logistics -weak institutional linkages
Land Management			
-Well trained staff -supportive law and land management institutions	-Limited awareness - failure by courts to settle land disputes in time -continued holding of land with un demarcated boundaries -poor land use and management systems -un planned developments	-Trainable staff	natural resources -Lack of proper storage of data on land issues -Land disputes due to lack of clear boundaries between people’s plots / lands -No proper rights for the various pieces of land ownership -Lack of Registration for fragile ecosystems like wetlands,forests and hill tops

2.0 OVERALL GOAL, KEY OBJECTIVES AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES

2.1 Overall goal

The overall goal of the environment policy in Masindi District is drawn from the District's Development Plan and it is to: Undertake initiatives to halt and reverse environmental degradation so as to guarantee improved productivity of the environment and natural resources with a view of accelerating sustainable economic growth and improving human welfare in Masindi District for all by year 2025.

2.2 Key objectives

- (i) To ensure the availability of a sufficient amount of financial, human resource and physical/ asset resources for sustainable management of natural resources and efficient Environment and Natural Resources Management in the District;
- (ii) To ensure adequate and continued participation of the communities living in the District in planning for and sustainably using the natural resources within in the District, in line with local and national policies and regulations;
- (iii) To support a comprehensive planning process that includes local communities, local environment committees, political leaders, civil society organisations and technical staff;
- (iv) To ensure adequate property rights to natural resources, especially land, and promote the sustainable land use practices such as sustainable land management;
- (v) To mobilise for the participation and good will of political, traditional and other forms of leaders to support the development and implementation of environment policies and legislations.
- (vi) To promote the commercialisation of surplus products sustainably produced from the environment and natural resources from such activities as Agriculture, Wildlife trade, carbon trade, and other forms of trade;
- (vii) To promote environmental health practices of sanitation and water use that lead to a healthier community throughout the District.
- (viii) To promote the teaching of environment studies in primary and secondary schools and the active participation of pupils and students in environment management practices.
- (ix) To promote compliance with national and local regulations for environment management by local government, private sector and civil society actors, through enforcement of local bye-laws, and national laws, statutes and legislations.

- (x) To allow for a monitoring and evaluation of the performance of environment and natural resources management programmes, plans and policies, from time to time and where necessary adjustments to fit new needs.

2.3 Guiding principles of the policy

The following key principles which will guide policy development and implementation strategies:

- (i) Every person has a constitutional right to live in a healthy environment and an obligation to keep the environment clean;
- (ii) The development of Uganda's economy should be based on sustainable natural resource use and sound management;
- (iii) Security of land and resource tenure is a fundamental requirement of sustainable natural resource management;
- (iv) Long-term food security depends on sustainable natural resource and environmental management;
- (v) The utilization of non-renewable resources should be optimized and where possible their life extended by recycling;
- (vi) Environmentally friendly, socially acceptable and affordable technologies should be developed and disseminated for efficient use of natural resources;
- (vii) Full environmental and social costs or benefits foregone as a result of environmental damage or degradation should be incorporated in public and private sector planning and minimised where possible;
- (viii) Social and economic incentives and disincentives should complement regulatory measures to influence people's willingness to invest in sustainable environmental management;
- (ix) The enforcement capacity of environmentally related laws should be taken as a priority for sustainable natural resource and environmental management;
- (x) Priority should be given to establishing a social and economic environment which provides appropriate incentives for sustainable natural resource use and environmental management;
- (xi) An integrated and multi-sectoral systems approach to resource planning and environmental management should be put in place;
- (xii) Regular monitoring and accurate assessment of the environment should be carried out and the information widely publicized;
- (xiii) Conditions and opportunities for communities and individual resource managers to sustainably manage their own natural resources and the environment should be created and facilitated;
- (xiv) Effective involvement of women and youth in natural resource policy formulation, planning, decision making, management and program implementation is essential and should be encouraged;
- (xv) Increased awareness and understanding of environmental and natural resource issues by Government and the public should be promoted;
- (xvi) Social equity, particularly when allocating resource use should be promoted; and
- (xvii) Sub-regional, regional and global environmental interdependence should be recognized.

3.0 NON-SECTOR SPECIFIC POLICY STATEMENTS, OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES

3.1 Land resource tenure and Land use

Policy statement: To ensure improved land resource tenure, equity in stewardship and appropriate land use practices in Masindi District

Objectives

- 1) To promote improved land stewardship for all land users including a better definition of, and strengthening, land and resource tenure rights.
- 2) To develop new and continually update resource maps for the entire District.
- 3) To design and implement, together with resource user communities, land and resource use plans for all resources in the District.
- 4) To ensure compliance of all developers with the Land use plans through issuance of fees, leases, certificates and requirement for approval of activities by local authorities;
- 5) To increase revenue collection from the land and other natural resources in the District without compromising the sustainability of these resources.

Strategies

- (i) Support the operationalisation of the Land Act 1998 and its amendments in the District.
- (ii) Support strengthening of tenure that leads to increased sustainable practices on land (e.g. forestry, agro-forestry, aquaculture, etc.).
- (iii) Require new leases of public lands to carry conditions which prohibit environmentally unacceptable land-use practices.
- (iv) Ensure that public land leases are subject to the environmental impact assessment process.
- (v) Conduct awareness on planning issues, form and train sub county area land committees, and training of local councils in land dispute resolution.
- (vi) Implement systematic demarcation of land.
- (vii) Gender mainstreaming and disability issues
- (viii) Tenure system/lease hold customary

3.2 Environmental information, education, human resource development, research, and public participation in environment management

Policy statement: Ensure provision of appropriate and adequate environment information to the communities, other resource users and knowledge providers and users in Masindi District.

Objectives

- 1) To provide adequate resources both physical, financial and human resource allocated to environment information development, and awareness provision;

- 2) To ensure an appropriate institutional structure for environment information generation and provision through the local environment committees, political leaders, civil society and communities.
- 3) To develop capacity building programmes for no-technical environment and natural resources stakeholders in the District such as local environment committees, land committees, town councils and their boards, councillors, and the District and sub-county executive.
- 4) To collect, analyze, store, and disseminate on a continuous basis, reliable information relating to environmental management issues at the District. Such information will include: land maps, land use practices, status of natural resources, biodiversity, soil conservation, fuel wood supply and demand and pollution control
- 5) To build capacity of local environment committees and parish development Committees and district enforcements and councilors

Strategies

1. Regular development of District State of Environment Reports and regular capacity building for staff in the District Natural Resources Department.
2. Include a sufficient budget for environment information generation and awareness within the District Natural Resources Department Budget.
3. Encourage the inclusion of environment information and awareness in projects that are likely to impact on the environment and natural resources in the District.
4. Train and strengthen the various institutions and structures that the district has set up to handle environmental management and for other district organs like the Council, the District Executive Committee, the Technical Planning Committee (DTPC) and Sister Sectors.
5. Regularly disseminate information and provide training to communities on environment and natural resources management.
6. Capacity building for Local Environment Committees and Parish Development Committees to execute the work.
7. Support initiatives that increase working linkages with Civil Society and Community Based Organisations.
8. Identify, nominate and integrate lead households into the provision of information on environment management and generation of data.

3.4 Conservation of biological diversity

Policy statement: Ensure that the biodiversity in Masindi District is conserved inline with the countries commitments inline of the Convention on Biological Diversity.

Objective

- 1) To ensure that the biodiversity in the District is always well protected both within the Protected areas and the unprotected areas.
- 2) To increase the level of cooperation between the Protected Areas Authorities, principally, the Uganda Wildlife Authority and National Forestry Authority, and communities to ensure sustainable and participatory management of protected areas.

- 3) To support communities to sustainably draw direct benefit from the ecosystems services including services from biodiversity, in order to meet their livelihoods needs.
- 4) Increase use rights and encouraging private investment into the management of the District's biodiversity rich areas.

Strategies

1. Develop either a biodiversity policy for the District or a plan for the management of biodiversity in the District to include both biodiversity in protected areas and in unprotected areas.
2. Develop and an investment strategy/plan based on the biodiversity resources of the District.
3. Promote active participation of the local communities together with investors in the opportunities available from the protected area resources, such as tourism and ecotourism.
4. To develop pricing mechanisms for the biodiversity resources of the District such as organic agriculture, ecotourism that reflect the true value of the ecosystem services being sold.
5. Regular participation of the local communities in planning of the District's natural resources.

3.5 Water resource conservation

Policy statement: Ensure sustainable and appropriate practices in the management and conservation of water resources.

Objectives

- 1) To ensure that the water resources in the District are managed sustainably to provide the same level of ecosystems services to future generations as to the current generation.
- 2) To increase the number of water source points within the semi-arid parts of the District such as Kibanda, and Buruli Counties in order to reduce the distance moved by women and children to water points.
- 3) Protect the rivers that run through the District and those that pour into the L. Albert catchment.
- 4) To ensure that the quality of the lake and river water systems does not deteriorate to a level where it threatens the health of users and the fauna and flora in and around the water systems.
- 5) To ensure good management of the watersheds which contribute water to the existing water resources systems in the District.

Strategies

1. To have water resource use plans developed in a participatory manner with the community and operational throughout the District;

2. Increased investment in water for domestic use and production, by increasing the number of boreholes and repairing systems regularly to ensure continued operation.
3. To be able to reduce the distance moved to the water collection points from 5km to at most 1 km.
4. Introduce ecosystem based approaches to the management of water systems within the District, in a participatory manner under the supervision of the water resource committees and the District Water Departments and Environment and Natural Resources Department.
5. Develop watershed or catchment area-wide plans that include upstream and down stream communities, ecosystems and ecosystems services to ensure sustained availability of the water shed properties of the catchments.
6. Undertake inventory on rivers size of water mapping out of water sources (an inventory)

3.6 Wetlands conservation and management

Policy statement: To provide adequate tools for wetlands conservation in line with the national policies and legislation on wetlands conservation.

Objective

- 1) To increase the productivity levels of the wetlands through technical assessment and undertaking of the livelihoods activities that can be sustainably be managed in the wetlands;
- 2) To ensure that the forms of wetland use adopted do not lead to the loss of the current biodiversity therein.
- 3) To halt all activities that lead to a change in the chemical, physical and biological properties of the wetlands ecosystems, and degrade the wetland systems resilience
- 4) To ensure community participation in the planning and use of the wetlands.

Strategies

1. Provide sufficient support for enforcement of the Wetlands Management Act;
2. Ensure Compliance with the Wetlands Management Regulations by private individuals and communities;
3. Ensure knowledge sensitisation of set standards

3.7 Financing environment management

Policy statement: To develop an adequate set of financial tools that will support sustainable and greater autonomy in environment conservation activities in the District.

Objective

- 1) To increase the local revenue generated from the Districts Environment and Natural Resources;
- 2) To identify new opportunities for and increase the level of investment into the Environment and Natural Resources of the District;

Strategies

1. Develop a long-term business plan for the ENR sector of the District;
2. To increase the level of information available on the business opportunities in the District's ENR sector among investors, through shows and media notices and briefings.
3. Identify new sources for resource generation.

3.8 Environmental Impact Assessment

Policy statement: To ensure that Environment Impact Assessments are undertaken to an appropriate level of quality for all significant investments undertaken in the District and ensure adequate participation of District staff.

Objective

- 1) To increase the level of compliance with conducting Environmental Impact Assessments (EIAs) and Environmental Audits.
- 2) To increase coordination between the District Environment and Natural Resources Officers and other District Technical staff in the monitoring and evaluation of project compliance to the Environment Impact Statement.
- 3) To encourage regular assessments of the Districts Environment and Natural Resources both from a local perspective and a national perspective.

Strategies

1. Ensure enforcement of regulations on conducting Environmental Impact Assessments (EIAs) and Environmental Audits, through increased support to the responsible District staff.
2. Increase the participation of the District Environment Officer in the monitoring and evaluation of project compliance to the Environment Impact Statement.
3. Promote the opportunities for conducting regular assessments of the Districts Environment and Natural Resources to national and international development stakeholders.

3.9 Control of pollution and management of domestic and industrial waste and hazardous waste

Policy statement: To ensure the control of pollution and provide adequate tools and knowledge for domestic and hazardous waste management in the District

Objective

- 1) To reduce the dangerous disposal of industrial waste from processing of liquor and other processes that is dumped in the District's streams, channels and rivers.
- 2) To reduce the volume of and improve on the handling of households waste and disposal of solid waste disposal.
- 3) To reduce the volume of siltation of the lake (gradual/increased soil-water run off).
- 4) Support activities that lead to decreased tree cover and vegetation along the shoreline and grazing in wetlands.

Strategies

1. Revise the District's Production and Environment Management Ordinance and develop bye-laws to counter dangerous disposal of waste in District's water systems.
2. Support the planting of trees and other vegetation in the areas surrounding the lake and rivers of the District.
3. Support development of ordinance and bye laws of not grazing on the wetlands near the shores.
4. Support activities that reduce grazing in wetlands and agricultural practices that damage the shore line of the District Rivers.

3.10 Climate

Policy statement: To counter excessive climate change and provide a basis for increasing communities' ability to adapt to the vulnerability associated with climate change.

Objective

- 1) To reduce the vulnerability of the rural poor farmers and herdsmen to the severe weather regularly experienced in the District.
- 2) To increase the adaptation within the District to the severe climate conditions among the pastoral communities and farming communities.

Strategies

1. Increase information and train communities on the livelihoods and land use opportunities available within the climate systems of the area.
2. Initiate activities for implementation of the climate change and desertification adaptation in the District, through operationalising the United Nations Convention on the Control of Desertification (UNCCD) and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

3.11 Population, health and human settlements

Policy statement: Integrate population, health and human settlements information in the management of the environment and in turn ensure that environmental criteria are used in making decisions on population, health and human settlements in the District

Objective

1. To reduce the incidence poor hygiene sanitation related diseases like eye diseases, skin diseases, intestinal worms and Diarrhoea disease are rampant at the district; reduce the incidence of malaria in the District through undertaking preventive activities; and reduce the proliferation of behavioural diseases such as HIV/AIDS and other Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs).
2. To improve the coordination in the movements of people from the neighbouring and out of the District so as to track their needs and potential for human and livestock diseases.
3. To ensure that settlements within the District follow the District and National Land use Plans

Strategies

1. Increase safe water coverage in the district provided through protected wells, boreholes, shallow wells and rainwater catchments tanks; the number of the toilet facility and the use hand-washing facilities.
2. Population density alongside maps allow resource allocation
3. Training on malaria, HIV/AIDs and other environmental diseases prevention practices within the communities
4. A bye-law on the movement of people and livestock across the District's boundary.
5. Implementation of the national land use Policy, Act and similar District regulations.

3.12 Gender integration

Policy statement: to reduce the gap between the levels of income among men and women and low women participation in development activities and low property ownership and control

Objective

- 1) To increase the participation of women, and poor people in decision making over the use environment and natural resources such as land rights

Strategies

1. Enforcement of the national laws; the Land Act (1998) and other gender related laws and policies.
2. Mainstreaming Gender issues into the District's Development Plans, policies and frameworks.

3. Provide increased sensitization gender roles and responsibilities. Gender biased planning in favour of women, implement affirmative action and promotion of girl child education.
4. Integrate disability issues especially blind people land use planning and tenure
5. Cooking energy saving stoves
6. Planting of trees in the households
7. Respiratory diseases and women

4.0 DEPARTMENT SPECIFIC POLICY GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES

4.1 Agriculture and farming systems

Policy statement: Increase the level of environment mainstreaming in the decision making undertaken in agricultural extension, production and marketing in the District.

Objective

- 1) To ensure infrastructure development for better training environment, enhance adoption of new technologies that lead to sustainable production practices.
- 2) To minimize crop production losses due to pests and diseases
- 3) To support enforcement of environmental policy options that lead to the control of animal diseases, such as restricted animal movement
- 4) To promote production practices in environment and natural resources that provide additional ecosystem services beyond their agro-ecosystems including promote modern bee keeping in forest areas;

Strategies

1. Adopt practices of sustainable land management so as to counter soil erosion, soil compaction and the loss of soil productivity observed within the District including among others agro-forestry, good agronomic practices, and organic farming practices;
2. To encourage vertical integration within agriculture among crop farmers, pastoralists and farmers diversification
3. Training farmers on diversification of income opportunities through re-tooling farmers into more than just one form of livelihood practice;
4. Encourage the use of Irrigation for agriculture and increase water for production

4.2 Forestry conservation and management

Policy statement: Increase the level of environment mainstreaming in the decision making undertaken in forestry extension, production and marketing in the District.

Objective

- 1) Increased ecosystems services of provisioning for communities and individuals, regulation services for the environment aesthetic supporting services through a participatory public-private sector partnered forestry conservation and management, and rangelands management approach.
- 2) To reduce the rate of deforestation taking place in the District through imposing restrictions on charcoal and timber production;
- 3) To halt the decline in the biodiversity in the District's forest and restore the restorable degraded biodiversity of the District forestry resources;

- 4) To encourage the growth of private investment and ownership of forests in the District, as away of enhancing the revenue from the District's forestry resources; and
- 5) To completely halt the burning of bush fires in forests within the District.

Strategies

1. Encourage private sector investment by individuals, Institutional and household level woodlots in the district.
2. Develop and implement a strategy for restoring the District's indigenous trees
3. Develop a bye-law on the harvesting of trees for charcoal, wood fuel and timber, and investment into forestry. In which the levies charged by the district shall be gazetted and the amount of extraction agreed upon based on regular assessments.
4. Develop and implement a District forestry management plan
5. Develop and implement a District rangelands management plan
6. seedling for the district.

4.3 Livestock and rangelands management

Policy statement: Increase the level of environment mainstreaming in the decision making undertaken in livestock and veterinary extension, production and marketing in the District.

Objective

1. To ensure that the Districts' grasslands provide an adequate level of grass for the livestock.
2. T ensure that the pasture lands are managed in such a way that maintains the fertility of the soils in the long-term
3. To manage livestock without destroying the social benefits and other services obtained by non-pastoral and crop farming communities.
4. To ensure harmony between cattle keeping communities and sedentary crop farming communities.

Strategies

1. Support initiatives that lead to acquisition of adequate and appropriate grazing lands for livestock keeping communities.
2. Demarcate land areas in such away as to reduce friction between crop farmers and livestock keepers.
3. Provide capacity for local leaders to be able to handle conflicts and resolve problems among and livestock keepers and between them and other communities.
4. Undertake trainings on sustainable livestock production and commitments by livestock keepers to manage the soil and other natural resources sustainably.
5. Promote proper stocking rate to avoid overgrazing hence soil erosion.
6. Increase the availability of water points for the livestock keeping communities.

4.4 Fisheries and other aquaculture resources conservation and management

Policy statement: Increase the level of environment mainstreaming in the decision making undertaken in fisheries extension, production and marketing in the District.

Objective

1. To encourage increased investment into fish farming;
2. To protect the biodiversity of the fisheries resources in the District through education.
3. To promote sustainable utilization of fisheries.

Strategies

1. Encourage private and institutional investment into fish farming as an alternative to Lake Fishery to reduce the pressure on the lake fishery.
2. Develop a programme for regular awareness raising to encourage proper fishing methods, and other related issues such as streamlining fish marketing.
3. Regular monitor the biodiversity of the fisheries in the District and mainstream biodiversity conservation into the District Fisheries Management Plan.

4.4 Energy

Policy statement: Increase the level of environment mainstreaming in the decision making undertaken in energy, production and use decisions in the District.

Objective

1. To promote sustainable use of the biomass energy sources (forests, grass, trees etc)
2. To promote the use of energy saving technologies at HH and institution levels.
3. To create awareness among the community on energy alternatives friendly to the environment for example solar, electricity, biogas etc
4. To operationalise the Masindi District Production and Environment Management Ordinance 2002.
5. To lobby the extension of the national electricity grid to the coming Rural Growth Centres in the District

Strategies

1. Undertake training and promotion activities on tree planting at household and institutional levels
2. Develop a mechanism for regulating the level of the use of forests and main streaming of energy issues at all levels of the local government
3. Support integration and mainstreaming of energy issues at all levels of governments
4. Start up energy saving demonstrations at schools, institutions, model homes
5. Conduct or organise public awareness campaigns on sustainable energy use
6. Strengthen or reactivate Parish Development Committees and operationalise the Local Environment Committees.

5.0 POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

5.1 Environmental legislation

Policy implementation will involve the successive detailing of policy from the level of intent (as expressed in the above policy statements) through the structuring of actions required to achieve intended policy outputs and impacts. The first of these actions is to create and establish an appropriate institutional and legal framework. Once these actions are undertaken, a monitoring and evaluation system should be developed to assess the impact of policies and actions on the environment, the population and the economy.

Objective:

Most of the existing legislation is of a national sectoral nature, and does not fit inadequate with the institutional arrangements at the District level. It is therefore out of phase with current environmental issues facing the current Districts, especially with defining the implementing officers and their powers. These deficiencies have had a significant negative impact on natural resources and environment management.

Strategies

1. Enact district bye laws to complement national legislation on environment and involve the local people in formulation of the bye laws
2. Improve environmental law and bye law enforcement
3. Involve the local population in enforcement of national environmental laws and district bye laws on the environment

5.2 Institutional framework

The institutional arrangements at the District level give enormous power to the Technical Department heads and very little leverage to the departments that are cross-cutting. As a result several department heads limit the amount of work they give to their colleagues from the cross-cutting departments. The arrangements of supervision, monitoring and evaluation are often informal and create a lot of room for non-execution.

Objective:

- 1) Regularize the institutional relationship between the Environment and Natural Resources Department and the other Departments within the District; and
- 2) Increase the profile of mainstreaming environment into the District Development Plans and Budget.

Strategies are to:

1. Mainstream the environment formally into the District Development Planning and Budgeting processes
2. Define the powers of the environment officers and other natural resources officers in any subsequent by-laws developed
3. Carryout trainings and awareness raising on mainstreaming environment into the District, and sub-district planning and budgeting processes.

5.3 The role of civil society organizations in environmental policy implementation

Non-Governmental organisations provide a pivotal role in mobilising and sensitizing the masses about environmental issues. They therefore supplement the efforts of the public sector and help in ensuring that the concerns of the underprivileged are incorporated in the national development process.

Objective:

- 1) Encourage and increase the participation of civil society organizations in the management of the environment and natural resources.

Strategies are to:

1. Create CSO working groups on environment and natural resources within the District;
2. Increase the occasions for interface between District Planning, Budgeting, Implementation and monitoring and evaluation teams with the CSOs in the District;
3. Lobby for additional support to and through CSOs that have an active role in environment management; and
4. Participate in the monitoring and evaluation and in planning to improve on the service delivery of CSOs working within the District.

5.4 Cross-district and cross (international) boundary resources management

Due to the complexity and transboundary nature of environmental issues, there is increased concern for a regional approach to redressing these issues. This concern forms an important operational basis for enhancing sound management and conservation of environmental resources. Unfortunately, some regional and international conventions and protocols on environmental management have not been implemented.

Objective:

- 1) To optimally and equitably draw benefits from the cross-District natural resources without hurting the benefits the citizens of the other Districts.

Strategies are to:

1. Masindi District should closely cooperate with neighbouring districts especially in the management of cross boundary natural resources or environmental issues.

5.5 Monitoring and evaluation

Development is perceived as the best social progress in human activities leading to better life. However it compromises the quality of the natural environment. This therefore calls for sustainable development of which generations to come must not be subject to suffering due to the current development. Environmental monitoring is therefore essential in as far as ensuring and directing development projects that take place, to ensure sustainability within the environment.

Objective:

- 1) Ensure that environment is sustainably managed and that ecosystems services are drawn from natural resources in a sustainable way;
- 2) Ensure that the resources earmarked for environment and natural resources management and other programmes which mitigate or improve the environment are appropriately used; and
- 3) Ensure that all stakeholders who undertake tasks related to environment and natural resources management not only undertake the tasks but that they are facilitated to do so

Strategies

1. There should be a joint monitoring of programmes for development involving all District departments in their respective activities but doing it in collaboration with the environment and natural resource officer;
2. There should be a special fund to support the environment office/natural resources to carry out environmental monitoring and compliance assistance.

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