



INCLUSIVE GREEN ECONOMY NETWORK-EAST AFRICA

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EAST AFRICAN NETWORK SEEKING TO PROMOTE AN INCLUSIVE GREEN ECONOMY LAUNCHED

Today, a new network of Ugandans and East Africans from across civil society and the private sector have united to promote a new vision for a green East African economy. Named the **Inclusive Green Economy Network-East Africa (IGEN-EA)**, the network was officially launched in Kampala, Uganda today.

The network`s mission is to support the realisation of green investments in key economic sectors that create opportunities for all Ugandans, while promoting environmental conservation, climate resilience and human rights protection. The network is focused on promoting and attracting investment to small-scale organic agriculture, fisheries, tourism, clean energy, agro-forestry and others.

The network was launched by a key Ugandan leader, Hon. Michael Mawanda, and the launch was participated in by political, technical, civil society and private sector leaders as well as community members that operate in Uganda and East Africa's biggest green economic sectors such as small-scale organic agriculture, fisheries, tourism, clean energy and others.

“Uganda is endowed with natural resources such as forests, fertile soils, lakes and others that have sustained the Ugandan economy through supporting agriculture, fisheries, tourism and other economic activities.

Combined, the agriculture, forestry, fisheries and [tourism](#) sectors [contribute 30.8% of Uganda’s GDP](#). Yet these sectors are under-invested in by the Ugandan government. For instance, in the 2021/2022 budget, the agricultural sector, which employs over 70% of Uganda’s labourforce especially women, was allocated only UGX 500 billion. Security and infrastructural developments were allocated UGX 3.4 trillion and UGX 3.1 trillion respectively,” Mr. Dickens Kamugisha, the CEO of Africa Institute for Energy Governance (AFIEGO) and chairperson of IGEN-EA, says.

Mr. Hakim Baliraine, the chairperson of the Eastern and Southern Africa Small-scale Farmers Forum (ESAFF) and an IGEN-EA taskforce member adds, “If more investments targeting subsistence small-scale farmers, who constitute 68% of the Ugandan population, were made, Ugandans would be lifted out of poverty.

Evidence from the World Bank indicates that significant increases in agricultural incomes in Uganda [reduce poverty](#).

The [World Bank](#) also estimates that with increased financing among others, the agricultural sector, one of the country’s biggest foreign exchange earners that got the country \$1.82 billion in 2015 and contributed [about 25%](#) to the country’s GDP in 2016/2017, can catalyse development.”

Benedict Ntale, a tourism sector leader says, “COVID-19 has badly affected tourism but the sector’s immense potential cannot be undermined. Before the COVID-19 pandemic for instance, the tourism sector contributed 23% of Uganda’s foreign exchange earnings and earned the country as much as \$1.6 billion¹. The sector also contributes 7.7% of Uganda’s GDP.

[Estimates](#) made pre-COVID-19 indicated that tourism could grow by 15-20% if every tourist stays one night longer in Uganda or if the number of leisure tourists goes up by 100,000. This target can be achieved if the tourism sector is invested in and our ecosensitive areas are conserved.

Unfortunately, tourism is only allocated 0.4 % of the national budget. Yet the tourism sector’s potential is so immense, it can only be compared to agriculture in Uganda.”

Charity Migwi, a climate change campaigner with 350Africa.org who is also an IGEN-EA taskforce member, notes, “Agriculture, tourism and fishing have great potential all over East Africa. However, the region’s pursuit of oil and gas exploitation which will worsen climate change, increase landlessness, cause environmental destruction and jeopardize security stands to hurt these important green economic sectors that depend on good climate and environmental conservation.”

Esther Nyanzi, the CEO of Ugandan Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Association (UNREEEA) and an IGEN-EA taskforce member says, “All of us under IGEN-EA are immensely hopeful that with our work and together with citizen, government, development partners and financiers’ support, sustainable and meaningful green economic development that benefits all Ugandans can be attained. This is why today’s official launch of our network is a momentous occasion.”

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For more information, contact IGEN-EA at contact@igen-ea.org or visit www.IGEN-EA.org. Follow the Network on Twitter at @IGENEastAfrica.

¹ <https://mobile.twitter.com/ugwildlife/status/1373207076504276993>