UTGA NEWS
From Nursery to plantation, Sawmill & market
28th March 2024 No.60

UTGA holds 17th AGM

Behind the scenes at the UTGA Annual General Meeting

On Thursday 14th March 2024, the Uganda Timber Growers Association (UTGA) held its 17th Annual General Meeting (AGM) at the Silver Springs Hotel in Bugolobi. Over 75 members, staff and stakeholders in forestry attended the meeting eager to address crucial issues facing the timber industry and explore avenues for improvement. At the meeting, participants engaged in discussions centered around maximizing profits from timber plantations and increasing forest cover. Reflections on the events of 2023 prompted constructive dialogue on overcoming challenges encountered in 2023 including strengthening the lobby against

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2024 UTGA AGM

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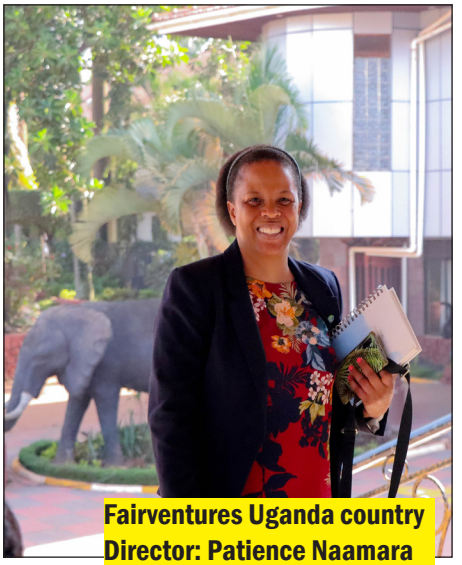
the presidential directive against timber exports, encroachment in central forest reserves (CFRs), forest fires and a restricted market for wood and wood products in Uganda.

In attendance was Mr. Tom Okello, Executive Director of the National Forest Authority (NFA), who addressed attendees. He gave assurances to growers in CFRs that have not yet got their licenses to approach the NFA offices and provide the requisite information. Mr. Okello also emphasized the importance of collaboration with the NFA in addressing land encroachment issues.

NFA Executive Director: Tom Okello



Fairventures Uganda country Director: Patience Naamara

UTGA Chairman: Solomon Oketcho

Former Chairperson: Dr Noreda Kiremire with another member

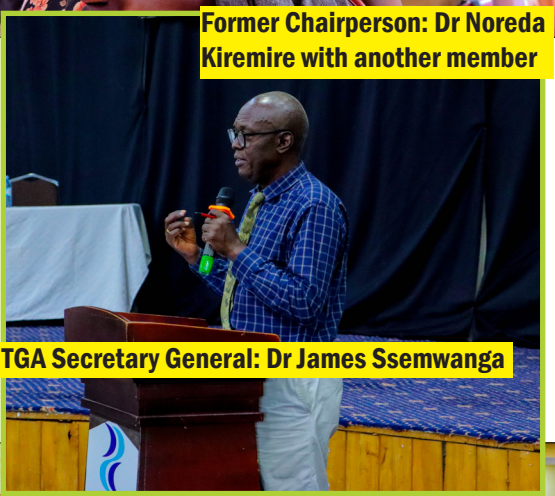
Representatives from the East African Development Bank (EADB) shared insights into new financial opportunities available to growers fom their bank. They outlined various financing options tailored to support agricultural, forestry, and tourism projects, including loans offered in partnership with selected banks at a competitive interest rate of 19%. However, eligibility criteria such as collateral and repayment capability were underscored as prerequisites for accessing these funds.

Overall, the meeting concluded on a positive note, with participants expressing satisfaction with the discussions and outcomes.

There was agreement among attendees on the significance of collective action in driving positive change within the timber industry, thereby contributing to the growth and sustainability of Uganda's forests and economy.

The reports presented by the UTGA Board were adopted by the members and the auditor was given another year to provide external audit services to the association.

The meeting was closed and members invited to lunch.

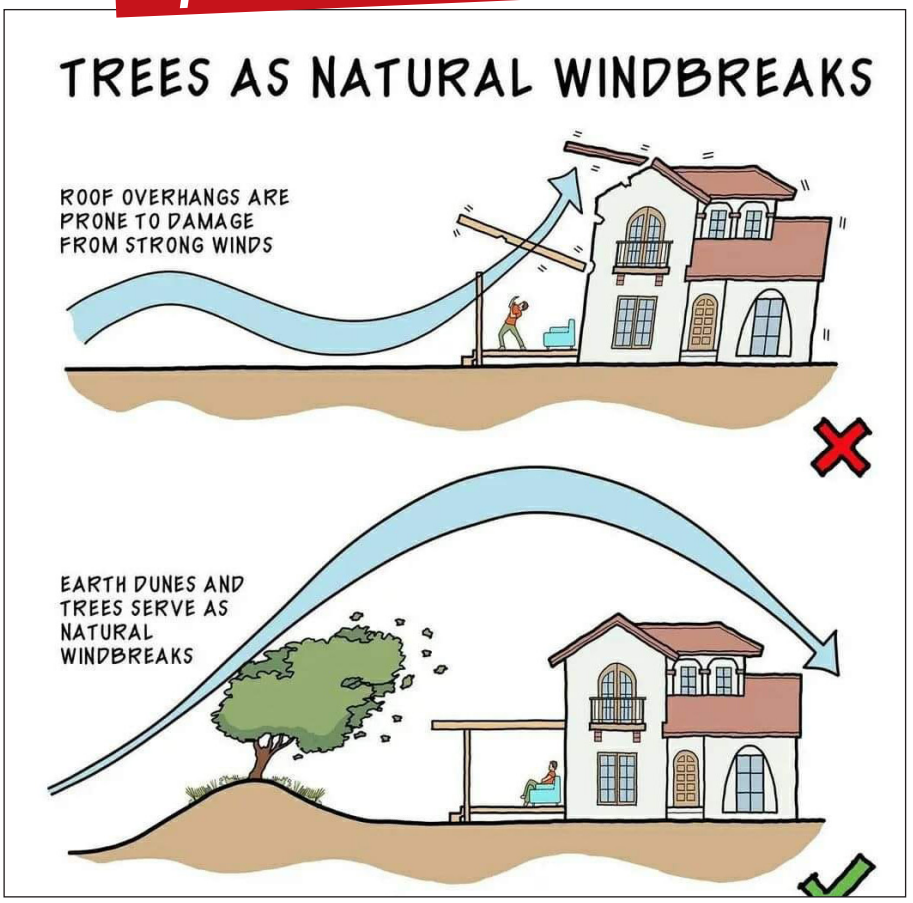


UTGA Secretary General: Dr James Ssemwanga

UTGA growers at the AGM

Uganda Forecasts Seasonal Rainfall

Implications & advisory



The Uganda National Meteorological Authority (UNMA) weather forecast for March to May 2024 indicates a near-normal to above-normal rainfall pattern for most parts of Uganda. Areas like Southwestern Uganda and parts of Karamoja are expected to see enhanced rainfall.

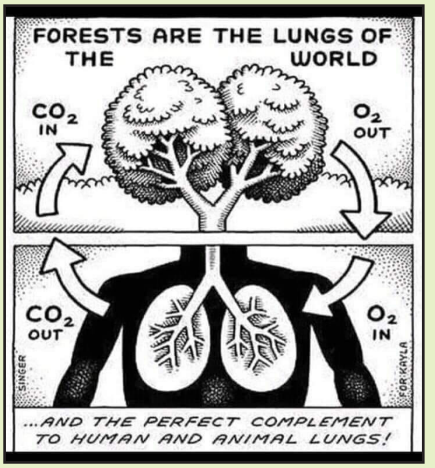
However, there may be disruptions like dry spells and potential impact from tropical cyclones. UNMA advises sectors like agriculture to implement soil conservation and pest management measures. Livestock farmers are urged to prepare for alternative feeding methods and fish farmers should focus on proper product preservation.

The water and energy sector should enhance water harvesting, while disaster management agencies are advised to sensitize communities on early warning systems. Health and nutrition sectors are urged to prioritize disease surveillance and offer support to affected populations.

With proactive measures, stakeholders can mitigate risks and harness opportunities presented by the forecasted rainfall patterns.
UTGA would like to advise tree farmers to use the oncoming rains by continuing to plant trees. Tree growing in the most natural and simplest forms of increasing forest cover in order to fight climate change.

Did you know that?

Every day, a 40 foot tree takes in 50 gallons of dissolved nutrients from the soil, raises this mixture to its topmost leaves, converts it into 10 pounds of carbohydrates and releases about 60 cubic feet of pure oxygen into the air.



UTGA Celebrates International Day of Forests with Neighbors

Happy faces of UTGA staff and the neighbours on Bukoto street

In honour of the International Day of Forests, the Uganda Timber Growers Association (UTGA) has embarked on a meaningful celebration by distributing 200 tree seedlings to neighbors and local offices along Bukoto Street. These tree seedlings, including Pinus caribbea, Eucalyptus grandis Urophylla, Maesopsis eminii, and Markhamia lutea, symbolize UTGA's dedication to environmental conservation and community engagement.
During the commemorative event, the UTGA team took the opportunity to educate neighbors about the crucial role of tree planting in combating climate change. With temperatures on the rise, the act of planting trees now holds significant importance for the health of our planet and the well-being of future generations.
UTGA is not only promoting environmental responsibility but also fostering a sense of unity within the community. Each tree planted along Bukoto Street represents a collective effort towards building a greener and healthier future for all.
UTGA's initiative serves as a powerful reminder of the impact that collective action can have in addressing environmental challenges.
The commitment to raising awareness and encouraging tree planting sets a commendable example for others to follow.

UTGA
Uganda Timber Growers Association

RAISING INDIGENOUS SEEDLINGS

NEWSLETTER

Uganda Timber Growers Association (UTGA) has ventured into raising good quality indigenous tree seedlings of different species including Antiaris toxicaria, Maesopsis eminii, Markhamea lutea, Afzelia Africana, and many others. These are mainly for the restoration of degraded forests to enhance the preservation of biodiversity. A variety of medicines, fruits, roots, and materials for construction can be obtained traditionally from these native tree species.

Tree growers with indigenous trees can register under a carbon removal project which generates financial returns through carbon credits, purchased at a prescribed price, providing a steady income stream. Growers under the FSC group scheme can go for the FSC Ecosystems Services Claim with verified value-added services including carbon storage and sequestration, biodiversity conservation, and protection of soils and water quality. These verified positive impacts aim to facilitate payments for ecosystem services and provide access to other benefits, thereby adding business value for those who responsibly manage forests and those who take action to preserve forest ecosystem services.

EXCITING MONITORING VISIT BY GROW FOR IT AND SILVA CAUSA TO WEST BUGWE CENTRAL FOREST RESERVE.

We are thrilled to share a recent monitoring visit by our esteemed partners, Grow for It and Silva Causa from Denmark, to the West Bugwe Central Forest Reserve. This visit is a crucial aspect of our commitment to sustainable forestry management, executed through dedicated forest restoration and certification efforts.

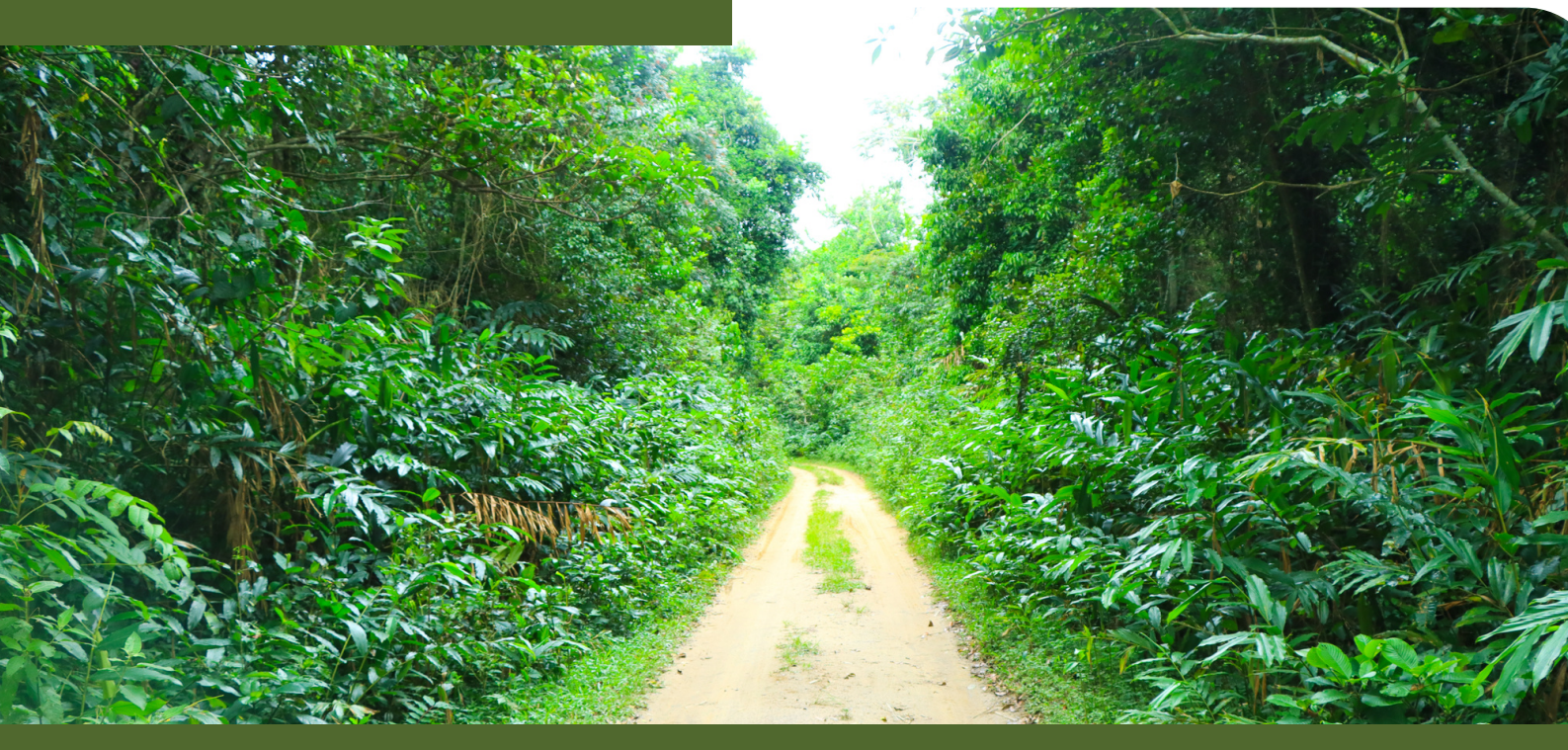
Collaborating with key stakeholders such as the National Forests Authority, DFE, Grow for It, Silva Causa, and the Hammerbacher family, our association periodically conducts monitoring visits to assess the progress of our initiatives and strategically plan for the future.

This time, we had the honor of hosting a representative from Grow for It and Silva Causa, Ans Suva Causa, who visited to gain firsthand insights into our impactful work. The visit allowed them to experience the tangible outcomes of our commitment to sustainable forestry practices.

Our ongoing collaboration aims to create a positive impact on the environment, promote responsible forestry management, and contribute to the overall well-being of our communities. We appreciate the continuous support of our partners and look forward to further strengthening our shared commitment to sustainable forestry.

SUSTAINABLE BUSINESS MODEL (SBM) PROJECT: UTILIZING CFRS FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND CLIMATE PROTECTION

The Uganda Timber Growers Association (UTGA) is implementing a project in Jubiya Central Forest Reserve (CFR) focused on developing sustainable business models for reforestation and management of degraded Central Forest Reserves (CFRs) in a way that benefits the communities surrounding the reserve. This project aims to balance economic development, climate protection, and the needs of local communities.



THE PROBLEM

Uganda faces a critical challenge - deforestation. Its once vast forests have dwindled, impacting livelihoods and threatening the environment. Central Forest Reserves (CFRs), managed by the National Forest Authority (NFA), hold immense potential for sustainable forest management and reforestation. However, the government lacks the finances to protect and manage all the CFRs

THE SOLUTION:

This project proposes a game-changer - developing sustainable business models for CFRs that balance economic development, environmental protection, and community needs. The project aims to create a transferable blueprint for CFR management by combining data-driven modeling with local knowledge and participation.

KEY FEATURES:

FOCUS ON INDIGENOUS TREE SPECIES:

Use of native timber species that existed or still exist in the CFR for restoration of degraded land, improve the functioning of the forest ecosystem, and boost carbon capture.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT:

Local communities will be actively engaged in the planning and implementation process, ensuring their needs and concerns are addressed and creating opportunities for income generation.

DATA-DRIVEN BUSINESS MODELS:

Cost-benefit analyses and comprehensive business plans will guide CFR management, ensuring financial viability and attracting potential investors.

CLIMATE-SMART PRACTICES:

Sustainable forest management techniques like agroforestry will minimize soil erosion and improve water resources, while afforestation combats climate change by absorbing CO2.

TRANSFERABLE MODEL:

The project's findings will be documented in a comprehensive report and a master template for data-based modelling, enabling replication in other CFRs across Uganda.

BENEFITS:

ECONOMIC GROWTH:

Sustainable CFR management creates jobs in forestry, processing, and related sectors, boosting local economies.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION:

Reforestation and responsible forest practices enhance biodiversity, combat climate change, and protect vital ecosystems.

COMMUNITY WELL-BEING:

Local communities benefit from income generation opportunities, improved environmental conditions, and increased participation in decision-making.

NATIONAL IMPACT:

The project contributes to Uganda's forest restoration goals, climate change mitigation, and sustainable development.

THE FUTURE:

This project paves the way for a brighter future for Uganda's forests. By embracing sustainable CFR management, we can ensure economic prosperity, environmental protection, and thriving communities for generations.

Join the movement. Support sustainable forestry practices in Uganda and contribute to a greener, healthier future for all.

TREE PLANTING PAVES THE WAY FOR SMART CITIES

In Uganda, a quiet revolution is underway, reshaping the landscape of its urban centers in a bid to build smarter, more sustainable cities. At the heart of this transformation lies a simple yet powerful idea: planting trees. In a country where rapid urbanization often comes at the cost of environmental degradation, the push for green spaces within city limits is not just a matter of aesthetics but a fundamental reimagining of urban life.

Government initiatives are leading the charge. From the ambitious "Running out of Trees" campaign, aiming to plant a staggering 40 million trees nationwide, to legislative frameworks like the National Physical Planning Standards and Guidelines, and the Kampala Green Infrastructure Ordinance, policymakers are setting the stage for a greener future.

But it's not just about planting trees; it's about ensuring they thrive. Technological innovations are being leveraged to monitor and maintain the health of urban forests. In cities like Kampala, Geographic Information System (GIS) tools are used for tree health assessments, complemented by expert evaluations from foresters.

Yet, the real success of these initiatives lies in the engagement of local communities. Through increased media coverage and international recognition, citizens are becoming active participants in the greening of their cities. Collaborations with NGOs, the private sector, and international partners further amplify these efforts, turning tree planting into a shared endeavor.

Challenges remain, of course. Poor physical planning, financial constraints, and a lack of technical expertise are hurdles that must be overcome. But with concerted efforts and innovative solutions, such obstacles can be surmounted.

In measuring success, Uganda looks not just to numbers but to impact. Key performance indicators such as tree density, canopy cover, species diversity, and community involvement serve as barometers of progress, guiding future interventions.

Drawing lessons from successful smart city projects around the globe, Uganda is charting its own path to sustainability. By aligning tree-planting efforts with sustainable development goals, the country aims to create cities that are not just smart but also green, resilient, and inclusive.

As Uganda's urban landscape evolves, one thing is clear: the seeds of change have been planted, and the roots of a greener future are taking hold. In this journey towards smart cities, trees are not just symbols of growth; they are the very essence of progress.