



**We are cutting trees and using the money to buy air conditioning**

# CLIMATE CHANGE!

**I**n the first 2 months of 2025, the weather was so dry and hot, such that many people in the country found it hard to sleep at night. It also felt unpleasant and uncomfortable because of the high temperatures of the heat wave.

A month after, in March, Uganda experienced heavy rains and there was severe flooding caused by the torrential rains especially in Kampala, which sadly claimed human lives. The heavy rains that lashed various areas of the country resulted



in motor accidents, swept pedestrians away and caused significant property damage. Now that we are in the middle of the year, the country is facing increased temperatures once again, and there is a threat of wild fires.

The excesses in weather variations are a cognisant sign of climate change.

The world is facing a climate change crisis, yet many people are not yet aware! Those who have carried out research on the same have omitted the

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# Concerns over climate change impact

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cultural and social context. Scientists have analysed environmental issues in isolation when coming up with policies and solutions, and this has resulted in ambiguous, one-dimensional quick fixes to complicated issues.

There is need to consider culture, politics, economics, art and human behaviour when looking at environmental issues, so that we are able to broaden our minds, expand our understanding of the climate change crisis and come up with more effective solutions. It's important to be creative about the issues and solutions to climate change.

## Solutions

Everyone can help limit the effects of climate change. From the way we travel, to the fuel we use and the food we eat,



Signs of deforestation in Jubiya CFR

we can each make a difference. Greenhouse gas emissions per person vary greatly among countries. In the USA and Russia, per capita emissions are almost three times the world average of 6.6 tons of CO<sub>2</sub> equivalent, while in India and the African Union they are less than half the world average. Globally, the 10 per cent of the population with the highest incomes account for nearly half of all emissions. The United Nations has given ten actions to help tackle the climate change crisis.

### 1. Saving energy at home

Much of our electricity and heat is powered by coal, oil and gas. Use less energy by lowering your heating and cooling, switching to LED light bulbs and energy-efficient electric appliances, washing your laundry with cold water or hanging things to dry instead of using a dryer.

### 2. Walking, cycling or taking public transport

The world's roads are clogged with vehicles, most of them burning diesel or petrol. Walking or riding a bike instead of driving will reduce greenhouse gas emissions – and help your health and fitness. For longer distances, consider taking a train or bus. And carpool whenever possible.

### 3. Producing & eating more vegetables

Eating more vegetables, fruits, whole grains, legumes, nuts and seeds, and less meat and dairy, can significantly lower one's environmental impact. Producing plant-based foods generally results in fewer greenhouse gas emissions and requires less energy, land and water.

### 4. Taking less flights

**During the last dry season (January to February 2025), four (4) UTGA members reported that they had lost part of their plantations to forest fires.**

**1. Nkwanga Samuel lost a 10-year eucalyptus crop in Kalagala, Nakaseke. The cause was not well known.**

**2. Elongot Jembrace in Bukedea lost five hectares of eucalyptus and in his case, the cause was arson. The fire was started intentionally by neighbours, yet he hoped they would recover when it rained because they were mature trees, about ten years**

**3. Kaganda Steven lost a ten year crop of eucalyptus in Hoima. The fire crossed two plantations of pine before it got to his plantation.**

**4. Alfred Tumwebaze lost 50ha of a six year old pine crop. This was due to bush burning by neighbouring farmers who were preparing for the oncoming planting season for food crops.**

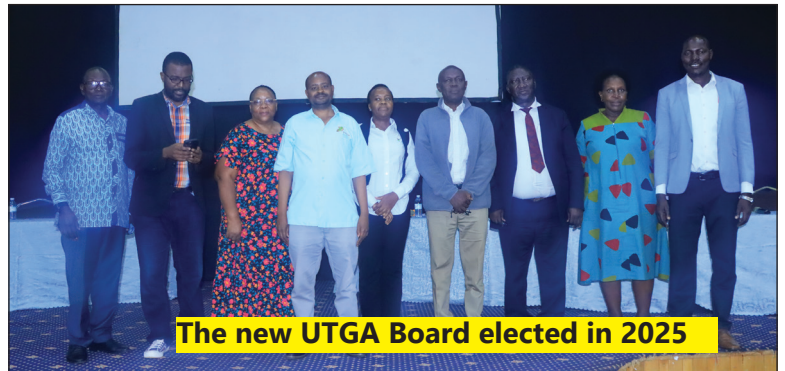
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The UTGA 2025 Annual General Assembly

# Members elect new UTGA board



The new UTGA Board elected in 2025

At this years Annual General Meeting (AGM), on the 6th March 2025, members elected a new board as enshrined in the UTGA constitution and governance policy. And then on the ....., a handover board meeting was held at which 5 outgone board members were thanked for selfless service and 5 new ones were welcomed. The new board had a one day training to prepare them for the new responsibilities

## Know your board

James Ssemwanga	Chairman
Phoebe Nantaba	Vice Chair
Harriet Kivumbi	Sec Gen
Barry Wojega	Treasurer
Alfred Okello	Member
Grace Murengyezi	Member
Dennis Obete	Member
Herbert Turamura	Member
Celestino Mindra	Member



Forest excursion by UTGA Board and NFA



UTGA Board members listen to forest communities around Jubiya



Aeroplanes burn large amounts of fossil fuels, producing significant greenhouse gas emissions. That makes taking fewer flights one of the fastest ways to reduce ones environmental impact. Its advisable to meet virtually, if able or to skip long distance trips altogether.

### **5. Throwing away less food**

Food thrown away is a waste of resources and energy used to grow, produce, package and transport it. When food rots, it produces methane, a powerful greenhouse gas. So its good to use what one has bought and to compost any leftovers.

### **6. Reduce, reuse, repair, recycle**

There is need to remodel our lifestyles and how we live. Electronics, clothes and other items we buy cause carbon emissions at each point in production, from extraction of raw materials to manufacturing and transporting goods to the market. To protect our climate, we are advised to buy fewer things, shop second-hand, repair what you can and recycle.

### **7. Use renewable energy**

If possible, we are asked to switch to renewable sources such as wind or solar. Or install solar panels on roofs to generate energy for our homes.

### **8. Electric motor cycles and vehicles**

These are here with us now and cheaper models continue to come on the market. Even if they still run on electricity produced from fossil fuels, electric cars help reduce air pollution and cause significantly fewer greenhouse gas emissions than petrol or diesel-powered vehicles.

### **9. Clean up your environment**

Humans, animals and plants all suffer from land and water contaminated by improperly discarded garbage, chemicals and other pollutants. We are advised to use what we need, and when we have to throw something out, to dispose of it properly. We have to educate others to do the same, and participate in local clean-ups of wells, rivers, roads and other public spaces. Every year, people throw out 2 billion tons of trash. About a third causes environment harms, from choking water supplies to poisoning soil.

### **10. Plant native species**

We are advised to augment our forest

## **OPINION**

# **The Boiling Frog: Climate Change & Our Future**

**R**ecord-breaking heat has gripped our region this month, a stark reminder of the escalating climate crisis. It feels like we're living the parable of the frog slowly boiling in water. Just as the frog fails to react to the gradual temperature rise until it's too late, we, too, seem trapped in a cycle of inaction. We've witnessed the environment deteriorate, and the relentless heat serves as a chilling warning of a potential tipping point. If we continue on this path, ignoring the increasingly urgent signs, we risk a devastating outcome.

The climate's trajectory shows little sign of improvement, demanding immediate and decisive action. As humans, we possess the unique ability to reason and adapt. This gift is crucial in navigating the challenges ahead. We must shift from passive observers to active participants in environmental preservation. Utilizing our intelligence, we can develop and implement sustainable solutions, mitigating the damage we've inflicted upon our planet.

Failure to act responsibly will inevitably lead to dire consequences, threatening not only our own existence but also the destruction of the world we've built. It's time to leverage our reasoning abilities, embrace sustainable practices, and work collectively to reverse the current trend. Only through conscious and concerted efforts can we safeguard our future and ensure a healthier planet for generations to come.

**Written by Moses Otim**

plantations with some native species. Use a plant identification app to help. The commercial species are important because they provide fuel wood, poles and timber and are an intervention to stem deforestation and forest degradation of the remaining natural forest. UTGA among others promotes this because of the biodiversity benefits and to allow the complex ecosystem balance of humans, plants, animals, birds and insects.

UTGA is working with unique land use GmbH to set up a modern nursery for native species. This will be one of the main focus areas for the next UTGA newsletter.

# The price of comfort

## Sacrificing Tomorrow for Today



**Flooding in the city made the roads impassable**

**T**he effects of climate change are increasingly apparent in our daily lives, with rising temperatures making our nights uncomfortable.

While many of us turn to air conditioning for quick relief, this solution comes with its own set of problems. Air conditioning units consume a significant amount of electricity, creating a higher demand that leads to considerable energy transmission losses. As we rely more on AC to escape the heat, we contribute to the very issue we're trying to avoid. This creates a troubling cycle: the more we use AC, the more energy is consumed, resulting in increased greenhouse gas emissions, which only exacerbates climate change.

While AC offers temporary relief, a more sustainable and long-term solution lies in restoring our natural cooling systems - our forests. Trees naturally cool the environment, improve air quality, and regulate our climate. However, natural forests are declining and are being replaced by crops. Communities are also cutting down trees for charcoal and firewood, compromising their resources. Uganda has seen significant forest loss due to agricultural expansion and timber harvesting. The increasing demand for charcoal further worsens natural forest cover depletion, particularly near urban centres.

Nonetheless, tree-planting initiatives by NGOs and private companies are working to restore degraded areas and promote sustainable forestry practices, offering hope against the deforestation trend. Governments and NGOs must move from passive awareness to proactive, strategic interventions to protect and restore our forests. The solutions are not merely 'within our reach,' they demand deliberate policy frameworks, considerable financial investment, and thorough enforcement and implementation.

The situation we face isn't just about choosing between our current comfort and future sustainability; it's really about how we govern responsibly and make sure we consider the needs of future generations. We're getting clear signals from the planet that we can't ignore what is happening anymore. It's only through deliberate actions that we can work together to create a resilient and livable environment for those who come after us.

### PAYMENT OF ANNUAL FEES

**T**he UTGA Secretariat is very grateful to all the members who have paid their Annual Subscription fees for the year and arrears. This is to kindly remind all those who have not yet paid to do so. Payments of arrears can be received in installments. Payments to meet the financial liabilities for the current year plus those who have arrears can be made through the following options:

#### 1. Office

A receipt is availed immediately.

#### 2. By Direct payment to the Bank

Account, a receipt is written after confirmation with the bank and scanned to the Payee.

#### 3. Mobile money (0781689256)

Charges for withdrawing must be included in the amount sent, a receipt is written and scanned and sent to the Payee.

#### 4. Collection of payment

A call/email may be made to the secretariat for Members in and around Kampala. UTGA Staff will pick the payment from agreed location and a receipt availed immediately.

Payment of the Annual fees is highly appreciated and allows for the efficient running of the office, facilitating and supporting UTGA activities.

Be informed that the Association currently provides the following services directly to its Members:-

- Forest Valuation, a paid for service at cost;
- Specific needs-training required and requested by Members;
- Technical forest visits to Members plantations and advice at site and UTGA office;
- Direct lobbying on aspects that touch on commercial forestry
- Supply of forest tools and equipment.
- Importation of improved, high quality seed

# Weather Update

## Implications & advisory

The Uganda National Meteorological Authority (UNMA) weather forecast for end of June 2025 rainfall forecast depicts moderately wet conditions to prevail over the entire country except parts of the cattle corridor which are expected to experience suppressed rainfall conditions during the forecast period. Moderately higher rainfall events are expected in Acholi and Mt. Elgon sub regions.

The mean daily temperatures (average of maximum and minimum) show that warmer conditions ranging from 24°C to 28°C, are expected to prevail over the northern part of the country, particularly in the parts of West Nile, and parts of Acholi subregions extending to areas around Lake Albert. The lowest temperature conditions are predicted in the Southern parts and highland areas of Rwenzori and Elgon ranging from 8°C to 20°C. Meanwhile, the remaining areas in the southern and northern sectors of the country are expected to experience mean temperatures ranging between 20°C to 24°C during the forecast period.

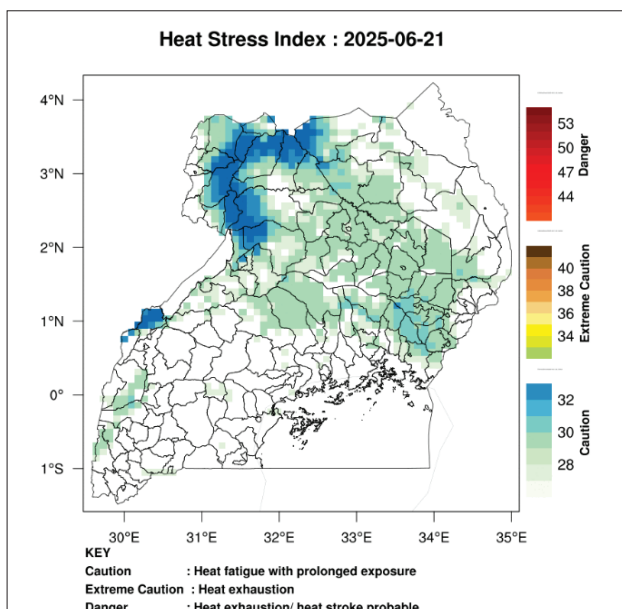
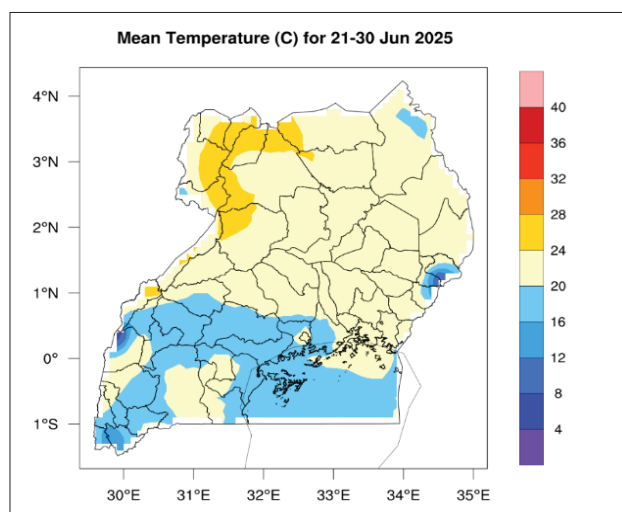
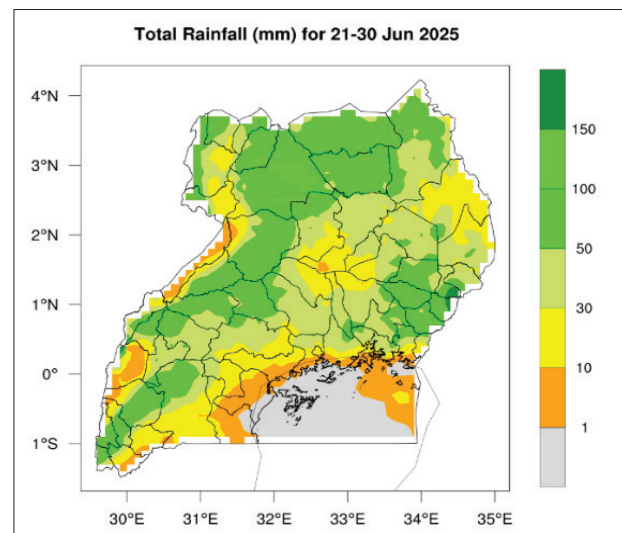
Overall, normal heat levels are expected over most parts of the country. However, some areas surrounding upper Nile are likely to experience isolated heat fatigue with prolonged exposure.

### Potential impacts expected within 3rd week of June 2025 rainfall forecast

The predicted moderate rainfall over most parts of the northern region and dry conditions in some parts of cattle corridor are likely to trigger potential hazards that include; landslides, floods, upsurge of malaria, foggy and hazy conditions.

#### Advisories:

1. The communities particularly in the Acholi and Mt. Elgon sub regions are advised to put in place preparedness measures to deal with floods or landslides.
2. Farmers are encouraged to practice supplementary irrigation for those areas with limited rainfall.
3. Communities are encouraged to use mosquito nets and report any emergence of diseases to authorities:
4. **Pruning of trees** should be undertaken as well as mulching which is critical for moisture conservation.



6. Motorists are advised to drive with caution whenever foggy and hazy conditions prevail.
7. Communities are encouraged to carry out proper post-harvest handling to avoid losses
8. Monitor and report any emergence of crop pests, animal parasites, and plant diseases to technical staff at the sub-county and district.





**Patience Naamara of FVW makes a case for restoration at a meeting**

# UTGA & Fair Ventures complete a forest restoration pilot

The Uganda Timber Growers Association (UTGA), in partnership with Fairventures Worldwide, implemented a pilot to restore and rejuvenate Jubiya Forest. As part of this effort, 7,000 trees were being planted across 11.9 hectares, with a variety of indigenous species such as *Prunus Africana*, *Markamia*, *Muvule*, *Croton*, *Mahogany*, *Khaya*, *Milicia*, *Antiaris*, and *Albizia*. This initiative is crucial for maintaining biodiversity and ensuring the forest's sustainability.

Despite the importance of this project, several challenges were encountered. The transportation of seedlings was a major hurdle, as the planting points were about 400 meters from the storage areas. This distance, although seemingly short, was difficult for the delicate and young seedlings, many of which were damaged during the process.

Labor shortages also hindered progress. Most local workers were engaged in more lucrative activities like charcoal production and fishing, making it hard to mobilize enough hands for planting.

Many were reluctant to participate due to unfamiliarity or fear about the work involved.

Additionally, the seedlings arrived later than scheduled, delaying the planting process and further straining the limited workforce. The young and weak condition of the seedlings increased the risk of damage during transport, necessitating careful handling and additional resources to ensure their survival.

To address these challenges, UTGA and Fairventures Worldwide adopted a multi-faceted approach. Recognizing the need for more manpower,



**Johannes Schwegler the vision bearer for FVW**

they mobilized additional community members and provided incremental incentives to encourage participation. This strategic move not only helped in gradually transporting the seedlings but also increased local engagement and ownership of the reforestation project. The Steering Committee played a pivotal role in outreach efforts, particularly targeting the youth. By engaging with the community and highlighting the importance of the project, the Committee successfully motivated many young people to join the planting activities. This grassroots involvement was crucial in overcoming the labor shortage and fostering

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## FAO & UTGA kick off awareness on forest certification for tree growers

As the forestry industry in Uganda grows, many actors are appreciating the need for forest certification. In the recent years the industry has attracted many actors interested in working with tree growers in the different forest value chains, however most of them demand assurance of the sustainability of the forests and their products which can mainly be proven through forest certification. UTGA identified this gap and ventured into forest certification through establishing a group certification scheme which got certified in 2019. The scheme provides a unique opportunity for small and medium scale tree growers to access forest certification quite easily. The scheme underwent a successful recertification in 2024 and a successful S1 audit early this year.

With technical and logistical support from FAO Uganda, UTGA has embarked on a journey to expand the group certification scheme to attract more tree growers and expand in certified area with a current

target of an additional 5,000 hectares before the end of 2025.

In May 2025 the expansion activities kicked off with a two-day certification awareness workshop that attracted 60 tree growers and key actors in the forestry sector.

Annah Agasha, a forest certification expert, introduced the participants to the certification system and process highlighting the relationship between certifying bodies, certificate holders and auditors.

Peter Mulondo the program officer and the group's resource manager justified the need to get certified with particular emphasis on the benefits of forest certification for small and medium scale tree growers, how to get certified and the entire process.

Follow-up activities will include field based practical trainings, gap audits, internal entry audits and annual surveillance audits.

## UTGA & Fair Ventures restoration pilot

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a sense of collective responsibility towards environmental conservation.

Gap-filling is a critical component of the reforestation process, aimed at replacing seedlings that failed to survive. This practice ensures accountability and accuracy in reporting the number of trees planted, especially with the integration of the new App Treeo, which facilitates precise monitoring and data collection. Gap-filling helps to optimize land use, preventing wastage and promoting a uniform and organized forest structure. This approach not only enhances the forest's aesthetic appeal but also improves its ecological balance, contributing to the overall health of the ecosystem.

The gap-filling initiative in Jubiya Forest is a significant step towards sustainable forest management and environmental conservation. Through the collaborative efforts of UTGA and Fairventures Worldwide, along with active community participation, the project is steadily overcoming its challenges and achieving its reforestation goals.

As these young trees take root and grow, they will replenish the forest and provide long-term benefits for biodiversity, climate regulation, and community/local livelihoods. This project stands as a testament to the power of collaboration and the enduring impact of dedicated environmental stewardship.