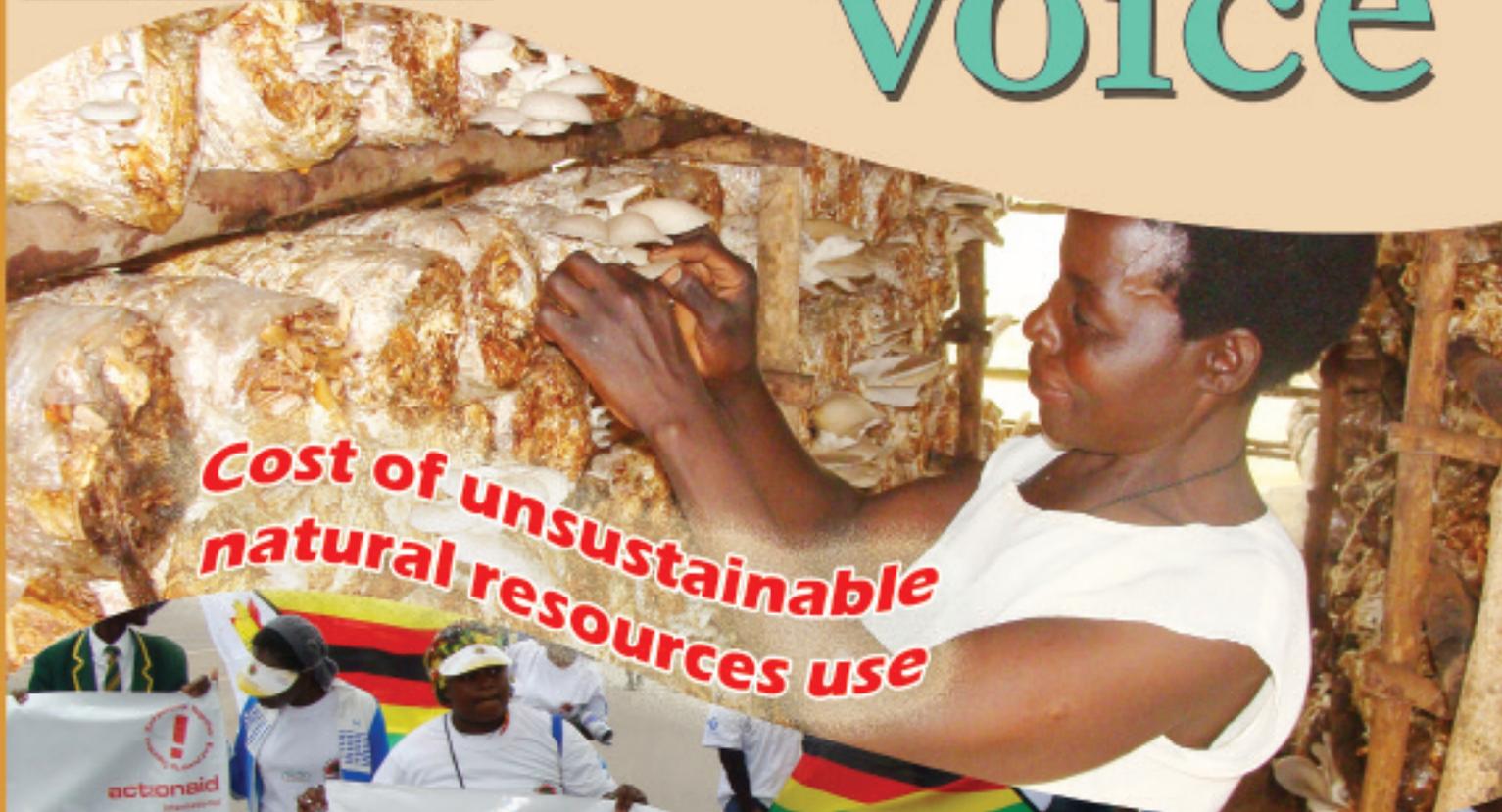


# Nature's voice

Volume 7 Issue 2 December, 2011



**Cost of unsustainable  
natural resources use**



**COP17 talks: A disastrous  
outcome for poor people**



**Alarm on raging bush fires**

# About CEPA

## Background

Centre for Environmental Policy and Advocacy (CEPA) was incorporated in 2002 as a think tank civil society institution seeking to contribute to policy advocacy for sustainable development. CEPA concentrates on environmental policy research and advocacy as a specific platform for influencing sustainable development. Over the years, the organization has experienced consistent growth and has become one of Malawi's top environmental policy research and advocacy institutions and also a key contributor to many national, regional and international policy processes, related to biodiversity, climate change, land environment and natural resources management. CEPA is distinguished by bridge-building between: a) policy and practice; b) policy makers and local communities who are affected by poor policy implementation; and c) local actions and national and global policy debates.

## Vision, Goal and Strategic Objectives

The vision of CEPA is *a just and equitable society that promotes sustainable development*, while its goal is *to carry out policy analysis and advocacy for sustainable environment and natural resources management*. Between 2011 and 2015, CEPA is focusing on addressing i) governance structure and management system; ii) financial sustainability; iii) biodiversity; iv) climate change; v) land and sustainable livelihoods; and vi) environmental advocacy and justice.

To achieve its goal, CEPA adheres to its five organizational values of: i) promoting transparency and accountability; ii) mainstreaming cross cutting issues; iii) promoting gender equity and equitable access to natural resources; iv) integrity; and v) cultivating and promoting partnerships.

## Scope of Work

CEPA's work emphasizes on policy research, analysis, lobbying and advocacy. These activities have improved the profile of the organization as evidenced by stakeholder responses and many requests for information, advice, participation and responsibilities the organization has received and continues to receive. Over the past five years, with support from its valuable partners, such as Development Fund of Norway, Christian Aid, World Resources Institute, Action Aid International, European Union/Government of Malawi and Community Technology Development Trust, CEPA has made a difference in a range of contexts. These have included: promoting legislative environmental representation; contributing to biodiversity and biotechnology policy making; facilitating access to environmental information, justice and public participation; undertaking policy research in land and agrarian reform; conducting capacity building and environmental advocacy; facilitating development of legislation in access and benefit sharing and farmers' rights as it relates to conservation and sustainable utilization of crop and animal biodiversity; promoting local policy dialogue in climate change adaptation and agricultural biodiversity; coordinating voices of civil society on climate change policy issues; and participating in international policy debate on

climate change and biodiversity. CEPA has over the years also been engaged by various Government of Malawi agencies and non governmental organisations in policy and legislative reform work in the environment and natural resources management sector. This has included: evaluating forest rules, by-laws and institutional framework related to community based forest management in Malawi; assessing law compliance, governance and transparency in the forestry sector in Malawi; assessing policy implementation and compliance to legislation for environment and natural resources management in Malawi; reviewing the Environmental Management Act; drafting the revised Environmental Management Bill; reviewing the National Environmental Policy and the National Science and Technology Policy; and harmonization of Malawi's environment and natural resource management policies

## Facilitation and Participation in National Processes

CEPA has undertaken responsibility to become Secretariat for an important national policy process. It is the Secretariat for the Civil Society Network on Climate Change (CISONECC). This responsibility is important for mobilization and consolidation of civil society voices on climate change; formation of strategic partnerships for implementation of community based activities; and facilitation of grassroots advocacy. Between July 2008 and December 2010, CEPA was the technical Secretariat for the development of the National Agricultural Biodiversity Policy for Malawi. This provided an opportunity for CEPA to facilitate civil society participation in the policy development process.

## Contribution to Regional Processes

At regional level CEPA is part of the Southern Africa Biodiversity Policy Initiative, a sub-regional network of civil society organizations working in climate change, biodiversity, biosafety, trade, development and environmental issues in Southern Africa. CEPA is also a founding member of the Southern African Land and Agrarian Reform Network. In addition, CEPA is an alternate National Contact Institution for the Regional Agricultural and Environment Initiative Network – Africa in Malawi. CEPA is also a member of the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources.

**Publications** - CEPA produces Nature's Voice, a newsletter which contains policy related issues in climate change, biodiversity, environment and natural resources management. CEPA also publishes a wide range of reports, policy briefs and other publications on the work it implements and electronic copies of these are available on its website ([www.cepa.org.mw](http://www.cepa.org.mw)).

**Resources** - CEPA maintains a resource centre of journals, books, policies, newsletters and related materials which can be accessed by the public at CEPA premises at any time.

## Editorial

# How Old Are You?

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This is the first edition of Nature's Voice in 2012 and New Year greetings are in order.

A new year also means we are a year older, all of us and we have some questions for you. How old are you? Well, you don't have to tell us. Think about this second question: How many trees or tree products did you use last year?

We know you used tree products last year. We are sure, as you read this magazine, you are sitting on something partly made from trees. We suspect you are going to sleep on a bed made of wood. Now the last question: How many trees did you plant last year?

Whatever your answer, let us agree on one thing: We should plant trees this rainy season. We have the next four months and we can do something about covering the bare hills and valleys of our home, Malawi.

In the just ended year, there was the Cop17 meeting in Durban, South Africa. We are all affected by climate change and we need to mitigate the effects which range from droughts to floods and everything in-between.

The magazine you are holding in your hands brings you some knowledge on how to deal with climate change and make life bearable for yourself and millions others.

Finally, if there is anything to think about in this new year, think about planting trees.

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**Articles in this newsletter are not necessarily the views of CEPA, but of the authors.**



The people speak: Multitudes marched in Durban to demand climate justice from CoP17

# Durban Climate Talks a Disastrous Outcome For Poor People

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In the early hours of Sunday morning, December 11, 2011 governments meeting at the UN climate change conference in Durban, South Africa, set a path towards a new legally binding agreement for all countries to cut emissions.

But the deal did little to meet the needs of poor people already fighting climate change, and risked blurring important distinctions between the responsibilities of developed and developing countries.

For Agnes Raphael, a rural woman farmer from Neno who was in Durban waiting for the outcome of the discussions, the Durban meeting failed to save farmers in rural areas from the harsh climatic hazards.

Agnes said predictions are clearer that frequent droughts and dry spells continue to wreck havoc if global warming a catalyst for climate change is not addressed.

"Changing rainfall patterns will deplete harvests. Increasingly scarce resources will exacerbate social tensions and may spark conflict," she said. "Millions of people will be at risk of hunger and under nutrition."

Grace Tepula who is small scale Zambian

dairy farmer and a mother of five and who has five grandchildren was optimistic that the Durban talks would bring solace to her family. She also grows maize and groundnuts.

"Maize is the staple food of Zambia you know," she said as we stood outside the International Conference Centre in Durban, South Africa while the discussions were ongoing.

Climate change has affected the community she finds herself in. "Climate change has reduced our milk from 50 to 60 litres a day to 30 to 40 litres a day," she said adding that the hot weather makes it difficult to grow fodder for the animals which are zero grazed for purposes of reducing diseases.

She was hoping that the Durban conference would provide a respite to farmers like her if the Green Climate Fund was operational.

## Green Climate Fund

However the \$100 billion a year fund is just a concept on paper for now. "The only notable achievement here in Durban is on the Green Climate Fund. Governments have agreed that the Fund will soon have staff and an office," said Mohamed Adow, Christian Aid's expert on the UN negotiations held this year in Durban, South Africa soon after the meeting was closed.

"But the Fund remains empty and so countries must keep working to identify new sources of the \$100 billion a year which they have already agreed must be available to poor countries by 2020, to help them cope with climate change and pursue sustainable

# CoP17 Talks Failed to Bring Solace to Poor Farmers

development.

"At present, the Fund remains empty and so can do little to help developing countries cope with the crippling costs of climate change and to develop in cleaner ways which won't greatly exacerbate the crisis," he added.

Adow pointed out that the Durban outcome is a compromise which saves the climate talks but endangers people living in poverty.

"It is a disastrous, profoundly distressing outcome - the worst I have ever seen from such a process. At a time when scientists are queuing up to warn about terrifying consequences if emissions keep rising, what we have here in Durban is a betrayal of people across the world.

"By giving themselves until 2015 to agree a new deal which only takes effect in 2020, governments are delaying desperately needed action and condemning us all to dangerous warming of much more than 2 degrees.

"Action against climate change in 2020 will come a decade too late for poor people on the frontline - they urgently need it now. Their lives are already ravaged by floods, droughts, failed rains, deadly storms, hunger and disease and we know that these disasters will get worse and more frequent as climate change bites.

"This Durban failure also perpetuates the hideous injustice of climate change, in which the poor people who bear least blame for it are the worst affected," stated Adow.



**CoP17 President, Maite Nkoana-Mashabane who presided over the contentious climate negotiations**

### KYOTO

"This deal rips out the most important part of the Kyoto Protocol – its requirement for emissions cuts to be informed by science, rather than Governments' political convenience. It is this which makes it such a powerful law to prevent climate disaster.

"But in Durban, Governments have turned their backs on science, at a time when we need more than ever to heed its warning - act now or pay a terrible price later.

"They are also turning away from the justice which the Convention itself enshrines, with its recognition of rich countries' special responsibility for climate change and their greater financial ability to fight it.

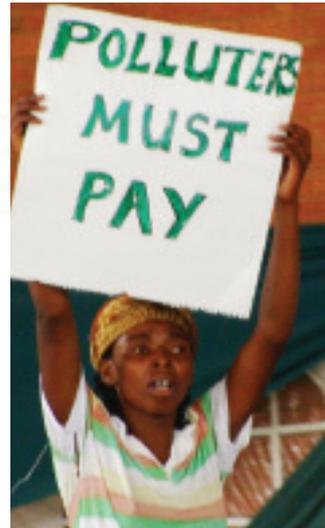
"What is left is Kyoto in name only. Governments are keeping it on life-support for the sake of the carbon markets but once they have a new deal they will kill it completely," he further explained.

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**Demonstrators plead for the rights of those that are most vulnerable to climate change from inside the CoP17 venue**

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# Cost Of Unsustainable Natural Resources Use

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Details have emerged on how Malawi is paying a high price for unsustainable natural resource use. This cost is equivalent to giving up 5.3 % of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) each year, says a 2011 Environment Report.

GDP refers to the market value of all final goods and services produced in a country in a given period. GDP per capita is often considered an indicator of a country's standard of living.

"Malawi would be richer by K26.6 billion (US\$191 million) each year in 2007 prices if soil, forest, fishery and wildlife resources were used sustainably. This is more than the total funding allocated to the education sector and to the health sector in the 2009 Budget.

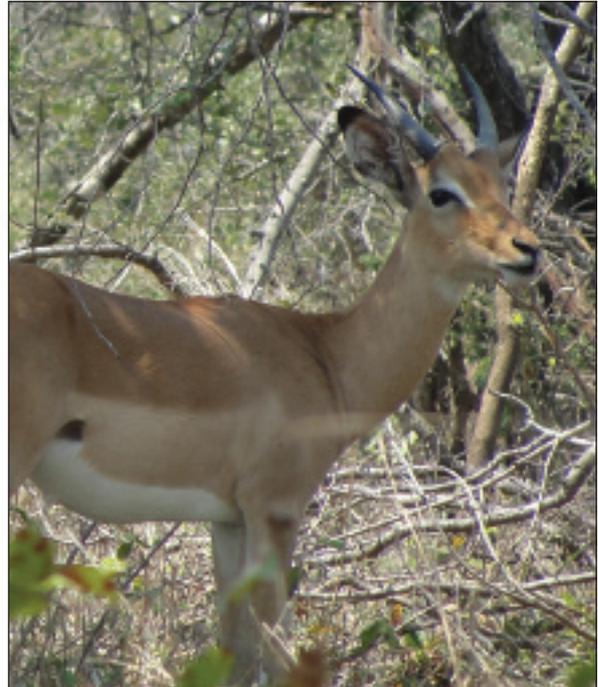
The Economic Valuation of Sustainable Use of Natural Resources in Malawi 2011 report adds that with a 10 % discount rate, the discounted value of unsustainable natural resource use over a decade amounts to more than K84 billion (US\$600 million) in 2007 prices – about K28,000 (US\$200) for each household in Malawi.

This economic study's primary aim is to provide evidence on the costs and benefits of sustainable and unsustainable natural resource management in Malawi. Focus is on four groups of natural resources: forestry resources, fisheries resources, wildlife resources and soil.

According to the report, the loss results from the loss of agricultural productivity as a result of soil degradation, deforestation in catchments around the main urban centres to supply firewood and charcoal, unsustainable fishing and reduced economic activity caused by indoor air pollution.

Although the economic contribution made by renewable natural resources to Malawi is very significant, the report says, it is not adequately captured in official statistics. "Estimates of GDP do not record the contribution of soils or wildlife. Even where natural resource use is recorded in GDP, the values tend to be understated," says the report.

For example official GDP figures



## Forestry resources are crucial for enhancement of eco-tourism

in Malawi significantly understate the true contribution of forestry by not capturing the extensive use of wood for fuel.

Forestry resources are crucial in supporting livelihoods, infrastructure development and energy in Malawi. Apart from providing a diverse range of wood and non-wood products, forests are important for soil and water conservation for agriculture and household use, for provision of animal habitat, for beautification of the countryside, for enhancement of ecotourism, and for regulation of climate change.

However, little of this contribution is captured in GDP estimates and the officially reported contribution of the sub-sector to national output, at 1.8 %, is certainly an understatement, observes the report.

Full-time employment in forestry is around 29,000 with a further 130,000 full-time jobs involved in wood fuel supply. Royalties levied on forest products by Government amount to some MK 163 million (US\$1.17 million) annually, well below resource rents, because the rates do not reflect current market prices and collection of royalties and fees is limited, in part, by inadequate funding.

However, records suggest that the sub-sector currently only receives about one-fifth of its



**honey is one of the potential non-wood forestry product sources of income**



**Malawi would be richer by K26.6 billion each year in 2007 prices if soil, forest, fishery and wildlife resources were used sustainably.**

desired operating budget per annum, estimated at about MK250 million (US\$1.79 million), says the report.

Fisheries resources, the report said, contribute to the livelihoods of more than 1.6 million Malawians. Almost 60,000 individuals are employed as fishermen, and about 450,000 are engaged in fisheries-related economic activities.

"However, these and many other official figures on fisheries have not been revised for some time, reflecting the data gaps that exist in the sub-sector, as with all natural resources.

"The landed value of fish was K9.4 billion (US\$67.1 million) in 2008, a significant contribution to the economy's total output. Traditionally, fish has been the most affordable source of animal protein, but the real price of fish (after accounting for inflation) has increased by about 3.5 times over the period 1987 – 2007.

"Over the same period, the population of Malawi grew by about 61 % from 7.9 million to about 12.7 million, while total fish supply has fallen by 20 %. As a consequence, per capita fish consumption has fallen from 9.4 kg to 5.4 kg between 1990 and 2008. Population growth and overfishing (which are potentially closely related) are, arguably some of the key causes of declining per capita fish



**About 450,000 locals are engaged in fisheries-related economic activities.**

consumption.

Finally, although over 80% of Malawians depend on agriculture as their main economic activity and a major source of livelihood, the country's topsoil continues to be degraded at an accelerating speed.

The report was commissioned by Ministry of Natural Resources, Energy and Environment.



# Forests and Human life: The case of Ndirande Mountain

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In 1992, Ndirande Mountain in Blantyre City was dense woodland of indigenous trees, a habitat of various manner of biodiversity in the flourishing undergrowths and along its streams and water fountains. Later that year, Malawians voted for multiparty government in a referendum that buried a decades-old era that denied Malawians many individual freedoms.

But that was also the beginning of recklessness and destruction. The interpretations of the new found freedom were too wild and short of reason and foresight. Without anybody's sanction, Ndirande residents invaded the forest soon after the referendum and in less than 6 months, the once thick forest was stripped bare. With it went much of plant and animal life.

From that time, the country has struggled to

restore what used to be immense treasure. The willy-nilly clearing of the forest then was meeting immediate short term demands: money and firewood. But on account of how human survival heavily depends on trees, the cutting down of the trees inflicted a lasting damage on the very survival that people sought to nourish.

A case in point, danger does not lurk too far there. Within Ndirande Township, the most populous in the city, is Malawi's largest industrial area, namely, the Makata Industrial Site. This is where the people's favourite Carlsberg beer and soft drinks are made. This is where some fuel giants of the country have their reserve tanks. In Makata Industrial Site is the largest clothing factory in Malawi. It is also home to largest cement company factory in Malawi.

Sacks and packaging materials of various forms that serve Malawi are made there. In brief, there is a vibrant industrial and economic activity there.

But beneficial as it is, industrial activity has been known to be a source of air pollution

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Stripped bare: Ndirande mountain was once a dense woodland of indigenous trees

# CoP17: What was Agreed on after 2 Weeks of Intense Negotiations

## Extension of the Kyoto Protocol

CoP17 Agreed to extend the Kyoto Protocol for another 5 years. The second commitment period will run from January 1, 2013 to the end of 2017. However, pulling out of large polluters on the scene such as Canada to join Australia, Japan and the US which is the World largest Historical Polluter raises the question on the actual effectiveness of the extension of the Kyoto.

## A New Global Agreement on Climate Change

Delegates agreed to start negotiations for a new legally binding treaty which is inclusive of all countries including the US, to be decided by 2015 and come into force by 2020. However, the exact nature of this legal instrument has not yet been decided. This means CoP17 has failed to deliver an

agreement to take meaningful global action to curb climate change by having CO2 emission to peak by 2015 in order to prevent a global average temperature increase of more 2oC above which according to IPCC the impacts of climate change may become uncontrollable. Indeed, developed countries might have managed to evade their responsibility by another decade.

The gap between the second commitment period of the Kyoto and the new agreement to come into force in 2010 further poses a danger of having 'no required action' by countries to reduce emissions, thereby leaving the climate to their mercy.

## Finance

CoP17 made headway in agreeing on the design of the Green Climate Fund to channel \$100 billion dollars per year against the \$600 billion dollars per year as estimated by the IPCC by 2020 to developed countries but established

little on where the funds would come from. It is the desire of developing countries for the funds to be sourced from public funds of the developed countries as opposed to the private sector and to be new and additional to the Official Development Assistance which rich countries already provide to poor countries as development aid. What developing countries like Malawi need is for the fund to start operating in order to finance programmes such those under the National Adaptation Programme of Action (NAPA). What CoP17 has achieved on the Green Climate Fund has been termed by others 'an empty shell that is yet to be filled' from which developed countries can then tap resources.

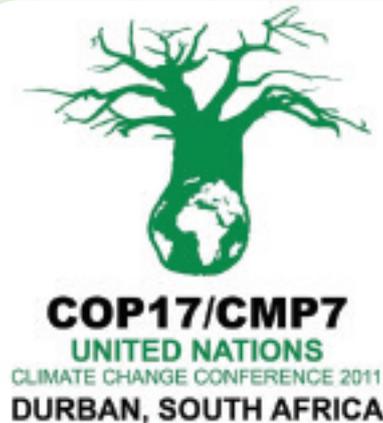
## Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Degradation (REDD)

CoP17 agreed to consider funding from market based mechanisms as option to finance the programme on reducing carbon emissions from deforestation and forest degradation paving the way for billions of dollars of private investment.

Civil society world wide has lobbied against such action for fear of marginalisation of the rights of the vulnerable from poor countries such as access to land, colonisation of the air space and their ability to produce food which are all associated with this market based mechanism. However, it may still take years until REDD can take off on a big scale

## Transparency

The talks also made adjustments to the operation of carbon markets and clean development mechanism and alignment to international law in an attempt to avoid fragmentation of the carbon markets.



## The 2011/2012 budget analysis on climate change and environmental management

# Key findings and recommendations

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Climate change presents a big challenge to Malawi's development prospects. Its impact includes changes in weather patterns leading to occurrence of extreme weather conditions such as drought, floods, and abnormal temperatures among others. As an agro-based economy, Malawi is highly vulnerable to these changes. In recognition of severity of the impact of climate change on peoples' lives, the Malawi Government made a decision in 2009 to include climate change and environment management as one of the priorities within priorities.

The inclusion of climate change and environmental management as a top priority underlines Government's commitment to implement interventions aimed at mitigating the effects of climate as well as building the capacity of the country to adapt to climate change. The 2011/12 budget analysis was commissioned to assess the extent to which

Government is implementing its commitment to addressing climate change challenges including analysing other recent fiscal years. The analysis was conducted by Centre for Environmental Policy and Advocacy (CEPA) and Malawi Economic Justice Network (MEJN) with funding from Christian Aid (CA). The results and recommendations were presented to stakeholders including legislature, government (Parliamentary Committee on Agriculture and Natural Resources and Parliamentary Committee on Budget and Finance) as part of advocating for an increase in funding towards climate change.

### Key findings

Among others, the following findings were documented:

- Climate change related sectors as identified in the National Adaptation Programme of Action (NAPA) were allocated a total of MK90.3 billion in 2011/12 proposed budget up from MK86.3 billion in 2010/11. However, the proportion of the budget for NAPA related sectors to the overall national budget has been going down over the years. This signifies reduced attention to the sector. Of MK 90.3 billion allocated to NAPA sectors, MK 10.8 Billion is allocated to district councils of which MK 10 Billion goes to District Health Offices. This leaves only MK 800 million for the other district sectors.

In addition, the analysis established that there is weak alignment of sectoral budget



Stakeholders discuss the 2011/2012 National Budget allocation to climate change and environment and natural resources management



### Climate change presents a serious challenge to Malawi's development prospects

actions to the NAPA sectors under their respective sectors. Consistency is also lacking in budget actions and requisite targets in most of the key sectors.

- Despite the importance of the energy sector to climate change, only MK19.83 million was allocated in the 2011/12 budget for NAPA related budget actions in this sector. The NAPA relevant actions in the energy sector include energy diversification, reduction of wood fuel use and Shire Valley reforestation.

- The Department of Disaster Management Affairs (DoDMA) is only allocated MK 31.3 million for 'other recurrent transactions' to cater for awareness creation on disaster management. Funds for disaster response are supposed to come from Ministry of Finance under a vote named 'Unforeseen Expenditure'. The analysis has established that this vote also covers other expenditures of unforeseen nature other than disasters. It has also been established that there are delays in realising funds from this vote which results in delays in responding to disasters.

- Forest is another key sector in addressing climate change challenges. In the 2011/12 budget vote, forestry has been allocated MK 1.0 billion down from MK 1.2 Billion in 2010/11 for recurrent expenditure. The development budget is pegged at MK776.5 million which will be financed by donors. The decline is of concern considering the rate at which forest depletion is taking place in Malawi.

- The Green Belt initiative is a key climate change adaptation strategy but in the 2011/12 budget, the initiative has been allocated MK 200 million under development budget down from MK 6.5 Billion in 2010/11 budget which was not even accounted for.

### Recommendations

The study recommended the following:

- Government should allocate sufficient resources for implementation of climate change activities
- More resources need to be allocated to the local Councils in line with the Decentralization Policy. Special focus needs to be made on those Councils most vulnerable to disasters such as Nsanje, Chikhwawa, Salima and Karonga districts.
- The energy sector requires urgent attention in terms of adequate financing for energy diversification and reduction of wood fuel use.
- There is urgent need for Malawi Government to consider a separate vote for the Department of Disaster Management Affairs instead of combining it with the vote for the Office of the President and Cabinet. It is, therefore, suggested that all resources for disaster response should be allocated under the vote for the Department of Disaster Management Affairs instead of aggregating it under the 'Un-foreseen vote'. This will allow speedy response to disasters in times of need.
- Government should urgently allocate resources for construction of dykes to protect communities that experience flooding regularly.
- Urgent need for Government to operationalize the Forestry Management Fund to enhance the capacity of the Department of Forestry to deliver on community level forestry management programs and step-up its targets on tree planting to replace the reserves currently being harvested.
- It is also recommended that the newly introduced Re-afforestation levy on tobacco buyers is really channelled to tree planting and management activities.



# Impact of Biofuels on Food Crops and Livestock Production

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## Background to the Promotion of Biofuels

Current indications show rapid decrease in resources of fossil energy which the world over heavily depends on. Consequently we have seen the increase in prices. Furthermore, these fossil fuels are associated with climate change phenomenon which has dramatic consequences on humans and other living organisms. These changes have led to the development of renewable energy sources, sustainable development and eco-friendly concepts.

It is now universally accepted that bio-based energy will be very important in the world's sustainable supply of clean energy. This is even more compelling in cognizant of the fact that dependency on imported oil for countries with no crude oil sources results in insecure fuel sources, depletion of foreign reserves and lack of job creation. Malawi is not new to exploiting bio-energy sources. It started producing

ethanol from sugar cane as early as 1970s following the fuel crisis. Malawi naturally prioritized ethanol production based on sugar cane since there was already a strong sugar industry. Efforts are now underway looking at provenance candidates for bio-diesel production and *Jatropha curcas* is being touted as a major biodiesel plant in Malawi.

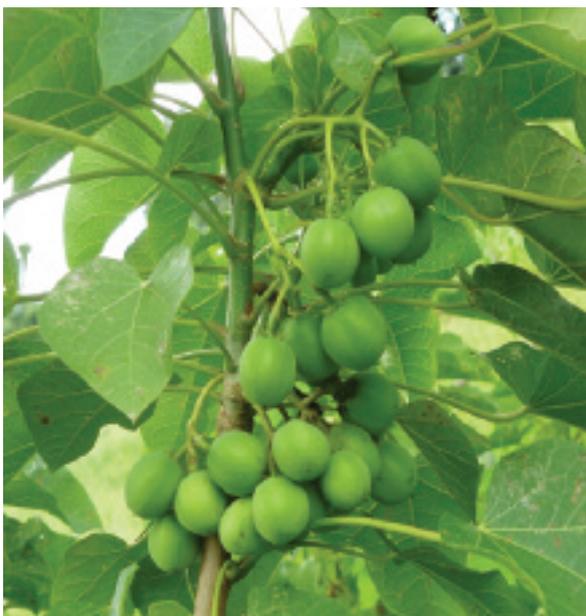
## Benefits of Growing Biofuels in the Malawi

Biofuels offer opportunities for farmers, producers, processors and investors involved in this industry for growth. Biofuels are seen as one of the biggest economic opportunities for Africa especially for job creation, income generation and for domestic energy supplying rural areas. For many African countries such as Malawi, biofuels serve as excellent alternatives to firewood which together with charcoal provides 93% of energy needs for domestic use, but also is the principal contributor to massive deforestation which has resulted in increased soil erosion, siltation of rivers, loss of biodiversity and acute shortage of fuel wood energy. Beyond the crop exits the potential and opportunities for rural communities to tap into international carbon markets, improve livelihoods and reclaim degraded land.

## Myths about Bio-diesel Production through *Jatropha*

The agricultural sector in Malawi is dominated by the smallholder subsector which contributes 75 percent of food crop production in the country, therefore substitution effect of *Jatropha* production by smallholder farmers is of interest. Invasiveness, food crop substitution and effect of *Jatropha curcas* production on forage and livestock production are highlighted as some of the factors affecting the adoption of *Jatropha* as a bio-diesel plant. A recent preliminary study did not establish any evidence to that effect. *Jatropha* has been grown for a long time in Swaziland and Zimbabwe and no problems of invasion have been reported to date.

*Jatropha* does not affect or kill other crops. This plant is known to be intercropped with other crops without negatively affecting the yields of the counterpart crops (e.g. Intercrops of *Jatropha* and cabbages have been reported in Swaziland).



The *Jatropha* fruit which is touted as being the major bio-fuel plant in Malawi

No evidence was found supporting the fear of smallholder farmers substituting food crops for *Jatropha*. To achieve economies of size often evident in industrial processing, which will be required for this plant, a rather substantial quantity of *Jatropha* seed may be required (Economies of size is a term used to describe a situation in which the average cost of production per unit declines as the size of the operation increases).

To attain this, large tracts of land of *Jatropha curcas* need to be grown under high management conditions. With the current management requirements and yields of *Jatropha*, it is envisaged that smallholder farmers may not ably adopt the crop as a cash crop for which to substitute their land.

Even if the crop management skills were affordable by the smallholder farmers and the yields were improved to the level that could attract some of the risk preferring farmers to venture into the growing of the crop, experience with smallholder decision making processes has shown that they are rational in their decision making. Smallholder farmers would not

use land that is used for growing food crops for the cultivation of *Jatropha*.

Smallholder farmers that have less than half an acre of land are subsistence farmers that are not involved in cash crop cultivation and that most of them are too poor to purchase inputs required by cash crops. These are farmers that mostly grow food, sometimes with the assistance from government on fertilizer and seed inputs.

Smallholder farmers that have land large enough to allocate some cash crops besides their food crops, experience has shown that from the time these farmers were allowed to grow burley tobacco in addition to the dark-fired and sun-dried tobacco, no significant food insecurity was reported in the country.

Similarly, no evidence exists that *Jatropha* production will negatively affect livestock production. It was observed that currently the prices of livestock does not influence the pricing of different crops in the

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## The case of Ndirande Mountain

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through fumes, factory chemical deposits and increased levels of carbon monoxide.

Scientists have proven that factory fumes are a cause for various health conditions such as cancer, tuberculosis and other respiratory infections. But nature has had a way of purifying the environment to make it safe for human survival. Forests sweep clean the atmosphere off carbon gases which they absorb for their use and in the process release oxygen. Man lives on oxygen. Man does not make oxygen. They get it from nature.

That is, by clearing the Ndirande Mountain forest, people in the township increased the risk of them getting infected with diseases resulting from activities of their industrial area. There is no question that the industrial area is a vital source of life for many Ndirande residents. But by cutting down trees, the site shall prove to be their death bed.

Yet, not all is lost. Much as people have capacity to destroy, they have as

much capacity to restore the environment and make the environment habitable. Over the years, many organisations have made efforts to replant trees in the mountain. But it has noticeably been without much success. And some modest efforts have met with further destruction from the residents. The tragedy goes on.

The factories in Makata Industrial Site cannot be removed. But the situation in the mountain can be changed for the better. And residents would achieve the most and the best of both worlds: the mountain and the industrial site.

As of now, in basic assumption, Ndirande residents are spending a lot of what they earn from the industrial area in restoring their health damaged by the destruction of the forest. Had the forest survived, they would have quality life and improve greatly with their earnings from the industrial site.

UNEP feels that in restoring nature, "individual actions can have an exponential impact". So, what if every resident played their part now in bringing back the lost treasure?





Developing nations must protect its people and oppose exploitation through market based solutions to climate change offered by carbon trading

## Should Africa become a Carbon Trading Cash Cow?

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 The Timberwatch Coalition



The history of global economics is littered with failed financial schemes that have resulted in massive losses for ordinary people whose investments have been plundered by unscrupulous consultants and bankers. Such economic crimes have usually been resolved through injections of public money, or extended credit - as in the recent cases in the US and the EU, where government funds were used to rescue affected financial institutions and struggling governments. With carbon markets there has been similar corrupt behaviour that has enriched so-called 'carbon traders' at the expense of state-funded bodies responsible for the administration of carbon trading deals.

### How Carbon Trading Works (in Theory)

Carbon trading aims to offset greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions produced by polluting energy-use activities, usually from an

industrialised (developed) country, with cheaper reductions in emissions somewhere else, usually a developing country. Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) offset financing instituted under the Kyoto Protocol (KP) of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) allows emission reduction targets of developed (Annex 1 Countries under the UNFCCC) countries to be offset by 'emission reduction' projects in developing countries supposedly reducing equivalent emissions, while benefiting local communities through 'sustainable development'.

### How Carbon Trading Works (in Reality)

In effect, carbon trading transfers responsibility for mitigating climate change to poor communities in developing countries who themselves have done very little to cause it. For example, a country like Malawi with very low industrial infrastructure and limited consumption levels, there is little it can do to slow or stop climate change because of their miniscule contribution to global greenhouse gas emissions. As such most of the implemented initiatives are towards adaptation to increase resilience.

This therefore is supposed to be compensated for by payments for carbon

credits generated by offset projects under the CDM as well as so-called Voluntary Carbon Standard (VCS) projects. Another method of generating carbon credits is planned in the form of a United Nations driven scheme called 'Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation' (REDD), and variations on that theme in agriculture, industrial tree plantations, biofuels and soil carbon storage or 'biochar'.

The carbon credit price is unpredictable, and most value is consumed by the costs associated with setting up and managing the projects that will supposedly benefit people and governments in the developing world. Invariably it has been the foreign consultants, financial institutions and dirty industries in already wealthy countries that derive the most financial benefit, while the communities whose resources have been commandeered are left with vague promises of future payments.

#### **The Land-Grab Question**

Carbon offsets are often dependent on access to land and its associated water, soil, biodiversity and people resources in developing countries. Already CDM tree plantations as well as REDD-type projects have led to the appropriation of vast lands, usually in areas occupied and utilised by communities or indigenous peoples, and now deprived of traditional rights of access and usage.

At this time when population is growing at a faster rate and at the same time land is required for offsetting carbon, the reality is very vague for sustainability of these projects and this might result in more devastating problems than before.

Some of the carbon trading projects in Malawi include Tree Planting, jatropha biofuel plantations and management for carbon sequestration under Department of Forestry and those under the Clinton Hunter Foundation.

All these initiatives are linked to the Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD).

However the major observation is that there are significant local capacity constraints in management of REDD initiatives such as carbon accounting and auditing. As a result most of these interventions involve a lot of middle-men eventually reducing the benefits accruing to the local communities involved.

In addition, the position of Government of Malawi regarding REDD is not very clear.

#### **The Role of the World Bank**

Together with other United Nations (UN) bodies such as the UNFCCC and UNEP (The United Nations Environmental Programme), the World Bank has driven an aggressive campaign to promote and support carbon trading as a solution to climate change; though in many ways it seems to protect big polluters in the North. The 17th Conference of Parties (CoP17) of the UNFCCC which was held in Durban in December 2011 was dubbed 'Conference of the Polluters' by some of its critics.

#### **What are the Alternatives?**

Many Southern groups have mooted the concept of Ecological or Climate Debt as the real solution to address climate change inequity, in view of the indecent wealth accumulated by colonial exploitation; and polluting industrial activities in so-called developed countries.

Genuine climate change compensation needs to be based on the recognition of the debt owed by these wealthy countries to those in the South that suffered the consequences.

#### **Climate Jobs are Needed**

As an alternative to the carbon market, one-way transfers of finance through grants to support the development of opportunities for decent work in previously and currently exploited countries would be a good start. This needs to happen in conjunction with the systematic writing off of dubious historical debts, often incurred for the benefit of the lending countries in the first place.

The concept of a 'green economy' is just another false solution aimed primarily at preserving the existing economic order, and should be rejected by countries that have suffered under Northern capitalism.

#### **Climate Justice is the Way**

Developing nations in general and of Africa in particular, must stand together to oppose continual exploitation by external economic influence such as the market based non-solutions offered by carbon trading. Another world is possible, but to make the leap of faith needed to transcend the present state of our world needs new vision together with determination to make it reality!



# The 18 days, 8000 kilometres Trans African Climate Caravan of Hope

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Showing off a plea for developed countries to make good their promises to reduce carbon emissions, activists took the scenic route to the 17th Conference of Parties (CoP17) in Durban, South Africa.

They travelled about 8 000km from Burundi in 18 days, through 10 Eastern and Southern African countries aboard a convoy of buses draped in various national flags.

The aim of the Trans-African Caravan of Hope, organised by the Pan African

Climate Change Justice Alliance (PACJA), was to demand climate justice before the Climate Conference in Durban.

The caravan is a campaign mobilisation that told the African story about climate change, whilst making known the demands of Africa people to its leaders and the rest of the world.

It was a huge awareness raising for the African civil society to highlight the challenges climate change poses to African's efforts to extricate herself from poverty and attainment of Millennium Development Goals.

The caravan ran through 10 countries and brought together communities from diverse backgrounds in Eastern and Southern African Countries where signatures were gathered en route for a petition which urged developed nations to abide by their Kyoto treaty commitments to reduce emissions and finance adaptation programmes.

The participating countries were Burundi, Rwanda, Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania, Malawi, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Botswana and South Africa. Another stream of caravan, Via Campesina started from Mozambique through Swaziland to join link the Trans-African Caravan in Pretoria, while that from Lesotho and representatives from Nigeria, Egypt and other African countries arrived at the same time in Durban.

The Trans African Caravan of Hope stepped into Malawi through the Songwe Border point with Tanzania on November 17 where it was welcomed by the Karonga district government officials.

The huge Climate Justice Awareness Big Walk saw thousands of locals and The caravanites walking a solidarity march for about 8km from



## The journey that was carried out in of hope for a fair climate deal to CoP17 in Durban, South Africa

the Total Filling Station opposite Lilongwe Hotel to Capital City Hotel where Hon. Vera Faramenga Chilewani, deputy minister of Natural Resources, Energy and Environment was guest of honour. Chilewani said the Trans-African Caravan of Hope is living to its name.

"The Malawi government appreciates the Trans-African Caravan of Hope journey which aims to influence world leaders to reach a fair and binding agreement that will bring real solution to climate change at the 17th Conference of Parties," she said.

She said through the caravan journeys, African countries which are said to suffer the most from the impact of climate change, will receive the much needed support from the grassroots and hope to gain meaningful outcomes from the Durban conference.

The deputy minister disclosed that Malawian communities, who mainly rely on rain-fed agriculture, suffer from the ravages of climate change in different ways through droughts, dry spells, floods, and erratic and unreliable rainfalls which have manifested themselves in the past two decades.

In response, the Malawian government has adopted some adaptation and mitigation measures with an effort of rescuing the vulnerable communities.

Among other efforts, Malawi has developed the Malawi Growth and Development Strategy, a national approach to achieve the UN Millennium Development Goals, she added.

The government has also developed the national adaptation programme of action which outlines urgent actions which the country needs to adapt to climate change.

But the programme, which hinged on funding from the developed nations, is struggling to get donors interested.

Eight Malawian youths took part in another caravan when they joined over 145 youths drawn from Africa and Norway on the 'We have Faith; Act Now for Climate Justice Youth Caravan'.

National events to the African Caravans including the Climate Justice Awareness Big Walk, the National Climate Press Conference and the We Have Faith Music Concert were facilitated by the Civil Society Network on Climate Change (CISONECC) in collaboration with Norwegian Church Aid and Malawi's three main Christian mother bodies, the Malawi Council of Churches (MCC), Episcopal Conference of Malawi (ECM) and the Evangelical Association of Malawi (EAM).

The petition asked presidents of Africa to keep Africa and the world safe and prevent catastrophic climate change by exerting pressure on developed countries to ensure that they sign up to legally binding commitments that reduce emissions and limit global warming.

The petition also asks African presidents to ensure that polluters of the environment, developed countries, and not the poor must pay.

Mithika Mwenda a coordinator of the PACJA said over two million signatures were collected on the way to Durban observing that this was a great demonstration that people were waking up to climate change issues.

"Africa will not be betrayed. We want to see fairness," said Mwenda expressing optimism that African leaders would uphold their commitment to one Africa,



**Hon. Vera Faramenga Chilewani who presided over the National Climate Press Conference**

one position and one voice for climate change justice.

Farmers on the caravan gave various testimonies on how climate change is negatively influencing their lives which consequently affect on food insecurity in Africa.

Paul Okong'o a farmer from Kenya observed that farmers are suffering because of climate change to the extent that food production has become a challenge.

Okong'o who comes from the shores of Lake Victoria added that the fishing industry has also suffered the blunt of climatic change effects because fish cannot breed properly due to increased temperatures of the water.

Pablo Solou a social activist from Bolivia said the civil society has a duty to stop capitalists from damaging Africa and the world from polluting the environment.

"We are here to stop the genocide. That is unacceptable. We are not going to be part of the genocide. They are burning and selling our mother earth, in that way we are going to suffer," he said.



**The thousands of people that gathered to march in the Climate Justice Big Walk of 18th November, 2011 in Lilongwe**

Burundi, Rwanda, Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania, Malawi, Zambia, Zimbabwe Botswana South Africa

# Impact of Biofuels on Food Crops

From page 13

country whereas the pricing of crops do influence the pricing of livestock which implies that the livestock industry has a great potential to expand and has not reached the threshold yet.

Studies show that tobacco production does not affect livestock production in any way, even at pasture levels. Similarly, biofuels production let alone *Jatropha* will not negatively affect livestock production in the country for the following reasons:

- i. Land substitution will be between commercial crops e.g. tobacco, cotton etc and *Jatropha* not with food crops.
- ii. Another scenario would be that biofuel crops like *Jatropha* will play a complementary role with tobacco and other commercial crops.
- iii. *Jatropha* cake (product after oil is expelled from the seed) would form part of livestock feed e.g. *Jatropha* cake is a valuable feed for pig production. The oil extraction process is enough to expel the toxicity which is highly talked about in *Jatropha*. On the other hand, the cake will also enhance soil fertility properties good for crop and forage production.

## Conclusion

*Jatropha curcas* would be an alternative cash crop for Malawian farmers in light of the threats to tobacco production and need for reliable sources of cleaner energy and to save on the scarce foreign reserves. This is supported by the findings that *Jatropha* will not negatively affect food crop production and livestock. This is due to the fact that production conditions and needs for *Jatropha* would not favour small-scale farmers with very small land holding sizes i.e. less than 1 ha who happen to be the major players in food crop production.

Lack of policy is affecting the development of the biofuels sector especially on biodiesel production. There is need to develop the strategy and eventually policy and these should provide guidance on cultivation of *Jatropha* and food crops to ensure that the policy on food security is not affected.

Issues of land transfer and management should be articulated to safeguard the potential abuse in the future when the industry peaks. There is also need to support elaborate research on biofuels in the country to help resolve gray areas and help the industry grow. This also calls for the active participation of the civil society in the country in building up this industry.

ZOLONKHOPE

BY SAM MANDA



Burning bushes is detrimental to the environment. Let us stop such practices to minimise bush fires

# Alarm on Raging Bush Fires

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Neno is on fire again just like many other districts in the country.

Last year a fire from a cigarette butt thrown on dry grass by unknown people destroyed 19 houses and also swept through forest reserves. Forest reserves in Neno cover 24 380 hectares. However, there was no stocktaking on how much damage the fire caused to the regenerating forests.

Neno District Forestry Officer Emmanuel Ngwangwa acknowledged that bush fires are a challenge to the proper management of forestry. "Bush fire is a big challenge. Forest reserves are also affected," says Ngwangwa. He says forests are prone to bush fires from August to October. The challenge is that the fire is set at night and become difficult to control, he said.

"It is a traditional here during the dry season. They hunt mice and game. That is the primary cause of bush fires," he adds that shifting cultivation practice whereby households open up new farming areas is another source of bush fires, according to Ngwangwa.

Ngwangwa explains that his office regularly hold sensitisation meetings with communities on dangers of setting bush fires.

"There is positive attitude change on the dangers of bush fires. We tell that for forests to survive they need to be protected from bush fires. Bush fires destroy seeds, sterilise soils and also destroy regeneration of trees," he says.

He also observes that one of the main potentially global or worldwide effects of bushfires is smoke. "Smoke in the atmosphere can change the way sun light gets through. This sometimes can reflect light and reduce the temperature on the ground for a while. Sometimes this can also affect how much light is available for plants to use (photosynthesis)," he explains.

As we reflect on the dangers of bush fires as they sterilise soils, destroys seeds and regeneration of trees let us also reflect on another possible global effect of the production of extra carbon dioxide.

More fires lead to an increase in carbon dioxide in the atmosphere which is actually Malawi's main contribution to global carbon emissions in the atmosphere which contributes to the increase the green house effect which increases the average global temperature, thereby causing climate change.



Hunting mice and game is a primary cause of such damaging bush fires in Malawi





Many towns, cities and trading centres in Malawi lack proper disposal facilities

## Population, Sanitation and Environment:

# The Case Of Mchinji District

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With a population growth rate of 3.2% per annum which is expected to double in the next twenty years, Malawi is among the developing nations with the fastest urban population growth.

The growth of the Malawian population has been accompanied by urbanization. 90% of the country's population resides in the rural areas with the majority living below the poverty line. This has resulted in the rural population to move to urban areas to look for opportunities. The moving of people from rural areas to Malawi's major cities namely Blantyre,

Lilongwe, Mzuzu and Zomba has direct impact on the cities' environment. District Councils are also facing the same impacts of urbanization that cities are facing. For Example, the increase of population at Mchinji Boma has led to the demand of a larger market space including space for slaughter houses as well as space for waste disposal. If this is accompanied by poor sanitation as is the case now, the level of risks to the population increase include risk of disease outbreaks.

Mchinji District has a population of about 487,077. The town centre is one of the fastest growing places in the district as well as most trading centres like Mkanda, Kamwendo, Kapiri and Walilanji due to the infrastructure development including roads, shops and offices that is taking place over the last decade. Despite the growth, the trading centres have no modern markets; neither do they have proper sanitary facilities which

compromise the hygiene in the markets. Most of the markets available in these areas serve a bigger population now than they used to at the time they were constructed.

As population grows, more waste is generated so that proper waste disposal systems need to be developed as a measure to deal with the waste.

Mchinji District needs to develop proper sanitation systems: this includes the construction of clean and improved animal slaughter houses. The current handling of live and slaughtered animals in the District leaves a lot to be desired.

Animals are allowed to move freely in and out of the market, animal's carcasses are left under open space since there are no slaughter houses and slaughter wastes including blood and carcass trimmings are dumped anyhow. Heaps of wastes in the District's town and trading centres are a common site as you pass by. It takes months for the District Council to dispose the wastes due to lack of haulage trucks and disposal facilities as well as low funding which the council receives.

Not only do the wastes produce smell, but they are an eye sore. The problem of improper waste handling is more pronounced in the rainy season when the dumped wastes decompose at a faster rate and produce highly pungent smells.

Mchinji district is growing fast. It is therefore very important to come up with short term as well as a long term measure for effective waste disposal; and this applies to the rest of the country's cities and districts. Measures to be taken could include waste collection houses where wastes can be separated and recycled. It is essentially important for each town and district to have a designated land fill. Policy makers should also come up with rules and regulations as well as implement current policies as a guide towards proper waste management.

Local policy makers should also impose what is called the polluter's principle where "anybody who pollutes the environment is fined", in this case anybody dumping wastes in an improper manner must be fined. It is also very important for the city assemblies to implement with modern methods of waste management such as reusing and recycling.

It is also of vital importance to raise awareness amongst the population cities and towns on the importance of proper waste management. The communities should be trained on modern ways of waste management. Butcher men must also be educated on the proper ways of handling animal carcasses.



**Animal carcasses are handled in open space and wastes such as blood and other slaughter wastes are improperly disposed off**



## ENVIRONMENTAL TIPS: *Conserve Biodiversity*

We should preserve every scrap of biodiversity as priceless while we learn to use it and come to understand what it means to humanity.—E. O. Wilson

There are many ways that you can make a direct difference as an individual. Here are a few ideas on how you can act to protect biodiversity:

- Plant a tree. Make sure it is a local tree species and look after it;
- Keep nearby forests, woodlots, bush and riversides clean;
- Use, reuse or repair things until they are completely worn out;
- Do not use, eat or buy endangered species. Ask your family, friends, community members to avoid buying or using endangered species;
- Avoid using pesticides in family and community gardens;
- Use Composting manure to grow crops;
- Find out where and how your food is grown. Encourage your family to support local or

sustainable farming

- Buy local products to avoid the energy consumption during transportation.
- One kilogram of paper can be made out of 3.5 kilograms of woods. In order to protect the forest, you should use paper as little times as possible. For example, replace the tissues with handkerchief and write e-mails to save paper
- Start a community biodiversity garden;
- Clean up a local wetland; and
- Teach community members about biodiversity and farming.

Endangered species are species that are at risk of going extinct because they have low population numbers, threatened habitat areas, reduced food access or have been over-utilised by human beings for food, sport, personal decoration or medicine.

Environmental tips Environmental tips

### WORD SEARCH

The word search contains environment related terminologies. Find the hidden words which are arranged forward, backwards, vertically, horizontally and diagonally;

M	W	X	H	K	W	K	N	V	W	F	C	Z	U	S	V	Z	H
U	W	E	T	L	A	N	D	S	F	A	J	V	Z	Q	R	O	P
O	J	T	V	G	W	L	T	M	Q	K	P	Y	R	M	N	B	H
P	O	C	Z	P	N	K	T	Z	F	I	R	E	W	O	O	D	P
E	N	V	I	R	O	N	M	E	N	T	R	D	C	W	A	Q	D
N	H	K	Y	G	R	E	N	E	E	L	B	A	W	E	N	E	R
T	U	M	S	M	E	L	E	P	H	A	N	T	S	Z	T	C	E
O	C	S	L	L	L	O	G	G	I	N	G	E	M	R	I	M	G
N	S	Y	T	I	S	R	E	V	I	D	O	I	B	A	A	W	R
D	F	O	R	E	S	T	S	H	H	U	P	W	J	S	Y	N	G
U	T	Y	B	I	O	M	A	S	S	B	T	P	F	M	M	B	B
D	D	P	A	W	A	G	N	A	K	I	H	C	L	A	W	P	Z
D	I	M	I	C	K	T	C	S	O	Z	M	D	O	R	O	V	H
L	Y	D	O	L	Z	I	S	T	H	G	I	R	D	N	A	L	A
H	W	V	N	H	C	L	I	M	A	T	E	C	H	A	N	G	E
F	A	Z	C	E	N	A	T	I	O	N	A	L	P	A	R	K	S
H	F	K	I	W	I	J	J	O	W	F	Z	D	R	F	S	T	O
L	L	A	Q	V	P	O	L	I	C	Y	F	J	F	M	C	G	F

#### Hidden Words

Biodiversity, Biomass, CEPA, Climate Change, Chikangawa, Elephants, Environment, Firewood, Forests, Land rights, Logging, National parks, Policy, Ramsar, Renewable energy, Wetlands

# Poor Waste Disposal Poses Health Risk in Lilongwe

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For over five months now, Lilongwe City Council has failed to clean the area behind Utatu Woyera Parish, where there is a bridge linking Kawale 1 and Kawale 2. Due to the shortage of dust bins, residents of the township have resorted to dumping their waste into Masintha River which has resulted in blockage of the passage way and stagnation of the water.

Passersby to the area are greeted by the stench. What is more disturbing is that residents continue to dump their waste in the already polluted river.

"We have for many times asked the City Council to help us clean this place but to no avail. We have tried to clean the place ourselves but the bad thing is that even after we clean the site, other residents continue to dump their garbage as there is an acute shortage of dust bins around," said one of the residents.

About half a kilometre from the site, is a dust bin. But according to Chikondi Phiri who stays close to the area, refuse collection leaves a lot to be desired. She laments the situation

is now becoming worse as the City Council does not collect the overflowing waste bins. "I wonder why we have one waste bin for this big area. The City Council should do something about the situation," Phiri said.

The waste is also making the site impassable. The state of this area may cause one to wonder what authorities of the city are doing about the situation.

During the rainy season, wastes that have accumulated behind the bridge are washed away into Lilongwe River. Ironically, other residents downstream use the same water for domestic purposes.

The residents, who refuted allegations that they do not take waste management seriously, have asked the city authorities to place refuse collection points in the township as failure to do so would continue endangering the lives of the people.

A source within the Council admitted receiving complaints from Kawale residents. He said the Council will look into the problem soon.

"We are on the verge of starting to clean the city and Kawale is one of the targeted areas. I ask the residents of the township to cooperate with the City Council during the exercise," said the source.

*(The author is a student at Malawi Institute of Journalism)*



The accumulated wastes dumped under the bridge pose a serious health risk to residents of Kawale



**DON'T  
KILL  
AFRICA**

