



EMLI ANNUAL REPORT

FY 2024 / 2025

Published by EMLI

P.O Box 133171, Kampala, Uganda

T. +256 (414) 692 -153

E. emli.uganda@gmail.com

W. www.emliuganda.org

Citation:

Environmental Management for Livelihood Improvement Bwaise Facility – Annual Report FY 2024/2025, Kampala: EMLI

© EMLI 2025

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form or by any means electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise without prior written permission of the publisher. EMLI's work is supported by generous donations and grants from Donors, Government of Uganda, well-wishers and members.

Contents

ACRONYMS	3
ABOUT EMLI	5
MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRPERSON, BOARD OF ADVISORS.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
FOREWORD BY THE ACTING EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	9
<u>HIGHLIGHTS</u>	11
1.0 INTRODUCTION	12
2.0 PROGRAMME AREAS.....	12
2.1 CLIMATE CHANGE PROGRAMME.....	12
2.2 ENVIRONMENTAL GOVERNANCE PROGRAMME	16
2.3 ECOSYSTEMS AND ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT PROGRAMME	20
2.4 CHEMICALS AND WASTE PROGRAMME	22
2.5 LIVELIHOOD PROGRAMME.....	23
3.0 ORGANIZATIONAL MANAGEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT.....	24
4.0 MEDIA HIGHLIGHTS.....	24
5.0 PARTNERS AND COLLABORATORS.....	24
6.0 FINACIAL PERFORMANCE.....	25
7.0 OUR PARTNERS	26

ACRONYMS

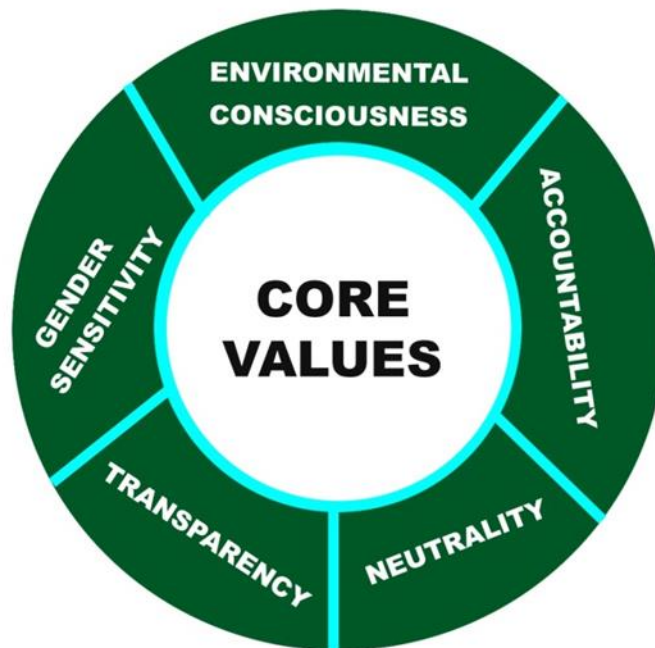
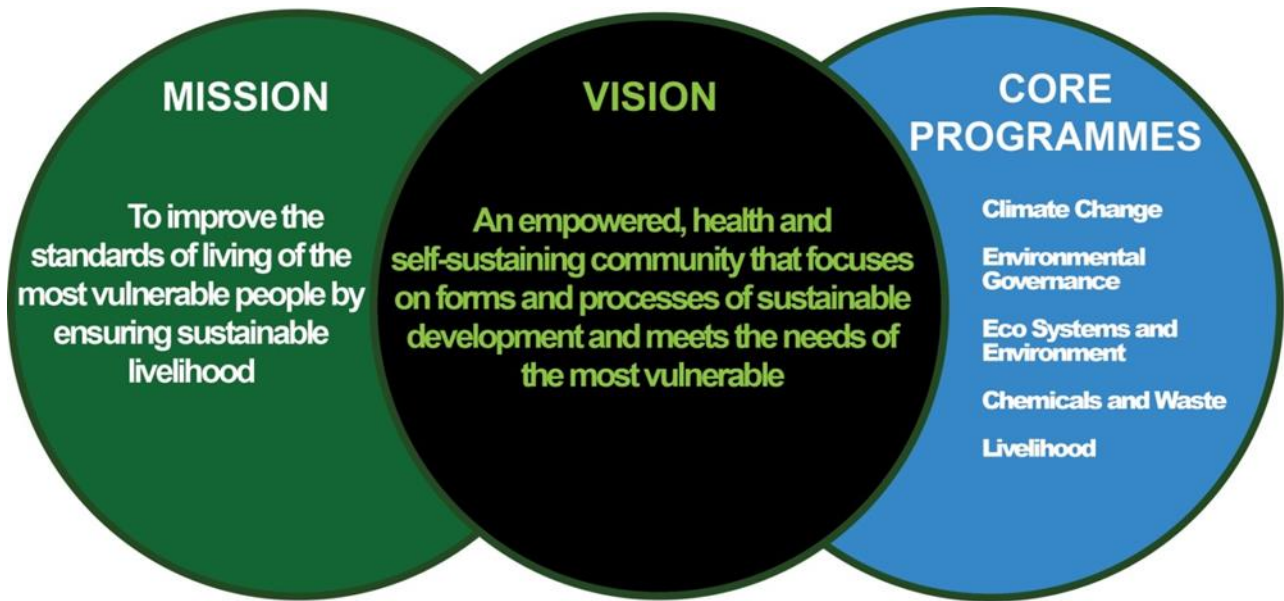
ARFSD	Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development
CCD	Climate Change Department
COP	Conference of the Parties
CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
DENRCs	District Environment and Natural Resources Committees
EMLI	Environmental Management for Livelihood Improvement – Bwaise Facility
FY	Financial Year
IEC	Information, Education and Communication
IPLCs	Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities
MWE	Ministry of Water and Environment
NDC	Nationally Determined Contributions
NEMA	National Environment Management Authority
REDD+	Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (and the role of conservation, sustainable forest management, and enhancement of forest carbon stocks)
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SOI	Summary Of Information
TREES	The REDD+ Environmental Excellence Standard
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNFCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.
UWEWK	Uganda Water and Environment Week
WWF-UCO	World Wide Fund for Nature – Uganda Country Office

ABOUT EMLI

Environmental Management for Livelihood Improvement Bwaise Facility (EMLI) is a national membership environmental non-governmental and non-profit making organization (S.5914/7912) founded in 2007. EMLI was formed as a result of deteriorating citizen role in environmental protection. Over the years, EMLI has played an important role in influencing environmental policy making at national, regional and global level.

EMLI is accredited to the following Inter-governmental bodies and Conventions: United Nations Economic and Social Council (UN ECOSOC); United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD); United Nations Framework Convention on Climate change (UNFCCC); United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD); United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat); the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands, Stockholm Convention on POPs. EMLI is also an active observer organization with Global Environment Facility (GEF), Green Climate Fund (GCF) and UN Global Compact.

EMLI is a member to a number of global, regional and national civil society networks working on Forests, Environment, Natural resources, Climate change, Agriculture, Land degradation, Oil and Gas. These include: GEF CSO Network, Green Economy Coalition, International PoPs Elimination Network (IPEN) and others.



MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRPERSON, BOARD OF ADVISORS

As we reflect on the progress of Environmental Management for Livelihood Improvement Bwaise Facility (EMLI) during the Financial Year 2024/2025, I am honored to present this Annual Report on behalf of the Board of Advisors. This year marks the Final period of implementation under our current Strategic Plan (2019–2024), a critical moment to consolidate achievements and prepare for the next phase of growth and impact.

EMLI continues to demonstrate its pivotal role in advancing sustainable development and climate resilience across Uganda, especially through its strategic programmes. Despite the ongoing challenges posed by global uncertainties and shifting priorities among partners, EMLI has shown remarkable adaptability and commitment to delivering on its mandate.

I would like to express my sincere appreciation to all our partners, especially The World Wide Fund for Nature Uganda Country Office (WWF-UCO), The United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP), the Ministry of Water and Environment (MWE) and other stakeholders whose collaboration has been instrumental in driving forward Uganda's climate agenda. Your continued support, both technical and financial, has been vital in realizing our shared vision.

This report highlights key milestones, lessons learned, and the challenges faced, underscoring the importance of partnership, innovation, and inclusive governance in achieving sustainable outcomes. As we approach the end of the current strategic plan, the Board of Advisors looks forward to supporting the organization in charting a renewed path that addresses emerging environmental and social priorities.

I thank the EMLI leadership and staff for their dedication and resilience in working towards achieving the objectives set out in the strategic plan. I also extend my gratitude to all partners for their invaluable contributions. Together, we will continue to build a future where communities thrive in harmony with nature.



Prof. Justine Ujumba Namaalwa

Chairperson Board of Advisors

FOREWORD BY THE ACTING EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

As we reflect on the progress and achievements of the Financial Year 2024/2025, I am both humbled and inspired by the dedication, resilience, and unwavering commitment of the secretariat at EMLI) in ensuring that the set targets are achieved. Amidst ongoing global disruptions and the persistent threat of climate change, our mission remained clear: to improve the standards of living of the most vulnerable people by ensuring sustainable livelihood.

This year marked critical progress across our strategic programmes, with focused efforts to implement systemic and enabling conditions for the scaling up of Nature-based Solutions (NbS); improve decentralized environmental governance in the Greater Virunga Landscape; and strengthen the meaningful engagement of stakeholders in REDD+ processes at both national and sub-national levels. These efforts not only advanced national policy priorities but also demonstrated our role as a trusted convener in bridging technical, policy, and community voices.

A key institutional highlight was the development of the Civil Society Advocacy Strategy and Action Plan (2024–2027), titled “Towards Pro-Nature Growth and Development.” This strategy provides a coordinated, evidence-based approach to advocacy, focusing on Nature-based Solutions (NbS), inclusive governance, and enhanced financing for grassroots action. Complementing this, EMLI launched the NbS Academy, enhancing knowledge and capacity among implementing partners, local NGOs, and policymakers.

We acknowledge the implementation challenges we encountered, including limited funding for some core programmes like chemicals and wastes and livelihood programmes. However, our ability to adapt, maintain coordination, and engaging with state and non-state actors enabled us to stay on course. These experiences reaffirm the importance of collaborative planning, flexibility, and shared learning.

During FY 2024/2025, we mobilized UGX 959,097,867 reflecting an increase of 1.06% from the funds UGX 948,988,528 mobilized in FY 2023/2024. This demonstrates our continued commitment to strategic resource mobilization to effectively deliver on our mandate.

None of this progress would have been possible without the dedication and passion of our staff and the invaluable support of our partners and members. I extend my heartfelt gratitude to our core partners including WWF-UCO, UNEP, and MWE as well as the many government agencies, CSOs, district leaders, and Indigenous Peoples who have walked this journey with us.

As we look forward, I am confident that with our collective vision, commitment, and collaborative spirit, we will continue to make a lasting impact in advancing climate resilience, equity, and sustainability.


Robert Bakiika

Ag. Executive Director

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In the Financial Year 2024/2025, Environmental Management for Livelihood Improvement Bwaise Facility (EMLI) made significant strides in advancing environmental governance, climate resilience, and sustainable livelihoods in Uganda. Operating across five core programme areas Climate Change, Environmental Governance, Ecosystems and Environmental Management, Chemicals and Waste, and Livelihoods EMLI delivered results that strengthened national policies, built local capacity, and promoted inclusive, community-centered approaches to nature and climate action. These successes were largely driven by strategic partnerships and dedicated resources targeting climate action.

This report presents progress under the five core programme areas implemented through key Projects that is the UN-REDD Programme, Deepening Civil Society Advocacy on Nature for Climate, Enhancing REDD+ Collaboration in the Context of Article 6 of the Paris Agreement, and Improving Decentralized Environmental Governance in the Greater Virunga Landscape, all supported by WWF-UCO and partners. Key performance highlights under programme areas:

Climate Change Programme

- Supported the development of a **1** consolidated Civil Society position paper for COP29 that was integrated into Uganda's official submission for COP29.
- Launched the Nature-based Solutions (NbS) Academy, a flagship initiative that trained **45** practitioners and change agents including government and CSO to design and scale NbS interventions.
- Developed **1** Civil Society Advocacy Strategy and Action Plan (2024–2027) for **4** landscape hubs Kalinzu, Queen Elizabeth Sub-Landscape, Bwindi-Mgahinga, and Rwenzori to guide coordinated advocacy and engagement in climate action.
- Developed and disseminated IEC materials on Nature based Solutions (NbS)

Environmental Governance Programme

- Built capacity of **123** stakeholders including government agencies, CSOs, private sector, academia, Indigenous Peoples (Batwa, Bennet, Karamojong), and media on REDD+ safeguards reporting and application, improving Uganda's readiness for results-based carbon payments
- Conducted **1** study on Experiences and Functionality of District Environment and Natural Resources Committees in the Greater Virunga Landscape (GVL)
- Engaged **25** stakeholders including **4** District Local Governments (Kisoro, Rubirizi, Mitooma, and Kasese in advancing the formation and operationalization of DENRCs, strengthening decentralized environmental governance in GVL.
- Conducted **1** study on governance features relevant to the success of REDD+ projects, focusing on Kitechura/Ibambaro Bugoma and Kagombe Central Forest Reserves.
- Developed **1** policy brief on governance features relevant to the success of REDD+ projects and printed and disseminated 350 copies of the brief.

- Raised awareness of over **170** stakeholders on Uganda's National Climate Change Mechanism Regulations (2025) through the national launch and familiarization workshops, fostering compliance and stakeholder ownership.

Ecosystems and Environmental Management Programme:

- Supported the development and review of Uganda's Second Summary of Information (SOI) on REDD+ safeguards, a key prerequisite for accessing results-based payments under international carbon standards such as The REDD+ Excellence ES (TREES)
- Facilitated a forestry dialogue that engaged 63 stakeholders, enhancing inclusive participation in forest sector reforms and empowering CSOs to actively influence policies and practices for sustainable forest management

Chemicals and waste Programme:

- Participated in the virtual third session of the Open-ended Working Group (OEWG 3.2) in Uruguay, which finalized the establishment of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Panel on Chemicals, Waste, and Pollution (ISP-CWP).

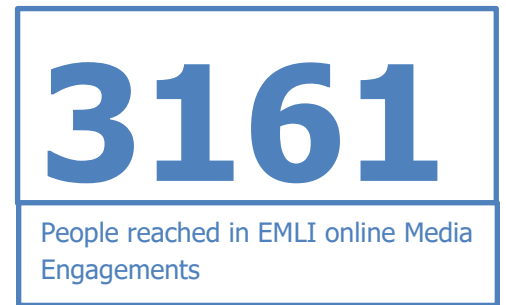
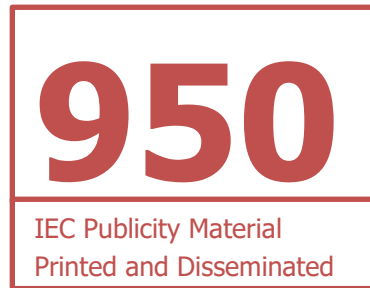
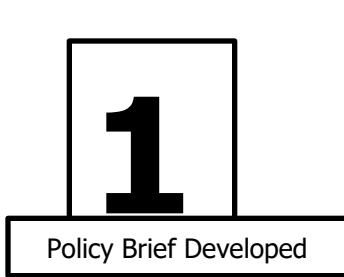
Livelihood Programme

- Expanded EMLI's regional influence by actively participating in the 11th Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development (ARFSD-11), hosted in Uganda, where EMLI contributed to high-level dialogues on sustainable finance, value addition, and SDG implementation.

Over the period EMLI faced challenges including constrained financial resources and competing stakeholder priorities. However, the organization remained adaptive and collaborated with partners to address the challenges.

Looking forward, EMLI is committed to deepening its impact by diversifying funding, enhancing institutional capacity, and fostering inclusive environmental leadership. Through strategic partnerships and community-driven action, EMLI will continue catalyzing transformative changes for both people and nature.

HIGHLIGHTS



1.0 INTRODUCTION

This Annual Report presents activities implemented by Environmental Management for Livelihood Improvement (EMLI) for the FY 2024/25 (July 2024 – June 2025). This report presents progress on activities implemented over the year under the 5 core programmes: Climate Change, Environmental Governance, Ecosystems and Environment Management, Chemicals and Waste and Livelihood Programme. It captures achievements, challenges, lessons learned, and mitigation measures across thematic programmes. The implementation of activities was guided by the EMLI Annual Work Plan and project specific workplans. Below is a highlight of accomplishments on performance under each programme area.

2.0 PROGRAMME AREAS

2.1 CLIMATE CHANGE PROGRAMME

For the 2024/25, EMLI aimed to influence and enhance climate action at both national and international level and Scaling up the adoption and funding for Nature-based Solutions (NbS). This was achieved through a series of targeted, consultative engagements, and global advocacy representation as highlighted below;

2.1.1 Strengthening policy advocacy for climate action at both national and global levels.

EMLI co-convened a preparatory meeting with MWE/CCD on August 16, 2024, in Luzira. The meeting brought together 32 participants (19 males and 13 females) from government, civil society, private sector, and development partners to design a training programme for youth negotiators and the Local Conference of Youth. The resulting workshop framework covered five thematic pillars: climate science and policy, negotiations, advocacy, justice and equity, and youth leadership laying a foundation for an informed and empowered youth delegation. The meeting led to the design of a comprehensive youth-focused programme, empowering young negotiators to effectively contribute to climate diplomacy processes at national and international levels.

EMLI collaborated with ENR-CSO and CAN-U to convene a national CSO consultative meeting on August 17, 2024. This strategic engagement enabled 30 representatives (20 males and 10 females) from MDAs, academia, and civil society to define collective priorities for COP29, including operationalizing the Loss and Damage Fund, enhancing NDCs, and ensuring a just energy transition. Government and civil society presentations informed a shared understanding of negotiation tracks, and participants committed to developing a joint CSO position. The meeting strengthened collective CSO voice and led to the initiation of a unified position paper that influenced Uganda's national climate negotiation strategy.

EMLI partnered with Regenerate Africa and MWE/CCD to host a hybrid planning meeting on October 8, 2024, attended by over 30 in-person and 200 virtual participants. The session aligned government and non-state actors on Uganda's thematic priorities for COP29, enabling the compilation of national positions across key blocks: Gender, Adaptation, Mitigation, Finance, Technology, and Capacity Building. The meeting promoted alignment among climate stakeholders and contributed to a cohesive national approach to COP29 negotiations.

From October 17–18, 2024, EMLI supported the Pre-COP29 Joint Civil Society Consultative Meeting in Kampala, which convened over 100 stakeholders to review COP28 outcomes, refine technical understanding of emerging issues, and formulate advocacy messages for COP29. The meeting culminated in the development of a consolidated CSO position paper, later integrated into Uganda’s official COP29 submission. The consultative process ensured civil society’s priorities were formally recognized in Uganda’s official submission to COP29, enhancing inclusivity in climate diplomacy.



Figure 1. participants during Pre COP 29 consultative workshop

EMLI participated in global negotiations at COP29 in Baku. The representative engaged in discussions on the new collective quantified goal on climate finance, which resulted in developed countries pledging \$300 billion annually by 2035. EMLI also tracked developments on Article 6 carbon markets, the Loss and Damage Fund (\$30 billion pledged), and the Baku Nature Action Pact, which committed to restoring 500 million hectares of degraded land and scaling up NbS, indigenous knowledge, and urban ecosystem integration. EMLI’s representation elevated Uganda’s civil society voice at the global level and ensured national and African priorities were actively pushed in negotiations around NbS, finance, and just transition.

EMLI participated in the Post-COP 29 National Forum during Uganda Water and Environment Week (UWEWK) on March 18, 2025. The forum assessed progress on Uganda’s NDCs, compliance, gender-responsive climate action, and called for the establishment of a Ugandan Pavilion at COP30. EMLI reaffirmed its commitment to inclusive, coordinated, and evidence-based advocacy to advance climate resilience and NbS. Additionally, the forum reinforced national ownership of climate outcomes and spurred momentum for early, inclusive preparations toward COP30.

2.1.2 Strengthening Coordination, Enhancing Community Livelihoods, and Scaling Funding for Nature-based Solutions (NbS) Initiatives.

Building on advocacy foundations laid in Kisoro and Rubirizi districts in 2023 were EMLI developed advocacy plans for the two districts, in 2024 with support from WWF Denmark through WWF Uganda, under the "Deepening Civil Society Advocacy on Nature for Climate" project aimed to create enabling conditions for scaling up and broad adoption of Nature-based Solutions (NbS). As a key output, EMLI developed a comprehensive Civil Society Advocacy Strategy and Action Plan (2024–2027), titled "Towards Pro-Nature Growth and Development." Anchored by an Issue Paper on Nature-based Solutions and Rights, the strategy consolidates experiences, lessons, and emerging issues from NbS implementation in Uganda, forming an evidence-based framework to improve coordination, community livelihoods, and resource mobilization for NbS.

The strategy and accompanying implementation plan were developed through a highly consultative and participatory process involving stakeholders from the Kalinzu Landscape Hub, Queen Elizabeth Sub Landscape Hub, Bwindi-Mgahinga Landscape Hub, and Rwenzori Landscape Hub. This inclusive approach ensured that the final strategy reflects diverse local realities and priorities. The Civil Society Advocacy Strategy and Plan for the Greater Virunga Landscape (GVL) now provide a unified direction for advocacy across the landscape, empowering hubs to align their efforts, strengthen collaboration, and drive community-led NbS initiatives more effectively.

Looking ahead, EMLI and its partners, including WWF-UCO and CSOs within Hubs intend to use this strategy as a guiding framework for all future NbS interventions. The strategy marks a critical step forward in institutionalizing NbS in Uganda's development agenda while delivering tangible benefits to both people and ecosystems.

2.1.3 Improving Knowledge and Awareness of Nature based Solutions (NbS) among Implementing Partners

EMLI in collaboration with WWF Uganda Country Office (WWF-UCO), convened a (3) three-day NbS Academy Training from December 18–20, 2024, at Kampala Kolping Hotel. The training convened and awarded certificates to 45 participants (22 males and 23 females) drawn from government, civil society organizations, media, academia, and representatives from the Greater Virunga Landscape (GVL).

The NbS Academy is a structured capacity development program designed to build the knowledge and skills of two key groups: Practitioners (such as policymakers and project developers) and Change Agents (including advocates and community leaders). The training content combined expert-led sessions, peer learning, and practical case studies, equipping participants with theoretical foundations and practical skills to design, implement, and advocate for NbS as integrated strategies for sustainable development and climate resilience.



Figure 2. Participants of cohort_1 presented with certificates of completion

By bridging the gap between policy and grassroots action, the Academy strengthened participants' capacity to influence NbS integration in both community-level initiatives and policy frameworks. The inaugural training marked the first step toward creating a cohort

of “NbS champions” capable of mainstreaming nature-based approaches into development and climate planning. This initiative not only improves individual competencies but also lays the foundation for stronger partnerships and sustained advocacy for NbS at local, national, and regional levels.

Challenges

- Coordination complexities, aligning diverse stakeholders across government, CSOs, private sector, and development partners for COP29 preparations were time-consuming and required significant facilitation.
- Constrained by financial and logistical resources to facilitate broad participation in trainings, workshops, and virtual engagements.

Mitigation measures

- Conducting multi-stakeholder workshops, hybrid meetings, and clear planning sessions ensured alignment and reduced coordination gaps.
- Leveraging partnerships and Collaboration with WWF-UCO, ENR-CSO, CAN-U, Regenerate Africa, and MWE/CCD allowed pooling of resources for wider participation and technical support

Lessons learnt

- Early and inclusive engagement is crucial to ensure that all stakeholders, especially youth and local actors, can meaningfully contribute to climate advocacy.

- Structured, participatory processes strengthen consensus building and improve alignment of national and civil society priorities.
- Collaborating with government, CSOs, and other partners enhances credibility, resources, and advocacy reach.

2.2 ENVIRONMENTAL GOVERNANCE PROGRAMME

The expected achievement for the 2024/25 period was enhanced understanding and application of REDD+ safeguards among stakeholders, ensuring compliance with Uganda’s national and international obligations under the TREES and Cancun Safeguards frameworks, intensified efforts to enhance environmental governance through strengthened coordination and engagement of district leadership in the Greater Virunga Landscape where it;

2.2.1 Strengthening national capacities focused on REDD+ safeguards

EMLI in collaboration with the Ministry of Water and Environment with support from UNEP through the UN-REDD Programme, convened two capacity-building workshops aimed at enhancing the understanding and application of safeguards under Uganda’s REDD+ framework. The first workshop was held on 30–31 July 2024 at Esella Country Hotel, and the second national on 23–24 January 2025 at Imperial Golf View Hotel in Entebbe. Together, the workshops reached a total of 123 participants (63 males and 60 females) from government agencies, civil society, development partners, the private sector, district local governments, academia, Indigenous Peoples (Batwa, Benet, and Karamojong), and the media.

The workshops strengthened stakeholder capacity to apply and report on REDD+ safeguards, with an emphasis on the Environmental Excellence Standard (TREES) and the Cancun Safeguards. Participants deepened their understanding of the role of safeguards in mitigating social and environmental risks and ensuring the integrity of REDD+ implementation. The workshops also offered space for stakeholders to engage in dialogue on addressing safeguard gaps and identifying appropriate measures for demonstrating conformance with ART-TREES requirements.

The workshops improved awareness of the safeguards requirements and reporting obligations, greater appreciation of the importance of inclusive consultation processes, and stronger stakeholder commitment to regularly monitor and update safeguard implementation. The national workshop further emphasized the need to update Uganda’s Safeguards Information System (SIS), continue stakeholder engagement, and ensure that safeguards are addressed and respected throughout the REDD+ implementation cycle.

2.2.2 Strengthening coordination and engagement of district leadership to support decentralized environmental governance.

A key milestone was the strategic meeting convened on 23rd September 2024 at Hotel Africana, focused on the formation and functionality of District Environment and Natural Resources Committees (DENRCs) for Kisoro and Rubirizi District Local Governments. The meeting, organized in partnership with the National Environment Management Authority (NEMA), highlighted critical challenges including weak enforcement mechanisms, political interference,

and inadequate funding. Nonetheless, opportunities were identified to leverage existing district structures and engage Members of Parliament to support environmental governance initiatives.

Following the meeting, a four-day field assessment mission was conducted from 25th to 28th September 2024 to evaluate the effectiveness of the DENRCs. Key recommendations arising from this mission included the development of clear operational guidelines for DENRCs, expansion of DENRC structures to broaden governance reach, securing sustainable funding sources, and targeted dissemination of the National Environment Act, 2019, to district stakeholders.

2.2.3 Improving stakeholder understanding of environmental laws and policies

On November 27, 2024, Environmental Management for Livelihood Improvement (EMLI) facilitated a consultative and dissemination workshop titled “Consultative Workshop on the Draft Regulations Prescribing the Procedures of the District Environment and Natural Resources Committees” at Lake View Resort Hotel, Mbarara. The workshop convened 25 participants, including (11 females and 14 males), representing NEMA, proposed members of the District Environment and Natural Resources Committees (DENRCs), and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) from Kisoro and Rubirizi District Local Governments.

The workshop featured presentations on the National Environment Act, 2019, and the draft regulations that outline the procedures for establishing the DENRCs. A panel discussion on compliance and enforcement of the Act engaged representatives from NEMA and officials from District Local Governments, providing key insights into environmental governance challenges and opportunities.

This event created a valuable platform for District Local Governments and CSOs to contribute input into the draft regulations, thereby fostering increased awareness and ownership of the regulatory framework among stakeholders. Additionally, the workshop enhanced participants’ capacity for effective environmental governance at the sub-national level. To further support this, 20 hard copies of the popular English version of the National Environment Act, 2019, were distributed, offering stakeholders simplified access to critical environmental laws and regulations.

2.2.4 Strengthening governance frameworks for more effective and transparent REDD+ project implementation

Throughout the year, EMLI, in collaboration with WWF Uganda Country Office, advanced efforts to strengthen governance frameworks for more transparent and effective REDD+ project implementation in Uganda. Under the Enhancing REDD+ in the Context of Article 6 of the Paris Agreement project, a targeted governance study was undertaken focusing on Kitechura/Ibambaro Bugoma and Kagombe Central Forest Reserves (CFRs). The study examined the critical governance conditions necessary for successful REDD+ implementation at the local level.

Key findings revealed persistent challenges including unclear land tenure systems, weak forest governance structures, low public awareness, and inequitable benefit-sharing mechanisms, all

of which threaten the credibility and sustainability of REDD+ efforts. Despite these barriers, the study underscored the importance of strengthening foundational governance principles such as transparency, inclusiveness, equity, and cross-sectoral coordination as key drivers for success.

In addition, the study recommended actionable steps including the clarification of carbon rights, enhancement of land tenure security, increased political will, and strategic engagement of civil society organizations. To further inform policy discourse, EMLI developed a policy brief that distilled these findings and put forward clear advocacy messages on regulating carbon markets, promoting the inclusion of marginalized groups, and improving forest law enforcement. These efforts reflect EMLI's continued commitment to advancing climate governance and ensuring that Uganda is well-prepared for equitable and effective REDD+ implementation under the Paris Agreement framework.

2.2.5 Supporting the establishment and operationalization of District Environment and Natural Resources Committees (DENRCs)

In collaboration with WWF-UCO, EMLI successfully conducted a study to document the practical experiences, challenges, and good practices of existing district environment committees in Mitooma and Kasese. This study filled a critical knowledge gap by systematically assessing the functionality of district-level environment committees.

The process involved extensive engagement with local government officials, a review of current committee structures, and field-based data collection to determine what works, what doesn't, and why. The findings captured in a comprehensive final report accompanied by actionable recommendations provide valuable evidence to inform the development of national regulations for District Environment and Natural Resources Committees (DENRCs). This initiative represents a significant milestone in efforts to strengthen decentralized environmental governance in Uganda.

2.2.6 Advancing awareness and supporting the implementation of Uganda's National Climate Change Mechanism Regulations, 2025.

EMLI, in collaboration with the World Wide Fund for Nature Uganda Country Office (WWF-UCO), played a central role in enhancing understanding and supporting the implementation of the National Climate Change (Mechanism) Regulations, 2025. These Regulations mark a critical milestone in Uganda's climate action efforts by establishing a clear legal and institutional framework for participation in international carbon markets under Article 6 of the Paris Agreement.

As part of this effort, EMLI actively supported the national launch of the Regulations on 29 May 2025 at the Ministry of Water and Environment Auditorium in Luzira. This high-level event underscored Uganda's readiness to engage in carbon markets and emphasized the importance of transparent, inclusive, and accountable governance structures. Key messages highlighted Uganda's \$28 billion climate financing gap, the need for institutional collaboration, and the urgency of mobilizing climate finance to meet its Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) targets.

To deepen stakeholder understanding and foster early compliance, EMLI co-convened a two-day familiarization workshop from 4–5 June 2025 at Esella Country Hotel, Kira. The workshop, organized in partnership with the Ministry of Water and Environment's Climate Change Department and supported by WWF-UCO and UNEP under the UNREDD Programme support, brought together over 70 participants (36 male, 34 female), including policymakers, civil society, academia, private sector actors, and local government officials.

Discussions focused on the role of carbon markets in achieving Uganda's NDCs, detailed provisions of the new regulations, and the operational status of market-based mechanisms. Presentations from MWE/CCD experts highlighted the potential of Article 6 to unlock significant climate finance by 2030. However, participants also raised key challenges such as limited technical capacity, fragmented institutional coordination, and low private sector engagement.

Emerging issues and priority actions included: Promoting value-driven carbon markets that benefit people, nature, and climate, Strengthening institutional readiness, including mechanisms for carbon fee collection and enforcement and Operationalizing safeguards to ensure equitable benefit-sharing.

The workshop concluded with reaffirmed commitments from the Ministry and WWF-UCO to deepen collaboration, translate technical information into accessible community formats, and support long-term investments in ecosystem sustainability. These efforts represent a significant stride toward the operationalization of Uganda's climate change mechanisms and the realization of its climate finance and mitigation goals.

Challenges

- Competing priorities across ministries, agencies, CSOs and Local Government slowed implementation and decision making
- Financial constraints.

Mitigation measures

- Rescheduling activities to fit in proposed timelines by partners.
- Held joint activities with different partners, for example WWF-UCO and UNEP to convene the familiarization workshop.

Lessons learnt

- Engaging diverse stakeholders from government, CSOs, communities, and private sector enhances ownership and implementation effectiveness.
- Continuous training and capacity building ensures stakeholders understand safeguards, regulations, and governance responsibilities.
- Documentation of experiences, challenges, and good practices informs evidence-based policymaking and regulatory frameworks
- Early planning ensures flexibility with activity timelines

2.3 ECOSYSTEMS AND ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT PROGRAMME

The expected achievement for 2024/25 was improved coordination among state and non-state actors implementing forestry-related NDC interventions to enhance sustainable forest governance and REDD+ implementation this was achieved through a number of initiatives;

2.3.1 Advancing Multi-Stakeholder Coordination and Collaboration on REDD+

Environmental Management for Livelihood Improvement (EMLI), in partnership with WWF-UCO, organized a REDD+ National Technical Committee meeting on July 9, 2024, at Kabira Country Club, Kampala. The meeting aimed to revitalize coordination among state and non-state actors involved in forestry-related NDC interventions. It brought together 20 participants, including (7 females and 13 males), representing the National Technical Committee and the Ministry of Water and Environment REDD+ Secretariat.

The meeting provided comprehensive updates on Uganda's REDD+ program, covering progress on implementation, UN-REDD support, and carbon project developments. It generated key recommendations such as redefining the status of forests in Uganda to address benefit-sharing challenges, building local-level capacity and awareness on REDD+, and increasing local government involvement in REDD+ initiatives. The discussions also highlighted the importance of integrating community best practices and local leadership into the program, as well as strengthening national REDD+ skills to attract both domestic and international support. Serving as a crucial platform for multi-stakeholder collaboration, the meeting renewed commitment among government and non-government actors to work collectively toward effective forest governance, with the improved coordination expected to accelerate REDD+ implementation, enhance transparency, and foster greater community involvement essential steps toward sustainable forest management and climate change mitigation in Uganda.

2.3.2 Enhancing stakeholder engagement and inclusive participation in ongoing forest sector reforms and environmental governance processes Convened a forestry Dialogue

On October 10, 2024, Environmental Management for Livelihood Improvement (EMLI), in partnership with Climate Action Network Uganda (CAN-U), convened a forestry dialogue at Kampala Kolping Hotel. The event brought together 63 participants (22 females and 41 males), including representatives from District Local Governments, Civil Society Organizations, academia, media, and law enforcement. This dialogue provided a crucial platform to strengthen stakeholder engagement and promote inclusive participation in Uganda's ongoing forest sector reforms. Discussions highlighted key priorities such as improving collaboration with academic institutions for tree planting initiatives, enhancing community involvement in forest management, and addressing challenges related to market access and pricing for forest products. Participants also underscored the importance of transparency in decision-making, especially regarding land title issuance within forest reserves. The dialogue further emphasized the need to mobilize funding for capacity building and enforcement, improve coordination among enforcement agencies, and create incentives for private forest registration. These outcomes contribute to advancing sustainable, participatory forest governance responsive to the needs of diverse stakeholders.

2.3.3 Facilitating the preparation of REDD+ related documents.

EMLI facilitated two key REDD+ Strategic meetings in late 2024 and early 2025 to support the development and review of Uganda's Second Summary of Information (SOI) under the TREES program, enhancing the country's participation in carbon market mechanisms under Article 6 of the Paris Agreement. The meetings brought together a total of 36 participants (14 female, 22 male) from government agencies, civil society organizations, academia, and technical institutions.

The first meeting, held on November 22, 2024, at Kampala Kolping Hotel, focused on discussing the draft inception report for the development of SOI. Discussions emphasized alignment of work plans, harmonization of reporting timelines, and the need for a comprehensive stakeholder engagement plan. Particular attention was given to including Indigenous Peoples and ensuring Uganda's REDD+ safeguards align with international expectations.

The second meeting, convened on February 21, 2025, brought together a broader group of stakeholders to review the draft SOI. Presentations and discussions focused on ensuring compliance with UNFCCC safeguards, integrating agroforestry, strengthening institutional capacity, and improving transparency in reporting. Key recommendations included revising the definition of Indigenous Peoples, closing legal and policy gaps, and creating mechanisms for inclusive engagement and continuous feedback.

The two meetings was a collective agreement on a harmonized timeline and roadmap for finalizing Uganda's Second SOI an important step toward enhancing the country's REDD+ transparency, securing results-based payments, and reinforcing trust among stakeholders and carbon market partners.

Challenges faced

- Knowledge gaps on environmental laws and REDD+ safeguards – Some local government officials, DENRC members, and community representatives had limited understanding of the National Environment Act, TREES safeguards, and reporting requirements, affecting compliance and implementation.
- Limited Local community buy-in in promoting environmental safeguards due to inadequate information and involvement in project development processes

Mitigation measures

- Capacity-building and dissemination of relevant environmental laws like the NEA, Environment gazette Workshops on environmental laws, draft regulations, and REDD+ safeguards enhanced stakeholder understanding, engagement, and compliance.
- Structured consultations ensured Indigenous Peoples and local communities contributed to REDD+ documents, promoting inclusivity and alignment with safeguards

Lessons learnt

- Continuous stakeholder engagement fosters trust, ownership, and coordination
- Simplified guidance and capacity-building help stakeholders understand laws, safeguards, and reporting obligations, enabling more effective implementation.
- Establishing timelines for document development and reporting ensures efficiency, transparency, and accountability

2.4 CHEMICALS AND WASTE PROGRAMME

Participation at Open End Working Group (OEWG) 3.2 on the intergovernmental science-policy panel on chemicals, waste, and pollution (ISP-CWP).

EMLI Virtually participated in OEWG 3.2, held in Punta del Este, Uruguay from 14-18 June 2025. The session focused on finalizing the establishment of the ISP-CWP to strengthen the science-policy interface for chemicals, waste, and pollution management. Some of the key outcomes include:

- Adoption of the structure, functions, and governance arrangements for the ISP-CWP;
- Strengthened science-policy interface to support evidence-based policy on chemicals and waste;
- Enhanced international collaboration, knowledge sharing, and stakeholder engagement;
- Opportunities for capacity building and promoting sustainable chemicals and waste management practices.

Challenges Faced

- Limited funding and resources constrained planned activity implementation

Mitigation measures

- Continued participation in virtual international technical meetings under the chemicals cluster to maintain institutional visibility and readiness for future engagement.

Lessons learnt

- Sustained engagement, even in the absence of dedicated funding, maintains institutional visibility and readiness for new opportunities
- Proactive planning, prioritization, and resource mobilization are essential for underfunded programmes
- Leveraging online platforms enhances participation in global events when resources are insufficient for physical attendance.

2.5 LIVELIHOOD PROGRAMME

2.5.1 Strengthening regional collaboration and advocacy for sustainable development.

The expected achievement for 2024/25 was enhanced regional collaboration and advocacy on sustainable development, with a focus on knowledge exchange, policy dialogue, and alignment with continental and global development agendas.

To realize this, EMLI actively participated in the Eleventh Session of the Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development (ARFSD-11), hosted by the Government of Uganda and convened by the UN Economic Commission for Africa in partnership with the African Union Commission, African Development Bank, and other UN agencies from 9–11 April 2025. The Forum reviewed progress towards the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Agenda 2063, with in-depth discussions on five key Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs 3, 5, 8, 14, and 17) and the second 10-year implementation plan of Agenda 2063.

Key highlights included a Presidential Dialogue led by the President, emphasizing industrialization, regional integration, skills development, and value addition. Deliberations also addressed sustainable finance through mechanisms such as carbon markets, green and blue bonds, and debt swaps, while promoting youth employment, gender equality, digital innovation, and private sector involvement.

EMLI's engagement contributed to knowledge exchange and advocacy on inclusive growth and sustainable finance, enabling the organization to strengthen partnerships with regional stakeholders, share experiences, and support evidence-based policy dialogue. The organization reaffirmed its commitment to participating in follow-up processes leading to the 2025 High-Level Political Forum and COP30. Furthermore, EMLI will support the implementation of the Kampala Declaration, reflecting Africa's unified commitment to inclusive and evidence-based development approaches, and will continue advocating for integration of both global and continental development agendas at national and subnational levels.

Challenges Faced

- Limited funding and dependence on external support constrained planned activity implementation

Mitigation measures

- Active participation in regional dialogues.

Lessons learnt

- Active participation in regional forums strengthens influence on policy and implementation at national levels.

3.0 ORGANIZATIONAL MANAGEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT

On 6 May 2025, EMLI participated in the official handover ceremony of the ENR-CSO Network Steering Committee, organized by Environmental Alert. As the outgoing lead of the Weather and Climate Change Technical Working Group, EMLI officially handed over this role to KULIKA. The event recognized the contributions of the outgoing committee and welcomed the newly elected leadership. EMLI, as an active member of the network, reaffirmed its commitment to collaborative civil society efforts in advancing environmental governance, policy advocacy, and sustainable resource management. Key priorities highlighted during the meeting included strengthening leadership, mobilizing climate finance, improving policy implementation, and enhancing civil society engagement in emerging sectors such as mining and oil and gas.

Undertook an audit exercise FY 2024/2025

4.0 MEDIA HIGHLIGHTS

During the year, our work received considerable media attention, with featured stories published in both print and online platforms such as New Vision and Daily Monitor. We broadcasted 22 virtual meetings live on YouTube, attracting a total of 435 views. Our digital presence remained active and engaging on X (formerly Twitter), generating 279 reposts and 2,726 total engagements. The number of followers increased by 10%, reaching 677 by the end of the year.

5.0 PARTNERS AND COLLABORATORS

Table showing EMLI Donors and Partners in the reporting period

Partners	Initiative supported
WWF-UCO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improving decentralized environmental governance in Greater Virunga Landscape. supported by SIDA - Deepening Civil Society Advocacy on Nature and Climate under TBP, supported by DANIDA - Enhancing REDD+ Collaboration in the Context of Article 6 of the Paris Agreement supported by VELUX
UN-REDD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Strengthening Safeguards Processes in Uganda, supported by UNEP
WIJOTA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Administrative Support
Collaborators	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Action Aid International in Uganda (AAU) - Advocates Coalition for Development and Environment (ACODE) - Climate Action Network-Uganda (CAN-U) - Climate Change Department under Ministry of Water and Environment (MWE/CCD) - District Local Governments (Rubirizi, Kisoro, Kasese, Mitooma, Luweero, Wakiso and Buikwe) - Environment and Natural Resources Civil Society Organization's network (ENRC SO) - Forest Sector Support Department (FSSD) - Katara Women Group - KIIMA FOODS 	

- Ministry of Finance Planning and Economic Development (MoFPED)
- National Environment Management Authority (NEMA)
- National Planning Authority (NPA)
- Pan African Climate Justice Alliance (PACJA)
- Participatory Ecological Land Use Management (PELUM)
- Regenerative Africa
- Renewable Energy Civil Society Organizations' Network
- Southern and Eastern Africa Trade Information and Negotiations Institute (SEATINI)
- United Organization for Batwa Development in Uganda (UoBDU)
- Uplift the Rural Poor

EMLI Member organizations

- Brighton Cares
- Kazo Youth Players Association (KYPA)
- KSAM Farm Ltd
- Tusitukirewamu Women's Group
- Uganda Youth Development Network (UYDNET)
- Uganda Youth Welfare Services (UYWES)
- Women and Children Action for Human Rights (WICAH)
- Kikyusa Environmental Farmers Association (KEFA)
- KATUCODO
- Kawempe Community Actor's Group
- KIKA FOUNDATION

6.0 FINACIAL PERFORMANCE

Programme Areas	Budget	Mobilised Resources	Expenditure	Variance
Climate change programme	252,000,000	144,158,280	103,314,850	40,843,430
Environmental Governance Programme	50,000,000	47,244,900	26,266,500	20,978,400
Ecosystem and Environmental management Programme	963,790,000	865,195,343	622,664,098	242,531,245
Chemicals and Waste Programme	34,000,000	-	-	-
Livelihood Programme	44,000,000	-	-	-
Total Programme areas	1,343,790,000	1,056,598,523	752,245,448	304,353,075
Operational costs				-
Personnel costs	179,520,000	143,935,000	137,830,000	6,105,000
Other operating costs	80,100,000	78,997,212	63,977,862	15,019,350
Tota operating costs	259,620,000	222,932,212	201,807,862	21,124,350
Total	1,603,410,000	1,279,530,735	954,053,310	325,477,425

7.0 OUR PARTNERS

Worldwide Fund for Nature and the VELUX Group, Climate Change Department of the Ministry of Water and Environment, CAN-U, ENRCO Network, Sida,





Environmental Management for Livelihood Improvement Bwaise Facility (EMLI)

Plot 133171 Bwaise-Nabweru road

P.O. Box 133171 Kampala

Tel: 0414 692 153

Direct line: 0393 111 249

Email: emli.uganda@gmail.com

Website: www.emliuganda.org