



RWANDA ENVIRONMENT MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY

Your Quarterly Newsletter

October - December 2021



Rwanda delegation at 2021 United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP26)

We are pleased to share with you REMA quarterly newsletter which features key stories and photos of our work these past months. We hope you will find it interesting and informative.

Follow us on social media for regular updates and contact the team at communications@rema.gov.rw for any enquiries.



Rwanda and Finland partner on Meteorology, Climatology and Air Quality



How Rwanda is Using Climate Change Data and Projections to Plan for the Future



Rwanda Selected as Pioneer Country in Taskforce on Access to Climate Finance

Rwanda and Finland partner on Meteorology, Climatology and Air Quality



Minister Dr. Vincent Biruta and Director General of the Finnish Meteorological Institute, Jussi Kaurola, after signing the Memorandum of Understanding

The Ministry of Environment and the Finnish Meteorological Institute have on 5th October 2021 signed a wide-ranging Memorandum of Understanding to cooperate in the fields of meteorology, climatology and air quality. The agreement was signed by Rwanda's Minister of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation, Vincent Biruta, and the Director General of the Finnish Meteorological Institute, Jussi Kaurola.

The new partnership will see Rwanda and Finland work together to expand meteorology and air quality observation networks and modernise equipment and laboratories. It will develop and modernise data management and information systems, as well as improve weather and air quality modelling and forecasting.

"We are pleased to expand our strong partnership with Finland to the fields of meteorology, climatology and air quality. This agreement will enable both countries to share expertise and experience, and ultimately support us to better respond to climate change and increase our resilience to extreme weather" said Vincent Biruta, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation, Rwanda.

Through the Memorandum of Understanding, Finland will support Rwanda to improve its weather, climate and air quality service delivery platforms and create new services that benefit citizens and everyone who depends on accurate and timely meteorological information. The two countries will also share skills and knowledge in data mining, quality management systems as well as engineering and maintenance of meteorological equipment.

Importantly, the two countries will partner to establish a world-class early warning system for weather and air quality extremes that will enable Rwanda to take early action in the face of these growing challenges.

"We look forward to working with our colleagues in Rwanda and strengthening cooperation in meteorology, climatology and air quality. Through this partnership, we will harness the power of meteorological information to support environmental, social and economic development in Finland and Rwanda," said Jussi Kaurola, Director General of the Finnish Meteorological Institute.

About the Finnish Meteorological Institute

The Finnish Meteorological Institute produces observation and research data on the atmosphere, the near space and the seas, as well as weather, sea, air quality and climate services for the needs of public safety, business life and citizens. The Finnish Meteorological Institute is an administrative branch of the Ministry of Transport and Communications.

Learn more at www.en.ilmatiiteenlaitos.fi

About the Ministry of Environment, Rwanda

The Ministry of Environment is the coordinating institution of the environment and natural resources sector in Rwanda. It was established to protect the environment, promote green and climate resilient growth and ensure optimal and rational utilisation of water resources, land and forests for sustainable national development.

Learn more at www.environment.gov.rw

Rwanda Calls for Ambitious Action at the COP26 UN Climate Change Conference



From 1st to 12th November 2021, Rwanda joined the rest of the international community at the 26th UN Climate Change Conference in Glasgow, Scotland and call for ambitious action to address the climate crisis. The event brought together thousands of delegates from governments, the private sector and civil society to renew commitments to limit the warming of the planet.

This year's conference, known as COP26, will be an opportunity for Rwanda to engage with bilateral and multilateral partners, as well as investors in the country's climate action and green growth agenda. During the global event, Rwanda will share its track record of fostering innovative solutions to climate change, and why the country is one of the best destinations for green investment.

Rwanda's delegation to COP26 will be led by the Prime Minister, Édouard Ngirente, and include senior leaders from across government, civil society and the private sector. This year, Rwanda's Minister of Environment, Dr Jeanne d'Arc Mujawamariya, is co-chairing negotiations on achieving common timeframes for all nations when they submit plans for and report on emissions reductions.

Rwanda is committed to protecting the environment and addressing climate change, and has a vision to be a climate resilient and carbon neutral economy by 2050. The country is work-

ing to achieve its 2030 goal of reducing emissions by 38% by engaging with partners, both nationally and internationally, to attract sustainable green investment. COP26 will be a strategic forum to advance these efforts, engage partners and seek new investors to support the country's climate action plan and green growth goals.

"We can overcome immense challenges when we unite with a common purpose. That's why Rwanda is hopeful that COP26 will reach consensus on the critical issues including the implementation framework of the Paris Agreement, guidelines on carbon markets and the finance needed to address climate change and adapt to it," said Minister Dr Jeanne d'Arc Mujawamariya.

Pending decisions to be made by countries at COP26 include setting common timeframes for national climate commitments, strengthening transparency around reporting emissions reductions and climate finance, as well as determining how the global carbon market will work.

Rwanda's Climate Action Journey

The Government of Rwanda has put environment and climate change at the center of the country's policies and plans. Under the country's Vision 2050, Rwanda has a bold vision to become a carbon-neutral and climate resilient economy by the

In May 2020, Rwanda was the first African country to submit its revised climate action plan - the Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC). In the plan, Rwanda has an ambitious target to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 38% by 2030 compared to business as usual, equivalent to an estimated mitigation of up to 4.6 million tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (tCO₂e).

The country's efforts to limit its contribution to climate change and adapt to the consequences of a warming planet over the next decade is estimated at US \$11 billion, made up of 5.7 billion dollars for mitigation and 5.3 billion dollars for adaptation.

To ensure the country remains well coordinated in financing these goals, the Rwanda Green Fund (FONERWA) was created. Since its inception, the Fund has raised US \$217 million for green investments across the country.

Rwanda was one of the few first countries to ban plastic bags in 2008 and single use plastics in 2019.

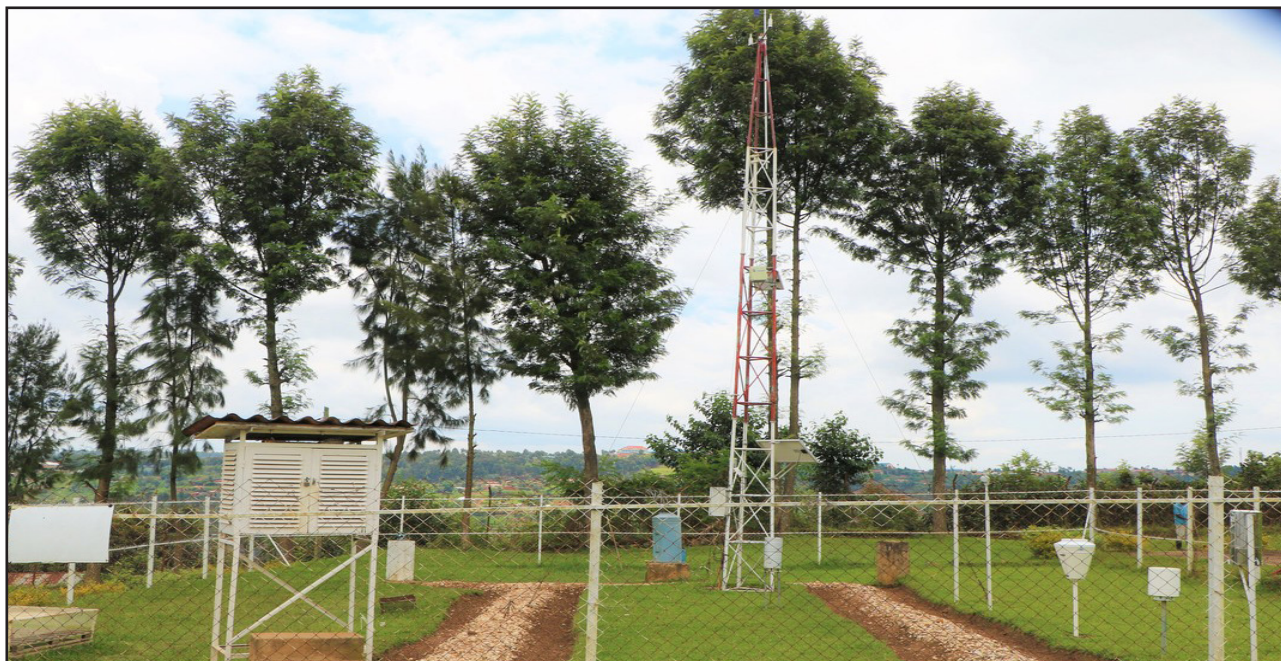
Rwanda's efforts to manage existing forests and reforest areas of the country have led to 30.4% of the country being covered with forests. These areas play an important role in mitigating Rwanda's contribution to climate change.

A National Cooling Strategy has been put in place which will phase out or reduce the use of powerful greenhouse gases used in cooling systems (known as HFCs) as part of efforts to achieve the goals of the Kigali Amendment to the Montreal Protocol.

Rwanda is also investing heavily in e-mobility, sustainable urbanisation, climate smart agriculture and renewable energy.

"To achieve global climate goals, countries need to manage the increasing impacts of climate change on citizens' lives and renew their commitment to sustainable climate finance. COP26 is an opportunity for the world to end the fossil fuel era and start regenerating nature, while also protecting remaining ecosystems" said Minister Dr. Mujawamariya.

How Rwanda is Using Climate Change Data and Projections to Plan for the Future



Gicumbi Air Quality Monitoring station in Northern Province

Rwanda adopted a Green Growth and Climate Resilience Strategy to become a developed, climate-resilient and low-carbon economy by 2050. To achieve this goal, the government and its stakeholders are working to reduce emissions and foster climate resilience.

One of the strategy's programmes of action is 'Climate Data and Projections', which was designed to maintain climate change records and provide data to help the country prepare for a warmer world through new technologies and capacity building.

Having access to climate data and projections is essential for Rwanda to respond to climate change using evidence-based policy making.

Therefore, a number of institutions came together to track and manage climate related data, including Meteo Rwanda, the Ministry of Education, the Rwanda Environment Management Authority, the Rwanda Green Fund and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT).

This effort includes regular measurements, weather forecast, data management, information sharing and climate knowledge and education. Work is underway to build Rwanda's capacity to advance the national adaptation planning process and is being implemented by Meteo Rwanda and the Rwanda Environment Management Authority.

One of activities is climate change projections for Rwanda on different timescale such as 2030, 2040, 2050 and 2080. Those projections will be used to develop climate risk assessments and to inform policy-makers and planners about climate risks.

In addition to this ground-breaking project, here are three other initiatives that are enabling Rwanda to better understand its climate today and more accurately predict how it will change into the future.

1. Rwanda Climate Change Observatory

The Rwanda Climate Change Observatory is a world-class project initiated in 2011 by the Ministry of Education in collaboration with the MIT to measure climate change on Mount Mugogo in terms of greenhouse gases (GHG), meteorological parameters, other climate change factors as well as building skills in storing, processing and archiving GHG data from different sectors.

The Climate Change Observatory is part of WMO's Global Atmosphere Watch network measuring greenhouse gases and air quality. As a World Meteorological Organisation Global Atmosphere Watch station, it contributes to an international network of observation systems supporting the global response to climate change.

This initiative has strengthened research on climate change and atmospheric sciences, presented education opportunities for Rwandans and trained them on effective climate data maintenance and analysis.

2. Investing in Meteo Rwanda forecasting and climate modeling

The Rwanda Meteorology Agency (Meteo Rwanda) provides accurate, timely weather and climate information services for safety of life, property and for socio-economic development of the country.

The agency collects, gathers and accesses meteorological data from weather stations around the country. The data are analysed in parallel with data from other sources to generate the weather forecast of different ranges of time (nowcast, short, medium and long ranges forecast), with the aim of supporting socio-economic development.

Given the importance of weather and climate data for responding to climate change, significant investments have been made to boost the capacity of Meteo Rwanda. This has been done through an investment from the Rwanda Green Fund called "Strengthening Rwanda's Weather and Climate Services to Support Development".

This initiative provided new monitoring equipment and increased the technical skills that lead to improvement of the range of weather and climate information available to inform decision making at all levels in Rwanda,

This project installed climate change and air quality monitoring infrastructure and provided training to inform decision-making and enforcement activities.

The infrastructure provides data for regulators and is being used as a research tool in higher learning institutions.

Data is now being provided to climate modellers to increase climate change consequence modelling in Rwanda and across the region.

3. Building a nationwide Air Quality Index

Rwandans can now access real-time air quality information thanks to a new website and mobile application launched by the Ministry of Environment, Rwanda Environment Management Authority and Rwanda Meteorology Agency.

The countrywide air quality monitoring system provides data on the quality of the air in twenty-three sites across the country. The Air Quality Monitoring System was developed through the Air Quality and Climate Change Monitoring Project, which has been funded by the Rwanda Green Fund (FONERWA).

It was designed in collaboration with Massachusetts Institute of Technology and implemented by Rwanda Environment Manage-

ment Authority and the Ministry of Education.

The system provides real-time Air Quality Index (AQI) for each station in both numerical and color code format. The system highlights the dominant air pollutant which is responsible for air quality degradation during the reported period for each station.

It will help Rwanda to compare ground observations data with satellite data through remote sensing technology to verify their accuracy.

The system strengthens Rwanda's existing field installed air quality monitoring network by providing online access to pollution readings from each station as well as data management including data sharing mechanisms.

Visit the Air Quality Monitoring System here:

- Website: www.aq.rema.gov.rw
- Mobile App (Android): play.google.com/store/apps/details;

Learn more about Rwanda's efforts to use data to prepare for the future at www.meteorwanda.gov.rw.

Rwanda Selected as Pioneer Country in Taskforce on Access to Climate Finance

Rwanda has been selected as a Pioneer Country for the Taskforce on Access to Climate Finance, co-chaired by the United Kingdom and Fiji. The country was chosen due to its strong track record of effectively utilising climate finance and its bold vision to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 38% by 2030, and become a climate resilient and Net Zero economy by 2050. The announcement was made at the COP26 UN Climate Change Summit in Glasgow, Scotland.

As a Pioneer Country alongside Bangladesh, Fiji, Jamaica and Uganda, Rwanda will trial a new approach in cooperation with providers of climate finance. These initial, country and de-



mand-led trials will see Rwanda and finance providers test, model and champion new methods for accessing climate finance.

The United Kingdom has committed £100 million to the newly established taskforce, which will provide capital grants to climate

Your Quarterly Newsletter

vulnerable countries to support delivery of national climate plans.

Rwanda's participation in the task force continues the strong partnership between the United Kingdom and Rwanda on climate issues, including the establishment of the Rwanda Green Fund for which the UK provided seed capital.

Rwanda is among the many voices calling for increased access to investment funds for climate action plans. The country was a part of the steering committee of the COP26 Presidency's Ministerial Meetings on this issue, and is pleased to be involved as a pioneer country in the initiative.

The need for climate finance in nations like Rwanda, which are highly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change, is urgent. With the land, property, jobs, and lives at risk, we cannot afford delay.

The current climate finance system is flawed – it can take years for funds to be successfully approved and disbursed. Project funding is also often not ambitious enough.

Vulnerable nations have no choice but to develop wide-ranging responses to the climate emergency, and they must be empowered to solve the problems they face.

The shift towards larger investments in more ambitious programmes will enable countries like Rwanda to implement the most important projects for the well-being of people, and to correct the imbalance which currently dedicates more finance towards mitigation than adaptation.

A new approach is needed to ensure the most vulnerable countries can take rapid action against climate threats. The taskforce will build upon the feedback of developing countries and of institutions involved in project financing to reach a more sustainable and effective state of investment in climate action.

"Rwanda is pleased to be part of the Taskforce on Access to Climate Finance and we look forward to seeing the transformative changes in climate finance that are needed to secure the future of our planet.

Rwanda has a clear plan of action for responding and adapting to climate change, and we have the necessary frameworks to attract both public and private green investment. We look forward to working with the taskforce to fast-track these efforts and achieve our ambitious targets," said Minister of Environment, Dr Jeanne d'Arc Mujawariya.

The British High Commissioner to Rwanda, Omar Daair, noted: "Rwanda has long been a leader in mobilising climate finance through its award-winning Green Fund, FONERWA, which the UK helped establish. But we recognise that accessing climate finance can often be slow, complex or not well coordinated, and so I'm really excited that Rwanda will now be a pioneer of the new approach launched through this Taskforce.

This will help channel investments more effectively into Rwanda's ambitious green priorities, and will be an important part of the work Rwanda and the UK take forward together to deliver on the promises of COP26".

Nyandungu Eco Park host The Queen's Baton Relay



The Queen's Baton Relay was on 10th November 2021 hosted at Nyandungu Urban Eco-Tourism Park in the City of Kigali.

The Baton which arrived in Rwanda on 9th November, was taken to various destinations around the world as part of commonwealth games traditions.

The 2022 Commonwealth Games are set to start in Birmingham, United Kingdom from July 28 to August 8 2022.

In Rwanda, it was on 8th and 10th November 2021 taken to the Kigali Genocide Memorial at Gisozi and Nyandungu Eco Park respectively, and later taken to Lycée de Kigali.

"The choice of this destination could not have come at a better time than now, when the world's leadership are congregated in Glasgow, Scotland to discuss how to boost efforts to ramp up support for a green, resilient, and inclusive recovery and support to low-carbon transitions that put people at the center" said Juliet Kabera, Director General, Rwanda Environment Management Authority (REMA) in her welcome remarks.

The wetland was degraded due to human activities which endangered its ecosystem. It was at that point that REMA came in with the objective to restore and conserve Nyandungu wetland ecosystem, promote the sustainable management of natural resources, and support livelihood diversification to enhance incomes for local communities as well as providing educational opportunities.

The restored Nyandungu wetland habitat includes a fig forest of na-

tive species, a restored wetland, a rehabilitated stream and ponds, and a reed-bed for pollution abatement of wetlands. Further, the Park has a network of walkways, road, nature-viewing areas, picnic areas, an information center, medicinal garden, the Pope's garden, and a restaurant, just to mention a few.

"The Queen's Baton relay event today, we hope, is going to help us showcase to the World, and particularly to the Commonwealth countries that it is possible to protect the environment, using nature-based solutions, such as wetland protection and restoration, as well as provide an important

means through which cities such as Kigali can meet both the climate change mitigation and adaptation goals, while simultaneously providing a multitude of co-benefits for ecosystems, economies, and societies" added Juliet Kabera, Director General, Rwanda Environment Management Authority.

The Queen's Baton Relay is a great tradition of the Commonwealth games, and the Baton symbolizes the links between all the commonwealth family and travels in all the 72 countries and territories of the commonwealth with the message inside from the Queen of United Kingdom which will be read at the end of the Relay.

Rwanda Showcases Green Investment Opportunities at COP26



At COP26 in Glasgow, the Rwandan delegation in partnership with UNDP Rwanda and the NDC Partnership hosted an event at the NDC Partnership pavilion to share the opportunities for investment in Rwanda's ambitious plans to address climate change.

The speakers discussed Rwanda's plans for the future, specifically the goal of becoming a carbon neutral and climate resilient nation by 2050. Rwanda's action plan, which was set out in its updated Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) last year, reflects an ongoing commitment to placing the environment at the centre of the country's development.

Speaking at the event, Rwanda's Minister of Environment, Dr

Jeanne d'Arc Mujawamariya, made a call for green investment in the country:

"Rwanda has a bold vision to be a carbon neutral economy by 2050, and is one of the best places in the world for green investment. Achieving our NDC requires an estimated investment of around 11 billion dollars, for which 5.3 billion is for adaptation initiatives and 5.7 billion is for mitigation actions. Let's dare to dream big for a net zero Rwanda and achieve our #ClimateAction goals," she said.

The speakers also identified the frameworks in place to attract and facilitate investment. CEO of the Development Bank of Rwanda, Kampeta Sayinzoga, shared the work of the Development

Bank of Rwanda and the Rwanda Green Fund to foster an institutional and regulatory environment which makes Rwanda attractive for external investors.

"Rwanda has done its homework, we have the institutions, systems and an exciting pipeline in place. Rwanda is ready. It's time for investment," she said.

CEO of the Rwanda Green Fund, Teddy Mugabo, pointed to the development of the Green Investment Facility as a key vehicle for Rwanda's move towards a blended finance model which leverages the potential of private and public sector funding.

"Rwanda is ready for a significant increase in investment, and we are working with our partners to

Your Quarterly Newsletter

make it easier for the private sector to access climate finance” she said, highlighting the country’s strong track record of climate action.

During the event, Dr. Jürgen Karl Zattler, Director-General for International Development Policy, the 2030 Agenda and climate at the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, committed an additional

4.5 million Euro as part of Germany’s strategic cooperation with Rwanda on climate action. This investment will support capacity development on NDC implementation and climate research.

The event, “Financing Rwanda’s Climate Action Plan”, featured speakers including the Minister of Environment, Dr. Jeanne d’Arc Mujawamariya, CEO of the Rwanda Green Fund, Teddy Mugabo,

and Dr. Jurgen Zattler from the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development as speakers.

They were joined by three panelists: Kampeta Sayingoza, CEO of the Rwandan Development Bank, Vel Gnanendran, FCDO Director for Climate & Environment, and Stephen Hammer, Advisor to the World Bank’s Climate Change Group.

Rwanda Launches Long-term Research Programme on Climate Change Adaptation



The Rwanda Environment Management Authority (REMA), the University of Rwanda (UR) and the Higher Education Council (HEC) on 7th December 2021 launched a research programme that will provide 50 fully-funded scholarships to 25 scholars and 25 lecturers of the University of Rwanda (UR) to inform long-term climate change adaptation planning and implementation in Rwanda.

The research programme has been made possible through the National Adaptation Planning Process (NAP) Project, which is being implemented by REMA with support from the Global Environment Facility (GEF) through the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).

The programme is intended for full-time Master’s scholars at the University of Rwanda College of Science and Technology (CST) and College of Agriculture and Animal Sciences and Veterinary Medicine (CAVEM).

Interested research fellows or associates from the University of Rwanda and Centres of Excellence submitted research proposals on ecosystem based adaptation approaches, so that best research proposals in fields such as soil management and agroforestry, soil and water engineering, renewable energy, water resources and environmental management as well as biodiversity conservation and natural resource management get financial support.

The scholarship covers tuition, research and publication as well as supervisor incentives, living allowances and funding for field data collection.

Director General of the Rwanda Environment Management Authority, Juliet Kabera, said the programme will enable the country to make informed policy decisions about long-term climate change adaptation and forge new partnerships with research institutions.

"Ecosystem based adaptation approaches promote the integrated management of land, water and living resources in a way that achieves sustainable use and delivers equitable benefits for people and nature. The research programme we are launching today will empower 25 scholars and 25 lecturers to conduct research on nature-based solutions that harness biodiversity and ecosystem services to reduce Rwanda's vulnerability and build resilience to climate change," she said.

The programme is one outcome of a memorandum of understanding between REMA, the University of Rwanda and the Higher Education Council. Through this unique partnership, the institutions are working together to build the capacity of Master's students to conduct research on ecosystem based adaptation, support University of Rwanda researchers to conduct research in ecosystem based adaptation priority areas, avail information for practitioners, policy-makers and other stakeholders, and forge long-term part-

nerships between government, academic and research institutions.

"Climate change is a long-term process and takes place over decades. That's why we need research to match this timescale. By investing in long-term research, we will be better placed to respond and adapt to the changes we experience today and into the future," said Professor Alexandre Lyambabaje, University of Rwanda Vice Chancellor.

Contact and follow us

 Inyota House KG7 AVE
Kigali, Rwanda

 Hotline: 3989

 www.rema.gov.rw

 info@rema.gov.rw

 @REMA_Rwanda

 @rema_rwanda

 Rwanda Environment Management Authority(REMA)

 Rwanda Environment Management Authority REMA

 Rwanda Environment Management Authority

Our Partners



GREEN
CLIMATE
FUND



Nordic
Development
Fund



THE WORLD BANK
IBRD • IDA | WORLD BANK GROUP



Address your feedback to our communications team:
communications@rema.gov.rw

