

# Navigating the Green Path:

**Prospects in the European Union Green Deal.**

Douglas Kamusiime & Ms. Brendah Akankunda

[info@greendealglobal.org](mailto:info@greendealglobal.org)





As Environmental Human rights defenders working with [Green Deal Uganda](#), we witness firsthand on a daily basis the urgency for sustainable development and climate action!

## **The Looming Shadow: Climate Change and the European Union's Bold Response**

[Climate change](#) is no longer a distant threat on the horizon, but a tangible reality casting a long shadow over our planet. Rising temperatures, extreme weather events, and rising sea levels are just a few of its many consequences, disrupting ecosystems, economies, and lives worldwide. This complex challenge demands a global response, and the European Union (EU) has stepped forward with a comprehensive strategy; the [EU Green Deal Package](#). The comprehensive Green Deal initiative by the European Union brings both challenges and opportunities to Uganda, specifically pertaining to environment-related matters and climate change.

### **Understanding the EU Green Deal Package**

The EU Green Deal, launched in 2019, aims to transform Europe into the world's first [climate-neutral continent by 2050](#). This comprehensive policy framework encompasses various initiatives, including carbon neutrality, biodiversity preservation, and sustainable agriculture. While the primary focus is on EU member states, its implications extend globally, impacting countries like Uganda, especially in areas of trade, investment, and environmental standards.

To pave the way to achieve this ambitious target in the fight for climate change, the [European Commission \(EC\)](#) pledged to reach these more detailed targets by 2030; Minimum 55% cuts in greenhouse gas emissions; Above 32% share of renewable energy; and at least 32.5% improvement in energy efficiency.

The Green Deal package calls for public policy to address climate change along with achieving other social aims like job creation, economic growth and reducing economic inequality hence the EU becoming the first climate neutral continent by 2050

With this understanding, the EU Green Deal Package becomes more than just a set of policies; but a beacon of hope, a demonstration that ambitious action is possible and that collective action is essential.

## EU Green Deal: Boon or Burden for Uganda's Sustainable Future

A significant challenge for Uganda lies in aligning its policies and practices with the stringent environmental regulations set forth by the EU. Meeting these standards requires substantial investments in green technologies, renewable energy, and sustainable practices across sectors such as agriculture, manufacturing, and transportation. However, limited financial resources and technological capacities pose formidable obstacles for Uganda's transition to a greener economy.

One of the key regulations is the [EU Deforestation Regulation](#) which will require all value chain supply actors in intensive sectors especially Agriculture and extractives to prove to the EU that the production of their commodities was not done in a [deforested area](#).

This regulation comes in at a time when there has been a huge outcry fronted mainly by Environmental Human rights Defenders (EHRDS) and civil society at large on the need to preserve the natural resources particularly the forests. One significant event that garnered attention was the proposal by [Government of Uganda to degazette part of the Bugoma Forest](#) for sugarcane plantation development

This proposal sparked outrage at [Green Deal Uganda](#) and several other [EHRDs](#) who highlighted the detrimental impacts such actions would have on the forest ecosystem, including loss of habitat for endangered species, disruption of water catchment areas, and exacerbation of climate change.

By regulating the import of products linked to deforestation, this specific Regulation hugely contributes to the preservation of forests and biodiversity in Uganda like Bugoma forest among the others.

The EU Green Deal package also sets out a directive on [Corporate sustainability Due Diligence](#). Proposed in 2022, this EU Directive primarily focuses on regulating the behavior of companies within the EU to ensure that they address and mitigate adverse human rights, environmental, and governance impacts within their global value chains.

This Directive comes at a time when Uganda has just put in place a National Action plan (NAP) on Business and Human rights that calls upon corporations to respect and promote

Human rights in their business activities.

The key challenge for implementation of the NAP and other national legislations centers around the **strong power dynamics** of the Multinational Corporations which may not be held accountable under the laws of Uganda.

However, with the strong EU legislation, there is hope for Uganda to potentially adopt similar principles or regulations domestically, especially if it seeks to enhance its own corporate governance frameworks or attract investment from EU countries.

## The Complexities!

**Technical Expertise and Capacity:** Implementing the Green Deal effectively requires access to technical expertise and financial resources. While this could impact Uganda's ability to compete in exports, especially within industries that heavily rely on non-renewable resources. Finding a balance between promoting economic advancement and maintaining environmental sustainability becomes a complex challenge for Uganda as it seeks to better living standards while limiting its ecological footprint.

**Land Rights and Livelihoods:** Transitioning to a **green economy** should not come at the expense of land rights and traditional livelihoods. Careful consideration must be given to the potential impacts of land-use changes associated with renewable energy projects and conservation efforts.

**Equity and Access:** Ensuring a just transition requires ensuring that the benefits and burdens of the Green Deal are shared equitably. This means prioritizing solutions that address the needs of marginalized communities, such as small-scale farmers and indigenous groups, who are often disproportionately affected by environmental degradation and climate change.

Despite the challenges, Uganda can benefit significantly from the EU Green Deal in its journey towards sustainable development. Through showcasing dedication towards climate action and preserving the environment, Uganda could gain access to advantageous trade pacts as well as business prospects in both Europe and other regions worldwide at the same time ensuring respect to Human and environmental rights

## Conclusion:

Navigating the Green Path requires a strategic and inclusive approach that prioritizes environmental protection, human rights, and sustainable development. By working collaboratively with the EU and other stakeholders, Uganda can harness the opportunities presented by the Green Deal while addressing the potential challenges to ensure a just and equitable transition towards a greener future.

not me.us 

0200902816

P.O. Box No. 800424

Plot 13. Friendship Road,  
Ministers Village, Ntinda,  
Nakawa, Kampala.