

National Water to turn faecal matter into charcoal

By Andrew Ssenyonga

In an effort to mitigate climate change and preserve the environment, National Water and Sewerage Corporation (NWSC) has embarked on a project to reduce deforestation by turning sewage into briquettes.

The corporation says massive encroachment on wetlands and deforestation have seriously impacted on the quality of water, thus increasing the cost of filtration and treatment.

Waste to fuel

The managing director of NWSC, Eng. Silver Mugisha, said a lot of forest cover had been destroyed by people and institutions who use firewood for cooking.

Mugisha said plans were underway to produce briquettes from faecal matter.

Addressing a press conference at the corporation's head offices in Nakasero, Kampala yesterday, Mugisha said turning waste into fuel was the way to go.

"Unlike charcoal, briquettes made from the waste produce no smoke," he added.



Musamali (left) looks on as Mugisha addresses journalists during a press conference about their partnership to plant one million trees at NWSC offices in Nakasero, Kampala yesterday. Photo by Nancy Nanyonga

Tree planting campaign

The corporation has also partnered with National Forestry Authority (NFA) to facilitate the success of the tree planting campaign.

The one million tree planting campaign was initiated by Young Water Professionals (YWPs) to encourage the youth, school-going children and the communities in areas that NWSC had operations.

Mugisha said NWSC was mindful of the need to protect and conserve the environment for sustainable provision of water and sewerage services.

Mugisha said NWSC together with NFA would also work towards wetland restoration and catchment protection in various parts of the country.

The acting executive director of NFA, Paul Musamali, said the community tree planting programme was introduced in 2009 and it is fully funded by the Government.

"The campaign will increase forest cover and supply of forestry products, which are increasingly getting scarce," Musamali said.

He explained that forests in and around urban areas

help filter and regulate water, contributing to high-quality freshwater supply for people.

"Forests also protect watersheds and prevent flooding as they store water in their branches and soil. Urban green spaces, including forests encourage active and healthy lifestyles, improve mental health, prevent disease and provide a place for people to socialise," he added.

John Fisher Sekabira, the president of YWPs, said since its inception in October last year, 172,192 trees had been planted in NWSC areas.