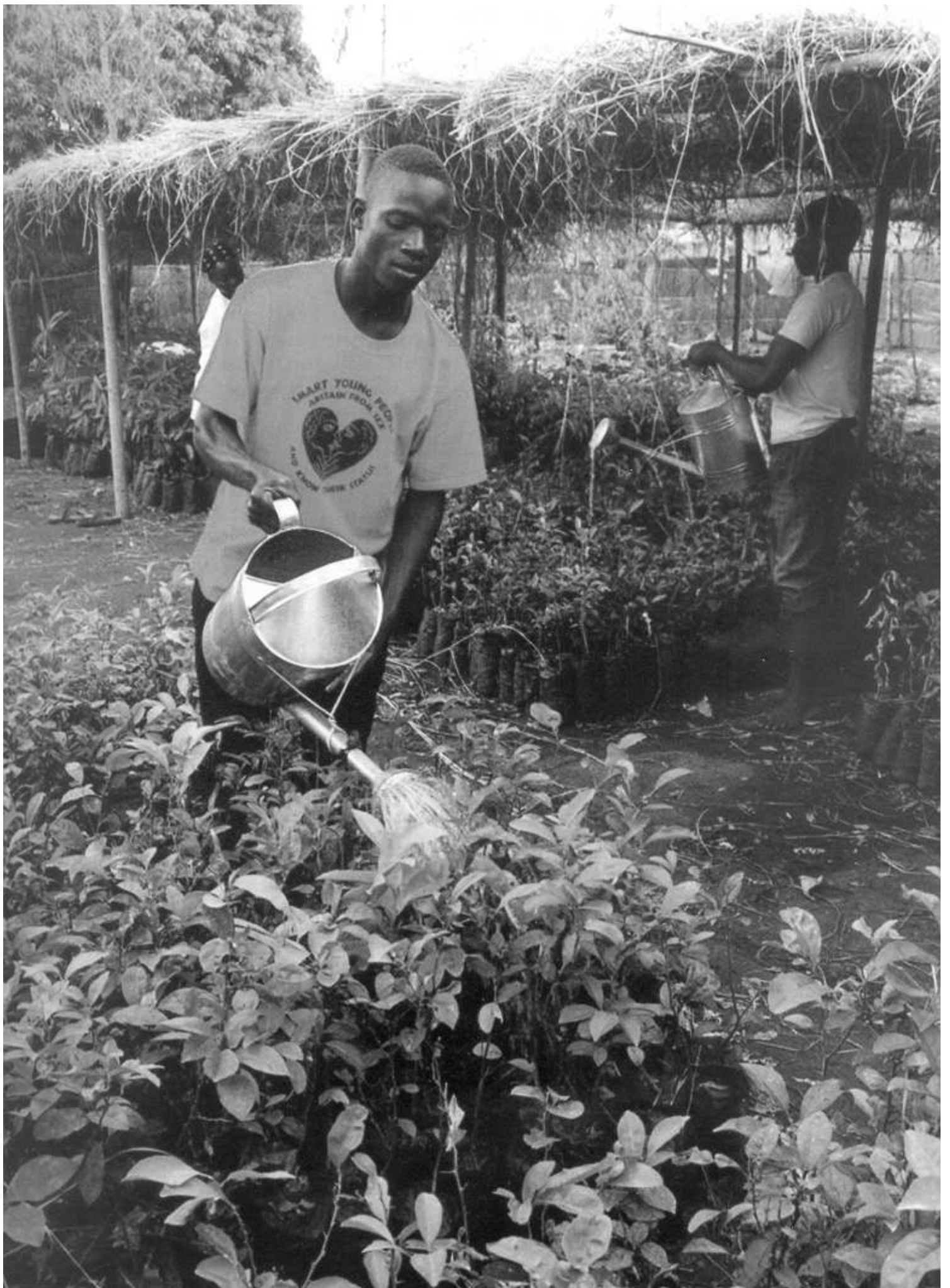




**PROTECTING
THE
ENVIRONMENT**



9. Protecting the Environment

OUR AIM

The UDF government is aware that the poverty situation in the country is contributing to high levels of environmental degradation. Since the poor rely on natural resources for survival, the country is experiencing unsustainable levels of fuel wood burning, fire hunting, and depletion of water resources - resulting in soil erosion and deforestation.

The UDF government believes that people need to change behavior in order to manage and preserve the environment. Therefore the UDF will intensify sensitization campaigns against pollution, cutting down trees for fuel wood, and wild fire burning. The UDF government wants to introduce incentives for encouraging people to engage in recycling, tree planting, and waste management.

WHAT WE PLEDGED

The past UDF manifestoes pledged to support efforts to halt the escalating environmental damage and ensure environmental protection. The government promised to introduce legislation and instruments for environmental protection and build environmental concerns in the overall developed strategy.

OUR ACHIEVEMENTS

The UDF Government has made notable achievements in environmental management and utilization as follows:

- Development and implementation of the National Environmental Action Plan (NEAP), the National Environmental Policy and Management Act, the Energy Policy, Fisheries Policy and Act, the Forestry Policy and Act, and approval of a Bio-Safety Bill in 2003.
- Introduction of the Environment Support Programme as an umbrella investment framework for the integration of environmental concerns into national planning.

- Establishment and training of more than 3000 village natural resources management committees.
- Completion of Phase 1 of Kapichira Hydro-electric Project, installation and commissioning of two machines each with a capacity of 64 mw.
- Expansion of the rural electrification programme .
- Intensification of small scale mining

THE CHALLENGES

- In the face of high population growth, the UDF government is faced with the challenge of unsustainable levels of usage of natural resources. The high illiteracy and poverty situation contributes to environmental degradation by forcing the poor to rely on natural resources for survival, especially as regards fuel wood energy, agriculture, water, fisheries and wildlife.
- The burning of crop residue, bush and forest fires, use of fire for hunting and clearing grazing pasture from wanton pyromania



and for fuel wood are still major problems.

- Soil erosion and degradation, deforestation, depletion and degradation of water resources continue to prevail.

OUR COMMITMENT

The UDF government realises that the survival of the nation depends on how well we manage and conserve our natural resources. The UDF is therefore committed to strengthening the legal and institutional framework governing environmental management by devolving the responsibility for environmental monitoring and planning to the local government.

The UDF will ensure the involvement of the private sector, NGOs and local communities in the management, conservation and sustainable utilization of natural resources and the environment.

The UDF will develop alternative livelihood strategies which include establishing a supportive technology development and transfer mechanism so that the poor change their behaviour, particularly with regards to use of fuel wood for energy and the wanton burning of biomass.

Under this manifesto, the UDF government will promote trade and markets in non-consumptive, value added products from natural resources so that the poor can benefit more by making and selling products from natural resources than by consuming (especially burning) those resources.

The UDF will strive to manage forestry resources endowment in a sustainable

manner to maximize benefits to the nation. The government will conserve and manage national park, wildlife reserves and outside protected areas in such a way as to ensure their protection, sustainable utilization, and reduction of people/wildlife conflicts.

The UDF is committed to managing fish resources for sustainable utilisation and conserve aquatic biodiversity. The government will conserve and manage sustainably the nation's unique tourist attractions so that the economy can benefit from its natural environment. Under this manifesto, UDF is committed to exploring avenues for industrial and mining activities while conforming to sustained natural resource utilisation and protection of the environment.

OUR PLEDGES

The next UDF government will do the following:

Forestry

- Provide an enabling framework for promoting the participation of local communities, NGOs and the private sector in forest conservation and management.
- Establish appropriate incentives that will promote the effective contribution of Malawi's forest resources and on-farm trees to the alleviation of poverty, sustainable economic development and environmental protection.
- Provide economic incentives and the necessary legal framework and technology to encourage rural communities to be self-sufficient in fuel wood requirements.

- Promote development and dissemination of agro-forestry practices.
- Promote dissemination of indigenous knowledge about the medicinal and other properties of Malawi's indigenous forest resources and where possible assist in marketing such knowledge for the benefit of the custodians of the knowledge.
- Ensure the sustainable utilization of forest resources by practicing conservation in the use of forest products, improving specifically the efficiency of fuel wood conservation, recycling paper through incentives and regulations and substituting fuel wood with alternatives such as paraffin, solar energy, biogas, electricity and coal where feasible.
- Promote and support the conservation and protection of forest ecosystems and the growing of trees by individual companies, estates, local communities and authorities, including the integration of forests and trees into farming systems, soil conservation activities and land-use systems.
- Involve local communities in afforestation and rehabilitation of bare, fragile or erodible areas.
- Promote forestry conservation measures for civil works, including minimal tree destruction when constructing roads, prohibiting encroachment of protected areas, and empowering chiefs to sanction tree felling in settlement areas.

- Provide alternative income generating activities that will reduce pressure on forestry products.

Fisheries

- Contain over-exploitation and destruction of habitat through strengthened research efforts and adequate planning, controls and monitoring.
- Promote aquaculture development as a means of raising farm incomes, increasing the supply of fresh fish, and decreasing pressure to capture fisheries.
- Promote inter-territorial co-operation in fisheries matters on all shared waters to minimize resource duplication and obviate any risk of over-exploitation.
- Subject all proposed introduction of exotic species into water ecosystems to detailed ecological impact studies.
- Prevent and reverse the process of catchments degradation in order to conserve rivers as breeding habitat for endemic fish.
- Give local communities adequate responsibility for the management of fisheries resources and strengthen the local management capacity.
- Accord greater attention to enforcement of fisheries laws and regulations, combined with a separate fisheries extension service which will collaborate with NGOs and other extension officers to promote community participation in fisheries resources management.



- Halt use of non-sustainable fishing technology.

National Parks and Wildlife

- Undertake appropriate programmes of research and monitoring in relation not only to the protection and conservation but also the sustainable utilization of resources in ways that are socially and economically important and the minimization of the negative impacts of wildlife.
- Manage, protect and conserve national parks and wildlife reserves according to management plans.
- Provide economic incentives and the necessary policy and legal framework to encourage the private sector to invest in revenue generating activities based on the sustainable utilization of national park and wildlife reserves.
- Increase benefits to local communities from national parks and wildlife reserves by, as far as possible, involving local communities in their planning, management and administration, and by returning a certain percentage of revenues to local communities.
- Improve the law enforcement and extension capability of the department of national parks and wildlife and increase the involvement of local communities in their management in order to contain poaching.
- Establish strong cooperative links with counterpart departments in the

neighboring states so as to better manage Malawi's national parks and wildlife reserves that lie on international borders.

Water Resources

- Strengthen the water resources board as a high level body responsible for the management of the water resources of the nation and constituting the prime source of policy advice to the government on water resource management issues.
- Develop an integrated approach that will guide the allocation of water, the allocation of investment and the pricing of water services. This will enable the achievement of maximum net benefit to Malawi from its water resources while recognizing both the social, environmental and economic value of water.
- Promote and devise methods of harvesting rainwater using low cost structures which can be easily managed and maintained by the smallholder farmers and villagers.
- Promote the development of small-scale beneficiary managed irrigation schemes with an emphasis on efficient water management, while ensuring and maintaining environmental integrity.
- Rehabilitate catchments areas, boreholes and gravity-fed water supplies as a safeguard to reduce the impact of supply shocks from droughts.
- Expedite implementation of the programme to contain/eradicate the water hyacinth.

- Promote effective water pollution monitoring and prevention programmes based on enforceable water quality guidelines and standards.
- Promote efficient water use.

Energy

- Strengthen the coordination of energy sector developments and improve the energy planning capability of those agencies involved in energy matters.
- Promote energy saving and renewable energy technologies.
- Promote the utilisation of thinning from Viphya and other forests and more efficient technologies for the production of charcoal.
- Explore means to make electricity more affordable and accessible in order to reduce the dependency on fuel wood.
- Develop indigenous coal resources to the extent that this is economically viable and implement an oil exploration programme to be undertaken and financed by competent private companies with a full environmental impact assessment and mitigation measures.
- Encourage government and rural communities to work together in providing electricity infrastructure in order to ensure its affordability.
- Amend the legislation that gives a monopoly on the supply of electricity in order to encourage competition.

- Explore ways to increase the percentage of ethanol in petrol and the possibility of blending ethanol and paraffin in order to reduce dependency on non-renewable resources.

Industry and Mining

- Adopt industrial and mining policies that are consistent with proper management of natural resources and the environment.
- Enact industrial and mining laws for prevention of environmental pollution and maintenance of ecological balance.
- Encourage development of industries that are based on domestic raw materials and use of technology that is appropriate for the local environment.
- Provide incentives to encourage the adoption of environmentally friendly technologies in industry and mining, incorporating energy saving, reduction of health hazards, pollution control and safe disposal of waste.
- Prohibit imports of environmentally harmful substances.
- Promote the use of concrete blocks in construction in order to decrease use of burnt bricks, which require fuel wood.
- Promote use of environmental guidelines and environmental impact assessment before industrial sites are developed and ensure application of a monitoring and auditing system for operating industries.

Tourism

- Promote fair access to tourism market opportunities for all potential participants through encouragement of partnerships
- Develop and implement a tourism-training programme for all potential participants including local communities.
- Monitor compliance with tourism laws and ensure that health regulations are strictly adhered to at all tourism sites.
- Encourage tourism that protects, conserves and manages the environment and natural resources of the country in a sustainable manner.



A Well Designed Sewage System