



# Rwanda Water Resources Board

## RWB

*Monthly*

# NEWSLETTER

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## Businesses risking prison, penalties over water permits



Irrigation is one of the activities subject to water use permit

**12th July 2022:** More than 1,500 businesses are using water without permits and, as such, they face penalties as well as imprisonment, The New Times' Doing Business has learnt.

Vital Munyandinda, the Water Use Permits Division Manager at Rwanda Water Resources Board (RWB), said that water resources are under increasing pressure, emphasizing the need for using them efficiently and effectively so as to ensure sustainable use for future generations.

“Currently, we have identified a total of approximately 2,200 big water users. And so far, only 696 have valid water use permits,” he said.

He said that according to the 2018 water use law (Article 36), “any person who uses water or carries out a water related activity without a water use permit as required, commits an offense.”

Upon conviction, the suspect is liable to imprisonment for a term of not less than two months and not more than three months and a fine of Rwf500,000 or only one of the penalties.

“Additionally, if businesses do not have water use permits, they are not recognised for water allocation and planning and they risk losing their water share, their abstraction sites or their concession areas,” Munyandinda explained.

Munyandinda said that they need to establish how much water is used, who uses it, and where users

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are located since it enables them to measure how much water is actually available for use.

This, he said, is based on the fact that in some areas, there is still extra water that can be made available for use, or there is already more water being used without considering the damage to the aquatic systems.

### Who needs water use permits?

Munyandinda said that irrigating an area of more than one hectare is one example of an activity where people in charge need to apply for water use permits.

Construction of infrastructure on river banks or lakes and dams, fish farming, coffee washing stations, industries using water, hydropower plants, mining companies, gas extraction, marine navigation, and recreational activities using water bodies are some of the other businesses that should request permits using water bodies are some of the other businesses that should request permits before using water resources from rivers, lakes,

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“Water should be used efficiently, effectively and wisely. In order to do this, it’s important to use only the amount of water needed and remember that other people downstream also need it. We have to share water equitably in order to satisfy our needs not only for the present but also for future generations,” he added.

**Negative effects from lack of water use permits**  
Munyandinda said that using water resources without permits triggers difficulties in managing water resources, and ineffective and inefficient water resources management which could affect the country’s socio-economic development.

“The effects also include lack of equitable water allocation due to the fact that the information on the available water, the used water and the needed water, by different users sharing the same source is not all known,” he said.

He added that the ineffective and inefficient use of water resources could lead to environmental degradation.

“If people use water without permits, it’s not possible to monitor and to inspect their use. Therefore, we have to ensure that they comply with the principle of environment protection,” he noted. He said the effects also include failure to recover the cost for water resources investments.

“The government invests much funds into water resources management interventions such as catchments restoration, floods control, river banks protection and others.

“So, as water users benefit from that investment, they must understand the necessity of paying water use fees which will be used for further investments related to water resources management,” he said.

Adolphe Niragira, a farm manager at Garden Fresh Ltd, in Nyagatare District, requested for a water extraction permit to irrigate crops using sprinklers that extract water from a marshland in the District.

He explained that having a water permit is very important as the user can’t face any conflicts.

“During the dry season, we face drought challenges and when you do not possess the water permit, you encounter losses. Again, lack of the water permit leads to illegal operations as well as creating conflicts among water users in different activities such as agriculture, fishing, among others,” he said.

Christopher Rudaseswa, a technician in agriculture and fishing in Rwamagana District, noted that water users with water permits realize the importance of environment protection.

“Water users with water permits operate freely. They are likely to get support from the experts in the sector. And they are trained on how to use water resources by conserving the environment,” Rudaseswa said.

He noted that there is especially a danger of no environment protection when water resources are used illegally.

**[RWB helps you now to apply for your water use permit. Click here](#)**

## 60 engineers attend the 'Summer School 2022 on Landslide Analysis and Slope Stability in Rwanda'



Participants of the 'Summer High School 2022' posing for a group photo

**14th July 2022:** 60 engineers and other professionals in related fields have participated in a one-week 'Summer School 2022 on 'Landslide Analysis and Slope Stability in Rwanda', an educational course organized by IPRC Musanze in collaboration with the University of Parma (UNIPR) and the Rwanda Water Resources Board (RWB).

The 'Summer School' was funded by EnRHED Erasmus Project. It entails both theoretical lessons and practical exercises using appropriate numerical codes designed specifically for slope stability analyses.

"Today, we are, more than ever, facing threats from the increased climate change and variabilities with heavy and intense rainfall triggering floods and landslides more frequently, sometimes finding us unprepared in some areas,"

"Flood and landslide-prone areas occupy a big share of the national territory, posing a threat to human security and the country's prosperity." Dr. Emmanuel Rukundo, RWB's Director General.

Hence, the Government of Rwanda through RWB has developed and continues to develop many projects to address problems affecting the country's water resources, with erosion and landslides being among the most important to deal with, he reveals.

The main goals of the 'Summer School 2022' include improving the awareness of civil engineers about hydrogeological hazards in Rwanda, increasing the knowledge about the problem of landslides, bringing up the capability of tackling and solving slope stability problems, and introducing knowledge about problems associated with deforestation and solutions through replanting of soil slopes for stabilization purposes.

On the other hand, its closing ceremony followed the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed between RWB and Rwanda Polytechnic regarding the establishment of a substantive collaboration to build knowledge, skills and capacity within the water sector.

### [Engineers speak out](#)

One of the participants, Dieudonne Niyigena, appreciates the course for enhancing knowledge in analyzing the factors that trigger landslides and slope instability, as well as the preventive measures.

Dr. Hussein Bizimana, RWB's Hydraulic Flood Modelling Specialist, notes that it is an academic opportunity that will equip trained engineers with advanced skills in dealing successfully with landslide occurrences and associated risks.

### [Watch it here in RTV news](#)

## Inception meeting and consultation forum on Rusizi Catchment Management Planning



Stakeholders using the map to discuss the Rusizi catchment situation

**12th July 2022:** RWB in partnership with Enabel - Rwanda have hosted a one-day inception meeting and consultation forum on Rusizi Catchment Management Planning.

The event, taking place in Rusizi District, Western Province, has featured different stakeholders from Rusizi catchment to discuss the Catchment Management Planning (CMP) objectives, methodology, work plan as well as the catchment situation.

During its conclusion, they have conducted a technical field visit to Bugarama Wetland and Ruhwa sub-catchment outlet as part of the catchment assessment.

Rusizi catchment is mainly drained by Rusizi and Ruhwa rivers and their tributaries originating from Nyungwe and Gishwati forests to upset in Lake Kivu.

The catchment is dominated by Rusizi river and the part of Lake Kivu, and it extends to Bugarama region which is the lowest part in Rwanda (900 m).

## Rwanda set to roll out 'flood sensors' to mitigate disasters nationwide



RWB installs telemetry stations on rivers to detect water levels

**18th July 2022:** Rwanda is set to roll out flood sensors nationwide to strengthen the early warning system.

Installing flood sensors (detectors of water levels) on rivers, drainages and lakes, is among the investments that Rwanda is making to manage and control the effects of storm water- surface water in abnormal quantities resulting from heavy falls of rain that result in floods.

The move is based on the fact Rwanda loses over Rwf204 billion due to disasters, such as floods and landslides as a result of lacking effective storm water management.

Disasters, mainly floods and landslides, killed about 100 people and injured 195 from January to mid-October last year.

At least 107 people were killed by disasters from January to April this year alone.

“The flood sensors will be updating us -in between every 5 and 15 minutes- about water levels, quantity, depth and speed of the storm water in rivers and drainages,” Davis Bugingo, the Flood Management and Water Storage Development Division Manager at RWB told The New Times.

“With that we will be able to warn people so that they leave a certain place because it might be affected by floods at the moment,” he added.

Bugingo revealed that procurement is going on in Kigali City to install flood sensors on between 10 and 15 places known to have rivers and drainages that are known to be sources of floods in the capital.

“We are targeting areas where storm water converges to cause floods. We have identified catchments such as those of Rwandex, Rugunga, Gikondo, Kinamba, Nyabugogo, Nyamirambo and others,” he said.

By next year, the flood sensors will have been installed in Kigali city, he noted.

“With the sensors we will be alerting the ministry in charge of emergency management and other institutions to do quick evacuation,” he said.

At least US \$0.2 million from the Rwanda Urban Development Project, financed by the World Bank, could be spent to procure flood sensors and hydrological stations in Kigali city.

“The system will also help owners of buildings to know the flood status for better decisions and enhance the infrastructure’s resilience,” he said.

### Floods sensors in other parts of the country

Bugingo disclosed that flood sensors, in another project apart from Urban Development Project, have been installed on major rivers and lakes across the country.

He said they have been installed on Sebeya River- one of the rivers when inundated usually causes floods in western province.

The government has also been constructing Rwf7.5 billion dams to contain flooding caused by this river under the support of the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands.

The flood sensors, he added, have again been installed on Rivers; Muvumba, Akanyaru, Rusizi, Mukungwa, and Nyabarongo, that are usually inundated to cause loss of lives and damage of properties.

“We are still installing more in other places,” he said.

### Different interventions to manage stormwater

Last week, the City of Kigali announced that over \$1 million (over Rwf1 billion) is set to be invested in developing the Kigali ‘Stormwater Management Master Plan’ that is expected to be complete by 2024 so as to mitigate floods in the city.

Bugingo explained that managing storm water requires different interventions at different levels.

“Storm water management is wide. It starts with home, land and building owners. When it rains, they must make sure they harvest rainwater using different techniques. They should also avoid a lot of pavements on the ground in their homes but also have lawns, gardens to ensure they curb runoff water speed,” he said.

However, harvesting rainwater, according to Rwanda Water Resources Board (RWB), is just 17 per cent across the country. Only two per cent of the households use rainwater tanks.

It would also take an investment outlay of \$40 million to equip all identified public buildings with rainwater storage systems.

“After rainwater harvesting, the runoff water needs proper channels and drainage networks so that they do not cause flooding.

“When detailing a physical plan for settlement in a village, the issue of storm water should be considered. Then we need big drainage networks with capacity to convey storm water across the whole city,” Bugingo said.

He said centralised sewerage system in the City of Kigali starts from managing stormwater in neighbourhoods.

### Natural based solutions

To manage stormwater, he added that nature-based solutions are also needed.

“These include planting trees and vegetation on hills, along rivers and drainages to help reduce speed of runoff water to avoid flooding,” he said.

In addition, he said, rehabilitating and conserving wetlands is needed since they retain and curb floods.

“The infrastructure such as roads and bridges among others should also be built in a way that they are resilient to floods,” he added.

## Dutch Parliamentarians visit Sebeya project's flood mitigation structures



The Dutch Parliamentarians touring the flood mitigation structures

**19th July 2022:** A delegation of Dutch Parliamentarians has visited various activities implemented through Embedding Water Resources Management in Rwanda (EWRM)- Sebeya Project, which is funded by the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in Rwanda.

This is a one-day visit on Sunday, July 17, 2022, with RWB's technical team led by Davis Bugingo, Flood Management and Water Storage Development Division Manager.

The delegation has toured the flood mitigation structures built along the Sebeya river, such as retaining walls and Sebeya lateral dyke, which protect local citizens from the river floods used to inundate different areas of Rubavu District.

Furthermore, they have also witnessed the project's impacts in some of the current protected areas, such as Nyundo School of Arts and Mahoko Center.

## IUCN DDG pays a courtesy visit to the Sebeya Project's beneficiaries



RWB DG and IUCN DDG meeting with Sebeya Project's beneficiaries

**20th July 2022:** The Deputy Director General (DDG) of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), Stewart Maginnis, and Director General (DG) of the Rwanda Water Resources Board (RWB), Dr. Emmanuel Rukundo, have met with the beneficiaries of the ongoing activities of Embedding Water Resources Management in Rwanda (EWRM) - Sebeya Project.

During their visit, the officials have toured current protected areas in Kanama and Nyundo Sectors, Rubavu District, such as Nyundo School of Arts and Mahoko Center.

They also visited various implemented activities along with the technical team, including radical terraces, flood control infrastructures such as retention dam and lateral dyke as well as supporting measures related to loans and saving groups.

Beneficiaries have been urged to strive for the sustainability of the ongoing project activities. They also commended the tremendous efforts of all stakeholders to ensure the accomplishment of the project's objectives.

The Embedding Water Resources Management in Rwanda (EWRM) - Sebeya Project is being implemented, in four Districts namely Nyabihu, Ngororero, Rutsiro, and Rubavu of the Eastern Province, by RWB in partnership with IUCN, SNV, and RWARRI, with the funds from the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands.

## Districts and private sector staff trained on water use permits and catchments committees' roles



The training participants posing for a group photo

**22th July 2022:** The local government and private sector staff from seven districts in Western Province have been trained on water use permits and catchments committees' roles.

The three-day training, from 20th to 22nd July 2022 was organized by RWB in partnership with GIZ Rwanda via the Nexus Platform and ABAKIR, and the concerned Districts were Karongi, Rubavu, Rutsiro, Nyamasheke, Rusizi, Ngororero and Nyabihu.

The training enhanced the effectiveness of collaboration between RWB and the Districts that are primarily adjacent to Lake Kivu, and also located in the Kivu and Rusizi catchments.

Furthermore, as explained by Vital Munyandida, RWB's Water Use Permits Division Manager, it was an opportunity to address water allocation, conflict resolutions, effective water resources management planning as well as mobilizing different water users to apply for water use permits as stipulated by the law.

“The hydrological management of Kivu Lake and Rusizi River is critical to the overall protection and management of the basin. Thus, the involvement of all partners is very crucial, especially water users,

who play a significant role in ensuring a fair use and equitable sharing of the water resources through the water use permitting processes,” he said.

The water Law n°49/2018 of 13/08/2018 Determining the Use and Management of Water Resources in Rwanda, gives the Rwanda Water Resources Board the tools to gather the information needed for the optimal management of our water resources.

On the other hand, Pamela Ruzigana, RWB’s Catchments Restoration and Erosion Control’s Division Manager, stated that the training was a platform to clearly explain the rationale, responsibilities, and composition of the water resources management committee at the catchment level in preparation for their effective implementation.

The composition, responsibilities, organization, and functioning of the water resources management committee at the catchment level are determined by the Ministerial Order N° 002/MoE/22 of 31/01/2022 governing the water resources management committee at the catchment level and the technical committee on dams.

The same water law determining the use and management of water resources in Rwanda has established a water resources management committee at the catchment level referred to as “Catchment Committee.”

Lake Kivu and Rusizi river, located in Kivu and Rusizi catchments, are part of the bigger transboundary Lake Kivu and Rusizi River Basin shared by the three countries such as Burundi, Democratic Republic of Congo, and Rwanda.

*Thank You To All Our  
Partners*