

By Mak Editor/Reporter

Makerere University Students Triumph in National Conservation Competition

Makerere University students have once again demonstrated academic excellence and commitment to environmental conservation after emerging as the overall winners in the Uganda Wildlife Authority Tertiary Institutions Conservation Competitions held during the national celebrations to mark the World Wildlife Day.

On 25th February, a team of eight students, including members of the Makerere University Tourism Association (MUTA), proudly represented the university at the competitions organized by the Uganda Wildlife Authority. The event took place at the Uganda Wildlife Education Centre in Entebbe and brought together students from various tertiary institutions across the country to showcase knowledge and innovation in wildlife conservation.

The competitions formed part of the activities marking World Wildlife Day and were held under the theme **“Medicinal and Aromatic Plants: Conservation, Health, Heritage and Livelihoods.”** The theme highlighted the importance of protecting plant biodiversity, particularly species that support traditional medicine, cultural heritage, and sustainable livelihoods.

After a highly competitive contest that tested participants’ knowledge of conservation, biodiversity, and environmental sustainability, Makerere University emerged as the overall winner. The Uganda Wildlife Research and Training College finished as the first runner-up, while Nkumba University secured the second runner-up position.

The team’s achievement was officially recognized during the national World Wildlife Day celebrations held on 3rd March at the Entebbe Works Grounds. During the ceremony, the students were awarded a trophy in recognition of their outstanding performance.

The award was presented by Uganda’s Prime Minister, the Rt. Hon. Robinah Nabbanja, alongside the Minister of Tourism, Wildlife and Antiquities, Hon. Tom

Butime, and the State Minister for Tourism, Wildlife and Antiquities, Martin Mugarra. The leaders commended the students for their remarkable achievement and emphasized the critical role young people play in promoting conservation and protecting Uganda's natural heritage.

The winning team comprised students from diverse academic disciplines as follows:

1. Iradikunda Jemimah – Bachelor of Biomedical Laboratory Technology
2. Nankabirwa Edith Mirembe – Bachelor of Science in Tourism and Hospitality Management
3. Agenrwoth Brenda – Bachelor of Science in Tourism and Hospitality Management
4. Joel Kibirango – Bachelor of Science in Tourism and Hospitality Management
5. Elvis Mujuni Kamara – Bachelor of Science in Biological Sciences (Botany/Zoology)
6. Kamyuka Ben – Bachelor of Science in Biological Sciences (Botany/Zoology)
7. Karisa Geoffrey – Bachelor of Science in Forestry
8. Nyangoma Caroline – Bachelor of Science in Forestry

According to Prof. Jim Ayorekire, Head, Department of Tourism at Makerere University, the win not only highlights Makerere University's continued leadership in conservation education but also underscores the importance of empowering young people to take an active role in protecting biodiversity and promoting sustainable use of natural resources.