

As the world observes the World Environment Day today, Greenpeace Africa has launched VUMA.EARTH (www.vuma.earth) - an online campaign platform for ordinary citizens to run environmental petitions. The platform seeks to grow an environmental movement and give a voice to millions of Africans across the continent. The tool provides a space for Africans to start campaigns that address environmental issues affecting their local communities.

“It is important for African people to stand up against the abuse of the environment because it is our heritage at stake. VUMA.EARTH is a tool to help facilitate this,” said Angelo C Louw, Greenpeace Africa Digital Mobilisation Officer.

This was named to resonate across the African continent, as VUMA means “to spread like wildfire” in Swahili and “to be in agreement” in Southern African Nguni languages.

VUMA.EARTH is a full-on campaign management tool that allows users to set up petitions, easily communicate with supporters and set up offline events. A particularly useful function of the platform, within the rural African context, is the ability to capture signatures offline for later use.

To garner momentum for this platform, Greenpeace Africa is calling on supporters to get friends and networks to support any of the environmental causes on the platform which they believe in.

“By choosing a cause you care about, signing and sharing on social media and tagging friends, you will demonstrate how simple it is to take action during this World Environment Day. Using the platform will also demonstrate the potential of ordinary citizens’ networks to affect change”.

“Many people think it is hard to get involved in protecting the environment because they feel that they can only do that by showing up at protests and clean-ups. While it would be amazing for people to commit to environmentalism at that level, taking a stand for the environment is as simple as signing and sharing an online petition

The call-to-action is simple:

CHOOSE a cause you care about

SIGN and SHARE it on social media

TAG your friends, added Louw

Social media has made it very difficult for decision-makers to sweep urgent environmental matters under the carpet. VUMA.EARTH offers a platform to mobilise African people to stand up for the environment.