



Hon. Sam Cheptoris,
Minister of Water and Environment,
Kampala-Uganda.

28th/July/2021

Dear Sir,

RE: IMPLEMENT THE 2016 WCC RECOMMENDATION-102 TO SAFEGUARD PROTECTED AREAS FROM EXTRACTIVES

The above refers

On behalf of Africa Institute for Energy Governance (AFIEGO) and the undersigned signatories, allow me to take this opportunity to thank you for your ministry's leadership and for coordinating as well as hosting the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) committee members in Uganda. We appreciate your recognition of the important conservation roles played by IUCN and all its constituencies across the world.

AFIEGO is an incorporated public policy research and advocacy Ugandan organisation whose main objective is to promote good energy governance to safeguard the environment and community livelihoods. We work to protect nature and communities especially the poor and vulnerable from the dangers of energy activities such as oil, gas and others. AFIEGO joined IUCN in 2020.

As an IUCN member, AFIEGO appreciates the Ministry of Water and Environment's efforts to continue mobilising the entire country to respect and implement all IUCN's resolutions, recommendations and decisions in line with IUCN's Statutes and Rules of Procedure.

The main objective of this letter is to request you to advise the Ugandan government to stop the conduct of oil and gas activities in protected and other critical biodiversity areas in the country.

The second objective of this letter is to inform you that we plan to write a letter to the leadership of IUCN to take action against Uganda if government fails or ignores the calls to stop oil activities from taking place in protected areas.

This letter is based on IUCN's 2016 World Conservation Congress (WCC) Recommendation 102 through which IUCN members including Uganda committed to and recognised previous IUCN

recommendations or resolutions aimed at addressing the negative impacts of environmentally damaging industrial activities and infrastructure development projects in, on, or otherwise affecting protected areas.

These recommendations or resolutions include Resolution 1.51 on Indigenous Peoples, Mineral and Oil Extraction, Infrastructure and Development Works (Montreal, 1996), Resolution 2.34 Multilateral and bilateral financial institutions and projects impacting on biodiversity and natural features (Amman 2000), Recommendation 2.82 Protection and conservation of biological diversity of protected areas from the negative impacts of mining and exploration (Amman, 2000), Recommendation 3.087 Financial institutions and the World Commission on Dams recommendations (Bangkok, 2004), Recommendation 4.087 Impacts of infrastructure and extractive industries on protected areas (Barcelona, 2008), Resolution 4.088 Establishing the IUCN Extractive Industry Responsibility Initiative (Barcelona, 2008) and Recommendation 4.136 Biodiversity, protected areas, indigenous people and mining activities (Barcelona, 2008).

Under the 2016 WCC Recommendation 102, the IUCN members also among others:

REAFFIRMED the six IUCN Protected Area Management Categories and four Governance Types Resolution 5.035 *Facilitating protection through the establishment of protected areas as specified by Target 11 of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011–2020* (Jeju, 2012)) and the importance and relevance of IUCN's existing resolutions and recommendations regarding environmentally damaging industrial activities and infrastructure projects located in, around, or otherwise negatively affecting, any protected areas;

RECOGNISED that environmentally damaging industrial activities and infrastructure impede achievement of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and the Aichi Biodiversity Targets, as well as the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals;

CALLED ON governments to prohibit environmentally damaging industrial activities and infrastructure development in all IUCN categories of protected areas, and to take measures to ensure that all activities are compatible with the conservation objectives of these areas ...;

CALLED ON governments and relevant authorities, when preparing development plans and plans for infrastructure, to adopt and implement policies that restrict environmentally damaging industrial activities and infrastructure development that may have negative impacts on protected areas, or on any areas of particular importance for biodiversity and ecosystem services that are identified by governments as essential to achieving the Aichi Biodiversity Targets.

Individually and collectively, the above recommendations seek to conserve protected areas and critical biodiversity from oil and gas activities among others across the world.

Unfortunately, the Ugandan government alongside oil companies such as France's TotalEnergies and China's CNOOC have failed to implement the above recommendations.

Since 2016, the following activities have been conducted or are being conducted or planned in the following areas:

- Development of infrastructure such as oil roads and bridges in Murchison Falls National Park (MFNP) and Budongo Central Forest Reserve;
- Development of Hoima International Airport with impacts on Kabwoya Game Reserve;
- Planned development of the East African Crude Oil Pipeline (EACOP) through the Lake Victoria basin, River Kafu, River Katonga, River Nakabazi and with impacts on Wambabya as well as Taala forest reserves among others¹;
- Plans to drill for oil in MFNP and Lake Albert by 2025² under TotalEnergies' Tilenga and CNOOC's Kingfisher oil projects respectively. Drilling for oil under the Tilenga project will also impact the Kabwoya, Karuma and Bugungu wildlife reserves³.
- Plans to develop oil pipelines under River Nile under the Tilenga project.
- Queen Elizabeth National Park and Lake Edward which form part of the Greater Virunga protected area are also being licensed out to allow oil exploitation.

Our demands

- a. We are asking the Ministry of Water and Environment (MWE) and its agencies such as the National Environment Management Authority (NEMA) to stop issuing Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA) certificates of approval for oil activities located in protected and other critical biodiversity areas.
- b. The government of Uganda should stop all ongoing and planned oil activities in protected areas and other critical biodiversity areas.

Conclusion

We hope that your ministry and the entire government will urgently implement and comply with the IUCN recommendations and resolutions.

Yours faithfully,



Dickens Kamugisha,
Chief Executive Officer –AFIEGO

Signatories

- Africa Institute for Energy Governance (AFIEGO)
- Action Coalition on Climate Change (ACCC)
- Centre for Constitutional Governance (CCG)

¹ <http://eacop.com/EACOP%20UGANDA%20ESIA%20NON-TECHNICAL%20SUMMARY%20.pdf>

² <https://www.monitor.co.ug/uganda/news/national/new-crude-oil-pipeline-deals-signed-production-for-2025-3358834>

³ <https://corporate.totalenergies.ug/tilenga-project-environmental-and-social-impact-assessment-report>

- Oil Refinery Residents Association (ORRA)
- World Voices Uganda (WVU)
- South Western Institute for Policy and Advocacy (SOWIPA)
- Citizens Concern Africa (CICOA)
- Guild Presidents' Forum on Governance (GPFOG)
- Centre for Energy Governance (CEG)
- Green Watch Uganda
- Twimukye Women's Organisation
- Youth for Green Communities
- African Initiative on Food Security and Environment

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Government

- The Speaker of Parliament,
- The Minister of Energy and Mineral Development
- The Chairperson, Natural Resources Committee of Parliament,
- The Executive Director, NEMA
- The Executive Director, Petroleum Authority of Uganda
- Director, Environmental Affairs, MWE
- The Country Representative, IUCN Uganda Country Office

IUCN National Committee of Uganda-Members

- Bwindi Mgahinga Conservation Trust, bmct@bwinditrust.ug
- Albertine Rift Conservation Society, info@arcosnetwork.org
- Conservation Through Public Health, supporter@ctph.org
- Department of Environmental Management, Makerere University, namaalwa.justine@gmail.com
- Ecological Christian Organisation, (ECO), eco@ecouganda.org
- Environmental Alert, (EA), ed@envalert.org
- Environmental Management for Livelihood Improvement Bwaise Facility, (EMLI), info@bwaisefacility.org
- National Association of Professional Environmentalists, (NAPE), nape@nape.or.ug
- Nature Uganda, nature@natureuganda.org
- The Environmental Conservation Trust of Uganda, (ECOTRUST), pnantongo@yahoo.com
- Uganda Wildlife Society, (UWS), uws@uws.or.ug

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