



EACOP IMPACTS: CORRECTING MISINFORMATION

On October 15, 2022, the *Daily Monitor*, published an opinion article titled, *Over 34m carbon lies about Uganda's oil*.

The article was written by Mr. Elison Karuhanga and through it, he made a number of assertions that Africa Institute for Energy Governance (AFIEGO) would like to react to.

First, Mr. Karuhanga noted that individuals or entities that have raised concerns in relation to the East African Crude Oil Pipeline (EACOP) project have shared misinformation. He noted that the EACOP will not kill lions or hippos and will not pass through 230 rivers.

One wonders how Mr. Karuhanga was able to look into the future and determine that no lions or hippos will die as a result of the EACOP project impacts.

HABITAT LOSS

Available information indicates that the EACOP will directly affect or will be located in the Area of Influence of key animal habitats in Uganda and Tanzania. These include Wambabya and Taala forests as well as wetlands and watercourses belonging to the Lake Victoria basin.

Further, the pipeline will cross rivers such as the Wambabya tributary, River Kafu and two of its tributaries, River Nabakazi and two of its tributaries as well as Rivers Katonga, Kibale and Jemakunya in Uganda. This information is contained in the Non-Technical Summary of the Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA) report for the EACOP project in Uganda. The report is dated January 2019.

In Tanzania, the pipeline will affect legally protected areas including Minziro Nature Forest, Burigi-Biharamulo Game Reserve (GR) and Swaga Swaga Game Reserve. Others include Kagera River, River Pangani, Lake Victoria Wetlands, Wembere Wetlands, Sigi River and others. This information is contained in the Executive Summary for the Tanzania EACOP ESIA that was published in August 2019.

TotalEnergies, which owns 62% of the EACOP, took lead on the production of the Uganda and Tanzania EACOP ESIA reports.

The above ecosystems are not only habitats to small invertebrates but also bigger animals such as chimpanzees, lions and hippos. The habitats stand to be lost or degraded because of the EACOP.

Indeed, in Tanzania, 73 hectares of animal habitat will be lost when the EACOP is constructed through the Ruiga River Forest Reserve and Burigi-Biharamulo Game Reserve.

The Tanzania EACOP ESIA recognises that “The [habitat] loss ... will have impacts of very long duration [as (the) forest(s) will take a long time to return to their original condition]”.

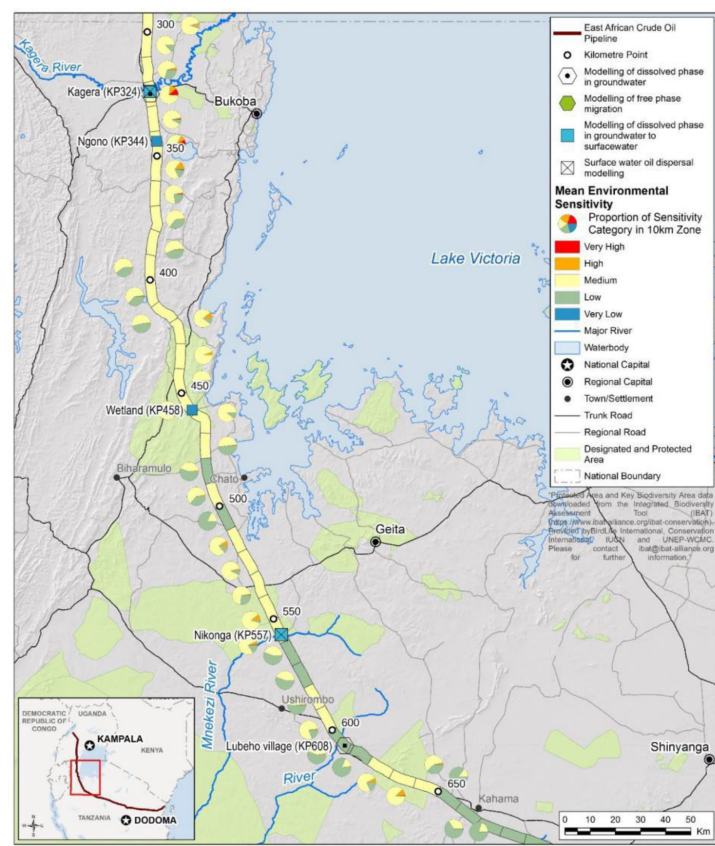
Endangered animals such as chimpanzees, lions, hippos, elephants and others inhabit the ecosystems that are going to be lost or disturbed because of the EACOP. To say with certainty therefore that the EACOP will not kill the already endangered lions, hippos or chimpanzees, which require special conservation status, yet the EACOP will lead to habitat loss, is erroneous.

LAKE VICTORIA

Another assertion made by Mr. Karuhanga is that the EACOP will not affect Lake Victoria. However, both the Uganda and Tanzania EACOP ESIA are clear: the pipeline will affect wetlands and watercourses belonging to Lake Victoria.

Indeed, between kilometre posts (KP) 455-470 in Tanzania, the pipeline comes within 5km of Lake Victoria. Modelling exercises done by scientists to determine how the lake would be impacted in case of any oil spills show that there are high risks of the lake being polluted at some points.

Specifically, a failure of the pipeline from KP300-520 in Tanzania would impact the water quality of Lake Victoria. Because the EACOP crosses River Kagera in Tanzania, which is a tributary of Lake Victoria, the lake's vulnerability to being negatively impacted in the event of an oil spill is heightened. A map demonstrating this is shown below. Notably, Lake Victoria is Africa's largest freshwater lake which meets the needs of over 40 million people in East Africa.



CARBON EMISSIONS

Another assertion made by Mr. Karuhanga is that the EACOP will not lead to production of about 34 million metric tonnes of carbon per year. Mr. Karuhanga argues that a buried pipeline cannot produce that amount of carbon. What Mr. Karuhanga fails to factor into his arguments are the full value chain emissions of the EACOP.

The full value chain emissions for the pipeline are 377.6 million metric tonnes over 25 years. Broken down, these include the carbon emissions from the construction phase (0.24 MtCO₂ -Uganda only), operational emissions (6.55 MtCO₂e), refining emissions (34.52 MtCO₂), and product use emissions (330.71 MtCO₂).

Currently, companies in Europe and elsewhere are expected to account for their companies' full value chain emissions, which the EACOP project developers did not do in the Uganda and Tanzania EACOP ESIA reports. When individuals or entities however discuss only the product use emissions, the EACOP project proponents say that this is misinformation. It is not.

This article was authored by AFIEGO.