



Press Statement:

May 16th, 2022

RE: Clarification on allegations that NEMA is harassing Kalangala Journalist

The National Environment Act No.5 of 2019, decentralises environment management in Uganda and gives different strata of responsibility to various stakeholders. Enforcement of the law is specifically shared between NEMA and Environment Police.

The case which was reported by the online media house known as Entebbe Post, under the headline "NEMA Regional Manager accused of conniving with BIDCO to harass Kalangala Journalist", is one of those arising out of an enforcement activity overseen by ASP January Kasiimwa, the liaison officer for Environment Police, Greater Masaka attached to Ministry of Water and Environment.

NEMA does not have a regional office or officer specifically in charge of the Greater Masaka region as reported by Entebbe Post. NEMA only operates five regional offices in Mbale, Lira, Masindi and Mbarara, plus our Head Office on Jinja Road in Kampala.

However, NEMA has picked interest in the matter as the reported case involves deforestation in the Lake Victoria buffer zone which is protected under the law, and also because the commercial oil palm industry in Kalangala is among the projects that NEMA regulates.

Oil Palm Uganda Limited undertook an Environment and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA) whose approval conditions compel the developer to undertake their operations without compromising the livelihoods of neighbouring communities.

The running land wrangle between Mr. Dennis Mubiru, a CBS journalist and Oil Palm Uganda Limited notwithstanding, the buffer zone degradation issue has been reported to police and a case file opened at the Buganda Road Utility Court. Sixteen (16) offenders were arrested and are being held in Natete Police Station ahead of the court hearing.

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