



MEDIA STATEMENT

NEMA registers significant progress in the prosecution of environment crimes

KAMPALA, Wednesday, 6th. March, 2024 – In the space of six (6) months, NEMA has secured several convictions and settlements, reinforcing its commitment to environmental protection and conservation. In the period July 1st. 2023 to December 31st. 2023, NEMA registered 147 cases.

The cases include: Failure to undertake ESIA (25); Forgery of EIA certificate (4); Illegal salt mining (1); Illegal sand mining (15); Lake shore encroachment (1); Littering (3); Noise pollution (14); Wetland degradation (85); Discharge of effluent substances into the environment (1); and Violation of ESIA conditions (2).

Wetland degradation was the offense with highest frequency standing at 56% of all cases. This was followed by operating without EIA certificate at 17%, Illegal sand mining at 10% and noise pollution at 9%.

Some Notable Criminal Litigation Proceedings in the Half Year

NEMA's legal team has been actively involved in criminal litigation proceedings, achieving positive outcomes in various cases. In an unprecedented development, Ice Love Co was fined Fifty Million Shillings (UGX 50,000,000/-) in August 2023 for degrading a wetland; while Lwanga Michael and others were in November last year convicted, sentenced and fined for two counts each UGX 8,000,000, totaling to Sixteen Million Shillings (UGX 16m): one for dumping marram in a wetland, and the other for commencing a project without ESIA certificate.

Administrative Fines and Settlements

In addition to criminal litigation, NEMA resolved several administrative cases, emphasizing its commitment to fair and efficient enforcement. A sum of UGX 135m was received through 12 fines in the half-year running from July to December 2023. See accompanying table below.

2024 Looks Brighter

NEMA is confident that this year more wins will be secured through the Courts of Law with more offenders being brought to book. For instance, Court in Lira has sentenced Acede Alvimos, 20, to four years in prison or pay a fine of UGX 3m for degrading Ongii Winy Wetland.

From the South Western Uganda Regional Office, NEMA has secured a conviction in the case of illegal sand mining along River Rwizi, with the convict earning a six months' imprisonment. In the same week, a degrader accused of illegally building a bar and restaurant in the banks of River Rwizi was fined UGX 7m.

All environmental enforcement has been guided by the National Environment Act No.5 of 2019.

NEMA's achievements demonstrate the Authority's enhanced capacity to detect, investigate, and prosecute environmental offenses. The convictions and settlements send a powerful message that environmental protection is a top priority, and NEMA remains dedicated to ensuring the sustainable development of our nation.

NEMA continues to warn the public to desist from breaching environmental laws that can land them into legal battles with the Authority.

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Table showing revenue collected by NEMA through fines

SN	Case Ref. No	Month	Category of Cases	Accused	Status of Cases	Fine
1	EPPU-NEMA SD 19/16/11/2023	November 2023	C1. Depositing Marram Soil in Wetland. C2. Commencing a Project Without ESIA	Lwanga Michael and others	Convicted, Sentenced and Fined for 2 counts each 8,000,000	16m
2	GEF 20/29023	October 2023	C1. Depositing Marrum Soil in The Wetland	Canaan Site Limited	Accused Fined	10m
3		October 2023	Under Taking Activity Without ESIA	Harree Precast Limited Company (Halai Kishor Shivjin)	Administratively Handled and Fined	10m
4	GEF 21/2023	October 2023	Discharge Of Effluent Substances into the Environment	The Proprietors of Gm Sugar Limited	Settled Administratively and Fined	5m
5	EPPU-NEMA SD 18/21/11/2023	November 2023	Noise Pollution	Mutebi Shakul (Nexus Bar)	Accused Administratively Fined	5m
6	EPPU-NEMA SD 10/09/12/2023	December 2023	Under Taking a Project With No NEMA Approvals	Mugeere Musa.	Matter Settled Administratively and Fined	7m
7	EPPU-NEMA SD REF 12/30/12/2023	December 2023	Under Taking A Project With No NEMA Approvals	Mwebaze Derick (Pilgrim Education Services)	Accused fined and stop order issued	5m
8	SD REF 26/10/08/2023	August 2023	Wetland Degradation	Ice Love Co.	Site Restored and Accused Fined	50m
9	SD REF02/25/09/2023	September 2023	Dumping of soil in wetland	Bukenya Ramathan and others	Accused Fined	10m
10	SD REF 16/28/10/2023	October 2023	Wetland Degradation/undertaking activity without ESIA	Kamusiime Derick and others	Accused Fined	7m
11	SD REF 21/16/11/2023	November 2023	Wetland degradation/undertaking activity without ESIA	Nasanga Jovia and Ssemukaya Dan	Accused Fined	5m
12	SD REF 17/29/11/2023	November 2023	Commencing a project without obtaining EIA	Dr. Goodrich Muteguya, CEO Hallelua (Reflexology and Health Solutions)	Accused Fined	5m
Total						135m