



Press Statement:

January 12, 2023

NEMA embarks on restoration of degraded Kyangwali Mixed Land Use Project area

The National Environment Management Authority (NEMA) has commenced an operation aimed at stopping further encroachment and restoration of the degraded areas of Kyangwali Mixed Land Use Project in Kikuube District.

In 2020, NEMA issued Hoima Sugar Ltd an Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA) certificate No. NEMA/ESIA/13709 to implement the project with specific conditions and project components as follows:

- (a) Sugarcane Plantation (9.24 sq. miles / 2,393.8483 ha);
- (b) Urban Centre (1.206 sq. miles / 312.3 ha);
- (c) Eco-tourism Centre (1.97 sq. miles / 510.2277 ha);
- (d) Cultural Site (0.156 sq. miles / 40.4038 ha);
- (e) Natural reserved forest and nature walk-ways (6.17 sq. miles/1,598.023 ha).

Following approval of the project there was an influx of people estimated at about 40,000 both within the project area and the adjacent Bugoma Central Forest, carrying out illegal logging, charcoal burning and cultivation. This prompted intervention by the area local government and initially about 20,000 people were evicted. However, encroachment continued prompting the district, through the Resident District Commissioner (RDC), to seek NEMAs support to curb the degradation.

In September 2022, NEMA issued a Restoration Order to the developer after a review of the Environmental and Social Audit report for the project and subsequent inspections discovered non-compliance to ESIA conditions, most significantly deforestation in places that were meant to remain protected such as the eco-tourism site, cultural site and the buffer zones. The Restoration Order also cancelled the earlier approval for development of an urban centre within the ecosystem and instructed the developer to take steps to safeguard and prevent further encroachment.

The developer is finalizing the Restoration Plan for the degraded areas as directed by NEMA.

To stop further community encroachment of the ecosystem, NEMA working with the district, National Forestry Authority and the Ministry of Water and Environment is undertaking an enforcement operation in the area to among others evict encroachers to pave way for restoration of the ecosystem.

ENDS

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