



Press Statement:

September 27, 2022

NEMA orders Hoima Sugar LTD to restore degraded parts of Kikuube mixed land-use project area and cancels approval for urban centre development in the ecosystem

The National Environment Management Authority (NEMA) issued Hoima Sugar Ltd an Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA) certificate **No. NEMA/ESIA/13709** on **14th August 2020** to implement the above project.

Section 4 of the Certificate indicated specific conditions and components of the project 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) The natural reserved forest and nature walk-ways/trails (6.17 sq. miles/1,598.023 ha).

Hoima Sugar Limited submitted an environmental and social audit report for the project in June 2022. Review of the Audit report and our further investigations including ground inspections in September 2022 revealed the following:

There was deforestation of the natural reserved forest areas contrary to approval condition 4.3 (i)(c). As result of this, the area of natural forests that was supposed be protected has been affected severely degraded (Figure 1).

There was deforestation of the eco-tourism site contrary to approval condition 4.3 (i)(c) which has affected the quality of the site for eco-tourism purposes.

The above findings amount to breach of conditions of approval of NEMA certificate issued to the company contrary to section 157(f) of the National Environment Act, 2019.

Accordingly, in exercise of powers vested to the Authority under section 129 of the National Environment Act, 2019, the following Orders and or Notices have been issued to the company in order to safeguard the environment and avoid any further damage to the environment: -

1. **Immediately** Stop any further deforestation of the natural reserved forest area, eco-tourism area, cultural sites and land reserved for urban center.
2. **No sugar cane** should be planted in the natural reserved forest area, ecotourism area, cultural sites area and land reserved for urban center. The sugar cane **MUST** be restricted to area permitted in the certificate.
3. The **312.3ha** earlier approved for the urban centre is halted to be kept as a natural forest in view of the country's efforts to recover forest cover loss.
4. **Restore all degraded areas of** the natural reserved forest area, ecotourism area, cultural sites and land reserved for urban center.

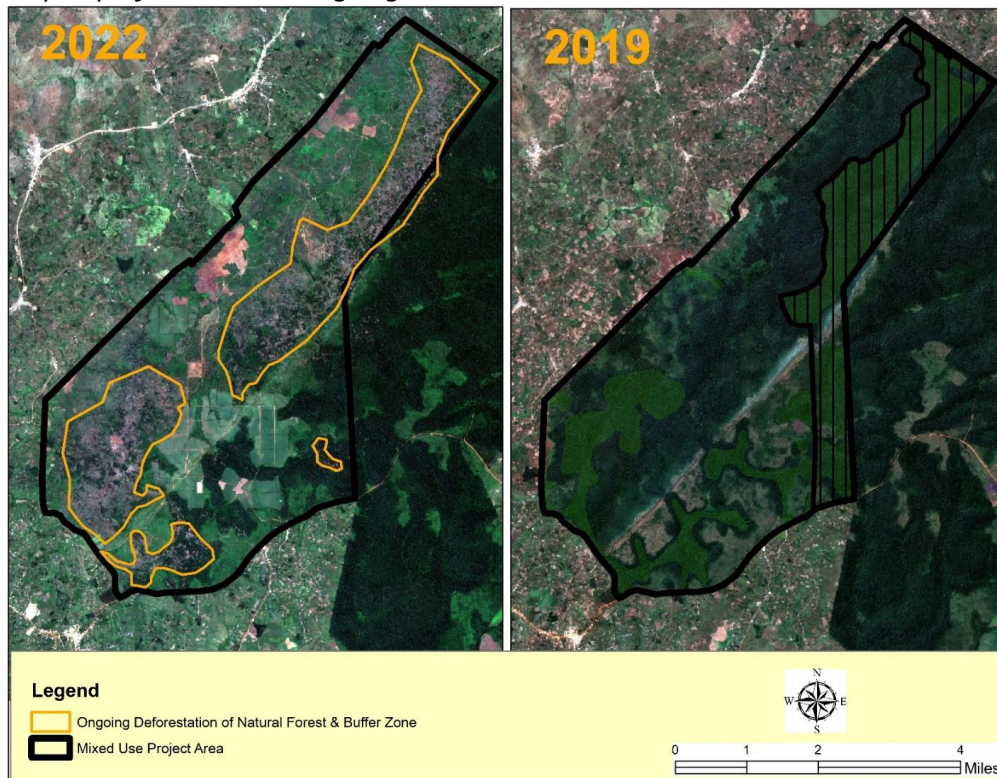
5. **Prepare a restoration plan** for the degraded areas in consultation with Forestry Sector Support Department of the Ministry of Water and Environment (FSSD), National Forestry Authority (NFA) and Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA) and submit the same to this Authority for approval within a period of not more than three months from the date of this order.
6. **Implement the Restoration Plan** in 4 above at your cost with guidance from FSSD, NFA and UWA to the satisfaction of this Authority.
7. **Permit third parties** approved by this Authority who may wish to participate in the restoration process of the degraded areas as appropriate.

Failure to comply with the given instructions will result in NEMA cancelling the ESIA certificate and further legal actions against Hoima Sugar Limited.

We strongly urge developers to abide by conditions of approval in Environment and Social Impact Certificates. NEMA will not relent on efforts to ensure that development projects are undertaken in a sustainable manner and that the environment is not compromised.

Notes to Editor

1. Statement on approval of project
<https://www.nema.go.ug/sites/default/files/Press%20Statement%20Bugoma%20FINAL.pdf>
2. Map of project area showing degradation



ENDS

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