



**AFRICA INSTITUTE FOR
ENERGY GOVERNANCE**

INTRODUCTION

On November 8, 2022, the European Union (EU) and the Government of Uganda (GoU) signed the Uganda-European Union (EU) Forest Partnership. The GoU developed and validated a roadmap for the partnership, whose objectives include:

- Increasing the area of protected, restored or sustainably managed forests;
- Increasing the number of forest-related decent jobs;
- Reducing the annual rate of deforestation of natural forests; and
- Looking for ways to facilitate trade in legal and sustainable wood products.

Through this publication, Africa Institute for Energy Governance (AFIEGO) has worked with our partners under the Save Bugoma Forest Campaign (SBFC) to share highlights of the key conditions in the partnership.

We hope that this will promote public participation in the implementation of the partnership to promote forest conservation in Uganda.

KEY COMMITMENTS

Reducing greenhouse gas emissions by approximately 22% by 2030: The GoU committed to use the funds received from the EU to reduce greenhouse emissions that come from unsustainable human activities such as deforestation, industrial processes and fossil fuels for energy among others. Despite this commitment, the GoU continues to invest in fossil fuel projects such as the East African Crude Oil Pipeline (EACOP). On May 16, 2024 the Ugandan parliament passed a supplementary budget of Shs132.634Bn for EACOP activities.

Further, in the 2024/2025 budget, the GoU provided Shs920.86 billion (Euros 231.6 million) for the EACOP and other oil activities.

Increasing forest coverage

up to 21% by 2030: The GoU committed to use the funds received under the forest partnership to expand the amount of forested land to cover 21% of the country's total area by the year 2023. Per the Ministry of Water and Environment, Uganda's forest cover stood at 12.2% by 2021.

Enhancing biodiversity conservation, management and

sustainable utilisation of forests: Further, the GoU committed to take serious steps in the protection and preservation of forests, game reserves, lakes, wetlands and other protected areas from unsustainable human activities. However, oil project activities including the Kingfisher, Tilenga and EACOP are negatively impacting or stand to affect Lake Albert, Murchison Falls National Park (MFNP) and wetlands.

Scaling up restoration: In the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), the government committed to increase efforts towards improving and rebuilding forest areas that have been damaged or degraded and lost. These efforts include planting new trees, protecting the existing forests from deforestation and restoring ecosystems to their natural state.

Despite this commitment, Bugoma forest, one of Uganda's few remaining tropical rainforests, continues to be destroyed by Hoima Sugar Ltd (HSL) for sugarcane growing. Though the National Environment Management Authority (NEMA) issued a





restoration order to the HSL in September 2022, the forest is yet to be restored.

Value addition: The Ugandan government committed to enhance value addition in key growth opportunities, including the forest sector, to increase average household incomes and improve the quality of community livelihoods.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The government should immediately stop all unsustainable projects within forested landscapes such as oil and gas activities, sugarcane growing, illegal timber logging and charcoal burning.
2. The EU should support CSOs' to work with the forest host communities to push for accountability and transparency in the implementation of the EU-Uganda forest partnership MOU.
3. Government should support forest host women and youth groups to engage in forest-based enterprises like beekeeping, tourism, and fruit tree planting as a means to provide alternative livelihoods.
4. Government should cancel all land titles issued within forest reserves.
5. Government through NEMA should make sure that HSL restores the degraded parts of Bugoma forest without fail.