

# ECOLOGICAL CALL

*"Sustainability a Must"*



ECOLOGICAL TRENDS  
ALLIANCE

Newsletter: Issue 2: April-June, 2025



## Featured Highlights

- Super outcome harvesting
- Strengthening the Save Bugoma Task Force
- Fuel efficient stoves
- Forest Guardians
- Youth It Lose It Conference

# Message from the Director Programs



I am delighted to share with you highlights of the second quarter of the year.

Ecological Trends Alliance has been implementing various programs in the forest adjacent communities within the Budongo-Bugoma landscape. Together with the leaders from the community groups, we evaluated the projects, achievements made and brainstormed on the future prospects.

During this quarter we were also able to work with our partner; African Institute for Energy Governance (AFIEGO) we continued to strengthen the Save Bugoma Task Force on the journey to saving Bugoma Central Forest Reserve, a key biodiversity area within the region.

Youths form the biggest portion of population in Africa and it is therefore upon us to leverage their youthful brains, creativeness and innovativeness or else we lose it. We are privileged to host a Youth It Lose It Conference in Hoima between 5th-12th October, 2025, an international event geared towards empowering youths towards creating green innovations and sustainable livelihoods. We hope to have you all there!!!!

Enjoy the Read!!

**Richard Ssemmanda**  
Director Programs

# Super Outcome Harvesting (SOH)

“Looking at the past, appreciating the present and planning for the future”

The Super Outcome Harvesting (SOH) exercise was held at the Hoima Field Office from 8th to 10th June 2025, bringing together key stakeholders to reflect on the impact of the Green Livelihoods Alliance (GLA2) and Working Landscapes programs in the Budongo–Bugoma Landscape.

Over the three-day workshop, the SOH process engaged:

- Community Forest Management (CFM) leaders from Kaseeta
- Leaders from Abetereine Tree Growers and Community Association (ATGANCA) and Friends of Itohya Community Conservation Association (FICCA)
- Private sector actor – *Core Woods*
- Representatives from Kikuube District Local Government

The exercise offered a platform to review **project achievements, challenges, and key lessons**, particularly in areas of **community forest management, wildfire control, and landscape restoration**.

## Strengthening Inclusive Forest Governance

Under the leadership of **Ecological Trends Alliance (ETA)**, significant strides have been made in empowering CFM groups through:

- Support for constitutional reforms
- Capacity building in inclusive forest governance
- Promotion of community-led decision-making processes



These efforts have been instrumental in embedding sustainable livelihood practices such as:

- Agroforestry
- Fuel-efficient cook stove adoption
- Nursery bed establishment
- Beekeeping (apiary initiatives)

This comprehensive support has instilled a renewed sense of ownership of forest resources within the community, contributing to:

- A marked reduction in illegal forest activities through community surveillance and patrol teams
- Increased participation of women, youth, and marginalized groups in forest patrols and restoration activities

## Toward a National Wildfire Strategy

As part of the Working Landscapes project, stakeholders across the landscape contributed to the development of a Wildfire Management Strategy, aimed at mitigating the persistent wildfire threats in the region.

This locally informed strategy has been widely adopted and now forms a strong foundation for a future National Wildfire Management Framework, positioning the Budongo–Bugoma Landscape as a model for landscape-level resilience



# Strengthening The Save Bugoma Task Force Through Exchange Visits

The Save Bugoma Task Force, an initiative started in May 2021 by a coalition of Civil Society Organisations within the region to halt destruction of Bugoma Forest facing immense pressure from sugarcane growers. Bugoma forest is home to globally threatened species of wildlife such as the Eastern Chimpanzee, Nahan's Patridge and others.

The African Institute for energy Governance (AFIEGO) in partnership with Ecological Trends Alliance (ETA) held an exchange visit on 28th June 2025 at Nyayirongo Church of Uganda. 15 community members of the task force were in attendance. Alinda Abel, a member from the Wambabya Forest Conservation and Development Association (WAFOCODA), a collaborative forest management group shared a story on his transformation from illegal charcoal burning and logging which he had done for decades. He described the actions as not developmental and expressed that living in fear for arrest and possibly death was not sustainable. Having learnt lessons from the wife, a member of WAFOCODA, a then newly formed group in Kyakatembe Parish. The association provides the local people with knowledge on environmental education and provides members with alternative sources of livelihood which are sustainable such as agroforestry.



## The story of Abel highlights a number of lessons;

- Behavioral change can be inspired by awareness combined with practical livelihood alternatives.
- Women play a critical role in influencing household decisions toward sustainable practices.
- Providing income-generating options (such as beekeeping, agroforestry, or eco-tourism) can reduce reliance on destructive activities.

Some members of the task force had abandoned the goal of saving Bugoma forest due to delayed justice from the reclamation of the degraded sections of the forest while some had joined the illegal community members cultivating in the forests leading to the arrest of some.

ETA together with AFIEGO encouraged the members to desist from illegal activities and reminded members of their commitment to the goals of Task Force, and to advocate for the clear boundary opening and have the degraded areas restored.



# Fuel efficient stoves for improved household Cooking and environmental conservation

As part of strengthening Collaborative Forest Management groups' capacity to conserve the environment and reduce pressure on the few remaining forests, communities were trained in fuel efficient techniques. 110 Improved cook stoves were constructed in Kaseeta, Itohya and Kyakatemba.

The Kaseeta Tugende Omumaiso Association (KATOA) has adopted fuel-efficient stoves as a sustainable solution to reduce fuel wood consumption and minimize over-dependence on forests. These stoves, designed with multiple cooking points, allow multiple cooking significantly saving time, cutting down amount of firewood needed and promoting environmental conservation. Additionally, the improved cook stoves save time used to collect firewood and also produce less smoke thus reducing indoor pollution and the associated respiratory diseases.

Members of the KATOA report that the stoves have enhanced their quality of life with households now using less firewood, saving money and reducing environmental degradation. The knowledge from KATOA has spilled over to other community members thus adopting the technology and constructing their own.



# Forest Guardians

## How Women in Bunyoro Are Leading the Way in Forest Conservation

Ecological Trends Alliance (ETA), in partnership with Action for Rural Women's Empowerment (ARUWE), recently conducted a joint study to explore the **role of women** in forest governance across three forest-edge communities—Kaseeta, Kyakatemba, and Munteme in the Bunyoro region.



The study employed a combination of **Focus Group Discussions (FGDs)** and **individual interviews** as primary data collection tools.

In total, **120 community members** took part in the research, with **65% being women**.

The research was supported and facilitated by **5 staff members from ARUWE** and **3 from ETA**, ensuring both comprehensive documentation and strong community engagement throughout the process

120

Community members  
took part in research

65%

Women took part in  
the research

8

Support staff from  
Aruwe and ETA

### Key Preliminary Insights:

- **Women as Tree Stewards:** Many women are actively involved in planting and nurturing trees, both on family farms and in community spaces.
- **Forest Dependence:** Households rely heavily on forests for **firewood, medicinal plants, and building materials**, yet women often face **more restrictions** in accessing forested areas.
- **Custodians of Indigenous Knowledge:** Women demonstrated **deep knowledge of indigenous tree species**, gained through their involvement in **tree nursery operations** and **Forest-Based Enterprises (FBEs)**, which also serve as sources of income.

These findings reveal that women are not only direct users of forest resources but also **critical actors in forest conservation and governance**. The study underscores the need to strengthen gender-inclusive policies and support women's leadership in community-based forest management.



## YOUTH IT OR LOSE IT CONFERENCE

**Ecological Trends Alliance, Uganda** is hosting the first-ever Youth IT or Lose It Regional conference in Africa.

**THEME: Green Innovations and Sustainable Livelihoods.**



12th-19th October, 2025



Miika Eco-Resort, Hoima, Uganda

### Participants will:

- Connect with youth from across different countries.
- Design and launch the Youth IT or Lose It initiative in their respective countries.
- Share personal stories, experiences, and visions for the future.
- Learn new skills, get inspired, and inspire others.



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Thank you for your support and interest in our work.  
Together, we can make a difference for our  
planet and its people.

