

ECOLOGICAL CALL

"Sustainability a Must"



ECOLOGICAL TRENDS
ALLIANCE

Newsletter: Issue 1: January-March, 2025



Featured Highlights

- Celebrating Women within our Network
- Training of Trainers in Wildfire Management
- ETA Visit to the District Local Government
- Forest-based Enterprises
- GLA Partners' Meeting

Message from the Director Programs



I am delighted to share with you the first edition of our Periodic Newsletter 2025. During the month of March, we celebrate the achievements of women and in this edition we bring you some of the faces of the ladies that have made an impact on our work both in office and in the field.

We bring you stories on how conservation of biodiversity is thriving alongside sustainable livelihoods through forest-based enterprises such as apiculture.

During this quarter, together with the National Environmental Management Authority (NEMA), Bunyoro Kitara Kingdom, Masindi Sugarcane Growers Association Ltd (MASGAL) and the Regional Police created awareness on occurrence of wildfires on Spice FM. This was in addition to the Training of Trainers for Wildfire management in the Budongo-Bugoma Landscape all geared towards fulfilling the Wildfire Management Strategy for the landscape.

ETA has established good working relations with the District Local Governments within the Budongo-Bugoma Landscape and we made visits to update them on our current operations and exchange ideas on better ways to steer the landscape while ensuring sustainable development. We appreciate our partners for their support towards our mission of "Securing solutions to biodiversity and development challenges through providing biologically diverse and proven alternatives".

Enjoy the Read!!

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Richard Ssemmanda'.

Richard Ssemmanda

Director Programs

Celebrating Women's Month

Ecological Trends Alliance (ETA) joins the rest of the world to celebrate women's day and month under the theme "**Accelerate Action**".

ETA empowers women in forest based enterprises such as apiary, re-purposing of plastic waste, nursery bed establishment, agroforestry and making of efficient stoves thus creating alternative livelihoods for the women in Uganda.

Several women have been trained and equipped to carry out forest patrols e.g in Wambabya Forest and this has since seen a reduction in illegalities such as charcoal burning and deforestation.

We appreciate the support from our partners African Rural for Women Empowerment (ARUWE) and African Institute for Energy Governance (AFIEGO) who are keen on empowering the women within our networks towards achieving gender equity.

We applaud the efforts of women in environment protection and conservation for sustainability.



Delphines interacting with the leaders of Friends of Itohya Forest Club.

Training Champions to Spearhead Management of Wildfires in the Budongo-Bugoma Landscape



Group photo taken after the training of Trainers in Wildfire management at Kabalega Resort on 26th February, 2025

Through focused group discussions, the participants shared from experience insights on wildfire management in their respective land uses thus enhancing the Training Manual for Wildfire Management in Uganda.

The day was crowned with creation of awareness on wildfires management on a Radio Talk show on Spice FM, Hoima featuring a team from NEMA, ETA, BKK, Masindi Sugarcane Growers Association Ltd (MASGAL) and the Regional Police Fire brigade. The actions above fulfill some of the strategic objectives of the strategy towards achieving a wildfire-free Landscape that sustains natural resources for prosperity.

Wildfire Management Training

Following the validation of the Wildfire Management Strategy for the Budongo-Bugoma Landscape, Ecological Trends Alliance (ETA) conducted a Training for Trainers in Wildfire management at Kabalega Resort on 26th February, 2025. The workshop was well attended by the District Local Government leaders from Hoima, Masindi, Kikuube and Buliisa Districts, government agencies; National Environmental Management Authority (NEMA), National Forest Authority (NFA), Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA) and the Uganda Regional Police. Additionally, the training was attended by the large-scale plantation farmers of Trees and woodlots, sugarcane, Bunyoro Kitara Kingdom, Nyabyeya Forestry institute and Community forest conservation groups.

The training exposed the participants to elements of fires; behavior, types, management of fires and the roles played by the fire management team.



Ms. Christine Ainabyona, NEMA Regional Manager (Western Uganda), delivering insightful on legal framework of Wildfires in Uganda

Ecological Trends Alliance Visits District Local Governments in Budongo-Bugoma Landscape

ETA visited local governments of Buliisa, Hoima, Kikuube and Hoima district between 24th -27th February 2025 at their respective district headquarters. They engaged the officers in natural resources conservation under the; Forestry, Community Development, Planning, Production, Natural Resources and Environment Departments.

ETA has worked within the landscape for 5 years and her work spans in areas of conservation of biodiversity, capacity building of communities in addressing human-wildlife and environmental challenges through evidence based research so as to inform sustainable development. As part of its goal to enhance environmental knowledge and conservation for the benefit of the people and sustainable development, ETA has empowered local communities

within the landscape in forest-based enterprises such as apiary, agroforestry, efficient fuel stoves thus providing alternative livelihoods.

Among the notable achievements of ETA was the Wildfire Management Strategy for the landscape, a collaborative effort to tackle the increasing wildfires. The strategy will come a long way in informing the formulation of the National strategy for the country.

The officers applauded the efforts of ETA and requested for a bigger coverage of Green Livelihoods projects to cover Buliisa and Masindi as well in addition to wildfire fighting equipment. They pledged to support the work of ETA to ensure the smooth running of the projects within the landscape.



A photo moment after an insightful radio show at Spice FM in Hoima, discussing the occurrence of Wildfires in Budongo-Bugoma landscape

Apiary as a Sustainable Livelihood for Itohya Community



ETA donated total of 80 bee hives to Itohya community

Promoting sustainable Forest Based Enterprises

Itohya Forest is a privately owned forest reserve measuring about 800 acres making it one of the biggest remaining forest reserves within the North Albertine Rift. It is a biodiversity hotspot and home to the globally threatened Eastern Chimpanzee and many other primates. Itohya Forest was gazetted in 1978 by the Hoima Catholic Diocese and its Swiss partner TECO and has since been under the care of **St. Joseph's Technical Institute, Munteme** which uses it majorly to train its students. The forest forms a big potential for tourism which is one of the biggest foreign exchange earners for Uganda's economy. **Itohya Forest** is a privately owned forest reserve measuring about 800 acres making it one of the biggest remaining forest reserves within the North Albertine Rift. It is a biodiversity hotspot and home to the globally threatened Eastern Chimpanzee and many other primates. Itohya Forest was gazetted in 1978 by the Hoima Catholic Diocese and its Swiss partner TECO and has since been under the care of **St. Joseph's Technical Institute, Munteme** which uses it majorly to train its students. The forest forms a big potential for tourism which is one of the biggest foreign exchange earners for Uganda's economy. ETA signed an MoU with the management of the institute on 12th February, 2024, a collaboration to sustainably manage the forest and has since then carried out a number of efforts to see this collaboration bear fruit.

The Friends of Itohya Forest Club (student based) and Friends of Itohya Community Conservation Association (community) are channels through which ETA is working to ensure the survival of the forest. The forest is surrounded by at least 10 villages who consistently put pressure on the forest in a bid to fulfill their livelihoods through charcoal burning, agriculture and wood extraction. ETA trained the members of the club and association in Apiary, a forest based enterprises for them to appreciate the value of Itohya without necessarily destroying it. A total donation of 80 bee hives (40) to Friends of Itohya Forest Club and 40 bee Hives to Friends of Itohya Community conservation Association group in Munteme Parish, Kiziranfumbi, sub county, Kikuube District.

The practical trainings on sustainable bee keeping were conducted in conjunction with Friends of TECO. The Club bee hives were installed within Itohya Forest while the bee hives for Friend of Itohya community conservation association were installed adjacent to Itohya forest in Rwobuhuka village.

These efforts continue to strengthen ETA efforts to promote sustainable Forest Based Enterprises (FBEs) with forest adjacent communities through inclusive empowerment of Youth and women as well as promoting sustainable conflict redress mechanisms.

News at Glance

■ Partners under GLA 2 (Green Livelihood Alliance 2) project whose main objectives “Uganda’s forested landscape protected from the effects of oil and gas” meet for a quarterly review.

The partners include the following; African Rural for Women Empowerment (ARUWE), Friends of Zoka, African Institute for Energy Governance (AFIEGO) and Ecological Trends Alliance (ETA).

■ We were honored to host Luis Gomes Primo in a productive meeting on Planning, Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (PMEL). Together, we explored strategies to improve our impact and ensure sustainable development for our communities and environment.



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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.



Luis Gomes Primo from Tropenbos
International visit ETA