

ECOLOGICAL CALL

"Securing Solutions to Biodiversity & Development Challenges"



ECOLOGICAL TRENDS
ALLIANCE

Newsletter: Issue 1: July-September, 2024



TOP STORIES:

- Landscape Approach To Wildfire Management.
- Giving Waste a Purpose For A Greener Tomorrow.
- Empowering Local Communities with alternative livelihood.
- Commemoration of World Chimpanzee Day 2024



I am delighted to share with you the first edition of our Periodic Newsletter 2024. We bring you stories on how biodiversity conservation can thrive alongside sustainable development.

Our natural world is a source of wonder, inspiration, and sustenance, and it is our collective responsibility to ensure its survival for generations to come. Through this newsletter, we aim to raise awareness, share knowledge, and inspire action to safeguard the diverse ecosystems that are vital to the health of our planet.

In this edition we bring you a Landscape approach to Wildfire Management, solid waste management, Collaborative Forest Management; a partnership to empower local communities to protect fragile ecosystems. 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".

Thank you for joining us.

We hope you enjoy this edition

Richard Ssemmanda



Presenting the wildfire management strategy to stakeholders.

Traditionally, fire is a tool used for cooking, charcoal burning, harvesting honey, hunting, preparation of land for farming and grazing to allow fresh pastures to sprout. These have however been run out of control and been exacerbated by climate change leading to wildfires-unwanted lighting. Wildfires have become a common occurrence globally and the Budongo-Bugoma landscape is not an exception.

The Budongo-Bugoma landscape comprises of districts of Hoima, Kikuube, Masindi and Buliisa housing some of the Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs) in Uganda and these include; Budongo and Bugoma Central forest reserves, part of Murchison Falls Conservation Area and Kabwoya Wildlife Reserve. The landscape is characterized by tropical high rainforests, grasslands, woodlands, bushlands and coniferous plantations most of which are extremely flammable thus increasing the risk of wildfires. Wildfires affect humans right from the grassroots to the top by altering the composition of the ecosystem, leading to loss of biodiversity and people’s livelihoods thus leading to economic losses.

The Wildfire Management strategy for Budongo-Bugoma Landscape (2025-2030) is a tool with a vision to build a wildfire free landscape that sustains natural resources for prosperity. It brings together all stakeholders within the landscape to tackle the shared enemy.

The strategy focuses on providing proactive measures to mitigate wildfire risks across the landscape through integration of advanced monitoring technologies with the North Albertine Rift Coordination – Group (NARC-G) and community engagement initiatives. It stipulates the roles to be played by each stakeholder within the landscape to reduce the incidence and impact of wildfires while fostering a resilient community. The strategy forms a baseline where lessons can be drawn to build a National Wildfire strategy for Uganda through improvement of the policy framework concerning wildfires. The Strategy was validated by the stakeholders from within the landscape e.g; CSOs, local leaders, sugar cane plantation managers, farmers, officials from Bunyoro Kingdom, National Environmental Management Authority (NEMA), National Forest Authority (NFA). The validation process done on 26th June, 2024 at Kabalega Resort was a success and the stakeholders agreed that it was a true reflection of the landscape.

We envision the integration of this Wildfire strategy into the Development Plans of the districts and private companies within the landscape.

Solid waste management is one of the biggest challenges facing the environment across the world as a result of population growth which eventually leads to increased generation of waste. Since the discovery of substantial amounts of oil in the Albertine Region, the area has had an explosion in the population of people which includes workers both formal and informal which has led to an increase in generation of solid waste across the region. Notable among the waste generated is the non-biodegradable e.g plastic bottles for mineral water and carbonated drinks.

The fast growing population in the oil regions overwhelms the capacity of the system to assimilate some of the wastes generated therefore a solution to reuse and repurpose the plastic bottles comes in handy to reduce waste.

130 youth from Shine Africa Primary School, friends of Itohya Club and Wambabya Forest Conservation and Development Association (WAFOCODA) in Kikuube District were educated about the effects of poor waste management and urged on ways how to put this waste to good use. These youth were trained in making tree shelters using plastic bottles and an estimate of 150 tree shelters will be made over the course of 3 months.

A generational change is best initiated at the grass root level as it creates a sense of stewardship and responsibility among the young generation.

Figure 3: empowered groups making sustainable





Incinerator Setup for Proper Waste Management

An incinerator was constructed in Kaseeta Parish to provide a quick solution to poor disposal of wastes especially the non-biodegradables. The incinerator was strategically set up in public and easy to access areas for example public markets.

6 School children from Kaseeta parish were employed as stewards of waste management and these aid in maintenance of incinerators and in return provided with scholastic materials for motivation.

This role empowers the children to be ambassadors of proper waste management and is also a way of raising young and responsible future custodians of the environment.





Highlights from our training programs in Kikuube district, where we are equipping farmers with the skills to grow coffee, cocoa, and indigenous trees, supporting sustainable livelihoods and biodiversity.

Farmers trained in Coffee, Cocoa and Indigenous Tree Growing.

98 farmers from Kaseeta Tugende Omumaiso Association, Kikuube in district were trained in coffee, cocoa and tree planting by the District Agricultural and Extension Officer of Kyangwari Sub County. The training which took place on 8th July, 2024 was facilitated by Ecological Trends Alliance under the Green Livelihood Alliance project. A total of 49341 seedlings were applied for by the farmers and this is projected to cover an area of 114 acres of land.

Our Impact

98

Farmers trained in coffee, cocoa and tree planting

49,341

Seedlings were applied

114

Acres of land projected to be covered



Bee-keeping: A Sustainable Livelihood

A donation of 20 bee-hives to be made to Bugambe Wambabya Forest Conservation and Development Association (BWAFOCODA) in Kikuube district. This forms part of the efforts of Ecological Trends Alliance in empowering youths and women with alternative sources of livelihoods. The members received training on sustainable bee-keeping from the National Forest Authority (NFA)



ETA signs an MoU with St. Joseph's Technical Institute, Munteme to manage Itohya Forest

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 a MoU with the management of the institute on 12th February, 2024, a collaboration to sustainably manage the forest for tourism.

The Friends of Itohya Forest Club was formulated on 23rd April, 2024 as an initiative towards creating awareness on preservation of the forest at the grassroots thus creating responsible future leaders. The club has a membership of 50 members and a leadership of 2 patrons, 4 females and 5 males were selected.

Itohya is surrounded by at least 9 villages and the forest provides goods and services to the surrounding local communities which led to the birth of Friends of Itohya Community Conservation Association. The role of the association is to create awareness on the conservation of the forest, eliminating threats and sustainable utilization of the forest resources.



Collaborative Forest Management to save Wambabya Forest

Wambabya forest is one of the largest remaining forest reserves in Kikuube District. It is faced with pressures rising from the lucrative charcoal burning, cultivation, firewood collection, and settlement all as a result of the growing population. ETA in collaboration with the National Forestry Authority (NFA) has instituted patrol teams through CFM groups adjacent to Wambabya Forest Reserve.

The patrol teams were supported with Personal Protective Equipment (PPEs) such as rain jackets and gumboots to assist them during the patrols.



Ecological Trends Alliance Joins the World in Celebrating World Chimpanzee Day in Bugoma Landscape



Ecological Trends Alliance raised awareness about environment conservation. This is to avoid Chimpanzee habitat destruction in Bugoma Landscape

The Importance of Chimpanzees to Our Ecosystem

Chimpanzees play a crucial role in maintaining the health and balance of their ecosystems.

As seed dispersers, they help regenerate forests, which in turn supports countless other species.

Their social structures and behaviors also provide invaluable insights into the evolution of human societies.

By protecting chimpanzees, we are not only preserving a key species but also safeguarding entire ecosystems that depend on them.

Chimpanzees, our closest relatives in the animal kingdom, are currently listed as endangered. Habitat loss due to deforestation, illegal wildlife trade, and diseases are among the primary threats they face. Chimpanzee Day is not just a celebration; it's a call to action. It's a day to reflect on our conservation efforts and to recommit to safeguarding their future.

At ETA, we have been working tirelessly to implement conservation programs that protect chimpanzee habitats, curb illegal poaching, and raise awareness about the importance of these magnificent creatures. Our research and on-the-ground projects have been instrumental in providing valuable data that inform global conservation strategies.


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#WorldChimpanzeeDay #ETA #SaveTheChimpanzees
#WildlifeConservation #ProtectPrimates #JaneGoodall ...more



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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.