

# ECOLOGICAL CALL

*"Sustainability a Must !"*



ECOLOGICAL TRENDS  
ALLIANCE

Newsletter: Issue 2: Oct-December, 2024



## Featured Highlights:

- The 16th Conference of the Parties (COP16).
- Training Itohya forest adjacent communities in Apiary
- ETA staff annual meeting.
- Exploring the Economic prospects of Itohya Forest.
- ETA seasons' greetings



I am delighted to share with you the last edition of our Periodic Newsletter 2024. We bring you stories on how biodiversity conservation can thrive alongside sustainable development. The year 2024 was well accomplished with a highlight of the Validation of the Wildfire Management Strategy for the Budongo-Bugoma Landscape, a landscape approach towards overcoming wildfires a threat to biodiversity, livelihoods and economic loss.

In this edition we bring you success stories of Youths involvement in Biodiversity conservation at COP16, empowering forest adjacent communities in alternative livelihoods, Annual planning staff meeting, exploring the Economic prospects of Itohya forest in Kikuube District and the seasons' greetings. 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".

I wish you a Merry Christmas and a prosperous New Year.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, which appears to read 'Richard Ssemanda'.

**Richard Ssemanda.**  
Director Programmes

# Transmission of traditional knowledge for the sustainable use and conservation of biodiversity.

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*Omondi Denis (standing 3<sup>rd</sup> right) with other Participants at COP16 after a fruitful discussion on traditional knowledge and youth-led conservation efforts in Cali, Columbia*

## Youth It or Lose It

The 16th Conference of the Parties (COP16) to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), held in Cali, Colombia, from October 21 to November 1, 2024, was a monumental gathering focused on combating biodiversity loss and promoting sustainable development. Under the theme **“Peace with Nature,”** the conference underscored the vital role of traditional knowledge and youth empowerment in conservation efforts.

A standout moment of COP16 was the presentation by Omondi Denis showcasing how the Baganda people use their rich cultural heritage and its significance in biodiversity conservation. The Baganda's tradition of intergenerational knowledge transmission anchored in their clan systems and totemic practices demonstrates a profound understanding of the natural world and its connection to human well-being.

By passing down this wisdom to younger generations, they not only preserve their cultural identity but also contribute meaningfully to environmental sustainability.

The presentation emphasized how traditional knowledge can serve as a powerful tool for addressing contemporary environmental challenges. This resonated strongly with the conference’s overarching **“Youth It or Lose It”** message, which highlighted the critical role of young people in shaping a sustainable future. By integrating indigenous knowledge into modern conservation practices and involving youth in leadership and decision-making, COP16 reinforced the importance of collaborative, intergenerational action for global biodiversity.

This inspiring event serves as a reminder that preserving traditional practices and empowering youth are integral to creating a harmonious relationship between humanity and nature. Let us celebrate and support such efforts as we strive towards a sustainable and inclusive future.



*Omondi Denis at COP16 in Cali, Columbia*

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# Training Itohya forest adjacent communities in Apiary as an alternative source of livelihood.

Itohya is a privately owned natural forest, measuring 800 acres located in Kikuube district. It is faced with threats of degradation majorly from the forest adjacent communities. Much of the degradation is done in a bid to fulfill livelihoods such as charcoal burning, timber and firewood extraction.

In a significant step towards sustainable livelihoods and human-wildlife co-existence, the members of Friends of Itohya Community Conservation Association (FICCA) and Friends of Itohya Forest Club (FIFC) were trained comprehensively in beekeeping on November 25th and 9th 2024 respectively. 51 members from FICCA (33 women and 18 men), and 48 youth club members (21 females, 27 male) were equipped with skills and knowledge. The skills included; understanding the life cycle, social structure, and ecological role of bees, Identifying and using essential tools

and equipment for beekeeping, techniques for setting up, maintaining and managing beehives. These skills will enable these forest adjacent communities to establish profitable group bee-keeping ventures thus reducing their dependence on the forests entirely for their livelihoods.

The training was conducted by Mr. Manigamukama David (Head Ranger Itohya forest) and Kitembo Brian (forester) in conjunction with ETA. By empowering community members with these skills, ETA seeks to Improve Livelihoods, Promote Conservation of Itohya forest, encourage sustainable forest management practices and reduce human-wildlife conflict. This apiary training supplements on the efforts of ETA in building capacities of local communities in forest-based enterprises.





ETA staff in the meeting at ETA Hoima offices.



Michael explains the value of the meeting to ETA staff




## Enhancing Organizational Effectiveness

### Staff Annual Planning Meeting

As part of our commitment to organizational growth and excellence, we held our Staff Annual Review Meeting in November 2024.

This meeting provided an opportunity to reflect on our achievements over the past year, assess our progress toward program targets, and set ambitious goals for the upcoming year 2025.

### Major areas included:

-  **Targets Achieved:** Celebrating milestones across our programs.
-  **Future Planning:** Identifying strategic priorities and actionable steps for 2025 to enhance impact and efficiency.
-  **Team Development:** Strengthening collaboration and fostering a culture of accountability and continuous learning.

# Exploring the Economic prospects of Itohya Forest, Kikuube District

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Itohya Forest, is the largest privately owned natural forest reserve measuring at least 800 acres in Kikuube District owned by St. Josephs Vocational and Training Institute, Munteme under the Catholic Diocese of Hoima. The forest is dominated with numerous indigenous tree species; *Khaya anthotheca* (African Mahogany), *Albizia coriaria* (Mugavu), *Milicia excelsa* (Mvule), *Warbugia ugandaensis* (Ugandan Greenheart), *Prunus africana* (Red Stinkwood) and a section of bamboo. The forest provides a habitat to a diverse number of mammals such as the Eastern Chimpanzee, Vervet monkeys, Red-tailed monkeys, Black-and-White colobus, Grey-cheeked Mangabey and Olive Baboon. It boasts of an impressive checklist of bird species such as the Grey Parrots and range restricted species e.g Uganda Woodland Warbler, Chocolate-backed Kingfisher, White-thighed Hornbill several species of reptiles and butterflies.

This forest like many others in the North Albertine is faced with various threats stemming from the influx of refugees in the region, encroachment, land degradation as the adjacent communities look to satisfy their livelihoods through charcoal burning, timber extraction, agriculture and settlement.

Much of the biodiversity in this hotspot remains unknown. ETA seeks to fill these knowledge gaps as part of her mission to contribute to sustainable development through knowledge and evidence based options for humanity. The ETA biodiversity experts set out in October to establish a baseline for the biodiversity (mammals, plants, reptiles and birds) which will play a great deal in developing a business plan for Itohya to ensure its sustainable utilization. A record of 118 bird species, several mammals, reptiles and plants were registered and we hope to carry out another survey in 2025 to get a more comprehensive list.



Red-capped Robin-Chat (one of the birds caught in Mist-nets)



Itohya forest in Kikuube district



## SEASONS' GREETINGS

This Christmas, let's celebrate the beauty of biodiversity, the gift that keeps our planet thriving. May the season inspire us to cherish and protect the natural wonders around us.

Merry Christmas  
& a Happy  
NEW YEAR 2025



Ecological Trends Alliance Unites with the World to Celebrate World Fisheries Day 2024



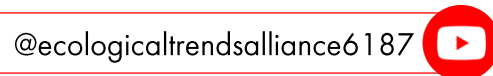
## Happy World Fisheries Day November 21



*"ETA supports the protection of aquatic ecosystems through restoration of river catchments"*

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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.