

# Army asked to intervene in sand mining

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**KAMPALA.** The Minister for Environment, Mr Sam Cheptoris, has asked the government to deploy the army to stop the ongoing dredging and sand mining in Lake Victoria.

Mr Cheptoris said the environmental police attached to National Environment Management Authority (Nema) to carry out such tasks is limited.

“Nema does not have capacity to monitor what they are doing in the Lake. We need the assistance of the army, but otherwise what is been done in the

lake is illegal and nobody should tell us that it is right,” Mr Cheptoris said during the sidelines of a meeting to discuss the proposed National

## BACKGROUND

Several companies continue to mine sand around Lake Victoria basin despite warnings from environmentalists. The Nema executive director, Dr Tom Okurut, maintained yesterday that the authority has never permitted any companies to dredge sand in the lake.

Environment Bill, 2017.

“The environment is being degraded at a very fast rate. So this Bill is trying to address some of the challenges. Our forests and wetlands are being encroached on. We [also] have issues of pollution,” Mr Cheptoris added.

The army spokesperson, Brig Richard Karemire, said the Uganda People’s Defence Force was ready to serve when called.

The army is currently involved in stopping illegal fishing on all lakes in the country, cracking down hardcore criminals in the city and is involved in the agriculture sector.