

EDITORIAL

Govt should take action
on wetland encroachers

Many areas in Uganda are already bearing the burden of environmental degradation. It is, therefore, no wonder that leaders in Kanungu District, which is facing severe food shortage, have decried this vice.

During the district stakeholder's meeting on environment management and restoration of degraded ecosystems, the leaders appealed to government to take full charge of wetlands. This can only mean that the laws on environmental protection such as the National Environment Act Cap 153, are only on paper despite the critical nature of environmental issues.

The encroachment on wetlands is one of the most visible examples of how this natural resource is being squandered.

The issue:

Loss of wetlands

Our view:

It will take a collaborative effort to save wetlands. Besides, the law must apply to all parties irrespective of who they are. Examples must be made of the culprits right from the grass roots level.

There must be deliberate government efforts, especially through agencies like Nema, in inspection and awarding of licences to parties using these wetlands. Examples must be made if this issue is to be taken seriously.

Unfortunately, encroachers are often prominent government officials thus making enforcement of laws a challenge. With creation of awareness on the value of the wetlands and institution of strict principles set right from grass root level, this matter can be adequately dealt with.

Government ministries such as ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development, ministry of Energy and Mineral Development, ministry of Works and Transport, and ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries should work in partnership with the ministry of Water and Environment to promote conservation.

It will take a collaborative effort to save wetlands. Besides, the law must apply to all parties irrespective of who they are. Examples must be made of the culprits right from the grass roots level and recommendations from the different assessments on environmental conservation, should be implemented if we are to curb wetland destruction.

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WILLIA

Raila Odinga during his presidential campaign opted to go to the grassroots to challenge the status quo by the Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission. The IERC called for a poll of Jubilee Party members (54 per cent of the 6.7 million) in a contested election. He would "go to the grassroots to contest the election and would not be intimidated by the opposition." He would "go to the grassroots to contest the election and would not be intimidated by the opposition." He would "go to the grassroots to contest the election and would not be intimidated by the opposition."

Raila has made the highest official attempt was believed he acted as a neutral, the highly sought after 'won't', but may eventually in the Rift Valley, leaving a more than shattered Kenya.