

Uganda must protect the environment?

EDITOR: The concentration of greenhouse gases (GHGs) produced by human activity has increased significantly in recent years. In its fifth assessment report, the intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change found that global climate has been warming since the 1950s.

Uganda is feeling the impact of climate change with rising temperatures and erratic weather.

However, one of the issues that I wish could be interrogated by concerned government agencies is: the status of forest cover in the country. The Food and Agriculture Organisation produced a report on the status of Uganda's forests in 2010.

According to that report, it indicated that Uganda's forest cover had declined from 54% of the country's land area

(approximately 13.2 million hectares) in the 1950s to about 4.9 million hectares in 1990: It declined further to four million hectares by 2000, 3.6 million in 2005 and 2.6 million hectares in 2010.

The on-going Bamugemeirere's commission of enquiry on land matters has exposed the rot in the lands ministry in regards to wetlands.

The picture painted therein looks unpleasing! Uganda's swamps are also on the verge of extinction, if nothing is done to reverse the current trend.

Another issue that ought to be looked into keenly is the country's population growth. Uganda is experiencing one of the fastest population growths globally. Can Vision 2040 be realised with this kind of population growth rate?

The UN Agenda for 2030, through the Sustainable Development Goals, has

climate at the centre.

One of the interesting facets of some of these goals is that parties will be enjoined to the United Nations framework Convention on climate to annually mobilise \$100b annually by 2020 and fully operationalise the green climate fund.

This facet is crucial to developing countries such as Uganda, but the challenge is that in the recent past, we have heard US president Donald Trump make comments that go against some of these dreams.

Is Uganda putting in place measures to mitigate some of the adverse effects of, say, an American exit? These are some of the issues that could be closely looked into by the relevant authorities.

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PICTURE BY RICHARD SANYA



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