

Government to cancel land titles in wetlands

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and Mary Karugaba

In a move to save the environment, the Government has named 27 certificates of titles issued for land in wetlands that are due for cancellation.

The land titles are part of the bulk of over 350 land titles that have unlawfully been awarded to individuals and companies.

Section 36 of the National Environment Act provides for the protection of wetlands and prohibits any person from encroaching, erecting or demolishing any structure that is fixed in, on, under or over any wetland.

The registered beneficiaries of the affected titles include Aisha Mulungi, Kellen Karemera and Emmanuel Gasana who got plots on Butabika Valley Road; Irene Kwera on By-pass Close, Azida Nantege and Huudu Ssemuga both on Sports Road.

Others are Floriculture and Organic Products Ltd (Peninsula Crescent), Barbara Nalubega (Peninsula Link Close), Bob Kanaabi (Butabika Valley road), Augustine Rutaganda (Miami Close), Rogers Kataali (Aqua Close), Kwagala Real Estates Ltd (Binayomba Drive), Trussnet (u) Ltd (Aqua Close), Asuman Irunga and Tumwine Silagi, both on Sports Road.

The list also includes Kiwanuka Wamala and Olivia Namaganda, both on Miami Close, Tar Investments Ltd (Sports Road), Rolco Corporation (U) Ltd (Peninsula Crescent), Barbara Nalubega and Hossana Properties Ltd, both on Sports Road, Palm development (U) Ltd (Railway Ring Road), Benon Kibanza (Peninsula Road) and Moskam Contracting Ltd on Butabika Valley Access.

Asked to explain when the cancellation would take effect, the National Environment Management Authority (NEMA) spokesperson, Naomi Karekaho, said: "We issued the list, so it is the responsibility of the lands ministry, which issued the titles, to cancel. But the actual reclaiming of the wetlands, will be done by Ministry of Water and Environment."

When contacted, the lands minister, Betty Amongi, declined to comment on the matter saying she was in a meeting.

Last year, the junior lands minister, Persis Namuganza, said the land titles to be cancelled are for individuals that unlawfully acquired land in several areas that include Bugolobi, Kansanga, Ninda, Bukoto, Kinawataka, Nansana, Buloba and Bulenga.

The Government said the directive would only affect those who acquired the land



Betty Amongi



Persis Namuganza

Certificates of titles issued on land in wetlands due for cancellation

BENEFICIARY	PLOT	ROAD
Aisha Mulungi of Kampala	2 - 12	Butabika valley road
Kellen Karemera of Kampala	26 - 36	Butabika valley road
Aisha Mulungi of Kampala	14 - 24	Butabika valley road
Irene Kwera of Kampala	1 - 4, 5 - 7 & 8 - 11	By-pass close
Azida Nantege of Kampala	2 - 8	Sports road
Floriculture and Organic Products Ltd, Kampala	11A	peninsula crescent
Nalubega Barbara of Kampala	2 - 5	Peninsula link close
Ssemuga Huudu of Kampala	56 - 58	Sports road
Kanaabi Bob of Kampala	2A	Butabika valley road
Rutaganda Augustine of Kampala	8	Miami close
Kataali Rogers of Kampala	4 - 5	Aqua close
Gasana Emmanuel of Kampala	4	Butabika valley close
Kwagala Real Estates Ltd, Kampala	20 - 26	Binayomba close
Trussnet (U) Ltd, Kampala	1 & 2	Aqua close
Tumwine Silagi Turnusiime, Kampala	10 - 16	Sports road
Asuman Irunga	44 - 52, 54 - 62 & 64 - 72	Sports road
Tar investments Ltd, Kampala	23 - 33	Sports road
Kiwanuka Wamala of Kampala	5	Miami close
Namaganda Olivia of Kampala	4	Miami close
Rolco Corporation (U) Ltd, Kampala	5 - 11	Peninsula crescent
Kiwanuka Wamala of Kampala	7	Miami close
Nalubega Barbara	18 - 22, 24 - 32 & 34 - 42	Sports road
Hossana properties Ltd, Kampala	1A - 1G	Sports road
Palm Development (U) Ltd, Kampala	9	Railway Ring road
Kibanza Benon	60	Peninsula road
Moskam contracting Ltd, Kampala	2	Butabika valley access
Moskam contracting Ltd, Kampala	6 - 10	Butabika valley access

titles after the 1995 Constitution because there were no laws to protect wetlands before 1995. Therefore, cancelling them would have significant legal implications.

The list was forwarded last month to the parliamentary

committee on physical infrastructure by the Uganda Land Commission (ULC) as inventory of government land.

The committee chairperson, George Nsamba (Bbaale County), said the list was

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presented following queries on how far the cancellation process had gone. In her response recently, Amongi said not much had been done because those set to be affected had filed numerous court injunctions against the move.

The Government has in the recent past toyed with the idea of cancelling land titles in wetlands, including those that are said to have been approved by authorities, such as NEMA and the Kampala Capital City Authority (KCCA).

Experts have consistently warned that Kampala, which sits on the shores of Lake Victoria, could face severe flooding, shortage of drinking water and disappearance of fish, as well as a number of health hazards if wetland destruction is not urgently stopped. They said wetlands serve as the rainfall catchment area for Africa's largest freshwater body.

According to NEMA, the wetland catchment areas around Lake Victoria have shrunk by more than half their size in 20 years from 7,167.6sqkm in 1994 to 3,310 sq.km in 2008.