

EACOP: IMMENSE ECONOMIC VALUE AT STAKE DUE TO PROJECT'S HUGE ENVIRONMENTAL FOOTPRINT



EAST AFRICAN
CRUDE OIL PIPELINE
HOST COMMUNITIES



CEFROHT
Justice for adequate living



A grisly image of a decapitated chimpanzee was shared via various Ugandan WhatsApp groups on October 25, 2022.

The people who shared the images indicated that some households in Kagadi district in Western Uganda had killed and eaten the chimpanzee.

Previously, in May 2022, some community members in Kikuube district had killed and eaten another chimpanzee.

The species, which is classified as **endangered** by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), is faced with a number of threats.

Other than poaching, the species faces threats such as habitat loss, fragmentation of habitats, declining number of fruit trees and others. Chimpanzees mainly live in tropical rainforests; they may also live in woodlands and grasslands.

Uganda has the highest density of common chimpanzees in Africa and the **second** highest number in East Africa. Unfortunately, the chimpanzee population is declining with a recent survey showing that the species had declined to **3,500** from over 5,000 in 2003.

Chimpanzees, which are largely found in the Albertine Graben in Western Uganda, are under immense pressure. Industrial as well as oil and gas exploitation activities have put the species at increased risk.

The East African Crude Oil Pipeline (EACOP), a 1,443-km pipeline that is to be built from oil fields in Western Uganda to the port of Tanga in Tanzania, in particular has further endangered the species.

How so?

EACOP & CHIMPS



A chimpanzee

In 2003, researchers led by Andrew Plumptre published **a report** titled, *Status of chimpanzees in Uganda*. The report showed that after Kibale National Park, Budongo and Bugoma forests had the second and third highest population of chimpanzees standing at 584 and 570 respectively.

In May 2022 however, the media reported that the population of chimpanzees in Bugoma forest had declined to **390!** Habitat loss arising from sugarcane growing, illegal logging, charcoal burning and others were reported to have caused the population decline.

Amidst the above, in their January 2019 Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA) report for the EACOP project, the project developers that include TotalEnergies, China National Offshore Oil Corporation (CNOOC) and the Ugandan government, indicated that they may construct their pipeline between Bugoma and Wambabya forests.

Experts from the Netherlands Commission for Environmental Assessment (NCEA) who **reviewed** the ESIA at the invitation of Uganda's National Environment Management Authority (NEMA)

indicated that construction of the EACOP between the forests could affect the migratory patterns of chimpanzees, thereby potentially affecting the population viability of the apes.

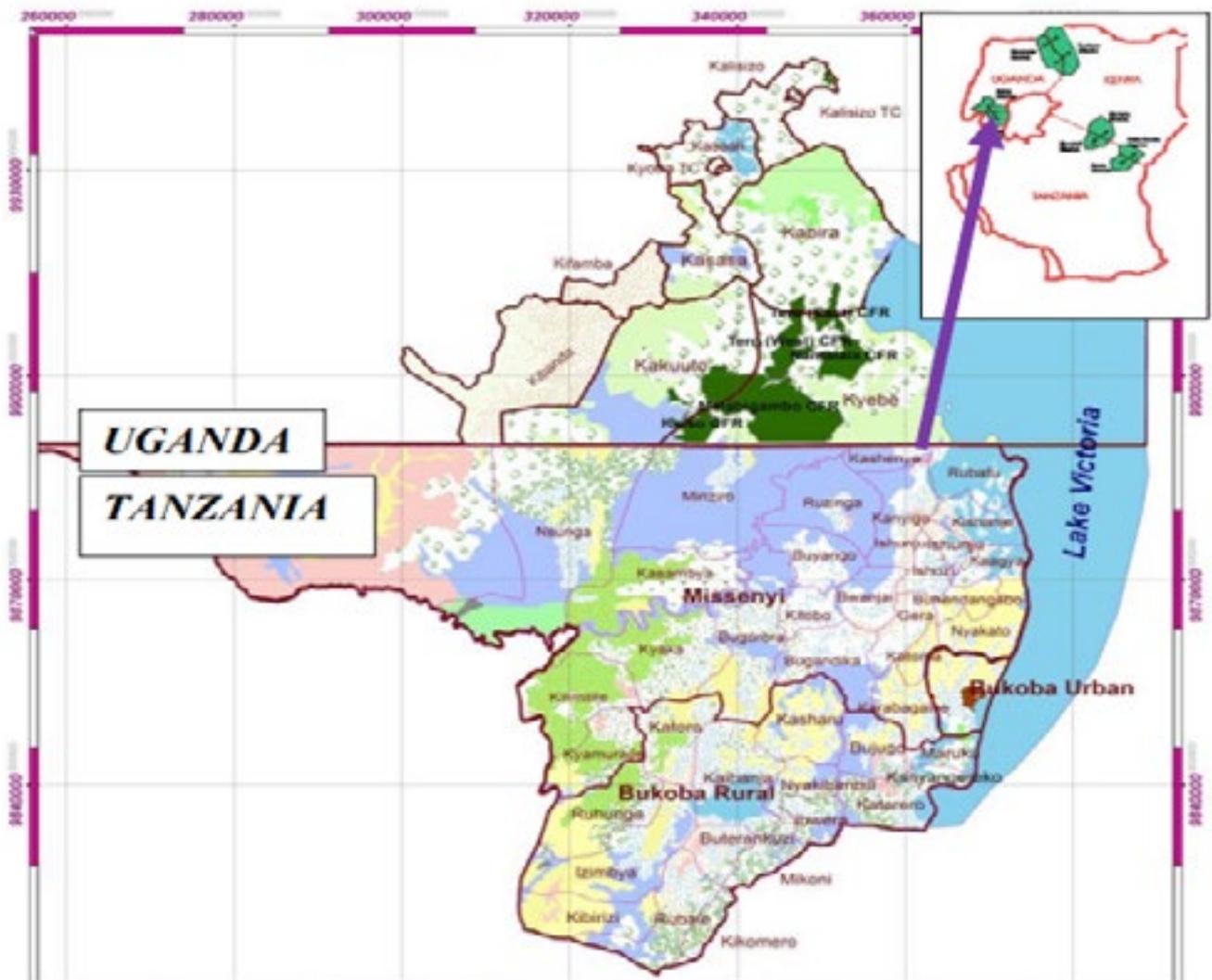
The mitigation measures that the EACOP project developers proposed to protect the chimps were found to be inadequate.

Yet it is not only the chimps that are under threat because of the EACOP project.

Below is a table with information on only three forest landscapes that are to be impacted by the EACOP project; more forest landscapes in Uganda and Tanzania are impacted but they are not discussed in this article.

The biodiversity therein and economic value of these landscapes is also shown.

No.	Forest	Biodiversity	Economic value
1.	Bugoma Forest - Uganda *The pipeline is set to be constructed between Bugoma & Wambabya forests	<p>Bugoma forest is the 12th among top places of biodiversity importance out of 65 forests studied for biodiversity.</p> <p>The forest is home to over 34 species of mammals including four globally threatened species.</p> <p>The mammal species in the forest include primates such as chimpanzees, Ugandan mangabeys, Black and White Colobus monkeys, Blue monkeys, Red tailed monkeys and the Velvet monkeys.</p> <p>Bugoma forest is also a home to Buffaloes, Bush Elephants, Uganda Kobs, Golden Cats and Side-stripped Jackals.</p> <p>Further, the forest is home to nine species of reptiles and over 257 tree and shrub species including seven species that are Albertine Rift endemics (can only be found in the rift).</p> <p>The forest is also home to 20 amphibian species including one that is endemic to the Albertine Rift, 118 species of moths, 292 species of butterflies and over 225 bird species. These include globally threatened species such as the Black-eared ground thrush (<i>Zoothera camaronensis</i>) and Nahan's francolin (<i>Francolinus nahani</i>).</p>	UGX <u>200 trillion</u> or over USD 52.9 billion per year
2.	Wambabya Forest - Uganda *The pipeline is set to be constructed between Bugoma & Wambabya forests	<p>Wambabya is a forest reserve that connects two major forest blocks, Bugoma and Budongo in Western Uganda.</p> <p>Wambabya has a population of around 120 chimpanzees (Plumptre et al. 2003).</p> <p>Wambabya may also be classified as of conservation value not based on its species content only but because it provides connectivity between Bugoma and Budongo. The connectivity enables gene flow to take place thereby maintaining viable populations of species.</p>	Unknown
3.	Minziro Nature Forest - Tanzania	<p>Minziro Nature Forest "is the largest forested landscape in Northwest Tanzania."</p> <p>The forest is "contiguous [with the] Sango Bay landscape in southwestern Uganda". The Sango Bay-Musambwa Island-Kagera Wetland System is a Ramsar site (wetland of international importance).</p> <p>The forest is home to almost 250 bird species, 58 of which are not found outside the Kagera Region in Tanzania, and 56 have only been seen in the forest.</p> <p>The landscape also hosts populations of the globally vulnerable Blue Swallow, and Papyrus Yellow Warbler as well as the near-threatened Papyrus Gonolek (<i>Laniarius mufumbiri</i>).</p> <p>It also offers habitat to primates including the Grey-cheeked Mangabey and Thomas's Dwarf Galago, neither of which have been recorded elsewhere in Tanzania, as well as the Red-Tailed Monkey (<i>Cercopithecus ascanius</i>) and the Angola Colobus (<i>Colobus angolensis</i>).</p> <p>The African Elephant (<i>Loxodonta Africana</i>) is also present in the forest.</p> <p>"Minziro is an important component of the Kagera floodplain ecosystem, and plays a critical hydrological role-regulating the waters that flow through the Kagera River to Lake Victoria".</p> <p>Source of above information</p>	USD <u>119 million</u> a year



The Sango Bay-Minziro Ecosystem in Uganda and Tanzania.
Photo courtesy: [Climate Links](#)

CONCLUSION

Because the environmental and biodiversity footprint of the EACOP project will undermine biodiversity conservation and East African citizens' capacity to enjoy their livelihood and other rights, four East African civil society organisations including Centre for Food and Adequate Living Rights (CEFROHT)-Uganda, Africa Institute for Energy Governance

(AFIEGO)-Uganda, Natural Justice-Kenya and Centre for Strategic Litigation-Tanzania filed a court case seeking both temporary and permanent injunctions against the EACOP project.

Other reasons showing why the court case was filed can be read in this [factsheet](#).

The case is set to be heard in Kampala on November 11, 2022.