



THE CONSERVATIONIST

EGI QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

Theme:

Awakening global actions, shaping community perspectives for a just energy transition



OECD participants during the session

WELCOME TO EGI'S QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

The first quarter of the year from January to March 2025 has brought with it both joy and sadness for Uganda and the region. The year began with intense heatwaves, a stark reminder that climate change is no longer a distant threat but a present-day reality. In some neighboring countries, temperatures soared to as high as 45°C, forcing school-going children to stay home for safety. Uganda, meanwhile, was still reeling from mudslides that had occurred earlier, leaving destruction in their wake.

As the climate began to stabilize, the fight for a just and equitable future pressed on. Communities directly impacted by fossil fuel projects continued to raise their voices, demanding their rights be respected. They called for genuine, free, prior, and informed consent, a right that must not be overlooked by companies operating in their midst.

At EGI, we took this call to a global stage. In the first quarter, we engaged in high-level advocacy at the OECD, urging policymakers to uphold the development needs of the Global South. We emphasized that the aspirations of emerging markets and developing economies must be honored. Encouragingly, key commitments were made to shape better policies for better lives.

However, just as hope was beginning to take root, EACOP announced that several financial institutions including Afreximbank, Stanbic Bank, and KCB Uganda—had approved funding for the controversial pipeline project. This announcement came on the very same day Uganda was hit by devastating floods, resulting in the loss of lives and property worth billions. The contrast could not have been starker.

Yet, this sobering news did not break the spirit of Uganda's environmentalists. Their hope remains not necessarily in the companies themselves, but in the belief that financial institutions and shareholders will come to understand the vital role they play in respecting the voices and aspirations of Ugandans striving for a sustainable future.

Until then, we remain committed to the momentum for change and the resilience of the communities we serve. Together, we are stronger.

Let us carry forward the spirit of solidarity, action, and hope into the coming months as we continue our fight for environmental justice.

EDITORIAL TEAM

1. Joy Nabulo
2. Elizabeth Namagembe
3. John Peter Okwi

KEY ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS UNDERTAKEN BY EGI THIS QUATER

EGI advocates for better policies at the OECD CSO forum in Paris



Mr. Samuel Okulony (third from right) participating in the OECD panel discussion on export support from the perspective of emerging markets and developing economies.

On March 12th, 2025, our Chief Executive Officer, Mr. Samuel Okulony, participated in the Civil Society Organisations Forum of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). The forum offered a vital platform for civil society to engage with representatives from OECD member countries on strategies to improve policies for better lives.

During the opening expert panel on Emerging Markets and Developing Economies, Mr. Okulony emphasized the urgent need to align development policies with the realities on the ground. He advocated for increased investment in initiatives that respond to the development priorities of recipient countries, particularly in the face of escalating climate challenges.

He highlighted the emerging and devastating impacts of climate change, including floods and

mudslides that have claimed thousands of lives in Uganda, and the recent heatwaves that disrupted schooling and endangered children's health. He stressed the need for collective global action to mitigate climate change and protect vulnerable communities.

Mr. Okulony underscored that public finance must not be used to fuel destruction but should instead promote sustainable and inclusive development. His key message focused on the importance of inclusive policies that uphold the rights of frontline communities particularly the right to Free, Prior, and Informed Consent (FPIC) and ensure that development support aligns with the needs of the Global South, while advancing climate action and long-term sustainability

EGI supports Kakuuto communities in standing for their Rights to free, prior and informed consent



EACOP affected communities during a meeting in Kakuuto subcounty, Kyotera

To protect the privacy of individuals, this image has been altered

On January 14, 2025, the Environment Governance Institute (EGI), in collaboration with the Vice Chairperson of Kyotera District, convened a community meeting in Kakuuto Subcounty, Kyotera District. The objective was to document the emerging impacts of oil and gas activities and gather community perspectives on ongoing developments particularly how their rights to free, prior, and informed consent have been violated.

The meeting brought together participants from several oil-affected villages, including Nabigasa, Bigade, and Kayachwere. It served as a critical platform for community members to share their experiences, concerns, and grievances regarding the oil-related activities taking place in their areas.

Discussions centered around the ongoing developments related to the East African Crude Oil Pipeline (EACOP), which continues to advance while leaving behind a trail of adverse social and environmental impacts. The meeting followed a

adherence to the principles of free, prior, and informed consent.

Following the meeting, the EGI team conducted one-on-one follow-up visits to affected communities to gather deeper insights and continue building solidarity

An elderly woman in kyotera worried of high-voltage power lines erected on her land



An elderly woman standing and expressing her fears during field community meeting in Nabigasa EACOP affected village

To protect the privacy of individuals, this image has been altered.

An elderly woman from Nabigasa Village in Kyotera District, affected by the EACOP project, recounted how project developers coerced her into signing agreements against her will. She shared a distressing memory from May 2023:

“I woke up early in the morning to go to my garden, only to find a group of strange people in overalls clearing a portion of my land and cutting down trees—without ever seeking my consent.”

Shocked and confused, she approached the group to ask under whose authority they were operating. One of the workers responded that they had been contracted by an oil company to install electric poles.

To this day, she says, the experience has left her living in fear:

“Every morning I wake up afraid to go to my garden. I see these poles marked with the Kiswahili word ‘Hatari,’ meaning danger, standing on my land. My family is scared to plant or plough near them. Even worse, we were never compensated for the portion of land that was taken. We worry constantly about the risks of living so close to something that’s marked as dangerous.”

A pap in Rakai risks losing sustainable income from her fish pond due to EACOP



Mr. John Peter Okwi EGI programs coordinator and a Pap , during field visit in one of the EACOP affected fish ponds in Lwanda village, Rakai

On January 15, 2025, the Environment Governance Institute (EGI) conducted a field visit to some of the households affected by the EACOP project in Rakai District. The aim of the visit was to document key green livelihoods that are under threat due to the ongoing oil pipeline development.

While in Rakai, the EGI team met with one resident of Lwanda Village, who expressed deep concern about the potential loss of income from her fish farming enterprise.

“I established this fish pond two years ago,” She shared, “and I’ve been harvesting mainly mudfish and tilapia. Each harvest gives me a quarterly income of around 400,000 shillings. (120 USD)”

However, her pond is located adjacent to the proposed path of the oil pipeline, and she fears that the development will disrupt the groundwater sources that feed her pond.

“If the pipeline affects the groundwater recharge, or if heat and pollution from it reach my pond, the fish will die. This would not only destroy my livelihood but also take away my ability to pay school fees and provide for my family’s daily needs.”

Her story is a powerful reminder of how large-scale infrastructure projects like EACOP can jeopardize sustainable, community-based sources of income and well-being.

Environment students join advocacy spaces to debunk the Energy charter treaty in Uganda



Kyambogo university Environment Science student giving his submissions during the public lecture



Mr. Okulony Samuel presenting on the dangers of ECT

On March 6th, 2025, the Environment Governance Institute, in collaboration with Youth for Green Communities, held a public lecture with Kyambogo University students. The purpose of the meeting was to create awareness on the impacts of ECT on climate change, and its implications on Just Energy Transition, and foster understanding of the role of students in mapping out ideas on the role in de-campaigning the ratification and expansion of the treaty in Uganda and Africa at large. Of students.

The meeting attracted about 90 environmental science students, KUEMA student leaders, and civil society youth actors. The meeting provided a platform through which students expressed their

ideas concerning the energy charter treaty, asked questions, and were oriented on their roles as environmentalists in ensuring that Uganda transforms to a just energy path.

This meeting informed efforts to leverage various perspectives and joint actions from students and civil society actors to stop Uganda's future intentions of ratifying the treaty due to its long-term negative climate change impacts and its dangerous clauses that contravene efforts to limit global temperature within 1.5° of pre-industrial levels.

A pap in Kyakaboga seeks compensation of land after seven years



Ongoing land clearing in Hoima, amidst gaps in compensation

One of the Project-Affected Persons (PAPs) impacted by the Tilenga pipeline and was among those relocated from Kabaale to the Kyakaboga resettlement area.

In 2018, just months after relocating to Kyakaboga, He began raising concerns about delays in compensation. Seven years later, he is yet to receive his land title for the land they were given, and TotalEnergies has reportedly started using the land rendering him powerless to negotiate better

In addition, he is particularly concerned about the ongoing pipeline excavation works. He notes that during the construction, soil is being pushed beyond the designated 30-meter corridor onto land that has not been paid for and destroying his crops. To date, he and several other affected individuals are still waiting for TotalEnergies to provide them with land titles for both the portions that remain outside the corridor and for the new parcels of land the company is in the process of acquiring on their behalf.

Irregularities in the compensation process push Madiru Justo's family into a weather-prone homestead.

Displaced and Forgotten by the Pipeline



A family in Kijumba village grappling with life after mishaps in EACOP compensation

To protect the privacy of individuals, this image has been altered

A 55-year-old resident of Kijumba in Kabaale Subcounty, Hoima District, is one of many affected by the East African Crude Oil Pipeline (EACOP) project. His story is a painful reflection of the human cost of displacement.

Initially, he was renting a small piece of land where he had built his home. When the pipeline project reached his area, he was asked to vacate the land to make way for development. Although he was promised compensation, securing alternative land proved difficult. A friend eventually offered him an acre of land temporarily and paid a small fee to the landowner. As he waited for compensation, he did not get enough compensation to replace the land he lost. He was eventually asked to leave.

However, this new beginning was short-lived. He failed to pay the costs for temporary land and he was forced family to leave. Today, he and his six children are living in a grass-thatched hut beneath a tree, with no access to basic shelter or stability.

“I never imagined I would have to raise my children like this. We have no security, no privacy, and no hope of returning to normal life. The pipeline has taken everything from us,” Madira shared. His story is a stark reminder that beyond the politics and profits of major infrastructure projects are real families struggling for survival and dignity

Community Reactions to the Announcement of Partial Financing for EACOP

Voices from the Ground

A Project-Affected Person (PAP) from Hoima, affected by both EACOP and the oil refinery project, shared:

“This project is harming the environment. Construction activities involve clearing natural bushland and indigenous trees, many of which are habitats for wildlife. When the vegetation is removed, the fertile topsoil is washed away during rainfall, leaving the land bare and degraded.”

A community member from Kyotera expressed deep frustration:

“It breaks my heart to hear that the East African Crude Oil Pipeline (EACOP) has secured more financing. For us in the community, this is not good news—it only brings more pain and suffering. Ever since they came here, life has not been the same. Our only hope was that they would fail to get the money and leave us in peace.”

“Whoever is funding these companies is acting against the interests of the people. Why don't they first come and see how their money is making us cry? These companies don't care about us—about our lives, our land, or our future. All they care about is the oil beneath our feet. To them, it's profit over people.”

A resident concerned about safety near the project corridor said:

“Please, no one should give them any more money. The EACOP will increase the risk of accidents along the Kijumba–Katooke road. That road is already narrow and is now being used to transport heavy machinery. The increased traffic and equipment movement pose serious dangers to pedestrians and motorists alike.”

A Rakai resident reflected on the broader impact:

“As someone from Rakai, I've seen firsthand how the financing of the EACOP project is already affecting our communities. Many people still don't have clear information about how this project will benefit us directly. While a few believe there may be economic opportunities, many others are concerned about unfair compensation and displacement. Our voices must be heard. Development should not come at the cost of our safety, dignity, and well-being.”

EGI IN MEDIA

Energy Charter Treaty irrelevant to Africa



Energy Charter Treaty irrelevant to Africa

Friday, February 28, 2025



The energy charter treaty is an international agreement that was signed in 1994 and came into force in April 1998 . The aim of the treaty is to promote and protect international investment in the oil and gas sector .This treaty provides the

framework for energy cooperation and trade and includes provisions for the settlement of disputes between investors and states

[Read More details](#)

Align wetland ecosystem conservation efforts



Align wetland ecosystem conservation efforts

Saturday, February 08, 2025



In relation to the recent celebration of International day of wetlands 2025 which was observed globally under the theme “Protecting wetlands of our common future “It is crucial for Uganda to reflect on

both regional and national efforts as well as the gaps and challenges in conservation of these sensitive vital efforts

[Read More details](#)

African banks back oil export pipeline despite climate commitments

African banks back oil export pipeline despite climate commitments

Lenders including Afreximbank are backing Uganda's EACOP project, while publicly talking up their support for a just energy transition.



It was announced this week that the African Export-Import Bank – whose main shareholders are African governments – would be part of a syndicate of financial institutions committing a first tranche of external financing to the East Africa Crude Oil

Pipeline (EACOP) project, which is majority-controlled by French energy giant TotalEnergies.

[Read More details](#)

Ugandan Environmentalists Demand Banks Halt New Funding For Oil Project

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Ugandan Environmentalists Demand Banks Halt New Funding For Oil Project

By AFP - Agence France Presse

March 27, 2025, 3:09 pm EDT

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Reprints

The East African Crude Oil Pipeline project (EACOP) announced it had secured the first part of financing to move crude from Uganda to a Tanzanian port, prompting environmentalists on Thursday to call on banks to withdraw their support.

French giant TotalEnergies and the China National Offshore Oil Corporation (CNOOC) are pushing ahead with a 1,443-kilometre (900-mile) heated pipeline from the oilfields in the Lake Albert region of northwest Uganda to Tanzania's Indian Ocean port of Tanga.

On Wednesday, EACOP announced "it has closed the first tranche of external financing for the project provided by a syndicate of financial institutions including

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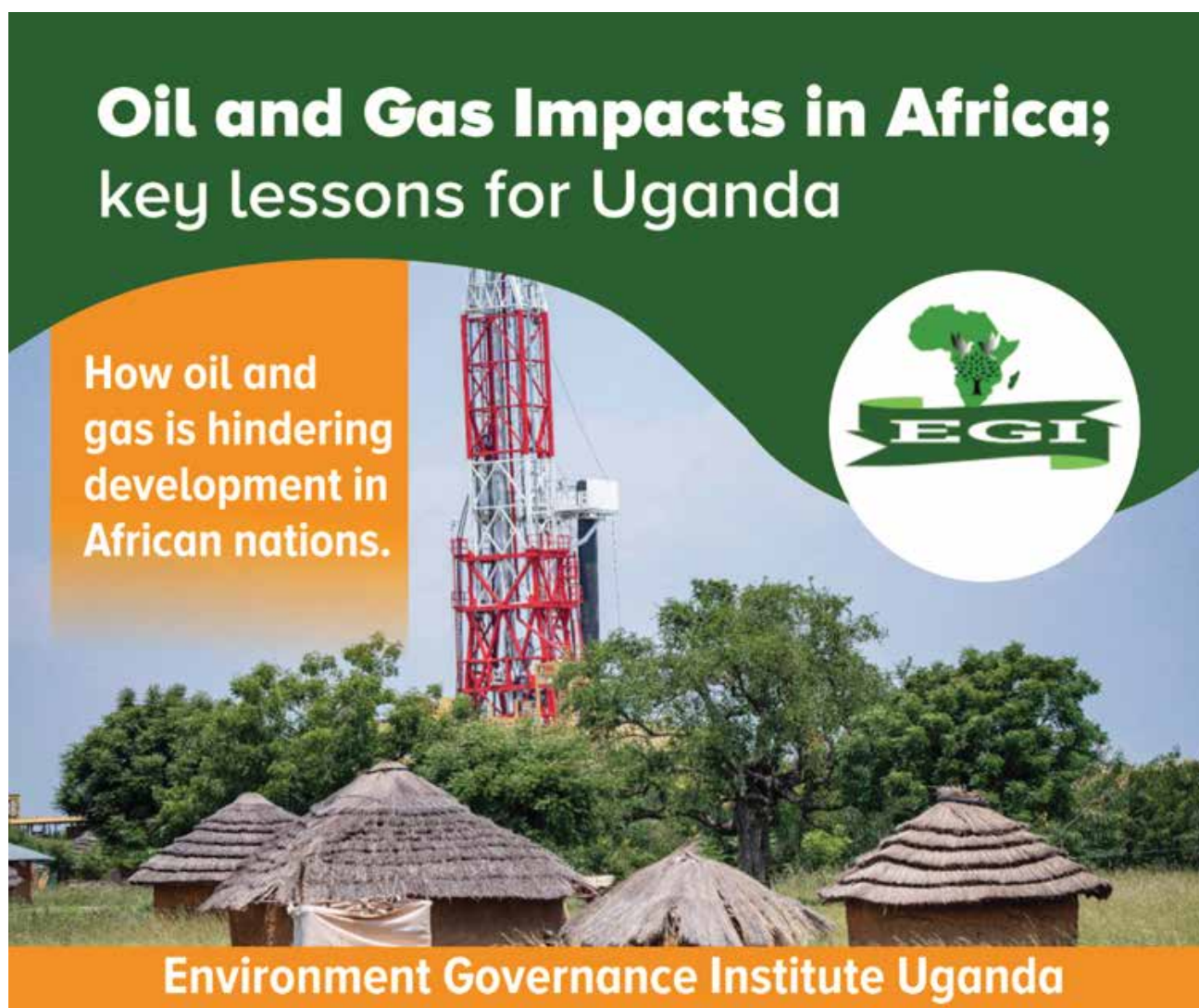
The funders include African Export Import Bank

(Afrixem Bank), the Standard Bank of South Africa Ltd, two Ugandan banks and the Islamic Corporation for the Development of the Private Sector.

[Read More details](#)

LOBBYING

Factsheet on Oil and Gas Impacts in Africa ;Key lessons for Uganda



How oil and gas is hindering development in African nations.



Environment Governance Institute Uganda

Oil is often seen as a golden opportunity for countries to fuel economic growth that can create employment, better infrastructure and more wealth in the country. Despite this notion, the good benefits

of oil have still not materialised in most African countries producing oil. This can be described by what in literature is called the resource curse.

[Read More details](#)

LOBBYING

Factsheet on oil and Gas developments; A ticking time bomb to health in African Communities

Oil and gas developments: A ticking time bomb to health in African Communities

3rd March 2025



Introduction

Africa is well endowed with energy resources, including oil and gas. To date, about 9.5% of global crude oil reserves and 8% of gas reserves are in Africa. In 2005, 12% of global production came from Africa, but the region only consumes 3.4% of global oil. Africa's share of global gas consumption is only 2%.

Oil and gas resources are concentrated in a number of countries and sub-regions (North and Western Africa). These are Nigeria, Algeria, Libya, Angola, Egypt, Sudan, Equatorial Guinea, the Congo Republic, Chad, Gabon, Tunisia, Cameroon, and Uganda, among others.

However, amidst oil demands in Africa, the continent still grapples with the worst air pollution and some of the most severe health consequences in the world due to oil and gas developments. In 2019, air pollution was the second leading risk factor for death across Africa, a large and dynamic continent that is home to more than 1.2 billion people, in terms of ambient fine particulate matter (PM2.5), 5 of the world's 10 most heavily polluted countries are in Africa.

Worse still, African countries such as Nigeria, Chad, Egypt, Africa, and Namibia, among others, have had their oil developments resident within and impacting the health of aquatic coastal waters and communities surrounding them.

A case in reference is the coastal waters of Namibia and South Africa, which have had a history of about 71 oil spills recorded up to 2021. Thirty-nine spills reportedly affected 83,224 seabirds, with African penguins (*Spheniscus demersus*; 91.0%) and Cape gannets (*Morus capensis*; 8.5%) most affected. Spills affecting seabirds were caused by unknown sources (46%), bulk/cargo carriers (43%), tankers (38%), and ship-to-ship transfers (14%).

Further still, the Ogoni land in Nigeria has to-date experienced about 2,976 separate oil spills leaking into water bodies in the Niger delta, leaving hosting communities with a number of health issues, such as early menopause in women, Life expectancy in the Niger Delta of 41 years, 30 years lower than the national average and the bioaccumulation of oil heavy metals such as lead and cadmium affecting nutrient content of the crops and health of children.

In this background that this fact sheet aims to reiterate and emphasize past oil and gas development health effects suffered by communities surrounding them.

It was further proved that the 2-year-old child could suffer acute renal failure.

Cadmium oil effect on Women

The concentrations of cadmium in the surface water and food crops exposed members of the impacted communities to 0.2 mg of cadmium daily, which is more than the 0.03 mg/day reference dose for a 60 kg adult. Cadmium is regarded as a cumulative toxin because of the human body's ability to excrete just 0.001% of the amount ingested in a day. Although it is considered probably carcinogenic, most chronic toxicity affects the kidneys, bones, and liver and presents mainly in post-menopausal women as "Itai-itai" disease with severe osteoporosis and osteomalacia, renal dysfunction, and normochromic anemia.

In various studies done in Ogoni Land, oil spills in the Niger Delta have adversely affected the reproductive systems of surrounding women and communities at large. The study reveals shorter menstrual cycles, longer bleeding durations, a high level of pregnancy loss, and early menopause due to exposure to petroleum-polluted environments.

Reduced Nutritive content of food crops

African countries notably Nigeria, Libya, South Africa, and Egypt, among others, have often suffered perpetual Oil spills that have consequently contaminated surface water, ground water, ambient air and crops with hydrocarbons, including carcinogens that bio-accumulate in some food crops. These oil spills have been estimated to have contributed to about a 50% reduction in household food

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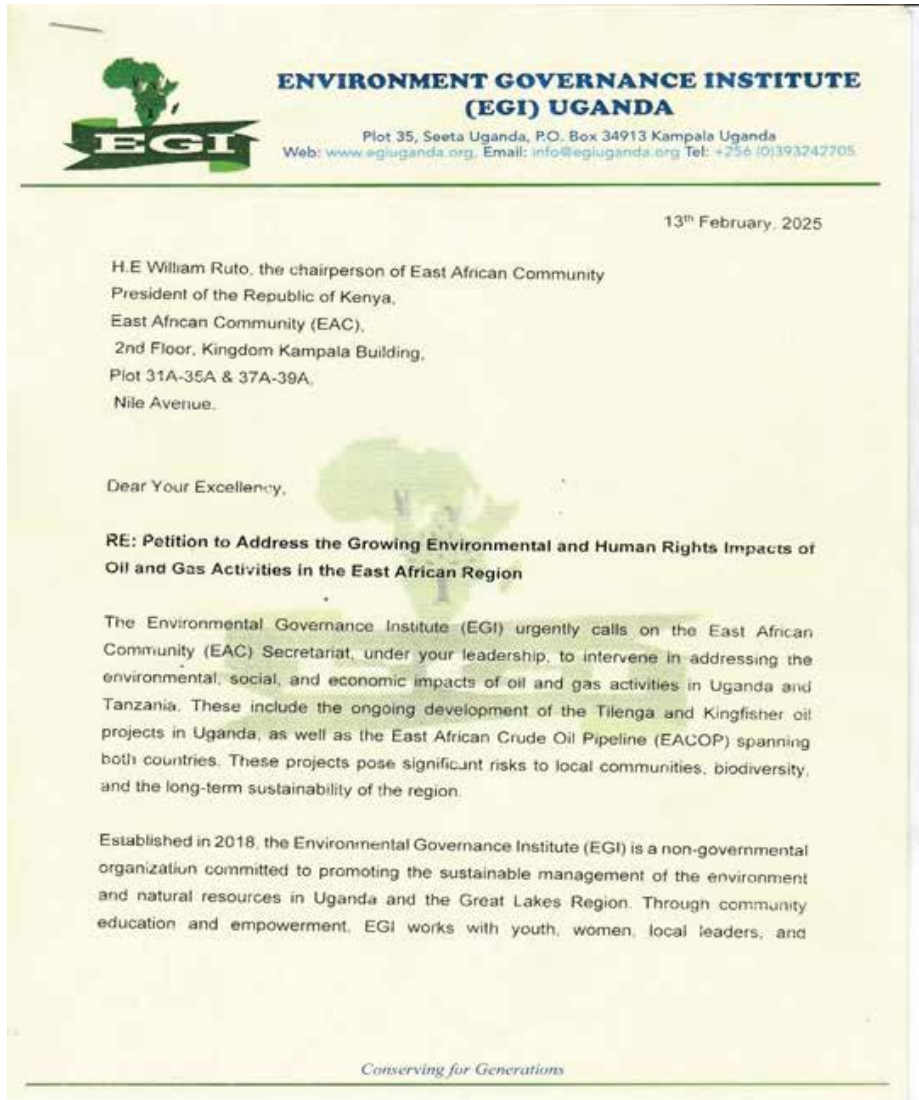
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developments. In 2019, air pollution was the second leading risk factor for death across Africa, a large and dynamic continent that is home to more than 1.2 billion people. In terms of ambient fine particulate matter (PM2.5), 5 of the world's 10 most heavily polluted countries are in Africa.

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[Read More details](#)

Petition to EAC to address the growing environmental and Human Rights Impacts of oil and Gas Activities in the East African Region



The Environment Governance Institute urgently calls on the East African Community (EAC) Secretariat, under your leadership to intervene in addressing the environmental, social, and economic impacts of oil and gas activities in Uganda and Tanzania. These include the ongoing development of the Tilenga and

Kingfisher oil projects in Uganda, as well as the East African Crude Oil Pipeline (EACOP) spanning both countries. These projects pose significant challenges to local communities, biodiversity, and the long term sustainability of the region

[Read More details](#)

Upcoming events

27th March 2025 - webinar on Understanding the impact of the Export Credit Agencies Finance landscape on the energy sector and its implications for just energy transition in Africa.

24th April 2025 - Meeting with Mukono district stakeholders on climate change and solid waste management .

5th May 2025 - Public lecture on Climate change and environment ,can students tap into green jobs held at Uganda Christian university.

10th June 2025- Training of community champions on evidence-based advocacy skills



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