

Purpose

The slogan often used to describe the scenic beauty of Uganda's natural environment is 'Gifted by Nature.' Rightly so, Uganda is home to Lake Victoria and four other lakes, not to mention crater lakes. Of the 241,550 sq km surface area, 41,743 sq km is covered by water and swamps. Forest cover was estimated at 14.95% in 2010. The country receives between 700-3,000 mm/year rainfall, and temperature of 16C-31C. To protect Uganda's environmental resources the government enacted the National Environment Act in 1995 right after the Rio de Janeiro Summit (1992). The Act provided for the formation of National Management Environment Authority (NEMA) mandated with coordinating, monitoring and supervising environment related activities. Twenty years down the road, there are fewer success stories; necessitating rethinking new strategies.

Content

NEMA's State of the Environment Report of the year 2010 and recent dossiers on the subject cast a worrying trend on the sustainability of the country's natural environment resources. Uganda faces severe soil erosion, decline in soil fertility, deforestation, pollution, loss of biodiversity and depletion of forest cover, fish and water resources. These environmental problems have been evidenced by the recurring Bududa landslides, the near annihilation of wetlands in Kampala Central Division and encroachment on Mabira tropical forest. New strategies for sustainability of Uganda's natural environment resources are needed. Beyond NEMA, the Association of Religious in Uganda has an obligation to engage the communities in a God-given mandate of stewardship of the natural environment resources - to protect and restore.

Process

Protection of the natural environment requires being good stewards of what counts as a common good. Repairing what is damaged calls for commitment to restorative justice.

Outcome

Nature harbors a reciprocity principle - we take good care of the natural environment resources, nature takes good care of us