



THE CONSERVATIONIST

EGI Monthly Newsletter Issue 11, November 2020

TOURISM AS AN ALTERNATIVE LIVELIHOOD:

GRASSROOTS PERSPECTIVES AND EXPERIENCES PROMOTING CONSERVATION



Welcome to EGI monthly newsletter

Dear friends and partners, welcome to our November 2020 newsletter. Last month, on Wednesday October 28, 2020, the World Bank and Swedish Embassy signed a partnership agreement of worth 12.3 billion Uganda shilling fund support with several government institutions including National Forestry Authority (NFA), Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA), Ministry of Tourism and among others to help the country to manage natural and tourism resources.

The purpose of the support was to help the country's economy to recovery from the effects of Covid 19, promote green economy by reducing the carbon emission and address loopholes by enforcing environmental protection as part of the recovery plan for the tourism industry.

In this Issue

- A project to secure Murchison falls landscape through diversification of community livelihoods launched
- Training of communities on alternative livelihood options for Murchison falls landscape
- EGI formalizes partnership with UWA to train communities on diversified livelihoods in Murchison falls national park
- Poaching increases in Kidepo Valley National Park, what should be done
- Just Energy Transition is possible, lets embrace clean energy for sustainable development

Have you read, EGI publishes reports

- Rapid Assessment on impacts of COVID 19 on Murchison falls landscape
- A just energy transition for Africa- mapping the impacts of ECAs in Ghana, Togo, Nigeria and Uganda

WELCOME REMARKS FROM OUR CEO

The outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic has had a profound impact on societies and economies across the world and considerably affected conservation efforts. This is because of restricted access to key sites, reduction in tourism activities, and income which affected one of the biggest income-generating sources for Uganda. The restrictions to curb the spread of the deadly virus sharply curtailed tourism activities everywhere and the tourism host community was not spared and negatively led to the rise in illegal wildlife activities including poaching and trade.

With the gradual re-opening of society is ongoing, the glimpse of hope that has started to emerge in the country has not yet reached its peak and the long process towards recovery is just beginning. As tourism crises elsewhere have demonstrated, communities who largely depend on tourism were left uncertain of how to survive after a national lockdown to contain the spread of Covid 19 halted tourism activities, which pushed communities to encroach on the wildlife

habitat areas in search of food and income and a big contributor to poaching in different landscapes.

Therefore, thought the pandemic period, EGI has prioritized working with communities whose livelihoods have been affected to diversify their livelihoods, work towards promoting the just transition to clean energy, and continue to work with cross border communities to promote transboundary conservation of ecosystems along the Albertine graben.

Through Research, Community Education, and empowerment, EGI is committed to work with different institutions and stakeholders to ensure that communities' livelihoods are diversified in conservation, embrace clean and affordable energy for the environment, and human rights protection.

Hope you enjoy our newsletter.

Samuel Aede CEO

KEY ACTIVITIES AND UPDATES FROM EGI

A PROJECT TO SECURE MURCHISON FALLS LANDSCAPE THROUGH DIVERSIFICATION OF COMMUNITY LIVELIHOODS LAUNCHED



As Uganda continues to slowly open up reviving tourism activities, tourism dependant host communities continue to grapple with the impacts of the covid 19 imposed lockdown that saw a halt in tourism and resultant loss of livelihoods. Therefore, an informed recovery plan and community resilience strategies are important and should be put in place for host communities to have other income generation ventures and also to save Uganda's fragile wildlife from poaching vices and illegal wildlife trade.

In this attempt, Environmental Governance Institute (EGI) in partnership with UWA and with support from [IUCN Save our Species](#) co-funded with [European Union](#) Launched a project titled "Empowering communities for sustainable livelihoods and Ecosystem conservation during and post Covid-19", the project has already taken its deep roots of engagement with tourism host communities of Ngwedo and Pakanyi sub-counties located in Bulisa and Masindi district respectively, neighboring the Murchison's falls landscape. [Read More](#)

TOURISM HOST COMMUNITIES TRAINED ON ALTERNATIVE LIVELIHOOD OPTIONS AND ECOSYSTEM CONSERVATION



A group photo of a community capacity building training at Kapanyo Sub-County Masindi District

In efforts to ensure the sustainability of the ecosystems, Environment Governance Institute (EGI) in partnership with Uganda Wildlife Authority Staff working in Murchison falls landscape with the support of the [IUCN Save Our Species](#) which is co-funded by the [European Union](#) organized community empowerment trainings for tourism host communities in Pakanyo and Ngwedo sub counties, Masindi and Bullisa districts respectively.

The communities, who largely depend on tourism were left uncertain of how to survive after a national lockdown to contain the spread of Covid 19 halted tourism activities, which pushed communities to encroach on the wildlife habitat areas in search for food and income. According to a report by the Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA), there was a significant increase in poaching cases from 163 to over 367 cases, between March and June 2020 as a result of COVID 19 restriction guidelines put in place by government. [Read More](#)

JUST ENERGY TRANSITION IS POSSIBLE, LETS EMBRACE CLEAN ENERGY FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Government of Uganda is moving ahead with major oil development projects despite most of these being located in eco-sensitive areas that are of economic, climatological, and social importance to Ugandans. These include the Tilenga project, Kingfisher, and the crude oil pipeline EACOP. The 1,445km EACOP runs from the shores of Lake Albert in Uganda to the port of Tanga in Tanzania. It will be biggest pipeline project on land and in the world.

Currently, government is pushing ahead with the second oil exploration licensing round of five other blocks. Among them is the Ngaji block which covers Lake Edward and Queen Elizabeth National Park. These sensitive ecosystems play an

important role in climatological stability, carbon absorption, income generation, and support millions of people through the provision of food, fresh water, and income from agriculture, fisheries, and tourism that no amount of money from oil exploitation can replace.

Experience from other oil producing countries such as Chad, Nigeria, Angola, South Sudan, shows that noncompliance to social and environmental safeguards enshrined in laws including international best practices usually leads to oil exploitation having devastating impacts on the environment and worsening livelihoods.

[Read More](#)

COMMUNITY CHAMPIONS TRAINED ON ALTERNATIVE SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOODS IN MURCHISON FALLS LANDSCAPE.



On November 10-11, 2020, Environment Governance Institute (EGI) in partnership with the Uganda Wild Life Authority Staff working in Murchison Falls landscape with the support of the [IUCN Save Our Species](#) which is co-funded by the European Union organized a training of Trainers for community champions in Masindi and Buliisa district respectively.

Participants were taken through topics related to community livelihood options such as climate-smart agriculture for crop growing, horticulture, beekeeping practices, the relevance of conservation in times of crises, and value addition among others.

The purpose of the training was to 'empower community champions to spear head adoption of alternative livelihoods options so as to promote ecosystem conservation'.

The training was organized as part of the EGI's project of empowering communities for sustainable alternative livelihoods and ecosystem conservation in the Murchison belt during and post COVID 19.

POACHING INCREASES IN KIDEPO VALLEY NATIONAL PARK, WHAT SHOULD BE DONE



The outbreak of the COVID19 pandemic in Uganda necessitated a nationwide lockdown in a bid to curb the spread of the deadly virus. The lock down resulted into closure of markets, travel restrictions, border closure, which in turn affected the essential economic activities of many households especially the rural pastoral communities around Kidepo Valley National Park in Karamoja region, North Eastern Uganda. According to the **RAPID ASSESSMENT OF COVID-19 IMPACTS IN KARAMOJA, UGANDA,**

August 2020 "The COVID-19 measures resulted in a serious food security problem in Karamoja.

The livelihoods of the communities were further worsened by the outbreak of desert locusts which entered Uganda from Kenya via Karamoja sub region in February 2020 and ravaged crops, destroying livelihoods of the communities.[Read More](#)

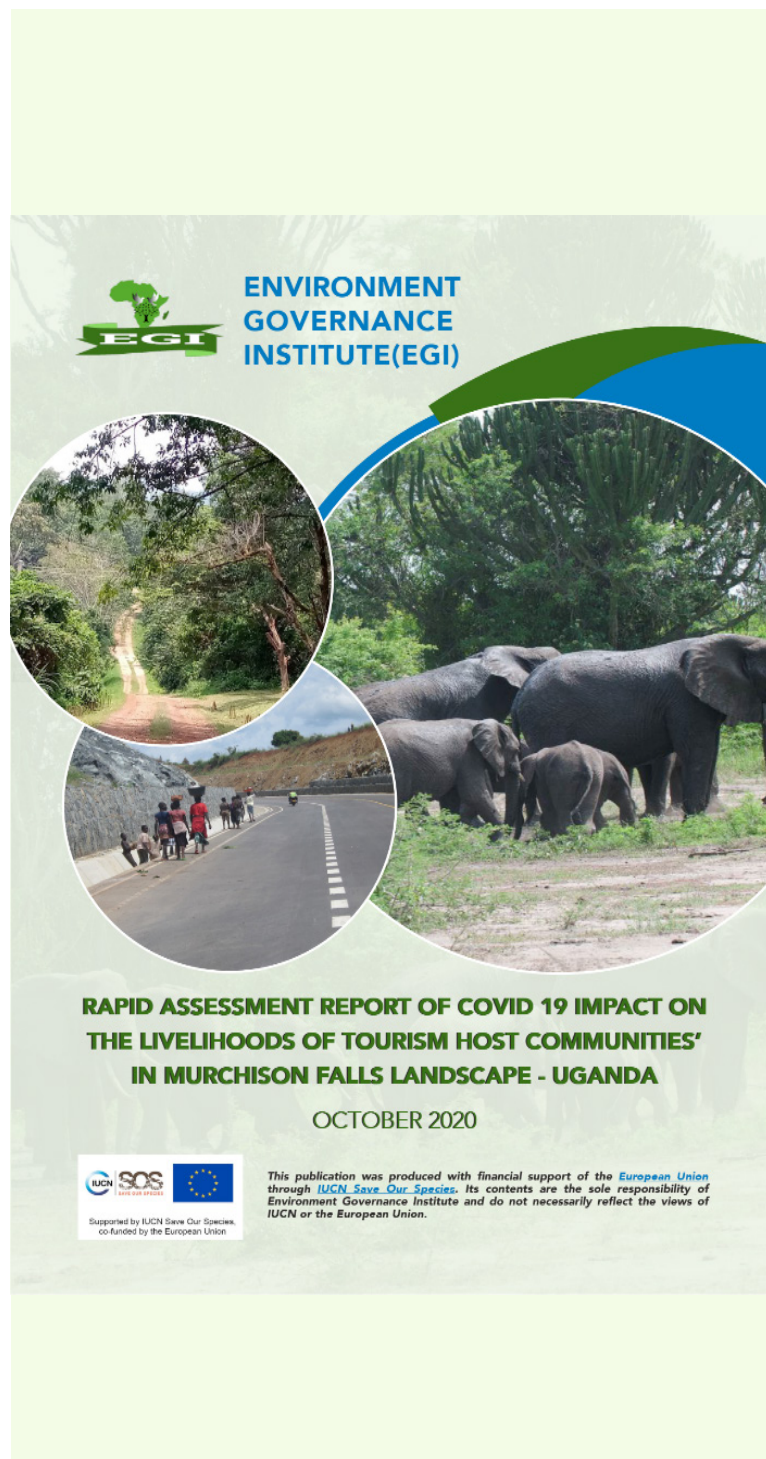
A REPORT ON JUST ENERGY TRANSITION FOR AFRICA PUBLISHED



Globally, the industrialized countries are slowly but surely switching more and more to sustainable, renewable energy sources. But beyond their borders, companies from the global North countries, often backed by export credit insurance, continue to invest heavily in fossil and other non-renewable energy projects that cause climate change, human rights violations and extensive damage to nature.

In Uganda, for example, climate change is already affected thousands of communities characterized by prolonged drought, floods, Outbreak of Pests and Diseases and by supporting fossil fuels and major hydro energy projects, export credit insurers like UKEF from Britain and Exim Bank of China contribute to the many risks and threats in the region. From the perspective of communities involved in energy projects supported by export credit insurance, this report looks at the best way to limit global warming to 1.5 ° Celsius on the one hand and to increase access to energy on the other to promote these countries. The report also analyzes the question of what the role of public financial institutions such as export credit insurers could be in promoting a green energy future in countries in Africa. [Read More](#)

A RAPID ASSESSMENT REPORT OF COVID 19 IMPACTS ON THE LIVELIHOODS OF TOURISM HOST COMMUNITIES



The outbreak of the COVID-19 Pandemic in Uganda and subsequent nationwide lockdown by the government helped the country register low coronavirus cases, but the measures had a devastating impact on the country's economy particularly on the Tourism sector, which placed the livelihoods of tourism host communities at risk and perhaps triggered a sudden rise of poaching cases in most landscapes of Uganda, including Murchison falls landscapes

In response Environment Governance Institute (EGI), with support from [IUCN Save Our Species](#) and Co-Funded by the [European Union](#)(EU) commissioned a Rapid Assessment Survey in the five districts of Hoima, Kibale, Masindi, Kiryandongo, and Bulisa that are within the Murchison falls national park green belt. The main objective was to assess the impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on the livelihoods of tourism host communities'.

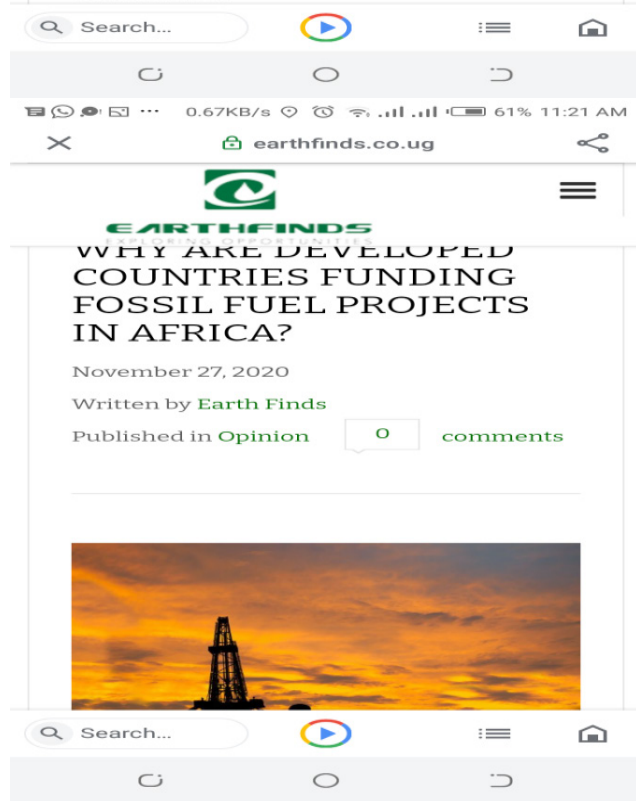
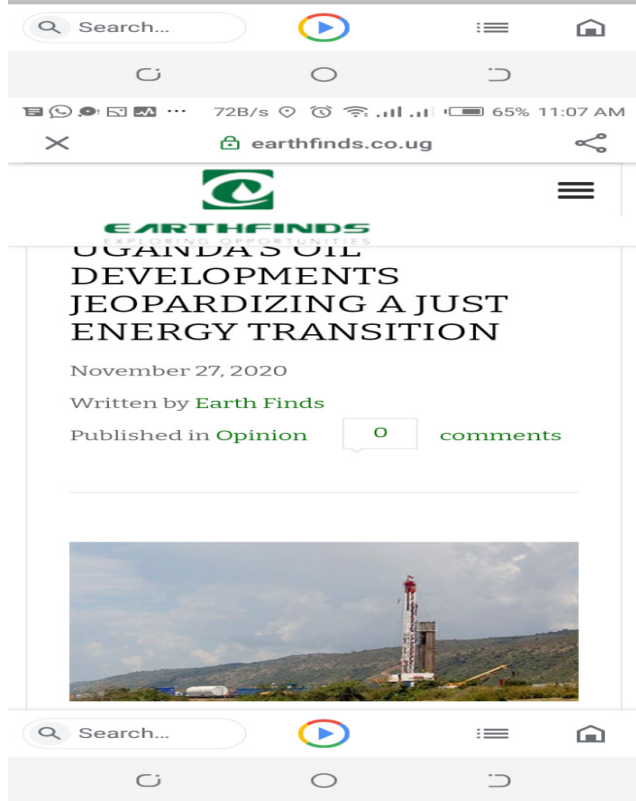
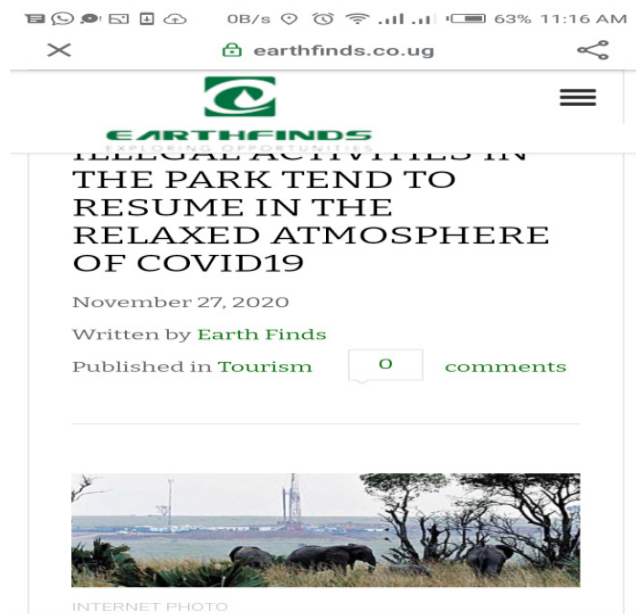
The findings of the Rapid Assessment generally indicate that; the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic put all activities of tourism host communities at a standstill. The closure of protected areas led to the loss of revenue from the sector which resulted in a lack of funds to support tourism host communities' in pursuing alternative ventures. [Read More](#)

ECI IN THE MEDIA

This month, staff, volunteers and our partners wrote over 9 newspaper articles that were published in the leading newspapers

including New Vision, Daily Monitor, EarthFinds among others.

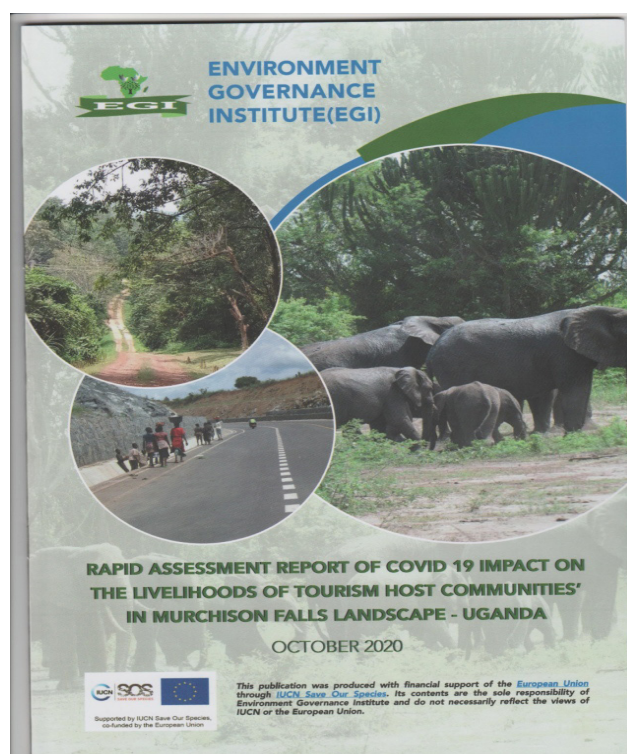
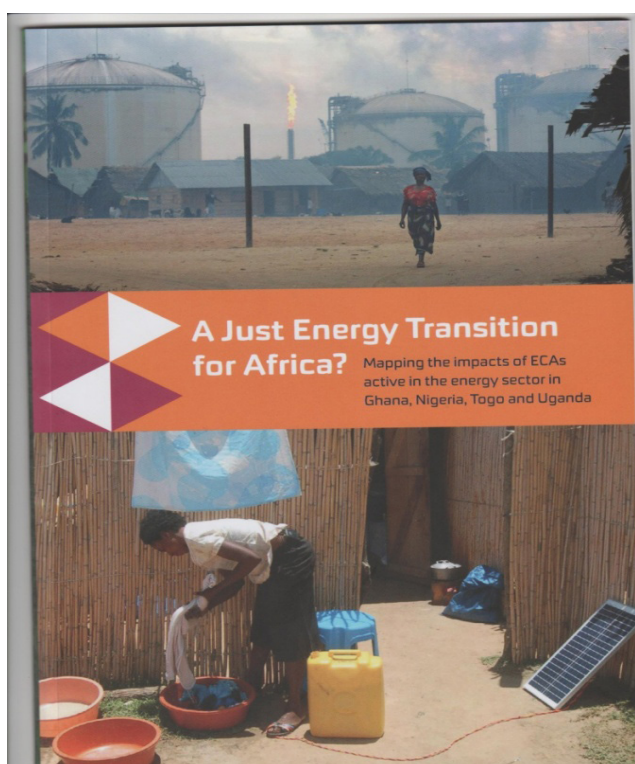
The media also published articles from the media interviews we held this month. Some of the published articles are captured below.



LOBBYING

This month, EGI published two research reports that showed the impacts of covid19 on the livelihoods of tourism host communities in Murchison falls landscape –Uganda and Mapping the impacts of ECAs active in the energy sector in Ghana, Nigeria, Togo and Uganda.

In addition, EGI and our partners issued a press release calling on export credit agencies to stop support for dirty fossil energy developments in Uganda



UPCOMING EVENTS

- i. **December 7, 2020; Kampala:** Launch of the environment defenders toll free line
- ii. **December 15-16, 2020; Kiryadongo and Kibaale:** Community capacity building training on alternative livelihoods options
- iii. **December 8, 2020; Kesese:** Public talk on sustaining pressure to stop government from licensing Ngaji oil block
- iv. **December 18, 2020; Kampala:** Staff end of year evaluation meeting
- v. **December 10, 2020; Kampala:** Board Meeting to review progress and plan for 2021
- vi. **December 11, 2020; Kampala:** Staff meeting to develop 2021 organization work plan



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