

Conservationists worry over extinction of tree varieties

By John Agaba

Recent reports indicate that the *Azelia* tree species is facing extinction. Even the encyclopaedia of life has branded the variety as vulnerable due to its popularity among wood dealers.

But it is not the only tree facing extinction in Uganda.

Simon Peter Achuu, a plant conservationist, said many other tree species face similar fate and ecologists were concerned the varieties could cease to exist, should nothing be done.

Achuu made the remarks at Esella Country Hotel in Wakiso district last week, where environment leaders converged to discuss biodiversity and potential desertification in Uganda.

"These trees are of high value. People literally 'hunt' them the entire time. But no one is bothered," Achuu, who is also a project manager for the UNDP Global Environmental Finance (UNDP-GEF) Rio Conventions Project that seeks to train local authorities regarding the country's commitment towards conserving the environment, said.

"What shall we tell our grandchildren after we have wiped all diversity and turned Uganda into a desert?" Achuu asked.

Azelia is predominant in northern Uganda, same as *Vitellaria Paradoxa* (shea tree). Tamarind (*Enkoge*), is mainly grown for its indehiscent, sub-cylindrical brown pod fruits.

The tree can be found scattered across the country, especially towards the eastern part of the country.

The desert date, scientifically known as *Balanites aegyptiaca*, is a highly valuable tree mainly found in West Nile, Teso and Karamoja sub-regions, where it is known by local names including *Logba* or *Lugba* (among Lugbara and Madi), *Thoo* (Alur), *Ecomai* (Ateso), and *Ekorete* (Ngakarimojong).

The date-like fruits of the balanite tree have a bitter-sweet, yellowish-red pulp. The ripe fruits are eaten raw or sun-dried and can be safely stored and sold as desert dates. Its pulp is rich in sugars, vitamins and a range of essential minerals. In Teso and Karamoja, its freshly growing leaves are used as vegetables.

The fruit pulp can be soaked in water to create a tonic, which can be fermented to make alcohol.

Warburgia ugandensis can be found in



The senior climate change officer in the Ministry of Water and Environment, Michael Mugarura; the senior range ecologist at the Directorate of Animal Resources at the agriculture ministry, Stephen Muwya and Achuu consulting during the workshop at Kira municipality in Wakiso district, last week. Photo by Wilfred Sanya

Mabira forest, which itself is under threat.

"We are not doing enough to protect the environment, especially the endangered species," James Ateker Okiria, the project manager of Kidepo Critical Landscape that oversees conservation and sustainable use of the threatened savanna woodland in the area, said.

He said the Police, who are meant to protect the vulnerable varieties, connive with illegal loggers.

The Government banned the cutting, transportation and sale of *Azelia Africana* logs and suspended the felling of varieties classified as vulnerable in late 2016.

Despite directives from President Yoweri Museveni banning the cutting of the *Azelia Africana* tree, the cutting continues unabated in West Nile.

This is partly a result of a very lucrative market for the logs (especially *Azelia Africana* logs) in some Asian countries. Shea trees are cut and burnt for charcoal and its fruits used in making lotions and other food supplements.

"We have a weak and corrupt enforcement,"

Okiria, said, calling for the amendment of the National Environment Act so it is "deterrent enough".

However, Achuu said a revised environment Act, which is before Parliament, would address the 'gap'.

"The challenge is the trees cannot just be replanted," Okiria said, adding: "One cannot say they are going to shift seedlings of the *Azelia* and plant them in other parts of the country. A soil composition study to see if it is suitable has to be done first."

The meeting focused on the Rio Convention and strengthening of institutional capacities for effective implementation of the agreements on biodiversity, climate change and desertification.

Uganda is party to the 1992 Earth Summit resolutions, held in Brazil's capital, Rio de Janeiro.

"All of humanity has a role to play so that another tree is planted and another water body preserved, while wetlands are conserved," Godwin Kamugisha, the principal environmental economist at the National Environment Management Authority, said.

Accidents leading cause of blood shortage in Uganda, says Balimwezo

By Norah Mutesi

Uganda is among 25 countries in the world with the highest number of fatal accidents, leading to blood scarcity in the country, Ronald Balimwezo, the mayor of Nakawa Division, has said.

He made the remarks while launching a six-day blood donation drive at Nakawa market yesterday.

He said most of the accident victims found in medical facilities are those caused by bodaboda riders and reckless car drivers.

"I lost a lot of blood when I got an accident in which I broke my leg but thanks to people who donated their blood to save my life," Balimwezo said.

He called upon the Government to address causes of accidents and also cautioned bodaboda riders and vehicle drivers against recklessness, in order to save lives.

He also urged the public to donate blood, in order to curb the scarcity of blood in the country.

According to a United Nations report, Uganda loses 10 people to road accidents everyday

Michael Mukundane, the National Blood bank co-ordinator in charge of donor recruitment, said Uganda has an annual demand of about 340,000 units of blood, but falls short by over 100,000 units.

About 600 pints of blood are needed to meet the gap that is in the country, which is expected to be collected within six days of the blood campaign.

He added that students are the leading blood donors because they are easy to mobilise and are found in schools compared to the community members that are in different places.

"We normally do community mobilisation when students are in holidays, to meet our monthly target," Mukundane said.

Speaking on behalf of the director of Uganda Blood Transfusion, Mukundane said the blood bank needs 1,200 units of blood to meet the country's demand.

"We call upon the public to join the drive to donate blood to save life," Mukundane said.

Ronah Arinaitwe, the Uganda Breweries Limited communications and sustainable manager, said anyone above age of 17 and weighs above 45kg is eligible to donate blood.

URSB UGANDA REGISTRATION SERVICES BUREAU

JOB OPPORTUNITIES

Uganda Registration Services Bureau (URSB) is established as a Statutory Body under the Uganda Registration Services Bureau Act Cap. 210. The Bureau is a key player in commercial, Civil and Intellectual Property Rights Registration that facilitate Private Sector Development and vital Statistics for National Planning.

Uganda Registration Services Bureau seeks to recruit suitably qualified, competent, and experienced professionals to fill vacant positions.

Format of application, detailed job descriptions, main duties, key outputs, competencies and qualifications for jobs can be accessed on URSB website www.ursb.go.ug/about-us/careers/

All applications should be sent by email to jobs@ursb.go.ug

VACANT POSITIONS

- | | |
|---|---------------|
| 1. Communication Specialist | (1) Position |
| 2. Senior Server Administrator | (1) Position |
| 3. Senior Network Officer | (1) Position |
| 4. Senior Registration & Compliance Officer | (1) Position |
| 5. Registration & Compliance Officer | (2) Positions |
| 6. Estates Officer | (1) Position |
| 7. Legal Officer | (1) Position |
| 8. Accountant | (1) Position |
| 9. Search & Examination Officer | (1) Position |
| 10. Office Attendant | (1) Position |
| 11. Driver | (2) Positions |

Application Deadline: 14th September, 2018.



OFFICE OF THE TOWN CLERK

LIRA MUNICIPAL COUNCIL
RAILWAYS DIVISION COUNCIL
www.liramunicipalcouncil.go.ug

Plot No. 5-6, Boma Circus, P.O. Box 199, Lira. Tel: 0772658215. E-mail: liramunicipalcouncil@gmail.com

DISPOSAL OF TWO RESIDENTIAL PLOTS AT RAILWAYS DIVISION COUNCIL

Lira Municipal Council intends to dispose its two plots located at Railways Division Council on Station Road and hereby invites interested bidders.

The disposal shall be conducted according to local Government PPDA regulations 2006. Successful bidders must pay 100% of their bid price within 24 hours upon being notified, only successful bidders shall be contacted.

The particulars of the two plots are as follows:

S/ NO	DISPOSAL REFERENCE NUMBER	MEASUREMENT OF THE PLOT	LOCATION	RESERVE PRICE
01	LIRA758/WRKS/18-19/00001	0.065HA	Station road opposite Hotel Pauline	20,000,000/=
02	LIRA758/WRKS/18-19/00001	0.061HA	Station road opposite Hotel Pauline	20,000,000/=

The plots will be sold on 'as is, where is' basis. Lira Municipal Council shall have no further liability after the plots are sold. The Plots can be viewed on request by the interested bidder at Railways Division Council, Station road from 3rd September, 2018 from to 21st September, 2018 viewing time shall be strictly office hours. No viewing shall be done on weekends.

All bidders should clearly indicate their daytime contact numbers and email addresses on the bid form.

Submission of the bidding document **MUST BE IN TRIPPLETS**. Bids MUST be fully sealed and carefully marked as per the plot applied for and must be addressed to **The head of procurement and disposal unit, Lira Municipal Council. P O BOX 119, Lira.**

Bids shall be issued from the procurement and disposal unit after a payment of non-refundable fee of Ugx 100,000/=, payments must be made to Railway Division Council Operation Account No. 01053500127844 DFCU, Lira branch. And the document shall be given to the bidder after presentation of a general receipts from finance office.

Planned procurement schedule (subject to changes) is as follows:

ACTIVITY	DATE
Publish bid notice	4 th September, 2018
Bid closing (10:00.Am) and opening (2:00 PM)	24 th September, 2018
Evaluation	25 th September, 2018
Contracts Committee Approval	27 th September, 2018
Display of BEB	28 th September, 2018

TOWN CLERK
LIRA MUNICIPAL COUNCIL