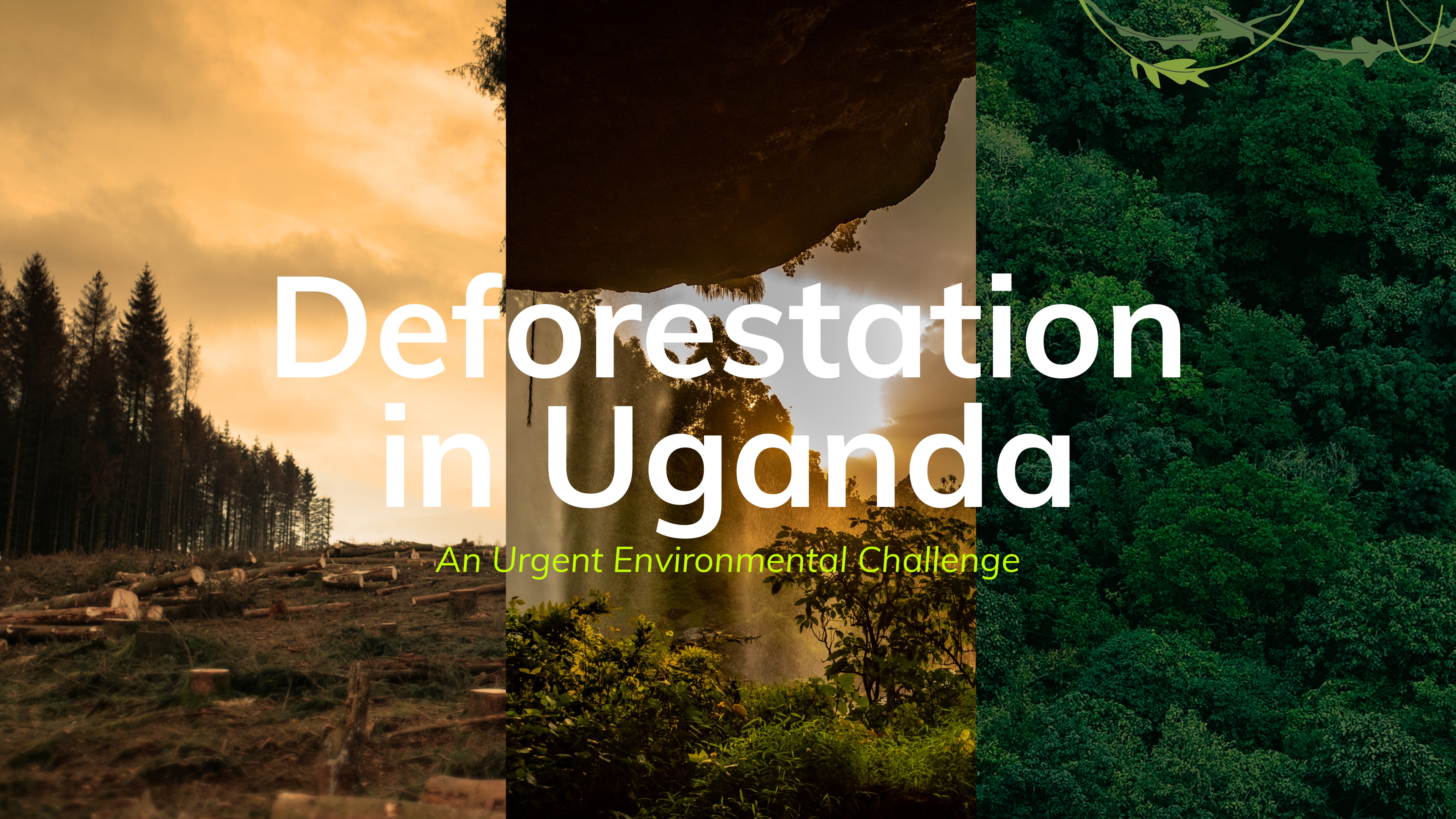




Deforestation in Uganda

An Urgent Environmental Challenge

UGANDA

- Uganda: landlocked country in East Africa, divided by the Equator
- Forest cover fell from 24% (4.9M ha) in 1990 → 9% (1.8M ha) in 2018
- 3M ha lost in 25 years; at current rates, forests may disappear in 40 years (NEMA)
- From 2001–2024: 1.16M ha tree cover lost, mainly from agriculture & logging
- Deforestation = Uganda's most serious environmental concern → threatens biodiversity, livelihoods, and sustainable development



Scope of the Problem

- Uganda has lost >40% of forest cover since 1990 (5M ha → <2.5M ha)
- Annual deforestation rate: 50,000–90,000 ha lost
- Only 3,500 ha restored; 5,400 ha plantations developed
- Forest loss = 8.25M tons of CO₂ emissions/year (Forest Ref. Level, 2017)
- Kampala region: 78% forest loss since 1990
- Drivers: population growth (3.2%/yr), energy demand (90% biomass use)
- If unchecked → forests could disappear by 2040





Causes of Deforestation

01

Charcoal & firewood demand

03

Agricultural expansion

02

Logging & timber trade
(legal + illegal)

04

Urbanization
(Kampala's growth driving land clearing)



Environmental Consequences

- Soil erosion & land degradation → floods, landslides (esp. Mt. Elgon)
- Water cycle disruption → reduced rainfall, drying rivers/lakes
- Biodiversity loss → critical habitats destroyed
- Home to 11% of world's bird species
- 19% of Africa's amphibians
- ~54% of Earth's mountain gorillas
- Rising risk of droughts & extreme weather

Social & Economic Consequences



Food insecurity
Erosion reduces productivity



Health impacts
Indoor air pollution from charcoal



Forest fires
Loss of livelihoods



Charcoal scarcity
Rising household costs

Government Response

- Legislation: ban on deforestation (except food production); logging ban in reserves (2018)
- Enforcement: crackdowns on illegal logging & charcoal production (still weak)
- Protected areas: forestry reserves & wildlife sanctuaries established
- Policy frameworks:
- Uganda Green Growth Development Strategy



- Vision 2040 & NDP III → forest cover target: 15% by 2026
- Partnerships: Forest Partnership with EU (2022)
- National Forestry Authority: nationwide tree-planting campaigns

NGO & International Efforts



Tree Adoption Uganda
reforestation initiatives



Renewable energy
biogas & solar promoted



World Bank & UNDP
sustainable land use



Community activism
tree-planting initiatives

Challenges & Gaps



Commerical vs conservation
Planting of non indigenous trees



Illegal logging
Unregulated and destructive.



Poverty
Reliance on cheap charcoal

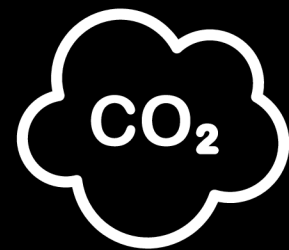


Enforcement
Weak enforcement of policies

Conclusion & Way Forward



Oxygen
production



Carbon
absorption



Climate
regulation



Rainfall
generation



Deforestation in Uganda is an urgent challenge with economic, social, and ecological consequences. But with solutions like stronger enforcement, renewable energy adoption, community-led conservation. we can have a better Uganda andworld at large

Works Cited

Global Forest Watch. Uganda Deforestation Rates & Statistics. Global Forest Watch, “Uganda Deforestation Rates & Statistics | GFW”, <https://www.globalforestwatch.org/dashboards/country/UGA/>. Accessed 15 Sept. 2025. Global Forest Watch

International Monetary Fund. “Ugandan Climate Activists Fight Deforestation by Planting.” IMF, 10 Nov. 2022, <https://www.imf.org/en/News/Articles/2022/11/07/cf-ugandan-climate-activists-fight-deforestation-by-planting>. Accessed 15 Sept. 2025. IMF

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. Uganda Forests. UNODC, <https://www.unodc.org/unodc/environment-climate/uganda-forests.html>. Accessed 15 Sept. 2025. UNODC

Office of the Prime Minister (Uganda). “Stop Deforestation: A Call to Action for Uganda’s Sustainable Future.” SDGs – Office of the Prime Minister, Uganda, 17 Oct. 2024, <https://sdgs.opm.go.ug/2024/10/17/stop-deforestation-a-call-to-action-for-ugandas-sustainable-future/>. Accessed 15 Sept. 2025.

DevelopmentAid. “Uganda’s Alarming Deforestation Rate.” DevelopmentAid, <https://www.developmentaid.org/news-stream/post/171655/ugandas-alarming-deforestation-rate>. Accessed 15 Sept. 2025.