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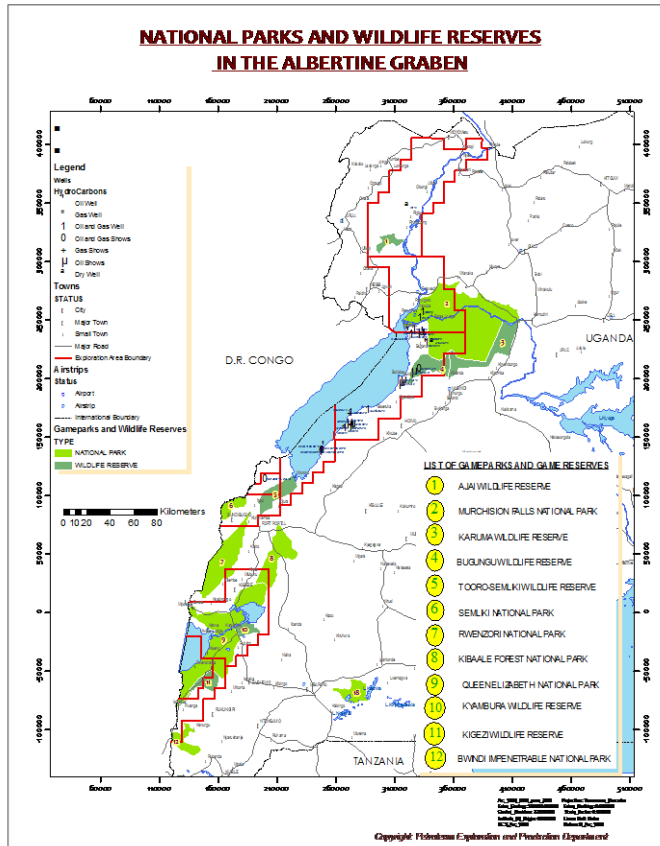
*Parks, people, planet:  
inspiring solutions*

# **Managing impacts of oil and gas exploration in Murchison Falls National Park – Seeking critical balance between Uganda's development needs & Conservation**

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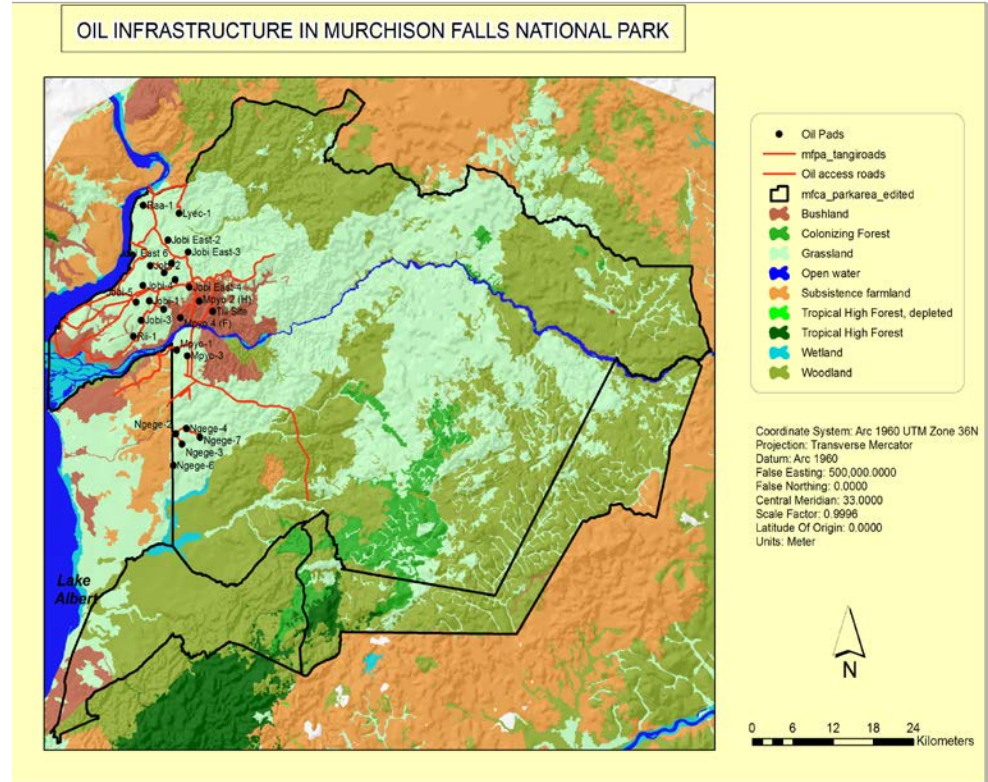
# Oil and gas exploration in Uganda



- Commercially viable quantities of oil and gas have been discovered in the country's Albertine Rift (AR) region
- The AR region is biodiversity rich eco-region with 5 out of 10 Uganda's national parks, 7 out of 12 wildlife reserves situated in the region
- Over 50% oil discovery exist in protected areas (**The unfortunate overlap 1**)
- In Murchison Falls N.P, 5 oil fields estimated to yield over 50% of the total discoveries have been appraised
- The country is excited by this discovery and is fast tracking exploration and development efforts in order to start earning foreign exchange from export of oil

# Oil activities in Murchison Falls National Park (MFNP)

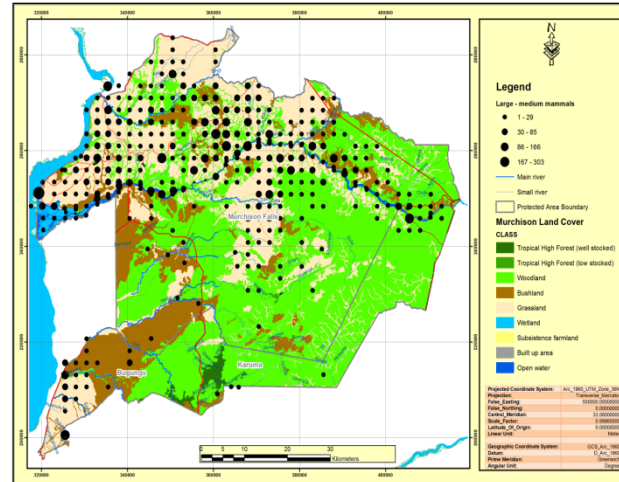
- In MFNP oil activities have been undertaken in ecologically sensitive areas part of which is designated IBA & Ramsar site.
- The fields lie astride the mighty River Nile home to Nile crocodiles and thousands of Hippopotamus
- Because of scenic landscape and varieties of game, tourism has been a leading activity earning PA authority over US \$ 4 million annually
- There is fear of loss of this revenue if oil impacts on the PA



# Seeking critical balance between oil & conservation



- The tourism area directly overlaps with the oil fields. The oil fields lies in areas with high concentration of game (**the unfortunate overlap 2**)



- To manage impacts of oil on PA ecosystem and biodiversity; tools, guidelines, policy & best practices have been designed & implemented



# Seeking critical balance between oil & conservation



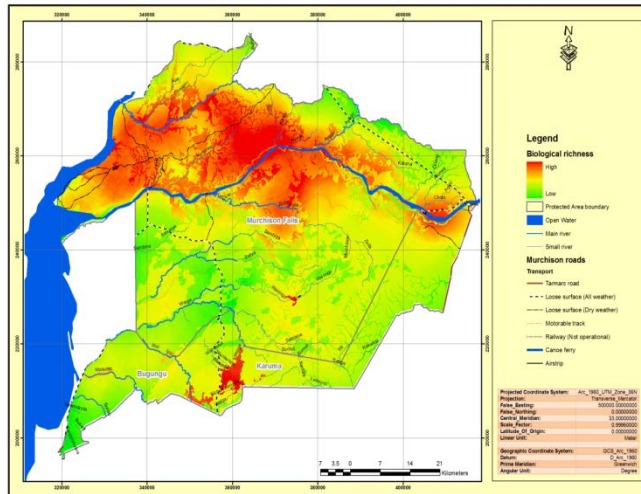
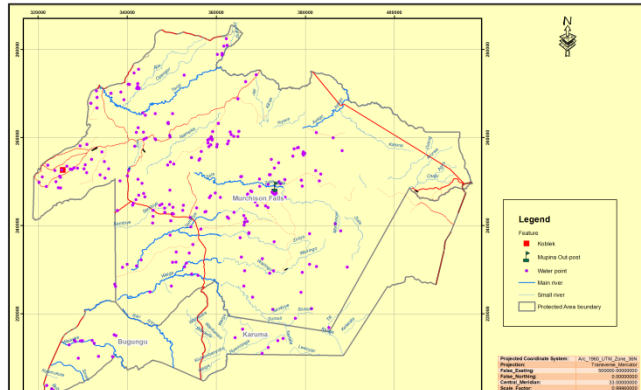
- Development of tools & initiatives involved all stakeholders, govt agencies for environment, PA mgt, oil & gas and oil companies, CSO and community representatives

## National level initiatives & tools

- Sensitivity Atlas for the Albertine Graben developed to act as baseline for future monitoring
- Environment Monitoring plan for the Albertine Rift developed
- Strategic Environment Assessment adopted as tool for decision making in the oil & gas sector
- Operational guidelines to regulate activities of oil companies in PAs developed and being implemented
- An MoU between oil company and PA mgt authority signed and implemented to streamline operations in MFNP
- Building capacity of PA staff on oil & gas issues and managing impacts of oil



# Seeking critical balance between oil & conservation



## Protected Area initiatives and tools

- Developing detailed sensitivity atlas for the national park mapping & zoning areas of ecological importance as avoidance features
- Carrying out biodiversity surveys in collaboration with oil companies (establishing baselines)
- Establishing full time oil monitoring unit for daily compliance monitoring of oil activities in PA
- Recruited & trained over 100 staff to work with oil companies
- Inducting oil company staff on PA issues before entering the PA
- Ensuring that all oil/drill wastes are taken out of the PA
- Ensuring complete restoration of drill sites & access roads immediately after drilling & well testing
- Convinced oil companies to pay daily access fees just like any tourists (conservation fees)
- Initiated & implemented stakeholders quarterly engagement fora to raise awareness & share updates on oil activities

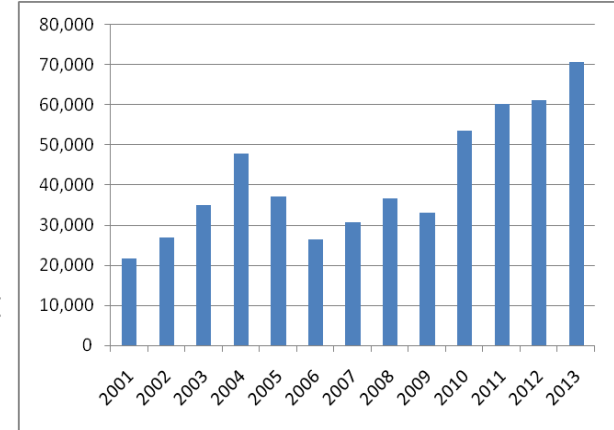
# An inspiring solution

## Innovative and effective

- Tourists have right of way & precede daily oil activities
- Establishment of environmental and biodiversity baselines for future monitoring
- Stimulated discussion on long term sustainability plans (30 years vision of the PA)
- Payment of conservation fees ploughed back for PA management

## Evidence of implementation and impact

- All exploration & appraisal wells and access roads have been restored
- Adoption of good practices such as; no flaring in PAs, reduction in drill sizes, building support infrastructure outside the PA
- Mapping & zoning sensitive areas (avoidance features)
- Exploration phase is now complete but with no visible impacts on biodiversity nor tourism.



# What makes it work?

## Components that lead to success

- Strict implementation of tools & guidelines while adhering to mitigation hierarchy
- Institutional cooperation & coordination

## Enabling factors

- Sound environment management policies, political support, buy in by all stakeholders and good will of the developers are pre-requisite in seeking the critical balance between mineral exploitation in protected areas and conservation!

