

# We must protect environment

**T**he decision by the National Environment Management Authority (Nema) to compel an encroacher to restore the shoreline of Lake Victoria is a timely and commendable assertion of environmental stewardship in Uganda.

Nema, in an order issued on April 7, 2026, asked developers of a beach in Munyonyo, Kampala, to restore a section of the Lake Victoria shoreline within 21 days.

There are over 220 metres of the shoreline that were developed without approval, which must be restored to the original state.

For years, encroachment on wetlands and lake shores has steadily eroded the ecological integrity of our natural resources. These fragile ecosystems are vital buffers against flooding, breeding grounds for fish, and lifelines for communities whose livelihoods depend on them.

## The issue:

Environment conservation.

## Our view:

Nema's firm action sends a clear message: environmental laws are enforceable. By ordering the restoration of the degraded shoreline, the Authority is not only correcting a specific violation, but also setting a precedent that illegal developments will not be tolerated, regardless of the stature or influence of those involved. This move deserves applause because it aligns with both national priorities and global commitments to sustainable development.

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Uganda cannot afford to sacrifice its natural heritage at the altar of short-term gain.

The restoration of the Lake Victoria shoreline is a step toward reversing years of environmental neglect and degradation.

Therefore, enforcement must be consistent and sustained. One decisive action, though significant, is not enough.

Nema must build on this momentum by intensifying monitoring, strengthening collaboration with local governments, and ensuring that all encroachers are held accountable, as well as increasing public awareness to understand that protecting wetlands and shorelines is a priority.

In standing up for Lake Victoria, Nema has demonstrated that environmental protection is a necessity. Government agencies, communities, and developers must take a leaf and respect and uphold the sanctity of our natural resources.

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