

Mutulanganga, Zambia

Title



Status: Forest reserve

Campaign period: 2010-2011

Background

It is the woodland area on the Siavonga district just beyond the badly eroded Lisutu Village in Zambia. It is one of the few areas of intact mopane woodland left in the Zambezi Valley. Mopane grows on soils which few other trees will tolerate – namely clay, or in shallow sand over clay, but cannot compete on deep well-drained soils.

Why it is important

It is the breeding ground of the African Pitta as well as the seasonal host of the Barred Longtailed Cuckoo, Thrush Nightingale and River and Marsh Warbler. Other birds of interest are the Western Banded Snake Eagle, Crested Guinea fowl, Purplecrested Turaco, African

Broadbill and Livingstone's Flycatcher. The forest protects the headwaters of the Mutulanganga, Bendele, and Lusitu rivers that flow into the Zambezi River and in so doing acts as protection from the severe impacts of flash floods and gully erosion on the agriculture land and surrounding villages. It is also an important in protecting the Namoomba Elephant Corridor, thus providing sanctuary and foraging areas for the regional Elephant population and other large mammals such as Hippos.

Threat

A Chinese company, Flydragon Wood and Lumber Company was awarded a timber logging concession in Mutulanganga IBA on condition that the Environmental Project Brief (EPB) was approved. It intended on logging 40 trees per day.

Campaign Strategies

- Objection to the proposal submitted to the Environmental Council of Zambia (ECZ).
- Pressurising ECZ to call for a full Environmental Impact Assessment of the project.
- Campaigns for the ECZ to reject the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA).

A successful advocacy campaign

When the company submitted an EPB to the Environmental Council of Zambia (ECZ), the Zambian Ornithological Society (ZOS – BirdLife in Zambia) immediately lodged an objection. Due to this pressure ECZ called for the Fly Dragon Wood and Lumber Company to do a full Environmental Impact Assessment on the area. Following an intense campaign by ZOS with some support from A.V Jensen Charity Foundation through BirdLife, the ECZ rejected the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) report submitted by company. The rejection of the Flydragon proposal is great victory for conservation organisations and the local communities and a warning that the current push within Africa to put development projects in environmentally sensitive areas is not going to pass unchallenged. It also demonstrates that success can be achieved when local organisations join hands with national and international ones to champion common causes.

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