

# Targeting Natural Resource Corruption

Welcome! We will begin shortly.

This is a Zoom webinar. All participant videos are off and lines are muted, but please feel free to introduce yourself in the chat.

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# Sand mafias: Environmental harm, corruption, and economic impacts



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(Moderator)*



# Get Engaged

Audio Settings ^



Chat

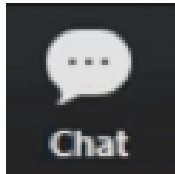


Raise Hand



Q&amp;A

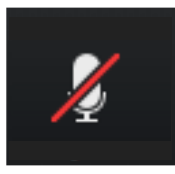
Leave Meeting



Chat

## 1. Exchange thoughts with other participants via chat

*Introduce yourself and share your own insights and questions in the chat window*



## 2. All participants are muted

*Given high attendance in this webinar, all lines will remain muted*



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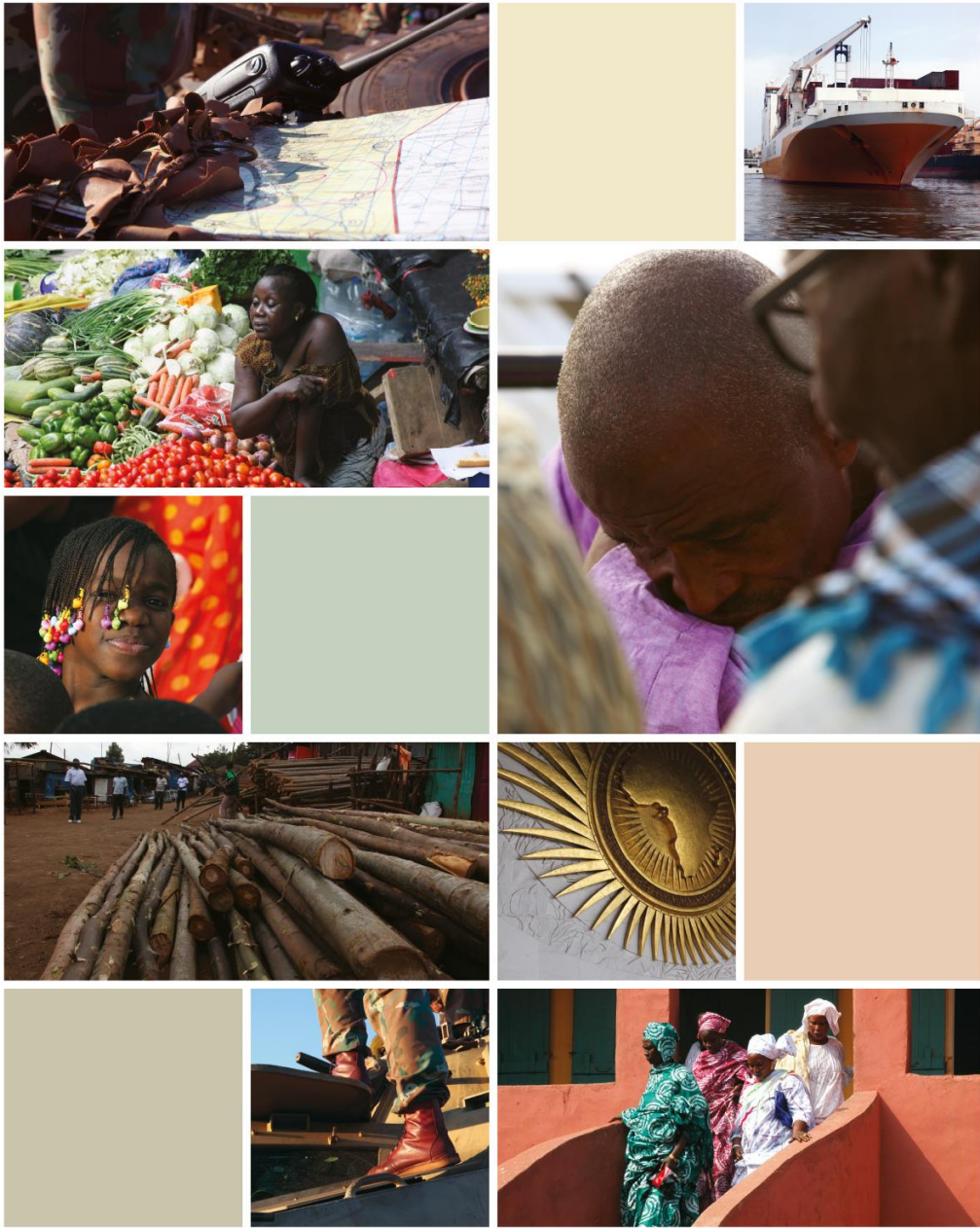
# Sand mafias: Environmental harm, corruption, and economic impacts

Ola Jennersten / WWF-Sweden



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# ENHANCING AFRICA'S RESPONSE TO TRANSNATIONAL ORGANISED CRIME



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by the European Union

# Sand mafias in Kenya and Uganda: Environmental harm, corruption, and economic impacts

*Mohamed Daghar – ENACT Regional Coordinator Eastern Africa*



# Presentation outline



- Sand harvesting vis-à-vis sand mining.
- Criminality and sand cartels.
- Sand mining's impact on lives and livelihoods.
- Sand mining's impact on ecosystems.
- How can sand be sustainably harvested through effective frameworks?



# Why is it important?

- Sand mining is a crime and must be stopped immediately.
- Through violence and corruption, criminals are controlling the sand market unabated.
- With lack of a formidable alternative, sand remains the only option for the advancement of human civilisation. But it must be harvested sustainably and not mined.



# Ok fine, but why sand?

- Sand is the bulking agent of all facets of the global economy.
- Sand takes millions of years to form but mined out in less than one!
- No international frameworks to regulate sand activities.
- Most countries such as Uganda do not also regulate sand activities and Kenya is not an exception.



# So what is happening?

Sand is mined and not sustainably harvested in Kenya and Uganda and this is leading to adverse environmental effects, affecting livelihoods and increasing inter-communal conflict/tensions.

- Mining is extracting it all, harvesting is replenishing it cyclically.
- Mining is exhaustive, harvesting is sustainable.
- Lives and livelihoods.
- Environmental effects.



# Lives and livelihoods

- Drivers that motivate people to engage in the sand trade are:
- Poverty
- Lack of higher education
- Idleness
- Lack of employment
- Source of employment
- Sense of entitlement

# Women and children in the sand trade

- The sand trade is male dominated and driven with women and girls supporting the trade in the periphery either directly or indirectly.
- Directly, women sell food to loaders in sand sites.
- Indirectly, sand has enhanced the involvement of women especially girls in commercial sex work.
- Most children who don't continue with higher education engage in the sand trade – all you need is a shovel!
- Children on wooden canoes in Uganda dredge sand in the middle of fast-moving rivers without any protective gear.
- With erratic school closures during the COVID-19 pandemic, it is observed that most children have engaged in the sand trade.



# Sand and ecosystems

- Sand mining have destroyed both water and land ecosystems.
- This destruction has left negative environmental impacts and also affected communities livelihoods detrimentally.
- Destroying sand ecosystems have multiplier effect to others.























# So why is it happening?

No regulation, no oversight bodies = no framework =  
sand mining

- Only national sand harvesting 'guidelines' exist.
- Only one (Makueni) of the 47 county (local) governments in Kenya has effective legislation and control measures (a framework) that oversees sand harvesting and trading.
- Kenyan counties either depend on national sand harvesting guidelines or have weak/basic/non-comprehensive county legislations.
- Gaps in Uganda's laws also limit the country's ability to regulate sand extraction.



# And who is making it happen?



The entire value chain of the sand trade (excluding the consumer) is driven by cartels that use violence and intimidation as they enjoy protection from powerful state actors.

- The market – lucrative, all-year round.
- The actors – state officials, transporters, brokers, loaders.
- The corruption – state officials.
- Territoriality and gang violence – up to eight gangs operating in one sand mining site each with its define territory.

# Now what can be done?

The sand harvesting and trading cannot only be regulated but can also be a top revenue earner for local authorities while providing employment opportunities thus reducing the youth bulge in Kenya and Uganda.

- Recommending best practices from Makueni county – a once epicentre for sand mining.
- Recommending best practices from two villages in Machakos County where the communities have refused sand mining to take place.
- Addressing legal gaps in Uganda.
- To curb the practice, neighbouring countries must act together.



# And why should it be done?



With lack of a formidable alternative, sand remains the only option for the advancement of human civilisation. But it must be harvested sustainably and not mined.

- Sand is unique and has no equal alternative so far.
- Rather than making a licit product illicit, sand sustainability options is the way to go.
- It can be done through comprehensive framework that will weed-out the criminality.
- Governments need to put in place sand harvesting, utilisation, conservation and trading legislation and oversee implementation.
- Regional initiatives would also help in curbing sand trafficking.

Thank You

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# THE GLOBAL INITIATIVE AGAINST TRANSNATIONAL ORGANIZED CRIME

*Sand Mafias in India*

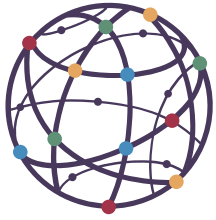
Prem Mahadevan

14 June 2021



**GLOBAL  
INITIATIVE**





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## Summary of Argument

- **Illicit trade in sand is almost unavoidable for 'economic growth' in many developing countries, but has damaging environmental impacts.**
- **These impacts are inherently difficult to mitigate, but empowering and sensitizing local communities might contain some of the damage.**

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## Corruption and the Economy

- India's economic growth, like China's, has triggered off consumerist aspirations.
- GDP growth created space for optics, helped deflect public attention from crony capitalism.
- Localised media coverage on sand-mining began in mid1990s as a niche issue.
- More concern among leftist circles, but instrumentalized by all politicians ('mafias').
- Seen as provincial development issue, hence not prioritized as policy concern (until lately).

## Key statistics

- India needs to add 800 million square meters of urban space annually just to keep pace with demand for housing, due to domestic migration.
- Long-term agrarian distress: Over 20 years, an average of 2035 farm workers quit to find work in other economic sectors each day.
- India has the third-largest construction industry, after China and the US, and saw a tripling of demand for sand between 2000 and 2017.





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## A lucrative illicit trade

- Riverine sand best suited for construction (desert sand too fine, marine sand too salty).
- Indian rivers mined at unsustainable level (40 times replenishment rate in some areas).
- Extraction by contractors and villagers, transportation by contractors who sell to intermediate buyers, who sell on to builders.
- Sand mafias are often not directly controlled by politicians, but patronized by businessmen who have political connections.

- Extortion of legitimate sand-mining firms makes it unprofitable to follow rules, pay fair wages, use manual tools.
- Extraction done at night, deters probing by villagers and (most) law enforcement.
- Most deaths caused by accidents, not murder. However, murders stand little chance of being investigated.



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## Effects of sand-mining

### Environmental

- Depletion of water table, adding to distress of farming communities
- Disruption of nesting places of rare migratory birds
- Disruption to natural fisheries along coastal and riverine areas
- Flash-flooding in mountainous and coastal areas

### Societal

- Polarization of village communities between collaborators and resisters (playing on caste and class divides)
- Increased aggressiveness of criminal gangs towards law enforcement officials, including weaponization/corruption
- Silencing of media reporting through bribery/assassination





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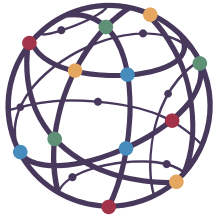
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## The Legal Situation in India

- Under a federal system of government, the provinces have jurisdiction over:
  - (1) Maintenance of law and order and
  - (2) Exploitation of (non-strategic) natural resources that lie within their territory
- National Green Tribunal established in 2010 to adjudicate in disputes concerning environmental matters, especially regarding compensation/restitution for those affected.
- Guidelines introduced in 2016 and 2020 to regulate sand-mining, track illegality.

## Facts on the ground

- Localized surveillance by drones
- Extent to which provinces respect NGT decisions varies. Foot-dragging and obfuscation of basic facts is common.
- Lately, more effort to limit illegal extraction of sand, but not much to interdict transportation – seen as playing to the interests of large corporate groups, as opposed to artisanal miners.



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## Possible solutions

### Recycling construction material

- Stone dust from quarries, ash from incinerators can (partly) substitute for sand
- Waste glass can be used in shotcrete for tunnelling supports

### More economical use of riverine sand

- Dredging from reservoirs

### Legal measures

- Enforce planning laws on new urban constructions, protection of existing buildings, legislate against speculation

- Consider banning transportation of sand across administrative boundaries, except in special cases

### Administrative

- Introduce programmes to train local communities in resource conservation
- Joint workshops between government departments focusing on env. crime.



# THANK YOU

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# Targeting Natural Resource Corruption

Harnessing knowledge, generating evidence, and supporting innovative policy and practice for more effective anti-corruption programming

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