



Virunga National Park is recognized globally for its rich wildlife, but it is much more than that. Virunga is also a vital resource to local residents living around Africa's oldest national park. WWF is urging governments, oil companies and non-governmental organizations focused on conservation, human rights and development to take immediate steps to protect the park from oil exploration.

DRAW THE LINE

THE OIL CURSE

Historical evidence in oil producing countries shows that rather than reducing poverty and inequality, oil has adverse social and economic effects and in many cases fuels conflict. Three processes are primarily responsible for this "natural resource curse".

- Exporting oil causes the local currency to appreciate making other exporting sectors less competitive
- The price of oil fluctuates leading to unpredictable revenues and causing severe economic disruptions making long-term planning challenging
- Oil revenues raise the value of being in power and provide politicians with more resources to influence the outcome of elections leading to higher levels of corruption



OIL

DEVELOPMENT COULD ALSO THREATEN THE PARK'S STATUS AS A WORLD HERITAGE SITE

Virunga is an UNESCO World Heritage Site and is known for its wildlife-rich network of forests,

savannas, rivers, lakes, marshlands, active and dormant volcanoes and permanent glaciers

VIRUNGA NATIONAL PARK

SOCO

INTERNATIONAL PLC IS THE ONLY OIL COMPANY THAT HAS INDICATED THAT IT WILL EXPLORE FOR OIL IN VIRUNGA

186

HOME TO 186 CRITICALLY ENDANGERED MOUNTAIN GORILLAS



POTENTIAL OPPORTUNITIES

28,000 jobs in fishing

10,000 jobs in hydro-electric power

7,420 jobs in tourism

85% In December 2007, the DRC government granted oil concessions covering 85 per cent of the park.



VIRUNGA NATIONAL PARK'S RICH WILDLIFE



218
MAMMAL SPECIES



706
BIRD SPECIES



78
AMPHIBIAN SPECIES



109
REPTILE SPECIES

SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC VALUE

The Total Economic Value of the Virunga ecosystem is likely to be US\$48.9 million annually. If current challenges are addressed, the park's value has the potential to be as much as US\$1.1 billion per year



Fisheries: Fishing from Virunga's lakes currently brings in US\$30 million a year. Management is poor and enforcement weak which has led to over-fishing. By introducing sustainable management systems the current yield could triple raising income to US\$90 million and increasing job opportunities.



Tourism: Virunga has been closed to tourists since September 2012 for security reasons but used to be a valuable source of income for the park and local communities. The potential value of tourism in the future is US\$235 annually with increased job opportunities as well.



Hydro-electric power: Access to electricity is recognized as having substantial benefits for poverty reduction. The Mutwanga station, which uses water from inside Virunga, provides electricity for 10,000 inhabitants. Potential value from additional stations is over US\$10 million annually with increased job opportunities for locals.