

Open letter: Uranium mine would damage Selous World Heritage site

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Credit: WWF / Gary Roberts / Almay Stock Photo

In a powerful public appeal, the Tanzanian president has been advised to discontinue plans for uranium mining in Tanzania including in areas near the fragile Selous Game Reserve World Heritage site.

The warning came in open letter by noted Tanzanian journalist Kiondo Mshana, which has been published in a number of national newspapers this week.

The author congratulates the president on progress to reduce elephant poaching in Selous, but urges him to cancel plans for a [uranium mining](#) and to reconsider other industrial projects proposed by multinational enterprises.

"My fears are that if these companies are allowed to mine uranium, especially in the Selous Game Reserve, their activities would lead to irreparable damage, not only to the environment in terms of its ecosystem, but also to Tanzania's precious tourism industry," Mshana said.

"Surely, one cannot promote the kind of tourism we have in this country without simultaneously protecting the environment," he added.

WWF echoes the author's concern over the health and safety of nearby residents, as well as the environment, which underpins the local economy. Uranium mining risks contaminating ground water, which would be devastating to the ecosystem and the people who rely on it for their well-being.



Credit: Getty images

Harmful industrial activities like mining, oil and gas extraction, and the construction of industrial-scale dams could compromise long-term sustainable economic development potential of the area.

"This could be a major opportunity for the current administration in Tanzania to make a decision that will have far reaching legacy," said Amani Ngusaru, Country Director of WWF-Tanzania. "This legacy will not only fortify established environmental protections, but also set the tone from the top in terms of a sustainable development pathway for Tanzania."

Provided by WWF

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