

Apex Musange, one of the evicted farmers, stands in the ruins of his house.



KEY RESULTS FROM THE FIAN REPORT AMATHEON IN ZAMBIA. VIOLENCE AND EVICTIONS BY GERMAN AG-INVESTOR.

The full German version can be found here: [LINK!](#)

FIAN has been working since 2013 on the investments made by the German investor Amatheon in Zambia and the associated effects on the local population. After the indications of various conflicts had been confirmed and, in some cases, intensified – despite many attempts to engage in constructive dialogue with the company, no real improvements had been achieved – FIAN began to report publicly on the case. The Amatheon Study aims to convey a more comprehensive picture of the situation.

1 The Berlin-based investor Amatheon is active in the agricultural sector in Zambia, Zimbabwe, and Uganda through 14 subsidiaries. By far the largest investment by the company is made in Zambia. According to their own information, Amatheon has acquired around 40,000 hectares of land since 2012 through its subsidiaries Amatheon Agri Zambia and Katonga Farm. This makes Amatheon the largest German agricultural investor on the African continent. However, the company's activities are controversial. Ongoing land conflicts, forced evictions, and the loss of vital water sources continue to affect the local population. Fundamental human rights such as access to food, water, and housing are syste-



Gerald Mukabe, affected farmer shows the borders of his land before Amatheon took it.

matically infringed by Amatheon. The investor is also criticized for misleading and euphemistic statements in public.

2 Amatheon's actual land holdings in Zambia are unclear. An investigation in the Zambian land registry confirmed only about 8,700 hectares of land as belonging to Amatheon. This is less than a quarter of the 38,760 hectares that Amatheon reported as its property in 2014 and has since claimed for itself. Only 18 farms could be identified as officially owned by Amatheon. Without secured property rights, Amatheon lacks the legal grounds to evict the people living and farming on part of the claimed land. Nevertheless, the company is still carrying out evictions - some of them in cooperation with external actors such as the Zambian Wildlife Authority (ZAWA). According to local sources, up to 11,000 people and 19 villages are at risk of eviction by the German investor.

3 In 2024, the four villages of Apex, Chiyabu, Mambanga and Sibanda were forcibly evicted several times. A total of 151 households were affected – this is equivalent to approximately 760 people. However, only these four villages were visited by FIAN, and consequentially, only their cases were documented - since many other conflict areas are known to be threatened with eviction, it can be assumed that the real number of displaced people is significantly higher.

4 Around 40 families live in the village of Apex, east of the Amatheon farm. During a group discussion in October 2024, around 30 families confirmed that the village had been forcibly cleared three times within nine months. Houses were destroyed or burned down. Those affected reported that armed employees of the Zambian Wildlife Authority (ZAWA), together with Amatheon staff armed with batons, were involved in the evictions. Court orders, which must be presented to families as the grounds for any eviction, were not shown to them. Furthermore, no one received statutory compensation or resettlement on legally secured replacement land.

5 Since Amatheon built two dams, the Kaluanyembe River and its tributary, the Kapwashe, have been drying up regularly for six to eight months of the year. Previously, the rivers only dried up for a few weeks a year. The approximately 5,000 households downstream now lack access to water, especially during the dry season, and many families had to give up growing vegetables along the rivers.

6 The situation for these people is further exacerbated by the fact that Amatheon illegally confiscates cattle and goats when they enter the land claimed by the company – often in search of water. In at least four communities, over 40 households were affected. To get their animals back,



Gathering of affected people, October 2024.
They discuss their problems and conflicts with Amatheon and get legal advice.

farmers currently must pay 500 Zambian kwacha (approximately 17.50 EUR) per cow – almost a quarter of the average monthly income in rural Zambia. Many families report that they have to sell other animals to cover the fees. Based on random samples alone, payments of over 35,000 Kwacha were documented by receipts. The number of unreported cases is considerably higher.

7 Labor-dispelling investments: The company employs around 250 permanent staff. When this figure is compared to the estimated 11,000 people who are at risk of displacement based on the land claimed by Amatheon, the narrative of job creation and development is difficult to comprehend considering the massive destruction of livelihoods.

8 Amatheon is called upon to immediately stop all forced evictions, to adhere to fundamental human rights norms and to comply with Zambian legislation. In addition, the unlawful confiscation of livestock must be stopped immediately and the farmers affected must be adequately compensated. The same applies to any damage caused by evictions, harvest losses, and the destruction of property.

9 The Zambian state is obligated to effectively protect people from human rights violations by private companies. The German authorities must, within the scope of their extraterritorial obligations, investigate any human rights abuses by the German investor and take regulatory action through administrative, investigative, and judicial measures to hold those responsible to account.