



Project Proposal

Project Name:	Rwenzori Mountains Conservation & Environmental Management Project
Project Location:	Kasese, Kabarole and Bundibugyo Districts, Western Uganda
Project Number:	
Project Budget:	Total: NOK 23.00 mill. (USD 3.13 mill.) Year 1: NOK 5.99 mill. (USD 0.81 mill.) Year 2: NOK 4.90 mill. (USD 0.67 mill.) Year 3: NOK 4.23 mill. (USD 0.58 mill.) Year 4: NOK 3.80 mill. (USD 0.52 mill.) Year 5: NOK 4.08 mill. (USD 0.55 mill.) (1 USD = 7.35 NOK)
Project Implementing Agency:	Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA)
Technical Cooperation Agency:	World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF)
Local Partners:	Local Governments of Kasese, Kabarole and Bundibugyo National Environment Management Authority (NEMA), National Forest Authority (NFA)
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Proposed Start Date:	January 2004	Expected End Date:	December 2008
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Background

The Rwenzori Mountains National Park covers nearly 100,000 ha in western Uganda and comprises the main part of the Rwenzori mountain chain, which includes Africa's third highest peak (Mount Margherita, 5,109 m). The region's glaciers, waterfalls and lakes make it one of Africa's most beautiful alpine areas. Rwenzori has been a focal point for international recognitions and was inscribed as a World Heritage Site in 1994. The Park's globally important biodiversity includes many natural habitats of endangered species and a rich and unusual flora. Along the 160 km park border there are many local communities that are economically poor and have very limited access to a variety of goods and services. Consequently, the Rwenzori area is a priority area in the work for sustainable development.

The 'Rwenzori', in local language meaning 'rain maker', is a vital water catchment area, feeding the economically important Lakes Edward, George and Albert, and constituting the highest and most permanent sources of the Nile River. It is estimated that 500,000 Ugandans directly depend on the mountains for their domestic water supply as well as protection from flooding and other environmental hazards (Howard, 1991). The catchment is also of great importance for a variety of water users, economic activities and ecosystems further downstream.

The Rwenzori Mountains are well known for their unusual biodiversity, which includes many species endemic to the Albertine Rift¹ in the higher altitude zones. Of the 278 woody plant taxa found in the afro-alpine zone, 81% are endemic to East Africa and 19% are found only in the afro-alpine belt (Herberg, 1961; Lush, 1993). Vegetation depends largely on altitude, with five zones being distinguishable. Below 2,400 m is the montane forest, which merges into a bamboo forest zone. The bamboo zone is replaced on poorer soils by a tree heath vegetation consisting of dense thickets of giant heathers. On better soils the vegetation is characterised by a tangled undergrowth punctuated by a mixture of small trees. Upwards to 4,400 m, is a zone of Afro-alpine moorland (Howard, 1991).

Knowledge of the fauna is skewed in favour of the higher altitude species. There are 106 species of mammals known to the Rwenzori Mountains, of which three are not found anywhere else in the world and a further 15 are endemic to the Albertine Rift. The forest is important for several primates including the threatened Chimpanzee *Pan troglodytes schweinfurthi*. The mountains contain at least 216 species of birds of which 17 are endemic to the Albertine Rift (Plumptre 2003). A study of invertebrate life forms listed 60 species in the alpine zone, 25 of which were new to science (Salt, 1987). This is indicative of a much more extensive fauna waiting to be discovered. There are 213 species of butterflies known to occur in the Rwenzori Mountains National Park (RMNP), of which seven are endemic to the Albertine Rift. The RMNP is home to many endangered species: 10 mammals (of which the African Forest Elephant *Loxodonta Africana cyclotis* (V), the Eastern Chimpanzee *Pan troglodytes* (V) and L'hoests Monkey *Cercopithecus l'hoesti* (V)), 5 birds and several reptiles and amphibians.

Until 1991, the Rwenzori Forest Reserve was managed by the Forest Department. In 1996 the mountains was gazetted a national park and thereby accorded higher conservation status which excludes any form of exploitative use of resources. Change of the management status meant a lot to the park authority and the local community. One of the issues was the anticipated participation of the local community in some aspects of park management, in order to overcome fears that their traditional use of forest resources would be curtailed. Others included violation of the integrity of the montane forest zone by intensive hunting for bush meat and other resources, high human population density of the area surrounding the Park (150–430 persons/sq.km) resulting in, among other things, intense human pressure on park resources.

¹ The Albertine Rift stretches from the northern end of Lake Albert down to the southern end of Lake Tanganyika and encompasses the forests, savannahs, wetlands and mountains that are found in the rift and on the adjacent escarpment in Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi, Tanzania and the Democratic Republic of Congo. This area contains, among others, 52% of all bird species and 39% of all mammal species on the African continent (Plumptre *et al.* 2003).

A welcome step towards addressing these issues was the establishment of the Rwenzori Mountains Conservation and Development Project, funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and implemented by the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) as from 1992. Phase I of the project (1990–1994) involved the preparation of a park management plan, addressing issues such as zoning, tourism development, infrastructure and community participation. Reducing local communities' pressure on the Park through the promotion of soil conservation, agroforestry, and ecotourism and raising levels of conservation awareness was also included in this phase (WWF, 1996). This was followed by Phase II of the project (1995–1998), which consolidated the achievements of Phase I and made a design for Phase III focusing greater emphasis on strengthening the capacity of the Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA), regional transboundary cooperation and financial sustainability of the park interventions.

The rebel activities, which started in the region in mid nineties, escalated and lead to the closure of the Park in 1999. The deteriorating security lead to lack of resources, suspension of projects and serious security issues at the Park for which the park staff could not cope with. Phase III of the project therefore did not go beyond the proposal level. The World Heritage Committee at its twenty-third session in 1999 examined the issues and recommended inscription of this property on the List of World Heritage in Danger. The Committee requested the World Heritage Centre and IUCN to work closely with Uganda Wildlife Authority to consult conservation NGOs and other international organizations present in the region, to discuss ways and means to publicize the need for all parties involved in the conflict in the region to respect the site's World Heritage status and to develop projects to support its site management. The submission of this proposal demonstrates a clear response to this call by UWA and WWF. In late 2001 the security resumed in the area and the Park was reopened for tourist activities in 2001 and it is now possible for a project of this kind to operate effectively in the area.

Justification

Rwenzori Mountains National Park (RMNP) has been under increasing human pressure due to high population growth estimated at annual growth rate of 5.16 in Bundibugyo, 3.76 in Kasese and 1.56 in Kabarole Districts (Uganda Bureau of Statistics, 2002) and corresponding increasing demand for forest and other natural resources. For a number of resources this extraction process is now operating at an unsustainable level and is leading to depletion of natural resources and loss of biodiversity. Excessive hunting and trapping have meant that large mammals and ground-living birds that used to be abundant are now extremely rare (Yeoman, 1992). Trade in wildlife and commercial poaching of monkeys and duikers were recorded high in all the sub-counties bordering the entire Rwenzori Mountains National Park.

The unique biodiversity values and water catchments functions of the Rwenzori ecosystem are threatened with the increasing and high demand for land by the surrounding population. The steep mountain slopes are continuously cleared for cultivation increasing the occurrences of landslides and soil erosion despite the presence national environment regulations on use of mountains and steep slopes. These have affected the water quality and quantity, and pose a threat to downstream fisheries, hydropower stations, and domestic water supplies. Some of the once large rivers have been reduced to streams and the smaller ones have become seasonal, probably due to changes in catchment characteristics.

Being a very important natural water tower in the region, the threats to the catchment values of the Rwenzori pose potential significant negative impact on the economically important lakes Edward, George, Albert and the Nile River Basin. These freshwater bodies contribute enormously to the livelihood of people in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Uganda, Sudan and Egypt. According to the Uganda Population and Housing census, 2002 over 1 million Ugandans are estimated to directly depend on the mountains for their domestic water supply as well as protection from flooding and other environmental hazards (WWF 2003, Report on socio economic studies in the Rwenzori area not published).

Communities bordering the Park have developed high negative attitudes to the existence of the Park due to, among other things, wildlife-human conflicts and exclusion from use of resources and cultural sites inside the Park. A range of problems and challenges should be addressed urgently. The Park is considered a liability, burden and the cause of high levels of poverty and under development in the communities. This is partly attributed to the low levels of awareness campaigns and education for the communities. The Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA) does currently not have appropriate capacity to effectively manage the Rwenzori Mountains National Park. The organization is understaffed and lacks the necessary infrastructure for efficient and proper management of the Park. The transboundary issues are not given the necessary attention. The combination of these points lead to an ineffective management and control of illegal activities in the Park. This constitutes a major threat to the biodiversity values of the Park and a range of ecological goods and services of great economic and social value to downstream areas as well as the global community.

Despite the above mentioned there are opportunities for addressing these challenges in a constructive way, as was illustrated in the stakeholder process leading up to the formulation of this proposal.

The RMNP was closed for three years due to insecurity and rebel activities in the region. This meant that the great achievements of Phase II of the project (1995–1998) might have weathered out partly, however, some impacts can still be seen on ground. Phase III will therefore start on a strong foundation to address some of the lost achievements from phase II and tackle the new and important challenges.

This project aims at promoting sustainable livelihoods of the local communities through increased incentives for sustainable use of natural resources. This objective is consistent with the country's overall strategy for poverty reduction which is articulated in the Poverty Eradication Action Plan (PEAP). The recent participatory poverty assessment case study on the environment (Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, 2003) indicates that the quality of natural resources is declining in Uganda and that this is increasing poverty and vulnerability. The Government of Uganda therefore took the initiative to review seriously how environment and natural resources can be given greater focus within the Poverty Eradication Action Plan (PEAP), which the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development (MFPED) is spearheading the revision of in 2003. By working with the various stakeholders at national and local levels and strengthening UWA's capacity to work with local communities in sustainable development and use of natural resources the proposed project will directly address the four pillars of the PEAP.

Among other national priorities the project will contribute towards implementing the National Environmental Action Plan, 1994, the Draft National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan, 2001 and the Wetlands Sector Strategic Plan 2001–2010 (MWLE 2001). The project will significantly assist Uganda in meeting several international obligations, such as those under the Convention on biological diversity (CBD), the Convention on international trade in endangered species of wild fauna and flora (CITES) and the Ramsar convention on wetlands.

The proposed project is in line with overall objectives of Norwegian development assistance (e.g. MFA 1997, NORAD 1999) and the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the Governments of Uganda and Norway (GoN & GoU 2001). The project proponents strongly believe this can be a key project for Norwegian and Ugandan follow-up of the outcomes from the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD), in particular in relation to the commitments and recommendations on biodiversity, freshwater, water supply and poverty reduction. The proposed project also fits very well within the WEHAB (Water, Energy, Health, Agriculture, Biodiversity) priorities, in particular as far as water and biodiversity is concerned, as well as the recent action plan for the environment initiative under the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD).

Building on the experience with the International Gorilla Conservation Programme in Uganda, DRC and Rwanda, this project plans to promote transboundary natural resources management around Rwenzori Mountains. This will seek to establish a common vision, build trust,

understanding, reconciliation and cooperation among stakeholders (governments, non-governmental organizations, communities, users) as a contribution to collaborative resource management, security and peace building. The project will also promote landscape-level ecosystem management through integrated bioregional land-use planning and management. Work on harmonization and coordination of management approaches and development of grass root informal mechanisms for collaboration and regular meetings between protected area staff of the two countries will prepare the ground for subsequent formalisation of regional collaboration.

Goal and purpose

The overall objective or goal of the proposed project is that the

Conservation of the Rwenzori Mountains ecosystem is enhanced and its biodiversity and water catchment's values are maintained in harmony with sustainable utilisation of resources for the benefit of Uganda and the international communities.

The purpose of the project is that the

Integrity and conservation status of Rwenzori Mountains National Park (RMNP) is reinforced by the end of year 5.

Outputs

Nine main project outputs or results have been defined and comprise the following:

- Output 1. Management of RMNP strengthened.
- Output 2. Financial viability of RMNP enhanced.
- Output 3. Mechanisms for assuring sustainable use of in-park resources in operation.
- Output 4. Effective mechanisms for park-community communication and cooperation established.
- Output 5. Local government capacity for conservation-focused environmental action planning strengthened.
- Output 6. Existing and developing pressure points on the watershed functions and properties of RMNP mitigated.
- Output 7. Forest Landscape Restoration initiated to offer opportunities for sustainable development outside RMNP.
- Output 8. Regional process and tools for the conservation of the Rwenzori Mountains initiated and developed.
- Output 9. Effective project management systems established for the project.

Outputs 1 and 2 focus on the need to ensure that RMNP is effectively managed, and that this management is financially sustainable. As per the Phase II evaluation recommendation, Phase III will place considerable emphasis on activities to achieve these two results, spearheaded by the on going comprehensive UWA general management planning exercise and coupled with on-the-job management training. Outputs 3 and 4 focus on the need to ensure that local communities use RMNP's natural resources sustainably, and that the Park and communities work together to achieve conservation and sustainable use. Central here will be the continuation of the efforts begun in Phase II to develop a series of community resource-use (R-U) agreements, and work to enable the Local Production and Environment Committee (LPEC) mechanisms through Community Protected Area Institutions (CPAI) to provide a forum for promoting effective environmental management and a park-community dialogue.

Outputs 5 and 6 address the need to reduce human pressures on the Park and many of the techniques pioneered in Phase II will be continued. Unlike Phase II, however, these efforts will be focused only on those areas where human pressures on RMNP are greatest. Particular emphasis will be on interventions that promote the watershed protection functions and water resources management to demonstrate the tangible conservation values of the Park. This will ensure that

the project-supported natural resource management activities have maximum impact on RMNP conservation. Activities will be identified through environmental and natural resource management planning initiatives launched with local government bodies neighbouring RMNP. Output 7 is a new approach and will focus to work with the Local governments, Community based organisations (CBOs) and NGOs to identify degraded sites in the Rwenzori ecosystem and undertake forest landscape restoration as a means to rehabilitate such sites and also contribute to CO₂ absorption and thereby address climate change while improving the livelihood of the community. Output 8 focuses on the importance of promoting effective conservation action and collaboration between protected area managers on *both* sides of the international border that bisects the Rwenzori Mountains ecosystem, that is, both Uganda and DRC. Result 9 lastly, crosscutting aims to devise and consolidate high standards of project management in accordance with UWA and WWF policies on partnerships. The main text of this proposal details the various outputs further.

Project Implementation

Project implementation arrangements, overall approach and the activities that will have to be carried out to achieve the various specific outputs are described in detail in the main text of this proposal. At the operational level, the project will be implemented along three major components. These are:

- 1) The “**RMNP Component**”, implemented by Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA), comprising activities aimed at achieving outputs 1, 3 and 4.
- 2) The “**Local Government Component**”, implemented by Kasese, Kabarole, and Bundibugyo Districts Local Governments and selected sub-counties bordering RMNP under technical guidance from WWF, and comprising activities aimed at achieving outputs 5, 6 and 7.
- 3) The “**WWF Component**”, for which WWF will take lead responsibility to promote conservation and financial sustainability for the wider Rwenzori Mountains ecosystem and to integrate this Phase III project with conservation efforts underway throughout the Albertine Rift Montane Forest Ecoregion through outputs 2, 8 and 9.

WWF will have lead responsibility for overseeing project administration, management and finances, under the supervision of the Project Technical Advisory Committee and in consultation with the UWA Executive Director. WWF will also be responsible for establishing the detailed project administrative systems (in consultation with NORAD and UWA). An organisation chart is included in the main text. After consideration of various alternatives for overall project organisation, the current proposal is based on a model where WWF Norway has a contractual relationship with NORAD in Oslo.

Budget

A detailed budget is presented in appendix 6. A summary of the main budget items is presented below. The total budget for the five years is about NOK 23.00 million, equivalent to about USD 3,13 million.

Category		Sum	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Capital expenditure	NOK	2,186,640	1,552,335	378,525	121,275	64,680	69,825
	USD	297,502	211,202	51,500	16,500	8,800	9,500
Recurrent expenditures	NOK	19,112,574	3,991,047	4,156,860	3,794,675	3,449,899	3,707,228
	USD	2,600,350	543,000	565,559	516,282	471,124	504,385
Management fee (WWF Norway)	NOK	1,703,937	443,471	362,831	313,276	281,166	302,164
	USD	231,828	60,336	49,365	42,623	38,394	41,111
Total Project Costs	NOK	23,003,151	5,986,852	4,898,216	4,229,226	3,795,746	4,079,217
	USD	3,129,680	814,538	666,424	575,405	518,318	554,996

NOK = Norwegian Kroner, USD – United States Dollars, 1 USD = 7.35 NOK

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ABBREVIATIONS

ADF	Allied Democratic Forces
AMCEN	African Ministerial Conference on the Environment
AMCOW	African Ministerial Conference on Water
AWF	African Wildlife Foundation
CARE	Cooperative for Assistance and Relief Everywhere
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CBO	Community Based Organisation
CBNRM	Community Based Natural Resource Management
CCR	Community Conservation Ranger
CEPO	Community Environmental Planning Officer
CITES	Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Flora and Fauna
CMS	Conservation and Management Strategy
CPAI	Community Protected Area Institution
CPAIP	Community Protected Area Institution Policy (of UWA)
CPC	Country Programme Coordinator
DEAP	District Environment Action Plan
DEO	District Environment Officer
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
DTPC	District Technical Planning Committee
EARPO	Eastern Africa Regional Programme Office
EES	Environmental Education Specialist
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
FFI	Flora and Fauna International
FLR	Forest Landscape Restoration
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GMP	General Management Plan
GoN	Government of Norway
GoU	Government of Uganda
Ha	hectares (1 ha = 10 000 m ²)
HQ	Headquarter
ICCN	Institut Congolaise pour la Conservation de la Nature
ICD	Integrated Conservation and Development
ICDP	Integrated Conservation and Development Programme
IGCP	International Gorilla Conservation Programme
IUCN	The World Conservation Union
KAP	Knowledge, Attitudes and Practice

KNP	Kibale National Park
KSCDP	Kibale and Semliki Conservation and Development Project
LGA	Local Government Act
LPEC	Local Production and Environment Committee
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MFPED	Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MTOP	Medium Term Operational Plan
MTWA	Ministry of Tourism, Wildlife and Antiquities
MWLE	Ministry of Water, Lands and Environment
NBSAP	National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan
NFA	National Forest Authority
NEAP	National Environment Action Plan
NELSAP	Nile Equatorial Lakes Subsidiary Action Programme
NEMA	National Environment Management Agency
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development
NES	National Environment Statute
NGO	Non Governmental Organisation
NRMO	Natural Resources Management Officer
OVI	Objectively Verifiable Indicator
PAMSU	Protected Area Management for Sustainable Utilisation
PEAP	Poverty Eradication Action Plan
PMA	Plan for Modernisation of Agriculture
PMAC	Park Management Advisory Committees
PNV	Parc National des Virunga
PNV-N	Parc National des Virunga Northern Sector
PRA	Participatory Rural Appraisal
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
QENP	Queen Elizabeth National Park
RMCDP	Rwenzori Mountain Conservation and development Project
RMCEMP	Rwenzori Mountain Conservation and Environmental Management Project
RMNP	Rwenzori Mountains National Park
RMS	Rwenzori Mountaineering Services
SCA	Solar Connect Association
SNP	Semliki National Park
SPM	Site Project Manger
TAC	Technical Advisory Committee

UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNESCO	United Nation Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UNP	Uganda National Parks
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
UTB	Uganda Tourism Board
UWA	Uganda Wildlife Authority
V	Vulnerable
WCS	Wildlife Conservation Society
WEHAB	Water, Energy, Health, Agriculture, Biodiversity
WIC	Warden-in-Charge
WPC	World Parks Congress
WSSD	World Summit on Sustainable Development
WCC	Warden Community Conservation
WLE	Warden Law Enforcement
WR&M	Warden Research and Monitoring
WWF	World Wide Fund for Nature (World Wildlife Fund in USA and Canada)
WWF US	World Wide Fund for Nature (USA)

1 INTRODUCTION AND PROJECT BACKGROUND

Since 1990, the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF), with financial assistance from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), provided support to the Uganda Government to assist the Rwenzori Mountains National Park (RMNP) and the surrounding communities to conserve the natural resources of the area, in particular to protect the biodiversity of the national park and the area's value as a watershed benefiting a large number of people downstream. WWF's support has been provided through the Rwenzori Mountains Conservation and Development Project (RMCDP) in two phases: Phase I ran from 1990 to 1994; Phase II was completed on December 31, 1998, followed by evaluation and design of Phase III. Phase III was not implemented as the Park was closed in 1999 due to rebel activities and was only reopened in July 2001. WWF in January 2003 got funding from the Norwegian Embassy in Kampala to revise the Phase III proposal for implementation. The revision of this proposal has led to the Rwenzori Mountains Conservation and Environmental Management Project proposal.

1.1 The development of this proposal

The history of the development of this proposal stems from 1990 when, WWF in the United States of America (WWF-US) began implementation of the Rwenzori Mountains Conservation and Development Project with a grant from USAID. Phase I, which lasted until 1994, was implemented in collaboration with the Ugandan Ministry of Tourism, Wildlife and Antiquities (MTWA) and its component parastatal, Uganda National Parks (UNP). Thereafter, there was a year of low-level activity between the end of Phase I and the arrival of funding for Phase II, which was also implemented in collaboration with MTWA and the Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA, which has superseded UNP). Phase II lasted until December 31, 1998. Financial support for phase II was through majority funding by USAID and counterpart funding from WWF.

The two previous phases of the project were termed Rwenzori Mountains Conservation and Development Project, reflecting the integrated conservation and development project (ICDP) approach that was adopted during these two phases. The underlying rationale of an ICDP is that, to achieve conservation, it is also necessary to assist local communities with their development process. However, as the evaluation of RMCDP Phase II underscored, achieving a significant and lasting impact on broad community development and natural resource-use processes is an enormous and largely unrealisable goal. This is especially true for a project area as large as the Rwenzori region, which includes 38 parishes and approximately 50,000 ha of community land in a 3 km wide strip buffering the Park.

If the proposed project is to succeed in having an impact, Phase III must focus these community efforts more narrowly on specific problem areas, and must work more strategically (see discussion below). The approach advocated in Phase III, then, is one of *environmental management* rather than rural development *per se*. This is a significant shift in emphasis that permeates project objectives and activities. For these reasons, Phase III of the project has been renamed "The Rwenzori Mountains Conservation and Environmental Management Project". Funding for the transition phase, meant to bring upfront a participatory stakeholder analysis and consultation to revisit the threats to the Park was provided by the Norwegian Embassy in Kampala for revising phase III proposal.

The goal of Phase II was: "To assist Rwenzori Mountains National Park and the surrounding communities to conserve the natural resources of the area, in particular to protect the biodiversity of Rwenzori Mountains National Park and its value as a watershed." This was to be achieved through:

- **Strengthening the capacity of RMNP or UWA to effectively manage the Park:** The project developed a three-year Medium-Term Operational Plan (MTO) that the Park can use pending the development of a full-blown park management plan and produced digitised vegetation maps of the Rwenzori Mountains that have wider application in the overall research and monitoring of resource-use. An Environmental Impact Assessment

(EIA) Of the proposed management regime was completed during the preparation of an Alternative Development Plan for the Park. This Alternative development plan identified suitable locations for constructing the park headquarters, visitors' center, and other infrastructure developments.

- **Reducing human pressures on the Park:** The project promoted alternative development activities outside the Park, such as agroforestry, bee keeping, soil conservation, and improved stoves. These were intended to reduce the demand on in-park resources.
- **Strengthening relationships between the Park and neighbouring communities:** The project supported the establishment of resource-sharing mechanisms, park-community dialogue mechanisms, and community conservation awareness initiatives.

Important general lessons were learned in the process of implementing the Phase II project. Among them was the need to allow a sufficient time frame for projects such as the RMCDP that use the integrated conservation and development approach. Implementing a successful integrated conservation and development project (ICDP) often requires raising environmental awareness, introducing new technologies and techniques, and changing attitudes – all of which require time to take root. Communities tend to participate actively when they have got clear understanding and incentives over what the projects are about and of clear relevance is the consensus building on CBNRM which in most cases are marred with difference of opinions and approaches.

Resource-use agreements for in-park resources were developed with full participation of the communities. The lessons learned through this process were used by UWA, CARE and other interested parties in developing similar agreements for application elsewhere notably, a success story in Bwindi National Park, southern Uganda.

Other lessons learned include the need to develop monitoring and evaluation (M&E) plans that are within capacities of the target audience to implement. As M&E plans are relatively new in project implementation, there is need for projects within Uganda to share lessons, including standardization of methodologies.

Phase II was evaluated in April 1998 (Ratter et. al 1998). The evaluation stressed that, “a further phase of support to RMNP and its conservation should be commissioned, though the design may need to be more focused, management strengthened, and access to appropriate technical expertise enhanced” (Ratter, 1998). This statement, the lessons learned, and the promising foundations that were laid out in Phase II provide the rationale and impetus for a rethinking of the direction and detail of a Phase III project. The specific lessons learned from Phase II are also of vital importance to the Phase III design, especially where similar activities are planned. It is important to realize that UWA through the World Bank supported Protected Area Management for Sustainable Utilization (PAMSU) Phases I & II is in the process of making significant contribution to human capacity building and construction of infrastructure in entire country wide National Parks however for RMNP this support have not taken root yet. It is planned that the PAMSU project will construct the Park headquarters including accommodation for staff and limited tourism infrastructure. This means some of the activities originally planned for in the 1999 version of the Phase III project have been dropped.

In revising and developing this proposal wider stakeholder consultation and cross border consultation meetings were held in 2003. Literature search and desk reviews of all previous projects documents including the project implementation and evaluation reports were studied and information thereof compiled to formulate a strategy for the transition review phase. Several important planning meetings were held with Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA) Headquarters and field senior staff on the transition phase implementation. In these meetings it was agreed that the current threats to RMNP be revisited and analysed; there should be synergies for development of the Park General Management Plan (GMP) activities and the Rwenzori Transition phase planned activities in-order for those two operations to get maximum mutual benefit form each other.

WWF/UWA conducted a joint cross border meeting with the Congolese counterparts Institut Congolaise pour la Conservation de la Nature (ICCN) in June 2003 in Queen Elizabeth Park. Five major sub county consultation meetings were held with the twelve sub counties and 38 parishes bordering the Park. Altogether 200 participants from the offices of local and political leaders constituted by Sub County Chiefs, Parish Councillors, Secretary for Production and Environment, Women representative and resource user groups attended the meetings. Two other separate meetings were conducted for the district political and technical brass and the local non-governmental organisations (NGOs), community based organisations (CBOs) and other stakeholders. Local Parliamentarians, LC V level Secretaries for Production and Environment, Production Coordinators, District Chairpersons, District Environment Officers, District Forest Officers and District Agriculture and Veterinary Officers, NGOs, CBOs and community resource user groups attended the meetings. The reports of the meetings were compiled and analysed to prepare a threats and opportunities analysis to address those threats in the Park General Management Plan to be supported by the proposed Phase III Rwenzori Project.

The following summary highlights the evaluation's most important conclusions and the implications for the design of Phase III. For further details, reference is made to Kamau *et al.* (1994) and Ratter *et al.* (1998).

1.1.1 Strengthening park management

The 1998 evaluation recommended that a greater emphasis should be placed on the strengthening park management component, primarily because it is central to the achievement of the project's goal. Phase II tended to concentrate resources and effort on activities outside the Park, partly because the Park was closed for more than two years. Whereas the previous Phase III document emphasized the need to reverse this process so that 'in-park' activities previously proposed in Phase II are completed, and new in-park activities are achieved within the specified time period, it is the view of the transition phase that outside park activities be revamped and consolidated since the impact of the Phases I and II have been partly eroded by the closure of the Park since 1999. In particular it is recommended that:

- Park boundaries currently being demarcated by the PAMSU project is maintained and community sensitised on the importance of the boundaries to avert the current conflicts between communities and park management authority due to lack of clarity about exact park boundaries.
- Channels of communication and cooperation including joint operations with other similar parks and projects, both in Uganda and elsewhere in Africa, should be established.
- The financial viability of the Park should be improved.
- Research should be more strategic and relevant to management decision-making.
- The ecological monitoring plan should be re-evaluated in light of its apparent complexity.

1.1.2 Reducing human pressures

The reduction of human pressures on RMNP, chiefly through the improvement of natural resource-use by neighbouring communities and the promotion of alternatives to in-park resources, was a major objective of Phase II. Initiatives promoted (and proven effective in the five targeted parishes) in previous phases included tree nurseries, fuel-efficient stoves, soil conservation, and bee keeping. The experience of Phase II, however, showed that achieving any form of significant impact on natural resource management along the entire 160 km boundary of RMNP is a task well beyond the capacity of a single project intervention. The specific lessons learned that are important for Phase III include:

- The need for the project to be more **catalytic**. Project resources need to be used to promote actions and outcomes well beyond those the project can achieve working in isolation.

- The need to **focus** interventions in areas where pressures on RMNP and the demand for park resources are the most severe, or are likely to become so.
- The need to achieve **sustainability** of natural resource management interventions well beyond the life of the project.

With these needs in mind, the 1998 evaluation argued that a future phase should re-design this project component. It also recommended stronger links to protected area conservation, and more effective collaboration with district extension services.

1.1.3 Strengthening park-community relations

The evaluation report recommended focusing and changing the mechanisms used in the effort to promote conservation awareness in the community, underpinned by the development of a strategy for doing so. Specific recommendations for Phase III include:

- Building the capacity of Community Protected Area Institutions (CPAI) whose members are drawn from the secretaries of Local Production and Environment Committees (LPECs) at LC I to LC V as the primary forum for park-community communication. The UWA Policy on CPAI supports this.
- Implementation of pilot 'collaborative management' (resource-use) agreements.
- Planning the proposed visitor center so that it may be used as a key conservation and education awareness center.

Phase III will emphasize benefit sharing, and implement the policy on revenue sharing which constitutes one of the greatest demands from the communities and the respective districts around RMNP. Although the Park has been opened to tourism only two years ago the perception and expectations of the community and district authorities are high on revenue sharing even if it is unlikely that RMNP will have significant revenues to share with the community in the short run. Revenue sharing has proved to be the ultimate tool to improve park-community relations in Queen Elizabeth and Kibale National Parks both of which to a large extent share common districts with Rwenzori Mountain National Park. The Park and project should reinforce each other's commitments in addressing community attitudes by focussing on developing benefit-sharing mechanisms in the form of resource-use agreements, tourism and access to important cultural sites inside the Park.

1.1.4 Cross-cutting activity: gender/participation of men and women

In Phase II, the project recognized the importance of gender issues in natural resource management and made gender a cross-cutting activity in the project design. In doing so, the project explicitly recognized that men and women play different roles in natural resource management and have different needs in regards to the protected area and the project. The project undertook several actions to integrate gender concerns including recruiting a gender specialist, collecting gender-disaggregated data, and holding gender sensitivity training for staff. Although appreciative of these efforts, the Phase II evaluation felt that addressing gender issues could be improved, particularly in analysing the differential impact of the Park and project on the welfare of women and men and altering project activities accordingly.

The evaluation report (Ratter, 1998) contained several recommendations for improving project performance in relation to gender that are being adopted in this proposal. Key recommendations are:

- Strengthen project and Park staff's capacity for analysis of gender issues.
- Extend gender-balanced recruitment especially for local staff to senior program and administrative positions in the project.
- Develop a policy framework and strategy for mainstreaming gender in order to direct project operations. The framework should be planned and explicitly make clear the

objectives for incorporation of gender, implementation strategy, activities, institutional considerations, monitoring strategy, activity-result indicators, technical and financial resources, etc.

1.1.5 Cross-cutting project management issues

One major constraint on the Park's role in leading the implementation of some project components was the further emergence during Phase II of 'the project' as an implementing body or institution in its own right. This was partly due to the limited, and often stretched, capacity of the Park management. The evaluation recommended that a future phase of the project should be more tightly integrated with the Park and with major regional institutional stakeholders such as the three districts and significant NGOs. This would be a means to achieving greater sustainability and of magnifying impacts. To achieve integration, the project should base itself chiefly within these institutions. The counterpart relationship with the RMNP Warden-in-Charge (WIC) should also be re-examined in order to provide him/her with a much greater role in leading the project. The evaluation team advised that the success of a Phase III project would also depend on:

- Strengthening monitoring and evaluation of the project, to include the collection of reliable and meaningful baseline data in order to facilitate objective verification of project results.
- Downsizing and focusing the project Technical Advisory Committee to enable it to become an effective decision-making forum.
- Strengthening internal project reporting and assessment so that the project is more responsive to unmet priorities and potential changes that might increase effectiveness.

1.2 Rwenzori Mountain National Park – natural resource management and local communities

Like other montane forest areas in eastern Africa, Uganda's Rwenzori Mountains National Park has been under increasing pressure from a growing human population and an increasing demand for forest products. The human population around the Rwenzori range is doubling every 21 years (Kamau *et al.* 1994; Howard, 1991) and people's consumptive expectations are increasing. These communities live in a finite environment: with a limited supply of land and natural resources. Unsustainable levels of exploitation are leading to the depletion of natural resources vital to local economies and livelihoods, such as timber, fuel wood and non-wood resources. This has been exacerbated by insecurity and political instability, which loomed the area for approximately a decade. The aftermath is over dependence of the impoverished population on natural resources from within the National Park.

Increasing demand for land is leading to the clearance of mountain slopes, which can have a large impact on water regulatory mechanisms. Cleared land has less ability to retain water than forested areas. Landslides and soil erosion, both common occurrences on the cleared slopes of the Rwenzori, also affect water quality and pose a threat to downstream fisheries, hydropower stations, and domestic water supplies. Compounding these problems is the relative unsuitability of the land for agriculture: the soils are not volcanic and are consequently less fertile than other East African highlands. The land is also very hilly with many steep-sided ridges and slopes.

Lack of security of land tenure may be another contributory factor in fuelling land demand and slope clearance. Increasing pressure on land has led to communities to cultivate fields right to the boundaries of the Park leaving no buffer between the Park and the community. Consequently the crops are left to an intense vulnerability to vermin raids and problems animals attacks. Crop raids and destruction of properties by problem animals is one of the highest causes of conflicts between the communities and Park which accounts for over 90% of the negative attitudes from the community on the existence of the Park.

Local communities, especially people from the Bakonjo tribe, have been extracting natural resources from the forests since before records were kept. However, for a number of resources this extraction process is now operating at an unsustainable level and is leading to a loss of

biodiversity. Excessive hunting and trapping has meant that large mammals and ground-living birds that used to be abundant are now extremely rare (Yeoman, 1992). Trade in live wildlife and poaching monkeys and duikers for meat and sale is rampant in the entire Rwenzori Mountains National Park. The following globally threatened species found in the Park continue to remain in danger of extermination: elephant *Loxodonta africana* (V), chimpanzee *Pan troglodytes* (V), l'hoests monkey *Cercopithecus l'hoesti* (V).

Over years the Bakonjo had cultural sites in the Park, however, these sites remain inaccessible as Park regulations forbids. This has interfered with the cultural norms of the tribe and has over time generated cumulative negative feelings towards the Park. Related to this are the community access roads, which connect various frontline villages bordering the Park. Park regulations do not permit use of such paths/roads hence breaking communication among villages. In the same vain as aforementioned communities feel infuriated and perceive the regulations as a violation of their rights to communication. The proposed project will have to deal with these issues.

RMNP was closed to visitors in June 1997 due to the activities of Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) guerrillas. These rebels were hiding out in the remote forest and mountain environment of the Rwenzori. The activities of the rebels undermined the local rural and RMNP economies and caused considerable disruption and hardship in surrounding communities. The level of poverty escalated, as most of the villages and parishes around the Park were evacuated and resettled in the Park areas. Government soldiers in offensive deployed heavily in the mountains and settled in a number of make shift tented camps most of which sites remained insecure to park staff and the locals as arms and ammunitions including landmines were left in the army abandoned camps. The global response to the tragedy was the inscription of the Park on the List of World Heritage in Danger in 1999. Government forces defeated the rebel forces in 2001 and the Park was reopened to visitors in July 2001.

The challenges are that for over three years the Park has been without any proper management which could have eroded all the achievements of Phase II of the project. All together UWA staff operation was brought to stand still during the war. Despite these shortcomings some impacts of Phase I and II are still visible on ground. The resource user groups in Rubona and Kazingo parishes have maintained their 'Ridge groups' settings and were met during the consultation in the transition phase. The vegetation map of the Park and the Alternative Development Plan developed in the previous phases remains the key documents to guide the Park management. The two Nissan Patrol vehicles taken over by UWA HQ are both operational. The office, camping and mountaineering equipments provided to UWA, Local Governments and Rwenzori Mountaineering Services (RMS) are still being used and finally the land purchased with the grants given to the Grant Management Unit, now ECOTRUST, at Nakalenjijo is still there with no development done on it. Refer to appendix 7 for problem analysis, threats and opportunities.

1.3 Location and physiography

1.3.1 Location

The Rwenzori Mountains are located in western Uganda astride the border with the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). The mountains lie between 0° 06' – 0° 46'N latitude and 29° 47' – 30° 11'E longitude. From north to south the range stretches approximately 120 km, with an average 40 km width along this length. Approximately eighty percent of the range lies in Uganda where, since 1991, land over 2,100 meters in altitude has been managed as Rwenzori Mountains National Park (RMNP). On the DRC side of the border, the mountains form part of the Parc National des Virunga (PNV), which runs contiguous to RMNP for approximately 50 kilometers. The total mountain area is 4,800 km², of which almost 1,000 km² lies within the RMNP. The remainder lies either over the border in the DRC, or below the park boundary at 2,100 meters.

RMNP shares administrative boundaries with three Ugandan districts. To the north and west lies Bundibugyo District; Kabarole District lies to the north and east, while the majority of the Park shares a boundary with Kasese District to the south and east. For maps of various aspects of the Rwenzori Mountains National Park and its surrounding areas, please see Appendix 1.

1.3.2 Physical features

Rising to an altitude of over 5,000 meters, the mountains are higher than the European Alps, and include the third, fourth, and fifth highest peaks on the African continent. Indeed, despite close proximity to the equator, six of the Rwenzori peaks carry a permanent mantle of snow and ice. Climatic conditions in the Rwenzori are closely related to elevation. Even at lower levels, precipitation falls on most days of the year, even during the drier seasons. Annual precipitation is thought to be approximately 2,500 mm per year over the majority of the range. Temperatures are moderate for an equatorial area, though diurnal variations can be large (from below freezing to +30°C).

The geology of the mountains comprises mostly Precambrian granites, with a small amount of volcanic derived deposits. The soils are generally of low fertility. The hard igneous rocks provide the basis for the dramatically steep profiles of Mounts Stanley and Baker and the Portal Peaks. Mild earth tremors are common and provide evidence that the rift tectonics that formed these peaks is still in action. An earthquake measuring 6.2 on the Richter scale struck the area on 6 February 1994.

Vegetation in the mountains can largely be described in terms of six distinct zones, determined for a large part by aspect and elevation as shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1 Vegetation types in relation to elevation in the Rwenzori Mountains.

Elevation	Vegetation Type
>1,700 meters	Grassland (distinct from forest due to differences in soil composition and human intervention)
1,700 – 2,400 meters	Montane forest
2,400 – 3,000 meters	Bamboo
3,000 – 3,800 meters	Tree heath
3,800 – 4,400 meters	Afro-alpine moorland
< 4,400 meters	Snow-line and above

1.4 Environmental issues

1.4.1 Biodiversity values

1.4.1.1 Flora

The Rwenzori Mountains are well known for their unusual flora which includes many species endemic to the Albertine Rift in the higher altitude zones. Of the 278 woody plant taxa found in the afro-alpine zone, 81% are endemic to East Africa and 19% are found only in the afro-alpine belt (Herberg, 1961; Lush, 1993). Most stunning are the giant heathers, ground-sells, ericas and lobelias of the tree heath and alpine zones (Butynski, 1992).

Vegetation depends largely on altitude, with five zones being distinguishable. Below 2,400 m, the vegetation is broken montane forest consisting of species such as *Symphonia globulifera*, *Prunus africana*, *Albizia* spp. and *Dombeya* spp. Few large trees occur and the canopy is consequently broken except in valley-bottoms and ridge tops where the gradient is slight. The montane forest zone merges into a bamboo forest zone (*Arundinaria alpina*), which occurs in pure stands in many places up to an altitude of 3,000 m. Up to 3,800 m, the bamboo zone is replaced on poorer soils by a tree heath vegetation consisting of dense thickets of giant heathers, *Philippia trimera* and *Protea kingaensis*, frequently over 10 m in height. On better soils the vegetation is characterised by a tangled undergrowth punctuated by a mixture of small trees including *Rapanea rhododendroides*, *Hypericum lanceolatum*, *H. keniense* and *Hagenia abyssinica*. Upwards to 4,400 m, is a zone of Afro-alpine moorland (Howard, 1991). As a result of most botanical effort having been directed to the high altitude flora, only 75 tree species (18% of the country's total) have so far been recorded in the montane forest zone; many more are expected

from this zone. Two trees are found only in the Rwenzori (*Hypericum bequaertii* and *Schefflera polysciadia*), and seven others occur only here and in the other montane forest zones of south-west Uganda, namely *Senecio erici-rosenii*, *S. adnivalis*, *Erica kingaensis*, *Philippia johnstonii*, *Vernonia adolfi-friderici*, *Ficalhoa laurifolia* and the nationally threatened *Ocotea usambarensis* (V) (Howard, 1991).

1.4.1.2 Fauna

Knowledge of the fauna is skewed in favour of the higher altitude species. There are 106 species of mammals known to the Rwenzori Mountains, of which three are not found anywhere else in the world and a further 15 are endemic to the Albertine Rift. The forest is important for several primates including the threatened Chimpanzee *Pan troglodytes schweinfurthi*. The mountains contain at least 216 species of birds of which 17 are endemic to the Albertine rift, (Plumptre 2003). There are 213 species of butterflies known to occur in the National Park, of which seven are endemic to the Albertine Rift. The Rwenzori Mountains NP is home to many species of endangered species: 10 mammals (of which the African Forest Elephant *Loxodonta Africana cyclotis* (V), the Eastern Chimpanzee *Pan troglodytes* (V) and L'hoests monkey *Cercopithecus lhoesti* (V)), 5 birds and several reptiles and amphibians. Although none of these species are unique to the Rwenzori, many are endemic to the Albertine Rift region (for instance 17 of the birds are Albertine Rift endemics), and a high level of sub-specific endemism occurs, including the Rwenzori colobus monkey, hyrax and leopard. A recent study of invertebrate life forms listed 60 species in the alpine zone, 25 of which were new to science (Salt, 1987). This is indicative of a much more extensive fauna waiting to be discovered.

1.4.2 Conservation in the Rwenzori Ecosystem areas

The Rwenzori range constitutes one of the most valuable areas of natural heritage in Africa. On local, national, and international levels the mountains are valued for their outstanding scientific importance, great scenic beauty, and immeasurable ecological and economic importance. Consequently, the mountains have been designated as a World Heritage Site (1994) and subsequent insecurity and civil war enabled its inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger (1999).

The Rwenzori Mountains have been under some form of modern conservation designation since colonial times. The higher elevations were designated a forest reserve in 1941. It was not until 1991 that the area above 2,100 meters was gazetted as a national park, despite the fact that the idea was proposed as early as 1945. By the time the Rwenzori Mountains National Park was gazetted, the constraints facing the mountains were apparent and the World Wildlife Fund had already begun implementing the Rwenzori Mountains Conservation and Development Project to address these issues.

The Rwenzori Mountains are part of a wider conservation system in Central Africa that includes Semliki and Kibale National Parks, Queen Elizabeth National Park, Bwindi Impenetrable Forest National Park (all in Uganda), Parc National des Virunga in the Democratic Republic of Congo, and Parc des Volcans in Rwanda. The entire system, termed the “Albertine Rift Montane Forest Ecoregion” by WWF, is of immense conservation significance. Many of the protected areas within the ecoregion are the focus of nationally and internationally supported conservation efforts. A variety of initiatives aimed at conserving the region’s unique biodiversity and habitats are being implemented by WWF, World Conservation Union (IUCN), African Wildlife Foundation (AWF), Flora and Fauna International (FFI), Cooperative for Assistance and Relief Everywhere (CARE), UNESCO mainly backing logistic support and others. The proposed RMCMP is a vital part of these wider efforts. Of particular note is the Kibale and Semliki Conservation and Development Project (KSCDP) supported by IUCN, RMCMP’s nearest project neighbour, which shares many of the same objectives. This project ended in 2002 but left a valuable impact on the management of the two protected areas, Unlike most projects whose sustainability are questionable the IUCN project was very well integrated in both UWA and local governments programmes and plans leading to all its activities taken over by UWA and local governments.

1.4.3 Hydrology

One of the Rwenzori Mountains' most important ecological and economic functions is the impact the range has on the area's and region's hydrological cycle. Thought by the ancient Greeks to be the source of the Nile River, the range's permanent mountain streams are indeed vital to the Nile River by way of the surrounding Albertine lakes (Lakes Albert, George and Edward). Adjacent agricultural land is fed partly by mountain run-off and partly from direct rainfall regulated by the Rwenzori's forest clad slopes. The mountains' water catchment properties also benefit valuable fisheries on Lakes George and Edward, hydro power and irrigation schemes, and the domestic water supply of approximately 1,000,000 surrounding people in Uganda.

1.5 Socio-economic issues

The Bakonjo people, who live around the Park, value the mountains and the resources they provide. The forests are a source of building materials, fuel wood, medicines, honey, animal products, and other resources. As such they represent a valuable economic asset to local people however the values of these resources have never been quantified in the economic sense to give an indication of the natural resource base values of the Rwenzori.

Until 1997, RMNP attracted a steady stream of national and international visitors. However, that year saw an escalation of security problems in the mountains leading to closure of the Park. Nevertheless, park-based tourism has an economic and financial value to the local and national economy. The Park was reopened to visitors in 2001 and since an estimated visitor numbers exceeds 500. In addition, should the tourism infrastructure be upgraded, the potential for more major revenue earning by the Park, local people, and in the broader economy is undoubted.

One of the prime reasons for the attraction of RMNP as a tourist destination is the high scenic value attached to the mountains. The forest clad slopes, afro-alpine moorland, and sharp snow covered peaks make up a rich and unique scenic landscape.

The highland climate with relatively much rainfall and lower temperatures together with the fertile volcanic soils in some areas of the Rwenzori provides suitable environ for agricultural investments. Traditionally over 80% of the population depend on agriculture for their livelihood. The main commercial crops are Tea, Coffee, Vanilla, Banana, cotton, and the non-traditional crops which has become commercial include fresh fruits, vegetables, maize and millet. Dairy farming, zero grazing and goat rearing have mushroomed in the region through the Government initiative to reduce poverty at grassroots levels. Fisheries are an important economic activity for the populations living around lakes George and Edward. The Rwenzori Mountain is the sole catchment area for these lakes.

1.6 Cultural issues

The Bakonjo people say that since time immemorial they have regarded the Rwenzori as a repository of many blessings to their socio-economic well-being. As such, the mountains constituted a form of reserve even before the colonial period (Yeoman *et al.*, 1990).

The cultural significance of the mountains is demonstrated by traditional rituals performed within RMNP, including the construction of hunters' shrines for animal sacrifices, ceremonies involving the exorcism of evil spirits, and human burials. There is a belief that if a person dies in the mountains his body is not to be brought home but must be buried where he died. These sites are known by the cultural leaders but the Park authorities have very little knowledge about them. Access to these sites has been a controversial issue between park authorities and local communities in some places.

1.7 Institutional and legal issues

1.7.1 District/local government environmental planning and management

Since 1986, the Ugandan Government has been implementing a sustained and far-reaching reform of the system of governance in the country. One of the more notable achievements of this reform has been the formulation and implementation of an ambitious decentralization policy which has as its key goal the creation of a democratic, participatory, and development-oriented local government system (Kisakye, 1996; Lubanga, 1996).

As part of the decentralization reform, the former centralized, regulatory approach to natural resource management and planning underwent critical review and revision through the consultative process of the National Environmental Action Plan (NEAP). As a result of the NEAP, the Government adopted a well-reasoned national environmental management policy (NEAP, 1994) and enacted comprehensive environmental legislation, the National Environment Statute (NES), 1995, that radically reworked the Government's approach to the management of natural resources. Instead of a centralized, top-down system, NES provides for the decentralization of natural resource management and planning to sub-national institutions, most significantly for this proposal, to the district and sub-county level. This statute also moves away from strict regulation and establishes the right of local communities and resource-users to participate in the management of natural resources through local consultative bodies such as Joint Forestry Management Committees and Local Production and Environment Committees (see section 4.1.2 below). The Statute is also being implemented through various regulations such as the Regulations on the Management of Hilly and Mountainous Areas (2000) and Regulations on Wetlands, River Banks and Lake Shores (2000).

The NES also created new institutions for environmental management at the district and local levels. Districts are required to formulate District Environmental Action Plans (DEAPs) that follow the framework of the national environmental management policy. A new position, the District Environment Officer (DEO), has been created and charged with providing environmental planning advice and expertise to planning efforts at the district and sub-county level and ensuring community participation in all stages of environmental planning and implementation. Additionally, a committee comprised of district heads of line ministries called the District Technical Planning Committee has been instituted at the district level and charged with the task of integrating environmental planning with local development planning.

On a national level, the DEAP process, however, is still in its infancy. The National Environment Management Authority (NEMA) has established a support unit for the districts and is providing significant support to seven pilot districts, one of which is Kasese District. Kasese District now has developed the DEAP but still in draft form while Kabarole district was supported by IUCN and completed the DEAP. Bundibugyo does not have DEAP. The activities of the RMCEMP will provide a valuable opportunity for the further development and field testing of the DEAP process, and will lend additional support to the decentralization process in Uganda.

1.7.2 Local Production and Environment committees

The local government sectoral committee, the Local Production and Environment Committee (LPEC), has been recognized by several key stakeholders (UWA, NEMA, District governments) as the primary institution for addressing environmental concerns at the local level in Uganda. This committee has its legislative basis in the National Environment Statute, 1995, and the Local Government Act (LGA), 1997. The NES requires the establishment of local level environment committees (LCI to LCIV) to address environmental concerns, as well as the formation of a district environment committee to co-ordinate the activities of the local level committees (NES, Part III, 15-17). The legislation details a variety of roles for LPECs including preparing local environment action plans, mobilizing community members to improve their environment, and monitoring environmental impacts of various activities in their area of jurisdiction. The LGA, in contrast, does not officially mandate the formation of these committees. The LGA is a broadly enabling document and allows for the formation of standing committees deemed necessary to perform its functions (LGA, Part III).

From this legislative basis, all levels of local government in Uganda have established LPECs and assigned to them the responsibility of overseeing issues of environmental protection and agricultural production/local economic development. These committees are still at a nascent stage of their existence having just been voted into office in the last election period, and it is not apparent how clearly they understand their responsibilities or how effective a body they will be. The committee structure, however, does appear to have great potential for mobilizing local involvement/representation in environmental protection and planning. In terms of project-specific concerns, it is anticipated that this committee will play a lead role in Phase III activities, in particular in the DEAP process and as a new forum for park-community communication. To reinforce this institution is the UWA Community Protected Area Institution Policy (CPAIP), which provides for the Community Protected Area Institutions at LCI to LCV levels who are drawn from the Secretaries for Production and Environment at those various levels to oversee wildlife park related issues in their jurisdictions.

1.7.3 Ugandan wildlife policy and legislation

In 1995, the Ugandan Government finalized a new policy that restructured the Government's approach to the protection and management of wildlife. As with other pieces of environmental policy, the Ugandan Wildlife Policy, 1995, was the result of wide consultation with members of the public, leadership, and the international community. Among other achievements, the policy rationalized and streamlined the institutional setting for wildlife. A sole parastatal body, the Uganda Wildlife Authority, was formed through the merger of the former Game Department and Uganda National Parks both formally under the Ministry Tourism Wildlife and antiquities. This body is responsible for the administration of the entire system of protected areas in Uganda, as well as being the lead agency for wildlife issues outside the PA boundaries.

The Uganda Wildlife Policy provided the basis for the primary legislation relating to the protection and management of wildlife, the Uganda Wildlife Statute, 1996. This act reworked and superseded three pieces of previous legislation, namely the National Parks Act (Cap. 227), the Game Preservation and Control Act (Cap. 228), and the Forest Act (Cap. 246). As written now, the Wildlife Statute affords greater protection for certain species, such as crocodiles, than was possible under the previous fragmented legislation (NEMA, 1996b). The Uganda Wildlife Statute also provides for greater protection of wildlife outside of protected areas.

One aspect of the Wildlife Statute is the legal provision for greater participation in environmental management by local communities. Communities or individuals can apply to have wildlife use rights that will allow them to manage the wildlife on their land and derive benefits from the wildlife, so long as the use is sustainable and within the allowable uses of the permit (Uganda Wildlife Statute, 1996). In national parks and wildlife reserves, the statute also allows for the development of resource-use agreements that provide regulated access to protected area resources. Finally, the statute is also one of the pieces of enabling legislation for the LPEC structure (see section 1.7.2 above).

The policy and legislative framework for environmental protection in Uganda, thus, is positive and enabling. A set of well-thought-out policies has been developed (NEAP, Uganda Wildlife Policy) and an innovative and ambitious decentralization program is underway. Taken together, Uganda provides a favourable setting for the next project phase with its focus on capacity building for natural resource management and environmental protection in the RMNP and at the local level.

1.7.4 International environmental policy

The major element of international conservation policy of relevance to the Rwenzori Mountains is the World Heritage Convention. The Rwenzori Mountains on the Uganda side were designated as a World Heritage Site in 1994 and across the international border, the portion of the range lying in the Democratic Republic of Congo has been similarly designated.

The World Heritage status of RMNP opens up the possibility of accessing United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) technical assistance, for example in the development of the general management plan (GMP), as well as financial assistance. More importantly, World Heritage status can potentially be used as leverage in the promotion of RMNP as a tourist attraction and in raising funds and increasing investment for the implementation of GMP action priorities and other projects.

1.8 Stakeholders

As in previous phases, the successful implementation of Phase III project activities will depend on the willing cooperation and involvement of all key stakeholders. Below, in Table 2, Preliminary Stakeholder Analysis, includes principal areas of interest and the project result(s) (see Section 4.0) of most relevance. An early responsibility of the project team in Phase III will be to fine-tune the analysis, based on earlier work in Phases I and II and experiences in the Transition Phase.

Table 2 Rwenzori Mountains National Park stakeholders, their principal interests and areas of involvement.

Stakeholders	Principal Interest(s)	Principally Involved in Project Result(s)
Rwenzori Mountains National Park (RMNP)	RMNP conservation management	1. Management of RMNP strengthened. 2. Financial viability of RMNP enhanced. 3. Mechanisms for assuring sustainable use of in-park resources in operation. 4. Effective mechanisms for park-community communication and cooperation established. 8. Regional process and tools for the conservation of the Rwenzori Mountains initiated and developed.
Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA)	Protected area policy and management	Same as above.
Ministry of Trade Tourism and Industries (MTTI)	Tourism and wildlife policy	Same as above.
National Environment Management Authority (NEMA)	Environmental protection and management	5. Local government capacity for conservation-focused environmental action planning strengthened. 6. Existing and developing pressure points on RMNP mitigated. 7. Forest Landscape Restoration initiated to offer opportunities for sustainable development outside RMNP
Parc National des Virunga (PNV)	PNV conservation	1. Management of RMNP strengthened. 8. Regional process and tools for the conservation of the Rwenzori Mountains initiated and developed.
Queen Elizabeth National Park (QENP), Kibale National Park (KNP), Semilki National Park (SNP), etc.	QENP, KNP, SNP management	2. Financial viability of RMNP enhanced. 8. Regional process and tools for the conservation of the Rwenzori Mountains initiated and developed.
Rwenzori Mountaineering Services (RMS) [& other similar organizations]	Tourism	Same as above.

Stakeholders	Principal Interest(s)	Principally Involved in Project Result(s)
Resident communities	Agriculture/ livelihoods	3. Mechanisms for assuring sustainable use of in-park resources in operation. 4. Effective mechanisms for park-community communication and cooperation established. 5. Local government capacity for conservation-focused environmental action planning strengthened. 6. Existing and developing pressure points on RMNP mitigated. 7. Forest Landscape Restoration initiated to offer opportunities for sustainable development outside RMNP
CBOs & NGOs, e.g.: Bailhweko, Rubona Community Farmer's Group	Local development (varied), e.g: Agricultural development and Tourism	5. Local government capacity for conservation-focused environmental action planning strengthened. 6. Existing and developing pressure points on RMNP mitigated. 7. Forest Landscape Restoration initiated to offer opportunities for sustainable development outside RMNP
County, sub-county, parish & village councils	Local development (incl. conservation and sustainable use)	4. Effective mechanisms for park-community communication and cooperation established. 5. Local government capacity for conservation-focused environmental action planning strengthened. 7. Forest Landscape Restoration initiated to offer opportunities for sustainable development outside RMNP
District councils (Kasese, Kabarole & Bundibugyo)	Local development (incl. conservation and sustainable use)	2. Financial viability of RMNP enhanced. 5. Local government capacity for conservation-focused environmental action planning strengthened. 6. Existing and developing pressure points on RMNP mitigated. 7. Forest Landscape Restoration initiated to offer opportunities for sustainable development outside RMNP
WWF [International] & NORAD	International conservation and development	All, but especially 8. Regional process and tools for the conservation of the Rwenzori Mountains initiated and developed. 9. Effective project management systems established.
USAID (including ECOTRUST)	International Development (incl. conservation)	Same as above.
Private Sector Organisations, Kilembe mines, KCCL and Hima Cement	Local development (varied), Tourism, use of the water resources from the Park	3. Mechanisms for assuring sustainable use of in-park resources in operation. 7. Forest Landscape Restoration
Other donors	International Development (incl. Conservation)	All

Stakeholders	Principal Interest(s)	Principally Involved in Project Result(s)
SNV Netherlands development organization	Capacity building of the local governments structures	3. Mechanisms for assuring sustainable use of in-park resources in operation. 5. Local government capacity for conservation-focused environmental action planning strengthened.

1.8 Threats

The Rwenzori Mountains National Park face various forms of threats and pressure resulting from increased population and demand on forest resources; management and policy issues. The major threats and pressure to the RMNP include;

1.8.1 *Unclear boundaries of the Park*

The Forest Department demarcated the boundaries of the RMNP in 1941. The paradigm at the time was that land belonged to Government and therefore limited dialogue and agreements were made with the cultural leaders and chiefs. No consultations were made with the communities. The surveys as claimed by the communities were not accurately done as a result of difficult terrain and thick vegetation in the Rwenzories. In the subsequent years many alterations of the boundary lines were done as result of the ambiguity in the routine work of the Forest Department officials but more importantly as a result of corrupt officials in the Forest Department. Language was clearly a barrier between the local community and the workers who were not from within the local communities neighbouring the Park during the demarcation. These trends of events have made the communities and the district authorities not contented with the present boundaries of the RMNP. The boundaries are contested at various points leading to conflicts between the park authorities and the communities. In some beats of the boundaries there are no clear demarcation (Yeoman 1992).

1.8.2 *Poaching for bush meat*

The Bakonjo tribe who are the majority around Rwenzori National Park are traditional hunters. Hunting is considered as a sport and attracts cultural pride and prestige. Bush meat also supplement animal protein to the population bordering the Park. In a number of cases bush meat trade has increased making it a lucrative business and as well a source of income for the Bakonjo people. Excessive hunting and trapping has meant that large mammals and ground-living birds that used to be abundant are now extremely rare (Yeoman, 1992).

The illegal hunting is caused by inadequate and low education levels of the community on the values of wildlife conservation. Lack of alternative employment is attributed to the hunting culture.

1.8.3 *Problem animals and vermin that raid crops and destroy property*

The land pressure in the Rwenzori caused by population increase has lead to the communities to cultivate gardens right to the boundaries of the Park leaving no buffer. Overtime crops have become palatable and attract wild animals. Consequently the communities in the front line parishes spend much of the time guarding crops and scaring away the animals. Children at school going age are diverted to become permanent crop guards during the day time while the parents in turn guard the crops in the night. There is persistent food insecurity in the parishes bordering the Park as a result of crop raids and destruction by wildlife. This trend of events has caused an outrage from the community against wildlife escalating wildlife/people conflicts. The community are not happy by the inadequate man power of park rangers to scare and control the animals. They also feel hurt by the fact that wildlife roams about freely without any form of control. Connected to wildlife problems is the diseases transmitted from the wildlife to domestic animals. The negative attitude from the community towards wildlife is enormous and posses a big danger to the conservation of the Park.

1.8.4 Poor land management practices outside park area and deliberate bush burning in the Park

The Rwenzori Mountains comprise mostly Precambrian granites, with a small amount of volcanic derived deposits. The soils therefore are generally of low fertility making the region vulnerable to low agricultural productivity when the farming methods are not observed. The Agricultural extension work collapsed years back in the greater part of the Rwenzori ecosystem leading to high level of ignorance in the farming community on proper methods of farming. The poor farming methods include cultivation on steep hill slopes and the slash and burn practices. This coupled by high precipitation in the region lead to excessive soil erosion, landslides and flooding in the bigger part of the Rwenzori ecosystem.

Deliberate bush burning is a common practice among the Bankonjo people. Fires are used often for clearing land for cultivation, hunting and search for honey. Fires are also used to clear bushes, which appear potential hideouts for rebels. Fires caused by illegal charcoal burning are common phenomenon in the Park. The big area of the Rwenzori has been subjected to cultivation and the soils have been exhausted, the community therefore look at the park-land as virgin and suitable for agricultural production. This human pressure for land in the Park caused by degraded land outside the Park is severe in the whole of the Rwenzori area.

1.8.5 Lack of land

As mentioned before in 1.8.4 poor land use practices leading to soil degradation and low crop production coupled by increasing population that has doubled in the last decade is a big potential threat to the existence of the Park. Politicians and communities have sentiments on the area of land under park management. The argument is that wildlife seems to be considered by Government to be more important than people who are confined in small and unproductive landholdings. The communities in Kasese District have bitter complaints on the existence of the protected area systems in the districts and other gazetted government areas such as the prisons farms and the Mubuku irrigation schemes, which tend to take off big chunks of district lands. A number of voices have been raised to degazette these areas and give out to the community which concerns when heeded to possess a potential threat and danger to the protected areas in the district.

1.8.6 Encroachment

Agricultural encroachment has been a problem in the Kasese and Kabarole sides of the Rwenzori Mountains National Park. Encroachment was caused by increase in population, leading to reduced family land holdings and loss of productivity of such holding due to continuous use. Degraded land in the neighbourhood of the Park could no longer support the production of food for the population. In a bid to sustain their families' communities move around in search for fertile land in the Park. Un-clear park boundaries increase the vulnerability of the Park to encroachment. High value horticultural crops are cultivated in the parkland that creates incentives and attraction for more community members to encroach the Park. The weak law enforcement capacity of UWA allow for the encroachment to continue undetected for months. If encroachment on the Park continues unabated the viability, functions and importance of Rwenzori Mountains Ecosystems will be at stake.

1.8.7 Inadequate capacity of Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA) to deploy staff as appropriate

Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA) has very little presence in the surrounds of the Rwenzori National Park. Overall there are four wardens and 12 rangers distributed in three Ranger posts. The Ranger posts lack the necessary infrastructure and are characterized by dilapidated almost near collapse mud and wattle structures. Living in those conditions adversely affect the morale of the park workers.

The Park has one double cabin 4W vehicle, which is hardly enough to provide the necessary transport needed for effective deployment of staff. Staffs mainly have to walk long distances in order to reach the sites of call and in most cases they arrive too late to solve the problems. This de-motivates the communities who perceive UWA as reluctant to address community-wildlife problems. The UWA park operations suffers a chronic problem of lack of coordination with the local communities and other stakeholders. This does not only impact negatively on UWA's image but also set precedence that park operations are exclusive to UWA. The combinations of these points leads to an ineffective management and control of illegal activities in the Park which constitute the major threats to the biodiversity values of the Park.

1.8.8 Lack of community awareness and information flow between park authorities and communities

The local councils who are the brass of the communities do not seem to be aware of their role in wildlife conservation and management. It is quite evident that in all the districts visited the lower council are not aware of the park legislations, policies and regulations. In particular following the recently concluded elections, the new cadre of local leaders have little (if any) awareness of conservation concepts. However it must be appreciated that the local communities that were consulted showed a good degree of understanding of the values of biodiversity and the importance of the Rwenzori ecosystem to their livelihoods. Sometimes the belief that resources belong to the state and to no one in particular may be exacerbating the problem. Investment in extension services by the district is almost non-existing with the exception of a few NGOs, CBOs and donor projects. Institutional coordination, which is a mechanism for information sharing, seems to be lacking in the Rwenzori for example the Chief Warden is never invited for the district councils meetings.

As a result there are inadequate channels for taking information to the local people and creating awareness about biodiversity conservation. The communities grossly resent the paramilitary approach used by the law enforcement rangers and wardens on people who contravene park laws. It is necessary to inform the public about their activities that may impact negatively on biodiversity and therefore solicit their support and participation in its conservation and management.

1.8.9 Lack of direct benefits from the park resources to the communities

From various consultations and field visits, it became apparent that there are currently extraordinary demands for biodiversity resources in the Rwenzori Mountains National Park by adjacent communities. The amount of resources required for human survival and socio-economic development is influenced by changes in patterns of demand. In a spat of a decade changes in demands could have been attributed to the maintained high economic growth rate of 7% per annum in Uganda, which could have caused the increased levels of demands for the resources from the protected areas. Rwenzori National Park having been in a state of adverse insecurity for three years and with no proper management could be a victim of uncontrolled over exploitation of resources. Limited funding to the wildlife sector, poor enforcement of laws, excessive demands of resources for survival by adjacent communities although not quantified and few or no clear incentives for sustainable management are likely to contribute to over-exploitation of biodiversity in the RMNP.

In most areas of the Park visited, there were cases of illegal timber cutting, charcoal burning; firewood collection, bamboo cutting, collection of wooden sticks and hunting that are exerting pressure on the biodiversity resources. Many people, including the local authorities and local people are involved in illegal exploitation of the resources.

Whereas the communities voiced their concerns over lack of direct benefit from the park resources it is imperative that mechanism for wise use of these resources are put in place. The current illegal access to the resources is not sustainable and could only increase the levels of dishonesty between the park authorities and the communities. Communities need to know their

rights roles and responsibilities in park resources management. They also need to be educated on the legislations policies and regulations that govern access to park resources.

1.8.10 Lack of community involvement in tourism

Community participation has been a talk as means for the involvement and empowerment of the community to take part in the planning and decision-making process of the management of park resources countrywide. However this has been easier said than done. Sub-county consultations meetings conducted during the revision of phase III proposal show lack of tenure for the needed tourism resources and by far the local people have continued to be alienated from these resources.

The Rwenzori Mountaineering Services (RMS), which championed community empowerment and participation on tourism, have turned to benefit a few individuals from the single sub-county where the idea originated. This is aggravated by the questionable tourism concession agreement RMS signed with UWA in 1993, which gives RMS a monopoly of tourism activities in the central and southern Rwenzori for 30 years! This practice precludes sustainable use that benefit a wider group of people and communities and shows there is no real collaborative activity or clear incentives for sustainable management on the ground. This is a threat, which is aggravated by lack of awareness; inadequacy of community education and lack of alternative livelihoods for the people.

1.9 Political issues

1.9.1 Local and national political issues

Lack of political support at community, district and occasionally at national levels on park operations was identified as a threat to the Rwenzori Mountains National Park during the consultation meetings. Political leaders in most cases are not always involved in park related operations. There are no proactive and deliberate efforts from either sides of the park authorities and politicians to broker this stalemate situations. Most political leaders view park operation as technical in nature and focused on the protection of animals and collection of revenue from tourism. The links to park management to their roles and those of the communities are completely floored.

With this philosophy most politicians have developed negative attitudes towards the Park. They argue that, protected areas take much of the land which could have otherwise been allocated to more valuable economic productive use. They also claim that the costs of the existence of the Park are far higher to the communities than the benefits. Some of these costs include crop raids, which result in impoverished community with no food security, disease transmission, loss of land to mention but a few.

Aware of these disgruntle and negative perception to conservation from the political arena, UWA on the contrary is not keen to lead a proactive approach to encourage and motivate politicians in park matters. The roles and responsibilities of political leaders in park management as defined in the National Environment Statute, 1995, and the Local Government Act, 1996, remain largely vague and difficult to translate into reality. Politicians ideally identify themselves with the people they represent and who voted them to power. They are therefore defensive and stand to protect the people's interest whether right or wrong, ultimately this political approach premeditates the park managers feeling towards politicians as being controversial and counter productive to park activities. The apparent lack of transparency and openness between the two groups are compounded by the fact that the laws governing the Park are not easily accessible to the local leaders or politicians.

1.9.2 Insecurity caused by rebel activities

Political instabilities and armed conflicts have over years rocked the Rwenzori region. The most recent rebellion reached unbearable levels in 1999 when the Park was closed. Four years of

occupation of the Park by rebel forces and Government soldiers meant a lot to the environment. There are now areas in the Park, which are sealed off from human trespass because of the presence of littered explosives and landmines left behind by the fighting forces. During the rebellion many community groups were displaced from their villages and resettled in restricted safe areas. Land became too scarce and most of these internally displaced refugees encroached in some areas of the Park.

1.9.3 *Transboundary issues*

The Rwenzori Mountains ecosystem straddles the border between Uganda and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The previous phases of the WWF projects focused activities almost exclusively on the Uganda side of the ecosystem, with very little interaction with the Parc National des Virunga Northern Sector (PNV-N), the adjoining protected area on the other side of the border. The consultation process in this design phase confirmed Phase III planning recommendations to ensure the long-term integrity of the Rwenzori Mountains ecosystem. This largely shall hinge on the promotion of effective conservation action on *both* sides of the international border, as well as on collaboration between managers of the two protected areas involved. Some of the key issues are:

- Secure wildlife migratory routes on both sides.
- Local populations living on both sides of the Rwenzori Mountains have the same ethnic roots, culture, and language and exert similar pressures on the mountain ecosystem for their livelihood.
- There is a need/opportunity for shared tourism management.
- Coordination structure established with a view to develop formal agreements between Governments

Until now, there has been very little cooperation between the UWA and its Congolese counterpart, Institut Congolaise pour la Conservation de la Nature (ICCN), concerning the management of the Rwenzori Mountains. This strained relationship is the result of civil unrest, poor communications between the two capitals as well as on a local level, the language barrier, differences of national legislation and policies, etc.

2 JUSTIFICATION

Like other montane forest areas in eastern Africa, Rwenzori Mountains National Park (RMNP) has been under increasing pressure from a growing human population and corresponding increasing demand for forest products. Unsustainable levels of exploitation and use of timber, fuel wood and non-wood resources are leading to the depletion of natural resources. For a number of resources this extraction process is now operating at an unsustainable level and is leading to a loss of biodiversity. Excessive hunting and trapping has meant that large mammals and ground-living birds that used to be abundant are now extremely rare (Yeoman, 1992). Trade in live wildlife and commercial poaching of monkeys and duikers is rampant in the entire Rwenzori Mountains National Park.

The unique biodiversity values and water catchments function of the Rwenzori ecosystem are at stake with the increasing demand for land. The mountain slopes are cleared for cultivation increasing the occurrences of landslides and soil erosion, which has affected the water quality and quantity (availability through the year), and pose a threat to downstream fisheries, hydropower stations, and domestic water supplies. Some of the once big rivers have been reduced to streams and the smaller ones have become seasonal, probably due to changes in catchment characteristics.

The glaciers on the peaks of the Rwenzories have progressively receded in the last decade to less than 52 km². Human pressures on the Rwenzori ecosystems have all in one way or the other

affected the spectacular lakes, wetlands and bogs in the mountains. The threats to the catchment values of the Rwenzori if not accorded priority and addressed will have significant negative impact on the economically important lakes Edward, George, Albert and the Nile River Basin. These freshwater bodies contribute enormously to the livelihood of over 5 million people in the DRC, Uganda, Sudan and Egypt.

Crop raids and destruction of community property by animals from the Park accounts for 90% of the conflicts between the communities and the Park. Communities bordering the Park have developed high negative attitudes to the existence of the Park. The RMNP is considered a liability, burden and the cause of high levels of poverty and under development in the communities. The awareness and education levels for the communities are low in some sections of the communities.

Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA) does not have appropriate capacity to effectively manage the Rwenzori Mountain National Park. The organization is understaffed and lacks the necessary infrastructure for efficient and proper management of the Park. The UWA park operations suffers a chronic problem of lack of coordination with the local communities and other stakeholders, the transboundary issues are not given the necessary attentions. The combinations of these points lead to an ineffective management and control of illegal activities in the Park as well as a poor relationship between park management and local communities, which constitute the major threats to the biodiversity values of the Park.

The challenges are that since the closure of RMNP in 1999 nearly all the great achievements of Phase II of the project have been eroded, which requires that phase III should start on a strong foundation to address the lost achievements from phase II and tackle the new challenges. The project aims to address these challenges through nine results namely; 1) strengthen UWA capacity to manage RMNP; 2) enhance the financial viability of the Park; 3) assure and devise mechanisms for sustainable use of in-park resources; 4) implore effective mechanisms for park-community communication and cooperation; 5) strengthen local government capacity for conservation-focused environmental action planning and governance; 6) mitigate existing and developing pressure points on RMNP; 7) initiate forest landscape restoration to offer opportunities for sustainable development outside RMNP; 8) initiate and develop regional process and tools for the conservation of the Rwenzori Mountains and 9) foster effective project management systems.

2.1 Natural resources and the poor

The poor, particularly those living in the rural areas, often rely on a variety of natural resources and ecosystems services as a direct source of livelihood. The poor in the Rwenzories live in the steep mountain slopes areas inherent to high ecological vulnerability and relatively low levels of biological or resource productivity. Limited access to land and other natural resources is another key aspect of rural poverty. In the Rwenzori region more than fifty percent of the population have landholdings too small to provide an adequate income. Thus both environmental conditions and access to a variety of natural resources are crucial to the ability of the poor people to sustain their livelihood.

Park resources are primary sources of livelihood and do supplement poor households daily needs and income. Many poor households often derive a significant share of their incomes from natural resources. Therefore natural resource degradation and biodiversity loss are undermining the livelihoods and future livelihood opportunities of large numbers of the poor. This is most evident with respect to agricultural systems. Soil and water degradation are major threats to the improvement of agricultural productivity, which underpins the livelihood of the vast majority of the rural poor. Poor people are affected by natural resource degradation and biodiversity loss much more than better off because of their limited assets and their greater dependence on common property resources for their livelihoods.

The Rwenzori ecosystem provides essential 'services' that contribute in numerous ways to productive activities of the rural poor as well as downstream water users far from the Rwenzori itself. Some of the services that support livelihoods include the provision of natural habitat for wild

pollinators that are essential for food crops; natural predators that control crop pests and soil organism important for agricultural productivity; watershed protection and hydrological stability, including recharging of water tables and buffering of extreme hydrological conditions that might otherwise precipitate drought or floods conditions; maintenance of soil fertility through storage and cycling of essential nutrients; and break down of waste and pollutants.

These services are 'public goods' providing indirect values that are only to a small extent traded in the marketplace but that are vital to the livelihoods of the poor, especially in more marginal environments or where the poor have limited access to external technology and other inputs (Koziell and Saunders, 2001). The goal of the Rwenzori project scores two fouls by maintaining productivity, healthy and stable environment, ecosystem services plus maintaining livelihoods options and the potential for livelihood diversification. When ecosystem functions are impaired, this inevitability leads to a narrowing of livelihood choices and an increase in the vulnerability of the poor.

2.2 Contribution to implementation of multilateral environmental agreements

2.2.1 The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)

Uganda ratified the Convention on Biological Diversity on 8 September 1993 and the proposed project will assist the Government to meet some of the CBD objectives. The proposal conforms to the objectives of CBD and in particular the requirements to the CBD Articles 6, 7, 8, 10, 11, 16, 17 and 18, which mainly deals with conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity as well as capacity building and technology transfer.

The various economic activities taking place in the Rwenzori ecosystem – such as tourism, mining and commercial agriculture – make the three main goals of the CBD crucial. Tourism and its benefits to local communities, mining and its negative impacts on land, water and air, and the pressures of commercial agriculture on natural resources are issues of particular pertinence to Uganda's commitments under CBD which the RMNP project will aim to address.

This mentioned the project will also undertake awareness raising at both local and national levels on the relevance and importance of the various conventions. Studies conducted in the transition phase indicate that most of the stakeholders are not informed on the importance of the conventions which governments sign and ratify.

The project will also contribute to implementing the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (see 2.3.4 below) that has been prepared to follow-up CBD.

2.2.2 The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES)

CITES was signed in March 1973 and entered into force after the tenth ratification on 1 July 1975. The basic principles of CITES on which trade is regulated are contained in the three Appendices to the Convention.

Parties to the Convention are not allowed to trade in species or their derivatives included in Appendices I, II and III, except in accordance with the provisions of the Convention. Therefore, CITES is particularly relevant to the Rwenzori Mountains National Park because of its high diversity of flora and fauna species and endemism. Several of the CITES listed flora and fauna species in Uganda are found in the Rwenzori Mountains National Park. Most of the Albertine Rift endemics and restricted range species are also represented in the Rwenzori making it an ideal hotspot for the implementation of the Convention. Although in low numbers, the following globally threatened species are found in the Park: elephant *Loxodonta africana* (V), chimpanzee *Pan troglodytes* (V), l'hoests monkey *Cercopithecus l'hoesti* (V).

2.2.3 *The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)*

UNFCCC was adopted in 1992 as a result of global concerns on climate change. Its ultimate objective, and that of any related legal instruments that the Conference of the Parties may adopt, is “to achieve, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Convention, stabilisation of greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere at a level that would prevent dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate system.” Such a level should be achieved within a time-frame sufficient to allow ecosystems to adapt naturally to climate change, to ensure that food production is not threatened and to enable economic development to proceed in a sustainable manner.

As a result of this Convention’s provision for carbon storage through forestry, the Government of Uganda changed the status of major forests (e.g. Rwenzori and Bwindi) in the Albertine Rift from forest reserves to national parks, which are protected from commercial logging. By promoting the protection and sustainable use of the Rwenzori ecosystem the project will be directly implementing the provisions of the Convention. The forest landscape restoration in degraded areas in the Park and expansion of forest cover on community and private lands will contribute to the carbon sink in the Rwenzori region.

By protecting an area with an altitudinal range from just above 2,000 m to above 5,000 m, the project will contribute to safeguard biodiversity also if there is real climate change. Presence of continuous corridors means that species will be able to move between various altitudes or climate zones to maintain their preferred conditions even when climate changes.

Maintaining a regionally important water tower like the Rwenzori Mountains is also likely to mitigate some of the potential negative impacts on freshwater supply caused by climate change.

2.2.4 *The Ramsar Convention on Wetlands*

The Ramsar Convention is the first of the modern global intergovernmental treaties on conservation and wise use of natural resources. Over the years the Convention has broadened its scope to cover all aspects of wetland conservation and wise use, recognizing wetlands as ecosystems that are extremely important for biodiversity conservation in general and for the well-being of human communities.

As a Party to the Convention, Uganda has fulfilled all the five major obligations firstly to designate one wetland for inclusion in the List of Wetlands of International Importance (the "Ramsar List") and to promote its conservation. Uganda designated the wetlands north of Lake George on the Ramsar List for which the main water catchments is the Rwenzori Mountains National Park. Under the Convention there is a general obligation for the Contracting Parties to include wetland conservation considerations in their national land-use planning. Accordingly, Uganda has developed a National Policy for the Conservation and Management of Wetland Resources (1995) that caters for wise use of wetland resources, *inter alia*. Other obligations include establishment of nature reserves in wetlands; international cooperation especially in regard to transfrontier wetlands, shared water systems, and shared species and report on progress in implementing commitments under the Convention which are all pertinent to the Rwenzori Ecosystems management. Water bodies of transboundary nature are Lakes Edward, Albert and the Nile River whose main source of water are the Rwenzori Mountains.

2.3 Contribution to the implementation of national plans

2.3.1 *Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP)*

The Rwenzori project aims at promoting sustainable livelihoods of the local communities through increased incentives for sustainable use of natural resources. This objective is consistent with the country’s overall strategy for poverty reduction which is articulated in the Poverty Eradication Action Plan (PEAP). The PEAP has four broad goals which include 1) Creating an enabling environment for rapid and sustainable economic growth and structural transformation; 2) Strengthening good governance and security in the context of ENR; 3) the promotion of

increased incomes and quality of life of the rural poor and 4) Increasing the ability of the poor to raise their incomes.

The recent participatory poverty assessment case study on the environment indicates that the quality of natural resources is declining in Uganda and this is increasing poverty and vulnerability (Ministry of Finance Planning and Economic Development 2003). The Government of Uganda therefore took the initiative to review seriously how environment and natural resources can be given greater focus within the Poverty Eradication Action Plan (PEAP), which the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development (MFPED) is spearheading the revision of in 2003. By working with the various stakeholders at national and local levels and strengthening UWA capacity to work with local communities in sustainable development and use of natural resources the project will directly address the four pillars of the PEAP.

2.3.2 Plan for Modernisation of Agriculture (PMA)

The Plan for Modernisation of Agriculture (PMA) is the Government's strategic framework for eradicating rural poverty through agricultural transformation. Its goal is to contribute to poverty eradication and food security by increasing agricultural profitability through sustainable enhancement of productivity and expansion of the commercial and industrial base of agricultural products. Therefore, the PMA provides a blueprint for "eradicating poverty by improving the natural resource-based livelihoods of the rural poor in a sustainable manner" (MWLE, 2001).

Whereas PMA has enormous strength in promoting private sector involvement and multi-sectoral approaches in sustainable management of natural resources, it has inherent weaknesses on over emphasis on promotion of agriculture that would possibly result in fragile ecosystems being brought under cultivation. It is silent on biodiversity within agricultural systems, and lacks emphasis on an ecosystem approach to achieving sustainable agriculture.

This said PMA provides an entry point for the activities of the Rwenzori project, particularly where they address the local community livelihood, equitable sharing of benefits from biodiversity conservation and control of land degradation.

2.3.3 National Environmental Action Plan (NEAP)

The National Environment Action Plan (1994) systematically identifies and evaluates alternative investments in natural resources sectors in relation to other sectors of the economy. Investment in forest and wildlife biodiversity is seen as a viable option for contributing to national sustainable development, hence the relevance of the National Environment Action Plan to the Rwenzori Mountains National Park Project where the need for sustainable use of natural resources is critical.

2.3.4 National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan

The National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP) identifies priority strategies for the conservation and sustainable use of Uganda's biodiversity. Some of the priority strategies identified in Chapter 3 of the NBSAP are: promotion of improved biodiversity management techniques, improvement of institutional collaboration in the management of biodiversity, enhance awareness on biodiversity issues among the various stakeholders, promotion of research and information management and exchange on biodiversity, to reduce and manage negative impacts on biodiversity; and to promote the sustainable use and equitable sharing of costs and benefits of biodiversity conservation. Chapter 4 of the NBSAP concentrates on forest resources development and conservation which links up very well with the forest landscape restoration activities of the project and awareness on sustainable use of the resources. This framework is relevant to the project in that it addresses most of the areas of concern for the Rwenzori Mountains National Park Project

2.3.5 Wetlands Sector Strategic Plan 2001-2010

The overall goal of this framework is the contribution of Uganda's wetlands to human welfare and health of the environment increased, while the purpose is that Uganda's wetlands are managed and used more wisely. The key strategic objectives of the plan that will be implemented by the Rwenzori project are: a) Knowledge and understanding of ecological processes and socio-economic values of wetlands enhanced; b) Public and stakeholder awareness of wetlands and their beneficial products and services increased; c) Vital wetlands protected and their characteristics and functions conserved and d) Community-based regulation and administration of wetlands resource use established and strengthened.

The framework offers the basis for the sustainable use of wetland resources and it has great relevance to the Rwenzori Project, which has huge wetland cover. It will also assist the project to identify areas of intervention on the higher slopes of the mountains where no initiatives exist.

2.4 Contribution to global and regional initiatives

2.4.1 World Summit on Sustainable Development

This project will contribute directly to the implementation of WSSD plans, especially as elaborated in the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation. The project will support the implementation of the plan's Chapter IV, para. 24 in terms of "*managing the natural resource base in sustainable and integrated manner*", "*to reverse the current trend in natural resource degradation*" and "*strengthening regional, national and local capacities*". Paragraph 44 on biodiversity stresses that the biodiversity loss "*can only be reversed if the local people benefit from the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity*", which is very much in line with the approach of this project. The Summit stressed the importance of focusing on the most biodiversity rich areas, and the Rwenzori is such an area.

Some of the Summit outcomes in relation to biodiversity have been further developed and refined in the recently completed World Parks Congress (WPC), Durban, named 'Benefits Beyond Boundaries'. The proposed project approach is in line with recommendations from WPC on how to protect biodiversity and at the same time secure benefits to and create incentives for surrounding communities to sustainably manage resources inside and outside the protected area.

The proposed project will assist Uganda in meeting the WSSD target by 2010 of a significant reduction in the current rate of loss of biological diversity, which will require the provision of new and additional financial and technical resources to developing countries. Paragraph 44 of the WSSD Plan of Implementation also makes specific reference to World Heritage Sites (of which the Rwenzori is an important one) and the need to '*Promote concrete international support and partnership for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, including in ecosystems, at World Heritage sites and for the protection of endangered species...*'. This is very much in line with the proposed project.

The Plan of Implementation (§ 44) also underlines the importance of national and regional ecological networks and corridors, which this project will also contribute to. National authorities, WWF and others are working to develop a network covering Murchison Falls National Park in the north, a range of wildlife and forest reserves, as well as Kibaale, Semuliki and Rwenzori Mountains National Parks. On a regional scale, the proposed project will facilitate the development of cross-border management of the Ugandan conservation areas with protected areas in DRC that in ecological terms are all part of one landscape and therefore should be managed according to the ecological rather than administrative borders.

Freshwater was undoubtedly a key issue at the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD), emphasised by many developing countries as well as the Norwegian Government. The WSSD Plan of Implementation has several references to the key role of access to safe freshwater and basic sanitation (e.g. §§ 7, 8) for poverty reduction and meeting the Millennium Development Goals. Integrated water resources management was emphasised as a key strategy for ensuring adequate freshwater supply and sustainable ecosystem and natural resource management. One

of the goals is to develop “*integrated water resources management and water efficiency plans by 2005, with support to developing countries*” (§ 26), which is a tremendous challenge. For this to happen national and regional strategies, plans and programmes with regard to integrated river basin, watershed and groundwater management must be developed (§ 26). The Rwenzori project, dealing with one of the most important water towers in the region, will contribute to development of integrated water resource management and safe water supply for a range of downstream users.

In terms of sustainable development in Africa promotion of integrated water resources management was seen as especially important. This means strengthening regional, sub-regional and national capacities and arrangements for water resource management (§ 66). This is in line with the recommendations from African Ministerial Conference on Water (AMCOW). Stakeholder participation (§ 25), adoption of an integrated basin approach (§ 26), support to monitoring of the land and water resources in important watersheds (§§ 27, 40), watershed protection and restoration, and improved land-use planning (§§ 37, 40) are all examples of Summit outcomes that the Rwenzori project will assist Uganda and the Nile Basin countries in meeting. The links between freshwater and poor people’s health were also stressed (§ 54), and a positive side-effect of the Rwenzori project will be contribution to improved health conditions through securing a source of safe water.

2.4.2 WEHAB (Water, Energy, Health, Agriculture, Biodiversity)

The WEHAB initiative was proposed by UN Secretary General Kofi Annan in preparation for the Johannesburg WSSD as an attempt to focus on progress and commitments in a few critical areas. This project relates mainly to the first and the last of the WEHAB themes, **W**ater and **B**iodiversity. These themes are addressed by two of the WEHAB Working Group (2002) documents.

WEHAB has stressed the importance of biodiversity for poverty reduction, livelihoods and human security, and particularly emphasises the public goods and services provided by ecosystems. Important areas for future work include effective participation by local communities, implementation and further development of the ecosystem approach, promote sustainable use including community based sustainable use and sustainable tourism. The proposed project is in line with these and other priorities and recommendations on biodiversity and ecosystem management promoted under the WEHAB concept.

The Norwegian Government has put particular emphasis on tropical forests in terms of follow-up of the biodiversity commitments from WSSD. The Rwenzori Mountains still have large tracts of relatively intact tropical forest and therefore fits very well within the Norwegian priorities.

The water and sanitation WEHAB working group highlighted the importance of integrated water resources management, and that as part of this it is critical to protect and sustainably manage the sources of freshwater. The source of sufficient freshwater of adequate quality is nature, in particular functioning ecosystems like the ‘rain maker’ Rwenzori Mountains. Sustainably managed, ecosystems like Rwenzori will provide a buffer to future challenges people are likely to face due to climate change.

As the Summit and the WEHAB papers highlighted, by preserving and sustainably manage water towers like the Rwenzoris one does not only contribute to international freshwater and sanitation target, but also areas like energy, health, agriculture and biodiversity.

2.4.3 Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)

The Millennium Development Goals adopted by the UN General Assembly in September 2000 provide key targets to address the most pressing development needs. Ensuring environmental sustainability is recognized as one of eight key goals. Because biodiversity underpins the survival of human societies everywhere, continuing progress towards these goals can only be possible when biodiversity is conserved and the benefits of its use are distributed equitably. This goal is

closely tied with that of eradicating extreme poverty and hunger. Since the poor are the people most directly dependent on biological diversity and therefore most immediately affected by its loss, the need to stem this loss world-wide as well as in specific locations is central to the goals of eradicating extreme poverty and hunger. Biodiversity is also important for the development of medicines, and therefore its maintenance is critical to efforts to combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases. A continued reduction in biodiversity will lead to a reduction in food security and increase in problems associated with malnutrition, undernourishment and risk of famine.

Continued biodiversity loss will also result in social disruption as ecosystems are destabilized and become more vulnerable to natural disasters, such as floods, droughts and hurricanes, and to stresses resulting from human activities, such as pollution and climate change. There is an inextricable link between biodiversity and the achievement of the MDGs. Ultimately, since social and economic stability is a prerequisite for sustainable development, the continued loss of biodiversity and degradation of natural resources can severely constrain efforts to meet all the MDGs.

2.4.4 New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD)

The New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) and its Action Plan of the Environment Initiative (UNEP 2003) have been adopted by the African Heads of State and Government. NEPAD aims to provide a coherent action plan and strategies to address the region's environmental challenges while at the same time combating poverty and promoting socio-economic development. The action plan of NEPAD's environment initiative has been developed under the leadership of the African Ministerial Conference on Environment (AMCEN) and contains programmatic and project activities to be implemented over an initial period of ten years.

The action plan covers priority sectors and cross-cutting issues including: combating land degradation, drought and desertification; wetlands; invasive species; marine and coastal resources; cross-border conservation of natural resources and climate change. Building on the Africa Environment Outlook report (UNEP 2002), NEPAD has identified the rapid biodiversity loss, in particular in hotspots like the Albertine Rift and Rwenzori, loss of forest cover, degradation of water resources and interference in the water cycle as major environmental challenges for the region. These are among the issues will be addressed by the proposed Rwenzori project. In terms of water resources NEPAD also refers to the priorities of the African Ministerial Conference on Water (AMCOW), which the proposed project will contribute to by securing the conservation and sustainable use of a major water tower in the region.

The action plan supports an integrated approach to river basin management in Sub-Saharan Africa, conservation of forest areas to mitigate climate change, the implementation and follow-up of the Convention on biological diversity (CBD) at national levels, including the ecosystem approach, sustainable forest management and other elements that are included in the Rwenzori project.

The NEPAD environment action plan puts particular emphasis on various aspects of capacity building and a strategic plan to build Africa's capacity to implement global and regional environmental conventions has been included. Capacity building for community based natural resource management and integrated water resources management has been specifically identified as a priority area for Eastern Africa. The WWF-UWA Rwenzori proposal puts emphasis on capacity building in UWA, in local authorities, local communities and among NGOs and CBOs and will therefore contribute to the NEPAD priorities.

Protected areas, which include the Rwenzori Mountains National Park, are highlighted in the NEPAD action plan as '*vital tools for safeguarding biodiversity, sustaining ecosystem processes and contributing to livelihoods and sustainable development*', which is at the core justification of the proposed Rwenzori project. NEPAD further stresses partnerships and collaboration among stakeholders to develop and build capacity for managing a system of well-managed conservation areas in Sub-Saharan Africa. We believe the cooperation between WWF, UWA, local authorities, local communities and other stakeholders will be a good example in this respect.

2.4.5 Nile Basin Initiative

The Nile Basin Initiative (NBI) has developed a Shared Vision Programme (SVP) in 1999 for the sustainable development of the Nile Basin for the riparian countries of Rwanda, Tanzania, Uganda, Burundi, D.R. Congo, Kenya, Sudan, Ethiopia, Eritrea and Egypt. In pursuit of its principle of subsidiarity, the initiative has developed technical assistance projects under its Nile Equatorial Lakes Subsidiary Action Programme (NELSAP). NELSAP seeks to achieve joint action on the ground to promote poverty alleviation, economic growth and the reversal of environmental degradation in the Nile Basin.

WWF EARPO is already engaged in dialogue with the Nile Basin Initiative and NELSAP. In recent meetings held in Entebbe and Nairobi, the Nile Basin Initiative and its subsidiary program, NELSAP, proposed to WWF to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) in which WWF would give technical support to NBI projects especially those on water resources management and biodiversity conservation. In pursuit of this intention, NELSAP proposes² to work closely with the WWF Mara River Basin Project in Kenya and Tanzania for its project in the same catchment.

NELSAP proposes to start a fisheries management project in Lake Albert that will extend to both sides of the Uganda/Congo border. NELSAP has submitted a funding application to the African Development Bank (AfDB) and awaits loan commitment to support this project. However, due to the political situation in DRC, this project is likely to take some time before it becomes operational. When and if it is financed, the proposed WWF project will establish close linkages with this project including providing useful baseline information.

The NELSAP has developed set of guidelines for implementing natural resource management projects including (1) planning at the lowest appropriate level, (2) community/stakeholder participation, (3) building on principles of equitable utilisation, no significant harm, and cooperation, (4) distribution of costs and risks equitably and efficient use of available resources, and (5) protection of the environment. This proposed project, WWF Rwenzori Mountains Conservation and Environmental Management Project, incorporates these and the WWF river basin guidelines as operational principles (see Appendix 3). WWF has also recently released two useful monographs. The first on “Lessons Learned: Implementation of the Water Framework Directive: Role of Local Authorities and Citizens in securing long-term water resource conservation” and another on “Managing Rivers Wisely: Lessons from WWF ‘s work for integrated river basin management”. The project will apply these lessons especially in implementing the Rwenzori Mountains Project.

2.5 Links to objectives of Norwegian development cooperation

2.5.1 Overall objectives

One of the six main areas for Norwegian development cooperation is “environment and natural resource management”. A separate strategy for environment in development cooperation has been developed where sustainable production systems along with conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity are two out of four main areas (MFA 1997).

2.5.2 Country specific priorities

Norwegian development co-operation is closely linked with the Poverty Eradication Action Plan (PEAP). This document is widely recognised as a basis for co-operation and assistance from abroad. The Government of Uganda (GoU) and the Government of Norway (GoN) MoU (2001–2005) will support the Government of Uganda in the following thematic areas.

- good governance and democracy

² See SIDA and NELSAP: Mara River Basin Integrated Water Resources Management Project: Preparation Phase – Draft Final Report, August 2003: SWECO and Associates.

- transparency and the fight against corruption
- a solution to internal and external conflicts
- a framework for economic growth and transformation
- continued fight against HIV/Aids
- basic social services for the majority
- environmental management with a regional focus

Overriding concerns within all areas of cooperation include sustainable management of natural resources, environment, institutional capacity building, transparency and accountability (GoN & GoU 2001).

The proposed project will in particular contribute to environmental management and sustainable management of natural resources. Strengthening the management of the RMNP will also contribute to good governance, transparency and capacity building, the latter being a major component of the proposed project.

2.6 WWF's experience

2.6.1 WWF experience in the region and the Albertine Rift

WWF and others (Plumptre *et al.* 2003) have recognized the Albertine Rift as a priority area for conservation in Africa. A recent study has shown that out of the 117 terrestrial ecoregions of Africa, the Albertine Rift actually comes out as the most important of all in terms of species richness, endemism and threatened species. Consequently, WWF has initiated an important network of field projects in the Region, backed up by the Albertine Rift Ecoregion Programme based in Nairobi.

WWF currently has nine active projects in the Albertine Rift, five of them in Uganda.

1) International Gorilla Conservation Programme (IGCP)

This is a cross-border conservation initiative for the endangered mountain gorillas *Gorilla gorilla beringei* and their unique forest habitats in Bwindi Impenetrable Forest and Mgahinga National Parks in Uganda and in the Virunga and Volcanoes National Park in DRC and Rwanda. The programme promotes eco-tourism, ecological monitoring, community participation and benefit sharing around Bwindi and Mgahinga.

2) Virunga Environmental Programme (PEVi) – DRC

This programme aims to contribute to the long-term conservation of Virunga NP by: environmental education and awareness building for the people living near the Park; supporting communities in their efforts to manage their natural resources; providing advice and support to park authorities in order to improve dialogue and collaborative management with the communities; participatory boundary delimitations. The project is anticipated to embark into a larger assessment of PNVi after 6 years of armed conflicts. This will involve an assessment of the level of encroachment, human activities and infrastructures, biological surveys and evaluation of ICCN staff in view of a major restructuring.

3) UNF-UNESCO Project on World heritage Sites in danger in DRC

This project is funded by UNF/UNESCO and provides direct support to the five World Heritage Sites in DRC. This includes Virunga National Park in the Albertine Rift for which WWF is the project implementer on behalf of UNF/UNESCO. Monthly bonuses are given to the guards, based on Law Enforcement work as well as medicine and rations for patrols.

4) Support to the Institute for Tropical Forest Conservation (ITFC) – Uganda

WWF provides financial and technical support to ITFC, a biological field station of the Mbarara University of Science and Technology. ITFC, based in Bwindi Impenetrable National Park, provides research support to the work of the Uganda Wildlife Authority and Uganda Forest Department in Bwindi, Mgahinga and Echuya Forest Reserve and is implementing a project funded by WWF and CARE on assessing ICDPs approach in western Uganda. This project provides crucial information for the proper design, implementation and monitoring of ICDP in the Albertine Rift.

5) Solar Connect Association (SCA) – Uganda

Solar Connect Association is an indigenous NGO that creates awareness and promotes the use of solar energy, for domestic purposes and small industries, to reduce pressure on forests. WWF is currently supporting SCA to extend its activities to communities around the Albertine Rift Montane Forests in Uganda and DRC.

6) Conservation of the Albertine Rift Forests in Uganda

This project is funded by GEF-UNDP and is under a pdf-B phase and implemented by WWF in collaboration with the Ministry of Water, Lands and Environment (MWLE). The objective of the project is to support the conservation of nationally and globally important forest biodiversity resources in the Albertine Rift Valley of Uganda. The project has three main components: development and implementation of an agreed Conservation and Management Strategy (CMS) for the Albertine Rift Valley Forests; develop and improve intra-district and inter-agency protocols, networks and community institutions in which NGOs, communities and civil society have an important role to play; and strengthen forest resource management in gazetted and non-gazetted forests by involving all stakeholders. The project will have accomplished phase I in February 2003 through the submission of a full Project Brief to GEF to be evaluated at the GEF council of May 2003, hopefully leading to a decision on full project implementation by January 2004.

7) Building Participatory Natural Resources Management in Central Albertine Rift Forests

The recent civil unrest and political changes have severely affected forests of the central part of the Albertine Rift, in particular Virunga (DRC) and Kibira (Burundi) forests. The purpose of this project is to ensure the long-term conservation of these two key forests for the benefit, and with the participation, of neighbouring communities. An important aspect of the work is a participatory approach to Natural Resources Management and Integrated Conservation and Development activities as well as awareness raising.

8) Kahuzi-Biega Conservation Programme

This project builds on the experience gained by its PEVi programme in Virunga. The project supports ICCN in Kahuzi-Biega NP management, and supports local initiatives and CBOs around the park in agroforestry, Community Based Natural Resource Management and Environmental Education.

9) Engaging the rural poor as partners in Conservation in Kasyoha Kitomi Forest Reserve, Uganda

The project rationale is that the main weakness of ICD programmes is the short time and little involvement of local communities in the programme development/design. This project aims at insuring a real involvement in an ICD programme in a forest landscape centered around Kasyoha Kitomi Reserve, in the Albertine Rift of Uganda. The current 2.5 years design phase involves detailed socio-economic surveys and a vision-based design engaging the rural poor living around the Forest Reserve.

2.6.2 WWF experience in the Rwenzori Massif

WWF involvements in the Rwenzori Massif stems from 1990 through the implementation of the Rwenzori Mountains Conservation and Development Project with a grant from USAID (ref. paragraph 1.1). Both Phases I and II were implemented in collaboration with the Ugandan Ministry of Tourism, Wildlife and Antiquities (MTWA) and its component parastatal, Uganda National Parks (UNP) then latter Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA). Phase II lasted until December 31,1998, however, the evaluation indicated the difficulties in achieving a significant

and lasting impact on broad community development and natural resource-use processes with a large massif as the Rwenzori region, which includes 38 parishes and approximately 50,000 ha of community land in a 3 km wide strip buffering the Park with total population of approximately one million from the three surrounding districts.

Important general lessons learnt in the process of implementing the two Phases include among others the need for a sufficient time frame to enable time consuming interventions such as raising environmental awareness, introducing new technologies and techniques, and changing attitudes all of which require time to take root to be undertaken. Other lessons learned include the need to develop monitoring and evaluation (M&E) plans that are within capacities of the target audience. As M&E plans are relatively new in project implementation, there is need for projects to share lessons, including standardization of methodologies.

WWF with small grant from the Norwegian Embassy in Kampala was contracted to revise and develop the Rwenzori Phase III proposal through a wider stakeholder consultation and cross border consultation meetings held in 2003 to foster a participatory approach in the design of the project. Literature search and desk reviews of all previous projects documents including the previous project implementation and evaluation reports were studied and information thereof compiled to formulate a strategy for the transition review phase. One of the key strategies was to have synergies between the transition Phase and the development of the Park General Management Plan (GMP) activities. The process lead to the redefinition and analysis of the threats and opportunities in Rwenzori ecosystem and stakeholders and socio economic analysis used in the writing of this proposal.

Overall WWF experience in the region has been that of a key facilitator and an active player in the discipline where it has overwhelming comparative advantage over other partners. These areas include, but are not limited to: ICD type projects design and implementation, wildlife/human conflict resolutions, institutional strengthening and development, partnerships, environmental education and community based natural resources management.

WWF is also working on the Congolese side of the Mountains through its PEVi programme in Virunga National Park. This presence on the ground and experience gained will be extremely helpful for implementation of activities contributing to outcome 8 (transboundary collaboration). WWF has actually already participated in several meetings between UWA and ICCN.

2.7 Contribution to WWF's global priorities

This project directly contributes to several global and strategic priorities of WWF.

Regarding Target Driven Programme (TDP), this project contributes to:

Forest TDP, under objective 2: improved Management of forested Protected Areas, through several outputs.

Species TDP: Rwenzori is home to the Chimpanzee, which is one of the Great Apes, which are the focus of the species programme. Maintenance and good management of the Rwenzori Mountains NP will directly contribute to the maintenance of viable population of the species.

Freshwater TDP: : The project will contribute to two targets of the freshwater target driven programme. These are Target 1 – Freshwater ecosystems (milestone 1 on improved management of important freshwater ecosystems) and Target 2 Conserving ecological processes of important river basins and their catchment areas. The Rwenzori Mountains supply the headwaters of the important lakes that feed the western Nile including Lakes Albert, George and Edward and the several tributaries of the Nile. Improved conservation and management of the Rwenzori Mountain will thus ensure adequate flows of waters to the Nile River.

Ecoregion Programmes: The Rwenzori is situated in the Albertine Rift Montane Forests Ecoregion, a priority Ecoregion for WWF and the first one of the 117 terrestrial ecoregions of Africa in terms of priority of biodiversity conservation.

During a biological assessment, out of over 80 sites in the Albertine Rift assessed, the Rwenzori came third in terms of priority for field intervention. The Rwenzori has been assigned the highest score in terms of species richness and the highest score too for threatened species. Further, it proves to be invaluable in the perspective of a complementarity analysis (i.e. it has a high irreplaceability value). It is also in the heart of the first planning unit (out of five that make up the Albertine Rift) for which a strategic plan is being developed.

3 PROJECT GOAL AND PURPOSE

3.1 Project goal

The overall objective of this project is that the:

Conservation of the Rwenzori Mountains ecosystem is enhanced and its biodiversity and water catchment's values are maintained in harmony with sustainable utilisation of resources for the benefit of Uganda and the international communities.

3.2 Project purpose

The project purpose is that the

Integrity and conservation status of Rwenzori Mountains National Park (RMNP) reinforced by the end of year 5.

Phase III's overall goal and project purpose highlight three major shifts in emphasis from Phases I and II. Notably, they are:

- Recognize the importance of conserving the entire Rwenzori Mountains ecosystem and its goods and services rather than simply its component parts and values.
- Place emphasis on action to reinforce the *integrity and conservation status* of the RMNP as the principal means of achieving the overall ecosystem conservation goal.
- Balance emphasis on enabling surrounding communities to conserve natural resources with capacity building for RMNP staff to efficiently and effectively manage the Park.

4 PROJECT OUTPUTS

Nine main outputs have been defined for the project:

- Output 1. Management of RMNP strengthened.
- Output 2. Financial viability of RMNP enhanced.
- Output 3. Mechanisms for assuring sustainable use of in-park resources in operation.
- Output 4. Effective mechanisms for park-community communication and cooperation established.
- Output 5. Local government capacity for conservation-focused environmental action planning strengthened.
- Output 6. Existing and developing pressure points on the watershed functions and properties of RMNP mitigated.

- Output 7. Forest Landscape Restoration initiated to offer opportunities for sustainable development outside RMNP.
- Output 8. Regional process and tools for the conservation of the Rwenzori Mountains initiated and developed.
- Output 9. Effective project management systems established for the project.

Outputs 1 and 2 focus on the need to ensure that RMNP is effectively managed, and that this management is financially sustainable. As per the Phase II evaluation recommendation, Phase III will place considerable emphasis on activities to achieve these two results, spearheaded by the on going comprehensive UWA general management planning exercise and coupled with on-the-job management training. Outputs 3 and 4 focus on the need to ensure that local communities use RMNP's natural resources sustainably, and that the Park and communities work together to achieve conservation and sustainable use. Central here will be the continuation of the efforts begun in Phase II to develop a series of community resource-use (R-U) agreements, and work to enable the Local Production and Environment Committee (LPEC) mechanisms through Community Protected Area Institutions (CPAI) to provide a forum for promoting effective environmental management and a park-community dialogue.

Outputs 5 and 6 address the need to reduce human pressures on the Park and many of the techniques pioneered in Phase II will be continued. Unlike Phase II, however, these efforts will be focused only on those areas where human pressures on RMNP are greatest. Particular emphasis will be on the watershed protection functions and water resources management. This will ensure that the project-supported natural resource management activities have maximum impact on RMNP conservation. Activities will be identified through environmental planning and natural resource management initiatives launched with local government bodies neighbouring RMNP. Output 7 is a new approach and will focus to work with the Local governments, community based organizations and NGOs to identify degraded sites in the Rwenzori ecosystem and undertake forest landscape restoration as a means to rehabilitate such sites and also contribute to CO₂ absorption and thereby address climate change while improving the livelihood of the community. Output 8 focuses on the importance of promoting effective conservation action and collaboration between protected area managers on *both* sides of the international border that bisects the Rwenzori Mountains ecosystem, that is, both Uganda and DRC. Result 9 lastly, crosscutting aims to devise and consolidate high standards of project management in accordance with UWA and WWF policies on partnerships.

4.1 Output 1 – Management of RMNP strengthened

Professional and cost effective management (i.e. clear management priorities and plans, trained and motivated staff, appropriate infrastructure and equipment, clearly maintained boundaries, and effective law enforcement) is vital to the effective functioning of the National Park, and to establishing priority conservation needs and actions. This result is carried forward from Phases I and II, although it will be accorded greater emphasis in Phase III.

The second major activity element in the achievement of Result 1 is strengthening RMNP human resources capacity, through ensuring that RMNP staff have clear and realistic job descriptions, appropriate skills, and the necessary motivation. As in Phase II, training will continue to be central to this effort, though in accordance with the Phase II evaluation recommendation, the focus will be on practical on-the-job training that provides staff with the skills they need in their own environment and enabling them to put these skills into immediate practice.

An aspect of strengthening the management of RMNP will be focused on liaising with the Protected Areas Management and Sustainable Use (PAMSU) project in building the park headquarters, ranger posts and tourism infrastructure. The project will also focus on the rehabilitation of the existing tourist trails networks, camps and huts and support the expansion of the trails to the northern sector. Other initiatives for strengthening the management of RMNP will only be effective if the staff have a base from which to operate.

4.2 Output 2 – Financial viability of RMNP enhanced

In the long-term, the integrity and conservation status of RMNP will depend to a significant extent on the availability of adequate financial resources to support essential management actions. This, in turn, will depend on the effective use of existing finances, as well as the identification and tapping of new sources of funding. In this regard, the Rwenzori Mountains' World Heritage status provides options for securing new donor and investment funding. In addition RMNP is connected to a network of protected areas in south-western Uganda as well as Eastern DRC, which provide an opportunity for regional environmental financing strategy. The development of RMNP general management plan will define funding priorities.

In the medium and long-term, tourism offers one of the best options for sustainable income to the Park, as well as enabling local communities to receive direct economic benefits from the presence of the Park. Currently much of the donor support involves short term financing of long term conservation programmes hence the problem of sustainability. Conservation is also not generally a priority among the local government programmes. Moreover, tourism revenues are rarely re-invested in conservation at both the national and district levels. Potential for local financial initiative is evident and can succeed when clear guidelines for setting up and managing the conservation funds are in place. A key assumption here will be that potential donors will see the value of these funds for protecting global biodiversity and join in to strengthen it. Phases I and II did not directly address financial viability aspects, and as a result, the sustainability of interventions was not assured.

4.3 Output 3 – Mechanisms for assuring sustainable use of in-park resources in operation

The history of RMNP and the role that park resources have traditionally played in the livelihoods of surrounding communities means that community use of park resources is a reality. This has been recognized in park by-laws, and in mechanisms for assuring sustainable community use of park resources, an important component of Phase II. Phase III's clear emphasis on reinforcing the integrity of RMNP underscores the need to effectively articulate this result.

An initial priority toward achieving Result 3 will be the further development of RMNP's capacity to monitor the impact of in-park resource-use and to determine the sustainability of these activities (Activity 5.1.3.1). As a first step, this will involve the review and revision of the RMNP ecological monitoring plan, prepared during Phase II. The ecological monitoring plan will be subject to a reality-check to establish whether the plan elements are practical and achievable, to determine the resources required, to allocate responsibilities, and to make adjustments as necessary. In this regard, the ecological monitoring plan prepared in Phase II has a strong emphasis on the role of participatory monitoring of resource-use by the community itself. While participatory monitoring will still be a priority (see below), Phase III will place greater emphasis on the importance of building RMNP's own capacity to monitor and oversee resource-use and the status of habitats and biodiversity. The revised ecological monitoring plan will feed into the GMP revision process envisaged in Result 1. In addition, the planned activities to collect and analyse baseline data on in-park resource stocks and usage will be a significant contribution to the GMP revision, especially re-delineating management zones.

The second major element in the achievement of this result is the development of the in-park resource-use agreements, officially known in forestry as collaborative management agreements (Activity 5.1.3.2). In Phase II, two resource-use agreements reached an advanced stage of formulation with the ridge communities of Rubona and Kazingo parishes in Kabarole District. RMNP management also received permission from UWA at that time to go ahead with the implementation of these agreements. However, implementation of these agreements did not happen due to the security situation around the Rwenzori Mountains, which had displaced resource-users, particularly those of Rubona Parish from their farms. Review and Implementation of these agreements will be a significant first action to be undertaken at the beginning of Phase III.

A provision of both agreements is their review and revision (as necessary) after a period of one year. An assessment of the resource-use agreements after this period will be an important activity in Phase III, which will have significant repercussions for additional resource-use agreements to be negotiated with the neighbouring communities and put into operation during this phase. This review will look critically at the collaborative management process to ensure that the agreements reached are well understood and adhered to by the communities. Additionally, the review will look at the question of the legality of the agreements under Ugandan law, which was identified as a possible weakness of the agreements during the Phase II evaluation. The presence of legally recognized Community Protected Area Institutions (CPAI) as part of the resource-use process will also be examined.

4.4 Output 4 – Effective mechanisms for park-community communication and cooperation established

Local communities have unique knowledge of park resources as well as human resources far in excess of those available to Park authorities. If harnessed, this capacity can make an immense contribution to Park management activities and particularly to assuring sustainable use of Park resources and preventing illegal activities. Enlisting community support and understanding for Park conservation needs and objectives can therefore enable Park authorities to solve problems more simply, quickly and cost-effectively than by working in isolation. This result, restated, is carried forward from Phases I and II. Instead of limiting to revenue-sharing mechanisms, however, the project will expand focus to include benefit sharing through the facilitation of resource-use agreements and community-based tourism development

As in previous phases, raising conservation awareness and environmental education in the project area, particularly in the frontline communities, continues to be an integral part of the entire project approach. This need will be addressed under this result, through the provision of support to RMNP's community extension team.

The major element of this result comprises a series of activities designed to empower the Local Production and Environment Committee (LPEC) structure as the principal forum for communication and cooperation between RMNP management and neighbouring communities. This approach grows out of the limited success at establishing and enabling effective Park Management Advisory Committees (PMACs) during Phases I and II. The major lesson learned from these earlier activities is that, because the PMAC was a creation of the national park, it failed to adequately empower communities. The conclusion was that rather than establishing a new forum, it would be better to make use of an existing community institution. The LPEC structure seems to offer the greatest potential. It is legislated in the Ugandan local government statute, and has a mandate beyond park-related issues, thus providing a purpose and momentum that the PMAC was unable to achieve. Recognizing this, UWA, in its Community protected area institution policy has developed the LPEC structure to act as an institutional link between communities and protected areas. In particular, UWA has been facilitating the formation of CPAI comprised of LPEC committee members from the LCI to LCIII level and other interested community members.

There are, however, a number of difficulties with the LPEC structure. Most significantly, although legislated, LPECs are not yet fully operational in the Rwenzori area, even when there is a great deal of experience to build upon from elsewhere in Uganda. This means that there will be a need for a great deal of preparatory work before the structure can function effectively. This will need to be founded on a clear understanding of the LPEC legislation and policy. Another drawback, also experienced with the early PMAC efforts, is that the LPEC structure may not be fully representative of the people the Park especially wants to reach, i.e., the frontline communities on the ridges. Making the LPEC structure relevant to the frontline communities, for example by establishing ridge-level sub-committees, will therefore be especially important.

Another important aspect is the need for the Park to establish exactly what it wants to get out of working with the LPECs. Being good neighbours with the local community is a reasonable objective in its own right, but a more substantive cooperation will need to be defined if the

relationship with the LPECs is to prosper. In Phases I and II, a significant element of the relationship with the PMAC was its role in revenue sharing. However, as the Phase II evaluation has emphasized, revenue sharing is not a realistic option for the foreseeable future, despite the supporting policies on revenue sharing. The evaluation recommended that, instead, the project should concentrate on *resource* sharing, through the resource-use agreement mechanism. Resource-use agreements, however, will be negotiated directly with the affected frontline communities and resource-user groups (see Result 3 above). LPEC members will be apprised of these agreements, but a direct role in negotiating them is not foreseen. An important role of the LPECs will be to provide community inputs to the district/sub-county environmental planning effort, and the subsequent identification and implementation of RMNP focused natural resource management priorities.

In addition to its activities in developing formal mechanisms for park-community communication, the project will continue to promote and support informal means such as community-level training workshops and meetings as a method of promoting better relations between the Park and its surrounding communities. As noted by the Phase II evaluation report, such activities, although difficult to monitor quantitatively, have had clearly positive impacts particularly in the parishes participating in the resource-use agreement negotiation processes.

Another important theme under Result 4 will be the continuation of the effective work begun by the project during Phases I and II to promote environmental awareness and education in the three districts neighbouring the Park. In Phase III, the main thrust will be to strengthen the capacity of RMNP, as well as of local government staff and partner NGO/CBOs, to impart conservation messages to community members in an effective manner. The project will recruit an Environmental Education Specialist (EES) for a three-month period at the beginning of the phase to conduct intensive “training of trainers” workshops aimed at imparting specific skills in environmental education to RMNP wardens and rangers, as well as selected local government extensionists and CBO/NGO representatives. The EES will also work with the RMNP’s community conservation department to formulate a strategy for conservation education that will determine key target audiences, messages, and appropriate media to use. This EES will also be contracted to provide periodic backstopping in environmental education over the five years of project implementation. Optimally, a consultant from the region will be recruited to fulfil these duties.

4.5 Output 5 – Local government capacity for conservation-focused environmental action planning strengthened

Outputs 5 and 6 are designed to respond to the lessons learned from activities aimed at reducing human pressures on RMNP. By providing support to local government institutions and other civil society organizations rather than direct project interventions (as was mainly the case in Phase II), the project will achieve sustainability as well as being catalytic. The output focuses on the development of local government capacity for environmental planning and management according to the guidelines established in the National Environment Action Plan (NEAP). This will involve catalysing the activities of, and providing practical support and training for, the various local government environmental planning and management mechanisms that have been mandated under the National Environment Statute (NES), including the Local Production and Environment Committees (LPECs).

At the district level, the NES establishes the District Technical Planning Committee (DTPC), which has responsibilities for integrating environmental planning into the district development planning process. The DTPC is responsible for coordinating environmental and socio-economic information gathering, identifying key conservation problems and priorities, promoting cross-sectoral involvement in environmental planning and management, and ensuring participation of key stakeholders. Along with the District Environment Officers (DEOs), the DTPCs in the three project focal districts will be the key district-level project counterparts for overseeing and coordinating support to RMNP focused environmental planning and management activities carried out under Outputs 5 and 6.

To oversee environmental planning activities and to promote collaboration and information dissemination between the various participating local government institutions in the three target districts, the project will support the formation of an “Environment Planning Consultative Group”. This informal committee, which will be a project rather than government mechanism, will involve District Environmental Officers, other relevant DTPC members, and focal sub-county representatives. It is anticipated that some issues associated with the Park will necessitate inter-district cooperation and planning. To represent the national park perspective, the group will also include the RMNP Warden Community Conservation (WCC) (Activity 5.1.5.1).

To ensure wider collaboration and information sharing beyond the three focal districts, the project will also liaise with the District Support Directorate the National Environment Management Authority which oversees implementation of the District Environmental Action Plan (DEAP) process in the districts. In particular, efforts will be made to harmonize the project approach to environmental action planning with the DEAP developed in Mbale and Masindi Districts which were the national pilot DEAPs. This collaboration will ensure that the RMCEMP environmental planning activities offer another opportunity for field testing and critically assessing the district planning approach of the National Environment Action Plan (NEAP).

The environmental planning activities to be carried out under Phase III will be chiefly targeted at the sub-county level (LCIII) and below. This focus, the rationale for which is discussed further in Appendix 8, *The sub-county environmental planning focus*, relates to the project’s primary aim in undertaking environmental planning – the pinpointing of environmental “pressure points” on RMNP and the subsequent design and implementation of natural resource management actions to alleviate that pressure (see Output 6). The sub-counties were identified by the National Environment Action Plan and the Local Government Act as crucial sub-units with their own planning needs and administrative powers.

Early project activities under this result will involve the identification of key environmental management issues of relevance to the conservation of RMNP and the establishment of a set of criteria for determining what constitutes a pressure point, and its relative significance. Coupled with reconnaissance visits and desk research, this will enable the geographical identification of the key pressure points themselves (Activity 5.1.5.2) and the selection of priority sub-counties for focusing the environmental planning and management activities (Activity 5.1.5.3). Environmental planning and management teams at the sub-county level will then be formed, and these will have lead responsibility for all subsequent environmental planning and management activities (Activity 5.1.5.4).

Once the sub-county teams are established, the project will hold planning initiation workshop(s) designed to familiarize team members with the project’s objectives, analyse key environmental problems and issues, determine causes and constraints, and enlist support in planning activities. Concurrently, the team will further develop the “stakeholder analysis” to decide on the most significant stakeholders in the environmental planning process and to establish mechanisms for involving them. A priority will be to establish methods of involving the LPEC structure in the environmental planning effort. This will be linked with the effort to mobilize the LPEC structure for park-community cooperation.

The initiation workshop(s) will also be used to identify skills required to build environmental planning and management capacity, and for an initial assessment of training needs. This will lead to a more detailed assessment of training needs and the subsequent provision of training opportunities. Training is likely to include:

- The organization of a series of in-service training workshops and programs in environmental management and planning issues. These workshops will cover topics such as: demographic issues, land-use planning, participatory rural appraisal (PRA) techniques, natural resource assessment techniques, soil conservation techniques, alternative natural resource-use practices, etc.
- The organization of study tours to districts elsewhere in Uganda already embarked on environmental planning and management activities.

- Limited short course sponsorship in essential skills not possible through in-service training.

4.6 Output 6 – Existing and developing pressure points on the watershed functions and properties of RMNP mitigated

The strengthening of local government environmental planning and management achieved under Output 5 will facilitate the identification of areas and problems of greatest concern for maintenance of the integrity and conservation status of RMNP. Of importance would be to address the threats to the watershed protection functions and the distribution and management of the water resources in the Park. The models of the Nile Basin Initiatives and other river basin management projects in the region will be used, including the NORAD funded Mara River Basin Management Initiative. The aim will be to enable these sub-counties to develop and implement activities aimed at addressing natural resource management problems identified through the environmental planning activities undertaken through Result 5, and also to assist individual villages bordering the Park to develop conservation-compatible natural resource management and land-use plans. The primary aim of these activities will be *to reduce the demand for the Park's land and natural resources*, by promoting efficiency of land and resource-use outside the Park and the development of alternatives. At this stage, it is not possible to state with certainty what type of natural resource management activities are likely to be involved, but it seems probable that many of the activities successfully promoted in Phase II to relieve pressure on the National Park will be employed.

The project will not directly seek to promote natural resource management activities with income-generating possibilities, such as bee keeping. While income-generating activities may in theory make the local community more receptive to conservation in the long-term, in the short-term the project is unlikely to see any appreciable impact. Indeed, unfocused income-generating activities may do more harm than good, by raising expectations and by attracting people to the park boundary areas. Efforts will be made to understand the land tenure situation as it affects project activities. Security of tenure is vital to achieving a commitment to improving land-use productivity and to reducing the impact of population movements.

The project will not establish an autonomous rural extension capacity. Rather, it will support strengthening the capacity of local government environmental and extension workers to achieve the project's conservation and natural resource-use goals, through the provision of training, technical advice and facilitation, and where necessary, material and to some extent financial resources. Support will also be provided to build the capacity of selected NGOs/CBOs to carry out RMNP focused natural resource management action that complements and reinforces the project supported local government extension efforts.

The project will utilise the LPEC structure and its mandated role in natural resource management. This approach will ensure the linkage of the supported project activities to the overall district plans. This should, in turn, enhance sustainability of these activities after the end of the project.

Local government environmental and extension mechanisms, supported by key non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and community-based organisations (CBOs), will then be used to deliver focused community based natural resource management interventions. The project will undertake agricultural extension strategy to link the various service providers and coordinate their activities at local levels to address the natural resources degradation from unsustainable use.

4.7 Output 7 – Forest Landscape Restoration initiated to offer opportunities for sustainable development outside RMNP

It has been widely recognized that a key element for the long-term survival of forested ecosystems in a protected area is the need to address forest landscapes around the area. Timber is a very valuable resource on which communities rely. Often illegal or unsustainable timber harvesting involves powerful community members or politicians. Restoration of degraded landscapes not only reduces pressure on the forests of RMNP but also increases the

opportunities for communities to use the services of and derive benefits from natural forest resources. Community forestry is one aspect of forest landscape restoration (FLR) that will address biodiversity conservation through the maintenance of forested corridors between key conservation areas but will also directly address poverty alleviation through commercial benefits from timber, charcoal, non-timber forest products etc.

Key activities will involve working with the National Forestry Authority (NFA) and district Forest service to identify degraded areas and select target sites for forest restoration planting this would include detailed field surveys, mapping and participatory review and understanding of the land tenancy security at each site. The LPEC will be incorporated in this activity by identifying and facilitating the process of making contract agreements with adjacent households and community groups to undertake forest landscape restoration operations in the target areas through on the job training on tree planting and silvicultural operations.

In order to address the livelihood component of this output the project will support the selected community groups and households to establish their own nurseries for community and individual household woodlots and sell surplus seedlings to the project for restoration planting in the RMNP. Efforts will be made to link promising farmer groups to the PRIME West project for commercial wood plantation development enterprise and carbon trading opportunities.

4.8 Output 8 – Regional process and tools for the conservation of the Rwenzori Mountains initiated and developed

RMCDP Phases I and II focused project activities almost exclusively on the Uganda side of the ecosystem, with very little interaction with the Parc National des Virunga Northern Sector (PNV-N), the adjoining protected area on the other side of the border. The Phase III transition Planning Workshop recognized and confirmed, however, that the long-term integrity of the Rwenzori Mountains ecosystem hinges on the promotion of effective conservation action on *both* sides of the international border, as well as on collaboration between managers of the two protected areas involved. Some of the key issues involved are:

- Animals (for example elephant and buffalo) migrate from one side of the border to the other regularly. Being protected on one side and poached on the other creates a problem in the long term. Larger species also require a large home range for their long term survival as well as genetic connection with populations from each side of the border (i.e. Chimpanzees)
- Local populations living on both sides of the Rwenzori Mountains have the same ethnic roots, culture, and language. They use natural resources similarly, and exert similar pressures on the mountain ecosystem. Common footpaths are used by both sides and are indicative of local trade and other regular interactions.
- There is a need/opportunity for shared tourism management for some tracks and huts, as well as integrated visitor procedures and booking systems. Many tourists have already voiced their wish to climb the mountain from Uganda and walk down on the Congolese side to connect to Lake Edward and from there to Queen Elisabeth National Park
- Joint and integrated Patrols for the Management of Law Enforcement would go along way to address the common practice among poachers or other persons engaged in illegal activities to cross the international boundary whenever they are pursued by rangers from either sides because rangers can not cross the international border freely. Only well coordinated patrols and communications between UWA and ICCN can improve this situation.

Until now, there has been very little cooperation between UWA and its Congolese counterpart, Institut Congolais pour la Conservation de la Nature (ICCN) concerning the management of the Rwenzori Mountains. This strained relationship is the result of civil unrest, poor communications between the two capitals as well as on a local level, the language barrier, differences of national legislation and policies, etc. Some initiatives are being developed with the two park management

authorities in both countries facilitated by WCS, IGCP and WWF and can be strengthened in phase III project to identify and implement further areas of mutual corporations. Output 8 addresses some of the practicalities of bringing about a cross-border/regional approach to ecosystem conservation and will facilitate harmonization and coordination of management approaches and develop greater communication and cooperation and environmental governance by RMNP and PNV-N managers. Establishing informal mechanisms for collaboration and regular meetings between protected area staff of the two countries will prepare the ground for subsequent formalisation of regional collaboration.

The current negotiations going on between the warring factions in the DRC seem to be bearing fruits and leading to peace and security in the area. The countries of the Great Lakes Region are steadily undertaking the implementation of the Lusaka Peace Accord. Uganda for example has pulled out troops from the DRC and Rwanda has opened better communication with the Kinshasha Government in addressing the transboundary conflicts.

4.9 Output 9 – Effective project management systems established

Project planning and management is a strongly emphasised feature of Phase III, with planning mechanisms and activities impacting and guiding subsequent project activities. Through planning exercises, project assessments, and annual reviews, RMCEMP will become strategic and analytical in its efforts and build such capacity within Uganda Wildlife Authority. Output 9 cuts across all aspects of the project to facilitate project management through a series of planning-related activities.

5 PROJECT ACTIVITIES

5.1 Activities

5.1.1 Activities that will address output 1. Management of RMNP strengthened

5.1.1.1 Build lasting capacity of RMNP staff for effective Park and organizational management

- In collaboration with the Human resource department at HQ and RMNP review and revise job responsibilities for the various posts in RMNP.
- Devise and develop training plan.
- Implement focused on-the-job training as per the training plan.
- Undertake in service and external training based on the UWA training needs assessment results. Notable is, environmental planning, CBNRM activities Integrated Conservation and Development (ICD) training and other aspects to strengthen park management)
- Provide specialised training related to management of mountain ecosystem including mountain climbing, rescue & safety operations and relevant international languages.
- Carry out review of the RMNP GMP.

5.1.1.2 Facilitate operation of the Community Protected Area Institutions (CPAI)

- Identify stakeholders and define their roles (get the District Councils to ratify CPAI).
- Raise awareness among stakeholders e.g. CPAI, politicians.
- Ensure proper coordination and involvement of stakeholders in protected area management.
- Carry out regular co-ordination meetings with relevant stakeholders.
- Undertake sustained lobbying and advocacy to involve stakeholders (politicians) in park management.

5.1.1.3 Demarcate and maintain selected sections of RMNP boundary

- Sensitise the community on park boundary work.
- Carry out aerial survey of the park boundary.
- Ground truth the park boundary.
- Reopen and demarcate the selected sections of the boundaries under contentions.
- Undertake specific boundary maintenance work as needed.
- Design and institute a program of routine boundary and resource-use zone patrols.

5.1.1.4 Establish and procure RMNP essential infrastructure and equipment

- Supplement and provide equipment and transport facilities for Park Operations not covered under the World Bank PAMSU project.
- Transport:
 - Vehicles (One for community conservation).
 - Motorcycles for Community Conservation Rangers and support to Local Governments operation (Kasese, Kabarole and Bundibugyo).
- Equipments:
 - 1 Office Desk Top Computer.
 - Assorted Mountain Gears (Warm cloths, sleeping bags, tents and hiking boots).
 - Communication gadgets (HF and VHF Radios).
- Assist UWA to develop the basic Park infrastructure
 - Identify and construct one or two ranger posts not covered under PAMSU funding.
 - Construct and repair selected access roads and bridges to the ranger outposts.
 - Provide minimum support to maintain the infrastructure.

5.1.1.5 Improve Park information management systems

- Support Management oriented research to be carried out in the Park.
- Support UWA to improve the existing RMNP information data base for easy access and dissemination (establish Park Resource Center).
- Support staff training in using the UWA in-house **Management Information System** (MIST) programme.

5.1.1.6 Provide good visitor and mountaineering services

- Training in visiting handling customer care, and international languages.
- Construct new huts at NYABITABA, BUJUKU, and KITANDARA.
- Rehabilitate GUY YEOMAN, JOHN MATTE and ELENA HUTS in the Park.
- Support RMS and UWA to establish sound RESCUE Service.

5.1.1.7 Diversify tourism activities

- Sensitise the community about community tourism.

- Identify possible regional circuits including a section in DRC.
- Promote local, national and international markets.
- Identify and develop cultural sites.
- Construct Huts at Lake MAHOMA in the Park.

5.1.1.8 Improve tourism trails

- Identify and rehabilitate damaged areas, e.g. damaged bog areas that need board walks.
- Improve trail design including interpretative/educational aspects.
- Undertake continuous maintenance and monitoring of damaged trails.

5.1.1.9 Improve waste management system at campsites and resting shelters

- Prepare waste management plan.
- Support UWA and RMS to implement the waste management plan.
- Monitor waste management system.

5.1.2 *Activities that will address output 2. Financial viability of RMNP enhanced*

5.1.2.1 Develop and implement financial plan to improve RMNP's ability to meet financial needs

- Use GMP to identify RMNP long-term financing needs and develop a business plan for the RMNP.
- Identify and solicit funding from the private sector and other stakeholders benefiting from the conservation of RMNP for the implementation of the GMP (e.g. companies with brand names Rwenzori).
- Support fund raising through donors' conference.
- Develop project proposals based on GMP, capitalizing on the Rwenzori Mountain World Heritage Site and transboundary status.

5.1.2.2 Develop and implement tourism development plan with appropriate stakeholders to enhance RMNP's tourism potential

- Establish cooperation with Queen Elizabeth National Park (QENP), Semuliki National Park (SNP) and Kibale National Park (KNP) and others in coordinating regional tourism efforts.
- In collaboration with the Uganda Tourism Board (UTB), develop a tourism development plan for RMNP and environs.
- Develop business and utilisation plan for visitor center.
- Implement elements of tourism development plan as and when possible.

5.1.3 *Activities that will address output 3. Mechanisms for assuring sustainable use of in-park resources in operation*

5.1.3.1 Develop and implement resource-use monitoring systems

- Revise ecological monitoring plan.
- Implement revised ecological monitoring plan.
- Collect and analyse baseline data on in-park resource stocks and usage.

5.1.3.2 Enable local communities to realise direct and indirect benefits of the RMNP

- Identify resources for benefit sharing based on policy and demand, responsibilities and timeframe.
- Carry out resource inventory.
- Provide training to communities in Collaborative Forest Management and other CBNRM initiatives.
- Develop and sign MoUs on resource use between park management and local communities.
- Implement revenue sharing programmes.
- Work with other agencies to provide alternative to Park resources.
- Sensitise communities on the indirect benefits resulting out of conserving RMNP.

5.1.3.3 Develop, implement and monitor community resource-use agreements

- Establish internal RMNP mechanisms for monitoring/enforcing agreement implementation.
- Review and revise mechanisms for community monitoring of community resource-use.
- Review and revise pilot resource-use agreements in Rubona and Kazingo Villages; implement agreements.
- Identify additional priority parishes/ridge communities, and establish contact.
- Establish work plan for launching new agreements, using phased approach.
- Build links with and familiarise new communities with resource-use agreement approach.
- Identify and establish cooperation with in-park resource-user groups.
- Launch new agreements in phased approach.
- Review implementation of Rubona and Kazingo Villages agreements done in phase II of the project.
- Implement comprehensive review of resource-use agreements.
- Contribute to revise UWA community resource-use policy based on lessons learnt.

5.1.3.4 Build communication and cooperation with district/sub-counties in environmental planning and management efforts

- Support sub county and district levels meetings to draw consensus on sub county and village environmental action plans.
- Undertake awareness on the need for environmental planning and make available the NEMA guidelines and manuals on environmental planning.

5.1.3.5 Cooperate with district/sub-counties on RMNP focused environmental interventions

- Draw action plan for identified focused environmental interventions.
- Support joint implementation of the plan.

5.1.3.6 Ensure reduced illegal activities in the Park

- Support RMNP to intensify protection patrols.
- Educate communities on existing policies and laws (resource utilisation, CPAI).

- Support UWA and Local Governments to revise and implement Park and Local Government bye laws.
- 5.1.4 *Activities that will address output 4. Effective mechanisms for park-community communication and cooperation established*
- 5.1.4.1 Conduct baseline assessment of communities' knowledge, attitudes and practice regarding conservation, especially in RMNP frontline communities
- Hire local consultant to undertake Knowledge, Attitudes and Practice (KAP) study.
 - Develop terms of reference for the study.
 - Advertise and evaluate the bids.
 - Award and supervise the consultancy.
- 5.1.4.2 Implement a strategy for using CPAI for park-community communication and cooperation
- Review UWA CPAI policy and legislation relating to LPECs.
 - Assist LPEC & CPAI to define their role regarding: park management, communication, law enforcement, etc.
 - Establish ways of making LPEC & CPAI approach relevant to communities close to the Park.
 - Establish ways of involving LPECs in facilitating sustainable use of in-park resources.
 - Develop LPEC action plan.
 - Implement LPEC action plan.
- 5.1.4.3 Develop and implement RMNP conservation education strategy
- Conduct Training of Trainers workshop in environmental education methodologies for RMNP community conservation staff and selected district extensionists and CBOs/NGOs.
 - Provide support to RMNP Community Conservation Rangers (CCRs) and selected district extensionists and CBOs/NGOs in delivering appropriate conservation messages in communities around RMNP through meetings, workshops, drama, radio programmes, exchange visits and publications.
 - Evaluate impact of conservation education activities through follow-up knowledge and attitudes assessment.
- 5.1.4.4 Contribute to development of UWA outreach and education policies and practices
- Develop curriculum/manual for awareness programme (used within as outreach programme).
 - Circulate the curriculum/manual among stakeholders and integrate it in the UWA/NEMA Institutional outreach policies.
- 5.1.5 *Activities that will address output 5. Local government capacity for conservation-focused environmental action and local land use planning strengthened*
- 5.1.5.1 Support establishment and operation of a technical/management committee involving District Environment Officers (DEOs) and appropriate sub-county representatives from the 3 focal districts

- 5.1.5.2 Establish criteria for determining pressure points on RMNP and pinpoint major existing or developing pressure points
- 5.1.5.3 Identify priority sub-counties/villages etc. for sub county and village environmental/local land use planning and management activities, and establish communication
- 5.1.5.4 Support establishment of core planning & management teams in target sub-counties, linked to LPECs
- 5.1.5.5 Hold planning initiation workshops to analyse environmental problems and issues, determine causes and constraints, increase awareness, and enlist support
- 5.1.5.6 Identify key stakeholders in environmental and integrated land use planning and management process
- 5.1.5.7 Build team skills in environmental/land use planning and management, through training opportunities and study visits
- 5.1.5.8 Carry out natural resource and socio-economic baseline surveys and studies to identify and investigate key land-use issues and environmental threats and their causes
- 5.1.5.9 Conduct Participatory Rural Appraisals (PRAs) in target communities to establish the economic and functional values of key natural resources, and the causes of specific threats to them
- 5.1.5.10 Hold stakeholder workshops to devise priorities, objectives and a strategy for environmental management, and to develop a work program for environmental planning
- 5.1.5.11 Implement work program
- 5.1.5.12 Hold additional workshops/public meetings to get feedback to planning recommendations and to secure support
- 5.1.5.13 Integrate environmental management plans with wider district environmental action planning and district development planning
- 5.1.5.14 Reduce damages and injuries to the communities resulting from wild animals
 - Pilot problem and vermin animals intervention measures, e.g. barriers, patrols to scare invading animals etc.
 - Build and strengthen local community/government capacity to handle/control problem animals and vermin.
 - Collect data on problem animals and vermins.
 - Research on and promote less palatable crops to problem animals.
 - Work with the Veterinary Department to control disease outbreaks resulting out of the wild animal contact with livestock and communities.

5.1.6 Activities that will address output 6. Existing and developing pressure points on the watershed functions and properties of RMNP mitigated

5.1.6.1 Identify priority RMNP focused biodiversity conservation and water resources management interventions through environmental planning process (Output 5), and develop practical action plans to achieve them

5.1.6.2 Provide on-going support to sub-counties and the district Water Resources Department in implementing RMNP focused natural resources management activities

5.1.6.3 Maintain database of local NGOs/CBOs with potential to undertake RMNP focused natural resources management activities

5.1.6.4 Build capacity of selected NGOs/CBOs to implement complementary RMNP focused natural resources management activities

- Work with other agencies to provide skills/training in natural resource management such as viable alternative income generation or enterprise development activities.

5.1.6.5 Utilise LPEC structure to facilitate RMNP focused natural resources management action

5.1.7 Activities that will address output 7. Forest Landscape Restoration initiated to offer opportunities for sustainable development outside RMNP

5.1.7.1 Identify degraded areas and select target sites for planting

- Field surveys.
- Mapping.
- Review and understand the land tenancy security at each site.

5.1.7.2 Contract adjacent households and community groups to undertake forest landscape restoration operations in the target areas through on the job training

- Transect slashing.
- Pitting.
- Seed collection.
- Nursery operations.
- Planting and watering.
- Tending operations.

5.1.7.3 Support the selected groups to establish their own nurseries for community and individual household woodlots and sell surplus seedlings to the project for restoration planting in the RMNP

5.1.8 Activities that will address output 8. Regional process and tools for the conservation of the Rwenzori Mountains initiated and developed

5.1.8.1 Facilitate and develop mechanisms for effective communication between RMNP and Parc National des Virunga–Northern Sector (PNV-N)

5.1.8.2 Establish a regional Rwenzori Mountains technical forum for RMNP and PNV-N staff and their major partners

5.1.8.3 Support UWA to strengthen and improve security and safety in RNMP

- Work with relevant agencies to map out potential areas in the Park which were mined and de-mine (remove the explosives).
- Work out a conflict resolution strategy using the trans-boundary initiatives to reduce levels of conflicts with the warring factions.

5.1.8.4 Hold annual regional Rwenzori Mountains technical forum meetings

5.1.8.5 Share expertise and experience between PNV-N and RMCEMP for activities carried out under Outputs 1, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7

- Facilitate and promote the process of tourism exchange by working with immigration offices on either side of the international boundary to improve services.
- Promote exchange of patrols, other technical reports and experiences on conservation issues.

5.1.8.6 Infuse a regional integrated perspective into the RMNP tourism development plan process

5.1.8.7 Provide training in French and Kishwahili to RMNP and English to PNV-N staff

5.1.9 *Activities that will address output 9. Effective project management systems established*

5.1.9.1 Establish project management and communication systems

5.1.9.2 Develop annual work plans

5.1.9.3 Establish Project Monitoring & Evaluation Plan

5.1.9.4 Establish contact with other conservation initiatives in ecoregion

5.1.9.5 Devise work plan for wider ecoregion communication and collaboration

5.1.9.6 Hold Technical Advisory Committee meetings

5.1.9.7 Carry out annual internal project assessments

5.1.9.8 Organise annual project review missions

5.1.9.9 Devise exit strategy

5.1.9.10 Revise project activity program and submit to donor

5.1.9.11 Reporting

5.2 Overall Approach

RMCDP Phases I and II were centrally coordinated by the Ministry of Tourism, Wildlife and Antiquities. The Ministry made an important contribution to ensuring the success of the project and in particular the smooth functioning of the Technical Advisory Committee. However there was a gap of coordination at field level between the project and Uganda National Parks (UNP). To avoid reoccurrence of this event in Phase III, Uganda Wildlife Authority will take control of this responsibility. Raising UWA's level of direct responsibility for project activities will significantly enhance the Authority's commitment to ensuring the success of the project and foster its ownership of the project. This line responsibility will trickle down to project implementation in a variety of practical ways, such as: ensuring that RMNP has a full-time, on-site Warden-in-Charge, providing necessary policy, technical, and financial support, etc. All of these commitments are vital to the success of Phase III.

The approach whereby Phase III project activities will be integrated into the operations of RMNP and the districts will have significant benefits in terms of long-term sustainability of project desired results. The approach will not be to minimise project staff; rather, support will be given to existing UWA and local government staff to enable them to accomplish project activities. The approach to be taken by the project is tied to the fact that management of RMNP is intimately linked with the developing environmental situation beyond its borders. Thus while RMNP does not have the mandate to play a major role in influencing natural resources management outside the Park, it is vital that park management builds strong cooperation with those that do have this mandate, specifically the appropriate local council (LC) levels.

In this regard, the project will, where necessary, provide allowances to local government and UWA staff in accordance with GoU and UWA regulations. The project will also, where necessary, provide support in the form of transportation, fuel, equipment, as well as training and technical advice.

As needed, additional staff will be recruited by one or the other of the implementing agencies (UWA, local government) and efforts will be made to ensure that these posts can be sustained beyond the life of the project. The main exceptions to this approach will be the recruitment of technical assistance staff and consultants by WWF, as well as a small number of administrative staff recruited for the specific purpose of ensuring effective administrative support to project activities.

The new approach which was not in the previous two phases emphasises the involvement and empowerment of the communities in the project implementation. Tailor made contacts will be with local NGOs and CBOs to facilitate community participation. Specific contracts and grants will be available to community groups in implementation for example of interventions on problem animals and crop raids control and forest landscape restoration.

5.3 Project implementation

At the operational level, the project is divided into three major project components. These are:

1) The **"RMNP Component"**, implemented by UWA, comprising activities aimed at achieving Results 1,3 and 4:

Result 1. Management of RMNP strengthened.

Result 3. Mechanisms for assuring sustainable use of in-park resources in operation.

Result 4. Effective mechanisms for park-community communication and cooperation established.

The RMNP component will be managed by the Warden-in-Charge (WIC), RMNP, with technical advice provided by the WWF Site Project Manger (SPM), who will also be the overall site overseer. Terms of reference for the WIC with regard management of the RMNP project component are given in Appendix 5.2. The remainder of the project team for this component will comprise other senior staff of RMNP, in particular the Warden Community Conservation (WCC),

the Warden Law Enforcement (WLE) and Warden Tourism and Warden Research and Monitoring (WR&M), and the WWF Natural Resources Management Officer (NRMO), who will provide technical support for community-related aspects, in particular Results 3 and 4.

This project component will be co-located with the RMNP headquarters. Initially, this will be at Naklinjuju in Kasese, although this will change midway through Phase III when the new park headquarters are constructed.

2) The **“Local Government Component”**, implemented by Kasese, Kabarole, and Bundibugyo Districts Local Governments and selected sub-counties bordering RMNP, and comprising activities aimed at achieving Results 5, 6 and 7. Apparently results 6 and 7 comprise the technical ‘niche’ of WWF, however in order to demonstrate and instil a deliberate practice of ensuring sustainability of these results after the project lifetime as mentioned in section 5.5.1 *Institutional management capacity* the districts will be facilitated to take an active participation on implementation of the two results while WWF takes lead in providing technical guidance and support through the Forest Officer.

Result 5. Local government capacity for conservation focused environmental planning and management strengthened.

Result 6. Existing and developing pressure points on RMNP mitigated.

Result 7. Forest Landscape Restoration initiated to offer opportunities for sustainable development outside RMNP.

The WWF Community Environmental Planning Officer (CEPO) will manage the Local Government component, in collaboration with the District Environmental Officers and the District Technical Planning Committees for the three participating districts. Other local government staff that are likely to be involved in the implementation of this component include the District Planning Officer, District Forestry Officer, the District Extension Coordinator, the District Production Coordinator other members of the District Technical Planning Committee, and various sub-county officials. The natural resources management activities of this project component will receive additional technical inputs from the WWF SPM.

3) And finally, the **“WWF Component”**, for which WWF National Project Coordinator (NPC) will take lead responsibility to promote conservation and financial sustainability for the wider Rwenzori Mountains ecosystem and to integrate this Phase III project with conservation efforts underway throughout the Albertine Rift Montane Forests Ecoregion through Results 2 and 8:

Result 2. Financial viability of RMNP enhanced.

Result 8. Regional process and tools for the conservation of the Rwenzori Mountains initiated and developed.

As in Phases II and I WWF NPC will be responsible for administering financial support to the project. He will also be responsible for providing technical and project administrative support to all project elements, with technical back stopping provided from the WWF Eastern Africa Regional Programme Office (WWF EARPO) based in Nairobi (Result 9).

The regional component – relating to the integration of RMCEMP Phase III into conservation initiatives within the wider Albertine Rift Montane Forests Ecoregion, planning to identify ways in which long-term financial needs of RMNP can be met and the integration of conservation and management efforts on either side of the international border in the Rwenzori Mountains – will be the responsibility of WWF programme office in Kampala assisted by EARPO. Specifically, the National Project Coordinator (NPC) based in Kampala will be responsible for coordinating technical support to RMCEMP. At the project site level, the SPM will be responsible for taking the lead in activities to be carried out under this component.

5.4 Target groups and main beneficiaries

5.4.1 International Communities

The key beneficiaries of these gains will include the international community, national level beneficiaries and the local communities. Since the project aims at supporting conservation and management of globally important biodiversity resources, the international community will be among the first beneficiaries of the project. Many provisions of the global conventions among which are the Convention on Biological Diversity and CITES will be met and carbon sequestration will have increased to address global warming. The tourism industry will be busted to benefit the international community. The catchments' values will enhance viability of the international water bodies (Nile, Lakes Albert and Edward), which are of transboundary, economic and international importance.

5.4.2 Central and Local Government

The Central and Local Governments of Kasese, Kabarole and Bundibugyo will benefit from increased revenue accruing from tourism as a result of a reduced illegal activities, diversification of tourism, improved tourism infrastructure and controlled use of the Park resources. The technical and human resources capacity of the Park and Local Government staff in the project area will be enhanced through training and education programmes. The participation of the stakeholders, in particular politicians from the local governments, will be reinforced in Park management.

5.4.3 Implementing Institutions

The various governments, NGOs and private sector institutions and individuals involved in implementation of different activities in the project, will benefit according to the inputs they will receive from the project. UWA and Local Governments departments of Environment will receive equipment and facilities that will create a better working environment. Staff from the natural resource, tourism and production sectors will be involved in project implementation and will benefit in terms of participating in workshops and receiving training.

5.4.4 Local Communities

The project will facilitate the use of alternative natural resources by the local communities living close to the project areas. The project will therefore address the problem of reducing poverty in the area. Sustainable funding for conservation will also benefit the local communities by boosting the socio economic and enterprise development activities they might get involved in during the project life. Communities living adjacent to the project areas will also benefit from long-term water supply and distribution as a result of the conservation of catchment areas of the Rwenzori ecosystem. Improved tourism and visitor services will boost up tourism revenue, which shall benefit the locals through the revenue sharing programme. Access to cultural sites and support to the communities to get involved in tourism activities through trainings, in particular community tourism, will directly enhance the livelihoods of the community. In short, the project will achieve its goal of conserving and managing rich biodiversity forests of the Rwenzori ecosystem for sustainable development of all stakeholders.

5.5 Sustainability and exit strategy

Noteworthy Phase III sustainability indicators and factors that will help ensure that project outputs do not fail at the withdrawal of donor support are outlined below.

5.5.1 Sustainability criteria

5.5.1.1 Policy support

The policy environment in which the project will operate is largely conducive to the long-term continuation of project results. Of particular significance are the recent local government policy

developments with regard to the District Environmental Action Planning process, and Local Production and Environment Committees. These new frameworks are a powerful mechanism for ensuring sustainability of project outcomes at the community and local government level. It will also be important that project activities involving these mechanisms are flexible and appropriate to local circumstances. Phase III will achieve this through a comprehensive review and development stage for the use of LPECs (already begun in Phase II), and measures to ensure that the LPEC approach is made relevant to frontline communities. The DEAP process will be launched through a comprehensive development period involving inputs from a variety of stakeholders, site visits, and field studies all aimed at ensuring that the process that evolves is appropriate to local conditions.

There is still need for further development and refining of the UWA's policies with regard to in-park community resource-use and instituting park-community dialogue. Contributions by the project towards this process are incorporated into the project activity plan.

5.5.1.2 Institutional management capacity

A strong feature of the Phase III design is the emphasis on building capacity of institutions already operating in the project environment. A number of important practical steps have been taken in order to support this. Most importantly, it is intended that project implementation will be undertaken *by and within* the host institutions themselves, not by a separate project infrastructure. The role of the project will be limited to providing support and technical assistance with the aim of expanding the capacity of host institutions. As a separate entity 'the project' will only exist in order to manage the support being channelled towards these institutions. The rationale is that for host institutions to be able and willing to sustain project outputs and build lasting capacity, they must be allowed to learn by doing, rather than by simply watching.

The policy of making the project an integral part of host institutions should also help to avoid the type of situation where friction between the project and host institutions develops when the project is extremely well resourced, while host institutions are struggling hard to maintain their own meagre commitments. Although the project will not assume the overall financial responsibilities of RMNP, direct costs associated with the implementation of the activities of the project will met as appropriate.

5.5.1.3 Economic and financial viability

At present RMNP, the institution that is the primary focus of the project, is unable to meet its own operating costs from park revenues. This leads to a host of problems including poor working conditions, low staff morale, and an inability to fulfil the essential tasks associated with managing a national park. While it is expected that project support may alleviate some of these problems in the short-term, long-term financial viability is of great concern.

No detailed economic analysis has been carried out for any of the RMNP based project activities. Therefore a financial needs assessment for RMNP is included as one of the project activities. This is to be followed by a planning process that will identify ways in which long-term financial needs can be met (see Result 2).

For activities that are being implemented by the local government authorities outside the park, finance is expected to come from existing sources. The environmental action planning process will focus on establishing priority actions at a scale that can be financed from existing budgets. Field-based natural resource management activities will be selected during the local government environmental action planning process using favourable economics (i.e. activities which local people will want and be able to implement using their own resources) as one of the selection criteria.

5.5.1.4 Socio-cultural factors

An understanding of the socio-cultural factors that influence local communities' motivation, participation, and acceptance of project activities is crucial to the sustainability and diffusion of project outcomes. Issues such as land ownership, gender and status differences, and age group

participation, all need to be taken into account when planning project activities. In this regard, the local government environmental planning process to be undertaken under Result 5 contains provisions for investigating and developing solutions to these and other socio-cultural issues that might influence the success of natural resource management activities. These provisions include socio-economic field studies, PRA exercises, and communication and cooperation with key stakeholders (e.g. women's groups, agricultural co-operatives, etc.). The role of the LPECs is also built-in to both the local government's environmental planning and the RMNP's general management planning processes, ensuring adequate community involvement in both exercises.

5.5.2 Exit strategy

The project will exit through a phased approach. There are several components that are anticipated to be completed by the end of the project and for which an exit strategy is by definition not relevant.

For those components that are by definition on going (various aspects of day-to-day management of the National Park, maintaining and developing good relations with communities, transboundary work etc.), the exit strategy is based on building on already existing structures and institutions (as the project will strive not to create new, parallel structures) and in particular UWA, the local governments and communities' organisations and structures. The various components with corresponding results will be handed over to the mandated implementing institutions as and when they are accomplished. The mid-term evaluation will set the pace for the exit based on the final exit strategy developed in Result 9. The project equipment will be handed over to the stakeholders who have hitherto been using them. The WWF employees will be phased out gradually as the project comes to the end; it is however anticipated that some aspects of the programme will need continued support beyond year 5. This includes support to local communities to engage into Collaborative Forest Management (and in a more general term, Community Based Natural Resource Management) as well as the Education component. Should the project evaluation, UWA and the local governments recommend extension of parts of the programme based on sound evaluation of past progress and perspective, such request will be integrated into output 2 (financial sustainability) before the end of Phase III.

6 INPUTS

6.1 Personnel

A project organisation chart is shown in Appendix 5. Various key positions are briefly described below.

6.1.1 Long-term contractors

Working through EARPO, WWF will recruit and retain a total of five long-term contractors for the project. All positions will be full-time and for the full five-year duration of the project, subject to the findings and recommendations of the mid-term evaluation carried out at the end of Year 3, which will map out activities to be accomplished in the final two years of the project.

6.1.1.1 WWF National Project Coordinator and Chief Technical Advisor (NPC)

The National Project Coordinator will head up WWF's technical assistance to the project. The NPC will also be ultimately responsible for overseeing project management and administration by supervising the Site Project Manager. The NPC will be a senior park management specialist and landscape ecologist who will have lead responsibility for advising the RMNP Warden-in-Charge and UWA Director Field Operations on the implementation of the RMNP project component, especially Results 1, 2 and 8. Detailed terms of reference for the CPC are included in Appendix 5.1.1. The NPC will be located in Kampala with 60% travel time to RMNP park headquarters. The position will be for five years. This is an important position doubling WWF presence in the country as well as for the project implementation. Two more WWF implemented projects are expected to start in year 2004 and the administrative and other technical support cost of this position will be

shared among the projects accordingly. The NPC shall liaise with UWA and other bodies in the GoU to make sure other policies, strategic plans or priorities are not conflicting and that they actually promote WWF/UWA objectives in the Rwenzori and the country at large.

6.1.1.2 Site Project Manager (SPM)

The SPM will report to the NPC and will be the primary counterpart to the RMNP Warden in-charge and advice and provide support to the Community Conservation Warden on the implementation of activities designed to achieve Results 3 and 4. Terms of reference for the SPM are given in Appendix 5.1.2. The SPM will be located at RMNP headquarters.

6.1.1.3 Community Environmental Planning Officer (CEPO)

The CEPO will report to the SPM and will have responsibility for managing the local government component (Results 5, 6 and 7), in particular for providing training and technical support to the District Environment Officers, District Technical Planning Committees, and the Environmental Planning and Management Teams established at the sub-county level in the three participating districts. Terms of reference for the CEPO are given in Appendix 5.1.3. The CEPO will be stationed at the park headquarters in Kasese District, but will maintain a desk in each of the participating district administrations and will conduct extensive fieldwork in all three districts.

6.1.1.4 Community Extension Officer (CEO)

The CEO will report to the SPM and will have responsibility for supporting district environment and extension officers and other relevant local government staff on extension work carried out to achieve the project's natural resources planning and management activities (Result 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7), as well as other community-related project activities. He will give substantive support to both the SPM and CEPO at field level. Terms of Reference for the CEO are given in Appendix 5.1.4. The CEO will be located at RMNP park headquarters and will conduct extensive fieldwork. Efforts will be made to recruit a suitably qualified Ugandan with vast experience on ICD for this post.

6.1.1.5 Forest Officer (FO)

The FO will report to the SPM and will have responsibility for supporting the District forest service and environment offices to develop strategy and action plan for Forest Landscape restoration. In particular he/she will work with community members and private sector in addressing the land tenure and tree tenure issues and devise frameworks for community woodlots and village plantations. He/she will focus on result 7 but also give substantive support to entire team on experiences outside the country on FLR extension work. The terms of reference for this position will be worked out in the preliminary stage of the project implementation as it is not clear at the moment whether the task can be taken through a consultancy or long term full time job.

6.1.2 *Consultants*

WWF in cooperation with UWA will identify and recruit short-term consultants to provide specific skills not available from full-time project staff or staff of collaborating institutions. The paragraph below provides an estimate of the likely consultant requirements during Phase III. Additional requirements are likely to be identified by project staff as Phase III progresses, especially relating to natural resources management activities. These are provided for in the budget. Where possible, preference will be shown to suitably qualified consultants from within Uganda or from the region.

It is anticipated that a number of consultants with a range of expertise will be needed to implement the project. Based upon the activities planned in this proposal for the first three years, several consultancies are foreseen, including:

- An environmental education specialist consultancy.
- Technical assistance in training district staff, LPEC members, and other key stakeholders in participatory rural appraisal and other important techniques for DEAP activities.
- Community Based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM)

- Tourism development plans technical assistance.
- Consultancy studies on cultural sites, and community tourism.
- Technical assistance with the aerial survey of RMNP boundary and target sub-counties, and related analysis.
- Technical assistance on resource inventory and participatory monitoring.
- Identification and removal of mines and explosives in the Park.
- Frameworks and strategies for implementation of FLR.

6.1.3 WWF EARPO and WWF Norway technical supervision

In addition to these specific technical inputs, WWF will provide technical supervision and oversight of the project through EARPO and WWF Norway. EARPO will be a member of the project Technical Advisory Committee (also on behalf of WWF Norway), and will participate in all major project review and planning processes, such as the annual project assessment and forward planning exercise. EARPO will take the lead in integrating the project into wider conservation efforts throughout the Albertine Rift Montane Forests Ecoregion (Result 8), as well as facilitating communication and cooperation with WWF's international conservation networks, especially those specializing in forest and biodiversity conservation, protected area management, and community participation in conservation. Based on experience from Southern Africa in particular, WWF Norway will take particular responsibility for integrating experiences from Community Based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM) in the Rwenzori project and such building capacity in UWA. EARPO will provide support to the Uganda Programme Office in facilitating access to relevant information and data, identifying and recruiting consultants, and organizing exchange visits to other WWF sponsored project activities.

6.1.4 Project administration

WWF will have lead responsibility for overseeing project administration, management and finances, under the supervision of the Project Technical Advisory Committee and in consultation with the UWA Executive Director. WWF will also be responsible for establishing the detailed project administrative systems (in consultation with NORAD and UWA). After consideration of various alternatives for overall project organisation, the current proposal is based on a model where WWF Norway has a contractual relationship with NORAD in Oslo.

At national level the NPC will have lead responsibility for overseeing project administration and management, under the supervision of the Technical Advisory Committee and in consultation with the UWA Executive Director. Administrative backstopping will be provided by EARPO and WWF Norway, which will also be responsible for establishing project administrative systems (in consultation with NORAD and UWA).

In addition, WWF will recruit a project administrative support team some of which will be located in Kampala and others at RMNP park headquarters and will be responsible for providing general administrative support for project activities, including financial accounting, procurement, secretarial support, etc. The administrative support team will be headed by a Project Administrator/Accountant, whose terms of reference are given in Appendix 5.5. Other members of this team will include secretarial staff and drivers. An important goal will be to keep the support team to the minimum possible number to ensure efficient support for project implementation without introducing staff positions that should rightly be built into RMNP and local government infrastructures to ensure sustainability.

6.1.5 The Technical Advisory Committee (TAC)

The entire project will be overseen by a Technical Advisory Committee. The Technical Advisory Committee will meet annually and will be responsible for:

- Reviewing and approving the project's annual work plan and budget.

- Reviewing the implementation of project activities and ensuring that the project's objectives are being fulfilled. A key role of the committee will be the regular monitoring of project performance against the established PPM indicators
- Promoting cross-sectoral involvement in, and inter-departmental coordination of, project activities.
- Promoting awareness of and support for the project both locally and nationally.

A representative of UWA will chair the TAC. Members of the committee, which will have a maximum of 12 members (excluding the secretariat), will be:

Technical Advisory Committee	
UWA – Executive Director	Chief Administrative Officer - Kasese District
ECOTRUST Representative	Chief Administrative Officer - Kabarole District
WWF-EARPO Representative	Chief Administrative Officer - Bundibugyo District
NEMA - District Support Unit Representative	District Environment Officers (3) - Representative
IUCN Country Office Representative	
Secretariat for Technical Advisory Committee: Warden-in-Charge, RMNP; WWF National Programme Coordinator	

Other members of the project team will only be required to attend the TAC when called upon to present reports/answer questions concerning their areas of responsibility. The Terms of Reference for the Technical Advisory Committee are detailed in Appendix 5.3.

6.1.6 Government of Uganda Personnel

One of most important features of the project approach in Phase III is that, unlike previous phases, the project will be integrated as far as possible into existing government structures, rather than creating parallel project structures (see section 5.5.1, *Sustainability criteria*). The implication of this is that government officers, particularly from RMNP and the three districts, will have a crucial role to play in implementing project activities. In particular, as is illustrated in the project organization chart in Appendix 4 specific government officers are expected to oversee the execution of both the RMNP and local government components of the project, working alongside WWF technical assistance personnel. However, it is appreciated that these government officers already have their own full-time jobs to accomplish, and they are not in a position to take on additional work responsibilities. Rather, the project is founded on the premise that it will provide a facilitating mechanism to enable government staff to better perform and accomplish their *existing* work responsibilities, rather than giving them new ones. The consequence is that this project proposal does not define specific technical terms of reference for those government personnel who are expected to play a significant role in project operations.

The only exception to this is the Warden-in-Charge RMNP, who as, working alongside the SPM, has a more substantive role in overseeing the management of project activities, in particular those carried out under the RMNP component. The following section provides a proposal for the terms of reference for the WIC in undertaking these project management and supervision functions. The technical job responsibilities for the WIC remain as defined by UWA and, as with other GOU officers involved in the project, are largely unchanged by the existence of the project.

6.1.7 Project management responsibilities, Warden-in-Charge, Rwenzori Mountains National Park

Working alongside the SPM, the Warden-in-Charge RMNP will be responsible for overseeing and supervising the management of RMCEMP Phase III, in particular, but not exclusively, the RMNP component. In undertaking these responsibilities, the WIC will report to the Technical Advisory Committee. The WIC's technical park management responsibilities remain as defined by UWA headquarters, her/his line manager.

In collaboration with the SPM the WIC:

- Oversees day-to-day project activities, in particular under the RMNP component (Results 1-4) and especially development of the annual work plan and synergies with the project document and ensures that project management is making progress towards the stated objectives. In particular, oversee the development and implementation of annual work plans, and the implementation of annual internal project assessments. Agrees the appropriate training for capacity building. Oversees the development and implementation of training courses to build capacity.
- Ensures that good working relationships are established and maintained with project participants, partner agencies, and other relevant organizations. In addition, promotes the establishment of strong working relationships with regional organizations and agencies, especially with the Parc National des Virunga in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Oversees the identification, and development of terms of reference for short-term technical assistance. Agrees the material requirements of the project. Oversees development and implementation of the monitoring and evaluation plan.
- Acts as a member of the secretariat to the project Technical Advisory Committee. As part of the TAC secretariat, takes a lead in preparing routine project progress reports.

6.2 Materials, equipment and infrastructure

6.2.1 Local procurement

Materials that need to be procured include: Timber, Cement, Water pipes for water gravity supply scheme, Roofing materials for the mountain huts and ranger posts, Bridges and access road construction materials.

Furniture that are needed for the park infrastructure include: Office Chairs, Secretary Chairs, Conference Chairs, Office Desks, Computer Desks, Conference Tables, Book Shelves, Store Cupboards/Wall Unit.

Equipment necessary for the project covers a range of items, including: Computers Desk tops, Laptops, Printers, Scanners, Stationery, Safes (1), Photocopiers (1), Filing Cabinets (metallic), Telephone handsets, Motorcycle, Overhead projector, Power point projector.

6.2.2 International procurement

Phase II had two reliable vehicles (Nissan Patrols) and two lower quality vehicles, a Toyota Land cruiser and a Toyota Hilux. At the end of the phase, these latter two vehicles were transferred to RMNP and when the project closed due to insecurity the Nissans were also taken over by UWA and retained in Kampala. No vehicles were retained for phase III.

In Phase III, vehicles will be purchased as per the project budget (Appendix 6). A condition for the provision of vehicles will be that the implementing agencies agree to assign vehicles exclusively to the project activities for which they are intended, for the duration of the project. These vehicles will be handed over to the implementing agencies on final completion of the project. Below is the list of equipment expected to be purchased in phase II:

Vehicles; Nissan Patrol (Station Wagon), Toyota Hilux (Double Cabin) (2),.

Communication equipment: VHF Motorola hand sets, HF Base station Radios (Codan), HF Mobile, Radios (Codan), DVD Video Cameras, Still photo Cameras, Relevant computer software, Television set, Internet & email software

Infrastructure: The construction of the new park headquarters is a critical component of efforts to achieve Result 1. This activity will be undertaken by World Bank PAMSU Project and is likely to extend until the middle of Phase III. In the meantime the Rwenzori Mountaineering Services is

hosting RMNP in one of their buildings and a Uniport. The project will provide financial support to rent a suitable temporary office accommodation in Kasese or another appropriate location. The following are the key infrastructure developments for phase III: Construction of one or two ranger posts, Construction and repair of selected access roads and bridges to the ranger outposts, Construction of new Units at NYABITABA, BUJUKU, and KITANDARA and the rehabilitation of GUY YEOMAN, JOHN MATTE and ELENA Huts.

6.3 Budget

6.3.1 Illustrative Summary Budget

The table below shows a summary of the main budget categories for the proposed Rwenzori Mountains Conservation and Environmental Management Project. Costs for major infrastructure development are not included in the budget as this is taken care of in the ongoing World Bank funded Protected Area Management for Sustainable Utilisation project (PAMSU).

Table 3 Illustrative summary budget for the proposed RMCEMP (figures in NOK and USD).

Category		Sum	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Capital expenditure	NOK	2,186,640	1,552,335	378,525	121,275	64,680	69,825
	USD	297,502	211,202	51,500	16,500	8,800	9,500
Recurrent expenditures	NOK	19,112,574	3,991,047	4,156,860	3,794,675	3,449,899	3,707,228
	USD	2,600,350	543,000	565,559	516,282	471,124	504,385
Management fee (WWF Norway)	NOK	1,703,937	443,471	362,831	313,276	281,166	302,164
	USD	231,828	60,336	49,365	42,623	38,394	41,111
Total Project Costs	NOK	23,003,151	5,986,852	4,898,216	4,229,226	3,795,746	4,079,217
	USD	3,129,680	814,538	666,424	575,405	518,318	554,996

NOK = Norwegian Kroner, USD – United States Dollars, 1 USD = 7.35 NOK

The detailed budget breakdown is shown in Appendix 6. There may be changes in the budget as the project progresses, for instance after a mid-term evaluation in year 3.

7 ASSUMPTIONS AND RISKS

7.1 Assumptions

The Phase III project planning workshop and matrix established a series of conditions required to ensure project success. These are given in the table below.

Table 4 Assumptions for the Rwenzori Mountains Conservation and Environmental Management Project (RMCEMP).

IMPORTANT ASSUMPTIONS: EXTERNAL FACTORS
<p><i>To achieve Overall Goal</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Rwenzori Mountains remain effectively protected on both sides of the international border.
<p><i>To achieve Project Purpose</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Donors are willing to fund infrastructure development components of park management plan. ▪ Donor contributions to RMNP are coordinated.

IMPORTANT ASSUMPTIONS: EXTERNAL FACTORS

To achieve Results

- On-farm natural resources alternatives lead to reduced offtake of in-park resources.
- RMNP is adequately and competently staffed.
- Continuity of RMNP staffing maintained.
- UWA is stabilized and provides necessary support to RMNP.
- Government contribution to RMNP is assured.
- Legal and illegal resource-users can be identified and collaborated with.
- Park and communities are willing to work together.
- There is no major influx of new people.
- Adequate and appropriate land is available for RMNP HQ development.
- UWA supports project implementation.
- RMNP staff are committed to project implementation.
- District councils support project implementation.
- There is a conducive policy environment.
- All parties will fulfil their contractual terms.

7.2 Risks

The risk that RMCEMP supported activities will cease at the end of the project life may be estimated to be moderate. The project is designed for 5 years, and will emphasize capacity building and development for the district and lower local government levels civil servants to ensure ongoing activities continue beyond project closure. The district authorities did indicate commitment for continued support during phase III design workshops and consultations. Since most of the ongoing project activities will be integrated in the lead institutions from the beginning, there should be no difficulty in absorbing these activities and associated costs into the districts' and UWA annual budgets when the project ends.

The Government of Uganda is strongly committed to biodiversity conservation and environmental protection in general. This is demonstrated by the numerous national policies and legislations already in place. Ultimately one can say there is little risk that the government might change its position in near future. However, commitment at district and community levels remains less clear than from central government. Since the project is specifically designed to increase these commitments, risks will be minimised through promotion of effective participation of all stakeholders in project implementation.

Human pressures on park resources are driven by rapidly expanding populations with no alternative sources of income. If population growth and demand continue to outstrip resource production, then the project may have only limited success. However, this is a problem facing biodiversity conservation worldwide. While Uganda's population is estimated to be growing at more than 2.5% per annum, there are indications that government is beginning to undertake aggressive family planning, which could significantly lower the population pressure on natural resources. The poverty action plan and plan for the modernization of agriculture are some of the key government policies to address sustainable use of natural resource for economic development.

The Log-Frame in Appendix 2 contains a set of assumptions, which the project will have to face. The Project will, in the first six months, design a set of indicators to show how the assumptions or risks will be overcome during project life. Indicators will include targets as well as process indicators. As most of the activities will be implemented through contractual arrangements, contracts will also contain provisions for indicators of success.

7.3 Preconditions

- Financial inputs are available on time.
- Good cooperation is assured from all key stakeholders.
- Competent NGOs/CBOs are available and willing to work with the project.
- Government and non-government extension services around RMNP exist, can be identified, and are receptive to support.
- Security is restored in and around RMNP.
- Suitably qualified persons willing and able to work with the project are available.

8 REPORTING AND MONITORING

8.1 Reporting

Technical reports will be submitted to NORAD and WWF International every six months. Financial reports will be submitted every three months. The formats will be according to the standards required by the respective institutions. A detailed reporting schedule, including inception report, evaluation reports, final reports etc. will be agreed upon as part of project initiation.

8.2 Monitoring and Indicators

8.2.1 Progress indicators

Provisional Objectively Verifiable Indicators (OVIs), together with their proposed Means of Verification, have been established and are given in the Project Planning Matrix (Appendix 2). Since project performance will be measured against these OVIs, it is both desirable and necessary that the project team itself have the opportunity to revisit and revalidate them at an early stage of project implementation. This important exercise will be a key stage in the development of the project's Monitoring and Evaluation Plan. New indicators will be established where proposed indicators are unrealistic or difficult to measure. Gaps will be filled where indicators have not been established. In addition, since there are likely to be many instances where baseline data against which change can be detected and measured is insufficient, the project team will need to establish reference baselines for OVIs wherever necessary. Such considerations of measurability will inevitably influence the choice and final definition of the OVIs themselves.

This plan will, where possible, build on the project monitoring and evaluation systems established in Phase II. The revised project logframe, together with the monitoring and evaluation plan, will be submitted to the project Technical Advisory Committee (SC) for review and approval. The role of the Technical Advisory Committee in monitoring project performance against established indicators will, therefore, be established at an early stage. The SC secretariat will devise systems whereby the committee will be able to track indicators routinely.

In addition to the monitoring of indicators that will be laid out in the M&E plan, Phase III incorporates the following specific monitoring activities:

- Activity 5.1.3.1: Implementation of the in-park ecological monitoring plan. This activity will be carried out by RMNP management, and will be the major mechanism through which management will track the implementation of the community resource-use agreements and the impact of the agreements on resource stocks and critical biodiversity and habitats.
- Activity 5.1.3.3: This activity includes provision for the establishment by RMNP of additional social/process monitoring mechanisms for overseeing and regulating the implementation of in-park resource-use agreements.

- Also under Activity 5.1.3.3, support will be provided to strengthen the communities' own (participatory) monitoring of in-park resource-use.

An important event in the ongoing project monitoring process will be the annual internal project assessment exercise. This assessment will enable the project team to take a more introspective and analytical view of project progress, successes and failures, and to use lessons learned in the revision of future activities through the annual planning cycle. Internal project assessments will be linked to the annual external reviews (see next section), as well as to a meeting of the Technical Advisory Committee.

8.3 Evaluations

The Phase III Plan of Operations (Appendix 3) and project budget provide for an annual project review exercise. There is an increasing body of opinion that frequent evaluations by smaller teams provide a more constructive and timely method of enhancing project effectiveness and impact, than the traditional mid-term and final evaluation arrangement. Coupled with the project's own internal assessment exercise, annual reviews will enable the project team to respond rapidly to changing circumstances and lessons learned, and in particular, to adapt project activities to the changing environs and security situation in particular in the region. They will also provide an opportunity to inject expertise and experience from other similar project initiatives, particularly from those operating within the same Albertine Rift Montane Forest ecoregion. The reviews will be carried out by two to three specialists, at least one of whom will be drawn from within the WWF network and another drawn from outside the network and in particular key national institutions in this case UWA. Representation in the evaluation from other WWF projects being implemented in the Albertine Rift Montane Forest ecoregion will be included as appropriate.

The annual reviews will be focused on issues that are especially important at the particular stage of the project cycle, and the review team members will be selected accordingly. The following annual reviews are notable in this respect:

End Year 2 Review: includes a review of the pilot resource-use agreements in Rubona and Kazingo Parishes (Activity 5.1.3.3).

End Year 3 Review (Mid-term Evaluation): definition of project exit strategy, to ensure a smooth transition and sustainability of project impact.

End Year 4 Review: includes a review of the RMNP general management plan.

End Year 5 Review (Final Evaluation): includes a comprehensive review of the resource-use agreements and their implementation (Activity 5.1.3.3).

Additional focal areas for the reviews will be established according to particular needs identified by the project team and/or the Technical Advisory Committee.

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