

**Mount Elgon Integrated  
Conservation and Development  
Project (MEICDP) :**

**External Evaluation**

**Final Report**

**By**

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**31 March 2001**

## Preface

This is the final version of the report on the external evaluation of the MEICDP. A draft of the report was discussed with representatives of all parties involved at the debriefing of the evaluation team at the Netherlands Embassy in Nairobi on Friday February 16, 2001. A preliminary draft of the conclusions and recommendations was presented for discussion during a debriefing by the evaluation team at project level in Kitale on Saturday 10 February. Present at this debriefing were representatives of KWS, FD and PMU. The team has assessed the valuable comments it received and incorporated them when necessary and possible. Among the comments there were some useful requests for additional analysis, which could not be followed up due to the short time-span of the evaluation.

A great many people have been instrumental in helping the evaluation team to do its work in a relatively short period. These include the people of the communities in the project area, the staff of the PMU, RNE and IUCN, officials in government departments at district as well as national level, and staff of NGOs and other agencies active in the project area and at national level. The team highly appreciates the inputs provided by all of them. We hope that this evaluation will prove of use in the further enhancement of sustainable use of the natural resources of the Mount Elgon ecosystem.

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## Contents

|  |    |
|--|----|
| Preface.....   | i  |
| Abbreviations.....   | iv |
| Executive summary.....   | v  |
| 1. Introduction.....   | 1  |
| 1.1 The external evaluation.....   | 1  |
| 1.2 Methodology.....   | 1  |
| 1.3 This report.....   | 2  |
| 2. Context.....  | 2  |
| 2.1 The Mount Elgon ecosystem.....                                       | 2  |
| 2.2 Threats to the Mount Elgon ecosystem.....                            | 4  |
| 2.3 Institutional environment.....                                       | 7  |
| 3. Basic information with respect to MEICDP.....                         | 8  |
| 3.1 The project: objectives, outputs, sub-programmes and activities..... | 8  |
| 3.2 Donor policy and the evolution of MEICDP.....                        | 10 |
| 3.3 Project formulation and preparation.....                             | 11 |
| 3.4 Institutional arrangements.....                                      | 11 |
| 3.5 Characteristics of the project approach.....                         | 12 |
| 3.6 Constraints.....   | 12 |
| 4. Achievements and problems.....  | 13 |
| 4.1 Sub-programme 1: Collaborative Natural Resources Management.....     | 13 |
| 4.2 Sub-programme 2: Community Capacity Building.....                    | 16 |
| 4.3 Sub-programme 3: Rural Livelihood Improvement.....                   | 19 |
| 4.4 Sub-programme 4: Tourism.....  | 20 |
| 4.5 Sub-programme 5: Policy.....   | 22 |
| 5. Conclusions and recommendations.....                                  | 23 |
| 5.1 Overall conclusions and recommendations.....                         | 23 |
| 5.2 Recommendations with regard to sub-programmes.....                   | 26 |

## Appendices

1. ToR of the external evaluation
2. Programme of the mission
3. References
4. Cost-neutral extension

## Abbreviations

|           |  |
|-----------|--|
| CAP       | Community Action Plan  |
| CBO       | Community Based Organisation   |
| CCF       | Chief Conservator of Forests   |
| CMC       | Collaborative Management Committee                                       |
| CCT       | Community Conservation Team  |
| CTA       | Chief Technical Adviser  |
| DFO       | District Forest Officer  |
| DMU       | District Management Unit   |
| DPC       | District Project Coordinator   |
| DRSRS     | Department for Resource Surveys and Remote Sensing                       |
| EARO      | East Africa Regional Office  |
| ECA       | East African Cooperation Authority                                       |
| FD        | Forest Department  |
| FR        | Forest Reserve   |
| GIS       | Geographical Information Systems   |
| GoK       | Government of Kenya  |
| IPDA      | Ideal Planning and Documentation Associates                              |
| IUCN EARO | World Conservation Union, East Africa Regional Office                    |
| KARI      | Kenya Agricultural Research Institute                                    |
| KEFRI     | Kenya Forestry Research Institute  |
| KENGO     | Kenya Energy and Environment Organisation                                |
| KFWG      | Kenya Forests Working Group  |
| KIE       | Kenya Institute of Education   |
| KIFCON    | Kenya Indigenous Forestry Conservation Project                           |
| KWS       | Kenya Wildlife Service   |
| MECDP     | Mount Elgon Conservation and Development Project (Uganda)                |
| MEICDP    | Mt Elgon Integrated Conservation and Development Project (Kenya)         |
| MENOWECTO | Mt Elgon and North West Kenya Eco-tourism Promotion Ltd                  |
| MENP      | Mt Elgon National Park   |
| MENR      | Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources                            |
| MOARD     | Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development                            |
| MOE       | Ministry of Education  |
| MOPIA     | Memorandum of Project Implementation Agreement                           |
| MOU       | Memorandum of Understanding  |
| MPT       | Management Planning Team   |
| NEKEKI    | NGO  |
| NGO       | Non Governmental Organisation  |
| NPSC      | National Project Steering Committee                                      |
| NRC       | Non – Residential Cultivation  |
| NRM       | Natural Resources Management   |
| PFD       | Project Formulation Document   |
| PFO       | Provincial Forest Officer  |
| PM        | Project Manager  |
| PMU       | Project Management Unit  |
| PPCSA     | Permanent Presidential Commission on Soil Conservation and Afforestation |
| PRA       | Participatory Rural Appraisal  |
| RNE       | Royal Netherlands Embassy  |
| SOK       | Survey of Kenya  |
| RDA       | Rural Development Adviser  |
| ToR       | Terms of Reference   |
| Vi        | A Kitale-based Agro-forestry Project                                     |
| WWF       | World Wildlife Fund  |

## Executive summary

This report is based on the external evaluation of the Mount Elgon Integrated Conservation and Development Project carried out from 29 January to 16 February 2001 by a team of three independent consultants. The evaluation included interviews at the national level and a field visit to the project area of nine days. The report explores the context in which the project is carried out, and concludes that there is a conspicuous need for an integrated conservation and development effort in the project area, given the present state of the Mount Elgon ecosystem and the threats it is confronted with.

Next, an overview of the objectives, expected outputs, sub-programmes and activities of the project is given. Basic information is presented on the project's history. Progressive decline in long-term donor commitment is documented. Changes in the policy of the Netherlands Government have forced the project to emphasise obtaining short term, tangible results. The institutional arrangements governing the implementation of the project are explored, and the team observes that these have not always functioned satisfactorily. This has resulted in delays in project implementation and other difficulties. Some fundamental characteristics of the approach of the project are identified. These include working through existing institutions instead of creating parallel structures and building up implementing capacity at project level, caution in funding of recurrent costs of partner agencies, and motivating staff of those agencies by offering training opportunities. In its conclusions, the team observes that it has not been easy for the project to use this approach. At the same time, continuing to work along these lines is considered by the team to be a key factor to sustainability of project results.

The report goes on to identify the main constraints the project has been confronted with. Obviously, the context of the threats to the Mount Elgon ecosystem is the major constraint – however, it is at the same time the very reason for existence of the project. At the implementation level, the constraints are:

- progressive reduction of donor commitment;
- inflexible logical framework planning contrasting with the flexible process approach which was to be adopted;
- delays in arrival of project equipment due to a deficient agreement with the Government of Kenya which does not allow for duty free import and VAT exemption; from the perspective of for instance field officers implementing the sub-programme on livelihoods, the project had therefore been operational for only just over a year at the time of this review (February 2001);
- flaws in project design;
- an attitude of dependency among local communities due to past relief efforts.

Subsequently, an overview is given of the achievements obtained under the five sub-programmes, and of the problems encountered. The underlying causes for successes and failures are analysed. It is concluded that promising results have been produced, notwithstanding the significant constraints listed above. These results are found amongst others in the areas of:

- strengthening of the knowledge base about the Mount Elgon;
- capacity building of local institutions and communities;
- strengthening of the tourist infrastructure and contributions to policy development in the area of conservation and development.

Nevertheless, there is still a long way to go, especially in establishing collaborative natural resource management involving local communities – an objective which requires long term

commitment. It is concluded that if external support is not continued, several expected results will not materialise, such as effective boundary demarcation of the Chebyuk excision, the integrity of the entire forest reserve boundary on Mount Elgon, and involvement of local communities in natural resource management.

On the basis of its findings, the evaluation team urges IUCN and RNE to adopt a pro-active approach towards securing external funding from a new donor for a follow-up project. Furthermore, it is recommended that RNE grant a budget-neutral extension until 31 December 2001. In addition, overall conclusions and recommendations with respect to a follow-up project are presented, as well as some recommendations regarding sub-programmes.

## **1. Introduction**

### **1.1 The external evaluation**

This external evaluation of the Mount Elgon Integrated Conservation and Development Project (MEICDP) was commissioned by the current donor of the project, the Royal Netherlands Embassy (RNE) in Nairobi. The terms of reference of the evaluation team are included in this report as appendix 1.

The evaluation team was surprised to find that at the national level the major implementing partners of the project, the Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS) and the Forest Department (FD) had not been consulted in advance about the terms of reference for the evaluation.<sup>1</sup> The team provided them with copies of its TOR during the interviews it had with their representatives. In the discussions that followed, both partners informed the team that in their view the major issues to be covered by the evaluation are adequately represented in the TOR.

Thus, fortunately, no major misunderstandings arose from this omission. Nevertheless, the evaluation team considers it to be a symptom of the lack of clarity of roles and division of tasks which has been a recurrent phenomenon during the implementation of the project. In the opinion of the team, IUCN – being the contracting partner for the project – should have liaised with the KWS and FD about the evaluation.

Before departure to Kitale, the team also experienced some minor logistical problems which it ascribes mainly to the fact that RNE has assigned only one part-time staff member to the follow-up of ongoing activities (notably projects in the area of environment) under the former bilateral programme with Kenya which is currently being phased out. These logistical issues were solved, and the mission was subsequently implemented according to plan and without further problems.

The team selected to implement the external evaluation was composed of Beatrice Khamati – Njenga, independent consultant (environmental education, appropriate technology, renewable energy), Mineke Laman, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, team-leader (community based natural resource management, institutional development) and Patrick Milimo, independent consultant (forestry).

### **1.2 Methodology**

The evaluation mission took place from Monday 29 January to Friday 16 February 2001. A detailed programme of the mission and of the persons met is attached in appendix 2. Immediately upon the start of the evaluation, the team received a comprehensive set of documentation about the project, prepared by IUCN. The TOR and project documentation provided guidance as to which institutions, resource persons and activities to select for interviews and visits.

In order to be able to move independently, the team was provided with a vehicle and a driver for the full duration of the mission. The first three days of the mission were used for briefings, interviews and document evaluation in Nairobi. On Thursday 1 February the team travelled to Kitale, where it stayed for nine days.

The programme in Kitale was drawn up by the team on the first day in consultation with the project management unit (PMU). It allowed for field visits to all four pilot communities in which MEICDP is active (two days in Trans Nzoia District and two days in Mount Elgon

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<sup>1</sup> At the local level, the project had provided the implementing partners with copies of the TOR.

District) as well as for visits to other activities (i.e. rehabilitation planting, boundary demarcation, rehabilitation of the Mount Elgon National Park, spatial data collection, management planning team) and for interviews with numerous resource persons ('internal' and 'external' to the project). The large majority of the interviews and visits were deliberately carried out without project staff being present.

The team was well supplied with documents, both from the project and from others involved in one way or the other in conservation and development issues in Kenya / East Africa in general, and in the Mount Elgon ecosystem in particular (see list of references in appendix 3). By division of tasks along the lines of the specific expertise of the individual team-members, the team made an effort to capitalise as much as possible on this vast body of information.

### **1.3 This report**

The next section of this report sets out the context within which the MEICDP is being implemented. It briefly discusses the Mount Elgon ecosystem, the threats to which it is exposed, and some relevant institutional and conceptual issues. In section 3, some basic information with respect to the project is presented, including basic characteristics of its approach and a number of constraints under which it has been operating. Both section 2 and 3 have been kept as brief as possible for the purpose of this evaluation, since the issues covered have been documented extensively elsewhere (references are provided).

Emphasis in this report is on section 4, which presents an overview of the achievements made and problems encountered by the project. These are presented per sub-program, and for each sub-programme a brief analysis is given of the reasons for success or failure. Section 5 goes on to draw conclusions from the preceding sections, and to present recommendations for the future of integrated conservation and development of the ecosystem.

## **2. Context**

The following sections highlight the context which is the justification for the existence of the Mount Elgon Integrated Conservation and Development Project.

### **2.1 The Mount Elgon ecosystem<sup>2</sup>**

#### **Location and boundaries**

Mount Elgon is located north of Lake Victoria on the border between Kenya and Uganda. It is a mountain of volcanic origin, which reaches an altitude of 4,320 metres and is between 15 and 20 million years old. The vegetation is zoned by altitude. Montane forest vegetation spans between 2,000 and 3,500 metres, with many important indigenous species. Above 3,500 metres, Afro-Alpine moorland is the main vegetation type.

Most of the montane forest on the Kenyan side of the mountain is gazetted as Forest Reserve (74,000 hectares) and managed by the Forest Department of the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources, with the exception of the transect of forest on the north-east slopes that falls within Mount Elgon National Park under the jurisdiction of Kenya Wildlife Service. The National Park that was established in 1968 extends from the lower montane forest to the caldera edge, covering a large area of the moorlands. The National Park was extended in 1978 by transfer of most of the moorland that had been in the Forest Reserve to the National Park, increasing the park area from 16,900 to 34,000 ha (map 1).

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<sup>2</sup> Section 2.1 and 2.2 cite extensively from KFWG's Forest Status Report, November 2000.



Mount Elgon plays an important role as a water catchment and is one of the five main ‘water towers’ of Kenya. It is the head catchment area for two major rivers: the Nzoia and the Turkwel rivers. It also provides water to the Malakasi River that crosses the small-farming area south of the mountain before entering Uganda (map 2). The Nzoia River is a critical water source for Western Province where it provides most of the water to highly populated areas before flowing into Lake Victoria. The Nzoia River crosses 123 sub-locations where the total population amounts to 1,054,283 inhabitants, according to the census undertaken in 1989 (see table 1).

The Turkwel River is one of three major rivers that feed Lake Turkana. It provides water to the Turkwel Gorge dam and its hydro-power plant. It is the main river that crosses the semi-arid and arid areas of the region on the south west of Lake Turkana.

| River Basin  | Number of sub-locations | Population (census 1989) |
|--------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|
| Malakisi     | 18                      | 129,265                  |
| Nzoia        | 123                     | 1,054,283                |
| Turkwel      | 25                      | 109,940                  |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>166</b>              | <b>1,293,488</b>         |

**Table 1.** Importance of Mount Elgon as a water catchment

### Bio-diversity

The ecosystem contains habitats which support unique and diverse fauna and flora. A considerable amount of research on its bio-diversity has been carried out (for references, see a.o. MEICDP: ‘Proceedings of the workshop on Integrated Natural Resources Management Planning Mount Elgon, September, 1999’ and KFWG, November 2000). The area is a priority for species conservation. A number of plant species are endemic to Mount Elgon, and it is one of the locations (with Kakamega and others) where the Elgon Teak (*Olea Capensis*) is found. This tree is highly valued by carpenters for its distinctively coloured, beautifully textured, hard wood. It is used for internal decoration, for furniture and as construction wood. Due to the rarity of some of its bird species, Mount Elgon has been the status of an Important Bird Area according to the international wildlife classification system.

The combined Kenyan and Ugandan protected areas (National Parks and Forest Reserves) are sufficiently large to maintain viable populations of many of the larger and rarer species of mammals which are vulnerable to extinction in smaller National Parks. Among them are elephants, buffaloes, leopards, giant forest hog, waterbuck, bushbuck, duiker and various monkeys. Information on small mammals is limited, but indications are that Mount Elgon has higher levels of species richness and diversity than many of East Africa’s low altitude forests. The caves on the slopes of the mountain are home to large colonies of various types of bats. In addition, the caves provide for salt licks for large and small mammals.

### Regional perspective

Mount Elgon’s water catchment capacity and its bio-diversity functions are of regional significance for East Africa. It is the major water source for Lake Victoria. The importance of the area has been recognised as trans-border mountain ecosystem with the establishment of integrated conservation and development projects on both the Uganda and Kenya sides of the mountain. Evidently however, political boundaries do not take account of realities of nature. Like most other political boundaries, the border between Uganda and Kenya was arbitrarily drawn by politicians never having set eyes on the land. As a result, it severs a functioning ecosystem, which would benefit from a larger scale, regional approach to conservation and development. The adjoining Mount Elgon National Parks in Kenya and Uganda have been recognised also in scientific publications as one of the 136 trans-frontier ecosystems consisting of Internationally Adjoining Protected Areas (Zbicz, 1999).

A regional approach towards conservation and development of the Mount Elgon ecosystem offers a number of advantages<sup>3</sup>, based on adopting an ecosystem approach to bio-diversity conservation instead of separate country specific approaches. This provides opportunities for joint action to be taken on ecosystem management problems which cross international borders:

- opportunities for joint activities which will lead to increased effectiveness and efficiency through sharing of resources and development costs;
- opportunities for sharing experiences;
- opportunities for new initiatives such as cross-border tourism;
- coordinated action to deal with problems of cross-border cattle raiding, poaching and wider security related issues.

## **2.2 Threats to the Mount Elgon ecosystem**

Threats to the Kenyan side of the Mount Elgon ecosystem, and thus to the resource base of the communities depending on it, are multiple and serious. During the past five years, several initiatives have been undertaken to address issues of conservation and development in the ecosystem and to document them in detail. They will be summarised in the following sections. One took place in 1996 in the form of a fact-finding mission and public awareness activity. A second initiative is MEICDP: the project formulation document was finalised in 1997, and the project started in 1998. One year later, after alarming articles in the media, the National Project Steering Committee (NPSC) of MEICDP commissioned a study to investigate the situation on the ground. In the same year, the Permanent Presidential Commission on Soil Conservation and Afforestation (PPSCA) carried out a reconnaissance survey in the area. On 7 September 2000, the Daily Nation published the results of an investigation into ongoing destruction of the forest. Subsequently, the KFWG carried out a two day reconnaissance mission.

### **Fact finding mission 1996<sup>4</sup>**

In view of forest destruction due to illegal commercial logging in the Mount Elgon Forest reserve, a Committee from Kaptalelio Parish prepared a statement that was sent to KENGO. The letter contained an overview of the problems (destructive commercial logging by RaiPly – a manufacturer of plywood located in Eldoret; illegal logging by civil servants; lack of compensation to the Saboat people for damage to roads and mining their forest resources; charcoal burning and resulting forest fires; intimidation by local administration) and a request from the community for assistance to halt destruction of the forest. A group of 11 people visited the forest, consisting of five reporters (Daily Nation, East African Standard and BBC), representatives of the Justice and Peace Committee, the Consolata Fathers, KFWG and KENGO.

One of the major findings was that RaiPly was only looking for Elgon Teak with a clear bole of six metres. The rest of the wood (the other trees and the discarded parts of the Elgon Teak) was left for the Administration Police, who forced local people, caught in their attempt to use the remaining wood for timber or fuel-wood, to make charcoal from it. In addition, RaiPly never implemented any planting nor paid compensation for environment and social damage to the local Saboat communities. The Forestry department had been continuing to issue licenses to RaiPly, despite the Presidential Ban on felling and logging of indigenous hardwoods decreed in 1986. The company had been active in Mount Elgon since the beginning of the 1980s, but major activities started in 1994.

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<sup>3</sup> See also IUCN Draft Project Concept Mount Elgon Ecosystem Conservation and Development Project 2001 – 2005, February 2001.

<sup>4</sup> KENGO, 1996; Daily Nation, October 15 1996; East African Standard, October 21, 1996.

### **Reconnaissance Survey by PPSCSCA**

The Permanent Presidential Commission on Soil Conservation and Afforestation visited the area in early 1999. RaiPly was found to be continuing to log the forest, despite the presence of the MEICDP, which had started in late 1998. The Commission considered this to be the single most important threat to the survival of the forest ecosystem (PPSCSCA, October 1999).

### **MEICDP's Review of the Management of the Forest Resources of the Mount Elgon Ecosystem (October 1999)**

The project itself is documented in sections 3 and 4. In the present section, in order to complete our background to the ecosystem and its threats, we pay attention only to one specific activity: the study on the management of forest resources in the ecosystem, commissioned by the NPSC. The study was implemented by a consultancy team of three persons: a forestry consultant, a Provincial Forest Officer (FD) and a staff-member of the KWS Forest Conservation Programme in Nairobi. The major conclusions of this review were the following (MEICDP: Review of the management of the Forest resources of the Mount Elgon Ecosystem, Kenya', October 1999):

1. The magnitude of forest destruction and losses are difficult to determine with the information available (due to poor record keeping by FD). However it is possible to conclude that the destruction and losses are significant and the longer they continue the more difficult it will be to rehabilitate the ecosystem. It is concluded that some of the causes such as excisions and encroachment can be mitigated through short-term actions of the FD and other relevant agencies. Others such as poaching will require more time and planning to stop.
2. The existence of brief case saw millers indicates a major breakdown in transparency and accountability of forest management.
3. Correct procedures for harvesting indigenous forests are not followed.
4. It is not known why or how RaiPly presumably received a license to harvest indigenous species, thus circumventing the ban on harvesting in indigenous forests.
5. There are inadequate logistical and infrastructure resources for sustainable management of the Mount Elgon ecosystem.
6. The mechanisms for local community participation in the management of the natural resources of the ecosystem are limited.
7. There is inadequate institutional capacity for the sustainable management of the Mount Elgon ecosystem.
8. Neither a long term nor a short term NRM planning system is in place for the ecosystem. In the absence of a long-term management plan, forest management cannot be sustainable. The lack of adequate planning and management makes it possible for illegal activities (and undesirable legal activities) to thrive.

The main threats the ecosystem were listed as follows:

- Excisions. They were either poorly planned or not yet officialised but in some cases have their original extent already more than doubled due to encroachment (the planned 3,686 ha Chebyuk excision being 8,700 ha in fact).
- Encroachment (clearings for farming by the local population or reportedly even more often by influential persons in search of fertile land). This is enhanced by lack of clear boundaries. The precise extent is not known.
- Poaching and other activities such as honey gathering and grazing.

With respect to the logging of Elgon Teak by RaiPly, the review observed that whenever stumps from RaiPly's operations were found, they occurred in clusters and most often, there were not other Elgon teak trees found within the vicinity. This indicated that:

- the harvesting method applied was not selective felling of the species;
- the regeneration potential of the species was essentially wiped out because the seed sources were all removed.

### **Daily Nation article, 7 September 2000**

In early September 2000, the Daily Nation published the results of an investigation by its reporters into the massive destruction of forest in Mount Elgon. It concluded that the absence of RaiPly<sup>5</sup> seemed to have paved the way for another threat in the form of organised cartels of government officials and local communities illegally exploiting the forest. It reported illegal logging involving government officials including FD staff (producing a transport permit for teak timber as evidence), extensive charcoal burning, abuses associated with the non-residential cultivation system (NRC), and encroachment following excisions.

### **KFWG fact finding mission, September 2000**

As a follow-up to the Daily Nation article, KFWG carried out a field reconnaissance and an aerial reconnaissance to appraise the type and extent of the threats to Mount Elgon. Its main findings were:

- excision of forest land (including excisions for political reasons, such as the extension of the Chebyuk excision from 3,000 to 8,000 hectares), uncontrolled NRC and encroachment are currently the main causes of destruction of forests in the area (map 3);
- logging is no longer the main threat, but it is unclear how the forest will recover from past logging and whether Elgon Teak will regenerate where the stand has been depleted or nearly depleted. The clearings created by the logging promote the growth of grass. This encourages people to drive their cattle into the forest to graze, impeding regeneration.
- The plantations have essentially disappeared.

### **Overall assessment**

The evidence presented by a diversity of actors leaves no doubt as to the alarming situation of the ecosystem. Essential Kenya-wide problems are political interference into the sound and sustainable management of forests, and the perceived high value of gazetted forest land: there is an immense pressure and lobbying by the rich to excise forest land. The beneficiaries of the excised gazetted land are never the landless but instead the politically influential. There is a conspicuous lack of political will and interest on the part of the government to put in place legislation (see also section 2.3) on the management of forests and to implement the recommendations of the Forest Master Plan of 1994 or of the Price Waterhouse Report of 1997 on the organisation of the Forestry Department. The delays in bringing the new Forest Bill to Parliament are another symptom of the lack of high-level political commitment. The need for a concerted approach towards conservation and development was and is obvious – it was precisely this need that triggered the setting up of MEICDP.

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<sup>5</sup> After the 1999 review, the local authorities, with support of the local population, had taken action against RaiPly. Its equipment was confiscated because the company had not been paying any compensation for damage done to the forest and to local roads. The company stopped logging in the area, but in February 2001 it was taking the local authorities to court for unlawfully withholding its equipment.

### **2.3 Institutional environment**

The institutional environment within which the MEICDP operates, is complicated and in a state of flux. Without aiming to be exhaustive, the evaluation team would like to highlight a number of the most characteristic elements of this environment.

#### **Policy and legislation**

The legal provisions for protection and management of environment and forests are scattered in 77 statutes that are not adequately harmonised<sup>6</sup>, creating a confusing environment for projects like MEICDP to operate in. Some of the most important elements of policy and legislation are:

1. The existing Forest and Wildlife Acts, which do not promote the sharing of benefits from forests and parks by communities.
2. The Environmental Coordination and Management Act, which was passed by Parliament in 1999. Its primary objective is to provide for the establishment of an appropriate legal and institutional framework for the management of the environment. It establishes a number of institutions, amongst which are the District Environment Committees, which may in future become important for MEICDP. The law contains several sections of significance for the protection of forests, and it can overrule other relevant laws.
3. The Forestry Master Plan (1994) presents a new policy for forest management. The proposed policy aimed to modernise forest-management in order for it to redress the injustices of the past and stem the tide of forest excisions.
4. The proposed new Forests Bill (final version September 2000), which was drafted as part of a wave of reform in East and Southern Africa – with Tanzania adopting a truly radical one. In all cases however, the reform in forest law follows the recognition that the State alone can no longer manage forests, and that alienating the real custodians of the forests – the communities that live close to them – is self-defeating.
5. Kenya's Forests Bill (currently under discussion) if passed by Parliament, has an inbuilt mechanism to face certain challenges, the most prominent one of which is preventing indiscriminate excisions. The Bill includes Parliament in the decision of whether or not to excise. It allows for co-management by Forest Associations, consisting of any individuals living within five kilometres from the forest. In addition, the Bill proposes a Forest Service (to replace the FD), which will be able to raise money independently, and it redefines the role of foresters. It is not yet clear when the Bill will be discussed in Parliament.<sup>7</sup>

#### **Other institutional considerations**

In an effort to reduce the conflicts arising from overlapping mandates in the management of natural resources, various government institutions and departments have signed Memoranda of Understanding. The implementing partners of MEICDP, KWS (under the Office of the President) and FD (MNER), signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) in 1991, for joint and integrated management of forest ecosystems of significant bio-diversity importance. The MoU has resulted in significant improvements in relations and collaboration between the two organisations. However, the significance of this MoU and its operationalisation at district level is not always clear.

Until 1999, KWS had a significant regional (= Western Kenya) presence, with regional officers for tourism, partnership (with communities) and bio-diversity, and also technical

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<sup>6</sup> IUCN, 2000, working paper No 5, pp 4 and 19.

<sup>7</sup> Kantai, 2000: p. 19.

engineering services. With the de-regionalisation of the Service, these officers were relocated. This represents a significant set back for MEICDP, which had intended for several elements of its programme to be picked up by these officers.

The FD has been under heavy criticism for a number of years for mismanagement, inefficiency and other shortcomings. The Kenya Forestry Master Plan already recommended urgent and sweeping changes, and in November 1996 the MENR contracted Price Waterhouse to conduct a review of the FDs management of industrial plantations. This study yielded recommendations for restructuring of the forestry department.<sup>8</sup> Traces of these are found in the newly proposed Forest Bill. However, since the proposed changes are only at a Bill stage, none of the recommendations have been implemented as yet.

The evaluation team has concluded that given the policy and institutional environment described above, the project provides a useful experimental ground for testing new policies, acts and institutional arrangements.

### **3. Basic information with respect to MEICDP**

#### **3.1 The project: objectives, outputs, sub-programmes and activities**

##### **Objectives**

The project's immediate objective, that which the project's interventions can expect to achieve, is given in the PFD as:

*"The Kenyan side of the Mount Elgon ecosystem's natural resource base and its functions are sustainably managed and utilised."*

This is not achievable in the three years of the first phase of the project. In the PFD, a realistic time frame for this objective was considered to be 10 years. In the first phase of the project, the immediate objective serves as a conceptual guide for project outputs and activities.

For the first phase, the project's overall goal, which reflects the changes in project design described in the Plan of Operations, is:

*"Enhancement of bio-diversity conservation on Mt Elgon by building up the competencies of some local communities and the partner agencies in collaborative natural resources management and seeking means of decreasing the dependency of these communities on the natural resources of Mt Elgon."*

The first phase objective presented above clearly signals the narrowed focus of the project's field activities after redesigning them from the longer term focus for the first phase contained in the PFD.

##### **Outputs**

Outputs to be delivered over the original ten-year time frame were:

- 1) Improved understanding and application of knowledge of the natural resources base of Mt. Elgon.
- 2) Institutional capacities and capabilities of local management institutions for sustainable management of the Mount Elgon ecosystem strengthened.

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<sup>8</sup> Price Waterhouse, May 1997, executive summary.

- 3) Women and men of local communities and other stakeholders to be genuine and effective partners of the management institutions with respect to the management of the Mount Elgon ecosystem.
- 4) Relative dependence of women and men of the adjacent communities on Mt. Elgon natural resources base reduced.
- 5) National policy issues with respect to Mount Elgon ecosystem addressed.

#### Sub-programmes and activities

##### Programme 1: Collaborative Natural Resources Management

This programme consists of activities which are designed to encourage the development of a collaborative approach to the management of the natural resources of Mt Elgon. It includes strengthening of the principal partners so that they become more effective managers of the mountain's natural resources, it supports the collection and dissemination of new information about the mountain's resources to improve management, and it covers the establishment of a participatory planning process and supports the production of a new long term management plan for Mt Elgon. Greater effectiveness of the partner entities is also sought by provisions for training their staff.

##### Programme 2: Community Capacity Building

Programme 2 focuses on strengthening capabilities within local communities so they may equitably negotiate with the management institutions on the sustainable utilisation and management of the Mt Elgon ecosystem. This capacity building will assist the devolution of certain NRM responsibilities to the stakeholders living most immediately around the Mt. Elgon ecosystem. In the year 2001, emphasis will be placed on assisting selected community groups to better organise into stronger, more cohesive entities, increasing the likelihood of sustaining their efforts in conservation and development activities. Targeted groups are Community Action Plan Committees (CAPs), Community Conservation Teams (CCTs) and women groups.

##### Programme 3: Rural Livelihood Improvement

The Rural Livelihood Improvement programme strives mainly to enhance community autonomy and lessen dependence on Mt Elgon's forest reserves through improving profitability of existing income-generating activities and identifying new ones. Rural poverty will be alleviated by seeking alternative off-farm employment, improving the efficiency of agricultural production, and strengthening the economic position of women.

##### Programme 4: Tourism

Tourism is considered to be an industry with substantial untapped potential in the project area and more broadly within the region surrounding Mount Elgon. Tourism can generate employment and income locally and help to put the management of Mount Elgon National Park on a sustainable financial footing.

##### Programme 5: Policy

The project coordinators based in the HQs of the Forest Department and Kenya Wildlife Service implement this programme. The programme activities are aimed at addressing national policy issues with respect to Mt Elgon ecosystem. It is envisaged that resources supplied to the coordinators will be used in the evaluation of existing policy and law, for lobbying and, where possible, enhancement of relevant policies and legislation. Owing to imminent changes in the forestry and wildlife policies and accompanying legislation, it is prudent to create awareness in both resource managers and users for efficient conservation. Decision-makers should also be sensitised and their support garnered for the development of visionary policies for the conservation of the nation's natural resources.

### 3.2 Donor policy and the evolution of MEICDP

The policy of RNE with respect to the MEICDP has been rather a special case. Early 1997, the embassy fielded a consultancy team which was to appraise and redefine a 1995 IUCN/KWS/FD project proposal in which the embassy had shown interest at the time. The terms of reference for the mission reflected an interest in a long term, multi-disciplinary community based conservation and development project which required a long term commitment. This was in line with the Dutch Government's priorities at the time, which featured environmental issues and poverty alleviation very prominently. The ToR continued to specify that the project document should be set up according to the ministry's guidelines and should include a logical framework. Consequently, a Project Formulation Document (PFD) was finalised in April 1997. The goals and objectives of the project were phrased in terms of a 10 year project with a five year first phase, which had been elaborated in detail in the document.

Almost one year later, in March 1998, the embassy informed the Treasury and IUCN HQ in Switzerland that the project had been approved, but only for a period of 2½ years. In its letter to the Treasury (12 March 1998) RNE states: *'The Formulation Document of April 1997 envisaged a 5 year project with a total budget of NLG 8.9 million. However, given the low rate of success of other donor-supported forestry projects in Kenya and in the light of the absence of a firm GoK commitment to sustainable forest management, the RNE considers such an investment as too risky. Instead, the Embassy proposes a first phase of 2½ years with a budget of NLG 4.16 million. This first phase is meant to test the viability of the project under the prevailing conditions in Kenya ... After that period, a review will be required to advise on continued donor assistance.'*

Thus, at that time the possibility of a five year first phase was still open, but commitment had clearly diminished. In the course of 1998, policy changes were introduced by the new Dutch Minister of Development Cooperation. She wanted to drastically reduce the number of countries The Netherlands had bilateral relations with, and good governance was one of the criteria used for selection. The likelihood of The Netherlands pulling out of its bilateral programme with Kenya for this reason, became apparent. The newly recruited PMU staff visited the embassy in February 1999 with its draft Plan of Operations for the first 2½ years of a 5 year programme. At that meeting, they were informed that the funding would most likely stop after 2½ years. The Plan of Operations needed to be readjusted for this, with emphasis on activities that could yield tangible results within the available time period. This was done, and in April 1999 the Plan of Operations was approved (a budget neutral extension of 7 months until July 2001 was later granted). In June 1999, the Parliament in The Netherlands sanctioned the proposal of the Minister to end bilateral aid with a number of countries, amongst which was Kenya. In August 1999, the Minister visited Kenya to officially communicate this decision to President Moi. It was announced that the existing programme was to be scaled down gradually enabling a gradual exit over a period of three years, to end in June 2002.

Thus, there has been a progressive reduction in long term commitment of the donor towards MEICDP. This has had a negative impact on project implementation, especially through the emphasis that was laid as of February 1999 on adjusting the Plan of Operations and achieving tangible results within a relatively brief period. The reasons for this reduction in commitment are understandable and legitimate, and for a large part outside the control of RNE in Nairobi. Nevertheless, in the eyes of the evaluation team the history of the involvement of RNE with this project does imply that the donor should have played, and should still play, a pro-active role supporting IUCN and the implementing partners in finding a new donor to take over the project. This is the more so since the results obtained by MEICDP are promising (to be demonstrated in sections 4 and 5), and the need for ongoing activity of this kind in the Mount Elgon ecosystem is obvious (section 2).



As far as the team can see, relatively little seems to have happened – be it through IUCN or through RNE - in terms of soliciting new funds since the policy decision of The Netherlands became clear almost two years (...) ago. At RNE, this must be due to understaffing on the projects under the former bilateral programme – the personal commitment of those staff who were available at the Embassy in the course of time has been impressive. The PMU did take an active approach by sending out 10 to 15 letters to various donor agencies in early 2000, exploring their interest, but it was not successful in its efforts. The team has noted with concern that there is confusion among parties involved as to the conditions under which NORAD would be prepared to contribute to a follow-up project. IUCN however is confident about NORAD's interest, and expects to know more in the course of February.

### **3.3 Project formulation and preparation**

Section 3.2 has already presented some information with respect to the process of project formulation. The PFD which resulted from the mission fielded in 1997 is a document which goes a long way towards elaborating the project in every detail – as requested by the donor. It includes a logical framework which leaves relatively little room for the exploratory, flexible process approach which the document also proposes to take (MEICDP, April 1997, p. 37). The Plan of Operations of April 1999 reflects the request from RNE to emphasise producing tangible results within 2½ years. This further reduced the potential for an approach geared towards involving local communities and partner institutions.

An important element of project preparation was the recruitment process of staff for the PMU. It was a difficult process, and it became clear that KWS and FD had been expecting relative autonomy in the recruitment process, and to employ the project manager themselves. But IUCN is the contracting partner charged with responsibility for proper management of funds. It formed a recruitment committee including representatives of KWS and FD. After a difficult process, the candidates preferred by KWS and FD were not selected and IUCN hired the project manager it preferred.

In the opinion of the evaluation team, the ownership of the project by the implementing partners would certainly have been enhanced had one of them been the employer of the project manager. On the other hand, given the relationship between KWS and FD it would not have been evident which of the two partners should have been the one employing staff. Also, with hindsight, the evaluation team thinks the project would not have progressed as it has under the current arrangement, with a relatively independent PMU. The team recommends that in the event of a follow-up project, this arrangement should be continued.

The recruitment of the DPCs was also significantly delayed, due to similar problems in the relationships between the various partners involved.

### **3.4 Institutional arrangements**

The institutional arrangements with respect to the project are depicted in the organogram in figure 1. Essential elements are: RNE is the donor agency, IUCN is the contracting partner and provider of technical advice, KWS and FD are the implementing partners through the secretariat of the MoU (see also section 2.3). At the district level, DFOs and the Park Warden are the representatives of the MoU. A major problem during implementation has been that communication between national headquarters and ground level staff of the two partner agencies was virtually lacking or at least severely deficient. Directors at national level did not inform local level staff to a sufficient extent of the partnership and its implications.

There are many other informal partners involved on an ad hoc basis. The project has built up good relations with many agencies, amongst others through the District Management Unit, a local forum of consultation initiated by the project. At a later stage, the recently established

District Environmental Committee may become a suitable partner with which to establish more formal relations.

At the time of the approval of the project (March 1998) it was already clear that a Memorandum of Project Implementation Agreement (MOPIA) was to be signed between FD, KWS and IUCN. However, the document was not actually signed until more than a year later (July 1999). The reasons why it took so long to get it signed are not clear, but the delay may have been related to the deterioration of relations resulting from the recruitment problems cited in section 3.3.

IUCN EARO has an agreement (signed in 1998) with GoK concerning its operations in Kenya. Although this agreement provides IUCN with some duty free privileges, these are for the requirements of EARO itself, and turned out not to extend to importation of project equipment. This significantly disadvantaged the project: three project vehicles arrived in Mombasa in November 1998, but the last of them did not reach the project until July 1999, due to problems in getting them released duty free. It was assumed that the signing of the MOPIA would enable duty free imports of project material. Interestingly, the signed version of the MOPIA does contain a section (article 5.5) which says that the implementing partners will facilitate the duty free equipment of project equipment and vehicles (older versions do not have such an article). This section must have escaped attention of some of the signatories, because it is well known by insiders that it is fundamentally unrealistic to expect this facilitation from KWS and FD.

Not surprisingly, the situation did not improve. Immediately after the MOPIA had been signed, six motor cycles were procured for the project. They reached Nairobi by September 1999, and arrived at the project office in Kitale in January 2000. However, they could not be put into service until November 2000 due to problems over the lack of duty free status. The current arrangements also do not enable the project to obtain VAT exemptions on items nor services procured within Kenya.

### **3.5 Characteristics of the project approach**

The project has opted for an approach which is innovative in the Kenyan context. Some fundamental characteristics of this approach as seen by the evaluation team are:

- To work through existing institutions, avoiding the creation of parallel structures which would disappear once external funding comes to an end.
- Consequently, to build up only very limited project implementation capacity.
- To emphasize the need for a contribution in monetary terms and / or labor by communities before a project contribution is made.
- To be cautious in funding of recurrent costs of implementing agencies.
- To motivate staff of implementing agencies by enabling them to work in the communities, by offering training opportunities, by study tours, improved mobility and so on.

### **3.6 Constraints**

During the first 2½ years of its existence, the MEICDP has operated under quite severe constraints. The major constraint it is faced with is the lack of political commitment of local and national level authorities to really tackle the issue of conservation and development in the area, and the associated tensions – as set out extensively in section 2.3. However, this is at the same time the very reason of existence of the project. Other major tensions have been:

- **Progressive reduction of the long term commitment by the donor**, causing undue pressure to produce tangible results in the short term. This is difficult to reconcile with the nature of a programme aiming at community based natural resource management and genuine involvement of local partner-organisations.
- **Inflexible logical framework planning** in the project formulation document, which was hard to reconcile with the intended process approach.
- **Delays in arrival of project equipment**, due to inadequacy of IUCN EARO's agreement with GoK concerning duty-free import facilities. As a result of these delays, from the field perspective (for instance of extension officers involved in the rural livelihood improvement programme), the project had only been fully operational for just over a year at the time of this evaluation (February 2001).
- **Flaws in the project design**, notably overemphasis on sub-programme 1 (collaborative natural resources management) and overestimation of the implementing capacity of the Forest Department and KWS and of other partners.
- **Dependency attitude among local communities**, due to the practice of other agencies to provide relief aid after the ethnic clashes of 1992. The relief activities were never linked to development efforts. This is in contrast with the approach taken by the project (no grants and handouts, no funding of recurrent costs of implementing government agencies).

## 4. Achievements and problems<sup>9</sup>

### 4.1 Sub-programme 1: Collaborative Natural Resources Management

#### Achievements

- (a) Strengthening the knowledge base about the ecosystem by generation of spatial and other data about Mount Elgon

Many activities have been implemented and are still going on (aerial photography, basic digital data captured from existing 1:50.000 topo sheets, production of hitherto non existent maps of vegetation zones and land cover, data base on Mount Elgon, publication of the proceedings of the 1999 workshop about NRM in the area, launch of a website, publication of a newsletter). All data will be stored on cd rom and made available to the implementing partners, research institutes and other relevant agencies. The planned work is expected to be completed by the July 2001 deadline.

- (b) Support to management planning of Mount Elgon

The concept of a joint plan for the ecosystem arose from the September 1999 workshop on integrated NRM planning. The 'Review of the Management of Forest Resources of the Mount Elgon Ecosystem' (October 1999) also recommended that a Management Plan for the Mount Elgon ecosystem be produced at short notice. The important aspects of this recommendation are that: first, it has implications for sustainability; and two, one management plan is planned for both KWS and the Forest Department. Two officers, one each, from the Forest Department and the other from KWS were availed and attached to the PMU for the same. Work on the Management Plan for Mount Elgon ecosystem is progress.

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<sup>9</sup> The evaluation team decided to use the term 'problems' instead of 'failures' (which is used in the TOR). There are indeed a number of failures, and these are identified as such. But there are also quite a few examples of problematic situations which do not deserve the qualification failure.

Visits to the Ugandan side of the Mt Elgon project by community representatives and implementing personnel were made and enabled people to draw useful lessons from this sister-project which has been in place since 1989.

(c) Forest inventory

The work on the forest inventory started in February 2001 and is currently in progress. It will contribute useful knowledge to the data base about the ecosystem

(d) Infrastructural strengthening

The National Park workshop, equipment and camp-sites have been rehabilitated or established, park roads have been graded, and motorcycles purchased and handed over to partner institutions. The infrastructure of the park has been improved significantly as a result. Nevertheless, this activity has achieved only a part of what should have been accomplished. The major impediment has been lack of technical skills especially for road works and equipment rehabilitation.

(e) Forest management

Work on the forest boundary demarcations (notably on the demarcation of the Chebyuk excision) with masonry beacons has started and is expected to be complete by the end of February 2001. However, in the original plan, this was only a first step. The second, essential step was the planting of a live boundary demarcation with a *Eucalyptus* species. Implementation of this step requires careful sensitisation of the neighbouring communities, and will only be possible if a follow-up project will be funded. In that case, this demarcation will constitute a significant contribution towards halting the encroachment into the forest in this area. However, the processes of land allocation following the demarcation will need to be closely watched.

(f) Training staff of government partner agencies

A training needs assessment has been completed and the corresponding training plan with recommendations has been partly carried out .

Two main factors are responsible for the successes listed above. These are dedication of the project personnel (implementing institutions and PMU) and willingness on the part of community members to participate.

Problems

The majority of the problems experienced during implementation are associated with the late start of the project, problems within implementing institutions or the progressive reduction of donor commitment (ref. section 2 and 3). The main problem is that data generation required to feed the process of developing a Management Plan for Mount Elgon ecosystem is behind schedule.

(a) Generation of spatial data about Mt Elgon

Two problems are identified: one, anticipated collaboration with some national institutions like DRSRS and SoK on digitising aerial photos did not work. In the end, the PMU decided to solve the problem by creating its own GIS facility and hiring a consultant to do the work, and also by contracting out to Photomap (a private company) most of the work that had been hoped could be done through collaboration. Maybe the expectation for DRSRS and SoK to

deliver was due to misjudgement of its capacity and commitment by the CTA. The initial choice to work with DRSSRS and SoK was obviously related to the commitment to work through existing institutions.

Due to these problems, some of the data needed will not be ready in good time to serve as an input into the Management Plan, as a result eroding the cost effectiveness of the activity.

(b) Support to management planning of Mount Elgon

Despite the potentially significant contribution of a Management Plan, there is little commitment on the part of KWS and the Forest Department to the process, be it in terms of support to the planning process (in October 2000 a zoning proposal was submitted to the MoU by the two staff-members working on the Management Plan but so far no reaction has been forthcoming), or with respect to a completion date and resources to implement the plan. One then wonders why make a plan, if there may be no resources to implement it. It is important to emphasise that MEICDP never had the ambition to have the Management Plan ready by the end of the current phase (the PDF considered the plan would be ready by the end of year 3). It considers the process to be owned by the implementing partners, and assumes it will be carried forward should the project come to a halt. Under the current circumstances, this seems a rather optimistic assumption.

The development process of the Management Plan to date has weak links to other project activities (like generation of spatial data, forest inventory and lack of appreciation for a strong bias towards community orientation). The current process of developing a Management Plan is not participatory since it does not yet have sufficient mechanisms for involving the community.

(c) Forest Inventory

The forest inventory work will not be complete in good time to be fed into the Management Plan during the current project phase. Late start of implementation and the likelihood of impassable roads with the onset of the long rains (February/March 2001) were cited as some of the possible causes for delay. Also, a close examination of the implementation proposal by KEFRI raises some questions with regard to the quality of data to be generated and their eventual use by the management planning team:

- details have been presented on *how* the exercise will be conducted and *what* data will be collected, but no convincing reasons as to *why* it is being collected;
- the proposal is sketchy on methods of data collection and analysis: insufficient thought seems to have been invested into the relationships between the types of data collected and analysis on one hand, and the type of use it will be put to on the other;
- the concept underlying the exercise is heavily biased towards wood production and weak on other forest uses, especially by the adjacent communities.

(d) Infrastructural strengthening

Despite the achievements, planning and implementation of this activity has not yet been sufficiently able to take advantage the opportunity it created, in terms of cultivating and building a positive relationship with the adjacent communities. So far, communities have benefited mostly from opportunities for casual work generated by this component.

(e) Forest management

Due to the shortening of the project period, the second step of the forest boundary marking (boundary planting) will not take place during the current phase. This might undermine the

cost effectiveness of the exercise as future identification of the boundary may require further survey services for authentication, clearing in preparation for planting and maintenance of planted trees.

Rehabilitation planting of indigenous species by the Forest Department has been a disappointing failure: it only attained initial establishment rates of 0-20%. The explanations from the Forest Department personnel at the district level are: planted species (*Markhamia lutea*, *Dombeya goetzenii*, *Grevillea robusta*<sup>10</sup>, *Olea capensis*, *Albizia*, *Sizygium* and *Podocarpus spp.*) are highly palatable to game and therefore were browsed; poor quality seedlings were purchased from farmers for planting; planting was during a period when rainfall season was towards its end (August 1999). However, in the opinion of the evaluation team the whole exercise is riddled with poor planning, management and lack of commitment on the part of the Forest Department.

(f) Training staff of government partner agencies

Gender training of implementing agencies' personnel was done for those in Mount Elgon but only partly in Trans-Nzoia district. Regarding the training needs assessment (TNA), the methodology used has critical flaws not only rendering its applicability for the project limited but also generating inappropriate expectations. The project missed an opportunity to sensitise partners on collaborative community based natural resource management issues. Furthermore: partners were not sufficiently aware that the TNA had a twofold purpose: 1) to identify the training needs of the partners in general, and 2) to identify which of these were of special relevance to the project. Only the latter were to be implemented under the project, the remainder were supposed to be taken up by the partner organisations themselves. In interviews held by the team, it became apparent that many of the staff of the partner agencies that participated in the TNA are expecting the project to provide all the training that was deemed to be necessary.

All in all, many factors have influenced achievements and problems reported under programme 1. Among them, the evaluation team has singled out five. These are:

- (a) lack of commitment and poor vision for sound forest management and conservation at the national level;
- (b) poor relationships and sometimes rivalry between the FD and KWS at the national level;
- (c) implementing institutions are poorly equipped in terms of capacity to adequately fulfill objectives of the project;
- (d) a poor vision regarding the link of project activities to market oriented economics as a tool for effective community participation in conservation;
- (e) inability by the implementing institutions to reconcile the official trickle down approaches to development at the national level with the decentralised and participatory approaches promoted by the project.

#### **4.2 Sub-programme 2: Community Capacity Building**

Attempts were made to quantify community needs, priorities and potential through participatory rural appraisals (PRAs). Information gained from PRAs is as good as the relevance of the methodology employed: the usefulness and relevance of PRA data depends among other things on the baseline knowledge and understanding of the community, in terms of cause and effect. This knowledge is expected to change over the duration of a project of reasonable length and impact, and therefore PRA data needs updating in order to maintain relevance and usefulness. Another problem affecting usefulness of PRAs is the ability to link problems to opportunities for solving them. It is curious to note that the Plan of Operations of

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<sup>10</sup> Should not have been planted since it is an exotic species.

1999 already had planned specific activities before all PRAs had been completed. This is related to the strict adherence during project preparation to objective oriented planning principles and provision of logical frameworks.

The implementation of the PRAs was an exercise in capacity building as it involved sensitisation of the communities on resource management, and on carrying out PRAs. According to the PRAs, the communities have similar groups of needs, but differing priorities and opportunities for meeting them. The PRAs for pilot communities were completed in March 1999 (Nalulingo/Chesitia and Cheptumbelio/Kalaha), July-August 1999 (Kamtiong) and July –September. Thus there have been only one to two years of implementing community action plans. There is not enough time to test the flexibility of project design in responding to changing needs and perceptions of the communities, or for the impact of interventions to bear fruit. This makes it rather difficult to assess the impact and potential for sustainability with a reasonable level of certainty.

#### 4.2.1 Achievements

Perhaps one of the greatest achievements has been in conflict resolution - helping to diffuse the tension among previously warring communities. This has helped facilitate project activities. The communities have been able to work together with the project to develop action plans, whose implementation is underway. The PRAs are of professional quality and have contributed significantly to the knowledge base of the area.

Specifically, the following have been achieved:

- a. Community empowerment
  - PRAs were carried out in four pilot areas. They helped build capacity, sensitise communities and in some cases helped ease ethnic tension.
  - Officers from collaborating agencies were also trained in PRA.
  - Community activities have been initiated.
  - Community committees (CAP) initiated<sup>11</sup>, but their sustainability is questionable.

It is important that the capacity of collaborating agencies to carry out PRAs has been enhanced. Many of these agencies are relatively permanent and are therefore critical to sustainability of the project impacts. The PRA training process also serves as an opportunity to influence the way in which these agencies work towards a more participatory approach and involving communities. Thus the exercise has provided an entry point for policy influence. Formation of community committees took into account pre-existing arrangements, so that unnecessary parallel structures were not formed. Working through such committees helps to entrench community ownership.

- b. Promotion of community awareness
  - Teachers have been trained in conservation education, and have actively participated in developing teaching materials, jointly with the Kenya Institute of Education (KIE).
  - Teaching materials in English are expected to be ready by March 2001.
  - CCT's have been trained in conservation, mass awareness, and the committees are operational.

Educating children is probably the single most effective approach to sustainable environmental management. Although this forms a single activity in the project, its impacts will eventually be among the most important and most cost effective in the long run. The involvement of local teachers and KIE in development of locally relevant materials is an important achievement. Although this has meant that the process takes longer, it enhances

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<sup>11</sup> CAPs were not foreseen in the project document; they arose more or less spontaneously, but they are closely related to the type of local committee Vi has been working with in the area for some time.

ownership and perhaps relevance of the results. Education is a matter of national policy, and any new teaching material requires endorsement by KIE. KIE's involvement therefore means that the resultant materials meet national requirements, and will have the support of the relevant departments in the Ministry of Education. Indeed, the local District Education Office has trained its inspectors and is set to oversee the implementation of the curriculum, and to use those trained to train other teachers in the region.

The trained teachers and CCTs have collaborated in organising 'field days', which have so far proved very successful. The field days have provided a useful avenue for selling the idea of environmental education, as well as marketing new community activities and products resulting from project initiatives.

c. Promotion of gender equity

Women have been trained in leadership skills and gender sensitisation *barazas* (public meetings) have been held for men, women and youth.

There is assumed to be great disparity in leadership and entrepreneurial skills among men and women. Developing women's capacity is therefore a minimal prerequisite to promoting gender equity. Leadership skills are particularly important in enabling women to take control of their lives and facilitate community development.

Problems and analysis

Problems in this programme are largely a result of the project design, technical capacity and time constraints. One problem has been in documentation of achievements and impacts. Those achievements not predicted by the logical framework have not been documented.

Other problems are as follows:

- Planned activities did not always correspond to PRA results. This was for several reasons: (1) the fact that the project was expected to start producing quick results even before PRAs were carried out; (2) that activities on the ground depended on the technical capacity and preference of the implementing partners<sup>12</sup>; (3) PRA results sometimes conflicted with the logistical framework.
- Limited array of opportunities taken up.
- Community committees (CAP) do an important job for the project- they are responsible for project achievements to a considerable extent, and would be very useful if they could continue beyond the project life. Their sustainability is questionable as they are expected to be self-motivated, since they have no saleable skills to justify the amount of time spent on their appointed tasks. No Collaborative Management Committees (CMCs) have been formed as yet, but for the time being there seems limited usefulness in introducing another type of committee of questionable sustainability. If and when the project gets to the stage of pioneering collaborative management initiatives (as is the case in the Ugandan sister-project), it may be useful to consider whether the already existing CAPs or CCTs have the potential to become CMCs – or for example Forest Associations, in case the new Forests Bill is passed by Parliament.
- Although the achievements so far in environmental education are laudable, there is need to diversify the curriculum content and action learning activities; and address the different levels of primary and secondary school audiences. The content is concentrated on geography of the biosphere, probably in parallel to what already

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<sup>12</sup> Thus, working through partners has limited the project's control over activities and achievements. In the opinion of the review team however, this is the price that has to be paid for a working principle that the project is rightly trying to adhere to, and which should certainly be maintained.



exists in carrier subjects, and missing out the atmosphere almost completely. The activities on the other hand are limited to traditional tree planting and nature trails. This may be a reflection of the selected group of teachers. It will also be necessary to look into sustainability with respect to staff mobility and availability of teaching materials.

- Educational activities become monotonous, unless they are imbued with meaning and have contextual relevance. Thus the need to link environmental action learning activities to immediately useful outputs as well as to long-term conservation.
- Planned activities on gender equity cannot achieve the intended project outputs. Monitoring tools for assessing improved gender relations are also lacking, as is a plan of action to reach those women who do not participate in public functions. The position of youth and children has not been tackled by the project.

### **4.3 Sub-programme 3: Rural Livelihood Improvement**

This programme has attempted to address gender equity, poverty alleviation, collaboration and participation. It has concentrated on activities that can generate immediate tangible returns or achievements. Considering the short time over which they have been implemented, long term impacts and sustainability are a matter of informed speculation.

#### Achievements

##### a. Promotion of on-farm tree planting

The project has closely collaborated with other organisations already active in the field (Vi, Action Aid, Manor House) in training communities in on-farm tree planting, home nurseries and community nurseries. Collaboration and participation have been maximised. The nurseries developed are low-cost, appropriate and of good quality. In some cases they have become income-generating opportunities for the owners. There are some successful examples of on-farm wood-lots.

##### b. Evaluation and promotion of small scale agricultural and off-farm enterprise opportunities

Men, women and youth have been trained in entrepreneurship and conducting feasibility studies. A number of enterprises and on-farm activities, including community cattle dips, bee keeping, production of onions, cultivation, storing and marketing of potatoes, zero grazing and soya beans have been started. In these activities, the project has very successfully cooperated with committed agricultural extension staff, even though an agreement with MoA does not exist.

#### Problems and analysis

It is important to note that availability of water has been a major constraint to the implementation of many of the activities. The problem of availability and quality of seeds and seedling remains.

The monitoring and evaluation plan<sup>13</sup> does not seem to make sufficient provision for following up spin-off activities. For instance, after training communities in conducting feasibility studies, it would be logical to expect that there will be documentable activities arising. Setting up of new business ventures is the obvious indicator of capacity built, and yet it was evident that most such initiatives have not been reported. This also suggests a PMU staffing problem, and the limitation of partner agencies in monitoring and evaluation skills.

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<sup>13</sup> The M&E plan was only finalised in October 2000, and is only being implemented from 1 January 2000.

The scope of income generating activities is limited. The project limited its scope of activities because of the short time within which they had to produce tangible achievements. Also, there was limited technical capacity between the PMU and its implementing partners. For example, all those farmers who adopted zero grazing thought were required to connect the effluent to a *napier* grass stand. This was not necessarily the most effective or desirable option. The preponderance of agricultural activities is probably because the most active implementing partner has been the Ministry of Agriculture. Staff of this ministry have been very motivated and enthusiastic. It will be useful to the project and at the same time an incentive to these staff-members to offer them even more training opportunities in specific technical fields and in farmer led extension approaches than has been the case so far<sup>14</sup>.

Marketing skills are still underrepresented dimension among the new entrepreneurs. There is a programme in place with PERT consultants to provide follow-up counselling to those trained, but the results still have to materialise.

#### **4.4 Sub-programme 4: Tourism**

##### Achievements

##### a. Tourism promotion in the project area

Mt Elgon and its surroundings are disadvantaged by the National Tourism Strategy which has concentrated on marketing Kenya's beaches and a small number of national parks in the Centre and East of the country where the "big five" wildlife species can be seen. Western Kenya offers a different kind of tourism experience away from the mass tourism market. Due to the smaller number of tourists visiting the region, visitors to Western Kenya have the opportunity to come into more intimate contact with nature. At present, the region is visited to only a small fraction of its potential. Mt Elgon National Park has only 2,000 visitors annually.

The project's tourism programme is designed to boost visits to the park to a level closer to its capacity. To make this feasible the project is supporting the improvement of tourism infrastructure in Mt. Elgon National Park.

##### b. Development of a tourism strategy for the region

In 1999, the project commissioned a consultant to study the potential of tourism in the region. The consultant carried out his assignment in January-February 2000 and the final version of his report was accepted by the project in June 2000. The tourism strategy that he proposed has been circulated to project partners.

##### Support to tourism committee

The project catalysed the organisation of tourism stakeholders around Trans Nzoia. This resulted in the birth of Mt. Elgon and Northwest Kenya Ecotourism Promotion Ltd. (MENOWECTO). This is presently being registered as a limited liability company. The project has withdrawn from regular collaboration and support to the organisation as at the end of 1999, and in the year 2000 has informally liaised with MENOWECTO to keep abreast of its evolution.

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<sup>14</sup> The fundamental attitude of the extension officers still seems to be 'we will educate the farmers', and at first sight there is little recognition of the possibility that farmers themselves may have or develop useful knowledge and technologies. In this respect, it would be of interest for staff involved in the project to get acquainted with approach of the UNDP/UNSO project Promoting Farmer Innovation (PFI) implemented since 1997 in Mwingi District, with funding from the Dutch Government (1997 – end 2000) and GTZ (2001).

The project is keen to promote links between MENOWECTO and whatever community-based tourism ventures that might develop in the project area. Some occasional collaboration may continue – for example, the project recently put a page about MENOWECTO on the project website, and also put the text of the MENOWECTO regional tourism brochure on the project's web site.

c. Support for the development of community based tourism initiatives

Communities living around the ecosystem have also got together and formed eco-tourism venture groups. In Mt. Elgon District there are two such groups: the Kongit and Kamtiong ecotourism groups. These groups are currently in the formative stage and intend to develop their own strategy on promotion of eco-tourism as an income-generating activity in the district. They have been registered by the Ministry of Culture and Social Services.

In Trans Nzoia, two communities living next to the Mt. Elgon National Park have started to make handicrafts that they hope to sell to tourists visiting the park. They hope to display them at the park shop located next to the Chorlim gate. Another group in Trans-Nzoia, including members of the Community Conservation Team, intends to register a porters and guides association (as a result of the visit to Uganda). They hope to link with the local tourism stakeholder, MENOWECTO, so as to be involved in their activities.

In relation to this initiative, the project realises that eco-tourism ventures are long term as far as payback is concerned, and therefore will not invest a lot of time and money due to the short time remaining for the project. The project intends to invite a business counsellor and or some other consultant who has a lot of experience in (eco)-tourism development to give business training to these groups to help them better understand what they are getting into.

The project will also support linkage to the relevant institutions that are supporting eco-tourism initiatives in the region as and when necessary. Their presence, for example, will be mentioned on the project's web site.

d. Strengthening of tourism services and infrastructure in Mount Elgon NP

At the commencement of the project, facilities for tourism at the National Park were only partially developed. It was recognised that better facilities and services for tourists in the park would help attract more tourists and also encourage them to stay longer. Both trends would help to increase the financial viability of the park and hence sustainability of its management for bio-diversity conservation.

e. Production of an information brochure for the park

In 1999, MEICDP supported the production of 5,000 copies of a tourist brochure for Mt Elgon National Park.

f. Park tourism infrastructure enhancement

The park has limited walking trails. The possibility of walking in the park is one of the special features of MENP, since, in most parks in Kenya walking is restricted. During 2000, 5 kilometres of new walking trails were opened. These will be improved before handing over. Four picnic sites have been rehabilitated. Improvement of campsites will also be given a priority, especially the newly-opened Chorlim campsite.

Trail maps and signposting will also be developed. Most of the reconnaissance work has been done and areas needing trail maps and signs have been identified.

## Problems and analysis

Community eco-tourism ventures have not been fully evaluated. The reasons for this are two-fold: one, the current policies of KWS are community unfriendly; and two, the de-regionalisation of KWS serves as an impediment to project aspirations in the area of tourism development.

### **4.5 Sub-programme 5: Policy**

According to the project reports, there is nil achievement under the programme on policy. Ostensibly, this is because the secretariat of the MoU, who are charged with the responsibility of implementing the programme have not done more than hold a workshop on its operationalisation. On the other hand, project activities in the field have involved changing the way partners work, producing data and information that will form a key input in policy development, and so on. These activities influence policy at significant levels and should be reported as such.

Policy may be influenced at the macro- and micro- levels, in different ways. In a project with multiple entry points such as this one, policy influence is also necessarily multi-sectoral. In this case, potential partners for policy influence have included departments in the Ministries of Education, Agriculture and Livestock Development, Local Government, Energy, NGOs, the community and donors, apart from those forming the MoU. A plan of action to operationalise the policy programme has to take all this into account.

Limiting policy activities to national level implementation demonstrates a limited understanding of the substance of policy influence. Indeed, influencing district and community level approaches and activities provides key lessons necessary to inform policy development. It is important to demonstrate that a certain way of doing things works, before expecting to replicate and institutionalise it in the form of policy.

Obviously, it is not easy for the project to play an advocacy role with respect to ongoing destructive activities in the forests in the project area, given that it has to try and collaborate with authorities and organisations in the area which sometimes are involved in illegal felling. It is the impression of the team that the project and/or IUCN/EARO could strengthen the influence of the project in this regard by liaising more closely with advocacy groups active in this field (such as KFWG).

## 5. Conclusions and recommendations

### 5.1 Overall conclusions and recommendations

#### Overall conclusions

1. Destruction and losses in the Mount Elgon ecosystem are significant. The longer they continue, the more difficult it will be to rehabilitate the ecosystem and to safeguard its important role as a water catchment. The resource base of the local communities and the bio-diversity of the region are under serious threat. Thus, **there is a conspicuous need for a programme like the Mount Elgon Integrated Conservation and Development Project**. Joining forces with Ugandan partners in a cross-border operation can further enhance the impact of the project.
2. During the first 2½ years of its existence, the MEICDP has operated under quite severe **constraints**. Lack of political commitment to forest conservation issues and involvement of local and high level authorities in illegal felling are obviously a predominant constraint, but these have been the very reasons to start the project. Other important constraints identified are:
  - **Progressive reduction of the long-term commitment by the donor**, causing undue pressure to produce tangible results in the short term. This is difficult to reconcile with the nature of a programme aiming at community based natural resource management.
  - **Inflexible logical framework planning** in the project formulation document, which was in contrast with the intended process approach.
  - **Delays in arrival of project equipment** due to deficiencies of the agreement of IUCN with the GoK.
  - **Flaws in the project design**, notably overemphasis on sub-programme 1 (collaborative natural resources management) and overestimation of the implementing capacity of FD, of KWS and of other partners (DRSRS, SoK).
  - **Dependency attitude among local communities**, due to relief type aid by other agencies after the ethnic clashes of 1992.
3. Notwithstanding these constraints, MEICDP has produced **encouraging results**, which have been documented in chapter 4. These results do not only relate to the planned activities of the plan of operations. There are unplanned positive results in other areas that are essential to project implementation (conflict resolution in areas of ethnic strife) and to sustainability.
4. Together with the need to rehabilitate the Mount Elgon ecosystem (as stated under a), the results produced so far fully justify long term donor support. **A budget-neutral extension by RNE to 31 December 2001 and a deliberate effort by RNE to support IUCN to find a new donor taking over by 1 January 2002 are a minimum condition for a decent exit**. The administrative arrangements to be put in place for this extension are still to be elaborated by the evaluation team (in appendix 4).
5. **In case a budget neutral extension is not granted and / or a new donor is not found, results in several key areas will not materialise or be minimised**. This would be the case with the boundary demarcation exercise, the development of the Management Plan, and genuine involvement of communities in the management of natural resources. In the opinion of the evaluation team, these would be clear cases of investment wasted. Furthermore, if certainty with respect to the extension and funding of a follow-up project

is not obtained very soon, a very motivated and well functioning group of implementing personnel will soon start disintegrating. A follow-up project may have to start practically from scratch in terms of team building and availability of qualified, experienced staff which will result in the loss of the momentum built up by the project.

6. **Fundamental principles of the innovative approach taken** by the project are:

- To work through existing institutions, avoiding the creation of parallel structures.
- Consequently, to build up only very limited project implementation capacity.
- To emphasize the need for a contribution in monetary terms and / or labor by communities before a project contribution is made.
- To be cautious in funding of recurrent costs of implementing agencies.
- To motivate staff of implementing agencies by enabling them to work in the communities, by offering training opportunities, by study tours, and so on.

Pressure to change these principles has often been considerable, due to past and present history of other projects and agencies active in the area. For reasons of sustainability, it is however essential to **maintain this approach**.

7. With respect to the fundamental principles listed under point 6, the evaluation team sees an **exception in the area of implementation capacity**. The workload of, and pressure on, the District Project Coordinators is such that in a follow-up project their position needs to be reinforced.

8. The **balance between and within sub-programmes seems skewed** towards easily recognisable activities (emphasis on MENP; in the livelihood sub-programme on potato and soy bean growing, and zero-grazing) and interrelationships are not very strong yet. The project design recognises the community as a critical partner, yet this is not reflected in the budgetary allocations.

9. The **institutional arrangements** under which the programme has been implemented have not functioned very satisfactorily. In any case, the arrangements should remain in place during the budget-neutral extension, which will be too short for sweeping changes. For a follow-up project, possibly within a regional (Eastern African) framework, they need rethinking:

- a) A precondition is for IUCN to improve upon its arrangements with the Kenya Government with respect to duty free import of project equipment and VAT exemption.
- b) In the opinion of the evaluation team, KWS and FD - through the MoU - remain the natural partners for the (follow-up) project in future. However, given experience during phase 1, participation of KWS and FD as full fledged implementing partners should be subject to specified conditions: (i) implementation by MNER of the recommendations of the Price Waterhouse report of 1997; (ii) a genuine commitment by headquarter and local level FD staff to conservation and development objectives; and (iii) more explicit dedication by KWS to making communities benefit from conservation work.
- c) If the Secretariat of the MoU is to play a central role again in a follow-up project, its presence and operationalisation at the district level need further attention.
- d) As to IUCN's attitude towards partnership under this project, there is evidence that the partnerships have in this case not always been sufficiently seriously (lack of consultation about the present evaluation being a relevant case).
- e) The recently established District Environmental Committee could become a relevant partner in the future.

10. The implementing partners at the district level should be granted more responsibility by their parent organisations. In discussions with the evaluation team, local level staff of KWS and FD repeatedly mentioned that they had to get permission from national headquarters for very minor decisions.
11. The fact that there has been no kingdom building by the project is judged as positive.

### **Overall recommendations**

1. It is recommended for IUCN EARO to intensify and speed up its efforts to secure long-term donor support for rehabilitation of the Mount Elgon Ecosystem, preferably in a cross-border operation with neighbouring Uganda.
2. It is recommended for RNE to grant a budget-neutral extension for a bridging phase of a period as long as permitted by remaining funds (at least until 31 December 2001) and to take a pro-active approach in securing support from a new donor for a follow-up project, preferably to be implemented on a regional (Eastern-African) basis. Certainty about whether or not this extension is granted is needed very soon, if further disintegration of the PMU is to be arrested.
3. As soon as possible, IUCN EARO's agreement with GoK to be improved to include duty-free import facilities for project equipment and VAT exemption for project goods acquired in Kenya. Action is urgently required.
4. The evaluation team recommends that the fundamental principles of the approach of the project be maintained, if a new funding agency is found.
5. In a follow-up project, the balance between sub-programme 1 and the other programmes needs to be redressed: emphasis should be on community related activities / collaborative management of natural resources with active involvement of communities.
6. Under programme 1 significant strides have been made towards increasing the knowledge base on the ecosystem. But there is still a need for additional in depth studies on specific bio-diversity issues. In the follow-up project, postgraduate studies by Kenyan students could be funded in collaboration with with a reputable specialised international institution under a pairing arrangement to promote inter-institutional cooperation. Emphasis in the selection of research subjects and methods should be on the applicability of expected results in conservation and development, not on scientific objectives as such (merely generating publications).
7. The evaluation team recommends for institutional arrangements and partnership relations during the follow-up project to be reviewed along the lines indicated in conclusion no 9. A more effective translation of the MoU on the ground is an important point of attention for the future.
8. Policy issues should not necessarily be the sole responsibility of the Secretariat of the MoU.
9. The District Project Coordinators should be supported by a qualified technical assistant (in addition to the secretary they currently have).<sup>15</sup> To emphasise the role and responsibilities of the implementing institutions at the local level, it could be worthwhile to consider changing the title of the District Project Coordinator into District Project Facilitator, which is what they really are according to the project design.

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<sup>15</sup> Their workload is very substantial. Because they do a significant amount of work in the field, they need a qualified person to be present in their offices who is at least able to answer questions.

## **5.2 Recommendations with regard to sub-programmes**

### **1. Collaborative natural resources management**

- Integrate and harmonise activities and processes for generating spatial and other data with those of the management Planning Unit (also see (b) below);
- Implementing agencies should commit themselves to supporting: (i) redeployment of additional personnel to the unit, (ii) reorienting the Management Plan so that it takes into consideration participatory approaches regarding communities, and (iii) re-orient the inventory work in order for it to address existing gaps between types of data collected and their intended use/application;
- Infrastructural strengthening should have a deliberate focus on cultivating good relations with communities neighbouring the National Park (for example roads and access to clean water);
- Preparations (sensitisation of communities) and planting of a live fence – or some other measure to make the boundary very conspicuous - to complement the work currently underway (boundary marking with masonry beacons) should be undertaken as soon as possible – assuming that a donor for the follow-up project will be found;
- Incorporate community sensitisation together with education on conservation of biological diversity and tree planting in the forest rehabilitation process; and,
- The training of personnel of partner institutions should take advantage of opportunities created during implementation to sensitise partners on collaborative community based natural resource management issues.

### **2. Community Capacity Building**

- PRA reports should be used to review opportunities
- A monitoring plan to enable project to respond to changing knowledge base and priorities of communities.
- Enhance sustainability of community committees by empowering them with saleable skills.
- Follow-up needed to assess and re-establish continued relevance of training and other activities.

### **3. Rural Livelihood Improvement**

- More intensive follow-up on the activities generated by training in feasibility studies.
- Increased attention to the key problems identified during the PRAS, notably water and access roads – the success of many of the livelihood activities hinges on the availability of water and the improvement of roads.
- Offer training opportunities (technical and in farmer-led extension) for extension officers MOA.

### **4. Tourism**

Effective and practical mechanisms to be put in place for strengthening and supporting KWS, regarding lobbying and forging community participation and sharing of benefits, and community eco-tourism ventures.

### **5. Policy**



Document and disseminate project lessons with policy implications so that they inform the processes of national policy formulation on:

- (a) Environmental education;
- (b) Direction of working approaches of partner institutions;
- (c) Formulate steps for developing effective partnerships; and,
- (d) Roles and responsibilities of different development partners.

In collaboration with IUCN/EARO: find ways to liaise more closely with organisations active in advocacy and public awareness on conservation and development issues.

## **Appendices**

1. ToR of the external evaluation
2. Programme of the mission
3. References
4. Cost-neutral extension

*Final Draft 25/01/2001*

## **Terms of Reference**

### **Evaluation of Phase I of the Mt Elgon Integrated Conservation and Development Project**

#### **1.0 Background**

What was meant to be a longer first phase of the Mount Elgon Integrated Conservation and Development Project commenced in July 1998 concludes at the end of July 2001 due to the Dutch government restructuring its bilateral relationship with the Kenya Government. The Dutch Government now wishes to evaluate the project in order to determine the reasons for whatever achievements made and the failures. The evaluation will also recommend whether there is need to give a five months bridging phase (budget neutral) to the project to facilitate the takeover by another donor by the year 2002. If yes, the evaluation will recommend suitable administrative and technical arrangement for this bridging phase.

The project is executed by IUCN East Africa Regional Office (EARO) under a contract with the Royal Netherlands Embassy (RNE), Nairobi. The project is implemented by Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS) and the Forest Department (FD) under a Memorandum of Project Implementation Agreement between EARO, KWS and FD.

A Project Management Unit (PMU), consisting of the Project Manager (PM), Chief Technical Advisor (CTA), Rural Development Advisor (RDA), and the two District Project Co-ordinators (DPC) - one in each of Trans-Nzoia and Mt Elgon Districts, guides the implementation, by partner agencies, of project activities in the field. The PM, CTA and RDA are employed by EARO; the DPCs are project employees.

The PMU reports to the Secretariat of the MoU established between KWS and FD for biodiversity conservation in Forest Reserves, and at the national level, the National Project Steering Committee guides the project.

#### **1.1 Objective of the Project**

The project's immediate objective, which the project's interventions was expected to achieve, as given in the Project Formulation Document (PFD) is:

*“The Kenyan side of the Mount Elgon ecosystem's natural resource base and its functions are sustainably managed and utilised.”*

This could not be achieved in the short period as the realistic time frame for this objective was considered to be 10 years. The immediate objective is therefore a conceptual guide for project outputs and activities.

For the first phase, the project's overall goal, was

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*“Enhancement of biodiversity conservation on Mt Elgon by building up the competencies of some local communities and the partner agencies in collaborative natural resources management and seeking means of decreasing the dependency of these communities on the natural resources of Mt Elgon.”*

## **1.2 Output**

The project was designed to deliver the following five Outputs:

- 1) Improved understanding and application of knowledge of the natural resources base of Mt. Elgon.
- 2) Institutional capacities and capabilities of local management institutions for sustainable management of the Mount Elgon ecosystem strengthened.
- 3) Women and men of local communities and other stakeholders are genuine and effective partners of the management institutions with respect to the management of the Mount Elgon ecosystem.
- 4) Relative dependence of women and men of the adjacent communities on Mt. Elgon natural resources base reduced.
- 5) National policy issues with respect to Mount Elgon ecosystem addressed.

The evaluation will assess how much of the above outputs have been attained two and a half years into project implementation.

## **2.0 Objective and Extent of the Evaluation**

The overall objective of the evaluation is to assess the efficiency and effectiveness of project implementation approaches and how the project supported activities have contributed to achieving the over-all project purpose.

Specifically, the evaluation will cover the performance of the project and will assess:

- What progress it has made towards the outputs and the immediate objective, as designated in the Plan of Operations, and will determine reasons for whatever progress that may have been accomplished, and the causes of any under-performance.
  - The effectiveness and efficiency of the organisational arrangements under which the project has been conducted, including the contribution of each of the principal organisational partners – IUCN-EARO, KWS, FD, and the Project Management Unit to the project's performance.
  - The appropriateness of the project design and in particular, the project objectives and outputs specified in the Plan of Operations.
  - The impact of the project, to what extent has the project contributed towards its long-term goals? Why or why not? Have there been any unanticipated positive or negative consequences of the project? Why did they arise?
  - Sustainability: will there be continued positive impacts as a result of the 2.5 years of project implementation? Why or why not? Will the organisational arrangements under which the project has been conducted support continued
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project activities implementation? What impact has this arrangement had on project implementation?

- The perspectives of the project actors on the effectiveness of the institutional arrangements of project implementation in-so far as technical and financial resources flows are concerned

## **2.1 Tasks to be performed by the Evaluation Team**

1. Gain an understanding of the project and its operating environment by reading relevant literature (especially project documents) and interviewing key project actors, at a central and de-centralized level.
2. Determine, for as wide a range of project actors as possible within the time available, their perspectives on the usefulness of the project.
3. Determine whether the project's performance, as assessed against performance targets outlined in the Plan of Operations, has been satisfactory and cost effective.
4. Assess the effectiveness and efficiency of supervisory and support arrangements for the project, addressing in particular the role of the three principal partners in the project – IUCN-EARO, KWS and FD.
5. Review the programs and activities being undertaken by the project and determine whether they effectively address the prescribed project outputs; recommend whatever changes may be considered desirable.
6. Make recommendations on whether the project in some guise should continue, and if positive, how a continuation should be managed, that is, the scope of the project, its aims, organisational arrangements, staffing and its *modus operandi*.
7. Taking into account No. 6, make recommendations on whether there is need for a bridging phase (budget neutral) to enable decent exit and handover to another donor by the Dutch government and how the bridging phase should be managed, that is – scope, staffing arrangements and activities during this bridging phase.

## **2.2 Outputs of the Evaluation Team**

- a) The principal output of the evaluation will be a report addressing the issues raised in these ToRs. The report should contain among others concrete recommendations on continuation identifying suitable partners and their role in the second phase (under another donor?) and staffing and activities in the bridging phase.
- b) The Team will lead a half day Debriefing / Review of their first draft report for key project actors assembled on the invitation of RNE, in Nairobi.

## **2.3 Proposed Schedule**

The evaluation will take place for 18 working days commencing on 29<sup>th</sup> January 2001 and concluding 16<sup>th</sup> February, 2001.

The team will assemble in Nairobi where the first three working days will be spent, reading documents and meeting Nairobi-based stakeholders.

Ten days will be spent in the field, based at Kitale, with field-based stakeholders and project staff, followed by three days in Nairobi, interviewing project actors based

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there, and producing a first draft of the report. The Royal Netherlands Embassy will arrange adequate formal working conditions in Kitale.

By the end of the sixteenth working day, the team will have distributed an initial draft of their findings.

On the afternoon of the seventeenth working day the team will conduct a debriefing review with key stakeholders, nominated by RNE, in Nairobi.

By the end of the eighteenth day the team will submit a revised draft of their report.

Within two weeks feedback on the revised draft will have been received by the Team Leader who will submit the final version of the report within a further two weeks.

## **2.4 The Evaluation Team**

The team will consist of three persons - an international consultant who will be the team leader, and two national consultants. At least one of the team members will be a woman.

The following skills and experience will be collectively present in the evaluation team:

- a) Collaborative natural resources management - forestry, wildlife and biodiversity conservation.
- b) Organization management and development.
- c) Agricultural development.
- d) Rural development, including rural sociology and gender competencies.
- e) Human resources development.

All team members will have had at least eight years of professional experience in their respective fields.

In addition, the Team Leader will have had at least ten years of work experience in developing countries of which at least five years will have been in Africa.

Whilst team members' opinion will be respected, the Team Leader will bear overall responsibility to RNE for the evaluation.

## **2.5 Resources**

### *Personnel*

RNE, EARO, KWS, FD will each designate an officer knowledgeable about the project to be a contact person for the Evaluation Team, and these officers will assist the Team to the best of their abilities.

Project Staff will be at the disposal of the Evaluation Team during normal office hours for the duration of the Evaluation, and outside these hours, by agreement with the individuals concerned.

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*Reading Material*

Project Formulation Document, April 1997  
Plan of Operations April 1999  
Plan of Operations December 1999  
Annual Workplan 1999  
Annual Workplan 2000

**Work-plan 2001**

Monitoring and Evaluation Plan  
Quarterly and Half Yearly Progress Reports Dec 1998-Dec 2000  
Proposals for Project Activities (filed in PMU Office)  
Review of the Management of the Forests of the Mt Elgon Ecosystem  
Various project reports - on PRAs, Trainings.  
PMU meeting minutes  
Project files on the Five Programs and Project Administration  
The project's website - [www.mountelgon.net](http://www.mountelgon.net)

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