Mid Term Review of

Mount Elgon Regional Ecosystem Conservation Programme (MERECP)

Final Report, June 3, 2008

By Thor S. Larsen (team leader), Benjamin Nganwa Kamugasha and Irene Karani

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List of Abbreviations

CFM	Collaborative Forest Management
CRM	Collaborative Resources Management
CTA	Chief Technical Advisor
DEAP	District Environmental Plans
EAC	East African Community
ENR	Environment and Natural Resources
ERS	Economic Recovery Strategy
ESARO	Eastern and Southern Africa Regional Office of IUCN
ICDP	Integrated Conservation and Development Project
ICRAF	The World Agro-forestry Centre-International Centre for Research and Agroforestry
IUCN	The International Union for Conservation of Nature
KFS	Kenya Forest Service
KWS	Kenya Wildlife Service
LC3	Local Government Community Sub County Level, Uganda
LC5	Local Government District Level, Uganda
LIRDP	Luangwa Integrated Resource Development Project
LVBC	Lake Victoria Basin Commission (formerly, Lake Victoria Development Programme)
LVDP	Lake Victoria Development Programme
MFA	Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MCC	MERECP Coordination Committee
MEMR	Ministry of Environment and Mineral Resources
MERECP	Mt Elgon Regional Ecosystem Conservation Programme
MIM	MERECP Implementation Manual
MSC	MERECP Steering Committee
MTR	Mid Term Review
NBI	Nile Basin Initiative
NEMA	National Environment Management Authority
NELSAP	Nile Equatorial Lakes Subsidiary Action Programme
NFA	National Forest Authority (Uganda)
NGO	Non Governmental Organization
NORAD	Norwegian Agency for Development
PA	Protected area
PAIMA	Programme Activity Implementation Agreement
PCLG	Poverty and Conservation Learning Group
PD	Project Document
PEAP	Poverty Eradication Action Plan
PEI	The Poverty Environment Initiative
PMU	Project Management Unit
PSC	Policy Steering Committee
RCMS	Resource Use Conflict Management Strategy
RPSC	Regional Policy Steering Committee

SLAMU	South Luangwa Administrative Management Unit
SMART	Sspecific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, Time-bound
SUSG	Sustainable Use Specialist Group
TNBRM	Transboundary Natural Resource Management
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UWA	Uganda Wildlife Authority
WCMC	World Conservation Monitoring Centre
WCPPA	IUCN World Commission on Parks and Protected Areas

Executive Summary

This is a report of the Mid Term Review (MTR) of the Mt. Elgon Regional Ecosystem Conservation Programme (MERECP). The MTR has, according to its TOR, been requested to assess overall progress, results achieved compared to the Vision, Goal, Purpose and Objectives, as well as risks, challenges and constraints encountered in the process of programme implementation; and to provide strategic guidance for the remaining programme period. The MTR was conducted between 21 April – 6 May 2008 in Uganda and Kenya. The review methodology comprised of participatory methodologies and included literature review, Focus Group Discussions, key informant interviews, field observations and comparisons between the findings of the two appraisals of 2002 and 2005 against the MTR findings in 2008. The MTR had key interviews with 18 out of a total of 23 stakeholders/ institutions.

Mt Elgon has been identified by the EAC Secretariat and partner states as a trans-boundary ecosystem that needs to be managed through a regional programme of conservation and sustainable development during the 2001-2005 EAC Strategic Plan. MERECP was developed in response to the need for a regional approach to the management of this important trans-boundary ecosystem as a water catchment for the Lake Victoria, the Nile and Lake Turkana. The basic objective of the MERECP is underpinned by the challenges of managing the shared ecosystem of Mt. Elgon between Uganda and Kenya. The main purpose of MERECP is to enhance the conservation status and benefits of Mt Elgon ecosystem to environment quality and livelihoods.

MERECP's over-all Vision is: *"A secure and productive ecosystem"* and the goal is *"Integrated ecosystem conservation and management for sustainable development and enhanced well-being of the people and their environment."* The purpose is: *"To enhance the conservation status and benefits of Mt Elgon ecosystem to environment quality and livelihoods",* which is to be realized through four objectives; a): Conservation and management of natural resources and biodiversity in and outside protected areas promoted; b): Sustainable development in Mt Elgon Ecosystem enhanced; c): Conservation and management needs of Mt Elgon Ecosystem integrated into national, regional and international development framework; and d): MERECP implemented effectively as a regional trans-boundary programme.

MERECP's vision, goal and purpose recognize the ecosystem approach, which is endorsed by several international processes and institutions, e.g. the Millennium Development Goals and the CBD, and also by the Norwegian Action Plan for Environment in Development Cooperation of June 2006. Transboundary natural resource management (TBNRM) is also a key priority under MERECP. The ecosystem approach emphasize the importance of participatory approaches in management of protected areas and ecological networks, with the overall objective to provide benefits to local and indigenous communities as well as enabling local communities to be more responsible for the sustainable management of their natural resources. (From CBD 7th COP Meeting). TBNRM require the safeguard of viable ecosystems and important components, appropriate and harmonized national legislation and regulations, and political and

institutional support for such legislation/ regulations. Institutions must have comparable visions, goals, competence and capacity.

Although MERECP's conceptual framework is a result of discussions and agreements between all involved in the design, review and approval phases, the MTR nevertheless finds it to be flawed in relation to what the programme is set to address. Although the programme's vision and goal are in harmony with principles and guidelines for the ecosystem approach, the translation into programme objectives and subsequent implementation is confusing. The MTR suggest the following revised objectives: a): Conservation and management of natural resources and biodiversity in and outside protected areas promoted (as before); b): Ecosystem goods and/or services for local communities and their livelihood enhanced (new); and c): Legislation harmonized and appropriate institutions strengthened in support of the ecosystem approach (new).

EAC's supervision and consultation for MERECP has not been as active as would have been desired. LVBC's shall assist with harmonization of the laws in Kenya and Uganda, which will allow for better transboundary management of the Mt. Elgon ecosystem. Harmonization of legislation and regulations is still hampered by capacity constraints. At the time of the review LVBC was expecting nine more staff, which will bring the total staff numbers to 21.

IUCN has played key roles in the design and launching of MERECP and was contracted by the EAC to provide technical and managerial support to the programme. All financial resources for MERECP have also been routed through IUCN. While the role IUCN is important and its performance appreciated, some of the stakeholders have also questioned IUCN's dominant roles in preparations for and implementation of MERECP. Government institutions should have been involved from the very beginning, i.e. in the design phase. Some stakeholders expressed skepticism on how an organization which itself is in the process of restructuring can have the capacity to provide technical assistance to this complex programme.

The structure of MERECP appears logical but is also complex. The MTR has made the following specific observations on the MERECP structure;
- Too many implementing institutions
- Co-ordination of too many structures in MERECP is not cost-effective
- Local management and implementation responsibilities are at the districts level instead of village levels. Local communities are left out of important consultations and decision-making processes.
- Management and implementation have been hampered by weak extension service structures and weak local ENR sector
- There is need to rank contribution of institutions. Such grading can be used when it becomes necessary to off-load some institutions. Now that LVBC is operational, the role of EAC will become clearer and stronger because it can concentrate on what it can do best at the strategic broad policy level

There need to be more emphasis on the communication between the implementing institutions and the communities who, with reference to MERECP's vision, goal and overall objectives, are the most important target groups.

MERECP's MIM is a useful tool, and the implementing institutions have been trained to internalize it. MIM is however different from local government management and financial procedures, which has caused delays for implementation of activities at the district level. The MIM needs to acknowledge the different procedures across countries.

Effectiveness of MERECP implementation arrangements and structures, which depends on harmonized policy, institutions and legal frameworks, was a matter of concern and a recurrent theme in all discussions. Harmonization requires comparable principles, that they are geared towards the same objectives, cover the same subject matter, and are capable of achieving stated objectives. The process of harmonization of laws under MERECP has been slow. MERECP has not taken advantage of provisions, which allow for each government to make rules using statutory instruments (subsidiary legislation).

Documentation has been well done and is adequate. All aspects of the programme are documented from the project document, inception phase, appraisal reports, semi-annual and annual reports, studies and research findings, minutes of meetings, MIM, M&E framework, documentation on agreements, etc.

The MTR has addressed and discussed the likelihood of resolution of the problems identified during programme preparation, including high levels of dependence on natural resources for livelihood and resultant pressures for agricultural encroachment, inappropriate access regimes to natural resources and land within and outside the protected areas, unregulated use of resources from protected areas, policy and legal challenges and constraints that act as disincentives to resource use and development, institutional and human capacity to manage and develop trans-boundary natural resources, legitimate settlers/inhabitants of the natural forest and illegal settlers and encroachment, political processes and involvement in management of the protected areas, insecurity for protected areas management, problems arising from illegal trade and cattle rustling and wildfires, inappropriate technologies for natural resources utilization, lack of capital and incentives for investments into natural resources development, poor markets and marketing systems and infrastructure, increasing human population and therefore increasing demand on natural resources, poverty levels and trends, land and resources tenure, declining land productivity, decline in resources availability, access to basic social amenities, natural and man-made disasters, problem animals/vermin, food insecurity and capacities to manage natural resources.

In order to address conflicts that sometimes have been historical, MERECP has been promoting Collaborative Resource Management (CRM) agreements between UWA and communities bordering the park in Uganda. In Kenya, KWS addresses welfare problems through corporate social responsibility where amenities such as schools, health dispensaries and water tanks are constructed.

There is a need for appropriate training on interdisciplinary aspects of the ecosystem approach and of TBNRM. Regulations under existing laws need to be harmonized and to allow for local, sustainable use of park resources e.g. via statutory instruments. The translation of project resources and activities into results has been slow, partly due to the complexity of the programme, but also because of government regulations, which slow down disbursements.

The MTR team is concerned about the high administrative costs of the programme. In 2005/2006, 65, 8%, or perhaps as much as 86, 4% of grand total expenditures, were for administration, coordination, meetings etc. Field activities accounted for a meager 3, 4% of grand total expenditures and only 12, 6% when ICRAF expenditures were added. In 2007, the respective figures were somewhere between 46, 3% and 62.4% for administration etc. and 28% for field activities. IUCN has challenged these calculations. However, even careful calculations of administrative costs show that less than 50% of the budget for 2007 went for field activities. Activities are too many and spread over a large geographical area. Less than 50% of the targeted activities have been implemented during the first half of the programme. Effectiveness has been below average because approximately 50% of the activities keep being rolled over each year due to their lack of implementation the previous year.

The MTR's opinion is that the programme is not cost effective and if the costs of administration and coordination continue to be high, the programme may not achieve tangible results and significant impacts.

It is commendable that MERECP has a M&E manual, which was developed in a participatory manner, and which is used. Other monitoring processes go according to planning via Annual Meetings, semi annual and annual reports, and now the MTR. The M&E systems appears to be working well as all have been trained on the framework and have participated in various forums which form part of the M&E system. One of the gaps identified in the framework is monitoring changes in livelihoods of the target beneficiaries. This does not come out clearly in the framework and as such baseline information on household economies was not collected at the beginning of the programme.

The MTR has some concerns regarding the activities: The districts are not targeting the hotspots near the protected areas, but are continuing with their normal rural development projects. The activities from district to district are blueprints of one another. Very few activities reflect the ecosystem approach and the transboundary nature of the programme. There is duplication of activities across objectives. Some of the activities were also found to be too ambitious for a four-year programme.

Over the last 20-30 years, there has been a growing recognition that conservation will not succeed unless poor people who traditionally have been dependent upon natural resources also participate in management and derive ecosystem benefits in some form. The MTR has addressed impacts from the Mt Elgon ecosystem upon livelihoods and livelihood security, and park provisions for support of livelihood for people who live adjacent to the

park. This include park boundary management, the importance of non-timber products for local communities, improvement in agricultural practices, access to ecosystem goods and/or services such as firewood, fruits and berries, medicinal plants and other non-timber products, revenue opportunities e.g. via tourism and related activities, local peoples' attitudes to conservation and the park.

MERECP has so far merely paid "lip service" to the local communities' park revenue sharing and to their possible involvement in park ecotourism. Local communities in Uganda are to receive 20% of gate fees only, i.e. 9.864.025 Ush, or USD 5.978, which is 0.07 of the total park income. It is an opportunity and a challenge for UWA to enhance local community support by allocating e.g. 80% of all park income, and with no intervention from UWA on use priorities. Local people's access to park resources can also be improved via statutory instruments under existing legislation, both in Uganda and Kenya. MERECP should, with the assistance of appropriate legal expertise, prioritize much needed improvement of current legislation and regulations. The MTR has suggested some modest infrastructure improvement for enhanced eco-tourism on both sides of the border, which may allow for more active roles and more benefits for local communities.

MERECP is now at a crossroad: On the one hand, the programme is expected to adhere to the ecosystem approach, and with that to work at the nexus of poverty, governance, and environment. MERECP must, however, also recognize Ugandan and Kenyan strict "fence and fine" conservation policies, legislation and regulations. For MERECP to succeed the trust and support of local communities is crucial and the programme should do whatever possible for formal and legal acceptance of local peoples roles and rights in sustainable use of natural resources and ecosystem goods and/or services from the park and adjacent protected areas.

Sustainability and replicability of MERECP is dependent upon a significant redesign of the programme, i.e. with revised objectives which are in harmony with the programme's vision and goal, with the ecosystem approach and with requirements for sound TBNRM. The number of institutions need to be trimmed down and activities to be refocused where most impact is likely to be achieved, i.e. with fewer districts and closer to the park boundary. Government ownership of MERECP is important and MERECP has to be well embedded in governance structures at the District and lower levels of local governance. Sustainability will depend on how well MERECP will empower communities under collaborative management of the Mt. Elgon ecosystem and thereby instil a sense of responsibility.

MERECP must convey lessons learned about the programme's achievements and constraints to other like-minded programmes and stakeholders, e.g. via MERECP's home page, which must be updated and made more easily accessible. It is equally important for MERECP to learn and to apply lessons from other relevant programmes in Africa, e.g. via study tours and other forms of interactions. MERECP could also have benefited from more active use of IUCN's Commissions and expert groups and from other groups/ institutions with relevant expertise and experience.

The MTR has, as of its TOR, described and provided details for an exit strategy for IUCN. The MTR recommends that LVBC takes over IUCN's current roles and responsibilities for management, coordination and disbursement of funds. An officer, who shall be fully responsible for MERECP affairs, should be recruited and based at LVBC. Details and time frame for such a transfer has to be discussed and planned with MCC, EAC, LVBC and other relevant stakeholders. These have to agree on a time-frame for IUCN to phase out so that institutions involved will have mainstreamed the ecosystem approach and TBNRM and are also able to manage and support certain elements from within their own resources and budgets.

The MTR has in its conclusions and recommendations addressed 12 items. Although not part of the TOR, the MTR has been requested to specify its recommendations as to what shall be done when and by whom. The MTR is, however, not in a position to provide specific advice on this, not least because most of what is recommended below is dependent upon the suggested changes of objectives, IUCN exit strategy, and which institution(s) that is to take over IUCN's roles and responsibilities. This has to therefore to be addressed and resolved by MERECP's current management and decision-making structures, i.e. the PMU, the MSC and the MCC and other stakeholders. EAC/ LVCB, which according to our recommendation should take over after IUCN, must be consulted and it is up to EAC/LVBC and IUCN to agree on realistic time frames for changes and to decide upon priorities for the way forward.

With a re-design of MERECP's objectives and activities, with fewer institutions and with better prioritization of field activities, then MERECP will be highly relevant in the pursuance of the ecosystem approach and TBNRM. The current four years programme period is, however, not realistic for sustainability and replicability. MERECP's current four year time frame can be regarded as a catalytic "kick off" and testing period. 15-20 years are more realistic for good results and sustainability. Donors should be prepared for this.

1.0 Introduction

This is a report of the Mid Term Review (MTR) of the Mt. Elgon Regional Ecosystem Conservation Programme funded by the Royal Norwegian Embassy, co-funded by the Swedish Embassy and implemented by the East African Community (EAC). The International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) is the facilitator of the programme.

The MTR has assessed the implementation of the Mount Elgon Regional Ecosystem conservation Pogramme (MERECP). It is anticipated that the recommendations made by the review will among other things inform the programme work-plan in the remaining programme period under the current funding arrangements. Specifically the purpose and objective of the mid-term review has been to:

a) Assess overall progress, results achieved compared to the Vision, Goal, Purpose and Objectives, as well as risks, challenges and constraints encountered in the process of programme implementation; and
b) Provide strategic guidance for the remaining programme period.

See Chapter 1.2. for details.

1.1 The background of MERECP

Mt Elgon has been identified by the EAC Secretariat and partner states as a trans-boundary ecosystem that need to be managed through a regional programme of conservation and sustainable development. This was meant to commence during the 2001-2005 EAC Strategic Plan. Accordingly, MERECP was developed in response to the need for a regional approach to the management of this important trans-boundary ecosystem as a water catchment for the Lake Victoria, the Nile and Lake Turkana. The basic objective of the MERECP is underpinned by the challenges of managing the shared ecosystem of Mt. Elgon between Uganda and Kenya. During the years of IUCN assisted national activities in the forests and other protected areas on both sides of the international border in Kenya and Uganda, it was recognized that both an ecosystem approach and a regional, bilateral approach were needed to ensure the continuation of the ecological and development benefits and services provided by the mountain ecosystem – both directly to the local peoples of the area, the remote users of Mt Elgon products and the biodiversity that is of local, national, regional and global significance.

MERECP was designed by IUCN over a period of almost four years (2000-2004) that involved many local, national and regional discussions and the interaction of a range of stakeholders including the EAC, the governments of Kenya and Uganda through relevant national government agencies, local government/districts, user groups, NGOs, the private sector, local communities and concerned conservationists and researchers. Through these processes, it was agreed that MERECP should be a regional programme for the good of the ecosystem and the ecosystem users and inhabitants.

MERECP was thus based on these national activities as well as achievements of the concluded Integrated Conservation and Development Projects (ICDPs) on both sides of the mountain to address conservation and development issues that require regional

approaches. This is what gave birth to the idea of a transboundary approach. Against this background the mid-term review has among others therefore had to critically look at:

1) issues of the link between conservation and development (which entails matters pertaining to the reduction of poverty, improving social economic welfare and addressing aspirations of livelihoods of local communities.

2) Sustainability of the MERECP approach and how it builds into the Poverty Eradication Action Plan (PEAP) for Uganda, and the Economic Recovery Strategy (ERS) for Kenya

3) Institutional arrangements required to streamline management of shared resources on both sides of the border; i.e. how to mobilize the institutions to protect and manage the ecosystem and strengthen their capacity to work together.

4) The potency of a whole range of incentives for countries to work together e.g. the EAC Treaty, EAC Protocol on Environment and Natural Resources, Lake Victoria Basin Commission, etc.

In February 2004, the EAC and the Norwegian Government agreed to embark on an Inception Phase in recognition of the fact that MERECP is a pioneer and complex programme that required adequate time to elaborate its design and implementation modalities. The Inception Phase undertook comprehensive consultations with stakeholders, carried out baseline surveys and piloted implementation and extensively revised MERECP's design with the aim to further develop the vision of how the program can make a difference in biodiversity conservation and improving peoples' livelihoods in the Mt Elgon Ecosystem.

The total budget for MERECP is USD 4,869,501 over an implementation period of 4 years.

1.2 The Mid Term Review (MTR)

This Mid Term Review (MTR) was conducted between April-May 2008 in Uganda and Kenya. The purpose of the review was to:

- Assess overall progress, results achieved compared to the Vision, Goal, Purpose and Objectives, as well as risks, challenges and constraints encountered in the process of programme implementation; and
- Provide strategic guidance for the remaining programme period.

Specifically the review was to address:

- The performance by EAC/LVBC in fulfilling its obligations to the MERECP (enabling mechanism for integration of MERECP into EAC/LVBC activities and smooth implementation of the programme);
- The performance by IUCN in fulfilling its obligations by facilitating implementing institutions, technical backstopping, coordination and management, reporting (technical and financial), value addition (leveraging funds and actions, etc.);
- Proposal of an IUCN exit strategy in MERECP implementation
- The effectiveness of the implementation arrangements and structures
- Relevance of programme
- Efficiency

- Impact and effectiveness
- Sustainability and replicability
- Assessment of risks identified, adequacy of proposed IUCN exit strategy and arrangements for collaboration with other regional programmes / actors
- Assessment of whether a programme extension in terms of time is required

(See full TORs in Annex 1).

1.2.1 Methodology

The review methodology comprised of participatory methodologies and included literature review, Focus Group Discussions, key informant interviews, field observations and comparisons between the findings of the two appraisals of 2002 and 2005 against the MTR findings in 2008. *(See Annex 2).*

1.2.2 Literature Review

The literature analyzed included programme documents and other studies and research that have relevance to MERECP. See bibliography.

1.2.3 Focus Group Discussions

Focus group discussions were conducted with beneficiary community groups, implementing institutions at district level and IUCN staff. Focus group discussions were held with Mbale, Sironko, Kapchorwa and Mt. Elgon districts, with UWA and KWS and with communities involved in transboundary management.

1.2.4 Key interviews (*See full list in Annex 4*)

Key interviews were conducted in Kenya and Uganda. The key stakeholders (23 in all) are listed below. Those who were interviewed by the MTR are marked with an *:

Uganda:
Ministry of Water an Environment (MERECP focal point) *
Ministry of Local Government *
Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA) *
National Forest Authority (NFA) *
IUCN Uganda Country Office staff. *
National Environment Management Authority (NEMA)
Six districts, i.e. Mbale *, Sironko *, Kapchorwa *, Bukwo, Budududa and Manafwa

Kenya:
Ministry of Environment and Mineral Resources *
Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS) *
Kenya Forest Service (KFS) *
Mt. Elgon County Council *
Mt. Elgon District *
IUCN-Eastern and Southern Africa Regional Office (ESARO) staff. *
National Environment Management Authority (NEMA)

Other stakeholders:
East African Community (EAC), Arusha *
Lake Victoria Basin Commission (LVBC), Kisumu *
Norwegian Embassy, Kampala *
Swedish Embassy, Kampala *

1.2.5 Field Observations

Field observations were carried out by the reviewers during the execution of the evaluation and recorded. This information was used in triangulation of data sourced from the literature review, FGDs and key informant interviews. It was also used in determining the impact of the project.

1.2.6. Comparison with findings and recommendations in 2002 and 2005.

The MTR has also compared the Appraisal 2002 and Appraisal 2005 reports with action taken at MTR in 2008. *See Annex 2.*

1.2.7 Constraints of the Review

Due to the large number of institutions that had to be met in the course of this review and the limited time allocated, the MTR team was unable to engage with beneficiary community groups themselves and thus some parts of the TOR such as the impact of the programme on gender could not be assessed effectively. The MTR only managed to engage with one boundary management community group.

1.3   MERECP's vision, goal and programme objectives

MERECP was designed to respond to the need for a regional approach to the management of the trans- boundary ecosystem of the countries of Uganda and Kenya. The main purpose of MERECP is to enhance the conservation status and benefits of Mt Elgon ecosystem to environment quality and livelihoods.

MERECP's over-all vision according to the project document is: *"A secure and productive ecosystem"* and the goal is *"Integrated ecosystem conservation and management for sustainable development and enhanced well-being of the people and their environment."* The purpose is: *"To enhance the conservation status and benefits of Mt Elgon ecosystem to environment quality and livelihoods",* which is to be realized through four objectives:
   a) Conservation and management of natural resources and biodiversity in and outside protected areas promoted;
   b) Sustainable development in Mt Elgon Ecosystem enhanced;
   c) Conservation and management needs of Mt Elgon Ecosystem integrated into national, regional and international development framework; and
   d) MERECP implemented effectively as a regional trans-boundary programme.

It is important to have a common understanding of opportunities and constraints under MERECP's objectives a) - c). Guidelines for Protected Area Management Categories by IUCN World Commission on Parks and Protected Areas (WCPPA), with the assistance of the World Conservation Monitoring Centre (WCMC), are: Category II National Park:

Protected area to be *"managed mainly for ecosystem protection and recreation."* Objectives of management include *"…to take into account the needs of indigenous people, including subsistence resource use, in so far as these will not adversely affect the other objectives of management."* Ownership and management *"… may also be vested in… council of indigenous people, foundation or other legally established body which has dedicated the area to long-term conservation."[1]*

Furthermore, the Seventh COP meeting to the CBD, in Kuala Lumpur, 9-20 and 27 February 2004 said that the Convention would: *"Adopt a participatory approach in establishing and managing protected areas and ecological networks, giving priority to the role and respecting the rights of local and indigenous communities and addressing and mobilizing the socio-economic potentials of protected areas and ecological networks and discuss ways of bringing more benefits to local and indigenous communities as well as enabling local communities to be more responsible for the sustainable management of their natural resources."[2]*

The internationally recognized guidelines by IUCN/ WCMS and by CBD's COP 7, and the internationally recognized endorsement of the ecosystem approach (*see Chapter 2.5)* are important for MERECP in the programme's pursuance of its Vision and Goal.
The MTR will in this context not distinguish between indigenous people and marginalized and poor local people who to a large extent depend upon natural resources and ecosystem goods and/or services. Their needs, roles and rights are the same.

Conservation and management of natural resources in- and outside Mt. Elgon's protected areas has been promoted by each country through their legislation and institutional framework, however with little attention towards the internationally recognized principles mentioned above. Kenya is via Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS) *de facto* practicing a *"fence and fine"* policy, which does not allow for local communities to access the park and to receive ecosystem benefits from it, e.g. in the form of non-timber products. Uganda applies a policy, which is slightly more relaxed, in that local communities can supply their livelihoods with ecosystem goods and/or services from the park, but only upon signed agreements with the Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA).

Kenya's and Uganda's strict park legislation represent therefore an "uphill battle" for MERECP in its pursuance of the ecosystem approach as of the programme's overall vision and goal, whereby local people would benefit from ecosystem goods and/or services from the park.

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[1] See: http://www.unep-wcmc.org/protected_areas/categories/eng/ii.pdf
[2] See: http://www.cbd.int/doc/meetings/cop/cop-07/information/cop-07-inf-35-en.pdf

1.4. Sustainable use of natural resources in protected areas and development.

Careful harvesting of renewable resources within protected areas need not be in conflict with ecological sustainability and the ecosystem approach, nor need there be a conflict with internationally recognized principles for park management. *See Chapter 1.3 above and Chapter 2.5*. There is no conflict between the definitions above and the application of the ecosystem approach, i.e."a strategy for the integrated management of land, water and living resources that promotes conservation and sustainable use in an equitable way" as described by CBD. Several studies have shown that ecosystem goods and/or services may contribute with more than 50% to poor and marginalized African rural communities' livelihoods (See e.g. UNEP 1981 and WRI 2005.)

1.5 What are the challenges to enhancement of transboundary natural resource management (TBNRM) and to what extent has the MERECP programme addressed these challenges?

The basic objective of the MERECP is underpinned by the challenges of managing the shared ecosystem of Mt. Elgon. This is what gave birth to the idea of a transboundary approach. Against this background the mid-term review has among others therefore had to critically look at:

- Issues of the links between conservation and development, which entails matters pertaining to ecological integrity and ecosystem well being, the reduction of poverty, ecosystem well being, ecological integrity, improving social economic welfare and addressing aspirations of livelihoods of local communities.
- Sustainability of the MERECP approach and how it builds into the Poverty Eradication Action Plan (PEAP) for Uganda, and the Economic Recovery Strategy (ERS) for Kenya.
- Institutional arrangement required to streamline management of shared resources on both sides of the border; i.e. how to mobilize the institutions to protect the ecosystem and strengthen their capacity to work together.
- The potency of a whole range of incentives for countries to work together e.g. the EAC Treaty, EAC Protocol on Environment and Natural Resources, LVBC, etc.

For Mt. Elgon to be managed effectively as a transboundary ecosystem there is need for cooperation and harmonized and coordinated actions between and among the relevant stakeholders. They must all have a common understanding of requirements for proper TBNRM:

- Boundaries must safeguard viable ecosystems and important components, i.e. bird and mammal populations, which periodically may be outside national boundaries, transboundary water catchments and supplies, etc.
- Appropriate national legislation and regulations for protected areas and their resources must be harmonized. Preferably also for buffer zones adjacent to the park.
- There must be national incentives for the ecosystem approach and transboundary management followed by political and institutional support for harmonized legislation and regulations for conservation and sustainable use.
- Institutions for management and use inside and around the park must have comparable visions, goals, competence and capacity.

However, there are a number of challenges to attainment of TBNRM objectives in the Mt. Elgon ecosystem. These include the following:

✓ Lack of ecological coherence and resilience, necessary for both biodiversity conservation and sustainable development;

✓ Lack of cross-border management and ecological monitoring and law enforcement;

✓ Lack of ecosystem approach competence and capacity for TBNRM;

✓ Lack of access of ecosystem goods and/or services (non-timber products) for local communities;

✓ Lack of financial planning and funds for TBNRM;

✓ Improvement of informal stakeholders' partnerships for the management of the Mt. Elgon ecosystem needed, including public information, community awareness, education and research

✓ Communication challenges, which include common radio frequency; equipment e.g. repeater stations and gadgets; and internet connectivity.

✓ Inadequate institutional arrangements/structures, key among which are the following:
  - No formal institutional collaboration arrangements between the two countries;
  - Unclear stakeholders roles and responsibilities;
  - Lack of manpower for joint management of the ecosystem;

✓ Inadequate policy and legal frameworks for joint management which include the following:
  - No provision for joint management and joint monitoring and protection within the wildlife and forest Acts of the two respective countries;
  - Differential application of user rights and responsibilities of stakeholders (e.g. local communities);
  - No formal provision for intelligence information sharing by the protected areas institutions; and
  - Un-harmonized immigration procedures.

To-date only a few of the above mentioned challenges are being addressed by MERECP. Processes such as preparation of joint management plan and joint protection and monitoring plan as well as sorting out communication challenges are some of the few being considered in the programme. A lot needs to be done if Mount Elgon is to be managed as a transboundary ecosystem.

2.0 Main Findings

2.1. Assessment of the performance of EAC/ LVBC in fulfilling its obligations to MERECP

The roles of the EAC Secretariat for MERECP are:

a) Oversee MERECP implementation, supervision, co-ordination and reporting for MERECP.
b) Ensure that MERECP budget is reflected in the EAC Secretariat plans, budgets and accounts.
c) Contract IUCN to provide technical and management backstopping to MERECP.
d) Integrate MERECP into the LVBC Programme.
e) Work closely with IUCN and the partner institutions to ensure efficient and harmonious implementation of the programme.
f) Provide a stable and enabling work environment for the implementation of the programme
g) Convene MCC, MSC and Annual Bilateral Meetings
h) Report on MERECP implementation progress (report to relevant organs and forums).
i) Commission external audits, mid-term review and end of MERECP Evaluation.
j) Convening annual regional MERECP Stakeholders forum

EAC senior management clearly pointed out that its understanding of its main role in the management of trans-boundary shared ecosystems and natural resources in the region is to provide a forum to facilitate partner states to adopt and pursue common approaches and strategies for joint management of resources. It remains the responsibility of individual partner states to effect actions e.g. legislation to effect changes that will support harmonized approaches. It was under such arrangements that the fisheries legislation to harmonise and guide the fishing industry on Lake Victoria was made. Under the arrangement each of the three EAC states which share Lake Victoria has designated an officer who works closely with the LVBC.

Overall the EAC saw the different systems of governance in Uganda (a highly decentralized system of government) and Kenya (a centralized system) as presenting obstacles to joint management. While this is a matter that should be recognized, accordingly, to EAC there are however many other practices which need to be looked into in order to promote effective joint management of the Mt. Elgon ecosystem under MERECP. The EAC is of the view that each partner state should designate an institution to take lead responsibility for MERECP. Harmonization of the policy, laws and practices is another aspect which should not present problems. Within the framework of MERECP Kenya and Uganda can identify what needs to be harmonized and take action. There should also be periodic review of progress of MERECP so that timely measures can be taken to address any problems in implementation in a timely manner. This is important given that MERECP is a programme expected to provide a model to be replicated for management of shared eco- systems in other EAC region with transboundary ecosystem and natural resources.

EAC reported to the review team that its level of participation in MERECP has not been as active as would have been desired. This is among others attributed to timing. The LVBC, which is supposed to oversee the activities of the programme, was created at about the same time as MERECP. The LVBC has, via EAC, a responsibility for coordinating transboundary initiatives geared towards management of shared ecosystems. LVBC's mandate is "coordination" and not "implementation", and one of LVBC's roles will therefore be to assist in harmonization of the laws in Kenya and Uganda, which will allow for better transboundary management of the Mt. Elgon ecosystem. Generally there has been lack of effective supervision and consultation from the centre (EAC headquarters) partly due to the bureaucratic processes that have characterized the establishment of LVBC. Harmonization of legislation and regulations is still hampered by capacity constraints. The Secretariat is, however, working on this problem. At the time of the review LVBC was expecting nine more staff, which will bring the total staff numbers to 21. However LVBC is of the opinion that a full time officer fully responsible for MERECP still needs to be recruited and stationed at LVBC.

2.2 Assess the performance by IUCN in facilitating implementing institutions.

The International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) is an international NGO with headquarter in Gland, Switzerland and with country and regional offices in very many regions. IUCN has a particular professional strength in its six Commissions and very many specialist groups. IUCN receives substantial financial support from several countries, and Sweden and Norway are among the main donors. IUCN has also developed very many projects in Africa and elsewhere, also to be funded by donors, and has provided technical support and management assistance to most of these.

IUCN has played key roles in the design and launching of MERECP and was contracted by the EAC to provide technical and managerial support to the programme. All financial resources for MERECP have also been routed through IUCN. While the role IUCN is important and its performance appreciated, it nevertheless raises a number of questions. The 2005 Appraisal Report emphasizes IUCN's competence and institutional capacity, but some of the stakeholders interviewed by the MTR have also questioned IUCN's dominant roles in preparations for and implementation of MERECP. According to high level policymakers (e.g. the Permanent Secretary MEMR, Kenya), there is novelty in transboundary programmes such as MERECP and government ownership of MERECP is therefore very essential.

The continued role of IUCN has to be revised. IUCN has however clarified that under the restructuring, a "IUCN Uganda Programme Office" will replace the present "Country Office". It will be staffed by a program Coordinator with capacity to support implementation of projects like MERECP, and the representation function of this office will be reduced. It has been further explained that, in the meantime, IUCN will retain the necessary capacities through the transition so as not to jeopardize the implementation of its key projects and programme.

The on-going restructuring exercise was not envisaged when the role of IUCN was defined. Stakeholders expressed some skepticism on how an organization itself in the

process of restructuring can have the capacity to provide technical assistance to a complex programme like MERECP. In any case the restructured IUCN may no longer have a structure conducive to its present role in MERECP which assumed presence of a country office in Uganda (to be eliminated in the new structure). While it is the consensus of stakeholders of the current roles of IUCN, there is need to redefine it in view of the changes occasioned by its new structure.

The MTR has also taken note of the fact that IUCN's offices in Nairobi and Kampala have made little, if any use, of important and valuable expertise available in IUCN's Commissions and specialist groups. IUCN could also have been more active in learning and benefiting from other expertise, e.g. the African Indaba, the Poverty and Conservation Learning Group, etc. *See also Chapter 5.8.*

2.3 Effectiveness of the implementation arrangements and structures.
The institutional and organizational structures of MERECP were elaborated in the project document (PD). It has however since then been overtaken by institutional changes at the national and district levels in both Kenya and Uganda, and even at the EAC.

A number of changes in institutions that collaborate and interact with MERECP were reported to the review team. Districts in the programme area in Uganda and Kenya have since been split into new entities. MERECP focal Ministries in Uganda and Kenya have undergone changes. E.g. in Kenya, forestry which is very much involved in MERECP was removed from Ministry of Environment and Mineral resources (MEMR), which remains the focal point for MERECP. In Uganda the MERECP focal Ministry of Water and Environment (MWE) has been separated from Lands. At the EAC level, changes which have had impact on MERECP include the entry of Rwanda and Burundi into the community. Rwanda and Burundi will be requested by EAC/ LVBC to designate a Ministry and hence a PS to become a member of the Regional Policy Steering Committee (RPSC) and the nominee will participate in relevant MERECP meetings.

The implication of other institutional change is implicit in other parts of this report; otherwise the current basic institutional structure of MERECP is indicated in Fig. 1 below:
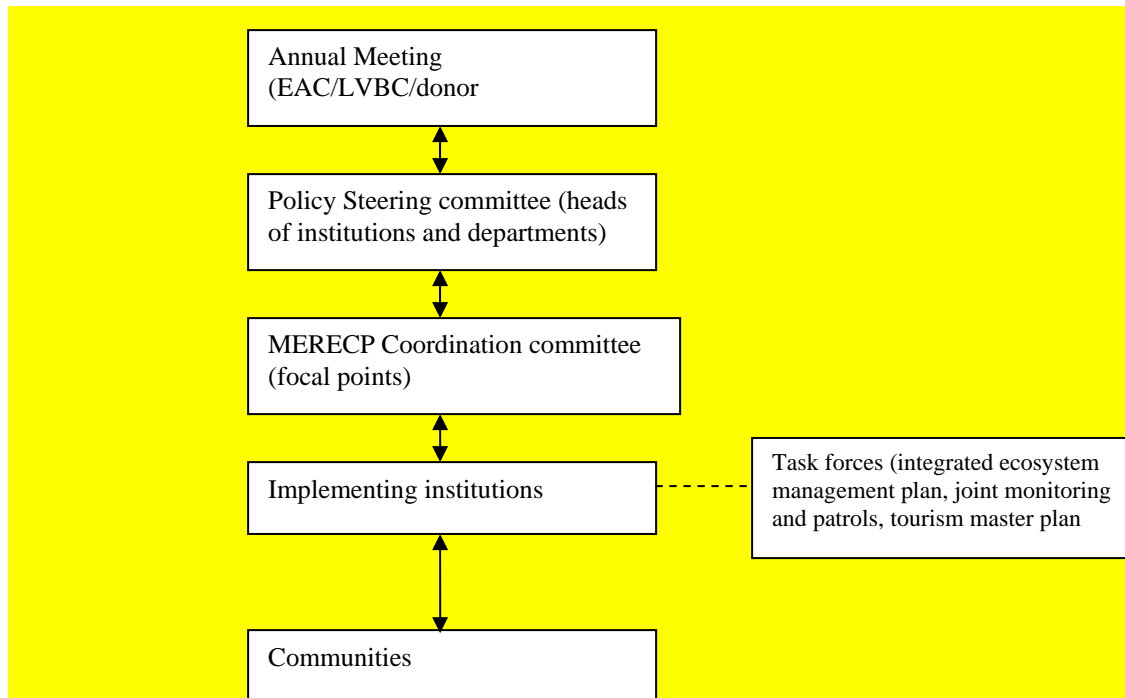
Fig. 1: MERECP institutional structure.

On the face of it, the structure of MERECP appears logical but at the same time it is complex due to many levels of decision-making, authority, and responsibility. A Number of stakeholders indicated that this is inevitable and expected if everyone is to be brought on board. The MTR has made the following specific observations on the MERECP structure;

- Too many implementing institutions have implied heavy bureaucracy with consequent delays.
- Co-ordination of too many structures in MERECP is not cost-effective and ultimately reduces budgets which could otherwise meaningfully support activities that enhance livelihoods.
- The structure has tended to concentrate management and implementation responsibility at the districts level instead of village levels. It may well be that it is easier for bureaucrats to deal with formal structures at district level rather than amorphous structures characteristic of community and village level organisations. But local communities are left out of important consultations and decision-making processes.
- Even in instances where districts have the desire to involve local communications in management and implementation they have been hampered by weak extension service structures and weak local ENR sector as is evident from low budgets allocated to the sector.
- Although actors at various levels in the MERECP institutional structure cumulatively contribute to the success of the program there is still need to rank contribution of

institutions. Such grading can be used as criteria when it becomes necessary to off-load some institutions as is already becoming evident.

- Now that LVBC is operational, the role of EAC will become clearer and stronger because it can concentrate on what it can do best at the strategic broad policy level.

There needs to be more emphasis on the communication between the implementing institutions and the communities who, with reference to MERECP's vision, goal and overall objectives, are the most important target groups.

The MERECP Implementation Manual (MIM) is a useful tool, which seeks to harmonize implementation procedures across the board. The implementing institutions must internalize the MIM, and they have been trained on this. MIM is however different from local government management and financial procedures, and it took a long time for the implementing institutions to understand and apply the MIM. This has caused delays for implementation of activities at the district level. The MIM needs to acknowledge the different procedures across countries, e.g. that opening of bank accounts by government institutions in Kenya require approval by the Ministry of Finance, which can take months.

2.4 Harmonization of Policy, Institutional and Legal Framework
Effectiveness of MERECP implementation arrangements and structures depends on how well harmonized policy, institutions and legal frameworks are. This was a matter of concern and a recurrent theme in all discussions the MTR team held with stakeholders.

The views and findings of the review report on harmonization of the legal, policy and institutional Frameworks for the implementation of the Sio-Malaba-Malakisi Transboundary Integrated Water Resources Management and Development Project are most illustrate and should guide MERECP in its own initiative and endeavors on the matter.

Harmonisation of laws, policies and institutional frameworks is a process under which the frameworks of two or more countries are compared and contrasted for differences and similarities and the differences eliminated or minimised. Harmonisation does not require that the frameworks should be the same. Rather it requires that the frameworks sought to be harmonised should be:

i) Based on comparable principles
ii) Geared towards achieving the same objectives
iii) Cover the same subject matter; and
iv) Capable of achieving their stated objectives.

The aim of harmonisation is to ensure that those differences in principles, objectives, coverage and ability to achieve objectives are minimised, and where possible, eliminated. Harmonisation recognises the differences in legal culture and traditions between various countries, and the specific, and at times, unique, circumstances of countries. It is not the aim of harmonisation that the frameworks overlook these differences and specific circumstances. Each country's laws, policies and institutional frameworks must take account of, and give effect to, that country's particular circumstances. It is for this reason

that it is not necessarily an aim of harmonisation of frameworks that laws, policies and institutional frameworks should be made the same.

The process of harmonisation requires that the principles, objectives, coverage (scope) and standards to be achieved by the laws, policies and institutional frameworks is stipulated and then each country is required to implement these in its own country, and using its own processes. Harmonisation therefore focuses on the outcome or results and not the literal sameness of the law, policies and institutional frameworks. Given the unique circumstances of countries, frameworks may look different but be capable of achieving the same outcomes.

The MTR makes the following observations on harmonization:

- Although mentioned in MERECP project documents the process of harmonization of laws has been slow. The tendency to look at the big picture i.e. carrying out the exercise under the auspices of the EAC (strategic level) has overlooked and indeed underestimated what can be achieved by invoking the existing frameworks e.g. through enacting subsidiary regulations through statutory instruments provided for under the respective wildlife, forestry laws and other environment and natural resources (ENR) sector. Uganda introduced a hunting ban using a statutory instrument. The alternative of promoting harmonization of laws simultaneously on both sides of the border for cumulatively promoting the ecosystem approach and transboundary ecosystem management in MERECP should be seriously explored.

- There are already provisions in the current laws which can be positively utilized in by introducing uniform practices on both sides of the border. Similar regulations can be invoked by each government using powers to make rules using statutory instruments (subsidiary Legislation). So far MERECP has not taken advantage of these provisions. A number of provisions in the Kenya Environmental Management and Coordination Act, the Uganda Environment Management Act and the respective Wildlife and Forest Acts in Uganda and Kenya have provisions which can be utilized for purposes of making appropriate subsidiary legislation.

- The MERECP implementing institutions, and in particular the UWA, KWS, NFA and KFS on both sides of the border have to sit together to identify what policies and laws need to be harmonized and make recommendations to their respective governments. Knowledge of these programmatic approaches and procedures within MERECP institutions is hazy and there is need for sensitization of staff on what can be achieved at the operational level.

- It is the view of most stakeholders that the harmonization of policy and legal frameworks between Kenya and Uganda is crucial for the success of MERECP and it needs to be done quickly. Given that MERECP targets the twin objectives of improving people's livelihoods and conservation of the ecosystem, harmonization has to be done in a holistic manner. MERECP has to look at the ecological, socio-economic political and legal aspects and seek harmonisation of these via interdisciplinary approaches.

- The EAC is an effective facilitating forum for the urgently needed harmonization. It has however to be properly appreciated that as dictated by the doctrine of sovereignty of states, partner countries have to shoulder the responsibility of enacting necessary laws.

2.4.1 **Logic of MERECP's conceptual framework, and adequacy of programme** documentation.

In spite of many stakeholders involvement in the design of MERECP, the MTR has found the programme's conceptual framework to be flawed in relation to what the programme is set to address, namely ecosystem and biodiversity conservation to go hand in hand with development and poverty alleviation. Although the programme's vision and goal are in harmony with principles and guidelines for the ecosystem approach *(see chapters 1.4 and 2.5)* the translation of this important principle into the programme's objectives and subsequent implementation is confusing. The current objectives are:
   a) Conservation and management of natural resources and biodiversity in and outside protected areas promoted;
   b) Sustainable development in Mt Elgon Ecosystem enhanced;
   c) Conservation and management needs of Mt Elgon Ecosystem integrated into national, regional and international development framework; and
   d) MERECP implemented effectively as a regional trans-boundary programme.

It is clear that (a), (b) and (c) are interrelated, while (d) is not really an objective for the programme but rather emerges as a consequence of the first three objectives.

In order to harmonise MERECP's objectives with the programme's vision and goal and the ecosystem approach, the MTR suggest the following objectives:
a) Conservation and management of natural resources and biodiversity in and outside protected areas promoted (as before):
b) Ecosystem goods and/or services for local communities and their livelihood enhanced (new);
c) Legislation harmonised and appropriate institutions strengthened in support of the ecosystem approach (new).

The programme logical framework was designed in a participatory manner through a series of workshops, which is good. But the rules that lead to the formulation of the log frame in particular seem not have been followed during the design of the project, i.e. once the core problem and causes are identified these are turned into positives, which then become the objectives of the programme. For example:

Problem: Lack of employment opportunities for physically challenged people
Objective: Employment opportunities for physically challenged people exist

In as so much as the problems of the Mt. Elgon ecosystem were identified one fails to see the cause and effect analysis so that the core problem in the Mt. Elgon ecosystem is

identified. If this had been done the objectives would have flowed logically and would not be disjointed the way they are currently. In addition objective four would not have been formulated as it would have emanated from an identified problem which would have been reading "*IUCN not effective in implementing the ecosystem approach and transboundary programmes*". Objective four is a process that IUCN needs to undertake in order to achieve the other three. Objective four can also be taken as an assumption that is required for the success of the programme. A problem analysis and objective setting process is outlined below.

During problem analysis:
* Involve primary and secondary stakeholders
* Identify the core problem
* No problem exists by itself; it is always part of a cause-and-effect chain of problems. Thus the idea here would be to list all the problems then try to categorise them in two categories of causes and effects. The causes lead to the core problem while the effects will emanate from the core problem. See example below for Mt. Elgon ecosystem. Ideally programmes or projects should strive to address the first line of problems that lead to the core problem if they are able to do so in order for them to have an impact on the ground. If they are not able to address one of the major problems that lead to the core problem due to their mandate then, they need to liaise with other actors who are able to do so.

 "If you identify a problem wrongly, the solution is also going to be wrong".

See also Fig. 2:

Fig 2: Flow chart of linkages between causes and effects
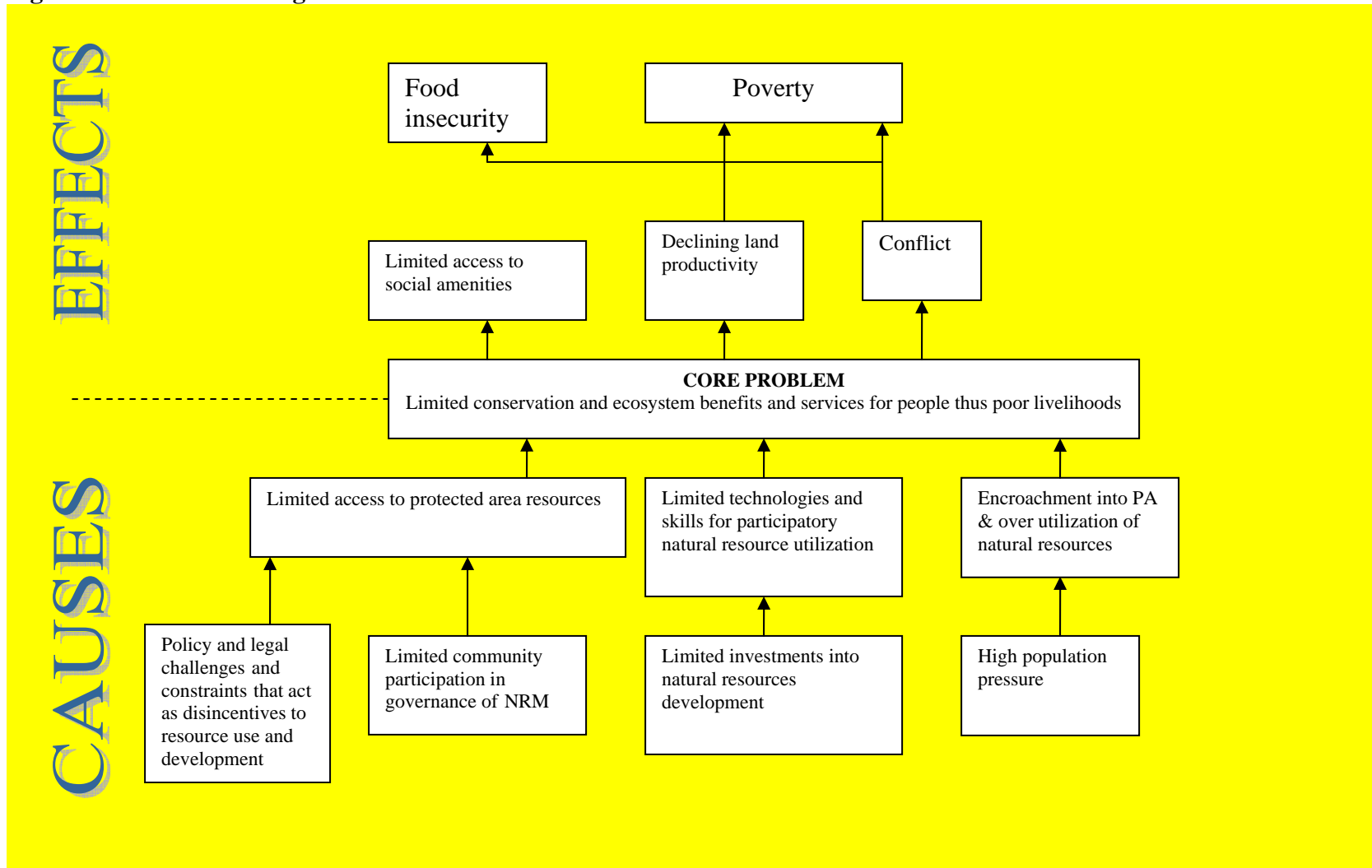
From the above problem analysis the next step would have been to change the first line of causes into objectives, which are the positives of the problems.

Core Problem: Limited conservation and ecosystem benefits and services for people thus poor livelihoods
Programme Purpose: People's livelihoods enhanced through improved conservation and ecosystem benefits and services.

Problem: Limited access to protected area resources
Objective: Enhanced access of local people into protected areas.

A look at the logframe itself, which serves as the basic monitoring tool, shows that the indicators are quite vague. They are not specific, measurable and some are not realistic or achievable within the time frame or the programme. For example:

Indicator under objective 1: *The value, both economic and cultural for conservation of natural resources and biodiversity recognized as important.*

How would one measure the success of the above indicator and attribute it to the specific intervention of this programme? What is the time frame within the programme for this to happen and who is needs to recognize the value of the natural resources and biodiversity? A good indicator (SMART) conforms to the following specifications. It is:

- **S**pecific and related to the objective
- **M**easurable
- **R**ealistic
- **A**chievable and
- **T**ime bound

It also specifies:
- Quantity - how many or how much?
- Time - when?
- Quality - how good?
- Target group - who?
- Location - where?

This review is recommending a redesign of the programme which means that the objectives and the indicators will have to be changed to conform to SMART principles.

2.4.2 Programme Documentation
Documentation of programmes is an essential part of M&E, lesson learning, accountability and transparency. The review team found that documentation of the

programme was well done and was adequate. All aspects of the programme had been documented from the project document, inception phase, appraisal reports, semi-annual and annual reports, studies and research findings, minutes of meetings, MERECP Implementation Manual (MIM), M&E framework, documentation on various agreements between IUCN and implementing institutions etc. All documentation was available to the reviewers in electronic and/or as hard copies. The annual reports were found to be detailed, analytical and had captured lessons, financial reporting and recommendations for adjustments to the programme in the subsequent workplan. It was also noted that due to good documentation many of the suggestions in the PSC and annual meetings had been followed up by the PMU.

2.4.3 The likelihood of resolution of the problems identified during programme preparation, including mechanisms put in place for conflict resolution, assessment of the internal coherence.
During programme preparation, two categories of problems were identified namely: protected area problems and landscape protected area problems[3]. The programme is half way and it is unlikely that all the problems identified will be resolved to the satisfaction of stakeholders during this phase of the problem as their solutions are not simple and four years is too short a time. Thus this section will discuss the extent to which the problems are being addressed with the assumption that the programme was to tackle all of them.

Protected area problems

- High levels of dependence on natural resources for livelihood and resultant pressures for agricultural encroachment over-use of natural resources and natural resources depletion.

Likelihood of resolution: This problem is a result of lack of skills in maximizing land productivity and high population pressure. The programme is attempting to address this through capacity building on better agricultural practices in order to reduce natural resource depletion.

- Inappropriate access regimes to natural resources (and land) within and outside the protected areas, unregulated use of resources from protected areas and the resultant natural resources use based conflicts.

Likelihood of resolution: The programme is attempting to address this through collaborative resource management, where protected area authorities e.g. on the Uganda side have resource use agreements with the communities bordering the protected areas. This has resulted in the reduction of conflicts between the authorities in some districts e.g. Sironko and UWA. There is, however, no access for use of natural resources from the park on the Kenyan side.

- Policy and legal challenges and constraints that act as disincentives to resource use and development.

Likelihood of resolution: The programme has began to address this by conducting a study on the legal instruments that affect the management of natural resources in the Mt. Elgon

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[3] Details in Programme document

ecosystem. The next step will be to identify the pieces of legislation that act as impediments to natural resource use and have them amended or harmonized across the border through the intervention of the EAC/LVBC.

- Institutional and human capacity to manage and develop trans-boundary natural resources.

Likelihood of resolution: A capacity assessment was done for all the implementing institutions and the programme is attempting to address the material and skills gaps that were identified.

- Legitimate settlers/inhabitants of the natural forest and illegal settlers and encroachment.

Likelihood of resolution: The programme is attempting to address this through UWA on the Uganda side and Mt. Elgon County council and Kenya Forestry Service on the Kenyan side. The Benets have encroached into the park and in Kenya the Sabaots sought refuge in the forest reserve due to land clashes in the area. UWA has already entered into dialogue with the Benets and a verification exercise has began. In Kenya the Mt. Elgon County Council is already discussing the plight of the displaced people with the local leaders with a view to resettle them in their homes.

- Political processes and involvement in management of the protected areas.

Likelihood of resolution: MERECP has engaged with political leaders in both countries in order to sensitise them on the importance of the ecosystem[4]. In some areas like Sironko district it has worked where the politicians support the programme while in other districts like Mbale the political elite are still luke warm.

- Insecurity for protected areas management, tourism and neighbouring communities arising from illegal trade and cattle rustling through the protected areas between Uganda and Kenya, and between communities living around the Park.

Likelihood of resolution: MERECP has attempted to address this by equipping both KWS and UWA with necessary patrol equipment and by facilitating joint patrols by both agencies.

- Wildfires (lit by hunters and cattle rustlers?) occur regularly in the moorlands, heathlands and grasslands, thus changing the vegetation structure and composition in the affected areas and having adverse impacts on the habitat values and water regulation functions

Likelihood of resolution: The programme is unclear on how it is addressing this problem.

2.4.4. Problems affecting areas outside protected areas
- Inappropriate technologies for natural resources utilization including agricultural practices, marketing and natural resources extraction.

Likelihood of resolution: The programme has utilised the district structures especially in Uganda to enhance extension work and has promoted good soil and water conservation

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[4] See Annual reports

measures for better agricultural produce. However this is at a relatively small scale and the uptake of the new technologies is still low among the communities. Marketing of surplus agricultural produce is yet to be done. Marketing of produce has not yet been done as the farmers are yet to produce any surpluses

- Lack of capital and incentives for investments into natural resources development.

Likelihood of resolution: It is anticipated that through the tourism master plan yet to be developed, this will be addressed.

- Poor markets and marketing systems and infrastructure for the agricultural and other natural resources products.

Likelihood of resolution: It is anticipated that through the tourism master plan and integrated area management plans yet to be developed, this will be addressed.

- Increasing human population and therefore increasing demand on natural resources within and outside PAs (land/soil, water, tree resources, etc.) for livelihoods and development.

Likelihood of resolution: The programme has various activities addressing this issue through supporting agriculture and natural resource based income generating activities, supporting the development of entrepreneur skills for investments in natural resources based income generating activities, promoting the use of appropriate technologies that improve land management and agricultural productivity, introduce high value and diversified crops and livestock for food and money, providing incentives for private sector, NGO and community in development of forestry resources amongst others.

- Poverty levels and trends

Likelihood of resolution: The programme can only contribute to poverty reduction as this is the government's mandate. The programme through its income generating activities is attempting to address this. However as the interventions are still new it is too early to tell whether these activities have resulted into increased household income.

- Land and resources tenure

Likelihood of resolution: Currently there a land policy review is ongoing Uganda. It is unclear on how the programme is involved the ongoing review. However the Ministry of lands in Kenya has been involved in the preparation of District Environmental Action Plans in Mt. Elgon and Transnzoia districts.

- Declining land productivity, decline resources availability

Likelihood of resolution: This is being addressed through capacity building on improved soil and water conservation activities by the local and district governments although at a limited scale.

- Access to basic social amenities (clean water, roads, education, health).

Likelihood of resolution: The programme is not directly involved in this as it is the mandate of the governments'. However through revenue sharing of conservation benefits from the protected areas, the communities are meant to increase their access to these

social amenities. A road was built with the assistance of this programme linking Kaberua Forest Station to Chepkitale National Reserve, Kenya

- Natural and man-made disasters (landslides, floods).

Likelihood of resolution: The programme is addressing this through the soil and water conservation interventions.

- Problem animals/Vermin

Likelihood of resolution: The programme is tackling this through enhanced protected area management and capacity building of UWA and KWS.

- Food insecurity

Likelihood of resolution: This is being addressed through capacity building on improved soil and water conservation activities and diversification of crops by the local and district governments.

- Capacity to manage natural resources (human, funds, technologies, etc.)

Likelihood of resolution: The programme is tackling this through enhanced protected area (PA) management and capacity building of UWA and KWS.

2.4.5. Conflict Resolution Mechanisms

Conflict between communities and protected area authorities have been historical in nature since Kenya and Uganda decided to gazette parks for protection of flora and fauna (during the colonial era) and exclude the use of these areas by communities who had utilised them traditionally.

As such the communities have always had running battles with protected area agencies such as KWS and UWA when they are found in the park extracting resources they need for their survival. Conflicts still occur regularly as the concept of total protection and preservation without the participation of the local communities is yet to be revised due to inhibiting legislation.

In order to address some of the conflicts that have been historical, the programme has been promoting the development and enforcement of Collaborative Resource Management (CRM) agreements with communities bordering the park (Uganda). In addition boundary marking and facilitation of dialogues with settlers in the protected areas and displaced people have contributed to conflict resolution. The CRM specifies which resource will be collected from the protected area, access rights and amounts, where and when the products can be collected and the type of harvesting methodologies to be employed. In addition, the agreements also stipulate other benefits for the communities such as access to cultural sites, siting of beehives, utilization of the boundary zone among others.

Through these agreements communities in Uganda are now able to access resources in the protected areas and even participate in boundary management as they are allowed to cultivate crops along the boundary and sustainably harvest the live fence (Eucalyptus spp)

for firewood, building poles and timber. Thus where the agreements have been successful conflicts between park authorities and communities have reduced considerably e.g. in Sironko district.

In Kenya access to resources to in parks is still not allowed by legislation but access is allowed in forest reserves. Despite this restriction Mt. Elgon Park seems not to have any major conflicts with the surrounding community as some of them are employed by the park to maintain the electric fence and this fence also deters wildlife (elephants and small antelopes) that destroy their crops. In order to maintain good relations with communities, KWS addresses their welfare problems through corporate social responsibility where amenities such as schools, health dispensaries and water tanks are constructed for them. The social responsibility budget is about Kshs 100 million per year for the whole country. However it would be important for the programme to explore whether the legislation on the Kenyan side can be amended through various means so that Mt. Elgon National Park be governed in a similar approach as is done on the Ugandan side.

2.4.6. Comment on appropriateness of objectives in relation to collaborative ecosystem governance.

It must be recognized, that although the basic ideas of the ecosystem approach at the nexus of poverty, governance and environment are appealing and good results sometimes have been achieved, there are also important constraints and pitfalls. There is often reluctance in central government institutions to delegate power to local peoples' institutions, but also deep skepticism in local institutions towards national governments. Interest groups and stakeholders vary in capacity to influence power and decision-making. Many projects which promote this synergy have been based on naïve assumptions, were over ambitious, or failed to become self-financing after the donor support ended. Too much was expected in too short a time. In addition, legislation and law enforcement in Uganda and Kenya have not supported the needs of local stakeholders.

MERECP therefore needs to re-design its objectives so that they are in harmony with the ecosystem approach and the programme's vision and goal. *See Chapter 2.5 below.* There will also be a need for appropriate training on interdisciplinary aspects of the ecosystem approach and of TBNRM for key institutions and stakeholders. Regulations under existing laws in Uganda and Kenya need to be harmonized and to allow for local sustainable use of park resources (non-timber products), e.g. via statutory instruments to be introduced and approved by relevant Ministries and agencies.

2.5. The relevance of the MERECP programme.

MERECP is addressing challenges in the linkages between conservation and development via its vision and goal, which are: *"A secure and productive Mt. Elgon Ecosystem"* and *"Integrated ecosystem conservation and management for sustainable development and enhanced well-being to people and the environment."* MERECP's vision and goal reflects therefore the ecosystem approach, which already is endorsed by a number of international processes, e.g. the Johannesburg Plan of Action, the UN Millennium

Declaration and the Millennium Development Goals, UNDP's Human Development Report 2005 etc. They all recognize the important relationships between poverty reduction, natural resource management, and good governance, i.e. the ecosystem approach for sustainable development. The ecosystem approach recognizes that humans are an integral component of ecosystems, and CBD describes it as *"a strategy for the integrated management of land, water and living resources that promotes conservation and sustainable use in an equitable way."* CBD has three stated objectives; 1): the conservation of biodiversity, 2): the sustainable use of its components, and 3): the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising out of the use of genetic resources.

Furthermore, the Norwegian Action Plan for Environment in Development Cooperation of June 2006 also adheres to the ecosystem approach. The plan's thematic priorities, item 4.1 Sustainable management of biological diversity and natural resources says that Norway will:
- support conservation and sustainable use of areas and ecosystems of global importance.
- promote the ecosystem approach to natural resource management.
- help to secure access and rights to resources for local communities, including indigenous peoples.

The success of MERECP or any other programme based upon the ecosystem approach for sustainable development, is however also governed by political legitimacy (i.e. legislation and governance), institutional capacity (including appropriate competence on all levels, from government to villages dependent upon ecosystem goods and/or services) and what is technically feasible (and possible). The ecosystem approach is thus relevant for local communities living around Mount Elgon, but also for Uganda and Kenya because of the ecological and socioeconomic importance of Mount Elgon. There is also a global relevance, because Mount Elgon is now a Biosphere Reserve.

2.6. Efficiency.

2.6.1 Evaluation of the translation of project resources and activities into results
The results are meant to be the objectives of this programme, which as earlier stated are flawed. From the 2005/6 workplan, 46% of all planned activities were implemented with the highest accomplishment being in objective four which is being implemented by IUCN. From the 2006/7 workplan, 49% of all planned activities were implemented again with most activities being implemented under objective four. Objectives one and two had the lowest implementation rate. In addition, the expenditure for the programme had only been spent about 43.9% and 53.1% in the years 2005/6 and 2006/7 respectively.

The translation of project resources and activities into results has been slow due to the complexity of the programme, and the teething problems and challenges experienced at the beginning of implementation. These included the rolling out of the MIM, the opening of accounts by partners, the discrepancies between MERECP budgeting and financial

year, and government financial years both in Kenya and Uganda, delay of the financing agreement between the Kenya Government and IUCN, amongst others.

This view on discrepancy between IUCN financial years and government financial years was expressed by stakeholders at the district level in Uganda and Kenya. IUCN's financial year is from January to December, while East African governments' financial years run from July to June. Thus financial planning and budgeting processes take place at different times in these two institutions.

Apparently there is also a discrepancy between IUCN budgeting and financial years which further complicates matters. The first step would therefore be to harmonise IUCN's budgeting and financial years. How feasible this is may be another matter. Most implementing institutions (NGOs) adhere to donor budgeting and financial years for ease of reporting. When it comes to the implementing institutions being government institutions which have to adhere to government financial years, then there needs to be an acknowledgment of this in the MERECP implementing manual under the Financial Procedures section which clearly spells out how this can be handled. The institutions having difficulties should come up with a practical way forward which can then be added into the MIM in order to enhance efficiency.

Budget performance and thus efficiency was also compromised by the teething problems mentioned earlier as in 2005-2006 and 2007 the absorption rate was 42.7% and 53.1 respectively[5]. This low absorption rate led to less than half of the activities being implemented during the reporting period (refer to 2.7). The two annual reports acknowledge this and it is expected that in the second half of the programme, budget performance and translation of budget into activities improves as some of the hurdles have been overcome e.g. financing agreement with the Kenyan government and capacity building of the partners in financial management and accounting is expected to continue.

Hence current results as they stand are being realized albeit at a slow rate. It is anticipated that after the MTR and the redesigning of the programme with smarter results/objectives, there will be faster progress in the realization of results. It could also be an idea for MERECP to seek advice from other programmes whose budgeting cycles do not follow the July-June period, and how they have addressed this matter.

2.6.2 Administrative costs

The MTR team is concerned about the high administrative costs of the programme. This was echoed by the focal point in the Ministry of Environment in Kenya and the 2nd Annual Meeting minutes 2007.

The MERECP annual report September 2005 – December 2006 says that *"…IUCN has absorbed the most, approximately 76% of the total disbursed."* (p. 22). However, the total IUCN expenditures for IUCN PMU, IUCN management fees and staff time and IUCN coordinated activities add up to USD 586,508 or 65,8% of grand total expenditures (USD 730.591.) If expenditures for NEMA/Uganda and EAC, which basically also are for

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[5] 2005-2006 and 2007 Annual report

administration, coordination, meetings etc, are added, then administrative costs are 631.212 or 86,4% of grand total expenditures. Field activity expenditures in Kenya by KWS were USD 7,825 and in Uganda they were USD 16.852 by NFA and two districts. This is a meagre 3,4% of grand total expenditures. When adding ICRAF expenditures of USD 67.105, the percentage for all field activities in 2006 was 91.782, or 12,6% of total expenditures.

According to the MERECP annual report for January – December 2007, IUCN's budget allocation for 2007 was USD 706.177 (p. 13). But according to the table (also p. 13), IUCN's 2007 budgetary allocation was USD 971.177 for budget items described under the four bullet points on pages 13 and14. This is 46, 3% of grand total. When adding IUCN contingency fund, the figure for IUCN is USD 1.059.944, i.e. 50, 5% of grand total. When keeping contingency fund out, but adding budgetary allocations for NEMA/ Kenya and EAC/ LVBC, which are not implementing field activities, total administrative costs (including coordination, meetings, travels etc) add up to USD 1.310.697, or 62.4% of grand total.

Budgetary allocations for activities implemented in the field, which in Kenya include KFS, KWS, Trans Nzoia and Mt. Elgon, adds up to USD 275.369. In Uganda, field activities are by UWA, NFA, Mbale, Sironko, Manafwa, Bududa, Bukwo and Kapchorwa, totalling USD 312.689. Together field activities add up to USD 588.058, or 28% of grand total. When deducting total administrative costs and field implementation activities from grand total, there is a "grey zone" of USD 200.760 (9,6% of grand total) which probably include some administration costs, but also some field activities.

The Team has been challenged by IUCN on the observation above; as IUCN claims that the budget handled by IUCN includes project activities and coordination activities as well as administrative costs. IUCN finds it incorrect to lump these together as administrative costs. The same principle applies to the budgets handled by LVBC. It can certainly be discussed if studies, training, status updates, development of plans, sharing of tools and methodologies, etc. etc, are project activities or not. What really matters is the expenditure on what goes directly for field activities for a programme to be cost effective.

The Team has been provided with a detailed breakdown of allocations to IUCN and LVBC, which we have studied carefully. When also looking at the summary budget allocations as documented in the 2007 Annual Report, the following careful calculations should be quite valid: Implementing institutions budget: USD 690.128. IUCN budget (PMU costs, IUCN staff time/mgt fees): USD 265.000 + 235. 410. EAC/LVBC costs: USD 296.500. Total IUCN administrative costs without even adding anything for IUCN coordinated activities and a contingency fund is thus USD 500,410. With the addition of EAC/LVBC, total administrative costs were USD 796.910 in 2007. The administrative costs as calculated above are thus more than what the field implementing partners are getting. These partners also have administrative costs embedded in their allocations, which reduces what goes to the field even further.

The conclusion is therefore that field activities have at the best been allocated less than 50% of the budget. The fact remains therefore that too little has been done to address and support the immediate needs of the main target group – the poor people living adjacent to the PAs.

In addition to that, the implementing institutions have been unable to effectively implement more than +/- 50% of their activities. Districts are yet to streamline their accounting procedures and it therefore takes a long time before their accounts are approved. Work in Kenya by government institutions is delayed due to financial procedures (difficulties in opening bank accounts and the security situation in Mt. Elgon, etc.) Quarterly disbursement of funds for some activities has proved to be a constraint. Agricultural projects have, for example, to be related to climatic conditions, planting and harvest times etc. For some activities quarterly disbursement are simply not practical, e.g. building of the cultural center in Mt. Elgon, Kenya.

Cost efficiency in a nutshell:
The reviewers are of the opinion that the programme is not cost effective and if the costs of administration and coordination continue to be high, the programme may not achieve tangible results and significant impacts. Ideally programmes should aspire to have administrative costs being 30% or less of the total budget, especially if the programme is working in a stable environment as opposed to programmes in conflict prone countries such as Somalia or South Sudan where the costs of operations can be quite high due to poor infrastructure and lack of government.

A programme is cost efficient if the benefits to the target group far outweigh the inputs. Currently in this programme very few people in the programme area are benefiting directly from the interventions. It also remains to be seen in the long term whether the conservation efforts especially in objective 1 actually increase benefits and raise people's standards of living in order to justify the high operating costs.

2.6.3 Adequacy of monitoring, reporting and evaluation systems
It is commendable that MERECP has a Monitoring an Evaluation (M&E) manual (many projects lack this), which was developed in a participatory manner. The tools in the M&E framework have already been used, e.g. the impact capturing tool (monitoring). Other monitoring processes go according to planning via Annual Meetings, semi annual and annual reports, and now the MTR. The objectives of the framework are:
a) Monitoring MERECP Performance; that is tracking MERECP implementation progress against set targets and milestones and the contractual obligations and MIM;
b) Measuring MERECP outcomes; including changes in the policy and institutional frameworks and practices for the conservation and management of Mt Elgon Ecosystem; and
c) Measuring MERECP impacts; changes (both planned and unexpected) in the well-being of local people and on the condition of the ecosystem.

There are internal and external M&E mechanisms and they include:
a) Annual audits;

b) Semi-annual implementation progress highlights and financial report to EAC submitted by IUCN;
c) MCC quarterly meetings;
d) PSC six-monthly meetings;
e) Annual Bilateral meeting;
f) Annual work plan reviews and planning meetings
g) Mid-term evaluation

The framework stipulates the different roles of the various institutions in monitoring and evaluation and reporting formats. Each level is tasked with monitoring at various stages. Activity monitoring at community level is conducted by the implementing institutions and the MCC, policy monitoring by the PSC and overall programme monitoring by the annual meeting on which sit the EAC/LVBC and the donor. The MERECP focal points have the mandate of monitoring activities of the various implementing institutions they are meant to coordinate.

The M&E systems appears to be working well as all stakeholders met both at community, district and national levels seem to be conversant with programme details as they have been trained on the framework and have participated in various forums which form part of the M&E system.

Various tools and the report formats in the M&E framework are also being utilised by the implementing partners such as the quarterly progress report format. Impact monitoring by the programme is still weak but can be improved upon with the recently designed impact/outcome capture tools. The integration of the M&E framework is still ongoing and partners are meant integrate it in their organizations. This is planned for in the 2008 workplan.

One of the gaps identified in the framework is monitoring changes in livelihoods of the target beneficiaries. This does not come out clearly in the framework and as such baseline information on household economies was not collected at the beginning of the programme. However the programme has tried to rectify this and currently the implementing institutions have been requested to conduct a household economy survey.

It has to be reiterated that communities on the ground need to see the value of conservation and sustainable use through the improvement on their standard of living due to benefits accruing from protected areas. It is only when their living standards have changed for the better that the threat they pose to the integrity of protected areas will be minimized. Thus it is very important to monitor how the communities' livelihoods are changing and their levels of satisfaction with interventions of the programme and capture this information through appropriate monitoring indicators (*refer to section 2.4.1*)

Monitoring such a complex programme, (i.e. with indicators which conform to SMART principles, see Chapter 2.4.1) can be a herculean task and effective monitoring has to be followed by adjustments in programme direction. The question here would be whether the current capacity of the PMU, in addition to internalizing the various studies and

recommendations from various actors, will be able to also effectively utilize the M&E framework and make adjustments in the programme accordingly.

2.7 Effectiveness

In addition to financial absorption capacity, effectiveness may also reflect the extent to which MERECP resources (manpower, time, funds, opportunities) have been utilized, in terms of cost-effectiveness, appropriateness of approaches and implementation modalities, strategies or actions undertaken to address emerging challenges and issues, performance levels, etc.

2.7.1 Extent to which project activities have been implemented.

Activities of this programme are too many, spread in a large geographical area and as of analyses in the annual reports, less than 50% of the targeted activities have been implemented during the first half of the programme. Thus effectiveness has been below average because approximately 50% of the activities keep being rolled over each year due to their lack of implementation the previous year.

The table below shows the level of implementation per objective during the review period. The figures are from MERECP's Annual Reports for 2005/06 and 2007.

Objective	Level of implementation	
	2005/6	2007
1: Conservation and management of natural resources and biodiversity in and outside the protected areas promoted;	25	40.9
2: Sustainable development in Mt Elgon Ecosystem Enhanced	30	23.2
3: Conservation and management needs of Mt Elgon ecosystem integrated into national, regional and international development frameworks;	45	54.2
4: MERECP implemented effectively as a regional trans-boundary programme.	84	77.7

As can be seen from the table objectives 1 and 2 have had a very low implementation rate as most partners' activities are in these two objectives while IUCN's activities of coordination and facilitation have been achieved to a large extent. It is, however, difficult for the MTR to interpret the figures in the table above. Per cent of what? Of expenditures against budget or allocations? Or percentage of what was implemented in the field against what was planned for? How is it possible to break down the percentages to such minute details?

At district level most districts visited e.g. Sironko and Mbale had implemented about 50% of their planned activities for the period under review. On the Kenyan side Mt. Elgon and Trans Nzoia districts had not implemented any activity yet by the time of this review.

A number of constraints have been cited as the reasons for low effectiveness and they include the following:
- Delays in the recruitment process of the PMU.
- The approval process for the PAIMAs took a long time. This also delayed the disbursement of funds.
- The internalization of the MIM by implementing institutions also caused delays.
- The sub county level in Uganda (LC3) has not fully owned the programme activities as they do not receive any funding. All funding goes to the district (LC5).
- The new clearing procedures in IUCN have exacerbated the low absorption levels of funds in the districts which also have their own internal delays in procurement procedures.
- In Kenya district councils and KFS were unable to open bank accounts and thus could not implement any activities until a financing agreement between the government and IUCN was signed.
- Insecurity in Mt. Elgon district (Kenya) since 2006 has impacted negatively on the implementation of activities as the area (Chepkitale Forest Reserve) was inaccessible.

In addition to the constraints listed above the reviewers have some concerns regarding activities and they are as follows:
1. The districts are not targeting the hotspots near the protected areas. As such they are continuing with their normal rural development projects. Thus people near the protected areas are not the beneficiaries of the interventions. This will need to be corrected during the second half of the project as it is the people next to the protected areas that require more incentives of conserving and managing the natural resources next to them otherwise with no incentives they can destroy the ecosystem.

2. The activities from district to district especially in Mbale, Sironko and Kapchorwa are blueprints of one another. There does not seem to have been an effort to engage the communities on their needs because it would have been rare to get the same priorities in each district with the same interventions i.e. zero grazing, establishing napier grass lots, apple growing, among others. During the field visit most of the explanations to the reviewers were by the extension workers as opposed to the owners of the households themselves. This raises ownership questions.

3. Most activities do not reflect the ecosystem approach and the transboundary nature of the programme. However this has been identified by the PMU and there are plans to promote eco-tourism and integrate tourism and management plans in the second half of the project. If activities of the ecosystem approach and of transboundary nature had been identified in the beginning there would have been more innovation and creativity with the activities. As they are now, most institutions are just implementing what they normally do with or without MERECP funding. However there are some new

activities such as promotion of CRM agreements between UWA and communities, supporting a resource conflict management strategy amongst others.

4. In as so much as the programme document has spelt out how activities are to be selected without duplication, with value addition and that they should target critical areas in the ecosystem, the implementing agencies workplans do not reflect this. There may be need for the MCC to actively guide the implementing partners again on what is and what cannot be accepted in their workplans so that the overall programme workplan is in sync with the aspirations of the project document.

5. There is duplication of activities across objectives thus similar outputs e.g. objectives 1 and 2. This is however attributed to the poor design of the programme from the beginning.

6. Some of the activities were also found to be too ambitious for a four year programme. For example attempting to change environmental and land policies or seeking to harmonise legislation across the two countries can definitely not be achieved in the time frame of the programme. Lobbying and advocacy is possible with impacts being felt after the programme end.

The details of the activities are well captured in the annual reports. The table below summarises a list of all the activities and their status as per the observations of the reviewers. See also the MTR's comments to status today against findings and observations by the 2002 and 2005 Appraisal Reports, Annex 2.

Objective 1: Conservation and management of natural resources and biodiversity in and outside the protected areas promoted		
	Activities	**Status**
1.	Support managing authorities to mark and publicize protected area boundaries where appropriate	This activity is ongoing with NFA, KFS and UWA.
2.	Support managing authorities to effectively engage political processes to diffuse the mounting pressure for excision of land	The political elite have been engaged on both sides of the ecosystem but the efforts are yet to yield fruit. This is because during the election years, politicians apply pressure on their governments to excise land especially for resettlement in order to gain votes.
3.	Support managing authorities to effectively meet their obligations relating to the on-going or planned resettlement exercises	MERECP has been supporting UWA with the resettlement exercise of the Benet and currently there is a verification exercise ongoing. Mt. Elgon County Council will also be assisted in the resettlement of the Ndorobo.
4.	Conduct an assessment of the Mt. Elgon ecosystem dynamics and support the development and application of ecological monitoring tools.	An assessment was conducted and ecological monitoring tools are currently being developed.
5.	Support integration of monitoring information into management strategies and actions.	MERECP has developed an M&E framework and partners have been trained on its use. Partners are now meant to integrate the framework in their organizations.
6.	Support the Forest Department (KE) and NFA to restore degraded areas in forest reserves	NFA has been assisted to restore Namatale Central Forest Reserve (46ha), and KFS will embark on restoration activities once the conflict on Mt. Elgon is resolved.
7.	Undertake assessments on the and dynamics of resource-use related conflicts and their impact on people's livelihoods and protected resources	An assessment was undertaken and completed.
8.	Support negotiations for access regimes.	Through the CRM agreements MERECP has been supporting negotiations for increased access to park

		resources by communities in Uganda.
9.	Support managing authorities effectively manage and monitor access regimes	MERECP has been supporting UWA in various ways so that they are able to effectively manage and monitor the agreements. Everybody who enters the park is registered by a committee. Different cadres of people are also allocated different resources for collection. They are monitored whilst in side the park and checked as they leave the park.
10.	Support the development and implementation of a Resource Use Conflict Management Strategy (RCMS) for the ecosystem	This has not yet been done.
11.	Support the development of pro-poor conservation policies and operational procedures at the field and national levels	A study on pro-poor conservation policies and operational procedures at the field and national levels was conducted and its findings will be utilized in the identification of the policies that require harmonization.
12.	Support the establishment and functioning of field based institutions for fostering collaboration between community and protected areas	The programme is continuously engaging communities with protected area authorities in order to enhance collaboration.
13.	Promote incentives for stakeholder participation in management of protected areas	Communities around protected areas especially in Uganda now have incentives to engage in the management of protected areas as they are now able to access non-timber park resources. This is yet to done on the Kenyan side due to the hindrance in legislation.
14.	Strengthening field level management systems and procedures for enabling institutional collaboration.	MERECP has been supporting institutional collaboration at field level e.g. between KWS and UWA, joint trainings.
15.	Develop capacity for trans-boundary resources monitoring and law enforcement.	The programme has been developing capacity for transboundary monitoring by supporting joint patrols.
16.	Understanding the status and functioning of Mt. Elgon ecosystem	An study on an update of the status of biodiversity in the Mt. Elgon ecosystem is yet to be concluded.
17.	Support mechanisms for information acquisition, storage and dissemination	A management information systems tool that will support the MERECP implementing institutions to progressively capture programme outcomes and impacts has been installed.
18.	Conduct valuation studies of the Mt. Elgon ecosystem and selected resources therein	A study to determine the total economic value of the Mt Elgon Ecosystem is on-going.

Objective 2: Sustainable development in Mt Elgon Ecosystem Enhanced

19.	Support the development of entrepreneur skills for investments in Natural Resources based Income generating activities and value adding to agricultural produce.	The programme has been supporting entrepreneurial skills in agricultural production amongst farmers on the Uganda side in horticulture, apiculture, commercial tree growing amongst others.
20.	Promote the use of appropriate technologies that improve land management and agricultural productivity.	The programme is supporting better technologies in soil and water conservation in Uganda. These include the use of organic manure and terracing.
21.	Introduce high value and diversify crops and livestock for food and money.	The programme has introduced Friesian cows to farmers as they produce more milk than the indigenous breeds. Vanilla, apples, pears are other crops that have been introduced in order to increase farmers' income.
22.	Strengthen tenure and access to land and natural resources	It is not yet clear how the programme is addressing this activity.
23.	Develop and support strategies that provide incentives for Private Sector and NGOs/Community investment in the development and management of Forestry resources in districts.	This activity is similar to activity 13 under objective 1. However environmental awards are to be used as incentives in the 2008 workplan.
24.	Support the development of a transboundary tourism development plan	This is scheduled to be done in the 2008 workplan.
25.	Train communities in eco-tourism activities	This is scheduled to be done in the 2008 workplan.
26.	Promote alternatives or substitutes to forest resources	The promotion of the commercial tree growing is addressing this as communities are not allowed to harvest timber from protected areas.
27.	Increase Forestry resources endowment	This is ongoing in the districts which have established tree nurseries in both countries.

28.	Promote awareness on the relationship between natural resources management, population and quality of life	A lot of sensitization and awareness on environmental conservation and ecological relationships has been conducted by various institutions especially during mobilization exercises. This activity is also similar to activity 12 under objective 1.
29.	Develop and implement a conservation & development awareness strategy for the ecosystem	A communication strategy on conservation and awareness has been developed and is currently being implemented.
30.	Establish mechanisms to enhance collaboration between natural resource management and social services Institutions	Development officers as district level have been involved in the implementation of MERECP. MERECP has also liaised with the education sector through promotion of environmental awards in schools. The public health department has also been used in the development of DEAPs.
31.	Integrate cross-cutting issues into MERECP supported activities	Efforts have been made to mainstream gender in implementation and reporting. However the implementing institutions are still unable to report against this. Corruption issues are addressed and enforced in agreements with implementing institutions.
32.	Understanding the socio-economic well being and livelihoods	A study has completed on this.
33.	Create and implement information sharing mechanisms	Information is currently shared through the decision making mechanism and through attending various forums, newsletters, publications and through the IUCN ESARO website.
Objective 3:Conservation and management needs of Mt Elgon ecosystem integrated into national, regional and international development frameworks		
34.	Develop and support mechanisms for the integration of MERECP with the LVDP	LVDP transformed into LVBC and is relatively new and only one officer had been assigned to MERECP during the period under review. As such the integration of MERECP into LVBC has not yet occurred. However LVBC are enhancing their capacity by July 2008 and it is expected that the integration will occur during the remaining programme period and will be finalized during the exit phase of the programme.
35.	Review conservation & development policies related to Mt. Elgon Ecosystem and make proposals for policy reforms	This is scheduled to be done in the 2008 workplan.
36.	Support environmental planning at district level	This has been done by NEMA both in Uganda and Kenya. District Environmental Plans (DEAPs) in 2 districts are complete (Kenya), some are under preparation (3 new districts in Uganda) and others are under review (3 old districts in Uganda).
37.	Facilitate forums for joint planning and coordination on trans-boundary issues.	The task forces on joint management, monitoring and patrols are forums focusing on trans-boundary issues.
38.	Strengthen land and natural resource use plans & policies	This is similar to activity 22 under objective 2 and it is not clear how the programme is addressing it. For example how is the programme engaged in the current land policy debate in Uganda and in Kenya, how is the programme positioning itself to engage with the finalisation of the land policy which is currently a top priority for the government.
39.	Support integration of environmental and natural resources as priority into development planning at district and national levels	This is being addressed through the integration of the MERECP workplans in the district and national plans of the various institutions.
40.	Support/facilitate participatory process for developing an Integrated Mt. Elgon Ecosystem management strategy	This is to be addressed in the 2008 workplan.
41.	Strengthen capacity for implementing provision of MEAs	Support to the enhancement of national coordination for MEAs has been planned for in the 2008 workplan.
42.	Integrate relevant national obligations to Multi-lateral Environmental Agreements MEAs) in MERECP supported activities	MERECP will support Kenya, Uganda and EAC Secretariat in implementing provisions of international conventions relevant to Mt Elgon ecosystem in the 2008 workplan.
43.	Assess institutional capacity needs(human, systems and	This was conducted and gaps were identified. MERECP has

	procedures and facilities)	been addressing the capacity gaps which were mostly material and equipment gaps. Training gaps e.g. in financial management were also identified and these trainings are ongoing. However there are still skills gaps in trans-boundary management and the programme will be emphasising on this in the 2008 workplan.
44.	Strengthen Capacity for trans boundary ecosystems management	This activity is similar to activity 15 under objective 1.
45.	Support the implementation of regional level mechanisms for enhancing institutional collaboration	The use of LVBC in enhancing institutional collaboration is yet to be done but is planned for once they acquire the relevant capacity.
Objective 4: MERECP implemented effectively as a regional trans-boundary programme.		
46.	Facilitate the development of a participatory strategy for monitoring and evaluating MERECP implementation progress and impact	The Monitoring and Evaluation Framework has been developed and is operational. Tools for collecting outcomes and impacts have also been developed and are in use.
47.	Undertake regular internal reviews & coordination and planning processes	This has been done through the MCC, PSC, annual meetings.
48.	Undertake reviews, evaluations and audits	Annual audits have been conducted, regular reviews are part of the MCC, PSC and annual meeting agendas. This mid term review is also part of the process.
49.	Develop and implement sound financial MERECP management systems	MIM has been developed and has been rolled out to the implementing partners.
50.	Publicize MERECP	A website was developed by MERECP and is currently being hosted by IUCN Esaro. MERECP has also produced brochures, contributed to newsletters and articles in various journals. MERECP has also participated in World Environment Day in Uganda and branding of Mt. Elgon National Park (Kenya) as part of publicity. This activity is also similar to activity 33 under objective 2.

As can be seen from the table above, more than 90% of the activities originally proposed in the programme are being addressed in one way or the other. Once the bottlenecks that have led to the low absorption rate when activities are refocused and the capacities of partners are enhanced it is hoped that by the end of programme period implementation of activities will lead to better realization of the results.

2.7.2 Assessment of the degree to which programme results have contributed to the achievement of programme purpose, including realization of planning assumptions
It is always important that the assumptions made during the planning phase are revisited periodically in order to gauge whether they are still valid or not. Sometimes projects/programmes can make killer assumptions or unrealistic assumptions which will never hold and this can make programme implementation quite difficult and negate project impact. Thus the table below analyses whether the assumptions that had been made during the planning phase still hold or not. Four of the assumptions have not held two are yet to be tested and one has largely held true. During the redesign of the programme there will be need for the assumptions to be revised so that more realistic ones are made.

	Assumption	Current Status
1.	Low level or insignificant cross border conflict	This assumption has not held true as conflict is one of the challenges that has hampered the implementation of activities especially on the Kenya border. The Sabaot Land Defence Force (Kenya) in their struggle for land in the programme area has displaced many households since 2006 and as per the time of this review there was a military operation to eradicate this force in Mt. Elgon district which is one of the implementing institutions. As such Mt. Elgon County Council and Kenya Forestry Service have not managed to implement their activities as planned as displaced people have sought shelter in the Chepkitale Forest Reserve which is a target area for MERECP.
2.	Commitment by all implementing institutions	This has also not held true to an extent as the lack of commitment by some institutions (LC3 in Uganda) who are closer to the grassroots, has also hampered activity implementation as they are not receiving any funding from the programme e.g. in Sironko district. In other places such as Mbale district, the political elite has negatively influenced the implementation of activities and this has hampered the efforts of NFA and UWA. It was also the opinion of the review team that commitment at district level may be waning as the money they are receiving from MERECP is not substantial.
3.	Effective involvement of rural people and communities results in the sustainable use of natural resources and contributes to livelihood security	This assumption has not held true. The review team found extremely low involvement of the rural people in sustainable use of natural resources. The decision making power of how natural resources should be used is still in the hands of protected area authorities. Communities can only make requests and hope that their needs will be acted upon. Thus the review team sees negligible contribution to livelihood security currently.
4.	Active cooperation between Uganda and Kenya with the EAC, and the implementing agency, implementing institutions, including Government Departments, District and Council authorities, Research Institutions, University Departments, NGO's, CBOs, Development Agencies, Lake Victoria Commission, Private Sector;	This assumption has largely held true. The review team did not come across any complaints of lack of cooperation amongst institutions. There has been a lot of cooperation between the mentioned institutions. However it is not yet clear on how the cooperation with the private sector if there is any at the moment is working.
5.	Project resources will be made available in a timely and appropriate manner	This has not held true. The project disbursements have been late due to the bureaucracy involved in accessing funding. In addition the delays in the opening of the bank accounts especially on the Kenyan side due to government financial procedures compounded this problem. In addition the implementing institutions are still facing challenges in adhering to the technical and financial procedures of the programme as stipulated in the MIM. In 2007 IUCN implemented new clearing procedures and this exacerbated the problem even more because the implementing institutions now had to adapt to it.
6.	Both countries will continue to work together to bring about the necessary policy harmonization which might be required for the effective management of the ecosystem	This assumption has not yet been tested as the process of policy harmonization has not yet begun. This process is planned for in the 2008 workplan. Discussions with the relevant institutions show a willingness of government institutions e.g. UWA and KWS to cooperate on this. However this remains to be seen.
7.	Functional mechanisms for cross border integration and coordination developed through the programme, will be accepted and acted on by the EAC and Governments of Uganda and Kenya	This assumption has also not been tested yet. There are plans to develop a joint management plan, joint monitoring and protection plan and a cross border tourism master plan. The implementation of these plans will be dependant on the goodwill and cooperation of both governments and the EAC. Thus it remains to be seen by the end of the programme whether the assumption held true.

In addition to the comments on assumption 3 in the table, MERECP has so far merely paid "lip service" to the local communities' park revenue sharing and to their possible involvement in park ecotourism. Local communities must retain a lion's share of revenues from the protected areas (ecosystem goods and/or services and/or money) in order for them to support conservation. The MTR learned that UWA's revenues from gate entry in 2007/2008 was 49.320.127 Ush. Local communities are to receive 20% of gate fees only, i.e. 9.864.025 Ush, or USD 5.978, which is 0.07 of the total park income. If local communities could receive 20% of total parks revenue, which is 136.801.655 Ush, then 20% would be more than 263.000 Ush. Further to this, expenditure of that money has to be approved by UWA, pending applications from the communities. It is therefore an opportunity – and a challenge - for UWA to enhance local community support by allocating e.g. 80% of park income, and with no intervention from UWA on use priorities (as was done under CAMPFIRE in its heydays).

Kenya, which is practice a "fence and fine" policy for their part of the park, does not allocate percentages of park income to the communities. However, KWS spend 100 million Ksh/ year on community projects nationwide. Communities nationwide have to present their proposals for what they need (e.g. water supply, a dispensary etc), which are vetted on national level, i.e. by KWS in Nairobi. Communities have thus no power to decide on priorities. Both countries thus practice a top-down management approach on park benefits for communities.

It is therefore, among others, a need to a): re-design MERECP's objectives as suggested (*See Chapter 2.4.1.)* with more emphasis on CBD's ecosystem approach, b): encourage statutory instruments, which allow for better access to PAs for local people, c): more benefits to them from total park revenues, d): prioritize on-the-ground activities to areas closer to park boundaries and e): be serious about local people's involvement in park ecotourism. The MTR discussed some ideas with UWA and KWS, whereby there would be opportunities for local communities to participate and benefit from tourism development in the park: In Uganda: UWA should improve simple overnight facilities for tourist who wants to climb the top e.g. from Kapkwai: Five tented facilities along the route (one for each night to reach the top), which can offer modest accommodation and some food, and which would allow for walking safaris without loads of camping gear. In Kenya: KWS should build some simple observation platforms at the caves, preferably with overnight facilities, which would allow for early morning and evening game watching, e.g. of elephants, buffalos and other game which come to lick salt from the caves. This would be a unique experience. The facilities in both countries should attract more eco-oriented tourists. They could be owned and run by local communities.

2.8 Impacts

2.8.1. Promotion of collaborative ecosystem governance.
The MTR recognises that policy and legislation for National Parks is different and much stricter than those for Forest Reserves and that restriction on access therefore is bound to happen. MERECP has, however, not addressed and prioritized possible amendments of the current legislation, e.g. by encouraging and negotiating for statutory instruments which would allow local people to have a say in management and to benefit more from

sustainable use of ecosystem goods and/or services from the park. Instead, the programme has, with its support of joint ranger patrols in the park and of park fencing on the Kenyan side, *de facto* supported the traditional, and all to common traditional approach for environmental conservation and management of protected areas is commonly called the "fence and fine" or the "fortress" approach (see e.g. Hutton et al 2005). It has been very well documented, however, that natural resources are very important for poor people's livelihood – they may sometimes contribute 50% or more to their food security (see e.g. World Resources Institute 2005 and UNEP et al 1981).

More recently, and particularly since the 1980ies, there has been a growing recognition that conservation will not succeed unless there is a recognition of the importance of natural resources for poor people who traditionally have been dependent upon them, and that they must play a role in management and use of such resources. Addressing local communities' resource rights, strengthening the capacity to manage natural resources at local levels, and encouraging and catalyzing the profitable use of resources provides powerful incentives for democratic processes, institution building, and resource sustainability. The rationale is that poor rural communities will have a vested interest in sound management of the resources upon which they depend for survival. And with that, conservation and maintenance of healthy ecosystems will follow. *See Annex 6.*

2.8.2. Impacts on improved livelihoods and livelihood security of the women and men of the Mt Elgon ecosystem.

Impacts of this programme on livelihoods are not yet tangible in the programme area as most of the activities are still new due to the delay in implementation. In addition livelihood impact monitoring of the programme had not been envisaged during the design of the programme. However an impact monitoring tool has now been designed and has been utilized to collect a baseline for impact monitoring. Currently the analysis of the data collected is ongoing.

However the reviewers can comment on a few examples that were observed that are bound to improve the livelihoods of targeted communities in future.

a). Park boundary management
In collaborative resource management in Uganda, communities leaving adjacent to the park have been involved in the planting and management of the live fence. The live fence consists of 10 lines of Eucalyptus planted just inside the beacons demarcating the boundary of the park. Each family along the border manages an area of about 20m x 10m. They take care of the Eucalyptus through weeding and are allowed to grow their crops within the boundary. Thus they get to increase production due to the additional piece of land and they get to harvest the Eucalyptus for poles, timber and firewood. They harvest the Eucalyptus such that it is allowed to coppice in order to continue providing benefits for the people.

Data on how these activities are impacting on household incomes and standards of living needs to be collected by the programme at household level so that the changes in

livelihoods for this people can be quantified. Currently the communities seem to be happy with the arrangement.

Boundary management by NFA on the other hand is similar to the one being practiced by UWA. However NFA have contracted a community group to carry out spot weeding along the live fence. The community group comes up with a schedule for weeding and are paid Ushs 100 per spot. The two gentlemen who were interviewed claimed that the income from this activity has assisted them build iron roofed homes, they had bought cows and have been able to send their children to school.

These types of impacts need to be documented by the programme in future as they are currently missing in the documentation.

b). The importance of non-timber products for local communities.
In Uganda since the change of the legal status from a forestry reserve under the Forestry Department to a national park under UWA, the wildlife authorities have been having running battles with communities. This is because with the gazettement of parks (under park laws) communities are not allowed into the park at all whilst entry into forestry reserves for the collection of non-timber products is permitted under reserve laws. This action therefore prompted communities to enter into the parks illegally and harvest firewood, bamboo shoots, mushrooms and other resources that they required for their livelihoods. According to a study conducted by Ditiro et.al (2008)[6], "*the mean number of households collecting resources before the legal status change was 72% and it went down to 30%. The change in management thus significantly reduced local people's access to natural resources in the park particularly for fodder, grazing, poles and timber. This implied an economic significant deprivation for local people*"

Ditiro goes on to say that "*collection of resources for cash generation purposes in the forest reserve were quite substantial when the area was under the forest department. However since the gazettement of Mt. Elgon National Park there was a substantial decline of households collecting park resources (from 14 % to 2 %) of involved households implying that the forest is no longer a source of cash incomes for most households. Cash was previously obtained from sale of resources such as bamboo shoots, vegetables, poles and timber, resources that they are no longer allowed to harvest*".

The above situation is however beginning to change. With CRM agreements between UWA and the communities, communities have been allowed to enter into the forests and harvest identified non timber products in the CRM agreements and on particular days. In Sironko district a maximum of 50 households enter the park twice a week to collect these resources. Since now it is legal, communities are able to continue with their normal livelihood strategies without fear that they will be caught and jailed for pursing a livelihood with resources from the park. Thus they are quite committed to protection of the park from others who might jeopardize the goodwill they are now experiencing with the park authorities. Ditiro et.al (2008) discovered that only 13% of the people collect non

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[6] Ditiro G. et.al (2008). From Forest Reserve to National Park, change in legal status and impacts on livelihoods and biodiversity resources, Mt. Elgon, Uganda. See bibliography.

timber products from the park do this illegally, while 40% of the people in communities with CRM agreements collect non timber products legally. The CRM agreements have thus managed to reduce conflicts between UWA and the communities and this has had a positive impact on people's lives.

Apiculture has also been promoted and farmers have been trained and equipped with beehives. Beehives have been hung in the forest reserve but the farmers are yet to harvest honey as the interventions are still new. This intervention is very lucrative to local communities if managed well

c). Improvement in agricultural practices
The impacts observed here were all in Uganda and were being implemented by the district councils.

Under objective 2, the programme has been attempting to improve agricultural practices in order to increase income and food security in the programme area. The improved practices include introduction of high yielding milking cows (Friesians) to farmers for zero grazing, biogas production, diversification of crops and promotion of soil and water conservation practices such as terracing.

The reviewers were able to visit farms with the grade cows that had already given birth and the households were already benefiting from the milk. The calves were to be passed on to another household. The grade cows produce an average of 12 litres per day of which about 8 litres is sold by the household for extra income. Thus the household have increased their milk consumption especially for the children and have also increased their income through the sale of the extra milk. It is still too early to tell by what margin the net income has increased by. This information will need to be collected in order to provide evidence by the end of the programme.

Biogas production for farmers has not yet been implemented but the impacts are expected to be substantial with a reduction in the use of firewood for cooking and kerosene for lighting thus impacting positively on air quality within the homestead.

Diversification of crops such as promotion of fruit trees has also been done by the programme. But the impacts of these are still to be felt as the interventions are still new.

Terracing and the use of organic manure as opposed to fertilizer were observed in several farms as an activity the programme was promoting. In one farm in Kapchorwa district the soil fertility had improved and the banana plants were already looking healthier as compared to the surrounding farms that were not practicing terracing. Ultimately production will increase and income will increase substantially.

At least four other farmers who were not target farmers were already replicating the efforts of the farmers who had been successful in restoring fertility to their farms. If more farmers take up contour banding, the impact on the target area can be significant.

It was also noted that farmers are highly dependant on the district extension workers who are already few and with limited resources. If the extension workers are unable to supply napier grass or other farm inputs, the farmers were unable to continue with the activity.

Extension services have been on a decline in this region since the implementation of the structural adjustment programmes in the 80s. As such community based extension services in crop and livestock production have been promoted with varying degrees of success in the region. Community based extension services include farmer field schools and community animal health workers. The communities stand to benefit if their capacities are be built in such a way that they can render extension services themselves without relying heavily on government extension workers as this is unlikely to be sustainable.

2.8.3. Park provisions for support of livelihood for people who live adjacent to the park.

There are two main aspects to this: a): Access to ecosystem goods and/or services such as firewood, fruits and berries, medicinal plants and other non-timber products, and b): Revenue opportunities e.g. via tourism and related activities.

In spite of the strong support for recognition of poor peoples' dependence upon natural resources and ecosystem goods and/or services, i.e. as of IUCN/ WCMC, CBD and other international processes *(see Chapters 1.4 and 2.5),* Uganda's and Kenya's policy, regulations and management practices are very strict. They adhere to the traditional, and all to common approach for conservation and management of protected areas, which commonly is called the"fence and fine" or the"fortress" approach. See e.g. what the Team read in the Ugandan newspaper "The New Vision" during its mission, on 24.04.08: "… People encroaching on Uganda's forest reserves or national parks will be arrested. *"We are going to get their cattle and sell them to pay the fines for grazing in protected areas."* (President Yoweri Museveni.) *"It is an encouraging statement from the President. The encroachers have been inviting their relatives and friends to come and settle in the forest reserves because they think it is free land. There is need for a stronger political will to secure the protected areas"* (Moses Watasa, National Forest Authority.) Environmentalists have greeted the Presidents' statement with excitement..."

These two different approaches for conservation and ecosystem management puts MERECP at a crossroad. On the one hand, the programme is expected to adhere to the ecosystem approach, and with that to work at the nexus of poverty, governance, and environment. MERECP must, however, also recognize Ugandan and Kenyan policies, legislation and regulations with regard to conservation and park management. Although good results have been achieved with application of the ecosystem approach (i.e. *Protect – Participate and Profit)*, there are also important constraints and pitfalls. There is often reluctance in central government institutions to delegate power to local peoples' institutions, but also deep skepticism in local institutions towards national governments. Interest groups and stakeholders vary in capacity to influence power and decision-making. Many projects to promote synergies between conservation and livelihood needs have been based on naive assumptions, were over ambitious, or failed to become self-

financing after donor support ended. Too much was expected in too short a time. Legislation and law enforcement have not supported the needs of local stakeholders and have often been unable to confront conflicting interests of the rich and powerful. Several of these concerns are applicable to MERECP.

b): Local peoples' attitudes to conservation and the park.
The MTR was repeatedly told that local communities by and large accepted the park boundaries and that there were few conflicts with regard to access and ecosystem goods and/or services from the park. Regrettably, the MTR did not have any opportunity to discuss this very important topic with the villagers, and the team did not have access to any baseline data on local people's attitudes. Norgrove and Hulme (2006) points out, however, that resistance can be open and outspoken (overt), or subdued and hidden (covert). Himmelfarb (2006), who did two months of field research in Kapchorwa between June and August 2005, found that villagers spoke with great animosity towards the park and its employees and that there was confusion and frustrations over their lack of traditional access to the mountain's natural resources. In addition, most villagers discussed the park rangers with fear and disdain.

Whatever the situation is, the MTR is convinced that it is vital that local people on the village level are recognized as bone fide stakeholders. Their voices must be heard and there must be opportunities for them to benefit from ecosystem goods and/or services from parks and other protected areas. To quote Dr. B. Child, who for many years was Director for the SLAMU programme in Zambia: *"Transferring user rights to local people, and encouraging profitable uses of natural resources, provides a powerful incentive for conservation. There is now sufficient evidence that co-management and community based natural resource management (CBNRM) can work, can do the greatest good for the greatest number of poor people, and that the hoped-for synergy between conservation and development indeed occurs."* Or, to quote (M.P. Wells: *"The rationale for these types of projects has not disappeared. The notion that biodiversity can be conserved without local peoples' needs and aspirations are simply not viable."* (In McShane, T. O. and M. P. Wells, Eds. 2004)

For a project as MERECP to succeed, the trust and support by local communities is crucial. Although strict regulations for local people's access to the park ("fence and fine") seems to work for the time being, local entries into the park and their use of non-timber products there should be allowed, preferably without special permit requirements, but admittedly under appropriate regulations and with some kind of control.

This has not been prioritized under MERECP, and the programme should therefore do whatever is required and whatever is possible for formal and legal acceptance of local people's roles and rights in sustainable use of natural resources and ecosystem goods and/or services from the Mount Elgon national park and other adjacent protected areas. That would improve peoples' livelihood and it can also be expected that parks/ people conflicts would be reduced.

3.0 Sustainability and Replicability

3.1. Prospects for future continuation and sustainability of MERECP activities and benefits, and the institutions participating.

As has been earlier stated in this document activities are too many and are duplicated in various objectives due to the poor design of the objectives. In addition it is obvious that having too many institutions in the programme, means that activities are spread too thin. The addition of three new districts in Uganda and one district in Kenya carved out of the original ones meant that the programme had to have an additional four agreements increasing activities substantially.

The MTR is of the opinion that not all these activities are adding value to the programme as the impacts will be minimal overall. For example there are similar activities in Sironko, Mbale and Kapchorwa districts with a large proportion of the district not benefiting. In some areas there are less than 10 people benefiting e.g. from zero grazing. It would have been better if activities had been concentrated to the most strategic districts so that the results had been more visible and more people would benefit. After the impacts are realized, and lessons are learned then other districts would have been brought on board.

With the redesign of the programme the decision making structure comprised of the Annual meeting, the PSC and MCC will need to refocus the activities where most impact is likely to be achieved.

When it comes to sustainability of the activities one strength of this project is that most of these activities are integrated in the work plans of the implementing institutions. Thus the activities would continue even after MERECP ends however not on a large scale. As it is now, the partners are implementing activities they normally do only at a faster pace due to supplementary funding from MERECP.

The ownership of these activities by the LC3 in Uganda is of concern as they are not benefiting from the programme directly as the lowest unit identified by the programme is the district. This was an oversight in the programme design as the LC3 are closer to the communities than the districts in Uganda and in Kenya support should have trickled down to location and sub-location levels.

The MTR is also concerned that communities seem to be relying heavily on the implementing institutions for all their inputs. Community contribution seemed not be an

emphasis of the programme. Even where farmers have been assisted with contour farming and fruit trees, some were still asking for wheel barrows amongst other tools (Mbale district). In Sironko the farmers were still waiting for napier grass seedlings from the extension officers whilst it would have been easier for them to negotiate with the farmers who had already established napier grass plots.

Ownership by farmers involved in boundary management however seemed high as they were benefiting twofold, from the harvesting of the live fence for poles and from collection of non timber resources from the park.

The MTR team points out the following:
- It is well recognized by most stakeholders that for sustainability MERECP has to be well embedded in governance structures especially at the District and lower levels of local governance. So far, there are variances in the extent and degree to which MERECP has been internalized in central government structures on the one hand, and local government structures on the other. On the Kenya side where the system of governance is centralized internalization has been more pronounced at the centre. The focal Ministry is very conversant with MERECP issue. In Uganda where the degree of decentralization is high, internalization is pronounced at local government level.

- Generally, there is consensus that involvement of Local Governments in implementation of MERECP is a good approach especially for purposes of sustainability; however the strategy has been affected by delayed processes in financial disbursements, procurement and in some cases inadequate training. Additionally gaps which have created weak and incoherent linkages between communities and MERECP should be addressed. Responses to questions on grassroots local communities' linkages with formal local government structures were vague, which implies they are weak and need to be streamlined and strengthened.

- Institutional sustainability in the context of MERECCP has to be accessed and judged by the likelihood of the program structures to continue delivering results after IUCN and later on Norwegian and Swedish support pulls out - i.e. will MERECP independently continue to effectively meet its objectives? It was difficult to give definitive answers during the MTR. This not withstanding, it can however be postulated that sustainability in all respects will depend on how well MERECP will empower communities under collaborative management of Mt. Elgon ecosystem and instil a sense of responsibility.

- To demonstrate commitment to MERECP and to ensure sustainability districts participating in MERECP should be encouraged to open budget lines to specifically support MERECP through ENR component in the district budget framework.

3.2 Replicability.
MERECP must convey lessons learned about the programme's achievements and constraints to other like-minded programmes and stakeholders. There is much to gain,

e.g. from MERECP's annual reports etc, from studies and consultancy reports, and also from other MERECP-related literature from the scientific community. MERECP's home page is an important tool. It is currently under IUCN-EARO's home page, [7]and today it only contains some few programme documents and two publications, both from before MERECP was launched. There are only brief descriptions of MERECP under IUCN-HQ homepage and the MTR was unable to find links to MERECP there.

The Team recommends that links are created under IUCN-HQ's home page (and/or under web sites for IUCN's Commissions such as WCPPA or CEM), which allow for quick access to MERECP and to the programme's achievements and lessons learned. An update of the home page is urgently required, e.g. with relevant plans, manuals, reports, minutes from meetings etc, when the distribution of such documents are not restricted for one reason or another. There should also be links to related programmes and publications.

When aiming for sustainability, and at the end of the day also replicability, it is equally important for MERECP to learn and to apply lessons from other relevant programmes, e.g. via study tours and other forms of interactions. It is evident that MERECP has not benefited to any appreciable extent from practices and experiences (positive or negative) from elsewhere; e.g. revenue sharing schemes in Amboseli, the CAMPFIRE Programme in Zimbabwe, LIRDP/ SLAMU in Zambia, LIFE in Namibia, etc. These are examples, which have registered positive results. On the other hand the experiences of the now defunct Kagera River Basin Organization, etc. are examples of negative approach to transboundary management and are important in as far as they illustrate what should be avoided.

MERECP could also have benefited from more active use of IUCN's expertise in Commissions such as the WCPPA and CEM, and IUCN expert groups such as the Sustainable Use Specialist Group, (SUSG), both during project design and during implementation. There is also much to learn from other expert groups, such as the African Indaba[8], the Poverty and Conservation Learning Group (PCLG)[9], etc.

In as so much as MERECP is complicated the Sio-Malaba-Malkisi project under the Nile Basin initiative has already replicated the planning and decision making process of MERECP.

4.0   Assessment of Programme Risks and a proposed IUCN exit strategy

4.1 Assessments of Risks

The risk analysis during programme design was found to be well done. All the risks associated with implementation of the programme had been identified correctly and measures to mitigate the risks had also been documented. The table below gives the current status of the risks as at the time of this review.

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[7] See: http://www.iucn.org/places/earo/prog_links/projects/merecp/merecp.htm
[8] See: http://www.africanindaba.co.za/,
[9] See: http://www.povertyandconservation.info/en/

	Identified risk	Current Status
1.	Complex project with multiple players and large geographical area. This risk will be addressed through a strong M&E framework, capacity of IUCN to convene and bring into action many players, and through the various MERECP Coordination and supervision mechanisms.	This risk has proved to be the biggest challenge of this programme. As such the reviewers are of the opinion that the programme should have began at a much smaller scale and gradually scale up. The multiple players have spread the activities too thin and thus impact many be minimal especially in livelihoods. However the coordination and supervision mechanisms seem to be working well despite the multitude of players. Most stakeholders interviewed were of the view that the players in the programme need to be reduced in order to enhance impact.
2.	Regional approaches that have not been tested yet: MERECP is a pioneer programme under the EAC. As such, most of the activities and the over-all implementation approaches are pilot in nature. MERECP applies a lesson learning culture that will build on outcomes of the M&E to proactively inform the implementation and underpin any modifications that might be warranted.	This risk is still valid as there is possibility that a regional approach may not be workable in this region. However the programme will provide useful lessons for any similar programmes in the future.
3.	Policies and legislation: MERECP activities hinge of the fact that both Uganda and Kenya and committed to providing conducive policy and legislative regimes that permit successful implementation of the planned activities. In addition, the EAC secretariat has mandate to harmonize policies and will assist whenever this is required.	This still remains a risk to the programme and has not yet been tested. Countries are very sensitive when it comes to legislation that is deemed sovereign and this programme has an uphill task of lobbying so that the two countries can cooperate in favour of the success of the programme and other similar programmes in future.
4.	Institutional capacities to implement a regional programme of this nature: MERECP strives to strengthen capacities for effective implementation of regional activities under MERECP. Further, MERECP implementation brings on board several technical agencies (research and development) whose main task is to provide technical support to the planned activities as well as strengthen capacity of host institutions (imparting skills, development tools and methodologies).	Institutional capacities were still weak by the time of this review. Weaknesses are still visible in the capacities of institutions to comprehend and implement trans-boundary programmes. This needs to be strengthened during the remaining period and during the exit phase of this programme.
5.	Sustainability of MERECP supported activities: strategies for addressing sustainability of MERECP supported activities have been entrenched in the MERECP design. Collectively, these strategies are deemed adequate to address this risk.	Sustainability of MERECP's activities was still a concern during the mid term review. Most institutions especially at district level could only implement activities because of allowances that MERECP was providing for their work. KWS, UWA, NFA and KFS seemed more inclined to continue with MERECP activities than the other institutions.
6.	Good governance and accountability: MERECP has developed a comprehensive Implementation Manual with adequate specifications and provisions for effective implementation and accountability. IUCN will strive to ensure compliance to the implementation Manual. In addition, the Norway – EAC agreement provides mechanism for handling any abuses of the resources of MERECP.	The MIM is a good tool in MERECP that strives to harmonise procedures across all the implementing institutions and enhances accountability and transparency. However it has taken a long time for partners to internalize the procedures as they are different from their own organization procedures. This is partly why most institutions especially at district level have been unable to absorb their allocated budgets as they have found it difficult to comply with the MIM.
7.	Insecurity and Political involvement: In the past, some of the areas in the Mt Elgon ecosystem have witnessed cases of insecurity. In other situations, there have been tendencies for political interference in the smooth management of the protected components within the ecosystem. These factors have been noted and EAC Secretariat will address any such occurrences as mandated by the EAC treaty.	This still poses a great risk to the project especially on the Kenyan side where at the time of the review there was a military operation in Mt. Elgon district and programme activities had been suspended. In Mbale district in Uganda, the political elite are sabotaging the activities of NFA in the rehabilitation of Namatale Forest Reserve. Thus NFA still has running battles with communities on the Mbale side who are still encroaching of the reserve.
8.	Impact of AIDS/HIV: This impact will be assessed at human capacity level within the implementing institutions as well as the impact on the over-all community well-being and individual households	The impact of AIDs is currently being addressed by an IUCN sister project (HIV/AIDs and NRM) and its findings of a case study conducted in Mt. Elgon (Uganda) have been incorporated into the 2008 workplan.

	capacity to sustain own needs. MERECP recognizes this challenge and plans to work with the Social services sector to contribute to government and non-government actions in addressing the problem of HIV/AIDS in the Mt Elgon ecosystem.	

4.2   Proposed Exit strategy for IUCN

So far MERECP has been more or less a rural development programme. The programme has to change profile and priorities according to new objectives (e.g. as suggested by the MTR, *see Chapter 2.4.1.)* and which are in harmony with MERECP's Vision and Goal and the ecosystem approach. This can be quite drastic, and will require considerable competence and capacity for the institution, which shall take over IUCN's current roles and responsibilities. MERECP is a complex programme, which requires understanding of the interdisciplinarity of the ecosystem approach and what is required for good TNBRM. The need for harmony in legislation and regulations etc. must also be recognized, understood and pursued.

From documents which the MTR has seen, the perceived responsibility for LVBC/EAC is that MERECP will be integrated as follows:

a) EAC/LVBC strategic plans and programmes
b) Lake Victoria Vision and Strategic Plan
c) EAC/LVBC decision and supervision process

The MTR has therefore identified the LVBC to be the most appropriate institution to take over IUCN's current responsibilities for management (including finances) and coordination. A transfer has, however, to be gradual and must be determined by LVBC's and other key institutions' capacity and competence. An officer, who shall be fully responsible for MERECP affairs, should be recruited and based at LVBC.

Challenges facing LVBC during transfer of roles and responsibilities from IUCN
In designing a trans-boundary conservation programme with an ecosystem approach, the following issues are critical:
a) Access to ecosystem goods and/or services for local people from the park and other protected areas.
b) Shared resources-the hydrological systems in the Mt. Elgon ecosystem. The mountain is an important supplier of water for the region's lakes and river system including Lake Victoria and the River Nile.
c) Shared threats to the ecosystem, which require collaborative action such as to secure sound management and prevent poaching, fire, and insecurity within the Mt. Elgon ecosystem.
d) Tourism within the Mt. Elgon ecosystem to be developed with opportunities for local communities to participate in and benefit from management and tourism services.
e) Research and monitoring-sharing of experience, staff, standardized methods, database and information management systems for more integrated and effective conservation.
f) Management response to a rapidly changing ecosystem dynamics, water, vegetation change, law enforcement and fire management.

The MERECP objectives and workplans did embrace certain aspects of all the above, but has lacked clear focus. This could explain why the MERECP objectives do not resonate very well with the objectives for the ecosystem approach and a TBNRM programme. One would have expected the MERECP objectives to focus more on the following:

a) Joint management of wildlife habitats at specific sites by a wide range of stakeholders; securing free movement of wildlife between the Kenya and Uganda border, implementation of ecological monitoring systems to track viability of important biological resources or conservation targets and to provide for adaptive management of these landscapes.

b) Interventions that provide community livelihoods and incentives for shared resource management. Establish a diverse range of viable and equitable natural resource based income generating interventions. Supported interventions should demonstrate good livelihood support, effective marketing and real conservation impact. These interventions should improve the livelihoods of the communities and provide positive incentives for partners especially communities to engage in natural resource management.

c) Support to a creation of policy and institutional environment with solid government backing, which is crucial for the successful implementation and adoption of viable practices in the Mount Elgon ecosystem. Efforts to support development of the policy environment through the establishment of institutions such as national multi-stakeholder forums, intergovernmental committees that can influence changes of policies crucial to the adoption of viable practices should therefore have been envisaged. This should have contributed to the following:

- pooling of expertise in the region to address TBNRM issues.
- Implementation of the EAC Treaty and protocol on environment and natural resources

d) Dissemination of trans-boundary natural resource management information on Mount Elgon ecosystem to various stakeholders on sustainable viable practices for natural resource management for possible replication; use of monitoring and evaluation information by the project for adaptive management. Information disseminated would help facilitate the learning process on trans-boundary natural resource management. This result would have been achieved through the development of functional information management systems and mechanisms that disseminate viable practices and lessons learnt to a wide range of stakeholders.

The MERECP objectives as they are currently would not promote the ecosystem approach and TBNRM in the Mount Elgon ecosystem; despite mention and implementation of some relevant activities in the 2005-6 and 2007 workplans and budgets. Thus, the overall MERECP focus on these key issues is very limited.

Management of a transboundary ecosystem whilst recognising the ecosystem approach.
For Mt. Elgon to be managed effectively according to the ecosystem approach and as a trans-boundary ecosystem there is need for cooperation and harmonized and coordinated actions between and among the relevant stakeholders. However, there are a number of challenges to attainment of trans-boundary natural resource management objectives in the Mt. Elgon ecosystem. These include the following:

a) Ecological coherence and resilience is necessary for both biodiversity conservation and sustainable development;
b) Cross-border ecological monitoring and law enforcement is essential;
c) Maintaining essential ecological processes and life support systems;
d) Capacity for trans-boundary natural resource management to be in place;
e) Access of ecosystem goods and/or services (non-timber products) for local communities;
f) Trans-boundary eco-tourism with low impact;
g) Public information, community awareness, education and research;
h) Financial planning and funds for trans-boundary natural resource management;
i) Informal stakeholders' partnerships for the management of the Mt. Elgon ecosystem.
j) Communication challenges, which include the following:
   - Common radio frequency;
   - Equipment e.g. repeater stations and gadgets; and
   - Internet connectivity.
k) Institutional arrangements/structures, key among which are the following:
   - Formal institutional collaboration arrangements between the two countries;
   - Stakeholders roles and responsibilities;
   - Manpower for joint management of the ecosystem;
l) Policy and legal frameworks for joint management which include the following:
   - Provision for joint management and joint monitoring and protection within the wildlife and forest Acts of the two respective countries;
   - Harmonised application of user rights and responsibilities of stakeholders (e.g. local communities);
   - Formal provision for intelligence information sharing by the protected areas institutions; and
   - Harmonized immigration procedures.

Few of the above mentioned challenges are being addressed by MERECP today. Processes such as preparation of joint management plan and joint protection and monitoring plan as well as sorting out communication challenges are some of the few being considered in the programme. This therefore means that a lot needs to be done if Mount Elgon is to be managed after the ecosystem approach and as a transboundary ecosystem and in particular when the issues listed are to be considered. However Stakeholders (UWA/Mbale) have observed that MERECP has been a uniting factor between institutions. This has been achieved through sharing information/intelligence at the National level across borders. In this regard, one of the major achievements of MERECP has been to build trust between institutions internally and on both sides of the border.

IUCN and the implementing institutions
There are a number of implications for MERECP's implementing institutions and IUCN with regard to the challenges listed above. These include the following:
a) Less of the ecosystem approach and TBNRM is currently being promoted in the Mt. Elgon ecosystem.

b) An in-depth understanding of the interdisciplinary nature and implications of the ecosystem approach and TBNRM is also lacking in most institutions. It is therefore need to entrench this among the relevant stakeholders in the Mt. Elgon ecosystem.

c) Left on their own, MERECP implementing institutions would not be able to promote the ecosystem approach and TBNRM in Mt. Elgon ecosystem. This is because these are not yet mainstreamed into institutional strategies, management plans, workplans and budgets.

The way forward

From the analysis above, IUCN technical backstopping is still required. The catalytic process for TBNRM, which IUCN has initiated under MERECP requires more time than the current project duration for relevant institutions to mainstream the ecosystem approach and TBNRM into their strategies, management plans, workplans and budgets. Time is also required to provide a conducive policy and institutional environment with solid backing from the governments of both Kenya and Uganda for the successful implementation and adoption of viable practices in the Mount Elgon ecosystem.

Therefore an exist strategy for IUCN (see table below) will have to consider the following:

a) An agreed time-frame for IUCN to phase out from MERECP such that by the end of it,

b) An officer, who shall be fully responsible for MERECP affairs to be recruited and based at LVBC.

c) The institutions involved to have mainstreamed the ecosystem approach and TBNRM and able to finance and support certain elements from within their own resources and budgets.

d) Capacity of the EAC/LVBC, national focal points and of the implementing institutions to coordinate and supervise and implement the ecosystem approach and a transboundary management programme as envisaged.

e) The need to refocus MERECP, giving attention to the guiding ecosystem approach principles under CBD and other international processes, and to TBNRM issues. These should among others include aspects of shared resources, local communities' access to ecosystem goods and/or services from protected areas, shared threats, revenue options from tourism etc, management response to changing ecosystem and socio-economic dynamics, and research and monitoring.

f) An institutional mechanism within the EAC/LVBC structures that will take advantage of the current MERECP decision-making structures to provide the role of coordination and technical backstopping on trans-boundary matters to the stakeholders in the Mount Elgon ecosystem.

g) IUCN would in the course of implementation delegate its roles and responsibilities to the said institutional structure in (b) above as it prepares to exit from its management obligations under MERECP.

h) Training of key stakeholders within the Mt. Elgon ecosystem on the ecosystem approach and TBNRM through short-courses and studies. These would not only provide theoretical understanding of interdisciplinary issues, but also create a critical mass of practitioners within the Mt. Elgon ecosystem.

i) Encourage exchange of lessons learned and visits to some of the well developed like-minded programmes in Africa and elsewhere. These should target politicians and decision-makers, technocrats and field staff within the Mt. Elgon ecosystem
j) Establish and strengthen a comprehensive research and monitoring systems with protocols on information sharing among the relevant stakeholders for improved management of the ecosystem.
k) Relevant transboundary management tools and viable approaches are established within the ecosystem.

Strategy	Responsibility
1. Finalize preparation of tools such as, tourism master plan, joint monitoring and management plans and other relevant studies.	IUCN, EAC/ LVBC and relevant ministries/ agencies
2. Identify policies and regulations which need harmonization. Solicit the support of EAC/LVBC to lobby the partner states to harmonize their policies and regulations.	IUCN and /EAC/ LVBC and relevant ministries/ agencies
3. Discuss with EAC/ LVBC to take over IUCN's current management responsibilities under MERECP.	IUCN and /EAC/ LVBC
4. In cooperation with EAC/ LVBC, refocus MERECP design with attention to the ecosystem approach and trans-boundary issues.	IUCN and /EAC/ LVBC
5. Re-evaluate the implementing institutions and drop some is necessary in order to refocus the programme into a smaller geographical area, fewer institutions and high impact.	IUCN and implementing institutions
6. Re-evaluate activities and only concentrate on strategic activities that will add value to the programme in terms of conservation efforts and people's livelihoods.	IUCN and implementing institutions
7. Lessons learned and exchange visits.	All relevant partners
8. Creation of a Programme Management Unit for MERECP within EAC/ LVBC	IUCN and /EAC/ LVBC
9. Undertake training of relevant staff on the ecosystem approach and transboundary issues	IUCN/ EAC/ LVBC and relevant ministries/ agencies
10. Relevant MERECP institutions mainstream the ecosystem approach and TBNRM into institutional strategies, workplans and budgets	All relevant partners All relevant partners
11. Research and monitoring enhanced.	All relevant partners
12. IUCN transfer management to an implementation unit within EAC/LVBC. IUCN provides backstopping as and when required.	IUCN and /EAC/ LVBC

5.   Conclusions and recommendations

Although not part of the TOR, the MTR has been requested to specify its recommendations as to what shall be done when and by whom. The MTR is, however, not in a position to provide specific advice on this, not least because most of what is recommended below is dependent upon the suggested changes of objectives, IUCN exit strategy, and which institution(s) that are to take over IUCN's roles and responsibilities. This has to therefore to be addressed and resolved by MERECP's current management and decision-making structures, i.e. the PMU, the MSC and the MCC, possibly in dialogues with the donors. EAC/ LVCB, which according to our recommendation should take over after IUCN, must also be consulted and it is up to EAC/LVBC and IUCN to agree on realistic time frames for changes and to decide upon priorities for the way forward.

5.1 Design of the programme

MERECP is an interdisciplinary and complex programme, with ambitious goals but also overlapping objectives, with very many institutions and with very many diverse and cross-cutting activities. In addition the programme is trying to respond to district workplans with their own defined processes complicating it further. The programme was, however, poorly designed from the beginning and the inception phase was unable to amend it to satisfactory levels. The objectives are not logical, activities are duplicated across objectives and the objectives do not reflect ecosystem approach and the trans-boundary nature of the programme as of MERECP's Vision and Goal.

The objectives will have to be re-designed and the MTR has provided suggestions. *See Chapter 2.4.1.* The activities will have to be redesigned accordingly, which will include revision of the logframe and the development of SMART indicators. Activities will have to be more focused. Some will have to be scaled down or done away with especially those not adding value.

5.2 Institutions

It was evident from the interviews the MTR team held with high level officials in Kenya, Uganda, and the EAC that MERECP has attracted a high degree of political support and will. MERECP is nevertheless facing a number of the challenges, partly because participating local governments and local institutions were not involved in the inception phase, but rather were brought on board at the implementation phase. There is thus a lack of ownership in many government institutions, which is not caused by lack of political will and support, but rather by some barriers which have in some ways undermined effective practical translation of this political will and support in implementation of MERECP. E.g. the design of the programme, its complex nature, too many institutions involved in implementation, and the obstacles relating to harmonization of the policy and legal frameworks (all mentioned in the report) which continue to affect coherent governance. Once sorted out as recommended it is expected that governance issues in the context of MERECP will be streamlined to the desired level.

EAC provides an umbrella structure for regional programs. It has capacity to support the program within the framework through building political partnerships, and can obviously promote the ecosystem approach and transboundary harmonisation of sustainable collaborative management relating to Mt. Elgon. Whereas EAC may prefer to follow "the principle of subsidiarity" and give most of the responsibilities to Uganda and Kenya, it has an important role of being one stop centre of developing and harmonising the policies and laws that affect transboundary resources such as the Mt. Elgon.

The MTR wants to point to an important factor regarding EAC's contractual obligations towards MERECP. At the EAC level, changes which have had impact on MERECP include the entry of Rwanda and Burundi into the community. A MOU has been signed between EAC, Rwanda and Burundi, which will take effect in July 2008 and which will enable these two countries to participate in all LVB related issues. Rwanda and Burundi will be requested by EAC/ LVBC to designate a Ministry and hence a PS to become a member of the Regional Policy Steering Committee (RPSC) and the nominee will participate in relevant MERECP meetings.

To participate effectively local administrations have to boost extension services and identify and empower institutions which have comparative advantage in advancing the objectives of MERECP e.g. District Farm Institutes which have a good track record of effectively working with local communities.

Streamlining through cutting down the number of institutions and sharpening focus instead of spreading too thin will be required in the remaining two years of the programme and should be identified in a participatory manner. According to stakeholders it is also important to identify which of the partners should take the lead. It has been suggested that it may be necessary to off-load partners who are held up by bureaucracy.

One other challenge is getting other institutions not directly linked to the programme to understand the MERECP. In future therefore, effort should be invested in streamlining linkages, enhancing collaboration between MERECP and other institutions and programmes e.g. programmes which target PEAP in Uganda and Economic Recovery Strategy in Kenya.

High level policy makers in Kenya Ministry of Environment and Mineral resources and the Uganda designated Ministry of Water and Environment informed the team that transboundary activities are mutually beneficial to participating countries. This realization should go a long way in promoting the much desired positive culture of institutional coordination in projects like MERECP.

Stakeholders (UWA/Mbale) have observed that MERECP has been a uniting factor between institutions. This has been achieved through sharing information/intelligence at the National level across borders. In this regard, one of the major achievements of MERECP has been to build trust between institutions internally and on both sides of the border.

A re-evaluation of the implementing partners will have to be done as they are too many and are not cost effective. This is a sensitive matter and should be discussed in the MCC and MSC with agreements on how to go about this. The MTR want to mention, however, that KWS, KFS, UWA and NFA are particularly important institutions for MERECP, because of their key roles and also because they are more flexible in their implementation approaches and are not tied down to government bureaucracy.

5.3. <u>Improvement of livelihoods</u>

Impacts on livelihoods are still low especially to communities adjacent the protected areas as some partners are not targeting them. Therefore funding into improving livelihoods of people adjacent the park as opposed to people who are not near the park needs to be increased. This means that MERECP will have to guide the districts as where their activities are to be conducted.

The MTR points out that Uganda and Kenya participate in various international conferences, conventions, protocols and agreements which relate to the management of the environment. These instruments impact on the management of Mt. Elgon ecosystem. The instruments are of two types; non-binding instruments and binding instruments. Among the legally binding instruments of particular relevance to the MERECP is the CDB. The convention among others emphasizes sharing of benefits arising out of biological resources- this provision can be used to promote livelihoods in the programme area but according to the findings of the MTR this has so far not happened to any appreciable extent.

5.4. <u>Effectiveness and Efficiency</u>

Effectiveness and efficiency of the programme are low. A number of factors which have undermined effectiveness and efficiency are summarized below:

- Implementation of the MERECP has experienced set backs arising out of the variation in operational styles, systems and modalities between different stakeholders and institutions. The operational procedures of statutory bodies, i.e. UWA, NFA, MECC, KWS and KFS are flexible compared to the more bureaucratic procedures followed by central governments and district administrations in the programme area. The

variation explains some of the unwelcome delays that have been experienced in programme implementation.

- The LVBC which has responsibility for coordinating transboundary initiatives geared towards management of shared ecosystems while in principle a good approach is still hampered by capacity constraints. LVBC is working on this problem and at the time of the review was expecting more nine staff which will bring the total staff numbers to 21.

- High turnover of officials working on implementation of MERECP was reported to MTR team. Although this problem is external to MERECP, it has not augured well for the programme. It is important that MERECP can maintain institutional memory one way or another, e.g. by briefing new key officials as they take over and by providing them with guidance on key elements in reports and documents. It may also be necessary for the MERECP to enter into MoUs with institutions i.e. UWA, KWS, NFA, district administration, etc to ensure that officers stay long enough on the MERECP to avoid interruption in implementation.

- It has been noted that political buy in continues to be a challenge. However it has also to be appreciated that the reality is that MERECP being a transboundary programme politics cannot be left out altogether. EAC being the apex of MERECP structure is expected to address this matter. During the MTR team consultations with EAC in Arusha, the top management indicated that it was aware of these challenges and has already put in place a mechanism to address it through the establishment of LVBC which will oversee management of transboundary ecosystems in the region.

- One of the challenges is to de-link politics from enforcement in the project areas especially in Mbale region Uganda where opening of the borders has presented problems.

- It was pointed out by a number of stakeholders including the Ministry of Local Government Uganda that the environment sector is weak. The low budget allocations to the sector are a clear illustration of this. Steps need to be taken to upgrade the ENR sector budgets both at the central and local government levels. The tendency has been in all the 6 districts in MERECP in Uganda to lump the environment sector with production. The result is that the production sector, which seemingly has more conspicuous links to the PEAP principles (a high priority programme), has overshadowed the environment sector.

- The law in Uganda transferred has placed budget and planning process at the sub-county level. In Kenya by practice attempts have also been made by the districts and local communities to involve lower levels of local government into planning and budgeting. These are practices which need to be encouraged. The dilemma though is that the capacity at lower levels to meaningfully engage in complex planning and budgetary activities is still lacking. MERECP should in collaboration with districts engage in training activities to improve capacity.

5.5. IUCN facilitation and coordination roles, and exit strategy.

IUCN needs to reduce its facilitation and coordination roles and hand them over to capable implementing institutions as outlined in the proposed exit strategy. Thus capacity building of institutions will have to be intensified in readiness for IUCN exit. The time frame and the process on how this will take place will have to be negotiated with the partners.

5.6. Impact monitoring and documentation and gender issues.

In Uganda the Local Government political structures take into account gender balance through the policy of Affirmative Action which ensures representation of women on Local Councils right from the village level (LC 1). This approach has promoted participation of women in planning and implementation of development programmes. MERECP has taken advantage of this well established practice/arrangement to bring women on board. During MTR field visits, particularly in the Sironko district, it was noted that women were involved in implementation of MERECP activities and had an impressive grasp of what MERECP is all about. In the Mbale district in Uganda, more than 50% of the participants in the agricultural activities were women according to the MERECP focal point.

Impact monitoring of the programme and documentation on outcomes and gender impacts is, however, poor. Thus the programme needs to improve on this area by enhancing the capacities of the partners to capture this information.

5.7. Policy and Legal Framework

On the legal framework, a distinction has to be made between the law and bureaucracy. The latter has to do with adequacy and efficiency of processes that precede enactment of the laws and procedures/modalities for its enforcement - i.e. are they pragmatic? The former has to do with the relevancy and potency of laws in the actual context of MERECP e.g. are they conducive to the ecosystem approach and transboundary natural resource management of shared ecosystems? What need to be changed to make them more conducive?

The LVBC under EAC are in position to influence the trends in a manner that is sensitive to the principles of sovereignty of state. It is however emphasised that it is the partner states which must take action to make the laws. MERECP has, however, overlooked and indeed underestimated what can be achieved by invoking the existing frameworks e.g. through enacting subsidiary regulations through statutory instruments provided for under the respective national legislation. MTR recommends that such opportunities are pursued, e.g. with the assistance of legal expertise who is familiar with legislation and relevant institutions in Uganda and Kenya.

5.8. Lesson learning

MERECP must convey lessons learned about achievements and constraints to other like-minded programmes and stakeholders. MERECP's home page, currently at IUCN-ESARO, is an important tool. MERECP's home page contains some few programme documents, and only two publications, both from before MERECP was launched. There are only brief descriptions of MERECP under IUCN-HQ homepage and the MTR was unable to find links to MERECP there.

The MTR recommends links to MERECP from IUCN-HQ's home page. An update of the home page is urgently required, e.g. with all relevant plans, study and implementation reports, minutes from meetings etc, when the distribution of such documents are not restricted for one reason or another. There should also be links to related programmes and publications.

MERECP can also learn and benefit from other ecosystem approach oriented programmes in Africa, e.g. CAMPFIRE, LIRDP/ SLAMU, LIFE etc.

MERECP should use IUCN Commissions such as the WCPPA and CEM, and IUCN expert groups such as the Sustainable Use Specialist Group more actively. There is also much to learn from other expertise, e.g. the African Indaba, the Poverty and Conservation Learning Group, etc.

As regards the livelihood aspect, MERECP can learn lessons on livelihood improvement through conservation and development activities from the SIDA funded Lake Victoria Environmental Education Programme implemented by WWF. In Uganda it is implemented via Nature Uganda whilst in Kenya through the Wildlife Clubs of Kenya. Good lessons on effectiveness and efficiency can be learnt from this programme.

5.9. Eco-tourism

MERECP should pursue opportunities for local communities to participate more actively in eco-tourism schemes in Mt. Elgon and to benefit from these. The MTR has presented some immediate ideas, such as simple overnight facilities on the Uganda side and game viewing platforms at the caves on the Kenya side. Other opportunities should be explored.

5.10.   Enhanced participation of local communities in management

Decentralisation has proved to be vital for local communities to benefit from ecosystem goods and/or services (i.e. co-management in some form). Communities on the village level must be recognised as partners in decision-making. Such decentralisation must be supported by government institutions and by the legislation.

Unrealistic programme design, which has unduly raised high expectations of communities has caused frustration and loss of confidence. It should however also be appreciated that initiatives like MERECP call for patience and persistence before tangible results can be realised.

Seemingly failed aspirations have meant that communities lacking in livelihoods and already in low trust situation to sometimes look at MERECP as any other government programme. This is particularly so in countries which have gone through a history of repressive political regimes i.e. Uganda, where corruption, etc have trampled on local communities and undermined good governance.

Knowledge about MERECP is still limited. The programme is known only around project areas and in target communities. Sensitization needs to be enhanced for MERECP to achieve the intended multiplier effect.

MERECP should therefore assist the communities in developing and strengthening their own institutions, and encourage their participation in stewardship and sustainable use of natural resources through the lowest administrative structures as opposed to concentrating at the district level which is not directly in touch with communities.

5.11. Research and monitoring
MERECP's Annual Meeting held on 30th May 2007 urged the use of on-going research by students on Mount Elgon Ecosystem to support the implementation of the programme.

The MTR supports this request, because it opens for "win-win". MERECP should identify and describe monitoring and research needs, to be outsourced as M.Sc/ Ph.D. thesis topics at selected universities. No payments for such research, but MERECP may provide limited technical assistance when needed.

5.12. Duration of the programme
With a re-design of MERECP's objectives and associated activities, with fewer institutions involved in management and coordination and with better prioritization of field activities, then MERECP will be highly relevant in the pursuance of the ecosystem approach and TBNRM. Experience from programs with similar diversity and interdisciplinary approaches tells us, however, that four years is not realistic – particularly in light of MERECP's modest achievements so far, and with the need for objectives which are more in harmony with the programme's Vision and Goal. MERECP's current four year time frame can be regarded as a catalytic "kick off" and testing period. 15-20 years are more realistic for good results and sustainability. Donors should be prepared for this.

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Annex 1

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR MIDTERM REVIEW OF
Mount Elgon Regional Ecosystem Conservation Programme (MERECP)

1. Background

The Mount Elgon Regional Ecosystem Conservation Programme (MERECP) which is a programme of the East African Community is supporting the governments of Kenya and Uganda to strengthen management of protected areas components of the Mt. Elgon ecosystem and initiate sustainable development activities. The focus of the latter is in the districts of Trans-Nzoia, and Mt. Elgon in Kenya; and Bududa, Sironko, Bukwo, Manafwa, Kapchorwa, and Mbale,in Uganda. The programme is being implemented by the East African Community (EAC) and the technical and managerial support is being provided by the World Conservation Union-IUCN. MERECP is funded by the governments of the Royal Kingdom of Norway and Sweden.

The MERECP is a regional programme that is being implemented for the good of the ecosystem and the ecosystem users and inhabitants. MERECP was conceived and designed in response to the conservation and development needs of the Mt. Elgon Ecosystem and developed over a period of almost four years (2000-2004). It involved local, national and regional discussions and the interaction of a wide range of stakeholders including the East African Community Secretariat (EAC), governments of Kenya and Uganda through relevant national sectors, local communities and concerned conservationists and researchers.

The Mt Elgon Ecosystem Over-all Vision is: *A Secure and productive ecosystem*. MERECP will contribute to realization of this Vision by working towards the following goal: *Integrated ecosystem conservation and management for sustainable development and enhanced well-being of the people and their environment*. MERECP intends to fulfil a purpose, which is: *To enhance the conservation status and benefits of Mt Elgon ecosystem to environment quality and livelihoods*. This purpose will be realized through the following objectives:
  e) Conservation and management of natural resources and biodiversity in and outside protected areas promoted;
  f) Sustainable development in Mt Elgon Ecosystem enhanced;
  g) Conservation and management needs of Mt Elgon Ecosystem integrated into national, regional and international development framework; and
  h) MERECP implemented effectively as a regional trans-boundary programme.

MERECP implementation started in September 2005 and as provided for under the Funding Agreement signed between the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) and the East African Community (EAC) a mid-term evaluation of MERECP is now due. The Second Annual Meeting of the Programme held in Kisumu, Kenya on the 30th May

2007 recommended that a MERECP mid-term review be undertaken in January 2008 prior to the 3rd Annual Meeting scheduled for late February or early March 2008.

In light of the aforesaid, a mid-term review exercise is required to assess the implementation of Mount Elgon Regional Ecosystem Conservation Programme. It is anticipated that the recommendations arising from the mission will inform the programme work-plan in the remaining programme period under the current funding arrangements.

2. Purpose

The purpose of the Mid-term Review will be to:
c) assess overall progress, results achieved compared to the Goal, Purpose and Objectives, as well as risks, challenges and constraints encountered in the process of programme implementation; and
d) Provide strategic guidance for the remaining programme period.

3 Scope of the work

The scope of the work for the review mission shall among others refer to the extent to which MERECP has contributed towards realization of the set objectives and outputs, relevance, efficiency, impact, effectiveness, impact and sustainability and replicability of the same. In particular the review mission will consider the following:

3.1. Review and assess progress towards ensuring sustainability of MERECP; specifically;
a) Assess the performance by EAC/LVBC in fulfilling its obligations to the MERECP (enabling mechanism for integration of MERECP into EAC/LVBC activities and smooth implementation of the programme);
b) Assess the performance by IUCN in fulfilling its obligations by facilitating implementing institutions, technical backstopping, coordination and management, reporting (technical and financial), value addition (leveraging funds and actions, etc.);
c) Propose an IUCN exit strategy in MERECP implementation; and
d) Assess the effectiveness of the implementation arrangements and structures (PMU, MCC, PSC, Annual meeting, MIM, M&E framework, etc) in ensuring smooth implementation of MERECP.

3.2. Relevance of programme: The focus should include extent to which programme addresses a critical need in a way most likely to deliver outcomes and impacts. This should include relevance to priorities and policies of the governments of Kenya and Uganda in general and in particular to the East African Community strategy to promote transboundary ecosystem management. Other issues to be looked into include the likelihood of resolution of the problems identified during programme preparation, including mechanisms put in place for conflict resolution, assessment of the internal coherence and logic of MERECP's conceptual framework, and adequacy of programme documentation. This section should also consider the appropriateness of objectives in

relation to collaborative ecosystem governance vis-à-vis the biodiversity, institutional, socio-political and economic contexts.

3.3. Efficiency: The issues to consider are the following: evaluation of the translation of project resources and activities into results; evaluation of adequacy of means, effectiveness of cost expended (value for money), suitability of project management, effectiveness of activities; and adequacy of monitoring, reporting and evaluation systems. The administrative costs, in particular, are to be assessed.

3.4. Impact and effectiveness: assessment of the degree to which programme results have contributed to the achievement of programme purpose, including realization of planning assumptions and effectiveness of collaborative ecosystem governance mechanisms including transboundary natural resource management). Impact in terms of programme objectives and the East African Community including but not limited to: promotion of collaborative ecosystem governance; improved conservation and ecological status of the natural components of the ecosystem; improved livelihoods and livelihood security of the women and men of the Mt Elgon ecosystem; capacity for management and development of the natural resources of the Mt Elgon ecosystem; and knowledge base on the ecosystem and interactions between people, including gender dynamics, and natural resources use and development.

3.5. Sustainability and replicability: The focus should consider the following: prospects for future continuation and sustainability of MERECP activities and benefits, and the institutions participating; plans for programme management structures after end of current funding phase;   potential for replicating the programme in part or whole, elsewhere in other shared ecosystems within the East African Community; and steps taken to ensure lessons learned are widely disseminated. A key indicator of sustainability is the extent to which programme principles and activities are being institutionalized in the EAC, national and local governments structures and systems

3.6. Assessment of risks identified, adequacy of proposed IUCN exit strategy and arrangements for collaboration with other regional programmes / actors

3.7. Assessment of whether a programme extension in terms of time is required

4. Implementation

4.1. Expertise required

The mid-term review of MERECP will be undertaken by a review team comprising three members with the following specialization and expertise:
a) Transboundary natural resource management with a strong background on protected areas management and monitoring and evaluation (Team Leader).
b) Institutional and organizational development (based on a sample of institutions); and
c) Livelihoods, rural development, socio economic and gender analysis.

4.2. Mode of work and methodology

Information needed by the review team should be gained through analysis of relevant documents and through interviews with staff of the Embassies of the Royal Kingdom of Norway and Sweden in Nairobi and Kampala, East African Community (Lake Victoria Basin Commission), IUCN, programme personnel, implementing institutions, partner organizations and selected stakeholders.

The review team will:
a) Review documents including programme document, workplans and reports to date.
b) Consult with the programme personnel and other stakeholders in Kampala, Nairobi, Kisumu and Arusha (see Annex I).
c) Consult with other actors (international NGOs) directly involved in facilitating Trans Boundary Natural Resource Management (TBNRM) in East Africa. This should include but not limited to AWF/IGCP, WWF, World Conservation Society and NELSAP /Sio-malaba-malakisi PMU in Kakamega.
d) Prepare detailed draft and final reports in English on the mission (the structure of the report should follow the general outline provided by the Agreement between the EAC and Royal Kingdom of Norway. This should include a summary of main findings and recommendations.
e) Debrief IUCN and EAC (LVBC) on the basis of the findings and recommendations
f) Debrief the Embassies of the Royal Kingdom of Norway and Sweden.

The Team Leader is responsible for the supervision of the review team, ensuring the overall accomplishment of the mid-term review, and for production of the mid-term evaluation reports. The review team will be supported by the PMU staff.

Relevant documents that should be consulted include the following:
a) MERECP Programme documents and MIM;
b) The May 2005 MERECP Appraisal report;
c) MERECP Inception Report ;
d) MERECP Semi-Annual and Annual Reports;
e) Agreements: These should include those between Royal Kingdom of Norway and East African Community; IUCN and EAC; and IUCN and MERECP Implementing institutions (PAIMA) and original TORs;
f) Letters exchanged between EAC and Royal Kingdom of Norway, EAC and IUCN and IUCN and MERECP implementing institutions on MERECP; and
g) Other sources of relevant documents.

4.3. Workplan and time allocated for preparation, field work and finalization of the mid-term review report

The plan is for the review to be undertaken in April / May 2008. The overall duration of the review will be three weeks, including travel time, plus an additional two weeks for the Team Leader to prepare the final report. The provisional timetable is as follows:

Day	Activity	Location
1	Review team meets to confirm schedule, review literature	Kampala, Uganda
2	Consultations with Ministries directly involved in MERECP implementation, Embassies and other organizations facilitating transboundary natural resource management.	Ministries of Water and Environment; Tourism, Trade and Industry; Finance, Planning and Economic Development Embassies of the Royal Kingdom of Norway and Sweden Kampala, Uganda. Also included are AWF, World Conservation Society and ARCOS.
3-6	Team travels to Uganda side of Mount Elgon ecosystem to meet with MERECP implementing institutions and field visits. Also meet other stakeholders	Mbale, Kapchorwa, Sironko, Manafwa, Kapchorwa, Bukwo, UWA and NFA
7-11	Team travels to Kenya side of Mt. Elgon ecosystem to meet with MERECP implementing institutions and field visits. Also meet other stakeholders	TransNzoia, Mount Elgon District, Mount Elgon Count Council, Kenya Forest Service and Kenya Wildlife Service.
12	Team travels to Nairobi Kenya for consultations with Ministries directly involved in MERECP implementation as well as other organizations facilitating transboundary natural resource management.	Ministries of Environment and Natural Resources, Planning and National Development, Tourism and Wildlife, National Environment Management Authority and Kenya Wildlife Service. Also included are AWF and WWF
13	Consultations with IUCN-EARO	Wassa-Nairobi
14	Consultations with EAC-Lake Victoria Basin Commission	Kisumu
15-16	Team meetings and preparation of Aide Memoire	Nairobi, Kenya
17	Presentation of Aide Memoire and key findings to EAC/LVBC and IUCN and key stakeholders in Nairobi	Nairobi, Kenya
18	Debrief the Norwegian and Swedish Embassies	Kampala

19	Team Leader prepares and submits Draft Final Report to National MERECP Focal Points, IUCN, LVBC and Embassies of the Royal Kingdom of Norway and Sweden in Kampala for comments	Team Leader's home country
22	All comments on Draft Final Report collected by IUCN submitted to Team Leader	Kampala, Uganda
24	Comments incorporated and Final Report submitted by Team Leader to IUCN,EAC and Embassies of the Royal Kingdom of Norway and Sweden	Team Leader's home country

5. Reporting

Two copies of each of the Draft and Final Reports should be submitted to the Embassies of the Royal Kingdom of Norway and Sweden in Kampala, the EAC-Lake Victoria Basin Commission and IUCN.

The report shall include a list of content, an introduction which summarizes subject matter of study, major findings, conclusions and recommendations as well as the main report. The attachment shall include ToR, additional explanations by the team if relevant as well as other documents of importance for the conclusions.

The final report shall be presented to Royal Norwegian Embassy in Kampala and the EAC/LVBC Secretariat in Kisumu.

Place…………………………..Date……………………………………

Annex I: Individuals and agencies to contact

1) Kenya:

Partners/stakeholders:
   a) Central government: Ministries of Environment and Natural Resources, Finance, Tourism and Wildlife, Planning and National Development, Local Government, and Lands.
   b) Local government: Districts of TransNzoia, Mount Elgon and Mount Elgon County Council
   c) Relevant Authorities: Kenya Wildlife Service, Kenya Forest Service (formerly Forest Department) and National Environmental Management Authority.
   d) Donors: Embassy of Sweden and USAID-REDSO
   e) NGOs: ACC, ACTS, AWF, WWF, IUCN, LVBC and Sio-malaba-malakisi PMU.

2) Uganda:

Partners/stakeholders:
   a) Central government: Ministries of Water and Environment; Finance Planing and Economic Development; Tourism, Trade and Industry; and Local Government. .
   b) Local government: Districts of Bukwo, Kapchorwa, Mbale, Sironko, Manafwa, and Bududa.
   c) Relevant Authorities: Uganda Wildlife Authority, National Forest Authority, and National Environmental Management Authority.
   d) Donors: Embassy of the Royal Kingdom of Norway and Sweden
   e) NGOs: World Conservation Society, ARCOS, AWF and WWF.

3) Tanzania:

   a) Ministry of Natural Resources and Tourism

4) East African Community:

   a) EAC Secretariat in Arusha

Annex 2 - Checklist for comparing the Appraisal 2002 and Appraisal 2005 with action taken at MTR in 2008

Addressed in chapter	Item considered in appraisal 2002	ion taken in PD 2005	R findings on action taken in 2008
2	Clarify regional and national ambitions of the programme, describing a more detailed workplan for activities, monitoring and reporting mechanisms	This issue has improved a lot, but is still unclear on; - institutional degree of transboundary ambitions; - what do different national partners want? - ambition of the Mount Elgon development strategy (MEECDS) (output 3.2) - what is the relevance of EAC? - what is the relevance of MERECP for Uganda and Kenya Better on monitoring than in the previous project document.	Workplans for activities, monitoring and reporting mechanisms in place, but regional and national ambitions for the programme is still unclear. The relevance of EAC still unclear, but MTR recommends stronger role in harmonising legislation and regulations for transboundary legislation and management and support to the policy and institutional environment.
	Relevance - Transboundary - Local livelihoods - Biodiversity resource - On Norwegian donors - Recipient responsibilities	- Ok - More emphasis on true livelihood activities; proper agriculture; rural economic activities and opportunities - Is there in principle - No reference to Norwegian policies - Little mentioned on local levels	The transboundary concept is relevant and challenging but not functioning due to lack of harmonised legislation, regulations and management practices. Differences in community access to park resources (Kenya none, Uganda limited) Local recipient responsibilities at district level, but not on community/ village levels

3.2	A strategy for combined social science and natural science research activities should be developed in the inception period; through a regional workshop with interested parties.	A workshop have been carried out and a report on research agenda is written, and forms a base for starting; - baseline studies and information gathering for the project and for information sharing both nationally and regionally - a more general and interdisciplinary research effort for the area, including livelihood analyses, valuation studies,	MERECP's Annual Meeting held on 30th May 2007 urged the use of on-going research by students on Mount Elgon Ecosystem to support the implementation of the programme. The MTR supports this request, because it opens for "win-win": MERECP identifies and describes monitoring/ research needs, to be outsourced as M.Sc/ Ph.D. thesis topics. No payments for such research, but MERECP may provide limited technical assistance when needed.
	One should form strategies to develop low cost replication models of the "Mt Elgon experience". The programme should have pilot and demonstration qualities?	This is not discussed at all in the PD.	No progress on this, and MERECP must be re-designed before it can offer pilot and demonstration values. The MTR recommends that MERECP should learn from other like-minded programmes, e.g. CAMPFIRE, LIRDP/ SLAMU, LIFE and other in Africa.
3.3	Plan for a more detailed harmonisation strategy between the two countries; including how to handle different legal provisions for local participation in National Park areas.	Basically OK on activities; still not a clear strategy, and in particular unclear on: - what areas and levels are relevant for harmonization - possibilities for legal harmonization	Key issue, which remains unresolved. Harmonisation of park legislation and regulations vital for MERECP's success. EAC is an effective facilitating forum for this. However partner countries remain responsible for action i.e. through subsidiary legislation and amendment of substantive laws.
	A need for improved local level coordination between National park and local governance structures	This is much improved through suggesting coordination of local development plans, the District environmental plans and Mount Elgon strategies (MEECDS), but it is important to also work at lower levels of governance (i.e. LC2)	Local management, implementation and coordination still mainly at the district level. MTR has emphasised the need to involve communities more, i.e. at the LC2 level in Uganda and location and sub-location level in Kenya or through district structures responsible for extension services.

	Clarify authority lines, tasks duties and responsibilities of EAC, Project Steering Committee (PSC), Project Management Unit (PMU), IUCN, and local stakeholders	The project is complex. The PD is now more focussed on clarifying this, but still has some unclarities in text and organogrammes, especially on relations between PSC/PMU. - Need for a discussion of organisation relative to "exit plans". - Clarify difference between core team and essential team - What is the actual role of Local Governance? - How are local, civil organisations represented? - What is the role of national focal desks?	Decision making structure is functional and effective. However too much bureaucracy due to many implementing institutions. EAC is of the view that each country should designate a lead institution to coordinate and play a lead role in championing transboundary NRM.
	Simplify the organisational structure, the number of stakeholders and the number of decision-making levels	This is not done; but is probably acceptable in the short run; within 2 years an exit plan must be developed and approved; Is this model also to be used in other transboundary programmes (replicability)?	The organisational structure has not been revised over the years and the MTR has suggested a simpler structure. The MERECP model has informed the proposed Sio/ Malaba/ Malakisi project institutional framework and its integration into the East African Community Structure through the Lake Victoria Basin Commission. There should be a dialogue between the MERECP programme and Sio/Malaba/Malakisi project over the institutional framework for their integration into the LVBC but also on how to enhance synergy between the two and add value to interventions supported by both since they share some of the target districts in both Kenya and Uganda. This includes Mt. Elgon District Kenya and Manafwa and Bududa Districts in Uganda.

Clarify the role and composition of PMU; with particular consideration for local stakeholders	This is partly clarified in that IUCN/PMU will work through national desks towards local stakeholders. Will it still be IUCN staff or should it be directly employed UWA staff to finalize the resource use agreement plans? Staff job descriptions are attached.	This should be resolved when IUCN's exit strategy with recommendations is approved.
The geographical location of PMU headquarters should be further discussed	This is not raised in the document, but it seems that there will be no fixed office. This means that PMU will be found in IUCN office in Kampala and in EARO Nairobi.	MTR recommends that PMU headquarters be located closer to where "the action is", i.e. in Mbale in Uganda or Kitale in Kenya.
The local level co-operation and management structures should be clarified, and the programme activities must reflect the needs and priorities also of the local people; including the links between environment and development needs of local people	A model where there is a national desk and with different involved ministries and institutions at central level may be problematic for coordination at local level - a classical governance challenge.	The important challenges raised in the 2002 appraisal remains un-resolved. Local people on the village levels do not participate in management and decision making. This is crucial for MERECP's success and for replication.
A unified and integrated management plan for the two countries must be put in place, and where also an a coordination and harmonization with the District Environmental Action Plans and also Local Development Plans is found	This seems to be planned for in the PD. We are a bit uncertain about the Mt Elgon strategy (MEECDS) and what it would contain.	This is a key issue. Integrated management plan due to be developed and has been planned for.
Kenya's lack of experience on CRM	One should describe and analyse this better for Kenya and in particular for KWS.	There is de facto no opening for CRM in Kenya's legislation, but little enthusiasm for this in KWS. However the new Forestry Act entrenched community participation of forest reserves through community forest associations and conservancies.

	Establishment of harmonising initiatives regionally on improved management and monitoring of the ecosystem, as to sustainable use of biodiversity resources on Mt. Elgon	Some found in output 1., but not much	Sustainable use of non-timber products is still not an option in Kenyan parks but is allowed in the forest reserves, and there are limited opportunities in Uganda. Hinges on harmonised legislation which acknowledge such use.
3.5	The budget items must be discussed with the stakeholders directly	Has IUCN this time discussed budget allocations with all involved actors?	Yes, part of planning and implementation processes in MCC and PSC meetings.
	Information should be passed to local levels authorities (five financial district officers) of budgets and expenditures to secure transparency and openness	This is not addressed much, but some is done on transparency page 52.	This is done. Decisions at various levels have been communicated either upwards or downwards to the concerned parties. E.g. revision of safari day allowance, decisions of the PSC that approximately 10% of the institutional budget be allocated to coordination and monitoring.
	The priority of funds and activity level for various programme activities should be explicitly discussed as it will have bearings on stakeholders and organisational structure; and especially look at distribution between different stakeholders, including EAC, IUCN and activities involving funds to local people.	Our assumptions while looking at the new budget: - Less for EAC as suggested in Appraisal Report - More for IUCN and to project implementation as not suggested in Appraisal Report - Less to livelihood activities as not at all suggested in Appraisal Report It looks like a very aggregated budget; what happened to participatory budgets?	Most of the funding is spent on management, coordination, meetings etc, and too little on field activities. Relatively little for livelihood activities

The following activities should be assessed for less emphasis; • General support to IUCN's national offices, IUCN East African Regional Office (EARO) headquarter and project staff being hired and paid for through IUCN • Capacity building to the EAC • PMU expenses, rather use staff on secondment from collaborating partners; less specially appointed staff.	- Not addressed; on the contrary, there seems to be an expansion in budget - This seems to be addressed; taken 50% down? - PMU is not well addressed in PD- difficult to assess real costs to PMU	MTR finds expenses for IUCN PMU and administration to be far too high. In addition there are admin. costs for EAC/LVBC, ministries and other government institutions. Plus admin. costs embedded in activities in all implementing institutions.

3.6	Human rights and gender issues must be addressed; in particular;	- This is well covered and supported, even if no legal rights for local people to access	It is the MTR's impression that all stakeholders take all these issues seriously. Efforts have been made to mainstream gender in implementation and reporting. However the implementing institutions are still unable to report against this.
	Rights to access resources	- statements on Benet problem?	Efforts for the Benet problem were initiated in 2007 with various stakeholders e.g. political, UWA, civil society, local communities participating in fora geared towards resolving the Benet problem. These are still ongoing.
	HIV/AIDS component	- This is well covered and supported	HIV/AIDs component was addressed by a sister IUCN project (HIV/AIDs and NRM). Mt. Elgon Uganda side was used as a case study and findings are to be incorporated into the 2008 work plan.
	Corruption issues	- not mentioned at all, apart from some kind of project transparency; not looking at local stakeholder	Corruption issues are addressed and enforced in agreements with implementing institutions. E.g. NEMA Uganda had been told to refund monies allegedly violating the tendering procedures. However it turned out that it was not clearly explained to the audit team how NEMA spent the money on its activities and this created the impression that there was uncompetitive procurement.
	Make all budgets and accounts available for all public for transparency and accountability	- This is mentioned to some extent (Programme administration)	Audited accounts get to be discussed in the EAC legislative assembly, in the PSC, MCC and in the implementing institutions. All these structures respond to various concerns raised in the audit report.

3.4	An organisational structure should be put in place for a participatory monitoring of activities	This is done; at least a suggestion for a participatory monitoring system	Monitoring and evaluation manual in place in 2006 and being used.
	It should be included a plan for baseline assessment and continuous monitoring of the biodiversity- natural resource base - as part of the management plan.	This workshop report on research is still not finalized.	A study was commissioned to update the status of biodiversity in the Mt. Elgon ecosystem. This is ongoing.
	Norad must make a decision regarding taking a controlling versus a participatory role for itself	The role of the donor is somewhat diffuse still; how much is reasonable to expect; through annual meetings; through general dialogue? In the organogramme Norad only holds a role as funder? No dialogue, advise, inputs, controls etc.	The Embassy in Kampala and Norad may take actions as required when receiving the MTR report.

| 4 | Secure mechanisms for co-ordination with related regional projects and programmes in the Lake Victoria area
For Nelsap: consider joint regular steering committee meetings. | This is suggested not only for Nelsap, but also for the Lake Victoria Development Programme. The Mt Elgon Ecosystem Vision is consistent with the Lake Victoria Basin Vision. One plans to integrate the NELSAP programme on Malaba-Malakisi and Sio rivers that drain from Mt Elgon. (Output 3.1) | LVBC has held joint meetings between MERECP and NELSAP in order to promote similar approaches across the two projects.

Synergy exists between MERECP, agriculture and land management programmes being implemented in Uganda and Kenya in the ecosystem. Synergy exists between MERECP and the National Agricultural Advisory Delivery Services (NAADS) in Kapchorwa. MERECP is adding value to ongoing activities such as land management and zero grazing.

MERECP has also developed synergy with Land care, Kapchorwa in soil and water conservation activities. |
| | How does the project confer with International Environmental agreements? | MERECP will support Kenya and Uganda to address relevant obligations to the MDGs, WSSD Plan of Action, NEPAD and Poverty Reduction Strategies and Action Plans.(Output 3.1) Uganda and Kenya are signatories to several international agreements (Conventions) relevant to Mt Elgon ecosystem. Notable among these are the three Rio Conventions (CBD, UNFCCC, CCD), CITES and Bonn convention. MERECP will support Kenya and Uganda in implementing provisions of these conventions relevant to Mt Elgon ecosystem. Could be more active cooperation? | MERECP's vision and goal is in harmony with the ecosystem approach as of CBD and many international processes and commitments as mentioned by AR 05. Also in harmony with the Norwegain Action Plan for Environment in Development. But the reality is very different, i.e. in that MERECP is first and foremost a rural development programme, with very little influence upon management in the park, i.e. upon regulations which may enhance ecosystem goods and/or services for communities. Marginal benefits for local people from the park. |

	Capacity building at local administrative levels and relevant, local NGOs and CBOs.	Not much mentioned What CBOs/NGOs to use? Most likely only NGOs?	Capacity building has focused on: i) confidence building among MERECP implementing institutions, and ii) skills enhancement in a number of areas including enhancement of entrepreneurial skills in commercial tree growing and energy saving technologies. This benefited District extension officers, representatives of farmer associations and CBOs from both Kenya and Uganda. Also capacity building was towards enhancing capacity in establishment of agro-forestry tree stands, beekeeping and honey production and apple production. In the latter extension officers from the districts as well as individual farmers benefited. In total over 1,000 people from within the ecosystem have benefited from capacity building initiatives However limited capacity building on integrated ecosystem management, which is a prerequisite for the ecosystem approach at all levels.
5	One should develop strategies to maintain the transboundary programme upon withdrawal/exit plans?	Nothing is there; except provision in the budget for an end review and "exit plan". This must be improved.	The 4 year time frame for MERECP is not realistic. Much experience from very many programmes of this kind (interdisciplinary, the ecosystem approach) tells that +/-20 years is more realistic. MERECP is merely a "kick-off" programme. Donors must be prepared for extension and much adaptive planning and management.

	IUCN should plan for a process of withdrawal from the PMU and a phasing-out of the external support within the programme's 4.5 years period. And secure measures for a long term sustainability of the programme;	This is not in place. Sustainability is mentioned in the project document	IUCN is currently working on an exit plan, which has been discussed with the MTR, and to be presented to the 2008 Annual Meeting. As mentioned above: Four years too short for sustainability – 20 years is more realistic.
	This should include also practical suggestions for how to generate funds locally (tourism, park and forest plantations) to secure both institutional sustainability and local legitimacy	This is discussed in the PD.	No tourism master plan yet but planned for but MTR has suggested some small initiatives which may enhance community involvement in ecotourism.
	Benefit sharing systems?	This is not mentioned in PD	MTR could not find anything on this, except that communities may receive 20% of gate fee revenues from UWA (0.07% of total park revenues in Uganda). In Uganda the district link committee was among other reasons formed to streamline the revenue sharing systems. This is one example of unintended spin offs from MERECP. KWS, in order to maintain good relations with communities, addresses their welfare problems through corporate social responsibility where amenities such as schools, heath dispensaries and water tanks are constructed for them. The social responsibility budget for all of Kenya is about Kshs 100 million per year.

More awareness raising and sensitisation among primary, secondary and tertiary pupils, teachers, farmer's associations, and relevant NGOs and CBOs	- This is partly mentioned and supported (output 2.4), including an awareness raising among students, pupils, but also local people both on environmental quality, on ecotourism, define target groups better	MERECP has supported equipping of a UWA information centre at Kapkwai with USD 9,000. School children are the main target group and many schools use the centre. KWS is meant to carry out a feasibility study on the replication of Kapkwai forest exploration education centre in Kapchorwa district, on the Kenya side. During the inception of MERECP activities in the new districts, the focal points began by raising awareness on the programme, the relationship between the ecosystem and people's livelihoods. MERECP supports the district environment officers in raising awareness on conservation and development, the preparation of status of environment report and preparation and revision of district environmental action plans.
Local level infrastructure initiatives relating to transport, education and health	- This is partly mentioned and supported	Substantial support to local infrastructure e.g. In Mt. Elgon County Council support to road (25km) construction linking Chepkitale National Forest Reserve with Kapsokwony.
More emphasis on people dependent on natural forest resources; as women, youth not attending school, landless peasants	- This is partly mentioned and supported; but target groups are lacking; more detailed on these that depend most	This is still lacking and has not been much addressed or prioritised. MERECP has instead concentrated its field efforts on much needed agricultural improvements, i.e. rural development

	Local level poverty-alleviating activities, including better agricultural and agroforestry extension, and even stronger focus on collaborative forest management	- This is mentioned and supported;	Better agricultural and agroforestry practices in place, but too little extension (government responsibility). Limited collaborative forest management.
	Establishment of local level sustainable income-generating activities including improvement of forest plantations management	- This is mentioned and supported, except forest plantations.	Communities have some access to forest reserves for non-timber products. No access to timber or to revenues from forest use. MERECP has supported Mbale, Kapchorwa and Sironko districts to establish approximately 18 acres of Eucalyptus and pine plantation.
	Reforestation and landscape restoration within agreed reserved boundaries	- This is mentioned (Activity 1.1.6) in particular for NFA/FDK	MERECP is supporting restoration of degraded forest e.g. Namatale in Uganda (45 ha). KFS is also planning enrichment exercises of degraded forests.

Annex 3. Detailed Travel and Meeting Plan for the Mid-Term Review Team 21/4 – 06/5 2008

Day	Time	Activity	Location
21/4/08	9.00-9.30 9.30- 13.00- 13.00- 14.00 14.00- 15.00 15.00- 17.00	Briefing by IUCN Review team meets to confirm schedule, and review literature Lunch Briefing by the Norwegian Embassy Review team meets to review literature	IUCN Country Office IUCN Country Office Norwegian Embassy Uganda IUCN Country Office
22/4/08	8.30-10.30 11.00- 13.00 13.00- 14.00 16.00- 17.00	Consultations with National Forest Authority (NFA) Consultations with Ministry of Water and Environment and courtesy call to Permanent Secretary Lunch Consultations with Ministry of Local Government	Headquarters, Nakawa Kampala Ministry Headquarters, Luzira Ministry Headquarters, Kampala
23/4/08	8.30-12.30 12.30- 14.00 14.00- 15.00 15.00	Review team continues with review of literature Lunch Finalization and signing of contracts Depart to Mt Elgon ecosystem Uganda side.	IUCN Country Office Norwegian Embassy Uganda Mbale

24/4/08	9.00-10.00 10.00-13.00 13.00-14.00 14.00-15.00 15.00-17.00	Consultations with MERECP Focal Point, Mbale District and her team Visit some of the MERECP field sites Lunch Consultations with the MERECP Focal Point and his team, Sironko Visit some of the MERECP field sites	Mbale Bukonde, Mbale Sironko Budadiri, Sironko
25/4/08	8.00-9.00 9.00-13.00 15.00-16.00 16.00-18.00	Consultations with the Chief Park Warden Mount Elgon Conservation Area and his team Visit some of MERECP field sites Lunch Consultations with MERECP Focal Point, Kapchorwa District and his team	Mbale Bumasifa, Sironko and Kapakwai in Kapchorwa District Kapakwai Kapchorwa
26/4/08	9.00-10.00 10.00-12.30 14.00	Consultations with the MERECP Focal Point and his team, National Forest Authority Visit some of the field sites Depart to Mt. Elgon ecosystem Kenya side	Mbale Namatale Sector, Sironko District Kitale, Trans Nozia West District Kenya
27/4/08	9.00-12.30	Consultations with Senior Park Warden and his team, Mount Elgon National Park	Park Headquarters Chorlim
28/4/08	9.00-110.30 10.30-11.00	Consultations with MERECP Focal Point and his team, Mount Elgon County Council Consultations with the District Development Officer, Mount Elgon District	Kapsokwony Kapsokwony Forest Headquarters, Kaberua

	11.00-12.00 12.00	Consultations with the District Forest Officer, Mount Elgon District Depart to Lake Victoria Basin Commission	Kisumu
29/4/08	9.00-13.00 13.00-14.00 14.00-17.00 18.00	Consultations with the Lake Victoria Basin Commission Lunch Team brainstorm on structure and content of mid-term review report and continue with report writing Depart to Nairobi	Kisumu Kisumu Nairobi
30/4/08	8.30 -9.00 9.00-11.30 13.00-14.00 14.00-17.00	Consultations/briefing with IUCN-EASRO Consultations with the KWS at Headquarters Lunch Consultations with the National MERECP Focal Point and his team and Courtesy call to Permanent Secretary	Wasaa Conservation Centre Langata Headquarters of Environment and Mineral Resources
01/5/08	9.00-13.00 14.00-19.00	Preparation of Power Point and other material for debriefings 05/5 and 06/5 Part of the team departs to East African Community Secretariat headquarters	Nairobi Arusha, Tanzania
02/5/08	9.00-11.00 14.00-16.00 16.00-	Consultations with MERECP Focal Point and his team Kenya Forest Service Part of the team continues with consultations at IUCN-EASRO Consultations with the Director Production and Social Services, East	Karura, Nairobi Kenya Wasaa Conservation Centre

	17.00	African Community Secretariat	Arusha Tanzania
03/5/08		Preparation of Power Point and other material for debriefings 05/5 and 06/5 and the draft report	Nairobi, Kenya
04/5/08		Preparation of Power Point and other material for debriefings 05/5 and 06/5 and the draft report	Nairobi, Kenya
05/5/08	9.00-10.30 18,000	Debrief IUCN-ESARO Team departs to Kampala	Nairobi Kenya
06/5/08	10.30	Debrief the Norwegian and Swedish Embassies, IUCN and EAC	Kampala
07/5/08 - 30/5/08 -		In preparation for the Annual Meeting the team will submit a 5-page brief to the Embassy, IUCN and EAC by 15th May 2008. The draft Mid-term Review report is expected by 17th May 2008. This report will be circulated to all for comments and review. The final report is expected by 30th May 2008..	Review team

Annex 4. List of People Consulted During the MERECP Mid Term Review, 21ST April -6 May 2008.

No.	Name	Position	Organization/Institution	Contact Details
1	Ms. Solveig Verheyleweghen	Second Secretary	Royal Embassy of the Kingdom of Norway, Kampala	P. O. Box 22770 Kampala, Uganda
2	Ms Getrude Ngabirano	Regional Programme Manager	Swedish Embassy	P. O. Box 22669 Kampala, Uganda
3	Mr. Hudson J. Andrua	Director Natural Forests	National Forestry Headquarters, Nakawa	P. O. Box 70863 Kampala, Uganda +256 312-+256 4035/6, +256 414-360407
4	Mr. Godfrey Acaye	Coordinator, Natural Forest Management	National Forestry Authority, Nakawa	P. O. Box 70863 Kampala, Uganda +256 312-+264035/6, +256 414-360407
	Mr. Reuben Arenitwe	Range Manager	Kyoga Ranger, National Forest Authority, Jinja	P. O. Box 70863 Kampala, Uganda +256772480205
5	Mr. Enock Arenitwe	Sector Manager, Namatale Central Forest Reserve	National Forest Authority, Mbale	P. O. Box 70863 Kampala, Uganda +254772341270
5	Mr. Gershom Onynago	Acting Director	Department of Environmental Affairs, Ministry of Water and Environment, Kampala	P. O. Box 20026, Kampala, Uganda +256414220074
6	Mr. Samuel Amule	Commissioner, Inspectorate	Ministry of Local Government, Kampala	P. O. Box 7037, Kampala, Uganda +256-414258101
7	Engineer Andrew Kizza	Assistant Commissioner, Inspectorate	Ministry of Local Government, Kampala	P. O. Box 7037, Kampala, Uganda +256-414258101
8	Mr. Rashid Mafabi	District Environment Officer	Sironko District Local Government	P. O. Box 7769, Mbale Uganda
9	Ms. Sarah Madanda	Environment Officer	Sironko District Local Government	P. O. Box 7769, Mbale Uganda
10	Mr. Hussein Masaba	Chairman Sectoral Committee on Environment, Local Council V	Sironko District Local Government	P. O. Box 7769, Mbale Uganda

11	Ms. Magadelen Mwambu	District Production Officer	Mbale District Local Government	P. O. Box 913 Mbale, Uganda
12	Mr. George Mabuya	District Forest Officer	Mbale District Local Government	P. O. Box 913 Mbale, Uganda
13	Dr. Were	District Veterinary Officer	Mbale District Local Government	P. O. Box 913 Mbale, Uganda
14	Mr. Isaac Mayeku	District Entomologist	Mbale District Local Government	P. O. Box 913 Mbale, Uganda
15	Mr. Peter Ayo	District Agricultural Officer	Mbale District Local Government	P. O. Box 913 Mbale, Uganda
16	Ms. Anna Nakayenze	District Environment Officer	Mbale District Local Government	P. O. Box 913 Mbale, Uganda
17	Mr. A.K. Wakishombe	Extension Officer	Mbale District Local Government	P. O. Box 913 Mbale, Uganda
18	Mr. Kitalibera Desa	Assistant Warden Law Enforcement	Mt. Elgon National Park Mbale	Mount Elgon National Park P. O. Box 135 Mbale Uganda +256 772653606
19	Mr. Matanda G.R	Assistant Warden Community Conservation	Mt. Elgon National Park , Mbale	Mount Elgon National Park P. O. Box 135 Mbale Uganda +256 772935812
20	Ms. Oyella Pamela	Assistant Warden Monitoring and Research	Mt. Elgon National Park, Mbale	Mount Elgon National Park P. O. Box 135 Mbale Uganda +256 772964672
21	Mr. Johnson Masereka	Chief Park Warden	Mt. Elgon National Park, Mbale	Mount Elgon National Park P. O. Box 135 Mbale Uganda +256772518342
22	Mr. Fred Kizza	Warden Forest Restoration	Mt. Elgon National Park, Mbale	Mount Elgon National Park P. O. Box 135 Mbale Uganda
23	Mr. Masiga Fred Robert	Member Resource User Committee Memeber	Bumasifa Parish, Buginyanya Sub county	c/o Mount Elgon National Park P. O. Box 135 Mbale Uganda
24	Mr. Wegosasa A.	Secretary Resource User and Boundary Management Committee	Bumasifa Parish, Buginyanya Sub county	c/o Mount Elgon National Park P. O. Box 135 Mbale Uganda
25	Ms. Madrina	Resource user	Bumasifa Parish,	c/o Mount Elgon

	Gloria		Buginyanya Sub county	National Park P. O. Box 135 Mbale Uganda
26	Mr. Maweda Fred	Boundary Management Committee Member	Bumasifa Parish, Buginyanya Sub county	c/o Mount Elgon National Park P. O. Box 135 Mbale Uganda
27	Mr. Wetaka Milton	Boundary Management Beneficiary	Bumasifa Parish, Buginyanya Sub county	c/o Mount Elgon National Park P. O. Box 135 Mbale Uganda
28	Mr. Kubiti Fred	Boundary Management Beneficiary	Bumasifa Parish, Buginyanya Sub county	c/o Mount Elgon National Park P. O. Box 135 Mbale Uganda
29	Mr. Namboye Moses	Boundary Management Beneficiary	Bumasifa Parish, Buginyanya Sub county	c/o Mount Elgon National Park P. O. Box 135 Mbale Uganda
30	Mr. Wasukira Simon	Boundary Management Beneficiary	Bumasifa Parish, Buginyanya Sub county	c/o Mount Elgon National Park P. O. Box 135 Mbale Uganda
31	Mr. Namable Peter	Boundary Management Beneficiary	Bumasifa Parish, Buginyanya Sub County	c/o Mount Elgon National Park P. O. Box 135 Mbale Uganda
32.	Mr. Lyagoba J.S	District Production/Agricultural Officer	Kapchorwa District Local Government	P.O.Box 127, Kapchorwa, Uganda +256 751999336
33	Mr. Chemusto Samuel	District Environment Officer	Kapchorwa District Local Government	P. O. Box 127, Kapchorwa, Uganda +256 772459166
34	Mr. Mwanga Tito	Assistant Agriculture Officer	Kapachorwa District Local Government	P. O. Box 127, Kapchorwa, Uganda +256 752974934
35	Mr. Chemangei Awadh	District Natural Resources Officer	Kapachorwa District	P. O. Box 127, Kapchorwa, Uganda +256 772645591
36	Mr. Ojangole O.S	District Forest Officer	Kapchorwa District Local Government	P. O. Box 127, Kapchorwa, Uganda +256 754501676
37.	Mr. Chekwel John	Assistant Forest Officer	Kapchorwa District Local Government	P. O. Box 127, Kapchorwa, Uganda +256752652341
38.	Mr. Chebet Siraj	Local Council V-	Kapchorwa District	P. O. Box 127,

		Secretary for Production	Local Government	Kapchorwa, Uganda
39.	Mr. Michael Kimwele	Clerk to council	Mount Elgon County Council	P. O. Box 163 Kapsokowny, Kenya +254 723279969
40.	Mr. Joseph Ngomat	Vice Chairman/ Councilor	Mount Elgon County Council	P. O. Box 163 Kapsokowny, Kenya +254722472338
41.	Mr. David Kisoi Ndiema	Forester-Mt. Elgon	Mount Elgon County Council	P. O. Box 163 Kapsokowny, Kenya +254 725835627
42.	Mr. Fidelis Mwaniki	District Development Officer	Mount Elgon District	P. O. Box 163 Kapsokowny, Kenya +254721277977
45.	Ms. Barbara Nakangu	Programme Officer	IUCN Uganda Country Office	P. O. Box 10950, Kampala,Uganda +256 414233738
46.	Mr. Alex Muhwezi	Country Director	IUCN Uganda Country Office	P. O. Box 10950, Kampala, Uganda +256414233738
47.	Mr. George M. Sikoyo	Chief Technical Advisor, MEECP	IUCN Uganda Country Office	P. O. Box 10950, Kampala, Uganda +256414233738
48.	Dr. Tom Okurut	Executive Secretary	Lake Victoria Basin Commission	P. O. Box 1510-40100, Kisumu, Kenya +25457 2026344
49	Dr. K.W. Kipkore	Deputy Executive Secretary	Lake Victoria Basin Commission	P. O. Box 1510-40100, Kisumu, Kenya +254572026344
50.	Prof. James Kiyapi	Permanent Secretary	Ministry of Environment and Mineral Resources, Kenya	P. O. Box 30126-00200, Nairobi Kenya +254-20730808
51.	Mr. Joash Akuma	Senior Economist	Ministry of Environment and Mineral Resources, Kenya	P. O. Box 30126-00200, Nairobi Kenya +254-20730808
52.	Mr. Samuel Gichere	Chief Economist	Ministry of Environment and Mineral Resources, Kenya	P. O. Box 30126-00200, Nairobi Kenya +254-20730808
53.	Mr. James Okaka	Director Human Resources Officer	IUCN-Eastern and Southern Africa Regional Office	P. O. Box 6820, 00200 Nairobi, Kenya +254 20890606
54.	Mr. Ben Wandago	Programme Officer	Ministry of	P. O. Box 6820, 00200

			Environment and Mineral Resources, Kenya	Nairobi, Kenya +254 20890606
55.	Dr. Geoffrey Howard	Global Plant Invsaives Advisor	IUNV-Eastern and Southern Africa Regional Office	P. O. Box 6820, 00200 Nairobi, Kenya +254 20 8906
56.	Mr. Damas Mugashe	Acting Head Finance	Ministry of Environment and Mineral Resources, Kenya	P. O. Box 6820, 00200 Nairobi, Kenya +254 20890606
57.	Mr. Francis Mutuku	Company Commander	Mount Elgon National Park, Chorlim	P. O. Box 753-30200 Kitale, Kenya +254 722171668
59.	Mr. Samuel Ojwang	Accountant	Mount Elgon National Park, Chorlim	P. O. Box 753-30200 Kitale, Kenya +254 722577168
60.	Mr. Dickson Ritan	Ag. Senior Warden Elgon	Mount Elgon National Park, Chorlim	P. O. Box 753-30200 Kitale, Kenya +254 727995498
61.	Mr. Gilbert Njeru	Administration /Tourism Officer	Mount Elgon National Park, Chorlim	P. O. Box 753-30200 Kitale, Kenya +254 711501050
62.	Mr. Emilio N Mugo	Senior Deputy Directort	Kenya Forest Service, Nairobi	P.O. Box 30513 – 00100 +254 203754904/5/6
63.	Mr. Esau O. Omolio	Deputy Director, Forest Conservation and Management	Kenya Forest Service, Nairobi	P.O. Box 30513 – 00100 +254 203754904/5/6
64.	Dr. Weggoro N.C	Director Production and Social Sector	East African Community Secretariat, Arusha	P. O. Box 1096, Arusha Tanzania +255-27 250253/8

Annex 5. Policy and Legal Framework Relevant to MERECP – Uganda and Kenya

Uganda:

Policy framework
- Poverty eradication action plan (PEAP) especially aspects relating to increased ability of the poor to raise their income, good governance, sustainability of growth, integration of environmental issues in sectoral plans, Forestry, wildlife- developing collaborative management guidelines, environmental management etc
- Vision 2025 especially aspects relating to sectoral linkages
- Uganda Sector Wide Action Plans (SWAPS)
- Plan for modernization of Agriculture PMA- especially its aspects relating to land tenure and use laws and policies.
- Environment and natural resources policies
- Local Government Development programmes
- National Environment Action Plans
- Forestry Policy
- Wild life Policy
- Management Plan for Mt Elgon national park
- National Biodiversity strategy Action Plan for Uganda
- Tourism Policy
- Land sector strategic Plan (LSSP)
- Wet lands policy
- National water policy (1999)

Legal framework
- The constitution of the Republic of Uganda particularly principles XXVII which addresses environment i.e. sustainable development utilization of natural resources and protection of biodiversity. It should be noted that the responsibility of local governments is specifically mentioned hence the MERECP institutional structure which includes local Governments on right track.
- The national environment Act Cap 153- particularly provisions which call for public participation in management of environment including ecosystems.
- The Hilly Mountains Areas Regulations of 2000 emphasize management of resources for the benefit of the peoples
- The Uganda Wild Life Act fundamentally changed the way wildlife was managed in Uganda. It moves a way from a state centred management system to a system that encourages public participation and private sector involvement. It establishes local government issues. It further updates and modernises the law and goes a long way to implementation the conservation philosophy of the CBD. The Act upholds wildlife as a sustainable resource and provides for the means of management and sustainable use of the resource. This is one area where Kenya could draw lessons from the legal framework in Uganda. During the MTR, KWS officials indicated a desire to open up and were of the view that MERECP could be a starting point on this issue.

- The Forestry and Planting Act – mentions sustainable management and development of forests for the benefit of the people of Uganda. This is in line with the objectives of MERECP. The institutional reforms which were introduced by the Act ie creation of NFA an autonomous body represent a departure from the bureaucracy characteristics of government forest departments ad imply flexibility which is good for MERECP.
- The land Act is currently under review. During the MTR it transpired that MERECP is not taking advantage of the review to lobby for laws that would be conducive to the objectives of the programme.
- The Local Government Act. Provisions which address decentralization an devolution of functions powers and services to ensure good governance and democratic participation and involvement of local Governments in decision making and management of ecosystems should e of interest to MERECP.
- The Town and Country Planning Act, Cap 246. It is worth wile exploring whether the provisions of orderly and progressive development can be involved in management of ecosystems. In some national planning legislations reference is made to areas of unique development- the MERECP which is piloting a trans-boundary approach could be included in this category.
- Access to Genetic Resources and benefit Regulations: The MTR was unable to establish the status of these draft regulations. If operational they have the potential to answer some of the concerns that have been raised in MERECP by some stakeholders particularly communities bordering the park and researchers.

KENYA

Policy framework
- Kenya Rural Development strategy (KRDS): Development through a consultative process it has as one of its main objectives the achievement of sustainable natural resource management. |this s a similar objective which MERECP is pursuing, KRDS linkage to the poverty Reduction Strategy through which it will be implemented is a good selling point for MERECP into the broad national agenda and ultimately EAC.
- National Development Plan 2002-2008: The plan recognizes the challenges faced in environmental management and the need to integrate them in planning processes at all levels. The Institutional work plans at the national and Cross border levels in MERECP could benefit from this policy.
- Environmental and Natural resources policies cover a whole rage of natural resources including Forestry, Water and Wild life. The MTR realizes that despite KWS appreciation of the critical link between communities ad protected areas e.g. Mr. Elgon national Park, the need for sustainable conservation to address social and economic needs of the people, and the need to bring local communities on board as partners to protect biological resources and allow them to benefit; Kenya Wild life policy still remains restrictive to utilization of NR. This is in sharp contrast with the situation in Uganda where flexibility in utilization of resources is practices.
- National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP): This should be of particular interest to MERECP as it among others addresses international initiatives of which cross border management of ecosystems is an example. The plan advocates

participation of all stakeholders; sound linkages between institutions; research and training.

- National Tourism Development Master Plan: The MTR was informed that MERECP is in the process of developing a tourism plan that will cover the Mt Elgon Ecosystem on both sides of the border. There should therefore be a good number of practices and lessons to learn from the Kenyan experience. Through tourism revenues MERECP can acquire the much needed link to Kenya's economic Recovery strategy and Uganda's PEAP and hence acquires more credibility in national level development process and strategies.

Legal Framework
- **The Constitution of Kenya** does not treat environment in the detail the Uganda one does. They are however proposed amendments which could enhance the manner in which the supreme law addressed the environment.
- **The Environment management and Coordination Act.** Under this Act a comprehensive legal and institutional framework for ENR Sector is established. The powers to establish guidelines provided for under this legislation could be involved to streamline management of Wildlife and forest resources in the Mt. Elgon Ecosystem in line with the objectives of MERECP.
- The Forests Act Cap. 385 1962 which was revised in 1992 was again under review in 2004. It was reported to the MTR Team that communities are allowed to collect some forest products under licence e.g. Firewood in Forests in the Mt Elgon Ecosystem. As many as 2000 licences can be issued in a month and this must overstretch the capacity of the FS.
- **Wildlife Conservation and Management Act Cap 376 of 1976** (amended in 1989) contains the laws governing National Parks in Kenya. KWS which is responsible for Management of Mt. Elgon National Park has the responsibility of managing the resources sustainability KWS has provided services i.e. Water to the communities who live in the vicinity of the park – access to the park e.g. to collect firewood and medicinal plants is still strictly prohibited.

Annex 6: Community Involvement in the Ecosystem Approach: Three Promising Examples from Africa.

In the 1980ies, several African countries abandoned strict traditional conservation approaches (the s.c. *"Fortress approach"* applicable to protected areas) and began to conduct experiments of market-led conservation with a strong human dimension. These trials are nurturing a new idea of conservation that focuses on maximizing the value of natural resources to landholders and communities. Natural resources, e.g. wildlife, is a profitable commodity when managed and used by communities, and natural resources offers particularly interesting economic opportunities in some of Africa's agriculturally marginal environments.

Such initiatives were IEM in practice, which in Africa ranges from park outreach programmes to radical policies to give back to communities the rights to use and benefit from natural resources on their land (e.g. communal natural resource management in Namibia, CAMPFIRE in Zimbabwe, LIRDP/SLAMU in Zambia), and very often in partnerships with the private sector. There are also many IEM success stories from Asia and Central/ Latin America in recent years. They all demonstrate that awareness of the socio-economic values of natural resources encourage sustainable and profitable uses of them.

1: Nature in Local Hands[10]
Namibia's Community Natural Resource Management Programme addresses poverty and environmental concerns through decentralized natural resource management. Established in 1996, it created locally managed conservancies within state communal areas in response to declining wildlife populations and land degradation.

Namibia is an ecologically diverse country. Its 1.8 million people are highly dependent upon natural resources for their food and livelihoods. By the early 1980s, poaching and overuse of land had taken a toll on the country's ecosystems. The community-based conservancies that were developed in response have been granted far-reaching autonomy to manage local resources. Run by elected local committees, they have user rights over wildlife within the conservancies' defined boundaries. To qualify, communities negotiate a constitution, prove their ability to manage funds, and produce an acceptable plan for equitable distribution of wildlife-related benefits. As legal entities, they can enter into contracts with private sector tourism operators.

By 2004, thirty-one conservancies operating on 7.8 million hectares of desert, savannah, and woodlands had begun to show impressive results. Five conservancies had become financially self-sufficient. Over 95,000 Namibians have received benefits, such as jobs, training, game meat, cash dividends, and social benefits including school improvements and water supply maintenance funded by conservancy revenue. Elephant, zebra, oryx, and springbok populations have risen dramatically as illegal hunting has fallen. Namibia

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[10] Source: World Resources Institute 2005: *The Wealth of the Poor – Managing Ecosystems to Fight Poverty*. World Resources Institute, United Nations Development Programme, United Nations Development Programme, World Bank. 2005

now boasts the world's largest free-roaming population of endangered black rhino. Government leadership, community enthusiasm, commitment from local supporting groups, and financial assistance from international donors have combined to support the rapid expansion of the conservancy program.

The management of the conservancies has not been without difficulties. Ad-hoc distribution of benefits in some conservancies has not always favoured the poorest community members, and limited participation has often hampered genuine local governance and empowerment. The limited nature of resource rights remains problematic: ownership of communal lands lies with the government rather than with members of a conservancy, and the rights of wildlife rests with committees rather than with households. Despite these limitations, the conservancies have delivered clear benefits for both wildlife and people. Less tangible but equally important gains include the strengthening of local institutions and governance, women's empowerment, and greater community cohesion.

2: CAMPFIRE – Communal Areas Management Programme for Indigenous Resources[11]
The CAMPFIRE movement, designed and managed entirely by Africans, began in the mid-1980s. It encourages local communities to make their own decisions about wildlife management and aims to help people manage natural resources so that the whole ecosystem benefits. It helps provide legal ways for such communities to raise money by using local, natural resources in sustainable ways.

Approximately 90% of CAMPFIRE's income comes from selling hunting concessions to professional hunters and safari operators working to fixed government quotas. Trophy hunting is considered to be the ultimate form of ecotourism, as hunters usually travel in small groups, demand few amenities, cause minimal damage to the local ecosystem, but still provide considerable income. Until the year 2000, 80% of the money was given directly to local communities who should collectively decide how it should be spent, whilst 20% was used by the District Councils for administration and management. Since 1989, over 250,000 Zimbabweans have been involved in CAMPFIRE projects. In 1993 over US$1.4 million were raised by 26 Districts with CAMPFIRE projects.

CAMPFIRE attracted considerable international interest and support for many years, and served as an example for very many similar initiatives in other African countries. But since 2000, Zimbabwe has experienced a difficult period of political, economic and social uncertainty, with serious consequences for CAMPFIRE. Political elites have captured the programme and local decision-making bodies are not functioning any longer. Financial benefits to the communities have been reduced to a fraction of what it was before, illegal hunting is on the increase, and many districts abandon the programme altogether. The history of CAMPFIRE thus demonstrated how a very successful program for local stewardship over natural resources also is very vulnerable to political changes and supportive legislation and regulations.

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[11] Source: http://www.globaleye.org.uk/archive/summer2k/focuson/mars_pt1.html and Mapedza E. and I. Bond 2006: Political Deadlock and Devolved Wildlife Management in Zimbabwe. The Case of Nenyunga Ward. Journal of Environment & Development, 15 (4): 407-427

3. The ADMADE programme and the LIRDP/SLAMU project in Zambia[12]

Two main wildlife-based Community-based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM) programmes have emerged in Zambia. The Administrative Management Design (ADMADE) Programme was initiated in the mid-1980s as a national programme, but has focused mainly on Game Management Areas (GMAs) in the Luangwa Valley, around Kafue National Park, and in the lower Zambezi Valley. It is based on revenue-sharing according to a formula set by government policy.

The Luangwa Integrated Rural Development Project (LIRDP) was initiated in the Lupande GMA in the Luangwa Valley in 1988. The initial design was similar to ADMADE, but also aimed to link wildlife revenues with integrated rural development. The project was changed to South Luangwa Area Management Unit (SLAMU) in 1996, to strengthen local institutions, to focus more on wildlife and to introduce a greater share of income to communities and a greater degree of village-level decision-making by the village action group (VAG).

Between 1996 and 2000, the community conservation activities in Luangwa demonstrated the benefits of substantive devolution of management and user rights to local communities, for both development and conservation achievements. Further evolution of the community conservation programme was initially hampered by the suspension of international trophy hunting by the Government of Zambia in 2000. This meant that meaningful revenue to village action groups (VAGs) ceased and there was little motivation to maintain the institutional and organizational framework together with the conservation and development activities that had been built up over the previous years. But with a new Government in place, safari hunting has been resumed and the VAG's roles and responsibilities have been encouraged and strengthened. LIRDP/ SLAMU have been supported by the Norwegian Government since 1988.

[12] Quotes from: Roe, D., Jones, B., Bond, I. and Bhatt, S. 2006. *Local action, global aspirations: The role of community conservation in achieving international goals for environment and development*. Natural Resource Issues Series No. 4. International Institute for Environment and Development. London, UK.