Terms of Reference

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

1.0 Background

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

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

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

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

1.1 Objective of the Project

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

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

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

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

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

1.2 Output

The project was designed to deliver the following five Outputs:

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

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

2.0 Objective and Extent of the Evaluation

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

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

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

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project activities implementation? What impact has this arrangement had on project implementation?

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

2.1 Tasks to be performed by the Evaluation Team

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

2.2 Outputs of the Evaluation Team

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

2.3 Proposed Schedule

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

2.4 The Evaluation Team

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

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

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

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

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

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

2.5 Resources

Personnel

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

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

Reading Material

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

Work-plan 2001

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