

Promoting Collaborative Forest Management in Degraded Forests of Central Uganda



Outcomes of the Workshop



Report March 2014

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List of Presentations

- African Union of Conservationists (AUC) Business Plan: 2011-2015 by
(Mr. David N. Nkuutu & Richard Mwesigwa)
- Collaborative Forest Management Practices in Uganda
(Fiona Driciru Florence)
- Promoting Collaborative Forest Management in Degraded Forests of Central Uganda (Raymond Katebaka)

African Union of Conservationists (AUC)

AUC is a non-government organisation registered in Uganda mandated to promote contemporary environmental conservation activities through facilitation of joint projects with local authorities, national and international organisations. The AUC was established to involve as many conservationists in Africa as possible to champion environmental conservation and development integration.

1.1 Introduction

African Union of Conservationists (AUC) received a small grant from Rufford Foundation to support activities that aimed at “Promoting Collaborative Forest Management (CFM) in Degraded Forests of Central Uganda” (PCFM). Collaborative Forest Management (CFM) practice is more effective regarding community participation. The practice presents an opportunity to grow and diversify local economies through community involvement. The communities can derive their livelihood from collaborative management of natural resources rather than their destructive extraction and this can lessen pressure on forest reserves in central Uganda. PCFM has been realised in enhancing community relationships with national forest bodies such as National Forests Authority (NFA) and Forest Sector Support Department (FSSD) of Ministry of Water and Environment in Uganda.

The forests in central Uganda are of concern due to their incredible importance for biodiversity and people in terms of vital ecosystem services. Despite the deforestation status-quo in the central region, threats on ecosystems have increased leading to biodiversity habitat loss. The drivers of threats have been identified as rapid expansion of urban centres, fires, mining, commercial estates, logging, development of infrastructures, brick laying, charcoal burning among others.

1.2 Proposed Project Approach and Activities

The project has employed a participatory approach among the communities to co-manage the forests. The project was launched with an inception workshop organised at the Ministry of Water and Environment (MWE). This one-day workshop aimed at bringing together government institutions to recommend on central forest reserves focusing on central Uganda. Through a series of consultative meetings with NFA and FSSD was recommended fit for three Central Forest Reserves (CFRs). PCFM works with ten forest adjacent communities that were considered to have a huge biological and socio-economic value in the central forest reserves (CFRs). The three forests which were selected for their ecological value (i.e. watershed protection, protection of water bodies and river courses); Biodiversity importance; Tropical High Forests. The project is designed to harmonize ways in which forest resources can be collaboratively utilized for maximum benefit to all stakeholders

Box 1:

The proposed activities include to:

- Establish Community Forest Associations (CFAs) that will participate in protection against illegalities; fighting forest wild fires; promoting alternative forestry and other income generating activities outside and inside the forest reserve, and; training on how to prepare and submit annual CFM reports to NFA and FSSD.
- Sensitise communities on what they are “entitled to” in terms of rights and benefits; these may be modified from time to time during the process of reviewing the CFM activities.
- Train CFA leaders and undertake an exchange visit where CFM projects are on-going to assess and implement CFM best practices

Box 2:

Expected Outcomes

- Ultimately this project should be able to make a long-term contribution towards forest biodiversity conservation.
- To put in place plans, including a forest resource harvest system and at least allow degraded forest patches to be restored.
- Promotion of sustainable use of the environment and natural resources and also contributes towards poverty alleviation among adjacent forest communities Box

Box 3:

CFM activities comprise:

- Free-planting schemes by communities;
- Regulated collection of ‘low impact’ resources such as firewood; herbal medicine extraction from collected native plants, access use rights for water; encouragement of bee-keeping along forest buffer zones, and; regulated charcoal burning of the offcuts in areas where legal logging is taking place.

2.1 Opening Remarks from NFA

The meeting was chaired by the Director of Natural Forest in National Forest Authority (NFA). His remarks provided details about the forests in Central Uganda. As such forests were gazetted in 1933 as catchments of Lake Victoria. In total Uganda has 506 of central forest reserves (CFRs), 256 Local Forest Reserve (LFR). There have been changes in management of forest resources in the last 40 years. These changes include population growth in the area, institutional changes such as FD to NFA, human resources, development among others. Further these changes have contributed to the deforestation in the region. Despite a number of interventions being put in place the management is also challenged due to inadequate resources for facilitation to cover the expanse of the country.

2.2 Pictorial of Participants



**Workshop Group Picture
(taken by TUMUAIWE GODFREY)**



**Workshop in Progress in the centre is the
Hon. Minister for Environment Flavia Munaaba
(Photo, by Tumuhairwe Godfrey)**



**Fiona F. Driciru the CFM Coordinator of
NFA explaining the process required
to signing level.**



**Fiona showing the completed and
on-going CFM in Uganda**

5. Outcomes from Stakeholder Workshop

A typology of participation			
Concerns/Interaction of participants	Lessons learnt	Remarks	Recommendations
CFM is understood to be a necessary/ required intervention in conservation of forests. Whereas deforestation currently appears as a hide and seek game. Why? What is not clear is why government cannot address even though there are free services such as water, firewood etc. but the concern is how this is valued. (Hon Minister) (The Hon Minister).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What approaches are being used while government is implementing their projects? • Has the “Bottom up” approach ever been considered and designed for the conservation and safeguarding of forest resources? • The best approach should consider where designed system in conservation starts and ends. • Many times the “bottom up” approach has been ignored. • Institutional changes that politically and technically take place e.g. Forest Department to NFA contributed to forest cover disappearance • There are increasing challenges of investment in forest sector. This comes with benefiting part of the community whereas other areas remain uncovered. Thus the communities that are not reached decide to ascend on the remaining resources if the other areas have been taken over. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is imperative in designing efficient systems of conservation. • There is a challenge arising .Social entrepreneur communities engaged in interventions are imposed due to incentives • The main issue is abstract with the benefit, no tangible outcome • The huge sums of money are also affecting the conservation, some these leading to land grabbing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is also a need to conserve community forests on private land to also establish community forest associations. • Creating alternative sources of energy away from the forests. • To-date, to achieve with contemporary conservation there is a need to design bottom – up approach (This should cut across all development sectors)
Marin Asimwe of WWF: Benefits from the forest conservation help the communities attach values both net & future on any product. However what is the level of motivation to be engaged in forest conservation?			The project should support on beneficial plans to the communities
Nankya Harriet (DFO Wakiso): To-date involving all key stakeholders in implementing forest conservation is inadequate e.g. some levels are skipped CFM planning.		A success CFM program requires providing incentives.	There is a need to conduct adequate stakeholder analysis
Sophie Kutegeka (IUCN): Where in the framework does CFM fit? Where and who are the main actors in the framework?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are we learning from CFM in order to implement REDD+ to address the sector issues? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CFM implementation appears to be clustered. • Does the current guideline project propose on what level returns are received? • How is the disagreement and agreement feasible in terms of money idea going to be dealt with at that level? 	What alternatives can be put in place?

A typology of participation

Concerns/Interaction of participants	Lessons learnt	Remarks	Recommendations
<p>Patrick Byakagaba: What is the involvement of the Ministry of Water & Environment (MWE) as a policy institution at this level?</p> <p>There are policies and laws and guidelines such as that of CFM that exist and so what has been done in order to reduce pressure on the forests?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The country lacks shared conservation vision with a lot of conservation agencies, institutions and organizations. The project communities need interests from the implementation of CFM. The country seems to be addressing homogenous activities in most projects. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A bottom top approach would contribute significantly looking at how working from behind and why we need these forests would prove effective. The drivers of deforestation are well known but what is the government doing to address these challenges. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This would ensure the processes of conservation but as country what have we learned? What have we done to it in order to come to terms with these challenges? What do we do next? The country needs guidelines on benefit sharing from natural resources
Responses			
<p>NFA CFM Coordinator (Fiona. D.F)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communities can work through Local Governments in order to implement CFM projects. Since the structure help to mobilize the activities politically among community institutions. 		
<p>Mr. Levi Etodo NFA</p>	<p>CFM is a process, it is not something to be rushed</p> <p>Lessons learnt from CFM:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The process of signing agreement should not be rushed 1. CFM groups are not reporting on their progress 2. How do we handle the disservices onto the community? 3. Communities are not prepared adequately as its been realized 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NFA has had challenges however there are projects that come in to facilitate these processes. Not involving all community members has also been registered as a challenge. Lack of appreciation from communities has been observed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A need for a continuous forum to interact and share communications Other partners are welcome
<p>CARE Uganda: CARE has participated in 90% of CFM agreements; CFM brings a set of skills and knowledge,</p>	<p>We need to do a little bit more in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reflection and learn by doing 		<p>Proper situational analysis</p>

Ministers Launch speech

Government Officials,

African Union of Conservationists (AUC) staff

Invited Guests

Ladies and Gentlemen

It is an honor for me to officiate at this function where we are launching the project: "Promoting Collaborative Forest Management in Degraded Forests of Central Uganda". I regard environmental conservation as very important particularly these days when the pressure on the natural resources especially forests is increasing as a result of a number of issues including high population growth rate and increased demand for forest products including charcoal, timber, poles and firewood. This has led to a general loss of forest cover in Uganda estimated at 2% annually since 1990.

As you're aware, Uganda joined the world to celebrate the Forest Days in this year-2014. Collaborative Forest Management (CFM) approach has been implemented by the National Forestry Authority for a long time in Uganda, with the aim of establishing forest management partnerships between forest adjacent communities and government agencies mandated to manage forests. The CFM programme was officially launched in Uganda in July 1998, following a number of research activities that begun in 1996. As a result, management of forest resources moved away from command and control system to a more participatory approach that requires involvement of a broad spectrum of stakeholders. This has been one of the most effective ways of forest management in Uganda.

The introduction of Participatory Forest Management (PFM) was sparked by several factors, both international and local. At international level, treaties and accords such as the Tropical Forest Action Plan (TFAP), an outgrowth of the agenda 21 framework initiated in Rio-de-Janeiro in 1992, sought to reverse the loss of forests through the involvement of stakeholders, especially adjacent communities. The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) (1992) highlights the importance of sustainable use and equitable sharing of benefits that arise from biodiversity resources. At the local level, the original argument for increasing community participation in the maintenance of rural conservation projects stemmed from the need to better target people's needs, incorporate local knowledge, ensure that benefits were equitably distributed and lower management costs. The inclusion of communities in the management of state-owned or formerly state-owned forest resources has become increasingly common in the last two decades.

The Government of Uganda institutionalized CFM in the 2001 Uganda Forest Policy and in the National Forestry and Tree Planting Act of 2003; and guidelines have also been put in place for the implementation of CFM arrangements in the forest sector. This shows that the government fully embraces this management approach of the forest resources.

The Government recognizes the support from development partners and stakeholders in conserving the country's natural heritage. NFA has been spearheading CFM, but must work with partners and stakeholders like civil society organizations, forest adjacent communities and the private sector to realize intended outcomes. I must say that at present, not much success has been realized in this, but I now believe that with this working relationship with AUC, much will be achieved especially in central Uganda where the demand for forest products is at its peak. It is now your duty as AUC to work in partnership with NFA and FSSD to ensure that this CFM approach to conserving our forests achieves greater support mainly from forest dependent communities so as to be sustained.

We must however, note that while CFM has succeeded in improving forest status in terms of registering increase in live stems of timber, pole tree species, trees with harvestable logs, merchantable volume, and lowered incidences of human disturbances, studies have found out that the approach has failed to improve community livelihoods whom it is intended to benefit. As I talk now, this is one of the major challenges we must address. I want to challenge AUC to ensure this is put into consideration if we must realize success in CFM.

Uganda is in the process of implementing the national REDD+ strategy aiming at reducing carbon emissions from deforestation and forest degradation. Government is mandated to work with CSOs, CBOs and forest institutions to effectively deliver on this program. My Ministry would therefore like to urge you to show your skills and interest; and team up with government to implement this very important program. I am happy that AUC has already begun on this and I hope you will continue this partnership to ensure sustainable conservation of our forests.

As I conclude, I must extend my sincere thanks to the Civil Society Organization's (CSOs) and in particular African Union of Conservationists (AUC) for your efforts in forests and biodiversity conservation even with limited financial support. I thank the AUC management and project team, FSSD and NFA for making this workshop possible.

Finally, I would like to thank all of you for the interest and commitment you have exhibited through your presence and readiness to participate in this workshop and most importantly supporting CFM in Uganda.

It is now with honour that I officially and launch this project. I wish you fruitful deliberations and effective implementation of this project and pledge full support from my office and the Ministry at large.

I THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION

List of Participants



PROJECT LAUNCH OF THE PROJECT PROMOTING COLLABORATIVE FOREST MANAGEMENT IN DEGRADED FORESTS OF
CENTRAL UGANDA REGISTRATION LIST ON 27TH MARCH, 2014

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