



Concept Paper on the 4th Mount Elgon Stakeholders Forum

I Introduction

The Mt Elgon Stakeholder's Forum (MESHF) was created in 2012 under the auspices of IUCN to provide a platform for coordinating all the efforts within the Mount Elgon ecosystem. The MESF brings together both state and non-state actors and the community as well as individuals that have a stake in the Mt. Elgon Ecosystem/Landscape. The MESF provides platform to stakeholders to discuss and get a common understanding of the issues in the ecosystem/landscape, how they affect or are affected and the various interventions being undertaken by various actors to address the challenges and harness the opportunities available. Lessons learned and good practices from on-going interventions on Mt. Elgon that integrate conservation, rural development, disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation/mitigation are discussed, good practices picked and new ideas developed.

The main goal of the Forum is to chart ways and means of restoring and, improving the quality and productivity of the landscape in Mt Elgon, so as to increase its ecological, socio-economic and cultural values and improve the flow of ecosystem goods and services from the ecosystem for local community livelihood improvement, national development and global benefits such as mitigation of climate change impacts, through shared goals and objectives.

2 Why the MESF?

The Mt. Elgon ecosystem is trans-boundary ecosystem that straddles Eastern Uganda and Western Kenya, and is a key resource in both Kenya and Uganda, providing ecosystem goods and services to over 4 million human lives and their livestock. The Mt. Elgon ecosystem serves as a catchment area for the drainage systems of Lakes Victoria, Turkana and Kyoga maintaining water quality, quantity and influencing the economies and livelihoods of communities in western Kenya, eastern Ugandan and the wider Nile Basin ecosystems. The forest mountain ecosystem is the source of critical goods and services that support livelihoods and economic development including: provisioning (e.g. food, fiber, fuel, timber, water and medicine), regulating (e.g. erosion regulation, flood regulation, landslide regulation), supporting (pollination, soil fertility) and cultural (e.g. recreation, cultural heritage). The higher slopes of Mt. Elgon landscape are protected as National Parks both in Kenya and Uganda Mt. Elgon was declared a UNESCO Man and Biosphere (MAB) Reserve in Kenya and Uganda in 2003 and 2005 respectively and is destined to be made trans-boundary MAB conservation area. It also has status of an Important Bird Area (IBA).

Despite its global, national and local ecological and socio-economic significance, many areas of the Mt. Elgon landscape are affected by land degradation, deforestation and forest degradation. Some wetlands and forests have been converted into farms and some riverbanks cultivated. The forest ecosystem is particularly threatened by overharvesting of forest products and encroachment for settlements and agriculture. Livestock grazing and poaching have equally and substantially reduced the biodiversity and, population sizes of animals are hunted down for meat and other products for traditional use. The main root cause of all this is high population pressure and poverty levels in the area.

In order to address the above challenges, a number of partners have been working in the Mt. Elgon ecosystem/landscape on conservation issues for over twenty years. However, it was noted that, the interventions are scattered and uncoordinated, hence affecting the impact of the interventions. The ecosystem also has a number of thematic working groups which spearhead discussions and learning lessons on key themes within the landscape. However, the thematic working groups are limited to specific stakeholders and issues. The MESF strategic intent, therefore, is to engage more stakeholders and cover wider issues that reflect the interlinkages within the ecosystem. It is in this Forum that, inter-linkages and synergies are created and strategic interventions discussed and agreed upon for implementation.

3 How far have we come?

After its inaugural meeting in 2012, the Second MESF was held in June, 2015 and, was attended by over 80 participants drawn from Regional (EAC) Authorities/Bodies, Central Government Ministries, National Parliaments, Autonomous Government Agencies and County/District Local Governments as well as development partners and civil society organizations that are operating in the Mt. Elgon Region from both Uganda and Kenya. The 3rd MESHF that took place in November 2016, drawing over 50 participants from Central Government Ministries, Agencies and Statutory Bodies, District Local Governments, Civil Society Organisations (CSOs), and Cultural and Religious institutions as well as representatives of related networks from Northern Uganda. The next (fourth) MESF is, therefore, in line with this collaborative stakeholder experience sharing and engagement.

4 Theme and purpose of the 4th MESF

The theme for the 4th MESF is: ***“Shared Understanding of Collaborative Solutions to Addressing Mt. Elgon Ecosystem Challenges”***. The objectives are to:

- i. Share experiences, lessons learned and good practices from some of the key on-going projects and activities within the Mt. Elgon ecosystem, and;
- ii. Have a common understanding on current and on-going national programmes and initiatives geared to address climate change impacts and building ecological and societal resilience.
- iii. Make recommendations for creating synergies and consolidating the achievements made based on the presentations in (i) and (ii) above.

5 Details and approach

5.1 DAY I

SESSION ONE: National Programs to Address Climate Change

In this session, presentations will be made by the following Government Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) and CSOs that are operating within the Mt. Elgon landscape to share their experiences, lessons learned and good practices. This will be followed by Panel Discussions and Plenary Sessions. This session will last one and half days. Details will be given in the programme.

- a) **Ministry of Water and Environment (MWE), Climate Change Department:** An overview from the Climate Change Department on climate change issues in the country: the status, ongoing processes, programmes, challenges and the general strategy in place
- b) **Ministry of Water and Environment (MWE), Forest Sector Support Department (FSSD).** The Government of Uganda, through the MWE-FSSD is implementing the National REDD+ Program that is aimed at reducing Green House Gases emissions, deforestation and forest degradation. Uganda’s

REDD+ Readiness Preparation phase (2013-2017) is in advanced stages for having Uganda ready for REDD+ implementation. The Uganda REDD+ Secretariat will be presenting the status of this process including but not limited to challenges, opportunities and the Secretariats' expectations from the stakeholders in the Mt. Elgon ecosystem.

- c) **Ministry of Water and Environment (MWE), Directorate of Water Resources Development (DWRD).** The Government of Uganda, through the Ministry of Water and Environment (MWE), Directorate of Water Resources Management (DWM) has since 2011 been operationalizing catchment-based integrated water resource management (CbiWRM) throughout the country. A number of Catchment Management Plans (CMPs) have been finalized while others are at different stages of development. The MWE-DWRD will be discussing the progress of this initiatives, challenges and opportunities and what is expected of stakeholders in the Mt. Elgon ecosystem in as far as CbiWRM.
- d) **The Ministry of Tourism, Wildlife and Antiquities (MTWA).** The UNESCO – Man and Biosphere (MAB) National Committees (NATCOMs) of Kenya and Uganda have been seeking to nominate the Mt. Elgon ecosystem as a Transboundary Biosphere Reserve (TBR), the Elgon-Masaba TBR. The successful nomination and declaration of Mt. Elgon as a TBR will not only enhance the functioning of the two Biosphere Reserves (BRs), but also will enhance economic development, environmental conservation and cooperation of the two countries in their sustainable development endeavour. The progress of this process as well as the proposed institutional and organizational arrangements will be presented and discussed.
- e) **Office of the Prime Minister (OPM):** The OPM approved the National Policy for Disaster Preparedness and Management in April 2011. The purpose of this instrument is to re-orient national and local efforts to address disaster induced problems due to climate change in a more comprehensive and integrated manner. The objectives of the policy are to: (i) Establish disaster preparedness and management institutions at national and local government levels; (ii) Equip disaster preparedness institutions; (iii) Integrate disaster preparedness and management into development processes at all levels; (iv) Promote research and technology in relation to climate change; (v) Generate and disseminate information on early warning; (iv) Promote public – private partnerships in disaster preparedness and management and, (vi) Create timely, coordinated and effective emergency responses at national, district and lower level local governments. The OPM will update stakeholders on the implementation process of this policy in lieu of the climate change risks and shocks obtaining in the Mt. Elgon ecosystem. NUSAF3 linkages to ongoing initiatives in the region and Ministry of Water and Environment IWRM approach and Catchment Management Planning processes.

SESSION TWO: (POSTER SESSION): Exposition and updates on current activities in Mt. Elgon

This session will involve the under listed institutions showcasing and explaining their works to the stakeholders. Each will have a “stall” with appropriate communication and knowledge products. Here, they will exposition and explain their work to participants. Participants will move from “Stall” to “Stall”. This will be 2 hour explosion on the second day (afternoon) divided into one hour for presentation and another hour for stakeholder input to the exposition.

- a. **Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA):** In addition to its mandatory and statutory obligation of protecting and managing the Mt. Elgon ecosystem, UWA runs a Collaborative Forest Restoration Model that allows community members to access the Park for forest resources. Also, a percentage of the gate

collections goes back to the community for development projects within the community. UWA will make a presentation on how these two initiatives have improved Park-Community relations and livelihoods and the discussions will be centered on how to improve the operations and governance aspects of In-Park Resource Access and the Revenue Sharing Scheme.

- b. **ECOTRUST:** ECOTRUST promotes Trees for Global Benefits Model that uses a system of payment for environment services to incentivize small holder rural farmers to apply proper land management. ECOTRUST will make a presentation on how this model works and the ecological and societal benefits it has been able to deliver in the Mt. Elgon landscape. Based on this pilot initiatives, discussions will be centered on practical aspects of how to upscale the model, and Payment for Ecosystem Services (PES) Models that could be applicable in the Mt. Elgon ecosystem.
- c. **Conservation Through Public Health (CTPH):** CTPH promotes biodiversity conservation by enabling people, wildlife and livestock to coexist through improving health and livelihoods in and around protected areas (PAs). CTPH will share their experiences on this innovative approach in Uganda's PAs and how this approach applies to the Mt. Elgon ecosystem.
- d. **The World Agroforestry Centre (ICRAF):** ICRAEF working with IUCN, developed the "**Africa Tree Finder Application**" which enables stakeholders to find suitable indigenous tree species for Forest Landscape Restoration (FLR) based on their local location, uses and purpose from their Smartphones. In Mt. Elgon, ICRAF has established a resource center in Mbale to be a one stop center for all information on smart agriculture.
- e. **International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN):** IUCN has over 20 years work experience in the Mt. Elgon ecosystem and, is currently implementing a project that integrates pro-poor principles and rights-based approaches into the National REDD+ Strategy, and other frameworks for sustainable management of forest resources in Mt Elgon and Agoro Agu. The project has generated practical lessons and experiences and these will be shared.

5.2 DAY 2

SESSION ONE: WRAP UP OF DAY ONE

SESSION TWO: DEVELOPING A STRATEGY FOR COORDINATED MANAGEMENT OF THE MT ELGON LANDSCAPE

In this session, the next steps for strategically involving the MESF to influence national level processes will be discussed. The membership of the forum will also be reviewed and updated as well as the launch of the revamped MESF website for knowledge sharing. The MESF steering committee will also present a workplan and budget for the following year.



Mount Elgon Stakeholders' Forum Agenda, 1st – 2nd November 2017

Time	Activity	Responsibility
Day 1: Wednesday 1st November, 2017		
Session 1 Opening remarks		
8:30 – 9:00am	Arrival and registration	IUCN
9:00 – 9:15am	Participants introductions; Background and objectives of the training workshop	MESF
9:15 – 9:30am	Welcome remarks	Chairman MESF
9:30 – 9:45am	Official opening remarks	Hon. Min. of MWE
Session 2 National Programs to Address Climate Change		
9:45-10:05 am	An overview from the Climate Change Department on climate change issues in the country: the status, ongoing processes, programmes, challenges and the general strategy in place	CCD (Chebet Maikut)
10:05 – 10:25am	Background to Uganda's REDD+ Readiness Phase and progress it's to date	REDD+ Focal Point (Margaret Athieno)
10:25 – 10:45am	The progress of the CbiWRM initiatives, challenges and opportunities. Linkages and opportunities of CbiWRM for stakeholders in the Mt. Elgon ecosystem.	Director, Directorate of Water Resources Management
10:45 – 11:00am	Breaktea	Hotel
Session 1 Continued		
11:00-12:00	- Penal discussion	PFCC, CCD, REDD+ and DWRW
12:00 – 12:20pm	- Progress of the process to nominate Mt. Elgon ecosystem as a Transboundary Biosphere Reserve (TBR), through the Elgony-Masaba TBR Man and Biosphere (MAB) National Committees (NATCOMs) of Kenya and Uganda	Ministry of Tourism, Wildlife and Antiquities
12:20 – 12:40am	- Updates on the implementation process of the National Policy for Disaster Preparedness and Management policy in lieu of the climate change risks and shocks obtaining in the Mt. Elgon ecosystem	Office of the Prime Minister
12:40-1:00pm	- Linkages and leverages between NUSAF3 and ongoing initiatives in the region and Ministry of Water and Environment IWRM approach and Catchment Management Planning processes.	
1:00 – 2:00pm	Lunch	Hotel
Session 2 Exposition and updates on current activities in Mt. Elgon		

2:00-3:00pm	Penal discussion	MTWA, SDPO, NUSAF3 secretariate,
3:00-4:00	Exhibition and updates on current activities in Mt. Elgon	UWA, ECOTRUST, CTPH, ICRAF IUCN
4:00 – 4:30pm	Panel discussion	UWA, ECOTRUST, CTPH, ICRAF IUCN
4:30 – 5:00pm	Evening tea	Hotel
5:00pm	Closure	All
Day 2: Thursday 2nd November, 2017		
Time	Activity	Responsibility
Session 1: Wrap up of day		
8:30 – 9:00am	Arrival and registration	IUCN
9:00 – 9:15am	Welcome remarks	Chairman MESF
9:15 – 10:00am	Wrap up of Day one	
10:00 – 10:30am	Break tea	Hotel
Session 2 Developing a strategy for coordinated management of the Mt Elgon landscape		
10:30 – 11:00am	Laying strategies for the MESF engagement	MESF steering committee
11:00-12:30pm	Plenary	
12:30 – 12:45pm	Way forward	UWA
12:45 – 1:00pm	Closure	Hon Min. of MTWA
1:00- 2:00pm	Lunch and departure	IUCN and Hotel