IUCN Conservation Outlook Assessment 2017 **(archived)**
Finalised on 08 November 2017

Please note: this is an archived Conservation Outlook Assessment for Rwenzori Mountains National Park. To access the most up-to-date Conservation Outlook Assessment for this site, please visit https://www.worldheritageoutlook.iucn.org.

Rwenzori Mountains National Park

SITE INFORMATION

Country:
Uganda
Inscribed in: 1994
Criteria:
(vii) (x)

Site description:
The Rwenzori Mountains National Park covers nearly 100,000 ha in western Uganda and comprises the main part of the Rwenzori mountain chain, which includes Africa's third highest peak (Mount Margherita: 5,109 m). The region's glaciers, waterfalls and lakes make it one of Africa's most beautiful alpine areas. The park has many natural habitats of endangered species and a rich and unusual flora comprising, among other species, the giant heather. © UNESCO

SUMMARY

2017 Conservation Outlook

Good with some concerns

The conservation outlook remains robust, given the natural attributes and resilience of such an inaccessible and rugged place, with its wide range of elevation, and linkages with other components of Africa's most diverse trans-frontier protected area complex. There remain significant uncertainties over the likely long-term impact of climate change, which may result in loss of the glaciers and snowfields by 2030 and have far-reaching long-term effects on plant community dynamics. Concern over the possible restoration of copper mining within the site remains, while other threats such as the growing impact of tourism and illegal hunting are being addressed.

Current state and trend of VALUES

Low Concern
Trend: Data Deficient

The scenic values of the site, epitomised by the occurrence of glaciers and snowfields on the equator, are being compromised as the ice melts (and the glaciers are expected to disappear altogether by 2030). There are insufficient data to assess likely changes to the site's biodiversity resulting from climate change, but rare endemic plants in the Afro-alpine zones may be in decline, while birds and mammals endemic to the western (Albertine) Rift forests may be benefiting from an expansion of forest at lower elevations.

Overall THREATS

High Threat

The park's remote and rugged geography, combined with its very limited potential for alternative use, means it is not highly threatened. Climate change is melting the glaciers (which are projected to disappear altogether by 2030), and will alter vegetation communities in the long term. There are some issues with

illegal hunting and other resource use by local communities and impacts from a growing number of visitors. There is a possibility that an old copper mine at Kilembe could resume operations within the park in the future.

Overall PROTECTION and MANAGEMENT

Some Concern

Funding is needed to activate park programmes such as the research and monitoring department together with community conservation. Currently the site has no comprehensive research and monitoring programmes despite the availability of an ecological monitoring plan that was funded by WWF. The park is still heavily dependent on international NGO partners and donor support to cover recurrent and investment costs.

FULL ASSESSMENT

Description of values

Values

World Heritage values

▶ Spectacular mountain scenery

Criterion:(vii)

The park protects some of Africa’s most spectacular mountain scenery, including Africa’s third highest peak (Mount Margherita, 5,109 m), and an abundance of glaciers, lakes, snow-capped peaks, waterfalls and bog-filled valleys. Unlike most other high African mountains, the Rwenzori range is not of volcanic origin but was created through tectonic movements in the Earth’s crust associated with the formation of the western arm of the Great Rift Valley. The mountain range includes multiple peaks, and its location on the edge of the Congo Basin is associated with very high rainfall and the development of exuberant Afro-alpine vegetation with impressive giant senecio and lobelia plants growing in the high bogs, and great cushions of colourful moss perched on the leaning branches of giant heathers (World Heritage Committee, 2011).

▶ Rich montane flora, with many endemic species

Criterion:(x)

The park has the richest montane flora of any site in Africa, including many endemic species. The heaths and Afro-alpine vegetation zones that extend from around 3,500 m to the snowline (at around 4,400 m) represent the rarest vegetation types on the African continent. Prominent constituents of this extraordinary vegetation are several endemic species of giant groundsels (senecio) and lobelias, which punctuate the landscape like giant

candelabra (World Heritage Committee, 2011).

► Rare and endemic birds

Criterion:(x)

Although the total number of species of birds recorded (247 spp.), is not especially high, the avifauna includes two Red Data Book species (Shelly's crimsonwing, Cryptospiza shelleyi, classified as Vulnerable; and Lagden's bush shrike, Malaconotus lagdeni, classified as near-threatened (BirdLife International, 2012)), as well as 20 of the 24 species endemic to the western (Albertine) Rift area of central Africa (Howard et al., 1996; World Heritage Committee, 2011).

► Rare and threatened mammals

Criterion:(x)

The Rwenzori range is especially important for its rare and endangered mammals, including an unusually rich small mammal fauna and some prominent larger mammals. The small mammal fauna includes 28 species of rodent and 12 shrews, of which nine species are endemic to the western (Albertine) Rift and three (Micropotamagole ruwenzori, Paracrocidura maxima and Ruwenzorisorex suncoides) are extremely rare (Howard et al., 1996). Large mammals of conservation concern include elephants, chimpanzee, Rwenzori black-fronted duiker (possibly a separate species) and l'Hoests monkey (World Heritage Committee, 2011).

► Diversity of habitats

Criterion:(x)

There is an exceptional diversity of habitats on account of the range of altitude (2,100 to 5,100 m), equatorial location and high rainfall. There are montane forest, bamboo, tree heather, Afro-alpine and nival zones at increasing altitude, each with its own special characteristics and associated flora and fauna (World Heritage Committee, 2011).

Assessment information

Threats

Current Threats

High Threat

The park’s rugged terrain and long history of protection as a vital water catchment area have resulted in generally low levels of threat. The park covers steep, cold, high altitude land with little potential for commercial forestry or agricultural use, and has never been subject to significant pressure for anything more than subsistence use of a few non-timber forest products such as bamboo, building poles, firewood, honey and medicinal plants. There is some illegal hunting, and collection of some non-timber forest products continues under management agreements with local communities, which is thought to be within sustainable limits. Tourism is increasing and there are some associated problems with litter, waste management and trampling of vegetation. There is also a degree of commercial poaching for bushmeat sold in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and poaching for medicinal reasons. The biggest long-term threat to the park is climate change, which is predicted to cause the disappearance of the glaciers by 2030, and result in a general shift in vegetation zones to higher elevations, reducing the area of the unique Afro-alpine communities.

▶ Fire/ Fire Suppression, Dams/ Water Management or Use

High Threat
Inside site, extent of threat not known
Outside site

Fire has occurred over parts of the alpine zone in the recent past from poachers’ or tourists’ fires. This is a concern as many of the endemic plant species occur in this zone.

▶ Water Pollution

Data Deficient
Inside site, extent of threat not known
Outside site

Unknown

▶ Erosion and Siltation/ Deposition

Data Deficient
Outside site

Landslides are relatively frequent on the steep slopes that are cultivated below the park boundary but not within the park.

▶ Habitat Shifting/ Alteration, Droughts, Temperature extremes, Storms/Flooding

Data Deficient

N.A.

▶ Hunting (commercial/subsistence), Poaching

High Threat
Inside site
Outside site

Low-level subsistence hunting is a way of life for the local Bakonjo people, and its impact is limited due to the extremely rugged terrain and difficulty of capturing prey species. Hunting is generally carried out with wire snares, and guns are not widely used in traditional hunting (IUCN Consultation, 2017a). There is also a degree of commercial poaching for bushmeat sold in the Democratic Republic of Congo, as well as for medicinal reasons (IUCN Consultation, 2017b).

▶ Crops

Low Threat
Outside site

Agricultural encroachment affects only a few of the lower valleys and ridges in the immediate vicinity of the lower park boundary within the buffer zone, but tends to be limited to cultivation of wheat on some of the ridge tops.

Elsewhere the land inside the park is too steep and inaccessible for cultivation, and the climate unsuitable. Most of the local population lives in the valleys, quite far from the park, where they benefit from better access and better provision of services and the soils are generally poor. With increasing human population pressures, agricultural encroachment is likely to become a more significant threat.

► Forestry/ Wood production

Low Threat
Inside site
Outside site

The montane forests of lower elevations are not generally suitable for commercial exploitation, but a few trees are felled to satisfy local demand for building poles and sawn timber.

► Tourism/ visitors/ recreation

Low Threat
Inside site
Outside site

Tourism numbers are still low compared with East Africa’s other great mountains – the drier, higher Mounts Kilimanjaro and Kenya. However, some areas are affected by unsustainable firewood collection; litter and waste management; and trampling of vegetation (especially through the extensive bogs).

► Other Biological Resource Use

Low Threat
Inside site, extent of threat not known

Non-timber forest products, notably bamboo, natural fibres, mushrooms, honey and the like, make an important contribution to local livelihoods and these products may now be harvested from designated zones under the terms of 14 community-use Memoranda of Understanding. Off-take is monitored by park rangers, but there are few data on which to base harvesting quotas (State Party of Uganda, 2012; State Party of Uganda, 2015).

► Water Pollution

High Threat
Inside site, scattered(5-15%)
Outside site

The site is rich in aquatic biodiversity including endemic species of fish that are sensitive to water pollution (ITFC, 2016). Water pollution results in change in water pH, siltation and sedimentation of the rivers and subsequently of nearby lakes. Water polluting activities such as mining, irrigation and power dams are therefore negatively impacting on the ecosystem services and goods that the rivers and the lake would provide; hydroelectric power dams on rivers Nyamugasani and Lubiliya at the site being a case in point. The Kasese Cobalt Company located on the periphery of the site was revamped by the Uganda Government through the Chinese company, Tibet Hima Company Limited, to mine approximately 4.5 million tonnes of cobalt (State Party of Uganda, 2015). The mining has caused pollution to several rivers flowing out of the site such as the Mubuku, Mpanga and Nyamwamba (ITFC, 2016). The rivers have had increased siltation levels, heavy metal contents and high pH values (ITFC, 2016). Such pollutants end up destroying fish habitats and therefore fish numbers and distribution (ITFC, 2016). Other pollutants to the rivers include agricultural practices that lead to sedimentation and siltation of the rivers (State Party of Uganda, 2015). The Chinese company has been given a licence to resume copper mining in the property. Copper tailings from this mine were piled outside the park in the 1960s and 1970s and continue to be left adjacent to the Kilembe mine and to the river that flows through Kasese town and into Lake George in the Queen Elizabeth National Park (a Biosphere Reserve). Vegetation does not grow well on these tailings. The Cobalt mine (referenced above) near the park also continues to pollute the Queen Elizabeth National Park which is downstream of that mine.

► Habitat Shifting/ Alteration, Droughts, Temperature extremes

Very High Threat
Inside site, scattered(5-15%)
Outside site

Climate change is raising temperatures and melting the park’s glaciers, which are projected to disappear by 2030. In the longer term, climate change

is expected to cause a general shift of vegetation zones to higher elevations reducing the area of the rare high-altitude Afro-alpine vegetation communities. At the same time, it is likely to increase the feasibility of cultivation close to the park boundary (on land that was previously too cold for most crops). There may be increased incidence of landslides and flooding if precipitation falls as rain instead of snow (UNESCO, 2009; Taylor et al., 2009). Long-term vegetation plots (part of the Global Observation Research Initiative in Alpine Environments (GLORIA) sites) have been established to monitor changes. Monitoring of the glaciers is also being conducted by Makerere University.

Potential Threats

Data Deficient

Mining activities for copper and cobalt are some of the potential threats to the site.

► Mining/ Quarrying

Data Deficient
Inside site, extent of threat not known
Outside site

The Kilembe mine used to operate an extensive network of deep mine shafts extracting copper ore from strata in the Kilembe River Valley within the area now designated as World Heritage. The mine was closed as a result of the economic difficulties which afflicted Uganda during the 1970s and 1980s. It was licensed to a Chinese company in 2015 and small-scale mining is now taking place but with little financial investment. Working conditions for the Chinese and Ugandan staff are extremely poor with several deaths having occurred. Since 2014, the Committee has requested details on the potential environmental impacts of re-opening the mine (Decision 38 COM 7B.93) but none have been submitted to date.

► War, Civil Unrest/ Military Exercises

Low Threat
Inside site, scattered(5-15%)

The park is located in a volatile part of central Africa, with insurgency activity on both sides of the international border erupting from time to time.

Intertribal conflicts between the Bakonzo and Bamba and the recent skirmish between the government of Uganda soldiers and the Bakonzo Rwenzururu Kingdom is a major concern for conservationists at the site. Tourism numbers are expected to decline at the site after the recent skirmish. This could affect the site's conservation activities.

Protection and management

Assessing Protection and Management

► Relationships with local people

Mostly Effective

Community relations have improved in recent years, with the economic benefits of tourism accruing to community-based groups managing park concessions for accommodation, porter and guiding services. Fourteen communities around the park have agreed Memoranda of Understanding, allowing access to park resources (bamboo, honey, mushrooms, etc.) within designated zones. A programme to support linkages between culture and conservation has been initiated (with support from Fauna & Flora International), through which cultural values are being promoted and culturally-important (sacred) sites protected within the park (State Party of Uganda, 2012; FFI-UWA, 2012). Although local communities are engaged in the management of the property, they experience limited benefits from tourism. This is leading to local communities still relying on non-timber resources from the property, such as bushmeat.

► Legal framework

Mostly Effective

The legal framework is strong. Originally protected as a Forest Reserve in 1941, it became a National Park under Statutory Instrument No. 26 of 1991, amended by Statutory Instrument No 3 of 1992. No cultivation or settlement is permitted within the park.
The park is managed by the semi-autonomous Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA), established under the Uganda Wildlife Statute 1996, with its own

Board of Trustees.

► Enforcement

Mostly Effective

Despite the need to increase the number of law enforcement rangers, law enforcement is the most funded department at the site. The law enforcement numbers have been reinforced with police and military personnel patrolling the park. The site is taking up and incorporating in its management a new law enforcement tool called the Spatial Management and Reporting Tool (SMART) with technical and financial support from Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS). It is expected that the SMART tool will allow more complex and useful analyses to be made to the data collected by the rangers.

► Integration into regional and national planning systems

Mostly Effective

The park is managed together with other protected areas within Uganda Wildlife Authority’s regional management structure. The site is also managed together with Virunga Park in the DRC with the coordination of the Greater Virunga Transboundary Secretariat that was recently signed as a tripartite treaty between Uganda, Democratic Republic of the Congo and Rwanda.

► Management system

Mostly Effective

The park has been under planned management for more than half a century, the first two management plans (1948, 1961) being produced by the Uganda Forestry Department and focusing on water catchment protection. The development of a General Management Plan (GMP) for all national parks is a statutory requirement, and the first full plan developed by Uganda Wildlife Authority covers the 2004-2014 period (Uganda Wildlife Authority, 2004). The GMP was reviewed in 2009 to make it more responsive and relevant to changing circumstances (State Party of Uganda, 2012). The new draft management plan was approved by the Uganda Wildlife Authority Board in September 2016.

► Management effectiveness

Some Concern

Management is significantly constrained by budgetary and staffing levels. The Uganda Wildlife Authority has in the past received financial and technical support during its initial establishment phase through World Bank and GEF financing of a major Protected Areas Management and Sustainable Use (PAMSU) programme, completed in 2009 (UNESCO, 2009). Currently the site is funded and supported by WWF. Like most parks, staffing levels (currently 56) are significantly below levels anticipated in the General Management Plan (which envisages 139 staff). The park staff are given training on site-specific tourism and operational skills but more specialised training needs to be provided. Funding for the park's activities is majorly biased to law enforcement to the detriment of other park programmes such as research and monitoring, community conservation and tourism development.

► Implementation of Committee decisions and recommendations

Some Concern

Since its removal from the List of World Heritage in Danger in 2004, Committee decisions and recommendations have focused on (1) development of a sustainable financing strategy; (2) elimination of mining licences; (3) mitigation of climate change impacts and (4) reporting on ecological monitoring. Some progress has been reported in implementing climate change mitigation measures, but at the time of writing there had been no significant progress in developing a sustainable financing strategy (revenue retained covers about half the park's recurrent budget) or eliminating mining licences. The ecological monitoring plan that was developed in 2009 has not been submitted for review, nor have the results of monitoring of resource use been reported to IUCN or the UNESCO World Heritage Centre (State Party of Uganda, 2012).

► Boundaries

Mostly Effective

Park boundaries are well marked with concrete beacons and lines of planted trees. No encroachment by local communities has been reported. The international border through the centre of the mountain range remains unmarked. There are no significant boundary incursions. Trans-boundary coordination of patrols between management on either side of the international border has recently been initiated.

The buffer zone is not subject to management intervention by Uganda Wildlife Authority, but communities have been supported to plant trees adjacent to the boundaries. Most settlements are located in the valleys, typically several kilometres from the park boundary. The boundary line itself traverses steep land that is generally unsuitable for cultivation, along the 2,100 m contour.

► Sustainable finance

Some Concern

Financial sustainability is based on retention of all park revenues by Uganda Wildlife Authority, enabling cross-subsidy within the Uganda parks system. Park revenue covers 50% of recurrent budgets so the park depends on cross-subsidy from other parks and donor support (State Party of Uganda, 2012). There has not been a significant improvement in the proportion of recurrent budgets covered by retained revenue since 2006/7, although visitor numbers are reported to be increasing at 20% per annum. There are useful contributions from international NGO partners, including WWF, WCS and FFI, but the major World Bank/GEF-financed PAMSU programme (which had provided vehicles and other equipment) was completed in 2009. There remain significant concerns over sustainable financing.

► Staff training and development

Data Deficient

The General Management Plan requires that the site has 139 staff but the site continues to be understaffed, with only 56 trained staff at present.

► Sustainable use

Data Deficient

Fourteen Memoranda of Understanding have been developed under which communities adjacent to the park can use resources such as bamboos, honey, mushrooms and medicinal plant products from designated zones. Resource availability and off-take are monitored by park rangers to ensure sustainable use, but the details of this monitoring are not yet available. Some illegal hunting is carried out (Howard, 1996; UNESCO and IUCN, 2003), but its impact in the rugged mountain terrain is difficult to evaluate.

► Education and interpretation programs

Mostly Effective

An education strategy aimed at raising awareness of park values amongst local communities has been developed through the support of the WWF-funded Rwenzori Mountains Conservation and Environmental Management Project. A separate initiative focused on raising awareness of climate change impacts and mitigation is supported by the MacArthur Foundation. Local communities are engaged at various levels, through tourism initiatives, wildlife clubs and negotiation over the extent and limits of resource use within designated resource use zones.

► Tourism and visitation management

Data Deficient

No visitor statistics are available but they are collected by the Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA). Hiking the 6-day ‘central circuit’ provides the park’s primary revenue and visitor numbers are increasing at 20% annually.

► Monitoring

Some Concern

Despite a detailed ecological monitoring plan commissioned by WWF (WWF, 2010), the site lacks a comprehensive ecological monitoring programme. The lack of funds has been a major hindrance to carrying out the ecological monitoring programme at the site. In 2011, ITFC established permanent plots along different elevation gradients of the Rwenzori Mountains to monitor the impact of climate change on restricted-range species, and changes in vegetation belts/altitudinal zonation as part of the GLORIA network. The follow up of these plots for subsequent data collection has been hindered by lack of funds for the programme.

► Research

Some Concern

Unlike at Bwindi Impenetrable National Park where there is an active research station (ITFC) with ongoing research, the Rwenzori Mountains do not have an active research station. ITFC is mandated to work in the Rwenzori

Mountains but lacks funds to extend its research there. Most of the research in the Rwenzori Mountains is carried out by independent researchers and partially by park management with limited funding. WWF has funded a few studies there and helped train the park's research department (WWF, 2010). The uptake of the research recommendations from independent researchers by park management is poor due to limited funds available to park management. Thirteen priority research topics have been identified to aid management decision making. Three of these, focused on (1) resource inventory; (2) monitoring of resource off-take by community members and (3) status of chimpanzees, are being undertaken with support from WWF. Two further research activities have recently been commissioned by Uganda Wildlife Authority on (1) the impact of climate change on restricted-range species, and (2) changes in vegetation belts/altitudinal zonation resulting from climate change.

Overall assessment of protection and management

Some Concern

Funding is needed to activate park programmes such as the research and monitoring department together with community conservation. Currently the site has no comprehensive research and monitoring programmes despite the availability of an ecological monitoring plan that was funded by WWF. The park is still heavily dependent on international NGO partners and donor support to cover recurrent and investment costs.

► Assessment of the effectiveness of protection and management in addressing threats outside the site

Some Concern

Community outreach programmes have significantly improved relations with local communities and the process of engaging communities in negotiating resource access rights should provide a basis for long-term sustainable use and reduce threats.

► Best practice examples

The park is considered a model for integration of cultural values into the Protected Area Management framework as an innovative approach to

resource management, the first of its kind in Africa (World Heritage Committee, 2011; Infield & Mugisha, 2010; FFI-UWA, 2012).

State and trend of values

Assessing the current state and trend of values

World Heritage values

▶ **Spectacular mountain scenery**

Low Concern
Trend:Deteriorating

For many visitors a significant element in the scenic values of the site is the existence of the glaciers and snowfields very close to the equator. Their disappearance will reduce the scenic value and impact of the site. Furthermore, as visitor numbers increase there will be a need for further infrastructure, including visitor accommodation, bridges and walkways through the high altitude bogs, all of which are likely to compromise the wilderness values of the 6-day hiking experience around the central peaks (UNESCO, 2009; Taylor et al., 2009; State Party of Uganda, 2015).

▶ **Rich montane flora, with many endemic species**

Low Concern
Trend:Data Deficient

The full impact of climate change is difficult to predict, but it is expected to cause a gradual long-term shift of vegetation communities to higher elevations, with the rare high-altitude Afro-alpine communities reduced in extent as they are gradually replaced by species characteristic of lower elevations. It is these rare communities at the higher elevations that have the highest proportion of endemic plants (UNESCO, 2009; Taylor et al., 2009).

▶ **Rare and endemic birds**

Good
Trend:Improving

Most of the rare birds, including the majority of the Albertine Rift endemics

which are forest birds, may be expected to benefit from the expansion of forest habitats to higher elevations as the climate warms. A recent assessment by WCS, comparing 2015 with 2002 data of bird species composition with altitude illustrated a trend for movement of many birds to higher altitudes.

► Rare and threatened mammals

Good
Trend:Improving

Most of the rare and threatened mammals, including the majority of the Albertine Rift endemic rodents and shrews, as well as the primates, elephants and duikers are forest-adapted species which may be expected to benefit from the expansion of forest habitats to higher elevations as the climate warms.

► Diversity of habitats

Data Deficient
Trend:Data Deficient

As the climate warms and there is a general shift of vegetation zones to higher elevations, a reduction in the area of the rare Afro-alpine vegetation communities can be expected. At lower elevations, species characteristic of richer lowland forest communities may be able to colonise the lower areas of the park. Nevertheless, the main vegetation communities and diversity of habitats are not likely to be altered in any major way.

Summary of the Values

► Assessment of the current state and trend of World Heritage values

Low Concern

Trend: Data Deficient

The scenic values of the site, epitomised by the occurrence of glaciers and snowfields on the equator, are being compromised as the ice melts (and the glaciers are expected to disappear altogether by 2030). There are insufficient data to assess likely changes to the site’s biodiversity resulting from climate change, but rare endemic plants in the Afro-alpine zones may be in decline,

while birds and mammals endemic to the western (Albertine) Rift forests may be benefiting from an expansion of forest at lower elevations.

Additional information

Benefits

Understanding Benefits

- **Carbon sequestration, Soil stabilisation, Flood prevention, Water provision (importance for water quantity and quality), Pollination**

  Water catchment, water flow regulation, climate amelioration. As a result of the intactness of the boundary, the watershed functions have enhanced the park’s capacity to act as the biggest contributor of water in the region for domestic and industrial use (World Heritage Committee, 2011).

  Water pollution as a result of cobalt mining and future copper and oil exploitation will likely increase in the rivers flowing from the site. Already there is reported pollution of the rivers from cobalt mining, limestone mining, irrigation schemes and power dams located near the site (ITFC, 2016). Climate change at the site is already a reality with the glaciers retreating and this is likely to lead to drying of rivers and possibly lakes, vegetation shifting to higher altitudes and loss of some endemic flora and fauna.

- **Cultural identity and sense of belonging, History and tradition, Sacred or symbolic plants or animals, Sacred natural sites or landscapes, Wilderness and iconic features**

  Sacred sites, strong cultural ties, rich history, source of livelihood, security. The Bakonzo and Bamba have a strong cultural attachment to the Rwenzori Mountains, including some flora and fauna therein. The Rwenzururu Kingdom under the king Omusinga has a strong cultural link to the Rwenzori Mountains. Recent conflicts in the region between government and the

Rwenzururu Kingdom are likely to affect this cultural link.

► **Outdoor recreation and tourism**

Mountaineering, nature tourism, cultural tourism, scenery.

► **Legal subsistence hunting of wild game, Collection of wild plants and mushrooms, Fishing areas and conservation of fish stocks**

The collection of food resources is not permitted by park management but the local people continue to collect food resources such as fish, wild honey, fruits, etc. illegally.

The collection of the food resources is at a subsistence level even though done illegally.

► **Access to drinking water, Commercial wells**

N.A.

► **Collection of medicinal resources for local use**

N.A.

► **Importance for research, Contribution to education, Collection of genetic material**

N.A.

► **Collection of timber, e.g. fuelwood, Sustainable extraction of materials (e.g. coral, shells, resin, rubber, grass, rattan, etc)**

There are memoranda of understanding with the local people to collect medicinal and basketry materials from the forest for their livelihood use. About 14 MoUs are now being used and managed by the park management for the local people to extract plant resources sustainably from the forest (WWF, 2010).

The collection of plant resources for medicinal use and basketry is carried out at a subsistence level and there is no evidence of overexploitation currently.

Summary of benefits

Ecosystem services benefits to the local population such as water supply, food, medicinal and basketry materials are currently sustainable. Improving the supply of basketry and medicinal plants could benefit local poor people since they are highly dependent on the forest. The pollution of the rivers near the site is a potential threat to local rural livelihoods.

Projects

Compilation of active conservation projects

№	Organization/ individuals	Project duration	Brief description of Active Projects
1	WWF		Rwenzori Mountains Conservation and Environmental Management Project, Phase II
2	FFI / MacArthur Foundation		Culture and Conservation Programme
3	WCS		Albertine Rift Conservation Programme
4	Environmental Conservation Trust of Uganda (ECOTRUST)		Support Ugandan communities to Conserve Rwenzori
5	Institute of Tropical Forest Conservation-ITFC	From: 2010	ITFC established long-term study Permanent Sample Plots under the project GLORIA to monitor changes in vegetation along altitudinal gradient in response to climate change. The plots were established in 2010 complete with data loggers. However, funding to continue with monitoring is unavailable.

Compilation of potential site needs

№	Site need title	Brief description of potential site needs	Support needed for following years

1	Funds for research and monitoring for the site	There is a need for funds to run an ecological monitoring programme for the park. There is need for research on the status of various flora and fauna at the site including endemic and endangered species. Most of the knowledge on the status of different flora and fauna is from past research by independent researchers.	From: 2016

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