IUCN Conservation Outlook Assessment 2017 **(archived)**
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Please note: this is an archived Conservation Outlook Assessment for Garamba National Park. To access the most up-to-date Conservation Outlook Assessment for this site, please visit https://www.worldheritageoutlook.iucn.org.

Garamba National Park

SITE INFORMATION

Country:
Democratic Republic of the Congo
Inscribed in: 1980
Criteria:
(vii) (x)

Site description:
The park's immense savannahs, grasslands and woodlands, interspersed with gallery forests along the river banks and the swampy depressions, are home to four large mammals: the elephant, giraffe, hippopotamus and above all the white rhinoceros. Though much larger than the black rhino, it is harmless; only some 30 individuals remain. © UNESCO

SUMMARY

2017 Conservation Outlook

Critical

The outlook for Garamba National Park is very uncertain, and its conservation status is considered critical. Regional insecurity and criminal networks associated with the international trade in rhino horn and ivory have had a devastating impact on the property. By 2016 the park had lost all of its white rhinos, 95% of its elephants, most of its giraffe and an estimated 80-90% of other large mammals. Since 2005 the park has been managed under a Public-Private-Partnership (PPP) arrangement by African Parks Network (APN). The first twelve years under APN management has been a period of enormous challenges associated with widespread insecurity perpetrated by the rebel Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA). Recent improvements in the regional security situation has enabled a major change in law enforcement strategy since May 2014, with protection efforts now extended to the entire property, as well as significant parts of the adjoining Hunting Areas. There are early signs of success resulting from these greatly increased levels of aerial surveillance, the strengthening and re-equipping of the ranger force, development of necessary park infrastructure and a strategic emphasis on ranger mobility, rapid deployment capability and use of intelligence information. The next five years will be a critical time in determining the future of the park, as poaching pressure continues (on elephants in particular, fuelled by the international ivory trade) and pressures on the park increase from the adjoining ‘buffer zone’ Hunting Areas where artisanal gold mining and land clearance for agricultural settlement are developing threats.

Current state and trend of VALUES

High Concern
Trend: Data Deficient

The Guinea savannahs of the park are intact and therefore maintain their potential for supporting an exceptionally large biomass of large herbivores. The mix of habitat types from the Guinea-Congolian and sudanian centres of

endemism are still present in and around the park, but illegal gold panning in the buffer zones is threatening some areas of important habitats habitats in the wider landscape (outside the property).
Gallery forests in the buffer zones are particularly affected (where typically impacting moist forest species such as chimpanzees)occur. The emblematic and endangered animal species continue to beare seriously threatened by poaching, the white rhino is now considered extinct in the wild and population of elephants and giraffe have been reduced to very low levels. Data are insufficient for an accurate assessment to trends over the past 5 years. It will require many years of strong park management to allow these populations to recover.

Overall THREATS

Very High Threat

Poaching for ivory, rhino horn and bushmeat have resulted in drastic reductions in large herbivore populations. Most of the larger species have suffered an 80-90% reduction in population, while elephants have been reduced by 92% from their 1976 population and rhinos must now be considered extinct. Poaching pressure continues to be intense despite significant recent investments in management. However, there has been a very significant improvement in the prevailing security situation with the defeat of the rebel Lord’s Resistance Army. Artisanal gold panning, land clearance and agricultural settlement are becoming increasingly widespread in the buffer zones and may threaten the integrity of the park itself in the longer term unless these activities can be effectively contained within a formally-designated buffer zone.

Overall PROTECTION and MANAGEMENT

Some Concern

The park is managed under a Public-Private-Partnership (PPP) arrangement by African Parks Network. This commenced in 2005, and the first twelve years of its implementation has been a period of enormous challenges associated with widespread insecurity perpetrated by the rebel Lord’s Resistance Army. Recent improvements in the regional security situation has enabled a major change in law enforcement strategy since May 2014, with protection efforts now extended to the entire property, as well as significant parts of the adjoining Hunting Areas. There are now early signs of success resulting from greatly increased levels of aerial surveillance, the strengthening and re-equipping of the ranger force,

development of necessary park infrastructure and a strategic emphasis on ranger mobility, rapid deployment capability and use of intelligence information. Nevertheless there are still major unmet needs and at least 3 giraffe and 98 elephants were killed in 2016, a level that is barely sustainable (State Party SOC, 2017).

FULL ASSESSMENT

Description of values

Values

World Heritage values

- **Large expanse of guinea savannahs with the potential to support an exceptionally high large mammal biomass**
  Criterion:(vii)

  This is a vast, gently undulating expanse of guinea savannahs and open woodlands with a dense network of permanent water sources and streams feeding into the Congo catchment (the northern boundary of the park follows the Congo-Nile divide). The abundance of permanent water means that plant productivity is high and can support an exceptionally high biomass of large herbivores. At certain times of the year (May/June) large numbers of elephant move into the park from the surrounding buffer zones (Hunting Domains). Groups of over 500 individuals have been recorded in times past (World Heritage Committee, 2012).

- **Geographic location within the transition zone between two bio-geographically important centres of endemism (Guinean-Congo and Guinean-Sudanese)**
  Criterion:(x)

  By virtue of its location in the transition zone between two centres of endemism the park and its buffer zones harbor species typical of both the savannah and dense humid forest ecosystems. This transition zone is poorly represented within protected areas elsewhere. Typically savannah species include the Congo or northern savannah giraffe (Giraffa camelopardalis congoensis), African elephant (Loxodonta africana, both forest and savannah

forms), African buffalo (Syncerus caffer, both forest and savannah forms), lion (Panthera leo), spotted hyena (Crocuta crocuta), Lelwel's hartebeest (Alcelaphus buselaphus lelwel), roan antelope (Hippotragus equinus bakeri), Thomas' cob (Kob thomasi), waterbuck (Kobus ellipsyprimnus defassa), reedbuck (Redunca redunca cottoni) and oribi (Ourebia ourebi). Large numbers or hippos (Hippopotamus amphibius) are also present.
Typically dense humid forest species include bongo (Tragelaphus euryceros), giant forest hog (Hylochoerus meinertzhageni), blue duiker (Philantomba monticola), red-flanked duiker (Cephalophus rufilatus), yellow backed duiker (C. silvicultor), chimpanzee (Pan troglodytes schweinfurthi), and 5 species of small diurnal primates : black and white colobus (Colobus guereza occidentalis), red colobus (Piliocolobus oustaleti oustaleti), agile mangeby (Cercocebus agilis), De Brazza monkey (Cercopithecus neglectus) and the red-tailed monkey (Cercopithecus ascanius) (IUCN Evaluation).

► Presence of emblematic, endangered and/or endemic mammal species

Criterion:(x)

The park's most important emblematic species was the northern white rhino Ceratotherium simum cottoni, but no individuals have been seen since 2007 (ICCN, 2010) and it is considered that this subspecies is now extinct in the wild. It was the world's last remaining population in the wild.
Congo giraffe (endemic to the DRC): this is the only existing population, currently estimated at 40-50 individuals located in the south of the park, and in the southern buffer zone (Gangala na Bodio Hunting Domain) (ICCN, 2010; Mission Report, 2016; SOC, 2017).

Elephant: this is the DRC's largest remaining population of elephants within a protected area (and one of the largest in Central Africa) and is unique in being an inter-grade between forest and savannah types (ICCN, 2010). The most recent count (2014) estimated a minimum population of 1156 individuals. They range widely over the park and its 3 surrounding buffer zones (Hunting Domains) (Antonínová, M. , 2010).
Eastern chimpanzees (Pan troglodytes schweinfurthi): these are known to still occur in the gallery forests in the eastern buffer zone, but there is insufficient data on the distribution and the size of different subpopulations in

and around the park (African Parks, 2011).

Other important biodiversity values

- **Large communal nesting sites of the northern carmine bee-eater Maerops nubiensis**

  These are exceptionally large flocks of carmine bee-eaters which constitute an impressive visual phenomenon.

Assessment information

Threats

Current Threats

Very High Threat

The intensity of elephant poaching is currently a serious threat to all populations of elephants in central Africa. Garamba National Park contains the DRC’s largest elephant population and is being specifically targeted by the local and international criminal networks behind the illegal ivory trade.
Large parts of the elephant population’s dispersal area (the buffer zones to the south, east and west of the park are not yet patrolled by park guards (SOC,2017), so elephants are therefore very vulnerable when they move out of the park.
Although searches for any remaining white rhino are ongoing it is probable that this sub species is now extinct in the wild.

- **Mining/ Quarrying**

  Low Threat
  Outside site

  Artisanal mining for gold has become a major economic activity in parts of the southern half of Gangala na Bodio and much of Mondo Missa Hunting

Areas over the past ten years or so (since liberalisation of the mining sector in 2004). It has attracted many thousands of people and resulted in extensive destruction of woodlands and gallery forests, as well as development of large permanent settlements in the Hunting Areas (Mission Report, 2016). As a result low Low levels of poaching inside the park occur as a direct result of the presence of these mining camps (Aveling, 2010).

► War, Civil Unrest/ Military Exercises

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

For more than a decade the park and its surrounding buffer zones weare used as a cover by the Lord’s Resistance Army (a rebel group originating in Uganda). This armed militia had wreaked havoc amongst local communities and destroyed the park headquarters at Nagero in January 2009 (with the loss of 10 lives), but has subsequently become increasingly fragmented and dispersed. Its members – probably no more than 100-150 combatants in 4-5 scattered groups – are being relentlessly pursued by a coalition of forces from Uganda (2,000 UPDF soldiers), South Sudan (500 SPLA soldiers) and CAR (300 soldiers), with support from the US Africa Command (AFRICOM). By the time of the last monitoring mission (March 2016) they had mostly moved away from areas they previously occupied in the park and Azande Hunting Area into the south-eastern areas of CAR. So although they may still remain a security threat it is well contained and may account for no more than 10-15% of elephant poaching, while no longer posing a significant risk of unprovoked attack on park personnel and installations (Mission Report, 2016). For some time, personnel of the government’s Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of Congo (FARDC) who were tasked with driving out remaining elements of LRA and improving security, were themselves contributing to the escalation of poaching. Measures have subsequently been taken, including the removal of two army colonels and re-organisation of the local command structure, to ensure that FARDC are no longer a threat to the park (Mission Report, 2016; SOC, 2017).

► Hunting (commercial/subsistence)

Very High Threat

Inside site, widespread(15-50%)
Outside site

Commercial hunting over the past 45 years has resulted in significant declines of all wildlife populations in the site (ICCN, 2010, Mission Report, 2016). Poaching remains the greatest single threat to the integrity of the park, especially its dwindling populations of elephants and giraffe. At least 2,000 elephants were killed illegally between 2007 and 2012, reducing the population to around 1,700 individuals by that time (from 22,000 in 1976). Most elephant poaching (75-80%) is now being carried out by people entering the park from South Sudan. In addition, there have been four known incidents of mass killings of elephants from a helicopter, accounting for the deaths of 50 elephants between March 2012 and August 2015 (Mission Report, 2016)
At the time of the last reactive monitoring mission (March 2016) the LRA was thought to be financing its operations through the sale of poached ivory, which probably accounted for around 10-15% of elephant poaching in the Garamba complex. LRA operatives were known to be collaborating in elephant poaching with Mbororo peoples (transhumant pastoralists) and others from further afield (including Janjaweed horsemen from Sudan), particularly in the western parts of the park and Azande Hunting Area (Mission Report, 2016).
The incidence of poaching for bushmeat by members of local communities is thought to be relatively limited, probably accounting for no more than 5% of total poaching incidents. The difficulties of stopping commercial hunting have to be seen within the exceptionally difficult security context in north eastern DRC (civil wars in DRC and neighbouring Sudan, presence of LRA until late 2015).

Potential Threats

High Threat

Although the park itself is unaffected by settlement, tree-cutting or cultivation, parts of Gangala na Bodio and Mondo Missa Hunting Areas are coming under increasing pressure from settlers. An estimated 50,000 people live within the two Hunting Areas and adjacent towns of Dungu and Faradje. Areas of these hunting areas that lie immediately adjacent to the park (to the north of the main road connecting these towns) remains relatively pristine as does the

whole of Azande Hunting Area and the western part of Mondo Missa bordering the park. It is important that these areas are secured and protected within a formally-recognised Buffer Zone (Mission Report, 2017).

► Mining/ Quarrying

Low Threat
Outside site

Given the current price of gold, and the prevailing context of poverty and poor governance in DRC, there is concern that there will be attempts to set up illegal gold panning camps inside the park. Cases have already been recorded but have so far been dealt with rapidly (Aveling, 2010).

► Logging/ Wood Harvesting, Crops

Low Threat
Outside site

Although the park itself is unaffected by settlement, tree-cutting or cultivation, parts of Gangala na Bodio and Mondo Missa Hunting Areas are coming under increasing pressure from settlers. An estimated 50,000 people live within the two Hunting Areas and adjacent towns of Dungu and Faradje. Areas of these hunting areas that lie immediately adjacent to the park (to the north of the main road connecting these towns) remains relatively pristine as does the whole of Azande Hunting Area and the western part of Mondo Missa bordering the park. It is important that these areas are secured and protected within a formally-recognised Buffer Zone (Mission Report, 2017).

Protection and management

Assessing Protection and Management

► Relationships with local people

Some Concern

Under the management of African Parks a considerable effort has been made to improve relations with the local communities. The construction of new schools and a hospital has provided surrounding communities with access to education and better healthcare. Garamba is one of the largest employers in

the area with over 300 full-time and 900 part-time staff, including law enforcement teams and dedicated community personnel. Environmental education programmes take place at schools throughout the region and 25 nature clubs have been set up at schools outside the park. Almost 9,000 people received treatment from Garamba's mobile health clinic and more than 1,000 refugees from South Sudan received medical treatment and food from the park in 2016 (AP website, 2017). FFI is a partner of African Parks and ICCN in Garamba, and is spearheading the community conservation programme. These efforts should be seen in the context of the extreme isolation/poverty of this part of the Oriental Province and the extreme levels of insecurity in which local communities live. The park is perceived by the local people as a pole of development and support. Park authorities and partners have showed their commitment not only to the conservation of this unique site, but also to the fate of local populations living in extremely difficult conditions.

► Legal framework

Serious Concern

ICCN has subcontracted the management of the GNP to African Parks since 2005, and this agreement was renewed for a further 10 years in early 2016. The legal framework of the park is clear and globally adequate. The official inclusion in the park of the triangle between the Garamba and Dodo rivers to the south east of the park would be desirable. Given the complementary nature of the different habitats inside and outside of the park (predominantly open grasslands inside the park, predominantly woodlands in the buffer zones) the importance of the 3 buffer zones (Hunting Domains) to the ecological integrity of the whole ecosystem cannot be overemphasised. The park cannot survive without the existence of the surrounding hunting domains as these act not only as buffer zone, but more importantly as an area which is seasonally used by elephants. Besides, some species, like the bongo, the chimpanzee and the sitatunga are probably only found in the hunting domains. Protection of these buffer zones, which are not part of the World Heritage property, falls far short of what is necessary to ensure the ecological integrity of the ecosystem as a whole.

► Enforcement

Serious Concern

Enforcement Law enforcement remains extremely challenging and only about 20% of the Hunting Areas is currently patrolled by park anti-poaching personnel (SOC, 2017). Law enforcement efforts have been strengthened considerably since the appointment of a new Director and other senior staff in May 2015. Nevertheless, at least 98 elephants and three giraffes were lost to poaching in 2016, a level which is barely sustainable given the low populations of these species now surviving (State Party SOC, 2017).

► Integration into regional and national planning systems

Some Concern

Wherever possible the park's strategy for support for community development takes into consideration the concerns of local "Collectivités". Development initiatives must be compatible with the conservation objectives of the park. However the park's community development initiatives must be viewed in the context of the enormous development needs of this province, very weak regional planning capacities, widespread poverty, and the general absence of functioning State structures (communications, schooling, health care, justice, etc…).

► Management system

Some Concern

The management of Garamba has been under a public-private partnership (PPP) arrangement with African Parks Network since 2005. A new 10-year agreement was signed in January 2016 under which an independent 7-member Board assumes responsibility for management of the park, including the appointment of a park director and assistant park manager. The Board raises necessary funding and a 50% share of tourism profits goes to ICCN/government. A new Business Plan has been approved for 2016-21, which sets out the strategy and procedures for managing the park. Key tasks are identified in six key areas of park operations, namely Infrastructure, Law Enforcement, Conservation, Research & Monitoring, Community Constituency, Tourism and Revenue Generation, and Finance and Administration. The Business Plan does not indicate the spatial zonation of the park or other parts of the wider Garamba complex (encompassing the three Hunting Areas), and this will be developed separately. The approved annual budget for the park is approximately US$ 3.2 million, with 70%

contributed by the European Union and smaller amounts coming from the World Bank, USFWS and American private foundations (Buffett, Bonderman). This amount represents a shortfall of US$ 1.1 million over the required US$ 4.3 million budget, which allows for a stronger ranger force and implementation of various projects as detailed in the park Business Plan (Mission Report, 2016).

► Management effectiveness

Serious Concern

No formal management effectiveness assessment, using one of the recognized management effectiveness assessment, tools is available. However it is likely that effectiveness is improving progressively thanks to the considerable investments in equipment, infrastructures, human resources and organization that have occurred since African Parks were given the mandate to manage the park in 2005. Law enforcement efforts have been strengthened considerably since the appointment of a new Director and other senior staff in May 2015 and there are some early indications of a turnaround in Garamba’s fortunes: firstly, aerial census results in 2007, 2012 and 2014 suggest that populations of buffalo, hippo, hartebeest, waterbuck and kob are recovering; and secondly, counts of elephant carcasses since intensive aerial surveillance began in 2014 indicate a progressive decline in the numbers of elephants killed (Mission Report, 2016). Nevertheless, at least 98 elephants and three giraffes were lost to poaching in 2016, a level which is barely sustainable given the low populations of these species now surviving (State Party SOC, 2017).

► Implementation of Committee decisions and recommendations

Some Concern

Most of the Committee decisions are being implemented within the constraints of the prevailing security situation in the area.
A concerted multinational effort (Congo, Uganda, Sudan, USA, MONUSCO, AU) is being made to eliminate the Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA), and this has been largely successful. The involvement of FARDC soldiers in poaching has been stopped. The park now has an effective force of 184 guards, and ground surveillance of the entire park, as well as 20% of the adjacent

Hunting Areas (State Party SOC, 2017).

The park management is actively engaging with illegal gold mining in the buffer zones, focusing on areas that are important for chimps (part of eastern buffer zone). However gold panning is very widespread, and increasing, and is almost completely uncontrolled by the State, so this continues to be a major challenge for the park.
Relations with local communities are improving thanks to concerted efforts by AP to engage with local community leaders and develop outreach activities (health care, schools, road access, employment through HIMO, micro-projects, etc.). Key wildlife populations are being monitored within the constraints of the security situation and an aerial census was planned for April 2017 (SOC, 2017), the results of which are awaited. Fifty four elephants as well as a number of giraffe and lions and have been fitted with GPS collars and there is regular aerial surveillance for the whole park (AP website, 2017).

► Boundaries

Mostly Effective

The eastern, southern and western boundaries of the park follow large rivers and are therefore clearly recognizable. The northern boundary is the international frontier with Sudan, of which part also forms the southern boundary of Sudan’s Lantoto NP. As mentioned above effective protection of the buffer zones is essential to the integrity of the whole ecosystem. Currently these buffer zones are not adequately protected, and the formal designation of a buffer zone has not been done (State Party SOC, 2017).

► Sustainable finance

Some Concern

The approved annual budget for the park is approximately US$ 3.2 million, with 70% contributed by the European Union and smaller amounts coming from the World Bank, USFWS and American private foundations (Buffett, Bonderman). This amount represents a shortfall of US$ 1.1 million over the required US$ 4.3 million annual budget, and the park management team considers the budget shortfall to be the principal constraint to effective management of the park. In addition to the park budget an amount of US$ 10 million of potential EU support was under negotiation at the time of the last

monitoring mission to support income-generating activities around the periphery of the park. This might serve to contribute towards the long-term financial sustainability of the park as well as supporting local communities. Revenue from tourism is very small and currently contributes insignificantly to financing park management costs. For the foreseeable future the park will be dependent on international funding agencies.

► Staff training and development

Some Concern

In line with the new emphasis on law enforcement, capacity is being developed in the ranger force through new recruitment, training and close collaboration with the national army, FARDC. Where FARDC personnel were previously a threat to the park, they have now become its strongest ally, with an agreement to deploy 300 soldiers to the park. FARDC soldiers are trained and deployed alongside park rangers and only those achieving the required level of competence and discipline after an initial 1-month period of training are retained. By the end of 2016 the ranger force (including some FARDC soldiers) included a total of 201 personnel (State Party SOC, 2017), and is expected to be strengthened to 240 (Mission Report, 2016).

► Sustainable use

Data Deficient

No resources may be legally extracted from the park so the question of sustainable use is not applicable. Resources currently being illegally exploited in the park are large herbivores and gold. Effective law enforcement is required to deal with both these problems.

► Education and interpretation programs

Mostly Effective

Environmental education programmes take place at schools throughout the region and 25 nature clubs have been set up at schools outside the park. Regular visits of schools to the park are organized by park management. The park has acquired a lorry specifically for this purpose. These visits certainly help top enhance an understanding of the values of the site.

► Tourism and visitation management

Mostly Effective

See under “Sustainable finance”. A new tourist lodge was recently completed and efforts to promote tourism are ongoing. Occasional international groups do visit the park but the current climate of insecurity is a major constraint. However an important local market (>1000 expatriates working for a nearby industrial gold mining complex) is being tapped. An area in the buffer zone where chimpanzees occur is being monitored with a view to habituating them for tourism, in collaboration with the local community.

► Monitoring

Some Concern

Garamba National Park is one of the few parks in DRC that has long term data on wildlife population trends. However monitoring has been seriously hampered since the civil war and the arrival of the Lord’s Resistance Army in the region and has meant that in recent years it has not been possible to cover systematically the same areas with monitoring activities in order to obtain easily comparable data. However the monitoring that has been possible provides useful information on trends. Aerial censuses (total counts and systematic sample surveys, depending on the species) are conduced as regularly as the security situation allows. The last aerial survey was carried out in 2014 and a new one was planned being for April 2017 (SOC, 2017).

► Research

Mostly Effective

GPS collars on 54 elephants, eight giraffe and some lions are providing useful ecological information. Vegetation studies had been initiated in collaboration with Kisangani University. Chimpanzees are monitored at Gbere (in the buffer zone near the eastern boundary of the park).

Overall assessment of protection and management

Some Concern

The park is managed under a Public-Private-Partnership (PPP) arrangement by

African Parks Network. This commenced in 2005, and the first twelve years of its implementation has been a period of enormous challenges associated with widespread insecurity perpetrated by the rebel Lord's Resistance Army. Recent improvements in the regional security situation has enabled a major change in law enforcement strategy since May 2014, with protection efforts now extended to the entire property, as well as significant parts of the adjoining Hunting Areas. There are now early signs of success resulting from greatly increased levels of aerial surveillance, the strengthening and re-equipping of the ranger force, development of necessary park infrastructure and a strategic emphasis on ranger mobility, rapid deployment capability and use of intelligence information. Nevertheless there are still major unmet needs and at least 3 giraffe and 98 elephants were killed in 2016, a level that is barely sustainable (State Party SOC, 2017).

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

Some Concern

The regional security context has improved considerably over the past five years, with the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) now reduced to small numbers of combatants operating as 4-5 scattered groups, mostly at some distance from the property. Poaching by elements of the national army (FARDC) has been stopped, but poachers continue to operate in Garamba, mostly entering the park across its northern boundary from South Sudan. Aerial censuses indicate that poaching has had a major impact on the park's elephant population, with more than half the remaining animals (2,000 individuals) lost between 2007 and 2012, and the killing continuing (at slightly lower) levels through 2016 (State Party SOC, 2017). Illegal gold panning, forest clearance and agricultural settlement in the buffer zones is increasing rapidly and constitutes a major concern for the park since the protection of the buffer zones is essential to the ecological integrity of the ecosystem to which the park belongs.

State and trend of values

Assessing the current state and trend of values

World Heritage values

▶ Large expanse of guinea savannahs with the potential to support an exceptionally high large mammal biomass

Good
Trend:Stable

The savannahs and habitats are considered to be in a good pristine condition, unaffected by human settlement, domestic animals, mining or other human activities. However, some change in vegetation structure and succession may be occurring as a result of the substantial reduction in elephant numbers (from around 22,000 in 1976 to around 1,200 in 2016, State Party SOC, 2017). The potential of the area to support the massive populations of large herbivores known previously is largely a function of the biophysical conditions at Garamba, which remain essentially unchanged.

▶ Geographic location within the transition zone between two bio-geographically important centres of endemism (Guinean-Congo and Guinean-Sudanese)

Low Concern
Trend:Data Deficient

The mix of habitat types from the two centers of endemism are still present, although it should be noted that the three buffer zones (which are not part of the World Heritage property) are critical to the maintenance of the full range of habitat types typical of this transition zone. Illegal gold panning and clearing for agricultural settlement in the buffer zones is negatively impacting certain important habitat types, particularly gallery forests which contain many typically moist forest species (Mission Report, 2016).

▶ Presence of emblematic, endangered and/or endemic mammal species

Critical
Trend:Data Deficient

All large herbivores have been affected and continue to be threatened by poaching. The white rhino is now considered to be extinct in the wild and the elephant population is under intense pressure from ivory poaching. Since 2004 the security situation has prevented the systematic collection of

monitoring data across the whole park. Aerial censuses of different species have been conducted when possible, and in general only over the southern part of the park. It is therefore difficult to assess the trends over the past five years with precision. However, there are some early indications of a turnaround in Garamba's fortunes for some species: firstly, aerial census results in 2007, 2012 and 2014 suggest that populations of buffalo, hippo, hartebeest, waterbuck and kob are recovering; and secondly, counts of elephant carcasses since intensive aerial surveillance began in 2014 indicate a progressive decline in the numbers of elephants killed (Mission Report, 2016). A systematic aerial count of large mammals was scheduled for April 2017, the results of which are awaited (State Party SOC, 2017). It is expected to indicate the elephant population to be around 1,200 individuals, lower than the 2014 estimate (1500 individuals) and a reduction of almost 95% compared with the 1976 figure (State Party SOC, 2017). The DRC's only population of giraffe (now re-classified as Kordofan giraffe, and no longer considered a distinct sub-species) now stands at a critically low number of around 47 individuals, following 3 confirmed killings by poachers and 7 known births in 2016 (AP website, 2017; SOC, 2017).

Summary of the Values

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

High Concern

Trend: Data Deficient

The Guinea savannahs of the park are intact and therefore maintain their potential for supporting an exceptionally large biomass of large herbivores. The mix of habitat types from the Guinea-Congolian and sudanian centres of endemism are still present in and around the park, but illegal gold panning in the buffer zones is threatening some areas of important habitats habitats in the wider landscape (outside the property).
Gallery forests in the buffer zones are particularly affected (where typically impacting moist forest species such as chimpanzees)occur. The emblematic and endangered animal species continue to beare seriously threatened by poaching, the white rhino is now considered extinct in the wild and population of elephants and giraffe have been reduced to very low levels. Data are insufficient for an accurate assessment to trends over the past 5

years. It will require many years of strong park management to allow these populations to recover.

► **Assessment of the current state and trend of other important biodiversity values**

Good

Trend: Stable

The large communal nesting sites of the northern carmine bee-eater Maerops nubiensis are intact and not threatened.

Additional information

Benefits

Understanding Benefits

► **Water provision (importance for water quantity and quality)**

The abundance of permanent water sources is a unique feature of the site and is one of the key contributing factors for the park’s capacity to support a very high biomass of large herbivores.

► **Outdoor recreation and tourism**

The park has very significant tourist potential, but is prevented from maximizing this potential because of the security situation. Key tourist attractions are: a vast undulating, grassland-dominated landscape; a variety of large herbivore species, including spectacularly large herds of elephants at certain times of the year; large communal nesting sites of carmine bee-eaters; hippos and crocodiles in the rivers. This is one of very few sites in central Africa where this kind of tourist potential exists.

Summary of benefits

The national and global benefits in terms of nature conservation (unique mixture of savannah and forest species), and the potential benefits in terms of recreation (tourism) are of high importance. However these benefits are at risk because of the inability to resolve the problem of armed militia.

Projects

Compilation of active conservation projects

№	Organization/ individuals	Project duration	Brief description of Active Projects
1	African Parks		Since 2005 African Parks Network (APN) has had the mandate from ICCN to manage Garamba National Park. The contract was renewed in January 2016 for a further 10 year period. APN mobilizes its own sources of funding, and also manages funds provided by the European Commission, Spanish Cooperation, World Bank, and various private foundations and NGOs. Current levels of funding are the highest they have been for over 20 years. Activities cover all aspects of park management: reorganisation of all park management structures, building and rehabilitating infrastructures, equipping and training guards, anti-poaching, community conservation, tourism development, research and monitoring,

Compilation of potential site needs

№	Site need title	Brief description of potential site needs	Support needed for following years
1	Sustained funding	All park management activities require sustained funding at least at the current levels for many years to come. Better surveillance of the buffer zones is vital and this will require a significant increase in resources, particularly vehicles and manpower.	

REFERENCES

№	References
1	APN website at : https://www.african-parks.org/the-parks/garamba
2	African Parks Annual Reports www.african-parks.org , and internal monthly report.
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