M.Sc. 2011

Implementing New Governance Strategies for Protected Areas: Analysis of the Transboundary Conservation Program on Mt. Elgon in Uganda and Kenya

Magnus Ruderaas

NORWEGIAN UNIVERSITY OF LIFE SCIENCES

Implementing new protected area governance strategy.

Analysis of the transboundary conservation program on Mt. Elgon in Uganda and Kenya

Magnus Ruderaas

Msc. Degree in Development Studies

May 2011

Noragric

Norwegian University of Life Science

The Department of International Environment and Development Studies, Noragric, is the international gateway for the Norwegian University of Life Sciences (UMB). Eight departments, associated research institutions and the Norwegian College of Veterinary Medicine in Oslo. Established in 1986, Noragric's contribution to international development lies in the interface between research, education (Bachelor, Master and PhD programmes) and assignments.

The Noragric Master theses are the final theses submitted by students in order to fulfil the requirements under the Noragric Master programme "International Environmental Studies", "Development Studies" and other Master programmes.

Declaration

I, (name), declare that this thesis is a result of my research investigations and findings. Sources of information other than my own have been acknowledged and a reference list has been appended. This work has not been previously submitted to any other university for award of any type of academic degree.

Signature………………………………..

Date……………………………………….

Ås

Acknowledgments

Abstract

This thesis aim to examine the process of how a transboundary protected area management strategy (TBPAM) is introduced and implemented, using the case of Mt. Elgon in Kenya and Uganda. TBPAM has received much attention over the last years and have been widely promoted, especially in Southern Africa. The program on Elgon, called Mount Elgon Reginal Ecosystem Conservation Program (MERECP) is the first attempt to implement such strategy in the region, and is therefore regarded as a pioneer program in East Africa.

Data was obtained through questionnaires and interviews with key stakeholders in the MERECP program. Questions were focused on mapping the stakeholders role in MERECP, understanding of transboundary issues and how the transboundary strategy matched the challenges facing protected area governance on Mt. Elgon. Moreover secondary data like MERECP reports and reviews are used as a data source. The thesis is rooted in institutional theory, and applies the analytical tools of stakeholder analysis and social network analysis to analyze the data obtained.

The MERECP project was introduced to Mt. Elgon by IUCN and gained the support of the Governments of Kenya and Uganda, and donors Norway and Sweden. Currently there are six different protected areas on Mt. Elgon, managed by five different organizations that all apply different conservation strategies. Bringing these organizations together and harmonizing their conservation strategies have proved difficult. The major reason for this is that there is a big difference among the actors involved in regards to their capacity, both in terms of financial and academic resources, furthermore many of the stakeholders involved perceive the solution to challenges faced by the protected areas to be of a national origin than a national. There are also few results so far that can be characterized as "transboundary" and these results mainly involve only the stakeholders with the highest capacity.

This paper raises questions as to the applicability of TBPAM on Elgon, and argue that the top-down manner in which the program was introduced have resulted in a program with while promoting transboundary cooperation, is not the best fit to address problems faced by protected area governance on Mt. Elgon.

List of tables and figures

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

Protected Areas (PA) are a significant land use category globally with 11,3% of land regulated by some sort of PA regime. For Eastern and Southern Africa, PAs are even more significant land use category with 15,5% of land in a PA regimes (West et al. 2006). However, governance of PAs is subject to different conservation categories, allowing different use and access under different management practices. In Sub-Saharan Africa governance of protected areas have come under considerable scrutiny, following a realization that sustainable management of the biodiversity resources within the PAs have been difficult to accomplish and further, the severe social impact and conflicts their governance has created (Hutton et al. 2005; Pétursson et al. 2010).

International boundaries are basically political constructs, that do not follow ecosystem- or natural resources boundaries (Singh 1999). However, policies for resource use in one country can potentially have great effects on the ecosystem in their neighboring country (Katerere et al. 2001). Managing adjoining protected areas as separate entities or enclaves is therefore increasingly perceived to be an insufficient approach to sustainable management of protected areas (Wolmer 2003).

Initially advocated strongly for by the International Union For Conservation of Nature (IUCN), transboundary protected area management approaches have gained the interest from major multilateral and bilateral donors, and is currently one of the emerging trends in international protected area governance discourse (Singh 1999; Amerom 2002; Hutton et al. 2005). The underlying assumption in the transboundary protected are management (TBPAM) strategy is that conservation efficiency and effectiveness can be improved by focusing on bioregional borders instead of being limited by national politically constructed borders.

Transboundary strategies to protected area governance in Africa has so far been most common in Southern parts of Africa where the strategy had a "boom" following the fall of the Apartheid regime in South Africa (Amerom 2002). These initiatives were

in many cases labeled as "Peace Parks", aimed at promoting cooperation and peace in the region.

Implementing transboundary management of protected areas entails entering a new and more complex institutional landscape in nature conservation. How actors associated with a protected area interact is regulated through a multitude of institutional arrangements, both formal and informal (Pétursson et al. 2010). Different PA categories operate with different jurisdiction within a country, they are a construct of respective countries policies. When cooperation is considered across borders we cannot expect to find the institutional arrangements in different countries matching. This implies that there will be a need to deliberately create new institutions for the TBPAM regime, both formal and informal, to coordinate the interactions. This paper will mainly be concerned with the formal institutions, while keeping in mind that informal institutions exist and are important.

While the perceived ecological benefits for TBPAM are widely advocated, less is known about the institutional aspects regarding implementation of such strategies (Plumptre et al. 2003; Pétursson et al. 2010).

This paper aims to advance knowledge about the challenges related to TBPAM implementation, using the case of Mt Elgon in Kenya and Uganda. The paper is rooted in institutional theory, and uses the analytical tool of stakeholder analysis and social network analysis as an approach to understanding the processes and actors in MERECP. The data for the study was collected during fieldwork in Uganda and Kenya in November-December 2010 and was mainly collected by employing semi-structured interviews with key stakeholders in the MERECP program. The respondents also provided data through a questionnaire.

1.2 Problem statement

The main objective of this thesis is to examine how a new protected area conservation strategy is introduced and implemented, using the case of the transboundary protected area management strategy.

The study employs the case of Mt Elgon in Kenya and Uganda where there is ongoing implementation of a transboundary protected area management project. The main focus will be on the implementing actors.

Mt. Elgon Regional Ecosystem Conservation Program (MERECP) is a program that attempts to apply a transboundary protected area management strategy to the Mt. Elgon region in Uganda and Kenya. The program initially suggested by IUCN and funded by the Government of Norway and the Government of Sweden is a pioneer program, in that it is the first attempt to apply TBPAM in East Africa.

1.3 Objectives:

The study did indentify following key research questions:

1. Examine why TBNRM was chosen as the preferred management system for the Mt. Elgon Ecosystem. And what goals and results was envisaged?
2. Identify who did introduce TBPAM to Elgon and what was the motive?
3. Analyse the role and interests of the stakeholders involved in the Mt. Elgon Regional Eco-System Conservation Programme (MERECP).
4. Apply network analysis to assess how far MERECP has developed as a policy network.
5. Analyse the challenges and progress of MERECP so far
6. See what lessons can be learned from Mt. Elgon that can be transferred into other transboundary projects and other new protected area strategies.

1.4 Justification of the study

The study aims at providing an understanding of how a new protected area management strategy is introduced, and how the implementing institutions are adapting to this new strategy. Implementing new governance strategies implies a major institutional change that will have an effect on formal as well as informal institutions. Furthermore the implementing institutions of MERECP are far from a homogenous group, their capacity and ability to function in this new institutional setting can be expected to be different.

Transboundary protected area management is a new strategy to Uganda and Kenya, and MERECP is seen as a pioneer program for a strategy that will likely be promoted to other protected areas within the East African Regioni. The experiences from MERECP might guide the implementation of future TBPAM initiatives.

The management of the Mt.Elgon area is in a state of gradual change. In the future we will potentially see major changes in the strategies and policies used to manage these areas. It is therefore important and timely to be able to conduct a research on the on-going implementation process.

1.5 Limitations to the study

There were some methodological limitations to the study. During the fieldwork for this study I was not able to organize meetings with the national focal points assigned to the project, nor with the East African Community. Therefore the opinions and interest of the Governments of Kenya and Uganda are not gathered from first hand sources. This limits the scope of the study to the implementing agencies on the ground in Mt. Elgon.

1.6 Thesis structure

The thesis consists of seven chapters. Chapter 2 presents protected area governance, and the emergence of transboundary protected area strategies. Chapter 3 presents Mt. Elgon and its conservation background. Chapter 4 presents the theoretical background for the study. Chapter five describes the methodology and data collection. In Chapter 6 the results are presented and discussed. Chapter 7 is the conclusions and recommendations.

2. Protected areas and the emergence of Transboundary Protected Area Management (TBPAM)

"A transboundary ideal ambition could be to address one common biodiversity resource with one common biodiversity plan within one organisational structure internalising all activities planned for. One should also have one common legal framework and a common economy internalising all external effects, and with a common set of participatory, livelihood practices" (Vedeld et al. 2005 : pp. 5).

Protected areas (PA) are a cornerstone of global conservation strategies and the nation state key conservation instrument (Dearden et al. 2005). PAs have in many countries been controversial, especially in developing countries when PA management often comes into conflict with local communities and their livelihood strategies.

Traditionally, protected areas have been rigid top-down structures governed by central governmental agency the has developed plans for conservation and put limits on access and land use, with little or no participation from local communities. Since the mid 1980, this has however been changing with the arrival of alternative PA strategies, highlighting the need for local participation and collaboration in protected area management. Strategies jointly phrased as Community Based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM) comes as a realization that local people and local communities have rightful claims to the natural resources that PAs are intended to protect. Indeed the affected local communities have in most cases been managing these resources long before the modern conservation schemes such as national parks came to be. This has in many cases led to introduction of new conservation policies that are supposed to involve and address local community needs and interests. Moreover this also marked a shift in focus from solidly focus on conservation, to sustainable use of natural resources (Vedeld 2002).

Within the field of protected area governance, one topic that has gained much attention last decades is transboundary protected area management (TBPAM). This strategy implies some level of joint management between two or more adjoining PAs in different countries, across the international border. The arguments behind such

management strategy are mainly emanating from ecological perspectives arguing for conservation boundaries to meet the ecosystem boundaries, beyond the national boundaries (Plumptre et al. 2003). However, few studies have explored the institutional aspects, implementation challenges and outcomes of the TBPAM strategy. A transboundary management structure will require new and adaptive institutions, so as to be able to work outside their traditional structures.

The first transboundary PA management strategy originates in North America. In 1932 the Canadian and U.S. governments established what is called a peace park linking Waterton Lakes National Park with Glacier National Park. While managed mostly separately, the two parks cooperate within fields such as search and rescue and tourism (Linde et al. 2001). This park later inspired several similar parks, branded as "peace parks" that are supposed to facilitate peace and good relations between adjoining countries.

According to Wolmer (2003) there are two main areas of tension within the field of transboundary protected areas (TBPA). The first relates to radical bioregionalism and the second to the concept of ecoregionalism. Bioregionalism argues that the earth consists of contiguous, but discreet bioregions defined by its topography and biota rather than human biases. Bioregionalists argue for political autonomy, decentralized government and grass root empowerment. These initiatives should be bottom-up driven by the communities themselves. This approach have however been criticized for being unrealistic in their approach to institutions and political creations, and to put to much faith in the laws of nature (McGinnis 2005).

The thoughts of bioregionalists have had a major influence on the scientific ecoregionalism. This scientific agenda has however ridden itself of the radical political agenda and is instead focusing on scientific discourse to argue for conservation programs with an ecosystem approach. The main argument behind this thought is that habitat fragmentation is major threat to conservation of biodiversity. Thus, they argue, it makes sense to combat fragmentation by linking protected areas (Wolmer 2003).

Ecoregionalism is inherently, with its scientific approach, a top-down driven process focusing on the managerial and technical aspects of conservation.

Ecoregionalism can also be analyzed in a neo-liberalistic paradigm and has been used to bring attention to donors motivation for supporting large-scale ecoregional planning (primarily by the international financial institutions like IMF and World Bank). Within the neo-liberal paradigm, development initiatives should promote an investment led approach, thus calling for private sector involvement. TBPAs is seen as a key revenue generator, providing a good environment for investment especially within the ecotourism (Wolmer 2003).

Wolmer (2003), also refers to an unpublished manuscript by Peter Brosious (2003) which draws attention to how ecoregional planning and neo-liberal economics intersect. He argues that the cost extensive nature of ecoregional planning makes conservation organizations more and more business like, and establishing funding strategies in conjunction with multi-lateral donor agencies. He continues to argue that these funding structures favor transnational conservation organizations on the expense of grassroot and national conservation organizations.

In deciding which organizations that should be involved in a transboundary protected area strategy there are some important considerations that need to be done. Van Ameron (2002) uses the example of the Peace Parks Concept where all actors interests are perceived to be complementary in nature, and each actor is given the possibility to pursue his interest. This win-win situation Ameron argues does however not exist, instead one risks having several actors engaged in power-struggles against each other. Implementing a transboundary protected area management strategy is likely to result in organizations stepping into each other previous domain. To mitigate this conflict it is therefore important to do a comprehensive mapping of stakeholders and their interest before embarking on such exercises.

A crucial element when considering transboundary management is to scrutinize what level of cooperation should be the objective. Theorizing cooperation and classifying cooperation is complicated, and the existing literature on transboundary PA conservation often fails to examine what cooperation is and further, perceives

cooperation as universally good where more is better. Fall (2009) argues that transboundary cooperation can be understood as a process of ongoing individual and collective identity construction. Using this we can identify that transboundary cooperation is not necessarily about creating a situation with no-borders or full integration of the PAs involved.

There are three broad approaches that exist in this context; (1) examination of the process on the scale of the individual, usually by applying game theory. (2) Reduction of the process to degrees of interaction without conceptualizing cooperation, and instead reducing it to degrees of interaction. (3) Theories of international cooperation, drawing on traditional international relations theory where cooperation is viewed as reducing conflict rather than solving extraneous conflict (Fall 2009).

In some cases transboundary PA cooperation is "measured" in communication and interaction between the involved stakeholders. While this is an integral part of transboundary cooperation, it cannot be said to be a complete measure for success within transboundary initiatives. We therefore need some more indicators for what constitutes "transboundary PA cooperation".

3. The Case: Mt. Elgon in Uganda and Kenya

The study area for this paper is Mt. Elgon, its protected areas and the stakeholders that are involved in the transboundary PA program Mount Elgon Regional Ecosystem Conservation Program (MERECP).

Mt. Elgon is a 4.321 meters high mountain on the border between Uganda and Kenya, divided almost equally between the two East African countries. The mountain is actually an extinct shield volcano that has contributed to the mountains (relatively) flat profile. The slopes of Mt. Elgon are covered with dense forest and farmlands. The forest-covered areas above the farmlands are mostly located within protected areas, circling the mid-range parts of the mountain. Beyond the forests are extensive heaths and moorlands.

All lands, both forest and moorlands, beyond the farmlands on Elgon belong to some protected area category in both countries.

3.1.1 Livelihood strategies around Mt. Elgon

Communities adjacent to Mt. Elgon are for the most part dependent on small-scale (subsistence) agricultural production (e.g. Ongugo et al. 2001; Soini 2006; Pétursson et al. 2010). The farming units are characterized by being fairly small, however the types of produce vary depending on the location around the mountain. Livestock is common, however factors like ethnicity factor in on how common this is.

A common misconception is to view all economic activities undertaken by subsistence farmers as "on farm" activities. For the communities adjacent to Mt. Elgon the forest resources also constitute an important part of their income. Katto (2004) found that 19% of total household income in park adjacent communities are environmental income. Environmental income can be understood as consumption of natural capital in within the first link of the market chain (Sjaastad et al. 2005). This includes gathering of firewood, medicine and fodder that are the most relevant environmental income generators collected by adjacent communities from the protected areas on Mt. Elgon.

3.1.2 People

There are mainly two major ethnic groups living around Mt. Elgon. These are the Sabiny/Sabaout and Bagisu. In addition there are several other ethnic groups present in the area (Soini 2006). The religion is dominantly Christianity, some Islam especially on the Ugandan side, and to some extent local religions in a combination with these.

Katto (2004) found that there were differences between ethnic groups in their income from activities conducted inside the park boundaries. One explanation to this is the different traditions for cattle keeping, and that cattle keeping groups utilize protected areas for fodder, in addition to the other uses shared by all groups. He also argues that for the groups keeping cattle they have cultural value as well as their economic value. This can be part of the explanation as to why some household take the risk of collecting fodder inside the protected areas. This show that the different ethnic groups interact differently with the PAs, and thus are affected differently by PA regimes.

Katto (2004) also gives other examples of different resource use by the different ethnic groups. This also suggests that the economic value of the resources located inside the protected areas varies between the ethnic groups. Both the Bagishu and the Sabiny use the forest in traditional rituals like for instance circumcision ceremonies, giving the forest great importance culturally.

In Uganda and Kenya, the areas surrounding the PA are very densely populated, actually among the most densely populated areas in East Africa. Sioni (2006) estimates the population in the districts surrounding Mt. Elgon at 2.002.297 based on data from the respective districts development plans[1]. According to the CIA World Factbook Uganda has a population growth rate of 3.576% while Kenya has a population growth rate of 2,462%. These high population growth rates contributes to an increased pressure on land and resources in the area.

---

[1] These numbers are based on the structure of districts in 2005. Since then Kenya has established one new district (Kwanza District), while Uganda has established 5 new districts (Kwee, Manafwa, Bududa, Bukwa and Bulambuli).

3.1.3 Water catchments

Mt. Elgon is an important regional water catchments area for both Uganda and Kenya with an annual rainfall ranging from 1500-2000 mm per year (Katto 2004). The main rivers flowing down from Mt. Elgon are the Suam, Malakis, Siroko, Malaba and Kelim. These rivers eventually feed into Lake Turkana in Kenya, and Lake Victoria and the river Nile in Uganda. The reliable access to water has provided good conditions for both forestry and agriculture, in combination with the fertile soils, and has been crucial in determining the land use patterns around Mt. Elgon today, and is a crucial factor in determining the sustainability of the livelihoods for people living on the plains below the mountain. Approximately 12 million people have Mt. Elgon and the rivers flowing from it as their primary water source.

3.1.4 Biodiversity

Mt. Elgon area boosts an exceptional variety of flora and fauna, with many species being endemic to the area that make it an important area for nature conservation.

Flora:

The vegetation of Mt. Elgon can be divided into four broad vegetation communities based within altitudes (Katto 2004; Myhren 2007):

1. Below 2500 m. A mixed mountain forest
2. 2500-3000 m. A mixture of bamboo and low canopy mountain forest
3. 3000-3500 m. A zone of high mountain health
4. 3500- < m. High mountain moorland.

Fauna:

Mt. Elgon is considered to harbour significant a variety of mammals, birds and insects (Katto 2004; Myhren 2007). Most large mammal species are however extinct on the Ugandan side but many species are still found on the Kenyan side of the mountain.. The birdlife of Mt. Elgon is rich, however it also reflects that Mt. Elgon is the eastern limit of some western birds, and on the western limit of range for some eastern birds.

3.2. Mt. Elgon conservation background

Kenya and Uganda have a long history of nature conservation pre-dating their own independence. For the sake of Mt. Elgon the first area was gazetted as Forest Reserve

in 1932 on the Kenyan side of the border (Ongugo et al. 2001). The colonial government in Uganda soon followed and the first gazetted areas as Forest Reserve on the Ugandan side came in 1938 (Sletten et al. 2008). According to Ongugo et. al. (2001) the colonial government in Kenya argued that the public good was best served if water sources and natural resources were protected, even tough it meant displacing local communities exploiting said resource. The colonial government therefore appropriated Mt Elgon resources in both countries under governmental tenure without any consent from the local communities.

In the 1960s both Uganda and Kenya gained independence from the UK. While it brought changes to many policy fields, it seems that the PA conservation strategy introduced by the British remained the dominant strategy for conservation.

Currently there are six different protected areas on Mt. Elgon:
- Mt. Elgon National Park (Kenya), managed by Kenya Wildlife Service. Approximately 17.000 ha.
- Mt. Elgon National Park (Uganda), managed by Uganda Wildlife Authority. Approximately 114.500 ha.
- Mt. Elgon Forest Reserve, managed by Kenya Forest Service. Approximately 50.000 ha.
- Trans-nzoia Forest Reserve, managed by Kenya Forest Service. Approximately 23.000 ha.
- Cheptikale National Reserve (Kenya), managed by Mt. Elgon County Council. Approximately 16.000 ha.
- Namatale Forest Reserve (Uganda), managed by National Forest Authority. Approximately 46 ha.

3.2.1. Conservation in Mt Elgon, Uganda
Following independence in 1962, the whole Elgon on the Ugandan side remained a Forest Reserve, governed by the Forestry Department.

The political instability from 1971-1986 in Uganda resulted in the collapse of the Forest Department, leaving the protected areas open to exploitation. This opened the

gazetted areas for settlers, and resulted in a massive deforestation and degradation. Actually, the Amin government facilitated settlement within the Forest Reserve and issued (then) legitimate rights to local communities to do so. Political stability returned in late 1980s and in 1987 all natural forest areas over 100km2 were designated as Forest Parks. Furthermore a new forest policy was presented in 1988 which acknowledged the environmental as well as the economic value of forest resources, and that the Forest Reserve boundaries from 1963 would be enforced and people evicted (Soini 2006).

To evict those who had settled inside the 1963 boundaries proved to be a difficult and complex task. During the time of political instability a large number of Sabiny households escaped increasingly violent cattle raids by relocating high up the slopes close to the edge of the reserve. A resettlement process of these people was undertaken in 1983 and an area that was initially said to be no larger than 6000ha was allocated, it later turned out that the area was close to 7500ha (Soini 2006). This later resulted in a long lasting conflict between local communities and park management. This conflict further escalated after the Forest Park was renamed as a National Park, and Uganda National Parks (now UWA) was tasked with managing the area. This was a major policy change, as the conversion to a NP implied that the whole area became a no-go area for local communities. They used the 1963 boundary, when attempting to evict nearly 6000 people living in the disputed 1500ha of "additional" land. This resulted in a long legal process between UWA and the local communities with high levels of conflict and little trust. This conflict is still ongoing.

However, the 1988 forest policy did not only lead to conflict. Shortly after its introduction; IUCN took interest in the area and together with governmental institutions they designed a program for rehabilitation of some of the degraded land and attracted donor funding from NORAD. This program can be seen as the earliest roots of the present day MERECP program. One of the activities that was introduced during the IUCN program was an assessment of which resources the local communities extracted from the park, and from where (Soini 2006). This revealed that some 60% of the park was used for resource extraction, while only 30% of the park was regulated for such activities.

Currently UWA has a community conservation program that is based on the principle that long term conservation of Mt. Elgon can only be achieved if the adjacent communities collaborate in management issues and are able to share the benefits of the park. UWA therefore offers communities living in parishes adjacent to the park boundary collaborative agreements that allow the local people to access a set of resources from the park. Further, as an effort to achieve this, UWA is currently sharing 20% of entrance fees with local communities. However communities do not benefit from camping fees, trekking fees, or other revenue streams from the park.

3.2.3 Mt. Elgon conservation background: Kenya

On the Kenyan side of Mt. Elgon the history of conservation shares many similarities with Uganda. However, a key difference is that the mountain is governed on the Kenyan side in four different protected area units.

The largest area of the protected areas on the Kenyan side are managed as two Forest Reserves, one in Trans-nzoia district and one in Mt Elgon district with similar regulations of access and extractive use. Until the year 2007 this was managed by the Forest Department. According to Soini (2006) local communities have been allowed to extract forest resources for home consumption, although no records were kept of what resources and what quantities were extracted.

Under this conservation regime local communities/ individuals are able to obtain different sets of licenses that gave the right to extract different types of forest resources on a commercial basis. In addition commercial large-scale logging companies were operating inside the forest reserves. Sioni (2006) especially mentions the Raiply wood company of Eldoret who was able to extract indigenous trees despite a 1986 presidential ban on such logging. This plundering activity ended in 2000 when the local community blocked Raiply vehicles from entering the forest.

The system with licenses for local communities to extract/ grow crops inside the forest reserves (shamba system) also proved problematic as there was little control with the activities and mismanagement (Soini 2006). Research has shown that encroachment often stems from areas were the people have been allowed to grow crops in relations with reforestation projects.

Following the Forest Act of 2005, the Forest Department was changed into Kenya Forest Services (KFS). KFS is mandated to create contracts with local communities and facilitate participatory forest management. However there is currently a ban (December 2010) on all extraction of forest resources from forest reserves. This applies both to local communities and large-scale logging companies.

A second type of protected area conservation strategy that we find on the Kenyan side is the Chepkitale National Reserve. A national reserve is a special PA category in Kenya according to the conservation legislation. Such PAs differ from national parks in two key aspects. Firstly national reserves are governed by the district local governments for the benefits of the respective local communities and secondly by allowing local communities extractive use of natural resources, such as grazing and firewood. Chepkitale National Reserve used to be a free access zone for grazing and beekeeping. However at the time of research it was indicated that the district local government responsible for the area, the Mt. Elgon County Council, wished to revoke these rights and keep all human activities out from the reserve.

Mt. Elgon National Park represents the third conservation strategy at Mt. Elgon. National Parks in Kenya are regulated under the Wildlife Act. KWS applies a strict "fence and fine" policy and does not allow any extraction or use by local communities inside the park. However, there have been incidents were communities violate the rules in order to extract resources from within the park. The PA-community border is marked with an electric fence that KWS argues is there to keep animals from exiting the park and destroying crops grown by adjacent communities. One could however argue that it also keep people from entering the park, moreover the fencing has not kept some animals like baboons from crossing out of the park to feed on communities crops.

A small portion of the entrance fees to Mt. Elgon National Park (Kenya) is shared with the local communities, and has been spent to construct schools and health centers. KWS main revenue generator is visitors fess and project and research funding (Myhren 2007). Among the PA managerial organizations on Mt. Elgon, KWS seems to be the one with the best financial resources and human capital. This also allows

KWS to have a high number of rangers to patrol inside the park, and law enforcement is strict (Pétursson et al. 2010).

4. Theoretical Background for the Study

The theoretical background for this paper is rooted in institutional theory and in conjunction with this it uses two analytical tools in order to analyze and understand the MERECP program. The first is Stakeholder Analysis which is a tool to analyze and understand the role of different stakeholders/actors involved in protected area governance on Elgon. The second is Social Network Analysis, which is used for mapping and analyzing the relations between different actors within a network. The theory will form the basis for the analysis of the data that was collected during the fieldwork.

4.1 Institutional understanding

Institutional theory is a broad field, which aims at giving a greater understanding of how people and society interacts within a matrix of institutions. The term institution itself is not easy to define as it is given different meaning depending on the theoretical tradition in which it is applied. This thesis adheres to the definition of institutions given by Vatn (2005), understanding institutions as the norms, convention and formal rules of society. However, Mehta et al. (1999) argues that there is a general understanding of institutions as both enabling and constraining for human behavior. Institutional theory sees institutions as a creation that through imposing of regulations or rules, norms and conventions shape and are being shaped by human behavior in order to facilitate for a collective action

There are both formal and informal institutions. Formal institutions are institutions that are established with some sort of formal power or mandate. However institutional theory also points to the existence of informal institutions that can be equally important and powerful albeit not as easy to identify. This can for instance be the authority of a local leader or a specific way of "doing things".

Within the field of economics, institutions are often seen in a functionalist perspective. I.E. institutions solves a problem by reducing transaction cost and moving toward efficiency (Mehta et al. 1999). Anthropologists also argue that

institutions are formed by history and social factors. A common critique of institutional theory is that it often perceives actors to be a homogenous group (community), thus failing to recognize that there can be asymmetric power and asymmetric information and knowledge between actors that will impact outcomes.

Institutional theory offers powerful tools in order to understand systems that have been established to govern the management and utilization of natural resources. This is recognition of the important role that institutions have in sustainable resource management. Furthermore understanding institutions is important in creating successful policies for management of resources, and that such institutions are used by both local people as well as governments (Mehta et al. 1999).

Institutional theory also recognizes the importance of property rights, be it individual or collective property rights. However one should be aware that there might be conflicts between the property rights regimes in formal and informal institutional settings, and that the "real" management of a natural resource is often happening somewhere in a mix of formal and informal systems which often are in conflict with each other (Mehta et al. 1999). Also Vatn (2005) argues that *institutions influence the individuals and their motiv*ation (pp. 13). This suggests that within already complex setting of informal and formal institutions the individual participants might have changing motivations based on the institution that they are a part of in this setting.

Governance is a central term in PA management. Governance is more than just government; it encompasses involved actors and their decicions, concerns conflicts, conflict resolution and coordination on all levels. Resource regimes can be understood as those institutional structures established to govern the use of resources, hence PAs. Within this we have two core issues; these are the rules governing access, and the rules governing the interactions between actors having such access. The actors within a governance systems can be divided into two groups: (1) those having access to resources (economic actors), (2) those influencing access and interaction rules (economic actors). (Vatn unknown year).

Legitimacy is a core concept in relation to governance, specifically how actors are included in the decision-making and implementation, and how decision makers are

held accountable to those their decisions concern. With each decision made, there will be trade-offs that needs to be handled. How these are handled will depend on the governance structure. The priorities and goals set by the decision makers are influenced by the governance structure, which influences how easy it will become to reach the said goals (Vatn and Vedeld 2011).

Within an institution it is important to consider the power, and power relations between the actors. Vatn (2005) illustrate this with the example of the parties to a labor contract. Owners of capital can rely on their resource (capital) to sustain themselves over a period, laborers on the other hand is depending on a continuous inflow of wages. Therefore these to groups, while equal partners to the contract on paper, have an uneven power relation when it comes to a conflict.

The example above also applies for a natural resource system where some actors have greater influence over decisions than others. Resource management structures are regulated by institutions, these institutions also regulates who holds power over whom. One should however be aware that power exists on different levels. Nuijten (2005) identifies three types of power relations: (1) *power as a strategic game* – on an individual or group level and can be perceived daily in interactions. (2) *government or institutional power* – systematized regulated and reflected modes of power that go beyond spontaneous exercise of power over others. (3) *domination or structural power* – fixed hierarchical asymmetric relationships of power that are difficult to change as the subjects of power have marginally liberty.

These types of power are however closely interlinked, i.e. the power an individual holds is regulated in a wider institutional process, and government regulations of power relationships might lead domination (Nuijten 2005). From this we understand that institutions regulate power and power relationships, and that power relationships exist on all levels, and internally among participating actors.

4.2 Stakeholder Analysis

In understanding *stakeholder* and *stakeholder analysis* one needs to first understand the complexity of the two terms. The understanding will vary greatly depending on

the context of which the terms are applied, furthermore one could also debate the legitimacy of a stakeholder in a given case. Stakeholder and stakeholder analysis within the field of natural resource management and development has often had a focus on empowering marginalized groups such as women and native tribes (Reed et al. 2009). Through their role as stakeholders these marginalized groups will be able to legitimize their role in an intervention or system, and allow them to access processes where they otherwise would have been excluded. This again raises concerns regarding the process of identifying the stakeholders. One can imagine that this process could be exploited to benefit or exclude certain groups. In order to identify stakeholders one have to make an assumption about what constitutes a legitimate stakeholder, i.e. who has a stake in the given intervention or system. According to Reed (et. al) the term itself has different meanings depending on the context that it is used, this is also reflected in the literature on stakeholder analysis as different authors has used the term very differently. This paper will apply an understanding of the term "stakeholder" that builds on Freeman (1984) as he is understood in Reed (et. al. 2009). According to this view we can make a distinction between those who affect or are affected by a decision or action.

A criticism of stakeholder analysis as it is known from business literature is that it fails to recognize that stakeholders have the ability to interact and change over time (Reed et al. 2009). In natural resource management and development on the other hand Reed et. al. argues that stakeholders should be involved beyond the stakeholder analysis, as this will help in identifying changes in the roles of stakeholders and adapt interventions after this. This suggests that there should be a continuous process where stakeholders are able to give input to the ongoing processes throughout the intervention.

The application of stakeholder analysis in natural resource management has come from a dissatisfaction with the earlier methodologies which failed to give adequate attention to the different intentions and objectives of the stakeholders involved (Grimble and Wellard 1997). This resulted in policies and projects that did not meet their objectives, or met their objectives at the cost of certain stakeholders. Stakeholder analysis is thus intended to be a tool for analyzing interests, possible conflicts or

opposition, and using the information for improving design and implementation of an intervention.

According to Grimble and Wellard (1997) there are two main branches of stakeholder analysis in natural resource management, namely the Natural Research Institute (NRI) approach and the ODA approach[2]. While the NRI approach was developed as an analytical tool for understanding complex situations and predicting future scenarios, the ODA approach uses stakeholder analysis as an instrument for creating a common understanding of a problem and finding joint way of working it out. The main difference therefore that an intervention designed with the ODA will seek to solve a problem trough a joint understanding, while an NRI designed intervention might find that the underlying problem is of a nature that is not possible to address trough compromise and discussions.

Before embarking on a stakeholder analysis it is important to have a method for identifying stakeholders and assess how they have a stake. We can for instance apply the example of a community with a river running trough it, and that there is an issue of flooding in periods with heavy rain. A possible solution is then to create some sort of flood prevention system. The question becomes; who are the stakeholders? The community and anyone who are forced to give up land for the flood prevention system are natural stakeholders. However we can assume that people downstream will also be affected, but how far down stream should one go? It is clear that one might not be able to include all stakeholders, and that we therefore need to draw the line somewhere, based on some well founded criteria such as geography or demography (Clarke and Clegg 1998).

The focus of the intervention is often important in deciding who is considered having a stake. The focus is often decided by an implementing institutions or donor, this might lead to a top-down process where the team conducting the stakeholder analysis might be influenced by their own presumptions and biases (Reed et al. 2009). As a measure to mitigate the risk of a biased stakeholder selection there is need for an intensive mapping of possible stakeholders. This can be done trough a vide variety of

---

[2] ODA – Official Development Assistance is a measuring tool developed to measure aid flows by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)

activities (see Reed, Graves et al. 2009 pp. 1938). It is however important to be aware that the techniques used in mapping of possible stakeholders may end up influencing who is considered appropriate stakeholders.

Another issue that should be addressed in a stakeholder analysis is the different levels of capacity and powers the stakeholders posses. In natural resource management i.e. governmental agencies, local government and households are all stakeholders that will be involved. The power relations between these groups need to be addressed in a stakeholder analysis, both in terms of their political power and their influence over the particular phenomenon. Lopez (2001) introduces a matrix for mapping of stakeholder power and influence relations and argues that stakeholders in conservation projects can be assessed according to two dimensions. These are *the potential for stakeholders for the conservation of natural resources* and the second is *the influence or power of stakeholders on the project* (Lopez 2001 pp. 53).

Applying the matrix suggested by Lopez (2001) we end up with four groups that Lopez named conservationists, developers, marginal conservationists and marginal developers. These groups could however be renamed to fit a specific context (i.e. Reed et.al. 2009 names the same groups: Key players, context setters, subjects, and crowd).. The usefulness of this model is that it illustrates the differences between stakeholders, both in terms of capacity and in terms influence regarding decisions.

Fig 1. Mapping of stakeholders of a NRM project.

Influence/ Power of stakeholders

in NRM

		High	Low
Stakeholders capacity/ interest for NRM	**High**	Supporters/ Key Players	Marginal Supporters/ Subjects
	Low	Opponents/ Context setters	Marginal Opponents/ Crowd

Adapted from Lopez 2001 pp. 54

According to Reed et. al. (2009) this type of categorization is useful because it provides an overview of how stakeholders might be engaged. It should however be noted that stakeholders that are categorized according to this system are not permanently locked in one category. Groups with high interest/ low influence might for instance increase their influence trough forming of alliances.

4.3 Social Network Analysis.

When attempting to analyze social networks it is important to create an understanding of what can be understood by networks. There is often made a distinction between a formal network (for instance a research network) and informal networks (i.e. a group of friends). This paper although concerned with what is usually categorized as formal networks, will also recognize that within such networks there also exist informal networks.

According to Prell et al. (2007) social networks consist of actors that are linked through a socially meaningful relation. The stronger the ties between the actors in the network more influence they have over each other and they tend to share similar views. In a stable situation this is favorable as there will be a high degree of mutual learning (reinforcing current believes) and share resources among other things.

However research has shown that new ideas travel better in networks with weak ties as these networks are more adaptive, thus making the networks more resilient in times of change.

Also different types of networks are established to serve different issues. Primmer (2011) makes a distinction between policy-, project-, and operational networks which are all relevant in the natural resource management discourse. Although they share some common features they are used in different settings.

A Project network is often associated with processes that are defined in geographical, time, organizational and financial boundaries (Primmer 2011 pp. 135). These networks are pragmatic solutions to set to handle a specific issues, and learning, social capital and empowerment are seen as important outcomes.

Operational Networks are often less regulated, however their actors operate within the same field and form networks because of regulatory and monitoring relationships. The formal ties between are often regulated on a contract basis, but all actors might not access all information in the network.

Policy Networks are established to mould policy. These types of networks can consist of a broad spectrum of actors, however membership is formalized in mandate. Learning in this type of network is associated with learning about each other interests, and redesigning bargaining strategies.

Both project- and policy networks have formal and informal links. The formal links are rooted in working groups, mandates or project plans. The informal links are often found in personal relationships, often predating the network in question, building on mutual interests (Primmer 2011). In operational networks has less distinct formal boundaries, but they often include ties formulated in contracts etc.

Social Network Analysis is used to map both formal and informal ties that exist between actors in the different types of networks. In order to do so, it is also important that we create an understanding of how ties are created within a network. Prell (et. al. 2007) makes a distinction between "homophily" and centralization as two

important attributes that can guide this process. "Homophily" is a situation were similar actors seek together as they are better able to communicate complex situations as they have a mutual understanding.

Centralization is another concept in which one (or a few) actors are holding the majority of ties with others in the network (Prell et al. 2007). While this can be useful in an early phase of a project it might be a constraint when it comes to problem solution and planning later. Another issue related to this is that the actor that is holding the majority of the ties might lack the capacity to maintain the required contact, thus weakening the ties.

Using social network analysis we can create a matrices that illustrates the relational ties that are linking stakeholders (Reed et al. 2009). Using this method we can not only if there is a tie between two actors, we are also able to identify what type of tie exists (can be positive/ negative) between two actors and how strong that relationship is. This allows for a graphical presentation that provides a quick overview of the ties within a network, and can also be used to anticipate were issues will come, and to make the necessary changes in order to mitigate the risk.

● / ⬬ private actor   ■ / ▮ state actor   ◆ / ⬧ others
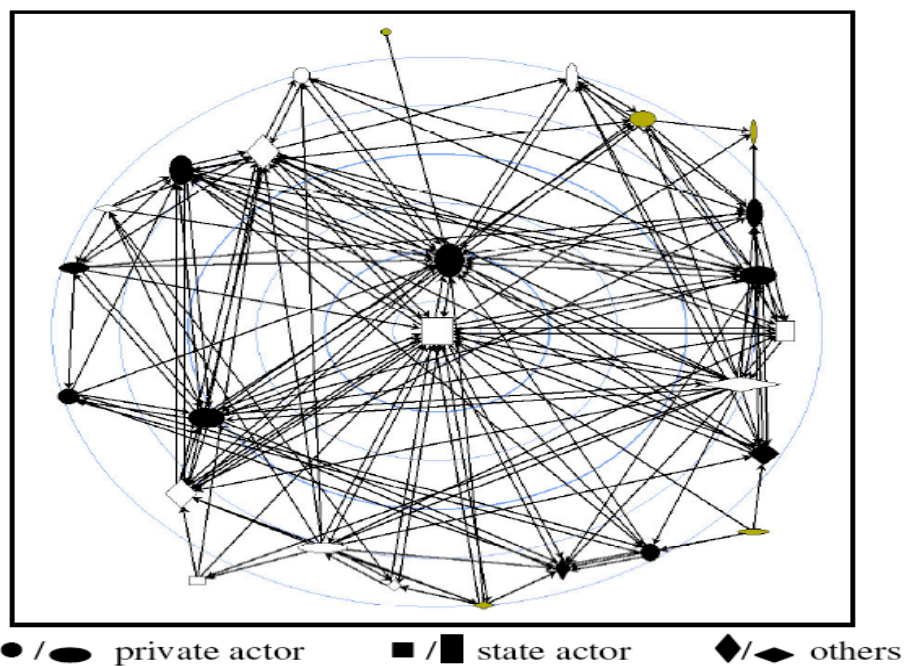
Figure 2. Graphical display of policy network. From (From Moschitz and Stolze 2005 pp.3)

Figure 2. show a graphical display of a policy network, and how the different actors relate to each other within this network. In the above presentation Moschitz and Stolze (2005) asked their respondents "with whom do you collaborate closely" with the center figure being the state. This paper will attempt to use the same method to map relations within MERECP.

5. Methodology

The field data for this study was collected in November-December 2010, mainly through interviews with relevant stakeholders in Uganda and Kenya. The primary data was collected using a questionnaire and semi-structured interviews. If possible more than one representative from each organization were asked to answer the questionnaire. Secondary data was also collected.

The fieldwork lasted for a total of three weeks, in which interviews were conducted in Kampala, Mbale, Sironko and Kapchorwa in Uganda, as well as a short field visit to one participating Community Based Organization in Budadiri, accompanied by Uganda Wildlife Authority. In Kenya interviews were held in Kisumu, Kapsakwony, Kitale and Endebess. In addition I had a preliminary meeting at the Norwegian Embassy before the visit up-country.

It should also be noted that the author has a background as an intern at the Norwegian Embassy in Kampala, Uganda for months in 2010. This connection has provided unique background material and insight into the formal processes of MERECP.

5.1 Sampling

As this paper has the purpose to analyze the implementing organizations, it was decided to interview people at management level that was chosen as focal points for MERECP, or people who were implementing MERECP activities in these organizations. The relevant stakeholders were identified to be the organizations that have a managerial role in implementing the transboundary management scheme on Mt. Elgon, the international and regional organizations and the district local authorities. One can argue that also local communities should also have been included. However, the local district governments were assumed to reflect the key local concerns and interests. Furhter, the role of local communities around Mt. Elgon has been subjected to much research, including their role in transboundary protected area management (see Pétursson et al. 2010).

In Uganda it was decided to only interview the local administrative districts that had been involved from the beginning of the project, i.e. from the first phase of MERECP. This decision was based on the intention of being able to collect historic data (some of the new districts in Uganda were less than one year old at the time of research), in addition the time constraints on the research did not allow for all districts to be interviewed. In Kenya all implementing districts were interviewed. In total six interviews with districts were conducted (three in Kenya, three in Uganda).

In total 15 semi-structured interviews were conducted for this study.

5.2 Collection of data

The primary data was collected using both qualitative and quantitative methods. This combination was identified as beneficial as it would allow for the two methods to complement each other. It was also in recognition of the different roles the respondents played in MERECP. Using these two methods opened for collecting comparable data, as well as in-depth interviews where each respondents role could be better described. Secondary data was further collected.

5.2.1 Semi-structured interviews

My qualitative data was gathered through semi-structured interviews conducted during the field visit. This method was preferred due to its focus on words rather than quantification of data. Furthermore the intention of this study is not to test a theory, rather it is to attempt to generate a theory through the findings of the study. Semi-structured interviews refers to a context where the researcher has a set of prepared questions in the form of an interview, the researcher is however able to rearrange the sequence in which the questions are asked. It also allows informants the possibility to lead the conversation into a special field of interest to them (Bryman 2004).

The preferred respondent was the MERECP focal point at each organization. At some location the focal point was not available, in these situations other staff members involved in MERECP was interviewed. Interviews were conducted in English and usually lasted from 40 minutes to one and a half hours. With an additional 20 minutes for filling in the questionnaire.

5.2.2 Questionnaire

The quantitative data for this paper was gathered trough questionnaires with questions formed as Lickert Items, summed together they will form a Lickert Scale. A Lickert item is a statement or question were the respondent is asked to evaluate according to given criteria. (i.e. strongly agree, agree, neither agree or disagree, disagree, strongly disagree).

The sampling was based on the respondents from the qualitative part of my research. However, when possible it was attempted to get at least three respondents from each organization to reply to the questionnaire. Here it relied on advice from the interviewed officer as to who might be relevant as respondents. This allowed for broader sampling, as well as a potential to see if there were differences between different management levels within a given organization. The questionnaire employed was the same for all respondents, hence not all questions were relevant for all respondents. Respondents were informed of this, and encouraged not to answer any questions they felt were not relevant to them.

Further, the respondents were asked to map who among the participating institutions they communicated with. This will be presented using the mapping tool from Social Network Analysis.

It was decided to ask respondents from the Norwegian Embassy and LVBC to fill out questionnaires. Instead more in depth interviews were prioritized. A total of 17 questionnaires were filled out. Due to the low number of respondents available to the research all data collected from the questionnaires are treated in the analysis as qualitative data, rather than quantitative.

5.2.3. Secondary data

This paper also relies on secondary data such as MERECP project documents, Terms of Reference, Appraisal Reports, Mid-term Review, and consultancies conducted on behalf of MERECP.

5.3 Structuring of the Interviews

There is a risk that the structuring of the interviews vs. the questionnaire might affect the answers in either one. After assessing this, I choose to begin with the questionnaire that the respondents filled out without my interference. When the results were handed in I did not look at them, but rather went through the questionnaire on a general level and asked if there were any topics they felt should be discussed further, or they would like to elaborate on. The intention was to allow respondents to give the quantitative data input unbiased. The following interview was more open session, thus allowing for the respondents to drag the conversation in whichever direction they liked.

5.4. Reliability and validity

Reliability and validity is important to ensure quality in the research. The research for this paper is primarily qualitative, even tough it employs methods from quantitative research.

One critique of qualitative research is that it is too subjective (Bryman 2004). This implies that the research conducted will be colored by what the researcher find to be significant and important. As mentioned earlier I am aware that my research can be colored by my own biases. However by contrasting findings done in interviews by different stakeholders and the quantitative data gathered from second hand sources I hope to meet the critique presented by Bryman. I furthermore had a prepared questionnaire that the respondents filled out before the interview started.

Another concern is that the researcher influences the respondent in the way that questions are formulated. This was kept in mind when preparing the questionnaire and semi-structured interviews. To furthermore mitigate this risk and to make sure respondents answers were given freely I started each meeting with introducing myself, and my academic intentions in the research. I made it clear that I was an independent researcher, and that the data they provided me would not affect my respondents negatively. All respondents were ensured that any quotes from interviews would be given anonymously, and would not be traced to the specific respondents.

5.5 Limitations to the study

The main limitations to this study were the difficulty in organizing and setting up meetings. In general it is hard getting meetings with overworked high-level officials, and it is possible even harder getting meetings when you are a student.

The limited time available for the study also limited its scope, and the number of respondents. With more time I would also been able to visit the three remaining districts in Uganda, and also the EAC headquarters in Arusha, Tanzania.

6. Results and discussion

In this chapter the results of the research will be presented and discussed. First a history of the MERECP program from the arrival of the idea to the present day status will be presented. Then we move to examine the stakeholders of MERECP and their roles in the program. Furthermore we present the findings from the questionnaires and interviews, and examine how the MERECP program is perceived by its stakeholders. Last we discuss how MERECP is functioning as a network, the sustainability of the program, and the results and achievements it has had so far.

6.1 MERECP history

This section has been divided into five parts that will be presented chronologically, beginning with the pre-MERECP phase and Norwegian involvement in protected areas in Uganda and Kenya. The next part presents the first phase of MERECP lead by IUCN, including inception phase. The third phase is a result of IUCN withdrawing from the project and the project entering a "vacuum". Last, we present the present day MERECP lead by LVBC, and its future.

6.1.1 Pre- MERECP phase.

Uganda was one of the first countries to receive bilateral development aid from Norway. The Norwegian support has, almost from the beginning, been linked to natural resources and forestry in particular. During the 1960's Norwegian support was mainly focused on training with support to the establishment of Nyabyeya Forestry College and the Department of Forestry at Makerere University. Other activities included technical assistance and afforestation programs (Arumadri 2001). The Norwegian bilateral development cooperation with Uganda was terminated during the years of civil war and unrest in the 1970s, however it resumed when stability was brought back with the present regime.

Bilateral development cooperation between Norway and Kenya started around 1965. Kenya remained one of the largest recipients of Norwegian Aid up until the 1990s, when Kenya canceled all diplomatic relations with Norway as a response to Norwegian criticism of the human rights situation in the country. Although

development cooperation trough NGOs remained, state-to-state development cooperation only resumed in 2004 (www.norway.or.ke 2011).

The present day MERECP project has more recent roots and is partly a continuation of two projects in Kenya and Uganda respectively. In Uganda we find IUCN involvement in a project dating back to 1988, this was the first partnership between the Ugandan Ministry of Water and Environment (then Ministry of Environmental Protection) and NORAD. This project had IUCN as implementing partner and was called Mt Elgon Conservation and Development Project (MECDP), it ran in the period 1988-2001. IUCN has also been an implementing partner for similar projects running in Kenya, among those the Mount Elgon Integrated Conservation Development Project (MEICDP) that was funded by the Government of Netherlands and ran in the period 1998-2001(Laman et al. 2001) (Baatvik et al. 2002).

The involvement of IUCN in the conservation of Mt. Elgon both in Kenya and Uganda can be seen to be important for the idea of introducing transboundary natural resource management to the Mt. Elgon area. In addition the strengthening of the East African Community (EAC) as a regional facilitator with added importance can be seen as paramount for the commissioning of a transboundary program. The decision to establish a regional program for conservation and sustainable development of the Mt. Elgon area was taken into the 2001-2005 EAC Strategic Plan, and MERECP was developed as a response to this (Larsen et al. 2008). In the literature we also find indicators that the introduction of transboundary PA management schemes are highly political creations, rather than founded in ecological conerns (Wolmer 2003; Duffy 2005; Pétursson et al. 2010).

The background for introducing a transboundary management scheme on Mt. Elgon is arguably a top-down intervention. Petursson et al. (2010) found that local communities around Mt. Elgon had no information about the transboundary initiatives. However this does not suggest that transboundary issues do not affect local communities but more the contrary. Petursson found that many of the households had relatives living in the other country, and half of his respondents had traveled to the other country, primarily to visit relatives.

6.1.2 MERECP phase 1 "IUCN phase"

IUCN was tasked by the EAC with designing the MERECP program, and over a period of 4 years (2000-2004) they hosted a variety of activities and discussions with stakeholders ranging from the EAC and respective governments, to the public and private sector. The program proposal received early support from both involved Governments and the EAC council of Ministers formally approved the program proposal on November 22, 2001 (Baatvik et al. 2002).The inception phase of the project commenced in 2004 following an agreement between the EAC and Norwegian Government that recognized that the project was a pioneer program, and thus needed time to elaborate its design and implementation. In this phase the project managers were concerned with undertaking consultations, baseline-study and other activities aimed at revising the design of the program (Larsen et al. 2008).

During the course of the inception phase many of the implementing agencies were experiencing institutional change that affected the MERECP implementation. These changes also had an effect on the extensive work of consultations with the stakeholders. These institutional changes meant that new stakeholders were coming in, and some existing were restructured or given new roles. Furthermore there were growing concerns that IUCN had a to dominant role in the project The extensive role of IUCN was seen as problematic because of MERECP role as a pioneer program in introducing the idea of transboundary protected area governance to the region. Larsen et al. (2008) found that high level policymakers were concerned that government ownership was compromised with IUCN having the lead role in the program through their offices in Kenya and Uganda. Formally IUCN was contracted by the EAC to provide technical and managerial services and to manage the project finances. IUCN also lead the program negotiations and development, the argument for this being that MERECP would be without *"diplomatic, political or national sovereign limitations to its objectives and implementation" (Muhweezi et al. 2007 pp.218).*

The role of the Kenyan and Ugandan IUCN offices was criticized for being to bureaucratic and slow in their coordination and secretariat role. In addition they were criticized for not using the expert groups organized within IUCN to draw benefits. Furthermore it was pointed out that MERECP failed to address most of the critical challenges facing Mt. Elgon and the attainment of transboundary resource

management. The mid-term review also criticized the project design for not being sensitive to the causes and effects of the core problems that was identified in the various workshops and studies. This failure to see problems in a larger context have probably attributed to the overall low performance of the initial phase of the project.

IUCN has been appraised an important resource for the MERECP program in the initial stages. Based on the organizations historical involvement in Mt. Elgon conservation projects both in Uganda and Kenya they possessed an extensive knowledge base that was seen as an important resource for MERECP. The importance of IUCN was increased by the lack of any regional institution/organization that could be tasked with managing such a complex program. LVBC was established around the same time that MERECP was starting its work, and lacked the capacity to take on such a project at the time.

6.1.3 MERECP "vacuum"

A mid-term review of MERECP was commissioned by the donors in line with the project Terms of Reference, and undertaken by a review team in April-May 2008 (Larsen et al. 2008). The review was asked to address (among others) the performance of IUCN and the performance of EAC/LVBC. One of the main findings of the review was that the objectives of the program was flawed in that the objectives failed to address the causes and effects of issues identified in the planning phase of the project. Furthermore the review found that translation of project resources and activities into results was slow, due mainly to the complexity of the program, but also due to internal issues and problems faced by differences in financial years between Uganda and Kenya. The review team also criticized MERECP for being more of a rural development initiative with duplicated activities across objectives and borders (Larsen et al. 2008).

The Mid-Term Review suggested a comprehensive redesign of the program with new objectives that were perceived to be more in harmony with MERECP vision and goals. A cleaning up among the objectives was also performed in order to address which activities added value to the program and which did not. The formal process of redesigning the program was done in October/ November 2008, and followed the

recommendations of the Mid-Term Review. The complete redesign was formally approved by the EAC during its 6th Meeting of the Sectoral Council of Ministers for Lake Victoria Basin (LVBC 2007).

Although the formal process of redesigning the project were concluded rather efficiently and within a short timeframe, the redesign was so complex that project activities have been delayed. This resulted in an expanded timeframe for the program, that would allow for mainstreaming of TBNRM with implementing partners budgets, plans and strategies. Moreover it would also allow time for providing a policy and institutional environment with backing from the governments of Uganda and Kenya (Larsen et al. 2008). It was also recognized that the total timeframe suggested for the project was not realistic for reaching the goals that were proposed. The new proposed timeframe is 15-20 years (LVBC 2007). The new timeframe had not received committed donor support at the time the fieldwork was concluded (December, 2010).

Seeing how IUCN would withdraw completely from the project it was also important to allow time for handing over of IUCN facilitation and coordination roles to implementing agencies.

6.1.4 MERECP phase two "LVBC phase"

Following the Mid-Term Review and the subsequent redesign of the program MERECP is now in a phase where project activities are once again being implemented. The project is now managed from LVBC headquarters in Kisumu, Kenya with one officer responsible for all MERECP affairs. This move is intended to strengthen the ownership of the program, both on national and local level. This changes also mainstreams the institutional arrangements of the projects, with all implementing partners (down to district level) reporting to the LVBC office. LVBC is also responsible for disbursing funds for activities under the program.

6.1.5 Current Status of MERECP

The MERECP project, as it is at the time of writing, is gearing up towards full implementation. Several studies have been commissioned in the dormant years following the redesign, and results should be expected shortly on these. However the

redesign also implied at major institutional change, and trust had to be built by LVBC towards the implementing organizations.

The process of redesigning and changing the institutional set-up in MERECP has, as expected, taken some time. This has created a picture among some of the participating institutions that the new MERECP is to bureaucratic and taking to long to respond. On issue in particular that was brought to attention was the late disbursement of funds to project activities. This is ironically some of the same critique that was presented towards IUCN in the first phase of MERECP.

The program is still funded by the Governments of Sweden and Norway, however they have not committed to funding as to the timeline proposed by the LVBC that suggests the program might need 10-15 years more for full implementation.

Below is a timeline illustrating the progress of MERECP so far (Figure 3).

Figure 3. MERECP project timeline

Mainly support to build capacity in the forestry sector	**1960s**	**First Norwegian donor involvement in Ugandan NRM Sector. Bilateral relations with Kenya from 1965**
Collaps in many public instiutions, including the forrest department. Local communities allowed to settle in areas that are now inside the PA	**1970s**	**Political unrest, Norwegian-Ugandan relations terminated**
Project taking place on the Ugandan side of the mountain. Simmilar project on the Kenyan side followed shortly funded by the Netherlands	**1988**	**First IUCN project on Mt. Elgon. Funded by NORAD**
IUCN hosted a variety of activities and discussions with stakeholders ranging from the EAC and respective governments, to the public and private sector	**2000**	**IUCN tasked by EAC to design MERECP program**
Decission made to establish a regional program for conservation and sustainable development of the Mt. Elgon Area	**2001**	**EAC 2001-2005 strategic plan**
Norway and EAC signs an agreement for the project recognizing its pioneer status. Baseline studies, consultations and other activities undertaken to redesing the project	**2004**	**Inception phase of MERECP commenced. IUCN contracted to do technical and managerial support**
Following growing concerns on the projects performance and on IUCN haveing a to dominant role in the program	**2008**	**Mid-Term Review**
LVBC tasked with doing technical and managerial support. IUCN withdrawl from the project. EAC recognizes that the project will need a an extended timeframe, possibly as much as 15-20 years	**DEC-2008**	**Redesing of MERECP completed**
Implementing of re-designed project commences. Shift in focus and fewer activities. Implementation is still going on, altough project progress is still delayed	**2009** ▼	**Implementation of the redesinged program**

6.2. Stakeholders in the MERECP project and their roles

In this section the stakeholders in MERECP will be presented and analyzed in terms of their role in the program, their motivations for participating in MERECP, their power and ability. The data comes from the interviews and questionnaires.

According to MERECP program documents the list of involved stakeholders is quite extensive. However, this paper will argue that the program actually involves a smaller list of key stakeholders that are directly involved in the transboundary aspects of the program. These can be broken down to several groups. First you have the communities adjacent to the PA. Then there is local administration on district level that participates in project meetings where they (are supposed to) represent the interest of local communities as the highest administrational structure locally[3]. There is however one exception to this. Mount Elgon County Council (MCC) which is the local authority in Mt. Elgon District is in a special position because they are the managers of Mt. Elgon National Reserve in the same way as KFS and KWS manages land on the Kenyan side of the mountain.

Next is the governmental bodies (KFS, KWS, UWA and NFA) that are managing PAs on Mt. Elgon. A common feature for these organizations are that they are centrally run organizations with mandates established in their respective countries legislation. They are also involved in conflicts with local communities on issues related to access rights to the PAs and poaching. These organizations are (relatively) well funded, both from government funding and funding from different donor projects.

Furthermore we have the involved governments. These are the Government of Kenya and Uganda. Moreover the Norwegian and Swedish governments that are involved through their agencies for development cooperation and the Norwegian Embassy in Kampala (focal point for donor interaction with the program). EAC, trough the LVBC, is the only multilateral stakeholder in MERECP, and EAC are also the formal

---

[3] It should be noted that forest adjacent communities are implementing several project funded activities trough a fund that has been established. However these activities have to be seen as local rather than transboundary activities.

commissioner of the program. It should also be noted that the project previously had IUCN which is an international NGO as stakeholder, however following the redesign of the program they are no longer involved.

This paper argues that there has to be made a distinction between the local communities in Uganda and in Kenya. One could also make a distinction between the local communities within each country, however this paper will argue that it is some key differences in policies in the two countries that justifies a distinction on a national level. Another key factor that justifies a distinction between Ugandan and Kenyan local communities in this paper is population pressure and population density.

The differences in policies have also made it necessary to make a distinction on a national level. While both Uganda and Kenya has a long tradition for managing land as national parks, the level of access and participation by local communities seems very different, especially in the national parks. The Kenyan national park conservation strategy is best described as a "fence and fine" strategy, where there is little or no participation, access or use by local communities. In Uganda on the other hand, the national park authority (UWA) has had a more open line when it comes to park adjacent communities, allowing some degree of use by local communities. The Ugandan approach to national park management could be said to be a pragmatic way of resolving issues such as low capacity by UWA to carry out patrols in the field, and the high number of park adjacent communities. On the other hand the Ugandan approach seems to have been more successful in creating a dialogue with local communities and using collaborative approaches.

6.2.1. Local communities in Uganda
The local communities adjacent to Mt. Elgon on the Ugandan side of the border stretch high up on the steep mountain slopes. This creates challenges when the increasing population goes searching for arable land in areas prone for soil erosion, sometimes with tragic results. In 2010 some communities were badly hit when heavy rain set of several mudslides in Bududa District. This has acted as an eye-opener for the Ugandan Government, and they are currently working on plans to relocate as many as half a million people from areas with a high risk of new mudslides.

The local communities adjacent to the national park are able to sign collaborative agreements with UWA. This arrangement allows them to access the park to extract certain resources. According to UWA this arrangement is popular, but also demanding as it requires community wardens to monitor and facilitate for the agreements. Petursson et al. (2010) found that the local communities considered these agreements legitimate, however they were critical to their lack of power in negotiating the terms of these agreements. There is a strict control regime in place that monitors the agreement, and if members of the community are caught violating the agreement the communities will be punished collectively, and the agreement terminated.

One common source of conflict between the local communities and UWA are conflicts related to political interference. During campaigns politicians will approach local communities with promises of access or even land titles inside the park in exchange for votes. This strategy seems to be common as all Ugandan respondents pointed to political risk/ political interference as a major challenge facing the protected areas.

Local communities in Ugandan enjoy however little influence over conservation strategies. They enjoy some benefits of the MERECP program such as the community revolving fund and cash labor opportunities from the park. The local communities interest in MERECP have to be seen in relation with their dependency on the resources inside the protected areas. Therefore their power and influence is limited and might be, however they are an important measure for success in MERECP in regards to the community components of the program. The individual communities are not themselves represented in MERECP meetings, instead they are represented by their local district administrations.

6.2.3 Local communities in Kenya

The local communities adjacent to the park on the Kenyan side of Mt. Elgon are faced with other risk factors than those seen in Uganda. One source of conflict that is common is that of wildlife crossing out of the park and destroying crops. This has been somewhat mitigated by the creation of an electric fence intended to keep

elephants within the park boundaries. However there are still problems with animals like monkeys crossing in and out of the parks destroying valuable crops.

The Kenyan strategy of fencing of protected areas and giving no access rights also differentiates the Uganda and Kenyan local communities. While political interference were mentioned as an important risk factor in Uganda it was not in Kenya. This might be attributed to MCC, KWS and KFS, which appears to be very outspoken about their strategy of no human activity in the park (at least not for local people), and also the high level of centralization in the Kenyan system of government.

On the Kenyan side of Mt. Elgon there are four different protected areas managed by three organizations. These are the KWS, KFS and MCC, which all have different rules regarding access to the protected areas. Communities adjacent to the Mt. Elgon Forest Reserve and Trans-Nozia Forest Reserve managed by KFS are able to buy access rights to collect fuelwood and other given sets of resources. According to KFS the communities often exploit this arrangement as KFS has limited capacity to patrol their areas.

Like their sister communities in Uganda, the Kenyan local communities enjoy very limited formal power in MERECP despite their dependency on resources inside the protected areas. Some communities are able to benefit from community revolving funds, and some communities are also benefiting from a fence built to keep larger mammals from destroying fields outside Mt. Elgon National Park. MERECP as a project was implemented from above, thus leaving communities with no choice but to participate in MERECP.

6.2.4 Administrative districts in Kenya and Uganda (without land titles in protected areas)

A common feature for all the Ugandan districts and the two Kenyan districts of Kapsokwony and Kwanza is that they have no jurisdiction or land titles within the protected areas. As a result of this on might expect that the local administration would argue for use/ better access for local people. However, from the interview conducted during the fieldwork it seems that the local administration have a strong belief in the value of a protected area, thus arguing for a strong conservation of the areas. On the

other hand it was also pointed out that it was the responsibility of MERECP and the government to provide other livelihood options.

It should also be noted that all interviews were with local bureaucrats who might see it as more beneficial to agree with central government rather than with local communities. The districts serve as an extended arm of the central government (although with locally elected leaders) and are supposed to deliver services locally.

The role of the districts has changed from the first to the second phase of the project. In the present phase the primary role of the districts have been to help identify local communities that can benefit from MERECP trough activities such as revolving funds, other than that the districts play a secondary role and it seems that the only project related activity the partake in is attending MERECP meetings.

The districts motivation for participating in MERECP is that they are representing the local communities adjacent to the park. As participants in meetings regarding MERECP they hold formal power, however they do not hold formal power over the protected areas, and for the most part they also lack the resources to be involved in direct management. It is not clear how districts in Uganda and Kenya are benefiting from being a part of a transboundary project like MERECP, although trough their role as voices of local communities they contribute towards legitimizing the program and adds face-value to claims about local involvement. Like the communities they represent, districts currently have no ability towards TBPAM, other than voicing the interests of those affected by PA governance decisions on Elgon.

6.2.5 Mount Elgon County Council

Mt. Elgon County Council (MCC) is formally a county under Mt. Elgon district. They are responsible for the management and protection of Chepktiale National Reserve which was crafted out of Mt. Elgon Forest Reserve in 2000. The area is approximately 16.000 ha and borders other PA units as well as Uganda. It does not share any direct borders with communities (Pétursson et al. 2010).

Local communities have traditionally enjoyed rights to access resources in the PA included grazing of livestock. At the time of interview there were plans to retract all these rights. Pétursson et al. (2010) found that MCC have expectations that Cheptikale National Reserve will bring economic benefits to the area in terms of pastoralism and tourism. Exclusion of grazing rights makes it impossible to gain economic benefits from pastoralism, we therefore have to assume that MCC are now focusing on economic benefits from the tourism sector.

The major difference between MCCs management of the protected areas and KWS/ KFS is MCCs lack of funds and capacity. While KFS and KWS are large (relatively) well funded government organizations, it seems like MCC are faced with some challenges that can be traced back to a lack of funding and capacity. Despite the lack in capacity and funds MCC are responsible for creating their own management and conservation strategies for the protected areas. MCC are however cooperating with KWS who assist in tracking wildlife in the reserve, KWS also have a ranger post in the area (Pétursson et al. 2010).

MCC seemed to be somewhat disappointed with the MERECP program. Although MERECP initially provided them with some funding this have disappeared in the redesign of the project. Furthermore MCC voiced some concern that they were not viewed as equal partners by the other organizations in charge of the protected areas. This could be seen as a result of MCC lack of capacity and resources compared to their "big brothers" in KWS and KFS.

MCC have power in MERECP through their authority in management of Cheptikale National Reserve. However there is a major concern that they are way behind the national management organizations when it comes to funding and capacity. Therefore we can assume that a motivation for MCC to participate in MERECP is to be empowered through funding and capacity building. Since MCC are responsible for producing and commissioning their own management plans they have power in the same way as KFS, KWS, UWA and NFA has. However they may lack the capacity to utilize this power. Last, MCC is also motivated by potential economic benefits from tourism trough the establishments of cross-border tourism schemes. Currently MCC is

however not involved in these schemes, and also lack infrastructure that is necessary for tourism.

Seeing how MCC have a very limited capacity as it is, their ability to be involved in TBPAM should also be questioned. However MCC might benefit from increased cooperation between the other managerial organizations, as well as being assisted in creating new policies for managing the resources in Cheptikale National Reserve.

6.2.6 Kenya Wildlife Service

KWS is mandated to conserve and manage wildlife in Kenya, and to enforce related legislation. Through its mandate KWS are responsible for the management and conservation of Mt. Elgon National Park (in Kenya). KWS receives donor funding from several major donors and appears to be a (relatively) well-funded organization with good capacity. KWS applies a "fortress" approach strategy to their conservation of the park where local communities are excluded from any resource extraction (Pétursson et al. 2010).

KWS are the only organization together with UWA that are able to point to specific activities that are transboundary in that they are carried out in both countries in order to achieve a common good. These activities include joint patrols and facilitation for cross border tourism. The tourism scheme involves cooperation between the organizations so that tourist groups can be guided over the mountain, being handed over at the border up on the mountain, allowing the tourists to skip the normal border crossing.

The joint patrols are another transboundary measure that the two organizations are implementing. The idea is that KWS and UWA rangers can meet up, while on patrol, to exchange intelligence at the border. This process is however more complicated than it seems. Since both Ugandan and Kenyan authorities insist on keeping their radiofrequencies secret, meetings have to be arranged trough the offices in Mbale and at the park gate in Kenya. This long line of communication is not very effective in terms of flow of information, especially in urgent situations. One can for instance imagine a poacher on the Kenyan side that is spotted crossing to Uganda. With

effective communication this could maybe be solved, however with the current system the poachers have a good chance of crossing undetected. Even if the poacher is caught in Uganda he stands a good chance of avoiding prosecution as Uganda and Kenya has not been able to establish the sufficient channels of information and legislation to allow for cross border prosecution.

KWS participation in MERECP is like the other managerial organizations motivated by a belief that the transboundary strategy will improve both their ability to do conservation in the national park, as well as improved sustainability of the Mt. Elgon system. However, one should keep in mind that MERECP was initiated from above, which could imply that their enthusiasm for a transboundary project is also instructed from above. Furthermore KWS are able to solve their role formal role in conservation on Elgon with or without MERECP.

KWS are probably the best funded of the organizations managing PAs on Mt. Elgon, the other participating institutions also perceive KWS to have the strongest academic resources. One can assume that this will give them increased power, as they will have the capacity to monitor MERECP activities closely and shape the agenda within MERECP.

KWS have good ability to apply TBPAM strategies, and also have the capacity to follow up and play a leading role in the implementation of TB strategies. The power KWS holds could however be of some concern as KWS is also the organization with the strongest "fortress approach" towards conservation. One can assume that KWS uses their power to promote their approach to conservation, and if so it could indicate a step backwards for community involvement in PA management on Elgon.

6.2.7 Kenya Forest Service

KFS has more or less the same mandate as their Ugandan sister organization NFA. What differentiates the two organizations in the case of MERECP is that while NFA is the managers of a very small and insignificant portion of the protected areas on Mt Elgon, KFS are managing the largest portion of land on the Kenyan side of the border. KFS is not a "conservation organization" in a traditional meaning. Their mandate is to govern the forest reserves for sustainable extraction of forest resources. When the

field work for this study was performed there were however, little extraction of resources as there is a nationwide ban on logging from Forest Reserves. People from local communities are however able access some resources with permits from KFS.

On Mt. Elgon MERECP are responsible for managing the two areas Trans-Nzoia Forest Reserve and Mt. Elgon Forest Reserve. Both these reserves are managed in a fashion related to the management of the National Parks. KFS had on the time of field work no logging activities inside the forest reserve as a result of a nation wide ban on logging in forest reserves with the exception of four sawmills (ILLEGAL-LOGGING 2010). In August 2010 it was announced that the ban would be lifted, however at the time of writing this has not happened.

KFS as a governmental actor is centrally run. However, they seemed to have a good dialogue with the district local authorities (at least more so than what NFA had in Uganda).

KFS manages a substantial part of the protected areas on Mt. Elgon. Through this they have formal power to influence decisions made in MERECP. Their motivation for being involved in MERECP is improved sustainability of the areas they manage, as well as improved sustainability of the whole Mt. Elgon system. However, one should also keep in mind that KFS is designed to turn a profit over extraction of resources from the reserves they manage. This could provide an explanation to Pétursson et al. (2010) finding that KFS (the Forest Department) viewed most of the issues relevant to their involvement on Elgon as a national issue that would be best addressed nationally, not regionally.

Through their role as managers of the largest portion of protected areas on Elgon they also have the ability to strongly influence the implementation of a transboundary governance system on Elgon. However, as they regard most of the issues relevant to their involvement on Elgon to be best addressed nationally, they have a strong incentive to keep transboundary cooperation to a minimum.

6.2.8 Uganda Wildlife Authority

Uganda Wildlife Authority is the governmental agency responsible for the protection and management of Uganda National Parks. Uganda Wildlife Authority has, unlike their Kenyan partners, adopted an approach to conservation where local community participation and access are promoted (to a certain extent). Local communities gain such rights if they venture into a contract with UWA where allowed activities are listed. This process is quite extensive and takes a considerable amount of time since it has to involve the whole community. UWA have established community wardens that are responsible for following up this work with the local communities.

However this strategy is not without its problems. It seems that the Ugandan authorities (UWA) are having difficulties limiting the human activities to those that have been permitted through the contract.

UWA together with KWS are the PA managerial organizations that seem most committed to the transboundary strategy. As managers of Mt. Elgon National Park (in Uganda) UWA has formal power and influence in MERECP. Moreover, UWA motivated by a belief that the transboundary strategy would improve the overall sustainability of Mt. Elgon. In addition UWA and KWS see great potential in cooperation and coordination, both for improved governance of the areas as well as increased income from tourism. UWA also have the ability to benefit from TBPAM strategies, and trough their role as the major actor in PA governance on the Ugandan side of Elgon their implementation of such strategies should be easier than it is on the Kenyan side.

6.2.9 National Forest Authority

National Forestry Authority (NFA) is the governmental body in Uganda responsible for managing national forestry reserves. They also have an important role as a market regulator in the timber industry in Uganda. They are a directly involved stakeholder in MERECP trough their role as manager of Namantale Forest Reserve. NFA is also one of the lead institutions in Uganda for implementation of REDD+, and is also involved in several other climate change mitigation and adaptation exercises. NFA also plays

an important role in the timber trade in Uganda as an official governing body responsible for permits and certification.

NFA involvement in MERECP are through its office in Mbale as well as through their head office in Kampala. The office in Mbale is participating in MERECP meetings, however their role in the program appears to be distant. One explanation as to why NFA are showing less interest in Transboundary Cooperation compared to the other managerial organizations could be the geography of the areas under their control on Mt. Elgon. They only control a very small portion that borders only with the UWA controlled national park. Therefore UWA is also the organization they have to interact with the most. One interest that NFA has in better transboundary cooperation is however market access. NFA sees a great potential in the Kenyan market, which could potentially generate large incomes for the organization.

Over the last years NFA has been involved in several corruption cases were the top-management has been involved. This has had a negative effect on the whole organization as NFA accounts have been frozen, thus limiting the organizations capacity to perform their duties. Although NFA respondents did not specifically mention this, it is reasonable to assume that NFA and their role in MERECP is somehow affected by the situation NFA was in at the time of writing.

While NFA governs a very small portion of Mt. Elgon, they are an important national actor in PA governance. In an interview one NFA official, when asked about their motivation to participate in MERECP said: *"We are participating (in MERECP) for our own good, trough MERECP we are able to secure funds for those activities we want to carry out"*. Like KFS, NFA is also designed to generate revenue from extraction of resources from the Forest Reserves they govern, and they indicated that they saw potential market access in Kenya as a potential benefit of MERECP. However there are no components in MERECP that would address this.

In addition NFA involvement in MERECP are also benefiting the communities adjacent to Mt. Elgon and helps NFA mitigate conflicts with local communities. Trough its role as a PA manager on Mt. Elgon, and as an important actor in PA governance in Uganda in general NFA have power and influence on processes

concerning MERECP. However we can assume that they hold less informal power and influence than UWA. Last NFA in Mbale has limited capacity making it harder for them to follow up on MERECP.

6.2.10 Government of Uganda

The Government of Uganda (GoU) are co-signers of the Agreement that forms the foundation for the MERECP program. Their involvement in the project is carried out via a focal point in the Ministry of Water and Environment. The Ugandan government is also very committed to regional cooperation trough the EAC.

It should be noted that while MERECP is the first transboundary protected area management program in Uganda, they have long experience with transboundary natural resource management. Mainly trough the Nile Treaty which regulates use and utilization of the river Nile, and also in later years in agreements concerning management of the Lake Victoria Basin.

The formal power that the governments of both Uganda and Kenya have in MERECP is beyond question. Furthermore the government is strongly committed to enhancing regional cooperation, and see the EAC as the legitimate body to advance cooperation.

6.2.11 Government of Kenya

The Government of Kenya (GoK) are co-signers to Agreement that forms the foundation of the MERECP program. Their involvement is carried out via a focal point in the Ministry for Environment and Mineral Resources. Kenya, like Uganda have a strong interest in promoting regional cooperation, and their support to MERECP should be viewed in light of this.

It is however important to keep in mind that the idea of a transboundary management scheme was not introduced by the governments of Kenya and Uganda, it came from IUCN. The future of MERECP and the successful implementation of a transboundary strategy on Elgon is however fully dependent on how far the two governments are willing to go in terms of devolving their power and authority to a regional body for PA management.

A common feature for both Uganda and Kenya is that they both have a natural resource driven economy. They are highly dependent on natural resources to generate economic activities, and are thus dependent on the sustainable use of such resources. The high interest in sustainable management of these resources can provide an explanation as to why they have committed to the MERECP program. Furthermore both countries are depending strongly on donor funding for their nature conservation, the informal power between Kenya and Uganda vs. donors can therefore be asymmetrical when it comes to the issue of what conservation strategies should be applied.

6.2.11 Lake Victoria Basin Commission

Lake Victoria Basin Commission was established as a specialized organization under the EAC, responsible for the sustainable development of the Lake Victoria Basin (LVBC 2007). Its present form and name came in 2005, however the EAC has since its establishment in 1999 had specialized institutions dealing with the Lake Victoria Basin. The organization is mandated to promote economic growth, poverty eradication, promote sustainable management of natural resources, and to promote the protection of the environment in the Lake Victoria Basin.

In the context of MERECP, LVBC has the function as program secretariat, which is based at its HQ in Kisumu, Kenya. This secretariat has the overall coordinating responsibilities for planning, executing and monitoring project activities. In addition LVBC are responsible for facilitating workshops and meetings. Third, LVBC is financially responsible for the program, which includes disbursing funds for activities or participating organizations (for instance LVBC are responsible for the disbursements to the community revolving funds).

Since its establishment in 1999 the LVBC commission has been working with transboundary issues and management. Originally created to provide policy guidelines on the management of the Lake Victoria Basin, the organizations now hold extensive experience in working with transboundary issues related to resource management, facilitation for economic growth and regional integration.

LVBC together with the EAC, GoK, GoU and (to some extent) RNE are identified as "high level stakeholders" in the MERECP project. "High level" indicates that these are the organizations that would be able to facilitate the multilateral political processes that would be required if MERECP were aiming at a higher level of integration in their TBPAM strategy.

With its current mandate the LVBC are limited to programs and activities within the Lake Victoria Basin. One can however, assume that the LVBC and/or its staff will play an instrumental role in any future TBNRM/ TBPAM initiatives in the EAC. According to the respondents this was also a role that the LVBC wanted. This would however require a restructuring of the current organization, both in terms of mandate and operational level.

As the secretariat for MERECP, LVBC is one of the most powerful and influential organizations involved in MERECP. Another motivation for LVBC is that they whish to become the EAC focal point for all future transboundary protected area management in the EAC. LVBC was designed to deal with TBNRM, and is therefore familiar with bilateral and multilateral cooperation with EAC member states in regards to management of natural resources. As an organization designed to facilitate regional cooperation, LVBC have great ability towards implementing TBPAM strategies. They are however dependent on the support of the governments of Kenya and Uganda to be able to fulfill this role.

As the secretariat for MERECP, LVBC have substantial informal power. They regulate the flow of information within the MERECP network, and monitors the progress of the program. LVBC also calls meetings for MERECP and have substantial influence which they can use to set the agenda for topics discussed.

6.2.13 East African Community
The EAC is a keen promoter of regional cooperation within several fields. As the parental organization of LVBC they also have a keen interest in MERECP, seeing how it is a pioneer program for trans boundary cooperation in East Africa. The EAC

has seen the potential in TBPAM programs and are expected to promote this between its member states.

The EAC is mainly designed to promote economic development trough reducing transaction costs on the movement of goods and services between member states. This new involvement in management of protected areas can therefore be understood as a wish to diversify the organizations work (earlier involvement in for instance Lake Victoria Basin has been justified by naming Lake Victoria Basin and "economic growth zone".

The EAC is recognized by both governments as the legitimate body for regional cooperation in East Afria, this gives the organization both informal and formal power which they can use to influence the governments. With MERECP, EAC is entering into a new arena of nature conservation that the organization have previously not been involved in. It is reasonable to assume that the EAC will put prestige into a successful implementation of MERECP.

6.2.14 Royal Norwegian Embassy, Kampala

The Royal Norwegian Embassy in Kampala is the main donor partner for the MERECP program. The embassy is responsible for monitoring of the program and project activities on behalf of the Government of Norway and also the government of Sweden. Embassy staff is involved in MERECP trough participation in annual meetings, disbursement of project funds and approval of annual reports and audits.

The Embassy is the formal co-signers to the agreement, however they work in close cooperation with NORAD. NORAD advises and funds the program trough the Embassy that is responsible for disbursing funds and monitoring on behalf of NORAD. The other stakeholders in MERECP will rarely see NORAD as the Embassy for all purposes are their partner.

If Norway, through the Embassy and Norad are to support any environmental development cooperation, the proposed programs have to be in line with the political priorities and strategies from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. At the time when MERECP was proposed there were four key areas:

1. Development of sustainable production systems/management of natural resources
2. Conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity
3. Reduced pollution of soil, air and water
4. Cultural heritage preservation and management of the natural environment's cultural values

(Baatvik et al. 2002 : pp. 5)

As these four key areas were addressed in the proposed program, and that it was in line with the Embassy strategy for development cooperation, the program was approved for funding. Drawing from this we also see that NORAD does not develop conservation strategies themselves, instead they can support, guide and assess proposed conservation strategies as long as they are in line with the set priorities and policies of the Norwegian Government (which are developed trough political processes).

As the lead donor in MERECP the Embassy in Kampala enjoys great formal and informal power in MERECP. Without donor support the program is very unlikely to be implemented. However the Embassy does not hold any ability to implement transboundary cooperation on Elgon, and is unlikely to interfere in most proposed strategies.

6.2.15 NORAD

The Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation is the main donor partner for the MERECP program. However the Norwegian Embassy in Kampala monitors the program on their behalf. NORAD is also the organization responsible for commissioning evaluations on behalf of the donors, and other reports such as the Mid-Term Review.

Following a redesign of the Norwegian Foreign Service, NORAD is no longer stationed abroad. Therefore MERECP, while initially suggested to NORAD, implemented by the Norwegian Embassy in Kampala.

NORAD considers environmental development projects based on the priorities for such aid provided by Norwegian Government policies. Key areas for priority are rights perspectives, good governance and community based management of natural resources (NORAD 2011). New conservation strategies that receive Norwegian support have to address at least one of these issues.

The Swedish agency for development cooperation is also a founder of MERECP, however all monitoring of the project are done by the Norwegian Embassy/ NORAD.

6.3 Involved stakeholders perception of MERECP
In this section of the paper the data derived from the questionnaires and interviews will be presented. A table presenting the results accompanies each section; the tables will show the results from PA managers vs. District Officers. Data from the interviews will also be used to enrich the discussions. The questions relate to the emergence and evolution of the TBPAM project.

6.3.1 How was the transboundary project introduced on Mt. Elgon?
It was identified that the origin of the idea of introducing a transboundary management model on Mt. Elgon would be of interest to this study. PA governance is often characterized by top-down initiatives enforced on local communities, this is probably even more true for transboundary management models.

Table 1. Introduction of TBPAM to Elgon

		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
TBPAM was initiated by Ugandan and Kenyan gov.	Protected Area Managers	0%	11%	33%	11%	44%
	District Officers	0%	10%	30%	50%	10%
TBPAM was initiated by donors	Protected Area Managers	20%	50%	20%	10%	0%
	District Officers	0%	0%	14%	43%	43%
TBPAM was initiated by local comunities	Protected Area Managers	14%	14%	14%	43%	14%
	District Officers	14%	29%	43%	14%	0%

The general knowledge of the background of introducing a transboundary management scheme on Mt. Elgon was found vague among respondents. Both through the questionnaire and the interviews questions were asked as to the origin of the idea, all respondents indicated that they were not familiar with the background of the project. This can be interpreted as an indicator for the idea not stemming from the involved organizations on ground.

From the questionnaire (table 1) however we see that the majority of district officers in both Uganda and Kenya agree or strongly agree that the idea was initiated by the Kenyan and Ugandan governments. Among the PA managers however the consensus is not so strong with 33% indicating "neither agree or disagree". It should be pointed out that formally it is correct that the Kenyan and Ugandan government trough EAC introduced the idea. However this study has not been able to identify who (if anyone) introduced the idea for the governments of Kenya and Uganda and the EAC.

The notion that the idea of transboundary management comes from the donor agencies is the one that are receiving the widest support from both groups. 60% of PA

Managers and 57% of District Officers either agree or strongly agree that the idea was introduced by donor agencies.

The respondents are strongest opposed to the notion that the idea of transboundary management was introduced by the local communities. The PA managers are the ones strongest opposed to the notion that the idea came from local communities.

To sum up, we find that donors, EAC and the governments of Kenya and Uganda introduced MERECP to Mt. Elgon. The process was initially started by IUCN who were able to gain the attention of both the donors and recipient governments. However, as the recipient formally requests development projects it must have been introduced to the governments of Kenya and Uganda who then formally requested the support of the donors. This indicates that MERECP is a top-down process as this new conservation strategy was not requested by local communities, nor by the local offices of the various organizations involved in the management of Mt. Elgon.

6.3.2 TBPAM and relations to Local Communites

According to the project documents, MERECP is supposed to bring benefits for local communities. As of today this is primarily done through the revolving community funds where identified communities can administer the funds themselves for purposes that will strengthen the sustainability of Mt. Elgon. This fund consists of a one-time cash donation that the communities themselves decide how to use within certain guidelines. The districts and LVBC can propose activities that might be beneficial.

The households around Mt. Elgon have historically been depending on the park for environmental income. In his study Katto (2004) found that 80% of communities around Mt. Elgon got environmental income from the park, highlighting the importance of park resources on household incomes.

There is a range of activities that have been established, all aimed at providing new livelihood income options. There has also been established community forest lots where participants can (eventually) collect firewood and extract timber for building. This is aimed at providing options to resource extraction from the protected areas.

The revolving fund is also important as a response to the critique presented by Larsen et al. (2008) of duplicated activities across the borders. The revolving fund are governed by the communities themselves, and hence local participation and involvement in the decision making process is established.

In Uganda communities adjacent to the park are able to sign a collaborative agreement with UWA that will allow them some resource extraction within the park. The formal process of signing these agreements is demanding, and the whole process takes quite some time. From UWA point of view this scheme is beneficial as the there is established a formal system for the illegal (!) resource extraction. This also allows for dialogue with the communities were UWA can train them so that they don't extract from the most vulnerable areas.

For the communities the benefits of such an arrangement are obvious in that it allows for extraction without the fear of getting caught or even shot at by UWA rangers. Another benefit is that UWA utilizes the local communities as day laborers for work in the border areas with the park. This work will allow people in park adjacent communities to generate an extra income, in addition the communities are allowed to use farm in the border area for a certain period.

While the communities are benefiting from MERECP trough revolving funds and increased access to cash labor, it is harder to identify their role in a transboundary project. This study has not been able to detect any activities related to local communities that can be said to be transboundary, neither has it been able to detect meetings were local communities around the mountains have met in an organized setting to discuss their role in the transboundary aspects of Mt. Elgon. Other studies has found that people around Mt. Elgon often visit their neighboring country to visit families etc. One can therefore assume that local communities have interest that could be placed into the transboundary category. Also with respect to the revolving community funds one could argue that these could benefit from exchanging ideas across borders.

Table 2. TBPAM benefits to local communities

		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
TBPAM allows for increased local community involvement in PA governance	Protected Area Managers	0%	0%	10%	50%	40%
	District Officers	0%	0%	0%	43%	57%
MERECP has facilitated good dialogue with local communities around Elgon	Protected Area Managers	0%	10%	0%	50%	40%
	District Officers	0%	0%	29%	14%	57%
MERECP has brought additional benefits to local communities	Protected Area Managers	0%	0%	10%	20%	70%
	District Officers	0%	0%	14%	43%	43%
MERECP has been able to adress conflicts with local people	Protected Area Managers	0%	10%	10%	40%	40%
	District Officers	0%	0%	29%	57%	14%

The table above shows how the stakeholders perceive how MERECP has been able to address issues relating to the local communities and their involvement in the governance of the protected areas. The stronger involvement of local communities in PA governance should be seen in relation to MERECP facilitating dialogue between the organizations in charge of the protected areas and the local communities. All involved protected area-governing bodies agree that the level of conflict with people in the park has declined.

6.3.3 What is the purpose of MERECP?

Table 3. Why a TBPAM strategy?

		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
To increase conservation efficiency	Protected Area Managers	0%	0%	0%	30%	70%
	District Officers	0%	0%	0%	57%	43%
A new conservation strategy my org. felt needed	Protected Area Managers	0%	0%	11%	67%	22%
	District Officers	0%	0%	29%	43%	29%
To adress local community rights	Protected Area Managers	0%	40%	20%	40%	0%
	District Officers	0%	0%	0%	57%	43%
A good vehicle for donor funding to conservation	Protected Area Managers	10%	0%	20%	60%	10%
	District Officers	0%	14%	0%	86%	0%
To enforce stronger law enforcement in Pas	Protected Area Manager	0%	20%	10%	60%	10%
	District Officers	0%	0%	14%	57%	29%
To bring benefits to local people	Protected Area Managers	0%	0%	10%	50%	40%
	District Officers	s0%	0%	29%	29%	43%

Despite the consensus on reduced conflicts with local communities there is more uncertainty about how important local communities are in MERECP. If we compare the views on the role of MERECP between the protected area managers and the district officers we find that the PA managers are less inclined to see MERECP as something that should address local communities rights (table 3) As much as 40% of respondents disagree that MERECP should address local community rights. This

indicates that the expectations on local level might be grater in respect to MERECP facilitating for better access and extraction rights to the protected areas.

6.3.4 Performance of MERECP so far

Table 4. MERECP performance

		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
TBPAM is preferred over other systems for resource management	PA Manager	0%	0%	20%	60%	20%
	District Officer	0%	0%	0%	43%	57%
TBPAM has improved Mt. Elgon sustainability	PA Manager	0%	10%	0%	60%	30%
	District Officer	0%	0%	14%	43%	43%
TBPAM is the right strategy for Elgon	PA Manager	0%	10%	20%	30%	40%
	District Officer	0%	0%	14%	29%	57%
Staff in my org. have received training on TB management	PA Manager	0%	40%	30%	20%	10%
	District Officer	0%	0%	14%	71%	14%
I would recommend TB management to other PAs in my country	PA Manager	0%	0%	0%	90%	10%
	District Officer	0%	0%	14%	29%	57%
When project activities and objectives are planned, all partner org. are involved	PA Manager	0%	10%	0%	50%	40%
	District Officer	0%	14%	0%	57%	29%
MERECP has enabled us to create new policies that we would not otherwise be able to	PA Manager	0%	30%	10%	50%	10%
	District Officer	0%	0%	14%	71%	14%
My org. Is enthusiastic about TB cooperation	PA Manager	0%	0%	10%	60%	30%
	District Officer	0%	0%	14%	57%	29%
Cooperation in MERECP is close	PA Manager	0%	10%	10%	60%	20%
	District Officer	0%	0%	0%	86%	14%
Criticism is accepted and we have free discussions on topics we disgree on	PA Manager	0%	0%	0%	90%	10%
	District Officer	0%	0%	29%	43%	29%
Successfull coperation is dependent on good personal relationships	PA Manager	13%	0%	13%	50%	25%
	District Officer	0%	0%	14%	43%	43%

Among respondents to the questionnaire and the interviewees there is enthusiasm regarding the transboundary management model. Both District Officers and PA managers say they prefer a transboundary management model to other systems for PA governance. This should however be seen in relation with the increased resources that trickle down on the organizations as a result of their involvement in MERECP, which potentially could bias the perceived enthusiasm for the transboundary approach.

While the majority of respondents in both groups agree that a transboundary approach to the management of Mt. Elgon is correct, we also see some skepticism, especially among the PA Managers. In understanding this it is important to keep in mind that the PA Managers of Mt. Elgon are by no means a homogenous group, ranging from well equipped organizations in terms of capacity to much smaller organizations. Within this group it should be expected that there are different opinions towards conservation strategies. Furthermore it should also be noted that the prioritized areas of MERECP might not sit as well with all participating organizations in charge of a PA.

The majority of respondents also agree that the transboundary model has improved the sustainability of Mt. Elgon. This result is somewhat surprising as the majority of project activities have yet to be implemented after the program was revised. Furthermore there seems to be no scientific studies that have been undertaken to assess any impact on any improvement/ declination in the sustainability of Mt. Elgon and its ecosystems. A feasible explanation could however be that this is another indicator of enthusiasm towards the increased resources and capacity allocated to the management of Mt. Elgon.

There is a smaller percentage of PA managers compared with District Officers that indicate that people in their organization have received training in transboundary management. This could be a potential reason for concern. If PA managers are not trained in the various aspects of transboundary management it could indicate that training is lacking, or that training is given to people elsewhere in the organizations. Another explanation could also be that the people trained are not sharing their training with fellow colleagues within the organization. The difference detected between

District Officers and PA mangers could also be down to District Offices being smaller, more transparent organizations with fewer people involved and participating in MERECP related activities.

30% of the respondents in the PA mangers group disagree with the notion that MERECP have enabled them to create policies that they would otherwise have been unable to create. This is in contrast to District Officers where 85% agree or strongly agree to the same notion. For districts involvement in a transboundary management project like MERECP have given them access to influence processes that they would normally not be able to, at least not to the same extent. For the PA managerial organizations on the other hand MERECP will potentially mean granting other access to their core activities, planning and executing the management of PAs. We can therefore make the assumption that the major changes in policy are easier to detect for the district offices compared with the PA managerial organizations. As of now only UWA and KWS are involved in direct transboundary activities (joint patrols and transboundary tourism), however for all the managerial organizations it could potentially include major change to incorporated practices.

We also find that both groups see assess the environment for cooperation and free exchange of ideas as good. The majority of respondents see the relationships between stakeholders are close. More importantly respondents also indicate that they are able to have open and free discussions on ideas that they disagree upon. Drawing on the discussion presented earlier in this paper by Fall (2009) we know that transboundary cooperation is not only dependent on communication but also on a conducive environment for problem solving and discussions. For MERECP to succeed in creating a transboundary management system, it will be important to continue providing this arena for discussions.

6.3.4 Weaknesses of the transboundary strategy

Respondents were asked to assess what they perceived to be the challenges of the TBPAM strategy on Mt. Elgon.

Table 5. Weaknesses of TBPAM strategy

		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Top-down drive process	PA Manager	0%	40%	10%	30%	20%
	District Officer	17%	33%	17%	33%	0%
Lacks clear objectives	PA Manager	0%	80%	0%	20%	0%
	District Officer	29%	57%	14%	0%	0%
Does not bring benefits to local people	PA Manager	20%	60%	20%	0%	0%
	District Officer	43%	57%	0%	0%	0%
There are no weaknesses	PA Manager	30%	50%	20%	0%	0%
	District Officer	14%	71%	14%	0%	0%
Alien to real PA management challenges	PA Manager	0%	56%	11%	33%	0%
	District Officer	0%	57%	29%	0%	14%
Limited benefits to managerial organizations	PA Manager	10%	50%	20%	20%	0%
	District Officer	0%	43%	43%	14%	0%
Cooperation is difficult and not worth while	PA Manager	0%	100%	0%	0%	0%
	District Officer	29%	43%	14%	14%	0%
Alienates local people from decission making	PA Manager	0%	78%	11%	11%	0%
	District Officer	29%	57%	14%	0%	0%
PA problems are more of a national than a regional origin	PA Manager	10%	30%	20%	40%	0%
	District Officer	14%	29%	14%	29%	14%

When asked about the major weaknesses of the transboundary strategy both respondent groups identify that the process is to much of a top-down driven process. Top-down can however be understood in at least two different ways. The first is that the structure of developing PA management strategies within a transboundary paradigm is top-down driven. The second is that the whole idea of using a transboundary strategy on Mt. Elgon is top-down driven. This notion is supported by the findings presented in section 6.3.1.

If we assume that the transboundary strategy on Mt. Elgon is aimed at creating a common policy on management of the area, it would imply that common decisions would need to be made. For many of the involved organizations this would suggest that they would loose power and rights that they have today, and it could also be interpreted as loosing influence. This process of transferring power can potentially be understood as shifting decision power up and away from the respective organizations.

Another critique of the transboundary strategy that we can derive from the questionnaires is that it is alien to the challenges of the protected areas. 33% of the respondents in the PA managers group agree to this. This critique is also supported by findings presented in table 5. 40% of PA managers and 43% (29% agree, 14% S. Agree) of district officers agree that the protected area problems are more of national origin than a regional origin. Problems facing the PA that are of a national origin can be issues such as political interference, deforestation and settlement in specific areas, and erosion in specific areas.

The concern regarding issues to the protected areas being more of a national than a regional origin could however also be a result of little communication between the involved organizations across borders. One can for instance imagine that the respondents does not bring up the issues they regard as of a local origin in the MERECP meetings, and instead focus on areas they identify as regional. In the interviews conducted with the same respondents they name many of the same issues when asked about the major threats to the Mt. Elgon protected areas. The chances are therefore good that they might also benefit from joint approaches to mitigate these risks.

From the interviews some of the respondents on district level also voiced their concern that they had been sidestepped. One official complained that even tough they had spent substantial resources on identifying communities that would benefit from the community revolving fund, they were not supposed to monitor the performance of these funds. The official elaborated that they were not compensated, and that they felt implementation had gone above the heads of the local administration.

Regarding cooperation several of the respondents elaborated in interviews that they felt that cooperation were challenging, but fruitful. One PA manager said that it was positive that they now were more exposed (sic) to their neighbors in Uganda and the local communities. Another official said that meetings in MERECP were fruitful, especially sharing of experiences.

One identified weakness that were identified in the interviews and did not show up in the questionnaires were a difference of opinion regarding what type of management strategy should be used to regulate local peoples access to the protected areas. Respondents in Kenya claim that their strategy of almost completely denying local communities access are the preferable. On the Ugandan side however they see the Kenyan strategy as one that creates unnecessary tension between law enforcers and the local communities. This issue will need to be addressed thoroughly by MERECP if there is going to be any hope of creating a common policy for the management of Mt. Elgon.

6.3.5 Will transboundary governance be sustained after MERECP support ends?
Respondents were asked to assess the sustainability of the MERECP activities after the end of the program.

Table 6. TBPAM after MERECP - what will happen?

		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I have no idea	Protected Area Managers	10%	60%	10%	20%	0%
	District Officers	43%	29%	29%	0%	0%
Continue in the same phase	Protected Area Managers	0%	11%	11%	78%	0%
	District Officers	0%	14%	29%	57%	0%
TB cooperation will halt without donor funding	Protected Area Managers	10%	60%	10%	10%	10%
	District Officers	0%	29%	29%	43%	0%

Both groups of respondents are optimistic as to the results of MERECP being sustainable without donor funding. 78% of PA managers and 57% of District officers are confident that the transboundary strategy will be carried over to a phase without donor funding. At the same time some respondents are concerned that the transboundary strategy will be affected without donor funding. It should be noted to this that in order for MERECP to have sustainable impact on the future of PA strategy on Elgon it will be crucial to develop a legal and institutional framework for transboundary management. One should however also keep in mind that when discussing sustainability without donor funding both KWS and UWA are depending heavily on donor funding to perform their day-to-day activities irrespective of MERECP (Vedeld et al. 2005). This illustrates the vulnerability and dependence on donor funding within the field of nature conservation in Uganda and Kenya.

6.4. Analyzing MERECP as policy network

In this section we will analyze MERECP as a policy network to examine who is active in the network and who is not. We attempt to analyze how information is flowing in the network by mapping the communication between stakeholders.
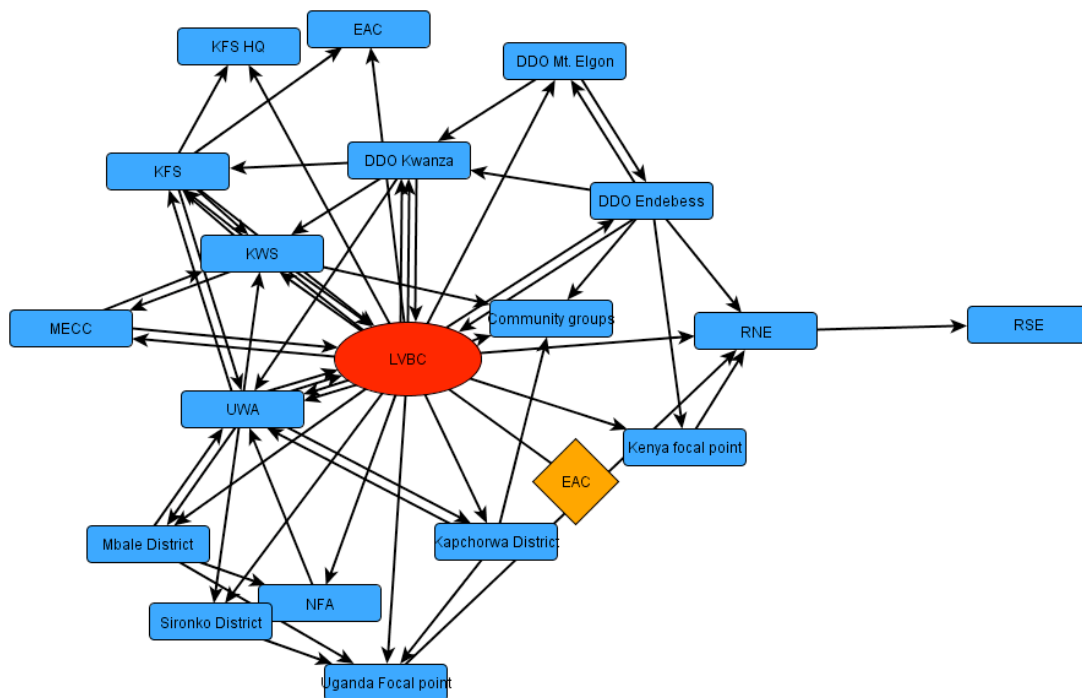
Figure 4. Network relations in MERECP based on whom participating organizations communicate with. Computed using Visone 2.6.3[4]

From the figure above we see that LVBC is in the centre of the MERECP network. Given LVBC role as secretariat this is also to be expected. The placement of each organization is random. The lines going between the different actors illustrate communication, and thus flow of information in the MERECP network. This method is useful as it makes it easy to detect who is in the stream of communication, and who is not. The figure is based on the question: *In the last six months, who have you communicated with in MERECP*.

Among those who are most active in the network we find KWS and UWA. Both organizations communicate with a vide variety of organizations, and also each other. To some extent this also applies for KFS. KFS, KWS and UWA are also the only organization that regularly communicates across the national border, without going trough the LVBC secretariat. This communication should be seen in light of the roles

---

[4] Visone is a tool that allows us to illustrate communication between actors in a network. Each line indicate communication flowing from one actor to the other. Actors are placed randomly in the chart.

that the involved organizations play on Mt. Elgon, especially related to national border crossing.

The two other organizations in charge of governing protected areas on Mt. Elgon, the MECC and NFA are not playing the same central role in the MERECP network. Despite not having a direct involvement at the physical border they are still managing important areas on the mountain. If we assume the argument that issues and threats to Mt. Elgon are of a transboundary nature, these organizations should very well play an involved role, and it can potentially be a reason for concern that they are sidelined.

There is a risk that transboundary projects like MERECP gets caught up in a mindset where "transboundary" only entails crossing national borders. If MECC and NFA are sidelined it could possibly indicate this.

On district level we observe that the Kenyan districts are all interacting with each other. It seems that the District Development Officers (DDO) have created a network among themselves that meet regularly. In Uganda these meetings are less frequent among the interviewed districts. This study has not been able to detect any communication across national borders on a district level. The districts are often faced with challenges that have a local origin and are best solved locally. Furthermore those issues that are of a regional character are also beyond the scope of local government.

6.4.1 Stakeholders interest and power in Protected Area Governance

Below is a graphic rendering of the participating institutions divided into groups by their influence over natural resource management, vs. their capacity and interest in natural resource management:

Influence/ Power of stakeholders in

PA management

		High	Low
Stakeholders capacity/ interest for PA management	High	LVBC, UWA, NFA, KWS, KFS MCC → ↓	District Offices ↓
	Low	Donors EAC	↑ Local communities in Uganda and Kenya

Fi*gure 4: Capacity/ interest for PA management vs Influence/ Power. Adapted from Lopez 2001 pp. 54.*

In the figure above we have defined the LVBC, UWA, NFA, KWS, KFS and MCC as organizations with high interest and influence. These organizations are created to specifically to deal with resource management (with the exception of MCC). MCC have been placed outside the rest of the group to indicate their weaker position, especially in terms of capacity and financial resources.

District Offices are perceived to be institutions with low influence over PA management, but high interest. As representatives of the local communities in MERECP they play an important role, but does not currently have influence over PA management.

EAC and donors have high influence over PA management. Through their role in funding and as agreement partners they have great influence over which PA strategies are applied however they do not have capacity to implement actual decisions. Therefore they are placed in the low interest/ capacity for PA management.

Local communities in Uganda and Kenya are seen as low influence/ low interest and capacity. This does not suggest that they do not have any interest in PA management, in many ways they are the once most greatly affected by decisions regarding which PA strategies are applied.

6.4.2 Understanding of Transboundary Protected Area Management
The Transboundary Model is new to Mt. Elgon and also new to all implementing organizations. Stakeholders knowledge and understanding of Transboundary Management were therefore identified as an important indicator. In a project like MERECP the concept of "transboundary project" is complex, and any differences in expectation and understanding could have devastating effects. The project strategies and visions provides some guidelines, but the understanding on individual level differs.

The training of participating organizations to MERECP on transboundary cooperation seems to be lacking. Of the respondents very few indicated that they had received any training in what a transboundary management system entails. For instance the UWA office in Mbale has not received any training on transboundary cooperation even tough they are supposed to liaise with KWS on matters related to the National Parks. Therefore it seems that transboundary cooperation on Elgon is very much a "learn as you go" process. It was however indicated that training might have been given to people at the central office in Kampala.

LVBC emphasized that transboundary cooperation does not only entail cross national border cooperation. Transboundary cooperation should also be understood as a socio-cultural approach that recognizes that there are other borders than only those between nations. This implies that there are cultural and social borders, borders in terms of economic power and poverty. These borders should also be a part of a framework for transboundary cooperation, beyond the borders of nations. This notion of applying "transboundary" to also entail crossing of social and cultural borders, while an interesting thought, does raise concerns regarding the focus given to PA governance across national borders, especially in light of the poor performance delivery of MERECP so far.

6.4.3 Sustainability of the transboundary cooperation without funding from MERECP

MERECP as it is today is fully dependent on donor funding from the governments of Norway and Sweden. According to the agreements the government of Uganda and Kenya are also set to contribute funds, however there has been some irregularities regarding how these funds should be channeled. The current agreement is for project funding out this year (2011), with possibilities for further funding. Following the redesign it was recognized by the LVBC that the complexity of MERECP calls for a substantial expansion of the project timeframe, possibly 15-20 years.

The data collected show that the respondents are optimistic that long-term benefits of MERECP can be yielded even without a funded project like MERECP, as long as the formal agreements are established. The participating organizations are optimistic

6.5 Results and achievements of MERECP so far

The respondents were asked about the results of the transboundary PA project up to date, now that the project has been running for about 11 years. The findings in this section are based on interviews with involved stakeholders. only results that can be said to have a transboundary nature are presented.

6.5.1 Established a transboundary policy network on Elgon.

Following the mid-term review and the subsequent redesign of the project MERECP is now established with a secretariat located at LVBC headquarters in Kisumu. This office has one officer designated to follow up implementation and disbursement of funds. Prior to the redesign IUCN had the role of secretariat divided between their Kampala and Nairobi offices. With one designated secretariat it is expected that implementation of this new phase will be better coordinated. It also makes it easier for focal points within each organization to know whom to contact and report to.

The Kisumu office is the hub in the transboundary policy network on Elgon. The program has been successful in establishing a dialogue between the actors involved in PA management on Elgon, and have been able to identify some areas were transboundary cooperation is possible. The Kisumu office can potentially reduce

transaction costs for involved actors as it provides a channel for spreading information to the network. There could be concerns that the arrangement with a project office would become an bureaucratic exercise without benefiting the involved actors, however the complexity of MERECP seem to very well justify such an office.

6.5.2 Joint Patrols

Joint Patrols between UWA, KWS and KFS is brought forward as the most immediate transboundary result of MERECP. For a long time there has been an issue with "transboundary poachers" and other people involved in criminal activity. Because of rigid command structures and security details people poaching in the Kenyan area of the protected areas were more or less safe when they crossed into Uganda. The reason for this was that KWS, KFS and UWA are operating on different communication systems that are not able to communicate with each other. The frequency these systems operate on is also considered a state secret. Because of this, rangers in Kenya and Uganda are not able to notify each other if they see poachers crossing the border. Since the rangers are carrying firearms they are also not able to cross the border as this would be regarded as invading each other territories.

In order to address this issue KWS, KFS and UWA has now arranged for joint patrols. These patrols are not "joint" in the meaning that they go together, instead they agree on time and place for meeting each other to exchange information and update each other. Both UWA and KWS emphasized this as one of the most important benefits of MERECP so far. There are however several obstacles that needs to be overcome for this arrangement to work better. First, there is the problem of the different communication systems. The patrols are usually lasting for a long time and the venue and time for the joint patrol is sometimes changed without information reaching the rangers. As of today communication would go like this UWA ranger calls UWA office in Mbale, UWA in Mbale calls KWS Mt. Elgon National Park head office, which contacts the rangers. This chain of communication is easily disturbed.

6.5.3 Cross Border Tourism

Another transboundary scheme that UWA and KWS are implementing is cross-border tourism. This allows tourists to cross between Uganda and Kenya inside the national park. Previously this was not possible since all tourists needed to pass trough a border

post outside the PAs, going in and out of the country. With the new scheme all paperwork is supposed to be taken care of before starting the trip. UWA and KWS then liaise so that tourist groups are handed over at the border up on the mountain by the respective rangers (all tourists in Mt. Elgon have to be followed by armed rangers). MERECP also facilitated the study and creation of a master plan for joint tourism on Elgon, that subsequently lead to the joint tourism efforts.

The arrangement of cross border tourism is meant to attract more tourists to Mt. Elgon. As of the possibility of crossing between Uganda and Kenya is not well known and only a small number of groups have utilized this possibility. Both UWA and KWS had large expectations for this arrangement and were planning to market the possibility better. There are however constraints when it comes to infrastructure to facilitate an increased load of tourism, for instance only very basic campsites exist inside the protected areas.

The cross-border tourism scheme is now implemented, however it is not well marketed, and therefore few tourist groups make use of this possibility.

6.5.4 Initial steps towards a joint management of Elgon
MERECP has commissioned a consultancy that will draft a joint management plan for Mt. Elon. It is expected that this plan will address institutional set-up as well as core areas to be addressed trough a transboundary regime. It will also address which policy changes that are needed in the respective governments to achieve a higher degree of integration. More so, it will also draft memorandums of understandings that will be needed to start the work with integrating new policy.

7. Conclusion and recommendations

The aim of this study has been to investigate how a new conservation strategy has been introduced to Mt. Elgon. To do so it was necessary to map the stakeholders

involved in MERECP and how they perceived the program as well as their knowledge and perception of TBPAM.

The stakeholders involved in MERECP are a complex and diverse group. This study has focused on those identified to be the core actors on a day-to-day basis. The organizations involved in MERECP are committed to the idea of managing the protected areas in a transboundary manner. The stakeholders in MERECP interact with each other, however there is little cooperation between the involved organizations with some honest exceptions. The complex institutional landscape on Mt. Elgon with five different PA regimes gives major institutional challenges.

The two organizations that have best adapted to the TBPAM strategy are KWS and UWA who also has the best capacity in terms of financial and academic resources. The other actors on Elgon seem to lack the capacity to be strongly involved in the complex processes that MERECP demands. These organizations become free-riders, and while their involvement in MERECP is legitimate and acknowledged formally, it is a concern that asymmetrical informal power relations are developing in MERECP.

Understanding MERECP as a social network is adds greatly to the understanding of such conservation strategy and is found useful analytical tool. We have found that the actors in MERECP learn from each other through interaction and that policies are formed trough sharing information and experiences. There are however different levels of involvement in this network. Using the mapping in figure 4. we see that some stakeholders, namely the large managerial organizations, especially KWS and UWA, are have more capacity, which allows them to interact more with other members of MERECP and that potentially give them increased informal power.

It seems that the motive behind introduction of Transboundary Protected Area Management to Mt. Elgon is based on several reasons. (1) IUCN already had projects in the PAs on both sides of the mountain. They knew the national actors well and were able to create interest and financial support for the idea from NORAD. (2) The availability of an existing regional organization, namely EAC that had support from both Governments and was itself eager to promote regional cooperation in any policy field. (3) A willing donors were in place that were already supporting protected area

management initiatives in the region and could be convinced that TBPAM was the way forward. We therefore find that the introduction of TBPAM strategy on Elgon was a top-down, donor driven process that was not requested by the PA stakeholders around Elgon.

We find that communities have limited benefits from the implementation of a transboundary strategy on Mt. Elgon. While some communities are benefiting from the revolving funds that have been established under the program, the communities overall role in the transboundary program is unclear. Any legitimate claims the communities might have to resources inside the PA are not addressed, and communities are perceived by the project as encroachers in the PA. Furthermore the PA managerial organizations percive MERECP as a program that should address community rights. As this paper has found, the managerial organizations also have the greatest influence in the MERECP network, therefore we find the potential for the program to address community rights limited.

While this paper agrees that it can make ecological sense to manage Mt. Elgon under one regime, the complex institutional changes that is needed to accomplish raises concerns if it is an effective path to improving governance at all. The program also seem to lack a clear vision on how to bridge the existing strategies of PA governance into one joint approach that all stakeholders can be satisfied with. This is of great concern now 11 years after the program started. This paper will therefore argue that the program has been to ambitious when involving as many as five different PA regimes in the program. One possible approach could be to reduce the number of PA managerial organizations involved. While this would compromise the ecological arguments for TBPAM, it could potentially result in easier implementation of the institutional changes that is needed and make sense.

MERECP failed in its initial stages to address the issues it was tasked to perform. This is partially to be blamed at insufficient project planning and implementation, and surprisingly not of lack of funding. However this paper will argue that it also show the risks of commissioning international NGOs with overseeing the implementation of complex transboundary programs without strong ties to the national conservation actors. Such programs is more likely to succeed if there is regional actor available

with capacity and a strong mandate in order to gain commitment from other
implementing institutions

8. Bibliography

Amerom, M. V. (2002). "National sovereingty & transboundary protected areas in Southern Africa." GeoJournal **58**: 265-273.

Arumadri, J. (2001). The Forest Revenue System and Government Expenditure on Forestry in Uganda, FAO. Rome.

Baatvik, S. T., Kabogozza, J. R. S., Kabutha, C. and Vedeld, P. (2002). Mt. Elgon Regional Ecosystem Conservation Programme (MERECP). Appraisal Report.

Brosius, P. J. (2003). "Ecoregions and investments: conservation by design." Unpublished manuscript. *In Wolmer 2003, Transboundary Protected Area Governance: tensions and paradoxes. Transboundary Protected Areas in Governance Stream of the 5th World Park Congress. Durban, South Africa*

Bryman, A. (2004). Social Research Methods. New York, Oxford University Press.

Clarke, T. and Clegg, S. (1998). Changing Paradigms: The Transformation of Management Knowledge for the 21st Century London, Harper Collins.

Dearden, P., Bennet, M. and Johnston, J. (2005). "Trends in Global Protected Area Governance, 1992-2002." Environmental Management **36**(1): 89-100.

Duffy, R. (2005). Global Politics and Peace Parks. Environmental change and security programme workshop : parks for peace or Peace for Parks?: Issues in practice and policy. Wilsoncentre.org, Washington DC.

Fall, J. J. (2009). "Beyond Handshakes: rethinking cooperation in transboundary protected areas as a process of individiual and collective identity construction." Journal of Alpine Research(2).

Freeman, R. E. (1984). Strategic Management: a Stakeholder Approach. Pitman, Boston

Grimble, R. and Wellard, K. (1997). "Stakeholder Methodologies in Natural Resource Management: a Review of Principles, Contexts, Experiences and Opportunities." Agricultural Systems **55**(2): 173-193.

Hutton, J., Adams, W. M. and Murombedzi, J. C. (2005). "Back to the Barriers: Changing Narratives in Biodiversity Conservation." Forum for Development Studies **No.2**.

Illegal-Logging. (2010). "Kenya Fact Sheet." Retrieved 28 Jan, 2011, from http://www.illegal-logging.info/approach.php?a_id=72.

Katerere, Y., Hill, R. and Moyo, S. (2001). "A Critique of Transboundary Natural Resource Management in Southern Africa " Paper no.1, IUCN-ROSA Series on Transboundary Natural Resource Management. Pretoria.

Katto, F. M. J. (2004). "Sustainable livelihoods and environmental income dependence around Mt. Elgon National Park, Uganda." Noragric MSc thesis. Norweginal University of Life Sciences, Ås

Laman, M., Khamati, B. and Milimo, P. (2001). "Mount Elgon Integrated Conservation and Development Project (MEICDP) External Evaluation, Final Report." Royal Netherlands Embassy, Nairobi

Larsen, T. S., Kamugasha, B. N. and Karani, I. (2008). Mid Term Review of Mount Elgon Regional Ecosystem Conservation Programme (MERECP). Noragric Report No. 44, Noragric, Norwegian University of Life Sciences.

Linde, H. V. D., Oglethorpe, J., Sandwith, T., Snelson, D. and Tessema, Y. (2001). Beyond Boundaries - Transboundary Natural Resource Management in Sub-Saharan Africa. Washington, D.C. U.S.A, Biodiversity Support Program.

Lopez, T. T. D. (2001). "Stakeholder Management for Conservation Projects: A Case Study of Ream National Park, Cambodia." Environmental Management 28(1): 47-60.

Lvbc (2007). Operational Strategy Lake Victoria Basin Commission (2007-2010). L. V. B. C. Secretariate. Kisumu, Kenya.

Mcginnis, M. V. (2005). Bioregionalism. Encyclopedia of Religion and Nature. B. Taylor. New Tork & London. Continuum.

Mehta, L., Leach, M., Newell, P., Scoones, I., Sivaramakrishnan, K. and Way, S.-A. (1999). "Exploring Understandings of Institutions and Uncertainty: New Directions in Natural Resource Management." IDS Discussion Paper 372. Brighton

Moschitz, H. and Stolze, M. (2005). "Making policy - a network analysis of institutions involved in organic farming." Unpublished Manuscript

Muhweezi, A. B., Sikoyo, G. M. and Chemonges, M. (2007). "Introducing a Transboundary Ecosystem Management Approach in the Mount Elgon Region." Mountain Research and Development 27(3): 215-219.

Myhren, S. M. (2007). "Rural Livelihood and Forest Management in Mount Elgon, Kenya." Noragric MSc thesis. Norwegian University of Life Sciences, Ås.

Norad. (2011). "Naturressursforvaltning og biologisk mangfold."   Retrieved 09.05.2011, 2011, from http://www.norad.no/Satsingsomr%C3%A5der/Klima+og+milj%C3%B8/Naturressursforvaltning.

Nuijten, M. (2005). "Power in Practice: A Force Field Approach to Natural Resource Management." The Journal of Transdisciplinary Environmental Studies vol. 4(no. 2).

Ongugo, P., Njguguna, J., Obonyo, E. and Sigu, G. (2001). "Livelihoods, natural resource entitlements and protected areas: the case of Mt. Elgon forest in Kenya." IFRI Working Paper.Indiana University

Pétursson, J. G., Vedeld, P. and Kabbogoza, J. (2010). "Transboundary Biodiversity Management. Institutions, Local Stakeholders and Protected Areas; A Case Study From Mt. Elgon, Uganda and Kenya." Article Pending Publication.

Pétursson, J. G., Vedeld, P. and Vatn, A. (2010). "Going Transboundary? Institutional and organizational analyses of transboundary protected area management challenges. The case of Mt. Elgon, Uganda and Kenya." Article Pending Publication

Plumptre, A., Kujirakwinja, D., Treves, A., Owiuniji, I. and Rainer, H. (2003). "Transboundary Conservation in the greater Virunga landscape: its importance for landscape spieces." Biological Conservation **134**(2): 297-287.

Prell, C., Hubacek, K. and Reed, M. (2007). "Stakeholder Analysis and Social Network Analysis in Natural Resource Management." SRI Papers **No. 6**.

Primmer, E. (2011). "Policy, project and operational networks: Channels and conduits for learning in forest biodiversity conservation." Forest Policy and Economics **13**: 132-142.

Reed, M. S., Graves, A., Dandy, N., Posthumus, H., Hubacek, K., Joe Morris, C. P., Quinn, C. H. and Stringer, L. C. (2009). "Who's in and why? A typology of stakeholder analysis methods for natural resource management " Journal of Environmental Management **90**(5): 1933-1949.

Singh, J. (1999). "Study on the Development of Transboundary Natural Resource Management Areas in Southern Africa - Global Review: Lessons Learned." Biodiversity Support Program, Washington DC, USA.

Sjaastad, E., Angelsen, A., Vedeld, P. and Bojö, J. (2005). "What is environmental income." Ecological Economics **55**: 37-46.

Sletten, M., Vedeld, P. and Kabbogoza, J. (2008). "To Co-operate or Not to Co-operate: A study of vollaborative management planning in Mount Elgon national park, Uganda." Noragric Working Paper No. 46.Norwegian Univeristy of Life Sciences. As

Soini, E. (2006). Land tenure and land management in the districts around Mount Elgon. Assessment presented to the MERECP program.

Vatn, A. (2005). Institutions and the Environment. Cheltenham, Edward Elgar Publishing Limited.

Vatn, A. (unknown year). "Environmental Governance - a Conceptualization."

Vatn, A. and Vedeld, P. (2011). "Getting Ready! A study of national governance structures for REDD+." Norgaric Report Pending Publication

Vedeld, P. (2002). "The Process of Institution Building to Facilitate Local Biodiversity Management." Noragric Working Paper No. 26.

Vedeld, P., Rooij, A. V., Sundnes, F. and Jørgensen, I. T. (2005). Final Appraisal of the Mt. Elgon Regional Ecosystem Conservation Programme (MERECP). Noragric Report No. 25, Norwegian University of Life Sciences.As.

West, P., Igoe, J. and Brockington, D. (2006). "Parks and Peoples: The Social Impact of Protected Areas." Annual Review of Anthropology 35: 251-257.

Wolmer, W. (2003). Transboundary Protected Area Governance: tensions and paradoxes. Transboundary Protected Areas in Governance Stream of the 5th World Park Congress. Durban, South Africa.

Www.Norway.Or.Ke. (2011, 08/02/2011). "Bilaterale forbindelser."   Retrieved 10/04/2011, from http://www.norway.or.ke/Norsk/Land--og-reiseinformasjon/kenya/fakta/bilaterale/.

9. APPENDIX

Questionnaire

(Which organization are you from?)
/what position

This questionnaire is made up by questions and the respondent are asked to rate his/ hers response to the questions on a five level scale.

(strongly disagree, disagree, neither agree or disagree, agree, strongly agree)

1. **What is Transboundary Protected Area Management (TBPAM) primarily all about - your general perception**

    1.1. To increase nature conservation efficiency

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree/disagree	Agree	Strongly agree

    1.2. A new conservation strategy that my organization felt needed

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree/disagree	Agree	Strongly agree

    1.3. To address local community rights

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree/disagree	Agree	Strongly agree

    1.4. A good vehicle for donor funding to conservation

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree/disagree	Agree	Strongly agree

1.5. To enforce stronger law enforcement in the protected areas

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree/disagree	Agree	Strongly agree

1.6. To bring benefits to local people

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree/disagree	Agree	Strongly agree

General comment: _____

_____

_____

_____

2. How was the transboundary project introduced on Elgon

2.1. The TBPAM project was initiated by the Ugandan and Kenyan governments

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree/disagree	Agree	Strongly agree

2.2. The TBPAM was initiated by the donor agencies

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree/disagree	Agree	Strongly agree

2.3. The TPBAM was initiated by the local communities

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree/disagree	Agree	Strongly agree

General comment: _____

_____

_____

_____

3. Has the TBPAM benefitted local communities

   3.1. TBPAM allows for increased local community involvement in governance of
        the protected areas

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree/disagree	Agree	Strongly agree

   3.2. MERECP has facilitated a good dialogue with the local communities around
        Mt. Elgon

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree/disagree	Agree	Strongly agree

   3.3. MERECP has brought additional benefits to local communities

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree/disagree	Agree	Strongly agree

   3.4. MERECP has been able to address some of the conflicts with the local people

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree/disagree	Agree	Strongly agree

   General comment: _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

4. How is the transboundary project doing

   4.1. The Transboundary Management Model is one that I prefer over other
        systems for resource management.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree/disagree	Agree	Strongly agree

   4.2. The Transboundary Management has improved the sustainability of the Mt.
        Elgon Protected Areas

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree/disagree	Agree	Strongly agree

4.3. The Transboundary management model is the right model for Mt. Elgon

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree/disagree	Agree	Strongly agree

4.4. Staff in my organization has received training in transboundary management

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree/disagree	Agree	Strongly agree

4.5. I would recommend a transboundary management scheme to other areas in my country

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree/disagree	Agree	Strongly agree

4.6. When project activities and objectives are planned it is a process were all partner organizations are involved.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree/disagree	Agree	Strongly agree

4.7. Trough MERECP we have been able to create policies that we otherwise would not be able to.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree/disagree	Agree	Strongly agree

4.8. My organization is enthusiastic about transboundary cooperation

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree/disagree	Agree	Strongly agree

4.9. Cooperation between MERECP organizations are close.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree/disagree	Agree	Strongly agree

4.10. I can openly present criticism of other organizations within MERECP, and we can freely discuss topics we disagree on.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree/disagree	Agree	Strongly agree

4.11.   Successful cooperation in MERECP is dependent on good personal relationships.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree/disagree	Agree	Strongly agree

General comment: _____

_____

_____

_____

5. What are the key weaknesses of the transboundary strategy

5.1. To top-down driven process

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree/disagree	Agree	Strongly agree

5.2. Lacks clear objectives

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree/disagree	Agree	Strongly agree

5.3. Does not bring any benefits to local people

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree/disagree	Agree	Strongly agree

5.4. There are no weaknesses

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree/disagree	Agree	Strongly agree

5.5. Is alien to the real protected area management challenges

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree/disagree	Agree	Strongly agree

5.6. Does bring limited benefits to the managerial organizations

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree/disagree	Agree	Strongly agree

5.7. Cooperation is difficult and not worth while

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree/disagree	Agree	Strongly agree

5.8. Alienates local people from decision making

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree/disagree	Agree	Strongly agree

5.9. The protected area problems are more of national origin than regional

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree/disagree	Agree	Strongly agree

General comment: _____

_____

_____

_____

6. What will happen with the TBPAM strategy after MERECP withdrawal

6.1. I have no idea

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree/disagree	Agree	Strongly agree

6.2. We will continue cooperating in the same phase

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree/disagree	Agree	Strongly agree

6.3. Without the donor funding, it is most likely that the transboundary protected area cooperation will halt.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree/disagree	Agree	Strongly agree

General comment: _____

_____

_____

_____

Questions aimed at identifying how often there is communication between the different institutions:

I. In the last six month, how often have you communicated with institutions involved in MERECP. Please name each organization, and how many times you have communicated with them based on the scale below.

   a. (never, 1-5 times)   b. 5-15 times – 15- 24 times   c. more than once a week

II. In the last six months, how often have you had meetings or gatherings were MERECP related issues were discussed. Please name each organization, and how many times you have communicated with them based on the scale below.

   a. (never, 1-5 times)   b. 5-15 times – 15- 24 times   c. more than once a week

Open ended questions for the semi structured interview:

- What are the current key protected area management challenges on Elgon?
- Are there any social conflicts around the PA governance, and if so, what is it about?
- For you, what does it mean that MERECP is a transboundary management model?
- In what way (if any) has the transboundary approach changed the way you/ your organization thinks and acts about protected area management.
- Has the transboundary cooperation lead to new or changed policy?
- How are you using transboundary approaches?
- How was the Transboundary idea introduced?
- After the project ends (2015) do you think the transboundary cooperation will live on in Mt. Elgon?
- Advantages and disadvantages of the present management model
- Changes after IUCN withdrawl (phase one and phase two)