



U.S. AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

# Environment Project Profile



Africa

Uganda

617-0123

## Action Program for the Environment

**U** SAID is providing \$30 million to implement the critical, five-year (FY 1991–95) *Action Program for the Environment (APE)*. Of this amount, \$20 million is in project assistance, and \$10 million is in nonproject assistance. It is one of USAID's three largest natural resource management programs in Africa. The program's overall purpose is to assist Uganda in managing its natural resources more effectively through policy reform, national environmental action planning, and the rehabilitation and conservation of its natural resource base. APE consolidates and expands on previous USAID/Uganda efforts to protect biodiversity through a number of PL480 and USAID/Washington-funded projects.

### Highlights for FY 1993–94

- Helped the Ugandan government develop policy, legislative, and institutional reforms. Obtained Cabinet approval for environmental policies and guidelines—such as a bill establishing a National Environment Management Authority.
- Developed tools to implement Uganda's National Environmental Action Plan (NEAP), for example, a state of the environment report, internal monitoring and evaluation, and a report on gender and the environment.
- Conservation and development subgrants to various private voluntary organizations (PVOs) and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) included work in Rwenzori National Park, CARE International in Bwindi and Mgahinga National Parks, and the management of the *PVO/NGO Natural Resource Management Project*.
- Identified and provided training and technical support to new district- and local-level officials.
- Conducted survey of community conservation activities near protected areas to identify needed changes and replicate successful techniques.
- Maintained and possibly increased population levels of elephants and gorillas.
- Increased Uganda National Park tourism revenues tenfold.
- Increased the number of men and women from buffer zones employed in protected areas.

### Project at a Glance

**Funding:** Life-of-Project \$30,000,000  
 Biodiversity Percentage 7%  
 Global Environment Facility  
 Parallel-Financed

**Project Duration:** FY 1991–95

**Primary Implementors:**

USAID/Uganda  
 Government of Uganda  
 Tropical Research and Development  
 Makerere University Institute of Environment and Natural Resources  
 Chemonics International  
 Several U.S.-based NGOs and PVOs

**USAID Project Officer:**

Robert Clausen/USAID/Uganda

## Background

Uganda's welfare depends primarily on its soil, water, wildlife, minerals, and vegetation. Situated on Africa's east-central plateau at the intersection of four ecosystems ranging from wetland to montane areas, Uganda is blessed with abundant water resources and rich biological diversity. Factors such as population growth, economic reforms, and the desire for increased income, however, are putting severe strains on the natural resource base. For example, the little remaining forest cover, under constant threat from nearby land and fuelwood seekers, is decreasing by 65,000 hectares each year.<sup>1</sup>

After years of political turmoil, the Ugandan government has only recently addressed the comprehensive management of natural resources. The absence of coordinated environmental policies or legislation combined with institutional conflicts, rivalry, and lack of effective cooperation and coordination within and outside government have contributed to the degradation of Uganda's environment. Inadequate information on the state of the environment and a lack of trained natural resource management specialists exacerbate the problem.

## Project Implementation

APE emphasizes the process of natural resource planning, training for staff of institutions charged with natural resource management, and support for the work of governmental and nongovernmental organizations fostering rational, long-term uses of local natural resources. These tasks are managed through both the policy and rehabilitation and the resource conservation components and are implemented through project and nonproject assistance.

The program is being implemented by USAID/Uganda and the government of Uganda (which is contributing \$10 million in local currency to the effort)

as well as through a contract with Tropical Research and Development (TR&D) and its subcontractors Makerere University Institute of Environment and Natural Resources and Chemonics International. In addition, several U.S.-based NGOs and PVOs are involved in implementing integrated conservation and development activities with APE support.

**Policy reform.** The policy reform component of the program is the primary vehicle for USAID assistance to Uganda's National Environmental Action Plan (NEAP) process. The NEAP process is an ongoing effort by the government, donors, and NGOs to form a comprehensive national strategy to address environmental issues through policy, legislative, and institutional reform. Project assistance under this component supports (1) short- and long-term technical assistance to the NEAP process to build national capacity in environmental management, (2) long-term technical assistance to the Ministry of Natural Resources in community conservation and decentralized natural resource management to help integrate human concerns into national policy implementation, and (3) long-term technical assistance to Uganda National Parks (UNP) in protected area and financial management. Technical assistance to the parks is aimed at developing policies to help local communities participate in planning and managing protected areas, revenue sharing and resource utilization, and tourism concessions. TR&D and its subcontractors are providing all technical assistance except for a long-term advisor on park management, who is provided by the U.S. Park Service.

Nonproject assistance supports the following: (1) providing support for overhead costs of the NEAP secretariat, (2) upgrading Bwindi, Rwenzori, Mgahinga, Kibale, Semliki, and Mt. Elgon Forest Reserves to national park status, (3) establishing policy guidelines for community participation in the

management of protected areas and for the decentralization of natural resource management, (4) promoting the privatization of tourist concessions in or near protected areas with special consideration for local organizations, (5) and providing interim support to the National Environment Information Center, which collects environmental data and helped produce a state of the environment report, and the Makerere University Institute of Environment and Natural Resources, which edited issue papers for the NEAP and aims to provide training services for the APE.

**Rehabilitation and resource conservation.** The rehabilitation and resource conservation effort complements the policy component. TR&D is providing technical assistance as well as training, materials, and local currency funds to the agencies responsible for managing Uganda's natural resources. Much of this is channeled through PVOs and NGOs working with government agencies to support improvements in the protected area system.

## Project Progress

**Policy reform.** During the diagnostic phase (November 1991–December 1993) of Uganda's NEAP, USAID was the lead donor in helping the NEAP secretariat develop issue papers on various environmental problems facing the country. Subsequent USAID efforts focused on developing policy, legislative, and institutional reforms. White papers on the "National Environment Management Policy," the "National Environment Management Institutional Framework," and the "Environment Bill" (which will establish a National Environment Management Authority to coordinate environmental management in Uganda) were finalized in December 1993 and approved by the cabinet in January 1994. In addition, the program helped develop a set of standards and training for environmental impact assessments, produce a state of the environment

report (to be updated every few years), and establish an internal monitoring and evaluation system for the NEAP. A two-day workshop to help integrate gender issues into the NEAP process was held in June 1993; participants developed a report on gender and environment to guide NEAP policy development. Decentralization of the NEAP process is also well under way. TR&D and the World Resources Institute, under a USAID/Uganda buy-in,<sup>2</sup> and a consultant to the APE project, produced several documents to establish steps in this process.<sup>3</sup> In short, the NEAP, including an environmental investment program to be presented to donors in the summer of 1994, is nearly completed. The policy component of APE is now shifting from NEAP assessment and planning activities to implementation.

The government of Uganda is meeting its several commitments to the program. It recently enhanced protected area management by regazetting (redefining boundaries and the level of protection) several reserves to national park status. In efforts to build community participation into policy development and park management, the government has established Participatory Management Advisory Committees, which provide community input on proposed changes in legislation and park governance. Policies on revenue sharing and resource utilization have also been developed by Uganda National Parks with APE support. Uganda has privatized 15 tourist concessions since 1992, with 12 more planned for 1994–95. Lastly, the government has kept pace with its pledge of local currency with an initial *tranche* (disbursement of funds) of \$3 million.

**Rehabilitation and resource conservation.** To date, USAID has funded efforts by numerous NGOs to improve sustainable management of protected areas while working with the resident population. Until September 1993 USAID/Uganda managed grants and provided technical oversight for this

component. Since then, subgrants have been administered by TR&D's new Grants Management Unit (GMU). The GMU has established proposal review criteria and procedures and provided technical support and training on organization, financial management, and monitoring and evaluation to grantees.

Examples of these grants include support to: (1) World Wildlife Fund (WWF) to work in Rwenzori National Park, (2) CARE International in Bwindi and Mgahinga National Parks, (3) World Learning to manage USAID's *PVO/NGO Natural Resource Management Project*, (4) a consortium led by the African Wildlife Foundation to manage the International Gorilla Conservation Program in Bwindi, (5) the Wildlife Conservation Society to work in Kibale Forest, (6) the University of Wisconsin Land Tenure Center for USAID's *Access to Land, Water and Other Natural Resources* (ACCESS) project, and (7) the International Council for the Research in Agroforestry (ICRAF) *AFRENA/Uganda* project. Lessons from initial efforts in protected areas are now being developed into more integrated conservation and development proposals. These will be submitted to the GMU for further USAID support.

TR&D helped develop monitoring and evaluation guidelines in 1993 to assess environmental impacts of nonpark activities and held a two-day workshop in December of that year to explain the guidelines to grantees. A training workshop for grantees on the mechanics of implementing the guidelines is being organized by CARE/Uganda and the GMU.

Despite delays caused by personnel changes, progress was made in revamping the accounting and financial management systems of the national parks.

The GMU is also supporting Uganda's decentralization of natural resource management by identifying training needs. The GMU will provide

limited training and technical support, where feasible, to new district- and local-level officials, such as District Environmental Officers. At the request of the NEAP secretariat, APE facilitated the participation of six Peace Corps Volunteers in pilot areas to work with these officers.

A survey of existing community-level conservation activities was made final in October 1993. The survey was designed to help the government determine future changes in activities surrounding protected areas, including whether and how to replicate successful techniques. For example, one effort studied was the CARE/Uganda National Parks Development through Conservation project in Bwindi Impenetrable National Park. This project involves the community in park management, resulting in the distribution of revenues from Bwindi's gorilla tours to local residents. In addition, the creation of multiple-use zones provides varied ways for the local community to benefit from the natural resource base.

APE has had significant positive results. Since its inception, population levels of such large mammals as elephants and gorillas have been maintained and may have increased, the number of protected areas with active conservation education programs has increased from three to seven, the number of men and women from buffer zone villages employed in protected areas rose from 400 in 1991 to 630 in 1993, and UNP tourism revenues have increased tenfold through support to the fledgling ecotourism industry.<sup>4</sup>

—Kara Page, *Datex*  
6/29/94

<sup>1</sup> World Resources Institute, *World Resources 1994-95* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), p. 306.

<sup>2</sup> A buy-in occurs when a donor agency contributes funds to a preexisting project for a specific purpose.

<sup>3</sup> Frederick Brusberg, "Design and Implementation of a District-Based Environmental Management Information System" (Kampala, Uganda: World

Resources Institute and USAID/Uganda, unpublished report, spring 1994).

Peter Veit, "Decentralizing Natural Resource Management: Some Issues Regarding Sub-District Environmental Planning and Implementation" (Kampala, Uganda: WRI/USAID/Uganda, unpublished report, May 1993).

———, "From Crisis Management to Strategic Planning for Sustainable Development: Sub-County/Town Planning Procedure and Process Guidelines" (Washington, D.C.: World Resources Institute and USAID, unpublished report, August 1994).

<sup>4</sup>U.S. Agency for International Development, *FY 1993 Assessment of Program Impact* (Kampala, Uganda: USAID/Uganda, 1993).