

CHAPTER 11

FOREST POLICY, LAWS AND INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENTS RELEVANT TO NATURE CONSERVATION

CHAPTER OUTLINE

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|-------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 11.1 Forest policy | 11.4 International funding mechanisms |
| 11.2 Forest laws | 11.5 Summary |
| 11.3 International agreements | 11.6 Further reading |

11.1 FOREST POLICY

11.1.1 Forest policy in Uganda

Forest policy in Uganda has a long history, not that much shorter than that of the Forest Department itself. Policies are established to keep management in line with the perceived long-term objectives of the state. As Kamugisha (1993) put it, policy is “... a general statement of aims or desirable goals in relation to given circumstances. It is stated and approved by government...for use by the appropriate government institutions to guide all their activities...”. Since forestry is by nature a long-term activity, the need for policy is particularly great in the forestry sector. Despite this, government objectives change over time, and this necessitates periodic revision of policy to bring management in line with the new objectives. Thus there have so far been three revisions of the original (1929) Uganda Forest Policy, to reflect changing objectives of forestry management. These are briefly outlined in Box 11.1.

11.1.2 Implications of the forest policy changes for conservation

The different policies reflect distinct changes in the perceived role of forestry in Uganda as the country has developed. These changes have had important implications for conservation within the Forest Department. The following paragraphs are partly based on Kamugisha (1993).

The 1929 policy was developed at a time when the state (in the form of the colonial power) was seeking to gain formal control over much of the land. The main justification for scheduling forest reserves was to ensure important water catchments were protected. This was a far-sighted policy in that it looked ahead to a time when those water-catchments might be threatened by increasing human cultivation or livestock grazing. Without it, many of the country's largest reserves, including many now recognised as being especially important for nature conservation, may never have come into existence. Timber production forests were also gazetted, since the main demand for timber was coming from the colonial authorities.

By the time of the first formal revision of the policy in 1948, Uganda was beginning to change more rapidly: the human population was growing, and the empire was reeling from the effects of war which had put heavy demands on countries such as Uganda to produce sufficient timber for export. Likewise, there was a growing awareness of the importance of national economic development in the post-war era. The policy therefore re-emphasised some of the values of the 1928 policy, but fine-tuned it to stress the role of forests in national economic development and in environmental protection, hence the stated need to educate Ugandan foresters, the need for an effective extension service, and the need to acquire more land for planting new forests.

Box 11.1

The Forest Policies of Uganda (Kamugisha, 1993)

The 1929 Forest Policy

1. To retain as forest or reforest all areas of land, the retention of which as forest is considered necessary on climatic or other indirect grounds.
2. To meet, with due regard to vested rights, such of the demands of the population of Uganda as cannot be met by individual or local administration efforts.
3. To advise individuals and local native administrations in all matters concerning arboriculture and forestry.
4. In so far as it is consistent with the three proceeding objectives, to manage the state forests of Uganda so that they will give the best financial returns on the capital invested.

The 1948 Forest Policy

1. To create a permanent forest estate to protect water supplies, to preserve climatic and soil conditions suitable for agriculture, and to supply the needs of the people for forest produce.
2. To manage the forest estate to obtain the best returns consistent with these purposes.
3. To foster among the people of Uganda a real understanding of the value of forests.
4. To encourage sound forestry by local authorities and private enterprise and to train Ugandan foresters.

The 1971 Forest Policy

1. To reserve adequate land as forest estate so as to ensure:
 - sustained production of timber and forest products for the needs of the country and, where feasible, export;
 - protection of water catchments, soils, wildlife and amenity of land.
2. To develop that estate so as to obtain maximum economic return to the country.
3. To ensure efficient conversion of wood and wood products, so as to reduce waste.
4. To carry out extension services aimed at:
 - helping farmers, organisations and other people to grow and protect their own trees;
 - educating the public about the role of forestry and forest industries for their welfare;
 - advising industries and users of wood on suitability and availability of various uses.

The 1987 Forest Policy

1. **To maintain and safeguard enough forest land** so as to ensure that:
 - sufficient supplies of timber, fuel, pulp, paper and poles and other forest products are available in the long term for the needs of the country, and where feasible for export;
 - water supplies and soils are protected, plants and animals (including endangered ones) are conserved in natural ecosystems, and forests are also available for amenity and recreation.
2. **To manage the forest estate so as to optimise economic and environmental benefits** by ensuring that:
 - conversion of the resource into timber, charcoal, fuelwood, poles, pulp, paper etc. is carried out efficiently;
 - the forest estate is protected against encroachment, illegal tree cutting, pests, diseases and fire;
 - the harvesting of timber, charcoal, fuelwood, poles and other products applies appropriate silvicultural methods which ensure sustainable yields and preserves environmental services and biotic diversity;
 - research is undertaken to improve seed sources for planting stock and the silvicultural and protection methods needed to regenerate the forest and increase its growth and yield;
 - research is carried out into tourism and education, with the object of maximising their utilisation potential;
 - research is undertaken to monitor and promote the preservation of environmental services and conservation of biotic diversity.
3. **To promote an understanding of forests and trees** by:
 - establishing extension and research services aimed at helping farmers, organisations and individuals to grow and protect their own trees for timber, fuel and poles and to encourage agroforestry practices;
 - publicising suitability of various timber and wood products for domestic and industrial use;
 - publicising the importance of environmental services provided by forests;
 - holding open days to demonstrate working techniques and bring attention to the positive benefits of forestry.

Under this policy, some natural forest reserves were converted to plantation, in others logging intensified, sawmills flourished, and arboricultural refinement and other technical approaches to silviculture were encouraged. Other natural forests were cleared for agriculture, in the belief that this was a higher priority land-use than forestry in some well-wooded areas. So, although the policy was more planned and detailed, it gave relatively little emphasis to nature conservation other than the formal adoption of the principles of sustained yield in natural forest management.

By 1970, economic development in Uganda was going on apace, a relatively affluent middle-class was emerging with a new set of values, and the forests were facing increasing demands. The policy emphasised how the state's forests could meet the demands of economic development and of the new consumer society, especially for timber but also for wildlife conservation and recreation, as well as the importance of encouraging tree-planting outside forest reserves. This is the first time that wildlife conservation gets a mention, in line with the new thinking internationally. However, international thinking also promoted the idea of forests as financial assets to be liquidated and reinvested in other sectors of the economy, and such a scheme fitted in well enough with Uganda's situation. But whatever the stated policy, the main emphasis of management thereafter was on extracting revenue, especially in the form of timber, with little regard for other policy objectives. In effect, the policy was made inoperable by the worsening political situation of the time. This was a mixed blessing for nature conservation: many sawmills closed down through

lack of skilled staff or spare parts, thus preventing the planned liquidation of the timber resources, but at the same time control of the forest estate was insufficient to prevent massive encroachment and illegal pit sawing.

Following the abuses of the previous two decades, the 1987 policy revision sought to re-emphasise the role of forests in national development, in fulfilling basic human needs, and in environmental protection. This was also in line with international thinking on the role of forestry, and indeed was drawn up at a time of increasing international involvement in the Ugandan forestry sector. The policy emphasises for the first time the need to conserve biodiversity and rare species, and emphasises the need for more active protection of forest resources, for research in silviculture and tourism, for promotion of agroforestry, and an overall emphasis on environmentally sustainable forestry.

The present policy is still sometimes attacked by conservationists for being too complacent about the impacts of forestry on the nature conservation value of natural forests. Box 11.2 outlines points produced by Struhsaker (1987) as recommendations for a shake-up of the Forest Department to re-emphasise nature conservation. Note that they are included here **not as a statement of what should be done**, but as food for thought in the on-going debate about the role of forestry departments in countries such as Uganda. Some of the recommendations have since been fulfilled; others now seem irrelevant; others may yet be appropriate.

Box 11.2

Struhsaker's (1987) ideas on how forest policy in Uganda should evolve in order to be more environmentally sustainable and pro-conservation

1. Natural forests, both reserved and on public land, require greater protection. Most of the larger natural forest reserves are worthy of full protection against destructive exploitation, building on the Man and the Biosphere Reserve model.
2. Mechanised felling and sawmills should be restricted to man-made tree plantations destined for clear felling, but even here extreme caution must be exerted. When timber extraction from natural forests is deemed inevitable, carefully managed and supervised pit sawing is recommended.
3. Every effort should be made to develop alternative, non-destructive uses of the natural forests, such as tourism; harvesting of seeds for wild foods, medicinal and natural pesticide uses; and establishing tree plantations for wood and non-wood requirements; research standard; educational opportunities; and protection of free ecological services.
4. Planted woodlots and tree plantations should become the major sources of fuelwood, poles, and timber, acting as a protective buffer to the natural forests, leaving these for their unique values outlined above.
5. It is urged that reforestation be primarily through the private sector with a de-emphasis on government plantations and a major shift away from exotic trees in favour of indigenous species.

Box 11.2 continued

6. The roles of the government forest department require review with shifts in emphasis and responsibilities. It is proposed that this department be less concerned with managing tree plantations and exploiting natural forests for timber and charcoal. Their primary functions would be: (a) protection of natural forests; (b) research and development of non-destructive uses of natural forests; (c) extension service; and (d) research and development of more efficient use of wood.
7. Implementation of these role changes could be either through a major restructuring of the forest department and/or through a re-allocation of responsibilities with management of several of the large, natural forests being handed over to the Uganda National Parks.
8. International aid agencies wishing to assist Uganda in its forestry problems are urged to give greater consideration to (a) protection forestry; (b) alternative, non-destructive uses; (c) mass education; (d) reforestation through private woodlots; (e) energy conservation; (f) alternative energy sources; and (g) development programmes that are based on long-term ecological planning which are likely to continue beyond the period of direct assistance. Environmental impact statements and follow-up studies should comprise vital components of international assistance.

11.2 FOREST LAWS

11.2.1 Laws relating to forestry and conservation

Legislation is usually established to serve existing policies. When policies are changed, this may be

followed by a change in the law. For a fuller summary of the various laws related to forestry and conservation, the reader should consult Kamugisha (1993) and Tukahirwa (1992). Box 11.3 lists some of them.

Box 11.3

Some of the laws that are relevant to forests and conservation in Uganda. From ODA (1992)

Note: There were well-advanced plans to revise the Forestry Act in 1995. 1995 also saw the addition to the statute books of the Environment Bill. Details were not available at the time of publication of this book.

Forests and plants

- Forest Act 1947
- Timber (Export) Act 1950
- Plant Protection Act 1937
- Prohibition of Burning Grass Decree 1974

Wildlife

- Game (Preservation and Control) Act 1959
- National Parks Act 1952
- Rabies Act
- Animals (Prevention of Cruelty) Act
- Animals (Straying) Act
- Cattle Grazing Act 1945
- Fish and Crocodiles Act 1951
- Trout Protection Act 1936

Health, pollution and others

- Public Health Act
- Factories Act
- Electricity Act
- Uganda Planning Commission Act
- Historical Monuments Act
- Penal Code Act

Water

- Water Works Act 1928
- Rivers Act
- National Water and Sewerage Corporation Decree
- Water Boards Act
- Inland Water Transport (Control) Act

Human Settlements

- Town and Country Planning Act 1948
- Urban Authorities Act
- Preservation of Amenities Act
- Reconstruction & Development Corp. Act 1981

Soils and land ownership

- Public Lands Act 1969
- Land Reform Decree 1975
- Soil Conservation (Non-African Land) Act 1958

Minerals

- Mining Act 1949

11.2.2 Details of some particularly relevant laws

There is not space here to go into details of all these laws, but let us take a closer look at a few key ones.

11.2.21 *The Forests Act 1947 (revised 1949, 1950 and 1964)*

Key components

- *Section 4: Declaration of forest reserves.* The Minister may declare any area to be a central forest reserve or a local forest reserve.
- *Section 12: Issue of licences.* The Chief Conservator (now Commissioner) or forest officers authorised may issue licences on the payment of prescribed fees for the cutting, taking, working or removal of forest produce from central forest reserves and open land.
- *Section 14: Prohibited acts.* 1) Subject to certain exemptions, no person shall cut, take, work or remove forest produce in or from a forest reserve, village forest or open land unless licensed to do so. 2) No person shall (a) clear, use or occupy any land in a forest reserve for (i) grazing, or (ii) camping, or (iii) fish farming, or (iv) the planting or cultivation of crops, or (v) the erection of buildings or enclosures, or (vi) recreational, commercial, residential or industrial purposes, or (b) construct or re-open any road, track or bridge in a forest reserve.
- *Section 15: Domestic use of forest produce.* Africans may in any forest reserve, village forest or open land cut and take for their own personal domestic use in reasonable quantities any forest produce which (a) is not declared by any such rules to be reserved forest produce, or (b) has not been planted by any person; provided that nothing in the Act or in any such rules shall operate so as to prohibit such cutting and taking, or so as to impose any fee on them.
- *Section 16: Protection against fire.* Prohibits any person from starting a fire in a forest reserve, either through negligence or deliberate action. This section makes provision for a forest officer to burn or authorise burning of fire-lines for the better protection of a forest reserve.
- *Section 17: Public to assist in extinguishing fires.* Members of the public living within a reasonable distance of any forest may be required to assist in averting or extinguishing any fire in such forest, or in securing property

within the forest from loss or damage arising from fire or other natural causes. It is an offence for a person to refuse or fail to assist as required by a forest officer.

- *Section 18: Damage to forest produce.* Any person lawfully cutting or removing forest produce from any forest or open land shall take all necessary precautions to prevent damage to other forest produce.
- *Section 27 (1): Seizure.* Empowers any Forest Officer or Police Officer to seize and detail any forest produce; livestock; tools, boats, vehicles etc. which he/she suspects to be liable to be forfeited under this Act.
- *Section 29: Power of exemption.* The Minister may exempt any person or class of persons or any land or class of land from any or all of the provisions of this Act.

Interpretation and comments

Although the law provides for local and village forest reserves, the latter does not exist in practice, since all local forest reserves were brought under central administration in 1967.

Forest produce is defined as: “trees, timber, firewood, poles, slabs, branchwood, wattles, withies, sawdust, charcoal, bark, fibres, resins, gum, latex, fruits and seeds; all honey, grass, litter, soil, stone, gravel or sand as originates in a forest and is not a mineral within the meaning of the Mining Act; and such other things as the Minister may by statutory instrument declare to be a forest product”.

Section 15 does not offer any guidance of control in the extraction of forest produce for domestic use. “Reasonable quantities” is not defined, and has led to large-scale deforestation in forest areas adjacent to settled areas. According to Tukahirwa (1993), “...such a general invitation for a population increasing at an annual rate of 3% is dangerous to forest conservation...”.

The law does not provide any guidance or basis for the granting or refusal of a license. This omission may lead to exploitative actions without due consideration of the needs of conservation. No attempt or provision is made within the law to encourage people to provide their own fuelwood. Forest management laws also ignore the interaction between various natural resources, e.g., protection of water catchment, wildlife habitats, game etc.

Note: The Forests Act was due for a full revision in 1995, to reflect better the current forest policy.

11.2.22 *The Game (Preservation and Control) Act (1959)*

Key components

- *Section 5: Protection of certain animals against unauthorised hunting.* Hunting of all scheduled animals is not permitted, except in a few exceptional circumstances, specified below.
- *Section 8: Right of killing any animal in self-defence.* Any person may, without any special authorisation, kill any animal in self-defence, or defence of any other person.
- *Section 10: Restriction on sale, purchase or export of scheduled animals or trophies.* No person without a licence shall sell, purchase or export any scheduled animal or trophy.
- *Section 33: Right of landholder, etc., to kill animals harmful to property.* The occupier of any land or the owner of any crops or domestic animals may, without the need for authorisation, kill or capture any animal damaging crops or domestic animals. Snares and poisons are not to be used.
- *Section 35: Killing of scheduled animal under section 33 to be reported.* If a scheduled animal has been killed or captured under Section 33, the person killing, capturing or authorising the same must make a report to the nearest administrative officer or game warden, within seven days. Any scheduled animal killed or captured shall be the property of the government.

Scheduled animals include, amongst others, mountain gorilla, owls, colobus monkey and leopard. Lion and elephant are included in the list of animals not to be hunted or captured except under special permit.

Interpretation and comments

This act reverses the general criminal law presumption of innocence of a suspected offender. The person charged has the onus of proving that any animal or trophy was lawfully obtained, when charged with possession, selling, buying, transferring or exporting in contravention of the Act. Wide discretionary powers are given to the licensing officer, without corresponding guidance principles. The interaction between wildlife and other natural resources is ignored. Attempts have been made toward integration in appointment of a forest officer as 'Honorary Game Wardens', but the law is not explicit as to their role, duties and powers as such wardens.

The Act provides for the right of farmers to kill or capture any animal damaging crops or farmland, or in self-defence, and report the action to the nearest administrative officer or game warden, within seven days. However, such hunting is banned within protected areas such as Game Reserves and National Parks, unless licensed. A scheduled animal may be killed in self-defence, or in defence of another person.

11.2.3 *The Public Lands Act (1969)*

Key components

- *Section 26: Timber.* All trees on public land granted in freehold or leasehold by a controlling authority shall become the property of the person to whom the grant is made. The person to whom the public land is granted shall pay to the controlling authority such price as may be fixed by the controlling authority for any reserved trees within the meaning of the Forests Act.
- *Section 48: Saving for law relating to forests, minerals and National Parks.* Subject to the provisions of section 26, nothing in this act shall affect the operation in relation to public land of the law relating to forests, minerals, or National Parks.

11.2.4 *The Land Reform Decree (1975)*

Key components

- *Section 1: All land to be public land.* All land in Uganda shall be public land administered by the Commission in accordance with the public lands act.
- *Section 2: Abolition of tenures greater than freehold.* There shall be no interest in land, other than land held by the Commission, which is greater than a leasehold. All freeholds in land and any absolute ownership are converted into leaseholds.
- *Section 6: Unlawful occupation of land.* It is an offence to occupy land unlawfully. A person is an illegal occupant if they occupy land while having no grant of title to it.
- *Section 9: Definition of unused lands.* A piece of land is deemed to be unused if it is not occupied by customary tenure or developed substantially in fulfilment of the purposes for which any lease has been granted.

11.3 INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENTS

11.3.1 The scope of international agreements

Many human activities are becoming increasingly internationalised. There has been a corresponding increase in the number and scope of international agreements aimed at harmonising these activities. Although there is as yet no universally-accepted international law-court to make sure that signatories respect these agreements, they do nevertheless carry a lot of weight internationally, and most countries aim to respect them even if they do not always get round to incorporating the main points in their own national law.

Uganda is a signatory to many of these agreements. Some of those relating to forestry and conservation are listed in Box 11.4.

11.3.2 Details of some particularly relevant agreements

11.3.21 *United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity*

This agreement is one of the major outcomes from the UN Conference on Environment and Development, held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil in 1992. The key objectives of the convention are to *promote the conservation of biological diversity, the sustainable use of its components and the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising out of the utilisation of genetic resources.*

Box 11.5 lists some of the articles particularly relevant to forestry and conservation.

11.3.22 *The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES)*

This convention monitors and regulates the trade in species whose survival is thought to be jeopardised by international trade. About 34,000 species are listed on the three appendices so far. Species in Appendix I are those in which international trade is banned completely because they face extinction. Appendices II and III are for species whose international trade is regulated by a system of import and export permits.

Ugandan species that currently appear in Appendix I include mountain gorilla, elephant, cheetah, leopard and rhinoceros. Species in Appendix II include chimpanzee, crocodiles, lion, python and, since 1994, African plum *Prunus africana*, giant ground pangolin, long-tailed pangolin, turacos, and African grey parrot. An attempt was made in 1994 to add African mahoganies and African blackwood to Appendix II, but this failed.

Box 11.4

Some international agreements relating to forestry and conservation. Uganda is a signatory to all of these apart from the ITTA. After ITTO (1995) and IUCN (1993)

- United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity (1992)
- Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (1975)
- Convention on the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage (1975)
- United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (1992)
- United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification (1994)
- United Nations Authoritative Statement of Principles for a Global Consensus on the Management, Conservation and Sustainable Development of All Types of Forests (1992)
- United Nations Agenda 21, Chapter 11: Combating Deforestation (1992)
- World Trade Organisation (1994)
- International Tropical Timber Agreement (ITTA) (1983/1994)
- Lomé IV Convention (1989)
- Convention on the Conservation of Wetlands of International Importance particularly for Birds (1975)
- African Convention on the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (1968)

Box 11.5

Some of the articles of the UN Convention on Biological Diversity that are particularly relevant to forestry and conservation (Glowka, Burhene-Guilmin and Synge, 1994)

Article 6b: Each contracting party shall, in accordance with its particular conditions and capabilities:

- integrate, as far as possible and as appropriate, the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity into relevant sectoral or cross-sectoral plans, programmes and policies.

Article 7: Each contracting party shall, as far as possible and appropriate:

- identify components of biological diversity important for its conservation and sustainable use;
- monitor, through sampling and other techniques, the components of biological diversity identified in (a) above, paying particular attention to those requiring urgent conservation measures and those which offer the greatest potential for sustainable use;
- identify processes and categories of activities which have or are likely to have significant adverse impacts on the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity, and monitor their effects through sampling techniques;
- maintain and organise data derived from identification and monitoring activities in (a) to (c) above.

Article 8: Each contracting party shall, as far as possible and appropriate:

- establish a system of protected areas or areas where special measures need to be taken to conserve biodiversity;
- develop, where necessary, guidelines for the selection, establishment and management of protected areas or areas where special measures need to be taken to conserve biological diversity;
- regulate or manage biological resources important for the conservation of biological diversity whether within or outside protected areas, with a view to ensuring their conservation and sustainable use;
- promote protection of ecosystems, habitats and maintenance of viable populations of species in natural surroundings;
- promote environmentally sound and sustainable development in areas adjacent to protected areas with a view to furthering protection of these areas;
- rehabilitate and restore degraded ecosystems and promote the recovery of threatened species through the development and implementation of plans or other management strategies;
- prevent the introduction of, control or eradicate those alien species which threaten ecosystems, habitats or species;
- endeavour to provide the conditions needed for compatibility between present uses and the conservation of biological diversity and the sustainable use of its components;
- subject to its national legislation, respect, preserve and maintain knowledge, innovations and practices of indigenous and local communities embodying traditional lifestyles relevant for the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity and promote their wider application with the approval and involvement of the holders of such knowledge, innovations and practices and encourage the equitable sharing of the benefits arising from the utilisation of such knowledge, innovations and practices;
- develop or maintain necessary legislation and/or other regulatory provisions for the protection of threatened species;
- where a significant adverse effect on biological diversity has been determined, regulate or manage the relevant processes and categories of activities;
- co-operate in providing financial and other support for *in-situ* conservation, particularly to developing countries.

Article 10: Each contracting party shall, as far as possible and appropriate:

- integrate consideration of conservation and sustainable use of biological resources into national decision-making;
- adopt measures relating to the use of biological resources to avoid or minimise adverse impacts on biodiversity;
- protect and encourage customary use of biological resources in accordance with traditional cultural practices that are compatible with conservation or sustainable use requirements;
- support local populations to develop and implement remedial action in degraded areas where biological diversity has been reduced;
- encourage co-operation between its governmental authorities and its private sector in developing methods for sustainable use of biological resources.

Article 11: Each contracting party shall, as far as possible and appropriate:

- adopt economically and socially sound measures that act as incentives for the conservation and sustainable use of components of biological diversity.

Article 13: The contracting parties shall:

- promote and encourage understanding of the importance of, and the measures required for, conservation of biological diversity, as well as its propagation through media, and the inclusion of these topics in educational programmes.

Article 14: Each contracting party, as far as possible and as appropriate shall:

- introduce appropriate procedures requiring environmental impact assessment of its proposed projects that are likely to have significant adverse effects on biological diversity with a view to avoiding or minimising such effects and, where appropriate, allow for public participation in such procedures;
- introduce appropriate managements to ensure that the environmental consequences of its programmes and policies that are likely to have significant adverse impacts on biological diversity are duly taken into account.

11.3.23 Convention on the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage (World Heritage Convention)

This convention provides for designation of areas of "outstanding universal value" as World Heritage Sites. The principal aim is to foster international co-operation in safeguarding these important areas. Sites are nominated by the signatory nation,

and evaluated by the International World Heritage Committee. There are now over 420 World Heritage Sites worldwide.

Ugandan sites on the World Heritage List are Queen Elizabeth, Bwindi Impenetrable and Rwenzori Mountains National Parks.

11.4 INTERNATIONAL FUNDING MECHANISMS

There is now a wide range of international funding mechanisms providing support for forestry and conservation in countries such as Uganda, sometimes as grants, other times as loans. Some prominent ones include:

- Global Environment Facility (World Bank, UNDP and UNEP)
- World Heritage Fund (UN World Heritage Committee)
- Wetlands Conservation Fund (under Ramsar Convention)
- International Tropical Timber Organisation (under the ITTA)
- Tropical Forestry Action Programme (World Bank, UNDP and World Resources Institute, through FAO)
- UNEP, UNESCO, UNFAO, UNDP
- World Bank/International Monetary Fund
- Multilateral and bilateral arrangements between the governments of two or more countries

Details of the Global Environment Facility, a particularly relevant funding mechanism for conservation, are given in Box 11.6.

Box 11.6 The Global Environment Facility

The GEF was established in 1990 as an experimental programme, co-ordinated by the World Bank, UNDP and UNEP, to disburse over a billion dollars over three years, in projects that addressed one or more of four environmental problems that were considered global priorities:

- Destruction of biological diversity
- Global warming
- Pollution of international waters
- Depletion of stratospheric ozone

The 40% share that was to be spent on biodiversity projects represents the largest commitment ever made to this issue by the international community. The second phase of the GEF, agreed in 1994/5 and now run from within the World Bank, increased the amount of money available for disbursement substantially. It is now seen as the main funding mechanism for the Biodiversity Convention.

The main project running in the field of biodiversity in Uganda has been the *Institutional Support for Biodiversity Conservation in Eastern Africa*, which has included several components, one of which, the Forest Department's biological inventory, has been particularly important for forest nature conservation (see Chapter 14).

11.5 SUMMARY

- Forest policy has a long history in Uganda. It has gone through many changes, reflecting changes in the way governments and societies have perceived the value of forests. Since 1987, the conservation of biodiversity has been one of the main policy objectives.
- Policies are generally backed up by laws. In Uganda, there are numerous laws that refer to the environment, forests and conservation, but none that yet bring all the strands together. The new Environment Bill and the proposed revision of the Forests Act should fill this role.
- Even without these new laws, there is much in the existing legislation to provide for good forest management and conservation; the problem is in enforcing the laws.
- International agreements concerned with forestry and conservation are proliferating. Many came out of the UNCED process in Rio in 1992, in particular the Biodiversity Convention. However, a long-awaited Forests Convention failed to materialise.
- International funding is increasingly being directed through organisations associated with these agreements. Particularly important for biodiversity conservation is the GEF.

11.6 FURTHER READING

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