



US Forest Service Guide to Protected Area Management Planning in Central Africa



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January 31, 2007



1. Introduction

This document aims to provide practical guidance on the development of management plans for Protected Areas (PA) which are contained within the landscapes of the Central African Regional Program for the Environment (CARPE). In addition to guiding the overall process of creating a management plan for a PA, this document also outlines certain minimum standards that will be expected of CARPE implementing partners and which USAID/CARPE Management will be using to assess progress toward the development of management plans by the partners. This document standardizes certain PA plan elements as required by USAID/CARPE. These minimum standards are highlighted under each section below as “Tasks” that need to be completed throughout the process.

The macro-zone of Protected Areas, addressed in this guide, is one of three macro-zones defined by CARPE for the landscapes. Planning guides are also available for the Community Based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM) and Extractive Resource (ERZ) macro-zones, as well as a planning guide for the Landscape as a whole. Each macro-zone plan, its desired conditions, objectives and guidelines, must be consistent with the desired conditions and objectives of the overall Landscape plan.

There is no shortage of information and published guidance documents available on the topic of protected area planning. In this series of planning guides we attempt to adapt the expertise gained by the US Forest Service (USFS) from managing large forested, multiple use landscapes in the United States, which include wilderness areas (complete protection zones), extractive uses, and recreation areas, and tailor this guidance to the specific context of Central Africa and the needs of implementing partners and government agencies in the region. This adaptation of lessons learned and processes utilized in the United States to a Central African context is being performed through partnerships and direct assistance provided in the region by the USFS International Programs (IP) office to CARPE implementing NGOs and host country government agencies charged with the management of these resources.

Chapter 2 explains the purpose of a Management Plan, along with other concepts central to planning, and provides a series of essential tasks to complete prior to, or very early in, the process of developing a Protected Area (PA) Plan. Chapter 3 provides the framework to follow for actually writing the PA Plan. It suggests approximate section headings to use and provides explanations regarding concepts to consider and items to include when developing each section.

2. Protected Area Planning Concepts and Process

2.1 Purpose of a Protected Area Management Plan

A Protected Area Management Plan (Plan) describes actions needed to ensure that a PA achieves the purpose for which it was established. Planning is the process in which stakeholders (community members, scientists, government representatives, private businesses, etc) come together to debate and discuss how to manage lands for the benefit of current and future generations and to ensure ecological sustainability of lands and resources. Plans establish guidelines and objectives for the PA over a stated period of time regardless of changing personnel.

PA planning can be problematic depending upon the complexity of issues internal and external to the PA. Planning requires risk assessments and forecasts about anticipated and uncertain future events and conditions. Consequently, even the best Plan will need to be altered to adjust to improving data and information; changing social, economic or other conditions; evolving threats; or feedback from monitoring efforts. Therefore, plans are adaptive in nature and amendments or entire revisions will be an outcome of PA monitoring and other factors discussed in the Plan.

Central to planning is the recognition that in most cases not all desired or ideal data on the PA and its resources will be available in any detail. This is true for PAs around the world, regardless of the financial and human resources available to the management authority. Nevertheless, PA planning must proceed with the view that the Plan can call for specific data collection and be revised with that newly acquired data to make better informed decisions. Therefore, it is important to not delay Plan development due to a lack of data.

PA plans around the world vary substantially in their content and level of detail and complexity. When working through the planning process it is important to keep in mind that, often, simpler plans are more effective plans. The likelihood that the Plan will be more widely read and understood by local stakeholders, as well as the likelihood of their engagement in the process, will increase if the Plan is kept relatively concise, focuses on what is important for protecting the PA and its resources, and is light on jargon, both scientific and legal. Such an approach will also ease implementation of the Plan.

Adaptive management:

Management plans should be considered to be “living” documents, able to evolve to changing information, environmental conditions, and monitoring results. Systematic Plan revisions should happen on a periodic basis, usually after the current plan has been in effect for 5 – 10 years. During a plan revision, the entire PA plan is revisited, allowing for major revisions and changes to the content and objectives of the Plan. Adaptive management, on the other hand, allows individual components of the Plan to be amended or altered at any time due to changing resource conditions, social values, improved data, or in response to results of monitoring activities.

2.2 Desired Condition vs. Threat Based Planning

The concept of “threat based” planning as an approach to PA management and biodiversity conservation contrasts with the USFS’ “desired condition and zoning” model of planning. The “threat based” model addresses only current threats, or those future threats that can be predicted by the planners, in designing management direction. It suffers from the inability to react and consider unforeseen future threats that may evolve, as well as plan for non threat based targets and objectives.

The alternative model utilized by the USFS for forest planning, and proposed in this guide, is the “desired condition” model which outlines overall goals and objectives for the PA, as well as more specific objectives for each micro-zone within it, to guide all future management. Through the setting of objectives it describes the desired compositional and structural characteristics of the biological and physical features desired across the PA, along with integrating social and economic elements, in order to achieve the plan’s desired conditions in the long run. In this approach, barriers, or threats that may limit the ability of land management to achieve or move toward the desired condition, are specifically addressed in guidelines, regulations or zoning concepts. Additionally, opportunities for improving conditions in the PA or micro-zone can also be addressed through these guidelines and regulations. The desired condition model is more flexible and adaptable to address not only existing threats, but unforeseen future ones, as well as non-threat management targets.

To illustrate the difference, take the example of a situation where illegal bush-meat hunting is occurring in a block of otherwise pristine forest within a PA. A typical “threat based” planning response would be to identify the threat, and then perform specific actions, such as anti-poaching patrols, to address this specific threat. The desired condition approach, on the other hand, would strive to set specific objectives for the PA as a whole or for a particular zone (e.g. desired population size or distribution of bonobos, elephants, etc.) that are achieved through the development and implementation of guidelines or rules and management zones. These guidelines and zones would allow land managers to address a range of current threats and prevent new threats from developing in the PA, such as future road construction or illegal logging which would also threaten the achievement of the PA objectives. The more limited threat based approach would not allow managers to deal with unperceived future threats, such as road construction.

2.3 Protected Area Planning Steps

The following steps form the basis of the PA management planning process:

1. Identification of planning team and definition of roles
2. Analyzing the existing legislative process for PA management plan approval
3. Data gathering
 - a. Characterizing the resources and conditions in the PA (this step involves a synthesis of existing knowledge on the PA and its surroundings; text in the Plan characterizing the PA should be limited and focused, the Plan is not a research document)

- b. Delineation of the PA (this step should occur in the macro-zoning process of the Landscape level planning, however there may be a need to further refine the boundaries at a finer scale)
 - c. Identifying additional stakeholders (groups which may not be initially known to planners and groups with interest in PA from outside of immediate region)
 - d. Assess legal status of PA (proposed, designated, neither)
 - e. Identifying trends in resource conditions, use, needs of local populations
 - f. Identifying key information gaps
4. Creation of a public participation strategy
 5. Developing desired conditions and objectives, describing desired conditions for the PA
 6. Defining PA-wide guidelines on resource use
 7. Identification of micro-zones, regions requiring special management, and defining the objectives and necessary guidelines for each
 8. Approval or official endorsement of Plan
 9. Implementation
 10. Monitoring and evaluation
 11. Revision and updating of the Plan as information improves, conditions change, monitoring results come in

Public stakeholders should be directly implicated throughout each step above.

2.4 Roles of the Planning Team

It will be important to define the roles and responsibilities of the planning team early in order to reduce confusion, focus staff time, avoid duplication of effort, and ensure that all aspects of the planning process are addressed. This planning team may be the same as the team working on landscape level planning, as well as on the other macro-zones. If this is the case, any alteration in roles of team members when working on the PA plan should be expressed. Identify the skills needed for successful Plan development. The necessary skills may vary depending on the types of stakeholders, data needs and primary issues associated with the PA, and the size of the team will vary depending on available resources, however some of the commonly required skills for a planning team include:

- Team leader / program manager
- Biologist(s)
- Hydrologist(s)
- Social scientist(s)
- Economist(s)
- Forester(s)
- Mineral/mining specialist(s)

It may not be necessary to have these specialists on the planning team throughout the entire process. Rather some of them could be brought in as needed to advise on certain issues. Even if forestry activities and mining or mineral explorations will not be permitted in the PA, these specialists may be necessary if valuable timber species or mineral deposits are present in the PA, or in the surrounding areas, as those activities outside of the PA will impact the resources within it.

Assign responsibilities and tasks to each staff member, and hire new staff or consultants to fill voids. It is important to recognize both the abilities and limitations of the existing planning staff and adjust accordingly.

Tasks:

- 1) *List planning team members, define the skill set of each individual on the team and what their roles and responsibilities will be throughout the planning process.*
- 2) *If any necessary skills are missing, explain how those gaps will be filled and when.*
- 3) *Identify any short term expertise that will be brought in to assist with the planning process.*

2.5 Official status of the Protected Area

Although many PAs already exist in CARPE Landscapes, some have not achieved any legal status or official recognition. What is the planning team's objective for this PA: pursue legal recognition; pursue international recognition of some kind; maintain current status? The goal and strategy the planning team has for the PA and the stakeholders required to promote such a strategy should be identified. Any PA strategy should explain the context of the PA in conjunction with other PAs, extractive use zones, and community based natural resource management zones. This strategy must demonstrate that economic and social development can still be achieved – or perhaps better achieved – with what is being proposed. The PA strategy should also explain that continued data collection will provide the rationale to make any adjustments, if necessary, in PA boundaries or management direction. If such adjustments are warranted, they would need government approval to be officially changed.

For sites striving for official national government recognition, which may take a significant amount of time to work its way through the political process, the planning team should work through consensus with local communities, advancing the planning process with these populations, to provide some effective level of protection for the area in question. The existence of a Plan created through such community consensus will boost the case for official designation of the PA and acceptance of this existing plan. Therefore, though the planning team will recommend official designation of the PA, they will proceed with management planning prior to any such designation because PA designation could take several years. Advancing the planning and implementation process is important to reduce the potential for lost conservation opportunities.

For sites that may never qualify as PAs on an international level, it is still wise to plan and implement actions that will lead toward desired conditions and alleviate threats to the ecological

Planners should be aware that many sites not yet identified under international agreements have the potential to be so designated: the quality of the Management Plan may be a critical factor in deciding if they are eventually recognized in this way.

- IUCN Guidelines for Management Planning of Protected Areas (Thomas and Middleton 2003)

or cultural values of an area before they become so degraded that the area is no longer worth protecting.

Tasks:

- 1) *Describe current legal status of the PA.*
- 2) *If not yet legally recognized, describe intended plan of action for the PA whether it be legalization and official demarcation of boundaries or some other status.*
- 3) *Identify contact person at appropriate government ministry with whom the planning team will liaise during this process.*
- 4) *Provide anticipated timeline for strategy or official designation of PA.*
- 5) *Draft proposal for PA designation if this is so applies.*

2.6 Stakeholder Participation

The planning team should develop a strategy for effective stakeholder participation in order for the Plan and the PA itself to be successful. The strategy will guide the planning staff in how and when they will involve stakeholders throughout the planning process and ensure that stakeholder's views are incorporated into the PA Plan where possible. Sound strategies for formally designating a PA and for creating a Plan will incorporate several opportunities for participation and concurrence by local communities, government, relevant industry, and other stakeholders. Creating a sense of ownership among local community members and a wider audience of stakeholders by involving them in planning discussions, and to some extent decision making, improves the likelihood that the plan and its implementation will be successful. However, it is important to keep in mind that it is vital that local communities derive concrete benefits which are directly linked to the existence of the PA in order to improve the long term probability of success.

2.6.1 Stakeholder identification

The stakeholder participation strategy will identify the list of stakeholders and the methods of information exchange with the planning team. The following items should be included in this strategy:

- Name the core participants, specifying which stakeholder group or groups they represent.
- Identify those groups that are central to land use decisions, impact the PA, or benefit from resources within the PA.
- During the identification process, expand your outreach to those working in a non-natural resource related field that may contribute useful information or know of other individuals or affected stakeholders (e.g. Health care worker or teacher that may know of individuals or organizations that could greatly contribute to the landscape planning process).
- Include stakeholder representatives from the central and provincial governments, and traditional leadership.
- Consider including ethnic and religious groups, timber companies, tourism companies, mining companies, NGOs (local, regional, and national), government agencies, civil

societies, hunters, fishers, loggers, farmers, water users, researchers or other groups with potential interests in the PA.

- Consider activities outside of the PA that may impact PA resources, identifying the necessary groups or individuals overseeing these activities.
- Is development or infrastructure proposed in the PA such as road reconstruction? Who oversees these activities and makes decisions on road placement?
- Given PA priorities and trends, decide which stakeholders are essential to addressing PA priorities and making PA planning decisions. Do certain stakeholder groups threaten key resources in the PA? Is there potential conflict with certain stakeholder? Are there authority figures with strong influence operating or living in or around the PA? What stakeholder interests may conflict with guidelines and micro-zoning decisions? These questions may help identify and prioritize the engagement of certain stakeholders.

Who are the PA Stakeholders?

Stakeholders of a PA will vary depending on the history, resources, socio-economic conditions, and other aspects of the PA and its surroundings. Stakeholders of a given PA could include:

- Villagers within and near the park boundaries
- Communities further removed from the PA who rely on the PA's resources in some manner, or travel through the PA
- Traditional leaders
- Representatives from national, regional and local levels of government
- Marginalized groups that may not have a voice as part of above groups
- Individuals with ancestral claims to land
- Extractive industries, whether active in the PA or outside its borders
- Local NGOs
- International community (usually represented by BINGOs)
- Tourism industry
- Others....

Task: Document the considerations that went into the development of the stakeholder list: identifying and listing the interests on the landscape; potential groups or individuals to represent those interests; and prioritizing the engagement of the identified stakeholders.

2.6.2 Stakeholder participation approaches

The PA planning process will involve a variety of stakeholders, with varying levels of involvement. Different strategies for different stakeholders may be necessary. The stakeholder participation strategy should identify the methods of information exchange. In engaging different stakeholders, the following should be included or considered:

- Determine how the planning staff will interact with the stakeholders (e.g., individual and/or group meetings on the landscape and/or a central location) and specify which, if any, stakeholder groups will be treated differently and why.
- Consider if all stakeholders are able to spend adequate time participating in the PA planning process. If they are not able to participate in organized group sessions, and their involvement is critical to the success of the planning process, consider keeping them informed through personal communication.

- Explain the manner in which information will be exchanged and how concepts will be delivered to the different stakeholders. This is particularly important for local inhabitants, many will have limited or no access to maps, data, and reports, and some may have low levels of literacy.
- Define the overall purpose of each stakeholder communication; e.g.: information sharing, data gathering, decision making, etc.
- Consider how representatives will coordinate between the PA planning team and their respective groups in order to ensure information and viewpoints are conveyed and received accurately.
- Develop specific talking points for each stakeholder group and for delivering concepts to the group as a whole.
- Include well-defined terminology to reduce confusion in the planning process.
- Describe what languages will be used for written documents and oral communication and how the planning team will provide for adequate translation.
- Ensure that all participants have an accurate picture of the process and their role in the process.

It is important to note that while a high level of community and stakeholder participation is desirable during the planning process, ultimately the majority of the decisions regarding the management and conservation of the resource in the PA will remain squarely in the hands of the PA management authority and not made by local communities unless the PA management decides that is the best course of action. In the case where the capacity of the legal management authority is very limited, or if an NGO is taking a lead role in writing the plan in place of the management authority, arriving at consensus among stakeholders is all the more important.

Tasks:

- 1) *Identify stakeholders that will participate in the development of the landscape plan, how they will participate; and their level of participation.*
- 2) *Describe why you have chosen to work with these stakeholders vs others on the landscape.*
- 3) *Prioritize stakeholder engagement and describe the reasons for the prioritization.*
- 4) *Describe the approaches used to engage the various stakeholders.*

2.7 Prioritizing Planning Actions

While it is ideal to put a great deal of effort into each step of the planning process, as well as into implementation and monitoring actions, the reality of limited financial and human resources, as well as many other challenges of operating in the region, will prevent planning teams and PA administrations from meeting these ideal levels of planning actions. Therefore, it is important that the planning team undergo a prioritization process throughout planning, implementation and monitoring. Key steps requiring effective prioritization of resources include data gathering, plan implementation, and monitoring. Honest assessments of available funds and costs of specific activities must be carried out to determine what the planning team can truly afford to accomplish. The planning team and/or the PA administration must decide what the key threats and

opportunities facing the PA are, as well as evaluate what partner organizations are, or could be, doing to complement actions taken by the PA administration.

***Tasks:** Throughout the planning process, prioritize activities to focus on those management actions that are most critical to the success of the PA and to meeting its objectives. This task is ongoing and the prioritization process should be utilized when evaluating what data to gather, what management projects to implement and what monitoring activities to undertake.*

3. Components of the Protected Area Plan

The following sections are important components of a PA Plan. Below we offer some guidance on what elements to include in each section, how to develop those elements, and other considerations of the planning process. Additionally, many of these sections contain “Tasks” which will be required actions on the part of CARPE implementing NGOs and used as monitoring tools by the USAID/CARPE management.

3.1 Unique Value of the Protected Area

A PA Plan will serve as a tool for the organized management of the PA and as a guide for whether the status of the PA (at given points along a timeline) is still on course with its purpose on the local, national, regional (including within the CARPE program), and global scales. In some cases, the Plan will also provide a strategy for acquiring legal recognition of the PA and for serving as a record of the original intent of the PA. As such, an introduction of the PA and the resources contained within it, explaining its unique value, is an appropriate way to start the Plan. This description should remain brief and focus on key features of the PA that contributed to the reasons it was designated, or should be designated, as such. The management plan is not the place for heavy, in depth discussions of the resource. Rather, this section should provide the name, location, size, and other brief, important features (e.g. endemic or rare species, heritage sites) of the PA.

In this section, explain the unique combination of attributes that warrant managing this area in a protected status and state the category of PA it will fall under. Consider an interdisciplinary approach to assess a PA’s particular values, as different stakeholders will value different aspects of the PA. In some cases, the values or needs of some stakeholders will be addressed on lands outside of the PA. Describe that relationship briefly in order to minimize the potential for negative perceptions of the PA. (*Example: Although commercial logging will not occur inside this PA, these activities are planned on neighboring lands and will provide a source of jobs for local communities.*) The following sections of the Plan will allow for more thorough explanation of the above items, so focus this section on the highlights – the key points you would want known about the PA.

Tasks: Identify and describe the unique value of this PA. This will serve as an introduction to the management plan and should remain brief and concise. This section should clearly and quickly answer the question “Why is this piece of land a protected area?”

3.2 Characteristics of the Protected Area

In this section, describe with more detail the various attributes of the PA. Explain the legal status of the PA (proposed, designated, other?). Include an inventory of the resources in the PA and information regarding the condition of those resources. Use objective statements as much as possible. Once again, the management plan is not the appropriate document for extensive discussions of all research accomplished on the PA. This section should be direct and concise, describing and listing features and resources and their importance. Missing information on any

of these items should not delay the planning process while research is performed on the topic. This section is an inventory of what is currently known and will assist the planning team in identifying key knowledge gaps. This section should include data on the following (to the extent that it is known and available):

- Physical
 - Delineate and describe boundaries, using natural features if possible
 - Identify topography, water courses, unique physical features
 - Compile maps/satellite imagery
- Ecological
 - Identify PA features in regards to:
 - key wildlife resources
 - wildlife migration and movement corridors
 - rare and under-represented plant communities
 - other floral and faunal resources that are of key importance to the PA
 - Describe key ecosystem processes within the PA and interactions with areas outside the PA.
- Socio-economic
 - Identify villages, cultural and spiritual resources, foot paths, transport routes, key economic centers within and around the landscape, agricultural activities, hunting/fishing areas, areas of subsistence level timber extraction.
 - Identify all stakeholders of the PA (including populations outside or removed from the PA).
 - Identify those resources and regions of PA utilized for subsistence purposes vs. larger commercial trade (species hunted or collected and intensity).
 - Map location of economically desirable timber species or mineral deposits that may be targeted for future exploitation.
 - Identify which ongoing uses of the PA resources are legal and which are illegal.
 - Describe any other existing economic activities dependent upon the PA, such as tourism.
- Facilities
 - Identify existing infrastructure; roads, administrative buildings, landing strips, tourist lodges, etc.
- Describe impacts of surrounding land uses.
- Describe any known threats to the resources named above and know trends impacting them.
- Anticipate any future challenges and new or changing influences on the PA.
- Assess government management authority presence in the PA and that authority's capacity to implement the plan and enforce laws.

Tasks: Characterize the protected area and its known features and attributes. Keep the descriptions objective and brief. Use tables and maps as much as possible to list natural resources of the PA and describe physical, ecological and socio-economic conditions.

3.3 Desired Conditions

Desired conditions for a PA should describe what the area will look like and the benefits it will provide indefinitely into the future. Describe the desired conditions for the PA and link them back to the CARPE Landscape desired conditions and objectives, as well as to any national level objectives for PAs. Desired conditions should reflect the PA's unique qualities and how the it can contribute to meeting the conservation purpose for which it was established, stakeholder needs and CARPE's goals *to establish sustainable natural resource management practices throughout Central Africa, thereby promoting sustainable economic development and alleviating poverty for the benefit of the people of the region and the global community (State of the Forest report 2005 p 2)*. PA desired conditions will provide context and direction for the rest of the planning process.

Desired Conditions

Desired Conditions set the broad direction for the protected area over an extended period of time. Desired conditions set idealized goals of what the protected area should be, what it should protect, and who it should benefit.

Identify the context, role and purpose of this PA in the network of PAs and other land-use classes (macro-zones) within the CARPE Landscape, across the country, and within the context of the Congo Basin and the world. If the country in which the PA is located has established a national level vision or set of goals for its PA system, the desired conditions should take these into account and reflect the country's vision for the development of its PAs. Some questions to consider when defining desired conditions include:

- How do planners and stakeholders want the PA to look ecologically?
- How should the PA contribute socially to the region and its inhabitants?
- What resources need to be maintained or protected?
- What category of PA is the Plan seeking to achieve?
- To what degree will this PA contribute to biodiversity conservation, to heritage, to local communities, or to economic development and poverty alleviation?
- How will this PA address the CARPE Landscape goals and in what way does it act as a critical link in a network of PAs?
- What should this PA look like and what should it provide for an indefinite period into the future?
- What is unique about this PA and what is it known for?
- How is this PA different from the lands that surround it?

Developing desired conditions should be done by consensus with the stakeholders. Therefore, this section of the plan should also state who was involved in their development. Seek to develop desired conditions that reflect social and economic considerations, as well as the PA's distinctive roles and contributions to ecological systems. It is critical to state the PA desired conditions early in the document in order to provide context and direction for the rest of the Plan.

Most projects and activities are developed specifically to achieve or maintain one or more of the desired conditions and objectives of the plan. It should not be expected that each project or activity will contribute to all desired conditions or objectives in every instance, but only to a

selected subset. PA management plans should articulate what desired conditions are being addressed by what activities and whether these conditions and objectives are being advanced.

Desired conditions may only be achievable in the long term. If desired conditions cannot be achieved or are no longer valid or relevant to the long-term multiple-use management of the plan, the plan should be amended or revised.

Tasks:

- 1) *Convene PA planning team and stakeholders for development of desired conditions for the PA.*
- 2) *Develop widely shared desired conditions that aim to maintain the PA's unique features and significance, improve resource conditions in the PA, and promote livelihood opportunities for those that depend on the PA's resources or could benefit from it. The desired conditions should reflect any nationally established visions or goals for PAs as a whole in that country.*
- 3) *State who was involved in developing the desired conditions so as to clarify whose desired conditions they represent.*

3.4 Objectives

Management objectives present, in a general way, the key principles that are indispensable for effective management of the PA. Objectives are particularly important because they support the desired conditions and more specifically describe the intended outcome for a given element, attribute, or condition in the PA. (*Example:* Within 10 years, this PA will support and maintain sustainable and diverse communities of native wildlife, fish, and plants.) There may be additional, more specific objectives for species or ecosystems of concern. There should be enough objectives that as many issues as possible related to the PA are adequately addressed.¹ Objectives should not state specifically how they will be accomplished, but they do need to be feasible. Objectives should be unambiguous, measurable, and have a time line. It is essential to involve stakeholders in the development of objectives as different stakeholders may disagree about which activities are or are not compatible with the desired conditions. It will not be possible to please all stakeholders, but the planners should accurately gauge the objectives of their different stakeholders and should develop responses to contentious or conflicting stakeholder views.

Where possible, objectives should be listed in order of priority. The objectives for the PA Plan could be based on the following topics but will be specific to the site in question:

- habitat and species (faunal and floral) conservation
- promoting scientific research
- preserving social and cultural features
- education and training
- community participation and development
- income generation
- ecotourism development

¹ "Issues" here refers to any topic pertaining to uses, threats, opportunities, activities, conflicts, etc related to the PA.

- ecosystem services

For each objective explain the challenges and opportunities related to achieving it. For instance, poverty and a poor economy may continue to translate into bushmeat hunting pressure on an endemic species of concern. Where possible, incorporate community and stakeholder desires or explain how those needs are addressed on neighboring lands within the Landscape.

Tasks:

- 1) *Convene stakeholders for development of PA objectives. Multiple objective setting meetings may be necessary.*
- 2) *Draft the objectives of the PA and, as much as possible, list them in order of priority.*
- 3) *Describe the opportunities and challenges to achieving each objective.*

3.5 Guidelines

Guidelines can be thought of as a set of rules or regulations that apply to a PA as a whole, describing permissible or prohibited activities. Guidelines ensure that certain aspects of the PA maintain their integrity and that various activities occur, or are prohibited, in such a way as to not harm valued attributes of the PA. In this section, name and describe the PA Guidelines that apply universally across the entire PA. Later, there will be additional guidelines written for each micro-zone that apply only within that particular micro-zone. Guidelines should prohibit or permit specific activities or actions. PA Guidelines may address the following, however, as always, the planning team should keep in mind that simplicity is preferable and to only adapt those PA wide guidelines that are necessary to conserve the character of the PA and achieve the objectives and desired conditions established above:

- **Hunting and fishing:** Specify whether it is allowed, if so specify what species, when, where, by what means, how much (limits per person, per season, or per day), and by whom (local communities, sport hunting or fishing tourists)
- **Timber harvest:** Specify whether it is allowed, if so then there should be several guidelines directing ecologically sustainable operations. The guidelines should again specify who can harvest, how much, when, where and what species (the guidelines could specify which species can be harvested, or which cannot, whichever is simpler).
- **Non-timber products collection:** Specify whether it is allowed, if so specify which species or items may be collected, where, when, how much, and by what method
- **Motorized vehicles:** Specify where they are allowed, when, and what rules apply (e.g. stay on designated motor routes)
- **Non-motorized recreation:** Give rules that apply to different types of recreation, if any, that are likely to occur inside the PA.
- **Roads:** A map of existing, planned, and closed roads should accompany these guidelines. Decisions should be made regarding which existing roads will be maintained and which will be closed off permanently. There may be areas where travel will be discouraged in order to protect an aspect of the PA, and there may be other areas where road infrastructure needs to be enhanced for proper management access or for tourism. What size of vehicle will be permitted, and will volume be controlled?

- Economic corridors: Identify, map and define acceptable use of main corridors utilized for the transfer of goods and services. Corridors can include roads, trails, paths, waterways, or other avenues of transporting goods and people for the purpose of trade or economic transactions.
- Trails: As with roads, with indications regarding what means of travel are allowed on each trail (e.g. pedestrian, bicycle, mule/horseback, motorcycle).
- Infrastructure development: A map of existing utilities such as communication towers, waterlines, powerlines, buildings, etc. should be accompanied by a strategy for achieving the desired level of infrastructure in the PA. The infrastructure strategy should focus development within “utility corridors” rather than in a haphazard manner that may increase negative impacts such as fragmentation of habitat or detract from the aesthetics of the PA.
- Fire: Will lighting of fires be permitted, if so by whom and under what circumstances? What will the policy toward fire suppression be?
- Culture heritage resources: If the PA contains any, who will be allowed access to them, when, and what type of rituals may be performed there, if applicable?
- Minerals and geology: Will prospecting and extraction be permitted?
- Tourism activities: Who can bring tourists into the PA, what permits are necessary, are guides required, what fees will be levied, is camping permitted, are night tours permitted, etc?
- Scientific research: What permits are necessary, what limits on manipulation of the environment will be allowed?
- Community rights and development: Are there pre-existing villages within the PA, will they have the right to remain, if so what rights to resource use will they retain? How will revenue be shared with local communities, will locals be given preferential treatment for PA related employment?

If any exceptions to a guideline are to be granted the guideline should explicitly describe the circumstances under which such an exemption would be granted and who has the authority to grant it. For example, if the capture or killing of any animals is to be prohibited in the PA by the guidelines, the author may consider writing in the exception of allowing the park administration to control certain species for management purposes or to allow capture or killing for scientific research with the proper permits. It is also important to note that pre-existing laws in the country where the PA is located may address some of these issues and activities in the PA will remain under the jurisdiction of these laws. Where appropriate, these laws should be referenced in the guideline, however, the PA may set more stringent guidelines in addition to pre-existing regulations. Finally, the PA planning team should consider “grandfathering in” certain uses within the PA. In other words, if national level legislation forbids certain activities in PAs which are an integral part of life at this particular PA for resident communities, the PA guidelines could provide for the rights of those communities to continue those activities, thus usurping national legislation. If this approach is used, it will be important to have the appropriate national level authorities approve such exceptions to national law.

Tasks:

- 1) *Name and describe the PA’s guidelines, applicable across the entire PA. Keep in mind that simplicity is preferable and each guideline should serve*

towards the achievement of the objectives and desired conditions previously determined.

- 2) *Describe any exemptions to the guidelines, as well as who and under what circumstances they can be granted.*

3.6 Micro-Zones

Within a given PA, there are likely to be areas in which the planning team decides to focus on different activities or to emphasize various aspects offered by the PA. These areas are micro-zones and should be delineated on a map of the PA and characterized in this section of the Plan. For instance, there may be some areas where human activity will be concentrated due to a Visitor Center that is planned for that area. Such a micro-zone might be entitled an Interpretive micro-zone and the planning team may choose to focus future development within that micro-zone. Other micro-zones may be planned as buffer zones between areas of high human activity and areas in need of protection from human disturbance. In the accompanying text, provide a heading for each micro-zone and explain how that zone will be managed, why it warrants different management, define objectives for that zone, and describe the micro-zone's guidelines. Micro-zones are not used to describe areas of differing ecological characteristics, but rather are areas of differing management actions. Therefore, for example, if a PA that is otherwise entirely forested contains a piece of savannah, this region need not be labeled as a micro-zone unless the management guidelines for that area will somehow be different than the rest of the PA.

Micro-zones are not used to describe areas of differing ecological characteristics, but rather are areas of differing management actions.

The entire PA need not be micro-zoned. Micro-zone designations should be reserved for areas that require special protections or management beyond that of the PA as a whole.

With each micro-zone, accompanying text should provide a name for the micro-zone and explain the management objectives and guidelines specific to that micro-zone. In order to keep the plan from becoming too complex, and ensure easier implementation and enforcement of the plan, the number of zones should be kept to a minimum and the entire PA need not be micro-zoned. Micro-zone designations should be reserved for areas that require special protections or management beyond that of the PA as a whole. In order to determine whether a new micro-zone is necessary in the plan, the planning team should ask itself how the management in that zone will differ from management across the rest of the PA or in any of the other micro-zones. It is important to keep in mind that the guidelines for the entire PA will still apply within the micro-zones unless the micro-zone guidelines expressly provide for an exemption to certain restrictions, therefore guidelines in place for the PA need not be repeated for each micro-zone.

Different PAs will need different micro-zones in order to achieve their overall desired conditions and objectives. Some micro-zones to consider for a PA plan include the following (again, the number of micro-zones should be kept to a minimum, if there is no substantial difference in the guidelines of two different micro-zones, it may be preferable to combine them into one micro-zone):

- Complete protection zones: regions where all access is prohibited, perhaps other than by the park administration or limited research
- Hunting zones: where certain communities may hunt following certain guidelines that are specified here in the Plan
- Subsistence fishing: for local communities
- Sport fishing: for tourists
- Heritage or Cultural zones
- Developed or High Impact zones: for administrative buildings, tourist lodges, etc
- Extractive Use zones: where extraction of limited amounts of timber or non-timber products may be permitted following certain guidelines
- Village zones: if any exist within the boundaries of the PA and will be permitted to remain

Tasks:

- 1) *Identify areas of the PA that require special protections or management actions and guidelines beyond that which applies to the entire PA.*
- 2) *Map these micro-zones and characterize the resources contained within them.*
- 3) *Create a heading or title for each micro-zone, explain why it warrants different management prescriptions than the rest of the PA or of other micro-zones.*
- 4) *Define objectives for each zone and guidelines to achieve those objectives.*

3.7 Implementation schedule

In this section of the Plan, action items will be prioritized into a workplan with a timeline and a budget to accomplish the work. This section should specify what action items will be accomplished, by whom, when and how much it will cost. It is appropriate to include a description of how the community will be involved, if they have agreed to participate in some aspect(s) of the PA, and how benefits derived from the PA will be shared with them. They may be involved as care takers, educators, guides, research or support staff, or in other ways. Implementation activities need not be focused solely within the boundaries of the PA, in fact it will often be necessary to address impacts on the PA caused by factors from outside its borders. All implementation activities should be linked back to one or more of the PA objectives. If it does not relate to a PA objective, why is the management spending limited resources to do the work?

Prioritization is extremely important in the implementation schedule as financial resources are always limited and it will not be possible to accomplish every task that would be ideal to have completed each year. For example, there may be a lack of knowledge concerning the nesting

habitat of a certain species and it would be ideal to fill that data gap in order to meet an objective of protecting the wildlife and their habitats within the PA. However, with limited resources, more pressing matters may exist in order to guarantee the success of a new PA, or a PA under newly effective management, such as community education projects or the organization of village committees to assist them in participating in the planning process. It is also important to consider here what partners may be doing within the PA boundaries. Improving knowledge of manatees and their habitat may be a priority, but if another entity is already performing this research in the PA, the work need not be duplicated by the PA administration and those resources can be spent elsewhere.

The implementation schedule in the management plan is then translated into specific activities which are outlined and budgeted for in annual workplans. A description of the workplanning process and strategy is available for reference in Appendix A, while simplified single task and multiple task project workplan templates are provided for reference in Appendix B.

Tasks:

- 1) Prioritize necessary management implementation activities, focusing on what issues are most pressing to the success of the PA. Budgeting exercises can be useful in this process in helping planners think through the real costs of activities and make tough decisions about what can realistically be accomplished with a finite budget.*
- 2) Create a schedule of anticipated priority implementation activities for the life of the management plan (5-10 years).*
- 3) Create an annual workplan for the first year of operation, specifying specific action items, along with their resource (human and material) needs and who the responsible parties are. Provide a timeline for completion and a budget.*

3.8 Monitoring

The objective of monitoring and assessment is to determine if management plan and annual work plans are effectively contributing to the achievement of the plan's objectives and desired conditions for the PA. Monitoring and assessment tasks should focus on rare resources, on activities authorized by the PA administration, or on basic information needs for the PA administration. With Plan implementation under way, monitoring will provide the feedback loop for evaluation of the Plan. Monitoring will identify whether the plan is being implemented effectively, that is, whether the existing guidelines are effective and, ultimately, whether the overall objectives are being met. Monitoring will also allow observation of the impacts of management and suggest changes to management actions accordingly. Where implementation runs into problems, monitoring can be used to signal needs for re-deploying management resources to improve implementation of the Plan. Monitoring efforts seek to measure whether the PA's management is effectively working towards attaining the desired conditions of the PA, as described in the objectives.

Plan monitoring should determine if key aspects of the Plan are working as intended or if changes need to be made to the Plan. Monitoring should help determine if existing guidelines

are effective at ensuring the sustainability of activities and resources. Not every thing can be monitored. The Plan should indicate the kind and frequency of monitoring that will occur regarding priority issues. Specific monitoring activities will depend on the objectives that have been identified for the PA, and may include, but are not limited to:

- Species of concern
- Plant communities
- Benefits attained by local communities
- Human disturbances
- Extent of hunting and fishing
- Infrastructure impacts
- Instream flows
- External threats to the PA

As with the Plan implementation, monitoring actions should be subjected to a prioritization process as limited resources will prohibit monitoring as much as would be ideal. Efforts should focus on monitoring aspects of the plan which relate most closely to the most pressing threats to, and needs of, the PA in order to assess whether or not the Plan has been effective at reducing the impacts of those threats.

Tasks:

- 1) Prioritize monitoring needs, linking monitoring activities to determinations of the Plan's effectiveness.*
- 2) Based on available budgets and resources, determine which monitoring activities will be carried out and how.*
- 3) Identify who will be responsible for each monitoring activity, create timelines and budgets for each activity.*
- 4) Explain how monitoring results will feedback into adapting the plan's management direction.*

APPENDIX A: DESCRIPTION OF WORKPLANNING STRATEGY, PROCESS, AND COMPONENTS

- Purpose of Workplans
 - a. To provide for the implementation of the park’s management plan.
 - b. To define the “program of work” for all park operations.
 - c. To set priorities for work to be accomplished.
 - d. To define the resources needed to accomplish priority work in the park.
 - e. To determine funding needs for park operations.
- Work Planning Strategy
 - a. Work planning is the process used to develop an annual program of work, which can be used to project immediate funding needs for the next fiscal year (budget request).
 - b. Work planning can serve as a valuable tool to project work priorities and budgetary needs for the next 3-5 years, particularly where projects or activities need to be phased due to complexity or costs.

Note – draft workplans, used for budget planning and requests, will likely need to be revised once a final budget allocation to park units has been made.

- Types of Workplans – Two types of workplans (see templates in Appendix B) may be suitable for the development of a program of work for PAs in Central Africa:
 - a. *Single Task Workplan Template* – This workplan template is suitable for projects or activities that are relatively simple in nature, and do not require complex planning or phasing. Examples of projects or activities that would likely fall into this category would be:
 - i. Law Enforcement – annual work program for law enforcement staff (eco-guards) who are engaged in such activities as monitoring for illegal fishing and hunting.
 - ii. Park administration – covering the salary, training, and materials and supplies for the conservator, clerical and budget staff, and any other administrative staff, and their supplies (paper, pens, computers and associated supplies, Xerox machine and associated supplies, etc.) It is important to note that, as the chief administrative officer of the park, the conservator’s annual salary would be included in this workplan. Therefore, if any other workplans call for efforts by the conservator, his/her salary would not be factored into that other workplan.
 - iii. Administrative Facilities Maintenance – covering the cost for annual maintenance of all administrative facilities, including staff involved in maintenance activities, cleaning materials, paints, stains, and any tools that must be purchased to accomplish this work (brooms, paint brushes, etc.). However, it should be noted here that a park with a complex administrative facilities structure (such as an office, maintenance building, and multiple staff housing facilities) may find the multiple task workplan format more suitable due to the diversity of facilities needing maintenance.

- iv. Park Trails Maintenance – covers the routine annual maintenance of all the park’s trails, such as brushing, any needed tread repair, etc.
 - v. Park Roads Maintenance – covers the routine annual maintenance of all the park’s roads, such as brushing, grading, and surface repair.
 - vi. Fleet Operations and Maintenance – covers the routine annual maintenance of the park’s vehicles (and boats where applicable) and their fuel costs.
- b. *Multiple Task Workplan Template* - this workplan template is suitable for projects or activities that are somewhat complex in nature, and can be better defined and planned as multiple tasks. Due to the complexity of these projects, they are frequently phased over several years. This allows phased implementation and funding to be spread out over several years, as appropriate. Examples of projects or activities that would likely fall into this category would be:
- i. Planning and construction of a trail with a wildlife viewing component, where the tasks are as follows:
 1. Task 1 – design and layout of the trail. Includes time spent on site identifying the specific location of the trail.
 2. Task 2 – construction of the trail. Includes all tasks associated with construction of the trail, such as trail width clearing, brush removal, and tread construction.
 3. Task 3 – construction of a wildlife viewing area. Includes time spent building bench seating for visitors to use while observing local wildlife.
 - ii. Planning and Construction of Entry Posts/Check Points.
 1. Task 1 – survey of sites selected for Entry Posts/Check Points – includes clearing, and clearance for cultural resources.
 2. Task 2 – design of Entry Posts/Check Points – includes any modification of standard designs provided for National Park use by CNPN, if needed and appropriate to accommodate local conditions.
 3. Task 3 – contract for construction of the Entry Posts/Check Points – includes cost for staff to conduct periodic inspection of construction progress to assure work is in compliance with contract requirements.
 4. Task 4 – purchase and installation of all furnishing for the Entry Posts/Check Points to make them operational.
- Work Plan Components – The inclusion of the following elements should be considered when developing a workplan:
- a. *Project Summary* – a brief description of the project or activity to be accomplished, with sufficient detail so it is clear what will be done.
 - b. *Personnel* - description of all personnel needed to accomplish the work, including name and or title of each position, with number of days planned for each person for this work, multiplied by the cost of the person per day, to give total personnel cost. Once again, the full cost of the conservator’s annual salary is placed under only the administrative workplan.

- c. *Supplies and Materials* - list of all supplies and materials which must be purchased to accomplish the project or activity. Include the item, quantity multiplied by unit cost, to get total supplies and materials cost.
 - d. *Contracted Services* – list all services which must be contracted to accomplish the work, including an estimate of the contract cost.
 - e. *Specialized Training* – list any specialized training that is required for this project or activity that is not routine training that the rest of the park’s staff would receive. An example would be special law enforcement training for eco-guards in a Law Enforcement Workplan.
 - f. *Fleet* – list all vehicles and boats that would be needed to accomplish the work, and the days needed for each. Note – the total of days planned for any vehicle or boat, when considering all the annual work plans, cannot exceed the number of work days in the year. If they do, an additional vehicle or boat will be required to accomplish all the projects or activities.
 - g. *Project Cost Summary* – provide a total cost of the project or activity, including all personnel, supplies and materials, contracts, and specialized training.
 - h. *Phasing* – for multiple task and/or high cost projects or activities, consider a multiple year phasing plan if appropriate.
- **Priority for Annual Work Plans** – The following general priorities are recommended when considering development of an annual program of work. The order of importance of these priorities may be different from PA to PA.
 - a. *Address health and safety issues* – this includes both visitors and staff, and includes sanitation facilities and any provisions necessary to assure a safe environment to prevent injury or disease.
 - b. *Protection of critical habitats or species.*
 - c. *Resource information needs* – includes surveys, inventories, and assessments.
 - d. *Transportation needs* – includes roads and trails.
 - e. *Cultural and community needs and issues.*
 - f. *Tourism needs* – includes information and education, and marketing.
 - g. *Administrative needs* – including development of office facilities and staff housing.

APPENDIX B: WORKPLAN TEMPLATES

Single Task Workplan Format

PROJECT TITLE: _____

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: ____ (Provide brief description of the work to be performed) _____

Personnel Needs (List all personnel needed to accomplish the project)

(Name/Title)	(Days Planned)	(Cost Per Day)	(Total Cost)
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

Supplies and Equipment (Only list items that need to be purchased)

(Item)	(Quantity)	(Unit Cost)	(Total Cost)
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

Contracted Services (List any work to be done by contract with non-park personnel)
(Serviced Needed) _____ (Estimated Cost) _____

Specialized Training (List any training needed specifically for this project)

(Course Title)	(Cost of Course)	(Travel)	(Total Cost)
_____	_____	_____	_____

Vehicles (List all vehicles needed to accomplish this project)

(Type)	(Days Planned)
_____	_____
_____	_____

SUMMARY OF PROJECT COSTS (Add all costs, by category, from above)

Personnel _____
Supplies and Material _____
Contracted Services _____
Specialized Training _____

TOTAL PROJECT COST _____

Multiple Task Work Plan Format

PROJECT TITLE: _____

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: (Provide an overall summary of the work to be performed) _____

TASK #1 (Description): (Provide a brief description of the task to be performed) _____

Personnel Needs (List all personnel needed to accomplish this task)

(Name/Title)	(Days Planned)	(Cost Per Day)	(Total Cost)
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

Supplies and Equipment (Only list items that need to be purchased)

(Item)	(Quantity)	(Unit Cost)	(Total Cost)
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

Vehicles (List all vehicles needed to accomplish this task)

(Type)	(Days Planned)
_____	_____
_____	_____

TASK #2 (Description): (Provide a brief description of the task to be performed) _____

Personnel Needs

(Name/Title)	(Days Planned)	(Cost Per Day)	(Total Cost)
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

Supplies and Equipment (Only list items that need to be purchased)

(Item)	(Quantity)	(Unit Cost)	(Total Cost)
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

Vehicles (List all vehicles needed to accomplish this task)

(Type)	(Days Planned)
_____	_____
_____	_____

TASK #3 (Description): _____ (Provide a brief description of the task to be performed) _____

Personnel Needs

(Name/Title)	(Days Planned)	(Cost Per Day)	(Total Cost)
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

Supplies and Equipment (Only list items that need to be purchased)

(Item)	(Quantity)	(Unit Cost)	(Total Cost)
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

Vehicles (List all vehicles needed to accomplish this task)

(Type)	(Days Planned)
_____	_____
_____	_____

(Add additional TASKS if needed)

(For Total Project)

Contracted Services (List any work to be done by contract with non-park personnel)
(Serviced Needed) _____ (Estimated Cost) _____

_____	_____
_____	_____

Specialized Training (List any training needed specifically for this project)

(Course Title)	(Cost of Course)	(Travel)	(Total Cost)
_____	_____	_____	_____

SUMMARY OF PROJECT COSTS (Add all costs, by category, from above)

Personnel	_____
Supplies and Materials	_____
Contracted Services	_____
Specialized Training	_____

TOTAL PROJECT COST _____

Recommended “Phasing Implementation” for projects to be funded over multiple years:

<u>Phase</u>	<u>Funding Proposal</u>
Phase 1: Task(s) number _____	Year 1- _____ \$
Phase 2: Task(s) number _____	Year 2- _____ \$
Phase 3: Task(s) number _____	Year 3- _____ \$