

**USDA Forest Service Technical Assistance Trip
Ituri Landscape
Democratic Republic of Congo
In Support to the Wildlife Conservation Society in
Assessing Landscape-Level Planning Strategies**

Mission Dates: January 16 – February 3, 2006



Photo of Okapi (Tatu) at Gilman International Conservation, Epulu, DR Congo



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[Note: The following report is a part of an ongoing technical assistance effort by the US Forest Service to USAID/CARPE and its partners aimed at providing guidelines for landscape level management planning. The recommendations contained in this report are focused exclusively on this particular landscape, and may contain discrepancies to recommendations made in other USFS reports for other landscapes. The USFS is currently working on producing generalized guidelines for landscape planning, based on the collective experiences of providing assistance on individual landscapes, which will be utilized to inform planning processes for any of the CARPE landscapes.]

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*The Wildlife Conservation Society crew in Beni with
the US Forest Service Team*

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I. Report Summary

The USDA Forest Service (USFS), through the Office of International Programs, is an implementing partner in the US Agency for International Development's (USAID) Central African Regional Program for the Environment (CARPE), providing targeted technical and capacity building assistance aimed at improving forest management in the Congo Basin. In an effort to focus this assistance in a manner that capitalizes on the relative strengths of the agency, the USFS is concentrating efforts towards land management planning processes for CARPE landscapes. These landscapes were chosen for their biodiversity and conservation importance and established as foundations of regional conservation and sustainable natural resource use. These areas contain a mix of national parks and other protected areas, current or future timber and mining concessions, villages and settlements, and the neighboring forested areas on which they depend for their day-to-day resources.

The multiple-use mandate of the USFS in managing National Forests and Grasslands in the United States requires planning which integrates conservation strategies to achieve ecological sustainability as well as resource use opportunities to contribute to economic and social sustainability. Capitalizing on this experience, the USFS has been asked by USAID/CARPE to develop planning processes and management planning guidelines for comprehensive landscape level planning and for the three different use zones within those landscapes: protected area zones, community use zones, and extractive zones. The USFS will develop these processes and models in collaboration with the NGO landscape leads (African Wildlife Foundation, World Wide Fund for Nature, Wildlife Conservation Society, and Conservation International) and host country governments.

The trip report which follows describes the USFS mission to the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Ituri Landscape in the Northeastern portion of the country, from January 16 – February 3, 2006. The focus of this trip was on identification issues impacting the landscape as a whole, but also providing input on strategies, threats and opportunities in planning on community use and extraction zones. The team worked in collaboration with the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) towards development of landscape planning elements for the Ituri Landscape. The USFS team for this mission consisted of Rebecca Nourse, District Ranger on the Cordova Ranger District of the Chugach National Forest (Alaska) and David Fournier, Vegetation Planner on the Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit (California).

II. Mission Objectives (summarized from terms of reference, see Appendix B):

This USFS technical assistance mission will provide input to WCS concerning threats to the landscape and the Okapi Faunal Reserve and buffer contained within the landscape. This mission will focus on assessing the existing conditions, threats, and opportunities on the landscape, and will provide input on planning processes for the landscape. The objectives of this initial mission to the Ituri landscape are:

- 1) Assess state of information, roles of stakeholders, threats and opportunities in and around the Okapi Reserve.
- 2) Provide input to WCS on activities, approaches, and tools for identifying zones and creating a management plan for the landscape, outlining key issues, stakeholders and steps for completing the process.
- 3) Advise WCS on information gathering techniques for a large scale forest assessment of the landscape and suggest different tools for this purpose.

Collaborate with WCS and other key stakeholders to inform the development of a land use planning template for landscape-level planning that can be applied throughout the Congo Basin.



Typical village in the Ituri Landscape



Transporting lumber from artisanal logging operation

III. Findings and recommendations:

- A. *An assessment of the state of available information on the landscape's resources and people, and the interactions between the two. This section should also propose prioritized data collection needs and recommend tools and procedures for collecting that data.*

The USFS team and WCS held meetings with many entities during the Ituri trip. These are summarized with complete meeting notes in Appendix F. The USFS team developed a short list of questions to use in all the meetings to focus discussion and elicit different perspectives on issues. The main questions asked are as follows:

- If things could turn out the way you'd like them to, what is your Vision for this area 20 years from now?
- What do you use the forest for? What do you get from the forest?
- Who else does something in the forest that affects you and the way you live? Who else do you think should be involved in developing the management plan?
- Who are the people that you interact with? What are the purposes of those interactions?
- What has changed from 10 years ago? What do you see that is different?
- What methods do you use, if any, to contribute to conservation while you are utilizing the forest?
- What are the primary species that are most important to you (tree, crop, animal, etc.?)

General Findings from Our Meetings

Although much of the information in this section is repeated in more detail in Appendix F, some of this background information is important for understanding the context of more specific recommendations that follow later in this report.

Richard Tshombe (WCS) provided information on a number of topics related to the situation and activities in the DRC with particular reference to the Ituri Landscape. He explained the administrative levels and identified the names of each that relates to the Ituri (see Table 1). He described the kind of administrative and traditional authorities for these areas as well as the role of the CARPE and NGOs in the landscape. The establishment of the Okapi Reserve and the major issues confronting it were discussed.

Table 1: Administrative Zones and Capital Cities in the Ituri Landscape

Province	District	Territory	Collectivity
Orientale (Kisangani)	Ituri (Bunia)	Mambasa (Mambasa)	7
		Djugu ()	1
		Irumu ()	1
	Haut Uele (Isiro)	Wamba ()	3
		Watsa ()	3

The CARPE has relationship with the NGOs within the Okapi Reserve, but it is the Ministry of the Environment’s “Conservation de la Nature” and “Eaux et Forets” that can address issues outside of the reserve. The Okapi Reserve (30,000 km²) was established in 1992 by Ministerial Decree as a pilot for multiple use of the Reserve including settlement, agriculture and extractive uses. The main subsistence crops in the area are rice, beans, corn, cassava and peanuts. It was established to protect the primary forest that serves as habitat for the Okapi, but also for the Mbuti Pygmies who retain close cultural and subsistence ties to the forest. The larger landscape area of 40,000 km² is where CARPE and WCS are focusing their land use planning efforts, i.e. a place-based planning strategy that incorporates protected areas, agricultural areas, and extraction areas.

WCS relationships in the Ituri Landscape include Gilman International Conservation (GIC), Enzymes Refineries Association (ENRA) logging concessionaire and the Institute Congolais pour la Conservation de la Nature (ICCN). WCS also attracts outside researchers to the station in Epulu to conduct research and collect inventory data on forest conditions. The following are the primary aspects of each collaborator:

GIC: assists ICCN staff with salary, logistics, law enforcement, medical, and tourist infrastructure. WCS is subcontracting GIC to provide education for zoning in Epulu. GIC also runs a zoo for breeding Okapi, the offspring of which are transported to zoos worldwide.

ENRA: produces papaya juice as a primary crop and timber as a secondary crop. ENRA is working with WCS to establish planning areas. The market for timber is in Uganda, Kenya and other eastern African countries.

ICCN: under the Ministry of the Environment, but independently manages protected parks. The Okapi is their logo on the uniform they wear. There are about 60 agents and they all carry guns.

The issues facing existing efforts to protect and conserve forest lands include:

- Need for information (research, studies, tracking, monitoring),
- Need for clarity in the current forestry code and elaboration of the code into regulations,

- Need for delegation of authority to local administration of the Ministry of the Environment,
- Influence of immigration from high population areas,
- Need for control of borders with neighboring countries to regulate flow of timber products,
- Social interactions between the Mbuti pygmies and other ethnic groups in the area, e.g. the Mbuti are not always open with ICCN agents and may not express their true thoughts openly with other groups, and
- Enforcement capabilities are needed to control concession, Reserve, and landscape level boundaries and activities.

The outlook in the DRC appears to be improving since cessation of conflict in the region. Efforts are taking place to improve legal basis for management and improve the standard of life in local communities. In addition to the Forestry Code, a new law was passed in October 2005 to control immigration. This law requires a permit for anyone visiting the Reserve. Only people who are already there or have traditional claims in the area can settle in the Reserve.

In addition, the TransAfrica road that goes through Epulu is being reconstructed by a Chinese company that will link the region to larger markets. This could be a good thing with some negative effects, but no one is certain.

The goal for land area protection nationally is 15%. Currently, the area under some form of protection is 8%.

Although the groups we met with throughout our trip represent very different interests, the USFS team was struck by the similarity of their perspectives related to conservation, planning, and issues that need to be addressed.

- The overwhelming vision for the state of the Ituri Landscape in 20 years is that “the forest will be conserved, will still be here for our use.”
- There is strong support for the concepts of conservation and collaborative planning; however, feeding the people will be the first priority if choices need to be made between that or saving the forest.
- It is hard for many to understand the urgency of planning for conservation when they see forest everywhere.
- Many issues and challenges stem from the state of government institutions in DRC.
 - Lack of institutions for laws, regulations, enforcement, and decision-making.
 - Financial resources from government and local economies are absent or insufficient to invest in local programs.
 - Taxes do not return to the Landscape for reforestation, conservation, and community benefits (as directed by the DRC Forestry Code).
- Pressures from immigration into the Ituri Landscape contribute to threats to conservation.
 - Increasing immigration is preventing reforestation.

- The old system of “log/slash and burn/farm/fallow/log” no longer works because the agricultural needs of an increasing population require additional areas of deforestation.
- Traditional chiefs “give” land for a fee to new immigrants.
- The desire for community food security is overwhelming throughout the Landscape. Several suggestions were heard that could help if support were available (financial, extension agents, etc.)
 - Develop more productive seeds and crops for local conditions (more production from less land).
 - Develop and teach improved agricultural techniques to increase production.
 - Diversify food base by creating fisheries and animal husbandry in addition to other crops, and reduce bush meat consumption.
 - Increase agroforestry projects in more communities.

Specific Findings and Recommendations

With regard to current landscape planning efforts undertaken by WCS in the Ituri Landscape, the USFS team offers the following findings and recommendations:

Additional Information Needs

Findings: The efforts of WCS and their partners are good and the USFS found no reason to step back from anything being currently developed or implemented. Some issues may have already been given some consideration, but need continued effort or need to become broader in scope.

Recommendations:

- Investigate broader socio-economic links throughout the Landscape, with neighboring DRC communities, and with neighboring countries.
- Evaluate population demographics and immigration trends in the landscape.
- Mining activities (both legal and illegal) within the Landscape were not discussed at length, although it is known that these activities impact the Landscape. This should be addressed in future planning.
- Minimum data elements for further planning need to be identified. The USFS plans to discuss this and develop a list to be provided to WCS. The USFS Team brainstormed a preliminary list, but this list is not complete:
 - Vegetation and forest types
 - Road, trail, and access route information
 - Wildlife population and habitat information
 - Community locations
 - Soil properties and types
 - Change detection trends in vegetation coverage
 - Demographic trends
 - Economic information related to local, country and international markets for forest products

Zoning

Definition: Zoning for Management – The demarcation of a planning area by designation, ordinance, or law into zones and the establishment of regulations to govern the use of the land and structures within each zone.

Findings: Some planning activities are being conducted by WCS and partners prior to the development of an overall Vision for the Landscape. In land management planning conducted by the USFS, a Vision is the first step. Zoning of land-use areas and establishing levels of protection would usually be done in the planning phase of the process once sufficient information was gathered on the landscape. In the absence of an existing plan, however, DRC does need to “put the cart before the horse” in establishing at least outer boundaries to the Landscape. If the specific zones they are considering (agricultural zones, artisanal and concession-based timber extractions zones, hunting management zones, etc.) are helpful in doing that, then this would be a good first step in defining the planning area (see Figure 1). As more information is gathered, more specific zones could then be adjusted within the landscape.

Without opportunity for more in depth discussions with WCS regarding methods and reasoning behind their delineation of zones, it appears that much of their zoning efforts to date match the current uses on the ground.

Recommendations:

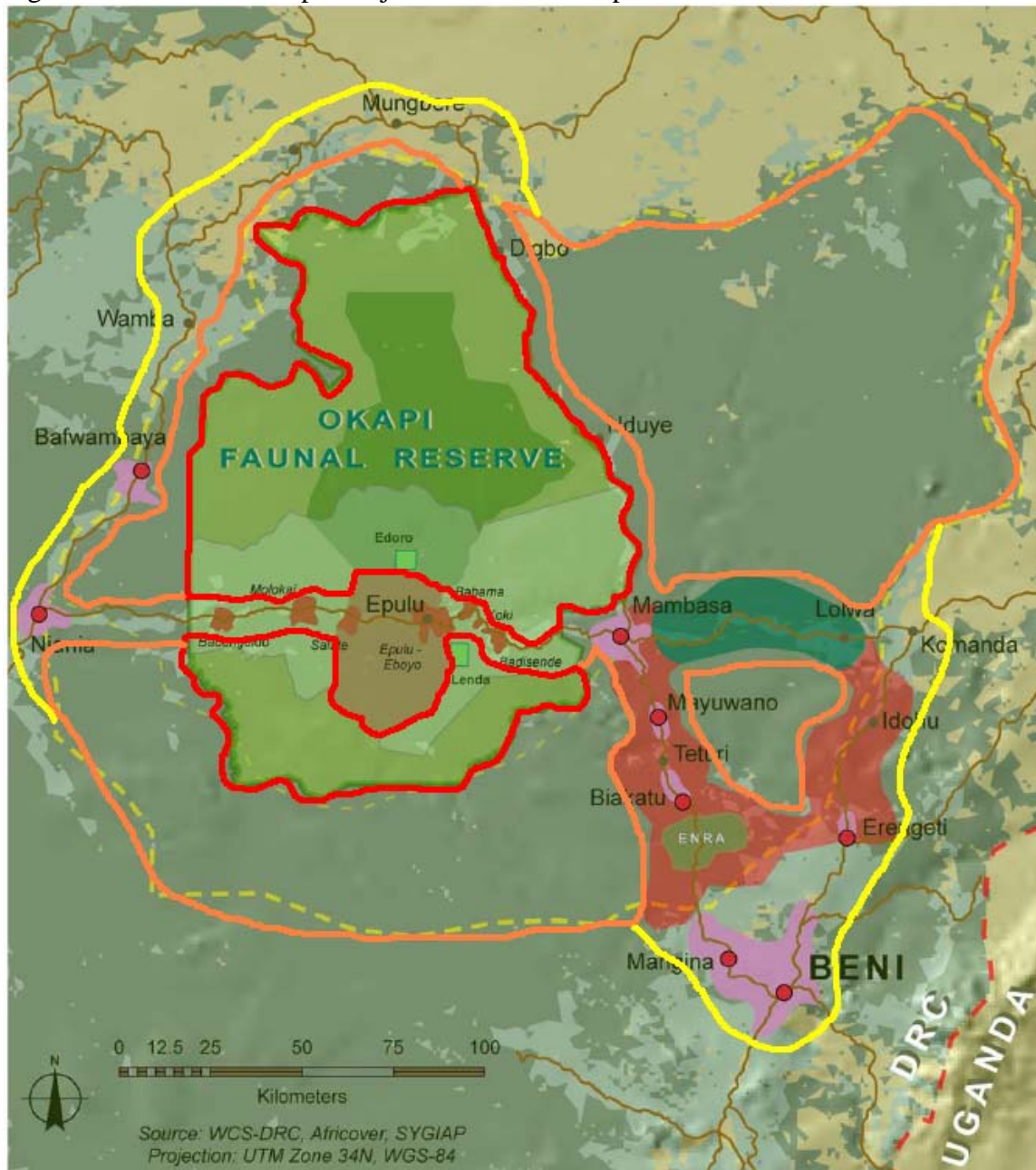
- Expand the landscape boundary (see Figure 2). Additional zoning is needed to expand the boundary to include villages along the roads surrounding the Okapi Faunal Reserve and transecting the Landscape.
- Zoning efforts should ensure provision for future population growth, both within existing villages and in the form of new settlements.
- There is opportunity to define additional categorical areas that tier directly to the DRC Forestry Code, and have increasing levels of impacts from allowed uses. Consider the following Categorical Zones, within which the use zones defined by WCS would fit. CARPE has developed terminology for a similar zoning concept, although some of the allowed uses may differ slightly from the DRC Forestry Code, and any future land management plan should clearly define the zoning terminology and allowed uses. It may make sense to adopt the CARPE zone terminology for land management plans in all eleven Landscapes; however, individual allowed uses may vary between Landscapes in the CARPE zones and should be clearly delineated.
 - USFS “Preserve” zone = DRC Forestry Code “Classified Forest”. Allowed uses might be research, protection, low-impact tourism, etc. This is similar to the CARPE terminology: “Protected Area Zone”.
 - USFS “Forest Use” zone = DRC Forestry Code “Protected Forest”. Allowed uses might be hunting, gathering, fishing, tourism, limited access, etc. This is similar to the CARPE terminology: “Community-Based Natural Resource Management Zone”.

- USFS “Land Use” zone = DRC Forestry Code “Production Forest”. Allowed uses might be hunting, gathering, fishing, commercial logging, artisanal logging, mining, agriculture, etc. This is similar to the CARPE terminology: “Extractive Resource Zone”.

Figure 1: WCS map of Ituri Landscape including Okapi Faunal Reserve and use zones.



Figure 2: USFS Team map of adjusted Ituri Landscape boundaries.



Red = area of preservation; Orange = area of forest land-use; and Yellow = community areas.

Public Participation and Communications

Findings: WCS appears to have developed good working relationships with the concessionaire in the Landscape, and with other partners, including community and government leaders in the area. They have identified most of the stakeholders who would have an interest or be affected by land management planning efforts. It is clear that they understand the importance of public participation in successful planning efforts and subsequent implementation of a land management plan.

However, they have not developed a strategy to coordinate future public participation and communication.

Recommendations:

- Develop a well-thought-out public participation plan for collaboration in land management plan development. The plan should include:
 - How, where, and when stakeholders will collaborate and who will be responsible for accomplishing this.
 - Special consideration for interaction with pygmy tribes.
 - One idea is to establish a forum with representation from each “interest group” (who will then engage constituents).
 - Include a communication plan that discusses how information and decisions throughout the planning process are shared (e.g. announcements, meeting summary notes, holding community meetings, radio, TV, publications, etc.).
- Identify feasible tasks related to land management that could be accomplished through participation of local populations, not requiring much outside funding. Some examples could include:
 - Local boundary enforcement groups to help ICCN in the OFR.
 - Development and implementation of a public education plan for natural resource conservation education in communities throughout the landscape.
 - Extension agents to help with improved agricultural methods.

B. A discussion of the landscape planning approach recommended for the Ituri landscape and an assessment of its usefulness as a model for developing similar plans on other landscapes.

In the Congo Basin, a hierarchal planning approach being developed includes: 1) Congo Basin Level - CARPE has a strategic approach to developing landscape-level plans across the 5 member countries of the CBFP; 2) Country Level - CARPE has recognized the DRC specific circumstances involving a new constitution and forestry code that relate to planning; and 3) Landscape/Regional Level – WCS has begun to identify land use zones in the landscape and to study some of the elements of the land uses.

Basic elements of landscape planning approaches used by the USFS can be applied within the context of the Congo Basin. Elements of the new Forest Planning Rule of 2005 may provide the basis for this approach. Once the US context is removed from the language of the rule, the landscape, country, and basin context can be used. The relevance of the basic concepts of this planning rule will be explored further when the USFS teams meet in Portland, OR with USFS-IP Staff in May 2006.

WCS - DRAFT Land Use Planning Process: Ituri Landscape

Findings:

Zoning: The Ituri landscape buffers the Okapi Faunal Reserve. Zoning uses around a central protected area is based primarily on existing use. Establishing zones in this manner is useful in identifying the location of dominant use areas within the landscape; however, these zones may not be sufficient in size or number to address the current and future population, including the land area needed to produce adequate food crops.

Information Gathering: Data collection of natural resource conditions is difficult to conduct in terms of the logistic support necessary to equip teams of data gatherers and man-power needed to cover the large scale of the landscape. Available research on forest dynamics appears to be substantial, however, studies on soil properties and types were not found. No studies were found on the demographic situations or trends. Anecdotal information on the demographic situation is corroborated by WCS, Local Administrators, and Associations, however, no studies were found on the economic relationships between local users of resources, purchasers, transporters, markets, and consumers. Although available studies appear to be useful on a local scale, they do not constitute adequate information needs at the landscape scale.

Recommendations:

- The broad-scale forest areas in and around the Ituri landscape and Okapi Faunal Reserve (OFR) should be determined. The forest and the habitat it provides have yet to be delineated. The OFR is only one aspect of the need to protect primary rainforest from immigration and deforestation.
- Utilize GIS and satellite imagery to begin delineation of broad forest areas around the Ituri. Based on initial interpretation of the forest types, focus inventory on validating imagery interpretation. This could save time and resources by installing fewer permanent inventory plots.
- The overall landscape boundary needs to be determined in order to define the planning area and focus specific studies, activities and monitoring. This boundary should be established relative to a regional objective.
- Utilize analytical tools with satellite imagery to determine conditions of specific characteristics, e.g. intensity of use or forest density, according to different types of land use and types of vegetation.
- A data management system could assist all NGO and CARPE to compile, synthesize and evaluate the effectiveness and accomplishment of the various management activities being carried out on the landscapes. A similar system could also be used to compile and disseminate research findings, local studies, and monitoring information.
 - Computing training
 - Data compilation & management
 - GIS & GPS
 - Spatial Analysis

- A suite of planning document outlines could assist CARPE to address the overall set of planning issues. The goal of these documents is to be adaptable to new and changing information. These include, but are not limited to: Executive Summary document, Technical Support document, Public Participation and Communication plan, Adaptive Management plan, Monitoring plan, etc.
- C. *A prioritized list of future tasks that should be addressed in advancing the landscape planning process for Ituri and the implementation of the plan, including any future role for USFS technical assistance. This section will include a discussion of any possible USFS role in providing more detailed assistance for land use planning on any community use or extraction zones on the Ituri landscape.*

Development of Interim Strategy for current on-going program of work

Findings: WCS and other entities such as GIC and ICCN have an on-going program of work related to various aspects of management in the Ituri Landscape. This includes initial zoning maps, protection efforts within the OFR, limitations on immigration in the OFR, small agroforestry projects, initial discussions with community leaders about future planning, stationing of WCS employees in small villages within the landscape, inventories of wildlife and vegetation, etc. While these efforts do not appear to be coordinated in the sense of moving towards a common goal of landscape planning, they are good projects which address conservation issues within the landscape in the short term.

Next Steps for USFS Participation

Findings: It appears that there is a need for additional technical assistance from USFS to provide guidelines and examples of landscape scale land use planning concepts and methodologies. Good progress was made during this initial visit to DRC landscapes to begin discussions with NGOs and community entities on these concepts. NGOs are eager to learn more and desire more specific guidelines to assist them in developing strategies to carry out land use planning for the landscapes.

Congo Basin landscape plans are essentially the equivalent of a Forest Plan under the 2005 Planning Rule. US law, regulation and policy establish both legal and agency policy frameworks that are both strategic and tactical at national, regional and local levels (see Table 2). Planning at these levels will provide a consistent context in the Congo Basin using the 2005 Planning Rule.

Table 2: USFS Strategic planning framework and 2005 Planning Rule components

Forest Service's Strategic Planning Framework	FOREST'S Plan Format	2005 Rule Plan Components
Mission		
Vision	Vision	Desired Conditions
Strategies	Strategy	Objectives Suitable Uses Special Areas
Tactics	Design Criteria	Guidelines
Projects		

The USFS conducts planning on multiple scales including Forest, Landscape, and Project-levels. At each scale, goals and objectives are determined from each higher level with National strategic goals guiding all lower levels. The National Forest Management Act (NFMA) is the guiding law for Forest-level planning. In 2005 the planning rule in the NFMA was updated to reflect the evolution of planning in the USA. The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) is the primary guiding law for project-level planning. The implementing regulation and agency-specific policies of the USFS provide guidance in meeting the intent and requirements of the laws. Application of the principles and concepts of these planning rules might provide for planning in the Congo basin.

In addition to a completed plan is the need to monitor effects of management activities and make necessary adjustments through an interdisciplinary and adaptive management approach. This is accomplished using an Environmental Management System (EMS, from ISO 14001). An EMS is a basic framework for sustainability in the Landscape Plan. EMS uses independent audits to open up to the public how we prioritize and conduct activities, measure the results, and improve our performance in meeting our commitments to the environment and to sustainability.

EMS is a transparent way of improving the environment that takes a look within the organization, checks work performance, and informs managers to make adjustments to improve the environment. It includes the whole organization - every employee who is required to know the environmental commitments and how they contribute to improving the environment. The EMS provides the structure to do this.

The following benefits of EMS should accrue quickly: 1) adjust for changing circumstances or to improve performance; 2) account for performance through required audits and assure the results of these audits are visible to the whole

organization and the public; 3) communicate with every employee all know environmental commitments and what to do to improve the environment.

Recommendations: A close-out meeting in Kinshasa between the USFS teams and USAID/CARPE staff was held to discuss deliverables from this initial visit to the landscapes and to recommend future involvement by USFS. In addition to individual team trip reports, it was agreed that follow-up deliverables should include two documents: a) Planning Strategy Guidelines; and b) Landscape Management Planning Guidelines.

- Hold a round-table in USA of all USFS teams including USFS-IP staff to synthesize and discuss a planning approach based on experiences gained in DRC Landscapes. This should be a 2-day facilitated meeting.
- Planning Strategy Guidelines - development of “guidelines” for a planning strategy, which could be used by NGO leads for each landscape, to be available within a couple of months. This is envisioned as a short and simple (4-5 pages) document that NGOs could use to articulate their proposed strategy to move forward in planning efforts. The guidelines would propose questions such as:
 - What steps are necessary to develop a landscape plan?
 - Who will be responsible for each step?
 - Cost estimate?
 - Timeline?
 - Means for verification that progress is being made?
- Landscape Management Planning Guidelines – development of “guidelines” for landscape management plans, which would provide consistency for planning efforts in all the CARPE landscapes and still allow for flexibility to address issues specific to each landscape. The guidelines might include:
 - Minimum data elements needed for planning (e.g. travel routes, vegetation types, communities, traditional and current use zones, forest cover change detection, socio-economics, etc.)
 - Public Participation and communications Plans
 - Planning Process (e.g. Vision, Desired Conditions, Standards, Consensus-building, Decision making, etc.)
 - Implementation Plans (short-term and long-term)
 - Monitoring and Adaptive Management Plans
- Hold a future workshop in DRC led by USFS to teach NGOs concepts of landscape planning and how to use both the “Planning Strategy” and “Landscape Planning” guidelines.
- Coaching - Once landscape planning has begun, there may be opportunities for USFS to provide technical assistance for specific planning steps.

Appendices

A: Acronyms & Abbreviations

AWF	African Wildlife Foundation
CARE	Cooperative for Assistance and Relief Everywhere, Inc.
CARPE	Central African Regional Program for the Environment
CENEM	Comite des Exploitants et Négociants de bois scie du territoire de Mambasa
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
EMS	Environmental Management System
ENRA	Enzymes and Refiners Association
GIS	Geographic Information System
ICCN	Institut Congolais pour la Conservation de la Nature
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OFR	Okapi Faunal Reserve
SNV	Netherlands Development Organization
TOR	Terms of Reference
USAID	US Agency for International Development
USFS	USDA Forest Service
USFS-IP	USDA Forest Service – International Programs
WCS	Wildlife Conservation Society
WWF	World Wide Fund for Nature

B: Terms of Reference as of August 2005

USDA Forest Service Technical Assistance in Collaboration with The Wildlife Conservation Society on Landscape Planning Support for the Ituri Landscape

Draft Terms of Reference – August 2005

1. Background

The USDA Forest Service (USFS), through the Office of International Programs, is an implementing partner in the US Agency for International Development's (USAID) Central African Regional Program for the Environment (CARPE), providing targeted technical and capacity building assistance aimed at improving forest management in the Congo Basin. In an effort to focus this assistance in a manner which capitalizes on the relative strengths of the agency, the USFS is concentrating their efforts towards the land management planning processes of the CARPE landscapes. These landscapes were chosen for their biodiversity and conservation importance and established as foundations of regional conservation and sustainable natural resource use. These areas contain a mix of national parks and other protected areas, current or future timber and mining concessions, villages and settlements, and the neighboring forested areas on which they depend for their day-to-day resources.

The multiple-use mandate of the USFS in managing National Forests and Grasslands in the United States requires planning which integrates conservation strategies to achieve ecological sustainability as well as resource use opportunities to contribute to economic and social sustainability. Capitalizing on this experience, the USFS has been asked by USAID/CARPE to develop planning processes and management plan templates for comprehensive landscape level planning and for the three different use zones within those landscapes: protected area zones, community use zones, and extractive zones. The USFS will develop these processes and models in collaboration with the NGO landscape leads (African Wildlife Foundation, World Wide Fund for Nature, Wildlife Conservation Society, Conservation International) and host country governments.

Toward this end, the USFS will provide a technical assistance team to work in collaboration with the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) towards the development of a landscape management plan for the Ituri Landscape in the Democratic Republic of Congo. This USFS team will consist of two individuals experienced in developing landscape level management plans utilizing a multiple use approach and in managing large forested landscapes. The potential exists, as needs are further refined, to add a third team member in the form of a GIS expert. This team will focus on issues impacting the landscape as a whole, but will also provide input on strategies, threats and opportunities in planning on community use and extraction zones as well. This team will travel to Congo and the Ituri landscape at an as yet to be agreed upon date for a period of approximately three weeks.

2. Objectives

This USFS technical assistance mission will provide input to WCS concerning the mitigation of threats to the landscape and the Okapi Faunal Reserve and its buffer contained within the landscape. This mission will focus on assessing the existing conditions, threats, and opportunities on the landscape, and will provide input on planning processes for the landscape. The objectives of this initial mission to the Ituri landscape are:

- 4) Perform an initial assessment of the state of information, roles and activities of stakeholders, threats and opportunities from activities in and around the landscape and the Okapi Faunal Reserve.
- 5) Provide input to WCS on landscape level planning activities. Building on work already begun by WCS in identifying particular use zones within the landscape, the USFS team will provide insight on activities, approaches, and tools that may be utilized in identifying zones and in creating a management plan for the landscape as a whole. This objective will rely on a technical exchange of ideas, aiming to strengthen WCS's landscape planning approach as needed. It should be noted that the USFS will not be writing a management plan for the Ituri landscape, but rather, will help outline key issues, identify appropriate stakeholders, and suggest necessary steps for completing the process.
- 6) Advise WCS on the information gathering techniques currently being employed or planned for a large scale forest assessment of the landscape and suggest improvements in these techniques as needed, or different tools which may be employed for this purpose.
- 7) The USFS team will be familiarizing itself with the challenges facing the Ituri landscape and the realities on the ground in the region. The experiences gained on this mission and insights provided by WCS and other key stakeholders on the landscape will inform the development of a land use planning template for landscape level planning which can be applied to other landscapes throughout the Congo Basin.

3. Tasks

#1: Recruitment, selection, and mobilization of a USFS technical assistance team:

- a) Recruit a specialist experienced in the development of forest management plans on a landscape level, with knowledge and familiarity of the tropical context of the region and experience working on landscapes involving a mosaic of land use practices, pressures, stakeholders and social issues.
- b) Recruit a forest ecologist, experienced in tropical ecosystems, with a skill set allowing him/her to evaluate the impacts of existing land use practices and to provide mitigation strategies and potential alternatives to unsustainable land use patterns as needed.

One or both of these team members should possess direct experience in managing large forests, applying and adapting plans to evolving realities on the ground. If the need is identified, a GIS expert could be added as a third team member.

Responsible party: USFS

#2: Provide input to WCS on the planning processes for large landscapes with multiple zones of varying use categories, considering the ecological, social, and economic context of the region. Provide insight and share experiences gained with landscape planning in the US and elsewhere.

Responsible party: USFS

#3: The USFS team will help identify any needed strengthening of tools and processes for information gathering utilized by WCS in performing a large scale forest assessment of the landscape.

Responsible party: USFS

#4: While the mission will primarily focus on landscape level planning, the USFS team will also inform, as needed, planning processes and strategies for confronting challenges and threats in managing community use or extraction zones on the landscape.

Responsible party: USFS

#5: Identify representative areas to show the USFS team, which demonstrate the variety of resources on the Ituri landscape, along with the threats to these resources and the challenges facing managers of the Ituri landscape. Local stakeholders and other entities operating in the landscape (local and international NGOs, logging/mining companies, etc) should also be informed of the teams arrival and purpose of the mission, and be given an opportunity to interact with them so that the USFS team can obtain a better sense of the range of perspectives, opinions, needs, and social and economic forces acting on the landscape.

Responsible party: WCS working with other stakeholders

#6: In-country logistical support:

- a) Inform local DRC officials of team's arrival and purpose of their engagement in region.
- b) Arrange for meetings with appropriate key officials.
- c) Arrange for in-country transportation and necessary lodging reservations.
- d) Arrange for a translator to accompany the USFS team during the mission.

Responsible party: WCS

#7: Prior to the arrival of the USFS team, WCS will gather all available and relevant information on the landscape for the team to review to allow them to adequately prepare for the work to be done while in-country. As much as possible, this information should be sent to the USFS team electronically prior to their arrival. Any documents not available in an electronic format should be made available to the team upon arrival.

Responsible party: WCS

4. Deliverables

The USFS team will produce a report detailing activities during the mission and all results and findings of the work toward the accomplishment of those objectives listed above. This report will include, but not be limited to:

- D.** An assessment of the state of available information on the landscape's resources and people, and the interactions between the two. This section should also propose prioritized data collection needs and recommend tools and procedures for collecting that data.
- E.** A discussion of the landscape planning approach recommended for the Ituri landscape and an assessment of its usefulness as a model for developing similar plans on other landscapes.
- F.** A prioritized list of future tasks that should be addressed in advancing the landscape planning process for Ituri and the implementation of the plan, including any future role for USFS technical assistance. This section will include a discussion of any possible USFS role in providing more detailed assistance for land use planning on any community use or extraction zones on the Ituri landscape.

C: Itinerary

Technical Assistance on the Creation of a Land Use Planning Strategy

Synopsis of Travels, Meetings, and Activities for USDA Forest Service (USFS) and Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) in the Ituri Landscape, Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC)

Dates: Monday, 16 January to Friday, 3 February 2006

USFS Team:

David Fournier, Vegetation Planner, Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit
Rebecca Nourse, District Ranger, Cordova Ranger District, Chugach National
Forest

WCS Team:

Richard Tshombe, Acting Country Director, Kinshasa
Jean-Remy Makana, Program Manager, Beni
Bisele Kasereka Ngungu, Rural Community Development, Beni

Arrival in Kinshasa, DRC (Monday, 16 January 2006)

Hotel Africa Dreams
African Wildlife Fund (AWF) – Jeff DuPain
WCS – Theresa, Richard Tshombe
USFS – John Sidle, Jena Hickey, David Fournier, Rebecca Nourse

Reception and Meeting at WCS office (Tuesday, 17 January 2006)

WCS – Richard Tshombe, Acting Country Director, Emanuel Kayumba, Laurent
USFS – David Fournier, Rebecca Nourse

Reception and introduction to Central African Regional Program for the Environment (CARPE) in DRC (Tuesday, 17 January 2006)

WCS – Richard Tshombe, Acting Country Director
US Agency for International Development (USAID), (CARPE) – John Flynn,
Director; Nicodeme Tchamou, Regional Coordinator; Dave Yanggen, Deputy
Program Manager; Jackie Doremus
AWF – Jeff DuPain, Country Director
USFS – John Sidle, Jena Hickey, David Fournier, Rebecca Nourse

Meeting with WCS at Hotel Africa Dreams in Kinshasa (Tuesday, 17 January 2006)

WCS – Richard Tshombe, John Hart
AWF – Jeff DuPain

USFS – John Sidle, Jena Hickey, David Fournier, Rebecca Nurse

Arrival, Reception and Introduction in Beni (Wednesday, 18 January 2006)

WCS – Forestry – Jean-Remy Makana, Program Manager, Marceline Makana,
Bisele Kasereka, Heraclite Bikumbu

WCS welcoming dinner at the Palma Club Restaurant

Meeting with WCS in Beni (Wednesday, 18 and Thursday, 19 January 2006)

WCS – Jean-Remy Makana
USFS – David Fournier, Rebecca Nurse

Meeting with Enzyme Refiners Association (ENRA) commercial logging and mill concessionaire (Thursday, 19 January 2006)

ENRA - Robert Ducarme, Director, Jacques Badesire, Assistant Director
WCS – Jean-Remy Makana
USFS – David Fournier, Rebecca Nurse

Meeting with Government Administration in Biakatu (Friday, 20 January 2006)

Administration – Chef de Collectivite, Souleymane
Comite des Exploitants et Negociants de bois scie du territoire de Mambasa
(CENEM) – Emmanuel Dondo, Martin, Victor, Paul Sindeni
WCS – Jean-Remy Makana, Bisele Kasereka
USFS – David Fournier, Rebecca Nurse

Artisinal Logging and pit sawing Field Trip near Biakatu (Friday, 20 January 2006)

CENEM – Emmanuel Dondo, Martin, Victor, Paul Sindeni
WCS – Jean-Remy Makana, Bisele Kasereka
USFS – David Fournier, Rebecca Nurse

Evening Meeting with CENEM Director Emmanuel Dondo in Biakatu (Friday, 20 January 2006)

CENEM – Emmanuel Dondo
WCS – Jean-Remy Makana
USFS – David Fournier, Rebecca Nurse

Meeting with Government Administration in Mambasa (Saturday, 21 January 2006)

Administration du Territoire – Kebe Abdallah, Administrator, Kiete Modeste,
Agriculture Inspector, Musoyi Michel, Administrative Secretary
ICCN – Somba, Conservatoire Adjoint
WCS – Jean-Remy Makana, Bisele Kasereka
USFS – David Fournier, Rebecca Nurse

Arrival at WCS Field Site in Eupulu (Saturday, 21 January 2006)

Field Trip to Lenda Research Site (Sunday, 22 January 2006)

ICCN – Jean-Paul Monga
WCS – Jean-Remy Makana, Bisele Kasereka, Moshi
USFS – David Fournier

Baptism Celebration for Gracia, the daughter of Floribert and Odette Bujo. Florie is the Eupulu site director for WCS.

Meeting with “Institute Congolais pour la Conservation de la Nature” (ICCN) (Monday, 23 January 2006)

ICCN – Jean-Joseph Mapilanga, Conservatoire, Somba, Adjoint Conservatoire
WCS – Jean-Remy Makana, Bisele Kasereka
USFS – David Fournier, Rebecca Nurse

Meeting with Gilman International Conservation (GIC) (Monday, 23 January 2006)

GIC – Rosmarie Ruf, Director, Marcel Enckoto, Deputy Director, Eleme
WCS – Jean-Remy Makana, Bisele Kasereka
USFS – David Fournier, Rebecca Nurse

Visit to the GIC Zoo to see the 15 captive Okapis including petting Tatu!

Presentation of Land Use Planning Examples (Monday, 23 January 2006)

Rebecca Nurse - Cordova Ranger District, Chugach National Forest, Alaska
David Fournier - Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit, California/Nevada
Attended by WCS, GIC and ICCN staff

Return to Beni (Tuesday, 24 January 2006)

Synthesis of Travel to Ituri Landscape at WCS/ENRA office in Beni (Wednesday, 25 January 2006)

WCS – Bisele Kasereka
USFS – David Fournier, Rebecca Nourse

Return to Kinshasa (Saturday, 28 January 2006)

AirServ – King Air
USFS – David Fournier, Rebecca Nourse
WCS – Laurent Kembo, Baraka

Visit to artist market, music district and the “Chez Tin-Tin” Restaurant on the Congo River in Kinshasa with Laurent Kembo (Sunday, 29 January 2006).

Meeting with John Sidle and Jena Hickey at WCS office in Kinshasa (Tuesday, 31 January 2006)

USFS – David Fournier, Rebecca Nourse, John Sidle, Jena Hickey

Presentation of Ituri landscape trip to Richard Tshombe at WCS office in Kinshasa (Tuesday, 31 January 2006)

WCS – Richard Tshombe
USFS – David Fournier, Rebecca Nourse

Presentation of Ituri and Moringa-Lopori-Wamba landscapes to representatives of CARPE, CARE, WWF, AWF, WCS, Univ. of Maryland, French Embassy, USAID, USFS-IP, D.R. Congo Environment Ministry, Kinshasa Television at WCS/CARE Conference Hall in Kinshasa (Wednesday, 1 February 2006)

Speakers:

WCS – Richard Tshombe
AWF – Jeff Dupain
CARPE – John Flynn
USFS – Oliver Pierson, Rebecca Nourse, David Fournier, John Sidle, Jena Hickey

Informal discussion of landscape planning at Grand Hotel (Wednesday, 1 February 2006)

Debriefing meeting at USAID in Kinshasa (Thursday, 2 February 2006)

CARPE – John, Flynn, Dave Yanggen, Jackie Doremus
USFS – Oliver Pierson, Chris Iverson, Rebecca Nourse, David Fournier, John Sidle, Jena Hickey

Return to the USA (Friday, 3 February 2006)

D: Names of people contacted associated with Ituri landscape

In Kinshasa:

AWF: Patrick Bergeron, Jeff DuPain, Jean-Pierre, Helen Charif

CARE: Marc

SNV: Rolf Schinkel

USAID/CARPE: John Flynn, Nicodeme Tchamou, Dave Yanggen, Jackie Doremus

USFS: Oliver Pierson, Chris Iverson

WCS: Richard Tshombe, John Hart, Teresa Hart, Emanuel Kayumba

WWF: Veronique Tshimbalanga

In Beni:

ENRA: Robert DuCarme, Jacques Badesire

WCS: Jean-Remy Makana, Marcilene Makana, Bisele Kasereka, Heraclite Bikumbu

In Biakatu:

Collectivity Administration: Souleymane

CENEM: Emmanuel Dondo, Martin, Victor, Paul Sinden

In Mambassa:

GIC: Jacqui

ICCN: Somba

Territorial Administration: Kebe Abdallah, Kiete Modeste, Musoyi Michel

In Epulu:

GIC: Rosmarie Ruf, Marcel Enckoto

ICCN: Jean-Joseph Mapilanga, Somba

WCS: Floribert Bujo

E: Bibliography

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- USDA Forest Service. 2005. Vision for a strategic role for the US Forest Service in the context of the Central African Regional Program for the Environment. USDA Forest Service, Washington, DC.
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- USDA Forest Service. 2006. A Guide for Planning Under the 2005 Planning Rule. USDA Forest Service, Washington, DC.
- Wildlife Conservation Society. 2005. Initiation Land Use Planning Process: Ituri forest landscape. Strategy document for the Ituri forest landscape with particular detail concerning the Okapi Faunal Reserve and buffer zone. WCS, Kinshasa, D.R. Congo.

F: Meeting Notes

Summary of perspectives gained from:

WCS staff, ENRA Concessionaire, Administrative Representatives (Collectivite, Territoire), CENEM, ICCN, GIC

Although these groups represent very different interests, the USFS team was struck by the similarity of their perspectives related to conservation, planning, and issues that need to be addressed.

- The overwhelming vision for the state of the Ituri Landscape in 20 years is that “the forest will be conserved, will still be here for our use.”
- There is strong support for the concepts of conservation and collaborative planning; however, feeding the people will be the first priority if choices need to be made between that or saving the forest.
- It is hard for many to understand the urgency of planning for conservation when they see forest everywhere.
- Many issues and challenges stem from the state of government institutions in DRC.
 - Lack of institutions for laws, regulations, enforcement, and decision-making.
 - Financial resources from government and local economies are absent or insufficient to invest in local programs.
 - Taxes do not return to the Landscape for reforestation, conservation, and community benefits (as directed by the DRC Forestry Code.)
- Pressures from immigration into the Ituri Landscape contribute to threats to conservation.
 - Increasing immigration is preventing reforestation.
 - The old system of “log/slash and burn/farm/fallow/log” no longer works because the agricultural needs of the increasing population require additional areas of deforestation.
 - Traditional chiefs are beginning to “give” land for a fee to new immigrants.
- The desire for community food security is overwhelming throughout the Landscape. Several suggestions were heard that could help if support were available (financial, extension agents, etc.)
 - Develop more productive seeds and crops for local conditions (more productive from less land.)
 - Develop and teach improved agricultural techniques to increase production.
 - Diversify food by creating fisheries and animal husbandry to alleviate need to produce everything as a crop, and reduce bush meat consumption.
 - Increase agroforestry projects in more communities.

**Meeting Notes from Coordination between
USDA Forest Service (USFS), Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS), and
US Agency for International Development (USAID) in
Kinshasa and Beni, Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC)**

Reception and Meeting at WCS office in Kinshasa (Tuesday, 17 January 2006)

WCS – Richard Tshombe, Acting Country Director, Emmanuel Kayumba
USFS – David Fournier, Rebecca Nourse

Richard provided information on a number of topics related to the situation and activities in the DRC with particular reference to the Ituri Landscape. He explained the administrative levels and identified the names of each that relates to the Ituri. He described the kind of administrative and traditional authorities for these areas as well as the role of the CARPE and NGOs in the landscape. The establishment of the Okapi Reserve and the major issues confronting it were discussed.

Table 1: Administrative Zones and Capital Cities in the Ituri Landscape

Province	District	Territory	Collectivity
Orientale (Kisangani)	Ituri (Bunia)	Mambasa (Mambasa)	7
		Djugu ()	1
		Irumu ()	1
	Haut Uele (Isiro)	Wamba ()	3
		Watsa ()	3

The CARPE has relationship with the NGOs within the Okapi Reserve, but it is the Ministry of the Environment’s “Conservation de la Nature” and “Eaux et Forets” that can address issues outside of the reserve. The Okapi Reserve (30,000 km²) was established in 1992 by Ministerial Decree as a pilot for multiple use of the reserve including settlement, agriculture and extractive uses. The main subsistence crops in the area are rice, beans, corn, cassava and peanuts. It was established to protect the primary forest that serves as habitat for the Okapi, but also for the Mbuti Pygmies who retain close cultural and subsistence ties to the forest. The larger landscape area of 40,000 km² is what the CARPE and WCS are focusing efforts on land use planning, i.e. a place-based planning strategy that incorporates protected areas, agricultural areas, and extraction areas.

WCS relationships in the Ituri Landscape include Gilman International Conservation (GIC), Enzymes Refineries Association (ENRA) logging concessionaire and the the Institute Congolais pour la Conservation de la Nature (ICCN). WCS also attracts outside researchers to the station in Epulu to conduct research and collect inventory data on the condition of the forest. The following are the primary aspects of each collaborator:

GIC: assists ICCN staff with salary, logistics, law enforcement, medical, and tourist infrastructure. WCS is subcontracting GIC to provide education for zoning in Epulu. GIC also runs a zoo for breeding Okapi, the offspring of which are transported to zoos worldwide.

ENRA: produces papaya juice as a primary crop and timber as a secondary crop. ENRA is working with WCS to establish planning areas. The market for timber is in Uganda, Kenya and other eastern African countries.

ICCN: under the ministry of the Environment, but independently manages protected parks. The Okapi is their logo on the uniform they wear. There are about 60 agents and they all carry guns.

The issues facing the existing efforts to protect and conserve forest lands include

- 1) need for information (research, studies, tracking, monitoring),
- 2) need for clarity in the current forestry code and elaboration of the code into regulations,
- 3) need for delegation of authority to local administration of the ministry of the environment,
- 4) influence of immigration from high population areas,
- 5) need for control of borders with neighboring countries to regulate flow of timber products,
- 6) social interactions between the Mbuti pygmies and other ethnic groups in the area, e.g. the Mbuti are not always open with ICCN agents and may not express their true thoughts openly with other groups, and
- 7) enforcement capabilities are needed to control concession, reserve, and landscape level boundaries and activities.

The outlook in the DRC appears to be improving since cessation of conflict in the region. Efforts are taking place to improve legal basis for management and improve the standard of life in local communities. In addition to the Forestry Code, a new law was passed in October 2005 to Control Immigration. This law requires a permit for anyone visiting the reserve. Only people who are already there or have traditional claims in the area can settle in the reserve.

In addition, the TransAfrica road that goes through Epulu is being reconstructed by a Chinese company that will link the region to larger markets. This could be a good thing with some negative effects, but no one is certain.

The goal for land area protection nationally is 15%. Currently, the area under some form of protection is 8%.

Reception and introduction to Central African Regional Program for the Environment (CARPE) in Kinshasa, DRC (Tuesday, 17 January 2006)

WCS – Richard Tshombe, Acting Country Director
US Agency for International Development (USAID), (CARPE) – John Flynn,
Director, Nicodeme Tchamou, Regional Coordinator, Dave Yanggen, Deputy
Program Manager; Jackie Doremus
AWF – Jeff DuPain, Country Director
USFS – John Sidle, Jena Hickey, David Fournier, Rebecca Nourse

Following a welcome by John Flynn and introduction of those present, John provided an overview on how CARPE and the Congo Basin Forest Initiative came about. He also gave a situational summary of conditions we could expect in DRC and advice on do's and don'ts.

John stressed the importance of two documents that have been completed and are available on the CARPE website, which are the Performance Management Plan and Lexicon of Terms Memo. The Performance Management Plan will provide for management of a complex of issues, using indicators and standards to measure performance. The lexicon will allow us to talk the same language.

The visit last November of Sally Collins (Deputy Chief, USFS) and Leslie Weldon (Forest Supervisor, Deschutes NF) were mentioned and the role of the USFS in CARPE was discussed. The USAID goal for our USFS mission here is to see the local circumstances and advise the local NGOs on developing a strategy to develop plans that is in simple terms, outlines how to go about it, what information will be needed, who needs to be included, what timelines are realistic, and what are the potential costs for developing and executing the strategy. Exchanges from the various landscapes with collaboration of the NGOs may allow for a national template to be devised that would provide for consistency in the plans to be developed.

The USFS is the agency that has expertise in the development of land-use planning models and for providing indicators, standards and strategies at the landscape scale. In order to develop plans for the 11 CARPE landscapes in the Congo, a template with methodologies for planning are needed. This is similar to the Forest Planning Rule of 2005 and the adaptive management approach used by the USFS. The findings of our two teams (David & Becky in Ituri and John and Jena in Moringa Lompori Wamba) will contribute to development of this template.

Meeting with WCS in Beni (Wednesday, 18 and Thursday, 19 January 2006)

WCS – Jean-Remy Makana

USFS – David Fournier, Rebecca Nourse

Jean-Remy presented three major issues confronting the sustainability of the Ituri landscape. These are: 1) Movement of people from the eastern border lands; 2) Mining for gold and coltan; and 3) Deforestation through legal* and illegal exploitation and subsequent slash and burn agriculture. There are a number of efforts underway in the landscape that WCS is either a part of or conducting itself. In Epulu, GIS has an agroforestry demonstration area where *Leucaena* and *Caliandra*, fast growing nitrogen-fixing trees, are planted for cooking fuel and poles along with agricultural crops. The Smithsonian Tropical Forest Institute has plots in the Ituri for research into changes in forest composition.

* Industrial logging concession with ENRA is a legal form of timber management, but there is no authority or enforcement to restrict people from coming into the concession once logged to burn and plant crops. Once this is done, there is no option for reforestation and the soil is nearly depleted within one to three years of this type of agriculture.

Information is needed on the demographics and socio-economic issues facing the agricultural and exploitation zones outside of the reserve in order to address the current and future needs of people. This in turn will help in the determination of zone size.

Jean-Remy reiterated the GIC role in agroforestry mentioned by Richard Tshombe.

Traditional Chiefs historically had distributed lands to farm or to lay fallow among villagers. Today however, these chiefs get taxes from immigrants who come to the area so it is harder to know how fast people are coming to the area and how much more deforestation will result.

Summary of Overarching Themes from Initial Background Meetings

1. Influences from outside of the landscape.
 - a. Rebels east of Beni forcing cutting of timber at gunpoint; movement away from the threat which leads to new slash and burn agriculture within the landscape.
 - b. Population expansion in the south and east is causing movement of people into the landscape. New villages and farms.
 - c. Market influences in Kenya and Uganda.
2. Information gaps.
 - a. Knowledge of size, arrangement and regeneration capacity of cutting either by artisanal or commercial loggers.
 - b. Socio-economic relationship between the supply and market and consumer.
 - c. Knowledge of what is sustainable. Can agricultural production use a cyclical rotation on a permanent land area given the type of soil? Can there be sustainable forest and agricultural production in the same area?
3. Influences on forest regeneration.
 - a. Commercial logging is followed by immigrant farmers cutting and burning the remaining trees and residues, making tree planting impossible.
 - b. Once left the farmed areas have low productivity making successful tree planting difficult.
4. Important stakeholders.
 - a. Who are they?
 - b. How to get them involved?
 - c. What is the current overlap or agreement space between stakeholders?
 - d. What cultural barriers are there?
 - e. What legal obstacles are there? I.e., clarity in the codes.
 - f. What funding, if any, is necessary?
5. Political aspects.
 - a. Many levels of government administration (7), each with a traditional chief as well as government administrator.
 - b. Financial motivations supercede any other given lack of legal requirements.
6. Collaborative groups.
 - a. What rules do they think would work if they could be established?
 - b. How would they implement a plan?

Technical Assistance on the Creation of a Land Use Planning Strategy

Trip Notes of Meetings between USDA Forest Service (USFS), Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS), Government Administration, Private Enterprise, and Local Participants in the Ituri Landscape, Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC)

Dates: Friday, 20 January to Monday, 23 January 2006

USFS Team:

David Fournier, Vegetation Planner, Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit
Rebecca Nourse, District Ranger, Cordova Ranger District, Chugach National
Forest

WCS Team:

Jean-Remy Makana, Program Manager, Beni
Bisele Kasereka, Rural Community Development, Beni

Introductory Statement and Three Questions to Stimulate Discussion

In each meeting place a brief statement of our team's background and objectives were given to those attending the meeting. We explained that we were here to assist the efforts of the WCS, who continue to work for the conservation of wildlife habitat and improve the lives of people around the Okapi reserve. After responding to any clarifying questions about the USFS or our mission here, we would prompt the attendees with a few questions as follows:

1. According to your point of view, in 20 years, what would you envision this area (Ituri landscape) to be like if you could implement what you want?
2. Who do you think are the important and necessary stakeholders who should be implicated in the planning of such a landscape-level effort?
3. What are the primary methods or activities that you would use to improve the situation in the landscape?

Meeting with Enzyme Refiners Association (ENRA) commercial logging and mill concessionaire (Thursday, 19 January 2006)

ENRA - Robert Ducarme, Director, Jacques Badesire, Assistant Director
WCS – Jean-Remy Makana
USFS – David Fournier, Rebecca Nourse

The main difficulty in conducting logging operations on the concession is there is no authority to enforce rules. What happens is that people come in after the logging and establish farms through a process of slash and burn, and then they farm for one or two years and move on, leaving the forestland degraded.

The chief of the locality is most important to include in planning because he allocates land to newcomers. He gets goats, beans as taxes for his own use. His mentality is that even though the land belongs to the state, he feels that he is the owner.

There are no incentives for the concessionaire to plant trees. If the chief is willing, ENRA can provide trees from their nursery of appropriate species for planting. The concern is that by the time the tree grows the farmers will have moved on so they don't have any incentive. They use eucalyptus, cordial and Leucaena. These are all fast growing species and ameliorate the soil as well as provide timber values.

In 20 years he would like to see that the upcoming elections will provide for a strong authority, otherwise all will be destroyed. You can't plan without the authority to do it. He would like to see enough security (i.e. peace) in the country so that people could have access to loans that could be used to improve life.

The current contracts for logging concessions are 25 years, which can be renewed, but are not guaranteed. He needs 40 years as a minimum as it takes that long to regrow the forest and conserve it.

ENRA pays taxes to the State/Territory/Locality and in theory the taxes should go back into the area for reforestation. In reality it doesn't.

The stakeholders who should be involved in planning are the chiefs and administrators at all levels. Communication with the Bantu and Mbuti is also important. In regards to new arrivals, there needs to be enough space to accommodate the population growth within the agricultural zone and to leave the forest in forest. The farming needs to be a long-term idea.

To make an estimate of the land area needed for farming zone means that you need to change the crop-growing methods. New methods are needed for protecting the soil. There are too many people and not enough land. Eventually you will have to change the traditional methods and habits. There are some examples from Rwanda where the people have adapted methods to accommodate more people on smaller land areas.

Improved seeds are needed by the farmers. Local research institute is needed to work on developing more productive crops that are suited to the local area. Included should be agroforestry. Soil conservation is the most important factor. The slash and burn depletes the soil of minerals and that is what makes the food chain productive.

Meeting with Government Administration in Biakatu (Friday, 20 January 2006)

Administration – Chef de Collectivite, Souleymane
Comite des Expositants et Negociants de bois scie du territoire de Mambasa
(CENEM) – Emmanuel Dondo, Martin, Victor, Paul Sindeni
WCS – Jean-Remy Makana, Bisele Kasereka
USFS – David Fournier, Rebecca Nourse

The point of view of the chief of the collectivity on who the important stakeholders are include the local population, artisanal and commercial loggers, chiefs of the localities, chiefs of the groupments, and traditional chiefs.

In 20 years his vision is the administration will have authority to manage the forest before it is destroyed. He mentioned the havoc and destruction brought about by the rebels and hopes that this will not happen again. He wants good management of the forest and private investments that will improve the community services, e.g. schools, clinics.

The community here uses the forest for farming, hunting, medicinal plants, hiding places during rebellions, traditional ceremonies. The Mabila tribe has lived in symbiosis with the pygmies and has the same ceremonies. He wants loggers to invest in the area so the standard of living can improve.

The local chiefs are giving forestland to immigrants, which started during the rebellion, for payment of taxes. Before the rebellion the chef de groupment knew how many new people were coming what they needed to subsist. They'd live in one place, using a system of crop rotation that did not require further conversion of the forest.

He thinks that new immigrants could be educated with ideas of how to manage the forest responsibly, according to a management plan. These immigrants would need to be settled in predetermined areas and not scattered around. Then they could become part of the community and participate in the schools.

A cadre of extension agents could help the farmers learn to be more productive, but there is no capacity at this time to train and fund such a force.

Need improved seeds because the traditional seeds and crops are not very productive. Most people can't afford to let a portion of their crop go to seed and to experiment with them, so they need to buy seed for the next growing season. They need seeds that are adapted to the local area, e.g. rice, beans, cassava, and bananas.

Agroforestry was attempted, but it was not expanded. Instead of putting money into this system, they put it into the education.

There are no current efforts in conservation among the local farmers. They need to be educated and have the support of local chiefs to understand why conservation is so important.

He would like to see the state become the authority in the region with the support necessary to enforce the laws. The new immigrants aren't respecting the way things are done. Local people don't care about "owning" the land as do the new immigrants.

Most of the agricultural production is low and little gets to a market. Some food needs to be brought into the area. People are using about ¼ hectare to produce food, but they really need about ½ ha for a family of four.

Artisinal Logging and pit sawing Field Trip near Biakatu (Friday, 20 January 2006)

CENEM – Emmanuel Dondo, Martin, Victor, Paul Sindeni
WCS – Jean-Remy Makana, Bisele Kasereka
USFS – David Fournier, Rebecca Nourse

From the Beni-Mambassa road, a small roadside landing that has planks and beams stacked up ready for transport, there is a small path that leads 3 miles to a pit-sawing operation. The distance the loggers will go can be upwards of 10 miles from the road to process a tree. Paul is the expert in artisinal logging methods who finds and selects the trees that are going to be harvested. He has a crew of 1 chain-sawyer, 2 pit-sawyers, and a fleet of bicycle transporters as well as some two-person plank carriers. These are mostly local people who are involved in the CENEM association and they appear to have good relationships in the collectivite of Biakatu.

The tree is cut by chainsaw using directional falling to optimize rolling the logs into place for sawing. A pit is dug at the half-way point on the fallen tree and a few planks are placed on top for one person to stand on. Large logs are cut into 10 to 12 foot sections and halved for cutting over the pit. One large tree measuring 50 inches and greater can take about a month to process and transport.

Only the most valuable trees are taken, leaving small openings that are not sufficient for regenerating these species. This results in a degradation of genetic diversity and biodiversity even though the forest appears to be intact. Unlike the commercial logging, only small farming plots are established within the forest logged by the artisinal loggers.

Evening Meeting with CENEM Director Emmanuel Dondo in Biakatu (Friday, 20 January 2006)

CENEM – Emmanuel Dondo
WCS – Jean-Remy Makana
USFS – David Fournier, Rebecca Nourse

Note: This meeting was recorded in order to capture a deeper sense of the relationship between the local community with the help of the association of artisinal logging and their environment.

CENEM is one of the only associations in that area that is dealing with artisinal logging. His vision is: 1) for the forest to be conserved and 2) everyone has to accept a certain level of responsibility for living with the forest. These people must also be implicated in the management of the forest and so they need to be made aware of a certain logic to the relationship between the forest and their life.

He went to Rwanda and saw the destruction there; that helped him to see what could potentially happen in the Ituri Landscape. This is why they want to work with the NGO's to prevent that from happening.

The association and community at large lacks the necessities for educating and implementing a conservation strategy. But to wait for the funding would be a big risk that could result in the destruction of the forest.

Rwanda example – 5 businessmen (these are the people who were exploiting the forest) who employ the people who can do the work; these men can drive these activities for their own benefit or for the benefit of the community.

People need to be informed about the consequences of deforestation.

Stakeholders: The children need to be implicated in an education plan. So it's the stakeholders of tomorrow who are important. The victims (immigrants running from pressures from the outside), traditional chiefs, government chiefs, NGO's, exploiters (loggers). What is missing from the discussions are the people (transformers) who would do value-added manufacturing.

People who are illegally doing these activities need to become legal. There are police, but the police don't do anything. Within the ENRA concession, the local people are more likely to work with the concessionaire than the immigrants.

The woodcutters who follow the law: an objective of the Association is to train the woodcutters that they can do this work legally and make a living. They are trying to follow the Forestry Code but they don't really know it. Association's primary role is to help the local woodcutters meet the laws and administrative regulations (they are sort of a middleman).

There is almost no reforestation in their region because of the system of slash and burn agriculture. It is mainly ignorance that causes people to keep cutting more and more forest, because they don't know how to plant trees, and they don't have enough people to work the land and it requires a larger area of land to produce enough food. So it may work that if they leave some areas fallow, they can come back and farm those areas again. But in the meantime, somebody else could move into that area so in reality, it is not laid fallow.

If people have enough fields, then they can satisfy their needs and you don't need police to come and protect the forest. But they need the police so that people are aware that it is illegal to burn and cut the forest. Police could be more like extension agents to help educate, inform the people what is bad and what is good. But they need to get an education somewhere and then come back (in conservation, forestry, the Forestry Code). Potential partnership between NGO's who are doing research and the Associations who are implementing forestry on the ground.

Meeting with Government Administration in Mambasa (Saturday, 21 January 2006)

Administration du Territoire – Kebe Abdallah, Administrator, Kiete Modeste, inspecteur de l’agriculture, Musoyi Michel, secretaire administratif
ICCN – Somba, Conservatoire Adjoint
WCS – Jean-Remy Makana, Bisele Kasereka
USFS – David Fournier, Rebecca Nourse

The primary aspect related to the people is their need to survive. The administrator was very clear in expressing that there can be no conservation without addressing the needs of people to eat and have security. He does not think that people will forgo their needs to conserve the forest. His vision is that the people will have a stable agricultural base upon which they can meet their needs and that the forest can be managed on a sustainable basis. In this regard, there needs to be improved market infrastructure to permit better transport and added value processing.

The agriculture inspector emphasized the need to diversify the agricultural base to include fisheries, improved seeds of a larger diversity of crops, animal husbandry, agroforestry, and better methods of farming. With a greater diversity of food options, there would be less pressure to farm larger areas. Instead, more food could be raised on less land.

A cadre of extension agents must be trained to educate farmers and demonstration areas can be used towards showing first-hand the benefits of improved methods. However, the best long-term approach could be farmer to farmer following an adaptive frame.

Conservation and agriculture could become a small part of education in the schools, but the teachers are not paid much and often only teach the bare essentials. There could be some outreach through the schools to families of students.

Stakeholders in planning are the administrative and traditional chiefs, local associations, and farmers.

The administrator was skeptical of another “project” coming with funding. Although he was interested in how much money we might bring, he was disappointed to find out we were not bringing any. He also was skeptical of such a large and long-term undertaking being successful.

Meeting with “Institute Congolais pour la Conservation de la Nature” (ICCN) (Monday, 23 January 2006)

ICCN – Jean-Joseph Mapilanga, Conservatoire, Somba, Adjoint Conservatoire
WCS – Jean-Remy Makana, Bisele Kasereka
USFS – David Fournier, Rebecca Nourse

The mission of the Okapi reserve is to 1) preserve the larger biodiversity of the reserve, and 2) provide for the communities' needs.

Although the law is clear for protecting the resources within the reserve, there is a lot of pressure from outside the reserve being exerted for timber, slash and burn agriculture and hunting. In the reserve, because of the authority behind the law, people don't have as much power. The reserve does allow some subsistence farming, hunting and root gathering for local people.

There is a need for a mechanism on how to include stakeholders in the planning process. There is recognition that this is a long process even though funding is short term.

Mining is not allowed in the reserve and there is some illegal mining taking place in the western sector. Are these miners stakeholders?

Meeting with Gilman International Conservation (GIC) (Monday, 23 January 2006)

GIC – Rosmarie Ruf, Director, Marcel Enckoto, Deputy Director, Eleme
WCS – Jean-Remy Makana, Bisele Kasereka
USFS – David Fournier, Rebecca Nourse

GIC has been in DRC since 1997 following the WWF. They support ICCN financially, provide infrastructure, and offer opportunities for tourism (camping, lodging, tours). In addition GIC also has a number of projects including:

- 1) Okapi zoo and breeding. They capture, breed and research life cycle, pattern, mother-calf relationship. They also provide Okapi to zoos in Florida, San Diego and around the world.
- 2) ICCN support includes guard salaries, administration costs, and development of management strategies.
- 3) Education in the villages of Epulu and around the reserve.
- 4) Agroforestry program includes two sites as well as a demonstration garden in Epulu.
- 5) Assistance to local communities for schools and administration.
- 6) Cane rat husbandry for meat production, which lessens the need for bushmeat.

Among the key stakeholders are church leaders, school directors and teachers, and women's associations. Women are not included in conservation decisions today, but they could have a strong voice in the future. Giving them some authority or voice would be a better way to effect conservation since women are the ones who do most of the farming.

Rosmarie's vision is two-fold: 1) Education of all the people around the reserve to the importance of conservation; and 2) Protection of the resources in the reserve that is well controlled and well maintained. The politics must change in a positive way towards conservation.

Outside the reserve, the forest could continue to be used, but not destroyed. The planning must address the outside influences impacting these forests while accommodating the extra people.

There is resistance to agroforestry locally because there is so much forest for local people to exploit. Often, the people who are immigrating to the area understand agroforestry better, because they come from an area that has already been degraded and may have already seen this method used.

GIC would like to see strong collaboration, use of agroforestry, interaction with planning process and inclusion of women's groups.

Presentation of Ituri and Moringa-Lopori-Wamba landscapes to representatives of CARPE, CARE, WWF, AWF, WCS, Univ. of Maryland, French Embassy, USAID, USFS-IP, D.R. Congo Environment Ministry, Kinshasa Television at WCS/CARE Conference Hall in Kinshasa (Wednesday, 1 February 2006)

Speakers:

WCS – Richard Tshombe

AWF – Jeff Dupain

CARPE – John Flynn

USFS – Oliver Pierson, Rebecca Nourse, David Fournier, John Sidle, Jena Hickey

The notes from these presentations were captured by Oliver Pierson in his and Chris Iverson's trip report. Additional perspectives on the discussion from these presentations include:

Welcome was given by Richard Tshombe, WCS, Oliver Pierson, USFS-IP, and John Flynn, CARPE. Presentations were then given by the two USFS teams from the Ituri (Nourse and Fournier) and Moringa Lopori Wamba (Sidle and Hickey) Landscapes. Following each presentation were opportunities for attendees to ask clarifying questions and bring up issues related to the findings and initial recommendations presented. A more in-depth discussion continued after the second presentation with closing remarks on the challenges to developing a planning process for the landscapes in the Congo Basin.

Questions and issues brought up by attendees include (but by no means all inclusive):

- Investigate the histories of conflict that continues in the landscape areas and will need to be resolved or agreed to in the plan.
- Link logging concession management plans into the planning.
- Address contingencies that might be needed in response to predictable and unpredictable threats.
- Integrate possible threats within particular zones to lessen these threats in the more protective zone.
- Develop a quick plan for the current project activities to adjust.

- Develop two participative plans: 1) Decision-maker, collaborators, supporters, and 2) Local people including youth.
- Education, involvement, transparency are all needed to be emphasized for local people to get their buy-in.
- Develop a time line that can indicate where CARPE is at any point in time during the planning process.
- Need to gain national and regional buy-in from government administration.
- Build in flexibility in the plan that considers unpredictable events that will likely occur at some point over the time the plan is in effect.
- Consider what is happening outside the DRC, especially Uganda, Rwanda.
- Need to define what is meant by ethnic-specific land-uses. Land tenure rights need to be clarified.
- Study and use the content of the new constitution and forestry code. The ICCN is a model of decentralization at the behest of the ministry of the environment.

Debriefing meeting at USAID in Kinshasa (Thursday, 2 February 2006)

CARPE – John, Flynn, Dave Yanggen, Jackie Doremus

USFS – Oliver Pierson, Chris Iverson, Rebecca Nourse, David Fournier, John Sidle, Jena Hickey

The notes from this debriefing were captured by Oliver Pierson in his and Chris Iverson's trip report. Additional perspective of this debrief include:

- USFS needs to develop a strategy for getting CARPE landscapes across the Congo Basin from an overarching planning process to landscape-specific plans.
- A clear step-by-step process for planning must accompany the guidelines.
- A two-tiered timeline is needed to set the pace for developing the short-term, current planning needs and long-term, comprehensive planning needs.
- Write a guide on developing clear mission and vision statements that the landscape managers can then use to guide development of desired conditions, indicators and standards. This must be done before strategies can be developed on the landscapes.
- Essential data sets and spatially explicit data layers (GIS) need to be determined and built to inform the planning process.
- A message needs to emerge that can be used to explain why nature needs to be conserved and what the consequences to local people might be if it is lost.
- The new USFS planning rule can be used as a guide if the USFS-specific items are replaced with DRC-specific examples. In addition to this rule are an ISO 14001 or Environmental Management System, Public participation plan and communication plan that are used in planning and monitoring.