

Securing the sustainability of the Mount Elgon forest ecosystem

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The Mount Elgon forest ecosystem straddles the border between Kenya and Uganda. This extinct volcano supports various habitat types and rare species on slopes reaching over 4,000 m. It sits adjacent to a heavily populated agricultural landscape supporting some two million people, and has been degraded by excessive use. Yet the livelihoods and economic activities of these people depend on the goods and services that this ecosystem provides.



Local children living on Mount Elgon
Photo © Agni Boedhihartono

Degraded Mount Elgon landscape
Photo © IUCN

Rangers discuss best steps forward
Photo © IUCN



0 100 200 Km

Map of the Mount Elgon region
Map © IUCN

The challenge of improving the management of Mount Elgon lies in bringing together various government and non-government agencies to work towards a common vision. For the past 15 years, IUCN and its partners have been working on both the Ugandan and Kenyan sides of Mount Elgon, successfully convening different institutions across this international border.

The current phase of work, the Mount Elgon Regional Ecosystem Conservation Programme, is a four-year, multi-stakeholder management programme with IUCN providing technical assistance. It was designed over a four-year period by key stakeholders, including local communities, to ensure its integration into national and local development plans in both Kenya and Uganda. The programme ensures links are made between environmental management, livelihood security and poverty alleviation, all of which are priorities for the governments of Uganda and Kenya, and the surest means by which to secure the sustainability of the Mount Elgon ecosystem.

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