

1991



2011

Overview of achievements 2009-2012



ITFC: post-graduate research institute

Mbarara University of Science and Technology

- 5-8 research staff
- 4 administrative staff
- 18 field assistants
- 2 drivers, 5 camp keepers
- 4 security guards
- Volunteers (12 in 3 yrs)
- MPI-EVA staff



ITFC's mission

- Capacity building for conservation and research
- Supporting conservation management (UWA)
- Own research & projects
- Hosting and facilitating research





MacArthur project

- Maintain, evaluate and improve long term **monitoring** and evaluation
- Build **capacity** for science based conservation in changing world
- Carry out **pilot studies to recognise change** (climate, invasive species, population trends, etc)
- Build effective **partnerships** and alliances, increase **visibility**

Monitoring

- Maintained and improved ecological monitoring of BMCA (weather, resource use, water)
- Analysed long term monitoring data sets; evaluation; lessons learned
- Developed new monitoring (Bwindi vegetation & vertebrates; Rwenzori & Elgon vegetation at high altitude; phenology)



Capacity building

- Scholarships for Master students' fieldwork
 - 9 Masters students funded by MA
 - 3 Masters students funded by USAID, through WCS project WILD-West
- 4 PhD students linked with ITFC
- Training UWA rangers (weather data collection, GPS refresher training)



Pilot studies

- *The impact of **elephants** on trees*
- *Land use change and **carbon stocks***
- *Birds as indicators for the **conservation value of matrix habitats***
- ***Emigration and land abandonment** in and around Bwindi*
- ***Altitudinal zonation** of birds species*
- ***Inventory** of *Myrianthus holstii* in Bwindi*
- ***Inventory** of **hemi-parasitic plants** in Bwindi*
- ***Invasive** plant species in Semuliki*
- ***Inventory** of **amphibians***
- *Rodents as potential **carriers of parasites** across park border*
- *Baboons as potential reservoirs of **zoonotic pathogens***
- *Resilience of trees to elephants in Rabongo forest*



4 PhD projects linked to ITFC

- Robert Bitariho (MUST): *Utilisation of forest resources in Bwindi : conservation and socio-economic impact*
- Dennis Babaasa (University of Massachusetts): *Mapping vegetation in Bwindi*
- Peter Alele (Xishuangbanna Tropical Botanical Garden): *Soil microbial composition in the Nile watershed*
- Marieke Sassen (Wageningen University): *Changes in forest cover, use and livelihoods on Mt Elgon, from 1973 to 2009*





Visibility of ITFC

- Website renewed, with more information
- Blogging with WildlifeDirect
- Visits to other research stations and institutes in Uganda and Rwanda
- Large number of visitors from region and overseas
- Information Sharing Workshops Feb 2010-April 2011-March 2012

IS-Workshop themes:

- 2010 (Lake Mburo): “Assessing the effectiveness of conservation”
- 2011 (ITFC - Ruhija): “Emerging issues and challenges of natural resource management”
- 2012 (Mbarara): “Key needs, unknowns and research impacts in the GVL: are we prepared for change?”



Partners & Collaborators

- MacArthur Foundation
- UWA
- WCS
- MPI-EVA
- TEAM
- BMCT
- IGCP
- CARE
- Nature Uganda
- UOBDU
- TCS
- MGVP
- CTPH
- DFDGI



TROPICAL ECOLOGY



USAID WILD-West, with WCS (2010-11)

- * Extensive survey to improve uptake of human wildlife conflict interventions
- * Extensive survey to improve introduction & management of resource access
- * Conducted studies to better understand risk of disease transfer across boundaries of Bwindi (scholarship program)



Other highlights

- Bamboo study with UWA-MGNP
- 3D mapping with UOBDU
- Hosted 5 foreign MSc students
- Hosted 5 external researchers



Future?



- New projects
 - Understanding motivations for illegal activities (IIED)
 - Batwa cultural value project (FFI)
- Proposals waiting for funding
 - Community education (SWBG)
 - Impact of ICD projects on socio-economic status of BMCA communities (BMCT)

For more see www.itfc.org

