
Terms of Reference (ToRs)

Supporting the National Forestry Authority (NFA) to Review the Agoro-Agu Sector Central Forest Reserves (CFRs) Management Plan Using a Landscape Planning Approach

I Introduction

Land use management in Africa often lacks the necessary institutional mechanisms required to facilitate local dialogue and help reconcile competing claims and interests. This presents a major obstacle to the implementation of national policies and programmes that seek to reconcile and unify national development and conservation objectives. Protected Areas (PAs) could offer such an institutional framework but in many parts of Africa tend to be understood only in terms of exclusion of local communities and associated agricultural and livelihood activities. At the same time, locally-derived institutional arrangements which can be shown to have stabilized land-use in specific localities tend to be overlooked as viable options. Community Based Natural Resource Management (CbNRM) strategies have a long and rich history in Africa but with varying levels of success in implementation. The diversity in application of CbNRM policies and practices across the continent is immense, ranging from the multi-site to area specific lease schemes for wildlife corridors.

The IUCN full matrix of protected areas including PA categories V and VI, and governance types (such as community and private protected areas) exist as proven and inclusive mechanisms for facilitating multiple-use/multi-benefit landscape protection and / or the protection of sustainable natural resource use, but are generally underutilized. Strengthening such approaches would also enable African countries to meet national commitments under Aichi Targets 7 & 11 and could be built into countries' Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) or REDD+ strategies. Generally, in Africa, the potential presented by IUCN Category V Protected Landscapes & VI Protected areas with sustainable use of natural resources: has not been explored or utilised and the continent is thus missing the opportunities these approaches present. These categories along with the range of governance types under the full IUCN PA Matrix, provide opportunities for a people-centered and human rights based approach to biodiversity conservation. The aim is to enhance the role of communal or community controlled forests principally as Categories V & VI PAs, while enabling and deploying collaborative frameworks for multipurpose management of Central Forest reserves (CFRs).

In a bid to contribute to this, IUCN has received a grant from the Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety (BMUB) of Germany to implement a project titled “Stabilizing Land Use: Protected Area (PA) categories V and VI as landscape mechanisms for enhancing biodiversity in agricultural land, ecological connectivity and REDD+ implementation”. The goal of the project is to demonstrate conservation and development benefits in targeted landscapes in; Ghana, DR Congo, Tanzania and Uganda through better use of the full matrixes of PAs and PA categories V and VI, and facilitate alignment with and integration of project outcomes, lessons and knowledge into national, sub-national and landscape policies and strategies. As part of this project, IUCN, in close collaboration with the National Forestry

Authority (NFA) intend to engage a Process Facilitator to support NFA in the review of the Agoro-Agu Sector CFRs Forest Management Plan using a landscape management planning approach. This is intended to ensure that these cluster of forests are managed through a landscape approach for purposes of creating connectivity between NFA managed CFRs, community managed forests and agricultural lands through land use dialogue processes that resolve conflicts over CFRs boundaries and strengthen CbNRM on public lands.

2 The national context

The predicament facing the Government of Uganda (GoU) currently is how to have ecologically representative and connected network of PAs supported by enhanced management arrangements that increase household and community benefits from biodiversity on private land and PAs. Most of Uganda's PAs are currently managed in isolation to the wider landscapes in which they exist. The PA management systems need to maintain vital connectivity with agricultural lands. Alongside this is the need for enhancement of the status of PAs', buffer zones and community managed forests which link the wider landscape to agricultural lands. This includes development of PA management plans that are linked to the landscape level plans.

This calls for strategic and wholistic landscape level planning, and development of effective governance capacity of core PAs within the landscapes supported by a coordinated landscape management approach. There is need to nest PA management in broader landscape level planning and management, encompassing "buffer zone" production areas used for agriculture, tourism or forestry. The basic principle is that, if well managed through a landscape approach, PAs can provide the cornerstone for natural resource management, contribute to sustainable livelihoods of local communities, and form the foundation for the regeneration of nature based economic activities such as ecotourism and sustainable forestry.

This ideal situation will only be possible through long-term engagement and a step-wise approach to systematically address threats and lift barriers. The purpose of this planning approach is, therefore, to set up the foundations that will enable Government of Uganda (GoU) to move towards this long-term situation complementing the current investments and measures that the GoU and her partners have already started putting in place. Uganda's PA landscapes need to be managed for the full suite of biodiversity and landscape values, including aligned revenue generation opportunities and enhanced economic performance, for ecosystem services (which are better managed at landscape level), for ecosystem functioning, and for sustainable PA management.

A landscape approach also requires careful attention to sustainable livelihoods and market interventions as part of the solution. A core component of the landscape approach will be the structuring of a fair and adequate system of incentives that will contribute community livelihood transformation. By taking a landscape approach, people can draw the best value from land in a sustainable manner by developing new products or diversifying existing products/services to realise more income. Diversification will increase resilience to climate change by better managing ecosystems and by expanding PA connectivity to agricultural lands. Most importantly, the landscape approach calls for greater community involvement and partnerships development and building as well as strengthening of landscape governance structures, systems and processes for better and coordinated PA landscape management and governance.

In Uganda, management of forest resources has moved away from command and control system to a more participatory approach that require involvement of a broad spectrum of stakeholders. The National Forestry Policy for Uganda emphasizes government commitment to promote innovative approaches to community participation in forest management on both government and private forest land. The Policy puts a strong emphasis on public involvement especially, forest adjacent communities, and benefit from sustainable forest management, including the application of Collaborative Forest Management (CFM) which defines the rights, roles and responsibilities of partners and the basis for sharing benefits from improved management and improving the livelihoods of forest dependent communities.

The National Forestry and Tree Planting Act (2003) lays out a legal framework for the development of CFM agreements for various categories of forest reserves in Uganda. The goal of CFM is to contribute to the overall goal of the National Forestry Authority in sustainable forest management. The purpose is to enhance sustainable forest management through the active participation of stakeholders. The specific objectives are to improve forest management through: (a) reduced costs (fairer distribution of the costs of management); (b) fairer distribution of benefits, responsibilities, decision-making authority in management; (c) reduction of conflicts over resource use; (d) creating awareness about benefits of forests; (e) creating a sense of ownership over forest resources; (f) sharing knowledge and skills and (g) keeping abreast with trends in the rest of the world.

To guide the step by step process of undertaking Collaborative Forest Management are CFM Guidelines (2003) that have been put in place. Further to the development of CFM Guidelines are the CFM Regulations which additionally provide for the rules and requirements for CFM and pave way for better understanding of the roles and responsibilities of concerned parties. The National Forest Plan (NFP) 2002, a sectoral plan for forestry development in Uganda provides a framework for implementing the Uganda Forestry Policy into action clarifies and makes provision for CFM by encouraging partnerships between lead forest agencies and local communities to enhance people's access to, and utilisation of forest products.

It is based on this background that IUCN, in close collaboration with NFA would like to adopt a landscape level conservation approach that goes beyond PA boundaries in their different forms or communal lands by viewing landscapes as ecological blocks that provide shared resources. By adopting this approach, the systems and activities created thereafter will likely improve the returns per-unit-of-investment in PAs by spreading conservation management, and benefits, across a wider scale. The target landscape has been selected based on the following criteria: (1) Biodiversity Significance; (2) Socio-economic Need; (3) Management Need; and (4) Government Priority.

3 The target landscape and the key issues to be addressed

This assignment will be conducted in the Agoro-Agu Sector, Achwa River Range landscape. The Agoro-Agu Sector is comprised of 17 Central Forest Reserves (CFRs), seven of which (Agoro-Agu, Lamwo, Lalak, Achwa River, Rom, Ogilli and Napono) are categorized as critical sites for biodiversity conservation because of the ecological importance attached to them like catchment functions, and conservation of endemic species (Figure 1 and Annex 1). The total CFRs area to be covered by the plan is 107,288.6 hectares consisting of unconnected network of CFRs in the biodiversity important belt of Northern Uganda (in the districts of Kitgum, Lamwo, Pader and Agago) and part of Kaabong district in Karamoja stretching into Southern Sudan, thus making trans-boundary biodiversity conservation more viable.

The Agoro-Agu CFRs are of national and local significance. Socio-economic benefits to the local community include; supply of building poles, timber, fuel wood, craft materials, water, honey, fruits, grass for thatching houses, herbal medicine, stones/marram and sand for building, black soil for smearing floor, and revenue

to government through logging. A Rapid Appraisal Study Report by IUCN (2015), shows a high dependency of the population on land and forestry resources at 91%, with forest resources providing the largest share of livelihood source even more than agriculture. Because of community over reliance on natural resources, the major threats include; commercial pit-sawing, encroachment, settlements, cultivation, charcoal burning and fuelwood collection for commercial purpose as a result of pressure from steadily rising population. The two decade insurgency in Northern Uganda led to internally displaced persons (IDPs) being settled in camps which were located either within the CFRs or very close to them, hence need for intervention.

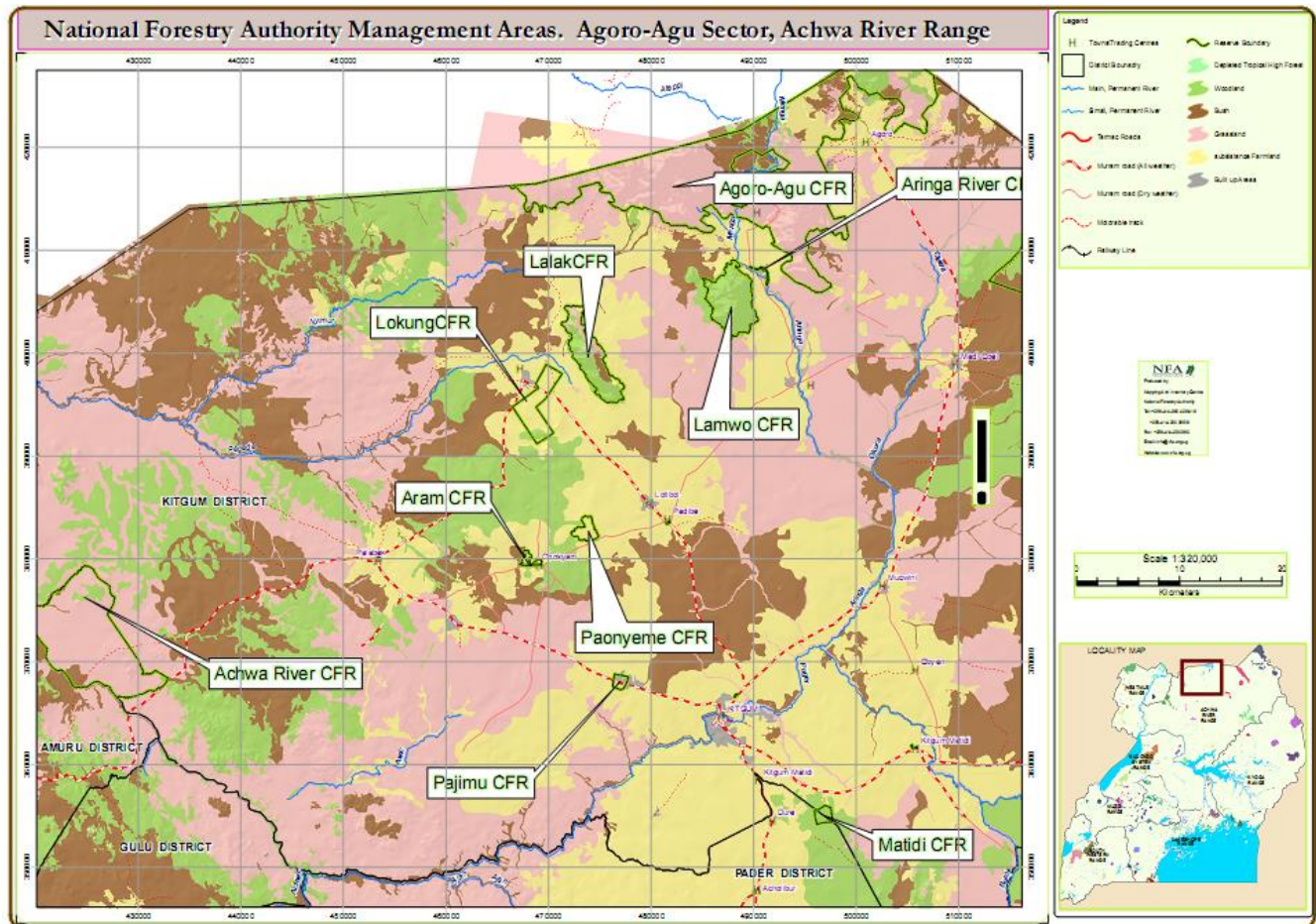


Figure 1: The Agoro-Agu Central Forest Reserves Landscape

Amidst all the above in-CFR socio-economic and ecological values, threats and opportunities, there are also emerging issues in the landscape that require to be addressed during the management planning process and these include but are not limited to:

- i. Climate change impacts and vulnerability.
- ii. Gender and equity.
- iii. Oil and gas industry development in the region.
- iv. Poverty and post war community livelihoods improvements.
- v. Lack of landscape approach to PA planning and governance mechanisms.
- vi. Lack of land use planning on community agricultural lands neighbouring CFRs.
- vii. Potential for community managed forest reserves and creation of connectivity between CFRs.
- viii. Inadequate community involvement in Collaborative Forest Management (CFM) approaches.
- ix. Escalating human-wildlife conflicts.
- x. Untapped tourism potential of the landscape.

- xi. Potential for trans-boundary biodiversity conservation with South Sudan.
- xii. Refugee influx from South Sudan into Northern Uganda.

4 Purpose, strategic objectives and tasks of the assignment

The overall purpose of this assignment is to support the NFA in the review of the Agoro-Agu Sector CFRs Management Plan (2012 to 2022). Currently, the overall vision of NFA (2012 to 2022) in Agoro-Agu Sector is: *“Sustainably managed forests which provide socio-economic and environmental services that contribute to community and national development”*. The vision of this plan is linked to the national development goal of the forestry sector which underscores the importance of forestry in the national development agenda as capable of producing numerous products and services to support economic growth, create jobs and contribute to the livelihoods of the majority of the people of Uganda. In the same vein, the current mission of the Plan is: *“Improved management standards to raise economic value of the natural forests and private plantations and restore the integrity of the Forest Reserves”*. This Plan is now due for review following established NFA Forest Management Planning Guidelines.

NFA is therefore, desirous of reviewing this Plan with support from IUCN with a focus and critical look at the larger landscape issues mentioned above among others. The review process will follow established NFA Forest Management Planning Guidelines and will be spearheaded by NFA. The most critical aspect is a landscape approach that addresses issues of connectivity between the CFRs themselves and between CFRs and community managed forest reserves and agricultural lands in order to ensure all stakeholder involvement, strengthen PA governance and foster sustainability.

4.1 Strategic objectives of the assignment

The main objectives of this assignment are to:

- 1) Map community and government land use and governance including community conserved areas as well as formal government protected areas, including stakeholder participation and define collaborative landscape governance framework that will deliver the desired management effectiveness of the Agoro-Agu Sector landscape cluster forests. This will involve identifying, analysing and describing the governance instruments, policies, practices and decision-making structures related to land use and land management within the landscape, as well as identifying aspects of governance that need to be considered when developing an inclusive and representative Landscape Governance Framework to implement the Landscape and Forest Management Plans. Special consideration and reference should be made to cross sectorial land-use practices and other sectoral policies and laws impacting the management of this impacting on the landscape. This should include an analysis not only related to the policy and legislation design but also how have they been implemented. This analysis will also include analysis on land tenure regimes and the impact of these into the current situation. This entails benchmarking with best practices regionally and nationally from literature on case studies and associated analyses within the IUCN protected areas programs globally and in ESARO.
- 2) Review the Agoro-Agu Sector Forests Management Plan through a landscape approach that enhances biodiversity in CFRs, community managed forest reserves and agricultural land, and harmonises REDD+ implementation in the entire landscape. This will involve using conservation planning technology and tools to rapidly assess the effectiveness of the PAs in conserving the full range of ecosystems and biodiversity values in the Agoro-Agu Sector and in maintaining the ecological viability and connectivity to agricultural lands, resilience and integrity of these of cluster of forests and different agricultural land use forms.

4.2 Tasks of the assignment

Under Strategic Objective 1: *“Map community and government landuse and governance including community conserved areas as well as formal government protected areas, including stakeholder participation and define collaborative landscape governance framework that will deliver the desired management effectiveness of the Agoro-Agu Sector landscape cluster forests”* the Process Facilitator will perform the following tasks:

Task 1: Analyse and document existing best practices within the IUCN protected areas programs globally and in ESARO that demonstrate effective use of PA categories V & VI, identify sectorial land-use and other sectorial policies and laws impacting the management of this particular landscape, and make recommendations that could enhance effective use of PA systems and for improved institutional coordination across the Agoro-Agu landscape. This should include an analysis not only related to the policy and legislation design but also how have they been implemented. Also, this analysis will include analysis on land tenure regimes and the impact of these into the current situation.

Task 2: Work with IUCN and NFA team in facilitating a training format workshop for key implementing partners and stakeholders to assign the full matrix of PA to appropriate land uses including IUCN PA Categories V & VI to Agoru-Agu CFRs using the IUCN PA matrix analysis framework.

Task 3: Engage landscape and community level stakeholders and the GWG in Land Use Dialogues (LUDs) in collaboration with The Forests Dialogue (TFD) geared towards strengthening the existing Agoro-Agu Platform and agree on an inclusive/multi-sectoral decision making and landscape governance framework (Governance Working Group-GWG) that provides a neutral platform for decision making.

Task 4: Engage the Governance Working Group (GWG) to define and develop the governance baselines, capacity indicators and targets to inform engagement processes and dialogues with other stakeholders. This task will include developing a policy engagement and influence strategy targeting decision makers from the local to the national level based on the analysis on policies & legislation as different opportunities to improve the current situation will arise during the analysis process.

Task 5: Working with landscape Governance Working Group (GWG), define and agree on stakeholder roles and responsibilities in the management of the PA landscape and recommend strategies for capacity development to that effect.

Under Strategic Objective 2: *“Review the Agoro-Agu Sector Forests Management Plan through a landscape approach that enhances biodiversity in and amongst CFRs, community managed forest reserves and agricultural land, and harmonises REDD+ implementation in the entire landscape ”* the Process Facilitator will perform the following tasks:

Task 6: Review and document data and information on Agoro-Agu landscape from existing reports and other sources (see Section 10) and identify gaps in available data and information to fill in order to inform the management planning process.

Task 7: Work with NFA field based staff and in close collaboration with The Forests Dialogue team and landscape GWG members to carry out stakeholder Land Use Dialogues in Agoro-Agu Landscape to ground truth CFR boundaries and the model for forest and landscape protection according to stakeholder perspectives and recommendations as well as the information and data obtained from the desk reviews, field reconnaissance and data analysis. The output for this task will be a development of inclusive models of forest and landscape protection for discussion with the NFA constituted Core Planning Team (CPT), the GWG and other stakeholders.

Task 8: Fill the identified data/information gaps that enable assessment of the effectiveness of the PAs in conserving the full range of ecosystems and biodiversity values and in maintaining the ecological viability and connectivity to agricultural lands, resilience and integrity of different forest categories and agricultural land use forms.

Task 9: Work with NFA, and IUCN and, in close coordination and collaboration with the TFD to convene CPT and GWG Land Use Dialogues (LUDs) to develop a common landscape vision and mission with well defined strategic objectives, strategies and actions for each of the 17 CFRs underpinned by an analysis of how different land use categories (Community Managed Forests, Central Forest Reserves, and Agricultural Lands) connect with each other in the overall landscape.

Task 10: Draft the Landscape and CFRs Management Plans and convene Landscape Governance Working Group and stakeholder workshops to review and provide input into the Draft Plans.

Task 11: Incorporate stakeholder comments into the Draft Plans and convene final stakeholder workshop for final input, approval and adoption of the Final Draft Plans.

Task 12: Produce the Final Landscape and CFRs Management Plans for implementation.

6 Expected outputs of the assignment

The Process Facilitator is expected to deliver the following outputs:

- 1) **Inception Report** articulating the approach and methodology to be used in executing the assignment, in line with the NFA Planning Guidelines.
- 2) **Stakeholder Engagement Process Report** with recommendations to guide future engagement processes based on good practices and lessons learned during the assignment engagement process.
- 3) **Policy Engagement and Influencing Strategy** targeting decision makers from the local to the national level.
- 4) **Landscape Governance Framework Report** detailing how all the aspects under Strategic Objective 1 above have been covered and the agreed upon Landscape Governance Framework and Governance Baseline.
- 5) **Landscape Assessment Report** detailing the processes involved and findings from the literature reviews, field assessments, socio-economic, ecological and mapping results (including GIS generated maps) and land use dialogues.
- 6) **General Landscape Management Plan** that addresses the whole landscape issues based on the analysis of all the information generated from all tasks in Strategic Objectives 1 & 2 and discussed and approved by the Landscape Governance Working Group for implementation.
- 7) **Agoro-Agu CFRs Management Plan** as a standalone, and statutory document focusing on the CFRs duly approved by NFA Board of Trustees for presentation to the Minister for final approval.

7. Qualifications and Experience of the Consultant(s)

The preferred approach is to have a small team of 2-3 Experts bridging several disciplines and that should meet the following criteria:

- i. Masters Degrees in Policy and Policy Analysis, Governance, Social Sciences, Environmental Economics, Natural Resources Management, Social Studies, or related fields.

- ii. Minimum of ten years experience in the field of Governance, Policy and Policy Analysis.
- iii. A solid understanding of Participatory Forest Management or Collaborative Forestry Management in Sub-Saharan Africa is required.
- iv. Past experience in management of a protected areas in Uganda or any other protected area in Sub-Saharan Africa region is highly desirable.
- v. Demonstrated analytical skills, clarity in writing, ability in translating abstract concepts into concrete actions/recommendations are all required.
- vi. English proficiency in writing is a requirement.

8 Oversight and Reporting

The Process Facilitator shall report to the IUCN Head of Office and who will provide regular evaluation and guidance and to NFA for policy and technical guidance on CFRs management planning processes.

9 Duration of the assignment

The total duration of this assignment is 45 billable man days spread over a period of 4 months effective 1st February 2018 and not exceeding 31st May 2018.

10 Some of the sources of information for the consultancy

The consultant(s) is/are encouraged to use the following documents among others:

- i. The Upper Nile Catchment Management plan.
- ii. IUCN PA Matrix analysis framework, Social Assessment of Protected Area and Natural Resource Governance Framework (NRGF).
- iii. Uganda Forestry Policy, 2001.
- iv. National Forest and Tree Planting Act, 2003.
- v. National Forestry Plan, 2012.
- vi. Agoro-Agu Forest Management Plan, 2012.

HOW TO APPLY

Interested individuals/organisations are requested to submit their **Application Letters** clearly demonstrating their suitable skills and experience for the tasks mentioned as supported by copies of **CVs**. The Application Letters should be accompanied by; (i) **Technical Proposal** and (ii) **Financial Proposal**.

The Technical Proposal should explain your skills and past relevant experience, understanding of the scope of the overall assignment and each of the tasks, a description of the overall approach, including the methodology and tools for each task, as well as the scheduling.

The Financial Proposal should indicate both professional and re-imbursable costs separately, as well as a statement on VAT or Withholding Tax.

Applications should be sent electronically or hand delivered to the following address by 4.30pm 25th January, 2018:

The Country Representative,
IUCN Uganda Country Office
Plot 39, Babiiha Avenue
P. O. Box 10950
Kampala, Uganda
Email: uco@iucn.org

Annex I: The Agoro-Agu Sector Central Forest Reserves and key issues to be addressed during the management planning process

SN	Name of CFR	Location		Area (Ha)	Comments and key issues to be addressed during management planning process
		District	Sub-county		
1.	Agoro-Agu	Lamwo	Paluga and Agoro	26,508	Critical for Biodiversity conservation. About 5% of PA is degraded due to cultivation by prison farm and the local community for barley growing
2.	Lamwo	Lamwo	Lukung and Padibe East	2,424	About 2% of the PA is degraded through extraction of forest products by the local community.
3.	Lalak	Lamwo	Lukung and Padibe East	2,212	About 2% of the PA is degraded for extraction of forest products. One MoU signed with communities for CFM.
4.	Lokung	Lamwo		1,958	About 20% of the PA is degraded and has been allocated for tree planting.
5.	Paonyeme	Lamwo	Padibe West and Palabek Gem	339	This is a grassland CFR which has its own biodiversity values. It was gazetted for production and research on bamboo. About 3% of the PA is degraded and has been allocated for establishment of commercial tree plantations.
6.	Achwa River	Lamwo	Ogili	8,459	This PA was gazetted as a buffer to River Achwa. About 30% of PA is encroached for settlement, grazing and cultivation and has now been allocated for plantation establishment.
7.	Aringa River	Lamwo	Agoro	44	Gazetted as a buffer to River Aringa, about 100% of this PA is degraded and there is need to replant it as a catchment area.
8.	Aram	Lamwo	Padibe West	155	Gazetted to protect sample of bamboo, about 40% of this PA is degraded and has been allocated for plantation establishment.
9.	Pajimu	Kitgum	Akwang	158	About 50% of this PA is degraded. The boundary resurvey was done and the PA is for reafforestation with Shea nut trees.
10.	Kitgum A and B	Kitgum	Municipality	14.6	PA gazetted as buffer to River Pager, but it is now heavily encroached with about 60% of PA badly degraded.
11.	Kitgum Matidi	Kitgum and Pader	Lagoro and Acholibur respectively	236	PA gazetted for conservation of bamboo. About 30% of the PA is degraded and has been allocated for tree commercial planting.
12.	Rom	Kitgum	Orom	10,904	PA is critical site for biodiversity conservation. About 3% of PA is degraded and requires restoration and control of timber cutting and charcoal production.
13.	Ogilli	Kitgum and Agago	Omiya, Anyima and Wal	5,348	PA gazetted as Conservation Forest Reserve. About 5% of is degraded and requires restoration.
14.	Ogom	Pader	Angagura	800	About 50% of the PA is degraded and has been allocated for commercial plantations.
15.	Parabong	Agago		2,792	About 20% of the PA is encroached for settlement.
16.	Napono	Agago		3,727	Gazetted as conservation forest. About 2% of PA degraded and requires restoration.
17.	Nyangea Napore	Kitgum And Kaabong	Orom and Karenga respectively	41,741	Currently managed under the Kaabong Sector CFRs. About 20% of the PA degraded and requires restoration.