

**THE ATTITUDES OF THE LOCAL COMMUNITIES TOWARDS THE  
CONSERVATION THROUGH ECOTOURISM IN UGANDA.**

**CASE STUDY: BUDONGO FOREST RESERVE IN MASINDI DISTRICT.**

**BY**

**SEKALALA ALAMATHAN.**

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## DECLARATION

I **Sekalala Alamathan**, hereby declare that this work is original and the findings are mainly the compilation of people's responses and this work has never been done and submitted to any University /Institution for any award.

Signature..........

Date.....20<sup>th</sup> / Sept / 2011.....

## STATEMENT OF APPROVAL

I certify that this research work has been submitted with my approval as supervisor.

Dr. Nuwe John Bosco

(Bsc, PGDE, MSC, PhD..Environmental Economics)

Signature.....

Date.....

## **DEDICATION**

This work is dedicated to my parents, brothers, sisters and friends.

## **ABSTRACT**

Ecotourism is new in Uganda and aims at benefiting local communities worldwide. In Budongo forest, it was introduced a few years back and one would expect it by now to be understood by the local communities and be appreciated if it is yielding benefits to them.

The study was conducted between June and July in Budongo forest, Masindi district. The results showed that it was mainly indirect benefits that were being realized by the local communities.

Although capacity building is one of the major goals towards the ecotourism project aimed at about 50percent of the local communities believed that if the current top management stopped what they are doing then the project will automatically come to an end.

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## LIST OF ACRONMS

- IUCN International Union of Conservation of Nature.
- UWA Uganda Wild life Authority.
- BFEP Budongo Forest Ecotourism Project.
- CFR Central Forest Reserve

# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.0 Introduction

The study was about the attitudes of the local communities towards the conservation through ecotourism in Masindi District (Budongo Forest reserve as a case study).

Attitude is the way someone looks at something either in a positive or negative way.

The community refers to the local population around the conservation or the protected areas that are affected by the conservation project.

Environmental conservation is prerequisite for sustainable development. As such ecotourism has received substantial attention among conservationists as a potential tool for sustainable development.

An important aspect of community based tourism is community participation in tourism. It is believed that many of the negative effects of mass tourism are likely to be reduced when communities have a role in making decisions with respect to improve local resource management as well as distribution of the economic benefits of tourism

In Masindi district, the attempt to involve the local communities in tourism projects has been inhibited both by the lack of experience of the bottom-up development and the dismissive attitude taken by some officials towards local communities especially in remote and rural areas. Therefore, the researcher intended to find out the attitudes of the local communities towards the conservation of the ecotourism in the Masindi.

### 1.1 Background to the study

Ecotourism grew around 1983 but many of the early definition not clearly separate it from other types of nature based tourism. According to the international union of conservation of nature (IUCN 1992) based in Switzerland ecotourism is environmental responsible travel and visitation to relatively undisturbed nature that promote conservation and has low visitation impacts and provides for beneficially active and economic investment from people.

According to Greg (1998) the growth in nature based ecotourism makes clear the potential of ecotourism as a tool for conservation and economic development. However it also remains clear that to succeed ecotourism must be planned and managed well as the protection of the life of the residents as well as the protection of the natural and cultural environments in addition to the creation of positive experience for visitors.

The management is a result of the colonial policy which severed the relationship, between people and wildlife. A Good example occurred in Budongo forest reserve in Uganda, until the mid 1960's this Forest Reserve was among the best in Africa for wildlife tourism (Smith 1993) however in 1932 , part of this ecosystem was gazetted such as the Bwindi national park in western Uganda were evicted and prevented from grazing in the park. This action disappointed the people of Masindi who had lived with wildlife harmoniously. Therefore, they decided to poison and spear wildlife which they had lived within the past. This anger arises from realization that it was wildlife responsible for not only the loss of their land, National Park but also the loss of the owning permanent water sources available for them and their livestock (Smith 1993).

The administration of the park has fallen apart, the tour operators dropped the park from their itineraries although the authorities would often associate the low animal numbers of mismanagement, increasing evidence suggests that this was caused by inept management and total disregard of communication with the local people.

The development of ecotourism stresses much emphasis towards winning local peoples support and even maintaining positive attitudes towards ecotourism to succeed , there is a need for cooperation and full participation of the local communities in both conservation and management of resources upon which ecotourism is based ( Obua 1996). This helps to create good relationship and senses of ownership on the side of the local and ecotourism which promotes ecotourism development.

According to Groove (1993), ecotourism came up as a result of three basic reasons which include; dissatisfaction of many tourists with the standard of mass tourism, the increased awareness among tourists, their potential impacts on the host environment and the indigenous societies and the dissatisfaction with materialism and love for adventure and nature. The development of ecotourism in Uganda is based on the support through the establishment of

tourism sites and forest reserve such Budongo forest reserve (UWA 1998). As a result of this, has been developed of ecotourism as a variant of conservation and revenue generation, for it is believed that ecotourism can generate revenue that may be reinvested in protected areas to facilitate conservation. Therefore the researcher critically found out the perception and attitude they have towards the conservation through ecotourism in Uganda.

## **1.2 Statement of the problem**

The attitudes of the local people are a crucial factor towards ecotourism and can affect the success of ecotourism positively or negatively. The establishment of Budongo Forest reserve involved negative effects on the local community mostly those who previously occupied the area. Negative effects mainly stem from the displacement of the people who previously occupied the forest area. In addition to that is the subsequent burn on the various activities that used to be carried out in the area.

Activities included things like medicine harvesting, firewood collection, food items and raw materials for both construction and handcraft industry. Though many of them were compensated for their loss of land, People developed negative attitudes towards the forest reserve.

However, Greg Ringer (1996) referring to Zimbabwe reports that there are signs that the local people are increasingly getting aware that conservation efforts do provide tangible benefits both in terms of seasonal stream flows for the people and as an alternative source of income for residents so the attitudes of the people of Budongo are expected to change positively given to Greg's findings from his reference study.

The researcher was therefore to investigate the relationship between the various local communities' attitude towards the conservation of the ecotourism. This on broader level was focus on the problem that create such attitudes as a way of critically assessing and identifying solutions aimed at enhancing positive local people's attitudes for better development of Budongo forest reserve as an ecotourism destination.

## **1.3 STUDY OBJECTIVES**

### **1.3.0 General objective.**

To evaluate the attitudes of the local communities towards conservation of Budongo forest reserve through ecotourism.

### **1.3.1 Specific objectives.**

To identify ecotourism activities in and around Budongo forest reserve.

To establish the attitude of the local communities towards conservation through ecotourism activities.

To establish the challenges faced by local communities to conserve Budongo forest through ecotourism activities.

To provide the best way in which local communities can conserve Budongo forest through Ecotourism.

## **1.4 Research questions**

The attitudes and behavior of people are generally a result of their position in the society (Pail 1982). The study was aimed at testing the following hypotheses;

What are the ecotourism activities in and around Budongo forest reserve?

What is the attitude of the local communities towards conservation through ecotourism activities?

What are the challenges faced by local communities in their efforts to conserve Budongo forest through ecotourism activities?

What are the best ways in which local communities can conserve Budongo forest through the Ecotourism?

## **1.5 Significance of the study**

The research was to give a new insight of what is going on within the ecotourism development in Budongo forest reserve. The study was to give a framework for which policy makers and stakeholders in the industry can begin to address issues concerning the local communities' attitudes towards ecotourism.

It was helpful in identifying the characteristic features of ecotourism site in Budongo the stakeholders, new developments and improvement plus ways of sustaining the available

resources for the future. The finding would go along way into assisting the future researchers who want to acquire new knowledge in Budongo forest reserve through Ecotourism.

### **1.6 Scope of the study**

Economic and time constraint often put limitation on how much of an area can be covered in the project (Kaniyo pabidi) .The study had no exception as regards availability of time and enough financial resources in addition to climate. The study was conducted from 2009 to 2011.

However the study gathered substantial data on issues related to the topic and its objectives as stated. An assessment was done on the opinion of the local people towards the establishment of the forest reserve. Also it considered factors that affect people's attitudes towards ecotourism development in Budongo forest reserve. It anticipated that the research would stimulate other personalities in the country to the more interest on the issues of the local people on ecotourism.

## CHAPTER TWO

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 2.0 Introduction

Not much more than a hundred years ago the term attitudes was used exclusively with references to a person's posture, (Johoda and Warren 1996). To describe someone as adopting a threatening attitude defiant attitude is to refer to his physical mien. Nowadays attitudes increasingly refer to the psychological (mental state) rather than immediate physical orientation (bodily stance of a person)

According to Droba (1930) in Walpole and Goodwin (2001) defined attitudes as mental disposition of the human individuals act for or against a definite object.

An attitude is also tendency to act towards or against something in the environment which becomes either positive or negative according to (Borgardus 1931 cited in Mohsin 1990). Attitudes develop in response to a person's changing situation as he ages, as his career and family circumstances develop and according to how important his various external stimuli may be one of these in the information received from other people perhaps derived directly from comments from friends, family and colleagues or through media like print media and television. However, Mohsin (1990) adds that attitudes do not exist in isolation rather it seems that the attitudes of one person about related things are, and more central they are said to be a person's value system. Attitudes which are central to the person are more difficult to alter, but can be more readily reinforced by further information or the views of other people which consistent with these they already hold.

On the other level Fishbein and Ajzen (1991) have argued that a person's attitude towards some action or object the strength of his feeling about it. Combination of the strength of his beliefs about the action and the consequences of the action. Motivation and perceived options attitudes build and image of an activity. The image may be defined as the sum of beliefs, ideas and impressions that a person has regarding an activity in question.

## 2.1 Attitudes of the local communities and conservation

According to Allport (1935) defined attitudes as “a mental and neutral state of readiness organized through experience exerting a directive or dynamic influence upon the individuals responses to all objects or situations with which it is related”. Attitudes are not born but learned, have objective references to all objective references, differ in valence and like more psychological concepts they can be inferred from the antecedent stimulus and consequent behavior pattern

Local people’s attitudes towards conservation according to Enriquez in Lindbergh (1991) are in most cases compelled by ecotourism contribution to the local economy. This can be of increased employment opportunities and even general infrastructures without forgetting participation of all stakeholders at all stages (government officials, protected area personnel and the local people). Negative attitudes on the other hand result from the negative impacts that the local people face from ecotourism development. These may come in form of inflationary pressures on local economies and exclusion of the local people from management and land use of resources on which they depended for their basic needs. (Cater 1992).

According to Lankford and Samuel (1994) noted that, attitudes towards conservation of wildlife among the people conditioned by their economic outlook as they pursue their anxiety to become rich modern and progressive. This in most cases force them to encroach wildlife areas for economic resources. Wildlife areas usually provide a lot of potential that once exploited provided a lot of economic benefits especially when it comes to building material and food potential in form of wildlife meat.

Positive attitudes towards tourism are related to the receipts of economic benefits and support for conservation (Goodwin 2001) however, not only do economic benefits influence the attitudes of the local communities towards conservation positively but awareness plays an important role. This will not only make people realize the importance of wildlife conservation but also make them realize wildlife population has gone down and their future depends on peoples’ effort to protect them in addition to arousing feelings and conscience on the rights of wildlife to survive. Infield (1986) in Behangana (1950) stressed out that benefits from a protected area, have influence on the local people’s attitudes towards ecotourism and conservation. Ensuring local support for protected area is increasingly viewed as an important element of biodiversity



conservation. This is often predicted and the provision of benefits from protected areas and a common means of providing such benefits are tourism development. Positive attitudes towards tourism are positive related to receipts of economic benefits Walpole and G Goodwin (2001).

The poor residents, who receive limited government service often perceived areas as restricting their ability to earn a living. It is not surprising that the pressure or the growing population and unsustainable land use practices outside protected areas boundaries frequently lead to illegal and destructive encroachment.

Therefore in Uganda, the local communities and ecotourism development in Budongo forest reserve was established through Budongo forest ecotourism to promote forest conservation by integrating conservation with community development. The aim was to manage the forest resources.

## **2.2 Community participation as a vital necessity in ecotourism development.**

The local community had mixed feelings about tourism development, ranging from worries about social and behavioural changes in their communities.

Any outside agency promoting a community participation program may be faced with a dilemma; it needs to deal with an organized entity that has accepted procedures for making an implementing group decision. Creating such an entity from scratch is rarely successful yet working with existing authorities may not be reaching all of the target beneficiaries or all those whose cooperation is essential to protect (Cater 1994) made an attempt to define community participation as a situation where by people act in groups to influence the direction and outcome of development programs that will affect them.

According to Kiss (1991) local participation towards the development of an ecotourism project involves all people who are directly affected by wildlife from the area or have an effect on it. She however adds that it is rarely so simple she notes that poachers who come from a great distance cannot be considered part of the local community. Also she greatly values the practical or political necessity to include all inhabitants of social or political unit which includes wildlife area and those individuals who do not come into direct contact with wildlife. Increased local people involved in the management and decision making process in the conservation activities helps to create a sense of the side of the local people which helps to reduce on the negative impacts to the environment (Cater 1994) Ziffer (1989) adds that increased local peoples' involvement where

low involvement yield high negative impacts by the local people.

According to Paul (Ibid 1987) made an attempt of defining community participation as a situation where people act in a groups to influence the direction and outcome of development program that will affect them. In support a subsequent study by Boring Feyerabend show that the degree to which communities are brought into the management and decision making process varies as falling somewhere along the management continuum extending from absolutely no communities involvement at one extreme to the devolution of all control over the natural resources at the other. Based on the report by Springall (1994) the process of involving the local communities around the forest reserve in its management started with getting to know peoples' concern about mismanagement of forest, each high level of corruption among forest management outsiders being preferential access to the forest.

In the past conservation needs have usually taken precedence over the needs of the local population in the vicinity of protected areas but this has made the protected areas vulnerable to the local communities' abuse and misuse in the times of political instability. Most protected areas are currently trying to involve and enable the local communities to participate in the day to day running of the program. Their main challenge is how to make them participate. The general assumption is that when protected areas can yield direct benefits to the local people for example through employment and maintaining their cultures then the harmonious co-existence will be achieved (MacKinnon et al, 1986) while the search for more lasting solution to wildlife conservation in Africa continues there is a growing concern that part of the solution will require involvement by the residents living near the wildlife resources to both manage and benefits from sustainable development of these resources (Lewis, Kewech and Mweya 1990). This requires taking people who share their land with wildlife (Eltringham 1994).

It is generally agreed that conservation cannot succeed unless local communities who have lived for centuries with wildlife in and around protected areas intimately involved and derived tangible social economic benefits from sustainable use of these areas. Involving local residents through tourism employment and sharing tourism revenue with tribal authorities are not new ideas (Western 1982 and Vedder 1989). The beneficiaries approach concentrate on dissemination of social and economic benefits of the local people, with decision making remains in the hands of the external body

(Wells et al 1995).

### **2.3 The impacts of the local communities' participation in ecotourism conservation**

According to De Kadt .E (1979) people who suffer or enjoy the main impacts of tourism are those who live near the tourist destination. The defense of community interest demands that those interests be formulated .These should be initial knowledge of the local conditions, needs and wishes implemented. In the most cases the community has little or no legal authority to deal with developments such powers are been invested at a regional government. Tourism demonstrates its potential for creating jobs and encouraging income generating activities to benefit local communities in destination areas. This sector provides various entry points for employment and the opportunity for creating self employment in small and large size income generating activities, thus creating paths towards the elimination of poverty from the local people. However the number of conditions this potential can be used most efficient in collaborations of all stakeholders, the government, intergovernmental bodies, local government, trade unions and the local community and initiatives.

Inter personal relation between the residents and the visitors can be achieved whether real or illusionary .Different access tourism industry conservation and profit gains changes power relations those who have vested financial interest in tourism and while those who are able to profit from the tourism industry will be more likely not to endorse the industry.

Politicians would like to raise their host community living standards and their own to hence conserving and involving the local people and whose benefits has been an argument in the tourism developing countries like Uganda.

In Uganda, ecotourism is new and even it has set up some new projects like the Kasyoha-Kitomi forest and Budongo forest ecotourism project (BFEP) were established basing on the growing awareness.

The idea behind the project was to promote forest conservation by integrating conservation with community development and to achieve active involvement of the communities in the project and management of the forest.

Therefore the research was conducted to bridge the gap.

## **2.4 Conclusion.**

Ecotourism refers to nature based tourism that contributes to conservation through generation of funds from protected areas, creation of employment for the local communities and offering environmental education. Ecotourism development involves a wide range of players (operators in the tourism industry, conservationists, lawmakers and the local people) whose cooperation is essential for the effective development of ecotourism.

For ecotourism development to be successful and acceptable sensitivity in implementation, sustainability and local participation must be more than just clichés in national or cooperation plans. Most importantly local population must be involved and shown that conservation and tourism can complement each other to the economic advantage of the local community. Unless this is successfully achieved longer term ecotourism development is unlikely in any area.

The encouragement of active participation by the local population in the conservation and education dimensions of the development process is essential element of ecotourism. This is because active participation helps in creating awareness among the local population of the importance of ecotourism therefore creating positive attitudes towards conservation and ecotourism development.

## CHAPTER THREE

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

#### **3.1 Introduction**

The chapter gives a description of the study area in terms of its location and physical features. It also gives an account of how the study was designed and executed. It discusses how the respondents were selected, how data was collected, processed, analyzed and finally, it took a look at the various problems anticipated to be encountered during the research process.

#### **3.2 Study area**

Masindi district is located in north western Uganda. The district lies between longitude 27 28<sup>0</sup> and latitude 1<sup>0</sup> 45<sup>0</sup> north and 31<sup>0</sup> 30<sup>0</sup> south of the equator. Budongo forest reserve was gazetted as a central forest reserve (CFR) in 1932. The total area of the district is approximately with the population density of 1.3 individuals per km squared. It is inhabited by Kitara people especially the Banyoro who constitute the highest population.

The majority of age working group of the community is engaged in unpaid family employment, particularly subsistence agriculture. Small proportions have attained formal education and are formally employed.

Budongo forest covers 825km<sup>2</sup> making Uganda's biggest forest reserve and a major tourist attraction site in the district. The forest covers an area of about 825Km square kilometers. Some of the activities at the forest include forest walk, bird watching , primate tracking camping and forest game watching . Public amenities are still undeveloped at the destination.

#### **3.3 Research design.**

Budongo forest reserve is remotely located a fact that may explain a low scattered type of population in the neighborhood. In case of this research descriptive survey methods of research that were used, included primary data which was collected through use of interviews and observation. Secondary data was however also collected through studying already printed materials. This research was basically focused on the local people s' attitudes towards ecotourism development in Budongo forest reserve. This research included data concerning

ecotourism development in Bwindi forest reserve, local peoples' participation in ecotourism activities in the forest , local peoples' expectations from ecotourism development, activities in which the local people are involved as a result of ecotourism development in Budongo forest reserve.

### **3.4 Sampling design, selection and size**

The sample size was dictated with the limited time that was available and the financial constraints. Due to the above problem the research was carried out using 30 selected respondents. The research mainly was concentrated on the local people who have stayed in the area for at least a period of 10 years, where random sampling was used to select 25 respondents for inclusion out of the 180 household of the villages. These were got using a box containing 180 mixed numbers of papers each representing a possible household to pick for inclusion in the sample from where 25 people form a numbered papers representing 25 people from each household was picked randomly one after the other.

The research included 5 forest reserve administrative officials who were selected using purposeful sampling. Under here, personal judgment was to be used by those to meet the purpose of the study (Bailey 1987) thus 30 people were selected to form a sample size where was a subset of the total population and samples normally constituting some elements in the large population. The reason for choosing the above people for inclusion in the research included among others; The local people were chosen because they are thought to be much in position to tell benefits, activities and attitudes towards the development of ecotourism in Budongo forest reserve.

### A table showing the respondents

Type of respondent	Number to be interviewed	Percentage (%)
The local communities	25	83.3
Forest officials	5	16.7
<b>Total</b>	30	100

Table 1: Sample selection

Research authorities was be included because they are thought to be in position to know the ecotourism facilities that have been put in place since that start of ecotourism program in Budongo forest reserve and thoughtful to be having the knowledge of the attitudes of the local communities towards the conservation of the forest

### 3.5.0 Instruments for data collection

#### 3.5.1 Observation

This technique involves seeking information by way of investigating own direct observation without asking respondents.

Bailey (1994) notes that, the observation method is the primary technique of data on non verbal behavior. Although observation most commonly involves sight or visual data collection, it could also include data collection via the other senses such as hearing, touch or smell. Observation is often conducted as a preliminary to survey and may be conducted jointly with document study or experimentation (Bailey 1994).

### **3.5.2 Questionnaires**

Is a carefully designed instrument (typed, written or printed) for collecting data directly from people. It consist questions and statements. The research involved questionnaires in the collection of primary data. The questionnaires have two types of questions , the open ended and the closed ended .The open ended questions are offered to respondents to give them a chance to provide their own views to the questions and the closed ended give respondents a list of responses from which they select an appropriate answer.

The questionnaire was used because it's cheaper to administer to respondents scattered over an area and population within a short space. This method was particularly suitable in the collection of information from administration and the local communities.

(a) Questionnaire for local council (LC)

(b) Questionnaire for the local communities.

(c) Questionnaire for the administration.

### **3.5.3 Documentary review**

This involved the use of library and organizational records to build a background to the study and also provide a backing in the discussion of the findings. Using this method I was able to get information from books, articles and newspapers.

### **3.5.4 Interview**

This technique involved seeking information by way of asking questions to the respondents

Bailey notes that;

“An interview is a conversation in which the researcher tries to get information from the respondents. The method assumes that the respondents to be interviewed have the information required. They can be understood, the questions put to them will be willing to give honest answers while are face to face with the researcher. It's particularly useful when the subjects cannot read and write or where the researcher is investigating complex and sensitive issues.”



### **3.6.0 Data processing and analysis**

This involved process like editing, coding and tabulating together with explanations of qualitative data. This process started after collection.

#### **3.6.1 Editing**

This was done through checking of complete questionnaire to eliminate obvious errors and detect omission.

#### **3.6.2 Coding**

Answers given in questionnaires and interviews were classified into meaningful categories. This was to enable the researcher to bring out essential patterns from which facilitate organizing presentation and the researcher was able to reduce data from detailed responses to understandable materials.

#### **3.6.3 Data analysis**

Various responses from the local community and the administration of Budongo forest reserve and the secondary were compared. These responses were grouped into qualitative and quantitative data for easy analysis.

#### **3.6.4 Qualitative data analysis**

Qualitative methods result in information which was described in words. Descriptive summaries were collected and responses (Donald and Del 1981). The researcher used content analysis to analyze qualitative data.

“According to bailey 1994 notes that the basic goals of content analysis are to take qualitative data. The results content analysis can generally be presented in table containing frequencies or percentages.”

#### **3.6.5 Quantitative data analysis**

This involved analysis of structured (closed ended) questions. Here the data was coded and tabulated. The coded data was broken up into appropriate summary statistics and presented in tables.

### **3.7 Problems**

Some respondents needed money prior to the answering of questions with the view that their time was being wasted instead of venturing in other activities.

Some questionnaires were not fully be answered because of lack of first hand information and also due to the presence of migrants who did not know the history of the place very well.

Illiteracy which led to fear by the local community to answer the questionnaires with the view that they are not learned and hence cannot handle a university student questions. And also this involved hectic movements of the researcher who had to fill in almost all questionnaires because the respondents could not write but can give report correctly.

Financial constraints whereby money needed for facilitation in terms of transport, feeding and accommodation was less hence spending a few days in the field.

Limited time where time given was not enough to conduct the research study and analyses all the issues in the field.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### PRESENTATION OF THE FINDINGS

#### 4.0 Introduction

This chapter deals with the findings of the research, their analysis and interpretation of the data deals with the findings of the research, their analysis and interpretation of data collected during the fieldwork. The discussion is done in context of the study objectives and responses from local listener's politicians and journalists were analyzed

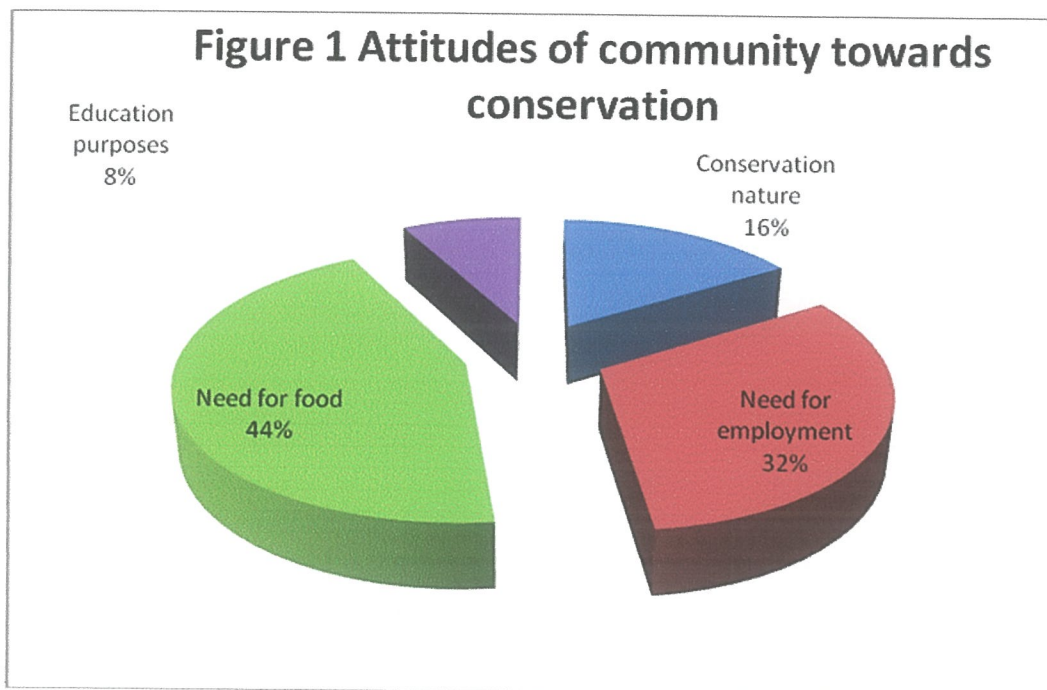
#### 4.1 Community attitudes towards, conservation development of Budongo forest reserve

The communities around Budongo forest reserve had different attitudes towards conservation of the forest and the attitudes depended on the individual benefits.

**Table 1: Opinions that affect the attitudes of community towards conservation of Budongo forest reserve.**

Opinion	Frequency	Percentage
Conservation nature	4	16
Need for employment	8	32
Need for food	11	44
Education purposes	2	8

**Source: Data collected by the researcher in the field.**

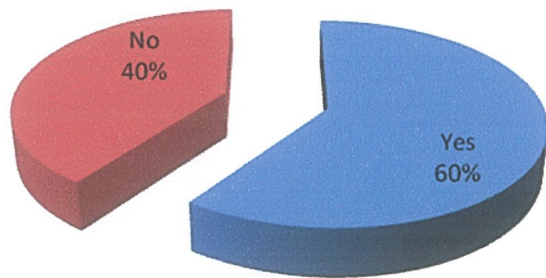


The results show that the majority (44%) of community prefer the Budongo forest for food, while 32% of the community respect Budongo forest for conservation and 8 % of the community see Budongo forest for education purposes (Table 1 and Figure1). Though the communities has indeed benefited from the forest reserve, not all of these communities suggest for the conservation of the forest reserve

**Table 2: Whether or not Budongo forest should be conserved.**

Factor	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	15	60
No	10	40

**Figure 2 Opinion on whether Budongo should be conserved**



**Source: Data collected by the researcher in the field.**

The results in Table 2 and Figure 2 show that most local people (60 %) suggest for the conservation of the forest reserve due to the benefits from the forest whereas (40 %) refuse conservation of the forest seeing it as a way of limiting their freedom to nature.

Different opinions were pointed out from respondents that supported the conservation of Budongo forest reserve and these were indirectly encouraged them to have good attitude the conservation of the forest.

For nature reasons (20 %) of the respondents reported to support it and this meant that their attitude were positive towards the conservation of Budongo forest reserve.

Some respondents had also positive attitudes towards Budongo forest reserve seeing it as a tourist attraction which can earn them foreign exchange that can develop the country in general.

This was reported by (12%) of the respondents, the other positive attitude towards conservation of Budongo forest reserve was reported to be due to development reasons. This was reported by 8% of the respondents.

The other opinion that was positive towards conservation was the need for employment, where some respondents 28% thought that through its conservation some local people would be employed at the forest station and would be able to earn income for survival.

Up to 16% of the respondents also were reported having positive opinion towards conservation of Budongo forest reserve because of the forest are for study purposes. Some children from neighboring schools around the forest are taken for academic tours to the forest and even secondary and higher institutions. This serves the society an encouragement for its conservation. About 16% of the respondents had positive attitudes towards conservation of Budongo forest due to the ability of respondents to collect firewood, food and medicine free of charge.

As noted earlier, up to 20% of the attitudes from the local people were positive towards the conservation of the forest because of the benefits got such as enjoying the scenic beauty and nature in all, employment where some locals are recruited as forest guards, public relations officers the ability to collect medicine and food from the forest, education lessons conducted on the forest leaving the forest as a tourist attraction and modification of climate that the local people believe in more than conservation reserve.

But the negative attitudes to the forest reserve still prevail among some local people mainly those who have not yet benefited from ecotourism. These attitudes are result of mainly restricted access to the forest product and traversing through the park, crop raiding with very little or no compensation and inflationary pressure on the local economy. However inflation affects those who do not produce for the sell because those who produce for sale are happy with increase in price for their produce.

Up to 40% of the respondents do not support the conservation of Budongo forest reserve as shown in table 2, more so , the communities around the forest reserve has to do anything, they also desired to have full authority over the whole forest so as to do anything they want to it. However the fore department has controlled them from having such authority that would even in the destruction of the forest sand these has reduced their willingness to conserve the forest as they assess and see themselves as cheated and not considered in issues concerning the forest reserve.

#### **4.2 The importance of community participation in the conservation of ecotourism**

The community participation can be said to be an involvement of people in a community in projects to solve their own problems. People should be given the opportunities to participate in

projects that affect their lives. This is held to be a basic human right and fundamental principle of democracy. Participation in particular can be viewed as having the capacity to bring about positive change towards everyone has come to believe in and support. Participation in Budongo forest reserve has been viewed as a process that leads to empowerment by the forest management.

Therefore in Budongo forest reserve community participation in the conservation of ecotourism has been of great importance as it was reported in the field and the importance of community participation was found out to be the following.

In the forest reserve, it was found out that community participation readdresses the inequalities by helping to retain and distribute the benefits of local activities within the community and hence provide new opportunities for development. Therefore the management of Budongo forest saw it of great importance to involve the local communities so as to re- address the inequalities.

Communities around Budongo forest reserve are much likely to have molodge about their localities in which they live and can therefore make a positive contribution towards the knowledge based on which resource utilization plans could be formulated.

The involvement and participation of local communities in planning and implementing of the Ecotourism project should be encouraged to promote positive attitude and hence of success of conservation through ecotourism projects.

It was also found out that community participation mostly in resource management for example the conservation of ecotourism of Budongo forest to be an opportunity to better the local peoples' lives and the whole community at large.

Since most the ecotourism destinations in most cases have failed, the management of Budongo forest reserve thought it wise to involve the local communities so as to be able to solve or use it as a strategy for conflict management in the forest reserve.

#### **4.3 The negative impacts of the local community participation in ecotourism project in Budongo forest reserve**

Amidst the importance of the local people in the participation in ecotourism project, there are some problems which the communities inflict on the project activity in Budongo forest reserve, these were found out to be;

Timber extraction; though the forest is rejuvenating and young trees species covering the gaps where the big trees were extracted, there is still illegal extraction of timber by local though its on

a small scale due to fear of being arrested by the forest authorities. The major types of trees extracted includes mahogany, mvule for timber ficusiatasonsis tree for backcloth making and antianstoxicana for logs, however the forest department is down to introduction of patrol services and forest rangers.

Problem of animal to the site was another impact that was cited out by the fore authority. They said that most community members rare animals like goats, pigs and cattle and as a result of careless grazing and tenting of these animals they encroach the forest area hence making it dirty with their dung and eating of the forest beautiful vegetation. Sometimes this leads to conflicts because it's repeated time and again.

Illegal hunting and pit sawing where they still go on in the forest , this have reduced on their numbers hence yet they are among the tourist attraction features in Budongo forest reserve. Pit sawing as an illegal activity takes place deep in the forest the process creates a lot of noise for tourists who are in the forest.

Disturbances by children on visitors , when the local communities are allowed to participate in the conservation their children will always be around and when the visitors come to the site thus children become excited in that they begin asking for money, pens, books and edibles from the visitors and tourists. This in actual sense irritates the visitors and secondly sets a bad impression about the destination area when the tourists go back to their homes of origin. This problem if not dealt with can seriously hinder the visitors from enjoying the causes of visits.

Apart from the problems that the local communities inflict on ecotourism project, there are other negative impacts that are faced by ecotourism which are not linked to the community participation as they were reported by the forest management, these are;

Noise the ecotourism center is located near Congo road where the moving vehicles cause a lot of noise to the site more especially heavy trucks which move slowly yet there noise disrupt with the visitors activities like resting and at the same time scares away animals like monkeys, birds bush pigs and can hardly be seen by visitors unless they take nature walk right deep in the forest to minimize on the problem of the noise from the main road as it was reported by the officials.

Off-truck driving by tourists and visitors themselves. This is due to lack of proper direction by signposts which have grown old and hence the off-truck drives have led to loss of vegetation and now bare land which facilitate soil erosion. To control this a plan to set up new sign posts and strict is being put in place and fine for those visitors and tourists who do not follow the rules of



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off truck driving as it was reported by Mr. Charles the forest official.

Lack of funds to improve on the ecotourism site because of few facilities. As a result of this only few workers are employed in this forest for ecotourism site because of the few facilities and poor qualities for example the Bandas are old and need to be replaced. Lack of water during dry season.

Littering of forest site with rubbish like rubbish polythene papers by visitors.

These are dangerous to the lives of animals especially the polythene papers which kill the animals if they eat them. The litters around the site are also as a result of poor state of rubbish bins most of them have been destroyed by termites because they are wooden as it was seen by the research.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENTATIONS

#### 5.1 Conclusion

Although Budongo forest reserve is found in a remote area, it provides a chance for the tourists to travel and observe what is offered in the North western part of Uganda. Tourists would enjoy travel to scheduled area where they can find peace with nature and Budongo forest reserve has the potential of fulfilling this desire.

From the research carried out, it was noted that the introduction of ecotourism in Budongo forest reserve has to a great extent been successful. This has been noted mainly when it came to local peoples support for nature conservation and local people's attitudes towards ecotourism development in Budongo. Over 80% of those who were evicted from the park now appreciate the existence of ecotourism development in the park.

Local people who have benefited or are benefiting from ecotourism project either individually or communally show a positive attitude towards ecotourism and conservation. Although the economic benefits are not much as expected by the local people, they see ecotourism now as a means of promoting economic developments.

Direct revenue to the local people is mainly through the sale of local [produce to the tourists and markets around plus employment. Indirect revenue on the other hand it does inform of subsidies to schools, health units and the various project developed in the area. In addition there is increase awareness security restraining of animals from attacking people around like snakes.

Cater 1994 notes that; " Ecotourism can generate income from local community, promote understanding between different cultures and provide a range of options for an enjoyable educational and challenging experience for both nationals and foreign tourists. In addition, ecotourism helps to educate the local population on matters of health , education energy use business and environmental conservation, and provides a financially incentive to project and conserve a globally significant natural and cultural resources.

## 5.2 Recommendations

- To improve interpersonal relationship amongst all stake holders in Ecotourism, there is need to ensure participatory mechanism in the mutilation and implementation stages.
- There is needs to promote Community Based Organisations (CBOs) and Non Govermental Organisations (NGOs) with the major objective of creating a positive attitude towards conservation and socio – economic development through Ecotourism.
- Since positive attitude towards ecotourism is related to the economic benefits the government should ensure that a larger percent that is to say 70% of revenue generated from ecotourism goes to the local countries.
- To eliminate the negative beliefs and actions for example poaching, cutting of trees. The government and other stakeholders should promote awareness on the importance of Ecotourism in the region.
- Since attitude of local are largely rental disposition, depending on the environment a well planned awareness campaign should be launched in and around the forest.
- There should be more awareness campaigns about conservation and the benefits of ecotourism. The local communities need to be educated, mobilized and involved in the conservation activities in the area. The management of the protected area who will in turn sensitize their counterparts should sensitize the group of the local communities about the potential ecotourism activities and its importance.
- Ecotourism is new in Uganda; attitude development towards participating in ecotourism activities seems to be slow. Therefore the government and local authorities should reinvest more revenue generated by ecotourism in pro-poor community project through programmes such as poverty eradication action plans.
- Further studies are required to identify and establish more potential ecotourism action.
- There is need for more cooperation amongst local communities, Uganda wild authority (UWA) to promote the involvement of the local communities.
- There is need to put up a policy in place to address and control population growth so as to pave way for economic recovery, reduce landless and poverty in the area. This should be accompanied with clearly defined policies to address survival and diversified development needs of the local communities given that landless and poverty circumstances make people negatively view the resources of ecotourism. Even with the

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family planning conservation program will be a success only if the priority needs of the local communities are addressed.

- The local communities should be encouraged to participate more in tourism related activities. They should also be encouraged to engage in self-help group projects that are environmentally friendly for instance vegetable growing and more beekeeping.
- Park management should allow controlled harvesting of forest products not commonly or easily found elsewhere in the area. This can be on the basis of sound science and deliberate precautionary policies especially taking into account the stock of resources at hand, the level of need, the gestation period between an act and its consequences. This will help to avoid irreparable damage and resource over exploitation that undermines self sufficiency and reduces future options used for ecosystem people may be allowed medicinal herbs and other traditional and cultural utilities that occur within park under sustainable arrangements.

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## APPENDICES

### APPENDIX I

#### QUESTIONNAIRE TO THE LOCAL COUNCIL (LC)

Dear respondent,

This is an academic questionnaire designed to gather information on the topics,

*“The attitudes of the local communities towards the conservation through ecotourism in budongo forest reserve”*

You are kindly requested to fill in the blank space provided and tick the correct answer as shown to the best of your knowledge. All information will be for research purposes only and will be treated with confidentiality.

Your co-operation will be highly appreciated.

**TICK ( ) WHERE APPROPRIATE**

1. Name of respondent.....

2. Sex

(a) Male  (b) Female

3. How old are you?

(a) 16-25  (b) 26-45

(c) 46-60  (d) 60 and above

4. What is your marital status? (Use where applicable)

(a) Single  (b) Married

(c) Widow  (d) Divorced

5. What is your occupation?

(a) Hunter  (b) Business person

(c) Civil servant

(d) Other (specify).....

6. Level of Education

(a) Primary  (b) Secondary

(c) Tertiary

(d) Other (specify).....

7) What is your opinion about the ecotourism in Budongo forest reserve?

.....  
.....

8) Do you think the conservation of Budongo ecotourism is of great importance to you community? If yes or No. what is your comment?

.....  
.....

9) What strategies have you put forward to enhance your community participation in the ecotourism conservation of this forest?

.....  
.....



10) What economic activities are carried out around Budongo forest reserve?

.....  
.....

11) What challenges do you face in implementing programmes concerning Budongo forest reserve in your community?

.....  
.....

12) What is the attitude of the local community towards the conservation of the Budongo forest reserve through ecotourism?

.....  
.....

13) What are the impacts of the Budongo forest reserve on the community?

Please clarify the negative and the positive impacts.

.....  
.....

APPENDIX II

QUESTIONNAIRE TO THE LOCAL COMMUNITIES

Dear respondent,

This is an academic questionnaire designed to gather information on the topics,

*“The attitudes of the local communities towards the conservation through ecotourism in budongo forest reserve”*

You are kindly requested to fill in the blank space provided and tick the correct answer as shown to the best of your knowledge. All information will be for research purposes only and will be treated with confidentiality.

Your co-operation will be highly appreciated.

**TICK ( ) WHERE APPROPRIATE**

1. Name of respondent.....

2. Sex  (a) Male  (b) Female

3. How old are you?  
(a) 16-25  (b) 26-45

(c) 46-60  (d) 60 and above

4. What is your marital status? (Use      where applicable)

(a) Single            (b) Married     

(c) Widow            (d) Divorced     

5. What is your occupation?

(a) Hunter            (b) Business person     

(c) Civil servant

(d) Other (specify).....

6. Level of Education

(a) Primary            (b) Secondary     

(c) Tertiary     

(d) Other (specify).....

7. What is it all about in your opinion?

.....  
.....

8. Should Budongo forest be conserved?

(a) Yes            (b) No     

9. Do you know the activities carried out through the ecotourism at Budongo forest reserve?

(b) If Yes,

what are the activities?

.....  
.....

(c) If No

Give reason

.....  
.....

10. Are you happy with the ecotourism activities?

(a) Yes  (b) No

11 What are your opinions that affect the attitudes of local communities towards the conservation of Budongo forest reserve through ecotourism?

.....  
.....

12. What is your opinion for improving conservation of Budongo forest through ecotourism?

.....  
.....

13. In what ways has the community benefited from it?

.....  
.....

14. In what ways has it helped you as an individual?

.....  
.....

15. Do you have any complain about how ecotourism does its work?

(a) Yes  (b) No

If yes, what is it?

.....  
.....

16. In what ways does the local communities involve in the conservation of the forest reserve?

.....  
.....

17. Suggest strategies that can be put forward to enhance your participation in the ecotourism conservation of this forest.

.....  
.....

18. What are your attitudes towards conservation development in this forest?

.....  
.....

19. Is there any advice or personal view which you would like me to tell them?

(a) Yes  (b) No

If yes, what is it?

.....  
.....

APPENDIX III

QUESTIONNAIRE TO FOREST RESERVE OFFICIALS

Dear respondent,

This is an academic questionnaire designed to gather information on the topic,

*“The attitudes of the local communities towards the conservation through ecotourism in budongo forest reserve.”*

You are kindly requested to fill in the blank spaces provided and tick the correct answer as shown to the best of your knowledge. All information will be for research purposes only and will not be used without your permission. Your co-operation will be highly appreciated.

1. Name of the respondent

.....

2. Post held by the respondent

.....

3. Are there any funding organizations standing behind this project?

.....  
.....

4. What is the duty of each stakeholder?

.....  
.....

5. What are the attitudes of the local communities towards this project?

.....  
.....

6. What the various ways in which the local communities are involved in the conservation?

.....  
.....

7. What problems do you face in enhancing the local communities to participate in the conservation?

.....  
.....

8. Do you have strategies formulated to enhance the local communities to participate in the conservation of the forest?

.....  
.....

9. List any other problems faced by ecotourism project a part the local communities?

.....  
.....

10. What solutions have been put forward to solve them?

.....  
.....

11. Is the local community participation in ecotourism conservation of great importance or not?

.....  
.....