

ITFC's impacts since 2009

ITFC's influences and impacts since the current MacArthur grant began.

Information, input, services	Means	Impact or influence on conservation	Year
ITFC is in the team developing a new General Management Plan for BMCA	ITFC staff Robert Bitariho is participating in all the discussions and decision processes	The General Management Plan for BMCA is the basis for park management for the next 10 years. The GMP includes plans for resource use access, problem animal management, revenue sharing, and priorities for research and monitoring, all of which have been influenced by ITFC	2012
ITFC seeks sources of regular and sustainable funding for students and research	Working with Mbarara University of Science and Technology on improved mutual support and role vis-à-vis ITFC	A plan to achieved more sustainable funding for ITFC researchers and students, thus capacity building for science based conservation management. The VC and deputy VC are supportive of increased funding from MUST to ITFC and the plan is being implemented.	2011-12
ITFC wrote proposal for regular and sustainable funding for students and research from BMCT	Lobbying the Trust administration	The Trust has been reminded of its role to support research around BMCA must be better guaranteed, to ensure for science based conservation management	2011-12
ITFC developing attitude study to understand motivation for illegal activities	Project proposal with IIED.	Project accepted for funding (Darwin Award). Results will inform conservation managers	2011, study to start in mid 2012
ITFC to implement study of Batwa Cultural Values	Project proposal with FFI.	Project accepted for funding (Darwin Award). Results will inform conservation managers. Targets include increased role for Batwa in PA management.	2011, study to start in mid 2012
ITFC has been piloting studies of Batwa concerns and issues	Pilot activities funded under MacArthur	A trial of approaches and possibilities. Has proved a useful to build a more nuanced statement of the aspirations of the Batwa that can now guide goals and the identification of opportunities for better integration.	Started 2011
ITFC supported UOBDU, Batwa organization, in 3D mapping of Bwindi	Participation in mapping process, observing and recording stories. Report on the process	Engagement of various organizations. A positive step in building a more constructive dialogue between the Batwa and others.	2011
ITFC provided GPS and map reading (refresher) training for rangers of BMCA	2-day training sessions of rangers in Ruhija and Nteboko respectively. Hands-on exercises	UWA rangers better able to collect quality GPS data Trails and boundaries were checked and corrected where necessary, coordinates for new features were included in the GIS of Bwindi and Mgahinga and (draft) maps given to UWA	2011
REDD "white paper" produced and shared	2 ITFC consultants talked to diverse stakeholders about the potential for REDD projects in SW Uganda and published results	The paper was widely shared and discussed on the Uganda REDD e-mail group. A number of key concerns and needs highlighted to ensure that conservation and development outcomes can benefit from REDD+ in SW Uganda.	2011
ITFC set up the first African high altitude plots for monitoring changes in mountain vegetation and temperature	Two fieldwork campaigns to establish plots	6 Permanent plots for monitoring high altitude vegetation—the first in Africa- established on Mt Rwenzori and Mt Elgon. UWA staff trained in assessment methods. Visibility of Uganda increased due to global monitoring network	2011
ITFC supported Jonathan Moore with a new community development initiative around Lake Bunyonyi (built on a study to examined REDD+)	Discussions, images, GPS use	Increased tree cover in cultivated community land	2010-11
ITFC developed guidelines for improved implementation of Resource Use agreements	Wide survey of community attitudes, consultations with all stakeholders	ITFC influenced perceptions of local government and UWA with regard to resource use management. The meetings were planned to coincide with UWA's stakeholder consultations on the BMCA general management planning	Started in 2010. Guidelines 2012

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ITFC developed guidelines for improved uptake of HWC measures	Wide survey of community attitudes. Guidelines written and consulted with all stakeholders.	ITFC influenced perceptions of local government and UWA with regard to human wildlife-conflict interventions. The meetings were planned to coincide with UWA's stakeholder consultations on the BMCA general management planning	Started in 2010. Guidelines 2012
ITFC advised UWA on mature bamboo stem harvesting by communities in Mgahinga Gorilla NP. New agreements in process for 2012	ITFC designed a survey of the pilot plots set up by UWA, trained UWA staff in measuring impact, analysed the data and published the study.	UWA was advised that the harvesting of mature dead stems does not negatively influence the availability of shoots. However, UWA was advised to vary the locations for harvesting and supervise the quantities harvested, as the removal of bamboo might in the long term result in decreasing availability of nutrients to the rhizome. Now the new resource use programme for MGNP has included dry bamboo harvest for local people basing on the results from ITFC study	Started in 2009, published in 2012
ITFC developed a proposal to join TEAM global network, in collaboration with UWA; weather data collection	New TEAM funding project in partnership with UWA (addresses an agreed UWA responsibility)	Automatic weather station established near Ruhija. This is in addition to and supports the manual weather data collection by rangers around the park. These baseline data help ensure that Bwindi is included in ongoing assessments of how environmental changes are influencing biodiversity in the wet tropics.	Ongoing; started in 2010
ITFC developed a proposal to join TEAM global network, in collaboration with UWA; vegetation monitoring	New TEAM funding project in partnership with UWA (addresses an agreed UWA responsibility)	Established 6 permanent vegetation plots spread throughout Bwindi. These will be assessed on a yearly basis. These plots help ensure that Bwindi is included in ongoing assessments of how environmental changes are influencing biodiversity in the wet tropics.	Ongoing; established and first recorded in 2010
ITFC developed a proposal to join TEAM global network, in collaboration with UWA; camera trapping	New TEAM funding project in partnership with UWA (addresses an agreed UWA responsibility)	A systematic camera trapping system was developed and set up in the lower and higher altitude section of BINP. The survey will be repeated on a yearly basis. These baseline data help ensure that Bwindi is included in ongoing assessments of how environmental changes are influencing biodiversity in the wet tropics. TEAM has increased visibility of UWA-Bwindi and ITFC	Ongoing; started in 2010
ITFC hosted the Transboundary Secretariat's meeting on monitoring and research.	Focused meeting with core group from Rwanda, DRC and Uganda	The meeting included protected area managers and researchers from Uganda, DRC and Rwanda and focused on sharing information about ongoing monitoring activities, creating an overview of available data and setting priorities for the future. The meeting agreed that attempts to harmonize methods and share data would be explored. Areas with poor data coverage were highlighted as needed attention.	24 to 26 June 2009
Expert workshop in Kigali on <i>Sericostachys</i>	Three ITFC staff attended the meeting and contributed to the discussions. A publication in <i>Oryx</i> shares the conclusions. Scholte, P. et al. (2010). Reaching consensus: impact of the liana <i>Sericostachys scandens</i> on forest dynamics in Nyungwe National Park, Rwanda. <i>Oryx</i> , 44(3), 325–326	The meeting addressed the threat posed by <i>Sericostachys</i> a climber which grows exuberantly in Rwanda's Nyungwe forest and other high altitude Albertine Rift forests (including Bwindi) and is believed by some to block regeneration of forest. The meeting. The meeting was successful in refuting some significant misconceptions regarding the climber and the Bwindi experiences were central to this. A publication in <i>Oryx</i> was developed by selected participants including two ITFC staff. It was agreed that a series of management trials would be established, rather than planning large scale control.	2009

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9 Ugandan Masters' students were supported for their fieldwork year, through our scholarship program made possible by MacArthur grant. Research questions identified through consultation with local conservation managers and various academic experts			
		*Fredrick Ssali (MUST, Biology): "The impact of elephants on trees in Bwindi Impenetrable National Park, south western Uganda". Changes in the abundance and feeding behavior of these animals are considered fundamental to the vegetation conditions within the park. The study focused on what these relationships are and what is the long-term outlook with or without these animals?	<i>Graduated, now staff at ITFC</i>
		*Geoffrey Malinga (Makerere, MUIENR): "Causes and implications of altitudinal zonation on bird species, a case of Bwindi Impenetrable National Park". As the landscape becomes warmer over the next century we might predict that species limited to the highest altitude areas of the forest will be increasingly reduced in habitat extent. But the details of these scenarios must be informed by better knowledge of how species are distributed by altitude and what factors determine the lower-altitude range limit.	<i>Completed and now enrolled for PhD.</i>
		*Ronald Twongyirwe (Makerere, MUIENR): "Impact of land use change on carbon stocks, total nitrogen and fluxes in adjacent land use types around Bwindi Impenetrable Forest in South Western Uganda". Much effort has been expended on studying the proportion of carbon stocks in above ground biomass. Much less is known of soil carbon stocks that are often several times greater than the above ground biomass. This study provided some basic figures on these parameters in relation to land-use history and location.	<i>Graduated, now enrolled for DPhil at Cambridge University.</i>
		*David Kissa (Makerere, MUIENR): "Abundance, distribution and utilization of <i>Myrianthus holstii</i> , in Bwindi Impenetrable National Park". <i>Myrianthus holstii</i> is a species that produces fruit which is in demand by local people – but due to its value for animals (including gorillas and chimpanzees) collection by people is currently prohibited. High levels of illegal harvest occur in some areas – though it is far from clear if this poses a genuine concern. This study provides a characterization of the status and ecology of the species. This will help inform future decisions regarding this species.	<i>Completed and awaiting graduation</i>
		*Lilian Twanza (Makerere, MUIENR): "The conservation value of matrix habitats around Bwindi Impenetrable National Park using bird species as indicators". This study examined the conservation value of remaining forest cover that lies outside the National Park. Such sites are increasingly scarce in the landscape but could be promoted by suitable policy and incentives.	<i>Completion delayed</i>
		*Moses Oluka (Makerere, MUIENR): "Understanding the process of emigration and land abandonment in and around Bwindi Impenetrable National park. The longer-term trends and implications". While most conservation concern has focused on immigration and increasing population densities, a range of population changing processes are actually taking place around Bwindi – but these remain poorly understood. This study tried to characterize the nature of these population processes.	<i>Completion delayed</i>
		* Emily Kamusiime (Makerere, FNC): Diversity, distribution and effects of hemi-parasitic plants in the canopy of Bwindi Impenetrable Forest	<i>Writing thesis</i>
		* Brian Baguma (Makerere, MUIENR): Invasive alien plant species in Semuliki Valley National Park	<i>Writing thesis</i>
		* Juventine Boaz Odoi (Makerere, FNC): Assessment of forest trees' resilience in elephant prone areas- A case of Rabongo forest patch-Murchison Falls National Park- Uganda	<i>Writing thesis</i>

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3 additional scholarships became available from USAID, through the WCS' WILDWest project.			
		Robert Sekisambu: Assessing amphibian populations of conservation significance around BINP and an assessment of the prevalence of Chytridiomycetes fungi among amphibians in BINP.	Writing thesis
		Hilary Agaba Kumanya: The role of baboons as potential carriers of Parasites across BINP boundary.	Writing thesis
		Patrick Mawanda: The role of rodents as potential carriers of parasites across BINP boundary. Patrick is currently collecting his data.	Writing thesis
Two PhD students are working with ITFC addressing issues of conservation relevance. Consultations with local partners and with academic supervisors			
		Robert Bitariho, senior research officer with ITFC, is well advanced on his PhD work addressing the evaluation of BINP's MUZ program	Ongoing, expected to complete in 2012
		Dennis Babaasa, former ITFC staff, remains affiliated to the institute and has developed a PhD proposal focusing on habitat mapping in BINP; he has completed a year of course work at the University of Massachusetts.	Field work still ongoing
ITFC welcomed 6 foreign students to Bwindi and supported their research projects in several ways. This involved discussions and collaboration with experts at foreign universities. These were produced and recommendations made			
	Dr. Patrick Meir of Edinburgh University	* Melissa Fedrigo, MSc in GIS at the University of Edinburgh. "Estimating Biomass in the Mountain Regions of BINP, Uganda, using Radar and Optical Remote Sensing". She tested an algorithm for biomass/carbon calculation from remote sensing, developed in level landscapes and found they do not apply for a rugged area as BINP.	
	Dr. Claire Cave of University College Dublin	* Ian Lacey, MSc World Heritage management at University College Dublin. "A study of land cover change in Bwindi Impenetrable National Park (BINP), Uganda using satellite imagery analysis". He assessed loss of tree cover outside the park and interviewed people about that.	
	Dr David Taylor of Trinity College Dublin	* Gayle McGlyn, PhD student Geography Trinity College Dublin. Studying historical environmental change based on pollen analysis of cores taken from Muhavura.	
	Dr Pieter Zuidema of Utrecht University	*Two students from Utrecht University, Suzanne Stas and Else Langbroek, helped analyze and evaluate the productivity of harvested NTFPs (three species) in Bwindi. They proposed a number of improvements in the data collection.	Graduated
	Dr Katherine Homewood of University College London	*Jade Jacobson from UCL evaluated the Amagara community project in Buhoma, assessing the conservation and development impacts.	Graduated

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Also, 12 volunteers and interns joined ITFC for periods varying from 2 to 12 months, assisting the institute with regular and special tasks	Experience and opportunities for further employment	<p>*Badru Mugerwa, Emmanuel Akampulira and Peter Kabano were initially (2008) taken on as volunteers helping with the MUZ program. Badru and Emanuel are now ITFC project staff, and Peter was employed by MPI, to work on the Mountain gorilla research program.</p> <p>* Leah Wangui Gichohi, a Kenyan botanist, helped update the taxonomy used in the ITFC herbarium to make it compatible with the recent literature.</p> <p>* Elias Tushabomwe spent his internship for the Nkumba University at ITFC, developing stories for the ethnobotanical garden plants</p> <p>*Emily Turinawe helped with data entry of several programs and assisted with computer training. She is now employed by MPI</p> <p>* Christopher Ngabirano worked as an intern on environmental education of local schools</p> <p>*Peter Ssekiranda joint ITFC as a volunteer, to assist Badru with all TEAM fieldwork</p> <p>*Joseph Ngubwagye volunteered on the MUZ program</p> <p>*Diane Mukundwa (BSc, University of Rwanda) is volunteering on the MUZ program</p> <p>*Donah Ndinawe (BSc Social sciences Makerere University) assists with phenology work and Batwa value surveys</p> <p>*Xiana Fab from Spain relabeled all specimen in the herbarium and created a database of it.</p>	<p>2008-2009</p> <p>2009</p> <p>2009</p> <p>2009</p> <p>2010</p> <p>2010</p> <p>2010</p> <p>2010-11</p> <p>2011</p> <p>2011</p> <p>2011</p>
The monitoring of resource offtake under the MUZ program was maintained. The MU agreements with six communities are being revised and renewed. New approaches are also being discussed with UWA and CARE.	Extensive field work in Bwindi. Consultations with other field work. Robert Bitariho is examining the effectiveness of current management strategies in the MUZ and seeking alternative models elsewhere in the region	The MUZ program is maintained and strengthened. Stakeholders (UWA and CARE) have come to ITFC to seek input and guidance on these processes. There is an in principle agreement that some new approaches will be piloted in at least one Parish in the next year	Ongoing
ITFC's visibility was greatly improved by renewing and expanding the website and joining the blogging network of Wildlifedirect.	Regular updates on ITFC's website, including announcements of vacancies and scholarship program. Blogging on Wildlifedirect: various ITFC staff raises day-to-day issues and stories.	ITFC is becoming better known and recognized by various interested blog readers. Many of the comments on the blog come from professionals and students interested in conservation topics. Some blogs raise difficult challenges for discussion and some prove controversial. Blogs are currently gaining a readership of 200-300 each.	Ongoing, since 2009
The smaller scale 2011 Information sharing workshop was held at ITFC and focused on students and their supervisors.	Scholarship students presented their preliminary findings to supervisors and park managers. Consultations with stakeholders	Discussions during this workshop focused on Recommendations from the review of Multiple Use and Human Wildlife Conflict	April 2011

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A well attended information sharing workshop was held in February 2010, in Lake Mburo National Park. The workshop theme: 'how to judge and measure conservation success and effectiveness'	Wide engagement with local, national and regional stakeholders. Rich and multifaceted discussion.	Sharing of research results and discussion of management implications. (See proceedings at ITFC.org.) UWA's Research and Monitoring plan includes outputs from the workshop (prioritized research questions)	Feb 2010
Max Planck Institute's research assistant, together with ITFC assistants has guided UWA in the habituation process of new mountain gorilla groups for tourism.	Partnership with UWA and MPI	More gorilla groups are available for tourism. This brings in more revenue for UWA (thus supporting national conservation) and increases the value of Bwindi to the country. At the same time these advances are being done with minimal disruption to the animals involved. Research efforts are being made to assess the nature of the behavioral changes associated with habituation. MPI assists UWA in individual recognition of gorillas, for improved monitoring.	Ongoing, since 2009
ITFC is on the Research and Monitoring working group of the Trans Boundary Secretariat and hosted a regional meeting in 2009.	Guidance for an international process. The governments of DRC, Rwanda and Uganda are signatories to this process.	A series of assessments and guidelines are being developed for management and monitoring across the region. Already efforts are being made to harmonize and share data and to identify where the key knowledge gaps occur.	Ongoing, since 2009
ITFC reviewed a report on 'global assessment of conservation and poverty link'; the ITFC led study of Conservation and Development success around Bwindi (2004) was one of the cases presented.	International processes. Brings attention to the region. Well received publication by IIED	Raises the problems and possible solutions at Bwindi to a global audience. Bwindi is seen as a case-study and site where improved conservation and livelihood outcomes are being sought. Publication of: Blomley T. et al. 2010. Development AND Gorillas? Assessing fifteen years of integrated conservation and development in south-western Uganda. Natural Resource Issues (23). IIED London	2010
ITFC facilitated a project funded by the Rare Finch Conservation Group	Day-to-day support and management of the project which used ITFC staff and logistics	This was an assessment of the distribution and status of the Crimson Wings (<i>Cryptospiza</i> spp.) in BINP, Echuya and Mgahinga. The aim is to develop a conservation plan for these taxa (especially the threatened Shelley's Crimson Wing).	2009-2010 (possible to continue)
ITFC worked with Makerere staff to develop a monitoring plan for the Rwenzori Mountains NP	This task was communicated to us. ITFC suggested to share the task with Makerere. A joint proposal made to UWA/WWF was accepted.	The consultancy document has been accepted by WWF/UWA. This plan will now form a basis for UWA/WWF activities in the Rwenzoris (though WWF funds are yet to be clarified).	2010
ITFC has hosted and facilitated a number of television crews to work in BINP	Television coverage will raise the international status of the region and bring attention to problems while perhaps increasing tourism revenues.	At least four crews have visited and worked closely with and consulted with staff and partners. The most valuable output is likely to be the three part BBC series which will gain international distribution.	Especially 2009, the International Year of the Gorilla
ITFC is introducing a range of new measures to improve forest-village hygiene and reduce likelihood of disease transmission between ITFC field staff and wild primates	This is collaboration with the Max Planck Institute. There was considerable consultation with experts on this topic asking for guidance.	ITFC field staff working with the mountain gorillas are now required to wash their boots between the park and the village, to change their clothes between home and forest and to be extra vigilant with respect to disease and related transmission risks.	From 2010 onwards

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ITFC contributed to IGCP's Physical Planning for Ecotourism in Ruhija project and advised the various consultants that visited the station.	Input to ToR, briefing of the consultants, and comment on various topics. Dissemination materials (posters and videos) will be shared locally.	Evaluation on the impacts of current (unplanned) physical developments in the region and their consequences. There is the potential that new infrastructure will be developed, or that some others may need to be adapted or destroyed. ITFC's contributions have largely related to waste and water. UWA has already asked helped in developing waste management practices (funding not yet secured).	Completed. Unclear what follow-up is planned
An evaluation of ITFC's long term ecological monitoring program (water, MUZ, weather, fire) is ongoing	Wide consultation and technical review. An advisory report is expected shortly, which will be guiding future monitoring activities	The long term data that we believe is going to be of greatest value and significance in the future is being judged and responded to. These methods and data will be available to other stakeholders in the wider region who look to ITFC for guidance.	Completed
Fire monitoring and planning	Consultation (and corrections!)	The US Forest Service International Program consulted ITFC reports and advice while preparing a transboundary fire management plan for the Greater Virunga Landscape. The Fire management plan should be out before October 2010. It is intended that this will be a basis of future planning and transboundary fire management. ITFC guided some major corrections.	Planned October 2010
ITFC regularly advises the Ugandan Forest Carbon Working group	DS was invited by the World Bank to join the e-discussion group. This includes all the key Ugandan actors in this process.	ITFC has taken the approach of sharing technical information and correcting errors when these arise. Feedback by group members suggests that this technical guidance is valued. These efforts ensure realism and better informed discussions. The group remains in a consultation phase so no specific decisions have yet been made (though some editorial comments and corrections have been adopted).	Since 2010
Publications in peer reviewed literature See separate list	Publications in the academic literature give a quality assurance of the research work itself and provide a means to share knowledge with the wider research community	ITFC and its collaborators have continued to publish in the peer reviewed literature and to share these publications widely. Forty four (44) such publications were achieved between 2008 and the end of 2009. These include some high impact articles. A number of significant publications are in press. These include: chapters in Andy Plumtre's edited book on trends in key protected areas in the AR (chapter on BINP is led by ITFC). A key publication on ICDPs. A review of plant resource assessment and control is in press in AJE.	2008-present