

Joint Forest Management Agreements for West Kilombero Forest Reserve in the Udzungwa Mountains

Based on an interview with John Massao, District Catchment Forest Officer and Coordinator for Udzungwa Mountains Forest Management Project



Mr. Massao

Since 1999, MEMA (Matumizi Endelevu ya Misituy ya Asili) projects in Iringa District has been promoting Participatory Forest Management (PFM) at various sites in Iringa District. The project functions through the Iringa District Natural Resources Office and has been financed by DANIDA through MEMA projects. The Udzungwa Mountains Forest Management (UMFM) is one of the MEMA projects. UMFM is supporting PFM in the New Dabaga/Ulongambi and West Kilombero Scarp

- stakeholders
- Developing participatory village land use plans
 - Forest surveillance and protection
 - Participatory base line surveys
 - Formation of Economic groups in the village
 - Water source Management
 - Agroforestry systems
 - Modern Fish farming and beekeeping
 - Tree nursery and Woodlot management
 - Formulation of Biodiversity Research Advisory Group (BRAG)
 - Project Monitoring and Evaluation System.
 - Tourism Development Framework.
 - Gender Involvement in the management of natural resources etc.

The management plans allow for limited harvesting of forest products within the reserve that include:

- Firewood
- Medicinal plants
- Mushroom
- Fruits and vegetables
- Honey and wax
- Tourism values
- Thatching material etc

Based on the management objectives of this forest no harvesting of wood products is allowed other than firewood. All allowed products are taken from the forest through permits issued by the Village Natural Resources Committees which are directly under the village government. Funds raised from the sale of products, tourism, research and visitors are divided between paying for the management of the forest and for village development activities.

During 2002 the Village governments through their VNRCs finalised their plan and submitted it to the Forestry and Beekeeping Division. The agreement was signed on June 19th 2002 by the Villages, District and Forestry and Beekeeping Division.

The West Kilombero Scarp Forest Reserve adjoins the Udzungwa Mountains National Park which is managed by TANAPA. Although there have been discussions regarding the extension of the National Park to include a part of the West Kilombero Scarp FR at Ndundulu and Nyumbanitu the agreement and the management plan appear to reflect a commitment from the government to manage the area according to the National Forest Policy (1998) through community involvement.

Resources Office and has been financed by DANIDA through MEMA projects. The Udzungwa Mountains Forest Management (UMFM) is one of the MEMA projects. UMFM is supporting PFM in the New Dabaga/Ulongambi and West Kilombero Scarp

A key focus for the project has been on capacity building for the Village Natural Resources Committees and assisting them to develop a management plan for the joint management area of the WKSFR. The area under PFM is determined by the evergreen forest on the peaks of Ndundulu and Nyumbanitu as part of WKSFR. It was agreed in the management plans that the adjacent communities would be involved in managing the peaks which constitute 5,000ha of the 104,000ha of the whole forest reserve.



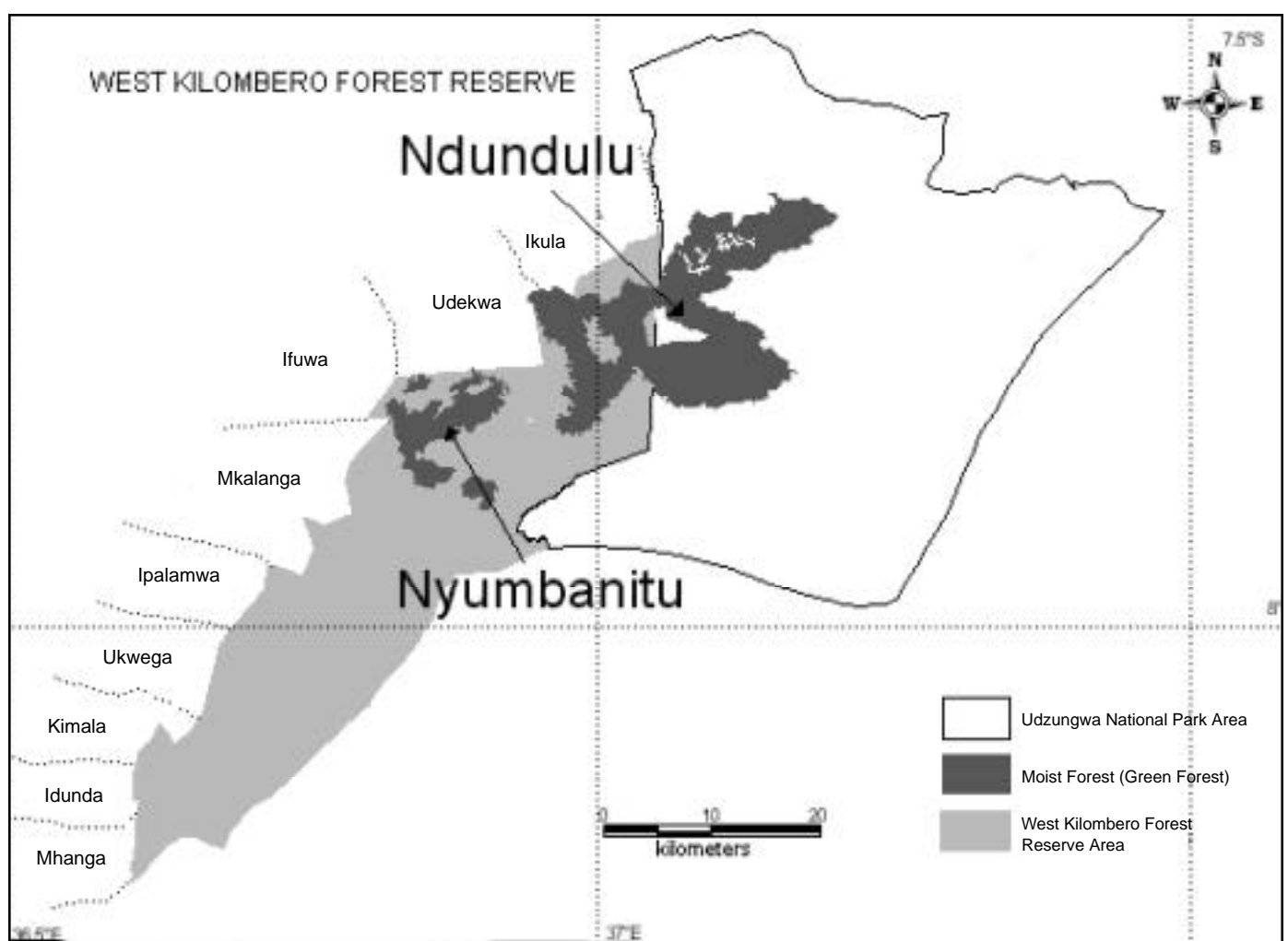
Natural Resources Committee in WKSFR

Forest Reserve (WKSFR). The Udzungwa Mountains form part of the Eastern Arc Mountain range and are of economic, social and environmental importance. The WKSFR provide areas of local cultural importance, constituting critical watersheds for Tanzania's hydro-electric power generation and are internationally recognized as areas of high biodiversity and endemism. The Forest Reserve is home to a number of species endemic to the Udzungwa Mountains including the Sanje mangabey, the Iringa red colobus, the rufous winged sunbird and the Udzungwa Partridge.

In WKSFR the project is working with two communities, the villages of Udekwa and Ifuwa. The project aimed to improve the management of the reserve by empowering the communities through Joint Forest Management approach.

MEMA has been supporting various activities related to forest management with these communities. These have included:

- Training (long and short courses), awareness raising including workshops, seminars, meetings and study tours to various



MAP OF WEST KILOMBERO SCARP FOREST RESERVE AND ADJACENT VILLAGES