

Name of Protected Area: Varirata National Park

Part 1: Basic information about the protected area

Table 1. Protected area information

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| Name, organisation and contact details for person(s) responsible for completing this form - Person 1: Name, Organisation, Address, Email, Phone | Greg Peterson, SPREP/Protected Area Solutions, 283 Madill Road, Tandur, Q4570, Australia, gregpeterson53@hotmail.com; 0414300955 |
| Person 2: Name, Organisation, Address, Email, Phone | Ann Peterson, SPREP/Protected Area Solutions, 283 Madill Road, Tandur, Q4570, Australia, a.peterson@uq.edu.au, 0414300955 |
| Today's Date | 22/6/2016 |
| Name (or names) of protected area | Varirata National Park |
| Size of protected area (ha) | 1,063 |
| PNG Code or number | |
| World Database of Protected Areas site code (these codes can be found on www.unep-wcmc.org/wdpa/) | 839 |
| What level or kind of protected area is it? (National Park, Wildlife Management Area, Sanctuary, Reserve, Locally Managed Marine Area etc) | National Park |
| IUCN Category | |
| International protected area? e.g. World Heritage or Ramsar? | |
| Country | Papua New Guinea |
| Province/s | Central |
| District/s | Koiari-Hiri |
| Local level governments | Koiari |
| Ward/s | 5 |
| Nearest big town | Port Moresby City |
| Location of protected area (brief description) | The park is located about 25 kms east of Port Moresby in the Sogeri Plateau, south of the Laloki River. The park overlooks the city and the coast. It is about half way between the city and the start of the Kokoda Track (approx. 45 minutes by car). It is mainly forested mountains (to 833m), with some savanna woodland and grassland. |
| Map references | |
| When was the protected area gazetted or formally established? | 18/12/1969 |
| Reference for gazettal or Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) | |
| Who owns the protected area? please enter Government Private Community/ customary landowners, private, Other (name) and include Clan name(s) | State land (CEPA) |

| | |
|---|--|
| Number of households living in the protected area | 0 |
| Population size within the protected area | 0 |
| Who manages the protected area? (e.g. please enter government, customary landowners [add clan names] management committee [how many and what gender]) | CEPA |
| Total number of staff (this means anyone working on the protected area in paid jobs – whether NGOs, community, rangers or customary landowners) | 2 |
| <i>Temporary paid workers</i> | 1 |
| <i>Permanent paid workers</i> | 1 (One staff member is based at Varirata National Park and is supervised by a CEPA staff member from CEPA headquarters in Port Moresby). |
| Annual budget (US\$) – excluding staff salary costs | US\$30,000 (K72000) |
| Operational (recurrent) funds | 0 |
| Project or special funds | 0 |
| Reason for park establishment | To protect important scenery and biodiversity. |
| What are the main values for which the area is designated (Fill this out after data sheet 2) | Recreation, bird watching, protecting cultural, education and scientific values. |
| List the primary protected area management objectives (add lines if needed after the most important objectives): <i>Management objective 1</i> | Protection of biodiversity |
| <i>Management objective 2</i> | Protection of cultural values |
| <i>Management objective 3</i> | Foster and promote tourism |
| Number of people involved in answering the assessment questions | 11 |
| Name/organisation/contact details of people participating the assessment (<i>Please do not insert return/enter or dot points</i>) | <i>Omoro Asi</i> , Depo Village, Narime Clan, Former Chairman, 73216996; <i>Gabe Asi</i> , (as above); <i>Arron Warite</i> , Nadeka Clan, Chairman, Gagibevai Village, PO Box 3935, Boroko, NCD, 73208631; <i>Kala Meia</i> , Nagere Village, Omani Clan, Chairman, 71272404; <i>Nuxsie Nuana-Momoa</i> , Nadeka Clan, 70594455; <i>Grace Meia</i> , Omani Clan, 72685604; <i>Kelly Womara</i> , Ianari Clan, Chairman, 73120444; <i>Kisea Tiube</i> , CEPA, Varirata National Park, Ranger, CEPA, Ianari Clan, 76658565; <i>Benside Thomas</i> , CEPA; <i>James Sabi</i> , CEPA; <i>Fredrick Ohmana</i> , CEPA. |
| Customary landowners/other community; CEPA, Other national government agency; Provincial govt; local level govt; Protected area staff (anyone working on the protected area in paid jobs; NGO; Donors; External experts; Others | Customary landowners; CEPA. |
| Please note if assessment was carried out in association with a particular project, on behalf of an organisation or donor. | SPREP through the PNG Protected Area Assessment Project, which is a component of the GEF Community-based Forest and Coastal Conservation and Resource Management Project in PNG. |

Part 2: What makes this protected area special and important?

The former Warirata National Park was dedicated in 1963 under a Board of Trustees. In 1966 the park was re-gazetted under the *Lands Ordinance 1962-1967* for the purpose of a National Park and Flora and Fauna Reserve. On 18 December 1969 the park name was changed to Varirata National Park and was re-dedicated. The park has high value due to its closeness to Port Moresby and is used by residents of the city and other tourists. It is popular for walking and hiking, picnicking and for the park has panoramic views over from the escarpment to the surrounding hills, coastline and city of Port Moresby. There is a joint five year CEPA and Jika project (2015-2020) to monitor and assess the biodiversity values of the park and to improve the facilities of the park. The park has important biodiversity values (e.g. for birds [cassowary, megapode, parrots, butterflies and poisonous birds], reptiles, bandicoots, and poisonous snakes and this is the basis for its importance for education and scientific research. It is also has high cultural value, in relation to the tree houses and sacred/secret sites and has important recreational values. There are five main walking tracks that are well signposted, several lookout points, and several recreational facilities (e.g. picnic shelters, BBQ sites, and camping sites). The road access is very good, with bitumen roads.

Table 2. Key values of the protected area

| No. | Key values | Brief description | Note if endangered species or ecosystem (IUCN) |
|-----|-----------------------------------|--|--|
| 1 | Biodiversity | Important for birds e.g. cassowary (2 species), parrots, kingfishers, birds of paradise (e.g. Raggiana), bower birds, white cockatoos, pitohui (<i>pitohudichrous</i>), megapodes; butterflies; wallabies; all four deadly PNG snakes are found in the WMA (i.e. black, taipan, diamond head, death adder); spotted cuscus; and bandicoots. It contains important vegetation (tropical rain forest, savannah woodland, grassland and gallery forest), with a diversity of plants including orchids, ferns, bamboo and lawyer cane. | |
| 2 | Rare animals | The giant bandicoot has not been seen for some time. The poisonous bird, the hooded pitohui (<i>pitohudichrous</i>) – when the bird is squeezed it exudes a poison (researched by Dr Jack Dumbacher, Smithsonian Institution). The bird is not eaten by the local people as it is taboo. | |
| 3 | Mountains, scenery and recreation | Provides scenic lookouts to the coastline, mountains and Port Moresby. There are well-maintained walking tracks through the mountains and several picnic shelters and BBQ facilities and a camping area. There was a guest facility, but this is not operational. | |
| 4 | Tree houses/culture | Important customary/traditional structures in our society that need to be protected. | |
| 5 | Education and research | There is a current CEPA-Jika project with funding directed to Varirata e.g. cameras to monitor movement of people and animals, biodiversity assessment, track improvement and management. UPNG students also undertake research in the area, and this supports their educational studies. Local schools and scout groups also use the park. | |

Table 3. Checklist of benefits

Not important 0; Important 1; Very important 2; Don't know DK

| How important is the protected area for each of the listed values/benefits? | Score (0,1,2, DK) | Comment |
|---|-------------------|--|
| 1. Biodiversity – the presence of many different kinds of plants, animals and ecosystems | 2 | Many different kinds of plants and animals (e.g. trees, orchids, cassowary [2 species] and other birds, snakes |
| 2. Presence of rare, threatened, or endangered species (plants and animals) | 2 | The pitohui is a rare bird. It is important to look after the species in the park so that they don't disappear. We need to make sure that we don't overhunt birds. The long-beaked echidna has disappeared from the park. |
| 3. Ecosystems (e.g. wetlands, grasslands, coral reefs etc) that are rare because they have been cleared or destroyed in other areas | 2 | Forest with eucalypt species, ferns, orchids and related wildlife, and grassland ecosystems. |
| 4. Protecting clean, fresh water | 2 | Water from the park is used for Port Moresby's water supply and for consumption by customary landowners who live on the boundaries of the park. |
| 5. Sustaining important species in big enough numbers that they are able to survive here | 2 | The park is large enough to support cassowary and other bird species. |
| 6. Providing a source of employment for local communities now | 2 | The park currently employs some people e.g. from the Jika project (small contract work) and one permanent ranger lives on the park and is employed by CEPA. |
| 7. Providing resources for local subsistence (food, building materials, medicines etc.) | 1 | Gardens are outside the park. Trees in the park are not cut for housing, but some plants are used for medicine. However, outsiders illegally enter the park and take resources e.g. timber and hunt wildlife. |
| 8. Providing community development opportunities through sustainable resource use | 1 | |
| 9. Religious or spiritual significance (e.g. tambu places) | 2 | There are some special spirit places e.g. near the lake. |
| 10. Plant species of high social, cultural, or economic importance | 2 | Some plants are used for traditional ceremonies and for medicines. |
| 11. Animal species of high social, cultural, or economic importance | 2 | Feathers are important for ceremonial purposes. |
| 12. Attractive scenery | 2 | The park has good structure, with trees, shrubs and ground cover and there are several walking tracks through the forest. There are several scenic lookouts from the mountain top and escarpment with views to the surrounding mountains, cliffs, the city and coast. |
| 13. Tourism now | 2 | Tourism brings in revenue to CEPA. People come for sightseeing and also birdwatching and walking. There are about 100 people each month – some camp and some are day visitors/ picnickers. Anyone can enter and walk through the park. The gate fee or non-national/non-citizens is K5 and for nationals K2 per person per day. There is a boom gate and station at the entry, although it is not operational at the moment due to limited staffing. |
| 14. Potential value for tourism in the future | 2 | There is a Memorandum of Understanding between CEPA, Jika, Tourism Authority, Koiari LLG, and UPNG. Part of the project is about tapping into developing a tourism package (e.g. to develop a bird watching program, which used to be important, and will involve the customary landowners who will have a role in performing traditional dance, selling artifacts et). The traditional tree houses are also important in the tourism package. |
| 15. Educational and/or scientific value | 2 | University and school students come to the park and also overseas researchers. There was a research station here, but it was burned down and it is not operational. |
| 16. Maintaining culture and tradition on customary land and passing this on to future generations | 2 | |

Part 3: What are the threats to the protected area?

Table 4: Threats to the protected area

- H** High significance threats are seriously degrading values. This means they are badly damaging some value –it might be a kind of animal or plant, or your traditional gardens
- M** Medium threats are having some negative impact – they are damaging values but not so badly
- L** Low threats are present but not seriously damaging values
- 0** N/A where the threat is not present in the protected area or where something is happening but is not threatening the values at all

| Threat type | Score (H,M,L,0) | Notes |
|---|-----------------|--|
| 1.1 Housing and settlement | 0 | |
| 1.1a Population increase in the protected area community | 0 | |
| 1.2 Commercial and industrial areas | 0 | |
| 1.3 Tourism and recreation infrastructure | 0 | |
| 2.1 Customary land owner and community gardens and small crops | 0 | There are no customary land users in the park. They reside in villages outside the park and do not have gardens in the park. |
| 2.1a Drug cultivation | 0 | |
| 2.1b Commercial plantations | 0 | |
| 2.2 Wood and pulp plantations | 0 | |
| 2.3 Livestock farming and grazing | 0 | |
| 2.4 Marine and freshwater aquaculture | 0 | |
| 3.1 Oil and gas drilling | 0 | |
| 3.2 Mining and quarrying | 0 | |
| 3.3 Energy generation | L | |
| 4.1 Roads and railroads (include road-killed animals) | L | There is a very good CEPA funded bitumen road into the park from the road to Sogeri. The road inside the park is also bitumen and leads from the entrance gate to the lookout at the top of the mountain (833m), to the former visitor lodge and lookout and various picnic area and walking tracks. There is a small amount of traffic on the road and it may cause some small threat to animals. There is a newly constructed dirt road to a mobile tower located in the park and this has resulted in the destruction of some vegetation. |
| 4.2 Utility and service lines (e.g. electricity cables, telephone lines) | L | There are two communication towers (Digicel and Police Communication) and there are proposals to build two additional towers. In order to gain access to these new towers there is the potential for more damage (e.g. vegetation loss). The towers do not affect the visual amenity from within the park, but the towers are very visible when entering and leaving the park and this has reduced the visual amenity of the park, especially the scenic vistas. The respondents also believed there was an unknown potential threat from radiation. |
| 4.3 Shipping lanes | 0 | |
| 4.4 Flight paths | 0 | It is on a flight path to Popondetta, but it is not a threat. |
| 5.1 Hunting, killing and collecting terrestrial animals (including killing of animals as a result of human/wildlife conflict) | M | There is hunting within the park and some species may be impacted, but this was largely unmonitored and unknown. People from outside come in and hunt occasionally, but the community is not clear on how many enter and how many animals are hunted. They hunt deer, wild pigs, cuscus, cassowary, wallaby and many other animals. |
| 5.2 Gathering terrestrial plants or plant products (non-timber) | M | Outsiders come in and take plant material e.g. grass for grass skirts and other plants for building materials. |
| 5.3a Logging and wood harvesting for local/customary use | M | Outsiders also take some timber for firewood. |
| 5.3b Logging and wood harvesting – commercial logging | L | Logging happened in the 1950s, but it has now stopped. This is a low threat. |
| 5.4a Fishing, killing and harvesting aquatic resources for local/customary use | 0 | There is no fishing in the park for customary use. |

| Threat type | Score (H,M,L,0) | Notes |
|--|-----------------|--|
| 5.4b Fishing, killing and harvesting aquatic resources for commercial use | 0 | |
| 6.1 Recreational activities and tourism | L | Visitors pay entry fees, but don't always abide by the rules of the park and cause damage. They sometimes remove plants and in the past have set fire to the park. |
| 6.2 War, civil unrest and military exercises | 0 | |
| 6.3 Research, education and other work-related activities in protected areas | 0 | UPNG students come into the park, but they are informed of the rules of the park and this is not a threat. Sometimes they leave flagging tape behind on the trees, but this is a minimal threat. |
| 6.4 Activities of protected area managers (e.g. construction or vehicle use) | L | The manager has a vehicle and this may cause a little damage e.g. to wildlife. |
| 6.5 Deliberate vandalism, destructive activities or threats to protected area staff and visitors | H | Outsiders enter the park and cut trees. There is graffiti at picnic areas and on trees (carved trees) and deliberate lighting of fires. There are issues relating to the security and safety of visitors to the park. |
| 7.1 Fire and fire suppression (including arson) | H | Fires are prevalent in the dry season and this impacts on the vegetation. Fires are human made, often by children/young people, and as a result of hunting and vandalism. This has become a habit in the dry season, as the people like to see the fire and the smoke. However, the source of the fire is often from outside the park. |
| 7.2 Dams, hydrological modification and water management/use | 0 | |
| 7.3a Increased fragmentation within protected area | L | There is a new bush track that was created by the communications companies and this and the tower construction resulted in a loss of vegetation (especially with the Police Tower). Other towers are proposed and this will be a threat. |
| 7.3b Isolation from other natural habitat (e.g. deforestation) | 0 | There are no settlements or development on the boundary. There is a cliff on one side. |
| 7.3c Other 'edge effects' on park values | 0 | |
| 7.3d Loss of keystone species (e.g. top predators, pollinators etc.) | L | The long-beaked echidna has disappeared. There is an orchid species that is no longer seen. |
| 8.1 Pest plants | M | Mimosa grass is present and some other invasive plants (with purple flower), especially along the roads (from vehicles, birds), piper tree is appearing in disturbed areas. |
| 8.1a Pest animals | H | Tilapia was introduced into both the lakes by CEPA staff (for fishing purposes). There was a long dry spell and the tilapia died and "then we put more tilapia in the lake". At the moment there is no threat. One of the lakes was human made for the piggery and the other, higher lake is natural. There is no connection between the lakes, but tilapia have been put into both lakes. One customary landowner said, "before there were fish that my grandfather used to get - there were rainbow coloured fish in the lake" and tilapia are thought to have impacted negatively on the local species, but this is not known for sure. We are not sure what has happened to them. There are other pest animals such as rusa deer, which pull the bark off the trees and this eventually kills the tree; wild boars dig the vegetation and destroy the track; wild dogs and cats (there is video evidence from the Jika project of wild dogs looking for megapode eggs); and cane toads, which were identified as a threat to snakes. |
| 8.1b Diseases such as fungus or viruses that make native plants or animals sick | L | |
| 8.2 Introduced genetic material (e.g. genetically modified organisms) | 0 | |
| 9.1 Household sewage and urban waste water | 0 | There are pit toilets/latrines for visitor use, but these are not a threat. |
| 9.1a Sewage and waste water from protected area facilities | 0 | |

| Threat type | Score (H,M,L,0) | Notes |
|---|-----------------|--|
| 9.2 Industrial, mining and military effluents | 0 | |
| 9.3 Agricultural and forestry effluents (e.g. excess fertilizers or pesticides) | 0 | |
| 9.4 Garbage and solid waste | H | There is littering in the protected area. |
| 9.5 Air-borne pollutants | 0 | |
| 9.6 Excess energy (e.g. heat pollution, lights etc.) | 0 | |
| 10.1 Volcanoes | 0 | |
| 10.2 Earthquakes/Tsunamis | 0 | |
| 10.3 Avalanches/Landslides | 0 | |
| 10.4 Erosion and siltation/ deposition (e.g. shoreline or riverbed changes) | 0 | |
| 11.1 Habitat shifting and alteration | 0 | |
| 11.2 Droughts | L | Drought causes a loss of algae and fungus – they die off. |
| 11.3 Temperature extremes | 0 | |
| 11.4 Storms and flooding | L | There are big storms and winds that cause trees to fall over. |
| 11.5 Coral bleaching | 0 | |
| 11.6 Intrusion by saltwater into gardens etc. | 0 | |
| 11.7 Sea level rise | 0 | |
| Other (please explain) | | |
| 12.1 Loss of cultural links, traditional knowledge and/or management practices | H | Loss of traditional local language, as more people speak Tok Pisin now. Loss of hunting skills, and the tree houses. |
| 12.2 Natural deterioration of important cultural site values | 0 | |
| 12.3 Destruction of cultural heritage buildings, gardens, sites etc. | L | There is a taboo site near the lake. Visitors now go to this site and they are not supposed to. The site is thus devalued. |
| Other (please explain) | | |

Table 5. Worst threats and ways forward

| Threat No. | Threat (Most significant first) | Threat number or name (copy no. from Table 4) | Nature of the threat, impact and how to reduce the impact. |
|------------|---------------------------------|---|---|
| 1 | Security and safety of visitors | Other | The park is important for recreation/visitation. However, there have been instances of loss of property and threats to personal security. There is a need to involve the communities and employ more park rangers; and have agreements with other law enforcement agencies e.g. police, to do more frequent (weekly) patrols and thus to be seen by the surrounding community to have a presence in the park. More information about safety issues (awareness raising) should be provided to visitors. |
| 2 | Garbage and littering | 9.4 | The picnic areas in the main area need collection devices (bins and a collection service). There needs to be awareness raising to make people more responsible (e.g. take your garbage with you). |
| 3 | Loss of culture | 12.1 | Need to stress parental responsibilities. Our children now speak English and not their local language. There needs to be greater awareness of the important aspects of our culture e.g. the tree houses, language, responsibilities. Involve parents in the school system to teach the children about their language and traditions and customs. Most children now learn in English and not their 'place talk'. Learning of traditions also starts at home and the parents should play a bigger role in this. |

Part 4: What is the management like in the protected area?

Table 6. Management effectiveness scores, comments, next steps

| Issue | Score (0,1,2,3 NA) | Comment | Next steps |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------|---|---|
| 1a. Legal status | 3 | The area was declared a National Park under the National Parks Act. | |
| 1b. Legal status | | | |
| 2a. Protected area regulations | 1 | There are some traditional rules for managing the park (although the customary landowners live outside the park). There are no formal regulations, other than those governing use and visitor access. The effectiveness of the regulations is limited. | |
| 2b. Protected area regulations | | | |
| 3. Law enforcement | 0 | There is very little law enforcement due to lack of capacity and funds. The main illegal activities include poaching, hunting, gathering decorative and medicinal plants, collecting fire wood and housing material, starting fires and littering. A ranger is stationed permanently at the park and can shut the gate to keep vehicles out. However, there is limited community presence on the park to monitor activities that may harm the protected area. | There is a need to increase the ranger presence in the park; improve the ranger facilities; enhance the customary landowner presence skills; increase the park budget for functions such as patrolling/enforcement and visitor management and staff training. The GEF 5 project plans to address some aspects of management effectiveness (e.g. developing guidelines), improving regulations governing management (e.g. use, visitor access), and working with PNG Power and customary landowners. |
| 4. Protected area objectives | 2 | There are agreed objectives but the park is not managed according to these objectives. There is an integrated catchment management plan in place with cooperation from customary landowners, Koiari District, Central Province and PNG Power. | Finalise the park management plan. |
| 5. Protected area design | 1 | The size is big enough to meet the objectives, which relate primarily to providing a tourism experience. However, in relation to some of the species (e.g. cassowaries which traverse the wider landscape), the park may not be of sufficient size. | To enhance the park's role in providing sufficient habitat for wide ranging species such as the cassowary it would be necessary to expand the size of the park. Such expansion would need the support of the customary landowners. |

| Issue | Score (0,1,2,3 NA) | Comment | Next steps |
|---|-----------------------|--|--|
| 6. Protected area boundaries | 3 | The boundary is fully demarcated, known and mapped. However, it is not demarcated on the ground. There is no fence, although there is a walking track along the boundaries and a cliff on one boundary. | |
| 7. Management plan | 1 | While the park is theory is managed through regulations, there is no Management Plan, although a draft Management plan is being prepared, with the assistance of the Jika project. | Finalise the Management Plan in consultation with the customary landowners. |
| 7a. Planning process | 1 | The community is involved in developing the draft Management Plan. | |
| 7b. Planning process | 0 | | |
| 7c. Planning process | 1 | | |
| 8. Regular work plan | 1 | Work plans are prepared by CEPA annually, but have little funding attached to them. | More funding is required to fully implement effective work plans. |
| 9. Resource inventory | 0 | | |
| 10. Protection systems | 0 | There is an entry gate and signage, but the poachers get illegal entry, despite the presence of a ranger at the park. | |
| 11. Research and monitoring | 1 | CEPA does not have a regular monitoring program. The Jika project has installed cameras to capture fauna and visitor movement. There has been some research in the past by UPNG and there is a field guide to Varirata National Park. The DEC does not have a complete species inventory of the area especially for amphibians, insects and plants. However, due to the popularity of the park to bird watchers, there is a bird list and a number of IUCN Redlisted species have been identified. | Research and monitoring are needed to underpin effective management. The results of the Jika project will provide important information on species presence, habitat use and movement. |
| 12. Resource management | 1 | There is a ranger stationed at the park, but due to limited capacity very little is achieved. | Need more people and funds. |
| 13a. Staff numbers | 1 | There is one person employed. | |
| 13b. Other people working on the protected area | 0 | | |
| 14. Training and skills | 1 | | Ranger training needs to be improved e.g. enforcement and monitoring. Funding sources need to be identified e.g. Jika project. |
| 15. Current budget | 1 | There is only limited funding and this seriously constrains management. | |
| 16. Security of budget | 0 | | |
| 17. Management of budget | 1 | | |
| 18. Equipment | 1 | The park has two lawn mowers and some trimmers; 1 staff residence; and pit toilets, but the infrastructure is run down. | There is a need for mowers and grass cutters. |
| 19. Maintenance of equipment | 1 | | |

| Issue | Score (0,1,2,3 NA) | Comment | Next steps |
|--|-----------------------|--|--|
| 20. Education and awareness | 1 | There are limited education opportunities e.g. UPNG and some local schools and scout groups visit the park. | We need to erect more signage; include information in the school curriculum; and target the schools around the protected area to provide more information. |
| 21. Planning for land use or marine activities | 2 | The surrounding community and planning framework are aware of the national park. | |
| 22. State and commercial neighbours | 2 | There are contacts between PNG Power and CEPA and the communications providers. | |
| 23. Indigenous people/ Customary landowners | 2 | There is some consultation, particularly in relation to the development of the management plan. | |
| 24a. Impact on communities | 1 | | |
| 24b. Impact on communities | 0 | | |
| 24c. Impact on communities | 1 | Customary landowners want to keep the national park and they support it. | |
| 25. Economic benefit | 0 | There is no return to the customary landowners from the visitor fees and it is unknown whether any fees are re-invested in the park. | |
| 26. Monitoring and evaluation | 0 | | |
| 27. Visitor facilities | 2 | There is a picnic shelter, BBQ plates, lookout, five walking tracks, signage, camping site, disused lodge, gates, pit toilets and large mowed picnic areas. | Enhance maintenance on all facilities. |
| 28. Commercial tourism operators | 0 | There are some bird-watchers that come. There is however, limited contact with the Tourism Promotion Authority. | |
| 29. Fees | 1 | Fees apply but are not systematically collected. Fee receipts are not monitored. Fees go to the government, but they are not returned to assist with management, or there is no record for this. | |
| 30. Condition of values | 2 | | |
| 30a. Condition of values | 1 | There is some research as a result of the Jika Project. | |
| 30b. Condition of values | 0 | | |
| 30c. Condition of values | 0 | | |

Part 5: Condition and trends of protected area values

Table 7. Values, condition and trend

| Key value (from Table 2) | Condition Score (VG, G, F, P, DK) | Trend Score, (I, S, D, DK) | Information source and justification for Assessment and HOW the condition can be IMPROVED |
|-----------------------------------|---|----------------------------------|--|
| Biodiversity | G | S | Condition is relatively good. Customary landowners do not generally hunt or garden in the park and this has minimized the threat to biodiversity. There is a need to assess the current status to identify the species and ecosystems and to remove the pest animals. The Jika project is assisting with biodiversity survey and monitoring. |
| Rare animals | DK | DK | Research and monitoring are needed to better understand these important species. |
| Mountains, scenery, recreation | VG | I | Infrastructure has been improved within the park and the presence of several lookouts means that the mountains and scenery within and beyond the park can be enjoyed by the visitors. |
| Tree houses/culture | F | D | Not many tree houses are being built and the skills are being lost. Languages are being lost. There needs to be more awareness of the values of the area, particularly in the village and home i.e. more parental involvement. |
| Education and research | G | S | Improve the publicity surrounding the park. Improve facilities for visitors, including students and researchers. Provide an information centre at the park, with small rooms. |

Table 8. Recommendations and ways forward

| 1. | 2. | 3. |
|--|---|--|
| Increase resources – people, funding, facilities and infrastructure. A collaboratively developed management plan with a secure budget is needed. Security and safety for visitors must be improved as there are problems with theft and personal security. In the past rangers moved around the park and this issue was less of a problem. If we can increase the staff numbers there may be fewer issues with security. Staff decreased when there was a general downsizing of the public service in the 1990s. | Improve or beautify the area to make it more attractive for the visitors to the park. | Provide community support to help reduce the activities that threaten the park and ensure that benefits flow to the community. |

Table 9. Strengths and challenges (facilitator/recorder synthesis)

| | Strengths | Challenges |
|---|--|--|
| 1 | Good biodiversity values, with several rare and threatened species. Research is being undertaken to better understand the biodiversity | Providing sufficient funding to ensure effective staff levels to better manage the park and enforce regulations to enhance biodiversity and visitor experiences. |
| 2 | Good access to and within the park. | Implement a ranger training program and increase the number of rangers and their facilities. |
| 3 | Accessibility to Port Moresby makes this park important for recreation and tourism. | Addressing the impact caused by outsiders entering the park and extracting resources and damaging the park's values. |
| 4 | Attractive mountain scenery with panoramic views | Ensuring visitor safety. |
| 5 | Good walk tracks, with signage. | |
| 6 | Surrounding customary landowners are supportive of the park. | |
| 7 | Near the Kokoda Track and there are opportunities to expand tourism within the area and attract international visitation. | |