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CCF’S FIRST 100 DAYS IN OFFICE

JULIUS KAMAU AT THE HELM OF FOREST MANAGEMENT
3 Foreword
4 Lead Story
6 News RoundUp
15 General Stories
22 Pictorials
24 Features
26 Project News
27 Cross-cutting issues/Ads
28 Sports News
29 Staff News
29 Station Profile
30 Leisure
31 From The Archives
32 Know Your Trees

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The role that forests play in the environmental integrity and socio-economic development of a country cannot be gainsaid. A fact that is known by all; young and old. The gazetted public forest land is limited and account for about 4% of the country’s land area and despite its significant forests continue to be subjected to immense pressure ranging from encroachment, illegal forest activities, fires, infrastructural development to politicization - and negative politicization at that.

Despite these human driven threats, the expectations by the public with regards to provision of ecological goods and services such as water by the same forests is ever increasing. Therefore, as a country, time has come when we have to agree to do all that is necessary to conserve and protect what is left of our forests.

Actions to conserve our forests are closely related to the rights of people to secure their livelihoods, access clean water, enjoy a healthy and clean environment and live with dignity. Similarly, actions to destroy the forests such as through illegal logging, illegal settlement and encroachment are equal to denying people of their basic human right to life.

At the Kenya Forest Service (KFS) we are quite cognizant of what we need to do to make sure that our forests function as intended. But we also realize that we cannot do it alone. It is for this reason that we have opened talks with all stakeholders, forest adjacent communities and citizens, both corporate and individual to regain their goodwill and pool their support towards conservation of our forests. To this end the Service is actualizing the directive by His Excellency the President for all Ministries, Department and Agencies to dedicate 10% of their CSR budgets for tree planting.

I have been encouraged by the enthusiasm and the goodwill I have received from in and outside Kenya Forest Service, a recipe necessary to change the forest conservation story. This is in fact what we need as a nation, for everyone to do their part in this journey. A journey that we must travel not only for ourselves but also for the future generations!

Word from the Editor

The 26th issue of the Forester Magazine comes out coincidentally when we are marking the first 100 days of our new Chief Conservator of Forests (CCF) Mr. Julius Kamau. So in this issue, we have tried to capture as much as possible all the CCF has been up to in terms spearheading reforms in the forestry sector and the Service itself.

We have tried to sum up the first 100 days of the new CCF in a feature article titled ‘100 days in Office’. In this article, we have given a glimpse of the reform agenda that the CCF is looking to carry forward in terms of community involvement in forest management, reforms in the Service and the confirming the place of forestry in the development agenda of the country.

We have also given emphasis to the significance of partnership in developing forestry and achieving 10% forest cover by the year 2022 as directed by His Excellency the President. The CCF has been up and about meeting the leaders of both government and private organisations in a bid to forge partnerships that will support increased seedling production for accelerated tree planting.

Other stories include one on the importance being given to the promotion of bamboo growing in the country given its versatility in terms of product diversity and its use in ecosystem rehabilitation. We also have an article on the marking of ‘International Day for Conservation of Mangrove Ecosystems’ which was marked in Kwale County and spearheaded locally by Kenya Forest Service (KFS).

These are among the many, informative and interesting articles we have compiled for you in this issue. Enjoy your read!
The Chief Conservator of Forests (CCF) of the Kenya Forest Service (KFS) Mr. Julius Kamau joined the Service at a time of change following a inquiry report by the task force on ‘Forest Resources Management and Logging Activities in Kenya’, 2018 that recommended a raft of changes to deal with emerging challenges in the forestry sector. Mr. Kamau a career forester who had worked mainly in the diplomatic, international development cooperation and private sectors had his work cut out for him. For starters, KFS is a big organization. With over 5400 staff spread across the country, KFS is one of the biggest state agencies in the country and any leader would need a strategy to rally all staff to a common goal.

But first, he had to deal with a morale problem that staffs were suffering from following a year of major upheavals which saw many and major conversion taking place. The new CCF kicked of his tenure by engaging the senior management staff to find out how the mandate of the Service was being implemented. He also interacted with staff both at the headquarters and the field and counseled them on need for harmony and synergy for the Service to achieve its very critical mandate. Speaking at a breakfast meeting at the headquarters, the Chief Conservator of Forests reminded the staff of the central role of forests in anchoring all the other sectors of the economy. “We must work together as a team, treat each other fairly and with dignity because that is the only way we shall win and deliver our mandate for Kenya,” he said adding, “I will support those who work hard and diligently.”

One of the major shortcomings of the Service has been its incapacity to consistently clear a huge backlog in rehabilitation of degraded forest areas as well as re-stocking harvested plantation areas. This has been brought about by a lack of capacity especially in resource allocation for production of sufficient and high quality seedlings. Currently, the Service is producing about 170 million seedlings in all its nurseries across the country. This is not enough to help increase the forest cover from the current 7.2% to the envisaged to 10% by the year 2022 as directed by His Excellency the President.

Another challenge has been inadequate capacity to keep all our forests safe from a myriad of threats. Hence, the need to encourage our Forest Rangers who put their lives on the line to protect our forests, work under somewhat challenging conditions and whose, critical role is rarely appreciated or acknowledged. “We must encourage our Forest Rangers, improve their working conditions, equip them and enhance their numbers if we have to effectively protect our forests’ CCF said. In demonstrating his commitment to this call, and for the 1st time in Service history, the CCF lead the KFS family in celebrating the Forest Rangers as our heroes during the World Ranger Day marked on 31st July 2019.

And as has often been said, forest conservation and especially tree planting cannot be the responsibility of government alone. It is for this reason that one of the first tasks the CCF had was implementing a presidential directive requiring all public institutions to dedicate 10% of their Community Social Responsibility (CSR) budgets to tree planting and forest rehabilitation. The CCF with guidance from the Board Chairman Mr. Peter Kinyua thus embarked on meeting with the management of public institutions to draw up collaboration strategies for joint forest rehabilitation programmes. One of the major aspects of these strategies is production of high quality seedlings for planting in both public forests and other areas.

The private sector some of whom have along history in conservation have also not been left behind in this course. “We realized that we cannot do this alone and are therefore engaging all stakeholders as responsible corporate citizens to take up their place in the conservation agenda of this country,” says Mr. Kamau. Already discussions and planning for massive tree planting in the October/November rainy season are at an advanced stage. Also improvement of the capacity of KFS nurseries to produce more seedlings in partnerships with a number of organizations is ongoing. He has held discussions with a number of organizations including the National Highways Authority, Agricultural Development Corporation (ADC), Teachers Service Commission (TSC), Department of Correctional Services, the National Oil Corporation of Kenya (NOCK), Kenya Revenue Authority, Kenya Breweries, NIC Bank, Multimedia University among many others.

The Forests Conservation and Management Act of 2016 envisages a mutually beneficial engagement of communities living adjacent to forests in forest conservation and management. This is in the realization of the long and historical role that communities attach to forests for their ecological, socio-economic and cultural development. It is well known that communities play a very important role in the conservation of forests. It is also beyond doubt that local communities know the value of forests and are intact willing to protect them for the accruing benefits.
For example, through partnerships in training forest officers and technology transfer from development partners in the east especially China, Korea and Japan, the Service has learnt the ecological importance of bamboo and how it can be applied to treat forest degradation in water catchment and riparian areas. The private sector is also slowly and surely introducing bamboo processing industries in the country. This expected to boost both conservation efforts and also a new industry that will deal in bamboo products which is multibillion dollar industry in the eastern countries.

The Service with the help of the Ministry of Environment and Forestry has forged and is pursuing a number of bilateral partnerships with the African Development Bank, the European Union, JICA, USAID, and the German Government among several other bilateral development partners. Looking forward, the Service is poised to continue playing its role in the development agenda of the country by providing a stable environment for the sustenance of all other sectors of the economy.

According to the CCF, the Service is not making deliberate and strategic changes in the way its resources are shared and utilized to make sure that the core forest management activities which include seed production and forest management at the station level are not compromised. Beginning this financial year, resource allocation will be concentrated at the station level. Already the forest station managers have been sensitized on their new roles which will include management of resources. Their capacity is also being boosted through deployment of more officers to assist in the management of forest stations.

To properly and legally involve the communities, they must organize themselves into Community Forest Associations (CFA) which can then draw up participatory forest management plans that guide the benefit sharing of resources. The law envisages a situation where all public forests are management according to PFMPs agreed upon between the Service and CFAs. It has been observed, rather predictably that in forest stations where there are well organized CFAs, forests are properly managed while there are challenges of protection where CFAs are absent.

This point was brought home by recent cases of increased levels of forest destruction at Mbooni Forest station in Makuini County which was attributed to lack of participation and indifference by the community towards forests. While addressing officers and members of the community during a visit to assess the level of destruction in the station, the CCF reiterated the importance of the local community in forest protection noting that forest rangers cannot be everywhere guarding all trees. “Our manpower especially in forest protection is limited and therefore we must work with the local communities otherwise ours will be a herculean task,” he said. The CCF has thus enhanced the capacity of the CFA Coordination and the Participatory Forest Management offices and directed it to fast track formation of CFAs and development of PFMPs respectively for all forest stations.

Another problem in the development of forestry in the country is the lack of adequate resources to carry out the various forest development programmes. This is not a unique problem to the sector but challenge nonetheless that must be addressed. But in this challenge therein lies an opportunity to engage development partners both local and bilateral. Partnerships like this bring not only the much needed resources and skills and technologies that help to hasten forest development.

Meanwhile, the Service is looking into ways of diversifying revenue generation to help boost forest conservation while at the same time reducing pressure on the government. To this end, the Service is looking at diversifying its revenue via Payment for Ecosystem Services (PES) and broadening its ecotourism revenue stream. Indeed KFS is collaborating with KIPPRRA to review its pricing regime for various forest products and services. “As a Service, we do not have a choice, we must succeed in delivering our mandate, otherwise we will have failed the country,” says the CCF.
KFS takes part in the AGRITEC Africa International Exhibition & Conference 2019

By Cynthia Mwema and Idah Katheu

Kenya Forest Service participated in the 6th Annual Exhibition and Conference on Agriculture Technology (AGRITEC), organized by Radecaal Communications of India held at the Kenyatta International Convention Center between 19th and 21st of June 2019. The three-day event was graced by various stakeholders of the Food and Agriculture Organization of United Nations including forestry, environmental, agricultural and technological experts from various countries across the world with the theme of ‘Working towards Zero Hunger through sustainable development goals’.

By nature of substantiality viewed by her rich biological diversity, Kenya serves as a habitat for diverse species of flora and fauna in its variable ecosystems. The forests are endowed with a wide range of endangered species found only in that habitat. This has a direct toll on the amount of rainfall resulting to more species in wetter forests. Areas around these

CCF VISITS KFC LONDIANI

By Sylvester Okal

Following his appointment as the Chief Conservator of Forests (CCF), Mr. Julius Kamau undertook his maiden field visit touring Mau Conservancy. He started off at the Kenya Forestry College in Londiani, Kericho County where he held a meeting with all the Heads of Conservancies and the Regional Commandants. He outlined his leadership agenda during the meeting where he stated his determination to reform the sector through implementing professional forestry practices in all processes. The CCF implored the field officers to change different aspects of their operations in order to instill a culture of accountability, transparency and restore public confidence, trust and image of the Kenya Forest Service.

The Heads of Conservancies were encouraged to engage with their Ecosystem Conservators and work closely with County Governments to give technical support in implementation of Transition Implementation Plans.

The officers were implored to look into non-extractive forestry utilization models such as eco-tourism to promote and market them as a way of diversifying revenue for the Service since the moratorium on logging was still in place. On their daily operations, the officers were warned against corruption and absenteeism from duty stations which has been affecting service delivery and that stern action would be taken against errant officers who abscond duty or are found engaging in corruption. During their interaction, the field officers cited a myriad of challenges that might be factors affecting their performance. The CCF pledged to offer them full support but reminded them that they would be expected to take full responsibility and be accountable for their actions. He encouraged them to look at things differently, assess their professional practices and review the ones that are no longer effective.

During this same tour, the CCF met the students studying at the College and encouraged them to work to be the best in the forestry sector and help with the good work of growing the sector.
By Leakey Sonkoyo

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs in collaboration with the diplomatic corps represented in the country have joined the forest conservation campaign by pledging to adopt forest areas that need rehabilitation. This was said during a tree planting exercise in Lari Kiambu County where over 2000 seedlings were planted by members of the diplomatic corps at Uplands Forest Station.

The Chief Guest Chief Administrative Secretary in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Hon. Ababu Namwamba urged the Diplomatic community to support tree planting by adopting forest blocks across the country and help in forest conservation. He noted with appreciation that several embassies including the Embassies of Israel and the Republic of Korea had taken tree planting and forest rehabilitation activities by adopting forest blocks in the area.

“Effects of climate change affect all of us wherever we are and it is our responsibility as global citizens to do our part in mitigating and addressing these adverse effects and planting trees is the easiest and surest way of doing this,” said Hon. Namwamba.

Members of Uplands Community Forest Association and students from surrounding schools also took part in tree planting. Also present during the event was Senior Deputy Chief Conservator Forests Mr. Esau Omollo.
By Lydia Ogada

The International Day of Biodiversity is marked all over the world on 22nd May each year, as part of the domestication of the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity (UNCBD), that was opened for signature in 1992 during the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development held in Rio de Janairo, Brazil.

The convention came into force in 1993, and provides a framework for international action on conservation of biological diversity (the variety of life on earth), the sustainable use of its components and fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the use of such resources.

This year’s International Day of Biodiversity was marked at the Busia Agricultural Training Center, Busia County in a ceremony officiated by the Chief Administrative Secretary Ministry of Environment and Forestry, Hon. Mohammed Elmi, on behalf the Cabinet Secretary, Mr. Keriako Tobiko. He was accompanied by the Governor, Busia County, H.E. Hon. Sospeter Ojaamong, Kenya Forest Service was presented by David Chege who is the Ag. Head Biodiversity He was accompanied by the Head of Conservancy Western Conservancy Mr. John Wachihi, the Ecosystem Conservator Busia County Fredrick Ashiono, foresters and KFS officers from the county.

The theme this year was “Our Biodiversity, Our Food, Our Health “. The theme’s aim is to spread awareness of the dependency of our food systems, nutrition and health on biodiversity and healthy ecosystems.

The theme also celebrates the diversity provided by our natural systems for human existence and well-being on Earth, while contributing to SDG 15 (life on land), SDG 14 (life below water), SDG 2 (zero hunger) and SDG 3 (good health and well-being), as well as SDG 13 (climate action) and SDG 6 (clean water and sanitation), among others.

Speaking during the occasion, Hon. Mohammed noted that our biodiversity continues to suffer from pressures arising from population growth, expansion of agriculture, over exploitation of biological resources, climate change and invasive species, that has seen a decline in these resources in recent past, Hon. Elmi observed that, the commemoration of International Day for Biodiversity (IDB) was indeed important for the Kenya, as it helps reflect on the many challenges facing us and the actions we are undertaking at both national and county levels, in the implementation of the United Nations Convention on Biological diversity.

The CAS called for scientific assessments on biodiversity status; development of tools, incentives and processes to combat biodiversity loss particularly at county level; transfer of technologies and good practices; building partnerships and work relations with stakeholders and local community towards conservation of biodiversity efforts.

The CAS, and Busia Governor, Hon. Ojaamong together with the invited guests planted trees at the Busia Agricultural Training Center grounds.
KFS SCOOPS TOP AWARDS IN ASK SHOWS ACROSS THE COUNTRY

By Bulbul Ratemo and Michael Kitum

The National and Regional Shows and Trade Fairs which date back to 1901, have over time become a linchpin of the Kenyan economy by offering a platform for different actors in the economy both foreign and local to showcase their innovations and activities in promoting sustainable development in the country. The annual Nakuru ASK International Show which took place from 3rd to 7th July 2019 at the Nakuru Showground was no different as multiple Government Agencies, Non-profit Organizations and companies from the Private Sector exhibited their products and innovations in line with the theme "Promoting Innovation and Technology in Agriculture and Trade".

With Kenya adopting a new development blueprint centred on the “Big Four Agenda”, the KFS stand exhibited some of the facets of its mandate including tree growing, tree nursery establishment and value addition in forestry products that is vital in achieving Food Security and Manufacturing in the country. The well curated KFS exhibition stand eventually managed to come out top in the category of the Best Agricultural based Statutory Board/Commission Stand and came in third in the Best Stand Demonstrating the Application of Environmental Quality Standards.

Speaking after the award ceremony, the enthusiastic Acting Head of Conservancy Mau George Njenga commended the officers for the prize and added that the trophy is a clear depiction of the improved efforts by the Service to promote the realization of the Big Four Agenda through sustainable conservation of the environment. Furthermore, the CS Water Simon Chelugui who was the Guest of Honour at the award ceremony, urged government institutions to invest in research and proper management of the resources placed under their jurisdictions so as to promote Food Security in the country.

The Service was also well presented by the KFS band who put up a glitzy performance at the award ceremony. Elsewhere, Kenya Forest Service emerged as the Best Government Ministry Stand for the second year in a row and also the Best Energy Services & Conservation Sector Stand at both the Eldoret ASK Show and recently at the Kisumu ASK Show. The Head of North Rift Conservancy, Mr. Benjamin Kinyili explained to the judges in the Energy Services and Conservation Category, the benefits of using charcoal briquettes as a better source of fuel as opposed to conventional firewood.

“Charcoal briquettes burn longer than conventional firewood because they have a high carolific value, and are also smoke free since they are manufactured by carbonized products making them very convenient for cooking,” said Mr. Kinyili.

He also added that the manufacture of briquettes uses easily available raw products such as saw dust, charcoal dust, coffee husks and even maize cobs thus making it environment friendly and a very lucrative venture for the youth as the demand for the product is still high within the region. “Schools, hospitals and other institutions are among the highest consumers of briquettes whose demand is still far from being met," added Mr Kinyili.

The Service will also participate in other upcoming shows including the Mombasa International Show, Central National Show, Kitale National Show and Nairobi Trade Fair.
Bamboo Planting Programme launched

By Cynthia Mwema

The Bamboo (Bambusoidaea) consists of 1439 different species in 116 genera. It is one of the 12 subfamilies of the grass family (Poaceae) and the only one to diversify in forests. Bamboo holds the world record as the fastest growing plant in existence. Some species of bamboo can grow up to 35 inches a day. Due to its ability to produce more than 35 percent oxygen than trees, bamboo can help to reduce carbon in the air and regulate global warming through balancing oxygen and carbon dioxide in the atmosphere.

It is for this versatility that the bamboo planting programme was launched in the country recently by Her Excellency the First Lady Mrs. Margaret Kenyatta at an event in Ruiru Dam, Kiambu County. The event that was organized by Bidco Africa saw the planting of over 2000 bamboo seedlings along the banks of the dam that supplies most of its waters to city of Nairobi.

Speaking at the event, the First Lady thanked Bidco Africa for their bamboo planting initiative noting that it was a sustainable source of energy for industries and raw material for production of numerous bamboo products. She also called on all players in the private sector to invest in environmental conservation saying that it will secure their businesses in the long run.

The Environment and Forestry led by the Cabinet Secretary Hon. Keriako Tobiko on his part said that the government will work with all stakeholders to promote environmental conservation. He noted that the private sector had a very important role to play in conservation as responsible corporate citizens. He informed the gathering that the Ministry was spearheading a bamboo planting programme across the country and especially in water catchments and riparian areas because of their ability to both conserve these areas and improve water quality.

Also present at the event were County Government officials led by the Governor Hon. Ferdinand Waititu and the Kiambu Women’s Representative, Gathoni Wamuchomba, Bidco Africa Chairman Mr. Vimal Shah, KFS Chairman Mr. Peter Kinyua and CCF Mr. Julius Kamau among other government and private sector representatives.

Mainstreaming of bamboo growing and value addition is one of the flagship projects of KFS aimed at driving the achievement of the social and economic pillars of Kenya’s Vision 2030.
Mangrove forests play a critical role to the livelihood of coastal communities in Kenya and the world whose predominant economic activity is fishing. The ecosystem supports a rich biodiversity which provides nursery habitat for fish and crustaceans to thrive. Mangroves also protect shorelines from damaging storms, hurricane winds, waves, floods and typhoons. Through their dense root systems, they trap sediments flowing down rivers and off the land preventing soil erosion. In areas where destruction of mangroves is eminent, the coastal damage is severe from weather vices. By filtering out sediments, the forests protect coral reefs vital for aquatic life.

Mangrove forests are also vital in carbon sequestration; a natural process through which carbon dioxide and other forms of carbon are filtered from the atmosphere and stored in liquid or solid form thus reducing global warming and dangerous climate change. This is a natural way to slow atmospheric and marine accumulation of greenhouse gases that would otherwise rise and trap heat in the atmosphere causing severe global warming.

Given the biodiversity of life inhabiting mangrove ecosystems, and their proximity to other ecological attractions such as sandy beaches and coral reefs, mangroves provide great scenic views that serve as great tourist attractions sites. An example of such tourist sites along the Kenyan coastline is in Crab Shack Dabaso, Watamu, Kilifi County where board walks meander in a mangrove forest where birds and butterfly species thrive and also crab farming is practiced.
The Cabinet Secretary, Ministry of Environment and Forestry, Hon. Keriako Tobiko embarked on a three-day working visit in Meru County. He was accompanied by an entourage of Chairmen and Directors of all the agencies under his Ministry led by the Kenya Forest Service Chairman Mr Peter Kinyua and the Chief Conservator of Forests, Mr Julius Kamau. The Meru County Governor Hon. Kiraitu Murungi was present to welcome the delegation and accompanied them in a three-day tour of his County.

Meru County is one of the Counties that has signed their Transitional Implementation Plans and is working closely with KFS Management in the county. KFS has partnered with the County Government on a highway tree planting project. Within this project, 44.3 KM have been planted with ornamental and other tree seedlings and has also recently supported the County in Gazetting 39 County Hills (2,538 hectares), now designated as County Public Forest areas.

Hon. Tobiko kicked off the working tour with a visit to Kanyakine Boys High School, one of the most active schools in tree planting and management. The school’s forest cover is 60% of its 33-acre land area. The Cabinet Secretary led the school in planting over 1500 tree seedlings after which he presided over a forum with the school fraternity, in which he happens to be an alumni.

The entourage then proceeded to Meru University of Science and Technology for setting aside an annual tree planting day. The University in partnership with Kenya Forest Service has planted more than 30,000 tree seedlings since December 2018 and on this day the participants partnered with Kenya Forest Service has planted more than 30,000 tree seedlings since December 2018 and on this day the participants

KFS Chairman of the Board, Mr Peter Kinyua applauded Meru University of Science and Technology for setting aside an annual tree planting day. He said the day is particularly important because it boldly communicates the University’s commitment to environmental sustainability and also

In the evening, the delegation met with the Njuri Ncheke Council of Elders and also participated in a tree planting exercise at the Nchiru Shrine. The functions of the Njuri-Ncheke Council of Elders are to make and execute community laws, to listen to and settle disputes, and to pass on community knowledge and norms across the generations in their role as the custodians of traditional culture. The elders said tree planting is a critical activity of the community and is associated with conservation and preservation of the environment.

On the second day of the visit, the entourage visited Keiga Beat, Nyambene Forest Station where the Service has partnered with the Energy Ministry in a restoration programme. The programme brings together CFA and the Meru Youth Service. The CFA has rehabilitated 51.38 hectares. A balance of 48.62 is remaining of which 20 hectares is to be done by Meru Youth Service. To date, 729.8 hectares have been reclaimed from lantana Camara in Lower Imenti Forest Station. The CFA has been assured of additional support to establish bee farming. The abet Secretary was very much pleased by the achievements of this project and he asked the members of the Ministry and Agencies present to support the CFA as an appreciation where they committed to donate a total of 100 beehives to them.

They thereafter participated in the planting of Bamboo seedlings in Mbeu beat, Lower Imenti Forest Station where over 700 bamboo seedlings were planted within the catchment area. Bamboo is essential in the conservation of water catchments and has multiple uses. Hon. Keriako Tobiko called for the replacement of Eucalyptus trees planted in riparian zones with bamboo and noted bamboo is a suitable species for conservation of water catchments areas.

On the third and final day of the tour, the Meru County Governor, Hon. Kiraitu Murungi led the delegation on a tour of ecotourism sites within Ruthumbi Forest Station. The delegation visited lake Ellis which is 14,000 ft above sea level in Mt. Kenya. It was agreed to have a taskforce on Environment and Forestry comprising both National and County technical officers from the various agencies. KFS Chairman, Mr Peter Kinyua on behalf of the delegation thanked the Governor for hosting the team the entire period and for the productive relationship he has led between the County and National Governments.
The Chief Conservator of Forests, Mr Julius Kamau accompanied by the Deputy CCF Natural Forest Conservation & Management, Mrs Charity Munyasia Chief Officer Ecotourism and a host of field officers including Head of Conservancy Central, Ecosystem Conservators and Foresters joined in the launch of the National Recovery and Action Plan for the Mountain Bongo 2019-2023 that took place at the Mount Kenya Wildlife Conservancy where the Chief Guest was the Tourism and Wildlife Cabinet Secretary, Hon. Najib Balala.

The Mountain Bongo is listed as critically endangered in the IUCN red list of threatened species. This rare and beautiful African antelope species is endemic to Kenya and about 100 are remaining in the world. These are found in Mt. Kenya, Eburu and South-West Mau Forests. Kenya Forest Service is a critical partner in ensuring the security and growth in numbers of this critically endangered species. It is highly prized by game hunters and wildlife lovers alike for its rarity and stunningly handsome coat.

This Plan envisages viable, free-ranging and genetically representative populations of Mountain Bongo, thriving across intact historic mountain ecosystem ranges, cherished by Kenyans and the global community. It aims to secure a minimum population size for mountain bongo within their ranges in Kenya, to achieve a national population of 730 individuals over the next 50 years.

The Kenya Forest Service has allocated 776 acres within the Mt. Kenya Forest ecosystem for Mountain Bongo conservation. The land will be used for expansion of the current Bongo sanctuary. It will be fenced and paddocked to allow for breeding and the offspring who will not have had interactions with humans will eventually be released into the wild.

The announcement was made by the Chief Conservator of Forests Mr Julius Kamau when delivering his speech. He later emphasized the importance of collaboration between KFS & KWS, which is critical and essential in the protection of endangered species and directed all KFS field staff to work closely with their KWS counterparts for this purpose.

The bongo, *Tragelaphus eurycerus*, is the largest and heaviest African forest-dwelling antelope weighing up to 300kg. Its colour is bright chestnut red, becoming darker with age, and it has 12-14 transverse narrow white stripes on the shoulders, flanks and hindquarters. Both sexes have massive spiral horns with light yellowish tips, (Dorst and Dandelot, 1995).
The forestry sector in Kenya is getting revamped with Kenya Forest Service (KFS) seeking mutually beneficial tree planting partnerships with state corporations following a Presidential Directive for all state agencies to put aside at least 10% of their CSR budget for tree planting in a bid to achieve the targeted 10% forest cover by 2022.

To actualize this directive, KFS Chairman, Peter Kinyua has invited all public institutions to work with the Service to develop tree planting partnerships that will enable the country produce the targeted 350 million plantable tree seedlings per year so as to attain the 10% tree cover by 2022. Currently KFS is only able to produce 175 million tree seedlings in its nurseries countrywide thus a need to partner and increase the number more than two fold.

Parastatals that have already engaged with the Service include the Kenya Revenue Authority (KRA) which in its partnership will seek to increase revenue collection through areas of commercial tree growing in Kenya. KRA Chairman Ambassador Francis Muthaura noted that while Kenya has great potential to establish commercial forest plantations, it is among the highest importers of timber in the region through the border customs managed by KRA. With a progressive partnership, plans to establish tree nurseries to generate seedlings for both natural forest restoration and commercial plantation will increase Kenya’s ability to produce timber for trade and make Kenya an exporter of timber since the demand for timber in the region for construction has not been met.

The Agricultural Development Corporation (ADC) has committed 180,000 acres of their land to Kenya Forest Service for forestry development. In a meeting between KFS Chief Conservator of Forests Mr. Julius Kamau and ADC acting Managing Director Mr. Mohammed Bulle, ADC outlined interest in partnering with KFS in the protection of the vast woodlands in Kulalu/Galana which also harbor wildlife, natural forest conservation and promotion of commercial tree growing including fruit trees in its farms across the country.

On its part, the National Oil Corporation of Kenya (NOCK) is set to partner with the Service and has pledged to work with KFS and Community Forest Associations in the establishment of tree nurseries, restoration of ecotourism sites in forests across the country and promoting the use of affordable LPG as an alternative source of clean energy as opposed to charcoal and firewood.

The Kenya National Highways Authority (KENHA) will work with KFS in the design of road infrastructure development to see to it that tree planting is incorporated. The partnership will also ensure that burrow pits, quarry sites and road sides are rehabilitated by planting trees which will enhance the aesthetical value of these projects. Trees will also control noise pollution. KENHA with the support of KFS will establish tree nurseries for provision of seedlings for roadside rehabilitation.

Academic institutions have also expressed interest in partnership with the Service; Kenyatta University and the Multimedia University of Kenya for instance which have vast land at the main campuses are looking into how a portion of their land can be put into establishment of indigenous tree nurseries and planting of urban friendly trees. KU through the School of Environment Studies will work with KFS in establishment of tree nurseries which will be supervised by KFS extension officers together with the schools’ vibrant environment club.

The Teachers Service Commission through its nationwide workforce will look into how they can mobilize teachers and public schools to ensure that students are also involved in this national course.

KFS plays a pivotal role of coordinating tree planting as a state corporation established under the Forest Conservation and Management Act no 34 of 2016 with the mandate to provide for the development of sustainable management, including conservation and rational utilization of all forest resources for the socioeconomic development of the country and for connected purposes. All state corporations are invited to explore avenues of accelerating achievements of the Presidential directive.
Followed sustained reports of illegal cutting of trees in Mbooni Forest in Makueni County, the Kenya Forest Service (KFS) has interdicted four officers found to have failed to prevent the illegal activities. This followed thorough investigations instituted by the Chief Conservator of Forests (CCF) Mr. Julius Kamau upon visiting the forest station. The Service has also put in place measures to halt further destruction of the forest by deploying the Rapid Response Unit to the forest to crack down on perpetrators of forest destruction. Already a number of people found to be engaging in illegal forest activities have been arrested and presented to court to answer allegations of illegal forest activities.

Speaking at the station during a forest inspection tour, the KFS Chairman Mr. Peter Kinyua said that the Board will not tolerate laxity and complacency by people charged with the management of forests. While noting that a majority of staff were hard working and dedicated, he called on all staff to execute their duties with commitment. “As a Board, we will continue supporting our staff and building the capacity of the Service to carry out its mandate,” he said. “But we will not allow a few individuals to taint the good image of the Service,” warned the Chairman.

On his part, the CCF Mr. Julius Kamau has reiterated that all officers are expected to abide by the code of conduct for public officers and to further note that they are charged with a huge responsibility of managing one of the most important resources for the country. “We must take our responsibility seriously if we are to achieve our mandate,” he said. He urged directed the officers to enhance vigilance and embrace community participation in forest management and conservation noting that the public is integral especially in the prevention of illegal activities.

Noting the pivotal role of communities in supporting forest policing, Mr. Kamau called upon all forest adjacent communities and stakeholders to report any illegalities promptly. The CCF assured the public that prompt responses will be made to investigate all reports that will be received from members of the public.

Meanwhile the CCF Mr. Julius Kamau toured Makueni County to familiarize himself with forest management in the county. During the tour, the CCF paid a courtesy call on the County Commissioner Mr. Maalim Mohammed and held discussions on how to enhance forest conservation in Makueni County.

The County Commissioner briefed him on the current issues affecting forestry in the county. He informed the CCF that he had formed a multiagency security committee to look into allegations of illegal forest activities in Kavale forest block which confirmed that there were no illegal activities.

The CCF lauded the cordial relationship between the County Commissioner’s office and KFS in Makueni and the two agreed to work together towards the attainment of the 10% forest cover by establishing tree nurseries in the county.

The CCF who was accompanied by the KFS Commandant Mr. Alex Lemarkoko then over flew Mbooni Forest to assess the damage caused by fire in Katende and Mataa forest blocks. He observed that the fire which started on 31st June has now been extinguished thanks to efforts by the forest officers assisted by members of the community. He commended the forest officers for their tireless work in managing forests in the county. The CCF also thanked the community for the good working relationship with KFS and responding to calls for assistance in managing forest fire outbreaks.
Have you ever asked yourself this question “why forests”? There is a good reason to do so. Forests are an overlooked and undervalued asset in the struggle to achieve SDG’s goals.

Somewhat less appreciated are the mostly invisible ways that forest-based ecosystem services contribute to development objectives, and how deforestation can undermine their achievement.

While attempts have been made to mobilize forest goods and services as a pathway out of poverty for rural communities, not enough attention has been given to deforestation as a highway to poverty.

Conversion of forests to other land uses eliminates income from wild products, and leaves landscapes less resilient to landslides, floods and other natural disasters events that can damage brick-and-mortar infrastructure (SDG 11) and set back income growth for decades (SDG 1).

Deforestation also affects agricultural productivity, a key weapon in the fight to end hunger (SDG 2). Forest-based birds, bats and bees provide essential pollination and pest control. Forested watersheds provide water for irrigation, and help maintain the aquatic habitat for the inland fisheries that nourish millions.

Loss of tree cover also affects the water cycle, threatening to dry up the flying rivers that transport water vapor from forest transpiration and fall as rain on faraway agricultural fields.

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However, the loss and degradation of forests exacerbate the problem of food insecurity both directly and indirectly: directly, by affecting the availability of fruits and other forest- and tree-based diets, and indirectly by modifying ecological factors important for crop and livestock production. At the same time the growing demand for food, fibres, energy and other goods produced on the land often leads to market pressures for exploitation. This can result in forest destruction unless managed through appropriate governance systems and institutions.

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NIC GROUP TREE PLANTING CHANGE THE STORY

By Sylvester Okal

KFS in partnership with NIC Group, Kenya Defence Forces and Greenbelt Movement conducted a tree planting exercise at Kibiko Forest block in Ngong. A total of 4,000 assorted indigenous tree seedlings were planted on 4.5Ha.

This tree planting exercise is being implemented through a movement dubbed ‘Change The Story’ which is being spearheaded by the private sector in Kenya. The aim of the campaign is to spark a tree planting initiative by raising consciousness of every Kenyan to go out and plant trees by addressing the deforestation challenges in watershed areas.

The change the story initiative targets to plant a total of 30 million trees as its contribution to the attainment of the 10% tree cover by 2022.

This exercise was led by the chief conservator of forests, Mr. Julius Kamau and NIC Group managing director Mr. John Gachora. The event was also attended by the Kenya Defence Forces officers who took part in tree planting, members of the media from royal media services, members of Ngong Metro Community Forest Association and students from local schools. By the time of tree planting day, a total of 18Ha has already been planted in Kibiko Forest block under the Change The Story initiative.

SHOWCASING INNOVATION IN FORESTRY

By Gerald Ngugi

Following years of extensive scientific and knowledge-based research aimed at conserving forests and achieving biodiversity, the KEFRI Open Day that took place on May 29th, 2019 sought to sensitize the public on forest products as well as showcase many of these products such as bamboo furniture, improved kilns for charcoal production, cosmetic products from Aloe, improved equipment for efficient on-farm tree processing among others.

This platform was aimed at creating awareness and a market for the forest products ultimately promoting sustainable use and appreciation of forests. The guests were educated on the techniques and innovations used in the production process and value-addition of the forest products and got the opportunity to purchase and test out a variety of the products on display.

Kenya Forest Service (KFS) also had a stand displaying various seedlings and informational documents that are essential in educating the public on the proper management and utilization of forests and the forest ecosystem. The foresters present at the stand sensitized the guests on the various agroforestry, forest conservation and management practices that the Service is undertaking thus boosting public interest and knowledge in active involvement on the area of conservation.

In a nutshell, the event offered a fun educational day for family, students and adults interested in forest products as well as forest innovation and allowing technical experts and interested parties to interact boosting stakeholder participation and knowledge. With the country aiming to achieve the 10% forest cover by 2022, it is important that different stakeholders in forestry organize Open Days that will help share knowledge on conservation with the public and other stakeholders.
ARABUKO SOKOKE FOREST RECOGNIZED BY UNESCO AS A BIOSPHERE RESERVE

By James Mwang’ombe

A rabuko Sokoke Forest has been officially recognised as a Biosphere Reserve (BR) by UNESCO at a meeting of the Man and Biosphere International Coordinating Council (MAB-ICC) which took place in Paris, France in June 2019.

Biosphere reserves are areas of terrestrial and coastal/marine ecosystems or a combination thereof which are internationally recognized within the framework of UNESCO’s Programme on Man and the Biosphere (MAB) under the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves.

These reserves are nominated by national governments. They are designed to deal with one of the most important questions the world faces today: How can conservation of biodiversity and biological resources be reconciled with their sustainable use? An effective biosphere reserve involves natural and social scientists; conservation and development groups; management authorities and local communities – all working together on this complex issue.

The concept of biosphere reserves was originated by a Task Force of UNESCO and launched in 1976. Each reserve must meet a minimal set of criteria and adhere to a minimal set of conditions before being admitted to the Network. Each biosphere reserve is intended to fulfil three complementary functions: a conservation function which is meant to preserve genetic resources, species, ecosystems and landscapes. A development function meant to foster sustainable economic and human development, and a logistic support function which is supposed to support demonstration projects, environmental education and training as well as research and monitoring related to local, national and global issues of conservation and sustainable development.

Physically, each biosphere reserve should contain three elements: core areas which are securely protected sites for conserving biological diversity, monitoring minimally disturbed ecosystems, and undertaking non-destructive research and other low-impact uses (such as education). Another element is a clearly identified buffer zone, which usually surrounds or adjoins the core areas, and is used for co-operative activities compatible with sound ecological practices, including environmental education, recreation, ecotourism and applied and basic research. The other important element is a flexible transition area which may contain a variety of agricultural activities, settlements and other uses and in which local communities, management agencies, scientists, non-governmental organizations, cultural groups, economic interests and other stakeholders work together to manage and sustainably develop the area’s resources.

There are six biosphere reserves in Kenya. These are; Mount Kenya, Mount Kulal, Malindi-Watamu, Kiunga, Amboseli including Namanga Forest and Mount Elgon.

The biosphere reserves are reviewed every ten years as per the requirements/guidelines of the Seville Strategy. The review is undertaken to assess whether the BRs still serve the purpose for which they were designated and if there are changes in legal status, management, ownership, size and zonation. A number of the BRs have undergone review among them Mt. Kenya. Mt. Kulal, Malindi-Watamu, Kiunga and Amboseli. The reviews have taken into recognition the legislative provisions that have taken place since they were first designated.

In the recent reviews, there have been greater recognition of the presence of KFS as being among the institutions managing them with the recognition of gazetted forests as protected areas and thus being given the status of a core zone unlike before where they recognised as buffer or transition zones. Consequently, the review of the Malindi-Watamu BR undertaken in 2017/8 recognised Arabuko Sokoke as a core zone in addition to the Malindi and Watamu Marine reserves. This recognition led to the re-designation of Malindi-Watamu BR as “Malindi-Watamu-Arabuko Sokoke Biosphere Reserve” raising the profile of gazetted forests. This also brings on board the recognition of Community Forest Associations (CFA) as community institutions involved in the management of a BR. A BR management team/committee is thus being formed as per the requirements of UNESCO’s Man & Biosphere Reserve programme.

The designation of an area as a BR confers a number of advantages including international recognition as an area important for biodiversity conservation, economic and social development and as well as maintenance of associated cultural values.
Involving Communities in Forest Management

By Leakey Sonkoyo and Bulbul Ratemo

The long-awaited elections of officials for the Mbooni Community Forest Association took place at Kikima Social Hall in an exercise presided over by the Independent Elections and Boundaries Commission (IEBC) and attended by members of the community from the eleven forest blocks that make up Mbooni Forest Station. Those elected to leadership positions are; John Kioko Mutua who is the new Chairman, James Mutiso Mbithuka as the Vice Chairman and Nicodemus Mwanzia Masila who will become the Secretary of the CFA. Also elected were; Alex Ndolo Mainga who is the Vice Secretary, Damaris Mbithe Kyalu who will be the Treasurer and Phiader Mueni Kivuva a co-opted official of the six-member executive committee.

The successful elections were a culmination of over three weeks of community sensitization barazas which were held in all the villages adjacent to the forest led by the CFA Coordination Officer Ms. Josyline Nthambu.

On hand to witness the historic elections that ushered in a new era for forest conservation in Makueni County were the Eastern Head of Conservancy (HOC) Ms Beatrice Mbula, the Makueni Ecosystem Conservator (EC) Mr. Jefferson Kitti among other local leaders and representatives from the County Government, Senator’s office and the office of the County Commissioner among other leaders.

The HOC Ms. Mbula congratulated the new office holders and urged them to work in harmony with all stakeholders for the benefit of the local community and the conservation of Mbooni Forest.

The Forest Conservation and Management Act stipulates that all gazetted forests should be managed in collaboration with forest adjacent communities using Participatory Forest Management Plans (PFMP). These are documents drawn up in consultation between the CFA and KFS and enumerates all the activities that the community can undertake in the forest. The PFMP also stipulates the responsibility of each party in the sustainable management of the forest.

Meanwhile, members of Naromoru CFA in Nyeri County have agreed to resolve their differences and carry out a peaceful election that will usher in new leadership to steer the once vibrant CFA to greater heights. This follows misunderstandings that resulted in chaotic elections that aborted in August last year. Following these disputes KFS decided to step in as an arbitrator to bring the parties together and ensure proper participation of the Community in the management of Naromoru Forest as outlined in the Forest Conservation and Management Act of 2016 which gives communities living adjacent to forests a legal framework for participating in forest management through CFAs.

Members of the CFA have together come up with an action plan that will guide the process leading to the election of new officials which is scheduled to take place on 30th August this year. The CFA also nominated a committee which is spearheading the sensitisation of the community about their role in forest management through public barazas as well as updating the CFA’s register.

The station which is 1992.7 ha is made up of 11 forest blocks on several hilltops and serve as important water catchment areas for the entire Makueni County and beyond.

The climatic condition for the area makes Mbooni Sub-county ideal for agriculture which supports the economy of a huge population in the region. The forest is also a source of livelihood for many people who live around it. It is for this reason that community involvement in its management is crucial.
The African Forest Forum—A New Narrative for African Forestry

By Bulbul Ratemo

The African Forest Forum commemorated a decade of its work in African forestry on May 22, 2019 at Amani Gardens in Karura Forest. The celebration coincided with the launch of eight training compendiums on various aspects of climate change in forestry, as well as a book titled, “The State of Forestry in Africa: Opportunities and Challenges”. The celebration was hosted in collaboration with Kenya Forest Service (KFS) and the Kenya Forestry Research Institute (KEFRI) who are both pivotal actors in the research and management of forestry in Kenya.

Prior to the anniversary celebration, AFF hosted a two day regional workshop on, “sharing of information, knowledge and experiences in African forestry. The workshop was aimed at building capacity among African forestry stakeholders, thus the plenary sessions were centred on the SFM programme framework for Africa, State and future of forest certification in Africa, status of forest financing in Africa, climate change challenges and opportunities in African forestry and strengthening implementation of REDD+

Various factors were projected during the week-long celebration that highlighted the steps that Africa has taken in the pursuit to conserve the environment while promoting sustainable development in line with the African Union Agenda 2063.

Since the onset of international agreements and protocols, Africa has always struggled to establish a requisite position on the negotiating table due to lack of adequate economic foundation or basically lack of soft power. In its efforts to realize the “African Union Agenda 2063”, the continent needs to position itself in the international sphere as a region with the adequate capacity required to lead international dialogue so as to leverage international policies in its favour.

As touched on above, the Agenda 2063 blueprint seeks to foster inclusive social and economic development in which the environment is at the centre of the process, with forests being the nucleus of the environment. African forests translates to 23% of the land area representing a natural capital that supports rural livelihoods, national economies, and has considerable potential in the global economy. With energy being a major component of driving human development, it is important to note that about 82% of household energy in Africa is derived from wood thus forests posing as a critical pillar in energy development. On the other hand, the African dry forests sandwich the agricultural belt, and are critical to agricultural development. The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) estimates that agriculture contributes to about 15% of the total GDP of Africa. When all these benefits are combined, one clearly sees that the forests are critical to the socio-economic development and environmental sustainability of the continent.

However, these pillars of African livelihood that represent the future of the continent are under threat due to formulation and implementation of policies that are tailored to suit the developed economies. With Africa being the ‘lungs of the world’, many environmental policies are generated without evidence from an African perspective. There is lack of provision of technical information form African research, lack of proper policies and avenues to help mobilize financial resources to support strategic intervention, and institutional strengthening in many African states.

In this respect, between 2003 and 2008 and with funding from the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA) a project on Sustainable Forest Management (SFM) was implemented in two phases. The program was aimed at identifying positive and negative lessons from forest activities, programmes and projects that had been implemented in Africa. It also sought to enrich its findings through analysing the relevance, to Africa, of lessons from Latin America, Asia and Sweden. The second phase was to establish an African Forest Forum (AFF) that could sustain the momentum of an independent and objective analysis, as well as provide sound advice and advocacy to backstop African leaders in decisions concerning the management of national forest resources and in various global fora.

To this date, the AFF has been able to project the state and future of forest certification in Africa, strengthening the implementation of REDD+ and championing forest financing in Africa. These were factors that lacked the knowledge-based backing in previous times but AFF has now been able to bridge the gap between science-based knowledge and implementation of policies from an African context. The AFF has also been at the forefront of policy dialogues on the implementation of the UN Strategic Plan for Forests 2017-2030 (UNSFPP) and the UNFF’s input at the UN High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLFP) at the UN headquarters in New York. All these factors represent the considerable efforts that the AFF has put in the last ten years to help usher in a new Africa.

The Pan-African delegates present lauded the efforts by the Kenya Forest Service and the Friends of Karura on their efforts in rehabilitating Karura Forest and pointed it out as a case study for other African countries to learn from and take back home with..
Forest resources are scarce with competing uses among various users. For a scarce resource some of the fundamental questions which arise during their utilization is how those resources are allocated to different uses and users, how the resources are distributed among users and how the quantity (scale) available is maintained over time and space. This article defines allocation, distribution and scale within the context of sustainable forest management and goes a step further to propose policy instruments which will achieve efficient allocation and fair distribution of forest resource, and sustainable scale.

Allocation refers to relative division of forest resources among various product uses. What volume of trees goes to production of paper, plywood, medium density fiber board (MDF), firewood, sawn timber etc. A good allocation is that which is efficiency that is, the one which will generate the highest return per shilling invested and in conformity with the user’s ability to pay.

Distribution refers to the relative division of forest resources among alternative people (usually users). How much trees goes to me, you and the future generation. A good distribution is the one which is fair and just.

Scale refers to physical volume of matter as raw material from the environment through a manufacturing process to final output. For example, quantity of logs fed into a sawmill line and converted to timber and other by-products (throughput).

Policy instruments for efficient allocation, fair and just distribution, and sustainable scale

Economists propose a basic rule that every independent policy goal must have an independent policy instrument. This is a deviate from the common analogy ‘kill two birds with one stone’. The analogy holds if the birds are roosting in the same hedge and flying in one direction. But in this case we have three birds (allocation, distribution and scale) flying in different directions. These calls for design of policy instruments that will ensure the inter-dependent goals of efficient allocation, fair distribution and sustainable scale are so

that the ultimate goal of sustainable forest management is achieved.

Policy instruments to address allocation

Usually allocation issues centers around how scarce resource is allocated to different uses.

Firstly, the different uses of a forest resource are identified and form basis for defining forest management objectives. After identification of use and users, user rights are allocated to users through issuance of licenses and permits for example grazing, water user permits, concession leasing through payments of rents and entry fee.

For distribution, the fundamental question is how do we ensure that the allocation of user rights is fairly distributed among individuals, households and firms who use forest goods and services, that is how do we ensure that trees harvesting permits are fairly distributed among saw millers? How are few forest cultivation permits going to be fairly distributed among members of Community Forest Association (CFA)?

While price mechanism is used to allocate rights, other issues beyond price and ability to pay must be considered. These include the consideration that when distributing forest resources to users, we must also consider trust ship of the poor, the future generation and non-human species. Very few policy instruments are available for addressing the problem of distribution. However, just distribution is not a matter that can be swept under the carpet. Community can be segmented according to their resource endowment, landless, gender, widows, farm ownership size, ability to invest. This somehow can lead to fair allocation and distribution of resources to users. Other mechanisms include biding where a user is restricted to biding limited quantities.

Policy instruments for efficient allocation, fair and just distribution, and sustainable scale

What policy instruments ensure the scale extracted from forest is sustainable and also is increased subject to constraints? Policy instruments such as management of forests through the concepts of sustainable yield is one

of the earliest criteria. Others are allowable cut where extraction is equal to growth of forests. Scale can be increased through conservation of existing forests, rehabilitation of degraded forests, reforestation, improvement of tree growth through silviculture (Pruning, thinning). Output from same quantity of raw materials can be improved through efficient wood processing technologies.

To maintain scale forests must be protected against illegal felling, encroachment and forest fires. This may be achieved by securing forests through fencing, gazettment, acquisition of title, compulsory acquisition of environmental sensitive areas accompanied by the requisite compensation and enhancement of community participation in forest management. Incentives for afforestation include tax exemptions, rebates, green bonds and efficient extension services.

Managing forests under forest management plans and use of environmental impact assessment may enhance sustainable forest management that meets social, economic and environmental criteria.

As we continue to utilize forest resources, it is important to note that forests has no obligation to respond to increased stress caused by overexploitation by sacrificing its services in order of their increased importance to us, conveniently giving use a predictable supply of forest goods and services. This places a heavy burden on us to ensure that forests are sustainably managed to meet our needs and wants without compromising the needs and wants of the future generations.
1. The President meets with the CCF at State House Nairobi.

2. The Environment and Forestry Cabinet Secretary, Hon. Keriako Tobiko leads a delegation from the Regional Dialogue on Indigenous People and Southern Civil Society organizations in a tree planting exercise at Karura Forest where over 240 indigenous trees were planted.

3. Members of Capacity Development Project for Sustainable Forest Management in the Republic of Kenya (CADEP-SFM) pose for a group photo when they paid a courtesy call to the Chief Conservator of Forests Mr Julius Kamau at the KFS headquarters, Karura.

4. The KFS Board Chairman Mr Peter Kinyua poses for a photo with a trophy warded to him by Kakamega County Governor, H.E Hon. Wycliffe Oparanya after his team, Car No. 23, emerged the highest fundraisers raising a total amount of Ksh. 19 million at the 2019 Rhino Charge in Nannapa Conservancy, Isiolo.

5. The Chief Conservator of Forests Mr Julius Kamau poses for a photo with KFS Airwing staff when he visited the KFS Hangar to familiarize himself with its functions and operations at Wilson Airport.

6. Delegates at the Forestry Society of Kenya 2019 Policy Dialogue led by the Chief Conservator of Forests Mr Julius Kamau pose for a group photo at the KEFRI headquarters in Muguga.


8. EC Machakos County Ms Mary Mwai poses with the best environmental standards trophy during the Machakos regional ASK show planned by KFS staff.

9. Students of Ontulili Boys High School pose for a photo with five laptops donated to the school by Kenya Forest Service together with Amadeus East Africa for enhancing Information Technology and Environment education.

10. Members of VAJIKI CFA participating in a tree planting activity in Vanga, Kwale County during the launch of the CFA’s Participatory Forest Management Plan.
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Human Rights and Climate Change

By Benedetta Wasonga

As the effects of climate change continue to be felt all over the world without discrimination of society class, appreciation of its future transformational impact on numerous areas is set to grow. Among these, human rights concerns are particularly heightened. They include forced mass migration, increased disease incidence and strain on healthcare systems, threatened food and water security, the disappearance and degradation of shelter, land, livelihoods and cultures, and the threat of conflict due to scramble for scarce resource.

Climate change is a reality that cannot be run away from and that human-made greenhouse gas emissions are its main cause. This is according to the 5th Assessment Report (2014) of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). The report highlighted the ever increasing occurrences of extreme and irregular weather patterns thereby causing natural disasters such as floods, droughts, rising sea-levels, heat waves, desertification, water shortages, and the increase in tropical and vector-borne diseases as some of the adverse impacts of climate change. These phenomena directly and indirectly threaten the full and effectual enjoyment and realization of a wide range of human rights by people all over the world, including the right to life, health, food, water and sanitation, housing, self-determination, culture and development among other rights.

The negative impacts of climate change are in most cases borne by people and communities who are already in disadvantageous situations owing to their geographical positioning, poverty, gender, age, disability, cultural or ethnic background, among others that have historically contributed the least to greenhouse gas emissions. In particular, persons, communities and even entire States that occupy and rely upon low-lying coastal lands, arid and semi lands, and other fragile ecosystems and at risk territories for their housing and subsistence are exposed to the greatest threats from climate change.

The harmful and destructive impacts occasioned by climate change are universal and subject to increase exponentially according to the degree of climate change that ultimately takes place. Climate change, therefore, requires an inclusive, comprehensive and national, regional and global rights-based response. The Human Rights Council (HRC), its special procedures mechanisms, and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) have brought renewed attention to human rights and climate change through a series of resolutions, reports, and activities on the subject while partnering with governments and environmental entities by advocating for human rights based approach to climate change. The Preamble of the Paris Agreement to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change makes it clear that all States “should, when taking action to address climate change, respect, promote and consider their respective obligations on human rights”.

The OHCHR in its effort to address the concern highlights key information on Human Rights and Climate Change and the essential obligations and responsibilities of States and other duty-bearers (including businesses and multinational corporations that contribute to greenhouse gas emissions) and their implications for climate change-related agreements, policies, and actions. In order to promote policy coherence that ensures climate change mitigation and adaptation efforts are adequate, sufficiently ambitious, non-discriminatory and otherwise compliant with human rights obligations, certain factors should be considered in all climate action which include but not limited to mitigating climate change and preventing its negative human rights impacts, ensuring that all persons have the necessary capacity to adapt to climate change, ensure accountability and effective remedy for human rights harms caused by climate change, mobilize maximum available resources for sustainable human rights-based development, protect human rights from business harms, guarantee equality and non-discrimination and ensure meaningful and informed participation of all people.

“If you destroy nature, nature will destroy you” – Prof. Wangari Maathai.
Ultimate Sacrifice of Forest Conservation

By Benedetta Wasonga

Kenya is a land blessed with an abundance of natural capital ranging from minerals to wildlife. However, no resource shines as bright as forests. Forests are the heartbeat of the country, feeding the rivers that flow and nourish lowlands and supply electricity to support the population.

This delicate ecosystem is in danger of collapsing or being depleted as illegal logging, deforestation, over grazing, charcoal production, ill-planned settlements, agricultural and urban expansion take up more forest land each day. This ultimately creates the risk of human-wildlife conflict and eco-system plundering. For that reason, Kenya Forest Service tasked with managing this threatened resource, has an Enforcement and Compliance Unit that comprises of rangers tasked with protecting this invaluable resource.

Nevertheless, as the Service works tirelessly in pursuit to achieve the 10% forest cover through protection, behind it there is a fallen ranger whose family has been left without a son or daughter, brother or sister, an uncle or an aunt and a father or a mother. A bread winner who left this world in the line of duty while robustly defending and protecting this significant and priceless resource. A ranger, who has been maimed, wounded or lost their eye sight. These men and women continue to face many dangers in their day-to-day operations. They risk injuries or death as they perform this noble duty and in some cases, simply wearing a uniform may get them attacked.

Incident reports of life threatening situations are not uncommon in the line of duty of a forest ranger. Illegal loggers, criminal gangs and cartels, poachers and other enemies lurk ready to ambush the officers. Between 2012 and 2016, over 26 deaths and 18 injuries were reported. Many of whom succumbed to vicious attacks by wild animals, illegal loggers and criminal gangs whose thirst for forest destruction and greed for forest land is unmatched.

They also brave harsh and unforgiving terrains. It is easy to get lost deep inside the forest forcing them to endure harsh conditions for days until they are rescued. Forest fires also pose a danger to them. They are expected to put out forest fires while suffering shortage in personnel and vast amounts of ground to cover. With drier seasons as an accelerant in intensity, size and frequency of these fires, it is usually human activities such as poaching, burning agricultural land before or after cultivation, illegal honey harvesting and illegal bhang farming that are the major catalysts. Curtailing the effects of forest fires is dangerous work involving close encounters with fires which in some cases may cause injuries as well as difficult breathing conditions.

With these and many more impediments to the job, it is commendable the level of dedication these men and women display each day as they protect our forests. It is also admirable that every year more and more recruits enlist to the Service. The rangers are unsung heroes with achievements and valour that the average Kenyan will never know and to whom we owe our debt to as a nation.

However, this is not to say that there have been no cases of misconduct. Several incidences have occurred and may as well continue to occur in future where a ranger may work against the values, principles and mandate of the Service. However, in the event of a breach in the Service statutes, the enforcement wing of the Service is mandated to carry out investigations and take punitive action as deemed necessary together with the arm of government charged with maintaining law and order.

Working in partnership with the forest adjacent communities, conservation projects such as tree planting and community networks to curb criminal activities such as illegal logging are gaining traction as a result of the favourable cooperation.
The government of France in June launched a 1 million Euros mangrove trees project following President Emmanuel Macron’s trip to Kenya in March. Dubbed “Mikoko project”, it was ceremoniously launched at the Kenya Forest Service Headquarters, Karura and was graced by French Ambassador to Kenya, Her Excellency Mrs Aline Muster - Menager, Conservation Secretary Ministry of Environment and Forestry, Mr Gideon Gathaara and Chief Conservator of Forests, Julius Kamau. The Project is aimed at restoring and conserving mangrove forests to ensure environmental sustainability and will run for two years.

Mangrove forests in Kenya cover about 61,271 ha, representing approximately 3% of the natural forest cover or less than 1% of the national land area. About 59% of these forests occur in Lamu County. All nine mangrove species in the Western Indian Ocean region are found in Kenya, with Rhizophora mucronata (or mkoko) and Ceriopstagal (mkandaa) being the most dominant.

To ensure the protection and sustainable utilization of mangroves, KFS spearheaded the development of a comprehensive Mangrove management plan in collaboration with other partner organizations in compliance with Forest Conservation and Management Act 2016, which provides for preparation of management plans for all gazetted forests. The Plan embraces collaborative and participatory approaches in forest resource governance that leads to ownership of the initiatives by the forest -adjacent communities and enhanced livelihoods.

The Mikoko Project to be based in Lamu County will focus on generating important scientific information about mangroves, to inform best practices for their conservation. Mikoko Project will also enhance the development of the Blue Economy which targets to protect Kenya’s marine environment and fragile coastal ecosystems and preserve biodiversity in the Indian Ocean.

KFS will work with the Kenya Forestry Research Institute, French National Research Institute for Sustainable Development (IRD) and French Agriculture Research Centre for International Development (CIRAD) among other partner organizations.

The Chief Conservator of Forests, Mr Julius Kamau said he was indeed grateful for the trust and confidence that the Republic of France has bestowed in supporting this project and that the partnership between various institutions will provide scientific information and capacity building for sustainable conservation, management and development of mangroves. “Mangrove forests play a critical ecological and socio-economic role. Ecologically, the mangroves provide important habitat and breeding ground for fish and other fauna.” Mr Kamau said.

In November last year, H.E President Uhuru Kenyatta called for global cooperation for success in the management of global aquatic resources for sustainable global development and he promised that the government would step up efforts to boost the blue economy. Macron’s trip was aimed at building partnership and corporation in areas related to the blue economy and The Service is grateful for the fruits that trip bore.
IV pandemic continues to be a major public health issue in Kenya. Kenya Forest Service (KFS) has not been left out from the HIV infection network either. As a result of this realization, the Service is making deliberate efforts in fighting HIV among its target population using multi-faceted approach anchored under the NACC guideline framework vision, ‘A Kenya Free of HIV infections, stigma and AIDS related deaths’. The Service workplace policy on HIV/AIDS overall goal is to contribute towards a decrease in new HIV infections and AIDS-related morbidity and mortality in Kenya, by implementing quality and expanded HIV prevention, care and treatment to KFS staff, their families and CFA’s.

A number of HIV interventions that are implemented by the Service, focus on preventing the transmission of HIV through a complementary combination of behavioral, biomedical and structural strategies. The objectives of the coalition interventions are to ensure effective prevention programme scale-up to the target population of the Service under the mainstreaming agenda. The key messages echoed by all HIV interventions carried out by the Service include: Protect yourself from HIV infection, know your HIV status, seek treatment, adhere to medication, and avoid stigma and discrimination to people living with HIV virus.

Currently, four Conservancies namely Nairobi, Central Highlands, Mau and Kenya Forestry College (KFC) Londiani program areas are implementing varied evidence behavioral intervention (EBI’s) tailor made for specific age group. Operationalisation of the remaining Conservancies is on course.

In regard to HIV Prevention, the Service adopted the National Guidelines anchored in the 90-90-90 strategy. The first 90 requires that at least 90% of the target population be reached with HIV testing services (HTS). In this front, the Service is implementing combined interventions that include EBI’s and HTS to all eligible clients while observing confidentiality issues. Second 90 postulates linking at least 90% of eligible clients to care and treatment. To realise this goal, the Service in partnership with Elizabeth Glazer Pediatric AIDS Foundation (EGPAF), purchased and handed over varied Laboratory Equipments to Kenya Forestry College-Londiani in readiness to initiate care and treatment services. Last 90 advocates for viral suppression for at least 90% of clients on care and treatment. The Service is in the process of actualising this goal by initiating care and treatment services in KFC Londiani.

Finally, Service through Aids Control Unit is encouraging everyone to know his/her HIV status, adhere to medication, and avoid stigma and discrimination.

Kenya Forestry College (KFC) is legally established under section 17 of the Forest Conservation and Management Act No 34 of 2016. Our mandate is to provide quality training and education for sustainable management and utilization of forests and allied resources. Kenya Forestry College (KFC) is a technical training institution which is the training arm of Kenya Forest Service, a Parastatal within the Ministry of Environment and Forestry.

Training Programmes offered by the College:

- Diploma in Forestry.
- Certificate in Forestry.
- Short forestry related courses (sawmilling, tree Nursery management, forest management, ICT)
- Paramilitary training for law enforcement officers.
- Staff refresher courses for serving persons.

Starting from January 2020 we will be offering the following programmes:

- Craft Certificate in Apiculture Management
- Artisan Certificate in Bee Hives and Bee Equipment
- National Vocational Certificate II in Horticulture Nursery Management
- Craft Certificate in Business Management
- National Diploma in Environment Management

Kenya Forestry College is both TVETA and KUCCPS registered training institution.

For further information regarding the College, contact the Principal

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The 2019 Rhino Charge which is organized by the Rhino Ark Kenya Charitable Trust took place on 1st June 2019 at Nannapa Conservancy, Isiolo County. It marked the 31st edition of The Charge since its inception and saw 57 teams battling it out under the scorching sun through bushes, rocks, and valleys for an endurance run where the participants use their skill and judgement to navigate their way around 13 checkpoints in 10 hours.

Since its inception in 1989, the event has raised over 16 million US Dollars and funds raised from this activity are used for the conservation of forests around the country. The Kenya Forest Service has been a major beneficiary of these funds have already benefited from the fencing of the entire Aberdares Forest and the proceeds of this year’s Charge were going to the fencing of Mt. Kenya Forest Ecosystem, fencing of Kakamega Forest and fencing of Eburu Forest which is part of the Mau Forest Complex.

This year’s Rhino Charge event raised over Ksh. 156 million. Car No. 48, driven by Mark Glen and team emerged as the overall winner after completing all 13 guard posts with zero violations and penalties covering a total distance of 30.187 kilometers. The highest fundraiser was the Kenya Forest Service Board Chair, Peter Kinyua in car No. 23 with the second being Adil Khawaja in Car No. 44 raising Ksh. 17 million.

Kenya Forest Service Chief Conservator of Forests, Mr. Julius Kamau, in his remarks thanked the Rhino Ark, Chargers and Sponsors urging them to remain committed to a progressive public-private partnership. The CCF also stated that the raised amount will go towards complementing KFS Forest Conservation and Protection efforts.

During the ceremony His Excellency the Governor of Kakamega Hon. Wycliffe Oparanya reaffirmed that his County Government has committed Ksh 100 million towards the fencing of Kakamega Forest and Rhino Ark also donated Ksh 4.6 million to the host community towards the support of a community project.

The event aimed to raise funds to support the activities of the Rhino Ark Charitable Trust is committed to conserving Kenya’s mountain range ecosystems, protecting water catchment areas, reducing human-wildlife conflict and promoting community harmony and prosperity. Working closely with government agencies like the Kenya Forest Service and the Kenya Water Towers Agency, Rhino Ark advocates for the protection of endangered wildlife habitats and the conservation of forests with the use of science to assess possible effects and derive several conservation solutions.
On Friday, 18th May 2019, the newly appointed Chief Conservator of Forests Julius Kamau, meeting his new staff for the first time at a bi-monthly staff breakfast, initiated Monday lunch hour interdenominational prayer meeting for all staff. These prayer meetings, already a weekly staple for the KFS family, are held in the tented area behind the Information Centre to worship and put the week in God’s hands.

These meetings are led by the head of chaplaincy Bishop Supt Amos Lapiyio Lapiyio Dapash, a guest speaker and attended by KFS staff members.

The weekly meetings are divided between denominations as the choir, the sermon and the procedure are chosen according to the denomination leads the service. However, the KFS Choir is a constant pleasure offering presentations every week.

Based on Isaiah 43:18-19 “Remember ye not the former things, neither consider the things of old. Behold I will do a new thing; now it shall spring forth; shall ye not know it...”, the Chaplaincy seek to usher in a new age for KFS by putting God first in the duties.

These prayers have continued to bring members together and have boosted workforce morale.

Mbooni Forest Station

Mbooni Forest station is one of the five forest stations in Makueni County situated on Mbooni Hills at an elevation of 5500 feet above sea level in Makueni County. The others are Kibwezi, Makuli, Nthangu and Kilungu Forests stations. The station is made up of eleven hilltops measuring 1992.7 ha which including; South Mbooni, North Mbooni, Utangwa, Ikilisa, Ngunguu, Kitoo, Mataa, Katende, Utuneni, Tulimani and Kiteta forest blocks. This is one of the older forest stations in the country which was gazetted in the colonial times. The forest blocks (hilltops) were gazetted separately on various dates between 1933 and 1960.

The forest is composed of mainly plantations which occupy 1667ha while the natural forests occupy about 325ha. The main species found in the forest include; various subspecies of eucalypts, cupressus, pinus, and gravelia. The forest is also home to podocarpus latifolias and juniperus procera among other indigenous species.

The major community activities taking place in the forest include; apiary, grazing, firewood collection among others. The forest is also a water catchment for the low-lying parts of the county hosts the Mulima Dam that supplies water to downhill communities.
What is the poorest kind of plant in the forest?
A vine, because it can’t support itself.

Where do you find forests without trees, roads without cars, and towns without houses?
On a map.

How do you get a one armed man out of a tree?
You wave at him.

What did the tree do when the bank closed?
It started a new branch.
Arches demonstrating the strength of laminated timber
**Olea welwitschii**

**English Name:** Elgon olive, Elgon teak  
**Local Names:** Musuga

**Description**

Olea welwitschii is a large deciduous tree with attractive timber and is found in lowland rain forest to upland dry evergreen forest, 750-2,000 m. In Kenya it grows in lower montane and moist lowland tropical forests and is abundant in Mt Elgon areas. Elgon teak appears in mixed hardwood forests. The tree can reach a height of 25 m, large ascending branches and a small crown. Fairly large buttresses usually present. Bark is usually pale grey to white, grooved vertically. Leaves are opposite and oval, to 5 to 15 cm with the tip drawn out and pointed. Elgon Teak has very many small and white flowers in sprays to 8 cm long.

**Ecology and distribution**

Elgon Teak is found in Angola, Zambia, Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda in lowland rain forest to upland dry evergreen forest, 750-2,000 m above sea level. It is characteristic of humid mountain forest.

**Propagation**

Elgon Teak is propagated mainly from seeds. Germination of the seeds involves pretreatment to remove dormancy arising from the thick pericarp. Pretreatment involves alternate wetting and drying of the seed. The seeds are soaked in water for 12 hours and then spread to dry in the sun for 12 hours. This is repeated for 10–14 days and then the seeds are sown in shallow germination beds of coarse peat covered by sand. The seeds then germinate after 15 to 30 days.

**End Uses**

This species is used for Firewood (branches), charcoal, timber (furniture), medicine (bark). Other uses include mulch soil conservation, nitrogen fixing building bridges and construction of ship and as a wind breaker.