

Forester

Issue #32 January - June 2022



This is a bi-annual publication of the Kenya Forest Service

TREES FOR BETTER LIVES



**KENYA JOINS THE
WORLD IN MARKING
UNEP@50**

**KFS PARTICIPATES IN
GRAND OPENING OF
KOMAZA SAWMILLS**

**KENYA MARKS
INTERNATIONAL
DAY OF FORESTS**

**KENYA SURPASSES 10%
TREE COVER TARGET**

Editorial

In 2019, a survey conducted by Stuff Survey among audiences in climate coverage established that readers and viewers of climate related stories are keen on more *forecasting of future climate impacts, as well as hopeful and solutions-based stories*. With this in mind, aside from communicating the milestones and news related stories to the activities of Kenya Forest Service, we have placed more emphasis in this latest issue, to publish stories and narratives that highlight the future climate direction in Kenya and what solutions the organization among other stakeholders are propagating in the fight against climate change.

For a start, our lead story is a more hopeful piece which sheds light on a positive future for the country. The article highlights our strides as a country in tree and forest cover with the recent report findings outlining our achievement as a country in surpassing the constitutionally defined 10% minimum tree cover.

Furthermore, we also report on the numerous projects we have spearheaded this year together with our different partners aimed at offering sustainable solutions to pressing challenges in forestry. Key among these stories include; Launch of a framework of cooperation with the Kenya Association of Manufacturers, rolling out of a JICA 5-year project aimed at strengthening forestry sector development and community resilience and launch of the UK-PACT greening Kaptagat Forest Landscape project aimed at providing water security among other stories.

We have also been keen to inform our readers of the events and conferences we have organized or participated in that have a global scope. This includes among others, hosting foreign delegates attending the United Nations Environmental Assembly for a tree planting event and fun run in our urban green spaces, participation of the Chief Conservator of Forests in the United Nations Forum on Forests session in New York and hosting Prince Edward at Zuti Forest during his visit to the country.

Finally, this publication aims to underscore the organization's continued pursuit in involving other institutions and the general public in the Adopt-A-Forest Framework. During the period in focus of this issue, we outline to you the collaboration frameworks we have developed with the ICT Cabinet Secretary Joe Mucheru in adopting Muringato Forest and a Framework of collaboration with Media Council of Kenya to adopt Ndoinet Forest.

For this and much more, we invite you to peruse through our publication and relieve the activities, experiences and measures taken by the Service to stay at the forefront of the fight against climate change and environmental conservation.

Enjoy!

Anne Kaari, 'ndc'(K)

We welcome feedback, comments and article contributions from our stakeholders, kindly email us through

editorial@kenyaforestservice.org

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Cover Photo: His Excellency President Uhuru Kenyatta shakes hands with the Chief Conservator of Forests Julius Kamau, EBS as the Cabinet Secretary of Environment and Forestry Hon. Keriako Tobiko, EGH, SC (3rd left) and the Chairman of the Kenya Forest Service Board Mr. Peter Kinyua, EBS (4th left) look on at State House Nairobi during the launch of National Forest Resource Assessment Report on 27th May 2022. (Source PSCU)

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Word From the Chief Conservator of Forests



Kenya has now surpassed the 10% tree cover by 2030 mark enshrined in our constitution. This comes after His Excellency President Uhuru Kenyatta in 2018, understanding the importance of trees/forests in the mitigation of adverseness caused by climate change, issue a directive bringing the target forward from 2030 to 2022.

The Ministry of Environment and Forestry, through Kenya Forest Service developed a National tree growing strategy which leveraged on partnerships from both state and non-state actors under the principle of 'leaving no one behind' and 'public private people partnership' as the vehicle that would deliver on the directive. This strategy set in motion a robust tree nurseries establishment and tree planting campaigns across the country to ensure planting of 2.1 billion trees within the period of delivery. The strategy also included the KFS brainchild of 'Adopt-a-Forest Initiative' which essentially enhanced the commitment from partners adopting degraded forest areas for restoration to ensure that they walk the journey to the end with the Service in ensuring maximum survival of grown seedlings, as opposed from before where trees were only grown for the 'cameras' and little follow-up commitment witnessed necessitating the Service to rethink its way of engaging with all its partners.

In 2021, Kenya Forest Service with support from Joint National Mapping and Resources Mapping (JNAM) under the Office of the President carried out a National Forest Resources Assessment to identify the tree cover, forest cover, and land use cover across the country. The enormous exercise deployed use of satellite technology to a 0.5 meters resolution scale.

The 'National Forest Resources Assessment Report 2021 Kenya' which was launched by His Excellency the President, places Kenya at a 12.13% tree cover and 8.83% forest cover (up from a 5.9% forest cover in 2018). The report also elaborately shows the forest and tree cover matrix per county and indicates land-use cover. This is a perfect baseline which institutions can reference to inform policy into the future. The report, can be accessed by all members of the public is on our website at www.kenyaforests-service.org

The President, while launching the report has given us yet again the big task of getting our country to 30% tree cover by 2050. To deliver on this, KFS will continue to leverage on the good support from members of the public as well as all its partners. While we strive to achieve on this enormous task, it is equally important to ensure we continue to protect and conserve the forest resources which already exist so we move forward.

The Service, as it enters the formulation process of its fourth strategic cycle, through its programs will advance a continued inclusion of the critical component of forest adjacent communities through Community Forest Associations in the conservation, management and protection of forest and allied resources as stipulated in the Forest Management Act (2016). We recognize that communities, as the first beneficiaries of forest resources, also form the social fence around them and our collective complimentary support is what will drive Kenya to a 30% tree cover by 2050.

Julius Kamau, EBS
Chief Conservator of Forests

Kenya Surpasses 10% Tree Cover Target



H.E President Uhuru Kenyatta alongside officials under the Ministry of Environment and Forestry during the launch of the report at State House, Nairobi

His Excellency President Uhuru Kenyatta launched the 'National Forest Resources Assessment Report 2021, at State House Nairobi. The report indicated that the country's tree cover has surpassed earlier Presidential directive of 10% tree cover by 2022. The 2018 directive was in line with Article 69(1)(b) of the Constitution of Kenya that emphasizes on the need to "work to achieve and maintain a tree cover of at least ten per cent of land area of Kenya." The President lauded the Kenya Forest Service (KFS) through the Ministry of Environment and Forestry for the immense effort towards attainment of this milestone.

The report which is the first assessment of its kind ever done in Kenya, indicates that the current tree cover stands at 12.13 per cent, while the country's forest is 8.83 per cent, up from 5.9 percent forest cover in 2018. Speaking during the release of the report, the President set a new target for attainment of a 30% tree cover by 2050.

The National Forest Resources Assessment was undertaken with support from His Excellency the President Hon. Uhuru Kenyatta, through allocation of adequate human, technological and financial resources. This was facilitated by support from the Cabinet Secretary Ministry of Environment and Forestry Hon. Keriako Tobiko and the Principal Secretary Dr Chris Kiptoo. A multi - agency team comprising of the Joint National Mapping Team (JNAM), National Air Support Department (NASD) and KFS technical staff undertook the assessment.

The National Forest Resources Assessment was necessitated by the need to generate accurate and reliable information on the extent, distribution and status of trees and forest resources. The report documents statistics on percentage tree cover, the extent and distribution of forest, forest type and land use. The lack of these critical sets of information and data has in the past constrained performance assessment of efforts towards restoration of the ecological integrity of trees and forest resources. The report has therefore been lauded by forest stakeholders as essential and timely.

The Chief Conservator of Forest (CCF) Julius Kamau EBS, while briefing the media on the report at the KFS headquarters said that the Service had adopted a coordinated approach and strategies in order to increase the country's tree and forest cover. These strategies included formulation of the 'National Strategy for Achievement and Maintenance of 10 per cent National Tree Cover,' enhanced national tree planting campaigns, reclamation and restoration of encroached forest areas and the introduction of the Adopt-a-forest initiative where other organisations are allocated areas to plant trees and fund their maintenance for a period of three years.

The assessment deployed cutting-edge technology that involved use of high-resolution satellite imagery and highly competent personnel under a multi-agency approach to determine the status of tree resources in the country. Tree, forest and land use land cover areas were quantified using the integration of wall-to-wall World View-3 mapping with a high spatial resolution sample-based assessment.

A forest which is defined as land area of more than 0.5ha with a canopy cover of at least 15%, trees of minimum two (2) meters high, which is not primarily under agricultural or other specific non-forest land use, were assessed to give the forest cover. The use of this high-resolution satellite imagery was a break away from the past assessments and mapping initiatives conducted that used medium resolution images which mainly focused on forest cover mapping.

In the previous assessments, data on scattered trees, trees under agro-forestry systems and woodlots under 0.5 ha were never captured. In addition, the deployment of medium resolution images made it difficult to map deciduous trees due to the shedding of foliage during the dry season.

The report indicates that 37 counties out of the 47 counties in Kenya have tree cover which is above ten per cent and that translates to 7,180,00.66 Ha of tree cover nationally. The forests on the other hand cover 5,226,191.79 Ha nationally. Nyeri county has the highest tree cover at 45.17 per cent while Marsabit has the lowest tree cover at 2.06 per cent. Nyeri also leads the country with a forest cover of 40.89 % of total land area with Siaya having a forest cover of only 0.23%. Wooded grasslands account for the highest land cover in Kenya with approximately 70 % of the total land area.

In addition, 21 counties have forest cover above the national forest

cover (8.83%), while in 26 counties' forest cover fell below the national forest cover. The results further show that up to 10 counties have a tree cover which is less than the Constitutional target of 10%.

The assessment provides essential information that will support decisions on the spread of trees and forests resources, and aid in developing and implementing tree –growing programmes in all counties. The report will support preparation of spatial and green infrastructure development plans. The report also aids in adherence to the Forest Conservation and Management Act, 2016, which obligates the Service to prepare and submit to the Cabinet Secretary a Resource Assessment Report once in every five (5) years.

The report will also guide in assessment and mitigation of threats, risks and mobilization of resources for tree cover maintenance and improvement. The report will inform allocation of more resources for tree planting programmes at the national and county levels as well as development and implementation of sustainable forest conservation programmes jointly with development partners. Lastly, the report will support Kenya in international reporting, the Forest Reference Level (FRL), and the National Forest Monitoring Systems (NFMS).

The National Forest Resources Assessment Report 2021 Kenya is available on the KFS website www.kenyaforestservice.org.



On-farm forestry has been one of the key strategies in achieving this milestone.

KFS joins the World in Marking UNEP@50



The CS Ministry of Environment and Forestry, Hon. Keriako Tobiko, EGH, SC addresses delegates during a tree planting to commemorate the 50th anniversary of UNEP at Naitobi City Park Nairobi. The site was renamed UNEP at 50 Corner

The fifth United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA) was followed by a special session, dubbed UNEP@50, held on 3 - 4 March 2022, to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the establishment of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). UNEP was founded on 5th June, 1972 in Nairobi.

The theme for the special session was “Strengthening UNEP for the implementation of the environmental dimension of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.”

Kenya Forest Service hosted a 10km fun run at Karura forest and a tree planting exercise for all 193 UN member states at the Nairobi City Park to commemorate 50 years of existence of the United Nations Environment Programme, Nairobi, Kenya (UNEP).

The tree planting activity saw 193 indigenous tree seedlings planted by UN Member States representatives visiting the country for the resumed United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA 5.2). The 90 Ha Park which is under management by KFS, is Kenya’s first park donated for public use by a Kikuyu clan (Mbaari ya Kihara) back in 1903.

In it, Kenyans remember the World War I and II war veterans whose remains lie at the Commonwealth War Memorial Cemetery among others also designated for the Jewish community. The remains of Kenya’s 2nd Vice President and wife the late Joseph Murumbi also lie at the Murumbi Peace Memorial Gardens among other history makers including the late Pio Gamma Pinto. The green-space is blessed with biodiversity comprising of over 998 different tree species which is home to over 100 bird species, reptiles and amphibians.

The Service also hosted a 10KM run under the theme “Connecting Environment and Sports” in Karura Forest organized by the

Government of Kenya in collaboration with UNEP, was premised as a side event of the congress, with the CS Sports Amb. Amina Mohammed, PS MEF Dr. Chris Kiptoo and CCF Mr. Julius Kamau, EBS joining delegates from the 193 member states and other stakeholders at Karura Forest.

The run highlighted the strong inter-linkage between environmental conservation and sports and celebrate the achievements made in rallying the sports community to take action in tackling environmental challenges. The run was also aimed at raising awareness on the need for urgent action by all actors to respond to the triple planetary crisis of climate change, pollution and biodiversity loss.



PS MoEF Dr Chris Kiptoo, CBS and the CCF Mr. Julius Kamau, EBS flagoff the fun run at Karura Forest during the conference

UN Environment Assembly Votes to end Plastic Pollution

Heads of State, Ministers of Environment and other representatives from UN member states and its relevant bodies and stakeholders gathered during the 5th UN Environment Assembly in Nairobi, agreed on 14 resolutions to address planetary crises, key among which being the *Resolution to End plastic pollution: Towards an international legally binding instrument and, Resolution on Nature-based Solutions for Supporting Sustainable Development.*

The world's Ministers for the Environment, agreed to establish an Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee with the mandate to forge an international legally binding agreement to end plastic pollution.

Kenya has been at the forefront of the phase-out of plastics on the planet through a directive issued by H.E President Uhuru Kenyatta in June 2020

to ban single-use plastics in protected areas. Kenya Forest Service, which is a key implementing agency of this directive has further scaled up the directive by enforcing the ban in all public forests under its management and investing resources and expertise aimed at identifying bio-degradable solutions to plastic seedling bags.

Another key resolution agreed by the Assembly focuses on nature-based solutions: actions to protect, conserve, restore, sustainably use and manage ecosystems. The resolution calls on UNEP to support the implementation of such solutions, which safeguard the rights of communities and indigenous peoples.

In line with the aforementioned, Kenya through KFS has instituted multiple projects and tools aimed at fostering human well-being with the environment and protecting communities.

For instance, the organization through multiple implementing partners, has ongoing interventions such as the Greenzones Development Project II, FAO Leroghi/Kirisia Project, JICA's Strengthening Forestry Sector Development and Community Resilience to Climate Change and the Community Forest Association model among others which are aimed at facilitating alternative sources of livelihood for forest-adjacent communities.

The world's Ministers for the Environment, agreed to establish an international legally binding agreement to end plastic pollution.

Kenya's National REDD+ Strategy Launched

The PS Ministry of Environment and Forestry Dr. Chris Kiptoo and the Chief Conservator of Forests Julius Kamau, EBS held a side event at the UNEA 5.2 Conference together with UNDP Kenya on Accelerating Forestry and Land Restoration Climate Actions under the theme "global call to accelerate forestry and land restoration climate action in Kenya."

The aim of the side event was to share experiences in restoration approaches and frameworks and launch Kenya's National REDD+ Strategy and a National Approach to Safeguards and Safeguards Information System For REDD+ Implementation.

Kenya's Country Approach to Safeguards (CAS) embodies rights and obligations which must be recognized, protected, and promoted throughout the implementation of the proposed REDD+ interventions, regardless of their source and type of financing.

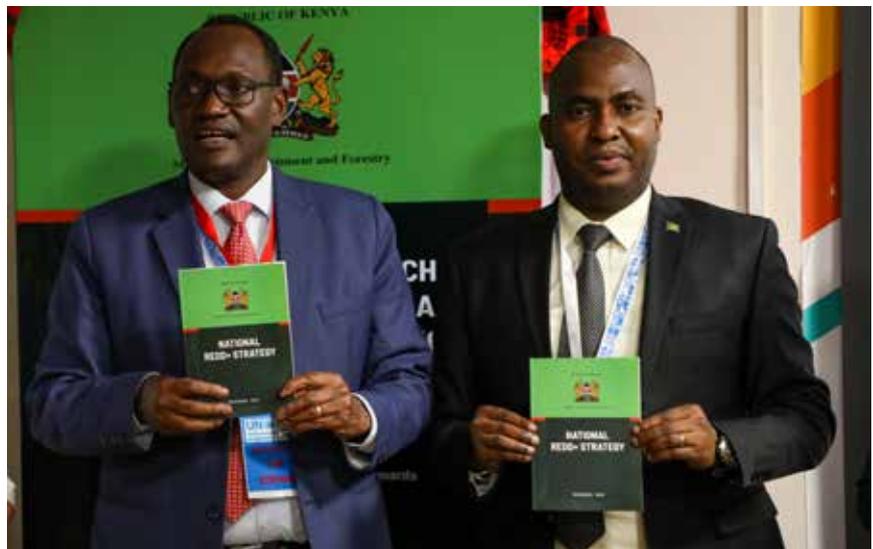
The report considered two types of safeguards; *Risk management* safeguards set out interventions to ensure that the socio-economic and environmental activities being undertaken do not result in harm to the environment, or people and; *Human rights-based* safeguards include the socio-economic rights, civil and political rights, and the human right to a clean environment

recently recognized by the UN Human Rights Council. Civil and political rights include critical freedoms including expression (speech), assembly, movement as well as public participation.

In ensuring a participatory approach was adhered to in the formulation process of the National Safeguards in accordance to the Kenyan constitution, a Technical Working Group (TWG) was appointed by the Ministry of Environment and Forestry to

function as the reference group for this task. The membership of the TWG was drawn from national government, constitutional commissions, counties, civil society, indigenous peoples, local communities and private sector to enable a cross-sectoral approach to the methodology employed.

The full report can be downloaded from the Ministry of Environment and Forestry website: <http://www.environment.go.ke/>



The PS Ministry of Environment and Forestry Dr. Chris Kiptoo, CBS (left) and CCF Mr. Julius Kamau, EBS (right) and during the launch of the strategy at the UNEP headquarters in Nairobi

UN Environmental Assembly Highlights

Hosted by the UN Environment Programme, the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA) brings together representatives of the 193 Member States of the UN, businesses, civil society and other stakeholders to agree on policies to address the world's most pressing environmental challenges. The resumed fifth session of the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA-5.2) took place online and in-person in Nairobi from 28 February – 2 March 2022.

The overall theme for UNEA-5 was “Strengthening Actions for Nature to Achieve the Sustainable Development Goals,” highlighting the pivotal role that nature plays in sustainable social, economic and environmental development.

With that, the Kenya Forest Service led by the CCF Mr. Julius Kamau accompanied the Cabinet Secretary for Environment Mr. Keriako Tobiko and the Principal Secretary Dr. Chris Kiptoo in bilateral talks with representatives from the UN Member States and partner organizations on the sidelines of the conference, exploring areas of co-operation in environmental conservation and climate change.

Kenya and Germany

The Environment and Forestry Cabinet Secretary Mr. Keriako Tobiko (right) led Kenya in bilateral talks with his German counterpart Ms. Steffi Lemke (Minister for Environment, Nature Conservation, Nuclear Safety and Consumer Protection) on the side-lines of UNEA in Nairobi.

The ministers, who were also joined by the Chief Conservator of Forests Julius Kamau and Germany Ambassador to Kenya H.E Annett Güntheram, discussed areas of cooperation on plastic waste management, deforestation, and the UN Convention for Biological Diversity.

CS Tobiko highlighted Kenya's commitment to eradicating plastic pollution (on top of banning single-use plastics within protected areas in 2017) through the Sustainable Waste Management Bill currently in Parliament.



Kenya and France

The Principal Secretary Ministry of Environment and Forestry Dr Chris Kiptoo (4th from right), together with the Chief Conservator of Forests Julius Kamau (3rd left) held a bilateral meeting with the French Minister of State for Biodiversity and UNEA's Vice President Her Excellency Berangere Abba and the French Ambassador to Kenya H.E Aline Kuster-Ménager to discuss progress of ongoing partnerships between Kenya and France.

The meeting appreciated the long-standing partnership between the two countries noting French Government's support in forest conservation in Kenya, especially in mangrove forest areas along Kenya's coastline as well as other terrestrial ecosystems noting Dundori forest station, in Nakuru County as one example.

Kenya and France also explored possible areas of collaboration, noting Kenya's need for capacity building in fire management to address forest fires which is the leading cause of forest destruction in the country.



Kenya and Gabon

The Environment and Forestry Cabinet Secretary Mr. Keriako Tobiko held bilateral talks with the Minister of Environment for Gabon, Prof. Lee White at Amani Gardens in Karura Forest.

The discussions held outside the premises of UNEP at Gigiri focused on the status and implementation of legislation by both countries in forest management & knowledge-sharing of the models of both countries in urban forestry, eco-tourism, farm forestry, ban of single-use plastics in forests, participatory forest management & the development of Nature-Based Enterprises for forest-adjacent communities.



Kenya and Estonia

The Principal Secretary Ministry of Environment and Forestry Dr Chris Kiptoo together with the Chief Conservator of Forests, Julius Kamau held bilateral talks with the Estonian Minister of Environment Mr. Kaupo Heinma, and Mr. Ado Lõhmus (Permanent Representative of Estonia to UNEP in Nairobi).

Discussions held aimed to further deepen existing bilateral collaboration in forest conservation noting that Kenya Forest Service and Estonia’s Timbeter Company are in partnership to provide digital solutions for timber processes through an artificial intelligence mobile web-based application called “Timbeter”. The system, which aids in measuring timber parameters, offers faster monitoring and control of the timber supply chain, and also ensures maximum utilization of forest produce through waste minimization. Furthermore, the meeting identified other possible areas of collaboration which include knowledge-sharing on digitization of environment data, waste management, further strengthening enforcement of single single-use ban (SUPs), promotion of biodegradable materials, and capacity building for sustainability.

The meeting also recognized a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to support the achievement of climate and forestry policy goals to increase the forest sector efficiency and transparency through enhancement of digital capacity was in its final development stage. This follows the signing of a statement of intent by Kenya and Estonia in November to pave way for the MoU.

On the commitment to ban SUPs, Dr Kiptoo noted that Kenya had made strides since enforcement of the ban on SUPs in 2017 but decried challenges emanating from porous borders with neighbouring countries, aside from Rwanda, that had not instituted the ban on plastics. He called for support from the international community in supporting Kenya’s further goal on plastic from a linear to circular model (recycling).

On his part, the CCF noted that KFS was keen on ensuring the successful implementation of the pilot Timbeter application adding that a joint technical working committee between the Service and Timbeter had already been formed.



Kenya & European Union

The Principal Secretary, Ministry of Environment & Forestry Dr. Chris Kiptoo led Kenya in bilateral talks with the European Union aimed at strengthening mutual areas of environment collaboration.

In a meeting with H.E Florika Fink-Hooijer, Director General for the Environment of the European Union Commission, the PS in the company of the Chief Conservator of Forests Julius Kamau, noted that Kenya was at a crucial juncture in enforcing laws to address pollution and address the global climate crisis.

The PS and CCF called for the EU to further strengthen Kenya’s capacity through funding to pave way for more advancements in waste management as the country focuses to move from a linear to a circular model of waste management which embraces recycling.

PS Kiptoo noted that the country was at an advanced stage of formulating legal regulations to manage waste at source, mentioning the Waste Management Bill which upon ascent will ensure waste is segregated at source by all before disposal. He further noted that the country will install material recovery centres to promote the recycling of inorganic waste and better handle hazardous waste.

The CCF lobbied the EU to support Kenya financially through incentive programs for community forest associations to empower members of the public towards the realization of the climate action plan, with one being reducing overdependence on forest resources for energy.



“The overall theme for UNEA-5 was “Strengthening Actions for Nature to Achieve the Sustainable Development Goals,” highlighting the pivotal role that nature plays in sustainable social, economic and environmental development.”



Kenya Marks International Day of Forests



The CS Ministry of Environment and Forestry Hon. Keriako Tobiko, EGH, SC together with the CCF Julius Kamau, EBS and the Family Bank Board Chairman Dr. Wilfred Kiboro (Right) waters a seedling during the IDF at Ngong Hills Forest

The Cabinet Secretary Ministry of Environment and Forestry (MoEF) Hon. Keriako Tobiko led the country in marking the International Day of Forests by planting 2,500 tree seedlings at Ngong' Hills Forest in Kajiado County on 21st March, 2022.

The CS was joined by the KFS Board Chairman Mr. Peter Kinyua, Chief Conservator of Forests Mr. Julius Kamau, EBS, Kajiado County Deputy Governor H.E Martin Moshisho, Nation Media Group and Family Bank Chairman Dr. Wilfred Kiboro, and the UN-FAO Country representative Ms. Carla Mucavi for the tree planting event at the 10Ha site adopted by Green Blue Foundation Africa.

The foundation has signed a framework of collaboration with KFS for the rehabilitation of 100Ha in Ngong Hills Forest and, set a target to plant 10,000 tree seedlings at the site aiming to restore the area and mitigate gully erosion threatening the downstream end of the hilly forest terrain.

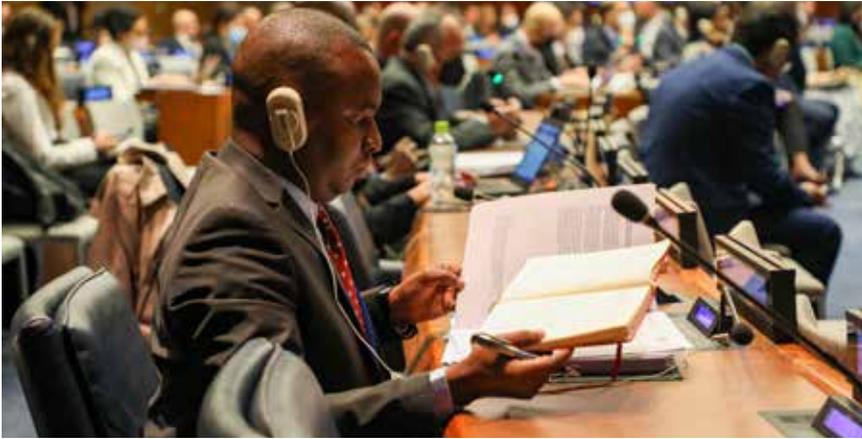
Speaking at the function, the CS commended the contribution of Kenyans in the attainment of 12.13% tree cover and further acknowledged that the government's decisions on forest conservation would always seek to leverage local communities and empower them to perceive trees as important resources to the nation.

The KFS Board Chairman in his remarks reiterated the organization's commitment to galvanize the concerted efforts of stakeholders in tree planting and highlighted that the Service would strive to uphold the momentum expressed by stakeholders towards tree growing through a reward and recognition scheme for exemplary conservationists.

The organization has also instituted the participatory conservation model as one of its key strategies in scaling its regreening goal across the country. In reference to this, the CCF articulated in the event that through the FCMA 2016, the Service would continue to work with organized Community Forest Associations (CFAs) to provide them with access rights and make them stronger allies in forest conservation.

He further noted that through collaborative exercises with partners through Public Private People Partnerships (PPPP), the Service was able to restore 70,000Ha of degraded forest areas. This was highlighted as possible through enrichment planting and secured natural regeneration.

Kenya Participates in the 17th Session of UNFF



The Chief Conservator of Forests Mr. Julius Kamau, EBS, takes part in the proceedings of the conference at the UN headquarters in New York

The 17th Session of the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF) took place earlier in May 2022 as world forest leaders and policymakers from UN member states converged for the conference at the United Nations Headquarters in New York. The Chief Conservator of Forests Julius Kamau, who is Kenya's National Focal Point to the UNFF represented Kenya in the crucial session, which was the first in-person meeting happening after a two year-pause due to the Covid-19 pandemic outbreak back in 2020.

With countries instituting mechanisms to address the effects that came with the pandemic, it was noted that through the UNFF deliberations that the pandemic had painted clearly the importance of the environment, including the forestry sector, in the global post-COVID-19 recovery strategies.

During the opening, the forum held a High-Level round table segment on 'UNFF Response to, Role in, and Expectations from Forest-related Multilateral Developments', where Kenya appreciated the centrality of forests and trees in sustaining economic growth, environmental integrity, social-cultural development, and climate change resilience of the country.

In Kenya's scenario, the CCF noted how forests contribute to 3.6% of the country's GDP which could more than double if environmental goods and services that forests offer, and their contribution to supporting other sectors of the economy (tourism, energy, agriculture, manufacturing, etc) could be included in the national accounting system.

The submission acknowledged how Kenya's forest sector continues to face various

pressures ranging from forest fires, climate change, and other human-related activities causing the deterioration of the forest landscape.

To respond to these challenges, he noted that Kenya formulated a National Strategy on 10% Tree Cover under the principle of 'leaving no one behind' through Public-Private-People-Partnerships. The strategy enabled the country to attain 12.13% tree cover in 2021. A new target of 30% tree cover by 2050 has been set.

The CCF also registered Kenya's milestones over the period which included the reclamation of approximately 57,000 hectares of previously encroached forest land; effective involvement and participation of forest adjacent communities (CFAs) in the conservation, management, and protection of forest resources for mutual benefit; deployment of various innovations and technology to complement human capital such as forest alert systems that aid in near real-time detection and response to various forest threats.



The Chief Conservator of Forests Mr. Julius Kamau, EBS consults with the Deputy Chief Conservator of Forests in charge of Drylands Forestry Dr. Clement Ng'oriareng during the conference at the UN headquarters in New York

Furthermore, the session was informed of Kenya's National Forest Resources Assessment in 2021 findings which seek to establish the status of forest and tree resources in the country. The report places the tree cover of the country at 12.13% and forest cover at 8.83% as of 2021, which is an improvement from the forest cover of 5.99% in 2018.

The CCF pointed out that as the country continues to advance its efforts towards sustainable forest management and enhancing its tree/forest cover, an elaborate and sustainable forest financing mechanism is critical, "Kenya compliments the initiative of the UNFF17 with other forest related multilateral entities such as the Convention on Biological Diversity on the establishment of global forest financing mechanisms," he said, adding that sustainable forest management at the local, national and international levels call for more collaboration, cooperation, and partnerships by all.

In Kenya's submissions, the CCF noted that through the commemoration of the IDF and National Tree Planting Campaigns, Kenya continued creating more awareness among the public on the need for tree growing. He added that this was one way the country implemented and communicated the UN Strategic Plan for Forests towards the attainment of the global forest goals and the associated targets.

Member states and major groups also made their submissions on the draft omnibus resolutions for consideration during the official session of the last day of the 17th UNFF Session where Kenya committed to continue submitting Voluntary National Reports to UNFF that inform global forest goal report and global forestry policy settings.

KFS Participates in Opening of Komaza Sawmills



Chief Conservator of Forests Julius Kamau, EBS, leads a KFS delegation and other guests when he officiated the opening of Komaza Sawmills in Nyandarua

The Chief Conservator of Forests Julius Kamau, EBS was the Chief Guest during the official opening of the Komaza sawmill in Ol-Kalou Nyandarua County. The establishment is the first-of-a-kind private sawmill in East Africa that guarantees on-farm tree-growing and focuses on giving farmers opportunities for business in agro forestry ventures.

Komaza is a smallholder forestry company founded in Coastal Kenya with the goal of alleviating smallholder farmers' poverty. It operates under a model where farmers grant their unused land and provide some labor to plant and take care of trees whereas Komaza provides seedlings, training, as well as tree management, and harvest support to farmers for free. The company has also developed proprietary mobile and web applications to make it immediately scalable in new locations. The company has been in operation in Kenya at the coast since its establishment in 2006, planting 5,930,000 trees on 9,500 Ha. In Central Kenya, the company has planted 830,000 seedlings targeting to conduct activities in all Nyandarua County wards by 2023.

The Chief Conservator of Forests while commissioning the new facility in Ol-Kalou, Nyandarua County noted the immense opportunities that small farm holders would benefit from the private sawmill as the main provider of raw materials for processing and value addition at the factory. During a tour of the sawmill, he also observed employment opportunities that the establishment had presented to both locals and forestry scholars.

While highlighting that the government alone could not satisfy the appetite for timber across industries (construction, manufacturing), the CCF explained how the gap in demand versus supply for timber in the country is high and observed the opportunity that the private sector, such as Komaza, has in contributing to the supply of the same while directly benefitting local agro forestry farmers.

Mr. Kamau still in his address to the forestry stakeholders further reminded them that the Service in its mandate of forest protection will require the sector players to follow the laid down laws as per the Forest Conservation and Management Act, 2016. He also noted the cross-learning opportunities between Komaza and the Kenya Forestry College (the training arm of the Service) which also has a sawmill offering training in wood processing learning platforms among other courses for forestry professionals.

He further maintained the role played by KFS as a facilitator for wood industry players in acquiring raw materials through the right channels, as the statutory body issuing Movement Permits for forest/wood products in the country.

The CCF was joined by forest sector players comprising both state and non-state actors among them Kenya Forestry Research Institute Senior Deputy Director Dr. Jane Njuguna and the Ministry of Environment and Forestry Conservation Secretary Alfred Gichu.

Prince Edward Visits Zuti Forest



Prince Edward of Great Britain talks to KFS officers at Zuti Forest Station in Nyeri during an event to mark Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth's Platinum Jubilee. Standing left is the KFS Board Chairman Peter Kinyua, EBS and the CCF Julius Kamau EBS (5th right)

Kenya Forest Service (KFS) was privileged to host a member of the royal family of Great Britain, His Royal Highness Prince Edward, The Earl of Wessex and Forfar at Zuti Forest Station in Aberdares, Nyeri County. During the visit the Prince met groups of youth drawn from different Kenyan universities participating in the Presidential Gold Award Expedition.

The Earl was joined by Mr. Muhoho Kenyatta, a Diamond Benefactor of the President's Award Kenya, and Mr Andrew Ndegwa (member NCBA, Board of Directors), and was hosted by KFS Board Chairman Peter Kinyua and the Chief Conservator of Forests Mr. Julius Kamau for the activity.

While speaking to the youth, the Prince commended them for undertaking tree planting activities noting that the cohort planted 100 indigenous trees within the forest station in honour of the award's founder, late Duke of Edinburgh Prince Phillip.

Prince Edward marked his visit by planting a ceremonial tree, *Podocarpus latifolius*, for the Queen's Green Canopy to commemorate Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth's Platinum Jubilee with his accompanying delegation also joining in to plant more trees in her honour.

KFS and the President's Award Kenya, have an ongoing collaboration to develop an 'Adopt A Forest Framework' that seeks to leverage on the awards' participation to inculcate awareness on environmental stewardship with the end result of having the awardees of the various prestigious categories become ambassadors of forest conservation by advocating for tree growing as well as adopting degraded forest areas for restoration.

The KFS was also joined by Mr. Jinnarius Wambugu (Research and Programme Development Manager, The President's Award – Kenya) and Mr. Edwin Kimani (Global Operations Director of the International Award Foundation) to receive the Prince.



Prince Edward (centre) confers with KFS Board Chairman Peter Kinyua, EBS (left) and the Chief Conservator of Forests Mr. Julius Kamau, EBS at Zuti Forest

CS Tobiko's 'Big No' to Proposed Amendment of Forest Legislation

The Cabinet Secretary of Environment and Forestry, Hon. Keriako Tobiko has strongly opposed the proposed amendment of section 34(2A) of the Forest Conservation and Management Act (FMCA) of 2016.

The Forest Conservation and Management (Amendment) Bill, which was introduced in the National Assembly by Lang'ata Member of Parliament, Hon. Nixon Kiprotich Korir through Kenya Gazette Supplement No. 208 (National Assembly Bills No 53) dated 19th November 2021, seeks to amend section 34 of the principle Act by deleting subsection 2A and introducing new sections hereafter subsection 3A and 3B.

The import of the above proposal is to vest the power of forest boundaries variation in parliament from Kenya Forest Service. It also gives the clerk of the Assembly powers to review petitions on forest boundary variations if they meet the requirements, request additional information and reject a petition under the proposed subsection 3B.

The impugned section 34(2A) of the FCMA 2016 states that, "A petition under subsection (1) shall only be forwarded to the National Assembly on the recommendation of the Service." The Bill proposes to remove the requirement for a petition under the principal Act to be in the form of recommendation to the National Assembly by the Kenya Forest Service (KFS). The section of the Act requires KFS to make technical recommendations to Parliament on the effect of any proposed forest boundary variation or excision on endangered or rare and threatened species and ecologically sensitive areas among other consideration.

The section to be amended further obligated the Service to ensure into any proposed variation of a forest boundary if approved by the local Forest Conservation Committee, has undergone independent Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and full public participation as required by Articles 10 (2) (a) and 69 (1) (d) respectively.

In a letter to the Speakers of both the Senate and the National Assembly, the Cabinet Secretary notes that, "removing this section will compromise the protection of public forests, lay to risk some of the most threatened forest ecosystems and water towers and deny Kenyans access to



removing this section will compromise the protection of public forests, lay to risk some of the most threatened forest ecosystems

these public amenities which are critical to their continued economic and social development".

According to the MP, the law as is currently constituted will adversely affect some of his constituents who apparently built their homes on sections of Ngong' Forest land and are at the verge of being evicted by the government.

On his part, the KFS Board Chairman Mr. Peter Kinyua termed the proposed amendment as meant to negate the major strides the Service had made in protecting public forests thanks mainly to strong forest protection laws.

"The Forest Act of 2016 and in particular Section 34(2) was carefully drafted to respond to the wanton destruction of forests experienced in Kenya in the 1990s and the 2000s largely due to excision of public forests," noted Mr. Kinyua in a statement.

According to the KFS Chairman the section earmarked for amendment had enabled KFS to protect public forests and removing it would reverse the gains made in the last fifteen years in restoring forests and water catchment areas.

In a letter forwarding a memorandum on the position by KFS regarding the proposed amendments, the Chief Conservator of Forests (CCF) Mr. Julius Kamau observed that the removal of the section will "compromise the protection of the country's public forests and thus compromise the capacity to provide forests goods and services to Kenyans, which are critical to the national economy and livelihood." The CCF further noted that the Service plays a cardinal role in the provision of technical advice related to forest conservation and management to the National Assembly before any action is taken on alteration or variation of forest boundaries.

In a joint statement by various conservation sector stakeholders, the proposed amendment was firmly rejected as ill advised, ill-timed and which will expose Kenya's forests to greedy individuals whose actions could damage Kenya's water catchment areas, hydro-electricity, food production, human well-being and the economic development of the country.

CCF Tours Lewa Wildlife Conservancy



The Chief Conservator of Forests Mr. Julius Kamau, EBS, during a demonstration on the use of forest and wildlife monitoring and surveillance tools.

Lewa Wildlife Conservancy is among the wildlife sanctuaries that apply remote sensing technologies to monitor the ecosystem health of the conservancy and the forests within its purview, an approach shared by the Kenya Forest Service in executing its protection mandate.

The Chief Conservator of Forests Mr. Julius Kamau, EBS conducted a tour of the Mt. Kenya Forest ecosystem with a key visit to the Lewa Wildlife Conservancy (LWC) at their headquarters in Meru County.

Aside from the visit being premised as a knowledge sharing experience between the Service and the Conservancy, the tour was also aimed at deepening the existing partnership between KFS, LWC and Northern Rangelands Trust. The later has actualized a considerable scope of work in the Northern Rangeland conservation sphere and the interdependency between the neighboring gazetted forests landscapes (Ngare Ndare Forest, Mukogodo and Marania & Mucheene Forest Reserves of the Larger Mt Kenya Forest Ecosystem) and Mukogodo Forest Reserve in Laikipia County.

During the tour, Mr. Kamau noted the critical role the neighboring public forests

play in providing ecological services to the Conservancy mainly water, micro-climate and habitat for the roaming wildlife connected through the designated wildlife corridors.

The CCF was taken through various forests and wildlife monitoring and surveillance tools deployed in the conservancy among them the integrated “EARTHANGER”; a web-based software solution that has a real-time observation and reporting platform thus enhancing efficiency in decision making and response. The software collects, integrates and displays all historical and available remote sensing data and combines it with reports from the field to provide one unified view of collared wildlife, rangers, enforcement assets and infrastructure within a protected area.

The Director during a consultative briefing reiterated the importance of enhancing Public and Private Partnerships (PPP) in enhancing forest conservation, protection efforts and community development throughout the country while integrating technological advancement and innovations.

During the visit, the CCF who is also an Honorary Warden was taken for a game drive within the conservancy to

appreciate the health of the rich wildlife species biodiversity and landscape and more importantly, the role the rivers that emanate from Mt. Kenya Forest Ecosystem play in sustaining the biodiversity in the conservancies.

He also lauded the hydrological systems that support the lowland conservancies as well as the established wildlife corridors and underpass bridges that connect LWC, Ngare Ndare Forest and the Mt. Kenya Forest ecosystem through Marania Forest Reserve.

Mr. Kamau lauded the conservation efforts exhibited by the managers of the conservancies in the Northern Rangelands and noted the need for concerted efforts to enhance productivity of the forest conservancies and forest landscapes.

The Lewa Conservancy and Northern Rangelands Trust (NRT) have committed to support the construction of Mukogodo Forest Station office that will include a repair of two houses, solar electric fence, borehole drilling and installation of accessories.

KFS and KAM Partner in Forest Conservation



The Chief Conservator of Forests Mr. Julius Kamau, EBS and the then Kenya Association of Manufacturers CEO Ms Phyllis Wakiaga with the Framework for Collaboration between the two organizations

Kenya Forest Service (KFS) and the Kenya Association of Manufacturers (KAM) signed a three-year Framework of Collaboration (2022-2024) to grow trees and conserve forests. The agreement, which was signed by the Chief Conservator of Forests and KAM CEO Ms Phyllis Wakiaga, aims to foster the two organisation's commitment to restore up to 10,000 Ha of identified degraded forest areas within 41 counties. The partnership will involve all the seven chapters of KAM countrywide.

Speaking during the signing ceremony, the two CEOs pointed at the interdependencies of the forestry industry and other economic sectors, for the country's development while noting the importance of conservation to ensuring sustainability of the forest industry both in the manufacturing sphere and conservation to upscale the production of raw materials within the country to meet the market needs.

Furthermore, the Sustainability Forest Sector Action Plan report from the Kenya Association of Manufacturers (KAM) issued to KFS, acknowledges how their actions, as an industry, directly affect forest resources hence the need to collaborate in achieving a vibrant value-chain in the timber sector and also a secure sustainable provision of raw materials whose demand currently supersedes the supply. The report also underscores the need for a multi-sector forum to discuss the sustainability of the forest industry, and its future and to formulate a guided collaboration framework to shape and be responsive to challenges experienced in the wood industry.

The CCF Mr. Kamau expressed the Service's appreciation to KAM for a longstanding partnership which has culminated in the signing of the framework of collaboration, adding that the manufacturing sector is one of the direct beneficiaries of well-conserved forest ecosystems as most require ecological goods and services such as water for manufacturing, singling out the tea industry as an example, which relies on neighbouring forest ecosystems for favourable microclimate to support tea production sustainability.

He also revealed that the Service was in the process of integrating its systems and instituted mechanisms that would ensure good governance, ethics, and accountability are adhered to in the business transactions between the KFS and the forest industry in the disposal of commercial forest plantations.

Ms. Wakiaga lauded KFS's role in enhancing the manufacturing sector through forest conservation and congratulated the CCF for restoring public confidence and rallying members of the public to grow more trees leading to positive visibility of the Service outlook. The CEO noted that KAM was keen on driving a competitive and responsible business sector and therefore the need for mobilising the sector players to take part in environmental conservation. She further committed to using the umbrella body to mobilise manufacturers across the country to actively invest in tree growing for the next three years.

2022 Rhino Charge Raises Ksh. 156m for Conservation



KFS Board Chairman Peter Kinyua, EBS (right) celebrates alongside the CCF Julius Kamau, EBS and KWS Director Strategy and Change Mr. Edwin Wanyonyi (left) after emerging as the number one contributor in this year's Rhino Charge

The 33rd annual Rhino Charge competition, an extreme off-road motor-sport event geared towards forest conservation in Kenya, was this year held on the rugged plains of Mosiro Conservancy in Kajiado County. A total of 64 teams participated in the competition which raised a total of Ksh. 156,279,489.

The end of this year's charge saw participating teams get recognized for their immense contribution to raising funds for conservation in a colourful prize-giving ceremony attended by the Chief Conservator of Forests Julius Kamau among other conservation corporates including the Kenya Wildlife Service and the Rhino Ark Charitable Trust.

KFS Board Chairman Mr Peter Kinyua, who was among the chargers in this year's edition, together with his car number 23 teammates yet again emerged the overall winners for mobilising the highest amount of Ksh. 39.5 million towards forest conservation activities which include electric fencing and forest adjacent communities livelihood support programs.

While receiving several awards for categories that car no.23 scooped, Mr. Kinyua lauded the long-standing relationship between KFS and Rhino Ark Charitable Trust which has seen the two agencies collaborate in fencing projects at Mount Kenya, Aberdares and Eburru forest ecosystems. He noted that the fence programs are some of the contributors to forest protection and management that enabled Kenya to achieve and surpass the

constitutional envisaged 10% tree cover by 2030, following the recently launched 'National Forest Resources Assessment Report 2021 Kenya' which placed Kenya's tree cover at 12.3% and forest cover at 8.83%.

Mr. Kinyua who is also the Chairman of the Rhino Ark Charitable Trust noted that the Kakamega forest ecosystem was the next fencing project upon completion of the remainder of 300kms Mt. Kenya Forest Fence

with 360kms already having been covered. He appreciated the efforts of all the participants in raising funds for a worthy course and urged the teams to continue striving in the same quest for the good of nature, the environment and people.

In his remarks, the CCF congratulated the high octane chargers for a wonderful showcase that made the 2022 Rhino Charge event a roaring success.

He recounted the gains that the sporting activity has impacted on the environment through forest and wildlife conservation. Mr. Kamau particularly pointed out that other than the fencing program, the event through the Trust has been instrumental in supporting KFS deal with wild forest fires which occur during dry seasons and are registered as the leading causes of forest destruction.

He thanked Rhino Ark for complementing the Service in several ways to support the livelihoods of forest adjacent communities who are considered critical in conservation as the social fence around forest ecosystems and also play a lead role in supporting fire fighting missions by their numbers.

The event at Mosiro saw the local community benefit with Ksh. 5,293,030 to support various livelihood projects as the host for this year's activity.



The CCF Mr. Julius Kamau, EBS, (left) KWS Director Strategy and Change Mr. Edwin Wanyonyi (center) and Rhino Ark CEO Christian Lambrechts (right) pose with a Dummy Cheque of funds raised in this year's charge.

KFS participates in the Africities Summit held in Kisumu



The CS Ministry of Environment and Forestry Hon. Keriako Tobiko, EGH, SC signs the visitors book at the KFS stand as the Principal Deputy Chief Conservator of Forests Monica Kalenda (left) looks on during the Africities Conference in Kisumu

Kenya Forest Service participated in the 9th Edition of the Africities Summit which was held in Kisumu City from 17th -21st of May 2022. The organization was led by the Principal Deputy Chief Conservator of Forest, Monica Kalenda who accompanied the Cabinet Secretary Ministry of Environment and Forestry Mr. Keriako Tobiko.

The theme of the conference was “The Role of Intermediary Cities of Africa in the Implementation of Agenda 2030 of the United Nations and the African Union Agenda 2063.” These two Agendas call for the urgent need to develop resilient and sustainable urbanization in Africa, cognizant of the fact that by 2050 the bulk of African population will be living in cities, and that the majority of city dwellers will settle in intermediary cities, Kisumu City being an intermediary city.

Africa is the fastest urbanizing region in the world (OECD, 2020), and its intermediary cities are projected to show the fastest rates of urbanization. An estimated 1086 intermediary cities become home to 174 million people representing 36% of our continent’s total urban population. The urbanization has led to reduction of green spaces in the cities which have been replaced by concrete jungles, to accommodate the growing population in the cities.

The Government of Kenya has committed to setting up and rehabilitating urban green spaces in the cities. This is being done through collaborative efforts led by the Ministry of Environment and Forestry, Kenya Forest Service, the Kenya Forest Service, Kenya Forestry Research Institute, National Environment Management Authority, National Museums of Kenya, the County Government’s and other stakeholders.

The Kenya Constitution 2010 devolved management of County Parks and Arboretums to County Governments. Kisumu City in Kisumu County has made tremendous steps toward reclamation and

rehabilitation of various green spaces within the city, key among them is the rehabilitation of Oile Park which had been turned into an open market by locals and has now been fully reclaimed and rehabilitated by the County Government of Kisumu and open to the public.

Kenya Forest Service as part of its mandate and commitment towards ensuring urban green spaces are protected donated 200 seedlings that were planted at the Jomo Kenyatta Sports Ground Kisumu, during the Africities Summit. In the capital city of Nairobi, rehabilitation of Hon John N Michuki Memorial Park has been a key milestone achievement, having been converted from a dumpsite to a modern park.

Other green spaces within the capital are; Nairobi National Park, Karura Forest Reserve, City Park, Nairobi Arboretum, Ngong Road Forest Sanctuary, Ololua Forest, Uhuru Park, Uhuru Gardens, Jeevanjee Gardens, Nairobi Botanical Gardens at Nairobi Museum Grounds, Giraffe Centre, August 7th Memorial Park and Langata Botanical Garden.

The declining nature of urban green spaces, coupled with the fast growing pace of African cities requires us to take critical measures now to sustain public open green spaces in Africa’s physical urban landscape, which is one of the main targets of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 11 on “Sustainable cities and communities”. These measures call for cities to develop public space policies to conserve green spaces in order to avoid undue privatisation of green spaces, control the effects of climate change, develop strong intercity partnerships to facilitate easy transfer of ideas and lessons on green spaces. This is key to achieving the New Urban Agenda; advancing the implementation of SDGs besides goal 11 mentioned above. Others include SDG 13 that focuses on “Combating climate change and its impact” and SDG 15 that pays particular attention to the “Management of forests’ sustainably and stopping biodiversity loss”.

Launch of the Mawingu Mountain Bongo Sanctuary



Tourism and Wildlife Cabinet Secretary Najib Balala, EGH, releases the first five Mountain Bongos into the new sanctuary. Looking on is the Chief Conservator of Forests, Julius Kamau, EBS

Kenya Forest Service teamed up with the Kenya Wildlife Service and Mt. Kenya Wildlife Conservancy for a historic conservation moment during the launch of the 'Mawingu Mountain Bongo Sanctuary' in Meru, as the first five of the critically endangered Mountain bongos were released back into the wild on 400 acres of the 776 acres sanctuary established and traversing the natural forest of Ontulili and Nanyuki forest station ecosystems.

The exercise, officiated by the Tourism and Wildlife Cabinet Secretary, Najib Balala witnessed the Mountain bongos (enlisted as critically endangered species in the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) red list of threatened species) get reintroduced into the wild in an ongoing efforts to breed and raise their numbers in Kenya, noting that this rare and beautiful African antelope is endemic to Kenya with only about 100 remaining worldwide.

In Kenya's efforts to save the endemic species and increase their numbers, the sanctuary was developed for the program to offer breeding and dispersal area for the species into their natural habitat to ensure

adaptation characteristics are integrated to the other Mountain bongos that will be released into the wild to join and learn from the first pioneers as they transition from human into the forest.

The sanctuary is a long-term vision by the three agencies as outlined in the Mountain Bongo National Recovery and Action Plan (2019-2023) to achieve a population target of a herd of 750 individuals in the country

by 2050.

The species highly depend on healthy forests for survival hence the few remaining are found in Mt. Kenya, Eburu and South-West Mau Forests. As the custodian of forest areas that provide habitat for Mountain Bongo, the Service is a crucial partner in ensuring the security and growth in numbers of this critically endangered species.



Two of the five endangered Mountain Bongos that were released into the wild within the Mawingu Mountain Bongo Sanctuary hosted within Ontulili and Nanyuki Forest ecosystems

KFS, KDF in Boreholes Project for Enhanced Seedling Production



Principal Conservator of Forests Mr. Hussein Noor (right), Major J. G Wainaina of KDF and the County Conservator of Forests for Kajiado Mr. George Oluga at the recently drilled borehole at Mashuru Tree Nursery in Kajiado County.

Kenya Forest Service (KFS) and Kenya Defence Force (KDF) have developed a partnership to carry out geo-hydraulic surveys and drilling of sixteen boreholes in various tree nurseries across the country. Through the partnership, KDF will conduct geo-hydraulic survey, drilling, development, equipping and commissioning of boreholes in KFS Tree Nurseries.

KDF through the partnership have completed the drilling the first borehole at Mashuru Tree Nursery borehole in Kajiado County. Another 15 boreholes will be drilled in tree nurseries across the country. The borehole has a yield of 4.5 cubic meter per hour, and the water is fresh. Its depth is 170 metres.

The project manager National Tree Planting Campaign (NTPC) Project and Head of Farm Forestry at Kenya Forest Service, Mr Noor while assessing the project underscored the significance of Mashuru Tree Nursery in enhancing our national greening agenda and socioeconomic development of the local communities. Major J.G. Wainaina the commanding officer 14 Engineering Battalion of the KDF, thanked KFS for the partnership, and noted the importance of water resource to the communities around and in greening efforts by both KFS and KDF.

The KDF have begun drilling of the second borehole at Thika Tree Nursery in Kiambu

County this will be followed by Biricha in Nyeri County. The second phase is set to begin in August 2022, covering; Mandera, Wajir, Garissa, Tana River, Lamu and Kilifi counties. While the third phase will cover Laikipia, Samburu, Marsabit, West Pokot and Turkana counties.

The drilling is being conducted by 14 Engineering Battalion of Kenya Defence Force and is being coordinated by the National Tree Planting Campaign Project of Kenya Forest Service.

Launch of Kaptagat Greening Project

The PS Ministry of Environment and Forestry Dr. Chris Kiptoo launched a solar-powered Kapkoi-Kibogy Water Project to inaugurate the Greening Kaptagat Forest Landscape Project at Kessup and Sabor Forest stations, both within the larger Kaptagat Forest Ecosystem in Elgeyo Marakwet County.

He was joined by the Representative of the British High Commissioner to Kenya, Mike Foster (Head, Economic Development and Climate Change at the British High Commission), the KFS Regional Forest Conservation Areas Coordinator, Dr. Benjamin Kinyili and the Executive Director for Science and Conservation WWF-UK Dr. Mike Barret.

The project is funded by the UK government through the *Partnering for Accelerated Climate Transitions* (UK PACT) fund and the World-Wide Fund for Nature-Kenya (WWF) and is aimed at addressing carbon emissions, biodiversity and poverty challenges in the Kaptagat landscape through the establishment of agroforestry and clean energy solutions.

The project is part of a 4.7 billion pledge by the UK government which aims to have over 1,000 hectares of deforested and degraded land under restoration and target investments in solar energy benefiting over 1000 households in the area through this



Environment and Forestry Principal Secretary Dr. Chris Kiptoo, CBS unveils a foam board poster to mark the launch of the Greening Kaptagat project.

and other nature-based projects.

The Kaptagat landscape extends beyond the forest into farmlands and grazing areas in the surrounding communities. It is part of the wider Cherangany-Elgeyo Hills Ecosystem - an important water tower for Kenya.

In the larger ecosystem, there are 286 springs out of which 229 feed into the Kerio River

which drains into Lake Turkana while 79 springs drain into Sosiani River, a tributary of the Nzoia River which flows into Lake Victoria.

In his remarks during the launch, Dr. Kiptoo appreciated the support put forward by the UK government and WWF and also noting that the annual Kaptagat Tree planting exercises have cumulatively led to the recovery of 404ha of once degraded forest land. He further lauded the efforts of all stakeholders and their contributions to the government's target of attaining and maintaining over 10% tree cover.

The British High Commissioner reiterated his government's efforts in supporting climate change mitigation efforts by implementing the Glasgow summit resolutions. As a result, the UK Government has pledged its support to help Kenya achieve clean energy and net zero emissions by 2030.

Representing the Chief Conservator of Forests, Dr. Kinyili, noted that Kenya Forest Service, together with other MoEF SAGAS saw fit the need of this project to respond to the increased deforestation and degradation across the landscape. He heeded that this will be achieved by rehabilitating the riparian lands using indigenous trees and bamboo together with creation of green jobs so as to reduce pressure on gazetted forests.



The project will also involve a complimentary solar-powered Kapkoi-Kibogy Water Project.

KFS Acquires Motorcycle Fleet to Boost Surveillance



KFS Board Chairman Mr. Peter Kinyua, EBS and CCF Mr. Julius Kamau, EBS flags off a motorcycle fleet at the KFS headquarters.

The Service early in the year launched a fleet of motorcycles to support conservation, management and protection of forest resources at station level in Aberdare, Mau and Mt Kenya forest ecosystems.

The 45 motorcycles flagged off by the KFS Board Chairman Peter Kinyua and the Chief Conservator of Forests Julius Kamau were procured through the Green Zones Development Support Project phase II (GZDSP II); a KFS project funded by the African Development Bank Group (AfDB) and Government of Kenya.

The project's aim is to promote efficient ways of increasing forest cover, food security, and improving overall community livelihood through sustainable and inclusive commodity value chains and market development. The six (6) year project is being implemented in 15 counties in four

KFS conservancies covering Aberdare, Mau and Mt Kenya forest ecosystems.

During the flag off ceremony, Mr. Kinyua appreciated the GZDSP II partners for their continued support in infrastructure development and called for more partnerships from the corporate world to further enhance the Service's capabilities in fire-fighting by investing in fire-fighting infrastructure. He made these remarks while noting the challenge facing the Service during the forest fire seasons; of spreading forest fires due to the prolonged dry season, adding that most of the causes of fire emanated from forest neighboring communities as they prepare farmlands for the planting season.

He ultimately urged other Government institutions neighboring KFS jurisdictions to further secure their areas by developing fire-breaks to forestall cases of wildfires

further spreading to forested areas.

The CCF during the launch exemplified achievements made by the Service through the GZDSP II project in enhancing forest conservation while touching the livelihood of communities living adjacent to forest ecosystems by investing resources to establish non-extractive income generating activities. Through the project, he noted the Service had restored and rehabilitated up to 98,000 Ha of degraded forest areas by working with Community Forest Associations in tree seedlings production and involvement of community scouts in forest protection.

The project has also during the rainy season supported several tree-planting exercises within its operation areas and involving local environmental enthusiasts and Government partners.

Equipment to Boost Conservation of Kirisia Forest

Kenya Forest Service (KFS) has received equipment from the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) to further enhance conservation activities happening within the Kirisia/Leroghi forest reserve.

The Chief Conservator of Forests (CCF) Mr Julius Kamau presided over the handover ceremony of two watch towers installed within the 91,000 Ha forest ecosystem at a total cost of Kenya Shillings Six (6) million, a tractor fitted with a hydraulic trailer and water bowser to support tree nursery and planting activities, and four (4) motorcycles to facilitate forest patrols by both KFS Rangers and community scouts.

Speaking during the ceremony in Maralal Samburu County, the CCF, who was also joined by Mr. Hamisi Williams (FAO Assistant Country Representative), Hon Naisula Lesuuda (MP, Samburu West) and Hon Maison Leshoomo (Samburu Women Representative), lauded the project for the support extended to the multi-faceted efforts in restoring the critical forest ecosystem as one way of battling the climate change crisis and also enhancing food security within the ASAL County. The support also involved community sensitization that led to the voluntary vacation of settlers from the forest during the reclamation process.

Mr. Kamau specifically pointed out that the two established watchtowers would facilitate early detection of wild forest fires notorious in most arid counties and the leading cause of forest loss in the country. He underscored, that the watchtowers would also be instrumental in security surveillance activities within the forest ecosystem.

The acquired tractor and accompanying equipments will play a major role in enhancing tree seedlings production at the county where KFS hugely relies on community-led tree nurseries. These community nurseries are a revenue earner for groups that include women and youth who derive livelihoods from such conservation practises that the Service continues to advocate in community forums.

During the handover, the CCF also acknowledged how the Service enjoys support from the community members who have been

at the forefront in protecting Kirisia/Leroghi forest resources. The forum provided a sensitization opportunity for the Service to further reiterate the importance of forest conservation and protection by advising the forest adjacent communities to avoid illegal activities such as charcoal burning. Instead the community was urged to utilise forest resources through legally allowed forest user rights which include grazing and beekeeping among other non-extractive income-generating activities stipulated under Forest Laws.

The FAO GEF Project representative noted the centrality of forest adjacent communities in forest conservation and registered the organization's pledge in continuing to support efforts by the Service to achieve its mandate to raise the national tree cover by consolidating the gains already made in Samburu County.

During the exercise, the CCF also inspected ongoing income-generating activities by communities under the Naramat CFA who have enjoyed three harvest seasons from over 50 beehives donated by KFS. He also appreciated a community tree nursery run by a local women group that currently has 24,000 plantable indigenous tree seedlings.



The CCF Mr. Julius Kamau, EBS and the FAO Assistant Country Representative, Mr. Hamisi Williams display signed documents signifying the handover of equipment to KFS



Some of the equipments donated by FAO GEF Project including a Tractor and Motorcycles

Forest Farmer Field Schools Graduation



28 graduates from Muembe Forest Farmer Field School pose for a group photo during their graduation ceremony in Maara, Tharaka Nithi County.

The approach intends to build farmers' capacity to identify their problems, test their possible solution and evaluate sustainable land use technologies alongside their own traditional conventional ways.

The Kenya Forest Service (KFS) through the Green Zones Development Support Project Phase II (GDZSPII) held Forestry Farmer Field Schools (FFFS) graduation ceremonies during the 2021-2022 financial year where 353 beneficiaries graduate with certificates of participation in different counties across the country.

The KFS project, partly funded by the African Development Bank and the Government of Kenya, in its first cycle of the farm forestry field schools managed to run 15 schools in its project areas of Embu, Kisii, Kiambu, Nyeri, Muranga, Machakos, Kirinyaga, Kericho, Nakuru, Nyamira, Bomet, Baringo and Tharaka-Nithi counties.

The FFFS approach is an innovative, participatory and interactive learning approach that emphasizes problem solving and discovery learning. The approach intends to build farmers' capacity to identify their problems, test their possible solution and evaluate sustainable land use technologies alongside their own traditional conventional ways.

The main benefits of FFFS are, the building of self confidence by members and enhancing decision making while also strengthening the farmers' ability in observation while at the same time change beliefs, myths through the experiments conducted by they themselves.

During the graduation ceremony, graduands present some of the studies conducted to improve food security in their areas such as studying the best maize or potatoes varieties for growing in their farms for their region. They also present livelihood improvement enterprises such as identifying the best quality of grafted mangoes and avocados to add to their income through the sale of these high-quality seedlings.

On forest conservation, they try out fast-growing timber species for their utilization so as to reduce pressure on natural forests and educated on the benefits in carbon sequestration, herbal source of material and habitats for wild animals.

The success of these schools is anchored in the capacity within KFS of having "master trainers" in the FFFS methodology who act as facilitators of the schools. The Green Zone Development Support Project (GZDSP) II is one of the main projects within the KFS with several objectives. One of their main objectives is Forest Conservation. The pressure on forests will only reduce through achievement of its 3 sub activities which include food security in people's farm, on farm livelihood improvement in their homesteads and this will result in forest conservation of the forests.

Kenya Marks World Environment Day



The Director of Administration in the Ministry of Environment and Forestry Mr. Joel Kitili (l) is led through the KFS exhibition by the Principal Conservator of Forests Dr. Benjamin Kinyili (2nd left) and other KFS officers during the WED at Dedan Kimathi University of Technology in Nyeri

Kenya Forest Service (KFS) joined other government agencies led by National Environment Management Authority (NEMA) and the Ministry of Environment and Forestry in marking this year's World Environment Day (WED) under the theme 'only one earth, together we can protect it' the event held at the Dedan Kimathi University of Technology (DeTUK), in Nyeri County. KFS planted 2000 trees to mark the important global event at the institution. A further 20,000 seedlings will be planted at the 850ha adopted by Dedan Kimathi University of Technology (DeTUK), at Tanyai block in Muringato forest station. This year's World Environment Day (WED) marks the 50th anniversary of the establishment of UNEP which is has its headquarters in Kenya.

The Chief Guest the CS for Environment and Forestry Mr. Keriako Tobiko was represented by the ministry's Administration Secretary Mr. Joel Kitili who noted that the Ministry had put in place measures to ensure that the country was adapting to climate change effects. He also said that the ministry was spearheading the circular economy strategy to enable country reduce waste.

The Chief Conservator of Forest (CCF) was represented at the event by the Regional Forest Conservation Area Coordinator Dr. Benjamin Kinyili who congratulated Nyeri County for maintaining the country's highest tree cover at 45% and forest cover at 40% as per the recently launched National Forest Resources Assessment Report.

Present during the event included the NEMA Acting Chairperson Dr. Lul Abdiwahid, the Catholic Archbishop of Nyeri Anthony Muheria, the Vice Chancellor of Dedan University of Technology Prof. Ndirangu Kioni, the CEC for Environment Nyeri County Mr. Fredrick Kinyua, the Regional Forest Conservator for Central Highlands Mr. Samuel Ihure among other public and private sector representatives. A number of individuals and institutions were awarded for exemplary efforts in environmental conservation

Archbishop Ole Sapit Visits Karura Forest

The Archbishop of the Anglican Church of Kenya (ACK) Most Rev. Dr. Jackson Ole Sapit was recently hosted by the KFS Board Chairman Mr. Peter Kinyua, during a visit to plant trees at Sigiria Block in Karura Forest.

KFS has been working closely with Faith-based organizations in Kenya, to plant trees within church compounds and other appropriate locations. In particular, KFS has prepared a Framework for Collaboration with the Anglican Church of Kenya on the adoption of degraded forest areas for rehabilitation.

The Anglican Church committed to adopt 3,000 hectares of degraded forest areas in 32 sites within gazetted forests. It is a commendable step that will mobilize church followers to participate in tree growing and increase awareness on the importance of forest conservation through their Green Anglican Movement whose main aim is preserving God's Creation for future generations. The two entities have also agreed to establish a prayer station at Sigiria forest block where visitors can connect with God.

In attendance were Alex Lemarkoko and Charity Munyasia Deputy Chief Conservators in-charge of Forest Protection and Natural Forests respectively.



The ACK Archbishop Dr. Jackson Ole Sapit waters a tree he planted at Sigiria block, Karura Forest flanked by the KFS Board Chairman Mr. Peter Kinyua.

KFS Participates at the World Wetlands Day



Ministry of Environment and Forestry Chief Administrative Secretary Hon. Mohamed Elmi visits the KFS stand during celebrations to mark World Wetlands Day at Ondiri Swamp in Kiambu County.

The World Wetlands Day 2022 celebrations were led by the Ministry of Environment and Forestry (MoEF) Chief Administrative Secretary (CAS) Hon. Mohamed Elmi at Ondiri Swamp in Kiambu County under the theme “Wetlands Action for People and Nature.”

Ondiri Swamp is a unique Palustrine Wetland located in close proximity to Kikuyu town, Kiambu County and covers 34.5 Ha with a perimeter of 3.5 km and a depth range of 2 to 3 meters. The swamp is a source to 40 other springs, which provides water to the local community and it also forms the headwaters of Nairobi River where it is fed by Nyongara River. Ondiri Swamp supports biodiversity ranging from aquatic and semi aquatic plants, birds, mammals, amphibians, reptiles and insects.

While giving his remarks during the celebrations, Hon. Elmi on behalf of the MoEF Cabinet Secretary noted that concerns had been raised locally and internationally on the conservation and sustainable use of wetland resources. Hon. Elmi indicated that the Ministry and other partners through; Wetlands Action for People and Nature, had made efforts to reverse Ondiri swamp degradation and loss through fencing. The fencing was highlighted to have contributed to regeneration of plant species that had been destroyed.

“Through efforts of KFS and NEMA, 10,000 tree seedlings have been planted around the swamp,” he added.

The Kiambu County Governor Dr. James Nyoro who was also present at the function noted Ondiri swamp as an important water catchment area for the communities adjacent to it. He appreciated the KFS Community Forests Association framework that enables locals adjacent to forests to offer their input in sustainable management of forests.

This, he reiterated would help stakeholders, the community and Friends of Ondiri in creating suitable management frameworks for sustainable use of the swamp.



Ministry of Environment and Forestry CAS Hon. Mohamed Elmi plants a tree during the event.

Belgian Embassy Collaborates with KFS to Plant Trees



Belgian Ambassador to Kenya H.E Peter Madden (right), KFS Board Chairman Mr. Peter Kinyua, EBS, (left) and the Chief Conservator of Forests Mr. Julius Kamau, EBS (center), during the Belgian Embassy tree planting.

The Embassy of Belgium has committed to work with Kenya Forest Service (KFS) in offsetting its carbon footprint through tree growing. The Belgian Ambassador His Excellency Peter Maddens, during a tree planting exercise held at Karura Forest to mark the beginning of the collaboration committed to donate 500 indigenous tree seedlings annually. The seedlings will be planted in identified degraded forest areas countrywide.

The Ambassador, who was hosted by the KFS Board Chairman Mr Peter Kinyua and Chief Conservator of Forests Mr Julius Kamau, reiterated the global climate change discussions at the UN Climate Change Conference (COP 26) drawing focus on environmental awareness and the need for concrete actions towards addressing climate associated vices.

KFS Board Chairman on his part lauded the initiative by the Belgian Embassy, he encouraged other institutions and members of the public to join in supporting KFS in growing trees for the

good of the country. He further noted that the Service works closely with forest adjacent communities through Community Forest Associations (CFA's) to protect, conserve and co-manage forest resources.

The Chief Conservator of Forest added that Service, was currently pursuing discussions for partnership with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP Kenya) and mobile Telco Safaricom to develop an online Carbon Credit Calculator, which once developed, will facilitate environment-conscious individuals intending to offset their carbon footprint, to calculate and identify the amount they would require to offset by contributing towards tree growing. He also underscored the importance of Adopt-A-Forest Framework developed through the Ministry of Environment and Forestry, to provide a guided mechanism for partnership in the restoration and rehabilitation of degraded forest resources.

CS Joe Mucheru Adopts Forest Area to Boost Restoration



The Cabinet Secretary for ICT and Youth Affairs Joe Mucheru, EGH receives a copy of Framework of Collaboration document from the Chief Conservator of Forests Julius Kamau, EBS at KFS headquarters

Kenya Forest Service (KFS) has signed two Frameworks for Collaboration with environment champions who in their personal capacity have identified with the global crisis of climate change and the need for individual actions being taken in reversing the dire crisis before it spins out of hand.

The Service in 2020, signed the first of this kind with renowned World Marathon Record Holder Eliud Kipchoge, for the rehabilitation and restoration of 50 hectares of a degraded forest area in Kaptagat forest station, where as an athlete, he desired to bring change to the place he loves to train.

The Cabinet Secretary Ministry of ICT, Innovation and Youth Affairs, Joe Mucheru became the second to sign a Framework for Collaboration with the Service where he will adopt part of a degraded forest area in Kiganjo Forest, a block within Muringato Forest Station in Nyeri County, where he will sponsor the rehabilitation and restoration process by supporting the Service's efforts in working with Community Forest Associations (CFA) comprised of community members living adjacent to the forest.

CS Mucheru signed the framework with the Chief Conservator of Forests Julius Kamau to support the restoration of 150 hectares of the forest over a three-year period by providing resources that will be used to rehabilitate the portion through tree growing.

Speaking during the signing ceremony, CS Mucheru stated that the need to safeguard the environment for the good of the country compelled his actions to take up the initiative. He pointed out that the youth related to practical examples as opposed to mere words from the society, and therefore the need for him to lead by example.

The CS further pointed to involvement by ICT SAGAs in the promotion of forestry citing Konza Technopolis who have established a 400,000-capacity tree nursery which they are expanding for the project's needs to produce up to 10 million tree seedlings.

On his part, the CCF thanked CS Mucheru for becoming the second individual in the country, after Eliud Kipchoge, to adopt a forest block for restoration and complement government efforts towards the achievement and sustenance of 10% tree cover. The CCF also hosted CS Mucheru on a guided tour of the KFS Forest Information Centre to appreciate the technology input by the Service aiding in forest conservation, management and protection. During the wide discussions, the CCF requested for support in strengthening the dynamic telecommunication needs of the Service to connect all forest stations in the country. He noted that most telecommunications masts in the country are installed within forest.

KFS Leveraging on Media Influence for Forest Conservation



The Chief Conservator of Forests Julius Kamau, EBS (2nd left) and the CEO of the Media Council of Kenya Mr. David Omwoyo (2nd right) sign the Framework of Collaboration KFS Headquarters

Kenya Forest Service (KFS) has partnered with the Media Council of Kenya (MCK), to enhance its role in forest conservation by tapping into the power of the fourth estate to shape public opinion and positively influence the society around issues of the environment, climate change, and importance of tree growing. The Council joins the list of about 50 partners, ranging from the public and private sector, who are now working with the Service through the Adopt-A-Forest Initiative to support forest conservation by restoring degraded areas and also conserve rehabilitated sites.

The two organizations, led by the Chief Conservator of Forests (CCF) Mr Julius Kamau and MCK CEO Mr David Omwoyo, signed a 'Framework for Collaboration for Forest Restoration and Creation of Awareness on Forest Conservation and Management efforts in Kenya' through which the Council will adopt a pilot five (5) hectares degraded forest area in Ndoinet forest (Kericho County) and provide financial support for the restoration and rehabilitation processes for a three-year period.

the media fraternity will be our linkage in mobilising the public for their immense and needed support in forest conservation

While signing the framework, the CCF noted how such partnerships have contributed to the Service's success in restoring 70,000 Ha of degraded forest lands across the country over the previous financial period 2021-2022. He further welcomed the new entrant as a strategic partner noting the powerful significance of the media in reaching out to members of the public to the benefit of the Service in mobilising the nation to grow trees during rainy seasons and provide knowledge on forestry.

"Through this framework, the media fraternity will be our linkage in mobilising

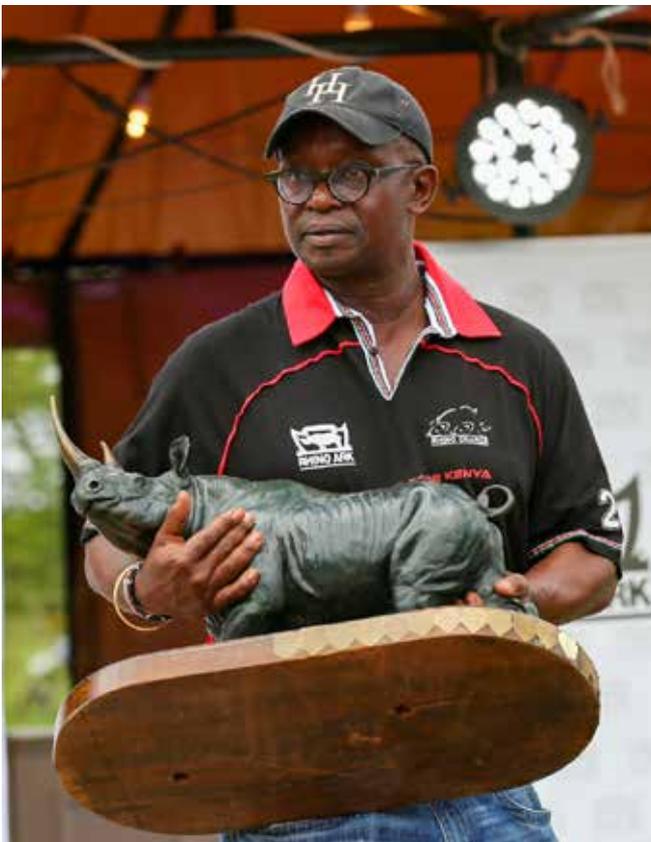
the public for their immense and needed support in forest conservation, as well as educating the masses on forestry and the benefits of tree growing," noted the CCF.

Mr. Omwoyo reiterated that through the framework, MCK would further activate its membership, including the Environmental Journalist Association of Kenya (who have been working with the Service in rehabilitating portion of a degraded forest in Ngong Road) to amplify through the media the message of forest conservation and highlight how forests offer lasting solutions to climate mitigation.

He further registered the Council's commitment to engaging media owners on the need of collaborating and supporting KFS by also adopting forest blocks as one way of complementing the government's effort to achieve and sustain over 10% tree cover as enshrined in the Kenyan Constitution. Under the framework, the two organisations will also cooperate in accurate content reporting on matters forestry.



His Excellency, President Uburu Kenyatta plants a commemorative tree during the opening of Uburu Gardens National Monument and Museum flanked by President of Sierra Leone His Excellency Julius Maada Bio (left)



KFS Board Chair Peter Kinyua, EBS carrying an award won by Car Number 23 in recognition of the team for raising the highest amount for conservation (39 million Kenya Shillings) during the event.



The Chief Conservator of Forests Julius Kamau, EBS with H.E. Amb. Njambi Kinyungu, Deputy Permanent Representative of Kenya to the United Nations at Kenya's UN Mission Offices in New York.



Prince Edward of Great Britain signs a visitors book at Zuti Forest Station accompanied by (from left) Mr. Mubobo Kenyatta, KFS Board Chairman Peter Kinyua, EBS and the CCF Julius Kamau EBS (right)



Kenya Forest Service award from the International Tree Fund. The Award was given to the Service during ITF's centenary celebrations.



KeNHA DG, Eng Kungu Ndungu takes part in a tree planting session at the organization's adopted section at the Ngong Road Forest under the Adopt-A-Forest initiative



Mr. David Chege Ag. Manager, Forest Survey & Information Management during a warmup session of the Stanchart Marathon held at the Nairobi Arboretum Park.



Ngong Road Forest Primary School pupils during a tree planting exercise at Miotoni block of Ngong Road Forest.



Airtel Kenya Managing Director Pratsana Das Sarma during a tree planting event at Ngong Hills Forest to mark the mobile service provider's partnership with KFS through Adopt-A-Forest



The CCF Julius Kamau, EBS plants a tree with youths at Old Kijabe, Kinale Forest Station in Kiambu County during a tree planting event.



KFS and KDF officers test water yield from a newly sunk borehole in Bilisha Tree Nursery in Nyeri County



A Community Forest Association member demonstrating the use of value added Forest products at the Machakos ASK Show. Watching on is the Machakos County Ecosystem Conservator Ms. Mary Mwai.



A mangrove tree planting exercise where 60,000 propagules were planted in Tana River County by local communities during the International Day of Forests



Tree planting during the International Day of Forests at Ngong Hills Forest



A demonstration of the sawmilling process during the launch of the Komaza Sawmill in Nyandarua County



CS Ministry of Environment and Forestry Hon. Keriako Tobiko, EGH, SC leads the Kenyan delegation in planting Kenya's tree during the UNEP at 50 commemorative tree planting at Nairobi City Park



The CCF Mr. Julius Kamau, EBS tests the newly constructed watch tower in Kirisia Forest, Samburu County



The CAS Ministry of Devolution and Asal Hon. Abdul Bubari (Centre) with the Nairobi Regional Forest Conservator Francis Kariuki (left) during a tree planting event at Ngong Hills Forest to mark Public Service Day.



KFS volleyball team during a 5th leg match of the Kenya Volleyball Federation National Men's League at the Nyayo National Stadium



Members of KFS Karate team during a week-long training training at the Shokotan Club under the tutelage of visiting karate expert; Chief Instructor Sensei Atika (center) from Japan

Nyandarua County Launches Forest Landscape Restoration Strategy (2021-2030)

Nyandarua County, under the leadership of the Governor His Excellency Francis Kimemia is the first county in the country to develop and officially launch a Forest Landscape Restoration (FLR) Strategy since devolution delegated forestry as one of the devolved functions to county governments under the 2010 Constitution of Kenya.

The county held a colourful celebration in Olkallou where the Chief Conservator of Forests (CCF) Julius Kamau joined the county administration and residents for the launch of the Nyandarua County Forest Landscape Restoration Strategy (2021-2030).

Inspired by Kenya's Forest and Landscape Restoration Plan 2021-2025 (FoLAREP), Nyandarua's FLR Strategy is in line with Kenya's commitment to the AFR100 and Bonn Challenge of converting 5.1million Ha of degraded landscapes in the country into forests by 2030. Through the strategy, Nyandarua will contribute to the challenge since the FLR provides an architecture on forest landscape restoration that targets to restore degraded landscapes within the county by 2030. In the 10-year strategy, Nyandarua targets growing 10 million tree seedlings on degraded landscapes.

Speaking during the launch, the CCF noted

how Nyandarua as the first county to develop an FLR strategy, set in motion a framework to guide the conservation and management of forest landscapes sustainably for present and future generations.

"County governments play a pivotal role in achieving FLR aspirations to support cooperation between national and county government agencies by encouraging partnerships with other stakeholders such as development partners, private sector and research and grassroots institutions," said the CCF.

He further commended the county leadership for their robust steps in forestry implementation noting how in under one-year Nyandarua had launched and signed the Transition Implementation Plans (TIPs) which provide a roadmap for transition planning of devolved forestry functions, from the national government level to the county. Furthermore, the county, within the same period also launched the Lake Olbollosat Integrated Management Plan.

Through such efforts, Kamau stated that following KFS conducting a National Forest Resource Assessment Report 2021, findings indicated that Nyandarua's forest cover had risen from 18.8% to 26.2% (85,686.10Ha) while the tree

cover stood at 27.56% (90,132.52 Ha).

The CCF in a press address during the launch, called on counties while formulating their fiscal budgets, to appropriate more budgetary allocations to environment and forestry programs noting that for a nation to be healthy and functional, the environment should be well protected. The CCF also urged members of the public to take up tree growing initiatives by planting trees during the current rains.

On his part, Governor Kimemia noted that while restoring deforested and degraded forest landscapes, his administration through the FLR seek to support livelihood opportunities for vulnerable communities as one way of ensuring they are climate-resilient. He indicated that through a social program, the county had issued over 20,000 gas cylinders to communities living adjacent to forest resources, and observed that the use of the gas cylinders brought visible change within the neighbouring forest ecosystems since the community's reliance on forest for fuel eased saving the forest landscapes.

The launch was attended by CFA officials from the county's five forest stations, NACOFA, Komaza, and WWF among others present.



The Chief Conservator of Forests Julius Kamau, EBS together with Governor of Nyandarua His Excellency Francis Kimemia launch the County's Forest and Landscape Restoration Strategy

Wangari Maathai 10 Million Tree Challenge



Environment and Forestry PS Dr. Chris Kiptoo, CBS (holding national flag), is joined by CCF Julius Kamau, EBS (right) Nyeri County Governor HE Mutahi Kahiga (center) and the Nyeri Catholic Diocese Archbishop Anthony Muberia (holding microphone) in flagging off 2.6 tonnes of seeds for distribution to schools in Nyeri County

The Ministry of Environment and Forestry (MoEF), Kenya Forest Service (KFS), Nyeri County Government, and the Catholic Diocese of Nyeri collaborated in launching the ‘Wangari Maathai 10 Million Tree Challenge’ which aims to raise 10 million seedlings for greening the county. The ambitious challenge, that is part of the implementation of the National Tree Planting Campaign (NTPC), is being implemented by the County Government through support from KFS, Kenya Forestry Research Institute (KEFRI) and the Catholic Diocese of Nyeri.

The programme targets ninety five schools with favourable parameters allowing establishment of tree nurseries to produce and supply seedlings from quality site-matched seeds issued by KEFRI with KFS providing technical support to raise the seedlings.

MoEF Principal Secretary Dr Chris Kiptoo was joined by KFS Chief Conservator of Forests Mr Julius Kamau, Nyeri County Governor His Excellency Mutahi Kahiga and the Nyeri Catholic Diocese Archbishop Anthony Muberia in flagging off 2.6 tonnes of seeds for distribution to schools.

While releasing the seeds, the PS reckoned that the effects of climate change are a reality

that requires action from all to reverse the situation in a bid to save mankind, adding that one way was through massive tree growing. Dr Kiptoo also informed the gathering at the launch that as part of



The Chief Conservator of Forests Julius Kamau, EBS assists Nyeri Catholic Diocese Archbishop Anthony Muberia to plant a commemorative tree at Nyeri County Headquarters

the National strategy for attaining and maintaining 10% forest cover, the Ministry of Education has also committed to support the agenda by producing 500 million seedlings in schools, colleges and TVET institutions across the country.

The Catholic Diocese of Nyeri through its networks will mobilize schools and stakeholders to initiate seedlings production in primary and secondary schools under the direction of technical experts drawn from KFS & KEFRI.

In his remarks, the CCF noted the potential in Nyeri to further raise its tree cover, as the leading county in tree cover, by leveraging on farmlands especially on the drier parts of the county mentioning Tetu and Kieni constituencies as examples. He further committed to KFS supporting the drive by producing five (5) million tree seedlings to support the program which will ensure water security among other benefits.

Governor Kahiga urged all school principals who attended the launch to commit to ensuring the success of the program and committed to his administration doubling the Kenya shillings five (5) million invested in the first phase of the program in the next phase.

KFS, Meru County launch Arboretum



Regional Forest Conservation Area Coordinator Dr. Benjamin Kinyili flags off cyclists during the launch of the Meru Arboretum Park

Officials from the Kenya Forest Service and the Meru County Government flagged off the 32km long IKOKAY Cycling Challenge, which took place across Upper and Lower Imenti Forest blocks, to mark the launch of Meru Arboretum Park on 2nd April, 2022.

The cycling event which was held under the theme, "Discover Meru" and drew elite cyclists from across the country, was aimed at promoting non-consumptive use of forests for recreation, promotion of green spaces, sports for forest conservation and

local tourism

The arboretum, which is the first recreational green space in the county and covers an area of 23.82 Ha, is situated inside Meru Forest Station along the Meru-Nanyuki highway and also at the intersection of the new by-pass from the Meru National Polytechnic. The arboretum falls about 3kms from the Makutano Township CBD and is adjacent to the highly populated suburbs of Makutano and Meru town.

This initiative was conceived by the signing

of a Framework of Collaboration on 9th March 2022 for the joint management of the green space through a Joint Coordination Committee comprising of representatives from KFS and the Meru County government.

The areas of collaboration as outlined in the framework include but are not limited to; design and construction of infrastructure which encompasses; an office administration block, entry gate, driveway, visitor center, parking area, events garden, cycling tracks and trails, central park, pavilion, conservation area, and ancillary facilities; beautification and landscaping which encompasses; growing flowers, grass and levelling soil; tree planting and maintenance at the arboretum and; security provision by deployment of forest rangers; record keeping; and infrastructural maintenance and improvement of arboretum.

Additionally, as part of the continuous development of green spaces in the county, Meru Forest Environmental Conservation and Protection Association (MEFECAP) which is the Community Forest Association in Meru Forest Station, has an existing special user's license to develop parts of Meru Forest for ecotourism. Sites under this license include King Muuru historical site, camping ground and respective eco-tourism products.

KFS Shines at the Machakos ASK Show

Kenya Forest Service performed exemplarily well at the Machakos ASK Show in Machakos County.

The KFS stand, mounted by the KFS Machakos County office, scooped four (4) awards: 3 first positions and 1 second position.

The awards were as follows: The Best Stand That Best Interprets Current Theme, Government Stand, The Best Organisation/Association in Community Project/Services, The Best Stand Demonstrating the Application of Environment Quality Standards, The 2 Best Stand Services and Conservation Sector Services.

The Secretary State Department of Crop Development and Agriculture Research,

Joseph Kirubi presented the trophies to the Machakos County Forest Conservator Ms Mary Mwai during the presentation ceremony at the official opening of the ASK Show.



The Kenya Forest Service Machakos County officers led by the County Forest Conservator Mary Mwai (center) posing with the trophies won at the Machakos ASK Show.

The Shepherds of Kirisia



Women members of Naramat CFA tend to Tree Seedlings at their nursery

Naramat is the name a Community Forest Association (CFA) in Maralal Samburu County has chosen for their group. It means to ‘shepherd’ or to ‘take care of’ in the local Samburu dialect. The Samburu are a pastoral community who keep large herds of cattle and often relocate from place to place in search of pasture. They are deeply attached to their cattle which are regarded as the main source of sustenance apart from being a status symbol. But the reason they gave their CFA the name Naramat is because they have now included their cherished Kirisia Forest among the things they shepherd. This is because after years of living in the forest and the attendant degradation of the same, they have come to the firm realization that they need to protect and conserve the forest for it to take care of them and their herds.

Until 2019, over 10,000 households illegally lived in the forest. This led to the extensive destruction of the forest and with it loss of ageless indigenous trees and drying up of springs and wetlands which nourished the forest and its inhabitants. Wild animals such as elephants, buffalos, rhinos and the big cats which used to be a common sighting either retreated to safer and more habitable areas or disappeared altogether.

Mr. John Lempisikishoi a CFA official and a community elder remembers when the over 90,000-hectare Kirisia Forest was intact and stretched to the edge of Maralal Town. He was

a young man and in those days the forest used to be treated with some form of reverence because of the role it played as grazing land during the dry season. And dry seasons in Samburu could be long and torturous. The forest was also a source of nourishment and medicine with its rich biodiversity of wild fruit and flora. In fact, Kirisia Forest used to be renowned for production of herbal medicine especially in the Maa speaking world of which the Samburu belong.

“Our cows, goats and sheep used to graze with the buffalos and gazelles as the morans kept watch for lions and leopards,” says Mr. Lempisikishoi. “Cattle from all the surrounding lowlands from Suguta Marmar to Lodokejek, Loosuk and Lorukoti used to be driven into the forest during the drought season to save them from starving to death and thus rendering their owners to poverty,” he adds with nostalgia. But all this changed when some people started to permanently reside in the forest in disregard of the long held practice of moving out once it started raining in the savanna. The destruction was also exacerbated by the entry of loggers and lumberjacks who cut down huge indigenous trees especially the predominant Cedar and others such as Podo and the African Olive for timber and building poles.

What followed was a steady decline in the integrity of the forest and an increase in illegal activities including animal poaching as well as

charcoal burning which became a mainstay of some members of the community. According to the Scout Corporal Mr. Daniel Lenanyokie, at one time the forest used to be characterized by plumes of smoke emanating from all corners of the forest indicating massive charcoal burning. Young people like Ljenesi Lekupe the secretary of the CFA as well as a youth representative did not get to see the mighty rhinos which had all been killed by poachers by the time he was born.

It is in this state of affairs that the government led by the Ministry of Environment and Forestry and the Kenya Forest Service (KFS) together with development partners such as the FAO engaged in spirited negotiations with the community in a bid to save the forest. The negotiations eventually paid off as the community in realization of the impending environmental catastrophe agreed to move out voluntarily to save what remained of the forest and to allow for restoration activities to begin.

Mr. Lempisikishoi is thankful for the intervention that is now seeing the steady recovery of the forest. He notes that in the last two years, springs and wetlands have started discharging again which has in turn seen the return of wildlife such as elephants though it might be too late for the rhinos. There is also a notable natural regeneration of indigenous tree species and especially the endangered Cedar.

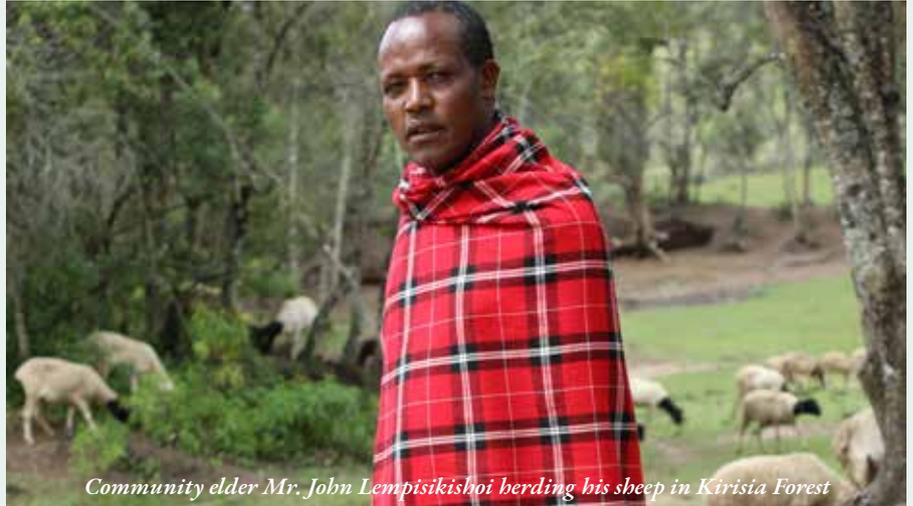
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The community in Kirisia have now organized themselves into three CFAs including Naramat, Nailepunye and Nkarro which are legally recognized entities that work closely with KFS in the management, conservation and protection of the vast forest. Through the CFAs, the community have gotten support to establish income generating activities to supplement their incomes and thus reduce their reliance on extractive practices in the forest.

According to Mr. Lekupe, an apiary established with the support of KFS and FAO is helping the youth earn a living from the sell of the famed Kirisia Forest honey reputed to have high medicinal value. The youth are also being engaged to replant areas that were extensively regraded in order to speed up regeneration. Already the CFA has planted an area of over 80 hectares with indigenous trees.

Ms. Salome Lenolng'enje who is the secretary of the tree nursery project run by women says that she used to be one of the illegal charcoal burners but is now propagating seedlings to revive the forest. "We used to burn charcoal and cut down trees so that we can sell firewood in Maralal town in order to



Community elder Mr. John Lempisikishoi herding his sheep in Kirisia Forest

feed our children," she says. Now they sell their seedlings to organizations involved in the rehabilitation of the forest.

The community scouts are grateful for the slowly rebounding ecotourism thanks to returning wild animals and the development of camping sites within parts of the forests that have since re-established. The scouts are being hired as guides and to provide security by visitors and tourists keen on exploring the forest.

"We have set up strict grazing plans to make sure that livestock graze in specific parts of the forests at a time to allow regeneration. Those who contravene the rules are fined heavily including slaughtering the offending cows," concludes Mr. Lempisikishoi.

According to the elder, the community are now happy shepherds of not only their beloved cattle but also the trees of Kirisia and the wildlife within.

A Healthy Workplace and Political Dichotomy

In William Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*, a dichotomy is created with the two households, Capulets and Montagues. Unlike the above contradictory examples, this dichotomy is one of two equal parts. The families are both "alike in dignity"; however, they have been at odds with each other for so long that the root of the conflict is no longer known.

All of us as employees though united by the strands of the fabric of our places of work, we are different and unique in every way. Our differences in the time of entry and exit of the organization, our designation and grades, our likes or dislikes, our personality traits, our cultures, our belief systems and so are choices. With this in mind, as we enter into electioneering period we should have some sobriety in that, our choice of leaders don't have to dictate how we interact with each other in our workplace. After the vote is cast we still need to work together to provide for our families and therefore the place of interaction need to remain intact and the issues of politics should be held loosely and not with a tight fist.

In this regards no person needs to die for a point to be proven, the sanctity of life should be held dearly. No drop of blood should be shed on account of politicians to appease aggression. Respect for our diversity is paramount knowing that each one is part of the puzzle that needs to fit in together to make one happy society.

The good book puts it clearly that we are parts of one body and each part is very important to each other. Imagine if all of us looked alike with the same skill set, the same abilities and talents where would complimentary roles come from? We need to create a healthy dichotomy with two equal parts. Our win will be progress in our organization; elusive peace that it's presence can cause us to still smile at each other and say it's well; the unity which when employed can achieve more for all of us; genuine love for each other without looking at our geographical backgrounds; acknowledging that politics like any game has rules and so the rule of the game is that they will always be someone to cede ground and another to gain.

One politician jokingly said "politics should be kept in the lungs and not in the heart or mind" this theory works for us as staff to hold loosely on politics because politics and politician come and go but colleagues and organization remains.

Conversation around offices and our homes should be seasoned and be dispensed in wisdom. The person we could be character assassinating before our colleagues and our children is human and has a family too. We should be careful then what we are planting through our works and actions because when it is deeply rooted it might be hard to uproot. Instead, we should echo the words of St. Francis, that we should truly to be made instruments of peace. Where there is hatred sow love, where there is injury, pardon where there is doubt, faith where there is despair, hope where there is darkness, we become the light and where there is sadness, we create the atmosphere of joy.

The Majestic Baobab



The baobab is an iconic tree of the African continent and lies at the heart of many traditional African remedies and folklore.

The tree is a prehistoric species which predates both mankind and the splitting of the continents over 200 million years ago. Native to the African savannah where the climate is extremely dry and arid, it is a symbolism of life and positivity in a landscape where little else can thrive. It is succulent, which means that during the rainy season it absorbs and stores water in its vast trunk, enabling it to produce nutrient-dense fruits in the dry season. This is how it came to be known as “The Tree of Life.”

The tree can be found in 23 African countries and have a life span of up to 5,000 years. During its lifespan, the tree can grow up to

30 meters high and close to an enormous 50 meters in circumference. Baobab trees provide shelter, food, and water for animals and humans, which is why many savannah communities have built their homes to the proximity of the trees.

The striking silhouette of a baobab tree at sunset is a familiar site to anyone who has spent time in the rural African setting, but it is also well known all across the world thanks to its starring roles in Disney’s Lion King of the Jungle (Rafiki the monkey’s tree), Avatar (The Tree of Souls), Madagascar and the famous children’s novel The Little Prince.

Every part of baobab tree is valuable, the bark can be turned into robe and clothing, the seeds can be used to make cosmetic oils, the leaves are edible, the trunks can store water and its fruits are extraordinarily rich

in nutrients and antioxidants. Women in Africa have turned to the baobab fruits as natural source for health and beauty products for centuries.

The baobab fruit, is the only fruit in the world that dries naturally on its branch. Rather than dropping and wilting, it stays on the branch and bakes in the sun for 6 months, transforming its green velvety coating into hard coconut-like shell. The pulp of the fruit dries up completely signaling that the fruit is ready to be harvested, de-seeded and sieved to produce a delicious pure fruit powder.

Unlike many other supplements, the baobab powder does not have to be sprayed, dried, frozen, or transformed in any way. It is 100% a pure fruit in the natural form. Incredibly, the fruit has a natural shelf life of 3 years hence no need for preservatives for its storage.

The Aduna Baobab Powder is one of the health and beauty world’s kept secrets. It is an extremely rich source of vitamin C with almost 50% fiber and has the highest antioxidant content of any whole fruit. The benefits of baobab include;

- **Energy release** - reduction of tiredness and fatigue.
- **Immune functions** - protections against illnesses, infections and diseases
- **Digestive health** – baobab is a natural prebiotic, supporting gut health
- **Healthy and younger looking skin** – baobab produces collagen leading to a glowing complexion and helps fight the signs of ageing.

As well as its abundant health and beauty benefits, baobab could also transform millions of lives. Baobab trees grows in some of the driest, remotest and poorest parts of rural Africa. There is no such thing as a baobab plantation; every tree in community or family owned and wild harvested.



Why Bamboo Growing is Gaining Prominence in Kenya



It is worth recognizing that the Bamboo, is a versatile and eco-friendly plant in the grass family with distinct and fascinating characteristics which can be tapped for environmental conservation, cultural practices, social and economic development.

The plant is important for biomass production and increasingly plays a role in revolutionizing and transforming the rural, national, regional and global economies.

The cultivation of the bamboo is increasingly becoming mainstream in China and the United States of America generating discourse around its farming. Globally, the growth of the bamboo covers over 22 million hectares, with 1,275 species in 71 genera and, with more than 4,000 recorded uses. China leads in terms of bamboo growth areas, species and genera which are essential in conserving forests landscapes with cottage industries improving communities' livelihoods and economy.

The tropical region of Africa has a recorded growth of fourteen bamboo species, majority of which are found in the Madagascar Island and only three bamboo species found in the mainland. Nevertheless, most of the forests in Africa are plagued by cases of degradation and unsustainable utilization emanating from population pressure and unemployment.

Kenya has a total natural bamboo growing area of 133,273 hectares of indigenous *Yushania alpina* (*Arundinaria alpina*), concentrated in mountain ranges. The five water catchment areas; Aberdares range, Mau Forest, Mount

Kenya, Mount Elgon and Cherangani hills have 50,038 ha, 32,196 ha, 35,966 ha 14,341 and 8,180 hectares respectively. Furthermore, there are twenty-two exotic bamboo species grown in the highland and lowland areas of Kenya. Indigenous bamboo areas in the country have been shrinking due to human activities cultivation, settlement, grazing and forest plantations establishment for wood timber.

It is worth noting that as climate change ravages the environment and lives of people across the world, Africa is turning towards the bamboo to not only address some devastating effects of environmental degradation, but also improve livelihoods. Bamboo is considered very vital in the conservation of the environment and ecosystem protection. This is possible through arresting of soil erosion, stabilizing the riverbanks, improving environmental conditions, wide range adoption and the quick growth in marginal lands. Bamboo serves a critical role in East African and contextual studies indicate that some exotic bamboo species high growth rate at an estimated rate of 1.2 meters a day, which makes it a perfect buffer against climate change, global warming and restoration of degraded forest areas.

The bamboo seedlings growing in the forest floor wildly can be used to start a basic nursery and plantation of bamboo plants. In the case of Kenya, these seedlings may be found in the montane regions. The seedlings are usually found in young clusters that can be extracted by scooping using nursery tools,

jembes, mattock, shovel, panga and then brought to the potting shade in the nursery for propagation, raising and replanting into portable polythene bags and containers. It is critical to bear in mind that the roots of the bamboo should never be disturbed during the transportation, preparation and planting process.

Additionally, the bamboo can sometimes be propagated using tissue culture to provide suitable planting materials. Root rhizomes are usually scooped, split and transplanted into tubes as an alternative propagation method. To quickly raise plantable stock, bamboo stems usually known as culms are drilled with holes at alternate internodes then rooting hormones used to accelerate sprouting of roots and shoots for planting.

Nandi, Uasin Gishu and Elgeyo Marakwet Counties are piloting bamboo cultivation for commercial and environmental conservation efforts in the North Rift region with a National Bamboo Propagation and Demonstration plot at Kaptagat forest. The initiative targets expansion of the bamboo into fragile ecosystems prone to landslides and have local farmers diversify into its production for the export market and finally setting up a bamboo processing factory. Perennial mudslides and floods that have been experienced in some regions of Nandi, Elgeyo Marakwet, West Pokot and Uasin Gishu counties following heavy rains would be tamed once farmers embrace large scale cultivation of bamboo.

Induction from the Lense of a Management Trainee

In the month of June 2021, I was among the successful 257 newly recruited staff by Kenya Forest Service following a competitive interview. The new staff consisted of: 143 Record Management Assistants, 57 Drivers and Plant Operators, 47 Forester Trainees and 10 Forest Management Trainees. To receive us was the Chief Conservator of Forests (CCF)- Mr. Julius Kamau, EBS at the KFS Headquarters in Karura.

After the welcome and introduction, we were posted to various work stations for on job training. Specifically, all the Forester Trainees and Management Trainees were posted to various forest stations around the country. The Management Trainees also had a chance for on job training at county level offices of the Service and the headquarters. The training and stay in the various offices exposed us to invaluable experiences, new ideas and great integration into the Service.

We were received at the stations by the station managers and other members of staff. The first few days involved adjusting to the new environments, some of which were a bit challenging, but did not hinder our adaptation and the learning process. We slowly got accustomed to the culture of uniformed and disciplined officers which we hope to be inducted into during the basic paramilitary training.

Some of the stations were inherited from the colonial times and are therefore characterized by antique architecture which fascinates people who come around for ecotourism activities. It was fascinating to live and work at the forest stations, getting a rare experience of what nature has to offer.

The training program was guided by a well-structured mentoring tool which emphasized on key areas of learning. These areas included tree nursery management, silvicultural operations in plantations, natural forest conservation, forest protection, forest advisory services, forest inventory, survey and mapping and office administration. The training involved learning by doing. The supervisors would take time to explain some practices before assigning them to us to do. This was followed by assessments by both oneself and the supervisors to determine understanding, ability and competency levels. The assessment reports were submitted to the headquarters for quality control and decision-making purposes.

In the course of the training, we learnt that a forester's normal day calls for multitasking and preparedness for emergencies. For instance, preparedness to handle fires in the dry season or timely tree planting when the rains come or preparing documents for litigation. Other activities would include: the forester joining rangers for forest patrols, supervision of nursery activities, and handling visitors in the office.

We also appreciated that forest conservation and management is a participatory activity and therefore requires engagement of various stakeholders. One of such stakeholders are Community Forest Associations (CFAs) which refers to an organized group of immediate neighbors of a forest. Most of us had a chance to engage the CFAs at various levels including but not limited to sensitization on their rights and obligations to enhance forest conservation and improve livelihoods. We noted that other stakeholders

like government entities, private companies, individuals and NGOs are actively participating in activities geared towards achieving and sustaining 10% forest cover.

The last two months of our field training were spent at the respective county level offices of the Service. This was necessary for our understanding of the coordination of various forestry activities and the reporting channels. We were also involved in general office administration, stakeholder engagements and compiling of various reports from the field.

After completion of the field-based training, we proceeded to the headquarters for on job training on the functional areas of the Service based on the organizational structure. Through this, we were not only able understand the linkage between those functional areas but also connecting them to the actual field activities and issues. One of the notable areas was the adoption of technology and information systems in the service. For instance, the use of technology to monitor illegal activities in the forests, use of drones in forest management, real time reporting on tree planting activities and access to information about forestry in Kenya at the click of a button.

The whole experience gave us an overview of the operations of KFS in its endeavor to fulfil its mandate in conservation, management and protection of forests. In conclusion, we thank the Government of Kenya through the KFS Board and its Management for the opportunity to serve the nation in enhancing conservation, management and protection of our forest resources.



The CCF Mr. Julius Kamau, EBS, addresses newly recruited staff including management trainees and forester trainees at the KFS headquarters

Fifteenth Meeting of the World Forestry Congress



Cabinet Secretary Keriako Tobiko, EGH, CBS, SC launching the Forest Steward Council (FSC) standards in Karura to guide Kenya's globally accepted responsible timber processes in line with the XV World Forest Congress Outcomes

The 15th World Forestry Congress (XV WFC) convened in Seoul, Republic of Korea, from 2-6 May, 2022, with over 15,000 participants from 146 countries representing governments and public agencies, international organizations, the private sector, academic and research institutions, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and community and Indigenous organizations. The meeting was held in a hybrid format, with 4,500 participants joining the meeting online.

The World Forestry Congress, considered to be one of the most influential forest-related events in the world takes place every six years. It is usually held under the auspices of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN (FAO) since 1954.

This edition was premised under the theme "Building a Green, Healthy and Resilient Future with Forests," sought to define the role of forests in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and other major agreements, including the Global Forest Goals, the Paris Agreement on climate change, and the post-2020 global biodiversity framework. During the five-day meeting, participants addressed a wide variety of themes, including: the UN Decade

on Ecosystem Restoration; Forests for a Healthy, Prosperous and Peaceful World; and Sustainable Pathways for Building a Green, Healthy, and Resilient Future.

Key events included the launch of FAO's State of the World's Forests 2022 report; the High-Level Roundtable on the Peace Forest Initiative (PFI); the Ministerial Forum on Financing; the Ministerial Forum on Sustainable Wood; the Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF) Dialogue; two full-day forums, one on forest fires, and another on private sector investment; the launch of the Assuring the Future of Forests with Integrated Risk Management (AFFIRM) Mechanism for fire management; and the Sustaining an Abundance of Forest Ecosystems (SAFE) initiative. Additionally, participants were invited to special events on investing in young forestry professionals and career development; forests in a post-COVID World: and sustainable forests and green energy.

Over the course of the week, 30 thematic dialogue sessions were held, organized under six sub-themes on the most important current issues concerning forests and the products and services they provide. These sub-themes included: reversing

deforestation and forest degradation; nature-based solutions (NbS) for climate change adaptation and biodiversity conservation; green pathways to growth and sustainability; forests and human health; managing and communicating forest information, data and knowledge; and enhancing management and cooperation.

The main outcomes of the Congress include: detailed action proposals following the six sub-themes of the Congress; a Ministerial Call on Sustainable Wood; a youth call for action; and the Seoul Forest Declaration, which outlines shared roles and responsibilities for ensuring a sustainable future for the world's forests. The Wangari Maathai Forest Champions Award 2022 was presented to Cécile Ndjebet, African Women's Network for Community Management of Forests.

One of the Key takeaways from a Kenyan perspective is the need for a database and robust forest information system to inform long-term monitoring and assessment; lesson-learning and field investigation to understand causes of failure; and comprehensive and accessible field-data collection.

Chyulu Hills REDD+ Project



KFS Board members Mr Peter Wandera (left), Dr. Joel Laigong and Dr Jane Njuguna (left), accompanied by the Chief Conservator of Forests Julius Kamau EBS, at Kibwezi Forest Station after a visit of Chyulu Hills REDD+ Project

Climate Change continues to pose the greatest challenge to sustainable development across the world. It is the biggest and most complex challenge to sustainable development in this century. Its impact has continued affect communities the entire world with the developing countries being affected the most. Alive to this fact, REDD+ which is a United Nations backed framework has been introduced to encourage developing countries to contribute to climate change mitigation efforts by stopping the destruction of forests. REDD stands for “Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and forest Degradation”; the “+” signifies the role of conservation, sustainable management of forests and enhancement of forest carbon stocks.

REDD+ presents a fantastic opportunity to reverse negative environmental degradation trends by providing innovative approaches, including incentives that support implementation of a comprehensive strategy that bolster sustainable management and conservation of existing forested areas and at the same time reduce forest sector carbon emissions.

The Chyulu Hills REDD+ Project which is in Southeastern Kenya extends over three counties: Makueni County in the north and the east, Taita Taveta County in the south and Kajiado County in the west. The ecosystem comprises of a great diversity of ecotopes, ranging from afro-montane cloud forests to grassland savannah. The area is faced with land degradation pressure mainly from unplanned agricultural expansion and unsustainable extractive practices such as charcoal burning and the harvesting of trees for use as timber and for carving.

Chyulu Hills REDD+ Project covers an area 410,533.84 ha, has been credited under Verified

Carbon Standards and Climate, Community and Biodiversity Standards and aims to stop deforestation, forest degradation and grassland conversion and thus deliver a climate change mitigation benefit of 18,452,476 million tonnes of CO₂ emissions within a period of 30 years from 2014.

It is a multi-partner initiative involving Kenya Forest Service, Kenya Wildlife Service.

Mbirikani group ranch; Kuku A group ranch; Kuku Group ranch; Rombo group ranch; Maasai Wilderness Conservation Trust; Big Life Foundation and David Sheldrick Wildlife Trust has been designed to promote climate change mitigation and adaptation, restore biodiversity, and create alternative livelihoods under the United Nations scheme of Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and forest Degradation (REDD+).

The climate change mitigation and adaption actions has so far been achieved through a range of conservation activities that includes direct protection and law enforcement by the effective deployment of rangers, improved infrastructure (communications, vehicles, equipment), ecological research and monitoring, and livestock predator-loss compensation programs.

The project has also created and expanded alternative income and employment opportunities for local communities. Furthermore, the Project aims to restore degraded forest and grassland areas, which has increased the quantity of sequestered carbon from woody biomass and soil.

There has been a substantial community and biodiversity co-benefits being generated by the project too. New and sustainable livelihood opportunities, such as the direct employment in

conservation programs, research, and tourism, alternative income generating activities (IGAs) and initiatives to stimulate investment in businesses has been supported to reduce pressure on natural resources.

Income generated by the CHRP has also been used to maintain and improve social services for local communities, particularly in healthcare and education. Additional programs have addressed food and water security and rangeland management, as well as raise environmental awareness. In combination, these programs have protected carbon stocks, conserve biodiversity, and provide significant social and economic benefits to local community.

The project intervention to address the drivers of change within the project area are clustered into four REDD+ project components; Forest and Wildlife Protection, Livestock and Range Management, Community Engagement and Support and Reforestation and Improved Agriculture.

The following activities and interventions have been implemented by KFS;

- ✓ A Toyota Landcruiser (KDA 744P) procured for Kibwezi Forest station
- ✓ 480 Langstroth beehives and 60 harvesting procured for the CFA and forest adjacent community
- ✓ Five training done to strengthening and capacity building of CFA and forest adjacent communities
- ✓ Thange Tree Nursery infrastructure improvement (Repair of water tank, pump house, piping, refurbishment of 2 staff houses, fencing jointly with Sheldrick using electric fence and procurement of nursery production materials).
- ✓ Rehabilitation of 90 hectares of degraded forests and riparian zones
- ✓ Greening of institutions and farmlands (two 4K clubs in primary school supported, 9 water tanks installed in schools, 45 primary schools and 25 post primary institutions supported with Grafted mangoes and Melia seedlings, 2 farmer field school formed, and 100 farmers issued with Melia seedlings)

The Chyulu Hills REDD+ Project is part of a global network of interventions aimed at helping communities to conserve forests and other important carbon stores, and in doing so keeps carbon out of the atmosphere. This benefits not only the people living around the Chyulu Hills, but the entire planet, by supporting a stable climate upon which we all depend.

Importance of Non-Timber Forest Products



The CCF Mr. Julius Kamau, EBS inspecting a mushroom production project which is part of the income generating activities of the Community Forest Association of Uplands Forest Station Kiambu County

Non-timber forest products (NTFPs) are defined as all biological products other than timber produced in forests, other wooded lands, and trees outside forests. NTFPs have since time immemorial been used and managed in complex socio-economic and ecological environments, constituting an important source of livelihood for many poor households in rural areas across the world. The NTFP sector contributes to millions of both full-time and part-time jobs contributing to a significant proportion of rural non-farm employment. These products are used for food (mushrooms, herbs, spices, fruits, nuts, vegetables, honey, berries, and game), herbal medicines, livestock feeds, construction materials, resins, gums, essences, and barks among others.

NTFPs are either used in their raw form or processed into other products. Their extraction, processing, and marketing provide a better alternative to tree logging for fuelwood or timber as rural livelihood plans. Sustainable extraction and sale of NTFPs can significantly contribute to realizing sustainable forest conservation, income generation, and preservation of cultural heritage. People from around the world harvest NTFPs for numerous uses including consumption, herbal medicine, spiritual fulfillment, fodder, and income among others. Many marketplaces are awash with such NTFPs as wild fruits, edible mushrooms, honey, and herbs for sale, amplifying their importance to livelihood improvement.

For example, honey is one of the NTFPs with a well-developed value chain in Kenya, contributing significantly to people's livelihoods. Numerous farmer groups and individuals have ventured into beekeeping and made it a lucrative industry. However, the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics points out that the current honey production quantities fall short of the projected potential annual production of 100,000 metric tons, claiming only about 20 percent of this. Wax production is also a product from beekeeping and can also fetch a good price on the market, adding to profitability. Across many ASALs in Kenya, it is now common to see beehives erected in homesteads and filled with bees and comparatively, farmers practicing beekeeping are doing better financially than those who still rely on pastoralism which has been the mainstay of people in those areas for centuries.

On the positive side, the Kenya Forest Service is leading the way in exploring the full potential of NTFPs in contributing to the household economy as well as forest conservation by promoting Nature-Based Entrepreneurship (NBE). NBE is sustainable entrepreneurship based on the resources and experiences offered by nature. This has enabled many Community Forest Associations engage in numerous nature-based enterprises such as beekeeping, handicraft making, and herbal medicine and sale. NBE has employed many rural entrepreneurs as the main business or secondary occupation hence minimizing cases of illicit forest activities.

KFS Explores Honey Processing, Water Bottling

Kenya Forest Service (KFS) is working with the Green Zones Development Support Project (GZDSP) in exploring areas of investment in honey processing and water bottling to benefit forest-adjacent communities across the country.

In strengthening its business profile and revenue diversification, the organization has mapped out sustainable business ventures that it aims at instituting and scaling up to benefit communities whilst strengthening its financial base.

Honey processing

In Kenya the demand for honey is high such that the country is unable to satisfy the demand and is forced to import from neighboring Tanzania. In relation to bee product marketing, information collected indicates that the Kenyan honey market is under-developed due to low volumes and that volumes and quality have not been reached for export.

In relation to this, KFS with the support of GZDSP will work with the Community Forest Associations (CFA) in the production, processing and marketing of honey. CFAs currently in honey production have already been identified and mapped out.



Community bee-hives in Kirisia Forest, Samburu County.

The organization will provide the CFAs with appropriate training and allow them to house the beehives within the forests. The processing plant will be set up at the County Ecosystem Conservator's office in Machakos County.

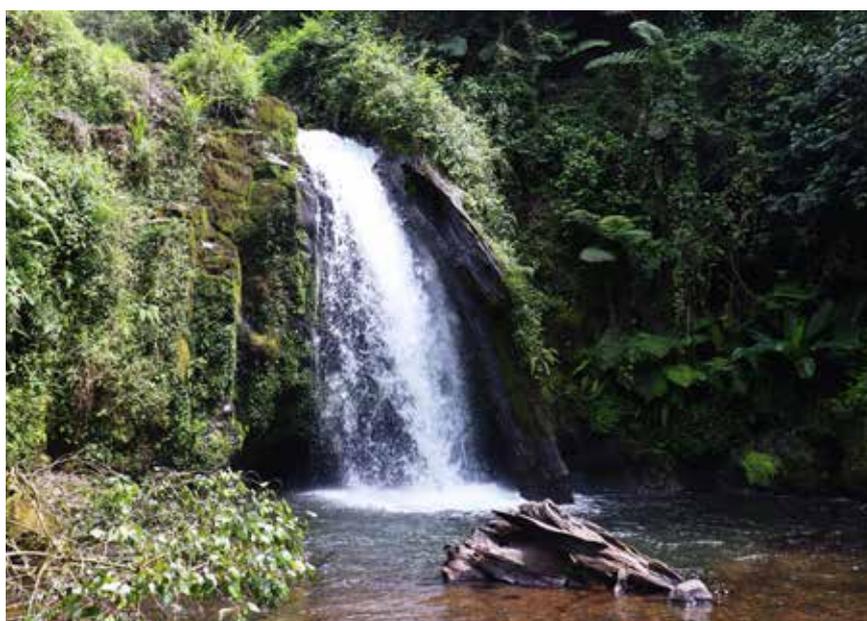
Following the harvesting, honey will be delivered to the Machakos processing Centre where it will be processed, packaged and sold to the general public. The products are targeted to be sold in packages of 250g and 500g. Aside from benefitting the communities, the proceeds of the venture are targeted towards benefiting forest conservation.

Water bottling

In leveraging on the availability of water sources within forests, the Service targets to build a water bottling plant at Kiandogoro Forest Station in Nyeri County and distributed to consumers across the country.

Initially, the Service targets to bottle water in 18.9L bottles targeting corporate customers and government institutions. According to research and valuation conducted, the organization is set to save an estimated Ksh. 800,000 per annum in the headquarters alone by bottling its own water. Profits from the business will go towards enhancing forest conservation and assisting the CFAs implement the Participatory Forest Management Plans (PFMP).

Forests are water catchment and therefore provide a viable water bottling venture.



A waterfall within Castle Forest Station in Kirinyaga County

Increasing Tree Cover Through Adopt-A-Forest Initiative



Involving stakeholders in facilitating tree nursery development is among the key inputs of the Adopt-A-Forest initiative.

The multiple and interrelated challenges of forest management are increasingly calling for a collaborative and multidimensional approach to sustainable management of forest resources around the globe. This approach involves leveraging on the contribution of different sectoral agencies towards common goals in an inter-agency collaborative framework.

Adopt-a-forest is a collaborative approach by Kenya Forest Service (KFS) to accelerate tree growing across the country. This approach entails adoption of a portion of a forest by partners for rehabilitation, protection and management for a period of three to five years. KFS is leveraging on this concept to improve forest management as the country takes positive strides to implement various local, national and global commitments for addressing climate change, biodiversity conservation, and land degradation.

The range of collaborative adoption activities include; multi-agency forest security operations for protecting the forest boundary integrity, forest reclamations, tree planting, rehabilitation of degraded forest areas, infrastructural development support, tree seedlings production, joint restoration of arboreta and green spaces, forest fence installation, forest fire response, community scout support among other activities.

Besides reviewing and formulating key forest legislation, policies and strategies, the government has committed to restore 5.1 million Ha of degraded landscapes as a contribution to the Africa Forest Landscape Initiative (AFR100) among other commitments. As such, forest adoption is fast emerging as a special purpose

vehicle for implementing inter-agency collaboration towards these commitments.

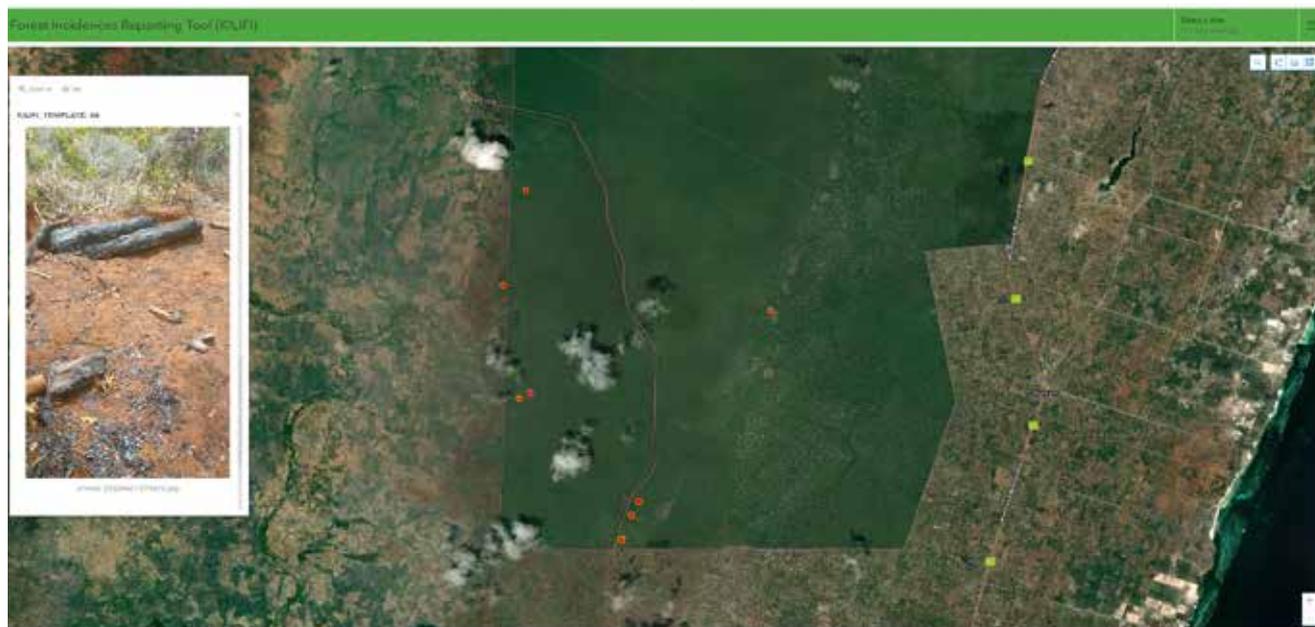
Early lessons from forest adoption show that the initiative has established a vibrant collaborative framework that promotes new management practices in the country by fostering interagency collaboration with multiple positive social, economic and environmental impacts for the Kenyan society. By June 2022, 104 entities including government ministries, departments and agencies (MDAs), as well as NGOs and corporates were involved in the initiative leading to the rehabilitation of **54,698.68ha** of degraded forests.

It is evident that forest adoption spearheaded by KFS has enabled MDAs and various non-state actors to implement forest management activities across the country while at the same time meeting their corporate social responsibility commitments. The collaboration has equally enhanced forest conservation and management and fostered the attainment of the Constitutional target of 10% minimum national tree cover.

There are many factors that have contributed to the current success including an enabling policy environment and the deliberate involvement of stakeholders in forest management by the government.

There is still urgent need for increased collaboration in light of the growing human needs arising from the increased population estimated at 47 million people in 2019 to 60 million by the year 2030.

Milestones in Forest Alert Systems



Charcoal making in Arabuko Sokoke forest in Kilifi County detected by the forest Alerts System

Forest monitoring today has a great potential to provide useful data and information for sustainable forest management. Due to harsh terrains and inadequate human resource capacity to patrol some areas, illegal logging activities have continued to thrive undetected. With the use of remote sensing technology, forest disturbance and changes in the forest can be monitored in a near real-time basis.

Forest alerts are used to inform decision makers on the damages that are likely to occur to forests in terms of deforestation or degradation, planting/rehabilitation. They are also early warnings issued to decision makers and different stakeholders on the likelihood of a degradation/deforestation, planting/rehabilitation. This tool is aimed at monitoring forest cover change in an effort to compliment and improve existing monitoring methodologies.

The need to do forest cover change and forest resource disturbance detection using high resolution satellite images and digital reporting was identified in 2017 as part of UK Partners (University of Leicester) and KFS Forest 2020 Project. This was to enable KFS detect small disturbances on the ground, and can even detect the removal of a single tree through selective logging.

Kwale County was identified as a pilot test case for the innovation and a training was carried out to KFS officers and other stakeholders. After two years of piloting and improvement, the forests alerts system KFS has stated the rolling out in the rest of the country. The service has now moved to Kilifi County.

In the instance of a detected disturbance, the alert generated is submitted to the trained field officers and embedded to them are coordinates of the exact locations of change. The officers use mobile phones, to access and visit the area of incidence and

validate the alert. This then informs the decision that needs to be taken. The rangers use mobile geographic information system tools (Survey 123) to report on the incidences on real time basis and any other disturbance they may come across in their line of duty. The reporting system is connected to live dashboard where the decision makers are able to monitor the incidences and take the necessary action.

KFS is now ready to roll-out the forest alerts system countrywide. The service is looking forward to getting necessary support from development partners and stakeholders in this undertaking. Among some of the interested partners that have expressed their support in upscaling the alert system is the UK-PACT through (Improving Measurements for Payments to Reduced Emissions and Strengthens Sinks (IMPRESS) project, Centre for International Forestry Research (CIFOR) through the Observatory of East and Southern Africa on Monitoring of Forests (OFESA) project. OFESA is already supporting upscaling in both Arabuko Sokoke and Kakamega forests that is currently ongoing.



Why Forest Ranger and Not Forest Guard



Forest Rangers Participating in a March-Past Parade during a National Holiday Celebration.

Section 2 of the Forest Conservation and Management Act 2016 defines forest officer to include professional, technical and disciplined cadre of the Service. Legally speaking, all employees of the service are forest officers before the assigned job designations. The designation ‘guard’ was first used to refer to forest law enforcement officers in 1915 with the enactment of Forest Amendment Ordinance, 1915 which provided for enlistment and conditions of service of forest guards. Later, the designation was used in reference to uniformed and disciplined officers of the service in section 1 (2) (c) under the first schedule of the Forest Act 2005.

While the designation ‘guard’ is not necessarily a bad term because it has been used by other more reputable and admirable forces around the world like the American Coast Guards and The British Royal Guards, the difference lies in the meaning and the connotation attached to the term by the user and the defect it leaves in the mind of the person referred to as a guard in a given context. For instance, a friend of mine once made fun of the designation by asking what it meant. While analogizing, he said, “imagine a ‘mudguard’ a mudguard is a plate that shields mud from the wheels of a bicycle. The mudguard doesn’t have to

think to do its job!” It begs the question, what is in a name?

Almost one hundred years ago in 1926, Senior Assistant Conservator of Forests Mr H M. Gardner, commented of the forest guard in his annual report by saying “*It is hoped in time to develop out of the Forest Guards a Forest Ranger Class who can take on rather more responsible duties and a certain amount of skilled forest work. At present however, very few show any initiative or ability to learn and still less ambition*”. One would presume that the ranger envisioned here must have been what is today, a corporal. However, the observation by the conservator though stereotypical, left the impression that anyone who fell in the category of a forest law enforcement officer, then, carried the tag described in the report above. If that was the perception of a forest guard in 1926, should that remain the same of the forest law enforcement officer of 2022?

This designation forest guard further got tainted in the nineties when a group of private guards attacked the late Prof Wangari Maathai at a place now named after her as “Wangari Maathai Corner” within Karura forest. It happened that those who had attempted to grab the forest land hired private guards who accosted the Nobel

Peace Prize Winner while she was trying to protest the unlawful acquisition of the forest land. Sadly, the newspaper and media houses reported that the late professor was attacked by the forest guards. To date, the so called forest guard fraternity still bears the brunt of this miscommunication not only as an institution but even at personal level. I remember introducing myself as forest guard sometimes back in a certain function and somebody chidingly said “*Nyinyi ndio mlipiga Wangari Maathai*”.

Comparatively, in order to shake off the colonial vestiges, Kenyans and their institutions have made effort to not only redefine the functions of institutions but also changing the designations of officers. For instance, Prison officers who were referred to as prison guards changed their names to prison warders. The Administration Police who in colonial days were known as Native Police also changed their name to the former. Likewise, the Kenya Wildlife Officers also changed their name from Game Wardens to Wildlife Rangers. Kenya Forest Service was up to 2005 a Forest Department as was established in 1902. It was changed into a corporate and autonomous entity which has served a great deal in rebranding the organization to what it is today. There was no way the term forest guard could cross with us from old to the new dispensation.

The designation ‘ranger’ was introduced in the year 2007 by Col (Rtd) JN Kimani, the former Commandant. Having understood human desire to always have new name for renewed vision, he changed the designation, though informally. The adoption of the designation in the newly approved Career Guideline thus replacing the ‘guard’, for all intent and purpose was to: first, comply with the implied provision of section 62(3) of the Forest Conservation and Management Act 2016 which recognizes a ranger and not a guard. Secondly, it is meant to give a new meaning to the officer holding the rank who unlike his 1926 counterpart, is ready and willing to learn and able to take on rather more responsible duties and a certain amount of skilled forest work. Thirdly, to absolve the rank from the negative connotation it has attracted over years. Finally, to rebrand and refocus the officer towards the new mandate, mission and objectives of the Service drawn from article 69 of the constitution 2010, the new dispensation.

20 Years Already!

Reflections of a Forest Ranger

This year marks the twentieth anniversary since I joined the former Forest Department in December 2002. We had just completed our five-month paramilitary training course at the National Youth Service with a climax of a passing out parade on the 17th of May 2002. It was the tradition that the President, on gracing such occasions, would order for absorption of National Youth Service (NYS) graduates into the mainstream forces. His Excellency Daniel Toroitich Arap Moi, the Guest of Honour of the day, briefly joined the graduates for a dance at the Drill Square and thereafter in his tonal signature, said *“nataka vijana elufu moja wachukuliwe waende wachunge misitu”*.

“Hiyo ndio gani sasa!?” everybody started wondering. We were all expecting him order our enlistment into the Kenya Army, Kenya Police or General Service Unit. A wave of despondency swept across the barracks with rumours discouraging people not to join the Forest Department as other more serious forces including the Kenya Army would come to recruit. Some who claimed to know better intimated that the salary of a Forest Guard was a meagre two thousand Kenya shillings, which was not far from the truth anyway as we would come to find out.

However, a few of us ignored the naysayers and we went ahead to participate in the recruitment. I remember people were being begged and dragged to join but they refused. A friend of mine said that they would rather take a course in Early Childhood Education (ECD) than join the unknown force. That is how unpopular the Forest Department was. The list of successful candidates did nothing to boost confidence either as it was very mean on details. It only had your name and the forest station you were to report to, nothing else.

I had never heard of *Cheptongei* Forest Station; I didn't even know where Marakwet District was. Despite the fact that there was no one to pick us up or show us direction, we were given two days to report. We started to doubt the authenticity of this new found job and began to wonder whether this was a prank. Indeed, some people decided to let the chance go. I left Gilgil on Sunday the 29th of December 2002 in the company of friends who claimed they knew where *Cheptongei* Forest Station was. While on our way to Eldoret along the Burnt Forest stretch, I could see young men and women

of my kind stranded by the roadside. They appeared lost, hungry and confused with their blue metal boxes grounded at their feet; they must have alighted far away from their supposed forest stations.

We arrived in Eldoret and took a vehicle to Kitale on my friend's advice. When we arrived in Kitale at about 1800 hours, I saw doubt and anxiety written all over his face; he was not sure of our next move. We reached out to a random person in the street and asked for direction but the way he reacted by holding his head with both hands, I knew we were lost. He advised that the only way was to go back to *Eldoret* and use the *Iten-Kapsowar* route. *“Wachana na buyo hajielewi”* My colleague rubbished him off as he reached out for another person who kept referring to us as *omwami*, but demanded money before he could show us the direction.

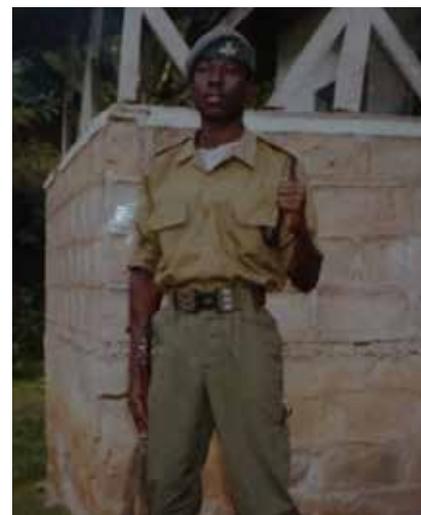
After travelling miles and miles to nowhere, the conductor inquired to know where we were going. I heard the guy chanting in his supposed mother tongue *“pwo! pwo! ‘pwo! pwo! Sisitunaenda Kapenguria!”* I didn't say a word because the only functioning organ in my body at that time was my lungs. Shocked and sorry for us, he stopped the vehicle by the roadside. Meanwhile, the passengers were all speaking animatedly, I suspect in *Pokot*, *Turkana* or *Marakwet* language, I couldn't tell which one. I felt very uneasy as I couldn't understand a thing they said. It was dark and we didn't know what to expect. Soon, another vehicle approached and we were put on board with assurance that this one, this time, was destined for *Kapsowar*; no more corners.

As the driver switched off the engine by 1100 hours, I thought we had arrived only for him to tell us that we were in a place called *Kapcherop*. He left us in the vehicle for a while before coming back with instructions that we follow him. I was by now very sure, we had fallen into a human trafficking racket and in a short while, we would be sacrificed to some gods in the forest or sold to the highest bidder. My doubts notwithstanding, we followed him into a club where he signalled somebody who later turned out to be the District Officer (DO) of *Kapcherop* Division. I took a heavy sigh of relief. He good officer bought us supper before instructing an officer to show us where to sleep.

We had hardly slept when he woke us up at about 0500 hours telling us that the vehicle playing *Kapcherop-Kapsowar* route was about to leave. If one is unlucky enough to be left behind, they had to plan their journey for the next day. When we arrived in *Kapsowar* Forest Station on 30th December 2002 we met some of our colleagues who had made it there the previous day. They had slept in the office and were hurriedly removing their bedding from the floor as the District Forest Officer (DFO) was expected in the office by 0800 hours.

It seemed nobody had been informed of our coming. Even the DFO asked who we were and what we wanted. He said he had not received any communication about us from Nairobi and so we had to wait. We sat there all day long reminiscing with nostalgia about our days in training and wondering what the future had in store for us. As the sun went down, the staff started to leave the office one by one. By 1730 hours, even the day-watchman locked the gate and left for his home leaving us inside the office compound. Luckily, the secretary left one door of the offices open; that is where we would sleep.

With nothing to eat, we had to jump over the gate to go and look for supper. I sprained my ankle in the process and had to endure a month painful recovery as we got down to the duty of protecting forests. Happy twentieth anniversary number.



Inspector Tito Okello while he was a Ranger (then Forest Guard) in Tirap, Chesoi Forest Station, Marakwet District back in 2004.

Contribution of Forests to Human Wellbeing



Participants stretching during a past marathon event held at the Nairobi Arboretum Park.

Kenya's forestry sector is one of the key areas identified by drafters of the Kenya Vision 2030 as critical to sustainable development of the country. Forest ecosystems play multiple roles at the national as well as local levels and provide a range of economic, social and environmental goods and services that impact on the well being of rural communities.

Forests ecosystems generate numerous benefits or "ecosystem services". River systems provide freshwater, recreation, hydro-electric power, and food supply. Coastal wetlands and mangroves help mitigate against flooding, filter waste, and serve as nurseries for fisheries. Forests provide a wide variety of ecosystem services, including provisioning, regulating, cultural, and supportive services. These ecosystem services not only deliver the basic material needs for human survival, but also underlie other aspects of well-being, including health, security, good social relations and freedom of choice.

A significant segment of Kenya's population depends on forests to meet their daily needs. These forest dependent groups are; the indigenous people who majorly rely on hunting and gathering, the pastoralists who use forest reserves as grazing fields and corridors, the farming communities who have embraced the Plantation Establishment and Livelihoods Improvement Scheme (PELIS), the timber manufacturers and the rest of the forest adjacent communities who indirectly depend on forests a healthy environment. With the current economic turmoil perpetuated by the effects of COVID-19 coupled with the war in Ukraine, populations have turned to forests to cushion themselves against economic shocks. Gas energy is now slowly being substituted by fuelwood energy especially in the rural setups. Reliance on firewood and charcoal is on the rise following a sharp increase in gas and petroleum costs.

Besides wood-based products and fuelwood energy access, biodiversity-rich forests help combat malnutrition and diseases of the most vulnerable rural populations. Forest food provides a safety net in case of food shortage and mitigates food insecurity and malnutrition. Forest foods such as mushrooms, wild fruits, leaves, nuts, wild roots and tubers, termites and honey may add nutrients that people might not get otherwise and may help people to survive in times of famine or prolonged drought.

Worth mentioning is the role played by forest environments in enhancing mental and physical health. Walking or meditating in a forested environment helps in reducing stress and in recovering from attentional fatigue and may generally promote psychological and physical calmness. Additionally, communities have utilized trees through the ages for traditional medicine. In recent years, many tree species have been found to be a rich source of bioactive compounds with medicinal properties. Nowadays several health promoting or medicinal products from trees are produced and commercialized by medium and micro-enterprises.

Regrettably, the part forests play in human wellbeing and prosperity is often underappreciated or overlooked by strict conservation approaches and poverty reduction policies. As a result, missed opportunities and unintended consequences can further drive forest loss and undercut community livelihoods. Changing government priorities such as mega-infrastructure development and expansion of urban centres may soon compromise forestry development. Case scenarios are the Lamu port, the standard gauge railway and the lapset corridor that hived off huge areas of forest without allocating new areas for forest conservation.

Enhancing Forest Conservation Through Football



FIFA, the world's football governing body, estimates that 265 million people (men and women) play football worldwide, and 3.5 billion consider themselves football fans. Close to half of the world's population is directly associated with football. Interestingly, the football attire production alone is estimated to be responsible for about 4% of global carbon emissions?

As a lover of the game and a professional forester, I watch football from two lenses, one for entertainment and the other as a potential platform to drive forest conservation and environmental conservation in general. Forests play an important role in offsetting carbon emissions from the atmosphere that would otherwise contribute to global warming

Football is a game adored by many people, both the old and the young. It is an intergenerational game that is undisputedly the most popular sport worldwide. This being the case football is a platform that can be exploited to articulate interventions towards the mitigation and adaptation of climate change.

Football, through its massive influence on young society across the globe, has already demonstrated in the past that it can play a positive role in changing attitudes towards major social problems such as racism and inequality. For example, despite

the complexity and the sensitivity of the situation at hand regarding Russia and Ukraine, the international football community has continued to display how rapidly and widely football can impact world issues. Sensitization and awareness creation on the importance of forest development and conservation can be achieved through football.

Locally, how can we leverage this game as we look to achieve the globally accepted 10 per cent forest cover and even surpass it? Forest conservation is a collective responsibility, and therefore effectively engaging all the potential partners and utilizing their influential platforms is necessary.

The local football industry has been experiencing financial challenges which hinder its sustainable development. This can be addressed by non-cost collaboration strategies.

One non-cost strategy would be to liaise with the Kenya Premier League (KPL), to have sensitization messages in matches. For example, a minute of silence in the tenth minute of every game to send a message to fans to actively contribute towards achieving 10% forest cover.

Another non-cost strategy would be to approach prominent Kenyan footballers to sensitize, motivate and convince them to take up ambassadorial roles in forestry. These footballers and other sportsmen and

women in the sports realm are looked up to as role models by the young population. Their following is huge, and likewise, the influence. Therefore, having Forestry sensitization education in their regularly organized tournaments and clinics will reach the masses and be impactful in the long run.

Adopt-A-Forest framework can be extended to all football clubs in the country despite the financial constraints faced by the majority of the clubs. The teams can be motivated to adopt a forest equivalent to the size of a football pitch only for a start.

The largest pitch size as per FIFA standards for international matches measures 110metres by 75metres which is an area of 8,250 meters sq. A collaboration with a hundred clubs only, for example, would lead to the restoration of 82.5 hectares of degraded forest land. Nairobi County alone has over 300 football teams.

Forest recreational parks provide serene and ambient environment havens for nature lovers and fitness enthusiasts. It is time to bring football into the forest to attract more visitors. Partnerships with private investors to develop recreation football stadiums such as small-sized five a side soccer pitches would work to attract footballers and fans alike. The revenue generated from such ventures would be partially committed to tree growing and restoration within the forest harboring them. Imagine having a nature walk culminating in a football match within the forest.

The mentioned strategies are a few of many frameworks through which we can connect the world of football with forest development and conservation. Football has undeniably been too slow to react to these environmental issues, but it is finally starting to mobilize. FIFA and UEFA have committed to helping football match the global goals of a 50 per cent reduction in carbon emissions by 2030 and achieving carbon neutrality by 2040. Locally we should be heading in the same direction so that each time we celebrate a goal; we also celebrate a milestone in forestry and environmental conservation.

KFS & Muthaiga Golf Club Launch Range at KFS HQ

Kenya Forest Service (KFS) collaborated with Muthaiga Golf Club to establish a golf practice range at KFS Headquarters in Karura that was instrumental for warm-up sessions during the Magical Kenya Open Golf Championship.

The recently refurbished KFS Sports Ground provided a perfect tee practicing course for all the participants drawn worldwide who participated in the competition.

During the establishment stages of the range, the Chief Conservator of Forests Julius Kamau received a host of delegations drawn from the Ministry of Sports, Culture and Heritage that was led by the Cabinet Secretary Amb Dr. Amina Mohammed for inspection tours of the 400 meters range, the longest in the country. Muthaiga Golf Club's proximity to Karura Forest Reserve offers a great environment for golf players and fans attesting how well-conserved forest ecosystems offer ecological goods and services to all.



The Chief Conservator of Forests Mr. Julius Kamau EBS, together with Muthaiga Golf Club Chairman Ronald Meru (left) and the Club Director Dr Khushil Nathwani (right) tee off during the launch of a 400 meters golf practice range at the KFS Headquarters, which was used for warm up sessions at the 2022 Magical Kenya Open Championship.

Ngong Hills Forest



A section of Ngong Hills Forest with the wind turbines installations.

Ngong Hills forest is one of the gazetted public forests, situated approximately 30 km south of Nairobi city. It's located in the northern tips of Kajiado county in Kajiado north and west sub-counties. The forest covers a total area of 4311.6 HA with 3 forest blocks namely; Ngong Hills (3077HA) the largest, purely natural forest and ideal for ecotourism, Ololua (661.6 HA) composed of natural forest, and plantations, also ideal for ecotourism; and Kibiko (573 HA), which borders Thogoto Forest and is largely covered with industrial plantations. The station is managed by the Kenya Forest Service in partnership with the adjacent community.

As part of the Great Rift Valley Escarpment, the Ngong Hills are actually the remains of a massive volcano formed from basalt lava deposition between five and six and a half million years ago. Around two million years ago, it is thought that the volcano was dissected by faults, which caused its western slopes to drop into the Rift.

The hills get their name from the explorer, Joseph Thompson, who camped at the foot on his way to Uganda in 1884. The actual site was called 'Enkong'u-e-nchorro-emuny' but Thompson was unable to correctly

transcribe this, so he simply dubbed the site 'Ngong'.

Ngong Hills forest provides numerous ecological services to not only surrounding communities but also to the country. For instance, Ngong Hills and Ololua blocks are the source of Kiserian and Mbagathi streams which not only provide water to locals but also forms what is commonly known as upper Athi River catchment.

Furthermore, the forests' close proximity to Nairobi city, rich biodiversity and unique sceneries such as high elevation has made it a popular ecotourism destination in Kenya. During the year 2020/2021 the hill recorded about 45,000 visitors most of which visit for hiking, picnic and camping activities.

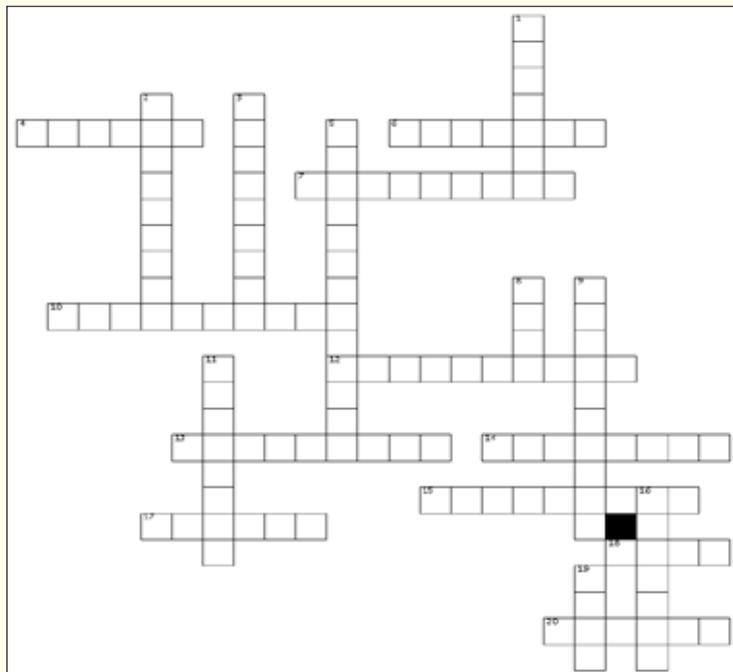
The popular areas of interest include; High points for communication masts wind power turbine, tourism attraction due to its vantage points and associated beauty, hiking areas (7 peaks), high attitude sports training, sites for cultural values e.g., caves and, religious retreat sites.

The forest is also the burial site of the legendary Maasai Laibon, Olonana Ole Mbatian.

So far, the organization has engaged a number of stakeholders in adopting areas across the ecosystem of restoration efforts. The stakeholders have been key to the countries aim in attaining the 10% forest cover.



Crossword for the Forester



ACROSS

4. The part of a tree that carries sap from the leaves to the rest of the tree.
6. The leaves of a tree or other plant.
7. Wood of large enough size to be used to produce lumber for construction and furniture.
10. Any device used for measuring tree height.
12. A distilled chemical produced from tapping into a living pine and harvesting the sap.
13. The sprouting of a seedling from a seed.
14. Wood used in the manufacture of paper, fiberboard or other wood fiber products.
15. A group of trees that do not lose all of their leaves every year
17. Vegetation such as leaves, stems, buds that can be eaten for food and energy.
18. Any herb other than grass.
20. The "roof" of the forest formed by the crowns of the tallest trees.

DOWN

1. A metric unit of square measure, equal to 100 acres
2. A plant that sheds its leaves at the end of the growing season.
3. The scientific name for wood fiber.
5. The loss of water through leaves.
8. Fruits or nuts used as a food source by wildlife.
9. A plant whose seeds are not enclosed in flowers.
11. The art and science of managing forests
16. The wearing away or removal of land or soil by wind, water.
19. A standing dead or dying tree.

From the Archives



Facts About Trees

- I. Moon trees were grown from seeds taken to the moon by Stuart Roosa, Command.
- II. The cottonwood tree seed is the seed that stays in flight the longest. The tiny seed is surrounded by ultra-light, white fluff hairs that can carry it on the air for several days.
- III. Trees improve water quality by slowing and filtering rain water, as well as protecting aquifers and watersheds.
- IV. One acre of trees removes up to 2.6 tons of carbon dioxide each year.
- V. Shade trees can make buildings up to 20 degrees cooler in the summer.
- VI. Trees lower air temperature by evaporating water in their leaves.

Jokes On Trees

1. I named all my kids trees, because they are the root of all my problems.
2. What do you call a military tree who doesn't return on time? Absent without leaf.
3. What must trees drink responsibly? Root beer.
4. My partner must think that I'm a tree, because they are leaf-ing me.
5. Why do all the other trees avoid the acorn tree? Because it's nuts!
6. I have so many nieces and nephews. My family tree has more branches than Quickmart.
7. Did you hear about the world's most beautiful tree? It has a great fig-ure.
8. Trees are always giving me shade. I'm pretty sure I had the last one call me fat.
9. What is every tree's favorite brand of shoe? Timberland.
10. What is it called when trees grow from other trees? Maternity leaf.

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A section of Sasumua Dam located in Njabini, Nyandarua County. The dam is one of the main sources of water for the Nairobi Metropolitan area.

Trees planted alongside the abutment are essential for water purification and prevention of siltation.

Kenya Forest Service is working with key stakeholders in the water sector and the community in regreening the riparian to ensure its sustainability.

KNOW YOUR

TREES

Name: *Acacia Xanthopholea*
English Name: Fever Tree, Yellow-barked Acacia, Naivasha Thorn.
Local Names: Mgunga (Swahili) Olerai (Maasai) Murera (Kikuyu, Meru) Musewa (Kamba) Kuth Ataro (Luo) Mwelela (Taveta) Mweda (rangi) Mwerera (Pare)

PLANT DESCRIPTION.

Fever tree has an easily recognized yellow-green bark that is hairy or powdery its spines grow in pairs at the nodes, which are either straight or diverging. Usually are whitish and go upto 100mm. it has 3-6 pairs of pinnae and its leaflets are normally between 8-17 pairs. The leaves are narrow and feathery.

ECOLOGY DISTRIBUTION.

A tree that reaches 25m or more in height. It is very common in west-central and east-central Kenya. It often grows in black cotton soils in areas with high groundwater tables and on the banks of rivers and lakes.

FLOWERING AND FRUIT DEVELOPMENT.

It has beautiful round, white or yellowish-white flowers. In terms of fruit, they're in brown pods that are either slightly curved, straight or flat. The projection between the seeds is slightly constricted.

END USES.

The foliage and pods from the trees are used as fodder, wood is used as fuel and timber for poles and fence posts. The tree is beautiful hence used as an ornamental and is also good for shade. The tree also helps in river-bank stabilization, mulching and nitrogen fixation.

The bark also has medicinal properties. The bark is rolled into a small ball and chewed to treat coughs and sore throats.

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