

THE Forester



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Magazine

Forester

TREES FOR BETTER LIVES



**PRESIDENT WILLIAM RUTO LEADS 7TH EDITION
OF KAPTAGAT FOREST TREE PLANTING**

DEMYSTIFYING PLANTATION FORESTS

ROLL OUT OF THE STRATEGY FOR ACHIEVEMENT OF 30% TREE COVER BY 2032

Editorial

Dear reader,

The country is now set on a new forestry trajectory aimed at achieving a 30% National tree cover by 2032; a monumental task that is now being implemented by the Ministry of Environment, Climate Change and Forestry with Kenya Forest Service (KFS) spearheading the strategic objective that forms a key pillar of the Government's Bottom-Up Economic Transformation Agenda (BETA).

In this issue of our biannual magazine, we have compiled articles that inspire and share with you some of the strategies that the Service is implementing to ensure the achievement of the aforementioned goal. A goal that highly calls for a paradigm shift on matters environment conservation noting that the vagaries of climate change are already at our doorsteps and it is incumbent on all of us as members of the public to contribute by taking positive action to support the Government's agenda of growing 15 billion trees by 2032 in a bid to reverse the dire adversities occasioned by the global climate crisis.

This edition shares on the ongoing restoration of the Kaptagat forest ecosystem where His Excellency President William Ruto lead the 7th Edition of the forest's tree planting and restoration campaign. The success of the restoration is community centred as the article highlights how prominent individuals have taken the trouble to restore a forest which influenced their childhood.

Also, we share how the Service has acquired Unmanned Aerial Vehicle's (UAVs) in its continued efforts to integrate the use of modern technology to compliment its human capital in forest conservation, management and protection.

The publication also highlights change at the helm of the Service's leadership as we welcome a new team of Board of Directors and Chief Conservator of Forests who now takes office at a critical time when the country upscales climate change advocacy through tree growing.

Finally, in continuation of a story from the previous edition, we now share the implementation of the Government's commitment to increase KFS personnel capacity with a story on the National recruitment of forest rangers.

Enjoy the read.

Anne Kaari, 'ndc'(K)

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WORD FROM THE CHIEF CONSERVATOR OF FORESTS



essential to mobilize resources and create a broader impact.

Private corporations have a significant role to play in tree planting efforts. Many companies have adopted corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives that focus on environmental sustainability. By including tree planting in their CSR activities, these companies contribute to the overall goal of 15 billion trees. They can allocate funds for tree planting projects, organize employee volunteering activities, and engage local communities in tree planting programs. Through collaboration with NGOs and governments, private corporations can make a substantial contribution to tree planting efforts.

Furthermore, individual participation is vital for achieving the target of 15 billion trees. Each person can make a difference by planting trees in their homes, gardens, or even in their communities. Individual efforts, combined with collective action, can have a significant impact on the environment. By educating individuals about the importance of trees and providing them with resources and support, we can empower people to contribute to the goal of 15 billion trees.

Schools and educational institutions also have a key role in fostering a culture of sustainability and tree planting among the younger generation. By incorporating environmental education into their curricula, schools can empower students to become active participants in tree planting initiatives. They can organize field trips to local forests and nurseries, where students can learn about the significance of trees firsthand. By instilling a sense of responsibility and environmental stewardship in our youth, we ensure a sustainable future for our planet.

In conclusion, achieving the goal of planting 15 billion trees by 2032 requires collective efforts from all stakeholders. Governments, NGOs, private corporations, individuals, and educational institutions all play a vital role in driving tree planting initiatives. By leveraging their resources, expertise, and influence, these stakeholders can work together to create a greener and more sustainable world. The journey towards 15 billion trees is not just a responsibility; it is a shared commitment to safeguarding our planet for future generations.

The year 2023 marks a new norm not only for Kenya Forest Service but for the larger forestry sector. The year knocked with revised tree cover target, policy and legislation review, change of guard at the helm of KFS leadership and most importantly the rallying call by His Excellency the President; directing that the country work towards growing 15 billion trees by the year 2032.

The journey towards growing 15 billion trees by 2032 is an ambitious goal that requires collective efforts from a wider array of stakeholders. Trees play a vital role in our ecosystem, providing numerous benefits for both humans and the environment. However, with increasing deforestation rates and the negative impacts of climate change, it has become imperative to take immediate action to mitigate these issues.

Firstly, trees are crucial for maintaining a healthy environment. They act as natural air filters, removing harmful pollutants from the air and releasing clean oxygen. As the levels of carbon dioxide continue to rise due to human activities, trees help in absorbing this greenhouse gas and combating climate change. By planting more trees, we can significantly reduce the impact of climate change and improve air quality. However, achieving the target of 15 billion trees by 2032 cannot be achieved by a single entity alone; it requires the

collaborative efforts of all stakeholders.

The government of Kenya through the Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Climate Change has developed a National Strategy for achieving a minimum 30% tree cover by 2032. The Strategy proposes financial incentives and subsidies to individuals, businesses, and organizations that actively participate in tree planting initiatives. It is expected that by implementing these measures, the government rally the wider array of stakeholders towards tree growing thus accelerating efforts towards the 15 billion trees target.

Even though KFS takes the lead in rolling out massive tree growing campaign, both state and non-state actors play a crucial role in driving collective efforts towards the attainment of the 15 billion trees. Civil society organizations for example can raise awareness about the importance of trees and encourage individuals to participate in tree planting activities. They can organize campaigns, workshops, and training sessions to educate the public on sustainable tree planting practices. NGOs can also partner with private corporations to launch tree planting initiatives, leveraging their resources and networks to achieve the target of 15 billion trees. Collaboration between NGOs, governments, and private corporations is

THE 7TH EDITION OF THE KAPTAGAT FOREST TREE

By Peter Martin Owino



H.E President William Ruto plants a tree during the 7th edition of Kaptagat tree Planting Campaign at Kesup Forest Station in Elgeyo Marakwet County

The 7th Edition of the Kaptagat Forest tree planting campaign held at Kessup Forest Station in Elgeyo Marakwet County marked a significant moment in Kenya's fight against climate change. His Excellency President Dr. William Ruto graced the event as the chief guest, demonstrating his commitment to addressing the impacts of climate change and conserving vital water catchment areas. The event also served as a platform to address the pressing issue of climate change and its adverse impacts on society.

Inspired by the remarkable achievements of renowned marathon runner, Olympic and World record holder, Dr. Eliud Kipchoge's 1:59 record run, President Ruto opened the campaign by participating in a thrilling 'under-two minutes' tree planting competition, competing against his Deputy President, H.E Rigathi Gachagua, Prime Cabinet Secretary, Musalia Mudavadi and other dignitaries. This demonstrates the urgency with which climate mitigation actions need to be taken. This event marked an important call to action for humanity to urgently tackle climate change and demonstrated the President's commitment, as well as the government's, to restore and conserve vital water catchment areas across the country.

President Ruto has embarked on an ambitious climate agenda that aims to achieve a minimum of 30% tree cover by 2032 among other mitigations. This endeavor requires the growth of a staggering 15 billion trees, which equates to the restoration of 10.6 million hectares of degraded forests and rangelands. To meet this target, every Kenyan is encouraged to plant thirty trees annually. However, the President has raised the bar by calling on each citizen to plant at least a hundred trees per year, emphasizing the collective responsibility and benefits for both present and future generations. President Ruto has also

pledged increased budgetary allocations to support tree-growing activities and the fight against climate change, urging Members of Parliament to dedicate a portion of the Community Development Fund to tree-planting initiatives.

"To achieve 30% tree cover, it demands comprehensive participation, starting from the grassroots level up to the highest echelons of government. It relies on a collaborative approach involving the entire society, combining government efforts with private individuals to achieve the desired outcomes." President Ruto said

The National Treasury Principal Secretary, Dr. Chris Kiptoo, initiated the annual forest restoration drive. Its primary objective is to restore 400 hectares of Kaptagat Forest, responding to the ecological challenges. By addressing these challenges, the restoration program contributes significantly to the overarching goal of growing fifteen billion trees by 2032.

The Kaptagat Forest, one of the five forest blocks within the larger Kaptagat Forest Ecosystem, plays a vital role as a water catchment area. It serves as a source of major river tributaries such as Sosiani and Kipsalen, supplying water to downstream communities and sustaining Eldoret and Iten towns. Therefore, the restoration efforts in this ecosystem hold immense significance for the provision of clean water, environmental preservation, and the well-being of local communities.

Dr. Kiptoo while addressing the public who turned up for the activity, reminisced about his young days when the forest was a virgin landscape, witnessing the untouched beauty of Kaptagat Forest. He took the bold step of leading the restoration process. "Every time I plant a tree

seedling; it reminds me that it is not about me. It is about us. It is about humanity," said Dr. Kiptoo.

In addressing the interconnected challenges of food insecurity and environmental conservation, the 7th Edition of the campaign focused on growing fruit trees. Thousands of fruit tree seedlings were donated to the community, encouraging individuals to plant them on their farms. President Ruto has made food security a priority, recognizing the importance of sustainable agricultural practices and the role of forests in supporting local livelihoods. By promoting the cultivation of fruit trees, this initiative not only enhances food production but also contributes to ecosystem restoration. Fruit trees offer economic opportunities for farmers and provide an alternative source of income. Moreover, they contribute to the overall diversification and resilience of agricultural systems. President Ruto's commitment to addressing food security demonstrates a holistic approach to environmental and socio-economic challenges.

Launched in 2020, the Cherangany-Elgeyo Hills Master Plan formalized ongoing restoration efforts within the ecosystem and accelerated restoration activities. The plan focuses on upscaling interventions across the entire ecosystem, addressing challenges within gazetted forests, upland escarpments, lowlands, and fragile riparian areas. By taking a comprehensive approach, the plan seeks to mitigate environmental issues while safeguarding diverse ecosystems and their ecological services. The Kaptagat Forest Ecosystem is one of the 12 forest blocks constituting the larger Cherangany Hills Water Tower. The implementation of the master



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plan will play a vital role in securing the water supply for both local communities and urban centers. Additionally, the plan accounts for the cultural value of the forest, acknowledging its significance in traditional practices and rituals conducted by the local communities. The restoration program has significantly benefited Community Forest Associations (CFAs) within the Kaptagat Ecosystem. Through the Plantation Establishment and Livelihood Improvement Scheme (PELIS), adjacent communities engage in regulated cultivation within the forest and establish nature-based

PLANTING CAMPAIGN

economic activities. These endeavors include apiculture, ecotourism, and the sustainable exploitation of non-wood forest products. By involving local communities, the program not only improves climate conditions but also enhances the economic and social status of these communities. Furthermore, the establishment of zoned grazing areas allows communities to manage their livestock sustainably, preventing forest degradation. The restoration of the Kaptagat Forest yields multi-faceted benefits, extending beyond ecological restoration to include the preservation of cultural practices and traditions tied to the forest.

President Ruto expressed deep concern about the increasing frequency, intensity, and duration of droughts resulting from climate change. He highlighted the urgent need to address these extreme weather events and emphasized the role of human activity in exacerbating climate-related challenges. The President's call to action seeks to mobilize individuals and communities to prioritize climate action and participate actively in tree planting and conservation efforts. The event served as a platform to raise awareness about the impacts of climate change on everyday life and foster a sense of urgency in tackling these issues. During the event, Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua, Prime Cabinet Secretary Musalia Mudavadi, and several Cabinet Secretaries engaged in tree-planting. The President's active participation underscored his commitment to the cause and set an example for others to follow.

The Ag. Chief Conservator of Forests, Mr. Alex Lemarkoko, guided the President through an exhibition showcasing various programs and strategies implemented by the Service to conserve and manage forests effectively. The event witnessed the presence of community members, celebrated athletes, county leadership, business leaders, NGOs, MCAs, and other prominent figures who actively contributed to the annual restoration campaign.

The Cabinet Secretary for Environment, Climate Change, and Forestry Hon. Soipan Tuya, on her part called on all Kenyans to not only plant trees but to ensure the growth of the trees they have planted. She also thanked Dr. Kiptoo for going beyond his call of duty to lead conservation efforts, she also thanked the President for taking a lead role in the restoration of forests.

The 7th Edition of the Kaptagat Forest tree planting campaign led by President William Ruto symbolized a significant step towards addressing climate change and restoring degraded ecosystems. The event served as a call to action, urging individuals and communities to actively participate in tree-planting initiatives and embrace sustainable practices. President Ruto's ambitious climate agenda, aiming for 30% tree cover by 2032, demonstrates the government's commitment to environmental conservation and the well-being of present and future generations.

The restoration efforts in the Kaptagat Forest Ecosystem not only contribute to mitigating climate change impacts but also provide economic opportunities and support food security. By involving local communities, the government aims to achieve holistic restoration and preservation of vital water catchment areas. The event showcased the commitment of various government agencies, emphasizing the importance of collective action in addressing climate change. Moving forward, concerted and sustained efforts will be essential to achieve the ambitious tree cover targets and create a more resilient and sustainable future for Kenya.



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1. Renowned World Marathon Record holder Dr. Eliud Kipchoge taking part in the 7th Edition of Kaptagat tree planting 2 & 3. H.E President William Ruto taking part in the 'under-two minutes' tree planting competition. 4. H.E President William Ruto is taken through a KFS exhibition during the tree planting

CHANGE AT THE HELM OF KFS LEADERSHIP

By Leakey Sonkoyo



KFS Board Chairman, Mr. Job Chirchir and former chairman Mr. Peter Kinyua exchange documents during the handover ceremony at KFS Hq

The fifth Kenya Forest Service (KFS) Board of Directors Chairman Mr. Job Chirchir has taken over the leadership of the Service in an elaborate ceremony presided over by the Principal Secretary (PS) State Department of Forestry Mr. Ephantus Kimotho and the former Chairman Mr. Peter Kinyua at the KFS Headquarters in Karura. The ceremony which was coordinated by the former Chief Conservator of Forests (CCF) Mr. Julius Kamau and attended by the other board members saw the former Chairman officially hand over to Mr. Chirchir after briefing him about the status of the Service and the activities of the Board during his tenure.

Mr. Kinyua said that he had served as the Board Chairman for the last six years during which time the Service had recorded a number of achievements. The former Chairman said his Board had overseen the automation of most of the services offered by KFS which had seen improved revenue collection and efficiency in service delivery. He added the Service with the guidance of the Board had enhanced seedling production to help cope with the increased demand for tree growing and forest rehabilitation. Mr. Kinyua said that the Service was in the process sinking boreholes in several Forest Stations noting that lack of reliable water supply to nurseries had been a major impediment in seedling production. To this end, boreholes had already been sunk in Meru Forest Station, Nairobi Arboretum and Mashuru in Kajiado County, he added.

The former Chairman informed his incoming counterpart that the Service was working in close collaboration with 255 Community Forest Associations (CFA) across the country to conserve and manage forests. He noted that the Board had been instrumental in helping the CFAs improve their governance through regular interactions and intervention in solving governance challenges, adding that the Vice Chairman Mr. Peter Wandera was the representative of CFAs in the Board. Mr. Kinyua said that he was happy that the Country's tree and forest cover had significantly improved according to the 2021 Forest Resources Assessment to stand at 12.13% and 8.83% respectively adding that there was still a great opportunity to grow.

On his part, the PS Mr. Ephantus Kimotho thanked Mr. Kinyua for his dedicated service to KFS and the country noting that a number of achievements had been recorded during his tenure. He also congratulated the incoming Chairman on his appointment and informed him that his Board had a huge task of actualizing the 30% tree cover achievement by 2032 as directed by His Excellency the President. He noted that the government was looking at the forestry sector as one of the areas that will create employment for thousands of Kenyans through proper management of the timber industry. He challenged the Board led by the new Chairman to focus on the ASAL areas saying that they provided the greatest potential for forestry development in the country.

The new Chairman Mr. Chirchir thanked Mr. Kinyua for his leadership of the Board and for facilitating a smooth handover. He also thanked the Board Members and the KFS management led by the CCF noting that he was ready to work with them to enhance the management of forest resources in the country. He agreed with the outgoing Chairman that there was a need to manage forest resources prudently noting that the cost of construction had got up significantly owing to the fact that most of the timber used locally is imported from countries as far as Mozambique.

The Chairman also noted the Board will look into the issue of understaffing as a matter of priority noting that service delivery was being hampered by lack of adequate staff especially in forest protection and other areas. He thanked the government for agreeing to allow the service recruit over 2,300 new officers saying this will be a big boost to ensure staff optimization. He also said that his Board will endeavor to protect forests through fencing to prevent conflict and encroachment as well as improve the fire management capability of the Service noting that fire was a big threat to forests. The Chairman said that he had noticed with appreciation through initial interaction that KFS officers were passionate about forest conservation and management adding that this was what was required in order for the Service to achieve its very crucial mandate.

CHANGE AT THE HELM OF KFS LEADERSHIP



Hand over the KFS flag to the new CCF Mr Alex Lemarkoko

Following the expiry of the term of service of the former Chief Conservator of Forests (CCF) Mr. Julius Kamau, the Chairman of the Kenya Forest Service (KFS) Board Mr. Job Chirchir presided over the handover ceremony where Mr. Alex Lemarkoko officially took over the leadership of the Service in an acting capacity.

In the ceremony that was attended by members of the senior management, the KFS Chairman thanked Mr. Kamau for his service, lauding him for steering the management of KFS in an effective and transformative and lauded him for electing to exit and pursue other ventures.

The Chairman congratulated Mr. Lemarkoko on his appointment in an acting capacity, noting that he is confident that Mr. Lemarkoko is able to guide the Service into the future.

The Ag. CCF thanked the Chairman and the Board for giving him a chance to serve and expressed confidence that the

Service had the capacity to spearhead achievement of the Presidential directive to attain 30% tree cover by the year 2032. He also thanked Mr. Kamau for his service to KFS. He said that he will together with staff, advance KFS successes, and learn from previous lessons.

Mr. Lemarkoko, a career forester has a wealth of experience spanning over 30 years, serving in both forest management and protection in various capacities from an Assistant Conservator role, to his most recent, the Senior Deputy Chief Conservator of Forests responsible for Forest Protection and Security.

Mr. Kamau expressed appreciation to the Board, and KFS community for the four years of Service. He noted that the Service had achieved a number of milestones due to cooperation among staff at all levels. He urged the KFS community to continue working together in order to effectively serve the people of Kenya.

KFS NATIONAL RECRUITMENT OF FOREST RANGERS

By Leakey Sonkoyo



Environment, Climate Change and Forestry Cabinet Sec. Hon. Soipan Tuyu with staff during KFS recruitment exercise

The CS Ministry of Environment, Climate Change & Forestry Hon. Soipan Tuyu has underscored the importance of recruiting additional rangers saying that they will help to address the staffing gaps in protecting Kenya's forests. Hon. Tuyu was speaking at the Kenya Forestry College (KFC) to the KFS rangers' recruitment teams during an induction course in preparation for the exercise.

She said her Ministry is tasked with bringing back the integrity of the environment, and a huge task rests on the shoulders of rangers. She noted that the world is currently facing climate change challenges, and Kenya is not an exception, adding that every possible measure must be taken to restore the environment.

The CS said the recruitment will conform to the recent Presidential directive by H.E. Dr. William Ruto that 30% of disciplined forces will be recruited from the National Youth

Service, as well as the Constitution requirement of the one-third gender rule. Hon. Tuyu was accompanied by the Principal Secretary State Department of Forestry Mr. Ephantus Kimotho, KFS Chairman Mr. Job Chirchir, and the Ag. Chief Conservator of Forests Mr. Alex Lemarkoko.

Mr. Kimotho said the recruitment exercise is a very sensitive one, and now the ball rests on the recruitment teams to ensure the integrity of the entire process. He directed that the team must be fair to all persons.

The KFS Chairman Mr. Chirchir said the exercise is enormous with great responsibility to the Kenyans. He cautioned that no Officer should make the mistake of receiving money from any Kenyans. He said everyone should be given a fair chance especially the vulnerable communities who often have the least amounts of money.

Mr. Alex Lemarkoko who has been guiding Recruitment and Promotions Committee said the teams now have a noble task ahead that requires utmost commitment to the values and ethics of the Service. He said this is the first massive recruitment since the year when the Service brought on board, 1,000 rangers. He expressed confidence that the recruitment team will deliver a respectable job. He assured the teams that all matters to ensure the exercise runs smoothly have been put in place, and all systems are ready.

KFS RECRUITS RECORD NUMBER OF FOREST RANGERS



Potential recruits during the KFS Ranger recruitment exercise



KFS recruitment exercise at Narok Stadium

Kenya Forest Service (KFS) conducted the biggest ranger recruitment exercise in its history by enlisting a record 2,700 recruits from across the country. The national exercise which took place on 8th March 2023 in all county headquarters came at a time when the government was gearing up to increasing the tree cover of the country from the current 12.13% to over 30% by the year 2032, a move that will require enhanced forest surveillance and protection.

While speaking to the recruitment teams before they embarked on the massive exercise, the Cabinet Secretary of the Ministry of Environment, Climate Change & Forestry Hon. Soipan Tuyu underscored the importance of recruiting additional rangers saying that they will help to address the staffing gaps in KFS that were curtailing the proper protection of Kenya's forests. She noted that the Service had for long struggled with low staff numbers a situation that was hampering its efforts to effectively conserve and protect the country's forest resources as well as lead the efforts to increase the country's forest cover. However with the entry of the new government and the prioritization of forest and environmental conservation, KFS was experiencing a much awaited injection of government support that would boost its capacity so that it can discharge its very important mandate effectively and efficiently, the Cabinet Secretary said.

Hon. Tuyu who was speaking at the Kenya Forestry College (KFC) to the KFS rangers' recruitment teams during an induction course in preparation for the exercise said that her Ministry was keen to build the capacity of the Service because it was the main implementing agency of the Presidential 30% tree cover campaign which she emphasized must succeed.

The KFS Chairman Mr. Chirchir appreciated that the exercise was enormous but expressed confidence that the teams were up to the task. He cautioned the recruitment teams to avoid acts of impropriety saying that stern action would be taken against culpable officers. He added that all prospective recruits should be given a fair.

The Chief Conservator of Forests Mr. Alex Lemarkoko reminded the teams that they

had a noble task to accomplish that required utmost commitment to the values and ethics of the Service. He expressed confidence that the recruitment team will deliver a respectable job. He assured the teams that all matters to ensure the exercise runs smoothly have been put in place, and all systems are ready.

The CCF directed the recruitment teams to work with the County Security Committees as well as other identified stakeholders to ensure that the exercise was carried out transparently and efficiently. The teams then moved to all the 47 counties to conduct what promised to be a grueling yet critical exercise. All the successful recruits were directed to report to the National Youth Service college in Gilgil to begin their ranger training programme.



KFS potential recruits being briefed

KAKAMEGA FOREST FENCING PARTNERSHIP

By Charles Ngunjiri/Leakey Sonkoyo



The Cabinet Secretary Ministry of Environment, Climate Change and Forestry Hon. Soipan Tuya unveils the plaque during the launch of the Kakamega Forest Fencing Project.



The CCF Mr. Alex Lemarkoko and the Ag. Commandant Mr. David Chege with other KFS officers during a tree planting session during the launch

The CS Ministry of Environment, Climate Change and Forestry Hon. Soipan Tuya has presided over the launch of Kakamega Forest Fence Project.

The forest's 117km perimeter that traverses both Kakamega and Vihiga Counties will be installed with an electric fence.

Speaking during the ceremony to launch the first phase of the project which will see the construction of the 15km with support from the Government of Japan, the CS said that the fence will help protect the critical ecosystem from illegal activities while guaranteeing sustainable source of livelihood for the neighbouring communities.



The CS and the CCF aboard motorbikes donated during the event.

Hon. Soipan informed the gathering that the rehabilitation of degraded forest areas within the forest will be done with the help of the community's youth and women who will be part of the Green Army that will implement the campaign to plant 15 billion trees

She thanked the County Governments of Kakamega and Vihiga for committing to partner with KFS in conserving the forest through allocation of resources for the fence.

Speaking at the same event, the Japanese Ambassador to Kenya H.E. Ken Okaniwa said that his country was glad to partner with Kenya in forest conservation and especially the protection of Kakamega Forest which is a biodiversity hotspot.



Stakeholders involved in the Kakamega Forest Fencing project display partnership documents

The Governor of Vihiga county H.E. Wilber Ottichilo assured the forest adjacent community that their rights as users of the forest had been guaranteed in the partnership agreement signed during the event.

On his part, the Governor of Kakamega H.E. Fernandes Barasa urged the community to continue conserving the forest even as he called on more partners to come onboard and ensure the successful

The UNDP Country Representative Anthony Ngororano said that climate change was the biggest threat facing the world at the moment and urged everyone to work in collaboration to reduce its negative effects on people.

Accompanying the CS was the Ag. Chief Conservator of Forests Mr. Alex Lemarkoko, the Senator of Kakamega county Hon. Dr. Bonny Khalwale, the

Regional Commissioner Western Mr. Macharia Irungu among other leaders.

KFS LEADS IN MARKING IDF 2023

By Peter Martin Owino



Former Forestry P.S. Mr. Ephastus Kimotho together with KFS chairman, Job Chirchir, FAO County director Dr. Stella Mukavi and CCF, Mr Alex Lemarkoko plant a tree during the International day of forests in Kireit Forest in Kiambu County.

In 2012 the United Nations General Assembly proclaimed the 21st of March as the International Day of Forests, to celebrate and raise awareness of the importance of all types of forests. This year the theme was, 'Forests and Health,' which calls for giving, not just taking, recognizing that healthy forests will bring healthy people.

This year's celebration was held at Kereita Forest in Kiambu County where the Principal Secretary for the State Department of Forestry Ephastus Kimotho was the Chief Guest. The PS who was accompanied by the KFS Board Chair, Job Chirchir, the Ag. Chief Conservator of Forests Alex Lemarkoko and FAO Representative to Kenya Amb. Carla Mucavi. A total of 15,000 tree seedlings were planted to mark the celebration.

Forests, trees, and green spaces play a vital role in ensuring a healthy life for all on a global scale, with the health benefits that range from physical and mental well-being to overall mortality reduction far outweighing the adverse effects on health. There are to some great extent linkages between human health, the health of other species, and the health of the planet as a whole.

The impact of forests, trees, and green spaces on human health across all life

stages positively significantly outweighs negative ones. The health benefits associated with forests and trees include neurodevelopment in children; mental health and well-being, spiritual well-being, and cardiometabolic health in adults; and mental health and well-being and longevity in the elderly. Forest-health relations, therefore, offer solutions to global crises, there is therefore a need for integrative and cross-sectoral approaches to be adopted to improve forest-health linkages.

Environmental protection is an inherent part of the solution to health and to achieve this there is a need to pay attention to the voices of "Indigenous Peoples" and local communities that live within the forest area or adjacent and the needs of future generations. The Kenya Forest Service has taken the lead on this front through the Community Forest Associations (CFAs), which put forest-adjacent communities at the centre of forest management and protection.

To prevent disease and create health-promoting environments entities charged with the conservation and protection of forests and other natural resources should adopt inclusive approaches in management. There is also a need for policy coherence and collaboration between the health and natural resource sectors.

Speaking at the event, the PS Mr. Kimotho noted that the world has recognized climate change, land degradation, and biodiversity loss as big challenges and huge threats to healthy living. He highlighted that the 15 billion tree-growing campaign is a strategy that Kenya is using to tackle environmental challenges. He reiterated the importance of all stakeholders; both state and non-state organs in achieving the 30% tree cover by 2032.

The KFS Board Chairman Mr. Job Chirchir on his part noted that the Service has received a huge boost with the recruitment of additional Forest Rangers who will enable the Service to discharge its mandate of protecting forests for sustainable environmental and health benefits. He further urged all Kenyans to join hands in the villages and homes to plant and grow trees in their environs to secure a cleaner and safer environment.

DESTRUCTION OF IMPOUNDED SANDALWOOD

The Cabinet Secretary Ministry of Environment, Climate Change and Forestry Hon. Soipan Tuya presided over the burning of impounded sandalwood at the DCI headquarters in Nairobi. The sandalwood burning followed a court order issued by Senior Principal Magistrate Boaz Ombewa of Kahawa Law Courts. The 13.5 tons of sandalwood burned worth Ksh 54 milion was seized from Samburu East, Wamba area.

Speaking during the ceremony, the CS said the burning was a symbolic act that demonstrates the commitment and teamwork of various stakeholders in breaking illicit networks that seek to benefit from the growing illicit trade in sandalwood trees and its products.

The CS reiterated the need to enhance surveillance, information sharing and collaboration with forest adjacent communities on stemming the tide of sandalwood trafficking in Kenya and the region.

The CS also called on the stakeholders to commit more resources and effort to combat the growing threat of sandalwood trafficking networks in the region.

She further called upon Kenyans and all state and non-state actors to rally behind the Presidential directive to growing 15 billion trees by 2032.

During the function, the Ag. Chief Conservator of Forests, Mr. Alex Lemarkoko commended and called for further collaboration among state, non-state agencies and local communities in the fight against the vice and forest resources protection and conservation.

He noted that sandalwood trafficking is an extractive environmental crime that must be stemmed out completely, reassuring of KFS commitment to protecting forest resources, including endangered species like sandalwood.

Also present during the event was the United States Ambassador to Kenya HE Meg Whitman, who expressed the US commitment towards eradication of international illegal trafficking and trading in sandalwood pledging to support Kenya in her conservation efforts. The function was also attended by senior government officers from Environment, conservation and the security sectors including the Director of DCI Mr. Mohamed Amin, NEMA Director General Mamo B. Mamo, Representatives from the Judiciary, Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions, Kenya Wildlife Service among others.



Cabinet Secretary Ministry of Environment, Climate Change and Forestry Hon. Soipan Tuya presiding over Sandalwood Burning Exercise at DCI headquarters.



Impounded Sandalwood being burnt at the DCI Headquarters



Senior Principal Magistrate Boaz Ombewa reading judgement on Sandalwood during the burning exercise at the DCI Headquarters

FRANCE SUPPORTS KFS FIRE MANAGEMENT PROJECT

By Leakey Sonkoyo



French State Minister of International Development Ms. Chrysoula Zacharopoulou watering a tree at KFS Headquarters and looking on is the CCF Mr Alex Lemarkoko and other KFS Staff

“Over the last decade, the country has recorded 457 major fire incidences that resulted to a loss of 123,812.15 Ha,” said Mr. Lemarkoko, adding that during the recently experienced drought a total of 180 forest fire incidences were recorded destroying 789 ha.

Mr. Lemarkoko noted that France was already collaborating with the Service in the conservation of mangroves and thanked the Minister for the support in the acquisition of a patrol boat to help in the protection of mangrove forests in Lamu County.

The project which officially started on 31st January 2023 will run for 28 months and will be implemented in three critical ecosystems of Mau, Mt Kenya and Aberdare Forests with an estimated forest area of 802,032 Ha.

The Project’s main objective is to enhance the institutional capacity of KFS to effectively manage forest fires as well as to build the capacities of various stakeholders to operate in an integrated forest fire management system. The project will also enhance the training capacity of the Kenya Forestry College in forest fire management.

Present during the event were the Ambassador of France to Kenya H.E Arnaud Suquet and the European Union Ambassador to Kenya H.E Henriette Geiger as well as senior KFS officers.

In continuing bilateral partnerships aimed at improving forest management, the governments of Kenya and France have collaborated in formulating a project that will assist the Kenya Forest Service (KFS) to manage forest fires that have become a threat to the country’s forests and continue to reverse government’s efforts to achieve sustainable forest management levels through destruction of forests especially during the dry season.

Minister commented Kenya’s efforts in increasing the country’s forest and tree cover through President William Ruto’s 15 billion tree growing campaign that seeks to increase the country’s tree cover to over 30% by the year 2032. Ms. Zacharopoulou noted that the world was grappling with climate change which was responsible for extreme weather conditions that contribute to forest fires.

Speaking during the launch of the Forest Fire Management Project (FFMP) at the KFS headquarters, the French State Minister of International Development Ms. Chrysoula Zacharopoulou said that France was glad to partner with Kenya in forest conservation and management noting that threats to forests in Kenya also affected the citizens of her country given that biodiversity loss is a global problem. The

The Acting Chief Conservator of Forests Mr. Alex Lemarkoko thanked the government and people of France for continued support in forest conservation initiatives. He noted that Forest fires pose a real threat to the survival of the existing forests ecosystems given that 20 out of the 47 counties are classified as forest fire hotspots a situation exacerbated by the negative effects of climate change, he added.



French State Minister of International Development Ms. Chrysoula Zacharopoulou and the CCF Mr Alex Lemarkoko holding a signed framework of collaboration



French State Minister of International Development Ms. Chrysoula Zacharopoulou and the CCF Mr Alex Lemarkoko during a tree planting session

DP COMMISSIONS BOREHOLE AT KENYA FORESTRY COLLEGE

His Excellency, Rigathi Gachagua, Deputy President of the Republic of Kenya, has applauded a borehole initiative that will increase access to fresh water for the Kenya Forestry College (KFC) and adjacent user communities.

Hon. Gachagua was speaking during the commissioning of the borehole at the college in Londiani, Kericho County. He noted that the initiative which is a collaboration between the Ministry of Environment, Climate Change & Forestry and Ministry of Water and Irrigation forms a critical approach which can be replicated in all forest areas across the country, not just for domestic purposes but also for growing trees and ensuring that forests and water catchment areas are preserved in order to contain the negative effects of climate change.

He reiterated the President's commitment to plant 15 billion trees by 2032 noting that access to water is essential for sustained tree growing gains.

Speaking at the commissioning event, the KFS Board Chairman Mr. Job Chirchir said the Board was keen to align its strategic approaches toward the achievement of the Government's priorities including, the growing of 15 billion trees by the year 2032, and fully engaging the communities who are at the frontline of forest conservation and protection.

Mr. Chirchir said the water from the borehole will be shared with adjacent institutions at discounted rates while the adjacent communities will access it for free.

The borehole which was sunk with the support from the Lake Victoria South Water Works Development Agency has an output of 80,000 litres per day.

H.E. Hon. Gachagua was joined by the PS State Department of Forestry Mr. Ephantus Kimotho, the Chief Conservator of Forests Mr. Alex Lemarkoko, Senior Deputy CCF Mr. Peter Waweru, KFC Principal Dr. Elizabeth Wambugu and other senior KFS, KFC, National and County government officials.



Deputy President H.E Rigathi Gachagua plants a tree at KFC Londiani during commissioning of the borehole



KFS Board Chair gives a brief to the Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua, (Second Right) at KFC Londiani

WORLD WETLANDS DAY

By Leakey Sonkoyo

Narok County was the venue for marking of the 2023 World Wetlands Day on 2nd February under the theme 'Its time for wetland restoration'.

Speaking while officiating the event, the Cabinet Secretary Ministry of Environment, Climate Change and Forestry Hon. Soipan Tuya called upon Kenyans to conserve wetlands which she said were critical biodiversity areas which provide sustenance to thousands of people. She also urged Kenyans to conserve forests and embark on the government's initiative to plant 15 billion trees by 2032.

Over six thousand seedlings were planted at the event where the former CCF Mr. Julius Kamau was represented by the Principal Conservator of Forests Dr. Benjamin Kinyili and the Regional Forest Conservator (RFC) Mau, Mr. Francis Kariuki.

World Wetlands Day raises awareness about the importance of wetlands and the need for their conservation and restoration. Wetlands play a crucial role in supporting biodiversity, providing clean water, regulating water flow, and mitigating the impacts of climate change. They are diverse ecosystems that encompass areas like marshes, swamps, bogs, and mangroves, and they provide habitat for a wide range of plant and animal species. Wetlands also offer valuable ecosystem services such as flood control, water purification, and carbon sequestration.

World Wetlands Day serves as an opportunity for governments, organizations, and individuals to come together to promote the importance of wetlands and encourage concrete actions towards their protection and restoration. By raising awareness and advocating for sustainable wetland management, this global event contributes to the broader goals of preserving biodiversity, mitigating climate change impacts, and ensuring the well-being of both human and natural communities.

Hon. Tuya warned those who were engaging in illegal forest activities that stern action will be taken against them noting that the government will not allow some people to take the country back in its quest to attain sustainable forest cover.



Ministry of Environment, Climate Change and Forestry CS Soipan Tuya plants a tree during the celebrations in Narok County

At the same event, the Governor of Narok County, H.E Patrick Ole Ntutu thanked the CS for holding the national ceremony in his county and noting that Narok was largely a semi-arid zone and the people depended on water catchments such as the Mau Complex and numerous wetlands for survival.

The Governor added that Enkong'u Enkare supported hundreds of farmers

who use irrigation as providing drinking water for hundreds of livestock.

The event was also graced by the PS for the State Department of Environment and Ministry of Environment and CS Soipan Tuya plants a tree during the celebrations in Narok County Climate Change Eng. Festus Ng'eno, KFS Chairman Mr. Job Chirchir, the NEMA Chairman Mr. Eric Mungai, area Member of Parliament Hon. Sylvester Kitilai.

KFS MARKS EARTH DAY

Kenya Forest Service (KFS) in collaboration with the Rotary Club of Kiserian and the County Government of West Pokot collaborated in a tree growing exercise at Kamatira Forest as part of the activities to mark this year's Earth Day celebrations.

Kenya Forest Service (KFS) in collaboration with the Rotary Club of Kiserian and the County Government of West Pokot have collaborated in a tree growing exercise at Kamatira Forest as part of the activities to mark this year's Earth Day celebrations.

The event which was part of activities that took place in several other counties saw the planting of over 2,000 seedlings together with the local community who are on a quest to restore the forest.

Speaking at the event, the Deputy Chief Conservator of Forests for Drylands and Private Forests Development Coordination Dr. Clement Ng'oriareng' who was representing the Acting Chief Conservator of Forests Mr. Alex Lemarkoko called on the local community to conserve the local forests which he said were a lifeline for the surrounding areas especially the people living in the drier lowlands who rely on the rivers emanating from the forests.

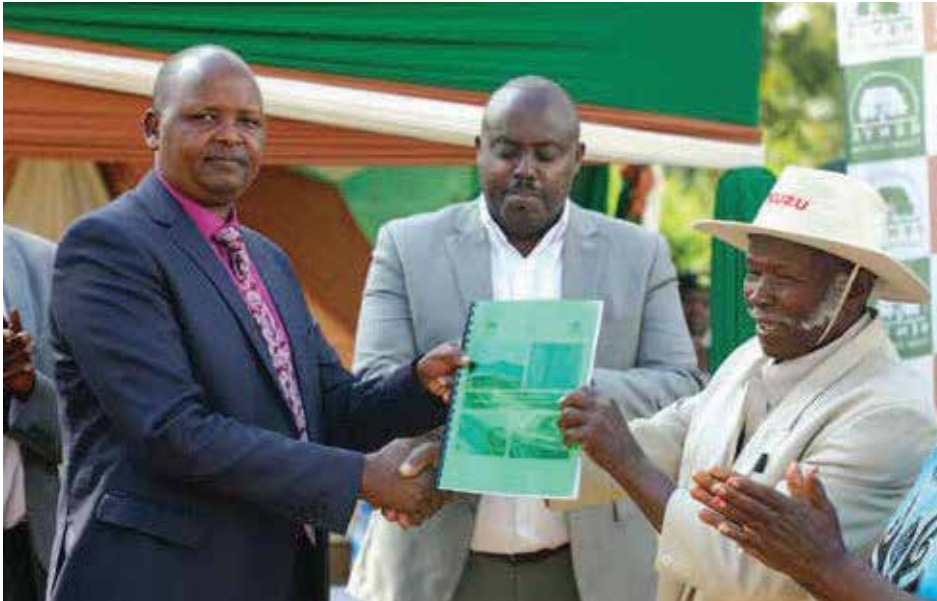
He added that KFS together with stakeholders such as the county government and the Rotary Clubs were ready to work together with them to conserve forests and ensure sustainability. He warned that continued forest destruction and uncontrolled cultivation on hillsides was heightening the risk of major landslides which had caused great damage and loss of life on previous occasions. Present during the event were the President of the Rotary Club of Kiserian Ms. Kevinna Loyatum, the Chief Officer for Water and Environment Leonard Kamsait, the KWS Warden for West Pokot Mr. Wilson Ng'oriareng' among other local leaders.



Deputy Chief Conservator of Forests for Drylands and Private Forests Development Coordination Dr. Clement Ng'oriareng' waters a tree

FMA & PFMPs LAUNCH UPDATES; Lariak, Kiptogot, Lusoi Hill, Kwale, Mukutani, Mt. Kulal

By Sylvester Okal/Irene Chepngetich



CCF Alex Lemarkoko hands over a signed Forest Management Agreement to a community member

enhance ease of access to seedlings within the region. He highlighted that the Service will engage partners to enable fencing of the forest which will reduce cases of human wildlife conflict.

The Service appreciates the vital role played by the Food And Agriculture Organization of the UN(FAO) in facilitating the processes for review of the 5 year Lariak Forest PFMP.

Mukogodo Forest

Kenya Forest Service and ILMAMUSI Community Forest Association (CFA) launched the reviewed Mukogodo Forest PFMP and signed the FMA for the Mukogodo Forest at a colourful ceremony at Lokusero Secondary School in Mukogodo Forest, Laikipia North constituency in Laikipia County in an exercise presided over by the area MP Hon. Sara Korere. The 5-year Mukogodo PMFM plan review was supported by service partners: FAO, Laikipia Conservancy Association, Lewa Wildlife Conservancy, Borana Conservancy, and Laikipia Wildlife Forum.

Mt. Kulal

PFMPs for Mt Kulal were launched and the FMAs signed with forest-adjacent communities from Mt Kulal at Gatab Open Garden in Mt Kulal, Marsabit County. The PFMP has been developed with support from FAO Kenya and Mt Kulal Biosphere Community Forest Association and is aimed at providing a 5-year framework to guide forest conservation and sustainable livelihood development through main activity which is pastoralism for the CFA.

Mukutani

The Chief Conservator of Forests Alex Lemarkoko led the launch and signing of Mukutani PFMP and FMA that took place in Mukutani Ward, Baringo County. Mukutani Community Forest Association has planted and sustained 2500 seedlings in their ward and the GSU Base Camp. The Service has also planted trees over 750 hectares, translating to 1 million seedlings in the larger Baringo County. Green Zones Development Support Project Phase II played a key role in the development of the Mukutani management plan from its initiation to the signing of the plan.

Kenya Forest Service signed Forest Management Agreements (FMA) with forest-adjacent communities in Kiptogot Forest (Elgeyo-Marakwet County); Lariak Forest (Laikipia County); Pongwe-Kidimu, Mirima and Marenje forests (All, Kwale County), Lusoi Hill Forest (at the border of Laikipia and Nyeri County), Mukogodo Forest (Laikipia County), Mt. Kulal (Marsabit County and Mukutani (Baringo County).

The signing of FMA's signify the first step towards the implementation of Participatory Forest Management Plans (PFMP's) which are aimed at empowering communities in co-managing forests with the Service.

PFMP's confer rights to forest-adjacent communities to benefit from mutually negotiated activities and offer a framework to guide forest conservation and sustainable livelihood development through user-right activities such as: Bee-keeping, eco-tourism, sustainable water abstraction, value-addition of forest products add details

Pongwe-Kidimu, Mirima and Marenje forests

The launch event of the PFMP's and signing of FMA's in the forests located in Kwale County was presided over by Dr. Elizabeth Wambugu (Principal, Kenya Forestry College and the Hon. Mangale Chiforomodo (Lunga Lunga Member of Parliament). The PFMPs have been developed with support from the World Wildlife Fund-Kenya and Plan International to provide a 5-year roadmap for the conservation and protection of the endangered Kaya Forests. The plans also aim to outline sustainable economic opportunities for the coastal communities who rely on the mangrove ecosystem for livelihood generation activities.

Kiptogot Forest

The development of the PFMP was supported by the United States Forest Service (USFS) with funding from USAID/Kenya & East Africa (USAID/KEA) under the Water Tower Resilience Program (WTP). During the launch, it was noted that through development of Kiptogot PFMP, the WTP advances official Government of Kenya's policy concerning the devolution of forest management and enhances community self-reliance by building Community Forest Association's capacity to plan, finance, and implement sustainable solutions to its development challenges.

Lariak Forest

This exercise was presided over by the Chief Conservator of Forests Mr. Alex Lemarkoko at Lariak Forest Station, Laikipia County. The CCF pledged to support Lariak Forest Station to upgrade seedling production capacity to 2 million seedlings to



Dr. Elizabeth Wambugu hands over a copy of the Kwale Management Plan to Community members during the ceremony

EMBRACING PRIVATE PUBLIC PARTNERSHIPS (PPPs) FOR ENHANCED FOREST CONSERVATION

By Ekuwam Julius

Forests are invaluable ecosystems that provide a wide range of benefits to society, including clean air and water, carbon storage, biodiversity preservation, and livelihood opportunities for local communities. However, global deforestation rates continue to rise, posing a significant threat to these vital resources. In order to address this challenge effectively, the importance of embracing public-private partnerships (PPPs) for enhanced forest conservation cannot be overstated.

PPPs bring together the strengths and resources of both the public and private sectors to achieve common goals. When it comes to forest conservation, collaboration between these sectors is essential. Government has the authority to formalize regulations, enforce laws, and manage protected areas, but often face limitations in terms of financial resources, technical expertise, and capacity. On the other hand, private entities, such as corporations and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), bring investments, innovation, and operational expertise to the table.

One of the key advantages of PPPs in forest conservation is the potential for increased financial resources. Kenya Forest Service (KFS) alone often struggle to allocate sufficient funding for conservation efforts, especially with the current Government strategic goal of attaining and maintaining a minimum 30% tree cover by 2032. By partnering with private entities, additional financial resources can be mobilized through investments, donations, and grants; as now witnessed in the "adopt a forest initiative". These funds can be used to support various conservation activities, such as reforestation, protection and sustainable forest management.

Furthermore, PPPs facilitate the transfer of technology and technical expertise. The private sector has a long history of innovation and operational efficiency that can be harnessed to improve forest conservation practices. For example, private companies specializing in remote sensing and geospatial technology can assist KFS in monitoring deforestation and identifying illegal encroachments. NGOs can provide valuable technical expertise in areas such as community engagement, capacity building, and sustainable



CCF Alex Lemarkoko engaging the CEO 748 Air Service Mr. Moses Mwangi during a meeting to discuss Carbon Offsetting at KFS Hq between the two organisation

livelihood development for Community Forest Associations (CFAs). By collaborating with the public sector, such expertise can be shared and utilized more effectively.

PPPs also promote the sharing of knowledge and best practices. Both the public and private sectors possess valuable experiences and lessons learned that, when combined, can contribute to more effective conservation strategies. Public agencies can share their understanding of policy frameworks, legislative processes, and governance structures, while private entities can provide insights into market-based approaches, corporate social responsibility, and project management. This exchange of knowledge can lead to more informed decision-making and the development of innovative solutions.

Additionally, PPPs encourage transparency and accountability. In recent years, there has been a growing demand for greater transparency in natural resource management as well as corporate accountability for the impact of their

operations on the environment. Through partnerships, KFS and private entities can work together to establish clear guidelines, standards, and reporting mechanisms. This ensures that forest conservation efforts are carried out in a responsible and accountable manner.

In conclusion, embracing public-private partnerships for enhanced forest conservation is crucial in addressing the Kenya's challenge of deforestation. The collaboration between the public and private sectors harnesses financial resources, technical expertise, technology, knowledge, and accountability, leading to more effective and sustainable conservation efforts. By working together, KFS, businesses, and civil society organizations can make significant progress in safeguarding forests for current and future generations.

SAVING THE MOUNTAIN BONGOS AND RHINOS THROUGH FOREST CONSERVATION

By Michael Kitum



Two of the endangered Mountain Bongo Species at the Mawingu Mountain Bongo Sanctuary in Ontulili Forest where KFS is among stake holders involved in raising their population.

Kenya Forest Service in collaboration with the Meru County Government have agreed to establish a wildlife sanctuary for the endangered Mountain Bongos and Rhinos in Marania and Mucheene Forest reserves which form part of the larger Mount Kenya forest ecosystem.

The former Chief Conservator of Forests Mr. Julius Kamau joined the Meru Governor, Her excellency Kawira Mwangaza during the ground-breaking ceremony of the Meru Bongo Conservation Sanctuary which will be the second sanctuary in the country supported by Kenya Forest Service, in line with the implementation of the Kenya National Bongo Recovery and Action Plan (2019 - 2023) to provide the forest as a habitat for Mountain Bongo (*Tragelaphus eurycerus isaaci*).

The Mountain Bongo is listed as a critically endangered species in the IUCN red list of threatened species at the brink of extinction. Back in the 1970s, Kenya was recorded

to have had a population up to 500 of the species which has now decreased with only about 100 species remaining in the country mainly within forest ecosystems in Mau, the Aberdares and Mt Kenya regions.

The Action plan aims to increase the population to 750 by 2050, and the two sanctuaries, including the Mawingu Mountain Bongo Sanctuary in part of Ontulili and Nanyuki forest reserves, provide a breeding ground where the population can be increased as they are re-introduced to the wild.

During the ground breaking, Mr Kamau noted the prime role forest resources play in supporting life and biodiversity underscoring that the country, with the current national tree cover of 12.13%, aims to reach 30% by 2032 and further recognized Meru whose tree cover stands at 29.63% and Forest Cover at 12.17% respectively.

He also registered KFS' commitment to the collaboration given its extremely significant

contribution to the conservation of Mountain Bongo and biodiversity in the country.

"The Service through the ongoing partnership with the County Government of Meru, Kenya Wildlife Service, Lewa Wildlife Conservancy, Ntimaka and Kamalu Community Forest Associations will endeavour to support the Meru Bongo Rhino Conservation Trust in the implementation of the Special Use License for breeding of Mountain Bongo," noted the CCF.

The Governor acknowledged the long-standing partnership between the Service and the county in forestry development and singled out the support from KFS for the Mountain Bongo Conservation Sanctuary to be of great significance to ensure the survival of the species and also for the economic impact it will generate through education and tourism.

The ceremony was attended by among others, the Deputy Governor for Meru County Mr Isaac Mutuma, Lewa Wildlife Conservancy Chief Executive Officer Mr. Mike Watson, Area MP(Buuri) Hon Mugambi Rindikiri, Meru County Commissioner Mr. Fredrick Ndunga, Members of the Meru County Assembly, Chairman of Meru Bongo and Rhino Conservation Trust Mr. John Kinoti. Chairman Kamalu CFA Mr John Mbaabu, Chairman of Ntimaka CFA Mr. Julius Mugaa among others.

KFS EXPLORES POST MINING REHABILITATION OPPORTUNITIES AT BASE TITANIUM

By Peter Martin Owino



KFS Staff led by Board Member Mr. Peter Leitoro together with staff from Base Titanium during the tour of a section of a rehabilitated mine field site

Base Titanium Limited (BTL) is on course to cease its mining operations in Kwale by 2024. It is for this reason that BTL is exploring the development of Post-Mining Land Use (PMLU) options that can sustainably use mined and tenured areas. The Base PMLU vision is that the closure execution will cement BTL reputation for full mine life cycle. This is will not only meet the end expectation of Base vision for mining in Africa but will fulfill the expectations of stakeholders.

Base Titanium has identified lack of a large training centre in Kwale County where students can choose from various course options and progress from entry level through to diploma or higher level of education. A TVET model of Technical Training Centre of Excellence that offer trade-based training, agri-business and sustainable conservation are the major thematic areas that have been identified in the PMLU.

Based on the model of training that Kenya Forestry College (KFC) offers and the three, key thematic areas identified in the PMLU KFC was therefore identified as a viable option among various training institutions. A meeting held in March 2023 between KFC and BTL found it necessary for KFS to undertake a field visit to BTL for familiarization to pave way for further discussions.

KFS staff therefore undertook a three day field visit to Base Titanium Limited (BTL) in Ukunda, Kwale County. The field familiarization visit aimed to explore further development of PMLU strategy and policies that will sustainably put to use the mined land, based on areas of common interest between KFS and Base Titanium and to capitalise on this opportunity in areas of training and sustainable conservation if the institutions are successful on their bidding to take over the BTL Facility.

The KFS team also conducted BTL assets assessment to establish how best KFS can utilise existing facilities if and when the partnership is actualized. A number of gaps that required immediate and long term adjustments were also identified by the teams.

KFC if successful in taking over the BTL facility seeks to establish centre of excellence training institution at the BTL facility as part of the PMLU strategy which identified lack of such institutions in Kwale County. The training facility will be the first of its kind in Kwale County and shall offer adjacent communities students training opportunities and bridge the labour market gap by developing markets ready work- force.

KFS shall rehabilitate, sustainably conserve, grow trees and continue protecting adjacent Buda and Gogoni forest to contribute to achievement of growing of 15 billion trees by 2032 and Climate Change Mitigation.

Speaking at the meeting Mr. Peter Leitoro, KFS Board Member, expressed KFS Board of Management commitment to ensuring success of the partnership. He also assured BTL of further discussion with KFS to ensure that all the pending matters are sorted to ensure the takeover is a success.



KFC Principal, Dr. Elizabeth Wambugu giving a presentation during KFS visit to Base Titanium

NEW FORESTRY PRINCIPAL SECRETARY VISITS KFS HEADQUARTERS



Forestry PS Mr. Gitonga Mugambi inspecting guard of honor during his visit to KFS Headquarter.

The new Principal Secretary (PS) for the State Department of Forestry Mr. Gitonga Mugambi has visited Kenya Forest Service (KFS) Headquarters in Karura to familiarize himself with the operations and programmes being implemented by the Service in the management of the country's public forests.

Mr. Mugambi who was until his transfer to the Ministry of Environment, Climate Change and Forestry the Principal Secretary for the State Department of Irrigation in the Ministry of Water, Sanitation and Irrigation inspected a quarter guard mounted by KFS Rangers in his honour before proceeding to plant a tree.

The PS who was accompanied by the Secretary Administration Mr. Isaiah Nakoru and the Conservation Secretary Mr. Alfred Gichu was received by the KFS Board Chairman Mr. Job Chirchir and the Acting Chief Conservator of Forests Mr. Alex Lemarkoko who brief him about the various programmes under implementation including the Presidential 30% tree cover campaign which targets to have 15 billion trees planted by the year 2032.

While addressing members of the senior management team, the PS said that KFS had a huge task as the custodians of Kenya's forests resources to ensure their sustainable management for the development of the country. He noted that the Service was the focal point of all issues pertaining to climate change being the agency which has the biggest impact in the fight against adverse effects of global warming.

The PS informed the KFS management that they had to concentrate all their efforts in realizing the Presidential directive on the 30% tree cover and urged them to keep a daily track of the tree planting activities in the country. The PS assured the KFS team of his full support and that of the Ministry in the management of Kenya's forests.

KFS CHAIRMAN TOURS FOREST AREAS IN BARINGO



KFS Board Chair Mr. Job Chirchir Planting a tree during his visit to Baringo Forest Area

The Kenya Forest Service (KFS) Chairman Mr. Job Chirchir together with the Governor of Baringo County His Excellency Benjamin Cheboi visited forests in Baringo County to appreciate the status and progress of forest management and conservation efforts and explore areas of mutual cooperation between the Service and the County.

The Chairman and his host visited Mochongoi, Esageri, Narasha and Chemususu Forests as well as the Tugen Hills, Lakes Baringo and Bogoria which recently experienced an unprec-

edented raise in water levels and Kerio Valley to assess the extend of landscape degradation due to soil erosion.

Speaking to KFS officers and members of the Community Forest Association (CFA) at Narasha Forest Station where he was received by the Deputy Regional Forest Conservator for Mau Conservancy Mr. Humphrey Monari, the Chairman thanked them for their cooperation which had seen planting of trees in areas that had previously been harvested. He encouraged the officers to keep up the good work even as he urged them to work with the CFA to clear the backlogs. The Chairman assured the KFS officers that the Board will prioritise their welfare issues noting that he was aware that there was an under-staffing challenge at KFS which he said will be addressed soon with the proposed recruitment of more officers to boost staff numbers.

On his part, the Governor assured the Chairman that the Baringo County Government will continue collaborate with KFS in forest conservation as well as in improving community livelihoods. He thanked the CFA

for their commitment to work with KFS to protect forests even as they draw their livelihood benefits from the forest.

Speaking on behalf of the community, the National Alliance of Community Forests Associations (NACOF) Treasurer Ms. Tecla Chumba informed the Chairman that CFAs had played a great role in assisting KFS with establishment, management and protection of forests. She assured the Chairman that the Plantation Establishment and Livelihood Improvement Scheme (PELIS) had proven to be a game changer in establishment of plantations country wide. She emphasized that with proper management and supervision, PELIS will continue to be instrumental in assisting the Service to clear its backlog even as the community continues to benefit through growing of food crops for food security and livelihood improvement.

In response, the Chairman assured CFAs that the Board will ensure that the mechanisms and regulations put in place to manage PELIS are strictly adhere to warning those who abuse the scheme that stern action will be taken against them.

KFS STAFF UNDERGO FOREST ALERTS TRAINING

By Leakey Sonkoyo



Ag Commandant Mr. David Chege addressing KFS Staff during Forest Alerts System Training

The Acting Chief Conservator of Forests (CCF) Mr. Alex Lemarkoko presided over the closing ceremony of a Workshop on Survey 123- a low cost technological application that was adopted by the Kenya Forest Service (KFS) to monitor change of vegetation in forest ecosystems and prompts immediate response by forest law enforcement teams to prevent forest offences and crimes.

In his remarks, the CCF said that KFS has a mission to Conserve, Protect and Manage public forests for present and future generations.

He noted that the technology which was first piloted in Kwale County and rolled out in Kilifi County has enhanced forest protection and security efficiency as well as reporting. He added that the Service will soon integrate the use of drones, CCTV and Survey 123 to ease forest protection and security work.

That Mau Regional Conservation Area being a hotspot shall now utilize the technology to address perennial challenges of illegal logging through enhanced forest crime detection and prevention thus reducing destruction of forests. He also noted that going forward, Kenya Forestry College (KFC) and Forest Law Enforcement Academy (FoLEA) will offer training on the new technology to new employees and recruits for ease of roll-out.

The Ag. CCF urged the staff to synergize as a team, apply initiatives, work in harmony with stakeholders and embrace technology for efficient and effective service delivery to the public.

KFS AND MAMA DOING GOOD ORGANIZATION COMMIT TO RESTORE FORESTS.

By Sylvester Okal



Students planting trees during Mama Doing Good Tree planting initiative held at Kakamega Forest

The First Lady speaking during the signing ceremony thanked the members of the community for taking part in planting of the 30,000 seedlings and pledged to continue working with the communities, women and youth adjacent to the forest. She reiterated that the 200Ha that had been adopted for rehabilitation will not be lost but will act as a blueprint for success in forest conservation and restoration.

The KFS Board Chairman Mr. Job Chirchir acknowledged the involvement of the First Lady in the noble cause of forest conservation while also encouraging the Community Forest Association and other forest adjacent communities to continue supplementing government efforts in restoring the glory of Kakamega Forest.

Also speaking during the exercise, The Chief Conservator of Forests Alex Lemarkoko highlighted his honor to host the First Lady and the Mama Doing Good Foundation and lauded her efforts in committing to rehabilitate the 200Ha of the forest. He further noted that coming together as a nation was an easy way of combating global warming and climate change.

Members of the local Community Forest Association also benefitted from donation of bicycles to enable their mobility during their conservation work in the forest.

Kenya Forest Service and Mama Doing Good; an initiative by the First Lady of the Republic of Kenya signed a framework of collaboration to oversee the restoration of 200Ha of Kakamega Forest.

A total of 104 organizations both state and non-state, have been able to take part in forest conservation through the Adopt-A-Forest Initiative to enable the country accelerate achievement of 30% tree cover by 2032. The Service has also engaged the forest adjacent communities, while appreciating the fundamental role played by the Community Forest Associations, the youth and learners.

A total of 30,000 seedlings of assorted indigenous species were planted in the forest block marking the commencement of the collaboration. The site was part of the area within the forest cleared of the invasive guava and Mauritius thorn species to enable regeneration of the indigenous species endemic to the forest.

This exercise was part of the First Lady's environment and climate change initiative focused on rehabilitating degraded forest areas and contributing to the achievement of planting 15 billion trees in ten years.



From right KFS Chair Mr. Job Chirchir, CCF Alex Lemarkoko, Mama Doing Good CEO Dr. John Chumo displaying signed framework of collaboration between the two organisations



H.E the First Lady Mama Racheal Ruto watering a tree at Kakamega Forest looking on CCF Mr Alex Lemarkoko (in uniform)



Community members from Bomet and Kisii Counties, benefitting through the Green Zones Development Support Project (GZDSP), demonstrate how agroforestry is supporting non-extractive income generating activities such as beekeeping during a forestry farmer field schools demonstration.



Her Excellency the First Lady of the Republic of Kenya Rachel Ruto flanked by the KFS Ag. Commandant David Chege during a tree planting exercise at the launch of the Eldoret- Iten Water fund in Kaptagat Forest.



The Chief Conservator of Forests Mr. Alex Lemarkoko hands over a copy of the Iveti Forest Participatory Forest Management Plan to the Retired Director of Forest and a current member of Iveti CFA Mr. Patrick Mungara.



Ministry of Energy and Petroleum Cabinet Secretary Davis Chirchir during a tree planting exercise hosted by KFS in partnership with the State Department of Petroleum at Kona Baridi Ngong Hills Forests Station.



Kenya Forest Service conservation partners Kenya Defence Forces and the Dedan Kimathi Foundation at tree planting exercise in Miritini Mombasa County.



KFS Ranger recruit undergoing firearm drill training



Participants during a tree planting exercise organized for the sponsors of the 2022 Forest Challenge at Kinale Forest, Kiambu County.



The Chief Conservator of Forests Mr. Alex Lemarkoko addressing the newly recruited foresters during their induction program at the KFS headquarters in Karura.



Participants during the 12km walk through Ngong Hills Forest that was organized by KFS, Sewa Kenya, Hindu Council of Kenya for celebration of World Environment Day.



Students taking part in the Mama Doing Good tree planting exercise in Kaptagat forest.



The Ministry of Environment, Climate Change and Forestry CS Hon. Soipan Tuya, PS Ephantus Kimotho and the Chief Conservator of Forests Alex Lemarkoko during a tour of Komaza sawmill in Nyandarua county.



Mzee Mwamba from the TV show Mother in Law with KFS Ranger Davis Balesa during a stakeholder tree growing exercise in Mombasa county.



Staff from the Ministry of Energy and Petroleum SAGAs during a tree planting drive.



The Ag. KFS Commandant Mr. David Chege planting a tree with students during the launch of the Eldoret-Iten water fund.



KFS Headquarters Staff planting trees at Ngong Forest in line with presidential directive to grow 15 Billion trees by the year 2032



*H.E the First Lady Mama Racheal Ruto watering a tree at Kakamega Forest
Looking on CCF Mr Alex Lemarkoko (in uniform)*



*KFS staff during tree planting activity in
Uplands Forest Station, Kiambu County*



KFS Volley Ball Team in action



Kenya Forestry College Students

THE KAYAS OF THE MIJIKENDA AND THEIR ROLE IN ACHIEVEMENT OF THE 30% TREE COVER

By Nafasi Mfahaya



Kaya elders conduct prayers in the forest

The Mijikenda originated from Shungwaya, a region in southern Somalia around the 17th century and settled along the coastal hinterlands in fortified villages called 'kaya'. The Mijikenda comprises nine (9) distinct Bantu groups who speak closely-related languages. They include the Chonyi, Duruma, Digo, Giriama, Jibana, Kambe, Kauma, Rabai and Ribe. The Kayas are now regarded as the abodes of ancestors and are revered as sacred sites for the Mijikenda and, as such, are maintained by councils of elders traditionally known as the Kambi. The site is inscribed as bearing unique testimony to a cultural tradition and for its direct link to a living tradition. Kayas are fortified settlements whose cultural spaces are indispensable for the enactment of living traditions that underscore the identity, continuity and cohesion of the Mijikenda communities. The use of natural resources within the Kayas is regulated by traditional knowledge and practices that have contributed to the conservation of their biodiversity.

Due to the collective responsibility of the community in conservation of the forests which are rich in biodiversity; the Sacred Mijikenda Kayas were inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List in 2008 becoming the fourth Kenyan site to grace the World Heritage List. The 10 sites inscribed are: Kaya Giriama (Fungo), The

Rabai Kayas (Mudzimu vya, Bomu, and Fimboni), Kaya Kambe, Kaya Jibana, Kaya Ribe, Kaya Kauma, The Duruma Kayas (Gandini Mtswakara). Kaya Kinondo though not one of the inscribed sites is also well conserved and is reported to harbor 52 bird species and 192 plant species. The current pristine status of many Kayas demonstrates the important role that social taboos have played in biodiversity conservation over time. These forests had remained intact due to taboos that prohibited tree felling, livestock grazing and extraction of forest product. Today, however; Mijikenda communities are gradually abandoning the Kayas in favour of informal urban settlements. Due to pressure on land resources, urbanization and social transformations, the traditions and cultural practices associated to the Kaya settlements are fast diminishing, posing great danger to the social fabric and cohesiveness of the Mijikenda communities who venerate and celebrate them as their identity and symbol of continuity.

Most Kayas in the recent past are experiencing a lot of degradation through illegal logging for building materials such as poles and withies, charcoal burning and encroachment into the land. Urgent measures are required to safeguard this important ecosystem. The Forest Conservation Management Act, 2016

requires the Kayas to be lawfully registered as community lands. Section 32 (2) states that the Service shall register each community forest in accordance with regulations prescribed in the law. Once registered the community can approach the County Government for provision of technical assistance regarding appropriate forestry practices and conservation. The Community can also access funds from the Forest Conservation and Management Trust Fund for the conservation of the Kayas.

The FMCA Act emphasizes management of indigenous forests such as Kayas for the purposes of; conservation of water, soil and biodiversity; protection of riparian areas; cultural use and heritage; recreation and tourism; sustainable production of non-wood products; carbon sequestration and other environmental services; education and research purposes and habitats for wildlife in terrestrial forests.

The community can agree to develop a forest management plan for their Kaya forests through identification of the resources and sustainable utilization of the different user groups. The benefits accrued from this should benefit the communities. This will deter destruction and encourage conservation of the forests and contribute to the achievement of the 30% tree cover.

TURBOCHARGING KENYA'S GREEN REVOLUTION: THE 15 BILLION TREES CAMPAIGN UNDER THE KENYA KWANZA GOVERNMENT BOTTOM-UP ECONOMIC TRANSFORMATION AGENDA

By Noor Hussein / Sylvester Chisika

Government's Ambitious Afforestation Drive Takes Root to Boost Economy and Environment In a resounding commitment to sustainable development, the Kenyan government has embarked on an ambitious journey to turbocharge the growth of 15 billion trees under the Kenya Kwanza Bottom-Up Economic Transformation Agenda. This monumental afforestation campaign is not only a significant step in addressing climate change but also a catalyst for economic growth at the grassroots level. By embracing this green revolution, Kenya is poised to become a beacon of environmental resilience and prosperity for the African continent and the world.

Restoring Nature's Balance

The 15 Billion Trees Campaign stands as a testament to Kenya's determination to restore nature's balance and protect its ecological heritage. With the environment facing unprecedented challenges due to deforestation and climate change, this afforestation drive is a beacon of hope for safeguarding biodiversity, conserving vital ecosystems, and countering the impacts of global warming. By planting a vast array of tree species, the campaign nurtures a rich tapestry of life, from lush forests to arid landscapes, fostering harmony between humanity and nature.

Economic Empowerment from the Roots

At the core of the Kenya Kwanza Bottom-Up Economic Transformation Agenda lies the principle of empowering local communities. The 15 Billion Trees Campaign embodies this vision, offering not just environmental benefits but also a pathway to prosperity. By integrating sustainable forestry practices, the initiative taps into Kenya's vast natural resources, presenting an opportunity for communities to participate actively in their economic transformation. Jobs in the forestry sector, coupled with the development of eco-tourism, empower citizens and nurture a culture of environmental stewardship.

Under the 15 Billion trees campaign, the Kenyan government through the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change is hiring 4,000 unskilled tree nursery attendants for the 'Green Army' program. The Green Army tree nursery workers will help the national tree growing and ecosystem restoration program by growing seedlings, planting trees, among other duties. The interested applicants for the Green Army Program must be 18 years and above and must be residents of the target counties, subcounty and wards.

Technology and Innovation for Growth

Harnessing the power of technology and innovation, the 15 Billion Trees Campaign leverages cutting-edge practices to maximize its impact. From remote sensing and drones aiding in forest monitoring to data-driven

decision-making, technology drives the efficiency of tree planting and maintenance efforts. Moreover, the campaign has designed the Jaza Miti App which is a mobile application for tracking tree planting progress across the country. The main objective of the Jaza Miti App is to provide information that enhances science based smart greening activities by stakeholders in forest-based enterprises and initiatives in agroforestry, commercial forestry and landscape restoration to achieve Vision 2030 goals. The App supports the National Tree Growing and Land Restoration Campaign unveiled by H.E. Dr. William Samoei Ruto on 21st December, 2022 at Ngong Hills and the government's ambitious programme aimed at managing, conserving and expanding forests sustainably towards attaining a minimum 30 per cent forest cover nationally by 2032. In addition, the App facilitates the need to collect real time data on tree planting activities in the country that estimates number of trees planted on public and private land. The verification module monitor's survival and mortality of trees planted in various sites. This user-friendly application can be used by tree growers countrywide to provide tree planting and survival data in the country. Kenyans are therefore urged to download the Jaza Miti application on their smartphones to enable them to know the number of trees planted, the type of trees planted, and the locations where they have planted them. This smart approach will facilitate optimal resource allocation, ensuring every tree thrives and contributes to the greater goal of a greener, more sustainable Kenya.

Private Sector Collaboration

The success of the 15 Billion Trees Campaign is bolstered by the active collaboration of the private sector through partnerships and collaborations. Leading businesses, both national and international, recognize the immense value of investing in environmental conservation. Many partners are already engaged in the campaign through tree-planting drives, corporate social responsibility initiatives, and sustainable business practices, aligning their goals with Kenya's vision for a greener economy. This synergy between the government and private sector has fostered a powerful force for transformative change.

Education and Awareness

Driving an environmental transformation of this magnitude requires raising awareness and nurturing a culture of environmental responsibility. The 15 Billion Trees Campaign places considerable emphasis on education and outreach programs. By empowering the youth with knowledge about the significance of trees and the environment, the campaign plants the seeds of sustainable growth in future generations. Community workshops, school programs, and media campaigns all play a vital role in building a collective understanding of the

interdependence between the economy and ecology.

International Recognition and Inspiration

The Kenya Kwanza Bottom-Up Economic Transformation Agenda and its 15 Billion Trees Campaign have garnered international recognition and admiration. As Kenya demonstrates a steadfast commitment to environmental resilience and sustainable development, it sets a powerful example for other nations to follow. This showcase of green leadership inspires global efforts in combatting climate change and motivates collective action toward a more sustainable future for all.

The theme for the 15 billion trees campaign "**30% Tree Cover, Wajibu Wa Kila Mkenya**" resonates well with the global goal of reducing and maintaining the rising global temperature to below 1.5°C as the safe limit for sustainable development, and the agenda of this year's Africa Climate Week (ACW) which takes places from **4-8 September 2023** in Nairobi, hosted by the government of Kenya as well as the parallel hosting of the African Climate Action Summit on **4-6 September 2023**. The ACW 2023 and all the Regional Climate Weeks provide a platform for policymakers, practitioners, businesses and civil society to exchange on climate solutions, barriers to overcome and opportunities realized in different regions. As Kenya blazes a trail with its visionary 15 Billion Trees Campaign, the country embarks on a transformative journey toward a greener, more prosperous nation. By fostering environmental resilience and economic empowerment from the grassroots level, Kenya stands tall as a model of sustainability for the world. The collective endeavors of its citizens, government, and private sector bear witness to a brighter, greener tomorrow where trees grow tall, economies flourish, and a shared commitment to the planet unites us all.

Moreover, these campaign activities will help the country to implement several national and global commitments with respect to climate change, biodiversity conservation, and land degradation. The government has committed to restore 5.1 million Ha of degraded landscapes as a contribution to the Africa Forest Landscape Initiative (AFR100), 50% reduction of greenhouse gasses from the forest sector by 2030 as part of its Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) to climate change, and to achieve land degradation neutrality by 2030 as a commitment to United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD); share responsibility towards mitigation and adaptation to climate change impacts, Enhance the contribution of the forest sector towards implementation of the social economic development of the country.

THE IMPACT OF SECURITY SERVICES LAWS (AMENDMENT) BILL 2023 ON KFS

By Tito Okello

Kenya Forest Service (KFS) is among other agencies expected to be under the oversight of the Independent Policing Oversight Authority (IPOA) should the Security Services laws (Amendment) Bill 2023 which seek to expand the mandate of the Authority is assented into law.

IPOA is a statutory civilian body established among other duties; hold the Police accountable to the public in the performance of their functions ensure that the Police shall strive to achieve professionalism, discipline as well as transparency and accountability; and ensure independent oversight of the handling of complaints by the Service.

From inception, the mandate of the authority was limited to providing oversight to National Police Service to the exclusion of Kenya Forest Service, Kenya Wildlife Service and the Prison Service. Since these

other services equally perform policing services in the country, a bill has been proposed in parliament known as National Security Services Amendment Bill 2023 seeking to amend various section of the IPOA Act and the impugned municipal laws establishing the Security Services with the objective of expanding the mandate of IPOA to equally oversight these other agencies.

While not expressly established as a security service like others, KFS is has a uniformed and disciplined force established under section 16 of the Forest Conservation and Management Act 2016. It is authorized to use firearms and is charged with the mandate of protecting forest resources and securing assets of the Service. The Service also has the power to carry out investigations of forest offences and conduct inspections in addition to have powers to prosecute of forest offenders in court.

One of the major impacts of the Security Services Laws (amendment) Bill of 2023 is that once the bill becomes law, it will be the function of IPOA to investigate officers of any service who contravene the constitution.

The bill equally seeks to amend Section 8 of the FCMA by adding a clause that will obligate KFS to cooperate with IPOA in carrying out its mandate. The authority will have power to take over any internal disciplinary process already commenced if in its opinion it does not serve the ends of justice.

The Bill if enacted will vest in the authority the power to monitor, review, and audit internal investigations and actions taken by the disciplined services and keep a record of all such complaints.

THE HIGH COURT DECLARES 'SURURU SETTLEMENT SCHEME' A PUBLIC FOREST LAND

By Tito Okello

The words of Hon. A. O. Ombwayo, Judge of the High Court should have been heard by those who have long gone, told and rehashed to those who are living and bequeathed to those who are yet to be born. In the case pitting the government against people who claimed to have been allocated forest land in the Mau Forest Complex, the good judge observed, "Our environment is everything and if we do not protect our beautiful environment then we will end up destroying our lives".

The plaintiffs in this case claimed that in 1997, the government excised and demarcated land bordering the eastern side of the Mau Forest complex and named it the Sururu Settlement Scheme. They alleged that the government issued the plaintiffs with title deeds upon payment of the requisite fees causing them to take possession and develop the land. They further claimed that they were evicted by the Forest Department from the same land in 2004, hence the suit.

The plaintiffs sought arrays of orders from the court including that they be declared as the legal allottees and lawful owners of the parcel of land in Sururu Settlement

Scheme; a declaration that the land comprised in the impugned titles are no longer forest land; a declaration that their rights were violated when they were evicted; an order for return to the land; and finally, to be compensated for loss and damages.

The court in its judgment found that plaintiffs were not allocated land under section 28 of the Forest Act 2005 and or section 34 (1) of the Forest Conservation and management of 2016 which provides for the procedure of variation of boundaries or revocation of State or local authority forests. "The facts herein depict a case where people invade the Gazetted forests with the assistance of the land registrar who issues them with land title deeds without following the laid down procedure and therefore a perpetuation of an illegality," the Judge observed. The court held that the title deeds were issued illegally, unlawfully and un-procedurally as the land remains a protected forest land.

In regards to compensation for violation of rights allegedly through violent eviction and destruction of property, the court declined to order for compensation noting

that "the plaintiff's thatched houses were destroyed, but the plaintiffs' equally destroyed a natural resource being the forest by cutting down trees." The court went on to say that the plaintiffs could have been entitled to compensation in terms of general damages had they not destroyed the forest and should restore the forest as it was before the invasion. "In any event, the plaintiffs cannot benefit from an illegality and acts that cause climate change by deforesting for agricultural farming, logging and other commercial purposes that cause the loss of millions of hectares of forest land every year in Kenya" The court ruled. In the end, the court dismissed the prayer by the plaintiffs to be placed back in the forest land and or in the alternative be given alternative land.

EFFECTS OF EUCALYPTS ON THE ENVIRONMENT: A Short Narrative on Facts vs Fiction

By Dr. Benjamin Kinyili

According to the United Nations Reports Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the global area under eucalypts was estimated at 700,000 hectares in 1955, rising to 4 million hectares in 1979 and exceeding 10 million hectares to date. Statistics from the Kenya Forest Service (KFS) indicate that the area under eucalyptus tripled from less than 50,000 ha in 2009 to the current 150,000 ha, making it the most popular and preferred tree species planted in Kenya. Neighbouring Ethiopia, which has been planting the tree for over 400 years has over 250,000 ha, Angola 390,000 ha, South Africa 1.2 million ha, Spain 390,000 ha, Brazil 4 million ha, India 4.5 million ha and China 8.3 million ha. In native Australia, 75 percent of all trees are eucalypts. The global estimates indicate that 50 percent of global forest plantation consists of eucalypts.

Fact is eucalyptus is the most water use efficiency according to comparative studies that pit water consumption and biomass production. For instance, for every litre of water consumed, eucalypts produce 2.06 grams of biomass compared to only 1.83 grams produced by *Women's Tongue*, 1.31 grams by *Dalbergia sissoo*, and 1.39 grams by *Earleaf acacia*.

Compared to other crops, eucalyptus are not water guzzlers. While eucalyptus require about 785 litres to produce 1kg of biomass, cotton, coffee and banana each require 3,200 litres, sunflower requires 2,400 litres and maize, sorghum and potatoes require 1,000 litres each to produce same amount of biomass.

Trees do not drink water in the literal sense. Along rivers we have evidence of streams flowing all the year round while giant eucalyptus trees tower over them. The decrease of water resources has been recorded everywhere in the country yet eucalypts are only found in few and selected areas of the country. The curse of our water losses lies in misuse and mismanagement of agricultural land and clearing of forests, especially natural forests. Scientific evidence suggests that in areas with annual rainfall above 1,200mm growing eucalyptus has no negative impact on water resources and planting should not be restricted.

The Kenya Forest Service (KFS), the government agency responsible for establishment and management of Kenya forests including plantations believes some of the concerns are driven by environmental romanticism and activism than science. For instance, while it acknowledges that there is limited biodiversity in eucalyptus plantations, this is not only unique to the species. That is what is expected, just as it is in any other plantations be it of tea, coffee, cypress, pine, acacia, maize or avocado. Singling out eucalyptus is hypocritical. In fact, their cultivation saves biodiversity elsewhere by preventing the destruction of natural forests, prevents land degradation and desertification by providing alternative tree products that would have otherwise been sought from natural forests. And in more recent times eucalyptus has been experimentally proven to be most efficient in CO₂ sequestration in comparative trials conducted recently.

Areas under eucalyptus have been found to have higher levels of micronutrients, compared to areas under crops such as tea of similar age. Long term planting of eucalyptus has been reported to improve soil fertility while comparative studies of soils under eucalyptus and adjacent grassland have found no significant differences if the trees have a rotation of more than 10 years. Studies have indicated that on degraded hillsides and wastelands, the net soil contribution of eucalyptus through litter fall is likely to be positive. Eucalypts also exhibit good potential for topsoil retention on degraded hillsides.

Due to the high popularity amongst farmers and the doubling of area under Eucalyptus every decade, the species will continue to be a permanent feature of the Kenyan forestry landscape. The solution is not in its banning or uprooting, but in advising farmers on which Eucalyptus varieties to grow, where to grow them, and how to manage them to minimize any adverse environmental footprints.

From an economic view Eucalyptus is a key ingredient in the economic growth of Kenya being the major energy source for tea processing the number one foreign exchange earner. Being a multipurpose Eucalyptus is a source of wood for various basic uses from firwood and charcoal to

fence post, scaffolding, props in vegetable growing and poles for transmission of electricity. Banning or interfering with development of such a species would have serious repercussions on the economic, social and environmental development of the country. While countries in the world are spending time and funds in researching and hybridizing various species of Eucalyptus to increase efficiency and prudence in its growth, it would be retrogressive to push backwards and expect to meet the nations' demand for wood through importation to the same products of eucalyptus. Technology and science have provided a viable platform even in Kenya to leverage on the need to balance growing of eucalyptus and environmental conservation for the greatest good for all. On this Tree Biotechnology Trust has been on the fore in deployment of eucalyptus hybrids suitable for growing in our open savannah away from water catchment areas and still produce quality biomass in quantities required for economic growth. This is the option being pursued by countries such as Brazil where eucalyptus is thriving in the Cerrados alongside beef farming. Both have placed Brazil on the front in pulp and paper as well as being the number one exporter to beef to EU.

A narrative by Tree Biotechnology Programme Trust P. O. Box 64159-00620 Nairobi Kenya



Eucalypts Tree

THE FOREST LAW ENFORCEMENT ACADEMY (FoLEA)

By Apollinary Mwandiga/Irene Chepngetich



KFS Ranger recruit undergoing firearm drill training

The Forest Law Enforcement Academy (FoLEA) derives its mandate from the Forest Conservation and Management Act of 2016, specifically Sect17(1)c. This authority empowers FoLEA to provide comprehensive courses in forest protection, security, and related subjects. Formerly known as "The School of Paramilitary Training," its transformation into FoLEA occurred alongside a process of service re-engineering and restructuring. FoLEA's primary mandate is to train and develop Forest Law Enforcement officers and Rangers, equipping them with the skills needed to enhance the protection, conservation, and management of forest resources. The academy envisions itself as the foremost training institution in the country for security, protection, and conservation of forests and allied resources.

To achieve this, FoLEA is committed to training, developing, and nurturing the finest Forest Law Enforcement Officers. Its core function revolves around providing professional commitment to all participants, fostering sustainable forest protection and security. The academy's core values and principles include discipline, leadership, character, commitment, integrity, professionalism, partnership, and teamwork.

The academy's structure is headed by the Commanding Officer (CO), supported by the Chief Instructor. This structure includes administrative and support offices, such as the Adjutant, Quarter Master, and Chief Security Officer. Instructional units encompass Field Craft and Tactics, Skill At Arms, Drills and Parade, Academics/Liberal Studies, Physical Training, and Guidance Counselling and Chaplaincy.

FoLEA fulfills a range of functions, including advising the service on training, offering paramilitary training and related courses, reviewing training curricula and manuals, conducting refresher courses for field officers, preparing training budgets, benchmarking emerging training practices, providing tailor-made courses, managing the Service Matching Band, and marketing the academy's training programs.

Its training programs adhere to well-structured curricula, encompassing Basic Courses, refresher courses, developmental courses, and leadership courses. FoLEA offers six key curricula tailored to different roles: Forest Ranger Recruits, Foresters and Management Trainees, Non-Commissioned Officers, Junior Officers, County Law Enforcement, and Forest Scouts' Enforcement.

Since its inception, FoLEA has conducted a total of 33 courses, ranging from Basic Induction to leadership training. The most recent course is the ongoing Rangers Recruits Basic Law Enforcement Course, hosted at the National Youth Service Gilgil. Training activities at FoLEA are determined based on comprehensive Training Needs Assessments. The academy trains its personnel and clients primarily at its main college in Londiani, with additional training taking place at three satellite camps. Research is integral to the academy's training approach, guiding curriculum development by addressing emerging trends in protection and security. FoLEA also forges valuable partnerships with other agencies in the realm of training.

Beyond training, the academy boasts a Matching Band that plays an active role in national events, parades, ASK shows, and more. This band also offers entertainment services for hire, including weddings and ceremonies, further showcasing FoLEA's multifaceted contributions to society.

INTEGRATING UNMANNED AERIAL VEHICLES (UAVS) IN KENYA'S FOREST MANAGEMENT

By Michael Kitum



FAO Director General Mr Qu Dongyu (extreme left) handing over a drone to Kenya Forest Service led by former Forestry Principal Secretary Mr. Ephantus Kimotho (third left). The PS was joined by CCF Mr. Alex Lemarkoko and outgoing CCF Mr. Julius Kamau among other Senior KFS Officials.

Kenya Forest Service has acquired specialized drones, courtesy of support from the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO), as part of continued effort in assimilating modern day technology in the management, conservation and protection of vast forest resources in Kenya.

In a handover ceremony of two newly acquired UAVs (Delta Quad Pro) at KFS headquarters by the FAO Director General Mr. Qu Dongyu, the Service led by the then Principal Secretary State Department of Forestry at the Ministry of Environment, Climate Change and Forestry Mr. Ephantus Kimotho noted that the two drones equipped with high-tech camera technologies, and a long range of travel/endurance through use of satellites will be instrumental in survey reconnaissance, aerial forest surveillance and forest mapping missions. In addition, it was also noted that the

drones will facilitate early fire detection and enable the Service address forest fires which are the leading cause of forest and biodiversity destruction.

The acquisition of the drones is part of a longstanding partnership between the two organisations under the FAO-GEF 5 Project on 'Capacity, Policy and Financial Incentives for Participatory Forest Management in Kirisia Forest and Integrated Rangelands Management.' Through this partnership, 11 officers drawn from the Kenya Forest Service and other national security agencies are undergoing a highly specialized training as the pioneer cohort of drone pilots from their respective services.

The integration of drones in forest management by the Service follows the adoption of other technological innovations in the sector including the 'mobile web-based arch-GIS forest alert system' which compli-

ments KFS human capital by enabling forest rangers use satellite imagery to detect forest changes through their mobile phones; and also the 'timbeter' which employs artificial intelligence to measure timber parameters enabling faster monitoring and control of the timber supply chain and ensure maximum utilisation of forest produce by minimisation of waste among other benefits.

The two Delta Quad Pro drones boasts features including; a range of 100-150kms single flight and return; a surveillance package of GPS controlled camera position holding; night vision; high definition live video transmission; object tracking; and a cruise speed of up to 90kms/hr among many other specialized functionalities.

KFS, SAFARICOM AND ABSA UNDERTAKE IN A TREE PLANTING EXERCISE

By Sylvester Okal



The Cabinet Secretary Ministry of Environment, Climate Change and Forestry Hon. Soipan Tuya (center) with Safaricom CEO Peter Ndegwa (right) and Absa Bank CEO Yusuf Omari during signing of the Climate Action Framework

The Cabinet Secretary Ministry of Environment, Climate Change and Forestry Hon. Soipan Tuya during the tree planting session at Kinale forest, Kiambu County.

The Cabinet Secretary, Ministry of Environment, Climate Change and Forestry, Hon. Soipan Tuya led KFS, Safaricom PLC and Absa together with their CEOs and staff in a tree planting ceremony themed 'Grow a tree to give a life' on the 12th of May 2023 in Kinale, Kiambu County.

During her address at the tree planting event, CS Soipan Tuya passionately called upon everyone present to embrace the role of environmental champions, emphasizing that individual efforts, no matter how small, collectively contribute to impactful change. She underscored that both government agencies and corporations share the responsibility of exceeding mere corporate social responsibility by engaging in tree planting activities that transcend boundaries.

Representing the Ag. Chief Conservator of Forests, Alex Lemarkoko, the Deputy Chief Conservator of Forests, Beatrice Mbula, stressed the urgency of adopting tree planting as a core national objective. As the country strives to achieve a 30% tree

cover by 2032, in line with the presidential directive to combat climate change, she highlighted the readiness of the Forest Service to support those eager to participate in tree growing. She particularly highlighted the potential for collaborations through the Adopt-a-Forest initiative, a channel for cooperation in nurturing the nation's green heritage.

Safaricom's CEO, Peter Ndegwa, illuminated the company's dedication to environmental conservation. He shared insights into Safaricom's forthcoming conservation initiatives, which encompass partnerships with schools and Community Forest Associations for tree planting and growth. These endeavors align with Safaricom's ambitious goal of becoming a net-zero carbon emission company by 2050. Notably, Ndegwa highlighted Safaricom's technological achievements, such as devices capable of monitoring and evaluating environmental factors like air quality.

KFS has registered several successes with Safaricom, under the Adopt-A-Forest

Initiative, in tree growing in various forest ecosystems including Marmaret, Kieni, Kakamega, Ontulili, Kinale, Homabay (God Jope), and Kimondi forest ecosystems where Safaricom cumulatively supported the planting of over 980,000 seedlings last year. Additionally, Safaricom also established a tree nursery at Geta forest station with a current plantable stock of 200,000 seedlings set for planting at the onset of the long rains.

The ceremony was also attended by the Kiambu County Governor His Excellency Kimani Wamatangi, Kiambu County Forest Conservator Thomas Kiptoo, Absa's CEO Yusuf Omari, KCB Foundation, NCBA, KFS officers, the National Government Administrative Officers, staff from the different partner organizations and the local Community Forest Association.

KFS AND KBC PARTNER TO LAUNCH NATIONAL TREE GROWING CAMPAIGN FOR THE MEDIA HOUSE

By Irene Chepngetich



KBC Board Chairman Eng. Benjamin Maingi, Uplands Forester Isaac Waweru and Assistant County Forest Conservator Kiambu Joseph Macharia at the tree planting ceremony

The Chairman of the Kenya Broadcasting Corporation (KBC) Board, Eng. Benjamin Maingi, led a group of staff members from the Ministry of Environment, Climate Change and Forestry, Kenya Forest Service (KFS) and KBC in a tree planting exercise where 520 indigenous tree seedlings were planted to mark the launch of KBC's National Tree Growing Campaign at KBC's transmission station in Limuru, Kiambu County.

The objective of the campaign is to promote tree planting at all of KBC's transmission stations nationwide. KFS will play a crucial role by providing technical expertise and advisory support to ensure the success

of the initiative. This effort aligns with the broader goal of the Service, which aims to plant 15.7 billion trees in order to achieve the presidential directive of attaining 30% tree cover by 2032.

The Ministry of Environment, Climate Change and Forestry plays a vital role in coordinating and overseeing various programs and initiatives aimed at increasing forest cover and mitigating the effects of climate change. Isaiah Nakoru, a representative from the Ministry, emphasized that the ministry is actively engaging stakeholders across the country to establish green enterprises. These enterprises will not only contribute to environmental

conservation but also create employment opportunities, particularly for the youth.

The event was attended by KBC's senior management, the Kiambu Assistant County Forest Conservator, the Deputy County Commissioner, other KFS officers, and local leaders. Their presence highlights the collaborative approach towards environmental sustainability and underscores the importance of involving various stakeholders in such initiatives.

KFS & TEGLA LOROUE PEACE FOUNDATION PARTNERSHIP

KFS and Tegla Lorupe Peace Foundation To Rehabilitate Cheranganyi Ecosystem

By Sylvester Okal



CCF Alex Lemarkoko and Tegla Lorupe sign the Framework of Collaboration at the KFS Headquarters

Kenya Forest Service (KFS) and the Tegla Lorupe Peace Foundation (TLPF) have today signed a Framework of Collaboration (FOC) that will see the rehabilitation of 400 ha of forest in the Cheranganyi Ecosystem, one of the five major water towers in the country which is managed by the Service.

The collaboration under the Adopt-a-Forest initiative involves the rehabilitation of 200ha in Embobut forest, Elgeyo Marakwet County and a further 200 ha in Lelan Forest West Pokot County for a period of three years.

Speaking during the signing ceremony at the KFS headquarters, the CCF Mr. Alex Lemarkoko thanked Amb. Tegla Lorupe for her sustained efforts to foster peace among people living in the North Rift region. He noted that a sustainable environment will also ensure sustainable peace as people will have enough for their livelihoods. Mr. Lemarkoko said that KFS had for a long time tried to carry out forest

rehabilitation and conservation initiatives in the region and had made little progress because of lack of proper cooperation with the local leadership. He therefore welcomed the partnership with TLPF saying that Amb. Lorupe was a highly respected elder in the region and her support for forest conservation initiatives will bear fruit. He committed full support from the KFS side saying that his officers will do everything to ensure that the conservation of Lelan and Embobut forests was a success. He further welcomed the Foundation to adopt more areas in the region.

On her part, the President of the Tegla Lorupe Peace Foundation (TLPF) Amb. Dr. Tegla Lorupe thanked the CCF for agreeing to work together to ensure the conservation of the North Rift Forest ecosystems which she said were a major source of livelihood for the inhabitants of the area. She noted that her foundation was majorly involved in peace initiatives in the area. She however said that they had

come to appreciate the role of natural resources in peace management saying that the major source of conflicts was the scramble for natural resources. The Ambassador decried bad politics which had slowed down both peace and forest conservation initiative. She however noted that working together with KFS will boost her efforts to bring lasting peace to the region. She also noted that the FOC will create employment for the youths and women who will be engaged to carry out forest rehabilitation activities.

During the signing ceremony, it was noted that a lot of work has been put to restore forests in the two counties over the years. The restoration activities have been noted to draw a lot of support from both public and private sector stakeholders and TLPF joins a list of reputable conservation partners who have pledged to play a role in the country's attainment of 30% tree cover.

KFS & MINISTRY OF ENERGY PARTNERS TO REHABILITATE GATHIURU FOREST

By Peter Martin Owino

The Ministry of Energy and Petroleum has adopted 183 ha of forest area in Nyeri County for rehabilitation under the Adopt-A-Forest Initiative. Through the partnership, the ministry of Energy will adopt 150ha in Gathiuru Forest Station and a further 33Ha in Hombe Forest Station and plant over three hundred thousand seedlings on the two sites. To mark the launch of the partnership, a total of 8,300 tree seedlings were planted and another 45,000 donated to farmers at Gathiuru Forest Station in Nyeri County on... at a ceremony presided over by the Principal Secretary for Forestry Mr. Ephantus Kimotho accompanied by his Energy counterpart Mr. Alex Kamau.

The partnership comes on the back-drop of the Service's current task of realising at least 30% tree cover by the year 2032. The project aims to increase the area forest and tree cover and to help mitigate against the adverse effects of climate change that has seen the area suffer extreme droughts. It also targets farmers to help them establish woodlots on their farms and reduce over dependency on natural forest for firewood and other energy needs.

Mt. Kenya Forest is a major water catchment area and a source to many rivers which contribute hugely to hydroelectric energy generation as well as water for use in food production in the region and beyond. Nyeri County has over 30% forest cover but Kieni sub-county where the Ministry of Energy has adopted the forests has less than 10% forests cover, thus making the area an ideal location for the rehabilitation project.



Former PS State Department of Forestry Ephantus Kimotho during the tree planting session at the event

The local community through the Community Forest Associations (CFA) are poised to be the first beneficiaries of the project through employment to plant and maintain the sites. The CFAs will also be involved in the replanting of harvested areas under the Plantation Establishment and Livelihood Improvement Scheme (PELIS) even as they cultivate food crops to boost food security in the country. The Ministry of Environment, Climate Change and Forestry also committed to donate seeds to enable the CFAs start tree nurseries for forest rehabilitation and on-farm tree planting.

Speaking during the launch of the initiative at Burguret Forest Block in Gathiuru, the Mr. Ephantus Kimotho thanked the Ministry of Energy and Petroleum for their continued and sustained efforts to conserve forests and especially water catchments zones. The PS also highlighted other benefits of tree growing like carbon trading and assured the locals that the government is in the process of formulating policies and regulations that will govern carbon trading and that those who stand to benefit will be those who are involved in tree growing and forest conservation.

The Principal Secretary for on his part noted that the Ministry was keen to rehabilitate forests in order to boost the hydroelectric production capacity of the rivers, which will, in turn, lower the cost of electricity in Kenya.

The partnership between the Service and the Ministry of Energy and Petroleum, dates back to 2011, though Kenya Energy and Environment Social Responsibility Programme (KEEP). During this period, a total of 1,812.5 hectares of degraded forests have been rehabilitated. This partnership is thus a plus to government initiative of achieving 30% tree cover by 2032.



Former PS State Department of Forestry Ephantus Kimani presents a seedling to a member of the community



A member of the community receiving a seedling from KFS

SILVOPASTORAL SYSTEMS IN KENYA AND ITS POTENTIAL FOR ECOSYSTEM RESTORATION

By Dr. Clement Ngoriareng



Livestock grazing in a community forest

Approximately 41% of dryland in Sub Saharan Africa are situated in East and Southern Africa and they are mainly inhabited by pastoralists and agro-pastoralists. The main source of livelihood within the drylands largely depends on pastoralism. Pastoral and agro-pastoral households in the drylands are exposed to the risk of losing their assets base due to droughts, floods, diseases and other social and economic reasons.

In Kenya, the ASALs occupy 89% of the country and are home to about 14 million people and approximately 70% of the national livestock herd which accounts for 90% of employment and more than 95% of the family incomes.

Dryland forests are threatened by encroachment, disintegration, deforestation, desertification and resource overharvesting, all of them exacerbated by climate adversities. Lack of practical conventional technical capacity contributes to vulnerability of sustainable woodland management under the silvopastoral land use system.

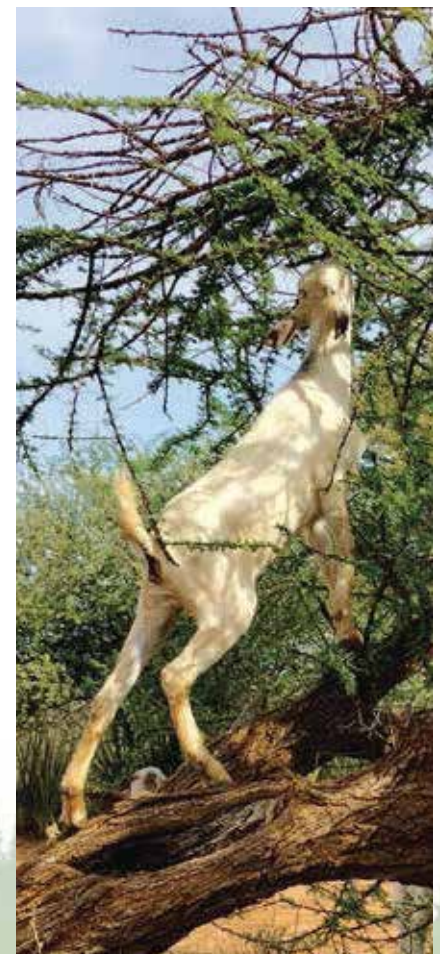
Silvopastoral land use system is a common practice among the local communities in the drylands of Kenya. This system brings together trees, grass and shrubs and

livestock in one area that is largely dedicated to livestock production. The benefits associated with this land use system include increased supply of wood, honey, fruits, fodder and pasture for milk and beef production and improved biodiversity conservation by protecting the forest from illegal harvesting of trees.

Trees and woody vegetation are important in regulating surface runoff, preventing soil erosion and ensuring adequate and consistent supply of clean water for human and livestock consumption. The forests also ameliorate and mitigate climatic variation by providing shade.

Vision 2030 promotes the inclusion of pastoralists in national development as a way to end the perceived marginalization. The Constitution as well as the Community Land Act (2016) recognizes pastoralists' livelihoods as valuable and therefore the need to be formalized.

The Leroghi forest in Samburu County is a notable example where silvopastoral land use system is practiced by the Samburu who are traditional pastoralists. The forest provides an important source of dry season pasture and fodder mainly during the dry month of January to March every year. The rest of the period grazing is confined to the plains.



USE OF INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE FOR FOREST CONSERVATION, CLIMATE CHANGE MITIGATION AND ADAPTATION

By Dr. Benjamin Kinyili

Forest conservation is valuable in climate change mitigation and adaptation. In recent years, the knowledge of local and indigenous people, often referred to as indigenous knowledge (IK) or Indigenous Knowledge System (IKS) has been increasingly recognised as an important source of forest conservation for climate change mitigation and adaptation. The potential for IKS in climate change management in the Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) and in particular Kenya is highly appreciated.

Human behaviour is shaped by natural and environmental crisis that stems from anthropogenic activities on earth. The increasing concentration of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions such as carbon dioxide (CO₂), methane (CH₄), and nitrous oxide (N₂O), blanket the earth and trap the sun's radiation and heat leading to global warming and climate change. The warming phenomenon over a period of time change weather patterns and disrupt the usual balance of nature, posing risks to humans and all other forms of life on earth through heat waves, disturbance events such as droughts, erratic rainfall, severe storms, floods, tsunami, wild forest fires and loss of biodiversity. The negative impacts of climate change are greatest in the African region due to extreme global warming than in other continents. In Kenya, climate change is characterized by large variability in temperature and rainfall with occurrence of extreme events in terms of droughts and floods for which there are long term records.

The role of forest conservation in climate change mitigation and adaptation is well established. There is a deep interconnection between forest conservation and climate change since forest loss and degradation is both a cause and a consequence of changing climate. Forest also plays a crucial role in climate change mitigation by absorbing about one-quarter of the carbon emitted by humans in the past five decades. Across Sub-Saharan Africa, forests are closely intertwined with the indigenous cultures where a significant fraction of the forests are found within or overlaps with community lands, territories and aboriginal resources. Thus, faced with the challenge of climate change and its unknowns, decision makers have often encouraged the use of existing and traditional

knowledge base in enhancing forest conservation, development and management.

Indigenous knowledge refers to the understandings, skills and philosophies of indigenous peoples, developed through long and multi-generational histories of interactions with nature. In addition, indigenous peoples' traditional ecological knowledge, traditional systems of control, use and management of lands and resources, and traditional institutions for self-governance also contribute substantially to conservation. Notably, the term "indigenous knowledge" is generally used to refer to how members of a community perceive and understand their environment and resources, particularly the way they convert those resources through labour. This has seen an increasing utilization of knowledge of local and indigenous people, often referred to as indigenous knowledge systems (IKS) in forest conservation for climate change mitigation and adaptation. The IKS is based on facts that are known or learnt from experience or acquired through observation and practice, and is handed down from generation to generation. Communities identify easily with IKS systems, which are embedded in their culture to enable them to live in harmony with the forest.

The IKS is still important among local communities in many parts of Sub-Saharan Africa and in Kenya, but it is not well documented. Instead, it is often undervalued in favour of western scientific knowledge by environmental planners, forest resource managers and sometimes the local communities themselves and is in danger of being lost. It is the high time we appreciate IKS used by communities in Kenya to conserve forests and hence boost climate change mitigation and adaptation.

The IKS encompasses wisdom, awareness, teachings, skills, experiences and insights of people, and is orally passed on from person to person over generations. In using indigenous knowledge in Kenya for forest conservation, there is massive use of taboos and totems. There is widespread use of traditional knowledge system in conservation of Mt. Elgon Forest ecosystem, Kakamega Forest, Nandi Forest, forests in Marakwet and Keiyo regions, Kaya Forests and forests in Central region of Kenya. The conservation of forest and cultural use of it is also extended to medicinal plants. However, the indigenous

knowledge and forest management objectives have not adequately complemented each other in these regions of Kenya.

In conclusion there is a need to recognize protection and promotion of traditional forest related knowledge, which is closely linked with the cultural and intellectual heritage of indigenous people and other forest dwellers. Also, there is a need to enhance and strengthen the existing strategies and policies to promote conservation and sustainable management of forest resources, through greater collaboration and linkages between Government agencies and communities. Regular assessment, monitoring, updating and compilation of indigenous ecological knowledge as a pre-requisite for its use in the management of the forest is therefore worth considering.

In understanding how IKS for adaptation can be fostered, it is equally important to highlight policy decisions that facilitate the fullest expression of indigenous adaptive capacity. Such policies may include those that maintain the integrity of and access to traditional societies, reinforce local practices for sustaining tree diversity and enhance transmission of IK values, attitudes, skills and worldviews. Good policy decision processes should be coupled with local capacity building, strengthening of local institutions. The inclusion of IK holders as key partners in the development of climate change research, mitigation and adaptation plans, and promoting the continued transmission of IK.

The provisions in the Protection of Traditional Knowledge and Traditional Cultural Expressions Act should be considered to offer opportunity for the state to realize the Kenyan Vision 2030 and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by incorporating Kenyan communities' indigenous knowledge in the roadmap to the achievement of the social economic and sustainable development agenda. By including these communities and their knowledge, any development policies aimed to benefit these communities will be more likely to not only respond to their cultural needs and preferences but will also enable them meaningfully participate in climate change mitigation and adaptation.

WAR ON ILLEGAL HARVESTING OF SADDLEWOOD GAINS MOMENTUM

By Julius Ekuwam

Kenya Forest Service (KFS) has intensified its efforts to combat illegal harvesting of saddle wood in Kenya. Saddle wood, also known as East African sandalwood, is a valuable and highly sought-after tree species known for its fragrant wood.

Illegal harvesting of saddle wood has been a significant problem in Kenya, with high demand leading to overexploitation and subsequent depletion of the species. This illicit trade poses a threat to the country's forests and biodiversity.

To tackle this issue, KFS has implemented various measures. Firstly, they have increased patrols and surveillance in areas known to harbor saddle wood trees. This includes deploying more forest rangers and using advanced technology such as drones to monitor and track illegal activities.

Additionally, KFS is working closely with law enforcement agencies to crack down on the trade of illegal saddle wood. This involves conducting coordinated operations and sharing intelligence to apprehend those involved in the illicit trade.

Public awareness campaigns have also been launched to educate local communities about the importance of protecting saddle wood and the negative impacts of illegal harvesting. KFS is actively engaging with community members and encouraging them to report any suspicious activity related to saddle wood.

Furthermore, KFS is collaborating with conservation organizations and stakeholders to develop sustainable management strategies for saddle wood forests. This includes establishing protected areas and promoting alternative livelihoods for communities dependent on illegal saddle wood harvesting.

These efforts by KFS aim to safeguard the saddle wood species and preserve the country's forests. By upscaling the war on illegal harvesting of saddle wood, they hope to curb the trade, protect biodiversity, and promote sustainable forest management practices in Kenya.



A Consignment of Confiscated sandalwood



Sandalwood Tree

GREEN ZONES DEVELOPMENT SUPPORT PROJECT PHASE II

By Nicholas Baari

Green Zones Development Support Project II Supports KFS Enforcement Officers for enhanced forest protection and conservation in Kenya

The project focus is in 15 Counties domiciled in three major water towers in Kenya; Mt. Kenya, Aberdare and Mau Forest complex. To support its overall goal of improving forest conservation and

community livelihoods for sustainable forest management in Kenya, GZDSP II purchased a fleet of eight (8) utility vehicles which will be used by the forest enforcement officers to swiftly conduct surveillance and protect Kenya's forests for enhanced natural forest regeneration and ecosystem integrity. This will also facilitate efficient protection of KFS assets and installations in the four Conservancies of

the project operations. The mobility of these officers will also minimize KFS revenue loss through poaching as well as improved response to forest fires during dry seasons.



Former Forestry PS Mr. Ephantus Kimotho and CCF Alex Lemarkoko flag off a fleet of 8 vehicles bought by GZDSP II meant for forest protection and security.



Additionally, the project supported several infrastructural development in KFS among them forest camps and outposts. This is meant to improve the living condition of forest enforcement officers and enhance their productivity in forest and allied resources protection.

On 22nd Feb 2023 the outgoing CCF Mr. Julius Kamau presided over the official commissioning of the GZDSP II supported Nyangweta Forest Rangers Camp in Kisii County. This has strengthened the strategic position of forest rangers in the County and the region to respond to various forest related emergencies.

Forest rangers provided with these housing are able to closely monitor the forest ecosystem when they are living nearby. This enables them to keep an eye on potential threats and disturbances, such as encroachments, illegal logging. It also enables a quick response to forest related emergencies such as wildfires which is vital in minimization of damage.

All these effort are geared towards realization of KFS mandate of enhancing forest conservation and management for socio-economic development and the delivery of the 30% forest cover by 2032.



Nyangweta Forest Rangers Camp in Kisii County.

GZDSP II EMPOWERING FARMERS FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT



GZDSP II Project Manager Jerome Mwanzia awarding a farmer with his certificate

Highlands respectively which are awaiting call for proposals by the project to transit to IGAs. So far, GZDSP II has support a number of IGAs arising from FFFS e.g. Kaminiambo Dairy Farming IGA in Kisii County with 18 in-calf heifers, Kwibanga Banana value addition IGA in Kirinyaga County, Ekerenyo Goat Dairy farming IGA in Nyamira County with 26 does, 4 bucks and a hosing unit and Mercy Mothers maize value addition IGA in Tharaka Nithi County with a three phase posho mills.

During the graduation ceremonies, officials from the Kenya Forest Service highlighted the importance of tree planting in everyday life. They emphasized the country's goal of achieving a 30% tree cover by 2032, as called for by the President. The FFFS program plays a crucial role in amplifying this call to action and engaging the public in the 15 billion tree-growing campaign as the program emphasizes knowledge sharing, with farmers encouraged to pass on their acquired skills and expertise to other farmers through established demonstration farms.

The Kenya Forest Service (KFS) has implemented the Forestry Farm Field Schools (FFFS) program as part of the Green Zones Development Support Project Phase II (GZDSP II). This approach aims to empower farmers in various counties, providing them with practical knowledge and skills in agroforestry, food security, climate change resilience, and agribusiness enterprises. The FFFS program focuses on improving livelihoods, increasing forest and tree cover, and promoting sustainable community development.

proposal writing skills for the community to seek funds from various sources as they transit to Income Generating Activities (IGAs) groups.

Since January 2023, GZDSP II has facilitated training and graduation of three and Five FFFSs in Nyanza and Central

The FFFS program adopts a community-centered participatory approach, where farmers identify their own problems and work collaboratively with technical support from the Kenya Forest Service to find sustainable solutions. The program aims to enhance farmers' capacity for informed decision-making, turning them into experts in their respective fields. By empowering farmers and promoting sustainable practices, the FFFS program contributes to forest conservation, food security, and climate change mitigation efforts. This training process also integrates development of



A farmer in Ollorok, Nyandarua demonstrating their study in the FFFS

THE PROJECT STEERING COMMITTEE TO GZDSP II APPROVES 2023-2024 WORK PLAN



GZDSP II Project Steering Committee and Secretariat at the Workplan approval meeting in Nakuru

The Green Zones Development Support Project Phase II is responsible for formulating an annual work plan outlining the project's activities. To accomplish this, the Project Steering Committee of GZDSP II, under the leadership of Dr. Benjamin Kinyili, the representative of the Committee's Chairman, Ag. Chief Conservator of Forests, Alex Lemarkoko, convened a meeting to review and approve the work plan for 2023-24 financial year.

This came after the Committee conducted a monitoring visit to Uplands and Kinale forest stations in Kiambu County, Njambini in Nyandarua County, as well as Molo and Bahati in Nakuru County. Following this monitoring visit, the committee thoroughly assessed the progress and outcomes of the project in these areas, providing guidance in the Project's work plan approval meeting.

The Project Manager, Jerome Mwanzia, presented a progress report that served as the basis for developing the work plan. He provided the team with an overview of the project's milestones and achievements, highlighting that there have been 62,136 beneficiaries, with a notable 47% representation of females.

During the meeting, the team engaged in discussions regarding the project's priorities, thoroughly examining the plan to ensure its alignment with national policies and the needs of the Service. With the aim of making a significant impact on conser-

vation and communities, the steering committee considered strategies to enhance the project's effectiveness and maximize its benefits.

Additionally, the steering committee stressed the significance of continuous monitoring and evaluation to track the progress of the project and make necessary adjustments along the way. They expressed their commitment to ensuring that the work plan reflects the project's

objectives and remain responsive to emerging challenges and opportunities.

By adopting this approach, the Project Steering Committee aims to drive the Green Zones Development Support Project Phase II towards its envisioned success, promoting environmental conservation and improving the well-being of the communities it serves.



Members of the steering committee during a field visit, together with Mau Region's Forest Officers

Deputy President Spearheads Tree Planting at Lake Olbolosat



Deputy President H.E Rigathi Gachagua during a tree planting exercise at Lake Olbolosat Nyandarua County

The Deputy President of the Republic of Kenya H.E Rigathi Gachagua was joined by the Cabinet Secretary Ministry of Environment, Climate Change and Forestry Hon. Soipan Tuya and the Chief Conservator of Forests Mr. Alex Lemarkoko

in planting 10,000 trees at Lake Olbolosat Secondary School in Nyandarua County.

The exercise spearheaded by KFS team in Nyandarua county and the Kabi Methu Foundation was geared towards

contributing to the attainment of 30% tree cover by 2032.

In his address, the Deputy President called for a united front in combating the impacts of climate change and promoting food security. This he noted would be enabled by planting trees and conserving the environment.

The Cabinet Secretary outlined the Government's plan of planting 15 billion trees urging Kenyans to participate by planting in their farms and play their part in the journey of greening the nation. Hon. Tuya also encouraged involvement of schools, religious institutions and the youth to be able to salvage the climate situation in Nyandarua County and the nation at large.

The event was also attended by the Principal Secretary State Department of Forestry Mr. Ephantus Kimani, Friends of Lake Olbolosat foundation, Chair of the Senate Environment Committee Hon. Methu Muihia, KFS Nyandarua county team and local area leaders & community.

KFS makes a Triumphant Comeback at the Eldoret National ASK Show

By Lydia Ogada



Kenya Forest Service North Rift Conservancy staff pose with awards won during the 2023 Eldoret National show

The Service scooped awards in all categories participated in scooping the first position for Best Energy Services and Conservation Sector Stand to the KFS team. The Deputy President His Excellency Hon. Rigathi Gachagua who was the Chief Guest during the awards ceremony presented the trophy to the Regional Forest Mr. Antony Musyoka

During the show, the Service was also scooped the 2nd positions in the Best Stand that Best interprets the current show theme and Best Government Stand and 3rd position in the Best Stand Demonstrating the Application of Environmental Quality Standards.

The awarding ceremony was also attended by the Cabinet Secretary Ministry of Agriculture Hon. Mithika Linturi, Uasin Gishu County Governor Jonathan Bii, the North Rift Conservancy Regional Forest Conservator Anthony Musyoka among other KFS officers and government officials.

Kenya Forest Service made a triumphant return to the Eldoret National Show in Uasin Gishu County after a break due to the COVID 19 pandemic. The North Rift Conservancy team mounted a stand at the weeklong event that well demonstrated the efforts the Service is

undertaking to conserve manage and protect forests and forest resources in the region. The local communities in the region also displayed some of the benefits they derive from forests, including non timber forest products that generate income and boost their livelihoods.

ASILI SACCO MARKS 50-YEARS THROUGH TREE PLANTING DRIVE

Asili Sacco will commemorate 50 years of its operations since its inception in 1972 by instituting a National Tree Planting Drive. The Sacco's Chairman Mr. Evans Kegode Aluda announced this directive during his address to national delegates at the 50th National Annual Delegates Meeting held on 2nd March, 2022 at the Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development in Nairobi.

The tree planting activities are set to be conducted at branch level during membership education and delegates' elections that will be carried out in the course of the year.

The institution's initial society membership was formed by individuals from the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources with its current membership composed of about 6,200 members most of whom are from the Kenya Forest Service and the wider environmental sector. Given this affinity and historical alignment to conservation in the country, the Sacco has

prioritized among its key social responsibility target for 2023, to augment the efforts of the country and the directive of His Excellency President William Ruto, in growing 15 Billion trees by 2023.

The primary purpose of the annual gathering is centered on charting the way forward for the policy direction and operational activities of the institution for the current calendar year. This years' meeting focused on the financial performance of the preceding year, the resolutions for the year 2023 and the election and filling of Board of Directors and Supervisory positions in the Sacco.

Speaking during the forum, one of the Chief Guest Mr. Godfrey Akumali, the Nairobi County Chief Officer, Cooperatives & Ag. CCO Markets and Trade, lauded the society for its compliance with its mission to protect the savings of its members and offer sustainable tools in savings and access to credit to promote to the livelihood improvement of its members.

Ms. Dolphine Aremo, Nairobi County Director of Co-operatives, commended the stewardship of the Institution, as an example among other Co-operatives, in inculcating tree growing to mark the Sacco's golden jubilee, a clear depiction of its vision in cultivating a favorable environment for the growth of its members and the society.

The delegates also welcomed Mr. James Wachira, a Kenya Forest Service employee as a new board member in the Credit Committee and Mr. Joseph Masolo to the Sacco's Supervisory Committee.

Among the key resolutions set out for 2023, the delegates elected to pay dividend of 10% on share capital and pay interest of 8% on deposits both on pro rata basis.

FOREST ALERT SYSTEM

KFS to Use Technology in Forest Management and Protection



Forest Rangers patrolling a section of Buda forest in Kwale County

He noted that the technology which was first piloted in Kwale County and rolled out in Kilifi County has enhanced forest protection and security efficiency as well as reporting. He added that the Service will soon integrate the use of drones, CCTV and Survey 123 to ease forest protection and security work.

Mau Regional Conservation Area being a hotspot, shall now utilize the technology to address perennial challenges of illegal logging through enhanced forest crime detection and prevention thus reducing destruction of forests. The AG. CCF also noted that going forward, Kenya Forestry College (KFC) and Forest Law Enforcement Academy (FoLEA) will offer training on the new technology to new employees and recruits for ease of roll-out.

Mr. Lemarkoko urged the staff to synergize as a team, apply initiatives, work in harmony with stakeholders and embrace technology for efficient and effective service delivery to the public.

The Acting Chief Conservator of Forests (CCF) Mr. Alex Lemarkoko presided over the closing ceremony of a Workshop on Survey 123 a low cost technological application that was adopted by the Kenya Forest Service (KFS) to monitor change of vegetation in

forest ecosystems and prompts immediate response by forest law enforcement teams to prevent forest offences and crimes. In his remarks, the CCF said that KFS has a mission to Conserve, Protect and Manage public forests for present and future generations.

PARAMILITARY TRAINING EXPERIENCE;

The Transformation From Civilian To a Disciplined Officer

By Protus Masaba

When I joined the service in mid-2021 and posted to the field for on job training, I found it difficult and sometimes awkward to handle complements when interacting with uniformed officers. At the same time, I developed more enthusiasm and interest in becoming one of such officers. This was going by their turnout, discipline and character which was definitely, not civilian. The desire to join the paramilitary training school after the completion of on the job training had greatly built up as we earnestly yearned for realization of this opportunity. I longed for this life-changing prospect into my carrier, as it would expose me to new skills in addition to providing me with the real life experiences in the training of the uniformed and disciplined cadre of the service.

The reporting day was on Sunday 10th July 2022. Some forester trainees who were within Nairobi joined the management trainees and the instructors who were stationed at the Kenya Forest Service (KFS) headquarters. By exactly 9 am, all of us were onboard the KFS bus as we headed to the Forest Law Enforcement Academy (FoLEA) in Londiani. We arrived at around 01600 hours and were treated to unusual reception by the instructors. There were several commands and orders, right from disembarking from the bus which made me believe that probably I was at the wrong place, barely could one finish responding before being intercepted with another command. We were made to sit on the ground interlocking each other for registration as the instructors hurriedly commanded us to display the items in the joining letters. Indeed, the only place one could observe such an atmosphere was probably during a police recruitment exercise. After registration, I was commanded to put my metal box on the head and form-up in threes, with two more trainees, as we shouted LEFT! RIGHT! LEFT! RIGHT! at the top of our voices. The instructor who walked besides us made sure we shouted to the pitch by threatening to take us back to the gate to start afresh. By the time I got into barracks I was sweating, my neck was aching while my throat was dry and my voice croaky.



Receiving the Trophy - Protus Masaba 1 MARCH 2023

The greatest challenge at the initiation of the course was adjusting to a new norm of order and command. We were to be guided on every activity and one was not allowed to do anything without permission from the instructors, I felt that my space and freedom had been taken away, the real life had been squeezed out of my person, eventually this early experiences made me to change my attitude. This was a total turnaround from my earnest enthusiasm and desire to join paramilitary training. The instructors' command language was full of sound and fury, their choice of words were scary and nerve-wracking. I felt uncomfortable, lost my freedom and I was therefore made to believe that I knew nothing and my personal view about issues was unnecessary. It was not easy for me to accept the new order of life as a result I developed resentment against some instructors when I was punished for array of offences. Days become longer than usual. Nonetheless, the barrack administrators and some instructors spend their time advising us on the general behaviour and conduct within the college, they implored us to change our attitudes in order to enjoy the course. I resolved to find my peace by taking every command and instruction positively even if it did not favour me. This meant taking up my duties cheerfully and completing them within the shortest time possible. I resolved not to expose my feelings when admonished and when not satisfied with

any outcomes.

One of the most unforgettable events were during the field craft and tactic lessons that was instructed by Inspector Bernard Ngeyo. He was full of zeal and energy and was extremely unpredictable. He could change the lesson plan from theory to practical depending on the general psyche of the trainees. One afternoon after it had rained heavily, he told us to pick up firearms and ammunitions and move to the field for practical lessons. We moved in single file with arms in alert position as were instructed to access the field through dense trenches full of storm water. We crawled through the trenches of cold water shrouded with thorns as the instructors fired blanks to push us through. We swam through the trenches of about 2kms before we were taken through the section battle drills where we crawled and rolled in the mud as we fought the pseudo enemy. At the end the drills in the evening, we embarked on the daily routine of cleaning our training uniforms and boots to ensure that they were neat and presentable for inspection the following morning. Knowing that time is of great essence in paramilitary school we hurriedly washed the uniforms and the boots and aired them briefly as we went for supper. The challenge then was on how to dry the boots in the night and shine them before retiring to bed. Believe it or not, everyone's turn out on the following day was still top notch...

Staff Profile

Along the course, I enjoyed the morale and psyche brought about by the songs we sung during the morning run sessions which kicked off at 0345hours every day. Before that (morning run), one had to ensure their bed was well made, something which could take between 5-20 minutes depending on one's mastery of the art. Morning run was the unique session where the soloist would use certain words to raise the morale of the trainees. Not only was it a moment of fun but also a wonderful opportunity to ventilate over unmet expectations as we ran under the cover of darkness. As part of the morning run, we had warm down sessions before lining up outside the armory to pick our rifles which one had to keep within an "arm's reach and sight" all through the day, no matter the location or activity.

The rifles literally became our children throughout the paramilitary training. Particularly, I had much fear for holding and operating a rifle but this gradually faded, thanks to Skills At Arms (SAA) lessons and practicals. SAA exposed us to a myriad of rifle experiences including Normal Safety Precautions (NSP) for various rifles, ranging exercises, rifle cleaning and storage. Ranging exercises were particularly nerve wrecking with the thoughts on the kind of damage that rifles cause. Fortunately, the instructors knew this so well because we started shooting with blacks

as we graduated into live ammunitions under strict and probably tense environment for some. I enjoyed ranging exercises to the extent of being one of the range party members that demonstrated shooting to the Chief Conservator of Forests during the training.

Lecture sessions became the rare opportunity of interacting with instructors without the fear of being punished regardless of the mistake committed during the session. The classes would commence from 011hours to 01300hours after the strenuous parade drills. The sessions gave us an opportunity to relax after the more physically demanding field activities, provided rest from the scorching sun and at times the chilly weather of Kericho. It was easy to find half of the class taking a nap within the early minutes into the session. It was indeed a moment to heal and reenergize ahead of other afternoon routine activities.

A moment of reprieve came when were given 3 days off to go and participate in the voting exercise on 9th of August 2022, this was a wonderful opportunity to connect with old self as I had space to decide for myself what I wanted from meals, entertainment and had a moment connect with my immediate family members. What was conspicuous then was that I looked edgy; had changed the skin tone and had lost considerable weight due to the rigorous

training.

The paramilitary course similarly gave me an opportunity for self-discovery of the hidden potentials. During the four months training, I served as the spiritual leader for the Catholic Trainees as well as working with other denominational leaders to guide trainees on the matters of faith. It was our role to lead in prayers before the morning runs and preparing summons for Sunday services and any other mid-week meetings. I appreciated the concept of planning and time management within the strict paramilitary set up as I had to balance time and priorities to prepare for Sunday summons. The training also inculcated in me some sense of alertness and keenness to issues and my immediate environment. I am particular and keen with my security and treat every stranger with some significant level of suspicion. In addition, I have been hardened greatly both mentally and physically that has improved my emotional intelligence to look at the greater issues as opposed to the expression of the emotions. Most importantly, my turnout has greatly improved and I can now handle complements with much confidence and pride. The paramilitary training was indeed invaluable.

The author is the Assistant County Forest Conservator Isiolo.



A Group Photo of KFS Board of Directors together with the Management and Foresters trainees Course No.01/2022 during the pass-out parade at FoLEA in Lodiani

THE EVOLUTION OF THE KENYA FORESTRY COLLEGE

By Elizabeth Wambugu



8th Long Course class, 1969. Predecessor to Diploma in Forestry



KFC Students during graduation

Kenya Forestry College (KFC) was inceptioned in 1956 then referred to as Forestry Training School, Londiani. The school offered a two-year long course in forestry for Forest Assistants then referred to as Forest Rangers.

At independence, a one year Advanced Forestry Course was introduced with a purpose of upgrading the serving Forest Rangers Successful ones were deployed to take up positions held by expatriate foresters

At the beginning of 1970, the advanced course became the current One-year In-service Diploma course in forestry (being faced out) which runs to-date along side the direct entry to Diploma in Forestry lasting two years which was introduced in 2020 under Competence Based Curriculum developed by TVET CDACC. The first cohort of the two year direct entry to Diploma in Forestry graduated on 23rd September 2022.

In 1971, the long course was converted into a two-year Certificate Course in forestry for Forest Assistants. This Certificate course was terminated in 2021 and was replaced with a one year certificate in forestry course under Competence Based Curriculum developed by TVET CDACC. The last group of a two year certificate in forestry course graduated on 23rd September 2022.

With enactment of the Forest Conservation and Management Act No 34 of 2016, Kenya Forestry College (KFC) is now legally established under section 17. Consequently, this statute establishes Board of Directors that formulates policies for administration and management of the College.

As a requirement by Technical and Vocational Education and Training Authority (TVETA), Act 2013, The College is registered

as a legally established TVETA institution as well as a registered member of Kenya Universities and Colleges Central Placement Service (KUCCPS).

In 1972 advocacy to affiliate the 4152 hectares Masaita forest block to KFC as a practical training facility started. As a result, in 1976, the block was put under the management of the College up-to-date.

KFC has trained many students from a number of countries including Rwanda, Somalia, Zambia, Ethiopia, Malawi, Burundi, Comoro Islands, Grenada, Botswana, Tanzania, Uganda, Namibia, Swaziland, Angola, Sudan, South Sudan among others. It has also trained Non-Governmental and Private Organizations sponsored students

KFC started from a humble background of two Lecturers, handling 20 students and has progressed to as high as 28 Lecturers and 500 students.

The college has had twenty Principals since its inception in 1956. In May 2022, for the first time a female Principal was appointed to head the College.

Either by design or default the appointment of the twentieth Principal, Dr. Elizabeth Wambugu, came at a time when the college registered a higher female to male student enrolment ratio.

Student enrolment has been male dominated for a long time until recently when the scales tilted in favour of the female students. Now the enrolment stands at 51.5% female and 48.5% male.

The College has diversified its programmes to remain relevant to the changing trend of job opportunities. Courses such as Diploma in Environmental Management, Certificate in Business Management, Carpentry and joinery courses have been incorporated in the curriculum.

Training Facilities

The College has the following resources that support training

- 4152ha. Masaita forest training block with research plots under KEFRI
- Training sawmill and workshops
- Tree nursery
- 2 laboratories
- A well stocked library connected to electronic resources via internet.
- 8 classrooms with capacity of 60 students each
- Computer lab with 60 desktops
- 6 High level conferencing facilities for 120 persons
- Play grounds
- College bus
- dispensary
- College farm with over 15 animals,
- Own water supply and treatment system with borehole with a solar water pump
- Ultra- modern dining hall for 500pax and kitchen
- Hostels- to accommodate 300 students
- 12 VVIP self-contained guest rooms
- 44 VIP self-contained guest rooms

Collaboration

The College collaborates with following institutions in terms of training

- University of Eldoret (UoE)
- University of Kabianga (UoK)
- Kenya Forestry Research Institute (KEFRI)
- County Governments



KFC Principal, Dr. Elizabeth Wambugu

APPRECIATING GREEN HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

By Monica Ruto

Human Resource Management (HRM) means management of human resources. It is a process which helps the organization to run itself in an effective way, so that it can achieve competitive advantages. According to Leon C. Megginson, From the national point of view human resources are knowledge, skills, creative abilities, talents, and attitudes obtained within the work force; whereas from the view-point of the individual they represent the total of the inherent abilities, acquired knowledge and skills as exemplified in the talents and aptitude of its employees.

Green Human Resource Management (GHRM) refers to the use employee's interface to advance sustainable practices and increase employees awareness and dedication. It also changes the thinking of employees and makes them aware of the sustainability. It extends its role in promoting and achieving sustainable goals within an organization using Human Resource Management policies and guidelines to build a comprehensive system of preserving natural resources. Green HRM practices play an essential role in a forward-thinking organization in that it develops alternative ways to save cost without compromising on their endowment & critical resources.

The idea of green HR practices is gaining a foothold in many organizations as leaders discover ways to foster sustainability within their businesses. Adopting environment friendly HR practices as an organizational strategy can help increase competitive edge in current work places. It also calls for an urgent need of proactive initiatives to environmental management which has become a global issue; whether in climate change or rising poverty and unemployment, the contention over the effectiveness of critical human resource management principles, drives the organizations to probe the unification of the sustainable environment and HR practices.

Earlier on the success of an organization was strongly dependent on promotion of economic value. However organizations now have to consider for the reduction of ecological footprints and give importance to social and environmental factors along with economical and financial factors. It is an undeniable fact that workplaces can play a significant role in the fight to preventing global warming. With the support of senior management and employees, HRM can fulfill the organization's commitment to green practices. Its functions can become the driver of sustainability goals that ultimately contribute to organizational goals.

The inclusion of HRM in an organization's vision, governance structure, and upcoming

development is crucial. When it comes to managing sustainability with resources, Human Resources plays an essential role in an organization. Most of the times they have to consider ethical issues beyond economic performances when operating a new path of sustainable business. HR can act as the moral compass of an organization. They put a lot of consideration on policies and practices that are viable for humans and nature. Attaining such a reformation can be daunting at times. HRM facilitates the conversation between top management and employees for a mutual collaboration of sustainable working practices.

Presently workplaces are trying to include greener approaches inside their organization. These includes but not limited to provision of water points and environmentally acceptable ways available that proves that when employees indulged in green practices, be it good habits to volunteering in green initiatives; they are more focused than usual day, this helps in gaining a positive impact and social outlook on employee relations in the organization. An employee feels responsible for preserving the environment apart from their functional contribution to the job. It also contributes to developing holistic employee wellbeing. Each organization has enormous growth potential when aligned with green initiatives. It involves eco-friendly initiatives that have the possibility of lowering carbon footprints in the atmosphere. Employees who support and practice these initiatives are less likely to fall ill. They will be more active at work, which reduces the rate of absenteeism and saves the organization's medical budget. Green HRM also helps in cutting down the cost without compromising their niche.

The Green HR practices helps employers to build brand image and create influence in the society. It also makes employees and society members aware of natural resources' usage, encouraging more economical and eco-friendly products. Conducting an environmental audit, upgrading the work culture, doing waste management, and saving society and its people that are getting affected by pollution are few ways that can help in creating brand recognition. Green HR practices can help in improving the employee retention rate. Some employees may take pride when their organization show concerns for the environment and society. It sends a positive image that the company cares about its employees, and helps them connect better with organizational values apart from their benefits. Apart from promoting physical fitness, nutrition, and a healthy lifestyle among employees and society, wellness programs can include environment and sustainability factors to create awareness.

Green HRM uses the policies to boost the judicious use of resources that promotes the cause of environmentalism, which further boosts employee morale and satisfaction.

At KFS being an environmental entity Green HR policies will help to focus on employees work related behaviour and create green work culture. This leads to solving the environmental issues now and in future. Every employee is a social person and learns many things from their private life as well as from work place. So both help to create and strengthen green organization. Human resource development helps to translate green polices into practices. It is a strategy to involve green workforce in environmental issues, to understand and grow the green culture in organization. This can be attained by including green initiatives in all the HRM functions like- Green recruitment which is a process of hiring new people who know about sustainable process, environmental issues and also familiar with words of preservation and sustainable environmental policies. The Service should make it sure that new talent are familiar with the green practices and environmental system that will support the effective environmental management within the organization-Green performance management is the method by which employees are encouraged to increase their professional skills which help to get organisational goal and objective. It is whole year ongoing communication between supervisor and an employee. Performance appraisal is an important aspect in performance management. Manager can appraise the performance of an employee whose behaviour is environment friendly. -Training and development is a process which is necessary to every organization. It focuses on developing of employee's skills, knowledge and attitude towards environment management. It makes the change in working methods that decrease wastage, proper utilization of resource, conservation of resources and reduce the use of less available resources.

In every company, people come from different places with different characteristics, interest, habit, and attitude and due to this they follow different practices in their life. So it becomes necessity for an employer to do efforts to get them together or build relationship in an environment where the total competences are in tandem with the environment promoting initiatives.

THE POSITION OF LAW AS TO THE USE OF FORCE IN KENYA

By Tito Okello

There are various legal provisions enshrined in the enabling Acts of parliament conferring investigative agencies with powers and circumstances under which to use force. Force has been classified into various categories which includes: reasonable force, excessive force and lethal force. Reasonable force which is sometimes called commensurate force is use of force equal to that of the aggressor. Excessive force is force which exceeds force used by the aggressor. Simply put, it is like responding to a mosquito bite with a sledge hammer. Lethal force on the other hand is force that results in death. Whenever an officer deploys the use of a firearm, it is highly likely that it may result in death if not permanent disability hence the law on the use of force.

Section 63 of the Forest Conservation and Management Act provides that a uniformed and disciplined officer after acquiring requisite paramilitary training on skill at arms may use legally issued firearm against [1] a person escaping or attempting to escape from lawful custody [2] any person who by force removes or attempts to remove another from lawful custody [3] any person who attempts to prevent lawful arrest of himself or another [4] any person hunting animals in a forest area [5] in protection of people and property against animal causing destruction and [6] in the Cause of animal population control.

Part B(1) of the Sixth Schedule of the National Police Service Act of 2011 provides that a police officer may use firearm in the course of [1] saving or protecting the life of the officer or another person; [2] in self-defence or in defence of other person against imminent threat of life or serious injury; [3] protection of life and property through justifiable use of force; [4] preventing a person charged with a felony from escaping lawful custody; and [5] preventing a person who attempts to rescue or rescues a person charged with a felony from escaping lawful custody.

Section 112 (3) of the Wildlife Conservation and Management Act 2013 provides that a member of the uniformed and disciplined cadre may use firearm against any person [1] who is escaping or attempting to escape from lawful custody [2] who by force removes or attempts to remove himself or another from lawful custody [3]

who attempts to prevent lawful arrest of himself or another [4] who is hunting any wildlife using firearm [5] in self-defence or defence of another officer; [6] in protection of people and property from animal causing destruction [7] for safety and protection of visitors against banditry attack and; [8] in the course of problem animal control.

Section 12 (2) of the Prisons act rev 2017 provides that a prison officer may use firearm against any prisoner who [1] is escaping or attempting to escape [2] is engaged with other persons in breaking out or attempting to break out [3] is engaged in riotous behavior and [4] endangering the life of an officer or other person.

In a nutshell, the above legal provisions provide that an officer may use firearm in the course of effecting arrest, in self defence, in defence of people and property subject to the above qualifications.

Regarding the use of force while effecting arrest, the authority is found in section 21(2) of the Criminal Procedure Code which stipulate that if a person forcibly resists the endeavour to arrest him, or attempts to evade the arrest, the police officer or other person effecting arrest may use all means necessary to effect the arrest. All means necessary includes use of firearm against such a person. This however depends on the gravity of the offence that is being committed as provided for in section 18 of the penal code, the offence must be a felony and not a misdemeanor.

When it comes to acting in self defence, the court pronounced itself in the case of *Mokua v Republic* [1976-80]1 eKLR that acting in self defence is an absolute defence even in the case of murder. This was also reiterated in the case of *Republic v Gachanja* [2002] KLR 428 where the court said that self defence in law is an absolute defence to a criminal charge. It absolves an accused from criminal liability for where self defence is available to an accused person, he is deemed to have acted within the permitted legal limits to repel any attack against him. Section 17 of the penal code states that criminal responsibility for the use of force in the defence of person or property shall be determined according to the principles of common law. That common law principle

was set out in the case of *palmer v Reginam* [1971] 1 ALL ER 1077 where the court said that it is both good law and good sense that a man who is attacked may defend himself. While the provisions cited in the legislations above authorize officers to use firearm against any person escaping from lawful custody or person removing or attempting to remove himself or another from lawful custody or against a person preventing lawful arrest of himself or another, the court in *Katiba Institute & another v Attorney General & another; Independent Policing and Oversight Authority & 3 others* [2022] KEHC 17072 (KLR) held that when it comes to apprehending an offender, who attempts to escape from lawful custody, the offender in making the attempt commits an offence which is punishable in law. Prior to being punished, the offender must be taken through the criminal justice system. If such an offender is executed summarily, then that is an affront to the right to a fair trial under article 50 of the Constitution.

The court declared paragraph (c), (d)& (e) of Part B (1) of the Sixth Schedule of the National Police Service Act unconstitutional, and held that an officer may only use firearm for saving or protecting the life of the officer or another person, and for self defence or in defence of another person against imminent threat of life or serious injury. Consequently, it is now unlawful to use firearm against a person escaping from lawful custody, or in the course of defending property or against a person who rescues or attempts to rescue another from lawful custody.



KFS Rangers

WORK AND NO PLAY A RECIPE FOR DULL WORK PLACES

By Monica Ruto



KFS Karate Team Members

Looking at the sports at face value, it is not easy to calculate all its positive impacts to the work places but from the wellness point of view its benefits on employee engagement and boost in productivity are immense. Some of the ways in which sporting in work places especially in the service can contribute to making work place better include;

Builds Discipline and Team connection

Sports have a mixture of values that reflects on our daily life. They provide a stage to practice discipline and retain strong bonding with colleagues. Sports thrust employees out of their comfort zone and clubs the work-related pressure with an element of fun "Don't aspire to be the best on the team, aspire to be the best for the team"- Brian Tracy. The friendly competition in sports teaches the value of discipline, tolerance, and cooperation. Playing any kind of sport leads one to observe situations better and promotes team-building opportunities.

Develops good Judgmental and Managerial skills

Taking part in any kind of sport aids the employees to judge a situation better. To come out of a difficult situation, the employee has to understand the challenge's demands and adapt to it accordingly. Team sports teach on how to manage the provided resources in the best possible way to achieve success. It promotes one's management skills and helps one make the right decisions. The problem-solving and strategic thinking traits from sports help employees handle their primary tasks and roles better.

Advances Employee Engagement

Employee engagement is determined

by the emotional investment of an employee in the workplace. It is their commitment to the workplace in terms of time, energy, and the level to which they are willing to push themselves to achieve organizational success.

Sports also boost employee engagement. The friendly rivalry in a game also encourages the employees to understand the value of leadership. It helps improve adaptability, which is essential for team coordination.

Attaining Health and Fitness results

The most obvious of the benefits an employee who is actively involved in sporting activities get is that he will always maintain optimum health and fitness aims. Physical exercise is essential to burn those extra calories and keep employees fit. It also regulates blood circulation and saves employers from investing that extra money in their wellbeing.

Learning from Failures

It is a universal fact that in life, you will not always get success from every situation. Sometimes you have to accept failures even though that is the last thing you desire. Sports relay this vital message of accepting defeat or success with grace. When you are competing with others in a game, it is not guaranteed that you will emerge with victory. Just like you, the others who will compete will also hate losing. So employees must understand that they must put their best foot forward but not expect the results to be favorable all the time. They must be humble enough to accept the outcome they deserve and look forward to improving from their learning.

Helps in De-stressing from Work

Sports are the most stress buster for

employees. Physical activity makes the body to release endorphins. It is that chemical in the brain which relieves pain and stress. Sports also improve the mental health of the employees. It makes the mind relaxed, and the person is less likely to be depressed. Incorporating sporting activities in your organization is the easiest way to push for health goals.

Available opportunities for sports in the Service

The work environment should be a perfect blend of formal and informal activities. Indoor games provide organizations with an easy way of providing recreational services. Several kinds of indoor, as well as outdoor campaigns can be integrated periodically.

Offices can dedicate a small area for a games room, where people can visit to de-stress. Employees can utilize such spaces to play games like darts, chess, and other indoor games. A workforce can have different personalities. The option for individual sporting activities provides introverted employees with an opportunity to express their talent and socialize in the best possible way. Success is an individual's achievement, but organizations thrive only with collective participation. Organizations use several group sports to generate sportsmanship and team spirit. It enhances engagement within the organization.

It is notable that the service is currently engages in sports like foot ball, volley ball, karate, Darts ,Athletics and Cycling which have helps in boosting the employee morale and improving the name of the Service making it the Employer of choice, as the evidence of the high number of applicants the Service receives whenever there is a job vacancy.

In all sporting activities, performance is not the most essential aspect — it is team spirit. It is not always about achieving the best performance, but about creating those special moments together, mastering the challenge together, combining sports and social values. Organizations must invest much more in sports and recreational activities to rejuvenate their employees and reap the rewards of lesser absenteeism, more productivity, and a much fitter workforce.

MOLO FOREST STATION: A forest ecosystem supporting the lifeline of an entire township

By Michael Kitum



A borehole situated within Molo Forest Station that supplies water to the township



Molo Forest Station



Molo Forestation Manager Ms. Sylvia Kalasinga and Nursery Head Mr. Charles Kipkirui inspecting seedling's at the station's nursery.

Molo forest station is a public forest located to the West of Nakuru County along the escarpments of the Rift Valley. Gazetted in 1932 by proclamation no.44 under Mau Forest Reserve, the forest ecosystem which sits at 2578 meters above sea level is at the apex of providing a lifeline to Molo Township's population of 156,732 (KNBS Census 2019).

The ecological goods and services derived from the forest, ranging from water sources and microclimate regulation, are indispensable to the agricultural viability of the region known to be the second largest producer of potatoes in Kenya. Additionally, the forest also supports the thriving timber industry which has employed many youth in the region. The forest's hydrology supplies the township and environs with water noting that the Nakuru Water and Sanitation Company (NAWASCO) operates two boreholes situated in the forest. The forest is also a catchment for Molo River which drains to Lake Baringo. The forest's sub compartments are

subdivided by streams; Reveti, Mto Police, Munju and Molo all which influence livelihoods downstream.

The forest covers approximately 1327 hectares with the largest portion of it being dominated by the plantation forests comprising of Cupressus lustanica, Cassuarina equistifolia, Pinus radiate, Pinus patula and Eucalypts species. Most of the indigenous species found along riverine include Afrocrania volkensii, Cordia abyssinica, Croton macrostachyus and Polyscias kikuyuensis among many others.

To effectively manage the forest, Kenya Forest Service has developed a Forest Plantation Management Plan (FPMP) which incorporates community involvement in the management and protection of the forest. Currently the forest has a 10 year FPMP (2015-2025). Under the umbrella body Molo Vision Community Forest Association (CFA), community members are involved in silvicultural activities which comprise plantation

establishment (planting), pruning, and thinning.

The CFA also has user-rights issued to them under the supervision of the forest station manager such as bee keeping, tree nursery establishment, and the Plantation Establishment and Livelihood Improvement Scheme (PELIS) also known as 'shamba system'.

Molo forest is also a rich biodiversity harbour. The forest hosts several species of wildlife that include the African hare, mongoose, porcupine, African skunk, bush squirrel, serval cat, and a wide array of birdlife such as wood peckers, cattle egret, African black kite, eagles, and weaver bird.

For motorists plying the Nakuru-Eldoret Highway, Molo forest offers a breathtakingly good scenery with its tree line canopy dotting the beautiful Rift Valley winding landscapes.³⁵

Trees Word Search



- | | | |
|-----------|------------|----------|
| Alder | Cottonwood | Pine |
| Apple | Cypress | Poplar |
| Ash | Dogwood | Redwood |
| Aspen | Elm | Sequoia |
| Birch | Fir | Spruce |
| Buckthorn | Hawthorn | Sweetgum |
| Cedar | Hazel | Sycamore |
| Cherry | Larch | Walnut |
| Chestnut | Maple | Willow |
| Chinkapin | Oak | Yew |

JOKES ON TREES

- Why do trees make the worst frenemies?**
Because they are the best at throwing shade!
- Why did the pine tree get in trouble?**
Because it was knotty.
- What did the trees wear to Mother Nature's pool party?**
Swimming trunks!
- Do you want a brief explanation of an acorn?**
In a nutshell, it's an oak tree.
- What do you get when you cross a tabby cat with a lemon tree?**
A sour puss.
- A snare drum and a crash symbol fell out of a tree.**
BA-DUM TSSSHH
- What did Betula pendula say to her super-annoying sister?**
Leaf me alone, birch!
- Did you know that I can cut down a dead tree just by looking at it?**
It's true. I saw it with my own eyes!
- What type of tree fits in your hand?**
A palm tree.
- How do you properly identify a dogwood tree?**
By the bark!
- What did the beaver say to the tree?**
It's been nice gnawing you!

FROM THE ARCHIVES



RIDDLES ABOUT TREES & FORESTS

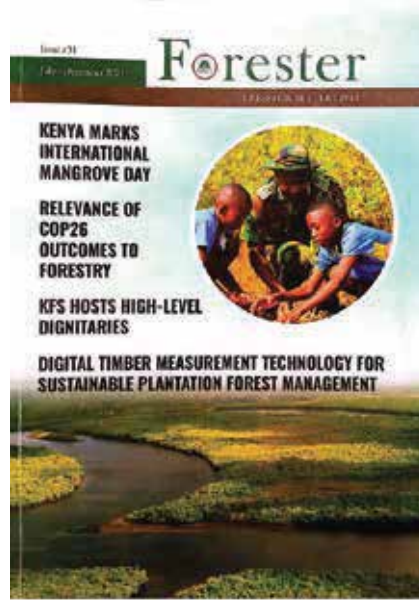
- There are peaches on a lone tree. After a strong gust of wind, peaches are not on the tree and peaches are not on the ground. How is this possible?**
Only two peaches were on the tree. The wind blew one of them off, leaving one peach on the tree and one peach on the ground.
- After a devastating fire, which trees remain in the forest more than any other type?**
Ash trees.
- There is something in the forest that cannot be seen and cannot be felt. It cannot be heard and cannot be smelt. It lurks beneath boughs and under root. The things it consumes turn the color of soot. It thrives most at night and hides throughout the day. It would kill all the trees if not chased away. What is it?**
Darkness.
- What weighs more, a pound of leaves or a pound of logs?**
They both weigh the same.
- Which side of a tree has the most leaves?**
The outside.
- What kind of trees do you get when you plant kisses?**
Tulips.
- How do you get down from a tree?**
You don't. Down comes from a duck.
- What can pass through a tree without rustling any leaves?**
Sunlight.
- What wears rings without having fingers, and leaves without going anywhere?**
A tree.
- What gets a year older whenever it rings?**
A tree.

FACTS ABOUT TREES

- Trees are the longest living organisms on Earth, and never die of old age.
- Tree rings can predict climate change
- Planting trees can help reduce your energy costs.
- Trees are able to communicate and defend themselves against attacking insects.
- Trees block noise by reducing sound waves.
- Trees can help you find your way if you get lost in the woods.

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THE FOREST LAW ENFORCEMENT ACADEMY (FoLEA)

The academy is the Forest Protection, Security and Enforcement Training Arm of the Service, where various cadres undertake tailor-made professional courses aimed at sharpening and enhancing their abilities to undertake respective responsibilities in the Service ranging from Enforcement & Compliance, Forest Conservation and Management among others.

The academy also offers training services to county government inspectorate officers and community scouts across the country.



	PROGRAM	DESCRIPTION	DURATION
1	Basic law enforcement course	Training course for forest ranger recruits	6 - 9 months
2	Non- Commissioned Officers Curriculum	Drills and duties tailored for discipline and management aspects of officers	3 months
3	Foresters and Management Trainees Law Enforcement Induction Curriculum	To cater for the technical and professional cadre of the Service to impact basic Law Enforcement knowledge	4 months
4	Junior Officers Command Course curriculum	To cater for cadet, inspectorate rank and Chief Inspectorate rank; imparting leadership skills, command, control and independent decision making.	4 - 6 months
5	County Government Law Enforcement Curriculum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To train; General county enforcement Aspects of forest conservation and management and natural resource protection. 	3 weeks _ 3 months
6	Forest Scouts induction Curriculum	To cater for scouts working under the Community Forest Associations	3 weeks

Other short tailor made courses: Need based (3 wks to 3months)

- 1.VIP Protection
- 2.Close-quarter Combat Course
- 3.Refresher courses for all provided curriculums
- 4.Human Rights Based Approaches (HRBA) *Compulsory in all the curriculum courses.

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Know Your TREES

Name: *Zanthoxylum chalybeum*
English name: Lemon-scented knobwood
Local names: Ol-oisugi (Maasai); Mjafari (Swahili); Saga-waita (Kipsigis, Nandi); Mukenea (Kamba); Mugucua (Mbeere, Meru)

A spiny deciduous shrub or tree, reaching a height of 8m, with an open rounded crown. The trunk has characteristic large, conical, woody knobs with sharp prickles at the tips. Branches have single, dark red, recurved spines up to 20mm long. It is found in dry woodland, bushland or grassland, often on termite mounds and in rocky areas, on the coast and also in dry forest and closed thicket near the sea; grows from sea level to 1,500m.

Bark: Pale grey; smooth, fissured or with ridges.

Leaves: Compound; with 6-9 pairs of shiny leaflets; 20-80 x 20-40mm; strong lemon smell if crushed; leaf stalk with hooked prickles below.

Flowers: Small; yellow-green; in short sprays or panicles below leaves on new branches.

Fruit: Rounded; reddish-brown to purple, then dark purplish-black when dry; 5-8mm long; split open on one side to release shiny black seeds.

Uses: The wood makes excellent charcoal and is also useful for fuel wood, timber, furniture production, construction poles and carving. Seeds are used as beads and leaves as fodder for livestock.

Traditional medicine: A bark decoction is used as emetic against malaria and also to treat colds, coughs, sore throats

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