

THE

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# Forester



A bi-annual publication of the Kenya Forest Service

TREES FOR BETTER LIVES



## Launch of the strategic plan for KFS

## National tree growing day

# Editorial

Dear Readers,

Welcome to the latest edition of our biannual forestry magazine. As we reflect on the past six months, we're proud to share the significant strides made in Kenya's forestry sector.

In this issue, we spotlight several key events and initiatives that underscore our commitment to sustainable forest management and conservation. Our lead story covers the launch of the Kenya Forest Service Strategic Plan, a roadmap that will guide our efforts in the coming years to enhance forest cover and promote sustainable utilization of forest resources.

We also bring you highlights from the International Day of Forests celebrations, where we joined the global community in recognizing the vital role forests play in our lives and ecosystems. Additionally, you'll find coverage of our National Tree Growing Day, an initiative that saw thousands of Kenyans come together to green our nation.

This edition also features news on various Memoranda of Understanding signed with partner organizations, strengthening our collaborative efforts in forest conservation and management.

These stories reflect our ongoing dedication to Kenya's forests and the communities that depend on them. We hope this issue informs and inspires you to join us in our mission to protect and nurture our precious forest resources.

Happy reading!

Anne Kaari, 'ndc' (K)



Members of the KFS board holding the Strategic Plan

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### STAFF WRITERS

Peter Owino  
Lydia Ogada  
James Waitathu  
Irene Laigong  
Joy Magaju  
Sylvester Okal

### CONTRIBUTORS

Peter Sirayo  
Andrew Soi  
Protus Masaba  
Julius Ekuwam  
Beth Walemba

### EDITORIAL COMMITTEE

Dr. Benjamin Kinyili  
Anne Kaari  
Abraham Wata  
Louise Kiuma  
Sylvester Chisika  
Julius Ekuwam  
Tito Okello  
Monica Ruto  
Donald Standa

*Disclaimer: Views expressed in this publication are not necessarily those of the Kenya Forest Service Board and Management*

# Word from the Chief Conservator of Forests

Kenyans continue to demonstrate their resolve to restore our forests to a sustainable status where they can support key social and economic aspects of the country. This has been demonstrated beyond reasonable doubt by the numerous people-led initiatives to grow trees in degraded ecosystems and the taking up of tree growing in farm lands and community lands across the country. The government on its part has been leading from the front by mobilising state agencies and resources to prioritise landscapes restoration through tree growing in a whole government whole society approach. This approach has seen virtually all state organisations get involved in tree growing initiatives by mobilising their own stakeholders to assist them meet their targets in the 15 billion tree growing campaign.

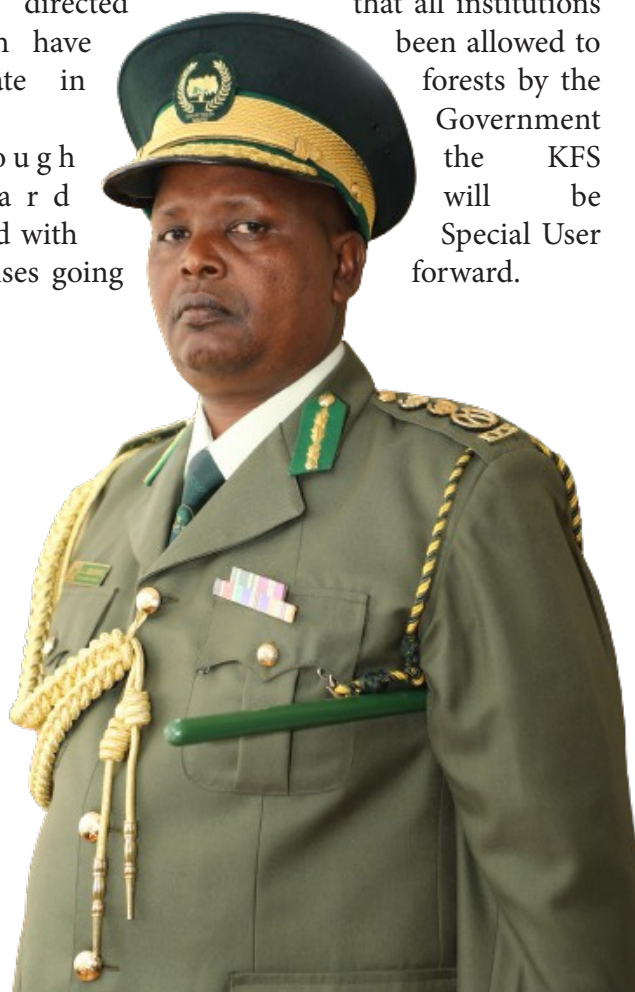
As has now become the norm, His Excellency President William Ruto has been at the forefront of this campaign. In May, the President led the country in a nationwide tree growing exercise to commemorate victims of the devastating floods that caused the death of numerous Kenyans in Mai Mahiu and other parts of the country. During the tree growing event at Kaimbicho Forest Station in Murang'a County, His Excellency the President reminded Kenyans of their responsibility in restoring our degraded ecosystems and desisting from forest destruction activities. It is at this historic event that he announced a six month accelerated tree growing exercise that is being led by Cabinet Secretaries in all parts of the country to take advantage of the enhanced countrywide rains.

Following this directive, our Cabinet Secretary Hon. Soipan Tuya has been at the forefront of supporting her cabinet colleagues in this initiative. The Cabinet Secretary for Environment, Climate Change and Forestry has continued to play a critical role in coordinating the whole government whole society approach by not only mobilising the other ministries and state agencies but also engaging the private sector through various forums to get involved.

This has in turn seen a heightened interest and involvement of the private sector in the initiative having clearly noted the business opportunities in the national tree growing programme as well as an increasing requirement for organisation to bring down their carbon foot prints. Quite a number of both public and private institutions have therefore gotten into collaborations with the Kenya Forest Service (KFS) under the Adopt-a-Forest initiative where they take up the responsibility of fully restoring identified forest areas by growing trees and working together with Community Forest Associations (CFA) to rehabilitate the identified forests.

The government through the Ministry of Environment, Climate Change and Forestry has now also clarified the utilisation of forest areas by other public institutions. In a directive, the Cabinet Secretary has now ordered KFS to begin the revocation process of all title deeds held by institutions for land inside gazetted forests. The CS noted that it was not proper for entities to purport to own land already under the legal custody of the government. She directed that all institutions which have been allowed to operate in forests by the Government

through the KFS Board will be issued with Special User Licenses going forward.



*Mr. Alex Lemarkoko, EBS, 'ndc' (K)  
Chief Conservator of Forests*



# KFS strategic plan launch

*Members of the KFS board holding the Strategic Plan led by the KFS Board Chair Titus Korir (center)*

**By Peter Owino**

Kenya Forest Service launched its Strategic Plan 2023-2027 which will guide the Service in executing its mandate towards the achievement of the 30 % tree cover by 2032. The plan aligns the Service mandate with the government greening agenda and BETA plan. Speaking during the event, the Chairman said that KFS had drawn its strategic plan to respond to the present realities of forest conservation including the need to grow over 15 billion trees in the next eight years in order to attain a sustainable tree and forest cover that will guarantee Kenya's social and

economic development. Kenya Forest Service also launched the Long Rains Tree Growing Season in all 47 Counties countrywide under the theme '15 Billion Trees by 2032, Wajibu Wetu.' Over 200,000 seedlings trees were grown on 200 ha during the event which also marked the launch of the construction of a 22km electric fence around the Siongiroi Block of the forest. The fence which is being put up with support from the African Development Bank through the Green Zones Development Support Project (GZDSP II) will protect the the Block from destruction and allow it to





other partners. He thanked development partners who had come onboard to support the protection and conservation of forests noting that tree growing was a responsibility for all citizens both corporate and individual. Speaking at the same event, the Principal Deputy Chief Conservator of Forests Ms. Charity Munyasia who was representing the Chief Conservator of Forests, Mr. Alex Lemarkoko thanked the Siongiroi forest adjacent community for resolving to conserve their forest which been under the threat of degradation due to illegal human activities. She added that Kenya Forest Service will continue to work with community forest associations to conserve forests and empower them through sustainable income generating activities.

According to the CEC for Environment Dr. Bernard Tonui, the County Government of Bomet had deployed 25 forest officers and was also promoting farm forestry. He also noted that the Bomet County was implementing Climate Change Action Plan supported by the World Bank.

The Service has embraced the idea of social fencing rather than physical fencing, this has yielded remarkable results, we therefore call on all forest adjacent communities to protect forest resources not only for their good but also for the benefit of future generations.

rehabilitate through natural regeneration.

The Service set and surpassed its target of growing 5,433, 180, trees in the identified sites across the nation during the long rains period. The planting exercise was led by County Forest Conservators, in collaboration with County Governments and National Government officials. The National launch which took place in Chepalungu Forest, Bomet County was led by the KFS Board Chairman, Mr. Titus Korir, as the chief guest, accompanied by other Board members and KFS Senior Management Team and the Bomet County Commissioner among



*KFS Board Chair, Titus Korir tests the newly-installed electric fence in Siongiroi, Bomet County*



*Environment, Climate Change and Forestry, CS Soipan Tuya waters a tree seedling*

# International Day of Forests celebration

**By Leakey Sonkoyo**

The United Nations General Assembly proclaimed 21st March the International Day of Forests in 2012 to celebrate and raise awareness of the importance of all types of forests.

In Kenya, the day was marked by growing over 5,000 trees at Lariak Forest in Laikipia County at ceremony presided over by the Cabinet Secretary for Environment, Climate Change and Forestry Hon. Soipan Tuya. A further 200 thousand were grown elsewhere in county. The event was also marked concurrently in all 47 counties with a target of growing over 5.2 million seedlings.

In line with this year's theme of 'Forests and Innovation: New Solutions for a Better World' KFS together with her partners show cased a number of technological innovations being employed to monitor, safeguard and manage forests. These include ArcGIS Survey 123 being used by KFS to monitor forests, the use of drones for surveillance, mapping and aerial

seeding and use of Artificial Intelligence to monitor illegal activities in forests as well as use of technology to detect and monitor forest fires.

The CS noted that forests in the area were facing challenges of illegal activities including encroachment and urged the community to conserve the forest for their own benefit. She announced government plans to put up a 56 km fence that will help to reduce human wildlife conflict and assist the forest to recover through natural regeneration and other interventions. The CCF Mr. Alex Lemarkoko took the opportunity to thank the KFS partners who had supported the marking of the day as well as those who were working with the Service in the rehabilitation of forests.

Also present during the event were the Governor of Laikipia HE Joshua Irungu, the Principal Secretary for Forestry Mr. Gitonga Mugambi, the Women Representative for Laikipia Hon. Jane Kagiri, the Chairman of the KFS Board Mr. Titus Korir, other Members of the Board among other guests.





# National Tree Growing Day

*H.E. President William Ruto inspects a tree planting site guided by CCF Alex Lemarkoko in Kimbicho, Murang'a*

**By Leakey Sonkoyo**

His Excellency President William Ruto on 10th of May 2024 led the country in marking the national tree growing day that was gazetted to commemorate the victims of flooding and fight against the effects of climate change that are causing extreme weather conditions. The event that took place at Kiambicho Forest Station in Murang'a County saw the growing of over 25,000 seedlings with a target of growing 200 million seedlings across the country in an exercise spearheaded by Cabinet Secretaries and other senior government officials.

The President led the people in observing a minute of silence in memory of the over 250 people who had lost their lives through the recent unprecedented floods. He told the people that tree growing was the most viable way of mitigating against adverse effects of climate change and urged Kenyans to fully embrace and participate in the National Landscape and Ecosystem Restoration campaign that seeks to increase the country's tree cover to at least 30% by the year 2032.

He encouraged every Kenyan to play their part by growing at least 50 trees every year in order for the country to attain and surpass the 15 billion target in the next ten years in order to secure the country from the effects of climate change. The President announced that every ministry will carry out tree growing activities for the next six months. Speaking at the same event, the Cabinet Secretary for Environment, Climate Change and Forestry Hon. Soipan Tuya said that the government had decided to take the whole government and whole society approach because of the urgency required to slow down global warming and manage climate change.

The CS made a commitment to purchase 10,000 fruit seedlings from private nurseries. The seedlings will be distributed to farmers under the agroforestry programme to enhance food security.

Other leaders present during the event included Her Excellency the First Lady Mama Rachel Ruto, Governor of Murang'a Hon. Irungu Kang'a'ta, the Senator Hon. Joe Nyutu, the MP for Maragua Hon. Mary Wa Maua, KFS Chair Titus Korir, and the Chief Conserator of Forests Mr. Alex Lemarkoko among other leaders.

## GENERAL NEWS



*Newly constructed ranger houses in Elburgon*



*Newly constructed ranger houses in Baraget*



*The CCF officially opening ranger houses in Elburgon*



*The CCF during the house tour of the new ranger houses in Molo*

# Forest Rangers get new houses

**By Leakey Sonkoyo**

The recruitment of over 2,600 forest rangers to boost the forest protection capacity of KFS was a major achievement for the Service which was suffering from an acute shortage of security personnel. But the coming in of new rangers brought with it a serious housing challenge considering that all rangers are required to reside within their stations. This situation meant that some rangers had to share the few existing houses while others were forced to put up in tents.

The Chief Conservator of Forests (CCF) Mr Alex Lemarkoko was therefore delighted to receive and open new rangers housing units built through collaboration with stakeholders in the timber industry in Nakuru County. The units which will house over 30 rangers were a culmination of the

stakeholders heeding a call for them to lend a hand in the construction of the houses for officers who were working under very difficult circumstances.

The twelve units were put up in Molo, Baraget and Elburgon Forest stations and include the installation of solar panels and rain water harvesting and storage infrastructure. The initiative also saw the renovation of existing houses and construction of ablution blocks for the rangers and other station staff.

The CCF thanked the partners including members of the Baraget CFA who had earlier built temporary mud houses for the new rangers. He called upon all the partners to collaborate in finding solutions that will ensure the sustainable management of forests towards increasing the country's forest cover to at least 30% by the year 2032.



# Engaging the private sector in tree growing

By Leakey Sonkoyo

The private sector are key stakeholders in the government's agenda to increase the country's tree cover to over 30% of the land area by growing at least 15.7 billion by the year 2032. This is because as corporate citizens they have an important role to play to improve the sustainability of the economy by ensuring that the environment is well conserved. The 15 billion tree growing initiative also has numerous incentives for the private sector involved in tree growing. It is for this reason that the Chief Conservator of Forests (CCF) Mr.

Alex Lemarkoko joined the Cabinet Secretary for Environment, Climate Change and Forestry Hon. Soipan Tuya during a private sector stakeholder's engagement meeting in Nairobi where they had fruitful discussions on how the private sector can get involved in the campaign.

The CS thanked the private sector for their involvement in tree planting and environmental conservation activities through their CSR programmes. She noted that tree growing and forest conservation will impact all sectors of the economy including food and feed security, expansion of the country's GDP as well as help to mitigate against the negative effects of climate change. The CS informed the gathering that there were immense opportunities in commercial forestry, seedling production, carbon trading and ecotourism among others.

The CS thanked the representatives of the private sector for giving their inputs in the development of



*CS Environment, Climate Change and Forestry, Soipan Tuya with the CCF Alex Lemarkoko during a stakeholder's meeting in Nairobi*

the 15 billion tree growing strategy. She said their views were important as they will help to capture the opportunities and incentives that will directly benefit those involved in the tree growing campaign. The Principal Secretary for Forestry Mr. Gitonga Mugambi also reiterated the importance of involving everyone in the campaign through the whole society approach noting it will guarantee the success of the programme. The CCF urged the stakeholders to think about the survivability of their tree growing activities by planning for not only planting but also protection. He also informed private sector players that KFS was ready to partner with them through the Adopt-a-Forest initiative as well as in seedling production. He noted that KFS had signed over 108 frameworks of collaboration with both state and non-state actors to support the implementation of the 15 billion national tree growing strategy.

“ ....tree growing and forest conservation will impact all sectors of the economy including food and feed security, expansion of the country's GDP as well as help to mitigate against the negative effects of climate change. ”

# KFS commits to 15 billion trees goal



*CCF Alex Lemarkoko (center) with the KFS Senior management team planting a tree during a staff tree planting exercise in Uplands, Kiambu County*

## By Peter Owino, Leakey Sonkoyo

The Kenya Forest Service begun the year with a tree growing exercise to set the pace in a year with a commitment to produce and grow over 300 million seedlings in order to meet our target in the 15 billion tree growing strategy by the year 2032 is achieved, not only as a means of climate mitigation and for the socio-economic good of the nation

To begin this ambitious annual target by the Service, the Chief Conservator of Forests Mr. Alex Lemarkoko led the Kenya Forest Service, Senior Management Team and all headquarters staff, media personnel and members of the Uplands Community Forest Association (CFA) in planting over 5000 indigenous tree seedlings to rehabilitate a 5Ha parcel at Matathia Bloc, Uplands Forest Station in Kiambu County.

As an Institution that is mandated with conservation and protection forests, KFS staff have been urged to actively engage and lead in the tree growing activities within their respective service area. The Service is also committed to not only provide the technical support but also get her staff hands dirty by doing the actual tree growing.

In implementing the All Government, All Society approach towards the achievement of the tree growing

target, the Chief Conservator of Forests outlined to the CFA members who joined the staff in the tree planting exercise, that the Service's depends on them and all Kenyans in ensuring the growth of the trees.

The CCF also articulated the Service's commitment in working with CFAs towards water conservation and rehabilitation of wetlands ecosystems and, prioritizing fruit trees in the restoration campaign due to their added economic value for livelihood development for forest-adjacent communities. He also reiterated the heavy duty bestowed on KFS of leading the country in the tree growing campaign by offering technical backstopping to the public and other stakeholders.

KFS staff were also urged to take advantage the goodwill and confidence the Government had shown in the Service by allowing the recruitment of over 3,000 staff in the technical and security cadres in order to boost our capacity to manage the country's forests, and reciprocate by ensuring the success of 15 billion tree growing agenda.

The Service, was joined by our partners in conservation and restoration, Earthlungs Restoration Project, during the planting exercise, also present were National Government Administrative Officers' and other stakeholders.



# KFS board committee visits Eastern conservancy

By Leakey Sonkoyo

The Kenya Forest Service Board of Directors Technical Planning Development and Kenya Forestry College (TPD & KFC) committee recently visited the Eastern Forest Conservancy to evaluate the state of forest management, conservation, and protection initiatives.

The two-day visit, which took place from February 21st to 22nd, 2024, was chaired by Dr. George Muthike and saw the committee members engage with KFS staff, including the recently recruited forest rangers and forest assistants/trainees, in the Eastern region.

During the visit, the TPD & KFC committee had the opportunity to review specific site applications by various clients for consideration. Additionally, the committee members took part in tree planting activities, underscoring their commitment to the country's ambitious "15 Billion Trees" target. The committee chair, Dr. Muthike, commended the Eastern team for their immense efforts in forest conservation, management, and protection, despite the challenges posed by limited financial resources. He recognized the team's unwavering dedication towards the realization of the KFS mandate.

"The Service is headed on an upward trajectory, and it's just a matter of time before some of the current challenges are a thing of the past," Dr. Muthike assured the staff, encouraging them to remain steadfast and focused on service delivery.

The committee members also interacted with the KFS staff, including the recently recruited forest rangers and forest assistants/trainees, urging them to work diligently and embrace professionalism and unity of purpose in their day-to-day duties.

Following the visit to the Eastern



*KFS Board being briefed by field officers during the Eastern Conservancy Tour*

Conservancy, the committee proceeded to the Central Highlands Conservancy for further engagement. The team was accompanied by senior officers from the KFS headquarters, led by Dr. Clement Ng'oriareng, the Deputy Chief Conservator of Forests for Farm and Dryland Forestry Development.

This visit by the KFS Board of Directors' committee underscores the Service's commitment to closely monitoring the progress and challenges faced by its various conservancies across the country. By engaging with the on-the-ground teams, the committee aims to identify

areas for improvement and provide the necessary support to ensure the effective implementation of the Service's forest management and conservation strategies.

As Kenya continues its push towards the ambitious 15 billion trees target, the KFS Board's active involvement and recognition of the field teams' efforts serve as a testament to the Service's holistic approach to achieving its environmental and sustainability goals.

# President launches Lariak Forest fencing project



*H.E. President William Ruto unveils the Lariak Forest Wildlife Electric Fence*



*KFS team examining drones used for forest restoration through Aerial seeding*

**By Peter Owino**

President Dr. William Ruto officially launched the Lariak forest fencing project at a colourful ceremony in Lakipia County. The 56 kilometres fence will cover an area of 5,134 ha and will provide a permanent solution to the perennial human wildlife conflict, that has in the past resulted in loss of lives and livelihood. Speaking during the event, His Excellency the President said that the government was in the process of fencing all gazetted forests in the country in order to protect them from degradation and illegal activities and to enhance their conservation. The President told the gathering that the government had set aside Ksh. 900 million to compensate victims of human wildlife conflict.

While addressing the same gathering, the CS for Environment Climate Change and Forestry

Hon. Soipan Tuyu noted the huge contribution of Community Forest Associations (CFA) and assured them that they will still have access to carry out their activities according to their participatory forest management plans.

She thanked her counterpart in the Ministry of Tourism and Wildlife Hon. Alfred Mutua for taking the lead in the project noting that both forests and wildlife will thrive in a secured ecosystem.

Also present during the event were His Excellency the Deputy President Hon. Rigathi Gachagua, the Governor of Laikipia County HE. Joshua Irungu, the Principal Secretary for Forestry Mr. Gitonga Mugambi and the Chief Conservator of Forests Mr. Alex Lemarkoko among other leaders.



# Capacity development of non-commissioned officers



*Forest rangers during a commissioning ceremony*

**By Peter Owino**

The Service most important asset in forest protection and conservation are its employees. It is therefore important to continually develop their capacity through training in order to develop their competencies for better service delivery and achievement of the organizational mandate.

In the phase of changing security dynamics and threats facing forest resources protection and conservation, the Service has continued to develop the capacity of its staff through training in order to develop their competencies for better service delivery and achievement of the organizational mandate.

It is for this reason that the Service resolved to undertake capacity development course for non-commissioned officers at the Forest Law Enforcement Academy B Campus at the NYS Training College in Gilgil where 192 officers of the

rank of sergeants and corporals are undergoing training. Since the beginning of the course three cohorts of officers have undergone the refresher course and upon completion a total of 646 officers shall have been trained.

The course is intended to enhance the capacity of the officers in command and leadership, forest patrols and security, radio communication court procedures and case management as well as forest intelligence and investigation skills. The officers are also trained on fire and disaster management, human rights based approaches in forest protection and work ethics among other skills.

While presiding over the course opening, the Chief Conservator of Forests informed the officers that they are expected to mentor and guide the recently recruited rangers and instill in them a culture of integrity and dedication to their duties.



*CS Aden Duale and CS Soipan Tuya being taken through the exhibit during the expo*

# KFS participates in the Kenya Space Expo and Conference

By Lydia Ogada

Kenya Forest Service participated in the Kenya Space Expo and Conference 2024 organised by the Kenya Space Agency at Edge Convention Center, Nairobi. The conference aptly themed Space and Technologies for societal Benefits seeks to demonstrate the utility of space science and technologies and how these can be leveraged for the improvement of societal wellbeing and supporting national social and economic development.

The conference was officially opened by the CS Defence Hon. Adan Bare Duale, EGH who was also accompanied by the CS Environment Climate Change and Forestry Hon. Soipan Tuya EGH. CS

Duale lauded the Kenya Space Agency for organizing the timely conference terming it an ideal forum for sharing experiences, and demonstration of technologies and solutions for space science.

The AG. Head Forest Information Systems Faith Mutwiri presented and participated in a panel session on how KFS deploys the use of Earth Observation for biodiversity conservation and Natural Resource Management.

The Service is also exhibiting to the participants some of the technologies that it is using for forest surveillance and inventory.

## World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought

On 17th June, the World marked World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought (WDDD). The Chief Conservator of Forests (CCF) Mr. Alex Lemarkoko accompanied the Cabinet Secretary Ministry of Environment, Climate Change and Forestry Hon Soipan Tuya when she presided over the national celebrations at Olkinyei Grounds, Maiyanat Community Conservancy in Doldol, Nanyuki, Laikipia County.

The theme for this year was “United for land, our legacy, our future”. The day is marked to raise awareness on desertification, land degradation and drought. Over 50,000 trees were grown as a demonstration of the fight against desertification and land degradation.



*CS Soipan Tuya (Far right), PS Festus Ngeno (far left), CCF Alex Lemarkoko (Second left) joined by MECCF staff during the tree planting exercise*

The ASAL areas of Kenya have the biggest opportunity for increasing the country's tree cover to the envisioned 30% by the year 2032. The CS was also accompanied by Environment and Climate Change Principal Secretary Dr. Eng Festus Ngeno and was received by Laikipia County leaders led by Governor Joshua Irungu, Laikipia North MP Hon. Sarah Korere and Wildlife PS Silvia Museiya among other leaders.



# Board chair visits Nairobi Conservancy



*Titus Korir being briefed by KFS officers in Nairobi Conservancy*

## By Michael Mkuzi

In a move to assess the state of Kenya's natural reserves, the Chairperson of the Kenya Forest Service (KFS), Titus Korir, embarked on a comprehensive visit to several parks under the Service's management on June 6th, 2024.

Accompanied by representatives from the Community Forest Associations (CFA), including Boniface Ndirangu, the CFA treasurer from the City Park office, as well as esteemed forestry officials, Mr. Korir's itinerary included visits to several renowned parks, such as City Park, Michuki Park, and the Arboretum Park.

City Park, in particular, stood out as one of the largest public parks in the city, and a national monument with a sprawling 60-hectare landscape that hosts a rich diversity of species, underscoring its significance as a conservation haven.

During the visit, the critical role of the Community Forest Associations, especially the Friends of City Park, in supporting the management and conservation efforts of these parks was highlighted. The need for a fencing proposal to safeguard and rehabilitate City Park was also emphasized, reinforcing the importance of securing these natural resources for future generations. Board Chairman Korir used the occasion to articulate several key priorities for the Kenya Forest Service, including the efficient management of forest resources, revenue maximization strategies, and enhancing accountability within the organization's operational areas. He also stressed the imperative to elevate the

standards of the Kenya Forest Service to international benchmarks, promoting ecotourism as a means to achieve sustainable conservation goals.

Addressing the pressing need for funding, Mr. Korir underscored the importance of sourcing financial support from stakeholders to effectively implement proposed rehabilitation and conservation projects.

The meeting also served as a platform for forest officials to demonstrate their commitment to effective park management. Mr. Korir urged attendees to establish comprehensive policies for monitoring and addressing emerging challenges, ensuring the sustained protection of Kenya's natural heritage.

Among the notable attendees were Madam Joyce Nthuku, Regional Forest Conservator, Madam Jennifer Wachira, Regional Commander, Madam Margaret Wanjiru, County Forest Conservator, and Madam Pauline Mutuku, Chief Inspector, whose collective expertise and dedication underscored the collaborative effort towards achieving sustainable forest management goals.

Mr. Korir's visit to the parks managed by KFS reflects a concerted effort to prioritize the conservation and rehabilitation of Kenya's natural assets. Through strategic partnerships, innovative management practices, and a commitment to accountability, Kenya is poised to lead the way in sustainable forest management and conservation efforts on both national and international fronts.

# KFS commences training for new cadets and foresters



*Cadets and Forester trainees' admission, opening of the course*

**By James Waitathu**

The admission of Forester and Cadet trainees was conducted on the 22/04/2024 in an exercise that saw 600 men and women begin their journey towards graduating as Foresters and Inspector Cadets upon completion of a Paramilitary training course expected to last for six months

After making applications for the positions which were advertised by Kenya Forest service, the trainees were shortlisted and interviewed before receiving a call up for Paramilitary training in their respective positions.

The course is designed and programmed for six months and will be closely monitored through weekly programs that will include: Lectures, Demonstrations, Role play and simulation exercises,

Group work and group discussions, Case studies, Presentations, Visitations among others.

Present to oversee the exercise was Principal Senior Deputy Conservator of Forests Ms. Charity Munyasaya who on behalf of the CCF welcomed the trainees and urged them to maintain a high level of discipline and commitment in their training. She went on to remind the trainees not take the privilege awarded to them by the president for granted and stay focused throughout their training. The course was later officially commissioned by the KFS Commandant, Mr. Mohammed A. Mohammed who expressed his joy in gracing the occasion and encouraged the trainees to stay committed to the course and take

time to bond with one another and learn to coexist in a peaceful manner.

In a speech read by the commandant, the CCF sent his regards to the trainees and assured them of complete support from the service in their quest to fully participate and complete the training. The Commandant made an inspection tour of the facilities at FoLEA B and also addressed the instructors where he encouraged them for the good work they are doing. He noted that they play a very important role in producing future Foresters and Inspector Cadets who will become valuable assets for the service in the near future.



## GENERAL NEWS



## Kenya's education sector champions nationwide tree growing drive

By Leakey Sonkoyo

The Ministry of Education (MoE) is going to play a very big role in the realisation of the ambitious 30% tree cover by the year 2032 through the participation of the vast number of stakeholders in the education sector. It is in realisation of this that the Ministry of Environment, Climate Change and Forestry and the Ministry of Education resolved to work together to not only grow the 15 billion trees but inculcate in learners the importance of forest and environmental conservation in the fight against climate change.

At a joint meeting which was presided over by the Cabinet Secretary Environment Hon. Soipan Tuyu and her Ministry of Education counterpart Dr. Ezekiel Machogu today, the two ministries agreed to develop a strategy that will see the education sector fully participate in the tree growing campaign by involving learners and tutors in basic education, TVETs and Universities. The strategy will include development of infrastructure for the institutions to raise high quality seedlings and grow them in suitable areas.

The Ministry of Education has an annual target of producing and growing over 30 million seedlings which will translate to the growing of over 300 million trees by the year 2032. Speaking at the meeting, Dr. Machogu assured CS Tuyu that his ministry will use its network of schools and colleges to enhance the national campaign. He noted that already a number of schools and colleges were involved in tree growing activities and environmental conservation programmes. CS Machogu

declared that every school term, a day will be designated as the "tree growing day" to enable the MoE to achieve its annual targets. The ministry also aims to have all universities establish nurseries with a capacity of at least 100,000 seedlings each.

Hon. Tuyu thanked the Ministry of Education for their past efforts in environmental conservation activities and assured her counterpart that the Ministry will provide technical support to ensure that the programme is a success. She noted that KFS had a presence across the country through their field offices that will support schools in the regions to establish and manage tree nurseries professionally.

On his part the Chief Conservator of Forests (CCF) Mr. Alex Lemarkoko noted that with 197 forest Stations across the country, KFS was up to the task to provide technical support in nursery management, tree growing and site matching through its countrywide network. Through the Adopt-a-Forest Framework, academic institutions as well as corporates can also take part in the realization of their targets.

Present during the meeting were PS Forestry Mugambi Gitonga, PS TVETs Dr. Esther Muoria, PS Basic Education Dr. Belio Kipsang, Ag. Director KEFRI Dr. Jane Njuguna and NEMA Director General Mamo B. Mamo, among other officials from both ministries.

# Framework of management of bamboo and prosopis

By Leakey Sonkoyo

The CCF Mr Alex Lemarkoko participated in a meeting on the framework for the management and control of the bamboo and prosopis tree species chaired by the Cabinet Secretary Ministry of Environment, Climate Change and Forestry Hon. Soipan Tuya at the KEFRI Headquarters in Muguga.

While bamboo has been declared a cash crop due to its many economical and ecological advantages, there



*CS Environment, Climate Change and Forestry, Soipan Tuya with senior management of different forestry parastatals in Muguga, Kiambu County*

is need for increased awareness of its management and uses. There is also need of sharing knowledge on the management of prosopis species for purposes of controlling its spread given its invasive nature.

The meeting brought together senior officers from the Ministry, led by the Principal Secretary State Department of Forestry Mr. Gitonga Mugambi and the KEFRI Acting Director Dr. Jane Njuguna among other senior officers.



*A retiree plants a tree, aided by a KDF soldier in Lanet, Nakuru County*

The National Defence University (Kenya) led by their Vice Chancellor LGeneral J.L. Mutai led a tree planting event on the campus grounds in Lanet, Nakuru County. The event which was organized by Kenya Defence Forces retirees under a group known as ANARK (ARMY NAVY AIRFORCE RETIREES OF KENYA) was the first of many tree planting events planned by the Kenya Defence Forces that aims to plant a total of 3,500 indigenous trees within the campus during the ongoing rainfall season.

ANARK is a welfare association of retired KDF personnel of all ranks who retired honourably, its

mission is to provide ways and means of sustainable welfare standards for registered members and their families residing within Nakuru County and its environs.

During the event, the University in collaboration with ANARK reaffirmed their commitment to tree growing in support of the national commitment of 15 billion trees by 2032. In addition, Kenya Forest Service is partnering with the University to grow a total of 100,000 trees during the ongoing tree planting season in Dundori Forest and also the neighboring military institutions.

## National Defence University tree planting

By James Waitathu



# KFS/WWF collaboration at Loitoktok forest station Kajiado



*CCF Lemarkoko plants a tree with WWF Project Coordinator Jackson Kiplagat during the commissioning of the model tree nursery in Loitoktok*

## By Irene Laigong

In a significant stride towards sustainable forest management, the Kenya Forest Service (KFS) and the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) have jointly commissioned a new office block and model tree nursery at the Loitoktok Forest Station in Kajiado County. The inauguration ceremony was led by the Chief Conservator of Forests, Alex Lemarkoko, and marked the completion of several key infrastructure projects including a solar panel installation and a potting shed.

During his address, Lemarkoko underscored the crucial role of collaboration between government entities, stakeholders, and local communities in achieving sustainable forest management. He highlighted the success of various forest management initiatives that have actively involved community participation. Expressing his gratitude, Lemarkoko thanked WWF, represented by Project Coordinator Jackson Kiplagat, for their steadfast support of forest conservation efforts in Kenya.

The establishment of the model forest station, complete with improved infrastructure and fencing, sets the stage for both sustainable forest management and ecotourism development. Feasibility studies will be conducted to assess the potential for ecotourism, which promises to enhance the economic and environmental value of the forest station. "Through these collaborative efforts and partnerships, we are committed to fostering a model of conservation excellence in Loitoktok Forest and beyond," Lemarkoko stated.

The model tree nursery is a cornerstone of this initiative,

currently boasting a capacity of 300,000 seedlings with an ambitious target of reaching 1.3 million. This endeavor is closely aligned with the national goal of achieving 30% tree cover by 2032. The Community Forest Association (CFA) has played a pivotal role in implementing strict regulations, including the prohibition of grazing in natural forests, to foster growth and regeneration. "The CFA's dedication to enforcing these regulations is crucial for the sustainability of our forests," Lemarkoko added.

The event was attended by notable figures including DCCF Drylands Dr. Clement Ngoriareng, RFC Nairobi Joyce Nthuku, Head of Tree Nursery Establishment Jane Ndeti, WWF Project Coordinator Jackson Kiplagat, as well as local leadership, stakeholders, and other KFS officers. Their presence highlighted the collective commitment to advancing forest conservation initiatives.

The collaboration between KFS and WWF at Loitoktok Forest Station is a testament to the power of partnerships in promoting environmental stewardship. By investing in infrastructure and community engagement, this initiative not only supports the national reforestation targets but also enhances the livelihoods of local communities through potential ecotourism and sustainable forest practices.

As Kenya continues to strive towards its reforestation goals, the success of the Loitoktok Forest Station project serves as an inspiring example of what can be achieved through dedicated collaboration and innovative approaches to conservation.

# Rhino Charge 2024 raises over 300 million for conservation

GENERAL NEWS



*The CCF Alex Lemarkoko presents overall Half-Charge Winner award to BATUK officers during Rhino Charge 2024 award ceremony*

**By Peter Owino**

In a remarkable display of solidarity for forest and wildlife conservation, the 2024 Rhino Charge has concluded with resounding success, raising over 300 million Kenya Shillings. The event, organized by the Rhino Ark Charitable Trust, saw participants and sponsors alike rally behind the noble cause of protecting endangered species and vital ecosystems.

Established in 1988 with the singular mission of safeguarding the endangered black rhino, the Rhino Charge has since expanded its scope to include the construction and maintenance of electric fences around critical forest habitats in Kenya. This year's event not only exceeded fundraising expectations but also demonstrated a growing commitment to addressing broader environmental challenges.

One of the standout features of this year's Rhino Charge was the significant contribution to the host community, with over 10 million Kenya Shillings allocated for the development of essential amenities. H.E President William Ruto led by example, personally donating 2 million Shillings to the community, underscoring the government's dedication to grassroots development initiatives.

During the event, Chief Guest CS MECCE, Soipan Tuya, commended the participants for their unwavering dedication to conservation efforts. She highlighted the crucial role that the funds raised would play in

supporting the government's ambitious 15 billion tree-growing agenda, emphasizing the importance of collaborative action in achieving environmental sustainability.

Echoing these sentiments, CCF Mr. Alex Lemarkoko expressed gratitude to Rhino Ark for their continuous support and emphasized the need for strengthened collaboration in protecting forest resources. He lauded the government's commitment to conservation, citing increased deployment of forest rangers and the implementation of effective fencing strategies as positive steps forward.

The Rhino Charge also garnered support from various partners, including the Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS), NGAO's, local communities, Safaricom, and other state and non-state actors. Their collective involvement underscores the widespread recognition of the urgent need to conserve Kenya's rich biodiversity and natural heritage.

As the dust settles on another successful Rhino Charge, the legacy of this year's event will endure as a testament to the power of collective action in safeguarding our planet's most vulnerable species and ecosystems. With the momentum generated by this remarkable achievement, the journey towards a more sustainable and harmonious coexistence with nature continues.



# Signing of MOU between KFS-I&M, KPC



*The Executive Director I&M Bank Sarit Raja Shah and CCF Alex Lemarkoko with the signed MoU*



*KPC Managing Director, Joe Sang and CCF Alex Lemarkoko sign the MoU*

## By Peter Owino, James Waitathu

The Chief Conservator of Forests, Mr. Alex Lemarkoko, the CEO I&M Bank Kenya and I&M Foundation Trustee, Mr. Gul Khan together with Group Executive Director, I&M Group PLC and I&M Foundation Trustee, Mr. Sarit Raja-Shah, signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on Ngong Road Forest Project at Kenya Forest Service headquarters, at Karura.

The MOU established areas of strategic partnership and common interest between the two institutions including but not limited to seedling production and rehabilitation of degraded forest areas, fencing of the sanctuary section of Ngong road forest, community livelihood improvement and improvement of forest infrastructure for ecotourism development.

This collaboration is aimed at supporting government agenda of attaining and maintaining 30% tree cover by 2032. It is also a key boost towards realization of Kenya's climate actions program.

The CCF during his key note speech noted the important role private sector plays in the fight against climate change and thanked I&M Foundation for choosing to partner with KFS in conservation of forest.

On his part Mr. Khan expressed the banks commitment to conservation, noting the important role forest and nature play in economic development and general well-being of humanity.

The signing of Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between Kenya Forest Service (KFS) and Kenya Pipeline Company (KPC) marked a milestone as the two institutions joined forces to enhance collaboration in tree growing and conservation activities towards a greener future.

The MOU was signed by Chief Conservator of Forest, Mr. Alex Lemarkoko and KPC Managing Director Mr. Joe Sang, solidifying the two institutions' commitment to tree growing and forest conservation. This is a major boost towards realization of 15 billion tree growing agenda.

KPC has already made significant strides with the 'Adopt-A-Forest' initiative, adopting 250HA of forest area nationwide for rehabilitation, including the successful restoration of 50HA of mangrove forest in Jomvu Kuu, Mombasa County, where the MOU was signed and the fully restored site unveiled.

During the signing ceremony, the CCF expressed gratitude to KPC for their dedication to tree growing programs and their decision to further collaborate with KFS. He also extended special thanks to the local community and Community Forest Association members for their invaluable contribution to mangrove restoration.

KPC Managing Director, Mr. Sang, on his part commended KFS for their unwavering technical support, which has made KPC's restoration efforts more effective. With a target to plant over 5 million seedlings in the next decade, KPC is fully committed to the attainment of 30 percent tree cover by 2032.

Beyond tree planting, the partnership will explore establishment of nurseries to boost seedling production and collaborate in safeguarding petroleum pipelines within forest areas.

# KFS board visits Base Titanium

By Leakey Sonkoyo

The Kenya Forest Service Board of directors and senior management officers visited the Base Titanium Mining Company in Kwale County to see the progress of post mining rehabilitation works and participate in a tree growing exercise which is part of the company's programme to restore the mining fields.

Speaking at a meeting with the management of the company, the Board Chairman Mr. Titus Korir said that the Service will immediately get into talks with the Ministry of Mining, Blue Economy and Maritime Affairs to have the area conserved as a forest. He noted that the over 2,500 ha mining field falls between two gazetted forests namely Gogoni and Buda and its conversion into a forest will create a continuous indigenous conservation area with very rich biodiversity.

The Chairman added that the fragile nature of the site calls for its restoration and management as a forest saying that this will be of great benefit to the local community and the nation at large. Other Board Members also called for the conversion of the site into a gazetted forest noting that the government was working towards increasing the forest cover in order



*Senior Management team during the tree planting exercise at Base Titanium*

to address the climate change crisis that is adversely affecting the country.

While addressing the same gathering, the management team led by the Principal Deputy Chief Conservator of Forests Ms. Charity Munyasia said that the Service had a long working relationship with the company especially in the area of community empowerment and forest conservation. She appreciated the company's willingness to donate some of their infrastructure for accommodation of forest rangers and other officers. She also commended the company for investing in a model nursery that can be upgraded produce over one million seedlings annually. She noted that the Kenya Forestry College was keen to establish a campus at the site to offer training on the management of coastal



*The Board Chair Titus Korir plants a tree with Base Titanium employees*



*The board chair Titus Korir with SDCCF SP&RM Charity Munyasia during the meeting at Base Titanium*

forests. The General Manager Mr. Denham Vickers on his part thanked the Board for expressing interest to conserve the site as a forest saying that it was the most viable option as it will ensure the sustainable management of the area.

Later, the Board and senior officers joined the staff of Base Titanium in a tree growing exercise at one of the rehabilitated sites where over 5,000 seedlings will be planted in honour of the Board's visit.





*Benedict Omondi engaging the community during the public participation exercise in Kaptagat*

# Public participation endorses Kaptagat fencing

**By Leakey Sonkoyo**

The Kenya Forest Service (KFS) has conducted a series of public participation meetings, regarding the proposed Solar Electric Fence Project for the conservation of the Kaptagat Ecosystem. The objectives of the forums which were spearheaded by the Head of Watersheds Mr. Benedict Omondi and the North Rift Regional Forest Conservator Mr. Anthony Musyoka were to inform stakeholders, solicit feedback and address any emerging concerns. Stakeholders included government representatives, local community members, and environmental organizations. The meetings commenced with comprehensive presentations on the project's significance and design, emphasizing the importance of conserving the Kaptagat Forest Ecosystem. Stakeholders actively engaged in discussions, providing valuable feedback and suggestions.

Concerns regarding potential impacts on local communities and wildlife migration patterns were addressed, indicating a thoughtful consideration of the project's implications.

The outcomes were unequivocally successful, thanks to meticulous planning and proactive engagement. Valuable insights gained from stakeholders will inform the project's implementation and operation phases, ensuring challenges are addressed and benefits maximized. Moving forward, transparency and collaboration remain paramount for the KFS.

The Public Participation Meetings served as a platform for fostering dialogue and collaboration among stakeholders, highlighting the commitment of the KFS to the successful implementation of the Solar Electric Fence Project while safeguarding the integrity of the Kaptagat Ecosystem.



*The CCF Alex Lemarkoko joined by KFS Officers and partners during the workshop*

# Drylands Forestry Workshop in Kitui

**By Anne Kaari**

Kenya Forest Service and its partners organised a strategic workshop in Kitui County as part of a concerted effort to harness the vast potential of the country's arid and semi-arid lands (ASALs) for the ambitious 15 billion trees campaign.

The workshop, held at the Kenya Forestry Research Institute (KEFRI) Resource Center, brought together representatives from nine ASAL counties to discuss the salient issues facing these regions and formulate a comprehensive action plan for enhancing dryland forestry technologies and methods.

According to the Chief Conservator of Forests, Mr. Alex Lemarkoko, who joined the team, the ASALs are expected to deliver 5.2 million hectares of the 10.6 million hectares envisaged in the 15 billion trees campaign. Additionally, agroforestry on farms will account for 3 million hectares, translating to 83.6% of the total area that will be grown with trees by 2032. The workshop participants, including the Deputy Chief Conservator of Forests for Drylands, Dr. Clement Ngoriareng, the National Tree Growing Project Manager, Noor Hussein, and the Acting Regional Forest Conservator, Ms. Ambia Osman, among others, agreed on flagship activities for each county to enhance knowledge on dryland forestry technologies and methods, and a prioritized action plan was drafted.

The Chief Conservator of Forests acknowledged the challenges posed by the external environment in the past, but emphasized the current government's

immense support for the forestry sector, as demonstrated by the leadership of His Excellency the President, Dr. William Ruto.

"The future of Forestry is in the drylands, and KFS is committed to reciprocating this support by demonstrating progress and catalyzing the development of local communities to spur tree growing," Mr. Lemarkoko stated.

The CCF urged the County Forest Coordinators to address the needs of the people through forestry, publicize success stories, increase awareness and education among communities, and leverage technology to drive these efforts.

Kitui County, the host of the workshop, has approximately 37,500 hectares of gazetted forests, of which 95% are natural forests. The county is home to five forest stations, and the JICA-funded SFS-CORRECC project is working with farmers to enhance agroforestry in the region.

This strategic workshop underscores Kenya's holistic approach to achieving its ambitious tree-growing targets, with a particular focus on unlocking the potential of the country's drylands. By engaging local communities, leveraging innovative technologies, and fostering cross-county collaboration, KFS aims to ensure that the ASALs play a pivotal role in the nation's journey towards a greener and more sustainable future.





*The KFS Board of Directors, KFS Senior management team and Ethiopian delegates during a retreat in Kwale*

# KFS hosts Ethiopia high level delegates

By Leakey Sonkoyo

A delegation from Farm Africa Ethiopia met the KFS Board of Directors who were on a working retreat in Kwale County for consultation, discussion and experience sharing on use of forest technologies on near real-time integrated landscape change tracking, monitoring and the forest alerts system. The Team was met by the KFS Board Chairman Mr. Titus Korir and other board members, including the senior management team led by the Principal Deputy Chief Conservator of Forest Ms. Charity Munyasya.

The Ethiopian Team was led by Dr. Gudina Legese, Head of Programmes Farm Africa and Mr Bona Yadessa, Deputy Director General, Environmental Protection Authority of Oromia Regional State of Ethiopia.



*Dr. Benjamin Kinyili speaks during the workshop*

The meeting served as an opportunity to deepen understanding and integration and laid a strong foundation for future collaboration and partnership between the two countries in sustainable forest management within the region.

**“ ....use of forest technologies on near real-time integrated landscape change tracking, monitoring and the forest alerts system.”**



# Pictorials



GZDSP II Project Manager (far left) joins the AfDB first ladies during a tree planting activity at Kinale Forest Station



Mr. & Ms. KFS performing a song during the World Wetlands Day celebrations



The CCF Alex Lemarkoko hands a tree to a child during a tree planting exercise in Kiambicho, Murang'a County



A Ranger guides a TVET student during a tree planting event at The School of TVETS in Nairobi County



Ag. Manager Administration and Infrastructure Isaac Wanyonyi opening the junior mess during the handover from Friends of Karura



6



*DCCF Drylands, Dr. Clement Ngoriareng planting a tree with a Kenya Defence Forces soldier during a tree planting activity at Embakasi Garrison*

7



*KFS Officer takes visitors through the KFS stand during the ASK show in Meru County*

8



*The Commandant, Mohammed A. Mohammed joined by KFS staff in tree planting during the launch of the KFS Strategic Plan*

9



*Cadets and Forester Trainees performing a song during the official commissioning of their training*

10



*Principal planning and Monitoring officer Nafasi Mfahaya watering a tree during a Farm Forestry Field School graduation Ceremony in Baringo County*



# Launch of Participatory Forest Management Plans

By Irene Laigong, Peter Owino

In a series of events across various counties, the Kenya Forest Service (KFS) launched Participatory Forest Management Plans (PFMPs) and signed Forest Management Agreements with Community Forest Associations (CFAs), empowering local communities to play a central role in the management and conservation of their forest resources.

From January to June 2024, KFS officials have presided over the launch of PFMPs and Forest Management Agreements in several regions, including Kitale, Nyandarua, Meru, and Transoia counties.

In Kitale, the event was officiated by Anthony Musyoka, the Regional Forest Conservator for the North Rift region, representing the Chief Conservator of Forests. Musyoka emphasized the crucial role that CFAs play in ensuring forest protection and development, urging the Kitale Township CFA to maximize the benefits of the signed Forest Management Agreement and support KFS in the 15 billion tree-growing agenda. He also highlighted the ecotourism potential of the Kitale Forest, calling on the CFA to explore such opportunities through partnerships.

In Nyandarua County, the launch of the Ndaragwa and Olbollosat PFMPs was led by Jerome Mwanzia, the Project Manager of the Greenzones Development Support Project Phase II (GZDSP II), representing the Chief Conservator of Forests. The project has played a significant role in funding activities identified by CFA members, including fencing 275 hectares of Ndaragwa Forest Station, constructing a new office block, purchasing a vehicle, and employing 12 youth to assist in the tree nursery, among other notable developments. Meru County witnessed the launch of PFMPs and



*SDCCF Natural Forest Conservation Beatrice Mbula presiding*



*KFS Senior management, partners and CFA Leaders with the launched PFMPs*

Forest Management Agreements for the Ngaya, Nyambene, and Ruthumbi Forest Stations, as well as Ontulili, Marania, and Muchene CFAs. Beatrice Mbula, the Deputy Chief Conservator of Forests for Natural Forest Conservation, presided over these events, emphasizing the opportunities for communities to benefit from non-extractive uses of the forests and the importance of their role in





*...the launched PFMP to Mucheene CFA Chair*

“...the crucial role that CFAs play in ensuring forest protection and development, urging the Kitale Township CFA to maximize the benefits of the signed Forest Management Agreement and support KFS in the 15 billion tree-growing agenda.”

conservation efforts. The Greenzones Development Support Project Phase II has also supported the development of PFMPs in Ontulili, Marania, and Muchene, as well as income-generating activities for the CFAs.

In total, the Kenya Forest Service has launched 12 Participatory Forest Management Plans and signed corresponding Forest Management Agreements with the various Community Forest Associations across these regions.

These initiatives highlight the KFS’s commitment to empowering local communities and placing them at the heart of forest management and conservation. By involving CFAs in the decision-making process and granting them user rights, the Service aims to foster a sense of ownership and responsibility, ultimately contributing to the sustainable management of Kenya’s valuable forest resources.

“...the crucial role that CFAs play in ensuring forest protection and development, urging the Kitale Township CFA to maximize the benefits of the signed Forest Management Agreement and support KFS in the 15 billion tree-growing agenda.



*SDCCF Natural Forest Conservation Beatrice Mbula hands a signed Forest Management Agreement to a CFA member*

# All-government approach to tree growing



*Attorney General Justin Muturi digs, accompanied by PS Forestry Mugambi Gitonga during a tree planting exercise in Kona Baridi, Kajiado County*

**By Lydia Ogada**

It was a wonderful day as the Attorney General of Kenya Hon. Justin Muturi came out in force to lead agencies and departments attached to his office in tree planting at Kona Baridi, Ngong Forest Kajiado County. More than 4,000 seedlings were planted in the event that was largely coordinated by the Kenya

Forest Service led by the Chief Conservator of Forests Mr. Alex Lemarkoko. The event which is part of the whole-of-government approach towards attaining 15 billion trees by the

year 2032 will going forward see Cabinet Secretaries fully participate in growing trees countrywide in approaches spearheaded by Hon. Soipan Tuya.

Hon. Muturi was joined by the Cabinet Secretary Environment, Climate Change and Forestry Hon. Soipan Tuya, and the Governor Kajiado County Hon. Ole Lenku.

Speaking during the event, the Cabinet Secretary Hon. Soipan Tuya lauded the ongoing demarcation of forest boundaries across the country that will ultimately end forest encroachment.

The leaders were accompanied by the Principal

Secretary State Department of Forestry Mr. Mugambi Gitonga, the Principal Secretary State Department of Environment and Climate Change Eng. Festus Ngeno, the Ag Forestry Secretary George Tarus, Solicitor General joined in the event that saw participation from hundreds of staff drawn from the AG's office,

and the Kenya Forest Service among others.

As part of the government efforts to accelerate tree growing as a mitigative measure to address the worsening climatic crisis. to

**“... 15 billion trees by the year 2032 “**

mitigate the effects of climate change.

Mr. Lemarkoko said the Service will ensure all interventions to have the tree growing exercise succeed are in place. He also led the guests to visit several sites that have been adopted in the area that are flourishing. The Attorney General who has been assigned 500 hectares at Ngong Hills in Kajiado committed to visit the site at least once a month as part of monitoring while at the same time engaging with the community Hon. Muturi. The government targets to plant at least 500, 000 tree seedlings in the area as part of the 15 billion trees target in 10 years.



# First Lady tree growing

## campaign



*The First Lady Rachel Ruto waters a tree as CCF Alex Lemarkoko looks over*

**By Leakey Sonkoyo**

The task of growing 15.7 billion trees by the year 2032 has received a major boost after the First Lady of the Republic of Kenya Mama Rachel Ruto committed to support the initiative by growing over 500 million seedlings through her Mama Doing Good Organisation that seeks to among other things contribute to the achievement of 30% tree cover in Kenya.

The Chief Conservator of Forests (CCF) Mr. Alex Lemarkoko was on hand to welcome the First Lady to Karura Forest during the launch of the strategy and commitment to grow 500 million trees as her contribution to the national tree growing and landscape restoration campaign. According to Mama Rachel Ruto, the strategy will seek to “addresses forest conservation, wise use of forest resources and restoration of degraded forests

in partnership with the Ministry of Environment, Climate Change and Forestry through Kenya Forest Service led Adopt-a-Forest framework and strengthening participatory forest management and good forest governance models.”

The strategy will also support agroforestry practices that promote the cultivation of trees and fruit trees on farmlands and in institutions, schools, arboreta, and other public spaces. The overall impact of the programme will be to improve household food security, incomes, diversification of livelihoods, and enhanced environmental education.

Speaking at the same event, the Cabinet Secretary Ministry of Environment, Climate Change and Forestry Hon. Soipan Tuya thanked the First Lady for leading the way in supporting the Government’s plan to increase

the country’s tree cover. She joined her in urging Kenyans to each grow 30 trees every year for the programme to be a success.

The CCF assured the First Lady that KFS was ready to work with her organisation to enhance forest conservation. He informed her that with the recruitment of over 2,600 rangers, forest offences had drastically reduced and thanked the government for prioritising sustainable management of forests.

Also present during the event were the Principal Secretary for Forestry Mr. Gitonga Mugambi, the President of UNEA 6 and the Minister of Energy Transition and Sustainable Development of the Kingdom of Morocco Leila Benali, UNEP’s Executive Director Inger Andersen and celebrated Kenyan Philanthropist Dr. Manu Chandaria among other guests.



# Training on forest alerts for Lamu



*A young Mangrove Forest in Lamu*

**By Peter Owino**

Lamu County Mangrove Conservation and Restoration Stakeholders successfully completed a four day consultation and awareness workshop to forge coordinated mangrove conservation actions for the county.

The workshop aimed at fostering dialogue, collaboration, enhancing capacity and knowledge sharing on mangrove conservation and restoration by stakeholders, brought together a total of 67 stakeholders, pooled from 28 institutions within various sectors in Lamu, including local communities, the County Government, the County Assembly, National Government agencies, NGOs, the private sector, and academia.

Sectoral needs that could be prioritized by the stakeholders were identified and a one-year work plan on mangrove conservation and restoration was refined for joint implementation. This is guided and in support of the 2017-2027 National Mangrove Ecosystem Management Plan for Kenya. The National Mangrove Ecosystem Management Plan's current implementation status, progress, and recommendations on areas of adaptive adjustment were also discussed.

This initiative was spearheaded by the Lamu County Mangrove Management Committee (CMMC) in collaboration with the National Mangrove Management Committee (NMMC) and The Kenya Forest Service with funding support from The Nature Conservancy (TNC) and the Global Mangrove Alliance.



# KFS and NRT collaborate to enhance conservation efforts



*CCF Alex Lemarkoko and NRT CEO Tom Lalampaa hold the signed MoU joined by KFS senior officers*

## By Irene Laigong

Kenya Forest Service (KFS) and Northern Rangelands Trust (NRT) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) at the NRT headquarters in Lewa Conservancy to formalize their long-standing partnership in conservation efforts across Kenya.

The Chief Conservator of Forests, Alex Lemarkoko, acknowledged the challenges in managing forests and the importance of bringing together stakeholders, partners, and the community to leverage their strengths for the benefit of all. KFS aims to change its approach in the drylands, focusing on afforestation while catering to the needs of pastoralists and the community. This integrated approach to landscape restoration considers water sources, roads, and food security, with the goal of influencing development through restoration.

NRT, led by CEO Tom Lalampaa, operates in 10 counties in Kenya and supports 45 community conservancies in the country, as well as two in Uganda. The organization has five regional offices and provides technical support to the conservancies, participating in forestry, governance, and the development of Participatory Forest Management Plans (PFMPs).

During the signing ceremony, Lalampaa expressed gratitude for the role played by KFS in supporting

and protecting water towers and working with communities in conservation. Andrew, the chairman of the council of elders representing all 45 conservancies, emphasized the importance of conservation amid the challenges posed by drought. He highlighted the need for sustainable grazing plans for their animals.

Meru County, where 60% of the land is classified as Arid and Semi-Arid Lands (ASALs), requires significant conservation efforts. The Chief Conservator of Forests (CCF) stressed that KFS is responsible for protecting 2.6 million hectares of forests in Kenya, with an additional 1.7 million hectares on farmlands. The law allows for partnerships and participatory management of forests with the community and stakeholders, recognizing the relationship between forests and the lives of those living nearby.

The MoU outlines the specific roles and responsibilities of each party in this partnership. A committee of six members, three from NRT and three from KFS, will be formed to oversee the implementation of the MoU. Present during the event was DCCF Drylands Dr. Clement Ngoriareng, Manager Legal Services Eshter Keige, George Abuto, Ambrose Genga, CFC Meru Wellington Ndaka, staff from KFS and NRT and the local community.



# Plantation forest stakeholders call for more public participation



*Stakeholders led by Secretary of Administration for the State Department of Forestry, Evans Mutari*

**By Peter Owino**

During an awareness workshop on the disposal of forest plantation materials, in Uasin Gishu County, within North Rift Conservancy conducted by KFS, stakeholders called for the opening of forest plantations to allow for harvesting of mature and over-mature forest resources.

The stakeholders noted that the trees are planted by the Kenya Forest Service, noting the Service should not be stopped from harvesting the same trees. Forest plantation establishment is entrenched in the Forest Conservation and Management Act 2016 which provides that all plantation forests in a public forest shall be managed on a sustainable basis for the production of wood and other forest products and services for commercial purposes.

The Forest Industry Investors also lauded multiple forest plantation outcomes for transforming the lives of resource-adjacent communities, improving their livelihoods and socioeconomic status. These benefits include improved livelihoods and food security, and benefits accrued from collecting firewood from the non-merchantable parts of harvested trees.

The stakeholders have also decried the effects of moratorium barring the harvesting of mature and over-mature forest resources, saying that it is heartbreaking to see over-mature plantation trees rotting away, while others are felled by the wind, noting that this is wasted revenue, not only to the government but the citizens alike.

Public participation is a key tenet in undertaking disposal of forest plantation materials, within specific forest ecosystems. Before any disposal is undertaken in any forest plantations KFS is required by law to engage the public, this ensures sustainable and optimum benefits and utilization of these resources for the right purposes.

The meeting was chaired by the Secretary of Administration State Department for Forestry-MECCF, Mr. Evans Mutari, and was hosted by KFS Regional Forest Conservator Mr. Anthony Musyoka, Other stakeholders in attendance included, NEMA, KEFRI, Forest Station Managers, County Forest Conservators, Timber Manufacturers Association, CFAs and KFS headquarter staff.



# KFS joins World Wetlands Day celebrations

By Irene Laigong

In commemoration of World Wetlands Day, the Kenya Forest Service (KFS) joined the global community in recognizing the vital role that forests and wetlands play in regulating water flow and mitigating the effects of climate change. The Chief Conservator of Forests, Mr. Alex Lemarkoko, presided over the national celebrations at the Timboroa Forest



*Former CS Environment, Climate Change and Forestry Soipan Tuya addresses those gathered for the celebrations*

station in Uasin Gishu County, emphasizing the intrinsic connection between these two crucial ecosystems.

“Forests and wetlands work together to capture, store, and moderate water discharge over time, ensuring a continuous water supply in our rivers and preventing flooding during the rainy seasons,” Mr. Lemarkoko explained, underscoring the importance of preserving these natural resources.

During the event, the Chief Conservator announced a significant reduction in forest crimes, which he attributed to the recent nationwide deployment of 2,664 forest rangers as part of the “Operation Imarisha Mitsu” initiative. This increase in ranger presence has been instrumental in curbing illegal activities within the forests and safeguarding their integrity.

“The preservation of wetlands and forests is mutually beneficial, offering enhanced outcomes in the battle against climate change,” Mr. Lemarkoko emphasized, highlighting the Service’s commitment to providing technical support, particularly in establishing tree nurseries, to aid in the country’s pursuit of its 15 billion trees target.

The Chief Guest, Cabinet Secretary for Environment, Climate Change and Forestry, Hon. Soipan Tuya, advocated for a participatory approach to forest and wetlands management, urging everyone to take

responsibility for the preservation of these vital resources. She stressed the importance of instilling environmental consciousness from a young age, emphasizing the role of education in nurturing a generation of responsible stewards.

In her address, the Cabinet Secretary also emphasized the need for adherence to the rules established by the Kenya Forest Service, particularly regarding the encroachment of forested areas. She underscored the priority placed on fencing these ecosystems to facilitate forest regeneration and the preservation and enhancement of wetlands.

The event was attended by a host of dignitaries, including the Principal Secretary for the State Department of Environment and Climate Change, Eng. Festus Ngeno, the Uasin Gishu County Governor, H.E. Jonathan Bii, Senator Jackson Mandago, representatives from NEMA, KEFRI, and other stakeholders.

This celebration of World Wetlands Day underscores the Kenya Forest Service’s holistic approach to environmental conservation, recognizing the symbiotic relationship between forests and wetlands. By working collaboratively with communities and leveraging increased ranger presence, KFS is poised to safeguard these precious natural resources for the benefit of present and future generations.

# KE-TZ timber tracking arrangement

By Leakey Sonkoyo

The Chief Conservator of Forests (CCF) Mr. Alex Lemarkoko held discussions in his office with officers from Traffic International East Africa and Tanzania Forest Service (TFS) on the piloting of a timber tracking system in Kenya to enhance chain of custody and traceability of timber products in the country. This is following the introduction of a similar system in Tanzania that has seen the country improve the management of timber products from public forests through avoidance of illegal activities and increase in the recovery of revenue from the same.

The CCF noted that there was need for the two countries which engage in significant trade in timber to utilise technology and other surveillance innovations to control their sale and other forest products. He further noted that Tanzania had been a major exporter of timber to Kenya especially during the moratorium on harvesting of forest products.



*The CCF Alex Lemarkoko (Right) and the DCCF Drylands Dr Clement Ngoriareng during the meeting at the KFS Headquarters*



*The CCF Alex Lemarkoko with a TFS member*

He said the collaboration between the two countries will also help to prevent the trade in endangered tree species such as sandalwood.

The officers from TFS led by the ICT Manager Mr. Harold Chipamba demonstrated how they track timber in the country and the benefits it had brought about in terms of prevention of illegal activities. He also agreed that collaboration between Kenya and Tanzania would help to seal all the loopholes being used by unscrupulous traders who deal in illegally harvested timber.

The two agreed to form a technical team that will work together to actualise the process that will lead to seamless collaboration on the matter. Other officers present during the meeting were the Deputy Chief Conservator of Forests for Drylands Forests Dr. Clement Ng'oriareng, Senior Conservator of Forests Jennifer Sifuna as well as Bakari Sheghembe of TFS and William Mallya from Traffic among other officers.



# Illegal title deeds in forest lands cancelled

By Leakey Sonkoyo

The Cabinet Secretary Ministry of Environment, Climate Change and Forestry Hon. Soipan Tuya said that all title deeds for lands inside gazetted forests will be revoked as they were issued irregularly. Noting that all gazetted forests are owned and managed by the government through the Kenya Forest Service (KFS), she emphasised that title deeds cannot be issued for the same parcels of land or parts of the land as they were already



*The team from MECCF, KFS and the community during the visit at Ololua Forest*

Kenya had been given authority to put up a research institute and offices respectively while the authenticity of the documentation purportedly giving another organisation claiming ownership of 66 acres inside the forest could not be verified. Hon. Tuya informed the gathering that all gazetted forests were under the custody of the KFS and that their authority should always be sought before undertaking any activity.

The local CFA had raised concerns that there was a plan to encroach on the natural forest following the erection of illegal perimeter walls. Led by the local leaders including the Senator for Kajiado Hon. Seki Lenku and the MP for Kajiado North Hon. Onesmus Ngogoyo, the residents thanked the CS for responding quickly to their concerns and for assuring them that the forest will be protected for the good of the local community and the country as a whole. They also thanked the KFS officers stationed there for the heightened surveillance which had seen a drastic reduction of illegal activities.

While addressing the same gathering, the Chief Conservator of Forests (CCF) Mr. Alex Lemarkoko assured the community that KFS will be steadfast in the protection of all gazetted forests and called on the community and all forestry stakeholders to work together with us in order to ensure the integrity of all forests.

Also present during the event were the Principal Secretary for Forestry Mr. Gitonga Mugambi, former Kajiado Senator Hon. Peter Mositet, among other leaders.

## GENERAL NEWS



*CS Soipan Tuya pushes on an illegal perimeter wall erected in Ololua Forest*

under the legal custody of government. She issued a directive for Kenya Forest Service (KFS) to immediately begin the process of revoking the titles in conjunction with the Ministry of Lands.

The CS said that all public organisations that have been allocated land in gazetted forests will be issued with Special User Licenses as prescribed in law to utilise the land for the intended purpose and for the good of the public, a process that does not require degazettement of forests.

The CS was speaking at Ololua Forest which is part of the Ngong' Hills Forest Station where she had come to verify claims of forest encroachment following reports by members of the local Community Forest Association (CFA). It was noted that two public institutions namely the Institute of Primate Research and Nuclear Authority of



*A representative from Nakie presents a hammock during the meeting at the KFS Headquarters*

# KFS hosts Earthlungs and Nakie collaboration

**By James Waitathu**

The Chief Conservator of Forests Mr. Alex Lemarkoko hosted a team from Earthlungs Reforestation Foundation and Nakie for deliberations for future collaborations with the Service. Nakie is an Australian based outdoor sustainable business organization that manufactures outdoor gear made from repurposed plastic bottles and is keen to adopting Mwache Mangrove Forest in Kwale County in an effort to rehabilitate the 4,000 hectare forest through the Jaza Miti and Veritree growing platforms.

Dean Leibbrandt and Jaryd Leibbrandt who represented Nakie expressed their interest in adopting Mwache as the world marked the international day of Forests in March. In addition, Nakie presented a sample of the Hammock to the CCF and committed

to support KFS by donating more outdoor gear that would go a long way in making the work of KFS rangers more easier in the field, the hammock can also serve as a bed and is good for outdoor activities like camping.

Speaking during the meeting, Earthlungs CEO Mr. Victor Mwanga expressed his interest to collaborate with Nakie and Kenya Forest Service in conservation and restoration of our Forests so as to attain the 15 billion trees objective by 2032.

In conclusion, the CCF welcomed the partnership and went ahead to encourage Nakie to come up with more ways that will add value to the working conditions of rangers in the field which will in turn boost their morale and productivity as they go about their duties where they sometimes have to brave very harsh climatic conditions.



# KFS board supports diversification of revenue streams



*KFS Board Chairman Mr. Titus Korir addressing the Board during a meeting in Nairobi*

## By Leakey Sonkoyo

The KFS Board Chairman Mr. Titus Korir assured the Management that the Board will ensure that all policies and instruments that have been put in place to enhance forest conservation and management will be implemented.

The Board noted that the Service was making great strides in executing its mandate even though a number of challenges still continued to slow down progress especially inadequate resources which were hampering the implementation of key activities. These include provision of enough housing for most of the newly recruited rangers and other staff as well as acquisition of working tools for the officers.

The Chairman said that they will facilitate the management to actualize the various proposals for the diversification of revenue streams to avoid overreliance on the exchequer and the traditional sources of revenue which are fraught with disruptions.

On the implementation of the 15 billion tree growing campaign, the Board noted that the Service had aligned its strategic plan to the flagship government programme. They however agreed with the management that there was need to establish and strengthen implementing teams in the field especially at the sub-county level.

The Chairman was speaking at the closing of a three day retreat for the Board of Directors and the KFS Management where they were briefed on the various programmes being implemented by the Service. They were also informed on of the various gaps in the staff establishment which needed to be filled to optimize output.

The Principal Deputy Chief Conservator of Forests Mrs. Charity Munyasia who was representing the Chief Conservator of Forests (KFS) Mr. Alex Lemarkoko thanked the Board for their unwavering support that had enabled the Service achieve a number of accomplishments including the recruitment of forest rangers and technical officers some of whom were currently undergoing training. She noted the Service was set to spearhead the 15 billion tree growing campaign riding on the government's goodwill and support from stakeholders. The she expressed confidence that with an enabling environment, the Service was motivated to deliver on its mandate and ensure that country benefits from the provision of sufficient environmental services.

Other Board members present included the Vice Chairman Mr. Kunal Chowdhari among other members and the KFS senior management team.

# Lusoi Hill and Mukutani CFA scouts graduate at FOLEA



*The Kenya Forestry College Principal Dr. Elizabeth Wambugu Forest Law Enforcement Academy Commanding Officer Mr Appolinary Mwandigha together with partner, FoLEA staff and graduating community scouts*

**By Sylvester Okal**

In a milestone for forest conservation efforts, the Kenya Forest Service Directorate of Protection and Security hosted a graduation ceremony for community forest association scouts at the Forest Law Enforcement Academy (FoLEA) in Londiani, Kericho County.

The graduation ceremony, which took place on [DATE], saw the successful completion of training for scouts from the Lusoi Hill and Mukutani Community Forest Associations. The event was presided over by the Kenya Forestry College Principal, Dr. Elizabeth Wambugu, on behalf of the Chief Conservator of Forests.

FoLEA, which is part of the larger training arm of the Kenya Forest Service, offers tailored courses to sharpen the skills and abilities of both disciplined and professional staff. Over the years, the academy has also partnered with other agencies to provide training opportunities for community scouts and County Government inspectorate officers.

During their training, the community scouts underwent various sessions, including drills and parade, bush craft, command and control procedures, customer care, intelligence gathering, map reading, disaster management, work safety and hygiene, forest protection and management, and Human Rights Based Approaches. The training was aimed at equipping the scouts with the

necessary knowledge and skills to effectively complement the forest protection efforts

The Ag. Commandant, Mr. Wilson Leboo, expressed his happiness with the attitude and cooperation of the scouts during the training. He reminded the graduates that they are now ambassadors of forest protection and conservation, and encouraged teamwork between the scouts and KFS rangers.

The Principal, Dr. Wambugu, recognized the efforts of all KFS partners working towards the conservation of Lusoi Hill and Mukutani Forests, and appreciated their contributions to community sensitization. She also reiterated the importance of public participation in tree-growing efforts, emphasizing the country's goal of planting 15 billion trees by the year 2032.

The graduation ceremony was attended by representatives from various stakeholders and partners, including the Sustainable Agriculture Community Development Program (SACDEP-Kenya), Homabay County Government, Lusoi Hill & Mukutani Community Forest Associations, Kenya Forestry College staff, and FoLEA officers.

This event highlights the Kenya Forest Service's commitment to empowering local communities in the fight to protect and conserve the country's valuable forest resources.



# Homabay County inspectorate officers passing out parade



*Homabay County Enforcement officers during their passing out parade presided over by Governor Gladys Wanga at Raila Odinga Stadium in Homabay.*

**By Sylvester Okal**

In a collaboration between the Kenya Forest Service (KFS) and Homa Bay County, 250 enforcement officers recently graduated from the Forest Law Enforcement Academy (FoLEA) in a ceremony held at the Raila Odinga Stadium in Homa Bay County.

The passing out parade, which was presided over by Homa Bay County Governor, Her Excellency Gladys Wanga, showcased the successful completion of the training program for the county enforcement officers. The event was attended by the Kenya Forest Service Board Chairman, Mr. Titus Korir, as well as the Kenya Forestry College Principal, Dr. Elizabeth Wambugu, and the FoLEA Commanding Officer, Mr. Appolinary Mwandigha.

Speaking during the ceremony, Governor Wanga expressed her gratitude to the Kenya Forest Service for designing the training program with a focus on county-specific needs and law enforcement. She commended the rigorous selection process for the officers and expressed confidence that they would put the knowledge gained from FoLEA into practice, diligently executing their duties.

The KFS Board Chairman, Mr. Korir, used the occasion to urge County Governments to partner with

the Kenya Forest Service in training their inspectorate personnel. He highlighted the Service's pride in having an excellent team of instructors who are well-versed in the training needs of security personnel, not only for forest protection but also for broader county purposes.

Furthermore, Mr. Korir encouraged County Governments to recruit foresters from the Kenya Forestry College to serve as county foresters. This, he noted, would help enable the implementation of comprehensive forestry programs at the county level. The event was a testament to the strong collaboration between the Kenya Forest Service and Homa Bay County, aimed at strengthening the capacity of local enforcement officers to protect and conserve the region's valuable forest resources. This partnership underscores the integral role that county-level enforcement plays in the nation's overall forest management efforts.

As the newly graduated officers embark on their duties, the Kenya Forest Service and Homa Bay County are poised to continue their joint work towards sustainable forest management and environmental conservation, benefiting both the local community and the nation as a whole.

# New KFS Commandant meets senior officers



*The Commandant Mohammed A. Mohammed (center) joined by Senior ENCOM officers during the Workshop in Naivasha*

**By Irene Laigong**

In a concerted effort to enhance forest protection and curb illegal activities, the Kenya Forest Service (KFS) recently concluded a three-day workshop in Naivasha, focused on the progress and future of Operation Imarisha Misitu. Led by Chief Conservator of Forests Alex Lemarkoko, the workshop brought together senior officers from the Protection and Security division, Regional Commandants, Base Commanders, and other key KFS officials to review the ongoing operation and strategize for the future.

Operation Imarisha Misitu, running from October 30, 2023, to April 30, 2024, has already seen significant success in eliminating unlawful activities in public and community forests. During the workshop, Lemarkoko highlighted the increased joint patrols and inspections that have substantially reduced illegal activities. This success is attributed to the enhanced capacity and deployment of new Forest Rangers, whose training and development have been a priority. Lemarkoko reiterated his

commitment to the growth and development of the Service, emphasizing the importance of training and capacity-building initiatives. "Empowering our officers is crucial for efficient operations," he stated, advocating for unity and cohesion among all officers as a critical aspect of successful operations.

The newly appointed Commandant, Mohamed A. Mohamed, noted that in addition to their protection duties, forest rangers have been instrumental in seedling production across forest stations nationwide. This effort aligns with the Service's annual target of growing 300 million trees, contributing to the national goal of achieving 30% tree cover by 2032.

Forest fire management was a significant topic at the workshop, with Forest Fire Project Manager Patrick Ithinji detailing the installation of crucial infrastructure in forest fire hotspots. This includes masts, microwaves, dishes, CCTV cameras, radio antennas, and security fences, with the foundation for 40 out of 50 masts already laid.

These measures are essential for preventing and managing forest fires, which pose a significant threat to Kenya's ecosystems.

The workshop concluded with plenary sessions, a midterm review of performance contracts, and the development of a roadmap to address regional challenges. Commandant Mohamed A. Mohamed urged officers to maintain vigilance and dedication in their conservation duties, emphasizing professionalism and the importance of upholding a positive image of the Service. Senior officers were encouraged to take on advisory and mentoring roles to guide the development of younger rangers.

Through these discussions, the officers gained valuable insights into potential areas for improvement and capacity-building within their respective domains. The presence of senior officials underscored the importance of collective leadership in advancing the goals of Operation Imarisha Misitu and ensuring the sustainable management of Kenya's forests.



# Reviving Africa's forests and landscapes for a sustainable future

By Peter Sirayo

Africa, boasting some of the world's most diverse ecosystems, grapples with severe environmental threats like deforestation, land degradation, and climate change impacts. In response, the African Forest Landscape Restoration Initiative (AFR100) emerged in 2015, aiming to restore 100 million hectares of deforested and degraded landscapes by 2030. Aligned with the Bonn Challenge's broader goal of restoring 350 million hectares worldwide, AFR100 also resonates with the African Union's Agenda 2063, envisioning a prosperous, sustainable future for the continent.

Since its inception, AFR100 has achieved remarkable progress. Over 34 African countries have committed to restoring more than 129.4 million hectares of land, surpassing the initial target. Key accomplishments include policy reforms to support restoration activities and innovative financing, with over \$1 billion in development finance and more than \$500 million in private sector investment mobilized to support various restoration programs.

Despite these successes, AFR100 faces significant challenges. One major obstacle is the substantial funding gap that remains despite considerable investments. Achieving the ambitious restoration targets requires more financial resources than currently available. Another critical issue is land tenure, as secure land tenure is essential for successful restoration. However, land ownership conflicts and unclear land rights in various regions pose significant hurdles. Additionally, effective monitoring and evaluation of restoration activities are crucial. Robust systems are needed to assess progress and make necessary adjustments to achieve desired outcomes.

In response to these challenges, AUDA-NEPAD, the AFR100 secretariat, organized a Regional Workshop on Establishing the AFR100 Technical Assistance Platform (TAP) for FLR Monitoring, Registries,



*KFS and KEFRI officers during the Regional workshop*

and Gender Mainstreaming. Held in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, from March 25-29, 2024, the workshop aimed to accelerate the transition of AFR100 from pledges to implementation. The event brought together a diverse group of participants, including representatives from government ministries, environmental agencies, women's affairs departments, international organizations, NGOs, and AFR100 partner institutions. Seventeen countries, including Kenya, participated alongside partner organizations such as UNCCD, WRI, GIZ, CIFOR, ICRAF, IUCN, and WWF.

The workshop bolstered FLR monitoring, registries, and gender mainstreaming, reinforced FLR project tracking and reporting capabilities, pinpointed country-specific requirements, fostered enhanced collaboration and knowledge exchange, and solidified AUDA-NEPAD's pledge for continuous assistance.

Future strides in the AFR100 initiative hinge on strengthened partnerships, collaborative efforts, inventive financing, and the expansion of successful models, crucial for achieving restoration objectives and catalyzing substantial environmental and socio-economic transformation towards a more sustainable and resilient Africa.



## sustainable forestry in Kenya's drylands



*Plantation site of improved Melia volkensii in Tiva, Kitui county*

**By Beth Welemba**

Since 1985, Japan and Kenya have collaborated to enhance forestry development, focusing on initiatives like social forestry promotion, drought-resistant tree breeding, and regional cooperation with other African countries. In recent years, projects like the Capacity Development Project for Sustainable Forest Management (CADEP-SFM), spanning from 2016 to 2021, aimed to bolster national and county-level capacities for sustainable forest management. Building upon this foundation, the successor project, the Project for Strengthening Forestry Sector Development and Community Resilience to Climate Change through Sustainable Forest Management and Landscape Restoration (SFS-CORECC), launched in 2022 and slated for the next five years, places a special emphasis on expanding tree cover through commercial forestry. This initiative aligns closely with Kenya's ambitious 15B tree growing strategy.

At the heart of SFS-CORECC project lies Component 2, spearheaded by the Kenya Forest Service (KFS), which focuses on promoting Commercial Forestry (CF) across the country. Given that Kenya's landscape is predominantly arid and semi-arid (ASAL), the restoration efforts primarily target these dryland areas, offering immense potential for forestry expansion. The pilot implementation of CF spans eight pilot counties, predominantly ASAL regions such as Embu, Nyeri, Taita Taveta, Kitui, Makueni, Tharaka Nithi, Kilifi,

and Kwale. Central to this initiative is the promotion of the *Melia volkensii* tree species, commonly known as "Mukau" in the Kamba dialect, renowned for its fast growth, drought tolerance and resilience to termite attacks. Often dubbed the "mahogany of Kenya" due to its high-quality timber, this indigenous species boasts a shorter rotation age of between 15 to 20 years compared to other native trees.

Recently, the project engaged 84 farmers and entities with one acre or more to establish commercial *Melia* plantations across the pilot counties. Beyond individual farmers, schools, churches, community-based organizations (CBOs), and private companies also joined hands in the pursuit of commercial *Melia* growing. Moreover, a *Melia volkensii* demonstration plot was established in partnership with Nyumbani Village in Kitui County, for showcasing best management practices for the species. Featuring different spacing configurations, this demonstration plot exemplifies the versatility and potential of *Melia volkensii* in Kenya's dryland restoration efforts.

As Kenya strives towards a greener, more sustainable future, the *Melia volkensii* emerges as a beacon of hope, offering a viable solution for restoring the nation's drylands while fostering economic prosperity and environmental resilience. Let us rally behind this "Magic Tree" and embark on a journey towards a flourishing landscape for generations to come.



# 55 km solar electric fence for Menengai Forest



*CCF Alex Lemarkoko plants a pole for electric fencing in Menengai*

In a groundbreaking ceremony, Chief Conservator of Forests (CCF) Alex Lemarkoko spearheaded the launch of a solar electric fencing project for the Menengai Forest Block in Nakuru County. This ambitious project, funded at a cost of KES 106 million, will cover 6,014 hectares of forest land with a 55 km solar electric fence, supported by the Green Zones Development Support Project Phase II.

CCF Lemarkoko highlighted that the primary beneficiaries of this initiative will be the local community, who stand to gain immeasurable advantages from the project. The fencing will enhance the recreational services available to Nakuru County's urban population while promoting biodiversity by facilitating the natural regeneration of the forest. "The local community will enjoy unquantifiable benefits, including enhanced security and recreational opportunities," Lemarkoko stated.

In addition to the fencing project, Lemarkoko addressed the pressing issue of housing for forest rangers. He noted that new ranger houses had been inaugurated in Molo, Baraget, and Elburgon. He called for further support from stakeholders to improve the living conditions for rangers, ensuring they can effectively patrol and secure the forest and its adjacent communities. "Better living conditions for our rangers will translate into more efficient patrols and enhanced security for visitors and forest-adjacent communities," he added.

The fence, which is expected to be completed within eight months, will feature perimeter patrol and intelligence software to monitor fence inspections. The contractor will also provide training on basic maintenance to ensure the fence's longevity and effectiveness. The County and National Government, along with the Kenya Forest

Service, will collaborate to ensure clear border demarcation and maintain a clean fence line.

The fencing project complies with all environmental regulations and aims to aid in controlled grazing, provide robust perimeter patrols, and improve the overall management and conservation of the Menengai Forest Block. "This project is not just about conservation; it's about creating sustainable livelihoods and ensuring the forest thrives for future generations," said Lemarkoko.

The launch ceremony saw the attendance of the County Commissioner, Commandant, GZDSP Project Manager, CFC Nakuru, Menengai CFA representatives, and other KFS officials. Their presence underscored the collective commitment to this transformative project.

# Act Now, Tomorrow will be too late

**By Monica Ruto**

Workplace disruption as result of the impact of climate change can no longer be ignored. The recent Climate Change Summit in Nairobi, Kenya, shows that the world's attention is once more directed on addressing the crucial global environmental emergency. While deliberations at such summits conventionally revolve around policy and technology, it is important not to overlook the critical part that Human Resources (HR) practices can act in the Mitigation against climate change. HR's participation is critical for upholding clear communication between leadership and employees, keeping everyone well-versed and aligned. This strategic place allows HR to realize effectively communicate in handling employee concerns and nurturing a sense of security in uncertain times.

Climate change mitigation strategy is multifaceted and therefore it is critical that its actors approach it by understanding the place of Green Human Resource management and why it cannot be ignored as essential contributor in pursuit of efficiency and ecological friendly practices in the workplace. Sustainable Human Resource spreads beyond the conservative responsibilities of HR departments. It involves fitting in sustainable principles into every area of an organization's human resources practices. This includes all the functions such as; performance management, recruitment, employee engagement, training and development and more. The main goal is to streamline organization's workforce and align them it with its environmental objectives. By encouraging eco-conscious ethics and practices, Greening Human Resource functions can motivate employees to adopt environmentally responsible actions in the workplace. This cultural more can lead to lower carbon footprints and enhance resource conservation. These practices can attract and retain talent with competences of passion on sustainability. Organizations that prioritize environmental responsibility in all their HR strategies are more likely to attract people who are self-driven to make contribution to climate action mitigation. Green HR warrants that employees receive training and development opportunities that enhance their understanding of sustainability issues and how

they relate to their roles. This knowledge empowers employees to make eco-friendly choices within their jobs. Green Human Resource introduces eco-performance measures that assess and recompence employees on their contributions to sustainable objectives. This can include waste selection initiatives, reduced energy consumption, employing waste reduction initiatives, or actively taking part in corporate sustainable projects.

Benefits of going Green Human Resource Management Human Resource professionals endowed with Green HR knowledge bring valuable expertise to the strategy table. They can support organizations develop and utilize sustainability strategies that align with worldwide climate change goals. Green Human Resource can enable employee to participation in climate initiatives and ensures that every member of an organization plays a role in mitigating climate change impact. Involved employees are more likely to champion and support and sustainability efforts both within and without their workplaces. Organizations with robust Green Human Resource programs can showcase their success stories to the public for adoption and as trail blazers, serving as examples of how to mainstream sustainability into the workforce effectively. Human Resource professionals on undertaking environmental sustainability courses can network and work together with other organizations and experts to share best practices and communally address climate change impact through human resources initiatives.

While policy, guidelines and technology are crucial, the role of Green Human Resource practices should not be underestimated. By nurturing eco-conscious cultures, attracting green talent, and aligning Human Resource strategies with sustainability goals, organizations and Human Resource professionals can make substantial contributions to the discussions on Climate Change management and actions required to tackle it. Ignoring Green Human Resource in discussion on climate change would be a missed opportunity to harness the full potential of our workforce in the fight for a sustainable future.





# Harnessing sports diplomacy for promoting forest conservation

**By Dr. Benjamin Kinyili**

Kenya is strategically leveraging sports diplomacy to advance forest conservation, recognizing the powerful role that sports can play in raising environmental awareness and promoting sustainable practices. By integrating sports into its environmental initiatives, Kenya aims to engage athletes, communities, and international partners, showcasing its commitment to preserving the nation's natural heritage while promoting a broader global environmental consciousness.

The idea of using sports diplomacy to enhance environmental security has gained significant momentum in Kenya. Sports, with their universal appeal, transcend cultural, social, and geographical boundaries, making them an effective medium for engaging diverse populations in environmental causes. Kenya's emphasis on sports diplomacy aligns with global trends where sports are increasingly recognized as a low-cost, high-impact tool for achieving development goals, especially in environmental conservation.

In East Africa, sports are deeply woven into the cultural fabric, making them one of the most popular leisure activities. Kenya has capitalized on this by organizing events such as marathons, cycling races, and eco-friendly tournaments with clear environmental themes. These events serve not just as competitions but as platforms to promote the importance of forests and sustainable practices. By involving athletes and spectators, Kenya is fostering a collective responsibility toward environmental conservation.

A key aspect of Kenya's strategy is appointing renowned athletes as ambassadors for forest conservation. These athletes, known globally for their achievements, use their influence to advocate for environmental protection through media campaigns, public appearances, and social media. Their involvement

helps extend the conservation message beyond the sports community to a wider audience.

Kenya is also setting a global example by incorporating eco-friendly practices into its sports infrastructure and events. This includes using sustainable materials, implementing waste reduction programs, and promoting energy-efficient practices in sports facilities. These efforts underline Kenya's commitment to environmental sustainability and provide a model for integrating green practices in the sports industry.

International sports competitions hosted in Kenya offer a global platform to showcase the nation's commitment to environmental conservation. These events often include green initiatives like tree planting ceremonies, symbolizing Kenya's dedication to protecting its natural heritage. Collaborating with international sports organizations further amplifies these efforts, creating a global network dedicated to biodiversity preservation.

Additionally, Kenya invests in educational programs that combine sports with environmental awareness, targeting schools, sports organizations, and communities. Corporate partnerships aligned with environmental goals provide financial support, while green sports policies promote sustainable practices within sports organizations, contributing to a comprehensive approach to sports-related environmental initiatives.

Through strategic media engagement, Kenya ensures that environmental messages are effectively communicated within sports narratives, broadening the reach and impact of its conservation efforts. In conclusion, Kenya's innovative use of sports diplomacy highlights its commitment to environmental sustainability, uniting diverse populations in the shared goal of preserving the planet's natural heritage.

# KFS scores big in war against forest destruction

**By Ekuwam Julius**

Kenya, celebrated for its stunning landscapes and rich biodiversity, faces a critical challenge in deforestation and forest degradation. Yet, amidst these significant threats, the Kenya Forest Service (KFS) stands as a beacon of hope, achieving remarkable progress in forest conservation and sustainable management. With a steadfast dedication to preserving the country's forests, KFS has made notable advancements in fostering environmental stewardship and biodiversity conservation.

As the steward of Kenya's forests, KFS has spearheaded numerous efforts to combat deforestation and degradation. In response to the government's mandate for a minimum 30% tree cover, KFS has implemented a range of innovative strategies designed to reverse the troubling trend of forest loss. Their comprehensive approach includes community engagement, technological advancements, and robust policy measures, all aimed at balancing human development with forest preservation.

A cornerstone of KFS's success has been its commitment to involving local communities in conservation efforts. The Forest Conservation and Management Act No. 34 of 2016 emphasizes the importance of community participation. By working closely with indigenous and local groups, KFS has fostered a sense of ownership and responsibility toward Sustainable Forest Management (SFM).

Through mechanisms such as Forest Management Agreements (FMAs) and Community Forest Associations (CFAs), KFS has built strong partnerships with local stakeholders, empowering them to act as forest guardians.

Technological advancements have also played a pivotal role in enhancing KFS's conservation efforts. The use of geospatial technologies, including satellite imagery and Geographic Information Systems (GIS), has revolutionized forest monitoring and enforcement. Real-time monitoring systems, currently being piloted in regions like Kwale and Kilifi, allow for swift responses to forest disturbances. Additionally, the integration of drone technology, bolstered by the Global Environment Fund (GEF-6) Project in collaboration with the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO), has provided critical insights into forest cover and vulnerabilities, significantly improving the agency's capacity to address illegal activities.

Policy formulation and enforcement are also central to KFS's strategy. The agency has been instrumental in developing and implementing progressive forestry laws and regulations. By collaborating with law enforcement and judicial bodies, KFS has effectively tackled illegal activities, particularly in sensitive areas like the Mau Forest complex. The strategic deployment of newly recruited Forest Rangers has further enhanced KFS's presence

in remote areas, improving surveillance and reducing illegal activities such as logging and poaching. These rangers receive ongoing training in advanced tactics and intelligence gathering, ensuring they are well-equipped to protect Kenya's forests.

Partnerships with government agencies, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and the private sector have been crucial in reducing forest destruction. The "Adopt-A-Forest" initiative, operational since the 2018/2019 financial year, has seen 59 state and 53 non-state actors engage in rehabilitating and restoring degraded forests. This collaboration has led to the successful restoration of 113,708.5 hectares of degraded natural forests, with local communities playing a key role through education and joint projects.

KFS has also championed reforestation and afforestation efforts, aiming to expand the country's forest cover. Through tree planting campaigns, agroforestry programs, and model tree nurseries, KFS is working towards the ambitious goal of planting 15.7 billion trees by 2032. This effort is guided by the National Forest Ecosystems and Landscapes Restoration Strategy and aligns with the KFS Strategic Plan 2023-2028, ensuring a sustained commitment to increasing Kenya's tree cover and enhancing forest ecosystems.



# Gum Arabic turning fortunes

**By Protus Masaba**

Most communities in Kenya's Arid and Semi-Arid Lands (ASALs), such as Isiolo County, rely heavily on pastoralism and are particularly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. These areas have also struggled with environmental degradation due to overgrazing and illegal charcoal production, driven by a lack of alternative sustainable livelihoods. The forests in Isiolo County, found in rangelands, wildlife conservancies, and community

forests, have been significantly degraded over the years. However, a shift is occurring thanks to the commercial harvesting of gum and resin, particularly from *Acacia Senegal* and *Acacia Seyal* trees.

Gum Arabic, a valuable product collected from these trees, is used in the food and soft drink industries as a stabilizer and in other industrial applications like textiles. The collection of gum Arabic has become a key economic activity in rural areas of Isiolo County, including Kipsing, Ngaremarara, Oldonyiro, and Loruko. The presence of a ready market, facilitated by local agents, has encouraged communities to recognize the value of these trees. This has led to a significant reduction in the destruction of *Acacia* trees, which were previously targeted for charcoal production, fencing, and construction.

Gum collectors have observed that a mature *Acacia Senegal* tree can produce up to 4 kilograms of gum per month, while smaller trees yield about 1.5 kilograms. The peak production season runs from April to August, with June being the most productive month due to optimal climate conditions. The gum is sold at Ksh. 240-260 per kilogram, providing a vital income stream for local communities.

This newfound economic opportunity has shifted community attitudes towards conservation. The Borana and Samburu communities, guided by their



council of elders (Dedha), have become active in preserving these trees. Disciplinary measures have been introduced to prevent illegal cutting of trees, reflecting a strong commitment to conservation. The Kenya Forest Service (KFS) has partnered with local communities, providing support for the transportation and sale of gum and resins.

Promoting non-wood forest products like gum and resin is essential for improving livelihoods and accelerating conservation efforts in ASAL areas. Extension services and training in sustainable extraction and collection methods are crucial for maximizing the benefits of these resources. Additionally, propagating *Acacia Senegal* and other resin-producing species could significantly enhance forest cover and resilience in these regions.

To fully capitalize on this potential, a comprehensive assessment and mapping of tree resources that produce gum and resin should be undertaken. Strengthening policies and governance around non-timber forest products (NTFPs) is also necessary, alongside improving accessibility and security in these areas to support socio-economic development. By focusing on sustainable harvesting of gum and resin, Kenya's ASAL communities can reduce pressure on forests, diversify their economies, and build resilience against climate change.



# Facts and myths about growing eucalyptus plantations in Kenya

By Andrew Soi

## Eucalyptus: Benefits, Challenges, and Considerations

Eucalyptus, a genus within the Myrtaceae family, comprises over 700 species, many of which are exotic hardwoods. These trees have found extensive use in Kenya, both domestically and for export. Globally, the area planted with eucalyptus has grown substantially, from 700,000 hectares in 1995 to over 10 million hectares today, according to the FAO. This dramatic increase reflects the perceived benefits of eucalyptus, which outweigh any negative impacts.

In various countries, eucalyptus plantations are significant. Brazil and India each manage about 4 million hectares, while Spain and China have 390,000 hectares and 8.3 million hectares, respectively. In Australia, eucalyptus trees dominate, constituting 75% of the tree population. The Kenya Forestry Research Institute (KEFRI) estimates that eucalyptus makes up 50% of global forest plantations. Despite concerns, many of these nations have maintained or expanded their eucalyptus areas without substantial complaints, indicating that the benefits often surpass the drawbacks.

Regionally, neighboring Ethiopia has planted eucalyptus for over 400 years, covering more than 250,000 hectares. Angola has 390,000 hectares, and South Africa, with 1.2 million hectares of forest plantations, has 515,000 hectares dedicated to eucalyptus. In Ethiopia, eucalyptus contributes up to 72% of the total household annual cash income for poor families in the central highlands. Kenya has also embraced eucalyptus since its introduction in 1902, initially to fuel the Kenya-Uganda railway. As of 2009, Kenya had less than 50,000 hectares of eucalyptus; this figure has now grown to over 150,000 hectares, making it the most popular tree species in the country.

However, the widespread planting of eucalyptus has raised concerns among environmentalists. Some fear that it could lead to the drying up of water sources, reduced biodiversity, increased flooding, and disrupted nutrient cycling, potentially affecting agricultural crops. These concerns, while significant, often stem from misconceptions rather than empirical evidence.

Eucalyptus trees offer several benefits. They provide high-quality timber for construction and furniture, fuel with high calorific value for various industries, and have a dense root system that aids in erosion control and land reclamation. Additionally, eucalyptus trees grow quickly, sequestering significant amounts of CO<sub>2</sub> and improving water percolation and watershed function. They also serve as effective windbreaks and have various medicinal uses, including treatment for respiratory illnesses.

Nonetheless, eucalyptus trees present challenges. They produce allelopathic compounds that inhibit the growth of other plants and consume more water compared to other species. Their invasive roots can damage infrastructure and disrupt nutrient and water availability. The fast growth of eucalyptus trees can also outcompete slower-growing species for resources.

To mitigate these challenges, it's essential to plant eucalyptus with careful consideration of site-specific conditions. Avoid planting near wetlands, catchment areas, and water sources to prevent excessive water consumption and root invasion. Instead, eucalyptus is best suited for bare, rocky, or degraded areas. Proper management and strategic planting can help balance the benefits of eucalyptus with its environmental impact, ensuring that its advantages are harnessed while minimizing potential drawbacks.



# Kenya's carbon market empowers local communities

By Irene Laigong

Kenya has opened up new economic opportunities for local communities and its forestry agency to benefit from global carbon trading with comprehensive regulations issued in May 2024. The Climate Change (Carbon Markets) Regulations establish a framework for developing emissions reduction projects across sectors like energy, agriculture, forestry and waste management that can earn tradable carbon credits.

A key aspect is the legal requirement for all land-based carbon projects on public or community lands to institute Community Development Agreements. These binding contracts stipulate transparent mechanisms for sharing the annual revenues from carbon credit sales with local communities.

At minimum, 40% of a land-based project's annual earnings after costs must go towards funding community-prioritized development initiatives like education, health, infrastructure, environment conservation and more. The agreements also mandate free, prior and informed consent from communities before implementation.

"This ensures transparency and that communities have a real stake in the proceeds, not just empty promises," said Bahati Mwenza, representing the Maasai community in a REDD+ forestry carbon project.

Grievance redressal committees will also be instituted to receive, deliberate and resolve any grievances from communities regarding project activities or benefit-sharing arrangements.

The regulations pave the way for the Kenya Forest Service (KFS) to participate as a project proponent for forestry and land use activities that reduce emissions from deforestation and forest degradation.

"The carbon markets provide an incentive for KFS to scale up our efforts in rehabilitating and expanding forest cover across the country," said Zarina Malik, KFS's Head of Ecosystem Conservation. "Revived forests enhance biodiversity, water catchments, prevent soil erosion and provide sustainable community livelihoods."

As the agency mandated to manage state and public forests, KFS can now earn carbon credits from approved reforestation, sustainable forest management or conservation projects in degraded areas under its jurisdiction. These credits can be sold on voluntary or compliance carbon markets.

KFS can leverage its forestry expertise and community relationships to develop high-quality carbon projects. External funding and technical support can enable it to fast-track forest landscape restoration for maximizing climate, environmental and economic returns.

The regulations also allow communities themselves to participate as project proponents or landowners for land-based activities like agroforestry or reforestation schemes.

Margizah Village in Kwale County is already exploring possibilities of restoring degraded community lands to increase soil fertility, forest cover and earn carbon credits as a new income source.

"With these new rules allowing us to earn from emissions reductions, it's a new revenue stream we can invest back into our village's priorities," said Hassan Juma from Margizah's community lands association. While compliance projects for entities meeting climate targets are expected, the rules also cover voluntary market projects funded by private companies, investors or donors for offsetting or philanthropy.

Overall, Kenya's new carbon market regulations aim to unleash investments into nature-based solutions and green initiatives by putting communities and forestry conservation at the center. The mandated involvement, free consent and fair benefit-sharing unlocks sustainable sources of climate finance that many regions have been unable to mobilize previously. "This levels the playing field and is an example for other nations to emulate in aligning climate action with sustainable development at the grassroots," noted Dr. Juma Ibrahim, head of Kenya's Designated National Authority overseeing the carbon markets.

# The UN legal framework on climate change

By Tito Okello

The saying, “This world we live in is not an inheritance from our forefathers but a debt we owe to our children,” underscores the essential responsibility we have to protect and enhance our environment for future generations. This awareness gained momentum in 1968 when Amb. Sverker Astrom, the then Swedish Permanent Representative to the United Nations, wrote to the UN Secretary-General advocating for the inclusion of environmental issues on the UN agenda. This led to the landmark United Nations Conference on the Human Environment in Stockholm in 1972. The conference established key principles that laid the groundwork for global environmental policies, emphasizing humanity’s duty to safeguard natural resources for both present and future generations.

The Kenya Forest Service (KFS) is central to implementing these global principles at the national level, ensuring that Kenya’s forestry practices align with international environmental goals. KFS’s mandate reflects the first principle from the 1972 conference—that humanity bears a solemn responsibility to protect and improve the environment. The Service’s role in sustainable forest management directly supports this principle, as it involves meticulous planning and resource management to balance ecological needs with human demands.

Following the Stockholm Conference, international agreements such as the Vienna Convention (1985) and the Montreal Protocol (1987) addressed issues like ozone layer depletion. These agreements mandated member states to adopt measures to mitigate environmental damage and cooperate in scientific research. In Kenya, KFS contributes to these global efforts by incorporating ozone protection

strategies into its forestry management, thereby supporting national and international environmental commitments.

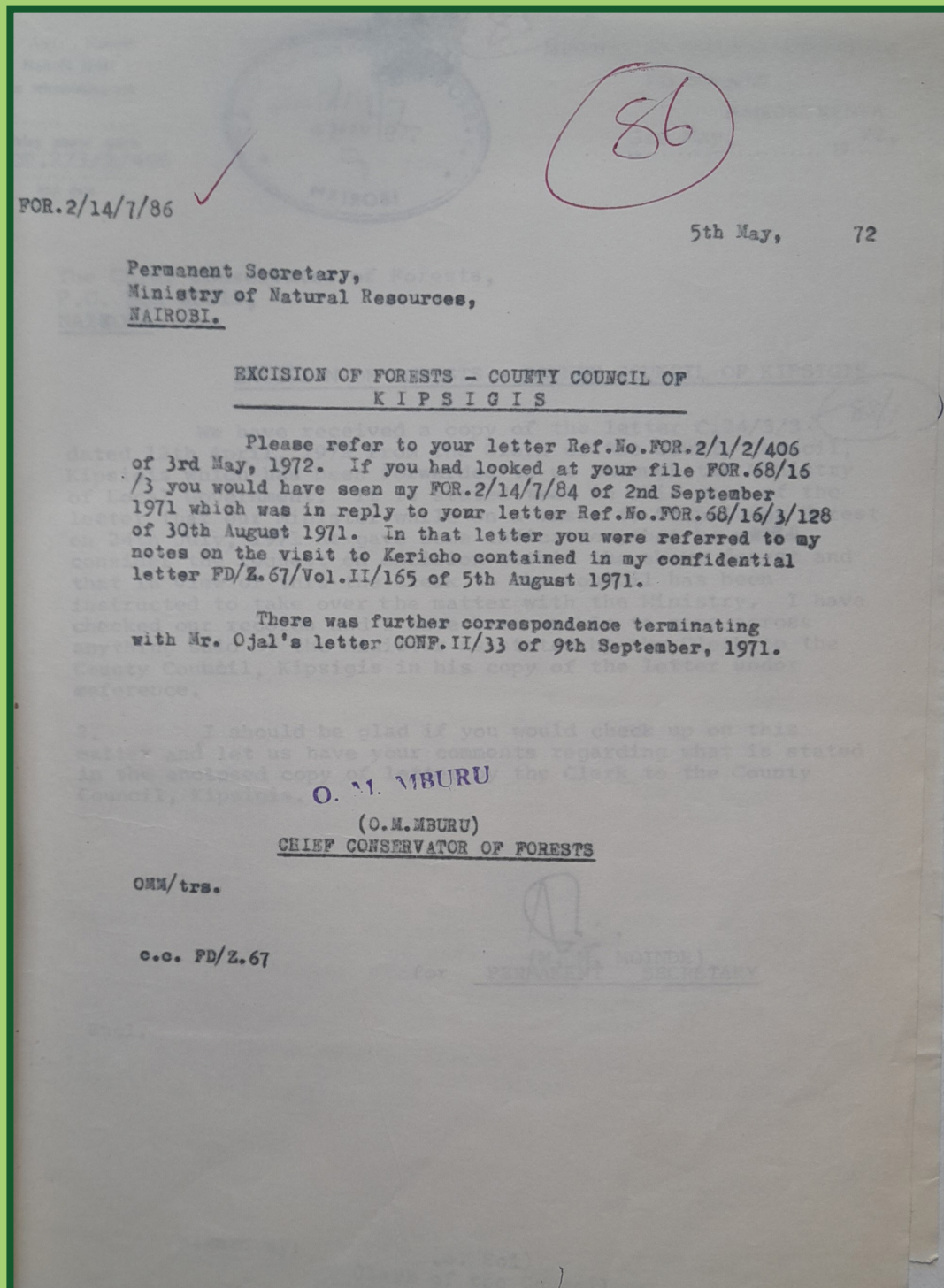
The 1992 United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) further advanced global climate policy by defining climate change and setting goals for stabilizing greenhouse gas concentrations. The principles of common but differentiated responsibilities, support for developing countries, and sustainable development are central to the UNFCCC. KFS’s initiatives, such as expanding tree cover and promoting sustainable forest practices, align with these principles by contributing to carbon sequestration and enhancing forest resilience, which supports Kenya’s climate goals and international obligations.

The Kyoto Protocol (1997) introduced mechanisms like the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) and Joint Implementation (JI) to facilitate emission reductions. The Paris Agreement (2015) built on this by setting a global target to limit temperature rise and requiring countries to submit Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs). Kenya, as a signatory to these agreements, integrates these goals into its environmental policies through KFS’s projects and programs aimed at reducing greenhouse gas emissions and improving forest management.

In summary, the Kenya Forest Service plays a crucial role in aligning Kenya’s forestry practices with global environmental frameworks. By adhering to principles established at international conferences and agreements, KFS supports national efforts to combat climate change, enhance sustainability, and fulfill Kenya’s commitments to future generations.



# From the Archives



## Fun facts about trees

- Trees have been around on Earth for at least 370 million years.
- Some types of tree can live for thousands of years.
- Trees act like the lungs of our planet, turning carbon dioxide into oxygen.
- Trees work together to ward off predators. They release chemical signals to deter pests, warn other trees about a threat, and attract predators that feed on the pests.
- There are 422 times more trees on earth than there are people.
- Trees can communicate with each other via an underground network of soil fungi - they can even send nutrients, water and unused carbon to each other!
- Leaves are lots of colours, including red, yellow, purple and orange, not just green. Chlorophyll makes leaves green and dominates until they get less sunshine, when the other colours start to take over.
- There are over 60,000 species of trees on our planet.
- Trees release chemicals called phytoncides, and research has shown that breathing these in can reduce blood pressure, lower anxiety levels and make us feel happier.

## Inspiration Quotes

"Trees are poems that the earth writes upon the sky."

— Kahlil Gibran

"To be without trees would, in the most literal way, to be without our roots."

— Richard Mabey

"He that plants trees, loves others besides himself."

— Thomas Fuller

"If we lose the forests, we lose our only teachers."

— Bill Mollison

"Learn character from trees, values from roots, and change from leaves."

— Tasneern Harneed

"Look deep into nature, and then you will start to understand everything better."

— Albert Einstein

## Jokes and trees

How do trees access the internet? They log in.  
Which side of a tree has the most leaves? The outside.  
What is every tree's favorite shape? A tree-angle.  
Why do trees hate riddles? Because they don't like being stumped.  
Why are leaves always taking risks? Because they constantly have to go out on a limb.  
What did the tree say to the lumberjack? Leaf me alone!


## Poem

In whispers of leaves, the stories they tell,  
Standing tall and proud, rooted so well.  
Their branches reach for the endless sky,  
A symbol of strength, as time passes by.

With rustling leaves and bark so strong,  
Trees stand resilient, where they belong.  
They offer shade and shelter, a home for all,  
In their grace and beauty, we stand in awe.

Trees, ancient and wise, teach us to grow,  
To weather life's storms and always show.  
That rooted in love and reaching for light,  
We, like trees, can stand strong in life's fight.



A photograph of a paved path in a forest. The path is made of grey rectangular bricks laid in a herringbone pattern. It curves gently to the right and is flanked by dense green trees and foliage. Sunlight filters through the leaves, creating dappled shadows on the path. The sky is visible through the canopy in the upper right.

# Nairobi Arboretum Trail



# Know Your TREES

## *Polyscias kikuyuensis*

**English Name:** Parasol Tree

**Local Name:** Mutati

**Botanic Description:** *Polyscias kikuyuensis* is a tall tree up to 25 m often with an unbranched bole up to 12 m tall and 1.2 m in diameter.

**Ecology:** Thrives in mountain climate types, found in upland rain-forest in the Aberdare ranges, Taita hills, Lari area, Meru and Nakuru districts of Kenya.

**Leaves:** Up to 55 cm long, imparipinnate, less frequently paripinnate; leaflets 3-6 pairs, coriaceous, rarely chartaceous, lanceolate to narrowly ovate, very occasionally rotund, often straight-edged or oblique, up to 14.5 cm long by 6.5 wide, sometimes larger in saplings, acute to acuminate, rarely emarginate, with a rounded to cordate (often subcordate) base, with the margins entire, often very narrowly inrolled, densely stellate-tomentose when young, later glabrescent to some extent, especially above where occasionally glabrous, petiolules of paired leaflets 2-14 mm long.

Inflorescence branches puberulous to tomentose; primaries up to 40 cm long by 2.5 -4 cm diameter, both orders racemosely borne; pedicels up to 9 mm (commonly 2-5 mm) long by 0.5-0.8 mm diameter in umbellules.

**Flowers:** Yellow.

**Fruits:** black, flattened ovoid, elliptical or cylindrical, 4-7.5 mm long, ribbed, apart from the stylopodia and persistent styles densely covered with stellate hairs.

**Uses:** Offers poor quality fuelwood, Produces soft white wood used in boxmaking; the tree trunk can be useful in beehive making.



**Headquarters: Karura, Off Kiambu Road**

P.O. BOX 30513-00100,

Nairobi, Kenya.


Tel: 0202-2020285

Fax: 0202-2385374

Email: [info@kenyaforestservice.org](mailto:info@kenyaforestservice.org)

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