

The UN-REDD Programme 4th Policy Board

Field Visit Annotated Itinerary

17 March 2010



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1. Objectives

1) To provide a platform for members to exchange experiences from their own countries using the Rift Valley landscape mosaic and the Mau Forest Complex issues as the context for a wider discussion about REDD

2) To provide Policy Board Members with an opportunity to engage, discuss and interact informally

2. Overview

Kenya is a country with low forest cover and relatively high rates of deforestation. A field visit in Kenya provides an opportunity to look at a variety of issues related to climate change, deforestation, ecosystem services, the need for regional and South-South cooperation and REDD+.

The Rift Valley of Kenya provides opportunities to explore many of these issues. Resettlement and expansion of populations are visible throughout the valley. The effects of drought as a result of changes in the climate and pressures from the industries in the area can be seen in the regions many lakes. The Mau Forest which is the largest forest ecosystem and the largest water catchment area in Kenya is also located in the Rift Valley.

3. Agenda

Time	Event	Facilitator
0800	Meet at Lobby of the Tribe Hotel, Briefing and distribution of materials	KFS, UNEP, KENVO
08:30	Depart Nairobi	
09:15	Kijabe, Kereita – visit community rehabilitation sites, plantations and forest in groups. Short performance by Kijabe Environment Volunteers (KENVO) (Equator Prize winner)	Kenya Forest Service, KENVO, (Civil Society) UNEP
11:15	Depart to Kikuyu Escarpment Forests: Kinale and Kijabe	
11:30	Timber management - Private sector– Moringa Holdings	Moringa Holdings and Uttam Singh Brar
12:30	Depart Kinale	
13:15	Naivasha - Lunch at the Kenya Wildlife Service Training Institute (KWSTI)	Kenya Wildlife Service
14:00	Kenya Wildlife Service Training Institute (KWSTI) Presentations from the Mau Secretariat and CSO perspectives and	Participants, KFS, Mau Secretariat, Julius Muchemi, KENVO and UN-REDD

	discussions and feedback from field trip	secretariat
1530	Depart Naivasha via Hippo Camp	
1630	Arrival Nairobi	

4. The Kenya Forest Service (KFS) (See fact sheet provided in your folder)

The Kenya Forest Service (KFS) is a state corporation established in 2007, under the Forest Act 2005 to provide for the establishment, development and sustainable management, including conservation and rational utilization of forest resources. KFS has about 5,000 staff, with about a half of these stationed in the field throughout the country.

The service's management structure comprises 10 conservancies that are ecologically demarcated, 76 Zonal Forest Offices (previously district offices) 150 forest stations and 250 divisional forest extension offices. To participate in forest management, forest adjacent communities have formed registered groups and are currently working with KFS to sustainably manage forest resources. There are about 300 community forest associations.

Kenya has about 3.4 million ha of forest of which 1.4 comprises of indigenous closed canopy forests, mangroves and plantations in both public and private lands. Although only 2.4% of total lands, these forests are key for the environmental services they provide for economic and agricultural activities

5. Kenya REDD (see brochure on KENYA REDD in the folder provided)

Vision 2030, the country's economic blueprint, identifies forestry as one of the key drivers of the economy through its support to the primary sectors including agriculture, infrastructure, tourism and energy. Under this vision, the country aims to protect the five water towers (Mt. Kenya, Aberdares, Mau, Cherangani and Mt. Elgon) and increase the forest cover to 10% through an aggressive afforestation, reforestation and restoration programs. In addition, the country is addressing climate change through the development of a National Climate Change Response Strategy (NCCRS). This strategy provides a framework for re-orienting national programmes towards a low carbon development pathway. NCCRS has identified the forestry sector as a strong vehicle for supporting this effort.

6. Kikuyu Escarpment Forests and KENVO

Kijabe Environment Volunteers (KENVO) is a non profit community-based organisation formed by members from the local community living adjacent to the important Kikuyu Escarpment forests. Initially a small group conducted a study which established that limited community awareness (of the forest's value) and poverty were key factors leading to the forest degradation. This original work recommended the initiation of an

awareness campaign on the value and importance of the forest to the adjacent community. Subsequent research has confirmed that most solutions to forest predicaments indeed lie with members of the local community themselves. The vision of the group is: *The biologically rich southern Aberdare forests - the Kikuyu Escarpment forest - and other natural resources will be conserved in whole for their biodiversity importance and support to livelihood of the local community.*

KENVO strives to conserve natural habitats in the Kikuyu Escarpment and their biological diversity, by working with local communities and partners to implement conservation projects, in addition to providing conservation information and education. The objectives are to raise community awareness on the value and importance of the local forests, to link community survival to environmental conservation, to gather information about local natural resources and traditional knowledge for biodiversity conservation and conserve the forests with the local community.

7. Lake Naivasha

The Lake Naivasha basin is located in the Great Rift Valley of Kenya at an altitude ranging from 1,887 (altitude of Lake Naivasha) to 3,906 metres above sea level. The lake is one of the few fresh water lakes in Kenya's Rift Valley as most of the rest are saline.

Economic activities around Lake Naivasha include small scale agriculture, horticulture, ranching, tourism and geothermal power production. Over 50 square kilometers of land around the lake is under large scale commercial horticulture and flower farming. These activities are a livelihood for over 500,000 people living within the basin.

Major threats to ecosystems in the Lake Naivasha landscape emanate from watershed environmental degradation, unregulated and excessive water abstraction for domestic and agricultural use, poor land use practices, weak policy enforcement, water pollution and high poverty prevalence. The trend leads to significant environmental degradation, biodiversity losses, economic losses and worsening poverty.

About Lake Naivasha's upper catchments

Naivasha basin upper catchments comprise of several upland forests: Mau, Eburu, Kipipiri, Kinangop and Aberdares. These forests form essential catchments providing water that supports diverse habitats, livelihoods and economic development. Important rivers draining into Lake Naivasha are the Gilgil, Malewa, Karati (seasonal) and their tributaries. River Marmanet drains into Lake Naivasha from Eburu ranges. The Aberdare Mountains reach a height of 4,000 metres and are among the critical watersheds of Kenya. This mountain range supports important biodiversity conservation areas: Aberdare National Park, Aberdare Forest Reserve, Lake Naivasha Ramsar Site and its associated riparian system.

8. Mau Forest Complex

The Mau Forest has suffered from deforestation and forest degradation in the past 10-20 years. Land-allocation, illegal logging and forest-land conversion for agriculture has played a large part towards the degradation of this important ecosystem. Currently, the Kenyan government is engaged in reforestation and conservation efforts to try to combat these challenges. Given its significance, the Mau Forest remains a newsworthy topic in Kenya, dominating the front-page of newspapers and magazines, specifically because of issues related to governance, resettlement and related water issues.

The conversion of the Mau forest block, the single largest forest block in East Africa (400,000 ha), is of a national and international importance as it is an important water catchment area, a life-line for the famous Maasai Mara and the Serengeti National parks, hydro energy generation, wildlife habitat and biodiversity. According to one valuation, the market value of goods and services generated annually in the tea, tourism and energy sectors alone, to which the forest of the Mau Complex have contributed, is in excess of US\$ 286 million.