



KEFRI *Newsletter*

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The Cabinet Secretary Ministry of Environment Climate Change and Forestry, Hon. Soipan Tuyu together with Laikipia Governor Joshua Irungu and Chief Conservator of Forests Alex Lemarkoko visiting KEFRI stand during the International Day of Forests celebrations at Lariak, Laikipia County



KEFRI staff from Lamu Sub-centre participates in tree planting at Hindi GK Prison to mark International Day of Forests 2024

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Contributors:

Stephen Gitonga, Mitchel Akinyi, Simon Ndegwa, Betsy Namisi, Maureen Kemuma

Editors:

Dr. Victor Jaoko, Gitonga Stephen, Sarah Mogaka, Betsy Namisi, Dorothy Ochieng

Layout and Design: Evans Abuje

International Day of Forests 2024

The Cabinet Secretary Ministry of Environment, Climate Change and Forestry Hon. Soipan Tuya led the Country in marking the International Day of Forests at Majani Beat - Lariak Forest Station in Laikipia County.

Speaking during the event the CS commended the use of Jazamiti App. which she said enables her Ministry to track tree growing in public and private lands.

While visiting the KEFRI stand, the CS noted that JazaMiti database indicates over 86 million tree seedlings have been planted since the launch of the 15 Billion National Tree Growing and Landscapes Restoration Programme.

The CS further noted that although fine-tuning of the Jazamiti App is in progress, the software has proved to be a critical tool for monitoring and evaluating the 15 Billion tree growing initiative in the country. She also commended the Forest 123 App, being used by KFS and other agencies to monitor forest degradation and enhance conservation.

“I am delighted to commemorate the International Day of Forests, for the year 2024 celebrated under the theme; ‘Forests and Innovation: New Solutions for a Better World’. The theme aligns with Kenya’s goal of maximizing the benefits of innovations in forest management including: the use drones and other innovations to amplify protection of our forests and needs of our communities,” the CS said.

“The Government through Kenya Forestry Research Institute is establishing 18 tree seed centres across the country to facilitate collection, processing and distribution of quality tree seeds. I wish to commend the Laikipia County Government for donating 20 acres of land to KEFRI which now accommodates one of the 18 tree seed centres,” said the CS.

“The Ministry in collaboration with respective County Governments in all 47 counties will also grow 5.2 million tree seedlings only where ample soil moisture allows the tree survival,” said CS.

The CS urged all stakeholders to embark on growing quality tree seedlings including fodder and fruit trees to increase tree and forest cover, conserve the environment as well as ensure food security for both human and livestock. However she urged scientists and tree growers to propagate quality tree seedlings and embrace biodegradable potting materials in the tree nurseries.

She also called upon KFS to cultivate good relationship with forest adjacent communities led by CFA in promoting conservation of forests.

The PS State Department for Forestry-Mr. Mugambi Gitonga; Laikipia Governor, H.E Joshua Irungu; and County Women Rep Hon. Jane Kagiri, KFS Board members, Chief Conservator of Forests, Mr. Alex Lemarkoko; KEFRI Director Dr. Jane Njuguna, FAO representative, the County Administrators among other ministry officials made their remarks.

“The Country is proud to host the national celebrations and noting that Lariak forest require fencing to minimize human animal conflicts,” said Governor Irungu.

The National Government in collaboration with the County Government targets to grow 373million seedlings in Laikipia County of which the County will raise 83million in ten years period.

Laikipia County which currently has a tree cover of 11.2 percent, and 9.86 forest cover will grow diverse trees including fruit trees for the achievement of 30 percent target, said the Governor.

The County Government will drill boreholes and establish tree nurseries in public schools in support of the 15billion tree programme by 2032. Laikipia is a water scarce County, and the County Government will provide 50,000 households with water tanks for roof water harvesting to entrench agroforestry practice.

Other KEFRI Eco-regions also marked the International Day of Forests as follows:

- Coast Eco-region Research Programme led by KEFRI Board Chairman Rtd. Samson Mwathethe planted 100 trees at Gede aboretum, while KEFRI Lamu planted trees at Hindi GoK Prison.
- DERP in collaboration with Kitui County Government planted trees at Kalivu Vocational Training Centre, Kitui South.
- RVERP planted trees at Sorget Forest Kipkelion East Sub-County. Turbo team in partnership with Nature Based Stakeholders planted 1000 trees at Endebes Teacher Training Institute.
- LVBERP team in collaboration with Kisumu County Administration planted trees at Mbaka Oromo Primary School, Kisumu County. Migori team together with Hatua Trust planted trees at Bande ACK, Nyatike.

World Wetlands Day



Lake Narasha Uasin Gishu County

KEFRI participated in the World Wetlands Day 2024's celebrations at Lake Narasha, Timboroa Dam in Uasin Gishu County.

The Cabinet Secretary Environment Climate Change and Forestry Hon. Soipan Tuya presided over the event held on 2nd February 2024. The event was celebrated under the theme “Wetlands and Human Well-being,” underscoring the essential connection between human well-being and the health of wetland ecosystems.

Hon. Tuya highlighted challenges wetlands ecosystems face in Kenya, expressing concerns about human encroachment and the need to recognize their vital functions. The CS also appealed to communities not to settle along wetlands and emphasized the importance of rehabilitating and conserving wetlands referring to them as the Earth's kidneys.

CS Tuya further stated that, “Kenya's wetlands cover approximately 4% of total land area and are home to key flora and fauna and my Ministry is committed to participatory practices of forest management and will embrace stakeholders from all walks of life to restore these ecosystems.”

Dr. Jane Njuguna Ag. Director KEFRI in her remarks thanked the Ministry for its support and sought to remind the country that KEFRI is distributing quality tree seeds to enable the country achieve the 15 Billion tree growing programme.

Ondiri Wetlands Conservation Run

KEFRI staff participated in the 3rd Edition of Ondiri Wetland Conservation Run, held at Kikuyu, Kiambu County. The Friends of Ondiri Wetland organized the event as a buildup activity towards World Wetlands day celebration scheduled for 2nd February, 2024.

The PS, Environment and Climate Change Eng. Festus Ng'eno graced the event and ran 10kms to conserve the watershed which has experienced degradation.

The National Environment Management Authority, Director General Mr. Mamo Boru Mamo, Mama Doing Good CEO, Dr. John Chumo and Assistant Sub County Commissioner - Kikuyu, Mr Ignatius Kiema, Charles Kogi - Alliance High School, Muchendu Githeci from Konza Technopolis were among dignitaries who participated in the run.

Ondiri wetland is the source of Nairobi River and amongst 9,500 wetlands that NEMA has identified for rehabilitation and gazettement.

KEFRI wins trophy at Eldoret ASK show 2024

KEFRI through the Rift Valley Eco-region Research Programme displayed various forestry technologies and innovations at the Eldoret National Agriculture Society of Kenya show held from 6th to 9th March, 2024.

Visitors had an opportunity to interact with KEFRI experts dealing with; collection and distribution of quality tree seeds and seedlings; bamboo propagation, and the achievement of 15 Billion National Tree Growing and Landscapes Restoration Programme.

KEFRI is ISO 14001:2015 and 9001:2015 IMS certified and received an award in demonstrating the application of environmental quality standards.



CS for Agriculture & Livestock Development Hon. Mithika Linturi (Centre) awards KEFRI a trophy for best performance

The Institute also scoped the second best position in Research and Development category, the second best National Government Ministry stand, and third best in Seed Production and Marketing.

The Legislator for Kesses constituency Hon. Julius Ruto and Uasin Gishu County Agriculture CEO Mr. Elvis Kesio also visited the stand.



KEFRI staff celebrates awards received at Eldoret ASK Show

KEFRI Board of Directors monitor research activities in Rift Valley Eco-Region Research Programme

The newly appointed KEFRI Board of Directors carried out monitoring of research and development activities under Rift Valley Eco-region Research Program (RVERP).

The activity kicked off in Marigat, Baringo County where the Board of Directors held a consultative meeting with Hon. Charles Kamuren, the MP for Baringo South.

“I am happy to welcome the KEFRI Board of Directors to Baringo County. The presence of KEFRI in Marigat has made a tremendous difference in the area and has greatly improved the lives of my constituents,” said Hon. Kamuren.

Hon. Kamuren who also serves as the Vice-Chair of the Parliamentary Committee on Environment, Forestry and Mining, stated that his committee is excited to work with KEFRI towards achieving 15B tree cover by 2032, which is a key target of the Government.

“As we increase our tree cover as a country we will inadvertently also improve the livelihood of our people. I wish to challenge KEFRI to also look into value addition as a way of enticing more people into growing trees,” he said.

The Board of Directors visited Salabani area where the community is processing *Prosopis juliflora* (Mathenge) to make BioChar which serves to retain carbon in the soil during planting.

“Although *Prosopis* is an invasive species, we are looking for ways to gain from it as well as improve the lives of our people,” said John Mayeka, from Plant Village an NGO working on *Prosopis* management in the area.

The project is also working with Community Based Organizations (CBOs) in clearing *Prosopis* from their farms cultivate tomatoes, maize and pasture for their livestock. The NGO has further

helped the farmers source for markets for their produce in nearby towns.

The Board of Directors proceeded to KEFRI Turbo sub-centre where they monitored clonal seed orchards of *Eucalyptus grandis* and *Grevillea robusta*. The plantations that were propagated vegetatively ensure production of superior quality seed.

“We are cloning superior mother trees in order to ensure that the off-spring is of superior quality in terms of height and growth,” said Martin Welimo a senior forester at the Sub-centre. The Sub-centre is also carrying out trials cross breeding various *Pinus* species in order to come up with superior hybrid species.

While conducting the Board of Directors through the centre tree nursery the Assistant Regional Director Ms. Joyce Okumu said, "Turbo tree nursery hosts over 150,000 seedlings of assorted indigenous and exotics, grafts of fruit trees and ornamentals."

The Board of Directors concluded their activity of KEFRI Rift Valley regional offices with a field visit to John Finlays Company in Kericho which is utilizing KEFRI-developed Bamboo and *Eucalyptus* technologies.

The activity also extended to the Kamara establishment plot, providing a comprehensive overview of KEFRI's advancements in sustainable forestry practices.



KEFRI Board of Directors visits Finlays greenhouse in Kericho County

Finlays Tea Extracts - Kenya, is a leading sustainable tea production and coffee sourcing 150 manufacturer and supplier of tea extracts to the global market.

The Company combine deep agricultural know-how to grow tea at high altitude of around 2,000m above sea level, where temperatures are generally lower and ultraviolet radiation (UV-radiation) from the sun is blocked less by the atmosphere.

With Rainforest Alliance Certified™, the company sustainably addresses the environmental, social and economic challenges faced by farmers and their communities.

The Rainforest Alliance Certified™ seal shows consumers that products, or ingredients, are produced on farms that help support the rights and well-being of farm workers, the conservation of natural resources and the protection of wildlife and the environment.

Cabinet Secretaries visit KEFRI on Ministry's performance evaluation

KEFRI hosted three Cabinet Secretaries from: the Ministry of Environment, Climate Change and Forestry Hon. Soipan Tuya; Public Service, Performance and Delivery Management Hon. Moses Kuria; and Secretary to the Cabinet Ms. Mercy Wanjau, during the Ministry of Environment, Climate Change and Forestry's presentation on GOK LAB report.



CSs and PSs visit during the Ministry of Environment, Climate Change and Forestry's presentation on GOK LAB report at KEFRI Hq

The Cabinet Secretaries were accompanied by the Principal Secretaries Eng. Festus Ng'eno (Environment and Climate Change department), Ms. Veronica Nduva (Performance and Delivery Management) and Mr. James Muhati (Economic Planning) and Mr. Gitonga Mugambi (Forestry department).



CS MoECCF Hon. Soipan Tuya plants a tree at KEFRI in the presence of PSs, CCF and Ag. Director KEFRI

The Guests were received by the Ag. Director KEFRI, Dr. Jane Njuguna.

The Cabinet Secretaries held a joint meeting to deliberate on the Government wide roadshow which is aimed at enhancing performance and efficiency of Ministries through setting of baseline indicators and continuous monitoring and reporting.

During the meeting Hon. Tuya requested for a roadshow for the 15 Billion tree growing campaign across the country to maximise on efficiency.

“Between 2022 and 2032, the Government is committed to plant 15 Billion trees as one of the key strategies to increase tree and forest cover to 30% as well as tackle negative effects of climate change,” the CS said.

PS Forestry, Mr. Gitonga Mugambi visits SFS-CORECC Project



The PS Forestry Gitonga Mugambi during impact assessment visit

Principal Secretary State Department of Forestry Mr. Gitonga Mugambi visited KEFRI-Kitui to assess the ongoing project for Strengthening Forest Sector Development and Community Resilience to Climate Change through Sustainable Forest Management and Landscape Restoration (SFS-CORECC) which is being implemented by the Ministry in collaboration with Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) in Kitui County.

The PS, who was on a 2-day visit was taken through the project which aims to strengthen the capacity of relevant institutions in the forest sector to promote sustainable forest management and landscape restoration in Kenya.

The project has four components which include; policy support and forest data management, commercial forestry through public-private partnerships and community participation, tree breeding as well as enhancement of KEFRI's functional capacity.

Also present at the meeting were; KEFRI Ag. Director Dr. Jane Njuguna, senior officials from the Ministry, KEFRI and SFS-CORECC project partners.

Government explores opportunity for Agro-and Commercial Forestry

The Ministry of Environment Climate Change and Forestry together with Development Partners is exploring opportunities for expanding the forestry value chain for wealth and employment creation in line with the Government Bottom-up Economic Transformation Agenda (BETA).

Principal Secretaries Mr. Gitonga Mugambi (Forestry) and Mr. Charles Hinga (Housing and Urban Development) on 1st March 2024, held a discussion on 'Greening Construction with sustainable wood'. The meeting was co-hosted by H.E Caroline Vicini the Swedish Ambassador to Kenya and Mr. Anthony Ngororano UNDP Kenya Resident Representative.

The discussions focused on commercial forestry and encouraged fostering collaboration through engagement in partnerships across sectors and borders to share knowledge, technologies, and best practices in order to overcome challenges and accelerate progress towards achieving common goals.

The parties also discussed innovations in technology focusing on research to enhance wood strength, durability and versatility. Measures in expanding wood applications in construction while reducing waste and increasing efficiency.

The Ministry is keen on ensuring agro-and commercial forestry with an ambitious target to increase its commercial forests from the current 180,000 Ha to 750,000 Ha. hence increase contribution to Kenya's Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

The Director of Forest Conservation at the Ministry, Mr. George Tarus, KEFRI Ag. Director Dr. Jane Njuguna and Kenya Forest Service Chief Conservator of Forests Mr. Alex Lemarkoko were also present at the meeting.

Launch of Mathenge Management for Decent Green Jobs and Livelihood Support Project



Garissa County Governor, International Labour Organization and KEFRI representatives sign Memorandum of Association

KEFRI in collaboration with the International Labour Organization (ILO), County Governments of Garissa and Tana River, Garissa University and Kenya Industrial Research and Development Institute (KIRDI) launched the *Prosopis juliflora* (Mathenge) Management for Decent Green Jobs & Livelihood Support Project in Garissa County on 19th March, 2024.

The project aims at enhancing livelihood and building resilience of communities afflicted by Mathenge through sustainable use of the species to create decent jobs and sustainable livelihoods.

The one year project will focus on three components namely: enhancing the local capacity of individuals and community groups mainly youth and women; exploiting economic benefits of *P. juliflora* through management, harvesting, and value addition; and manufacturing using pro-employment and local resource-based approaches.

“Although Mathenge is a menace to local communities; research has shown that it can also be used for livelihood creation,” said Lilian Ndinda of ILO.

KEFRI Deputy Director for Socio-Economics Policy and Governance, Dr. Joram Kagombe, representing the Director, stated that despite the challenges brought about by Mathenge, there are many other untapped opportunities to be harnessed, including production of charcoal, animal feeds, energy and foodstuff.

Garissa County Governor Hon. Nathif Jama Adam thanked ILO and KEFRI for the collaboration but emphasized on the importance of setting realistic time lines.

“My Government is already working with ‘Mathenge Maisha’ - a CBO, facilitating communities manage the tyree menace,” said the Governor, who also called upon his constituents to support the project and learn from it.

In response to the ecological threat of Mathenge, the National Government through the Cabinet has approved the ‘National Strategy and Action Plan for the Control and Management of Invasive *Prosopis juliflora* species’.

Tree Planting and Landscape Restoration in Migori County

Her Excellency Dr. Pastor Dorcas Gachagua joined KEFRI staff from Migori sub-centre in a tree planting and landscape restoration activity at Kendege Polytechnic, Migori County on 25th January, 2024.



H.E Dr. Pastor Dorcas Gachagua in a tree planting and landscape restoration activity at Kendege Polytechnic, Migori County

The Second Lady graced the event by planting an Elgon Teak (*Olea welwitschii*) tree as part of government agenda of growing 15 Billion trees by 2032. In her remarks, she called upon every citizen to plant 30 trees annually in order to restore degraded ecosystems.

The tree planting activity was a collaboration of key technical agencies of the government including, the Kenya Forest Service, Migori County Government, GoK Kehancha Prison and non-state actors.

KEFRI Migori donated the seedlings of *Acacia polyacantha*, *Eucalyptus urophylla*, and *Cupressus lusitanica*.

This tree planting activity aims to grow 70,000 tree seedlings in Maeta Forest, St. Joseph Secondary School, Kendege Prison, Kehancha police station and Kendege Polytechnic.

Memorandum of Association

KEFRI and NGARA signed an MOA to implement a project titled "Bolstering Resilience and Livelihoods: Strengthening Non-Timber Forest Products" in Baringo County.



NGARA's Executive Secretary Dr. Chikamai and KEFRI Ag. Director Dr. Njuguna exchange the MoA

Network for Gums and Resins in Africa (NGARA) Executive Secretary Dr. Ben Chikamai and KEFRI Ag. Director Dr. Jane Njuguna signed the Agreement during a meeting held at KEFRI Karura on 14th March, 2024.

“The project aims to grow 500,000 indigenous trees and 1million aloes to diversify valuable plants in Baringo County which is one of the eight counties heavily infested by *Prosopis juliflora*,” stated Dr. Chikamai

Additionally, the project seeks to enhance stakeholder engagement through training programs in sustainable resource utilization, information exchange and technology transfer within the industry to foster collaboration and best practices.

By synergizing efforts, the project will establish a more efficient supply chain, leading to increased food security, rural development, and poverty alleviation. The 5 year project will focus on the socioeconomic advancement of Baringo County.

NGARA is a PanAfrican organisation that is assisting African producing countries and partners formulate a coordinated strategy for the sustainable development of their natural gums, resins and allied dryland resources.

KEFRI signs MoU with ARTAGRO POLSKA

KEFRI Acting Director Dr. Jane Njuguna signed a Memorandum of Understanding on 23rd January 2024 with ARTAGRO POLSKA SP. Z.0.0, a Polish Company Director Mr. Marek Ciborowski, which will test hydrogel technology in the forestry sector in Kenya.

“Hydrogel is a super absorbent substance designed for use underground to improve water absorption and retention capacity for seeds and seedling production,” said Mr Ciborowski.

“KEFRI has tested hydrogel in seedling production since 1980’s. However, this new product will be a game changer in supporting the realization of the 15 Billion National Tree Growing and Restoration Campaign,” said Dr. Njuguna.

Kenya is a water scarce country and upscaling hydrogel technology especially in ASALs will enhance the growth of trees and other crops in agroforestry at micro and macro levels, she added.

The two parties mutually agreed on several components including conducting forestry research and development, partnership and linkages, resource mobilization, information sharing and publishing joint research.

The ceremony was also graced by 4th House Consultants, Germany Imaging Technology, Truly Kenya, and Youth for Green Action in Kenya- an NGO conserving forestry in Kenya.



KEFRI Ag. Director Dr. Njuguna and ARTAGRO POLSKA Director Mr. Ciborowski addressing delegates that attended the signing of the agreement

KEFRI hosts Transilvania University Professors

KEFRI Acting Senior Deputy Director Research and Development Dr. M.T.E Mbuvi held a meeting with Prof. Bogdan Popa and Prof. Claudiu Coman from Transilvania University of Brasov - Romania.

“The objective of the visit was to explore gaps in forestry and silviculture as well as interventions, and areas of further collaboration in research and development for the benefit of the two institutions. Transilvania University has 626 partnerships from 82 countries and the silviculture and forestry faculty is one of the oldest in the University,” said Prof. Popa.



Prof. Bogdan Popa from Transilvania University of Brasov exchanging documents with KEFRI Ag. SDD, R&D Dr. M.T.E Mbuvi after signing the MoU

Dr. M.T.E. Mbuvi representing the Director said KEFRI signed an MoU with the university in 2023 to collaborate in research and development, share data and research information for the benefit of both institutions.

The University has sponsored two Kenyan students - Messrs Eric and Ibrahim Osewe who are pursuing PhD studies focusing on socio-economic status of Kakamega and Karura forests in Kenya.

The duo Professors will undertake field visits in the countryside to supervise Ibrahim Osewe who is back in the country collecting data in Kakamega natural forest, a remnant of Congo rainy forest. The forest reserve is undergoing degradation due to intrusion by the increasing human population.



Mr. Patrick Mugi

Monitoring, Evaluation and
Learning Specialist - FAO

TOPIC:

Forest Landscape Restoration (FLR) Monitoring Standards to Guide Ecosystem Restoration

KEFRI hold its 3rd Public Lecture

KEFRI held its 3rd public lecture on 20th February 2024. Mr. Patrick Mugi, an expert in Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Specialist working with Food at Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) presented virtually.

Dr. Robert Nyambati welcomed the 162 participants who attended the online meeting KEFRI Ag. Senior Deputy Director for Research and Development Dr. M.T.E Mbuvi in his opening remarks, urged participants to engage and interact with Mr. Mugi who have a wealth of knowledge in monitoring and evaluating landscapes.

KEFRI Acting Deputy Director for Forest Biodiversity Environment Management Dr. Jared Amwatta introduced the speaker, Mr Patrick Mugi, as a Kenyan citizen who holds a bachelor's degree in agriculture and rural development from University of Nairobi and a postgraduate degree in project planning and management from Catholic University of East Africa.

“ Mr. Mugi is currently working with FAO as a lead monitoring expert for the Kenyan ASAL chapter restoration initiative program, has served in different donor and multilateral organization, in various capacities, and key among them are GoK, FAO, IFAD and USAID,” said Dr. Amwatta.

“I have interacted with Mr. Mugi in a technical working group while developing a National Landscape Restoration Monitoring and Learning framework,” said Dr. Amwatta

In his presentation Mr. Mugi, outlined forest and landscape restoration, as an active, long-term process that involves conservation of intact ecosystems as well as recovery of degraded or destroyed ones.

“Landscape restoration aims to regain ecological functionality and enhance human well-being it is riddled with uncertainties due to many factors including the impact of climate change,” Mugi explained.

Mugi stressed the imperative need to monitor and evaluate restoration projects over time. He categorized the restoration based on three key purposes:

1. Implementation monitoring to determine the extent of activities carried out compared to the planned ones (e.g., tree growth).
2. Outcome monitoring to assess the degree of goal achievement, focusing on results such as tree cover.
3. Impact/effects monitoring to evaluate the ecological, cultural, and socioeconomic effects of the project, attributing changes to the initiative (e.g., impact on livelihoods).

Monitoring and evaluation enable adaptive and ongoing management. Successful actions can be scaled up, ineffective approaches scaled down, and new methods promoted based on the gathered data, said Mr. Mugi.

Mugi highlighted the importance of participatory approach in monitoring, engaging stakeholders, including indigenous peoples, and incorporating diverse knowledge types. He discussed the development of an M&E system, emphasizing the need for a well-articulated plan with specific objectives, indicators, and approaches.

In Kenya for instance, under the TRI project, KEFRI and FAO is collaborating in restoring through enrichment planting in Mukogodo forest in Laikipia and Mt. Kulal in Masabit County, said Mugi.

Key aspects of a monitoring framework, including a Results Framework (Log Frame), M&E Plan, Performance Indicator Reference Sheet (PIRS), Performance Indicator Tracking Table (PITT), M&E Calendar & Budget, and tools for data collection, were discussed.

Mr. Mugi stressed the significance of involving stakeholders in the monitoring process and budget, which determines the scope and intensity of M&E efforts.

This process to revitalizes local communities, restores biodiversity, and contributes to climate change mitigation.

He advised scientists to recognizing their permanent interrelationships with nature and the knowledge they possess.

“Collaboration with indigenous peoples, and reinforcement of their rights in monitoring processes lead to early detection of emerging problems and sustainable,” said Mr. Mugi.

Mr. Mugi also highlighted various tools for data collection, including Collect Earth for biophysical

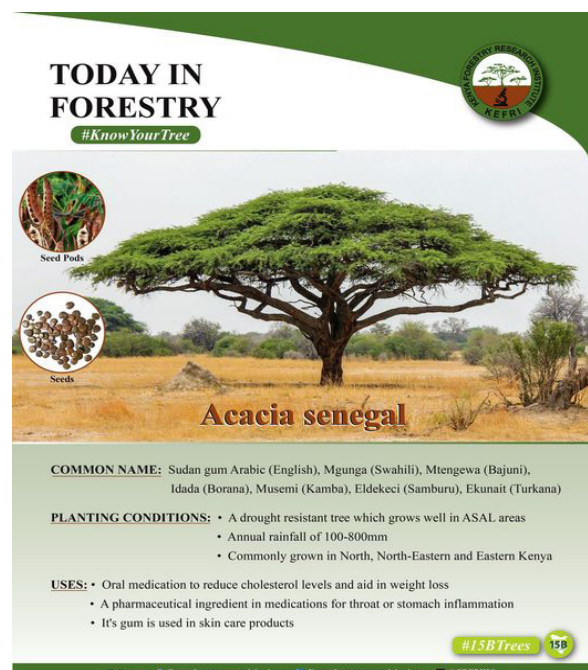
data and Collect Mobile for socioeconomic data. He also introduced the Forest and Landscape Ecosystem Restoration Monitoring (FERM) platform for collation, dissemination, and sharing of restoration project data.

In conclusion, Mr Mugi emphasized the urgency of reviving damaged ecosystems, stating that healthier ecosystems lead to a healthier planet.

He called for immediate action to restore ecosystems for the benefit of climate, nature, and humanity.

Restoration of degraded landscapes can produce triple wins for the climate, biodiversity and economic development. Monitoring can help communities, governments, companies, NGOs and donors understand where restoration interventions - such as planting and maintaining trees-are having an impact on carbon storage, biodiversity and rural livelihoods. It can help those doing the hard work of restoration see where success can be replicated, learn quickly from failures, and adjust their projects where needed.

With renewed interest in nature-based solutions to climate change, more donors are looking to invest in Africa’s restoration movement, thus monitoring can show funders where their investment is having real impact.



JICA Team visits KEFRI



KEFRI officials led by Acting Director Dr. Jane Njuguna (Centre) with JICA inspection team

A team of experts from the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) Headquarters, Tokyo visited KEFRI on 17th January 2024 to conduct an audit on JICA projects in Kenya.

As part of the audit, the team visited Kitui County where for the past three decade, KEFRI and JICA have collaborated on forestry research, with JICA supporting key projects, including the development of improved dryland species including *Melia volkensii*, (Mukau). Mukau is a fast growing hardwood species native to dryland regions of Kitui, Makueni, Machakos, Embu and Tharaka Nithi. The tree which is drought-tolerant and termite-resistant, can be intercropped very well with other food crops.



Melia orchard comprising genotypes of suitable mother trees is under trial for seed productivity in Kitui County

It produces high quality termite resistant timber which is superior, compared to commonly used woods in market, thus it is colloquially referred as the Kenyan mahogany.

KEFRI trains Botswana seed experts

KEFRI in partnership effort with JICA and Japan Forest Technical Association (JAFTA), rolled out a training program for a delegation from Botswana Seed Centre.

The 3-week programme that took place at KEFRI Headquarters, focused on impacting skills on tree seed production and field visits to experimental sites and seed orchards.

The knowledge acquired is expected to be instrumental in enhancing Botswana's forestry sector.



Delegation from Botswana Seed Centre attending training at KEFRI Headquarters

KEFRI's Ag. Director, Dr. Jane Njuguna, in her welcoming remarks, emphasized the importance of collaboration for effective knowledge and technology transfer.

“KEFRI has ample experts on seed research, training and information dissemination tree species in addition to modern testing laboratories and seed handling and storage facilities,” said the Director.

In 1985, the Government of Kenya with the support of GTZ (Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit) on behalf of the Federal Republic of Germany formed Kenya Forestry Seed Centre which is part of KEFRI that offers tree seed research and conservation of genetic resources.

Today, KFSC with support from GoK has expanded its operations to eighteen seed collection centres situated in different ecological regions of the country, with a national mandate to collect and distribute 100 MT of quality tree seed of both exotics and indigenous species for the attainment of 30% tree cover by 2032.

Retirement Planning Seminar

KEFRI Pension Scheme in conjunction with Sanlam Investment East Africa and Minet Kenya Finance Services, rolled out a Retirement training for staff at the Headquarters, on 15th March 2024.

Pension Trustee Chairman Mr. Charles Koech represented by Chair Finance and Investment Committee Mr. Joseph Machua, stated that the training is conducted after every three years to enrich members with skills to manage themselves financially during retirement.

Trustees Mr. Fredrick Odhiambo, Mr. Timothy Wanjala and Commissioner Rose Osoro, noted that pension is the only assured source of income that many veterans rely upon during retirement.

Messrs Mathew Mue and Andrew Mutuku from Sanlam Investment East Africa urged staff to create budget management plans that cater for efficient inflow and outflow of money.

“Debt can be considered good or bad depending on end product or intent. A bad debt is typically a loan or money borrowed to purchase rapidly depreciating assets, leisure or consumption. On the other hand, a good loan is a debt to acquire homes, land or other investments that create value and has the potential to increase net worth or significantly enhance livelihoods,” said Mue.

Mr. Mue advocates for efficient spending of monthly salary: 50% on domestic needs, 20% investment, 20% saving and 10% donations.

He further urged staff to invest in Money Market Funds, Shares or Bonds from Banks and other profit making institutions including, real estate and National Stock Exchange which are some of the investments with minimal risk.

Mr. Robert Rotich of Minet Kenya Finance Services, the Administrator of KEFRI funds, stated that KEFRI Pension Scheme in the year ending 31st December 2023 made approximately 86 million shillings profit.

“Ample savings provide important supplemental income for unforeseen expenses. Group pension plans provide guaranteed, monthly income for life, which makes financial security in retirement much more achievable for those who have them. Additional Voluntary Contribution (AVC), non-taxable, are another way of increasing pension benefits” said Mr. Rotich

The Trustees will engage the employer seeking consensus agreement on Post Retirement Medical Fund to be deducted at 10% from the scheme to boost the income streams for pension.

KEFRI recently engaged 80 new staff to undertake forestry research and innovation in 18 sub-centres nationwide. The new staff will boost the Pension fund that will propel KEFRI scheme towards greater heights for their benefit.



Mr. Mathew Mue of Sanlam Investment making a presentation to KEFRI staff during Pension sensitization meeting

Take Note:

In a draft National Retirement Benefits Policy released by the National Treasury, the Government proposes to revise the Pension Scheme to enable Kenyans save for retirement home and pay for their medical care during retirement.

The Parliament has received a legislative proposal - the Public Service Commission (Amendment) Bill 2023 to lower the statutory retirement to 55 years - aim to give young employees opportunities to grow in the service professionally and to lower pension bill. However, Salaries and Remunerations Commission has opposed the proposal citing taxpayers will carry a higher pension liability, and the nation would lose rich experience that bolster the Kenyan workforce.



Corporate Affairs and Quality Assurance staff bid farewell to Dr. Jackson Mulatya aka Father of ISO standards, and Geoffrey Nganga Mukundi who have retired after serving the Institute under CA&QA amongst other departments



KEFRI staff Mr. George Etindi displaying assorted Bamboo products during the 2024 International Wetlands Day held at Lake Narasha, Timboroa in Uasin Gishu County

Kenya Forestry Research Institute (KEFRI)
Headquarters Muguga, off Zambezi, Nairobi - Nakuru Highway
Tel: +254 724 259 781/2, 722 157 414
E-mail:director@kefri.org, Website:www.kefri.org

Follow us:  Kenya forestry research institute  @KEFRIHQ

