



**NATIONAL ENVIRONMENT MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY**

**COMMEMORATION  
OF WORLD DAY TO COMBAT DESERTIFICATION  
AT TARASAA SECONDARY SCHOOL**

**REPORT**



**TANA DELTA DISTRICT**

**TANA RIVER COUNTY**

**HELD ON**

**17<sup>TH</sup> JUNE 2012**

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## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

The World Day to Combat Desertification (WCD) is an annual event set aside by the United Nations to reflect on our environment and is celebrated on the 17th June every year all over the world. It lays emphasis on fragile ecosystems in arid and semi arid lands. The observation of this day aims at sensitizing the public to the fact that desertification, land degradation and drought dramatically affects the productivity of our natural resources. Tana River District was selected to host the World Day to combat desertification. Tana River District is faced with a number of environmental challenges that require a multi-sector and multidisciplinary approach. Such environmental challenges include those brought about by pressure for utilization of natural resources, human settlement in the Tana delta, loss of biodiversity, siltation, scarcity and depletion of water sources and high rate of deforestation.

The United Nations declared this year's theme as "**Healthy soil sustains your life: LET'S GO LAND-DEGRADATION NEUTRAL**"

### **1.1 DISTRICT PROFILE: TANA DELTA DISTRICT**

The District is one of the 3 districts constituting Tana River County. It borders the Indian Ocean in the South East, Ijara and Lamu district in the East, Tana river district in the North and Malindi district in the south and Makueni district in the west. The district has 15 Locations and 35 sub locations. It has a population of 103,000 (estimate -2012) and an annual growth rate of 3.62% and covers 16,0134 Km<sup>2</sup> of which 19% is in the Tsavo National Park. The district has a poverty index of 76% and a literacy level of between 30-40%.

#### ***1.1.1 Physical Description***

Tana delta is expansive and covers 1,300km<sup>2</sup>. It is characterized by wetlands and oxbow lakes. The delta has high potential for agriculture and is a dry season grazing area for the pastoralist communities. The Shakababo Oxbow Lake is found in the district and is one of the biggest in Africa. The Lake is degraded as a result of the shifting of the River Tana, siltation and encroachment by farmers. There is urgent need of restoration the lake as it was a source of fish and water for the local community. The district has a coastline of 76Km. The shifting of river Tana has affected the ecosystem particularly pelican birds nesting sites and migratory routes. The local people believe this has also reduced the rainfall received in the area.

#### **1.1.2 Climate**

The District is characterized by a bimodal type of rainfall. It receives between 300mm-900mm of rain. Long rains are experienced in April-May and good for crop production while short rains are received in October-November. The District has an annual mean temperature of 30°C

### ***1.1.3 Wildlife***

Tana Delta has diverse wildlife which is a major tourist attraction. These include lions, elephants, buffaloes, antelopes, monkeys, hippos, crocodiles, guinea fowls, giraffes, ostriches, leopards, baboons and various species of birds. In terms of management of wildlife, Tsavo National Park is managed from Voi while at Baomo, the Tana River Primate reserve is managed by the KWS staff. The district has one private wildlife estate, Nairobi Ranch that is located in Kipini.

### ***1.1.4 Forestry***

Currently, there are a number of forest pockets that were carved out during the creation of settlement schemes at Witu for conservation. In addition, there is a gazetted mangrove forest along the coastline. Kenya Forest Services has three nurseries at Garsen, Tarasaa and Kipini with a total annual seedling capacity of 35,000.

### ***1.1.5 Main economic activities***

- Food crop production (maize, Mangoes, cassava, rice, )
- Cultivation of cotton cashew nuts bananas
- Livestock rearing
- Fishing
- Tourism

**Table 1: Facts and figures**

<b>Thematic area</b>	<b>Item</b>	<b>Indicator</b>
<b>Population</b>	No. of house holds	12,457
<b>Waste disposal by mode -% of population</b>	Waste collected by local Authority	Nil
	Garbage pit	15.5%
	Burning	73.1
	Public garden heap	3.8
	Farm garden	7.2
<b>Lighting fuels % of population</b>	Firewood	18.8
	grass	0.7
	Paraffin	78.5
	electricity	0.6
	solar	0.6
	LPG	0.6
<b>Cooking fuels % population</b>	Firewood	87.5
	Grass	0.6
	Paraffin	0.4
	Charcoal	11.4
<b>National parks and reserves</b>	Area covered	3,049Km2
<b>Forests</b>	Gazzeted forests	2,665Ha (1 No.)
	Not gazzeted	5
<b>Agricultural land</b>	Arable	1,184Ha
	Non Arable	5,118.4 ha
<b>Sector contribution to house hold income</b>	Agriculture	82.2%
	Rural self employment	7.1%
	Wage employment	3.2%
	Urban self employment	7.5%
<b>Prevalent diseases</b>	malaria	63%
	Diarrhea	5.4%
	Stomach ache	3.6%
	Upper respiratory	0.3%
	Lower respiratory	3.7%
	Flue	23.5
Literacy % of population	Ability to read	40.4%
Sanitation- Households with toilet facilities	Pit latrine	4%
Average accessibility to water source	Livestock	10Km
	Domestic	4Km
Water harvesting	No of households with roof catchment	8
	No of households with piped water	231
	No of households with portable water	1,122

*Source: District Development plan Tana Delta District 2008-2012*

### ***1.1.6 Main environmental issues***

- Conflict on use of Natural resources –Farmers and pastoralist from neighbouring areas
- Destruction of woody vegetation due to opening of land for cultivation and charcoal burning
- Encroachment of the provisional Forest within Kipini Division
- Human wildlife conflict
- Flood and Drought
- Destruction of river line ecosystem by settlement
- Overgrazing and soil erosion in the dry season
- Invasive and alien species (Mathenge) affects grazing areas and affects movement of people and livestock
- Poor road network to enhance awareness on environmental activities
- Low awareness on environmental management and conservation among the communities

## **2.0 PREPARATORY PROCESS**

The preparations for the world Day to Combat Desertification was spearheaded by a national steering committee consisting of government ministries and departments, CSOs and development partners. Towards the preparations, 8 meetings were held. Various committees were constituted to follow-up on specific tasks. The committees were;-

- Publicity and Hospitality
- Logistics, Finance and Transport
- Host District committee
- M&E committee
- Proposal and project development committee

Further 2 teams were formed to facilitate and assist the district team to identify Community Based Organizations for support with seed money and preparation of the site for commemoration. Terms of reference for selecting the committees were also prepared and endorsed by the steering committee.

## **2.1 IDENTIFICATION AND VETTING OF COMMUNITY GROUPS**

### **2.1.1 Criteria for Selecting Community For Environmental Awards, Seed Money, Support During WDCD**

During the field visit by a team consisting of UNDP, NEMA, the Chairman National committee on combating desertification Kenya led by the District Development Officer Tana Delta district identified groups for support during the oncoming event to commemorate the WDCD 2012.

The following criteria was used to identify the host community and other group to be supported with seed money.

### **2.1.2 Criteria for group selection**

- Registered group with the Department of Social Services or NGO Council
- Existence of written Memorandum of association or bye laws
- Proof of regular Annual returns to the registration body
- Elected management committee (Chairperson, secretary, treasurer)
- Membership of more than xx of which 30% must be female gender
- Has held regular meetings within the last 6 months and records of same available
- Should have been in existence for more than 2 years
- Has a bank account and report on their financial status

To identify the venue for the commemoration the following criteria was used;-

- It should be a public school/institution
- Should have environmental club and has Natural resource management activities
- Adequate public health and hygiene facilities

### **2.1.3 Activities should be linked to and have;-**

- UNCCD convention thematic areas (land degradation in arid, semi-arid and dry sub-humid areas)
- Documented programme of work – plans, workplans, progress reports
- Tangible activities
- Environmental conservation creativity
- Environment for science learning (for schools)
- Demonstrate Environmental values (improvement of environment,)
- Link to the livelihood improvement
- Level of impact (positive number of beneficiaries)
- Promotes Environmental friendly knowledge and technology transfer (indigenous, modern)
- Able to clearly define their need/activities to be supported and how it will be monitored

## **2.2 WORD DAY TO COMBAT DESERTIFICATION MATERIALS AND CONTRIBUTIONS**

Various organizations were instrumental in provision of materials, finances, transport and support towards the commemoration of World Day to Combat Desertification. Below is a



list of institutions whose contributions in addition to NEMA's made the World Day to combat Desertification a success.

**Table 2: Materials and contributions towards WDCD**

No.	Institution	Contribution
1.	UNDP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kshs. 400,000 Seed money</li> <li>• Support to Advance Team</li> <li>• Support to the District Steering Committee</li> <li>• Training of 2 Selected CBOs</li> </ul>
2.	DRSRS	Transport (bus)
3.	CLOUT	Kshs. 45,000 (print of Banners)
4.	Tarassa secondary school	Venue and other facilities
5.	Media	Coverage of Event, advertisement and Talk shows
6.	NRM project	Kshs. 1.5 million for publicity.
7.	Office of the Prime minister	Kshs.780,000 for hiring of 2 buses (Transport)
8.	Ministry of Environment and Mineral Resources	Kshs.2 million for media coverage and publicity material, seedlings and luncheon
9.	NEMA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overall Coordination</li> <li>• Transport</li> <li>• Logistics (DSAs, Fuel)</li> <li>• Seedlings, T-shirts</li> <li>• Water Tank</li> <li>• Luncheon</li> </ul>

## 2.3 EXHIBITIONS

The following groups exhibited material and products from their groups:

No.	Name of Group	Main activities	Display at Exhibition
1	Kipini Integrated Community Enterprise (KICE CBO)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tree nursery establishment and management</li> <li>• Fruit farming</li> <li>• Tree planting</li> <li>• Conservation of marine fishing areas through planting of mangroves</li> <li>• Planting of food crops</li> <li>• Planting and processing Jatropha products</li> <li>• Provision of electricity in Kipini shopping centre</li> </ul>	
2	Mapato Community based organization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tree nursery for rearing seedlings</li> <li>• Planting of trees in members farms</li> </ul>	

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fish farming</li> <li>• Culture and art article production (handicrafts)</li> <li>• Cultivation</li> <li>• HIV management</li> <li>• Water management</li> <li>• Environmental conservation</li> <li>• Community based tourism</li> <li>• Computer services</li> </ul>	
3	Pwani jatropha group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Production of bio diesel</li> <li>• Bee keeping</li> <li>• Operate Tree nurseries</li> </ul>	Jatropha products, Bio diesel, ointment for rashes
4	Golbanti mazingira CBO	Mats and rope weaving	Mats and rope weaving
5	Tana delta active bee keeping group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bee keeping</li> <li>• Farming</li> </ul>	Bee keeping, honey
6	Tsekea Ngao CBO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Water management</li> <li>• Environmental conservation</li> <li>• Community based tourism</li> <li>• Bee keeping</li> <li>• Farming</li> </ul>	Bee keeping
7	Ministry of planning, National development and Vision 2030, Poverty and Environment Initiative	Integrating environmental issues in to development plans	Brochures, News letter
8	Tarasaa Secondary School	Education and extracurricular activities	Waste management, Goat rearing, Green house and fish farming
9	Nature Kenya	Awareness creation and conservation	Posters and Briefs
10	NEMA	Coordination and supervision of environmental activities	Brochures on regulations, State of Environment



**Plate 1: Hon. Assistant Minister (MEMR), Ramadhan Kajembe inspecting exhibitions at Tarasaa Secondary School**

### **3.0 COMMEMORATION**

The official commemoration was graced by the Assistant Minister, Ministry of Environment and Mineral Resources Hon. Ramadhan Seif Kajembe, Environment Secretary Dr. Alice Kaudia from the Ministry of Environment and Mineral Resources, Representative of the Chairperson NEMA Board of Management, Representative of the Country Director and UNDP resident representative Ms. Faulata Kwenya, Ag. Director General NEMA. Other guests included the Chairman Public Complainant Committee, Ag. District Commissioner Tana Delta District, Kenya Forest Service representative, Representative from the Office of the Prime Minister, Representatives of NGOs and the private sector. Other participants were from schools and the general public.



The chief guest and other dignitaries planted commemoration trees in the school and members of the public were also given tree seedlings to plant in their farms.



Plate 2: Alice Kaudia Environment Secretary MEMR Planting a tree on June 2012 (WD CD)  
(Photo courtesy of Inganga Francis)





**Plate 3:** Mr. Benjamin Langwen representing the Director General NEMA planting a tree at Tarasaa secondary school during WDCD 2012 *(Photo courtesy of Francis Inganga)*

### **3.1 SPEECHES**

#### ***3.1.1 Welcoming remarks by the Principal Tarasaa Secondary School***

The school principal welcomed the guests and the participants and appreciated selection of the school to host the event. He gave a brief profile of the school and added that the school is in need of a new water pump that could facilitate provision of water to the School. The representative of the School PTA board also noted the need to conserve the wetlands and requested for support for the completion of a library complex.

Entertainment during the occasion was from various groups and included the following;-

- Wata group
- Kyodore group
- AIC Ngao youth group
- Hurara Group
- Tarasaa Secondary School
- Duvu Dararifu

#### ***3.1.2 Statement by the Ag. District Commissioner***

The Acting District Commissioner Mr Antony Macharia welcomed the participants to the occasion to commemorate the World Day to Combat Desertification and noted the District was privileged to host the occasion.

In addition the area councilor, reported that the Council had donated 5 liter/garbage/refuse bins and 1000 seedlings to the school.

#### ***3.1.3 CBOS Representative***

The chairman of Mapato CBO spoke on behalf of the local Community Based Organizations and acknowledged the organizers for holding the event in Tana Delta District. He outlined the environmental challenges that the district is facing that includes;

- Fragmentation of the local forests
- Siltation of farms
- Degradation of Lake shakababo
- Reduced water levels
- Saline soils in their farm lands

The Councilor recommended solutions to the challenges as follows:

- Gazettement and protection of forests in the area
- Stakeholder conservation and participation

- Enhance planting of trees and stop charcoal burning
- De-siltation of L. Shakababo

#### ***3.1.4 Statement by the Director Environmental Planning and Research coordination***

The Director Dr Ondimu Kennedy commended all who had attended the celebration and gave a brief of other areas where the WDCD celebrations had taken place in the past years. He noted that 17<sup>th</sup> June is the WDCD as directed by United Nations.

He also echoed the efforts of the National steering committee, UNDP, DRSRS CLOUT, DEC, KFS, and other stakeholders for their hard working in ensuring that the celebrations were successful. He thanked the District team for their effort in mobilizing the community and organizing the event.

#### ***3.1.5 Statement by the Office of the Prime Minister Representative***

The Office of the Prime Minister has been working in Tana Delta since year 2006 spearheading climate change mitigation initiatives. Through the office, an inter-ministerial committee has been established to look into sustainable management of the Delta.

#### ***3.1.6 Statement by the chairperson Public complainant Committee (PCC)***

The chairperson outlined the Mandate of the committee.

The Public Complaints Committee (PCC) is established under Part III Section 32 (a) of the Environmental Management and Coordination Act (EMCA) to investigate and make periodic reports on allegations and complaints of suspected cases of environmental degradation. The Committee also prepares and submits to NEC periodic reports of its activities. PCC reports contribute to the annual State of Environment Report.

#### ***3.1.7 Statement by the Country Resident Representative UNDP***

The representative of the Resident Country Director UNDP noted that issues of desertification are linked to climate change and there is need for the community and the country to undertake mitigation measures. She urged the residents to work with development partners and the government to improve on the human well being through environmental conservation activities. She observed there is still an opportunity to save the area from further aridity by planting more trees, soil erosion control and good land management practices.

#### ***3.1.8 Message from the Director General NEMA (Prof Geoffrey Wahungu)***

The World Day to Combat Desertification is observed every year on 17 June. This year, the Day's slogan is "Healthy soil sustains your life: LET'S GO LAND-DEGRADATION NEUTRAL". NEMA recognizes that the world's most significant non-renewable resource is fertile soil,

which is the peel of productive land. Soil is key for securing water, energy, food, biodiversity and building resilience to climate change. At NEMA we remains steadfast in ensuring a clean and healthy environment for all as enshrined in the Environment Management and Coordination Act of 1999.

NEMA is mandated by the law to supervise and coordinate all matters relating to the environment in our country. I am glad that we are implementing various regulations to reduce pollution of the ecosystems and prevent illegal activities that harm the environment. Together with other agencies, NEMA has been actively involved in community projects in the arid and semi-arid areas, including Tana Delta District. The challenge to NEMA and other partners is to save the disappearing vegetation cover due to massive charcoal burning and other unsustainable land use practices.

NEMA is concerned about the continued loss of fertile soils in the country because of the increased demand for land occasioning settlement in very fragile ecosystems like in hill places, riparian areas, deforestation, and over grazing due to unsustainable livestock husbandry among others. This is made even worse because of the poor farming methods and the effect of climate change. All these have combined to increase the rate of desertification in the country. We are also concerned about the continued receding of forests cover in the country because of the increased demand for land for settlement, pasture and large scale agricultural purposes. We must curb desertification in this district and other ASALs by all means and efforts by the government, partners, groups and individual citizens.

I would also wish to inform you that NEMA is the National Coordination Body (NCB) which implements and provides the role of technical National Focal Point (NFP) for the United Nations Framework Convention on Biodiversity (UNCBD), the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the United Nation Convention to Combat Desertification and the Global Environment Facility (GEF) Operational Focal Point. This gives NEMA an advantage of facilitating the implementation and domesticating of the relevant UN Conventions in Kenya.

Various NGO's, the civil society and local communities are involved in identification, planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of initiatives to combat desertification. The National Action Programme (NAP) has a National Steering Committee (NSC) which includes UN agencies, government ministries and departments and members of the private sector as well as civil society.

NEMA is the principle instrument of government for the implementation of all policies relating to the environment and therefore coordinates all lead agencies in the production of



various national documents and reports for the management of the environment. NEMA has spearheaded review in consultation with the relevant lead agencies, the NAP, Land Use guidelines and prepared the State of Environment (SOE) reports each year since 2003, the National Environment Action Plan (NEAP 2009-2013) and the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP). These documents will guide the country to promote proper environmental management and land use practices that will control land degradation and increase food security hence alleviating desertification.

NEMA has coordinated the development of the Tana River District Environment Action 2009-2013. This process brought together various stakeholders including government ministries and department, the private sector, the civil society, and local communities to map the way forward for the sustainable development of the lower Tana basin. The Tana River Environment Action Plan is now being implemented by various stakeholders in addressing the environmental Challenges mentioned above.

I would like to pass my sincere thanks to all the organizers of these celebrations especially the National Steering Committee and our partners who expended many hours to ensure this event is successfully organized and executed. I also wish to extend my sincere thanks to institutions both from Nairobi and here at Tana Delta District and the county at large for assisting us with support in terms of transport logistics, availing technical staff to assist in planning and sponsorship materials for this event.

As we return to our homes and places of work, let us care for our environment and remember this year's slogan and relate it to "Healthy soil sustains your life: LET'S GO LAND-DEGRADATION NEUTRAL.

### ***3.1.9 Statement by the Chairperson NEMA Board of Management***

This day is vital to us because it is a reminder about the need to conserve our land that sustains our livelihoods and more so in the arid and semi-arid areas.

The impacts of land degradation and desertification include a reduction in crop and pasture productivity and fuel wood and non-timber forest products, which are closely linked to poverty and food insecurity. The damage to soil, loss of habitat, water shortages, and siltation reduce biodiversity and ecosystem services and have economic consequences. Land degradation manifests itself in many forms; among them are soil erosion, increased sediment loading of water, loss of soil fertility, salinity, reduced ground cover, and the reduced carrying capacity of pastures.

Desertification has several causes. The immediate cause is the removal of vegetation. This is driven by a number of factors, alone or in combination, such as tillage for agriculture; too many livestock on too little land; removal of crop residues for feed/construction use; deforestation for fuel wood and construction materials; and inappropriate irrigation practices that lead to salinity.

Unprotected, dry soil surfaces then blow away with the wind or are washed away by flash floods, leaving infertile lower soil layers that bake in the sun and become an unproductive hardpan. Overgrazing destroys valuable plant species, leaving mostly unpalatable ones. Losses of vegetation and biodiversity threaten habitat for other species.

Tana River has experienced rapid population increase partly through migration of people from neighboring districts. More agricultural land has been opened up for subsistence crops including irrigated rice farming. *Jatropha* growing is in advanced formative stages. All these have caused conflicts over resources use. Impacts of climate change including droughts have worsened the situation

The management of Kenya's dry lands has been guided by several sectoral policies and legal and institutional frameworks. In this regard they form a solid foundation and provide opportunities for Kenya to implement United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) programs. As a requirement of the convention Kenya prepared its first National Action Plan (NAP) in 2002 to domesticate the convention. This NAP has been reviewed this year to align it to the UNCCD Ten Year Strategy which emphasizes indicator-based implementation of activities to combat desertification and also report such implementation through the (Performance Reporting and Assessments of Implementation System (PRAIS). The second NAP was prepared and completed this year.

Some of the laws enacted to operationalize environmental issues on desertification and drought include EMCA (1999), Water Act (2002); Forests Act (2005) and Heritage Act (2006) among others. These are implemented through various institutions, namely National Environment Management Authority, Water Resources Management Authority, Kenya Forestry Service, and National Museum of Kenya among others.

Desertification programs in arid and semi arid areas have received financial support from government as well as from bilateral and multilateral development partners. There are increasing opportunities provided by EMCA 1999 (NETFUND, Restoration Funds) and bilateral funding through Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs).

The National Environment Management Authority Board of Management has given support to NEMA as the National technical focal point for the United Nations Convention to Combat

Desertification. In its part, the Authority has managed to work closely with other stakeholders that include lead agencies, the private sector, civil society organizations and communities in addressing issues of desertification, land degradation and drought. The main activities includes promoting public awareness on issues of desertification, capacity building of local communities to improve livelihoods in ASAL areas, technological transfer and fundraising through National Environment Trust Fund (NETFUND) and bankable project proposals. In addition NEMA has been able to work with development partners such as UNDP and UNEP to develop proposals for Global Environment Facility funding towards community initiatives on land degradation and desertification.

The NEMA Board of management notes with satisfaction that NEMA has played and will continue to play its cardinal role of coordinating all the efforts towards attaining a clean and healthy environment for all. This is achieved through the Provincial and District Environment committees whose roles and responsibilities are stipulated in EMCA-1999. Their support has enabled the communities to put in place mitigation measures to reduce impact of desertification, land degradation and drought. Our constitution has put the roles of the Provincial and District Environment committees under the larger County Committees. This will call for more human capital and financial resources from The NEMA Board of Management. All efforts will be put in place to ensure all environmental concerns at all the counties are prioritized.

The NEMA Board determination will forge a strong linkage with the Ministry of Environment and Mineral Resources and other Lead Agencies in order to deliver a clean and healthy environment. NEMA will be supported in carrying out awareness campaign so that every stakeholder understands and appreciates what NEMA is, its mandate and service to Kenyans. Dissemination of information on all regulations and environmental guidelines should be the first step in making sure that citizens understand what is expected of them to ensure they play their rightful role in environmental management.

The Board will assist NEMA through capacity building so as to ensure a wider full coverage of the country, enhance efficiency and effectiveness in service delivery particularly on issues touching on community participation in sustainable environment management. Lastly, on behalf of the Board and NEMA Staff, we thank everybody for their efforts in addressing this year's theme of "Healthy soil sustains your life. LET'S GO LAND DEGRADATION NEUTRAL."

### ***3.1.10 Statement by the Permanent Secretary***

The theme of this year's WDCD is "Healthy soil sustains your life: LET'S GO LAND-DEGRADATION NEUTRAL". Hence this commemoration at Tarasaa School of Tana River

County is aimed at raising awareness on the significance of conserving the natural resources of the region.

This county is endowed with rich and vulnerable resources. These resources include indigenous forests, wildlife (mainly in the Tana River Primate National Game Reserve and Kora National Park), land and water from River Tana. Furthermore the Tana River Delta is amongst the top three of Kenya's largest and most important freshwater wetland systems with a significant local community of cattle herders and others depending on it.

It covers an area of 130,000ha (320,000 acres) and comprises of a diverse range of habitats that support a wide diversity of wildlife, plants and many thousands of wetland birds. It is internationally important for the survival of at least 22 species of birds which makes the delta one of the key sites in the country for water bird conservation. It also holds a rich diversity of other wildlife including hippos, lions, elephants, buffalos, many fish species and amphibians. Other wildlife which are major tourist attractions are crocodiles, guinea fowls, giraffes, ostriches, leopards and baboons.

There are a number of forest pockets that were carved out during the creation of settlement schemes at Witu for conservation. In addition, there is a gazetted mangrove forest along the coastline. Kenya Forest Services has three nurseries at Garsen, Tarasaa and Kipini with a total annual seedling capacity of 35,000.

The main economic activities include food crop production like maize, mangoes, cassava and rice; cultivation of cotton, cashew nuts and bananas as cash crops; livestock pastoralism; fishing both at sea, river and farming levels and of most importance tourism which contributes immensely to the local as well as national economy.

The Ministry's parastatals and departments are involved in various programmes aimed at combating desertification in the country. These programmes aim at reducing environmental degradation and ecosystem destruction. These parastatals and departments have been actively involved in community projects in the arid and semi-arid areas, including Tana River County. The challenge to the partners is to save the disappearing vegetation cover due to land use changes.

The lead agencies as provided for by the Environmental Management Coordination Act 1999 are key in data collection on natural resources, and human activities information. These lead agencies have continued to generate and disseminate data and information on areas such as vegetation cover changes, status of natural resources for use in combating land degradation and desertification in Kenya.

As a Ministry we are making all efforts to empower community based organizations (CBOs) to address environmental issues at the grassroot level. The challenge to CBOs and other

self-help groups is to come up with fund raising strategies that are homegrown and sustainable.

The Ministry of Environment and Mineral Resources will continue involving all stakeholders, including, non-governmental organisations, community based organisations, the private sector and individuals in the fight against desertification and the effects of drought.

The Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources thanks the organisations, community groups and non-governmental organisations for working with the Government in various environmental activities including those to reduce impact of desertification, land degradation and drought.

***3.1.11 MESSAGE FROM THE MINISTER FOR ENVIRONMENT AND MINERAL RESOURCES HON. AMB. CHIRAU ALI MAKWERE EGH, FCILP, MP DURING THE WORLD DAY TO COMBAT DESERTIFICATION (WDCD) CELEBRATIONS***

The World Day to Combat Desertification (WDCD) is marked on the 17th of June every year globally. This day is important because it calls for us to be conscious of the need to conserve the fragile environment and the natural resources in the arid and semi-arid areas in our country in line with the requirements of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, (the Earth Summit) held in Rio de Janeiro in 1992. The outcome of the earth summit required governments to recognize the need to redirect international and national plans and policies in ensuring that all economic decisions fully take into account any environmental impact. The result was the adoption of Agenda 21, a wide-ranging blueprint for action to achieve sustainable development worldwide. The summit recommended to the UN General Assembly for the negotiation for the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) and the effects of drought, particularly in Africa. The Government of Kenya signed the convention in October 1994 and ratified it in June 1997 and therefore we have an obligation to domesticate it.

Arid zones account for 40 percent of the earth's surface and therefore over two-thirds of our planet's surface is affected by desertification. Among this, three quarters are pasture lands. Desertification affects over 2 billion people and approximately 100 countries across all the 5 continents. Because it concerns the poorest population groups, essentially living off threatened natural resources, the desertification process is a challenge for achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and Kenya Vision 2030. While arid zones are the most vulnerable to desertification and land degradation processes, their ecosystems, including the soil, are more fragile when exposed to combined human activity and extreme climatic conditions. This affects many countries all over the world.

In Kenya, over 80% of the land surface is vulnerable to desertification and drought. These areas support about 10 million people, which is about 30% of the total population. In addition, 50% of the livestock populations and a wide variety of wildlife that form the basis

of Kenya's tourism industry are found here. Most of the affected populations are characterized by widespread acute poverty, chronic food shortages, inadequate social services as well as harsh climatic conditions resulting from frequent and prolonged droughts. Hence the reason why the Government must address these areas in order to have them properly managed so as to protect the environment and enhance community livelihoods.

The theme for this year's World Day to Combat Desertification as put out by the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification is "Healthy soil sustains your life: LET'S GO LAND-DEGRADATION NEUTRAL". This is in noting that fertile soil is a finite and irreplaceable resource which feeds billions of people today. It is a common wealth that provides us with not only food, but also secures water and energy for present and future generations. To ensure this we must sustain healthy soils and restore degraded land.

Desertification is intensifying and spreading in Kenya, threatening millions of inhabitants and severely reducing productivity of the land and soils. The droughts of 1970-2000 have accelerated soil degradation and reduced per-capita food production. Much of the problem is due to a growing imbalance between population, resources, development and environment.

As noted 80% of the land in Kenya is classified as ASALs and varies from county to county. The eco-climatic zones provide a good indication of the drylands of Kenya. The land under Tana Delta District and Tana River County at large is classified as semi-arid because 10-29% of its land surface experiences drought and receives low precipitation (300-900mm per annum).

Rapid population growth especially of immigrants from neighbouring areas is exacerbating the existing problems of imbalance between human population and available arable land, pastoral land, deforestation, poor land use systems and inappropriate farming methods. All these are among the major problems leading to food crises and desertification in this region. There have been conflicts over scarce pasture and water resources in these dry lands. The recurrent deaths of livestock due to drought have been a major concern to the government of Kenya in terms of food security and economic development of the ASALs in Kenya.

Impacts of drought on croplands or rangelands which are already subjected to poor cultivation and grazing practices, leaves land bare and vulnerable to wind and water erosion. Erosion strips away the topsoil, destroying the land's fertility and its potential to support human and animal populations. Rains, particularly the torrential ones common to most of the tropical Africa, accelerate soil erosion. Most run-off, tears away the topsoil at an even faster rate.

The government has recognized the need to combat desertification and put in place efforts towards achieving this objective. Initially, ASAL activities were scattered in several departments and ministries, such as Department of Relief and Rehabilitation in the Office of the President, Ministry of Planning and National Development, and Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock Development and Marketing. This scenario was complicated by inadequate co-ordination of various programmes in the different ministries towards alleviating the suffering of communities living in the ASALs.

The ASAL Development programmes were given heightened priority after the creation of the Ministry of Development of Northern Kenya and other Arid Lands, the development of a comprehensive policy and an Environmental Action Plan for ASAL in 2008. This was followed by a number of studies used to develop Framework for the Management of District Integrated Development Programmes in ASALs. Through these initiatives, the government has on annual basis allocated funds for the development of the ASALs. Development partners like UNDP have also supported programmes in the arid and semi-arid areas of the country through Drylands Development Centre and Poverty Environment Initiative (PEI).

The government prepared and adopted its first National Action Programme (NAP) in 2002 under the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification as a requirement of the Conference of Parties for all governments signatory to the convention and other regional initiatives designed to implement the convention to address the development of ASALs. As we mark this day, the NAP has been reviewed to conform to the requirements of the COP decisions for the parties to align their NAPs to the Ten Year Strategy and the Performance Review and Assessment Implementation System (PRAIS) of reporting. This is aimed at building capacity for effective monitoring and assessment of the progress made in achieving poverty reduction and environmental sustainability objectives of the convention.

The Kenyan Constitution gives impetus for the proper management of the environment in Chapter five, part two, by outlining environmental rights of Kenyans. It further calls upon the Government to put in place policies and legislations for the enhancement of environmental goods and services. Exploitation of natural resources for maximization of both ecological and economic needs is also mentioned in the constitution. The Environmental Management and Coordination Act of 1999 (EMCA) has been in operation for almost 10 years and it has assisted the country to enhance the management of the environment for that period. This piece of legislation came at an opportune time because the environment had been degraded to unprecedented levels prior to its enactment.

The major ethnic groups in the Tana River County are the Pokomo, many of whom are farmers, and the Orma and Wardey, who are predominantly nomadic pastoralists. The county is generally dry and prone to drought. Rainfall is erratic, with the rainy seasons in March–May and October–December periods. Conflicts have occurred between farmers and

nomadic peoples over access to water. Flooding is also a regular problem, caused by heavy rainfall in upstream areas of the Tana River. Cattle diseases like Trypanosomosis have been wrecking havoc in the county in the past. The infrastructure is also very poor thus hampering movements of goods and services.

The county presents an interesting case of the nexus between conflict and food security. The district is 79% food insecure and with an incidence of poverty at 62%. It comprises several areas of forest, woodland and grassland which are minor centres of endemism. Despite the apparent adequate natural resources which are under-exploited, the region remains marginalized from the rest of the country.

Efforts at development always seem to centre around the huge River Tana, i.e. Bura, Hola and the Tana delta rice irrigation project. The area has very high potential for irrigation farming and perennial agriculture if investments can be channeled to this region. The soils are fertile and can produce enough for the local population and even for export. There is need to put in place proper farming and livestock keeping systems to reduce conflict over natural resources.

This county has a very import resource in form of the Tana River, the ox-bow lakes and its delta as it enters the Indian Ocean. River deltas are known for being fragile, dynamic and extremely rich and important wetland systems, flooding in times of good rain and later drying out again. Therefore, any level of interference with the hydrological system will upset the delicate natural balance and wreak havoc on the ecosystem, spelling the destruction of the delta. As a government, Kenya needs to be very careful when approving large scale projects in such fragile areas. Approvals should thus be informed by scientific studies and research findings to enable a balance of economic benefits and ecological sustainability.

I wish to thank our partners who have supported various projects and programmes in the country geared towards environmental conservation and protection like the European Union (EU), Swedish Government, Danish Government, United Nations Development Programme, United Nations Environmental Programme and many others for their financial and technical support to the government of Kenya which is contributing to a healthy and better environment for Kenyans.

I also wish to extend my gratitude to all those who have played a role in the general improvement of the environment in one way or another. These include EMCA institutions such as the National Environment Council, the National Environment Trust Fund, the National Environment Tribunal, the Public Complaints Committee, the Provincial and District Environment Committees, the NEMA fraternity at large, Civil Society and individual Kenyans.



I wish to affirm our resolve and determination to forge strong team spirit and networks among relevant lead agencies, civil societies and development partners to foster better environmental management systems in this country. Furthermore, I want to assure you that NEMA will be supported to carry out its mandate fully through collaboration and budgetary support in order to assure a clean and healthy environment, through timely and quality service delivery to the people of Kenya.

Lastly, on behalf of the Ministry fraternity and the entire government, I take this opportunity to challenge us to contribute in various ways in actualization of the theme of the 2012 World Day to Combat Desertification, Healthy Soil Sustains Your Life: Let's go Land Degradation Neutral.

### ***Minister's remarks***

The Assistant minister who represented the Minister observed that the coast regions is rich in natural resources including minerals and the people require assistance to upscale their operations for maximization productivity and to alleviate poverty.

Other issues include:

- Nema to follow up on land degradation issues in Tana Delta.
- Nema to deploy and facilitate Environmental Officers in the counties in 2012-13 as an urgent issue
- Ministers Speech should not be too long and he noted that the speech was only 7 pages which was good since he would not tire reading it
- The programme for the day should not be too long to enable the public to concentrate and not to get tired waiting for the minister's speech.

### **4.0 AWARDS**

During the event a number of institutions were awarded certificates in recognition of their contribution to environmental conservation.

Two community groups Mapato and Kipini CBOs were also awarded money to support their environmental conservation and livelihood activities by UNDP. A cheque of Kshs. 400,000.00 was to be shared equally by the two group each to get Ksh 200,000.00. The minister presented the cheque to the 2 groups as shown below.



**Plate 4: Hon. Assistant Minister Ramadhan Kajembe (MEMR) presenting Kipini and Mapato CBOs with a Cheque** *(photo courtesy of Francis Inganga)*

## **5.0 VOTE OF THANKS**

On behalf of the Authority (NEMA) Ms Jacqueline Marita the Chief Corporate and Communication manager thanked the invited guests, the District team, National Steering Committee and all participants for finding time and their commitment during the preparations and commemoration of the World day to Combat Desertification.

## **ANNEXES**

### **Annex 1: List of partnership institutions**

- National Coordinating Committee on Desertification -NCCD-K
- United Nations Development Programme - UNDP PEI
- CLOUT
- Ministry of Environment and Mineral Resources
- National Museums of Kenya - NMK
- Kenya Forestry Service - KFS
- Department of Resource Surveys and Remote Sensing - DRSRS
- Ministry of Water and Irrigation
- National Council for Science and Technology -NCST
- Public Complaints Committee (PCC)
- District Environment Committee Tana Delta
- Office of the Prime Minister

## Annex2: WDCD 17<sup>th</sup> June 2012 Programme

TIME	ACTIVITY	FACILITATOR/PRESENTER
7.00 – 9.00am	Travel from Malindi to Tarasaa School	Drivers
9.00 – 9.20am	Courtesy to DO Tarasaa Division	PDE Coast/Chief Guest
9.20-9.40am	Procession led by a Band	Band/ DEO Tana Delta
9.40 – 10.00am	Ceremonial tree planting by Chief Guest and other Guests	DEO/DG
10.00 – 11.00am	Exhibitions	PDE/Director EP&RC
	National Anthem	Band/ School
	Prayer	DEC Member
	Entertainment	Culture & Social Services
	Welcoming Remarks from Head Teacher, Tarasaa School	Head Teacher
	Welcoming Remarks from DC Tana Delta	DC Tana Delta District
11.00 – 11.20am	High Lights of WDCD and Preparatory process	Director, EP&RC
<b>OFFICIAL STATEMENTS/ REMARKS</b>		
11.20 – 12.00pm	Statement by the Provincial Commissioner	PC
	Statement by County Commissioner	CC
	Statement by DG NEMA and introduction of Directors	DG NEMA
	Statement by the Chair, NEMA Board	Chair, board rep
	Statement by UNDP Representative	UNDP
	Statement by the Permanent Secretary, MEMR	PS
	Remarks by Area Member of Parliament	MP
	Keynote Address by the Minister for Environment and Mineral Resources	Chief Guest
12.00 – 12.15pm	Award of Certificates	Chief Guest
12.15 – 12.25pm	Vote of Thanks	Jacqueline Marita
12.25 – 12.40pm	National Anthem	Band/ School
12.40- 12.50pm	Closing Prayer	DEC member
12.50 – 1.30pm	Refreshments and lunch	All
1.30pm	Chief Guest departure	
<b>OTHER ACTIVITIES OF THE DAY</b>		
1.30-2.30pm	Visit to a degraded site (diversion of River Tana) by the remaining Guests	PDE/DEO
2.30-3.30pm	Transportation of entertainment groups back to stations	PDE/DEO
3.30pm	End of the WDCD National Event	

### Annex 3: List of Participants at WCD 2012, Tana River County, Coast Province

NATIONAL STEERING COMMITTEE		
1.	Dr Kennedy Ondimu	National Environment Management Authority (NEMA)
2.	Inganga Francis	National Environment Management Authority (NEMA)
3.	Agnes Kamiri	National Environment Management Authority (NEMA)
4.	Frank Msafiri (Chairman)	National Environment Management Authority (NEMA)
5.	Silas Ngeywo	National Environment Management Authority (NEMA)
6.	Godfrey Mwangi	National Environment Management Authority (NEMA)
7.	Evans Oluchiri	National Environment Management Authority (NEMA)
8.	Diana Mobagi	National Environment Management Authority (NEMA)
9.	Wallace Ngolo	National Environment Management Authority (NEMA)
10.	Vincent Mahiva	National Environment Management Authority (NEMA)
11.	Patrick Maingi	National Environment Management Authority (NEMA)
12.	Paul Nguru	National Environment Management Authority (NEMA)
13.	Joseph Kiema	National Environment Management Authority (NEMA)
14.	Nyamache Tinga	National Environment Management Authority (NEMA)
15.	Dr Ali Adan	National Museums of Kenya (NMK)
16.	Silas Mulehi	Department of Resource Surveys and Remote Sensing (DRSRS)
17.	Samson Koome	Ministry of Water & Irrigation
18.	Clement Ngoriareng	Kenya Forest Services (KFS)
19.	Felix Mugambi	National Environment Management Authority (NEMA)
20.	Florence Mwikali	National Environment Management Authority (NEMA)
21.	Julius Mwangi	National Council for Science and Technology (NCST)
22.	Dr Samson Wasao	UNDP – Poverty and Environment Initiative (PEI) project
23.	Antony Mwangi	National Environment Management Authority (NEMA)
24.	Eliud. Ngunga	National Environment Management Authority (NEMA)
25.	Rebecca Nyamache	National Environment Management Authority (NEMA)
26.	Beatrice Chebet	National Environment Management Authority (NEMA)
27.	Ernest Mwangi	National Environment Management Authority (NEMA)
28.	Huron Wanjohi	National Environment Management Authority (NEMA)
29.	Gabriel Sanya	National Environment Management Authority (NEMA)
30.	Sylvester Maithya	National Environment Management Authority (NEMA)
31.	Issak Elmi	National Environment Management Authority (NEMA)
32.	Anastacia Maorwe	National Environment Management Authority (NEMA)
33.	Agnes Masika	CLOUT
34.	Cecilia Muchama	National Environment Management Authority (NEMA)
EDUCATION DEPARTMENT		
35.	Mrs Betty Nzioka	National Environment Management Authority (NEMA)
36.	Mr David Ong'are	National Environment Management Authority (NEMA)
37.	Jane Nyandika	National Environment Management Authority (NEMA)
38.	Anne Kaben	National Environment Management Authority (NEMA)
39.	Beatrice Ongaki	National Environment Management Authority (NEMA)
COASTAL MARINE		
40.	Stephen Katua	National Environment Management Authority (NEMA)
41.	Baraza Wangwe	National Environment Management Authority (NEMA)

	<b>LEGAL DEPARTMENT</b>	
42.	Irene Kamunge	National Environment Management Authority (NEMA
43.	Eunice Chipinde	National Environment Management Authority (NEMA
44.	Elizabeth Muthigani	National Environment Management Authority (NEMA
	<b>DIRECTORATE DEPARTMENT</b>	
45.	Morton Saulo	National Environment Management Authority (NEMA
46.	Wilson Busienei	National Environment Management Authority (NEMA
47.	Rachel Ratemo	National Environment Management Authority (NEMA
48.	Jorum Ngunyi	National Environment Management Authority (NEMA
49.	Moses Misik	National Environment Management Authority (NEMA
50.	Ester Ochanda	National Environment Management Authority (NEMA
51.	<b>MEDIA</b>	
52.	Rajab Ramadhan	The Star (Nairobi)
53.	Peter Opiyo	The Standard (Nairobi)
54.	Dave Opiyo	The Nation (Nairobi)
55.	Henry Waihenya	The People (Nairobi)
56.	Sandra Chao	The Nation (Local)
57.	Bernard Kenga	Rahma (local)
58.	Johnson Nzai	Milele FM (local)
59.	Mwarandu Tsuma	Kaya FM (local)
60.	Alloys Musyoka	Baraka FM (local)
61.	Lorna Kerubo	The Star (local)
62.	Dikson Wekesa	Kenya Broadcasting Corporation (local)
63.	Paul Olale	Kenya News Agency (KNA) (coast)
64.	Nehemia Okwemba	Kenya News Agency (KNA) (coast)
	<b>PLANNING &amp; RESEARCH DEPARTMENT</b>	
65.	Ben Ithagu	National Environment Management Authority (NEMA
66.	Anne Sirengo	National Environment Management Authority (NEMA
67.	Virginia Musau	National Environment Management Authority (NEMA
68.	Peninah Nyasami	National Environment Management Authority (NEMA
69.	Abednego Marube	National Environment Management Authority (NEMA
70.	Lydia Nyaboke	National Environment Management Authority (NEMA
71.	Stephen Musila	National Environment Management Authority (NEMA
	<b>ADMINISTRATION DEPARTMENT</b>	
72.	Esher Chege	National Environment Management Authority (NEMA
73.	Nancy Obenda	National Environment Management Authority (NEMA
74.	Margaret Kuria	National Environment Management Authority (NEMA
75.	Mary Chemas	National Environment Management Authority (NEMA
76.	Vicky Oncharo	National Environment Management Authority (NEMA
77.	Janet Kituku	National Environment Management Authority (NEMA
	<b>HUMAN RESOURCE SECTION</b>	
78.	Stephen Kyalo	National Environment Management Authority (NEMA
79.	Winnie Mwangi	National Environment Management Authority (NEMA
80.	Emmanuel Wekesa	National Environment Management Authority (NEMA
81.	Martin Maira	National Environment Management Authority (NEMA
82.	Stanley Owuor	National Environment Management Authority (NEMA

83.	Abednego Marube	National Environment Management Authority (NEMA)
84.	Thaddeus Akama	National Environment Management Authority (NEMA)
85.	Cornelius Mutiani	National Environment Management Authority (NEMA)
86.	Lucy Thuku	National Environment Management Authority (NEMA)
87.	Festus Musyoki	National Environment Management Authority (NEMA)
<b>COMPLIANCE &amp; ENFORCEMENT</b>		
88.	Ben Langwen	National Environment Management Authority (NEMA)
89.	Denis Achoki	National Environment Management Authority (NEMA)
90.	Jane Nyandika	National Environment Management Authority (NEMA)
91.	Robert Orina	National Environment Management Authority (NEMA)
<b>POLICE UNIT</b>		
92.	Evans Mwariswa	Environmental Police Unit of NEMA
93.	Caleb Ondiek	National Environment Management Authority (NEMA)
94.	Ruth Okwara	Environmental Police Unit
<b>FIELD OPERATIONS</b>		
95.	Kodia Bisia	National Environment Management Authority (NEMA)
96.	PDE Coast Ali Mwanzei	National Environment Management Authority (NEMA)
97.	Samuel Nganga DEO Mal	National Environment Management Authority (NEMA)
98.	Wilfed Osumo	National Environment Management Authority (NEMA)
99.	Francis Karisa Driver	National Environment Management Authority (NEMA)
100.	Said Memza Driver	National Environment Management Authority (NEMA)
101.	Bernard Ogembo Driver	National Environment Management Authority (NEMA)
102.	Mutinda Musembi Driver	National Environment Management Authority (NEMA)
103.	Joseph Otundo Driver	National Environment Management Authority (NEMA)
104.	John Maina Driver	National Environment Management Authority (NEMA)
105.	Driver Hired	Office of the Prime Minister
106.	Driver Hired	Office of the Prime Minister
107.	Anne Muriungi	National Environment Management Authority (NEMA)
<b>BOARD MEMBERS</b>		
108.	Sam Ogutha	
109.	Edwin Mwinga	
110.	Maluki Mwendwa	
111.	Erastus Wahome	
<b>COMMUNITY MEMBER</b>		
112.	Francis Olekeis	Community Based Organization (CBO)

***NB. These participants joined the others from Tana River County to commemorate the day***

This report was compiled and edited by a team led by Mr Inganga S. Francis the National Science and Technology Correspondent for Kenya under the UNCCD