

Central Highlands Eco-Region
Research Programme
(CHERP)



KEFRI *Newsletter*

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**KEFRI launch 5th Strategic Plan, Central Highlands Eco-region
Research Programme and Sandalwood Guidelines**

KEFRI is ISO 14001:2004 Environmental Management Systems certified



Dr. Alice Kaudia, Environment Secretary (Centre) planting a tree during the launch

Cover Photo: Dr. Alice Kaudia, the Environment Secretary, Prof. Daniel Mugendi, Chairman KEFRI BoD (left), Dr. Ben Chikamai, Director KEFRI assisted by Mrs Sarah Mogaka during the launch of KEFRI 5th Strategic Plan, Central Highlands Eco-region Research Programme and Sandalwood (Osyris) guidelines

KEFRI Launch 5th Strategic Plan

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The launch of KEFRI 5th Strategic Plan, Central Highlands Eco-region Research Programme and Osyris guideline is a major milestone not only for KEFRI but also for the Ministry of Environment, Water and Natural Resources. The Environment Secretary Dr. Alice Kaudia, on behalf of the Cabinet Secretary Prof. Judi Wakhungu remarked during the launch at the KEFRI head office, Muguga on 20th June, 2014.

In her speech, she noted that the Ministry is responsible for forestry development, conservation and provision of the information required for sound management of forestry and allied natural resources that include water and wildlife. She further noted that the 5th Strategic Plan outlines KEFRI's commitment to research agenda, provision of technologies and related information for forestry development in Kenya and beyond.

She praised the strong partnership existing amongst; KEFRI, the Ministry and partner institutions terming it a step forward towards achieving the best results in forestry research and development as well as increasing

forest cover to the international standard. Research outputs are some of indicators used to measure the Government achievements and its aspiration as it progresses towards increasing forest cover to 10 percent.

KEFRI has played an instrumental role in development of technologies for increasing the forest cover, sustainable forest management and rehabilitation of water towers.

"The 5th Strategic Plan will play a pivotal role and pave way for achieving more success at national and global level, through enabling the ministry to deal with the principles of de-centralized forest management and corporate governance, in addition to creating a more interactive environment with local governments as well as regional and international organisations." she said.

During the next five years of implementation, health and clean environment, which are social sector concerns, will be treated as top priorities and the Ministry will fully support the initiative.

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Mr. George Muhoho former Minister for Science and Technology was one amongst the many guests who attended KEFRI 5th SP launch

Speaking at the same event, the Chairman KEFRI Board of Directors Prof. Daniel Mugendi said the 5th Strategic Plan (2013 - 2018) emphasizes on results based management, the driving force for public service delivery. The Plan is aligned to strategic priorities of the Government as outlined in various government policy documents including: Medium Term Plan II of Vision 2030; relevant national development goals in the National Forestry Plan; and Ministry of Environment, Water and Natural Resources Strategic Plan; all in line with the Constitution of Kenya.

One of the key features in the 5th Strategic Plan is the establishment of five thematic areas namely; forest biodiversity and environmental management, forest productivity and improvement, forest product development, socio-economics, policy & governance and technical support services. These thematic areas will drive the forestry research agenda in line with the National Forest Programme (NFP) that is being aligned to Vision 2030.

He noted that the launch of the Central Highlands Eco-region Research Programme (CHERP) just like other eco-regions namely Coastal, Drylands, Rift Valley and Lake Victoria Basin is meant to address the forest needs and priorities of different eco-regions. He further noted that re-branding of CHERP and other eco-regions is a

strategy prioritizing forestry research needs and implementing the devolved function in line with the Constitution. Similar re-branding will take place in other reregions as part of demaining centralizing forestry research services to many more regions of the country.

KEFRI Director Dr. Ben Chikamai said that the Institute is committed to strengthening its strategic partnership with various C o u n t y governments to aid in increasing the current forest cover from current seven to the envisaged ten percent. KEFRI is also working with farmers and entrepreneurs to protect and domesticate valuable tree species.

East African Sandalwood is one of such valuable tree crop threatened by extinction in the wild due to its essential oils, hence the launch of booklet "guidelines on growing sandalwood (*Osyris lanceolata*)" is key in its propagation and management.

The event which also hosted an exhibition of KEFRI products and services, was attended by notable guests amongst them former Minister of Science and Technology Mr. George Muhoho, Deputy County Commissioner of Kabete, sub-county Mr. Elias Githaiga, Vice Chancellor South Eastern



Dr. Kaudia releasing balloons to commemorate the launch

University (SEKU), Prof. Geoffrey Muluvi, Senior Deputy Director-Kenya Forest Service, Mr. Emilio Mugo, representatives from donor agencies, entrepreneurs and partner institutions.

Launch of Tree Planting

Kiambu County

Muguga Environment Research Community Forest Association (MERCFA) in collaboration with KEFRI and Kenya Forest Service (KFS) led KEFRI staff, the neighbouring communities and other stakeholders in a tree planting exercise at Gachuthi forest on 16th April, 2014.

KEFRI's Director Dr. Ben Chikamai graced the occasion and launched a community bee keeping project, dedicated a tree planting site in commemoration of Prof. Wangari Maathai and rolled out tree planting exercise in Kikuyu County.

Dr. Chikamai lauded the Muguga CFA for dedicating its efforts in the conservation of Muguga forest. "Tree planting is a worthy cause and sure means to mitigate the impacts of climate change. This initiative is contributing to the Government of Kenya's goal to increase forest cover to 10 percent by 2030," he said. The Government of Kenya targets to plant 50 million trees with the help of institutions and individuals during this period of commemorating 50 years of independence.

KEFRI will therefore collaborate with neighbouring public schools to plant trees on their compounds in support of Green School initiative that was rolled out by His Excellency President Uhuru Kenyatta on 7th December, 2013 as part of CSR. The Director urged both public and private institutions as well as individuals to plant trees during the rainy season.

KEFRI has worked closely with the MERCFA in conserving the environment since its formation in 2008. The MERCFA focuses on conserving and managing the 2.25Km² Muguga forest, reserved since 1938 and comprises of Gatuikira 17ha and Gachuthi 30ha. The two blocks are remnant of the natural forest in the area.

Mr. Simon Kamonde, Chairman of MERCFA, stated that the CFA has provided seedlings and volunteered in planting over 300 indigenous tree seedlings, which are endemic to the forest. Among the tree species planted during the launch were Cedar (*Juniperus procera*), *Olea europaea*,



KEFRI Director Dr. Ben Chikamai led the community adjacent Muguga forest and other stakeholders in a tree planting exercise at Gachuthi forest, Kiambu county

Teclea simplicifolia, and *Warburgia ugandensis*.

Ms. Njeri Kinuthia representing Bio-vision, ICIPE-Kenya, handed a laptop donated by Farmers Communication Programme to the CFA. The laptop would be used to access Bio-vision data and also to interlink the CFA with the outside world.

National tree planting - Ngong

KEFRI staff also participated at the national tree planting exercise at Kibiko Primary School, Ngong forest on 5th May, 2014. Ms. Maryanne Keitany, Chief of Staff, who represented the Deputy President, was the Chief Guest. She was accompanied by Dr. Richard Lesiyampe the Principal Secretary, State Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources.

In a speech read on his behalf by Ms Keitany Honourable Ruto said protecting the country against environmental degradation was the responsibility of all Kenyans, adding that the national tree cover could only be increased if more trees were planted.

Dr. Chikamai, Director KEFRI, Dr. Mulatya DDCA & QA and Dr. Kimondo Regional Director from KEFRI participated in the exercise which was to complement the government's 50 million tree planting campaign.

Tree planting - Kabete:

On 4th April 2014, KEFRI staff joined students of the University of Nairobi, College of Agriculture and Veterinary

Sciences (CAVS) Kabete in a tree planting exercise. The event whose theme was "Greener Cleaner Environment," saw the college plant more than 5000 tree seedlings at Kanyariri farm. KEFRI donated 200 seedlings of indigenous and exotic tree species as part of CSR.

The Chief Guest was Dr. John Omiti, the Executive Director - Kenya Institute for Public Policy Research and Analysis (KIPPRA). The Master of Ceremony Prof. P. K. Gathumbi. Dr. Omiti noted that the event was in consensus in line with the core values of the college that emphasize on conservation of the environment.

Prof. Gathumbi acknowledged the activity as a success and appreciated the presence of KIPPRA, KEFRI, ILRI, KARI and ICRISAT amongst other stakeholders who collaboratively supported the event an initiative should be enhanced inyear.



Dr. Chikamai (left) and Ms Kinuthia handing over laptop and other information to Mr. Kamonde on behalf of the CFA

Is Climate Change Real?

The United Nations Environmental Assembly (UNEA) Conference, held in Nairobi, has resolved to intensify crackdown on environmental crimes which cost Africa Sh.18 trillion each year through poaching, trafficking of endangered species and deforestation.

The conference also resolved to strengthen sustainable development goals where Global warming and climate change were pointed out as factors threatening environment and development globally.

Through assessment, climate models indicate that warmer temperatures, greater rainfall variability, increasingly severe and frequent extreme weather events are here with us. These changes are expected to decrease agricultural productivity more so in the developing world. Africa in particular is vulnerable due to its geographical inclination, and the fact that 70 percent of the populations are subsistence farmers who rely on rain-fed agriculture and use traditional technologies.

In Kenya for instance, the National Human Development Report produced by the Ministry of Planning and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) point out that adverse weather stalled economic growth by 2.8 percent between 2008 and 2011. Due to frequent drought the country lost 721 billion in the agricultural sector, sh. 110 billion in industrial production due to power shortage and 51.8 billion in the energy sector due to reduced hydroelectricity generation. What was not reported, presume is that the side effects of global warming and climate change are already hurting the tourism sector and the well being of the population. How bad this will get depends on the choices we will make.

Greenhouse gases

The greenhouse gases; carbon dioxide, nitrous oxide, Chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) and methane that humans contribute to the atmosphere are the



Cabinet Secretary Prof. Judi Wakhungu addresses delegates during the first day of UNEA Conference in Nairobi on 23rd June, 2014

major cause of global warming and climate change. Reports from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) indicate human activities such as agriculture; industry and deforestation are responsible for over a quarter of total global greenhouse gas in the atmosphere as reported in the just ended UNEA conference.

Consequences

Global warming is the cause of increase in rainfall in some areas, high temperatures, drought and flooding. These changes are affecting nutrient levels, soil moisture, water availability and weather conditions. Erratic temperatures are already disrupting the ecosystems causing habitat shift to many plants and animal species. Establishment of 20 acres Tregothnan tea plantation in the United Kingdom is an indicator of a changing pattern in farming systems as one of the examples.

Diseases

Higher temperatures combined with humidity could cause heat waves, spread of insect pests and disease vectors that could diminish vulnerable plant and animal species, particularly in fragile ecosystems. Unless we act firmly and quickly our lifestyle and environment are literally in danger.

Change in lifestyle

Architect have raised alarm on the looming danger of glass building after the glass skyscrapers in London last summer reflected powerful rays on adjacent buildings, that melted paint and rubber on cars parked nearby.

Mitigation

Adaptation and mitigation to global warming and climate change require innovations supported by policies as well as inter-linkages for global impact. Normally, trees are carbon sinks; they absorb carbon dioxide, which increases as vegetations are lost. Kenya is on course to adopting a green economy through engaging in investment and trades which are environmentally viable.

KEFRI, the only fully fledged-national forestry research institution in Kenya has been in the forefront advocating for policies that ensure commitments towards Reducing Emissions from Forests Deforestation and Degradation (REDD). Similarly the institute has been in the forefront supporting government efforts of planting 50 million trees to increase forest cover to 10 percent, and poverty reduction by providing tree technologies information conserve environment and support livelihood.



Camels browsing the only available green vegetation amidst dry bushland along Garissa-Bura road

Centre Research Advisory Committee - (CRAC)



KEFRI scientist Mr. Ngugi Kigomo presenting comments during the Muguga CRAC meeting at the headquarters

Forty one research concepts were presented at the Centre Research Advisory Committee (CRAC) for Central Highlands Eco-Region Forestry Research Programme (CHERP), at head office Muguga, on 12th and 13th May, 2014.

Concepts presented were on forest health and tree improvement, climate change, soil and water management, forest rehabilitation and restoration, livelihood improvement, policy and governance, gender and benefit sharing in participatory forest management, forest productivity and improvement, Information dissemination and knowledge management.

Mr. Jesse Lugadiru, a long serving forester by profession, presented a proposal to measure air pollution in Nairobi City. Mr. Lugadiru argues that the City is polluted by emissions from vehicles and industrial activities. He therefore intends to ascertain pollution level by measuring leaves of tree species at selected parts in the City.

This concept coincided with the launch of the National Guidelines for Strategic Environmental Assessment by the Environment Cabinet Secretary Prof. Judi Wakhungu on 13th May, 2014. The document is a strategic environment management tool that will help

identify environmental impact and measures that could mitigate certain conditions that pose a threat to clean environment.

The concept has also come at a time when the level of pollution is said to saturate cities and urban centres with devastating health and environmental side effects.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) estimates one in eight deaths worldwide in 2013, resulted from air pollution, which exacerbates asthmatic condition and lung illnesses. This situation may worsen as more people migrate to urban areas, construct more industries and use fuel wood and Kerosene in cooking.

CRAC resolutions

“KEFRI through the 5th Strategic Plan advocates for multi-sector and multi-disciplinary approaches to research development,” said Dr. Ebby Chagala-Odera, Deputy Director Technical Support Services. She commended stakeholders and urged them to liaise with KEFRI scientists and jointly undertake research projects.

Similar CRAC meetings were held at Karura, Kitui, Gede, Londiani and Maseno centres.

Training

Natural Resources Management Course

The 13th Participatory Natural Resources Management (PNRM) course with 20 participants drawn from 12 organizations was held at KEFRI head office between 12th - 23rd May, 2014.

The PNRM course objectives were to enhance understanding of the guiding principles and implementation process of participatory natural resource management. The course is built on socio-ecological, sharing experiences and lessons from success cases. It also integrates the implications of these lessons to local actions through development of action plans.

The 13th course covered 20 key interdependent topics with individual presentation and interactive discussions. The participants visited KEFRI's Tree Seed Center for value addition and marketing of seeds, Karura Centre for eco-resource production, KEFRI Kibwezi Centre for dryland forestry technologies.

They also visited Ngomongo villages for ecological rehabilitation and eco-cultural themes as well as individuals' initiatives in rehabilitation of degraded sites, Haller Park and Lafarge East Africa Limited ecosystems corporate rehabilitations and plantations. To sum it up, the participants had a passionate interaction with Dida Community at Arabuko Sokoke forest, the pioneers of Participatory Forest Management (PFM).



Participants of the 13th PNRM course

ISO 9001:2008 – Quality Management System (QMS)

KEFRI plans to streamline its operations and improve the quality of services and products through initiating and implementing Quality Management System (QMS) - ISO 9001:2008.



Participants who attended QMS training of trainers course at Kitui centre

QMS is a management system that prompts the needs to demonstrate ability to consistently provide quality products and services and also aims to enhance customer satisfaction through the effective application of the system. For a start, KEFRI has trained a QMS team, with representatives from each regional centre and all departments or sections/units.



Dr. Jackson Mulatya

The Deputy Director, Corporate Affairs and Quality Assurance Dr. Jackson Mulatya is the Quality Management Representative (QMR).

The training was held at the Dryland Eco-Region Research Programme - Kitui from 13th to 23rd May, 2014. Participants underwent rigorous training on ISO 9001:2008 requirements and developed draft Standard Operating Procedures and Work Instruction for all departments within KEFRI.

QMS will be implemented at all Centres and departments throughout the Institute. We are counting on your support and co-operation.

Outreach Activities

Exhibition at ASK shows

Under the Agricultural Society of Kenya show theme “Enhancing Technology in Agriculture and Industry for Food Security and National Growth”, KEFRI showcased its products and services at Machakos show between 24th and 29th June, 2014 and at Kakamega show 19th to 21st of the same month.

At the Machakos show processing of aloe products, high quality tree seeds, tree improvement and domestication, forest rehabilitation methods were exhibited. Similarly, at Kakamega show, processing of high quality tree seeds, soil improvement, forest rehabilitation, medicinal plants found in Kakamega forest, bamboo propagation and utilization were some of the suitable forest technologies exhibited for adoption in the western eco-region.



Dr. Alfred Mutua Machakos Governor, presenting trophy and certificate to Ms Damaris Munyao

Achievements

At machakos show, over 5000 people namely farmers, students, representatives from public and private sector visited KEFRI stand, which was ranked 1st locally for manufactured products, 2nd best medium government stand, 3rd best in theme interpretation, research and development, was awarded trophy and certificates.

At Kakamega show 515 people visited the stand which was ranked 2nd best in research and development and 3rd best medium government stand, and was awarded certificates.

Issues of concern

Majority of the show attendants at Kakamega requested for more enlightenment on bamboo propagation, utilization and marketing. In addition, they requested for tree seeds and giant

bamboo seedlings to be availed at the KEFRI Kakamega Centre. At Machakos, show attendants requested for training on propagation and utilization of *Aloe vera*, *Melia volkensii* and *Osyris lanceolata*. KEFRI management was requested to establish a KEFRI station at Machakos County by the governor.

Open day - Karura

KEFRI National Forest Product Research Centre - Karura, held its Open day on Friday 16th May, 2014. The aim of the annual event was to show case research and disseminate information in respect to developed forest technologies.

Wood and Non-wood products

On this aspect, visitors were introduced to technologies on efficient processing, utilization and value addition to wood and non-wood forest products. The technologies and services included best practices to timber and non-timber products, sawmilling, on-farm timber processing, wood preservation using Tanalith method, furniture and design making, wood finishing, wood panels and laminated fancy items. Other technologies included wood anatomy, analysis of physical and mechanical wood properties, micro technique and photomicrography for wood timber preservation.



Visitors at KEFRI Karura open day man engagement with collaborators

KEFRI together with its collaborators also displayed assorted value added products namely gums and resins, soaps, lotions, shampoos and hand washing detergents fortified with aloe extract. Other non-wood products displayed were juices and jams from indigenous fruit trees. These products undergo intensive research in phytochemistry, analytical chemistry and product development. Technologies on charcoal production, carbonization of biomass waste management, making charcoal briquettes and demonstration of locally manufactured micro-gasifiers for domestic use were also displayed.

Collaborators

Collaborators who graced the occasion were Kenya Forest Services (KFS), whose mandate is forest conservation and protection, Tree Biotechnology Programme Trust (TBPT), Bee Keeping (Ministry of Agriculture) and individual entrepreneurs among others who have adopted KEFRI technologies and similarly ventured into value addition to assorted non-wood products.

Farmer's field day - Laikipia

KEFRI celebrated World Environmental Day by organizing a field day at Kwandege in Ndaragwa, Laikipia East on 5th June, 2014. The agenda of the event was "Promotion of *Osyris lanceolata* (East African Sandalwood)". Visitors were introduced to the species which is a shrub or a small tree known for producing fragrance-scented wood and famous essential oil. It is an endangered species in Kenya, thus KEFRI embarked on a research, propagation methodologies, to enhance domestication.



Ms. Lucy Kagunyu, KEFRI technician (left) displaying Sandalwood propagation method to community members during farmers field day at Kwandege in Ndaragwa

The event was hosted by Nettles World, a community group that has adopted *Osyris* propagation methodology. The group currently applies marcotting propagation method but is going towards root stem cutting in future. They have raised over 600 seedlings using *Croton megalocarpus* as a host. Some of the *Osyris* products displayed were the samples of the valuable wood, air freshener, perfumes, bathing soap among others.

Also displayed were high quality tree seeds from indigenous as well as exotic species, propagation and utilization of bamboo as alternative planting material were promoted. Collaborators who showcased their products and technologies were Kenya Forest Service,

Desert Edge (Conservation Enterprise Development Programme), Tree is Life - for Fireless Cookers and Energy Conservation, Ministry of Agriculture, Fishery and Livestock, and individual farmers among others. The event was graced by over 350 visitors amongst them small scale farmers, students and community groups. Beside interaction, attendants were provided with *Osyris* leaflets and other KEFRI publications for more information.



KEFRI staff, Community members and collaborators interacting during the Laikipia farmer's field day

The event culminated in planting 80 seedlings of *Osyris lanceolata* at Ngobit Girls Secondary School. These seedlings were raised by Nettles World Community Group.



A student from Ngobit Secondary School plants a tree at the schools demo plot. Already established with 1245 trees planted through Kazi kwa Vijana Project phase V



4 yrs old East African Sandal Wood (*Osyris lanceolata*) tree at KEFRI headquarters Muguga

Director's Tea Forum

Director's tea forum is a quarterly informal gathering whose purpose is to enable staff interact freely with the management. The forum also gives the staff an opportunity to air out some of the challenges that they face in their daily activities. The 4th quarter forum was held on 23rd June, 2014. The forum started with a word of prayer and a moment of silence in respect to two members of staff who passed on.



The Director KEFRI Dr. Ben Chikamai, accompanied by senior management, while addressing staff during the tea forum

The Director, Dr. Ben Chikamai thanked the staff and also extended thanks to Dr. Alice Kaudia who graced the launch of Strategic Plan and Central Highlands Eco-region Research Programme on 20th June 2014. He appreciated the presence of KEFRI former employees during the occasion whom he said in future ought to be recognized in a special way.

He introduced some of the new staff who joined KEFRI fraternity and requested the older staff to mentor them to adopt the institutes' culture. He also introduced the new leadership under the 5th Strategic Plan, which have been approved by the Board of Directors (BoD) and the government. He noted that KEFRI advocate for an open door policy and urged the staff to embrace team work in support of the institute's management.

The 5th Strategic plan was prepared with the focus on performance management using the balanced scorecard (BSC), performance appraisal, research for impact where scientists should look beyond publication, ISO/EMS/QMS and the staff well being.

Ms. Evelyn Oroni (DD,HR) highlighted the proposed revision of Pension and NSSF deductions which could be mandatory once the law is ratified and



Some of KEFRI newly engaged staff Godfrey Maripet Morpoor-Administrative Officer, Head office (in white jacket) and Jesse O. Owino - Research Scientist, Drylands forestry/Officer in Charge Lodwar station (right) among other staff who attended the forum

COTU court case is determined. The Pension contribution would be raised from 6% to 8% for employees and from 12% to 16% for employers. On the well-being of the staff, a letter had been written to the SRC and response is being awaited. A review of schemes of service is on going. Security issues were also discussed and there's need to beef it up.

"KEFRI is in the process of establishing research centres at Migori, Wundanyi (Taita Taveta), Maua and Rumuruti." said Dr. Benard Kigomo, Senior Deputy Director, Research and Development.

Dr. J. Mulatya the Deputy Director Corporate Affairs and Quality Assurance informed staff that apart from ISO EMS 14001:2004, KEFRI is in the process of implementing ISO QMS 9001:2008. This system has procedures which captures every staff in the system. Trained staffs will be sent to various centres to sensitize other staffs.

The 3rd quarter's Director forum was held on 4th April, 2014. Dr. Jackson Mulatya, representing the Director, conveyed his apology as he was attending to other urgent matters. He highlighted the following remarks from the directorate;

- KEFRI management cares for its staff and advocates for an open door policy.
- In addition, Dr. Mulatya called for adherence to the following issues;
- The ISO EMS 14001:2004 certification expires in June 2014, therefore the institute is due for recertification. As such, the procedures and manuals have been revised. Sensitization on the same will be carried out in all the centres.
- Performance contract activities



Members of staff enjoying a cup of tea

You will pay more for year pensions



Photo source. <http://blog.jobberman.com/comic-of-the->

for 1st, 2nd and 3rd Quarters had been accomplished; therefore the remaining activities scheduled for 4th Quarter must be done on time. He urged employees to accomplish scheduled tasks as they form the evidences that the institute use to defend its existence in the government.

Grievances

- Some staff lack computerized services particularly downloading payslips, leave application and filling KRA tax returns which are now online.
- A staff requested for an induction course in computer for the auxiliary staff and a computers lab for accessing online services.

With effect from July 2014, KEFRI employees will increase contributions to the pension scheme. In a circular from the Director, KEFRI management in agreement with the Pension Trustee Board reviewed pension contribution upwards from current 6 to 8 percent for employees and 12 to 16 percent for employer, in the year 2014/2015. Similarly, in the fiscal year 2015/2016, employees' contribution will be increased to 10 percent while the employer will top up 20 percent.

This directive dated 22nd May, 2014 is a follow-up to KEFRIs' Staff Scheme Annual General Meeting 2013, where members resolved to increase their contribution from 6 percent to maximum of 10 percent of the pension emolument as stipulated in the Treasury Circular No. 18/2010.

"Ensure that you adjust and maintain a net pay that will be adequate to meet the increased contributions as well as comply with the third basic salary rule".

Pension is the income benefit (payments) one receives upon retirement, death or termination. This is achieved through a Pension Plan, also known as a Retirement Benefits Scheme, as defined under the Retirement Benefits Act, 1997 laws of Kenya. Two plans are in place namely Defined Contribution (DC) Plan and Defined Benefits Plan (DB).

Under DC plan a member receives payment dependent upon the total contribution and the performance

of the fund's investments over time. Under DB plan, a member receives payment based on a set formula. No money is contributed to a pooled fund for investing; the defined benefit is treated as a liability by the employer to be paid when an employee retires.



Mr. Jonathan Ochieng

Meanwhile, Mr. Jonathan Ochieng (above) is now the KEFRI non-scientific staff Pension Scheme representative after overwhelming winning in the election held on 8th May, 2014. In his thanks giving note, Jonathan assured both scientific and non-scientific staff of his commitment in service.

NSSF

Pension contribution adjustment will also affect members of the National Social Security Fund (NSSF). From June 2014, both workers and employers will contribute 6 percent to the NSSF, a review from current flat rate of Kshs.200. According to Retirement Benefits Authority Supervision Manager Mr. Charles Machira, once the proposed NSSF Act, 2013 takes effect, workers

earning Kshs.3,000 will pay discounted rate of Kshs.180 and employer top up with similar amount, totaling to Kshs.360. Those earning 10,000 will pay Kshs.360 and employer will top up with similar amount, bringing total to Kshs.720. Those earning Ksh.18,000 and above will contribute total Kshs.2,160, both worker and employer contributing Kshs.1,080 each. This rate also applies to individual earning up to half a million and above.

“There is possibility of contribution to both NSSF and the private schemes, which is likely to see employer pay twice to workers’ retirement benefits”.

Under the new Act, anyone seeking employment must secure an NSSF card. It is also compulsory for all organisations both public and private sector to insist on certificate of compliance before undertaking any business with suppliers.

Benefits currently offered by NSSF include, retirement package when a contributor reach retirement age. Members are eligible for withdrawal from benefit if they are at least 50 years old and they have retired from regular paid employment. A funeral grant of Kshs.10,000 is payable to dependents of a deceased member. Under the new system all benefits are paid in form of pension rather than a lump sum to ensure that a pensioner has a regular income.

KEFRI Choir Progression

KEFRI choir has continued raising the Institute's profile higher through music under the guidance of Mr. Charles Mwangi the choirmaster. The choir through the courtesy of Permanent Presidential Music Commission (PPMC) participated in this year's 51st Madaraka Day Celebrations at Narok County on 1st June 2014.

Mr. Sonya Coordinator, Department of Culture recieved the choir at the office of County Commissioner Narok North.

The choir rehearsed at the Maasai Mara University grounds on the eve of the Madaraka Day.

The celebrations were graced by Narok County Governor Hon. Samuel Ole Tunai. The choir led the National Anthem followed by their other patriotic songs. In attendance at the ceremony were also the Deputy Governor Everlyne Aruasa, Narok Women Representative Hon. Soipan Kudate, the leader of majority in Narok County Assembly Stephen ole Kudate, Minority leader in Narok County Assembly Bob Ole Maren, the speaker of Narok County Assembly Hon Olotisati Kamwaro, Narok East Member of Parliament Ken Lemanken Aramat, Narok County Commissioner Kassim Farah, amongst other guests.



KEFRI choir ready to entertain guests during this year's Madaraka Day celebrations at the Masai Mara University grounds, Narok County



KEFRI choir entertaining guests during the 5th SP and CHERP launch at KEFRI headquarters

Previously, the choir entertained guests with variety of songs on forest conservation, patriotism and celebrating 50 years of Kenya's independence during tree planting exercises at the University of Nairobi, College of Agriculture and Veterinary Sciences (CAVS) on 4th April, 2014. This was followed by another entertainment at Kibiku Primary School in Ngong, Kajiado County on 3rd May, 2014, where the choir members also participated in tree planting.

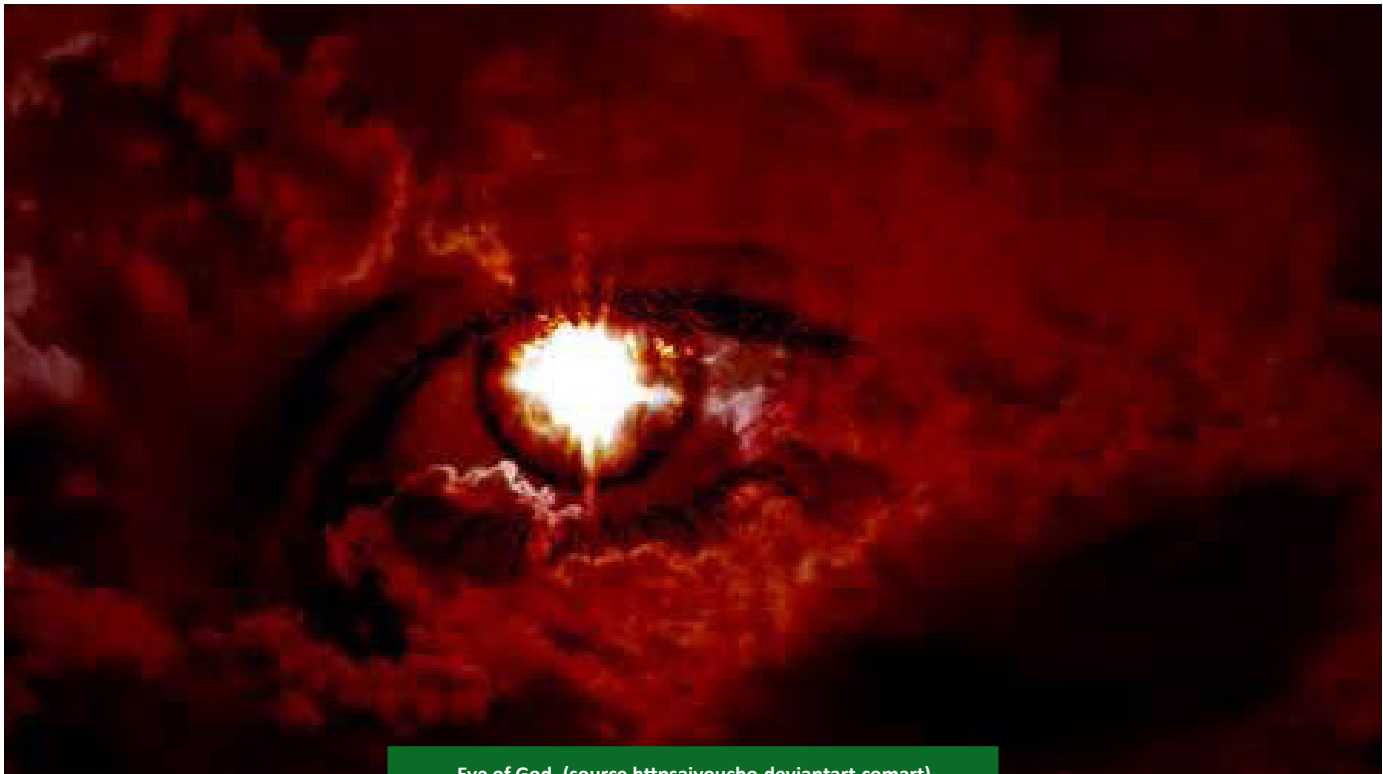
Choir records a DVD

The choir has released a second DVD consisting of 8 songs. The DVD was officially launched concurrently with the Strategic Plan and the Central Highland Eco-region Research Programme on 20th June, 2014. The recording of the DVD was done at Naivasha, Karura FPRC, Gachuthi Forest and KEFRI Headquarters. The DVD consists of both forest conservation and gospel songs. The DVDs are available at the corporate office, head office Muguga.



The newly released second volume DVD

Letter to God



Eye of God. (source <https://saiyoucho.deviantart.com/art>)

Continued from Newsletter No. 8

At day break the following Sunday, having strengthened himself in the conviction that there is someone who watches over us, he began to write a letter. It was nothing less than a letter to God!

Dear God, he wrote ... because of the hailstones, I need a hundred pesos to sow again and to live on while the new crop is growing... If you fail to help me, I and my whole family will be hungry this year.

He wrote "To God" on the envelope, put the letter inside, and went into town still worried. At the post office he put a stamp on the letter and dropped it personally into the mailbox.

The mailman came across the letter and, laughing heartily, showed it to his boss. The postmaster, fat and jolly, also began to laugh but suddenly became serious. What faith! Oh if only I had the faith of the man who wrote this letter. To believe as he believes; to wait with confidence he feels as he waits; to start corresponding with God.

And in order not to disillusion that abundant faith, revealed by a letter that could not be delivered, the postmaster had an idea. But when he opened the letter, he found that something more

was needed than just goodwill, paper, and ink. He kept on with his plan. He forfeited part of his salary, and induced several of his friends to give something for a charitable cause. It was impossible for him to collect the hundred pesos requested by the desperate farmer. So he managed to raise only a little over half. He put the bills into an envelope addressed to Lencho, and a letter that had only one word, as a signature: God.

The following Sunday after attending service Lencho passed by the post office to enquire if there was a letter for him. It was the mailman himself who handed him the letter while the postmaster, with a happy glow of a man who has done a good deed, watched through the door from his office. Lencho showed not the slightest surprise when he saw the bills – so very sure was he – but he became furious after he counted them. God could not make a mistake or have he denied what I had requested".

He went at once to the window and asked for a paper and ink. At the public desk he began to write, wrinkling his brow due to effort it cost him to express his thoughts. When he had finished, he bought a stamp, licked it with his tongue and then stuck it with a bang of his fist.

As soon as the letter fell into the drop box, the postmaster got it and opened it up. It said, Dear God" You know that money I asked You for. Only sixty pesos reached me. Please send me the rest for I need it desperately. But don't send it through the post office, the employees are very dishonest. Lencho.

Lesson learnt

In this world full of unknown God is caring and will always provide for our needs. At times He use nature or human beings to dispense His providence. Normally, people use divergent world views and powers to compromise the destinys' of their fellow human beings. Destiny is a self-choice, it is not written for us but by us through actions of which majority we have control over them. We should not be restricted by our mindset but set personal goals and in faith go for them. God will always meet us at the hour of need. If only we can have such a strong faith. Math.17:20-21

To His name be the glory.

PICTORIAL OF THE SP AND CHERP LAUNCH



The exhibition displayed various technologies, products and services



Display of African Sandal Wood, its products and propagation methods



Guests joins the traditional dancers to enjoy the the rhythm



KEFRI choir entertaining during the event



Dr. Ben Chikamai speaking during the launch



The chief guest Dr. Kaudia (right) cutting cake to commemorate the event

New Staff



Christine Khaemba
Administrative Officer, LVBERP - Maseno

Holds a BA in Economics, Business, Admin from KU. Currently pursuing MBA– Project management. Previously worked at KU for 3 yrs and Standard Chartered Bank.



Godfrey Maripet Morpoor
Administrative Officer, Head office

Holds a Bachelor degree in BAM from St. Pauls University, Diploma in Project Management from (KIM). Has 10 years experience. Previously worked at Kijabe Hospital and ASN Upendo Village.



Francis Mathenge Muchina
Senior ICT Officer, Head office

Holds an MSc in IT Management from Institute of Sunderland - UK
Has 6 years experience with Wilpro Technologies and 8 years with National Treasury.



Jemimah Margaret Nzilani
Administrative Officer, DERP - Kitui

Holds a B. Com in Business Administration from Daystar University and CPA II. Has 8 years experience in private sector.



Jesse O. Owino
Research Scientist, Drylands forestry/Officer in Charge Lodwar station.

Holds MSc in Natural Resource Management from Egerton University. Previously worked with Sports Stadia Management Board as the Senior Facilities Management Officer.



Nadir Waluchio Stanley
Research Scientist, Soils section- Head office

Holds MSc. in soil physics & crop modelling from University of Eldoret. He worked there for a period of 3 years. Currently persuing PhD studies at the same university.



Salil Charles Kiplagat
Supply Chain Officer, KEFRI Head office

Holds a first degree in procurement and supply chain from Busoga University. Formerly worked for Kerio Valley Development Authority.



Esther Ngendo Mukiha
Human Resource Officer, Head office

Holds BA in Sociology and Dryland from KU
Postgraduate Diploma in Human Resource – KIM
MSc-HR at UON enrolled. Has 3years work experience with Oserian company- Naivasha.



George William Otieno
Chief Internal Auditor, Head office

Has an MBA and Degree in Finance from Kenyatta University. Accountancy (CPAK) from KCA. He worked with Kenya Railways as an Accounts Assistant. Before joining KEFRI he was an Auditor Manager at Sony Sugar Company where he worked for 8 years.



Timothy Wanjala
Accountant, Fixed Assets

Has Bachelor degree in Business communication - Finance from Catholic University CPA II from Kenya Accountancy College (KCA). Currently enrolled for MBA at Catholic University. Previously worked with Chemilil Sugar company for 7 years.



Mathew Kioko Musau
Principal Supply Chain Officer - Head office

Holds a Masters Degree in Procurement from Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology (JKUAT). Bachelor of Commerce from Daystar University and Diploma in procurement (CIPS). Currently persuing PhD in supply Chain Management at JKUAT. He has 4 years experience as head of procurement.



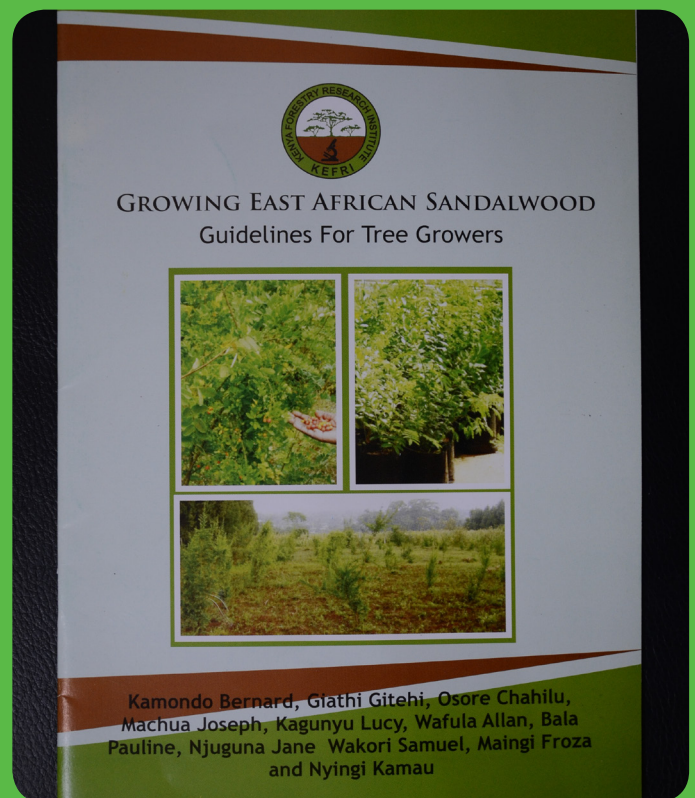
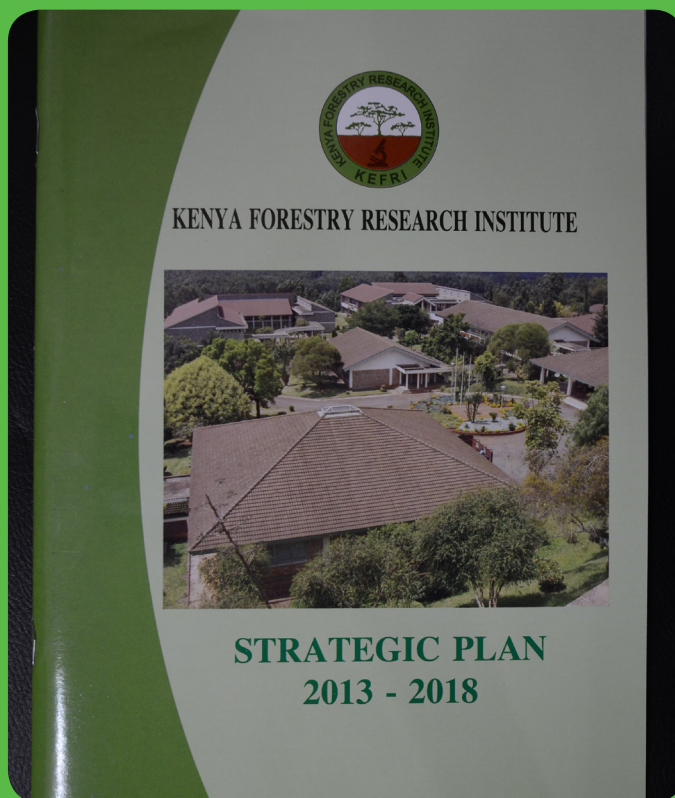
Everlyne Moraa Omesa
Accountant, NFPRC - Karura

Holds a Bachelors of Arts degree in Economics from University of Nairobi and a CPA (K). She has five years experience as Relationship Officer, Equity Bank.



Riziki Umanzi Mwadalu
Soil Scientist, CERP - Gede

Holds a Masters Degree in Social Science and a Bachelors Degree in Environmental Studies from Kenyatta University.
Has one year experience as a project director in Compassion Kenya and six months experience as a Research Assistant at Edulink Project, Kenyatta University.



Cover page of Strategic Plan and Sandalwood Guidelines launched on 20th June 2014

Demise

KEFRI fraternity mourns the loss of the following members of staff:



Mr. Joseph Clement Mutange who passed on 19th June, 2014. Until his death Mutange worked at Lake Victoria Basin Eco-Region Programme – Maseno. He was interned on 26th June, 2014 at Mahanga village, Mulama location Vihiga county.



Mr. Eliud Aroka Ogonda passed on 20th June, 2014. Until his death he was working at KEFRI Headquarters (Seed Centre). He was laid to rest on 5th July 2014 at Godbondo village, Ndhiwa subcounty in Homabay county.



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