

# Meeting held on sustainable management of Deltas in Kenya

Title The Inter-ministerial consultative meeting was held at the office of the Prime Minister in July 2011. The Chairman, Mr. Peter Odhengo who is the Green Energy/Climate Change Specialist in the Office of the Prime Minister called the meeting to order and welcomed members to the meeting. He explained that the main problems affecting Tana Delta were planning, coordination and consultation of the local communities affected by projects in the area. There was thus need for stakeholders with interests in Tana Delta to adopt a multi-stakeholder approach to address issues of the Tana Delta projects. Members were also informed that there was a need to endorse the Tana Delta to be a member of the International Delta Alliance (IDA) as currently in Africa only Nile is a member. This issue was accepted by members and they agreed the process to be initiated immediately. Mr. Paul Matiku gave a brief background of Nature Kenya (BirdLife Partner) stating that his organisation has worked for several years in Tana Delta among other places and that Tana Delta is one of the biggest in Africa only comparable to Okavango Delta in Botswana. However, he acknowledged that there are problems and agreed with the Chair that there is need for an integrated approach and that a Green (sustainable) development is important for Kenya. Mr. Zephania Ouma and Dr. Kennedy Ondimu of National Environmental Management Authority (NEMA) gave briefs on the Tana Delta. Mr. Ouma indicated that there is inadequacy of environmental management in terms of impact, projects initiated and the processes followed. According to him, Environmental Impact Assessments (EIAs) need to be justified economically and accepted socially. He also informed the meeting that Strategic Environmental Assessments (SEAs) involve a rigorous stakeholder engagement, and that can help to come up with a bigger picture of managing resources. Therefore, there is need to move to the SEAs as a process which is more inclusive. Dr. Ondimu began by thanking Mr. Ouma and Mr. Matiku for championing diversity in the country as he posed the following questions to members: - How prepared is the country on environmental management in terms of conservation? - Although Tana Delta is an agriculturally potential area, have we been strategic as a country? - How have the local communities been prepared in terms of conservation of the biodiversity of the ecosystem? - It is clear that those interested in Biofuel have been very strategic but is it beneficial to the local communities? - How prepared are we in the governance structure i.e. the District Conservation Committees? Have they been strengthened? - Poverty is a reality in the region, what should be the strategy to involve local communities? and, - Although there are good plans but who benefits from them? Other Issues raised: - Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) are also interested and may be brought in to support but they may not have the resources or the mandate to do so; - Exotic trees i.e. *Jatropha*, while being introduced to local

communities, care should be taken so that they do not interfere with the local livelihoods support systems; - Explore the role of scientific research institutions i.e. in soil and experts in other field - NEMA may have limited capacity and in most times respond to specific issues brought to their attention (reactionist) as opposed to use of a holistic strategic approach; - Although it is very expensive, there is need to involve relevant partners to make it a participatory approach of the locals (i.e. EU funded NEMA to involve local communities to gain goodwill and ownership); - Most of the land in Tana River was communal land and having large land at the expense of the local people may complicate the issues. There is need to address trans-boundary issues; and, - Funds need to be availed to spur local economic development. Mr. Patrick Waweru of the Ministry of Lands - Physical Planning Department informed members that the Ministry is in the process of developing a comprehensive land use master plan, the National Spatial Plan (NSP). The process of developing the plan was very participatory involving people at all levels and further consultations are expected to be held at the local and county levels on the various identified thematic areas which will culminate into a national conference. However, it was noted that given the national coverage of the NSP, it may take long while at the same time resources are disappearing. Therefore there is need to use currently available plans to identify the hotspots for immediate implementation. During the meeting, several key issues were deliberated on; John Nyagena of MOPND & V2030 raised the issue on the need to look at the report on the initial work done on Tana Delta in 2010 . The findings showed that the delta land is over allocated and there is a crisis. There is therefore need to look at the current status before the team moves on. Dr. Ondimu of NEMA stated the need to consider studies by the IUCN which identified the Tana Delta as a hotspot area. However, there are gazetted forest areas i.e Lake Kenyatta (by KFS) that has been marked for oil exploration with the area around the Lake being important for elephant breeding. Mr. Koyo of Imarisha Board- Naivasha stated that Tana Delta is the 2nd largest in Africa and applauded the attempts being made to list it as a RAMSAR site for biodiversity conservation and also for socio-economic development and the need to consider the linkage between the delta and the upper catchment areas in such a way that planning can take place in consideration to the upper regions. Mr Fox Imarisha Board - Naivasha deliberated on the need to develop alternative livelihoods and win the acceptance and long term support of the people and consider parallel achievements - ?the interest of a stakeholder is achieved if the interests of the all stakeholders are achieved?. Otherwise there is no successful achievement. During the meeting members proposed key stake holders to form an Interim Tana Delta Planning Task Force with the Office of the Prime Minister taking the lead. They noted the need to involve the Ministry of livestock as Tana Delta is a key grazing area for the local communities. The meeting also came up with a strategy to engage the local communities, lead ministries, private sector, CSOs and various other stakeholders. The task force will comprise of 9-11 people namely; Mr. Peter Odhengo of Office of the Prime Minister ? Convener, Mr. Zephania Ouma of NEMA, Mr. Paul Matiku of Nature Kenya (BirdLife Partner), Mr. Dan Guda of Ministry of Agriculture, Mr. Patrick Waweru of Ministry of Lands, Mr. Daniel Mbithi of Kenya Forest Services, Mr. Fred Omengo of Kenya Wildlife Services, Mr. John Nyangena of MOPND & V2030, Mr. George A. Koyier of Ministry of Water and Irrigation, Mr. Sammy Naporos of Ewaso Nyiro South Development Authority (ENSDA) and Mr. Richard Fox of Imarisha Naivasha. The constituted core team of the task force developed their terms of reference as follows; 1. Development of ToRs for the Inter-Ministerial Committee; 2. Collect and collate information on the Tana Delta; 3. Development of a roadmap (action plan) for the main committee; 4. Identify and map out key stakeholders; and, 5. Map out areas of resource mobilization. The task force would report to the Inter-Ministerial Committee after two weeks and agreed to do field Visits in the Tana from early September.