

SPEECH BY HON. MORRIS DZORO, EGH, MP MINISTER, MINISTRY OF TOURISM & WILDLIFE, ON THE OCCASION OF THE 2ND NATIONAL SYMPOSIUM – PRESENTATION OF THE DRAFT WILDLIFE POLICY AT KCCT MBAGATHI CAMPUS, NAIROBI ON 29TH MARCH 2007

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DISTINGUISHED PARTICIPANTS

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN

ON 6TH JULY 2006, THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM AND WILDLIFE STARTED A PROCESS TO REVIEW THE WILDLIFE CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT POLICY AND LEGISLATION AS CONTAINED IN THE SESSIONAL PAPER NUMBER 3 OF 1975, AND THE WILDLIFE CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT ACT, CAP 376 THAT WAS ENACTED IN THE YEAR 1976. THIS IS INDEED THE REASON WHY WE ARE ASSEMBLED HERE TODAY. TO EVALUATE AND IMPROVE ON THE DRAFT WILDLIFE POLICY, WHICH WILL BE PRESENTED TO US SHORTLY BY THE NATIONAL STEERING COMMITTEE.

ALLOW ME TO THANK YOU ALL FOR ATTENDING THIS SECOND AND FINAL NATIONAL SYMPOSIUM AS REPRESENTATIVES OF THE VARIOUS WILDLIFE STAKEHOLDERS IN KENYA. IN ADDITION, I WANT TO ACKNOWLEDGE THAT MANY OF YOU IN YOUR OWN CAPACITIES AND WHILE REPRESENTING YOUR VARIOUS ORGANIZATIONS AND CONSTITUENCIES HAVE IN THE PAST WORKED BOTH DIRECTLY AND INDIRECTLY WITH MY MINISTRY IN SUSTAINABLE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT, AND IN WILDLIFE CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT ACTIVITIES. FOR THE MANY CHALLENGES WE HAVE FACED TOGETHER AND TACKLED, AND FOR THE MANY SUCCESSES WE HAVE REALIZED, PLEASE ACCEPT MY SINCEREST APPRECIATION.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

THE FOLLOWING PRESSING ISSUES HAVE BEEN ENCOUNTERED AND CONTINUE TO POSE A SERIOUS CHALLENGE TO WILDLIFE CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT IN KENYA:

ESCALATING HUMAN POPULATION HAS LED TO ENCROACHMENT OF FORMER WILDLIFE DISPERSAL AREAS, MIGRATORY CORRIDORS AND BUFFER ZONES
MUCH OF THE NATURAL LANDSCAPE HAS BEEN SUB-DIVIDED AND CONVERTED INTO SETTLEMENTS, AGRICULTURE AND URBANIZATION

LACK OF A NATIONAL LAND USE POLICY HAS LED TO WIDESPREAD INCOMPATIBLE LAND USE PRACTICES AND ENVIRONMENTAL DEGRADATION THAT ARE ADVERSELY AFFECTING WILDLIFE POPULATIONS AND SPECIES

HUMAN WILDLIFE CONFLICT HAS CONTINUED TO INCREASE AND LACK OF A CLEAR POLICY GUIDELINE HAS FRUSTRATED EFFORTS TO DEVOLVE WILDLIFE CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT TO THE LANDOWNERS AND LOCAL COMMUNITIES AND CONSERVATION OF WILDLIFE AS A RESOURCE BASE FOR SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

WE ALL ACKNOWLEDGE THAT THE POTENTIAL OF MOST KENYANS IN WILDLIFE CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT IN KENYA HAS NOT BEEN FULLY TAPED. THERE IS THEREFORE EXCESS UNTAPPED POTENTIAL ESPECIALLY AMONG THE LOCAL COMMUNITIES, WHICH COULD COMPLEMENT GOVERNMENT CONSERVATION EFFORTS, IN THE FACE OF SHRINKING STATE RESOURCE ALLOCATION.

MY MINISTRY HAS MADE SOME PROGRESS IN THE PAST YEARS IN ITS ATTEMPTS TO REACH A BROADER SEGMENT OF THE PUBLIC AND INCLUDE THEM IN WILDLIFE RESOURCE MANAGEMENT. IN FACT, SOME OF YOU MAY HAVE HEARD MY MINISTRY MENTION 'THE NEW ERA' IN WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT THAT WE HAVE EMBARKED ON IN THIS COUNTRY, AN ERA DEFINED BY RELIANCE ON STRONG SCIENCE AND STRONG PARTNERSHIPS, OR CITIZEN PARTICIPATION. WE WANT TO STRENGTHEN GENUINE AND MEANINGFUL PARTICIPATION IN WILDLIFE CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT ISSUES BY A CROSS-SECTION OF CITIZENS.

WE CARE ABOUT INCREASING PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN WILDLIFE CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT BECAUSE EXPLOSIVE POPULATION GROWTH WILL QUITE LITERALLY PLACE OUR WILDLIFE POPULATIONS IN PERIL THROUGH ALTERATION OR DESTRUCTION OF WILDLIFE HABITATS. WE BELIEVE THAT WITHOUT PROPER CITIZEN PARTICIPATION IN THE PROCESSES DESIGNED TO GUIDE AND CHANNEL THIS GROWTH AND MANAGE OUR WILDLIFE RESOURCES, THIS TERRIBLE TOLL ON OUR WILDLIFE, AS WELL AS ON OUR OTHER NATURAL RESOURCES, WILL CONTINUE.

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION IS ALSO IMPORTANT IN MAKING DECISIONS CONCERNING EXPANDING RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITY WITH GROWING GAME POPULATIONS. THERE ARE MANY DIFFERENT WAYS TO EXPAND OPPORTUNITY, AND THE PUBLIC NEEDS TO PLAY A MAJOR ROLE IN SHAPING HOW IT GETS DONE. IN ADDITION, PUBLIC AWARENESS AND PARTICIPATION INCREASES THE CHANCE THAT THE PUBLIC WILL UNDERSTAND THE ROLE OF SCIENCE IN WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT.

WE ARE ALSO SEEING MORE AND MORE WILDLIFE ISSUES ADJACENT TO

URBAN AREAS GAINING PROMINENCE. THESE SITUATIONS HAVE BECOME VERY SENSITIVE. A GOOD EXAMPLE IS THE GROWING HUMAN WILDLIFE CONFLICT AROUND NAIROBI NATIONAL PARK. IT WILL TAKE A BROAD CROSS SECTION OF THE PUBLIC TO HELP MAKE DECISIONS ON HOW TO ADDRESS THE PROBLEMS ASSOCIATED WITH URBAN WILDLIFE.

UNLESS WE REACH OUT TO INCREASE THE NUMBER OF PEOPLE PLAYING AN ACTIVE ROLE IN WILDLIFE ISSUES, UNLESS WE MAKE MORE OF AN EFFORT TO ENGAGE THE PASTORALISTS, AGRICULTURE FARMERS, YOUTH, AND OTHERS, INCLUDING THE COUCH POTATOES WHO MAY NEVER COME CLOSER TO AN ANIMAL THAN WATCHING ANIMALS ON TELEVISION AND CINEMA'S, BUT WHO NEVERTHELESS CARE ABOUT WILDLIFE, WE ARE SETTING OURSELVES UP FOR FRUSTRATION AND FAILURE. IN A NUTSHELL, WE WILL NOT GAIN THE ATTENTION AND SUPPORT OF GOVERNMENT AND LEGISLATORS AND OTHERS, WHOM WE DEPEND ON TO BE EFFECTIVE. THERE IS ONE FINAL REASON WHY I BELIEVE WE NEED TO DRAW MORE PEOPLE INTO OUR TENT: THERE IS STRENGTH IN NUMBERS.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN

WHEN WE LAUNCHED THE REVIEW PROCESS IN JULY 2006, WE ASKED THE NATIONAL STEERING COMMITTEE TO:

TAKE A HARD, CRITICAL LOOK AT OUR PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PROCESSES AND HELP ME FIND WAYS TO INCREASE THE LEVEL OF CITIZEN PARTICIPATION, FIND WAYS TO ATTRACT PEOPLE FROM ALL WALKS OF LIFE WITH AN INTEREST IN WILDLIFE
HELP US RE-INVIGORATE AND, IF NECESSARY, RE-INVENT THE WAY WE INVOLVE PEOPLE IN THIS COUNTRY IN THE DECISION-MAKING PROCESSES AFFECTING OUR WILDLIFE
EXAMINE BOTH MY MINISTRY AND THE KENYA WILDLIFE SERVICE, AND DETERMINE IF THEY ARE FUNCTIONING THE WAY THEY SHOULD IN WILDLIFE CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT
EXAMINE THE RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN GOVERNMENT INSTITUTIONS AND THE PRIVATE SECTOR, DEFINE THOSE RELATIONSHIPS, AND RECOMMEND WAYS TO STRENGTHEN THEM
EXAMINE THE ROLE OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY IN EXPANDING CITIZEN PARTICIPATION IN WILDLIFE ISSUES
REVISE THE WILDLIFE POLICY AND LEGISLATION IN LINE WITH REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL WILDLIFE POLICIES AND STATUTES

IN SHORT WE MANDATED THE NATIONAL STEERING COMMITTEE TO:

REVIEW THE CURRENT WILDLIFE CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT POLICY IN ORDER TO IMPROVE ITS VISION TO ADDRESS THE CURRENT

CHALLENGES AFFECTING WILDLIFE AND THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC NEEDS OF THE COUNTRY AND REVISE AND AMEND THE WILDLIFE CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT ACT SO AS TO PROVIDE A SOUND LEGAL FRAMEWORK THAT WOULD ENSURE EFFECTIVE CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT OF WILDLIFE RESOURCES FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AT THE SAME TIME, WE CHALLENGED THE REVIEW TEAMS FROM THE OUTSET THAT THE MINISTRY WANTS THE REVIEW PROCESS TO BE:

A CRITICAL EXAMINATION OF OUR PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PROCESSES A DYNAMIC DIALOGUE BETWEEN MY MINISTRY, THE REVIEW TEAMS, AND THE PUBLIC ONE THAT RELIES ON SCIENCE AND ONE THAT CONCLUDES WITHIN A REASONABLE AMOUNT OF TIME, ONE YEAR, WITH CONCRETE RECOMMENDATIONS ON WAYS WE WILL IMPROVE EXISTING WILDLIFE CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT IN KENYA

I AM HAPPY TO NOTE THAT THE REVIEW TEAMS HAVE CONSULTED WIDELY. THEY HAVE BEEN ABLE TO GATHER VIEWS AND OPINIONS DURING 22 WELL-ATTENDED REGIONAL WORKSHOPS.

THE WORKSHOPS WERE HELD IN VOI, MOMBASA (TWO WORKSHOPS FOR MARINE AND TERRESTRIAL ISSUES), GARSEN, NAMANGA, KITENGELA, NANYUKI, MERU, EMBU, NAKURU, NAROK, KILGORIS, KISUMU, ELDORET, KAPENGURIA, MARALAL, GARISSA, WAJIR, MARSABIT, LODWAR, MWINGI AND MACHAKOS. I WANT TO THANK ALL THE STAKEHOLDERS WHO PARTICIPATED IN THE REGIONAL WORKSHOPS.

CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT OF WILDLIFE IN KENYA MUST BE IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE RELEVANT MULTILATERAL ENVIRONMENTAL AGREEMENTS AND WITH REGIONAL INSTRUMENTS SUCH AS THE TREATY, WHICH ESTABLISHED THE EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY. THESE DEFINE IMPORTANT INTERNATIONAL AND REGIONAL OBLIGATIONS FOR CONSERVING SHARED WILDLIFE RESOURCES. IN THE QUEST FOR SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT OF WILDLIFE AND IN RECOGNITION OF THE FACT THAT WILDLIFE ECOSYSTEMS STRADDLE POLITICAL BOUNDARIES, MECHANISMS FOR TRANSBOUNDARY CONSERVATION MUST BE IDENTIFIED AND IMPLEMENTED WHERE NECESSARY.

IN THIS REGARD, THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM AND WILDLIFE SPONSORED SOME MEMBERS OF THE REVIEW TEAMS IN FEBRUARY 2007 TO VISIT TANZANIA, NAMIBIA AND BOTSWANA TO:

HEAR PRESENTATIONS ON KEY WILDLIFE ISSUES AND SUBJECTS
LEARN FROM EXPERIENCES
LEARN ABOUT CONFLICT RESOLUTION AND CONSTRAINTS AND WHERE

POSSIBLE, TO SEE ACTUAL EXAMPLES IN PRACTICE
WE BELIEVE THERE EXIST A STRONG POTENTIAL OF CROSS BORDER
CONSERVATION AREAS IN EAST AFRICA. THERE IS THEREFORE A STRONG
AND URGENT NEED FOR EAST AFRICA'S NEIGHBOURING COUNTRIES TO
HARMONIZE CONSERVATION EFFORTS AND SPECIFICALLY TOURISM AND
WILDLIFE POLICIES AND LEGISLATION. WE URGE ALL THE
STAKEHOLDERS TO SUPPORT THE CURRENT INITIATIVES BEING LED BY
THE EAST
AFRICAN COMMUNITY SECRETARIAT TOWARDS THIS DESIRED DIRECTION.

WE ARE THEREFORE ASSEMBLED HERE TODAY TO DISCUSS THE RESULTS
OF ALL OUR EFFORTS AS CONTAINED IN THE DRAFT WILDLIFE POLICY. AT
THIS JUNCTURE, LET ME CAUTION THAT ACHIEVING RESULTS IN THIS
REVIEW PROCESS IS NOT NECESSARILY JUST ABOUT PLACING NEW
DUTIES ON PEOPLE. WHAT IS MORE CRUCIAL IS ACTUALLY MOTIVATING
PEOPLE TO TAKE ACTION. WILDLIFE CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT
AS AN ESSENTIAL ROLE TO PLAY IN THAT PROCESS. KENYAN'S EXPECT
THE FOLLOWING OUTPUTS FROM THE REVIEW TEAMS WITHIN THE
COMING MONTH:

A REVISED WILDLIFE POLICY THAT IS ACCEPTABLE AND OWNED BY
STAKEHOLDERS AND A REVISED WILDLIFE ACT THAT IS CAPABLE OF
ADDRESSING CURRENT AND FUTURE CONSERVATION ISSUES AND
CHALLENGES

ON MY PART, I PROMISE TO DO EVERYTHING POSSIBLE TO ENSURE THAT
THE DRAFT POLICY AND BILL GET THE NECESSARY GOVERNMENT
APPROVAL. IN ADDITION, MY MINISTRY WILL DEVELOP AN
IMPLEMENTATION PLAN FOR THIS POLICY THROUGH A PARTICIPATORY
PROCESS TO ENSURE THAT THE ACTIONS OUTLINED IN THE POLICY ARE
ADDRESSED SYSTEMATICALLY AND EFFECTIVELY.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN

THE MAJOR THRUST OF OUR CURRENT STRATEGIC PLANS IN TOURISM
AND WILDLIFE SECTORS ARE:

TO DIVERSIFY TOURISM PRODUCTS AND TOURIST SOURCE MARKETS
TO CONSERVE WILDLIFE POPULATIONS, WHILE AVOIDING CASES OF
OVERPOPULATION AND
TO REDUCE LAND USE CONFLICTS RELATING TO PEOPLE AND WILDLIFE.

THESE STRATEGIES TAKE COGNISANCE OF THE FACT THAT THE
CHALLENGE OF PRESERVING THE ENVIRONMENT AND THE RESOURCE
BASE OF KENYA IS CRUCIAL TO ITS SURVIVAL AND PROSPERITY. THIS
CALLS FOR THE INVOLVEMENT OF LOCAL, NATIONAL AND

INTERNATIONAL STAKEHOLDERS IN THE MANAGEMENT OF THE WILDLIFE RESOURCES OF THE COUNTRY. THE TARGET IS TO FACILITATE THE DEVELOPMENT, DIVERSIFICATION AND PROMOTION OF TOURISM PRODUCTS AND POSITION KENYA AMONG THE TOP PREFERRED TOURIST DESTINATIONS IN THE WORLD.

LET ME TAKE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO URGE STAKEHOLDERS ACROSS TOURISM AND WILDLIFE SECTORS TO REDOUBLE THEIR EFFORTS AND ENSURE THAT WE ACHIEVE SUSTAINABLE AND DIVERSIFIED DEVELOPMENT THROUGH COMPETITIVENESS IN GLOBAL MARKETS. THE NATION NEEDS COMMITMENT FROM EVERYBODY, INCLUDING MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT, THE PRIVATE SECTOR, THE TRADE UNIONS, NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS, COMMUNITIES AND INDIVIDUALS, AS WELL AS FROM OUR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT COOPERATING PARTNERS, TO ACHIEVE IMPROVED AND SUSTAINED PROSPERITY.

IN CONCLUSION

LET ME COMMEND THE REVIEW TEAMS AND ALL KENYAN'S WHO HAVE BEEN INVOLVED IN THE REVIEW PROCESS THUS FAR. I NOTE WITH GREAT SATISFACTION THAT YOU HAVE ADHERED TO THE ROAD MAP I PRESENTED TO YOU IN JULY 2006. THIS IS A SPLENDID EXAMPLE OF THE WAY STATUTORY AND VOLUNTARY BODIES SHOULD BE WORKING TOGETHER IN TAKING FORWARD CONSERVATION.

EVERYONE IN THIS ROOM HAS A STAKE IN WHAT HAPPENS TO WILDLIFE. WORK WITH US. GIVE US SUGGESTIONS AND THE BENEFIT OF YOUR EXPERIENCE. LET US KNOW WHAT WORKS AND WHAT NEEDS TO WORK. TOGETHER WE CAN FULFIL OUR WILDLIFE CONSERVATION RESPONSIBILITIES TO THE KENYA PEOPLE.

ALL PROPOSALS FROM THE DELIBERATIONS OF THIS NATIONAL SYMPOSIUM WOULD BE MOSTLY WELCOME TO IMPROVE THE DRAFT WILDLIFE POLICY, ENHANCE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE POLICIES, EMERGING PROGRAMMES AND PROJECTS.

I ALSO WANT TO THANK OUR DEVELOPMENT COOPERATING PARTNERS, ON BEHALF OF GOVERNMENT AND THE PEOPLE OF KENYA, FOR THEIR CONTINUED SUPPORT TO OUR DEVELOPMENT ENDEAVOURS WITHIN THE TOURISM AND WILDLIFE SECTORS. THIS SUPPORT, WHICH HAS CONTRIBUTED IMMENSELY TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF THIS COUNTRY, IS HIGHLY APPRECIATED. WE TRUST THAT THEIR SUPPORT WILL CONTINUE IN THE FUTURE, PARTICULARLY DURING IMPLEMENTATION STAGES OF THE STRATEGIES AND ACTION PLANS ARISING FROM THIS POLICY AND LEGISLATION MAKING PROCESS.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN

WITH THESE MANY REMARKS, IT IS NOW MY PLEASANT DUTY TO
DECLARE THIS 2ND AND FINAL NATIONAL SYMPOSIUM OFFICIALLY
OPENED.

THANK YOU.