

## **EEIU Nabuur – ESEA Joint Venture into Ecologism and Ethics**

The Ecological Society for Eastern Africa (ESEA) is an East African, not-for-profit, networking organization, bringing together individuals and institutions participating in ecological research and application of ecological science to development in East Africa ([www.ecsea.org](http://www.ecsea.org)). Amidst a variety of objectives, it has a mission to promote sustainable development through high quality research, education, technological innovations, and information and resource sharing. This relates well with the aims EEIU holds of developing the conceptual basis of eco-ethics, bringing eco-ethics to the attention of many people worldwide, and at implementing eco-ethics in human behavior, politics and economics. We thus find a complete need to relate with ESEA as the regional office for EEIU activities in East Africa.

After six months of correspondence with Dr. Nicholas Oguge Ph.D (founder President), we both found coordinating time from whence we could initiate elementary focus on our activities and develop relations of our organisations. The best part of this quest was my knowing that Dr. Nicholas is also the Executive Director for Earthwatch Institute in Kenya. Earthwatch Institute is an international non-profit organization that brings science to life for people concerned about the Earth's future. Founded in 1971, Earthwatch supports scientific field research by offering volunteers the opportunity to join research teams around the world. This unique model is creating a systematic change in how the public views science and its role in environmental sustainability. At this particular time, Earthwatch Institute in Kenya (EWK) has commenced a study to develop resilience towards climate change among Samburu communities, a component of which involves climate change mapping funded by Rio Tinto.

For lack of better reasons, I had to meet the project officer instead of Dr. Nicholas, but the meeting progressed well with great surprises on how our activities had been widely read by members of ESEA who respected our progress and decided that we were indeed a rightful organisation to reckon with.

Amongst issues emanating from our short meeting was the possibility of the members in this society (Ecological Society for Eastern Africa) to participate in publishing, especially in the Journal for Ethics and Environmental Politics as produced by Inter – Research Science Publisher. It is within my hopes that their independent quest for inclusion in this endowing activity will produce more hopes for greater synergy.

In the meeting, my emphasis was on the difference between Inter – Research and EEIU as much as the facts hold it that we have a single founder, Prof. Otto Kinne.

The meeting I had with Ms. Caroline Lumasi, (project officer of ESEA) gave me greater courage of even mobilising chapter resources (as within the limits of respective chapter chairs) towards continental integration. We really hope to achieve this in good time for the stronger linkage of our eco ethics concepts to the thesis so developed.

## **Young Diplomats Forum – The EEIU On Campus Visit to K.W.S.**

Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS) was established in 1990. It manages the biodiversity of the country, protecting and conserving the flora and fauna.

Its mission statement reads “To sustainably conserve and manage Kenya's wildlife and its habitat in collaboration with stakeholders for posterity”.

KWS manages the National Parks and Reserves in Kenya. The money collected as entrance fees in the parks is used to help the conservation of the plants and animals within the parks. A look at its value statement demonstrates this ethical endeavour and invites activists, researchers and other ecological stakeholders to feel involved. The value statement says “*At Kenya Wildlife Service, we conserve and manage Kenya's wildlife scientifically, responsively and professionally. We do this with integrity, recognizing and encouraging staff creativity, and continuous learning and teamwork in partnership with communities and stakeholders*”.

With these great descriptions of what Kenya Wildlife Service is all about, we decided to visit the organization's head office in Nairobi. And this event has been a continuous effort between three offices: EEIU Nabuur, EEIU Nabuur On Campus (YDF) and the K.W.S. HQ.

EEIU Nabuur On Campus operates within the United States International University as the Young Diplomats Forum, a club that shares the diversity of students pursuing divergent courses with common agenda of career development in ethical means. And this makes Eco Ethics International Union an organisation that is very popular among students in this University; though the enrollment is low (we are almost 3,800 students at the time of this reporting).

The mission of USIU is to promote the discovery and application of knowledge, the acquisition of skills, and the development of intellect and character in a manner that prepares students to contribute effectively and ethically as citizens of a changing and increasingly technological world. This statement in itself finds relevancy on the ultimate strife that EEIU aims to develop worldwide. We share in a global initiative.

This event took place on the 28<sup>th</sup> May 2009. The Thursday morning was chilly but the students who participated had lots of issues to learn.

In preparation for this event, Mr. Boaz Adhengo made contact with a list of personnel at the Kenya Wildlife Service, including the Assistant Director for Education and Conservation – Mr. Paul Mbugua. The touching correspondence was through a dedicative commitment by Mr. Alfred Owino (Research Scientist) to develop the discussion topics and identify presenters who made this date a success. The theme was to revolve around diplomacy and conservation, thus these seven headings were identified:-

1. Planning for environmental conservation in a changing landscape: Strategies and options in Kenya
2. Biological invasions – The Kenya scenario
3. Biodiversity related Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) in Kenya: Implementation strategies, challenges and opportunities.
4. Wildlife diseases management in Kenya: Strategies and Challenges
5. Endangered wildlife conservation in Kenya : The case of African Elephant
6. Wetlands and conservation areas linkages in Kenya
7. Biotechnology and wildlife conservation in Kenya: Opportunities and challenges.

Initially, our visit was expected to be on the 29<sup>th</sup> May 2009, but due to logistical issues arising at the University, we had to relocate our visit time to suit the planned activity that required full participation of all students. This change of date costed our event dearly as we lost four presentations. We therefore had to adjust on our time and prepared for three papers instead of seven. These topics as presented were numbers 4, 5 and 7. Nevertheless, we had lots of information to relate, analyse and compare.

**Mr. Alfred Owino** began by welcoming the On Campus group at the venue, agreeing that conservation diplomacy is gaining great attention and young minds need to be prepared to be in position of addressing such challenges. He also noted that conservation has been a man's domain, but the group attending this visit had many women thus putting hopes for the future (eco – feminism).

Owino explained that Kenya Wildlife Service is a parastatal established under a government act which gives it a core mandate of managing and conserving Kenya's natural environment. Biodiversity monitoring division has been divided into five:

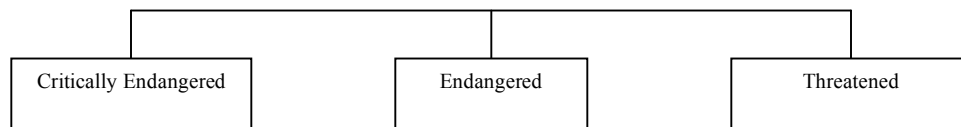
- I. Ecosystem and Wildlife Management – headed by Samuel Adanje
- II. Biodiversity planning, assessment and compliance – headed by Stephen Magero
- III. Ecological Monitoring, Biotechnology, Biodiversity Management and Evaluation – Headed by Charles Musyoki
- IV. Conventions, Licensing and Permits – (handling multilateral agreements e.t.c) headed by James Njogu
- V. Veterinary and Capture Services – headed by Dr. Francis Gakuya

**Dr. Isaac Lekolok** gave a presentation on Wildlife Disease Management in Kenya, highlighting his departmental experience and duty as the officer in charge of field work (capture services). He explained that they have three field units (Lewa, Mara and Nairobi) and operates with eight veterinary officers. Among the diseases identified were Rabbits, Scabies, Anthrax, Riderpest, trypanosomes (caused by tse-tse flies).

While listening to his presentation, I noticed that little technicality is possessed with our members as we were unable to even get the correct spelling for some diseases as demonstrated on the lines above. My interest was that diseases which affect livestock (as domesticated) also affect the wildlife. But his main agenda was the impossibility of controlling poaching (where people sell the game meat to the public at cheaper prices). Zoonotic diseases, as defined by Dr. Isaac, are those diseases that affect the wildlife and humanity. Noting that other diseases as identified are of great economic importance e.g. the Riderpest. He also noted that other countries as Somali Ecosystem, makes it close to impossible to regulate the outbreak of such diseases adding to the additional challenge that most wildlife population are free ranging, and lie outside protected areas.

**Mr. Mukunyi Kavaka** – Coordinator for Bioengineering/Biotechnology was the next to present a paper. He clarified that Biotechnology involves bio-exploration (bio-prospecting) from whence we identify valuable genetic resources for commercialization. That Kenya is classified as one of the richest biodiversity areas in the world and K.W.S. conserves almost 80% of the landmass. He also expressed the recent generic and genetic discoveries that K.W.S. has made through its contracted researchers and how they are being used in medicine departments as well as production industries.

**Moses Litoroh** – Coordinator for the Elephant Programme, presented the case of the African Elephant. He elaborated the goal of species conservation and management as to ensure proper viability of wildlife species through scientific management and wildlife conservation practices. He taught the group on the classification of species according to the levels of conservation i.e.



The visit ended with a vote of thanks from Mr. Alfred Owino and the On Campus Vice Chair, Ms. Josephine Magawi. But as a bonding initiative, there were assignments delegated to the group. These questions are supposed to be assessed by the coordinating committee for this visit and hopefully design the topical concerns for our next activity.

- 1) What do you consider to be the challenges of Young Diplomats and how do you intend to address them?
- 2) Define what you understand by sustainable development: What are your views for sustainable development for emerging countries?
- 3) What are the conservation diplomacy challenges for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century?
- 4) What is Climate Change?
- 5) Discuss technological innovations for sustainable development
- 6) How is Kenya allocating resources for sustainable development?
- 7) What is the role of diplomacy in Rotterdam Convention?
- 8) What is the role of Biotechnology in addressing food security?

As the EEIU Nabuur Executive Committee, we are satisfied that the Young Diplomats Forum is representing the advocacy initiative in all its forms. We will continue to support such endeavors and steer our ties to the betterment of relations with our identified members as ambassadors for Eco Ethics.

Mr. Boaz Adhengo is EEIU Fellow, Chapter Chair and author of two books. He is currently developing the Balozi Journal as an On Campus Initiative.