

UNDP Resident Representative’s speech at the Launch of the National Steering Committee for the preparation of the Environment Policy

- Honourable David Mwiraria, Minister for Environment and Natural Resources,
- Prof. James ole Kiyapi, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources,
- The Representative of the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme,
- Your Excellency Ambassador Bo Jensen of the Royal Kingdom of Denmark,
- Permanent Secretaries of Sectoral Ministries,
- Representatives from bi-lateral institutions and non-government organisations,
- Members of the National Steering Committee for the preparation of the Environment Policy,
- Distinguished guests,

It is a great pleasure for me to be here today, on the occasion of the launch of the National Steering Committee for the Preparation of the Environment Policy. The United Nations Development Programme is particularly encouraged to see the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources take decisive steps towards initiating an environment policy process.

The Environment Coordination and Management Act of 1999 and establishment of the National Environment Management Authority (NEMA) and other institutions have contributed to improve the effective management of Kenya’s environment. An environment policy will serve to strengthen Kenya’s commitment on sound environmental management in the medium and long term, by providing a clear direction on Government’s intended actions to address important environmental issues affecting its people and economy. For instance how it will minimise its contribution to climate change and on the other hand how it will adapt and manage changes resulting from climate change.

UNDP is committed to support this process with the provision of financial and technical support through the Poverty and Environment Initiative (PEI) project. The PEI Kenya project is a collaborative initiative by the Government of Kenya, UNDP and UNEP which aims to support the mainstreaming of environment into development policies, planning and budget

actors to ensure that environmental considerations are incorporated in sectoral policies and plans.

My third point relates to the Environment Policy preparation process itself and the need to ensure that the knowledge and experience of Kenyans, both men and women, are equally brought into the preparation process. I am encouraged with the establishment of a National Steering Committee made up of eminent Kenyans to lead the process, and I take the opportunity to appeal to you to ensure that civil society institutions at national and local levels and the private sector are engaged in the policy preparation process. Similarly, I am also encouraged with the leadership accorded by the Honourable Minister for Environment and Natural Resources and the Permanent Secretary to the Environment Policy process. Your success will also be largely dependent on you informing and influencing your colleagues in other Ministries and Government Offices on the environment policy. At the end of day, the implementation of the policy and its eventual success will require the political support from the highest offices in Government and wide engagement of public, private and civil society institutions, and the public in general.

At this stage I would like to thank the Honourable Minister for inviting me to this function and to wish him, his colleagues and the National Steering Committee success in formulating a new Environment Policy for Kenya. I look forward to being kept informed on progress, I will remain a keen supporter of this process, and I look forward to being invited to future forums.

Thank you.