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National Environment Management Authority

OPERATIONALIZING CARBON MARKETS



CARBON MARKETS

Kenya National Carbon Registry (KNCR) is the Government of Kenya's official digital platform for registering, tracking, authorizing, and reporting carbon market activities within the country under the Climate Change Act (2016) and the Climate Change (Carbon Markets) Regulations, 2024.

inside



ARCA PROJECT LAUNCH

The Upper Athi River Catchment Area (ARCA) project titled, "Enhancing Community Resilience and Water Security in the Upper Athi River Catchment Area in Kenya," was launched marking a major step in strengthening climate resilience and water security across Nyandarua, Kiambu, Nairobi and Machakos Counties.

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Our Environment, Our Life, Our Responsibility





World Wetlands Day 2026 procession in Isiolo town during the celebrations

|| By S. Irungu & F. Musomi

Connecting Wetlands and Traditional Knowledge

As the world marked World Wetlands Day 2026, NEMA spotlighted the vital role wetlands play not only in environmental sustainability, but also in preserving traditional knowledge and cultural heritage, in line with this year's theme: "Wetlands and Traditional Knowledge: Celebrating Cultural Heritage."

At the heart of Isiolo Town, within the Fisheries Department compound, lies Merire Wetlands — a unique urban wetland ecosystem that demonstrates how nature and culture coexist. Covering approximately three-quarters of an acre within a 2.7-hectare compound, the wetland plays a critical role in fisheries development, biodiversity conservation, and environmental sustainability in Isiolo County.

For generations, local communities have relied on wetlands like Merire for livelihoods, drawing on indigenous knowledge systems to manage resources such as fish, reeds, and water in ways that sustained

both people and nature. This traditional wisdom continues to guide responsible use of the wetland, underscoring the importance of integrating cultural heritage into modern conservation efforts.

Merire Wetlands support a variety of species, including monitor lizards, bats, fish, and other aquatic and terrestrial life, making it an important biodiversity hotspot within an urban setting. Beyond ecology, the wetland serves as a living classroom — a reminder of how traditional practices can complement scientific approaches to environmental management.

However, despite its significance, Merire Wetlands face increasing threats. These include encroachment, pollution from nearby sewer lines, activities from the adjacent fresh produce market, flooding, uncontrolled livestock and poultry access, unsustainable harvesting of reeds, and recurrent fires, which have already affected the wetland on four occasions.



Merire Wetland in Isiolo County

During this year's commemorations at the wetland, the Chief Guest was CS Environment, Climate Change and Forestry, Dr. Deborah Barasa, EGH accompanied by Hon. Beatrice Askul, CS Ministry of EAC, ASALs and Regional Development, Isiolo Governor, Hon. Abdi Guyo, NEMA Board led by Chairman, Mr. Emilio Mugo and Director General, Dr. Mamo B. Mamo, EBS among heads of other institutions.

CS Barasa called for cooperation and contribution by all actors in safeguarding wetlands and the environment in general. She added that wetlands restoration requires efforts from each of the actors especially in the long term contribution to the attainment of the 15 billion trees national target by 2032. CS Barasa underscored that improved wetlands contribute to ecological integrity as well as improved provision of ecosystem services among other benefits. She assured stateholders that her Ministry will continue to put in place and enforce necessary measures to ensure that wetland resources are restored and protected from further degradation and loss.

NEMA Chairman, Emilio Mugo indicated that Kenya boasts of diverse wetlands that provide essential ecosystem services. He added that Merire Wetland is one of the 30 wetlands in Isiolo County- serving as natural water reservoirs and biodiversity hotspots that need protection and sustainable management. He

urged the locals to conserve the wetlands to enhance water security and agricultural sustainability.



NEMA Chairman, Emilio Mugo making his remarks during World Wetlands Day 2026 in Isiolo



NEMA Director General, Dr. Mamo B. Mamo, EBS addressing participants during the World Wetlands Day celebrations

NEMA DG Dr. Mamo B. Mamo, EBS affirmed that NEMA is actively involved in the conservation, restoration, and sustainable management of wetlands, including developing and enforcing policies and regulatory frameworks for wetland protection.

The DG added that there is a pressing need to implement wetland conservation strategies within national and county development planning to prevent further degradation and promote ecosystems health to avert climate change related risks.

The CS also launched the Carbon Markets community guide. The guide has been developed by NEMA in partnership with Wild Wide Fund for nature (WWF). It will help the communities to understand issues around carbon markets trading and conservation. She also awarded various environmental conservation groups for their efforts in environmental protection within Isiolo County.



Participants pose for a group photo after planting trees at Isiolo School for the blind as a build-up towards WWD 2026 celebrations in Isiolo



CS Environment, Climate Change and Forestry, Dr. Deborah Barasa (L) and CS EAC, ASALs and Regional Development, Hon. Beatrice Askul (R) are joined by Governor Isiolo, Hon. Abdi Guyo (C), NEMA Chairman, Emilio Mugo (L) among other dignitaries to display the Carbon Markets Simplified Community Guide during the WWD national celebrations in Isiolo.

The guide was developed by NEMA in partnership with the Wild Wide Fund (WWF-Kenya).

The NEMA Director General, Dr. Mamo B. Mamo, EBS also graced the annual Friends of Ondiri Wetland Conservation concert held on 28th January, 2026 at Alliance Boys High School in Kikuyu. The concert was held to commemorate conservation efforts being done at Ondiri Wetland, a critical water source for the Nairobi River.



NEMA, Waste Pickers Meet on EPR

|| By S. Irungu & P. Kerubo

Kenya's Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) regulations, 2024 integrated waste pickers and recognized their crucial role in waste management value chain.

In recognition of this role, NEMA through the support of the Royal Danish Embassy organized for a waste pickers meeting on 9th March, 2026 at a Nairobi Hotel.

The meeting was graced by the CS Ministry of Environment, Climate Change and Forestry, Dr. Deborah Barasa, EGH accompanied by the NEMA Chairman, Mr. Emilio Mugo and Director General, Dr. Mamo B. Mamo, EBS.

While making her remarks, CS Barasa stated the government has come up with policies to better the role of waste pickers in environmental governance. She added that the ministry has formally recognized waste workers as environmental workers as enshrined in the Sustainable Waste Management act, 2022.

She added that waste pickers should be regarded as critical partners in the waste management value chain as spelt out in the EPR regulations and in promotion of circular economy. She placed emphasis on the need to safeguard the health of waste pickers in their daily dealings. "The government of Kenya is committed to transforming the waste management system by promoting sustainable practices, strengthening recycling and ensuring that those who work within the sector are recognised and supported," the CS said.

The NEMA Chairman noted that waste pickers are critical in the waste management value chain. He acknowledged the dynamics in the waste sector which are critical for seamless waste management. He emphasized for coordination and cooperation by all players in the waste sector.

The NEMA Director General, Dr. Mamo, EBS noted that the waste pickers are the 'unsung heroes' in the waste management value chain. He added that the country can only be clean if all waste generators take responsibility for their waste.



CS Environment, Climate Change and Forestry, Dr. Deborah Barasa with NEMA Chair, Emilio Mugo, DG, Dr. Mamo B. Mamo, EBS in a group photo with producers, PROs and Waste pickers at a Nairobi hotel.

Despite waste management being devolved, the DG noted that the Authority in 2015 developed the 10 minimum points to be followed in the waste sector by the County Governments.

He underscored that the Authority has also urged the Counties to develop Material Recovery Facilities (MRFs) to enhance waste management. He encouraged constructive dialogue in the betterment of the welfare of the waste pickers.



NEMA Director General, Dr. Mamo B. Mamo, EBS speaking to waste pickers at a Nairobi Hotel

The government's move to recognise and integrate waste pickers into the formal waste management system is therefore seen as a step toward addressing both environmental and urban challenges. Experts argue that strengthening waste collection, recycling and involving waste pickers more systematically in the management chain could help reduce the amount of waste that ends up in drains and rivers, ultimately improving urban flood resilience.

During the meeting participants highlighted daily struggles, including lack of protective equipment, exposure to health hazards and inconsistent earnings. For years, Kenya's waste pickers have quietly supported recycling efforts, yet their work has largely gone unrecognised, leaving many to operate in unsafe conditions with unstable incomes. Many have worked in the sector for decades, offering valuable knowledge that officials said will inform new policies and programmes.

The forum brought together stakeholders in the waste management sector including the Ministry of Cooperatives and MSMEs, Nairobi County, Waste Pickers Associations and Producer Responsibility Organizations (PROs).



NEMA Director Enforcement, Dr. Ayub Macharia making a presentation to waste pickers in Nairobi



Dignitaries led by CS Environment, Climate Change and Forestry, Dr. Deborah Barasa during the launch of KOCEMS at a Nairobi Hotel

KOCEMS: Monitoring Emissions Through AI

|| By S. Irungu & P. Kerubo

NEMA Kenya in partnership with United Platform Solutions (UPS), developed the Kenya Online Continuous Emissions Monitoring System (KOCEMS)—a landmark initiative that introduces a new era of digital environmental regulation and real-time pollution monitoring in Kenya.

KOCEMS was unveiled on 11th March, 2026 in an event presided by the CS Environment, Climate Change and Forestry, Dr. Deborah Barasa, EGH accompanied by NEMA's Mr. David Ong'are, Director Environmental Compliance representing the Director General.

While making her key note address, the CS stated that air pollution remains a major environmental and public health challenge across Africa, contributing to over 1.1 million premature deaths annually.

She underscored that the introduction of this system represents a major step in not only strengthening environmental compliance and enforcement but also

supporting evidence based policy decision making which will enhance the protection of public health and the environment. The CS encouraged all regulated facilities to work closely with NEMA and the UPS to ensure the successful implementation of the program. She implied that Kenya continues to demonstrate leadership in environmental governance.

The deployment of this system contributes to the implementation of resolutions adopted by the United Nations Environment Assembly calling for stronger action to address air pollution and enhance emissions monitoring and reporting.

The statement by NEMA DG Dr. Mamo B. Mamo, EBS indicated that the initiative is anchored in Regulation 59 of the Environmental Management and Coordination (Air Quality) Regulations, 2024, which require regulated facilities to install a web-based Continuous Emission Monitoring System (CEMS) which shall transmit real time emissions data to the Authority.



NEMA staff pose for a photo during the launch of KOCEMS at a hotel in Nairobi



CS Environment, Climate Change and Forestry, Dr. Deborah Barasa making her remarks during the launch of KOCEMS at a Nairobi Hotel

Through the system, NEMA will have 24/7 real-time visibility into emissions from factories, power plants, cement plants, refineries, and other industrial facilities across the country. The system uses AI-enabled analytics and IoT-based emissions sensors installed at industrial facilities to continuously track emissions data and transmit it to a centralized environmental monitoring platform.

The system will allow the Authority to measure and analyze real-time data on air, water and noise pollution throughout the country.

With real-time digital monitoring, NEMA Kenya will be able to:

- Detect environmental violations instantly and take immediate enforcement action
- Monitor industrial pollution continuously across the country
- Maintain a real-time national emissions inventory for policy and climate reporting
- Improve regulatory transparency and eliminate data manipulation
- Enable faster decision-making and environmental protection
- Support Kenya's climate commitments and emissions reduction targets

By combining advanced sensors, artificial intelligence, and environmental data analytics, KOCEMS provides a powerful digital infrastructure that will support evidence-based environmental regulation for decades to come.

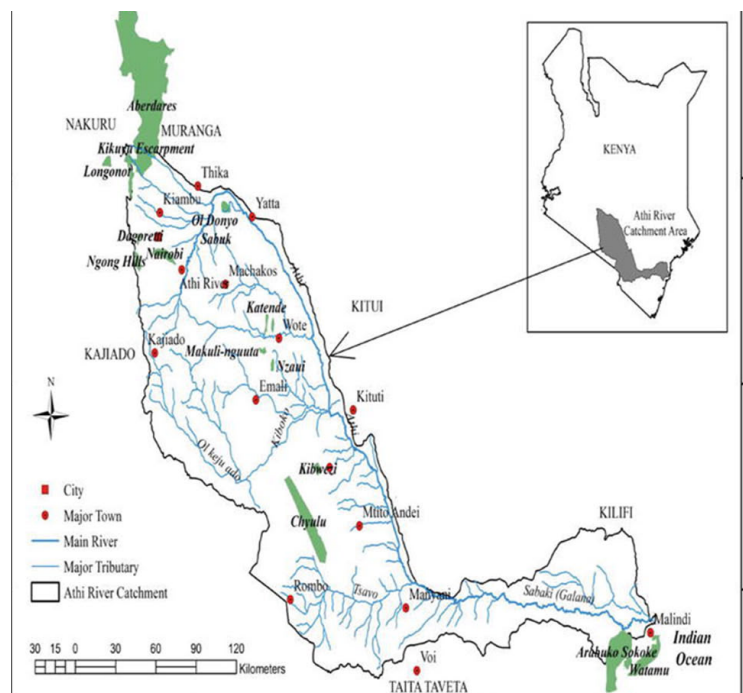


Dignitaries launch the ARCA project led by the Chief Guest Dr. Musalia Mudavadi, Prime Cabinet Secretary and Cabinet Secretary for Foreign and Diaspora Affairs at a Nairobi Hotel

The ARCA Project Launched

|| By A. Kamiri & S. Irungu

The Upper Athi River Catchment Area (ARCA) project titled, “Enhancing Community Resilience and Water Security in the Upper Athi River Catchment Area in Kenya.” Funded by the Green Climate Fund (GCF), the project marks a major step in strengthening climate resilience and water security across Nyandarua, Kiambu, Kiambu and Machakos Counties.



Kenya officially launched the Upper Athi River Catchment Area (ARCA) project titled, “Enhancing Community Resilience and Water Security in the Upper Athi River Catchment Area in Kenya.”

The project is funded by the Green Climate Fund (GCF) marking a major step in strengthening climate resilience and water security across four counties. The project was launched on 26th February, 2026 in Nairobi.

The Chief Guest was Musalia Mudavadi, Prime Cabinet Secretary and Cabinet Secretary for Foreign and Diaspora Affairs accompanied by CS Environment, Climate Change and Forestry, Dr. Deborah Barasa.

In his keynote address, Dr. Mudavadi said that the initiative is designed to strengthen the resilience of communities and increase water security in Kiambu, Machakos, Nairobi and Nyandarua counties, an expansive ecosystem that supports millions of Kenyans, including farmers, pastoralists, industries and urban households.

He underscored that the project demonstrates Kenya’s resolve to confront the global climate crisis while safeguarding water resources and promoting sustainable economic growth for present and future generations, before officially declaring the programme launched. He noted that the programme aligns with Kenya’s Nationally Determined Contribution under the Paris Agreement, including the country’s commitment to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 32 percent by 2032 and scale this up to 35 percent by

2035.

He emphasized that climate action remains central to Kenya’s Fourth Medium Term Plan (2023–2027) and the Bottom-Up Economic Transformation Agenda, including ambitious environmental restoration targets such as growing 15 billion trees and restoring degraded landscapes.

Cabinet Secretary for Environment, Climate Change and Forestry, Dr. Deborah Barasa, described the launch as a historic milestone, noting that ARCA is Kenya’s first project to be funded by the Green Climate Fund under the Direct Access Modality. “This initiative strengthens Kenya’s growing GCF portfolio, which now comprises over 19 projects valued at approximately \$292.7 million,” CS Barasa said.

CS Barasa reaffirmed Kenya’s commitment as a signatory to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Paris Agreement, highlighting key national frameworks including the Climate Change Act (2016, amended 2023), the National Climate Change Action Plan and the National Adaptation Plan”.

On his part Principal Secretary for Environment and Climate Change, Festus K. Ng’eno, described the initiative as transformative. “We aren’t just launching a project with a long title; we are launching a lifeline for the Upper Athi River Catchment,” he said, noting that the project represents Kenya’s broader commitment to ensuring communities not only endure climate change, but “overcome and thrive in it.”

Prime Cabinet Secretary and Cabinet Secretary for Foreign and Diaspora Affairs, Dr. Musalia Mudavadi making the key note address during the ARCA project launch at a Nairobi Hotel.



Dr. Ng'eno underscored the urgency of action, stating that climate change is “not a theoretical threat but our lived reality,” with impacts falling most heavily on rural and vulnerable communities. However, he stressed that Kenya “refuses to be defined by our vulnerabilities” and instead chooses to be defined by ambition.

He added that ARCA exemplifies Kenya’s integrated approach to climate action. “Through ARCA, we are protecting livelihoods, restoring our ecosystems, and opening the door for climate-smart investments. We are proving that we can lower our carbon footprint while simultaneously building a wall of resilience around our farming communities,” he said.

The project will be implemented by the National Environment Management Authority as the accredited entity, working alongside the Water Resources Authority and the Kenya Meteorological Department. It will focus on strengthening climate-resilient water infrastructure, enhancing ecosystem restoration and improving climate information systems in the Upper Athi River Catchment.

The NEMA Chairman, Emilio Mugo said that NEMA has walked the journey with GCF since 2016. He noted that the relationship with GCF has seen the Authority

benefit from capacity building initiatives through the readiness program and project preparation facility. He underscored that the board has put strategic policy direction to ensure the Authority delivers on its mandate. The Chairman added that the Authority has identified climate action as a key result area in recognition of the country role in advancing the climate agenda.

The Chairman noted that the upper Athi River catchment plays a critical role in supporting livelihoods of thousands of households, sustaining biodiversity and driving economic activities. Despite this, the catchment has faced various challenges ranging from deforestation, water over abstraction, pollution, land degradation among others. This had made communities downstream vulnerable to droughts and regular floods.

NEMA Director General, Dr. Mamo B. Mamo, EBS stated that the project will help the country invest in climate resilient infrastructure including construction and rehabilitation of water pans, boreholes and sand dams and other water facilities to ensure reliable water supply. The DG urged the County Governments and other institutions to fully embrace the project as the communities are the centre of the activities to be undertaken.



NEMA staff in a group photo during the launch of ARCA project at a Nairobi Hotel

Dr. Mamo emphasized that the success of the project will depend on the ownership and participation of affected communities. He appreciated the GCF for approving the grant project the country and the national treasury as the designated authority and the national focal point of GCF. The DG also appreciated the executing entities for supporting various components of the project stating that their technical expertise will go a long way in ensuring the success of the project.

As implementation begins, leaders called for transparency, accountability and collective responsibility to ensure the programme delivers lasting benefits to communities and secures a resilient, water-secure future for Kenya.

In attendance were, Governor of Nyandarua County, H.E Dr. Kiarie Badilisha, CECM Kiambu David Kuria, CECM Machakos Onesmus Muia, Ag. Director KMD Mr. Edward M. Muriuki, the WRA Board, led by Chairperson Donald Murgor and CEO Mohamed Shurie.

The project will be implemented in four Counties namely; Nyandarua, Kiambu, Nairobi and Machakos. The project aims to strengthen the resilience to climate change of communities, and increase water security in the area.



ARCA Project Manager, John Wafula making a presentation during the launch at a Nairobi Hotel



Participants during the launch of the ARCA project at a Nairobi Hotel

Kenya National Carbon Registry Launched

By S. Irungu



CS Environment, Climate Change and Forestry, Dr. Deborah Barasa, NEMA officials and other partners launch the Carbon market registry at a Nairobi hotel

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The launch of Carbon Registry sends a strong signal that Kenya is strengthening its institutional readiness to participate effectively in global carbon markets while safeguarding national interests and maximizing benefits for its citizens

Emilio Mugo
NEMA Chairman

The launch of Kenya National Carbon Registry (KNCR) took place on 17th February at a Nairobi Hotel. The launch followed its successful development, rigorous testing, and institutional validation through extensive stakeholder engagement, user acceptance, and targeted capacity building with the Designated National Authority.

The Chief Guest was the CS Environment, Climate Change and Forestry, Dr. Deborah Barasa accompanied by PS Environment and Climate Change, Eng. Dr. Festus Ngeno; PS Forestry, Mr. Gitonga Mugambi, Special Envoy for Climate Change, Ambassador Ali Mohammed; NEMA Chairman, Emilio Mugo; Director General, Dr. Mamo B. Mamo, EBS, H.E. Henriette Geiger, EU Ambassador to Kenya; Maren Kneller, Head of Cooperation, Embassy of Germany in Nairobi among other dignitaries.

The launch marked a formal transition from system development to national operationalization of the carbon register.

Speaking at the launch, the NEMA Chairman, Mr. Emilio Mugo reaffirmed that the Kenya National Carbon Registry will provide a transparent, secure, and credible national platform for recording and tracking carbon market projects, authorizations, and mitigation outcomes.

“The launch of this Registry sends a strong signal that Kenya is strengthening its institutional readiness to participate effectively in global carbon markets while safeguarding national interests and maximizing benefits for its citizens,” the chairman stressed.

He added that the Authority’s unwavering commitment to implementing its statutory mandate as the Designated National Authority (DNA) and to ensure that carbon market activities in Kenya deliver real, measurable, and sustainable outcomes as outlined in the Climate Change Act, Cap 387A and the Climate Change (Carbon Markets) Regulations, 2024.

NEMA Director General, Dr. Mamo B. Mamo, EBS stated that the event signifies a major milestone in strengthening Kenya’s climate governance architecture and reinforces our national commitment to transparent, accountable, and high-integrity participation in carbon markets.

NEMA is the Kenya’s DNA for carbon markets, it is

also hosting and administering the National Carbon



NEMA Director General, Dr. Mamo B. Mamo, EBS making his remarks during the launch of national carbon market registry

Registry. As the DNA, Dr. Mamo added that NEMA will provide oversight of carbon market activities, facilitate registration processes, and ensure that all projects deliver measurable climate benefits while contributing to sustainable development priorities. He further affirmed that the system will enhance accountability, protects against risks such as double counting.

The CS Environment, Climate Change and Forestry, Dr. Deborah Barasa expressed optimism that the carbon registry will provide an opportunity for Kenyans to be able to register and build a carbon markets ecosystem that works for everyone. She added that the operationalization of the DNA represents a critical step in safeguarding Kenya’s national interests within the carbon market mechanisms.

Through the DNA, NEMA will provide oversight of carbon market activities in line with the government agenda and sustainable development goals. She emphasized that the system and its subsequent implementation will position Kenya as a trusted carbon marketer.



Dignitaries during the launch of the carbon market registry at a Nairobi Hotel.

The KNCR was developed through a partnership led by the Ministry of Environment, Climate Change and Forestry, the National Environment Management Authority (NEMA), and the Climate Change Directorate, with support from international partners.

The Registry development was supported by the European Union's Data Governance in Africa Initiative and the German Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) through GIZ Kenya. H.E. Henriette Geiger, EU Ambassador to Kenya, emphasized the importance of a strong carbon markets system.

The system is the Government of Kenya's official digital platform for registering, tracking, authorizing, and reporting carbon market activities within the country. Established under the Climate Change Act (2016, as amended) and the Climate Change (Carbon Markets) Regulations, 2024, the Registry ensures transparency, prevents double counting, and safeguards the environmental integrity of carbon transactions.

The KNCR supports Kenya's participation in voluntary carbon markets and cooperative approaches under Article 6 of the Paris Agreement. It strengthens national oversight of carbon projects, enhances accountability to stakeholders, and provides a secure and interoperable digital system aligned with international best practices. Through the KNCR, Kenya reinforces its commitment to high-integrity carbon markets, sustainable development, and climate leadership in Africa.



Deputy Director Environmental Programs and Partnerships Dr. Anne Omambia speaking during the launch of Carbon Markets registry

NEMA hosts JICA

NEMA hosted Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) high level delegation led by Executive Senior Vice President of JICA, Ms. MIYAZAKI Katsura, accompanied by officials from the Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers (JOCV) Secretariat in Tokyo and chief representative from the Kenyan office on 9th February, 2026.

The team was received by NEMA Board of Management Chairman, Mr. Emilio Mugo. The chairman was accompanied by Mr. David Ongare, standing in for the Director General, Dr. Kennedy Ochuka, Director Corporate Services and Mr. Evans Nyabuto, Deputy Director Corporate communication.

The deliberations centred on how the Authority has played host to JOCV over the years and future collaborations in environmental management. The team visited NEMA laboratory where Ms. Manami SAWATANI, a JOCV volunteer has been working for the last one year.

The Authority is currently hosting volunteers; Ms. ISHIKAWA Sayako at Homabay Green Point and Mr. SUMIMOTO Kenishi at Siaya Green Point.



NEMA Chairman, Emilio Mugo with JICA Executive Senior Vice President of JICA, Ms. MIYAZAKI Katsura at NEMA offices



NEMA Chairman, Emilio Mugo with JICA Executive Senior Vice President of JICA, Ms. MIYAZAKI Katsura, JICA and NEMA officials



IUCN OFFICIALS COURTESY CALL TO NEMA

NEMA Director General, Dr. Mamo B Mamo, EBS hosted the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) led by the Portfolio Manager, Eastern and Southern Africa - (GEF and GCF) Ms. Boral Rolland Debasmita and Mr. Charles Oluchina, Regional Programme Coordinator on 28th January, 2026.

The team discussed the implementation status of GEF 7 SFM project and strategic partnership on marine conservation of the proposed northern Kenya transboundary rangelands ecosystems, critical wetlands and strategic partnerships for GEF 9 funding cycle between the two organizations.

NEMA is executing a four-year GEF-7 cycle National Child Project (2023-2027) on "Strengthening Forest Management for Improved Biodiversity Conservation and Climate Resilience in the Southern Rangelands of Kenya" in close coordination with the implementing agency, IUCN. The project covers Narok and Kajiado Counties.



CS Environment, Climate Change and Forestry, Dr. Deborah Barasa, Director Compliance, David Ongare (L) and CEO United Platform Solutions, Rohit Khattar pose for a photo during the launch of KOCEMS

The Principal Secretary in the State Department for Culture, The Arts and Heritage in the Ministry of Gender, Culture and Children Services, Ms. Ummi Bashir, CBS on 5th March, 2026 paid a courtesy call to NEMA Director General, Dr. Mamo B. Mamo, EBS. They briefly discussed about Kenya's climate diplomacy and Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) negotiations.



NEMA DG, Dr. Mamo B. Mamo, EBS with Regional Directors of Environment and Staff at a meeting in Nairobi



PICTORIALS

NEMA Regional Director, Isaiah Kyengo receives an honorary member certificate from Kenya Institute of Planners awarded to NEMA DG during the institutes' conference



Nyandarua Governor, H.E Dr. Badilisha Kiarie speaking during the launch of ARCA project



NEMA Board Members, Judith Chimau (2nd L) and Dr. Loise Kipkiror (3rd R) joined members of staff and stakeholders to plant trees at Isiolo School for the deaf during the Wetlands Day celebrations



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Catalyzing Clean Air: Kenya Advances Strategic Action for a Healthier Future

|| By Christina Mwaura

Kenya is taking bold steps toward cleaner air and a healthier environment through a high-level stakeholder workshop convened by the National Environment Management Authority (NEMA) in collaboration with the Centre for Science and Environment (CSE).

The two-day forum, themed “Catalyzing Clean Air: Strategic Action Planning for Kenya,” was held in Nairobi and brought together international key actors committed to tackling growing air pollution challenge.

In her opening remarks, CSE Executive Director Anumita Roychowdhury underscored the critical elements required to establish an effective National Clean Air Programme. Drawing from India’s experience, she highlighted the importance of strong institutional frameworks, data-driven planning, and, notably, multi-sectoral financing to sustain impactful air quality interventions. Her insights provided a practical roadmap for Kenya as it seeks to strengthen its own clean air strategies.

The workshop convened a diverse group of participants, including representatives from national government agencies, Nairobi City County, air quality experts, and development partners. Together, they engaged in in-depth discussions aimed at identifying actionable strategies to improve air quality management across the country.

Key areas of focus included enhancing air quality monitoring systems, strengthening regulatory frameworks, and accelerating the transition toward clean and sustainable mobility solutions.

Delivering the keynote address on behalf of the Director General of NEMA, the Director of Environmental Compliance, Mr. David Ong’are, emphasized the far-reaching impacts of air pollution. He noted that air quality is not solely an environmental concern but also a pressing public health, economic, and climate issue. He called for integrated, multi-sectoral approaches that align policy, investment, and innovation to effectively address the challenge.

The workshop marks a significant milestone in Kenya’s journey toward cleaner air. By fostering collaboration, sharing global best practices, and aligning stakeholders around a common vision, the initiative is laying the groundwork for a comprehensive and sustainable National Clean Air Programme.

As Kenya continues to urbanize and industrialize, such strategic engagements are essential in ensuring that development pathways remain environmentally sustainable and people-centered. The outcomes of this workshop are expected to inform policy direction and accelerate coordinated action, ultimately contributing to a cleaner, healthier, and more resilient future for all.



Centre for Science and Environment (CSE), NEMA and other participants during the stakeholders workshop on catalysing clean air strategic action planning meeting in Nairobi.

Wetlands Festival Held at Ondiri Wetland

By John Maniafu, CDE Kiambu & David Wakogy, Founder and Coordinator, Friends of Ondiri Wetland Kenya

Friends of Ondiri Wetland Kenya, in partnership with the NEMA and other stakeholders, successfully organized a three-day Wetlands Festival at Ondiri Wetland in Kiambu County.

The festival formed part of the build-up activities towards the national and global commemoration of World Wetlands Day 2026, whose theme focused on Indigenous Knowledge and Wetland Conservation. The event was graciously hosted at Alliance High School under the leadership of Mr. David Kamau, Principal, Alliance High School, whose support and hospitality greatly contributed to the success of the festival.

The Wetlands Festival brought together government institutions, environmental organizations, community groups, artists, innovators, and members of the public in a multi-sectoral effort to promote wetland conservation.

It marked a significant milestone in Kenya's environmental calendar by integrating culture, enterprise, education, and sport as tools for conservation advocacy. The festival aimed at raising awareness on the ecological importance of wetlands, strengthening partnerships, and empowering communities to participate actively in environmental protection.

The first day of the festival featured the Conservation Concert, the first event of its kind in Kenya dedicated solely to environmental conservation through the arts.

The Guest of Honour was Dr. Mamo B. Mamo, EBS, Director General of NEMA. He was flanked by Mr. John Maniafu, County Director of Environment, Kiambu County, and Mr. Evas Nyambuto, Director of Communications at NEMA, among other distinguished dignitaries.

The conservation concert brought together gifted environmental artists who communicated powerful messages on conservation, climate change, and

sustainable living through music, spoken word, drama, and visual art.

The performances drew strong connections between indigenous knowledge systems and modern conservation practices, highlighting traditional values that promote respect for water sources, forests, and sacred natural sites.

This creative approach successfully reached a wide audience, particularly young people, in an engaging and emotionally resonant way. The concert demonstrated that culture and art are effective tools for environmental education and behavioral change.

The 5th Edition of the Ondiri Wetland Conservation Run was also held which attracted thousands of environmental enthusiasts from across the country. Participants included students, corporate teams, civil servants, community groups, and environmental organizations. The conservation run has become a flagship annual activity for Friends of Ondiri Wetland Kenya and continues to grow in scale and impact each year.

In conclusion, the Wetlands Festival at Ondiri Wetland was a resounding success and an important contribution to Kenya's World Wetlands Day build-up activities. It demonstrated the effectiveness of combining art, innovation, knowledge exchange, and community participation in advancing wetland conservation.



NEMA DG, Dr. Mamo B. Mamo, EBS as he joined the Ondiri festival accompanied by John Maniafu (R), CDE Kiambu & David Wakogy, Founder and Coordinator, Friends of Ondiri

Fatal Borrow Pit Closed in Webuye

|| By **Omondi D. Omondi, EO Bungoma**

The National Environment Management Authority (NEMA) Bungoma County Office took enforcement action following a fatal incident that occurred on 11th February 2026 at a murrum borrow pit in Maruti B Village, Maraka Ward, Webuye East Sub-County. The incident, which resulted in the loss of two lives while two other individuals survived drew attention to the risks associated with non-compliant excavation activities and the importance of adherence to environmental regulations.

In response to the incident, NEMA conducted a compliance inspection to assess environmental management practices, safety conditions and conformity with statutory environmental requirements. The inspection team, led by NEMA Board Member Mr. Maclean Nangalama together with County environmental inspectors, established that excavation activities at the site were being carried out without a valid Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) License, contrary to EMCA, 1999.

The inspection revealed that excavation had been undertaken manually using handheld tools and involved vertical digging without appropriate slope stabilization. These unsafe practices created unstable pit walls that eventually collapsed, contributing to the tragic incident. Residents living near the site confirmed longstanding concerns about the unsafe excavation methods and the environmental risks posed by the borrow pit.

Further observations identified several regulatory and environmental non-compliances, including abandoned and non-rehabilitated sections of the pit filled with stagnant water, lack of perimeter fencing exposing members of the public to danger, encroachment onto a public road reserve and neighbouring land, and leasing arrangements between the landowner and contractors conducted without proper environmental authorization. The Authority also established that the borrow pit had been operational for several years, particularly during the construction of the Webuye–Malaba Highway. Following the inspection, an improvement Order was issued directing the proponent, Mr. Michael Wafula

Wanjala to immediately cease all excavation and related activities at the site.

The order requires fencing and securing of the area to prevent unauthorized access, rehabilitation and restoration of the degraded site within six months and submission for compliance verification inspection by Environmental Inspectors upon completion of restoration measures. The proponent was further advised that any future murrum excavation or related activities must involve prior consultation with NEMA and the Regional Mines Department to obtain all necessary environmental approvals and statutory permits.

During engagement with residents, Mr. Nangalama emphasized the importance of conducting Environmental Impact Assessments for projects that may significantly alter environmental conditions or land use. He reiterated that public participation is a critical component of environmental decision-making and plays a key role in preventing conflicts and ensuring sustainable development.

NEMA has reminded the public that non-compliance with environmental laws constitutes an offence punishable upon conviction by imprisonment for a term of one to four years, fines ranging between two million and four million Kenyan Shillings, or both. The Authority has encouraged community members to remain vigilant and report environmental violations promptly, reaffirming its commitment to protecting the environment, promoting responsible resource use, and safeguarding public safety.



NEMA Board Member, Maclean Sitati (L) accompanied by a local inspecting the abandoned and non-rehabilitated sections of the pit in Webuye.

NEMA Joins the International Day of Forests Celebrations in Vihiga County

|| By Brenda Obura & Fredrick Nambisia

The International Day of Forests (IDF) is a global observance aimed at raising awareness on the importance of forests and trees in sustaining life, supporting livelihoods, and combating climate change. The day is celebrated annually on 21st March.

The 2026 celebrations in Vihiga County were held at Maragoli Forest, a critical ecological site recognized for its role in biodiversity conservation and water resource management. The event was guided by the global theme, “Emphasizing forests’ contribution to sustainable development, climate resilience, and economic growth.”

A key highlight was the Maragoli Forest Management Plan, developed with support from Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO). The plan promotes sustainable forest management through community participation, establishment of nature trails, and development of protective forest belts. Maragoli Forest was notably described as a place “where the green economy meets the blue economy.”

The Chief Guest was Prime Cabinet Secretary and Cabinet Secretary for Foreign and Diaspora affairs, Dr.

Musalia Mudavadi accompanied by CS Environment, Climate Change and Forestry, Dr. Deborah Barasa, Governor Vihiga, H.E Wilberforce Ottichilo, the Deputy Governor, Principal Secretaries, County Commissioner Mr. Maina, Beatrice Kimei, among other stakeholders.

The day highlighted the importance of forests in environmental sustainability, economic development, and community livelihoods. The event reinforced the need for a coordinated approach among stakeholders to ensure sustainable forest management.

Various leaders emphasized the importance of forest conservation. CS Mudavadi called for a whole-of-government approach in forest conservation, highlighting that coordinated efforts are key to the success of forestry initiatives. He noted that protecting forests is essential for securing Kenya’s economic future and sustaining livelihoods.

CS Dr. Debora Barasa emphasized the role of forests in climate change mitigation and national development. She noted that forests are critical infrastructure in the conservation of the environment and health of citizens.

Governor Ottichilo highlighted conservation efforts since 2015, including increased forest cover, promotion of alternative livelihoods such as beekeeping, and



Vihiga County Ecosystem Conservator together with NEMA Vihiga Officers during IDF celebrations



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