

KENYA

Deepening the Dialogue with Stakeholders in the Forest Sector in Kenya

Frequently Asked Questions

Why is the WB organizing a Colloquium to discuss the participation and inclusion of forest dwelling communities in forest management?

The World Bank is organizing a Colloquium in collaboration with the Government of Kenya to provide a platform to promote dialogue between the Government and stakeholders in the forest sector in Kenya. It is committed to facilitate a dialogue and cooperation in forest management including land use and rights issues among forest stakeholders including the Sengwer and Ogiek people around Cherangany Hills.

What are the key objectives of the Colloquium?

The key objectives of the Colloquium are to: (i) facilitate constructive dialogue and foster cooperation among key stakeholders in the forest sector in Kenya; and (ii) share national and global experience and best practices on the management of forest resources for win-win solutions for poverty reduction, livelihoods improvement and environmental sustainability.

What will be the outcomes expected from the Colloquium?

It is expected that the outcomes of the Colloquium will inform the discussions around the National Forest Program (NFP) and further development of a national forest development framework.

Who will be the key participants in the Colloquium?

Key participants in the Colloquium will be the stakeholders interested in the forest sector in Kenya, including representatives from all the 14 counties that host the vulnerable and marginalized forest communities, the Sengwer, Ogiek, and other forest dependent communities, senior officials from the relevant Government of Kenya institutions at the national and County levels, civil society organizations, researchers, private sector, international experts, and development partners including the World Bank.

Why focus on the forest sector?

Growing demand for land and other land resources has put tremendous pressure on Kenya's natural resource base, especially water and forests. The country is highly water scarce, and the management of forests and watersheds has a direct impact on water resources and, more broadly on livelihoods, prosperity, and resilience. Unsustainable management and depletion of

the natural resources have reduced Kenya's relatively small forested area from about 10 percent of its land area at independence in 1963 to an estimated 6.9% forest cover presently. Indigenous forests play a critical role in Kenya's society and culture, and were planned to be managed to conserve water supplies, reduce soil erosion and (to a lesser extent) produce timber.

Was the World Bank involved in the evictions of the Sengwer in Embobut Forest and Cherangany Hills of Kenya?

The World Bank has not been involved in the forced eviction of Kenya's forest communities, including the Sengwer people of Embobut Forest and the Cherangany Hills. In fact the Bank has raised strong concerns with the Government of Kenya (GoK) about the eviction of communities from the Embobut Forest and Cherangany Hills. The World Bank's independent Inspection Panel has conducted an investigation into claims by some members of the Sengwer community around the Cherangany Hills alleging that they were forcibly evicted from their homes in the Embobut forests of the Cherangany Hills due to a World Bank-funded Natural Resource Management Project (NRMP) that closed on June 30, 2013. The Panel's report, concluded that the World Bank was not linked to the evictions in the Cherangany Hills areas, including the Embobut Forest, and that no evictions were supported by the NRMP. A copy of the Inspection Panel's report and Management's Response can be found on the Panel's website: <http://ewebapps.worldbank.org/apps/ip/Pages/ViewCase.aspx?CaseId=89>

What has the Government been doing about these problems?

Throughout 2014 the Government carried out consultations with forest dwelling communities in various parts of the country including the Ogieks and Sengwers and helped them to elect through a self-selection process the leaders who would act as their representative in subsequent discussions with the Government. In January 2015, the Government hosted a four-day National Forum in Nakuru for the forest-dependent communities to respond to communities' livelihood concerns and to promote the conservation of forests. In addition, recognition of the acute problems in the forest sector led the Government of Kenya to prepare a Forest Policy and the Forests Act, which received parliamentary approval in 2005. The main goals of the reform of the forest sector were to increase efficiency, ensure protection and sustainable forest use, and promote poverty reduction. Strengthening forest governance, therefore, is critical for the success of these efforts. The Forests Act embraced participatory forest management, whereby community forest associations (CFAs) would be recognized as partners. It also promoted private sector participation to enhance the competitiveness of the sector. In parallel, Kenya is participating in different international conventions such as United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), United Nations Convention on Drought and Desertification (UNCDD) and United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity

(UNCBD), and initiatives such as the Forest Carbon Partnership Facility and the UN-REDD Program. Such partnerships provide opportunities that could foster community engagement in the forest sector.

How has the World Bank participated in the sustainable management of the forest sector in Kenya?

The World Bank supported the Government of Kenya in the sustainable management of the forest sector through the Natural Resource Management Project (NRMP). The project implemented during 2007 - 2013, aimed at strengthening policies and practices to ensure the sustainable provision of water, improved irrigation, and enhanced forest management. Overall, the NRMP delivered significant results. More than 145,000 rural people have benefited from irrigation works or through community-driven micro-projects and livelihood opportunities contributing to the improvement of income of vulnerable and marginalized forest communities. In addition, around 320,000 hectares of forest area is now being managed according to the approved forest management plans. The Project has also confirmed several important lessons. They include that sustainable forest management is constrained in many parts of Kenya by conflicts and/or uncertainty concerning the respective rights of local people and government to forest resources and to the land in and around forests.

How does the World Bank plan to provide support to the forest sector in Kenya?

The World Bank is committed to facilitating dialogue, learning and knowledge sharing to support the forest sector in Kenya. Thus, the upcoming Colloquium will deliver a report that will contain actionable proposals to continue and stimulate the dialogue that has already been started between the Government and various stakeholders including forest-dependent communities across the country. It will provide the ongoing National Forest Program with policy and programming content for the Government of Kenya's engagement with forest dependent communities and other key stakeholders. In collaboration with other development partners, the World Bank will also be exploring ways of supporting the forest sector using appropriate funding mechanisms such as the REDD+ program supported through the Forest Carbon Partnership Facility (FCPF).

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