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REPORT

of the

'International Dialogue on Land and Security'

in

Kabarnet, Baringo County, Kenya

12th-15th April 2016

Enhancing land and water governance for resilient communities in the dryland regions of the North Rift



Photo by Leela Channer

Introduction

The International Dialogue on Land and Security, the first national-level dialogue deriving from the global Caux Dialogue on Land and Security held annually in Switzerland since 2013, was held successfully in Kabarnet, Baringo County, on 12th-15th April 2016.

Over 120 participants engaged in intense discussions on issues of land management, land-based livelihoods, environmental sustainability, climate change, conflict, peace-building and governance.

The Dialogue was opened by HE Governor Cheboi, of Baringo County, and the first plenary session was launched by HE Governor Tolgos, of Elgeyo Marakwet County.

The conclusions to the Dialogue were drawn by HE Deputy Governor Lagat, of Elgeyo Marakwet, and the event was drawn to a formal conclusion by HE Deputy Governor Tuitoek, of Baringo.

The Dialogue endorsed both a Caux-Kabarnet Declaration and a poetic Vision for the Northern Rift 2030 (both attached). It also produced a cluster of Action Plans, with an over-arching Action Group to drive these and ensure synergy between them.

Objectives of the Dialogue

- To start a dialogue on resilience in arid lands
- To bring best international expertise to bear on the region's challenges
- Convergence of researchers, practitioners, NGOs, and Government for multi-stakeholder synergy
- Collaboration and resource-sharing, including co-hosting of Dialogue among County Governments
- Generating practical follow-up actions
- Creating a Vision / Declaration

Assessment of achievement of objectives

Dialogue on resilience	Achieved to a high level
International expertise	Achieved to a high level
Multi-stakeholder convergence	Achieved to a high level
Collaboration and co-hosting	Achieved to a high level
Practical follow-up	Fully on track
Developing a Vision and Declaration	Achieved

- *Starting dialogue on resilience in arid lands* – achieved to a high level. All NOREB arid Counties (Turkana, Baringo, West Pokot, Samburu, Elgeyo Marakwet) were engaged at Government level, with Governors and DGs from both Baringo and Elgeyo Marakwet. Communities were represented from all eight NOREB Counties. With the regular Devolution Dialogue looming, Governors have asked for this report to take forward the dialogue that has begun thus.



The UN Drylands Ambassador, Dr David Garrity addressing the conference

Photo by Leela Channer

Bring best international expertise to bear on the region's challenges – achieved to a high level. The UN Drylands Ambassador, Dr David Garrity, the World Agroforestry Centre, and ICRAF all made presentations, including a cutting edge presentation on spatial resource mapping from Dr Tor Vagen (ICRAF) and highlights of the SHARED process in Turkana. Local expertise was also vividly present – RAE Trust's experience with grass regeneration for pasturage, World Vision's Farmer-Managed Natural Regeneration, Holistic Grazing from Laikipia, and rangeland management from the Grevy Zebra Trust, were all presented. The Catholic Justice and Peace Commission presented research on conflict analysis in one particularly tense area, East Pokot, and Jamii Thabiti of Coffey Kenya set out their experience in peace-making in the region. Finn Church Aid also brought their long-standing experience.

- *Convergence of Community-Based Organisers, researchers, practitioners, NGOs, and Government for multi-stakeholder synergy* – achieved to a high level. All these levels were present, and all participated actively, all engaged in dialogue and in Acting Planning. CBOs felt empowered to carry on their activities – peace-building, agro-ecological management, and community development – with renewed energy, confident of support from their County Governments.

The National Government was broadly represented, including the Office of the President, the National Land Commission, and the National Drought Management Agency. Many came at high level, including the Chair of the NLC and one of his Commissioners, and two senior Advisors in the Office of the President, Rev Dr Samuel Kobia and Dr Muktar Ogle. Members of County Assemblies attended from several Counties, and County Executives, including County land administrations were well represented. In addition to the two Governors and their Deputies, Baringo and Elgeyo Marakwet had senior policy representation, including over half the Elgeyo Marakwet cabinet.

- *Collaboration and resource-sharing, including co-hosting of Dialogue among County Governments* – achieved to a high level. A joint planning team, co-chaired by the DGs of Baringo and Elgeyo Marakwet, prepared the event; both Counties shared in the costs, while other Counties covered the cost of their participants; the event was launched by both Governors, and the conclusion was drawn by both DGs.



An outside lecture

Photo by Leela Channer

Generating practical follow-up actions – fully on track, with great promise for the future. A number of Action Plans were prepared, with identified champions to deliver them. For example, action on FMNR will be pressed ahead, led by World Vision, and first steps should be visible by August. The Pastoralists Action Group have planned a training outreach programme for the next three months (which will be coordinated through a WhatsApp group). The women’s empowerment Action Plan and implementation Group (also set up on WhatsApp) have a six-month first phase. The Action Plan on sustainable land management and Ending Drought Emergencies, which NDMA will lead, plans to draw on Baringo capacity to work across County borders in trans-boundary action. Conservancies, which now include elephant populations migrating into Baringo, are also being expanded.

- *Developing a Vision and Declaration* – achieved. A poetic Vision Statement was distilled from the first day’s discussions, presented to the Dialogue on the second morning, and endorsed. It is visionary and wide-ranging, and each element of it reflects an experience demonstrated during the Dialogue – this aspirational Vision is not impossible if the Northern Rift’s citizens and their organisations so choose. A Caux-Kabarnet Declaration was developed from the Dialogue participation and the resultant Action Plans, and the Steering Group for the Dialogue (co-chaired by the Deputy Governors of Baringo and Elgeyo Marakwet Counties) endorsed it.

A photographic report of the Dialogue can be seen here:

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/alanchanner/>

The Caux-Kabarnet Declaration

- The participants in the first International Dialogue on Land and Security, held in Kabarnet, Baringo County, Kenya, on 12th-15th April 2016, and drawn from the Northern Rift's communities and community-based organisations, Kenyan and international NGOs, researchers, development and peace-building practitioners, County and National Governments, share a common commitment to sustainable management and governance of land and water in the region as a path to peace.
- We share a Vision of a region in 2030 that is fertile, prosperous and at peace, as detailed in the Vision Statement from the Dialogue.
- We appreciate that we do not own the land; we borrow it from our children.
- We appreciate, too, that water is life, for land, people and livestock – a shared resource that flows through the landscape.
- We recognise the challenges to achieving this Vision – the diversity of the landscape and the ecosystems and people who inhabit it, the fragility of the soils and the social institutions that underpin life here.
- We are also cognisant of the wider context of the Dialogue: the National Constitution of Kenya, our National and County policies, and the recently agreed Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
- Based on improved governance of resources, we shall strive for communities working together in harmony.
- We shall need to harness all available resources – human, financial, environmental and political – to achieve our Vision.
- We recognise that this will not come easily, but instead will require sacrifice for the common good.
- But we also recognise that this will bring much greater benefits for communities and individuals alike.
- We underscore that the Dialogue will help to inform County Integrated Development Plans, Budgets, and evolving County policies
- We have developed Action Plans to move towards our Vision, including farmers' land fertility, pastoralists' sustainable grazing lands, land governance, water resources, and others, and detailed in the Dialogue Report.
- We are also committed to the Action Plan on women's rights and roles in decision-making, ranging from land issues to Kenya's National Constitution.
- We acknowledge the challenge, but also see that failing to take up the challenge condemns our region to a tragic trinity of hunger, degradation and war. So we are ready to meet the challenge as champions of a brighter future.

The Caux-Kabarnet Vision Statement

In 2030, the lands of Kenya's dryland counties are hosting thriving communities living in prosperity, dignity and harmony on soils that have fully regenerated their natural capacity to bring forth the bounty that God intended His children to receive.

The people are tending the land with skill and care, informed by the insights of science and tradition, secure in their ownership and enabled by the blessings of peace.

The landscapes of the dryland have been healed. Tall, diverse grasses dance across the drylands in the rainy seasons, dotted by carefully managed trees offering firewood, timber, medicinal plants and honey. Prosperous farms grow fine produce on soils made rich by the manure of cover crops, animals and trees.

All those plants lock the soil in place, dramatically reducing erosion. They also help the rains to percolate into the soils, recharging the aquifers. Old springs are gushing again. Rivers bring clean waters to the villages and townships.

Proud warriors meet to plan their grazing with care. As they recall the stories of their fathers – stories of hardship and sorrow, of hunger and war – their hearts swell with pride and joy: it is their careful management that is turning these barren, dusty landscapes into a land of plenty.

The markets are bustling with fine, nutritious produce. Happy farmers gaze upon fields dotted with the carefully pruned trees they allowed to grow back and chose to plant. They know their trees do more than bring fertility: they shelter their thriving crops from the inevitable droughts and the strong rains. Their young children have never known hunger. Their husbands, humbled by their successes, are strong, equal partners.

Wildlife is thriving, too. Increasingly, tourists are leaving the overfilled parks of the south for the vast, rich landscapes of the North, attracting new hotels and other tourism operators. The thriving grasslands are not just sustaining the cattle and the wildlife. It is bringing in good jobs.

Enlightened assemblies and local governments, informed by a constant interaction with researchers, have encouraged this transformation by wise policies. The schools and higher education institutions have become among Kenya's best, teaching the youth the secrets that make lands green and lives prosperous. More and more young women and men, secure in their rights to their bountiful lands, are taking the plunge and choosing to become entrepreneurs.

Investors, encouraged by this revolution, are coming in. The fine meats, milk and crops of the north are increasingly being transformed into valuable products in the north for the wider market. Trade is thriving. The extraordinary diversity of the North's landscapes, wildlife and peoples are attracting ever more visitors.

Delegations from other drylands areas near and far, from Kenya and beyond, are regular visitors, sharing their experience, and learning from Kenya's successes. Africa's drylands are weaving strong bonds with one another. Across Africa, the careful management of their lands by newly enabled communities brings forth new wealth. Informed by tradition and science, communities thrive, escaping the awful trinity of hunger, war and exile.

The world is taking notice: all that grass and all those trees are capturing a lot of carbon from the air, mitigating climate change. The renaissance of wildlife is helping biodiversity thrive. And the new wealth is bringing order and peace, denying extremists the anger and misery from which they draw sustenance.

The drylands have found their way, and now they are blazing a global trail. A couple of decades ago, welcoming a delegation of Americans from degraded West Texas keen to learn how to manage their lands better would have astonished NOREB's leaders. Not in 2030.