



How to engage with UN Environment and the United Nations Environment Assembly, a briefing for Non-Governmental Organisations from Kenya

NOTE, September 25, 2017

UN HEADQUARTERS IN GIGIRI

CONFERENCE ROOM 1

Background

Kenya hosts 12,000 registered Non-governmental organizations, with 3000 active members. Only a few of them are aware about the work of the United Nations in Kenya and Africa and the opportunities to engage with and benefit from the UN. In particular, the focus will be on headquartered UN organizations, such as UN Environment. Furthermore, there is little awareness and understanding about the role of the United Nations Environment Assembly.

The United Nations Environment Assembly is not only the highest authority on the Environment within the United Nations. It is also an ideal platform for bringing together different stakeholders: Governments at ministerial level, Civil Society/NGOs, Science and the Private Sector to enable them to work together to tackle the shared and unprecedented challenges the world is facing. The third session of the United Nations Environment Assembly will be held on Monday, 4, 2017 to Wednesday, December 6, 2017 under the theme "Towards a Pollution-Free Planet". Participants will discuss the status, trends and actions needed to be taken to address pollution in all its forms: air, marine, freshwater, soil and land, including chemicals and waste. Please visit UN Environment website for more information: www.unep.org/environmentassembly/

Non-Governmental organizations have a critical role in supporting the decision making process at the 2017 Environment Assembly; by engaging with governments, sharing their expert knowledge and by ensuring that the voice of those who might be effected by decisions taken, is heard. Furthermore, NGOs are partners of UN Environment and governments in implementing most of the resolutions and decisions taken at the United Nations Environment Assembly.

Partners

Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES) is an international foundation that works to promote democracy and development, contribute to peace and security, help shape globalisation into an inclusive process and support the widening and deepening of the European Union. Through projects in over 100 countries FES has been actively involved in the development and consolidation of civil society and state structures for promoting democracy and social justice, strong and free trade unions, human rights and gender equality.

The National Council of NGOs, popularly known as the NGOs Council, is a self-regulating, non-partisan body comprising all registered NGOs in Kenya. The NGO Council membership includes international, regional and national NGOs operating in Kenya and working with a host of Citizen Based Organisations and groups.

The Pan African Climate Justice Alliance (PACJA) (www.pacja.org) is a continental coalition of Civil Society Organizations from diverse backgrounds in Africa. Founded in 2008, the Pan African Climate Justice Alliance has emerged as the most vibrant and largest Civil Society platform in climate change and sustainable development, with a membership of more than 1000 organizations and networks. The Alliance brings together Faith-based Organizations, Community-based organizations, Non-Governmental organizations, Trusts, Foundations, Farmers and Pastoralist Groups among other sectors.

Transparency International–Kenya (TI-Kenya) is a not-for-profit organisation founded in 1999 in Kenya with the aim of developing a transparent and corruption free society through good governance and social justice initiatives. TI-Kenya is one of the autonomous chapters of the

global Transparency International movement that are all bound by a common vision of a corruption-free world. The global movement provides a platform for sharing knowledge and experience, developing strategies to respond to regionally distinct patterns of corruption and initiating advocacy campaigns at both the regional and sub-regional level. TI-Kenya possesses vast experience in matters of climate change and climate governance gained from leading the climate governance integrity programme in East Africa from 2011. TI-Kenya has been working with various institutions, both government and civil society, to advance awareness of climate governance issues at all levels. It has also been advocating for transparency, accountability, good governance and anti-corruption in the climate change sector targeting different international bodies and government entities. TI-Kenya has developed a training manual on climate governance which it has been using to enhance skills on the topic across the country. The institution has also engaged civil society organizations in Ghana, Bangladesh and Germany on the same issues.

The United Nations Environment Programme (UN Environment - www.unep.org) is the leading global environment authority that sets the global environmental agenda, promotes the coherent implementation of the environmental dimension of sustainable development within the United Nations System and serves as an authoritative advocate for the global environment. UN Environment also organises the United Nations Environment Assembly - www.unep.org/environmentassembly, the next of which will take place in December 2017.

Objectives

With this meeting, NGOs based in Kenya, together with NGO representatives from other African Countries will be informed and aware about the role of the United Nations and UN Environment and its engagement with civil society, with the objective to allow them to better benefit from the presence of these organisations in the country.

Additionally, UN Environment partners, the Friedrich Ebert Foundation, Transparency International Kenya, PACJA and the Kenyan NGO Council will present their work.

The meeting will take place on 25th September 2017 at UN Complex in Gigiri, Nairobi.

The meeting will provide a unique opportunity to highlight the synergy that will result from the partnership of the National Council of NGO's with the Friedrich Ebert Foundation, Transparency International Kenya, PACJA and UN Environment, allowing outreach to citizens represented by these organisations while gaining from the wealth of expertise that UN Environment and civil society have at their disposal.

Participants

Kenyan NGOs, that are members of the National Council of NGO's, from the national to the grass-root level will be the main target audience for this meeting. Overall, a total number of 200 participants are expected.

Expected Outcomes

1. A better understanding by the participating civil society organizations on the role and mandate of UN Environment and its relevance in the Kenyan context.
2. A better understanding of the role and mandate of the UN Environment Assembly and the opportunities it holds for civil society organization to engage with the inter-governmental environmental decision making body
3. Enhanced stakeholder capacities and understanding on the opportunities for engagement and influence at UN Environment and the United Nations Environment Assembly.
4. Increased outreach to citizens/private persons in Kenya and beyond, helping them to better understand the role of the UN, UN Environment and the Assembly
5. Participants will learn more about the role and activities of the Kenyan NGO Council, Transparency International Kenya, PACJA and the Friedrich Ebert Foundation

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