

Prof. Judi Wakhungu Cabinet Minister for Environment & Water and Natural Resources Launches the STAKE Project

Date and time:

Tue, 2013-07-02 16:10

Location / Venue:

College of Agriculture and Veterinary Sciences, Upper Kabete Campus



Prof. Judi Wakhungu Cabinet Minister for Environment & Water and Natural Resources at WMI site. On her left is Prof Mwangombe, Principal, CAVS and Prof Mulei, Dean FVM and Prof S. Shibairo Dean Faculty of Agriculture. On her right is the Director Wangari Maathai Institute, Prof Kiama and Director KEFRI, Dr Chikamai

The Cabinet secretary for Environment and Natural Resources today 2nd July 2013 visited Wangari Maathai Institute to launch the STAKE project. Commenting during the launch Prof Wakhungu said " Kenya is riddled with conflict associative with instability, as evident in the widespread violence after the national elections 2007. Much of the violence took place in rural areas, where conflict and competing claims over natural resources appear closely entangled. The

underlying drives of conflict and violence remain contested and poorly understood. Solving or mediating these may comprise an important contribution to the building of a more stable Kenya empowered to support development for and bring prosperity to its populace” Prof Wakhungu indicated that she was happy that Wangari Maathai Institute has taken this to be its first project.

The STAKE project is an exciting new partnership between the Wangari Maathai Institute, the Green Belt Movement (GBM), Kenya Forest Research Institute (KEFRI) and the University of Copenhagen, Denmark. It is expected to contribute to stability in Kenya by understanding and targeting the underlying factors that lead to conflicts over forest related resources. This 3-year project funded by the Danish Development Agency (DANIDA) will also contribute to Kenya’s long-term development by mentoring and training the next generation of talented, young academics through provision of scholarships for Masters and PhD training. The total value of the project is about 1.5 Million USD.



Prof Karanja Njoroge, Chairman Friends of Karura Forest, explain to Prof. Judi Wakhungu Cabinet Minister for Environment & Water and Natural Resources the value of Prunus African tree.

On her part, Cabinet Secretary Prof. Wakhungu congratulated WMI and its partners on the historic milestone. She commended the initiative terming it as a solution to some of the problems Kenya is facing in dealing with conflicts. Prof. Wakhungu noted that in search of stability and prosperity, the government of Kenya in 2005 enacted a Forest Act aimed at improving natural resources management by decentralizing responsibilities and rights of forest management to civil society bodies called Community Forestry Associations (CFA).

Other people who attended and spoke during the launch included: Prof. Agnes Mwangombe Principal College of Agriculture & Veterinary Sciences University of Nairobi, Prof. S. G. Kiama,

Director Wangari Maathai Institute, Prof. Vibeke Vindelov, University of Copenhagen, Dr B N. Chikamai Director, Kenya Forest Research Institute, Dr Njeri Gakonyo Chair of the Board, Green Belt Movement, Mahesh Pradhan Head of UNEP's Environmental Education and Training Unit and the daughter of the late Prof Wangari Maathai, Ms Wanjira Maathai.

After the launch Prof Wakhungu led the participants in planting indigenous tree to commemorate the life of the late Prof. Wangari Maathai at the WMI site. The trees planted include: *Prunus Africana*, *Warburgia ugandensis*, *Olea europaea ssp. Cuspidate*, *Podocarpus falcatus*, *Vepris simplicifolia*, *Croton megalocarpus*, *Juniperus procera*, *Markhamia Lutea*, *Syzygium guineense*, *Olea welwitschii*, *Trichilia emetic*, *Brachylaena huillensis*, *Spathodea campanulata* and *Vitex keniensis*. Prof. Wakhungu planted a red stinkwood (*Prunus africanas*) and a Nandi flame (*Spathodea campanulata*).



Prof Wakhungu being received by the Director WMI during the STAKE project launch.