

# Kigali Declaration on Forests for People

Inter-Parliamentary Hearing, 8 July 2012

At the First Inter-Parliamentary Hearing on 'Forests for People' convened by the World Future Council, with the support of the Rwanda Ministry of Natural Resources, Rwanda Natural Resources Authority, Rwanda Environment Management Authority (REMA), the United Nations Forum on Forests, the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the UN (FAO) and GLOBE International;

*We*, the parliamentarians and policymakers from Burundi, Cameroon, Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, Rwanda, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia and experts from the World Agroforestry Centre (ICRAF), the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) and the Cameroon Wildlife Conservation Society (CWCS);

*Acknowledging* that Sustainable Forest Management as defined at the first Earth Summit in Rio in 1992 is an evolving and developing approach to forests which addresses the social, economic and environmental values of all types of forests and trees outside of forests, for the benefit of present and future generations;

*Recognising* that highly successful and exemplary policies and programmes exist in Africa that benefit current and future generations, for example Rwanda's Forest Policy and the Gambia's Community Forest Management which were highlighted by the Future Policy Award 2011 initiated by the World Future Council with the support of the UN Forum on Forests, the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN in the first ever United Nations International Year of Forests;

*Further recognising* that the Rio Forest Principles of the Earth Summit (1992) emphasize that countries have the sovereign and inalienable right to utilize, manage and develop their forests in accordance with their development needs and on the basis of national policies consistent with sustainable development legislation;

*Emphasizing* that there is an urgent need to act at the local and national level, to introduce and to scale up any successful experiences and best practices to the levels needed in each country, region and on the continent of Africa;

*Decide to:*

1. *Commit* to taking back to our countries policy and programme ideas, successful experiences discussed at this First Inter-Parliamentarian Hearing on 'Forests for People' and to work to get support for these in our own national and local governments and with our citizens, consistent with our national priorities on forest-related policies, our laws and in their implementation;
2. *Further commit* to achieving sustainable forest management, which has been agreed by all UN member states to include economic, social and environmental objectives, thus ensuring that policies, laws and implementation are integrated into all sectors and across institutions, both public and private;
3. *Mobilizing* financing from all sources to address sustainable forest management in the context of an integrated landscape approach. This includes as a first the development of a local and national strategy and an integral plan for forest finance which addresses the short, medium and long-term needs for financing from all sources, both public and private, national, regional and international focused on the needs of our own priorities, noting the recent experience of Rwanda in this regard;
4. *Facilitate effective* development and implementation of local and national programs on afforestation, reforestation, restoration of degraded lands as part of a national strategy to effectively halt and reverse deforestation and forest degradation;
5. *Facilitate* the development and implementation of effective policies and actions to manage and restore degraded wetlands and other fragile aquatic forest ecosystems;
6. *Implement* agroforestry by integrating trees with annual and perennial crops in our effort to address food security, while also focusing on the millions of hectare of completely degraded land which can be populated preferably with indigenous or appropriate exotic species;
7. *Develop policy and a legislative basis* that will ensure the implementation of community based forest management at all levels, as well as community rights over resources and the benefits deriving from their management, noting the particular relevance of women and youth;
8. *Take action*, in recognition of the close relationship between forests, forest products and energy to develop a national plan which recognizes the sustainable use of fuelwood, renewable energy resources at affordable prices. Support research and development institutions in Africa, foster capacity building, enhance technology transfer and to do so in a short-, medium- and long-term approach which recognizes that deforestation is still occurring at unsustainable rates;
9. *Integrate into our countries' laws* the importance of clear land and tree tenure for communities and notably women;

10. *Address* the specific challenges faced by women and children among others health hazards related to providing and using woodfuels, by promoting sustainable woodfuels, energy efficient cook stoves and by promoting alternatives including environmentally friendly renewable energy sources such as biogas and solar cookers and thereby helping to prevent abuse and violence against women and girls;
11. *Commit*, consistent with customs and traditions, to establish strong and comprehensive governance on biodiversity at the local, national and regional level, integrating biodiversity into all relevant policies and actions in line with international agreements, specifically the CBD Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011 2020 and signing and ratifying the Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit Sharing and implementing the actions in the UNFF Forest Instrument;
12. *Support a move towards the prohibition* of the importation, manufacturing, sale and use of polyethylene bags, utilizing instead sustainable products such as biodegradable products, including for example reused paper and cloth;
13. *Request* both public and private funding in support of holding Inter-Parliamentary Hearings on 'Forest for People' for parliamentarians, policy makers and experts in Africa on an annual basis in order to exchange views and highlight best practices in policies and legislation in Africa and to report on national progress in line with implementing the Kigali declaration.

Kigali, 8 July 2012

### **Signatories**

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Hon. Ambassador Stanislas Kamanzi, The Minister, Ministry of Natural Resources, Rwanda

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Hon. Landrada Umuraza, Member of Parliament, Parliament of Rwanda

Hon. Marie Thérèse Murekatete, Member of Parliament, Parliament of Rwanda

Hon. Josephat Sinkamba Kandege, Member of the Land, Natural Resources and Environment Committee, Parliament of Tanzania

Hon. Alex Byarugaba Bakunda, Member of Parliament, Parliament of Uganda

Hon. Stephen Kampyongo, Member of Parliament, National Assembly of Zambia

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