



KENYA GREEN UNIVERSITIES NETWORK

INFORMAL CONSULTATIONS

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Participants

Commission for University Education (CUE)

- Dr. Eusebius J. Makokha

National Environment Management Authority (NEMA)

- Dr. Ayub Macharia
- Catherine Mbaisi

UNEP/EETU

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Background

- The Kenya Green University Network (KGUN) was proposed in 2012, after deliberations between the Greening Kenya Initiative (GKI), World Student Community for Sustainable Development (WSCSD), the University of Nairobi (UoN), Multimedia University of Kenya (MMU) and UNEP's Environmental Education and Training Unit (EETU);
- KGUN aims at developing a functional network of higher education institutions (HEIs) in Kenya that incorporate environment, low carbon-climate resilience development strategies and sustainability aspects in their education, training, campus operations and enhanced student engagement;
- KGUN will also develop capacity to assist universities in their performance contracting reporting requirements on the environmental targets;
- An informal consultative meeting was held at the UN in April 2014, to assess current and emerging environmental sustainability trends in higher education, discuss performance contracting requirements for Kenyan Universities, and brainstorm institutional aspects for KGUN;
- There are currently over 66 universities in Kenya, whose combined efforts of these tertiary academic institutions can have a positive impact on achieving of sustainable development. Of these 66 higher education institutions in Kenya, 22 are public, 9 are public constituent colleges, 17 are chartered private, 5 are private constituent colleges, 11 are private with letter of interim authority and 2 are registered private institutions;
- Presently, some universities are actively involved in incorporating environmental sustainability targets in their performance contracts as stipulated by NEMA; and
- Commission of University Education, in its role of regulating and assuring quality university education through setting and enforcing rules, standards and guidelines will act as a regulator for the network.

Discussions

- A briefing on KGUN was provided jointly by UNEP and NEMA, including preliminary agenda for the launch and potential launch dates in early December 2014;
- Dr. Juma Mukwana welcomed the proposed KGUN network and emphasized linkages with CUE in terms of environment related curricula. This is in line with the Universities Act, No. 42 of 2012;
- CUE can play a pivotal role for KGUN, which includes the following:
 - To act as a regulator of the KGUN;
 - Assess the Performance Contracting (PC) targets for universities and give recommendations;
 - Integration of environmental aspects in rules and regulations for universities; and
 - Ensure quality assurance of environmental practices in universities.
- Potential roles for KGUN are as follows:
 - Develop sustainability tools and indicators for universities;
 - Promote green practices and development in universities (Vision 2030);
 - Establish a Sustainability Index criteria for ranking Kenyan universities; and
 - Enhance human capacity on environmental issues (student and community outreach).
- NEMA confirmed availability of funding for the launch and start-up of KGUN. The preferred modality for NEMA to transfer the funds to UNEP, which will be responsible in coordinating preparation of background papers, and the KGUN Launch.

Way forward

1. UNEP/EETU to fast-track the development and signing of an agreement with NEMA-Kenya to facilitate transfer of funds for KGUN Launch;
2. UNEP/EETU to revise KGUN concept note based on feedback from CUE, and circulate the revised version for additional review/comments;
3. UNEP to prepare draft TORs for background papers as inputs for KGUN;
4. Convene a follow-up meeting on third week of November at UNEP Offices, which will assess four background papers prepared around the KGUN Pillars and one analysis paper on Performance Contracting;
5. CUE to nominate a focal point to help in the preparations of the launch of the KGUN;
6. CUE, NEMA and UNEP/EETU to prepare a tripartite invitation for all university Vice Chancellors in Kenya on the KGUN launch; and
7. CUE Secretary to have a key role during KGUN launch, and be informed at least 2 weeks in advance.