

## **Draft Ministerial Declaration of the 2019 UN Environment Assembly**

### **“Innovative solutions for environmental challenges and sustainable consumption and production”**

**Vision: Sustainable, prosperous and inclusive societies that address key environmental challenges with innovative solutions and rely on responsible patterns of consumption and production**

**Main priority 1: Ensure the access and use of global environmental data and develop innovative digital solutions.**

Access and use of global data will be a great chance for all groups to put their inputs and use the available data for the purpose of mapping of resources and monitoring changes.

This will greatly contribute to the country of Kenya in the field of environmental conservation, governance, equity and security. The presence of monitoring system will help regulate various environmental crisis brought about by human activities, like air quality, water quality, deforestation and marine litter among others. The open access of this data will enhance transparency in various sectors, which will trigger a sense of environmental responsibility. Environmental data strategy and action plans will put the youths in a position whereby they will get educated and therefore the implementation will be easier.

In corporation of science, community and private sector will help in maintaining the principles of ethics, governance, equity, transparency and security. The inclusion of various bodies in the country including youth groups among others will help build strong partnerships and strong institutions which is part of the sustainable development goals. This will be a positive factor that will contribute to environmental stewardship and growth of the country. Empowerment on disclosure of consumer information, starting with textile and plastic products by 2025, and will develop solutions for product transparency, including labelling systems and digital product resource passports, product environment footprint, and life-cycle models.

Improvement of scenario-building models to develop environment foresights, including food security, marine litter, desertification and extreme weather events will be a gateway to big ideas on green buildings and green economy. This will help deal with food insecurity and extreme weather conditions that at times results to floods or outbreak of diseases due to poor sanitation mostly in the urban slum as a main challenge in Kenya which is as a result of climate change. It will also promote the tourism of Kenya represented by coastal areas due to presence of beaches and marine wildlife.

**Main priority 3: Support robust engagement of civil society, citizens, private sector and academia in promoting innovative approaches for meeting global environmental challenges and sustainable production and consumption.**

The UN environment recognizes the importance of engaging major groups, stakeholders and partners in advocating for environmental challenges. It appreciates that groups such as civil society organizations, private sector and students are able to share different perspectives, conduct research and undertake advocacy functions that help meet not only Kenya's environmental challenges but global environmental challenges as well. Some of the challenges this robust engagement will change are;

### **Encouraging Afforestation Projects**

Wood fuel is still the most important source of domestic energy in Kenya. Trees are also required as a source of timber both for domestic consumption and export. Tree cutting has therefore lead to deforestation, soil erosion and desertification in many parts of Kenya. Regional tree planting initiatives should be established and encouraged to help save the forests.

### **Pest Control Programs**

Specific programs geared towards the areas affected by pests and diseases like those affecting the pastoral farmers should be introduced in such areas to educate and enable such farmers understand the nature of these problems especially in relation to the environment and how effective measures can be taken to control such problems.

### **Conservation of Biodiversity**

In Kenya, there is a rapid depletion of the living natural resources. Deforestation, land degradation and desertification are the main processes affecting the loss of biodiversity. Citizens should be educated on the needs to protect the environment since the majority of Kenyan population are either not aware of the importance of managing their environment or the dangers that waits them having degraded their environment.

### **Community Participation**

Local participation in the identification and implementation of development projects is essential since the complex interaction between social, cultural, economic and environmental factors are best understood by those involved, and their contribution to the planning process would promote the preparation of appropriate development strategies. Participation can be direct or indirect. It is seen as a process by which local people become managers of their own development and are simultaneously becoming more empowered. Participation entails the involvement of communities in designing, planning, implementing and the evaluating their resource development programs. Thus a major hindrance to community participation has been the attitudes and behavior of the public sector development workers. In retrospect the encouragement of local communities to participate in conservation practice should be given priority so as to ensure a sound foundation upon which relevant environmental policies could be effectively implemented.

### **Environmental Education and Awareness Initiative (EEIA)**

EEAI provides a platform to inform, educate and engage various stakeholders. The goal is to enhance voluntary initiatives and participation in environmental conservation activities by every Kenyan through education and awareness campaigns. This is expected to foster inclusiveness and partnerships in environmental conservation and management. The implementation of EEAI should ensure effective stakeholder involvement and resource mobilization in environmental management.

EEAI should aim to; Increase environmental awareness and participation in environmental activities, mobilize the general public to get involved in the protection and conservation of the environment and especially catchment conservation, encourage media to embrace effective, positive and informative environmental coverage in order to enhance awareness and prioritization of the environment. These could be achieved through; Public awareness campaigns, outreach and education, tree planting.

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