



Policy Meeting on Establishing a Biocultural Heritage Territory/Landscape

Rabai Museum, Kilifi County, Friday 30th August
2019

This meeting was organised by the Kenya Forestry Research Institute (KEFRI) in collaboration with the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED). Participants included: Kilifi County Director for Culture and Deputy Director for Culture; Kilifi County Officers for Environment and Agriculture; Kaya Elders; National Museums of Kenya (see Participants List p.12).

Opening Speech from Hon Maureen Mwangovya, County Executive Committee (CEC) member in Charge of Culture in Kilifi County, read by Dr Ismail Benjamin (Kilifi County Director for Culture).

Dr Chemuku Wekesa visited me last week to discuss the proposal to establish a Biocultural Heritage Territory in Rabai and how the County Government can contribute. The County government is responsible for safeguarding culture within its area of jurisdiction; by law the county government has a lot of power in cultural sites preservation. Over many years, Kaya forests have developed as distinct biocultural landscapes which include: association with tribes that migrated from Shingwaya; defined Kayas with central clearings; 'Moroni' – central huts; and 'Chisa' – where prayers take place.

Kaya forests and Kaya elders are so much intertwined that one cannot exist without the other. Kaya Rabai was designated as a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 2008, which has strengthened the Kaya as an important cultural site and enhanced its recognition by domestic and foreign tourists. It is developing as a centre for showcasing culture and traditional medicines. I have the following recommendations:

- Consultations with Kaya elders must be done more often to respect and use their traditional knowledge (TK), including their management plans for conserving the forest and for ending hunger (Sustainable Development Goal 2).

- Continuous environmental education is needed for the younger generation on traditional values and beliefs.
- Indigenous tree species nurseries and more inventories of Kaya trees are needed to pass to future generations.
- Physical security of Kaya forests must be enhanced so that biodiversity is conserved.
- Review of organisational structure of Kaya leadership

Action is needed to:

1. Facilitate the gazettement of remaining Kaya forests.
2. Support the conservation of Kayas
3. Identify suitable species for boundary marking, instead of fences.
4. Work with different government agencies to instruct repossession of Kaya forests that have been taken by others.
5. Establish an award scheme in collaboration with partners – this we have done with UNESCO.
6. Develop a County Framework for effective conservation of Kaya forests – we already have a draft, will share it with you to validate it.
7. Create awareness about the County Cultural Act

I would also like to thank the stakeholders that have come to help ensure the protection of our Biocultural Territories.

Mr. Chiro, NMK: I support the CEC's speech. Some of these strategies are already in practice. We've identified 'mare' trees for boundary marking and planted them around Kaya Fumbo, with funding from UNDP-SGP. Mare is a cultural tree which elders acknowledge, it grows very fast and straight. Regarding gazettement of kaya forests, there has been a lot of devolution to counties, and that work firmly rests with the counties. Gazettement will give Kayas legal protection. The award scheme is supported by Kenya National Committee for UNESCO. However, there is heavy logging/cutting in some sites in Rabai, particularly Kaya Bomu. NMK does not have the resources and manpower to enforce regulations on a day to day basis; I call upon other stakeholders to join this effort.

Kaya Elder: It is unfortunate that the destruction of Kaya forests is very high, even though the team from the County is telling us that they are able to provide security for the Kayas.

Mr. Garero, Kaya Elder: I am the senior-most Kaya elder and I also volunteer to guard the Kaya forest. County forest guards have not been that helpful. They have a station in Kambe but never visit the field. I have been to their office almost three times a month to report cases of destruction, but so far I have not been assisted. I am requesting the representative of CEC to request her to bring people who want to work and not just take the job and sit in the office. The Kaya Elders complained about the previous Environment Officer and that person was replaced by the current one here today. So, we want them to come and work in the field. Before leaving today I would like to discuss how we can check the land around where the destruction is happening.

Dr. Mbuvi, KEFRI: KEFRI's role is to review government policies to see if they are meeting the objectives of all stakeholders, not just the government. If Kaya Elders are organised and stakeholders are organised they will be able to protect the forests better than anyone. IIED and KEFRI have a concept/idea of establishing a Biocultural Landscape in Rabai. We could put a big sign in the airport, saying 'Visit Rabai Cultural Landscape to experience culture and biodiversity'. We hope that if it succeeds, other Kayas and forests in the county will learn from here and it will spread to other areas of the county. Rabai is unique because it is near Mombasa. But as the land value increases, that brings challenges. Fortunately, a Biocultural Heritage Territory will be able to protect the landscape and add value for the communities in this place.

KEFRI's work in Kaya forests: Presentation by Dr. Linus Wekesa, KEFRI:

This community is my second home. I am here now wearing 2 hats – as a researcher and as an administrator. Allow me as an administrator to recognise the stakeholders that have been working very closely with KEFRI: the County government of Kilifi, they are very key because our Gede office is in Kilifi; we have a close partnership with NMK in kaya forests; and with the Ministry of Agriculture, especially in terms of trying to promote the kinds of technologies that we are promoting. Through IIED we were able to support two Kaya elders to go all the way to Peru – because we recognise how important Kaya Elders are in conserving Kaya forests.

KEFRI focuses on Kaya forests because they are a vital resource in the coastal region. Kayas are small isolated forest patches, which can be from 2 ha to 200 ha – varied sizes. They are protected as sacred places where prayers, sacrifices and rituals took place. Protection of Kayas is deeply entrenched in traditional Mijikenda culture and their integrity and sanctity are safeguarded by the Kaya Elders' Council who employ a system of taboos and traditional rules. Kaya forests sustain very high biodiversity including many rare and endemic plants. They are sources of genetic resources for food, forestry and agriculture. Crop wild relatives (CWRs) are found in Kayas and used by local communities; KEFRI research has identified quite a number of plants related to crops. CWRs are important for:

- Improving agricultural production – resistance to pests and diseases and tolerance to drought thus improving quality and yield of crops
- High nutritional content that enhances human health
- Mitigation against climate change impacts – CWRs help communities to maintain high crop diversity which is key for climate adaptation. This year we planted our crops in May and June – something that has never happened before – we were told that the rains had got stuck in Tanzania. This is because of climate change, which is going to negatively affect us. But CWRs in Kayas can produce and enhance yields and give us the foods that we require when other food sources have failed. Temperatures in South Sudan have gone up to 45 celcius.

Herbal medicine is also very important – it is very unfortunate that Kenyans associate it with witchcraft, backwardness and un-Christianity. But our herbal medicines are equally as good as the medicines from the hospital and may be even better for some diseases. We get them from Kayas – on farm they are not potent or not growing. Wild plants in Kayas are important sources of fruits, hence contributing to food security of local communities. Kayas also promote culture and enhance social cohesiveness- traditional festivals and ceremonies are held in Kayas, festivals promote cohesion and sharing of knowledge and encourage cultural values (eg. reciprocity) and innovation.

Kaya Elder: We also have edible mushrooms growing in Kayas.

Dr Wekesa: And we also have 'Nderema vegetable' also known as vine spinach or Malabar spinach (*Basella alba*) – the Ministry of Agriculture instructed that this should be planted, and the ex-President Moi used to fondly indicate that this vegetable cures gout. Kayas are very important as they provide such plants. So instead of cutting trees let's be running to the Kayas to collect the vegetables. Through SIFOR (the IIED PI is here), KEFRI supported the establishment of the Rabai Cultural Village and economic activities. When people go to the Mombasa agricultural show, they should have a big sign saying 'visit the Rabai Cultural Village'. We also work to strengthen the Kaya Elders' Council – eg. by supporting the visit to the Potato Park. Through SIFOR were able to establish the Community Seed Bank in Rabai Cultural Village (CV) which is being used to conserve seeds and enhance seed access for communities.

Our work also focuses on:

- Restoration of degraded sites within Kayas using native species and establishing community tree nurseries so communities can raise tree seedlings for planting in Kayas and on farm.
- Capacity building in entrepreneurial skills – for marketing of biocultural products.
- Publication on Kaya Mudzi Muvya documenting all important plant species in the Kaya and bats and other animals.

Daniel Garero, Kaya elder: In your photo the Kaya elders are standing based on seniority – this is determined not by age but by level of TK. First is the ‘Mviere’ (Daniel). Then the Mvaya is second in command. Then the ‘Bora’, who are elders with special skills.

‘Indigenous Biocultural Heritage for Sustainable Development’ project: Towards a Kaya Biocultural Heritage Landscape in Rabai. Presentation by Krystyna Swiderska, IIED

This two-year participatory action-research project (ending December 2020) involves indigenous communities in India, China, Peru and Kenya (Rabai community) and is funded by the British Academy. It builds on earlier IIED-KEFRI research with Mijikenda communities: “Protecting community rights over Traditional Knowledge” (2005-09); and “Smallholder Innovation for Resilience” (SIFOR, 2012-2017). The first project found that cultural values such as Reciprocity in society and with nature, Equilibrium with nature, and Duality (eg. the complementary roles of men and women, traditional and modern knowledge), held by Quechua people in Peru, are also evident in the cultural values of Mijikenda communities.

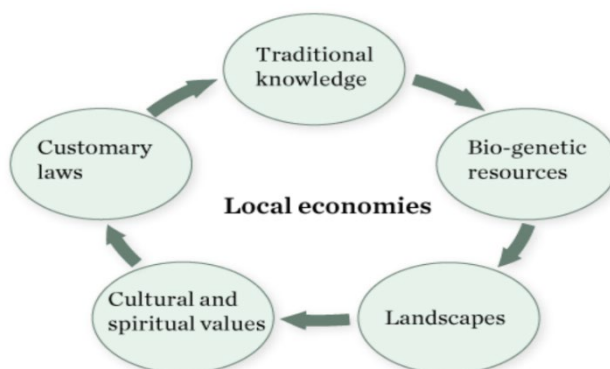
The British Academy project on Indigenous Biocultural Heritage has two main objectives:

1. To catalyse the establishment of collectively managed biocultural heritage territories for self-determined sustainable development.
2. To enhance understanding of the role of biocultural heritage in addressing the SDGs, especially SDG2, amongst policy makers, international agencies, researchers and practitioners; and promote more holistic and culture-centred policy and planning.

The project seeks to address the following key Research Questions:

1. How are indigenous communities connected to the landscape historically?
2. How do indigenous **worldviews**, wellbeing concepts, cultural values and customary laws promote or hinder sustainable and equitable development? To what extent are these recognised by different actors within communities?
3. What kind of traditional **governance** system exists? How can it be strengthened for sustainable management of the landscape?
4. What are the main elements of **biocultural heritage** and how are they interconnected?
5. How can the local biocultural heritage be used sustainably to strengthen **livelihoods**?
6. How does biocultural heritage-based agriculture contribute to **SDG2** (resilience, sustainability, productivity, nutrition)?

The earlier project on TK protection identified the following key elements of biocultural heritage which are inter-dependent:



Biocultural heritage territories are integrated landscape management approaches with the following key objectives:

1. Biodiversity conservation – wild and agricultural
2. Revitalising culture and TK for sustainable development
3. Enhancing livelihoods (eg. eco-tourism revenue)
4. Improving food security and climate resilience.
5. Strengthening the rights and voice of indigenous communities.

The project builds on the successful 'Potato Park' Biocultural Heritage Territory in Peru, where 6 villages in the Andes mountains collectively manage c.9000 ha based on customary laws. They have established a Community Association which is legally registered and have Collective land title. They conserve over 1000 varieties of potato in a secondary centre of potato domestication, and other Andean crops and wildlife. Incomes doubled in 5 years due to tourism-related micro-enterprises. Crop productivity has increased despite severe climate change challenges. The Potato Park has been scaled out in Peru to establish a Maize Park. These experiences highlight two key success factors:

- Ensuring a community-led process, using TK and science and building local capacity and ownership is important for sustainability beyond projects.
- This has entailed using an indigenous holistic development concept, the 'Ayllu', to guide the management system. The ayllu comprises 3 communities - the community of wild plants and animals; the human and domesticated plants and animals; and the sacred and the ancestors. These 3 communities need to be in balance to achieve wellbeing.

Why establish a Biocultural Heritage Territory in Rabai? Daniel Garero (Kaya Elder), and the two project coordinators from KEFRI (Chemuku Wekesa and Leila Ndalilo) have visited the Potato Park. Rabai has maintained relatively strong traditional governance system, the Kaya Elders' Council. But Kaya forests are being encroached for livelihoods; and traditional crops and knowledge are being lost. So there is a need to integrate conservation and livelihoods objectives at landscape level, and to strengthen traditional governance for sustainable development. But the Rabai community in Kenya has a different agro-ecosystem, socio-cultural and political context, so the Peruvian model needs to be adapted.

What do Rabai villages think about establishing a biocultural territory/landscape? We discussed the idea over the last 3 days with the Rabai Cultural Village, Kaya Elders, and 6 villages: Jimba, Mikahani, Bwagamoyo, Mwele, Buni and Kaliang'ombe. Most people supported the idea: they felt they would be stronger working together as one. They want to revive traditional crops, but need links to markets. They emphasised that traditional crops are more healthy and resilient. They also emphasised the need for sensitisation particularly for younger people encroaching kayas. But one elder in Kaliang'ombe was less keen on the idea, he explained that people are very poor and land is privately owned, so it may not work. He said that traditional farming may not suit them as they have limited land.

Mr. Kadilo, Cultural Village: The elder from Kaliang'ombe is worried that smoke from the gravel quarries and related factory damages the crops around them so he feels that even if they joined, they won't be able to benefit from this project. They emphasised that waste (eg. water) is disposed in that area without planning. They suggested that instead of traditional farming, they can do small enterprises like beading etc, which are not affected by the waste.

Kaya Elder, Kaliang'ombe: There are a lot of problems in the Kaliang'ombe area, the factories are close to the river where people can farm to sustain the community, and at the other end there is a slaughter house which disposes water with a lot of salt into the river – when the water is used to irrigate vegetables, it produces a lot of problems. They also produce tarmac in one of the factories, so the emissions of fumes also affect the crops and plants, and the safety of the crops in their shambas is questionable. That is the problem in Kaliang'ombe. People are willing to farm but hire farms in other areas.

Mr. Chiro, NMK: I would like to emphasise the elders' point. NEMA is responsible for dealing with companies that harm human life because that is a violation of human rights. What land tenure system is this biocultural territory approach based on?

Ms. Swiderska, IIED: We heard in Kaliang'ombe that people are offered a lot of money by politicians so they sell their land. But once they have spent it they may have nothing left and end up worse off (it would be interesting to know what happens to them). In the Potato Park in Peru they have collective land title for the whole territory, and farmers also have their private farmland, surrounded by common land (eg. for grazing). But the land tenure regime may not be such an issue if there is a collective governance system and a biocultural economy. The main reason why communities established the Potato Park in Peru was to defend their land rights against mining. People don't want to sell their land to mining companies as they feel it would destroy their resources, pollute rivers etc, and also because they feel proud of their Inca heritage and ancestral landscape.

Mr. Chiro, NMK: The Maasai used to sell land but now they have changed their mentality. Here you can hire a shamba for 2 years – they build a 2 bedroom house and the rest of the land is used for farming. A biocultural heritage landscape would attract people to come and study in the area. There is a settlement scheme in Mukana – most people were given land. Shambas are being sold by cartels and politicians who use rich people to buy the lands. So you can't dictate to people not to sell their land – they are selling land because of poverty. Amongst the Mijikenda the only people who can't sell their land are the Chonyi. When we sell our land, instead of improving our lives we are increasing poverty. I am convinced that what we need to do is make people understand the biocultural territory concept and with time they will embrace it. It's about changing the mindset of the people – land is very important. Instead of selling land, we should farm to ensure food security. Kadilo is a board member of the Land Commission of the County government, so he should take the initiative to sensitise people about the importance of their land.

The Kikuyu community elders have a saying that it is easier to take someone's wife than to take their land. According to the Kikuyu, if you sell your land you become an outcast of society. This kind of knowledge is passed down through generations – they believe that to be respected they must have some land. They believe in and respect their land, and if they lose it they say their rights have been violated. When they were being pressured to sell their land, they said they were prepared to die to protect their land.

But here land has been commercialised. Kaya elders have owned land – they had a sub-committee called 'owners of the land' to resolve disputes and oversee how land would be used. These elders used to be selected under oath to be 'fair and just to society'. So if you are given land and go against the conditions, you have to give it back. You have to follow the rules set by the land committee. At that time, there was no ownership, they only gave user rights, the land could not be sold or change ownership. Those given land would be called 'children of the land'. After independence, these systems were completely destroyed by modern religion and education, so now in the coast, land is commercial. Previously there was no individual land ownership, but now there is, so land became a commodity that you are free to dispose of. Selling of land has affected the Chonyi and other Mijikenda communities and is now starting to affect Rabai. It is better to change the land ownership system so land is owned by the community, not individuals. Kaya Fimboni has the main forest and the buffer zone – people can live in the buffer zone as long as they meet the conditions set by the elders. Recently it has been demarcated – but people who were given land in the buffer zone have now sold it. They need to solve the problem with the land officers of the County – the people given land in the buffer zone were not from that area.

Dr. Mbuvi: The County government's Spatial Plans can also incorporate biocultural landscapes, eg. so people cannot sub-divide land below a certain size.

Curator, Rabai Museum: Can KEFRI come up with a plan for planting trees?

Ecosystem-based Adaptation (EbA) Evidence and Policy project. Ms. Swiderska, IIED

This four-year project (2015-2019) involves IIED, IUCN, UNEP-WCMC and partners in 12 countries: Kenya, South Africa, Uganda, Burkina Faso, Mali, Bangladesh, Nepal, China, Chile, Costa Rica, El Salvador and Peru. It is funded by Germany's International Climate Initiative (IKI). EbA is often a sound investment compared to hard infrastructure but does not get the financial or policy support it deserves. A key reason for this is weak evidence of the effectiveness of EbA and its economic viability – the evidence is often anecdotal and from single case studies. This project analysed 13 case studies of EbA using the following main questions:

1. Does the EbA initiative allow human communities to maintain or improve their adaptive capacity or resilience, and enhance long-term well-being?
2. Does the initiative restore, maintain or enhance the capacity of ecosystems to provide important ecosystem services for local communities, and to withstand climate change impacts and other stressors?
3. Is the initiative cost-effective and economically viable over at least 5-10 year horizons, or longer?
4. What institutional, political and capacity factors influence the implementation of effective EbA initiatives and how might challenges be overcome?

The findings show that EbA can be effective for enhancing human adaptive capacity and ecosystem services and produces a multitude of social co-benefits. EbA can help the world's poorest people who are most vulnerable to climate change and reliant on natural resources. Adopting participatory processes and valuing indigenous or local knowledge was essential for building adaptive capacity. However, there are sometimes trade-offs, where some groups accrue more adaptation benefits and social co-benefits than others; and several projects showed how one group received these benefits at the expense of others. Some projects also reported trade-offs in ecosystem service delivery between different geographical scales or sites, or between timescales. Some improvements to ecosystem service provision occurred rapidly, but others took years to materialise. Acknowledging trade-offs is necessary to tackle them. In the Potato Park case, no trade-offs were identified relating to human or ecosystem benefits.

Many EbA projects were perceived as cost-effective, or more cost-effective than alternatives, and in most cases Cost-Benefit Analysis supported this. A wide range of broader economic benefits also emerged from most EbA projects. At times, the financial costs and benefits were different for different people. Some financial or economic benefits were rapid, but benefits could often take years to accrue. Economic incentives sometimes helped compensate for this delay. Constraints to EbA implementation include: lack of prioritization or mandate for agencies to work on EbA, and weak policy and legal support; limited technical skills at local government level and weak government institutions and community organisations; limited funding for EbA; insufficient collaboration and knowledge sharing; and high levels of poverty and poor infrastructure. Success factors include: government prioritization and supportive policies; EbA 'champions'; government capacity; working with or strengthening local organisations and planning processes; provision of incentives; and knowledge generation and sharing.

The **EbA case study in Kenya** focused on a project in Isiolo County: "Supporting Counties in Kenya to Mainstream Climate Change in Development and Access to Climate Finance", supported by the Adaptation Consortium (ADA), National Drought Management Authority and DFID. The study assessed the Isiolo County Climate Change Fund (ICCCF) which supports investments that build climate resilience, which are selected and managed by the County and Ward Climate Change Planning Committees. ADA aims to prepare County governments to access global climate finance for adaptation. The ICCCF supports public goods – eg. water and pasture access. From 2010-2014, it provided tangible benefits for 18,825 people. Customary range management institutions were particularly important for building resilience. Funds were disbursed much quicker than by a similar nationally managed fund – the Community Development Trust Fund.

The study found that ICCCF provided significant adaptation benefits for people in poor and marginalised households, particularly pastoralists and agro-pastoralists. Women benefited as much as men. Social co-benefits from rangeland management improvements included improved natural resource management, conflict resolution and community cohesion. Community participation was actively sought in all stages of project design and implementation and has been formalised in management structures and decision-making processes. By supporting traditional management institutions (dedha), local knowledge was also prioritised. Strong participation throughout the ICCCF process was central to building local resilience.

Continued provision of ecosystem services from the rangelands for pastoralism requires landscape level management, and ICCCF investments operated at County level. The ICCCF supported projects that improved ecosystem resilience and service provision. Investments in traditional rangeland governance and management systems slowed land deterioration and led to regeneration. Investments such as sand dams may have reduced downstream water availability but much less so than other land uses such as irrigated crops.

It is hard to measure returns on investment due to high mobility and difficult to quantify benefits. Strengthening dedha (eg. rule enforcement, climate information) brought a 400:1 ratio of community benefits to ICCCF investment. Comparison with doing nothing or top down approaches indicate that EbA provides better returns. There are also many broader economic benefits of ecosystem services (eg. reduced disaster risk) - but these are even harder to quantify. Economic benefits are likely to materialise fast and last for a long time.

Policy and institutional challenges:

- Historical mismanagement of water and grazing resources
- Disconnect between communities and formal governance systems, and lack of knowledge of rangeland ecosystems amongst government staff at County level.
- Poor access to climate information at County level.
- Securing County government support and multi-sectoral coordination.
- Legacy of centralised planning systems.

The ICCF required considerable investment at first, but local institutions (eg. dedha) are now strong and communities are in control of designing and supporting development and adaptation initiatives to meet their needs. The initiative is being scaled out to other counties, including Kilifi County (with IFAD support). It could provide support for a community-led process to establish a biocultural territory for integrated landscape management and climate adaptation.

Dr. Benjamin, Kilifi County Director for Culture: There was a training workshop last week for county governments on decentralised climate change finance. We should ensure that Rabai benefits.

Remarks

Ms. Neema Mwangi, Sub-county environment officer: I am involved in forest conservation. As a department we have responsibility to ensure all forests are well conserved, making sure that we make regular patrols to protect them from those who destroy the forest. Rabai Cultural Village is rehabilitating degraded kaya sites with indigenous trees. We have a mandate as a department to make sure that we protect our forest and support communities who live around the forest to use alternative sources of energy eg. solar panels and improved jikos (cooking stoves). Another mandate is to ensure that all our communities live in a clean environment. I am disappointed with what I've heard from one of the elders that Kaliang'ombe is polluted and as an officer of this area I will visit the area and take action, so that the companies take responsibility, and Kaliang'ombe can also benefit from the project.

Mr. Kadilo: On behalf of Rabai Cultural Village, I am very close to these elders and anything related to culture and heritage has been my passion over the years and I took this from my father because he was also moved by preserving culture. If the Environment Officer can do that in Kaliang'ombe it will be a milestone because what we saw yesterday was beyond us, we could not do anything.

Kaya Elder: I would like to remind the Environment Officer about the problem with the saltwater from the slaughterhouse polluting the river and affecting our crops.

Mr. Kadilo: I will briefly talk about our Cultural Village project. It is comprised of c.1,500 members with 26 cultural groups – but out of them c.600 members are active members. The aim of this project is to preserve the Kaya Mudzi Muvya forest to restore its glory. Currently we are able to plant c. 1800 baby trees / seedlings in the presence of the administration. And we work in consultation with the elders to make sure we rehabilitate those areas which are degraded. We are encouraging the County government of Kilifi to also embrace the project so that those who come from within and outside the country can also see the support of the County government. We've been proposing some projects on public participation but unfortunately we've not been supported yet. Because of my remarks I'm sure the Director of Culture will take action and make sure we also benefit from the County. Most of the members of the CV don't benefit from the project and this means it is a challenge to convince the young generation that the project is meant to change their lives. I congratulate NMK and KEFRI for giving us a hand in making sure they encourage the members to remain united and in due time we will reap dedication to the project.

Mr. Lenox Ringa. We try every year to organise a Rabai Cultural Festival to market our cultural practices. In the Cultural Village we can employ more than 500 people. So we are asking the County government to help us.

Ms. Swiderska. The idea of a cultural festival is very good – they are also doing this in Peru, India and China as part of the process to establish biocultural territories. It would be good to include a focus on sharing traditional seeds, and call it a 'biocultural festival'. You could invite tour operators and hotels to promote ecotourism.

Mr. Chiro, NMK: There are ethnic issues – for the County government to buy in, the festival should be done for different Mijikenda villages each year. It should celebrate all aspects of culture – dress, governance, food etc.

Mr. Lenox Ringa: We promote the Cultural Village through the Rabai Cultural Festival. Now we need to embrace other communities and invite others because if you are a government officer you can't provide support just for Kilifi but have to support all Mijikenda tribes. So it has to be designed to ensure all people can come.

Mr. Mambo, Rabai Museum Curator: We have been very supportive of this project from the beginning especially of Mr Kadilo, we have been supporting him with the Cultural Festival and I'm grateful that he always notifies us on everything concerning the Cultural Village. So we have to maintain the coordination.

Mr. Daniel Garero, Kaya Elder. What I saw in Peru and brought home is about the community seed bank, but what I don't support is destruction of the forest and the environment. To whom does the forest belong? My humble request is to the County government. They should give us support to make sure we conserve the forest by bringing civil servants who are ready to work with the community and are not just enjoying sitting in their offices. I learnt something from the Trust for Indigenous Cultural Health, that we should be the vision carriers and not always depend on others to decide for us. We want all of us to be active and not lazy people.

Mr. Felix Ireri, Agriculture sub-county officer. In the department of agriculture we also advocate for sustainable resource management, we encourage agroforestry to try to ensure the ecosystem is safeguarded. We also support conservation agriculture. We don't force farmers to plant what they don't want, we are change agents, just want to change them, so we are safeguarding their rights. In the Ministry of Agriculture we also have programmes to promote traditional crops because farmers have forgotten that sorghum is more nutritious than maize – we try to promote these crops which are more resilient in terms of harsh climate conditions. To create a market for traditional crops, we have to start with promoting their utilisation in the community to create local demand, and then look for markets to expand to.

Mr. Lawrence Chiro, NMK: In NMK there is a unit that deals with conservation of Kaya forests. We think Kayas are very important. Kayas are cultural and biological – biocultural, it is our identity, our culture, our tradition. They provide a good, nice environment. Kayas have been registered as World

Heritage Sites under the 1972 UNESCO Convention – as natural and cultural heritage, ie. biocultural heritage. In Rabai, 3 sites have been registered – Kaya Mudzi Muvya, Kaya Bomu and Kaya Fimboni. What can we do to conserve this heritage? Most of the destruction is for domestic use and small enterprises eg. charcoal burning, selling firewood. We can educate/sensitise our women and youth on the importance of conserving our Kaya forests and that way everyone will be the security of our Kaya forests. We need to reduce dependence on the forest, but how can we do this? The County Forest Officer should take charge of encouraging the community to plant trees on farm for domestic use. We can start income generating activities so that we can improve the livelihoods of the communities, so they can cater for their basic needs. This can be initiated through a focus on traditional farming.

How can we train our community to be able to cope with climate change and global warming? If you are a livestock farmer, how can you use an alternative way of farming if there is no rain? Vis a vis the cash crops for farmers, we launched African 'bad eye' chilli and tomato sauce to enhance income and incentives to conserve Kayas (Kaya Ribe and bedida sacred forest). We need to target an entire landscape – biocultural heritage landscape – since what happens on shambas has a direct impact on forests. We need to use TK and science and learn from best practice. If we improve peoples' living standards, Kaya forests will be conserved forever – if not, people will always depend on food relief.

Dr. Benjamin, Kilifi County Culture Director: The County is an institution governed by law and sometimes we can go astray as an institution. But this project today should be the new beginning because we learned from Dr Wekesa that this approach will be an alternative way of generating income. All those who enter Kaya forests come from the surrounding area– this project will involve all of them as soon as they understand the meaning and importance of conserving kayas – it's us, our kids etc. who have the responsibility to conserve our forest. As a County we are the custodians, but we own these kayas as a community because the County is not an individual it is an institution. How can we then subdivide and take an area of the forest? The County government will now seriously take care of these forests as indicated in the Traditional Knowledge and Cultural Expressions Act of 2016 sections 6, 1 and 2 – there is a fine for interfering with a cultural site. So the law is there but maybe not implemented, people are not informed. We had even suggested a penalty of 250,000 KES. The most important thing is to enforce this law, through consultations etc. We have a programme where we want to hand over cultural heritage matters to the younger generation – they should understand that they own the Kayas, and it is not good to involve police with firearms, instead we should take the responsibility.

We facilitated you in the previous Cultural Festival with 250,000 KES because our role is to facilitate. This year Mekatilili Wa Menza, she was a heroine, if we want to celebrate her, let us not do it only in Giriama but across the county – to build cohesion instead of segmenting people – because sometimes it divides our people rather than bringing them together. So at some point we need to identify who the real Kaya elders are because we understand that there are commercial Kaya elders who are close to the County Governor and when they talk to the Governor they are easily funded. Negligence and corruption we are not going to entertain. We should meet every 2 weeks with KEFRI, NMK, KFS and NEMA, otherwise the next generation will not see the Kaya forests. As a County how can we come in? Looking at the County Culture and Heritage Bill, our mandate is to promote, preserve and protect our tangible and intangible cultural heritage. If the Bill passes we will have more powers. You have to contribute to the policy so that we can come up with the best law to protect our biocultural territories. The County should be involved at all levels, in all areas of the project for establishing a biocultural territory. We are developing a framework for effective conservation of Kaya forests – does it represent the needs of Rabai? If not, we can amend it. Even if passed a law can still be amended. But we can't use a law to manage Kayas, let's use the best traditional methods. I want to congratulate and thank KEFRI, we are ready to support you, work together and ensure that these unique biocultural territories are conserved.

Ms. Jacinta Mwachizigwa, Kilifi County Culture Deputy Director: On the issue of traditional foods, sensitisation is needed for people to go back to traditional cuisine, to avoid diseases like cancer.

Dr. Benjamin, Kilifi County Culture Director: Traditional healers are doing a very good job. So why don't we embrace the consumption of traditional food and drinks? They are very healthy and delicious.

Dr. Mbuvi: The County has a law now (the Culture and Heritage Bill) and needs to come up with guidelines. Communities and the County government are willing to move forward. For protecting Kayas,

the best conserver is the community – first we start with traditional methods. When we use cultural rules for conflict resolution the person can easily go back into their community. We need to engage youth in cultural heritage management, how do we do that? Need to have continuous engagement of the community as we implement the project. Kilifi has the best database of indigenous foods, a book has been published by NMK and Bioversity International. This is the 1st meeting where the County government has sat with us all the way through.

Closing remarks – Dr. Linus Wekesa. I've worked with communities for over 25 years. Many communities are illiterate and don't speak English but begin to learn it as more money starts flowing into their pockets. I know Daniel Garero (kaya elder) speaks good English. The issues that Krystyna has mentioned are very important – EbA – let's remember what that means. Also Biocultural Heritage Territory. These are wonderful terminologies and concepts that are coming up. It has been a very educative day. NMK has brought up economic issues – 'biocultural economy'. Let's follow-up with actions. Our governance structure has changed, the engine of development at local level is now the County government. We want the County government to give us direction, do facilitation where needed etc. Yesterday we were in Lamu signing an MoU with the Lamu county government – we want to do that with Kilifi too. We also very much appreciate the partnership with IIED.