

PRESS RELEASE

Memorandum of Understanding on the Promotion of a Public Private Partnership Model for Natural Woodland Management in Kilombero Valley

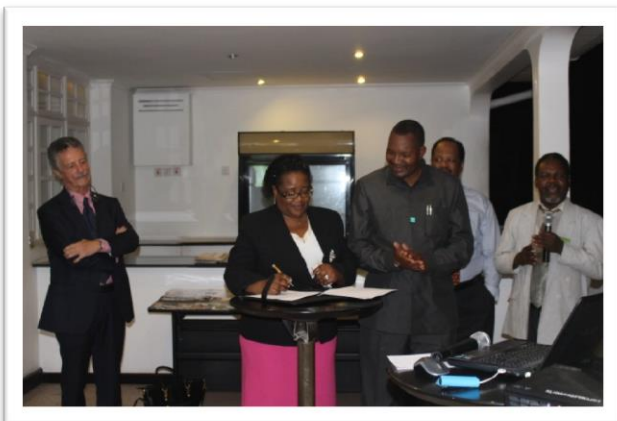
Dar es Salaam, November 16, 2016 – The Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Tourism (MNRT) witnessed the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on the promotion of a **Public Private Partnership (PPP) model for natural woodland management in the Kilombero Valley**. The MoU was signed by the Country Representative of the Belgian Development Agency (BTC), the Chief Executive Officer of the Kilombero Valley Teak Company (KVTC) and the Vice President for Conservation Projects, African Wildlife Foundation (AWF). **By means of this MoU, BTC, KVTC and AWF will support commercially oriented participatory forest management in the Kilombero Valley, which will both benefit forest conservation and generate income for local communities.**

Tanzania is experiencing a rapid loss of forest resources. This will produce negative environmental and economic consequences. Rural communities or competing land use interests sometime do not see the benefit of forest conservation, if the conservation systems do not generate revenues. Generating revenues from timber harvesting in a sustainable manner requires technical and commercial capacities and a system of collaboration and accountability.

The PPP model was developed through a feasibility study supported by MNRT, BTC, KVTC and the Finnish Ministry of Foreign Affairs. KVTC is the largest producer of teak in Africa. KVTC also has extensive natural forests on its land. **Meanwhile, villages in the same catchment have established numerous forest reserves, but are yet to reap major direct financial benefit from them. The study proposed to establish a collaborative forestry management scheme on KVTC land, to enable sustainable harvesting of Miombo and a revenue sharing scheme with the neighbouring communities.**

On that basis, the PPP partners have decided to join hands and launch this pilot initiative with two goals in mind: establish the collaborative scheme on 6,000 ha of Miombo in KVTC land; and pursue the development of a broader enterprise capacity and collaboration systems which with time may serve other villages in the catchment which have Village Forest Reserves.

The PPP partners will support the pilot phase in collaboration with MNRT and the local District Councils.



The Deputy Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Tourism, Ms Angelina Madete signs the MoU in the presence of (from left to right) Mr Tom Smis, Resident Representative BTC; Dr Kebwe Stephen Kebwe, Regional Commissioner Morogoro; Dr J. Salehe, African Wildlife Foundation; Mr P.F.Kauzeni, MNRT.

Background information

BTC supports the initiative through the Kilombero and Lower Rufiji Wetlands Ecosystem Management Project (KILORWEMP) (2012-2018); this project is funded by the Government of Belgium, the European Union and the Government of Tanzania. The project is implemented by BTC, the Belgian Development Agency, in partnership with MNRT and the District Councils of Ulanga, Kilombero and Rufiji. The project supports the sustainable management of natural resources and wetlands in the Kilombero Valley and lower Rufiji. www.btcctb.org

KVTC was established in 1992 and is one of the most innovative forest management projects in Africa, bringing a wide range of social, economic and environmental benefits to a remote area of Tanzania. At the heart of the project is the planting and sustainable harvesting of plantation teak and the protection and management of over 20,000ha of native forests and wetlands and a wide range of wildlife and flora within. KVTC has established an integrated processing plant for the production of timber and value added product, bringing much needed long term employment and social development for the region. Its major shareholders include the Africa Sustainable Forestry Fund and Finnish Development funds. www.kvtc-tz.com

The African Wildlife Foundation (AWF) is the primary advocate for the protection of wildlife and wild lands as an essential part of a modern and prosperous Africa. Founded in 1961 to focus on Africa's unique conservation needs, we articulate a uniquely African vision, bridge science and public policy and demonstrate the benefits of conservation to ensure the survival of the continent's wildlife and wild lands. In the Kilombero Cluster of the Southern Agriculture Growth Corridor of Tanzania (SAGCOT), AWF through its SUSTAIN project seeks to contribute conserving ecological systems in the Udzungwa highland forests, Magombera forest, and Kilombero valley to demonstrate how an Inclusive Green Growth model and restoration can positively contribute to building the resilience of agricultural systems and economic growth of local communities while maintaining the ecosystem. www.awf.org

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Images are available upon request

