

Destruction of natural habitats through anthropogenic activities has been increasing at a worrying rate in Kinangop among majority of other region Nyandarua regions. Initially, Kinangop was a beautiful grassland plateau with clean water streams running down to Lake Naivasha and other lakes in the Great Rift Valley Region. After colonization, settlement into the region was introduced and the land was sub-divided. The main economic activity is agriculture and employs 69 % of its residents. There is a new trend of eucalyptus tree growing fostering a threat to the environment.

Kinangop grasslands are important as it has been acting as the middle catchment of Lake Naivasha. It has also been known for its unique grassland biodiversity including the endangered and endemic Sharpe's longclaw among other birds such as the grey-crowned crane. Where the grasslands is well maintained, there are occurrences of spotting the rosy-throated longclaw, antelopes and hyenas as evident during the last detailed bird monitoring we had. This region has rich biodiversity potential and they are prone to conversions since majority of the land is privately owned.

Eucalyptus tree planting and growing is one of major the challenges facing Nyandarua County and its threat has been intensified. Some of the remaining grasslands have been converted for eucalyptus tree planting through Tea Growers Associations increasing vulnerability of impacts of climate change in the county. This tree species is highly hydrophilic and is associated with drying of Lake Olbolosat since trees has been planted near the lake. Poor farming methods on the slopes of Kipipiri region has also lead to increased soil erosion and siltation of the lake. It is therefore evident that there are some gaps which need to be filled running from local communities to the government. The government of Nyandarua through its action plan, 2023 proposes for a ban of this tree especially in sensitive areas such as riparian areas which I highly support

Youth unemployment increases a risk of natural resources over-exploitation. This group is important in the fight of climate change and environmental degradation and they face the impacts today and will face them in future if nothing is done. A huge number of youth especially men are lost in drug abuse, others engage in theft, wild honey harvesting, charcoal burning, and illegal poaching all intensifying threats to our biodiversity. We need to think around job creation and creating awareness.

Corruption, inequality and poor implementation of law in Kenya has played a huge part in environmental degradation. There have been brilliant laws and policies that would be used to not only lift the livelihoods of many Kenyans but as safeguard ecosystems and their biodiversity. Only a few individuals benefit in advantage of other vulnerable groups including the poor, women, children, youth, elderly, and people living with disabilities. This emphasizes development concepts that states; 'a country is poor because it is poor'. Giving voices by educating and empowering these groups will help them fight for their rights and we will eventually achieve the goal of environmental and biodiversity protection. Government trust to its citizens will facilitate proper collaboration and achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

Some nature based solutions and conservation agriculture need to be enhanced. An example is the FOKP's sheep farming model which if achieved will help guide the community around and a huge milestone ahead. Others include government Projects such as Kenya Climate Smart Agriculture, which I was part of as aquaculture extension officer, are beneficial to local communities. Through partners like Lake Naivasha Basin Landscape Association, we are working to create awareness to the community on county budget formulation so as they can take part in formulation and to empower them to hold leaders accountable. As a member of climate change committee, I have been happy to work the county government in identification climate related hazards, their risks, vulnerable groups and mitigation and adaptation measures. It is until we solve problems from their roots that we will be able to safeguard the environment for us and for future generations.

Research advancement will help to advice on the best economic alternatives. Thanks to Conservation Leadership Program for helping Friends of kinangop Plateau collect quality data. This will work as the baseline for researchers in help to track status and trends of biodiversity and their habitats. Biodiversity acts bio indicators and can be used to identify hazards and threats in an environment.

Let us all work for to safeguard our environment for today's and future generations and fight against biodiversity loss. I believe that united we will restore mother-nature.