

# Mwanza Adopts Forestry Bylaws

making it the first district in Malawi  
to have forestry bylaws

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## A Word From the Executive Director

**WILLIAM CHADZA**

It gives me great pleasure to welcome you to the last edition of Nature's Voice in 2015. In the last half of 2015, we were preoccupied with participating in policy processes and reviewing our 2011 – 2015 Strategic Plan.

CEPA was very active in engaging in various national and international policy processes. On the local scene, we continued on our efforts of influencing policy development and implementation. Among others, CEPA supported the development and adoption of the National Gender Policy and ensured climate change, disaster risk management and environment management are mainstreamed. We also provided policy advocacy support to our implementing partners in various districts across the country. A major milestone was the adoption of the Forestry Bylaws for Mwanza District. We also worked with other civil society organizations in providing input into the draft National Agricultural Policy, Land Bills and Mines and Minerals Bill. We are proud that a number of our inputs and policy positions are reflected in these instruments.

On the international arena, the Sixth Session of the Governing Body of the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture was convened in Rome, Italy where CEPA and the Government of Malawi through the Department of Agricultural Research Services took part. CEPA contributed to formulation of the Government of Malawi position to the Treaty and preparation of interventions during the plenary sessions. In addition, towards the end of 2015, CEPA was part of the historical agreement of climate change that was made at the 21st Conference

of Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. We look forward to contributing towards domestication of the various commitments from these international policy agreements.

The CEPA 2011 – 2015 Strategic Plan came to an end on 31<sup>st</sup> December 2015. We are proud to note that this five year period was manifested by institutional growth, strengthened governance and management structures and increased availability of financial resources to undertake programme work in policy analysis and advocacy. We would like to acknowledge the financial and technical support that we have received from our partners to enable us excel during this period. Many thanks to all our partners that have supported us this far, such as Development Fund of Norway, Christian Aid, Tilitonse Fund, Oxfam and United States Agency for International Development.

A new Strategic Plan that will be guiding us for the period 2016 to 2020 has been formulated. In this plan we have redefined our goal to be *“environment and natural resources policies implemented for sustainable development.”* In order to accomplish this goal we build on our strengths as we work around two themes, namely: policy research and advocacy; and institutional strengthening. We look forward to your support and collaboration so that we can attain our goal and objectives.

I wish you all a happy prosperous 2016.

***Environment and natural resources policies implemented for sustainable development.***



## From the Editor's Desk

**AGATHA CHIMSEWA**

As the year comes to an end we welcome you to the final issue of Nature's voice in 2015 which covers a wide range of environmental issues of the moment.

In this issue we take a look at how CEPA is improving communities' participation in forest management in Mwanza district through facilitating development and adoption of forestry bylaws. A story about gender and youth analysis in the fisheries sector offers a reader a glimpse into gender and youth dynamics into the fishing industry

A special feature in this issue is 'Activities in Pictures' where different pictures are telling different stories about some of CEPA's activities done in the last half of the year. This will be followed by some updates in the environmental circles where CEPA participated in the 21<sup>st</sup> Conference of Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change in Paris and the 6th Governing Body of the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture in Rome.

In addition we take our readers through different environmental policy advocacy work that CEPA was engaged in, in the last six months of the year 2015 in the 'CEPA in a Snap' section. This is followed by a 'Word from Our Friends' where some of our friends from Nigeria, Health of Mother Earth Foundation (HOMEF) and from Global Forum on Agricultural Research (GFAR) give us their experience in oil extraction and also on Farmers' Rights, respectively.

Lastly, I would like to thank the editorial team: Stanley Mvula and Stephen Chikuse for the great job done with this issue.



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# Mwanza Adopts Forestry Bylaws



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Mwanza is one of the districts richly endowed with natural resources from rivers, forests, mountains and rich fertile soils that provide perfect conditions and environment for agriculture. No wonder Mwanza boasts of crops like pigeon peas, maize, beans, irish potatoes and fruits like bananas, avocado pears and tangerines. Bee keeping is also prominent due to the presence of vast areas covered with natural forests.

Due to the increase in agricultural production at the expense of the natural resources in the district, an assessment was done in 2012 by CEPA with funding from Christian Aid with a view to helping communities in coming up with interventions for enhancing management of endangered natural resources. The climate change goal was to make the vulnerable communities resilient to climate and market shocks through different on farm and off farm activities. The assessment revealed massive natural resources degradation due to pressure from the communities who depended very much on natural resources for their livelihoods apart from small scale subsistence farming activities. The pressure on natural resources had negatively resulted in massive deforestation affecting village forests and the government protected Thambani Forest Reserve, Government protected Thambani Forest Reserve, river banks of many rivers, such as Mwanza river. Deforestation also led to washing away of fertile soils which led to reduced agricultural yields in the district.



One of the poster depicting awareness messages of the forestry bylaws

Following the assessment CEPA organised dialogue sessions bringing together government officials, political leaders, and communities, including community leaders. The sessions were meant to identify key issues in natural resources management and their proposed solutions. The communities in Traditional Authority Kanduku, Nthache and Sub TA Govati proposed the development of Forestry bylaws for the district, to contextualize National Forest Policy. The bylaws

It should be noted that the communities at group and village level developed Natural Resources Management Action Plans in 2014 drawing from recommendations made in the consolidated district forestry bylaws developed.

focus on management, roles and responsibilities of committees and communities and penalties for non compliance. The bylaws were developed by communities in the three Traditional Authorities of Mwanza with support from CEPA. The bylaws were finalised and presented to Mwanza district council for adoption in 2013 presented to Mwanza District Council in 2013 for a final review and subsequent adoption.

After a long period of engagement with district authorities coupled with the coming in of councillors in 2014, the council adopted the Forestry Bylaws in June 2015 making Mwanza the first district in Malawi to develop and adopt district forestry bylaws prior to the adoption of bylaws, communities had developed natural resources management Action Plans in 2014 drawing from the forestry bylaws. The action plans were meant to ensure quick understanding, adoption and implementation of the forestry bylaws at village level.

Some of the bylaws on which the action plans were based and are being implemented are: each village to have its own village forest area; each village to have a village natural resources committee; each village to have its own tree nursery and; all villages to replant trees on all fragile and sensitive areas.

As part of implementing the bylaws village forest areas (VFAs) are patrolled regularly and culprits are penalized. During one of the patrol session a man was found cutting down trees without permission in Kachere VFA in Njanjama village TA Nthache. The man was ordered to dig and construct a pit latrine and he did so.



A live panel discussion by CEPA to press for the adoption of Forest bylaws by Mwanza District Council



Local Chiefs played an integral part in the development and adoption of Forestry bylaws for Mwanza District





# CEPA Conducts a Gender and Youth Analysis of the Fisheries Sector



By Stanley Mvula, CEPA  
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Women in fishing societies, especially those that engage in fish trade are considered vulnerable to what is commonly referred to as “fish-for-sex”. To compete with men for access to fish, fish products and transport, women are often expected to provide certain favors to secure supplies.

Women of fishing communities across the major water bodies in Malawi play vital roles in fisheries, and in sustaining their households, communities, social networks and cultures. While these roles are central to maintaining livelihoods and the very activity of fisheries, they often remain unacknowledged and undervalued. Gender disparities in fishing communities are among some of the major constraints affecting equity in fisheries livelihoods and productivity of the sector.

Men are mostly involved in fishing activities while a majority of the women are involved in the secondary activities like processing and trading as well as in the service industries (i.e. small trading, restaurants, markets and the like). Women in fishing societies, especially those that engage in fish trade are considered vulnerable to what is commonly referred to as “fish-for-sex”. To compete with men for access to fish, fish products and transport, women are often expected to provide certain favors to secure supplies. Furthermore, women face challenges to access the fish for further processing and trading as well as lucrative markets for fish due to their low price negotiation skills a result of a combined effect of them being economically and socially disadvantaged as well as stiff competition between women who trade in fish.

As a result, Centre for Environmental Policy and Advocacy (CEPA with support from USAID under Fisheries Integration of Society and Habitats (FISH) project commissioned a gender and youth analysis of the fisheries sector. Fisheries Integration of Society and Habitats (FISH) Project is a partnership between the Government of Malawi (GoM) and USAID, and implemented jointly under a Cooperation Agreement with Pact, University of Rhode Island (URI-CRC), Christian Aid and local partners Centre for Environmental Policy and Advocacy (CEPA), Community Initiative for Self Reliance (CISER), Emmanuel International (EI), Wildlife and Environmental Society (WESM), Lilongwe University of Agriculture and Natural Resources (LUANAR) and WorldFish Center.

The premise of FISH is that if Malawian fisher folk and government are empowered to make informed co-management decisions about the fisheries, its governance and the sustainable use of the aquatic environment on which they depend, then the quality of life for Malawians will be improved. The general theory of change driving the FISH project is:

*“If decisions around fisheries management are based on shared, evidence-based objectives and learning, are grounded in inclusive and effective ecosystem-scaled governance structures, and strengthen the assets of communities, then Malawi’s complex and diverse freshwater lake ecosystems can be sustained.”*

This study examined gender and youth situation in the four main fisheries of Malawi, (i.e. Lake Malawi, Malombe, Chilwa and Chiuta) and in so doing came up with learning as the evidence base needed for FISH to make recommendations towards the objectives of strengthening a national equitable and fair gender strategy for the fisheries sector. Furthermore, the assessment was also meant to draw attention to women’s roles and work in the fisheries and in fishing communities, as well as the initiatives being taken by them to organize and defend their interests and the interests of their communities.

The fact that the fisheries sector does not have a stand-alone gender strategy

poses a challenge to harnessing sector specific activities that need focus and attention specifically as opposed to accommodating them in agricultural sector oriented strategic pillars as is the case in the Agriculture Sector Gender, HIV and AIDS Strategy.

While the overall gender policy framework promotes gender mainstreaming in natural resource management, there is limited consideration of gender in the national fisheries policy and legal framework. The current National Fisheries and Aquaculture Policy (NFAP) encourage 30% composition of leadership positions to be women in an effort to encourage more participation of women in local fisheries management authorities (LFMAs) (i.e. BVCs) affairs. However, neither the Fisheries Conservation and Management Act of 1997 nor the NFAP of 2001 provides explicitly guidance for mainstreaming gender in the fisheries sector. A strategy for gender mainstreaming in fisheries sector should explicitly outline approaches for making women as well as men’s concerns and experiences an integral part of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programs.

The outcome of the gender and youth analysis makes it clear that fishing, by its very nature of hardships, hazards and hard labour, is very much a male dominated livelihood activity, while women engage more in fish processing and fish trading either as the wives of fishers, or as independents. However, to secure fish, women often are enticed into “sex for fish”, which leads to a high level of promiscuity and vulnerability to HIV/AIDS, that earlier studies suggest HIV/AIDS prevalence amongst fishers and fish traders is three times the national average. The assessment suggests that for any national gender strategy in fisheries there is a need to consider;

- a. **Awareness raising:** Education and sensitization programs on gender and women empowerment and to reduce practices of “sex for fish” raising women’s profile in the fishing industry especially fishers spouses should have a say for any collapse will have implications for them and their household.
- b. **Women mobilization and empowerment:** Women need to be more organized into groups for them to be able to lobby and protect their vested business interests (e.g. processor groups as sub-sets of BVCs, FA or VSLA) and representation issues in BVC, have a say in sustainable fisheries co-management.
- c. **Mainstreaming gender in fisheries governance:** There is need for training of LFMAs like BVCs and FAs

in gender mainstreaming and the value of engaging both men and women and respecting their roles in fisheries and related beach enterprises and value chain management.

- d. **Institute gender quotas in training:** Ensure that training is not captured by men only, seats should be reserved for women when planning training workshops or meetings.
- e. **Provision of basic business related management skills:** Women processors should be equipped in business management skills to assist to meaningfully contribute to manage their affairs.
- f. **Development of a National Fisheries Gender Strategy:** work with the Department of Fisheries to develop a stand-alone fisheries sector gender strategy for gender mainstreaming bringing women and men into a position where they participate as equals in fisheries management.
- g. **Sex for Fish:** Reduce the spread of HIV/AIDS amongst fishing communities by engaging in awareness programs of the risk, distribution of condoms at beach sites, increase HIV/AIDS counseling and other propaganda campaigns, addressing the possible link between HIV/AIDS and bilharzia, by treating for bilharzia.

The FISH project gender mainstreaming strategy is envisaged to explicitly outline approaches for making women as well as men’s concerns and experiences an integral part of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programs in the FISH project.



CEPA facilitating a gender and youth analysis of fishing communities at Msaka fish landing site in South West arm of Lake Malawi in Mangochi District.



# A Forest Without Trees!



# Activities in Pictures



By Alice Kammwamba, CEPA  
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Since its establishment in 1958, Kalulu forest in Thyolo has been under conservation until five years ago when it is believed that people, due to poverty, started cutting down trees in the forest for timber, charcoal and firewood businesses. People also believed that the forest soils are more fertile as compared to their previous gardens where the soils were not fertile. Gardens were shared amongst the residents surrounding the forest and cultivation started.

The rate of encroachment increased and the situation worsened when there was road construction within the forest which made the forest accessible. People came from Blantyre to do business such as Timber and charcoal. The state of the forest is now worse such that it is bare and prone to soil erosion.

One of the residents complained that their actions have led them into problems. Soil erosion has now increased because the forest is now bare. There are no trees or vegetation to control runoff water. This is contributing to unending floods in the lower shire during rainy season because the forest is a source of three tributaries that drain into Shire the main river in the Lower Shire. Now that trees that used to act as wind breaks are no longer there, there is no control of strong winds which end up blowing off roof tops. Communities are no longer able to fetch firewood for domestic use and no chance to benefit from other non-timber forest products such as mushrooms from the forest.

When Enhanced Community Resilience programme (ECRP) visited the area and saw the extent of the damage caused on the forest they advocated for reconstruction of the forest as soon as possible. An advocacy meeting was conducted with the community to discuss how best they can reconstruct the forest and it was also about establishing the community's willingness in the process. The community assured ECRP that they are willing to reconstruct the forest and it was agreed at that meeting that Church Aid in Relief Development under ECRP will provide them with tree seedlings to be planted in the rainy season. The seedlings were provided and the planting of the trees is now in progress.



A community member looking at what used to be a beautiful forest

Soil erosion has now increased because the forest is now bare. There are no trees or vegetation to control runoff water.



A newborn calf with its mother given to a farmer by Heifer International Malawi with support from Development Fund of Norway under SALFP.



A field under Sustainable Agriculture in Lilongwe - Supported by Trustees of Agricultural Promotion Programme with Support from Development Fund of Norway.



A variety of maize saved by farmers in Rumphu displayed at a Seed and Food Fair organized by Biodiversity Conservation Initiative (BCI).



Honey harvested by one of the beekeeping farmer clubs under COMEIP Project in Mwanza.



An interactive session at the Bi-annual meeting of FISH with Traditional Authorities reviewing progress on improving fisheries governance through revamping and capacitating local fisheries management authorities (LFMAs) in FISH Project target areas.



Participants at the validation workshop of a guide to Participatory Fisheries Management in Malawi facilitated by CEPA at Boadzulu Resort in Mangochi District.



Facilitating Engagement between Water Communities and the Private Sector Service Providers in Nsanje District under Climate Justice Project.



Members of editorial committee for the translated chapters of the Farmers' Rights handbook published under Agro-biodiversity Conservation programme supported by Development Fund of Norway.



Minister of Information Jappie Mhango appreciating some products displayed on the ECRP/DISCOVER pavilions during 2015 International Day of Disaster Reduction (IDDR) Commemorations in Chikwawa District.



Engaging Communities in sharing 2015/16 Seasonal Forecast during Participatory Scenario Planning Training-of-Trainers in Karonga District under ECRP.



DISCOVER community tree nursery in Ntakataka, Dedza.



Engaging media on Conservation Agriculture practices in Thyolo District.



# A Climate Resilient Future Hanging on Voluntary Action



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Unlike the Kyoto Protocol which focused on emissions reduction, the Paris Agreement includes all areas of climate action such as adaptation, finance, capacity building and technology transfer.

The global community met in Paris, France from 30 November to 12 December 2015 to agree on a global treaty to address climate change known as the Paris Agreement. The Paris Agreement is based on the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, a global framework for managing climate change which was agreed upon in 1992. The goal of the convention is to stabilize greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere at a level that would prevent dangerous human interference with the climate system. The convention defined in broad terms areas of climate action including mitigation (reducing emissions), adaptation (living with the impacts), finance, capacity building and technology transfer. While the convention defines what needs to be done, the Paris Agreement stipulates how it should be done.

In essence, the Paris Agreement is a successor to the Kyoto Protocol which was agreed upon in 1997 and entered into force in 2005. The protocol set quantitative targets for developed countries to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases such as carbon dioxide by an aggregate of 5% below 1990 levels. This target was set to be achieved between 2008 and 2012. Since the protocol expired in 2012, there was need for another regime to guide climate action towards the goal of the convention. In any case, many countries had not met their emission reduction targets by the end of 2012. Meanwhile, scientific findings showed the need for much higher levels of emissions reduction as the earth's atmosphere continued to warm faster than anticipated. To this end, a process to set up a new global agreement to regulate climate action was instituted in 2011 by Parties to the convention. Unlike the Kyoto Protocol which focused on emissions reduction, the Paris Agreement includes all areas of climate action such as adaptation, finance, capacity building and technology transfer.

The Paris Agreement has been hailed as a success for various reasons not least because of the collective determination to reach an agreement unlike similar conferences in the past. In particular, countries recognized the need and agreed to work towards limiting warming of the atmosphere to 1.5°C above the pre-industrial period. Previous agreements had a target of 2°C but this target was highly unfavorable especially to developing countries such as Malawi which are already suffering from devastating impacts of climate change when the earth's atmosphere has only warmed up by a global average of 0.85°C above pre industrial levels.

Another milestone of the Paris Agreement was the adoption of a global goal on adaptation in the context of the temperature goal. Considering the increasing need to adapt to existing and anticipated impacts of climate change, developing countries had been calling for a global goal on adaptation that is tied to global efforts of limiting temperature increase through emissions reduction. The global goal on adaptation reinforces the need for more action to reduce emissions because the higher the temperature, the more costly it will be to adapt. By agreeing to an adaptation goal, countries ideally agreed to bear the cost of addressing adaptation needs that correspond with any level of temperature increase.

It is worth noting that the success of the Paris Agreement is dependent on the goodwill of countries to take action. This voluntary approach predates the Paris Agreement itself as developed countries became uncomfortable with a top down

approach of setting targets for them to comply with as it was with the Kyoto Protocol. Accordingly, climate negotiations shifted from the language of commitments to a pledge and review mechanism which was later coined as intended nationally determined contributions (INDCs)

Against this background, countries communicated to the Secretariat of the convention what they would like to contribute to the global effort of emissions reduction prior to the Paris conference. It was understood that an aggregate of all contributions would be the basis for limiting global warming to the desired temperature goal. The Paris Agreement would therefore be premised on INDCs. In this regard, the INDCs which were submitted were more ambitious than many had expected. Notably, most of the developing countries' contributions were conditional to receiving support from developed countries. Even if all contributions were to be implemented as submitted prior to the Paris conference, temperature would still rise to more than 2.7°C above pre-industrial levels. The conference was therefore faced with a task of defining a pathway for increasing ambition towards a safer future for all. This was achieved in the Agreement though a decision for countries to communicate their nationally determined contributions every 5 years.

In many ways, the Paris Agreement reinforces the differentiation between developed and developing countries defined in the convention as the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities. Based on this principle, developed countries are supposed to provide support to developing countries in the form of finance, capacity building and technology transfer. However, the Paris Agreement is punctuated with a number of nuances to differentiation in keeping with a voluntary approach to climate action. For example, the Agreement says that implementation will reflect equity and the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities, in the light of different national circumstances. On this basis, developed countries are not bound to provide support to developing countries if their national circumstances dictate otherwise. In the absence of a definition

of what counts as valid national circumstances, provision of support will ultimately be voluntary.

On the basis of the convention, developing countries have argued that developed countries are supposed to provide climate finance to developing countries as grants from public sources. The Paris Agreement requires developed countries to take lead in providing finance and encourages developing countries to also provide such support voluntarily. While noting the significant role of public funds, the Paris Agreement states that finance shall come from a wide variety of sources and shall be channeled through a wide variety of actions. The agreement does not place any obligation on any Party in quantitative terms except for a strong urge to developed countries to scale up their level of financial support. By implication, the meaning of what counts as climate finance, how it should be provided and how much should be provided is left to the discretion of individual countries.

In the end, the success of the Paris outcome largely depends on voluntary actions by all. In the face of urgent need to avert a climate crisis, we can only hope that this approach will catalyse real action and foster resilience to climate change.



The UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon (4<sup>th</sup> from left) joining in the celebrations following adoption of the Paris Agreement.



# About The Sixth Session of the ITPGRFA Governing Body



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The recognition of PGRFA by the UN as one of the key targets for the achievement of improved food security requires that Malawi also prioritise the area through budgetary support for continued conservation of useful plants being maintained by farmers as well as the Malawi Plant Genetic Resources Centre.

The International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (referred to as the Treaty) was adopted in 2001 and came into force in 2004. The objective of the Treaty is conservation and sustainable use of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture; and fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising out of the use of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture.

The Department of Agricultural Research Services (DARS) under the Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Water Development is the Treaty National Focal Point in the country. In fulfillment of its obligations, Malawi has completed and submitted a number of reports to the Treaty. In addition, Malawi has regularly participated in the sessions of the Governing Body of the Treaty which have taken place over the years.

## Sixth Session of the Treaty Governing Body

The Sixth Session of the Treaty Governing Body was held in Rome from 5th to 9th October 2015. The participants included representatives of Contracting Parties and Observers. Meetings were held in plenary to hear statements, consider reports and organizational issues. There were also several side events that were organized by various partners.

The key agenda items during the Session included: enhancement of functioning of the multilateral system for access and benefit sharing; Farmers' Rights implementation; monitoring implementation of programme of work on sustainable use; funding strategy; global information system; and cooperation with other international instruments such as Convention on Biological Diversity.

The Malawi delegation comprised of Dr Lawrent Pungulani from the Malawi Plant Genetic Resources Centre and Mr. William Chadza from Centre for Environmental Policy and Advocacy (CEPA). Prior to the Session, CEPA worked with the Malawi Genetic Resources Centre to develop the Government of Malawi position. The position was used to inform participation of Treaty National Focal Point in regional consultations prior to plenary sessions; and in formulation of interventions during plenary sessions. CEPA worked alongside the Government of Malawi Delegate, Policy Advisors from Development Fund of Norway and other civil society organizations. In addition, CEPA made a presentation at a side event that was organized by Development Fund of Norway and Global Forum on Agricultural Research. The presentation was on achievements, challenges and possible measures for implementation of Farmers' Rights in Malawi.

The international community through the Governing Body reiterated the need for contracting parties to implement Farmers' Rights. The Governing Body outlined next steps towards the successful implementation of Farmers' Rights at national level as follows:

- *Organising a Global Conference on Farmers' Rights* where lessons and best practices will be shared among contracting parties.
- *Development of Universal Guidelines of Farmers' Rights* for the successful implementation of farmer' rights by contracting parties.

- *Reviewing the knowledge, views, experiences and best practices on Farmers' Rights* from various geographic areas. The documented practices will be used in the development of capacity building materials for use by contracting parties.
- *Commissioning a study to understand Complementarity between International Union for the Protection of New Varieties of Plants (UPOV) and International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (ITPGRFA)*. The results from the study could lead into development of global, regional or national projects which would address the perceived conflicts between the two instruments.

In addition, the secretary of the Treaty notified the Governing Body on the inclusion of Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (PGRFA) in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the United Nations. The Secretary therefore, advised member states to take kin interest in achieving target 2.5, more especially by strengthening both ex situ and on farm management of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture through increased budgetary support to institutions involved in the area. The inclusion of PGRFA in the SDG means that countries will be responsible for reporting progress to the United Nations in this particular area.

## Way forward for Malawi

As a contracting party to the ITPGRFA, Malawi is obliged to make positive strides towards implementation of the Treaty and its related articles. The recognition of PGRFA by the UN as one of the key targets for the achievement of improved food security requires that Malawi also prioritises the area through budgetary support for continued conservation of useful plants being maintained by farmers as well as the Malawi Plant Genetic Resources Centre. It is also important for other key stakeholders in the country to support the implementation of Farmers' Rights and other related articles.

All in all, the key take away actions from the Session include lobbying for national policy direction and guidance on implementation of Farmers' Rights; lobbying for increased budgetary allocation; and facilitating scaling up of practical ways of realizing Farmers' Rights in order to enhance impact and influence policy.



Yams (*Dioscorea spp.*), Chilazi cultivated by small holder farmers in Rumphi



Yams (*Dioscorea spp.*), Chilazi cultivated by small holder farmers in Rumphi



# Working Together to Tackle Wildlife and Forest Crime



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With a wealth of urgent humanitarian issues to consider, it is all too easy to ignore matters surrounding wildlife and the environment. However, as concern grows surrounding the impact of biodiversity on the livelihoods of people and the nation's sustainable development as a whole, conservation is now high on the agenda.

What's more, wildlife and forestry issues have generally been addressed separately, but this too is changing - partly as a result of the Department of Parks & Wildlife moving from the Ministry of Tourism into the Ministry of Natural Resources.

## The Value of Wildlife and Forests to Malawi

Malawi has one of the highest rates of deforestation in the world, with forests depleting at a rate of 1% a year. If this continues Malawi's forest cover (currently spanning 34% of the country) will disappear in just 100 years.

Forests are being cleared for human settlement, fuelled by a rapidly increasing population, and the reliance on firewood or charcoal, 60% of which comes from protected land. Without a more sustainable approach to forest management, wild animals will have nowhere to live and people will soon find themselves short of the most basic natural resources.

Similarly wildlife is a major asset to Malawi. Tourism in Sub-Saharan Africa is the fastest growing economy, increasing 300% since the 1990's and it is wildlife that drives tourism. Malawi has much of the sought after wild animals to attract visitors, and we need to halt the drastic decline of our wildlife to have a real slice of the pie.

## The Parallels between Wildlife and Forest Crime

Centuries old practices of 'living off the land' where communities accessed resources like firewood and bush meat are no longer sustainable in the face of the enormous population growth that Malawi has experienced and, in combination with alternative livelihood solutions, the law must be enforced if the plunder of the country's natural resources is to be halted.

Beyond the genuine subsistence poaching, there is a concerning trend for commercial outfits operating on the illegal domestic markets of charcoal, bush meat and pet trades. But even more concerning is the emergence of Malawi as a 'soft target' for highly organised transnational criminal syndicates capitalising on the booming illegal timber and ivory trades.

Whilst all forms of wildlife crime are harmful to wildlife populations, it is the illegal ivory trade that poses the biggest threat to one of our most valuable species: the elephant. Elephant numbers have declined across the continent and if current rates of poaching continue they are set to be extinct in just 20 years' time. Malawi is no exception with just 1500 elephants remaining with Kasungu National Park's population alone going from 2000 in the 1980s to around 50 left today. Elephants are killed and their tusks hacked away so that the ivory can make its way up the chain to countries like China, Vietnam and the USA, where the demand is ever-increasing. But, is it really worth losing such a majestic species so that someone halfway across the world can have a nice carving or bracelet?

Malawi is no exception with just 1500 elephants remaining with Kasungu National Park's population alone going from 2000 in the 1980s to around 50 left today.

The people benefitting from the illegal ivory market are not the small-scale poachers on the ground: 90% of the profits end up in the hands of criminal and terrorist groups elsewhere. The trend is the same for the illegal international trade in hardwoods. The industry as a whole has become so huge that it is now the fourth largest organised crime syndicate in the world, after drugs, arms and human trafficking.

## A Tipping Point

Despite how desperate the situation may appear, there is hope. Forestry and wildlife crimes have been at the forefront of Government talks in Malawi over the last year and significant steps were made, others being made, in the fight for our wildlife and natural resources, led by Malawi President, His Excellency Prof. Arthur Peter Mutharika.

Government, development partners and NGO's are recognising the parallels and are collaborating on forest and wildlife challenges. September's workshop on "Combating Forestry and Wildlife Crime through Strengthened Policy and Legal Processes" - organised by the Malawi Parliamentary Conservation Caucus in partnership with the ICCF Group, UNDP, CEPA and Lilongwe Wildlife Trust - was the first time that both wildlife and forestry focused NGO's, development partners and government departments worked together. Furthermore, parliamentarians were engaged in the same forum, a group which is critical in the upcoming reviews of forestry and wildlife crime legislation.

The level of political will that is available will serve to better protect our wildlife and natural resources, but this needs to be tackled holistically. As a nation we need to begin taking pride and ownership over our wildlife and natural resources and behave in a more sustainable manner. Thinking about the future as opposed to today may feel out of reach to some, but it's a necessary way of life to make sure that our children and grandchildren live in a Malawi they can be proud of.



2.6 tonnes of ivory confiscated in Mzuzu in 2013



Elephant in Liwonde National Park, home to Malawi's biggest population



# Climate Change Week Unites Stakeholders in Showcasing Climate Change Responses



By Julius Ng'oma, CISONCEC

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As part of the Country's preparation for the 21<sup>st</sup> Conference of Parties (CoP 21) of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) which was held in Paris in December, 2015, Malawi united to show solidarity in Climate change response by observing a climate change week from 12<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup> October, 2015.

The 2015 Climate Change Week which was commemorated under the theme: "Towards Green Societies for Sustainable Development" was the first of its kind to be observed in Malawi for stakeholders to showcase their climate change response actions and learn from one another for enhanced action against the impacts of climate change. Further to this, the week created a platform during which the government, represented by Ministry of Natural Resources Energy and Mining, in collaboration with civil society organizations carried out a number of activities. The activities were to raise awareness on various climate related topics, launch important policy documents, knowledge products and frameworks, showcase ongoing climate change activities and advocate for evidence based actions through sharing information on the various research that has been conducted on climate change, so far.

As part of observing the week, Government and CSOs raised public awareness on climate change related issues through a climate change solidarity walk and engaging

in radio and television programmes. CSOs took advantage of the week to raise awareness on climate justice issues through various campaigns which were conducted national wide. This included the Mulanje Mountain hiking under the Women Food and Climate Justice Campaign spearheaded by CISONCEC and Coalition of Women Farmers supported by OXFAM and the cycling caravan across Southern Africa under the "We Have Faith" campaign spearheaded by Act Alliance. CSOs during various campaigns lobbied Government for speedy finalization of the National Adaptation Planning (NAP) process and the National Implementing Entity (NIE) accreditation process for direct access to the adaptation funds established under the UNFCCC. More importantly, CSOs united during the climate change week to lobby for a quick approval of the Climate Change Policy that has been in draft form since 2013. The policy provides a harmonized approach and coordinating efforts by stakeholders within and across sectors in addressing various effects of climate change.

Through the climate change week initiative, Government and CSOs also raised stakeholders' awareness on important climate change related frameworks that Malawi developed which included the Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDCS), The Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Actions (NAMAs), the Green Climate Fund (GCF), the revised NAPA, the Climate Change Response Framework (CCRF). It was during this week that stakeholders witnessed the launch of the revised National Adaptation Programmes of Actions (NAPA) during the climate change symposium that was held at Bingu International Conference Centre in Lilongwe.



Hon Bright Msaka Minister of Natural Resources, Energy and Mining joined by Professor Sosten Chiotha of LEAD-SEA, Professor E. Sambo, Chancellor College, Dr. Ntupanyama, Chief Director in the MoNEM and other CSOs members during the solidarity walk

More importantly, CSOs united during the climate change week to lobby for a quick approval of the Climate Change Policy that has been in draft form since 2013.

# CEPA in a SNAP July - December 2015 Activities

## Guide to Participatory Fisheries Management in Malawi Validated



CEPA in collaboration with Pact facilitated a review of the guide to Participatory Fisheries Management (PFM) in Malawi and the validation of the findings of the review by stakeholders. The validation workshop took place in Mangochi at Boadzulu resort. Deputy Director DoF, Assistant Director Planning DoF as well as District Fisheries Officers and Directors of Planning and Development from Balaka, Zomba, Mangochi and Machinga district councils attended the function. The report of the review was submitted to DoF and the comments were incorporated in the final draft PFM guide.

Participants of the validation workshop on Guide to Participatory Fisheries Management in Malawi at Boadzulu resort in Mangochi.

## Mining Policy Implementation Assessed

CEPA with Support from Tilitonse Fund through the Strengthening Mining Governance in Malawi project undertook an assessment of mining policy implementation. The study assessed the extent to which ongoing mining activities comply with the existing regulatory framework such as the Mines and Minerals Policy (2013). The report was disseminated to government, private sector, media and civil society organizations. The report can be accessed online here, <https://mininginmalawi.files.wordpress.com/2015/09/2015-08-implementation-of-mining-policy-in-malawi.pdf>.



Governmental Official speaking at the dissemination workshop in Lilongwe on 11<sup>th</sup> August, 2015 at Crossroads Hotel.

## CEPA FACILITATES A COMMUNITY EXCHANGE VISIT FROM NSANJE TO BALAKA



One of the home gardens under irrigation and uses compost manure

Through increased water supply and food security project, which is supported by the Scottish Government through Christian Aid, CEPA facilitated an exchange visit to Nankhono irrigation scheme which is located in Group Village Headman (GVH) Chim'dikiti, TA Kalembo, Balaka district. The main objective of the visit was to learn and share information on water resources management and climate change adaptation. The visiting participants comprised of communities from GVHMsamba from Nsanje, government, CARD and CEPA.



# CEPA IN A SNAP

July - December 2015 Activities



## CEPA FACILITATES THE REVIEW OF THE NAP

CEPA in collaboration with Civil Society on Agriculture Network (CISANET) facilitated a review of the NAP and the validation of the findings of the review by stakeholders. The validation workshop took place in Salima at Lake Side Hotel. Different CSOs and farmer organizations were in attendance. The report of the review was submitted to the MoAIWD and the comments were incorporated in the draft NAP.

Participants of the meeting listening as the Consultant who reviewed the NAP presented the findings at the meeting in Salima at Lake Side Hotel.

## CEPA JOINS DF PARTNERS' JOINT MONITORING VISITS

CEPA joined the DF partners' joint monitoring visits organized by partners in Lilongwe. The team visited project sites in Ntchisi, Dowa and Lilongwe under TAPP, Heifer International, AICC and MUSCCO. Among others the team monitored the implementation of sustainable agriculture and VSL projects that are supported by Development Fund of Norway.

Some of the DF partners from different organizations that were part of the monitoring visit standing on an NFYD Nkhupa youth club farm under sustainable agriculture in Chiwamba EPA, Dowa



## COMMUNITY ECONOMIC IMPROVEMENT PROJECT (COMEIP)

CEPA with funding from Christian Aid is implementing an initiative called "Enhancing Marketing Enabling Environment for Pigeon Peas and Honey in Mwanza". CEPA has so far facilitated the implementation of fair trade regulations (legal scales and trade certificates) in pigeon peas trade and the adoption of Forest Bylaws by Mwanza District Council.

Some community members embracing group marketing as advocated for by CEPA through Fair Trade campaign in Mwanza.

## CEPA FACILITATES MEDIA ENGAGEMENT WITH COMMUNITIES ON CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION AND DISASTER RISK MANAGEMENT

CEPA under Enhanced Community Resilience Programme (ECRP) facilitated a media engagement with communities on Climate Change Adaptation (CCA) and Disaster Risk Management (DRM) Practices. The media engaged included MBC Radio 1, Joy Radio and the Nation Newspaper. The media engaged with communities in Machinga, Mwanza, Mulanje, Dedza, Thyolo and Nsanje. Radio programmes were produced and aired on MBC Radio 1's Nyengondi Chilengedwe programme, and on Joy Radio's Zachilengedwe programme.



Media engagement in Mulanje



Participants at the Orientation Workshop, 03<sup>rd</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> September 2015 at Pacific Hotel in Lilongwe

## MY LIFE MY CHOICE YOUTH LEADERS ORIENTED ON POLICIES GOVERNING THE YOUTH SECTOR

CEPA with support from Operation Days Work through The Development Fund of Norway oriented Young Women Can Do It Club leaders on different policies that govern the youth sector. The workshop was aimed at: raising awareness among the youths of the policies related to youth empowerment to inform advocacy and lobbying for the policies' implementation and also on different policy making processes; raising awareness on the rights of the youth and; sharing knowledge and information on issues affecting youths. Ultimately, the workshop enabled the youth to know the roles they can play in contributing to implementation of the policies.

## LAND GOVERNANCE PROJECT

Under the Land Governance Project which started in September, 2015, CEPA and its partners in the project, Landnet and Oxfam, participated in a meeting with the District Executive Committee (DEC) for Kasungu District Council in order to introduce the project to the committee and also seek its approval. During the meeting the scope of the project was explained and a number of land issues were raised by the participants and potential solutions were discussed. Interestingly, at the end of the meeting the project was approved by the Committee. The project targets three districts which include Kasungu, Mzimba and Phalombe and is funded by the EU through Oxfam.



(Left) One of the committee members addressing the participants. (Right) A group photo of the meeting participants



# Oil Extraction Crisis in the Niger Delta



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The people of Ogoniland die daily. They usually experience a series of strange health issues including girls experiencing early menopause at the age of 19 - 20 years, the situation is so sad and so bad.

The Niger Delta region has been noted by environmentalists globally as the most polluted region in the world and the worst routine gas flaring sites in the world for many years. For decades, the region has been experiencing oil spills, gas flaring and other forms of pollutions by international oil companies. Due to the impact of the extractive processes on the environment and health of the people many lives have been lost to various diseases caused by toxic fumes and flares from the oil industries.

The poisons released by the oil spill fumes and flares have contributed more to climate change and global warming than all other sources in sub-Saharan Africa combined. One of such affected areas in the region is the oil rich Ogoniland. The Ogoniland which has an average population of over 830, 000 people has been ravaged and seriously impacted by oil spills and gas flares up to the extent that some communities such as Goi community and others around have been left destitute due to loss of livelihoods, lack of portable drinking water and agricultural produce as a result of a massive oil spill which occurred in the region in 2008 in Bodo community in the locality.

Ever since this massive spill the lives of the people have remained stagnant as they no longer live their normal lives. They live from hand to mouth as their sources of livelihood have been destroyed since the people are predominantly farmers and fishermen. The people's rights to secure livelihood has been violated and this has led to series of peaceful revolts in the land where oil corporations have been sacked from operations in the land in demand for cleanup and environmental justice but to no avail.

In 2011 United Nation Environmental Program (UNEP) came up with a comprehensive study and recommended that the land should be cleaned up, but over four years now the land is yet to be cleaned up by Shell, the culprit, and the Nigerian government.

The people of Ogoniland and other Niger Delta region are living in abject poverty despite the fact that the region stands as a major hub to the economic boost of the Nation, yet it's going through tough times as the average life expectancy of the citizens is about 42 years, drinking water is contaminated with Benzene a known cancerous chemical 900 times above WHO recommended standard, and the air is polluted with fumes of hydrocarbons which leads to respiratory diseases of all sorts. The people of Ogoniland die daily. They usually experience a series of strange health issues including girls experiencing early menopause at the age of 19- 20years, the situation is so sad and so bad. Most times I pay a visit to this region places me in a somber mood because lives are being lost daily due to greed for wealth from fossil fuel extractions.

According to Comrade Chelbegwura, an Environmental activist from River State, Nigeria; "For years, we have lived with continuous gas flares. Our farmlands have been polluted. We labour hard to plant, but little comes out. Our roofs are corroded. Our air is polluted. Our children are sick. Even the rainwater we drink is contaminated with black soot from the gas flares. We cannot continue with this suffering." After many years of protest and struggle, routine gas flaring was outlawed in 2005 in the Niger Delta but gas is still been flared up to date and this violates human rights.

It is therefore recommended that an effective response to the health impacts of extractive industries must be engaged at community, national and international/global levels, and must encompass not only superficial measures of health outcomes but meaningful solutions. An adequate plan for community people's health will also address the myriad of social, economic, political and environmental issues intertwined with health. Governance reforms must be guided by principles of transparency, participation, accountability, community determination, reciprocity, and enforcement of laws and treaties, among others and above all Oil should be left in the ground where it belongs and alternative sources of energy should be harnessed.



One of the oil spill effect in Ogoniland, Nigeria.



A man collects polluted water in Nigeria's Niger delta.



# FARMERS' RIGHTS: Collective Human Rights

## Ensuring Food Security and Sustainable Livelihoods



Juanita Chaves Posada,  
Global Forum on Agricultural  
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### About the author

Juanita Chaves Posada is a lawyer with a Master's Degree in Natural Resources Law and works as a legal expert on access to genetic resources; intellectual property rights; traditional knowledge and Farmers' Rights. She currently coordinates the Joint Capacity Building Programme on Farmers' Rights at GFAR. She is available at [juanita.chaves@fao.org](mailto:juanita.chaves@fao.org). Information about her work on Farmers' Rights is available at <http://www.gfar.net> and <http://www.gfar.net/our-work/partnerships-impact-0>

All in all, farmers' contribution to global food security and conservation of plant genetic diversity has been enormous and of high importance. However, this valuable task has not been fully recognized neither valued.

Thanks to the work of farmers we are able to have food on our plates. This is because farmers from around the world have conserved and improved the food crops that we eat. Their valuable knowledge, innovations and practices on the conservation, innovation and use of these resources has been key for domesticating wild plants, developing crop varieties and maintaining plant genetic diversity. All of this helps in adapting to climate variability and our own food needs and preferences. But the important contribution of farmers, particularly women farmers, has not always been recognized and valued. It is time that smallholder farmers, decision-makers, researchers, consumers, private sector and all stakeholders value and recognize the contributions of farmers to global food security and agro-biodiversity conservation. Farmers' Rights are an expression of Human Rights and take into account farmers' role in ensuring food security and sustainable livelihoods to all.

Farmers' Rights means the collective right of farmers to keep doing what they have done for centuries: maintaining and developing food crops, and recognizing and rewarding them for their contribution to global food security. They are a collective right as aim to protect the interests and identity of a group of people (farmers communities), rather than mere individuals.

These rights were recognized by the international community more than twenty years ago, but only in 2001 were Farmers' Rights were recognized by an international legally binding instrument: The International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture. The Treaty states that farmers have the right to save, use, exchange and sell farm-saved seed and other propagating material. Farmers have the right to participate in decision-making regarding the use of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture as well as in the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising from these resources.

According to Article 9 of the Treaty, the responsibility for the realization of Farmers' Rights rests with national governments and therefore, governments, including Malawi, are expected to take measures to protect and promote these rights, including measures to:

- Protect traditional knowledge relevant to the conservation and use of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture
- Share benefits with farmers arising from the use of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture
- Ensure the participation of farmers in decision-making at national level, on matters related to the conservation and sustainable use of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture

**In practice Farmers' Rights can be implemented, for example, through:**

- community seed fairs;
- participatory plant breeding;
- repatriation of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture to farmers' fields;
- strengthening farmers' organizations, including women's organizations, and capacity for participating in decision making processes and receiving benefits arising from the use of their plant genetic resources and traditional knowledge;

- documenting traditional knowledge, innovations and practices to protect such important assets from disappearing and becoming misappropriated by third parties;
- registering local varieties in community catalogues for monitoring the changes occurring to genetic diversity and making visible the diversity and richness of farmer varieties, giving farmers credit and recognition for their work in the conservation and improvement of these resources;
- keeping the use of local crops in traditional rituals and maintaining plant varieties' local names;
- allowing and promoting farmers to commercialize their seeds and propagating material

**However, there are two main things that are needed to implement Farmers' Rights in practice:**

- Increasing awareness and building capacity on Farmers' Rights. There is much ignorance about what Farmers' Rights means in relation to plant genetic resources for food and agriculture by smallholder farmers, decision makers, researchers, consumers, private sector, and other relevant stakeholders.
- Improving legal and policy national legislation, allowing Farmers' Rights to be implemented and setting the framework for the co-existence of Farmers' Rights and breeders' rights. Legal

frameworks in many countries not only do not recognize nor promote Farmers' Rights, but also prevent and affect their full implementation.

At the Sixth Session of the Governing Body of the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture, 136 Contracting Parties of the Treaty, including Malawi, requested the Treaty Secretary to launch and implement, subject to the availability of financial resources, a Joint Capacity Building Programme with the Global Forum on Agricultural Research and other relevant organizations on Farmers' Rights related to plant genetic resources for food and agriculture.

All in all, farmers' contribution to global food security and conservation of plant genetic diversity has been enormous and of high importance. However, this valuable task has not been fully recognized neither valued. It is time to ensure smallholder farmers in Malawi and other parts of the world continue doing what they have done for centuries: maintaining and developing food crops, and recognizing and rewarding them for their contribution to global food security. We have to start by increasing awareness and building capacity on Farmers' Rights. It is also time to have legal national frameworks promoting and ensuring the implementation of Farmers' Rights and avoiding affecting these rights while protecting breeders' rights and other intellectual property rights over plant varieties.



A farmer picking indigenous maize



Farmers selecting seed for the next growing season





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