

**TALKING POINTS FOR KENYA WILDLIFE SERVICE DIRECTOR GENERAL,
DR ERUSTUS KANGA HSC, DURING NATIONAL TREE PLANTING DAY AT
NAIROBI NATIONAL PARK ON MONDAY 13TH, NOVEMBER, 2023**

1. I welcome you all to this tree planting exercise here in Nairobi National Park, which is part of the national greening initiative whose target is to plant 15 billion trees in the next ten years to foster a sustainable future. KWS has been allocated its quota of 500 million trees. I want to state here that we are determined to hit this target on the prescribed date or even earlier.
2. Today the world is battling the adverse effects of climate change that pose great threat to biodiversity, thus putting into jeopardy lives of all living things, including people and wildlife. Due to this adverse phenomenon, the world is experiencing more frequent and intense droughts, storms, heat waves, rising sea levels, melting glaciers and warming oceans that directly harm wildlife, destroy their habitats, and wreak havoc on communities' livelihoods.
3. The question I am posing today therefore is: As responsible citizens, do we just seat back and surrender to these adverse effects of climate change? The answer is no. Climate change affects the food we eat, the air we breathe, the water we drink, and the places that provide us with shelter. Climate change can also impact our health and well-being by altering the frequency or intensity of extreme weather and spread of certain pests and diseases.
4. Planting trees and nurturing the ones we already have has been identified as panacea to the devastating effects of forest destruction like it has been witnessed in some of our country's forest reserves. As Kenya confronts the complex interplay of climate change and its impact on wildlife, the proactive efforts of KWS stand as a beacon of hope. Through habitat management, research, community engagement, and the recognition of issues like human-wildlife conflict and invasive species, KWS exemplifies a holistic approach to conservation.
5. By addressing these challenges comprehensively, Kenya not only safeguards its natural heritage but also charts a course toward sustainable coexistence in the face of changing climate patterns. Therefore, let us all roll up our sleeves and plant as many trees here and wherever else we can, not because the government has asked us to do so, but because we care about mother earth on whose every living things life is hinged on.

6. As the Kenya Wildlife Service Director General, my main job entails leading my staff to conserve wildlife and ensure their coexistence with human beings. Thus the Service continues to enhance community education and awareness geared towards conserving biodiversity and initiating income generating projects for communities living next to parks and reserves to guarantee their livelihoods.
7. I will conclude by saying, “let us adore trees with every breath we take until we leave this world. He that plants trees, loves others besides himself. A society grows great when old men plant trees whose shade they know they shall never sit in. When trees burn, they leave the smell of heartbreak in the air”.

THANK YOU