



July 31, 2015

## **Joint press statement on Standard Gauge Railway**

The Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS) was approached some months back in early 2015 to grant access through the Nairobi National Park by the Standard Gauge Railway (SGR), which is under construction. A number of meetings have been held between KWS, the Kenya Railways (KR) and the National Land Commission (NLC) in an attempt to find a pragmatic solution which will, amongst other things, reflect the fundamental principles on the management of state land that is protected by both the Constitution of Kenya and various laws, especially the Wildlife Conservation and Management Act, 2013. Of particular concern to the Boards of KWS and KR, and the NLC was that:

- The original boundaries of the Nairobi National Park (NNP) will not be varied and the total acreage of NNP will not be reduced.
- Strict controls will be put in place to maximize security of both wildlife and the environment.
- Appropriate measures and fencing along the track will protect animals from fast moving trains.
- Animals and visitors will have access to the eastern side of the SGR track without hindrance by passing under several sections of the track that will be elevated on three (3) bridges of almost a kilometre in total length and an underpass height of 6 metres minimum but generally a height of over 20 metres.
- KWS is negotiating to obtain funds from KR to offset the intrusion of the easement and if these funds are paid they will be invested in a transparent Wildlife Endowment Fund where only interest earned could be spent.

It is the view of the boards of Kenya Wildlife Service, National Land Commission and Kenya Railways that allowing the SGR through and in places over Nairobi National Park is a compromise situation that reflects the

national interest in the larger sense, and leaves the boundaries of the Park intact and unaltered.

- No boundary changes or loss of acreage occurs.
- Minimal disturbance to the environment with wildlife having access to both sides of the easement.
- There is a huge financial saving on the SGR project which reflects a saving to the tax payers. The substantial savings from this decision will be invested in an endowment fund for wildlife conservation.
- It is our hope that by reaching this compromise, the KWS policy on park land never being excised in future will be reinforced.
- KWS would like to propose to planners and government that all future major transport corridors (rail, road and pipelines) should be put above ground on bridges to allow for wildlife migration and movement, where such corridors pass through any National Park estate.