# The People4Nature Belong!

Issue 3/July-September 2018

For the Love of the Bird

Traditional Dryland Biodiversity Conservation

On-farm Tree Farming, The Way to Go!

Challenges in Documenting Traditional Knowledge

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#### THE SUMMIT

Silvanus Uunona – Chairman,

Yaa Tiwah – Co-Chair,

Moses Ziro – Secretary,

Frank Maro – Treasurer,

Phathisani Tabengwa – Member,

Cheli Gurung – Member

Nancy Saumu Ronald – Member,

Emma Kyomukama – Member.

#### THE PLATFORMS

<u>Water</u>

Convener: Silvanus Uunona (Namibia),

Co-convener: Soledad Castro (Costa Rica).

<u>Wildlife and Forest</u>

Convener: Nancy Saumu Ronald (Kenya),

Co-convener: Dorothy Syallow (Kenya).

**Conservation Agriculture and Fisheries** 

Convener: Yaa Tiwah (Ghana),

Co-convener: Setondji Gaston (Gabon).

Environmental Education and Awareness

Convener: Phathisani Tabengwa (Zimbabwe),

Co-convener: Zelalem Abera (Ethiopia).

Young People4Nature

Convcener: Cheli Gurung (Nepal),

Co-convener: Raymond Mwambire (Kenya)

Indigenous People4Nature

Convener: Emma Kyomukama (Uganda),

Co-convener: Michael Wamalwa (Tanzania).

**Enterprise-led Conservation** 

Convener: Frank Maro (Tanzania),

Co-convener: Fadhila Ghikas (Kenya)

### The Summit Report

We have just concluded the third quarter of activities for 2018, in which most of the activities were centered on discussions at the Platforms.

The most interesting discussion this guarter was on the Network of Women within our network by the platform on education and awareness (P4N-EnEA). This is a debate that did not have a lot of support last year. However, grassroots women revived it in July 2018, receiving overwhelming support for its revival and strengthening among women. Its main focus will be to empower grassroots women to participate fully and benefit from their involvement in environmental management. We will look at the new proposal, together with the draft communication strategy the platform developed, and give feedback soon.

The Platform on Wildlife and Forestry (P4N-Wild) had a rather controversial discussion on wildlife utilization. There was a taskforce formed by the Ministry of Tourism and Wildlife in Kenva to look at the options for its implementation. The platform members were clear that building strong livestock systems could be a better option in generating incomes and improving food security compatible with local traditions compared to wildlife consumption.

The Young People4Nature Platform (YP4N) concluded the development of the Child Protection Policy and Guidelines. The draft highlights



the commitment and proposed actions of P4N to protect its young P4N as well as other children that are directly or indirectly affected by our activities. The summit will review and adopt it before end of 2018.

The realities of climate change are hard to ignore and the conservation agriculture and fisheries platform delved into ways of supporting farmers and fishermen hard hit by draught. A raft of strategies was proposed that pointed to the need for a wholesome approach in supporting farmers and fishermen. They include technical support in production, financing and linkage with the market.

The Water Platform had a presentation on our efforts to sustain the coral gardening initiative in Wasini Island, Kenya. The presentation highlighted the process of establishing coral gardens through establishing coral nurseries and transplanting them in degraded coral reef areas.

Interestingly, the Indigenous P4N platform looked at how indigenous knowledge related to biological resources could be traded to benefit both the local and global communities. In the current newsletter, Mr. Jazzy Razalojaona has gone further to share his experience and thoughts on the challenges of developing community biocultural protocols in Madagascar.

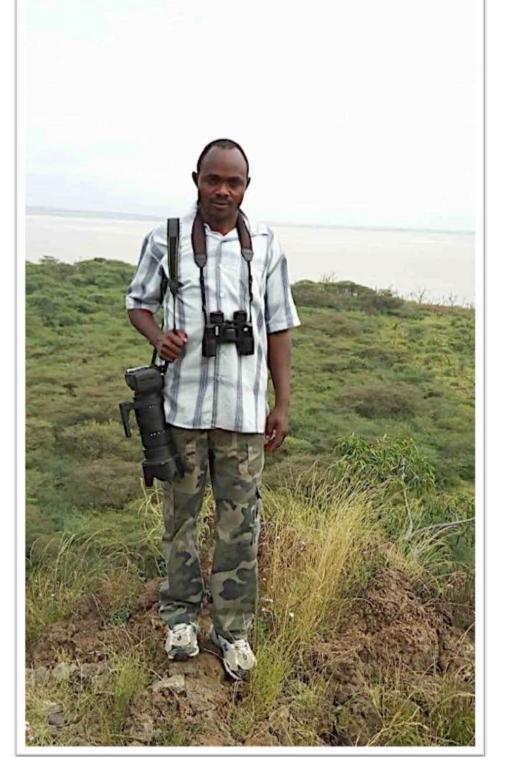
In preparation for the end of year activities, the Platforms developed draft criteria to be used in nominating and recognizing members under various award categories. This year, the YP4N intends to recognize young members with special talents such as drawing, singing and writing on environmental issues. The enterprise-led conservation platform has also proposed to recognize young P4N who regularly grown their savings.

Lastly, the P4N-EnEA has set out the criteria for the P4N Ambassador award. It includes those who mobilize and recruit more new members (other than their immediate family – Family award), those who mobilize resources for P4N activities, those active in sharing/sensitizing the public about P4N and those who assist in designing information materials for P4N.

Thank YOU!

### For the Love of the Bird

Meet the bird enthusiast and photographer, Joseph Chekangor.



Lake Baringo is now becoming a popular tourist attraction site thanks to its 470 rare bird species. The lake is found in Baringo County, Kenya, and covers about 130km<sup>2</sup>. The lake has 13 islands and one of the few fresh water lakes in the Rift valley. The first European to see the lake was Scottish explorer Joseph Thomson in 1883. It is here that that the English geologist Prof John Walter Gregory explained the formation of the Rift Valley from his observations of the lake in1892.

In the small trading centre of Kambi ya Samaki (the Fish Camp) along the shores of Lake Baringo, we meet Joseph Titus Chekangor. Joseph is a young bird enthusiast, whose interest and passion for birds has steadily grown since 2005. In this year, he met Terry Stephenson, a former Baringo ornithologist, who inspired Joseph to take interest in birds and avian photography. Terry holds the world 24 hours bird-watch record of 342 species.

The abundance of birds, both resident and migratory, led to the classification of Lake Baringo as one of the Important Bird Areas (IBAs) in Kenya. Among the many birds found at the lake are rare birds such as bat hawk and majestic verreaux eagle. Other birds include flycatcher, African fish eagle, marabou storks, shikra, white-faced scops owl, Hemprich's hornbill, African darter, the African skimmer, ostrich, Egyptian goose, yellowbilled duck, Helmeted Guinea fowl, Marabou Stork, Great Cormorant, Great White Pelican, Striated Heron, African Spoonbill, Black Crowned-Crane and Giant Kingfisher.

The interest in birds motivated Joseph to link up with Francis Cherotich, another bird enthusiast, to form the Lake Baringo Biodiversity Conservation Group in 2007. Through the activities of the group, Joseph and thirteen other members of the group have been able to support the conservation of birds and their habitats within Lake Baringo.

Joseph had a great desire to further his studies beyond his secondary level of education. In line with his passion for birds and wildlife, Joseph joined the renowned Kenya Wildlife Training Institute at Naivasha, Kenya in 2014. Unfortunately, Joseph was not able to complete his certificate course due to lack of fees.

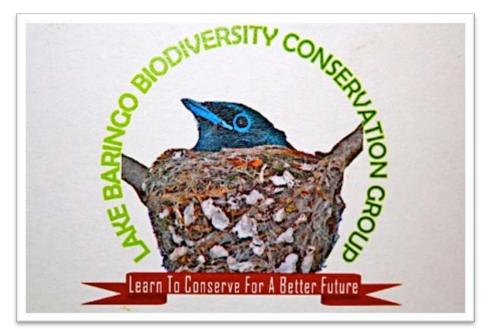
Did this dim his enthusiasm for birds and wildlife? Not at all! Joseph went back home and embarked on strengthening Lake Baringo Biodiversity Conservation Group and horning his skills in photography and tour guiding. Fortunately, his enthusiasm was noted by one of the visitors in one of his tour-guiding entourage who donated one of his extra professional cameras. This opened up a new world of professional photography for Joseph.

The activities of Lake Baringo Biodiversity Conservation Group got a major boost in 2018 when Nature Kenya introduced waterfowl counts for the lake. Fleur Ng'eno, of Nature Kenya, and Rupi Mangat, a popular reporter on tourism and nature, were among the people who joined the inaugural bird counting activity at the lake in June 2018.

There are now all indications that Lake Baringo will continue to grow as a popular avian tourist destination. Joseph and his group believe that they will be part of the stakeholders who will contribute to this success.



The Heuglin Courser has a nice neck ring. It is Joseph's favorite bird.



The logo of the group that Joseph and his friend Francis Cherotich founded.

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#### The People4Nature



Mama Constance Ziro first arrived in Kayafungo Location, Kaloleni County, in the early 1970s. In those days thickets, shrubs and patches of forest populated most of the landscape. She was an occasional visitor mostly during Christmas time, when the whole family would gather at her husband's ancestral home for end of year celebrations.

It was not until 1981 that she decided to settle in the rural home. She had grand ideas to transform the rural home into a home similar to Kwa Luweti, the home of Lily White in Kilifi town, the white lady she adored as a young girl. She was the first in the village to plant the then popular bougainvillea and many other ornamental trees around her compound.

She ventured into mixed farming, keeping both livestock and growing a variety of crops. She was successful with maize, groundnuts, cowpeas, millet, sorghum, onions and tomatoes as well as with chicken, goats

### Traditional Dryland Biodiversity Conservation

Mama Ziro (left) narrates her journey in re-establishing a remnant coastal forest in Kilifi County, Kenya.

and the local zebu and Friesian cattle.

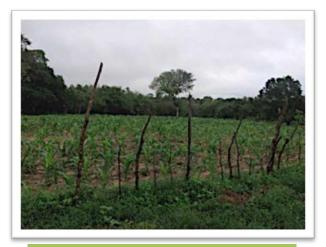
She was also active in community development through her involvement in rural initiatives and the Maendeleo ya Wanawake, a women empowerment movement in Kenya. In 1983, together with 32 women, they founded Lamukani Women Group (Lamukani -Wake Up!) and became its first chairperson and by 1989 she had risen the ranks to be the secretary of Maendeleo ya Wanawake in Kilifi District. In 1993 she mobilized 200 women with a membership of 6000 women to form the Association of Kaloleni

Women Groups. Her long service to the women movement earned her a seat as Nominated Councillor at the Kilifi County Council in 1998.

In 2004, the UNDP through Global Environmental Faculty, Small Grants Programme, financially supported

the Association of Kaloleni Women Group through Egerton University to implement a dryland biodiversity conservation programme. The activities included tree planting and construction of water pans. Through the project, she managed to expand her existing water pan but was not successful in planting many trees.

Over the years, she developed a rather unique tree establishment and conservation technique. After trying shifting and fallow systems of farming, she set aside seven acres for livestock and crop farming. The rest of the more than 30 acres were left undisturbed. With little



Maize farm surrounded by forest cover

disturbance, shrubs did regenerate and grow to fill most of the empty spaces.

She has a simple forestry philosophy. If the land is left undisturbed, the land will naturally populate with shrubs and trees that best suit the area. She had unsuccessfully tried to plant and grow trees. Most of them died as a result of drought. livestock interference or being stolen by passersby. Instead, she had let nature select the best vegetation to cover the land. No watering, no site-species matching, no weeding or any tree management operations were required.

The only activity she labored to do was to ensure there were no disturbances within the land either from livestock or humans. To do this, she fenced off her farm, re-routed most of the public footpaths passing through her farm and reduced her livestock to a manageable herd. Besides, she stopped firewood collection, as this was a big contributor to forest destruction. Women, who would not find dry firewood, would cut down trees. leave them to and collect the dry firewood in a week's time.

The farm has one of very few remnants of coastal forest in the sub-county. Kaya Fungo Forest Reserve is the largest remnant of coastal forest in the sub-county. As a result, her home is now referred to as 'Kwa Ziro Tsakani' (The home of Ziro in the forest).

Researchers and herbalists have shown increasing interest in the tree species within the farm. In response, she has started documenting the tree species within her farm. So far, she has been able to identify 62 distinct indigenous tree species. She estimates that there are over 200 indigenous trees in the farm and by the end of the year she will have documented most of them.

The indigenous tree species she

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conditions and tolerant to local pests and diseases. She has now managed to establish a small seed bank of local maize varieties such as mdzihana (black maize), kanjerenjere (yellow maize), mbondeni (maize with distinct dark blue stalks), mingawa (white



Mkingiri, Dichrostachys Cinerea

has identified include the endangered African ironwood (*Dalbergia melanoxylon*; Mpingo), honey acacia (*Acacia mellifera*; Kikwata), zebrawood (*Brachystegia spiciformis*; mrihi), lucky bean tree (*Afzelia quanzensis*; mbambakofi), marabou thorn (*Dichrostachys cinerea*; Mkingiri), red pod (*Terminalia brownie* Mbarao), African teak (*Milicia excelsa*; mvule), melia (*Melia volkensii*; mukowe) and tamarind (*Tamarindus indica*; Mkwaju).

She has also ventured into traditional crops and vegetables. After trials with commercial seeds, she opted for traditional maize varieties that are more adapted to the climatic, soil maize) and mwangongo (red maize). There are also traditional vegetables growing in the farm including mtsunga (*Launaea cornuta*), vongonya (*Asystacia gangetica*), logatsi (*Amaranthus graecizans*), mnavu (*Solanum* spp), kiswenya (*Amaranthus*) and kidemu (*Psilotrichum sericeum*) among others.

Mama Ziro's journey is that of persistent and consistent adaptation of conservation methods. This is testimony that every little thing that we can do individually and as a community, while working with nature itself, can benefit both humans and nature.

## Challenges in Documenting Traditional Knowledge

Mr. Jazzy Rasolojaona, Programme Officer, Natural Justice, Madagascar, shares his experience and thoughts in the process of developing Community Bio-Cultural Protocols.

Traditional knowledge is the subject of lively debate, especially since the adoption of Article 8j of the Convention on **Biological** Diversity. The observation of the value of traditional knowledge in relation to the preservation of biodiversity has been supported by the need for their protection.

They also interests for research and development institutions. Indeed. traditional knowledge is often a shortcut for determining the properties and virtues

of resources, even if there is no scientific confirmation a priori of their veracity. The purpose of the protection of traditional knowledge is, therefore, justified in several ways, some of which are highlighted below.

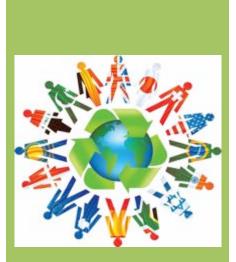
On one hand, the protection of knowledge tends to prevent their erosion in parallel with the biodiversity to which they are



Mr. Jazzy (left and back left row) supports local communities to develop bio-cultural community protocols and ABS-related activities in Madagascar.

Currently, attached. there is debate to revive and or strengthen them. In doing so, the holders develop partnerships with research institutions to value traditional knowledge and thus derive benefits that would be shared based on mutually agreed terms between the holder and their This is called the partners. proactive protection approach and communities initiate the process by contacting potential partners.

On the other hand, protection can be part of a defensive tool. In this sense, the objective is to give adequate access to knowledge and avoiding third parties. Third parties have the potential of misappropriating the knowledge to the detriment of the interests and rights of the holders. For this purpose, prior consent of the holder is sort and granted prior to any



Article 8(j) -Traditional Knowledge, Innovations and Practices

It states that each contracting Party shall, as far as possible and as appropriate:

Subject to national legislation, respect, preserve and maintain knowledge, innovations and practices of indigenous and local communities embodying traditional lifestyles relevant for the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity and promote their wider application with the approval and involvement of the holders of such knowledge, innovations and practices and encourage the equitable sharing of the benefits arising from the utilization of such knowledge innovations and practices

access to the traditional knowledge.

The two approaches are independent. However, the controversy seems to focus, more often than not, on the very practical nature of the protection system in both cases. A frequently cited solution is the establishment of a database of traditional knowledge. In this case, traditional knowledge documentation refers to all census, attachment and classification activities to facilitate the capture of an organized set of data, whether paper records, digital databases, archives or libraries (WIPO, 2016), subsequently inducing or not disclosing information according to the level of confidentiality established. The database serves as a reference to facilitate the construction of "prior art" by Intellectual Property Offices in a patent application involving traditional knowledge.

In the course of this year, several consultations were initiated to document traditional knowledge in three local communities from three different regions in Madagascar. These were: (i) natural resource management communities in Mariarano, (ii) Analavory farmers and (iii) Antavolobe farmers. The discussions were part of the process of finalizing their Community Protocols on Access and Benefit Sharing that Jazzy facilitated. There is convergence, at least from his experience, on the fact that documentation of traditional knowledge has as many practical uses as limitations.

Identifying traditional knowledge first has the advantage of safeguarding it, thus avoiding its extinction, especially in situations where traditional knowledge is competing with the scientific knowledge that young people these days seem to attach more value. However, this varies from one community to another. In communities that still value their knowledge, identifying traditional knowledge is a simple process.

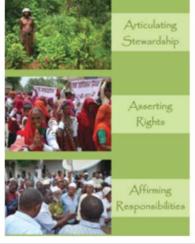
Documenting oral knowledge is important as reference for the future generations. The transition to the culture of writing has become unavoidable under the influence of education. This process often facilitates the identification of knowledge bearers and types of knowledge within the community. And yet, two challenges seem to exist in the process. First, traditional information gathering is bulky work and can be complicated depending on the size of the community and the amount of knowledge it holds. Success of the process largely depends on external technical and financial support, especially for communities willing to undertake the process but have inadequate resources to undertake the process.

Secondly, documenting knowledge requires periodic updating as knowledge is not static. Innovations that induce traditional knowledge are the everyday practices of indigenous peoples and local communities. They are, therefore, constantly evolving, just as the database should be. One solution that could be considered is to regularly have the holder (s) review the database.

#### The Nagoya Protocol

The Nagoya Protocol on access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilization to the Convention on Biological Diversity is an international agreement, which aims at sharing the benefits arising from the utilization of genetic resources in a fair and equitable way.

### Biocultural Community Protocols



Biocultural Community Protocols (BCPs) are instruments that set out clear terms and conditions to governments and the private, research, and non-profit sectors for engaging with indigenous and local communities (ILCs) and accessing their local resources and knowledge.

Thirdly, documentation facilitates the protection of knowledge in a certain way. It may be difficult to misuse of traditional check without knowledge written reference orally disclosed. The written record of knowledge can thus serve as proof of the existence of the knowledge and its holder(s). But can anybody say holders they are of that traditional knowledge? How to we avoid imposters? Identification must. first and foremost, be regulated in national legislation by defining 'the holder of traditional knowledge'. These can be individuals, a small group or an entire community.

Fourthly, to comply with the principles of Access and Benefit Sharing, access to the traditional knowledge database must be under made appropriate conditions, including through the prior consent of the holder, as well as establishing conditions mutually agreed between the holder and the applicant for access to traditional knowledge. Prior consent may be obtained according to the customary laws of the holders of knowledge to the extent that they are recognized in national law. However, the challenge remains for traditional knowledge that is widely shared among several local communities. In this case, it is less obvious which communities will be negotiating for the ABS agreement.

Lastly, in many communities, traditional knowledge is kept secret. Generally, communities in Madagascar value sharing their knowledge unconditionally, especially if the traditional knowledge can be of help to others. It is, therefore, important that this strongly entrenched value be aligned to the principles of ABS to avoid creating loopholes that will create contradictions and misappropriation of knowledge.

Community Protocols can play an important role in establishing conditions for access to traditional knowledge, under customary rights and the universally recognized rights of indigenous the peoples and local communities concerned. This view has been taken into account in the process of developing Community Protocols of the three local communities referred to above. Resources and related knowledge are intricately related. The process of developing Community Protocols should not lose sight of this fact.

Different systems of sui generis protection of traditional knowledge can be developed. The choice is therefore to determine which one is best suited to the local context, and moreso, how to modify and adapt these systems to fit into this voice. But a clear and secure legal basis is important. Some countries opt to integrate traditional the knowledge protection regime into various exiting legislation while others opt to develop a single national legislation on Access and Benefit-Sharing. In either option, effective participation of representatives of local communities is essential.

## **On-Farm** Tree Planting The Way to Go!

Mrs. Nancy Saumu Ronald, a forest practitioner, roots for onfarm woodlots to meet wood





Tree hugging as a sign of love for the things we appreciate.

The motivation to conserve Nature stems from the many benefits derived from natural resources. As a forester, the responsibility of taking care of the natural environment is divine and it is best done with the support of others through sensitization and capacity building.

There are two very important issues to note about the environment. A clean living environment is essential for our health and development. But more importantly, a healthy environment provides goods and services that support the economic development of humans. From a forestry point of view, these benefits are many such as selling seeds collected, selling seedlings raised, selling tree products and of late there is carbon credits, measured by the capacity of a tree to capture and store carbon dioxide.

There are a number of challenges I face on a day-to-day basis as a tree breeder and manager. These challenges include: -

- Changes in climate resulting in extreme whether conditions that are not conducive for tree propagation and growth. The remedy to climate change is to reduce our destructive impact to the environment, through among other measures, tree planting and protection of available vegetation cover,
- Sensitization of the public to take action towards protecting the environment. The public knows about the importance of tree planting and the effects of destroying forests but few know of the best practices for optimum tree planting, tree growth and maximization of tree products.
- Our education system is heavily loaded with theory and is yet to keep pace with new technologies in tree farming and production.
- There is a huge wood deficit in as demand surpasses production. The demand for wood and wood products has

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pushed people to seek unsustainable alternatives that destroy and degrade the current forest cover.

On-farm tree planting is quickly gaining prominence as a viable alternative to checking the downward spiral of forest destruction. Most of Kenya's land is not arable and not fit for tree growing. There is also high competition of the remaining arable land for agricultural production and other development activities. If we can convince people to plant a few trees in their farms, through establishment of small woodlots or boundary planting, it will boost the forest cover in Kenya as well as address the current wood deficit.

It is important for farmers who are willing to establish woodlots on-farm or generally plant trees, to understand their environment before planting tree and know the type of tree species suitable for the area. In the course of my day-to-day work, I support farmers to assess the planting area and do speciessite matching before planting commences. This is an activity aimed at ensuring the tree planted on-farm is suitable for the area as trees have specific areas they grow well. After identifying suitable tree species to plant on-farm, the farmer need to be guided on the best way to prepare, establish the plantation, harvest as well as marketing of the tree products. Proper silvicultural management ensures optimum yields.

Individuals with existing tree farms require occasional support to ensure good tree management. Regular assessment of tree growth involves:

- Observing and recording the tree species grown,
- Accessing the growth and progress of the plantation by measuring the DBH, height and the health of the plant. This information will indicate whether the trees have vigorous growth, stressed or affected



#### Assessing suitability of soils and species-site

by pest and diseases.

- Accessing the soils by digging a small hole to observe the soil characteristics. Good soils should be freely draining to allow root penetration. Poorly drained soils include sand soil and black cotton soils.
- Accessing the management practices such as proper spacing, pruning, thinning and the source of seeds or propagation material.

The establishment of on-farm woodlots should be encouraged and supported as it has a big potential to reduce wood deficit, provide extra income for farmers and contribute to a reduction in the effects of climate change.

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### **News Round Up!**

#### Vital Voices: Your Feedback

#### Violating the Plastic Ban

Shop owners and other small traders in the Mara region have started using the banned plastic bags to wrap merchandise with. We are sensitizing them of the ban and its consequences but we need everyone, especially the local authority, to enforce it – **Mr**. **Reuben Soit**, P4N-291, Narok County, Kenya.

#### **Mother Earth**

The Earth is our mother and we are all her children. I urge all of us to take care of Mother Earth – **Mr. Amos Kahindi**, P4N-367, Kilifi County, Kenya.

#### **Enjoyable Read**

I really enjoyed reading the second issue of our newsletter - **Dr. Stellah Mukhovi**, P4N-311, Kakamega County, Kenya.

Congratulations! – Ms. Elizabeth Mwambui, P4N-356, Taita Taveta County, Kenya and Mr. Sam Maina, P4N-279, Nairobi County, Kenya.

#### **Call Sessions**

Not all of us have smart phones, access to the Internet or at times credit to call. Kindly consider periodically organizing call sessions to gather our feedback – **Mr. Amos Kahindi**, P4N-367, Kilifi County, Kenya.

#### **NoW Conservation**

The discussion to formally adopt the Network of Women in Conservation has been on-going since 2014. The Secretariat sent our short messages to its members and this is what they said:

Grassroots women and women in leadership positions need to support each other and learn from each other to effectively contribute to conservation – **Mrs. Rashida Zaid**, P4N-290, Arusha, Tanzania.

The network should focus on empowering activities such as training, awareness creation, peer-to-peer learning, exchange visits, etc – **Mrs. Beatrice Mutahi**, P4N-026, Nyandarua, Kenya.

It is a very good idea. It will enhance women involvement in environmental management. It is now our (women) responsibility to move the agenda forward – **Rev. Jackline Loroghw**a, P4N-111, Taveta, Kenya.

The network should not exclude men but involve them as Friends of the network – **Mrs. Nancy Saumu Ronald**, Convener, P4N-Wild, Kilifi, Kenya.

The idea is long overdue – **Ms. Catherine Musili**, P4N-348, Mombasa, Kenya.

The network should be modeled in the format of YP4N platform – **Mrs. Phathisani Tabengwa**, Convener, P4N-EnEA, Bulawayo, Zimbabwe.

#### **Birthday Cards**



In response to **Mrs. Mary Mnene**, P4N-172, Taita Taveta, Kenya, we started sending out e-birthday cards to our members in 2017. The e-cards are also posted on our social media outlets (Facebook, Instagram and WhatsApp). Any one who shares with us their birth dates (day and month) will receive from us the birthday e-card.

Welcome Home!



We have the pleasure of welcoming three more new members to our network this quarter. Ms. Anzana Basnet (pictured) becomes our third member from Nepal. The other two are Bibiana Mnawe (Taita Taveta County, Kenya) and baby Mercy Jumwa Karisa (Kilifi County, Kenya).

### Let Us Connect!

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