

FINAL DRAFT

VIHIGA COUNTY GOVERNMENT



DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT, WATER, ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES

THE VIHIGA COUNTY AGROFORESTRY POLICY, 2019

© May 2019

FOREWORD

In addressing the myriad of challenges facing Vihiga County, it has become clear that traditional agroforestry is fading away due to population pressure associated with diminishing land holdings. The emerging dynamics under existing policy and legal frameworks tend to slowdown promotion of on-farm forestry. Given that the Constitution of Kenya, 2010 requires farms to put at least 10% of their land parcels under forest cover, the need for agile policy and legal framework cannot be over emphasized.

The County Government of Vihiga (CGV) has already developed and deployed a new Forestry Policy which recognizes the need for deeper development of the agroforestry sub-sector as a means for rapid build-up of tree cover on private farms. Therefore this policy recognizes the institutional and legal framework outlined in The Vihiga County Forestry Policy and further established an agile order to the development of agroforestry practices in the County.

Consequently, in order to enhance livelihoods, the current weak institutional and legal frameworks are addressed. In particular there is need for robust institutional arrangements for optimal management of sub-catchments and water tower areas, water harvesting and storage facilities, trans-boundary waters, landscape restoration in community lands adjacent to gazette forests and protected community forests, and on private land holdings. Indeed the practice of agroforestry is key to these policy pathways. Additional efforts involve the improvement of landscape management systems.

The County is beginning to experience a rapid phenomenon of deterioration in soil and water conservation. With a steadily increasing human population growth, the demands for water and sustainable soil productivity are set to increase significantly. This situation may lead to a reduction in water levels and soil productivity, hence the need for strategic interventions envisaged by this policy, designed to address the cross-sectoral issues on water for production, agriculture, energy, forestry, among others. Thus we shall promote the agroforestry concept in our landscape management as well as land use practices.

In order to ensure good governance for the agroforestry sub-sector, the CGV, through this policy, shall cause the establishment of responsive institutions, including the County Agroforestry Board. This action should streamline agroforestry-based products and their consumption. Last but not least, the recommended institutional and legal frameworks by this policy are set to effectively address the enhancement of incomes at farm level thus positively impacting on livelihoods of population in the county.

Hon. Prof. Justus Inonda Mwanje (PhD)
CECM: Environment, Water, Energy and Natural Resources
THE COUNTY GOVERNMENT OF VIHIGA

ACKNOWLEDDGE MENT

The County Government of Vihiga on recognizing that the sizes of farm holdings are diminishing while the demand for forest-based products is on rapidly increasing, has decided to promote strategies of increased on-farm tree cover without disrupting food security. To this end agroforestry practices are found to be suitable and hence promoted by this policy. The policy is aligned with ongoing efforts to promote the Landscapes Conservation and Livelihoods Improvement (LaCoLi) Project.

As a department we are grateful to the County Department of Agriculture, County Department of Lands, the National Environmental Management Authority (NEMA), the Kenya Forest Service (KFS), the Kenya Forestry Research Institute (KEFRI), the Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS), and County Assembly's Committee of Environment, among others.

We are deeply indebted to the staff at our Department, other county government officers, and various stakeholders including local communities and their leadership, for enabling completion of this policy. We are convinced that this support augers well for the implementation of the policy in Vihiga county.

Finally, we are deeply indebted to all institutions and individuals who submitted focused memoranda throughout the development stages of this Policy.

Mr. Dr. Richard K. Boiyo
Chief Officer, Environment, Energy and Natural Resources
THE COUNTY GOVERNMENT OF VIHIGA

TABLE OF CONTENTS

FOREWORD	2
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	3
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	4
1.0 INTRODUCTION.....	5
1.1 Background	5
1.2 Agroforestry Perspectives.....	5
1.3 Policy Development Process	6
2.0 SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS	7
3.0 POLICY GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES	8
3.1 Overall Goal of the Policy.....	8
3.2 Policy Objectives	8
3.3 Guiding Principles	8
3.4 Policy Statements.....	9
3.4.1 Agroforestry Production Systems	9
3.4.2 Silviculture Practices	9
3.4.3 Unique Agroforestry Systems	9
3.4.4 Agro-ecological Specificity	9
3.4.5 Silvi-Pastoral Systems.....	9
3.4.6 Payment of Ecosystem Services (PES).....	10
3.4.7 Public-Private-Partnerships (PPPs) in Agroforestry	10
3.4.7 Financial and Insurance Sectors.....	10
3.4.8 Restrictive Regulatory Regime	10
4.0 LEGAL AND INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK	11
4.1 Legislation	11
4.2 Institutional Arrangements.....	11
ANNEX I: COMPOSITION AND FUNCTIONS OF THE COUNTY AGROFORESTRY BOARD	12

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Agroforestry has been known as a traditional land use system among the inhabitants of Vihiga County, and as a farming strategy that sets priority on food security in improving the livelihood status of farmers. Traditional systems are one of the best examples of ecosystem services providing several goods and services, such as conserving soils by improving fertility levels and reducing erosion. Further such systems enable provision of quality water for local consumption, fodder for livestock, fuel and timber for use as energy and construction materials, and traditional crops for food security.

The Millenium Ecosystem Assessment Report serves as a baseline for evaluating the associated indirect benefits. However, there exists difficulty in methodologies to evaluate ecosystem services in agroforestry according to different agro-climatic zones and also in terms of monetary values, i.e. payment of ecosystem services.

In recent times agroforestry has grown to provide impetus to commercialization in the form of producing fruits, timber products, honey, herbal products, among others with significant market value and potential for establishment of cottage industries. However, lack of policy initiatives and strict trade regulations has not supported wide adoption of agroforestry. Further there is no clear-cut mechanism from seed procurement to marketing of the products. Besides agroforestry appears to oscillate between Agriculture and Forestry Departments in both the national and the devolved governments. To this end, this Vihiga County Agroforestry Policy is designed to address issues of land preparation, quality planting material, tree insurance marketing of agroforestry produce, extension services, innovative research and development (R & D), and restrictions on transit and harvesting.

Therefore, it is envisaged that the outcome of the implementation of this policy shall include transformation of landscapes, improved land-use systems, and enhanced utilization of the full potential in the economic development of the county.

1.2 Agroforestry Perspectives

Agroforestry is an integration of tree species with agricultural crops and/or animals. It is a practice that is part of indigenous traditional knowledge of local communities in Vihiga County, known for its inter-dependent benefits of three sub-systems components, of trees, crops and livestock. In addition, it ensures food security through the 6Fs, i.e. food, fruit, fodder, fuel, fertilizer and fibre. The practice guarantees sustainable farm production mechanisms through nutrient cycling exchange within existing climatic conditions.

For the agroforestry system to thrive there is need to collect and evaluate germplasm of multipurpose tree species and development of location-specific agroforestry technology for different agro-climatic zones of the County. This strategy lies in the epicenter of this policy. It has been established by research that agroforestry is more profitable to farmers than agriculture or

forestry (considered separately) for a particular area of land and from different agro-climatic regions. While economic analysis of agroforestry systems is well known, little is known about the cost of goods and services produced by the agroforestry systems in temporal and spatial dimensions. These services include microclimate moderation, biodiversity conservation, carbon sequestration, protecting water sources, and soil erosion and pollution control. Encouragingly, agroforestry has been mentioned by the IPCC as one of the instruments to fight climate change. This policy opens avenues for the realization of real benefits from the practice of agroforestry in Vihiga County in future and it is in synch with the Vihiga Climate Change Policy, 2019 and the Vihiga County Forestry Policy, 2019.

1.3 Policy Development Process

The County Government deployed a comprehensive public participation approach during the preparation of this policy. The focus was based on a battery of strategies including encouraging partnerships between Department of in-charge of forestry affairs, state agencies including the Kenya Forestry Services (KFS) and Kenya Forestry Research Institute (KEFRI), civil societies organizations operating in the county, local communities, individuals, and other stakeholders in bid to ensure increased tree cover and enhanced livelihoods. Ultimate the goal is to enhance ownership, governance and equitable benefits sharing arising from the sustainable management of on-forest resources and products.

This policy creates responsive institutional arrangements in addition to existing mechanisms under the National Forest Policy 2019 and the County Forestry Policy 2019; designed to ensure that the integrity of intra and inter-county ecosystems and ecosystem functions are enhanced.

2.0 SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS

The challenges facing Vihiga County include the reluctance of a significant proportion of farmers who continue to be hesitant to adopt agroforestry systems primarily because of certain apprehensions about the tree component such as long rotation, reduction in gross area and complicated legal procedures involved in tree farming trade and market fluctuations. With diversification of outputs from agroforestry system, along with sustained agricultural productivity, diverse incomes, moderation in climate aberrations and technological interventions, the prevailing negative perceptions are set to change. This policy attempts to address the somehow scattered efforts to bring more focus on agroforestry practices.

The lacuna of not having an exclusive policy for agroforestry at the devolved systems of government where actions take place as per Schedule four of the Constitution of Kenya (2010), continues to hamper its adoption on a wider scale. In this regard and by this policy 'farmers in Vihiga County will be encouraged to take up agroforestry farming practices for higher income generation by evolving technology, extension and credit support packages and removing constraints to development of on-farms agroforestry and protection of wastelands.

Markets and market information are not well established in all places as far as tree components are concerned. The complicated and cumbersome legal procedures, trans-county differences in financial prospects, and hurdles involved in growing, felling, transportation and marketing of tree in devolved systems of government are addressed.

It is evident that private enterprises like pulpwood, match wood and other plywood industries are in huge demand for raw material supply which can be tied up through Public-Private-Partnership (PPP) model of investment or any new approaches that will be beneficial to the farmer and also indirectly helping in achieving increased forest cover in the County.

In order to create a framework for vibrant development of agroforestry considered to be a key farm production system that plays a major role in sustainable food production, ecosystem services and economic benefits, it is imperative to have this policy separate from the agriculture and the forestry policies. This way it will be possible to reduce the risks while increasing returns on small holder investments. For instance, in recent times, the National Government of Kenya, under the Ministry of Agriculture championed new rules requiring at least 10% of all farms to be covered with trees as buttressed in the Constitution of Kenya (2010). In this regard and for the case of small-holder investments, only agroforestry practices could enable this requirement with the potential to alleviate poverty while providing an alternate source of income to farmers. Thus this policy is formulated to address issues like food security, nutrition, employment generation, energy requirement, land degradation, soil and water conservation, climate change mitigation and adaptation, market facility and value-chain innovations, and to establish industrial linkages mainly focusing on small farmers.

3.0 POLICY GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES

3.1 Overall Goal of the Policy

The overall goal of this Policy is sustainable development, management, utilization and conservation of on-farm forest resources which have a great potential to contribute to the overall increased forest cover in the County while ensuring enhanced household incomes derived from the proceeds of diversified products only possible under an agroforestry farming system.

3.2 Policy Objectives

This policy is premised in the Department in-charge of forestry affairs, working in collaboration with the Department of Agriculture. The primary specific objectives are to:

- Establish institutional framework to promote agroforestry;
- Ensure security of land tenure and creating a sound base of land records and data for developing a market information system (MIS) for agroforestry;
- Simplify regulations related to harvesting, felling and transportation of trees grown on farmlands;
- Invest in research, extension and capacity building and related services.

3.3 Guiding Principles

This policy adopts the guiding principles outlined in the National Forest Policy, 2019. These are summarized as follows:

- (a) Public good
- (b) Ecosystem approach
- (c) Sustainable Forest Management (SFM)
- (d) Good governance
- (e) Public participation
- (f) Polluter and User Pays
- (g) Commercialization of forestry activities
- (h) Ecologically and fragile areas
- (i) Research, education and knowledge
- (j) Livelihood enhancement
- (k) Indigenous knowledge and intellectual property rights
- (l) International and regional cooperation.

3.4 Policy Statements

3.4.1 Agroforestry Production Systems

- Access quality planting material including superior quality seeds obtained from seed orchards and seed production areas (e.g. vegetative multiplication gardens) have a positive impact on productivity of plantations;
- Certification of quality seed and planting material;
- Adopt a mechanism for laboratory and nursery accreditation;
- Subject established agroforestry systems to organic farming certification at the national and international level to bring in additional income and incentives;
- Bring forward all wood-based sectors involved in economically viable agroforestry management;
- Institutional credit and insurance cover to agroforestry practitioners;
- Increase participation of industries dealing with agroforestry produce, and strengthening marketing information systems for tree products.

3.4.2 Silviculture Practices

- Prepare an Agroforestry Tree Manual for identified species at County level to inform extension service providers and farmers.

3.4.3 Unique Agroforestry Systems

- Promote unique and hi-tech agroforestry systems such as aqua-forestry.

3.4.4 Agro-ecological Specificity

- Develop agro-ecological specific agroforestry models for small, medium, and large-scale farmers.
- Revive and replicate the time-tested and sustainable but now fast-disappearing traditional agroforestry systems.

3.4.5 Silvi-Pastoral Systems

There are many community-based agroforestry (predominantly silvi-pastoral) systems that are part of the Common Property Resources (CPRs); for example, community grazing and fodder/fuel banks, and wood groves for traditional practices (e.g. Tiriki cultural forests in Hamisi Sub-County, Nganyi forest in Emuhaya Sub-county, etc.), among others. These tree-based systems are breaking down as community rights are being vanished and these CPRs are being divided and distributed among individuals resulting into changes in land-use patterns and community access. The recommended policy statement is to:

- Provide guidelines on CPRs that support some agroforestry components in various proportions.

3.4.6 Payment of Ecosystem Services (PES)

The criteria and indicators, field methods for quantification, and evaluating traditional agroforestry systems are also to be focused upon as these systems help in sustaining ecosystems combined with human wellbeing. This recommended policy statements are to:

- Provide guidelines regarding traditional agroforestry and ecosystem services.
- Evolve and focus on methodologies for quantification and payment of ecosystem services (PES) in agroforestry systems, which will link consumers of environmental services with suppliers.

3.4.7 Public-Private-Partnerships (PPPs) in Agroforestry

Private sector support to agroforestry has the potential of rapidly enhancing uptake of new technologies. Among the latter is utilization of bamboo trees in production of pulp and paper, foods, furniture, and other building materials such as plywood, gums and resins, cardamom, etc. The recommended policy statements are to:

- Promote strong linkages between different institutions and clients on the PPPs model and ensure a complete value-chain development for the agroforestry sub-sector.
- Create opportunities in the production and supply of quality planting materials, land development activities, buy-back schemes of farm produce, research and extension activities, etc.

3.4.7 Financial and Insurance Sectors

The agriculture sector has facilities of insurance and credit from the financial institutions as well as an organized marketing structure. However, the farmers practising tree-based farming are devoid of any such facilities which are necessary for boosting agroforestry practices among resource-poor farmers. The recommended policy statement is to:

- Promote tree insurance and credit cover to encourage involvement of farmers in expanding the area under agroforestry.
- Develop proper guidelines for the mode of operation of insurance scheme/credit covers for agroforestry.

3.4.8 Restrictive Regulatory Regime

- Develop uniform guidelines for exemption of agroforestry tree species from restrictive regulatory regimes with uniformity in tree and land tenure laws across the County.

4.0 LEGAL AND INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK

This policy aims at bringing together various programmes, schemes, and missions among the elements of agroforestry under one platform functioning in various departments of agriculture, forestry and rural development sectors of the county government. This is proposed to be achieved in the measures explained in sub-subsequent sections.

4.1 Legislation

A Vihiga County Participatory Agroforestry Bill shall be developed. It will, among other actions:

- Permit introduction of new tree crops in Vihiga agro-ecological zones,
- Remove regulatory restrictions at least for those species which have potential for wide adoption under agroforestry systems (e.g. Cacao, as opposed to species from pure forest stands),
- Enable agile provision of raw material to wood-based industries (e.g. through promotion of Bamboo trees species).
- Enable transit regulations for tree species grown on non-forest/private lands by relaxing in-transit and felling permissions for the species preferred by the farmers in agroforestry systems.
- Establish a County Agroforestry Board and synchronize its roles and operations with those played by the County Agriculture Board, County Environment Committee, County Water Board, and any other relevant entities.
- Provide a schedule to regulate and restrict tree species to specific and suitable agro-ecological zones.

4.2 Institutional Arrangements

County Agroforestry Board

Subject to approved provisions in the proposed Vihiga County Participatory Agroforestry Bill, there shall be established under the Department responsible for forestry affairs, the County Agroforestry Board. Its mandate shall be to provide oversight on all agroforestry programmes in the County. The composition and functions of the Board are presented in Annex I.

ANNEX I: COMPOSITION AND FUNCTIONS OF THE COUNTY AGROFORESTRY BOARD

Composition of CAB

The composition of the CAB shall **consist of the following:**

- (a) **The County Executive Committee Member in-charge of Forest affairs (Chair)**
- (b) **County Director in-charge** of Natural Resources and/or Forestry Affairs
- (c) Director of Agriculture
- (d) Director of Fisheries
- (e) County Director of Meteorology
- (f) County Director of Climate Change
- (g) County Director of Environment
- (h) Two famers practicing Agroforestry
- (i) A representative of the County Chamber of Commerce (Business Community)
- (j) A representative of the wood-based industries that draw raw material for agroforestry systems (Industries based in the County)
- (k) A representative of the Kenya Water Towers Agency
- (l) A representative of the Lake Victoria Economic Block.
- (m) A representative of the Kenya Forest Services (Ecosystem Conservator)
- (n) A representative of Civil Society Organizations (Forum) involved in agroforestry promotion.

Functions of CAB

The functions of CAB shall include but not limited to the following:

- (i) Promotion of agroforestry practices
- (ii) Development of value-chain in agroforestry products
- (iii) Advise on research and development, product development, climate-resilient technology development, and responsive innovations in agroforestry sub-sector.
- (iv) Pave the way for intra-county and trans-county marketing linkages in agroforestry.
- (v) Advise on the role played by an established extension programme for agroforestry sub-sector.
- (vi) Liaise with the roles played by the County Agriculture Board, County Environment Committee, County Water Board, and any other relevant entities; as they may impact on the agroforestry sub-sector.
- (vii) Perform any other functions as may be incidental to statutory requirements.