

Coalition for Environment and Development

**Sustainable Cultures - Cultures of Sustainability
Dialogues on the Future of Low Ecological Footprint Communities**

NAIROBI DIALOGUE

Swara Safari Lodge, Nairobi, Kenya, 6-7 August 2008

Moto: Premature death by over-consumption and premature death by underconsumption are pervasion of humanity principles.

The meeting was convened by Coalition for Environment and Development together with KENDREN (Kenya Debt Relief Network) and took place in Nairobi at the, Swara Safari Lodge, Magadi Road. The dialogues were divided into two main themes- with day one mainly concentrating on dialogues from on ground activists and institutions while day two the dialogues were focused on the conceptual understanding of the sustainability issues at national or global level (with a special focus on perspectives from on ground activists and actors within the broader policy advocacy in civil society, academia and researchers). The two themes brought up diverse views but converged on the need to deal with the dominant market forces and institutions that have become tools of dispossession, creation of dependencies, poverty and a catalyst to climate change.

The meeting started with **Kiama Kaara** (KENDREN/Coordinator IBON Africa Office) providing introductory overview and welcoming the different participants to the Global Dialogue series.

Marko Ulvila from CED introduced the discussants to the research question specifically relating to cultures, sustainability and climate change.

Wahu Kaara Executive Director of KENDREN contextualized the work in relation to Kenya and raised the political questions linked to the discussion especially the role of different functionaries in the dilution of cultural values and which in turn have made the future less clear and exposed to political and industrial manipulation. She called people to embrace transformative action that is forceful and purposeful. Wahu Kaara: Gave her reflections about people like JJ (Martin Okoyo) from Reality Tested Youth Programme who have been working and forming a livelihood by collecting garbage and recycling it. This newfound industry is now under threat through the arm of privatization. She found it fair that the voices of such strong individuals and their causes need to be replicated at such high places like the UNEP offices in order to counter the Power of Capital whose main thrust is the deliberate destruction of environment at expense of life. She posed the question on "How to engage powers that have been so structured to keep masses oppressed and leading in the commodification of life processes – what do we do as people of the world?" She also raised the question of identity and the politics of identity or ethnicity. The intergenerational claims will determine how the future generations will judge us. It is upon us to seek to repair that disconnect.

We also need to interrogate the question of sovereignty, government and the corporate web, for within this lies an answer that will give us the courage to fight and not be cowed from the power to deliver our dreams to avoid a future of nightmare. Taking power and being in charge is the only guarantee to our future survival. We have to remember that democracy is not a statement; it is a way of way of life- a life not dictated by the corporate. Are the slums, agriculture, biofuels, agro fuels a disconnect? Wahu sees a need for a united state of the world as part of the political solution and division of political work. She sees this model to be defined by the appreciation of each others and working together towards similar goals of world justice. In this vision she sees the development of a grand Master Plan on Development compatible with the lifestyles of the people

who represent the majority of the world population. This will be a more organized world that represents the majority view as it were!

A shift from the mainstream persuasions and perspectives of life sequences becomes a critical anvil on which to forge our common outlook for a shared, common and mutually reinforcing future. It is imperative that we discern through critical thought and reflection, the exigences of an intense corporate led neo-liberal globalization as the basis on which our current futures are founded and resolutely make the statement that this is not sustainable! We must unequivocally state that our lives, culture and futures cannot be commodified.

On the big question of Energy and Climate we have to remember that trees don't change it is humans who contribute to that change. Trees are a central link to sustainable futures. They help us visualize pollution, climate change, and work out the plateaus of our future energy demands. They help us monitor our own economic might versus nature capacities to accommodate our future options following the different economic models- this raises the question of modernization, saturation and life options. Do we have a future? And in that future, do we make linkages to the interplay of environmental demands and lifestyles? We need to locate our power- Where is it? We also need to look for that new vision and define how will it play out in the future? In a global process we need to find that critical mass to drive change, positive social change by pushing each other to push a resistance. This should be a North and South Struggle through resistance, solidarity and resilience! Through out history, the dominant forces have tried to diminish our purpose but from the current trends we can comfortably state that dispossession is no longer a way of life, we have refused to die!

In discussing her paper Visions of Alternative Lifeworlds, Wahu Kaara took a retrospective look at our past espousing that it will help us face the future challenges and transform the future. She took a swipe at the overpowering presence of capitalism which has subdued all the existing options of natural survival embedded in our cultures. The whole crisis can be summed up by looking at the consumption patterns of the Haves and Have Nots.

The new visions are based on a truly reflective and democratic process that is just, ever changing and responsive to the needs of the masses. Equity, dignity and values are the cornerstone of that new vision. It is already happening in transformative spaces like the World Social Forum (WSF).

James Maina Mugo - Nyeri, Futa Magendo Action Network (Say no to corruption Network) – an internally displaced person IDP (Evicted from Mt Kenya Forest, and now living as squatter). In 1908 his grandfather was evicted and 40 years later, he was again evicted and now resides on road reserve. Maina sees a failure in governance, lack of respect for law having a direct link to their current situation. When governments do not respect their own set of laws, they set up a culture of lawlessness that negates the principles of a social contract in governance. Rights and claims are obliterated and so are levels of responsibility and the attendant capacity to make demands or petitions is overwhelmed. People become political pawns and are conceived in the narrow lenses of political expediency. The state becomes a site of rent seeking and personal aggrandizement. Maina also linked the deteriorating environmental conditions of the Mount Kenya Ecosystem to the breakdown in the indigenous knowledge systems through the forced eviction of knowledge holders and diluting the management systems with the introduction of outsiders whose commercial interests and farming practices have lead to a change in the ecological balance. He also pointed out how forceful evictions have become part of real development and an acceptable form of human rights abuse. More and more people are being made destitute in the face of capital development. There is a need to come together to bring real change in the global society. He sees the future calling for a more collective responsibility and humanity linking through solidarity action to take back power to the people. He also faults the activists who have become part of the politicization of natural resources and the dreams of humanity. This is leading to a near collapse of our systems

including abuse of power by those delegated with legal powers – this was in reference to government forest management institutions. The time to act is now!

Martin Simotwo - an Ogiek from Mount Elgon calls himself a physical scientist and has a very clear view and understanding of the relationship between his people and global community. He is from the Sengwer a hunter gatherer community whose lifestyles and life cannot be separated from forests. Government census does not recognize them and lumps them in the unclassified category of among others as opposed to being Kenyan. A deliberate government approach to delegitimize the claims of indigenous communities.

By working with a community based organization involved in sustainable livelihoods and holistic development his community is able to highlight the contradictions of conflict and gives an examples that clarify the lack of political will and a degenerating policy cohesion when it comes to local development. The area has in recent history seen the growth of a guerilla movement SPLDF (Sabotage Peoples Land Defence Force). Initially this movement had popular support from the local population precipitated by the people's disaffection with the oppression and development trends enforced by the government policies in the region and specifically related to land and forestry. However, the internal philosophical differences in the movement lead to the community disaffection with the brutal approach the leaders of the movement utilized in the recruitment of members. A vintage Fanonian description of the internal conflicts that decimate peoples movements when the contradictions of peoples power vis a vis the tentacles of capital are blurred and the "victims, become the villains!"

A heavy handed government intervention brought an end to the brutality of the SPDLF. This led to the changing of roles where the former enemy (government) is now seen as a savior and protector while the people led movement is now seen as an enemy. The power struggles and the change of ideological focus within the movement and besides its grounding in the community, the SPDLF is now seen as an oppressor yet they once were fighting for the people. This shows the contradictions that the Mount Elgon community is facing today and is also a reflection of the changing fortunes of most communities in developing nations. For the Mount Elgon Sengwer community, the only thing that has changed is those who are claiming to be fighting or protecting the community, but nothing has changed and there exists no processes to assist them in the march towards the realization of the dreams about their lands. The Mount Elgon community has been caught in a power play and is now placed at the mercy of the political convenience of the times. Sadly, a reality that the government is all willing to exploit, posing as a saviour but in the same vein mercilessly crushing any seeds of discontent and peoples struggle that can sprout as witnessed by the actions of the army. This has been documented by various human rights organizations including the governments own kenya national human rights commission (KNHRC) and the media.

Peace is elusive in this community but the government is not putting resources in alternative methods of conflict and peace building – but rather investing in military expenditure in the hope of creating an everlasting solution. To this, Simotwo wonders what peace the government foresees and how sustainable this can be if it is through coercion.

At a global scale, Simotwo views the shared burden on Government procured loans and under performing grants to be an issue that is fundamentally impacting on the local populations and needs to be addressed as a matter of urgency. Where a government can not be held accountable by its citizens, then it is not mandated to negotiate loans in their name or on their behalf. Thus a need to interrogate the social contract between people and government as the foundation of true real democracy or rethinking our perspectives of democracy as the governance model becomes a recurrent theme. His sentiments link with those of Marko, that of essence, democracy must be seen and internalized as a way of life and not just as a governance tool as reflected in Gandhian tradition.

A minority in the world, whom we also tend to worship, have plundered the global resources.

“There is a need to awaken the world on the issue that global commons cannot be part of the shared Global burden! We are in the wild and have neglected our mother yet we can not be able to feed ourselves. We need to go back to her, take her breasts so that we can be well nourished; we also need to take care of her if we are to depend on her. Go back to your mother, to her bosom so that she cares for you, do not to ignore her, do not inherit a curse, go to your grandfather and learn, let us coordinate our ideas! Our common experience will create a common future”

Markets and consumerism has changed the way of doing things on a sustainable basis, we no longer get ghee from milk, manure from animals, use our indigenous knowledge, respect our traditional governance and management systems, and the list is endless. We also promote policies that deny people access to their livelihood and infrastructure development that destroys nature. Where is the future?

On the international protocols, the North - South engagement needs to take a more meaningful direction and the investment in military expenditure should be totally opposed. Francis also highlighted the issue of integrity and exploitation where negativity has become a measure of political success. He gave an example of his work and how he found the system to be corrupt and against his own people which led to his resignation. My dream is that my children will inherit a world that is just and global and fresh, for this we need the world to see with us and walk with us!

Basilus Kagwe - from Karima Ka Inya -Nyeri a sacred forest that is a link between- Mt Kenya and Aberdares Ranges believes that the policy of decimating local knowledge systems, governance systems and plundering resources by introducing new development concepts understood by a few are the root to the crisis we are facing today.

At Karima, the community is fighting to conserve a resource that has been handled and managed by local government in the most unsustainable manner. They cleared the original forests and introduced exotic species leading to the loss of water and grazing lands. When there is no water people are forced to migrate to other area which is a potential for conflict.

Basilus Kagwe: Pointed out that there has been a gradual and deliberate process of disconnection from nature. We have promoted production systems that have undermined our cultures and literally killed traditions that as we know today might have averted our ecological disasters. This process has been so intrusive that it has also taken the human health and packaged it as a consumer culture- leading to a changing of local cultures eventually leading to the destruction of environments. New media has also ensured that there are no dialogues or communication about what matters to the local people but focused on multinational driven agenda as a form of an alternative. The legal instruments have also tended to ignore local context as well as the national policies not being informed by local needs.

Soil is the basis for life, Basilus sees a need to get connected and be with the soil. This connection will help us define what we mean by lifestyles, life, livelihoods, traditional norms, ancestral lineage, and traditional practices- all with a bearing on climate change! Let us be practical.

“Let’s go tracing our way back and see where we lost the path. A major option is to go to the Mountain, the Lake, to the sacred places which are only being taken care of by our ancestors. There we will find the answers.

Local communities do not spoil their own environment. It is those people who have no passion with the environment that show contempt to it.

We have taken the first steps by walking the baby. The initiative has to come from us. We will be considered to be backwards and unprogressive. But we will have chosen a noble engagement.”

Simon Kokoyo - From Mathare (A major slum in Nairobi), and member of Reality Tested Youth

Programme sees Mathare to have been romanticized, demonized, politicized and militarized all in one; making it a confluence of the contradictions of mainstream approaches to development. Simon felt that people from Mathare have a life far richer than those who call them poor and deprived. They have dignity. The way Mathare has been portrayed to the outside world has meant that it has become a victim of the civil society and that of the government. Its portrayal has led to a situation of embedded oppression and a global poverty perception. It has also led to opportunistic ventures which are only meant to serve those with the correct links and possess the power of the word.

There is a strong feeling that the North always wants to control and dominate any agenda in order to gain access to resources from the South. The creation or reinvention of failed institutions which rebrand for convenience introduces concepts which the real meaning of community is lost, the focus goes to things that do not matter to the people such as empowerment as a measurable indicator, mainstreaming as an integrative development output, but the agenda is geared more towards subsuming the South into the North. This is a co-opting of the civil society and is a reflection of the power struggles between the North and South and the dependencies that have evolved in this new institutional arrangements. Simon sees new problems as an excuse to develop new contracts with multinationals and shifting the centers of the problem. For example the North should be taking a greater role in dealing with Global warming but instead shifting the blame and creating an environment that will create complacency.

Simon Kokoyo was also categorical in stating that – people from Mathare are very capable of managing their resources and they should be central in all decisions meant to uplift their lives.

Calvin Mbugua - is the oldest member Reality Tested Youth Programme and works in two slums of Mathare and Huruma in regenerating these communities – and specifically regenerating the Mathare river. This initiative is to ensure the continued interconnectedness of livelihoods of the Mathare people.

Calvin calls the slum situation a Crisis of Modernization where things get swept under if one set of management principles fails which is then followed by another set of prescriptions.

On the role of pervasive media, the media changes our tastes and proposes conveniences that are destructive to our societies. He picked on a point that had been made by Wahu Kaara about the bottled water as one of the contradictions introduced by the global capital. He went on to add and clarify on the issue of tastes where he posed the question about why one would prefer to drink Coca Cola over soup yet there is no comparative nutritional value, or why one would prefer to eat bread over cassava. Humanity has been enslaved through manipulating tastes and conveniences; these two stand on the way to a sustainable future. Alternative education is key.

John Mulingwa (Garang) - from Pumwani area works with a Youth Group Network- along the Nairobi River focused on Community Empowerment. He is also a trained paralegal fighting for people's rights. He sees the government as a centre of conflict. He wonders where he and his colleagues who have been working and living along the river will go when the government finally gives the restoration work to private groups. It is most likely that those contributing most to the pollution of the river will be the ones given the financial contract while we the people who live by the river will be obstacles that will need to be evicted for progress to be realized. A classic example of the failures of a governance at the whims of capital. The system of governance that exist is flawed and will continue to oppress the masses as long as private ventures are the preferred developers of such resources. For them it is a profit, for us it is a way of life. My place is the slum. All the new developments (modern buildings) surrounding us found the same mud houses here. The slum has a history, culture, and a people. One of our main problem has been the oppression and opportunistic approach used by the Local Government as a tool of oppression.

The instruments like the Community Development Funds and institutions like the local government

are killing hope in the youth. They have proposed grand visions that are empty and non consultative. The youth are 70% of the population, they are least consulted and the resources targeted at them very minimal. The local government systems are corrupt, their funds being used for inappropriate projects. The youth fund is not transparent. There is a lot of talk about the youth but at this rate, the youth do not have a future in this country.

Christopher Mwabingu - from TAITA RESOURCE CENTER, a local Community Based Organization in Taita Taveta pointed out that the people from Taita are the largest set of squatters and victims of hedonistic practice of tourism based on national parks for the enjoyment of others. The area designated as a Tsavo National Park was once the home and source of livelihood for the local population. They now have very limited access and live in squalid conditions and with little benefits from the tourism. When they were evicted, it was said to be an order from the government, Christopher then wonders “who is government”, is the government not of the people, by the people? How then can people take away their own livelihoods?

He wonders whether there are strategies at international and local level to reform or redress such injustices. He caps his discussion by calling for government to pay particular attention to youth development policy otherwise there is no future if matters continue in their current state.

Jhikkolabwino Manyika - A musician, writer and composer from Tanzania, (reggae artist) called for a new world that connects us back to our roots. It is only by shunning consumerism can we have a future guaranteed, we must embrace a culture of self control over what we as human can and should be consuming.

Marko Ulvilla CED, Friends of Earth, VK, NIGD. The issue of culture is a complex political dispensation going back in History. There are social Cultures and and global cultures which are changing with modernization and are not in balance and where solutions can be a process of disenfranchisement.

How do we build solidarity and build linkages that will promote sustainability and cultures that define a better future? How do we deal with the questions of historical primitivism, modern and traditional agriculture, and the evolving cultures of time! How do we deal with consumerism lead by 30% of the world population destroying our world while we have 70% are outside the consumerism! What should be the actions for the future and deal with a world where profit over rules and where we use and destroy in the name of profit making. Who will organize?

Marko Ulvila observed that the dialogues had been rich and inspiring. The convergence in processes will determine how this processes link and translate to action in the future. There are few questions that relate to to the role of power and the impact on nature. There is also the question of big businesses and the struggles of the civil society. To break the status quo, there might need to be a revolution in the political power shape and the fixation on the party systems. The labour movements are also challenged and the question of power and movement of capital.

Peter Kuria, SHALIN Finland/CED. He noted that there was a deep connection between the different speakers with their work and there was a lot of overlapping issues. Cultures define who we are, and how we relate to each other. Based on the presentations, networking and collaboration needs to be nurtured and good practice reinforced. We should not be fearful of supporting each other, walking a baby does not mean it will forever hold onto your hand, but by guiding it, you give it the confidence to takes those all important precocious steps. This should be the same action we should embrace when supporting cultures of sustainability!

Julius Muchemi - From ERMIS Africa having worked with most of the forest communities in Kenya- the Mukogodo, Sengwer, Ogiek, Life is defined differently by these tribes. At the same time technologies have been used to exclude the local communities! Julius gave an example of mapping principle where if you are not on map you do not belong. Maps are made by government and from

pre-colonial to post colonial times. The fundamental question is who defines where people are and how do we define other peoples values? Indigenous communities have a different relationship with earth and have internal processes that govern their thinking. For sustainability to take root, we need to internalize these processes and play by the rules as defined by the insiders especially when relating to the environment. Julius also expressed the notion of how dialogue assists in identifying your location in the different circles of life – yourself, within your own community, within Kenya, and globally. This also helps in consolidating the power of those who are seating on resources and fighting for the control of resources. Julius posed the question of if 500 million Africans would be living within the consumerism lifestyle of the West, would this not pose a security threat to the world as it stands. How does Africa locate it self in this geo-political set up? What would be the implications to the global resources! What is our position - where does the world hold us? How do we build coalitions for the Micro and Macro defense of our resources? Kenya is at cross road as expressed by the Tiomin Titanium mining project in the Kwale district and the emerging issues over the market economy as displayed by the Kwale Mining project and the China link to the exploration of raw materials to power the growing economy. We must look for those clear processes that link the North and South that will allow us to continue in this concerted effort reinforced by the dialogues. Poverty is Global: Super exploitation chains the minds in development.

Jane Naini Meriwas - from the Yiakku Peoples Association representing a gatherer-hunter community from the Mt Kenya region gave an account of the Yiakku struggles to gain government recognition over their territorial claim, identity, own and a crisis over a dying language. She pointed out that the Yiaku are a victim of a flawed lease signed agreement signed in 1901 between the maasai community leadership and the british colonial government to pave way for british colonial settlers in the vast Rift Valley region of Kenya and hence secure colonial rule. Whereas this case warrants intense historical and political research in unmmasking the dynamics of Kenya’s political economy, its illustrative to note that this lease expired in 2004. The end of the lease did not deliver back their land.

She saw the problems linked to poverty and degradation of environment to be linked to poor knowledge management and under representation of minorities in governance structures that involve numbers. Indigenous Knowledge Systems and management practices are not recognized over land and natural resources management yet they have been shown to have all the capacities. Naini also raised issue on the failed systems of governance and imposed management systems that have lead to the collapse of the natural systems. There was also the failure in government to implement international instruments that it is signatory to and denial of services. The issue of the Yiakku was further deliberated by Angaine Matunge. also a Yiakku and he like Jane emphasized on the sustainable way of doing things by hunter gatherer communities. The traditional ways have been impacted negatively by government policies. The Yiaku live in forests, Yiakku is a forest and forest is Yiakku. This life is deeply connected: Forest and Life and Life and Forests. In the forest the Yiakku have our life line! Natural resources are fundamental; inclusiveness is vital and we should always ask who is representing who, for our voices will never be heard.

Kennedy Omote - Has worked on rural tourism. He has advocated for clean environment rights and through volunteer services on sanitation and waste management! Clean Nairobi River United. He feels that the youth work in isolation. They have worked on many issues with youth to elaborate that Youths of Nairobi River are united with other kenyan. The are youth are desparate due to lack of rights.

Julius Gikundi- from Gitune sacred forest in Meru- “Our traditional methods have been very successful in the protection of natural resources as has been shown by Giitune forest community. Our traditional ways have systems of governance that are more in concert with nature as opposed to the imposed systems of management being promoted by the powerful today. We have shown that they can work!”

Francis Kakwetin - an Ogiek from the Mau Complex said that after 15 years of destruction of the

main watershed and a livelihood for the Ogieks, it is time to reflect and develop new strategies of engagement. We must weigh the problem and devise our strategy accordingly. As for Francis, "When I learn something I change 5 people. I call it person mobilisation. The message is normally on the value of coming together. People from grass roots are in touch with the rest of the community and when there is cohesion, then it is easy to mobilise a peaceful resistance. Our struggles must continue but we must take a stronger role in mobilising local communities for change. Kakwetin is not sure on how the late entry of the government in the Mau debate will shape the future, but he is sure that the governance element must emanate from the people and not from above if the issues of the Ogiek are to be comprehensively addressed.

Njuguna Mutahi considers himself a part dreamer. He has had a chequered history of activism in Kenya including the then infamous 12 December movement, Pambana. He was prisoned and later exiled for his political views. For a while he had not been part of Kenya dialogue processes, but by listening to the different voices I have learnt a lot about our communities which convinces me we have commissions that can mould the world we desire! We first need to re-engineer the Civil society movement. We also need to face the awkward question of meeting and weaning ourselves from donors for sustainability. Life is one tree with many branches!

Phyllis Nduva, from Makueni Social Forum a local affiliate of KENDREN has been involved in the local process of energizing and strengthening Social Movements- she sees the biggest challenge to climate change and adaptability of the pastoralist communities being influenced by the Relief Food Syndrome. The relief food programme has changed the natural reaction of mobile communities to environmental changes and made them reliant on handouts. This has had a debilitating impact on those communities where such relief takes long to arrive leading to disaster in some cases. The sedentation approach to development has also reduced the capacity for environmental regeneration and in our own capacities to adapt. External interventions have lead to a shift in local technologies which have some times lead to a dilution of local knowledge that is valuable to sustaining lives. Of keen interest to Phyllis, its not the question of embracing top – down development models but harnessing traditional local knowledge to secure livelihoods. In the face of the ongoing food crisis, local people and communities are not interested in grand plans of a vision 2030 but where their next meal will come from. What are the opportunities for asserting peoples control over food production, distribution and consumption in the way they know best and have practiced over years. It is criminal to have instances where food, land and environment are used as a political tool. We need to eschew the principles of food sovereignty, both as a framework and as policy advocacy.

Anne Muniu, a Mathare activists pointed out that evictions have become a politicised issue that is affecting thousands of families triggered by privatisation and with big impacts on Health and Sanitation. The options are few but a central theme should be development of holistic capacities in all areas of life. Muniu specifically mentioned a Heart Disease that affects the poor in the ghettos yet it is manageable and treatable. We have misplaced priorities for example instead of using honey as part of health eating, we use it for brewing liquor. We also need to build capacity for mobilisation purposes especially towards empowerment of communities and focused on the unravelling of the NORTH - SOUTH imposition of modern farming methods which is impacting negatively on seed and food security.

Hamilton Parpai believes that poverty is a cultural offshoot to the changes in habits of food and survival instincts. We at times embrace issues that have no relevance to the local needs and in the end comparable to empty tins- hollow but loud!

Systems and frameworks and categories;

In a group exercise that was exploring the vision of development and sustainable futures, the key issues that were that humankind should not destroy the environment and should struggle to sustain good environmental conditions and development should be embedded in culture that looks

at the value of human life as a basis for development. Future development should be in concert and balanced with the needs of today and those of the future generations. Development should also be a consultative processes and based on a collective responsibility in policy making common people as the basis. On the broad definition of cultures and development: Life is the basis for development. Wrong focus in policies and weak advocacy strategy based on our unique cultures and diversity when not employed effectively is counter-productive.

For a strong force in the future, our various struggles/issues, come together into a formidable movement through networking of those with same dream about life processes in a holistic sense.

The challenges and barriers, to active engagement is in information, financial Resources, driving an equity democracy focused democracy, ignorance and access to knowledge, different interpretation and context of issues of solidarity! People do not speak in one voice and are not united and there is also a need for communication for common action. Trust was also lacking at different levels.

There is a need to re-engineer the future of mobilising and also seek for new avenues for moving the North South engagement and develop a new media strategy reduce the donor dependency, improve on technology and information fight bad Governance and develop policies and politics that are driven by ideology. We should focus on devolving powers but also seeking to build alliances for a united world full of peace and co-existence! We should call for more investment in people, education and arrest the greed of over-consumption! We also need to identify forums and movements where our issues will not get swallowed and ignored. When we seek for democracy it should be comprehensive participatory horizontal.

We should seek to understand the power of the market and principally advertisement which promotes a market culture and state of gambling between options. We need to focus on sensitization to agitate and stay engaged. Custodians of resources must respected through a more powerful environmental responsibility, deal with the paper culture

Marko mentioned the need to have a set of ideas and pillars and locate the discussion this will allow for the building of bridges! Within this setting it is also important to have reflections on what has informed the bigger picture of the ideals that dominating today and how we can influence them or form counter dominion. This should also serve as a platform to challenge the west (North) and South perspectives of the cultures which is characterised by waste as a show of might e.g Space tourism and energy waste! The views were further reinforced by Wahu who saw sustainable futures as a challenge that needed affirmative action by all those concerned with current global outlook: She was also emphatic on the idea that the common goods belong to all of us. It can be done and it is timely to regain control of these goods. We have a critical mass –and the sustainable futures- are happening.

The power of omissions and pointing fingers to the global South, injustices of debt should be calling for all to grab power of people to shift and create change – power of change is the globalisation of Hope. It is the high time when world leaders must be held accountable for development that impoverishes the global masses

Global Commons can not be part of the shared Global Burdens and we must move away from the Leaders worship!

Prof. Kavetsa Adagala - Talked about the need to capitalise on local social and cultural activities and to support their growth. She felt there is a need to build strong networks that will ensure long established celebrations and festivities act as catalysts for other initiatives. It is only through such home-grown and well grounded activities that we can be assured of nurturing the spirit of sustainability and look at the question of sustainable cultures pro-actively!

OKOYO touched on the issue of information sharing. Information is the basis for networks, activities and consensus building. Mathare experience- action- zero at local level;

The coming together showed that there exists people who are concerned about the future of societies. On this basis a new network was conceived, a National Alliance Social Movements! Uniting together we can succeed!

Kiama Kaara (KENDREN/Coordinator IBON Africa Office) discussed his model of Ecological Counterplanning for Sustainable Futures in the Age of Neo-Liberal Globalisation. The paper highlighted the fact that the conflicts we are facing today are not only rooted but are being driven by the forces of global capitalism. Finance capital has consistently suffered boom and bust cycles and at every epoch has sought ways to mitigate this crisis as is being witnessed today by the sub prime house crises in the US, the food crises and the exponential rise in fuel prices that have triggered an economic crisis.

In a resource extraction based capital economy, that's where we find the intersection of economy, earth and ecology. These are important linkages to make since they speak specifically to the issue at hand on sustainable futures.

By unpacking the dominant logic that is based on profit, we must resist the commodification of the environment and the concomitant life sequences as is well espoused by the world bank backed clean development mechanism on carbon footprints trading.

Referring to his paper, he drew a stinging critic on the push to adopt environmental concerns and responses tied to market forces as is the case in South Africa and Kenya. This he argued has negative bearings that actually are hinged on a flawed rationale that the west can continue with its intense energy consumption but pay the south to keep the carbon sinks. That a scenario of, "We will pay to pollute" is gaining ground whereas at the same time the north remains the judge and jury on how this new market is to be organized.

As such, there is a critical need to move the agenda forward by deepening both community articulation of alternatives and resistance to the upcoming neo-liberal models. By way of some concluding remarks on moving forward he drew parallels with KENDREN discussions all which point to commitment to dignity. This process requires internalisation and localisation and should be embedded as an ongoing process – it is not a one day activity. But as a group and committed members we need to operationalise the ideals and deliver those ideas through breathing life into a National Movement Alliance added Wahu. We need to connect with issues first, locate ourselves and not shy to giving birth to Sustainability and Futures !

Awori Achoka from SAYARI think tank and Uhai Trust guided the discussants through the Uhai Model, The search for a tool to negotiate with nature. This model summarised most of what had been discussed by the participants during the two days of dialogues.

The model seeks to clarify how planners of development should think, how consumers should react, what to input into our ecosystems and how nature will balance and counter balance the shared responsibility of production and measured consumption. The model is based on working closely with nature and ecosystems and letting ecosystems define how we as humans relate to earth.

The definition of zones closely corresponds with how humans over centuries have learnt to co-exist with nature and how they have also been able to relate closely with nature and their neighbours. This model offers retrospective view on how cultures have evolved over time, the risks that have evolved over time and become accepted as normal and mainstream, and is a baseline from which our future thinking should be based. In the end, Achoka proposes an Eco Forum (ECF) which is the unification of people, culture, natural resources and geo-space. He then poses the question "What

have we done to safeguard the dignity of nature and natural resources?" Only by reflecting on such key questions can we start to define a new way of engagement like proposed by the key discussants and what Wahu calls the visions of alternative lifeworlds.

Note by Peter Kuria and Kiama Kaara.

List of participants:



Awori Achoka, SAYARI / UHAI TRUST
Basilius Kagwi, KARIMA SACRED FOREST
Calvin Mbugua, REALITY TESTED YOUTH PROGRAMME (RYP)
Christopher Mwambingu, TAITA RESOURCE CENTER – COAST PROVINCE
Francis Kakwetin LESINGO, OGIEK DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE (ODI)
Gathuru Mburu, INSTITUTE FOR CULTURE & ECOLOGY
George Chitechi Osundwa, KENDREN (LUGARI-WESTERN PROVINCE)
Hamilton Ole Parseina, FOSTER NATIONAL COHENSION (FONACON)
Hanne / Muniu, HURUMA SOCIAL FORUM
Hilda Obyerodhayambo, CITIZENS COALITION FOR CONSTITUTIONAL CULTURE
Ibrahim Hassan, HURUMA SOCIAL FORUM
Isaiah Ngotho, LAW STUDENT
James Maina Mugoo MT.KENYA FOREST EVICTEES/FUTA MAGENDO ACTION NETWORK
Jane Naini Meriwas, YAIKU PEOPLES ASSOCIATE – LAIKIPIA NORTH
Jhikolabwino S. Manyika, AFRIKABISA
John Mul'ingwa, PUMWANI YOUTH GROUPS NETWORK (KAMUKUNJI)
Julius G. Muchemi, ERMIS AFRICA
Julius Gikundi, GITUNE SACRED FOREST
Julius Okara, KENDREN
Kavetsa Adagala, VIHIGA CULTURAL SOCIETY, UON, 4C'S NDC, SAYARI
Kennedy Chindi (J.J), REALITY TESTED YOUTH PROGRAMME
Kennedy Omondi Odote, PUMWANI YOUTH GROUPS NETWORK (PYGRON)
Kiama Kaara, IBON AFRICA KENYA DEBT RELIEF NETWORK (KENDREN),
Kitarpei Ngaine Matunge, YAIKU PEOPLES ASSOCIATION,
Marko Ulvila, COALITION ON ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT (CED)
Martin Somotwo, CHEPKITALE INDIGENOUS PEOPLES DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME (CIPDP)
Mgugi Mutura, SACDEP – KENYA
Michael Chelogoy, RESEARCH INSITUTE FOR PEACE, JUSTICE AND HUMAN RIGHTST – AFRICA
Njuguna Mutahi, KENDREN
Paul Kipkoris Kibet, SENGWER CHERANGANY HILLS FORESTS CONSERVATION PROGRAMME (SIDP)
Peter Kuria, SHALIN
Phyllis Nduva, MAKUENI SOCIAL MOVEMENT
Simon Kokoyo, REALITY TESTED YOUTH PROGRAMME (RYP)
Wahu Kaara, KENDREN