



Ms. Parita Shah (left) assists the First Lady, Mrs. Kenyatta (cutting the ribbon), during the official opening of Karura Forest Auditorium and Educational Centre. Ms. Shah, “a friend of Karura forest”, is an active member of the Karura Forest Environmental Educational Trust (Photo: Courtesy of Daily Nation of 4th June 2013/PPS)

MESSAGE FROM CHAIRMAN OF DEPARTMENT



Welcome to this edition of Geo News – an annual newsletter of the Department of Geography and Environmental Studies. It provides you with an opportunity to sample some of the department’s activities in 2013. In December 2013, we joined the nation in celebrating 50 years of independence, as well as the University of Nairobi’s 50th graduation ceremony. The department will continue to revitalize its core mandate to provide dynamic leadership in the teaching, research, consultancy and outreach services in geography and environmental studies for the benefit of humanity and sustainable development.



I congratulate the following staff on their promotion and/or new appointments in 2013: (-) Dr. John Kioko Musingi – promoted to Senior Lecturer; (-) Mr. Isaac Ayuyo – promoted to Chief Technologist; (-) Mr. Jared Ochieng Lummah – appointed as Technical Assistant; (-) Mr. Nicholas Musyoka Mwakavi – appointed as Cartographer; and (-) Mr. Robert Kimutai Langat – appointed as Map Curator. I wish you all the best and dedication to your new roles. I also wish to congratulate Mr. Amos Kamweru who, in December 2013, graduated with a Bachelor of Technology (Surveying Technology) degree from Technical University of Kenya. Lastly, I am pleased to note that the department will, from January 2014, offer a new **MSc Degree Program in Sustainable Urban Development** with specializations in **Water and Sanitation**; **Food and Nutrition Security**; or **Renewable Energy**. The main objective of the programme is to train professionals and practitioners for sustainable urban development in Africa.

Enjoy reading...!



Some of the students who participated in the inter-university field course

International Inter-University Field Course

The department, in collaboration with the Centre for Development & Environment, University of Bern, Switzerland, and the Centre for Research in Arid & Semi-Arid Development (CETRAD), Nanyuki, held a successful inter-university field course on sustainable regional development in Kenya. The course, which took place between 21st and 31st of August, 2013, brought together 18 graduate students from various universities in Europe and 18 from the department. The course covered Samburu, Isiolo, Laikipia, Mt. Kenya, Karatina, Thika and Nairobi. The course was facilitated by Prof. Urs Wiesmann, Dr. Hanspeter Liniger (University of Bern), Dr. B. Kiteme (CETRAD), Prof. E.H.O. Ayiemba, Prof. G.O. Krhoda, Dr. Stella Mukhovi, Dr. S.O. Owuor and Mr. L.K. Karingi (of the department).

Annual Field Classes

Field-class is an annual event for all third year geography and environmental studies students. The **2013 BA III field-class** took place in Nanyuki County and its environs between 9th and 13th July. The theme of the field-class was *“Harnessing natural resources for ecological integrity, sustainable livelihoods and food security in Laikipia County and its Environs”*. The field-class team comprised Dr. S.O. Owuor, Prof. E.H.O. Ayiemba, Dr. Stella Mukhovi and Dr. J.M. Nyangaga. The 2013 BA III field-class was unique because it was co-organized and sponsored by one of our strategic partners – CETRAD. We wish to acknowledge the participation of the Director (Dr. B. Kiteme), Dr. Jennifer Kinoti, Ms. Caroline Ouko and all the field lecturers. This was indeed a great team and a wonderful field-based experience for all of us. In addition, there were two other field-classes. The **2013 BEd (Arts) field-class** was coordinated by Mr. N.M. Ochanda, while the **BEd (Science) field-class** was organized by Dr. I.A. Nyandega, Dr. J.K. Omoke and Dr. J.M. Moronge. Both field-classes took place in the coastal region of Kenya – under a general theme of harnessing coastal resources for development in the context of devolved governance.

National PHE Integration Capacity Building Workshop

Dr. Francis Mwaura was one of the facilitators in the 2013 Population, Health & Environment (PHE) Integration Capacity Building Workshop held on 4-9th November at the Kenya School of Government. The workshop was organized by the National Council for Population and Development (NCPD) in partnership with the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). Besides giving lectures, Dr. Mwaura facilitated a one-day field mission for the group in Kinangop, Nyandarua County.



UNEP-Tongji University students pose for a group photograph

UNEP-TONGJI University (China) & University of Tsukuba (Japan) Seminars

Staff and students from UNEP-TONGJI University, Shanghai, China visited the department for a one-day seminar on 8th August 2013. The theme of the seminar was *"Kenya's resource base and development challenges"*. The visit and seminar was organized by Ms. Frida Nyiva (PhD student at UNEP-TONGJI University), Dr. F. Mwaura and Prof. E.H.O. Ayiimba. Three weeks later (on On 28th August), the department hosted graduate students from various countries including Japan, China, Vietnam, Laos and Eritrea who were on an Africa internship as part of their graduate study in Environmental Diplomatic Leader (EDL) education program at University of Tsukuba, Japan. This visit was organized by Dr. F. Mwaura.

African Climate Change Fellowship Programme (ACCFP) Workshop

In January 2013, Dr. Francis Mwaura, through the ACCFP, organized a successful workshop on *"Environment and natural resources management education for sustainable adaptation to the impacts of climate change"* at the University of Nairobi. The workshop objectives were: a) to familiarize with the ACCFP and other climate change initiatives in Kenya, b) to contribute to the Kenya ACCFP project, and c) to identify collaboration opportunities for improved climate change integration in the education sector. The workshop was attended by scholars from public universities in Kenya and Canada, as well as representatives from relevant government institutions.

Integrative Training Workshop

Dr. Stella Mukhovi, in collaboration with the Centre for Development and Environment, University of Bern, Switzerland, coordinated a four-day integrative training workshop in February, 2013 at the University of Nairobi. The theme of the workshop was *"Sustainable management of land resources for rural development"*. The workshop brought together 33 postgraduate students and 7 staff members from the department.

Capacity Building Summer School

Dr. Samuel Owuor facilitated at the summer school on *"Methodological Training Programme in Social Sciences and Humanities"*. The capacity building summer school was held in Zanzibar from 3rd to 12th April 2013 and drew participants from various public universities in East Africa. The scientific event was jointly organized by the State University of Zanzibar (SUZA), IFRA, IRD and INED.



Prof. Njeru sharing a joke with Mrs Smita Shah & Mrs. Anjna Shah

Raja Trust Scholarships

The department initiated a MoU between Shah Ranmal Raja Charitable Trust and University of Nairobi to help needy and bright students in geography and environmental studies. The official launch of “Raja Trust Scholarships” took place on 13th August, 2013 at the University of Nairobi. Speaking on behalf of the Vice-Chancellor, the Principal, College of Humanities and Social Sciences, Prof. Enos Njeru, thanked Raja Trust for their generosity and kind gesture. The ceremony was attended by Mrs. Smita Shah, Mrs. Anjna Shah & Mr. Coutinho (Raja Trust); Deputy Principal, Dean, Faculty of Arts and members of the department (Dr. S.O. Owuor, Prof. G.O. Krhoda, Dr. Stella Mukhovi & Ms. P. Shah).

Prof. Irandu at the “Humanities Week” in Limuru Girls High

Prof. Evaristus Irandu gave a captivating, motivating and mentorship talk to students of Limuru Girls High School on 15th of June 2013. Prof. Irandu stressed that “Humanities and Social Sciences” is important in all aspects of our lives. Quoting several success stories and examples, he encouraged students who choose Humanities (Geography, History and CRE) to be proud of it and walk tall in the crowd. He challenged the students to take a leading role in education, politics and planning. Dr. Stella Mukhovi and Ms. Parita Shah accompanied Prof. Irandu.

PhD Training

Ms. Parita Shah was among the participants at the summer school on “Global change and sustainable environment” – coordinated by the Centre for Development and Environment of the University of Bern, Switzerland. The summer school trains PhD candidates on methodological aspects, including writing and presentation skills. The summer school, held in Côte d’Ivoire in September 2013, drew participants from Bolivia, Burkina Faso, Côte d’Ivoire, Congo, Ghana, Ethiopia, Kenya, Nepal, Switzerland and Tanzania.

(Fare Thee Well)

Fare Thee Well Prof. Reuben Benjamin Ogendo & Mr. Joseph Kirema

We shall forever cherish your contribution and dedication of service to the department, University of Nairobi and the society at large



Participants at the 2013 Tunza International Youth Conference

Students' Activities

- Members of the University of Nairobi Geography Students Society (UNGSS) participated in the 2013 Tunza International Youth Conference held in UNEP, Nairobi, Kenya. The conference provided a platform for over 300 youth from 100 countries across the globe to deliberate and share several development issues.
- Members of the UNGSS attended the 2013 World Environment day celebrations held at Maseno University on 5th of June under the theme "THINK, EAT, SAVE & REDUCE YOUR FOOTPRINT".
- Two more postgraduate students from the department benefited from a one-semester exchange programme to the University of Jyväskylä, Finland. Michael Kaelo and Belinda Omungu were on a North-South-South exchange programme coordinated by Prof. Laura Stark (JyU) and Dr. Samuel Owuor (UoN).

Links and Collaborations

The department was, on 24th July 2013, privileged to host a team from the Department of Geography & Resource Management, Chinese University of Hong Kong. In the team was Prof. David Chen (Chairman of Department); Prof. Yee Leung; Prof. Jiang Xu; Prof. James Wang; and Dr. Lawal Marafa. The two parties discussed prospects for future links and collaboration on areas of mutual interests and benefits.



The department and the African Studies Centre in Leiden, Netherlands are involved in a collaborative project on "Food Planning and Innovation for Sustainable

Metropolitan Regions (FOODMETRES): The Nairobi Case Study". FOODMETRES project aims to identify innovations for shortening food chains. The case study is coordinated by Dr. S.O. Owuor, Ms. T. Mbatia, Dr. Dick Foeken & Dr. Sebastian Soeters (ASC).

Hats off to our postgraduate students who graduated in 2013

NAME	DEGREE AWARDED	THESIS/PROJECT TOPIC
1. Ombogo Meshack Opole	MA Climatology	The impact of climate variability on pastoralism: Forage dynamics and trends in cattle population in Kajiado County, Kenya
2. Maina Margaret Wagikondi	MA Transport Geography	An investigation of commuter satisfaction in the use of Muthurwa terminus, Nairobi, Kenya
3. Amboga Reginald Mahonga	MA Environmental Planning and Management	An investigation of urban heat island phenomenon in Nairobi
4. Arwa George Augustine	MA Environmental Planning and Management	Sustainable governance for artisanal sand mining: Case of Kangonde Location, Masinga District
5. Cherutich Eunice Jemutai	MA Environmental Planning and Management	E-waste management in Kenya: A case study of mobile phone waste in Nairobi
6. Kariuki David Mugendi	MA Environmental Planning and Management	Adoption of bee farming as an adaptation strategy for rainfall variability effects on food security among the vulnerable communities in Kenya: Case of Kitui, Kenya
7. Maasai Mathew Mutua	MA Environmental Planning and Management	Assessment of farmers' perceptions of health risks of untreated wastewater used for crop production in Maili Saba, Nairobi – A gendered perspective
8. Mideva Joy	MA Environmental Planning and Management	An assessment of environmental management in the export processing zones in Kenya. A case study of some selected enterprises
9. Mukhongo Manas Lukhubi	MA Environmental Planning and Management	An assessment of livelihood strategies adopted by the urban poor in Khalaba Ward, Bungoma Town, Kenya
10. Mulwa Moses Mitau	MA Environmental Planning and Management	The community awareness and preparedness for floods along the lower Tana River, Tana River County
11. Mutero Paul Kaniaru	MA Environmental Planning and Management	The effect of tea growing on forest degradation in Chinga area of the Abadares ranges in Nyeri County, Kenya
12. Muturi James Thongoh	MA Environmental Planning and Management	Compliance of slaughterhouses to environmental regulations: A case study of Dagoretti market abattoirs, Kikuyu District, Kenya
13. Mwangi Veronica Wambui	MA Environmental Planning and Management	Energy consumption among rural households in Mukaro Location of Nyeri County, Kenya
14. Nambisa Fredrick Imbayi	MA Environmental Planning and Management	Factors contributing to poor solid waste management in small scale businesses in Nairobi: A case study of Huruma
15. Njoroge Elizabeth Gathoni	MA Environmental Planning and Management	An investigation of causes of land management challenges in satellite towns: A case study of Ruiru municipality
16. Nyandega Laban Onsomu	MA Environmental Planning and Management	Socio-economic impacts of photovoltaic solar installation and use: A case study of Borabu Division, Nyamira County
17. Ogunyo Miriam Adero Owino	MA Environmental Planning and Management	An assessment of consumers' perception of eco-labels within Nairobi
18. Ondieki Jasper Morara	MA Environmental Planning and Management	Assessment of the adoption and level of implementation of cleaner production by star-rated hotels in Nairobi County, Kenya
19. Otieno Stephen Odhiambo	MA Environmental Planning and Management	Factors affecting water governance and accessibility among households in Huruma informal settlement, Nairobi
20. Rika John Kagai	MA Environmental Planning and Management	A study of variables contributing to quantities of solid waste generated by businesses located within Anniversary Towers High-rise Building in the Nairobi Central Business District, Kenya
21. Sogoti Peris Kaptuya	MA Environmental Planning and Management	The impact of urbanization on the livelihoods of the Maasai community: A case study of Ngong Ward, Kajiado County
22. Sonje Caroline Wakesho	MA Environmental Planning and Management	Mainstreaming environmental management in corporate organizations: A case study of Kenya Commercial Bank
23. Syallow Dorothy Masiga	MA Environmental Planning and Management	The role of community conservancies in wildlife conservation and livelihoods systems of the Maasai: A case study of Enoonkishu conservancy, Narok County, Kenya
24. Wachira Sylvia Wambui	MA Environmental Planning and Management	An evaluation of the potential of sustainable land management practices to enhance watershed ecosystem services in upper Tana catchment: A case study of Kirurumwe River, Ena Basin in Embu County, Kenya