

# REMARKS BY HIS EXCELLENCY GOVERNOR PATRICK OLE NTUTU DURING THE WORLD WETLANDS DAY HELD IN SHANKOE WARD, KILGORIS CONSTITUENCY

February 2, 2024

Ladies and gentlemen, fellow citizens,

1. I stand before you today, here at the Enayenyeny Swamp in Shankoe Ward with a sense of urgency and purpose as we gather to commemorate the World Wetlands Day, a day that holds profound significance in our shared commitment to the environment. Since its establishment by the United Nations in 1997, this day serves as a global reminder of the critical role wetlands play in human prosperity and the health of our planet.
2. This year, the World Wetlands Day theme, "Wetlands and Human Wellbeing," underscores the interdependence between these vital ecosystems and various aspects of our lives, encompassing physical, mental, and environmental health. It is a timely reminder that our wellbeing is eternally linked to the health of our wetlands, including lakes, swamps, marshes, rivers, and their riparian zones.
3. In our pursuit of environmental stewardship, our county has been actively engaged in ecosystem restoration, aligning with the objectives of the United Nations Decade of Ecosystem Restoration. Through the dedicated efforts of the Department of Environment and Climate Change, we have recently entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with KenGen, marking a significant step towards the restoration of the Enoosupukia forest.
4. Our commitment to ecosystem restoration is not merely a local endeavor but a response to a global call for action. The County Climate Change Action Plan and the County Participatory Climate Risks Assessment have identified wetlands, riparian areas, and catchments as key areas requiring restoration. This strategic focus is not only aimed at enhancing ecosystem functionality but also at supporting livelihoods and contributing to climate change mitigation.
5. As part of our contribution to the larger effort, our county has embraced the challenge set by the Presidential directive to plant 45 million tree seedlings. I am pleased to announce that, through the collective efforts of various agencies and stakeholders, we have already planted over 250,000 tree seedlings this year. This is a testament to our dedication to sustainable practices and the preservation of our natural heritage.
6. Further to this, In Narok, climate finance is elaborately governed by the climate finance mechanism established through the Narok Climate Change Fund Act of 2021 and its accompanying regulations. The cornerstone of the mechanism is the Climate Change Fund, which allocates 3% of the county's development budget, totaling approximately Ksh.150 million. This financial commitment underscores the county's commitment to addressing climate change challenges.

7. In our efforts to address climate change, it is crucial to highlight the establishment of Climate Change planning Committees in each ward of our county. These committees play a vital role in strategic decision-making and setting policy directions. The inclusion of the Ward Climate Change Planning Committee is pivotal, ensuring that local perspectives and needs are integral to our climate action planning. Collectively, these components create a robust framework, empowering Narok to actively confront climate change with dedicated financial resources and inclusive decision-making processes
8. Therefore, ladies and gentlemen, on this World Wetlands Day, let us renew our commitment to the conservation and wise use of wetlands. Let us recognize the intricate web that connects these ecosystems to our wellbeing and the health of our planet. As we mark this day, let us also acknowledge the challenges that lie ahead and embrace the responsibility we bear towards future generations.
9. Before I end my brief remarks, may I state that; in the reflection of every wetland, we find the essence of resilience, the heartbeat of biodiversity, and the promise of a sustainable future. Let us pledge, on this World Wetlands Day, to be stewards of these precious ecosystems, safeguarding their beauty and vitality for generations to come.
10. To our development partners, government agencies, the local conservation groups, environmental activists, scientists, Indigenous communities, educators, community volunteers, international organizations and the general public; together, we hold the power to protect, preserve, and celebrate the wetlands that connect us to the heartbeat of our planet.
11. God bless you all, Asanteni!

H.E Hon. Patrick Keturit Ole Ntutu

Governor, Narok County