

Book: Nurturing Our Environment for Sustainable Development,

Kariuki Muigua, 2016

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The central themes in this book revolve around environmental resources management with the aim of achieving sustainable development. It is based on the idea that environment and its natural resources are a heritage that should be managed, conserved and protected not only for the sake of the current generation, but also for future generations. The book argues that due to its critical role in the human, social and economic development of the country, the environment is one of the most important elements necessary for the existence of the human life. Environment affects all the life on earth in various ways, be it directly or indirectly. The environment and the resources therein must be carefully nurtured to make sure that their health is not sacrificed at the altar of national development.

This book explores the various principles that inform the sustainable development approach to environmental protection and conservation. The key principles that inform the book include: the principle of international co-operation in the management of environmental resources shared by two or more states; the principles of intergenerational and intragenerational equity; the polluter-pays principle; reasonable use and equitable utilization and precautionary principle, amongst others. The discourse also explores the place of the cultural and social principles traditionally applied by any community in Kenya for the management of the environment or natural resources in so far as the same are relevant to the debate on sustainable development. These inform the discussion across all the chapters of this book. This is particularly important considering that sustainable development aims at ensuring that the current human generation plays a role in guaranteeing that future generations will have enough of the environmental resources to sufficiently support their needs, while also having sufficient to pass on to the subsequent generations.

While much of the available literature is based on promoting sustainable development in order to satisfy human needs, making such an approach mainly anthropocentric, this book also explores the alternative arguments that are ecocentric in nature. The discourse, therefore, adopts and emphasises that both approaches can play a key role in facilitating sustainable management of environment and its resources. Some of the running themes that are informed by the anthropocentric approach to environmental management include Poverty Eradication, Food Security, Environmental Democracy, Environmental Justice, Environmental Security, Public

Participation, Gender Equity, Access To Information, Conflicts Management, amongst others. All these themes are discussed within the broader theme of human rights while emphasizing the special relationship between human rights and the environment. This is particularly important in light of the new Constitutional provisions on governance and in the Bill of Rights including Articles of the Constitution that touch on environment and natural resources.

Ecocentric arguments also inform the discussion on themes such as combating climate change, impact of resource extraction, environmental health, and environmental conservation for the sake of the Mother Nature. However, promoting such rights as the right to a clean and healthy environment has both anthropocentric and ecocentric benefits and should therefore be pursued.

The author affirms the need for sustainable management of the environment and environmental resources to secure the life of both flora and fauna now and in future while benefiting from these resources for national development. Thus, the book explores the above themes in the context of the sustainable development goals (United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development) for purposes of facilitating environmental protection and conservation.

To achieve the foregoing, the discussions in this book range from the International, Regional and National legal and regulatory frameworks on sustainable development and management of environment and natural resources. The Best Practices in environmental management and efforts towards nurturing the environment around the globe are discussed in the context of Kenya and the obligations that lie on individual countries.

While the book highlights the role of law in facilitating environmental protection, there is also an emphasis on the need to move beyond the law in looking for answers to the challenges facing sustainable environmental management. This is also brought out in every chapter and alternative approaches to achievement of sustainable environmental management are discussed. The argument is that there should be a paradigm shift from over-reliance on natural resources to curb environmental degradation and resource depletion. This may be achieved through such ways as scientific innovation and creativity, amongst other means of supporting community livelihood which should be encouraged. Easing the pressure on the environment through diversification of livelihood means is essential to facilitate protection, conservation and replenishment of the environment and the resources therein. This is however, not meant to downplay the crucial role that natural resources can play in eliminating poverty, being one of the major hindrances to achieving sustainable development. As such, the book also explores the various elements of environmental security and how they relate to sustainable development. Unless the food insecurity problem is adequately addressed, any efforts to achieve environmental protection and sustainability in the country will be futile. That is why the use of resources, fair trade practices and technology for food security is important.

Kenya has launched a roadmap to guide the process of achieving the sustainable development goals. The discourse is therefore relevant both in the broader arena and the Kenyan context.

The book targets the general reader, scholars, government agencies, Non-Governmental organisations and all stakeholders who have an interest in the environment and sustainable development. The environment is a heritage that belongs to all. Human beings have a duty to take care of the environment. The book thus explores the broad theme of “Nurturing Our Environment for Sustainable Development.” It is an ideal that is achievable.

Dr. Kariuki Muigua, Ph.D., FCI Arb
Chartered Arbitrator
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