

George Otiango Owiti, Principle, Kenya Wildlife Training Institute in Naivasha. He shared his view on the goals of capacity building for the wise use of wetlands during the Kigali Forum for Wetlands, 8 to 12 July 2013, which took place in Kigali, Rwanda.



UNEP-TEEB: *What is the profile of the people that you train at Kenya Wild life Institute ?*

George Otiango, Owiti: The people we train are mainly practitioners involved in the management of wetland sites in their countries. Our training programme focuses on what knowledge and skills they require to conserve wetlands and minimize threats to them. We emphasize issues of wise use so as to minimize threats to wetlands

UNEP-TEEB: *What have you observed as major training needs and what knowledge and skill are important for the people that you train?*

George Otiango, Owiti : One of the key things we try emphasize is the value of wetlands, because the trainees will have to inform policy makers and people on the ground why wetlands are important . So one of the key training modules we deliver is on valuation of wetlands. We also offer training on performing wetland inventories and how to deal with stakeholders, raising awareness and communication.

Capacity building means giving knowledge and skills and the right attitude so our trainees can go back home and accomplish their tasks.

UNEP-TEEB: *What can you describe as some of the achievements and changes observed as a result of your training programmes?*

George Otiango, Owiti : It is difficult to quantify the results of our programmes but we have evidence that some of our alumni especially from Uganda and Tanzania have been able to implement what they have done in the course mainly engaging with policy-makers.

UNEP-TEEB: **Capacity building is one of the three main pillars of this Kigali Forum, the other two being research and policy. What is your definition of capacity building?**

It means giving knowledge and skills and the right attitude so our trainees can go back home and accomplish their tasks. It also means they can pass on this information to the key stakeholders they work with. We educate them and give them knowledge so they can promote the wise use of wetlands. If a community does not benefit from the wetland they will find it very hard to conserve it.

UNEP-TEEB: *What are your views of the TEEB for water and wetlands report?*

George Otiango, Owiti: I think it is a useful report that will be critical for those of us working in environment and wetlands to help us understand how to value wetlands and especially when dealing with policy makers to say how much it would cost. Value is not only monetary but also includes other values which can be cultural and social. All wetlands don't have the same function, so there are many aspects to be considered before deciding on how to use a wetland.