REPUBLIC OF KENYA

COUNTY ASSEMBLY OF LAIKIPIA

THE HANSARD

Wednesday, 27th March, 2024

The House met at the Assembly Chambers at 9.20 a.m.

[The Speaker (Hon. Lantano Nabaala) in the Chair]

PRAYERS

NOTICES OF MOTION

REPAIR AND MAINTENANCE OF STREET LIGHTS IN MAJOR TOWNS

Hon. Salim Edung: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I beg to give notice of the following motion,

THAT AWARE THAT County transport including streetlight is the function of the County Government as stipulated in part 2 of the fourth schedule of the Constitution of Kenya 2010;

FURTHER AWARE THAT the installation of streetlights in major towns in the County and its environs has been done to some extent in order to beef up security, improve road safety for pedestrians and drivers and allow realization of a 24-hour economy;

CONCERNED THAT most of the streetlights in the major towns in the County are non-functional rendering most of the streets in major towns in the County unattainable of the benefits streetlighting brings;

This House URGES the County Government to repair and maintain the existing streetlights in the major towns of the County.

Thank you, Hon. Speaker.

MOTION

TREE PLANTING THROUGH SEED BROADCASTING

Hon. Parleto Lekopien: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Honourable Speaker, I beg to move the following motion;

THAT, AWARE THAT implementation of specific national government policies on natural resources and environmental conservation, including soil and water conservation; and forestry is a function of the County Government as stipulated in part 2 of the fourth schedule of the Constitution of Kenya 2010;

FURTHER AWARE THAT forest resources in our country are valuable natural endowment that must be sustainably managed for present and future generations;

NOTING THAT Forest resources offer a range of benefits and opportunities for local and national economic development, improved livelihoods and provision of environmental goods and services such as watershed protection and carbon sequestration;

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APPRECIATING THAT Aerial seeding is a technique of sowing seeds by spraying them through aerial mechanical means;

ACKNOWLEDGING THAT application of aerial seeding technology in restoration of degraded forestlands is significantly cheaper compared to manual planting of seedlings and the technology is also faster and effective in rehabilitating inaccessible and difficult terrain;

Mr. Speaker, I would like to move this motion and urge the County Government to help in doing the seed broadcasting through aerial planting. Forest is one of the main sources of Carbon credits, Water around the county and mitigating pollution.

Hon. Speaker, if we plant more trees in different areas of the country, we will try to eradicate the water problems that face this County at most, the Country through the help of carbon credit. We will also earn more through the mechanism and also eradicate the drought problem facing this country.

I want to urge County Government of Laikipia to try and plant trees through; aerial seeding planting, forest lands and the low of savannah land. If we do that, we will yield more from the tree planting and get more from water harvesting. If we do more trees around Aberdare, Mukogodo or around Mt. Kenya, we will for sure get more water downstream.

We will try and get relevant authorities and make or get carbon credits. Thus, it will eventually help us move on and get more money for tree planting and to help in building more dams such that once we plant more trees, we will also harvest enough water for our animals and for agriculture around this County. I want to urge Hon. Umija to please second this.

Hon. Catherine Umija: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to second this motion on tree broadcasting. I think this is one of the newest technologies that the country or the county needs to embrace.

It is cheaper in terms of ensuring that we are not using a lot of fuel or anything else. Since these trees usually are put in sort of balls, they are broadcasted using maybe aerial method or any other method that can be used.

This will help especially in terms of how Hon. Lekopien said in ensuring there is more afforestation in our region and in turn, we will be able to improve carbon credit as he has eluded; thus, earning carbon credits as Laikipia county.

I know that right now, the major climatic changes debates are here and there and it is something discussed worldwide. As Kenya, we need to improve on the way we are doing things using new technology.

I know that long time ago we used to broadcast seeds in such a way that we just put the live seeds on the ground. However, nowadays the technology is such that seeds are kept in a ball shape which is fed well. Therefore, if it falls on the ground it grows very fast compared to the normal seed process which seeds undergo. I would like the county to embrace this technology because it is really affordable. We can also give this to students so that they can do it.

We have been doing the normal tree planting by burying seedlings but this is also a better way of doing it especially in areas that have dense forest cover which is inaccessible. We can use the aerial method to ensure that our seeds are replanted again. I support the motion. Thank you.

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Speaker: Thank you, Hon. Lekopien and Hon. Umija.

(Question proposed)

Speaker: I open the floor for Members to contribute to the debate.

Hon. Daniel Mugweru: Thank you, Hon. Speaker for the opportunity given to me to make my contribution in support of the motion regarding tree planting through aerial seed broadcasting. One of the things that we must agree on as a House, as a county and as a nation is that trees are so important to all of us and to the entire nation. Another thing we must agree on is that human beings, myself being one of them, have destroyed forests in this country. Thirdly, we must agree that we must work very hard to make sure that we restore our forests to what they were before.

Hon. Speaker, by all means, everybody should be concerned about how we can plant as many trees as possible. As stated in the motion, planting trees through aerial broadcasting is one of the best things we can do especially for areas designated as forests. Most of the areas in the forests are not accessible and this could be a better way of planting trees. At the same time, it will be faster and efficient, and will enable planting even in areas where we as a community cannot go.

So, it is a very timely motion especially at this time when we are expecting heavy rainfall more so in Laikipia. This is the high time for us as a County Government to set an example and agree that we are supposed to plant these trees. Not that the government has declared that date 4, 5 or 32 are days for planting. It should be a regular thing for the County of Laikipia. We plant trees when it has been declared a tree planting day but we also declare in our hearts. You just wake up in the morning and say that tomorrow you will plant a tree. You can even declare your day. Any day is a tree planting day

Hon. Speaker, the challenge we have in this country is that we only sit down and wait for our TVs to tell us that a certain day is a tree planting day, even in your own home where you live and are supposed to plant trees even during the dry season because you can use your own water to water the tree. Yet, someone says that they are waiting for Labour Day because it is a day for them to plant a tree in their home. Hon. Speaker, it is ironical.

Before we talk about the forest even in your home, you are talking about waiting for the government to declare a Tree Planting Day. It is as if you are waiting to be paid for planting in your own farm.

Hon. Speaker, we need to take up responsibility. We should wake up and support this issue of planting trees for our own good. Not for the good of nation. If we do it in a very small way at home, you will find the entire county will be full of trees. Today, the Mt. Kenya we used to know, the forest, the water catchment areas; when I was young everybody feared to go there because the area was swampy. Today we are driving vehicles to those places. Places where we used to sink. We have gone to an extent of deforesting even the catchment areas.

Mr. Speaker, river Nyariginu, the river we used to give as an example of permanent rivers while in school. Today it turned to be very seasonal. The books that were written before that Nyariginu is a permanent river should be re-written to a seasonal river. At the same time along the river, trees were cut. You see the river end to end. We have gone to an extent of deforesting along the river and Mt. Kenya. How about our homes.

It is the high time that we first own these issues of planting trees and put it in our heart. We should agree it is time to plant trees whether the President declares it or not. It's upon you.

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We own this responsibility and take it collectively as a County and individual. We even need to move out of offices to educate our people on the importance of planting and preserving the existing trees. We should even pay the old *wazee* too and tell the people the areas we used to have forests before drying. We should also have some of them as an example, who can say how they used to burn charcoal in Doldol or Endana resulting to deforestation.

Mr. Speaker, in Umande some years ago when I was young, in an acre of land we could get over 20 bags of maize or 20 bags of tomatoes. Today if I harvest 2 bags in one acre, I will be celebrated by the whole village. Most of the year we don't even get a bag. People may say there is no relationship between trees and rain. Here in Umande, I can tell the rainfall in Umande and in Meru. There is no comparison. Our people are moving from Umande to farm at Mt. Kenya where production is better.

I request the County Government to move out of office and tell people the importance of planting trees. Let us own this as individuals. Now the government needs to go to areas that have forests to broadcast seeds in our forests. There are people in this county who went ahead and sub-divided the forest areas.

If you go to Nyahururu on your way to Rumuruti there was a forest area that was there and it has been sub-divided. People are farming there. If we cannot broadcast seeds there then we do the *Shamba* system.

During the Moi era, there was *shamba* system. We get like 50 acres and plant trees and you are allowed to farm there as you take care of trees. That is how Mt. Kenya was maintained during the KANU era. If you want to know that we are going in the wrong direction as a country, look at every timber station in Nanyuki. We are seeing huge logs of trees. These trees are cut from Mt. Kenya. Let us be honest. If you move from here to Narumoru, in every yard there are huge logs of trees. They have been allowed to go to forests and cut trees.

Mr. Speaker, we must wake up as a county and say no to this. We should start talking to our people to plant trees. Some areas we know in this county, we will be able to like Mt. Kenya which was meant to reach Nanyuki-Meru Road. Today the place is deforested. Senior government officials who were here before destroyed our future. We should not be embarrassed by saying so. They sub-divided lands and now they own them.

Mr. Speaker, as a County we need to wake up and see the reality. If Hon. Gitahi knows that in Githiga Ward there is a place that was designated for forest, you should be able to wake up and say that Honourable so and so many years ago took that forest and made it his own. That is the only way we shall help this country.

I support the motion and call the Hon. Members to own up this responsibility. Whether it involves us setting a budget for the same, or we move out of the House and go to those areas that had forest and tell those people that this is a forest area and we need to plant trees. We should move to the community and make sure that forests are restored as it were before we destroyed the nature that God gave us. I support and call upon the Hon. Members to continue supporting and put it in their hearts to believe that it is their responsibility. Thank you.

Hon. Joseph Gitahi: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I must say that the mover of this motion is a wonderful person because the motion is timely and significant. Above all, it is relevant to the times that we are living. I support this motion on development and spread of seedlings so that we regenerate our forests.

Hon. Speaker, I want to say that we hail the President for seeing it necessary that every 13th of November is a National Tree Planting Day. It is a step forward and together with the

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motion that has been put forward, I believe that these are enough initiatives to do ecological restoration.

Hon. Speaker, trees and forests are very important. I happened to travel with you to Arusha and I remember your commentary on the issue of tree planting and forests in that part of the world. The air is clean and there is a lot of wind breaking hence less noise pollution. Actually, there is no issue of air pollution. Those who took time to listen to the expert opinions of those who attended the conference during the recent climate change that happened in Nairobi, they talked about very important issues that comes with forests and trees.

I understand that the current climate change that we are experiencing is purely drawn from deforestation. It is a build-up of greenhouse gases that raises the temperatures causing the desertification in some areas and also causing flooding and destruction of set ecological systems that were there before. If we plant trees, we are going to fix a lot of green house gases and carbon dioxide. These are the sole starters of problems which we have in our climate. Therefore, I dearly support the issue of tree planting to ensure that we have got enough forest cover.

Mr. Speaker, on 13th November last year, the people who serve in the environment department together with the President, said that this country has cropped the 10% forest cover but we do not need mere statistics. We need to see it on the ground. In my last sitting as the Chairperson of the Agriculture Committee, we chaired together with an initiative called Poralep. We gave a lot of insights and ideas on how we can continue planting trees that are ecologically fit. This calls that we first have good and ample research so that we may identify the breed of trees that grow in different areas and that can pick up with the broadcasting system so that we are able to have good trees and trees that will continue regenerating fertility of our soils in this great county.

There is something that Hon. Mugweru said but before that, there is a lot of benefits which comes with this one including soil structures. If you go to Laikipia North today, it has a lot of erosion and big gulleys and free lands which are agents of soil erosion. So, this is a timely motion like I said. As Members of this House, we need to support it for the betterment of our county.

As I end, there is something that Hon. Mugweru struggled to say because what we want is that whatever we say, it be embedded in our culture. Recently, I was doing a paper and I found an argument by professor Dan Eily. He has written a nice book called ‘we are predictably rational’. He says that whenever we want to have development, we must embed it in our culture so that we will not abandon it and we will own everything that comes with that development move. Today we are legislating as we are developing this motion and seeking its support, it is important that it gets in our culture unlike he has said, let us get out of our offices and get to work.

It is important and I want to ask this Honourable House, not only to pass this motion but ensuring that even at the budget level to have enough money for the regeneration of our forests. We have got the whole Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources and we need to see these people working on the ground because we understand that the initiative we take today, will have effect and will be beneficial to us in a decade or so to come.

Hon. Speaker, there is a time when we had higher levels of green house gases like a century ago and scientists have recorded that one. What happened is that once there was rain, vegetation was up again and that was enough to fix greenhouse gases and correct the climate patterns and were able to enjoy the richness that comes with a reliable climate for a like a

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century. So let us plant a lot of vegetation in either trees or bamboos so that we may fix these changes in climate.

Hon. Speaker, just to expound on how climate change is real in our modern day lives, today farmers do not know whether to till their lands or not because our weather patterns are not predictable anymore. This can be corrected through enough forest cover, planting trees and ensuring that the same is passed down to different generations. That is what I mean when I said that we embed it in our culture. I thank the mover and the seconder of the motion. I wish to ask all the Members that we support this motion both in legislation and also in terms of finances. Thank you.

Hon. Benson Kuria: Mheshimiwa Spika, nashukuru kwa hii nafasi ambayo umenipatia. Kabla ya kuchangia huu mswada ambao umeletwa na Mheshimiwa kutoka Sosian, niweze kuguzia sehemu moja ya biblia. Katika kitabu cha Matayo 5:9, 'heri wapatanishi kwa maana wataitwa wana wa Mungu'. Ningetaka kuhisi Wajumbe ya kwamba sote tuwe wapatanishi kwa sababu katika Jimbo la Laikipia, sisi ndio kioo na macho ya wote.

Mheshimiwa Spika, nikiweza kuchangia huu mswada wa siku ya leo, ningependa kusema kwa Idara ya Maji wakiongozwa na Mwenyekiti wao ya kwamba wakati umefika ambapo tumewekewa zawadi kwa meza ili tuweze kuona ya kwamba wana Laikipia wamepata mazingira maalum. Najua ya kwamba sasa hivi tunaponena na kuongea, mwaka uliopita, siku ya upanzi wa miti, kuna kampuni ambayo ilikuwa imeagizwa na serikali pale Nyahururu. Walikuwa wamefadhiliwa na Serikali Kuu na ukienda mahali pale ulikuwa unapewa miti bure bora tu ujue vile utasafirisha.

Sasa hivi ukiingia katika wadi yetu ya Tigithi, Segera, Mukogodo Magharibi na Sosian, ni zile sehemu ambazo zina janga kuu kwa upanzi wa miti. Sasa hivi ukitembea Segera, utapata asilimia nne kwa mia. Ni wakati tunatenga bajeti kwa hivyo, hii idara ihakikishe ya kwamba kuna pesa wamepeana ili kila wadi itengewe pesa zake kama elfu mia tano, ili tuone ya kwamba kila wadi iko na upanzi wa miti. Utapata kwa sababu mwananchi hana hela, unamwambia apande miti lakini hata kupata shilingi kumi inakuwa ni shida.

Idara ya Maji na Kilimo wahakikishe ya kwamba kuna pesa ambazo zimetengwa ili tuone ya kwamba wadi zetu kumi na tano ziko na miche karibu ya milioni moja. Hata kama tunategemea Serikali, tunafaa kuona ya kwamba huu mswada ambao umeletwa na Mheshimiwa Sammy ulikwa wa baraka katika Laikipia yetu. Huu ni mswada ambao utaleta mabadiliko ya hali ya anga baada ya miaka kumi kama itafuatiliwa.

Kama litatiliwa maanani inaamisha wadi ambayo Mheshimiwa Sammy anawakilisha kutoka Kilimon na Laaban, hakuna watu wamepanda miche. Hii ikiwa sheria na kila mtu apatiwe na idara miti kumi ama ishirini, Wadi ya Sosian iko na zaidi ya wananchi elfu arobaini. Inamaanisha kwa kila mwaka miti elfu arobaini itapandwa na baada ya miaka kumi hali ya anga itabadilika.

Nashukuru sana kwa sababu ninajua ya kwamba ujumbe wowote ambao unakuja mahali hapa, mwenyezi Mungu huwa amenenea huyo mtu. Ndiposa amechaguliwa kuwa kipaza sauti cha kufikisha ujumbe ambao unafaa. Mheshimiwa Spika, mimi nitafikisha hapa lakini heri wapatanishi maana wataitwa wana wa Mungu.

Hon. Salim Edung: Mheshimiwa Spika, nashukuru kwa kunipatia hii nafasi. Kwanza nampatia pongezi Mheshimiwa Lekopien kwa kuleta hii mswada ya miti katika Bunge hili. Katika Kenya yetu, kuna wataalamu ambao wamekaa katika maabara kwa kupanga ujuzi wa

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kuleta miti ambayo ukipanda, baada ya siku chache zinakua. Si kama awali mtu alikuwa anaenda msituni na kutoa miche na kupanda na kukaa kwa muda bila kukua.

Kwa sababu ya ufumbuzi ambao uko kutoka maabara, unapotoa miche na kuipeleka mashambani, si misitu pekee inastahili kupelekwa miti. Tunafaa kujua ya kwamba tumepanda miche mahali pengi katika Laikipia. Ukifuata barabara ya kuelekea Nyeri, unakuta kibao kimeandikwa kwamba miti ni maji, miti ni chakula, miti ni dawa. Huyo mfumbuzi ninashirikiana na yeye kwa asilimia mia moja. Kwa lugha ya mama, tunasema *seketet* ni miti na dawa.

Bila kuangalia hayo yote ambayo tunaongea hapa tukijua ya kwamba bila kuweka miti katika sehemu zetu na si msitu, mwaka uliopita tuliangalia na kuona mito yetu mingi ilikauka kwa sababu ya kukosa upanzi wa miti katika eneo zetu. Jambo lingine ni kulikuwa na marehemu Wangari Maathai ambaye ndiye peke yake ambaye alikuwa anadhibiti miti. Sisi ndio Wangari wa Maathai ambao tumebaki. Inafaa tukuze miti katika misitu yetu na katika mashamba yetu.

Tukipanda miti kwa misitu peke yake, huko peke yake ndiko tutapata mvua. Sehemu zingine ambazo tuko, hatutapata mvua kwa sababu mvua huletwa na miti. Bila kupanda miti, hakuna mvua ambayo tunaweza kupata katika Laikipia. Tungependa Wabunge ambao wako hapa waunge huu mswada mkono ili tuanze kupanda miti. Bunge la Kaunti linafaa kuwa na sehemu ya kupanda miti ili itakapofika siku ya kupanda miti, hasa mwezi wa nne ambao tunatarajia mvua waweze kupanda.

Mheshimiwa Umija atapanda miti namna gani na hajapatiwa miti ya kupanda pale? Hata kama ni ploti, lazima miti ipandwe ili hewa ya eneo hilo iwe sawa. Sisi tungependa tuzingatie kupanda miti katika sehemu zetu na katika misitu yetu ila sisi tunaangalia misitu peke yake. Bwana Spika, tukiangalia Mlima Kenya na Aberderes, huko kuna miti lakini ukiangalia katikati ya msitu, miti mingi imekatwa ilhali hapa mbele tunafungwa macho kuna miti.

Mara mingi nikipitia pale nakuta akina mama wakibeba miti kwa migongo yao wakitoka kwenye misitu. Sisi tunafaa kukuza misitu na katika mashamba yetu. Mswada ambao umeletwa na Mheshimiwa Lekopien ni kwa sababu katika sehemu zetu kuna kiangazi hasa kwa sasa tunahamisha mifugo kwenye Mlima Kenya kwa sababu tulikosa kupanda miti. Hatujakosa kupanda miti ila ni kuweka mikakati ya kupanda miti. Unaweza kupanda miti na bila kuiangalia hiyo miti inakauka.

Naomba Waheshimiwa wenzangu waunge huu mswada mkono kwa sababu umeletwa kwa njia ambayo inastahili kushikiliwa. Huu mswada umeletwa kwa wakati ambao mvua inakaribia kunyesha Laikipia ili tupande miti. Mheshimiwa Lekopien ama Mheshimiwa Umija akipanda aandike ya kwamba ndiye amepanda hiyo miti.

Ukienda nyuma ya Bunge hili la Kaunti, kuna miti ambayo nimeona imewekwa kibao kwamba imepandwa na Spika Patrick Waigwa. Hii inaonyesha ya kwamba miaka ambayo alikuwa pale aliona ni vizuri apande miti kwa sababu kuna waheshimiwa watakuja huko na atakuwa mfano wa kupanda miti kwa kuangalia vile ambavyo amepanda. Kwa hayo machache Bwana Spika, ninaunga mkono mswada wa Mheshimiwa Lekopien na naomba wenzangu wachangie. Asanteni.

Speaker: Thank you, Hon. Salim. I think Honourable Members have contributed enough. I will now take this opportunity to invite the mover of the motion to reply.

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Hon. Parleto Lekopien: Thank you, Hon. Speaker. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Members for supporting this motion. As you support this motion, it is for the benefits of each one of us here and for the benefit of the country and for the future generations. Thank you, and I beg everyone of us to support the motion.

(Question put and agreed to)

ADJOURNMENT

Speaker: The sittings of this House now stand adjourned until later today Wednesday, 27th March, 2024 at 2.30 p.m.

The House rose at 9.50 a.m.

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