



ARCOS Regional NGO Network and Leadership Development Meeting

Centre Pastoral Notre Dame de Fatima
Musanze, Rwanda, 4th-7th October 2011

PARTICIPANTS DECLARATION

We, Heads and representatives of NGOs operating in the Albertine Rift region and members of ARCOS Network, having met in Musanze on 4th-7th October 2011 at ARCOS Regional NGO Network and Leadership Development Meeting organized by the Albertine Rift Conservation Society (ARCOS).

We wish to pay tribute to the People of Rwanda under the wise leadership of HE President Paul Kagame and for the warm welcome and the hospitality extended to participants by the sister NGOs

Realizing that the Albertine Rift is a hotspot for biodiversity conservation and has high proportion of endemic plants and animals, and its important role for various biological and ecological processes and community livelihoods and the economy of Albertine Rift countries.

Appreciating the role of NGOs/CBOs in conservation, community development and awareness and government efforts to involve civil society in sustainable development.

Appreciating the efforts by our governments to lead our countries to sustainable development

Noting that in spite of many actors in development and conservation operating in the region, the impact remains unrealized being scattered and confused in the small circle of the implementers.

Appreciating the various and diverse efforts invested into NGO capacity building that are creating united impact on the ground;

Noting with a concern that diversity of conservation and development issues currently affecting the region seriously impact the poor and vulnerable rural populations who depend on the natural resources for their livelihoods;

Observing that most of the natural resources in the Albertine Rift region are contiguous and transboundary in nature yet their management is mostly localized and limited to national boundaries and call for the need collaboration and networking in implementing conservation activities within the Albertine Rift region.

Noting with concern the adverse effects of climate change and the weak capacity of the poor communities to cope with these effects on their lives and biodiversity.

Realizing the need for concerted effort to realize sustainable development for the good of both biodiversity and people

Noting with satisfaction various international and national government policies and strategies

We hereby declare and commit ourselves to:

1. Recognize the ARCOS NGO Network as a platform for exchange among the NGOs and collaborative action on environmental issues in the region and call for establishment of an NGO Network Desk at ARCOS.
2. Set up a Regional Committee to support ARCOS Secretariat in the coordination of Regional NGO Network activities
3. Authorize the Regional Committee to draft Network Operation Framework with guidelines describing the scope, membership and operational issues for the Network.
4. Engage in communication and information sharing at regional level for experience sharing and networking on conservation and sustainable development activities in the region;
5. Jointly fundraise for and work towards the establishment of a sustainable regional NGO Fund purely to address community livelihoods as a component of the network activities.
6. Urge governments of the region to demonstrate more leadership in the implementation of the Albertine NGO activities and donors to scale up support to the transboundary collaboration initiatives to ensure sustainability of programs
7. Urge governments of the region to develop or harmonize policies, guidelines and agreements required for the sustainable management, use and sharing of benefits of Albertine Rift and shared natural resources
8. Urge governments of the region to ensure transparency and good natural resource governance processes through sustainable and fair natural resource management in the region
9. Welcome development activities, and call for harmonized Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) guidelines on development activities taking place in the Albertine Rift region, particularly on oil and gas activities.
10. Urge the development of policies to ensure that local communities benefit from the management and use of natural resources.
11. Urge local and central governments to consider increasing budget allocations towards conservation initiatives within the Albertine Rift in order to minimize over dependency on donors.
12. Urge governments in the Albertine Rift to recognize civil society organizations as important partners in creating public awareness, gender & youth and the marginalized group empowerment for sustainable natural resources management
13. Resolve to work together to promote informed decision and participation of all stakeholders in addressing climate change, environmental impact assessments and mainstreaming environment and needs of people in development agenda;
14. Appreciate the leadership and coordination role played by the Albertine Rift Conservation Society in the region and funding support from The MacArthur Foundation for the Albertine Rift Regional NGO Network.

We whose signatures are appended below own the declaration

LIST OF SIGNATORIES OF THE DECLARATION

No	Nom de l' ONG	Représentant	Signature
1	A-B-O	MUGERIMYANGE Charles	
2	ACNR	NSENGIMANA Serge J.	
3	DBICOK	Kizwano Mwanang Robert	
4	DAEB	NIYONGABO J. Baptist	
5	JPE	HAMUKONGE JACK	
6	ARECO	UMUTONI Monique	
7	RECOR	BAVALDI Michael Joseph	
8	HORIZON NATURE	SHALUKOMA Vindicien	
9	I.N.P.E	Bantu Lukamba	
10	CIDOPY	Achille BIFFUMBU	
11	ABELE	NTUKAMAZINA Jacqueline	
12	URP	KABIHOGO BEATRICE	
13	REBO	GASHUMBA DOMINIQUE	
14	NATURE UGANDA	MFITUNDINDA HENRY	
15	ARDI	Musabimana Patrice	
16	NECF	REV. CANDI NASHI BAHUKU	
17	NAHI	Richard Mwesigwa	
18	FLEVICA	KAMBALE SUVANELRE	
19	AFED	MTANGALA LUMPU	
20	ARCOS	Dr Sam KANYAMIBWA	