



# Somali Ecological Society

Conference: Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> June 2017

## SHORT REPORT

The Somali Ecological Society (SES) met at the Indian YMCA in Central London with 45 participants in attendance (Annex 1).



A series of presentations were delivered to the meeting as given in the Agenda (Annex 2) culminating in ideas for future SES actions being collected and discussed by the Conference attendees (Annex 3).

Letters and messages of support from the Government of Somalia were delivered, both for the meeting (Annex 4) and immediately after the meeting, since the Government in Mogadishu was informed overnight by the Diaspora attendees of the meeting and its deliberations.

Hence the Conference meeting has acted as a stakeholder consultation with a rich array of technical and up to date contextual information being offered from the Somali diaspora and UK friends of the Society in attendance.

As a result of the consultation and lively deliberations of the attendees it became clear that:

→ **The role and focus of the SES will be to:**

1. Re-establish itself as the technical support partner to the Somali Government on environment and conservation and enlist Donor support for its work, utilizing its Diaspora membership and volunteers in the country;
2. Re-establish its professional links with international wildlife and conservation organizations in Europe and elsewhere;
3. Establish technical partnerships with organizations on the ground in Somalia and Somaliland and support their work in environment and conservation.

→ **To have a tangible impact in Somalia three intervention areas emerged**

for the SES to aim to develop project proposals on:

1. To provide a think tank, linked to the Somali diaspora with technical skills, to support the rebuilding, strengthening and planning capacity of the Ministry of Livestock, Forestry & Range in Somalia;
2. To assist the Somali Government in carrying out a “base line” survey of the environmental situation in Somali and Somaliland utilizing the SES volunteers in many parts of the country and the Diaspora;
3. To support the provision of environmental training and awareness education to Somali refugees, currently in Kenya and Ethiopia, as a preparation for their repatriation.

These three intervention areas will ultimately aim to support on the ground community projects throughout Somalia linked to income generation for returned refugees and local people [e.g. tree planting; improved farming techniques; solar technologies etc.]. These can take place through existing Non-Government Organisations present in Somalia and Somaliland with technical support from the SES.

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Note the presentations made to the Conference meeting can be seen on the SES website.

**List of Conference Attendees\***

1. Abdulqadir Gedi
2. Giama Fara
3. Abdulqadir Dini
4. Hassan Ali Surey
5. Sue Mahony
6. Harry Leefe
7. William Leefe
8. Scott Jones
9. Yusuf Ali
10. Dr Mohamed A Haji
11. Des Mahony
12. Mohamed Abdi
13. Fiasal Abdi
14. Ahmed Moalim
15. A. Karani
16. C. Shire
17. M. Darood
18. Ahmed sh Aden
19. Daadir Geedi
20. Hayad Abdisallan
21. A. Muse
22. Taramdi Ali Hadi
23. Tessa Awe
24. Ahmed Gagale
25. Mohamed Warsame
26. Harun Sh Nur
27. Amina Hassan
28. Abduallahi Bahass
29. Hussein Hassan
30. M. Ighe
31. Rhoda Ibrahim
32. Qalif Sidbid
33. Susan Malakh
34. Amina Khalif
35. Yusuf
36. Hanan Shidane
37. Fuad Uddin
38. Mohamoud Ibrahim
39. Abdullahi Ibrahim
40. Ahmed Omer

\*There were 4-6 delegates who did not write their names on the register



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## Delivered Programme

**Objectives of the day:** To outline the history, current status, potential funding and future role for the SES in Somalia.

### 0930-1010 *Arrivals and Registration*

#### 1. The SES and its potential role: (2 hours)

- 1010-1020 Welcoming remarks - Mohamoud Ibrahim, Chair of the SES
- 1020-1100 The origins and history of the SES and its current status - John Jenks, Treasurer, SES & Former Lecturer, British Forestry project Somalia  
The origins and history of the SES continued – Dr. Mohamed Abdirahman
- 1100-1120 A vision for the future role of the SES - Harry Leefe, SES President
- 1120-1135 Messages of support from Somalia
- 1135-1150 Somali Vet Forum Prof Ahmed
- 1150-1200 *Plenary Questions and Comments to the Panel*

### 1200-1215 *Coffee Break*

#### 2. The Somali ecological and environmental status: (1¼ hours)

- 1215-1230 The status of the Somalia's coastal marine ecology perspectives - Dr Y Ali, Former Director, Science Division, Somali Academy of Arts and Science, Somalia
- 1230-1255 Conservation of Afromontane juniper-olive forests - Dr Scott Jones, Forest Ecologist, Mind the Gap
- 1255-1310 Wildlife of Somalia: Current status and challenges - Mohamed Ighe, Former head of conservation education in Wildlife Department
- 1310-1330 *Plenary Questions and Comments to the Panel*

### 1330-1415 *Midday Break*

#### 3. Opportunities for SES project funding: (1 hours)

- 1415-1445 Impact of environmental degradation on the livelihoods of the Somali people, especially women - Roda M Ibrahim, CEO, SAAFI and Co-founder of Somali week in the UK
- 1445-1515 Potential funding for environmental programmes under a 'green growth banner' - Des Mahony, CIDT, University of Wolverhampton, Former Lecturer, British Forestry project Somalia

#### 4. Priorities and conclusions for the SES way forward: (45 mins)

- 1515-1550 Plenary feedback and suggestions for an SES action plan for the way forward - Facilitated by Des Mahony & Chaired by Mohamoud Ibrahim
- 1550-1600 Concluding Statements by Harry Leefe (President ) & Mohamoud Ibrahim (Chairman)

### 1600 *Closure & Depart*

### SES Conference (20/6/17) recommendations from conference attendees

SES Actions: Way Forward: *The Conference participants were asked to give their ideas for how the SES should go forward now. Their feedback was verbal and written and is captured in the list below.*

#### Capacity strengthening

- To support actions to the Somali government
  - **Survey the government capacity within country (baseline)**
  - Re-establish environment and conservation department
- In order to protect the environment we have to make a short term plan and long term and deter degradation of rural areas especially deforestation, soil erosion, wise water management
- Re-open schools for Afgoye Forestry Wildlife Training Centre working with community local people – hiring
- To help Somalian government to arrange country survey on reality in conservation and wildlife
- Co-ordinate activities of environmental Ministries in Somali

#### Environmental actions

- Multiple small projects with the people (income generation, range, agriculture etc.)
- Need the diaspora to invest in Somalia and Somali government needs their help. Best to work via government and for the government to co-ordinate. Government includes the local authorities
- The Somaliland and Somalia need to build solar capacity
- In the Lower Shabelle drought and famine focus on how to grow crops so that the livestock people have food to eat.
- How to deal with drought so that the plants and crops do not dry out
- Seek funding for renewable energy for domestic use
- Establish a Coast Guard service to patrol and protect marine resources
- Non private ownership of utilities (e.g solar field energy) to minimise corruption
- Focus on achievable plans such as wildlife and environment green growth and protection conservation
- Management of water- Somalia's biggest resource, will change with climate change and needs addressing
- Women and the environment: charcoal, water, fuel wood collection are all issues that mostly affect women and on which women impact. So an analysis of post-diaspora, post-refugee ecological roles of women needs consideration.
- Think about pastoral communities, because the refugees will return without livestock and so they will need livestock and support for the first year. So a framework is needed to support the returnees
- Somalia needs coast guards
- Training for afforestation
- Properly utilise the water flooding from the Juba and Shabelle rivers. Divert to create agriculture. They have become incredibly polluted and need cleaning before they can be used.
- Target - the diaspora to invest in environmental protection
- At moment Somali people need to teach how they care forest and wildlife

- SES to seek funding for awareness raising project.
- We need to raise the awareness of local people and improve livelihood of rural people by investing in income generating activities and renewable energy sources to save resources and money we pay to kerosene and electricity
- Environmental education to Somali refugees to prepare them for return.

### **Information support to Somalia**

- Actively collect and seek out information on existing environmental activities – big, small, whatever
- In order to promote this organisations activities we need to set up a website where anyone who is interested can obtain information or knowledge about Somalia Ecology and Natural Environment.
- Has to formulate a policy of identifying environmental condition of Somalia. As you know or according to the statistics of Somalia about 60% of population is pastoralist and their livelihood depends upon land (vegetation, pasture, water for grazing)
- SES should act as think tank or lobbying group to target the donors and relief agencies to include in their projects an environment component fund to be used for their development
- To be the link between Somali government, NGO, communities for technical support in conservation projects and the environment
- Knowledge management: collation of evidence is a role that is easy to play from UK to support environmental projects
- Collation of information pertaining to projects of ecological impact

### **SES internal actions**

- SES have focus groups for project proposal development
- SES needs 2 -5 quick wins that enhance reputation and can be measured. Good modest impact that people can feel good about and built on. Specific clear measures to recruit women and young people.
- SES needs to consider its own capacity in terms of who can do what, its time scales, partnerships – a lot of work!
- SES needs a strategy and to define the scale and scope of its landscape work
- Make a modest proposal to apply for money to apply for money!
- SES prepare projects and work with the Somali government
- Role of the diaspora in ecological development needs clarity
- There could be linkages with Universities, Watershed development with dry land areas e.g India...Link to organisations doing similar work
- SES acts as think tank or lobbying group.
- Could another activity be to encourage strong links with existing similar organisations to SES in Somalia / Somaliland (eg. other SES groups), or help establish where they do not already exist, perhaps also at school level? different "chapters" of SES?

## Supporting Messages from Somalia

Message from Minister of Livestock, Forestry & Range

Jamhuuriyadda Federaalka Soomaaliya  
Wasaaradda Xanaanada Xoolaha,  
Dhirta & Daaqa  
Xafiiska Wasiiir Ku-xigeenka



جمهورية الصومال الفيدرالية  
وزارة الثروة الحيوانية، الغابات والمراعي  
مكتب نائب الوزير

(Federal Republic of Somalia Ministry of Livestock, Forestry & Range)  
Office of the Deputy Minister

Ref: WXXDH&D/XWIK/004/2017

Date 19/06/2017

**Support Message To London Conference Somali Ecological Society (SES)**

On behalf of the Ministry of Livestock, Forestry and Range, I wish to express my appreciation to the Somali Ecological Society (SES) invitation to the 20<sup>th</sup> June 2017 Conference in London, UK. Certainly, it would have been an excellent opportunity to participate in such important meeting. Unfortunately, we are unable to attend the conference this year.

Indeed, in Somalia, the environment and natural resources are fundamental to society are far-reaching for predominantly pastoralist society that mainly depend on the livestock for their wellbeing and livelihoods. On the whole, the cultural aspirations and traditions, social structures and economic systems of the households, communities and the nation itself are dependent on the livestock sector, and its resourceful and nurturing habitat – the environment and natural resources.

Hence, Somalia's socio-economic development strategy gives a national priority and significant weight to the environment and natural resources. The overall objectives of the Ministry are formulated and undertaken to achieve such national strategy. As such, with its strategic focus on the environment and natural resources as its core issues that concern the livestock sector, the Ministry is indebted to organizers of this Conference for their hard work and dedication to invigorate the SES that has a strategic commitment to the sustainability of the resources.

Briefly, the SES was founded in 1983 and, arguably, is one of first NGO in Somalia. The SES venture, particularly in its early years, considerably benefitted from the remarkable contribution, devotion and enthusiasm of the late Mr. John D. Leefe OBE who was one of its founders. Other founding members were Somali professionals as well as international experts.

The main objectives of SES, which evolved since its inception, are the pursuit of Sustainable Development principles and practices in managing the environment and natural resources. Aply, this Ministry appreciates the apparent SES re-emergence at this juncture where there is a need for institutions such the SES to participate in and contribute to the rehabilitation and rebuilding Somalia. Undoubtedly, the Ministry encourages SES and others.

Meanwhile, the Federal Government of Somalia is dedicated and actively engages in socio-political initiatives to secure sustainable peace in Somalia. Simultaneously, it is also undertaking series of socio-economic development schemes to rehabilitate and rebuild the war ravaged and neglected national institutions and infrastructures for the past quarter century.

Accordingly, as one of the key social and economic mainstay of the Somali society, this Ministry is at the forefront in the implementation of relevant these strategies, and welcomes and encourages institutions, such as the Somali Ecological Society, to contribute their expertise to these efforts. In conclusion, I wish a successful conference with valuable and constructive outcomes.

Abdikarim Khalif Abdil Dhalac (Deputy Minister and Acting Minister)  
Ministry of Livestock, Forest and Range.



Deputy Minister of Livestock, Forestry & Range

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## **Support letter from Dr AbdullahI Karani ( Former General Manager of National Range Agency)**

### **Message by Dr. Karani for the SES Conference in London on 20 June, 2017.**

Mr. Chairman and Friends,

It gives me great pleasure to be invited to attend this very important Conference of Somali Ecological Society happening today, Tuesday 20 June, 2017 here in London. Unfortunately, other irreversible commitments prevented me to be physically among you this morning, but definitely with you in full spirit.

In 1974/75 Somalia has witnessed one of the worst droughts in its history known as “Dabadheer drought” which starved thousands of people to death and left quarter- million nomads destitute as a result of losing their livestock.

The Somali government has taken measures to protect the environment; this was demonstrated by many activities including Forestry, Wildlife and Range Management for which the National Range Agency (NRA) was created in 1977. During that time, under my leadership, among other achievements;

1. The NRA With the support of the British government represented by late John Leefe established Forestry training schools (Diploma level) in Lafole area, and for the first time we had graduates of Range Management attached to the faculty of agriculture.
2. The NRA enrolled thousands of employees to work in the countrywide on forestry, wildlife and sand dunes projects in exchange for food and rations.
3. With the aim to get all Somalis to see conservation as their duty, the NRA established fifty nurseries throughout the regions and conducted civic education programs on values of trees and benefits of environmental protection; as a result people would come out in large numbers to plant trees, while cutting trees and exporting charcoal were banned by law.
4. NRA commemorated the National Environmental Day every year on April 17.

These are some of the memories I have from the past.

Mr. Chairman and Dear Friends,

As you all know the Somali people have endured 26 years of conflict coupled with environmental degradation, including deteriorating natural resources, diminishing forests and wetlands, deforestation ( burning and exporting charcoal) depleting underground water, regular shortage of fresh drinking water, vanishing plants, drying up of rivers, disappearance and reduced production of livestock etc. With all that mentioned above, in reality it means that Somalia and its people have been denied to live life!

Mr Chairman,

I would like to take this opportunity, to commend SES for their continued and tireless efforts in trying to identify, protect and maintain the environment in Somalia through research projects and providing platforms for scientists and environmentalists, to discuss and present their findings and share information on environmental problems in Somalia.

As you all know the drought which is happening in Somalia now and in East Africa in general is due to lack of appropriate environmental management skills of those countries and it is now up to the whole world to help prevent the disasters that occur frequently in those countries.

Mr Chairman,

Today, as you move on with your deliberations, I hope you will have an opportunity to discuss and come up with remedies for better environmental solutions.

I take this opportunity to call upon the new Government of Somalia to take swift actions, in order to prevent further environmental degradation, which is the cause for the recurrent draughts in the country.

I believe that, with your support and commitment we can together do better environment for Somalia and bring back “life” to its people.

Mr Chairman,

Finally, my sincere and best wishes to my old friends attending this pivotal conference and to the new friends who are joining us to save the Somali environment. I congratulate you for organizing this conference and support the outcome of the Conference. Thank you all. May Allah bless your deliberations.

Dr. Abdullahi Ahmed Karani is a veterinarian and an environmentalist, former General Manager of the National Range Agency and a Laureate of UNEP global 500 environmental award in 1987.

Dated: 15/6/2017