SPEECH BY PROF. PETER M.F. MBITHI, THE VICE-CHANCELLOR DURING THE TRAINING FOR ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY CHAMPIONS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI ON JUNE 11 – 12, 2015 AT CENTRAL CATERING UNIT (CCU) AT 8.30 A.M
The Deputy Vice-Chancellors

Members of University Management Board

Dr. Ayub Macharia, Director, Department of Environmental Education, Information and Public Participation, NEMA

Mr. Brian Waswala, Environmental Education and Training Specialist, UNEP

Heads of Departments

Environmental Sustainability Champions

Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen
It is my great pleasure to welcome you all to this environmental sustainability training for our officers who are involved in implementing our corporate environmental policy and in the process performing environmental sustainability audits. I would like to thank our partners – the National Environment Management Authority (NEMA) and the United Nations Environment Programme, for accepting my request to come and assist us in the training of our officers. I also wish to thank the Principals of colleges thank for their efforts in implementing environmental sustainability programmes in their respective Colleges and who have helped us to prepare and submit quarterly and annual sustainability reports as required by the Government.
Indeed, I also appreciate the work being done by the environmental sustainability champions in this important area of our PC with the Government.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Respect and protection of the environment is one of our core values as stated in the Strategic Plan (2013-2018). Deliberate efforts to examine the impacts of our activities on humans and the environment began in 2008 when an environmental audit was carried out throughout the university campuses. This was followed by the development of the corporate environmental policy in 2009. In 2013, management appointed Prof. David Mungai of the Wangari Maathai Institute for Peace and Environmental Studies to
coordinate environmental sustainability activities in the University. In early 2014, College Principals nominated College Environmental Sustainability Champions. So far, we have 83 sustainability champions representing SWA (6), CHS (13), CAE (4), CBPS (9), CEES (12), CAVS (7), Central (23) and an overall central committee of 8 chaired by Prof. Mungai. Committing these staff and other resources provided by the University Management Board for implementing environmental sustainability activities is a significant investment to promotion of sustainable development by the University of Nairobi.
We have implemented several environmental sustainability projects in the university. Examples include tree planting with exemplary leadership and contribution by the College of Agriculture and Veterinary Sciences (CAVS). To mitigate greenhouse gas emissions from livestock, CAVS in partnership with the Ministry of Energy and Mining are implementing a 120 M$^3$ capacity bio-digester plant which will provide energy to one of the kitchens at Upper Kabete. The University has also actively engaged communities and neighbors in environmental activities in Ngong, Kibwezi, Kwale and other places. Recently, we have engaged with the National Environment Management Authority (NEMA), Water Resources Management Authority
(WARMA) and the Ministry of Environment in addressing environmental degradation problems and their impacts at the CAVS dam at Upper Kabete and at Chiromo Campus where there has been pollution in the Kirichwa Ndogo River.

Ladies and gentlemen,

This training therefore is of strategic importance to the university. When I took over as Vice-Chancellor of this great university early this year, I stated my vision as “to ensure that we become a top-ranked, sustainable, world-class institution with enduring and valuable scholarly excellence”. Your work will contribute to the University of Nairobi’s leadership role in protecting and conserving our environment
and natural resources. Indeed, it will also contribute to my vision for this University. The DVC (A&F) has outlined areas where we need improvements in our environmental sustainability PC performance. It is my hope that this training will give you the necessary knowledge and skills to enable you to perform even better. On the part of the Management, we will support your work as much as we can.
With those remarks I wish you a very successful training.

Thank you

PETER M.F. MBITHI, PhD, EBS
VICE CHANCELLOR
AND
PROFESSOR OF VETERINARY SURGERY