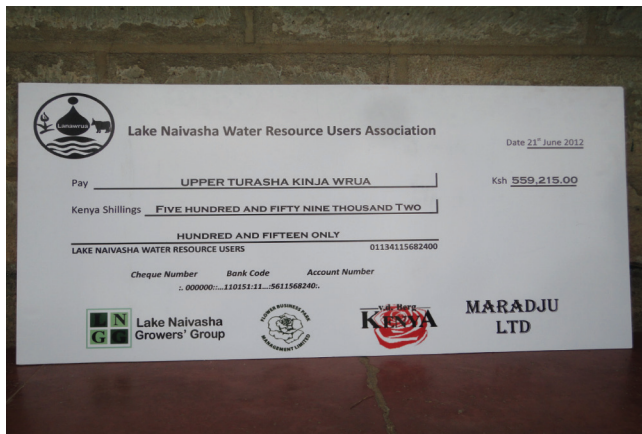


Naivasha Flower growers invest in conservation of the lake



Cheque in favour of upper Turasha Kinja WRUA

The lake Naivasha catchment has undergone many challenges in the past ranging from land degradation, inadequate waste management practices to depressed lake levels. During the drought of 2009, water levels in the lake hit an all time low which led to the realization that going forward, water conservation would be key to survival of the economic success of Naivasha and the well being of the community in the town and its catchment.

In 2009 Care International working with WWF rolled out a conservation project in the upper catchment of Lake Naivasha, linking small holder farmers with large scale horticultural and flower growers around Lake Naivasha. The project, titled Payment for Environmental services, large scale growers rewarding smallholders in Wanjohi and Turasha/kinja areas for conserving the environment. WWF on its part mobilizes trains and supports small holders to implement conservation works on their farms through tree planting and implementing soil conservation technologies such as cultivation along contours, riverbank

protection, grass stripping and terracing. The result is less erosion in the upper catchment thus less turbid water flows in the rivers and ultimately into Lake Naivasha. The small holders are deemed to be selling an environmental service of clean water to the large small farmers downstream who are the buyers of the environmental service. From their conservation efforts, small holders have more fodder for their dairy production and increased crop yields as soil fertility is maintained on their farms. They also receive a pat-on-the-back of 17 dollars per farmer per year from water users around Lake Naivasha.

This year a total of US\$13,868 was contributed to reward 784 small holders at a ceremony held on 21st June at Gathara Township in the Aberdares. Unlike in the last two years where only the Lake Naivasha Growers' Group (LNGG), an association of flower companies in Naivasha, were contributing incentives, this year three more companies namely Maradju, Flower Business Park and Van Den Berg Roses contributed a total of \$ 6130.

LNGG contributed US\$ 7738 bringing its total contribution in the project to over US\$21,000 in three years. The number of beneficiaries also went up from 504 farmers in 2011 to 784 farmers in 2012.

Beneficiaries are organized into two groups of Wanjohi Water Resource Users Association and Upper Turasha/Kinja Water Resource Users Association. Incentives are given to the two Associations who then give vouchers to individual farmers which they use to redeem farm inputs from local agrovet shops. On the buyers' side, the whole transaction is done through Lake Naivasha Water Resource Users Association.

It is hoped that in the coming year, more small holders and large growers, hoteliers and industrial water users will join in the scheme to increase its area of coverage and its impact on conservation of the environment

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