

REPUBLIC OF KENYA



MURANG'A COUNTY ASSEMBLY

PRESS RELEASE

THE STATE OF MURANGÁ WATER

Murangá County Assembly through the Committee on Water, Energy, Forestry, Environment, Natural Resources and Cooperative Management has been notified of plans to carry out massive water abstraction in rivers Gikigie, Irati and Maragua all in Murangá County. The Northern Water Collector Tunnel project being proposed by Athi Water Services Board is intended to convey approximately 140,000 cubic meters of water per day from the three rivers into Ndakaini Dam to eventually satisfy the residents of Nairobi and its satellite towns with drinking water.

While appreciating that water is a national resource and that the residents of Nairobi and its satellite towns are in dire need of the resource, The Assembly has no objection to the National Programme to provide Nairobi with water as provided for in the Vision 2030.

However, the objective of the programme must be done with caution to ensure that:-

1. Normal water levels of Murangá rivers are not affected.
2. The ground water levels of Murangá are not affected and the boreholes in the County are secured.
3. Irrigation and other water programmes planned for or envisioned for Murangá are not negatively affected.
4. That the project gives tangible benefits to the people murangá.

This Assembly thus recommends:-

THAT

1. The County Executive Committee Member in charge of water should undertake a survey within 60 days and verify the Social and Environmental Impact of the whole project in terms of;
 - a) The water demands, potential and water balance in the whole river basin and the larger ecosystem.

- b) Analysis of the County's short and long term water demands in domestic, commercial and irrigation in the whole County
2. 40% of the treated water shall be supplied to the people of Muranga as a condition precedent to the implementation of the project.
 3. The abstracted water should therefore be reduced by 50% in order to safeguard the environment
 4. Public participation should be undertaken in relation to the proposed water schemes under the Northern Water Collector Tunnel project. Further the County Government including the County Assembly should be consulted in developing this project.
 5. That pursuant to Section 17 of the Environmental (Impact Assessment and Audit) Regulations, 2003, which was complied with by the Athi Water Service Board, the whole exercise of public participation and Gazetement should be repeated afresh.
 6. The proposed water schemes should be aligned to the Muranga County Water Master Plan and that priority of the proposed schemes should come from the public.
 7. The proponents of the project should ensure that the down flow will not affect the optimal production of hydro power from Wanjii and MESCO power stations
 8. The Northern Water Collector Tunnel project sets the compensation flows in such a manner to ensure there will be minimal impact on the Hydro power generation as well as the other downstream river supports for domestic use, irrigation and other uses.
 9. The County Executive Committee Member in charge of Water should enter into negotiations with the Athi Water Service Board within 60 days and develop binding agreements on the following issues;
 - a) Reforestation and conservation of the Aberdare water tower
 - b) Payment of an amount not less than Kshs 1 per cubic meter of water abstracted from this project
 - c) Mode of monitoring of water volumes in the affected areas
 - d) Environmental Impact Assessment Survey for the water schemes to be implemented under the project within Muranga including the allocation of a clear budget and implementation plan.

- e) That there should be uncontrolled access by the relevant County Government officials and its agencies to ensure compliance with the agreements, National and County Laws.
- 10 Athi Water Service Board immediately convenes a meeting of Key stakeholders of this project to deliberate on its implementation. The key stakeholders should include the County Assembly, the County Executive, Tana and Athi River Development Authority, Kenya Power Generation Company (Kengen), National Irrigation Board, Ministry of Environment and Ministry of Interior and Coordination of Government among others
11. The project provides for resources and develops a work plan for rehabilitation, reforestation and restoration of the Aberdare forest which is the Catchment area for the Northern Water Collector Tunnel.
12. The design and construction of the Northern Water Collector Tunnel should mitigate against disturbances caused in the underlying rock systems along the tunnel to avoid possible landslides and other seismic movements.
13. That the design and construction of the Northern Water Collector Tunnel should ensure that no underground water penetrates into the tunnel.
14. Athi Water and Service Board reconsider construction of the project by substituting the tunnel with Dams along the proposed Rivers. It's the view of the committee that Dams will have lesser adverse Social and Environmental impact as compared to the tunnel.
15. All water schemes intended to be implemented by the Northern Water Collector Tunnel should be in tandem with the County Water Master Plan.
16. The County shall have unlimited access to the tunnel to undertake environmental Impact Assessment Surveys, Environmental Audit and other hydrological surveys.

SIGNED:

HON. JOSEPH KIMANI MACHIRI – KAMACAHRIA WARD

CHAIR- WATER, ENERGY, FORESTRY, ENVIRONMENT, NATURAL RESOURCES AND COOPERATIVE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE.

