

Vice Chancellor's Speech at the Launch of the BIOTA East Africa Atlas, Monday 30th August 2010, 5.30 – 6.30 pm

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- My colleagues in the University Management, Deans and Directors
- Representatives of the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research
- Representatives of Government Departments, Lead Agencies and Authorities
- Researchers, scholars and the professionals in the field of forestry and nature conservation
- Representatives of the Secondary and Primary Schools
- Students and pupils
- Ladies and Gentlemen

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I take the honour to thank you for coming to witness the *Launch of the BIOTA East Africa Atlas: Rain forest Change over Time.*”

This occasion unveils the ***BIOTA East Africa Atlas***, a tangible product of the research linkages established between Karlsruhe University of Health Sciences and Makerere University within the framework of the BIOTA East Africa Project (Biodiversity Monitoring Transect Analysis of Africa).

This launch is in line with the Makerere University Strategic Plan (2008/09-2018/19) aimed at repositioning the University to meet emerging development challenges. The focus is to reposition Makerere into a research driven institution where research and teaching/learning are mutually reinforcing as well as fostering community engagements through knowledge transfer partnerships and networking.

The Makerere University Management is currently implementing the Research and Innovations Policy in order to promote a research, innovations and publications culture in the University. It is important to note that the academicians and researchers in the University have been undertaking a lot of valuable research, but

the major challenge has been the failure to disseminate the research findings. This has therefore limited the spread of the valuable knowledge in these researches and publications. I am therefore glad that the new Atlas provides a solution to this problem through ensuring that the research findings are not restricted to our shelves and libraries, but reach the various stakeholders.

I commend the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) for providing funding for the atlas. I am informed that over 170 copies of the atlas will be distributed by the Faculty of Forestry and Nature Conservation to various partners. I am delighted to inform you that the researchers and academicians at Makerere University are keen to strengthen this linkage to realize more outputs in research and outreach.

I also thank the partners, in particular the National Forestry Authority (NFA), the Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA), and other field staff who have contributed to the success of the BIOTA as well as other projects in which Makerere University is involved.

I commend Prof. Gertrude Schaab and Sebastien Schwarz (from Karlsruhe University, Germany) and partners in Makerere University (specifically the Faculty of Forestry and Nature Conservation represented by Assoc. Prof. Gerald Eilu) for their effort in producing the atlas.

Knowing that the target audience in education, policy and research fields will use the atlas to learn, inform policy and conserve our forests, **I hereby launch ‘*The BIOTA East Africa Atlas*’.**

Professor Venansius Baryamureeba
Acting Vice Chancellor, Makerere University