GREEN FUTURES FOR WHOM? TRAVELING MODELS AS TOOLS OF LEGITIMIZATION IN KENYA'S FUTURE MAKING

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DEDICATION

This is in memory of my late parents who sacrificed so much and taught me the value of hard work but never lived to see the fruits of their labor. I will always be grateful.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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ABSTRACT

Development concepts that promise growth in the economy while safeguarding the environment have progressively become significant in the recent past in the global south countries. These concepts are framed and argued to respond to immediate and long-term societal needs. This study looks at these concepts as traveling models that strive to find a state of balance between environment and economic goals. They influence how Kenya's development agenda is set and put into action.

I conducted qualitative research with experts and actors from government ministries and agencies and local and international non-government organizations. Primary interviews were conducted in Nairobi and via telephone. I attended some workshops and conferences to get an insight on which actors were more dominant than others and how ideas are framed and sold to other actors. I looked at how actors implement the neoliberal concepts of green development in Kenya. Additionally, I conducted focus group discussions and talked to locals where these ideas are implemented, including parts of Kenya's Narok, Baringo, and Laikipia counties. The locals I spoke to were strictly the ones key informants referred to me. This was important to determine whether what is discussed at the global and national levels is reflected and shared with the locals. More importantly, this aided in finding out which visions are dominant, which ones materialize, which ones do not materialize, and alternative visions.

The findings indicate that particular actors play significant roles in ensuring ideas move from the international arena's point of origin and are put into practice through powerful networks. Further, the findings indicate that political interests in Kenya play a significant role in how these ideas are received and put into practice. Some ideas become dominant while others do not, which is highly dependent on which actor has what vision, their networks, and the ability to influence politics. To sum it up, the application of green development ideas is characterized by a considerable sum of money from international donor organizations. This is why they have been quickly taken up and put into policy and legal frameworks. This enables the country to show its commitment nonetheless with a more significant objective of attracting funds from donor organizations.

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ACRONYMS

AGRA	-	Alliance for Green Revolution in Africa
CBO	-	Community Based Organization
CCCFs	-	County Climate Change Funds
CCD	-	Climate Change Directorate
CCF	-	Climate Change Funds
CSO	-	Civil Society Organization
DANIDA	-	Danish International Development Agency
EA	-	Environmental Audit
EIA	-	Environmental Impact Assessment
EMCA	-	Environmental Management and Coordination Act
FES	-	Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung
FGDs	-	Focus Group Discussions
GAF	-	Green Africa Foundation
GCF	-	Green Climate Fund
GE	-	Green Economy
GESIP	-	Green Economy Strategy and Implementation Plan
GGEP	-	Green Growth and Employment Program
GGGI	-	Global Green Growth Institute
ILO	-	International Labour Organisation
KAM	-	Kenya Association of Manufacturers
KENHA	-	Kenya National Highways Authority
KEPSA	-	Kenya Private Sector Alliance
KETRACO	-	Kenya Electricity Transmission Company
KWS	-	Kenya Wildlife Service
MCAs	-	Members of County Assemblies
MoEF	-	Ministry of Environment and Forestry
MTP	-	Medium Term Plan
NACOSTI	-	National Council of Science, Technology, and Innovation
NCCAP	-	National Climate Change Action Plan
NCCC	-	National Climate Change Council
NDC	-	Nationally Determined Contributions
NECC	-	National Environment Complaint Committee

NEMA	-	National Environment Management Authority
NGOs	-	Non-Government Organizations
NNP	-	Nairobi National Park
OECD	-	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
SACCOs	-	Savings and Credit Cooperative Societies
SEA	-	Social Impact Assessment
UN	-	United Nations
UNDP	-	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	-	United Nations Environment Programme
UNHABITAT	-	United Nations Human Settlements Programme

1. INTRODUCTION

Kenya has gone through several waves of 'grand visions' in the past years, some of which are yet to materialize while others materialize differently. Green concepts play a vital role in the development discourse. Therefore, it will be decisive for Kenya's future what determines the performance and success of this new development strategy.

The future is both an idea of a coming world and a way through which this assertion can be made (Colonomos, 2016). This study aims to show how concepts of green development or green economies end up in the Kenyan context and how various actors use these concepts to determine the country's directions towards its development. With the narratives about the future in mind, I aim to demonstrate the role 'the future' plays in determining actions taken in the present and how this is manipulated towards actors' agendas.

The study argues that interpreting these concepts has mainly been open to individual and institutional manipulation. As Ariel Colonomos (2016) writes in his book 'Selling the Future, the Perils of Predicting Global Politics.'

> *The future gets spoken about a great deal because it is at once proof of our curiosity, a manifestation of our perplexities or fears, and an expression of our impatience…The mystery about the possible futures and our predictions about them consist of their effect on reality, thereby influencing the present we will live in (Colonomos, 2016, pp. 6-7).*

What role do the imaginations of Kenya's future by those in spaces of power play in the present? The future is an idea of an upcoming world and a means through which such claims are made (Colonomos, 2016). I contend that everyone can have ideas about the world to come; however, I question how ideas about the future of Kenya rests with specific actors. The study looks at how forecasted green futures gain legitimacy and what techniques actors use. Tied to this is the question of social ambitions and skills of individual and institutional actors.

Framing and grafting are portrayed as reinterpretation or representation acts instead of reconstruction. The study argues that actors in Kenya are used by 'outsiders' in driving agendas that do not benefit locals[1]. As shown in chapter four, critical legal and policy documents have come up in recent years indicating the importance and urgency the country has given to the green visions of development. The study shows in later chapters whose ideas matter and for whom they matter how they are infused into Kenya's political, social, and economic contexts

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[1] People living in geographical spaces where ideas are put into practice

and spaces. The study aims to understand how norms formulated at the international stage shape institutions and how these norms are localized in Kenya.

1.1 Research Aim and Objectives

The overall aim of the study is to investigate the green development concepts and how these concepts are used in making or unmaking Kenya's green futures. This is because, in the recent past, green development ideas have been and continue to be influential in the way development projects and programs are designed and implemented in Kenya to attain a state of balance between ecology (environmental and natural resource conservation and management) and economy (connecting rural to urban spaces through large-scale infrastructure). Using the Political Ecology framework, the study investigates the possibility of achieving this state of balance. Further, the study looks at how the green concepts create institutions that play a legitimacy role in the development plan.

The study addresses three main objectives-

1. To understand how green development concepts work in Kenya.

I look at the actors[2] involved in making these ideas travel and their reasons. The study argues that these ideas do not just travel because they are good ideas or fancy, for that matter. Still, they do so because they are pushed by powerful actors who influence at different scales for particular agendas. Therefore, the primary focus in these development concepts is on the actors, their networks, and the intersection points where these models are developed and exchanged (Aminzade et al., 2018). I start from the fact that these development concepts did not come from Kenya but originated somewhere and are brought to practice in Kenya by certain actors.

2. Find out whose green visions materialize and whose green visions do not materialize.

This second objective interrogates the interplay between actors' visions to find out, in the end, the dominant visions. I am more concerned with the way actors frame and sell their visions from the global level until they are contextualized and put into practice in Kenya and how this changes when they are contextualized.

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[2] Used in this study to refer to individuals and institutions taking part

3. To examine how institutions are used to legitimize actions by the government.

With a realization that several institutions have been created in the past, the study is interested in examining the reason why despite various institutions being in place, these institutions struggle to keep some actors in check and how some actors use these institutions as a way to get away with specific contested actions. The study put this against the backdrop that power is requisite in the process of governing resources (Ahlborg & Nightingale, 2018)

1.2   Structure and Summary of the dissertation

The dissertation is structured into eight chapters. The first chapter introduces the entire study. The second chapter talks about the literature and the theoretical background. Chapter three will focus on the methodology underpinning the study. The fourth chapter explicitly discusses Kenya and describes national development politics' historical experience and institutional setting. The fifth, sixth and seventh chapters are the empirical chapters of the study. A summary outlining the findings of the study then follows in chapter eight.

Chapter Two: Conceptualising Kenya's Green Futures

In this chapter, I review scholarship available on Political Ecology and the notion of power more broadly and concerning Kenya. I check the literature on traveling models in development studies from global discourses to national policies and local implementation and policy mobility. The chapter also looks briefly at the literature on institutions to find the nexus between politics, visions, and institutional roles.

Chapter Three: Approaching the field, the site(s), and methodology

In the following chapter, I first discuss the research design, how I developed the research questions, selection of participants, and area of study. Secondly, I overview the qualitative research methods I applied: interviews, field journals, participant observation, mainstream, and social media research. I discuss my reflexive position as a young Kenyan researcher, affiliated with a German education institution and researching institutions some, of which I would want to work for in the future; the ethical processes of getting research approvals, limitations of the research, and the ethics of relations with my respondents.

Chapter Four: Research setting in Kenya

With this chapter, I seek to put Kenya into the context of its history and development visions. I first give an overview of the development history and plans then highlight the legal and policy frameworks that anchor green visions of development: Environmental Management and Coordination Act (EMCA), Kenya Vision 2030, Kenya's 2010 constitution, GE Strategy and Implementation Plan (GESIP) and the National Climate Change Action Plan. I view them as having a performative role in making or unmaking the future of Kenya.

Chapter Five: Green visions as traveling models

The traveling models idea is explored in this chapter as models of development framed in specific places by specific actors and then applied or used in different contexts by different actors for various reasons. I contextualize green visions as ideas used to navigate the social, economic, and existing political dynamics. I discuss the agencies of travel, actor perceptions, and interests.

Chapter Six: Whose green visions (un) materialize?

This chapter explores the actors whose vision comes to be while keeping in mind the visions of the actors that do not come to be as a result. I emphasized specific actors: Government, private sector, Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), the development community, and the locals looking at how they navigate to ensure these visions materialize. I look at how actors frame their practices and the role such frames play in (un) materializing other visions.

Chapter Seven: Unmaking green futures? Institutions as a legitimization tool

In this chapter, I present the argument that institutions are strategically used by powerful actors and especially the political elite to legitimize their models of development which do not necessarily reflect the "common Kenya's" interests. I examine the complex situations and the environment these institutions operate in and the ambiguity in some of their fundamental functions—the interplay within institutions and the implementation of their core mandates.

Chapter Eight: Conclusions

The concluding chapter links the critical arguments to the conceptual framework neoliberal variants of environmental governance that foreclose alternative development approaches. I also

revisit the study's objectives and summarise my primary ideas of how actors navigate the social and political fronts. I go ahead to suggest further research questions that might be explored in the future on Kenya's green futures. I further demonstrate that green visions are empty signifiers and finish the chapter by looking at these visions' challenges.

2 CONCEPTUALISING GREEN FUTURES

I examine the concepts of green futures in Kenya from an analytical point of view grounded in insights from the literature on Political Ecology. Kenya's relationship with the ideas of green futures can only be well understood as rooted within and produced by broader ecological, social, and political practices at numerous spatial and temporal scales. Therefore, the actors need to be analyzed how they are connected to power and their objectives (Cockerill & Hagerman, 2020).

In a broader sense, this study aims to analyze the visions of Green futures and how they are translated into Kenyan political discourse. This is because 'Green' development concepts have increasingly become very influential in the countries in the Global South. For this reason, this chapter looks at the theoretical debates underpinning this study. I intend to show the scientific arguments that support the research and offer my thoughts about them. More broadly, the chapter looks at Political Ecology and the notion of power, traveling models, and the new institutional economics. The chapter discusses these three approaches in detail and shows why they are relevant in understanding how visions of green futures are relevant in Kenya's political and development discourse. This study's theoretical approach also offers a basis for the study's methodological approach.

2.1   Political Ecology and the notion of Power in Environmental Governance

In this section, I review the literature on Political Ecology to understand the conceptualization of power and show how this study has conceptualized power embodied within dynamic material infrastructures that constantly influence human behavior. Power is central in Political Ecology anthologies, and therefore its understanding is central. Power is conceptualized differently across the field of Political Ecology. Ahlborg & Nightingale (2018) argue that some scholars have portrayed it as a relation anchored on distributing risks and resources unequally as a trait of an individual, as the individual's ability to force a person's will or the ability to shape the environment that humans interact. Some have inspiration from Butler and Foucault, who look at power as something that constitutes aspects of social life that result in subjects, places, and resources, which defines how humans interact. They further argue that power operates through many but definite actions of humans' logics, discourses, and procedures which influence the ecological and social spaces and relations. There is profound consciousness regarding how important power is in governing resources. However, there is recurrent tension between power as a resource that can be controlled and focused on the one hand versus power as a potential

that should be put into practice to have a meaningful effect, with the results not predictable and ambiguous on the other hand. Another area where tension occurs is between the way combined phenomena are conceptualized and how vague pressures as either somewhat steady or structures established historically (Ahlborg & Nightingale, 2018).

2.1.1   A Political Ecology perspective of Green Futures

The necessity of taking a Political Ecology approach comes about because environmental regulations can be traced back to the government, so it is imperative to take this more seriously (Loftus, 2020). According to Robbins, Political Ecology is not a theory or a method but an urgent kind of narrative that focuses on losers and winners. He further pointed out that the use of dialectics starts and ends in a paradox and analyses the status of nature. Referring to Meehan and Molden (2015), Loftus (2020) contends that it is a community of practice, emphasizing the fact that it is something that is done and not a theory (Loftus, 2020). Political Ecology refers to the political economy of interaction between humans and the environment. Early insights of Political Ecology included observing resource management behavior like farming and forestry. Such behavior was often nested within various external influences such as regional environmental change, international market dynamics, and national policies (Moseley, 2017; Robbins, 2005).

Several definitions have come up from their early use to the most recent one, and each stresses something different. Robbins' arguments stress environmental change and narratives or stories that emphasize that change.

This goes in line with Moseley (2017), who notes that currently, Political Ecology is quite varied in its methods, epistemologies, and objectives. Since several different scholarship areas lack a straightforward approach theoretically or message, this 'subfield' can only, therefore, be discussed with enormous trepidation. Robertson (2015) argues that the government constitutes individuals with interests and contexts. The progress of the approach of Political Ecology is traced back to how political ecologists understand the dispersed networks of governance in environmental issues and management and the formal apparatus of government (Robertson, 2015).

As a field, it tries to show that political forces are usually at work in environmental access, transformation, and management. This study investigates the political forces working in Kenya's green futures, looking at how they work and with whom they work.

Political Ecology, therefore, comes in handy in Kenya's green future as it helps to have a critical look at who are the winners and losers in the process of implementing green visions.

Robbins illustrates that ecology is naturally political and politics is unavoidably ecological. The question I raise is at what point does politics and the environment intersect in Kenya, and how is this happening? Addressing equity and sustainability challenges and fundamental questions in environmental science is possible to understand that field research can shed light on ecological change and its dynamics. Robbins (2012) shows that Political Ecology is something that people do rather than just showing it as a body of knowledge. He also notes a shift of political-ecological analysis and argument to a relatively intense focus involving the construction of social environments and their co-constitution by various kinds of human and non-human players from a focus on the damage of the environments with stress on influences of humans. To this end, the central question of my study is who the actors are in Kenya's green futures and how they interact with one another and what kind of visions they have of Kenya's green future. I further analyze how their visions materialize in the spaces where Kenyans go about their day-to-day activities.

Forsyth (2015) points out that earlier debates about social and critical theory influenced early discussions of Political Ecology instead of analyzing how scientific knowledge and politics were connected. He acknowledges that different people and scholars across the various disciplines in the world have a different understanding of Political Ecology. However, this does not mean that each of them is solid on its own, and each of them mutually shapes each other. Considering this together, he suggests, will put them in a better place to deal with environmental challenges more proactively. Previous pressing ecological problems have been handled by already pre-fixed facts and norms (Forsyth, 2015, p. 103). This study argues that such pre-fixed facts and norms have failed to work in the past and continue to do so since different settings have different challenges at other times; thus, attempting to tackle the challenge similarly is bound to fail. Also, considering that different actors hold different visions for Kenya's future leaves a black box where each institution and actor practically implements their ideas of how the future should look. In the end, what we are likely to end up with are fragments of failed projects at the expense of the local communities.

The study seeks to evaluate how local decisions are influenced globally and how policies are acting outside Kenya's political system influence the policies in Kenya and who these benefit. Ecology is political; our ideas about ecology are directed through political and economic processes.

By first looking at the history of Kenya's green future, the study puts into perspective the present and gives meaning to the politics of green futures in Kenya. Narratives of Political Ecology track the institutional and legal infrastructures, historical processes, and socially implicated discourses and assumptions that make unjust outcomes an exception but rather the rule. In doing this, I look at the legal and institutional frameworks, how they have evolved, and the significant driver of their evolution (Robbins, 2012).

In summary, Robbins points out that Political Ecology first tracks winners and losers to comprehend structures of winning and losing that are persistent - who then wins and who loses in Kenya's future making? How has this changed in the past? Secondly, human-non-human dialectics is used to narrate Political Ecology stories; thirdly, they start from or end in a contradiction and finally formulate claims about the government of nature simultaneously. Due to this contradiction, Political Ecology challenges us to create surprising outcomes by reviewing what forces loop, skew and reverse expected causation (Robbins, 2012).

Being an intellectual inquiry, Forsyth argues that Political Ecology should look at how politics and ecology are tied together. He notes that other debates in the past have tended to look at ecology and politics separately as they discuss their connections, but he instead suggests that the two are made together. The current debates on environmental policy have placed science and politics in different boxes. Still, Forsyth moves away from such a debate arguing that such only simplify ecological explanations that cause a reduction in the effectiveness of the environmental policy. In his approach, he reviews other methods in Political Ecology that will enable both environmental science and politics to be understood collectively (Forsyth, 2015).

He notes that Political Ecology outlines a series of tensions about how politics and ecology are related. He also points out that the basis of ecological discussions lies in several assumptions of how the natural world operates. He raises a critical question of whether it is possible to have environmental science that is not also influenced by politics (Forsyth, 2015, p. 104). This is not the case; from my point of view, the two do not exist in isolation. As the study argues that politicizing the Green visions plan does not imply that Kenya has in the past not used the environment more sustainably, but it is essential to understand that actors at different levels with different interests have influenced how such knowledge and activities have been generated and legitimized and this is what has informed current debates about Kenya's green futures.

Political Ecology does not aspire to take sides in how different people in the society do other things but lays more focus on what supports different norms and vice versa. It further questions who wins and losses in the event analysts claim that norms and facts are not connected. This

argument arises because policymakers or scientific advisors usually justify decisions by simply looking at the facts and not connecting them to the norms. According to Forsyth, insights from science studies adopted from facts and norms can emphasize the relationship between ecology and politics. However, this doesn't imply that people should not value wilderness or worry about the effects of modern industrial life on the environment. The aim is to demonstrate how social influences can simplify the understanding of environmental change and even exclude social groups in potentially damaging ways (Forsyth, 2015).

I consider Green visions in Kenya a specific kind of storyline that actors are taking as a matter of urgency and are developing ideas that they perceive will solve current environmental challenges. The study argues that this does not benefit all but specific actors with specific agendas hidden under this narrative. These actors have represented the Green visions agenda to indicate urgency that needs to be acted upon immediately. Still, ironically, the recent development projects counter the sense of environmental urgency that Green Vision represents. The study intends to look at the experts in Kenya's green futures; by this, I mean those who play vital roles in various capacities and have found legitimacy. Forsyth acknowledges that the influence of expert organizations on the generation of knowledge or analyzing experts as socially legitimate communicators of authoritative knowledge is a growing field in Political Ecology and, as such, very critical in my studies (Forsyth, 2015).

The relationship between nature and society can be well understood through what Valdivia (2015) calls Eco-Governmentality, which emphasizes political power is used to produce structures of dominance in the current culture to see how power manifested everywhere and in everything. The forms of dominance in Kenya's green future are of interest to these studies. How are the structures produced, and which political forces are behind them in Kenya? In summing up the focus of governmentality, Robertson noted that government strategies succeed because the subjects see themselves continuously as subjects, and the government has made them constantly feel so. The government, therefore, secures hegemony by changing both the attitude and mentalities of the people (Robertson, 2015).

Noting that environmental governance has changed over time, Asiyanbi (2015) argues that this is manifested in causes that purport to address threats that the environment faces (Asiyanbi, 2015).

In making the green futures in Kenya, we see a reinvention of several conversations that have taken place, some in other forms while others have new terms. In contrast, the underlying factors and practices have remained the same. The essence of such reinventions is a question I seek to

find out. Asiyanbi (2015) argues that to gauge the extent and methods, this globally framed and articulated transaction is operationalized at the local levels, citing an earlier concern in policy implementation studies. The study argues that it is almost impossible to operationalize these globally framed operations. First, the meanings are lost, then, political contexts vary from place to place, and finally, different actors and institutions serve other interests. Most actors fail to consider that the disjuncture between local realities and globally dispatched plans is assumed mainly by proponents and critics and is much messier. Citing an example of the implementation of REDD+ in a local forest in Nigeria, he argues that there is a big disconnect between the terms coined at the global level and the realities, usually at the local levels. Therefore, more effort should be put towards evaluating how plans and discourses of emergent global transformation are translated into existence on the ground and, if so, as planned. More emphasis should be placed on understanding how these global dispatches are translated into realities in local areas and their implications (Asiyanbi, 2015).

History and politics transform the globally dispatched blueprints. In most cases, there is a lack of harmony between the flourishing global policies, which present optimism and frustrating realities in the local contexts. In what Asiyanbi (2015) terms as 'floating symbols,' he notes that strategic actions of local actor coalitions who evince a particular mode of articulation with local situations and institutions are used to shape projects. Understanding the actors, developing local coalition partnerships articulating these floating symbols in their localities (Asiyanbi, 2015). Communicating global ideas with local institutions and situations in which certain realities co-habit minimally daily with other kinds is the first step to keep these ideas flourishing. Prominent actors like the Global Green Growth Institute (GGGI) now move from the implementing agency to 'government oversight.' The main focus point should be to what extent and how the global articulated reinvention of conservation and environmental governance is being implemented. This is important in realizing to what extent global ideas vary from the local realities (Asiyanbi, 2015).

My focus is drawn to how green development concepts in Kenya are institutionalized and territorialized as traveling models in communities in Kenya. Institutionalization here means everything that makes green visions operational in public institutions and public debates. Green ideas are expected to be implemented at both the national and county levels; however, this is not necessarily the case as there is a vast policy gap to find coherence between these government

levels. As I observed in my fieldwork, the relationships between these government levels are still unclear regarding who should mainly play which role. The national government significantly influences what the counties do, which I observe because of its role in fundraising. The revenues collected by the counties are not enough to run the counties' expenditure; thus, they rely on the national government for funding. Looking at the environmental issues, for instance, the finances from donor institutions go to the national treasury first before it is directed to different projects. Who then determines what amount goes to what county and project and at what time. While in the field, I happened to attend one of the strategic meetings that came up with a proposal to secure funding from the government. I make a crucial observation here is so much politics regarding such. Experts and scholars come together through established local Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) to secure finances to implement such projects. The actors master the criteria for securing such finances from donors and understand how to position their ideas and projects to secure the funds.

The environment being constituted as a field for government action is highly important since its government project. This may not change due to increasing threats of conflicts related to water, climate change, and the concern about the environment's security. Nature is an active and internal surface on which government strategies play out. The tendency of analytics in Political Ecology to challenge material and discursive dualisms is essential in analyzing governance as we seek to understand the governance implications for environmental outcomes and the involvement of nature in governments' political projects (Robertson, 2015, p. 457). Noting that the government and government interests typically come first in each situation, how this, for instance, is balanced with the very environmental and local interests that the government claims to put forward is worth investigating. How the government manages the physical environment brings out the power relation issues, which potentially leads to conflict with the functions of the government as a developer and at the same time as a natural environment steward. Robertson emphasizes that understanding the government and its operation is fundamental to understanding how the environment is managed and how the future is made. As Robertson notes, we need to keep in mind that the government is present and has invested in nearly all settings, and this is evident from the actions and subject-making of resource managers (Robertson, 2015).

2.1.2   Critiquing Political Ecology

While Political Ecology has been widely used and presents an excellent framework for tracking those who win and the ones who lose in how the costs and benefits of global change[3] are distributed (O'Brien & Leichenko, 2003), it has not been without shortcomings. Walker argues that while Political Ecology has a rich history and an interest in engaging in public debate, its limitation has played out when engaging with other non-academic fields (Walker, 2007).

He further points out that Political Ecology is not well known for generating compelling and concise narratives compared to social theory; instead, it is well known for often dense theoretical prose and complexity. These attributes are the cornerstone of the enormous analytical strengths of Political Ecology; however, they can be an obstacle considering its influence on the world of policy outside the academy. He argues that Political Ecology only offers critiques, which alone cannot bring about any significant policy change. Instead, it may end up causing uncertainty and maintaining the status quo, so it is essential to have counter-narratives. Critiquing the stories already in existence alone cannot suffice; however, it is necessary to consider the conditions under which such stories are produced and reproduced. Political Ecology's key role is to question how human-environment relations are always presented as oversimplified and misleading. The success of some of these stories about human-environment associations is attributed to the fact that they had a powerful idea that was effectively communicated. The Political Ecology works that have succeeded in the past are the ones that have built counter-narratives in social and environmental research.

Recognizing that in the policy world, the actors and networks are built around certain foundational beliefs, whether the ideas hold some truth or not is another question; however, this makes certain narratives to be accepted as they conveniently fit within the political-economic interests of the powerful elites who also include policymakers. Political Ecology focuses on social relations and power and how these shape how humans relate to nature. However, critics argue that the subfield's biggest flaw is concentrating on political power relationships. How power shapes the relationship between humans and the environment is a critical component of Political Ecology. Justice, inequality, exploitation, poverty issue, and the structural motives for reproducing poverty remain fundamental of the subfield even if the theoretical language is stopped. How does this explain the inequality experienced globally? Citing Billie Lee Turner,

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[3] Process that take place at the global scale but the outcomes felt across all scales

he observes that Political Ecology in its poststructuralist phase has made it hard to distinguish any consistent significance to the label because it has encompassed various mixes of worldviews. Political and cultural ecology has not yet received a unified and robust response about the critical environmental debates and present challenges (Walker, 2007).

Political Ecology research typically has policy relevance, but this doesn't imply that its full potential has been realized. The biggest shortcoming has also been communicated to the outside world regarding how Political Ecology ideas can be used appropriately and effectively. Some suggested solutions are never inclusive and fail to consider where they will be implemented. Political ecologists often differentiate between ultimate causation and proximate (or immediate) causation. For instance, while cotton farmers may be degrading soils in Mali due to their land management practices (a proximate cause), national policies encouraging cotton farming and World Bank policies stressing export orientation ultimately drive this problem (Moseley, 2017). This illustration shows how the decisions made at the global and national levels have great unintended, often ignored effects at the local levels.

In doing so, Political Ecology offers potential insights into the New Green Revolution for Africa. First, who is framing hunger in Africa as a problem caused by supply deficits that need to be solved by more production? Who are the winners and losers of a market-oriented, supply-side solution? How does feminist Political Ecology complicate our understanding of the impacts of the New Green Revolution for Africa? African governments came together in a highly coordinated and unprecedented effort to frame hunger in Africa as a problem caused by supply deficits. They came up with two proposals to address food insecurity in the region. These proposals are market integration and yield-enhancing technologies. Critically it would be necessary to question why these governments came together to frame the hunger problem as a supply-side problem and whose interest they were pushing. Political Ecology has not yet responded to critical questions like 'what political ecologists wish to achieve and how the achievements will be ensured while not co-opted or distorted. Other fields that strengthen the status quo will dominate public debates and decision-making unless the subfield effectively responds to these questions. Political Ecology will then be left to the verdant but highly peripheral academia pastures (Moseley, 2017; Walker, 2007).

2.1.3 Soft forms of domination by the government.

This section aims to see how a balance between those in power and the subjects is attained with minimal conflicts. More specifically, I aim to discuss how the government exercises its authority regarding environmental governance issues.

Governmentality has been employed to address political questions on human-environment interactions. The main focus is building government substances and the rationalities, logic, and know-hows of rule (Loftus, 2020). Luke addresses the question of green governmentality. He argues that it draws attention to the existence of traditional political actors and acknowledges how power and knowledge in the entire society produce many other subjects and structures with materially significant differences as agents. He argues that the discourse on environmental governmentality maps out new domains of truth where knowledge and data required to manage the political, social, and economic institutions get more engaged in managing the complex composed of men in the environment. It strives to provide and police a range of conduct for green ways of living, which are sometimes accepted as usual and other times contested as oppressive, irrational, or unjust. Environmental destruction has been materially embedded in immense regional, national, and global infrastructures for transport, industry, agriculture, housing, communication, and marketing. Since the theory of environment and politics appeals to moral ideals to influence change, it also can prompt the exercise of new multifaceted power forms over human and non-human populations working outside of realms of personal ethical activity and collective ideal thinking (Luke, 2016).

Environmental truths produced in different sites with players and social groups can act politically, which is not a preserve for governments, NGOs, or the proletariat. These environmental truths produced by different players are what this study seeks to further look at how these are made. The government exercises its power through what Valdivia calls "regimes of practice," where action plans, rules, and rationalities encounter what is essentially done in practice. When it comes to governing, there is no point in applying force, but instead, a state of balance between compulsion and self-constitution should be attained to advance the life of populations (Valdivia, 2015).

The attainment of this balance makes the Political Ecology approach helpful in understanding how this is achieved. Setting up structures of governance and domination is quite critical to attaining a state of balance.

2.1.4 Historical approaches to Political Ecology

Davis (2015) notes that an easier way to address various questions involving power and their analyses directly is by taking a historical approach. This is because it considers environmental change's economic, political, social, and cultural forces. He emphasizes the need to critically understand the historical ecological development, social relations, and the privilege and knowledge that attends it. This is important in revealing the hidden connections of power, especially in questions studied by Political Ecology. Critical historical analysis helps understand the social relations, knowledge, and power nexus and howay it is spread and operationalized. With this in mind, the question that emerges then is how long back should a historical approach be? According to Davis (2015), there is no specific time for political ecology. Still, instead, the focus should be put on carrying out critical historical research that examines power relations and their representation application. The ways these have been internalized, changed and spread over the years under global capitalism. Critical historical analysis is a vital component in all Political Ecology research. To understand the roots and realities of environmental challenges in Kenya, it is imperative to grasp the colonial history that explains the machinations of global capitalism and how Kenyans were enfolded into it. The theories of post-humanism and governmentality emphasize the importance of history, highlighting its importance in producing sophisticated, critical analyses. It isn't easy to achieve this kind of work without researching how things in the present came to be in the first place (Davis, 2015).

2.1.5 Placing Local Knowledge in imaginations of Green Futures

This section engages with the local knowledge and discusses its place in the green futures discourse. I believe that local knowledge has a considerable place in environmental management matters. However, the critical question is whether this knowledge finds a place in the broader conversations. I further assess how actors use such knowledge to create specific green futures. The study adopts Horowitz definition of local environmental knowledge as a cumulative body of knowledge, practices, and beliefs which evolve by adaptive processes and is handed down from one generation to the next by cultural transmission, about the relationship of living beings with one another and with their environment (Horowitz, 2015). With so much movement and interaction and many people moving to live in new areas for various reasons, it is critical to examine whether this knowledge still exists and how such interactions have shaped and reshaped how it is perceived in the present. Horowitz (2015) argues that this knowledge

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has evolved through intercultural communication, sometimes over centuries. Globalization has negatively affected traditional knowledge through intercultural contact, which has a positive influence, but the negative one far outweighs the positives. Power relations play out during the recording of knowledge by people outside the community. The local community members are likely to be disempowered, and their grasp of the local knowledge dilutes as the outsiders attempt to protect them. Horowitz discusses how Political Ecology has contributed to understanding how the outsiders' physical presence and belief systems influenced the local people's relationship with their natural resources and surroundings. He further examines insights of Political Ecology into tensions between LEK and large-scale development and the micro-political tensions that emerge as local knowledge systems clearly explain global forces. Politico-economic marginalization has often forced poor rural people into destructive practices. Political ecologists have also illustrated that LEK has contributed to the long-term management of natural resources rather than overuse or degradation. Scientists in implementing development projects should incorporate the knowledge possessed by local farmers. Some environmental management practices applied by the locals are better than techniques of management imported from other areas. However, I question how locals view their ecological practices and observe that local communities have held on to the belief that their practices are backward and underdeveloped and have hoped to be 'modern' for a long time. It would be unfair for me to leave such observations at that point without examining why some of these local actors believe so. The challenge of this kind of knowledge occurs in instances where the development of large-scale projects risks the destruction of archaeological sites and landscape features. This has led to conflicts in most instances because of the need by locals to protect their cultural heritage, practices, and beliefs (Horowitz, 2015, p. 239).

With such large-scale development projects involving scientists who assess the impacts such would have on the environment and the possible measures to remedy the situation, such predictions have also been observed to conflict with those of the locals. Scientists collect data through normative methods within a restricted time frame. At the same time, residents rely on observations collected incidentally to other activities and transmitted orally by respected elders over several generations. What makes scientific predictions more questionable, the study argues, is the motivation to make money out of it other than the common good. This is because most of them operate as consultants whose first and critical agenda is for-profit and work for the proponents who are the ones who own and are behind such projects. The contention that

plays out is that experts who work for government institutions supposed to regulate the impacts projects have on the local landscapes and livelihoods ignore knowledge-based in local experience, which makes locals perceive that their identity is being put at risk "ignorant but arrogant experts." Political Ecology thus aids in understanding that LEK is neither isolated, localized, nor fixed knowledge as such but is part of an expansive network both influencing and influenced by broader political, economic, and social forces (Horowitz, 2015).

Arguably, significant participation of the communities in question in the governance of natural resource matters will make such knowledge only helpful in managing natural resources. Cultural norms, religious beliefs, traditional beliefs, and practices are crucial in aiding the successful environmental and specific organisms' conservation, especially in developing countries. This is often in line with the current conservation ethics, and these ethics must be upheld to ensure effective management and protection of natural resources. Moreover, environmental protection is closely linked and essential to the culture of the people living in rural communities worldwide (Muigua, 2014).

2.1.6   Framing and Nudging for Greener Futures

Solving problems around environmental issues is quite challenging due to their uncertainty, complexity, and political nature. It becomes quite tricky, mainly because these are issues that the public needs to be involved in through public participation to be solved. The understanding of the issues to be addressed are different, and while some people become optimistic that they can be managed, others remain discouraged and overwhelmed. However, the population should not feel inconsequential and helpless to address these issues. Individuals' way of conceptualizing problems changes over time, making it challenging to frame risks as it has to change constantly. For instance, the public might reject how the government stated the issue even after accepting it initially. They may also modify the frame to an 'acceptable' form of structuring the problem to be compatible with an already made policy choice. How the consequences of exposure are framed to an agent of the environment when it comes to risk to a specific subpopulation has an implication for which policies will either be accepted or rejected. While several ways of looking at the problem exist and several paths worth exploring, there is no one right solution to these problems. Each solution creates another problem as actors employ different answers to the same problem over time. There are high risks and long-term irreversible consequences of such actions. The choices made regarding the environment reflect social values, societal expectations, and the country's politics as much as scientific facts. Decisions

highly depend on the priorities and trade-offs a society chooses and indicate what risks and changes the community is willing to accept (Bardwell, 1991; Vaughan & Seifert, 1992).

When agencies cannot communicate the importance of programs (environmental conservation) they implement convincingly to the public, the environment loses. Effective framing is a way to ensure that people understand and have concerns in ecological management. In framing, the information that connects to people's problems and beliefs is effectively highlighted, thus drawing people to participate in the programs. Frames have a way of making issues relatable, relevant, understandable, and accessible to the public. DeGolia et al., (2019) evaluate how two different frames impact policy issues. They look at attribute frames that highlight specific factors present in issues being assessed and outcome frames. The outcome frames present attributes regarding the promised gains or prevented losses (DeGolia et al., 2019).

To make sure that individuals behave positively towards the environment rooted in applied behavioral economics is loss framing. This is whereby the existing messages are put so that emphasis is on the negative consequences of particular actions/inactions on the environment. When the results are framed to highlight specific groups' vulnerability, the preferences for policy decisions are influenced. This also affects how risks are managed from policymakers' and general public perspectives (Ropret Homar & Knežević Cvelbar, 2021; Vaughan & Seifert, 1992).

How are frames used in making the green futures of Kenya? From a green perspective, Hall argues, insofar as framing and nudging focus on encouraging what is often called "pro-environmental behavior," they hold people responsible for their personal energy use or carbon emissions or consumption of resources with little attention to the larger structures (energy grids, transportation systems, capitalist economies) within which these "individual choices" are made. Criticism has, however, come up in two ways: first, there are concerns that these activities are manipulative and paternalistic, and secondly, that they are privatizing, individualizing, and superficial (Hall, 2016).

In summary, I note that global decisions and guidelines influence country decisions. For this reason, countries frame their problems in line with such decisions made in the global arena. This raises the question, how are these policy goals, which are national framings of international decisions and guidelines, translated into reality in Kenya? To comprehend this, I look at the activities and practices around Green visions in Kenya, review program documents that have

come up in the past, and conduct in-depth interviews with diverse actors. This involves looking at the relevant documents produced or reproduced in the last years.

2.2 Traveling Models in Development Studies: From global discourses to national policies and local implementation.

The following section introduces the concept of the traveling idea and explains why I choose it as a conceptual framework for the study. Engaging critically with the traveling idea, I seek to understand how ideas of green development travel and find themselves in Kenya's political and development agenda. The study aims to contribute to the debate by showing the origin of the ideas, why they travel, who makes them, and where they travel. Furthermore, I seek to explore why some ideas are quickly taken up in some areas while others are not. I believe that institutional and individual interests are significant contributors to how these ideas travel.

This study conceives ideas about the future as traveling from somewhere else. It is brought together by different actors who may have their versions of the future, but this might not necessarily match the agenda of others or benefit everyone.

2.2.1 Understanding traveling models

To have an understanding of traveling models as a concept, the question then arises, what makes an issue that is so important in a particular place be taken as necessary in a different place while others not taken as necessary or at least seen as not essential and how do changes in specific areas influence how changes in various other places take place? This question indicates that decisions made at a particular location will always shape the futures of other different places, whether that was the intention or not. It is also against this backdrop that the study seeks to unravel how this happens. Acharya questions why norms and ideas he refers to as International find greater acceptance in certain localities while others do not. He emphasizes that attention should be given to 'the causal mechanisms and processes by which …. ideas spread.' And how the local political conditions and actors influence how the ideas spread (Acharya, 2004).

According to Behrends et al., (2014) a model refers to that which represents specific aspects of realities that are created as a protocol to be used to intervene in certain circumstances to shape some facts for particular purposes. Behrends et al., (2014) however do not emphasize those who create these protocols to be used in such intervention measures and why this is so important to them but rather emphasize examining the technologies used by those who mediate to transmit

the model and those of the people who implement the new law, transferring it and putting it to use at different levels. I, therefore, find it essential to examine the various understandings inherent in the model of Green futures held by other actors and look at how they relate to the model in everyday practice and how it impacts the local populations, and how it is locally translated (Behrends et al., 2014). This I find essential because knowing those behind specific models helps understand why they will be necessary.

While Behrends do not put a keen focus on the actors but rather on the traveling model itself, Aminzade and others, on the other hand, emphasize that critical geographers interested in the movement of policy models across space should focus on the actors, their networks, and the intersection points where these models are developed and exchanged. Quickly rejecting the notion that global cultures flow amorphously from the international to the local, as suggested in some studies, these scholars emphasize the roles particular actors and interests play in constructing and transferring policy ideas. They also emphasize that policy does not move in a unidirectional pathway i.e. from more powerful countries to less powerful nations (Aminzade et al., 2018).

This is an argument that I depart from and argue that power plays a huge role in how norms diffuse. For that reason, norms move from more powerful countries to the less powerful, with domestic conditions mediating the process of reception. Global models diffuse down to other nations by creating a world culture that international NGOs spread.

The study goes beyond understanding models to examine who is behind specific development models and why this is so important. Models do not necessarily travel due to their superiority but rather because they are already widely circulated, and this is why they have the status of a model. They are already realized and are ready to be used in places. Similarly, Acharya points out that the success of norm diffusion strategies and processes has been affected by the extent to which opportunities for localization are provided (Acharya, 2004; Behrends et al., 2014).

Taking a look at the epistemology of adaptation, Weisser et al. (2014) underscore that adaptation observed in places different from those where adaptation is produced are modifications of the latter and can be considered a translation process. Other actors with different framing of models result from the fact that individuals don't follow a single global idea they argue. On the contrary, they modify, appropriate, or invent new parts of that script (Weisser et al., 2014).

What stages or steps does the model travel from one geographical location to another? First and more importantly, it is de-territorialized (the eradication of social, political, or cultural practices from their native places and populations) from its original setting and reterritorialized[4] in new environments and problem spaces, but for this to happen, anything related to this move changes. Instead, this is a complex process in which the agents involved have to harmonize the global idea with the local practices and beliefs. Any foreign notion that does not match the local one is incorporated into the local norm in this process. I point out the role that domestic politics and institutions play in shaping how global norms, discourses, and ideas are accepted, altered, or rejected at the national level (Acharya, 2004; Aminzade et al., 2018).

When a token[5] gets to a different place, it must adapt to the site to connect. For this reason, what first changes is the token implying that it doesn't arrive as it left the original destination. Secondly, the token becomes a model and the unification of the two (token and model) increases its discursive stability and allows it to travel. It is important to note that a transformation happens when the token arrives in a new place.

Actors here in their understanding end up interpreting the model to address the problems in their contexts. In some instances, the models connect to their new sites without necessarily. Of great interest is how the conversion takes place that is of interest (Behrends et al., 2014).

To follow the traveling elements along different sites to their final destination Behrends and others argue that it is crucial to check the process of transfer, adaptation, and, appropriation as translations. In their article, they explain what Opening the 'black box' of transfer means as not only to observe how ideas are gathered together in one place connect with what is significant and exercised in another, but also to focus on the step by step movement from when an idea is deterritorialized and reterritorialized in a different place. The practice that follows the model deployment, the tipping point between transfer and translation, is not adequately explained about the transferred apparatus and the protocol accompanying it (Behrends et al., 2014).

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[4] The restructuring of a place or territory that has experienced deterritorialization
[5] An object that represents something else

2.2.2 Translating traveling models

Weisser et al., (2014) point out that the current change in environmental governance is evident in the discourse of a changing climate and its impact on development politics. The ontological framing of adaptation is the concern of the central argument and it incorporates the incentives of new funds and reactions to prevalent ideas (Weisser et al., 2014). According to Hall (2016), frames are mental structures through which the world is seen. They guide the communal interpretation and definition of particular issues through the perceptual lenses, underlying assumptions, or world views. They give interpretive storylines that set a specific train of thought in motion and communicate why an issue might be a problem, what or who might be responsible for it, and how to resolve it (Hall, 2016).

The importance of framing comes in because 'the linkages between existing norms and emergent norms are not often obvious and must be actively constructed by proponents of new norms. The frame thus helps those advocating for the new norms to highlight and 'create' issues 'by using language that names, interprets, and dramatizes them. Framing is capable of localizing a global norm and is usually performed by outsiders, and it is an act of reinterpretation rather than reconstruction. Localization, however, is a complex process that involves making an outside norm congruent with a pre-existing local normative order through reconstitution. Here, the local actors have a more critical role as compared to the role of outsiders (Acharya, 2004).

Local actors do not consider it a must to have adaptation. Instead, they suggest conceptualizing transformation should widen the analytical frame as a contentious co-production by various actors. They argue that social actors respond to many incentives presented by science, stimuli of a changing climate, media, and policymakers. Therefore, analyzing adaptation should consider several other potentially essential processes, such as the general concerns for societal environmental problems and the extent to which funds are available to influence economic development or other environmental issues. Practices labeled as green growth/ GE are embedded in specific socio-political and cultural. This involves relabelling and reframing practices; an example is when old problems are presented as new ones, often with an undertone of urgency (Weisser et al., 2014).

Similarly, the study argues that green practices or practices labeled as green witnessed in Kenya have been anchored in Kenya's political, social, and cultural contexts. Here I see nothing but reframing and rebranding the same problem that the same actors have dealt with over the years. Green Growth, GE, Blue Economy, Circular Economy, among others, present no significant

difference other than the name and the institutions or actors spearheading them. This is discussed later on in the empirical chapters.

Following the political class concerns in the country for unrestricted control of political and social processes, Weisser and others observe a mainstreaming of the public climate change debate, reporting channels, and centralization of responsibilities. He further notes that creating awareness is considered a political process that conveys that some actors are aware while others are not. What I question is, what makes an actor more qualified to talk about Kenya's green futures than the rest of the country? While showing the importance of regimes, they indicate that administrations in a country are highly involved in the transfer and modification of climate-related policy directions between the capitals and peripheries. In Kenya, for example, this becomes more complex with two levels of governments brought about by the 2010 constitution, which has seen a lot of disconnects, lack of proper coordination, and a supremacy war between actors at those different levels. Some of these wars tend to be personal and do not benefit the locals. Various institutions are created to ensure that these ideas are owned. Thus, institutions become the result of the translation process. For a more critical analysis, I find it imperative to look at the histories of institutions and the ones that have been created and how they have evolved. They observe that since the translated concept relates not only to the discursive level, it also pertains to concrete activities and institutions and constitutes what Foucault termed dispositive. When this is accomplished, mobilization is the final step of translation. This step serves to assure that specific actors become legitimate representatives of others and as such, they have the authority to control them (Weisser et al., 2014).

This study underscores that frames have played a significant role in making Kenya's green future. I look at how Kenya's environmental problems have been viewed and solved. From policy interventions by the government and other actors to civil society engagement and local agencies. How have all these different actors framed the problem and how are their frames responding to the societal issues in the spaces they operate. Is their response strategy similar? As Hall argues, framing is about getting language that fits a person's worldview, and the way I engage with this is to find out how the said frames influence these world views. Frames thus shape the goals we seek, the plans we make, the way we act, and what counts as good and bad outcomes of actions. Frames are conceived as organizing principles that enable a particular interpretation of a phenomenon. Frames play a role of filters through which information is

evaluated and processed, further noting that information that does not fit our frames is ignored or otherwise disregarded (Hall, 2016).

My focus is on the agenda-setting of power and the formulation of policy proposals; that is how problems are constructed through claims made in policy debates. To what extent is the global discourse of GE/growth incorporated into the conceptual framework adopted by the Kenyan government, and what does this say about how policy ideas move from the global to the national level? What set of actors support these global models of green visions/economy, and what do these actors tell us about the character of the Kenyan government? How, if at all, do domestic politics and distinctive historical legacies mediate the process of reception, revision, or rejection of the global discourses (Aminzade et al., 2018).

To give a summary, ideas are made to travel across the globe through an organized and active network of actors operating at the global, national, and local levels, each playing a role depending on their individual or institutional beliefs and practices.

2.3   Institutions and the New Institutions economics

What role do international, national, and local institutions play in shaping how ideas are received in Kenya. In the following, I explain how international consultants, international development agencies, and other policy actors aid in the travel of green vision ideas and how they are locally translated to solve the rising environmental challenges. I further argue that these ideas are not necessarily meant to tackle these challenges but rather used as tools of legitimization by their proponents. I use the new institutionalism theory as the conceptual backing for the analysis of this part. In new institutionalism theory, imitating ideas is the primary way ideas that later become myths are circulated (Zapata Campos & Zapata, 2014).

We ought to think of institutions as processes that define the way people behave. Both formal and informal institutions should be centers of focus since significant institutional factors are often casual. Several key actors that occupy a dominant role in contemporary life are modern economic and political systems, formal organizations, and the institutions of law and bureaucracy (March & Olsen, 1984).

Governance takes place in and through institutions, and therefore they play a significant role in political landscapes. They are capable of resource mobilization, wielding powers, and making decisions in many ways. The institutions of tomorrow are shaped today's situations through a

selective, coercive process by acting upon men's habitual view of things, which alerts a point of view or a mental attitude handed down from the past—seeing each institution as imposing its pattern of conduct upon the activities of men in a manner consistent with the notion that institutions possess causal powers above that of individuals alone. Actors within institutional settings are assumed to be selfish individuals whose core motives are self-interest. Their preferences are determined by the institutional context in which selfish motives are pursued. It is within the institutions that actors get opportunities to travel. Here, there are several incentives to do this, i.e., getting a travel allowance shaping individual preferences (Bell, n.d.). The compliments and contrasts of institutions and human actions are forever remaking each other in the endless drama of the social process. Money is the most important thing here; as Hodgson argues, it is the most potent institution in the entire culture. It stamps its pattern upon wayward human nature and makes all react in standard ways to the normal stimuli it offers and affects human ideals of what is either good, beautiful, or actual (Hodgson, 2000).

Zapata Campos & Zapata draw attention to the fact that organizations respond to new ideas whenever they think the ideas are beneficial to them in different ways, rebranding and developing new initiatives and projects. He importantly recognizes that aid development agencies, for example, are compelling when bringing new ideas to the global South countries. Their ideas influence management especially touching on the projects they fund. Following this, I note that the ideas that travel to the global south are implemented as per the donor's requirements and within their timeline. This is especially currently the case with the ideas of green development in Kenya. Other ideas involving public participation have become the normative of the agents, subjects of development, and internalized habits. Traveling ideas are dependent on those who transport and support them and how they are packaged, timed, and formulated rather than the ideas themselves. How they are taken up and viewed is dependent on their places of origin as well. For ideas, institutions, models, practices, or technologies to travel, they must be embodied, simplified, inscribed, and abstracted. The translation process involves disembedding an idea from its surroundings, packaging it into an object, then translating and unpacking it to fit the new context, which is then locally translated into a new practice. The final process is re-embedding, and it does not include the technology or idea but rather accounts and materializations of it into distinct local contexts and versions. Therefore, the travel of ideas aims at bringing about change and innovation through the adoption of new ideas. The metaphor 'travel of ideas' has resulted from a "diffusion" to a "translation" model

whereby ideas adopted externally are translated, localized, and modified in the new organizational context (Zapata Campos & Zapata, 2014).

Simple compliance, appropriation, and assimilation of programs cannot reduce the travel of models and policies from North to South. Instead, development aid projects are locally contested and eventually localized, either covertly or overtly. New spaces in which local actors can create interpretation, adaptation, and twisting of these projects to fit local needs, meanings, and interests. Due to this, organizations such as local governments respond differently to these pressures despite being subject to the exact effects of institutional forces. Response of organizations to the travel and adoption of ideas through strategies such as compliance, compromise, avoidance, defiance, and manipulation. The emergence of inconsistencies with well-established practices and institutions can occur once local governments, communities, and cities have received these ideas. Decoupling ceremonially adopted ideas from existing organizational practices is adopted to resolve these inconsistencies. This practice is also known as "organizational hypocrisy," and it refers to the act of decoupling organizational discourse from decisions and actions. For instance, the introduced participatory policy involving making models in municipalities has retained the decoupling of decision-making power by municipal politicians and officers with the participation of non-governmental organizations launched to gain social legitimacy. However, organizational change may have a consequential effect on day-to-day practices and formal structures due to decoupling adopted ideas from organizational practices (Zapata Campos & Zapata, 2014).

Institutions offer platforms where there are conflictual situations since there might be differences in values and how they are ranked among individuals. They change with time because of the desire for efficiency; however, attention must be put to interests as drivers of institutional existence and change (Spithoven, 2014).

Nation governments around the globe adopt similar policies despite very different socio-historical contexts. Reflecting the focus on the diffusion of western norms and institutional forms worldwide, world polity neo-institutionalism focuses on the similarities and not the differences (Aminzade et al., 2018).

3 APPROACHING THE FIELD, THE SITE (S) AND METHODOLOGY

This dissertation is part of project C03 Green futures, which aimed to answer three research questions: how are green visions translated into politics and projects, how green visions reconfigure environmental governance, and how particular regimes of translation influence the implementation of green visions. It aimed to contribute to Future Rural Africa's overarching topic by analyzing visions of green visions and their translation into politics as specific forms of future making and as powerful drivers of social-ecological transformation.

I structure this chapter in two ways; the first part looks at the process of generating empirical data discussing in detail the research design, the process of developing research questions, how the participants and the study areas were selected, data collection procedures, and finally, my positionality as Kenyan conducting research in Kenya. The second part will focus on the methodological challenges, ethical issues in research, and the limitations experienced during the study. The data used for the analysis of this study have come from several critical recent government documents, frameworks, and policy papers. I also looked at publications from leading newspapers in the country, websites of key institutions in the green visions agenda, and social media posts of different actors. I conducted key informant interviews from 2018 to 2020 with several actors, including government representatives, NGOs (local and international), civil society organizations, foreign aid officials, youth organizations/ groups, and smallholder farmers. I analyze the data by closely interpreting the documents instead of a quantitative form of content analysis.

3.1   Research Design

The design of the study was developed in such a way that it was going to enable the researcher to gain an in-depth understanding of the overall aim of the study, which was *to find out how Green visions re-constitutes environmental governance through particular regimes of translation in Kenya* and to respond to the three research objectives: *to explore how green visions influence environmental governance; to examine how actors affect the implementation of green visions and to analyze how green visions are translated into specific projects.*

3.2   Developing Research Questions

The research questions analyzed green visions and their translation into politics as specific forms of future making and as powerful drivers of social-ecological transformation. I explored the concept of green visions and how it influences environmental politics in Kenya. Interacting with several actors from the government to non-government actors and their expression of what they either knew or thought of green visions as a development model showed a massive gap in definition and how the term was used interchangeably with other terms like GE.

Drawing on Agee (2009), an initial generative question can set the stage for developing related sub-questions. Sub-questions can take many forms, depending on the focus of the overarching questions. Both sub-questions emerge from an overriding question about the specifics of a topic/issue or a phenomenon. I started by interrogating the definition of green visions by actors in various institutions. Secondly, I explored how this concept was translated into local environmental politics and the relationship between different actors. These are the general questions that I used to develop my research instruments which involved guiding questions to the interviews and focus group discussions.

I had planned to go for another round of data collection; therefore, developing new sub-questions was necessary to address the study's objectives thoroughly. As Agee (2009) explains, the development of further questions, especially sub-questions, often occurs during the inquiry process, sometimes during data collection and analysis. A researcher may find that the initial focus of the research question is too limited to address the phenomenon under study. The traveling model and the Political Ecology as the theoretical framework that the study adopts shaped the questions and connected the study to the respondents (Agee, 2009).

3.3   Selecting Participants and Study area

The participants of the study were selected based on a snowball basis. During my interviews with actors, I understood that the actors knew each other and to what extent the others were involved in my subject. While I was referred to several of the actors I thought were exciting to interview, several also did not respond to my request to talk with them. For some, it was because of their busy work schedule, while some opted to refer me to other actors whom they thought were more relevant. Some institutional bureaucracies also worked against me. When I contacted them, I was referred to the research department. The quality of information I attained in these

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departments was not very good, most of which ended up not being included in this study. This study was conducted in Kenya with two field visits. The initial visit was done in July and August 2018, and the second field visit was conducted from April to September 2019. Follow-up interviews were conducted virtually to supplement the data collected between these periods.

3.4   Qualitative Research Methods

This research method aims to gather descriptions of the person being interviewed regarding their interpretation and understanding of the phenomena in the description. This is done in several ways, including face-to-face interviews, which can bring out the interviewee's body language and intonation, among others. This gives the interviewer more information that can supplement what the interviewee said. This approach also provides a detailed description of the opinions, feelings, experiences, and interpretations of what the actions of participants mean (Mohajan & Mohajan, 2018; Opdenakker, 2006).

Qualitative methods aid in giving rich explanations of phenomena. They increase understanding of the background of happenings and the happenings themselves. It also plays an essential part in clarifying the values, language, and meanings attributed to diverse roles in organizations and communities. Researchers taking qualitative research are interested in the experience, belief, and significance of things from people's perspectives. Important to note is that empirical calculation and statistical analysis are not included in qualitative research. Instead, the goal of this qualitative approach is an understanding of the particular in a more profound sense. Qualitative research aims to interpret and describe things systematically from the respondent's point of view to develop new theories and concepts. The concern is with aspects of life that cannot be quantified (Almeida et al., 2017; Mohajan & Mohajan, 2018).

Those who oppose the qualitative method of conducting research argue that those conducting research and research participants already affected by several factors such as their ethnic backgrounds, their age, their standings in the community, sex, and other factors which influence the outcome of the research (Borman et al., 1986).

This study employed a combination of focus group discussions, interviews, participant observation, and telephone interviews to understand the participants' green visions and their translation into politics as specific forms of future-making.

3.4.1   Key Informants and In-depth interviews

This technique has been used widely and successfully in numerous branches of social science study. The main advantages relate to the quality of information gathered quickly. Data is obtained from those experienced and with knowledge, and therefore this technique allows a researcher to get information that cannot be acquired using any other method. The key informants may offer personal information that would not be discovered in different settings. They may tell of occurrences, local happenings, or conditions that clarify implementation problems. Further, they provide the elasticity to explore new thoughts and issues that were not projected in planning the study but are pertinent to its purpose (Marshall, 1996). For this reason, I found this method effective and valuable in my research because I highly relied on key informants from different institutions to identify actors at the local levels. In addition, I identified organizations working with locals such as the World Vision and interviewed their representatives to gain a better context of their involvement in practice.

The questions are not structured in in-depth interviews but are asked directly to the respondent. I usually started with a question and allowed the respondents to answer freely and explain until exhaustion before moving to the next question or a follow-up question. With my semi-structured questions, I offered the respondents to explore them to a greater depth. This way, I could get rich information while feeling very comfortable and free with my respondents. I was also able to allow the respondent to be very comfortable and unrestricted in answering questions (Almeida et al., 2017).

The depth and the richness of the information and stories that I narrate in my study result from in-depth interviews conducted with key informants, experts, and farmers. In-depth interviews are most suitable for situations where you need to ask open-ended questions that require in-depth information from relatively few people. It includes conducting thorough individual interviews with a small number of respondents to discover their perspectives on a particular program, idea, or situation, and its importance comes when you want exhaustive information about a person's opinions and conducts or want to explore new issues in depth (Campion et al., 2001).

I developed guiding questions that varied from one respondent to another depending on their represented institutions. The questions focused on their knowledge and understanding of green visions and how they translated this idea into local practices and offered an in-depth

understanding of how green visions are put into practice in Kenya, their roles and aspirations, and the challenges they face. My interaction with the farmers took a different approach, whereby I focused on open-ended questions. The conversation would start as soon as I arrived in their homes or farms and as per the norms with formal introductions, mostly to put names to faces since they were usually aware of my coming because of the earlier phone conversations. Conversations were dominated by life stories involving how the past looked like and hope for a better tomorrow.

3.4.2 Field Journals

During my fieldwork, I maintained a field journal that this study has. This was a build-up to my notes since I started designing this study. It contains notes from online sites, documents downloaded, appointments made, and my overall field observations, which I captured on a day-to-day basis. Some of the field notes used were taken by my research assistant, a graduate of Environmental Engineering from the University of Nairobi was very helpful. His role included accompanying me to the field, conducting interviews, and taking field photos. His notes were beneficial, especially in instances where I was busy asking questions and, therefore, it was challenging for me to capture everything. I also noted down the challenges faced on a day-to-day basis and what they meant for my work.

Figure 1 Taking notes of field observations with my research assistant. Photo: 1. Assetto 2019

Field notes were taken comprehensively, and particularly the one with the researcher's critical reflection can provide a good guide for future data-gathering efforts in the current study. Just like several researchers do, I took small, keyword-based notes during my field visits and events in a way that was not so conspicuous because, at the same time, I had to be attentive and interact with my participants. While taking my field notes, some questions would arise which I directly asked the interviewee since I did this both while still with the interviewees or later in the day (Opdenakker, 2006; Phillippi & Lauderdale, 2018).

3.4.3 Participant Observation: Conferences, workshops, and training as a methodology

In the context of this research, workshop and conferences refer to an arrangement in which a group obtains new knowledge and applies creativity in solving problems relating to a specific issue of interest. Workshops and conferences are a daily language and need no further explanation; however, they are loosely defined from an academic context since the use and format developed within very authentic contexts (Ørngreen & Levinsen, 2017).

However, the limitations in this approach are that the researcher does not have a choice on the themes of the workshops and the conferences and has to deal with all that goes on to obtain the specific data needed. This is mainly because I had to depend on the actors I had already created a relationship with to lead me to the relevant workshops when collecting data. This way is much easier as it saved me the whole process of submitting applications needed to join some of the workshops, which can lead to either acceptance or rejection due to the limitation in attendance of the participants.

It is impossible to study the social world if we are not part of it. This implies, therefore, that social research by itself becomes part of participant observation. It is, therefore, safe to conclude that participant observation is not a form of research technique but an approach whereby the researcher can be in the world in which the study is conducted (Delamont, 2011). Studying ideas about green futures as a development model in Kenya where the concept is quickly getting people's attention and, most importantly, being highly integrated into several different sectors by different people meant I had to keep up with the conversations going on in other fora.

I accompanied one of the organizations (Kilimo Trust) in their training with local farmers attended media dialogues on green visions and other activities in the name of green visions. One interesting thing I observed in this was how enthusiastic participants were. In social media, practitioners, academics, and young people would engage on issues with much sobriety. It was also interesting to see how the conversations are connected from one platform to another. For example, in a workshop, a hashtag would be developed. The participants were expected to engage in the discussions online to let those not part of the conference also participate in the discussions.

Figure 2 Photo session at the end of one of the workshops I attended to discuss green visions in Nairobi. Photo A. Ogolla 2018

3.4.4   Media analysis

In my fieldwork in 2019, I collected some newspaper articles from two leading media groups-the standard and the nation media groups. The idea was to find out the role of the media in the green visions agenda. How they reported on green visions and the level of attention given. I did this by first going to the internet to find out what had been written by these media stations. I focused on the print media since it was easier to find these, especially those discussed years ago. I then visited the media houses libraries in Nairobi, where I selected articles specifically on green visions and related issues.

Why the media articles? Recognizing the role media plays in passing information, educating the public, and influencing public opinion, I found it essential to see how news of subjects critical to my studies was reported. I attended a workshop dubbed *Media dialogue on energy and climate change reporting* at the Strathmore University school of business which brought together several journalists from different media houses. As much as these meetings focused on how the media could adequately report on climate change news and get the public to be more proactive about climate change adaptation, I found this very critical because of the recognition

of the media's role in creating awareness. One of the challenges pointed out in this meeting was that the media finds itself in an awkward position to raise awareness versus selling news.

Figure 3 An informal session with media practitioners after a workshop in Nairobi. Photo: V. Ondieki 2019

With politics taking center stage in the daily news, getting enough space for environmental information is still quite challenging. In the print media, I looked at what was written on green visions as a subject that shows very little even though the country boasts of having made progress in the green visions agenda. I ask then is what role does the media play, especially on the green development ideas agenda. A look at the daily nation newspaper and how they reported green visions news to indicate that the subject is given less attention. Most of it comes from the opinion columns found around the 15th page of the newspaper. This shows that other pressing issues or essential to the public come before visions green development, which would make the papers sell or be read more by members of the public.

The findings indicate that those who talk about green visions are aware of it have worked or studied the same. The media reports what is happening regarding green visions, but there is a lack of a critical evaluation of the content and meaning of the same to the locals.

While the media is seen as a technology of power in the green visions agenda by actors, the setback is that there are just other pressing issues that need to be highlighted. For instance, the

challenges the society currently faces, preferences, and immediate needs play a critical role in the kind of news the public wants to consume and what sells at the moment.

3.4.5   Green futures on social media

The media's role as a critical factor in forming common-sense knowledge on green futures cannot be underestimated. From policymakers to researchers, stakeholders are increasingly turning to social media to pass the information on green futures, what they are doing about it, and how the public can get involved. The green futures discourse has found itself on social media and especially Twitter. This comes as no surprise because of the increasingly high number of users and its reach globally, and the posts touch on critical societal issues (Veltri & Atanasova, 2017).

In recent years, social media in Kenya has emerged as a source of news and essential debates affecting the country. More recent data, especially online newspaper coverage of environmental activities in Kenya, information from social media platforms, especially Twitter and Facebook from key actors (individuals and institutions) in Kenya, and the debates around current developments. Watching news frequently through Livestream on YouTube channels on activities in various parts of the country complements the fieldwork data. I followed several discussions on the local television channels took part in several social media conversations (Facebook and Twitter) and print media.

Figure 4 Screenshot of the MoEF twitter handle showing their activities to the public. Source MoEF 2020

Social media sites, especially Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn, provide a perfect platform for social connections but has been widely used to share information on what is interesting while at the same time allowing those using it to keep a physical distance and maintain anonymity for those who do not wish to be known (Gelinas et al., 2017). A lot of parody accounts have been created in this regard. Social media allows qualitative researchers to access a broad individual base and the content they create. This enables the researchers to point out and reach voices they might not be able to reach if they followed the more traditional methods like interviews and internet surveys with open-ended questions. Data from social media comes from real-world social environments covering a broad array of people, without any warning from researchers. Therefore, when comparing this with traditional methodologies, participants' behavior is somehow not constrained by how a researcher behaves (Andreotta et al., 2019).

I did not have a reliable method to gather data from social media and lacked a consistent way to follow this. I logged on to social media in my free time for my social interaction. Still, I would randomly encounter interesting conversations and hashtags enriched my study. The inexistence of a guideline can be accredited to the perplexing, mixed nature of social media as both sources of evidence and information about people's behavior (Veltri & Atanasova, 2017).

3.4.6 Telephone and video-based interviews

Telephone interviews have been regarded as inferior because they lack visual contact between the interviewer and interviewee. Skepticism in the effectiveness of telephone interviews is widely used in carrying out market research and polling and has also been used in explaining more traditional survey results (Block & Erskine, 2012). Building a rapport is argued to be an essential ingredient to creating an enabling environment that encourages interviewees to speak freely and openly, therefore, providing rich data during interviews (Farooq, 2015; Farooq & De Villiers, 2017). With the Covid 19 pandemic at a time when fieldwork was meant to be going on. This method provided good data that has been essential in completing this study.

Telephone interviews provide broad access to participants than other data collection forms such as face-to-face interviews and focus group discussions (Opdenakker, 2006). Being in Germany and with fieldwork not complete, I took advantage of this method to generate further essential data from experts in Kenya. The advantage I found with this method was recording all of the interviews conducted because getting consent to do this was easier than conducting face-to-face interviews.

3.5 My positionality and Reflexivity as a Kenyan in a German institution conducting research in Kenya.

Reflexivity involves us as researchers understanding how doing research influences the research outcome. Reflecting assists researchers in looking at the way the empirical study was conducted and explaining to the audience how certain conclusions were arrived at (Hamilton, 2018). It includes questioning the way we act and do things in a manner that makes an individual reflect, and as a result, it assumes the form subject-object-subject. By asking our interpretations, reflexivity results in meaningful change as we engage in self-reflection. Therefore, it helps respond to feelings, actions, and opinions as we conduct research. It also incorporates questioning how we conceptualize the reality and knowledge of nature and how other paradigms viewpoints can open up different ways of thinking about phenomena. Through reflexivity, we ask how we relate to the background of the research, those taking part in the study, and the data itself. Additionally, it incorporates interrogating what is put forward as 'valid' and valued research. The questions relate to how qualitative research thinks, does, and evaluates (Hamilton, 2018).

I had always thought about my Ph.D. and its critical nature's implication on my future career. Initially, I undertook a critical study, but I had to keep reflecting and changing so many things as time went by. Balancing the interests of the project and my interests and doing science is not something to be taken lightly. Researchers have a qualitative relationship with their subjects, and hence the data given to them are significantly and unintentionally patterned by factors such as ethnicity, social status, professional training. Therefore, it is not easy to differentiate reality from what subjects thought was practical knowledge to offer the researcher (Borman et al., 1986).

The data gathering instrument is usually the researcher in qualitative studies, and therefore, issues of competency and bias must be considered. The presence of the researcher might influence the data given by respondents.

3.6   Ethical issues and methodological limitations

In Kenya, the National Council of Science, Technology, and Innovation (NACOSTI) is mandated to accredit research institutes and approve all scientific research, among other functions, according to Section 6(1) of the Science, Technology, and Innovation Act 2013. I, therefore, acquired a postgraduate research permit with NACOSTI for the fieldwork period (Appendix II)

The empirical work for this dissertation was conducted between 2018 and 2020, far from what I had been used to from my previous institutional settings. This included two field trips to Kenya in 2018 and another in 2019. My most significant blow came in 2020 with the global pandemic, which disrupted my final field visit that never came to be. I had to conduct a few more interviews remotely for this last part of data collection, but I could not effectively gather the data that I needed as designed before. Due to this factor, most parts of the dissertation and study site have been changed. Conducting expert interviews in Kenya requires a lot of patience. Getting an appointment is not easy, and when you get one, there is no guarantee that the respondent will turn up when you travel to the agreed point of meeting. I had several canceled appointments. I often relied on referrals to other actors, which proved a considerable challenge to data acquisition because I got very few referrals from my respondents.

The extent of truth is the primary concern because there may be bias because of the respondent's character. Some informants may misleadingly present things as they want things to look worse

or better than they are. Respondents behaved differently depending on where they were. For example, while visiting respondents at their offices, they seemed more reserved in giving information than those I interviewed on the phone or met in a restaurant somewhere in the city (Brink, 1993). This method relied on experts and the projects/programs they implement in various places. For this reason, the study encountered a challenge in individual identification of the projects and programs as we had to first conduct expert interviews before examining their projects, most of which had an apparent disconnect in practice.

4 RESEARCH SETTINGS IN KENYA

In this chapter, I discuss Kenya's history of development. This assists in understanding the way development visions have come to be and how they are constantly reproduced. This will then assist in contextualizing green concepts of development and how they have been influenced historically. In understanding the country's development history, I trace the Development Plans and how they have come to be. More importantly, to understand whose visions are reflected in the development plans. I follow this with a discussion on critical legal frameworks that anchor green visions in Kenya. The section addresses how these frameworks have been produced over time, including the prevailing political conditions and their performative role in the politics of green development. As I will show, these frameworks reflect the visions of actors who operate both within and outside the boundaries of Kenya.

4.1 Kenya's development history and an overview of development plans

Both the Kenyan past and the world economy have had a massive part to play in the current economic situation of Kenya, which I contend can never be looked at in isolation. This is in how employment, technological advancements, industrial development, and resources are distributed. Policies form a critical part of the social struggles and are both the outcome and cause of historical development. Primarily the current situation in Kenya has been influenced by two distinct periods, the colonial era and the post-colonial epoch (Stewart, 1976). It will not be possible to discuss these two eras in detail. Still, it will briefly highlight a few essential things that I believe have led to the current situation and development pathway that Kenya adopted.

When the colonial settlers arrived, they took the white colonists' most productive land and prioritized agriculture. While at this, the displaced Africans were employed in this agricultural land and paid meager wages. Africans' right to own land was limited, and their right to access any form of credit and market. After that, the Asian population was brought to Kenya mainly to assist in constructing the Kenya Uganda railway to link Uganda, Kenya, and the coast. The Asian population was also supposed to provide skilled labor, which Africans had not developed yet (Stewart, 1976).

Kenya's policy environment has constantly been changing. This has had an impact on approaches to managing the environment. The method of formulating policies involves many organizations. This process is done at the national level while implementing the policies locally is what is left to the counties. Kenya's approach over the past years in its policymaking is

arguably unsystematic and uneven, with substantial changes to multi-sectoral combined methods only in the late 1990s. The necessity to change from a disjointed policy formulation and implementation was articulated through Sessional Paper No. 1 of 1999 on Environment and Development, which defined a unified policy framework for sustainable environment, natural resource management, and poverty reduction, with precise goals for soil conservation, wetlands, forestry and water resources management. The policy paper acknowledged the extensive degradation of natural resources and its difficult links to economic productivity and poverty regressions. Additionally, it provides for approaches that seek to find a state of balance in achieving both conservation and development goals. The plans aim to find ways that the private sector, NGOs, and the communities can be well brought on board (Yatich et al., 2007).

Colonial inheritance has been a vital driver of inequality in Kenya and other factors favoring high productivity agricultural areas and the rural-urban divide. A fast-growing population has surpassed the informal sector's ability to generate adequate jobs to take in those new people looking for jobs. African Socialism purely influenced Kenya's development pathway. It emphasized rapid economic growth, assuming that a robust economy would improve poverty, unemployment, and income disparities. There was little emphasis on human development. Access to health services, education, and political participation was economically envisioned. Implementation of the Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAP'S) radical measures involving a reduction in government expenditure and trade liberalization resulted in the imposition of user fees on such social amenities as health services and education. It reduced access to such services by the poor and vulnerable (Misati & Mngoda, 2012).

Kenya attained political independence in 1963, and at this time, the country was facing several challenges but, most importantly, poverty. The new government urgently had to reverse this situation with the high poverty level. Thus it came up with the Sessional Paper No. 10 of 1965 titled African Socialism and its applications to Planning in Kenya, a pathway to fighting poverty, ignorance, and disease. In its efforts to fight poverty, ignorance, and disease, the government has put development strategies and policies in the last five decades. Till now, all indications point out that the war against poverty is far from over (Achola et al., 2004). There remains a high level of exclusion and poverty despite the sustained economic recovery and declines in absolute poverty from 46.6% in 2005-2006 to 36.1% in 2015-2016. The poverty rate in remote, arid, and sparsely populated north-eastern parts of Kenya is still high and is approximated to be above 70%. There has been no significant decrease in income inequality in

recent years.[6] The current situation regarding poverty is painted in the year 2020 Comprehensive Poverty Report by the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (KNBS), which shows that a third of Kenyans (15.9 million out of 44.2 million) are poor when you only consider financial income. This scenario is illustrated by the fact that an average adult living in rural areas earns less than Sh3,252 and Sh5,995 monthly for those in urban areas. However, the multidimensional poverty index raises Kenya's poverty rate to 5%, compared to 36.1% when looking at money only.[7] But why has the country not been unable to fight poverty? This question can well be answered by reviewing the development paradigm foundations that have been used to derive development strategies and policies.

Development strategies are derived from development theory, even though it is not the aim of this study to look at the development theories that Kenya has anchored its development upon for the last five decades. I nevertheless mention not in detail though that Kenya's development models have followed theoretical underpinnings derived from the Western World. The study argues that this has been the biggest obstacle to fighting against poverty. Most of these models have failed to properly consider the unique political challenges and how this has evolved from independence to now (Achola et al., 2004).

The unemployment question, which has a very high correlation to poverty, for instance, is not a new phenomenon but dates back to the year 1971 when the International Labour Organization (ILO), with support of the World Bank and numerous UN agencies, sent experts to Kenya to conduct a study on the unemployment situation. In 1972 the team of experts arrived and later came up with a celebrated report ``*Employment, Incomes and Equality: A Strategy for Increasing Productive Employment in Kenya*`` this report suggested a radical shift in policies of development in the lines of the "poverty oriented" strategy adopted by Robert MacNamara as President of the World Bank in his policy speeches from 1970-71 going forward (Leys, 1979). The study is interested in looking at how the development strategy has been evolving since Kenya gained her independence and how different internal and external interests have produced the kind of development that currently exists as will be shown in the later chapters of the study. I do not get into the details of the development plans and the strategies but highlight them to show that the current plans have evolved with some forces and interests behind them.

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[6] UNDP Kenya Annual Report 2018

[7] KNBS The 2020 Comprehensive Poverty Report

4.2 Anchoring Green Futures in Kenya.

This section discusses the policy and legal frameworks on which the green discourse in Kenya is anchored. This is to assist in understanding the origin and the current situation regarding green futures and how they came to be. The regulatory frameworks comprising policies, legislations, and institutions are factors that will catalyze Kenya's transformation to a GE. The adequacy of provision of these policies and institutions in leading the country in the direction of green visions is fundamental. However, the institutions are characterized by duplication of roles, lack of synergy, and institutional inertia. The institutions employ management and enforcement styles that do not foster discursive and consensual approaches for eco-innovation.

The study argues that green aspects have always taken center stage in Kenya's growth agenda. This is reflected in Jomo Kenyatta's Harambee movement Moi's conservation efforts, and therefore, this is nothing new. The choice of green colors as one of the flag colors cannot be downplayed. Despite this, when you ask a Kenyan from the Northern part of Kenya and a Kenyan from the Western part of Kenya what a green Kenya means, the answers might not be similar. Northern Kenya comprises arid and semi-arid land characterized by unending drought, while this is not the case in western Kenya. The question then arises: What is Kenyans' collective vision on what green should be, how is this vision created and materialized, and further who makes this vision?

The concept of GE doesn't replace sustainable development. Nevertheless, it is a shift to a future that focuses on the natural capital base and ecosystem services. The ambition of being part of low carbon, GE. These visions have acted as key drivers of change in the environmental governance system, pushing a rapid reaction by government and non-government actors alike to refocus resource use and consumption towards a GE (Kaudia, 2012). This set the stage towards the green futures discourse because it symbolized the level of commitment the two top political leaders of the country had at that time. Consequently, it defined how other actors across scale have engaged and continue to engage in the green discourse in Kenya.

In recent years, Kenya has discovered viable deposits of minerals such as natural gas, oil, and coal, whose exploitation is expected to meaningfully alter the impact on the environment, social aspects, and the economy's structure. Additionally, the rapid development of infrastructure and housing construction at the national and county levels is anticipated to exacerbate these impacts if sustainable production and consumption approaches are not embraced to transform into GE.

Further, demographic changes, sustainable jobs, and sustainable consumption and production patterns are the main drivers of the country's GE agenda. It emphasizes the core compulsory social-economic situation towards attaining Kenya's vision 2030. It is meant to guide the national and county governments, civil society, the private sector, and other actors to adopt development pathways that have higher productivity, green visions, and a cleaner environment relative to the normal state of affairs (Green Economy Strategy and Implementation Plan: 2016-2030, 2016).

Contemporary environmentalism is concerned with how a society operates within a natural system. The belief that the environment should be protected and taken care of has been widely spread and held. As the world continues to develop, the rate of environmental destruction and natural resources has increased. This, therefore, makes the need to protect the environment to be embraced. Environmentalists believe that the environment should be protected at all costs. This has had a significant influence on the way governments operate and the kind of decisions they make. This has been the case for development cooperation, international and national NGOs, and other actors. This environmental influence can be seen in the development blueprint, such as Kenya's vision 2030. This is also reflected in how politicians talk about it, especially during campaigns for elective positions. The word environment has and continues to be used by companies as a marketing strategy for their products. Companies government how environment friendly they are or may have been during the manufacture. They also talk about how profits are channeled towards environmental protection as a corporate social responsibility. To this end, many people at the individual level have adopted the green lifestyle, which is widely reflected in the consumption pattern (Haq & Paul, 2013).

According to the Green Economy Strategy and Implementation Plan (GESIP), it is expected that the country shifts to a green and sustainable development path as entrenched in vital planning documents like Vision 2030, the National Climate Change Action Plan (NCCAP) 2018-2022 (Green Economy Strategy and Implementation Plan: 2016-2030, 2016). Vision 2030, for instance, purposes to change the country into "*a middle-income economy, providing a high quality of life to all citizens.*" The Constitution (2010) further explains the quality of life as imagined in Vision 2030 to comprise *a clean and healthy environment.* There is a broad consensus that the chapter on the environment and natural resources in the constitution is helping the country achieve green visions and sustainable development making it a critical step in environmental governance (Koech, 2020).

The attainment of environmental quality, social equity, and economic prosperity is at the core of development planning in Kenya. This study looks at how the country aims to achieve this using several policy documents. The study argues that documents have strategic functions that they perform. Prior and Hunter contend that documents contain information, words, or instructions and play an informing role in research; they influence how people interact socially and how organizations perform their functions. In other words, they disrupt and sustain social relations. They perform the role of actors when it comes to governance matters and in research, they act as informants and operate as coercion tools. Documents receive content and are active actors in action networks (Hunter, 2008; Prior, 2008).

Weisser also explores the role documents play and notes that it is imperative to consider how the documents come to be and what can be achieved from a viewpoint that puts documents at the core in international politics and beyond. He argues that they make a difference in how they perform as agents and play a performative role i.e., assigning roles and areas of responsibility and structuring workflows (Weisser, 2014).

Once the documents are written and sent out there, it is hard to predict how they will be activated in different cultural, social, and political settings. Therefore, if you have to analyze a document, then there is a need to trace it from drafting it to the final product, considering the politics involved at all stages. It is also imperative to consider how human actors are positioned and manipulated in different circumstances; content issues are secondary. A good understanding of this aids in understanding their performative role in organizations (Prior, 2008; Weisser, 2014). The study argues that populations are not always involved in making policies as stipulated in the law, nor are they brought on board in the process of implementing them. The ideas contained in these policy documents come from somewhere, including development partners, NGOs, Civil Society groups, local political class, and bureaucrats. One ends up in the final document is a process primarily influenced by political interests and a quest for government control. It, therefore, results in several alignments with those ideas favored by the government carrying the day, not necessarily because they are beneficial to the public but because they favor political interest. We can see how powerful networks with similar interests align themselves in such situations.

Further, I question how Kenya, a developing nation with constrained resources, balances economic, environmental, and political interests. The study argues that policies have been formulated so that the status quo in most cases is never disrupted since this is not always in the

interest of the politicians. With a constitution that marked ten years in August 2020 from the time it was promulgated in 2010, a new dawn was signaled, bringing optimism to the Kenyan population. According to Steve Ogolla, a lawyer based in Nairobi, the constitution is celebrated for its political and symbolic value. He argues that it feels good to have a detailed and purposive constitution, which probably explains why it got overwhelming support and brought hope among Kenyans, especially after the 2007 post-election violence. But has the constitution been effective in practice a decade later? The lawyer argues that the constitution has limited transformative potential because the implementers do not care about its core.

4.2.1 Environmental Management and Coordination Act (EMCA)

Inspired by the Brundtland report and Agenda 21, Kenya developed EMCA, outlining guidelines for design, safeguarding, and conservation of the environment, Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA), Environmental Audit (EA), and monitoring. Additionally, it sets out specific environmental standards. Drawing from EMCA 1999 (reviewed per constitution 2010), the country created various institutions and enacted numerous environmental legislation including Wildlife Conservation and Management Policy, Forest Policy, Wetland Policy, industrial development policies, performance, and standards. Ironically, current development plans seem distant from these efforts. Vision 2030 is grounded on three broad pillars: political, social, and economic pillars, which primarily draw from the millennium development goals and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The economic pillar aims to move the economy up the value chain through agriculture, tourism, livestock, and industry (manufacturing). In contrast, the social pillar strives to improve the quality of life for all Kenyans. This is by pursuing a cross-section of social and human welfare programs and projects. The political pillar aims at good governance, accountability, equality, participation, and decentralization in a democratic space. On paper, Vision 2030 arguably falls short of a deliberate concern for environmental sustainability. Emphasis is put on economic growth. Therefore, it is assumed that previous and existing environmental management and coordination policies should automatically guide the three pillars of the vision, thus hacking the win-win narrative.

In the following, the study argues that the ACT has since its inception been used by the government to legitimize its development projects, which have to be implemented to justify the funds that come from the donor organization.

With this act, it is argued that the institutional framework in Kenya is pretty robust and comprehensive when it comes to matters of the environment. Before this act was enacted, Kenya lacked all-inclusive legislation that regulates the environment. The act is extensive, but its critical contribution to environmental governance is the creation of the National Environment Management Authority (NEMA). Several of the provisions enclosed in EMCA, along with the subsidiary legislation, ought to offer regulations for the usage and type of permissible activity in Kenya's diverse habitats and ecosystems. EMCA, therefore, gives NEMA absolute powers to oblige any ministry or authority to comply with environmental regulations that are in existence (Barczewski, 2013).

EMCA is anchored within the principles of sustainable development. EMCA defines sustainable development as one that meets the needs of the current generation while at the same time ensuring that future generations will be in a position to meet their needs by sustaining the carrying capacity of the supporting ecosystems. This is talked about in detail in the fifth section of EMCA. The definition adds an obligation to reserve the carrying capacity of ecosystems and includes the principles of environmental law as stipulated in the fifth section of EMCA. The concept of ecosystems carrying capacity typically denotes the necessity to put external boundaries of progress to maintain ecosystems' integrity by avoiding degradation that cannot be reversed. The sustainable development principle has a crucial juridical position in the legal system of Kenya as one of the important national values and principles of governance enumerated in Article 10 of the Constitution (Mwanza, 2020).

Accordingly, EMCA entitles everyone in Kenya to a healthy and clean environment and must protect and improve the environment. The act was enacted when the government of the environment in Kenya was observed to be deteriorating, and there was a need to protect the environment. The act was passed on 6th January 2000 and commenced on 14th January 2000, after which it was revised in 2012 (Government of Kenya, 2015).

It serves as the legal framework for environmental conservation and management. It has to be stressed that this framework established other institutions-NEMA, National Environment Tribunal, National Environment Action Plan Committees, National Environment Trust Fund, Public Complaints Committee, County Environment Committee- to drive the country's sustainability goals (Koech & Munene, 2020).

It gives orders, restoration, conservation, and environmental assessment procedures. An ecological conservation order may be enforced on burdened land to conserve fauna and flora, preserve water quality, restrict the scope of any agricultural activity on burdened land to save the environment. It stipulates the guidelines affecting environmental impact assessment. Before carrying out a project, its impacts are assessed to determine the positive and negative effects on the environment to take the necessary precaution. This act defines environmentally-related offenses and describes the measures needed if these laid down regulations are not adhered to. How else do you explain the continuous deteriorating environmental conditions in the country even with the existence of such good and well-articulated documents?

Under EMCA, it is a prerequisite that resource users and developers undertake EIAs and EAs. It sets out the operational procedures necessary for planning and managing the environment and its natural resources. As such, it is essential in preparing environmental action plans. These environmental action plans help coordinate environmental planning at various levels. These operational guidelines set up The study argues are constantly disregarded by the government whenever they intend to implement or are implementing large-scale development projects. With most Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) studies passed by the National Environment Management Authority, an institution established by the ACT, it has been challenging for the public to challenge them. Public consultation meetings are selectively done basically to fulfill the requirements of the law. Still, their views are only considered whenever they do not overlap the governments in most cases. In other words, public interests are usually overtaken by interests of the government and especially the executive wing of the government.

It has established committees such as the public complaints committee to investigate suspected cases of environmental degradation, complaints or allegations regarding the government of the environment or on its motion and make reports of its findings and recommendations to the National Environment Council (NEC). Doing so ensures that ongoing projects do not have severe impacts on the environment and determines the short and long-term effects of the actions of any activity by monitoring them; this is practically not the case. The people themselves never understand how the committees operate or even their existence, for that matter. They are only known to those in the field of environment as a profession. Also, the committee established has to wait for the public to launch a complaint which in most cases, due to technicalities involved, the public never does so. Without issues launched by public members, projects flouting the environmental conditions go on to completion.

While it provides a means for entering both international and regional treaties and agreements, the question remains to what extent are such treaties and agreements applicable in Kenya and whose interest they primarily serve. Kenya is a signatory to several international and regional agreements and treaties that should be respected and implemented. EMCA offers a legal means by which Kenya can enter such agreements. I advance the thought that being a signatory to international treaties which must be respected, the elites have always manipulated this. I ask how important the treaties are for Kenya and the population? How do the treaties translate, and how are they actualized in Kenya? It is in the interest of this study to find out who the actors in Kenya that take lead roles in such are and their interests.

Section 58 of EMCA requires projects specified under schedule 2 to undergo an EIA process. However, the process of undertaking EIA in Kenya has been highly criticized. This I observe is because of its selective application. For example, substantial infrastructural projects have been and continue to be undertaken without proper EIAs. I view them as exercises meant to tick specific boxes to obtain a license (Okul, 2019).

4.2.2 Kenya's development strategy

The year 2002 remains one of the historic years in Kenya because it is the year that ended the 24-year rule of the second president and the first time an opposition candidate won an election. With this change, the new government had to focus on addressing the slow economic growth experienced in the country for nearly two decades. This is what they had predominantly ridden on during campaigns. This resulted in an immediate short-term approach, the Government's Economic Recovery Strategy for Wealth and Employment Creation, designed to cure the economy.

The settling in of the new government made it clear that a long-term development plan had to be made from the short-term strategies. Consequently, the Government created an advisory group called the National and Economic Social Council (NESC). This body was primarily mandated to develop the country's long-term vision by advising the government on articulating a long-term vision of the economy and, more broadly, the nation's future direction. The Kenya Vision 2030 was officially launched in June 2008 to have a globally competitive and prosperous nation with its people living in a secure and clean environment by 2030. This is what has become the reference point for all government policy activities.

Vision 2030 is the development plan which guides Kenya's development agenda. It is a political document that came into place in 2007/2008. It was meant to serve a particular purpose with the regime in place then. Coming especially after the post-election violence, which brought the country to its knees, the Kibaki regime was keen to gain legitimacy to rule, which it finally achieved. The study argues that the vision 2030 development plan has passed over time, but it is essential to highlight that it served its political purpose. There are new development visions, such as the 'Big Four' of the Jubilee government. The 'Big Four' came about in the second term of President Uhuru Kenyatta. The argument is that these are born of the vision 2030. Kenya's politics has in recent years changed so quickly. Everything is changing very fast. Everything is at stake; not even the constitution is safe. The current conversations on constitutional review include the position of prime minister and two deputies to ensure that those who lose elections become part of the government. Shifting alliances by top politicians have in the past determined the priorities the government gives in its development agenda. Currently, the talk about amending the constitution has taken shape. The government's focus has changed to the 'building bridges initiative.' The president and the opposition leader shook hands in 2018 in what is popularly known as the handshake. After this, the two said they had buried their political hatchet and were committed to developing Kenya and leaving a legacy of a peaceful Kenya. The question I raise is, which kind of green futures do the two have for Kenya?

Other plans which have since become relevant building on the vision 2030 have also come into existence.

The national plan serves three essential functions. First, they help to inspire hope and confidence among the citizens. For example, the big four announced by President Kenyatta after coming to the office for his second term are very ambitious. The newly styled Kenyatta appeared keen on defining his legacy and exerting his authority. These ambitions targeted to secure affordable housing, manufacturing, food security, and affordable healthcare. Given that they touched on the immediate needs of the citizens, they inspired hope and confidence in the second and last term of the president. The Government, for example, targeted to realize 100% national food and nutrition security by the year 2022. With barely two years remaining for the president to be in office for this term, this hope seems to have dwindled with the recent address where the president admitted that it would not be possible to achieve such in a single term in office. On 18th January 2020, the East African newspaper reported that only less than 1% of the set targets of agenda four had been met. This, therefore, means that the economic growth that the government had foreseen was going to be a tall order to achieve. The president recognizing this,

has recently changed his focus to what is now called the Building bridges initiative. He is keen on managing his political transition through this initiative. With this in place, the big four agenda seem to have been the biggest casualty in the economic sense.

Secondly, they serve the purpose of attracting funds from the donor organization. It is almost impossible to convince any serious institution to give you money to do anything without a plan. The plans' third role is to legitimize actions for which the funds are received. This is also true in situations whereby the government wants to justify its actions. Take a case of the large infrastructure development that has been going on in the country in the previous years, for example.

> *During the Grand coalition government, this vision was alive, there were systems in place, and there were meetings after every two weeks to report on its progress, these days that is not happening at all, and what we remain with is a well-outlined document just like the other documents that have been there in the past (Senior Staff KENHA, Nairobi 04/2019).*

This statement by a senior expert who worked closely with the vision 2030 secretariat during the government of President Kibaki and now works in the government of President Kenyatta is a representation of what many believe that governments have a crucial part to play in realizing the country's visions. However, different regimes have their visions. This means that visions play a role that goes beyond a country's development. Currently, there is less talk about vision 2030, but more on 'Big Four' whose implementation and achievement seem not to be realized within the period it was meant to be realized. During President Kenyatta's 7th state of the nation on 12th November 2020, the president admitted that the 'Big Four' would not be achieved during his term in office. He argued that he had laid a basis for the achievement of the 'Big Four,' which he claims is an aspiration of many Kenyans.

> *Even as we mooted the four intentions, we recognized then, as we still recognize now, that the task of ending the indignity of not having decent shelter; the task of enhancing access to Universal Health Coverage; the task of enabling all who are willing to live in dignity through the sweat of their brow to thrive, and the task of ensuring food and nutrition security; would not be completed in a single term of office. That being the case, we give our solemn vow that by the end of 2022, we will have laid an unshakable foundation for realizing this vision, which is a*

> *shared aspiration for millions of Kenyans (President Uhuru Kenyatta 12th November 2020).*

One needs to ask the place of future green visions of the country as enshrined in the constitution and other plans. This comes when the talk about amending the constitution is at its peak. Since 2018 when the president had the handshake, the conversation shifted from development to inclusivity. Inclusivity in this context refers to a situation where all competing political leaders get a position after the election contest ends. They envision a condition whereby elections are not as hotly contested as has been in the past. This is to help deal with what has been seen as divisive politics, which is argued to be the main hindrance to the country's development. The elite's development plans should be understood in a broader context.

> *Yeah, it's always good for a country to have a vision for where it is going. We only have medium-term plans like MTP III, which runs from 2018 to 2022. But I don't think that these documents, people follow them. I think they are used when a country, for example, is trying to bargain for some financial resources for project funding and is aligning to a specific document (Senior Staff FES, Nairobi 11/2020).*

Vision 2030 has three pillars; the first one is the Economic pillar which focuses on achieving an average economic growth rate of 10% per annum, which will be sustained until the year 2030; This rate of economic growth has faced a considerable challenge from diminishing natural resources, like loss of biodiversity (Kaudia, 2012). Second is the Social Pillar, which seeks to engender cohesive, equitable, and just social development in a secure and clean environment. Finally, the political pillar aims to identify a democratic system that is issue-based, result-oriented, people-centered, and accountable. I suggest a good comprehension of the circumstances that led to the production of this vision for a good understanding. It is good to understand the prevailing political, economic, and social conditions that the country was going through during its development. A further understanding of the process and those involved in developing this vision is crucial as this helps in further understanding whether the country needed it. Vision 2030 is a plan designed to respond to the failure of development practice in Kenya for the last 40 years. During the first two decades of independence, commentators and Kenyans perceived that the country was doing relatively well because it focused on limiting the import-substituting industrialization policy and agriculture. However, during the second two decades, the economy was at best moribund due to a "stop and go " structural adjustment and an increasingly authoritarian regime. After the 2002 general elections,

the economy recovered after a more focused economic policy regime, and favorable export prices were put in place. However, in 2007 the economy collapsed due to recurrent drought, global financial meltdown, and post-election political crisis (Government of Kenya, 2010).

The vision stands on three pillars: political, social, and economic pillars and secured on the foundations of macroeconomic stability; infrastructural development; Land Reforms; Science, Technology and Innovation (STI); Human Resources Development; Security and Public Sector Reforms. The vision requires a sustainable, secure, and clean environment for Kenyans by 2030. This is motivated by the sustainable development principles and the necessity for equity in accessing the advantages of a clean and secure environment. To deliver on Vision 2030, four strategic thrusts were identified for the sector based on the economic and political pillars. In its economic pillar, the vision provides for the conservation of the environment for a continuous flow of environmental goods and services for national development, reducing the effects of desertification and disasters in the country and the development of a pollution and waste management system to ensure a clean, healthy and secure environment.

The political pillar involves environmental planning and governance. In Vision 2030, Kenya's GDP was expected to achieve a growth rate of 10% per annum over five years. This growth was expected to have both positive and detrimental effects on the environment. For instance, major development projects like the LAPSSET would lead to environmental degradation and increased pollution. Environmental planning and management are geared towards sustainable ecological management while achieving development. The vision aimed to integrate planning approaches and improve the overall governance of the environment. As a result, strategies have been put in place to help achieve the goals. Notable strategies include GESIP, Kenya Climate Change Action Plan (KCCAP), and the Medium Term Plan (MTP) III[8] (Oguge, 2019).

The goals to achieve this included; Harmonizing environmental laws both at the national and local levels; Enforcing ecological regulations, standards and guidelines; Strengthening institutional capacities on environmental management; Developing incentives to ensure compliance with environmental laws and regulations; Entrenching the development and use of Strategic Environmental Assessment and National Environmental Action Plans; Upgrading a capacity for enhanced information coverage and sharing; Attracting a minimum of three Clean

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[8] Big Four agenda- food security, affordable housing, Manufacturing and Affordable Health for all

Development Mechanisms projects per year. However, the study argues that the Vision falls short of a deliberate and critical environmental concern but seems to direct attention to the problems above without a clear pathway for ecological sustainability. Instead, it is assumed that previous environmental management and coordination policies and institutions should automatically guide the three pillars of the vision, which has caused more confusion when it comes to roles and responsibilities. The government is currently in phase three of the implementation of the vision under MTP III, which is a five-year time period (2018-2030) that is highly marketed as the 'Big Four' agenda where the government focuses on four sectors with a critical interest in projects that will accelerate economic growth, improve health standards, improve living conditions and reduce inequality (Oguge, 2019).

With this outline of what vision 2030 entails, the critical question that I pose is the extent to which the Vision has responded to the persistent development challenges Kenya continues to face. Examining the country's growth in the past regarding the objectives of Vision 2030 and its effect on inequality, it is noted that as opposed to common perception, Kenya's growth has not been impressive compared to other African countries. This can be credited primarily to high levels of inequality in Kenya. For instance, income increases associated with growth have been skewed towards the top of the distribution (Government of Kenya, 2010). However, the country has fallen at least five years behind this ambitious plan, with several initiatives remaining a pipe dream more than ten years since it was launched. According to Gituro Wainaina, the former vision 2030 Delivery Secretariat Director General, Kenya set the growth targets too high for itself. Corruption has also played a considerable role in derailing the dreams of Vision 2030 (Wafula, 2018).

4.2.3   The constitution and the environment

The right to a healthy and clean environment and the sustainable development principles found their way in the 2010 constitution of Kenya. Constitutionalising the two signified crucial progress in Kenya's environmental law, representing sustainability constitutionalism and ecological constitutionalism. With this, the country departed from the framework of the 1963 constitution, which aimed mainly to develop a governance structure that protected political and civil rights. According to Mwanza, environmental rights lacking a clear language in the constitution allowed the government to engage in mismanaging the environment within a legal perspective without clear and effective ways for legal alternatives (Mwanza, 2020).

Whereas Mwanza argues that constitutionalizing sustainable development principles and the right to a clean and healthy environment can seal specific gaps that were present in the old constitutional arrangement, thus improving environmental protection, I depart from this. I argue that it has instead led to an emergence of several institutions and legal frameworks, most of which are duplication and much more unclear in terms of their role in effective environmental management. Different actors, both at the international and national level, have used it to propagate their development agenda mainly at the expense of the environment in itself. As a principle in the constitution, sustainable development works as a guiding principle that outlines the content of environmental law precisely by motivating the formation of environmental regulations that can spearhead vital interests of the environment. Sustainable development has influenced the primary content and scope of laws about the environment in Kenya (Mwanza, 2020).

Figure 5 cartoon showing the intention of politicians to amend the constitution to create more political positions so that after elections everyone can still hold a political office. Source @iGaddo 2020

The current conversations in the political arena in Kenya to amend the constitution is seen are those who are opposed to the amendments as only geared towards sharing political positions by the political class. This is illustrated better in this cartoon by Gaddo, a famous cartoonist working for the Standard Media Group, who depicts the struggle of the Kenyan political class to get to the center of power. The baby represents the 2010 constitution, which is being

amended, and at the time of drawing this cartoon, the process was in a stage of collecting signatures from the public. The debate around it is who gets a share of what while at the same time, due to political struggle and competition, some politicians feel that others should not be included in the whole process. While this is going on, the citizens tend to watch from the periphery—most without knowing what is happening. When the politicians agree at the political table, they then go out to the public to campaign and urge the public to support or reject what they think works for or against the politicians themselves. The second photo shows the political elite reaching out to the public during political campaigns in helicopters with a narrative to support or reject what is working for or against them. The public will then vote to legitimize the whole process. One crucial question is in whose interest do such actions happen and what role do public plays in legitimizing such actions. To put it simply, the constitution provides the principle to govern, but the country is continuously in the field of political struggle.

Hardcore environmentalists were sarcastically referred to as "Tree-huggers" because ecological issues were a preserve, and green concepts have only become a recent phenomenon. Today in Kenya, environmental concerns are at the center in almost all aspects of development, as reflected in the Bill of Rights in the 2010 Constitution[9]. After several decades of unsuccessfully attempting to have a new constitution, the 2008 violence that erupted after the elections presented a political opportunity to have the new law in place (Khaunya et al., 2015).

This constitution strives to decentralize governance. It creates a system of devolved government that ought to start addressing concerns in the retired constitution. Article 174 necessitates this system to attain some objectives, some of which include encouraging people's accountability and participation when exercising the power of the government, nurturing national unity by taking into consideration the diversity that is of the Kenyan people, ensuring equitable sharing of national and local resources, giving powers of self-governance to the people, guarding the rights of the marginalized and the minority and supporting economic and social development and access to public services throughout Kenya (Akech, 2010). Under this constitution, sustainability concerns have been fundamental in the country's legislature. Emphasis is put on Environmental protection. This is under Articles 42, 60(c), and 69(ah), which acknowledge the rights to a healthy and clean environment, sustainable and management of land resources in a productive manner, and sustainable use and defense of genetic and

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[9] The draft of this constitution was subjected to a referendum in August 4th 2010 and was promulgated on the 27th August 2010 replacing the first constitution which had been in place since 1963

biological diversity, respectively. Article 42 of the constitution stipulates that each one has the right to a clean and healthy environment, which comprises the right to: safeguard the environment for the value of present and future generations by the way not limited to legislation and (ii) have requirements relating to the environment fulfilled under Article 70. Article 69 of the constitution protects the Environment and Natural Resources by ensuring sustainable utilization, management conservation, exploitation of the environment and natural resources, and fair sharing of the benefits (The Government of Kenya, 2010).

The provisions of the 2010 constitution encourage public participation in managing, protecting, and conserving the environment. It obligates all to work hand in hand with organs of the government and every other person to protect and preserve the environment (Oguge, 2019). However, the study argues that Kenya's conservation and natural resource management has maintained a top-down approach with such explicit provisions. The public is only used to validate the projects and initiatives. Therefore, the key questions I raise are to what extent the public participates in these projects and at what level they participate. The second question I raise is the role of having such provisions in the constitution; could they be to legitimize a document that otherwise no one has the intention to live up to?

Important to stress is the time and how the constitution came into place. In 2007 after the hotly contested general elections that caused the destruction of property, loss of lives, and displacement of people, Kenya ended up with a coalition government under the national accord that would automatically expire at the end of the five years. Among the requirements of the coalition government were critical reforms and a constitution that would address issues perceived to have contributed to the violence, among them the land and environment question. President Kibaki's administration was keen on making sure that the country had the constitution, and this is how environment and land issues got a whole chapter in the 2010 constitution. Over the years, the land question has been an emotive factor that has come out during the election period, and the solution to this perpetual problem was to be anchored in the constitution. I add that the underlying political conditions of the time forced aspects of the environment into the constitution for acceptance and legitimacy. This study argues that these questions remain thorny and not addressed despite articulating such in the law. Several regulations have been put in place and are continuously being put in place to try and fix the problem. Still, the study argues that this has not been easy because they came up with the constitution. Several political interests were addressed using the constitution and not necessarily

the environmental agenda. This constitutional reform that brought the devolved governance system is highly praised as an excellent opportunity for green visions. It deals with earlier challenges where many thought that power was so much centralized in the capital of Nairobi. People should feel represented and those elected are required to be accountable to the electorate. This has, however, brought with it a myriad of challenges; for example, the political class on many occasions does not support effective implementation, especially in instances where they do not stand to benefit. Several Members of County Assemblies (MCAs) Members of Parliament (MPs) either are not conversant with a lot of matters in the new constitution or knowingly misinterpret some clauses to serve partisan interests (Owino et al., 2016).

The intention of the constitutional reform, which was to ensure the top-down approach to decision-making is reversed, remains a mirage. This is because locals still do not understand their position and how the devolved system functions. The process of public consultation when the projects and programs are being developed is also costly. However, implementing the constitution correctly opens up making decisions to a more bottom-up approach that considers all the local grievances. Political goodwill from the highest level of political leadership is also necessary (Kaudia, 2012; Owino et al., 2016). While the constitution must provide an overall framework of devolved government and leave the details to enabling legislation and policy, the study argues that several challenges can be accredited to the constitution's text.

4.2.4 The Green Economy Strategy and Implementation Plan (GESIP)

To move towards a Green Economy (GE) requires institutions to innovate their implementation strategies and practices along ecological lines. Approximately 70% of overall employment and 42% of Kenya's GDP comes from natural resource-related sectors such as mining, agriculture, fishing, forestry, wildlife, tourism, water supply, and energy. These sectors are susceptible to climate change and variability, making Kenya's economic growth highly vulnerable (Green Economic Strategy and Implementation Plan: 2016-2030, 2016).

> *'The Ministry decided that if we are to go green, we must also look at some policies that can support the Ministry's desire to shift towards green visions. And there was a study that was done by UNEP that also now reinforced the fact that the country can only achieve sustainable development by changing its development model into the green. So the program now came up with a strategy called GE Strategy and Implementation Plan' (Senior Staff MoEF, Nairobi, 11/2019).*

Whenever I interacted with environmental practitioners and mentioned that my study was about Kenya's Green futures, I was always met by this question; Have you read the GE Strategy and Implementation Plan (GESIP)? If the person asking noticed, perhaps I was not too familiar with the document; the emphasis was always that I needed to take my time to read the document. The sense I got from these practitioners was that this environmental framework had solutions and a clear road map on the direction the country was taking on the environment's future. For practitioners in the water sector, matters green started and ended at the MoEF, and to them, it was about the Blue Economy. What is GESIP, and what role does it play in Kenya's green futures?

GESIP aims to ensure the country attains an advanced economic growth rate that matches the vision 2030, emphasizing sustainable development in the general national growth strategy. It is intended to support a low carbon development path that is globally competitive by encouraging sustainable management of infrastructure, natural resources, economic resilience, and resource efficiency and providing support for social inclusion.

Understanding the function this strategy performs in Kenya's development discourse is at the core of this study. To do this, several questions come to mind, some of which this study doesn't respond to directly. What role does it play in regards to Kenya's development discourse? How did it come to be, and who are the actors behind it? Which institutions/individuals are benefiting from it? Factors that are needed for a speedy transition to GE are identified in this framework. They include prioritization of GE implementation within the devolved system of governance, human development and capacity building, maintaining macroeconomic stability for green visions governance, reduced capital for businesses, establishing a framework for extractive industries, sustainable structural transformation, and financing, sustainable trade regime through exploring market opportunities associated with the transitions to a GE and formation of decent green jobs. The policy mix aims to align national policies to support and address vulnerability shocks, thus accelerating greening the economy.

The strategy and its implementation plan aim at attaining Kenya's vision 2030 by overcoming the main binding economic and social constraints. It aims at addressing multiple challenges such as environmental degradation, food insecurity, infrastructure gaps, inequality, poverty, unemployment and climate change, and variability. Transitioning to GE requires significant resources (finance, technology, capacity building, and investment). Therefore, GE Integration in the budgeting and planning process is essential for successfully implementing GESIP at the

county and national level (Green Economy Strategy and Implementation Plan: 2016-2030, 2016).

How do GESIP and Vision 2030 connect? What is the linkage between the two documents, and how does each influence the other? The implementation of vision 2030 has been implemented in stages. In this case, the second medium-term plan, MTP II, 2013-2017, recognized the development of a national GE Strategy as a priority to implement Vision 2030. This means that GESIP is a product of Kenya's national development blueprint. The Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources spearheaded the formulation of GESIP through a national steering committee comprising experts representing development partners, civil society, and government sector representatives gazetted by the cabinet secretary. To understand the document further, a critical look at who the specific actors in this formulation process are essential, the institutions they represent, and the institutions' mandates. I further argue that the selection of these actors remains biased among themselves due to the similar organizational interests they represent.

The first stage, the inception stage, was informed by the GE assessment study done by UNEP (2014). This assessment study identified opportunities, challenges, and risks for a GE transition. Accordingly, I question the extent to which these opportunities, challenges, and threats identified by UNEP reflect those of the locals instead of what UNEP assumes are the challenges faced. Here I contest two different visions, the visions by UNEP and the visions of citizens at the local level. The study argues that these visions do not link at all. Focusing on the socio-economic factors that hinder the country in attaining vision 2030, I look at the performative role that GESIP plays in Kenya's green future. The study argues that having been developed to guide the national government, county governments, civil society, private sector, and other actors to build greener pathways, the document has been manipulated and used by the same actors to attain and drive their agenda, which does not benefit all. As earlier noted, the same actors played a role in developing and validating the document, which I critically argue was to their benefit. Lack of proper coordination and understanding of the document's contents has led to several fragmented activities implemented by the actors that do not necessarily lead to a greener pathway. Experts observe that Kenya has done so well in transitioning to sustainable energy under one of the thematic areas: the sustainable infrastructure that involves other sectors, including agriculture, waste management, water and sanitation, transport, and irrigation. These developments have caused the environment, and the locals outweigh the benefits. Land-use

changes have been massive, rendering several people homeless and losing their sources of livelihood. GESIP plays a role in disrupting and sustaining several social relationships among the actors and the general public. It is essential to understand this because, in the end, it is in the interest of this study to find out who loses and who wins in all this.

The success of this policy document requires a substantial amount of resources in the form of finances, technology, investment, innovation and transfer, and capacity building. This, the study argues, is nothing new, as has been the case with previous policy documents, which achieve very little in the end. In addition, I opine that integrating the document in the national and county planning and crucial budgeting process has been characterized by contestations between actors at these government levels for a long time, hindering the document's implementation. This can be attributed to the fact that there is still confusion about implementing some of these initiatives. I further argue that the contest also comes with the funds involved and opine that the drive is usually monetary rather than the actual implementation.

With this promise of accelerated economic growth and increased opportunities to create wealth, the country embarked on developing GESIP. The plan, which covers 2016 - 2030, envisions a low carbon, equitable and inclusive socio-economic transformation, resource-efficient. Kenya's Green vision approach has quickly spread across vital economic sectors, including environment and natural resources; agriculture, livestock, and fisheries; industry, trade and cooperatives; manufacturing; community affairs, labor, and social protection; water and irrigation; energy and petroleum; devolution and planning; and education in a short time. Kenya's Green vision plan is developed around five thematic areas aligned with Vision 2030 and other development plans (GESIP 2017). These are:

1. Promoting sustainable infrastructure: agriculture and irrigation, energy, transport, water and sanitation, waste management, and housing and construction

2. Resilience building: encourage efficient public finance management, diversifying livelihoods of the communities that are most vulnerable, and improve disaster risk reduction measures

3. Management of natural resources sustainably: encompassing water, agriculture, forestry, fisheries, wildlife, and land.

4. Promote resource efficiency: increase national energy efficiency, boost water efficiency in rural and urban areas, manage waste as a resource; and

5. Social inclusion and sustainable livelihoods: promote green innovation and technology development, accelerate the creation of green jobs, etc.

The fifth chapter discusses how policy frameworks such as GESIP come to be.

This study questions the relevance and practicality of ideas put in this document in Kenya. With these international actors leading the process, the study argues that ideas contained in GESIP represent the interests of institutions playing a critical role in bringing this framework to life in Kenya. A look at the institutions paints a picture of international organizations. Therefore, ideas presented are global ideas that are localized, and their legitimization is sought through this policy document and framework. As the country drives deep into a green future, the activities and initiatives are guided by GESIP, as I will demonstrate in the other chapters of this dissertation.

Whereas the document is presented as people-driven, the future green visions present are those of the institutions that fund them. The people and the people-driven approach legitimize the document and the initiatives afterward, as shown later. Highlighting the partners is fundamental as I will discuss their initiatives towards achieving a green future in Kenya. Understanding these actors is also critical. It puts into a context where most green initiatives in Kenya have failed or are not achieving the much-anticipated results even with funding in place. It is also in the interest of the study to finally see how the initiatives are new or just a reflection of the old problems that these particular institutions have been trying to solve but presented as new ones with some sense of urgency put in them—with GESIP in place, understanding how the actors are working with this document to develop other policy documents to aid in implementing the contents of GESIP. The study argues that the usual process in the past has made it difficult for initiatives to be implemented.

What prompts the name of this plan to grow and not something else like, say, environmentally friendly development? Actors agree that every country in the world wants to grow economically. This puts pressure on the demand for resources available. The focus is on the growth perspective the study notes and matters ecological just come in on realizing that the resources needed to achieve the growth desired may not be sufficient. This makes me question whether the state of balance is tenable from how actors agree that countries have to grow but consider the ecological perspectives.

4.2.5   National Climate Change Action Plan (NCCAP)

NCCAP 2013-2017 was the initial plan of action on climate change developed to realize the National Climate Change Response Strategy (NCCRS) launched in 2010. This plan acknowledges that to meet Vision 2030's goal, there is a need to adopt a low carbon emission pathway that tackles sustainable development and climate change. It is one of the strategies that the government developed to help achieve vision 2030. It does by providing measures and mechanisms that prioritize adaptation and recognize the essence of improving the resilience of vulnerable groups such as persons with disabilities, children, youth, women, the elderly, and minority and marginalized communities to achieve the development of a resilient low carbon climate (Government of Kenya, 2018; Oguge, 2019).

The plan, which runs for five years, enables the country to adjust to climate change and decrease the emission of greenhouse gas. Kenya enacted the Climate Change Act (Number 11 of 2016). The initial legislation in Africa dedicated to climate change to demonstrate how seriously it takes climate change. While this plan builds on the previous Action Plan spanning the period 2013-2017, it is critical to see how much the previous program achieved and what this new plan hopes to accomplish that is different from the previous one. It further helps the country's development aspirations and aims to achieve the following: establish climate change activities in alignment with the development agenda of the government such as the 'Big Four' agenda, promoting the involvement of the private sector, vulnerable groups, and civil society, providing the framework to deliver Kenya's Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) in the period between 2018-2022 and integrating climate change into sector functions at the national and county level (Government of Kenya, 2018).

This law allows the local population to appeal to the Environment and Land Court if an action affects the adaptation and mitigation objectives. In this way, people are empowered and can exercise their right to safeguard the environment in which they live (Owino et al., 2016). This triggers contestation regarding the local community's interest, governments development plan, and international actor interests. The aims of this plan are well articulated, for example, to align climate actions with the government's development agenda. This current regime focuses on the Big Four agenda, launched in President Kenyatta's second term in office. It is not clear to many Kenyans whether the big four agenda replace the vision 2030. However, the government runs on a narrative that the big four aim at helping the country achieve vision 2030. To argue that Agenda Four will help achieve vision 2030 is too simplistic, in my opinion. For this reason, I

hold that Agenda Four presents nothing new but is instead a reframing to gain legitimacy in his second term in office, which the president worked so hard to achieve. If you are not very keen, you get lost somewhere with these plans signify everything and nothing in particular. The study argues that the 'Big Four' agenda is a creation of the government to find relevance and legitimacy to govern in its second and final term, but a critical look at it presents nothing new or outside the vision 2030. The government will ensure that all the plans developed and those already in existence are aligned to do this effectively. These agenda four were strategically identified and presented with urgency. Still, the study argues that the country has faced challenges in the last several years, including during the president's first term in office.

While some of these frameworks and strategies were only produced due to specific political conditions, some have emerged as complementary to those existing. Other frameworks have also come about due to the country's commitment to the international development and conservation agenda. In as much as it is argued that such documents have been domesticated to reflect the visions of the Kenyan population, the study argues that to a great extent, the visions of the local people are not captured because of the design of what should be included in the documents. As such, the frameworks have tended to reflect more of the visions of actors at the international fora.

It is neither the policy documents nor the laws that will solve the social, economic, and environmental challenges as it is put across. These documents only play an actor's role in legitimizing activities that do not benefit all. Beyond the documents providing guidelines on what should be done to attain a green Kenya, the documents are not strict on how these follow-ups should be made and by whom.

5   GREEN IDEAS OF KENYAN DEVELOPMENT AS TRAVELING MODELS

In the development field, interventions encouraged by international organizations and actors at the global level in middle and low-income countries are in several cases standardized. In many instances, this is done to simplify in different contexts as they are spread there. The section explores how green ideas aimed at preserving the environment and growth- meant to spur economic development find themselves in Kenya and how they interact with local political and economic players and gain legitimacy. There has been a rising number of 'traveling models' developed by experts from international organizations to advance aspects of the already destroyed environment as development goes on. This study focuses on models of development that envision harmonizing ecology and economy, among many other models that have existed and continue to exist. Like many other standardized interventions, these models are put to a challenging test of implementation in the Kenyan context, which is very diverse and largely unfamiliar to the advocates of the intervention (Olivier de Sardan et al., 2017). According to Barbier, supporters of green visions trust that it can result in a 'win-win' scenario that can achieve several outcomes policy-wise in developing countries, making it attractive (Barbier, 2016).

> *How do you then enable Africa to take a greener option? Whatever that greener option is, label it as you want it (Senior Staff, DANIDA, Nairobi 07/ 2019).*

The statement above from a senior expert implementing green visions in Kenya shows how African countries should take the green development pathway. The urgency is an indication that countries in Africa stand to lose if they do not take this option. I observe that this kind of urgency with which green development ideas have been presented has been fundamental in how these ideas have been taken up in Kenya.

In the following, I explore the undercurrents behind the disputed intellectual hinterland of ideas about green futures such as green growth and the examination of the key actors responsible for their evolution. After establishing the logical foundations of the concepts, I look at how it influences the present international development agendas and the implications policy-wise for Kenya (E. Brown et al., 2014). The chapter helps understand why the Green development concepts must be placed within a broader historical context. For a better and more critical analysis of the practices in Kenya, it is essential to understand from which context the ideas originate and how they travel. I further look at actors responsible for their implementation in Kenya. This analysis makes it easier to understand the actors' strategic economic, and

ideological interests identifying the winners and losers in the end. I employ the idea of traveling models in this analysis.

The study engages with green development concepts as travel models and have become quite influential in Kenya. I examine how actors define the concepts, and then look at these concepts' international, national, and local agencies. The final part of this section examines how these concepts have been localized and made to find legitimacy in Kenya's development discourse. I explore the power interplays that have guided the development of the idea and practice of green ideas of development. I also examine the ideas as those that travel through space and find their way in Kenya's environmental and development politics because of influence beyond the boundaries of Kenya.

5.1   The global context of green visions of development

That green visions of development have become very influential in Kenya's development agenda is not in doubt. Understanding what these visions mean to all the actors would be fundamental, and most actors agree that there has been a state of balance between the economy and the environment. Different actors focus on different framings and this is defined by the sectors they work or have previously worked. Therefore, there is a general consensus on the practices and what each aims to achieve which is economic growth while safeguarding the ecological aspects. The former environment secretary for instance defined green growth as;

> *First, it is growth. It is more investment. More jobs. More income. A higher standard of living. But it is growth that doesn't fight against the environment but works together with it (Former Environment Secretary, Nairobi 05/2019).*

While defining green growth, she acknowledged that there should be an increased income, which ensures the improved standard of living among Kenyans. While this is happening, much attention has to be paid to the environment in which the people live. This environment should be safeguarded, and according to her, this is achievable, noting the progress made by the government by making commitments through policy and legal frameworks. I find it necessary to put these visions of development into context to make it simpler to understand why they are so important for Kenya.

As the world approached the end of the twentieth century, the consumer society idea had been installed. This correlated with the rapid urbanization processes, technological advancements,

increase in the standard of living, and rapid population growth rate. The above, in turn, affected the natural resources leading to their continuous decrease. The political and legislative realities of developing sustainably and reducing environmental risks overlapped with these processes facing the world (Dogaru, 2021).

I examine what prompts framing practices among communities, looking at the key actors behind the frames. Bowen & Fankhauser (2011) argue that the term green growth is linked to low carbon, sustainable environment, and climate-resilient increase in the prosperity of humans. It thus emphasizes GE and sustainable development concerning environmental, economic, and social politics. The difference is when GE emphasizes efficiency and an economy that functions as a precondition to attaining progress. Strategically though, green growth permit protection of the environment to be put forward as a question of opportunity and reward as opposed to costly restraint. It focuses on the microeconomic environment, considering the regulatory frameworks and the many market imperfections (externalities) and policy failures. Further, it recognizes that the economic changes needed are profound, systemic, and structural as opposed to minimal, as much of the literature on mitigation tacitly assumes. Another perspective is the link to scarcity of resources and realizing that replacing away from scarce resources such as fossil fuels might eliminate a restraint to long-term growth (Bowen & Fankhauser, 2011; Lederer et al., 2018). Dogaru argues that the co-existence of green development ideas such as GE, green growth, and sustainable development is realistic due to these concepts' balancing and simultaneous nature. Herman contends that the ideas, rather than a burden on the economy, are currently viewed as pillars of economic growth and industrialization (Dogaru, 2021; Herman, 2021).

> *So in their formulations to respond to that, that is how they now start coaching growth with color. So when you say green growth, you are almost saying growth, but we'll try and make it greener. So then the notions of greening growth become something that…a vocabulary that is now being presented (Senior Staff, DANIDA, Nairobi 07/ 2019).*

The above statement shows the pressure that green development has put on ways of economic development considered detrimental to the environment. It indicates an admission that growth in the past has not been friendly to the environment, so there is a need to capture that; however, as he puts it, the aspects of green growth seem to be more focused on vocabulary other than the actual practicalities. As the study has noted, green development concepts aim to synchronize economic growth and environmental sustainability by supporting essential changes in the production and consumption pattern and are marketed as the solution to the problems of the

world's collective future. The ideas, however, have deeper historical roots dating back several centuries. In tracing the history of green visions, it becomes easy to understand the kinds of economic and political power and the cultural forces that have influenced the emergence of green visions. A historical understanding helps to reveal the hidden power plays (Perreault et al., 2015).

Due to the high population growth rate, increased demand for resources, industrialization, among other factors, the world is already going beyond its limits. If this is not checked, there is a potential for the global economy to collapse. The GE concept has been evolving and was first used in 1989 by a group of economists in the Blueprint for a GE report drafted for the United Kingdom Government. In recent years, its emergence from economics has become very influential in making decisions and government policy (Borel-Saladin & Turok, 2013; Dogaru, 2021). Such prevailing realities and historical perspectives have prompted actors to rethink their development strategies.

> *But the point is if we take the same development pathway that the West took or the developed nations took, more correctly said, then we will inevitably push the boundaries of our planet, and that is going to have foretold consequences to one and all, including Africa (Senior Staff, DANIDA, Nairobi 07/ 2019).*

Accordingly, there is a caution that since development is necessary, fundamentally, countries in the global south should not do so the way western countries already did. This is because the impacts of the strategies taken by the western countries are already felt, and therefore, there is a need to change tact to reduce the other effects. This has been taking place at a macro scale, whereby survival strategies have continued to be discussed. The Brundtland Commission Report and Agenda 21 provided the turning point for global action on sustainability. The report popularised the sustainable development idea, anchored on social development pillars, economic growth sustainability, and environmental protection. Agenda 21 brought together world nations to the common goal of sustainability. It urged governments to adopt national strategies for sustainable development, or Green Plans, following the global development pathway ushered through the UN MDGs and SDGs in 2000 and 2015, respectively. Brown argues that the 1987 publication by UN dubbed Our Common Future crystallized a new paradigm noting that the primary assumption of the report was that the main reasons for environmental destruction were approaches to growth that were not long term, that the use of

suitable technology could resolve, and the desperation of poverty, which left people with no option but to overuse natural resources (Brown, 2016).

The OECD presents concepts such as Green Growth as a subset of sustainable development but not a replacement. However, they do not find a clear distinguishing point from the two as shown; no further explanation is given on this. Both green visions and GE are presented as pathways to sustainability. Both UNEP and the World Bank pay more attention to the social aspect of sustainable development than the OECD offering sustainable development as the ultimate goal; this presents a chance for each institution to do what they perceive as the best way and do so convincingly. I trace the origin of the term 'green growth' to South Korea during the Fifth Ministerial Conference on Environment and Development, which pushed for much more than sustainable development (Dale et al., 2016). With the establishment of the GGGI, a treaty-based international, inter-governmental organization dedicated to supporting and promoting strong, inclusive, and sustainable economic growth in developing countries and emerging economies- in 2012 at the Rio + 20 UN conference on Sustainable Development to spearhead the efforts to showcase South Korea to the outside world. It has the vision of a low-carbon, resilient world of strong, inclusive, and sustainable growth. The mission is 'to support members in transforming their economies into a green visions economic model.'[10] In an interview with the Director-General of the GGGI, he noted that 'the GGGI establishment had as much to do with showcasing Korea in the world, as with the focus on "Green visions," if you like' (11/2019).

Accordingly, green development concepts such as green growth are viewed as practical ways to grow economically while ensuring less degraded environment, reducing biodiversity loss, and sustainably using natural resources. It contributes to many countries' initiatives to develop clean growth sources. While at this, they also aim to capitalize on opportunities to come up with new green industries, technologies, and employment and at the same time be able to deal with the changes associated with the switch to a greener economy. Dogaru looks at the models as a form of economic growth that puts to use natural resources sustainably and argues that they provide an alternative concept to classical industrial economic growth, which leads to the phenomenon of GE, which is a real phenomenon of headway and a concept of environmental security (Dogaru, 2021).

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[10] Gggi.org/about/

Leaders and heads of fundamental institutions driving visions of green development influence the direction the institutions take. The Director-General of GGGI in an interview alluded to this by explaining that when Banki Moon took over as the president of GGGI, he preferred using the term sustainable development instead of 'green growth' that had been in use. So different leaders have different priorities, thus framing their narratives and actions. I note that these framings also create institutions that live beyond the frames.

> *So it was difficult for President Moon; he certainly did not agree to use the terms "Green Growth." He preferred "sustainable development," even though the government planned to increase renewable energy and address several things. His plan was much more in line with GGGIs than the previous president. So gradually, we have got the president to support, not so much "Green growth" as a concept, but GGGI as an institution, that Koreans are proud of (Director General, GGGI, Bonn 11/2019).*

Concerning conceptual changes, environmental protection should be viewed as a driver of growth and necessary for long-term economic sustainability rather than a constraint to economic growth. System changes call for the creation of policies that focus on green development and the adoption of green planning that improves eco-efficiency in production and consumption and institutional development and strengthening for effective decision-making. While the green growth approach is relevant for both developed and developing countries, social-economic disparities, politics, governance, and development priorities affect how GE initiatives are adopted, translated, communicated, and implemented and the actors and interests involved.

The World Bank has been seriously advocating for the idea of green visions and has put a lot of resources into initiatives like the Green Growth Knowledge Platform. At the same time, the OECD's most effective intervention was 'Towards green growth' in 2011. The World Bank's definition of green growth is simply *environmentally sustainable economic growth.* This definition doesn't incorporate social inequality. Accordingly, the World Bank refers specifically to 'inclusive' green growth, recognizing that social inequality has often been ignored in favor of environmental degradation and economic growth when discussing sustainability.[11]

Green growth, as presented, is narrower in scope in comparison to sustainability but entails an operational policy plan to aid in achieving concrete, measurable progress at the interface

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[11] World Bank 2003

between the economy and the environment. There lacks a clear definition of the term green growth. Therefore, this allows different actors to interpret it and justify their actions. By questioning what this lack of clarity means to other actors who engage with these concepts, I explore whether they find meaning in them as they navigate the social, economic, and political spaces.

Those pushing for GE see this as a means to deal with poverty, thus addressing the existing social challenges. Leading organizations globally presented the concept of GE in three reports. The World Bank's Inclusive Green Growth, UNEP's Towards a GE, and the OECD's Towards Green Growth. Examining UNEP, OECD, and WB definitions, I note differences in their focus on where the emphasis is laid though their approaches to GE remain the same. They aim to develop a policy framework to achieve green visions (Borel-Saladin & Turok, 2013). This focus area is what helps the institutions to come up with strategies for green development. The visions of green development are believed to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, prevent further environmental degradation, and promote the efficient use of natural resources. The UNEP report highlights that greening the economy can outpace the current environmentally damaging growth rate. This difference in emphasis is useful for the study as it helps to answer the questions about interests (Brown et al., 2014a). I, therefore, argue that it is in the interest of the institutions and not for the general public that they claim to be implementing these strategies, as Brown and others argue that GE does not come up with anything far from the current economic system.

Kenya is not one of the members of GGGI; however, the idea of green visions has found itself in Kenya's environment and development discourse. GGGI is active as a neutral advisor and a strategic development partner within the countries and governments they work with, and Kenya is not one of the member governments. Interestingly, the ideas are implemented in Kenya. For this reason, I note that these ideas are also picked by other actors and taken to be implemented by their governments and institutions without adequate coordination. Members of the GGGI are supported to come up with green vision plans, and they are also supported to implement the same according to the priorities of every country. Members share knowledge and best practices.

> *We get money from the country to work in other countries, to share*
> *initially, possibly in the government's ideas the Korean technologies or*
> *ideas (Director General, GGGI, Bonn 11/2019).*

The WB, in its report, acknowledges the critical function infrastructure plays in greening growth, arguing that infrastructure policies are fundamental to green visions. The question then arises as to whether this could be the reason for the recent large-scale infrastructure

development in Kenya and whether this infrastructure has addressed poverty in Kenya and environmental sustainability as is suggested. It appears not to be the case since the Standard Gauge Railway has not yielded any fruit, there has been massive ecological destruction caused by infrastructural development, displacing people in the end, and while some get compensated for the land, others are not because of the complexities that come with the questions of compensation (Lindsay, 2012). Infrastructural development has also brought about other communities' changes; some were initially pastoralists/farmers but have now been forced into other means of livelihoods (Greiner et al., 2021). The suggestion by the WB to incorporate environmental issues into government operations has so far taken place in Kenya. This has happened through the recent policy changes and institutions being built. Money comes from the WB directly to the treasury for environmental issues and the financial influence should therefore not be ignored. The institutions that provide finances thus become active participants when the policies are being formulated; thus, a lot of the ideas incorporated in these policies come from the institutions.

An opportunity to strengthen the commitment to sustainable development beyond economic dimensions is presented with green visions. The obligations to address challenges of the environment and economic benefit promises are put forward as a combination of a win-win allowing embedding an innovative global economic angle that simultaneously considers environmental and social issues.

Brown, however, remains unconvinced and does not see anything to suggest a radical break with neoliberal orthodoxies and their limitations. To him, the critical conduits of thinking on green development have a familiar ring: the "greening" of productivity and innovation, growing marketization (assigning values to previously unpriced resources), the promotion of flexible regulatory frameworks, and erosion of government administrative and managerial roles, the privatization of energy, land, water and, generally speaking, and the incorporation of natural capital into economic thinking, all without problematizing the concept of the growth (economy) itself (Brown et al., 2014b).

> *They wanted to find how they could raise the environment's profile, and to raise the profile of the environment linkages to the economic aspect was very important. People will listen to you if you begin to talk in terms of dollars (Senior Staff, UNHABITAT, Nairobi 06/2019).*

This statement by an expert reflects that framing is highly linked to the financial aspects. It acknowledges that the environment is essential in the development discourse; however, it has been ranked low and given very little priority. Therefore, to get the attention that was necessary for it to be prioritized by actors in the industry and private sectors, it was going to be critical to find a way to frame it to fit into the economic perspectives. Therefore, with such a background, it is vital to question if it is even possible that a state of balance will be achieved at some point, as the proponents put it.

5.2 Green visions of development in the Kenyan context

Green development policies are intertwined into policies of the environment and climate to a great extent. They aim to address social inequality, poverty reduction, and the progress of the environment. They also focus on investment, research, development, technologies, and infrastructure. Generally, there is an agreement that approaches of green visions ought to address poverty reduction, particularly in the countries of the global south (Borel-Saladin & Turok, 2013; Herman, 2021).

The inequality in Kenya regarding unemployment and disparities in income is vast. This is projected among the youth, a majority who do not have formal employment. For this reason, the private sector primarily seeks to fill in this gap by creating a business environment that will enable the population that is not formally employed to conduct business. With a healthy environment to do business, there are high chances of increasing jobs, investments, and motivating people to venture into business, which helps eradicate poverty. The private sector has been supported by the government of Denmark, having realized its importance in addressing unemployment is key to economic growth.

> *We've been working with the business advocacy fund mainly to figure out what to research the barriers to them being more green where Green is an efficiency issue; it is also an impact issue (Senior Staff, DANIDA, Nairobi 07/ 2019).*

International actors are strategically working with the private sectors to address the financial aspect and reduce poverty. The private sector forms an integral part of matters of green development in Kenya. This sector has a key focus on the economy's growth and presents an excellent opportunity, as will be discussed in detail in the sixth chapter of the study. While the program was already ongoing, somehow along the way, institutions like DANIDA find it essential to bring new partners and change their way of doing things constantly, allowing new

ideas by way of research. In this way, I note that the way these concepts are presented is quite challenging to implement because of the different dynamics in Kenya.

In an interview with the former secretary of environment in Nairobi in July 2019, she narrated how these visions became the core government agenda. With an emphasis on green growth, she noted that the approaches could be traced back to around the year 2010 during one of the UN conferences, which is currently UNEA, where there was a session on green visions. As the experts drafted the Kenya speech for the minister, there was a strong feeling that the idea of green visions would sharpen the thinking on how the environment could be safeguarded with regards to managing environmental challenges the country was facing such as pollution as it pursued its development agenda. Later on, with support from UNEP, the Ministry of Environment started assessing the potential sectors that the country was going to focus on. This assessment shows critical sectors such as energy, agriculture, transport, manufacturing, and housing. The sectors presented the important sectors that, if worked on, the country could provide a better response to managing the ecological challenges. These findings and the international conversations on climate change triggered the necessity to focus on green visions where concepts such as resource efficiency and cleaner production started to be infused in Kenya. The country developed an implementation framework, GESIP, which I discussed in detail in the previous chapter. One of the questions that I kept asking was about the practices of new framings of environmental and development discourse such as green visions GE and how unique these practices were. I had the privilege to have a conversation with the first former environment secretary for the Government of Kenya, a position she held from the year 2008 to the year 2018. She held this position during two different regimes of presidents, Kibaki and Kenyatta. At the time of the interview, she served as the Co-Chair of Global Green Growth Knowledge Platform, Global Co-Chair of Climate and Clean Air Coalition, and member of the Steering committee of the International Resources Panel. After leaving her position as the environment secretary for the government of Kenya, she continued to disseminate her knowledge, experiences, and skills on agribusiness and green visions through Eco-entrepreneurs Ltd, a consultancy firm she founded in 2018 with a key focus on improving livelihoods and poverty eradication; green visions based entrepreneurship for sustainable development; re-skilling retired women for environmental careers; and the intensive reduction of short-lived climate pollutants. She believes that whereas some emergent frames and languages guide development, the practices behind the framings are not new, especially at the community level, and recalls her early life in the village and the farming practices at that time.

> *I think green growth, having been brought and singled out as a concept, is new in terms of framing. However, in practical actions that people undertook 30 years ago, we still practiced green visions (Former Environment Secretary, Nairobi 05/2019).*

Communities have always practiced green development in Kenya, perhaps without the formal knowledge that what they are doing corresponds to the ambitions of green growth. Highlighting how farming practices used to happen as she grew up, for example, between the field as they cultivated land, there remained trash from the previous harvest. To her, this is simply controlling soil erosion, managing the soil, and links this to 'Circular economy,' which is one of the framing terms of green visions by taking away the harvest and retaining all the trash in the field to ensure the soil is rich enough for the subsequent cultivation. What is new, according to her, is the fine-tuning of such concepts to move towards efficiency where you get more with less. This shows human progress in thinking in terms of using their resources. The former Environment Secretary is convinced that the practices are nothing new but rather, the framing of the practices to harmonize ecology and economy is a recent phenomenon. The vision of local farmers has always been to ensure there is harmony between their agricultural practices and the natural environment. According to the Green Growth and Employment Program manager at the Danish Royal Embassy in Nairobi, the idea about green growth was an offshoot of an earlier program the embassy had implemented. The program, which spanned nine years, focused on natural resource management. The program focused on resilience building and climate engagement. He notes this previous program was vital in pushing the climate engagements within the Ministry of Environment and building the Environmental Regulatory Framework under NEMA. This is nothing new and is the way development cooperation works. Programs and projects have a cycle in which they operate, and therefore when the funding face comes to an end, there is a need to come up with a new project idea that is in line with the donor interests. When I posed the same question to the Project officer at Green Africa Foundation (GAF), an organization founded in Kenya in 2000 primarily focusing on the implementation of practical hands-on projects that are driven by the community aimed at greening the African continent[12], she agreed that these practices are new and mention critical aspects such as technological advancements which in her opinion are the basis of the framings.

> *I would say yes because bits of it say technology is new (Project Officer, GAF, Nairobi 01/2021).*

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[12] http://www.greenafricafoundation.org/

However, some experts think that as green ideas have existed for a long time, there are critical new aspects, which is where the emphasis should be put. For example, the technology was not that advanced in the past, which hindered practices. Still, in the present day, there have been technological advancements that can drive the country to achieve the desired green future. Different actors have different opinions based on their experiences at a very personal level. I also consider the age of actors as playing a role. This is because the senior ones can have a reflection of practices that were conducted in their communities while they were growing up. At the same time, the circumstances of young people do not allow them to draw such comparisons because they lack most historical experience.

> *So Green was central in the Danish public sphere. So it also became an overarching strategy which then provided us with a natural transition. So we had the background with the Kenya program, but you had this new imagined green vision and employment agenda at the Danish official policy position. And then the two married. So the green visions then became a natural program within that (Senior Staff, DANIDA, Nairobi 07/ 2019).*

The green growth manager at the Danish Royal Embassy differs from the former environment secretary, who argues that previous agricultural practices in Kenya portrayed green visions but only lacked the framing. According to him, previous practices shaped the idea of green visions. He argues that DANIDA was previously known for agriculture as its core engagement, and it is while implementing agricultural programs natural resource management issues came into the picture. He says that it was like a natural evolution that you are doing agriculture, but agriculture is nature-based and nature is currently under threat. Further, he explains that green development has been at the core of Denmark's development agenda going beyond energy issues to the whole question of sustainability and how efficient their economy is. Explaining the origin of the idea about green visions and the Green Growth and Employment Program, how this ended up to be important in their work and engagements with other stakeholders in Kenya further getting into the policy frameworks he says: The questions of sustainability and the threats that the climate was facing due to climate change started coming up as they were engaged on a natural resource management program. It was then not easy to continue ignoring the climate's threats while only focusing on ecosystem-level engagement that natural resource management was focusing on. Within the embassy, there existed a business engagement running a business private sector engagement program under the natural resource management program. This is where the idea

of giving support to the government in its economic stimulus package and supporting businesses came about. This program operated within the same framework as natural resource management. While on this the questions as to whether there existed a point where natural resources could merge with the business aspects, he explains;

> *Somehow, around the same time within the Danish global strategy building frameworks, the whole question of green and the engagement with green was also gaining a lot of currency (Senior Staff, DANIDA, Nairobi 07/2019).*

As noted earlier, Denmark operates in Kenya and has been financing several projects and programs around environmental management. Kenya joined the P4G in 2018 to help enhance the network's work in Kenya and across the African continent. The platform in Kenya is the regional hub. The leading institutions that form this platform include National Treasury, Vision 2030 Delivery Secretariat (VDS), MoEF, and KEPSA[13]. Therefore, as Kenya is not a member of the GGGI, this platform still enables actors in the country to be influenced by the ideas that travel across this network. Countries and programs are supported, but it is a requirement that they have a plan in line with the conditions that the funding institutions have put in place.

> *Korea set up GGGI, and Denmark set up the "Green Growth" forum, which was held a few years and after that 3GF organization morphed into this P4G (Partnering for Green Growth and the Global Goals in 2030) in an effort of not being a purely Danish thing, but to have more countries join. We are an active partner in P4G (Director General, GGGI Bonn 11/2019).*

Looking at the Kenyan context, it is challenging to fix the development concepts directly to a single institution as driving the agenda. As I found out, there are institutions whose direct involvement is minimal in practical terms. However, they constantly influence practices through partnerships with direct projects and programs institutions. In an interview with the director-general of GGGI, he shared with us that the institution joined P4G to move beyond being an initiative of Denmark. Through such partnerships, ideas and visions from different actors are communicated, constantly changing as they are made and unmade. This is why it is possible to have different framings of practices in Kenya, with actors agreeing that they are all addressing sustainability issues. Other sectors frame practices differently; for example, the

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[13] https://p4gpartnerships.org/news-events/p4g-partnerships-kenya

water sector currently uses the term Blue Economy, while DANIDA pushes green growth through MoEF and NEMA.

Experts agree that there are several shades of green development that different actors are implementing. This is dependent on their understanding, personal and institutional interests. Having acknowledged this, it is the role of the actors to ensure that the shade of green they are implementing translates to meaningful change in society.

> *Even within the program, we seem to agree that we all have shades of green. But what does that green translate to, and does my shade of green translate to green visions, or is it not, is it just a shade of green visions? (Senior Staff, DANIDA, Nairobi 07/ 2019).*

While this might be the case, translating such ideas at the community level results in minimal change that cannot be felt in a large spectrum. I will not, therefore, do this study justice if I do not question the sincerity with which several actors are implementing their visions of green development.

5.3   "Travel agencies" and translators of green visions in Kenya.

Having understood a model as a representation of particular aspects of realities created as protocols to be used in intervening in specific circumstances to shape realities for particular purposes (Behrends et al., 2014), the underlying subject of this section is to look broadly at the actors behind green visions as models that shape Kenya's realities. I look at how they understand these models and their interests and the interest of the institutions they represent. I aim to identify the politics that are a result of these practices. Like in policy transfer, where there are several actors than initially thought, traveling of models involves many actors. This study focuses on a few of these actors, which I consider critical; - they include think tanks, International advocacy networks, and international organizations. Their influence has proved popular since they shape the degree of traveling models. I also identify that local and county governments are essential to transfer agents, and as such, they benefit from several linked processes such as devolution and globalization. Intergovernmental norm diffusers such as the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and global financial institutions play a significant role under conditions of greater globalization. Subsequently, policy transfer was shown to occur within vertical and horizontal actor networks extending across governance scales below the government, both within and across borders (Benson & Jordan, 2011).

5.3.1   International Agencies

International agencies are now part of global politics of environment and development. In this section, I explore how these agencies aid in traveling ideas of green development to the Kenyan context. The 1972 Stockholm Earth Conference marked the emergence of a large and complex set of environmental regimes. More than 1,300 multilateral environmental agreements govern all aspects of the natural world. Besides these agreements, governance institutions, International actors, and networks have arisen to form a fundamental part of global environmental governance. In the climate regime alone, for example, in 2018, the UN documented more than 190 International initiatives addressing climate change. More than 12,000 sub- and non-government actors took part (Hale, 2020). According to Hale, international agencies exist because of two related factors. The first one is that the institutions and issues that affected the environment became global in scale, and the second one is that environmental groups increasingly formed cross-border networks. The growing Internationalism has been manifested through the rise of advocacy networks operating across borders as key actors in world politics. By working Internationally, the networks can gain more power by sharing resources and information (Hale, 2020).

> *There was a study that was done by UNEP that also now reinforced the fact that the country can only achieve sustainable development by changing its development model into green (Senior Staff, MoEF, Nairobi 09/2019).*

Actors at this scale are believed to have the necessary expertise for policy formulation. International actors are valuable in influencing public perceptions through the media, drawing on either knowledge or their ability to speak for broader social and economic interests. This gives them some degree of power to impart or reserve legitimacy from intergovernmental outcomes, which can shape the external pressures to which diplomats are subject. Expertise, framing, and other means of influence are often more critical in the early agenda-setting phase of negotiations, shaping governments' and international organizations' interests in advance of intergovernmental deliberation.

Institutions operating at the international level perform a crucial function as travel agencies for models, but they are not the only agents. Others involved are local governments, think tanks, communities of practice, civil societies discussed in another section. These institutions validate their actions based on the real success of the model they work with but ignore the unforeseen outcomes of its implementation in complex settings not well known in the expert and decision-

maker world. The model must go through informal and formal setups that will enable it to travel by justifying it, legitimizing it scientifically, and promoting it. These networks of actors play a huge role in forming alliances and 'enlisting' supporters, among others. Olivier and others argue that practicing a model somewhere different from where it originated is not unstructured. There are experts in a similar network who already intend for it to be implemented, and they are the ones who hold this vision. They implement these visions in collaboration with finances from international organizations combined with technical assistance (Olivier de Sardan et al., 2017).

5.3.2   National and Local Agencies

Hale (2020) notes that governments and intergovernmental organizations don't just condition environmental governance at the International level but also aim to create, shape, and steer it. They coordinate with NGOs, the private sector, and other actors to deal with challenges they cannot deal with themselves. They have the legitimacy and substantial resources to assist them in activating International actors who share a goal with them (Hale, 2020).

Figure 6 Poster on national green growth conference and exhibition with DANIDA as the Key organizer in collaboration with microenterprise support program trust. Source: Danida 2019

It is common to witness conferences and exhibitions to share the green vision and persuade the public to support or join these initiatives. DANIDA has been critical in influencing green visions in Kenya. As the green growth and employment program manager explained, their work

involves many partnerships from the government to CSOs and the private sector, 'more specifically with the government partners it's about enabling policy, enabling policy frameworks and regulatory frameworks' he said. Thus, they can influence how institutions perceive green futures and what kind of activities are implemented.

> *MESPT is essentially a microfinance institution that specializes in*
> *wholesaling finance. But our engagement with them is about greening*
> *the agricultural value chain (Senior Staff, DANIDA, Nairobi 07/2019).*

NEMA was established under EMCA as the principal government instrument for implementing environment-related policies and ensuring successful environmental management through coordination and supervision of all environment-related matters[14].

MoEF works to facilitate enabling policies and legal and regulatory reforms to promote sustainability of the environment and forest resources while mitigating the effects of climate change. [15]

Institutions in Kenya employ many individuals who study abroad. One of the senior staff at FES in Nairobi mentioned that most of the researchers who he thinks are the best have their degrees from abroad; he went further to tell me that I represented an excellent example of these researches arguing that when I go back to work in, Kenya I will have ideas gained in Germany which will then influence the way I will conduct my work. In this way, the ideas will find their way in Kenya's policy, projects, and programs circle.

> *Most of the best researchers, even in Kenya, have studied from outside.*
> *You are an example; you will come up with ideas that you borrowed*
> *from Germany (Senior Staff, FES, Nairobi 11/2020).*

Many of the actors in development and environment have got their training from institutions abroad. The rising number of scholars who study abroad through scholarships and go back to their countries to practice is a clear indication of how currently the globe is connected. Accordingly, these scholars can develop knowledge and acquire skills to return to their respective countries. This is true for Kenya, and according to an expert from the FES Nairobi office, the leading travel agencies are these scholars. He argues that in most of the institutions in Kenya, the best experts who do most of the work have studied abroad. In this sense, he argues that the ideas they implement and which get to the policy documents are part of the knowledge

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[14] www.nema.go.ke

[15] http://www.environment.go.ke/

acquired while studying abroad. This is then sustained by the constant exchange in the networks they also formed abroad. Therefore, the ideas are developed or obtained from institutions abroad but brought by experts who studied abroad.

International actors still dominate the local sphere and act as key actors at the national level. In the case of GESIP for instance African Development Bank (AfDB), UNEP, Danish International Development Agency (DANIDA), World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) and Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) played a key role. They did this by supporting stakeholder engagement, validation workshops, technical thematic working groups, printing, and document launch. UNEP provided technical support through Kenya Institute for Public Policy Research and Analysis (KIPPRA) and AfDB, Canada International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD). The resulting Green visions initiatives and projects in Kenya include SWITCH Africa Green Project, Operationalizing GE Transition at Sub-national level in Africa, Denmark – Kenya Green visions and Employment Programme (where Denmark contributed funds for activities that are part of NEMA's strategic plan for 2013-2017), NETFUND Green Incubation Program, Green Schools Program, and Sustainable Financing Initiative. These initiatives have been vital in the transition towards Kenya's green future. While implementing visions from these International institutions, some Kenyan actors believe that translating the visions to fit local situations rests with them. Senior staff at the Danish Royal Embassy told me that 'it is our responsibility to interpret this in a manner that makes sense to us.' He noted that actors should question the viability of these visions in the community they work for so that as they materialize them due to the availability of funds, they are actually what the community needs. This expert informed me that he does not go to conferences and advises that other actors should not push international agendas simply because of the opportunities that come with them.

> *So that it stops just being an agenda that you are pushing for the sake*
> *of some funding opportunities or for opportunities to go to conferences.*
> *I don't go to conferences. I don't see the need to go to conferences*
> *(Senior Staff, DANIDA, Nairobi 07/2019).*

The study argues that one of the reasons there are different shades of green visions and parallel activities in Kenya is the availability of funds. Actors at the national level implement projects and programs because International institutions present development funds and green development being fashionable presents an excellent opportunity to utilize these finances.

> *So this document (GESIP)is a strategy that the Ministry of Environment is using. As discussions with the other government ministries, we are the leaders. We are the ones now who engage other government agencies (Senior Staff, MoEF, Nairobi 09/2019).*

While there are several agencies of green development in Kenya, MoEF is the lead in this agenda. I note that clarity as to where their role starts and ends has not been there due to tany other government agencies that perform more or less similar functions. This has resulted in many duplications of roles and several pieces of legislation being drafted which is yet to achieve much.

5.4   Local Actor perceptions and interests

Presently those with the power to make decisions use terms such as Green Growth, Green Jobs, GE, just transition, circular economy, blue economy, and Global Green New Deal, occasionally interchangeably, and in most cases without clearly articulating each of them. I discuss what green ideas imply to different actors in Kenya and their perspectives, basing my arguments on empirical findings. Green development ideas offer a new view focusing on the scarcity of resources and the recognition that substituting away from scarce resources such as fossil fuels presents a possibility to remove a restraint to long-term growth. The ideas and the narratives around them strengthen rather than reduce the need to collaborate. Economic opportunities brought about by green visions may depend on a collective understanding by an adequately large number of players that it is indeed the way to go, making it a classic collective action problem (Bowen & Fankhauser, 2011). These ideas are characterized by a lack of standard definition among the actors, even though they are commonly used in the development discourse in Kenya. Green initiatives are spread across public and private sectors of the economy and are based on actors' understanding. This is influenced by either the institutions they work for or the international community financing their activities. Actors' understanding proved to be somehow elusive, but there is a consensus that the world is moving towards a green future. Different sector players align their knowledge based on their interests; for example, the manufacturing sector under their umbrella body KAM understands this as introducing efficient production practices and developing products and services, which places environmental and social aspects on an equal footing with economic concerns. This is because the NCCAP recognizes the role that manufacturing can play in combating climate change. KAM, therefore, does this to be in line with the commitment of the government to green the manufacturing sector. KAM identified the following areas of priority: Sustainable Use of Energy and Energy Efficiency; Circular

Economy and Resource Efficiency and Management, Water and Water efficiency; Innovations and Technology; Financing for Green visions and Climate change programs; Enhancing Human Capacity in Climate Change and Green Growth; Compliance with NEMA Regulations; Monitoring and Evaluation of achievements.

> *It is about the growth of the economy. But how do you want this growth to grow? We say let it grow in a low carbon development pathway therefore it has to grow green. That is how the name came up as green visions and in the process of growing green, you also provide additional jobs to the pathway (Senior Staff, MoEF, Nairobi 09/2019).*

Actors agree that Kenya's economy needs to grow but they recognize that this has to be done in a way that is not harmful to the environment. This ability to simultaneously grow while having a minimal or low effect on the environment seems contested and difficult to achieve. While realizing the visions of green development, it is believed that employment opportunities will be created along the way to help deal with the increasing unemployment rate in Kenya.

The Denmark-Kenya Green Growth and Employment program, whose objective is greener growth inclusive of increased employment opportunities, breaks this down and approaches green visions through intervention areas i.e., Sustainable growth and jobs from investment and trade; Use of natural resources in a sustainable manner and community resilience. They have 'inclusive' and 'employment,' which captures the social, environmental, and economic aspects. In this approach, DANIDA envisions instituting low carbon climate resilient practices within Kenya's private sector. The key emphasis is to ensure the private sector is highly involved in sustainable business practices (Kenya Association of Manufacturers & Centre for Energy Efficiency and Conservation, 2017). These understandings revolve around clean energy, climate change adaptation, and mitigation. It functions to support the achievement of sustainable development.

Actors' understanding of green development concepts is influenced by how they are framed. When you look at green visions, for example, it is easy to take the term green to mean "the environment" and "growth" to mean "development." Many actors understand this, and when they engage in their activities, their vision is to see a win-win situation. However, a challenge arises when such visions have to be translated into meaningful projects and programs. What comes out is a narrative by actors to be implementing green concepts while in practice it is business as usual sticking to the norms as has been the practice. According to an official at the MoEF, the terms are only used because they are the ones which are accepted in the international

circles 'we used the term green growth which is an internationally accepted term' he said, noting that when such terms are used, they guide the way projects and programs are implemented and the way people get to commit to them and the ideas behind. He argued that the term green growth, for example, would mean a significant shift towards a low carbon development pathway that, if focused on, will help in dealing with the climate change threat that has since affected most parts of the country. This is also the government's commitment, and therefore they would not have used any other term. These sentiments are shared by several experts from the NGOs working on a wide range of projects and programs towards green futures. "We borrowed from, of course, international agreements and also good international practices" (Project Officer, Green Africa Foundation 01/2021). The expert argued that Kenya is a party to play a significant role in the ideas they implement locally in international agreements. They must find what these international agreements present and see the similarities and the relationships at the local level; it is only then that the ideas make sense. Therefore, it is their responsibility to localize the ideas, which in most cases have found their way into policy documents at the national level. In this way, the study argues that the approaches to development and environmental governance are already narrowed to what the terms such as green visions define as development.

I point out the role domestic politics and institutions play in shaping global norms, discourses, and ideas that are accepted, altered, or rejected at the national level. Social actors are central in the contexts of implementation viewed as pragmatic contexts, with their networks, interactions, informal rules, organizational routines, strategies, and motivations. First and more importantly, it is de-territorialized from its original setting and reterritorialized in new environments and problem spaces. For this to happen, anything related to this move changes. This is a complex process in which the agents involved have to harmonize the global idea with the local beliefs and practices, and in this process, any foreign idea which does not match the local one is incorporated into the local norm (Acharya, 2004; Aminzade et al., 2018; Olivier de Sardan et al., 2017). Not all foreign ideas can be integrated into local norms, which is the challenge in implementing green development concepts in Kenya.

Different actors at different levels and scales have different interests. This section engages with the question about which and whose interests matter the most and why such interests matter more than other actors' interests do. Visions are implemented in Kenya and "take place" in specific or local contexts. The question, therefore, is whether the visions and interests of the people in whose region the project takes place are taken into consideration. With policy

frameworks in place to ensure the green visions are mainstreamed in Kenya's development and political discourse, the question arises as to whose rationality and interests are reflected in the formulation of national plans; Kenya's development pathway has a narrow approach to the "green" concept. The overall development trajectory that pivots around a form of accumulation hinders any genuine efforts towards implementing a green transformation agenda. However, the idea is essential because, in theory, it represents the country's involvement in global initiatives geared towards sustainable development; it legitimizes funding and international support and strengthens collaborations and partnerships at the global level. For the country, the green agenda is primarily a political statement for the benefit of the international institutions but not, at present, a solid commitment to a sustainable future. In an interview with the Director-General of GGGI explained that the establishment of this institution was to show Korea to the world and their success stories on the steps made towards a green society. This was more of a marketing strategy of the country to the other countries of the world, and in his statement, he said that they do not work in Korea at all despite drawing funds from the government of Korea.

> *So you have an administration that gives some lip service at the international stage (Environmental Lawyer, Nairobi 11/2019).*

In an interview with one of the environmental lawyers in Kenya and an advocate for environmental justice, the lawyer argued that the Kenyan government essentially believes that economic development is not strong and is supported by ecological rights to a very high degree. This, therefore, means that the commitment to it is strategic so that it doesn't hinder any other government development agenda which may not give high priority to the environment. The study argues that economic activities involving tangible projects like infrastructure are essential for the government. This is because it is easy to show this to *wananchi*[16] when they are trying to be accountable regarding what one has done during their term in office as an elected leader. This became even a popular narrative after President Kibaki 'successfully' built the 'Thika Super Highway.'[17] To date, most *wananchi* believe that the former president did well and keep referring to this project.

> *The shift was not necessarily donor-driven, but it was a feeling that surely we need to change because what we have been doing has been taking us in the wrong direction. So the only thing the donor assisted*

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[16] Swahili word to mean the local citizens

[17] The first modern highway infrastructure in Kenya's history aimed at assisting Kenya attain the goal of middle-income status by 2030

was to provide for financial support to be able now to get these things
done (Senior Staff, MoEF, Nairobi 11/ 2019).

According to MoEF, the previous green visions the ministry had is the reason for the current government of the environment in Kenya. Government officials argue that the shift towards a green future in Kenya is an initiative from within. This kind of shift is donor-driven. The vision promoted by the ministry involves a top-down approach. While it is argued that the actions are based on a needs assessment whereby International actors such as UNEP conduct studies within the Kenyan community to get their opinion, this remains a targeted top-down approach. Because of the financial support that International organizations offer in these initiatives. The study argues that local experts working with international experts identify critical aspects that need to be addressed using the money already in place for 'green' projects.

Knowledge, strategies, plans, and actions concerning the transition to a GE are primarily top-down. Even when aspects of the idea of Green visions are implemented, they are not translated to the local level. They thus do not reflect local knowledge, understanding, culture, values, and experiences. For example, projects focusing on agricultural intensification take the mass export-oriented production approach by clearing presumably idle lands and mechanized irrigation. While agriculture is an activity devolved to the county government, the resources have not been devolved. Hence you have a situation where functions are devolved, but the money that should finance the operations at local levels remains with the national government. This paralyzes the said functions and therefore, you have well-articulated roles to be performed by the counties yet no finances to achieve the said functions. The county leaders, led by the county governors, constantly ask the national government to disburse the funds.

The promises of local job creation and capacity building remain on paper, except for menial tasks, interpreted as community participation. In most cases, such projects end up contravening people's rights and increasing local livelihood insecurities. For example, the implementation of the affordable housing plan, under the big four agenda imposed mandatory monthly contributions (a form of housing tax) from citizens who would eventually be allocated a house after 15 years of successful contribution. Therefore, the housing scheme mainly favors government officials, and although it is ongoing, it suffers from immense public mistrust. Ironically, the scheme is based on the rapid development of apartments, while Kenya's middle class seems to favor stand-alone homes with open green spaces. For the government institutions at the helm of steering the Green visions agenda, the main interest has been to obtain the Green funds, without which they will have no capacity to existing. Their existence depends on

international support and the promise of steering the county toward a green future. This is done by participating in high-level conferences, workshops, and training and constantly placing bids for said support.

5.5 The challenge with Green ideas as traveling models

In this section, I raise the question of whether green development ideas can help solve the problems of social inequality and environmental degradation while retaining the same system of economics, which is argued to be the system that created the problems. The concept of "green futures" raises a whole range of questions. They promise to restore the damaged environments and mitigate against any further destruction, thus stimulating economic growth and remedying social inequality; the green development ideas may not embody a satisfactory departure from the existing economic system to attain progress that is all-rounded (Borel-Saladin & Turok, 2013).

One limitation with the ideas of green futures as traveling models is that there is no case where they have been successfully implemented in the world, and globally, and its success story is still a work in progress. The model in question should reference a particular standard in a different part that has not been identified in the case of green ideas of development. You may then be tempted to ask the question as to why they are quickly taken up in Kenya. For this, the study argues that it has highly depended on which actors promote the idea and how powerful they are both economically and politically. The experience from other places is crucial for its creation and exportation. Models at all times have been successful in a different context and this is what international experts refer to spread it beyond its original context. Despite a non-existent success story, green development visions have continued to be spread in Kenya by a network of actors combining experts and decision-makers and supported by international institutions. Olivier de Sardan et al. (2017) contend that the actual production of a traveling model undergoes three mainly overlapping processes, i.e. creating a narrative that is pegged on an already existing successful story, shaping (the construction of a mechanism and its devices), and networking which includes selling the idea to other actors globally. The founding success story is non-existent in the case of green visions (Olivier de Sardan et al., 2017).

The green future discourse has been centered on a low carbon economy, with every initiative revolving around reducing carbon emissions. Institutions have not addressed the challenges that the country faces holistically. Other actors would like to see a different institutional arrangement

with a more holistic approach. So much money is spent on building institutions in the name of institutional capacity building. This includes training and building the capacity of staff members. Workshops, conferences, and training are held repeatedly in luxurious hotels. More money is spent on staff salaries and allowances. These institutions, the study argues, play a role in the huge amount of money. When you look at the institutions, they are believed to have the ability to solve problems. However, the study argues that the promises they carry with them are in most cases not realistic and meant to drive a narrative that they are doing something when they have their agendas. They serve a purpose that is different from their primary goal. The lack of a clear definition and the disjointed manner in which the ideas are implemented pose a challenge. This means that with many actors in the country, each of them applying their shade of green only translates to small bits and pieces here and there which does not amount to a collective vision as they are framed.

Having looked at green ideas of development in a broader perspective, I conclude that with the many attempted definitions by different actors, they remain empty in practice, are not very precise, and should be critiqued, especially at this point that it is enabling "empty gestures" on the part of politicians, political bureaucrats and other key decision-makers in Kenya. They however open several opportunities socially and politically.

The green concepts mean all things to all the actors and in this way, it is subject to different interpretations that do not allow for tangible. Its function as an empty signifier in Kenya has opened new possibilities for political action. It has found so much power in Kenya's discourse on planning and is central to Kenya's development agenda. As the study has observed, green visions are not easy to define in concise terms among the actors in Kenya. Most definitions emphasize development, which considers aspects of the environment. How this should happen remains open, which makes it an empty signifier. However, it is agreed that the country will maintain its carrying capacity in this way. What an actor refers to as green is not necessarily what they end up getting as a result of implementing a project, nor is it what other actors at different scales would also refer to as green ideas of development. The fact that the ideas are devoid of content allows their meaning to be contested, and those who speak the dominant language are better able to fix their purpose temporarily. Internationally, planners regard the ideas as primarily providing growth opportunities for future generations, which has been entrenched in the Kenyan development plans and agendas in recent years. The development initiatives that comprise the large-scale infrastructures all ride on economic development with

aspects of environmental conservation in them. How and why is the concept of Green development steadily and quickly dominating in the Kenyan development and political agenda? Brown explains that the process by which a signifier comes to dominate as representative of the entire system is subject to struggle, which is within the context of a field of uneven power relations. Like sustainability, Green development ideas remain empty terms in practice with no explicit content. This study contends that as empty signifiers, actors can use and misuse them as they navigate their interests without benefiting all.

These ideas have triggered some passion globally that have rendered the present trends as dangerous and a compromise to the future of humans. There has been an emergent discussion on whether the aim of green visions is appropriate for low and middle-income countries, and if so, what additional policies may be needed to foster such a shift in developing countries. This debate, Barbier argues, has raised concerns about several challenges facing developing countries in implementing green visions, comprising a large informal economy, high levels of poverty and inequality, weak capacity and resources for innovation and investment, and inadequate governance and institutions. Given these challenges, the question I pose in Kenya as a developing country is to what extent it can pursue these green visions without undermining its development agenda as outlined in the vision 2030. Green ideas of development can be important for developing economies only if they consider policies consistent with their main structural features of natural resource use and poverty. If green visions are relevant to developing countries, they must be compatible with the most critical d poverty alleviation's most critical development goal feature of green vision policies is that they imagine a degree of structural transformation and industrial development more appropriate to high-income and not developing economies (Barbier, 2016).

In conclusion, this chapter has shown that green development ideas are not a recent phenomenon. New framings emerge and this is what is new and is presented as a new way of Kenya's future-making, yet the practices behind them are not new. Their aspects have changed due to the changing global factors and the emergence of new institutions. This study has also looked at the travel agencies of green development concepts and concluded that the existing dominant agencies who set the agenda. While some actors use these concepts to pursue their individual and institutional plans, others redefine these ideas and use the opportunities presented by the ideas for societal change.

6 WHOSE GREEN IDEAS (UN)MATERIALIZE?

Futures do not fall from the sky; they are made by human beings (men and women). It is important to understand whose futures override other ones and why they are more important. I look at how green development visions create particular futures while un-creating others in the following. Having looked at Kenya in context and how green visions have been anchored, I now look at green visions' (un) materializations. I look at how different actors work to ensure their visions become dominant.

6.1 The Government

Kenya's development plan has historically circled food security, primary education, job creation, and delivery of essential services like healthcare, water, sanitation, and security. From the early 1960s, successive government planning focused attention on these problems, albeit from different political and ideological standpoints. Even though these problems are linked to the quality of the environment, historical ideas of prosperity and economic growth in Kenya have arguably accorded little concern to environmental sustainability. For example, population growth and climate change pressure fragile ecosystems like forests, water bodies, and riparian zones, which people consider favorable for agriculture and other livelihoods. Urban sprawl, soil erosion, poaching, desertification, industrial pollution, and deforestation are other environmental problems that have faced Kenya until the late 1990s. Specifically, in 1999, Kenya lacked a comprehensive environmental management plan. In the following section, I look at how the government of Kenya materializes its visions and the contestation between the visions of the government and other visions. The central argument in this section is that while the government materializes its vision, the visions of other actors un-materialize or materialize differently.

The role of the government when it comes to creating an enabling environment whereby those investing can move from investments that are harmful to the environment to those that are environmentally friendly such as green industries and businesses, cannot be downplayed. The responsibility of putting up relevant policies that guide the civil society initiatives and private sector in their investments. The OECD's 'Towards Green Growth,' UNEP's 'Towards a GE,' and the World Bank's 'Inclusive Green Growth' reports have emphasized this as much (Borel-Saladin & Turok, 2013; UNEP, 2011). According to Otiso, governments have had a legal and social contract to provide services in return for political support (Otiso, 2003).

The 2010 constitution ushered in a devolved system of governance. In this system governing the environment is a devolved function whereby county governments and representatives from line ministries and agencies carry out environmental management and coordination activities. The implication is that the two levels of government must have their visions aligned together. Otherwise, there is a lot of contestation, as shown in the other study sections. I note that policies and actions on environmental planning, management, conservation, and coordination are translated and implemented through a top-down approach with a view of context-specific needs, problems, and conditions. The policies critically EMCA is meant to ensure that ecology is harmonized with the economics. This is, however, not easy to achieve. Some experts feel that the existence of the legal documents should not be underestimated, arguing that even if they are not implemented due to lack of capacity or any other reason, they serve to inform. When the government makes certain decisions, they are quite aware of their actions' consequences on the environment and in general. Large-scale infrastructure projects have characterized economic development, a critical pillar in vision 2030. The megaprojects significantly impact the environment, forests are destroyed, and the aesthetic value that the natural ecosystem serves is largely compromised. Institutions implementing the mega projects have environmental departments with environmental experts. These departments and the experts are supposed to make sure that ecological aspects are considered as the projects are materialized. The study argues that these environmental departments are faced with enormous challenges, and as a result, ecological visions do not materialize while the economic visions arguably materialize.

Politics is comprehended as processes and practices whereby power in its multiple forms is wielded and negotiated. This study identifies particular contexts where power and politics function and associated discourses and representations of the environment where people communicate.

> *So when it comes to infrastructure projects versus the environment infrastructure project carries the day, but on paper, you will be told that is not the position, so you see there is a difference between what is on paper and what is happening (Senior Staff, KETRACO[18], Nairobi 11/2020).*

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[18] Kenya Electricity Transmission Company- a government institution established by the Ministry of Energy under the Energy Act and mandated to design, develop, operate and maintain new high voltage electricity transmission lines in Kenya.

Materializing government projects constantly disrupt socio-material landscapes that play out loud regarding land and land ownership. In such cases, people are expected to relocate to other areas after the government has financially compensated the affected people. I discuss this in detail in the section where I talk about compensation to materialize visions. With the country's constitution, projects of national interest key to vision 2030 supersede any private interests (Lesutis, 2021). However, I note that the complication comes about in a situation whereby I see at least two visions that the government has at any particular time. That is the vision written in policy and legal frameworks and the practical visions. These realistic visions are what the regime of the day is interested in materializing regardless of what is on paper and what the ordinary citizens want. It is quite clear that the government's interest is in the infrastructure projects rather than the green visions as anchored in the policy documents. Since there are actors interested in the green visions, the government tries to make sure that they show on the outside that they are interested in the green future. The junior government experts have very little to do, and in most cases, the job they are employed to cannot be adequately done as their hands are somehow tied to what the government wants. This is even more complicated because the interests they represent are those of the government and not their own.

The impact infrastructure development has on the environment cannot be underestimated. While developing infrastructure, a lot of vegetation is lost and a disturbance of the ecosystem, resulting in an interference with the primary features of the surrounding ecosystem (Nyumba et al., 2021).

The construction of the Standard Gauge Railway, the Southern Bypass road, and the inland container depot access roads have constrained Nairobi National Park's continued existence. A park that has been in existence since 1946 since it was created through a colonial proclamation. These infrastructure developments have passed through the park despite being a gazetted park. I note that while the vision of having such infrastructure in the country has materialized, visions of the pro-conservation have continuously been deemed. Their idea of having this park properly managed, restored, and improved does not seem to materialize as they would want it to. Making the park more accessible to Kenyans appears like a vision that does not materialize. Instead, it materializes for other sections of Kenyans and non-Kenyans who have the luxury of enjoying the park as a way to spend their leisure time. The proposed draft management plan was highly resisted forcing the tourism ministry to go back to the drawing board and involve the public more before moving ahead. After resistance, KWS came up with another version of the Draft

Management Plan after involving other stakeholders seen to be more appropriate for the park and the prevailing economic situation. The study argues that with the draft plan, the government's vision of attracting international tourists is realized, but while at it, it underestimates the potential of local tourists.

Those in favor of large-scale infrastructure projects argue that they are essential to economic development. Still, the detractors opine that such projects are rushed because of politics and do not sufficiently consider the threats such projects have on the green futures of the country (Kazziha, 2016). An environmental expert who has worked with the government implementing major projects but is keen on ensuring that the future green vision as presented in policy documents is achieved told me, '*let me say to be realistic, being an environmentalist in Kenya is tough.*' Such expression shows the frustrations some actors working for the government experience daily as they try to bring on board visions of community members.

Projects already designed by the executive materialize however much impact they would have on the environment, and EIAs conducted serve to legitimize these projects to the Kenyan public. The government is keen on ensuring that the mega projects succeed. When it comes to the point where ecological aspects stand in the way, the government will then use its power to push for the 'success' of the projects without much attention to environmental concerns. He gave me examples of other projects where projects directly impacted the environment, and there was a huge public uproar, but the executive pushed through still those projects.

> *Even if at the end of it development politics overrides the good intentions of EIA report, at least we have information to tell everybody, coming future generation that "before this was done there was a scientific assessment and there was a policy assessment, and we had this report, and we knew these were going to be the negative impacts. (Former Environment Secretary, Nairobi 05/ 2019).*

The former environment secretary believes that the country is at a good place and is headed toward the right direction. She believes that having legal frameworks is a significant step forward. As they serve to inform, they also document the recommendations by the experts on what is best from the environmental perspective. When development issues override the ecological angle, at least something can be used to hold those in power responsible for any damages. The challenge is whether it is a guarantee those leaders will be there if things are completely wrong.

Most of the experts working for the institutions would prefer to ensure that the quality of the environment is not compromised. They apply the principles of first avoiding the impacts projects would have on the ecology. Where avoiding is impossible to minimize, they mitigate also not achievable. Avoiding, in this case, refers to a situation whereby if a project is going through a forested area or a national park, the preference would be to avoid such places and change the route of the project. Since, in many cases, this has not been possible, the second aspect minimizing the impact then arises. In reducing, the project is pushed to be implemented at least some distance away from where people live. The argument is that by making it a few kilometers from where people reside, the impact will not be as severe as when it could have been closer. In cases where avoidance and mitigation are not possible, compensation issues arise.

> *You cannot avoid it, so in such a case we pass the power line through the park, but we usually pay for mitigation measures (Senior Staff, KETRACO, Nairobi 11/ 2020).*

The payment is made in monetary terms to the relevant bodies such as Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS). KWS refers to this payment as a conservation fee, whereas EMCA refers to it as restoration fees. This is because it is money that you pay for restoring the environment that you have damaged. This is also contained in the Land Act, i.e., a benefit which is as a result of a wayleave or the right of way of a community is not supposed to be paid to a public body except only if it can be shown that the public body has interfered with the way the land has been previously utilized (Parliament of Kenya, 2012).

However, such a fee is never paid to the relevant government bodies in some cases. You realize that all these are government entities—one dealing with the ecological aspect and the other with the economy. During the construction of the Southern bypass by the Kenya National Highways Authority (KENHA) in Nairobi, which went through the NNP, KWS is still waiting to receive the fee from the treasury. The environment experts from KENHA assessed the environmental damage the road project would cause on the NNP ecosystem and settled on a sum of two billion Kenya shillings, a fee which is yet to be paid almost two years after the completion of the project. In this case, the win-win narrative is unrealistic as the ecological aspect has been lost. Large-scale transport infrastructures like the Southern bypass are implemented in landscapes that have social importance, after which they materialize into some beautiful grand features that symbolize imaginaries of modernity and advanced mobility as symbols of "development." In

this way, these infrastructures become practical tools in advancing real and symbolic government power (Lesutis, 2021).

Such actions cumulatively taken across the country deals a massive blow to the environment. The former Environment Secretary shares similar views. Political leaders serve so many purposes, and managing the environment is just one of them. Achieving the green and growth narrative is a tricky balance for politicians. What is immediate for them is growing. Therefore, they must pursue development by necessity because the public demands services. You get benefits through growth; however, at times, this growth comes at a cost to the environment, she argues. Large-scale infrastructure projects are thus suitable for the political class as they use them to justify economic development, which in my opinion may not necessarily be the case. Still, they ruin people's social systems, livelihoods, and the environment in the long run.

6.2   The private sector

The private sector[19] is recognized as a critical partner to the government in the growth and development of the economy. Therefore, the study must operationalize what it means by the private sector (*The Role of the Private Sector in Kenya's Economic Growth*, 2019). It consists of private individuals and companies who own, manage and control profit-making businesses in the economy. These businesses come into existence by establishing new enterprises, while in some cases, this happens through the privatization of a public institution. Capital is obtained from the business owners or shareholders; a sole proprietor contributes capital solely while partners invest money in a partnership. Prices are stabilized by creating fair market conditions. Despite it being free from government control, some businesses may still partner with the government to jointly provide services to the community (Linder, 1999; Nutt, 2006). It is estimated that 90% of the private sector offers employment (formal and informal jobs) in developing countries. This helps to increase tax revenues, provide essential goods and services and enable the adequate flow of capital in the economy. It also contributes to urban governance by establishing sustainable and inclusive ways that reduce poverty, instability, exclusion, and unemployment (Hameed & Mixon, 2013; Kongolo, 2010).

To enable the participation of the private sector and municipalities in urban governance, interactive planning and decision-making processes are required. The interaction and

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[19] Part of the economy that is not controlled by the government.

collaboration of municipalities with the private sector strengthens and enhances urban governance by promoting local economic development strategies and partnerships that combine local resources, skills, and ideas that improve the economy (Pieterse & Smit, 2014). When you consider the functions that the government performs, they are not any different from those that the private sector performs. Therefore, it is not possible to restrict the two based on the functions they perform. Take, for instance, providing service in critical sectors like health, education, social protection, and environmental protection, which is shared between the private and the public sectors. The government also guides the internal policies of operations by the private sector, and therefore to bring out the difference will be hard when you look at it from this angle. Thus, in operationalizing the concept of the private sector, this study adopts the concept of ownership whereby in this context, ownership relates to the custody of property, where the owner exercises rights and control over the property. Therefore, private sector entities are incorporated under the law and geared towards making profits (Lienert, 2009).

I elaborate on how the development community works with the private sector and the government in materializing their visions of green futures—recognizing that different actors get involved in different ways at any given scale. It is important to note that some contribute to the problem while others play a huge role in coming up with solutions, and others may only be involved because it is affected by the problem (Bryant & Bailey, 2005).

> *Some of them are just doing it for compliance, while others are noticing*
> *the competitive advantage they get from investing in such initiatives*
> *(Project Officer, GAF, 01/2021).*

The study argues that these actors have specific kinds of visions which they are implementing and in so doing, it is essential to have all the relevant actors on board to ensure that they realize their plan. The international community, the private sector, and the government need to collaborate to realize their visions. The questions then arise how does this happen and who can influence what and at what level? The study argues that this occurs at the policy level, where ideas from different actors are put together. The policy then acts as a tool to legitimize actions from every actor.

The private sector in Kenya is keen on the swift adaptation to a circular economy. The circular economy concept has gained a lot of interest in the recent past among policymakers and the discussions on industrial development even though it is not new. Seen as an approach to combat challenges facing the environment while concurrently encouraging sustainable development. It,

however, comes with new opportunities that companies can explore for their interests and those of their stakeholders. Practitioners see it as a way to set in motion strategies to induce regenerative industrial transformation that will enhance sustainable production and consumption (Geissdoerfer et al., 2017; Korhonen et al., 2018).

This move will help minimize the destructive effects of environmental actions and establish long-term resilience. The private sector in Kenya has collaborated with the government through the MoEF, the National Treasury, and the Vision 2030 delivery secretariat to achieve what they call a sustainable and inclusive future. They have been hosting the national platform for Partnering for Green visions and Global goals 2030. The Danish government finances this initiative, and it aims at identifying and incubating the most innovative public-private partnerships that will steer sustainable global economic growth. It also furthers the visions of the network, which are passed down to the Kenyan public through a top-down approach. Among the 24 selected finalists, seven projects from Kenya were chosen from 450 applications received from 80 countries. The projects emphasize the UN Sustainable Development Goals activities such as improved industrial and urban practices for the circular economy, energy access, and investment and innovation in land use and agricultural technology. The qualification includes a focus on the SDGs.

> *As we approach the link between the green visions agenda with Kenya's development priorities, we must work together as stakeholders to maximize our bottom line and accelerate economic transformation at the least cost to the environment (KEPSA, 2018).*

In summary, the study argues that while some futures are made, such as the future of green energy, so many other futures are unmade. Different actors and interests have different futures that do not link up to the collectively envisioned future by the government. In this section, the study used Kenya Power, a government parastatal that is likely to run into losses, as an illustration. Under the vision, 2030 promotes economic development and a low carbon economy. While it works to attain a low carbon economy, many other visions are shut or unmade. Different promising futures have emerged while the private sector works towards a green future.

> *The government is engaging with the private sector because we want the private sector to take lead in terms of transitioning their businesses towards green (Senior Staff, MoEF, Nairobi 11/ 2019).*

When it comes to compliance with environmental laws in Kenya, some actors opine that the private sector has tended to comply more. This is attributed to the fact that they are interested in doing business. For this reason, they would avoid a situation whereby their day-to-day operations are stopped for non-compliance with the set regulations in Kenya. Through its regulating body National Environment Management Authority (NEMA), the government has tended to be stricter on them than when it comes to applying the same laws on government projects. Their vulnerability to the government officials puts them in a situation whereby they have no option but to comply. In this way, the green visions contained in the government regulations are reflected in how the private sector operates. However, the private sector does not comply with the rules.

> *There are also those in the private sector who also normally typically take advantage of the capacity challenge NEMA has because I think NEMA has less than 1000 officers (Senior Staff, KETRACO, Nairobi 11/2020).*

This lack of capacity poses a challenge to police the environment. Ideally, NEMA should conduct annual auditing of the environment to ensure green visions as presented in the Kenyan laws are complied with. Therefore, some actors within the private sector will abide by these regulations for some years, i.e., 2- 3 years. If they note that NEMA officers never come to inspect the level of compliance they stop doing it anyway. Instead, they would save on money spent on conducting environmental audits to maximize profits. The challenge presented in such cases again is that in cases where NEMA officers go to such actors, and they notice non-compliance, they are given bribes and do not hold those actors responsible. The government agencies' selective application of the law leads me to question the government's sincerity in attaining a win-win situation pushed forward by the government. The officers like the private sector because it can get bribes instead of government facilities or projects that do not comply with the government regulations. This is because the officers will not secure a bribe from the government.

While (Talukdar & Meisner (2001) argue that a country that foreign direct investment and private sector involvement in a significant way in economic activities and has an advanced financial capital market stands a chance of enjoying a better quality of the environment at each phase of its economic development (Talukdar & Meisner, 2001). I do not see this as being the case in Kenya because empirically, it is difficult to look at the private sector in isolation, but it is. Still, it is an entity whose practices are tied with that of the government.

The private sector has played and continues to play a pivotal role in Kenya's development visions. With the agenda of harmonizing ecological and economic aspects taking center stage in recent developments, the role of the private sector cannot be underestimated. The dominant view is that the private sector has a significant role in achieving more dynamic economic growth. Resources will be used productively if transferred to the private sector (Talukdar & Meisner, 2001). For this reason, the study shows how the Kenyan government uses the private sector to legitimize its vision of green futures. Additionally, recognizing the government's role in solving environmental challenges at the local scale with support from the private sector, which is business to a large extent. They approach it professionally and abstract the ecological challenges from economic and political contexts that led to their being. Their silence in political and economic factors is attributed to their role as contributors to the environmental challenges at global, regional, and local scales (Bryant & Bailey, 2005).

The following questions then arise; How are the visions of the private sector actors passed down to citizens? How do the government and other powerful actors use the private sector to push their green visions into the Kenyan policy agenda? What role does the private sector play in the process of legitimizing visions other actors have? Analytically, these questions could still go the other way and ask how the private sector uses the government to push their visions of green. What role does the government play in legitimizing visions of the private sector actors? The question is on whose visions become dominant and the strategies used to ensure that such visions dominate the development agenda. Vision 2030 points out the manufacturing sector as a priority in achieving its development agenda in its economic pillar.

> *It's about business. It's about profits for them. They want to make money, and it's straightforward to make money if you get the right people in government. But we need to engage the private sector as much as possible if you want to make progress in terms of the circular economy, and the GE (Senior Staff, FES, Nairobi 11/2020).*

International agreements such as the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and the Paris Agreement on climate change are vital in laying out the role of the private sector in development. This is with regards to technical know-how and finance. The transition, for instance towards green visions, needs a good amount of financial investment in Kenya. Globally, the private sector is a significant source of climate finance. The public sources of finance play the role of catalyzing and guiding investments made by the private sector. To realize the visions of harmonizing the ecology and economy, investments are

needed in green products, business models, and services. In addition, they can be a source of innovation to assist in achieving growth without damaging the environment further. The private sector's networks provide a unique avenue of impact and entrench a conventional understanding of abilities, requirements, and needs locally. Therefore, environmental issues can be addressed more effectively by engaging the private sector (Morgado & Lasfargues, 2017). However, the private sector in Kenya should be understood in a broader political context. The connection the private sector has with the country's politics is quite complex and as one expert observed;

> *The private sector is about business and profits. In the Kenyan context,*
> *the private sector plays a very key role in politics because all funds for*
> *these politicians are basically the private sector (Senior Staff, FES,*
> *Nairobi 11/ 2020).*

The survival of the businesses in the private sector depends so much on the extent to which they complement the work of the government. Therefore, their crucial role in Kenyan politics cannot be underestimated. This is because politicians who run for private businesses fund politicians who run for offices is a common phenomenon, so they do business with those who supported their political bid when they get to power. Several top politicians are also significant shareholders in the private sector. It is widespread for politicians to own companies through proxies (immediate relatives or close friends). This means that the visions of the political class are reflected in how the private sector does business and vice versa.

The study argues that the private sector needs to rebrand what they have been doing to gain legitimacy. They have their kind of imagination of how the future green vision of Kenya should be. The study argues this kind of vision reflects the vision of political elites in the country, which influences International organizations that fund projects and programs in Kenya. It is critical to outline how their visions materialize. This is because it is about the visions and how they are implemented. The study argues that the private sector in Kenya is a key actor and therefore sets the pace for the visions of green futures.

> *But from an environmental perspective, if you do not engage the private*
> *sector, for example, you never move, because if you talk about the GE,*
> *those who develop the technologies within the green economic aspect,*
> *it is the private sector (Senior Staff, FES, Nairobi 11/ 2020).*

They work hand in hand with the government and support its green discourse. They put forward their ideas and incorporate them with the government's development plan, and in this way, their ideas constantly gain legitimacy. The government regards them as significant partners in the

development agenda. Kenya Association of Manufacturers (KAM), Kenya's manufacturing umbrella body, has much power and influence. This is because they offer jobs to so many citizens, and they also provide money to the government for the government to realize some of its agendas. In this way, they are well-positioned practically to sell the future to the broader population better than other actors. While they sell their kind of green, they can convince others to buy into their visions. DANIDA has been working with KAM, and engagement has been on efficient energy. DANIDA, interested in the efficient energy regime, has been engaging through capacity building. They have supported the capacity building of experts, especially in energy audits, and assisted in the transition to an efficient energy regime within the manufacturing industry. KAM intends to raise the manufacturing sector's contribution to 15% by 2022, which is in line with the 'Big Four' of the current regime. They intend to engage in projects that stimulate investments and policy initiatives promoting green visions. An improvement in energy efficiency presents a clear impact on saving money. This business improvement, in turn, enables economic growth (Kenya Association of Manufacturers & Centre for Energy Efficiency and Conservation KAM/CEEC, n.d.).

KAM, for example, is an excellent source of financing. Through the Sustainable Use of Natural Resource and Energy Finance Programme, KAM has provided financial solutions to green energy initiatives to mitigate climate change. Their vision of a green future incorporates green energy, which they see as critical to sustainable economic growth. The government of Kenya has prioritized renewable energy, which is in line with Vision 2030. While this is the case, it is important to note how this vision of green energy conflicts within the government itself. KAM uses energy efficiency, water efficiency, waste management to promote a GE. Through a partnership with the Ministry of Environment and Forestry, it will execute waste management and sound chemicals. This aims to control risks arising from the production, importation, use, and exportation of chemicals, thus protecting human health and the environment.

KAM, in the past, has partnered with DANIDA to address opportunities and challenges presented by green visions of development in Kenya. The objective of this partnership is to ensure the manufacturing sector grows climate-friendly has also been mobilizing its stakeholders and members to take part in various policy dialogues (Royal Danish Embassy in Kenya, 2016). Some experts argue rightly so because no one has a monopoly of knowledge that Kenya's private sector can learn a lot from the private sector in Denmark who already have experience with green development ideas, especially green growth. With the positioning of

Kenya in the East Africa region, the interest of Denmark is also for its private sector to explore opportunities for green technologies and solutions.

> *So working with the umbrella association of manufacturing, you can then target key energy needs or concerns and then try and help them look into a more energy resource efficient – where resource-efficient for us then addresses green visions (Senior Staff, DANIDA, Nairobi 07/2019).*

The Kenya government parastatal Kenya Power, the electricity distributor, warned that an increasing number of its top customers are moving from the national grid. The customers of top industry players have been slowly moving to have their solar power. This comes at a time that Kenya Power has been producing excess electricity. While such industrial players under the umbrella body KAM are primarily keen on transitioning to cleaner energy sources, Kenya power sees this as a loss in revenue. Materializing green visions implies the end of the others. For example, industry players are keen to find cheaper and more reliable electricity means. This mean a drop in revenue collection. Kenya Power, a government parastatal. Strathmore University, a private university based in Nairobi, which I visited during my first fieldwork in 2018, installed a 600 KW PV solar plant on the rooftop. The university uses and sells part of it to the national grid. Approximately the university saved between 18 million shillings and 24 million shillings annually. Similarly, Kenyatta University switched on the first phase of a solar plant to generate electricity, thus offloading excess power to the national grid. There is, therefore, advancement in the use of solar energy, which the government has primarily supported. Renewable energy equipment and accessories have been relieved of import duty, and they now have a zero-rated Value Added Tax (VAT). The electricity generation has been massive, yet the users are dwindling, which means the electricity distributor is under pressure. There is already a huge volume of electricity that is not used that it has to pay for (Okoth, 2020).

Selling products that fit the purchasing power and their availability within the mobility range of potential customers have resulted in a high level of uptake. This, therefore, justifies the existence of rural outlets that sell solar products. Innovative products have also emerged. One such is the M-KOPA project to enable more Kenyans to embrace solar energy. It aims at using a 'pay-per-use' installment plan as a basic model to ensure that its product is affordable to low-income households. With the input from the government, the private sector, and the innovations being made in the sector, solar energy is indeed the next frontier in Kenya's renewable energy sector. According to the C.E.O of the Kenya Private Sector Alliance, the private sector has a

collective responsibility to increase the adoption of sustainable business practices and raise awareness of the circular economy and its extensive benefits.

Influential private sector actors often do not work within the multi-level futures governance and devolution processes but rather work directly with the national government, bypassing county governments. For example, energy provision is both a national and a county function; however, large-scale renewable energy investments are often negotiated only at the national level, even though the investment affects the county. As a result, the county and its population may not always have a say in investments that directly affect their environment or share their benefits. Therefore, the visions materializing is not shared visions even within the private sector actors themselves, but power determines whose vision materializes in the end (Bellali et al., 2018).

6.3   NGOs and International development partners

The government of Kenya has recognized the role of NGOs in providing essential services to the citizens. Over time, they have been identified as critical partners when in making decisions that affect different aspects of society. However, how NGOs and the government have been relating has traditionally not been cordial. Some countries, including Kenya, have shown great suspicion towards the NGOs in the past. For example, while Moi was the president, at some point issued a warning threatening to bar NGOs from participating in politics. One of the experts noted that '*during Moi's era you could only get a project if you were aligned to the system.*' This depicts a dictatorial tendency whereby the government did not welcome alternative ideas and critiques. In the last decades, the ability of NGOs to marshal financial bases has been growing. A growing number of donors prefer working with NGOs as opposed to governments. This is because bureaucracies in governments lead to wastage which is not the case with NGOs. The government, on the other hand, does not like this approach as they also target the donor money (Brass, 2012; Yatich et al., 2007). In the following, I discuss how NGOs' green visions or roots in Kenya are made to materialize.

According to UNEP International, cooperation will be necessary to supplement national actions of least developed countries, primarily through financing to help clean energy and capacity building concerning trade in green sectors, which will catalyze and sustain LDCs' transition to a green future (UNEP, 2011). There is a vast NGO community in Kenya operating at different levels. Strong NGOs can help tackle environmental challenges. Environmental NGOs are capable of playing a critical role in aiding to fill the gaps by carrying out studies that are useful

in developing policies that will help in developing institutional capacities resulting in conversations that will lead to sustainable lifestyles. This potential however has been influenced by interests that play out among the powerful actors, and most of them do not genuinely drive this agenda.

NGOs need to have a clear mandate and political goodwill to function and deliver on their mandates. In the recent past, NGOs have been driven by donors and powerful actors who have other interests altogether. Other challenges that NGOs face are a lack of understanding of their mandates by the public and civil society organizations. NGOs in Kenya are donor-funded; this implies that the donor organizations have a theme or program they would want to fund. This calls for the NGO to put up a proposal that is in line with the theme and the donor's requirement at that time. The study argues that it is impossible that visions implemented are community visions in such scenarios but rather those of the donor organization. This was revealed by an expert who told me… '*They will develop a program, like the CICs'….* After they have funded these programs, the NGO has to look for funding elsewhere, which means they always have to be aligned to the donor's requirements at that particular time. In this way, the dominant visions remain those of the donor organization.

> *We have different targets or needs, because in most cases, some of these projects we get, we always look at, maybe a call which has been made, because you will get different development partners who have different interests (Staff, SUSWATCH, Nairobi 10/2020).*

NGO experts then prepare their proposals around the theme and funding needs of the donor. In the proposals, they give their ideas on how they think they would use the funds for the best interest of the community and the donor. So the projects and programs they implement on the ground are their ideas which they use later again as a baseline to seek funding from the same or other donors.

> *So you will find that any proposal or any kind of strategy that we're developing will be aligned to some of those principles, the GE, circular economy, just transition, and the rest (Senior Staff, FES, Nairobi 11/2020).*

Green visions of development that are developed at the international arena, such as circular economy, GE, green growth carry with them principles that organizations use to develop ideas that they intend to implement. According to an NGO expert I interviewed, these ideas influence their development strategies because they rely on donor funding, and since the donors would

want to see an incorporation of these ideas into projects being implemented, they have no option but to incorporate the ideas to secure funding. It doesn't end at that because the monitoring mechanism later on, towards finding out if the implementation took into consideration the principles of green development. In cases where this is not well taken into account, there is a possibility of not securing funding in the future.

> *We are a country that depends on donor funding, on grants from whatever countries and we do not have a standard that says as a country even if we are receiving your grants these are some of the bare minimum (Project Officer, GAF, Nairobi 01/2021).*

Development projects in Kenya materialize because of the existing donor funding in the country. The revenue that the government collects through taxation in most cases goes into funding recurrent expenditure in Kenya. It is also argued that the informal sector drives a large part of Kenya's economy. The government doesn't have enough data on the financial income from this sector, i.e. income from small-scale farmers, and this, therefore, makes it very difficult to tax this sector (Cheeseman & Griffiths, 2005). For this reason, the government of Kenya has remained dependent on financial aid from donors to materialize development projects. Being so reliant on donor support implies that it's a challenge to determine what kind of projects the government would like to implement that will directly and in the short term benefit the people. Still, rather they will implement projects designed by the donor organizations and in most cases with limited modification to suit the people. Some experts suggest that despite this situation, there is a need for the government to get to a point whereby they are not only swayed by what the donor organization needs but to put the interest of the citizens at the forefront. This way will help deal with white elephant projects that the country has witnessed in the previous years. The study argues that donor organization visions materialize through local and international NGOs that operate in the country; however, in most cases, this is not easy to know because as financial proposals are sent out, projects are already designed to fit into the requirement of the donors.

> *Now as a ministry, we said okay, we cannot do it alone, we must look for development partners so we looked for development partners and we are currently partnering with DANIDA (Senior Staff, MoEF, Nairobi 09/2019).*

Senior staff at MoEF explained how things work at the ministry. About GGEP, whose implementation the ministry was spearheading, he argued that already the government has the agenda of implementing green visions of development, and their role is to look for partners to

assist in the implementation. I however argue that the situation is relatively more complex than it seems. Institutions such as DANIDA that he referred to have their projects that keep evolving and implement them in Kenya. For this reason, the government collaborates with such institutions on their already existing projects. DANIDA also targets the government as a significant collaborator because these projects can quickly be taken up by influencing government policies. When I visited the ministry for an interview with the senior staff, I noticed the office was partitioned into two, and the other section was occupied by DANIDA's senior advisor on GGEP who was from Denmark. This is not just for the sake of it but to ensure that projects are implemented as required by the financiers, which is Denmark. Therefore, I depart from the argument that the government has their single projects for the simple reason that they do not intend to fund those projects and therefore rely on the donor organization.

6.4   Resistance from below

Realities on the ground play out very differently in many forms and the experts have to deal with local resistance, which in most cases are not foreseen and are simple things to deal with. As one of the respondents noted, when it comes to mobilizing community participants you need to bring everyone on board having worked with a community for quite some time. She argues that there are always those that will be resisting for one reason or another which in most cases cannot be explained.

> *Well, I would say it's just political differences because if they (the community) realize that this agenda is being pushed by this organization and then they realize this organization aligns to a certain agenda that is pushed by a certain person (whom they do not agree with politically) then it becomes problematic (Project Officer, GAF, Nairobi 01/2021).*

Such voices, she argues, must always be involved from the consultation of the project or program to the end of it to curb the conflicts that may arise. It indicates how social actors including community members have been responding to, negotiating, and producing the meaning of ideas that materialize in their local realities. This kind of contestation shows how visions of local politicians are negotiated within and in communities. Fundamentally The study argues that it is not important whether the politicians have visions of transformation but rather how the politicians are strategically positioned in the national political game. For this reason, many communities in Kenya have their visions but in most cases, those of political leaders end

up overriding the local visions. This has been attributed to high levels of poverty which has created a dependency on politicians. At the national level, NGOs implementing various projects work with politicians in such a way as to put pressure on them so that the visions NGOs push to get into the political agenda. It is therefore important that visions become central to political action because when politicians pay attention to certain issues the way communities take them up is speeded up.

Aside from the politicians, there are institutions and organizations which have to do with competing desires and ambitions that get activated when projects and programs have to be implemented as identities get challenged and change concerning diverse and shifting social contexts, discourses, and encounters. The importance of land as a resource in social, economic, and political developments cannot be questioned. In the local communities' land is owned by the community members so when the government wants to materialize their visions of economic development they reserve the power to compulsorily acquire the land from the community. However, there exist laws to ensure that when such land is acquired the community is compensated (Wanyonyi et al., 2017).

> *If you take care of their pockets hizo vitu za (those issues of) environment they will not bother about those things (Senior Staff, KETRACO, Nairobi 11/2020).*

A government official told me that Kenyans do not bother much about the long-term visions of the projects but look at the short-term benefits that result from the project. For example, they do not engage in constructive discussions but wait for the compensation part. In this way, this expert is not convinced the community has long-term visions whether it is economically or environmentally.

Through a top-down approach, green futures is currently linked to neoliberal ideologies of green growth, GE among others, and an organized narrative of a win-win situation where the people can secure their livelihoods while managing natural resources for the future. The government currently focuses on the aspect of public participation but this is done in a top-down where the government has its understanding of how green futures should look like already and therefore attempts to mainstream this in government institutions and departments. This is then expected to be trickled down and translated to various projects and programs where the community should be a part.

> *Public participation is far from being achieved. The level of consultation and public participation is still designed such that the local population rubber stamp what is already designed at the national level. 'It is ticking boxes (Senior Staff, FES, Nairobi 11/ 2020).*

Public participation has been quite a complex term to understand for a long time in Kenya due to its vagueness and ambiguity in the law. Those charged with duties have always conducted public participation as a formality. The parliament in Kenya considered three bills on public participation which are the Public Participation Bill (Sen. Bills No. 4 of 2018), Public Participation Bill (NA Bill No. 69 of 2019), and the Public Participation Bill (NA Bill No. 79 of 2019). The main reason for these bills is to give effect to the Constitutional provisions on public participation (Article 10(2)(a), 69(1)(d), 174(c), 184(1)(c), 196(1)(b), 201(a) and 232(1)(d)). The question then is why are there three different bills? This presents a situation where there will be laws that conflict and confuse the public more than to achieve the desired goal. It shows a lack of coordination among the political class and the drive to achieve different agendas (Birgen & Maria, 2020). Kenyan law gives powers to the executive and parliament to formulate policies and make laws respectively. These powers should, however, be exercised in the interest of the people of Kenya. This is where public participation is entrenched to ensure the vision of the locals is incorporated in the laws, policies, and activities of the government. The success or failure is highly dependent on how all the visions are incorporated (Birgen & Maria, 2020).

Muthoni Nyuguto on 02/July 2021 at the Court of Appeal during the BBI appeal hearing argues that *'Public participation itself is the essence of democracy because it broadens the constitutional agenda. Public participation legitimizes the constitution; it allows people to be committed to their constitution through the level of public participation that was involved in their making.'* She argues that deprivation of human rights and citizenship manifests itself in the lack of public participation. Public participation does not occur when an actor comes up with a problem, formulates a solution to that problem then goes ahead and invites the public to give in their inputs to these initiatives. In this context, the ic participation is conflicted and ineffective as it happens way too late into the process after all the issues and agendas have been framed and decisions already arrived at. The outcomes in this sense are usually predetermined and the people are normally just "conveyor belts". Public participation should enable the people to affect the outcome of that participation. When public participation is not done effectively,

the question arises which interests are being promoted and while at it whose interests are excluded.

Materializing green visions of development is indeed challenging. This is because of the many actors that are involved from the individual to institutional actors that operate across the scale. Differences in perspectives, ideas, and values of different actors in the society - government, nongovernment, the private sector, and the general public - need to be increasingly well-captured in the transition to green futures: in the way, information is collected, decisions are made, actions are undertaken and the process of reviewing the actions (Bass et al., 1995). This section investigates to what extent do the views of actors are incorporated, especially the actors at the community level who in most cases are never aware of these new projects and programs that come up aimed at attaining a certain green future. I also investigate how the views of powerful actors become dominant in society and how this is negotiated. The study argues that expert translation of the information in the policy and legal documents is still lacking. The public, therefore, is left behind as the policy puts a keen focus on achieving the legal obligations (Ageyo & Muchunku, 2020).

> *As far as environmental issues are concerned I have a very harsh verdict against Kenyans in that once they are compensated good rates in quotes. Once the compensation part is well taken care of they do not care about the environment (Senior Staff, KETRACO, Nairobi 11/ 2020).*

KETRACO is a government parastatal that designs, plans, construct, and operates high voltage transmission lines and conducts public participation as they carry on their mandate. When it comes to the green future of the country KETRACO would prefer to ensure that the environment is safeguarded. They strive to avoid, minimize and mitigate the impacts their large-scale electricity projects have on the general environment. While doing their work those living in places the projects are implemented are affected. This results in displacements and environmental degradation like in cases where the project is going through forest land. For this reason, they involve the public to take part and be informed of the project. One of the experts who work for KETRACO however observes that Kenyan citizens have very little concern about the effects projects have on the environment. According to him, it doesn't matter the level of degradation projects have on the environment but what concerns most Kenyans is the amount of money they receive in the form of compensation.

> *It is just about money. People who normally ask questions about the environment are never sincere; they use the environment as a bargaining tool ili walipwe pesa mingi (so that they are paid a lot of money) (Senior Staff KETRACO, Nairobi 11/2020).*

This is as a result of the loss of land or where their property is demolished. In this way, the level of engagement is not two ways the study argues. The experts spend time educating the locals on key issues that do with the future of the environment but most of the locals are keen on the compensation part. As such the study argues that the visions of the locals and the future they envision differ from the win-win scenario. The critical engagement of the locals in such cases is substituted with money issues. This is because issues that are hard pressing for the people at the local level have to do with immediate needs which require money to fix quickly.

The counties in Kenya are unique in their way. As a result, it is believed that counties are in a position to deliver necessary services to the people living in those counties. This is because it is believed that those living in the county possess local knowledge that will enable them to meaningfully deliver the services they need and address the challenges they face. This system of government, therefore, presents a chance to address diverse needs, choices, and challenges. It is for this reason that I assess the level in which the counties and the people at the sub-county levels have been able to take part when it comes to decision making and how far community members are involved (Khaunya et al., 2015).

The move from a central system of government to a two-tier system with national and 47 county governments is seen as a great step towards achieving Kenya's development goals. This is because power and the way people have represented move to a much lower level for better service delivery and make people more involved in new project designs. One of the consequences of the centralization of power in the presidency has been a widespread perception of alienation among citizens, many of whom have felt marginalized, neglected, and discriminated against based on their ethnicity. For this reason, Kenyans asked for the devolution of governance so that they can participate meaningfully in governmental decision-making at the local level (Akech, 2010).

The designers of the 2010 constitution, therefore envisioned it in such a way that democracy, equity, social and economic development was going to be enhanced especially at the local level. It encourages citizen participation in the political process. In this way, the citizens can demand accountability while at the same time taking ownership of the projects and programs taking

place in their localities. Devolution is viewed as one of the most important and decisive factors for the future development of Kenya (Kirui & Biwott, 2010; Todtling et al., 2013). It was anticipated that devolution was going to make it easy for people to participate in decision-making, especially on issues that directly affect them, and that their views were going to be well captured. This however has not been the case because there is no consensus on what public participation should essentially entail.

> *Public participation is a very broad term and you cannot explain public participation as abcd... because, like, given the way we are talking, we can say that we have done public participation (Senior Staff, FES, Nairobi 11/ 2020).*

Public participation in its very nature is a very loose term. For this reason, it has been misused by actors who are required to implement it. Their ability to justify the actions they carry out as representing or meaning public participation is not easy to challenge. Some of the actors involve actors in their networks by way of making a phone call to take part in what they would refer to as public participation. This, therefore, ensures that visions of the real people who are supposed to take part in this public participation are not reflected. So what exactly is public participation? Participation means different things to different people. Practically it meant anything from passive "listening" only (the Project does the planning, the people do what the Project decides), through to communities defining their objectives and implementing and monitoring the project themselves (Bass et al., 1995).

Muigua (2014) differentiates two kinds of participation by citizens in Kenya. Consultative and empowered participation. In consultative participation, a government provides citizens and their representatives with a chance to be heard. Here however there is no guarantee that participation will be heeded since the decision-makers have the freedom to agree with citizens or not, though there is normally an obligation to give the reasons for why they agree or disagree. For empowered participation, the participants are invested with decision-making power and influence, such as having citizen representatives on boards that oversee local public service delivery and the citizens may participate through local associations, social movements and campaigns, formal participatory governance spaces, and multiple approaches which employ several of these strategies. In this way, the officials act in the interest of the citizens. Participation, therefore, allows citizens to take part in making decisions that affect them (Muigua, 2014; Ngigi, 2019).

It is however not easy to tell which kind of participation the citizens are involved in. This is due to the way this is carried out. Locals do not understand complex issues presented to them by the decision-makers. There is not enough time to understand the issues and there is no one to break such issues down to them for a better understanding before they can give their inputs.

> *if you are not very careful in terms of mobilization to ensure that you do not only mobilize those that you think are going to agree with you but mobilize everyone that you think has a stake in whatever it is you are doing. The moment you leave anyone out by mistake or by choice then that already begins to bring conflict (Project Officer, GAF, Nairobi 01/2021).*

The conversations and the involvement of people at the lower level are happening. However, such conversations do not happen at the level of government policymaking. They happen in the context of CSOs, CBOs in the villages. These are the organizations that take lead in such conversations with community members and therefore there is still a huge gap in ensuring the voices of people at the local level reach the government and their needs properly mainstreamed in the policy agendas. This is because the kind of participation here is consultative. The CSOs and the CBOs do not possess the powers necessary to even push the government to shape the conversation in the direction they want. This mostly happens when the government agenda matches that represented by the grassroots organizations which again is not easy to achieve.

The power struggle in the two levels of government has affected the way the public gets to participate. The national government is keen on keeping an eye on what is happening in the counties. Counties on the other hand do not take this as an honest move. They view it as an attempt by the national government to derail the devolution process. The organization of the way power is divided and functions between the national and county governments as set out in the Fourth Schedule is wide, vague, and general (Kirui & Biwott, 2010; Todtling et al., 2013).

To navigate this, Kirui & Biwott (2010) suggest that the two levels of government must view each other more objectively for a symbiotic relationship to exist. The county government should not overlook the role of the national government and vice versa. To avoid a situation where the local elites have more power and manipulate the local power, the central government must play an oversight role (Kirui & Biwott, 2010). Some political actors at the county level also deliberately misinterpret some clauses in the constitution to serve their political and related partisan interests pretending to be serving the interest of the public. Other non-political

stakeholders should for this reason be cautious about the potential additional political risk of rent-seeking, conflicting interests, and project delays as a result of devolution measures in combination with low government capacity to regulate. To ensure the national government does not undermine county governments, various provisions of the new Constitution strive to ensure the sustainability of the latter. The Constitution shields its provisions on county government from being amended easily (Akech, 2010).

Several counties have now established County Climate Change Funds (CCCFs) as a consolidated way of mobilizing climate financing from various sources to finance local climate actions. Establishing the CCCFs is key for climate adaptation to be mainstreamed in the County Integrated Development Plans (CIDPs) in Kenya. With this fund, the counties can prioritize, propose and be in a position to implement the adaptation actions that are necessary for that county. The relevant leaders at the county levels can receive training on climate change and how to integrate climate change policies at the national level while they keep an eye on the priorities at the local level. This way, they can see how the local visions can be aligned to the broader national visions of adaptation (Chaudhury et al., 2020).

These institutional arrangements are the ones meant to take care of the future green visions of the country. The capacity at this lower level of governance is inadequate as the level of expertise in green development discourse has not been developed. Many in the political class do not understand several issues in the new law and the role in which they are elected to serve (Dzebo et al., 2020).

The jurisdiction of counties on matters green futures is limited. The function of some key sectors remains with the national government and government departments. Some of them include water, wildlife, and mining. The national government, however, through national institutions, has been working to streamline actions at the local level. This is done through meetings with stakeholders in the counties. Overlapping issues and mandates have been identified but little exists to show that there is progress. A lot of money is therefore spent in such bureaucratic activities while so much time is wasted at the same time. The budgeting of the money to be delivered to the counties is still done at the national level and this makes it hard for the people to decide on what kind of actions they would want to see implemented. The money does not reach the counties and their citizens. As the socio-economic development in the counties declines, people become more and more discontent with the system and blame it for their

decreasing living standards. Todtling and others refer to devolution as a white elephant project. The needs of the citizens are not met under this system while the elite view it as it serves their purpose. The discussion about devolution in the country is split: the elites praise it while the people criticize it and call for a change (Todtling et al., 2013).

Akech (2010) notes that the oppression of minorities and marginalized groups that has been prevalent at the national level could be repeated in the counties. The strategies adopted by county governors are shaped by competition with other elected leaders both at the county and national levels. The strategies focus on the huge amount of money and development funds meant for the counties. Cheeseman and others argue that this does not mean that they scramble for personal enrichment alone but must be seen in a broader context where political patronage and development funds are key to sustaining a political career, and a system of government (Akech, 2010; Cheeseman et al., 2016).

This in turn has threatened to divide the citizens along ethnic lines. The provisions on devolution promise to enhance perceptions of national (as opposed to ethnic) citizenship, since they aim to ensure equitable sharing of national resources. As such, the stakes of communities that have previously felt or been marginalized in sustaining the entity called Kenya are enhanced. If these provisions are implemented, the livelihoods of the people at local levels would be enhanced (Akech, 2010).

Kenya is well-placed to involve local communities through county governments. An inclusive, equitable green vision path requires the maximization of benefits from natural resources while minimizing social and environmental costs and risks. This requires local communities to participate in the policy process and share the benefits from natural resources. However, as I already noted, participation does not happen at the level of government policy-making. They happen in the context of CSOs, CBOs in the villages. These are the organizations that take lead in such conversations with community members and therefore there is still a huge gap in ensuring the voices of people at the local level reach the government and their needs properly mainstreamed in the policy agendas.

> *Wakenya wanaangalia tu maneno ya pesa (Kenyans just look at monetary issues) like hii nyumba yangu utanilipa pesa ngapi, miti yangu utanilipa pesa ngapi...vijana wetu watapata kazi (how much will you pay me for my house, how much will you pay for my tree, will our*

youths secure jobs) but they do not look at the environmental aspects

(Senior Staff, KETRACO, Nairobi 11/ 2020).

The approach to public participation is top-down. External experts and actors approach the community with a view to capacity building them. The idea is that visions to be implemented in and for the community are already developed and this is what is brought to the community for adoption. An expert who had been working for the community told me that their key role was to enlighten the community on what the government is doing. This implies that these visions are already being implemented and it is only important for the community to be aware of them. He says that much of the work they were involved in was capacity building as the content instruction had been well structured. They enter the community through chiefs and local sub-county administrators who help them find other organized groups who influence the community.

> *So we look at how they spend their budget if it's efficient… are they*
> *achieving their objectives what is the responsibility of citizens in*
> *ensuring that their money is spent well and how it should be spent so*
> *also now supporting citizens to know what their civic rights are and*
> *actualizing them to do a lot of capacity building on budgeting processes*
> *on public expenditure management (Project Officer, GAF, Nairobi*
> *01/2021).*

Promoting Kenya's green futures has no doubt had its share of challenges when it comes to public participation. Public participation in developing projects and programs is a constitutional requirement that needs resources to be achieved and this has proved to be a costly affair for several actors (Kaudia, 2012).

6.5   Perceptions and practices at the community level.

Projects and programs designed at a global and national scale are implemented within local communities in Kenya. However, these communities have always been engaged in different activities to secure their livelihoods. This subsection explores the perceptions of communities where specific programs implemented by actors from the private sector, donor organizations, and the government think about those programs. I further explore whether they have similar visions and understandings of the way the projects and programs are framed and implemented.

Well, I would say it's just political differences because if they realize that an agenda (project/program within the community) is being pushed by this organization and then they feel this organization aligns to certain agenda (political agenda) that is being pushed by a certain person then it becomes problematic (Project Officer, GAF, Nairobi 01/ 2021).

Local political situations in different communities have always been a factor in how communities perceive what is happening around them. Political leaders have networks drawn from both the international and national actors. Organizations must not align to any political affiliations or be seen by the community to align to a certain political affiliation for them to easily implement their ideas in the community. This way, the visions are perceived by the community to be long-term visions and can easily gain popularity.

The private sector activities have seen rural households get connected to the solar home systems. In Kenya's rural areas power outages are quite common. It may take several days for this to be reconnected. This makes it quite unreliable but then provides a huge market for solar energy. Being within the tropics there is a guarantee to have the sun for up to 10 hours on a day-to-day basis. This arguably makes solar energy quite reliable and cheap for that matter as this may reduce the electricity bill to almost zero. With such needs for an affordable, reliable source of electricity, private sector actors working with the government and other organizations complementing the role of the government work to address such needs while at the same time making profits. Such actions are framed and strongly pushed as working towards a low carbon economy since solar power is an environmentally friendly source of energy. A teacher who doubles up as the deputy headteacher of a local primary school in Ilkimati village expresses his excitement on the possibility of making it to school and being in a position to do some remedial lessons very early in the morning when there is still darkness. He says to me that the pupils can have an extended time of study at night in school before going home as the entire village is well lit. He goes further to state that "Even the teachers can charge their mobile phones in the staffroom, besides the teachers, the pupils themselves over the night, especially these upper classrooms they can carry their studies at night. There is no problem. We are appreciating the project so much because in the past there was no source of electricity. So we are very happy about this project."

Figure 7 Solar light installed at Ilkimati Primary school in Narok county. Photo A. Ogolla 2019

The narrative from this teacher is a reflection of what the community cares about. To them, it is not about how these visions are framed but the impact they have in communities they live in

and derive their livelihood. The teachers in this school are happy with this solar-powered electricity and to them, whether it is a green source of energy or not is not important. This village had never had electricity and now that there is electricity and they can do the basics such as charging their phones which implies staying in touch through the internet and phone calls it's all that matters. For the pupils in school, the fact that they can spend more time studying and stay longer in school is something they do not take for granted. Materializing a green vision as framed by institutions implementing the project (solar lighting) which is clean energy has led to the realization of other visions. The number of children who have enrolled in the school has increased and according to the deputy headteacher in this school, the performance of the pupils has also gone up. He attributes this to the ability of the pupils to spend more time in school. To be able to study even through the night and the teachers also can stay motivated as they teach. Children have come from far away areas to attend this school because in the areas where they come from there is still no electricity. Because of this solar, the school can rely on itself for food production. This is because they can practice irrigated agriculture. The solar can pump water to huge storage tanks which in turn irrigates the crops majorly vegetables planted in the school farm. In this same area, the health facility that had not been functional for quite a long time is now able to function and basic health care can be accessed. Speaking to the doctor who serves this hospital he noted that for a long time he could not be able to provide vaccination services to anyone who needed it, especially children who should be getting several vaccinations. Women who needed health care could not be attended to. This is attributed to the fact that without electricity vaccinations that need to be stored in refrigerators could not be stored. Sterilization machines were also not operational. With the availability of electricity, these services can now be offered. Initially for such to happen the community had to travel several miles to Narok town which is situated several kilometers away and with the challenge of a poor road network this was not easy.

The study argues that for the community in Ilkimati it is not about frames. What is important for them is that pressing issues and needs are addressed. Firstly, the issue of education and that school-going children can effectively take part in academics, increased enrolment and performance is important. Secondly, the fact that they can stay connected with the rest of the country through mobile phone communication is another thing they find important. This is probably the best way their visions materialize.

Outside their official practices, actors have tended to set up their practices within the community where they implement their green visions as private citizens. In most cases, these are set up as a way of giving back to society. I however argue that this in most cases goes beyond giving back to society but it is a form of soft power where these actors show that they have the experience and ideas. They generate income through different mechanisms including funding institutions and tapping on resources from the government since they have the relevant networks and possess the experience to navigate through this. What I also note is that while this happens political power struggles emerge within the society. In Kenya historically those who have community engagement projects have ended up going into politics and even further securing those political seats. Therefore, while some experts might genuinely be engaging the community to express alternative visions, they face challenges from local politicians who do not want to be outshined purely for political reasons.

> *With my over 10 years of experience as the environment secretary for the government of Kenya and with the international connections that This study has made on the environmental issues and climate change issues, I want to continue with ensuring that the policies, the regulations, the practices that we identify as good for the society are applied by the people in the rural areas particularly working with women (Former Environment Secretary, Nairobi 05/2019).*

In implementing community projects women and youth are still targeted and the actors who do so argue that they are the most vulnerable and have very limited ability to access knowledge, its application and even to access resources such as land. I however do not see anything new in this approach. The practices actors implement individually and in organizations that they run privately are to a large extent influenced by the positions they hold in government or previously held.

Figure 8 Irrigated agricultural practices in arid land in Ilkimati, Narok county. Photo: A. Ogolla 2019

For the locals, future-making is more about livelihood. Their ability to generate income and be able to feed their families. This is in understanding that no matter what kind of vision the government has for the citizens; the trickle-down effect may not be realized. They use both their past and present to envision a future of hope and those who have the little opportunity create space and a means for the others. The present challenges inspire hope. It is both direct and indirect employment. Once we buy from farmers, some offload which brings in the aspect of wages. It is a job that is on a contract basis and therefore there are a variety of jobs. They mostly involve young men who do the loading and unloading as we buy them in tonnage (Community Expert, Nyahururu 08/2019). This expert who I visited in Nyahururu owns a workshop that manufactures organic fertilizers. He works there together with his wife and has employed different people in different capacities. The place where the workshop sits is owned by his father who I also find there but do not have a chance to have a conversation with as he is very busy working. Our conversation started on the subject of his current work to materialize visions of green development in his community after a recommendation by the Kenya climate innovation center only to realize that he is an engineer by training who obtained his degree from Japan. He

tells me that his love for industries started while studying in Japan. He has also been to Russia and China and some of the machines he has in his workshop which he shows me he bought from China. This is where some of the ideas he has been implementing have originated. This suggests that even though several institutions operating in Nairobi claim to be implementing visions of green development through community experts, most of these young people establish the initiatives to be able to explore income-generating opportunities in the present.

Figure 9 Community expert's workshop with sacks of organic fertilizers waiting to be delivered to clients. Photo: A. Ogolla, 2019

This community expert and his company has been featured in the media as a youth-led company manufacturing organic fertilizers from plant and animal waste. He also works as a model for young people with green projects that positively impact society. During my conversation, I was curious to understand the inspiration behind his project. Recognizing the need to produce more food because of the food insecurity situation he thought of a better way of engaging so that the food produced by local farmers would match the labor and efforts they put in as they work in their farms. He recalls that his mother used to work hard on her farm but what she got in return is not in line with the effort she put into the work. The fertility of the soil is also gone and there is an urgent need to boost soil fertility.

How our parents used to farm is not in line with what they produced. For example, maize in an acre of land would yield 30 bags but currently getting 10 bags in an acre of land is an uphill task because the soil structure is gone. It has been destroyed and is equivalent to a human being who is sick and nothing can be done. We saw it would be nice to take on this idea bit by bit. That is how it came alive (Community Expert, Nyahururu 08/2019).

The past creates fond memories which then inspire community members to envision a future that looks like the past. History includes coming together as a people around events that created memories that either support or create a social bond. Memories help create a sense of responsibility among the members of the community (Colonomos, 2016). While such initiatives are quite noble, I question how such small pockets of initiatives that are not well coordinated or supported can translate into the bigger vision of greener futures while economic activities of the government have continued to exploit natural resources and destroy ecosystems.

Figure 10 A farmer showing me alternative sources of income in his farm which are also environmental friendly. Photo: I. Asetto 2019

The vulnerability of communities to climate change is increasing on a day-to-day basis. This is according to a climate change specialist who works for World Vision Kenya. They implement projects with a focus on assisting communities to adapt to the impacts presented by climate change. In the communities they promote climate-smart agriculture, restoration activities in the name of reforestation and afforestation, promote renewable energy whereby they encourage communities to take up alternative energy options which reduce carbon emissions while being efficient at the same time like the improved cooking

stoves. These initiatives she notes have been able to transform communities they work with in terms of efficiency and increase household incomes. Beekeeping is one notable income-generating activity that has improved many household incomes in the communities they work in.

Some members of the community are very innovative. This is echoed by experts I interviewed who work with communities in certain projects. When organizations have projects that they implement in the community they appreciate that some community members are very active and have a vision for their communities and through this, project ideas can be modified to fit into the needs of such communities. Meeting farmers in Baringo I noticed that this was indeed the case as my meeting with some farmers was more insightful while others were not. The project officer at GAF insists that such ideas should not be locked out but must be incorporated into the project so that you get the best way to implement community projects since each community has its way of doing things.

> *If you lock out ideas from the community, you do not only kill the goodwill you also prevent yourself from getting the best ways to do things because each community has its way of doing things (Project Officer, GAF, Nairobi 01/2021).*

She says that she has always had a feeling that community members are supportive and would like the changes that institutions bring in their areas. They are supportive and while at it they provide more information that becomes helpful and therefore not incorporating their ideas kills their spirit and they end up feeling like they do not own the project or program implemented.

6.6 Framing to materialize green visions

While actors from the private sector work in close collaboration with actors from the development community and the government to translate their visions to specific projects and programs, I attempt an analysis of the role of framing their practices. In the following, I show

why actors frame their practices the way they do and whether the community members are aware of such frames. I contrast the argument by some of the actors I engaged in my fieldwork that the communities share their visions and co-produce visions of green futures with the community. The reality is that a significant gap exists between the implementers and the community whose livelihoods are meant to be changed.

How substantive is the vision encompassed in green visions and the GE concepts? Is a significant overhaul of the current economic system required? Do these reports represent a call for a paradigm shift, or are this 'tweaking' the system and 'green-washing'? Also, by framing sustainability issues in economic growth, Brown argues they are far more likely to be taken seriously and acted upon. When you add a perspective of efficiency whereby you do more with more petite such frames become even more attractive in the development discourse. This is key in understanding how the concept of Green visions has found itself in Kenya's development agenda.

Further, I explore the power interplays that have directed the development of green visions ideation in practice (E. Brown et al., 2014). Frames, according to Hall, are mental structures that frame how we view the world. Framing is vital as they serve the role of processing and evaluating information such that the information that doesn't fit the frames is not included. Frames make it possible for a particular issue to be interpreted in a specific way. Frames, therefore, shape goals, plans, and actions used to determine what is good or bad (Hall, 2016).

> *Call it what you want to call it. Call it green visions, call it GE, call it sustainable economy, call it regenerative economy. You call it what you'd call it (Senior Staff, DANIDA, Nairobi 07/2019).*

According to the program manager of green Vision at the Danish Royal Embassy, the names and framing do not matter. He argues that growth is necessary for Africa; however, fundamentally, the growth should be sustainable, which should be the question practitioners should deal with. He stresses that we should take the same development pathway that the West (referring to already developed countries) took or that we will inevitably push the boundaries of our planet, which will have foretold consequences to one and all, including Africa.

When sustainability issues are framed in economic growth, governments will likely take them seriously and act upon them. Due to the economic crisis and other challenges facing the globe, i.e., climate change, green development concepts have become very attractive to businesses and governments (Borel-Saladin & Turok, 2013).

With an agenda of attaining a low carbon economy as pushed by actors at the international level and Kenya being a party to global agreements, it must reduce carbon emissions. As such, policy documents and legal frameworks outline the measures to achieve this. Due to international cooperation and funding source, local organizations must then engage in practices that are committed to achieving these goals. Therefore, framing is crucial for ensuring that their activities align with a specific plan. The different actors, in most cases, engage in various thematic issues, which in the end contribute to sustainable development and what is referred to as improved livelihoods. Different development partners fund the projects and programs, and therefore, it is critical to frame the projects and practices to match the agenda of the funding institutions.

So regarding the green visions in the country, the funding community has geared their money towards issues of climate change, natural resources, land management, and sustainable development. The programs and projects are also implemented in phases according to how funding is availed. The frames are also important because some funding organizations are also partners in the programs and participate in the day-to-day implementation. These actors find the linking point between the community and their programs. Persistently, the community groups are left out in decision making, and therefore they play no role in framing activities and programs. For example, when it comes to devolution, there are attempts to see how it can be merged with climate change because most funding institutions put their money. Development partners have different interests, so the organizations working within the communities always check out the calls that have been made. Depending on their scope of work, they frame their proposals to suit the requirements of the calls. Without this, it is hard to win grants.

The frames happen and are shaped differently by different actors, including the national and government. This is highly dependent on the visions of those actors who finance the projects and programs. I note that frames evolve, and while this happens again, previous frames are constantly deemed and fade away. The practices, in most cases, remain the same but under new frames. I note that project cycles play a fundamental role in taking up new frames while others are not. Hall defines frames as storylines that set out a particular way of thinking and show why something is problematic and those who bear the responsibility for it. Frames also show what ought to be undertaken about it (Hall, 2016). The study argues that actors' green visions are expressed through several frames in Kenya and are constantly negotiated through a top-down approach where visions of the influential actors dominate.

> *I do remember that as we drafted our Kenyan speech for the minister it was strongly felt that the idea of green visions would sharpen the thinking on how the environment can be safeguarded in terms of reducing pollution, getting a better environment despite a swift development, industrialization and so on (Former Environment Secretary, Nairobi 05/2019).*

According to the former secretary of the environment, however, framing ensures focused thinking in matters development. On matters green, she notes progress has been made in the way humans think over issues related to natural resources. In matters framing, she argues that it is a way of fine-tuning concepts to move from just savings from better use of resources *to concepts like efficiency - getting more with less,* which is summarised as the circular economy.

The GGEP in Kenya shows a straightforward way of how the project evolved. From agricultural program to natural resource management program and finally, the green visions and employment program, which at the time of my fieldwork was running until 2021. Frames play the role of bringing actors together. According to an official from MoEF, before 2015, the ministry was involved in a program focused on natural resources management that the Danish government funded through DANIDA. Ideally, the study argues that this program aimed to transition towards sustainable development. Since actors viewed this as not compelling enough, there was constant negotiation to adopt new mechanisms to achieve this. A study done by UNEP emphasized that for the country to achieve the sustainable development objective, there was a need to change the development model. This study has played a fundamental role in framing the green future agenda in Kenya. After this study, GESIP was developed to help incorporate the green visions and make a policy document. The study argues that this framing is essential to bring the actors together in a shared vision of a green future in the country but falls short of addressing the different shades of green that individual actors implement.

> *We are now coming up with a green public procurement framework which we want to guide procurement within public institutions. We realize that the government is a heavy procuring entity when it comes to public goods and services (Senior Staff, MoEF, Nairobi 09/2019).*

Frames serve to secure funding or increase the chances of obtaining financing. In the case of Kenya, I observe that green frames sell and can generate income. For example, the government shows this through the MoEF attempt to shift procurement within the public towards green. At

the time of this fieldwork, MoEF was still engaging the Public Procurement and Regulatory Authority and the Treasury to develop policies guiding this.

> *So we realized that if the government can procure green, it will influence the manufacturing in the private sector to manufacture green products (Senior Staff, MoEF, Nairobi 09/2019).*

It boils down to who funds the whole environmental agenda in Kenya. For example, according to information from my respondents, this plan is entirely donor-funded. This means that donor ideas are hugely borrowed and used in Kenya. The ideas influence contexts in which specific trains of thought are built to align with where money will come from.

> *So you will find that any proposal or strategy that we're developing will align with some of those principles (Senior Staff, FES, Nairobi 09/ 2020).*

External actors also use agendas frames to ensure that their plan can be accepted in the Kenya political discourse and for the ideas to gain legitimacy. Talking to certain politicians enables this because they make it a political agenda once they endorse the idea. In this way, it is an easy sell to the electorate. They take it as their vision of development which the country desperately needs. In one of my interviews, the respondent working for an international organization noted, '*and the north is very smart in trying to look at who is influential and who they can target.' The influential people, according to him, also work very closely with high-ranking politicians. If you can convince them of the ideas behind your frame, it's straightforward to sell that idea in the different policies, plans, and programs* you have at the country level. And the documents have been very fundamental in the way in which green futures ideas have been received.

6.7   Compensating environmental losses as a form of materializing green visions.

The economic growth in Kenya, just like in Africa, is being achieved at a high ecological cost. In as much as leaders are at the moment taking the proper steps in attracting finances for economic development, it is observed that they are doing this without considering the outcome of such developments in the ecological aspects, which have led a to big blow to the forested land, grasslands and even drying up of water bodies. As a result, the ecosystem goods and services that wildlife and human beings depend on are under threat. Does this imply that Africa is considered short-term benefits above long-term growth? Conservationists argue that transformation in Africa should not come at the expense of the environment as it is the environment that underpins human well-being, political stability, and the continued economic

prosperity that African leaders need (*Strategic Vision 2020-2030 | African Wildlife Foundation*, n.d.). As noted earlier, for most leaders, it is what can be shown to the public members during political campaigns that matter most to them. It is easier to point at an infrastructure project developed than to point at an environment conserved, and therefore the narrative of achieving both remains a pipe dream. This is better explained because environmental losses are compensated after an infrastructure project has been developed.

Kenyan leaders in the past who have performed well in the environmental conservation arena have not made it far in the political stage. This is because a majority of the voters are never impressed by such, and history has shown this very well. In the 1997 general election, Wangari Maathai, an internationally acclaimed environmentalist, contested as a president to dislodge the then-president Moi. However, a famous columnist had bad news for the professor, who would clinch the Nobel Prize for Peace seven years later. He argued that the political environment was very hostile and winning would be reserved for those who were good at scheming, and an individual's credentials would not matter. This was true as Maathai came a distant 13th out of 15 candidates in that election.

I define compensation as payments or any kind of restitution that is rewarded to beneficiaries of economic services or agents of the ecosystem to offset foregone privileges to environmental benefits. Compensation is essential because, as much as large-scale infrastructure projects have a significant contribution to cultural, economic, and social growth, their impact on the ecological system cannot be underestimated. There is an increasing recognition of the consequences large-scale infrastructure projects like the railway have on the natural environment, more specifically on the rural and remote areas where they pass with a sparse and l who are marginalized and marginalized climatic conditions (Nyumba et al., 2021; Swallow et al., n.d.)

Previously exclusionary conservation has been criticized for trade-offs between conservation and social development goals. Several studies argue for and against negative social impacts of protected areas in different parts of the world, and the scope and characteristics of these impacts. As a result of these studies, there have been debates among development and conservation practitioners and those in academia. Consequently, several international finance and aid organizations supporting conservation have adopted principles, policies, and programs that address the rights of local people and mechanisms available to redress conservation-related displacement. A good number of policies advocate for fair, timely, and adequate compensation

for all the assets that are lost. The guidelines also call for supportive rehabilitation strategies so that those affected can attain a pre-invention level of well-being (Rantala et al., 2013).

The current approach to ecological matters in Kenya is reactionary. This is whereby the environment is damaged due to economic growth by the executive and other actors and afterward compensating for the damaged environment. The executive, which is part of the government as an actor, plays a significant role in exacerbating environmental problems in Kenya. These problems in Kenya can be understood adequately only when we recognize that different actors contribute to, are affected by, or seek to resolve, environmental issues at different scales. In this case, I look at the government as a massive contributor to the ecological problems it aims to resolve (Bryant & Bailey, 2005).

In this section, I examine how losses related to the environment are handled by the executive, whether the compensation offered is sufficient and if it is usually done. Protecting the environment and natural resources rests with the national government, which should establish tools to achieve sustainable development. It is a requirement that an EIA is conducted before projects can commence. EIA is an environmental management tool aiming at identifying environmental problems and providing solutions to prevent or mitigate these problems to acceptable levels and contribute to achieving sustainable development (Muigua, n.d.). Where prevention and mitigation are completely not practical, restorations then come in. EIA presents one of the actors' tools to reimagine how environmental futures will look. By doing this assessment, the report done by ecological consultants on behalf of project proponents looks at the vision the specific project has, especially from the economic perspective, and looks at how this impacts the surrounding environment at present and in the long run. Before the project commences, the project proponent must government the project's likely impacts on the environment. After that, they have to show the measures they have systematically put in place to ensure that those impacts are taken care of. While this is usually the case, the study argues that, in a way, it reshapes the kind of green futures which then materializes differently. Projects implemented by the government undergo Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA). For example, institutions such as KETRACO constructing large-scale electricity transmission lines does this. Still, the process and the outcome that The study argues end up materializing the economic vision. In contrast, the environmental vision is constantly a battlefield, and the vision keeps deeming as the country steadily steps into the future.

We normally pay KWS conservation fee; they call it conservation fee,
but it is like let me call it okay Wildlife Act calls it conservation fee, but
EMCA calls it restoration fee because it is money for restoring the
damage that the KETRACO project has had in the park (Senior Staff,
KETRACO, Nairobi 11/2020).

In an interview with a senior environmental expert at KETRACO, I noted that different government institutions had other names that they used to refer to the fee paid due to the damaged environment. Since these institutions had various labels, the institutions that harm the environment don't focus on framing it. For them, as long as they can find their way to achieve the project they intend to implement, that is good enough. The naming doesn't change anything in any way. Why would different government agencies frame it differently to include the different frames of names in the legal framework, such as the Forest Act and the Wildlife Act?

This is part of making things blurry by specific actors who tend to benefit from such ways of framing. With conflicts between the two government agencies in terms of who should bear the most significant responsibility in restoring the damaged ecosystem, the economic activities go on unstopped. At the same time, conservation debates still take center stage. There has been an overlap in mandates of the two government agencies in the past, and this is nothing new (to insert evidence on overlapping mandates of KFS and KWS).

KWS and KFS are primarily involved in protecting gazetted protected areas such as the forest reserve and the national reserve. The two agencies are concerned with forest and wildlife resources generally. In as much as the linkage between institutions has been identified as a critical factor in the system of governance of the environment both across levels and within the same levels (Robinson & Kagombe, 2018). The study argues that there exists little difference in the roles the two institutions play and note that this lack of clarity plays a well-intended role not known or well understood by the public- that of making every action unclear—mandates of KFS and KWS in restoring the damaged environment during the construction of large-scale infrastructure projects.

KWS calls it conservation fee, KFS calls it compensation for materials,
it is not buying, it is compensation for materials where materials are
the trees which will be damaged (Senior Staff, KETRACO, Nairobi
11/2020).

This approach assumes that compensation alone is enough to achieve the environmental targets, thus completing the win-win narrative. I, however, argue that this will be difficult to achieve and suggest an ecological compensation approach that is target-based. This would be most effective when developed as a coordinated jurisdictional policy, with both net jurisdictional outcomes set and improvement/Maintenance compensation ratios calculated at the outset (Simmonds et al., 2020).

My empirical evidence agrees that institutions with mandates to safeguard the environment largely remain unsuccessful whenever there is a conflict with other institutions with different assignments. The environment is given a secondary role in the hierarchy of decision-making by the government (Bryant & Bailey, 2005). The study shows that corruption and irregular dealings are factors that, to a large extent, have affected the compensation of Kenyans who have to give away their lands for the construction of large-scale infrastructure projects. During the process of payment, some lose out. Those who have no title to the lands they have called their own cannot be compensated. Some of the lands have also always been grabbed by powerful politicians or those with political connections. During the compensation process, local citizens realize that the lands they have been living in are not theirs. The method of payment also takes a long in several cases. This affects communities because livelihood is denied at this particular period. In many instances, the government of Kenya has been accused of neglecting the community. Government bureaucracies have left many people suffering. Most of it has left the local community members without anywhere to go and raise their complaints, and while at it, their visions of the future are constantly deemed and the green visions deemed as well. The government promises to pay the community, and for this reason, there is always minimal resistance. Once the land is acquired, the government makes an about-turn, and most community members lose out.

7 UNMAKING GREEN FUTURES? INSTITUTIONS AS LEGITIMIZATION TOOL

But now the reality is that you know what is there on paper and what happens (Senior Staff, KETRACO, Nairobi 11/ 2020).

This senior staff member who has worked for the government for slightly over two decades expresses his fears on the practicalities of institutions that are supposed to safeguard the environment. Being a trained environmental scientist, he contends that Kenya has a progressive legal and institutional framework but argues that the situation is quite different when you hit the ground. It is difficult for institutions to operate independently without political interference. This is even though the government and the people of Kenya have shown an awareness of the environmental challenges facing the country. The challenges manifest in several ways, such as increased drought and flooding, land degradation, and pollution. This has seen a lot of effort consistently put into ensuring the future is sustainable. In the following, I look at the institutions behind the visions of green development, how they are created, the roles they perform, and the possible challenges and complexities they face in materializing green futures. The study argues that the current institutional arrangements reflect a well-organized network by actors at different levels who already have a particular kind of future in mind. They would like to see this future reflected in Kenya's development discourse. The institutions, therefore, play a role in legitimizing such visions, which have little to do with the ordinary citizen. Since these green development concepts bring along finances, I attempt to show that institutional arrangements also assist in attracting funds from the donor.

7.1 Institutions in Practice

In Kenya, Green Futures are currently linked to the neoliberal ideologies of framings of green visions of development such as "Green growth," "GE," "Blue Economy," "Circular Economy," among other ideologies, and a win-win narrative. In a top-down organized government, these ideologies are mainstreamed in most ministries and translated into projects throughout the country. The onset of these ideologies as a new paradigm for developing institutions to ensure this is achieved steadily becomes vital in how projects and programs are planned and implemented. Kenya has in the past witnessed a reconstitution of the institutions that have been in existence. The laws and frameworks that have existed before have been constantly under review. As earlier pointed out, I attribute this to external pressure posed by emerging and continually changing development frames. As a result, outdated policies are dropped, and the new ones make more sense in the current situation. That being the case, there is a need for the

existing institutions and laws to be up to date for effective environmental management in line with what is termed *international best practices*. In the following, I discuss the practicalities of the institutions when it comes to implementing the green agendas, which is the primary purpose they are created. The study examines the complex situations institutions charged with making Kenya's green future face in delivering their mandates, how these complexities are created, and how they lead to unmaking Kenya's green futures. The role of institutions in dealing with conflictual situations cannot be underestimated. This is because individuals have different values and interests, and in such cases, the chances of conflicts arising are high. The study views institutions as serving particular interests, and their existence is not necessary to solve disputes. As I observe, environmental institutions in Kenya have not been able to do that. I draw attention to the interests of powerful actors as drivers of institutional existences and change (Spithoven, 2014).

Like many other countries, Kenya has legal and high-level policy recognition of the environment and conservation needs. It is the implementation that is proving to be of significant challenge. I observe that lack of political goodwill coupled with legal and institutional arrangements stand as the major factors (Le Quesne et al., 2010). Changing and adopting new policies by itself does not guarantee their implementation. There must be deliberate support from the highest political players, central to setting strategic direction, securing planning resources, advocating for environmental requirements with shareholders, and enforcing implementation.

> *We have all the necessary instruments to enforce (the law) but then ask*
> *any government official (the response is) that we have no resources*
> *(Project Officer, GAF, Nairobi 01/2021).*

The challenge is that most players, especially those within the private sector, have great connections to political powers. Some of them are politicians; therefore, they are not willing to implement some laws and policies that might interfere with their businesses. This is a massive conflict of interest. Passing very ambitious laws and policies at the high levels is one thing, and implementing them so that they are practically effective and following is an entirely different thing. At the implementation stage, challenging political realities are faced, especially from the affected areas. Conflicting situations also come out within the stakeholders implementing projects on the ground; for instance, some are rewarded because they can give kickbacks and not necessarily because they are doing environmental protection work (Le Quesne et al., 2010).

Important to note is that the institutions, legal and policy frameworks operate in a political environment with different interests. I show that, in theory, these institutions mean well and have the best intentions. This comes out well, especially during their formulation. However, politics and interests hinder their operations and service delivery in practice. This implies that the narrative of a win-win situation remains on paper as practices become more and more destructive to the environment. Therefore, the fate of the environment in Kenya remains uncertain. In an interview with a senior government staff member who spends most of his time conducting fieldwork assessing the impacts government-driven projects would have on the environment before implementation, his position also requires him to advise the government on the alternatives. The expert tells me that it is sometimes frustrating to work knowing that the government has already made decisions before the project. Therefore, they have very little to do, especially where their recommendations do not favor the government's position on the project. *"If you give your report as an environmentalist, you will be told to moderate the language, this is how the government works, and you will be told a decision has been made" (Senior Staff KETRACO, Nairobi 11/ 2020).* This situation is made complex because the government employs experts like him. According to him, the institutional language is quite complex. It is so that realities are not presented the way they are on the ground. The result of things that happen in reality is not captured in the legal reports. Experts who work in specific government institutions often do not have the freedom to paint an accurate picture of the reports they finally present. This is a strategy the government uses to legitimize projects and programs implemented. Decisions are made even before experts, including environmental experts, surveyors, and socio-economists, among others, are sent to the field. Regardless of their expert opinion, some government projects and programs go on.

In some cases, the experts are called in closed-door meetings with high government representatives to see how the interests of those in power can be taken care of. Since the final decision still lies with the high government officials, experts would present the scenarios and leave it at that. Like government officials and experts working with international organizations share a similar opinion.

> But unfortunately, every time there is a battle between the environment
> and the development environment seems to lose (Junior Expert, UNEP,
> Nairobi 01/2021).

The contest between the environment and development is not anything new in Kenya. Cases where the government's development agendas have had a severe impact on the environment, most long-term, have been there. Experts have drawn several conclusions, most of whom believe rightly that it is impossible to attain a win-win narrative as things stand at the moment. Large-scale infrastructure projects like the standard gauge railway[20] spur social and economic growth. The government of Kenya has constantly reminded Kenyans that it holds the promise of prospering and developing the people (Lesutis, 2021). This is the government's vision, and it is something else whether the Kenyan citizens share it. While the project has created laborers and some permanent staff jobs, the operations remain under the Chinese company for five years. They are expected to be training Kenyans who will take over after they leave during this period. The biggest winners in such projects are the Chinese government since the project is implemented on a loan basis which has to be paid back by the Kenyan taxpayers. Secondly, the political bureaucrats negotiate for the loans and have their shares of the money. In a recent interview, one of the candidates eyeing the presidency in the 2022 general election alleged that the Standard Gauge Railway project was inflated by more than ten times the cost initially supposed to be incurred. This was after the current regime came into power (Mburu, 2021a). The critical question would be why one would wait to reveal such information after nine years and only when one intends to run for political office. The study argues that this presents the fundamental reason why the government prefers megaprojects. While they materialize, a lot of corruption occurs, with huge sums of money ending up in the pockets of the politicians and their close families and allies. Finally, the politicians want to use the project to secure their re-election into political offices. The losers are the ordinary citizens, most of whom have been relocated and remain without jobs even as the large-scale project promises employment opportunities.

Unlike some politicians who can politely negotiate, others like the Kenya Deputy President exercise power with arrogance and complete disregard of the law and institutions that are in place. The same law he swore to abide by and protect. In an interview, a government staff narrated how his colleagues working for another government institution were told by an agitated deputy president that the project the government was implementing at that time was going to pass through the NNP despite expert advice on alternative routes "they were told by the deputy

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[20] Vision 2030 flagship project

president concerning the Standard Gauge Railway passing through NNP *mpende msipende hii project itapita hapa* (like it or not this project will pass here)."

This statement by the deputy president depicts the arrogance of a majority of the political elites in Kenya. Coming from the country's second command shows how powerful people can manipulate things and ensure their visions materialize for political reasons. Like most politicians, the deputy president's interest revolves around tangible things that can be seen and pointed out that they were able to achieve while serving in government. This kind of political narrative is what politicians use to ensure that the public remains aware that they serve their interests and easily get re-elected. It shows how institutions and laws in Kenya only matter to the extent that they do not stand in the way of those in high political offices. The politicians' interest is to have tangible projects to refer to when they seek re-election. According to an environmental expert who claims that it is tough to be an environmentalist in Kenya, ecological issues cannot be pointed to when seeking political offices.

In a bid to open up historically neglected areas like the northern part of Kenya and the arid and semi-arid lands, megaprojects are currently being implemented in these areas. EIAs are conducted to legitimize projects which have led to massive destruction of the environment, loss of livelihoods, and displacement of people. The magnitude of the destruction these projects have on the ecology is told by an expert who posits, "Imagine if I take an example of Kibwezi forest which is 11KM and our line passed through you want to clear trees in a gazetted forest of a width of 30M and a distance of 11 KM you will agree with me that that impact is massive" he continues and says that even as an institution they are supposed to pay but agrees that they cannot be able to pay for the opportunity costs foregone within this ecosystem.

The transmission lines the government of Kenya builds through KETRACO are donor-funded. This with a clear understanding of the implication it has on the environment. The government of Kenya must implement the projects because they have already received the funds. The environmental standards that projects are obliged to adhere to are the international standards, for example, WB and the International Finance Corporation Environmental Safeguard standards. These standards influence the measures that Kenya adopts in its environmental legal frameworks. These standards find their way into Kenya's legal and institutional framework, and in most cases, they remain superior. For this reason, several projects are continuously implemented without regard to the local laws.

In Kenya, there is an obsession with what is termed as international. However, the study argues that in most cases, some of the international standards only consider the broader elite visions without considering how this trickles down to the local population.

Visions about green futures have led to institutional multiplication, confusion, incoherence, and the emergence of uncoordinated policies and guidelines. Kenya's development agenda is spread and implemented through concerned ministries, which have representation in the devolved structures and in specific contexts where projects are based. However, these ministries have no autonomy over implementing a project because the government constitutes implementation and management committees or boards. At the county levels where such projects are based, county implementation or oversight committees emerge. Eventually, such institutional multiplication is visible in the policy and decision-making frameworks where power struggles often stall or compromise the projects. To date, numerous economic growth projects have either not kicked off or have somehow stalled or collapsed thanks to institutional fights and the lack of robustness to deal with the plurality and diversity of knowledge.

The priorities of the political class and the one exercising political powers compete with the overarching visions and the prescriptions of the Green development agenda. This is evident for the 'Big Four,' where some development activities tap into Green funds without necessarily implementing any environmental sustainability plan. Simply put, economic development in Kenya largely ignores green growth, although the concept becomes necessary across sectors because it legitimizes international partnerships and support. Kenya still grapples with the problem of governance, which raises concerns over whether the country can deliver on the Green visions agenda. Moreover, successive regimes have focused on capitalist accumulation, whether these efforts mean massive industrial growth, investment in non-renewable energy, or leasing out agricultural land to multinational corporations. The hunger for economic growth cannot keep pace with green aspirations – at least not at present.

7.1.1 NEMA, a watchdog or tool for legitimacy?

The development of institutional and legal frameworks is not only a Kenyan government affair. Both bilateral and multilateral organizations support this process. It dates back to when integrating environmental concerns into project portfolios, including through financial commitments to the Global Environment Facility (GEF), was a requirement for organizations, as seen in the 1992 UN Conference on Environment and Development and Brundtland Commission. Most organizations like DANIDA have answered this call in their activities in Kenya. Kenya being a party to the UN conventions, must ratify them. The multilateral environmental agreements such as Rio and the Stockholm Conventions are vital since they are legal documents in their own right. They also produce a trail of legislative and administrative initiatives among the parties to the conventions and shape environmental development assistance.[21] This is where Kenya finds itself at the moment.

NEMA's sole responsibility is to investigate, monitor, and account for the level of compliance by different establishments. It does this on climate change matters on behalf of the National Climate Change Council. There exist fines that are imposed on establishments that, in a way, fail to comply with the set standards. Officers who withhold or give false information to NEMA also risk being jailed when this is proven. However, the criteria required to establish liability are very lenient. Implementing provisions of EMCA and other minor legislations is the responsibility of NEMA. Additionally, NEMA has a duty in reviewing and issuing licenses to those who plan to change the way they utilize the land (Barczewski, 2013; Odhiambo, 2016). What happens in situations where NEMA fails to take all the environmental considerations before allowing projects to commence, especially large-scale projects detrimental to the environment initiated and implemented by the executive?

NEMA works with Lead Experts who are trusted to conduct environmental and social impact assessments. These experts are consultants whose main plan is to do business, make money, and not necessarily protect the environment. They will prepare the report when at the back of their mind they already know that it must go through for the project to come to effect. The detrimental aspects of the environment are shielded by how they come up with suggestions on mitigation measures. In as much as there is a code of conduct and practices that bind the experts

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[21] Danish Institute for International Studies (2013) The role of development assistance in the establishment of a legal and institutional framework for international and national environmental governance.

to ensure that they do a good job, such as being the one responsible for conducting the work on behalf of the project proponent and guiding them throughout the preparation and implementation of the environmental management plan, the study argues that this is still far from being realized.

> *The expressway from Westlands to Jomo Kenyatta International Airport met a lot of resistance, and there are very good reasons for that. Even the Standard Gauge Railway met a lot of resistance for excellent environmental reasons, but still, they went through. NEMA sued the EIA report, but people rejected it based on lack of consultation…because it is just whitewashing. At some point, we just saw construction going on (Junior Expert, UNEP, Nairobi, 01/2021).*

Before commencing construction of the Nairobi expressway, there were several debates on the social and environmental impacts the project. Concern was raised on the potential impact of the project on Nairobi's Uhuru Park and other open spaces that belong to the public and the expressway's inaccessibility to most Nairobi residents. There is a proposed toll for motorists who will use the road.

Figure 11 A section in Westlands of the Nairobi expressway under construction. Photo: A.Ogolla 2021

In the National Assembly, Environment and National Resources Committee said the project lacked the mandatory Environment Impact Assessment (EIA[22]) report and demanded the construction be halted until it complied with all the required legal requirements. They argue that rolling out the project without the crucial documents posed severe adverse effects on the environment. They are using an initial report which had nothing to do with the modified project that President Kenyatta rolled out. The committee also observed that adequate public participation had not been conducted despite being a requirement under the law. The study notes that is a common trend on the mega infrastructure projects currently implemented by the executive wing of the government. Then the question is to what extent NEMA is an institution able to regulate and act in the public's interest. This is a clear example that most projects are implemented, and their approvals by NEMA only serve to legitimize the projects. This is because the projects are designed and rolled out and sometimes modified when the legal requirements are implemented or put in place.

The study argues that NEMA is an institution created through an act of parliament, making it a public institution that should have the public interests as its priority. I, however, note that this has not always been the case in several ways. The executive arm of the government has used it to legitimize several actions, including the large-scale infrastructure projects that are more political than development. This works in a way that it has proved to be hard to challenge most of the activities the government implements, which the public never find beneficial. NEMA, a government agency, finds itself in a peculiar position. It is supposed to be an environmental steward, protecting and considering all ecological interests that are usually against the government's interests, which mandates spearhead development programs. Bryant and Bailey argue that several third-world countries responded to the intensifying environmental crisis within their borders by coming up with ecological departments and agencies dedicated to promoting conservation of the environment (Bryant & Bailey, 2005). However, I depart from this argument and note that in the recent past, such departments have been created by the governments to legitimize their development projects and to show that indeed they are environment compliant as most donor institutions are ready to fund 'green projects.'

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[22] EIA is the process of identifying, predicting, evaluating and mitigating the biophysical, social, and other relevant effects of development proposals prior to major decisions being taken and commitments made" (Principles of EIA best practice, January, 2009).

In a recent study, Nyumba argues that the construction and operation of large-scale infrastructure, especially the railways, have led to the destruction of critical ecosystems. Soil erosion, destruction of natural habitats, and land degradation have increased. In addition to this, the movement of wildlife and water bodies has also been affected despite an EIA of the international standard being conducted (T. Nyumba, 2021). In a meeting with a team of stakeholders, the cabinet secretary for Wildlife and Tourism admitted that infrastructure developments inside the Nairobi National Park were a terrible mistake by the government. It would never have happened if he had been in charge the time. This admission reveals that some actors within government do not act for the common good, but personal interests and greed guide their actions. In a newspaper article published in the Daily Nation on May 1, 2020, *Akshay Vishwanath, an environmentalist, opines that a*s a way forward, it is only wise that the government re-starts the process of developing the management plan, working with stakeholders from the very beginning, creating a shared understanding of the vision for the park, relying on solid science, allowing for the extensive feedback, and recommendations thereof adequately considered and incorporated into a draft plan. In my view, such advice has been given to the government actors in the past by other experts and actors of goodwill but has continuously been disregarded by those in power at the moment. The government finds it easy to challenge such arguments by referencing NEMA as the institution charged with coordinating environmental activities in the country. With an EIA approved by NEMA, it is impossible to challenge the decisions further. Looking at the institution, the appointments of top officials such as the director-general, other directors, and members of boards are usually very political. They are presidential appointees; thus, their loyalty to the government and not the public. This is echoed by an expert who works at UNEP in Nairobi; he argues that NEMA as an institution is toothless because those who control it sit outside the institution. The senior officials find themselves in complex situations because if they are not "cooperative," they might lose their jobs.

> *I can't start blaming NEMA because if a particular manager or director*
> *doesn't comply, he is demoted or transferred to another area (Junior*
> *Expert, UNEP, Nairobi 01/2021).*

Most of the people who are mandated to audit the suitability of these projects are unable to stop government projects like large-scale infrastructural projects. Still, they will instead find a way of making sure that they are approved. A phone call from a senior government official like the president, deputy president, or cabinet secretary can alter the designs of the projects. The

political interference in such institutions points to how the government implements its visions without regard to the general vision of the public. These government visions find legitimization through NEMA. In an informal conversation with a former staff in government, he narrated to me while working as a junior surveyor. His boss, the senior surveyor, was called by the cabinet secretary for the energy ministry for a meeting. They went to the high-level meeting, and according to him, power lines were supposed to pass through land owned by the president, and seemingly the president did not agree to this. Since this was a project with a lot of public interest, the surveyor was asked if there were an alternative path the power line would pass. The surveyor presented alternative routes and its implication and left it since he is not the final decision-maker. This is not always the case when such power lines pass in the lands of other citizens; you are relocated and not allowed to negotiate. This shows the way power is used to unmaterialized common visions while materializing visions of a few in high-ranking government positions.

The EIA field has been rapidly evolving worldwide; however, their practices; differ broadly across countries. So many African countries have in the past decade introduced EIA regulations because of initiatives such as the African Ministerial Conference on Environment that tasked ministers of the environment to reinforce EIAs, a stakeholder meeting of EIA experts held in Nairobi in 1998, and initiatives of the Pan-African Initiative for Capacity Development and Linkages for EIA in Africa. Despite these, the study argues that the most significant challenge is that experts are not well vast on these matters and those opposed think that there is a possibility EIAs may hinder the growth of economies (Li, 2008).

The way EIA experts relate with the project owner in Kenya is seen as compromising the quality of the EIA itself. This is because it is the responsibility of the project owner to hire a consultant who is the expert to conduct the study. Effectively the experts have the motivation because of the monetary value and will do their best to ensure the license is allocated. This, in return, compromises the quality of study and recommendations made. Therefore, the social and environmental costs of such projects are not well captured because when such is done, it means either that the report doesn't go through or the project proponent has to redesign the project to meet the required standards. This is a long process and is not in the economic interest of the project owner and therefore would rather pay the expert costs and direct them to 'manipulate' the report to ensure it goes through (Barczewski, 2013; Li, 2008). One key concern is that the

spread of EIAs into developing countries, including Kenya, primarily is because of external influences (Li, 2008).

> *Whether it was given by a corrupt official remains a NEMA document. It is not that official that will be put into account; no, it is the organization. It is the body, NEMA. So, you find that sometimes they give approvals for building construction and staff. However, it is totally against their principles (Project Officer, GAF, Nairobi 01/2021).*

Many stakeholders participate in large-scale projects of the nature Kenya is implementing (railways, roads, dams, electricity transmission lines, among others). This has a high likelihood of triggering impacts economically, socially, and environmentally by the projects and triggering conflicts. Therefore, EIAs safeguard compliance with the applicable legal provisions and constitute a practical tool to improve public participation cooperation at the international level and enhance the ability to get justice in the environment (Makarenko, 2012).

7.1.2   National Environmental Complaints Committee

The environment's challenges can be linked to the policies driving the economy and politics. Historically the colonial and post-colonial policies adopted by the government of Kenya promoted neo-colonial development, which led to the marginalization of some regions and people and the degradation of the environment (Fox, 1988).

This section looks at why the National Environment Complaints Committee (NECC) exists and their ability to implement their mandate, considering that the factors that hinder them from effectively discharging their mandates are intentionally materialized for specific reasons.

Conflicts relating to the environment seem to be on the increase. When those who seek change challenge those who are the beneficiaries of the status quo, conflicts are bound to rise. Disagreements are bound to occur when those affected have differing perspectives on defining an environmental challenge. Conflict can also come about when different interests come to play in allocating a resource as they essentially do in diverse societies. Environmental conflicts are those that are a result of environmental degradation. What complicates the scene of several grounds of conflict, ecological decision making happens at the intersection of science, politics, and economics, each with its criteria for distributing resources (Lach, 1996).

NECC as an institution provides alternative dispute resolutions on matters relating to the environment in Kenya. It must receive complaints from public members on issues affecting the environment as an institution. As I note, many of the complaints arise from economic activities in different parts of the country and other sectors of the economy. This emanates from the fact that many industry players are unwilling to comply and look at their activities' implications on the environment. This was brought out from an in-depth interview with a research officer at NECC.

> *People carry out developments without first carrying out EIA. They do not comply with the conditions of the licenses of EIA, so people come to complain that you know, such and such an industry is not adhering to the conditions of the license that was issued to them (Research Officer, NECC, Nairobi 11/2020).*

Similar sentiments were reported in national newspapers where officers from NEMA have raised similar issues of non-compliance. *We have had several cases of factories operating and house constructions done without proper clearance from authorities.* NECC is expected to receive and handle complaints touching the current event and bear significant implications for the environment's future. These include forestry, water, charcoal burning, sand harvesting, waste management, and human-wildlife conflict. The study argues that NECC does not have the human and financial capacity to handle all these complaints and find solutions that ensure the green futures as envisioned are achieved. When they have complaints raised, they are supposed to conduct an investigation. They depend on other agencies as well who have different mandates. With the devolved system of governance, NECC also has to work with counties depending on which county a complaint has been raised. The challenge I observe is that this makes it even much more complicated because of different primarily political interests. The existence of many institutions and agencies to help address the complaints raised again goes back to the intentional lack of clarity so that it is almost impossible to understand who is responsible.

Once NECC does its investigations on the complaints either raised by the public or on investigations that they initiate by themselves, they write a report and make recommendations to the cabinet secretary of the environment. NECC does not do enforcement work, and he decided to take action in cases where the environment is harmed; therefore, it rests with the cabinet secretary. The president appoints the cabinet secretary, and the national assembly only approves. In this regard, the person holding this position must be politically correct to keep their

job. Therefore, it is naive to think that matters touching the political elites will be dealt with. Even with NECC's role strengthened by EMCA 1999 to handle environmental issues robustly, I argue that this will stay on the paper with no minimum actions to follow. This challenge is further exacerbated with the existence of the Climate Change Act of 2016, which has provisions that allow the Kenyan public to sue entities that deal a blow to the efforts to reduce the impacts of climate change. Therefore, the public is unaware of which way to direct their complaints. The Climate Change Act of 2016 is the same one that established the National Climate Change Council with powers to impose obligations of climate change on the private sector (Odhiambo, 2016).

Complaints from public members arise because they are either directly or indirectly affected by specific economic activities in their day-to-day living areas. Health matters arising from the right to a clean and healthy environment as envisioned in the constitution are of great importance to the public. However, to the industry players, what is important to them is that economic activities continue taking place. They would like to take environmental consideration in their actions, but this is not an easy balance from expert interviews. This would be okay if they had their way without any interference from proponents of a healthy environmental future. In this regard, the two visions of economic growth in a clean and healthy environment are challenging to achieve at the moment.

The work of NECC is further blinded by NEMA, which is the institution that the public is aware of. Several complaints are directed to NEMA. However, the study argues that the effectiveness of their actions after receiving complaints is questionable. Several newspaper headlines report about the institution's warnings after receiving complaints from public members, i.e., the Standard newspaper headline read 'NEMA warns Kajiado firms over pollution' (Githaiga, 2018). This article reported that NEMA warned a factory that was due to start its construction against polluting the environment, noting that it ought to have all the documents required from relevant government agencies. This resulted from a dispute between a manufacturing company and a housing developer. The company complained in a letter directly to NEMA and not the NECC. This is why the study argues that this lack of clarity and duplication of roles makes it very hard to attain the environmental visions in Kenya.

7.1.3 Interplay between institutions and implementation

Green futures in Kenya link so much to climate change mitigation and adaptation. Several interventions put in place strive to sort out climate change-related challenges. Many experts believe that by addressing these challenges through adaptation and mitigation, you move closer to materializing the collective green visions in Kenya. While this is true for many climate change experts, others believe that climate change practitioners are the greatest threat to achieving green visions. They argue that global environmental challenges have everything to do with carbon emissions. According to senior staff at the Danish Royal Embassy, actors working on climate change-related issues have narrowed down the challenges to revolve around climate change. This, in my observation, has to do with the silent competition among the actors pushing various institutional and donor agendas in the country and the struggle for social relevance.

Finances play an essential role regarding the green futures in Kenya. For this reason, I find it necessary to see how the institutions are arranged right from the level of the presidency. I also look at which institution receives the money and from where. This is because different International organizations prefer to channel their funds to specific institutions within government while others do this through other organizations. One would ask why this is the case. Important to note is that particular donors and government institutions work specifically on specific aspects to achieve a collective green vision. Odhengo et al. (2019) emphasized climate finance. They argue that climate finance is an essential factor needed to achieve Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as published under the 2015 Paris Agreement and the African Union Agenda 2063. Therefore, Kenya should establish a solid financial mechanism that supports mitigation and adaptation measures through initiatives, systems, and programs (Odhengo et al., 2019). It is essential to point out that GESIP should support a globally competitive low-carbon development path.

Since the country's green future is pegged mainly on its ability to adopt a growth path that is low in carbon, the government has the National Climate Change Council (NCCC), which is headed by the president and established under the Climate Change Act. The aim is to provide an effective national climate change coordination mechanism encompassing overseeing Climate Change Funds and identifying national priorities. This great responsibility is seen as an opportunity to put climate finance in the president's office (Odhengo et al., 2019).

However, the study argues that putting such a responsibility at the president's office serves a more profound function. When you look at the government growth plan, the aim has been infrastructure development. Achieving the green agenda has stood in the form of infrastructural development in several ways. There is a need to ensure that the government has this in check. The government recognizes and knows how much of an influence environmental concerns have specifically regarding the country's development.

> *It is not that the president is committed to synchronizing policies...to accord such responsibilities to the highest level means there is the control between environment and development (Environmental lawyer, Nairobi 11/2020).*

According to a lawyer who has been working with CSOs in Nairobi, putting responsibilities at the office of the president implies that the government is keen to exercise control and be able to manage both the environment and development affairs. Since so much money is received from external funding institutions, the management from the top is even more necessary. This also plays a legitimate role as it shows the country's level of commitment to matters of environment and climate change. A CSO representative, however, departs from this view and notes;

> *We felt that climate change was beyond all these ministries and sectors. So it needed to have a very strong, maybe authority that was going to deal with it specifically (Staff, SUSWATCH, Nairobi 12/2020).*

He mentions that it is essential to understand politics that relate to the environment and narrates the historical course of the development of climate change policies. He reminds me that climate change issues were initially at the prime minister's office during the grand coalition government until 2013. He points out that when the environmental law was formulated in Kenya (EMCA 1999), there was no mention of climate change. This is because climate change has not become an international plan. "Because if you look at the act of 1999, there is no mention of climate change, because, by that time, it was being formulated that climate change is not an international plan. It was just literally about environmental conservation, environmental enforcement," he argues. The impression I get is that there was a push and pull on which government institution should be responsible. Since this was not easy to determine, the responsibility was pushed to the president's office.

The study argues that this reorganization creates order and disorder in the green visions; it includes and excludes actors in the process. Two complementary roles should be executed by

agencies involved in managing climate finance in Kenya. Finance management brings together several agencies under the National Treasury and a supportive role that ensures technical and policy management support under the MoEF through the Climate Change Directorate. In some cases, these roles overlap and are complementary, thus providing greater integration and coordination of delivery in institutions. Other ministries and sectors with different responsibilities include the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, responsible for policy. In contrast, others such as the Ministry of Energy, Ministry for Education Science and Technology, and Ministry of Agriculture are responsible for technology. They provide climate finance in Kenya with opportunities for engagement with various stakeholders and seizing multiple opportunities by establishing integrated climate finance mechanisms (Odhengo et al., 2019).

Executive order number one of 2018 created the Ministry of Environment and Forestry. Its vision is *"A Clean, healthy, safe and sustainably managed Environment and Forestry Resources''*. This ministry has changed names over the years. The mandate is to give climate change-related technical advice and services to the National Treasury, National Climate Change Council (NCCC), and the Technical Advisory Committee. This is done to ensure conservation and management of natural resources and the environment for current and future generations.

Additionally, the Ministry also coordinates how the country responds to climate change. It has various institutions and departments that assist in responses related to climate change. The Ministry also acts as a national central point for the UNFCCC. The Inter-Ministerial Climate Finance Technical Advisory Committee established under the Ministry of Environment and Forestry works with the climate finance mechanism (Climate Change Fund) to provide climate finance advice to the government and NCCC. Its representatives include the Council of Governors (C.O.G), line ministries, academia, civil society, and the private sector. The committee's role may overlap with that of the Treasury's Climate Finance Unit, and as such, it needs to build closer synergies and complementarity (Odhengo et al., 2019).

Under the Climate Change Directorate (CCD), the Ministry of Environment and Forestry is responsible for the overall implementation and coordination of the NCCAP 2018–2022. These involve partners coordinating and reporting the implementation of climate actions. According to the Climate Change Act 2016, CCD is responsible for offering various ministries and county governments analytical support on climate change-related issues and technical assistance to county governments. Additionally, it has a role of coordinating the country's compliance to international obligations such as developing national communications and updates on biennial

reports and Kenya's GHG inventory, reporting on NDCs, and representing the country in international negotiations. It also coordinates the execution of gender and intergenerational plans such as national and county government youth climate programs, action plans related to climate finance, optimizing the country's opportunities to mobilize climate finance, and identifying mechanisms requiring low-carbon development (Odhengo et al., 2019).

The chief government agency that regulates and coordinates environmental protection is NEMA. Apart from the legislative and administrative functions, NEMA also implements projects and programs geared towards conserving and restoring the environment. As an institution, it has access to the Adaptation Fund and the Green Climate Fund by developing proposals that meet their standards (UNDP, 2019).

Within NEMA, the climate change coordinator is responsible for all activities relating to climate change except the financial aspect, which lies with the National Treasury. The roles include mainstreaming climate change in all environmental assessments and collaborating with other actors as they are the functions spelled out in the climate change act. It is established under MoEF, within which new policies, programs, and plans are legally required to go through the Strategic Environmental Assessment process (SEA) before they are implemented. This is meant to integrate environmental protection measures into the plans, programs, or policies before rolling out. SEA broadly documents essential concerns of the environment to particular projects (Musyoka & Field, 2018).

SEA is created against the backdrop that it is better to prevent the environment from degrading, and this is why it aims to incorporate environmental aspects at the planning stages. The study argues that there has been a lack of implementation and that follow-up processes are usually ineffective. This is because of minimal political will. I observe a disconnect between what the politicians say and how the institutions charged with environmental management responsibility respond. As a result, development programs well-intentioned by the donor organization end up, especially on capacity-building issues. The citizens are constantly in the government of uncertainty, which means that the living conditions hardly improve as it is framed. I note that laws and legal frameworks relating to the environment are abundant, but the implementation aspect has remained a mirage.

7.2   Obscuring Green Futures

Concerns about the environment have increasingly become a matter of interest by the Kenyan population. However, the dynamic nature of the environment has left a gap when it comes to safeguarding the environment. In this section, I show how environmental issues are intentionally made unclear by several institutions with duplication of roles. In this way, the ordinary Kenyan citizen is unaware of which institution deals with particular matters. Some institutions and experts also do not play some responsibilities since it is not their mandate. While they think it is the mandate of the other institution, the other one also believes that it is not their mandate. This has been a prevalent scenario among the institutions in Kenya.

The complex institutional structures involved in visions of green development include international and non-governmental organizations, academic institutions, government departments, private sector entities. These actors work globally across economic, environmental, and social domains at national and regional levels. This complexity has grown over time with the proliferation of political governments, financing and governance mechanisms, multilateral agreements, and institutions initiated to further the transition to a GE. For effective planning of GE, an understanding of this difficulty and a recognition that there is no single blueprint for a GE transition. Most importantly, institutional and governance capacity should be developed in each country to enable the formulation and implementation of various policy reforms associated with green visions.

This serves to ensure that the status quo remains. The study argues that the narrative of achieving growth while at the same time harmonizing ecological aspects intentionally remains a mirage. Creating several institutions, frameworks, and laws very well ensures that nothing stays clear to the Kenyan public. This legitimizes the executive's actions towards the environment as it carries on with its growth plan. This is because several citizens are unaware of which institution should play the responsibility to realize the green vision. As a result, environmental management remains a much more complicated issue.

Additionally, the study argues that as time goes by, the public loses hope in the institutions as they clearly understand that the executive muzzles them. The growth plan of the executive carries the day. For this reason, the win-win narrative on paper remains just on paper, but in practice, it is not easily achieved. However, the executive successfully states that it can achieve

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both development and its green ambitions. The high number of institutions that have been created need finances to run effectively.

7.2.1 Structural ambiguity in the lens of green finances

In the following, I aim to address the question of how green futures funds are coordinated and the circumstances that make such coordination difficult. I look at the government agencies responsible for the green funds and how this flows. I point out the gaps and overlaps that exist. The gap existing plays a significant role towards achieving a green future as envisioned difficult. I seek to determine if some actors design this for their visions and interests.

The National Treasury is a government body charged with coordinating climate finance, including the Green Climate Fund (GCF)[23] and the Climate Investment Funds (CIF)[24]. It, therefore, plays a crucial role in providing financial management on matters related to green futures within the climate change framework.

It also includes a specialized Climate Finance Unit responsible for coordination. On the other hand, NEMA is the National Designated authority for the Adaptation Fund. The Climate Change Directorate (CCD), MoEF, is responsible for coordinating all climate change activities in the country. Additionally, the establishment of Climate Change Units in all ministries and counties is mandated under the 2016 Climate Change Act to mainstream climate change activities within planning and budgeting. To facilitate coordination between and within the government, civil society, and development partners, sector coordination working groups and informal donors have been established. These structures aim to avoid duplication in the use of climate finance by funding sources and various actors, thus ensuring transparency and the efficient use of resources (Dzebo et al., 2020).

An interview with the climate change coordinator at NEMA painted a picture of institutions that have the same responsibilities broken down to smaller units aimed at proper coordination but in the real sense makes things much unclear. For example, as constituted by EMCA, NEMA is a coordinating and supervisory body. How then again does it become in charge of the Adaptation Fund, and likewise how effective is it when it comes to the implementation of

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[23] the world's largest dedicated multilateral climate fund and the main multilateral financing mechanism to support developing countries in achieving a reduction of their greenhouse gas emissions and an enhancement of their ability to respond to climate change (Climate Funds Update, 2015).

[24] trust fund that seeks to accelerate climate action by empowering transformations in clean technology, energy access, climate resilience, and sustainable forests in developing and middle-income countries (World Bank, 2008).

projects that it has been implementing in the country. It remains unclear that while they are undertaking duties that go beyond their mandate, what then is the role of the other institutions that are supposed to be implementing those particular roles, and what happens to the functions that NEMA itself should be implementing? The implication this has on the vision of attaining ecological growth cannot be underestimated. The striking thing is that most of the duties are allocated, but finances are not necessarily assigned to those functions.

The climate change coordinator at NEMA is in charge of all the climate change activities in the country delegated to the authority through the climate change policy except the funding aspect. *"so I coordinate the roles that have been assigned to NEMA except the funding mechanisms"* she says. The implication of not being in a position to have control over funds is that it is dependent on another agency to facilitate the implementation of the green vision that NEMA might have at a particular time. The difference in interests among actors will also prioritize where money is allocated each specific time.

The study argues that whereas these structures aim to avoid duplication in how climate funds are used, they fall short of addressing the entire funds associated with Kenya's green visions and green development. This is highlighted by the view of a senior staff at DANIDA who argues that climate change practitioners narrow environmental problems to only climate change issues.

> *The big challenge I see is that climate actors tend to imagine that a low carbon which is just a climate change issue - It doesn't address biodiversity. It doesn't address resource efficiency. Yes. It doesn't address pollution. Yet those elements can undermine development (Senior Staff, DANIDA, Nairobi 07/2019).*

The study argues that this happens due to a lack of coherent understanding of what green futures mean to everyone. The issue about climate change funds and climate change the study argues that climate change practitioners' vision is influenced at the global stage. Some experts say that the most significant contributor to this structural ambiguity is that actors have failed to have a chance to reflect on what they are addressing. Referring to it as an animal, one actor said, "for me what I see is as the big challenge is that we have not had a chance to have an aerial view of what this animal it" he argues that every actor approaches green futures from their specific sectors after which they describe it from where they are coming from.

> *And for me, the challenge then is more about elevating ourselves to a place where we can see it for what it is, not just what I see. And that for*

me is really what is the big challenge - is how do you get people to step

out of their sectors and elevate themselves to a place where we have a

shared view of the animal (Senior Staff, DANIDA, Nairobi 07/2019).

Specifically, the Climate Change Act mandates coordination of climate finance flow and mainstream at the national and county level through establishing public and private funds by the National Climate Change Fund. This fund is managed by the Climate Change Council, chaired by the head of government under the National Treasury. Budgeting of this fund requires government ministries and departments to set aside a proportion for climate change activities. The national designated authority ensures that multilateral sources flow to the accredited entities, accessing and disseminating them. Implementing agencies and executing entities such as consultancies, civil society organizations, and private sector actors receive funds from bilateral sources and channel them to projects (Dzebo et al., 2020).

7.2.2 Devolving green finances and the challenges

For so many years, Kenyans yearned for a new constitution. It was clear that Kenyans wanted a different way of governing the country for many reasons. One and the primary reason was that Kenyans were not satisfied with the central system of government, which majorly excluded the locals from government affairs, which led to regional imbalances, especially when it came to resource allocation. For this reason, the country promulgated the 2010 constitution with its central focus as the devolved[25] system of government consisting of forty-seven county governments and one national government. The 2013 general elections saw the commencement of implementing the devolved system of government. The forty-seven county governments did not start at the same level because they were at different stages of development which I attribute to the old system of government where resources remained in the hands of the elites and were characterized by many injustices. Counties like Nakuru, Mombasa, and Nairobi were already developed for public utilities, infrastructure, and employment and investment opportunities. Therefore, for other counties disadvantaged on these fronts, there is a need for extra effort to be put in. Another challenge posed is that while some counties are small in size and population, others are big and have many people. Some counties are naturally endowed with natural resources, better climatic conditions, rich agricultural land, while others are not. With this background, it is clear that some county governments had a head start with the devolved system

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[25] The transfer of decision making and implementation powers, functions, responsibilities and resources to legally constituted and popularly elected local governments known as counties.

of government than the others. Because of these differences, those who framed the constitution made provisions to ensure counties were at the same level. They did this by putting requirements for conditional grants to counties by the national government and the share of nationally raised revenue between the national government and the county governments in addition to the Equalization Fund (Ngigi, 2019; Wanyande & Mboya, 2013). With the inclusion of the Equalization fund in the constitution, Wanyande and Mboya (2013) observe that this is an admission that there were regions in the country that were marginalized in terms of development. Therefore, there was a need to remedy the situation. The connections between the county and national governments are molded by how Kenya's devolution is defined constitutionally as a cooperative devolved governance system. County and national government levels are separate and have a symbiotic relationship whereby intergovernmental relations are conducted through cooperation and consultation. The county and national governments are different in that each makes their own decisions without the other interfering in those decisions. Their symbiotic relationship comes to play in cases where they have standard and shared responsibilities and, therefore, should consult and support each other and exchange information (Bellali et al., 2018).

In general, Kenya faces a challenge with inefficiency in the many bureaucratic processes. Transparency and accountability are lacking in many angles, and there is minimal community participation in local development. The involvement of citizens in the governance process is relatively low because citizens are not aware of the duties and responsibilities and lack the skills and know-how on how to execute their responsibilities. This can be attributed to the centralized system of government that was in place before decentralization which brought about the devolved system of government. Regarding the green futures fund, I attempt to find out if similar challenges still exist or whether the devolved system of government has cured them. I also look at the new challenges that may have been presented by this system of government (Khaunya et al., 2015; Ngigi, 2019).

In government processes, the transition from pilot to project phase has been made easier through the inclusion aspect of community participation in which a lot of focus has been placed. However, the greatest challenge is integrating climate information into the design of investments and the sustainability of these investments by institutions to ensure climate information gives the most vulnerable benefit. No research has been conducted to show the strategies used by County Climate Change Funds (CCCF) to measure resilience. Establishing

adequate climate finance through institutional strengthening is crucial because it enables effective engagement in climate resilience among institutions. In Arid and Semi-Arid Lands (ASALs)[26], limitations have been identified in formal planning systems. This is evident because there is a difference between community and government planning. Traditional community-based institutions are absent and hardly consulted in the legal planning process. The challenge comes in because the government lacks a grasp on community planning processes. Complaints have been raised regarding the procurement processes and delivery of investments perceived as slow, with little community oversight. Climate information support is necessary because climate information is also not adequately integrated into government planning, and communities may not develop proposals aligned to government systems and structures. Besides, the ability of sub-national governments to support local priorities, especially within the annual budget cycle, is limited by budget guidelines that have been set centrally (Odhengo et al., 2019).

The disjointed manner in which climate change projects are implemented at county levels plays out when some projects, financed mainly by development partners, sidestep county structures. Some donor-driven projects and programs have been on the rise over the years, working directly with civil society or groups at the community level. Therefore, they do not align their work with the priorities of the county governments. On the other hand, some donors finance national institutions directly through the treasury to implement programs directly at the county level. As a result, several programs that seek to tackle climate change issues set up parallel structures to address the apparent lack of capacity and accountability at the county level. These parallel structures often take the form of project coordination (Bellali et al., 2018).

Because of the government's concern and creating these institutions, donor-sponsored projects and programs have increased over the years. The major ones are in the development field but with a sustainability angle. The study argues that the level of concern by the government does not just happen because of the degradation observed over the years but is a push by the external actors. They also are interested in implementing specific projects and programs in different sectors and parts of the country. Some of the institutions and frameworks are a result of global interests. For example, the NCCC, chaired by the head of government, is very strategic in providing an overarching national climate change coordination mechanism. By putting this responsibility to the president, the bearer of the highest political office in the land. It is meant to show political goodwill and raise green funds' profile. This way, the donor confidence is

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[26] Consists of highly vulnerable farmers and pastoralists

boosted and the amount released is similarly huge. However, the president is not interested in these issues and focuses on other aspects of development like the 'Big Four' and recently the 'Building Bridges Initiative.'[27] As mandated by the Climate Change Act, the establishment of the National Climate Fund will be signed off once the Climate Change Council chaired by the head of government meets (Dzebo et al., 2020).

What makes it challenging to achieve the visions at the county level is that the national government still holds money at the national level. Financially the counties have been characterized by delays in the disbursement of funds from the national government. This is shown in the Star (2020). It highlighted that the National Treasury was on the spot for holding some 78 billion Kenyan shillings that were meant to be released to the counties, making operations very difficult. A similar report was highlighted by the Standard Media Newspaper report in 2017, which highlighted that the operations at the county governments were soon going to be brought to a halt because the Treasury still at that time was holding some 50 billion Kenyan shillings, which was part of KSh 329 billion permitted by the National Assembly for distribution to counties. However, in the Nation newspaper media report (2021), the finance cabinet secretary accused the counties of not utilizing what was already released to them. Yet, they keep asking for more "There are situations in which county governments do not utilize resources given to them. Others have more than Sh3 billion in their accounts but keep asking for additional resources. It is the responsibility of the National Treasury to enforce good financial management," the counties affected. The ones noted to be still holding some money that ought to have been utilized will be left out when funds are disbursed, the cabinet secretary noted (Mburu, 2021b; Ngigi, 2019; Otieno, 2020; Sunday, 2017).

Some responsibilities, such as those of achieving green visions at the county levels, are not financed by the annual budgets; mainstreaming climate change in the counties is one such example (Bellali et al., 2018). This, in essence, makes the employees who are already overstretched with other responsibilities in the counties not have the needed motivation. The law devolved several functions to the county. Still, the counties that are supposed to be implementing the functions do not have the money, so there is a continuous circle of conversations. Counties, for example, can hardly come up with innovative agricultural practices to boost food production.

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[27] An initiative by the president and former prime minister to amend the 2010 constitution

To summarise, the chapter argues that institutions such as NEMA and NECC have been very strategic from their formation and how top officials are appointed. This enables the institutions to be used by politicians and other powerful actors to find legitimacy in their development visions. The complexities further exacerbate this institution's operation, with several duplicated roles. The devolved system makes the unclear circumstances in which the institutions operate complex of government that places some functions to the county governments.

8   CONCLUSION

The following section answers the questions raised in the introduction of this dissertation. It discusses the findings of green visions of development in Kenya, traveling models, and the politics around creating institutions. Specifically, the section answers the following two questions; First, how are the findings connected to the more extensive debate on green futures and ideas of green futures as traveling models of development and secondly, what can we learn from this dissertation about traveling models and how it impacts development practices in general, not only in Kenya?

The study's overall aim was to investigate the green development concepts and how these concepts are used in making or unmaking Kenya's green futures. Having noted that green development concepts have been and continue to be influential in how development projects and programs are designed and implemented in Kenya, the study investigated whether it is possible to achieve a state of balance between development and environment using the Political Ecology framework. Further, the study looked at how these concepts have led to the creation of institutions, which the study argues play a legitimacy role in the development plan. Specifically, the study addressed three main objectives;

First, the study aimed to understand how green development concepts work in Kenya. In doing this, the study looked at the actors involved in making these ideas travel and their reasons for doing this. The findings indicate that actors, their networks, and their power are fundamental in how ideas travel, how quickly they travel, and how they are taken up. This has very little to do with whether the ideas are helpful or not to the local communities. Secondly, the study sought to determine whose green visions materialize and whose green visions do not materialize. This second objective cross-examined the interplay between actors' visions to discover the dominant visions. Specifically, the study was concerned with the way actors framed and convinced other actors about their visions from the global level until they were contextualized and put into practice in Kenya and how this changes by the time they hit the ground. Thirdly, the study aimed to examine how legal institutions are used to legitimize alternative growth pathways by the government. With a realization that several institutions have been created in the past, the interest of the study was to examine the reason why despite various institutions being in place, these institutions struggle to keep some actors in check and how some actors use these institutions as a way to get away with specific contested actions. The study put this against the

backdrop that power is requisite in the process of governing resources (Ahlborg & Nightingale, 2018). The study concludes that institutions are part of the power game and play a fundamental role in legitimizing state actions.

The study found that implementing these green ideas is applicable in some sectors instead of others. In some sectors, there is stiff competition with the existing regimes' growth and development priorities like infrastructure development which have massively destroyed the environment. Since compensation is done, it does not equate to the destruction made, which is not effected in some instances. Projects under LAPSSET and the implementation of other projects have resulted in a massive change in land-use patterns. For example, sections of national parks like NNP have been lost to infrastructure. The aspiration of development through new infrastructure to spur economic growth and job creation supersedes environmental sustainability.

The study explored how the narrative of a completely destroyed world is presented and solution offered by adopting green development strategies seen to be an urgent and only solution to development. This sets the stage through which development in Kenya is mediated. The study argues that the present hegemonic green vision policies ultimately re-enforce processes of de-politicization and the socio-political status quo rather than, as some suggest and hope, offering a wedge that might contribute to achieving socio-ecologically more egalitarian transformations. Conditions of the environment have in the past and continue to be considered a great danger that may prematurely end civilization if unheeded. How environmental conditions have been elevated to public concern can be mobilized to grapple with the contested formation of a post-political frame. The politics of sustainability has been a way to configure, forge, and entrench the post-political structure (Swyngedouw, 2010).

Green development ideas such as green growth have become one of the defining commercial, political and intellectual projects of our time. The proponents of these ideas view them as the plan presenting a better way for the country to develop economically while putting humans at the center of growth and ensuring that environmental assets last to provide the resources and eco-friendly services to support sustainable development. While this has been commonly accepted in Kenya and has become part of a well-established policy narrative by its proponents, it is problematic for two reasons; The study finds the concepts to be new in terms of framing and put as a new way of Kenya's future making yet the practices behind them are not new at all. The idea of labeling activities as green becomes vital as they set a specific train of thought

in motion showing how it is essential to go the greenway. Hall (2016) supports this argument, which explains frames as narratives that bring a specific way of thinking and show why a particular issue may be a problem, those responsible, and what can be done about it.

The study argues that the exact implementation of the green development idea shows a lack of a common understanding by the actors implementing it. The practice works several actions but nothing in particular that links together a range of diverse and, in most cases, contradictory practices into an integrated discourse but deters crucial social changes (Methmann, 2010). The United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development in 2021 had an outcome document titled 'The Future We Want.' This document was highly criticized because it was not specific on how sustainability would be achieved. It also did not have a strong commitment from the world leaders on the principles contained in the document. Some scholars, for example, have dismissed GE as a mere 'greenwash' (Borel-Saladin & Turok, 2013; Utting, 2012).

Among the experts interviewed, there was a consensus that different kinds of green ideas are implemented with the hope that they all translate to the same thing: a sustainable future in the end. They agree that it is fundamental for them to interrogate the ideas they implement and see their implication on the communities they implement them and whether it translates to much rather than doing so because finances have been made available.

Green ideas of development have been associated with environmentally sustainable, biodiverse, low carbon, and climate-resilient growth in human prosperity. This is because there is still a lack of clear definition (Bowen & Fankhauser, 2011). This was depicted by several experts implementing green ideas who seemed to agree about the growth part as an implication of more employment opportunities, investments, income, and a higher standard of living among the citizens of the country while at the same time preserving critical aspects of the environment. What seems unclear is the how part that gives leeway for different actors to implement projects and programs as per their understanding and definition. In this way, the study argues that most actors highly push the institutional and individual agendas in the guise of pursuing green futures.

Actors agreed that these green development visions focus on growth, more investments, more income, and a higher standard of living without fighting the environment. Instead, there should be complementarity between them. The study's findings indicate that this narrative is nicely put on paper and on proponents' lips but whose practicality is near impossible.

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In unifying a diverse field of phenomena, the empty signifier is impossible to define in concise terms, and the meaning is subject to constant revision and interpretations. It serves as a container notion for several meanings that can change and be reinterpreted according to divergent preferences (Davidson, 2010; Lederer et al., 2018). For example, the 2016 Climate Change Act provides the legal foundations for the National Climate Change Council, which is to coordinate the implementation of the country's climate change objectives. It aims to stimulate low-carbon development through various actions, including incentivizing the private sector, promoting low-carbon technologies, and mobilizing financial resources through the Climate Change Fund while overseeing climate change efforts (Republic of Kenya, 2016).

Recent developments in the political landscape in Kenya have provided an opportunity for the realization of Kenya's green vision potential. The level of awareness among the public and government on the need to address climate change is high and further increasing. This I would attribute to two factors: firstly, the risks the country has been exposed to in the past and the calamities that various parts of the country have had to deal with, and secondly, the deliberate effort by climate change practitioners to create awareness and disseminate climate change information aimed at drawing attention towards a low carbon economy which is argued to be the most significant contributor to climate change. However, some actors see this as a big challenge that is narrower in scope while they think that issues to do with green futures go beyond a low carbon economy. Some experts who are not directly working on climate change-related matters view the actors directly working on climate change issues as problematic as they focus on a low carbon economy. This, they argue, doesn't address other more important aspects like biodiversity loss and resource efficiency, among others, yet those elements undermine development. This I note is because of the availability of finances that the current global community is availing. Climate change issues have been central in Kenya, with large sums of money from the donor organization.

Several actors have taken up the need to adapt and develop small-scale solutions and have taken advantage of the funding opportunities at the global level. The past years have seen numerous initiatives aligned to match the donor requirements with actors with similar interests coming together to partner in different kinds, both locally and nationally, to tap into these funds. Rapid population growth has put a significant demand on the available resources. It has constantly pushed the country's growth path to ensure that the needs of its growing population are taken into consideration. While ecological aspects have had to be compromised at this time, the need

to address this has been raised. These have been articulated together under a standard heading of sustainability. This term seems to explain the common link between them all, and to factor in the aspect of development, the growth aspect emerged. Brown contends that it serves as the central role the empty signifier plays- in being named, the empty signifier retroactively groups together diverse and ambiguous instances of concern. Here, the term green visions apply (Brown, 2016).

While it is not in the interest of this study to dismiss green ideas of development in practice and their contributions towards a healthy environment, I view them as performing a function of opening new and more possibilities of political actions in Kenya. The ideas offer a "promise" to the actors who advocate and use them term but one that cannot be articulated directly. Their political potency is derived from representing an ambiguously discernible future that is, strictly speaking, impossible within the coordinates of the currently institutionalized discursive reality. Green ideas of development represent the imagined fullness of Kenyan society that is now not in existence and in which they strive to achieve in the future, which is not clearly defined. Further, it shows that the Kenyan society has fully reconciled itself with the destructive effects it created. Different actors and institutions constantly rephrase existing activities in terms of green visions, but the actions remain the same (Brown, 2016; Methmann, 2010).

This study has ultimately challenged the possibility of attaining a state of balance between environment and development and urges actors in the development field to rethink how global ideas are implemented in local contexts deeply. The most pertinent question is how this then should be done. The study suggests a more understanding of the needs of the local contexts and an interrogation of global ideas before they are put into practice. As Kenya strives to achieve its visions of development in the face of numerous challenges and flaws, this dissertation opens a debate for further interrogation on the winners and losers in the practice of development, having noted that green development ideas seem to mean all practices to all people as long as you can show that there is something which touches on the possibility of people who will live in the future to be able to live in a sound environment and be able to cater for all that they will need for their survival.

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Appendix I - List of interviewees

NO	DESIGNATION	INSTITUTION	DATE	DURATION
1	Project Officer	Green Africa Foundation	21.01.2021	90 minutes
2	Junior Officer	United Nations Environment Program	05.01.2021	120 minutes
3	Program Officer	SUSWATCH Kenya	10.12.2020	120 minutes
4	Environmental Manager	Kenya Electricity Transmission Company	28.11.2020	120 minutes
5	Chief Executive Officer	The Youth Agenda	04.12.2020	60 minutes
6	Researcher	Institute of Development Studies, University of Nairobi	02.12.2020	90 minutes
7	Research officer	National Environment Complaints Committee	26.11.2020	60 minutes
8	Programme Coordinator	Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung	23.11.2020	90 minutes
9	Environmental Lawyer	East Africa Wildlife Society	11.11.2020	60 minutes
10	Staff	Mali Asili	19.05.2020	
11	National Technical Specialist, Environment and Climate Change	World Vision	16.09.2019	150 minutes
12	Former Environment Secretary	Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources	14.05.2019	120 minutes
13	Senior Staff	National Environment Management Authority	17.06.2019	75 minutes
14	Senior Staff	UNHABITAT	21.06.2019	150 minutes
15	Senior Staff	Micro Enterprise Support Program Trust	30.08.2019	120 minutes

16		Program Manager, Green Growth and Employment Program DANIDA	11.07.2019	60 minutes
17		Program Officer GIZ	08.10.2019	60 minutes
18	Senior Teacher	Ilkimati Primary School	03.10.2019	
19	Program Director, Green Growth and Employment Program	Ministry Of Environment and Forestry	10.09.2019	115 minutes
20	Environmentalist	Kenya National Highways Authority	10.05.2019	45 minutes
21	Climate Change Officer	Ministry of Agriculture	04.09.2019	30 minutes
22	Senior Staff	National Treasury	14.09.2019	65 minutes
23	Research and Policy Officer	Kenya Climate Innovation Centre	29.07.2019	90 minutes
24	Value Chain Officer	Micro Enterprise Support Program Trust	04.06.2019	80 minutes
25	Co-Founders	Agro Flora Organic Fertilizer Company	21.08.2019	120 minutes
26	Director General	Green Growth Institute	04.11.2019	

Appendix II - Interview Guidelines

- Could you please tell me about your organization?

- What is your job within the organization? Please describe your work.

- Please describe your vision for the environment?

- Where do the green ideas of development originate?

- Who is shaping green ideas of development internationally?

- Who is shaping green ideas of development in Kenya?

- How are these ideas infused into the political, social, and economic contexts or spaces?

- How are green ideas of development translated into politics and projects?

- What would you say about the large-scale infrastructure projects and their effects on the environment?

- What would you say about a win-win scenario between ecology and development? Is it possible in Kenya? If no, why not?

- To what extent do you think green development ideas are applicable in Kenya?

- How do you see the state of the environment in Kenya presently, and how do you see it in the future?

- Do we have institutions resisting green development ideas?

- To what extent is the public generally involved in conceptualizing and implementing the ideas?

- What is your thought on the devolved system of governance in relation to the environment? Do you think devolution is efficient? What are the advantages and disadvantages of devolution?

- Which challenges do you face while implementing the green development projects and programs?

- Do you think it is beneficial to frame green development ideas such as green growth and green economy the way they have been framed? If yes, why? If no, why not?

- What role do institutions such as NEMA play regarding ecological management? Are they effective? If no, why not?