

OUR GUEST OF HONOUR, REPRESENTATIVE OF THE PERMANENT  
SECRETARY, MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT  
REPRESENTATIVE OF THE ITALIAN AMBASSADOR TO KENYA  
FAO REPRESENTATIVE IN NAIROBI,  
DISTINGUISHED PARTICIPANTS,  
LADIES AND GENTLEMEN.

I wish to welcome you all most warmly to this happy occasion, marking the official opening of the FAO- AFRICOVER PROJECT FIRST NATIONAL COORDINATORS MEETING.

Allow me, at the outset, to express AFRICOVERS' gratitude to the Government of the Republic of Kenya for hosting us over these days we shall be here in Nairobi and for all the support that the Project continues to from Kenya as the host and as a member country of the project. We are confident that under her host, the Project will continue to develop and prosper.

AFRICOVER is most delighted and grateful to you, Representative of the Ministry of Planning that you have been able to come and open our deliberations, given the tight schedule of your office.

The Permanent Secretary,  
Representative of the Italian Embassy,  
Distinguished Participants,  
Ladies and Gentlemen.

Poor leadership has brewed strife and conflicts in many of our countries, all at the detriment of the people. Africa has abundant natural resources and potential industrious people.

The renewable natural resources of many African countries have come under severe strain over the past two or three decades and most indicators point toward a continuation of this trend. Today, Africa has a severe shortage of country-wide quantitative and qualitative information on vegetation cover and current land use. As a result, there has been limited planning, development and sustainable management of renewable natural resources in Africa. An all round management of these resources is therefore paramount.

Your Excellency, Distinguished delegates, history has proved that for any development to take place, the principles of management must be put into effect. Resource managers require rapid and accurate methods for accuracy and interpreting data for the development and management of the resources of Africa.

I am pleased to see that your respective countries, organizations and indeed you yourselves, have recognized this fact and decided to take advantage of this opportune Meeting. I urge you to exert yourselves and ensure the Meeting Objectives are achieved.