

REPORT OF THE AUDITOR-GENERAL ON KENYA FORESTRY RESEARCH INSTITUTE FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE, 2020

REPORT ON THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Qualified Opinion

I have audited the accompanying financial statements of Kenya Forestry Research Institute set out on pages 1 to 41, which comprise the statement of financial position as at 30 June, 2020, and the statement of financial performance, statement of changes in net assets, statement of cash flows and statement of comparison of budget and actual amounts for the year then ended, and a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory information in accordance with the provisions of Article 229 of the Constitution of Kenya and Section 35 of the Public Audit Act, 2015. I have obtained all the information and explanations which, to the best of my knowledge and belief, were necessary for the purpose of the audit.

In my opinion, except for the effects of the matter described in the Basis for Qualified Opinion section of my report, the financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Kenya Forestry Research Institute as at 30 June, 2020 and of its financial performance and its cash flows for the year then ended, in accordance with International Public Sector Accounting Standards (Accrual Basis) and comply with Science, Technology and Innovation Act, 2013 and the Public Finance Management Act, 2012.

Basis for Qualified Opinion

Property, Plant and Equipment

As previously reported, the statement of financial position reflects Kshs.5,750,406,850 (2019: Kshs.5,752,762,412) in respect to property, plant and equipment. However, the balance excludes the value of buildings and properties on various parcels of land totalling 2,847 hectares across the country on which the Institute has put up developments. These include parcels of land owned by Kenya Forest Service, Maseno University, Ministry of Agriculture, Kitui, Lamu and Migori County Governments. The balance also excludes the value of its Headquarters which is built on land under the name of the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources. Further, title deeds for twenty one (21) parcels of land were not provided for audit review.

In addition, the property, plant and equipment includes a balance of Kshs.58,149,496 relating to motor vehicles. However, log books for twenty two (22) motor vehicles were not provided for audit review.

In the circumstances, the accuracy, completeness, ownership and valuation of property, plant and equipment balance of Kshs.5,750,406,850 as at 30 June, 2020 could not be confirmed.

The audit was conducted in accordance with International Standards of Supreme Audit Institutions (ISSAIs). I am independent of the Kenya Forestry Research Institute Management in accordance with ISSAI 130 on Code of Ethics. I have fulfilled other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the ISSAI and in accordance with other

ethical requirements applicable to performing audits of financial statements in Kenya. I believe that the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my qualified opinion.

Key Audit Matters

Key audit matters are those matters that, in my professional judgment, are of most significance in the audit of the financial statements. There were no Key Audit Matters to report in the year under review.

REPORT ON LAWFULNESS AND EFFECTIVENESS IN USE OF PUBLIC RESOURCES

Conclusion

As required by Article 229(6) of the Constitution, based on the audit procedures performed, except for the matter described in the Basis for Conclusion on Lawfulness and Effectiveness in Use of Public Resources section of my report, I confirm that, nothing else has come to my attention to cause me to believe that public resources have not been applied lawfully and in an effective way.

Basis for Conclusion

Board Expenses

The statement of financial performance reflects Kshs.17,218,626 in respect to Board expenses incurred on payment of sitting allowances and reimbursement of other expenses to Board members. However, as reported in the previous year, the members of the Board of Directors were not issued with appointment letters contrary to the provisions of Section 1.1(11) of the Code of Governance for State Corporations (Mwongozo) which states that each Board member shall be formally appointed to the Board through a Gazette Notice and thereafter an appointment letter be issued, and Board members shall signify their acceptance of the appointment in writing.

Consequently, the propriety and legality of the Board expenses balance of Kshs.17,218,626 for the year ended 30 June, 2020 could not be ascertained.

The audit was conducted in accordance with ISSAI 4000. The standard requires that I comply with ethical requirements and plan and perform the audit to obtain assurance about whether the activities, financial transactions and information reflected in the financial statements are in compliance, in all material respects, with the authorities that govern them. I believe that the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my conclusion.

REPORT ON EFFECTIVENESS OF INTERNAL CONTROLS, RISK MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE

Conclusion

As required by Section 7(1)(a) of the Public Audit Act, 2015, based on the audit procedures performed, except for the matter described in the Basis for Conclusion on Effectiveness of Internal Controls, Risk Management and Governance section of my

report, I confirm that, nothing else has come to my attention to cause me to believe that internal controls, risk management and overall governance were not effective.

Basis for Conclusion

Abscinding from Duty and Irregular Salary Payments

As previously reported, three officers absconded duty and were irregularly paid salaries amounting to Kshs.2,739,360 in the year 2015/2016. They had been sponsored for overseas training. To date, the Institute has not recovered that money from the concerned officers. Efforts to recover the money through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs have not yielded positive results.

In the circumstances, the situation is indicative of weak internal controls within the Institute and it was not possible to determine whether the Institute have an effective recovery mechanism to ensure that public resources are safeguarded.

The audit was conducted in accordance with ISSAI 2315 and ISSAI 2330. The standards require that I plan and perform the audit to obtain assurance about whether effective processes and systems of internal control, risk management and governance were operating effectively, in all material respects. I believe that the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my conclusion.

Responsibilities of Management and the Board of Directors

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of these financial statements in accordance with International Public Sector Accounting Standards (Accrual Basis) and for maintaining effective internal control as Management determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error and for its assessment of the effectiveness of internal control, risk management and governance.

In preparing the financial statements, Management is responsible for assessing the Institute's ability to continue to sustain services, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to sustainability of services and using the applicable basis of accounting unless the Institute is aware of the intention to terminate the Institute or to cease operations.

Management is also responsible for the submission of the financial statements to the Auditor-General in accordance with the provisions of Section 47 of the Public Audit Act, 2015.

In addition to the responsibility for the preparation and presentation of the financial statements described above, Management is also responsible for ensuring that the activities, financial transactions and information reflected in the financial statements are in compliance with the authorities which govern them, and that public resources are applied in an effective way.

The Board of Directors are responsible for overseeing the Institute's financial reporting process, reviewing the effectiveness of how the Institute monitors compliance with relevant legislative and regulatory requirements, ensuring that effective processes and systems are in place to address key roles and responsibilities in relation to governance

and risk management, and ensuring the adequacy and effectiveness of the control environment.

Auditor-General's Responsibilities for the Audit

The audit objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes my opinion in accordance with the provisions of Section 48 of the Public Audit Act, 2015 and submit the audit report in compliance with Article 229(7) of the Constitution. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISSAIs will always detect a material misstatement and weakness when it exists.

Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

In addition to the audit of the financial statements, a compliance audit is planned and performed to express a conclusion about whether, in all material respects, the activities, financial transactions and information reflected in the financial statements are in compliance with the authorities that govern them and that public resources are applied in an effective way, in accordance with the provisions of Article 229(6) of the Constitution and submit the audit report in compliance with Article 229(7) of the Constitution.

Further, in planning and performing the audit of the financial statements and audit of compliance, I consider internal control in order to give an assurance on the effectiveness of internal controls, risk management and governance processes and systems in accordance with the provisions of Section 7(1)(a) of the Public Audit Act, 2015 and submit the audit report in compliance with Article 229(7) of the Constitution. My consideration of the internal control would not necessarily disclose all matters in the internal control that might be material weaknesses under the ISSAIs. A material weakness is a condition in which the design or operation of one or more of the internal control components does not reduce to a relatively low level the risk that misstatements caused by error or fraud in amounts that would be material in relation to the financial statements being audited may occur and not be detected within a timely period by employees in the normal course of performing their assigned functions.

Because of its inherent limitations, internal control may not prevent or detect misstatements and instances of non-compliance. Also, projections of any evaluation of effectiveness to future periods are subject to the risk that controls may become inadequate because of changes in conditions, or that the degree of compliance with the policies and procedures may deteriorate.

As part of an audit conducted in accordance with ISSAIs, I exercise professional judgement and maintain professional skepticism throughout the audit. I also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve

collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.

- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the Management.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of the Management's use of the applicable basis of accounting and sustainability of services, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the Institute's ability to continue to sustain its services. If I conclude that a material uncertainty exists, I am required to draw attention in the auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify my opinion. My conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of my audit report. However, future events or conditions may cause the Institute to cease to sustain its services.
- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.
- Obtain sufficient appropriate audit evidence regarding the financial information and business activities of the Institute to express an opinion on the financial statements.
- Perform such other procedures as I consider necessary in the circumstances.

I communicate with the Management regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that are identified during the audit.

I also provide Management with a statement that I have complied with relevant ethical requirements regarding independence, and to communicate with them all relationships and other matters that may reasonably be thought to bear on my independence, and where applicable, related safeguards.



CPA Nancy Gathungu, CBS
AUDITOR-GENERAL

Nairobi

11 February, 2022