**Kenya Forest Service License Issuance Narrative**

The Kenya Forest service (KFS) is a state corporation, whose mandate is to enhance development, conservation and management of Kenya’s forest resources based in all public forests, and assist County Governments to develop and manage forest resources on community and private lands for the equitable benefit of present and future generations.

All individuals, corporate bodies and communities who wish to use forests and forest resources are required to apply and obtain a license from KFS. KFS Assess applications and issue licenses in accordance with the Forest Act, 2005. The act also mandates KFS to establish and implement benefit sharing arrangements.

Kenya Forest Service (KFS) does not have an automated license issuance system. All the processes—(from application to the issuance of licenses) are done manually. License applications and/or any other documents are addressed to, and received by the Chief Conservator of forests, who forwards them to the head of Biodiversity. The Head of biodiversity examines the application for completeness, i.e. if all relevant documents have been attached. A typical application includes the following attachments:

* An application letter
* A research proposal describing the research that is to be carried
* A NACOSTI research permit
* A Prior Informed Consent (PIC) with MAT (where applicable) 1.
* Identification documents (ID/Passport for foreigners)
* Letter of affiliation for foreigners
* Letter from host institution for Kenyans

In the event that the application is not fully completed, the head of biodiversity requests the applicant to submit the missing details/documents. Otherwise, the head of biodiversity determines the requisite application fee and instructs the license applicant to pay the amount to the KFS bank account. The applicant makes the payment and submits the bank-slip to KFS finance/accounts department, who issue a KFS receipt. The applicant then submits the KFS receipt to the head of biodiversity.

The head Biodiversity then reviews the application and decides to grant or deny the license. If a grant decision is arrived at, the head of biodiversity prepared and prints the permit, and forwards it to the director for signing and subsequent dispatch. On the other hand, if a deny decision is arrived at, the applicant is notified of the same through a letter. The letter outlines reasons for not granting the license.

The head of biodiversity sends a copy of the permit to ecosystem conservators who are the heads of KFS at the county level. This ensures that the relevant authorities are informed and there is monitoring and compliance of the research on the ground where research is being carried out. The head of biodiversity also files a copy of the permit.

The researchers are required to give feedback as they carry out research and on completion of their research.

1In cases where the research involves a resource at the community level, the community forest association which is registered by register of societies signs a PIC with the researcher, which the researcher then takes to KFS who in turn sign the MAT then issue a license.

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