

STUDENT CONFERENCE IN CONSERVATION SCIENCE, *THEME:* BIODIVERSITY IN AFRICA – PRESENT STATE, CHALLENGES AND PROSPECTS ON ITS CONSERVATION.

2ND-4TH JULY 2013, NATIONAL MUSEUMS OF KENYA, NAIROBI, KENYA.

Prepared by Tendai Musvuugwa

The student conference in conservation science was held this year in Nairobi (Kenya) and attended by 136 delegates from 11 African countries, including Kenya, Uganda, Nigeria, Tanzania and South Africa. During the 3 days, we learnt about the work of 30 delegates, mostly students, across Africa through oral presentations, speed talks, posters sessions as well as the wealth of experience from 4 keynote speakers. The topics for discussion were diverse, ranging from Kenyan indigenous food plants, used in medicine, to butterflies in the West Albertine Rift forests, used as indicators of habitat health. Other studies presented during the conference focussed on the Mau Forest in Kenya's Rift Valley for lessons on forest rehabilitation and the spread of diseases in amphibians in Uganda's Bwindi Impenetrable National Park.

Four workshops were also organized on the first day around various themes that divided participants into different groups. These included Fundraising for conservation projects, Biodiversity and ecosystem functioning and services and Conservation of carnivores. Although all 4 workshops were held in parallel, we all received a chance to discover the experiences from the other workshops through the Rapporteurs of Workshop Proceedings.

During the conference I gave an oral presentation entitled: "Biodiversity and ecology of ophiostomatoid fungi associated with native trees in the Cape Floristic Region". For this presentation I received the award for best oral presentation.



Tendai Musvuugwa giving her presentation (left) and receiving the award for best oral presentation (right).