

## **Project Update: April 2006**

The project team is pleased to report that it organized and conducted environmental talks, public lectures, focus group discussions, in-depth interviews and short training workshop to traditional healers, park wardens and some local communities bordering Nyika national park from 5<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup> April 2006. These people were targeted because they directly depend on the park resources for their livelihoods. The main aim of organizing and conducting these activities was to educate the community on the importance of protecting endangered and threatened plant species. During the in-depth interviews and group discussions, the community mentioned some of the medicinal plant species (*Aloe* spp., *Afelia quanzensis*, *Prunus africana*, *Hypoxis goetzii*, *Catha edulis*, etc) which have become extinct in the area due to over-utilization. In this respect, the communities and stakeholders have asked the project team to assist them to find these species from other areas of country and bring them back into their areas through propagation techniques. They further indicated that the extinct species are vital because they cure HIV/Aids related illnesses and the unavailability of these plant species poses a great threat to their health and survival. The project team assured them for their technical assistance.