

**Opening Remarks by Dr. Eliud Kireger Director General, Kenya  
Agricultural and Livestock Research Organization (KALRO)**

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Distinguished guests, esteemed colleagues, and partners, good morning.

It is a pleasure to welcome you to Nairobi for this important Africa Regional Consultation on CABI's Strategy. I wish to thank the Government of Kenya, the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock Development, and CABI for convening this timely meeting. As Director General of KALRO, and in my role as CABI Liaison Officer and Active Observer to the CABI Board, I am pleased to reaffirm Kenya's technical support to this process and to highlight the critical role of research and innovation in implementing the next phase of CABI's work in Africa.

**Ladies and gentlemen**

KALRO's mandate is to generate and transform agricultural research into solutions that serve farmers, agribusinesses, and the broader food system.

We focus on five strategic priorities: increasing productivity and resilience, enhancing biosecurity, promoting sustainable and climate-smart agriculture, advancing digital agriculture, and building partnerships that deliver at scale. Within this framework, CABI has been one of our most valued and enduring collaborators. Together, we have delivered tangible results on the ground, especially in the areas of plant health, pest management, invasive species control, and knowledge dissemination.

## **Ladies and gentlemen**

Allow me to briefly highlight three key areas where our collaboration has made an impact:

- 1. Plantwise and PlantwisePlus:** These programmes have significantly extended our outreach to farmers, through plant clinics, trained plant doctors, and digital tools that support better decision-making. We have seen clear outcomes reduced crop losses, improved pesticide stewardship, and stronger farmer confidence in science-based advice.

**2. Invasive species management:** Our joint work with CABI, KEFRI, and county governments has strengthened surveillance and control systems. A notable example is the clearance of *Prosopis* from Lake Bogoria, which is now seeing a revival of biodiversity and eco-tourism.

**3. South–South collaboration:** KALRO's involvement in the Belt and Road initiative with CABI, IPP-CAAS, and Egerton University demonstrates how partnerships can expand capacity, facilitate technology exchange, and reinforce Africa's role in global research cooperation.

### **Ladies and gentlemen**

Looking ahead, KALRO is fully aligned with the direction envisioned in CABI's next Strategy (2025–2028) especially the emphasis on integrated pest management, digital tools, SPS systems, and climate resilience. We see this consultation as a valuable opportunity to co-create practical, farmer-centric solutions that build on national systems and drive regional innovation.

In closing, I assure you of KALRO's continued partnership not just as a research organization, but as an implementing institution committed to

transforming agricultural science into results that matter. Let us use this forum to deepen our collaboration and to place science, farmers, and partnerships at the centre of Africa's agricultural transformation.

I now wish to invite the Principal Secretary, State Department for Agriculture Development, Dr. Kipronoh Rono, to deliver his remarks and thereafter invite the Cabinet Secretary to give the keynote address.

Thank you, and I wish you productive discussions.