

Friday, Lusaka (January 14, 2022)



## **CEJ LAUNCHES THE YOUTH ENVIRONMENTAL DEFENDERS PROGRAMME**

CENTRE for Environment Justice (CEJ) has launched a Youth Environmental Defenders Program to run from 2022 to 2025.

CEJ Executive Director Maggie Mwape says the programme will see youths take a lead in amplifying environmental and climate justice voices and action, lobby and advocacy, and sensitizing communities across the country.

Speaking at CEJ during the launch in Lusaka today, Ms. Mwape says young people can play an active role in protecting and improving the environment.

She said engaging the youth in environmental protection not only creates direct impact on changing youth behaviors and attitudes, but possibly influence their parents, relatives and families.

The CEJ Executive Director says the youths are very vital to lead in issues of the environment because they are a key stakeholder in sustainable development.

"There can never be a successful and meaningful change without the youths and therefore the reason that they are given an opportunity to be engaged in the environmental agenda," she said.

She revealed that the program will be led by six youths comprising of University Students and Graduates.

Ms Mwape named activities to be implemented as community youth dialogues, engagements in schools and universities, demonstration forest restorations, parliament engagement, exchange visit among others.

She has since invited cooperating partners and government line ministries to be part of the initiative to Leave No Youth Behind in Climate Action and Environmental Protection across the country.

"CEJ believes that information dissemination is important to transform the current environmental challenges and climate change impacts being faced in the country and therefore more concerted effort is needed to multiply youth participation," Ms Mwape said.