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CLIMATE CHANGE FUND URGENTLY NEEDED- CEJ

Centre for Environment Justice (CEJ) has called for the implementation of the Environmental Sustainability commitments made by government in the 2022 National Budget speech. CEJ Executive Director Maggie Mwape cites the 2022 National Budget speech paragraph 130 to 133 where Government has made its aspirations clear on environmental sustainability.

Ms Mwape adds that the speech has focused on climate change adaptation and mitigation, natural resources management and early warning systems.

She says the New Dawn Government has made commitments to promote innovative financing for climate change interventions such as Green Bonds, carbon trading and putting in place legislation to establish a National Climate Change Fund.

The CEJ Executive Director has since urged the Ministry of Green Economy and Environment to commence process for establishing the Climate Change fund, including a clear definition of the proposed governance frame for the fund. Meanwhile, Ms Mwape has emphasised that the fund should not only be established but must be operational.

She says, this is because the fund in question should not join the list of non-operational funds and avoid operational challenges witnessed with other established funds. Ms Mwape cites examples of established funds such as the Environmental Protection Fund (under Mines and Mineral Development Act 2015, Section 86), Environment Fund (under Environmental management Act of 2011, section 95), Fisheries and Agriculture Development Fund (under Fisheries Act of 2011, section 53 -56), Tourism Development Fund (under Tourism and Hospitality Act of 2015, Section 64), Water development Fund (under Water resources Management Act of 2011, section 155), Wildlife Development Fund (under Zambia wildlife Act of 2015, Section 10) and Wildlife Community Resource Board fund (under Zambia Wildlife Act of 2015, Section 35).

Ms Mwape says while Zambia has a number of environmental protection policies and strategies, financing has largely been earmarked for donors. The CEJ Executive Director says the New Dawn administration has an opportunity to change the status quo and align development aspirations with stronger domestic resources to ensure effective implementation of climate change actions and plans.

"As Zambia thrusts for green economy, there is need to use public funding intelligently. The green transition is a prosperity strategy as Climate Change has become a reality much faster than all scenarios predicted," she said.

Ms Mwape says Climate Change is not just an environmental issue, as too many people still believe.

