

Sunday, Lusaka (June 12, 2022)



**PRESS STATEMENT**

**INCREASE BUDGET TOWARDS ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION- CEJ URGES GOVT**

Centre for Environment Justice (CEJ) has urged Government to increase the 2023 budgetary allocation towards environmental protection from zero point six to at least five percent.

The Ministry of Finance is collecting submissions from stakeholders from various sectors to consolidate the 2023 National Budget to be presented in Parliament in October this year. CEJ Head of Programmes Ricky Kalaluka says though the budgetary allocation towards environmental protection showed a two percent increase when compared to 2021, the increment was the least among other national budgetary functions.

He emphasised that there are serious implications of low funding to the sector that relate to unsustainable use of natural resources.

Mr. Kalaluka added that low funding to the sector greatly contributes to weak institutional capacity of public regulators such as the Water Resources Management Authority (WARMA), Zambia Environmental Management Agency (ZEMA) and implementers such as the Department of National Parks and Wildlife (DNPW) among others.

He said increased funding to the sector means that there will be significant impact to key operations and compliance functions for stronger environmental protection.

The CEJ Head of Programmes said an increased budgetary allocation must be deliberately targeted at women and the youth for them to venture into alternative livelihoods to save forests.

Mr. Kalaluka emphasised that Zambia should have a sound budget towards environmental protection because it is currently an active member of the African Group of the Negotiators of Climate Change.

He echoed that an increased budget towards the environment would be an opportunity to show political will by the New Dawn Government as the sector is of global importance.

**Issued By:**

Ricky Kalaluka (Mr.)  
Head of Programmes  
Centre for Environment Justice

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Plot 269, Off Twin Palm Road, Ibex Hill  
Lusaka – Zambia

Website: <https://cejzambia.com>; Twitter: @CEJZambia2010  
Facebook: <https://facebook.com/cejzambia.org>