

Sunday, Lusaka (15<sup>th</sup> October, 2023)



## **ZAMBIA STARTS RESTORING LUKANGA SWAMPS FOR ENERGY, WATER SUPPLY SECURITY IN LUSAKA AND KAFUE TOWNS**

Government, working with World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) Zambia, has embarked on a programme to use Nature Based Solutions (NBS) to restore the Lukanga Swamps in Central Province.

World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) Zambia, Climate Change Scientist and Adaptation Specialist, Dr. Bowen Banda, says the project rationale is to ensure security of energy and water supply in Lusaka and Kafue Towns by ensuring restoration of Lukanga Swamps as a major water sponge.

Dr. Banda said Lukanga Swamps are degraded thereby failing to absorb enough water as a sponge on behalf of the Kafue River which feeds into Itezhi Tezhi, of which Itezhi Tezhi also feeds into the Kafue Flats and Kafue Flats into the Hydro Power in Kafue Gorge.

This came to light when Dr. Banda presented a paper on Nature Based Solutions (NBS) that Traditional Leaders can promote to enhance Carbon Sequestration at the just ended '2nd Traditional Leaders Caucus' in Lusaka.

The Caucus was held under the theme, "Strengthening Traditional Leader's Role in Carbon Financing for Sustainable Development in Zambia", organised by the Centre for Environment Justice (CEJ) and supported by CEJ partners such as Bread for the World, First Quantum Minerals (FQM), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Sweden through Musika, and the Bio Carbon Partners (BCP).

"Climate Change and high population has come with biodiversity degradation of which the solution is to go back to the roots to use nature to address these problems by restoring biodiversity and ecosystem services for the benefit of the communities. Fire prevention is a nature based solution. The other nature based solution is protecting forests with a view of benefiting from Carbon Trading. This is a nature based solution which Chiefs can promote because their subjects need money which come from the natural resource endowed in chiefdoms. Using nature for carbon sequestration and what we promote is holistic because

we are trying to protect the ecosystems and also restore them. Nature based solutions can be promoted at a small scale, even at a big scale,” he said.

Dr. Banda said Kafue River is sustainable such that it must be protected at all costs, especially from resources such as Lukanga Swamps.

“The same river feeds into Zambia Sugar, Zambia Bottlers and water supplied to Lusaka. We have seen a lot of problems with people complaining about water. When you remove the connections, it looks like something that is not important which is why it must be looked at holistically. So we have gone back up stream to restore the Lukanga. It is at scale and it is a big programme that we are thinking of. When we are set, announcements will be made probably in two years but for now we are working in the background to restore it. While restoring the Lukanga Swamps by growing trees around it and promoting efficient energy use, prevent people from degrading the area too much, it means we are also doing Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR),” he said.

The World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) Zambia Climate Change Scientist and Adaptation Specialist said WWF is supporting Government because of the political will in the restoration of Lukanga Swamps.

“We are now doing community engagements because this is very critical in the restoration drive to get a strong buy in. I would like to urge Chiefs to take interest in Full Council Meetings and District Development Coordinating Committee Meetings (DDCC) because once a decision is made, it is difficult to reverse because it is embedded in the Local Government Act,” he said.

Dr. Banda said WWF is working with Local Authorities that surround Lukanga such as Ngabwe, Chibombo, Mumbwa, among others, so that they embed restoration into their plans.

“We will do the Development of Natural Resource Management Plan including Restoration and Protection Interventions, Spatial Planning, Zoning, Development of Sustainable Livelihoods, and thereafter do a business case.

Issued By: CEJ Communications Unit

.....  
Centre for Environment Justice (CEJ)

---

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

Visit CEJ website: <https://cejzambia.com/> and Facebook: <https://facebook.com/cejzambia.org>

Call: +260 54713003 / +260 964 244255 / +260 973 389859

Email: [info@cejzambia.com](mailto:info@cejzambia.com)