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GOVERNMENT ADDRESSES SECTOR SILOS IN BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION

The government says it is working hard to ensure proper sector coordination in the implementation of the Second National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP-2).

Senior Natural Resources Management Officer at the Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources, Hope Mambwe noted that the government has observed sector players working in silos, which hampers progress.

This came to light during the Ministerial Stakeholder Engagement in Lusaka organized by the Centre for Environment Justice (CEJ) with support from the Southern African Trust (SAT).

She emphasized biodiversity's contributions to food security, job creation, and its mental, spiritual, cultural, and economic impacts.

Ms Mambwe revealed that key threats to biodiversity include invasive alien species, climate change, population growth, and pollution.

She outlined the vision for 2025, where biodiversity in Zambia will be conserved, restored, and sustainably utilized, ensuring a healthy environment and delivering essential benefits for all Zambians and the economy.

"The goals of NBSAP-2 are to address the underlying causes of biodiversity loss by mainstreaming biodiversity across government and society," she said.

Ms. Mambwe emphasized the importance of continued efforts and collaboration among stakeholders to ensure the successful implementation of biodiversity strategies.

Her presentation underscored the critical role of biodiversity in sustaining life and promoting environmental health.

She highlighted the development and implementation of strategies in response to COP 10 of the UNCBD, focusing on improving information on biodiversity expenditure and finance.

"Ongoing efforts include the development of a Green Finance Strategy, implementation taxonomy, tagging and reporting systems for Zambia, and Green Bond Market Development," she said.

Ms. Mambwe identified implementation status and barriers such as fragmented policies, inadequate coordination among stakeholders (NTCB/NSCB), challenges in enforcing policies, and an inadequate monitoring framework.

Meanwhile, Centre for Environment Justice (CEJ) Head of Research and Studies, Freeman Mubanga, emphasized that biodiversity conservation is closely linked to activities in the extractive sector.

Mr. Mubanga stated that CEJ collaborates with mining communities to address social issues such as settlement and compensation resulting from mining activities.

He also highlighted the need for effective conservation strategies to protect both ecosystems and species.

Government representatives that attended the meeting included the Office of the Vice President-Resettlement Department, the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Agriculture, the Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources, the Ministry of Community Development, the Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development, and Zambia Environmental Management Agency, among others.

Others in attendance include strategic CSOs such as the Norwegian Church Aid, Zambia Climate Change Network, Zambia Land Alliance, and We Effect, among others.

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