

Monday, Lusaka (2nd September, 2024)



GOVERNMENT PRIORITIZES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION, ENFORCEMENT - PS CHIBAMBA

Ministry of Green Economy and Environment Permanent Secretary Douty Chibamba says the government puts a premium on environmental protection and enforcement.

Dr. Chibamba stated that this is to ensure that natural resources are managed sustainably.

He emphasized the responsibility of ensuring that the environment is managed according to sustainable principles, which implies that natural resources must be managed and utilized sustainably.

He highlighted that the Ministry is committed to this responsibility, ensuring compliance and enforcement of environmental protection measures.

This came to light in a speech delivered on his behalf by the Ministry's Director of Environment Godwin Fishani Gondwe during the Ministerial Stakeholder Engagement in Lusaka organized by the Centre for Environment Justice (CEJ) with support from the Bread for the World (BFTW).

Meanwhile, Centre for Environment Justice (CEJ) Board Chairperson Vincent Ziba said there is a need to ensure that the rights and livelihoods of affected communities are protected as the country pursues development, particularly in sectors like mining and agriculture.

He emphasized that equitable resettlement policies are vital in achieving this balance, ensuring that no community is left behind in the country's pursuit of progress.

Mr. Ziba, in a speech delivered on his behalf by CEJ Board Member Emmanuel Mutamba said the meeting focused on two critical areas: biodiversity conservation and compliance, and equitable resettlement policies.

He noted that these topics are not only central to environmental protection but are also integral to the well-being and sustainable development of the nation.

“Our natural heritage is our wealth. The implementation of effective biodiversity strategies is crucial in ensuring that our biodiversity is preserved for future generations. However, we must acknowledge the challenges we face in this endeavor and work collectively to overcome them. I am confident that the insights and recommendations that will emerge from today’s deliberations will significantly contribute to shaping our national policies and strategies,” he said.

Earlier, Centre for Environment Justice (CEJ) Executive Director Maggie Mwape said her organization takes the meeting as a learning opportunity, especially as it would be able to hear from key government ministries about the key issues they are addressing.

Ms. Mwape said the focus of the meeting will be on government efforts towards implementation of the National Biodiversity Strategy and resettlement policy, recognizing some of the challenges, opportunities, and barriers that exist.

She noted that stakeholders would learn about the status of the implementation of the National Biodiversity Strategy, including the challenges and opportunities, and how civil society organizations have been involved.

Government representatives that attended the meeting include Office of the Vice President-Resettlement Department, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources, Ministry of Community Development, Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development, 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, We Effect, among others

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