

Tuesday, Serenje (17<sup>th</sup> June 2025)



### **CHIEF MAILO CALLS FOR CAPACITY-BUILDING, RESOURCE ALLOCATION TO COMBAT NATURE-BASED CRIMES IN CHIEFDOMS**

Chief Mailo of the Lala People in the Serenje District of Central Province has called for improved capacity building and resource allocation to combat nature-based crimes in local chiefdoms.

He emphasized that community engagement, social cohesion, and economic empowerment are essential for preventing crime at the grassroots level.

The Traditional Leader said this in Serenje District when he made a PowerPoint presentation during the Resilience Dialogue in Africa: Zambia Edition co-hosted by the Centre for Environment Justice (CEJ), Decisive Minds, and Centre4Zero Waste and Development.

He acknowledged the support of the Resilience Fund and its partners, including the U.S. Department of State – Bureau of Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs, for enabling the dialogue in Zambia.

Chief Mailo highlighted the importance of effective community policies for maintaining order and security.

He explained that traditional leaders play a vital role in mobilizing communities, preserving cultural values, and resolving disputes.

He stressed that partnerships between community leaders and stakeholders are crucial for achieving sustainable crime prevention.

Chief Mailo pointed out the significance of community-based initiatives, youth engagement, and dialogue in curbing crime.

He noted that forming partnerships with various stakeholders would enhance local crime prevention measures.

To address illegal activities affecting natural resources, the Chief underscored the need for environmental impact assessments, sustainable designs, ongoing monitoring, and evaluation, as well as a focus on collaboration and transparency.

He referenced key legal instruments, including the Mines and Minerals Development Act No. 11 of 2015, the Zambia Environmental Management Agency (ZEMA), and the Forestry Act, which governs environmental and land-related issues.

Chief Mailo warned that converting customary land into state land could lead to a loss of community control, resulting in economic impacts, social challenges, legal and institutional difficulties, and environmental concerns.

He advised that successful management of customary land-related issues requires community engagement, comprehensive impact assessments, fair compensation, and clear policy development.

Chief Mailo further suggested that strategies such as capacity building, resource allocation, collaboration, and monitoring and evaluation are effective for sustainable crime prevention.

He stated that traditional leaders, community members, and stakeholders must work together to develop effective strategies for both crime prevention and community development.

Meanwhile, Resilience Fund Liaison for Africa at the Global Initiative Against Transnational Organized Crime (GI-TOC), Jacques Muhindo, stated that the Resilience Dialogue in Africa, held in Serenje, Zambia, aimed to engage stakeholders on nature crimes and local responses.

He emphasized that the sessions sought to develop a policy document to guide advocacy, engagement, and interventions that would positively impact affected communities.

Mr Muhindo highlighted the urgency of addressing environmental crimes such as illegal mining, logging, wildlife trafficking, and land conversion, stating that these activities not only deplete natural resources but also threaten livelihoods and governance structures.

He explained that GI-TOC, founded in 2013 and headquartered in Geneva with offices in Vienna and Cape Town, was a global NGO committed to combating transnational organized crime and building resilience in affected communities.

Mr Muhindo noted that the organization had developed the Organized Crime Index, a tool to assess the severity of criminal networks and the resilience of nations in tackling them.

He added that the Resilience Fund, initiated in 2019, provided grants, capacity-building, and networks to local communities, prioritizing prevention, positive reactions, and mitigation of nature crimes.

Mr Muhindo emphasized the importance of hearing directly from stakeholders and community members about how nature crimes affected them, ensuring that responses were adapted to local contexts.

He urged participants to discuss key issues such as identifying red flags of illegal activities, understanding their impact on different demographic groups, and evaluating the effectiveness of local responses.

He stated that partnerships between governments, civil society, and individuals were crucial in building local resilience against transnational organized crime.

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.org/> and Facebook: <https://facebook.com/cejzambia.org>  
Call: +260 954 713003 / +260 964 244255 / +260 973 389859  
Email: [info@cejzambia.org](mailto:info@cejzambia.org)