

Thursday, Luangwa (3<sup>rd</sup> July 2025)



### **GRZ NOTES CLIMATE CHANGE DISRUPTING LUANGWA DISTRICT ECONOMY, LIVELIHOODS**

The Government of Zambia says the economy of Luangwa District, which largely depends on fishing, has been disrupted due to the depletion of fish stocks in an area increasingly impacted by climate stress.

Luangwa District Administration District Commissioner Luke Chikani noted the escalating climate-related difficulties and emphasized the pressing need for resilience as extreme weather events intensified.

This came to light during the Post Climate Justice Indaba organized by the CJC project under the Centre for Environment Justice in Luangwa District, Lusaka Province.

Mr Chikani explained that the development challenges had changed significantly over the past few years, noting that the economy had shifted drastically due to climate conditions.

He indicated that a vital part of the winter season, once essential for the fish trade, had been lost.

The DC said that without fish, the district's economy and people had suffered greatly, necessitating a renewed focus on building resilience.

He observed that the district had been subjected to a series of climate shocks, including prolonged droughts and, for the first time, recurring flash floods.

Mr. Chikani pointed out that while flash floods were typically viewed as disasters, in Luangwa they posed a different threat due to increased malaria risks.

He added that although the recent floods were not the most severe, the persistent high temperatures and frequent climate incidents continued to impact rural communities by limiting access to clean water and undermining food security.

Mr Chikani stressed that agricultural productivity, a key contributor to national food supply and economic progress, was under threat.

He noted that efforts were underway to explore solutions such as malaria control and education campaigns, but acknowledged that water availability remained a significant hurdle.

The DC recalled that on January 20th, the Centre for Environment Justice, in partnership with the Council of Churches in Zambia, organized a Climate Justice Indaba in Luangwa District, bringing together government representatives, local leaders, civil society groups, and community members to identify climate challenges and develop practical responses.

He viewed the gathering as an opportunity to revisit past action plans and evaluate resilience strategies.

Centre for Environment Justice CJC Project Coordinator Engineer Gabriel Mukuka described the meeting as a follow-up to January's Indaba and explained that it aimed to strengthen community engagement in climate resilience work.

Engineer Mukuka said the focus was on improving project delivery and ensuring inclusive participation.

He explained that the CJC Project, which is funded by the Scottish Government, operates in Zambia, Rwanda, and Malawi.

Engineer Mukuka highlighted that the project aimed to promote climate justice by empowering marginalized communities to stand up for their rights and develop long-term resilience.

He noted that in Zambia, the project was focused on four districts—Luangwa, Sinazongwe, Sioma, and Shang'ombo—where challenges such as drought, water scarcity, food insecurity, and human-wildlife conflict were being addressed.

Council of Churches in Zambia Acting Project Coordinator Grenda Nchima expressed satisfaction with the knowledge shared throughout Luangwa's sectors.

She emphasized equipping communities with the skills and information necessary to adapt and succeed despite mounting climate threats.

Council of Churches in Zambia Representative Reverend Laban Chisala encouraged participants to speak openly about the challenges their communities faced, stressing that candid conversation would support accountability and joint action.

Traditional Authority Chief Mphuka of the Chikunda-speaking people raised alarm over the growing human-wildlife conflict, attributing it to the effects of climate change.

The Traditional Leader noted that elephant migration patterns had been disrupted, with elephants increasingly moving into human spaces in search of food and water.

He called for innovative approaches to address this issue.

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