

Monday, Serenje (16th June 2025)



ZAMBIA HOSTS INTERNATIONAL RESILIENCE DIALOGUE TO TACKLE NATURE CRIMES

Zambia has hosted an international dialogue in Serenje District, Central Province to dissect nature crimes.

This came to light in Serenje during the Resilience Dialogue in Africa: Zambia Edition, co-hosted by the Centre for Environment Justice (CEJ), Decisive Minds, and Centre4Zero Waste and Development.

CEJ Executive Director Maggie Mapalo Mwape 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.

She emphasized that confidence in local actors and frontline communities reaffirmed the shared belief that sustainable solutions must come from the ground up.

Ms Mwape explained that Zambia, like many countries in the region, faced growing threats from nature crimes such as illegal logging, illicit mining, wildlife trafficking, illegal fishing, and destructive land conversion.

She noted that these activities weaken governance structures, fuel organized crime, and threaten communities dependent on natural resources.

Ms Mwape highlighted that the Resilience Dialogue was a deliberate effort to convene diverse stakeholders, including traditional leaders, civil society, community activists, and policymakers, to discuss practical ways to prevent and respond to environmental crimes while building long-term resilience.

She outlined several objectives of the dialogue, including fostering a shared understanding of nature crimes and their impact on livelihoods, security, and social cohesion.

The CEJ Executive Director also emphasized identifying detection methods, exchanging local knowledge, capturing community perspectives, and amplifying voices to ensure inclusive policy-making.

Ms Mwape stated that the dialogue was part of a growing regional movement supported by the Resilience Fund, which had already taken shape in Tanzania and Kenya.

She added that Zambia was proud to be part of this effort and acknowledged CEJ's collaboration with Decisive Minds and Centre4Zero Waste and Development.

Ms Mwape urged participants to engage openly, share their experiences, and reflect critically on the discussions.

She stated that the strength of the dialogue lay in the voices of those living the realities of environmental challenges daily and encouraged honest conversations to build a future where nature is protected, communities are empowered, and justice is upheld.

Ms Mwape said this in a speech delivered on her behalf by CEJ Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist Haggai Nyambe.

Meanwhile, Serenje District Commissioner Paul Masuwa emphasized that nature crimes such as illegal logging, unauthorized mining, wildlife trafficking, and unsanctioned land conversion were pressing issues that severely impacted communities, threatening livelihoods, security, and environmental sustainability.

Mr. Masuwa highlighted the devastating effects of these crimes, particularly in rural areas, where illegal mining exploits youth, contaminates water sources, and renders land unsuitable for agriculture.

He commended President Hakainde Hichilema for his administration's commitment to environmental protection and sustainable management of Zambia's natural resources, emphasizing the importance of strong policies in tackling environmental crimes.

The District Commissioner said this in a speech delivered on his behalf by Serenje District Education Board Secretary (DEBS) Harry Silungwe.

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