ZIMBABWE EBAFOSA LAUNCH
EVENT:
Official launching of EBAFOSA Zimbabwe Branch

DATE:
12th May 2017

VENUE:
The Rainbow Hotel

IN ATTENDANCE
Ministry of Agriculture;
Ministry of Environment, Water & Climate;
UN Resident Coordinator;
Zimbabwe EBAFOSA bureau officials;
UNEP Regional Climate Change coordinator;
Country Stakeholders;
Reshaping Africa’s food security and climate resilience through leveraging Ecosystem based Adaptation Assembly Policy Framework

OFFSHOOTS FROM EBAFOSA ZIMBABWE NATIONAL BRANCH LAUNCH

Following the 6th Special Session of the Africa Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN) supported the establishment of the Africa Ecosystem Based Adaptation for Food Security Assembly (EBAFOSA), its' Constitution and the outcomes of the process leading to the establishment of the Assembly, as the inclusive pan-African policy framework and implementation platform that brings together key stakeholders and actors along the entire ecosystem-based adaptation-driven agriculture value-chain.

With this highest policy recognition by AMCEN countries have a big opportunity to build on the call for these partnerships to implement their INDCs/NDCs as well as ensuring Adaptation Mitigation projects are jointly implemented towards a transition to low-emissions and climate resilient development in order to realize 2030 Agenda for the SDGs and Africa’s Agenda 2063.

Article 7 of the EBAFOSA constitution establishes the structure of EBAFOSA and Country branches are the critical component where impactful activities are undertaken in a country led process. Country branches register local, continental and global actors within the country and facilitate their interactions and mutual partnership to bridge gaps in policy processes, techniques, technology, markets, commercialization, and finance and achieve implementation.

It is against this backdrop that the Zimbabwe National Branch hosted by the Agriculture Research Council, was launched on 12th May 2017, under the theme “Re-shaping Zimbabwe’s food security and climate resilience through EBAFOSA”. The launch event under the leadership of the EBAFOSA Zimbabwe officials, attracted over 200 stakeholders representing multiple sectors from government, academia, NGOs, CSOs, individual professionals & citizens, farmers, resident UN agencies with media coverage to enhance awareness across the country.

The Zimbabwe Government as official custodian of development supports EBAFOSA as an inclusive policy-implementation framework to harness the complementary strengths of various government ministries to harmonize policies towards climate proofing & maximizing productivity of Zimbabwe food systems for climate resilience & socioeconomic transformation.
In his welcome remarks, the EBAFOSA Zimbabwe president thanked the government for its support and added that EBAFOSA supports sustainable agro-industrialization as a path towards transformation of rural economies. He further explained that EBAFOSA supports efforts within the Zimbabwe’s development priorities including the Zimbabwe Agenda for Sustainable and Socio-Economic Transformation, Climate Policy, Zimbabwe Agriculture Investment Plan, Intended Nationally Determined Contributions, and the National Climate Change Response Strategy.

In demonstrating the effectiveness of the EBAFOSA approach to climate proof & maximize food systems by integrating Ecosystems Based Adaptation (EBA) - driven agriculture and clean energy with market linkages as tools to maximize productivity of the entire agro-value chain, a lecturer at the Midlands State University Dr. Jephias Matunhu shared on a success story. Faced with the challenge of reducing yields as a result of degraded farming areas and increasing poverty due to falling income, Midlands University pioneered Community Engagement Centres (CECs) to build capacity of farmers on applying EBA techniques of alternative livelihoods and providing market linkages. Going forward CEC will leverage on EBAFOSA to replicate its model across Zimbabwe.

The UN resident coordinator Mr. Bishow Parajuli also offered remarks premised on the nexus between the environment, human welfare and economic growth. He noted the importance of addressing key challenges of policy disharmony, agricultural inefficiencies, inadequate policies, and lack of implementation of known solutions as well as leveraging on opportunities such as clean energy, healthy ecosystems, green agro-supply chains, and multilevel partnerships involving both state & non-state actors, including financial institutions towards actualizing the SDGs. These are the strategic pillars of EBAFOSA. He thanked the Government of Zimbabwe through the Minister of Agriculture Dr. Joseph Made who was in attendance for providing leadership and support in this strategic trajectory that could potentially unlock multiple SDGs for Zimbabwe.

Representing the Ministry of Environment, Water and Climate, the Permanent Secretary reading the Ministers remarks noted that EBAFOSA comes at an opportune time for the country because the African landscape is in need of lasting solutions to address severe climate shocks and socioeconomic challenges. In light of the 70% of Zimbabweans living in rural areas & depending on rain-fed agriculture, the Minister put into perspective the need to enhance agricultural productivity while building ecosystems resilience and reducing emissions per unit increase of agro-productivity. This is exactly what the EBAFOSA strategic trajectory of amalgamating EBA with clean energy for value addition and linking efficiently to markets & supply chains addresses.

The Minister further noted Zimbabwe’s commitment to climate action as evidenced by submitting to the UNFCCC, of the country's Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDCs) and the Cabinet approval of the Climate Policy.
The Minister indicated that the Climate Policy will provide guidance on climate change adaptation and mitigation in pursuit of a low carbon economy. Where leading socio-economic priorities of food security, job & income creation are actualized simultaneously with offsetting carbon and building ecosystems resilience to meet climate objectives.

Finally, the guest of honour, the Minister of Agriculture Dr. Joseph Made presided over the launch starting off with his speech. He reiterated Zimbabwe’s food security & socioeconomic development policy priorities and trajectories informed by the country’s own research and analysis. Among key trajectories include that Zimbabwe prioritizes nature based, and improvement of soil fertility. In addition, the government prioritizes value addition and market linkages to maximize agro-productivity and earnings. All these are the foundational pillars of EBAFOSA. To actualize these priorities, the Minister noted that the Government does not intend to isolate itself from other nations in the world. But will position itself globally to access available relevant technologies and ensuring that its human capital was strategically deployed to these priority areas. The Minister further advised EBAFOSA to take into account the contextual peculiarities across countries in Africa. These are an opportunity to cross-hybridize innovative solutions across the continent.

Thereafter, the Minister officially launched the EBAFOSA Zimbabwe Chapter, and proceeded to sign the relevant paperwork together with other officials present at the event. The broad participation in the launch, especially cross-cutting policy level, UN and other development partners, academia, individual professionals & citizens, private sector coupled with media coverage was a crucial achievement for the EBAFOSA Zimbabwe branch. This in ensuring the launch catalyzes progress in the EBAFOSA stakeholder promotion & mobilization and strategic partnership building, the crucial tenets towards EBAFOSA’s mandate of building targeted policy & action solutions for optimized, climate resilient food systems in Zimbabwe and Africa. With the support of AMCECN and with the launch of EBAFOSA Zimbabwe, the country now has a national policy driven niche to domesticate the EBAFOSA at national level. This will enhance effective policy uptake to ensure enhanced EBA uptake and integration into national plans, development processes and decision making frameworks in the country.

As next steps, with guidance from the continental secretariat hosted by the UN Environment and partners, EBAFOSA Zimbabwe will embark on activities to ensure the promotional aspects and awareness created by the launch event are leveraged to catalyze expedited progress in implementing the EBAFOSA roll-out strategies. A follow up of new contacts from policy level, private sector, academia, NGOs, and resident UN agencies and other International / intergovernmental organizations etc., established at the launch event will be made to ensure their registration and involvement in EBAFOSA Zimbabwe activities. This will be underpinned by multi-stakeholder mobilization & registration across sectors in Zimbabwe and fomenting of mutual multi-level, cross-sectorial partnerships towards bridging implementation gaps at both policy and operational level. Through volunteerism, regional and sectorial focal persons will be recruited to lead in these activities as illustrated in the EBAFOSA Phase two rollout Strategy and Implementation Plan. The EBAFOSA Zimbabwe national branch will develop an action plan based on this strategy, with timelines and responsible persons through guidance from the continental secretariat to proceed with activities.

Congratulations EBAFOSA Zimbabwe!

EBAFOSA Zimbabwe becomes the 16th National branch to be launched. For further information please contact: zimbabwe@ebafosa.org Richard.Munang@unep.org

OFFICIAL LAUNCH OF THE EBAFOSA ZIMBABWE CHAPTER

THEME: SHAPING ZIMBABWE’S FOOD SECURITY AND CLIMATE RESILIENCE THROUGH EBAFOSA

RAINBOW TOWERS HOTEL AND CONFERENCE CENTRE, HARARE 12TH MAY 2017

Ecosystem Based Adaptation for Food Security Assembly