LIBERIA EBAFOSA
BRANCH LAUNCH
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EVENT:
Official launching of EBAFOSA Liberia Branch

DATE:
19th July 2017

VENUE:
Bella Casa Hotel, Monrovia

IN ATTENDANCE
H.E Vice President, Republic of Liberia;
Ministry of Agriculture;
Ministry of Gender;
Ministry of Foreign Affairs;
Environmental Protection Agency (EPA);
UN Resident Coordinator;
Liberia EBAFOSA bureau officials;
UNEP Regional Climate Change coordinator;
FAO;
Country Stakeholders;
Reshaping Africa’s food security and climate resilience through leveraging Ecosystem based Adaptation Assembly Policy Framework

OFFSHOOTS FROM EBAFOSA LIBERIA 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 Liberia National Branch hosted by the Liberia Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), was launched on 19th July 2017, under the theme “Re-shaping Liberia's food security and climate resilience through EBAFOSA”. The launch event under the leadership of the EBAFOSA Liberia officials attracted about 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 EBAFOSA Liberia was launched by the Vice President of the Republic of Liberia, H.E. Amb. Joseph N. Boakai. This demonstrates high level government support of EBAFOSA's mandate to climate proof & maximize productivity of Liberia Food systems and the country driven approach fostered in implementation. In his welcome remarks, the EBAFOSA Liberia president noted that the EBAFOSA approach of building on existing complementary initiatives to implement national socioeconomic and climate agenda specifically the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) is efficient and value adding to Liberia's development.
The UNDP country director Dr. Pa Lamin Beyai noted that effective Climate Adaptation requires policy harmonization and lauded EBAFOSA for doing exactly that. On his part, the UN FAO country representative Hon. Mark Abdala noted that climate change already impacting food production. He noted that healthy ecosystems are therefore critical to maintain balance and sustain food production in the long term under the changing climate.

On productivity, he noted that Liberia spends up to $200million for rice importation, depleting foreign reserves and compounding macro-economic stability. He therefore welcomed the EBAFOSA approach to maximize productivity of the entire value chain holistically by eliminating inefficiencies along the chain – both on farm & off-farm as timely to safeguard domestic production, eliminate need for imports & recover the $200million to capitalize other sectors of the economy and stabilize macroeconomic growth.

He further noted the urgent need for implementation at policy level which EBAFOSA covers through policy harmonization by interagency policy task forces & at operational level which EBAFOSA covers through operational level mutual partnerships. He lauded EBAFOSA for fostering harmonization & inclusivity of complementary actions at both policy & ground level.

He urged all to leverage on the complementary partnerships EBAFOSA fosters to enhance impact of their actions to climate proof & maximize productivity of Liberia agro-value chains & convert the country into an agriculture power house. On his part, the Minister of Agriculture underscored the need for coordinated action towards maximizing agriculture productivity to accelerate socioeconomic transformation in Liberia.

By this he underscored the urgent need to bridge silos at both policy & operational level to actualize harmonized action towards a common objective to maximize productivity of Liberia's food systems and this is what EBAFOSA targets.

The special guest, H.E. the Vice President of the Republic of Liberia Amb. Joseph N. Boakai underscored the timeliness of EBAFOSA for Liberia's and Africa's accelerated development. He underscored the urgent need to open up Africa's rural areas for agro-industrialization driven by Nature approaches including clean energy, and creation of additional income & job opportunities as an urgent need that EBAFOSA is fulfilling. He also echoed the Minister of Agriculture on the urgent need for coordinated & harmonized actions at both policy and operational level towards a shared end goal to maximize impacts & efficiency.

Thereafter, the H.E the Vice President officially launched the EBAFOSA Liberia Chapter. The launch certificate was then signed by the Minister of Agriculture together with the President and the Environment Protection Agency Executive Director.

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 Liberia 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 Liberia and Africa.
With the support of AMCEN and with the launch of EBAFOSA Liberia, 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 Liberia 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 Liberia activities.

This will be underpinned by multi-stakeholder mobilization & registration across sectors in Liberia 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 Liberia 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 Liberia!

EBAFOSA Liberia becomes the 17th National branch to be launched.
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