



MINISTRY OF LANDS
AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Report on Attendance at the Southern Africa Expanded Constituency Workshop in Johannesburg, South Africa 2025

A Zambian delegation participated in the Global Environmental Facility (GEF) Southern Africa Expanded Constituency Workshop of 2025 in Johannesburg, South Africa from 20 to 23rd January 2025.



Report By;

- Mr. Milton Malaya (Ministry of Lands)
- Dr. Kazembe Kawanga, Forestry Expert
- Ms. Mailes Zulu Muke the founder and CEO of SEPA Zambia
- Mr. Kiss Abraham, NewZambian Innovations

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1. INTRODUCTION

A Zambian delegation participated in the Global Environmental Facility (GEF) Southern Africa Expanded Constituency Workshop of 2025 in Johannesburg, South Africa from 20 to 23rd January 2025. The delegation comprised Dr. Kazembe Kawanga a Forestry Expert, Ms. Mailes Zulu Muke the founder and CEO of SEPA Zambia, Mr. Milton Malaya from the Ministry of Lands, and Mr. Kiss Abraham from NewZambian Innovations.

The event details can be found on this link: <https://www.thegef.org/events/southern-africa-expanded-constituency-workshop-2025>

The Southern Africa Expanded Constituency Workshop 2025, hosted by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) from January 20-23 in Johannesburg, South Africa, brought together key stakeholders from ten Southern African countries. The workshop aimed to enhance awareness and capacity on the latest GEF programs and policies, focusing on the theme “Integration for Impact.” Participants, including government officials, international agencies, civil society organizations, and representatives from multilateral environmental agreements, engaged in discussions and interactive activities to explore integrated approaches for achieving global environmental benefits. The event featured presentations, learning stations, and a field visit, emphasizing the importance of collaboration, gender inclusion, and stakeholder engagement in driving impactful environmental actions.

GEF is a multilateral environmental fund established in 1991 to address global environmental challenges. It provides grants and blended finance for projects related to biodiversity, climate change, international waters, land degradation, and pollution, among others. The GEF collaborates with 186-member countries, international institutions, civil society organizations, and the private sector to support sustainable development initiatives that generate global environmental benefits. Over the past three decades, the GEF has mobilized over \$26 billion in financing and \$149 billion in co-financing for more than 5,200 projects worldwide. It also serves as a financial mechanism for several international environmental conventions, including the Convention on Biological Diversity and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

The Southern Africa Expanded Constituency of the Global Environment Facility (GEF) encompasses ten countries: Angola, Botswana, Eswatini, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Zambia, and Zimbabwe. This constituency aims to enhance regional collaboration and capacity-building to address environmental challenges. Through workshops and meetings, such as the Expanded Constituency Workshops (ECWs), the GEF engages stakeholders from these countries to share knowledge, experiences, and best practices. The primary function of these gatherings is to increase awareness of GEF programs and policies, promote integrated approaches for environmental sustainability, and strengthen the capacities of participants to implement impactful environmental projects. These efforts are crucial for achieving global environmental benefits and meeting the targets of multilateral environmental agreements.

2. EVENT OVERVIEW

The workshop focused on the "Integration for Impact " theme, which aimed to engage key stakeholders and generate awareness and capacity on the latest GEF program and policies. The event provided a platform for discussions on global environmental benefits, integration in achieving MEA targets, and the GEF's integrated approach programming.

3. DELEGATION PARTICIPATION

The Zambian delegation represented government, civil society and private sector. SEPA and NewZambian Innovations are recipients of GEF support to local environmental projects in Zambia.

The delegation actively participated in various sessions, including overview presentations, learning stations, and interactive activities on integration.

The Global Environment Facility (GEF) integration approach focuses on addressing the root causes of environmental degradation through comprehensive, cross-sectoral strategies. This approach involves Integrated Programs (IPs) that tackle interconnected environmental issues by promoting synergies across different sectors and stakeholders. For example, the GEF's Integrated Approach Pilots include programs on sustainable cities, food security, and deforestation-free commodity supply chains. These programs aim to achieve broader and more sustainable impacts by addressing the drivers of environmental problems, fostering innovation, and scaling up successful practices. The integration approach also emphasizes the importance of collaboration among governments, private sector, civil society, and international organizations to create transformative change and generate multiple global environmental benefits.

Dr. Kazembe Kawanga expressed the importance of integration in achieving global environmental benefits, Ms. Mailes Muke engaged in discussions on the GEF's integrated approach, emphasizing its impact on environmental action. She shared insights and observations on various GEF projects and how for example use of certain brands of energy saving light bulbs which are considered appropriate for energy conservation will release toxic chemicals into the environment when broken and how integration would be aware of the necessity of using conscious methods in environmental interventions. In the Zambia the bilateral meeting with GEF she talked about late disbursement of funds and she proposed that SGP funding should be increased. Additionally she alluded that people implementing GEF/SGP should be given monthly allowances and grantee should be able allowed to apply for more than one project. Mr. Milton Malaya contributed insights on the GEF's Small Grants Program and its role in supporting environmental initiatives in Zambia. He gave a status report of the grant in Zambia and shared some of Zambia's key environmental priorities. Mr. Kiss Abraham shared the progress of the UNDP GEF Small Grants Programme supported NewZambian artists project on climate change which was conceptualized in 2023 to involve artists in climate change and environmental and biodiversity protection.

4. OUTCOMES

The workshop concluded with several key outcomes, including enhanced understanding of the GEF's integrated approach and strengthened capacities of participants to achieve

transformational change. The Zambia delegation successfully represented the country's interests and contributed to the discussions on environmental action and collaboration.

5. CONCLUSION

The Zambia delegation's participation in the Southern Africa Expanded Constituency Workshop 2025 was productive and impactful. The insights and contributions made by the delegation members will help shape future initiatives and policies in environmental conservation and sustainable development.