

Over one hundred and thirty proposals have been received by COMESA by potential implementers of Climate smart agriculture in Eastern and Southern Africa, technical experts from COMESA, the East African Community (EAC), the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC), and UK's Department for International Development (DFID) spent a residential week (24th Feb-1st March 2013) at Protea Safari Lodge, Chisamba, 38 kms north of Lusaka; going through preliminary assessments of the submissions. It is expected that the promoters will be notified of the outcome of their bid early April 2013, once an investment board has made its final selection. More calls for bids are expected mid 2013.

In December 2012, COMESA Secretariat announced a call for proposals for the "Upscaling Climate Smart Agriculture" under the Programme on Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation in the Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA-EAC-SADC) Region. The scheme will be supported by the Results Facility established under the COMESA-EAC-SADC Tripartite.

The Results Facility is supported by DFID. The potential bidders were given only two weeks to submit the bid and were allowed to request up to British £1,000,000, provided they were able to demonstrate value for money basis. Bids were invited from CSOs / NGOs, research organisations, and the private sector; particularly from Eastern and Southern Africa. Bids from overseas institutions could also be eligible provided they are already active in any country in the COMESA-EAC-SADC region, have strong linkages with local institutions, and demonstrably build the capacity of local partners.

The selected promoters are expected among other things to support the adoption of Climate Smart Agriculture (CSA) practices and strengthen applied research and knowledge management vis-à-vis CSA. According to the bid, the initiatives whose results will be sustained following the end of the project will be particularly favoured, as are those which leverage this investment to engage other partners or deliver larger impacts. For this call, CSA was defined as including conservation agriculture (reduced tillage, mulching, intercropping with legumes), integrating of trees into farms, improved rangeland management, and other agricultural practices that build climate resilience or mitigate climate change.

Women Entrepreneurs discuss challenges and opportunities in Climate change Over 100

women entrepreneurs on Thursday 7 March 2013 met at for a whole morning at the Taj Pamodzi Hotel, Lusaka Zambia, as part of women's day celebration that is scheduled to take place on Friday 8 March 2013..

Speaking at the gathering the COMESA Climate Change Advisor, Dr Mclay Kanyangarara, who is also the interim coordinator of COMESA-EAC-SADC tripartite Climate Change programme, pointed out that women as the family pillars are the most affected by Climate Change. He further added that rural women in particular bear the burden. " Due to adverse climate rural women spend more hours than they used to, looking for water and firewood. Rural girls are forced to drop out of school to work with their mothers, or spend their after school hours doing these domestic related work instead of studying which has a future effect on the family" pointed out Dr Kanyangarara.

At the overall business environment, he informed the gathering that some countries have started including carbon footprint on necessary information on products labelling, and since most African countries are far from their export markets, their carbon foot print is increased and this may affect business.

On opportunities Dr Kanyangarara, pointed out that entrepreneurs could actually take advantage of climate change to leverage business. Giving example of Lusaka , Zambian capital, he pointed out that a study conducted by COMESA has revealed that over 800,000 tons of waste is generated by the city, much of it related to Climate change. This, he pointed out could be transformed into waste to energy, and generate millions of dollars. Opportunities also exists in renewable energy such as solar, and water harvesting. In addition such projects if well profiled could be sold as carbon credits under the United Nations Framework Convention Clean Development Mechanism (CDM projects). Other business opportunities that are likely to accrue as a result of climate change include food preservation and green houses distribution and farming.

The meeting was organized by Judah Investments in Partnership with, Lusaka Stock exchange (LuSE) and the Ministry of Gender and Child Development; an invitation extended to COMESA as a Eastern and Southern Africa leader in the region in climate change climate change adaptation and mitigation.