



CONFERÊNCIA REGIONAL
REGIONAL CONFERENCE
CONFÉRENCE RÉGIONALE

MIOMBO

"One community, one community forest"



**MAPUTO DECLARATION ON SUSTAINABLE AND
INTEGRATED MANAGEMENT OF MIOMBO WOODLANDS**

Maputo, 5th August, 2022

1. Two Heads of State of Mozambique and Zimbabwe and eighth delegates of Angola, Botswana, Democratic Republic of Congo, Malawi, Tanzania, Zambia, South Africa and Republic of Congo (the last two countries participated as guest) from the Southern African Miombo Woodland region and/or sharing the Great Zambezi River Basin, participated in the Regional Conference on Sustainable and Integrated Management of Miombo Forest in Maputo, Mozambique on 5 August 2022. The Conference was convened by the Government of Mozambique in collaboration with Miombo Network, being the first high level meeting held in Southern Africa with a focus on the Miombo forest.
2. Under the theme of Integrated and Sustainable Management of Miombo Forest, the regional Conference identified the priorities for the next decade to strengthen systems of transparent, inclusive, and accountable governance of the Miombo forest so that these forests can contribute to local and global climate change efforts, biodiversity conservation as well as to the local and national economies and sustainable development of the Miombo countries and beyond. These woodlands used to cover about 2.7 million Km² in Southern Africa but unsustainable management and use has resulted in forest loss to current 1.9 million km² in the last 15 years, according to Miombo network report, 2021.
3. The Conference attracted participants from across the Miombo forest countries and beyond, including, NGOs, Civil Society, international organizations, youths and local communities, academia and other research institutions, and the private sector.
4. As the Conference draws to a close, and motivated by the growing awareness by stakeholders of the importance of

integrated management processes of woodlands in general and the Miombo in particular, we, the delegates to the Miombo Woodland Conference:

- a) **Concerned with** the high rate of deforestation and degradation of the Miombo forest which has been increasing annually at an ever-accelerating rate, mainly due to illegal logging, charcoal extraction, shifting cultivation, wildfires, overgrazing, collection of wood for biomass energy, and infrastructure development, including human settlements, urbanization and climate change;
- b) **Recognising** that the Miombo forest are an essential and primary source for the provision of economic, social, and environmental goods and services vital for the survival of millions of people, such as water, food, shelter, building materials, climate regulation and resilience, fuelwood, timber, medicines, bushmeat, tourism, among others, which contribute to the bio-economy of Southern African countries;
- c) **Aware** that the Miombo forest are home to much of the region's terrestrial biodiversity, that it provides habitat for an enormous diversity of both fauna and flora species, and that it plays a vital role in the mitigation and adaptation to climate change, including enhancing carbon removal and storage, increased resilience against climate change impacts such as floods, droughts and extreme weather events, the direct and soil conservation, stabilization, and carbon soil stocks, and the hydrological cycle on global, regional and national scales;

- d) **Aware** of the multiple impacts and the environmental, economic, legal, and social consequences resulting from the unsustainable use of the Miombo's natural resources;
- e) **Aware** that, although the region is endowed with a legal and regulatory framework rich in content for forestry protection and management (SADC Forestry Protocol 2002 and Zanzibar Declaration 2015), it has not yet been able to establish institutional and specific framework mechanisms on a regional scale that promotes the integrated, rational, effective, and efficient management of the Miombo forest;
- f) **Aware** that the management, conservation, sustainable use, and restoration of the Miombo forest will contribute to economic growth, poverty alleviation, strengthening of the Rule of Law, combating deforestation and desertification, and addressing climate change in the region, and in so doing also contribute to the participating countries' ability to deliver on their Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and commitments under the Paris Agreement Goals via their Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) and Long-Term Low Emission Development Strategies (LT LEDS) in this critical decade for climate action;
- g) **We**, the Heads of State of countries with Miombo Woodlands and other signatories' states namely South Africa and Republic of Congo, recognize the diversity of rightsholders and stakeholders in the Southern Africa region and the existence of a variety of

governance arrangements for State protected and conserved areas, by private actors and the areas conserved by local communities. In particular, we recognize the need to respect the rights and identity, and traditional governance systems and customary laws of all stakeholders, including women, youth and vulnerable people, as well as transparency and accountability in decision-making, and the equitable sharing of costs and benefits of production, protected and conserved areas.

5. As signatories to this declaration, the States commit to achieving the following goals by 2032:

- a) To enforce the sustainable management principles and practices in production forests including promoting legality, traceability, transparency, and investment in more efficient processing of final forest products while promoting circular economy and integrated utilization of forest products;
- b) To strengthen the management of existing protected areas and create, restore and increase the number of conservation areas in the Miombo Woodland for sustainable community use, under the slogan: "*one community, one community forest*", including promoting the use of Participatory Forest Management approaches;
- c) To promote alternatives for the diversification of income sources for local communities that depend on the extraction of timber and non-timber products from the Miombo Woodlands through valorisation and other

initiatives that promote entrepreneurship and prosperity;

d) To leverage the capacities and alliances of the African continent, to jointly and decisively use and manage Miombo Woodlands sustainably to achieve the objectives of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (SDG 13, 15, 17), Agenda 2063 African Union Agenda, the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), and those called for in the 2014 New York Declaration on Forests at the Climate Summit;

e) To ensure sustainability and conserve the most important biodiversity areas within the Miombo Woodlands and ensure their associated ecosystem services and cultural and spiritual values are also conserved in protected and conserved area systems that deliver conservation and societal benefits. This calls for the deliberate statutory recognition of forestry as a viable land use option, and the effective management of existing protected areas and greater support for local community conservation efforts;

f) To halt and revert forest loss and land degradation by 2032 and strive towards net zero emissions in the Miombo Woodlands;

g) To implement programmes to reduce emissions from deforestation and forest degradation and the role of conservation, sustainable management of forests and enhancement of forest carbon stocks in developing countries (REDD+) through Carbon credits and other mechanisms and to do so in a manner that does not

harm but rather enhance biodiversity and protect the rights of local communities;

- h) To improve resourcing to restore and secure the integrity of the Miombo Woodlands and their biodiversity as the foundation for actions to address global challenges, and to secure the health and well-being of communities and their economic and social well-being. In particular, we commit to strengthening the integrity and resilience of protected and conserved areas to sustain the ecosystem's long-term functions, cope with the increasing frequency and intensity of climate-induced events and disasters, and strengthen communities' abilities to adapt to climate change;
- i) To foster transboundary cooperation for both peace and security, legal cooperation and to address the transboundary movements of both animals and people, reduce human-fauna conflicts, illegal trade and to reduce the rapid and ongoing fragmentation and disruption of Miombo ecosystems;
- j) To mainstream the Miombo Woodlands into development plans, productive sectors and policy, planning and practice in woodland landscapes to sustain ecological integrity and ecosystem services that support resilient livelihoods;
- k) To enhance research and technology adoption to improve the sustainable management, monitoring and reporting;

- l) To increase communication and knowledge at all levels about the multiple functions of Miombo Woodlands, the importance of their conservation and sharing existing experiences of implementing best practices in the region, targeting local communities, women, children and youths;
- m) To implement multi-level and multi-sectoral participatory forest governance to guarantee Miombo Woodlands sustainable use, resources management and strengthen transparency in governance in the light of the principles of the rule of law in the region;
- n) To provide, based on the principle of adaptive management experience, the existing legal framework, where it can still be improved, with effective measures to protect Miombo Woodlands and integrated management at the regional level;
- o) To promote sustainable utilization of miombo for timber, grazing, improved charcoal production technologies and other forest products;
- p) To promote sustainable eco-tourism in miombo woodlands;
- q) To promote alternative source of biomass energy to reduce over extraction of charcoal from Miombo;
- r) To promote forest plantation and agroforestry systems using native and adapted rapid growing species to reduce pressure on miombo woodlands and increase carbon sequestration;

- s) To promote sustainable and intensive agriculture practices and reduce shifting cultivation in Miombo forest areas;
- t) To provide the legal framework with transparent, swift, and effective mechanisms to maximise the benefits from the revenues obtained from the use of the Miombo's natural resources for the sustainable economic development of local communities and social inclusion, including the application of indigenous knowledge systems in the management of Miombo Woodlands;
- u) To coordinate and strengthen enforcement, investigation, and prosecution, adopting effective mechanisms for coordination and communication between the Forest Sector Enforcement *Network*, criminal investigation, and prosecution in all countries concerned;
- v) To monitor the effective implementation of the "net zero loss of biodiversity" standard, including updating the list of threatened flora species as defined by CITES;
- w) To eradicate illegal exploitation of forest resources, as well as uncontrolled burning in Miombo woodlands in the region;
- x) To strengthen enforcement of trade on forest products and services from Miombo Woodlands through information sharing;

- y) To undertake concerted effort of technical training and enforcement of employment of technical experts in the management including restoration of Miombo Woodlands and processing of its products;
- z) To support proactive and forward-looking planning, investment and implementation approaches in Miombo woodlands that reduce significant damage, including the high level of forest degradation, minimize its conversion to other types of land use;
- aa) To promote beekeeping and other livelihood activities that are compatible with conservation of high biodiversity as strategy for miombo woodlands protection;
- bb) To allocate adequate human and financial resources for the sustainable management of Miombo woodlands.

Call to Action

6. Recognizing the unique and significant extent of the Miombo Woodlands and biodiversity, its central role in achieving national and global climate change goals, and the diversity of its peoples, the Conference endorses the need for urgent action to conserve the remaining woodlands and restore this critical ecosystem. We, the participants at this conference therefore pledge our commitment to communicate our recommendations widely and call upon all stakeholders to support implementation.

7. The Heads of State agree to establish a Regional Commission for Miombo Sustainable Management within three months, which will be responsible for the elaboration of a Regional Strategy and Action Plan to be approved by the member countries within a year from the date of adoption of the present declaration.
8. The Commission will be composed of the State Bodies responsible for forest management in each country, and other relevant players in the field may be invited.
9. The Heads of States agree to disseminate and mobilise national, regional and international stakeholders for technical and financial support towards the implementation of the Miombo initiative as part of African Climate Action effort during COP 27 and other international events.
10. We, the Heads of State, give mandate to the President of the Republic of Mozambique His Excellency Filipe Jacinto Nyusi, to lead the promotion of this initiative and coordinate our action at global level.

Adopted in Maputo, on August 5, 2022