THE NATIONAL FOREST POLICY



MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, CLIMATE, TOURISM AND HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY (METCHI)

GOVERNMENT OF ZIMBABWE

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

GHG	Green House Gas
MEA	Multilateral Environmental Agreement
NEP	National Environmental Policy
NDC	Nationally Determined Contributions
NDS1	National Development Strategy 1
NTFP	Non-Timber Forest Product
RDC	Rural District Council
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
TFCA	Trans-Frontier Conservation Area



1.0 BACKGROUND

1.1 Forests, woodlands, bushlands and wooded grasslands cover about 55 per cent of Zimbabwe's land area and are made up of indigenous forests and plantations of exotic commercial species. Zimbabwe is dominated by the dry miombo woodland, which covers in excess of 17 million hectares.

1.2 At least 44 % of the country's forests and woodlands are in communal and resettlement areas. Just less than one quarter (24%) of the area under woodland and forest is situated in Gazetted Forests, National Parks, Safari Areas, Sanctuaries and Botanical Reserves. There are also small areas of moist forests and plantations of exotic commercial species covering about 89,000 hectares. The status of these resources varies with land tenure category.

1.3 Zimbabwe's forests have many environmental, economic, cultural, spiritual and aesthetic functions and values that should all be maintained for their intrinsic worth and contributions they make to human welfare and sustainable development. The forests provide approximately 62% of the energy balance of Zimbabwe.

1.4 Forests also support crop and livestock production; and provide a habitat for wildlife which is the basis of tourism. They provide timber, transmission poles, construction materials, bark, fruits, medicines and browse for livestock and wildlife. Thus, forests support livelihoods in many parts of Zimbabwe, especially in rural areas.

1.5 Forests provide vital ecosystem services such as combating desertification; maintaining and protecting watersheds as well as biodiversity; regulating local climate and enhancing carbon sequestration. Other services provided include erosion control as well as natural hazard and disease regulation. However, most of these forest values are not paid for, and consequently are not captured in the national accounting system.

1.6 In addition, Government is popularizing and mainstreaming agroforestry into all relevant initiatives. The practice has been broadened to embrace all trees outside forests (planted farm and urban trees, including orchards). Planting and processing fruit trees into various products will unlock more value in order to create a self-sufficient and food surplus economy.

1.7 However, this grossly misrepresents the contribution of forests as it excludes the economic value of environmental services and non-timber forest products (NTFPs). NTFPs play an important role in the economies of rural households that include traditional medicines and small-scale forest-based enterprises, with some forest products such as honey and fruits having been commercialized. There is further potential for value addition to more non-timber forest products.

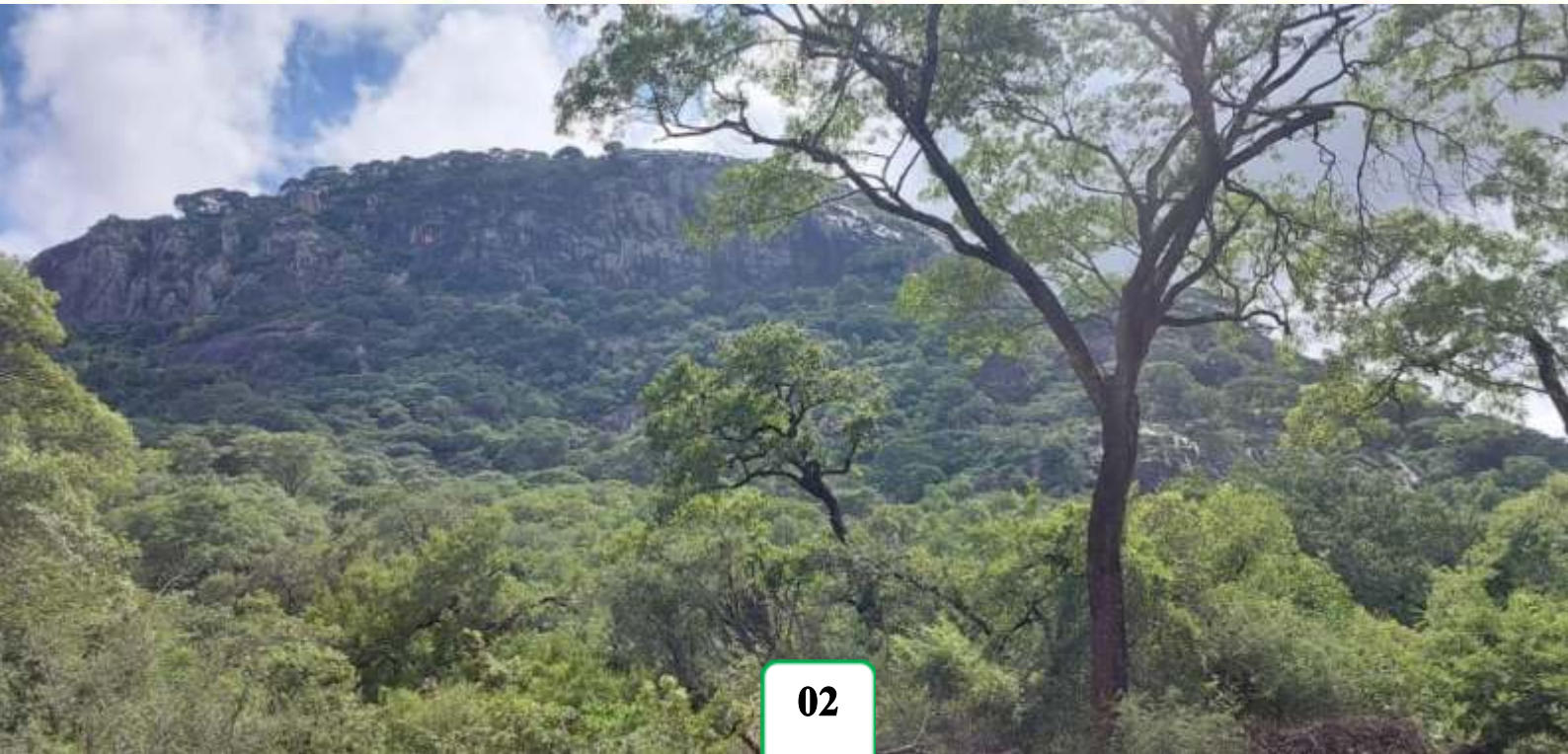
1.8 The Government of Zimbabwe acknowledges the local and national importance of forests for human well-being; socio-economic development; poverty alleviation; biodiversity conservation and environmental protection. However, these values, uses, benefits and contributions of forests to national development have been understated and consequently forests have been lowly prioritized in national development plans.

1.9 The new Constitution of Zimbabwe of 2013 includes environmental rights, whereby, every Zimbabwean has the right to have the environment protected for the benefit of current and future generations through reasonable legislative and other measures; that prevent pollution and ecological degradation; promote conservation and secure ecologically sustainable development; and use of natural resources, while promoting economic and social development.

1.10 The National Development Strategy 1 (NDS1) 2020-2025, identifies Environmental Protection, Climate Resilience and Natural Resource Management as well as Devolution as some of the key national development priorities consistent with Vision 2030 and SDGs 11 on sustainable cities and communities; 12 on sustainable production and consumption; 13 on climate action; and 15 on life on land.

1.11 NDS 1 targets to increase the area of planted forests from 11 500 hectares to 45 000 hectares by 2025; increase the National Forest Cover from 44.5 % in 2020 to 47% by 2025. These targets will need to be multiplied by a factor of 2 to 3 in each 5-year planning cycle in future and therefore put all conditions necessary for growth and maintenance. The number if keystone species will also need to be increased.

1.12 This Forest Policy recognizes the multiple functions of and interests in forests and is meant to ensure that they contribute effectively to national development; local economies and environmental protection, including climate change mitigation and adaptation. It creates the framework for sustainable forest management in a way and at a rate that maintains their biodiversity, productivity, regeneration capacity and vitality.



2.0 RATIONALE FOR THE NATIONAL FOREST POLICY

2.1 The forestry sector is an important component of the country's economy and needs to be well co-ordinated spatially and in relation to other key natural resources. The forestry industry is dominated by the exotic plantations made up of mostly various pine and eucalyptus species. It is estimated that the commercial forestry industry, based on exotic trees contributes 3-4 % to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and employed an average of 14,600 people between 2005 and 2010. The indigenous hardwood timber industry is smaller and based primarily on the extraction of the Zambezi teak which is mainly found on the Kalahari sands in north western Zimbabwe. It employs 2,000 people and a significant number in the downstream furniture industry.

2.2 There is a steep decline in both ecological and economic productivity in the Forestry Sector due to overexploitation and degradation of forests. The national rate of deforestation accelerated from 100,000 hectares per year in the 1990s to over 330,000 hectares per year between 2000 and 2010; the rate slightly declined to 262 000 per year by 2022, which is still unsustainably high.

2.3 In the context of gazetted forests, where communities live near the gazetted forests and exotic forest plantations, there has been a history of contested access and use of the forests by local communities who depend on these forests for wood and NTFPs. The Government administration finds it increasingly difficult to regulate this open access to forest resources without community responsibility. This policy therefore provides guidelines on co-existence with responsibility to communities, local institutions and management agencies for sustainable use and protection of the forests.

2.4 Government introduced collaborative forest management, which sought to enhance the participation of communities in forest management. It was not underpinned by a policy, hence there were different approaches promoted across the country and this did not bring the desired results of forest protection. The main challenges have been the demand for land overriding forest protection. Competing claims for access to forest land and limited capacity of forest valuation has contributed to increased degradation.

2.5 The Forest Policy contributes to the National Environmental Policy (NEP) Goal *"to avoid irreversible environmental damage, maintain essential environmental processes and preserve the broad spectrum of biological diversity so as to sustain the long-term ability of natural resources to meet the basic needs of people, enhance food security, reduce poverty, and improve the standard of living of Zimbabweans through long term economic growth and creation of employment."*

2.6 This National Forest Policy also provides for the strengthening of the legal and regulatory framework that promotes long-term national development through sustainable use of forests and meaningful participation of people who depend on forests for their livelihoods.

3.0 VISION, GOAL AND POLICY OBJECTIVES

3.1 Vision

The vision of this policy is: *to manage wisely Zimbabwe's forest and woodland resources for the improved social, economic and environmental well-being of its people.*

3.2 Goal

The goal of the policy: *to revitalise, manage, conserve, and sustainably utilise forest resources and to enhance the contribution of the forestry sector to development and social equity through active participation of all stakeholders for the benefit of present and future generations.*

3.3 Policy Objectives:

To achieve the goal, the following objectives have been formulated around the policy pillars:

3.3.1 **Maintaining forests integrity**: to promote the conservation and sustainable management of forests and biodiversity in all categories of forest tenure systems;

3.3.2 **Devolution and benefit sharing:** to provide an enabling devolution framework for meaningful participation of local communities and other stakeholders in sustainable forest management and benefit sharing;

3.3.3 **Forest industries and products:** to promote investments and partnerships in commercial tree growing, forest-based industries and beneficiation of non-timber forest products (NTFPs) for improved community livelihoods as well as public and private sector growth;

3.3.4 **Gender and vulnerable groups:** to ensure gender equity and meaningful participation of women, youths, and vulnerable groups (which include children, people with disabilities, the elderly, orphans, and marginalised communities) in forest resources management, forest industries and livelihood interventions;

3.3.5 **Forests and beautification of towns and cities:** to ensure that households not only plant trees, but also ensure a landscape that is maintained with additional aesthetic values from grass, flowers and related apparel.

3.3.6 **Climate change and forest ecosystems:** to enhance forest carbon sinks and build communities' resilience to climate change impacts through sustainable forest management;

3.3.7 **Forestry research, innovation, and training: to support:** Technology transfer; Forestry research in valuation of the contribution of forest resources to ecosystem services; and Ensure adequate finance research, education, and training institutions to ensure a vibrant forestry sector;

3.3.8 **Forestry governance and institutional arrangements:** To establish an effective legislative and institutional framework committed to the development of the forestry sector in line with regional and international agreements on sustainable forest management; and

3.3.9 **Regional and international collaboration in forestry:** to develop institutional mechanisms for mainstreaming forestry issues into, and coordinating with, other sectors.

3.4 POLICY PILLARS

3.4.1 The policy pillars present the state the medium to long-term intentions of government for the forest sector. They inform strategies and plans for the forest sector. A summary of the nine policy pillars is presented below.

Table 3.1: Policy Pillars of Zimbabwe National Forest Policy

Pillars	*Focus*	*Action*
Policy Pillar 1	Maintaining forest integrity.	Forests in all tenure categories will be sustainably managed to achieve national objectives.
Policy Pillar 2	Devolution and benefit sharing.	Rights and responsibilities for sustainable forest management will be devolved to local community level.
Policy Pillar 3	Forest industries and products.	Investments and business partnerships in forest industries and products will be promoted.
Policy Pillar 4	Gender and vulnerable groups.	Meaningful participation of women and vulnerable groups shall be integrated in forest management.
Policy Pillar 5	Forests and beautification of towns and cities	Park development and roadside tree planting, regular maintenance of the trees will be promoted.
Policy Pillar 6	Climate change and forest ecosystems.	Forestry sector interventions will build resilience against climate change.
Policy Pillar 7	Forestry research, innovation, and training.	The capacity of Zimbabwe's forestry research and training institutions will be enhanced.
Policy Pillar 8	Forestry governance and institutional arrangements.	A new legal and institutional framework for the forest sector will be developed.
Policy Pillar 9	Regional and international collaboration in forestry	Government will lead in collaboration and promoting joint bi-lateral and multi-lateral programmes with other countries and participate in international conventions for the benefit of Zimbabwe's forest sector

4.0 PILLAR 1: MAINTAINING FORESTS INTEGRITY

4.1 Drivers for Forest and biodiversity integrity

4.1.1 The integrity of Zimbabwe's state, exotic plantation and community forests and woodlands is threatened by deforestation and degradation of forest ecosystems including fragmentation and loss of biodiversity. This is a result of direct causes and indirect drivers. Direct causes of deforestation and biodiversity loss include clearance of land for agriculture and mining, overreliance on fuelwood for energy, dry season forest fires, illegal settlements in state gazetted forests and exotic plantations, and invasive alien species.

4.1.2 The direct causes identified above are driven by underlying forces such as market failure, inadequate budgetary resources for the forest sector and limited institutional capacity, weak implementation of land-use plans and inadequate and outdated forest laws. Forest institutions must be supported to enable the forestry sector to address direct and underlying drivers of deforestation and biodiversity loss and to contribute to the achievement of national objectives enunciated in Vision 2030 and NDS1 and the Constitution of Zimbabwe.

4.2 Guiding Principle

4.2.1 As a unique component of Zimbabwe's natural heritage and as an economic resource, the biodiversity and ecological integrity of gazetted forest areas and the ecosystems of which they are part of, must be protected, conserved and used sustainably.

4.3 Policy Action

The Government of Zimbabwe undertakes to:

4.3.1 Set aside, protect and manage selected area forest diversity of Zimbabwe.

4.3.2 Extend gazetted forests to include those in catchment areas, steep slopes and other vulnerable sites as well as in wildlife corridors and permanent carbon pools.

4.3.3 Halt and prevent illegal settlements in gazetted forests to maintain forest integrity.

4.3.4 Ensure that all plantation development is preceded by comprehensive environmental and social impact assessments so that they are planned and implemented in ways that do not compromise other ecosystems and local livelihoods.

4.3.5 Formulate and implement a comprehensive veld fire management framework that maintains the ecological integrity of forests.

4.3.6 Reverse deforestation and forest degradation by increasing planted area and promoting woodland management.

4.3.7 Create buffer zones around State Forests and, where appropriate, promote collaborative management of gazetted forest areas and buffer zones with the relevant local authorities for those areas and neighbouring communities, to ensure sustainable management and protection of the gazetted forests while benefiting the adjacent communities and local authorities.

4.3.8 Support improved management of gazetted forests and encourage certification to enhance forest productivity and sustainability, biodiversity conservation and environmental protection.

4.3.9 Develop strategies to control invasive alien species.

4.4 PILLAR 2: DEVOLUTION AND BENEFIT SHARING

4.4.1 Devolution and benefit sharing policy drivers

4.4.1.1 The Constitution of Zimbabwe provides for the devolution of governmental powers and responsibilities to lower tiers of Government. This National Forest Policy aims to devolve rights and responsibilities to rural communities to conserve and develop Zimbabwe's Forest resources for the socio-economic and environmental benefit of its present and future population.

4.4.2 Guiding Principle

4.4.2.1 Effective forest resources conservation and management depends on sharing responsibilities among stakeholders, efficient, well-motivated and coordinated institutions at community, district, provincial and national levels.

4.4.3 Policy Action

The Government of Zimbabwe will:

4.4.3.1 Decentralize authority for forest resources management to the lowest appropriate level and strengthen the capacity of local authorities and traditional leaders to fulfil their obligations in this regard.

4.4.3.2 Ensure that the land tenure system in communal and resettlement areas provides incentives for forest user rights with responsibility so as incentivize them to conserve and sustainably use woodland and forest resources.

4.4.3.3 Encourage and support the development of local forest-resource based industries and cultural and creative industries at growth points and service centres.

4.4.3.4 Harmonizes and strengthens all policies, laws and programmes relating to forest resources and align them with the Constitution of Zimbabwe.

4.5 PILLAR 3: FOREST INDUSTRIES AND PRODUCTS

4.5.1 Forest industries and products policy drivers

4.5.1.1 The hardwood and softwood industries have witnessed a significant decline in productivity and has faced competition from cheap imports. The NTFPs sector is commercially and industrially underdeveloped. These challenges also provide opportunities for investments in the certification of hardwood and softwood products to penetrate the lucrative export market. Related investments are also required in adding value to NTFPs for the domestic and export markets.

4.5.2 Guiding Principle:

4.5.2.1 Trade in competitive wood products and NTFPs offers considerable potential for increased economic development through employment creation and income generation as well as export earnings but requires an enabling environment for commercial activities, incentives and investment.

4.5.3 Policy Action

The Government of Zimbabwe will:

4.5.3.1 Support public-private-community partnerships in the establishment of new forestry industries.

4.5.3.2 Encourage value-addition in the wood industry to enable the country to maximise on benefits from its exported wood products and NTFPs.

4.5.3.3 Encourage the adoption of standardization and of a certification system to increase the competitiveness of Zimbabwean wood products regionally and internationally.

4.5.3.4 Establish an appropriate incentive framework for investment in the wood industry including small and medium enterprises as well as cultural and creative industries.

4.5.3.5 Ensure security of forest raw materials supply through sustainable management of the forest resource base.

4.6 PILLAR 4: GENDER AND VULNERABLE GROUPS

4.6.1 Gender and vulnerable groups policy drivers

4.6.1.1 Women and vulnerable groups such as the elderly, people living with disabilities, youths and children are rarely involved in decision making over natural resources management and forest management. The reliance of women on natural resources for food, limited access to productive resources combined with their disadvantaged position in society increases their vulnerability to deforestation, forest degradation and climate change. There is therefore a need to consider taking a gendered approach in the design and implementation of sustainable forestry management.

4.6.1.2 The Forest policy address the needs of both men and women and vulnerable and marginalised communities to end poverty in all its forms through achieving gender equality and empowering all women and girls. The forest policy shall ensure they have access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy while protecting, restoring and promoting sustainable use of forest ecosystems.

4.6.2 Guiding Principle

4.6.2.1 Gender mainstreaming and social inclusion through the integration of women and vulnerable groups in sustainable forest management should be promoted and strengthened.

4.6.3 Policy Action

The Government of Zimbabwe will:,

4.6.3.1 Encourage women and vulnerable groups to actively participate in devolved structures of decision making, forest resources management and access and benefit sharing.

4.6.3.2 Promote women and vulnerable groups' participation in value addition of timber and NTFPs for livelihoods enhancement.

4.6.3.3 Support initiatives that aim to actualise the constitutional environmental rights of women and vulnerable groups.

4.7 PILLAR 5: FORESTS AND BEAUTIFICATION OF TOWNS AND CITIES

4.7.1 Policy driver for greening rural and urban areas

4.7.1.1 Trees in urban areas enhance the environment for the urban population. Most Zimbabwean cities and towns have trees along roadsides and on individual properties. They improve the aesthetics of the urban environment, act as natural filters and improve the micro-climate of cities and towns. Most of the

trees on individuals' plots are fruit trees and are an important source of nutrition.

4.7.1.2 Increased urbanisation has resulted in growing demand for housing making cities and growth centres loose trees in large quantities. Energy deficit, and land for urban agriculture has also led to increased environmental degradation and pollution. Trees can provide many functions to city ecosystems, that to provide: shade, enhance micro-climates, help in reducing soil erosion, provide aesthetic to the environment, balance underground water. When combined with other interventions, forests can beautify cities of Zimbabwe.

4.7.2 Guiding Principle

4.7.2.1 The value of urban tree resources is multifaceted as they enhance environmental, nutritional, social, economic and aesthetic values.

4.7.3 Policy Action

The Government of Zimbabwe will:

4.7.3.1 Ensure that households, communities, companies, authorities ensure that their premises are beautified with trees and accessories.

4.7.3.2 Encourage the establishment of woodlots and plantations to meet the diverse needs of communities and the environment in or adjacent to urban areas.

4.7.3.3 Promote planting of trees to enhance landscapes and increase the values of properties.

4.7.3.4 Continue to promote park development and roadside tree planting; and encourage the regular maintenance of the trees.

4.7.3.5 Promote planting of indigenous trees in urban areas to indigenize urban landscapes.

4.7.3.6 Create awareness on the value of urban and peri-urban trees.

4.8 PILLAR 6: CLIMATE CHANGE AND FOREST ECOSYSTEMS

4.8.1 Climate change and forest ecosystem degradation drivers

4.8.1.1 Climate change impacts the productivity of forests and woodlands resulting in changes in species composition of forest ecosystems and, on the other hand, forests are a key component in climate change mitigation through carbon sequestration and during droughts they are a major coping strategy for adaptation.

4.8.1.2 Through deforestation and forest degradation, the forestry sector is a major emitter of greenhouse gases (GHG) contributing about 17% of global yearly gas emissions.

4.8.1.3 The Government of Zimbabwe seeks to contribute to global mitigation of climate change through low carbon emissions economic development to meet its national and international obligations as specified in the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs).

4.8.2 Guiding Principle:

4.8.2.1 The role of trees and forests in climate change should be recognized, given their unique ability to contribute to both climate change adaptation and mitigation.

4.8.3 Policy Actions:

The Government of Zimbabwe will:

4.8.3.1 Promote land-use plans that clearly identify forestry as a recognized land-use at district, ward, village and farm management levels.

4.8.3.2 Build capacity for sustainable forest management in a changing climate.

4.8.3.3 Strengthen the resilience of communities to climate change through afforestation programmes, climate smart agriculture, planting trees for fuel wood energy as well as economic activities that include wood and non-wood forest products.

4.8.3.4 Maintain, expand and account for carbon sinks for enhancing adaptation and mitigation with community participation.

4.8.3.5 Implement the carbon credit framework as a guide in forest based projects.

4.8.3.6 Promote forestry-based climate change interventions that are gender sensitive and take into account the needs of vulnerable groups.

4.9 PILLAR 7: FORESTRY RESEARCH, INNOVATION, AND TRAINING

4.9.1 Forestry research, innovation, and training policy drivers

4.9.1.1 The forestry sector heavily depends on the availability of human resources for research, policy development and forest management. Low capacity is one of the challenges constraining the mapping and valuation of forest ecosystem services inn economic development. There is therefore a need to continuously strengthen the capacity of forestry institutions including the private sector and civil society.

4.9.2 Guiding Principle

4.9.2.1 Given the complexities and uncertainties inherent in the functioning of natural systems, sustainable management of forests needs to be flexible, adaptive and based on both sound science complemented by experience in value addition to forest produce into merchantable products.

4.9.3 Policy Action

The Government of Zimbabwe will:

4.9.3.1 Support the development of a comprehensive inventory of all forest species in a defined cycle of 5 years to account for the status of the forests.

4.9.3.2 Assess within the 5-10 year cycle the impacts of climate change on the forest sector for purposes of remedial action.

4.9.3.3 Assess land-use systems and related factors on forest degradation as forests will be commercially used, while threats of wild fires, pests and invasive species will be monitored.

4.9.3.4 Support the documentation, dissemination and use of indigenous technical knowledge on sustainable management and use of forest resources.

4.9.3.5 Support research into alternative fuel sources to reduce dependency on fuel wood and reduce deforestation levels.

4.9.3.6 Promote investment in and funding of research and innovation on forest resources in order to attain high productivity and reduce poverty.

4.9.3.7 Encourage collaborative research among public, private, academic and research institutions and the private sector to support the forestry sector.

4.9.3.8 Improve coordination on forest resources data and ensure that information on the state and prospects of the forest resources, including emerging issues and concerns is generated and appropriately packaged for different users.

4.9.3.9 Develop an integrated strategy to build awareness and improve the understanding of the importance of forests through education and training at all levels by mainstreaming forestry issues in all education curricula.

4.10 PILLAR 8: FORESTRY GOVERNANCE AND INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

4.10.1 Forestry governance and institutional arrangements policy drivers

4.10.1.1 Forestry sector governance is principally governed by two outdated pieces of legislation namely the Communal Land Forest Produce Act (Chapter 19:04) and the Forest Act (Chapter 19:05). Other pieces of legislation which have a direct and/or indirect bearing on forests and their management include the Environmental Management Act (Chapter 20:27), Parks and Wildlife Act (Chapter 20:14) Rural District Councils Act (Chapter 29:13), Mines and Minerals Act

(Chapter 21:05) and the Traditional Leaders Act (Chapter 29: 17). There is a need to merge the two principal pieces of legislation on the forestry sector and create a single Forest Act which is aligned with the MEAs, regional protocols, TFCAs and Constitution of Zimbabwe as well as cross-referenced with other complementary laws.

4.10.2 Guiding Principle

4.10.2.1 Laws are an essential component of effective management of forest resources therefore they should be dynamic, locally and internationally accountable and should set demands, impose duties and create obligations to society for sustainable use, management and protection of forest resources.

4.10.3 Policy Action

The Government of Zimbabwe will:

4.10.3.1 Review the forest legislation and draw up a clear legislative framework that harmonizes and strengthens all policies, laws and programmes relating to forest resources and align them with the Constitution of Zimbabwe.

4.10.3.2 Promote the use of participatory appraisal to assess local conditions, needs, attitudes, perceptions and concerns of communities when crafting forest policies and legislation to ensure buy-in from all stakeholders and communities.

4.10.3.3 Enact deterrent penalties that are commensurate with the levels of crimes committed against forests and strengthen and standardize all penalties dealing with forest offences across all legal entities that govern forest resources including those issued by traditional leaders.

4.10.3.4 Enforce legislation; prevent illegal exploitation of forests and forest products; promote interventions and actions aimed at reducing deforestation and woodland degradation while enhancing sustainable management of Zimbabwe's forest and woodland resources.

4.10.3.5 Improve capacity within key national institutions including local authorities and local community institutions, to undertake and facilitate conservation, management and sustainable use of forest resources.

4.10.3.6 Strengthen the capacity of the Forestry Commission to provide advice and support for implementing sustainable forest management programmes and to regulate use of the forests and woodlands in the country including giving its employees arresting powers.

4.10.3.7 Strengthen Forestry Commission's Regulatory and Enforcement Unit and ensure that it is well resourced to facilitate successful implementation of its duties.

4.11 PILLAR 9: REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL COLLABORATION IN FORESTRY

4.11.1 Linkages with other sectors policy drivers

4.11.1.1 Zimbabwe is a Party to several international and regional environmental agreements. Regional and international environmental agreements allow the country to manage trans-boundary and global environmental resources including forests. Key regional agreements with potential for forest management are those for Trans-Frontier Conservation Areas. Commitment to regional and international forest protocols is reflected by their integration into national laws and policies.

4.11.2 Guiding Principle

4.11.2.1 Government will sign regional and multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) on forests and their use must be reflect the national policy priorities, legislation and practice to ensure sustainable forest management.

4.11.3 Policy Actions

The Government of Zimbabwe will:

4.11.3.1 Promote integrated management and controlled use of forest resources for sustainable development by encouraging the formation of social and economic partnerships at regional and international levels

4.11.3.3 Foster linkages among sectors to ensure conservation and sustainable use of forests in related Transfrontier programmes and projects, including bi-lateral joint commissions.

4.11.3.4 Develop institutional mechanisms aimed at coordinating and sharing developments, information, joint assessments and scientific studies in the forestry sector.

4.11.3.5 Develop and maintain an inter-institutional and cross-sectoral mechanism aimed at overseeing and coordinating institutions that govern forest resources for the planning, implementation and monitoring of the resources.

5.0 INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR IMPLEMENTING THE POLICY

5.1 Role of the Ministry of Environment Climate Tourism and Hospitality Industry (MECTHI)

5.1.1 The Ministry of Environment, Climate, Tourism and Hospitality Industry has overall responsibility for this policy. However, the priority policy intervention areas and strategies outlined in this policy cut across multiple sectors and therefore entail multi-stakeholder cooperation for successful implementation.

5.2 Inter-ministerial co-ordination

5.2.1 The Government of Zimbabwe will develop and maintain an inter-institutional and cross-sectoral mechanism for forest governance, improve capacity within key national institutions including local authorities and local community institutions, to undertake and facilitate conservation, management and sustainable use of forest resources and strengthen the capacity of the Forestry Commission.

5.2.2 Ministry, Department and Agencies (MDA) of central government will work towards the objectives of forest sector integrity in their policies, plans, and resources allocation;

5.2.3 Ministries of State Affairs and Devolution will work closely with the Forest Commission and other agencies to ensure that forests in each province are protected and programmes that are regional and landscape in scale are well co-ordinated between the provinces;

5.2.4 Local authorities and that is Rural and Urban District Councils shall set local laws in the management of forests within their local areas, and co-ordinate efforts at inter-district and inter-province to ensure coherent planning and management of all forest resources.

5.2.5 Work closely with traditional leaders to strengthen enforcement and other measures to reduce deforestation and forest degradation.

5.3 Implementation mechanisms

5.3.1 Forestry Commission shall take lead in the promotion of reforestation by communities and institutions in communal lands and resettlement areas using a wide variety of fast-growing non-invasive exotic and indigenous tree species.

5.3.2 The private sector shall invest in forestry research, plantations, value addition of timber and non-timber forest products and marketing; securing certification of forest plantations and forest products and developing and implementing corporate social responsibility programmes designed to contribute to the National Forest Policy objectives.

5.3.3 Establish and strengthen legislative and administrative provisions under which local communities can share equitably the benefits arising from commercial and other uses of forest resources.

5.3.4 Establish and maintain efficient and effective information systems that respond to user needs and facilitate informed decision making to improve forest resources management.

5.4 Resource mobilization

5.4.1 The major source of funding for the implementation of this Policy is Public Sector resources allocation that will be complemented by specific revenue collected by government for the purpose such as the Tobacco Levy, mainly for the tobacco growing areas. There will be need to ensure that its collection, disbursement and utilization is improved to ensure realization of the Policy Objectives.

5.4.2 Funds shall also be generated from payment for ecosystem services and levies such as carbon credits, carbon tax and the tobacco levy for afforestation activities.



6.0 CONCLUSION

6.1 This is the first Forest Policy that comes at a time of significant global and local climate change, with impact on forests. In Zimbabwe, there is also wide economic growth that has seen significant expansion of urban areas, agriculture, mining and other related sectors. These have affected the forest cover and forest growth. Government and communities are having to deploy more resources into forest protection. In view of climate change, the government of Zimbabwe has been increasing forest planting, growth and protection with pressure for competing access to forested land for urban and rural people demands for land and grazing areas. While, technical innovation, including tree planting, reforestation, silviculture can assists, there is a need for this policy not only to protect but provide incentives to grow the forest sector and protect ecosystems and biodiversity for the benefit of the country's present and future generations.



ANNEXES

DEFINITIONS

Adaptation: An adjustment in natural or human systems in response to actual or expected climatic stimuli or their effects, which moderates harm or exploits beneficial opportunities. Adaptation measures include prevention, tolerance, sharing losses, changes in activities or location and restoration.

Adaptive capacity: Is the ability or potential of a system to respond successfully to climate variability and change and includes adjustments in both behaviour and in resources and technologies.

Afforestation: Establishment of forest through planting and/or deliberate seeding on land that, until then, was under a different land use, implies a transformation of land use form non-forest to forest.

Agroforestry: Other land with tree cover" with temporary agricultural crops and/or pastures/animals.

Biodiversity: Biodiversity—short for biological diversity—means the variability among living organisms from all sources including, inter alia, terrestrial, marine, and other aquatic ecosystems and the ecological complexes of which they are part; this includes diversity within species, between species and of ecosystems.

Civil society: Covers all organisations other than government.

Carbon sequestration: Is the process of capture and long-term storage of carbon dioxide or other forms of carbon to either mitigate or defer global warming and avoid dangerous climate change

Climate change: Is a change of climate which is attributed directly or indirectly to human activity that alters the composition of the global atmosphere and which is in addition to natural climate variability observed over comparable periods

Climate change mitigation: Is a human intervention to reduce the sources or enhance the sinks of greenhouse gases

Co-management: The sharing of authority, responsibility, and benefits between government and local communities in the management of natural resources. Conservation The management of human use of nature so that it may yield the greatest sustainable benefit to current generations while maintaining its potential to meet the needs and aspirations of future generations.

Conservation of Biodiversity: The management of human interactions with genes, species, and ecosystems to provide the maximum benefit to the present generation while maintaining their potential to meet the needs and aspirations of future generations; encompasses elements of saving, studying, and using biodiversity. In relation to forests, the management objective is conservation of biological diversity, it includes but is not limited to areas designated for biodiversity conservation within the protected areas.

Deforestation: Conversion of forest to non-forest use.

Deforestation drivers : Drivers of indirect threats are factors behind the occurrence of one or more direct threats and can be in the form of political, economic, social, cultural, or institutional. In this policy, drivers are defined based on issues at the national and sub-national levels and how they contribute to the occurrence of threats.

Devolution: Is the act by which central government formally cedes powers and resources to institutions and actors at lower levels in a political-administrative and territorial hierarchy

Ecosystems: Are self-regulating communities of plants and animals interacting with each other and with their non-living environment—forests, wetlands, mountains, lakes, rivers, deserts, and agricultural landscapes. Ecosystems are vulnerable to interference as pressure on one component can upset the whole balance. They are also very vulnerable to pollution. Many ecosystems have already been lost, and many others are at risk.

Ecosystem approach: It is a strategy for the integrated management of land, water and living resources that promotes conservation and sustainable use in an equitable way. The Ecosystem Approach places human needs at the centre of biodiversity management. It aims to manage the ecosystem, based on the multiple functions that ecosystems perform and the multiple uses that are made of these functions. The ecosystem approach does not aim for short-term economic gains but aims to optimize the use of an ecosystem without damaging it.

Ecosystem services: Ecological processes or functions having monetary or non-monetary value to individuals or society at large. These are frequently classified as (1) supporting services such as productivity or biodiversity maintenance, (2) provisioning services such as food or fibre, (3) regulating services such as climate regulation or carbon sequestration, and (4) cultural services such as tourism or spiritual and aesthetic appreciation.

Forest: A forest is a piece of land spanning more than 0.5 hectares with trees higher than 5 meters and a canopy cover of more than 10 percent, or trees able to reach these

thresholds in situ.

Forest certification: Is the process of verification by a body of proven independence that the management of a forest has reached a specified standard. This enables the preferential purchase of products from, or investment in, such certified well managed forests by consumers, investors, or others providing incentives.

Forestry: Includes all activities related to forests, tree growing, forest produce, forest conservation, forest management and forest utilisation.

Forest Policy: A set of orientations and principles of actions adopted by public authorities in harmony with national socio-economic and environmental policies in each country to guide future decisions in relation to the management, use and conservation of forest for the benefit of society.

Habitat: A place or type of site where an organism or population naturally occurs.

Invasive Alien Species: These are plants, animals, pathogens, and other organisms that are non- native to an ecosystem, and which may cause economic or environmental harm or adversely affect human health. They pose impacts on biodiversity, including decline or elimination of native species through competition, predation, or transmission of pathogens and the disruption of local ecosystems and ecosystem functions. Their damage is further exacerbated by effects of climate change, pollution, habitat loss and human induced threats.

Land use: Refers to how a specific piece of land is allocated: its purpose, need or use (e.g., agriculture, industry, residential or nature.

Multiple Use: Forest where the management objective is a combination of several purposes and where none of them is significantly more important than the other.

Non-timber forest products: These include all biological material, other than timber, which are harvested from forests for human and industrial use such as roots, barks, fruits, flowers, and leaves.

Public participation: It is an approach for governments, organisations, and communities around the world to improve their decisions by involving those people who are affected by those decisions

Reforestation: Re-establishment of forest through planting and/or deliberate seeding on land classified as forest

REDD+: Reduced Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (or REDD+) is a

mechanism to create an incentive for developing countries to undertake forestry and related activities at the national (and in some cases subnational) level that, together, would contribute to climate change mitigation. The incentive is provided through promotion of conservation of forests and the creation of financial value from the carbon stored in trees. The plus (+) sign indicates enhancement of forest carbon stocks, also referred to as forest regeneration and rehabilitation, negative degradation, negative emissions, carbon uptake, carbon removal or just removals.

Resilience: Is the ability of a social or ecological system to absorb disturbances while retaining the same basic structure and ways of functioning, the capacity for self-organising and the capacity to adapt to stress and change;

Sustainable development: Development that meets the needs and aspirations of the current generation without compromising the ability to meet those of future generations

Sustainable forest management: A dynamic and evolving concept (that) is intended to maintain and enhance the economic, social, and environmental value of all types of forests, for the benefit of present and future generations.

Sustainable use: The use of components of biological diversity in a way and at a rate that does not lead to the long-term decline of biological diversity, thereby maintaining its potential to meet the needs and aspirations of present and future generations are direct human intervention or activities that may lead to deforestation and degradation of forest resources

Threats: They are direct human intervention or activities that may lead to deforestation and degradation of forest resources

Traceability System for Wood Products: A system that provides the ability to trace the origin, location, and movement of wood products by means of recorded identifications. This involves two main aspects: (1) identification of the product by marking, and (2) the recording of data on movement and location of the product all the way along the production, processing, and distribution chain.

Vulnerability: Is the degree to which a system is susceptible to and unable to cope with adverse effects of climate change including climate variability and extreme weather condition

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