

# African Landcare Network workshop

The Limpopo Department of Agriculture and Rural Development in partnership with the national Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (DAFF) hosted an African Landcare Network workshop from the 01st - 04th of March 2016 at Thaba Moshate Hotel & Casino in Burgersfort, Limpopo Province. The workshop was attended by 38 participants from different institutions. In attendance were the provincial co-ordinators from the Western Cape, Northern Cape and North West provinces, the Head of Department from the Limpopo Department of Agriculture and Rural Development Ms Jacqueline Maisela, officials from Limpopo Department of Agriculture and Rural development, officials from the national Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, Professor Kingsley Ayisi from the University of Limpopo, representatives from the SADC region, Dr Lewis Hove from the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations, Chairperson of CCARDESA Professor Timothy Simalenga, African Landcare Network members from Uganda, Namibia, Zimbabwe, Zambia, Congo, Kenya and Malawi. The purpose of the workshop was to promote and advance development in the Landcare Regional Programme.



The HOD of the Limpopo Department of Agriculture and Rural Development Ms Jacqueline Maisela said that it was an honour for them in the Limpopo province to be chosen to host such an important occasion. It was important as a province for the development of the African agenda to tackle hunger and unemployment through advocating for sustainable land management practices. Adoption of the Comprehensive African Agricultural Development Programme at the AU Assembly of United States and government in 2003 was frameworked to accelerate agriculture and rural development in Africa particularly the Landcare pillars. In accordance with the NEPAD agent for CATF, the expansion of African Landcare will age in facilitating dialogue and information sharing or strategies advacing the Landcare philosphy in the countries which were adopting it .



The General Secretary of African Landcare Network (ALN) Mr Joseph Tanuia emphasised that the lessons which emerged during the workshop had been very useful and created potential for upscaling to bigger areas and reaching more and more communities. He said that great lesson showed how they could empower communities and institutions into being active participants in the development of the national and regional agendas, and to make those lessons useful on wide application. He said that within Landcare they subscribed to all the biophysical, socioeconomic, indigenous knowledge and gender perspective together and were quite a big mix and from their educational system; which is why they needed to reinvent themselves to look at holistical and sustainable land management in order for it to make an impact. He said that by championing grassroot institutions they managed to bring profitability, sustainability and resilience to the enterprises at local level for both non-farmers and farmers, and those institutions were emerging as competetive players in various markets. They were able to influence policies of large instiutuions as they were effective in their environment and were able to play a part in, supporting agricultural production and a full range of non-farming services. "We do have a methodology through which we work in various countries to learn and put together a big picture, to bring these pictures together to create a vehicle that can be able to benefit farmers across the SADC region. Landcare should be seen as an opportunity for creating a conducive environment and as an investment for creating jobs for young people," he said.



Deputy-Director General of Forestry and Natural Resource Management Dr Maphaka Tau from the Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries said, "The blueprint programme of the African agenda brings together key players at the continental, regional and national levels to improve coordination, share knowledge, successes and failures to encourage one another and promote joint and separate efforts to achieve the scope of the Comprehensive Africa Agricultural Development Programme." He further said that the hosting of that workshop came at the right time considering that South Africa was experincing irregular climatic patterns which resulted or mianfested into drought which has affected the farmers' productivity. About 24600 farmers in the country were severely affected. Statistics as at Monday, 29 february 2016, indicated that 83000 of the livestock mortality rate was recorded as a result of the drought. He said the workshop further reaffirmed the need to upscale Landcare movement within the region to address the scourge of land degradation, thus fulfilling the



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obligation committed within the three Rio Conventions: to combat desertification, United Conventions on Climate Change and United Nation Convention on biological diversity. He said that the government has committed through the National Development Plan (NDP) as the country and as the region, also in terms of the Medium Term Strategic Framework (MTSF) that natural agricultural resources were key to radical economic transformation and the creation of decent employment through inclusive growth path. The workshop has called for strengthening of partnerships and inter-sectoral collaborations, heightening advocacy and reinforcing community systems to address land degradation at grassroots level. The African Landcare Network had been formed by alliance partners such as the Centre for Coordination of Agricultural Research and Development for Southern Africa (CCADERSA) Science Institute from Southern African Development Community (SADC) and the University of Limpopo and Provincial Landcare coordinators.

The African Landcare Network workshop split into four commissions in order to address the following questions and the suggested resolutions for each question from the commissions:

1. What are the appropriate entry points to ensure vertical and horizontal integration of conservation and livelihoods improvements?

- Identification of existing local institutional arrangements;
- A vigorous interrogation of vision, mission and objectives;
- Justification of engagement.

2. What form of partnerships, coalitions, platforms and networks are necessary for scaling up land restorative SLM practices?

- Increasing the creation awareness on LandCare principles;
- Facilitation on the development of regional, national and local framework;
- Research based on participatory technology development.

3. What support models in rural grassroots institutional development are necessary for large-scale participation in land restorative activities?

- National/International conferences, workshops, symposiums, seminars;
- Regional Landcare information portal to be developed;
- Partnering with technology development institution to promote technology uptake and usage to ensure SLM.

4. How should networking and information exchange be developed to include lesson learning across governance levels?

- Identify existing standing trans-boundary institutional agreements between states;
- Strengthening of existing trans-boundary relationships.

On the 02nd of March 2016 the ALN workshop participants visited the NFB project in Ba-Phalaborwa municipality and Itemeleng project in the Maruleng Local Municipality. These two projects have research demonstration sites led by Professor Ayisi Kingsley from the University of Limpopo to showcase the importance of Agroforestry and the differences between conventional methods and no-till methods.



African Landcare Network members with DAFF officials, provincial coordinators from North West, Northern Cape, Western Cape and officials from Limpopo Department of Agriculture at Thaba Moshate Hotel and Convention Centre in Burgersfort, Limpopo province.

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