



**KEY NOTE ADDRESS BY HONORABLE POHAMBA SHIFETA
MINSTER OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST & TOURISM**

**HON. POHAMBA SHIFETA
AT THE LAUNCH OF ECOSYSTEM BASED ADAPTATION
PROJECT AND GRANTS HANDOVER CEREMONY FOR 12
COMMUNITY BASED ORGANISATIONS**

6 NOVEMBER 2020, KEETMANSHOP

//KHARAS REGION

Director of ceremonies-

- Honorable Aletha Fredericks, Governor for //Kharas Region
- Honorable Salomon April, Governor for Hardap Region
- Mr. Benedict Libanda, the Chief Executive Officer for the Environmental Investment Fund of Namibia
- CRO's and Regional Political Representatives
- Heads and staff members of Namibian Government Line Ministries
- Staff members of EIF,
- Members of the media
- Very distinguished guest
- All protocol observed
- Ladies and gentlemen

Good Morning

I must start by expressing my profound gratitude and appreciation for an opportunity to be at this event, celebrating two milestones, firstly is the official launch of the project entitled "*Building Resilience of Communities Living in Eight Landscapes Threatened Under Climate Change Through an Ecosystem Based Adaptation Approach in Namibia*", which is a One Hundred and Forty Six Million Namibian Dollars (N\$146 million) project that is implemented between 2020 to 2025 by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Tourism.

Secondly, I take pride today to handover grants to twelve Community Based Natural Resource Based Organizations to a total value of Twenty-Two Million

Namibia Dollars (N\$22,000,000) through a project entitled '*Creating Climate Change Resilient Livelihoods Through Community Based Natural Resource Management in Namibia*'.

Ladies and Gentlemen:

Once again, the Green Climate Fund has shown the world that Direct Access Entities like the Environmental Investment Fund of Namibia has potential to source, manage and deploy funding from global agency more effectively and efficiently. I am more delighted to note the growing portfolio of the Green Climate Fund funded projects in Namibia. Through the Environmental Investment Fund of Namibia alone, the Green Climate Fund has provided grant funding amounting to Six Hundred and Seventy Million Namibia Dollars (N\$670 million). I would like to thank the Green Climate Fund for availing these resources to Namibia.

Distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen,

With global temperatures increasing by more than 1.5 Degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels by the year 2100. Adaptation to climate change is arguably one of the biggest challenges facing humanity. Climate change is already impacting vulnerable ecosystems such as drylands, mountains and coastal areas. Namibia is not spared from climate change and the citizenry are already experiencing the impact and continues to worsen. More than 70% of the Namibian population depends on climate vulnerable ecosystems for their livelihoods, thus it's imperative that Namibia strives to

identify pathways to implement adaptive mechanism thorough various developmental interventions among the citizenry to address impact of climate change.

Noting the risks posed by climate change, the Namibian Government and in particular the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Tourism firmly and is undoubtable committed to continue serving the nation to ensure that we safeguard rural livelihoods from natural catastrophe. With this in mind and with cognizance of the challenges that lies ahead, I wish to stress our commitment to the United Nation Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) as a ministry responsible for the implementation of the Paris Agreement. To that end, we have developed several policies as a conduit to implement climate change adaptation projects. Amongst them are; National Climate Change Policy of 2011, and National Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan.

Ladies and Gentlemen:

The Ecosystem-based Adaptation Project as it is known in short is based on the premise that biodiversity and ecosystems provide valuable services that increase the climate resilience of local communities. Activities undertaken as part of this project will maintain and enhance ecosystem integrity to continue to support the generation of food and income in order to reduce the severity of negative socio-economic impacts of climate change on vulnerable rural households. In addition, the project emphasizes on building resilient communities by restoring and maintaining biodiversity and ecosystem services, increase habitat connectivity with co-benefits of carbon

sequestration and restoring the capacity of ecosystems to regulate water cycles.

It is estimated that the project will directly benefit about 60,000 people and an additional 156,000 indirectly, mainly natural resource reliant communities. Between 800 to 1,000 households are likely to benefit through community-level adaptation projects. Over 200 people, mainly small scale farmers will be directly trained in awareness of climate threats and related appropriate responses.

I wish to commend the Environmental Investment Fund of Namibia for their tireless efforts to secure resources from the Green Climate Fund. I am aware of how complex and challenging for entities to access such funding because of competing submissions. Only the best of the best is considered by the Green Climate Fund, we have therefore proved that our institutions are competent to meet global governance requirements. I wish to congratulate the Chief Executive Officer of the Environmental Investment Fund of Namibia, Mr. Benedict Libanda and his team for a wonderful job in obtaining the much-needed funds. Allow me also to congratulate all those involved in organizing this event for their immensely effort and making this launch a resounding success.

I now have the honor to officially launch this project in Keetmanshop. At this juncture, I am also honored to unveil the logo for the Ecosystem-based Adaptation Project. Please project it on the screen before I proceed to the second half of my assignment, which is that of the Grants Handover Ceremony.

Distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen,

As I proceed to the second part of my task, which is that of presenting grants to twelve Community Based Natural Resource Management entities worth Twenty-Two Million Namibia Dollars (N\$22,000,000) through a project entitled '*Creating Climate Change Resilient Livelihoods Through Community Based Natural Resource Management in Namibia*'.

I recall that I had the honor to present the first batch of grant recipient under this programme last year on the 11th of June 2019 to nineteen Community Based Natural Resource Management entities worth Eighty-Four Million Namibian Dollars (N\$84 million). The occasion was graced by the presence of His Excellency, Dr. Hage Geingob, President of the Republic of Namibia, and several high-ranking officials including the Vice President of the Republic of Namibia, His Excellency Nangolo Mbumba, the Right Honorable Saara Kuugongelwa-Amadhila, Prime Minister of the Republic of Namibia, and several ministers and members of cabinet.

Ladies and Gentlemen:

It means that by the end of today, we will be committing a total amount of One Hundred and Six Million Namibian Dollars (N\$106,000,000) directly to Community Based Natural Resource Organizations. I am glad to report that the grants that were awarded in 2019 are proving to have a significant positive impact on the ground:

- About 78,000 community members have benefited from those grants, including small-scale farmers and natural resource users.

- The grants have created 200 job opportunities;
- 14 Small and Medium Enterprises have been established;
- More than 180 boreholes were rehabilitated and retrofitted with solar pumping systems, providing clean water to more than 55,000 people

For the reasons outlined above, you will agree with me that these grants contribute to poverty eradication in Namibia through increasing the resilience of our vulnerable rural communities to the impacts of climate change.

The twelve projects being awarded today covers the three investment windows namely; Climate Resilient Agriculture, Climate Proof Infrastructure and Ecosystem Based Adaptation, they are expected to achieve a myriad of impacts. Let me take this opportunity to highlight that the projects are expected to provide access to reliable and safe water supply despite climate induced shocks and stresses to over Twenty-Five Thousand (25,000) people, and ensure that more than Two Thousand (2000) households will be food-secure to mention but a few.

Ladies and Gentlemen:

Once again, I would like to commend the excellent job being undertaken by the Environmental Investment Fund of Namibia and the Project Management Unit. I would also like to congratulate the successful grant recipients for competitively securing funding. However, while it seems like an easy task to undertake these activities, you have just been given a huge responsibility to manage large amounts of funds and ensure that they are used for the right purpose. I am therefore requiring you all to always maintain the highest

possible fiduciary, financial management and ethical standards during the implementation of this project.

The pressure on us is immense and, as the NDA, my Ministry demands only the highest levels of accountability. Similarly, I would also like to assure you, ladies and gentlemen, that there will be consequences in the event that any form of inappropriate use of resources is proven against any of the beneficiaries. I wish you all the best as you implement your projects.

I thank you!!