

PRESS RELEASE

(For Immediate Release)

Paramount Chief Mpezeni Endorses Chiefdom Climate Governance Initiative as EP-JSLP Expands Across Eastern Province.

Chipata, Zambia -April 19, 2026-The Eastern Province Jurisdictional Sustainable Landscape Programme-EP-JSLP, implemented by the Government of Zambia through the Ministry of Green Economy and Environment with support from the World Bank, continues to strengthen collaboration with traditional leadership in advancing climate action and sustainable land management across Eastern Province.

In a significant milestone, His Royal Highness Paramount Chief Mpezeni of the Ngoni people has officially endorsed the Chiefdom Emissions Reduction Coordinating Committee-CERCC for his chiefdom following a successful community engagement and sensitisation for an election process.

The newly elected ten (10) committee members coming from Community Forest Management Groups, Cooperative Groups, Woman's Groups, Lead and Follower Farmers, Village Action Groups and Community Resources Boards were formally presented at Ekuphendukeni Palace in Chipata District, where the Paramount Chief Endorsement the CERCC and the Chiefdom Emissions Performance Plan-CERPP), affirming the CERPP and the committee's legitimacy and readiness to spearhead emissions reduction interventions at chiefdom level.

The EP-JSLP has embarked on the formation of CERCCs in all 56 chiefdoms across the province as part of its broader objective to establish formal governance structures at chiefdom level.

These committees are designed to coordinate implementation, enhance accountability, and sustain performance in line with the Chiefdom Emission Reduction Performance Agreements-CERPAs signed between the programme and participating chiefdoms.

The agreements formalise commitments by traditional authorities and communities to implement emissions reduction interventions based on agreed performance indicators and targets.

Speaking during the endorsement, Paramount Chief Mpezeni emphasised the importance of unity, teamwork, and inclusive participation in driving the programme's success, urging the committee to work closely with headmen and headwomen across the chiefdom and to remain committed to achieving meaningful and lasting environmental and community outcomes.

"This committee must work as one, with a shared vision for the development of our chiefdom and the wellbeing of our people." Paramount Chief Mpezeni said.

Similarly, Senior Chief Mwase of the Chewa people in Lundazi District expressed appreciation to the EP-JSLP team for facilitating the process in his chiefdom and reaffirmed his full support following the successful election and presentation of the CERCC members for endorsement.

He underscored the importance of accountability, loyalty, and strong collaboration between traditional leadership and community members in ensuring effective programme implementation.

The formation and operationalisation of CERCCs is critical for coordinating the implementation, monitoring, and reporting of Chiefdom Emissions Reduction Performance Plans-CERPPs, ensuring compliance with agreed performance frameworks and contributing to the overall success of the jurisdictional emissions reduction programme.

To date a team of key stakeholders supported by Project Implementation Unit (PIU) is going round all the chiefdoms to form the CERCC and CERPP and so far 22 out of the total of 56 chiefs across Eastern Province have endorsed their CERCCs, reflecting steady progress toward establishing functional governance structures in all targeted chiefdoms.

The programme continues to roll out community sensitisation meetings and CERCC elections in remaining chiefdoms, with committees being presented to traditional leaders for formal endorsement.

This progress highlights the vital role of traditional leadership and community participation in strengthening governance systems, promoting sustainable land use practices, and enhancing climate resilience across the province.

Originally and issued by:

Creavat Chituta

Communications Officer

Eastern Province Jurisdictional Sustainable Landscape Programme (EP-JSLP)

Ministry of Green Economy and Environment

Email: Creavat.Chituta@epjslp.org.zm