



**REPORT OF THE JOINT MEETING OF THE SADC PF STANDING COMMITTEES ON FOOD, AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES (FANR) AND TRADE, INDUSTRY, FINANCE AND INVESTMENT (TIFI) TO THE SADC PF 51<sup>ST</sup> PLENARY ASSEMBLY SESSION**

Mr President I beg to move that this Plenary Assembly do adopt the Report of the Joint Committee on Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources and Trade, Industry, Finance and Investment (TIFI) to the 51<sup>st</sup> Plenary Assembly Session of the SADC Parliamentary Forum, laid on the Table on 12 July 2022.

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## **1.0 COMPOSITION OF THE JOINT COMMITTEE**

The Joint Committee consisted of the following Members:

### **COMMITTEE ON FOOD, AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES**

Hon. Ishmael J Ndaila Onani, MP (Malawi) (Chairperson)  
Hon Hawa Subira Mwaifunga, MP (Tanzania) (Vice Chairperson)  
Hon Andre Leon Tumba, MP (Democratic Republic of the Congo)  
Hon. Lekhetho Mosito, MP (Lesotho)  
Hon. Helena Bonguela Abel, MP (Angola)  
Hon. Lova Herizo Rajaobelina, MP (Madagascar)  
Hon. Seiso Joel Mohai, MP (South Africa)  
Hon. Princess Phumelele Dlamini, MP (Eswatini)  
Hon. Tambudzani Mohadi, MP (Zimbabwe)  
Hon. Carlos Manuel, MP (Mozambique)  
Hon. Marie Genevieve Stephanie Anquetil, MP (Mauritius)  
Hon Mutinta Mazoka, MP (Zambia)  
Hon. Rocky Uranie, MP (Seychelles)  
Hon. Paulson Majaga, MP (Botswana)  
Hon. Phillipus Katamelo, MP (Namibia)

### **COMMITTEE ON TRADE, INDUSTRY, FINANCE AND INVESTMENT**

Hon. Ruth Adriano Mendes, MP (Angola)  
Hon. Dumelang Saleshando, MP (Botswana) (*Vice Chairperson*)  
Hon. Mukendi Tumba, MP (DRC)  
Hon. TsepangTsita-Mosena (Lesotho), MP (*Chairperson*)  
Hon. Marie Jeanne d'Arc MASY GOULAMALY, MP (Proxy)  
Hon. Denis Namachekecha, MP (Malawi)  
Hon. Marie Joanne Sabrina Tour, MP (Mauritius)  
Hon. Carlos Moreira Vasco, MP (Mozambique)  
Hon. Vipuakuje Muharukua, MP (Namibia)  
Hon. Audrey Vidot, MP (Seychelles)  
Hon. Hlengiwe Mkhali, MP (South Africa)  
Sen. Isaac Mmemo Magagula, MP (Eswatini)  
Hon. Dr. Afred James Kimea, MP (Tanzania)  
Hon. Kalalwe Mukosa, MP (Zambia)  
Hon. Anele Ndebele, MP (Zimbabwe)

## **2.0 Terms of Reference for the Committee**

The Joint Committee drew its mandate from Article 14 (1) of the Constitution of the SADC PF as read together with Rule 42 (b) and (c) of the Rules of Procedure.

### **3.0 Number of Meetings Held and Meeting Date and Theme**

The Joint Committee on Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources (FANR) and Trade, Industry, Finance and Investment (TIFI) held a meeting on Sunday, 1<sup>st</sup> May, 2022, to consider the theme ‘Expanding Investment in Agroecology in Southern Africa for Sustainable Development and Climate Adaptation’.

### **4.0 BACKGROUND**

The effects of climate change, persistent droughts, floods and pests compounded by economic challenges, poverty, conflict, gender disparities, and gaps in social accountability, all contributed to the Southern African Development Community (SADC) region’s food security crisis. In addition, the COVID 19 pandemic reduced incomes and disrupted supply chains, further exacerbating poverty in the region. According to the SADC Synthesis Report on the State of Food and Nutrition Security and Vulnerability in the Southern Region, released in July 2021, up to 47.6 million people (approximately 13 percent of total population) in the SADC region were food insecure. Based on the ten SADC Member States that submitted data, an estimated 47.6 million people were food insecure, a 5.5 percent increase from 2020 and 34.3 percent above the five-year average.<sup>1</sup>

Smallholder farmers, who produced most of SADC’s food, were negatively impacted by the effects of COVID 19 pandemic, including lower household incomes, limited access to inputs (seeds, fertilisers) and lack of extension services to combat the ongoing threat of pests and diseases. In particular, the pandemic had affected multiple aspects of the lives of women smallholder farmers, who supplied about 50 percent of total agricultural labour in Sub-Saharan Africa, from undermining their food security and eroding their savings, to increasing their unpaid care workload and heightening their risk of gender-based violence.

The SADC region had made several commitments to boost agriculture in the region, for instance, in 2003, the African Union (AU) member states signed the Maputo Declaration, which committed to increasing agricultural budget allocations to 10 percent, pursuing agricultural growth of 6 percent, and setting up the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP).<sup>2</sup> Soon after, SADC member states signed the Dar-es-Salaam Declaration in 2004, which established priority areas for achieving food security, including short-term approaches such as ensuring access to quality seeds, fertilisers, and agrochemicals.<sup>3</sup> Additional regional instruments followed, guiding both regional

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<sup>1</sup>SADC Synthesis report on the state of food and nutrition security and vulnerability in Southern Africa: [https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/Synthesis-Report-2021\\_English.pdf](https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/Synthesis-Report-2021_English.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> For the Maputo Declaration, see: <https://bit.ly/2PQ4EhX>

<sup>3</sup> For Dar-es-Salaam Declaration, see: <https://bit.ly/2EzVRPc>

and national actions, namely, Regional Agricultural Policy (RAP) 2013; Regional Agricultural Investment Plan (RAIP) 2017 to 2022; SADC Food and Nutrition Security Strategy (FNSS) 2015 to 2025; and SADC Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan (CCSAP) and Strategy, 2015 to 2030.

The Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) and International Fund for Agriculture Development (IFAD) highlighted the key role that agroecology can contribute towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).<sup>4</sup> The FAO recognised agroecology as a “promising option to implement the Paris Agreement,” as it addressed climate change adaptation and mitigation simultaneously.<sup>5</sup>

Despite the urgency and clear benefits of adopting agroecological approaches towards the transformation of food systems, the quality and quantity of finance for agricultural research and development, and food security was woefully inadequate. Globally, there was a shortfall in funding for sustainable food systems, and very little of that was allocated to smallholder farmers. Additionally, almost all of that funding was allocated to encouraging farmers to adopt detrimental forms of high-energy, high-input industrial agriculture.<sup>6</sup>

## **5.0 SUMMARY OF PRESENTATIONS ON THE THEME: ‘EXPANDING INVESTMENT IN AGROECOLOGY IN SOUTHERN AFRICA FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND CLIMATE ADAPTATION’.**

### **5.1 Presentation on Agroecology as a Sustainable Response to Climate Change by ActionAid International**

The Joint Committee noted that agriculture was the basis of global food security and a source of livelihood for over 1 billion people and was the backbone of many economies in the world, including in Africa. However, the agriculture sector was highly vulnerable to climate impacts, which manifested in terms of change in rainfall patterns, droughts, floods, cyclones, typhoons, hurricanes and rising sea levels. The joint committee acknowledged that climate change threatened food security in the region and that marginalised people, people in poverty, people with disabilities, ethnic minorities, women indigenous peoples were likely to be more affected. The Joint Committee further noted that about 20 to 30 percent of Green House Gases (GHG) emissions, emanated from agriculture, with the rest from deforestation, production of synthetic nitrogen fertilisers, livestock, transportation, greenhouse heating and food waste. The Joint Committee noted

<sup>4</sup> IFAD (December 2019), *How agroecology can respond to a changing climate and benefit farmers*.

<https://www.ifad.org/en/web/latest/story/asset/41485825> ; FAO (2018), *FAO’s work on agroecology: a pathway to the SDGs*. <http://www.fao.org/3/I9021EN/i9021en.pdf>.

<sup>5</sup>FAO (2018). Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> CIDSE (2021) *Policy Briefing – Making Money Move for Agroecology: Transforming Development Aid to Support Agroecology*. <https://www.cidse.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/EN-Making-money-move-for-agroecology.pdf>

with sadness that considerable amounts of emissions were from countries with highly industrialised systems of crop and livestock production.

Hon Members of the Joint Committee appreciated that agroecology when compared to industrial agriculture provided direct climate adaptation and mitigation, and offered socio-economic benefits for farmers globally. Notably, the Joint Committee appreciated that agroecology was premised on the principles of just transition that ensured that any changes in agricultural systems did not adversely affect farming communities, increase hunger or cause inequalities. The Joint Committee further noted that agroecology was intended to transform food systems to work for people, nature and the climate, while emphasising the need for inclusiveness and participation of people in planning processes. The Joint Committee acknowledged that scaling up agroecology would result in more skills, knowledge and gender-responsive extension services and a cost-effective investment. The Joint Committee bemoaned the fact that synthetic fertilisers were likely to be unaffordable due to the war in Ukraine, which would affect crop yields and cause widespread hunger. In this vein, the Joint Committee underscored the importance transitioning to agroecology which used natural manure.

## **5.2 Presentation from the Small-scale Farmers Forum in Eastern and Southern Africa (ESSAF) on Agroecology from the Perspective of Smallholder Farmers'**

The Joint Committee noted that the sixteen SADC Member States had a population 345.2 million as at 2018, of which 70 percent relied on agriculture. The Joint Committee further noted that agriculture contributed about 20 percent of the SADC region's Gross Domestic Product (GDP). The region had a GDP of about \$721.3 billion with a growth rate of 1.8 percent and total trade was \$376,887 million in 2018. The joint committee acknowledged the decline in funding towards agriculture, noting that 50.8 million people were food and nutrition insecure as at July, 2021. That notwithstanding, the region remained resolute to achieve its goal through the various commitments it had made both at the regional and global level.

The Joint Committee appreciated that agroecology utilised local skills and inputs instead of expensive external inputs like hybrid seeds, chemical fertilisers and pesticides. The Joint Committee further noted that farmers in the SADC region had been practicing agroecology for many years, long before the Green Revolution. The Members of the Joint Committee recognised that agroecology was ideal for small holder farmers given its ability to assist farmers to cope with climate change, avoid risks and the debt trap. The Joint Committee reaffirmed the need for Africa, and the SADC region in particular, to take affirmative action to achieve sustainable food systems by placing farmers and agroecology at the heart of all public policy and budget processes, with deliberate focus on women

and youths. The Joint Committee noted that such steps would aid the region attain some of its commitments such as the SDGs, CAADP, Malabo Declaration, RAIPs, RISDP and NAIPS, among others.

### **5.3 Highlights of the findings from Research undertaken by CCARDESA in selected Southern African countries**

The Joint Committee noted that the Centre for Coordination of Agriculture Research and Development for Southern Africa (CCARDESA) had undertaken several studies in agroecology in selected countries in the SADC region. Regarding agroecology practice in South Africa, it was noted that the country had adopted ecological production practices before it was colonised. To that effect, a number of initiatives on agroecology had been developed over the years, which were underpinned by a base of diverse practitioners who were connected in networks of variable coherence and scale. The Joint Committee further noted that the networks had been strengthened as a response to deepening social and ecological crises.

With regard to the studies undertaken in Malawi, the Joint Committee was informed that CCARDESA had undertaken a study on legume diversification. Other studies included Participatory Research on Agroecological Climate Change Adaptation, Agroecological Farmer Experiments in Agroforestry, 'Malawi Farmer-to-Farmer Agroecology' (MAFFA), 'Farmer-led Curriculum on Agroecology, Climate Change, Nutrition and Social Equity, and the Participatory Communication and Agroecology constituted part of the studies that CCARDESA had executed in Malawi.

The Joint Committee learnt that most of the research findings in Malawi pointed to the fact that transitioning to agroecology would result in improved food security, income and sustainable land use. This notion was supported by the findings of the MAFFA research. The studies also revealed that there was a significant link between the number of agroecology practices and the likelihood of becoming food secure with modest higher incomes as a region. Further, participation in MAFFA and crop diversity positively impacted child intake of vitamin A rich foods after controlling for other covariates. Other research findings concluded that crop diversity and social support significantly improved food security.

In terms of studies undertaken in Tanzania, the Joint Committee noted that CCARDESA had carried out research work under the Singida Nutrition and Agroecology Project (SNAP), whose investigation centred on establishing whether participatory agroecological peer farmer education intervention could improve legume production, food security, and infant and young child feeding. The Joint

Committee further noted that, in Malawi, Peer Mentors received training and supported participating farmers. The study concluded that intervention at household level significantly increased food security, dietary diversity, crop diversity and had more equitable gender relations in three years, compared to delayed intervention households. Another study was conducted in Tanzania during the period September 2011 to May 2014 in Chololo village located in the semi-arid drylands. The research was necessitated by challenges faced by the village in terms of frequent droughts as a result of climate change. Further, a study was done on conservation farming and organic pineapple growing. The research on conservation farming disclosed that conservation farming increased yields dramatically and improved resource management through erosion-control technologies and sustainability measures. The results of the study on organic pineapple growing demonstrated that small-scale farmers in East Africa could benefit from the growing demand for organic products.

With regard to agroecology practise in Zambia, the Joint Committee noted that the Zambia Alliance for Agroecology and Biodiversity Conservation (ZAAB) comprising a network of concerned citizens, civil society groups and farmer-based organisations, worked together to strengthen the growing agroecology movement. The joint committee further noted that ZAAB advocated for citizens' right to food sovereignty, and supported the adoption of agroecology as a holistic, citizenry solution to sustainably build Zambia's food and farming systems and to strengthen resilience against climate change.

For South Africa, the Joint Committee noted that, similar to what obtained in Zimbabwe, had been practising agroecology for a long time. The farming system was practiced, among others, to overcome the adversities of climate change. In that regard, CCARDESA's research in that country was tailored towards establishing how small-scale farmers responded to the effects of climate change in Zimbabwe. The field studies were conducted in Masvingo and Manicaland provinces where farmers practised agroecology as a transformative model of production while "adapting" to the changing climate. The Joint Committee noted that despite limited access to resources and support from the government, people were slowly moving towards building climate justice within their communities.

The Joint Committee recognised the notable success recorded in Zimbabwe as evidenced by the restoration of Shashe farms in Runde catchment area which had been degraded. Another positive study in Zimbabwe involved Agroecology and Water Harvesting in Zvishavane. The Joint Committee acknowledged the works of one Phaniah Phiri Maseko who since the 1960s had been pioneering a unique, innovative vision for communities and agricultural development through judicious water management and his system had been widely adopted across Zimbabwe as it had proved to increase agricultural productivity and resilience in the semi-arid region.



The Joint Committee noted that a pilot project to combat deforestation and degradation of the Miombo forest was undertaken in the outskirts of Gilé's national reserve, in the Zambezia province in Mozambique. Another notable study was on inclusive investment for agroecology that was done in 2012, which aimed at facilitating access to financing for farmers who wished to transition to agroecology. Based on a combination of individual and collective investments, risk sharing and a process of consultation and negotiation, the practice facilitated a transition to boost agroecology and strengthen local institutions.

The Joint Committee noted that the famous Machobane Farming System (MFS) in Lesotho was borne out of concern for declining soil fertility and climatic variability that threatened the country's agricultural productivity. The MFS was developed in the 1950s by Dr. Joseph J. Machobane. The approach was a simple and low-input technique based on intercropping and localised application of organic manures. The presenter further informed the Joint Committee that since its re-introduction in the early 1990s, nearly five thousand farmers had integrated the system into their land management, which increased land productivity three-fold compared to traditional monocropping.

The agricultural system was inspired by more than a decade of research on traditional Basotho farming techniques. The joint committee further noted that early research in MFS revealed that MFS out-yielded conventional cropping methods nearly three-fold and eschewed dependency on expensive external inputs, by shifting away from grain monocultures and encouraging ecological intensification of cultivation on small plots. The Joint Committee appreciated the eight lock-in model that demonstrated the probable challenges associated with transitioning from industrial agriculture to agroecology as outlined below.

- (i) Lock-in 1: path dependency – significant investment in Industrial agriculture was difficult to undo.
- (ii) Lock-in 2: export orientation – dependence on exports was near impossible to dislodge.
- (iii) Lock-in 3: the expectation of cheap food - the food industry had become increasingly reliant on the cheap and flexible supply of uniform commodities that industrial agriculture was uniquely positioned to provide.
- (iv) Lock-in 4: compartmentalised thinking - highly compartmentalised structures continue to govern the setting of priorities in politics, education, research and business, allowing the solutions offered by industrial agriculture to remain at centre stage.
- (v) Lock-in 5: short-term thinking - politicians were locked into short-term electoral cycles that rewarded policies delivering immediate returns.

- (vi) Lock-in 6: 'feed the world' narratives - by narrowing the debate to a question of net calorie production, such narratives allowed industrial agriculture to be reinvented as the solution.
- (vii) Lock-in 7: measures of success - narrowly defined indicators of agricultural performance (for example yields of specific crops or productivity per worker) reward large-scale industrial monocultures while failing to capture the benefits of alternative systems.
- (viii) Lock-in 8: concentration of power - the manner in which food systems were structured allowed value to accrue mainly to a limited number of actors, reinforcing their economic and political dominance, and thus their ability to influence the governance of food systems.

Arising from the above, the Joint Committee noted with concern the challenges that stood in the way of a smooth transition to agroecology, emphasising the need for the SADC region to realign food systems.

#### **5.4 Presentation on the Framework for Analysing Financing for Agroecology**

In appreciating the Framework for Analysing Financing for Agroecology the Joint Committee noted the ten element approach on agro-ecological advocated by the Food and Agriculture Organisation as outlined below.

- (i) Diversity –diversification was key to agroecological transitions to ensure food security and nutrition while conserving, protecting and enhancing natural resources with examples being intercropping, crop rotation, crop-livestock integration, biodiversity, mixed grazing, market diversification, dietary diversity.
- (ii) Co-creation and sharing of knowledge - agricultural innovations responded better to local challenges when they were co-created through participatory processes with examples like Participatory knowledge creation, indigenous and traditional knowledge, context specificity.
- (iii) Synergies - selective combination of annual and perennial crops, livestock and aquatic animals, trees, soils, water and other components on farms and agricultural landscapes to enhance synergies with examples such as nitrogen fixation through intercropping and crop rotation, manure for soil fertility in crop-livestock systems
- (iv) Efficiency - Innovative agroecological practices produced more using less external resources for example improving the use of natural resources; reduction in the use of fertiliser, water or energy.
- (v) Recycling - closing nutrient cycles and reducing waste for example recycling of nutrients, biomass and water within production systems at farm and landscape levels.

- (vi) Resilience - greater capacity to recover from shocks and disturbances for example farm design, diversification and integration.
- (vii) Human and social values - protecting and improving rural livelihoods, equity and social well-being, in the form of respecting human rights, building autonomy and adaptive capacity, gender equity and women's participation, youth empowerment and participation.
- (viii) Culture and food traditions - supporting healthy, diversified and culturally appropriate diets for example the right to food, promoting culinary traditions, traditional and indigenous knowledge.
- (ix) Responsible governance - accountable and inclusive governance mechanisms for example Participatory land and natural resource governance, cooperation, traditional and customary governance models
- (x) Circular and solidarity economy - reconnect producers and consumers for example local markets, short food circuits, community supported agriculture, participatory guarantee systems.

The Joint Committee noted that the SADC Regional Agricultural Policy (RAP), the SADC Region subscribed to the African Union Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Plan (CAADP) which obligated Member States to allocate at least 10 percent of national budgets to agriculture. The Joint Committee noted with concern that according to the 2022 African Union Biennial Report on the Malabo Declaration (which re-affirmed the CAADP), only Seychelles (8.87), Egypt (8.56), Eswatini (8.54), and Zambia (8.07) against the 2022 benchmark of 7.5 were on track to achieve Commitment No. 2 on Investment Finance in Agriculture by the year 2025. The Joint Committee was informed that based on the analysis of the ten Official Development Assistance (ODA) projects that were available for review, more than a quarter of investment into the Zimbabwe agriculture sector was in support of agroecology in its various forms as articulated by the United Nations High Level Panel of Experts' Thirteen Principles of Agroecology.

The Joint Committee appreciated that Zimbabwe had made tremendous strides towards transitioning to agroecology as espoused in its National Agriculture Policy Framework (2019 – 2030) which clearly stated that: “The process of enhancing agricultural productivity and production must be anchored in sustainable production systems based on agroecology”. Further, the Zimbabwe Climate Smart Agriculture Investment Plan (2019) emphasised climate smart agriculture including, inter alia, proposed initiatives, productivity through diversification to smaller grains like sorghum for increased food security through production of drought and heat-tolerant crop varieties; and promoting crop diversification to increase soil carbon through soil sequestration and therefore the general soil health. The joint committee acknowledged the fact that Zimbabwe had embraced a transformation approach to agriculture that would yield socio-economic and ecological benefits to that country.

The joint committee acknowledged the results of the Analysis of Financing for Agroecology in Zimbabwe in terms of responsiveness of the national budget to the promotion of agroecology. The aggregate percentage score per HLPE principle across the sub-programmes of the key agroecological votes were recycling, input reduction and soil health 12 percent, animal health 4 percent, biodiversity 16 percent, synergy 19 percent, economic diversification 21 percent, co-creation of knowledge 58 percent, social values and diets 9 percent, fairness 20 percent, connectivity 26 percent, land and natural governance 20 percent, participation 31 percent. In terms of aggregate percentage project score per HLPE principle was presented as recycling 11 percent, input reduction 13 percent, soil health 15 percent, animal health 5 percent, biodiversity 19 percent, synergy 16 percent, economic diversification 18 percent, co-creation of knowledge 39 percent, social values and diets 4 percent, fairness 13 percent, connectivity 16 percent, land and natural resource governance 21 percent and participation 35 percent. The joint committee further noted that the National budget in the 2022/2023 financial year as viewed from the allocations of the four votes was marginally responsive to agro-ecology with only 20 percent (19.89 percent) of the funded sub-programmes being agroecologically compliant.

### **5.5 Presentation rendered by the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation towards Promoting Agroecology**

The Joint Committee noted that food insecurity was increasing in the SADC region with an estimated 36 million people likely to be affected. The effects of climate variability and change, including the COVID-19 pandemic had negatively impacted on the agriculture sector. The Joint Committee further noted the resolutions that were made by the United Nations High Level Panel of Experts (HLPE) on Food Security and Nutrition in the United Nations (UN) Committee on World Food Security (CFS) as set out below:

- (i) transforming food systems by applying ecological principles to agriculture and ensuring a regenerative use of natural resources and ecosystem services, while also addressing the need for socially equitable food systems in which people could exercise choice over what they ate and where it was produced.
- (ii) Agroecology was one of the innovative approaches to meet current needs.
- (iii) Agroecology was practiced by African farmers and pastoralists for millennia.

The Joint Committee appreciated the work of FAO and UN Partners, which among others, culminated into the launch of the Scale Up Agroecology Initiative in 2018, to support national agroecology transition processes through policy and technical capacity building. He explained that the initiative was in line with FAO's ten elements of agroecology, namely: diversity, co-creation and sharing knowledge, synergies, resilience, human and social values, responsible

governance, efficiency, circular and solidarity economy, recycling, culture and food traditions. The joint committee also noted the development of the Tool for Agroecology Performance Evaluation (TAPE) which was developed in 2019 by FAO and was being used in more than thirty countries worldwide. The Joint Committee appreciated the evidence-based information on the opportunities that existed in agroecology as set out below.

- (i) Evidence of benefits of agroecological systems on environmental, economic and social dimensions as evidenced by the application in more than 800 farms in Lesotho, Mali, Tanzania and Uganda.
- (ii) Agroecological farms generated higher economic values, producing more, creating more wealth and generating higher levels of income.
- (iii) The environmental benefits of agroecology included soil health and biodiversity.
- (iv) Social benefits were in the form of good nutrition, women empowerment and an active engagement of youth.

The Joint Committee noted that agroecological practices addressed climate change impacts. This was illustrated by the studies that FAO supported in Kenya and Senegal in collaboration with other partners on the potential of agroecology to hedge against climate change. Results of the study revealed that agroecological approaches built resilience through increased adaptive capacity and reduced vulnerability in agroecosystems. The Joint Committee further noted that the study also analysed the role of agroecology in Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) showing that out of 136 NDCs reviewed, seven countries (12.5 percent) explicitly mentioned agroecology as one of their climate action strategies. Further, the United Nations held a Food Systems Summit in September 2021, which highlighted agroecology as an important agriculture approach to boost nature-based solutions for sustainable agriculture and food production. In that regard, the Coalition for the Transformation of Food Systems through agroecology was founded and the Governments of the Democratic Republic of Congo, Senegal, Burkina Faso, Mali, Madagascar, Cote d'Ivoire, Guinea, Congo, Ethiopia, Tanzania and the African Union had since joined the coalition.

The Joint Committee acknowledged the need for the SADC region to accelerate the transition to agroecology, noting the need to invest in participatory farmer centred research, linking producers, researchers, private sector and government institutions. In addition, the Joint Committee noted the need for research for locally adapted solutions and innovations. Of great importance was the need for the region to promote education and knowledge transfer about agroecology and related practices on all levels of education, including formal and informal producers and farmer training opportunities such as for example farmer groups and farmer training centres. Support for smart subsidies for farmers and

producers who wished to transition to agroecology was of great importance, including strengthening of territorial markets, value addition and value chains.

## 6.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

Now, therefore, the Joint Committee on Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources and Trade, Industry, Finance and Investment resolves to recommend to the 51<sup>st</sup> Plenary Assembly Session to:

- (i) **URGE** SADC Member States to prioritise funding and promote investments in order to improve and sustain the performance of the agriculture sector and ensure a food secure region.
- (ii) **FURTHER URGE SADC** Member States to strengthen and/or develop robust mechanisms to prevent misuse of both domestic and foreign public resources in the agriculture sector.
- (iii) **ENCOURAGE** SADC Parliaments and parliamentarians to strengthen their oversight role in execution of policies, laws and budgets relating to agriculture in general and climate change in particular.
- (iv) **CALL** on Member States to review, inter alia, legislation, policies and national development plans in order to promote agroecology, noting that although the farming system was practised in many SADC countries, it was absent in critical policy documents both at national and regional level.
- (v) **IMPLORE** SADC Member states to fulfil their seven Malabo Declaration commitments and progressively allocate at least 10 per cent of public expenditure to appropriate and high-quality agriculture and nutrition, including agroecology.
- (vi) **ENCOURAGE** SADC Governments to strengthen agricultural data collection and management systems to ensure that all Malabo Declaration goals and targets are accordingly reported, noting that failure by Member States to submit data rendered the Malabo Biennial Review Reports incomplete.
- (vii) **ENCOURAGE** Member States to promote education and knowledge transfer on agroecology and related practices on all levels of education, namely; university; vocational education; formal; and informal. This is critical for all stakeholders especially smallholder farmers for them to understand the reasons for transitioning from industrial agriculture to agroecology.
- (viii) **IMPLORE** SADC Member States to ensure that the transition from industrial agriculture to agroecology should be preceded by robust research to ensure that the process does not create inequalities and food insecurity in the region.

## **7.0 CONCLUSION**

Agroecology can immensely contribute to food security of the SADC region and assist to combat the adverse effects of climate change as it works in harmony with nature and ecosystems, coupled with a low carbon footprint. Notably, its potential to increase the resilience of smallholder farmers in the face of climate change should be a huge motivating factor for the SADC region to embrace agroecology, as its benefits far outweigh conventional agriculture. While agroecology is practised in some SADC Members States, there is need to promote it further by ensuring enabling policy and legal frameworks that support it. It should also be acknowledged that the transition from industrial agriculture to agroecological transitions may present some challenges in the initial stages in terms of sustaining the food security of the region. In that regard, care should be taken to ensure that the transition is supported by research, knowledge transfer and investments in order mitigate some of the challenges likely to be encountered.

Finally, the Committee extends its gratitude to the Secretary General and staff of the SADC PF for the tremendous work and facilitation of the joint meeting which resulted in this report. The Committee further extends its appreciation to all the resource persons for rendering valuable input that if implemented can result in sustainable water resource management in the region.

**Appendix I – List of SADC PF Officials**

Ms Boemo Mmandu Sekgoma	Secretary General
Ms Clare Musonda	Director, Corporate Governance
Mr Joseph Manzi	Director, Parliamentary Business
Mr Sheuneni Kurasha	Programme Manager, Democracy, Governance and Human Rights
Ms Sharon Nyirongo	Committee Secretary (FANR)
Mrs Edna K Zyambo	Committee Secretary (TIFI)
Ms Agness Lilungwe	Executive Secretary to the Secretary General
Mr Ronald Windwaai	Information and Communications Technology Officer
Ms Paulina Kanguatjivi	Assistant Procedural Officer and Coordinator



## **Appendix II - List of Resource Persons**

Mr Joseph Mzinga	Coordinator of the Small-scale Farmers Forum in Eastern and Southern Africa (ESSAF)
Ms Irene Liborious Dr Cliff S Dlamini	Project Control Coordinator - ESSAF Executive Director, Centre for Coordination of Agriculture Research and Development for Southern Africa (CCARDESA)
Mr Martin Muchero	MT Muchero Management Consultancy (Pty) Ltd – ActionAid International
Dr Lewis Hove	Resilience Team Leader, Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations

### **Observer**

Ms Julie Middleton	Consortium Project Manager, Partnership for Social Accountability/ActionAid International
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