



WELCOME REMARKS

BY

**PERMANENT SECRETARY FOR ENVIRONMENT, CLIMATE AND
WILDLIFE,**

AMBASSADOR T. T. CHIFAMBA

**SENIOR OFFICIALS MEETING ON ENVIRONMENT, NATURAL
RESOURCES AND TOURISM**

Rainbow Towers Hotel, Harare

19 May 2025

Salutations

On behalf of the Ministry of Environment, Climate and Wildlife of the Republic of Zimbabwe, I am pleased to welcome you all to this important Meeting of Senior Officials on Environment, Natural Resources and Tourism, held in the margins of the inaugural SADC Transfrontier Conservation Areas (TFCA) Conference and Summit.

We are honoured to host this gathering and grateful for your presence, which reflects the shared commitment across our region to advancing cooperation in environmental governance, natural resource management, and sustainable tourism development.

Today's discussions are an opportunity to build on that vision — by taking stock of our progress, aligning our technical approaches, and preparing clear recommendations for policy direction.

Colleagues,

Our gathering today takes place at a time when our sectors face growing challenges and increasing expectations. Pressures on ecosystems, biodiversity loss, climate variability, and growing demands for socio-economic development require us to respond with integrated, well-coordinated and sustainable strategies.

The agenda before us provides a valuable platform to:

- Review the performance of the wildlife sector, particularly in conservation programming and sustainable resource use;
- Exchange views ahead of the upcoming 20th meeting of the Conference of Parties to CITES, especially in balancing conservation priorities with community livelihoods and development;

- Reflect on the forestry sector, which is key to ecosystem services, rural livelihoods, and climate resilience;
- Consider how to better harness tourism as a tool for green growth, employment creation, and cultural preservation.
- Consider the outcomes of the SADC TFCA Conference which is taking place concurrently to this meeting.

Additionally, we will assess progress on regional environmental instruments and strategies that support transboundary cooperation, environmental sustainability, and regional integration. We also take note of the continued engagement of the SADC First Ladies' Forum on Environment, whose efforts in community mobilisation and advocacy remain valuable to our shared objectives.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

As technical officials, our role is critical in supporting evidence-based policy formulation, coordinating implementation, and ensuring that regional aspirations translate into measurable national results. The success of our Ministers' engagements depends on the quality of input and guidance that emerges from this forum.

I therefore encourage open, constructive dialogue and collaboration throughout the course of this meeting. Let us work collectively to ensure that our deliberations are informed, practical, and grounded in the realities and opportunities across Member States.

In closing, I reaffirm Zimbabwe's continued commitment to the SADC regional agenda for sustainable environment and natural resource governance. We remain ready to support the work of the Secretariat, our

partners, and fellow Member States in ensuring the success of this meeting and the broader TFCA programme.

I thank you and wish you all fruitful deliberations.