



DEVELOPING RADIO PARTNERS

### Focus: Loss of Natural Resources

Zambia has an abundance of natural resources ranging from wildlife, rivers, lakes and forest. Natural resources are naturally-occurring and are considered important for the balance of nature and also for improving the livelihoods of people.

The value of natural resources is based on the amount of the material available, and how it is used.

Natural resources are classified into renewable and non-renewable resources. Renewable resources are living resources such as fish, wildlife and forests. These can restock if not over harvested and used sustainably.

Non-renewable resources include fossil fuels and minerals.

This week's Bulletin will focus on the loss of renewable natural resources in Zambia.

## The Weekly Information Resource Bulletin

The goals of the Weekly Bulletin are:

- Bring listeners in the project area the latest information on natural resources, the environment and agriculture
- Focus on solutions, what works and what people can do
- Encourage listeners to share both their questions and solutions (African solutions for African problems)
- Raise awareness of issues that need to be discussed to affect public policy.
- Bring the latest solutions and practices that have relevance to this region from around the world
- Identify and link other NGOs working in the region share the project interests and goals
- Give the participating journalists guidance and tips on their reporting on these issues

### Problem: Loss of Natural Resources in Zambia

The threats to Zambia's natural resources are mainly caused by human activities.

They include:

Deforestation and habitat destruction. Zambia has approximately 50 million hectares of forest with an estimated deforestation rate of 250,000 to 300,000 hectares a year. (UN-REDD programme).

The deforestation and habitat destruction rate is alarmingly high. The indiscriminate cutting down of trees is the result of land clearing for farming, logging for timber, cutting for firewood and the making of charcoal. Charcoal making is one of main drivers of deforestation due to

increased energy demands in the country.

Population growth is another driver of lost natural resources. In fact, the increase in the human population is directly affecting all our natural resources. This calls for greater efforts to preserve our natural resources for future generations.

For instance, the fisheries resources have been exploited due to increasing use of poor fishing methods and indiscriminate fishing. Water and air pollution is another issue which needs serious attention. Still another is the industrial sectors such as mining and manufacturing. They are major causes of water and air pollution.

## Solutions: Activities for Journalists

A look at Zambia's energy sources and use reveals that about 90% of the population use charcoal-related sources of energy. Thus, making charcoal is an attractive business, but it is poorly regulated. This calls for alternative sustainable charcoal production strategies such as encouraging tree planting for charcoal production and rotation of areas for charcoal making to allow natural regeneration of trees.

Find out from your listeners about what kind of trees are suitable for charcoal making? How can local communities participate in planting such trees?

Fish makes up about 40% of animal proteins in the diet of Zambians. Find out from listeners how they see the size of fish catches today – compared to ten years ago. Are the fish bigger or smaller today? The number of fish caught and their size have reduced significantly because of poor harvesting methods and weak management activities.

Find out from the listeners what they think of the fish ban in Zambia. How many respect this fish ban between October and March? The ban allows fish to breed and grow. The government has been implementing the ban to allow fish stocks to replenish, but most

communities don't respect this ban. Ask listeners how their communities can better participate in the management of the fish ban.

What is the quality of the water like in your community? Find out how the forest can help in protecting water sources.

Does your community have a natural resources conservation committee?

Find out how these committees help village members appreciate conservation. Does the conservation village group receive support from other organizations or the government?

The importance of the sustainable use of nature's resources must be emphasized as it provides resilient livelihoods options.

### Useful Links

Information about farming and the environment:  
**Makweti Sishekanu**, National Farmers Union Zambia:  
+260-211-252-649 or +260-965-098-360. Email:  
[makwetiskanu@yahoo.com](mailto:makwetiskanu@yahoo.com)

**Mr Davies Kashole**, Forest Department head quarters  
0976059152  
Vincent Ziba, FAO Forest And Farm National  
Coordinator, Community-based National Resource  
Management Forum, Zambia; Email:  
[vinceziba@yahoo.com](mailto:vinceziba@yahoo.com). Phone: 0966-246-924 and  
0977 210382

**Mwape Sichilongo**, WWF Conservation Manager.  
Email: [msichilongo@wwfzam.org](mailto:msichilongo@wwfzam.org). Phone: +260  
966442540