



**REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA**

**Keynote Address and Official Launch of the Five-Year Ministerial  
Strategic Plan and the National Policy on Subdivision and  
Consolidation of Agricultural Land**

**By**

**Alpheus G. !Naruseb, MP  
Minister of Agriculture, Water and Forestry**

**26 April 2018**

**OLD CABINET CHAMBER, OFFICE OF THE PRIME MINISTER**

**WINDHOEK**

**Director of Ceremonies;**  
**Honourable Anna Shiweda, Deputy Minister of Agriculture, Water & Forestry;**  
**Honourable Governors present;**  
**Mr. Percy Misika, Permanent Secretary of Agriculture, Water & Forestry;**  
**Deputy Permanent Secretaries present;**  
**Management and Staff of the Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Forestry;**  
**Senior and other Government Officials present;**  
**Representatives of United Nation Agencies present;**  
**Representatives of the Private Sector;**  
**Representatives of NGOs;**  
**Representatives of Farmers' Union;**  
**Representative of our Institutions of High Learning;**  
**Members of the Media;**  
**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

I am delighted today, to present to you two very important documents that are designed to appropriately direct the future work of the Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Forestry, namely the five-year Strategic Plan and the National Policy on Sub-Division and Consolidation of Agricultural Land. The two documents have been developed in consultation with stakeholders, in response to the dynamic environment in which the Ministry and its stakeholders operate, and are key facilitators to the execution of the Ministry's mandate in line with national development plans and the sustainable Development Goals of Agenda 2030.

Before I specifically talk about the documents, allow me to say a few words about the significance of sectors under the mandate of this Ministry and the challenges facing the agriculture, water and forestry sectors. Although the agriculture and forestry sectors jointly contribute a mere 3.7% to the country's GDP, the sectors sustain the majority of the Namibian population,

whereby about 70% of the population depends on agricultural activities for income and livelihoods. The sectors notably contribute to national foreign exchange earnings and hence to the country's balance of payments, and to fighting poverty by improving rural livelihoods, enhancement of household and national food security, as well as the promotion of sustainable use of natural resources.

The agriculture, water and forestry sectors, on the global scale, are increasingly being negatively affected by climate change and economic trends. The situation for Namibian farming communities is further compounded by natural disasters, such as floods and periodic droughts experienced in the country, which are predicted to escalate due to the real threat of climate variability. The negative impacts of climate variability and its related consequences are being particularly felt by our people in a country where agriculture, in its broadest sense, is linked to the economy, the environment and most importantly, to the people. To address this challenge, the Ministry together with our development partners is implementing some of the key projects such as Comprehensive Conservation Agriculture (CCA) and Climate Resilient Agriculture in three (3) of the Vulnerable Extreme northern crop-growing Regions (CRAVE) which are aimed at building resilience for farmers and at mitigating the negative effects of Climate Change.

With the understanding that the agriculture, water and forestry sectors are operating in a fluctuating and increasingly challenging environment, and knowing the direction in which Government wants the country to move as far as the three sectors are concerned, the question is whether the Ministry's legal, policy, and strategic frameworks, in their current form, are

adequate to attain the objectives set out in the Fifth National Development Plan 5 (NDP5) and Harambee Prosperity Plan to increase the sector's contribution to the country's socio-economic development. In answering this question, the Ministry reviewed some of its laws, policies and strategic frameworks. Some outdated legislations have been amended to respond to the new environment and challenges, while other instruments are still under review. It is on the basis of the prevailing operating environment that the Ministry in consultation with stakeholders formulated and finalized the now-to-be-launched five-year Strategic Plan as well as the National Policy on Sub Division and Consolidation of Agricultural Land.

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

The Strategic Plan for 2017/18 to 2021/22, will serve as a road map for the Ministry to continue carrying out its mandate and functions for the next five years. This Strategic Plan is aligned to higher national planning documents such as NDP5 and Harambee Prosperity Plan so as to attain the desired outcomes outlined in those high level national plans and subsequently contribute to the achievement of Vision 2030. It is a framework that outlines key themes, strategic objectives, programmes and projects which need to be vigorously pursued in order for the Ministry to deliver effective and efficient services to its customers. The five key themes which underpin the development of this strategic plan are: Sustainable Livestock & Forest Management; Sustainable Food production; Value Chain Development and Market-oriented Infrastructure; Water and Sanitation Infrastructure as well as Operational Excellence. These themes are critical to increase production and productivity; ensure sustainable food security; promote sustainable management and utilization of existing water

resources in order to ensure water security for human consumption; livestock and industry development. This Strategic Plan will also ensure access to adequate and improved sanitation facilities as well as to provide business development services to strengthen the cooperative movement in Namibia.

The essence of this Strategic Plan is anchored in the Constitution of the Republic of Namibia, Vision 2030, 2014 SWAPO Party Manifesto, NDP 5, HPP as well as Agenda 2030, Paris Agreement on Climate Change, Agenda 2063, Maputo and Malabo Declarations and other international, continental and regional agreements, conventions, protocols, and treaties which Namibia is party to. The process of developing this Strategic Plan has taken into account the internal environment of the Ministry in terms of its own weaknesses, strengths as well as the external environment in respect of political, economical, sociological, technological, legal and environmental factors to identify opportunities and threats, which may have an impact on the Ministry's performance. The Plan will enable the Ministry to provide targeted and improved service delivery at central, regional and local levels and contribute to a public sector that is professional, transparent and accountable through the Government's Performance Management System.

This Strategic Plan will form the basis of the Annual Work Plans which are the building blocks of the Performance Management System through which each and every staff member will have to commit to, by signing a Performance Agreement.

In order to implement the Strategic Plan successfully, the Ministry would like to invite the participation and cooperation of all stakeholders. In the same vein I urge Regional Councils to participate in the implementation of

the Ministry's 2018/19 Annual Work Plan and future ones, which are derived directly from the Strategic Plan. The collective development and implementation of this Strategic Plan is aimed at ensuring that the Ministry is responsive to the needs of all our stakeholders, particularly, the farmers.

### **Ladies and Gentlemen,**

The National Policy on Sub Division and Consolidation of Agricultural Land is equally important as there can be no agricultural development without land. Recognizing the importance of the agricultural sector, this policy mainly advocates for guarding the sustainable existence of the agricultural sector. As such, the policy guards, amongst others, against the subdivision of agricultural land into uneconomic units, as well as against speculation with agricultural land which inevitably results into inflated prices. Given Namibia's agro ecological zones and climatic conditions in various areas, the Policy sets parameters used to determine viable agricultural economic unit sizes in specific areas.

Adverse climatic factors have rendered the productive agricultural land to be very limited, making it one of the most valuable resources in Namibia. The most productive and suitable agricultural land in Namibia is either confined to the perennial rivers or in the center of the country. The demand for land has increased enormously while the size of the total land area especially for agricultural purposes remain the same and inelastic. To try and address the high demand for land, land owners often opt to subdivide their into small portions. However, unplanned or uncontrolled land subdivision into smaller units can easily lead to over exploitation of resources, bush encroachment and permanent loss of the most fertile soils

through erosion. The smaller land units may also not necessarily be economical in terms of agricultural production and could pose a threat to food security at national level. The high demand has resulted in the current situation where farms are sold at prices which by far exceed their real productive values. It is therefore not surprising that most Affirmative Action Loan beneficiary farmers find it difficult to honour their loan obligations. Once the business on the subdivided agricultural land is found not to be viable, requests for change of land use to non-agricultural purposes such as lodges and residential estates are made. In order to control the loss of agricultural land and keep up with the source of livelihood for the majority of the Namibian people, a clear policy direction is key, hence the development and introduction of this National Policy on Subdivision and Consolidation of Agricultural Land.

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

The intention of the Ministry is not for these documents to remain on the shelves, destined to become dust-collectors. These are operation manuals to be used by all staff in undertaking their daily duties; they are handbooks for managers to plan actions and manage resources; they are references for stakeholders to evaluate our performance; and they are guides for agricultural investment and sectoral growth. My request to you all here today would be to support the Ministry in the implementation of these initiatives. The success we seek can only be achieved by working together, in a transparent and accountable manner, to elevate the contribution of our agricultural, water and forest sector to National Development and to make meaningful impact to the livelihood of all Namibians.

With these words, ladies and gentlemen, it is now my distinct honor and privilege to officially and publicly launch these two important documents, namely the Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Forestry five-year Strategic Plan and the National Policy on Sub Division and Consolidation of Agricultural Land and in doing so, reaffirm the commitment of the Ministry to their successful implementation.

I thank you all for your kind attention.