

African CSOs Biodiversity Alliance (ACBA) Strategic Launch and the signing of a Memorandum of understanding with African Wildlife Foundation (AWF)

Formed in February 2020, the African CSO Biodiversity Alliance (ACBA) provides a platform for African CSOs to speak with one voice on issues of Sustainable Use of nature that contribute to conservation and equitable benefits from nature. The ACBA members comprise of national NGOs, Civil Society Organization (CSOs), networks, Community-Based Organizations (CBOs), youth groups and individual experts that share ACBA's vision and values.

As the second phase of the UN Biodiversity Conference (COP15) approaches and the post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) takes shape, African Protected Area congress that happened for the 18th to 23rd was an opportune moment for ACBA to reflect on how it engages throughout African countries between now and 2030.

Africa CSOs Biodiversity Alliance developed a 10-year strategic plan titled from bottom up nature people positive, which was launched at the African Protected Area Congress. The strategic plan carefully navigates the challenges of developing a plan for a geographically and thematically diverse network that is united in its desire to sustainably manage and use biodiversity. The plan speaks differently to different members because of this diversity.

The strategic plan developed by ACBA is ambitious but achievable, the main mandate of the alliance is to make sure that the African voices are included in conservation models and agenda and also focused on empowering Indigenous People and local communities & small-scale farmers with rights to sustainably manage and benefit from their resources are recognized and most importantly create a platform where members are able to network.

"While a strategic plan does not guarantee funding, not having a plan guarantees no funding. We are therefore motivated in the belief that this strategic plan will assist us mobilize the required financial resources and means of implementation." Stated Dr. Yemi Katerere African CSOs Biodiversity Alliance, Coordinator during the strategic plan Launch.

The main theme of the ACBA pavilion at the African Protected Area congress was Strengthening partnerships to secure Africa's Biodiversity and heritage and that is because ACBA believes that

partnerships are very key when it comes successful networks. ACBA was honored to sign a Memorandum of Understanding with the African Wildlife Foundation (AWF) as they believe in the vision and values of ACBA. African Wildlife Foundation has in the past provided critical funding and technical support that has enabled coordination of ACBA's activities as well its active participation at key events such as the IUCN WCC, CBD negotiations and APAC and the signed MOU is a clear indication that AWF are willing to work together with ACBA to achieve its goals going forward

Mr Kaddu Sebunya, the CEO of the African Wildlife Foundation (AWF), pointed out that, by forming an Alliance with CSOs, it will open new doors in our conservation journey, and touch many more lives than if we all took individual action. He gave an example of what a Greek philosopher, Aristotle referred to as the 'whole being much greater than the sum of the parts.' He continued by stating that, together, we will walk the conservation journey further and faster, achieve more in a shorter time period and place conservation on top of the agenda across the continent.

"This Memorandum of Understanding is a game changer in the field of biodiversity conservation and we must therefore be very proud of this defining moment in the history of pan African conservation." Concluded Mr. Kaddu Sebunya.