

## Steering Committee Members say Land Policy implementation on track.

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Addis Ababa, 05 April 2012 (ECA) – The Steering Committee of the African Land Policy Initiative (LPI) today expressed satisfaction at the progress registered with the implementation of the African Union declaration on land issues in Africa.

Presided over by Dr. Abebe Haile Gabriel, Director of Agriculture and Rural Economy at the African Union Commission, the Committee examined the progress report since its last session in March 2011 and unanimously agreed that a lot had been accomplished despite enormous human resource challenges the Secretariat faces.

According to ECA's Information and Communication Service, members decided to deepen their reflection on role of the Steering Committee's role in decision making---to be guided by study on mechanism for implementing the Declaration.

It underscored the need to engage regional land experts (RLEs) to foster the implementation of the AU Declaration and called on the Secretariat to reflect on how to bring additional experts on board especially to guide resource mobilization in line with the strategic plan.

The Secretariat was advised to rationalize activities based on budgets and human resources and to seek partnerships to implement activities including resource mobilization.

On the LPI's Work plan for 2012 the Committee recommended that it should focus on support to member states and resource mobilization and reflect the key elements of the strategic plan now being drafted.

Members then enjoined the Secretariat to expedite the process of developing the strategic plan as it is urgently needed to guide resource mobilization. They also advised the Secretariat to take the opportunity offered by the Declaration to position itself and fully engage different African governments who are the key players in all land issues.

Participants highlighted the need for all the Regional Economic Communities to come on board, but recognized the challenges some members face when documents and even meeting deliberations are nearly always in English, despite the heavy presence of Francophone delegates.

The Committee resolved to translate the most basic documents as soon as possible and to ensure that there an interpretation service is provided for future meetings. The AJC undertook to ensure the implementation of this particularly recommendation, given its expertise in this domain.

The UN Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) and the African Development Bank (AfDB), under the overall leadership of the AUC, launched a joint land policy initiative in 2006, in recognition of the central role of land in African development.

The initiative aimed to develop a framework and guidelines on land policy in Africa (F&G) which was endorsed into a Declaration by African Heads of State. The implementation phase of that Declaration was officially launched in October 2010 in Lilongwe, Malawi.

That marked the beginning of the second phase of LPI, dedicated to building the capacity of AU member states in support of effective and improved land policy development, implementation and evaluation in Africa.

The Land Policy Initiative Steering Committee is a decision making organ with authority to make strategic.

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