

Land Policy Initiative Update: Steering Committee lauds progress, approves 2015 work plan

Addis Ababa, 11 May 2015 (ECA) – The Land Policy Initiative (LPI) Steering Committee met on Friday 8 May at the African Union Commission (AUC) and approved a consolidated work plan for 2015. The Chair of the LPI Steering committee, Mr. Abebe H/Gabriel of the AUC Commission noted that for the first time since its inception in 2006, the LPI Secretariat has an annual work plan developed jointly for implementation with regional economic communities (RECs) and other regional partners.

Mr. Abebe, who also chaired a Joint Working Group on Land (JWGL) meeting on 6 May 2015 led other members in commending the LPI Secretariat for successful efforts over the past two years that have culminated in the mainstreaming of land governance in the work programmes of these institutions. He noted that this is essential to the successful implementation of the AU Declaration on Land Issues and Challenges at regional and national levels.

With the support of the European Union (EU) and the Swiss Agency for International Development Cooperation (SDC), the joint work plan will include land governance related activities in the realms of research and advocacy, capacity development, knowledge management, and monitoring and evaluation implemented jointly with the secretariats of four RECs: the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), East African Community (EAC), Economic community of West Africa States (ECOWAS) and the Intergovernmental Authority for Development (IGAD). The LPI will also implement joint capacity development activities with the African Institute for Economic Development and Planning (IDEP) and the Regional Center for Mapping Resources for Development (RCMRD). The Steering Committee encouraged the LPI Secretariat to expedite finalization of joint work plans and agreements with outstanding RECs and implementing partners to enhance the reach and impact of the entire land governance program.

Examining progress made during 2014, the Steering Committee commended the LPI Secretariat for expediting implementation of Committee decisions and the LPI 2014 Work Plan. The Committee pointed to the launch of the Guiding Principles on Large Scale Land Based Investments and

the inaugural Conference on Land Policy in Africa as key highlights of a successful 2014 for the LPI Secretariat, the tripartite partnership of the AUC, ECA and AfDB and indeed the entire membership of the Steering Committee. The committee also appreciated the efforts of the LPI Secretariat in taking the initiative and partnering with the AUC and NEPAD Agency (NPCA) to mainstream land governance in the AU year of agriculture and food security, culminating in the Malabo Declaration on Accelerated Agricultural Growth and Transformation for Shared Prosperity and Improved Livelihood in June 2014.

"Land governance now forms part of the three components in the implementation strategy for the Malabo Declaration," said Mr Abebe. He called on the LPI Secretariat to be vigilant in ensuring that land governance indicators formed part of its monitoring mechanism.

Mr. Stephen Karingi, Director of the Regional Integration and Trade Division, ECA thanked the Steering Committee for its strategic guidance to the LPI .

Issued by:

ECA External Communications and Media Relations Section

PO Box 3001

Addis Ababa

Ethiopia

Tel: +251 11 551 5826

E-mail: ecainfo@uneca.org [1]

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