

MEDIA RELEASE
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For Immediate Release:

**HONORABLE MARIA DO ROSÁRIO BRAGANÇA SAMBO,
MINISTER OF HIGH EDUCATION, SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY
AND INNOVATION, ANGOLA TAKES OVER AS THE CHAIR OF
SASSCAL'S COUNCIL OF MINISTERS**

The Southern African Science Centre for Climate Change and Adaptive Land Management (SASSCAL) Council of Ministers held a successful virtual 2nd Ordinary Council of Ministers meeting on 14 October, 2021 during which they endorsed the 2020 – 2024 SASSCAL Business Plan, Financial Sustainability, and its transformation into an International Organization.

The Council of Ministers meeting takes place every two years to deliberate on SASSCAL matters of strategic importance. The meeting also elected Angolan Minister for Higher Education, Science, Technology and Innovation, Honorable Maria do Rosário Bragança Sambo as Chairperson of the Council while Botswana Honorable



Philda Kereng, Minister of Environment, Natural Resources, Conservation and Tourism, Botswana was elected Vice-Chairperson.

The newly elected Chair takes over from Namibia's Minister of Agriculture, Water and Land Reform, Honorable Carl-Hermann Gustav Schlettwein. Namibia was at the helm as interim chair from 2018 – 2019 and was elected substantive Chair from 2019 – 2021.

In her acceptance speech, the newly elected Chairperson said she looked forward to the implementation of the SASSCAL business plan 2020 – 2024 and would work hard to achieve SASSCAL'S transformation to an international organisation.

Meanwhile, Honourable Maria do Rosário Bragança confirmed that Angola, the second largest oil producer in sub-Saharan Africa, with an average daily production of about 1.2 million barrels, is also working towards migrating to low carbon energy sources, making a migration in its energy mix with renewable energies. Multidisciplinary research to identify the full potential of renewable energy sources existing in Angola, resulted in the production of the Atlas and National Strategy for the New Renewable Energies, under the coordination of the country's Ministry of Energy and Water. The results of the research also served as the basis for Angola's contribution to SASSCAL's "H2 Atlas Africa" project.

SASSCAL's main sponsor, Germany's Minister of Education and Research, Honourable Anja Karliczek, reiterating the importance of SASSCAL's mandate, said "We all know that climate change - together with other drivers of change like urbanization or land use will have dramatic effects on natural resources in Southern Africa and elsewhere. It will lead to increasing competition between, for instance, food or bioenergy production and biodiversity or nature conservation. And we all know that these effects are not and will not be confined to national or even regional borders

but will impact on global sustainability. SASSCAL has become a reference institution in the fight against the impacts of Climate Change in the region and beyond”.

“Looking at the severe problems in terms of provision of electricity in some of your countries these days, we are sorely reminded how energy patterns are changing already. This is the reason why we engaged our cooperation into a new and relevant research topic, which is Green Hydrogen.”

The German Minister considers Southern Africa as a region with an enormous potential for wind and solar energy, placing it in an excellent position to produce green hydrogen for its own use and export purposes. In this regard, the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) is going to invest 120,000,000 Million Euros for the development of Green Hydrogen Economy in the region.

Among other presentations, SASSCAL Executive Director, Dr Jane Olwoch presented the progress made so far in transforming SASSCAL to an international organisation. To transform SASSCAL into a fully-fledged international institution, Member States are required to ratify the SASSCAL treaty. During the meeting, member states congratulated SASSCAL for its achievements during the last 10 years.

Handing over the Chairmanship of the Council of Ministers, Namibia’s Deputy Minister of Agriculture, Water and Land Reform, Honorable Anna Shiweda congratulated Honorable Maria do Rosário Bragança Sambo and Vice-Chair Honorable Philda Kereng, Minister of Environment, Natural Resources, Conservation and Tourism, Botswana. Honorable Anna Shiweda said SASSCAL achieved many milestones during Namibia’s Chairmanship. These include: signing of the founding legal document of SASSCAL by most of SASSCAL member states; commencement of the ratification process of the SASSCAL treaty, which will enable the regional body to transform into an international organisation; full establishment of the SASSCAL

Regional Secretariat; the commencement of construction of the headquarters of SASSCAL regional secretariat and the Namibian Node; implementation of the research portfolio 01; as well as capacity building, research and infrastructure among member states.

SASSCAL is a joint initiative of Angola, Botswana, Germany, Namibia, South Africa, and Zambia, established in response to challenges of global change. It works on thematic areas including climate, water, forestry, agriculture, and biodiversity. So far, the institution has implemented almost 90 research projects with 80 partner institutions, trained about 200 young scientists, established a network of 156 weather stations and 54 biodiversity observatories, as well as an operational central data and service centre at the Regional Secretariat in Windhoek.

Present during the meeting were Namibia's Deputy Minister of Agriculture, Water and Land Reform, Honourable Anna Shiweda, Angola's Minister of High Education, Science, Technology and Innovation, Honourable Maria do Rosário Bragança Sambo, German Minister of Education and Research, Honourable Anja Karliczek, and Chairperson of West African Science Service Centre on Climate Change and Adaptive Land Use (WASCAL) Ministerial Council and Mali's Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research, Honourable Amadou Keita. Also in attendance during the virtual meeting, were Senior Officials representing the SADC Secretariat, Minister of Science and Innovation South Africa, Minister of Environment, Natural Resources, Conservation and Tourism Botswana, SASSCAL Board Chairperson, Mrs. Jane Chinkusu and all Members of SASSCAL Governing Board.

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