



## PRESS RELEASE

**For more information or to set up interviews, please contact:**

**Alex Banda**, Senior Programme Officer, Environment and Sustainable Development, [abanda@sadc.int](mailto:abanda@sadc.int), phone +267 395 1863

**Christine Mentzel**, Senior Programme Officer, BIOPAMA Programme, [Christine.mentzel@iucn.org](mailto:Christine.mentzel@iucn.org), phone +27 74 452 0750

### For immediate release

## **SADC Member States agree common approach for extractive industries to consider biodiversity**

**Johannesburg, South Africa.** A regional meeting hosted by the SADC Secretariat (Southern Africa Development Community) developed the framework for the first best practice guidelines aiming to facilitate biodiversity conservation during the exploitation of mineral and hydrocarbon resources in the SADC Region. The workshop was convened in collaboration with the EU-funded Biodiversity and Protected Areas Management (BIOPAMA) Programme and the IUCN (International Union for Conservation of Nature) Pan-African Protected Areas Conservation Programme, in Johannesburg, South Africa, from 2-4 September 2014.

13 SADC Member States, representatives of the private sector, and conservation NGOs took part in the discussions on how to reconcile the development objectives of mineral and hydrocarbon exploitation with protection and sustainable use of biodiversity in the SADC region.

The SADC Region is endowed with an abundance of mineral and hydrocarbon resources that have significantly contributed to the economic development of many countries in the region. These resources represent a promising prospect of substantial economic growth in the future, following the discovery of a number of large deposits and reserves of various minerals, metals, oil, and gas in the region. Mineral resource rich areas also support extraordinary biodiversity that plays a critical role in promoting national economic growth directly through tourism and employment and indirectly through ecosystem services that sustain development and support livelihoods.

The three-day discussions resulted in the elaboration of a framework for **Regional Best Practice Guidelines for the Exploitation of Mineral and Hydrocarbon Resources in the SADC Region**, as part of the implementation of the SADC Regional Biodiversity Action Plan. This will be the first guideline at the regional level that aims to facilitate the strategic and operational mainstreaming of biodiversity considerations into the development of the extractive industries in the region. The guidelines will help governments, the extractive industry sector, and civil society to identify opportunities and needs for biodiversity conservation during planning, exploitation, and closure of extractive operations.

The development of the regional guidelines is in line with the key action to “Develop guidelines on the exploitation of natural resources such as minerals in reserves or protected areas” defined in the SADC Biodiversity Action Plan approved by Ministers responsible for Environment and Natural Resources in October 2013. The collaboration with the SADC Secretariat to host and facilitate this regional meeting is directly in line with the goals of the BIOPAMA programme in Eastern and Southern Africa that focuses on supporting cross-sectoral engagement for integrated sustainable planning with sectors and stakeholders active at the interface of protected areas.

The outcomes of this meeting will feed into the agenda of the next meeting of SADC Ministers responsible for Environment and Natural Resources, the upcoming African Ministerial Conference on Environment (dates to be confirmed) and the IUCN World Parks Congress 2014 (Sydney, Australia, 12-19 November 2014), to demonstrate the need to prioritize working with the extractive industries sector in relation to biodiversity conservation.

#### **About SADC**

The SADC is a Regional Economic Community of the 15 Southern African Member States; Angola, Botswana, Democratic Republic of Congo, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Seychelles, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe. Established in 1992, SADC is committed to Regional Integration and poverty eradication within Southern Africa through economic development and ensuring peace and security. One of the mandates of SADC is to ensure the equitable and sustainable use of the environment and land based resources for the benefit of the present and future generations. The Southern African Development Community (SADC) Secretariat is the Principal Executive Institution of SADC, responsible for strategic planning, facilitation and co-ordination and management of all SADC Programmes. [www.sadc.int](http://www.sadc.int)

#### **About IUCN**

IUCN, International Union for Conservation of Nature, helps the world find pragmatic solutions to our most pressing environment and development challenges. IUCN's work focuses on valuing and conserving nature, ensuring effective and equitable governance of its use, and deploying nature-based solutions to global challenges in climate, food and development. IUCN supports scientific research, manages field projects all over the world, and brings governments, NGOs, the UN and companies together to develop policy, laws and best practice. IUCN is the world's oldest and largest global environmental organization, with more than 1,200 government and NGO members and almost 11,000 volunteer experts in some 160 countries. IUCN's work is supported by over 1,000 staff in 45 offices and hundreds of partners in public, NGO and private sectors around the world. [www.iucn.org](http://www.iucn.org)

#### **About BIOPAMA**

The Biodiversity and Protected Areas Management (BIOPAMA) programme aims to address threats to biodiversity in African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries, while reducing poverty in communities in and around protected areas. It is financially supported by resources from the intra-ACP envelope of the European Commission's (EC) 10th European Development Fund (EDF). BIOPAMA combines improving data availability with capacity development to strengthen protected area management. It has two main components: one concerning protected areas, jointly implemented by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and the EC's Joint Research Centre (JRC), and another dealing with access and benefit sharing (ABS), implemented by the Multi-Donor ABS Capacity Development Initiative managed by Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH. [www.biopama.org](http://www.biopama.org)