



FIRST INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON AGRICULTURAL LAW

Sustainable Development in Agriculture

Challenges and opportunities of smallholder communities transitioning to sustainable agriculture and living in harmony with nature- A Southern African Perspective.

23rd September 2021

Ebbie Dengu

Agriculture, land/NRM and climate change adaptation-Consultant.

Ebbie Dengu (ebbiedengu@gmail.com)

Southern Africa Development Community (SADC)





FIRST INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON AGRICULTURAL LAW

SADC Profile

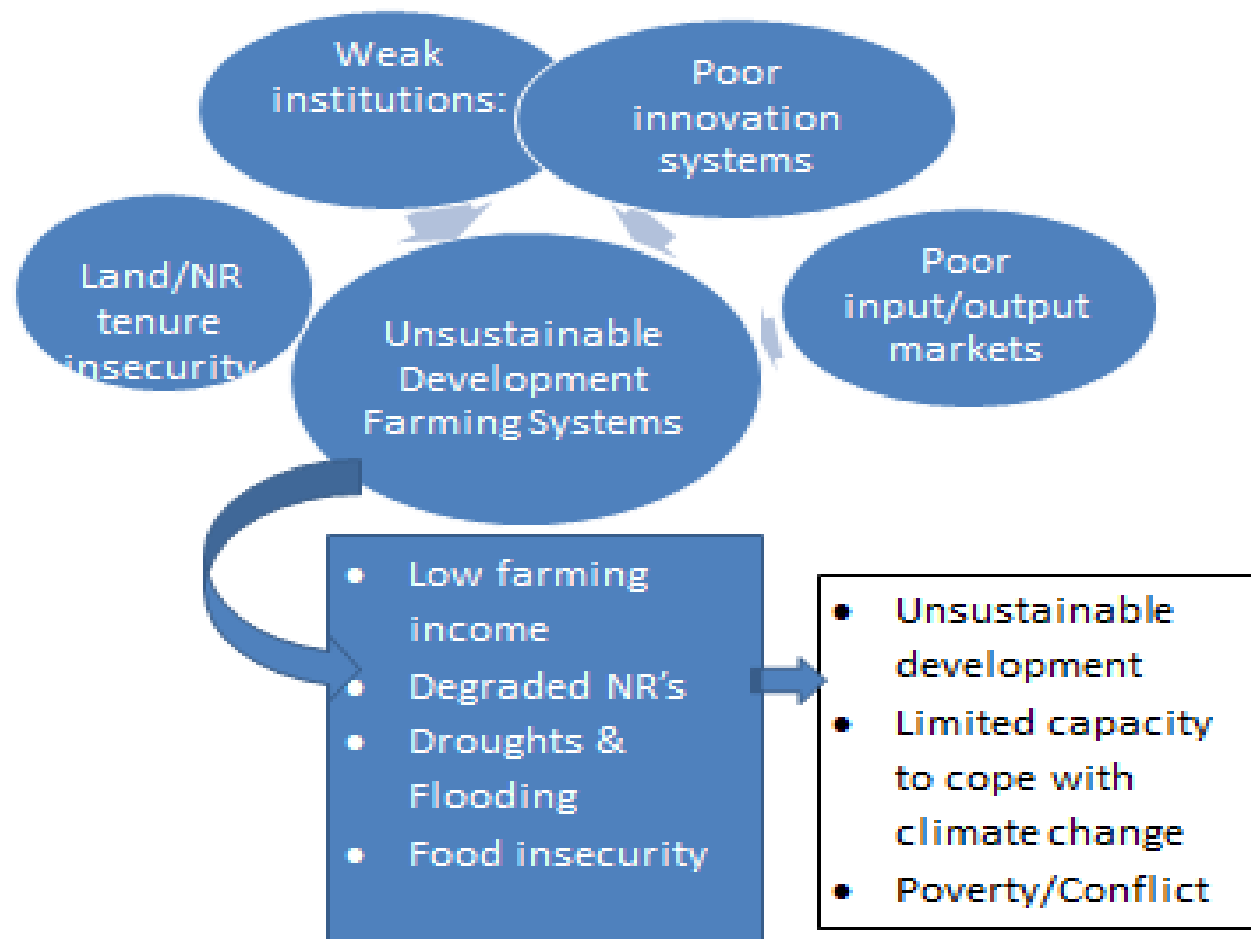
- 16 Countries
- Land area: 556 781 km²
- Population: 345 million (60% under 40years)
- GDP (2018): USD \$721.3 Billion
- + 200m people (58%) live in rural areas
- +90% of farmers in SADC are smallholder farmers i.e. they farm on 5ha or less in their village communities mostly under traditional tenure system.
- 44.8 million people in both urban and rural areas of Southern Africa were food insecure in 2020. (SADC Food & Nutrition VAC Report 2020.)
- 9 Member States report stunting rates above 30%, while 4 Member States report obesity rates of above 10 per cent. (2020)



the global voice of
the legal profession

FIRST INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON AGRICULTURAL LAW

Current Unsustainable Agriculture pathways





FIRST INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON AGRICULTURAL LAW

Smallholders & Formal VC's

Formal VC's

Loose VC's

- Largely subsistence
- traditional tenure sys.
- Insecure land/property rights
- small surpluses for the market
- locked land value
- Vulnerable to Climate Change



FIRST INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON AGRICULTURAL LAW

Smallholders face Climate change threats.

- Rainfall decreases by 4.1 percent and 5.9 percent by 2030 and 2070 respectively
- temperatures increase by 2.2 degrees.
- IPCC forecast a 20-50 per cent reduction in yields of staple cereals for Southern Africa. (NCCRS)
- Vulnerability to flooding- the incidences of tropical cyclone systems increase.
- Crop and livestock diseases triggered by CC on the increase.
- Reduced availability of water for domestic use, livestock/wildlife and irrigation.



FIRST INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON AGRICULTURAL LAW

Smallholders face Challenges

- **Policies & public resource allocation that favour centralized & extractive support models:**
- **Input support schemes & centralized produce markets** inappropriate & create dependency on government and donor funded programs.
- **External input driven production systems** that lead to poor health of soils, loss of biodiversity, food insecurity & debt burden on farmers.
- **Local entrepreneurs/innovators crowded out;** poor or no stimulation of local value addition & development of local markets.
- **long supply chains and increase in carbon foot prints.** (e.g. *bread travelling 900kms to consumer markets!!*)
- Fragmented laws over land land& NRM lead to **tenure & property rights insecurity.**

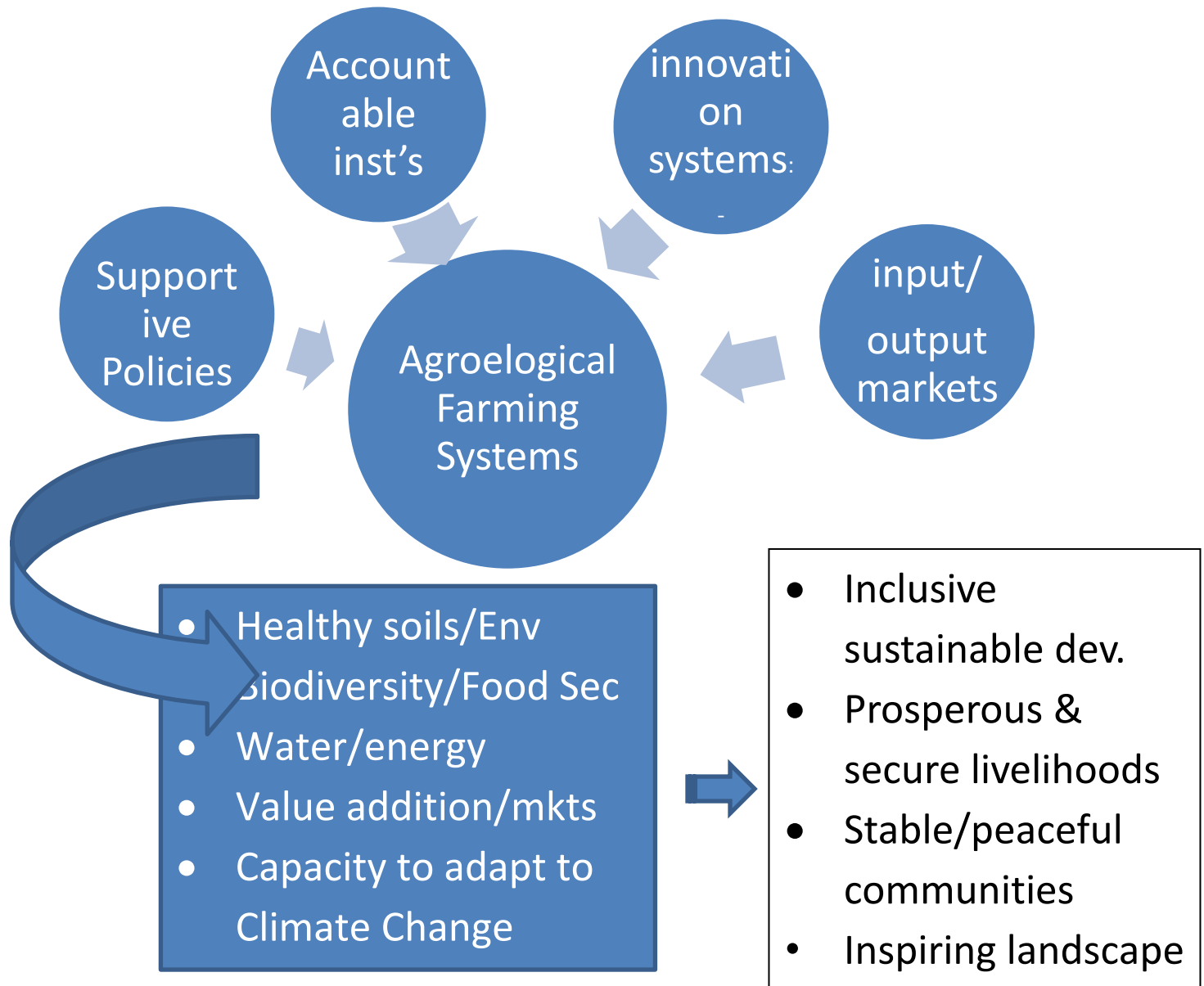


FIRST INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON AGRICULTURAL LAW

Opportunities to build capacity & relationships to cope with Climate Change

- Register & secure the rights of smallholder communities over their Land and natural resources. *(with will & technology it can done efficiently!)*
- Supportive Policies & Public expenditure for Innovative Agricultural and ecological systems and practices: *-scale up the islands of success.*
- Nature based innovations: Water & renewable energy for efficient utilization & regeneration of landscapes.
- Consumer education on the links between soil health, food and human health. *(food quality STDS)*
- Local level planning & governance systems to support adaptive capacity to climate change. *(NRM/agricultural education!)*
- Improve Smallholder Access to timely Early Warning Systems Information
- Local value addition, stimulation of local economy & access to wider markets

Transitioning to sustainable agriculture & development



Agroecological Practices-CA





Building on smallholder climate smart successes





FIRST INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON AGRICULTURAL LAW

Thank You!

Ebbie Dengu (ebbiedengu@gmail.com) is a Zimbabwe based Development Consultant in agriculture, land/NRM and climate change adaptation.