

Botswana suffers climate impacts

COPENHAGEN, Dec.17 (BOPA): Botswana is experiencing the impacts of global warming and climate change, Minister of Environment, Wildlife and Tourism, Kitso Mokaila has said.

Addressing the high level segment of the Copenhagen climate change talks on Wednesday, he mentioned that in Botswana extreme weather events such as storms and floods are recurring more often and are becoming more prolonged.

He noted that the country's vulnerability to the adverse effects of climate change calls for the need to better understand its science, determination of the environmental and socio-economic impacts on sectors such as health ,water,tourism,mining and agriculture.

The minister reiterated that Botswana's commitment to the Kyoto Protocol .In Indonesia, he highlighted that, the Bali Road Map was defined and Copenhagen has to seal the deal.

Climate change impacts on the health sector, he noted, have led to increased incidences and geographical spread of malaria and diarrhoea.

Similar patterns, he asserted have been observed in a variety of pests and diseases in the arable and livestock sectors.

Consequently, he said that Botswana has to adapt to climate change but this comes at a cost to other development programmes.

Although Botswana has no binding requirement to reduce its emissions under the Kyoto Protocol, he explained that the country aspires to develop a low-emissions economy and become more carbon efficient.

“However for this to happen we require funding, technology transfer and capacity building, ” he said.

He also explained that Botswana recognizes the importance of forest management and avoiding deforestation in sequestering carbon.

Furthermore, he said the country acknowledged the existence of clean technologies but reiterated that there is need for a global framework for technology transfer, including finance.

On other issues, he asserted that at the sub-regional level, there is need to put in place high resolution climate modelling for forecasting for countries to determine and cope with the future impacts of climate change on key sectors.

He called on Annex 1 parties to fully support the country's capacity building effort to enable it to develop local solutions to climate change challenges.

In enhancing funding for adaptation, he called for innovative measures such as the international air passenger taxation to be considered.

In addition, he urged the developed countries to consider long term commitments to adaptation financing which would allow Botswana to attain sustainable development.Enditem