

THIRD POST-CABINET PRESS BRIEFING

24TH FEBRUARY, 2025

1.0 FIRST ROUND OF CROPS, LIVESTOCK AND FISHERIES ASSESSMENT REPORT

Cabinet received an update on the First Round of Crops, Livestock and Fisheries Assessment Report, as presented by the Minister of Lands, Agriculture, Fisheries, Water and Rural Development, Honourable Dr. Anxious Jongwe Masuka. The survey was led by ZIMSTATS and used a Whole-of-Government Approach.

The area planted under staple cereals that include maize and traditional grains (sorghum, pearl millet and finger millet) increased during the 2024/2025 season from the targeted 2 520 000 hectares to 2 540 385 hectares. The planted area is 8.1% higher than the 2 349 921 hectares achieved in the 2023/2024 season and above the 2024/2025 target.

Regarding horticulture, there were notable increases in the area planted to perennials particularly blueberry, orange and coffee. The total area planted under horticulture marginally increased from 11 952 hectares in the 2023/2024 season to 11 957 in the 2024/2025 season. The increases were achieved despite the negative effects of the El Nino induced drought and the corollary false start to the 2024/2025 season.

Concerning livestock, the national beef cattle herd grew by 0.4% from 5 718 523 in 2023 to 5 741 397 in 2024. The national dairy herd increased by 8.7% from 60 398 in 2023 to 65 659 in 2024. This resulted in a 15%

increase in raw milk production to 11 699 440 litres from 99 823 775 litres in 2023. The Presidential Rural Poultry Scheme gained momentum in 2024 with the distribution of 751 408 four-week-old indigenous chicks to beneficiaries compared to 200 161 in 2023.

Drawn from the First Round Crop, Livestock and Fisheries Assessment Report are the following preliminary decisions:

- i. Government will create a new institutional arrangement to optimise planning and coordination of cloud seeding activities for enhanced rainfall patterns in Zimbabwe;
- ii. Climate-proofing agriculture at household and national levels will be accelerated through Pfumvudza/ Intwasa;
- iii. Government will accelerate irrigation development in order to increase functional irrigation from the current 217 000 hectares to the targeted 496 000 hectares among others, through increased private sector participation;
- iv. Community participation in the Strategic Grain Reserve will be enhanced at community level;
- v. Government will accelerate establishment of Ward Drought Mitigation Centres to create resilience of communities against future shocks;
- vi. Government will strengthen the local production of key farming inputs such as fertilisers;
- vii. The Presidential Tick Grease Scheme will henceforth be appropriately renamed to Household Tick Management Scheme;

- viii. The Government will accelerate the establishment of the five fingerling production centres at Henderson, Chipinge, Makoholi, Matopo and Lupane;
- ix. The Rural Development 8.0 intervention will be accelerated to empower communities.

2.0 POLICY REVIEW FOR AUDIT COMMITTEES IN CENTRAL GOVERNMENT

Cabinet received and approved the Policy Review Framework for Audit Committees in Central Government, as presented by the Minister of Finance, Economic Development and Investment Promotion, Honourable Professor Mthuli Ncube.

In the interest of good governance, the following measures aimed at strengthening the operations of Audit Committees in Ministries have been introduced:

- i. Every Ministry shall henceforth constitute a board composed of the following members:
 - a) Minister responsible for the Ministry as Chairperson;
 - b) Deputy Minister;
 - c) Five non-executive Audit Committees members;
 - d) Accounting Officer;
 - e) Head of Finance;
- ii. The Ministry's Audit Committee shall report to the Ministry board;

- iii. The Minister responsible for Finance shall be the appointing authority of Audit Committee members;
- iv. The Secretary to Treasury will now be the nominating authority of Four Audit Committee members;
- v. The Office of the President and Cabinet shall appoint the Audit Committee for Treasury;
- vi. The Accounting Officer of the Ministry shall nominate one technical member of the Audit Committee who is retired; and
- vii. The legal department of the Ministry will be the Secretariat of the Audit Committee.

3.0 UPDATE ON PREPARATIONS FOR THE 15TH CONFERENCE OF PARTIES ON WETLANDS

Cabinet received an Update on the State of Preparedness to host the 15th Meeting of the Contracting Parties on the Convention on Wetlands (COP15), as presented by the Minister of Industry and Commerce, Honourable Mangaliso Ndlovu in his capacity as the Acting Minister of Environment, Climate and Wildlife.

The nation is informed that subsequent to winning the bid to host the COP15, Zimbabwe has already made significant milestones towards hosting the 15th edition of the Conference of Parties (COP15) from 23 to 31 July 2025 at Elephant Hills Hotel in Victoria Falls. The Conference will run under theme, “***Protecting Wetlands for our Common Future***”. Preparations for the Conference are at an advanced stage. Suitable conference facilities have been identified and the COP15

website is now operational, while the registration of foreign delegates is already underway. The registration of locals will commence in early March 2025. The Conference is expected to showcase Zimbabwe's tourist destinations, including the Victoria Falls, Zambezi National Park and the Kasibo Wetland.

4.0 REPORT ON THE VIRTUAL SADC EXTRAORDINARY MEETING OF HEALTH MINISTERS: 20 TO 21 FEBRUARY, 2025

Cabinet received and noted the Report on the Virtual Southern African Development Community (SADC) Extraordinary Meeting of Health Ministers, which was held from 20 to 21 February 2025, as presented by the Minister of Health and Child Care, Honourable Dr. Douglas Mombeshora.

The Meeting addressed critical health challenges facing the SADC region and adopted several key decisions to strengthen collective responses to these challenges. Key highlights of the proceedings and outcomes included the ongoing health emergencies in the SADC region, such as Mpox Outbreak and Marburg Virus Disease. Member States were urged to share information on disease outbreaks timeously in order to effectively address cross-border transmission. The Meeting also endorsed the following:

- i. the SADC TB Strategic Plan;

- ii. the expansion of the E8 Malaria Elimination Initiative to all 16 SADC Member States under the auspices of SADC;
- iii. a project to accelerate the implementation and investment into the SADC Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) Strategy;
- iv. the feasibility study on the establishment of a Southern Africa Health Organisation; and
- v. the establishment of the SADC Pooled Procurement Services (SPPS) as an Autonomous Special Purpose Vehicle under the principle of subsidiarity.

In addition, Member States were urged to mobilise alternative funding through public-private partnerships and domestic resource mobilisation for critical health programmes, including HIV, TB and malaria prevention, treatment and control.

I THANK YOU!