



## PRESS RELEASE

### **SADC Ministers responsible for Agriculture, Food Security, Fisheries and Aquaculture to meet in Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe, to advance Food and Nutrition Security and Blue Economy**

**18 May 2026, Gaborone, Botswana** – The Southern African Development Community (SADC) will convene a Joint Meeting of Ministers Responsible for Agriculture, Food Security, Fisheries and Aquaculture on 29 May 2026 in Victoria Falls, Republic of Zimbabwe, to discuss regional issues aimed at advancing food and nutrition security and the blue economy in the SADC region.

The meeting will be chaired by **Honourable Mr. John Henry Steenhuisen**, Minister of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development of the Republic of South Africa, in his capacity as the Chairperson of the Joint Committee of SADC Ministers of Agriculture and Food Security, Fisheries and Aquaculture.

The Ministers' meeting will be preceded by a meeting of Senior Officials responsible for Agriculture, Food Security, Fisheries and Aquaculture in the SADC Member States on 27–28 May 2026.

The meeting will review implementation of previous Summit, Council and Ministerial decisions and deliberate on measures to accelerate transformation of food systems, strengthen resilience, and harness the blue economy in the SADC region.

#### **Some of the key issues on the Ministers' agenda include:**

- Update on the current food and nutrition security situation, review the 2025/26 rainfall performance and production outlook, and consider the season forecast for 2026/2027.
- Update on results of the 5th Biennial Review of the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP), progress under the Support Towards the Operationalisation of the SADC Regional Agricultural Policy (STOSAR II) project and strategies to advance youth in agribusiness across the SADC region.
- Updates on the SADC Rice Development Strategy, SADC/Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) Hand-in-Hand Investment Cases, and the Regional Crop Development Programme, including the Harmonised Fertilizer Regulatory Framework, Regional Strategy on Plant Health, and Harmonised Seed Regulatory System.

- Update on the Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) following the call by the SADC Council of Ministers meeting held in March 2026 in Pretoria, South Africa urging Member States to accelerate a coordinated regional response to including strengthened cross-border surveillance, harmonised vaccination strategies, enhanced information sharing, and resource mobilisation, to safeguard livestock-based livelihoods, trade, and food security.
- Review of the state of fisheries and aquaculture in the SADC region, including the implementation of the Programme for Improving Fisheries Governance and Blue Economy Trade Corridors (PROFISHBLUE), genetic improvement of tilapia, and revision of the SADC Aquaculture Strategy and Action Plan (2016–2026).

Outcomes of the meeting will be submitted to the SADC Council of Ministers and are expected to contribute to the SADC Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan (RISDP) 2020–2030, the SADC Food and Nutrition Security Strategy, and the SADC Vision 2050.

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#### **About SADC**

SADC is an organisation of 16 Member States established in 1980. The mission of SADC is to promote sustainable and equitable economic growth and socio-economic development through efficient, productive systems, deeper cooperation and integration, good governance and durable peace and security; so that the region emerges as a competitive and effective player in international relations and the world economy.

**Issued by the SADC Secretariat**

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**Gaborone, Botswana**