

## **Different seed policies – major problem in SADC**

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The question of seed legislation in the Southern African Development Community (SADC) member states has been noted with concern, as the take-off of seed transfer in the region might be delayed because of differences in policies.

Concern over the issue was raised by participants at the regional FANRPAN dialogue in Dar es Salaam, who called for uniform legislation to move the region to a fast agro-development track.

Already nine out of 15 member states have shown speedy response towards the implementation of seed regulation. Members lagging behind in this respect are Tanzania, Madagascar, Zimbabwe, Angola, Mauritius and the Seychelles. Those in forefront are South Africa, Mozambique, Zambia and the Democratic Republic of Congo.

The advantage of uniform policy - and implementation – is the easy transfer of seeds from one country to another when regions are faced with droughts or floods which threaten to destroy crops.

FANRPAN's seed expert, Fungayi Simbi, says seed policy harmonisation in SADC is crucial as it will also give small farmers a more defined stake in the market.

Recent studies indicate that the rate of adoption of improved seed in sub-Saharan Africa remains at less than five percent.

Nathan Phiri, Principal Seeds Officer at the Ministry of Agriculture in Zambia, is of the opinion that alignment of legislation should be applied in more general terms in future, also outside the SADC region.