

Migration, Environment and Climate Change project launched

The International Organization for Migration (IOM) and Namibia's Ministry of Environment and Tourism (MET) launched a project on migration, environment and climate change (MECC) on 14 March 2017. The project was launched by Petrus Muteyauli, the Head of Multilateral Environmental Agreements at the MET, on behalf of the Environmental Commissioner.

This initiative is part of the wider IOM Development Fund (IDF) supported project 'Migration, Environment and Climate Change: Evidence for Policy in Southern Africa and the Indian Ocean', which aims to increase knowledge and awareness about the relationship between migration and environmental change in order to inform related policy and operational planning at both the regional and national level.

Teofilus Nghitila, Namibia's Environmental Commissioner, added that in Namibia, the urban population makes up 50% of the total population which is not only due to a certain lack of economic opportunities in rural areas, but also to the fact that many people move to the cities following recurrent droughts and floods. He also said the project comes at the right time, as it will help deepen understanding of the impact environmental challenges have on human mobility.



Participants of the launch included the UNRC, UN Heads of Agencies, Diplomatic Corps and Representatives from Government Ministries.

Similar sentiments were echoed by Japhet Iitenge and Nehemia Nghishekwa from the Directorate of Disaster Risk Management (DDRM) and the Department of Border Control and Immigration, respectively.

The launch was followed by a two-day capacity building workshop on the relationship between MECC which sought to address the relationship between migration and environmental change, including climate change. It also served as a platform for the partners to discuss and share expertise on the realities and challenges of MECC, including how the evidence gap on the subject could be addressed.