



Economic Commission for Africa

A service of the UN system-wide support to the African Union and its NEPAD Programme

# NEPAD TODAY

Every Wednesday

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## Leaders urge private sector to accelerate agricultural transformation

**A**frican agriculture is undergoing a transformation, creating a new era of opportunity for both farmers and investors, according to African and global leaders at the World Economic Forum on Africa.

The Grow Africa Investment Forum, convened jointly by the African Union, NEPAD and the World Economic Forum, engaged over 270 leaders including heads of state and government from Ethiopia, Rwanda and Tanzania, as well as leaders of African and global business, international and donor agencies and farmer organizations.

Participants noted that African agriculture offers tremendous growth potential to investors which can strengthen food security and economic opportunity on the continent. Greater private-sector investment and improvements to the business enabling environment are needed to capture that potential.

Leaders noted that much of agriculture's potential remains untapped. Meles Zenawi, Prime Minister of Ethiopia, said "we have scratched the surface, but we haven't yet broken the mould. When we do that, you will see the explosion of development in Africa."

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## Industry players and ministers concur on harmonized approaches to mining

**O**n the sidelines of the World Economic Forum, an Industry Partnership session for Mining and Metals underscored that mining companies must work closely with governments and civil society on the basis of established legal frameworks in order to boost development. A cross-section of global mining companies, including Rio Tinto and Anglo-American, mining ministers and civil society concurred that the time has come for the mining industry to operate on the basis of a more harmonized approach that clarifies the na-

ture and process of mining activities for the benefit of the companies, government and communities.

The session was organized by the World Economic Forum's Responsible Mineral Development Initiative (RMDI), the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) and the Intergovernmental Forum on Mining, Minerals, Metals and Sustainable Development (IGF).

Speaking at the session, Wilfred Lombe,

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## Leaders rally...

Seven countries showcased specific investment and partnership opportunities aligned to their national priorities for agricultural transformation. Jakaya Kikwete, President of Tanzania, said: "We are ready to do business, that's why we came to this meeting." He noted that Tanzania's agriculture investment strategy prioritizes groups that can most benefit from new market opportunities.

"When we bring in the private sector, it is to benefit the smallholder farmers. We need to modernize agriculture and make it more attractive to youth." Paul Kagame, President of Rwanda, noted that "we can mobilize farmers into an entrepreneurial mindset and create new opportunities for women, youth and rural entrepreneurs."

The Grow Africa partnership has developed significant momentum since it was catalysed by African and global leaders at the 2011 World Economic Forum on Africa. Jean Ping, Chairperson of the African Union, said "the Grow Africa platform is open to all countries, and can accelerate the implementation of national investment plans developed through the Comprehensive African Agricultural Development Programme (CAADP)."

*For full story: Africa News, May 10, 2012 Thursday*

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## Industry players...

who heads the Infrastructure and Natural Resources Development Section at the ECA, elaborated on the Africa Mining Vision (AMV), which he said, advocates "transparent, equitable and optimal exploitation of mineral resources to underpin broad-based sustainable growth and socio-economic development."

Adopted in 2009 by the African Union Heads of State Summit, AMV is Africa's own response to tackling the paradox of great mineral wealth existing side by side with pervasive poverty. AMV goes beyond the 'mining box' thinking that has constrained the integration of the sector into countries' long term development goals – it goes beyond optimizing tax revenues.

"There is a need to open mining's enclave status so that Africa can move from its historic role as an exporter of cheap raw materials to manufacturer and supplier of value-added goods - it is about integrating mining much better into development policies," said Lombe.

To support increasing calls by countries to assist navigating the myriad of complexities surrounding the sector, including contract negotiations, member states agreed in December 2011, to an AMV Action Plan that proposes, among others, the setting up of a Minerals Development Centre. In this regard, a study is currently underway that will provide a comprehensive view of the capacities and resources needed for Centre's establishment and sustainability.

*Special to ECA, for full story: [www.uneca.org](http://www.uneca.org)*

## Upcoming Event

- NEPAD Agency workshop on integrating agriculture and food security risk management issues in CAADP investment plans in southern and eastern Africa  
16 - 18 May 2012, Johannesburg, South Africa
- Regional Dialogue on Enhanced Coordination towards NEPAD Implementation  
6 - 7 June 2012, Durban, South Africa
- Earth Summit (RIO+20)  
20 - 22 Jun 2012, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

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