

**SUBMISSION TO THE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE, LANDS AND NATURAL  
RESOURCES:**

**A**

**MEMORANDUM**

**ON THE CONSIDERATION OF THE AGRICULTURE LANDS (AMENDMENT) BILL,  
N.A.B NO. 31 OF 2026; THE COFFEE (AMENDMENT) BILL NO. 36 OF 2026 AND  
THE TOBACCO (AMENDMENT) BILL, N.A.B NO. 16 OF 2026**

**14<sup>TH</sup> April 2026**

**WESLEY NYIRENDA COMMITTEE ROOM**

**PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS**

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## **Background**

### **About ActionAid**

ActionAid Zambia (AAZ) is a part of the ActionAid Global (AAG) Federation, sharing common values and aims to drive social change towards a just, equitable, and sustainable world. The ActionAid Federation builds the active agency of people living in poverty, their organisations, and movements, to address the structural causes of social injustice, gender inequality, and poverty. This is in line with the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which have identified the importance of addressing poverty and inequality.

### **Vision**

Our vision is to have a just, equitable, and sustainable Zambia in which every person enjoys freedom from poverty and oppression for the enjoyment of their right to a life of dignity.

### **Mission**

Our mission is to promote social justice, gender equality & poverty eradication for the people living in poverty, exclusion, and marginalisation in society by working with the people living in poverty, their communities, organisations, activists & social movements for a just, sustainable Zambia.

## Overview

Zambia, over the years, has made strides to ensure the devolution of authority through the decentralisation policy to ensure access and inclusive participation of citizens. Key instruments at the regional level, such as the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP), which mandates countries to ensure inclusion of women, youth, persons with disabilities, and other key players in agriculture, all promote decentralisation.

The SADC Protocol on Gender and Development promotes member states to implement gender-responsive budgeting, climate action, and capacity building to promote women's empowerment and increase their role in decision-making within the sector. At the national level, the Comprehensive Agriculture Transformation Support Programme (CATSP) highlights the need to improve production by ensuring local players in the value chain, especially small-holder farmers.

The review and proposed amendments to the agriculture lands Act, Tobacco Act and the Coffee Act on the composition of Board Members, should not neglect the key fundamental consideration of players like youth, Women, persons with disability and media if these board committee are to be fit for purpose, relevant and reflect the realities of Zambians but more so, the more than 70% smallholder farmers to contribute to agriculture.

## CHAPTER ONE: 1.0 THE AGRICULTURE LANDS (AMENDMENT) BILL, N.A.B. NO. 31 OF 2026

### 1.1 Introduction

The Agriculture Lands (Amendment) Bill of 2026 seeks to revise the composition of the Agricultural Lands Board, effectively amending the Agricultural Lands Act of 1960.<sup>1</sup> The Act provides the legal framework for managing and distributing state-owned agricultural land in Zambia,

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.parliament.gov.zm/node/948>

primarily through the Agricultural Lands Board, which advises the Minister on land use, reviews the alienation of holdings to farmers, and oversees the administration of tenant farming schemes to ensure organised agricultural development.

## 1.2 ANALYSIS FRAMEWORK

S.N.	Clause	Observations	Implications	Recommendations
1	2(A)The board consists of the following part-time members appointed by the minister: a) the chairperson, who shall be the person from the private sector with knowledge and experience in matters relevant to the Act.	The position of chairperson has been strictly limited to the private sector despite stakeholders on the subject being diverse.	While the government recognises the critical role that the private sector plays in driving economic growth, its dominance in this board may limit inclusive participation. Inclusivity ensures that realised gains remain inclusive.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Revert to the text of the current act that states “a chairman appointed by the Minister to be other than a public officer” while maintaining that the chairperson “must have knowledge and experience in matters relevant to this Act.”</li> <li>- There is a need to have a Vice Chairperson who should be elected from amongst themselves, other than a public officer.</li> </ul>
2	Section 4, part (3): the ministries, institutions, and organisations referred to in subsection (1) shall nominate their representative for appointment by the president.	Both the president and the Minister have the power to make appointments on the same.	While it is of importance for the office of the President to offer appointment oversight, it also undermines devolution efforts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Decentralisation around the appointments. Only the Minister should appoint the Chairperson as well as the representatives from the ministries.</li> </ul>

### 1.3 Conclusion

In conclusion, the provisions raise concerns around inclusivity and the concentration of appointment powers. Limiting the chairperson to the private sector may exclude diverse stakeholder perspectives, while overlapping roles between the President and Minister risk undermining decentralisation. Addressing these issues will strengthen representation, clarity, and the board's overall effectiveness.

## CHAPTER TWO: THE COFFEE (AMENDMENT) BILL NO 36 OF 2026

### 2.1 Introduction

The Coffee (Amendment) Bill of 2026 seeks to revise the composition of the Coffee Board of Zambia as outlined in the principal Coffee Act of 1989.<sup>2</sup> The Act regulates Zambia's coffee industry by mandating the varieties to be grown and requiring licenses for all production and export. The Coffee Board of Zambia enforces these standards, overseeing licensing, quality control, and the registration of growers to ensure the industry remains competitive and legally compliant.

### 2.2 ANALYSIS FRAMEWORK

S.N.	Clause	Observations	Implications	Recommendation
	Article 4(1): Composition of the board	The composition has no representation of key demographics such as women, youth, persons with disabilities, civil society organisations, and the media.	The absence of inclusive representation on the board poses risks of unequal outcomes.  Increased (organised) private sector representation may favour the sector's interests at the expense of Small-scale and Medium Enterprises (SMEs), consumers, and the government's resource mobilisation efforts if the sector advocates for tax incentives.	For the Vice Chairperson, he/she should be someone other than a public officer.

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.parliament.gov.zm/node/1029>

		Further, the private sector is allocated more seats in (d) and (g), compared to other categories.	Any board is not inclusive especially in sectors like Tobacco, that is not inclusive or suffers the exclusion, key players.	
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## 2.3 Conclusion

The proposed composition of the board under the Coffee (Amendment) Bill of 2026 raises significant concerns regarding inclusivity and balance of representation. The exclusion of key groups such as women, youth, persons with disabilities, civil society, and media risks undermining equitable outcomes, while the disproportionate allocation of seats to the private sector may skew decision-making in favour of its interests. Addressing these gaps through a more inclusive and balanced board structure, including the appointment of a non-public officer as Vice Chairperson, will enhance fairness, accountability, and the overall effectiveness of the Act.

## CHAPTER THREE: THE TOBACCO (AMENDMENT) BILL, N.A.B. NO. 16 OF 2026

### 3.1 Introduction

The Tobacco (Amendment) Bill of 2026 proposes revisions to the composition of the Tobacco Board of Zambia (TBZ) as outlined in the principal Tobacco Act of 2022.<sup>3</sup> The Act legal framework designed to promote, regulate, and monitor the production, marketing, and packaging of tobacco in Zambia. Under this Act, the Tobacco Board of Zambia (TBZ) serves as a statutory body mandated to ensure a sustainable and ethical industry. Its core functions include registering and licensing growers and buyers, regulating imports and exports, and operating essential services like sales floors.

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.parliament.gov.zm/node/10318>

### 3.2 Analysis Framework

S.N.	Clause	Observations	Implications	Recommendation
	Article 1(f) amendment of Section 5	The board appears to largely consist of the private sector and excludes all other key stakeholders, such as CSO, marginalised groups, and media. The composition further does not speak to the existence of the vice-chairperson	<p>The absence of critical oversight representation, such as the Competition &amp; Consumer Protection Commission (CCPC), the Zambia Bureau of Standards (ZABS), and the Health Ministry, may prioritise profit-making decisions while neglecting health considerations.</p> <p>The absence of the vice-Chairperson may raise ambiguity on who is delegated the chairperson's duties when a need arises.</p> <p>The board that is private sector-led turns to focus on profit maximisation and ignores key fundamental principles related to social protection and social impact.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Compliance becomes compromised in terms of operation</li> <li>• Externalisation of financial resources, hence the</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is a need to include the Civil Society Organisation, Persons with disabilities, youths, Ministry of Health, Competition and Consumer Protection Commission (CCPC), and Zambia Bureau of Standards (ZABS)</li> <li>• There is also a need to reduce the number of the private sector.</li> <li>• There is a need to have a vice chairperson who should be elected from amongst themselves, other than a public officer.</li> <li>• The Chairperson should be appointed by the Minister and should be other than a public officer.</li> </ul>

			<p>withdrawal from the local economy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tax avoidance becomes more prominent</li> <li>• Weaken the playing field, especially for local players, on account of limited access to capital resources.</li> <li>• Has a bias towards foreign investors as opposed to local investors</li> <li>• Ignores key principles such as Child labour and Gender.</li> </ul>	
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### 3.3 Conclusion

The Tobacco Bill of 2026 raises concerns around limited inclusivity and weak oversight within the board's composition. The dominance of private sector representation, coupled with the exclusion of key stakeholders such as regulatory bodies, civil society, and the Ministry of Health, risks prioritising commercial interests over public health and consumer protection.

Additionally, the absence of a vice-chairperson creates a governance gap in leadership continuity. Addressing these issues through a more inclusive, balanced, and clearly structured board will strengthen accountability, safeguard public interest, and improve the effectiveness of the Act. Without addressing these key issues, the Sector is likely to face challenges as outlined below.