

## Mwanza Zonal Water Laboratory Accredited

The Mwanza Zonal Water Quality Laboratory has been accredited in the scope of "Chemical Analyses" of water in accordance with ISO/IEC 17025 by the SADC Accreditation Service (SADCAS).

The accreditation certificate handover ceremony was held on 15 May 2015 at St Gasper Hotel in Dodoma the capital city of Tanzania. In her welcome remarks to the ceremony, Mrs Nadhifa Kemikimbe the Director Division of Water Quality Services under the Ministry of Water, noted that Mwanza Zonal Water Quality Laboratory is the first government laboratory to be accredited in Tanzania. She reminisced on the journey to accreditation which started in 2004 by participating in Proficiency Testing. In 2012 the Ministry engaged a consultant to do a gap analysis of the laboratories management systems following which all issues raised were addressed and an application for accreditation was submitted to SADCAS in April 2014. The initial assessment was carried out in October 2014 and accreditation granted on 30 March 2015 for 15 water testing parameters. She noted that the accreditation would assist in assuring the safety of water.



From left to right: Mrs Nadhifa Kemikimbe, Mrs Mutasa and Engineer Kutakamba

Speaking during the ceremony Engineer Mbogo Kutakamba, the Permanent Secretary Ministry of Water noted that Mwanza Zonal Water Quality Laboratory was the first out of 16 laboratories under the Division of Water Quality Services of the Ministry of Water to be accredited following a directive from Honourable Jakaya Kikwete, the President of the Republic of Tanzania to improve the quality of services. He noted the benefits derived from accreditation particularly accuracy and reliability of results. "Accreditation assures public accountability" he said. He advised that the Ministry had a program in place for the other 15 laboratories under the Division of Water Quality Services to be accredited of which 5 laboratories

should be accredited by 2018. As the Accounting Officer under the Ministry Engineer Kutakamba committed to supporting the program. He also advised that the Government would amend regulations to require all water testing laboratories to be accredited. In concluding his remarks Engineer Kutakamba congratulated the team for a job well done and thanked all those who had assisted in the process.

In his presentation on the "Economic perspective on water quality", Mr E Msangula, an accreditation consultant, highlighted the need for all water testing laboratories to be accredited and the market opportunities for accredited testing services in the mining, textile, fishing and environmental sectors. He also emphasized the need and importance of continued support to accredited laboratories and called upon the Government to review Public procurement Act to allow for new and emerging needs and requirements. He also called upon the Government to allow laboratories to retain earned income from services and to review service charges so as to ensure sustainability of accredited laboratories. He concluded his presentation with a quote for Charles Darwin "It is not the strongest of the species that survives, nor the most intelligent, but the one most responsive to change."

In her remarks during the ceremony Ms Stella Mrosso, the National Accreditation Focal Point for Tanzania informed delegates about the role of the NAFP and the achievement it had made in promoting accreditation and marketing SADCAS services in Tanzania. She noted that Tanzania had the 2<sup>nd</sup> highest number of accreditations by SADCAS and the 4<sup>th</sup> highest number of accreditation applications under process

Mrs Maureen Mutasa the SADCAS Chief Executive Officer said that Mwanza Zonal Water Quality Laboratory was the 4<sup>th</sup> testing laboratory and 9<sup>th</sup> laboratory in Tanzania to be accredited by SADCAS. The Mwanza Zonal Water Quality Laboratory had been granted the unique accreditation numbers TEST-5 0011 indicating that Mwanza Zonal Water Quality Laboratory is now a SADCAS accredited testing laboratory for chemical analyses of water. The certificate was issued on 30 March 2015 and is valid for 5 years until 29 March 2020 during which period SADCAS will undertake surveillance to ensure continued compliance with accreditation requirements. Mrs Mutasa said that Mwanza Zonal Water Quality Laboratory underwent a joint assessment by SADCAS and SANAS and had been issued with 2 accreditation certificates with the latter being internationally recognized. "This is meant to ensure the credibility of SADCAS certificate whilst at the same time benefiting from skills transfer from SANAS", she said. She informed the delegates that SADCAS had made great strides towards international recognition of its certificates having successfully undergone a pre peer evaluation in June 2014 and now set to undergo a peer evaluation from 26 to 31 May 2015. In conclusion Mrs Mutasa congratulated Mwanza Zonal Water Quality Laboratory for the achievement and encouraged the Laboratory to extend its scope of accreditation to the other methods that the laboratory undertakes and encouraged the other laboratories under the Division of Water Quality Services to seek accreditation from SADCAS. She then handed over the certificate to Engineer Kutakamba who in turn handed over the certificate to the Honourable Professor Jumanne A Maghembe, the Minister of Water who then handed over the certificate to Mr HM Chisute, the Manager Mwanza Zonal Water Quality Laboratory.



Mrs Mutasa handing over accreditation certificate to Engineer Kutakamba with Mrs Kemikimbe looking on



Honourable Professor Maghembe receiving the accreditation certificate from Engineer Kutakamba



Mwanza Zonal Water Quality Laboratory management holding accreditation certificate in jubilation

In his remarks the Honourable Maghembe congratulated all for the achievement "You make us stand 9 feet tall. The icing to all the Ministry's successes over the past 3 years." he said and urged the Laboratory to continue to comply with SADCAS requirements in order to maintain the accreditation. Water is fundamental to life and the environment. It plays a central role in both economic and social development activities. It plays a pivotal role in poverty alleviation through enhancement of food security, domestic hygiene and the environment. He noted the importance of accreditation in assuring the safety and cleanness of water and thanked SADCAS for bringing accreditation to Tanzania. The Honourable Professor Maghembe prided in having the best staff in the public service, who deliver albeit being the least funded. He reiterated his Ministry's commitment to supporting all the laboratories under his Ministry and encouraged Mwanza Zonal Water Quality Laboratory to publicize its accreditation for competitiveness. He assured all that the regulations will be amended to include mandatory testing of water by an accredited laboratory.



Group photo with Honorable Professor Maghembe after the ceremony

A vote of thanks was given by the Mwanza Regional Commissioner after which the guests proceeded to have lunch.

