



**5th December 2022**

## **PRESS STATEMENT**

### **Competition Policy and Climate Change**

Today the Competition and Consumer Authority joins other competition agencies and civil society organisations in observing 5<sup>th</sup> December as World Competition Day under the theme “Competition Policy and Climate Change.”

Scientific evidence continues to show that human activities primarily the human burning of fossil fuels, have warmed Earth's surface and its ocean basins, which in turn have continued to impact Earth's climate (NASA).

The impact in Africa has been directly observed in increased flooding, drying and ecological droughts, increased wind speeds and tropical cyclones (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change Sixth Assessment Report).

Alongside pandemics and wars, climate change is recognised as one of the key disruptors of economies. If competition policies are appropriately designed and effectively implemented, they can build resilience into economies, and can also be used as a tool to mitigate the effects of climate change, and to promote environmental sustainability (Consumer Unity & Trust Society - CUTS International).

In light of the above, there is general agreement on the need for collective action in combating climate change. Governments, businesses, and consumers alike have to be part of the solution to advance environmental sustainability.

To address the challenges of climate change, governments around the world must collaborate to develop and implement policy frameworks, including competition policies, that mitigate greenhouse gas emissions, mobilise financial resources, and create a conducive environment for environmentally sustainable societies and businesses.

Businesses need to play a bigger role in a green economy by making sustainability the easy choice for consumers in order to reduce the negative effects of climate change. Detractors of environmental sustainability are known to opine that sustainable business practices eat into corporate profits. However, research has established that sustainability has real business benefits when conscientiously integrated into business operations. Development of sustainable business practices leads to efficient operations that reduce wastage and conserves resources. In a nutshell, investing in green policies and practices can give firms a competitive advantage.

Consumers, on the other hand, can champion environmental sustainability through their purchasing power and behaviour. Choosing products based on their impact on the environment can go a long way in mitigating climate change effects. Avoiding waste generation altogether, or waste minimisation is the most effective option in ensuring environmental sustainability. Overflowing landfills and the indiscriminate dumping of waste in cities, towns and villages shows that there is a long way to go in realising the objective of sustainable consumption in Botswana and elsewhere.

In addition to mindful shopping habits, consumers can also make lifestyle changes that promote a healthy environment and combat climate change. At the centre of these lifestyle changes are the Three Rs – Reduce, Reuse and Recycle. These environment friendly practices not only cut down on waste, but save consumers money in the long run.

Combating climate change revolves around three pillars of an enabling policy framework, sustainable business and a sustainable consumer. Let us all play our role in making environmental sustainability a daily part of our lives.