THE Food Security Research Project has called for conducive policies that will foster development of agriculture through capital inflows.

Appearing before the parliamentary committee on agriculture and lands yesterday, project director Chance Kabaghe said there are a number of factors that have been blocking capital investments in land and agriculture.

He reiterated the importance of a comprehensive countrywide land audit to determine how much land is available both under state and customary tenure for development purposes, but stressed that an audit alone would not resolve the current challenges being faced in issues of land allocation and development.

“There is urgent need for a comprehensive land audit, but that is not a panacea to the problems currently being faced in the allocation and development of land,” Kabaghe said. “There are other factors that hinder agriculture and land investments such as unfavourable policies.”

Kabaghe cited the embargo on product exports as a factor that has prevented growth in the agriculture sector and recommended that the government should consider lifting the ban on exports of wheat, among other products.

“As the situation stands right now, we are blocked. In terms of seed, government has allowed for exports and Zambia is a regional supplier. But the ban on exports of other crops has remained and this is not promoting investments,” said Kabaghe.