

# MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION

Our Ref: .....

**Tel:** 0302 - 666 049

**Fax:** 0302 – 688 913/ 688 663

**E-mail:** [info@mesti.gov.gh](mailto:info@mesti.gov.gh)

**Website:** [www.mesti.gov.gh](http://www.mesti.gov.gh)



Republic of Ghana

Post Office Box M232 Ministries,

Accra

Ghana

---

June 17, 2020

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **WORLD DAY TO COMBAT DROUGHT AND DESERTIFICATION: Let's Create a New Social Contract with Nature**

Ghana joins the rest of the world today, 17<sup>th</sup> June, to observe the World Day to Combat Drought and Desertification (WDCDD).

The WDCDD is observed every year, in accordance with UN General Assembly Resolution A/RES/49/115 to promote public awareness about the causes and effects of land degradation, desertification and drought as well as highlight efforts to combat these challenges.

This year's theme "**Food. Feed. Fibre**", seeks to educate individuals on the links between consumption and land.

The celebration is focusing on changing public attitudes to the leading driver of desertification and land degradation: our relentless production and consumption patterns. The lives of close to half the people on the planet are affected by land degradation.

As the global population continues to grow wealthier and more urban, so does the demand on land to provide food, animal feed and fibre for clothing. Meanwhile, the health and productivity of existing arable land keeps declining, worsened by climate change. To have enough productive land to meet the demands of ten billion people by 2050, the lifestyles of all of us, needs to change.

*Ghana* has 35% of its **land** under threat of desertification due to anthropogenic activities such as deforestation, unsustainable land use practices, wild fires, the use of agrochemicals, and overgrazing. However, there are clear evidences of recovery and restoration of degraded landscapes through the implementation of the Ghana Environmental Management Project (GEMP), the Sustainable Land and Water Management Project (SLWMP) and the Adaptation Fund Project.

These projects have provided dugouts as watering points for livestock and supported 39,000 farmers with farm inputs to practice various forms of Sustainable Land Management technologies within 246 communities, covering 152, 578 hectares of land, to protect the ecology of the northern sectors of Ghana.

In addition, a total of 1, 060 hectares of land have been reforested within two forest reserves namely the Kulpawn and the Ambalara Forest Reserves.

Again, the Adaptation Fund Project has provided water and increased access to water supply by drilling 145 boreholes and constructing 10 dug-outs to serve over 1,000,000 people mainly women and children in 50 communities in 10 districts in the northern sector of Ghana. The Project has also undertaken several livelihood interventions in the area of beekeeping, shea butter processing, groundnut oil extraction, dry season vegetable production and fish farming.

The implementation of these projects are in line with the government's priority programmes and are complementing and enhancing the successful execution of the "One Village One Dam", "Planting for Food and Jobs" and the government Medium Term Development Plan "Agenda for Jobs".

The food we eat and the clothes we wear impact land thousands of miles away. Every one of us can protect the land by making simple changes in our lives to support community resilience, maintain the sustainable delivery of ecosystem services and contribute to reducing the COVID-19 crisis' impact on global poverty and food insecurity.

We must create a new social contract with nature. If we choose to work in harmony with nature, we will avoid waste and reduce land degradation, reduce carbon emissions and reverse biodiversity loss. The time to act is NOW.

**Signed,**

**PROF. KWABENA FRIMPONG-BOATENG  
MINISTER**