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Minister calls for environmental conservation

KAMPALA. Government has issued a stern warning to Ugandans to either protect wetlands, water bodies and forests or accept to die from effects of environmental destruction such as droughts, landslides and floods.

State minister for Environment Dr Mary Kitutu issued the warning yesterday at the Low Carbon and Adaptation Expo organised jointly by this newspaper and the Environment ministry. She said this is a "defining moment in our life".

"At this level, I would expect every Ugandan to know that we either protect these systems (wetlands, rivers, forests and lakes) or we shall die," she added.

A 2017 Ministry of Water and Environment sector review indicated that the country currently has 9 per cent of forest cover. With climate change causing long dry spells, floods and high temperatures, Dr Kitutu said Ugandans have to keep natural features such as forests, rivers and lakes

that influence 40 per cent of the rainfall received in the country.

The other partners at the expo organised under the theme: A Climate Smart Uganda, a Proud Ugandan, were: NTV, Uganda Coffee Development Authority, Agriculture Business Initiatives, United Nations Development Programme and USAID-Feed the Future.

Mr Paul Mafabi, the director of environment in the Water and Environment ministry, said trees act as a sink for dangerous gases emitted by factories and transport sector and other gases not to reach the ozone layer, thereby preventing it from warming.

Mr Chebet Maikut, the commissioner in charge of climate change in the Ministry of Water and Environment, highlighted many recent incidents caused by climate change in Uganda

"We have had many incidences of lightning striking many places across



Advised. State minister for Environment Mary Kitutu (2nd right) speaks to one of the exhibitors. Right is the Monitor Publications managing director, Mr Tony Glencross.

PHOTO BY ALEX ESAGALA

the country," Mr Chebet said.

Mr Tony Glencross, the Monitor Publications managing director, said the expo was driven by hundreds of farmers who attend the various farm

clinics organised by the company.

UNDP country representative Almaz Gebru said the international body has supported many development projects, including Uganda Green Growth

Development Strategy, a pathway for a green economy that encourages sustainable economic growth, enhances social inclusion while maintaining healthy and functioning ecosystems.



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