

**STATEMENT BY THE HON. MINISTER OF WATER AND
ENVIRONMENT
ON THE LAUNCH OF
WORLD ENVIRONMENT DAY 2022 COMMEMORATION IN
UGANDA
AT
UGANDA MEDIA CENTER, KAMPALA, 24TH FEBRUARY 2022**

WORLD ENVIRONMENT DAY 2022

Fellow Citizens **Global Theme: "Only One Earth"**

On Sunday the 5th of June 2022 Uganda will join the rest of the World to commemorate the **International World Environment Day 2022, and the venue will be in Lwero.**

The United Nations General Assembly declared this day for the first time during the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment and Development in Stockholm, Sweden in 1972. The **International World Environment Day** has since 1974 been held annually on every 5th June.

On that day, each Member State is supposed to reflect on efforts put in place at National level in protecting the Environment. It is also a day for

each Member State to reaffirm her commitment to sustainable environmental management.

World Environment Day is the United Nations' principal vehicle for encouraging worldwide awareness and action for the environment. Over the years it has grown to be a broad, global platform for public outreach, promoting progress on the environmental dimensions of the Sustainable Development Goals. With the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) at the helm, over 150 countries participate each year.

World Environment Day also serves as the 'people's day' for doing something positive for the environment, galvanizing individual actions into a collective power that generates an exponential positive impact on the earth planet.

At global level, the 2022 International World Environment Day will be commemorated in Stockholm Sweden under the theme '**Only One Earth**'. The **theme** itself, and global host **as Sweden**, are symbolic reminders of the 1972 Stockholm Conference which led to the formation of the United Nations Environment Programme now headquartered in Nairobi, Kenya. The 1972 Stockholm Conference also culminated into the declaration of the 5th of June as the International Day for reflecting on human interaction with the Environment and its resultant effects.

"**Only One Earth**" was the slogan in Stockholm in 1972 where the first United Nations Conference on the Human Environment was held. This global declaration therefore put sustainable development on the global agenda and led to the establishment of World Environment Day. Fifty years

later, Sweden is hosting **Stockholm+50** from 2nd to 3rd June, together with the International World Environment Day on 5th June 2022.

I wish to remind all Citizens that time to act for environment is fast running out, and nature is in an emergency mode. To keep global warming below 1.5°C this Century, the World must reduce to half the annual Greenhouse gas emissions by 2030. Without action, exposure to air pollution beyond safe guidelines will increase by 50 per cent within the decade and plastic waste flowing into aquatic ecosystems will nearly triple by 2040.

We need urgent action to address these pressing issues, making “**Only One Earth**” and its focus on living sustainably in harmony with nature, as pertinent as ever.

I wish to inform you that the World Environment Day 2021 launched the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration 2021-2030 to prevent, halt and reverse the degradation of ecosystems on every continent and in every ocean. Restoration of the environment can help to grow wealth, end poverty, combat climate change and prevent a mass extinction. It will only succeed if everyone plays a part.

In Uganda, we have developed a ten-year Environment Restoration Plan and declared the next ten years as a war Decade for Environment restoration. We are making every effort to reverse forest cover loss, wetland cover loss, reduced availability of water resources and biodiversity loss.

In the case of Uganda, this year's World Environment Day celebrations will be held in Luwero on 5th June 2022 under the National theme: '**Our Earth, Conserve for Life**'.

As we commemorate World Environment Day on June 5th, 2022 let us remember that the Earth we have is our '**Only Home**' and our survival depends on the way we handle it.

Our Earth faces a triple planetary emergency:

- The climate is heating up too quickly for people and nature to adapt;
- Habitat loss and other pressures mean an estimated 1 million species are threatened with extinction;
- Pollution continues to poison our air, land and water.

The way out of this dilemma is to transform our economy and society to make them inclusive, fair and more connected with nature. We must shift from harming the planet to healing it.

The good news is that the solutions are with us, room for innovation is available and environmentally friendly technologies exist within affordable range. We should all embark to

1. Stop encroachment on fragile ecosystems including; wetlands, forests, lake shores and river banks
2. Restore degraded areas to bring balance in ecosystem functions and services

3. Plant and grow trees
4. Stop settling on steep slopes and cultivation with an angle greater than 30 degrees
5. Adopt best environmental, agricultural and water catchment practices
6. Seek guidance from respective Authorities before implementing projects avoid encroaching/ destroying natural habitats for biodiversity.
7. Avoid dumping waste in fragile ecosystems and littering
8. Avoiding use of environmentally dangerous single use plastics

I call upon everyone to note that there is Only One Earth. Let's conserve it to secure our lives.

FOR GOD AND MY COUNTRY



For and On Behalf of

**HON. SAM CHEPTORIS
MINISTER OF WATER AND ENVIRONMENT**