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Climate experts appreciate Ethiopia's tree planting campaign

BY MISGANAW ASNAKE

ADDIS ABABA –Part of the green legacy initiative, Ethiopia's commitment to plant about 600 million seedlings in a day is tremendous job, which should be replicated by other countries, climate experts said.

The experts, who have attended the 46th meeting of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) Least Developed Countries Expert Group (LEG) between August 19 and 22, 2024, in Addis Ababa, expressed that Ethiopia should be appreciated for its dedication to undertake substantial environment protection activities to achieve sustainable development.

Expert Maria Ashili, who came from the US to attend the meeting, said that Ethiopia's dedication to combat climate change impacts with the realization of the green legacy initiative is encouraging and good example to the world.

The country's commitment to plant 600 million seedlings in a single day will contribute a lot to the global world, she noted.

Ethiopia's effort to mitigate climate change in the Horn of Africa (HoA) and at World level, makes the country important role player in the sphere, she stated.

Sierra Leonean expert Gabriel

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Greening Ethiopia

August 23/2024



Mln. trees in a day

Cherishing Ethiopia's 600-mln saplings global benchmark

BY YESUF ENDRIS

Ethiopia's national Green Legacy Initiative day marks an ambitious milestone today, with the country targeting the planting of

approximately 600 million saplings. This initiative, championed by Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (PhD) over the past five years, has positioned Ethiopia as a global leader in

reforestation.

Launched in 2019, the Green Legacy Initiative has grown into a landmark

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Cosmopolitan to plant 6 mln. Trees in one day

BY STAFF REPORTER

ADDIS ABABA – Along with redevelopment projects designed to improve health and livelihoods of residents, Addis Ababa has envisioned to significantly increase its green space coverage by sharing six million seedlings of the 600 million trees the country scheduled to plant on August 23, city Mayor Adanech Abebie said.

Despite the successful implementation of city redevelopment projects, Addis Ababa still lacks green spaces, which makes it mandatory to the capital city to vastly work on greenery activities.

The national Green Legacy Initiative, on the other hand is reviving the country's environment that was once barren lands

See Cosmopolitan to plan ... page 3

Green legacy boosting coffee productivity: ECTA

BY ASHENAFI ANIMUT

ADDIS ABABA – The integrated Green Legacy Initiative (GLI) in coffee plantations has been contributing to the development of coffee production and export volume, the Ethiopian Coffee and Tea Authority (ECTA) said.

Speaking to the local media, ECTA Director-General Adugna Debela (PhD) said that the country's coffee productivity and quality has been witnessing a significant growth since the introduction of the green legacy initiative.

He emphasized that as Ethiopia is known for Coffee Arabica plant species, which is more vulnerable to climate change, the progress of green legacy initiative helps improve the coffee productivity and quality.

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Fortunately, it resuscitates

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Graduates driving force for Nat'l prosperity : Mayor

BY MESERET BEHAILU

ADDIS ABABA – Addis Ababa Mayor Adanech Abiebie emphasized the need for skilled and knowledgeable citizens to achieve Ethiopia's comprehensive prosperity in the years ahead.

The Mayor made these remarks yesterday during the graduation ceremony of 5,180 students from the Addis Ababa Labor and Skills Bureau, who completed training in various fields.

In her opening address, Adanech highlighted that Ethiopia's development and prosperity hinge on the contributions of citizens who are not only skilled but also ethical and knowledgeable. "This is why the current government prioritizes technical and vocational education," she added.

She urged the graduates to apply their skills, expertise, and knowledge towards constructive activities that contribute to national development. Adanech pointed out that the success of many developed countries lies in their effective utilization of trained students, making them exemplary on the global stage.

The Mayor also noted that the Addis Ababa City Administration is engaged in various initiatives, including improving the image of the metropolis and fostering citizen-centered development. Extensive efforts are being made to enhance the city's appeal for both tourism and residents. The graduates are expected to continue this productive work, with the Mayor pledging ongoing support to inspire further contributions from citizens.

Tiratu Beyene, the Jobs and Skills Bureau with the rank of Deputy Mayor, noted that the 5,180 graduates specialized in 22 different fields. The graduates, who completed levels two to five in their respective areas of study, received training with a strong emphasis on practical engagement, with 70% of the curriculum focused on hands-on experience. The training programs spanned from one to three years, with six fields classified under polytechnics and eight under colleges.

Tiratu stressed the importance of fostering a generation skilled in technology and trades for national development. He advocated for an education and training policy guided by innovative ideas to advance the sector.

Additionally, Tiratu mentioned the city's efforts over the past five years to establish Centers of Excellence in vocational and training fields, which are crucial for registering and educating large numbers of citizens. Currently, more than 100,000 short training sessions and over 40,000 regular training programs are offered annually.

Hana Dejene, a graduate from General Wingate TVET College in Accounting and Finance, expressed her confidence gained through the practical focus of her course. "The training has prepared me to handle challenges, whether I work as a self-employed individual or as an employee," she shared with *The Ethiopian Herald*.

Ethiopia to witness increasing FDI after reform: Economists

BY YESUF ENDRIS

ADDIS ABABA—Ethiopia's foreign direct investment inflow would increase in the upcoming year higher than the previous periods on the heels of the recently introduced reform, which is significant to build investors' confidence, economists reflected.

In a recent webinar discussion organized by Invest Africa, Fairfax Africa Fund, Global Chairman and Invest Africa advisory board member Zemedeneh Negatu said that the policy reforms taken by the government would give impetus to rise in foreign direct investment (FDI).

Recalling Ethiopia's third rapidly growing economy next to China and India in the last 25 years, Zemedeneh stated that the productivity today is also getting better environment as many sectors are being opened up for investors.

The telecom, the banking, transport and logistics sectors were closed in the past are now opened up so that new investors will come to Ethiopia to tap the potentials, he noted.

To him, there will be a transition period. "Of course, the economy is transitioning



Zemedeneh Negatu

and it could face some box. If we look at the last five years, the foreign direct investment in Ethiopia has been on the top, gaining three billion plus every single year," he said.

The country requires addressing the needs of both domestic and foreign investors, Zemedeneh said, adding that Ethiopia has been receiving significant number of FDI during the past four years, which is admittedly challenging with the internal conflict.

Ethiopia will continue to be even more attractive to FDI as forecasted by the IMF

though, there will be challenges absolutely like anywhere else, he indicated.

IMF and the World Bank, are looking at Ethiopia's GDP to grow by seven percent. "It could be eight to ten percent of the next five years. So we need to look at separating legacy issues which have been resolved through reforms." Investors devote their money because they look at the long-term trends, he remarked.

Financial Risk analyst, Patricia Rodrigues, who presented her insight during the webinar discussion, on her part cautioned the possibilities of potential risks despite opportunities.

Though Ethiopia is now hunting foreign currencies to resolve problems caused by the import and export deficit outcomes, she suggested that the country should learn from nations' experience of implementing new reforms in such issues.

Kenya for example, according to Rodrigues, is facing protests because of reforms on tax, which could be a good lesson to Ethiopia.

She also emphasized internal and geopolitical affairs would have their own impacts on FDI flows that Ethiopia is demanding and bidding with incentives.



AliExpress launches in Ethiopia, ushering new era of e-commerce

BY BETELHEM BEDLU

ADDIS ABABA – The launch of Alibaba's AliExpress in Ethiopia marks a significant milestone, not only by introducing a global e-commerce giant to the country but also by showcasing Ethiopia's progress in creating a conducive environment for digital innovation and economic growth, according to the Ministry of Innovation and Technology (MiNT).

Speaking at the official launch, Innovation and Technology State Minister Yeshurun Alemayehu (PhD) highlighted that as Ethiopia moves toward a fully integrated digital economy, the presence of AliExpress will play a key role in achieving these ambitions. He emphasized that the platform would empower Ethiopian businesses, particularly Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs), by providing them with tools to reach international markets, enhance their competitiveness, and contribute to national economic development.

"The launch of AliExpress, one of the world's leading online retail platforms, aligns perfectly with our national vision of empowering the private sector and fostering an environment where e-commerce can thrive," Yeshurun stated.

The State Minister further noted that this partnership opens new opportunities for Ethiopian SMEs to engage more effectively in global trade by leveraging the digital tools provided by Alibaba. He also reaffirmed his office's commitment to supporting AliExpress and ensuring that the collaboration benefits Ethiopia's economy while setting a precedent for future digital partnerships.

May Wang, Director of AliExpress Business Global Account, remarked that the launch marks a new era for e-commerce in Ethiopia, allowing local businesses to expand globally and giving consumers seamless access to international products.

Digital Transformation Ethiopia Association

(DTEA) President Fikir Andargachew added that this partnership fosters an environment where innovation can thrive, bringing Ethiopia closer to its digital aspirations. She noted that Alibaba's entry into the Ethiopian market would accelerate the country's Digital Ethiopia 2025 initiatives.

Chinese Embassy Minister Counselor Shen Qinmin emphasized Ethiopia's strategic role as a gateway to Africa, facilitating connections between Africa and China through the AliExpress platform. He noted that e-commerce is the future, and Alibaba's presence will not only reduce costs but also provide opportunities for small businesses and farmers.

The Digital Transformation Ethiopia Association (DTEA) and the Ministry of Innovation and Technology, with Ethiopian Airlines set to play a crucial role in enhancing logistics and delivery capabilities for AliExpress in Ethiopia, supported the launch event.

News

China-Africa Forum opportunity to deepen cooperation: Amb.Hu Changchun

ADDIS ABABA (ENA) - China and Africa will take opportunity of the Beijing Summit Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) to further deepen their cooperation and make new contributions to promoting the global modernization, Ambassador Hu Changchun said.

Head of Mission of China to the African Union, Ambassador Hu briefed the media recently about the 2024 Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) Beijing Summit that will take place from September 4 to 6.

The summit under the theme: "Joining Hands to Advance Modernization and Build a High-Level China-Africa Community with a Shared Future" is expected to attract African heads of state as well as representatives from regional

and international African organizations.

According to Ambassador Hu Changchun, it will be an event that strengthens China-African partnership and explore cooperation and chart the course for the future.

"We believe that China and Africa will take the opportunity of Beijing Summit FOCAC to further deepen solidarity and cooperation and to make new contributions to promoting the global modernization and the building of a community with a shared future for mankind," he said.

The head of mission reaffirmed that China is always Africa's good friend, partner, and brother.

"Together with our African friends, we have pressed ahead on the path of solidarity and

cooperation and looked out for each other in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic. We have enhanced China-African relations to the new stage of jointly building a high level community with shared future."

He stated that the upcoming Beijing summit will be another friendly gathering of the big China-African family, mutual respect, treating each other as equals and joining in consultations are important features of FOCAC.

The two sides are having intensive communication and consultation under preparation of the summit and other activities with the aim of carrying forward the spirit of China-Africa, friendship and cooperation, and making this summit another symbol of our solidarity, the ambassador noted.

Green legacy boosting...

The country's coffee coverage that was about 800,000 hectares of land three years ago, has now grown to 1.2 million with an annual average increment of 100,000 hectare land, according to him.

"As the conducted researches, over 80% of the coffee products were highly forecasted to be extinct in the next 20 to 30 years, but the GLI is mitigating the expected scenario by normalizing the general ecosystem," he underscored.

Revealing the increasing trends of coffee export to macro-economic development, he elaborated that the country has managed to earn 1.4 billion USD from exporting about 300,000 tons of

coffee in 2022 and earned 1.33 billion USD exporting 250,000 in 2023.

Familiarizing the seedling plantation with coffee productivity, the director-general stressed that the coffee productivity volume was not exceeding 200,000 before this initiative came into effect.

He said, "The commercial coffee export share was 70% three years ago, but from the emergence of the program the volume decreased to 30% and promoting specialty coffees."

Indeed, Ethiopia's coffee price at the global market shows a significant growth of 18 % while the international coffee price decreased

by 32% last year, he added.

It was recently announced that the country has managed to generate about 1.43 billion USD exporting approximately 298,500 tons of coffee during the last fiscal year.

In January, 2024, the Government of Ethiopia, in partnership with UNDP and other partners has also launched a major project dubbed "Preventing Forest Loss, Promoting Restoration, and Integrating Sustainability into Ethiopia's Coffee Value Chains and Food Systems," to tackle deforestation, promote forest restoration, and integrate sustainability into the country's coffee value chains and food systems.

Cosmopolitan to plant...

and struggling cities. Addis Ababa, for example, is emerging as a beautiful new metropolis, where greenery harmonizes with modern architecture.

According to Mayor Adanech Abiebie, the city requires to significantly increase its green space coverage to meet international standards.

The city's current green area remains relatively low, she said, adding that this year's launch of the tree planting program marks a continuation of efforts to increase green spaces.

She also emphasized the importance of strengthening cooperation to achieve the international urban standard of 30 percent green coverage within the next three years.

"We are the ones who make our capital green and comfortable to live in," Adanech said.

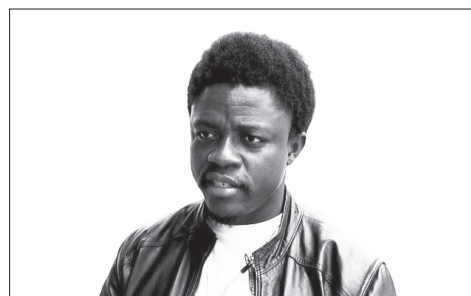
The city has planned to plant 20 million saplings this year, to increase green spaces for the current as well as next generation thereby showcasing the results of cooperation, according to the Mayor.

For this reason, religious institutions, members of the diplomatic community based in Addis Ababa, civic associations, contending parties and all the residents of the capital are expected to leave their mark in the places prepared by the administration, she added.

Ethiopians have planted 32.5 billion tree seedlings across the country since the Green Legacy Initiative was launched by Prime Minister Abiy in 2019. The overall goal of the initiative is to plant 50 billion seedlings by 2026. If the implementation of the initiative continues with this pace and citizen's strong enthusiasm, the forest coverage of the country will reach 30 percent by the year 2030, according to the national news agency.



Maria Ashili



Gabriel Kapaka



Makabe Aste

Climate experts...

Kapaka expressed that the action taken by the government and people of Ethiopia regarding environmental protection is an encouraging one and it is the responsibility of all to make continue this action onwards.

He explained that tree planting is an international activity and Ethiopia's undertaking of such

work extensively contributes to international efforts to reduce global warming.

Another attendant of the meeting, Kenyan Makabe Aste, said that Ethiopia's green development is bringing a huge change in the region.

"Ethiopia's plan to plant about 600 million

trees in a single day will make us all to take a lesson from it," she said.

According to the experts, Ethiopia's environment preservation works are exemplary for other countries seeking to address the challenges of climate change, local media reported.

Cherishing Ethiopia's ...

environmental campaign, both in scale and ambition. The initiative initially aimed to plant 20 billion seedlings across Ethiopia, but by 2023, the country had surpassed this goal, planting 25 billion seedlings. The campaign saw four billion seedlings planted in 2019, five billion in 2020, seven billion in 2021, six billion in 2022, and 6.5 billion in 2023.

Ethiopia's reforestation efforts have also set world records. Last year, the country planted nearly 567 million seedlings in just 12 hours, with Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed and millions of Ethiopians, including international community members, participating in the effort. This achievement earned Ethiopia international recognition

and praise.

Ambassador Meles Alem, then Ministry of Foreign Affairs Spokesperson expressed gratitude to the global community for its support, noting that the initiative is integral to Ethiopia's green diplomacy. The initiative has garnered international backing as a key player in the global fight against climate change.

As the first phase of the Green Legacy Initiative concluded last year, Ethiopia set a new goal to plant an additional 25 billion seedlings across various agro-ecological zones. The initiative's impact has been acknowledged by global entities such as the UNFCCC's Least Developed Countries Expert Group (LEG), which held its

meeting in Addis Ababa this week.

During the meeting, Planning and Development State Minister Seyoum Mekonnen emphasized Ethiopia's commitment to building a green economy and climate resilience, as outlined in the country's 10-Year Development Plan. Ethiopia's efforts include policy and strategy formulation, long-term planning, and institutional restructuring to combat climate change.

Ethiopia's updated Nationally Determined Contribution, National Adaptation Plan, and Long-Term Low Emission and Climate Resilient Development Strategy reflect the country's dedication to reforestation and landscape restoration. These initiatives

contribute to carbon sequestration, job creation, watershed management, and biodiversity conservation.

Chair of the UNFCCC's Least Developed Countries Expert Group, Gabriel Kpaka, highlighted the global urgency for progress on climate issues, stressing the importance of having National Adaptation Plans in place by 2025 and showing significant progress by 2030.

As Ethiopia continues its Green Legacy Initiative, the country remains committed to combating climate change and fostering global environmental partnerships, which is further demonstrated by an extraordinary goal of planting over 600 million tree seedlings within just 12 hours.

Opinion

Let Ethiopia go green via planting 600 million saplings a day

BY MENGESHA AMARE

In the planet where climate change and environmental hazard predominantly prevail, balancing nature thereby bolstering the safest human life has to be a prime priority and top on the agenda across the globe. Yes, breathing clean air coming out of green plants is all the time an incomparable innate gift for human beings from nature.

The untold bounties of the earth, if managed and meticulously taken care of, suffice the generation to come let alone the eight billion ones currently residing on it. However, human beings themselves have become arc enemy of nature, the earth on which they have been living lucidly explaining.

Thanks to the knowledge of countries about the negative repercussions of leaving land desolate, lack of entrenched awareness about nurturing the environment, forest degradation, among others, many countries of the world including the east African star—Ethiopia—have attached due emphasis to greening plots of land, especially the dwindled ones, as the cumulative effect of every effort towards this end would provide countries individually in particular and the universe in general with invaluable bounties.

One of the viable means to reverse the menace the human creature is imposing on earth is planting tree seedlings as it would play an irreplaceable role in harmonizing the situation in which living things peculiarly human race is leading life, making weather condition suitable for living things as a whole with an atypical emphasis to human race and helping people create countries suitable to live and work.

This appealing trajectory should be entertained in a well organized and streamlined manner in every nation of the world as the entire planet is the sum total of each and every plot of territory aggregately termed as a nation/country summed to a continent and this in turn would undoubtedly construct the globe at a larger scale.

Cognizant of the fact that a journey of many miles starts from a span, Ethiopia, as one of the east African nations, an element incorporated into the whole Africa, has all the time, at a year interval perhaps, exercised tree plantation, sapling nurturing to make degraded places green, urban areas much more alluring and give people ample opportunities to secure jobs. Such a bold move would undoubtedly make a significant contribution to the national, regional, continental and even global effort towards making the world an earthly heaven.

Of course, getting Green Legacy Initiative higher and widely practicing planting tree

seedlings is of paramount impertinence in making barren land green, providing places, which once were very disgusting to look at with a majestic gaze, attracting rainfall that can be used to sow crops and grow fruits and vegetables as well as boosting economic growth and integrated development. In simple terms, one is tired of listing the benefits of appreciating Green Legacy Initiative as it does have an all rounded significance and life is in one way or another immensely related to trees and green vegetation, plants and grass in general.

Unequivocally, not only is the Green Legacy Initiative what Ethiopia has widely been working out for benefiting the nation, but it is also of significantly useful in making neighboring countries advantageous of garnering enumerable achievements. Most definitely and as well attested so far, the ambitious initiative is also benefiting countries of the neighborhood, regional realm, continentally located ones and countries of the world at large. That is why Ethiopia has been encouraging other African countries to be part and parcel of the tree-planting campaign by providing tree seedlings.

Drawing important lessons from past experiences and practices, Ethiopia has planned to plant 600 million seedlings in a single day. This was officially declared on 17th August 2024. By participating in this historic day, every Ethiopian is expected to put their fingerprint on planting tree seedlings so as to make the green legacy persistent.

Ethiopians from every nook and cranny of the nation are expected to stand together, with sense of national spirit, to trample their fingerprints on the Green Legacy. No question about it, if citizens of a given nation or people of the world, with a particular emphasis to Ethiopians as per the concern of the piece, stand together, they can absolutely and confidently achieve much more let alone greening the land that can be potentially a good source of clean environment, catchy scenario and neat air to breathe.

In one occasion when this year's tree seedling campaign was launched, Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (PhD) proposed that adults are expected to plant more than 20 seedlings and teenagers more than 10 during the day.

Though climate change was, once a distant warning is now a tangible reality, manifesting itself in extreme weather events, raising sea levels, and mass extinctions. The consequences of peoples' actions, like ripples in a pond, unwise waste disposal, mismanaged garbage throwing, open defecating in many places though the degree varies, are spreading across countries of developing continents and severely impacting ecosystems, economics, and the very fabric of human civilization.

The myriads of the daunting challenges from which the world over is tremendously suffering have to be reined at some point in history, that time is now and all human beings have to act accordingly to prettily reverse the devastating scenario born to land degradation, reckless environmental handling, haphazard treatment of nature in general.

The most important point to be taken into account in this regard is this year has set a goal to propagate 600 million tree seedlings in 12 hours across the country. As indicated by the Prime Minister, Ethiopians will plant 600 million tree seedlings in a single day, on 23 August, 2024, today in short.

It was also well attested that Prime Minister Abiy emphasized the importance of unity and harmony among Ethiopians on the occasion. According to him, through unity, Ethiopians can achieve more than what they have attained so far. Thus, Abiy encouraged every adult and teenager to leave their legacy for the next generation by planting more tree seedlings on that special day.

As learnt from his utterances, planting trees is one of the manifestations of loving Ethiopia and leaving a Green Legacy to the next generation is a real demonstration of true patriotism in this era. "Let us leave our legacy all over Ethiopia with one spirit. If we are one, we can do more and make genuine difference in all aspects."

Needless to state, every Ethiopian can be an integral part of this initiative and are expected to play their part in due course of making the country green and combating the effect of climate change. By planting tree seedlings—be it in backyards, schools, companies or organizations' premises or at community lands—citizens can meaningfully contribute to the effort geared towards restoring ecosystems, enhancing biodiversity, and improving air quality, balancing the distorted nature thereby boosting the level of mother earth towards being safe and livable status.

Without a shadow of doubt, every drop of the tree, each single sapling, citizens have been planting symbolizes hope, bright future, green and catchy atmosphere via providing either the existing or the generation to come with a greener, promising, suitable to work and live as well as more sustainable and lucrative world.

It is also essential to remember that planting is just the first step; but protecting and nurturing these seedlings is equally vital as merely spreading seeds on the ground without scrupulously following up, nurturing and wholeheartedly taking care of them leads nowhere. True, people/citizens can safeguard their environments and strengthen the harmonious way of living of their communities by ensuring the growth, fruitfulness of the tree

seedlings, the current nurseries and the huge trees of the future to produce the clean air living things inhale.

It is also an undeniable fact that the Green Legacy Initiative empowers individuals to take ownership of their environments. The initiative instills a sense of pride in participation—every seedling nurtured, every tree protected, contributes to a collective legacy that strengthens not only the social fabric of the society but also their natural landscape. The other good thing is, for all active participants, engaging in the seedling planning movement fosters collaboration, as neighbors come together, share knowledge, and support one another in the real shared goal of eco-restoration, biodiversity protection, ecological preservation, among others.

Here, keeping the environment eye-catching, the country at a wider scope green and neat, should not be left only to the government, line ministries working on the area, development partners, non-government organizations and companies advocating greenery and environmental protection, instead it demands the amalgamated effort of all.

This means that the issue of making the land green; having good air to respire knows no boundary. If truth be told, taking up the Green Legacy Initiative means acknowledging everyone's role as stewards of the globe, as safeguarding the planet earth from a range of upsetting circumstances. Let me exhort my case urging all citizens of my generation, fellow citizens of my beloved nation—Ethiopia, compatriots of neighboring east African countries in particular and those of the entire continent in general and even cross continental inhabitants to move in unison, collaboratively plan to rescue mother earth and work together thereby coming up with meaningful change in all aspects not only in greening earth.

In so doing, all sons and daughters of the planet can combat deforestation, mitigate the impacts of climate change and global warming, and create a sustainable environment for all human races if they develop assiduousness, coordination and sense of fraternity.

Generally, Ethiopians have to protect the natural resources of this affluent nation and ensure that its beautiful landscapes as well as rich biodiversity endure for future generations to cherish. Equally, other African nations can replicate the best practices undertaken by Ethiopian and its citizens. For meting such a dual target—for keeping Ethiopia green and for making others green, let Ethiopia go green!

Editor's Note: The views entertained in this article do not necessarily reflect the stance of The Ethiopian Herald

Editorial

As Ethiopia takes the lead, wealthy nations ought to address climate change

With wealthiest nations dragging their feet to bankroll the required amount of finance to back green initiatives, climate change has already become a daunting global challenge. And as the race against time continues to fight rising temperature, the world is teetering into uncharted territory. Particularly, the last few years have seen an uptick in climate related disasters. From the deadly floods to excruciating heat waves, the world is confronted with the growing repercussions of carbon emissions.

As the world hesitates to take prompt, appropriate action in response to the elephant in the room, the climate catastrophe has reached a fever pitch. With volcanoes erupting, storms devouring cities, floods washing towns, and earthquakes rocking countries, some of the world's most hospitable places for people have somehow changed into a living hell over time. The ramifications of climate change have posed an unparalleled threat to humankind.

Climate change continues to wreak unprecedented havoc on the planet, and the global phenomenon shows no signs of abating. The serious consequences of this increasingly alarming problem are becoming more severe over time. Over the past decade, the world has experienced severe weather and extreme temperatures.

However, the effects of climate change are harshly felt in developing countries, where early warning systems and prevention methods are weak. Resources are scarce and some countries are struggling to cope with the serious humanitarian crisis they face.

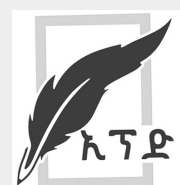
Having fallen short to provide the pledged climate finance, the developed world particularly the major polluters have failed to walk the talks. In contrast, countries like Ethiopia have been taking bold initiatives albeit contribute less to the global phenomena. Over the years, Ethiopia planted more than 32 billion seedlings as per of the green legacy initiative that have been in full swing since 2019. This initiative championed by the Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed.

The Green Legacy Initiative was launched in 2019, and as many as 25 billion seedlings were planted under its first phase by mobilizing over 32 million people, a target of planting another 25 billion seedlings during the second phase that was launched on 17 July 2023.

In the preceding rainy season (2023), the country planted over 566 million seedlings in 12 hours across the country, exceeding the target of 500 million tree seedlings in a single day. As a result, it can increase its forest cover to 23.6 percent from 17.2 before the initiative years. The biggest and pressing global challenge needs big and global commitment. Without the intended finance and resource mobilization, the world would never be in position to tackle its daunting challenge and one of man's worst threats.

Nations including Ethiopia that have been frontrunner in both planting massive numbers of trees and building climate friendly economy should be compensated by the creator of the problem. According to the incumbent, Ethiopia needs around 50 billion dollars to finance its green legacy

Today, Ethiopia has set to plant 600 million tree saplings in a single day. The Green Legacy Initiative also aligns with global efforts to restore 15 million hectares of degraded forests and landscapes by 2030. Backing Ethiopia has far reaching implications to global cause. Climate change affects all indiscriminately and requires collective measure. In this regard, the world should react timely and rightly although appears to be a little too late. World leaders' action has to fine tune with mission in terms of financing green activities and combating climate change ramifications.



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Opinion

Green Legacy Initiative reawakens people's passion for afforestation

BY ZEKARIAS WOLDEMARIAM

In the history of human beings forests have played a vital role in the livelihoods of the people. In Ethiopia too, forests are integral components of the lifestyle of the population. For example people used trees for lumber, construction, fuel, traditional medicines, among others.

In the religious system of many people in Ethiopia forests have been playing an important role. For instance they provided suitable place for payer, shade and the production of religious artifacts.

Some records indicate that at the beginning of the twentieth century, around 420,000 square kilometers (35% of Ethiopia's land) was covered by trees. However, this figure has significantly dropped to less than 14% at present.

The country has experienced continuous deforestation over a period of more than thousand years. But the rate of deforestation has aggravated to a level of threatening the ecosystem during the last century. Among the top reasons for the rampant depletion of the country's forestry are rapid population growth (3% per year), extensive forest clearing for cultivation, over-grazing, and exploitation of forests for fuel wood and construction materials.

All the clearing of forests in the past used to take place without any effort to reforest the land. Such removal of trees without sufficient reforestation has resulted in damage to habitat, biodiversity loss and aridity.

Accordingly, the country's forest got depleted due to the unfair utilization of forest for various purposes. Indeed people plant trees to supply for their daily uses. As far as they want to use them they have to replace them. If possible they have to replace more than what they use. This avails abundant resources for reserve as well as for their consumption.

There are rich and accumulated traditional practices of protecting the natural forests in parts of the country like Sidama, Gedeo and Kaffa, among others. In such regions people are well aware of the vitality of forest for the overall human existence.

This shows that it is possible to hold greening campaign as culture of the people. The Green Legacy Initiative (GLI) has played significant role in reinstating this culture among the people. By now the green legacy initiative have become a highly anticipated annual event in the minds of the general public. Just as people eagerly wait for the onset of the season of annual holidays the launching of the annual green legacy campaign is also becoming a highly awaited, popular vibe.

The GLI program takes place annually during the rainy season, usually on August. IT is a very cold, foggy season during which people prefer to stay at home to stay away from the grinding cold weather. Yet they set out to the seedling plantation sites in spite of the rain and

the slippery mud along their path to discharge their share.

For the last five seasons millions of Ethiopians have been doing this historical feat with due commitment. Accordingly they have accomplished the plantation of billions of seedlings in each season starting from 2019. The number of seedlings planted every year kept on increasing continually. By now the people are bracing to plant 7 billion seedlings. Along with this they are set to break world record by planting 600 million of them only today. Out of this it is indicated that the transplantation of 150 million of them, which is 25 % of the total would be monitored via modern satellite technology there by to corroborate the authenticity of both the one day record challenge as well as the entire greening program.

Such careful and well-coordinated green development campaign is likely to pay back in various forms in the long term. It is unrealistic to expect quick outcome from this mega level program as it is likely to take quite more years to show its impact. Yet one can witness some improvements in the rainfall patterns and other weather conditions in parts of the country.

Agriculture is still the mainstay of the country as more than three quarters of the population rely on it. Rescuing the agriculture sector from the direct impacts of climate change which is the outcome of deforestation is a valuable step in revamping the economic growth of the country.

While raising the forest coverage of the country the GLI has started to leave its additional impacts. First and foremost breaking the long ingrained culture of the destroying forest that depleted the green coverage of the country is an indispensable success. If the people maintain the current practice with the increasing trend it is likely to bring about unfathomable change to the environment of the country.

Alongside this the direct and active participation of the top level leadership is of material contribution to the progress observed so far. Such exemplary role of the leadership must be replicated in all other areas where the people are facing troubles. For instance leaders are required to pioneer changes like good governance, corruption, productivity ... etc.

The increased active participation of the people in the annual campaign is a signal that if people obtain proper leadership and guidance they can do miracles. The peoples' active and massive role is still required to avert bunches of problems that are raging in various parts of the country. For instance people need to campaign against dependency mentality, violence, against women and children, corruption ... etc.

The experiences drawn from the GLI in motivating, sensitizing and mobilizing the people towards a noble national cause can be taken as important lesson that should be emulated by other governmental and non-governmental institutions.

Editor's Note: The views entertained in this article do not necessarily reflect the stance of The Ethiopian Herald

Business & Economy

Ethiopia's Green Legacy Initiative : A seed for economic prosperity

BY LAKACHEW ATINAFU

Our beautiful planet needs producer to sustain food chain and keep the momentum of the planet in healthy track. Cognizant of all this, the Ethiopian government has made smart move to address food security, herbal gain and react to environmental degradation via undertaking tree plantation during the span of the last five years. In this regard, the state is in the forefront of the motto "A Nation that Plants; A Generation that Sustains." Over the last five years, some 25 billion seedlings including trees, fruit, and cattle feeds have been planted across the country.

The Green Legacy Initiative in Ethiopia is a massive tree-planting campaign aimed at tackling several pressing issues:

The initiative creates job opportunities in nurseries, animal husbandry, beekeeping, poultry farming, and fruit and vegetable production. It is also expected to strengthen Ethiopia's international reputation as a leader in climate change mitigation.

Ethiopia's ambitious Green Legacy Initiative, launched in 2019, aims to plant 4 billion trees annually for a decade, transforming the country's landscape and contributing significantly to its economic development. This ambitious project goes beyond environmental restoration; it holds the potential to unlock a wealth of economic opportunities, boosting livelihoods and fostering sustainable growth.

By combating deforestation and promoting afforestation, the Green Legacy Initiative campaign strengthens Ethiopia's resilience to climate change. This translates into increased agricultural productivity, reduced vulnerability to droughts, and improved water security, all crucial for a nation heavily reliant on agriculture.

The initiative contributes to the preservation of Ethiopia's rich biodiversity, safeguarding ecosystems that support vital industries like tourism and forestry. This biodiversity not only attracts eco-tourism but also provides a source of income through sustainable harvesting of forest products.

The planting and maintenance of trees create numerous job opportunities, particularly in rural areas. This provides a much-needed boost to the local economy, empowering communities and reducing poverty.

By absorbing carbon dioxide from the atmosphere, the Green Legacy contributes to mitigating climate change. This opens up opportunities for Ethiopia to benefit from carbon markets and attract investments in sustainable development.

The Green Legacy Initiative goes beyond planting trees. It encompasses a holistic approach to environmental conservation and sustainable development, focusing on local communities that are actively involved in the initiative, ensuring ownership and long-term sustainability. This fosters a sense of responsibility and promotes participatory decision-making.



Ethiopia's Green Legacy Campaign: all are participants

The initiative emphasizes sustainable land management practices, including soil conservation, water harvesting, and agro forestry, to maximize the benefits of reforestation.

The Green Legacy promotes the development of value chains around forest products, creating opportunities for local communities to benefit from the initiative's economic potential.

Moreover, many argue that securing adequate funding and resources to sustain the initiative over the long term is crucial. Ensuring active participation and ownership by local communities is vital for the initiative's success. Implementing robust monitoring and evaluation systems to track progress and adapt strategies is essential.

The Green Legacy Initiative presents a unique opportunity for Ethiopia to achieve economic prosperity while safeguarding its environment. By harnessing the power of nature and fostering sustainable development, Ethiopia can build a greener and more prosperous future for its people.

According to ENA, Federal Ministers and Regional Chief Administrators have lauded Ethiopia's Green Legacy Initiative as a major step forward in environmental conservation and food security.

The officials also affirmed that the initiative, being underway for the past five years, has been making significant impact on the country's efforts to improve food security and environmental protection.

Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (PhD) has issued a call to action, urging citizens to plant 600 million saplings during the nationwide overnight greening program on 23 August, 2024. The program, which has seen the planting of over 566 million saplings in a single day last year, is set to be scaled up this year.

The premier urged adults and teenagers to demonstrate their love for the country by

planting over 20 and 10 trees respectively adding that "Let's ensure our gift to the next generation is placed in the right spot." Leaders at different administrative levels from across the country have expressed their support for the initiative.

Sidama Region President, Desta Ledamo, hailed last year's joint planting program as historic and pledged the region's full participation during this year's overnight tree planting event to achieve the 600 million saplings in one day.

Similarly, Tilahun Kebede, President of the Southern Ethiopia Region, expressed confidence in the region's ability to contribute significantly to the national target.

Mayor of Dire Dawa City Administration, Kedir Juhar, has also announced an ambitious plan to plant one million saplings overnight within the City limits. He called on residents to join the nationwide greening effort.

The initiative has also garnered support from the cabinet. Minister of Agriculture Girma Amente (PhD) and Minister of Women and Social Affairs, Ergoge Tesfaye (PhD) both emphasized the program's role in environmental protection, climate change adaptation, and food security. They urged citizens to actively participate during the overnight planting event.

As the nation gears up for the massive tree-planting campaign, expectations are high that Ethiopia's Green Legacy Initiative will continue to yield positive results for the environment and its people.

The officials have said that the initiative has been making significant impact on the country's efforts to improve food security and environmental protection.

Ethiopia has actively embarked on extensive tree planting over the past five years, having planted a remarkable number of seedlings so far. Pursuant to the country's ambitious plan of planting 50 billion trees, Ethiopia

is anticipated to plant 7.5 billion trees this year, it was indicated. The goal for this year is to reach 40 billion seedlings from the overall target of 50 billion. Ethiopia has so far planted more than 32.5 tree seedlings.

Trees help improve soil fertility by providing organic matter and reducing erosion. This leads to better crop yields and increased food production. Trees act as natural sponges, absorbing rainwater and releasing it slowly, which helps recharge groundwater reserves and improve irrigation for crops. Trees can help mitigate the effects of drought, a major challenge for food security in Ethiopia.

Ethiopia has a rich biodiversity of medicinal plants, many of which are used in traditional medicine. The Green Legacy Initiative aims to protect and expand these resources, ensuring access to natural remedies. The cultivation and trade of medicinal plants can create new economic opportunities for local communities. Trees absorb carbon dioxide from the atmosphere, a key greenhouse gas responsible for climate change. Planting trees helps mitigate the effects of global warming.

Trees can help create microclimates that are more resilient to extreme weather events like droughts and floods, making communities more adaptable to climate change.

The Green Legacy Initiative encourages widespread participation, with communities actively involved in planting seedlings. This fosters a sense of ownership and responsibility for the environment. Planting seedlings ensures the growth of trees, providing long-term benefits for future generations.

Overall, the Green Legacy Initiative in Ethiopia is a comprehensive approach to address food security, promote herbal gain, and mitigate climate change. By planting trees and engaging communities, Ethiopia is working towards a sustainable future.

Art & Culture

Fortunately, it resuscitates

BY ALEM HAILU G/KRISTOS

As mother nature's
Punitive measure
Against a society
In maintaining
The statuesque
That doesn't bother,
Our rivers
Had become subject
To a water thirst,
To the extent
Of projecting
Rocky ribs
Terrifyingly protruded out
For easy count!
But now thanks to
The all-out, terrace-making
And reforestation effort
Of each catchment
Farmers have made a point
And also to the afforestation
Move of the government
Rivers aside from quenching
Their insatiable thirst
Have resumed
To brim over
With floods
Drinking water
To their hearts' content.
Our forests once stripped of
Their wooded cover
Have started, fast, to recover
From afar they are seen
Robed eye-catching green
From a fry-pan sky
Allowing a shelter



Also busy
Carbon to sequester.
Wild animals
That migrated
Have preferred
Back their way to find.
Now farmers don't have
Deep to dig
To sink a water well
Or find a nearby spring.
Birds are heard chirruping
Be it winter, summer or spring,
While Brooks bubbling.
Buzzing and hovering
From this to that flower
Bees are producing
Organic honey by the hour.
Promising a bumper harvest

Farmer's plots have
Fortunately continued
To resuscitate!
Those leaving
Their denuded abode behind
Away, who preferred
To stay
'We will return back
home soon!'
Is what
They say.
Happily enough
Mother nature
Affords us a second chance
Imbued with
Environment stewardship
If we are willing to mend
Our wrong 'Feast today

famine tomorrow!' stance.
To dispel the spectre
Of climate change
And systematically face
The global challenge
True to the adage
'We have either to
swim together
or sink together!'
Hence in fighting the challenge
Or adapting to the change
Back scratching,
We have to be on the same page.
Indeed, irrigation must
Not slip our mind
For erratic rainfall
A lasting solution
If we must find. //



Ethiopia

BY ALEM HAILU G/KRISTOS

Endowed with bountiful natural resources, a water tower with an awesome waterfall
Tourists' magnet, enchanting live volcanoes in earth's nadir, mountains that stand tall
Hospitable to foreigners, a haven for refugees
Intangible and tangible heritages, Timket and Axum obelisk
Origin of mankind, coffee
Piousness its hallmark, is repetitively mentioned in Holy Books
Inspiration to freedom fighters, the beacon of black resistance
Amalgam of cultures, home to over 82 groups that display peaceful coexistence

Science & Technology

Green Legacy: Nurturing nature, combating climate crisis

BY DARGIE KAHSAY

According to the United Nations, climate change remains the planet's defining crisis of the time where the problem is becoming worse and quick than the expectations. The world continues to suffer from the devastating damages of climate crisis. Flooding, droughts, famine, desertification, and land sliding and other unexpected natural disasters remain to be recurrent events across the globe.

Everyone across the corner of the globe is not immune from the shocking penalties of climate change. Rising temperature which is the result of climate change is fueling environmental degradation, weather extremism, natural disasters, economic disruptions, conflict, and food and water insecurity. This indicated that it is time for bold and continuous actions to reduce the climate change driven consequences of our planet, earth.

United Nations Secretary General, António Guterres during the 2020 UNGA disclosed that with practical actions and measures, human beings can win the race over climate crisis. However, due to lack of practical actions, the world is losing the race on climate emergency.

Despite everyone across the globe knows the urgency of taking actions to save the world from further damages of the worsening climate crisis, still leaders of the developed world continued talking too much and make unpractical promises. Climate change and climate crisis remains the agenda of researches, seminars, annual conferences and speeches of world leaders. But, due to lack of practical actions to implement the talks and findings of scientific researches, climate change is worsening and climate driven natural disasters remains to be top challenges across the globe.

The world talks too much with regard to climate change; it is time to take practical actions to live the promises and the talks. The planet demands applicable climate mitigation and adaptation actions so as to reduce the impacts of climate crisis. Climate crisis comes from the actions of human beings and the solution to save the planet from further crisis remains on the hand of human beings, according to researchers.

In this regard, conserving forests and reforestations remains among the top scientific solutions to combat climate change and desertification, though not the only one. Deforestation, land degradation and desertification are the top problems in climate crisis which can be addressed through conserving the available forests and reforesting and afforesting the destroyed areas.

According to an article entitled "Can tree planting solve climate change?" published at Zurich on May 2024, planting trees is a scientifically valid and beneficial approach to mitigating climate change with a making it part of a broader strategy that includes reducing fossil fuel emissions, transitioning to renewable energy, and protecting



Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (PhD) planting a seedling, July 2024

existing forests. Hence, tree planting is considered one of the most effective tools for combating climate change and restoring biodiversity.

According to the article, trees are natural carbon capture and storage machines, absorbing carbon dioxide in the atmosphere through photosynthesis and then locking it up. As to researchers in the field, to create healthy ecosystems and effective capture carbon, reforestation and afforestation projects is crucial. Mass plantation helps to nurture nature. Scientists concluded that mass plantation which helps to restore forests, ranks among the most effective climate change mitigation strategies of the time.

According to a report released during the recent World Economic Forum, the world would lose over 12.5 trillion USD and would over 14 million people due to climate change by 2050. In addition, due to climate driven weather, over 500 million people living in a hot weather will be exposed to communicable diseases like malaria. According to the report, deaths due to flood and drought would worsen.

The report revealed that, by 2040 due to climate change driven disasters, Asian countries would lose 3.5 trillion USD, Europe 2.6 trillion and South America over 2.2 trillion USD. The report concluded that if the world implements proper and timely actions to combat climate crisis, there is a chance to reduce the damages that the world may experience in the future, calling for an immediate actions across the globe. This indicated that our planet is at a critical stage due to climate crisis and taking practical actions is an urgent task.

In this regard, Ethiopia is striving to fulfill its responsibility in combating climate change. Its economic reform measures are climate friendly and invest more on

According to a report released during the recent World Economic Forum, the world would lose over 12.5 trillion USD and would over 14 million people due to climate change by 2050. In addition, due to climate driven weather, over 500 million people living in a hot weather will be exposed to communicable diseases like malaria

removable energy sources. As part of its comprehensive efforts to combat climate crisis, Ethiopia gives due attention to increase the forest coverage of the country with mass plantation. By launching Green Legacy initiative in 2019, Ethiopia increased the nation's forest coverage by nearly seven percent.

Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (PhD) "Forests are vital for the planet's health and human well-being." Trees are crucial to provide oxygen, store carbon, and regulate the climate, helping to mitigate climate change. While calling the public to attend the 23rd of August mass plantation day targeting to plant 600 million seedlings in a single day, the premier stated that forests are home to a vast array of biodiversity, offering habitat to millions of species. He calls the public that to protect the existing forests and continue

increasing the forest coverage by planting trees.

According to PM Abiy, the goal of Ethiopia's Green Legacy for this year is to reach 40 billion trees counting from the beginning of the initiative in 2019. So far, Ethiopia has planted over 32 billion seedlings and to reach 40 billion targets, Ethiopia is working to plant 7.5 billion seedlings this plantation season. As part of the national campaign, Ethiopia has set to plant 600 million seedlings within a single day, today. PM Abiy calls the adult population to plant over 20 trees and children to plant 10 and above trees for this day.

According to experts in the forest sector, planting 600 million seedlings in a single day means installing a plant that can absorb over 13 billion kilograms of carbon dioxide. According to researches, a tree has a capacity of absorbing over 20 kilograms of carbon dioxide annually, despite it varies across tree species and the weather condition. This indicated that, if the 600 million seedlings set to plant today grow properly, it saves Ethiopia from further climate crisis by absorbing over 13 billion kilograms of carbon dioxide annually.

Accordingly, planting trees is among the vital and timely actions to combat climate change and to save the planet earth from further damages. Increasing the forest coverage is all about protecting the precious blessings of nature.

Despite planting billions of trees by itself is an appropriate solution for the current climate crisis, it should be supported by scientific researches and climate change concerned international organizations should also support this ambitious initiative of Ethiopia. It is crucial to fund like Green Legacy initiatives by the developing countries so as to promote actions of climate change.

Society



Green Legacy Initiative, planting the seeds of sustainability

BY LEULSEGED WORKU

Today, Ethiopians from all walks of life are planting as many trees as possible. It was early in the morning (6:00 am) that they started flocking to the areas where tree seedlings are planted to successfully realize the ambition of the nation to plant 600 million tree seedlings in a single day and break the global record.

As part of this aspiration, all Ethiopians throughout the country are planting millions of tree seedlings. Mainly, all states are setting their own targets, they are striving to meet their goals and make history.

Recently, the Agriculture Bureau of Amhara State announced its readiness to plant 285 million tree seedlings in a single day and propel the national effort. According to the Natural Resources Development, Protection and Utilization Department of State's Agriculture Bureau, 28 thousand 500 hectares of land is prepared to plant over 285 million seedlings.

According to the Bureau, the Green Legacy Initiative holds a big idea. Aside from restoring degraded lands and greening Ethiopia, it will contribute significantly to global efforts exerted to mitigate the impacts of global warming.

Similarly, Oromia State also revealed a plan to plant hundreds of millions of tree seedlings as part of the national Green Legacy Initiative, targeted to planting 600 million tree seedlings. According to State's Agriculture Bureau Deputy Head Elias Kedir, all the necessary preparations were finalized to achieve the set target. Advocacy works have been undertaken to achieve the plan while sites and planting holes are prepared

well, he mentioned. According to Elias, the seedlings have been planted in 1,000 spotted areas in many parts of the State.

According to him, Oromia has been carrying out soil and natural resource protection activities by planting over 5.5 bn on seedlings under the Green Legacy Initiative. The seedlings that are being planted today are different in species and include fruits such as avocado, guava, and plants that are used for animal fodder and environmental protection as well.

Oromo people have a good culture of preserving trees under the traditional constructive rules, and the Green Legacy Initiative will have paramount importance in achieving the plan across the State, he noted. He also called upon residents to put their fingerprints on these historical moments and support the national ambition of improving production and productivity.

Likewise, Sidama National Regional State indicated the plan to plant 10 million tree saplings on this historic day by engaging over 2.1 million people. In a similar way, Dire Dawa City Administration Mayor Kedir Juhar also stated a plan to plant one million tree seedlings and leave a legacy in the national 600 million saplings in a single day.

And today, Ethiopians committedly are planting as many tree seedlings as they can to realize their ambition and make history. Without a doubt, Ethiopia would manage to plant 600 million saplings in just a day and write history by breaking the world record registered by India in 2016 by planting 50 million trees.

The Green Legacy Initiative, which enables Ethiopia to cope up with climate change, is witnessing positive results. It

has enabled the country to rehabilitate its degraded lands, improve the country's forest coverage, instill massive seedling planting and environment preservation and conservation culture.

For instance, following the initiative, the Somali State, which once faced serious desertification, is now turning green and 80 percent of the seedling trees that were planted for the outgoing Ethiopian year are bearing fruits.

Mentioning that the State had been one of the areas that were affected by desertification, Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed said that the initiative has enabled to turn areas that faced desertification into green. In addition to this, it has created job opportunities for several youths. Following the Green Legacy Initiative program, several tree seedlings are planted in the region and degraded lands are rehabilitated, he remarked.

According to Ahmed, there is a plan to plant more than 13 million tree seedlings in this year's massive seedling planting campaign. So far, 7.9 million tree seedlings have been planted and more than 3,000 hectares of land are covered.

The coordinator also said that there are a large number of saplings that are used for beautifying the cities and roadsides as well as for animal feed.

True, the Green Legacy Initiative has wide-ranging benefits aside from restoring degraded lands, improving forest coverage, and promoting a green economy. It has also socio-economic benefits by generating job opportunities for citizens and ensuring food security by enabling to growth of varieties of food crops and fruits such as avocado, papaya, and mango among others.

In a message he posted in his social

media page in relation to the initiative to plant 600 million seedlings in a single day, Prime Minister Abiy highlighted the importance of togetherness among Ethiopians saying that there is nothing that we can't achieve if we stand together.

"Let us come out and leave our legacy throughout Ethiopia with one spirit. If we are one, we can do more," he remarked.

The Premier also urged adults and teenagers to leave their legacy by planting over 20 and 10 seedlings respectively; thus practically demonstrating their love for their country and their respect for the next generation.

"Ethiopians have been able to achieve great things, especially when they stand together for a common goal, said Government Communication Service State Minister Selamawit Kassa while talking concerning the Green Legacy Initiative and the success Ethiopians achieved so far. "There is no more recent example than the Green Legacy Initiative to achieve this in practice."

"This is something to be proud of as a citizen," she noted.

Emphasizing the significance of the initiative, Selamawit also called on adults to plant over 20 saplings each and teenagers more than 10.

In the preceding rainy season, 2023, Ethiopia planted over 566 million tree seedlings in a single day, surpassing the target of 500 million seedlings in a single day.

So far, as to documents, under this initiative over 32.5 billion plants have been planted in Ethiopia which has so far created more than 1 million jobs and the number of nurseries increased to 145,000 in Ethiopia.

Re-greening Ethiopia...

percent in the 2000s from 35 percent a century earlier. However, following the initiative, it was possible to increase the coverage to 23.6 percent from 17.2.

“Afforestation is the most effective climate change solution to date and with the new record set by Ethiopia, other African nations should move with speed and challenge the status quo,” said Juliette Biao Koudonoukpo, Director of UN Environment’s Africa Office.

“Africa has what it takes to spearhead this global push and as the most affected and vulnerable continent, climate change mitigation must be the topmost priority in the coming days. We, at UN Environment, are taking the lead in helping to build capacity for nations and people to apply themselves to afforestation and climate change mitigation strategies,” she added.

So far, the UN Environment Program is working with countries across the continent to replicate such initiatives to stop deforestation and increase forest cover. This is crucial in honoring African countries’ commitments to mitigate climate change and contribute to the achievement of the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration.

Thus, this year, the country has targeted to

plant over 600 million tree saplings; and today Ethiopians from all walks of life are exerting the utmost energy to achieve success as usual and write history.

Green Legacy Initiative Technical Committee Deputy Chairperson Getachew Gizaw informed local media in relation the preparation made to achieve this ambitious goal. Last year, Ethiopia planted around 566 million tree saplings in a single day, surpassing its target of 500 million.

These years of experience and planning indicate the capacity to plant 600 million saplings in a day. The identification of approximately 7,700 plantation sites and the selection of sapling types have been completed, with experts assigned to report the task from various administrative levels.

The use of technology will play a critical role in overcoming limitations such as inaccurate reporting. A geo-referencing system has been set up to manage and verify reports from each site, ensuring precision. Efforts are being made to match tree species with the local ecology, and sector experts are supporting the process from preparation to planting.

Over 28 million citizens are expected to participate in today’s massive plantation effort. Various strategies are in place to

surpass the previous record, and the use of technology is expected to provide global credibility to the effort.

The Green Legacy Initiative National Technical Committee Secretary Fanose Mekonnen reiterated that after finalizing all the preparations, today the country is planting seedlings, -600 million seedlings in a single day-aiming to break the world record.

The geo-referencing system will significantly showcase Ethiopia’s greenery potential and ensure accurate reporting, which is vital to the country’s goal of building a green and climate-resilient economy.

A priority has been given to planting eco-friendly and climate-resistant seedlings to enhance forestry development. Additionally, beautification saplings have been prepared for metropolitan areas, with a special focus on indigenous species that help conserve soil and water resources.

Ethiopia’s Green Legacy Initiative also aligns with global efforts to restore 15 million hectares of degraded forests and landscapes by 2030. The 46th meeting of the Least Developed Countries Export Group (LEG) recognized Ethiopia’s contribution to global climate change

efforts, particularly through the Green Legacy Initiative. The meeting emphasized integrating gender perspectives into the initiatives and operations of the LEG, with discussions involving representatives from various global organizations aimed at enhancing support for least-developed countries (LDCs).

Recently, Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed revealed that Ethiopia’s forest cover report had increased to 23.6 percent by 2023 from 17.2 percent in 2019. The Prime Minister also noted the importance of the need to continue building on this progress to increase forest coverage.

The Prime Minister tweeted that “our goal for this year is to reach 40 billion seedlings from our overall target of 50 billion, which means we need to collectively plant 7.5 billion seedlings this planting cycle.”

“For anyone who wants to leave a legacy for future generations, we must invest in the future today,” he added.

In sum, the annual tree plantation progress in Ethiopia ensures combating the worsening climate change impact on the Earth. No one should left behind this golden initiative to guarantee future generations and nature’s survival and make history by breaking the world record.

Bunna with Sweta: A Glimpse into Harnessing Insights and Inspiring Each Other for Africa’s Transformation

BY MALANG B.S. BOJANG

Brainstorming sessions are powerful tools for generating innovative ideas and solutions in policymaking and development initiatives. It is a creative endeavor, best done informally and without the baggage of meeting agendas and minutes as one tends to see in large institutions. I was recently invited to attend the weekly event (Bunna with Sweta - Inspiring each other) hosted by the Gender, Poverty and Social Policy Division (GPSPD) of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), which has garnered attention for its effectiveness and outcomes. This informal brainstorming exercise over coffee - bunna in Amharic - tackles a range of research topics and projects of interest to the Division.

The GPSPD’s informal brainstorming exercise highlighted critical issues and set a precedent for how such processes can be conducted to maximize impact and inclusivity. The staff, led by the GPSPD Director, Sweta Saxena took on the challenge to discuss pressing issues related to gender equality, poverty alleviation, and social policy within the African context. The GPSPD aimed to uncover nuanced insights and devise actionable strategies by fostering an environment where different perspectives could converge. The success of the informal brainstorming exercise offers valuable lessons for other Divisions within ECA and beyond.

Setting the Stage

One of the standout features of the exercise was the deliberate dispensing with hierarchy and the inclusion of diverse voices from the staff of various sections within GPSPD. This diversity ensured that discussions were enriched by a wide range of experiences and expertise, offering holistic viewpoints on complex issues the Division is currently working on. It’s not just another meeting. It’s all done around Coffee.

Recognizing that social issues are interconnected and multifaceted, the brainstorming sessions explored the intersectionality of gender, poverty, and social policies. The Division could propose more comprehensive and targeted interventions by examining how these factors intersect and affect different populations. In addition, the brainstorming exercise was firmly rooted in data and evidence-based research as this deepens insights. Various sections within GPSPD took turns to present findings from recent studies and analyses, providing a solid foundation for discussions and recommendations. This emphasis on empirical data strengthened the insights’ credibility and underscored the importance of informed decision-making in policy formulation.

Throughout the exercise, there was a strong commitment to inclusivity and representation. Efforts were made to ensure that voices from different sections, both the Professional and

General Services staff members, were not just heard, but valued and respected. This inclusive approach not only enriched the discussions but also fostered a sense of ownership in divisional work, making each participant feel valued and respected.

Lessons for the UN system

The success of the Gender, Poverty and Social Policy Division’s brainstorming sessions offers valuable lessons for other Divisions within ECA and beyond.

1. This informal brainstorming exercise seeks diverse perspectives and expertise to foster comprehensive and inclusive discussions.
2. It recognizes the interconnected nature of social issues and explores how they intersect to develop more holistic solutions to contemporary problems.
3. Discussions and recommendations are not just based on solid empirical evidence but are the very foundation of their work, enhancing credibility and effectiveness and instilling confidence in decisions. They also create environments encouraging creativity and innovation, allowing for the exploration of new ideas and approaches.
4. It makes—deliberate and concerted efforts to include voices from all segments of the Division, making everyone feel valued and integral to the process.

By leveraging diversity, data-driven

insights, and a commitment to inclusivity, the Division identified key challenges and proposed actionable solutions that could drive meaningful change. In my one year as an ECA fellow, I have benefited from informal gatherings and discussions which yield ideas and inspiration. They say business decisions are made over rounds of Golf. As other Divisions within ECA and the UN system at large seek to address complex socio-economic issues, they can draw inspiration from this exercise to conduct more impactful and insightful brainstorming sessions. And how better to infuse the coming together of ideas than the aroma of a simple cup of coffee.

In essence, the GPSPD’s initiative demonstrates that effective policymaking begins with collaborative and inclusive dialogue that embraces diversity, values evidence, and fosters innovation. By learning from these principles, we can collectively strive towards more equitable and sustainable development outcomes. And given the cultural relevance of coming together to mull decisions over coffee in Ethiopia, my Bunna with Sweta could not have been more inspiring.

Malang B. S. BOJANG, Ph.D. is an outgoing Research Fellow at the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa. He researches e-Government in developing countries, public value management, democracy and good governance, and public sector reforms.

Source: UNECA



This is Ethiopia

Re-greening Ethiopia via Green Legacy Initiative

BY TEWODROS KASSA

Trees provide many ecosystem services and environmental benefits for the planet as a whole. As they grow, they absorb and store carbon dioxide—a major driver of global heating. In a scientific paper published in Science magazine, researchers estimate that a worldwide tree planting program could remove two-thirds of all the emissions that have been pumped into the atmosphere as a result of human activities.

Researchers found that tree restoration was among the most effective strategies for climate change mitigation. They show that the global potential tree coverage stands at 4.4 billion hectares of canopy under the current climate. Planting trees is therefore considered the biggest and cheapest way to tackle the climate crisis.

Ethiopia has witnessed tangible progress in reforestation following the annual green legacy initiative launched by Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (PhD). The initiative has been an outstanding achievement in massive tree-planting efforts since 2019.

Accordingly, more than 350 million trees



The new generation's participation in the tree plantation

were planted throughout the country in a single day. This year, the tree plantation is set to double this amount. The government has set a plan to plant 600 million tree saplings in a single day, as part of the Green Legacy Initiative.

According to the UN World Environment Program, Ethiopia launched a historic tree planting campaign in 2019 where over 350 million trees were planted in an ambitious move to counter the effects of deforestation and climate change.

Moreover, the initiative aims to tackle the effects of deforestation and climate change in the country. The United Nations estimates that Ethiopia's forest coverage has declined drastically to a low of just 4

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EEP builds efficient power system

BY MENGISTEAB TESHOME

The technology advancement in every section is transforming how to manage duties and activities saving time and energy with improved reliability. This is improving the service ensuring safety enhancing efficiency in electric power production and utilization.

Off late, groups of journalists have been in tour to Electric substations found in Central Ethiopia State Bu'ii, Werabe, Buttajira and Hossana towns. Power Station Heads and operation technicians told the media that the Ethiopia Electric Power (EEP) is striving to supply efficient power through advanced technology to the community to support the nation's power consumption.

Responding to the use of smart meters, Buttajira Power Substation Head, Mulugeta Alem said: "I have been serving here and working for last thirty three years, through these entire journeys of EEP has shown great technology advancement and now we have reached to use smart meters and many others."

He noted that EEP was measuring power supply simply in arbitrary arithmetic ration but now changed to use Smart meters. "We

provide the power to Ethiopian Utility Service through smart meter; the device puts the accurate power consumption. The Smart meter has helped to save power and to let EEP get paid with power reader intervention."

He said that the device helped in analyzing their energy usage patterns, consumers can identify areas where they can reduce consumption. This might involve switching to energy-efficient appliances, optimizing heating and cooling systems, or shifting energy-intensive activities to off-peak hours.

It can also send alerts when energy consumption exceeds a predetermined threshold, prompting users to take action and reduce their energy usage.

Utilities can use smart meters to implement time-of-use pricing, charging different rates for electricity depending on the time of day. This incentivizes consumers to shift their energy consumption to off-peak hours when demand is lower, reducing overall energy consumption and grid strain.

Real-time data from smart meters allows utilities to better manage the grid, identify potential outages, and respond more effectively to emergencies.

By understanding consumption patterns, utilities can optimize their operations, reduce energy losses, and minimize the need for costly infrastructure upgrades.

Smart meters enable utilities to provide more personalized customer service, offering tailored energy-saving tips and addressing customer concerns more efficiently.

Smart meters are an essential tool for creating a more efficient and sustainable energy system. By providing real-time data and enabling informed decision-making, they empower both consumers and utilities to reduce energy consumption, optimize grid operations, and contribute to a cleaner and more sustainable future.

Likewise, Hossana Power Substation Head, Mahder Gebremeskel, for her part said that the station has new built facility with smart meter it helped us to know exactly the amount of power we provide to the utility.

She further noted that Ethiopia Electric Power is revolutionizing the way we consume and manage electricity. These sophisticated devices go beyond simply measuring energy usage; they provide real-time data, enabling both consumers and utilities to make informed decisions about energy consumption and

optimize efficiency.

Similarly, Werabe Power Substation Technician, Mahlet Getachew said that the sub-station is new substation with state of the art technology; it has helped us to control incoming and outgoing power.

Equally, Bu'ii Power Substation Operation Technician, Ayisheshum Abera, for his part the substation has got fitted the technology and each power flow is recorded with the intervention of power reader individuals.

He said that Smart meters are digital devices that communicate wirelessly with a central system. They continuously monitor electricity usage and send this data back to the utility company. This data can be accessed by consumers through online portals or mobile apps, providing them with a detailed breakdown of their energy consumption patterns.

He further noted that smart meters have empowered consumers to take control of their energy usage and implement strategies for saving power. "In our context it is simple seeing how much energy is being used in real-time."