

# UN pledges to support MWE's efforts in restoring wetlands depleted by refugees

The United Nations High Commission for Refugees has pledged to scale up efforts by the Ministry of Water and Environment to restore degraded wetlands in refugee host communities.

While delivering his closing remarks at the Water and Environment Joint Sector Review on Thursday afternoon, Mr. Joel Boutroue, the UNHCR Uganda Country Representative commended the Ministry for establishment of a Refugee Response Sub-Group.

He also applauded the subgroups progress on last year's undertaking to develop a costed Water and Environment Response Plan in the context of the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework to catalyze the shift from humanitarian aid to longer-term development solutions.

"We resolve together with the sector under the Ministry's leadership to continue to scale-up restoration of degraded hotspots in refugee and host communities using a catchment-based approach as articulated in the latest proposed undertaking," Mr Boutroue said.

He added that partners in the refugee response have prioritized action on environment in 2019 by increasing quotas for sustainably sourced construction poles for new arrivals, engaging refugee and host communities to plant and maintain more than 2000

hectares of trees through cash for work.

Mr. Boutroue noted that Development Partners have increased access of more than 11,000 households to energy-saving stoves.

Reflecting on this year's Joint Sector Review with the theme "The role of Water and Environment in the industrialization and wealth creation agenda of Uganda," Mr Boutroue on behalf of Development Partners echoed Minister Mary Gorette Kitutu's opening remarks, highlighting that domestic consumption and export relies on sustainable natural resource management.

"We support her aspiration to see mainstreaming of the Sustainable Development Goals in the coming third National Development Plan," he said.

"We note that sustainable development is defined as development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. While we have been deliberating here in Kampala, the UN General Assembly has also convened in New York where youth from around the world have spoken clearly: the time for action on environment & climate change is now."

*By MWE COMMUNICATIONS UNIT*

Mr. Joel Boutroue, the UNHCR Uganda Country Representative.



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