

## Young people express commitment towards environmental protection

**Accra, 9 June 2020** - Young people have resolved to be more zealous and committed towards the protection of the environment to avert the current climate crisis, especially in this decade of action for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). They made this known at a virtual dialogue organized by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in Ghana on Twitter to mark this year's World Environment Day on the theme: ***"Time with Nature - Role of Young People in Protecting the Environment."***

Commenting at the dialogue, Mr. Daniel Odoi, a youth and President of Rotaract Club, University of Cape Coast, indicated that, the youth have a unique opportunity to play a more active role in climate action and environmental sustainability through volunteerism. He therefore challenged all young people to explore various ways to effectively play this role. ***"Youth actions matter in safeguarding the natural ecology against climate change. Through volunteerism, the youth can get involved by joining groups to undertake actions to mitigate the effects of climate change"***, he said.

Participants also noted that the innovation and creativity of young people can influence the quest to achieve a safer environment and urged their peers to get actively involved in addressing environmental issues. ***"Through innovation, we are uniquely positioned to provide solutions to some of the basic things that affect our environment. Therefore, let us avail our innovative ideas to governments and development partners to facilitate environmental actions on the grounds"***, suggested Mr. Andrew Akoto, a youth leader.

The dialogue further identified actions such as venturing into green businesses, advocacy, waste resource recovery including recycling to promote circular economy; green blogging, awareness creation, tree planting, increased interest and youth self-sensitization on environmental issues, as well as clean up exercises as some of the roles young people must play to contribute to the protection of the environment.

In terms of actions from leaders, the youth demanded an effective implementation of environment and climate policies including the [Paris Agreement](#) to ensure the sustainability of the planet. ***"Global partnership is key to winning this fight. So, countries must show greater climate commitments; develop higher carbon pollution standards, low carbon development strategies with greater ambitions to limit increase in greenhouse gases and improve energy efficiency to ensure a future of zero emissions,"*** stated Mr. Lartey Isaac Atiemo of the Right to Lead Organization.

The youth also identified more investments in climate education and research; strict environmental laws and regulations; adoption of green bonds; youth engagements on climate actions, and implementation of countries' Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) as critical to having a monumental influence for the climate action agenda.

On its part, UNDP revealed that it has been providing thought leadership in environmental protection, championing climate mitigation and adaptation initiatives in many countries including Ghana. Currently, with support from Adaptation Fund and the Ministry of Environment, Science, Technology and Innovation (MESTI), UNDP is supporting over 50 communities with climate adaptation [interventions](#). UNDP with the support of the Government of Germany, Spain and the European Union, has been collaborating with

Government of Ghana to implement the [NDCs](#) as part of Government's commitment under the Paris Agreement. In addition, during this COVID-19 pandemic, UNDP is supporting about 800 hospitals to manage [medical waste](#) more effectively through monitoring and on-site training. In the area of biodiversity protection, UNDP and the Ghana Cocoa Board (COCOBOD), in partnership with Mondelēz International, have promoted environmentally friendly cocoa production practices with over 40,000 farmers.

World Environment Day is marked on 5<sup>th</sup> June every year to highlight the key issues affecting the environment, and to mobilize actions at local and international levels to address challenges facing the environment. The UNDP Twitter Chat had about 100 youth participants, who pledged their support to the fight against environmental degradation and climate change.

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***For media enquiry, please contact:***

**UNDP:** on: +233- 501323566 or email the following Communications Specialists:

[praise.nutakor@undp.org](mailto:praise.nutakor@undp.org) / [priscilla.m.ajeidu@undp.org](mailto:priscilla.m.ajeidu@undp.org)

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