

Re-greening for food security, tackling climate change

BY BELETU BULBULA

ADDIS ABABA - The Ministry of Agriculture said that the government of Ethiopia has already recognized climate change as a growing threat to the effort to reduce poverty, sustain economic growth and social transformation.

Speaking at the 4th National Earth Day workshop held at the Ghion Hotel yesterday, State Minister Sileshi Getahun said that the country's development plans recognize climate change both as a threat and opportunity so as to act on its adaptation and mitigation issues.

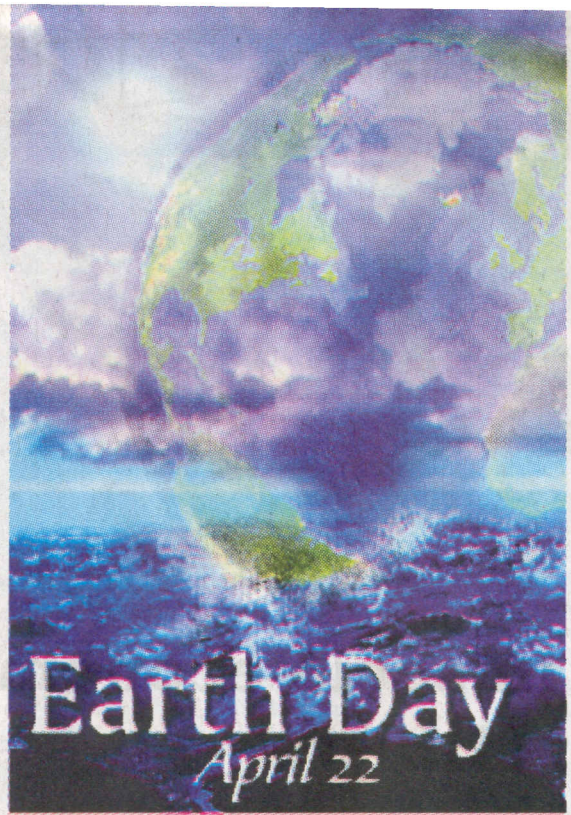
According to Sileshi, moving from policy to practical action, numerous initiatives are being led by the appropriate Federal ministries, agencies, institutions and state offices and their partners.

He further indicated that more directed at addressing climate change, the country has previously prepared a national programme of adaptation to climate change (EPACC), which adapts and replaces its National Adaptation Programme of Action (NAPA) formulated and submitted to the UNFCCC in 2007.

Sileshi also said: "Hence, celebrating the Earth Day at national level has most important implication for Ethiopia—a nation in the process of massive land management programme to secure soil, water, biodiversity and implementing other related activities as component of climate smart agriculture for subsequent increase in agricultural production."

The celebration is to mean about planning and agreeing on practical actions for re-greening the earth for food security, adaptation to climate change and poverty reduction, he added.

Dr. Girma Balcha from Climate Change Forum-Ethiopia on his part said that studies indicate that Ethiopia is one of most vulnerable countries to climate change in sub-Saharan countries, and mentioned that areas like agriculture and food security, water resources, energy, health, ecosystem and



biodiversity are of particular concern. Ecosystem degradation, habitat fragmentation and subsequent loss of massive biological resources pose threats to life on earth in general, he added.

"Thus, the celebration of this year's Earth Day starts with the national workshop to liken the undertaking of the government, civil societies, academia, researchers and the communities at large in re-greening initiatives."

He also added that the workshop would identify a platform to strengthen and scale-up best practices of integrated rehabilitation and re-greening programmes in different parts of the country to help implement the nation's plan to re-green considerable areas of land.

Dr. Araya Asfaw Director General of Horn Africa Regional Environment Centre/Network also indicated that the government of Ethiopia has developed Climate Resilience Green Economy Strategy and set milestones." Clean energy

Re-greening for...

development is at the forefront," he added.

He further stated that the government has targeted to achieving food security by increasing agricultural production and productivity and to reforesting 15 million hectares of degraded land which seem contradictory since agriculture expansion has been considered the major driver of deforestation and land degradation. Hence, the theme of the Earth Day celebration: "Re-greening for Food Security, Adaptation to Climate Change and Poverty Reduction", therefore would make sense which is in line with the nation's climate Resilience Green Economy Strategy, Dr. Araya added.

Mother Earth Day has celebrated for 42nd at international level while Ethiopia has celebrated the day for 4th time with the aim of rising the awareness of the community on the overindulgence exploitation that the Mother Earth is currently facing.
