

Bereket stresses need for enhancing soil, water conservation to protect Grand Dam from silt

MAKALLE (ENA) - Government Communication Affairs Office Minister Bereket Simon stressed the need for further enhancing soil and water conservation with a view to protecting the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam from silt and sediment.

He made the remark at a relevant meeting held here yesterday to discuss a document on Integrated Basin Development Project prepared by the Public Consultative Forum of Ethiopia on Peace Development and Democracy.

Bereket, who is also Secretary of the National Council for the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam Project, said that soil and water conservation and natural resource protection should be carried out in Amhara, Oromia and Benshangul-Gumuz states towards the same goal.

The Minister said state governments have been undertaking natural resource conservation before the launching of the construction of the Dam as per the government's Agricultural Development and Natural Resource Protection Policy and Strategy.

Soil erosion has been prevented in many rural areas as the states carried out construction of terraces and forest development with participation of the public as part of implementation of the policy and strategy.

Bereket said the Council has passed decision to further strengthen natural resource conservation and expand experiences of the states during the coming

five years to protect the Dam from silt.

Agriculture State Minister Sileshi Getahun on his part said studies confirmed that natural resource conservation activities carried out with the participation of the public are successful and sustainable. Sileshi said natural resource conservation helps to increase productivity, ensure food security and speed up rural development as it is being carried out taking into consideration landscape.

He said the government is carrying out various activities to strengthen natural resource conservation with the participation of the public towards success of the five-year Growth and Transformation Plan.

Forum Chairperson Eng. Getahun Hussein also said the document will be an input for researchers and institutions conducting researches on natural resources. It will also enable to fill gaps in natural resource management and utilization, he added.

Over 12 billion birr budget is required to implement the Integrated Basin Development Project.

Ministers, senior government officials and members of the Council took part in the forum.

The Forum was established in 2007 to develop the culture of dialogue between citizens and the government in addressing mutual concerns, needs, wisdoms, aspirations, challenges and opportunities using the development of democracy in the country. It is not affiliated to any political party or religious persuasions.



Bereket Simon

The objective of the forum is to contribute to the positive evolution of the multi-faceted development initiatives of the country.

It also aims to serve as a bridge between the public and government and foster strategic partnership with the community in order to enable policy and Implementation directions that reflect

public wishes, preferences and priorities, among others.

The Dam, which is being constructed in Guba Woreda of the Benshangul-Gumuz State, will have a capacity to generate 6000MW.

Ethiopia funds the construction of the dam whose cornerstone was laid by Prime Minister Meles Zenawi April 2, 2011.