

Environment

Stakeholders decry depletion of forests, biodiversity losses

By Cornelius Essen, Abuja

22 August 2022 | 2:08 am



[FILE PHOTO] Forest

Stakeholders have expressed dismay over the massive depletion of forests, loss of biodiversity and other environmental, as well as social factors that have left negative tolls on both terrestrial and aquatic systems.

They spoke at the National Council on Environment in Abuja, saying, all these have terrible consequences on the planet and humans, adding they are already causing debilitating effects of climate change.



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Minister of Environment, Mohammed Abdullahi, stated that the impact of global warming occasioned by deforestation, desertification, COVID-19 pandemic and naturally occurring emergencies have exacerbated it in recent years.

Abdullahi said: “We are persuaded by the reality of the imperatives to pursue a low carbon emission trajectory as an indispensable option to preserve the health of the planet as we journey to net zero emission.”

He argued that Nigeria’s forest ecosystems exist within a context in which the ripple effects of population and economic growth in the country drive the rapid and massive depletion of forests at a fast rate.

“We will leverage on our strong partnership with the Federal Ministry of Agriculture to ensure implementation and, if necessary, redesigning of agricultural policies and programmes to incentivise sustainable and climate-smart agriculture, promote food security, and benefit the environment.”

Country Representative, United Nations Industrial Organisation (UNIDO), Dr. Jean Bakale, observed that net zero emissions status has become the new ambition of every developed, developing and forward-thinking country in the world.

“We will not fail to provide every necessary support required to ensure a successful journey to zero-emission, while we all live in harmony with nature and brighter hope of sustainable development.

“Today, sea levels are rising with frequent flooding that is destroying lives and properties worth several millions of dollars, global temperature is rising and wildfires are rampant, food security is greatly affected,” Bakale added.

Similarly, he stated that UNIDO is recommitting to supporting Nigeria in promoting inclusive sustainable industrial development and achieving a green and sustainable national development.

FAO Country Representative to Nigeria, Fred Kafeero, noted that current Nigeria’s Country Programming Framework (CPF), which guided them to support the government and other stakeholders, would come to an end in December 2022.

He stated that they would support the Ministry of Environment in mobilising resources from the global climate finance institutions, the Global Environment Facility (GEF), the Adaptation Funds and the UK PACT programme) to support the implementation of the Nigeria Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs).

According to him, “we will strengthen capacities of government counterparts to better respond to climate change challenges including the ability to generate, collect, analyse and utilise data and information for climate action.”

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