

## MINISTERIAL DIALOGUE ON THE GREAT GREEN WALL

VP Kevin Kariuki

I would like, first, to thank you for your kind invitation and the honor thus extended to the African Development Bank to participate in this Virtual Ministerial Conference on the Great Green Wall. Allow me to also extend my congratulations to the Pan-African Agency of the Great Green Wall (APGMV) and its eleven member countries on the laudable efforts with regard to the Great Green Wall Initiative. Let me also express my huge appreciation to UNCCD for spearheading this process.

*The GGW implementation status and way ahead to 2030 report* has highlighted the huge progress being made on the Great Green Wall. Millions of hectares of land have been restored, thousands of jobs created, and livelihoods and dignity of millions of people have been enhanced in the Sahel through diversification of economic activities and revenue regeneration. We need now to scale up.

**With regard to the subject of today's meeting, let me first note that The African Development Bank's vision for the Sahel aligns strongly with that of the Great Green Wall initiative.**

- Since 2015, The African Development Bank has been a part of the Great Green Wall and intends to reaffirm its commitment to continue to support this bold and transformative programme. **The Bank's vision for the Sahel** is that of green growth and prosperity based on clean, reliable and affordable energy systems, the restoration of degraded ecosystems and land, and agriculture that is resilient in the face of climate change. This approach fits perfectly with the Ten-Year Strategy of the African Development Bank Group, the High 5s, the Bank's Climate Change and Green Growth Action Plans, and includes commitment to mobilize \$25 billion for climate finance by 2025.

### **Building on existing initiatives and scale up**

- As shown in the GGW Status report, examples of success stories abound from restoring land for food and energy to generating income for local communities. However, the challenge is huge as we need to at least quadruple our efforts over the next decade in order to meet the Great Green Wall's goal of restoring 100 million hectares of land and creating 10 million green jobs.
- The Bank has a long-standing support program for the Sahel region and the Horn of Africa. Over the past decade, the Bank has supported investments of over US\$ 2 billion in the Sahel region.
- In this regard, please allow me to highlight some of the **Bank's significant investments which can serve as a lever for an accelerated and large-scale implementation of the Great Green Wall.**
  - The first is the **Desert to Power program**. Estimated to cost **about \$20 billion** to actualize, this is an important and transformational initiative of the Bank, with high-level

commitment from the Heads of States, in particular the Sahel G5 countries. By building 10GW of new solar generation capacity in the Sahel Region and providing clean electricity for up to 250 million people across the 11 Sahelian countries, the Desert to Power Programme will enable countries in the region to achieve the SDGs, and to meet their mitigation and adaptation targets in line with their commitments both under for the NDC and the Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN) targets.

Specifically, the Dessert to Power Initiative strongly complements GGWI, and enhances the sustainability, and indeed its continued viability. This is because power from Desert to Power initiative minimizes the chances of trees planted as part of the great green wall being used as fuelwood.

- The Bank is supporting the **Sahel Commission's** Investment Plan and Priority Action Program (2018-2030) and has pledged **\$1.3 billion, out of the total 3.41 billion pledged**, towards this cause
- Further, the AfDB is supporting the Sahel countries in mobilizing an US\$ 500 million to finance 2 (two) Regional Programs – one in the Sahel (**Program for Building Resilience to Food and Nutrition Insecurity in the Sahel**) in partnership with the Global Mechanism of the UNCCD, and the second in the Horn of Africa to strengthen resilience and agricultural value chain development.
- **The Lake Chad Basin Program:** The Bank has committed **USD 100 million** to support the Lake Chad Rehabilitation program.
- **The Bank is implementing the Africa Climate-smart Agriculture (CSA)** Programme with an approximate budget of **USD 2.7 billion**. The overarching objective is to enhance the adaptive capacity of 5 million vulnerable farmers by building resilient water harvesting and irrigation infrastructure, promoting CSA practices among both farmers and enterprises in the Sahel.
- **Strengthening Regional Climate Centres:** The ClimDev-Africa Special Fund hosted by the Bank with support from the European Union- African Caribbean and Pacific (EU-ACP) Programme is strengthening the capacities of the Agro Meteorology and Hydrology Regional Centre (AGRHYMET) and the continental African Centre of Meteorological Application for Development (ACMAD) both in Niger in climate disaster risk management for the Sahel region and the continent.
- Several ongoing programs initiated by the Bank in the Sahel on the **development of value chains** and the promotion of youth employment including the **Youth in Africa (JfYA) Strategy** (2016-2025) which aims to create 25 million jobs for African youth over the next decade have also the potential to ensure that youth and women play a key role in driving GGWI 's inclusive growth and transformation agenda forward.

All these programmes speak to the ambition of the GGW **to scale up action across sectors and promote a structured approach to mobilizing finance**. In these regards, we need to avoid duplication and make use of existing resources and to leverage additional financing.

- **Overall, I am pleased to announce that the African Development Bank** intends to invest over **US\$ 4 billion in the Sahel in the next 5 years** – US\$ 3 billion in the water and sanitation sector and another US\$ 1 billion in the agriculture sector

### **Way forward**

Finally, building on the lessons learned from the GGW implementation, The Bank is committed to:

1. Supporting the GGW through regional **members states' allocations (AfDB and ADF financing)** and to **mobilize climate finance** at scale. This is also in line with our policy commitments to support ADF countries on biodiversity conservation and on combatting desertification.
2. Working closely with the eleven member countries and the interested technical and financial partners for a **definition of a programmatic approach to GGW projects** to be co-financed by the Bank, the GCF, GEF, etc.
3. Continuing the **technical dialogue initiated with the Pan-African Agency of the Great Green Wall (APGMV)** to facilitate the development and financing of bankable multi-sectorial projects (energy, water, agriculture, land restoration, climate change adaptation and disaster risk management), using the full spectrum innovative financing options and mechanisms available.

In conclusion, I would like to reiterate the following:

- The African Development Bank stands ready to scale up effort in liaison with our Regional Member Countries and other development institutions to build on the significant progress made and the support provided over the years for the GGW.
- Bold actions and innovative financing mechanisms are needed to unlock the investments needed for the Sahel. The Bank remains fully committed to the initiatives in the Sahel and will ensure that its investments priorities continue to be aligned with the objectives of the GGW.
- I also reaffirm the bank's commitment to strengthen our collaboration with the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), the Pan-African Agency of the Great Green Wall (APGMV) and all the stakeholders to deliver together a transformative program based on the added value and comparative advantage of each partner.