

VIRTUAL MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE ON THE GREAT GREEN WALL COUNTRIES

MONDAY, SEPT. 7, 2020 | 9:00-11:00 A.M (DC TIME)

TALKING POINTS

901 words (about 7 minutes)

Good afternoon and good morning Excellencies, partners and colleagues.

I also would like to salute Ms. Amina J. Mohammed, Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations and Her Excellency Mrs. Josefa Leonel Correia Sacko, Commissioner for Rural Economy and Agriculture. African Union Commission

It is an honor to be part of this meeting gathering countries and partners who are renewing their commitment to the Great Green Wall, an initiative about hope, change and opportunities.

**On behalf of the World Bank Group which also include the IFC- International Financial Corporation, the private arm of the World Bank group, I would like to congratulate the UNCCD** on the launch of an excellent report that captures achievements to date but also challenges we need to overcome to reach our objectives by 2030.

It is a pleasure to talk about how the World Bank Group is contributing to this initiative. Much has been done, but larger scale impact is required to strengthen the resilience of communities and landscapes. That is why in the context of IDA 19, going from now to 2023, the World Bank is scaling up its engagement in the Sahel, leveraging its strong partnerships with client countries and global partners.

Let me first highlight why the World Bank is strongly engaged in this agenda:

- **Land degradation, the impact of climate change and poverty are inextricably linked.** This is more acute in the Sahelo-Saharan States, where millions of livelihoods are impacted.
- **Climate change is diminishing the availability of land for production or grazing,** affecting the availability of water and increasing floods and droughts.
- **Environmental degradation is testing the “carrying capacity” of the land to the limit.** And all of this is exacerbated by **unprecedented levels of population growth,** along with a **rise of temperatures that is 1.5 times faster** than the global average.
- Added to this are ethnic tensions, pastoralist rights issues, poorly defined land tenure and challenges posed by migration - by 2050, **83 million people could be forced to move** within their countries to escape the impacts of climate change.

Stepping up efforts is not easy, but the World Bank is firmly committed.

### **What has the World Bank Group done so far?**

**Between 2012 and 2020** the World Bank has led the *Sahel and West Africa Program in Support of the Great Green Wall* (also known as **SAWAP**). The Program included \$70 million of GEF resources on top of \$1.25 billion IDA resources. It has brought **1.5 million hectares of land under sustainable land management** and reached over **17 million beneficiaries** across **9 member countries** of the Great Green Wall. **Ethiopia** has been a top performer: it has used a highly decentralized and participatory process to address the root-causes of land degradation.

## **Many lessons were learned from the SAWAP experience:**

- 1. We need to scale up agroforestry practices** to improve soil fertility, provide fodder for livestock and improve *micro-climate*. The 2011 **drought in Niger** showed that districts with the highest on-farm tree densities produced more grain than others.
- 2. We need to scale up water harvesting techniques** to collect and concentrate runoff on cultivated areas. In **Burkina's Central Plateau**, this led to significant groundwater recharge and rise in shallow aquifers and water levels in wells, allowing the creation of vegetable gardens around wells.
- 3. We need to strengthen land tenure security**, a necessary condition to encourage land-users to sustainably manage their lands. Ethiopia, our top performer, has dedicated \$7.6 million to Rural Land Administration and Certification, allowing 360,000 households to receive land certificates.
- 4. Finally, we need to make sure that future land restoration projects are geo-referenced from the beginning** to allow easier monitoring.

Beyond the SAWAP program, the **World Bank Group including the IFC has invested about \$15 billion** in various programs that strengthen the resilience of ecosystems and livelihoods in GGW countries, including about 0.8 billion of IFC investment for small and medium scale enterprises and women-owned firms.

### **What are our plans to scale up our investment?**

The Sahel, Lake Chad, and Horn of Africa remain priority areas under **IDA 19**. Projects amounting to over \$4 billion are under preparation in Great Green Wall countries. These cover a mosaic of interventions in agriculture, livestock,

community development, food security, renewable energy, and landscape management.

One of them is a multiphase **Food System Resilience Program** covering West Africa with a proposed budget of 1.2 billion. COVID-19 came on the heels of an already existing food security and has significantly reduced the poor's incomes. This project aims to bring change for the 17 million people in need of food assistance in the Sahel.

The **Emergency Locust Response Program** is delivering US\$500 million to multiple countries including Ethiopia and Djibouti and more operations are under way in countries like Chad.

We have recently launched PROGREEN, a \$200 million fund dedicated to boosting countries' efforts. **I am pleased to inform you that PROGREEN has already dedicated \$13.2 million in grants to five (5) countries of the GGW** and more applications are under preparation.

Looking forward, our "Next Generation Africa Climate Business Plan" will support countries scale up climate resilience, increase energy access and bring innovative approaches to leapfrog into greener development pathways.

The **World Bank Group is committed to staying engaged**. We are here today to support countries expand their efforts towards sustainable development and build resilient livelihoods.

But to get there, we need to restore land, create employment, reduce fragility and conflict, tackle migration, and increase climate resilience and food security.

We also need to step up support to agriculture, agribusiness, digital connectivity, energy and infrastructure to create jobs and economic opportunities.

Let us join forces and make the Great Green Wall a **reality**.