

PRESS RELEASE



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Somalia takes further steps to meet global climate convention targets with new UNDP and GEF supported initiative

Mogadishu, 14 November 2018. The Government of Somalia has launched a new initiative to meet its obligations under three key international conventions on climate change, biodiversity and desertification, which were agreed to during the 1992 Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro. Somalia signed on to these conventions, known as the Rio Conventions, as part of a series of environmental protection policy steps.

The new project will support the Somali Government's ability to improve inter-governmental, state, and regional cooperation to meet the targets of the conventions in alignment with the Government's National Development Plan. It is based on a national assessment carried out by the Government in 2016, and is supported by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Global Environment Facility (GEF). It will use a learning-by-doing approach to ensure global environment objectives are met.

The initiative was launched in Mogadishu at a meeting attended by Somali Federal and State government experts and officials, and UN representatives. The Director General of the Office of the Environment of the Prime Minister, Abdirizak Mohamud, said the project was a pivotal one for the country. "As a result of the prolonged civil war in this country, we do not yet have the full capacity to address the impact of climate change. This project is important for Somalia and we are committed to building our capacity and implementing it at both federal and state levels," he said.

UNDP Country Director George Conway said the project was at the centre of UN support on climate issues. "2.2 million people have been displaced by drought and other climate shocks, as well as by conflict, in Somalia, and desertification and land degradation are being exacerbated by charcoal production and over-grazing across the country."

Mr. Conway added that "this particular project is intended to sit in the middle of other projects that are addressing such challenges. It will help drive these initiatives forward at the federal, state, and district levels, and to support Somalia's capacity to live up to its obligations under the Rio Conventions."

Mr. Tom Twining-Ward, UNDP's global technical advisor on capacity development, who had travelled to the meeting from the UN development agency's regional hub in Istanbul, also highlighted the strategic nature of the initiative for Somalia. "This will provide the framework, the foundation for other projects to be successful. The contribution from the Global Environmental Facility to this project is one of the highest in the Arab region and there is a lot of positive expectation from the donor community at large for this project," he said.

The initiative is being carried out under the Somali Government's National Development Plan and in alignment with the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals, in particular Goals 14 and 15 for improving life on land and water, Goal 7 on clean and affordable energy, and Goal 13 on climate action. UNDP works to support the Government on this initiative under its climate change and resilience portfolio, with additional financing from the Global Environment Facility.

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