

# Stanbic Bank joins Government for collective action on protecting environment

KAMPALA: Stanbic Bank Uganda has joined the Ministry of Water and Environment and other partners to mark Earth Day, with a renewed call for collective action to address climate change and restore the country's degraded ecosystems.

Speaking during the event held at the Ministry headquarters in Kampala, Tunde Thorpe, Executive Head of Business and Commercial Banking at Stanbic Bank, said environmental protection must go beyond awareness and translate into sustained action.

"This is not just about marking a day on the calendar. It is about taking responsibility as individuals, institutions, and corporate to safeguard our environment for future generations," Thorpe said. He said this year's Earth Day theme, "Our Power, Our Planet," underscores the urgency of accelerating the transition to renewable energy, with a global target of tripling clean electricity use by 2030.

Thorpe reiterated that Stanbic's commitment to sustainability is anchored in its purpose: "Uganda is our home, we drive her growth." He said, "Growth cannot come at the expense of the environment. It must be sustainable and inclusive because business-as-usual is no longer viable," he said, Thorpe said the bank continues to finance climate-smart solutions such as renewable energy, sustainable agriculture, and fisheries.

This is part of the events leading to the launch of Stanbic's Blue Roots Campaign, an initiative across the Standard Bank Group footprint aimed at planting one million trees for its Business and Commercial Banking customers across Africa.

He said the campaign aligns with the bank's Positive Impact Agenda, which focuses on



**Diana Ondoga Stanbic Bank Uganda, Manager Corporate Social Investment and the Executive Head BCB Tunde Thorpe and with the Ministry of Water and Environment delegation led by Nassuna Catherine**

financial inclusion, job creation, infrastructure development, climate resilience, and corporate philanthropy, with particular emphasis on women, youth, and farmers.

Nassuna Catherine, the undersecretary at the Ministry of Water and Environment, underscored the urgency of sustained action.

"Climate change is no longer a distant threat; it is already affecting our livelihoods through prolonged droughts, floods, and declining agricultural productivity. We must move from commitments to action," Nassuna said.

She said partnerships between the government, the private sector, and communities are essential to achieving Uganda's environmental restoration targets. Nassuna warned that despite some recovery, Uganda's forest cover remains significantly depleted, having declined from over 30% at Independence to about 12% in the 1990s, and currently standing at around 13%.



Diana Ondoga, the Manager Corporate Social Investment echoed this call. "Planting a tree is only the beginning. We must nurture it, protect it, and ensure it grows. This is a shared responsibility, and the time to act is now," she said. With youth making up about 70% of Uganda's population, stakeholders noted growing awareness and engagement among young people, which is expected to drive the adoption of sustainable practices and climate solutions. As part of its ongoing environmental efforts, Stanbic has been distributing approximately

75,000 tree seedlings annually through the Stanbic National Schools Championship in partnership with Roofings Group. This year, the bank plans to scale up its efforts through the establishment of Stanbic Forests, in partnership with the Ministry of Water and Environment and the National Environment Management Authority, targeting the planting of 50,000 trees in designated areas.

The bank is also a corporate member of the Running Out Of Trees (ROOTS) campaign, which is supporting Uganda's national target of planting 200 million trees by December 2026.

**Tunde Thorpe, the Stanbic Bank Executive Head of Business Commercial Banking with Nassuna Catherine, the undersecretary at the Ministry of Water and Environment**