

# Climate Change Here

## Food Insecurity, More Poverty Loom

TEXT & PHOTO  
BY FESTUS POQUIE

Several experts and officials have warned that Liberia is already experiencing the effects of global warming, and that with it come food insecurity and poverty.

Both the Minister of Lands, Mines and Energy, Dr. Eugene Shannon, and the UNDP Country Representative Dominic Sam speaking separately at the launching of the 2007/2008 Human Development Report at the Monrovia City Hall Monday, warned that the country faces dire consequences as the globe heats up.

Dr. Shannon said as a result of the rise in sea level the township of West Point in Monrovia will inevitably be swept away thus urging residents of that part of the

city and other lowland areas to leave in order to avoid the potential danger of climate change

"West Point will go! I am not predicting any evil. I just

there will be no west Point. I'm sorry to say that, but that will happen, the sea will go up and up ward because the place is getting warmer more water and the water is going

He further indicated that climate change has created an irreversible change, which has disrupted the farming season.

"No water in the soil for you



(L-R) ENERGY ADVISOR CHRISTOPHER NEYOR, ENERGY MINISTER SHANNOH, & UNDP COUNTRY REP. DOMINIC SAM

want to present to you scientific facts that one day if people don't move from West Point and the lowland areas, we will get to know that

up. We call that ecstatic behaviour of the sea in simple English, sea level rise. So I hope we understand that," the Energy Minister said.

to grow agriculture products and the desert is coming as far from Tunisia and Algeria.

The wind is blowing, and bringing the desert. Those are the effect of the warming of the earth. When, that happens, agricultural food production becomes blank, poor agriculture productivity. So, agriculture is affected and our people will get poorer"

Dr. Shannon, however, stated the measures must be put in place to reduce the effect of global change. He said Liberians must adapt to the effect of the global climatic change. "The government may not have the mechanism to put into place some thing to reduce the effect but will join international forces in mitigating the effect," he said.

## “CLIMATE CHANGE NOT ABSTRACT; IT’S OBVIOUS”

### -UNDP Boss

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP-Liberia) country director, Dominic Sam, says the impact and effect of climate change in the world over including Liberia is obvious and same is not abstract; Bob Woods reports.

Director Sam in an interview with our reporter yesterday in Monrovia, following the launch of the UNDP Human Development Report 2007-2008, said desertification and changes in weather pattern has and continues to change considerably.

The UNDP Liberia country director, who succeeded outgoing UNDP boss Steve Orsino, explained that issue of climate change should be discussed at various levels and must begin with the Liberian media.

He voiced that the media has a key role to play in driving the sensitization and awareness campaign by bringing the role and discussion of climate change to the height of the civil rights.

Sam said “secondly the media should create the awareness, at the level of each individual and see to it that each action that we have to take, we should bear in mind, what will be the likely impact and effect climate change will have on the environment”.

He said emphasis needs

to be placed on the kind of farming system Liberia have in place and figure out whether they are environment friendly as well as how the citizens, can abide or adhere to environment laws and what can be done by government to enforce the environment laws.

Sam disclosed that climate change poses serious threat to more than one million inhabitants in the world.

The UNDP country director used the occasion and extolled government efforts in trying to uphold the environmental laws.

Currently noted by Sam, the Liberian government is in the process of preparing a poverty reduction strategy, looking at a variety of actions and how they all can relate to each other.

As regard the issue of mitigating erosion, Sam said it is a complicated thing to deal with as it calls for individual action.

He stressed the need for individuals living in areas threatened by erosion or cli-

mate change to begin relocating themselves in different localities considered much safer.

Sam also wants government invest in strategies in a very proactive way, bringing communities together and empowering them, providing funding, adding “this is one sure way to deal with the creeping problem of climate change in a more systematic manner”.

Meanwhile, Dominic Sam said the Human Development Report 2007/2008 puts the people at the height of every discussion and policy, and hoped the discussion will go beyond 2007 to 2012, and put in place financial developing countries for them to adopt and fully implement the strategies.

# THE INFORMER

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## Govt., UN Launch Human Dev. Report

By Kevin S. Tydehson

The Government of Liberia through the Ministry of Lands, Mines & Energy in collaboration with the United Nations yesterday launched

Human Development Report 2007/2008 at the Monrovia City Hall on Tubman Boulevard, Sinkor under the theme: "Fighting Climate Change: Human Solidarity in a Divided World" The launching of the program which

He said that if we care about the future of our children, we must act now. Speaking further Dr. Shannon averred that Liberia must create an insurance against possibly very large losses. He said also that it is cleared that the danger that exists if we do not act now. "We know that the damage caused by emissions is irreversible for a long time. We know that it is growing with every day of inaction." In the long run, Dr. Shannon said, climate change is a massive threat to human development and in some places it is already undermining the international community's efforts to reduce extreme poverty. This development process is increasingly going to be hindered by

climate change. So, we must see the fight against poverty and carbon. He further disclosed that carbon related gases will have to be priced so that using them will reflect their true social cost. This

should be the essence of a mitigation policy. The pricing of carbon related gases will however require a much deeper dialogue between economists and climate scientists as



Mr. Dominic Sam, UNDP Country Representative

brought together several key figures including the UNDP Country Director, Mr. Dominic Sam, Lands and Mines Minister Eugene Shannon Prof. David Wiles and host of other well wishers was climaxed by cultural performance by the Flomo Theatre.

Speaking as keynote speaker at the program, Dr. Eugene Shannon Minister of Lands Mines & Energy said among other things that climate change is a scientifically established fact.

"We are now quite cognizant about the enormous risks potentially catastrophic ones, including the melting of the ice sheets in Greenland and the West Antarctic (which would

place many countries under water) and changes in the course of the Gulf Stream that would bring about drastic climatic changes," Dr. Shannon maintained.



Dr. Eugene Shannon, LME Minister