

## **Under RPF-Inkotanyi, Rwanda blazes the trail in environmental protections**

Under the leadership of President Paul Kagame, Chairman of RPF-Inkotanyi, Rwanda has over the past decades shown unwavering commitment to combating climate change, and the problems that cause it.

Indeed, the government of Rwanda has put environmental and climate change at the center of our country's policies and plans.

What world are we building or, as Rwanda, what country shall we bequeath our children? Our leadership has a bold and ambitious answer, couched in the vision to become a climate resilient, as well as carbon neutral economy by the middle of this century.

The government of President Kagame hasn't been afraid to take the bull by the horns.

One of the first initiatives for a green, clean future for coming generations was the banning of plastic bags, beginning in 2008, something that made the world sit up and take note!

It wasn't easy, mainly because plastic containers or wrappers were such an ingrained part of everyday life: from shopping to transportation of food materials, to so much else.

Additionally, businesses, the retailers of the commodities of daily life, were distressed.

But the leadership, through timely, yet thorough communication, brought everybody on board.

Soon, ingenious solutions to find substitutes for plastic became a daily part of life.

Now no one misses plastic. Not only that, the cleanliness of our public spaces has been noticeably enhanced.

Such efforts have gone hand in hand with communal efforts, like the monthly Umuganda, whereby Rwandans clean their public spaces, dispose of any trash, and, most crucially for the environment, plant trees. Additional contributions by local authorities, like the creation of the Nyandungu Eco-Park, have had the effect of enhancing the quality of our lives.

In so many other, even bigger ways, the government of Rwanda is moving forward in implementing green, environmentally sound policies. Most notable: efforts by the government to encourage more people to buy eco-friendly electric, or hybrid vehicles, not to mention "moto" transporters.

Taxes have been waived on electric or electric cars, unlike with fuel guzzlers. Now we see more and more hybrid, or even fully electric cars on our roads. Public transporters are encouraged to move fully into importing electric buses. Soon our air will become even more pleasant to breathe!

On the international scene, Rwanda has become a major actor in the community of nations looking to make a carbon-free world possible.

Back in 2020, Rwanda was the first country to submit a climate action plan whereby it unveiled its target of reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 38 percent, by 2030 – equivalent to an estimated reduction of up to 4.6 million tonnes of carbon dioxide.

During the 26th UN Climate Change Conference in Glasgow, in November of the following year, Rwanda put forward its vision of becoming a climate-resilient, and carbon-neutral economy by 2050.

These only are some of the courses of action our country is committed to, as its contribution to a better future not only for our country but the planet as a whole.

As is the way with RPF-Inkotanyi, where there is a problem, a solution will always be found.