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Mau complex farmers aim for 10% forest cover by 2020

意: マウ森林の農民が2020年までに
10%の森林復元を目指す

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Nakuru county Kenya Forest Ecosystem Conservator Sylvester M'Odero speaks to journalists in Keringet, December 16, 2017. /AMOS KERICH

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Residents of the Mau forest complex have been asked to plant trees alongside other crops.

Sylvester M'Odero, Nakuru county Kenya Forest Conservator, said tree planting will enable the region to maintain a conducive environment.

"As we speak, forest cover in Nakuru stands at seven per cent. But we aim to hit the target of 10 per cent by the year 2020," he said on Friday.

He said Kenya Forest Service has done away with "briefcase" saw millers who have been carrying out illegal logging.

M'Odero said his organisation has licensed only 120 millers who are willing to harvest and replant trees.

He spoke while distributing free seedlings to residents. The seedlings came from Community Roads Empowerment Africa, an organisation sponsored by Toyota Japan.

Core Africa has been running the programme dubbed 'Toyota Environment Activities Grant Program' for the past two years and have planted up to 100,000 indigenous and exotic trees in Kuresoi North and South constituencies.

Programme officer Amos Biwot said they chose the region because it is the main source of rivers feeding the entire forest.

The organisation is now headed for Narok county to educate schoolchildren on the importance of planting trees.

Biwot said more than 1,000 farmers in Kuresoi have embraced the programme.

The United Nations Environment Programme calculated that between 1991 and 2011, settlers destroyed almost a quarter of Mau Complex forest cover.

Experts predicted droughts would worsen and pastoralists would in future fight for water and grass.

“When the Mau Forest suffers, so do an estimated six million Kenyans who depend on

it for their water,” Unep said.

The late Nobel Prize winner Wangari Maathai helped plant more than 20,000 trees at Kaptunga, Molo, in the Mau Forest complex in January 2010.