



PHOTOGRAPH: BONIFACE PHIRI

Mtupanyama (2ndR) appreciating a cooking stove

# Govt loses K26bn in nature preservation

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STAFF REPORTER

**G**overnment is losing about K26 billion in combating environmental degradation, Principal Secretary in the Ministry of Natural Resources, Energy and Mining Yanira Mtupanyama has said.

Mtupanyama, speaking on Saturday during commemorations of this year's National Environment Day at the Bunda Campus of the Lilongwe University of Agriculture and Natural Resources (Luanar), stated that government has lined up several strategies in trying to arrest the

situation.

"In trying to reverse and arrest this problem, we will start from household level knowing that 80 percent of waste in the country comes from households. In this, we will be sensitising people to consume responsibly.

"In terms of reversing, we are encouraging natural regeneration of trees because regenerates grow faster than newly planted seedlings," she said.

Mtupanyama said they put in place a programme in ozone depleting substances where, among others, the country's borders are refusing to let in any refrigerants as well as ozone depleting gases.

"We will also be working on completely banning

plastics which have been a challenge to the country's fight against environmental degradation and it is our aim to limit the use of plastics," she said.

Mtupanyama hailed Luanar on the significant role it plays in helping government to conserve natural resources.

"As a research institution, Luanar helps government in terms of sustainability and consumption as regards the environment, land and wealth management.

"We have taken up their research findings which we are implementing at community level across the country. Through that we are helping rural masses to separate waste that is paper and plastics and waste

which is biodegradable."

Luanar deputy vice-chancellor Emmanuel Kaunda said the institution is encouraging its students to be innovative in terms of conserving natural resources.

"The idea is that our graduates fully and professionally understand the impact and significance of natural resources. When they go out they are our ambassadors.

"We have also helped them organise themselves in an environmental conservation club through which they have managed to come up with improved cooking stoves, conservation agriculture as well as animal conservation," he said. ■