Rwanda has joined the rest of the world in celebrating World Environment Day 2025, under the theme “Ending Plastic Pollution.” The day’s message focused on the urgent need to work together to stop plastic waste, which harms nature, human health, and the economy.

In a statement released on July 5, 2025, and signed, Juliet Kabera, Director General of the Rwanda Environment Management Authority (REMA), warned that plastic pollution is a serious problem that could triple by 2040 if nothing is done. She warned that plastic waste not only pollutes the environment but also affects people’s health and contributes to climate change”

Rwanda has taken strong steps to reduce plastic use over the years. In 2004, the country began by limiting plastic bags, and in 2008, it banned them completely. A law passed in 2019 went even further, stopping the production, use, and sale of single-use plastics. These efforts have helped keep streets clean and protect nature.

In 2021, REMA and the Private Sector Federation added a tax on imported plastic products, using the money to support plastic collection and recycling. Since then, 24 plastic collection centers have been set up across the country, helping to recover over 1,500 tonnes of plastic. These actions have also created more than 1,200 jobs.

Kabera thanked all Rwandans for their support, especially those who have chosen eco-friendly alternatives and businesses that help find better solutions.

“As we look back on 20 years of progress, we are reminded that protecting the environment is an ongoing task,” she said. “We must keep working together to build a cleaner and healthier future.”

Kabera encouraged Rwandans to continue reducing plastic use in daily life, support businesses that avoid plastics, and help keep their communities clean.

“Our goal is clear,” she said. “We want a plastic-free and healthy environment for all Rwandans — now and in the future.”