

# **Environment and Sustainability**

*Issues, Policies & Contentions*

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***In Honour of Professor Peter Okebukola, OFR***

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## **Introduction**

Anthony Kola–Olusanya, Ayo Omotayo and Olanrewaju Fagbohun

This collection of essays, on issues, policies and contentions relating to environment and sustainability, has been put together as a Tribute to Professor Peter Akinsola Okebukola, OFR, formerly Executive Secretary, National Universities Commission, Nigeria; the First African to win the prestigious UNESCO, Kalinga Prize for the Communication of Science; consultant to a number of international organizations such as UNESCO, UNICEF, the World Bank and UNDP; African Representative and Member of the Board of Directors of the International Council of Associations for Science Education; former Acting Vice Chancellor of Lagos State University, Visiting Professor at the Curtin University of Technology, Austria; Pro-Chancellor and Chairman of Governing Council Osun State University; and Pro-Chancellor and Chairman of Governing Council Crawford University, Ogun State.

Why a tribute in the area of environment and sustainability to this unique and accomplished scholar one may ask? Professor Peter Akinsola Okebukola's revealing portraits is that of a highly respected man of ideas who has done so much to promote the organized learning, teaching and training of environmental education in Africa. The book has been conceived against the background of the rapid, breath-taking, untamed economic development and global environmental change affecting the different spheres of our national and international life. In a manner and on a scale never witnessed before, humanity is confronted with environmental challenges at national, regional and global levels, while communities continue to grapple with strategies aimed at reconciling the conflicting demands of economic growth and environmental protection.

What emerges with clarity from the foregoing is the need to continue to deepen our searchlight on the critical issues using a multi-disciplinary approach. This is imperative in the light of the far-reaching implications of such issues as climate change, massive loss

of biodiversity, deforestation, increased soil degradation, drought and desertification among other challenges to environmental security. The mantra of Agenda 21 that “*Humanity stands at a defining moment in history*” must not only continue to resonate, it must also be implemented with a good vision and serious commitment of all and sundry. It remains to add that this is the only way to come to terms with the challenges of today while preparing for the foreseeable future of forthcoming generation.

**Environment and Sustainability: Issues, Policies and Contentions**

is thus being published against the background of an acute awareness of developments within and outside Nigeria. The book is divided into three parts, consisting of eighteen chapters, bound together by a common purpose, namely, to critically examine issues, policies and contentions relating to environment and sustainability.

In Chapter 1 under Part One which feature **ISSUES**, Michael Adetunji Ahoje under the title “*Environmental Education in Nigeria*” focuses on the history and development of environmental education in Nigeria and discussed in an incisive manner the role of teachers in the implementation of environmental education curriculum, trends in environmental education research, and national and international influence on curriculum and methodology of research. He also examined the challenges of environmental education in Nigeria and makes a number of far reaching suggestions for the development of environmental education in Nigeria.

Musa Ajisegiri contributes Chapter 2, “*Environmental Economics: Issues and Applications*”. Here, he examined the relationship between natural resource economics and environmental economics, the relevance of natural resources for economic growth and scarcity, and environmental problems in resources allocation. His summary is that the failure to accept that the earth is a closed system that can easily be disrupted by human activity has already led to potentially threatening changes which must now be considered along with natural hazards. There is a need to incorporate flexibility in options.



He argues in favour of environmental accounting as one of such options that must be given serious consideration.

Chapter 3, “*Sustainable Forest Management*”, is contributed by Abiodun Tajudeen Afolabi. It is a critical examination and assessment of the importance of forest and forest resources management, biodiversity and livelihoods in forest management. While he accepts that it is often a challenge for developing countries to harmonize implementation activities between various international commitments which all address forests and to implement these policies, his conclusion is that much can still be done in the area of sustainable forest management and conservation. He argues in favour of national biodiversity strategies and action plans, and mainstreaming capacity-building activities into relevant policies.

“*Understanding Environmental Issues for Better Environmental Protection*”, contributed by Ayo Tella, takes up Chapter 4. The author provided information and enlightenment on the causes, effects and solution to environmental problems and the need for environmental protection.

Chapter 5, “*Environmental Finance: Carbon Trading and Carbon Offset*” is contributed by Babajide Olakunle. He examines the basis of environmental finance as a tool for effective and efficient management of the Nigerian environment. He calls attention to the fact that one of the pressing challenges over the next decade will be to increase the scope of emission trading to cover more countries, more sectors and institutionalize the market. In this respect, he concludes that other climate policies like carbon taxes, regulation and information provisions will continue to play a major role.

Part Two which is devoted to **POLICIES** opens up with Chapter 6, “*Learning for Sustainable Future*” contributed by Babatunde .M. Lawal. The author notes humankind’s relative low consciousness of what it takes to assume a more dignified position in the course of demonstrating an understanding of the variety of human activities

that affect the quality of their environment and its resources. The discourse therefore highlights the concept of sustainability, its relevance and importance to humankind, its challenges, and the skills and strategies that should be popularized among different stakeholders for the promotion of learning for sustainable future, sustainable literacy and sustainable development.

In Chapter 7, "*Climate Change, Ethics Policy and Development*", Francisca Nlerum examines the causes and consequences of climate change and argues that ethics have a prominent role to play in policy and developments in addressing climate change. Her conclusion is that a balanced integration of the best of science and technology interwoven with core ethical principles should lead to a more sustainable path than the one humanity is currently following. The recognition of the damage already done to the climate system and the resolve to minimize any additional damage that may threaten the needs of future generation is our moral and ethical duty.

In Chapter 8, "*Environmental Law, Legislation and Policy Making in Sub-Saharan Africa*", Olanrewaju Fagbohun who is one of the Editors through a detailed examination and criticism of what has been the norm with environmental policy making and legislation in sub-Saharan Africa notes that appropriate policies and legislation have an important role to play in the sustainable management of sub-Saharan Africa's environment. The author presented what challenges countries of sub-Saharan Africa are facing in relation to effective implementation of environmental laws and how these challenges can be met. He concludes that the formulation of appropriate policies and laws, and their effective implementation will require the sincere support of the developed nations and a critical look inwards by the countries of sub-Saharan Africa to curb their own self inflicted inefficiencies.

"*Reconciling the Challenges of Sustainable City Planning in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*" is the title of Chapter 9 contributed by Abiola Labisi. The author examined the concept of sustainability in relation to city

planning, demography, urbanization and sustainable cities, the extended metabolism model of human settlements, policy implication facing cities in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. He made far reaching suggestions on how some of the challenges can be met.

Chapter 10, “*Environment and Human Health: Towards an Etiological Classification*”, is contributed by Oluwaseun Olusegun Babalola. The author seeks an etiological classification of diseases, particularly those that reflect environmental causes. He considers the effects of ‘place’ and in particular the idea of ‘locale’ in which various aspects of the physical, social and economic environment converge to influence health outcomes. He concludes that the sustainable development of mankind that will be freed of diseases and health crises demands not only a good understanding of our natural environment but also requires an urgent end to the various unsustainable production and consumption patterns, which are putting increasing pressure on various resources and other essential needs of man in the process.

In Chapter 11, Ayo Omotayo, who is also one of the Editors wrote on “*The Effects of the Structural Adjustment Programme on the African Environment: A Historical Review*”. The author re-assesses both the short-term and long-term effects of SAP on the national environment of African states. This is on the premise that the environment has been brought to the fore of the political agenda especially at the United Nations and no effort is being spared to assess the role of the environment in the advancement of human society or the effect of political and economic decisions on the environment. He concludes that the time has come for African countries to re-examine the present economic strategies in the light of diagnosed consequences. If African countries fail to control their environmental resources, they will eventually have no viable environment to bequeath to the coming generation.

Part Three is devoted to **CONTENTIONS**. Here Suraj Muda in Chapter 12 opens with “*Environmental Politics and Governance*”. The author examines the relationship between environment, politics and

governance and the rationale for environmental politics and governance. The author concludes that environmental policies and governance should be considered paramount in every discussion of the environment. Apart from making policies that protect the environment at the local and national levels, the involvement of all stakeholders in the implementation of these policies should be considered an imperative. Adewale Olumuyiwa Noah in Chapter 13, *“Popular Education for Environmental and Social Justice”*, examines what popular education can do to promote environmental justice and the responsibilities of popular education in socializing young ones towards environmental activism. He concludes that popular education must itself be emancipated from ruling class domination if it is to effectively serve radical environmental concerns. This can be achieved through a sovereign people’s assembly on education. Popular education to effectively support environmental concerns must adopt a radical curriculum that promotes critical thinking.

Patricia Glazebrook and Rebecca Tiessen in Chapter 14, *“Women, the Environment and Justice: Climate Change in North-East Ghana”*, examine the ways in which women in particular are coping and adapting to the impact of climate change, and provide context-rich information from case study research in Ghana. The research supports significant findings that can be generalized beyond Ghana. The findings indicate the pressing need to mainstream gender into all climate change policies and strategies, and especially into adaptation and mitigation policies.

In Chapter 15, *“Environmentalism and Environmental Movements in Nigeria”*, John Agbonifo examines the development context of environmentalism in Nigeria. He observes that environmentalism in Nigeria is bedeviled by two reductionisms, economic and secularist reductionisms. Further, that the environmental movement in Nigeria is not a homogenous group. He concludes that given the range, complexity and diversity of the groups that constitute the environmental movement in Nigeria, it makes little sense to glide over

their differences or box them in a single category labeled “environmentalism of the poor”.

In Chapter 16, “*Gender Differentials in Environmental Disaster Management*”, written by Emmanuel Ajiboye and Adesunmbo Elizabeth Omotayo, the authors examine whether there is a gender effect on communicating vital issues such as the engaging challenges posed by a perceived change in climate that is said to affect all aspects of daily life. The authors in conclusion note that there is express need to identify with a development paradigm that addresses the issue of gender and disaster management, sustainable livelihoods, social inclusion of the disadvantaged (particularly women) as well as regeneration and good governance.

In Chapter 17, “*Energy Militarisation and Security in the Niger – Delta*”, contributed by Sylvester Odion Akhaine and Kenneth Akali, the authors examine the interplay of socio-economic and political forces in the Niger Delta, the breakdown of dialogue and outbreak of armed resistance, and the measures taken by the Nigerian authorities to address the crisis in the region. The authors conclude that the exploitation of mineral resources from the Niger – Delta without a corresponding development of its infrastructure, education and employment of the locale and the failure of dialogue to resolve the points at issue in the crisis have combined to deepen the crisis to the point of armed confrontation with the Nigerian state. While there has been a vortex of activities aimed at dealing with the crisis, there are reasonable grounds to surmise that the inroads of the United States into the Nigerian security complex in order to secure their energy interest may well be the threat of the future.

In Chapter 18, “*Corporate Social Responsibility and Sustainability*”, Anthony Kola-Olusanya, another of the Editors, examined the meaning and concept of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), the diversity of CSR perspectives globally, the link between CSR, environment and sustainability, and CSR practice and sustainability in Nigeria. The author concludes that embracing CSR as a process of

continual development is an imperative for businesses and organizations. CSR issues can present significant risks and opportunities to company performance and need to be incorporated into board governance to protect long term shareholder and stakeholder interests.

In conclusion, the eighteen Chapters, are all, without exception, well-researched contributions from distinguished scholars. As captured by His Excellency, Chief Olusegun Obasanjo, it is hoped that the book will inspire all to create and maintain a sustainable environment for present and future generations.