



## **Impact of Climate Change Regime in Maintaining Internal Security in Nigeria**

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## IMPACT OF CLIMATE CHANGE REGIME IN MAINTAINING INTERNAL SECURITY IN NIGERIA

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### Abstract

*Scientific and empirical data in the last three decades confirm the climate change phenomenon on human and natural systems. One of such impacts is drought which cause natural resource scarcity, hence agro-conflict in Nigeria. This Paper aims to examine the effectiveness of the climate change regime in maintaining internal security in Nigeria. The method adopted is the doctrinal approach which is based on both primary and `secondary sources of data collection. The primary source includes statutes while the secondary sources include text books, journal articles, internet materials and lecture notes. Findings reveal that although climate change does not fit into the mode of traditional threats to national security, such as war, terrorism and insurgency, its non-violent and gradual manifestation tend to disguise its impact on the civic, political and socio-economic lives of the citizenry. Findings further reveal that climate change polices and sustainable internal security is central and complimentary of each other, as a result, the Nigerian State must work towards both. As adoption, awareness and implementation of climate polices could reduce insecurity to modest levels in the country. Findings also reveal that the Nigerian State appears to have effective climate change regime to deal with security issues, but the problem boils down to enforcement of the regimes. This, in so many ways, has affected the capacity of the security agencies to maintain law and order in the country. It is recommended that solutions cannot be attained through force alone but by strict implementation of the Climate Agreements.*

**Keywords:** Climate change regulation, internal security, sustainable development, law enforcement, Nigeria.

### 1. Introduction

The term ‘environment’ include water, air, land and all plants and human beings and animals living therein and the harmonious inter-relationship

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which exist among these or any of them.<sup>1</sup> It is important as it provides for the food chain and the ecological system; is a source of natural beauty and man's only home. It is in the recent times under pressure,<sup>2</sup> which is due to the fact that man's quest for harnessing nature for his development was seen from nature's wealth creating abilities.

The climate is definitely changing and it has become one of the greatest challenges currently facing humanity,<sup>3</sup> apart from hunger, poverty, disease and overpopulation. It is not restricted to any national boundary as its impacts are already being felt both in the developing and developed countries. In Nigeria, Climate change manifests as epileptic seasonal variations. For instance, the rainfalls previously occur between March and September with a break in August in the middle belt.<sup>4</sup> But now, the rain lasts beyond September and sometimes even falls during Christmas in December. Furthermore, the dry season that starts in October/November is distorted, that no one really knows when the dry season would start or end.<sup>5</sup> These occurrences are believed to have been caused by climate change.

It is an uncomfortable fact that human activities seem to constitute the root cause of the international as well as national environmental problems.<sup>6</sup> However, the problem is no longer about whether or not there is climate change, but on the actual cause of climate change and its impact. In 2001, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate

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<sup>1</sup> National Environmental Standards Regulations and Enforcement Agency (Establishment) Act, 2007, s 37.

<sup>2</sup> EU Onyeabor, 'Precautionary and Environmental Management and Control: How far so far in International Environmental Law?' [2011] (3)(1) *Nigerian Journal of Petroleum, Natural Resources and Environmental Law*, 58.

<sup>3</sup>Theodorou Petros, 'How do Cities Mitigate and Adapt to Climate Change? Could (Synergies Among) Cities be the Drivers for Global Action on Climate Change? Examples from Los Angeles and Durban', <<https://climate-exchange.org/2014/02/12/how-do-cities-mitigate-and-adapt-to-climate-change-could-synergies-among-cities-be-the-drivers-for-global-action-on-climate-change-examples-from-los-angeles-and-durban-2/>> accessed 7 November 2021.

<sup>4</sup> EU Onyeabor, Lecture Notes on Climate Change and the Law, Faculty of Law, University of Nigeria Enugu Campus. 11 October 2016.

<sup>5</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>6</sup> JC Carlson and GWR Palmer and BH Weston, *International Environmental Law and World Order: A Problem-Oriented Course Book*, with a Contribution from David Bollier (3<sup>rd</sup> edn, West Publishing Company USA 2012) vii.

Change (IPCC)<sup>7</sup> concluded that ‘there is new and stronger evidence that most of the warming observed over the last 50 years is attributable to human activities’. Areas identified as major contributor to human induced climate change are the Agriculture, Land Use Change, Industrial Activities and the Energy Sector. Furthermore, the Court in *Environmental Defence Society v Auckland Regional Council and Contact Energy Ltd*<sup>8</sup> gave a judicial node to the assertion that the present rise in global temperature is induced by human activity. Such human activities include deforestation, industrial activities, cooking with open fire, bush and waste burning, overpopulation, agriculture, fossil fuel usage and urbanization among others. It should be noted that the developed countries have over the years developed through the use of fossil fuel and are better equipped to deal with the adverse impacts of climate change. The developing countries which Nigeria is one of, unlike the developed countries is in dilemma. This is as a result of the fact that even though they are battling with crippling poverty and inequality at home, they need to develop to save their people out of poverty and at the same time, cut GHGs (Greenhouse Gas) emissions in order to save the world from global warming.

The policies, standards and agreements at the international level have sought to put a balance to particularly ensure that the needs of the States for economic development do not prohibit the need to protect the environment and in particular the climate. But it appears that failure to share limited resources well underlies many of the violent conflicts that dot the country’s social landscape, pitting neighbour against neighbour, Muslim against Christian, patron against client, citizen against the State.<sup>9</sup> Furthermore, the Nigerian government does not want to commit itself to a climate agreement whose economic effects are unpredictable. This allows some reflection on climate change and its impact on the Nigerian security system. Moreover, there is also the need to discuss what the communities and government can do to overcome insecurity in order to address the issue

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<sup>7</sup> United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, Fourth Assessment Report (AR4), 2007. p. 7

<sup>8</sup> [2002] NZRMA 492.

<sup>9</sup> Vivan Ezra and others, ‘Climate Change and its Effect on National Security in Nigeria’, [2014](2)(4), 6-10. ISSN 2348-1226 (online), *International Journal of Interdisciplinary Research and Innovations*, <[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/307433891\\_CLIMATE\\_CHANGE\\_AND ITS\\_EFFECT\\_ON\\_NATIONAL\\_SECURITY\\_IN\\_NIGERIA](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/307433891_CLIMATE_CHANGE_AND ITS_EFFECT_ON_NATIONAL_SECURITY_IN_NIGERIA)> accessed 16 October 2021.

of disharmony in the country leading to economic and political instability and civil unrest; why it continues to exist; and what steps might be required to narrow it.

The paper in addressing the impact of the climate change regime in maintaining internal security in Nigeria is in five sections. The first section is the introduction; the second section discusses the change regime ((what is climate change, instances of its impact on the human environment, the international legal instruments on climate and its national implementations); the third section discusses climate change and internal security management in Nigeria; while the fourth section is the recommendation and the fifth, the conclusion.

## 2. Climate Change Regime

Climate change is one of the greatest challenges to ever confront the international community. It respects no national boundary as its impacts are already being felt both in the developing and developed countries of the world. Climate change refers to the response of the planet's climate system to altered concentration of carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) and other Greenhouse Gases (GHGs) in the atmosphere.<sup>10</sup> Whereas, the climate changes when the total amount of energy from the Sun that is kept in the Earth's atmosphere changes,<sup>11</sup> the energy changes spread out around the globe upsetting climate processes. This change in energy is then distributed around the globe by winds, ocean currents, and other mechanisms to affect the climates of different regions.<sup>12</sup> There are many causes for these energy shifts. Scientists have linked to climate change<sup>13</sup> the interdependence of the global economy on CO<sub>2</sub> emitting energy sources.<sup>14</sup> Although, nature could be said to be a cause of climate

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<sup>10</sup> Chris Wold and David Hunter and Melissa Powers, *Climate Change and the Law* (LexisNexis New Jersey 2009) 2.

<sup>11</sup> Earth Eclipse 'Natural and Man Made Causes of Climate Change', -- <<http://www.earthclipse.com/climate-change/natural-and-man-made-causes-of-climate-change.html>> accessed 11 November 2021.

<sup>12</sup> What's Your Impact, 'What Causes Climate Change?' -- <<http://whatsyourimpact.org/climate-change/causes>> accessed 11 November 2021.

<sup>13</sup> New York Times, 'What the Paris Climate Meeting Must Do' Editorial, *New York Times* (28 November 2015) <<http://www.nytimes.com/2015/11/29/sunday/what-the-paris-climate-meeting-must-do.html>> accessed 14 October 2021.

<sup>14</sup> Seth Bornstein, 'Earth is a Wilder, Warmer Place since Last Climate Deal Made', (29 November 2015), <<http://www.apnews.excite.com/article/20151129/eu-climate-countdown-since-1997-edf9d62e51.html>> accessed 14 October 2021.

change,<sup>15</sup> it is the manmade causes that had over the times caused global warming and resultant impacts in the climate system.

One of the implications of climate change is in extreme weather events<sup>16</sup> that have threatened all countries and its impacts are not confined to national boundaries. Further warming is unavoidable due to past heat-trapping emissions; unless today's emissions are aggressively reduced.<sup>17</sup> According to the IPCC<sup>18</sup> the extent of climate change effects on individual regions will vary over time and with the ability of different societal and environmental systems to mitigate or adapt to change. The IPCC predicts that increases in global mean temperature of less than 1.8°F - 5.4°F (1°C - 3°C) above 1990 levels will produce beneficial impacts in some regions and harmful ones in others.<sup>19</sup> It is noteworthy that the World Bank stated that the developing countries are the most vulnerable to climate change impacts.<sup>20</sup>

Environmental and socio-economic impacts of climate change include, amongst others - shrinking ice sheets and declining arctic sea ice,<sup>21</sup> ocean acidification,<sup>22</sup> higher temperatures and warming oceans,<sup>23</sup> melting ice and sea level rising seas,<sup>24</sup> decreased snow cover

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<sup>15</sup> PJ Poses, 'Roles of Religion and Ethics in Addressing Climate Change' *Ethics in Science and Environmental Politics*; [2007] (31)(49) 4, <<http://www.int-res.com/articles/esep/2007/E80.pdf>>, accessed 11<sup>th</sup> February, 2017.

<sup>16</sup> SI Ladan, 'Climate Change in Extreme Weather Events: A Case Study of Hailstorms in Katsina Metropolis, Katsina State, Nigeria' *International Journal of Environmental Studies* [2011] (8) (1), 76-85 at 76.

<sup>17</sup> 'Global Warming Effects around the World', -- <<http://www.climatehotmap.org/global-warming-effects/>> accessed 17 November 2021.

<sup>18</sup> 'The Consequences of Climate Change', -- <<https://climate.nasa.gov/effects/>> accessed 17 November 2021.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>20</sup> World Bank, *World Development Report 2010: Development and Climate Change* (The International Bank for Reconstruction and Development 2010) xx

<sup>21</sup> 'Climate Change: How Do We Know?', -- <<https://climate.nasa.gov/evidence/>> accessed 17 November 2021.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>23</sup> 'Climate Change Threats and Solutions: What Can We Do to Make a Difference?', -- <<https://www.nature.org/ourinitiatives/urgentissues/global-warming-climate-change/threats-solutions/>> accessed 17 November 2021.

<sup>24</sup> 'Climate Change Consequences', -- <[https://ec.europa.eu/clima/change/consequences\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/clima/change/consequences_en)> accessed 17 November 2021.

and glacial retreat,<sup>25</sup> changing landscapes, wildlife habitat and ecosystems,<sup>26</sup> increased risk of storms, droughts<sup>27</sup> and floods and agriculture and food supply.<sup>28</sup> Climate impacts are also felt on the coral reefs,<sup>29</sup> water resources,<sup>30</sup> coastal areas,<sup>31</sup> society and communities at risk (climate refugees),<sup>32</sup> energy sector,<sup>33</sup> forests,<sup>34</sup> and people and the environment,<sup>35</sup> public health,<sup>36</sup> transportation,<sup>37</sup> economy<sup>38</sup> and

<sup>25</sup> 'The Effects of Climate Change' (2 October 2016) <<https://www.wwf.org.uk/updates/effects-climate-change>> accessed 17 Nov 2021.

<sup>26</sup> 'Plants, Animals, and Ecosystems', -- <<https://www3.epa.gov/climatechange/kids/impacts/effects/ecosystems.html>> accessed 17 November 2021; <<https://www.epa.gov/climate-impacts/climate-impacts/ecosystems>>, 'Climate Impacts on Ecosystems' accessed 17 November 2021.

<sup>27</sup> WP Cunningham and MA Cunningham, *Environmental Science: A Global Concern* (12<sup>th</sup> Edn, McGraw-Hill Companies 2012) 330.

<sup>28</sup> 'Climate Impacts on Agriculture and Food Supply', -- <<https://www.epa.gov/climate-impacts/climate-impacts-agriculture-and-food-supply>> accessed 17 November 2021; 'Effect of Climate Change on Agriculture', -- <<https://www3.epa.gov/climatechange/kids/impacts/effects/agriculture.html>> accessed 17 November 2021.

<sup>29</sup> 'The Effects of Climate Change' (n 25).

<sup>30</sup> 'Impacts of Climate Change', -- <<http://www.davidsuzuki.org/issues/climate-change/science/impacts/impacts-of-climate-change/>> accessed 17 November 2021; 'Climate Impacts on Water Resources', -- <<https://www.epa.gov/climate-impacts/climate-impacts-water-resources>> accessed 17 November 2021; 'Water Supplies', -- <<https://www3.epa.gov/climatechange/kids/impacts/effects/water.html>> accessed 17 November 2021.

<sup>31</sup> 'Effect of Climate Change on Coastal Areas', -- <<https://www3.epa.gov/climatechange/kids/impacts/effects/coastal.html>>, ' accessed 17 November 2021; 'Climate Impacts on Coastal Areas', -- <<https://www.epa.gov/climate-impacts>> accessed 17 November 2021.

<sup>32</sup> 'Climate Impacts on Society', -- <<https://www.epa.gov/climate-impacts/climate-impacts-society>> accessed 17 November 2021; Navdanya, 'Climate Change', <<http://www.navdanya.org/climate-change>> 17 November 2021.

<sup>33</sup> 'Climate Impacts on Energy', -- <<https://www.epa.gov/climate-impacts/climate-impacts-energy>> 17 November 2021; 'Climate Change Effect on Energy', -- <<https://www3.epa.gov/climatechange/kids/impacts/effects/energy.html>> accessed 17 November 2021.

<sup>34</sup> 'Effects on Forests', -- <<https://www3.epa.gov/climatechange/kids/impacts/effects/forests.html>> accessed 17 November 2021; 'Climate Impacts on Forests', -- <<https://www.epa.gov/climate-impacts/climate-impacts-forests>> accessed 17 November 2021.

<sup>35</sup> 'Effects on People and the Environment', -- <<https://www3.epa.gov/climatechange/kids/impacts/effects/>> accessed 17 November 2021.

recreation.<sup>39</sup> Furthermore, all the regions of the world<sup>40</sup> - Africa, Asia, Australia and New Zealand, Europe, Latin America, North America, Polar Regions, Small Islands – are not spared from climate impacts.

Nigeria, like other African countries are badly hit by the effects of climate change because of extreme poverty and absence of technology to combat such effects<sup>41</sup>. Others include the topography, climate, vegetation, soils, economic structure, population, energy demands and agricultural activities,<sup>42</sup> limited human and financial resources, history and weak institutions.<sup>43</sup> Rainfall variation is projected to continue to increase. Precipitation in southern areas is expected to rise and rising sea levels are expected to exacerbate flooding and submersion of coastal lands. Droughts have also become constant in Nigeria, and are expected to continue in Northern Nigeria, arising from a decline in precipitation and rise in temperature. Lake Chad and other lakes in the country are drying up and at risk of disappearing.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> 'Effects on Health', -- <https://www3.epa.gov/climatechange/kids/impacts/effects/health.html> accessed 17 November 2021.

<sup>37</sup> 'Climate Impacts on Transportation', -- <https://www.epa.gov/climate-impacts/climate-impacts-transportation> accessed 17 November 2021.

<sup>38</sup> 'Climate Change Threats and Solutions: What Can We Do to Make a Difference?' (n 23).

<sup>39</sup> 'Effect on Recreation', -- <https://www3.epa.gov/climatechange/kids/impacts/effects/recreation.html> accessed 17 November 2021.

<sup>40</sup> 'Climate Change 2007: Synthesis Report - IPCC', -- [https://www.ipcc.ch/pdf/assessment-report/ar4/syr/ar4\\_syr\\_full\\_report.pdf](https://www.ipcc.ch/pdf/assessment-report/ar4/syr/ar4_syr_full_report.pdf) accessed 12 October 2021.

<sup>41</sup> NM Idris, 'The Effects of Climate Change in Nigeria', (18 April 2011), <https://environmentalsynergy.wordpress.com/2011/04/18/the-effects-of-climate-change-in-nigeria/> accessed 17 November 2021.

<sup>42</sup> Nkechi Isaac, 'Mitigating Negative Effects of Climate Change in Nigeria', (26 April, 2016), <http://www.leadership.ng/features/521690/mitigating-negative-effects-climate-change-nigeria-2> accessed 17 November 2021.

<sup>43</sup> World Bank (n 20). 6.

<sup>44</sup> 'Climate change in Nigeria: Impacts and responses', -- (2019) *Institute of Development Studies (IDS)* <https://www.preventionweb.net/publications/view/68975>, accessed 19 October 2021.



According to Ebele and Emodi,<sup>45</sup> evidence have shown that climate change impacts on Nigeria arose from various climate change related causes experienced due to the increase in temperature, rainfall, sea level rise, impact on fresh water resources, extreme weather events, flooding, drought and desertification in the north and increased health risk. There are however, two extremes of the expected challenges of the climate change in Nigeria, viz: increase in rainy and dry season with each lasting approximately six months on the average, that is, April to October and October to March respectively.<sup>46</sup>

To tackle the adverse impact of climate change, most countries of the world in June 1992 convened and adopted an international treaty - the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). The UNFCCC highlights two fundamental response strategies to address climate change - adaptation processes and mitigation mechanisms- which are provided for in Art 4 on the commitment of States Parties. The purpose of mitigation is prevention of further warming not reversion of the already done warming. Adaptation processes on the other hand is how we adjust to climate impact, it involves the active involvement of different actors.<sup>47</sup> While adaptation aims to lessen the adverse impacts of climate change through a wide-range of system-specific actions; mitigation looks at limiting climate change by reducing the emissions of GHGs and by enhancing sink opportunities.<sup>48</sup> According to United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP),<sup>49</sup> while climate change mitigation involves taking practical actions to manage risks from climate impacts, protect communities and strengthen the resilience of the economy; adaptation refers to dealing with the impacts of climate change.

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<sup>45</sup> NE Ebele and NV Emodi, 'Climate Change and Its Impact in Nigerian Economy', [2016] (10)(6) *Journal of Scientific Research and Reports*, DOI: 10.9734/JSRR/2016/25162.

<sup>46</sup> Uche Ngene, 'Climate Change: Any Impact on Nigeria?', <<http://www.vanguardngr.com/2012/10/climate-change-any-impact-on-nigeria/>> accessed 17 November 2021.

<sup>47</sup> EU Onyeabor, Lecture Note on Climate Change and the Law, Faculty of Law, University of Nigeria Enugu Campus. 7 March, 2016.

<sup>48</sup> 'Adaption and Mitigation: Responses to Climate Change' <[http://know.climateofconcern.org/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=article&id=142](http://know.climateofconcern.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=article&id=142)> accessed 12 October 2021.

<sup>49</sup> 'Climate Change Mitigation - UNEP' <[www.unep.org/climatechange/mitigation/](http://www.unep.org/climatechange/mitigation/)> accessed 13 September 2021.

As a result of low adaptive capacities and the projected impacts of climate change, a consensus has emerged that developing countries are more vulnerable to climate change than developed countries. This according to Nzeadibe and others,<sup>50</sup> is due to the predominance of rain-fed agriculture in their economies, the scarcity of capital for adaptation measures, their warmer baseline climates and their heightened exposure to extreme weather events. This could be attributable to the general belief that the developing countries is to adapt to climate change while the developed countries mitigate.

Having discovered the inadequacies of the UNFCCC and its subsequent 1997 Kyoto Protocol, the United Nations in 2015 at the 21<sup>st</sup> Conference of Parties (COP 21) held in Paris, France, adopted the Paris Agreement. The Paris Agreement 2015 seeks to accelerate and intensify the actions and investment needed for a sustainable low carbon future.<sup>51</sup> Its central aim is to strengthen the global response to the threat of climate change by keeping a global temperature rise this century well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels and to pursue efforts to limit the temperature increase even further to 1.5°C. The Agreement also aims to strengthen the ability of countries to deal with the impacts of climate change. To reach these ambitious goals, appropriate financial flows, including by, before 2025, setting a new goal on the provision of finance from the US\$ 100 billion floor, and an enhanced capacity building framework, including an Initiative for Capacity Building, will be put in place: thus supporting action by developing countries and the most vulnerable countries, in line with their own national objectives. The Agreement plans to enhance transparency of action and support through a more robust transparency framework.

Here in Nigeria, the concern to protect the environment gave rise to the creation of the Federal Ministry of Environment in 1999 to ensure effective coordination of all environmental matters, which were hitherto fragmented and resident in different line Ministries. The creation was intended to ensure that environmental matters are adequately

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<sup>50</sup> TC Nzeadibe and others, 'Climate Change Awareness and Adaptation in the Niger Delta Region of Nigeria', *African Technology Policy Studies Network, Working Paper Series* [2011] (57) ISBN: 978-9966-1552-6-9.

<sup>51</sup> 'The Paris Agreement', -- <[http://unfccc.int/paris\\_agreement/items/9485.php](http://unfccc.int/paris_agreement/items/9485.php)> accessed 8 September 2021.

mainstreamed into all developmental activities;<sup>52</sup> as a result, the Ministry took over environmental protection functions of various Federal Government Agencies, Ministerial Departments and Units upon its establishment.<sup>53</sup> National efforts to address climatic change are guided by a number of principles<sup>54</sup> including the following:

1. Strategic climate change response is consistent with national development priorities;
2. Climate change is addressed within the framework of sustainable development, which ensures that climate change response must be sensitive to issues of equity, gender, youth, children and other vulnerable groups;
3. The use of energy as a key driver for high economic growth is pursued within the broad context of sustainable development;
4. Mitigation and adaptation are integral components of the policy response and strategy to cope with climate change;
5. Climate change policy is integrated with other policies to promote economic and environmental efficiency;
6. Climate change is cross-cutting and demands integration across the work programmes of several government ministries/agencies/parastatals and stakeholders, and across sectors of industry, business and the community; and
7. Climate change responses provide viable entrepreneurship opportunities.

Since the submission of its first national report to the UNFCCC in 2003, Nigeria has made some progress on climate change governance.<sup>55</sup> In its National Development Plan (Vision 2020), the government recognizes climate change as threatening its economic prosperity and future development. For improving policy formulation and co-ordination in this area, the Ministry of the Environment created a Special Climate

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<sup>52</sup> 'Federal Ministry of Environment: Introduction', -- <http://www.environment.gov.ng/> accessed 10 September 2021.

<sup>53</sup> 'About the Ministry', -- <http://www.environment.gov.ng/about> accessed 17 November 2021.

<sup>54</sup> Michal Nachmany and others, 'Climate Change Legislation in Nigeria' in *The 2015 Global; Climate Change Legislation Study: A Review of Climate Change Legislation in 99 Countries* <<http://www.lse.ac.uk/GranthamInstitute/legislation/countries/nigeria/>> accessed 29 October 2021.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*

Change Unit was transformed into the Department of Climate Change.<sup>56</sup> In recognizing the need for an adequate response strategy to climate change, the National Assembly passed the Nigerian Climate Change Act, 2021 which was further assented to by the President on the 18 November, 2021. The Act demonstrates Nigeria's commitment to net-zero emissions as reiterated by President Muhammadu Buhari at the COP26 conference in Glasgow in 2021.<sup>57</sup> Notable highlights of the Act include: Scope and Purpose of the Act, Establishment of the National Climate Council and Secretariat, Carbon Budget, Climate Fund and National Climate Change Action Plan.<sup>58</sup> Furthermore, key aspects of the Act include its provision for nature-based solutions such as Reducing Emission from Deforestation and forest Degradation (REDD+) and environmental-economic accounting, and the push for a net zero emissions deadline for Nigeria.<sup>59</sup>

Besides these efforts to improve the country's institutional capacity to deal with climate change, there have been several policy initiatives with relevance to climate change.<sup>60</sup> For example, since 2007, civil society organizations and international donor organizations have been working together to identify climate change vulnerabilities and develop a comprehensive adaptation strategy. In 2011, these efforts resulted in the publication of the National Adaptation Strategy and Plan of Action on Climate Change for Nigeria (NASPA-CNN). The Strategy outlines responses to climate change in key areas such as agriculture (crops and livestock), freshwater resources, coastal water resources and fisheries, forests, biodiversity, health and sanitation, human settlements and housing, energy, transportation and communications, industry and commerce, disaster, migration and security, livelihoods, vulnerable groups, and education. However, the policy document did not find official support. Instead, in 2012, the Executive Council approved the adoption of a National Climate Change Policy and Response Strategy (NCCP-RS). NCCP-RS aims to provide a framework for responding to

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<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>57</sup> OM Atoyebi, 'The Nigerian Climate Change Act 2021: Nigeria's Antidote to the Global Climate Crises' <[https://omaplex.com.ng/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/THE\\_NIGERIAN\\_CLIMATE\\_CHAN](https://omaplex.com.ng/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/THE_NIGERIAN_CLIMATE_CHAN)> accessed 20 April 2022.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>59</sup> 'Climate Change Bill 2021 (Bill No. 31 of 2021)', -- <<https://www.parliament.gov.fj/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/Bill-31-Climate-Change-Bill-2021.pdf>> accessed 20 April 2022.

<sup>60</sup> Michal Nachmany and others (n 54).

climate change-induced challenges such as increased flooding and rising sea levels. There are also plans to create a National Strategic Climate Change Trust Fund (NSCCTF) and develop a National Appropriate Mitigation Action (NAMA) document. In 2013, a National Policy on Climate Change was finally approved and adopted by the Federal Executive Council. This forms the basis for any new climate change law.<sup>61</sup> The challenge of the Climate Change Unit is that it exists at the Federal Ministry of Environment as a technical department without information as to its establishment, structure and functions. As a result the environmental protection objective of establishing it would no longer be feasible.<sup>62</sup>

The second institution on climate change governance in Nigeria is the National Environmental Standards Regulations Enforcement Agency (NESREA). The NESREA (Establishment) Act, (NESREA Act) 2007, was enacted as Act No. 25 and commenced on the 30<sup>th</sup> of July 2007.<sup>63</sup> The Act<sup>64</sup> repealed the Federal Environmental Protection Agency Act 1992<sup>65</sup> and in s 1 established the NESREA, which shall be the enforcement Agency for environmental standards, regulations, rules, laws, policies and guidelines.<sup>66</sup> The vision of the Agency<sup>67</sup> is to ensure a cleaner and healthier environment for all Nigerians, while the mission is to inspire personal and collective responsibility in building an environmentally conscious society for the achievement of sustainable development in Nigeria. The Agency also collects, analyses, stores, and retrieves environmental data and information for input into national planning and development.<sup>68</sup> The obstacles of NESREA emerge from the Act itself, it lacks enforcement mechanisms; the Act is silent as to

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<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>62</sup> 'About the Ministry' (n 53).

<sup>63</sup> EU Onyeabor, 'NESREA Act and the Protection of the Nigerian Environment' unpublished lecture Note Series, Department of International and Comparative Law, Faculty of Law, University of Nigeria Enugu Campus, 2016, 3.

<sup>64</sup> The Act was signed into law by President Umaru Musa Yar'Adua, GCFR, and this has been published in the Federal Republic of Nigeria Official Gazette [31 July 2007] (94)(92).

<sup>65</sup> NESREA Act (n 1) s 36.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.* s 1(2)(a)

<sup>67</sup> 'National Environmental Standards Regulatory and Enforcement Agency (NESREA)', -- <<http://www.environment.gov.ng/nestrea.html>> accessed 30 September 2021.

<sup>68</sup> 'NESREA: What We Do', -- <<http://www.nesrea.gov.ng/activities/index.html>> accessed 17 November 2021.

whether the Agency has the powers to prosecute the offenders; and oil and gas which are the main cause of global warming are not within the ambit of the Agency.<sup>69</sup>

### 3. Climate Change and Internal Security Management in Nigeria

Now, although the relationship between climate change and conflict is apparently weak, FC Onuoha and GE Ezirim<sup>70</sup> argue the connection between climate change and national security is complex, non-linear, and, at best, uncertain. Nevertheless, its implications for national security are more pronounced in states and regions of the world where environmental and natural resource challenges have added greatly to the matrix of political, socio-economic, religious, and cultural tensions threatening the survival of people and the stability or legitimacy of the state.<sup>71</sup>

Climate change pose threats to the security situation in Nigeria through conflict over resources. This is exacerbated by increasing water and food scarcity. Desert encroachment and steadily depleting vegetation and grazing resources in the North have prompted massive emigration and resettlement of people to areas less threatened by desertification. This has resulted to communal clashes among herdsmen and farmers and inter-ethnic clashes, some of which have turned deadly.<sup>72</sup>

In Nigeria, rising temperatures, more erratic rainfall (causing both droughts and floods) and rising sea levels along the southern coast have contributed to large-scale changes in the agricultural sector, increased tensions over arable land and changed access to the country's oil revenues.<sup>73</sup> Environmental changes also contribute to population

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<sup>69</sup> NESREA Act (n 1) s 7(g).

<sup>70</sup> FC Onuoha and GE Ezirim, 'Climatic Change and National Security: Exploring the Conceptual and Empirical Connections in Nigeria', (January 2010), <[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/268575717\\_255\\_Climatic\\_Change\\_and\\_National\\_Security\\_Exploring\\_the\\_Conceptual\\_and\\_Empirical\\_Connections\\_in\\_Nigeria](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/268575717_255_Climatic_Change_and_National_Security_Exploring_the_Conceptual_and_Empirical_Connections_in_Nigeria)> accessed 19 September 2021.

<sup>71</sup> FC Onuoha and GE Ezirim (N 70).

<sup>72</sup> Huma Haider, 'Climate change in Nigeria: impacts and responses', (10 October 2019), <[file:///C:/Users/B/Documents/CC%20and%20sustainable%20internal%20security%20in%20Nig/675\\_Climate\\_Change\\_in\\_Nigeria.pdf](file:///C:/Users/B/Documents/CC%20and%20sustainable%20internal%20security%20in%20Nig/675_Climate_Change_in_Nigeria.pdf)> accessed 19 September 2021.

<sup>73</sup> Adam Day and Jessica Caus, *Conflict Prevention in an Era of Climate Change: Adapting the UN to Climate-Security Risks* (United Nations University New York 2020) 35,

displacements across the country and the broader region, not only through diminishing arable land, but increasingly due to sea level changes. More than 50 million people may need to be relocated due to sea level rises alone in the coming years. And with a population highly dependent upon agriculture, amidst long-standing tensions around land and natural resources, changing environmental conditions present serious and immediate risks to the country.<sup>74</sup>

According to Adishi and Oluka,<sup>75</sup> the reality of growing aridity of several parts of northern Nigeria has been universally acknowledged. They posit that about 35% of land areas that were cultivable before the 1960s are increasingly getting arid in 11 of Nigeria's northernmost states (Borno, Bauchi, Gombe, Adamawa, Jigawa, Kano, Katsina, Yobe, Zamfara, Sokoto, and Kebbi). As a result, "the livelihoods of some 15 million pastoralists in northern Nigeria are threatened by decreasing access to water and pasture- shortages linked to climate change".

For many communities in Nigeria, especially the southeast zone (Abia, Anambra, Ebonyi, Enugu, and Imo States), erosion and the associated flooding constitute serious environmental hazards.<sup>76</sup> Increase in the frequency of heavy rains and flooding had led to widespread erosion and siltation with more dramatic impact on these areas. Its impacts include destruction of valuable property, loss of livelihood, loss of soil nutrients and biodiversity, productivity collapses, and loss of flora and fauna due to the transportation of sand deposits or pollutants to other natural ecosystems. Loss of productivity and valuable property undermine food security, personal security, and social order in a community with consequences for internal displacement.<sup>77</sup>

Furthermore, the problem of coastal erosion/flooding due to sea-level rise and storm surges constitute a significant source of threat to life,

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<<file:///C:/Users/B/Documents/CC%20and%20sustainable%20internal%20security%20in%20Nig/UNUClimateSecurity.pdf>> accessed 19 September 2021.

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>75</sup> Eric Adishi and NL Oluka, 'Climate Change, Insecurity and Conflict: Issues and Probable Roadmap for Achieving Sustainable Development Goals in Nigeria', [2018],(4)(8). 12, ISSN: 2545-5303, *International Journal of Social Sciences and Management Research*,

<<file:///C:/Users/B/Documents/CC%20and%20sustainable%20internal%20security%20in%20Nig/Climate%20Change.%20Insecurity.pdf>> accessed 19 September 2021.

<sup>76</sup> FC Onuoha and GE Ezirim (n 70).

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*



property, livelihoods, and infrastructure in the Niger Delta.<sup>78</sup> And this is made worse by the destruction of mangrove forests due to oil exploitation activities. Flooding is widespread in the Niger Delta because of low relief, the reduced hydraulic capacities of water channels, and high rainfall. In the mangrove swamp forest areas, diurnal tidal movements result in floods exacerbated by rising sea levels, coastal erosion, and land subsidence.

Climate change also weakens the economic base that determines military capacity, as income from and employment in primary sectors such as agriculture, forestry, fishing and mining, and from environmentally dependent services like tourism, are all adversely affected by environmental change.<sup>79</sup> Furthermore, climate change-induced shifts in economic opportunity, for instance, undercut existing trade relationships that act as barriers to violence, leaving mistrust, rumour, and broken agreements in their place.<sup>80</sup> Two examples illustrate the problem.<sup>81</sup> In the south, many farmers now plant over grazing routes long agreed upon with Fulani herders, in some cases leading to violence. Their reasons are partly climate related: shifts in planting techniques driven by changing rains and temperature. Migration is also something of a wild card among the climate change-induced conflict risks.

As cropland becomes unproductive and previous settlements become unliveable as a result of harsh environmental condition (drought, desert encroachment, and desertification), people are forced to compete for available arable land or migrate to a new settlement.<sup>82</sup> Against this backdrop, the rate of migration and cross-border movement in the northern region (with international borders with the Republics of Cameroon, Chad, and Niger) has intensified with serious implications for resources and identity conflicts in the region, and even beyond. Both the competition for scarce resources (arable/grazing land, fresh water, etc.) and eco-migration triggered by climate change-induced shrinkage of

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<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>79</sup> Tochukwu Nwauba, 'Climate Change: An Emerging Threat to Nigeria's National Security', [2018](6)(11) Page No.: SH-2018-327-337, e-ISSN : 2321-3418, International Journal of Scientific Research and Management, <<https://ijsrm.in/index.php/ijsrm/article/view/1882>> accessed 19 September 2021.

<sup>80</sup> Vivan Ezra and others (n 9).

<sup>81</sup> Vivan Ezra and others (n 9).

<sup>82</sup> FC Onuoha and GE Ezirim (n 70).



Lake Chad, underpin actual and potential conflicts in some parts of the northeast zone of Nigeria.

Moreover, the Fulani herdsmen are nomadic and habitually migratory. Due to expansive desertification, drought and unchecked deforestation in Northern Nigeria, the herdsmen naturally seek greener pastures southward.<sup>83</sup> As the resultant migration has intensified, so too has violent clashes over grazing lands with local farmers in the south and pastoral herdsmen whom the former accuses of wanton destruction of their crops and forceful appropriation of their lands.

It is noteworthy that crop farmers produce more than 80% of Nigeria's food.<sup>84</sup> Leaving this critical lifeblood of the country's economic and cultural life at the mercy of herders and their cattle is not an option. Farmers, the majority of whom are women, constitute the bedrock of the country's informal economy. And the unofficial farming sector is the country's highest employer of labour. Now, this key economic sector is under siege. The on-going resource and environmental tension represented by the clash between herders and crop farmers has embedded religious significance. Most itinerant herders are northerners and adherents of the Islamic faith. Their clashes with farmers happen mainly in the central and southern regions, where most people are Christian and animist.<sup>85</sup> The herder-farmer crisis demonstrates the reality of the climate change and resource control interface, and its embedded security challenges. The scarcity of water and shrinking of grazing fields in the desert north appear to be pushing herders southwards to the grasslands of the savannahs and forests.

Furthermore, the Nigeria's biodiversity<sup>86</sup> (which relates to the diversity of ecosystems, species, and genetic traits within species which exists in a particular area: wetland, rainforest, savannah grasslands, plant and animal diversity, and various primate sub-species) is its natural assets critical for human survival and national development. This is essentially because biodiversity provides the reservoir for genetic materials, which

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<sup>83</sup> Tochukwu Nwauba (n 79).

<sup>84</sup> Chidi Oguamanam, 'Nigeria faces new security threat fuelled by climate change and ethnicity', (12 May, 2016), <<https://theconversation.com/nigeria-faces-new-security-threat-fuelled-by-climate-change-and-ethnicity-58807>> accessed 19 September 2021.

<sup>85</sup> Chidi Oguamanam (n 84).

<sup>86</sup> FC Onuoha and GE Ezirim (n 70).

can be used for pharmaceutical development, wood for fuel and furniture, and food security. New analyses suggest that about 15-37% of a sample of 1,103 land plants and animals would eventually become extinct as a result of climate changes that are expected by 2050.<sup>87</sup> Regrettably, Nigeria is experiencing progressive decline of its biodiversity. Natural water bodies, like streams, lakes, and springs, are drying up due to climate-induced changes, like drought, in the Northern parts of the country and the worsening incidence of erosion in the southern parts, which is transporting pollutants to these water bodies. The intrusion of saline water as a result of erosion into streams, lakes, and rivers has led to the reduction in freshwater supplies and fish fauna. Nigerian forests are equally affected by climate change, manifest in the decreasing forest density, poor tree growth and development, increased incidence of pests and diseases that attack and decimate forest plants and trees, and disruption and reduction of the fruiting intensity of some trees. Thus, many species of plants and animals in the country are becoming extinct.<sup>88</sup> The impact of biodiversity depletion has been worse on the local people, who depend on it for their livelihood, especially for nutritional and medicinal purposes.

Health wise, the effects have been even more terrible. The phenomenon of climate change has been known to have intensified spread of even more diseases. Extreme weather conditions have in many cases served as disease vectors or provided favourable niches to them. Tochukwu Uwauba<sup>89</sup> posits that water scarcity due to drought creates the tendency for concentration of users around remaining limited sources of water. Under such circumstances, according to him, there is increased the possibility of additional contamination of the limited resources of water and transmission of water-borne diseases like cholera, typhoid fever, Guinea worm infection, and river blindness and the increasing temperature will mean northward migration of mosquitoes and malaria fever.

The national security implications of the sudden disruption of the oil industry in the Niger Delta by climate variability cascade disastrously through the Nigerian economy.<sup>90</sup> It induces forced migration; disrupts

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<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>89</sup> Tochukwu Nwauba (n 79).

<sup>90</sup> FC Onuoha and GE Ezirim (n 70).

socioeconomic livelihoods; constricts national revenue; deepens poverty which causes robbery, theft, looting, kidnapping, depletion of the moral values and other social vices; and consequently stretches the government's capacity to provide for the citizenry.

The implication of the foregoing<sup>91</sup> is that more demands would be made by the citizens on the government to assist in preventing or mitigating the impact of climate shocks on the people. If a government is perceived to be incapable of addressing these climate-triggered stressors, it can produce heightened senses of marginalization and deprivation amongst the affected population and a stronger sense of resentment towards the government. It can equally fracture the fabrics of harmonious co-existence among hitherto peaceful groups that are divided along different cultural, ethnic, religious, and political linings. The net effect could prove very unsettling for the stability and security of a state.

Although the local people and communities have lived with these hazards of Boko Haram insurgency, banditry, kidnapping, sectarian violence, youth radicalisation, violent extremism, militancy, pastoralists' and sedentary farmers' conflicts, and separatist agitations among others for many years and have evolved ways of dealing with them, climate change is already exacerbating their impacts with consequences for security and stability in Nigeria.

#### **4. Recommendations**

Climate change is a global problem with enormous challenges which must be met by joint co-operative action. It therefore requires global, regional and national partnerships and the promotion of alternative sources of energy internally on a country by country basis. To design an effective mitigation strategy in such a way that it helps ensure sustainable development, the GHG emission pattern, available mitigation options, role of technology and market-based mechanisms ought to be known.

Furthermore, to reduce the effects of cutting GHG emissions, which are the source of the present climate change, Nigeria, being dependent on coal, oil and gas exports for her foreign exchange should diversify her economy to encourage other sectors of the economy. The Nigerian government needs to find a non-fossil fuel, non-carbon-producing form of energy or be faced with a choice: warm the planet or crush her economy. It should be noted that climate change mitigation is not about cutting carbon

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<sup>91</sup> *Ibid.*

emissions now; rather, it is about making sure that future generations do not use fossil fuels. That means investing in energy research and development of renewable technologies. This paper advocates for intergenerational solidarity wherein the four principles of sustainable development are adopted - intergenerational equity, sustainable use, equitable use and integration.

Furthermore, in a bid to safeguard the environment, we need to go back our indigenous religious values and practices. As African traditional religion is very close to nature, with structures, practices and sanctions that can effectively protect the environment, such beliefs and practices can serve as alternative tools in mitigating climate change in Nigeria, such as countering deforestation.<sup>92</sup>

Moreover, a critical challenge involves the need to sustain the political will and current momentum that provides Nigerians and foreigners with leeway to operate. While not discussed extensively in this Paper, it is generally recognized that there is need to strengthen environmental laws at all levels in Nigeria, to hold individuals, groups, firms, including Multinationals accountable for any action against the environment, which in turn fuels national insecurity. Be that as it may, the security agencies should adhere to their mandate, which is to ensure the safety of lives and properties in Nigeria. It is also imperative that the institutional mandate of security agencies and the Ministry of Environment should be respected and be adherent to without blocking the progress made in the safeguard of lives and properties in Nigeria.

However, governments and development partners will have to continue investing in the development of knowledge, skills and capacities required to mitigate and adapt to climate change; and, in due course, maintain national security. This can be done by enhancing the partnership with other governmental and public partners and by setting appropriate instruments to foster communication and participation among a wide range of actors (private sector, civil society, academic and research institutions, the large public).<sup>93</sup>

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<sup>92</sup> Huma Haider (n 72).

<sup>93</sup> Evaluation Office of United Nations Environment, Terminal Evaluation of the UN Environment Project, 'Support for the Implementation of the National Biosafety Framework of Nigeria' (March 2018) viii  
<[https://wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/25450/3655\\_2018\\_te\\_unenvir](https://wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/25450/3655_2018_te_unenvir)

The Paper further recommends that governments at all levels must intensify action on promoting environmental education and monitoring. Environmental education involves a conscious effort aimed at imparting individuals with knowledge, skills, values, and awareness of the changes in the environment.<sup>94</sup> Hence, environmental education, with specific attention on climate change, must be integrated in academic curricula of Nigerian schools. Furthermore, F.C. Onuoha and G.E. Ezirim posit that the government should move quickly to boost all environmental regulatory and security institutions and agencies in the country through sustained capacity building, greater funding, and inter-agency collaboration to improve their efficiency in preserving and monitoring environmental and security trends in the country. Furthermore, that information sharing and discussions on climate related conflicts should be undertaken largely between Nigeria government officials, scientists and researchers. The Nigerian farmers and the general public however need continuous education on the subject.

As Nigeria presents a complex terrain of interconnected social, political and economic factors, contributing to the risks of insecurity and this Paper recommends that governance matters here. It is the Government's response to climate driven resource shortages or natural disasters that influences whether their consequences increase violence or not. Improved resource management, large-scale mobilization of funds and better service delivery are needed for Nigeria to better adapt and decrease its vulnerability to climate change.<sup>95</sup> According to Adam Day and Jessica Caus, efficient governance, however, is not just done by the State, but is also a community responsibility. Looking for opportunities to educate and build local resilience and governance capacities as well as strengthening local conflict and dispute resolution mechanisms is crucial in this here. The backdrop for the reflections on these issues is the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, s14 (2)(a) and (b), which stipulates that "the security and welfare of the people shall be a primary purpose of government" and "the participation of the people in the government shall be ensured in accordance with the provision of this Constitution". Deriving from this provision, it is argued that government

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[onment\\_gef\\_speg\\_biodiversity\\_msp\\_Nigeria\\_National\\_Biosafety\\_Framework.pdf?sequence=1](#)> accessed 2 November 2021.

<sup>94</sup> FC Onuoha and GE Ezirim (n 70).

<sup>95</sup> Adam Day and Jessica Caus (n 73).

tends to lose its essence when it is unable to guarantee the basic internal security<sup>96</sup> and welfare requirements of society.

While some level of debate is useful when looking at major social problems, society must definitely move on and actually address the issue. To do nothing about the problem of climate change is akin to letting a fire burn down a building because the precise temperature of the flames is unknown, or to not address the problem of smoking cigarettes because one or two doctors still claim that it does not cause lung cancer.<sup>97</sup> One should not also lose focus of the admonition of the UNFCCC Art 3(3) that, 'where there are threats of serious or irreversible damage, lack of full scientific certainty should not be used as a reason to postponing such measures' that will, at a reasonable cost, prevent dangerous consequences in the climate system.

In the final analysis, it is recommended that all hands must unselfishly be on the deck to save man's only home before it is too late to reverse the damage caused every day. And it is all about TEAM which means Together Everyone Achieves More.

## **5. Conclusion**

Climate change is a global phenomenon, closely tied to fossil fuel-based development, which exposes countries to various degrees of vulnerability. Nigeria's vulnerability to climate change is too in-depth to be ignored. From massive flooding; rising heat waves; growing desertification; droughts; dried up water bodies; erosions; the spread of diseases; food insecurity; forced migration; attendant resource conflicts; disrupted socioeconomic livelihoods; constricted national revenue; to deepened poverty which causes robbery, theft, looting, kidnapping, depletion of the moral values and other social vices. The developing countries which Nigeria is part of are in dilemma unlike the developed countries. This is as a result of the fact that even though they are battling with crippling poverty and inequality at home, they need to develop in order to save their people out of poverty and at the same time, they need

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<sup>96</sup> IM Alumona, 'The State and Internal Security Management in Nigeria in Internal Security Management in Nigeria', [24 July 2019], 49-68 <[https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-981-13-8215-4\\_3](https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-981-13-8215-4_3)> accessed 19 September 2021.

<sup>97</sup> 'Climate Change Deniers', -- <<http://www.davidsuzuki.org/issues/climate-change/science/climate-change-basics/climate-change-deniers/>> accessed 10 October 2021.

to cut GHG emissions in order to save the world from global warming. The impact of climate change on the Nigerian security would definitely be on the rise especially if the government fails to put in place stringent adaptation and mitigation measures that could help individuals and communities cope with the challenges in the years and decades to come. We therefore encourage the Nigeria Government to stick to the Climate Agreements. In the final conclusion, climate change polices and sustainable internal security is central and complimentary of each other, as a result, the Nigerian State must work towards both. As adoption, awareness and implementation of climate polices could reduce insecurity to modest levels in the country.