

PLAYING EARTH: ECO-PEDAGOGY IN NIGERIAN DRAMA

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this work is the product of my own research efforts, undertaken under the supervision of Professor Tor Iorapuu and Professor Elizabeth Nyager and has not been presented elsewhere for the award of a degree or certificate. All sources have been duly distinguished and appropriately acknowledged.

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CERTIFICATION

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DEDICATION

In loving memory of my parents – Pastor Innocent and Mrs Stella Uzoji.

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ABSTRACT

The crisis of the earth is beginning to take centre stage in world affairs. The concern globally hinges on the need to rescue the environment from an impending ecological crisis. Over the years, changes in climate conditions have intensified a near desperate quest to salvage humanity from eco-degradation. The irony however, is that these changes are largely orchestrated by human activities. This study investigates the preoccupation of drama and the dramatic text in Nigeria with a view to seeking out its relevance to the eco-challenges of sub – Saharan Africa. It further makes a case for the engagement of Nigerian drama in the global quest for peace in which sustainable development thrives. It also investigates the eco-engagement of plays written by Wole Soyinka, Femi Osofisan, Tess Onwueme and a host of others. Three eco-related theories form the bedrock of this study. They are; Eco-pedagogy, the Ecocritical theory, and Eco-idealism. These theories concern themselves with ideas and practices of environmental preservation and conservation especially those that stir up the consciousness of the human race to the role it plays in eco-degradation and what it can do to create a more eco-friendly and sustainable world. Eco-idealism seeks for plain truths, worthy ideals and sound plans to arrest the global eco-crisis the world now faces. The focus of this study is to interrogate the discourse in the field of ecology for which a dramatist can engage and reinvigorate the needed awareness on the plight of humanity in the face of a fast eroding environment. Drama has a lot of significance in educating humanity and creating the needed awareness on how humans should relate with their environment. This study engages the problem of conflicts and its relationship with the dwindling natural resources in Nigeria. The hatred and seeming genocide that is being experienced in the country is perceived as having an ecological twist. The objectives for this study are: to find out the ways in which literary drama has

interrogated or is interrogating the eco-crisis and environmental degradation in Nigeria. Secondly, the study seeks to establish areas of critical engagement and the intersection between drama and ecology and to further engender academic discourse for Nigeria's participation in sustainable development using drama as a tool. This research work adopts the methodology of qualitative research. It is a textual analysis of selected plays by Nigerian playwrights in the past fifty years and the purpose is to seek out their relevance to the eco-discourse that has taken centre stage in contemporary literary criticism. Other works such as essays and articles that revolve around eco-issues especially as they affect the Nigerian environment have also been analysed. The focus has also been to further establish areas of critical engagement in the field of eco-drama for Nigeria and also to explore opportunities for academic discourse in Nigeria's participation in the Green Revolution using drama as a pedagogic tool. The study concludes that the planetary crisis calls for not only concerted effort but also a radical paradigm shift in re-interrogating the sustainability of the global life world. It recommends that for Nigerian drama to remain relevant in the years to come, the subject of human ecology, climate change and the planetary crisis as it affects the nation must be of immense thematic concern.

CHAPTER ONE INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

On Christmas Day in 1988, Beatrix, Queen of Holland stunned the world in an unprecedented address to her nation. She on this day, quite uncharacteristic of any monarch broke with tradition in her regular ceremonial speech to the public by discussing the acute problems facing the country. These were issues that no monarch before her had ventured to raise – ecological problems. The following is an excerpt from the queen's Christmas message:

The earth is slowly dying and the inconceivable – the end of life itself – is becoming conceivable... Each generation must give new substance to the concern for nature. After a period of development and expansion – the reclamation and cultivation of the Earth – followed a period during which concern turned into exploitation. Now we are faced with a challenge of finding a new relationship with nature, characterized by respect for ecological balance, caution and careful management (Wolfson 117).

The world is in a constant state of flux. Every waking day throws on the faces of the human race challenges that stretch not only its intellectual capability but also its resilience to survive. Many nations have woken up to one of such realities – climate change. The earth and the human race now stand virtually on the threshold of extinction due to the activities of man in the search for wealth and resources. The global quest for who controls the world's resources has left not only the ecosystem plundered but also makes the plundered regions and their inhabitants “the wretched of the earth”. Africa and indeed Nigeria is among the worst hit. From the days of slavery to colonialism and the continued neo-colonialism, the country has had to grapple with the twin-devils of exploitation and poverty in the midst of plenty. In many African states, existing

developmental strategies have not only failed to benefit the lower classes, but have destroyed forests, arable land, and fragile ecosystems, thus depriving many people of their life support systems, and in turn exacerbating existing conflicts (IPA 9). In the wake of a glaring ecological crisis facing the entire expanse of the earth, there appears to be an eco-absence in the process of policy making by nations of the world. Darder in this vein captures the world's eco-crisis thus:

Despite the importance of this phenomenon to the survival of the planet and the manner it should earnestly underscore the decisions we make in our life, seldom are the questions of ecological concerns made central to the discourse of pedagogical preparation. Perhaps it is exactly this historical "missing link" in the curriculum that is most responsible for an uncritical and inhumane response to the suffering of human beings under regimes of genocide, slavery and colonialism (3).

The continuous plundering of natural resources especially oil in the Niger-Delta regions of Nigeria have generated conflicts between communities and the oil merchants on one side and militants and the government on the other. This is in addition to the pollution and harm done to both humans and the environment as a result of the exploitative activities of the oil merchants.

It should be noted that oil production in Nigeria does contribute to global warming because the country flares more gas than any other country in the world. The methane produced by this flaring is over sixty times more harmful as a greenhouse gas than carbon dioxide, and thus contributes significantly to global warming.

Nigeria also has one of the highest rates of forest loss (3.3 percent) in the world. Since 1990, the country has lost some 6.1 million hectares or 35.7 percent of its forest cover (Grant, Nnamonu and Jowitt, 23). Worse still, Nigeria's most bio-diverse ecosystems – its old-growth forests – are disappearing at an even faster rate. Between

1990 and 2005, the country lost a staggering 79 percent of these forests (Grant, Nnamonu and Jowitt, 24). These forests took thousands of years to develop; but are being destroyed in a matter of decades. Sadly, then, Nigeria has the dubious distinction of having the highest deforestation rate of natural forest on the planet.

Despite these problems, Nigeria has striking bio-diversity. Nigeria is home to gorillas, chimpanzees, baboons and elephants, and has 899 species of birds, 274 mammals, 154 reptiles, 53 amphibians (Grant, Nnamonu and Jowitt, 24). The country has also a very rich plant-life. But as its forests fall, Nigeria has seen wildlife populations plummet from poaching and habitat loss, increasing desertification and soil erosion.

In North-Central Nigeria particularly in Jos, the last fifteen years have seen the people taking up arms against each other over the question of land ownership. The struggle for land and its resources has been a major factor in the various contestations among the various groups in the Northern Nigeria. While the Fulani herdsmen continue to agitate for grazing land with local communities, other ethnic groups are engrossed in fistcuffs over who controls the economic nerve centre of Jos metropolis. This continued struggle which also takes different colourations such as ethno-religious and political crises have left in their wake tales of woe and destruction. The conflicts have reached a point where humans are butchered and set ablaze on the streets in such a manner not befitting the dignity of dogs, chickens and goats. The land and its resources are not only degrading but so is the human mind as well.

Moreover, there is a genocidal twist to the crises and in a typical genocidal scenario as Nzungola-Ntalaja points out; “those targeted for death were not seen as human beings. Demonizing and animalizing the targets of ethnic cleansing and

genocide allow the perpetrators to feel justified in their cause and behaviour (68). Such is the level of depravity that we see in the 21st century Nigeria.

There is no doubt that historically the arts have been in the forefront of engaging society and interrogating the social and economic order particularly in Africa. Drama has mediated in times of conflicts among communities and even galvanized society to act and participate in both the political and economic spheres of their lives. Zelizer admits that in conflict regions throughout the world, the arts have often had a significant impact on bringing together divided communities (70). We are also aware that the developed West is beginning to take proactive measures to check the activities of industries and their impact on the environment. Ironically, the same West is largely responsible for the gas flaring, pollution, dumping of toxic waste all across the African landscape, the major catalyst that sparks off the conflict in these regions. No wonder Darder posits that “racism and the political economy of globalization – once known as imperialism – has dominated the ecological exploitation of societies, creating conditions that threaten peril, if we do not reverse its direction”(3). Only recently the United States unveiled a massive programme that will eliminate dependence on oil to the detriment of oil – dependent economies such as Nigeria. The import of this policy no doubt will have serious political and economic consequences not only on most African and non- African States whose livelihood is nearly 100 percent oil-dependent but also will revolutionize international relations all across the world. As oil price drops by the day, many oil dependent nations are left to make structural adjustments that will no doubt have severe consequences on the living conditions of the masses.

Recent findings also show that major economic shake-ups such as the drastic fall in the world market price of coffee and land scarcity were the major catalysts that sparked off the Rwandan genocide (Newbury 73-97). In Nigeria, one of the remote causes of the

Nigerian civil war according to Asagba is traceable to the fight for the control of the oil resources of the Niger Delta region (42). As the quest for sustainable development gathers momentum with most nations seeking for eco-solutions to life's many challenges such as energy, here in Africa, the Green Revolution is yet to go full-swing. Ironically, our economy and lifestyle as dictated by the West is greatly anti-environment and the consequences are felt each day. Africa's long-term economic wellbeing is surely linked with sustainable development of its natural resource base. As Pringle asserts; without progress in this area, the prospects for even more civil unrest and the requirements for extremely expensive emergency aid are going to escalate (6). Our intention here is to examine how far or how much drama has engaged the Nigerian society on the need to create and sustain a safe earth. The purpose is to generate and develop a scholarly discourse in the field of eco-drama. This field no doubt appears novel in the theatre in Nigeria. The advent of globalization and the realities of the 21st century Nigeria have opened up new issues and challenges for Nigerian theatre studies. As the world grapples with the effects of a warming planet, the challenge before Nigerian drama is how to engage local communities on the need for peace, tranquillity and a safe earth. Just as Keen posits, "Ethnic warfare" may flare up among groups that had previously lived together peacefully (84). Conflicts hence, whether religious, ethnic or political are part of human life. Drama therefore has a role in interrogating these issues and this work finds eco-pedagogy as one such mode through which this can be achieved. How has drama mediated the various conflicts that threaten life and property and turn the oil rich and naturally endowed Niger Delta into a cauldron of violence and chaos? How has the thematic preoccupation of play texts lately engaged issues of natural peace and tranquillity? These questions preoccupy the focus of this study.

This we achieved through a thorough investigation of Nigerian drama in the last fifty years. This study also investigates and examines the role of 21st century genres of drama as typified by plays written in the last three decades in engaging society on the realities of a global environmental meltdown. As observed by Dugga, “the options for and in Theatre are limitless; but, most definitely, this theatre serves to develop both the person and the environment” (137). It is not in doubt that drama in the 21st century is dynamic and assumes innovative roles. As stated by May;

Theatre functions as a field moving between the permeable spheres of self and community and then cuts into the terrain of our lives. Ecocriticism, like feminism, post-colonial or multi-cultural theory, addresses injustices felt in the body – the body of experiences, of community, of land (par 3).

It is from this backdrop that we approached this study. One question is critical here: To what extent has Nigerian drama taught the Nigerian populace to love the environment and treat same as sacred? The world shares a common humanity and believes that people are foremost part of the human family and the environment is their home. In both content and form, how has drama in Nigeria in the last thirty years engaged the eco-crisis in Nigeria? To what extent is Nigerian drama questioning and interrogating the eco-conflicts especially as being experienced in the Niger-Delta and elsewhere in Nigeria? These questions form the very crux of our study.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Drama comes as a bridge that connects man and his environment. Drama teaches us how and gives us the will to survive and human survival on earth largely depends on the survival of nature and the environment. A natural disaster is nature’s way of saying “I protest” and this comes with tales of woe. According to Iorapuu; “there are two dangerous empires in the world. One is the empire of Natural Disaster;

the other is the empire of Human disaster” (par 1). One of such disasters we have seen lately is man’s inhumanity to fellowman. The hatred and seeming genocide that pervades the Northern Nigerian landscape is one of such catastrophes that threaten the human race with extinction. We are no longer faced with the threat being posed by humans to other natural phenomena such as plants and animals but more gruesome is the threat humans pose to their own kind. Drama we believe can begin to engage these issues and bring a turn-around to the manner in which life and the environment is regarded in Nigeria. This is also the problem this study seeks to investigate.

1.3 AIM AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objectives of this study are:

- To find out the ways in which literary drama has interrogated or is interrogating the eco-crisis and environmental degradation in the Nigeria.
- To establish areas of critical engagement and the intersection between drama and ecology and to further engender academic discourse for Nigeria’s participation in sustainable development using drama as a tool.

1.4 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

From the bedrock of what we have analysed so far, we find three basic philosophical standpoints as the fulcrum for this study. They are: Eco-pedagogy and the Ecocritical theory, Eco-idealism and postmodernism.

1.4.1 Ecopedagogy and the Ecocritical Theory: Kahn sees eco-pedagogy as a form of non-formal popular education, borne out of developed ideas and practices of environmental preservation and conservation “that stirs many people to become self-aware of the role they play in environmental destruction and to become more socially active in ways that can help to create more ecological and sustainable world (5). From

this definition, eco-pedagogy can be further viewed as an outgrowth of developments in critical pedagogy, a body of educational ideas and practices influenced by Paulo Freire. The mission of this theory is to develop a robust appreciation for the collective potentials of being human and to foster social justice throughout the world. One of its goals is the realization of culturally relevant forms of knowledge grounded in normative concepts such as sustainability, planetarity (i.e. identifying as an earthling) and biophilia (i.e. love of all life).

Eco-pedagogy is not just another pedagogy among many other pedagogies. It not only has meaning as an alternative global project concerned with nature preservation (Natural Ecology) and the impact made by human societies on the natural environment (Social Ecology), but also as a new model for sustainable civilization from the ecological point of view (Integral Ecology), which implies making changes on economic, social, and cultural structures (Antunes and Gadotti 2). Thus, effective environment and sustainability education according to McNaughton should be: “holistic; active and participative; based on and in the environment; focused on values; based on action competence; and systemic” (291).

The whole concept centres on self-consciousness, awareness and the need for action motivated by self-realization. It is aimed at educating the individual to see from an inward point of view the need for change. The sustainability values promoted by the Earth Charter have terrific educational potential: the preservation of the environment depends on an ecological conscience and shaping this conscience depends on education (Antunes and Gadotti 1).

Murphy in his review of Ecocriticism says this theory can be employed in studying any literary work in so far as that work reveals or reflects something about nature and humanity’s place in, with, or against it. Nature-oriented literature is limited

to having either nonhuman nature itself as a subject, character, or major component of the setting, or to a text that says something about human – nonhuman interaction, human philosophies about nature, or the possibility of engaging nature by means of or in spite of human culture. The goal of Ecocriticism is to decentre humans, often by giving nature “back” its subjectivity. Ecocritics claim that they must represent nature (speak for and about it) as a subject with rights by finding (listening to) nature’s voice (Caminero-Santangelo, 699). Ecocritics insist that in literary studies non-human nature must be treated as having an existence and value beyond the human and the environmental representation is not to be read only as a means of symbolically exploring other, more important (human) concerns or as an ideological tool. In the words of Rosenbatt, a major Green theorist:

Nature in its monumental autonomy throws us back upon ourselves – not merely our inventive but our moral selves. Humans are the only species able to go everywhere in the world, which also means we have the capacity to do good or ill everywhere. The hardest case to make for acting on an environmental conscience is that it is the right thing to do. Yet, in the end, it may be the only case worth making. If we do not respect nature; we do not respect ourselves (32).

Recent scholarship on conservationism in Africa shows the links among many Western “environmental” beliefs regarding Africa, conservationist policies, and power in colonial and postcolonial Africa. These studies according to Caminero-Santangelo suggest that traditional Western “wisdom” about the environment and environmental change in Africa can be a form of colonial discourse which works all the more effectively through claims to its scientific validity and/or its apolitical objectivity. This is tantamount to a celebration of Western environmental knowledge and the subsequent denigration of indigenous environmental practice, suggesting that (non-Westernized) Africans do not understand and abuse their environment, and that Westerners (or those

with Western training) need to protect it. Thus, much recent scholarship in African environmental history represents Western ‘received wisdom’ about African environments, as well as Western conservation in Africa, as determined by the “historical, political and institutional context for science and policy” and more specifically, by the effort to promote “external intervention in the control and use of national resources (Adams and Hulme, 20).

For Slaymaker, what ecocriticism offers is not another theory of liberation like Marxism (684). Rather, it appears as one more hegemonic discourse from the metropolitan West. A theory of liberation should entail and espouse liberation from Western literary theories and their domination of literary themes, images and language. Black African writers take nature seriously in their creative and academic writing, but many have resisted or neglected the paradigms that inform much of global ecocriticism. For Slaymaker, the call of the global Green Wave resounding through much of the literary world has been answered weakly by black African writers and critics (684).

1.4.2 Eco-idealism

The quest to dominate nature has formed part of humanity’s critical consciousness especially in an era when natural resources are fast becoming scarce. The question now is how to make nature work for us? Eco-pedagogues believe this is an erroneous mindset that has further exacerbated the environmental aggression humans now face and there is need for a renewed thinking that puts nature, humans and environment at par for the general good of all. This is far more needful as conflicts and wars the world over are traceable to the quest for space and natural resources.

Foss defines eco-idealism as a philosophy of nature which suffers from the weaknesses that afflict popular ideologies because it sprung up spontaneously from the

soil of human concern and conviction (8). For him, it is not a system of thought but a loose collection of putative facts, questionable creeds, and hastily conceived calls for action fortified throughout with plain truths, worthy ideals, and sound plans (8). On the other hand, Pepper sums up the belief of Eco-idealists saying it is hinged on a world that can be changed by thinking about it.

If people decide, for instance, that it is a good idea to start behaving cooperatively, non-aggressively and benignly towards nature, then they can do so. If you want to change society in these directions, then you need to change institutions where we learn our values and ideologies (Pepper 13).

The main objective of this philosophical engagement is a re-modelling of the institutions that shape the values that society holds in regard to the environment.

Imperialism and imperialist ideologies interpret nature and the environment as a resource to be prowled upon. The earth is meant to work for humanity and this flawed mindset is the springboard that drove the expansionist encroachment on African soil. All over the landscape of Nigeria particularly, one is stunned by the relics of life and damage done to the environment for over a century all in a desperate quest for natural resources. Reid explains that to our modern, urbanized consciousness, the two modes of valuing nature – reverential and utilitarian – tend to seem mutually exclusive.

It will not be enough to acknowledge our dependence on the natural world on a notional or theoretical level. We will be on a truly sustainable path only when our awareness of that dependence informs all our thinking about using natural resources and all our practices in every form of economic, social and cultural activity (157).

Another concern for the eco-idealist is that we have a dying planet. In an age of fast-paced technology and massive industrialization, the combustion that drives these

apollonian projects takes its toll on the life of the earth. Just as Raberg puts it: “Wherever we live on the globe, we are inexorably involved in networks whose functions have the entire planet for their arena and whose aim is to establish closer contact with its outermost limits” (47). The life of the Earth is being stretched to its limits. Melting icecaps overflow the seas and the oceans and the raging waters pour out its fury on inhabitants of the land. This definitely is not unconnected with activities of humans. Sale captures human’s inhumanity to the Earth thus:

We remove too many fish from the sea and too many trees from the forest. We replace grasslands with agricultural fields with towns. We divide land into patches separated by concrete barriers we call highways. And we poison natural systems (and sometimes ourselves) when we send the by-products of our technology (not to mention our used and unwanted items), into landfills, waterways, and the air around us. Now our impacts are so large that we are altering the chemistry of our atmosphere and oceans in ways that change the climate on a global scale (3).

To reverse this trend, eco-idealists believe that there is need for a purification of the human mind. Pure minds create clean lands. Queen sees pure minds as thoroughly controlled minds which are delightful, peaceful, and unfettered in any situation. Clean lands he says, is a world where balance and harmony with nature are well established and the earth is no longer something to be conquered but to be preserved by abandoning lust and desire. To achieve this, there is need to develop a pure mind in our livelihood and to reject consumerism in order to keep the earth sustainable, peaceful and clean. (168).

Vittori on his part also sees eco-idealism as a further development on the idealist philosophy. In what he calls the philosophies of deep ecology and biocentricism, adherents believe that all organisms on earth are of equal value and

equally deserving of consideration. This philosophy favours rolling back industrialization and civilization to an imagined pristine state which adherents believe has been spoiled by the human race. Vittori further postulates that these radical environmental groups stress that an environmental apocalypse is imminent, and hence, immediate, direct action is necessary. Adherents to this philosophy also suggest that fundamental changes must be made in human values or that economic, social and political structures must change to force mankind into living in harmony with nature (Vittori 356).

Further excavations into the philosophy of ‘naturalism’ saw to the emergence of eco-idealism. Alexander is another scholar that came up with what he called ‘eco-ontology’ as a substitute for naturalism which he saw as a term that must be rescued from what he calls “reductionist associations” (18). Alexander also believes eco-ontology has the advantage of recognizing that philosophy itself must overcome its own habits of mind in order to rethink nature along genuinely ecological lines (18).

Most of western philosophy has posed the ‘question of being’ in terms that resist an ecological outlook. Aristotle, great biologist as he was, thought of nature in terms of species, not in terms of relations of species and environments. Dewey’s naturalism, by contrast, is one of the most impressive efforts to think along ecological lines, emphasizing the fundamental dynamism of the organism-environment interaction and the interrelated, temporal webs of events that have bearing on each other (Alexander 18). However, one guiding theme of eco-ontology is the primacy of nature over being. While Aristotle prioritized being, the Stoics affirmed “God or nature” – *Deus sive natura*. Nicholas Cusanus and then Giordano Bruno had God as the “enfolding” potential infinite who “contracted or unfolded” into the actual infinite universe (Alexander 19). In the African socio-cultural milieu, the understanding of the

place, existence and the creative prowess of any god is to look at nature and the environment. This explains the intricate but highly inextricable link between the traditional African devoid of any western ideological contraption to all kinds of natural phenomena. These phenomena are deified in the gods of thunder, god of the earth, the river goddess and many more including god of the forest. The encroachment of western religions or religious beliefs absolutely rubbishes the sacredness of the African environment and turns it into a mere economic resource to be exploited for the so-called good of humanity. Presently, the situation is that these once revered natural endowments are continuously being ferried off to western nations. This is the situation in which Pippin says is brought about by what he calls “the hypermodern era”, where there are religious worries about the compatibility between traditional faith and modernization (3). More recently, there are claims that the appeal to a progressive modern revolution could not be disentangled from the politics of western imperialism, and represented only a European rhetorical strategy for the sake of its own hegemonic interests (Pippin 4).

1.4.3 Postmodernism: The literal meaning of postmodernism is “after modernism” and in many ways postmodernism constitutes an attack on modernist claims about the existence of truth and value – claims that stem from the European enlightenment of the 18th century. Quayson relates postmodernism to a literary and philosophical tradition of representation which could be said to have its own peculiar historical and social trajectory in Western thought (647). He further typifies this theory as a vigorously anti-systemic mode of understanding with pluralism, borders and multiple perspectives being highlighted as a means of disrupting the centralizing impulse of any system (649).

One major trait of the postmodernist cultural movement is the dominance of inaccessible and impenetrable prose that characterise many postmodern philosophical texts. This is however intentional and reflect specific claims about the nature of language and meaning. In disputing past assumptions, postmodernists generally display a preoccupation with the inadequacy of language as a mode of communication. Among the major postmodern theorists are French philosophers Jacques Derrida and Michel Foucault and psychoanalyst Jacques Lacan.

Derrida originated the philosophical method of deconstruction, a system of analysis that assumes a text has no single, fixed meaning, both because of the inadequacy of language to express the author's original intention and because a reader's understanding of the text is culturally conditioned – that is, influenced by the culture in which the reader lives. Thus texts have many possible legitimate interpretations brought about by the “play” of language. Derrida stresses the philosophical importance of pun, metaphor, ambiguity, and other playful aspects of language traditionally disregarded in philosophy. In the words of Derrida: “I do not believe that anyone can detect by reading, that I am a ‘French Algerian’” (46). His method of deconstruction involves close and careful readings of central texts of Western philosophy that bring to light some of the conflicting forces within the text and that highlight the devices the text uses to claim legitimacy and truth for itself, many of which may lie beyond the intention of its author. Although some of Derrida's ideas about language resemble views held by the analytic philosophers; Wittgenstein, Quine, and Davidson, many philosophers schooled in the analytic tradition have dismissed Derrida's work as destructive of philosophy. However, despite the disagreements and arguments on what constitutes the postmodernist paradigm, Ihab Hassan (123-4), believes that postmodernism has its major traits that distinguishes it from modernism. These include

Dadaism as against symbolism, antiform as against form, antithesis as against synthesis, deconstruction as against totalization, decreation as against creation, misreading as against reading, anti-narrative as against narrative, among others.

Foucault created a searing critique of the ideas of the Enlightenment, such as reason and truth. Like Derrida, Foucault used close readings of historical texts to challenge assumptions, demonstrating how ideas about human nature and society, which we assume to be permanent truths, have changed over time. From an array of historical texts Foucault created “philosophical anthropologies” that reveal the evolution of concepts such as reason, madness, responsibility, punishment, and power. By examining the origins of these concepts, he maintained, we see that attitudes and assumptions that today seem natural or even inevitable are historical phenomena dependent upon time and place (Carpenter par 4). He further claimed that the historical development of these ideas demonstrates that seemingly humane and liberal Enlightenment ideals are in reality coercive and destructive.

Lacan agreed with Derrida and Foucault about the need to overturn crucial cultural and philosophical assumptions, but he arrived at this conclusion by a different method altogether. Influenced by Swiss linguist Ferdinand de Saussure and the psychoanalytic theories of Sigmund Freud, Lacan claimed that the unconscious portion of the mind operates with structures and rules analogous to those of a language. He used this claim to criticize both psychoanalytic theory and philosophy. On one hand, he believed that concepts from linguistics could clarify and correct Freud’s picture of the mind and provide the field of psychoanalysis with greater philosophical depth (Carpenter par 5). On the other hand he mentioned that applying psychoanalytic methods and theories to linguistics would radically revise traditional philosophical views of language and reason.

These philosophical frameworks have provided us with new parameters from which we can begin to study the works of Soyinka, Osofisan, Onwueme and others. The trend of eco-engagements in the arts especially drama is also now taking centre stage as the global threat of a warming planet and its attendant consequences is also now a matter of growing concern. The drive for sustainable development and protecting the earth's natural heritage provides a platform for dramatists in Nigeria to engage. Soyinka's early dramatic works such as *The Lion and the Jewel*, *Dance of a Forest* and *The Swamp Dwellers* can be cited for any of their ecocentric dimensions. The same goes for Osofisan whose play – *Morountodun* will pass for not just a postmodernist dramatic text but can be also reviewed from the perspectives of eco-radicalism. Tess Onwueme's plays such as *Then She Said It* and *The Desert Encroaches* make a strong case for climate change and environmental justice both in the Niger Delta and the Northern part of Nigeria.

1.5 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The postmodern dramatist has a nomenclature of interrogating teething issues in the society through the work of art. One of the visible traits of this movement in the last century is the questioning of the relevance of the neo-classicist struggle and the enthronement of a neo-liberalist approach to existing social structures in the society. This research is relevant not only to the dramatist but also to the social scientist as it not only opens up a new vista of engagement for the theatre but also focuses on the paramount issue of human peaceful co-existence in our society. This research exposes the need for the dramatist to focus on issues of conflicts as it affects the environment, nature, human survival and sustainable development.

1.6 ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE OF THE STUDY

This work is divided into six chapters. The first deals with the introduction, purpose of the study, aim and objectives of the study, significance of the study, research scope, methodology, theoretical framework, definition of terms and contemporary application.

Chapter two offers an intensive literature review that among other things concentrates on the advent of eco-pedagogy and its relevance in solving issues related to conflicts and environmental degradation, the genesis of the Niger Delta conflicts and efforts made at resolving them.

Chapter three presents the data elicited from selected Nigerian dramatic texts that echo nature and ecological phenomena. Chapter four presents details of the interview done with selected playwrights whose recent works have touched on issues affecting the environment. Chapter four also considers latest reports on the state of the Nigerian environment especially the Niger Delta and drama's engagement with these issues.

Chapter five focuses on data analysis where we synthesized all the issues and findings together. Chapter six is the conclusion, summary as well as observations and recommendations.

1.7 DEFINITION OF TERMS

1.7.1 Ecopedagogy: Eco-pedagogy as used in this study refers to the systematic presentation of facts and ideas of ecological concerns. It is the sharing of knowledge about nature – life and the environment in such a manner that reawakens the consciousness of the human mind for change.

1.7.2 Eco-planetary: In this study, we view eco-planetary as that which describes the environmental or ecological concerns relating or involving all of Earth, its people and countries.

1.7.3 Eco-drama: Eco-drama is viewed in some quarters as a project which engages and inspires people in the value of caring and being responsible for our natural world (www.ecodrama.co.uk). As defined by the University of Oregon, Ecodrama Playwrights Festival of May 2009:

Eco-drama stages the reciprocal connection between humans and the more-than-human world. It encompasses not only works that take environmental issues as their topic, hoping to raise consciousness or press for change, but also work that explores the relation of a “sense of place” to identity and community (www.cfcinc.org).

While we cannot agree less with the above definition as it aptly captures the framework from which this study theoretically finds credence, we however add that Ecodrama as used in this study refers to all performative literature that concerns itself primarily as advocacy for the environment. Ecodrama here means all dramatic texts that bring to light the environmental challenges humanity currently faces.

1.7.4 Eco-crisis: Ayre citing James Nash says eco-crisis is not “a single, discrete problem, but rather a massive mosaic of intertwined problems adversely affecting all life” (par 2). The global eco-crisis is a phenomenal and serious environmental degradation of our time that largely has a human cause. Eco-crisis however as used here, refers to an event or series of events usually caused by human actions that result in very severe damage to the environment. Here we are looking at a time of great danger or difficulty to the environment that is as a result of human actions.

1.7.5 Drama: Dasylyva sees drama by its very nature and form as performative saying “it is realised primarily, through performance (enactments) (29). However, the standard

definition of drama is that it is an imitation of an action of a person with the ultimate objective to edify or to entertain or do both. For the purposes of this study, we see drama in its literary sense. In other words, drama as used in this study is the documentation of these mimetic actions in a play text.

1.7.6 Conflict: Wallenstein defines conflict as a social situation in which a minimum of two actors (parties) strive to acquire at the same time/moment an available set of scarce resources (16). Wilson on the other hand sees conflict as any situation, which results into controversy, struggle, strife or contention and in consequence, brings about a state of incompatibility between humans and a crisis within the society (163). Conflict generally refers to a disagreement or clash between ideas, principles, or people as in the case of ideological contestations. In this study, we see conflict as warfare between opposing forces, especially a prolonged and bitter but sporadic struggle.

CHAPTER TWO LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 ORIGIN AND CONCEPTS OF DRAMA

Drama is as old as Homo sapiens. Its origin can be traced to the period when humans first set foot on the earth. Brocket says performative elements (both dramatic and theatrical) are present in every society, no matter how complex or how unsophisticated a society may be (1).

Theatre emerged out of myth and ritual. Anthropologists in the 19th and early 20th centuries, point out that during the early stages of the development of drama, a society becomes aware of the forces that appear to influence or control its food supply and well-being. Desirable and undesirable occurrences are attributed to supernatural or magical forces. In the struggle to combat the undesirable and sustain the desirable, the society believes that continuity, refinement and formalization of actions into fixed ceremonies was the key. This according to Brocket is the theory of ritual origin – the bedrock of drama in all societies including Africa.

But much more worrisome is the fact that in Brocket's anthology of theatre/drama, no mention is made of African drama. Nonetheless Nigerian drama has been influenced by drama emerging from other climes such as Greece, United States, Western Europe and the Scandinavia. Perhaps due to the criticisms the 6th edition of Brocket's book received, he attempted to address this anomaly in the 7th edition with the addition of a new chapter on the theatre of Africa.

Dugga in his defence of African theatre against Western conceptualizations, points out that virtually all early African civilizations are known to have possessed artistic forms preserved in oral traditions. More importantly, "African theatre

performances of various genres considerably predate Africa's contact with Europe" (77).

However, Western historiography has it that stories (myths) grow around rituals. Frequently, the myths include representations of those supernatural forces that the rites celebrate or hope to influence. Performers may wear costumes and masks and represent the mythical characters of supernatural forces in the rituals or in accompanying celebrations. As a people become more sophisticated, their conceptions of supernatural forces and causal relationships may change. Consequently, they abandon or modify some rites. But the myths that have grown up around the rites may continue as part of the group's oral tradition and may even come to be acted out under conditions divorced from ritualistic concerns.

The above scenario is quite reminiscent of all dramatic origins including from Africa. No one society can lay claim to be the birth place of drama not even Athens (which is considered the birth place of Western European drama) and its dithyrambic processions.

Africa does have a theatre culture, a history and a civilization that predates her contact with the West. The origin of drama therefore cannot be traced in isolation to Greece or any other part of Europe. The origins of all dramatic forms are also traceable to Africa. Drama is inherent in the life of the African and his continued combat with the forces of nature.

2.2 CONCEPTUAL AND CONTEXTUAL OVERVIEW OF DRAMA AND ECOPELAGOGY

We spill our unholy wars upon her belly's tender flesh, blazing dislocated corpses, ignite her agony and grief.

Still, in love with her creations, she warns of our complacency to cataclysmic devastation, rooted in the alienation of our disconnection, our rejection, our oppression, our scorn.

And still, we spin ungodly tantrums of injustice against her love, against ourselves, against one another. __ Darder (cited in Kahn x).

Darder's poem (excerpts above) captures the whole essence of this study. Drama is a creative and expressive area of human activity which provides a powerful source of peace-building energy and passion that is not always apparent in the formalized processes of political conflict resolution (Ramsbotham, Woodhouse and Miall 347). One of the attributes of eco-pedagogy is to educate the individual on the need to love life and protect same. This is the pathway to sustainability.

We live in a world where humans must struggle to regain their humanity by going back to history to locate their connection with nature and redefine their civilization. As the world now yearns for a new civilization that underscores our common heritage in mother earth and life, a critical understanding of issues in eco-literacy becomes imperative. The other dimension that gives justification to this new zeal is the fact that the poorest regions of the world have the worst ecological problems. The poorest regions of the world are or have been the most exploited regions in terms of human and natural resources. The poorest regions of the world are also the regions that have seen the worst conflicts angst by growing poverty, social injustice and the scramble for scarce resources.

Eco-pedagogy hence, emanates from these contentions as a body of scholarly discourses in the field of critical pedagogy. Martin and Te Riele believe that it is an

outgrowth that is not older than 30 years and owes a lot to works done by Paulo Freire and Augusto Boal. It has been at the centre of efforts “to construct social alternatives that are both credible and compelling. This has included creating new social contexts and encounters that value alternative meanings, knowledge and actions” (23). This allusion of a three decade eco-presence in literature may be true for Western literature but in Africa and particularly Nigeria, eco-pedagogy has been present in our dramatic writings for more than half a century. Some of the works of Soyinka used in this study were written in the 1950s and in them we find images and messages that challenge the injustice done to the environment by humans.

Environmental education is a multi-discursive field. It is a space of both struggle and opportunity for the reconstruction of a web of relations between humans and the environment and with each other. This web has faded with the advance of civilization, but could enable us to develop new treaties between cultures, societies and nature and give rise to new values, languages, and meanings that could lead us responsibly to the social change that is so critical at this time (Gonzalez-Gaudio & Meira-Carter 14).

Eco-pedagogy is a form of non-formal popular education which Kahn says is borne out of developed ideas and practices of environmental preservation and conservation that centres on self-consciousness, awareness and the need for action by self-realization (5). As an outgrowth of critical pedagogy, it questions the status quo, and liberates the mind towards change from dehumanization to humanization. The world’s economic structure as well as the adoption of globalized capitalism has no doubt created a serious dichotomy not only in the distribution of wealth but also in the human environment. In the same earth, we have those who live in affluence and comfort and those who battle with diseases every day. Such is the dehumanization

which Freire says marks not only those whose humanity has been stolen, but also (though in a different way) those who have stolen it (44). This he said, is a distortion of the vocation of becoming more fully human and “this distortion occurs within history; but it is not a historical vocation” (44). He further believes that the world as we have come to terms with today is engaged in a struggle led by the oppressed peoples of the earth against those who made them less human and was quick to advise that this struggle to regain their humanity must not turn the oppressed to become oppressors of the oppressors. This is quite reminiscent of the flashes of several agitations we have seen in Nigeria’s Niger Delta. The militarization of the struggle and the seeming criminality this struggle takes all in a bid to free the area of further exploitation takes the wind off the sail of genuine efforts at resolving the evident eco-crisis in the region. For Freire, both the oppressed and the oppressor have lost their humanity and the struggle should be aimed at restoring the humanity of both (44). This is one problem eco-pedagogy and eco-literacy seeks to address.

One strong strand of the concept of eco-pedagogy is the love of all ‘life’. The last three decades have been a seemingly wake up call for all peoples of the Earth to consciously embrace lifestyles and attitudes that promote the sacredness of life. But every where we look “social relations of oppression and contempt for human dignity abound” (McLaren 22). For McLaren, gobbling up the global life world in the quest for an endless accumulation of surplus value has produced some world – historical excretory excesses, turning the world into a global toilet of toxic waste while adding legions of Marx’s reserve army of labour (20). While this remains the true story of many developing nations, the arts in most cases have celebrated the apollonian heights humans have achieved but at the expense of a dying earth. This is what brings to light

the need for an eco-literacy that is place – efficient and can serve the needs of local communities.

Nanda and Warms in this light draw us to the position that national narratives show history as a march of progress:

They celebrate the founding and development of corporations rather than the violence that often accompanied such events. They focus on the lives of the wealthy and powerful or sometimes, the infamous. The lives, the struggles of families, of members of ethnic and religious minorities, of women, and of children are often omitted from the record. Their voices are silenced (343).

Such is the scenario when we have an art that is not only classicist but marks the semblance of the ethos of a bourgeois society. Ecopedagogy hence seeks the reversal of this trend and pursues the emergence of a new body of knowledge and the awakening of a multi-disciplinary approach to peace, safe earth and sustainable development. As the world continues to grapple with the reality of depleting resources, the battle rages on for the remaining natural resources. Standlea believes that an unprecedented expansion of human population coupled with an America-styled propagation of unlimited economic “growth paradigm” is forcing a critical historic transition portrayed by ruthless competition over Earth’s remaining natural resources (1). “It is unlikely that the current state of affairs and the rate of greed and acquisition, especially characterising American economic consumption, will prevail at this pace without forcing severe environmental and social conflict and chaos” (Standlea 1). It is quite obvious as recent global events have proven that where there is oil, there is war. Where there is diamond, there is blood. We cannot extricate the world’s deadliest conflicts from the quest and struggle for natural resources as exemplified in Nigeria’s Delta regions and elsewhere in other African countries as well as the Gulf nations. The

politics of these conflicts have been the continued desperate quest especially by Western nations for these resources. Sadly enough, these conflicts or wars have left in their wake environmental havoc of the worst kind not to mention the devastation the continued exploitation of these resources bring to local communities.

Our planet is replete with conflicts (human disasters) that betray the love for all life going by the catastrophic consequences that these conflicts beget. Though the conflicts in Africa and indeed Nigeria may take the semblance of political, ethnic or religious colouration, everything boils down to the fact that we live in a world that is savagely anti-human, and as a consequence anti-environment. When humans are taught to love and protect their own kind, they will inevitably protect their habitation. This is the space that eco-pedagogy tries to fill. There is an “eco-solution” to all threats to human existence. Sadly, this space has not been explored enough by theatre practitioners in the last five decades. As confirmed by May: “An increasingly lively and nuanced eco-critical discourse in literary studies has entered its third decade, but a comparable discourse in theatre studies has been slow to take root” (95). Chaudhuri also gives credence to this fact asserting that environmental theatre as he calls it is still at its experimental stage. For him, it is just “an exploration of the theoretics of naturalism rested on the fantasy of total visibility, of the impossible translation of private experience into public expression” (17).

Transformative theatre which is a brand of theatre emerging from the gaps created by Theatre for Development (TFD) in the last ten years has the potential to spearhead this kind of education. Iorapuu posits that transformative theatre which draws from the pedagogies of Bertolt Brecht, Paulo Freire, Augusto Boal and Jack Mezirow, “seeks to explore the people’s experiences in solving problems plaguing their communities. It is about seeking solutions through education that is transformative and

self – sustaining. This can only take place when individuals significantly reflect upon environment and learning” (573). Not much has been done in African literature and literary discourse to reflect the Green revolution or the Green wave blowing across the world. Slaymaker validates this by saying that the African echo of global green approaches to literature and literary criticism has been faint (683). Clive also adds his voice to the seeming eco-silence by African artists pointing out that there is a basic relationship between theatre and the environment. “In all times and places and particularly, in the Niger Delta, the theatre has dealt extensively on the relationship between man and man, man and the unseen but little or nothing has been on stage on the relationship between man and the environment”(par 1). This seemingly eco-hesitation is partly due to reservations by many African writers, literary critics and artists who view the whole eco-discourse as yet another attempt by the West to impose a hegemonic discourse. “For some Black African critics, ecolit and ecocrit are another attempt to ‘white out’ black Africa by colouring it green” (Slaymaker 684).

Prior to the coming of the white man, Africans had their indigenous ways of protecting the environment and the natural habitat from which they derive their livelihood. The Okonko society, a traditional religious cult in Igboland has as one of its tenets the value for the natural environment and its preservation through disciplined habits, practices, tradition and values that enhance its purity and beauty. A study by Nwosu reveals that environmental protection in Okonko ethos has a religious as well as social relevance. It recognizes and appreciates the beauty of nature (61). With conscious efforts, mechanisms were put in place to check deforestation, assortment, and pollutants to land, air and water. Specific trees are regarded as sacred. They provide shades for the community streams while some trees and plants serve as medicines. It is

a forbidden tradition to cut down certain trees. Certain animals, plants and rivers are also viewed as sacred and preserved from any form of exploitation.

All these have changed with the advent of modern religious practices. These beliefs are seen as mundane, anachronistic and satanic, hence some of these trees have been felled, exploited and their proceeds sold to both local and foreign merchants. Further down the line we have seen tin mining activities in the North, coal mining in the East, oil in the Niger-Delta; all these exploration and exploitation have left their toll on the environment. Despite these contestations however, the reality of the environmental degradation in Africa was brought to the fore by the martyrdom of Ken-Saro Wiwa in 1995. Since then, the act of environmental degradation especially in the Niger-Delta, a region plagued by conflicts between armed militias and government forces has been exposed to the entire world. Only recently, international and domestic outcry for justice has been rife over the continued destruction of the eco-system and the fact that places like Ogoni will require 30 years of thorough clean-up to salvage the region from the mess created by oil exploration and exploitation.

Across the landscape of Nigeria: the Niger-Delta oil pollution, the landslides and erosion in the South East, the desert encroachment in the North and floods in the Middle Belt region; every part of this country has a sad story to tell. In the centre of this is the fact that some of these natural disasters are caused by some human activities.

2.3 GREENING THE ARTS: THE GLOBAL PRAXIS OF NATURE AND THE CONNECTIONS BETWEEN DRAMA AND HUMAN ECOLOGY

Climate change, global warming, ozone depletion – all these have become popular clichés that have characterized various global summits aimed at confronting the environmental challenges of the 21st century. Nations of the earth have risen in one testament – The Earth’s Charter to forge a common cause aimed at addressing a reality

that stares all in the face – a human race under peril due to the absolute disregard for nature. The first paragraph of that document reads:

We stand at a critical moment in Earth's history, a time when humanity must choose its future. As the world becomes increasingly interdependent and fragile, the future at once holds great peril and great promise. To move forward we must recognize that in the midst of a magnificent diversity of cultures and life forms we are one human family and one Earth community with a common destiny. We must stand together to bring forth a sustainable global society founded on respect for nature, universal human rights, economic justice and a culture of peace. Towards this end, it is imperative that we, the peoples of Earth, declare our responsibility to one another, to the greater community of life, and to future generations (echarter.org).

Natural and man-made disasters of catastrophic magnitude now ravage the entire globe. From flash floods, tsunamis, earthquakes, forest fires, draught, hurricanes, erosions, desert encroachments, air and water pollution, oil spills, every part of the earth shores in one sad story or the other. In Africa, humans have to grapple with the twin-devils of both natural and man-made disasters as well as conflicts and their attendant natural consequences of hunger, destitution, disease and poverty.

Amidst these realities is the question of the role of drama in addressing the ecological concerns of the earth. As stated by Chaudhuri, ecological victory will require a transvaluation so profound as to be nearly unimaginable at present and the arts and humanities, including drama, must play a role (Chaudhuri). McKibben equally adds his voice to this believing that playwrights, poets and artists need to create works which will place climate change deeply in the imagination (Ashden). Drama holds the power to help us see “something about ourselves” by touching some parts of our identity construct. Theatre is life – a reflection of who we are and what we do. Humans cannot

be disconnected from the environment and hence, theatre needs and ought to reveal the common reality of the earth – the home of all human beings. This is more apt as “our human identity and the identification of what we refer to as nature, are now forever intertwined and dependent upon one another” (McKibben 11).

To understand the relationship of theatre and nature one must first refigure the relationships between ‘culture’ and ‘nature’ that all humans inevitably inherit. Modernist traditions of European ‘enlightenment’ pitched nature and culture, ‘man’ and the environment against each other in what Kershaw says has turned out to be a potentially disastrous opposition (12). Nature is human and humanity forms the whole ensemble that nature represents. Since theatre is life, then it only amounts to the fact that all human life is theatricalised and dramatised, including, crucially, its interactions with other species and the environment. The performance paradigm was thus a major generative force of an age of ecology that emerged in the final five decades of the second millennium (Kershaw 14).

The concept of the “Green theatre” is such that is shrouded in a lot of complexities owing to the fact that the word “Green” is not easily collocated. The green terminology spans across several disciplines from medicine to politics. We have heard of the word – The British Green Party, Green Capitalism, Green Consumerism, Green Theory, Green Socialists, Green Ecology, Greenpeace, Green shirts, The German Green Party, The American Green Party, The Green Economy, etc.

However, the concept of ‘Green’ today has developed into a universally understood notion that non-human nature is given status, and that to protect it, the concept/ideology has come to include socio-political ideology. The traditional Green theory includes a critique of growth, environmental concern, scientific ecology,

philosophical holism and the granting of status to non-human nature (Wall 29). Wall in his study reveals that in seeking to solve environmental problems, “Greens” have been forced to consider human affairs and embrace a set of political, economic, and cultural principles. “Any description of Green demands an exploration of approaches to human society. Solving perceived ecological problems undoubtedly demands a transformation of attitudes and institutions” (Wall 29). The world’s economy as it stands today is largely driven by forces that put both man and nature under peril. Gaseous emissions from industries and exploitation of forest reserves can only be checked by an absolute change of not only attitudes but also of institutions that perpetuate this trend. Green theorist Schnaiberg supports this crucial element by reminding us that “all environmental problems are social problems regarding both their causes and effects” (17).

Based on the foregoing, we can safely state that the contemporary Green movement is not only an environmental movement but also a socio-political movement. Heinlein’s study of proto-environmental performances in contemporary Western Theatre traced the history of this movement to the summer of 1962 when marine biologist Rachel Carson, previously a noted author of marine life books, stated the following:

As man proceeds toward his announced goal of the conquest of nature, he has written a depressing record of destruction, directed not only against the earth he inhabits but the life that shares it with him. The history of the recent centuries has its black environment passages. Now to these and others like them, we are adding a new chapter and a new kind of havoc, the question is whether any civilization can wage such relentless war on life without destroying itself, and without losing the right to be called civilized (Sale 3).

Today, more than fifty years after, the world is stunned by the truth of Carson's prediction. Humans now turned predators are preying on their own kind as conflicts ravage the entire globe. The quest for life's natural resources has been a major catalyst for war and other genocidal killings especially in Africa not to mention the complete disregard for the environment in the wake of continued plunder of natural resources.

No doubt the state of affairs calls for a social revolution and drama is one tool for such a resolution. The socio-theatrical work of Augusto Boal – *Theatre of the Oppressed* puts him as the philosophical forerunner to contemporary Green theatre. Boal validates performance as a weapon for social revolution, a means by which identity can be initiated (14). Contemporary Green practitioners have always sought for revolutionary change not only in behaviour but also in the structures that gives ambivalence to nature and the whole concept of a safe earth. Green theatre therefore presupposes a performance that is socially relevant and maintains its efficiency as a tool for creating widespread socio-ecological change (Heinlein 25).

For Gare, the world lacks stories or narratives of sufficient power and complexity to orient people for effective action to overcome environmental problems, to relate the multiplicity of social and cultural forms implicated in or affected by environmental destruction. Though, environmental problems are global yet there is need to formulate stories, craft performances and write plays about the lives of people and the history of societies in terms that Gare says will enable them to be understood in context of and as part of nature (45). The environmental challenge in many parts of the Third World especially Africa is not the same with developed nations. Gare's argument that global capitalism dominated by transnational corporations and financial institutions, and controlled by a new international bourgeoisie has exposed some of the most basic cultural structures on which Western European civilization in general and

modernity in particular have been based is quite timely (114). If this be the case, then there is a need for a new kind of civilization – a Green civilization that is not only trans-historically and culturally relevant but also challenges this global hegemonic culture of transnationalization. This challenge can only be met when people are oriented in practice and in their daily lives to pursue the pathway of creating an environmentally sustainable civilization and drama as stated earlier is one such weapon that has the potential to meet this challenge.

Already, there are contradictions in the global quest to solve the world's eco-crisis. The concept of sustainable development seems to globalize environmental problems and consequently implies that only global solutions should be sought for 'local' eco-problems. This partly explains the seeming eco-hesitation by African critics to the global eco-crisis as conceptualized by the West. Africa today stands on the wrong side of the divide in the futile attempt to globalize the eco-crisis. While the continent continues to writhe in pain of the worst kind owing to a degenerating environment orchestrated by decades of exploitation of natural resources to fuel developed economies, increasing poverty has no doubt exacerbated bloody conflicts, genocide and terrorism. This trend no doubt puts the respect for life and nature in utter disregard. Maathai Wangari, a renowned African environmental activist was awarded the Nobel Prize for Peace in recognition of her efforts to halt deforestation in Kenya. For her, "peace on earth depends on our ability to secure our living environment" (<http://www.womeninworldhistory.com/contemporary-01.html>). She was arrested and jailed severally by Kenyan authorities for her doggedness in challenging the very institutions that encouraged the continued plundering of Kenya's forest reserves. It is quite ironic that in Africa, those who challenged the forces that perpetuate eco-degradation have been met with stiff opposition. Nigeria also shares a similar story in

Ken Saro Wiwa who was summarily executed alongside eight others by the then military authorities for daring to challenge the continued devastation of the Niger Delta ecosystem by oil merchants. Since then, this region which holds the key to Nigeria's survival has not known peace.

African efforts at sustainable development have been targeted at fighting poverty by enriching scarce resources. For Africa, the only way to guarantee peace which is one of the goals of sustainable development is by meeting the needs of the current generations without jeopardizing the needs of future generations. This was the motivation for Wangari when she founded the Green Belt Movement that succeeded in planting 30 million trees in an effort to halt deforestation in Kenya. For her, "people are fighting over water, over food and over other natural resources. When our resources become scarce, we fight over them. In managing our resources and in sustainable development, we plant the seeds of peace" (<http://www.womeninworldhistory.com/contemporary-01.html>).

Glover's analysis of Escobar's work captures the current contraptions of sustainable development which he says are: 1) a 'saving the world mentality', which promotes the global at the expense of the local; 2) a belief that the world's poor create environmental problems, but which ignores how capitalism creates poverty in the first place; 3) a faith that capitalism's market structures can resolve ecological problems (54). To overturn these structures and engender a pathway for development that is Africa friendly, drama is and should be seen to be in the forefront to secure an environment of peace that guarantees the wellbeing of all peoples of the earth.

2.4 THE PREHISTORIC FOUNDATIONS OF ECO-ENGAGEMENTS IN DRAMA: IDEALISTIC INQUEST ON ECOLOGY AND THE CREATIVE PROCESS

One cannot fully appreciate the inextricability of humans and nature vis-à-vis all life and the environment without due cognizance to the fact that we are all part of what Soyinka calls an ‘integral cosmos’ (4). Sullivan believes that the universe is now in its ecozoic era as the technological and industrial world birthed by the modern era is now our dying heritage (47). The well being of all both animate and inanimate means the continued survival of all creation. In ancient times, the seasonal or New Year Festivals were intertwined with the wide spectrum of nature and its agricultural cycles, with the natural concrete phenomena of these cycles. These included sunrises and sunsets, the waxing, the full and the waning moon, the rising and abatement of the Nile or the flowing of the Tigris and Euphrates, the acts of planting and sowing new seeds or tending to a new flock, the blossoming and the reaping of the harvest (Schnusenberg 8). Life has always found itself manifest in the springs and rivers.

Ancient Egypt for example, was a Kaleidoscope of great festivals reflecting a drama as colourful as the prism of a rainbow that mirrored what Schnusenberg calls a “multiplicity of approaches” (19). Egypt’s mythological dramas were punctuated by the rhythms of the cycles of nature, the central features of which were the water and the sun, manifested in the annual inundation of the Nile and the daily rising of the sun (Schnusenberg 19).

In Babylon, we see another connection between celebrated festivals and ecological factors as the seasonal year was defined by the equinoxes of summer and harvest season. During the rains, Babylon or Mesopotamia was usually threatened by violent floods which were dramatically personified by the monster *Tiamat*, who raised her head during the flooding of the rivers to swallow all that existed. This monster was,

however, time and again subdued during the *Atiku* festival by the god *Marduk* (Schnusenberg 63).

The Greeks also refer to the feast of Dionysus, in prehistoric Athens, as the birthplace of drama. Lee's anthology captures the celebration of the Greater Dionysus in the spring and that "Dionysus is a god who dies and is reborn, his return the creative root bursting into literal flower" (193). In Aristophanes' *The Frogs* (405 B.C.) *Aeschylus* addresses *Dionysus* saying: "How say'st thou son O' the goddess of the Greens?" (Dukore 5). Prehistoric Japan also sees the invocation of the souls of the dead through the power of the sun. The sun is often associated with the soul of the dead. The revitalization of the sun goddess exemplifies the nature of *Lagura* (Heavenly Cave Door), which presupposes that through the performance of song and dance, it is possible to "restrain or secure within the body" the life span of a person that appears to be departing (Asai 13). In the Caribbeans, context of transplantation and Diaspora sees the individual, the community and the land inextricably linked in the process of creating history. Landscape is a character in this process and its deepest meanings need to be understood (De Loughrey and Handley 7).

In Nigeria, the tropical rainforest is home to a variety of indigenous species of wild and domesticated yams, cocoyam and three-leaved yams. Its fauna includes cows, goats, chickens, elephants, leopards, and monkeys. Nigerian rural settlement's primary means of livelihood include farming, hunting and resource gathering. Population in Africa, as Barau puts it is bolstered by what nature offers it (96).

In the past there were also various species of fish, reptiles and insects.

Birds ranged from eagles to kites and parrots while indigenous trees, which later became major cash crops, included the oil palm, raphia palm and hardwood such as iroko and mahogany. Value systems in

Africa and Nigeria in particular are embedded in their religious beliefs, customs and traditions which were to a sufficient extent drawn from the physical and metaphysical environment (Barau 98).

The tense used for describing the abundance of eco-wealth above suggests that this is no longer the case owing to years of exploitation and subsequently extinction. Current events indicate that most of the eco-life of these regions has been depleted owing to new found religions that preach that all ancestral trees including birds that co-habit them are now bastions of fleeing evil spirits. The trend in most of these communities is to see people cutting down trees in the name of professing a new found faith that labels such irreplaceable natural heritage as evil. Orjiji points out that festivals in honour of ancestors and the god of yams were celebrated between July and August. The peak is a theatre-like assemblage of the whole community in an arena where a masquerade representing the 'earth-goddess' is welcomed with a resounding ovation (4). In Yoruba dramaturgy, some forests were delineated according to their functions. There is the religious grove (*Igbó Oró*), small, uncultivated forest near the community. One can also still find the *Igbó egúngun* where the ancestral masquerades prepared for annual community rituals (Pinkston and Warren 158).

The world and indeed Africa's prehistoric performative arts is functionally linked with the quest for survival and the continued strive for sustainability in life's support systems and the environment. Here we find that the environment gives inspiration to the birth and growth of drama. This branch of art is intertwined with nature and ecology and hence, the continued survival of life is the story that drama creates. No story is complete without the complexities of life's struggle with nature and the environment.

Drama no doubt emanates from man's interaction with nature. The anthology of most dramatic traditions share a similar story of a continued struggle with 'life' that eventually gives birth to what we now call drama. From the dithyrambic processions of the Greeks to the rituals in the jungles of Africa, all share a similar performative eco-history. Shakespeare in *Hamlet* (Act III, Scene 2) says

the purpose of playing, whose end,
both at the first and now was and is to hold,
as twere, the mirror up to nature;
to show virtue her feature, scorn her own image,
and the very age and body of the time his form and pressure" (108).

It is however not accidental that drama finds its root in nature and humans' continued struggle to dominate and control the environment. Western scholars refer to the feast of Dionysus as the birthplace of drama. As recorded by Lee, the renewal of life after winter was celebrated in the Greater Dionysia in the spring, and that "Dionysus is a god who dies and is reborn, his return the creative root bursting into literal flower" (Lee 193). In Aristophanes' *The Frogs* (405 B.C.), Aeschylus addressing Dionysus says: "How say'st thou, Son O' the goddess of the Greens? (Dukore 5). Nature by inference gave birth to drama. Drama all over the world is traceable to humans' continued interaction with the forces exuded from the environment. As captured by Giannachi and Stewart "nature is always performed and can only be appropriated by means of performance. The ontology of nature lies in the performance of nature – in nature's capacity to appear as action or in our capacity to act within it" (20). The reciprocity of the relationship is quite obvious – nature echoes drama and drama echoes nature.

Nature has always been in the arts. She has always represented not only a major point of reference for art but also a substantial means to provoke politically and aesthetically. For Giannachi and Stewart:

It is in great part through its engagement with nature that art has time and again proven that it can subvert the social and political status quo. This is because nature marks a complex phenomenon that is utilized to define the real, with all its political and ethical implications, whilst also embracing culture, with all its aesthetic and philosophical relevance (21).

In Africa, where we find a dramatic tradition that predates her contact with Europe, the primitive roots of all theatrical tradition is sought in the numerous religious rituals and festivals that marks the African conquest of the forces of nature. As can be deduced from documentary evidence, African drama is an embodiment of the first struggles, first preoccupations, first successes and setbacks of the African (Ogunbiyi 3). Drama in this clime grew out of man's acquired knowledge of his environment. It is an art that celebrates the sharpened awareness about nature.

On the other hand, early modern literature presents narratives that emphasize pro-ecological values like interdependence, unanticipated consequences and the limits of human ambition (Mentz 155). This is quite apt for Africa's pre-colonial oral performances. Dancing and acting as a form of rites were functional as these were done to ensure the steady supply of nature's good and to ward off adversity that may spring up from the same natural force. The myths, stories, tales, songs and proverbs that surround these rites were an expression of the wish for bountiful production and the experience of the human mastery over nature. Shakespearean drama also offers self-consciousness about literary invention that can help renovate narratives about human beings and the natural world. Shakespeare's plays model a mutable system for coming

to terms with change and catastrophe, and they help shape future conversations about remediation and stability (Mentz 156). The interplay between nature and humanity and the resultant consequences either for good or for bad forms the bedrock of the foundations of drama all over the world.

2.5 THE THEORETICS OF NIGERIAN DRAMA AND THE PROTEST IDEOLOGY

No date can be given to the very beginning of drama in Nigeria but recent studies have revealed that dramatic traditions across Nigeria are traceable to pre-colonial times. Ogunbiyi in his critical profile of Nigerian theatre and drama says the primitive roots of Nigerian robust theatrical tradition must be sought in the numerous religious rituals and festivals that exist in many Nigerian communities (3). It is an embodiment of all the rites which became ritualized as a result of regularity in performance. With greater awareness, it was possible to isolate the myths which have developed around the rituals and to act them out as drama.

This forms the metamorphosis of Nigerian dramatic traditions with its ritual origin forming the bedrock of what is now called the modern Nigerian drama. Nigerian drama hence, can be defined as the “totality of all performances or re-enactments before an audience or spectators that are based on Nigerian traditions, customs, religion and other social events” (Ogunbiyi 3). Ogunba on the other hand sees Nigerian drama as an art nurtured in the Nigerian soil over centuries of time with its own peculiarities and distinctive features (8). What this implies is that Nigerian drama takes a different coloration in both content and form. It is art from Nigeria, by Nigerians and about Nigerians – a democratized performance that projects their lived and shared experiences. It is about who Nigerians are, where they are coming from, what they believe and where they are going. Soyinka calls it “Ritual Theatre” which;

...establishes the spatial medium not merely as a physical area for simulated events but as a manageable contraction of the cosmic envelope within which man – no matter how deeply buried such a consciousness has latterly become – fearfully exists (41).

The true Nigerian drama depicts the Nigerian cosmology and the African worldview. Such is the early tradition of Nigerian drama – a representation of man in combat with ‘dark’ forces which Soyinka also calls “chthonic realms”. The drama he says “would be non-existent except within and against this symbolic representation of earth and cosmos, except within this communal compact whose choric essence supplies the collective energy for the challenger of chthonic realms” (11).

Nigeria’s contact with Europe via colonialism saw to the emergence of a literary tradition in drama. This experience dates back to 1863 when Britain secured a foothold in Nigeria through its annexation of Lagos. The pioneering work of the church in Oloyede’s *King Elejigbo* in 1902 comes to mind as the first written play to be so performed which also “became a prototype of most Yoruba drama being written in Lagos” (Ogunbiyi 19). Elsewhere, the Onitsha Market Literature had started flourishing almost three decades after the first play was published. Although, most of the literary works of the Onitsha market genre were largely novelettes, pamphlets, and short stories, some interesting playlets were also coming out from this dispensation. Obiechina describes the rise of this literature as a product of several socio-economic and historical factors (80). The plays deal with a wide range of subjects and themes, from the imprisonment of Adolf Hitler, through dramatized biographies of African leaders, love themes, to straightforwardly didactic pieces. It is not surprising though that even at its teething stage, literary drama in Nigeria dealt with issues around society and the realities of every present day have been of primary thematic concern.

By 1956, what could be classified as a better constructed and more popular play – *This is Our Chance* by James Ene Henshaw came on the scene. In 1958, we saw the emergence of a more serious contemporary Nigerian dramatic piece when Wole Soyinka came up with *The Swamp Dwellers*. In 1960, Soyinka came out with two plays – *The Trials of Brother Jero* and *A Dance of the Forest*. Widely regarded as the first generation of modern dramatists in Nigeria, Henshaw and Soyinka were later to lead a literary tradition that was quite classical in both language and dramatic construction. Other notable playwrights of this era include: J.P. Clark, Wale Ogunyemi, Zulu Sofola and Ola Rotimi. The post civil-war period has also witnessed the emergence of a different crop of playwrights. Inspired by a different kind of temperament and vision, these playwrights were largely hardened as it were by the wounds of the civil war. The finest amongst them include Tess Onwueme, Fela Davis, Olu Obafemi, Comish Ekiye, Soji Simpson, Kole Omotoso, Bode Sowande, Meki Nzewi, Laolu Oguniyi, Bode Osanyin, Ahmed Yerima and Femi Osofisan.

Modern Nigerian drama no doubt has been heavily influenced by European dramatic conventions. Virtually all Nigerian playwrights have learned their crafts from the West. They have equally adapted the acquired artistic skills to suit the African socio-cultural milieu. These adaptations have in most cases seen the fusion of Nigerian context as exemplified in Ola Rotimi's *The gods are not to blame*.

However, drama and performance in the post modern period has been largely a protest drama. The drama of the 19th century is a searching examination of the soul of modern man, torn between good and evil and consumed by a fatal spiritual disease. The spiritual emptiness is characteristic of modern western man in general. The 20th century saw the emergence of the avant-garde theatre – a reaction against established forms. The avant-garde artist leads a constant minority battle against the serious artistic

expression of his day. Burns believes the concept implies renewal, opposition, and revolutionary experimentation.

The avant-garde can never be composed of too great a number of writers and its work cannot win widespread acceptance, for should such a movement win to it a great number of creative artists or should its output become generally accepted by the literate public, then the movement has ceased to be a true avant-garde: loses its revolutionary usefulness (201).

The post-modern artist reflects the perspective of groups who felt marginalized or disenfranchised because of their race, gender, sexual preference or political point of view. Wilson believes that most of them emerged in the 1960s and the 1970s – a period characterized by social and political protest and by a growing awareness of the rights of minorities (236).

This was the era of protests against the Vietnamese war: of civil rights marches; of women's movements; of Native American advocacy. In this atmosphere, theatres began to appear that expressed the anger and aspirations of social populations (Wilson 201).

In Nigeria, the culture of protest is not new to the country's socio-political space. It precedes even the people's contact with colonialism or the 1960s or 1970s mentioned by Wilson. In Nigeria's pre-colonial political system, there were avenues through which the people vexed out their disenchantment even in a feudalistic society. During the thriving periods of the kings, Obas and Emirs, there were court jesters who through satire encapsulated in praise-singing, exposed the ills of the ruling and hegemonic classes. There also arose certain individuals otherwise known as heroic figures who took the challenge of upstaging political arrangements not favourable to the generality of the people. Interestingly, most of these heroic figures are women.

Notable for this are Princess Moremi, Emotan, Queen Amina, Idia Esigie among others.

Protest is a statement or an action that shows one's disapproval or disagreement (Hornsby 1002). Embu defines protest drama as that which is motivated by issues and policies in the society that tends to alienate, dehumanize, exploit and suppress the masses politically, socially, economically, as well as culturally (57). What is of interest here is that political, economic and social exploitation cannot escape the prying eyes of drama in the 21st century so long as the ruling elites and politicians continue to perpetuate injustice, fraud and misrule in any society.

One cannot discuss protest drama in Nigeria without allusion to the Ogunde travelling Theatre. Widely regarded as the first modern theatre company ever to grace the Nigerian soil, this group was instrumental in protesting against colonialism and its exploitative tendencies. Between 1945 and 1960, Ogunde's works which include *Worse than Crime* (1945), *Bread and Bullet* (1950), *Hunger and Strike* (1945), engaged the colonial authorities and took them up on several ills perpetrated against hapless Nigerians. The plays which were staged in Jos, Kano and several Northern states of Nigeria irked the government. Ogunde was subsequently arrested, fined and his plays were banned from being staged anywhere in Nigeria. This confirms the efficacy of drama as a tool for change and that a play can indeed serve as a tool for social revolution. *Bread and Bullets* for instance was a vivid re-enactment of the Enugu crisis in which eighteen coal miners were shot and killed by the police for demanding for a pay rise.

These exploitative and oppressive tendencies did not end with colonialism as Nigeria continued to witness these traits in its leaders and naturally, the drama of the

1960s and 1970s had the protest leaning. The social conditions in which Nigerians found themselves soon after independence necessitated the adoption of a protest ideology by post-civil war dramatists. Gbilekaa argues that:

The enormous wealth as a result of oil boom dichotomized and intensified class struggle in Nigeria as the gap between the economically privileged and their grovelling proletarian and peasant class yawned abominably. The aggressive and dehumanizing capitalism which the nation pursued called for a serious examination of our past, the present and the future (IV).

In the last four decades we have seen the contributions of radical scholars and the growth of the protest ideology in Nigerian drama in the wake of debilitating social, economic and political developments. These conditions provided them the opportunity to hold our past and contemporary history as it were, against the future vis-a-vis Nigeria's socio-economic structure and its implications on the toiling masses.

2.6 THE ECO-PEDAGOGIC RELEVANCE OF DRAMA IN CONFLICT RESOLUTION IN NIGERIA.

Conflict according to Yanoov, usually refers to disputes and disrupted relations between individuals or groups who have incompatible or rival purposes, value – based norms, needs, feelings, opinions, interests or desires (16). There has been a proliferation of ‘non-official’ conflict resolution organizations in the last twenty years whose work in areas of conflict throughout the world has been built upon principles of non-violent peace-making. Theatre is one of such phenomena that has used non-violent communication skills to intervene in all facets of crises plaguing communities all across Nigeria. This practice of non-violent conflict resolution provides the basis for a global ‘peace praxis’, that is, the development of skills, processes and resources necessary to sustain and develop cultures of peace (Woodhouse and Rambotham 10).

All across the African landscape, one can easily find traces of conflict if not an ongoing full-blown war. Almost every country in Africa has stories on one conflict engraved in its history and as we write this piece; Libya, Cote d'Ivoire, Uganda, Somalia, Congo, Egypt, Nigeria, Sudan, etc are either presently engulfed in internal crisis or recovering from a recent one.

Nigeria is a vast country and according to Fasona and Omojola, over 70% of its 167 million people dwell in the rural areas and their occupation is directly connected to the land (5). More than 65% of the population is engaged in agriculture at subsistence levels. Cash crops (mainly cocoa and rubber) dominate agriculture in the rain forest zone; the guinea savannah zone is the food basket of the nation with much of the root and tuber crops from this zone. The Upper Guinea and Lower Sudan Savannah ecology produces much of the cereal (mainly millet and guinea corn) for both human and animal consumption. The Upper Sudan and Sahel ecology used to be the main zone of animal grazing. Crop production in this zone is localized around the wetland areas (locally referred to as Fadamas). To increase vegetable and cereal crop production, most wetlands in this zone are equipped with irrigation infrastructure. The Southern mangrove swamp zone presents a different scenario. It consists of permanently flooded wetlands. Hence agriculture is localized around the main river channels during the dry seasons. Fishing is the major occupation in this zone. This region is also a zone of commercial oil exploration of crude oil and bitumen deposits. So this greatly hampers the chances of utilizing available lands for agriculture. Local fishing and subsistence is also impaired by externalities in form of oil spills, dredging of canals and excavation of lands resulting from oil exploration.

Fasona and Omojola strongly believe that there is a very strong connection between climate change and the pattern of communal clashes in Nigeria (5). While this

assertion is highly contestable, however, one of the factors responsible for the incessant clashes in North is the search for grazing land which is attributed to lack of adequate rainfall. 19 of the 37 cases of conflict between 1991 and 2005 representing 51% were basically triggered by land resources (between Nomads and the natives). Nzongola-Ntalaja further explains that with the growing reduction in arable and grazing land due to a variety of reasons, territorial and land disputes keep multiplying, particularly between pastoralists and agriculturalist (69). The study further reveals that ethnic and religious clashes were in some cases offshoots of the question “who owns the land” which is a reverberation of diminishing returns on land resources (Fasona and Omojola 5). More cases of agriculture related land conflicts recorded in the rainforest, guinea and lower Sudan zones suggest strongly the influence of climate change induced pressure on this zone. The oil and environment related conflicts are localized around the Niger Delta as a result of environmental degradation, loss of farmlands and pollution of surface waters brought about by oil exploitation and exploration.

In a country replete with conflicts, several attempts and organizations have sprung up to quell them even before they escalate into full-blown war. Both internal and international organizations are set up, foreign emissaries are sent and several peace ambassadors come into play whenever crisis looms.

Drama as a form of creative conflict resolution has within its bowels the energy that both nourishes and defines the emergence of a culture of peace, which has been defined by the United Nations as “a set of values, attitudes, modes of behaviour and ways of life that reject violence and prevent conflicts by tackling their root causes, to solve problems through dialogue and negotiation among individuals, groups and nations” (Ramsbotham, Woodhouse and Miall 347). Theatre rather than stepping into the heat of the conflict by neutralizing the firepower of contending parties as in the case

of military interventions, it rather engages the communities in an atmosphere of play to fosters dialogue that addresses the root causes of the conflict. In the words of Femi Osofisan:

“Our theatre must arouse pleasure in cognition and organize the joy of changing reality. Our literature must be used to play its role in the advancement of society, in the urgent struggle against neo-colonialism and the insidious spread of fascism” (81).

Nwadiuwe on the other hand states that recently the protection of the environment and conservation of biodiversity has gained prominence on international agendas and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) of the United Nations (65). This is yet to be replicated in the Nigerian scene thus necessitating the use of theatre to educate local communities.

Another important factor of theatre in peace making is that it creates ‘a global civic culture’. Boulding identified three modes of knowing – cognitive/analytic, the emotional/affective and intuitive. In a world governed by science and technology, the cognitive/analytic mode has come to dominate and the emotional/affective and intuitive modes have become relatively less used (95). For Boulding, it was important to find ways of ‘freeing’ the other modes of action by developing skills of the imagination (95). Boon and Plastow have equally argued that “theatre, in a variety of forms and contexts, can make, and indeed has made positive political and social interventions in a range of developing cultures across the world” (1). In a series of case studies, their work describes how theatre has in various forms confronted and explored issues such as genocide, poverty, AIDS, violence, human rights, racial, sexual and political intolerance, divided communities, and the power of the state (Boon and Plastow 1-12). The study reveals that the most vital forms of theatre for development,

or theatre for peace and engagement, is that which represent real lives – theatre ‘from below’, as they describe it – echoing the values of peace building from below, familiar in the literature of conflict resolution. While acknowledging that theory is important in analyzing the uses, forms and impacts of theatre, avoidance of dogma is also crucial when the main aim is to produce learning and insight that genuinely comes from the communities, cultures and contexts which the theatres serve. In this sphere of conflict resolution, the most potent adventures are not those coming from professional theatre troupes in the big cities or foreign lands but usually and most likely a self-taught troupe that is home-grown and understands the underlying issues, the historiography and culture of the contending communities. This is a theatre of the people, for the people and by the people. Just as Kershaw put it; “the 21st century theatrical front is a ‘democratized performance’” (20).

What gives theatre this power is the presence of a story – a narrative which Park-Fuller sees as a linguistic and cultural construct which is changed to the mutual satisfaction of both (or all) the disputants and hence, leads to the transformation (6). Winslade and Monk also developed the theory of “discursive repositioning” (or story switching) which not only allows the participant to see him/herself with different needs and interests, but also includes “the conscious reshaping.. of the discourses out of which needs and interests are produced” (62). In that way, theory and practice go beyond addressing specific conflict situations to address the cultural roots of conflicts. They become activist as well as mediators.

Elsewhere we see the contributions of the playwright and the play text to conflict resolution and peace building. To bring this dramatic medium closer to contemporary realities, Losambe and Sarinjeive believes that Osofisan’s Yungba Yungba and the Dance Contest engages us in a sweet dream of successfully living together equally as it

interrogates contemporary politics of ethnic conflict and power – sharing (76). The above assertion seemingly underscores the relevance of theatre in conflict resolution and peace building.

The eco-pedagogic relevance of theatre in conflict resolution thus presupposes that the discourse of environmental and sustainable development should place emphasis on the love for life as a pathway to conflict resolution. With the potency of addressing the root causes of conflict which are traceable to the disconnect from our common human heritage, theatre thus engages the individual, group and community in moments which Taylor says produces thoughtful and creative responses by the whole community (76).

CHAPTER THREE METHODOLOGY

This chapter focuses on the method used in carrying out this research. For a work that dwells on the eco-relevance of dramatic literature, the qualitative research method aptly fits into the context of the study. Kothari sees qualitative research approach as that which is concerned with subjective assessment of attitudes, opinions and behaviour (5). According to him, research in such a situation is a function of the researcher's insights and impressions. It is largely based on the interpretations and connotative meanings given to a material. The instruments adopted are largely that of focus groups interviews, projective techniques and content analysis. For Kuada, the qualitative research method also includes participant observation, in-depth and conversational interviewing (93). The qualitative research method is imperative for this study as it provides the researcher with the tools to analyse and synthesize the data elicited from the texts and other materials as well as interpret observations from the field.

3.1 RESEARCH DESIGN

Hakim believes that the research design primarily deals with style, the researcher's own preferences and ideas (1). In another vein, Downton conceptualizes research design as a way of enquiring, a way of producing knowing and knowledge (2). The focus of any research design is to seek answers to questions. The qualitative researcher is intrigued by the complexity of social interactions expressed in daily life and by the meanings that the participants themselves attribute to these interactions. Thus, the qualitative research is pragmatic, interpretative, and grounded in the lived experiences of people (Marshall and Rossman 2). This study hence foregrounds itself in the phenomenon that daily confronts the people and that ecological degradation and

eco-protection through education. This work benefits from this premise as it seeks to among others draw on multiple methods that respect the humanity of the participants in the study and is largely contextual. It is also a study that is emergent, evolving and fundamentally interpretative. This according to Marshall and Rossman is very typical of all qualitative research design (3).

3.2 RESEARCH METHOD

Within the context of the qualitative research method, this study is largely a content analysis of relevant plays that dwell on ecological issues. The plays reviewed included those written by Wole Soyinka, Femi Osofisan, Tess Onwueme, Ahmed Yerima, Greg Mbajiorgu, Adinoyi Ojo Onukaba and Emmanuel Dandaura Barclays Ayakoroma and Arnold Udoka. The plays are selected based on their eco-pedagogic engagement. The concern is to x-ray the extent at which these plays portrayed issues that border on nature and the Nigerian environment.

3.3 VALIDITY/RELIABILITY OF THE RESEARCH TECHNIQUE

For a qualitative research, the interpretation given to texts used in this study reveals and meets the expectations of the research as well as the subject of this study. The engagement of the subject of ecology in Nigerian dramatic literature is best handled by a contextual and interpretative analysis of texts and documented materials relevant to this study. The plays selected for this study and data gathered from them as documented in this study meets with the researcher's expectations and objectives of the research.

3.4 RESEARCH INSTRUMENT

This work made use of content analysis as a major instrument for eliciting and synthesizing information from the play texts. The play texts were divided into two

categories namely: the post-independence playwrights of the 1960s to 1990s in which plays of Wole Soyinka, Tess Onwueme and Femi Osofisan were studied. The other category included recent plays emerging at the dawn of the 21st century in which plays of Emmanuel Dandaura, Greg Mbajiorgu, Arnold Udoka, Ahmed Yerima, Ojo Onokaba and Barclays Ayakoroma fall within this context. This research also adopts the interview as an instrument to elicit data from notable dramatists whose responses remain imperative to the findings of this work.

3.5 PROCEDURE FOR DATA COLLECTION

3.5.1 Primary Sources of Data

The primary sources of data are plays written by Nigerian playwrights whose works thematically dwell on ecology and the environment. These include Wole Soyinka, Femi Osofisan, Tess Onwueme, Emmanuel Dandaura, Greg Mbajiorgu, Adonoyi Ojo Onokaba, Barclays Ayakoroma and Arnold Udoka. These playwrights and their plays are selected on the premise of their eco-relevance. The concern here is to x-ray ecological themes inherent in the works of the playwrights.

3.5.2 Secondary Sources of Data

This research work also incorporated interviews of selected dramatists whose scholarly activities dwells on the works of the playwrights reviewed in this study. Added to this, a field study of collected pictorial samples of ecological degradation across the Nigerian landscape was also used in this research.

3.6 METHOD OF DATA ANALYSIS

As it is akin to a qualitative research work, the method used in analysing data here is interpretative. Each play text is summarised and the ecological themes analysed

in line with the objectives of this study. A total of twelve plays are summarized one after the other and their engagement of ecological themes are x-rayed.

CHAPTER FOUR DRAMA, NATURE WRITING AND THE ECO-CONCERNS OF NIGERIA'S NIGER DELTA

The Niger Delta has been the centre stage in dramatic concerns lately especially since the Nigeria Liquefied and Natural Gas (NLNG) Company instituted a prize for literature. Playwrights have seized this incentive to interrogate the dynamics of the Niger Delta in their plays. The focus in this region has been on the need for resource control, the elimination of industrial waste, oil spillage, the loss of sea-life and the growing poverty and alienation amongst the people. These issues have re-echoed in the dramatic texts coming from the stables of Nigerian playwrights recently. Over the years there has been a clamour for a larger share of the resources accruing from oil exploration. Amidst these agitations is the need for developing a cleaner mechanism for the exploration of oil in the Niger Delta. Some of these plays have taken the position to call for resource control. Others have joined the call for climate justice especially with the current state of gas flares, oil spillage and loss of vegetation. In this chapter we have attempted to sieve out the dominant themes that have preoccupied these plays in alignment with the discourse of eco-pedagogy and its eco-planetary relevance. It is from this standpoint that we approach the works of Tess Onwueme, Adinoyi Onukaba Ojo, Emmanuel Dandaura and Arnold Udoka.

4.1 NIGER DELTA: THE LAND, THE PEOPLE AND THE CULTURE

The Niger Delta, the delta of the Niger River in Nigeria, is a densely populated region sometimes called the Oil Rivers because it was once a major producer of palm oil. The area was the British Oil Rivers Protectorate from 1885 until 1893, when it was expanded and became the Niger Coast Protectorate.



Plate 1. *Oil Spill at a drilling site in the Niger Delta. (Photo Source: pa-journal.com)*

The Niger Delta, as now defined officially by the Nigerian government, extends over 70,000 km² and makes up 7.5% of Nigeria's land mass. Historically and cartographically, it consists of present day Bayelsa, Delta, and Rivers States. In 2000, however, Obasanjo's regime included Abia, Akwa-Ibom, Cross River State, Edo, Imo and Ondo States in the region. Some 31 million people of more than 40 ethnic groups including the Bini, Efik, Ibibio, Annang, Oron, Ijaw, Itsekiri, Isoko, Urhobo, Ukwuani, and Kalabari, are among the inhabitants in the Niger Delta, speaking about 250 different dialects.

The Niger Delta, and the "South South Zone", which includes Akwa Ibom State, Bayelsa State, Cross River State, Delta State, Edo State and Rivers State are two different entities. While the Niger Delta is the oil producing region, the South South Zone is a geo-political zone. The delta is an oil-rich region, and has been the centre of international controversy over devastating pollution and ecocide, kleptocracy (notably by the Abacha regime), and human rights violations in which Royal Dutch Shell has been implicated.



Plate 2. *Dead fishes lying afloat a polluted river in the Niger Delta. (Photo Source: m.timeslive.co.za).*

Western Niger Delta consists of the western section of the coastal South-South Nigeria which includes Delta, and the southernmost parts of Edo, and Ondo States. The western (or Northern) Niger Delta is a heterogeneous society with several ethnic groups including the Urhobo, Delta Ibo, Isoko, Itsekiri, Ijaw (or Ezon) and Ukwuani groups in Delta State, along with Yoruba in Ondo State. Their livelihoods are primarily based on fishing and farming. History has it that the Western Niger was controlled by chiefs of the five primary ethnic groups the Itsekiri, Isoko, Ukwuani, Ijaw and Urhobo with whom the British government had to sign separate "Treaties of Protection" in their formation of "Protectorates" that later became southern Nigeria.

Central Niger Delta consists of the central section of the coastal South-South Nigeria which includes Bayelsa and Rivers States. The Central Niger Delta region has the Ijaw (including the Nembe-Brass, Ogbia, Kalabari, Ibanis (Opobo, Bonny, etc.), Okrika, and Andoni clans, the Ogoni and other groups which consist of the Ekpeye, Ndoni, Etche, Ikwerre and Ndoki in Rivers State.



Plate 3. *Children playing in polluted waters in the Niger Delta. (Photo Source: Jane Hahn. janehahn.com)*

Eastern Niger Delta Section consists of the Eastern (or Atlantic) section of the coastal South-South Nigeria which includes Akwa Ibom and Cross River States. The Eastern Niger Delta region has the Efik, Ibibio, Annang, Oron, Ogoja (including Eko and Bekwara) people, who are all related with a common language and ancestry.

4.2 SOYINKA'S *A DANCE OF THE FOREST*: A SYNOPSIS

The play, *A Dance of Forest* by Wole Soyinka presents the relationship between the Town Dwellers and the Forest Dwellers. It is more of a vivid reflection of the African cosmos that shows the interconnectivity between two worlds- the world of the living and the dead. There is a big ceremony in town, a gathering of the tribes and Demoke, the famous wood carver has to make a totem to show human mastery over his environment. This totem has to be carved at the expense of a monumental tree in the heart of the forest, a tree highly revered as the 'king of trees'. However, this daring act becomes his greatest undoing. Spurred on by a seeming giddiness influenced by a supposed curse of the gods, he goes on to cut down the tree but a slap to his face by forces beyond his comprehension leave him lame for life.

Times Literary Supplement on the play as documented in the opening page of the play text, captures this as a drama between the world of the living and the dead – the abode of the dead being the forest. While the dead desire to live out their 'lives' and have their dance, the living are not willing to let them be. Hence, there is a conflict of desires, a desire of the dead for judgement and the desire of the living to avoid it. This conflict is manipulated by the will of forest father, a character masquerading as Obaneji, who leads both the living and the dead to a judgement they do not relish.

The play opens with the arrival of two dead ancestors – dead man who in his former life was a captain in the army of Mata Kharibu and the other, a dead woman, the

captain's wife. They had been summoned by the living to attend "the gathering of the tribes" but instead decided to wallow in deep bitterness and resentment of their past. The play ends with forest father having them own up to their true selves with a harsh realization that their lots are direct consequences of the past ills.

4:2.1 Ecological Concerns of the Play

A Dance of the Forest is one of Soyinka's plays that not only dwells on the cosmic and trado-religious belief patterns of the African but also typifies the connectedness with the environment. The sacredness of the forest grove to these religious inclinations is one of the central thematic concerns of the play. The tree is of tremendous significance to the African and the most revered of these trees outlives many generations. Obaneji, the forest father and Rola in the opening scene of the play say thus:

Obaneji: ...But that... (*referring to a tree in the midst of the forest*) it was the work of ten generations.

Rola: ...Climbing the king of trees and carving it as it stood- I think that was very brave.

Obaneji: It was the kind of action that redeems mankind, don't you think so? (Soyinka 7).

To the African, the above scenario shows that the tree is not just of aesthetic value but serves a religious purpose. In the tree, the African finds his true essence; it is a place of reflection, a sacred grove where the gods provide answers to every life's question. The tree is also a place of retribution and instant justice. Demoke, the wood carver who dared the gods by climbing up the king of trees to carve it says:

.... The tree was in a grove of Oro, so it was possible to beep it hidden. Later I learnt it was meant for the gathering of the tribes. When I finished it, the grove was cleared of all the other trees, the bush was

razed and a motor road built right up to it. It looked different. It was no longer my work. I fled from it (Soyinka 8).

Demoke here projects how human encroachment into the deep forest has impacted on the peace and tranquillity of forest dwellers. So called human expansionist tendencies in a bid to build roads and grow cities has dealt heavily on natural forests that support the continued existence of life. Just as Demoke puts it, they fled when they saw the motor road and how the bush was razed down. Life ceases in the forests when the trees disappear.

Soyinka also gives the forest life. The Forest Dwellers were crafted by him to depict the deep concerns of human ecology which stipulate that all life both animate and inanimate deserve the right of existence. The conversation between Morete and Aroni (Forest Dwellers) suggests that what goes on in the forest is deeper than mere trees and grasses:

Aroni: Today, when forest head needed you all. You meant to desert him.

Murete: Today there happens to be much from among the living.

Aroni: Among the living? Fool, are you dead then?

Murete: No, but it is dead enough here. Even my house looks dead. You see how the leaves have served someone for a forest? (Soyinka 8).

Gaseous emissions were part of the thematic preoccupations of the play. The Lorry (Chimney of *Ereko*) was brought in to depict the kind of pollution brought upon the African natural landscape by the fossil fuels emitting from vehicles. Obaneji captures this thus:

Obaneji: Yes, that is the name painted on it. But we prefer to call our collection, human or vehicular, by the names by which they are generally known. This one, the Chimney of Ereko. What a lorry!

What a record it has. You put it off the road very recently, didn't you?

Adenebi: We had to. It was smoking like a perpetual volcano (Soyinka 9).

This desecration of the forest marked by a continued wiping out of forest reserves and irreplaceable ancestral trees also re-echoed in the front burner of the concerns of this play. Demoke, the wood carver dared to carve the king of trees and suffered great ordeal- a reality that speaks of the consequences of the continued plunder of Africa's natural resources today. In his own words, Demoke says:

While I crouched below him, nibbling hairs off the chest of araba, king of the trees. So far I could climb, one beaten like an egg and I clasped the tree-hulk like a lover. Thrice I said I'll cut it down, thread it, stride it prostrate, mould and master araba below the knee, shave and scrape him clean on the head. But thrice Oremole, slave, server to Eshuoro laughed! The squirrel who dances on a broken branch, must watch whose jaws are open down below (Soyinka 27).

The forest indeed has a life of its own. It remains the abode of the spirits – the very essence of African cosmology and depicts the essence from which she shares a linkage with not just an ancestral past but a connection with her physical environment. The forest also co-habits non-human species with a distinct spiritual significance to the human world. Eshuoro further describes the encroachment and destruction of the forest as not only a wiping out of the spiritual essence of the natural world but a catastrophe to the cosmogonic arrangement that ensures the well being of all life. In this dialogue with Murete, Eshuoro states:

Have you seen how they celebrate the gathering of the tribes? In our own destruction. Today they even dared to chase out the forest spirits by

poisoning the air with petrol fumes. Have you seen how much of the forest has been turned down for their petty decorations? (Soyinka 45).

Humans according to this play have lost the true essence of the environment and its support systems. The co-habitation of trees and humans and what this relationship means to the survival, well-being and sustainability of all life no longer holds value within the matrix of development in 21st Century Africa. Eshuoro captures the reality that the true value of trees and forest reserves has been lost thus:

Where humans preserve a little bush behind their homes, it is only because they went somewhere for their garbage. Dead dogs and human excrement are all you'll find in it. The whole forest stinks. Stinks of human excrement (Soyinka 46).

Little creatures like ants are also not spared the annihilation and extinction of lower species by humans. Soyinka uses them as characters to depict the impact that assumed human progress is bringing to nature. One of the Ants has this to say:

Another: We are the headless bodies when the spade of progress delves.

Another: Down the axis of the world, from the whirlwind to the frozen drifts, we are the over legion of the world, smitten, for- 'the good to come'.

4.3 SOYINKA'S *THE SWAMP DWELLERS*: A SYNOPSIS

This play tells the story of the agony of life in the swamps and the uncertainty of living in an eco-unfriendly environment. The play begins with Alu and Makuri, a couple with two sons in the city. One of them, Igwezu, returns home only to find out that his farmland has been wiped out by rising floods despite his sacrificial offerings to the god – serpent of the swamps. The reality of this disaster makes him disbelieve the authenticity of the serpent's priest – Kadiye whom he accuses of exploiting the

vulnerability of the *Swamp Dwellers* to enrich himself on the guise of helping to check the rising tide.

The play also has an interesting character- the Beggar of Katunji who fled the drought in the North to beg for alms in the swamps. He is however disappointed as he soon realizes that no land is spared of the harshness of eco-disaster. He tells the story of the locusts in the North rendering their farmlands into wastelands and in a bid to escape the impending famine, he travels to the green swamps of the South. He soon discovers that the swamp dwellers also need alms due to the devastating floods.

4.3.1 Thematic Preoccupation of the Play

A major subject of the play is the changing environment. The lack of adequate rainfall in the North brings hunger to the people while, in contrast, too much rain in the swamps destroys their crops. The irony here is that while desert lands are clamouring for rain for their farmlands, too much of it in the south is a major cause of starvation and death. This clearly shows the dynamics of the ecosystem in the wake of climate change. This sudden change of events was not the case in the past when the environment was friendly to mankind. Makuri, one of the characters in the play captures it thus:

Ah well...these were the days....those days were really good. Even when times were harsh and the swamp overran the land, we were able to laugh with the Serpent (Soyinka 10).

The impact of rising water and oil spills on the ecosystem of the swamps is another subject treated by the play. Oil spillage has been a major cause of poverty for the people of the swamps as their major source of livelihood is cut off completely due to land and water poisoning. The dialogue between Makuri and the Beggar is quite reflective of this scenario.

Beggar: Were there much damage to the farm?

Makuri: Much damage? Not a grain was saved, not one tuber in the soil.....and what the flood left behind was poisoned by the oil in the swamp water.....it is hard for him, coming back for a harvest that isn't there (Soyinka 16).

Drought another eco-issue in the world today was aptly captured in the play. Soyinka brought the Beggar, as a blind man from the North to show the menace of this unpleasant eco-phenomenon on the inhabitants of sub-Saharan Africa. The Beggar continues this dialogue with Makuri on this:

Beggar: How thankful we would have been for the excess that you had here. If we had the hundredth part of the fall you had, I would not be sitting under your roof this moment.

Makuri: Drought? Did you have drought.

Beggar: We are used to droughts. Our season is one long continuous drought..... But we were used to it. Even when it rained, the soil let the water run right through it and join some stream in the womb of the earth. All that we know, and were content to live on alms..... (Soyinka 24).

Another eco-issue captured by this play is the activities of loggers and timber merchants. Part of the devastation done to the African natural forests is highly precipitated by these forest poachers. In Nigeria particularly, most of the nation's rainforest have been lost to businessmen both local and foreign who cut down timber and ferry them abroad and Igwezu captures this scenario in this dialogue:

Makuri: How did he make his money?

Igwezu: In timber. He felled it and floated it over the seas....He is wealthy and he is big (Soyinka 31).

The inevitability of disasters when humans treat the environment with disdain is another subject of concern in the play. Mankind remains helpless before the fury of

floods but these disasters are consequences of humanity's actions and inactions. *Igwezu* says:

I know that the floods can come again, that the swamp will continue to laugh at our endeavours. I know that we can continue to feed the Serpent of the Swamp and kiss the Kadiye's feet – but the vapours will still rise and corrupt the tassels of the corn (Soyinka 39).

Humans have for centuries grappled with the inevitability of natural disasters. More worrisome however is the spate of flooding in Nigeria recently and the great fury with which it descends. Soyinka's plays especially the swamp dwellers not only brings to light this trend of eco-disasters but reminds all that humans have largely contributed to these opposing natural circumstances. When humans fail to act on the side of the environment, there are consequences but ever so real are graver consequences when they act against it.

4.4 OSOFISAN'S *MOROUNTODUN*: A SYNOPSIS

Titubi, the only daughter of Alhaja, a business merchant decides to sacrifice her freedom in a desperate move to halt a rebellion by peasant farmers. In a supposed coalition with the powers of the state wielded by the Superintendent of prisons, her incarceration was perfectly stage-managed and the rebels who broke into the prison set her free but she decided to go with them. All these were to change as soon as she came face to face with the truth about the rebellion while in their camp for many days. Titubi's primary mission of spying on the rebels failed as she changed sides soon afterwards and led the rebels to a negotiating table that however was not to be. Marshall's quest to crush the powers of the state by backing out of the negotiation also failed and in the end, we have another stalemate.

4.4.1 Eco-themes in the play

Morountodun as a play text, reverberates a key subject that has formed the nucleus of eco-struggles in 21st century Nigeria; the need for social justice in the exploration, exploitation and distribution of the gains of natural resources. Mama Kayode, one of the characters in the play declares: “We own the earth, we are the earth itself” (Osofisan 67). This supposition indicates that you do not kill the goose that lays the golden egg. The subject of the conflict in the play arises from the exploitation of farmers by market forces who through the paid support of the state undervalue their farm produce and impose heavy taxes on them. The import of this is that you have a group of people who sustain the livelihood of the community and yet are considered as peasants of no consequence, a wasted breed.

The trans-historical link of the African with the forest – a natural phenomenon of the earth is another subject of concern in the play. The typical African sees the African forest as the grove that habituates the spirits of his ancestors. The earth is seen and believed to have a life of its own and the forest shares a nature that is common of all humanity and this is life. Marshall, the rebel leader in the play prays and evokes the powers of the Earth in honour of Titubi’s bravery declaring thus: “Now I call on this earth I am standing on. I call on you trees and animals which people our forests and are our kinsmen” (Osofisan 74). This prayer shares the fact that humanity is not in dichotomy to the Earth and the environment. Life is Africa and humanity’s place on the earth is an ensemble of the entire cosmos. The wellbeing of humans is determined by the other natural phenomena that form what we call Earth.

Another eco-dimension to the reading of this play is in the background itself. The situation indicates that the uprising by the farmers was duly caused by a drought.

Titubi echoed this fact in the opening scene saying: “Did we send locusts to anybody’s farm?” (Osofisan 9). The Eco-crises Africa grapples with today are to some extent caused by drought especially in sub-Saharan Africa. Rampaging locusts descend on farmlands because their natural habitat is being cut off by desertification.

The play also shows that the killing of wildlife especially endangered species is a problem here in Africa. Nigeria is among the worst culprits. There appears to be no visible programme whatsoever to protect and preserve disappearing wildlife and animal poaching is seen as one among many human adventures. The play metaphorically uses this reality to denote this level of oppression and the kind of relationship that exists between humans and other species of life. *Titubi* again in this vein declares: “the hunter brings home a grass-cutter, and beats his chest. What will happen to the elephant – killer?” (Osofisan 13). The statement above projects the reality in the African forest – the world of the hunter and the hunted. It shows that killing elephants, one of the world’s most endangered species in this part of the world is not a crime but an act of heroism for the African hunter.

Tree – felling is another subject engaged by the play. Trees are cut down and used as blockade or bridges across river paths or to close down roads – roads also built by felling trees along their paths. Wura in Scene Nine says: “Marshal’s plan was good. With those trees we felled across the road, they could not bring their lorries and big guns close enough. They had to come on foot (Osofisan 42). The forest remains a fortress in time of war but the African forest suffers during conflicts. The trees serve as cover; we run to them for refuge; we use them to protect ourselves and cut off enemy lines yet we treat them with disdain and destruction. The peasant farmers took to the forest as a place of refuge, to hide from the rampaging army bent on crushing their rebellion. This scenario is quite reminiscent of the Boko Haram saga where the

Sambisa Forest at the edge of the Nigerian- Cameroonian border remains their safe haven.

Sea-life poisoning is another eco-tragedy the play projects. The poisoning of a river used by the rebels is captured in Bogunde's statement. He returns with this news: "Fresh tragedies, Marshall, the vultures had poisoned our stream before they retreated" (Osofisan 48). The condition above speaks of the current quality of so-called fresh water in most Nigerian communities. Industrial activities have rendered sea-life dangerous for human consumption let alone the fishes and other water-dependent species. Cholera outbreaks in most parts of the country are traceable to contaminated water sources especially in rural communities where a vast number of the impoverished masses reside. The impact of industrial activities on farmlands was also captured in the play. Baba, another character restates the poor yield in farm produce when he recounts thus: "We said we couldn't pay the tax, that we could hardly feed our children" (Osofisan 51). Such is the dilemma farmers contend with in the wake of unyielding farmlands all across the African landscape. The impact of climate change gravely impacts on crops which is the mainstay of the larger part of the population engaged in agricultural activities.

4.5 OSOFISAN'S *NO MORE THE WASTED BREED*: A BRIEF SYNOPSIS

Elusu and Olokun, both gods disguised in human form emerged out of the sea to assess the impact of the floods on human habitation. Olokun is quite sympathetic with the situation masterminded by Elusu, the goddess of the inland waters and demands her intervention but this can only be achieved by Biokun the son of the late Priest, and a fisherman. Their interaction with him mediated by the Priest of Olokun proved to be futile as Saluga, a friend to Biokun confronts the gods in absolute defiance. This

confrontation marks a turning point in the play as the gods fail in their mission to co-opt Biokun and the goddess herself pays for this misadventure with her life. The play ends with the floods receding and life returning to normal but not without the goddess paying the ultimate price for it.

4.5.1 Major Thematic Concerns of the Play

The prologue of the play is quite instructive. Osofisan situates two characters – Olokun and Elusu – gods in human disguise who emerge from the sea to a beachside. Here we see the impact of rising tide and roaring waters on the human environment. Elusu, the goddess of the waters is accused by Olokun of bringing misfortune on hapless humans. The following dialogue ensues between them:

Olokun: look at your work. Just look at your work, Elusu!

Elusu: Yes. Am I not beautiful?

Olokun: Beautiful! Look at the wreckage you've made of the town. For how many months now you've surrounded them, till their land has ceased to breathe. You've spread your water everywhere, like a terrible carpet, so that wherever they put their feet, even within their doors, they swim in you.

Elusu: And now! You should see their farmlands which I have turned to swamp. Roots of their precious crops, I held so tight in my embrace, till they rotted away. I am a terrible goddess of vengeance.

Olokun: They'll starve to death

Elusu: All the fishes I have driven them away to other shores. And more! When they put their boats out, seeking escape, I simply heave my chest, a simple effort of breathing, and they are lost, lost forever. Husband, I am beautiful! (Osofisan 88).

Nature's vengeful rage against all humanity is not without a cause. Elusu's vendetta is precipitated by her outrage at the way humans have turned the waters of the Earth into a receptor for human waste. She declares thus:

All the more reason why they must be punished! Olokun, I am surprised at you. When we burst out from the bleeding gash of our mother Yemoja, were we not each given our laws and taboos? Were we not bidden to guard them jealously, or else wither or die? You've been away, but see, look at my face! See what the human beings have made of me, a cesspit of rotten flotsam! See how they choke my breath with oil, my belly with cement! And shit – I, Olokun, woman of clear eyes, I've become their chamberpot! They've turned my bosom into a restless market of smugglers and pimps and murderers (Osofisan 89).

This solemn lamentation chronicles the filth that has become the lot of most of the natural waters. A journey across Nigeria's coastline and beaches reveals the chaotic scenario of lawlessness as fishing vessels take over her shallow waters. The peace and tranquillity of the beach and the quiet life of the sea are lost as the shoreline transforms into a market place that beckons not only the good, but also the bad and the ugly. Garbage and human waste dot and floats all over the place. In the creeks, the water is a burning cauldron as oil-spills take their toll on sea life rendering the entire region a disaster area. Saluga also in the opening scene speaks of this eco-catastrophe thus:

Listen, everybody knows in what strange times we live. What we are witnessing now, no one has seen the likes of it before. Not even our oldest men recall a season like this, when the sea crashes in over the beaches and our sand barriers, and comes to settle down permanently on our streets, at the very doorsteps of our raised huts. Strange indeed, that every day over the past seven months or more, the sea has come in such floods that we have been cut off completely from, the mainland, and no

one dares put a canoe out on the raging water. Food supplies are short, the fishes have fled, all the plants have rotted away (Osofisan 93).

The effects of the global warming as being experienced across all nations of the earth is aptly encapsulated in Saluga's words above. The tsunamis, floods, loss of habitable land to erosion, famine and disappearing fishes off the rivers are all manifest 'proceeds' of our changing climate.

Another eco-dimension in the thematic interpretation of this play is the exploitation of Africa's rich natural resources especially by the developed West. Biokun captures this scenario saying:

And now they have seized control of the mainland over there, have seized our richest lands, and are busy carting off to their brethren back at home the most precious of our natural resources. What do you do goddess? You watch and let them pass, these alien ships laden with plunder, with our oil and gold and diamonds, with timber, coffee, cotton and cocoa and what else (Osofisan 109).

The continued exploitation of natural resources especially in Nigeria pitches the country on the part of peril in the near future. This remains the message in Osofisan's *No More the wasted Breed*. The trend of exploitation and exportation of these resources took root in colonial times and has continued unabatedly to this present age. The African waters are filled with vessels and barges ferrying off resources derived from the African environment to the West. The current situation is even further perpetuated with absolute disregard for the continued existence of eco-life and every species of life including humans. The impact of oil spills leaves the Nigerian environment on the path of a gloomy future with its attendant consequences on future generations. This is one important message derived from this play.

4.6 GREG MBAJIORGU'S *WAKE UP EVERYONE*: ABOUT THE PLAY

This three act play written in simple language brings to its audience the reality of climate change and several adaptive measures that can be employed to ameliorate its effect. In the play, we have Professor Aladinma, Desmond, a PhD student from the UK and the Professor's Green Theatre troupe – an assemblage of fresh graduates brought together to dramatize the message of global warming. On the other hand, we have peasant farmers who dwell and depend on the land for survival and there is also the political class as typified by the Hon. Ochonkeya, the Local Government Council Chairman.



Plate 4. *Gas flares light up the night sky in the Niger Delta. (Photo Source: ecoremediation.blogspot.com)*

Professor Aladinma, armed with enough information on climate change and the pending danger it poses to Ndoliland, goes to the Hon. Ochonkeya, with a proposal on how to arrest this looming catastrophe.

The chairman pretentiously accepts to look into the proposal with the promise to present it before the legislative council, only to cast it aside soon after the Professor has left his office. Meanwhile, Professor Aladinma returns to his rehearsal studio and with the arrival of Desmond, continues with the sensitization of local farmers. The farmers in the characters of Odukwe, Okosisi, Nnadozie and others are to be taught local ways of adapting to climate change by planting drought resistant crops and other modern methods of agro-practice that take into cognizance the reality and unpredictability of a changing climate.

However, a much bigger disaster lies in wait for the land. This is further aggravated by the refusal of Hon. Ochonkeya, the chairman to attend to the professor's proposal which would see the government and other international agencies working together to arrest the coming flood. Ndoliland lies in the coastal plains and has been under severe threat of eco-degradation owing to years of exploitation by oil companies. The topography of the land also makes it susceptible to flooding. The play ends with the flood submerging the farmlands as predicted by the professor. The farmers are enraged by this development and in the full knowledge of the nonchalant attitude of the council chairman; they decided to go for their 'pound of flesh' at his residence.

4.6.1 Thematic Concerns of the Play

One of the clear messages we get from Mbajiorgu's *Wake up Everyone* is that natural disasters are a direct consequence of human insensitivity to the plight of the environment. Professor Aladinma in Act one, scene one says:

What we are witnessing now is nothing else but planetary reactions to man's mindless activities, period. Our soil and rivers have become

unproductive because of chemicals and oil spillages. The floods and erosions we experience are caused by our senseless attempts to reclaim wetlands. What about the carbon monoxides from power generators and poorly maintained automobiles, and the unfriendly substances flared up into the air by oil companies on daily basis? The problems of our world today are caused by us and yet we are reluctant to find solutions to them (Mbajiorgu 2).

Natural disasters as natural as they seem do not just occur. They are triggered by humanity's actions and inactions. What the world faces now in the name of global warming, ecological degradation or climate change are nothing but offshoots of what humans do or fail to do. Quite typical of this is the level of corruption in oil politics at the expense of the land and the people who depend on it for survival. The play brings this dimension to the fore and raises questions about the so-called amnesty programme for Niger Delta militants. The disarmament of the youths to a reasonable extent calmed the frayed nerves in the region but the continued plundering and mindless destruction of the environment has continued unabatedly and the creeks smell of the filthy continuous oil spillage. The chairman, Hon. Ochonkeya in this same scene dialogues with his long time friend and partner saying:

Chairman: I saw the oil spillage incident a grand opportunity to get back at the multinational oil companies. When the event occurred, I got a fiery lawyer that has been at the vanguard of environmental issues to institute a legal action against the oil companies. When they perceived the legal consequences and the attendant damages they resolved to invite me, as the plaintiff, for alternative dispute resolution.

Jango: Choi!! Na lie – o – o, how the mata come take disappear nah?

Chairman: Through my lawyer, of course. We agreed that they pay three hundred million naira (Mbajiorgu 11).

This situation chronicles the hypocrisy and approach to the agitations and so-called environmental activism that has been the lot of the Niger Delta for many years. The level of damage done to the eco-system in this region ends up in compensations that are largely unaccounted for and absolutely nothing is done to commit the oil companies to clean the filth and make the land safe once more for human habitation.



Plate 5. *A scene from Greg Mbajiorgu's Wake up Everyone performed at the 44th Convocation Ceremony of the University Of Nigeria Nsukka on 23rd January 2015 (Photo Source: UNN)*

The impact of climate change on agriculture is another matter of topicality in the play. Dimkpa, one of the farmers in the play draws attention to the deteriorating farms saying: “Go there and see for yourself. My farmland is dry and barren, with nothing at all to justify all my efforts during the planting season”(Mbajirogu 16). We also see in the play that the reality of a changing climate especially in Nigeria calls for an urgent response in the area of education and empowerment. There is a great need to educate the masses and rural dwellers whose mainstay is farming on the new strategies of combating or adapting to the effect of global warming. Ugodiya, another farmer responds to Dimkpa’s dilemma blaming him for his loss saying:

You have nobody to blame but yourself. We had series of meetings with the Professor on what species of seed yam to plant and how to plant in this difficult time of change in climate. We were also introduced to different crop varieties and animal species (Mbajirogu 16).

This clearly shows that climate adaptation remains one of the remedies for Africa and Nigeria in particular. When people cannot change the reality of a warming planet, they have to adapt and the mode of adaptation remains the greatest challenge in a continent where literacy and access to information remains elusive.

The question of sustainable development is another issue of thematic concern in the play. In Act two, Scene one, Obioma recounts that; “humanity’s brutal and outrageous quest for wealth and development has nothing but the promise of doom and poverty for the children’s generation” (Mbajirogu 28). To mortgage the survival of an economy on one resource – oil, is not only suicidal but smacks a notion that the country is not thinking ahead. What will become of the fate of the next generation fifty years from now when oil may no longer be what powers the world’s industrial, political, economic and locomotive machinery? This is the question sustainable development is asking.



Plate 6. *Wake up Everyone on stage at the University of Nigeria, Nsukka. (Photo Source UNN)*

Today we are seeing the effects of an industry-driven economy sparked off by the age of modernity. Emission of green house gases, deforestation, and loss of natural landscape and subsequent extinction of the lifeworld are just a few possibilities that stare all in the face. The intellectual discourse between the Professor and Desmond in Act two, Scene two reveals a dimension to this trend that is increasingly becoming a reality in modern day Nigeria. Here we see in vivid pictures that the pursuit of modernity has further aggravated humanity's crisis with the environment. The impact of climate change and its causative factors are staring all in the face even in the rural areas of Nigeria. Desmond blames it on the quest for so-called development fuelled by Western-style civilization and modernity saying: "That's why we are discharging all kinds of poisonous substances into the atmosphere in the name of industrialization and modern technological supra-efficient machines" (Mbajjorgu 37).



Plate 7. *A scene depicting rehearsals in Mbagiorgu's Wake up Everyone (Photo Source: UNN)*

The play also brings to light the causes and effects of climate change. Act two, Scene three sees Professor Aladinma using his Green theatre troupe to narrate the story of climate change. With his cast working in his studio, they use various dramatic techniques as a tool for raising the consciousness of the local farmers on the possible causes of climate change and the resultant effect of this crisis on human habitation. The scene of the rehearsal shows the current reality of global warming and where the world stands today. Obioma, Adaora, Ekene and Nweke – all part of the cast engage in this dialogue:

Obioma: What have you done? Bio diversity minimization and emission of harmful and dangerous substances into the atmosphere and you know the adverse effects?

Adaora, Ekene & Nweke: We don't.

Obioma: They are numerous, where do I even start, (counting with her fingers as she lists them). Increase in global atmospheric temperature, melting of polar ice, rising sea temperatures, sea level rise, appearance of radiation-related concerns, change in the pattern of precipitation, change in agricultural yield, proliferation of a thousand other diseases and health problems..(Mbajjorgu 39).

This shows that the eco-crisis as it is today is the making of changing climate. This eco-catastrophe is felt in every part of the globe and more and more on African shores. Changes in rainfall patterns across Nigeria have gravely affected food supply and the rise in the cost of foodstuff in recent times is a testament to growing effect of climate change. Nigeria's response to these ecological challenges over the years has been that of silencing the voices that dare to speak out either by military might or by monetary inducement in the name of paying compensations. Nweke reminds us in this same scene that the nation has not responded with the right antidote to arrest this situation. She states:

Look at those men carrying heavy weapons. Look at them, all around us, murdering our heroes for daring to stop the spillage of oil and flaring of gas. And there is the mighty rig, the monstrous equipment that rapes and pollutes our waters. (*Stares in the distance*). What am I seeing? (*Pause*). What are they doing? (*Runs to the imaginary scene*).

Hei! Stop! Leave those little boys alone, they are too young, too young to handle that heavy military equipment. Take your fetish amulets off their necks! Can't go find something better to do than turning this whole land into corpses and coffins? All you know is how to shoot and maim (Mbajiorgu 40).

The Ken Saro Wiwa saga and how he and his fellow activists were summarily executed by the then military junta comes to mind as one ponders on the scene above. The resultant militancy that grew soon afterwards, the merchants of death armed by oil thieves ferrying off stolen oil overseas is also captured by Nweke's statement. We also see the effects of hunger precipitated by poisoned sea life. Nweke further illustrates this, saying:

Here in Ndoli, our source of living has gone forever,
our fishermen have exhausted what is left of our sacred waters,
carting home tender fingerlings that hold the secret of future harvest
(Mbajiorgu 41).

This explains the current spate of importation of sea life. Nigeria's waters lie empty due to the prolonged and desperate quest to harvest whatever is left from a once rich and abundant sea life. Fishermen now grovel through the filth of the waters in search of fish that no longer exist. Even the famous preserved and conserved waters that once served as an international tourist destination such as the Argungu Fishing Festival has gone with the winds because the giant fishes that were the attraction of this festival can no longer be found.

The ineptitude, nonchalance and indifference of the nation's political leadership to the reality of climate change is another subject matter in the play. In Act three, Scene three, Professor Aladinma captures this message in this dialogue with Desmond saying:

Look, Desmond, this country is asleep. Great leaders in other parts of the world are busy, embracing serious ideas like how to produce alternative energy sources that will replace fossil fuel. Here, our leaders are busy sharing oil wells and buying fuel tankers (Mbajiorgu 50).

Desmond's response to this statement brings to light another dimension to the eco-discourse by exposing the nation's lack of will to adapt to the realities of climate change. He states thus:

It is despeakable, most of the cities in this country are stuffed with hotels, filling stations, shopping malls, exotic mansions, and no breathing space at all; no trees, no flowers, no parks, no forest reserves and no pedestrian walk-ways. In every corner, you will find one structure or another without adequate waste disposal system, unfriendly buildings facing and suffocating one another. Yet more people are procuring cement and moulding blocks in these already congested cities (Mbajiorgu 50).

A look at our cities today reflects this reality. The slums are swelling daily as more people migrate from the hinterlands in search of a better life. As the cities grow in population, nearly non-existent infrastructure is over-stretched and this also impacts greatly on the environment.

4.7 ONWUEME'S *WHAT MAMA SAID* AND THE ECOLOGICAL CONCERNS OF THE NIGER DELTA

What Mama Said is set in the metaphorical state of Sufferland, whose people are starving and routinely exploited and terrorized by corrupt government officials and multinational oil companies--that is, until a voice erupts and moves the wounded

women and youths to rise up and demand justice. Onwueme's powerful characters and vibrant, emotionally charged scenes bring to life a turbulent movement for change and challenge to tradition. Aggrieved youths and militant women--whose husbands and sons work in the refineries or have been slaughtered in the violent struggle--take center stage to "drum" their pain in this drama about revolution. Determined to finally confront the multinational forces that have long humiliated them, Sufferland villagers burn down pipelines and kidnap an oil company director. Tensions peak, and activist leaders are put on trial before a global jury that can no longer ignore the situation.



Plate 8. *A woman and her children fetching water from a polluted stream. (Photo Source: Lambert Mbela. lambertmbela.com)*

The play - *What Mama Said*, by Osonye Tess Onwueme focuses on the effect of national and global oil politics on women, youth and impoverished rural Nigerians. Although the setting of the play is in the Niger Delta, issues raised by this drama can be universalized to depict the economic dynamics of the global capitalist ideology that creates a highly impoverished and exploited African environment. Onwueme according to Maureen Eke returns to this perennial theme, the disempowerment of rural woman, those who “till the land, those who have the power to make and unmake the land” (12).

Onwueme typically uses names of rivers as characters in the play. Imo, Oni and Oshimi are women who galvanize the energies of other women to lead a revolt against the activities of oil merchants in the region. The conflict in the play hinges on the deprivations suffered by women in this oil producing community exemplified by the lack of kerosene, an essential household commodity hoarded by Pipeline, an oil dealer. The women with the help of Imo, surreptitiously plan a revolt against these oil lords and with the charismatic leadership of Oshimi and Cross River, they in the end succeeded in dislodging these merchants by gaining control of their resources.



Plate 9. *A woman dries tapioca seeds next to a gas flare. (Photo Source: ft.com)*

The play also brings to light the subject of eco-degradation in Nigeria. One of the reasons for the agitations in the Niger Delta is the pollution and oil spills that destroy both sea life and farmlands. George-Ukpong believes that nature's contribution to observable changes in the Niger Delta environment is probably not that spectacular to the people.

The South-Southern Nigerians at the coastal region have been conversant with the peculiar hydrology. They could understand the tidal behaviour of the Atlantic Ocean, the flood regime of the rivers, the physical quality of the estuaries, and even the influence of sea water as it intrudes into inland waters. But the scum of crude oil in rivers, rivulets and creeks that induces fish-kill; the man-made canals and water ways that distort the swamps and mangrove ecosystems and drive species to extinction, and the waste/burrow pits and toxic waste dumps all became alien to them since the advent of oil exploration in their land. Perhaps much more strange and disturbing is the continuous burning of natural gas since the late fifties (57).

The entire eco-system in this area no doubt is on the path to extinction due to the continued pollution caused by oil spills. *Imo*, one of the characters in the play states thus: "And look around you see? They're not even killing us alone. The trees too!"(Onwueme 43). This situation reflects the situation in the creeks, a scenario where all life is of no consequence whether human, beast or plants; all are consumed in the desperate quest for oil.



Plate 10. *Farming next to a gas flare. (greengrants.org)*

The play also criticises the national leadership's abdication of its responsibility to protect the people. When men fail, women can arise and bring about the change they want. The play invokes this reality by re-enacting the women's rebellion of the 1980s against multinational oil corporations who polluted their farmlands. Women's protest against the exploitative presence of foreign oil companies is not new in these regions. The anger is justified by the fact that their primary source of livelihood which is fishing and farming is gradually being eroded by oil pollution. This anger is further fuelled by the poverty and destitution that pervades the entire area despite the enormous wealth extracted from the land. In movement three of the play, the conversation between Cross River, Imo, Oshimi and other women draw attention to the effects of environmental degradation orchestrated by male exploitation of women and their means of livelihood. The following dialogue captures it thus:

Imo: Did you hear how much the so called leaders spent globe-trotting and renovating their mansions in the state capital?

Women: No tell us.

Imo: Billions

Women: (*Alarmed*) eh?

Imo: Enough to feed this nation for centuries!

Oshimi: And here we are.

Cross River: Begging

Imo: just to be able to survive.

Women: One day? Just one more day! (*Pause*).

Imo: And look around you'll see?

They're not even killing us alone. The trees too!.

Oshimi: Our farmlands!

Cross River: And rivers

Oshimi: The environment

Cross River: pollution

Oshimi: Polluting the land, the river, our entire environment.

Women: All polluted

Imo: You said it.

Oshimi: Then she said it.

Imo: They're killing everything with their oil pollution

and spillage. We cannot breathe clean air. Fishes die or get fried in the polluted simmering rivers. Water-water everywhere. But we have no clean water to drink! And now we lose the land too.

Oshimi: No firewood because the plants and trees are

soaked in oil. What do they expect us to cook with? (Onwueme 43-44).

The above scene no doubt underscores the fact that women bear the brunt of the continued depletion of the earth's resources. When the environment is pillaged, women come under the pressure.

4.8 ONWUEME'S *THE DESERT ENCROACHES*: A BRIEF SYNOPSIS

The desert encroaches by Tess Onwueme brings to light the hypocrisy of world industrialized nations in tackling the ecological disasters that affects developing nations. Using animals or the symbolic animal kingdom as a metaphor, she exemplifies the lopsided relationship that exists between nations of the world where the powerful prey on the less powerful.

Lion, Hyena and the Wolf – all flesh eaters rule the wild and in their conspiracy to perpetuate their relevance, they fool the others to an agreement which they believe will only exist on paper. While they are busy with their schemes, the Sahara threatens the entire kingdom and soon drought sets in. The play ends with all uniting to keep the peace and joining hands to confront the common enemy – drought.

4.9.1 Thematic concerns of the Play – *The Desert Encroaches*

The onset of the play focuses on the effect of drought and the response of developed nations to the plight of Africans. In movement one, *The Director* announces to the audience that:

I hear there is yet another holocaust... just below the equator. This time it is famine from drought. Souls are drying up and as usual, they are scampering about sent relief... (P1).

This shows the typical response of the West to the plight of many African nations who daily groan under the severe impact of a changing climate. Uneven rainfall patterns especially in the Sahara render nations like Niger, Sudan, Chad, and the Northern parts of Nigeria to near desolate situations. The attendant consequence is famine and the usual response of relief from the West.

In this scene, *The Crier*, one of the characters in the play enters with a call for all to react to an emergency. He says:

Animals of the four winds. Dwellers of the sky penetrators of stubborn clouds. Tamers and trudgers of hills and mountains. Animals of the four winds. Do your eyes not ache from sand blown by forceful winds? Do your skins not burn from the fire in your hands and hearts? Plants weep and sleep...

Animals of the four winds.

The stream's not, no longer runs.

The sky's tear no longer cleans.

Only the sea's sour salt.

Only the sun's fire to mop us.

Only earth's ditch to envelope our limp limbs (p. 13).

This is a clear reflection of the true nature of the desert region. The scenario painted by *The Crier* above typifies the everyday experience in the Saharan regions of Africa. The reality of desert encroachment stares all in the face and a trip to the

the most vulnerable and they are easily caught-up in the web of these eco-crises. This is more so as poverty and deprivation pushes people to the fringes of the environment where they are easily swept off by the wind.

There is also an ironic twist to the play and its setting. Onwueme here writes about the desert but chooses to set the play in the forest. The forest is home to Africa's wild life. The desert is the driest part of the world. Nothing and no one survives in the desert. Hence, she chooses to use life to explain death because only in living can we interrogate what it is to be dead. Onwueme wants everyone to remember that while the forest provides refuge for the remnants of life, no one should forget that the desert is encroaching and the only ways to stop it is to push back by replicating the forest which symbolizes life everywhere. In movement two, the play re-echoes the consequences of felling trees:

Cow: When trees are felled?

Chorus: Hmn! Hmn!

Tortoise: Shed demolished?

Chorus: Ugh! Ugh!

Tortoise: De-sert....

Chorus: En-croaches,...

Little Sheep: on who?

Little Cow: You and me! (P.20)

Also in movement three, the scenario above is further amplified as the once thick forest enclave is fast giving way to a few shrubs which have equally lost their leaves. The forest Crier reminds all that when humanity fails to act for change by planting trees, then life will begin to give way to death as the desert encroaches:

My mother was born when the world's conscience was deep,
 deep like a well. As I grew up, the earth's core became shallow.
 The world's conscience had dried up. And the Sahara now

threatens the entire kingdom. The green leaves in the world's heart withering each day... for the desert encroaches.

And man, fuelling the sun, fueling the sun... to maim the winds... Ambition of the powers like fire – ravaging, ravishing the green lands where men planted their hopes. Their seeds ... ah (P. 25).

The world's carbon emissions are never ending and the melting ice-caps pour down to flush out every living thing on their path. As the world's industrialized nations talk about cleaner energy, gas flares in the Niger Delta burn and heat up the entire region. Amidst these man-made and human triggered disasters, there is also the exploitation of natural resources without any measure to ensure sustainability. *Cow*, one of the characters in the play encapsulates this by saying:

“They siphon the juice away and leave us with mere sand, with no grazing land and the desert, encroaches....(33).

While this agony remains in the minds of the animals, there is a conspiracy going on among the powerful trio – Lion, Hyena and Wolf. These three are top predators preying on the rest without any thought of how they will survive. The powerful trio feed on the animals whose livelihood comes from the fast disappearing grazing land. In one of such clandestine gatherings, Hyena sums up their pitiful minds' disposition towards the well-being of rest saying thus:

Don't worry. We're there to protect our and your interest. Who is fooling who? You'll be well supplied from us but of course, when it's time to debate and vote, we'll join them to agree that you should be perpetually ostracized. No one must have contact or contract with you. You know, the routine agreements, treaties, and so on. Those are mere round table paper agreements. Trade sanctions and detractions (p.45).

This is typical of all the protocols and treaties signed by international bodies to reduce or cut down on carbon emissions and move towards renewable and sustainable energy. Over the years we have seen that these same nations are not committed to the realization of these agreements.

4.9 AHMED YERIMA'S *HARD GROUND*: A BRIEF SYNOPSIS

The play centres on Nimi, an unrepentant young sixteen year old militant who escapes from the creeks after his comrades are killed. He returns home to his family – his mother Mama, his father Baba, uncle, Kingsley who all try to dissuade him from returning back to the violent life in the creeks and the harem of militancy. Nimi is however bent on vengeance as he narrates his ordeal in the hands of the war lord known as the 'Don' who he blames for all his misfortunes. While at home, news reaches him that his lover – Pikibo and their unborn child have been murdered. This news further aggravates his resolve. When he is told that the Don is about to visit their home, he surreptitiously plans to have him killed but the whole plan takes a twist as he mistakes his own father for the Don and kills him. The play shows the life in the creeks and homes of the Niger Delta. It further brings to light the motivation that has spurred the agitations of the eco-struggle in the creeks. It shows-cases the violent and criminal dimension of militancy in the creeks.

4.9.1 Thematic Concerns of the Play

In the play we see the ideals that have crystallized the Niger Delta struggle. What they are believed to be fighting for is encapsulated in these words by *Nimi*:

All I wanted to be was a good leader, please the don, and maybe, one day die for the cause of the nation state. Shed my blood like many great people before me for the love and goodness of my people, the future of the children and the welfare of the old (P.21)

Nimi's statement above depicts the ideology of the Niger Delta struggle. It is an ideology based on freedom and the promise of a good life. But in it we see that the hope of a good life is trapped with the presence of another form of slavery with the presence of the 'Don'. Armed struggles are believed to be backed and sponsored by certain faceless people that must be pleased and have their bidding carried out by their foot soldiers. Shrouded in the ideals of this supposed genuine struggles is the traits of gangsterism and the mafia who supply the tools.

In the play, we also see the effects of eco-corruption and the culture of impunity in the Niger Delta. While the environment stinks from filth, leaders engage in violent crime and smuggling. *Inyingifaa*, a village chief says:

We know. But the death in the camp worried all of us. The tribesmen in particular. It was as if the swampy forest could not hold a secret any longer. The chiefs could not be trusted.

And too much money was passing from hand to hand and nothing was achieved. There was no trust anywhere. The air of mistrust was choking, and the toll of dead bodies was mounting. One could smell it, and almost touch it. The stream of blood was beginning to mix with the oily black soil. (P. 22)

The trado-religious and socio-cultural relevance of the African river is also captured in the play. The river is seen as the source of life and well being to the African. Such beliefs are still found in the Niger Delta – a terrain of many waters. The African tradition as it relates to the significance of the river to the belief system was brought to fore here in the play. The cosmology of the people and the importance of river to this socio-cultural milieu is seen in the portrayal of the river goddess. The river possesses a cosmic power that keeps both life and living in good state. *Mama* depicts this belief thus:

Some people say, I am a fallen angel of the sea goddess, and I must have wronged her, and she tried to strangle me, and this is why I cannot breathe when I have the attack.... It is true, son. Sometimes I can feed my skin dry, and my lips cake, like scales, and my waist is all very painful, until I go to the river to bathe. Then and only then do I become born again (30).

This is typical of the African river. It is that place where people go to find purity and good health, where they bath after the day's activities. With the effects of pollution and oil spillages in these rivers, it hardly becomes the ideal place for life but a cauldron of burning fossil fuels. This gave rise to the agitations of environmentalists in the Niger Delta. The struggle was to clean up the filth and restore the purity of the source of life, health and well being of the Niger Deltan.

However, there came another twist to this struggle – resource control. It was no longer about the environment and the damage done to sea food and purity of the rivers. The eco-struggle took a different turn when militants began to demand for resource control. The modus operandi became that of blowing pipelines and causing more damage to an already polluted ecosystem. This is illustrated in the words of Nimi:

I was a little man in the trenches, planning the attacks of blocking the oil wells in trenches, finding how well to kidnap the white men, exploiters of our nation state, and making their hearts feed our pains. Little man, me? They dress in fine clothes at weekends in the cities after exploiting our oil (P. 37).

4.10 ARNOLD UDOKA'S *INYENE* AND THE LEGAL CONVENTIONS FOR ECO- SUSTAINABILITY

4.10.1 A Brief Synopsis of the Play

Inyene – an Annang word for wealth is used as a metaphor for the abject poverty in the midst of plenty (rich country, poor people) that has become the lot of the Niger Delta. The play explores the lack of sensitivity to the environment which lays the golden egg, the neglect of corporate social responsibility and the breeding of a culture of vulturism. There is also a depiction of the futility of violence, and other strategies which undermine the search for peace in the region.

The play calls for restraint and understanding on the part of the multinational corporations, and the compassionate intervention of the educated elite amongst Niger Deltans to resolve the knotty issues. *Inyene* is also a token of hope, a prophecy that the people's wealth would be truly theirs someday soon.

The play centres on Inyene, who was born in a riverine environment but left for the city to become a successful businessman who later returns to assist his people. He comes home to Bawkeng only to find that many of his kinsmen and women have either died due to confrontations with oil merchants or diseases arising from the effects of environmental pollution. Preba, one of the women who challenges the guards of the oil expatriates is shot in one of the many protests by the people.

However, Inyene has a different idea. He initiates a dialogue with the oil merchant, Adam Smith and this move pays off as the people are able to reach a mutual agreement on how to end the conflicts and halt further pollution of the environment.

The play ends with Adam's workers emerging with all sorts of cleaning equipment to sanitize the environment. Using the leafy branches in their possession, the women and the men join in cleaning up the environment. Adam walks up to the gas

flaring pit and turns it off. With the aid of the workers he connects the gas flaring pit to several cylinders.

4.10.2 Eco-issues in the Play

From the play, four typical issues are identified as common sights of eco-degradation in the Niger Delta. They are: gas flaring, soiled fishing nets, oil spillage and conflicts between natives and oil industries. The flaring of gas in the Niger Delta has continued unabatedly for several decades. Apart from the huge economic loss to the Nigerian state, it has impacted heavily on the quality of air in that region. The people's livelihood is tied to the environment and when the waters are soiled with oil, their means of survival and collective well-being is cut off. Oil spillages are now common occurrence in the Niger Delta and on each occasion, the devastation brought to both land and water-dependent animals is quite considerable. One of the characters in the play – the priest encapsulates the importance of the environment to the people thus:

For all these, our gods and ancestors, we are grateful. Let the rain come in its season. And let the sun shine in its season. And our waters; may they continue to bear all manner of water animals. And may the fishes they bear not tear our nets. May these waters continue to run free to our shores and keep our swamps green in peace all year round (2).

The ideal is what the priest prayed for. The Niger Delta is rich in sea food and other water resources. The ideal Niger Delta environment is ever green and the tranquil nature of the fields makes it a peaceful habitat both for humans and animals. The ambience of its forests, waters, creeks and canals resonates with the sound of eco-wealth but all of these are now threatened due to the exploitation and other oil related activities since pre-colonial times. The priest in the play captures the impact of ecological disasters now plaguing the Niger Delta thus:

We were very happy people until one day, a strange and violent tide swept from the depth of the ocean to our shores. None of us knew what type of dam to build to stem that tide. Its winds were so destructive that

even the ramparts of our shores were blown away. Where then do I as a priest appease our gods? In the water or the land? It is now a curse to claim Bawkeng as a homeland. The pain in our souls degenerated into fear, indignation, poverty and death. Who invoked this despoliation on our land? Who? In Bawkeng that strange and violent wind changed us to the proverbial rich land with poor people...(23).

In the play we also see the height of impunity and indifference to the plight of the local natives. Oil spills have just been discovered to have littered the entire community and all the oil merchants care about is the profit. The conversation between the foreman, the workers and the engineer reveals the intent of such exploitations and displays the global hegemonic economy which prefers profit above any other humane consideration.

Foreman: Master, master
 There is a mistake
 The oil is flowing
 But on the ground.
 On the water
 And the farmland

Workers: There's an error
 Error error error
 There's an error

Engineer: Oh no! Oh no!
 But it's no one's fault
 Oil spillage
 Is no big deal
 There are other waters
 For the natives to fish
 There are other lands
 For the natives to till
 The oil flows well
 That's all I need
 To make my money back... (26)

In movement three, there is a depiction of the consequence of resistance. The people's revolt has often been met with fatal response by government agencies and private personnel hired by the oil merchants. Preba, a woman who mobilized others to protest against the ecological disasters caused by the oil industry was brutally shot and killed by the security guards at the gate. This was captured in the priest's lamentations shortly after saying:

For challenging environmental crisis,

Preba was killed.

Demanding for practices to maintain the health and survival of life,
Preba paid with her life.

For seeking the reordering of the relationship between nature and
community,

Preba lost her life.

Her ecological consciousness to regenerate the land of Bawkeng
and reduce the death toll occasioned by the oil spillage and gas flaring
condemned her for elimination (35).

The scenario above proves that the fight against eco-degradation especially when this affects the free flow of proceeds from exploration and exploitation has come with its consequences. Many lives have been lost and are still being lost due to the crisis in the Niger Delta. However, there is a glimmer of hope as can be seen from the play. The return of Inyene in movement five appears to lift the spirits of the downcast people of Bawkeng. As he enters to hear the tales of woe, the masquerades enter bearing the following inscriptions on their wide masks: "spirit of death, spirit of famine, spirit of drought, breathe and die, drink and die, on Kyoto protocol we stand" (47). These inscriptions spur Inyene on to confront the reality of eco-degradation that has cut off the livelihood and survival of the people. He bares it all to Adam Smith, the oil merchant saying:

We are dealing with environmental degradation and pollution here. These constitute the dispute. It's not all about money. My people protest the way and manner you throw your master on them. That's all! We must find solutions to these mishaps and poverty (50-51).

This is the central message of the play – the clean-up of the Niger Delta and the amelioration of poverty that has become the lot of the majority of the inhabitants of the creeks. Eco-degradation as indicated by this play breeds poverty and when the people become desperate, they will agitate. In most cases these struggle takes a violent dimension.

4.10.3 Legal Conventions for Eco-Sustainability

In the play – Inyene, one of the inscriptions borne by the masquerades reads: “On Kyoto protocol we stand”. This presupposes that there are legal frameworks that ought to guide the way humans treat the environment. One of such is the Kyoto protocol. Over the years and at several international conferences, meetings have been held to streamline activities that pose a danger to the earth especially by the developed West. These conventions have also inspired individual nations to enact environmental laws to protect their environment as may be applicable to their peculiar circumstances. Environmental law in the opinion of Barau is a framework for achieving ecological sustainability. These include laws, pacts and penalties to guard, govern and guide individuals and institutions at local and global levels to stick to ways that favour the environment (101).

The Kyoto protocol to the United Nations framework convention on climate change is one such pact that seeks to engender a safe earth that guarantees the future of generations yet unborn. This convention was adopted in New York on the 9th of May 1992 by 39 western industrialized nations with a fully grown market economy or transiting to same. The objectives of this protocol are: to achieve enhancement of

energy efficiency in relevant sectors of the national economy; protection and enhancement of sinks and reservoirs of greenhouse gases; promotion of sustainable forest management practices, afforestation and reforestation. Others include the promotion of sustainable forms of agriculture in light of climate change considerations and the encouragement of appropriate reforms in relevant sectors aimed at promoting policies and measures which limit or reduce emissions of greenhouse gases. Under this protocol, each party is expected to minimize adverse social, environmental and economic impacts on developing countries. (United Nations Framework Convention on climate change).

Another convention on climate change is the Montreal protocol of 1999. This convention also aims at taking precautionary measures to control equitably total global emissions of substances that deplete the ozone layer, with the ultimate objective of their elimination on the basis of developments in scientific knowledge. The convention further acknowledges that special provision is required to meet the needs of developing countries, including the provision of additional financial resources and access to relevant technologies. (United Nations Environment Programme). These conventions stipulate that the reality of global warming needs a concerted and practical approach especially by the industrialized West to arrest the threat. Countries such as USA, Japan, China, Britain and a great deal of Western Europe emit more greenhouse gases than the rest of the world put together. This is a consequence of their massive industrial activity and hence, there is need to sign a pact that will ensure that there is a process of eliminating these carbon emissions. However, more than fifteen years down the line since these agreements were made; gas is still being flared all across the Niger Delta. The entire region is a cauldron of burning fuels by mostly western oil companies with no practical steps to end such emissions.

In Nigeria, there are laws and policies that have been enacted to somehow give impetus to the drive to arrest the threat of environmental degradation and ecological drift that the country has been going through in the last half a century. Nigeria presently has twenty eight legislations that serve as an instrument for environmental protection, planning, pollution, prevention and control. Section 20 of the 1999 constitution for example makes it an objective of the Nigerian state to improve and protect the air, land, water, forest and wildlife of Nigeria. Section 12 establishes, though implied that international treaties (including environmental treaties) ratified by the National Assembly should be implemented as law in Nigeria (Environmental Law Research Institute).

There is also the national policy on the environment drafted in 1998 by the Federal Environmental Protection Agency (FEPA). The goal of this policy is to achieve sustainable development in Nigeria through: securing a quality of environment adequate for good health and well-being; conserving and using the environment and natural resources for the benefit of present and future and generations; and restoring, maintaining and enhancing the ecosystems and ecological processes essential for the functioning of the biosphere to preserve biological diversity and the principle of optimum sustainable yield in the use of living natural resources and ecosystems. Other ways through which this policy intends to achieve sustainable development include: raising public awareness and promoting understanding of the essential linkages between the environment, resources and development, and encourage individual and community participation in environmental improvement efforts; and co-operating in good faith with other countries, international organizations and agencies to achieve optimal use of transboundary natural resources and effective prevention or abatement

of transboundary environmental degradation (Federal Environmental Protection Agency).

A return to the full implementation of these international treaties, laws and policies is what the play – *Inyene* calls for. This is significant especially now that the world is moving to the era of sustainable development with a focus on cleaner and renewable energy. With the fall in oil prices, a major catalyst for the crisis in the Niger Delta, Nigeria remains on the wrong side of history if practical steps are not taken to diversify the economy and ease the tension that oil politics generated over the years. At the moment, there appears to be no end in sight to stop gas flaring in the Niger Delta. Oil spills continue to become the daily experience of the people in this region. *Inyene* calls for a stop to gas flaring as indicated at the end of play.

The concern for the earth and the sustainability of the global life world was also corroborated in Barclays Ayakoroma's *A Chance to Survive*. There are traces of ecological concerns in this drama. Chief Kurokaki rules over a kingdom heavily endowed with natural resources. As typical of any riverine area, the land is endowed with fish and oil. However, the chief sells these resources and uses the money for his personal interests. Money paid as compensation for a gas explosion (twenty million Naira) was diverted to marrying a new wife and obtaining an honorary doctorate degree. This brazen act of eco-corruption sets the chief and the youths on a fierce war path. The youths led by the activist Oloye vows to have the chief removed and brought to justice. Things take a different turn when Oloye falls in love with the chief's daughter. Chief Kurokaki vows to have Oloye his sworn enemy eliminated and resorts to black magic but this plan boomerangs on him as he comes down with a strange illness that needs electric fish to cure.

Incidentally, all the fishes in the river have been sold out by the chief and his only hope now lies with Oloye who has been preserving electric fishes in ponds at his backyard. After much reluctance to help, Oloye finally gives in to love by bringing out three electric fishes despite the feud between him and the chief. This singular act of forgiveness resolves the enmity between the palace and the house of Oloye.

Ayakoroma's *A Chance to Survive* makes a case for conservation as a means of saving and sustaining the earth. By preserving electric fishes (one of the rare breeds of fishes) in his backyard using a pond and feeding them daily, he demonstrates that humanity's dependence on other species of life cannot be more overemphasized. These fishes were used to save the chief who sold all the fishing lakes and their content to foreigners. In scene ten, the severity of the chief's problem and how seriously he needs help is captured thus:

2nd Chief: His Royal Highness is dying and every diviner has said that we need to give him shock treatment, and we need three electric fishes to do it. That is the only chance for him to survive.

Oloye: Then go to the fishing lakes....

1st Chief: They have tried, but all in vain.

Oloye: You see! You see why father used to oppose the sale of the fishing rights over our communal lakes to people to fish exclusively. You could kill as many electric fish in any of those lakes before (55).

Quite characteristic of plays set in the Niger Delta is the issue of oil, its exploration, exploitation and the impact on the livelihood of the people. *Oloye's* father died as a result of the activities of oil merchants. In the opening scene of the play, Oloye draws attention to the general state of the Niger Delta region saying:

Our problem now is that we are suffering because our oil boom has become a curse! We do not have fishes in our river again, our food crops are not producing and our only source of water supply is contaminated always because of incessant oil spillages (P. 20-21).

4.11 ONUKABA'S *THE KILLING SWAMP* AND KEN SARO WIWA'S ECO-ACTIVISM IN THE NIGER DELTA

Adinoyi Ojo Onukaba's *The Killing Swamp* imagines the last moments of Ken Saro Wiwa and eight others who were sentenced to death and hastily executed in November 1995 by the military government of that day. The play brings to light the issues at stake in the oil-rich Niger Delta and supposedly speaks for the dead who paid the supreme price of environmental activism. This one scene play revolves around Kenule, a short, intense, and self-confident writer in his fifties who is just about to be executed along with others for the alleged murder of four pro-government traditional rulers. At the site of his execution, he uses his last minutes to engage his executioners, a major in the army in his mid-thirties and a sergeant in his mid-thirties in a discourse that was meant to unravel the issues of environmental degradation in the Niger Delta. Just before he is hanged, we get to hear from Kenule that the ecological crisis in the region inspired the struggle that will ultimately cost them their lives.

One of the main thematic thrust of this play is that the destruction of the ecosystem especially in the Niger Delta is a crime against future generations. Kenule in the play says:

We are all on trial for denigrating our country and jeopardising the future of our children by our actions.

History will judge us all. There is no doubt in my mind that the ecological war being waged in the Delta by the Nigerian government and the oil companies will never go unpunished. It is a crime against humanity. It is genocide (Onukaba 31).

Kenule's statement brings to light the fact that the future of this region remains under great uncertainty owing to the decades of disregard for the ecosystem by both government and oil companies. Today, we see a different twist to the situation currently unravelling in that area. Oil bunkers using crude methods to explore and exploit oil have added to the filth in the Niger Delta through oil spills resulting from oil theft. As Kenule puts it; "We are all on trial" (Onukaba 31). Everyone is guilty for either directly polluting the environment or failing to speak against such acts. In the wake of this supposed silence, the future looms with great uncertainty for generations yet unborn.

The play also draws attention to the current air pollution going on in the Niger Delta. Gas flares and oil spills continue unabatedly and contribute in no small measure in polluting the creeks and rivers that have supplied the people with drinking water and sea food. Kenule reminds all that the reason for their trial and condemnation is all about oil:

My actions and words have become a threat to the flow of oil from the Delta. I have woken up the docile people of the Delta. I have asked them to reclaim their land. I have told them to hold the oil companies accountable for the dead creeks and oily swamp. I have opened their eyes to the atrocities of the oil companies which have wasted their rich fertile land and polluted the creeks and rivers that supply them drinking water and food .. (Onukaba 33).

Kenule's words above bring to light the urgency of the need to raise the consciousness of the people to the precarious situation in the Niger Delta. The activism or struggle in this region reached its height soon after the execution of Ken Saro Wiwa when insurgents took over this struggle. The militant dimension that greeted this eco-crisis resulted in a near breakdown of the operations of oil companies. The death of

Saro Wiwa no doubt did not only serve as a catalyst for this struggle but brought global attention to the dynamics of the Niger Delta environment.

4.12 DANDAURA'S *VENOM FOR VENOM*, THE CONFLICT OF GREED AND THE ECO-DEGRADATION IN THE NIGER DELTA

Dandaura's *Venom for Venom* presents the subject of greed as the driving force behind all forms of environmental degradation and exploitation especially in the Niger Delta. The play explores the motivation behind the militancy and the violent approach to the eco-struggles of the region in recent years. The play opens with two central characters – Ogenero and Tega who represent different ideological divides in eco-activism. Ogenero is a selfish insurgent who cashes in on prevailing exploitation in his community to milk the resources of the elites and that of the multinationals through kidnappings, hostage taking and robbery. Tega on the other hand, decamps from Ogenero's group to lead a non-violent campaign aimed at educating the people to reject the continued plundering and devastation of the environment. This he achieves by mobilizing the people through the power of art (drama).

The play further portrays the consequences of violent militancy as represented by Ogenero who in the end fails tragically while Tega's group and their approach bring about a revolution in the hitherto restless community. The play ends with the people embracing peace and getting the needed result they deserve as everyone comes to a realization that violence is not the best antidote for achieving peace and development.

In scene two, we see the real agenda that gave impetus to the resurgence of militancy in the Niger Delta. Ogenero, leader of the militants in the play addresses his comrades-in-arms saying:

My brothers, they call us terrorists, but you and I know that we are not terrorists. The real terrorists are the foreign companies that have connived with our brothers uphill to exploit us. They destroyed our land,

polluted our environment. Even the water, our people's means of livelihood has been muddled up and poisoned (Dandaura 13).

No insurgency erupts without a cause. The insurgency in the Niger Delta was primarily angst by the growing deprivation, exploitation of oil wealth and subsequent alienation of the people from nature's good. The growing poverty index and the mass population of unemployed youths provided a ready and willing army for a violent and deadly campaign that further exacerbated the conflict in the region. Ultimately, the environment is left battered and bruised by the simmering rivers fuelled by leaking oil from blown-up pipelines. The creeks are left unsafe and impregnable as gun-wielding militants lurk on every side.

Venom for Venom also brings to light the true purpose of eco-activism and the environmental crises especially in the Niger Delta. The play shows us the two strands of the Niger Delta struggle. Ogenero is a violent militant with a selfish bent whose modus operandi has a criminal bent. Tega is a non-violent activist, a social crusader with a pro-environmental ideology. The confrontation between these two characters partly explains the dichotomy that pervades the insurgency and the eco-struggles of the Niger Delta. This scenario also explains the rise of criminality within the claims and agitations of the various contending groups. There are those who took to arms to perpetuate mayhem for their selfish gains such as hostage taking, kidnappings, oil theft and vandalism. On the other hand we have those who push for the safety and productivity of the environment in the face of oil exploitation. Tega says:

We must not lose focus. Our movement is geared towards total emancipation of our people and the environment, not murder and arson!
We must not commit same crimes that have warranted our struggle (16).

Just soon after this statement, he gets kicked out of Ogenero's camp.

What then is the present state of the Niger Delta that catalyzed these agitations?

Scene four of the play provides an answer. At a drinking and relaxation centre owned by Mama Etteh, characters simply known as 1st Man and 2nd Man provide a reality that has characterised the entire Niger Delta environment saying:

1st Man: My worry is that our crops have all withered.

There is this strange dust colouring every plant in the farm. Even grasses and trees are gradually dying. I am afraid we may not have any harvest this season if this problem is not addressed soon.

2nd Man: Haven't you noticed the disappearance of fishes

from our rivers. The water these days is as coloured as banga soup. At first, I reasoned that the gods were angry with us, but only this morning, my friend explained that it is oil spillage from the Company's pipes that has polluted the waters (Dandaura 25).

This situation no doubt explains the danger and uncertainty that prevails in oil producing communities. It typifies the reality that the primary source of livelihood of ordinary citizens which is agriculture is severely threatened by the activities associated with oil exploration. What this portends for future generations becomes more worrisome owing to the fact that the Niger Delta still grapples with ecological crisis till date. At the moment, there are no realistic measures to arrest this trend other than just providing amnesty for supposed repentant militants.

In the play, we also see the potency of non-violent resistance. Scene seven shows Tega calling on the people to shun violence but yet to courageously lead a struggle that ultimately engages the minds of the people to act for change. He says:

Tega: Do not be scared of what the powers that may be will do to us. So long as we succeed in sensitizing the people, the people themselves will decide on how best to liberate themselves. That is my problem with the violent approach; it robs the people of the revolutionary zeal (Dandaura 40).

The eco-pedagogic importance of drama was also captured in this scene. Drama was identified as one effective tool for social change with the potential to galvanize the energies of the people to change what they do not want and bring about what they want. Tega also amplifies this saying:

Tega: Through such performances, we could teach out people to rediscover their identities and regain confidence in their capabilities, limitations and potentials” (Dandaura 42).

This clearly indicates that drama indeed serves educational functions that reinvent the innate abilities of the people to transform their societies particularly their environment. This scene also provides us with a self-reflective dimension to change which eco-pedagogy brings in the discourse with forces that militate against the environment. The ideology of change according to the play should and must be seen to begin with the people and the war against these alien forces must be targeted at the conscience. We see this in the resolve of the youths at the end of scene seven who declared thus: “We shall never exploit the people or collaborate with those who exploit the people. Our weapons should pierce the consciences of our oppressors and never their bodies” (Dandaura 44).

CHAPTER FIVE
PLAYING EARTH: EXPLORING THE TRAJECTORY OF ECOLOGY IN
NIGERIAN DRAMATIC LITERATURE

Nigerian plays have in the last five decades engaged issues that have characterized the nation's birth or rebirth into the complex web of modernism and globalization. From political experiments dawned by the quest for independence from British overlords to the dark days of military rule, drama in Nigeria has not spared its thought in drawing attention to the realities of modern day Nigeria. Twenty first century Nigerian drama has thematically preoccupied itself with issues of corruption, health, economic exploitation, crime and conflict, the woman question, political exploitation and social injustice.



Plate 11. *Two men cutting down a tree in one of Nigeria's forest region. (Photo Source: climatereporters.com)*

Within this same period however, the Earth and its support systems have come under serious peril albeit unnoticeably to the literary profession. Glotfelty in his critical survey of literary studies in an age of environmental crisis believes that in view of the discrepancy between current events and the preoccupation of the literary profession, the claim that literary scholarship has responded to contemporary pressures remains difficult to defend (xvi). For him, if one's knowledge of the outside world were limited to what one could infer from major publications of the literary profession, one would quickly discern that race, class, and gender were the hot topics of the late twentieth century "but you would never suspect that the earth's life support systems were under stress" (Glotfelty xvi).



Plate 12. *Giant trees stand in the centre of a Relaxation Park at Kofar Gamji, Kaduna, Nigeria. (Photo Source: Researcher).*

The ecological crises that have seemingly missed the prying eyes of literary scholars in the last five decades includes oil spills, lead and asbestos poisoning, toxic waste contamination, extinction of species at an unprecedented rate, battles over public land use, protests over nuclear waste dumps, a growing hole in the ozone layer, predictions of global warming, acid rain, loss of top soil, destruction of tropical rain forests, auto emissions, famines, droughts, floods, homicides etc. Nigeria and indeed the Third world is not spared as growing poverty and a burgeoning mass of illiterate class fuelled by desperate quest for energy puts extreme pressure on the environment. Within this age of global eco-crisis emerged a new body of knowledge that interrogates the inter-connectivity of humans and their environment. This body of knowledge otherwise called “Ecopedagogy” sprang out of developed ideas and practices of environmental preservation and conservation. It stirs many people to become self aware of the role they play in environmental destruction and to become more socially active in ways that can help to create a more ecological and sustainable world (Kahn 5).



Plate 13. *An open waste dump in the heart of a residential area. (Photo Source: Researcher)*

Ecocritics have within the last three decades risen to the Earth's call to foster social justice and to develop a robust appreciation for the collective potentials of being human. Love (5) sees the third millennium and the 21st century as a "century of the environment", where a coherent and broadly based movement embracing literary-environmental interconnections is emerging.



Plate 14. *A typical deforestation site. (Photo Source: channelstv.com)*

Ecocriticism hence studies the relationship between literature and the physical environment. Just as feminist criticism examines language and literature from a gender conscious perspective, and Marxist criticism brings an awareness of modes of production and economic class to its reading of texts, Ecocriticism takes an earth-centred approach to literary studies (Glotfelty xviii).

Environmental and population pressures inevitably and increasingly support the position that any literary criticism which purports to deal with social and physical reality will encompass ecological considerations. This body of knowledge “challenges interpretation to its own grounding in the bedrock of natural fact, in the biopheric and indeed planetary conditions without which human life, much less humane letters could not exist” (Love 5).

Nigeria in the last fifty years has come under severe ecological crisis arising from massive deforestation, disappearing landscape in the savannah, poisoned sea life in the Niger Delta and quite recently floods in all parts of the country. The nation’s socio-economic dynamics make life and living quite unsustainable. With the single resource nature of the economy predicated on oil and gas extraction, Nigeria’s contribution to climate change, global warming and environmental degradation is beginning to draw significant attention. Harthaway and Boff capture the scenario thus:

The new global capitalism has resulted in rising social exclusion, a breakdown of democracy, more rapid and extensive deterioration of the natural environment, and increasing poverty and alienation. It has threatened and destroyed local communities around the world; and with the pursuit of an ill-conceived biotechnology it has invaded the sanctity of life by attempting to form diversity into monoculture, ecology into engineering and life itself into a commodity (xiv).



Plate 15. *Flood waters push residents out of their homes. (Photo Source: transparency.com)*

From the foregoing, it therefore becomes imperative that we re-evaluate the eco-relevance of Nigerian literary studies within the period that the Earth and her challenges became a concern. This is imperative since the already manifest effect of a warming planet is visibly taking its toll on the country. The ambience of Nigeria's environment resonate the tone of a catastrophe. Where are the green savannahs that once lavished the landscape of the Northern Nigeria offering grazing to the cattle of the herdsmen? It is not in doubt that disappearing grazing land in the Northern Nigeria is a major catalyst for conflicts that have ravaged this region in recent times. Needless to say that gas flares and oil spills in the Niger-Delta, erosions in the South East and devastating floods in the Middle Belt spell a reality that Nigeria is not isolated from the looming global eco-catastrophe.

The platform to interrogate this concern is Nigerian drama. In the face a presumed eco-absence in what has preoccupied the thematic concerns of Nigerian drama in recent years; this study becomes more apt and indeed appears timely as it calls for a paradigm shift in scholarly discourse of Nigerian drama. This wakeup call seems to be gaining relevance as we have in the last ten years seen the emergence of a new dimension to Nigerian dramatic writings that engages issues surrounding the environment.

The point needs to be stressed here that echoes of nature or the environment have been reverberating in the play texts of Nigeria since the first literary dramatic text emerged. This is due to the fact that the cultural setting is strongly intertwined with the natural environment. In Nigeria, according to Sirayi, theatre grew under the shade of trees. "It was feasible for a man to sit, perhaps under the shade of a tree, and begin to hum tunes, and later attach words to those tunes, thereby giving birth to the singing and composing of songs" (21). Nigerian drama emerged out of the Nigerian cosmology. It

is an integral cosmos where every living being plays out its survival and dominance over the forces of nature. Anthropologists in the 19th and early 20th centuries point out that during the early stages of the development of drama, a society becomes aware of the forces that appear to influence or control its food supply and well-being (Brocket 1). This therefore, means the ritual origin of Nigerian drama cannot be extricated from two vital phenomena – food and well-being, two vital forces strongly influenced by the environment.

It is therefore inconsequential that some scholars especially of Western origin have conceptualized eco-drama as very novel in the world today. Standing defines it as an inter-section of drama and ecology which is a new sub-genre of drama and performance studies (1). Read on his part adds credence to the newness of this sub-genre saying; “the drama speaks continually of the ‘world’, but can the Earth tell us about the drama? It is the place it occurs, and its ecological determination has become in recent times drama’s concern and content” (177). The point being made here is that drama’s engagements with crisis of the environment may appear novel, but yet the former’s relationship with ecology goes back to the very origins of drama. In the analysis of Kershaw, the final decades of the twentieth century saw performance becoming to culture what water is to nature, an element indispensable to life. In some respects this was not altogether new, as ritual performance traditionally had provided a spring for human survival (11). Hence, the call for a safe earth is a call that drama has always courted but not fully consummated. The consummation of this relationship becomes imperative now and it is a call that makes this study quite timely.



Plate 16. *A residential building erected in the middle of waterway causing massive flooding that resulted in the collapse of a part of the structure. (Photo Source: Researcher)*

Nigeria's literary dramatic discourse in the 21st century is a discourse with nature. This discourse is what Diamond calls "Theatre for Living". This invitation according to him, is for drama to engage in the struggles of the characters, which is recognized as also our own struggles not to break the oppression (getting rid of what we don't want), but to create healthy community, or safety, or respect (getting what we do want) (43).

No one is in doubt that there is an ecological crisis and to address it there is an urgent need to come up with different ways in conceptualizing the relationship between humans and nature. Standing believes that it is through a re-examination of this relationship that we can address ecological policy and actions (2). Drama in itself is life, the everydayness of living is what drama creates, just as nature and culture remains inseparable, the environment gives inspiration and indeed life to drama in all climes.

Read gives amplification to the above by stating that everyday life (shaped by natural phenomena) is the given and drama (culture) is the created (151). For him, everyday life is human and the earth, the sea, forest, light, night, do not represent everydayness. The relations between the everyday and nature and humanity's place within that frame are often in political urgency overridden by abstract ideals of progress and universal emancipation. This has been the concern of drama in recent times as what we have seen both in dramatic content and form is a celebration of human conquest or supposed dominance over the environment. There is a mindless gobbling up of the global lifeworld in the quest for an endless accumulation of surplus value (McLaren 20). Drama hence, is in no position to deny local imperatives for such universal ambitions that have consequently turned the world into a global toilet of toxic waste.

5.1 THE NIGER DELTA: HISTORICAL OVERVIEW OF FACTS AND CONTENTIONS IN THE ECO-CRISIS

Human development is first and foremost about human beings. Development is about men, women and children in families and communities; about their ability to take control of improvements in their living conditions and their sense of personal achievement and efficacy (Opubor 71).

Oil was discovered in Nigeria in the 1950s and since then, the country has been suffering the negative environmental consequences of oil development. The growth of the country's oil industry, combined with a population explosion and a lack of environmental regulation, led to substantial damage of Nigeria's environment especially in the Niger-Delta region. This region's main environmental challenges result from oil spills, gas flaring and deforestation. Oil spills in the Niger Delta have been a regular occurrence and the resultant degradation of the surrounding environment has caused significant tension between the people living in the region and the multinational oil companies operating there. Media reports put oil spills incidents in the Niger Delta at 9,343 between 2004 and 2014 – the world's worst record (Kalejaye 1). This translates to an average of nearly a thousand spills yearly. These spills as reported by the National Oil Detection and Response Agency (NOSDRA) would lead to Nigeria losing nine states that make up the oil rich region, including their arable lands and water resources in the future if drastic measures are not taken to stop this menace (Kalejaye 1).

The Niger Delta region remains fraught with ethnic unrest. The Ogonis, an ethnic group that predominate in the region, have protested that not only have foreign oil firms degraded the local environment, but that the Nigerian federal government also has acquiesced by not enforcing environmental laws and regulations. Clashes between tribal groups and security forces have resulted in numerous deaths, as

well as periodic disruptions in oil production. Protest actions occur with regularity, with local youths seizing oil platforms or taking hostages and forcing oil companies to withdraw their staff or halt oil production until their demands are met. These protests are pointers to an environment under peril. Despite these hiccups, oil exploration and exploitation has never ceased owing to the fact that Nigeria remains the hotbed for oil trade with loose regulations. There have been over 4000 oil spills in the Niger Delta since 1960 (eia.doe.gov), and gas flaring from oil extraction has resulted in serious air pollution problems in the area.

One of the most visible consequences of the numerous oil spills has been the loss of mangrove trees which were once a source of both fuelwood for the indigenous people and a habitat for the area's biodiversity. While the habitat is now unable to survive the oil toxicity, the oil spills have adversely affected marine life with a high level of contamination that makes it impossible for humans to consume uncontaminated seafood. In March 2003, Shell was ordered to pay \$1.5billion to the Ijaws for the company's actions in Bayelsa State over a 50 – year period. A government committee that investigated Shell ruled that the company was responsible for a number of oil spills and environmental incidents, including an epidemic between 1993 and 1994 in which 1,400 people died as a result of a Shell oil spill (eia.doe.gov). The committee blamed the prevalence of cancer in the region on exposure to the company's oil spills, noting that Shell continually refused to pay compensation for these spills, and where it had, the payment was inadequate (eia.doe.gov). Acid rain and air pollution in the area is also a result of the continued gas flaring which has continued to defy every deadline put in place by the government.

Oil accounts for ninety five percent of Nigeria's export earnings and over eighty percent of the total annual revenue of the federal government and Agbese believes that

this extreme dependence on oil revenue ties the hands of the government from enforcing its environmental regulations for fear of “killing the goose that lays the golden egg” (190). These long years of eco-hesitation by the government became its biggest undoing as events that followed proved costly and deadly too. The area has for over two decades now been plunged into an intractable crisis pitching both local communities and the authorities on the path of conflict. This crisis is predicated on the reality that the Niger Delta has contributed immensely to the survival, stability and development of the Nigerian economy yet remains largely underdeveloped. Tugbokorwei and Ogu-Raphael believe that the ecological devastation and total oppression of the people, especially in the denial of their rights, including land rights, are very much incidental to the conflict in the region (119). Far from just being an agitation for land rights, there is also a worse scenario – the right to survival. The *raison d'être* for the various contestations is the destruction and devastation done to the entire ecosystem – life. This has been the centre point of the Niger Delta activism.

Niger Delta activism gained momentum soon after the civil war but reached its heights during the Fourth Republic. Movements that sprang up include the Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People (MOSOP), which was the brainchild of the late environmental activist, Ken Saro Wiwa. There were also the Movement for the Survival of the Ijaw Ethnic Nationality of the Niger Delta (MOSIEND), the Ijaw Youths Council (IYC) and the Supreme Egbesu Assembly (SEA). Some of these groups have been associated with militancy especially the Ijaw Youths Council which metamorphosed into splinter organisations such as Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND), the Niger Delta People’s Volunteer Force – a rebirth of the Boroist Movement of the 1960s and the *Egbesu Boys*.

It is however on record that these groups seemingly lost the ideology of their founders which was to civilly draw attention to the deprivations suffered by the Niger Delta people as criminal elements hijacked their activities to unleash terror and violence on the area. Vandalism, piracy, hostage – taking, kidnapping and oil bunkering became the order of the day. Ayakoroma believes that the degeneration of genuine protests movement to criminality is not in tandem with the cultural identity of the Izon man (4). For the Ijaws, he further asserted that Isaac Boro – the founder of the first militant group (The Niger Delta Volunteer Force), planted in them the spirit of selfless agitation that would improve the quality of life of the Ijaws, “the people who produce the wealth of the nation”.

Boro saw that since the discovery of crude oil in commercial quantity in Oloibiri (Ijawland) in 1956, oil companies such as Shell (Anglo/Dutch), Agip (Italian), Elf (French) and Chevron (American), through their oil exploration activities, had perpetrated a war of economic exploitation and environmental degradation. Boro believed that the people of the area deserved a fairer share of proceeds of the oil wealth. Thus, he started the struggle of what has come to be called ‘resource control’. (Ayakoroma 4).

Recent happenings especially with regards to the Amnesty Programme initiated by the Yar’Adua government for self-confessed and seemingly repentant militants have again thrown up very critical issues bordering on the Niger Delta struggle and the sincerity of the government. While the so-called amnesty was on, the government has severally boasted of increased oil production without addressing the critical issues that gave birth to the conflicts in the Delta regions. Hopes that the Ministry of the Niger Delta and the Niger Delta Development Commission (NNDC) will bring succour and once and for all put an end to the yearnings of the people of the area were dashed as

they soon became yet another political smokescreen that again failed to pacify the people. Little or nothing is being said about recovering the region from several decades of dehumanizing degradation. Little or nothing is being said of women, men, farmers, fisher men and diseased children who have lived all their lives with the filth created by oil exploration and exploitation. Amidst the seemingly glorious trumpeting of the strides of the Amnesty programme is the harsh reality of a people whose source of livelihood is systematically being eroded.

5.2 IN THE EYES OF DRAMA: ISSUES AND CONTRADICTIONS IN THE ECO-STRUGGLES OF NIGERIAN DRAMA AND THE NIGER-DELTA CRISIS

In the closing stages of the last century and now, we have noticed flashes of concern by Nigerian playwrights for the eco-crisis that stares the country in the face. Nigerian dramatists are beginning to question the issues and facts of the global environmental melt-down as it affects the Nigerian landscape. While many of the dramatic works in the last decade have focused on the Niger Delta, a lot of such works however, have thematically preoccupied themselves with the issue of ‘resource control’, militancy, economic exploitation and social justice. Quite recently, the critical issues of conservation, air pollution and environmental degradation are being brought to the front burner of plays coming out from the stable of Nigerian dramatists.

The seeming eco-hesitation by Nigerian playwrights in this regard is understandable as the primary motivation that gave birth to the first eco-struggle anchored by the Boroist Movement was largely the control of Niger-Delta resources. Oil spills, air pollution or loss of biodiversity were secondary and were treated as offshoots or consequences of a supposedly wrongful control of indigenous wealth. This is however not to say that the concern for safety of the Niger Delta environment was

not an issue but quite obvious is the struggle for control of a fairer share of the proceeds of oil money.

Clark-Bakederemo's *The Wive's Revolt* and *All for Oil* reinforces and pursues social and political themes bordering on the fate of humans plagued by predators from within and without (Asagba 45). The play *All for oil* sets out to correct certain historical anomalies, perceptions and positions concerning socio-political happenings and developments in the Niger Delta. The discourse of this playwright as reflected in the two plays dwelt more on economic exploitation and dehumanization of the people of the region who should naturally live better from the natural resource – oil even if the environmental circumstance remains the same. The question left to be answered is whether the eco-degradation will cease if oil were left for Niger Deltans to exploit. Will the militancy continue when the people of the region are in charge and yet oil spillage and gas flaring continue to wreck havoc in the region.

In Yerima's *Hard Ground*, we see a different twist to the environmental agitations in the Niger Delta. In this play, we are confronted with consequences of the conflicts arising from issues of militancy, national resource control, poverty and marginalization in this region. The play brings to light the fact that in the continued quest to right the wrongs in these depleted zones through armed struggle much pain is still being inflicted on life and living with women and children being the most vulnerable. Embu's analysis on one of the central characters of the play - *Nimi* portrays a staggering reality in the creeks where children are caught in the web of the struggle and used as militants.

This is a clear case of children's rights abuse which is against international human rights law. Nimi, 'the scorpion', as he is popularly called by the group for his bravery did not complete his education due to

this kind of youthful experience. . He believes in getting what he can immediately and has no plan for the future or consequences of his actions. (Embu 151-152)

The continued militancy in the Niger Delta has caused much pain if not worse to vulnerable groups than the cause that gave rise to the struggle.

In Bakare's *The Gods and the Scavengers*, we see a vivid presentation of the conflicts in Nigeria that is tied to the environment. The play brings to light the fact that depleting resources and a desperate scramble for what is left has pitched the burgeoning population of the biggest black nation on earth on war path. It presents preoccupations of the different ethnic divides in Nigeria whose livelihood it tied directly to the environment such as cattle rearing, fishing, blacksmithing and farming. In most cases conflicts also arise when those in political power use their offices to reclaim landed property belonging to these 'scavengers' and convert same to personal use. Dandaura's *Venom for Venom* published in 2010, reawakens humanity to issues of environmental degradation, youth restiveness and the need for peer-to-peer education and collective action towards sanity in the Niger Delta.

Nwanmuo's *Wisdom of the King* brings a different dimension to the eco-discourse in Nigeria. The play challenges all Nigerians irrespective of where they are domiciled to imbibe conservatory habits since "our bushes and natural environment provide us with most of what we need to survive" (Nwanmuo 21). Onwueme's 2002 play – *Then She Said It* brings a feminist twist to the discourse of the eco-crisis in the Niger Delta. It is one play that breaks down the realities of every day experience in the creeks, shanties, and hamlets of the Niger Delta. The play chronicles the harsh and deplorable condition of the environment and its effect on women as captured in this dialogue:

Obida: They've killed everything with their pollution
and oil spillage. We cannot breathe clean air. Fish die or get fried
in the simmering rivers. Water-water everywhere. But we have
no clean water to drink! And now we have no land too?

Niger: No firewood because the plants and trees are
soaked in oil. What do they expect us to cook?
(Onwueme 15).

Onwueme establishes a connection between ecological issues and the livelihood of women. The sustenance of women especially in the rural areas is largely agrarian. Their source of living is tied to nature and the environment. This we see in the dialogue between Obida and Niger. There is a feminist twist to the discourse of ecology as typified in the play. Eco-issues are also women's issues as they depend on the Earth for survival and when plants and trees are soaked in oil, their sustenance is largely infringed. The images in Onwueme's plays support the fact that the woman seem to be taking the greater brunt of eco-issues.

Two distinct voices are echoed in Nigerian drama when it comes to the Niger Delta. There is the voice of those who have sided with the clamour for resource control as a way out of the Niger Delta crisis. This group of playwrights have amplified the clamour for a fairer share of the oil spoils to those who generate it – a call whose legitimacy gained international relevance in the last decade. The sympathy for this voice is predicated on the quest for social justice, economic empowerment and freedom from slavery, exploitation and dehumanization. Amidst this seemingly dominant voice in Nigerian drama is also the sublime whisper of the 'Earth' – a hush tone that speaks against the continued plundering of nature's reserve such as trees, farmlands, water, seafood and air. Unfortunately, this voice is spoken by a numerical minority who champion the very essence of life – nature, from which humanity finds existence. It is a voice that is heard daily from women, children, farmers, pastoralists and all those

whose livelihood is tied to the earth as they grovel through the filth to eke out a living. It is a voice that is heard from those who depend on the earth for their supply but are shocked by the reality that this all important resource-base and even their very lives might soon go extinct.

5.3 THE ECO-DIMENSIONS OF SOYINKA'S DRAMA AND THE NIGER DELTA STRUGGLE

Soyinka's principle of thought as a major ideologue of contemporary Africa naturally reflects the realities of the African environment. Some of the writings on Soyinka have clearly demonstrated that his life is "inseparable from his work, much of which arises from a passionate, almost desperate concern for his society. This concern is apparent in his poetry, drama and essays" (Jones 11). Soyinka sees the African world as an integral cosmos with a unique fluidity that makes unbroken continuity possible. There is an unbroken connection between the human, the spirit (gods) and nature (the environment). It is a state of perpetual transmutation, which he refers to as 'a state of transition' (Soyinka 5). Much of this is reflected in his play *Death and the King's Horseman*. Therefore, the cosmos is seen as possessing a nerve centre that holds all aspects of existence including the environment in place, but which, at the same time, gives each being free access to self-determination and volitional involvement in life without jeopardizing the existence of others. There is a certain mystic union which encourages amicable co-existence of all forces both spiritual and physical and which at the same time makes truncation or indefinite suspension of transmutation impossible (Soyinka 7). This is the essence of the dark centre where the mysterious continuum of transition and inter transmutation of life both essential and material occurs. Illah illustrates this thus:

Soyinka's *Death and the King's Horseman* speaks volumes about the complex nature of the modern African. It depicts the ability of the African, to adapt easily to the trans-racial, trans-lingual and trans-historical situation that made up part of the environment that the African operates within. For us to be able to curb these contestations, we must be able to create a conducive environment for communal progression (lecture notes, par. 2).

This is the world in which the African lives, a world Soyinka passionately captures in his drama – a world in which the present is the meeting point between the past and the future, the past is transmitted to the future. He believes that most of the problems Africa faces today are as a result of a disconnect from ancestral heritage including a rich and abundant eco-life with all its spiritual and material significance. Humanity's quest for survival in the current ecozoic era calls for a rethinking and repositioning of the human consciousness along sustainability lines. This is what Sullivan calls an exercise in cosmology which shows “our attempts to situate ourselves as humans in the matrix of the earth and further in the universe”(78). The absence of this reality marks the tragedy of the modern African caught within the web of globalization.

As disaster looms all across the streets, western imperialists continue to plunder and ravage Africa's natural resources. The war in Sudan has no end in sight owing to the sudden discovery of oil – the main stay of western economies. The gradual but steady depletion and consequently extinction of whatever remains of the Niger Delta is in progress as world powers continue the debate on the principles of a safe earth. For us to change this negative progression, the inseparable relationship between the past and the present must be revisited. That is the main task of the dramatist, to constantly remind the people about their history, the trans-historical link that existed among them

from creation. Soyinka believes that, Africa's present is a reflection of our past and that "a solemn future casts a backward glance over drooped shoulders" (Illah par 6).

For this to be possible, Ogbong proffers that the process will entail an intense imaginative return into the African cultural matrix, an imaginative return capable not merely of synthesizing but also appreciating and interpreting the forces exuded by the African environment. "The whole body of myths, customs, legends, rituals, taboos, and other beliefs have always held the communities in African villages together and provided a sense of shared experience and belonging (Ogbong 48). This body of cultural matrix was eco-friendly as they engendered the preservation or conservation of endangered species and provided a conducive environment where all life could be sustained. Sullivan stresses the need to return to this reality saying:

It is time to evoke the emergence of a new earth period that can be identified as the ecozoic era. Even now the shift is beginning to take place in which a relationship of mutual enhancement between humans and the natural world is regarded not only as possible but essential to planetary survival (46).

This, we find in Soyinka and his plays. It is an ideal which he lives and speaks for. A closer look at his works reveals the deep yearnings of a man who wants to see the rejuvenation of the African spirit lost in the abyss of western imperialist ideologies.

Soyinka's drama particularly *A Dance of the Forests*, *The Lion and the Jewel* and *The Swamp Dwellers* echoes the reality of the planetary crisis that the world now grapples with. The Yoruba culture which forms the clime of these plays is nature sensitive, eco-friendly and nature protective. The plays show the bond between humans and the spiritual forces of their environment. Fai re-echoed this strong belief stating that this inter-dependence presupposes that the absence of one indicates the end of the other (95). The perpetual conflict between humans and spiritual forces is a result of human

encroachment (Fai 95). In *A Dance of the Forests*, we see an intricate relationship between humans and the spiritual forces of the land. In African cosmology, the abode of spiritual forces remains the forests and for any human-spirit mediation to be possible the forest is of inestimable value. In the semblance of a court that seeks to adjudicate the devastation done to the forests, the *Crier* summons all forest dwellers to what he calls “Dance of Welcome”:

To such as dwell in these forests, Rock devils, Earth Imps, Tree demons, ghommids, dewilds, genie, Incubi, Succubi, windhorls, bit and halves and such sons and subjects of Forest Father, and all that dwell in his domain, take note, this night is the welcome of the dead... (Soyinka 45).

The above call by the *Crier* presents a scenario that all is not well and to find a solution, there is need to go back to the very essence of life for the African – the forests. This is further captured by the opening scene of the play – an empty clearing in the forest. *Eshuoro* captures the gloom of the forest thus: “Have you seen how much of the forest has been torn down by their petty decorations?... the forest stinks. Stinks of human obscenities” (Soyinka 41).

In *The Lion and Jewel*, Soyinka was more apocalyptic about what the so called “civilization” would bring to the African eco-system. The bridges and roads brought western-styled development but along with it came the destruction of the flora and fauna. In the play, *Bale’s* statement captures the wiping out of the eco-life of Africa thus:

I do not fear progress, only its nature which makes all roofs and faces look the same. And the wish of one old man is that here and there, among the bridges and the murderous roads, below the humming birds which smoke the face of Sango, dispenser of the snake-tongue lightening; between this moment and the reckless broom that will be

wielded in these years to come, we must leave virgin pots of lives, rich decay and the tang of vapours rising from forgotten heaps of compost, lying undisturbed ... (Soyinka 47).

In *The Swamp Dwellers*, Soyinka draws the attention of world to the impact of continued exploitation of African natural reserves and its attendant effects on the inhabitants of the land. *Makuri*, one of the characters says: “The land is big and wide, Alu, and you were often out by yourself digging for crabs. And there were all those shifty-eyed traders who came to hunt for crocodile skins (Soyinka 83). After this *Makuri* further reminds us all of what today has become a regular occurrence – floods. “He came for his crops. Now that he knows they’ve been ruined by the floods”(Soyinka 87).

These plays were some of the earliest plays of Soyinka and eco-issues have formed new parameters from which we can begin to assess these plays in terms of their ecopedagogic relevance. Thus , ecocritical examination of some of his earliest works reveals that the cosmogenic roots of the African cannot be extricated from his umbilical connection to the environment.

5.4 ECO-RADICALISM: OSOFISAN’S ECO-DIALECTICS AND THE ECOLOGICAL CONCERNS OF THE NIGER DELTA

Economic considerations have been the impetus of ecological exploitation especially in Africa. The commoditization of life places humans on top of the value chain leaving the earth as a resource to be prowled upon. The economic value of cutting down trees for timber or exploring oil far outweighs any ecological consideration. The only reason governments would want to end the agitations in the Niger Delta is to have unhindered access to oil production. Little or no consideration is given to the damage being done to life and living in that region. African nations and indeed Nigeria is fast losing its forest reserves to the activities of loggers and timber merchants. Williams,

Roberts and McIntosh believe that the ecological and social values of trees are among the most valuable things we have (22). This is however not the case here in Africa. Tree planting is not considered to be of any economic value.

The true scenario in most African villages is that trees and the rich vegetation that form the sublimity and quietude of communal life have been lost in the guise that they are evil and heathenish. It is a truism to have people call certain forests evil and to have them destroyed only for timber merchants to cart them away and leave such communities to the cruelty of the aftermath of such actions. This then calls for a radical approach at tackling such anomalies and we find Femi Osofisan's drama as one of the relevant discourses in the planetary and ecological crisis facing 21st century Africa.

Eco-radicalism stems from the belief that environmental problems are a symptom of the workings of the capitalist system and that structural reform of the system along socialist principles is the answer to the ecological crisis. Quite interesting is the Nigerian situation where economic policies such as the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) have turned the citizenry into desperate scavengers preying on the remnants of eco-resources. A whole forest came down in less one hour during the structural adjustment programme bite in Jos. Citizens could not access kerosene so, they descended on the trees. Blair and Hitchcock's study on this concept brings to the front burner the main discourse of Eco-radicals which is the search for a fundamental change to society through a top down approach via state intervention (18). The Eco Dharma Centre's position on eco-radicalism is also not different. Eco Dharma believes Eco-radicalism embraces both deep ecology and social ecology. "This ideology seeks to champion a sustainable and socially just world through the transformation of the conditioning factors which exist within our individual consciousness" (Eco Dharma 3).

The reality that presents itself today is that of a one dominant global culture, an ever expansionist and predatory industrial capitalism, valuing profit above life. Gas flares, water pollution, loss of arable land and food poisoning are all consequences of the activities of a global industrial culture that puts all life under peril. This is the true nature of the Nigerian environment. Here, we have a system which reduces the entire natural world – mountains, forests, oceans; plants and animal species (including human beings) into resources to be ordered and controlled, used and exploited in the pursuit of material growth and economic development. This ever suffocating technocratic system is destroying the ecology of life. Eco-radicalism hence, points out that solution to a crisis of this scale involves far more than technological fixes or market incentives. Likar poses two fundamental questions on the true identity of the eco-radical. Is he an eco-warrior who fights what he perceives as the evil forces that benefit from their profit-motivated exploitation of the world's ecosystem? Or is he a terrorist who, despite his seemingly altruistic desire to protect animals and the natural environment, use illegal acts of violence against property or persons to achieve political or social change? Interestingly, Likar aligns himself with the first premise saying; the eco-radical is an eco-warrior “who is an actual ‘spear thrower’ usually young and not a philosopher. The predominant belief possessed by most activists in this movement is that action, not ideological debate, must be taken to save the environment (76).

Osofisan's ideological leaning is positively skewed towards this socialist cause. It is an ideology that radically seeks change in human behaviour because “man's problems originate from man himself and not from any metaphysical realm or gods, and only man can, by himself find solution to these problems” (Seiza par 8). This partly explains the contradictions in religious inclinations that saw to the gradual but steady destruction of forests in the south of Nigeria. As we write this piece, Christian

preachers in the South East have launched a crusade against what they called ancestral trees which they claim harbour evil spirits. People who are struck by misfortune largely brought upon them by themselves blame it on the tree and the only remedy is to cut down anything that looks like a tree around them. This contradiction needs a radical approach if what remains of these tropical rainforests will be salvaged.

Osofisan's beliefs are around a group of ideas which are humanistic. They are;

That everyman be born free and equal. That everyman has a right to life and to the means of maintaining it. That inequality, as we practice it in Nigeria can only lead to doom. That change and progress can only be achieved by us and not through any divine intervention. That anybody who labours must enjoy the fruits of his labour. That nobody should exploit the labour of others for his personal enrichment (Awodiya 75).

In Nigeria, oil is exploited in such a manner that spells catastrophe in the Niger Delta. Elsewhere in the North, the Sahara desert is fast eating up what remains of habitable land while erosion is a major threat to life in the South East. No one can deny the fact that irresponsible and unsustainable economic policies have been the major cause of this eco-crisis. As a result, the poverty index speaks for itself and when our resources become scarce, we fight over them. As a radical writer Osofisan believes in social change – a major antidote for the global but now localized climate change dilemma. His works typify a man who has a penchant for the re-awakening of human consciousness that will ultimately lead to a radical action. Obafemi also believes that though Osofisan's plays do advocate for a radical change, they do not have a clear cut ideological leaning. "They cover a wide range of doctrines and as a result; critics differ in their opinions in categorizing them" (Obafemi 38). Despite the ideological ambiguity in Osofisan's works, he is a humanist with a radical bent. One of the major preoccupations of the humanist discourse in the 21st century is the re-interrogation of

human relationship with the environment. At what point and in what circumstance did we have this disconnection? This question raises the need to revisit human ecology once again from the standpoint of not just social aesthetics but also of sustainable development. Some works of art (drama inclusive) presupposes that progress and development be achieved. This clarion call forms a new category from which we can begin to read the works of Femi Osofisan. This forms the whole essence of eco-radicalism and Osofisan uses what we call eco-dialectics to interrogate the contradictions we find in post-independence Nigeria including the hypocritical stance towards the world's ecological crisis. In his own words; "the artist who is faithful to the original essence of his or her vocation cannot escape the curse of commitment. For this reason, therefore, because all true art openly or surreptitiously carries the knife of subversion, the artist is always a target and the creative spirit endangered, when terror mounts the saddle of state" (Osofisan 8).

Osofisan uses eco-metaphors in most of his drama. It is not coincidental that such metaphors run richly in almost all his works. In *Chattering and the Song*, we see a lavish use of ecological images such as elephants and antelope (Osofisan 45) to depict the dichotomy between the oppressor and the oppressed. Such metaphors further exemplify the relationship between humans and other so-called lower species of life. The play further describes *Abiodun* as the lion and *Latoye* as the toad. Another disparity we find is that of the buffalo and the antelope. There is also the hunting dog and the sacrificial ram in *Once Upon Four Robbers* (Osofisan 67), the hawk and the hen in *Chattering and the Song* (2), the elephant and the mosquito in *Morountodun* (18), lion and dogs in *Red is the Freedom Road* (125, 128), crabs, scorpions and stray dogs, maggots in *No More the Wasted Breed* (93, 100), sharks and fishes in *Another Raft* (69), and locusts and grasshoppers in *The Oriki of a Grasshopper* (27). On a face value,

critics like Ajidahun merely see these metaphors as the imagery of the relationship between the rich and the poor (2). However, from the standpoint of an ecocritic, one sees the portrayal of the predatory relationship between humans and other species of life. The plays typify the exploitative tendencies of Western industrial overlords over the natural reserves of the Third World, Nigeria inclusive. In *Chattering and the Song*, *Latoye* displays her cruelty when he declared:

Yes, Abiodun, yes, Olori! Sango eats, Ogun eats, and so do the eboras of the forest! But in your reign Abiodun, the elephant eats, and nothing remains for the antelope! The buffalo drinks, and there is drought in the land! Soldiers, seize him! He is ripe for eating (Osofisan 45).

Nigeria's Niger Delta is a true reflection of what Osofisan captures in the predatory – prey relationship above. The level of poverty, dejection and mindless destruction of the ecosystem in that region all in a bid to drill oil to fuel western economies while livelihood of the people of the same area is cut off is what the play rejects. *Sontri*, one of the characters in that play is described as a hawk because of his oppressive, repressive, harsh and cruel dispositions. A hawk is a bird of prey, while *Yajin*, *Sontri's* victim is portrayed as a hen. The hawk feeds on the chicks and thereby deprives the hen of its natural process of procreation. The reality today is that most species of life are going extinct due to predatory nature of humans. The trees are disappearing without any deliberate effort to replant and sustain their existence. The natural habitat of most animals has been destroyed to a scary limit that it is now a rarity to find monkeys at your backyard.

5.5 ECOFEMINISM: TESS ONWUEME'S ECO-CRITICAL DISCOURSE AND THE RIGHT OF WOMEN IN THE NIGER DELTA

Ecological feminists or ecofeminists are concerned with the impacts of ecological degradation on women. According to them, important connections exist

between the treatment of women, people of colour, and the underclass on one hand and the treatment of nonhuman nature on the other (Warren 7). Ecological feminists claim that any feminism or environmental ethic, which fails to take these connections seriously, is grossly inadequate. For them, eco-issues are women issues. Trees for example, provide materials for basketry, dyes, medicines, decorations. Trees also provide sites for honey barrels; trees provide shade and human food. However in Africa and particularly Nigeria, we see another different function of trees – fuel for cooking. Part of the reason for the disappearance of forest reserves today is that women here largely rely on trees as “firewood”. This avoidable situation is caused by lack of affordable alternatives such as cooking gas.

Ecofeminists also believe that foresters do not see the multiple uses of trees. They hold the view that multiculture tree species are useful, that men and women may have very different trees for different purposes. This inability to see women’s contributions to either making the flora or destroying same has been called a “patriarchal conceptual trap” of orthodox forestry (Warren 8). This partly explains why all conservatory efforts exclude the peculiar needs of women. It is very common to see efforts being made to reproduce or conserve economic trees while neglecting the fact that certain trees serve the domestic needs of women. Hence, when there is a programme that targets the so-called conservation of forests, no one is asking how will women the majority of who have no access whatsoever to other means of cooking survive.

Ecofeminism therefore is a philosophy that looks at environmental problems and their connections with women (Warren xii). Water also is an eco-issue that is of great importance to women. Women these days must work extra hard to get water because it is a natural resource under depletion. It is a common sight in Africa to see

women and children shouldering the burden of water collection. They experience disproportionately higher health risks in the presence of contaminated water. Each year, millions of people predominantly women, are affected by major illnesses acquired while drawing water.

Another dimension to the eco-twist in 21st century Africa is that women farmers are in the majority of the continent's food producers. It is estimated that 59% and as much as 80% of the world's food producers are women (Warren 8). Therefore, climate change and other forms of ecological imbalances that affect crop yields are of grave concern to women. Yet gender division of labour typically puts men in charge of cash crops while women manage food crops. Ecofeminists recognize these connections – both theoretically and practically, discursive and material – between the oppression of nature and the oppression of women (Carr 2). Their major objective is the realization of a world free of sexist oppression that is also environmentally sustainable and sound.

What then is ecofeminism? Bile puts it simply as a synthesis of the insights of feminism and ecology (173). For Besthorn and McMillen, it is a theory and movement for social change that combines ecological principles with feminist theory (224). Donovan on the other hand believes that the main tenet of the ecofeminist theory is that the domination of women and the domination of nature are integral (206). Ruether on her part gives a historical analogy to this theory tracing back to the late twentieth century when it emerged as a school of philosophical and theological thought and social analysis. The word 'ecofeminism' according to her was coined in 1972 by Francoise d'Eaubonne who developed the "ecologie-fémisme", arguing that "the destruction of the planet is due to the profit motif inherent in male power" (91).

The bottom line here is that there is a connection between the domination of women and the domination of nature. Ruether further explains this connection at two

levels: ideological-cultural and socioeconomic. On the ideological-cultural level, women are said to be “closer to nature” than men, more aligned with body, matter, emotions, and the animal world. On the socioeconomic level, women are located in the spheres of reproduction, child-raising, food preparation, spinning and weaving, cleaning of clothes and houses that are devalued in relation to the public sphere of male power and culture (Ruether 91).

This explains why we view the works of Tess Onwueme as one of the ecological discourses that explains that patriarchal domination of nature is largely a domination of women. The choice of Onwueme in this context is predicated on the fact that her works are universal in scope as she asks individuals, nations and international communities to turn a searchlight on themselves and conduct a critical self-appraisal on their role in the planetary crisis that has dawned on us all. Ekwierhoma sees Tess Onwueme as a dramatist to reckon with mainly because she came onto the scene at a time there was a yawning gap in dramatic creativity from the woman’s perspective as an author, as a subject in plays and an object of critical attention. Her play – *The Desert Encroaches* looks at desertification, global warming and the unfair way humans treat the environment. For Ekwierhoma, Onwueme’s engagement with the problem of the Northern desert, being that she came from the South proves that she is a playwright cum dramatist whose efforts and attentions are not localised or provincial.

In *Then She Said It*, Onwueme believes that the Atlantic as a water body has a lot of significance for blacks and Africans.

When she focussed on the raping of the environment by the sisters (the seven sisters), she was telling us that the oil boom may have become “oil doom”. It also dwelt on the collusion between natives, non-natives and the oil industry. The bottom line is that the environment should be protected, the environment should be cared for and that the whim and caprices of men in the society that lead to the degradation of the

environment can be salvaged by a female centred approach to looking at the environment (Evwierhoma).

For Akoh, Onwueme's *Then She Said It* tells the story of oppression and loss occasioned by highly corrupt local and international leaders in the oil-rich Niger Delta area of Nigeria. The women here are able to organise around general societal concerns beyond the feminist trouble (165). Her recent play – *What Mama Said: An Epic Drama* thematically concerns itself with the disempowerment of rural women. In an attempt to give women a voice and imbue their lives with meaning, Onwueme creates female combatant characters who confront those structures that seek to subordinate them by taking away their means of livelihood. In the play, we see characters like Omi, Imo and Hadejia who galvanize their mothers under a battle cry for land reclamation. Another striking point in the play that reflects eco-relevance is the use of rivers or bodies of water such as Oshimi and Cross River as characters. In a similar play – *Then She Said It*, Onwueme also draws attention to the environmental degradation and misuse of the eco system by oil companies. She implores major rivers once more personified as leading female characters such as Oji, Oshun, Kainji, River Benue among others as vehicles for the leading of a revolt against this institutionalized disempowerment. This concern has been and still is the major preoccupation of ecofeminists. No discourse on Ecopedagogy can therefore be said to be adequate without a critical evaluation of these concerns. Eco-dramaturgy in the 21st century needs to critically evaluate the growing poverty and annihilation currently suffered by women as a result of the systematic and steady exploitation of what is left of the Earth' life support systems in Africa and the Third World.

5.6 POSTMODERN NIGERIAN DRAMA AND HUMAN ECOLOGY: AN OVERVIEW OF MBAJIORGU'S *WAKE UP EVERYONE* AND DANDAURA'S *VENOM FOR VENOM*

Climate change and the reality of global warming has been a topical issue in literary discourse in the last three and half decades. Even so, it is a rarity to find any substantial engagement of ecological concerns in any major work of art including drama. In Nigeria, ecoliteracy is seemingly non-existent despite the fact that the country is gravely affected by ecological disasters in recent times. In September 2012, Nigeria's two major rivers – the Benue and the Niger overflowed their banks and rendered many homeless and helpless. Major cities such as Onitsha, Lokoja, and Makurdi as well as the Niger Delta were flooded. Roads were cut off and travellers were stranded for weeks. This situation is just one of the harsh realities of climate change. At the moment, the unpredictability of rainfall patterns leaves the entire populace with the gloom of drought and famine with its attendant high cost in food prices.

Climate constitutes the total experience of weather and atmospheric behaviour over a number of years in a given region. Rafferty says it is not just the “average weather” and variability and the frequency of various occurrences (2). As natural as it may sound, yet, it can be affected by human activities. As Rafferty put it, “no region is untouched by human influence” (2). The release of waste products from domestic and economic enterprises (burning fossil fuels, synthetic chemical use, trash production,) alters the composition of the atmosphere, and gases and particulates related to these activities travel to all parts of the globe. Therefore, from the simple method we dispose of waste from homes and offices and the smoke that emits from our generators and cars, we are either killing the earth or sustaining it.



Plate 17. *A secondary school student planting a tree in response to the global campaign on tree planting. (Photo Source: Researcher)*

Climate change on the other hand, is a product of cumulative anthropogenic releases of heat-trapping gases that consequently warms global climate. This is popularly described as a crisis (Glover 1). Losses to ecological values and human societies due to climate change are potentially catastrophic, and will be long-lived, largely irreversible, and remain for the most part unpredictable. Climate change also refers to the changes in the composition and behaviour of the Earth's atmosphere. Mintzer and Leonard state that the last 10,000 years has seen a constant concentration of the most important gases in the atmosphere but the last two centuries, human activities – including industrialization and agricultural expansion have caused the release of large quantities of gaseous pollutants into the atmosphere (xi). These emissions have affected the average temperature at the Earth's surface.

The impact of climate change are felt today in the areas of agriculture and food security, access to water resources, impacts on human health and geopolitical relationships (conflicts due to competition for resources) (Richardson, Steffen and Liverman 102). This predicament is the outcome of modernity and the contemporary issue born out of industrial society (Glover 1). It is a global crisis yet with a local impact. Every part of the earth feels the effect of this ecological catastrophe. Climate change is considered as a gradual but devastating threat to the continued existence of life on earth. It is a subject that calls for everyone to wake up.



Plate 18. *A part of the Auchi-Okene road, Edo State, Nigeria, cut off by erosion in August 2011. (Photo Source: vanguardngr.com).*

Todd traces Africa's experience with climate change to six millions years ago when one of the most dramatic set of changes on Africa's ecological stage took place at the end of the Miocene epoch. For millions of years Africa had been in lush tropical forests, offering easy travel, safe shelter, and abundant water and foodstuff here. Then the Ice Age, which had begun in the middle Miocene, drastically altered the African continent. Though the ice itself never reached Africa, falling global temperatures cooled the continent significantly. As more and more water became locked up in ice, sea levels plunged – the Mediterranean shrank to an island sea – and Africa experienced an extensive period of acidification. The net effect of this climatic change was the devastation of Africa's rich Miocene forests (Todd 27).

No doubt the planetary crisis speaks of the greatest mass extinctions of all time. Harthaway and Boff paint the picture thus:

The combined dynamics of the deepening poverty and accelerating ecological degradation are creating a powerful vortex of despair and destruction from which it is becoming increasingly difficult to escape. If we fail to act with sufficient energy, urgency and wisdom, we will soon find ourselves condemned to a future in which the potential for living with meaning, hope and beauty has been immeasurably diminished (2).

This reality requires a critical response and for this to be possible, there is every need to question the very idea of the environment. Harthaway and Boff in their study of deep ecology came up with the fact that there is no “environment” separate from humanity. Humanity is seen as part of the natural world, a part of the greater “web of life”. “When we poison the air, water, and soil, we poison our very selves. When we diminish the beauty and diversity of the planetary community, we also diminish our humanity” (Harthaway and Boff 63). To further appreciate the oneness between humans and the environment, McIntosh came up with what he called “Human

Ecology” which studies communities in relation to their environment. In this vein, the cosmologically sustained planet is the “household” in which we live (36).

What then should be the major discourse of the playwright in Nigeria in the global quest to demystify the planetary crisis and create a sustainable world where all life can thrive? Drama in the last decade has woken up to this challenging question. There is a strong urgency to awaken the consciousness of society to this eco-neglect that spells doom for everyone. In the Philippines in 2008, a group of children and youths in Banaba used theatre performances as a tool for advocacy in Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR). Using singing, dancing and acting, they communicated their perceptions of local hazards such as flooding and river bank erosion, and the potentially destructive impacts of these hazards on people’s livelihoods, properties and lives. They also took the challenge using theatre dynamics to communicate risk reduction activities such as tree planting and solid waste management (Tarner et al 62).

Elsewhere in Africa, the Nile Project sprang up to address the ecological concerns of the Nile. The impact the group is making clearly indicates that music can also be used to transform human consciousness towards saving the earth. Information posted on its webpage shows that the Nile project is already transforming what it called the Nile conflict by inspiring, educating, and empowering an international network of university students to cultivate the sustainability of their ecosystem (nileproject.org). This project shows that when applied, Ecopedagogy can indeed serve as a catalyst for transformational education and awareness about the global as well as regional concerns of a degrading environment. The Nile Project’s model integrates programmes in music, education, dialogue, leadership, and innovation to engage students across disciplines and geographies on the need to address the Nile Basin’s cultural and environmental challenges. Using music to spark cultural curiosity, the Nile Project engages musicians

and audiences, encouraging them to feel connected to the world's longest river and to explore new approaches to its large-scale social, cultural, and environmental problems (nileproject.org).

This is an age where the relevance of arts to global developmental goals is under serious scrutiny. Scholars have risen to the challenge by bringing to the front burner of developmental objectives the implications of art. They have advocated that the art is not subservient to other forms of societal transformation but that arts have served as a catalyst for development. Umezinwa gives credence to this saying that “music is a central force of social cohesion – it brings people together” (58).

In other climes and indeed Africa, we have seen the role music plays in throwing up issues and contradictions within society. This is more so in contemporary times where popular music has served as a tool for creating awareness and educating the populace. Yanni, a non-lyrical jazz artiste used his music to draw the attention of the world to the beauty and magnificence of nature as well as the communality of all human beings. Yanni was not only eclectic but his musical pieces served as a voice for nature. This we find in *Nightingale*, *A walk in the Rain*, *Rainmaker*, *The Rain Must Fall*, *November Sky*, *Highland*, etc. World acclaimed King of Pop – Michael Jackson also sang for the Earth in *Earth's Song* and *Heal the World*, where he drew the attention of the world to the devastation being done not only in Africa but elsewhere through war, drought and exploitation.

Popular music in Nigeria no doubt has engaged the spectrum of the Nigerian society, bringing to light ills perpetrated in the society. Ogaga (51) believes that Nigerian artistes have insisted on not only foregrounding the pedagogical province of art, but have equally captured the realities of everyday existence in postcolonial Nigeria. Adeola also adds his voice to these accolades saying; “popular music has been

an important tool in the march towards the growth and development of the nation” (81). He strongly believes popular music has been used over the years to move the nation forward or otherwise at different stages. This is seemingly true when the music of legendary artistes like Fela Anikulapo Kuti Onyeka Onwenu, Christie Essien Igbokwe, Sonny Okosuns and the likes are considered.

However, a closer view of the present day pop musicians in Nigeria speaks volumes of a generation in search of its song. There seems to be a yawning gap between the artiste and the realities of the society. While the music of the 1970s and 1980s marked a struggle for the emancipation of the grovelling masses in the hands of ruling overlords, this present day pop musicians lack depth of ideology. As corroborated by Ogaga (54), the typical Nigerian guerrilla hip hop does not engage in any conversation with the ‘centre’, but it dialogues with and confronts the politics of everyday life in Nigeria. This is rather disturbingly unrealistic in present day Nigerian popular music where the penchant for profit voices almost anything but sustainable development. It is rare to find any song that captures the ideals of nature and the richly endowed Nigerian landscape. It is equally rare to find any Nigerian piece of music that reveals the structural and institutional disequilibria that give ambivalence to the drive for a safe earth. What we have today are songs verbosely laced with images of ‘fire’.

Music according to Martins (11) is a social product, social resource and social practice. It is not autonomous but is created and performed by real people in particular times and places and doing so, they reveal much about themselves and their societies.

Environmentalism is one of the issues that postmodernity erupts at the top of the literary discourse. The artist justifies his or her relevance and lays claim to the grip of contemporary discourse through his or her engagement with the planetary crisis. Glover gives credence to this saying that despite the complexities and contradictions, there has

emerged a distinct set of responses to the concepts of postmodernity giving rise to a postmodern environmentalism (19). For Glover, the term postmodern conflates at least two possibilities: firstly, an attack on the understanding and condition of modernity; and secondly, to sketch out a future different from the present (20). It was inaugurated by the progressive triumph of the market, fluidity of identities, the collapse of communism and the “End of History” (Roberts 3). To be postmodern as Goodman puts it, “is to understand the limits of modernity and to believe that modernity can be successfully overcome only by going beyond it” (13). For her, while modernists see solutions to all our problems as potentially existing within modern parameters, postmodernists see the root cause of the problems in the assumptions of the modern paradigm. “There can be no real change unless we challenge the entire foundation of modernism” (Goodman 12). The postmodern dramatist is concerned with a rejection of the status-quo – a seeming refusal of modernity or the reinvention of the remnants of it. The postmodern dramatist through his or her work turns history against itself to define or redefine a new path for the future. This forms the basis upon which drama in the 21st century Nigeria must critically re-examine the current socioeconomic and geopolitical structures that plunder the Nigerian ecosystem and put its future on the path of peril. This explains the resonance of ecological themes and concerns in a few play texts that managed to surface in recent times. Sam Ukala for example created *Harvest of Ghosts* to challenge the destruction by oil pollution of the environment of the Niger Delta and the execution by the Abacha regime in Nigeria of the playwright Ken Saro-Wiwa. The play while offering a graphic visual statement of these atrocities “carries a universal message about greed, corruption and the destruction of the environment” (Banham 155).

One of the plays that prides as Nigeria's play on climate change is Greg Mbajjorgu's *Wake Up Everyone*. Heim says the play has a purpose:

to support impoverished farmers, to educate, to build resilience against the effects of climate change in rural Nigeria. The information on climate change is familiar, too, the belief and disbelief, the sometimes awkward juncture of different kinds of experience, the social power implicit in different kinds of knowledge (122).

The playwright in the preface to the play states that his effort was quite tasking as the subject of climate change is scientific and hence not easily adaptable to the stage (6). Mbajjorgu said he was quite surprised that despite the frightening effect of climate change, only a few plays have been produced on it globally.

With climate change encroaching on us and the global future looking bleak, our world is dire need of a paradigm shift with regards to how we relate to our planet. To guarantee the future of our world, drama is one of those salient strategies we can employ. The time for jaw jaw is over. This is the time for action, let's join hands and bring about the needed change (Mbajjorgu 3).

Wake Up Everyone captures the ignorance that pervades the Nigerian landscape on the subject matter. The encounter between the local government chairman and Professor Aladinma in the first scene clearly shows that climate change still sounds like a fairy tale to many even leaders. In that scene, Professor Aladinma says: "Things are no longer the way they used to be, and even a child must have noticed the changes in our climate..." The Chairman cuts in saying: "But these are expected, Prof. Aladinma. Doesn't the Bible say that in the last days things like these will happen..." (13). This situation clearly interprets the ignorance that is responsible for the hesitation in tackling the eco-crisis that faces the African. There is always a religious explanation to every natural disaster rather than face the fact that these disasters are precipitated by human activities. In that scene, the professor assumes the role of an ecopedagogue as he makes

a futile attempt to deschool the chairman of his erroneous conceptions about the planetary crisis.

In another vein, Dandaura's *Venom for Venom* leads the eco-discourse further by exposing the impact of western styled companies to the degradation of the Nigerian environment. The play tackles the hypocrisy in the so-called development efforts of the West on Nigerian soil. Kevwe, one of the elders in the play questions this hypocrisy and flagrant deceit of these companies saying: "we believed the company which deceived us that they would turn our community into paradise overnight." (9). *Briggs*, another elder added, "instead of development, our land has been pillaged by the company. Our rivers are no longer productive." (9).

The import of these plays shows the multi-faceted dimensions to the main causes of ecological disasters in Africa. There is no doubt that industrial activities largely controlled by multi-nationals have contributed in no small measure to the desecration of the once peaceful, surreal and sublime Nigerian climate. The constant production of unrecyclable waste comes largely from the west and in most cases the Nigerian environment has become a dumping ground of some sort.

5.7 CLIMATE CHANGE: NIGERIA IS HANGING ON THE PRECIPICE - AN INTERVIEW WITH GREG MBAJIORGU

Greg Mbajiorgu, exponent of solo and ecological theatre, is the first African to publish a monodrama and a seminal drama on climate change. His eco-drama *Wake up Everyone* won the first prize for Arts and Humanities Research at the 2012 National Universities Research and Development Fair (NURESDEF) organized by the National University Commission (NUC). From 1991 to 2000 during his self-sponsored historic national tour with his one-man show (The Prime Minister's son), Mbajiorgu recorded over six hundred successful performances in universities, secondary schools, Army

Barracks, cultural centres and several other educational institutions across Nigeria and beyond. As a theatre artist and professional interested in innovation and challenging assignments, Mbajiorgu has executed the following professional theatre contracts/duties in the last two decades:

- *The Lion on Exit* (1992), a send-off play commissioned by the Governing Council of the University of Nigeria as part of the activities marking the last days of Prof. Chimere Ikoku as Vice Chancellor.
- *The Lion of Lions* (1996), a solo documentary drama with background chorus-based on the poems and speeches of RT. Hon. Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe, First President of Nigeria and founder of the University of Nigeria.
- *Wota na Wota*, a water conflict resolution drama (2003) commissioned by OEP/JDP Water Programme, Enugu with funding from MISERO, Germany. Premiered in 2008 at the New Arts Theatre, UNN during the National Universities Game (NUGA).
- *Trial of the Fittest* (2007) written for the end of year retreat of the African institute for Applied Economic (AME). Performed at the Bridge Water Hotel, Enugu.
- *Keep the Dream Alive* (2008) written for AIAE 2008 retreat and performed at the Bridge Water Hotel, Enugu.
- *Beyond the Golden Prize* (Miniaturized Version) written for the 10th Anniversary of Seat of Wisdom Secondary School, Enugu.
- *Wake Up Everyone* (Brief Version) 2009, Commissioned by ATPS, Nairobi, Kenya, for their international conference on climate change at Nikon Luxury Hotel Abuja.

- *Towards a New Dawn* (2010) commissioned by the presidential Task Force on power and performed at the Presidential Banquet Hall, Aso Rock Villa, Abuja for the 2010 Power Stake Holders Forum.
- *United Against Climate Change* (2011), commissioned by the University of Nigeria's African Climate Change Adaptation Initiative (ACCAI, UNN), and performed at the Princess Alexandra Auditorium, UNN, 2011.
- *Wake Up Everyone* (2014 Edition) (staged as a special command performance for the 44th Convocation Ceremony of the University of Nigeria Nsukka, on 23rd January 2014).

In this brief interview with this researcher, Mbajiorgu bares his mind on climate change and Nigeria's response to this global ecological threat.

Researcher: Climate change has become a global issue of concern over the years. As Nigerians, do we have any cause to worry?

Mbajiorgu: Nigerians have a cause to worry when it comes to the impact of climate change. Why is it that it almost didn't rain till May this year (2015)? Why is it that the cocoyam farmer in Ankpa took a bank loan to plant cocoyam thinking that the rain will take it normal course and when that didn't happen and all his cocoyams in his farm died, he went and committed suicide. All this happened this year. People are committing suicide for failure to anticipate the changes in climate. The more this climate change devastates our agriculture, the more our food security will worry, the more our government will be pressured.

Researcher: Looking at the reactions and response of the world to this threat, do you think Nigeria is doing enough in handling this issue of climate change?

Mbajiorgu: Developed nations like the USA are putting climate change in the forefront of their policies. There are white papers coming out every day. Climate change threatens our national security. Environmental or ecological disaster is a major security issue.

The Nigerian government is insensitive to the issue of climate change. Up until now, we have not thought it wise to carry out a national ecological audit. This will show who in religion, media, drama, etc have the expertise on ecology. There is need to convey a national summit and bring in all the stakeholders to discuss the issue of climate change and Nigeria's ecological crisis. The first phase in solving a problem is to bring in all the experts to a round table and give it a multi-disciplinary approach.

Researcher: What about environmental agencies, how do you assess their impact in the fight against these ecological disasters?

Mbajiorgu: Our environmental agencies such as NEMA need to take a holistic view at Nigeria's ecological index and seek solutions from a multi-disciplinary perspective. This is more so because climate change and its approach especially in Nigeria has a cultural dimension. When people believe that the problem is man-induced, they will begin to change their attitude. When they see it as God bringing an end to the world or the goddess of the river is angry with the people, how do you solve a problem when people have different interpretation to the meaning of it? Every year we are faced with a different effect of change in climate conditions to food and livelihood in Nigeria. Question is what is government actually doing about it?

The reality of a changing climate as raised by Mbajiorgu above and why government and other stakeholders must act fast is daily felt on the streets, homes and farmlands of Nigeria. In 2012, some 1.3 million Nigerians were displaced and 431 died in what authorities said was the worst flooding in over 40 years, with 30 of the country's 36 states affected. This was according to official reports by the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) (Igomu 41).

CHAPTER SIX

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

6.1.1 With this study, it has been proven that Nigerian literary drama has long before the global call for a safe earth been interrogating and is still interrogating issues of nature and ecology. Nigerian drama's engagement with ecology predates the global advocacy on the reality of climate change. This is seen in Wole Soyinka's *A Dance of the Forests*.

6.1.2 This work also identifies areas of critical engagement and intersection between drama and ecology. There is a relationship between the arts and science-related concepts and with drama; scientific concepts such as ecology and climate change are best explained. This study has found out that science can be put on stage and appreciated through moving images depicted by characters. Mbajjorgu's *Wake up Everyone* proves that scientific phenomena such as climate change can be dramatized.

6.1.3 As the world moves towards actualizing Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030, this work has identified that the seeming gap that exists between the arts particularly dramatic literature and Nigeria's participation in the global quest for sustainability can be filled. Drama has always engaged in the discourse of ecology and eco-degradation and with this work, Nigeria's participation in sustainable development can be better explored using drama as a pedagogic tool.

6.2 CONCLUSION

This study has examined the present state of Nigeria's eco-system. It has also x-rayed the level of eco-degradation witnessed in most parts of the country with attached

images. The study has also presented a synopsis of Nigeria's environmental laws with a critical analysis of its effectiveness in checkmating the current state of the nation's ecological crisis. The researcher has equally presented a critical evaluation of the role of eco-dramatic literature in creating the needed advocacy for a safe and cleaner environment as well as the relevance of eco-drama in speaking for the earth and its eco-system. A review of relevant dramatic texts has been explored; its adequacy and pedagogical functions have also been reviewed. The study has drawn attention to the current works by Nigerian playwrights and their thematic relevance to the quest for peace, sustainability, and saving the life world. It equally brought out the struggles and challenges of writing for the Earth especially in a developing country like Nigeria where other supposed stronger challenges such as health, politics, corruption and democracy are considered.

One major objective this study achieves is the generation and development of scholarly discourse in the field of eco-pedagogy and eco-drama. Despite the novelty in this field of study, it generates new parameters for which we can begin to engage the heritages that abound within the Nigerian eco-system but also in the cultural dynamics of the Nigerian environment. With this study, we have established the fact that despite the seeming prolonged eco-hesitation by dramatists the world over, ecology and eco-related concerns have always been an integral part of our artistic voyages over the years. The advent of globalization and the reality of climate change in the 21st century Nigeria have opened up a new vista of scholarly engagement in the study of Nigerian drama. This we have seen in plays written over the years as echoes of nature have always reverberated in some play texts.

This study has also engaged the issue of conflicts in Nigeria and has also discovered that they are not just off-shoots of ethnic, religious or political upheavals

but largely a contest for space and natural resources. These natural endowments are even made smaller by the effects of global warming and hence, the challenge before Nigerian drama is engaging local communities on the need for peace, adaptation and a safe earth. Drama is communication and part of the goals of communication in the 21st century Africa and indeed Nigeria is development. Development is about people and Nigerian drama in recent times has toed the path of development. It has questioned Africa's and Nigeria's development and fought the side of the people. Nigeria stands at a critical stage where it should address the issues surrounding its development strategy. The nation has reached a crossroad. The question is whether to follow the path of sustainable development that guarantees the future of generations yet unborn or remain on the wrong side of history by pursuing a never-ending expansionist agenda that puts both the human race and the environment under peril. Are there alternatives? How can the people live or survive with a single-resource economy that serves as a catalyst for conflicts across the nation? These remain questions that should find expression and engagement on the Nigerian stage.

6.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

6.3.1 If drama truly reflects the realities of every given society, then the ecological challenges of Nigeria need to be re-interrogated within the ideals of the cultural make up and peculiarities of the Nigerian society. Imperialist encroachment on African soil makes this engagement all the more necessary. This is far more imperative as the ecological ideals of the Nigerian environment are not only self-conservatory but supports the mutual co-existence of all life.

6.3.2 The discovery of oil, the race to acquire new technology and the pressure of modernity put the environment under intense pressure. Hence, there is an urgent

need for the nation to adapt to the realities of a changing planet by embracing practices that engender a safer world and guarantee the sustenance of all life.

6.3.3 Nigeria and her people are at a point where their art should go beyond the quest for the control of natural resources to preservation and conservation in the interest of posterity and the protection of the livelihood of future generations. The agitations in the Niger Delta with the consequent destruction of pipelines and the effect this act has on the environment can be resolved if the people's psyche is shifted from just resource control to resource sustainability. In this vein also, there is an urgent need to review the educational curricula especially in humanities so as to create the needed platform for achieving an attitudinal change in human relationship with the environment.

6.4 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

6.4.1 In this study, our concentration is on Nigerian drama and its efforts in engaging environmental degradation in Nigeria through eco-pedagogic means.

6.4.2 Our focus is on post-independence Nigerian drama and the Nigerian environment. However, this study will benefit from further research into conflicts arising from ecological crisis in other parts of West Africa.

6.4.3 We in the mean time are concerned with efforts by Nigerian playwrights who have embraced eco-thematic concerns in their plays as part of our data collection and analysis.

6.5 SUGGESTION FOR FURTHER STUDY

This study concerns itself primarily with the eco-pedagogic preoccupation of Nigerian literary drama. The focus is narrowed down to the eco-relevance of the thematic engagement of the play text. However, other areas that will be prove to be of interest for further research is in the area of film, the fast growing Nigerian movie industry and

music. The eco-pedagogic relevance of these forms of performative arts should interest other scholars as the momentum on the global planetary crisis grows stronger.

6.6 CONTRIBUTION TO KNOWLEDGE

The contribution to knowledge hinges on the word “Ecopedagogy” itself which adds to the existing postulations on ecological discourses by fusing drama and ecology as a method of critical enquiry and environmental education. The yawning dichotomy between the dramatic art and ecology stems from the existing premise that ecology is a scientific concept and hence cannot interrelate with the arts but with this study, it has been established that literature particularly dramatic literature can be explored in explaining scientific phenomena such as climate change.

Secondly, despite the novelty of literature’s engagement with ecology, this work has underscored the fact that drama can be used as a pedagogic tool in creating the needed awareness on the role of humanity in saving the global life-world. From the analysis of dramatic texts used in this study, it has been proven that literature remains one of the potent means through which the environment can be better appreciated and the balance between nature and culture created.

This work has equally discovered that Nigerian dramatists have been using their works to encourage policy makers to revisit environmental issues in Nigeria by using literature or history to engage ecological issues especially in Africa where the cultural and historiographical dynamics are at variance with the West. With this study, it has been established that the dramatic arts have the potency to explore, excavate and extrapolate these dynamics in such a way that they not only become relevant to the African socio-cultural milieu, but are also kept in the front burner of knowledge.

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APPENDIX A

THE EARTH CHARTER

PREAMBLE

We stand at a critical moment in Earth's history, a time when humanity must choose its future. As the world becomes increasingly interdependent and fragile, the future at once holds great peril and great promise. To move forward we must recognize that in the midst of a magnificent diversity of cultures and life forms we are one human family and one Earth community with a common destiny. We must join together to bring forth a sustainable global society founded on respect for nature, universal human rights, economic justice, and a culture of peace. Towards this end, it is imperative that we, the peoples of Earth, declare our responsibility to one another, to the greater community of life, and to future generations.

Earth, Our Home

Humanity is part of a vast evolving universe. Earth, our home, is alive with a unique community of life. The forces of nature make existence a demanding and uncertain adventure, but Earth has provided the conditions essential to life's evolution. The resilience of the community of life and the well-being of humanity depend upon preserving a healthy biosphere with all its ecological systems, a rich variety of plants and animals, fertile soils, pure waters, and clean air. The global environment with its finite resources is a common concern of all peoples. The protection of Earth's vitality, diversity, and beauty is a sacred trust.

The Global Situation

The dominant patterns of production and consumption are causing environmental devastation, the depletion of resources, and a massive extinction of species. Communities are being undermined. The benefits of development are not shared equitably and the gap between rich and poor is widening. Injustice, poverty, ignorance, and violent conflict are widespread and the cause of great suffering. An unprecedented rise in human population has overburdened ecological and social systems. The foundations of global security are threatened. These trends are perilous—but not inevitable.

The Challenges Ahead

The choice is ours: form a global partnership to care for Earth and one another or risk the destruction of ourselves and the diversity of life. Fundamental changes are needed in our values, institutions, and ways of living. We must realize that when basic needs have been met, human development is primarily about being more, not having more. We have the knowledge and technology to provide for all and to reduce our impacts on the environment. The emergence of a global civil society is creating new opportunities to build a democratic and humane world. Our environmental, economic, political, social, and spiritual challenges are interconnected, and together we can forge inclusive solutions.

Universal Responsibility

To realize these aspirations, we must decide to live with a sense of universal responsibility, identifying ourselves with the whole Earth community as well as our local communities. We are at once citizens of different nations and of one world in which the local and global are linked. Everyone shares responsibility for the present and future well-being of the human family and the larger living world. The spirit of human solidarity and kinship with all life is strengthened when we live with reverence for the mystery of being, gratitude for the gift of life, and humility regarding the human place in nature.

We urgently need a shared vision of basic values to provide an ethical foundation for the emerging world community. Therefore, together in hope we affirm the following interdependent principles for a sustainable way of life as a common standard by which the conduct of all individuals, organizations, businesses, governments, and transnational institutions is to be guided and assessed.

PRINCIPLES

I. RESPECT AND CARE FOR THE COMMUNITY OF LIFE

1. Respect Earth and life in all its diversity.

- a. Recognize that all beings are interdependent and every form of life has value regardless of its worth to human beings.
- b. Affirm faith in the inherent dignity of all human beings and in the intellectual, artistic, ethical, and spiritual potential of humanity.

2. Care for the community of life with understanding, compassion, and love.

- a. Accept that with the right to own, manage, and use natural resources comes the duty to prevent environmental harm and to protect the rights of people.
- b. Affirm that with increased freedom, knowledge, and power comes increased responsibility to promote the common good.

3. Build democratic societies that are just, participatory, sustainable, and peaceful.

- a. Ensure that communities at all levels guarantee human rights and fundamental freedoms and provide everyone an opportunity to realize his or her full potential.

b. Promote social and economic justice, enabling all to achieve a secure and meaningful livelihood that is ecologically responsible.

4. Secure Earth's bounty and beauty for present and future generations.

a. Recognize that the freedom of action of each generation is qualified by the needs of future generations.
 b. Transmit to future generations values, traditions, and institutions that support the long-term flourishing of Earth's human and ecological communities. In order to fulfill these four broad commitments, it is necessary to:

I I . ECOLOGICAL INTEGRITY

5. Protect and restore the integrity of Earth's ecological systems, with special concern for biological diversity and the natural processes that sustain life.

a. Adopt at all levels sustainable development plans and regulations that make environmental conservation and rehabilitation integral to all development initiatives.
 b. Establish and safeguard viable nature and biosphere reserves, including wild lands and marine areas, to protect Earth's life support systems, maintain biodiversity, and preserve our natural heritage.
 c. Promote the recovery of endangered species and ecosystems.
 d. Control and eradicate non-native or genetically modified organisms harmful to native species and the environment, and prevent introduction of such harmful organisms.
 e. Manage the use of renewable resources such as water, soil, forest products, and marine life in ways that do not exceed rates of regeneration and that protect the health of ecosystems.
 f. Manage the extraction and use of non-renewable resources such as minerals and fossil fuels in ways that minimize depletion and cause no serious environmental damage.

6. Prevent harm as the best method of environmental protection and, when knowledge is limited, apply a precautionary approach.

a. Take action to avoid the possibility of serious or irreversible environmental harm even when scientific knowledge is incomplete or inconclusive.
 b. Place the burden of proof on those who argue that a proposed activity will not cause significant harm, and make the responsible parties liable for environmental harm.
 c. Ensure that decision making addresses the cumulative, long-term, indirect, long distance, and global consequences of human activities.
 d. Prevent pollution of any part of the environment and allow no build-up of radioactive, toxic, or other hazardous substances.
 e. Avoid military activities damaging to the environment.

7. Adopt patterns of production, consumption, and reproduction that safeguard Earth's regenerative capacities, human rights, and community well-being.

a. Reduce, reuse, and recycle the materials used in production and consumption systems, and ensure that residual waste can be assimilated by ecological systems.
 b. Act with restraint and efficiency when using energy, and rely increasingly on renewable energy sources such as solar and wind.
 c. Promote the development, adoption, and equitable transfer of environmentally sound technologies.
 d. Internalize the full environmental and social costs of goods and services in the selling price, and enable consumers to identify products that meet the highest social and environmental standards.
 e. Ensure universal access to health care that fosters reproductive health and responsible reproduction.
 f. Adopt lifestyles that emphasize the quality of life and material sufficiency in a finite world.

8. Advance the study of ecological sustainability and promote the open exchange and wide application of the knowledge acquired.

a. Support international scientific and technical cooperation on sustainability, with special attention to the needs of developing nations.
 b. Recognize and preserve the traditional knowledge and spiritual wisdom in all cultures that contribute to environmental protection and human well-being.
 c. Ensure that information of vital importance to human health and environmental protection, including genetic information, remains available in the public domain.

I I I . SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC JUSTICE

9. Eradicate poverty as an ethical, social, and environmental imperative.

a. Guarantee the right to potable water, clean air, food security, uncontaminated soil, shelter, and safe sanitation, allocating the national and international resources required.
 b. Empower every human being with the education and resources to secure a sustainable livelihood, and provide social security and safety nets for those who are unable to support themselves.
 c. Recognize the ignored, protect the vulnerable, serve those who suffer, and enable them to develop their capacities and to pursue their aspirations.

10. Ensure that economic activities and institutions at all levels promote human development in an equitable and sustainable manner.

- a. Promote the equitable distribution of wealth within nations and among nations.
- b. Enhance the intellectual, financial, technical, and social resources of developing nations, and relieve them of onerous international debt.
- c. Ensure that all trade supports sustainable resource use, environmental protection, and progressive labor standards.
- d. Require multinational corporations and international financial organizations to act transparently in the public good, and hold them accountable for the consequences of their activities.

11. Affirm gender equality and equity as prerequisites to sustainable development and ensure universal access to education, health care, and economic opportunity.

- a. Secure the human rights of women and girls and end all violence against them.
- b. Promote the active participation of women in all aspects of economic, political, civil, social, and cultural life as full and equal partners, decision makers, leaders, and beneficiaries.
- c. Strengthen families and ensure the safety and loving nurture of all family members.

12. Uphold the right of all, without discrimination, to a natural and social environment supportive of human dignity, bodily health, and spiritual well-being, with special attention to the rights of indigenous peoples and minorities.

- a. Eliminate discrimination in all its forms, such as that based on race, color, sex, sexual orientation, religion, language, and national, ethnic or social origin.
- b. Affirm the right of indigenous peoples to their spirituality, knowledge, lands and resources and to their related practice of sustainable livelihoods.
- c. Honor and support the young people of our communities, enabling them to fulfill their essential role in creating sustainable societies.
- d. Protect and restore outstanding places of cultural and spiritual significance.

IV. DEMOCRACY, NONVIOLENCE, AND PEACE

13. Strengthen democratic institutions at all levels, and provide transparency and accountability in governance, inclusive participation in decision making, and access to justice.

- a. Uphold the right of everyone to receive clear and timely information on environmental matters and all development plans and activities which are likely to affect them or in which they have an interest.
- b. Support local, regional and global civil society, and promote the meaningful participation of all interested individuals and organizations in decision making.
- c. Protect the rights to freedom of opinion, expression, peaceful assembly, association, and dissent.
- d. Institute effective and efficient access to administrative and independent judicial procedures, including remedies and redress for environmental harm and the threat of such harm.
- e. Eliminate corruption in all public and private institutions.
- f. Strengthen local communities, enabling them to care for their environments, and assign environmental responsibilities to the levels of government where they can be carried out most effectively.

14. Integrate into formal education and life-long learning the knowledge, values, and skills needed for a sustainable way of life.

- a. Provide all, especially children and youth, with educational opportunities that empower them to contribute actively to sustainable development.
- b. Promote the contribution of the arts and humanities as well as the sciences in sustainability education.
- c. Enhance the role of the mass media in raising awareness of ecological and social challenges.
- d. Recognize the importance of moral and spiritual education for sustainable living.

15. Treat all living beings with respect and consideration.

- a. Prevent cruelty to animals kept in human societies and protect them from suffering.
- b. Protect wild animals from methods of hunting, trapping, and fishing that cause extreme, prolonged, or avoidable suffering.
- c. Avoid or eliminate to the full extent possible the taking or destruction of non-targeted species.

16. Promote a culture of tolerance, nonviolence, and peace.

- a. Encourage and support mutual understanding, solidarity, and cooperation among all peoples and within and among nations.
- b. Implement comprehensive strategies to prevent violent conflict and use collaborative problem solving to manage and resolve environmental conflicts and other disputes.
- c. Demilitarize national security systems to the level of a non-provocative defense posture, and convert military resources to peaceful purposes, including ecological restoration.
- d. Eliminate nuclear, biological, and toxic weapons and other weapons of mass destruction.
- e. Ensure that the use of orbital and outer space supports environmental protection and peace.

f. Recognize that peace is the wholeness created by right relationships with oneself, other persons, other cultures, other life, Earth, and the larger whole of which all are a part.

THE WAY FORWARD

As never before in history, common destiny beckons us to seek a new beginning. Such renewal is the promise of these Earth Charter principles. To fulfill this promise, we must commit ourselves to adopt and promote the values and objectives of the Charter.

This requires a change of mind and heart. It requires a new sense of global interdependence and universal responsibility. We must imaginatively develop and apply the vision of a sustainable way of life locally, nationally, regionally, and globally. Our cultural diversity is a precious heritage and different cultures will find their own distinctive ways to realize the vision. We must deepen and expand the global dialogue that generated the Earth Charter, for we have much to learn from the ongoing collaborative search for truth and wisdom.

Life often involves tensions between important values. This can mean difficult choices. However, we must find ways to harmonize diversity with unity, the exercise of freedom with the common good, short-term objectives with long-term goals. Every individual, family, organization, and community has a vital role to play. The arts, sciences, religions, educational institutions, media, businesses, nongovernmental organizations, and governments are all called to offer creative leadership. The partnership of government, civil society, and business is essential for effective governance.

In order to build a sustainable global community, the nations of the world must renew their commitment to the United Nations, fulfill their obligations under existing international agreements, and support the implementation of Earth Charter principles with an international legally binding instrument on environment and development.

Let ours be a time remembered for the awakening of a new reverence for life, the firm resolve to achieve sustainability, the quickening of the struggle for justice and peace, and the joyful celebration of life.

ORIGIN OF THE EARTH CHARTER

The Earth Charter was created by the independent Earth Charter Commission, which was convened as a follow-up to the 1992 Earth Summit in order to produce a global consensus statement of values and principles for a sustainable future. The document was developed over nearly a decade through an extensive process of international consultation, to which over five thousand people contributed. The Charter has been formally endorsed by thousands of organizations, including UNESCO and the IUCN (World Conservation Union). For more information, please visit www.EarthCharter.org.

APPENDIX C

NIGERIA'S NATIONAL POLICY ON THE ENVIRONMENT

1. INTRODUCTION

Nigeria is committed to a national environmental policy that will ensure sustainable development based on proper management of the environment. This demands positive and realistic planning that balances human needs against the carrying capacity of the environment. This requires that a number of complementary policies, strategies and management approaches are put in place which should ensure, among others, that:

- * environmental concerns are integrated into major economic decision-making process;
 - * environmental remediation costs are built into major development projects;
 - * economic instruments are employed in the management of natural resources;
- environmentally friendly technologies are applied;

Environmental Impact Assessment is mandatorily carried out before any major development project is embarked on.

This policy, in order to succeed must be built on the following sustainable development principles:

- * The precautionary principle which holds that where there are threats of serious or irreversible damage, the lack of full scientific knowledge shall not be used as a reason for postponing cost-effective means to prevent environmental degradation;
- * Pollution Prevention Pays Principle (3p+) which encourages Industry to invest positively to prevent pollution;
- * The polluter pays principle (PPP) which suggests that the polluter should bear the cost of preventing and controlling pollution;
- * The user pays principle (UPP), in which the cost of a resource to a user must include all the environmental costs associated with its extraction, transformation and use (including the costs of alternative or future uses forgone);
- * The principle of intergenerational equity which requires that the needs of the present generation are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs;
- * The principle of intra-generational equity which requires that different groups of people within the country and within the present generation have the right to benefit equally from the exploitation of resources and that they have an equal right to a clean and healthy environment; and
- * The subsidiary principle which requires that decisions should as much as possible be made by communities affected or on their behalf by the authorities closest to them.

This new policy thrust is based on fundamental re-thinking and a clearer appreciation of the interdependent linkages among development processes, environmental factors as well as human and natural resources. Since development remains a national priority, it is recognized that the actions designed to increase the productivity of the society and meet the essential needs of the populace must be reconciled with environmental issues that had hitherto been neglected or not given sufficient attention.

In enunciating a national policy on the environment, cognisance must be taken of the various institutional settings and professional groupings, as well as the complex historical, social, cultural and legal considerations which have been and continue to be involved, in the identification and implementation of measures designed to solve national environmental problems. The provisions of the Policy have thus been informed by recent national policy initiatives in Science and Technology, Agriculture, Health, Industry, Oil and Gas, Population, Culture, etc., as well as major international efforts in the field of environment. The Policy aims to provide a rational, practicable, coherent and comprehensive approach to the pursuit of economic and social development in a way that minimizes contradictions and duplications, while enhancing inter and intrasectoral co-operation and effectiveness at all levels.

Since the health and welfare of all Nigerians depend on making the transition to sustainable development as rapid as possible, this National Policy on the Environment provides the concepts and strategies which will lead to the procedures and other concrete actions required for launching Nigeria into an era of social justice, self-reliance and sustainable development as we enter the 21st Century.

2. POLICY GOAL

The goal of the National Policy on the Environment is to achieve sustainable development in Nigeria, and, in particular to:

- a. secure a quality of environment adequate for good health and well-being;
- b. conserve and use the environment and natural resources for the benefit of present and future generations;

c. restore, maintain and enhance the ecosystems and ecological processes essential for the functioning of the biosphere to preserve biological diversity and the principle of optimum sustainable yield in the use of living natural resources and ecosystems;

d. raise public awareness and promote understanding of the essential linkages between the environment, resources and development, and encourage individual and community participation in environmental improvement efforts; and

e. co-operate in good faith with other countries, international organisations and agencies to achieve optimal use of transboundary natural resources and effective prevention or abatement of transboundary environmental degradation.

3.0 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The National Policy on the Environment is basically a programme of actions rooted in a conceptual frame within which the linkages between environmental problems on the one hand and their causes, effects and solutions on the other hand can be discerned. This is achieved in the Policy document through five major policy initiatives:

a. preventive activities directed at the social, economic and political origins of the environmental problems;

b. abatement, remedial and restorative activities directed at the specific problems identified, and in particular:

- problems arising from industrial production processes;
- problems caused by excessive pressure of the population on the land and other resources; and
- problems due to rapid growth of urban centres.

c. design and application of broad strategies for sustainable environmental protection and management at systemic or sub-systemic levels;

d. enactment of necessary legal instruments designed to strengthen the activities and strategies recommended by this POLICY;

e. establishment/emplacement of management organs, institutions and structures designed to achieve the policy objectives.

4.0 STRATEGIES FOR IMPLEMENTATION

The implementation of the National Policy on the environment depends on specific actions directed towards all sectors of the economy and problem areas of the environment. Consequently, the approach to problem-solving adopted in this Policy is predicated on an integrated, holistic and systemic view of environmental issues.

The actions envisaged will establish and/or strengthen legal, institutional, regulatory, research, monitoring, evaluation, public information, and other relevant mechanisms for ensuring the attainment of the specific goals and targets of the policy.

It is also expected that these strategies will lead to:

a. the establishment of adequate environmental standards as well as the monitoring and evaluation of changes in the environment;

b. the publication of up-to-date environmental data and the dissemination of relevant environmental information;

c. prior environmental assessment of proposed activities which may negatively affect the environment or the use of a natural resource.

The proposed implementation strategies for the various sectors are as detailed below:

4.1 Human Population

The most valuable national resource is the human resource base - the people of Nigeria. Consequently, the protection and enhancement of the health and well-being of the people constitute a major responsibility of government. By their individual and collective behaviour, humans make significant positive or negative impact on the natural resources and non-human environment of the country.

Environmental sustainability will be impossible unless human numbers and resource demands level off within the carrying capacity of the Earth. Since a major objective of the national environmental policy is to encourage measures which sustain a balance between population and environment, intersectoral cooperation, involving all tiers of government is envisaged. This policy will, therefore, be implemented with the National Population Policy in mind to ensure not only the survival but also the sustainable improvement in the quality of life of Nigerians.

The strategies to be adopted include the following:

- a. addressing the issues of population growth and resources consumption in an integrated way;
- b. setting goals for the stabilization of national population at a sustainable level;
- c. integrating resource consumption and demographic goals with the other sectors and economic objectives;
- d. monitoring trends in population and resource consumption and assessing their implications for sustainability;
- e. encouraging and involving the private sector, NGOs and the public in the implementation of strategies and actions aimed at achieving stated goals;
- f. the prevention and management of natural disasters such as flood, drought and desertification that more directly impact the lives of the populace;
- g. integration of population and environmental factors in national development planning;
- h. solving public health problems associated with rapid urbanisation and squalid urban environments;
- i. prevention of the depletion of forests through judicious search for alternative energy sources and control of the demands and patterns of land resources usage;

4.2 Culture

The various communities living in the different ecological zones of the country have developed, over many generations, their individual and unique traditional strategies for understanding and exploiting their environments and the available natural resources. This is embodied in the culture of the people and consists of their social, economic, legal and political institutions; their beliefs and values; their creative abilities; and their habits and materials as manifested in their housing, food, clothing, medical practices, tools, etc. Consequently, at every stage of a sustainable development plan, the interrelationships between culture, the natural environment and the rational utilization of available resources should be clearly comprehended.

To achieve and reinforce these objectives, appropriate machinery will be put in place to:

- a. enhance the understanding of the development of indigenous knowledge and technology and link these to established sciences in order to promote the sustainable management of natural resources;
- b. encourage communities to incorporate their values and traditional knowledge into community development programmes;
- c. promote and protect traditional intellectual and cultural properties and customary practices with emphasis on traditional medicine and crafts;
- d. inculcate environmental awareness into cultural habits and entrench individual and collective responsibilities to protect the environment for the benefit of the future generations;
- e. identify and ensure the preservation of artefacts and areas of historical importance as part of the national heritage;
- f. encourage the traditional modes of leisure that can promote environmentally sound tourism activities;
- g. promote sustainable urban culture;
- h. promote proven traditional architecture that are compatible with sustainable development.

4.3 Housing and Human Settlements

The goal of the National Housing Policy is to ensure that all Nigerians own or have access to decent housing accommodation at affordable cost within the foreseeable future. The attainment of this goal as well as the provision of housing which satisfies basic and environmental needs of the populace on sustainable basis would necessarily require the active participation of all tiers of government and the greater involvement of the private sector.

The Policy places human comfort and survival at the centre of concerns for sustainable development as man strives to achieve a healthy and productive life in harmony with nature. Rapid urbanization reinforced by high rate of population growth and sprawl of cities into wider geographical areas will continue into the 21st Century. In order to mitigate the unbalanced geographical development of human settlements and effectively reinforce the creation of a dynamic economy in an environmentally sustainable manner, governments at all levels (i.e. local, state and federal) should encourage the development of balanced and environmentally friendly settlement structures.

On housing, mechanisms would be put in place to:

- a. strengthen appropriate institutional framework to facilitate effective planning in housing development;
- b. ensure the development of housing that is functional and conducive for family development;
- c. encourage the restructuring of all existing public institutions involved in housing delivery at the Federal, State and local government levels with a view to making them more effective and responsive to the needs of Nigerians;

- d. strengthen the executive capacity of local governments to enable them contribute more effectively to housing delivery at the grassroot level;
- e. produce and update regional development sites and services to facilitate home ownership and orderly urban and rural development;
- f. improve the quality of rural housing, rural infrastructures and environment;
- g. strengthen the operational effectiveness of the National Housing Fund (NHF), through the inclusion of environmental and safety concerns in the assessment process;
- h. encourage research into and promote the use of locally produced building materials as a means of reducing building costs without compromising environmental concerns;
- i. increase the supply of, and improve the quality of man-power needed in the housing sector;
- j. discourage overcrowding both with respect to the number of houses per unit area and dwellers per unit of housing.

The Strategies to achieve objectives of sustainable human settlement shall include:

- a. provision of guidelines for appropriate planning, design, construction, maintenance and rehabilitation of shelters, infrastructures and other facilities;
- b. removal of barriers and eradication of discrimination in the provision of shelter for all Nigerians;
- c. maintenance of an acceptable balance in the allocation of landuse functions, including the containment of urban sprawl on prime agriculture land and encouragement of productive investments in job creation and social infrastructures development in small and medium-sized cities, towns and villages;
- d. encouragement of research and studies to promote and develop indigenous planning and design techniques that are compatible with the actual needs of local communities;
- e. stimulating public participation in assessing real user needs, especially gender needs as an integral part of the planning and design processes;
- f. promotion and support for the development of locally produced, environmentally sound, affordable and durable basic building materials in co-operation with all other interested parties;
- g. provision of advice and technical assistance to museums and other cultural institutions to establish parks, game reserves and other recreational facilities;
- h. identification and protection of holy places and places of cultural and historical importance;
- i. provision of guidelines for environmentally sound masterplans for urban development, industrial and rural settlements;
- j. design and development of geographically balanced model cities and villages;
- k. application of modern urban planning and management techniques to housing, transport, employment opportunities, environmental conditions and community facilities;
- l. focusing attention on priority human settlements programmes and policies aimed at reducing urban pollution resulting especially from inadequate water supply, sanitation and drainage, poor industrial and domestic waste management and air pollution;
- m. development and implementation of a phased and systematic programme for the enhancement of the aesthetic appeal and living conditions in Nigerian cities and villages through tree-planting and related anti-erosion landscape management measures.

4.4 Biological Diversity Management

In Nigeria, economic development has not been sustainable partly because biological resources are improperly managed. The trends which manifest by the misuse of biodiversity, the underestimation of the benefits of biological conservation, the non inclusion of the full costs of biodiversity losses in economic accounting, and the biodiversity must all be reversed. The following strategies shall be pursued:

- a. work out ways of using ecosystem sustainably thereby improving their social value;
- b. protect the remaining natural ecosystems;
- c. maintain as large an area as possible of modified ecosystems to support a diversity of sustainable uses and species;
- d. promote sustainable agro-ecosystems without compromising natural ecosystems;
- e. increase awareness and understanding of biodiversity to society;
- f. conserve and facilitate access to genetic resources that are important to agriculture, medicine and industry;
- g. support the sharing of the benefits and knowledge, expertise and technologies in the use of biodiversity in a fair and equitable manner;
- h. support the integration of biodiversity conservation objectives in sectoral policies, programmes, strategies, regulations and educational programmes at all levels;
- i. take the full social cost and benefits of biodiversity into account when converting land to agriculture and urban systems;

- j. restore and rehabilitate degraded ecosystems;
- k. ensure implementation of Nigeria's Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan;
- l. promote national biodiversity conservation through monitoring and identification;
- m. strengthen centres for the exchange of data and information of relevance to the conservation of biological diversity.

4.5 Natural Resources Conservation

The nation's boundaries encompass rich natural resources which are unevenly distributed. The human resources are also abundant though much of the population still lives in poverty. As a result, the natural resources are being overexploited thereby decreasing their productive potential for current and future generation. Improvement in the quality of life for the people will require long-term economic growth which is itself dependent upon improved management and conservation of the natural resource base. Therefore, this policy will aim to pursue the following strategies:

- a. support and promote technologies that use resources more efficiently;
- b. integrate economic policies and environmental considerations in every effort to increase the benefits obtainable from natural resources;
- c. ensure that development also maintains essential ecological processes and life support systems;
- d. ensure that resource users pay the full cost of the benefits from natural resources;
- e. eliminate constraints to the sustainable utilization of the resource base of the nation,
- f. upgrade in general, natural resource and environmental management;
- g. support national income accounting systems which include the degradation and depletion of natural resource stocks;
- h. promote co-operation to harmonise various sectoral policies;
- i. promote resource mapping and the use of remote sensing technologies for land use planning;
- j. ensure the development of shared natural resources such as rivers or their basins to make them much more sustainable;

4.6 Land Use and Soil Conservation

Land is the basic resource upon which most development efforts are based. Activities utilizing this vital resource usually interact and are often conflicting. It is necessary, therefore, to plan the utilization and management of land in an integrated manner. Integrated management of land should be harmonised and co-ordinated at the various levels of government. Additionally, the impacts of the various social and economic activities on natural resources such as soil, water, air and biota should routinely be assessed at every stage of the development process. This is necessary for appropriate allocation and utilization of land and its resources that will ensure transition to sustainability.

Accordingly, suitable strategies shall be adopted to encourage the:

- a. compilation of detailed land capability inventories and comprehensive land classifications;
- b. assessment of the current land use practices and the causes and extent of soil degradation;
- c. establishment and the strengthening of guidelines of the regulatory framework for sustainable land use;
- d. adoption of soil conservation principles in highway and other construction activities;
- e. ensure sound management of soil through monitoring and control of changes in land use.
- f. ensure implementation of guidelines for traditional grazing system;
- g. expansion of protected area system to meet IUCN requirement as reserves and parks, for conservation purposes;
- h. promotion of afforestation and reforestation programmes including community based agro-forestry for soil improvement;
- i. improved management of soil and water resources;
- j. co-ordination of the activities of the various agencies dealing with land management;
- l. intensification of public awareness of the causes, consequences and remedies of land degradation

4.7 Agriculture

The viability or otherwise of the agricultural sector is crucial to the growth and development of a nation. The agriculture sector strongly impacts food security, industrialisation efforts, quality of life, economic growth, political stability and, to a certain extent, a nation's position in international relations and trade. The sustainability of this important sector should, therefore, be of paramount importance. Consequently, it is essential to establish a balance between efficient agricultural enterprise and environmental protection.

The emphasis should be the promotion of ecologically sound and profitable farming systems and suitable rural development programmes principally aimed at small scale farmers. In order to increase agricultural

productivity, vigorous programmes have to be established and supported to ensure proper use of natural resources and judicious application of agricultural inputs. In order to ensure the attainment of these objectives, strategies shall be put in place to:

- a. support research aimed at developing farming systems that combine optimum production with land resource protection and which are compatible with the socio-economic conditions of all peoples;
- b. promote farming systems based on natural adaptations across ecological zones; ensure maintenance of soil quality and capability through sound management;
- c. develop, through research, sustainable agro-forestry techniques for the prevention and remediation of erosion and checking desertification;
- d. discourage the cultivation of marginal lands and encourage off farm contributions.
- e. prescribe and regulate appropriate land preparation and agriculture mechanisation techniques in collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture;
- f. encourage and support ecologically appropriate livestock and poultry production;
- g. promote efficient use of crop and livestock waste products;
- h. develop and support efficient fish production, processing, storage and marketing through promotion of improved technology and management practices; encourage conservation of grazing reserves and enforce strict range resource management programmes;
- i. minimize agricultural products losses by promoting efficient processing techniques, improved transportation infrastructures, appropriate storage facilities and efficient marketing strategies;
- j. regulate the production, use, storage, transportation, marketing, sale and disposal of agricultural chemicals;
- k. maintain an up-to-date register of approved agro-chemicals and provide "Safe Use of Pesticides" Guides;
- l. encourage the production of high yield crop varieties requiring minimum agro-chemicals input;
- m. monitor pesticide and agro-chemical residue levels in air, soil, water, sediments, flora, fauna and human, and document the environmental fate of such chemicals;
- n. promote farming, using manures and other soil conditioners.
- o. Promote integrated pest management.

4.8 Water Resources Management

Water is a vital resource governing the viability of all ecosystems and providing the basis for socio-economic development. The proper management of this vital resource through the incorporation of environmental concerns is essential to minimize supply shortages, pollution, land degradation and associated health hazards. To ensure sustainability, comprehensive medium and long term national plans for water resources management and conservation should be put in place taking into consideration demand and availability. These will be achieved through:

- a. provision of water in adequate quantity and quality to meet domestic, industrial, agricultural and recreational needs;
- b. environmental impact studies of water resources development;
- c. increased support to promote efficient water use and management;
- d. specification of water quality criteria for different water uses;
- e. continuous monitoring of the public health implications of water resource development projects such as dams and irrigation schemes;
- f. control of point and non-point sources of pollution;
- g. establishment of adequate controls and enforcement procedures to check contamination and depletion of water resources;
- h. adherence to the use of the Sustainable "River Basin" concept in water management;
- i. improved water management technology including the safe disposal of waste water, waste water reuse and recycling;
- j. provision of guidelines for water damage prevention through flood control, damage water collection and treatment and amelioration measures;
- k. encourage improvement of water fronts for recreation;
- l. maintenance of systematic and comprehensive inventory of national water resources and application of appropriate analysis and prediction techniques capable of minimizing the impacts of natural disasters;
- j. implement water allocation decisions through demand management, pricing mechanisms and regulatory measures.
- k. consideration of the impacts of climate change on water resources.

4.9 Forestry, Wildlife and Protected Natural Areas

It is true that there have in recent years been increasing deforestation, soil degradation, deterioration and desertification in Nigeria. All these have been due to the spread of agriculture, commercial timber felling and local cutting of wood for fuel at will. This is further aggravated by accidental forest fires as well as farming and game related bush burning. The need is, therefore, to secure development while at the same time sustaining the productivity of the natural vegetation, protecting wildlife, maintaining genetic diversity and avoiding forest and soil destruction.

The strategies for achieving these objectives include:

- a. promoting the rational exploitation of forest resources to meet domestic consumption needs and to achieve a significant export activity on a long term basis;
- b. regulating forestry activities to enhance conservation and environmentally sound management practices;
- c. monitoring the quantitative and qualitative changes of forest cover and their effects using conventional means and modern technology such as multi-spectral satellite imagery;
- d. providing data on the balance between the nation's forest biomass and the prevailing environment and changes in the forest biomass considered to have a significant impact on the environment;
- e. strengthening forest protection programmes to ensure adequate vegetation cover in critical areas and to discourage developments likely to cause harmful changes;
- f. assessing the state of natural vegetation resources and identifying endangered sites and species for priority action;
- g. protecting flora and fauna in danger of extinction as well as forest reserves for scientific, recreational and other cultural purposes;
- h. encouraging reforestation and afforestation programmes and activities with a view to rectifying forest losses and the adverse effects of deforestation;
- i. combining desirable features of traditional approach with modern scientific methods of conservation;
- j. increasing support of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and community tree planting programmes;
- k. promoting the development of alternative sources of energy while supporting programmes for the development of more efficient methods of wood energy use;
- l. protecting forest from bush and forest fires and taking measures to discourage wanton destruction of forest resources;
- m. strengthening programmes for the identification and study of the natural heritage in fauna and flora and for establishing a national inventory of forest resources;
- n. establishing germplasm conservation programmes;
- o. establishing programmes for the efficient utilisation of vegetation resources including reduction of wastes and improved technologies for product consumption;
- p. encouraging appropriate agro-forestry practices and the search for multi-purpose plant species for achieving increased productivity for a unit area of land;
- q. developing and disseminating scientific and technological information conducive to more efficient use of forest resources and wildlife;
- r. supporting the goals of the National Conservation Strategy for Nigeria.

4.10 Marine and Coastal Area Resources

In order to maintain and improve the quality of the unique environmental resource endowment and the physical characteristics of the coastal areas, Ecological Master Plans (EMP) will be prepared based on detailed baseline ecological data to guide the use of coastal areas for the diverse and often conflicting industrial and social needs of the nation so that continued viability of all aspects of the ecosystems will be secured. To achieve this objective, all applications for project development in the coastal and nearshore areas must mandatorily be accompanied by Environmental Impact Assessments with strict adherence to public hearings before permission is given for such developments.

In addition, mechanisms must be put in place to:

- a. study and highlight the vulnerable components of the marine and coastal ecosystems bearing in mind their limited stocks of living and non-living exploitable resources;
- b. identify and map critical and sensitive habitats (Environmental Sensitivity Index maps) to enable project planners and developers to incorporate appropriate measures to minimize damage and disturbance to breeding, nesting and feeding areas of estuarine and coastal water species;
- c. provide timely data and operational standards for project planning and implementation, especially for fishing, drilling, construction of offshore oil production platforms and loading terminals, dredging, pipe laying and seabed mining;

- d. study the prevalent coastal and nearshore geomorphologic processes and identify the land forms that are indicative of coastline changes over time especially with regard to coastal submergence/emergence, subsidence, sediment balance, coastal sand transport with depositional or erosive tendencies, sediment compaction and tidal and current erosion;
- e. monitor the rate of coastline progradation or recession and establish coastal protection measures with a view to timely intervention to arrest irreversible negative changes;
- f. establish measures to discourage and prevent or at best minimize point and non-point pollution of the entire coastline and nearshore marine waters;
- g. prepare Ecological Master Plans for the management and control of coastal and nearshore marine industrial and social development activities to minimize pollution and protect the resources;
- h. encourage the recreational use of coastal and nearshore marine water-fronts areas for the enhancement of tourism;
- i. discourage upstream water use that can negatively impact estuarine and coastal habitats, water quality and quantity and thus endanger marine life living and/or reproducing in such habitats;
- j. establish measures against the transboundary movement of toxic and hazardous substances within Nigerian marine and coastal waters;
- k. create public awareness of the dangers of dumping toxic and hazardous wastes, sewage and other domestic and industrial wastes in coastal and marine waters;
- l. establish national and regional contingency plans for maritime tanker accidents, oil well blow outs and accidental oil spills in coastal and nearshore waters;
- m. establish stringent standards for effluent discharge from mines, thermal nuclear plants and oil exploration and production operations in coastal and continental shelf waters;
- n. effect regular environmental audits of all development projects located in or bordering the coastal zone in order to promptly correct the undesirable negative environmental impacts of such projects.
- o. highlight vulnerable species and ecosystems bearing in mind the limited stocks of living and non-living exploitable resources;
- p. sustain ecological diversity and productivity;
- q. provide data and operational standards for project planning and implementation, for example, in fishing, dredging, and mining;
- r. prepare controls for land-use, coastal and marine-based activities to minimise pollution and protect coastal and marine resources;
- s. establish restoration, rehabilitation and mitigation and or compensation programmes for loss of marine and coastal resources;

4.11 Mining and Mineral Resources

The growing profile of the solid mineral extraction sector within the economy dictates that attention be focused on its tendency to cause extensive environmental degradation. Mining and associated beneficiation activities should, therefore, be carried out in an environmentally sound manner. In order to achieve this objective, the approval to initiate mining should mandatorily be preceded by an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA). In addition, mechanisms shall be put into place to:

- a. facilitate orderly development of minerals for real economic growth, improvement of the living standards of the people and the creation of favourable investment climate through prudent use of the nation's mineral resources and the adoption of rational conservation measures;
- b. prevent haphazard opening of quarries to minimize soil erosion, land degradation and uncontrolled damage to vegetation, wildlife and water resources;
- c. prescribe operational standards aimed at minimizing dust and noise pollution from open quarries and to reduce the impact of dust on vegetation, surface and groundwater and humans;
- d. minimize environmental degradation associated with beneficiation and refining of minerals;
- e. prescribe minimum safety standards in the construction of mines and the use of personal protective equipment (PPE);
- f. establish stringent standards for effluent discharge from mines and monitor compliance;
- g. ensure the existence and workability of mine safety contingency plans and provision of first-aid facilities at the mines;
- h. monitor the health of the workers involved in mining and mineral beneficiation and protect miners from excessive exposure to dust, particulate matter, radioactive and toxic materials in and out of the mines and make provision for adequate treatment of mining related diseases;
- i. prescribe stringent regulations for the stacking and ultimate disposal of mine and beneficiation tailings and dumps in a way to ensure their long term stability;
- j. stipulate and monitor compliance with approved procedures for the reclamation and the restoration of land, top soil and vegetation of mined out areas and monitor the recovery of such areas;

k. maintain regular environmental audit to stimulate the adoption of environmentally sound practices and technologies in all mining operations.

4.12 Industry

Sustainable industrial development can be achieved through policy initiatives that seek, among others to ensure:

- i. availability of indigenous technological materials;
- ii. availability of industrial raw materials;
- iii. possession of a viable research and development base that is capable of selecting, adapting and developing technology; and
- iv. creating awareness to promote and sustain technological and industrial growth.

Strategies to achieve these objectives include:

- a. preparation of a national classification/categorization of industries that will ensure optimal utilisation of common services by industries that produce similar effluents;
- b. ensuring strict adherence to land use zoning and demarcation of industrial areas to encourage the optimal utilisation of shared facilities;
- c. ensuring that major industry locations are selected on the basis of raw material, socio-cultural and environmental considerations rather than on strict economic and political considerations;
- d. preventing industries from being sited close to ecologically sensitive areas, historic and archaeological monuments, national parks, scenic areas, beaches and resorts, coastal areas and estuaries, bird and animal sanctuaries, natural lakes, swamps, floodplains, wetlands etc.;
- e. reducing the trend to appropriate forest reserves and prime agricultural lands for industrial use;
- f. prohibiting the siting of industries close to residential areas;
- g. ensuring the rational and sustainable exploitation and use of industrial raw materials taking into consideration the best conservation practice and prevention of resource depletion;
- h. encouraging the use of state-of-the-art equipment and environmentally sound technologies in process operations to enhance in-plant safety and healthy out-plant environments;
- i. encouraging existing industries to produce Comprehensive Industrial Master Plans that will show novel and more effective methods for phased pollution abatement and waste management, and compliance with set environmental standards;
- j. ensuring that production processes incorporate realistic programmes for waste minimization through material recovery and recycling;
- k. ensuring that sufficient space is provided on site for solid waste storage and primary effluent treatment;
- l. ensuring the establishment of specialized facilities for the handling and disposal of toxic and hazardous wastes from industries;
- m. considering the assimilative capacity of the environment before approving/adopting any waste disposal system;
- n. enforcement of in-plant safety regulations and emergency procedures by compelling management to provide Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and making it mandatory for workers to use them through their labour unions;
- o. ensuring workers good health through periodic monitoring of their state of health and provision of emergency and first aid services;
- p. rewarding all existing industries that articulate viable programmes of environmental remediation, facility sharing, and those with facilities for waste management through economic incentives such as tax holidays, soft loans, outright grants etc.
- q. prescribing strict adherence to the polluter-pay principle;
- r. ensuring that EIA reports are submitted by all proposed industrial enterprises prior to approval of licenses to operate;
- s. ensuring that development finance institutions insist on the inclusion of environmental remediation at least up to primary level in their appraisal procedures and the inclusion of treatment plants costs in the total project cost prior to granting of loans;
- t. ensuring sustainable development through the maintenance of industrial infrastructural facilities particularly water, roads, electricity, telecommunications etc.;
- u. initiating periodic detailed environmental audit of major industries and compiling comprehensive inventory of pollutants;
- v. monitoring of effluents from factories and other non-point sources as well as leachates from approved industrial waste disposal sites to reduce/ prevent contamination of air and groundwater.
- w. monitor, on continuous basis, the Quality Assurance Standards/Requirements (such as Ecolabelling) of potential foreign market blocks (e.g. EEC) and ensure that local products meet the set standards.

4.13 Energy

Energy sources are multivarious and the technical expertise for their harnessing and exploitation vary from very simple to very complex. Their impacts on the environment also vary markedly from low level environmental disturbances as in the case of peat and coal mining and burning to extremely severe environmental damage associated with nuclear power plant accidents. Thus, the specific environmental concerns will vary depending on the energy type, source, the mode of exploitation and the technology employed in harnessing and transmission. In energy production and use, therefore, attention should be focused on the following:

- energy source;
- mode of procuring the energy fuel on sustainable basis;
- mode of power generation;
- energy transmission and use; and
- conservation

Nigeria is blessed with an abundant variety of energy resources. The most important for development in the 21st Century are likely to be the conventional hydrocarbons (oil, gas and coal) and non-conventional sources particularly Tar Sands and solar energy which are expected to play increasingly more important roles in future years.

As energy consumption increases with increase in industrialization, it is essential to ensure a more balanced mix of the various energy types used. Their procurement and use must also be compatible with sound environmental practice and in tune with the principle of sustainable development through ensuring minimal negative impacts on the environment.

Strategies to achieve this objective include:

- a. implementation of detailed Environmental Impact Assessments (EIA) of all existing and planned energy projects backed by detailed baseline ecological data against which subsequent environmental changes and/or impacts can be measured;
- b. developing a rational National Energy Utilization Master Plan that balances the need for conservation with the utilization of premium energy resources for premium socio-economic needs;
- c. encouraging the use of energy forms that are environmentally safe and sustainable;
- d. establishment of stringent safety standards in all national energy production processes while promoting safe and pollution-free operations in energy production and use;
- e. prescribing and enforcing stringent standards for the disposal of radioactive and toxic wastes from energy production processes and controlling the level of human exposure to nuclear radiation at mines, power plants and reactors through periodic audit checks of ambient radiation levels at such environments;
- f. monitoring and controlling the levels of particulates, toxic chemicals and noxious gaseous effluents of energy production and use such as CO, CO₂, NO_x, SO₂ and non-methane hydrocarbons;
- g. monitoring the ambient temperatures and other physical and chemical properties of cooling effluents of energy plants to prevent or reduce their severe impacts on human health and the aquatic plants and animals;
- h. ensuring that site selection for energy construction projects emphasises the right of way (R.O.W) of transmission lines, in such a way as to ensure minimal loss or disturbance of habitats, vegetation, wetlands, wildlands, and human habitation;
- i. adoption of a multi-sectoral approach to the monitoring and control of environmental problems associated with energy production and use;
- j. Licensing and periodic inspection and monitoring of all energy waste disposal sites;
- k. encouraging research and development programmes that promote environmentally sound utilisation of the abundant coal resources as a domestic energy source through the reduction of the ash and noxious chemicals content;
- l. establishment of standards for the control of fuel additives especially with respect to trace metals especially Pb, S, Va, Ni, Cr and Zn;
- m. promotion and encouragement of research for the development and use of various locally available energy sources especially non-conventional resources such as geothermal, solar, wind and bitumen or tar sands;
- n. preparation of guidelines for energy production and use in consonance with the environmental implications of the National Energy Policy.

4.14 Oil and Gas

The Oil and Gas Sector has continued to be the backbone of the Nigerian economy, contributing over 90% of the nation's foreign exchange earnings and at least 80% of the GDP. This situation is likely to

continue unchallenged in the near future and well into the third millennium. The sustainable development of the Oil and Gas Sector is, therefore, of utmost importance, especially since virtually all of the activities in both the upstream and downstream sectors are not only pollution-prone, but readily provoke social discord.

Accordingly, sustainable exploitation strategies to be adopted nationally will seek to:

- a. evolve a realistic national conservation policy that ensures optimum economic returns from oil and gas exploration and production, while ensuring adequate provisions for strategic reserves and taking into consideration the welfare of the local inhabitants of the oil and gas producing areas;
- b. ensure minimal disturbance of the soil, topography, vegetation, sensitive ecological zones, including critical wildlife habitats, wetlands, avian migratory routes, etc. during the process of exploration, production, refining, transportation and marketing of oil and gas;
- c. proscribe all forms of oil and gas exploration and production in estuaries, coastal waters, beaches and resorts, take such measures as will minimize disturbance to and contamination of benthic and aquatic habitats;
- d. minimize disturbances/displacement of the local inhabitants, their artefacts, roads, historical sites, sacred groves/places of worship, etc., source of livelihood (agriculture, fishing, transportation etc.) and pay adequate compensation for proven cases of pollution;
- e. prescribe stringent regulations for the efficient collection, treatment and disposal of oil field wastes (drilling muds and additives, formation waters etc);
- f. monitor water quality in open drains, streams and other water bodies around oil and gas operations, as well as groundwater quality in all areas prone to pollution;
- g. inspect periodically pipelines, ships, barges, tanks and other oil field and refinery facilities for early detection of corrosion, leakages, damages etc. and ensure prompt maintenance;
- h. encourage all oil and gas operators to keep accurate records of crude oil and product spills as well as other accidents that impact environmental quality and report them promptly to the appropriate authorities;
- i. maintain an inventory of certified/approved oil spill control chemicals and document their toxicity levels and biodegradability;
- j. monitor air emissions and gaseous wastes (CO , CO_2 , NO_x , H_2S , CH_4 , SO_2 etc.) discharged at production platforms, refineries, petrochemical and gas processing facilities through continual air quality sampling as well as through daily visual checks for leakages around tanks, pumps, pipelines and transfer points;
- k. promote conservation and restoration of natural formation pressure through elimination of gas flaring and the re-injection of produced associated gas and formation waters;
- l. promote the complete utilization of produced associated gas, reduce gas flaring and the production of greenhouse gases;
- m. monitor regularly the functioning of well head and drilling platform devices to prevent blowouts, and install early warning electronic devices for their detection and prevention;
- n. install pressure monitoring gauges and automatic shut-off devices on pumps, pipelines and ensure their integrity through periodic inspection and testing;
- o. prescribe minimum standards of environmental safety in all upstream and downstream oil sector facilities and maintain regular environmental audits of all existing oil and gas production facilities to ensure the adoption of environmentally safe practices as well as compliance with set standards;
- p. prescribe minimum environmental and safety regulations for the protection of the health of workers, the general public and the environment and ensure compliance through teams of competent inspectors;
- q. prescribe a realistic Quality Control Assurance scheme for the adoption of all operators and monitor compliance;
- r. ensure the establishment of realistic Oil Spill Contingency Plans to contain oil spillage, accidental explosion, well blow outs and fire incidents;
- s. prescribe stringent penalties for deliberate sabotage of oil and gas installations;
- t. promote research aimed at accumulating baseline ecologic data on oil and gas production areas;

4.15 Construction

The act of constructing denotes more than the construction of mere buildings as its use encompasses the erection of various engineering (civil) projects such as bridges, dams, highways, railways, airports and runways, canals, embankments, wharfs, jetties, moles, heavy energy facilities e.g. refineries and power generating works, steel complexes, smelters, etc.

This wide range of engineering activities vary in size and technological complexity from those involving simple technology such as building construction with low level of environmental disturbance to the more highly complex activities such as the construction of refineries, power plants etc., with high levels of

impact. The specific environmental concerns also vary and depend upon the nature of the project, the siting and the materials used.

The processes of construction often involve the use of heavy machinery and equipment, with attendant large-scale disturbance of the land. Construction wastes also include several materials (e.g. asbestos) of public health significance.

Environmental concerns should, therefore, focus on the anticipated impacts of the following major aspects:

- the sustainable procurement of the construction materials;
- the adoption of processes/stages of construction that are environment friendly; and
- the effect of the completed structure(s) and the contained utility on the environment;

The strategies for ensuring sustainable development in the Construction Subsector of the economy include:

- a. the mandatory implementation of a detailed Environmental Impact Assessment of major construction projects;
- b. ensuring that remedial measures to mitigate the negative impacts of major construction projects on the environment are built into the project blue print before permission is given for work to commence;
- c. initiating post-construction environmental audits that ensure that the in-built mitigating measures satisfactorily address the anticipated environmental concerns;
- d. the introduction, in collaboration with the Standard Organisation of Nigeria and the Nigeria Society of Engineers, of stringent quality standards for various construction materials in order to guarantee the structural stability and durability of the construction works;
- e. enactment of environmental by-laws aimed at minimizing the negative impacts on the environment of the processes of material procurement, transport and utilization in construction industry especially with regard to:
 - noise abatement,
 - reduction of vibrations,
 - reduction of dust pollution,
 - careful handling and disposal of spent oils, fuels etc.,
 - minimization of noxious gas emissions (CO, SO, NO_x, O₂, etc.),
 - provocation of erosion, flooding, landslides, etc., and habitat destruction, and
 - conservation of local ecological resources;
- f. ensuring the safety of workers in the construction industry either on land or water by the provision and insistence on the use of appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE), and other safety gadgets (helmets, goggles, gloves);
- g. ensuring the good health of construction workers through periodic monitoring of the state of their health and the provision of on-site emergency and first aid services;
- h. establishment of contingency plans for rescue operations in case of accidents;
- i. ensuring that construction design and implementation are carried out in such a way as to minimize undesirable micro-climatic, geological/ geomorphological and other man-induced impacts such as fires, landslides, earth flows, gulying, debris avalanches, accelerated erosion, flood etc.;
- j. ensuring that quality control assurance mechanisms are integrated into the construction process such that work is stopped as soon as workers' safety is no longer guaranteed;
- k. prescribing a minimum quality level of aesthetics around construction sites and built-up areas that ensures good drainage, landscaping, sound insulation, ventilation, easy accessibility for purposes of fire fighting, rescue operations, waste collection and emergency evacuation, etc.;
- k. prescribing quality standards for the construction industry to ensure that construction does not radically and negatively alter the existing landuses, for example, through undue encroachment on valuable agricultural lands and does not detract from the beauty of the natural built-up environment;

4.16 Health

As there is no sustainable development without health, FEPA will work closely with the health sector to ensure the environmental and health improvement of the peoples of Nigeria.

The strategies to be pursued will include:

- a. cooperation with the health sector to improve environmental health within the framework and as a component of primary health care;
- b. placing a high priority on improving environmental services in support of public health programmes;
- c. improvement of environmental health services and conditions relating to water supply, sewage, solid wastes, pollution control and green areas housing;

- d. improving the health and quality of life of people in urban and rural areas by focusing on developments and the creation of physical, social, institutions and economic conditions that support health and well being;
- e. enabling rural populations and their leadership to maintain a sustained dialogue concerning health and environmental issues;
- f. strengthening local capacity of village, township, district and other local level authorities and institutions to promote health and environmental services for their populations;
- g. encouraging and promoting the use of appropriate technology and local expertise to raise community awareness of and standards of health and hygiene education;
- h. developing network and information exchange on health and environmental issues;
- i. creating closer ties and contacts between activities and programmes relating to environmental health, primary health care, nutrition, health of women and children and environmental hazards;
- j. supporting and maintaining priority programmes targeted at health and environment problem solving;
- k. provision of support for the preparation of legislation to regulate production and disposal of toxic waste and for organisation and mechanisms that work to implement such legislation;
- l. compiling and disseminating information on health and environmental risks from various sources;
- m. supporting education and public awareness programmes in sanitation issues;
- n. supporting community participation in the preparation and implementation of health and environmental activities and projects;
- o. ensuring that environmental impact assessments of development projects also contain the assessment of health impacts.

4.17 Education

Education is a dynamic instrument of change. As the relationship of man and nature is necessarily complementary, appreciation and protection of the environment should be fostered at all levels of both formal and non-formal education. Basic education provides the foundation for developing sound and sustainable means of resources exploitation. Non-formal education promotes mass public awareness towards changing and strengthening attitudes, values and actions that are congruous with sustainable development. It is also an effective means of encouraging popular participation in decision making. It is necessary to develop and support the education sector to ensure its responsiveness to changes and demands of all the other sectors. This will lead to inculcation of environmental ethics in the people and mobilising them, individually and collectively, to accept the responsibilities of protecting the environment and ensuring rational utilisation of the available natural resources.

To this end, Government shall:

- a. promote comprehensive curriculum reviews that integrate environment and development concepts in the educational curricula at all levels;
- b. support the development of courses and programmes leading to the award of degrees and diplomas in environmental sciences, environmental management and technology;
- c. encourage gender balance education at all levels including continuing education opportunities and literacy programmes;
- d. encourage practical training programmes for graduates of tertiary institutions to prepare them for labour market requirements and creation of sustainable livelihoods;
- e. strengthen vocational training that facilitates the development and assimilation of environmentally sound, socially acceptable appropriate technology and know how;
- f. establish and support centres of excellence in interdisciplinary research and education in the areas of environment and sustainable development;
- g. emphasize training and retraining of teachers, administrators and educational planners in environmental education and development issues;
- h. assist schools to design and sustain environment related activities including establishment of environmental awareness clubs and associations;
- i. support educational institutions to develop and provide appropriate training programmes on environment and development issues to decision makers, business class, journalists, community leaders; etc.;
- j. promote research on and development of indigenous knowledge to facilitate sustainable adaptation of relevant technologies;
- k. adopt community based approaches to public education and enlightenment through culturally relevant social groups, voluntary associations and occupational organisations;
- l. collaborate with media, entertainment and advertising agencies in enhancing environmental awareness;
- m. encourage the United Nations and other donor agencies to emphasize capacity building in all development programmes through adoption of the multi-disciplinary approach to skill transfer;

- n. encourage research linkages and staff/student exchanges between Nigerian educational institutions and institutions abroad in the areas of environmental studies and sustainable development;
- o. encourage public relations activities which tend to provide a forum and context for the debate on sustainable development and the articulation of the collective vision of the future;
- p. promote public awareness activities through traditional and mass media and NGO participation structures to keep them informed about all aspects of the policy;
- q. support public participation activities covering formal and informal education and training to help carry out needed changes or strengthen values knowledge technologies and institutions with respect to priority issues and also to support active concern for the quality of the environment;
- r. support Environmental Information Systems at a number of levels: national, regional and global.

4.18 Transport and Communication Systems

Transport and communication systems are the key to the movement of goods, people, information and ideas as well as access to markets, employment, schools and other facilities and landuse both within and between cities and in rural and other remote areas. The transportation sector is a major consumer of non-renewable energy and land and is a major contributor to pollution, congestion and accidents. Integration of the transport, communication systems and land-use policies and planning can minimize the negative impacts of current transport systems on the environment while yielding accessible, affordable, safe and efficient public transport modes.

Strategies for achieving this objective include:

- a. supporting an integrated transport policy that explores the full array of technical and management options and pays due attention to the needs of all population groups (e.g. the disabled, poor and the aged);
- b. coordinating land-use, communication systems and transport planning in order to encourage spatial settlement patterns that facilitate access to such basic necessities as workplace, school, health care, places of worship, goods and services and leisure thereby reducing the need to travel;
- c. encouraging the use of an optimal combination of modes of transport, including walking, cycling and public means of transportation, through appropriate pricing, spatial settlement policies and regulatory measures;
- d. introducing disincentives that discourage the increasing growth of private motorized traffic and thus reduce congestion;
- e. providing and or promoting an effective, affordable, physically accessible and environmentally sound public transport and communication system, giving priority to collective means of transport with adequate carrying capacity and frequency that support basic needs and the main traffic flows;
- f. promoting, regulating and enforcing quiet, use-efficient and low-polluting technologies, including fuel-efficient engine and emissions controls and fuels with a low level of polluting emissions;
- g. encouraging and promoting public access to electronic information services;
- h. bringing the private sector into the process of managing environmental pollution in the transport sector as one aspect of partnership in progress;
- i. establishing and enforcing emission standards;
- j. requiring new transport and communication projects to undergo environmental impact assessment;
- k. developing, where appropriate, criteria for maximum permitted and safe levels of noise exposure and promoting noise assessment control as part of environmental health programmes.

4.19 Trade

Reconciling the operation of a liberal trade regime with policies to conserve and protect environmental resources has emerged as a high priority issue on the international agenda. The overall objective is to seek ways in which the benefits of a liberal trade system can be reconciled with greater environmental protection. Nigeria, like many less-developed countries, is still heavily engaged in natural resources production and trade, and hence has a direct interest in natural resource-related trade questions. The main thrust of Nigeria's external trade policy objective is to achieve economic development through the attainment of healthy balance of payments, market expansion, net inflow of foreign exchange and the protection of infant industries. To attain these goals in the face of new and tougher environmental criteria confronting it in international markets, Nigeria will have to continually adapt to the environmental requirements of its major markets to remain competitive.

The attainment of the policy objectives of Nigeria's external trade would therefore require the adoption of the following strategies:

- a. encouraging the use of recyclable, re-usable and returnable materials in packaging;
- b. establishing the machinery for "eco-label" awards for products meeting prescribed environmental standards;

- c. providing relevant environmental information and advice to importers and exporters with respect to the requirement of the International Organization of Standardization (IOS);
- d. organizing in-house awareness seminars involving all the stakeholders on the effects of environmental standards abroad on Nigerian imports and exports;
- e. requiring industries to use chemicals with minimal toxic or polluting components in their production processes (e.g. tanneries to use butane instead of PCP);
- f. ensuring that all new export projects conform with EIA procedures;
- g. requiring agro-chemical industries to adhere to environmental standards with respect to storage, handling, packaging and disposal of its products;
- h. encouraging (in special circumstances) the acquisition of foreign certification from importers to ensure acceptable standards, e.g. the United States certification of foreign slaughterhouses to ensure the quality of imported meats;
- i. imputing the costs of negative environmental externalities in the prices of goods;
- j. advising judicious use of trade measures as a way of uplifting environmental standards;
- k. supporting the harmonization of product standards, including environmental product standards among ECOWAS member countries not only for the purpose of increasing trade among themselves but also with the rest of the world;
- l. ensuring that environment and trade policies are mutually supportive with a view to achieving sustainable development;
- m. encouraging exporters to adopt new practices that generate less pollution in line with international environmental standards;
- n. providing assistance to exporters on environmentally friendly product development and financing.

4.20 Tourism

Great potentials exist in Nigeria for the development of eco-tourism, hence it has become an integral part of the official development policy. Specifically, the policy objective in this sector is to generate foreign exchange, encourage balanced development, promote tourism-based rural enterprises, create employment and accelerate rural-urban integration and cultural exchange.

To achieve this objective, strategies will be put in place to:

- a. reconstruct, rehabilitate and modernize the country's infrastructural facilities, especially road, bridges, air transport, water, electricity supply and communication systems with due concern for the environment;
- b. guarantee security of life and property;
- c. strengthen the capacity of the Nigerian Tourism Development Corporation (NTDC) to effectively manage and develop eco-tourism;
- d. identify, designate and develop environmentally friendly centres of attraction for tourism development;
- e. establish effective organs for the planning, development, promotion and marketing of tourism within and outside Nigeria, including well-defined roles for the three tiers of government;
- f. ensure that the nation as a whole and the local populations on the fringe areas in particular truly benefit from eco-tourism development projects;
- g. regulate large scale and consumption-oriented types of tourism with the objective of limiting the flow of tourists to environmentally sensitive areas;
- h. establish norms for the use of restricted natural areas for eco-tourism;
- i. evaluate the environmental effects and cultural impacts of major tourism development projects on local populations.

4.21 Science and Technology

In Implementing this policy, it is important that everybody from policy makers to the general public understands the roles that science and technology have to play in achieving environmental protection and human development. There is need, therefore, to work closely with the Science and Technology Policy implementation programmes through the adoption of the following strategies:

- a. identify how scientific and technological programmes could impact development to become really sustainable;
- b. provide and support full and open sharing of information among scientists and decision makers;
- c. support national advisory groups to help society develop common values on environmental and development ethics;
- d. support environmental technology research programmes including ways to enhance the soundness of new technologies;
- e. develop scientific quality of life indicators covering health, education, social welfare and the state of the environment and economy;

- f. supporting research to improve the understanding of the links between the state of ecosystems and human health and the benefits and costs of different development policies;
- g. support scientific studies to map out national and regional pathways to sustainable development as well as the attitudes and behaviours that lead to environmental impacts and how environmental degradation affects global and local economies.

5.0 SPECIFIC ISSUES

5.1 Disasters

Nigeria has had a number of emergency situations arising from disasters - natural and man-made. The natural phenomena include tropical storms, land erosion, windstorms, floods, drought, desertification, human diseases, coastal erosion, livestock diseases, crop pests and diseases, wildfire, harmattan haze and landslides. Other potential hazards include earthquakes and volcanoes. The major man-made hazards include civil strife; road, water and air traffic accidents; and technological episodes such as oil spills, hazardous wastes dumping and industrial accidents.

All of above call for urgent action for the strengthening of our emergency preparedness to reduce our peoples' vulnerability and cushion the impact of disasters on our settlements, economy and environment. The following strategies are required to mitigate the negative impacts of natural and man-made disasters on the lives of the people.

A) Prepare comprehensive hazard maps and vulnerability analysis for the country by;

- a. compiling historical data of disaster occurrence.
- b. analysis of meteorological, seismological, agricultural and environmental records.
- c. employing satellite imagery and the GIS system to plot the hazard maps.

B) Establish very effective early warning systems for meteorological, geophysical, biological, social and industrial hazards by;

- a. enhancing the meteorological services.
- b. effective monitoring of pests and disease epidemics.
- c. resuscitation of seismographic stations and the existing seismological centres.
- d. development of reliable biological indicators.
- e. building of a viable network for early warning information dissemination.

C) Develop and maintain prompt emergency response mechanisms and contingency plans by:

- a. making an inventory of all existing resources for emergency response for easy marshalling at times of disasters.
- b. establishing a body to coordinate emergency response to reduce duplication of efforts and enhance accountability.
- c. formulating a national emergency policy and an emergency plan.

D) Mount a sustained public awareness and education programme on hazard preparedness by:

- a. engaging military and para military forces as well as voluntary organisations in drills on emergency response including search and rescue.
- b. preparing curriculum and integrating emergency preparedness into school.

5.2 Drought and desertification

Drought and desertification are the most important environmental problems affecting the northern states. Government, and at some instances in collaboration with donor countries, international organizations and institutions, has done a lot to combat desertification, and mitigate the effects of drought since early 1970s. Efforts have been made through more efficient utilization and alternative sources of fuel wood, promulgation of State Edicts, afforestation and reforestation programmes. Despite all these efforts, desertification has continued its down-south movement which currently renders the areas north of Latitude 15° either desertified or prone to desertification. This process coupled with the effects of drought have continued to cripple the socio-economic lives of the people living in the affected areas. The negative impacts on the lives of the people call for urgent actions to check the desert encroachment, rehabilitate affected areas and institutionalise drought ameliorating measures. The strategies needed to achieve this include:

- a) develop a National Action Programme to Combat Desertification and Mitigate the effects of drought towards the implementation of the Convention to Combat Desertification (CCD) in Nigeria.
- b) Integrating public awareness and education on causes and dangers associated with drought and desertification, as well as the constraints of the CCD.
- c) strengthening of national and state institutions involved in drought and desertification control programmes;

- d) promoting of sustainable agricultural practices and management of water resources;
- e) encouraging of viable afforestation and reforestation programmes using tested drought resistant and/or economic tree species;
- f) encouraging the development and adoption of efficient wood stoves and alternative sources of fuel wood;
- g) establishing drought early warning systems;
- h) involvement of the local people in the designing, implementation and management of natural resources conservation programmes inimical to combating desertification and ameliorating the effects of drought;
- i) intensifying international cooperation and partnership arrangements in the areas of training, research, development and transfer of affordable and acceptable environmentally sound technology and provision of new and additional technical and financial resources;
- (l) inventorizing degraded lands, and implement preventive measures for lands that are not yet degraded or which are slightly degraded.
- (m) adopting an integrated approach to address physical, biological and socio-economic aspects of desertification and drought.
- (n) intensifying co-operation with relevant Inter-and Non-governmental Organizations in combating desertification and mitigating the effects of drought;
- (o) strengthening of the nation's food security system;
- (p) establishing, reviewing and enforcing cattle routes and grazing reserves.

5.3 Flood and Erosion

Flooding in one form or other affects at least 20% of the nation's population. It cuts across the society from the urban residents to the rural dwellers. Flooding is a threat to physical infrastructures, including residential accommodation, commercial, and industrial properties, roads, rail lines, bridges, port installations etc. It also destroys farmlands, including standing crops. Losses due to flooding run into many billions of naira per year.

On the other hand, 85 of the total land area of Nigeria is under severe sheet, rill and gully erosion with over 2000 active gully erosion sites spread and around the country. Erosion leads to impoverishment of the soil as nutrients are washed away, loss of livelihood as farmlands become wasteland thus increasing the menace of rural urban migration and pollution and siltation of available sources of drinking water. Human lives and properties especially buildings are endangered as they collapse into gullies.

Coastal erosion is widespread along the nation's 800km long coastline with estimated mean shoreline retreats of 2 - 30 metres per year. The worst affected areas include Victoria Beach in Lagos, Awoye/Molome in Ondo State, Ogborodo/Escravos and Forcados in Delta State, Brass in Bayelsa State and Ibeno - Eket in Akwa Ibom State.

To achieve effective management of urban, river and coastal flooding and stabilize all gully and coastal erosion sites and enforce management practices aimed at preventing/minimising the incidence of erosion, the following strategies are required:

For flooding:-

- a) Enforce compliance with planning/urban laws/edicts.
- b) Build embankments and levies along rivers and coastline prone to flood.
- c) Establish rainstorm early warning system
- d) Establish and monitor weather stations, river and tidal gauges
- e) Ensure appropriate management of dams
- f) Ensure proper maintenance of existing urban drainage channels
- g) Enforce environmental sanitation laws in towns and cities.

For Soil and Coastal Erosion it will be necessary to:

prepare and implement a comprehensive national policy on soil and coastal erosion and flood control.

b. Formulate and enforce regulations for soil and water conservation especially in erosion-prone areas.

c. Carry out national watershed delineation and characterization for use as a basis for development of an aggressive management and enforcement programme to protect and maintain the quality of the nation's lands water and coastal resources and implement the programme.

d. Prepare periodic masterplan on the management of soil and coastline erosion and flood, and advise the Federal Government on the financial requirements for the implementation of such plans.

e. Carry out feasibility and scientific studies on soil erosion and related flood problems for the design of appropriate integrated remedial control measures.

f. Carry out public enlightenment campaigns on environmental degradation arising from poor land and water management practices.

- g. Provide and promote training on environmental issues as they relate to flood, erosion, land degradation and water conservation.
- h. Promote integrated ecosystem management with other agencies connected with agriculture, land use, soil and water conservation, rural development and coastal resources management including environmentally sound recreational use.
- i. Strengthen national capacity through personnel development, provision of training facilities and research on combating climate-related ecological problems.
- j. Strengthen capacity of the Environmental Management Support System (EMSS) for Remote Sensing data gathering, GIS facilities and development of disaster/environmental data bank.
- k. Support agro-forestry and integrated Coastal Zone Management.
- l. Encourage planted fallow in abandoned farmland using soil enriching species.
- m. Promote conservation farming and use of organic fertilizer and soil conditioners.
- n. Establish viable contingency plans for tackling socio-economic and other problems resulting from coastal and other erosional disasters.

6.0 CROSS-SECTORAL ISSUES

6.1 Sanitation and Waste Management

Environmentally sound management of wastes requires an understanding of the range of treatment, disposal and re-use options available for sanitary and industrial effluents, raw domestic wastes and storm water. In order to ensure that improper handling and disposal of wastes do not lead to the spread of disease and the pollution of land, air and water, priority shall be given to the environmental studies of industrial effluents as well as the variety of solid and liquid wastes generated in the various ecological zones of Nigeria. Appropriate guidelines shall be introduced for their collection and safe disposal.

These will be done through:

- a. study of the most reliable treatment systems that are appropriate for domestic and industrial wastes;
- b. engineering design and specification of appropriate waste disposal and treatment systems that take into consideration the geological and environmental setting, encourage recycling and guarantee the safety of surface and underground water systems;
- c. setting up and enforcement of standards for sanitary facilities for the disposal of human and other solid wastes in dwellings, housing estates and public facilities in both urban and rural areas;
- d. establishment of monitoring programmes and stations for the control of the dispersal of leachates from dumpsites into surface and groundwater systems;
- e. establishment of an early warning system for the identification of potential waste disposal hazards;
- f. provision of information on the appropriate methods and technologies for the treatment and disposal of wastes;
- g. regulation, registration and licensing of all major land-based waste disposal sites and systems;
- h. establishment of a mechanism for the identification and clean up of abandoned land-based waste dumps;
- i. introduction of effective protective measures against the indiscriminate discharge of particulate matter and untreated industrial effluents into lakes, rivers, estuaries, lagoons and coastal waters, taking into account the following additional factors:
 - the establishment of baseline studies to ascertain water quality at various points along the river or other water bodies;
 - the physical, chemical and biological characteristics of treated effluents;
 - the location and type of existing and projected uses of river water which will determine the acceptable/optimal location of waste water treatment works and the level of treatment necessary, given the assimilative capacity of the rivers;
 - the establishment of relevant standards based on river/water quality objectives;
 - public health criteria; and
 - the need for a comprehensive monitoring programme incorporating an early warning system for the down-stream users.

6.2 Toxic, Hazardous and Radioactive Waste Management

As part of the Environmental Policy, necessary administrative rules and legislation will be operated to govern the monitoring, introduction, manufacture, import, sales, transportation, use and disposal of toxic, hazardous and radioactive substances in Nigeria.

The appropriate governmental agencies shall therefore:

- a. maintain an up-to-date register of toxic, hazardous and radioactive substances;

- b. control the generation of toxic, hazardous and radioactive wastes and ensure that those banned shall be stringently controlled;
- c. monitor the effects of and control all phases of the life-cycle of all substances likely to have an adverse impact on human health and environment;
- d. determine and use environmentally safe and technologically sound techniques for the disposal of toxic, hazardous and radioactive wastes;
- e. set up regional framework and standards for "DUMP WATCH" against transboundary movement of toxic, hazardous and radioactive wastes and for the achievement of the environmentally sound management of hazardous substances;

6.3 Air Pollution

The atmosphere is very vital for the survival of man and other living animals. It provides air for respiration and photosynthetic processes. It also provides the safe environment surrounding man and other living organisms by shielding them from dangerous particles and rays. It is also the habitat for varied flying organisms and the medium for air navigation.

Strategies for achieving a clean air situation include:

- a. designating and mapping of National Air Control Zones and declaring air quality objectives for each designated Air Control Zone;
- b. establishing ambient air quality standards and monitoring stations at each designated zone;
- c. licensing and registering of all major industrial air polluters and monitoring their compliance with laid down standards;
- d. provision of guidelines for the abatement of air pollution;
- e. establishing standards for the control of fuel additives with respect to trace elements especially Pb, S, Va, Ni, Cr and Zn.
- f. prescribing stringent standards for the level of emission from automobile exhausts and energy generating plants and stations;
- g. monitoring and minimising the incidence of "acid rains";
- h. promoting regional cooperation aimed at minimising the atmospheric transportation of pollutants across international boundaries.

6.4 Noise Pollution

The reduction of noise levels and the control of noise pollution are requisites for the creation and maintenance of a comfortable and healthy living environment. In furtherance of these objectives, programmes will be established to:

- a. set up noise standards including acoustic guarantees;
- b. prescribe guidelines for the control of neighbourhood noise especially with respect to construction sites, markets, meeting places and places of worship;
- c. prescribe permissible noise levels in noise-prone industries and construction sites and ensure the installation of noise dampers on noisy equipment;
- d. set up quiet zones especially within game parks, reserves and recreational centres;
- e. provide guidelines for the control of aircraft noise by prescribing acceptable or permissible noise levels within the vicinity of airports;
- f. ensure compliance with stipulated standards by conducting periodic audit checks;

6.5 Working Environment (Occupational Health and Safety)

A considerable portion of a worker's life is spent within his work environment. It is therefore essential to ensure that environmental factors in the workplace conform to generally accepted standards to ensure optimal productivity as well as the protection of the health and safety of the worker.

In this connection action will be taken to:

- a. establish appropriate regulations and standards to guarantee the protection of workers against hazards that threaten their health and safety within the working environment;
- b. monitor and update levels of various pollutants permissible within the working environment consistent with nationally set standards for human health and well being;
- c. institute training and enlightenment programmes for the management, union leaders as well as workers on the dangers posed by industrial operations including excessive exposure to industrial emissions and other health hazards;
- d. establish minimum standards for recreational facilities and aesthetics within and around offices and factories for the enhancement of the comfort and productivity of workers;
- e. specify and ensure the provision of contingency plans for emergencies within the work environment and establish an effective system for the reporting and monitoring of industrial accidents;

- f. specify safety and health codes and guidelines based on the hazard levels of various industry types.

6.6 Public participation

In order to secure the involvement of the citizenry and assure its commitment to the principle of sustainable development, action will be undertaken to enlighten various levels of society on the essential linkages between environment and development. Action shall be taken to:

- a. ensure public input in the definition of environmental policy objectives;
- b. engage mass and folk media at all levels in the task of public enlightenment;
- c. review curricula at all levels of the educational system to promote the formal study of environmental concepts and sciences;
- d. boost environmental awareness and education through the involvement of indigenous social structures, voluntary associations and occupational organizations;
- e. secure public confidence in the administration of the environment, by demonstrating the resolve of government to enforce the environmental stewardship of government agencies and organs, corporate citizens and elite organizations;
- f. grant the citizenry access to environmental information and data thereby promoting the quality of environmental management and compliance monitoring;
- g. support the role of cognate NGOs, professional associations and other civic groups in activities designed to propagate environmental protection information, techniques and concepts.

7.0 Institutional and Intergovernmental Arrangements

A viable national mechanism for environmental management requires co-operation, co-ordination and regular consultation, as well as the harmonious management of the policy formulation and implementation process through the establishment of effective institutions and linkages within and among the various tiers and levels of government - Federal, State and Local. For this purpose, Government will:

- a. strengthen and adequately fund the activities of the Federal Environmental Protection Agency (FEPA);
- b. strengthen the consultative and advisory roles of the National Council on the Environment and the State Environmental Protection Agencies (SEPA) particularly those relating to:
 - advising the President/Governors on environmental issues;
 - recommending and updating National/State policies to improve the environment;
 - encouraging the use of ecological information in the planning and development of resource-oriented projects at all levels;
 - emphasising their complementary role in ensuring the achievement of the overall objectives of the National Policy on the Environment.
- c. promote and strengthen research and development programmes in environmental technology;
- d. enhance co-operation among all tiers of government on environmental protection, planning, monitoring and enforcement;
- f. clarify and reinforce the role of Local and State government administrations in the management of wastes and other forms of pollution;
- g. ensure prompt payment of financial contributions and meet contributions to relevant international organizations such as the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP);
- h. provide systematic and periodic briefing for public officials at all levels of government on environmental issues and legislation;
- i. ensure multi-disciplinary and intersectoral collaboration in environmental management, through institutions such as the National Resources Conservation Council and various other technical advisory committees;

8.0 LEGAL ARRANGEMENTS

The legal framework, as a component of the national environmental policy should directly and continuously drive policy in a way that recognises the organic nature of the environment and therefore the need to manage it in an effective and efficient manner.

To ensure this role, action shall be taken from time to time to:

- a. periodically evaluate current legislation with a view to updating existing provisions;
- b. streamline all legislation and regulations relating to the environment with a view to re-organising them into a holistic and integrated compact that recognises the cross-sectoral linkages of the environment;
- c. prescribe jurisdictional boundaries for law making among the various tiers of government;

d. state the principles governing the enforcement of environmental regulations as guideposts for judicial and quasi-judicial bodies charged with the responsibility of obtaining compliance with environmental law.

9.0 INTERNATIONAL TREATIES AND OBLIGATIONS

Legislative action will be taken to incorporate Conventions and Treaties to which Nigeria is a party into the laws of Nigeria. Nigeria will continue to participate in the development of international laws and guidelines on environmental protection, and will ensure the implementation of such laws and guidelines within and outside its territory.

10.0 FINANCING ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION

Huge financial investments are needed to implement the various programmes and activities for Environmental Protection and Natural Resources Conservation. With the increasing pressure on the environment and natural resources, the cost of in-action would rise exponentially and manifest in the expansion of desertified areas, loss of our agricultural and natural resources, declining agricultural productivity, impaired health of the citizenry, polluted surface and underground waters, expansion of coastlines into prime property and agricultural areas etc.

The financial requirements for environmental protection and natural resources conservation, calls for the need to streamline the current funding mechanism to make them more efficient and responsive. There is also the need to improve current funding levels and to provide new and additional financial resources that are both adequate and predictable to halt and reverse the current menace of environment and natural resources degradation.

Strategies/Activities

- a) ensure adequate annual budgetary provision for implementation of the National Policy on Environment; and in particular, the amelioration of key environmental problems;
- b) Access the 2% Ecological Fund (set aside from the Federation Account for the amelioration of ecological problems) for environmental protection, natural resources conservation and for evaluation and monitoring of projects.
- c) Set aside 25% of the 3% Federation Account to OMPADEC (Oil Mineral Producing Areas Development Commission) for environmental protection, restoration, remediation and rehabilitation of natural resources; d) Establish a Fund, to be funded by at least 3% of the Federation Account, for the restoration, rehabilitation and development of the degraded mine lands in all Solid Minerals Producing areas.
- e) Take full advantage of bilateral and multilateral technical and financial assistance in environmental protection and ensure maximum benefits from the financial mechanisms for the implementation of the Conventions and Protocols ratified by Nigeria;
- f) Establish an Environment Endowment Fund with contributions from governments, individuals and corporate bodies as a sign of their commitments to the environmental protection efforts. This fund shall be revolving and be managed by FEPA for emergency environmental clean-up of oil spills, industrial pollution accidents and restoration of abandoned mining sites and desertified areas.
- g) Mobilize additional finance through the imposition of taxes, fines and charges, where appropriate, on activities that deplete natural resources or degrade the environment.

The task of an economy is to produce the combination of goods and services that will promote the welfare of the members of the community within the limits of the resources and production techniques available. Sustainable development ensures that this production of goods and services does not destroy the environment irreparably; hence sustainable development is defined as "a process in which the exploitation of resources, the direction of investments, the orientation of technological development and institutional change are all in harmony, and enhance both current and future potential to meet human needs and aspirations." Since the national development policy objective is to achieve rapid economic growth and improvement in individual welfare on a sustainable basis, a range of enabling policy instruments are required to propel the development process in the desired direction.

Among other things, action shall be taken to:

- a. grant pioneer industry status to only environmentally sound new projects;
- b. introduce performance bonds for hazardous waste;
- c. grant "soft" loans to firms, complying with environmental guidelines and standards;
- d. promote market-based extraction charges as well as emissions and effluent charges;
- e. encourage the use of ecological information in planning and development of resource-oriented projects;

- f. promote and strengthen research and development programmes in environmental technology;
- g. encourage and institute incentive measures for installation and provision of anti-pollution equipment and devices;
- h. allow costs of negative environmental externalities to be internalized in supply prices;
- i. incorporate environmental values in growth-promoting economic activities;
- j. encourage active participation, prompt payment of financial contributions and make contributions to relevant international organizations charged with protecting the environment;
- k. ensure the active involvement of all the citizens in pollution and waste management, especially in the urban areas;
- l. encourage economic policies conducive to sustainable development.
- m. prescribe and enforce regulatory measures aimed at preserving the environment;
- n. insist on multi-disciplinary and intersectoral collaboration in environmental management;
- o. adopt the principle of incorporating environmental concerns from the start in any project planning.

11.0 THE USE OF ECONOMIC INSTRUMENTS AND INCENTIVES IN THE MANAGEMENT OF ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES.

Sectoral Policies, environmental laws and regulations are important, but cannot, alone, be expected to deal with the problems of environment and development. Prices, markets and governmental economic policies also play a complementary role in shaping attitudes and behaviour towards the environment. Sustainable development requires that the exploitation of resources, the production of goods and services, the direction of investments, the orientation of technological development and institutional change are all in harmony and enhance both current and future potentials to meet human needs and aspirations. Since our national development policy objective is to achieve rapid economic growth and improvement in individual welfare on a sustainable basis, a range of enabling policies, economic instruments and incentives are required to propel the development process in the desired direction

Strategies/Activities

Among other things, action shall be taken to:

- a) incorporate environmental costs in the decisions of producers and consumers so as to reverse the tendency to treat the environment as a "free good" and to stop passing these costs on to other parts of society or to future generations;
- b) integrate social, environmental and other costs of negative environmental externalities into economic activities so that prices will appropriately reflect the true and total value of resources and contribute towards the prevention of environmental degradation;
- c) include, wherever appropriate, the use of market principles in the framing of economic instruments and policies to pursue sustainable development, and in particular, to consider gradually building on experience with economic instruments and market mechanisms by undertaking to reorient policies, keeping in mind national plans, priorities and objectives.
- d) institutionalize "Polluter Pays Principle" so that the polluter bears the cost of environmental degradation or pollution; thus providing the positive incentives to limit degradation or pollution of the environment.
- e) develop and implement a mechanism for charging emission fees and fines for all pollutants and effluents (based on quantity, quality and detrimental effects) thereby internalizing all costs and other negative externalities into the production process and output prices.
- f) impose penalty taxes, fines, and charges for non-compliance to environmental standards and regulations so that violations to such regulation become costly to the violators
- g) encourage participation of all stakeholders in the management, harvesting and the utilization of revenue from the use of natural resources.
- h) adopt an appropriate pricing of natural resources and production inputs to encourage on optimal allocation, production and consumption of these resources.
- i) Promote tax reliefs that encourage investment in pollution abatements through:
 - * grant of accelerated depreciation allowance on pollution abatement equipment.
 - * the removal of import duty on abatement equipment
 - * the grant of tax holidays and pioneer status to environmentally sound new projects.
 - * the use of other tax credit schemes.
- j) promote market based extraction charges and appropriate taxes on the extraction of resources to discourage their destructive exploitation and inefficient use.
- k) require the submission of performance bonds to insure that industries comply with post resources extraction regulations and employee accident insurance schemes.
- l) allow, where appropriate, the direct transfers of financial assistance (subsidies)

- * to compensate specific groups which may be caused additional costs or hardship in complying with standards,
- * to encourage groups to improve their environment.
- * where conservation initiatives affect their immediate income
- m) develop a compensation framework for environmental damage which ensure that:
 - the polluted environment is adequately compensated by way of remediation and restoration.
 - persons affected are equitably compensated, and
 - the offender or saboteur is made liable.
- n. employ appropriate insurance schemes and other risks management processes in remediation and restoration of polluted or degraded areas.
- o) encourage active participation and prompt payment of financial contributions to relevant international organisations charged with protecting the environment;

12.0. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

12.1 Monitoring

In keeping with the objectives of the National Policy on the Environment, there shall be established:

- a. a National Environmental Data Collection and Information System co-ordinated by the Federal Environmental Protection Agency (FEPA) which functions as a network involving as partners all relevant agencies at the Federal, State and Local government levels as well as NGOs, Universities and Research institutes;
- b. a national environmental monitoring and information management network;
- c. the collection, analysis and distribution of data of relevance to environmental impact assessments, policy analysis and environmental monitoring within the country as well as the preparation of periodic and national reports on the state of the environment.

Government responsibilities in this regard would include:

- a. the monitoring and enforcement of environmental quality standards and regulations;
- b. the regular assessment of environmental conditions and trends in rural areas and identification of programmes and actions needed to reduce or avoid further environmental degradation and pollution;
- c. the application of the national environmental assessment guidelines and procedures for all development policies and projects likely to have adverse environmental impacts within state and local governments;
- d. the development of Contingency Plans and capabilities to respond quickly and effectively to environmental emergencies;
- e. the collection, analysis and distribution of data of relevance to environmental impact assessments, policy analysis and environmental monitoring within the State and Local governments;
- f. the preparation of periodic public reports on the state of the environment in their area.

12.2 Analysis and Evaluation

Analysis and evaluation should be seen as problem solving opportunities not only for departments but also for task managers and project staff at all levels. To facilitate this, major programmes and policies affecting the environment would be carefully monitored and readily evaluated. Environmental standards and attainment targets will be set. Indicators for monitoring assessment of progress nationally, regionally and sectorally will also be worked out.

**NATIONAL POLICY ON THE ENVIRONMENT
FEDERAL ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY (FEPA)
THE PRESIDENCY INDEPENDENCE WAY SOUTH
CENTRAL AREA GARKI – ABUJA
1998**

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1998**

**DRAFT REVISED NATIONAL POLICY ON THE ENVIRONMENT
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PROGRAMME FOR NIGERIA (NIR/C3)
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APPENDIX E**AUTHOR' S PUBLICATION FROM THESIS**

1. Uzoji, E.E. "Echoes of Nature: Reappraising the Eco-relevance of Nigerian Popular Music in Sustainable Development" in Opafola S. O. et al. *Journal of Arts and Contemporary Society*. Vol. 4, Minna: Cenresin Publications, December 2012. Pp. 37-46 Online Version - [http://www.cenresinpub.org/pub/Dec2012/JACS/Page 36-42 059 .pdf](http://www.cenresinpub.org/pub/Dec2012/JACS/Page%2036-42%20059.pdf)
2. Uzoji, Emmanuel. "Eco-literacy and the Planetary Crisis: Nigerian Protest Drama and the Niger Delta Dynamics". *Covenant Journal of Language Studies (CJLS)*. (ed) Chiluwa, I. Ota: Covenant University, Vol. 2 No 2, December 2014, pp 127-145.
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3. Emmanuel Ebere Uzoji. "Eco-Radicalism: The Discourse of Ecology in Femi Osofisan's *Morountodun* and *No More the Wasted Breed*." *ANSU Journal of Theatre and Humanities*. Department of Theatre Arts, Anambra State University, Igbariam, Nigeria, Vol. 1. No 1. May 2015. pp 116 – 126.