

International Environmental Sustainability Laws with Focus on Environmental Sustainability in Nigeria

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Abstract:

Despite the fact that developed countries are yelling for environmental protection to be fully supported, the developing countries view it as a strategy to slow down their economic and social development. This is as a result of the complexity in intersecting the social, economic and environmental aspects of sustainable development. However, regardless of the controversies, the era of environmental latency is over. All over the globe, governments and various bodies have created a greater awareness as to the need for environmental protection with the concept of sustainable development gaining grounds worldwide. International policies which led to its adoption in regions and countries aims to tackle the undesirable effect of mans' activities on the environment. It seeks to strike a balance between the needs of the present and that of the future generations. The green strategy of implementing sustainable development in Nigeria has so far been beneficial to the country although it seems lip service is paid to this area. However the nation has witnessed more conducive environment for international relations and prospects for future advancements compared to the period of her independence. Thus, laws protecting the environment should be enacted where necessary and existing ones strengthened, and compliance ensured to achieve environmental sustainability.

Keywords: Environment, Sustainability, Laws

1.0 Introduction

Human activities and the demand for economic growth and development have affected the environment negatively thereby causing land, water and air pollution as well as sheer neglect and disregard for the protection of the immediate environment, much more the future environment (Ezeabasili, 2009). The following dimensions of the negative environmental impacts are identified by Faucheux et al, 1998:

- ❖ Threat to human life, health and continuing economic activities, ecosystem.
- ❖ Threat to the natural world.
- ❖ Threat to socially, aesthetically, and culturally significant environment.

Furthermore, Faucheux et al. (1998) stated that the dramatic increase in environmental damage has awakened social concerns on the significance of environmental issues. Thus, the need for the formulation of various policies to this effect in the past two decades. These impending

environmental problems led the World Conservation Strategy (WCS) of the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) in 1980, to introduce the concept of Sustainable Development into the international policy debate (Tisdell, 2005). Tisdell stated that the main aim of the WCS was to foster ‘*sustainable development through the conservation of living resources*’.

In 1987, the Brundtland Report, also known as ‘Our Common Future’, spoke about the criticality of progressing towards economic development which could be sustained without negative impact on the environment. This report defines sustainable development as the “development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs” (Djeflat, 2010)

The significance of sustainable development to man and his environment cannot be underestimated. This resulted to the adoption of Agenda 21, the Rio declaration on environment and development, and the statement of principles for the sustainable management of forests by more than 178 governments at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) in 1992.

This report aims at showing the influence of international co-operation on the implementation of sustainable development policies in Nigeria with focus on the environmental sustainability; its application, enforcement, and the effect it has on the country.

2.0 Literature Review

2.1 Sustainable Development

The Brundtland Commission’s definition of sustainable development has been supported by some scholars. Fodgen (2002) statement that *we can’t expend the earth’s limited potential today if we want human life to continue tomorrow*” supports brundtland’s definition although he added that the issue about sustainable development is more complex than perceived. He observed in his report that when delegates from both developed and developing countries, business leaders, scientists, environmentalists, economists and different non-governmental organizations met in Johannesburg in 2002 to find tangible measures to balance current and future needs, they had diverse and distinctive opinions on sustainable development which falls into one or more of the three pillars of sustainable development. He recognised the three pillars as economic development, social development, and environmental protection. Ajayi, (1995) opines that the principle of sustainable development requires that the environment be managed so as not to irreversibly damage the processions of nature or over tax them.

In addition, the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) pointed out the integration of economic development, social development and environment protection as a necessary tool needed to strike a balance on sustainable development (WSSD, 2002).

2.2 Environmental sustainability

This is defined as the ability of the environment to continue to function properly indefinitely (Ezeabasili, 2009, p.371). This involves meeting the present human needs without jeopardizing the wellbeing of future generations. The target of environmental sustainability is to stop the progress of environmental degradation. According to Masika and Joeke (1997, p.2),

environmental degradation in this regard takes three forms and these includes the depletion of resources, pollution or overuse of the waste-absorbing capacity of the environment and reduction in biodiversity - a loss of some types of resources. The long term result of this is that sustenance of human life becomes unattainable thereby causing an extinction of humanity on a global scale.

Sustaining environmental resources such as land, water and air is necessary in developed and developing countries where urban growth and industrialization is on the increase. This will bring about economic development. For example, protection of water resources in developing countries like Nigeria will produce tourism opportunities which will in turn create employment opportunities. To support these, Chapter 18 of Agenda 21 gives a high priority to the 'protection of water resources from depletion, pollution, and degradation'. The emphasis given to the protection and preservation of water resources reflects a growing recognition that freshwater is becoming scarcer and that ignoring pollution control threatens the sustainability of future resources.

2.3 Controversies over Sustainable Development

Although the definition of sustainable development in 'Our Common Future' is generally accepted, the concept has been the subject of controversy since its introduction. Hardaker, (1997) is of the opinion that the operational definition of sustainability is complex and Crabbe (1997) resentfully describes sustainable development as a political utopia developed by the UN primarily to lure Third world countries to subscribe to the environmental agenda of the north. Crabbe's opinion is supported by Ezeabasili, (2009), who suggests that the concept has been criticized on the basis that it sets limits on the developing world. Meanwhile, Beckerman (1992) argues that sustainability is a meaningless notion while Pretty (1994) describes it as a learning process, not a goal; He also added that sustainability stands for neither a fixed set of practices nor a model to impose on the world (cited in Hardaker, 1997).

In addition, Weir (1995) in his argument, recorded that the 1992 Rio summit gave the world a perception that poverty as well as under-development are main causes of pollution and is one of the issues sustainable development should address. Furthermore, he stated that the developed countries sought after nations particularly the developing countries with enormous natural reserves to sustain their resources in order to avert the greenhouse effect. This elucidates that the development of developing countries will be deterred because in Weir's opinion, without development, electricity and waste treatment facilities in place, these developing nations will continue to pollute their own environs; thereby defeating the intent of sustainability. Hence, he believes that the poor cannot afford to cease developing. To support this, principle 11 of Agenda 21 states that:

"States shall enact effective environmental legislation. Environmental standards, management objectives and priorities should reflect the environmental and developmental context to which they apply. Standards applied by some countries may be inappropriate and of unwarranted economic and social cost to other countries, in particular developing countries".

Therefore, each country should be left with the right of choosing how they develop their communities because as regards developing countries for example, adequate developments should be put in place for future needs to be met (Weir, 1995). In line with this notion, principle

3 of Agenda 21 states that “*the right to development must be fulfilled so as to equitably meet development and environmental needs of present and future generations*”.

Although Agenda 21 is a global action plan to implement sustainable development, there is no binding force so implementing sustainable development depends solely on member states (Welch, 2011)

2.4 Benefits of Sustainable Development

Implementing and ensuring compliance to sustainable development by member states will not only preserve the natural resources of such states but is of great benefit to organisations, stakeholders (which include communities and people) as well the environment as a whole.

Hitchcock and Willard (2006), identifies the following as some of these benefits:

- Reduces energy, waste and costs: Organizations that have achieved the zero waste goals have successfully dealt with haulage costs and get paid for the residual wastes.
- Sidestep future regulations: Sustainability provides a good structure for organizations to keep up with the constantly changing regulations.
- Creative innovation of new products: Focus on sustainability helps to develop ideas on new products or processes that address present and future challenges of humanity.
- Organisations that strive towards sustainability tend to have competitive advantage over their competitors.
- Opens new markets: The focus of most companies is on the industrialized nations which makes less than one-sixth of the world’s population. Sustainability can help organizations to refocus on the larger percentage of the world’s population which will lead to a very high profit.
- Attract and retain the best employees: Employees now prefer to work for organizations that share their values.

Writing in 2011, the US Environmental protection agency points out that incorporating sustainable development allows for environmental, economic and social benefits beyond what are usually achieved. In this report, some of the benefits are water conservation, waste reduction, improvement of indoor environmental quality as well as air and water quality, energy efficiency and cost savings. Also, the British Standard Institution (BSI) speaking about the benefits of sustainable development in Northern Ireland stated that businesses can make a lot of savings by reducing waste and using energy and water as efficiently as possible (2009).

2.5 Risks of Sustainable Development

Although Sustainable development is beneficial, there are still some risks to it. However, these risks are easy to control compared to the risks of not implementing sustainable development (Hitchcock and Willard, 2006). According to them, giving lip service to the concept without actually putting it into action could be considered as ‘green washing’. In addition, unrealistic expectations could be raised by stakeholders as a result of organisations engaging in sustainable development.

3.0 Sustainability In Nigeria

3.1 Background of Major Issues of Sustainability in Nigeria

As Odedikan (2005) points out, Nigeria at independence(1960) estimated to be over 100 million people, occupying an area of 923,768 km² known as a political middle-income nation, ranked higher than Asian countries like Indonesia, Malaysia, Taiwan, and Singapore. According to him, this was possible because agriculture and solid minerals were the major sources of revenue in the country. The Northern part of Nigeria was a world class provider of agricultural products such as groundnuts, cotton, gum arabic, etc while the southern part was the main producer of cocoa, palm product and rubber. However, in the late 1960's and early 1970's when crude oil was discovered and became the major source of foreign exchange for the country, these sources of revenue were ignored with little or no attention paid to them. Inasmuch as enormous revenue has been earned from oil, 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 enforcement of environmental regulations has led to substantial damage to Nigeria's environment, especially in the Niger Delta region (Nwilo and Badejo, n.d). Such damages include, pollution of water bodies and farmlands due to oil spills, global warming as a result of gas flaring and emissions of harmful gases such as CO₂, waste generation as well as deforestation due to urban development. These environmental issues are what sustainable development seeks to address.

3.2 Approach to Sustainability in Nigeria

Nigeria's approach to sustainable development is based on four aspects which include economic, natural resources, institutional, and the social aspects (United Nations, 2007) Table 1 shows the classification under each aspect in the country. Nevertheless, Nigeria does not have a separate policy on sustainable development yet but one of the main approaches to cater for sustainability so far is the implementation of environmental policies. This is in compliance with principle 4 of Agenda 21 which states that *"In order to achieve sustainable development, environmental protection shall constitute an integral part of the development process and cannot be considered in isolation from it"*. Thus, Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is one of the methods used in Nigeria since it is a globally recognized tool for achieving sustainable development (Yusuf, 2008).

Also, in compliance with principle 5 which states that *"All states and all people shall cooperate in the essential task of eradicating poverty as an indispensable requirement for sustainable development, in order to decrease the disparities in standards of living and better meet the needs of the majority of the people of the world"*, Nigeria being faced with poverty eradication as the greatest challenge and indispensable requirement for sustainable development because of the increase in unemployment, high level of inflation, poor governance, corruption, lack of employment opportunities for the poor etc. has put together series of poverty alleviation programmes to bring about sustainability. However, in most cases, the structure and practise of these programmes has been for selfish interest of the top government officials, hence thwarting the aim of the programmes.

TABLE 1: ASPECTS CLASSIFICATION OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA

ECONOMIC ASPECT	NATURAL RESOURCES ASPECT	INSTITUTIONAL ASPECT	SOCIAL ASPECT
International cooperation	Agriculture	Integrated Decision-Making	Poverty
Trade	Atmosphere	Major Groups	Demographics
Changing Consumption Patterns	Biodiversity	Science	Health
Financing	Desertification and Drought	Information	Education
Technology	Energy	International Law	Human Settlements
Industry	Forests		
Sustainable Tourism	Freshwater		
	Land Management		
	Mountains		
	Oceans and Coastal Areas		
	Toxic Chemicals		
	Waste and Hazardous Materials		

(Source: The United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 2007)

3.3 Sustainability Implementation Through Environmental Laws

Subsequent to **Principle 2** of the Earth Summit 1992 which states that “ States have, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and the principles of international law, the sovereign right to exploit their own resources pursuant to their own environmental and developmental policies, and the responsibility to ensure that activities within their jurisdiction or control do not cause damage to the environment of other States or of areas beyond the limits of

national jurisdiction”, and **principle 3** which states that “The right to development must be fulfilled so as to equitably meet developmental and environmental needs of present and future generations”, the Federal Republic of Nigeria was influenced to review her environmental policies and take actions aimed at ensuring environmental sustainability. Environmental concerns are gradually being integrated into resource management, policy and planning processes as a way of promoting sustainable development (Alkali, 2005).

Prior to the above principles of the 1992 Agenda 21, the country had existing environmental laws but these laws did not really reflect sustainability which as at then was a major problem in Nigeria. The laws are stated below:

- Federal Environmental Protection Agency Act of 1988 (FEPA Act). The following Regulations were made pursuant to the FEPA Act:
 - ❖ National Environmental Protection (Effluent Limitation) Regulations:
 - National Environmental Protection (Pollution Abatement in Industries and Facilities General Wastes) Regulation: **Regulation 10** provides that no person shall engage in the storage, treatment or transportation of harmful toxic waste without a permit issued by FEPA. Where harmful toxic waste is produced on-site, it may only be stored or disposed on-site where a permit has been issued to the producer of such waste. **Regulation 11** provides that the collection, treatment, transportation and final disposal of waste shall be the responsibility of the industry or facility generating the waste. The ultimate responsibility lies with the producer, as under Nigerian law, the “polluter pays” principle applies. Whereas, **Regulations 16** provides that where it is environmentally safe to do so, solid waste may be stored or disposed of on-site, subject to the issuance of the requisite permit.
 - National Environmental Protection (Management of Solid and Hazardous Wastes) Regulations: provides that where practicable, waste should be recovered at the point of generation.
- Harmful Wastes (Special Criminal Provisions etc.) Act 1988: This was triggered by the illegal dumping of toxic waste in the Koko port of the then Bendel state of Nigeria. This Act makes it an offence for any person to “carry, deposit, dump, or be in possession, for the purpose of carrying, depositing or dumping, any harmful waste anywhere on Nigerian soil, inland waters or seas”. Persons held liable shall be convicted and sentenced to life imprisonment except the act was done within permissible limit, caused by natural disaster, act of war or sabotage (Aluko and Oyebode, 2007). This is a strict liability offence, which even excludes the defence of diplomatic immunity (Kalu, n.d).

After the Agenda 21, the Nigerian government under the military regime issued a decree in August 1992 to amend the FEPA Act 1988; this decree is cited as the Federal Environmental Protection Agency (Amendment) Decree N0 59 of 1992. Etomi (2002) observed that the Nigerian legislation conferred on FEPA the overall power for the protection and development of the environment, biodiversity conservation and sustainable development of the nation’s natural resources generally and environmental technology. FEPA was also given the responsibility of initiating policies that relate to environmental research and technology (Section 4, Decree No.59,

1992). In addition, **Section 37** of the decree gives FEPA more responsibility to make regulations generally for the purpose of Act and prescribe standard for water quality, influent limitation, atmospheric protection, air quality, ozone protection, noise control, and control of hazardous substances and removal control methods. (Cited in Etomi, 2002)

Afterwards, FEPA was absorbed and the Federal Ministry of Environment (FME) took over its functions to administer and enforce environmental laws in Nigeria. Aluko and Oyeboode (2007) notes that permits which are usually granted by the FME and relevant state agencies are required for all potentially environmentally sensitive activities. Furthermore, the FEPA Act empowers the FME to require the production for examination of any licence or permit granted to any person, to enter and search any land or building, and to arrest any person whom they have reason to believe has violated any environmental regulation. The FEPA Act also provides that a person who breaches the provisions of the Act commits an offence and shall on conviction be liable to a fine, or imprisonment, or both. The FEPA Act also provides that where there has been a discharge of any hazardous substance in violation of environmental laws/permits, the person responsible for the discharge will bear the liability of the costs of removal and clean-up. However, if this offence is committed by a company, the company shall on conviction be liable to a fine. The FEPA Act also provides that unless the owner or operator of any vessel on shore or offshore facility from which the hazardous substance is discharged can show that the discharge was caused by a natural disaster or an act of war or sabotage, the owner or occupier shall be subject to the cost of removal and restoration or compensation as the case may be.

In an event where pollution is found on a site or is discovered to be migrating off-site, there is a legal obligation to disclose this to an environmental regulator and to potentially affected third parties. **Section 22(2)(a) of the FEPA Act** provides that where there has been a discharge into the environment, the responsible party shall immediately give notice of the discharge to the FME and to any other relevant agencies.

Accordingly, states and local governments in the country are required under Decree 59 of 1992 FEPA Act 1992, to set up their own environmental protection bodies to protect and develop the environment within their environs. They are also empowered to promulgate laws to this effect. In line with this, all the states have their environmental agencies and laws. For example, **The Lagos State Environmental Protection Agency (LASEPA)** was established by the enactment of the Lagos State Environmental Protection Agency Law in Lagos State with the function of monitoring and controlling waste disposal in the state and advising the state government on all environmental management policies. The state also endorsed the Environmental Pollution Control Law to control pollution and protect the environment from abuse as a result of poor management of waste. **Section 12** of the Lagos state **Environmental pollution control** law makes it an offence to cause or permit a discharge of raw untreated human waste into any public drain, water course or onto any land or water. This offence is punishable with a fine not exceeding ₦100, 000 (One hundred thousand naira) and in the case of a company, a fine not exceeding ₦500, 000.

Also, in Abuja, the Federal Capital Territory has issued the **Abuja Environmental Protection Board (Solid Waste Control/Environmental Monitoring) Regulations 2005** which primarily governs the control of solid waste in Abuja (Aluko and Oyeboode, 2007). Another example is **Akwai Ibom State** which enacted the Environmental Protection and Waste Management Agency

Law to establish the **Environmental Protection and Waste Management Agency (EPWMA)**. The responsibility of the Agency is to identify and proffer solutions to environmental protection problems as well as monitor and enforce environmental protection standards and regulations in AkwaIbom state. This act requires a polluter to pay compensation to affected persons and the State for environmental damage caused by the offender.

Adding to the FEPA Act 1992 stated above, the Nigerian government also issued a decree on **Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)** as a result of the principle 17 of Agenda 21 which states that:

“Environmental impact assessment, as a national instrument, shall be undertaken for proposed activities that are likely to have a significant adverse impact on the environment and are subject to a decision of a competent national authority”(UNCED, 1992).

The follow-on EIA Act N0 86 of 1992, Section 2 provides that the public or private sector of the economy shall not undertake or embark on or authorise projects or activities without prior consideration of the effect on the environment. The EIA Act 1992 also makes it mandatory under section 14(1), for development projects that are likely to adversely impact the environment to carry out EIA before implementation. Furthermore, Section 14 (1)(d) states that the federal, state, local council or any part of its agencies, prior to environmental assessment of the project in accordance with the EIA Act,

“shall not under the provisions of any law or enactment, issue a permit or license, grants an approval or take any other action for the purpose of enabling the project to be carried out in whole or in part.”(Cited in Yusuf, 2008). To support the requirement of section 14(1)(d), Aluko and Oyebode(2007) reveal that the EIA Act was promulgated principally to allow an earlier consideration of environmental impact assessment of public or private projects. According to them, any person planning a project/activity which may have an impact on the environment is statutorily required to prepare an EIA Report which must set out the potential impact of the activity on the environment, plans for preventing/mitigating the same, as well as clean up plans. All such Reports must be approved by the FME. The scope of the EIA process covers the following four stages as stated below:

- EIA reports preparation (under section 4, 21 & 24 of the Act)
- Public participation / Independent review (under sections 7, 22 (3), 25 & 37 of the Act)
- Final decision-making / Authorisation – in view of the relevant provisions of the EIA in sections 13 (1) & (2), 40 (1) & (2), 41 & 42
- Post – project authorisation activities (Section 41 of the EIA Act). The full scope of the EIA is attached in the Appendix 1.

Attached to the EIA Act is a schedule of activities and industries for which environmental impact assessments are mandatory. According to Echefu and Akpofure (2000), FEPA categorizes mandatory study activities into three; this is shown in Appendix 2 below. Full and mandatory EIA is required in category 1, category 2 requires EIA only if projects are within environmentally sensitive areas while category 3 has favourable impact on the environment. An initial environmental evaluation (IEE) system is used to determine projects requiring full EIA.

A publication by the Environmental Law Research Institute (2011) observed that in 2007, The Federal Ministry of Environment administered the **National Environmental Standards and Regulation Enforcement Agency (NESREA)**. The NESREA act 2007 is the embodiment of laws and regulations which focuses on protection of natural resources and sustainable development in the Nigerian environment. **Section 7**, provides authority to ensure compliance with environmental laws, local and international, on environmental sanitation and pollution prevention and control through monitory and regulatory measures.

Section 8 (1)(K) empowers the Agency to make and review regulations on air and water quality, effluent limitations, control of harmful substances and other forms of environmental pollution and sanitation. Section 27 prohibits, without lawful authority, the discharge of hazardous substances into the environment. This offence is punishable under this section, with a fine not exceeding, N1,000,000 (One Million Naira) and an imprisonment term of 5 years. In the case of a company, there is an additional fine of N50,000 for every day the offence persists.

Also, **the Nigerian Radioactive Waste Management Regulations 2006** provides that the primary responsibility for the safe management of radioactive waste lies with the waste generator and the waste generator shall take all necessary actions to ensure the safety of radioactive waste unless the responsibility has been transferred to another person or organisation approved by the Nigerian Nuclear Regulatory Authority. The Regulations further provide that the waste generator shall be responsible for collection, characterization and temporary storage of radioactive waste arising from his activities and discharge of exempt waste.

The **Department of Petroleum Resources (DPR)** which is a federal regulatory agency is aimed at supervising all petroleum industry operations being carried out under licences and leases in the country in order to ensure compliance with applicable laws and regulations in line with good oil producing practices. This department published the **Environmental Guidelines and Standards for the Petroleum Industry in Nigeria (EGASPIN) 2002** which sets out a list of activities in the oil and gas sector that require environmental assessment. EGASPIN provides that as much as possible, all the reusable components of hazardous wastes should be recovered by using the best practicable technology currently available.

In addition, **The Niger-Delta Development Commission (NDDC)** was created to ensure that funds allocated are directed towards effective conservation of natural resources and the ecosystem and thereby set the Niger delta region of the country on the path of sustainable development.

Section 7 (1) (b) empowers the Commission to plan and implement projects such as transportation, health, agriculture, fisheries, urban and housing development geared towards sustainable development of the area. Under this Act, the commission has a duty to interact with oil and gas companies and advice stakeholders on the control of oil spillages, gas flaring and other related forms of environmental pollution.

Considering the water sector, the **Water Resources Act** is aimed at developing and improving the quantity and quality of water resources. **Section 5 and 6** provides authority to make pollution prevention plans and regulations for the protection of fisheries, flora and fauna. Also, reforms

have been introduced to ensure that there is provision of safe and affordable water services for all Nigerians. For example, a National Water Policy, which includes an **Integrated Water Resources**

Management (IWRM) Plan was launched in 2003 with desire is to achieve a water target by 2011, through a spirited implementation of the "Water for the People, Water for Life" initiative.

Although this report focuses on environmental sustainability, it is pertinent to note that purely environmental ideas cannot tackle sustainable issues. They need to be considered alongside economic and social imperatives to be sustainable. For instance, the Koko dumping in 1988 by some Italian business frauds was carried out with the involvement of a poverty stricken, ignorant and hungry villager, Sunday Nana for a miserable sum of ₦500.00 (Kalu, n.d). Also, the petroleum development activities of the Shell Petroleum Development Company (SPDC) have continued to pollute the water bodies which inhabitants of these areas depend on for their livelihood, causing unsustainable exploitation of resources. To address this issue, the Nigerian government according to Alkali(2005) worked towards halving poverty in the year 2015, in line with the **Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)** with awareness that to achieve progress in economic improvement, policies that develop opportunities for employment, income generation and access to resources among the poorest groups in society must accompany it. In furtherance, based on lessons learnt the MDGs period, Nigeria alongside other United Nations member states adopted the **Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)** in 2015 with the sole aim of putting an end to extreme poverty, protecting the earth and ensuring peace and prosperity is enjoyed by all individuals by 2030.

Hence, a number of poverty reduction and economic empowerment measures have been put in place since the return of democratic governance in 1999. This includes a comprehensive **National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP)** developed in 2001 with the goal of eradicating absolute poverty over a ten-year period.

Specifically, there are four initiatives which include:

- (a) Youth Empowerment Scheme(): Directed towards empowering youths economically
- (b) The Rural Infrastructure Development Scheme(RIDS): Carries out rural electrification and development of rural water and supply, transportation and communications.
- (c) The Social Welfare Services Scheme(SOWESS): Includes programmes on qualitative education, primary health care, and empowerment of farmers and provision of social services.
- (d) The Natural Resources Development and Conservation Scheme(NRDCS): Contains environmental protection programmes as well as that of agricultural, solid mineral and water resources development.

4.0 Conclusion and Recommendations

Initiating sustainable development seems quite challenging especially with the idea of integrating social and economic developments as well as environmental preservation for the future generations. However, as challenging as it seems, efforts made towards sustainability will lead to a better place for mankind and other life forms in the environment.

Apparently, there will never be balanced sustainable programmes in Nigeria until and unless the economic, social and environmental dynamics are assessed simultaneously with programmes developed and implemented in a way that all these elements are taken into consideration. Such

sustainable programmes have to take on board the multi stakeholder and cross sector approach to allow an effective evolution of a dynamic system that considers relevant impacts on the stakeholders.

Additionally, effective compliance to Environmental impact assessment (EIA) as a generally accepted and genuine tool that would guarantee sustainable development should be ensured. Nigeria still needs to develop the technical, administrative and legislative framework for effective incorporation of environmental concerns. Effective monitoring of the industries that pollute the environment should be carried out and these industries should be given a rebate to purchase pollution control equipment with laws and regulations in this area fully strengthened and compliance ensured.

Conclusively, Nigeria must develop grass roots consciousness following global agenda 21 and encourage or stimulate civil activism that allows the voices of the people to resonate louder and also allow those without voices to gain transparent representation by those who accurately speak their voices.

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