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# CLIMATE CHANGE IN NIGERIA: REPERCUSSIONS AND POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

Man’s existence and sustenance is shaped by his environment and that proves the need and importance of protecting the environment from all forms of degradation. With more light being shed on the significance and inevitability of the environment for the survival of man by environmental experts, the world at large has begun to look more into the problems and possible solutions. Countries have sought to cut carbon emissions as it is one of the main causes of climate change worldwide due to global warming and pollutions of all kinds. Undoubtedly Nigeria’s climate like other countries has also drastically changed over the years. It is evident in: increases in temperature, irregular rainfalls, drought and desertification, rise in sea level and floods and more frequent extreme weather conditions.

The country has faced climate change disasters such as the drying up of Lake Chad in the north-eastern region presently comprising of Borno and Yobe states, the southern part of Lake Chad, the part of the lake which lies in Nigeria’s territory. Decades ago the lake covered an area of over 40,000 square kilometres, whereas now it merely surrounds 1,300 square kilometres. This negative trend continued with the land being laid to waste by the rising temperature and affected farmlands and surrounding villages leaving them barren and prone to desertification, which led to massive migration of people southward in search of more fertile land. The advancing desertification forced hundreds of Fulani herdsmen to move the south and middle belt leading to clashes with crop farmers resulting in numerous deaths according to reports.

Nigeria’s guinea savannah area (which includes states like Oyo, Ondo, Kaduna, Benue, etc.) regarded as the bread basket of the nation is not spared either. Over logging and dependence of firewood and timber, for cooking and building materials, has led to deforestation reducing the areas vegetation cover. Unfortunately the same situation is replicated in other southern states. The south-eastern part of the country has however faced a different predicament. There, gulley erosions have destroyed many settlement areas as well as roads and farmlands, leading to poor transportation of goods and high poverty among the residents of the area.

However, this change doesn’t just affect the northern and middle belt parts of the country. Just as desertification is a devastating occurrence in the northern states, rising sea levels are prevalent in the coastal regions. A huge source of oil-wealth, the Niger Delta’s low terrain and crossing waterways is prone to flooding, and over the last decade has experienced reoccurring floods. In 2012 a massive flood occurred, houses, farms, farm products, goods and merchandises, and even human beings were swept away. Certain areas such as Bayelsa State have experienced extreme oil pollution as well.

Failure and negligence to tackle these issues and others of climate by the government and responsible bodies has also contributed to its increasing effects. It is clear that if appropriate preventive action is not taken with adaptation measures, the results will nothing short of catastrophic. As a result of this fact, development plans and possible solution have been made. One of which is the need to include climate change in national, regional and state development plans. As part of the efforts to do so, the federal government has taken steps to address environmental problems, but it is easier said than done. Funds provided for said development plans have been misused. It is clear to see that the government needs to hold accountable the bodies it has placed for climate change control in order to see the expected result. Another solution proffered is a great wall; planted trees over a vast area, to reduce desertification. In order to cut down carbon emissions, the country should also focus on a cleaner source of energy such as solar energy and bio-fuel, to counter the use of fossil fuels which emit green house gases.

Additionally, the science of climate change should be included in school curriculums. Core knowledge and information about should be part of the compulsory education students of all levels need. This will ensure that students learn about the potential impacts of climate change and options for adaptations, in order to enable the future generation a chance in complete understanding. Policy makers, educational institutions, organisations and parents should embark on raising awareness of climate change in Nigeria

Also, appropriate technologies for data gathering on climate change should be provided to generate the right statistics that will enhance the performance of effective monitoring and evaluation.

With hope, the adherence to the solutions proffered by government bodies, coupled with my own suggestion, climate change disasters will reduce, enabling the country to concentrate on other programmes, projects and activities for its development.