**COMMUNIQUE ISSUED AT THE END OF THE 3RD WORLD ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION CONFERENCE (WECC, 2020) HELD VIRTUAL ON 7TH JULY, 2020 AND HOSTED BY WESLEY UNIVERSITY, ONDO, ONDO STATE, NIGERIA.**

**Preamble**

The participants at the 3rd World Environmental Conservation Conference held online on the 7th July, 2020 and hosted by Wesley University, Ondo, Ondo State with the theme “*STRATEGIES FOR IMPROVED QUALITY OF LIFE:* Inclusive, Innovative, Integrated and Multi-Stakeholder’s Participation” considered several issues of urgent importance to realizing the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals and the targets towards improving quality of life before year 2030.

Unlike the previous WECC, the 3rd edition of WECC was held online due to COVID-19 pandemic with the participants drawn from researchers and academia at various institutions and disciplines. Other categories of participants present were the Vice–Chancellor of the host institution, Conservator-General of National Park Service represented by Conservator of Park, Old Oyo National Park and other relevant stakeholders in private and corporate organizations, Ministry, Department and Agencies (MDAs).

The participants carefully considered issues centered on achieving UN-Sustainable Development Goals geared towards improving the quality of life in Nigeria, Sub-Saharan Africa and the world; and resolved as follows:

1. The risk and disaster associated with flood are huge, and this calls for urgent attention. Hence, there is need for periodic studies on vulnerability assessment and control measures on flood re-occurrence in flood-prone areas of Abeokuta, Ogun State and other parts of the country. The vulnerable communities are encouraged to intensify efforts at reducing associated disaster while government should assist in the construction of drainages and enforcement of law on land-use and waste disposal.
2. It was noted that the issue of insecurity is beginning to have negative impacts on forest resources. This has culminated and paved ways for miscreants and men of the underworld to occupy protected areas and unleashing terror attack on the host communities. There is need for government to review current forest policy on forest-use for adventures, greening project, tourism attraction and ecological benefits.
3. Perhaps, tourism sector is the worst-hit sector by the outbreak of COVID -19 pandemic. The need to safeguard coastal tourism can therefore not be overemphasized. Inhabitants in the coastal areas are charged to build resilience by designing disaster preparedness plan to maintain and sustain tourism industry as major source of income and livelihood.
4. Geospatial approach of GIS and Remote Sensing techniques are relevant in mapping areas for agricultural purposes. It was recommended that integration of GIS and satellite remote sensing be used extensively for site selection based on the topography of an area set for agriculture.
5. There should be an adjustment in construction if there would be sustainable eco-friendly facilities in the local hotels in Nigeria. Construction of sustainable eco-friendly facilities in the hotels coupled with availability of environmentally sustainable services should be encouraged to boost customers’ patronage.
6. Blue economy is a veritable tool for improving socioeconomic activities and environmental conservation of coastal states. However, inherent potentials in it can only be realized if the range of productive economic sectors is considered within the scope of four lenses including natural capital, livelihoods, good business and driver of innovation. Government need to invest more on infrastructural development to provide enabling environment for blue economic growth.
7. The Primary Health Care (PHC) system is applauded as a grass-root approach meant to address the health problems in the local community through provision of preventive, curative and rehabilitative services. Government and non-governmental agencies are enjoined to provide sufficient health equipment for these to be sustained.
8. There was a serious concern over proliferation of Base Stations (BS) as a result of increasing number of mobile cellular subscriptions and information traffic. The attendant proliferation of BS is consequential in environmental impacts as reflected in increasing emission of Green House Gases (GHGs) and power consumption. It is on this premise that environmental sustainability activists, regulators and government agencies represented at the conference recommended switching off of base stations during off-peak period as the preferred green BS solution to other form of approaches stated.
9. The rapidly declining forest areas are beginning to have a negative toll on the environment. The state of forests in Africa with emphasis on Congo Basin (being the world’s second largest tropical forest after the Amazon) and the upper Guinea forest (a global biodiversity hotspot) was berated. In order to address this ugly trend, award winning forest policies from Rwanda and Gambia were examined and brought to the fore as recommended templates for better forest management in Nigeria *.*
10. Globally, the interest of green investors has been aroused because of the increasing level of awareness on companies’ environmental impact on ecosystems and biodiversity. Having understood the concept of accounting for environmental externalities in manufacturing companies as presented at the conference, it was affirmed that sustainability reporting should be made mandatory for all the companies operating in Nigeria because it provides a deeper insight into how building a sustainable business is beneficial for all stakeholders.
11. As one of the ways in tackling surface water pollution through anthropogenic activities, the effects of locust beans production activities on surface water were evaluated. Based on the results obtained on collected surface-water parameters in comparison with the World Health Organization guidelines for drinking water, effluents from locust beans production were observed to pose a health risk to several rural adjoining communities which rely on the surface water as their source of domestic water. Such water needs to undergo proper primary or secondary treatment before it can be consumed.
12. The productivity of any aquatic ecosystem depends on the amount of chlorophyll-a (chl-a) present in various forms in a particular water body. This assertion was formed based on the results obtained on the assessment of temporal dynamics in chl-a distribution in the Bonny estuary from 1986 to 2018 with earth observation archived Landsat imagery. The variation in the chl-a led to the conclusion that there was temporal dynamics in chl-a distribution of the estuary; thus, the recommendation that remotely-sensed data should be adopted for monitoring chl-a in water bodies was affirmed*.*
13. Hotel choice criteria, in particular, is one of the most visible and significant parts of the hospitality industry. The need for hotel staff to provide efficient services, display attributes of being polite and friendly, neat and understanding as well as possession of multi-lingual skills to attract customers’ patronages for economic growth can therefore not be overemphasized.
14. Levels of Green House Gases’ emission being generated from solid waste, can be reduced a formal approach that incorporate recycling into waste management system thereby reduce land filling.
15. As part of the contributions to finding suitable corrosion inhibitors of organic origin in various corrosive media, it was revealed that Methanolic and Ethanolic extract of *S. cordifolia* have good inhibition capability for mild steel corrosion in HCL. The phytochemical analysis of the plant extracts shows that it contains some bio-molecules which aid in the inhibition efficiency and this forms the basis for its recommendation*.*
16. Despite the volume of studies on flooding and residential property value across the globe, there is still consistent flooding over the years that affect the value of residential property. This is largely due to poor level of awareness on the risk associated with flooding and poor land-use practices; hence, it was agreed that public enlightenment on the dangers of flooding and restriction of flood-prone areas as non-buildable zone for the protection of life and property should be intensified*.*
17. The participants stressed on the benefits of providing conducive school environment influences the quality of teaching and the extent of attention students pay to lesson in school. They appeal to government and education institutions to provide special care and invest more funds in improving school environment.
18. It becomes obvious to the participants that there is need to mitigate the devastating effects of gully erosion, especially in the Eastern part of Nigeria. The result of prediction on the soil loss potential mapping of Imo State, Nigeria using Revised Universal Soil Loss Equation (RUSLE) model is quite revealing. Relevant agencies were called upon to discharge their duties in line with their mandate of controlling, monitoring and measurement of erosion/flood hazard through periodic engagement of the services of experts .
19. Participants underline the importance of honey production as source of food and food ingredients, it was opined at this conference that modern techniques of honey production are more efficient and hygienic than traditional technique*.*
20. Participants reaffirmed that attendant issues associated with decline in environmental quality are posing serious threats to sustenance of hotel businesses. Hence, hotel businesses are encouraged to adopt more friendly practices to protect the environment while relevant organizations and concerned stakeholders should aggressively educate the hotel owners and their employees on the benefits of adopting eco – friendly practices*.*
21. Participants stressed their commitment to improving quality of life and healthy living of man, animal and the environment. One Health approach is acclaimed as suitable approach to address present outbreak of zoonotic diseases such as Lassa fever, COVID-19, e.tc wreaking havoc on human health, economic, social well-being, animal and environment.
22. Satisfaction with indoor temperature, humidity, fresh air, draft/still air is widely regarded as universal way of assessing perception of Indoor Air Quality (IAQ). It is therefore expedient that architectures should take into consideration the perception of their users in the designing of projects so as to build the capacity to satisfy them.
23. The participants are pleased to note that the growing human population is putting increasing strain on available water resources due to high demand. Thus, environmental monitoring and modeling on chemical parameters and major ions in water quality in surface and groundwater should be carried out regularly in order to reduce threat to human lives as a result of water use*.*
24. Considered the fact that development of tourism is critical in economic agenda of most nations of the world. In a bid to sustain tourism potentials, it was recommended that there should be economic diversification towards sustainable tourism development and paradigm shift to e-tourism.
25. The need to increase the consciousness of relevant stakeholders in hotel industry on green initiatives to minimize energy consumption, heat generation, water conservation, waste recycling was reiterated. Funding should be provided to organize intensive awareness programmes and advocacy to sensitize hoteliers, general public and relevant stakeholders on specific desirable environmental-friendly facilities and appliances.
26. Strategies to achieve sustainable conservation and management of wildlife resources require exhaustive understanding of the social, economic, cultural and demographic characteristics of the local inhabitants adjoining forest areas AND the ecology of the animals.

**Next World Environmental Conservation Conference (WECC, 2021)**

The participants appreciated the organizer of this year WECC and decided to meet at the next conference in June, 2021**.**