

COMMUNIQUE ISSUED AT THE END OF THE 6TH WORLD ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION CONFERENCE (WECC, 2023) HELD HYBRID (FUTA/VIRTUAL) FROM 18TH TO 21ST OCTOBER, 2023, HOSTED BY WASCAL

The Netlink Environmental Conservation Organization ,NECOR in partnership with the West African Science Service Centre on Climate Change and Adapted Land use(WASCAL), Federal University of Technology, Akure(FUTA) the host institution, the National Park Service (NPS) and the African Regional Center for Space Science and Technology Education-English (ARCSSTE-E,) organized the 6th edition of the World Environmental Conservation Conference (WECC) 2023 with the theme, “*Climate Partnership Partnership Actions for Sustainable Future and Restoring Life on Earth*”. The conference was held at the Obafemi Awolowo Auditorium of the Federal University of Technology Akure, Nigeria from October 18 to 21, 2023.

RATIONALE

The Conference aimed at creating an interface for information sharing and opportunities for participants to re-define their commitments and pledges in the quest to achieving sustainable development in the face of climate change. This is hinged on the premise that effective synergy among the relevant Ministries, Departments and Agencies of Government and other relevant institutions and organization’s with mandates in environmental conservation should be at the front burner at state, national and international discussions to effectively mitigate the adverse effects of climate change and global warming

GENERAL CONSENSUS

Participants identified factors such as carbon dioxide and other gases released as a result of human activities such as burning fossils fuels for power generation, industry and transportation, the cutting down of trees on large scale for fuel are some of the major triggers and practices responsible for climate change.

They agreed that tackling climate change requires adapting new measures in Agriculture, Technology, Architecture, daily business, modification of the educational curriculum, cutting down of emissions, encouragement of Afforestation. They also agreed that Global partnership must be pursued on the part of Government and the private sectors and all other relevant organizations and all communities as everyone bears the brunt of the adverse effects of climate change.

The conference identified climate partnership actions as collaborative efforts among different stakeholders to mitigate climate change effects to promote sustainability. The advantages of Climate

Partnership Actions identified by participants include climate adaptation promotion, fostering of implementation of low emission actions, and encouraging of joint efforts towards sustainability.

The participants agreed that Climate change as a challenge should be seen as everyone's responsibility. They restated that the climate and weather will be fair to mankind only if mankind is fair to it. They also urged the Federal government to take more responsibility in making sure that the disasters caused by climate change are abated.

RESOLUTIONS

After four days of scientific and technical presentations, experience sharing, and candid discussions by the participants, the following conclusions were drawn:

1. Recalled its previous pronouncements and decisions on the link between climate change, peace, security, and the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (UN-SDGs), from the Communique adopted at its 5th Edition of the WECC 2022 held at FUTA, Akure, Nigeria on 6-7 June 2022, WECC 2022 Theme was titled, ***“Re-Imagining Contemporary Environmental Conservation Issues in Sustainable Development Goals”***.
2. Noted the findings of the IPCC Reports AR4 and AR6 that are conclusive on the reality of climate change impacts and assert that Africa will be impacted by climate change under all emission scenarios. The projection is that the region is to experience more frequent and intense heatwaves, droughts, floods and storms under all emission scenarios.
3. Reaffirmed that adaptation to climate change is a priority, a matter of survival for Africa which also brings co-benefits for development, and that the agricultural sector is core to the agenda and goals of sustainable development of the continent.
4. There should be increasing awareness of climate change impacts on human livelihood, ecosystems, and economies and which is potentially expected to affect millions of lives in Africa, who are ill-equipped both in capacity and financing to pursue the uncertain transitional pathways out of extreme poverty by 2030.
5. Issues bordering on climate change as it affects agriculture, food security, nutrition, biodiversity, ecosystem services, tourism and other environmental issues like flooding, pollution and various forms of environmental degradation and remediation (rehabilitation and restoration) should continue to be on the front burner of international discourse and action
6. Expressed concern on the negative effects of climate change, variability and extremity of the weather as major determinants of agriculture, food security, livelihood and sustainable ecosystem: crop,

livestock and fisheries production for food security, income and livelihoods and socio-economic benefits. It is noted that there is need for government to increase public awareness of these environmental phenomena and implications for human welfare and the necessity to develop early warning mechanisms and systems for extreme weather events risks and disaster reduction strategies. Such will enhance food production, adaptation, strengthened resilience and diversification of food resources, and climate-smart agricultural production techniques including improved scale for soil, water and ecosystem conservation and food preservation.

7. Emphasized the need for financial Institutions to provide soft loans with low interest rates for farmers and Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs), to enable them to acquire necessary resources and technologies for adaptation to climate change.
8. Recognized Indigenous Knowledge System, active involvement and participation of local communities as veritable keys to natural resources conservation and sustainable food production.
9. Re-affirmed that information on the genetic characteristics of trees must be taken into consideration in establishment of forest plantation for climate mitigation and economic growth maximum yield to attract customers, in order to aid increased food security and sustainable production of raw materials. Participants also stressed that households should participate in reforestation and afforestation efforts, as a strategy to advance adaptation and resilience to extreme weather events that threatens sustainability of the ecosystem and its conservation.
10. Stressed the need for properly planned and controlled urbanization, which is also characterized by improved urban green space, having clear understanding of the effects of land use agricultural, mining and the built environment, on carbon emissions, water and energy cycles and climate.
11. Having realised the potential of Aquaculture of Tilapia and grey mullet for increasing food production and the efficacy of the skin of Tilapia as an alternative source of collagen for skin remediation the need to sustain the production of Tilapia can therefore not be over emphasised.
12. In the Landscape Architectural front, urban tourism and Hospitality outfits , the participants realised that the incorporation of solar energy capturing devices in building construction, retrofitting and decarbonisation are sustainable ways to mitigate climate change effects in Urban environments.
13. Call the attention of the policy and decision makers on the need for continuous monitoring of groundwater levels and water quality including possibility for ground water table recharge in areas with impervious formations for informed decision-making and conservation.
14. Highlighted the importance of a Common African Position on Climate Change and reiterated the need for mobilizing predictable and sustainable climate financing, including the establishment of Climate Fund.

15. Understanding the impact of climate change and variability for climate change adaptation strategies and mitigation will aid in the development of an early warning system while policy makers should develop measures to reduce emissions of aerosols of anthropogenic to improve air quality in West Africa region.
16. It restates the need for environmentalist to intensify awareness and knowledge based on the effects of flooding on humanity and environment through production of flood vulnerability map .
17. Emphasized the need for development of sustainable practices for Agriculture, Forestry and Land use (AFOLU), to reduce carbon and other greenhouse gases emissions, improve provision of ecosystem services and carbon sequestration (It is reported that one-quarter of greenhouse gas emissions emanate from agriculture, forestry, and other land use options. However, there are huge possibilities for trade of the organic carbon stocks of AFOLU to access funds from the Clean Development Mechanism (CMD). This will increase the potentials of AFOLU for attaining emission reduction targets for Nigeria (Compliance to article 12 of the Kyoto Protocol of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)).