

Climate change the focus at third Lagos UN SDGs Dialogue

The UN Information Centre (UNIC) Lagos, in collaboration with the Nigerian Environmental Society (NES), recently held a dialogue session focused on Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 13: Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impact. It formed part of UNIC Lagos' monthly SDGs Dialogues, attracting over 100 environmentalists, climate change activists, private sector representatives, academia and other stakeholders. The theme was 'Combating Climate Change and its Impact in Nigeria'.



Image source: United Nations Information Centre (UNIC) in Lagos

‘Climate Change Vision’

In his lead paper, a senior research fellow at the Centre for Environmental Studies and Sustainable Development, Lagos State University, Dr Ahoje Michael advocated for the establishment of a ‘Climate Change Vision’ with timelines and high level of community buy-in, excellent climate change governance and behavioural change amongst the people. “There is a need to disseminate from command to community to build indigenous community-based adaptation and mitigation knowledge that takes cultural dynamics into consideration,” he noted.

Above highlighted some examples of climate change impact in Nigeria:

- Desert encroachment and desertification;
- Poor precipitation,
- Drought,
- Loss of soil fertility,
- Poor vegetation,
- Poor agricultural yield,
- Food insecurity, and
- Inadequate food and water for livestock.

Other impacts include illnesses and death of live stocks, irregular and sudden change in weather patterns, flooding of

homes and other facilities, increased incidence of malaria and other diseases, loss and disruption of human activities, loss of goods and properties and loss of life.

Recalling the statement of the United Nations secretary general António Guterres that climate change is “the most systemic threat to humankind”, Desmond Majekodunmi, an environmentalist and chairman of LUFASI Park, Lekki, urged individuals, corporate organisations and the Nigerian government to decarbonise by curbing greenhouse gas emissions, and protecting the forests.



R-L: Lead speaker and senior research fellow at the Centre for Environmental Studies and Sustainable Development, Lagos State University, Dr Ahoje Michael; director, UN Information Centre (UNIC) Lagos, Ronald Kayanja; environmentalist and chairman of LUFASI Park, Lekki, Desmond Majekodunmi; and representative of the Private Sector Advisory Group (PSAG) on SDGs, Adekunle Dosunmu, of Siemens Limited. Image source: United Nations Information Centre (UNIC) in Lagos

Deepening stakeholder knowledge

Earlier, the director of UNIC Lagos, Ronald Kayanja, explained that the SDG-13 dialogue, the third in the series of monthly SDGs dialogues organised by UNIC was meant to discuss and deepen stakeholders' knowledge of issues around climate change, especially as related to the impacts, resilience and adaptive capacity of Nigeria to climate-related hazards and natural disasters.

He explained that UNIC deliberately assembled stakeholders of diverse backgrounds because climate action is multi-dimensional and interlinked with many of the other Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). “The SDGs are indivisible and interrelated,” he added.



R-L: senior research fellow at the Centre for Environmental Studies and Sustainable Development, Lagos State University, Dr Michael Aboye; director, UN Information Centre (UNIC) Lagos, Ronald Kayanja; and secretary general of the UN Association of Nigeria, Engineer Ganiyu Owolabi. Image source: United Nations Information Centre (UNIC) in Lagos

The chairman of the Nigerian Environmental Society (NES), Mainland Lagos branch, Dr Eugene Itua charged the participants to take responsibility and protect Mother Earth and mankind through eco-friendly lifestyles.

Interventions and questions by the participants delved in environmental law and policies, phasing out of non-biodegradable packaging, adaptation and disaster risk reduction measures in areas prone to flash floods, responsible consumption, high cost of clean energy and the importance of environmental education in climate change discourse.

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