



# SUSTAINABILITY POLICY COMMISSION GENERAL ASSEMBLY

 Monday **25th**  
**March** 2024

 **2PM**

 **Virtual Event**



<p><b>Date: Monday, March 25, 2024</b></p> <p><b>Time: 2:00 pm</b>  <b>Duration: 2 hours</b>  <b>Venue: Virtual</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>SESSION REPORT</b></p> <p><b>Session Title: GENERAL ASSEMBLY - SUSTAINABILITY POLICY COMMISSION</b></p> <p><b>Details of Discussants:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Dr. Eugene Itua</b>, Facilitator, Sustainability Policy Commission (SPC)</li> <li>• <b>Mr. Clem Ugorji</b>, SPC Steering Committee Member</li> <li>• <b>Mrs Dolapo Kukoyi</b>, Thematic Lead, Climate Change, NDC, and the Green Economy Thematic Group</li> <li>• <b>Dr. Femi Idowu-Adegoke</b>, Thematic Lead, Circular Economy/Natural Ecosystem &amp; Forest Thematic Group</li> <li>• <b>Mr Abbas Agbaje</b>, Technical Anchor, Sustainability Policy Commission</li> </ul> <p><b>Moderated by:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Ms Ese Ikponmwonba</b>, Secretariat Anchor, Anchor, Sustainability Policy Commission (SPC)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Background</b></p>	<p>Sustainability has a significant role to play in Nigeria's forward progress. It is generally agreed that no country can achieve developed status without a strong and well-implemented sustainability plan. Also, given Nigeria's lack of action on this front, there is significant space for progress along the lines of the circular economy and climate change, to name a few. Therefore, it is important for Nigeria to be more proactive to ensure the country no longer falls behind global standards, especially as it relates to climate-resilient infrastructure, energy transition, and carbon markets.</p>
<p><b>Welcome Address</b>  <b>Dr Eugene Itua, Facilitator, Sustainability Policy Commission</b></p>	<p>Dr Eugene Itua welcomed the participants and noted that the 2023 General Assembly included discussion on pressing issues and clarified the role of the Policy Commission as a whole. The three thematic groups under the Sustainability Policy Commission are the Climate Change, Circular Economy, and Marine &amp; Blue Economy Thematic Groups. Moving forward, the Policy Commission also plans to focus on increasing awareness, knowledge, and interest in sustainability.</p>
<p><b>Opening Remarks</b>  <b>Mr Clem Ugorji, Steering Committee Member, Sustainability Policy Commission</b></p>	<p>In his opening remarks, Mr Clem Orji highlighted Nigeria's status as a high-carbon economy, attributing it to factors such as reliance on extractive industries, inefficient energy use, transportation sector inefficiencies, and challenges in waste management. The urgency of transitioning to a low-carbon economy due to Nigeria's high ranking on global climate risk indices was also emphasised, as well as the need for concerted efforts within the policy commission to address these challenges.</p> <p>Mr. Ugorji commended the ongoing efforts of various stakeholders and government agencies, such as the Department of Climate Change and the Ministry for the Blue Economy, in addressing sustainability issues. Moreover, the importance of synergy between the commission's discussions and operational works in driving progress was emphasised. Expressing hope for stimulating conversations and fruitful deliberations that would contribute to advancing sustainability initiatives in Nigeria, the remarks</p>

	<p>concluded by urging active participation in the breakout group discussions to generate valuable contributions and action points.</p>
<p><b>Sustainability Policy Commission Updates</b></p> <p><b>by Ms Ese Ikponmwonba, Secretariat Anchor, Sustainability Policy Commission (SPC)</b></p>	<p>Ese Ikponmwonba, the SPC Anchor, provided updates on the Policy Commission's activities over the last two years:</p> <p>These activities emphasised alignment with Nigeria's Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC) sectors to drive sustainability for economic growth. Activities also aligned with the sectors of the three thematic groups: climate change and the green economy, marine ecosystem and blue economy, and circular economy and natural ecosystems and forests.</p> <p>In 2022, the policy commission focused on aligning objectives with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG 13 for climate change. Events were held in preparation for COP 27, including workshops and a study tour to Cairo. Additionally, a pre-summit event titled "Roadmap to Nigeria's COP: A pragmatic path to net zero using the green economy and forestry" was held to engage both public and private sectors on climate issues.</p> <p>In 2023, the focus shifted to other SDGs, such as SDG 7 for affordable and clean energy. Activities included meetings and research projects on "Carbon Trading and Energy Transition Plan in Nigeria" and a #NES 29 pre-summit event titled "Waste to Wealth: The Plastic Value Chain" to explore economic opportunities in the circular economy.</p> <p>In 2024, the Sustainability Policy Commission, in collaboration with the NESG's Energy Policy Commission has undertaken a project sponsored by the African Climate Foundation. The aims of this project are to strengthen public-private sector engagement around Nigeria's Energy Transition Plan (NETP) and the carbon market. This project entails a strong emphasis on maximising the benefits of these two initiatives financially.</p> <p>Additionally, a white paper titled "A pragmatic path to net zero: using the green economy, blue economy, and forestry" was published in March 2024, providing recommendations to encourage low-emission practices and define regulatory frameworks for the blue economy.</p>
<p><b>Strategic Direction of the Sustainability Policy Commission</b></p> <p><b>by Dr Eugene Itua, Facilitator, Sustainability Policy Commission (SPC)</b></p>	<p>Dr. Eugene Itua returned to present the strategic direction of the Sustainability Policy Commission. He noted the strategic direction arose from discussions during the last general assembly and various strategic meetings.</p> <p>The policy commission has identified two critical policy areas of focus for 2024: climate-resilient infrastructure and Carbon Markets. These two focus areas were selected due to various climate-related factors, such as infrastructure deficiencies and the general growing interest in carbon markets among the public.</p>

Nigeria has ongoing projects related to these policy areas. One such project is the Nigeria Energy Transition Project (NETP), aimed at engaging the private sector in supporting energy transition plans and participating in carbon markets. Stakeholder mapping is of utmost importance in involving relevant parties in policy discussions and implementation.

For its implementation plan, the policy commission uses the PERM approach (Planning, Execution, Review, Monitor). This helps guide the policy commission's future activities, which include further research, stakeholder engagement, and policy brief development.

There is a need for infrastructure planning that incorporates climate resilience and outlines anticipated impacts, such as economic and social benefits. This aligns with the global need for increased funding for adaptation measures, which calls for stakeholders' involvement in advocating for policy reforms and innovative solutions.

#### Breakout Sessions by

- *Mrs Dolapo Kukoyi, Thematic Lead, Climate Change, NDC, and the Green Economy Thematic Group*
- *Dr. Femi Idowu-Adegoke, Thematic Lead, Circular Economy/Natural Ecosystem & Forest Thematic Group*
- *Mr Abbas Agbaje, Technical Anchor, Sustainability Policy Commission*

Each thematic group conducted breakout sessions, which served as an opportunity to discuss more specific issues and recommendations.

#### **Circular Economy Thematic Group**

##### **Issues Identified**

##### **1. E-Waste Management:**

- Lack of effective implementation and enforcement of Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) laws.
- Insufficient incentives and disincentives for proper e-waste disposal.
- Limited policy advocacy and awareness among stakeholders.

##### **2. Circularity in Agriculture:**

- Limited adoption of circular business models in agriculture.
- Inadequate policies for reducing waste and promoting sustainable practices.
- Dependency on traditional farming methods leading to inefficiencies and waste generation.

##### **3. Renewable Energy:**

- High costs and lack of affordability for renewable energy solutions like solar panels.
- Limited government subsidies and incentives for renewable energy adoption.
- Insufficient focus on local production and technology development.

##### **4. Market Development for Circular Economy:**

- Absence of viable domestic markets for recycled materials.
- Lack of recycled content policies across different sectors like plastics and construction.
- Inadequate integration of circular design principles in product manufacturing.

### Recommendations

- 1. E-Waste Management:** Strengthen implementation and enforcement of EPR laws with clear incentives and penalties. Increase policy advocacy and awareness campaigns to engage stakeholders effectively.
- 2. Circularity in Agriculture:** Develop policies to encourage circular business models, co-ownership between farmers and processors, and waste-to-resource initiatives. Promote research and development in agricultural circularity for improved sustainability and productivity.
- 3. Renewable Energy:** Introduce subsidies and long-term financing options for renewable energy adoption. Encourage local production and technology development to reduce costs and dependency on imports.
- 4. Market Development for Circular Economy:** Implement recycled content policies across sectors to promote the use of recycled materials. Foster a strong domestic market for recycled products through eco-design and sustainable manufacturing practices. Collaborate with research institutes to drive innovation and develop circular economy solutions.

### Marine and Blue Economy Thematic Group

#### Issues Identified

- 1. Dependency on Fossil Fuels:** The maritime sector heavily relies on fossil fuels for powering vessels and port equipment, leading to significant carbon emissions.
- 2. Lack of National Transport Policy:** Nigeria lacks a comprehensive national transport policy, with the draft version from 2010 still not finalised or publicly available.
- 3. Limited Decarbonisation Efforts:** There is a lack of focus on decarbonising the maritime sector despite its substantial contribution to Nigeria's emissions profile.
- 4. Challenges in Adopting Renewable Energy:** Challenges include seasonality affecting solar energy viability in coastal areas, transportation difficulties for batteries, and competition for resources like biomass.
- 5. Plastic Pollution:** Plastic waste poses a significant threat to marine ecosystems, requiring effective policies, implementation, and sanctions to address.

#### Recommendations:

- 1. Integration of Renewable Energy:** Explore options for integrating renewable energy sources like solar, electric, and hydrogen power into maritime infrastructure, focusing on energy-efficient equipment and vessels.

**2. Policy Development and Implementation:** Develop and enforce policies to reduce plastic waste, promote the use of biodegradable materials, and sanction polluters effectively.

**3. Investment in Infrastructure:** Invest in infrastructure for renewable energy adoption, including charging stations for electric equipment and facilities for hydrogen production.

**4. Collaboration between Sectors:** Foster collaboration between the public and private sectors to support decarbonisation efforts, with the private sector contributing resources and expertise to complement public sector initiatives.

**5. Research and Innovation:** Invest in research and innovation to overcome challenges associated with renewable energy adoption and address specific needs and circumstances in Nigeria's maritime sector.

#### Climate Change Thematic Group

##### Issues Identified:

**1. Communication and Networking Platform:** The group discussed the need for a platform to facilitate communication and networking among members. There was a question about whether to use conventional methods like WhatsApp or explore other options.

**2. Policy Ambition and Realism:** There was consensus on the importance of setting ambitious yet realistic targets within climate change policy. It was noted that targets and policies must be impactful and supported by robust policy instruments.

**3. Energy Transition Challenges:** Several speakers highlighted the challenges associated with energy transition in Nigeria, particularly regarding baseload power supply and technology adoption. The need for realistic and achievable strategies within a limited timeframe (considering government cycles) was emphasised.

**4. Carbon Market Strategy Alignment:** Concerns were raised about ensuring alignment with global standards in developing Nigeria's carbon market strategy and regulations. The importance of not operating in isolation and adhering to established industry standards was stressed.

**5. Carbon Pricing and Taxation:** There was discussion around establishing a framework for carbon pricing and taxation. Issues such as determining sectors responsible for higher emissions and setting appropriate carbon prices were highlighted.

### **Recommendations:**

- 1. Establish a Communication Platform:** Set up a communication platform, preferably using WhatsApp for day-to-day communications, to facilitate a quick and efficient exchange of information among members.
- 2. Develop Realistic Energy Transition Plans:** Develop energy transition plans that are both ambitious and realistic, considering Nigeria's current energy infrastructure and technological capabilities. Focus on practical steps that can be achieved within the timeframe of government cycles.
- 3. Ensure Alignment with Global Standards:** Ensure that policies and regulations related to carbon markets align with global standards and best practices. Engage with international organisations and leverage their expertise in developing Nigeria's carbon market strategy.
- 4. Implement Carbon Pricing Mechanisms:** Establish a framework for carbon pricing and taxation that reflects the emissions profile of different sectors. Consider mechanisms such as carbon taxes or emissions trading schemes to incentivise emission reductions.
- 5. Regular Meetings and Online Communication:** Hold monthly meetings to continue discussions on climate change policy and ensure regular progress updates. Additionally, maintain ongoing communication through email and other online channels to address urgent matters and facilitate collaboration between meetings.

### **Closing Remarks By Dr. Eugene Itua, Facilitator, Sustainability Policy Commission**

In his closing remarks, Dr Eugene Itua thanked the speakers and all participants at the General Assembly. He also noted the following:

- The General Assembly witnessed active participation from all attendees, including virtual speakers and presenters. The discussions highlighted the need for the new members to actively participate in their respective thematic groups.
- Despite members being volunteers, the important nature of the work requires commitment and focus, and it is extremely rewarding.
- Any questions, comments, or concerns should be directed to the secretariat, as they are best placed to guide newer or uncertain members through. This also applies to members trying to marry their various or diverse interests.
- The Policy Commission would enhance its visibility and engage critical stakeholders in its advocacy for reforms such as good governance, a conducive environment among others that would stabilise the mining industry, attract investments from both foreign and domestic investors, and ensure the sustainability of these investments.