

## **PROGRAM CONCEPT NOTE**

### **Managing Climate Change in Post COVID-19 Nigeria: Policy Options for Low-Carbon Climate-Resilient Development**

Although Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic is the worst crisis of global scale since World War II (The New York Times, 2020) given its largescale health and economic impact, climate change is still the most critical challenge facing mankind. The impact of climate change is expected to be catastrophic, much more than COVID-19, if mitigation and adaptation measures are not effectively pursued. Projected impact of climate change is of great concern for Nigeria as scientific evidence suggests that the country could lose between 6% and 30% of her GDP by the year 2050 if she fails in her bid to find solutions to enhance adaptation (FME, 2011). Current estimates show that the loss in the Nigeria's GDP (%change/year) in the long-run due to global warming at 1°C and 2°C is 4.528% and 9.689%, respectively (Kompas, 2018). As of today, indications of climate change and its impacts abound in Nigeria, for example, the high rate of reduction in Lake Chad, the recurring flood disaster, increased desert encroachment and increased conflicts due to natural resource degradation. Particularly, Nigeria witnessed flood disasters in 2012, which resulted in a loss of physical and durable assets in the twelve most affected states, equivalent to US\$9.5 billion (Federal Government of Nigeria, 2013; Adekola and Lamond, 2018). In fact, climate change can be said to be a "pandemic" although occurring slowly and the devastation is expected to be more massive than Novel Coronavirus pandemic.

The urgency to respond to climate change prompted the Paris Agreement which was adopted in December, 2015 and signed and ratified by Nigeria in September 2016 and March 2017 respectively. The Paris Agreement aims to keep the rise in global average temperature under 2°C above pre-industrial levels and pursue efforts to limit the increase to 1.5°C in order to avoid dangerous climate change impacts. Nigeria as a signatory to the agreement made pledges regarding carbon emission reduction as documented in the NDC. In her NDC, Nigeria pledged to follow a low carbon development path and to reduce carbon emission by 20% unconditionally and 45% conditionally by 2030. Although Nigeria is making some effort to achieve the target, the country is still lagging behind in some of the targets and a lot still needs to be done. This is very critical given the fact that the global score card suggests that there is need to massively scale up efforts if the goal of limiting global warming to below 2°C or to limit the temperature increase to only 1.5°C

will be achieved (Khan, 2019). Besides, current Nigeria policies, especially the post COVID-19 Economic Sustainability Plan (FGN, 2020), do not specifically reflect the pledge to follow a low carbon development path as indicated in the NDC. The post COVID-19 Nigeria Economic Sustainability Plan, which was made to respond to the economic challenges posed by the pandemic given the predicted negative gross domestic product (GDP) growth of -3.4% in 2020 (IMF, 2020), may inadvertently worsen the threat of climate change if the option of a low carbon climate-resilient development is not clearly reflected in the strategy and targeted in the action plan.

Thus, to help support Nigeria's effort towards achieving a low-carbon climate-resilient development even as the country is updating her NDC and to learn from international experiences, the Resource and Environmental Policy Research Centre (REPRC)- Environment for Development (EfD) Nigeria, University of Nigeria Nsukka, in collaboration with the Federal Ministry of Environment and the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) hosts a policy seminar and dialogue. The policy seminar and dialogue, which will be virtual, aims to bring together some policy makers, leading experts and practitioners to brainstorm on the policy options for facilitating low-carbon climate resilient development in post COVID-19 Nigeria. The discussion will involve presentations by experts on different sub-teams on the subject matter and a follow-up robust discussions and dialogue on best policy options to facilitate low-carbon climate-resilient development and green growth in Nigeria in the post-COVID era. The output of the discussions will be a policy brief that will guide government to facilitate Low-Carbon Climate-Resilient Development in Post COVID-19 Nigeria and in developing a Low-Carbon Climate-Resilient Development Plan. On a broader scale, the international experiences shared and output of the event may also be useful in informing policy in other countries in Africa facing similar environment-development challenges.

## References

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