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**TOPIC: SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT FROM
INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVES: HOW DO DEVELOPING
COUNTRIES FIT THE MATRIX**

Let me begin by expressing my profound gratitude to the Vice Chancellor, Prof Olugbemiro Jegede and the Faculty of the National Open University of Nigeria for the invitation extended to me to share my thoughts on the topic: *Sustainable Development From International Perspectives: How Do Developing Countries Fit The Matrix.*

At the Earth Summit in Rio in 1992, the international community desperately sought to establish a new and equitable global partnership to protect the integrity of the global environment based on three pillars of sustainable development, namely: environmental protection, economic development and social development. The global community agreed that these three pillars must be balanced, integrated and mutually reinforcing based on the Rio principles. The United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development (UNCSD) was thereby established as an intergovernmental process with unhindered involvement of all countries in its decision making process, to ensure effective global implementation of the Earth Summit agreements, including the now famous Agenda 21, which is a blue print containing the agenda for the implementation of sustainable development.

Agenda 21 covers the broad field of sustainable development. The action programme was envisaged as the tool for implementing the principles enunciated in the Rio Declaration. It offers clearly articulated objectives, targets, strategies, activities, costing and an allocation of institutional roles. Agenda 21 has a preamble that is important in setting its contents. A key clause in the preamble states that Agenda 21 "reflects a global consensus and political commitment at the highest level on development and environment cooperation." The preamble further notes the disparities between the rich and poor and urges nations to work together in a global partnership in order to achieve sustainable development. In order to assure a safer and more prosperous future, environment and development issues need to be dealt with in a balanced manner.

While recognizing that the right to development must be fulfilled in order to equitably meet developmental and environmental needs of present and future generations, it also acknowledged that meeting the environmental objectives in Agenda 21, the blue print for sustainable development, would place additional, even onerous, burdens on developing countries. A balance was forged between developmental and environmental imperatives, consequently creating a framework for assistance by the international community to complement and support the efforts of developing countries.

It could be stated that the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) changed, in a far-reaching way, the face of the environment and development landscape, and institutions. UNCED generated five formal documents: treaties on climate change and biodiversity, a statement on non-binding forest principles, the Rio Declaration and the action programme, Agenda 21.

The Earth Summit further recommended the active participation of citizens along with governments in the implementation of the Rio agreements. Since then, many countries have established their own multi-stakeholder participatory body, referred to as National Council for Sustainable Development or its equivalent, to promote and implement sustainable development at the national level.

The form and functions of National Council for Sustainable Development vary, but its common roles are:

- Assist governments in decision-making and policy formulation;
- Facilitate the focused participation and cooperation of civil and economic society with governments for sustainable development;
- Integrate economic, social and environmental action and perspectives;
- Localize global agreements such as Agenda 21 and other international conventions related to sustainable development; and
- Provide a systematic and informed participation of civil society in United Nations deliberations.

The National Councils for Sustainable Development (NCSO) can be seen as national level counterparts of the United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development at the international level. It facilitates countries' follow-up of the implementation of Agenda 21 at the national level, and assists in preparation of national reports to be presented regularly to the United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development

(UNCSD). While the UNCSD provides a forum to coordinate amongst different countries' interests and concerns to negotiate common global sustainable development objectives and targets, the NCSs coordinate amongst plurality of national stakeholder interests and concerns to develop and carry out collaborative sustainable development strategies, policies, programmes and projects for common national good.

The UNCSD activities are coordinated by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations (UN DESA) which serves as its secretariat. The secretariat receives reports based on master set of data compiled by an Inter-Agency and Expert Group (25 UN bodies - Funds and Programmes, Commissions and Specialized Agencies, including the World Bank, United Nations Environment Programme, United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, World Trade Organizations, Economic Commissions, Conventions, etc) for periodic assessment of progress on sustainable development, including millennium development goals.

A number of countries, which established National Council on Sustainable development or its equivalent following the outcome of the Earth Summit in 1992 showed considerable progress in the implementation of Agenda 21 and other decisions on sustainable development during the review process in 2000. The rest, at best, including Nigeria without a national coordinating body, achieved little progress. It was in this light that the Institutional Framework for Sustainable Development of the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development recommended the establishment of national council for sustainable development or its equivalent to all countries to assist them in coordination at the national level. Nigeria only got Presidential approval to set up its national sustainable development commission in 2007, fifteen years after the Earth Summit in Rio.

The sample of countries that established a national council for sustainable development or its equivalent customarily set them up as independent bodies. These countries include:

- United Kingdom – founded Sustainable Development Commission in October 2000 – advocates sustainable development across all sectors in the UK, review of progress towards it, and build consensus on the actions needed if further progress is to be achieved;

- Belgium – National Council for Sustainable Development functioned as from 1993 – an advisory body that advises the Belgium Federal authorities about the federal policy on sustainable development;
- Germany – German Council for Sustainable Development – established in 2001,
- Finland – Finnish National Commission on Sustainable Development – established to coordinate the different measures on sustainable development at different levels;
- South Korea – Presidential Commission on Sustainable Development;
- Romania – National Centre for Sustainable Development – responsible for advocating and coordinating all relevant initiatives pertaining to sustainable development in Romania;
- Philippines Council for Sustainable Development – created to chart environment and sustainable development initiatives in the country.

In the UK as in many other European countries, a Board of Sustainable Development Commission was established, consisting of 19 Commissioners from a mix of academic, scientific, business and NGO background, chaired by a notable figure, and supported by 49 policy staff. Its work is divided into ten policy areas: climate change, consumption, economics, education, energy, engagement, health, housing, regional and local government and transport. Each policy area is led by a steering group of Commissioners and SDC staff. Commissioners decide on which projects will be undertaken in each policy area, taking into account: knowledge gaps in Government, new policy initiatives, contentious issues and technological innovations.

ASSESSMENT

After ten years of global implementation of Agenda 21, the international community through the outcomes (Johannesburg Plan of Implementation and Declaration) of the World Summit on Sustainable development (WSSD) expressed deep concern that, despite the many successful and continuing efforts of the international community since the United Nations Conference on Environment, held at Rio in 1992 and the fact that some progress has been achieved, the environment and the natural resource base that support life on earth continue to deteriorate at an alarming rate, particularly in the developing countries.

The review of the implementation of Agenda 21 as it affects African countries showed that not much improvement have been made in their socio-economic and environmental development. The Nairobi Declaration stated that the African economies have been on the decline and in some cases near collapse, both in quantitative and qualitative terms. The rate of economic growth in at least half of the region has stayed below 2 % per annum-measured in terms of GDP while the human population has grown by an average of 3% per annum. It stated that Africa, unlike other regions of the world, continues to receive extremely low foreign private capital. It highlighted that despite the great opportunities globalization offers, its benefits are unevenly distributed and yet its costs are borne by all, leading to marginalization of the continent in the global economy. It thereby emphasized that increased regional integration/cooperation is essential for promotion and development of African economic markets, to support economic growth as well as strengthening Africa's negotiating abilities with other regional groupings and transnational corporations.

In spite of the difficulties experienced in the implementation of Agenda 21, mainly due to weak financial constraints and insufficient technology transfer, reviews carried out within the framework of the African Preparatory Process have indicated that some of the major gains made by countries include:

- The formulation of policies and strategies for sustainable development
- Inter-agency coordination mechanism have been established/strengthened
- Civil Society including NGOs, women's groups, youth groups and the private sector are more and more being involved in the design and implementation of sustainable development strategies and action plans
- Greater awareness on sustainable development issues has been built
- The democratization process has yielded some encouraging results and there is greater decentralization of natural resources management
- Life expectancy and access to education especially for girls have improved
- Sub-regional integration has increased and regional integration strengthened

It was against this background that the Commission on Sustainable Development, at its eleventh session at the United Nations Headquarters, decided that its multi-year programme of work beyond 2003 to implement the outcomes of the World Summit on Sustainable Development of 2000, would be organized on the basis of seven two-year cycles, with each cycle focusing on selected thematic clusters of issues, as set out in the table below.

<i>Cycle</i>	<i>Thematic cluster</i>	<i>Cross-cutting issues</i>
2004/2005	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water • Sanitation • Human Settlements 	Poverty eradication, Changing unsustainable patterns of consumption and production, Protecting and managing the natural resource base of economic and social development, Sustainable development in a globalizing world, Health and sustainable development, Sustainable development of SIDS, Sustainable development for Africa, Other regional initiatives, Means of implementation, Institutional framework for sustainable development, Gender equality, and Education
2006/2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Energy for Sustainable Development • Industrial Development • Air Pollution / Atmosphere • Climate Change 	Poverty eradication, Changing unsustainable patterns of consumption and production, Protecting and managing the natural resource base of economic and social development, Sustainable development in a globalizing world, Health and sustainable development, Sustainable development of SIDS, Sustainable development for Africa, Other regional initiatives, Means of implementation, Institutional framework for sustainable development, Gender equality, and

		Education
2008/2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agriculture • Rural Development • Land • Drought • Desertification • Africa 	Poverty eradication, Changing unsustainable patterns of consumption and production, Protecting and managing the natural resource base of economic and social development, Sustainable development in a globalizing world, Health and sustainable development, Sustainable development of SIDS, Sustainable development for Africa, Other regional initiatives, Means of implementation, Institutional framework for sustainable development, Gender equality, and Education
2010/2011*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transport • Chemicals • Waste Management • Mining • A Ten Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production Patterns 	Poverty eradication, Changing unsustainable patterns of consumption and production, Protecting and managing the natural resource base of economic and social development, Sustainable development in a globalizing world, Health and sustainable development, Sustainable development of SIDS, Sustainable development for Africa, Other regional initiatives, Means of implementation, Institutional framework for sustainable development, Gender equality, and Education
2012/2013*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forests • Biodiversity • Biotechnology • Tourism • Mountains 	Poverty eradication, Changing unsustainable patterns of consumption and production, Protecting and managing the natural resource base of economic and social development, Sustainable development in a globalizing world, Health and sustainable development, Sustainable

		development of SIDS, Sustainable development for Africa, Other regional initiatives, Means of implementation, Institutional framework for sustainable development, Gender equality, and Education
2014/2015*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oceans and Seas • Marine Resources • Small Island Developing States • Disaster Management and Vulnerability 	Poverty eradication, Changing unsustainable patterns of consumption and production, Protecting and managing the natural resource base of economic and social development, Sustainable development in a globalizing world, Health and sustainable development, Sustainable development of SIDS, Sustainable development for Africa, Other regional initiatives, Means of implementation, Institutional framework for sustainable development, Gender equality, and Education
2016/2017	Overall appraisal of implementation of Agenda 21, the Programme of Further Implementation of Agenda 21 and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation	

In each cycle, the thematic clusters of issues will be addressed in an integrated manner, taking into account economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development. The Commission agreed that the implementation process should cover all these issues equally and noted that the selection of some issues for a given cycle did not diminish the importance of the commitments undertaken with respect to the issues to be considered in future cycles.

The Commission further agreed that means of implementation should be addressed in every cycle and for every relevant issue, action

and commitment. Linkages to other cross-cutting issues are also to be addressed in every cycle, as shown below.

It was against this background that the Bureau of the 13th session of the Commission on Sustainable Development requested the secretariat to develop a matrix of information tool along the line of thematic themes for each cycle of the CSD to provide the user with a convenient overview of concrete experiences in addressing barriers and constraints identified in the areas of the thematic themes. It is meant to timely compile the policy options and practical measures contained in the Chairman's summary of the interactive discussions held at the Intergovernmental Preparatory Meetings of the CSD, so as to make it a living document, and to develop web-based tools to disseminate information on implementation and best practices.

It is also based on information submitted by Governments, including through national reports; and by UN agencies, international and regional organizations and by Major Groups. It takes into account information contained in Secretary-General's reports and Partnerships for Sustainable Development registered with the CSD Secretariat, as well as information emerging from the regional implementation meetings. It is not an official outcome document of the CSD. As an information tool, it is a work in progress, which the Secretariat will continue to update as more information on implementation is made available.

It consists of four columns which are structured as follows:

- **Barriers/Constraints:** Information in this column is based on Secretary-General's Reports, national reports, reports of Regional Implementation Meetings and the related background documents, and inputs from Major Groups and CSD Partnerships.
- **Case studies:** Case studies are drawn from Secretary-General's Reports, national reports, reports of Regional Implementation Meetings and the related background documents, and inputs from Major Groups and CSD Partnerships, as well as case studies submitted for CSD-16.
- **Lessons learned:** Best practices or results. This column provides a snapshot overview of the lessons learned, best practices or results of the particular case study.
- **Key implementation actors:** This column indicates key implementation actors, based on information contained in the case studies.

HOW DEVELOPING NATIONS FIT THE MATRIX

The matrix is a flexible tool that would enable the user, be it a developing country, to access information that will enable it to address barriers and constraints in the implementation of the thematic themes of the CSD cycle as well as in drawing from the pool of lessons learned from best practices from other countries. Notwithstanding that it is not a negotiated document; it could assist developing countries in the implementation of outcome decisions on the thematic themes of the CSD cycles.

The fundamental problems facing developing countries are not in the matrix but on lack of capacity to meet up with the requirements for effective application of the matrix. First and foremost, most developing countries the required technology that would provide them with easy and unhindered access to information that is freely available in the web site of the secretariat of the CS to all countries. Even basic requirements of the matrix such as preparing national reports and inputs of major groups and civil society countries to update on the level of implementation of the agenda for sustainable development could not be met by most developing countries for so many reasons, including lack of financial resources, technical know how, national coordination, capacity and political will, etc.

For our country, Nigeria, although there are many Federal Ministries and Agencies of government handling the issues of sustainable development, none has the legal authority and mandate to coordinate the implementation agenda. Principal among them are Federal Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Federal Ministries of Water Resources, Energy, Agriculture, Industry, Trade, Women Affairs, Finance, Transport, Health, Education; National Planning Commission, Central Bank, National Energy Commission, NNPC, Office Special Adviser to the President on Millennium Development Goals, National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP), National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS), NEPAD Nigeria, etc.

Each one of the Ministries and Agencies in Nigeria, as operational bodies, has mandate to implement one aspect or the other of sustainable development but none has the mandate or the structure to coordinate national implementation of sustainable development. In effect, there is no national body coordinating sustainable development in the three tire levels (Local, State and Federal) of governments in Nigeria. Nigeria's

marginal progress in the implementation of the Agenda 21 and other outcomes of the UN Conferences and Summit as they relate to sustainable development could be traced, in the main, to the lack of national coordinating body for implementation of such decisions as well as inadequate and uncoordinated allocation of resources for implementation of sustainable development agenda.

The Federal Ministry of Environment, which is the focal point on environmental aspects of sustainable development, and has tried to assume the role of coordinator, either by omission or default, was not structured or well equipped financially to perform that role. Being the operational body on environmental issues, other Ministries and agencies, such as Finance and National Planning as well as Central Bank with certain mandate on development matters (economic aspect of sustainable development) simply refused to submit to the Federal Ministry of Environment, and hardly attend any Inter-Ministerial meetings called by Environment to reach national consensus or participate in international meetings on sustainable development. Furthermore, the Millennium Development Office has charted an independent approach that does not appreciate that what currently are MDGs are important but small part of overall decisions on sustainable development.

In effect, it will be difficult to apply the matrix in Nigeria and many developing countries. This is because the enabling environment does not exist. It is self evident that neither in economic planning nor in annual fiscal policies did successive governments integrate or mainstream outcomes of sustainable development targets in relation to the Millennium Development Goals. Using the CSD thematic themes as a practical example, the matrix was composed of energy, industrial development, air pollution/atmosphere and climate change. The information available would indicate the adequacy of private sector investment, capacity development support and CSD partnerships database. The capacity development will aim to increase access to energy services by enhancing policy frameworks, entrepreneurial developments, consumer organization and credit systems, expanding the number and capabilities of enterprises operating in rural markets. It would also indicate international partnerships, government, entrepreneurs and local communities that are available and ready to engage in the implementation process.

The matrix under this theme further addressed other issues such as lack of incentives and resources for service providers to expand service, inadequate governance structures for managing energy services, lack of

capacity and viable business models for off-grid services. It dealt with regulatory frameworks with particular focus on energy access not prioritized and integrated into the development strategies, weak regulatory framework for energy efficiency in building sector, lack of policy support for increased renewable energy application. It highlighted insufficient awareness and access to new technologies or fuel in relation to household energy, lack of financing of public sector energy efficiency projects, lack of information about renewable energy and application at all levels. The information provided in the matrix is so fulsome with case studies and real and specific investment modules that any country with certain level of seriousness could dramatically reshape its sustainable development focus with its application.

Nigeria and other developing countries have clear responsibilities with regard to sustainable development which they have not lived up, particularly with respect to mobilization of domestic resources and international financial, technological and technical support for the implementation of sustainable development. We are seeing a huge gap among developing countries that following up effectively in the implementation of sustainable development agenda, such as such as South East Asia countries, in particular India, China, Brazil, South Africa and those lagging behind mainly from sub-Saharan Africa.

The Earth Summit established the GEF as the financial mechanism to provide grants to developing countries for projects that benefit the global environment and promote sustainable livelihoods in local communities. GEF projects address six complex global environmental issues:

- Biodiversity;
- Climate Change;
- International Waters;
- Land Degradation;
- The Ozone Layer;
- Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs)

Since 1991, the Global Environment Facility has provided \$6.8 billion in grants and generated over \$24 billion in co-financing from other sources to support over 1,900 projects that produce global environmental benefits in more than 160 developing countries and countries with

economies in transition. GEF funds are contributed by donor countries. In 2006, 32 donor countries, including Nigeria pledged \$3.13 billion to fund operations for four years.

According to Global Environmental Outlook (GEO) 2000, Africa had received \$US419 million (22 per cent of all GEF funding) for approved projects by June 1998. By mid 1998, the regional projects in the biodiversity focal area had been allocated the highest amount globally (some \$US250 million). GEO 2000 lists examples of other national and sub-regional projects in the biodiversity focal area, including the management of plant genetic resources, and of protected areas, the conservation and management of habitats and species, island biodiversity, coastal, marine and freshwater ecosystems, forest ecosystems and capacity and institution building.

As the financial mechanism of the Climate Convention, GEF allocates and disburses about \$250 million dollars per year to fund projects in developing countries in energy efficiency, renewable energies, and sustainable transportation. Moreover, it manages two special funds under the UNFCCC — the Least Developed Countries Fund and the Special Climate Change Fund. The GEF supports mitigation projects that reduce or avoid greenhouse gas emissions in the areas of renewable energy, energy efficiency, and sustainable transport. It also supports adaptation projects that increase resilience to the adverse impacts of climate change of vulnerable countries, sectors, and communities.

In the area of international waters the projects include water-body management programmes, pollution control, integrated land and water programmes, and oil pollution management projects.

Biodiversity conservation constitutes one of the GEF's greatest priorities. Since 1991, the GEF has invested nearly \$7.6 billion in grants and co-financing for biodiversity conservation in developing countries. As the financial mechanism for the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the GEF helps countries fulfil their obligations under the CBD. The biodiversity portfolio supports initiatives that promote in situ and sustainable biodiversity conservation in protected areas and production landscapes as well as capacity building for implementation of the Cartagena Protocol on Bio safety (CPB) and knowledge dissemination.

In 2002, the GEF Assembly expanded GEF's mandate by adding land degradation to the GEF portfolio. In 2003, the GEF was designated a financial mechanism of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD). Over the next three years, GEF expects to invest more than \$750 million in projects that integrate sustainable land management into national development priorities, strengthen human, technical, and institutional capacities, bring about needed policy and regulatory reforms, and implement innovative sustainable land management practices. In the current replenishment, the GEF has allocated US\$300 to focal areas of Sustainable Land Management.

Although Nigeria has benefited from funding activities of the Conventions and its financial mechanisms, it has not fully exploited the tremendous opportunities available in the funding of projects in the multilateral environmental conventions. Virtually all Sub-Saharan African countries, including Nigeria, could not to-date access funding allocated to them under the resource allocation framework of the Global Environment Facility. This has to do with the inability of these countries to develop viable projects that would meet the eligibility criteria or incremental cost or any other requirements of the GEF on projects. It is also pertinent to note that we have not, so far, been able to provide the counterpart funding, as a matter of annual fiscal policy, required to guarantee access such funding from the international financial institutions.

It is urgent, at this point, for Nigeria to provide the leadership expected of her as a major geo-political player in the continent of Africa, particularly at the meetings of the Conference of the Parties of the Conventions, where decisions that affect Nigeria and other developing countries in Africa are taken. More significantly, Nigeria's international image is incessantly being tarnished by its inability to pay its statutory contributions to multilateral organizations to enable it exploit all the available potential opportunities, which by far outstrips such payments in term of benefits. The vacuum thus created is increasingly being contested by other regional players like South Africa, Egypt, Brazil and Indonesia in the South Souths context.

We must therefore seize the moment of an evolving international environment to re-establish our rightful position among the comity of nations.

