

**THE UNITED NATIONS' FRAMEWORK CONVENTION ON CLIMATE  
CHANGE AND NIGERIA'S ADAPTATION STRATEGIES**

**I MOMOEMI ABEL YOUGHBA  
ADP15/16/ H6011  
B.Sc. (International Relations) Oa**

**A THESIS WRITTEN IN THE DEPARTMENT OF INTERNATIONAL  
RELATIONS, FACULTY OF ADMINISTRATION AND SUBMITTED TO THE  
POSTGRADUATE COLLEGE, OBAFEMI AWOLOWO UNIVERSITY, ILE-  
IFE, NIGERIA, IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR  
THE AWARD OF MASTER OF SCIENCE DEGREE IN INTERNATIONAL  
RELATIONS**

**2019**

## ABSTRACT

This study investigated how climate change has affected Nigeria and examined Nigeria's institutional capacity to respond to climate change. Furthermore, the study assessed Nigeria's strategies in adapting to climate change and identified the effects of response by global actors to the Paris Agreement on Nigeria's ability and strategies in response to climate change. These were with a view to enhancing the understanding of the nature of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the ways Nigeria is affected by the framework.

Primary and secondary data were used in the study. The primary data were sourced from in-depth interviews from 30 respondents. The study area included the Department of Climate Change, Ministry of Environment of the Federal Republic of Nigeria in Abuja and the Nigerian Environmental Study/ Action Team (NEST) in Ibadan. Descriptive qualitative analysis was used to analyze the data collected.

The results showed that climate change affected every region of Nigeria and could be seen in distorted patterns of rainfall, increased heat, drought and severe floods; which had dire effects, especially on the agriculture and health sectors. Furthermore, although Nigeria has established a number of institutions to respond to climate change, institutional capacity were inadequate as seen in available resources and ability to implement plans. Additionally, Nigeria has spelt out strategies for adaptation; however, these strategies were yet to be implemented. Finally, the study found that global actors' responses have not been adequate to achieve the goal of the Paris Agreement, and this will further aggravate climate change and raise the need for adaptation in Nigeria.

The study concluded that while the UNFCCC Paris Agreement established a more realistic approach to international cooperation on climate change, it has however delivered little concrete influence on climate change adaptation in Nigeria.

OBAFEMI AWOLOWO UNIVERSITY

## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **1.1 Background to the Study**

There is now a global consensus that the climate of the earth is changing and this change creates a huge potential threat to the world and its entire population, whether now or in the future. The mainstream thought being that the shifts in the global climate are mostly due to human activities (CEPS, 2004: 4). This view has been confirmed not only by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), but by various assessment reports (CEPS, 2004). Nevertheless, dissenting views still persist. The United States Environment and Public Works Senate Committee (2009) issued a report documenting over 700 scientist-skeptics voicing a range of opposing opinions, most challenging the argument on the anthropogenic cause of climate change, although some are reported debunking climate change entirely. In 2010 that list was updated by Climate Depot Special Report (2010) to above 1000 sceptics.

Consequently, policymakers and experts largely agree that the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) is indeed a positive step in developing a holistic framework for regulating the activities of the international community to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to the changing climate. The UNFCCC's almost universal membership is by far the most prominent attempt at creating mechanisms for climate change. In May 1992, the UNFCCC was adopted and available for signature at the 1992 Rio de Janeiro Earth Summit. This came into force in March 1994 and had 197 Members (196 states and the European Union) as of May 2018. The

end goal of the Convention is to "stabilisation of greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere at a level that would prevent dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate system" Two agreements, the Kyoto Protocol and the Paris Agreement (IPCC, 2018), adopt and enforce the terms of the Convention.

Nonetheless, States' cumulative commitments are inadequate to meet the convention's goal of achieving stability of ambient greenhouse gas concentrations at a rate which would discourage dangerous anthropogenic interference with the earth's climate. Additionally, doubt remains over the willingness of states to meet these pledges, much less increase them over time to the extent needed to reduce the average global temperature. Moreover guidelines and incentives to guarantee that these agreements are transparent and accountable have characterized international climate negotiations (Moncel, Joffe, McCall and Levin, 2011). Implementation, since Kyoto did not impose any responsibilities on developing states, and the United States did not ratify the agreements for a long period, its practical impact was limited, weak and essentially symbolic of the complexities that underscore the development of an adequate climate regime (Keohane and David, 2010).

The international community is now aware of the severity of the threat to climate. The risks associated with unchecked climate change are also well reported and its impact increasingly affect humans and the ecosystems. However, following a global agreement by so many governments all over the world to stabilize anthropogenic greenhouse gases (GHGs) at acceptable levels, emissions are still on the rise and commitments for possible action, in sum, still fall short as to what evidence indicates is

required (Moncel, Joffe, McCall and Levin, 2011). Without a fully functioning global governance structure, international climate agreements can only be accomplished on a voluntary basis. Since protection against climate change is a global public good, no state can be excluded from enjoying climate security regardless of participation; these commitments provide very strong opportunities for free-ride. Climate change, like other global environmental negotiations, faces challenges related to the need for global cooperation, long-term sustainability, strong policy engagements and free-riding (CEPS, 2004). Considering that climate change is far more complicated due to its high level of uncertainty and lack of technological solutions, the latest debates on the future of a global climate change regime in improving on important accomplishments that have already been made, focus on the problem of how agreements are formulated to guarantee:

1. Participation (and avoid free-riding) and
2. Compliance (CEPS, 2004).

Independent of the discussions concerning global climate policy, all countries will experience the effects of climate change, even though the impact will vary. In the poorest states where vulnerability is higher due to geographical and climatic conditions and where the capacity to respond is very low these adverse effects will be felt most strongly. Stakeholders generally agree that climate change will impact all states, particularly the developing nations (Nicholas, Madukwe, Enete, Anmechina, Onokala, Eboh, Ujah and Garforth, 2012). Generally, developing states have less favourable economic conditions, weaker structures, restricted access to capital, and are limited in exchange of information. The most vulnerable states to climate change are often the least ready to adapt or respond to it. Effective adaptation depends on advances in technology,

organizational capability, expertise and training, and financial availability (Figueres and Maria, 2002).

OBAFEMI AWOLOWO UNIVERSITY