

Examining The Effectiveness of International Climate Agreements in Fostering Global Cooperation and Collective Action Towards Climate Change Mitigation in Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

This paper aims to examine the role of international climate agreements in encouraging cooperative action and facilitating climate-change mitigation efforts in Nigeria. It begins by underscoring the pressing necessity of addressing climate change as one of the most significant challenges confronting humanity in the 21st century. It emphasizes the vital role of international climate agreements in reducing greenhouse gas emissions, promoting sustainable growth, and supporting vulnerable nations in mitigating the consequences of climate change. Given that Nigeria is highly susceptible to the adverse effects of climate change, it is exposed to significant risks to the environment, economy, and socioeconomic development.

This paper discusses Nigeria's commitment to climate change mitigation through its participation in international agreements such as the UNFCCC and the Paris Agreement. It evaluates Nigeria's progress in implementing climate change mitigation strategies and collaborative efforts with global partners. Furthermore, the concept of collective action theory is introduced, highlighting its relevance in tackling global challenges such as climate change. Additionally, this paper emphasizes that collective action is essential in addressing climate change, as it entails cooperative efforts among individuals, groups, and countries to achieve common objectives.

It delves into how collective action theory provides valuable insights into the efficacy of international climate agreements and the need for international collaboration to develop comprehensive solutions. This paper identifies the factors that influence the success or failure of climate agreements in Nigeria and underscores the importance of in-depth studies to comprehend their impact on international partnerships and collective action. It concludes by discussing the implications of the research findings for future policy and decision-making, to contribute to more effective global climate change mitigation strategies.

INTRODUCTION

Climate change has emerged as one of the most pressing challenges faced by humanity in the 21st century. Its impact is far-reaching, affecting ecosystems, economies, and human well-being worldwide. Recognizing the urgency of addressing this global issue, international climate agreements have been established to foster global cooperation and collective action.¹ These agreements aim at mitigating climate change by reducing greenhouse gas emissions, promoting sustainable development, and supporting vulnerable nations in adapting to climate change. In Nigeria, a country highly vulnerable to climate change impacts, it is crucial to examine the effectiveness of international climate agreements in fostering collective action and facilitating climate-change

¹Cecile Barnaud et al., "Ecosystem Services, Social Interdependencies, and Collective Action: A Conceptual Framework," *Ecology and Society* 23, no. 1 (2018): art15, <https://doi.org/10.5751/ES-09848-230115>.

mitigation efforts.² Nigeria, located in West Africa, is particularly susceptible to climate-related risks such as rising temperatures, increased frequency and intensity of extreme weather events, sea-level rise, and desertification.³ These challenges pose significant threats to the country's agriculture, water resources, health systems, and overall socioeconomic stability.⁴

To reduce the effects of climate change, nations must work together and take coordinated action. International climate agreements are essential for promoting cooperation among nations and for group efforts to mitigate climate change.

These agreements provide forums for nations to coordinate efforts to cut greenhouse gas emissions, prepare for climate change, set goals, and share resources and expertise.⁵

Nigeria has acknowledged the significance of taking part in these agreements and implementing sustainable policies to address the climate crisis, given its status as a developing country that is extremely vulnerable to the effects of climate change.⁶

The issue is that there is currently a dearth of in-depth studies that carefully examine how international climate agreements affect international collaboration and group action, particularly in Nigeria.⁷ It is imperative for policymakers, researchers, and stakeholders engaged in climate change mitigation initiatives in Nigeria to understand the efficacy of these agreements.⁸

This paper offers important insights into boosting the efficacy of international climate agreements in Nigeria and eventually contributing to more successful global climate change mitigation strategies by identifying the strengths, weaknesses, and areas for improvement.

NIGERIA'S ROLE IN CLIMATE CHANGE MITIGATION EFFORTS

Nigeria's Commitment to Climate Change Mitigation through its Participation in International Agreements and National Policies.

Climate change poses significant risks to Nigeria's environment, economy, and socioeconomic development.⁹ Nigeria is committed to reducing climate change as a responsible member of the global

²Ogunayo O. Olashore, "Implementation of the International Legal Framework Regarding Climate Change in Developing Countries; A Review of Nigeria, Kenya, and Botswana's Environmental Provisions Governing Climate Change," *Environmental Law Review* 21, no. 3 (September 4, 2019): 189–209, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1461452919841001>.

³Obinna Nzechie et al., "Analyzing the Critical Impact of Climate Change on Agriculture and Food Security in Nigeria," *International Journal of Agriculture and Earth Science (IJAES)* 9, no. 4 (July 2023), <https://doi.org/10.56201/ijssmr.v8.no1.2022.pg32.40>.

⁴Victor Ojakorotu, Bamidele Olajide, and Busola Dunmade, "The Political Economy of Digitalization and Climate Change Response in Nigeria," *International Journal of Criminology and Sociology* 9 (April 5, 2022): 508–17, <https://doi.org/10.6000/1929-4409.2020.09.49>.

⁵Ibid.

⁶Stephen Osaherumwen Idahosa, "An Analysis of the Nigerian Foreign Policy: A Narrative," 2017, <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/321034775>.

⁷Olashore, Supra note 3.

⁸Onyejelam Emem, "Building an Effective Implementation Process to Nigeria's Climate Change Policies and Intended Nationally Determined Contribution (INDC)," *SSRN Electronic Journal*, 2016, <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.2843279>.

⁹Mohammed A Al-Amin, "An assessment of Nigeria's preparedness to environmental disasters from its commitment to international environmental treaties," *European Scientific Journal*, vol. 9, 2013.

community by participating in international agreements and forming national policies.

Nigeria signed the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in 1992, which serves as the main framework for global climate action.¹⁰ By signing this agreement, Nigeria has demonstrated its understanding of the global nature of climate change and the necessity for coordinated action. In 2015, the Paris Agreement was established in Paris with the sole aim of reducing greenhouse gas emissions to 2 degrees above the pre-industrial level while still pursuing it to 1.5 °.¹¹ Nigeria is among the countries that have committed to keeping global warming well below 2 °C and to work toward keeping it to 1.5 °C when it ratified the agreement in 2017.¹²

Nigeria promised in its Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions by 20% without conditions and by up to 45% with help from other countries by 2030.¹³ Furthermore, Nigeria created the National Climate Change Policy and Response Strategy (NCCPRS) in 2012 as a guide against climate change.

Nigeria's commitment to low-carbon development, adaptation strategies, and resilience-building initiatives across multiple sectors is outlined in this policy document. A thorough framework for controlling climate risks and fostering resilience is offered by Nigeria's National Adaptation Strategy and Plan of Action on Climate Change (NASPA-CCN).

It concentrates on important topics, such as energy, agriculture, water resources, health, and ecosystems. Nigeria's NDC outlines the country's climate-change mitigation and adaptation targets, strategies, and actions. This emphasizes the importance of renewable energy deployment, sustainable agriculture, afforestation, and energy efficiency measures.¹⁴

Nigeria's Progress in Implementing Climate Change Mitigation Strategies and its Collaboration with Global Partners.

Nigeria has a lot of work ahead in terms of climate change mitigation. Nonetheless, the nation has shown increasing dedication to tackling this problem through partnerships with international organizations and internal policy initiatives.¹⁵ Nigeria has demonstrated its commitment to lowering greenhouse gas emissions by ratifying the Paris Agreement.¹⁶ The Green Climate Fund was established to raise funds for climate-action initiatives.¹⁷ To encourage investment in renewable energy sources, such as solar and wind power, the government has implemented policies and incentives. This reduces the dependency on fossil fuels and promotes a sustainable

¹⁰Ibid.

¹¹Zhizheng Zhou, "Evaluation of the Effectiveness of Paris Agreement - An Angle from the Determining of Normative Framework," *Lecture Notes in Education Psychology and Public Media* 11, no. 1 (October 26, 2023): 18–25, <https://doi.org/10.54254/2753-7048/11/20230705>.

¹²B. C. Anwadike, "Paris Agreement Implementation in Nigeria: Compliance Level, Constraints and Possible Ways Forward," *Current Journal of Applied Science and Technology*, September 14, 2021, 41–48, <https://doi.org/10.9734/cjast/2021/v40i2331491>.

¹³Emem, Supra note 9.

¹⁴Abubakar Oladeji and Oluwatobiloba Daniel Adewunmi, "Between Climate Change Narratives and Policy Actions: The Choice of Developing a Sustainable Development Agenda for Nigeria," *SSRN Electronic Journal*, 2015, <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.2673505>.

¹⁵Osaherumwen, Supra note 7.

¹⁶Ibid.

¹⁷Jonas Bertilsson and Håkan Thörn, "Discourses on Transformational Change and Paradigm Shift in the Green Climate Fund: The Divide over Financialization and Country Ownership," *Environmental Politics* 30, no. 3 (April 16, 2021): 423–41, <https://doi.org/10.1080/09644016.2020.1775446>.

energy sector.¹⁸Nigeria has demonstrated its commitment to global efforts by actively participating in international discussions of climate change. Nigeria can obtain financial and technical knowledge for climate mitigation projects by collaborating with developed countries. This cooperation is essential for the success of implementation.¹⁹Nigeria actively participates in international climate negotiations and advances its global climate change agenda as a signatory to the UNFCCC. It uses climate finance mechanisms, builds capacity, and submits national reports.

Nigeria pledged to make Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) in line with its development priorities after ratifying the Paris Agreement in 2017.²⁰These include strengthening climate resilience in important sectors and reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 20% by 2030.²¹Nigeria has access to climate finance through the Green Climate Fund and other international climate finance mechanisms.²²These grants help to carry out climate change projects, such as the development of renewable energy sources, adaptation plans, and capacity-building campaigns.²³

COLLECTIVE ACTION THEORY

The Concept of Collective Action and its Relevance in Addressing Global Challenges Such as Climate Change.

The term ‘collective action’ describes the cooperative efforts of people, groups, and countries working toward a common objective. Addressing common challenges involves combining resources, assigning duties, and coordinating activities.²⁴Because climate change is a transboundary issue that requires comprehensive and coordinated responses, collective action is crucial. All countries and communities are affected by climate change, irrespective of the level of greenhouse gas emissions. The concept of mitigating climate change is a shared duty that calls for the involvement of all stakeholders in cutting emissions, preparing for consequences, and advancing sustainable development fostered by collective action.²⁵As the effects of climate change are not limited by national borders, international cooperation is required to create effective mitigation and adaptation plans. Cooperation between nations is facilitated by collective action, making it possible to share financial, technological, and intellectual resources for a coordinated worldwide response.²⁶

Climate change complexities require a range of viewpoints and knowledge. By promoting the sharing of information and resources, collective action helps develop creative and comprehensive solutions that tackle various facets of the climate crisis, including energy transition, sustainable agriculture, and ecosystem preservation.²⁷The social science-based theory of collective action investigates the circumstances in which individuals or groups cooperate to accomplish shared objectives. It examines the mechanisms, incentives, and

¹⁸Kelechi Ojukwu, “What Strategic Policies Can Save Nigeria in the Energy Transition?,” in *Day 3 Wed, August 04, 2021* (SPE, 2021), <https://doi.org/10.2118/207090-MS>.

¹⁹Ochi Ijeoma Brigid, Ezeamu Emmanuel Okwuchukwu, and Jachin Anyiam Marcel, “The Political Economy of Climate Change in Nigeria,” *Scholars Journal of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences* 10, no. 7 (July 16, 2022): 324–38, <https://doi.org/10.36347/sjahss.2022.v10i07.003>.

²⁰Anwadike, Supra note 13.

²¹Ogheneruona Diemuodeke and Chukwumerije Okereke, “Energy Scenarios for Ambitious and Effective Nigerian’s Nationally Determined Contributions,” *Journal of Energy Technologies and Policy*, December 2020, <https://doi.org/10.7176/JETP/10-7-04>.

²²Ibid.

²³Ibid.

²⁴Amanda Kennard and Keith E. Schnakenberg, “Comment: Global Climate Policy and Collective Action,” *Global Environmental Politics* 23, no. 1 (February 1, 2023): 133–44, https://doi.org/10.1162/glep_c_00699.

²⁵Brechin, Supra note 2.

²⁶Ibid.

²⁷Barnaud, Supra note 1.

obstacles that affect group effort. The theory of collective action aids in our understanding of the dynamics of international cooperation in climate agreements as well as the obstacles and possible solutions for successful implementation. According to the collective action theory, motivation for cooperation is often a shared interest or set of advantages.²⁸ A sense of shared responsibility is fostered in the case of climate change by the realization that all countries are impacted and stand to gain from collective action.²⁹ International climate agreements, such as the Paris Agreement, provide countries with a forum to coordinate their efforts and set shared objectives for reducing greenhouse gas emissions and preparing for the effects of climate change.³⁰

The importance of considering how participants' costs and benefits are distributed is further highlighted by collective action theory. Both significant financial resources and technological expertise are required for climate change mitigation.³¹ It may be difficult for developing nations to meet these standards and cooperation may suffer if distributional issues are not resolved. International climate agreements frequently include mechanisms for financial and technological assistance to promote collective action and guarantee a more equitable distribution of costs and benefits.³²

How Collective Action Theory can Provide Insights into the Effectiveness of International Climate Agreements.

International climate agreements are essential to address the global challenges of climate change. By examining the fundamental tenets of collective action theory and its implementation in international climate agreements, we can enhance our comprehension of the elements that lead to worldwide collaboration in addressing climate change.

The Paris Agreement, adopted in 2015, exemplifies the application of the collective action theory in international climate governance.³³ It provides a framework for voluntary national contributions, known as Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), based on each country's unique circumstances and capabilities.

The agreement recognizes the principles of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities, addressing the diverse interests and capacities of nations.³⁴ International climate agreements include provisions for information exchange, capacity-building, and cooperation.³⁵ These mechanisms foster collective learning and empower countries to improve their climate actions by facilitating the exchange of best practices, technologies, and expertise. Platforms such as the Technology Mechanism and the Green Climate Fund support developing nations financially and technologically, while encouraging fair and inclusive participation.³⁶

²⁸Matthew R. Zefferman, "Cultural Multilevel Selection Suggests Neither Large or Small Cooperative Agreements Are Likely to Solve Climate Change without Changing the Game," *Sustainability Science* 13, no. 1 (January 18, 2018): 109–18, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11625-017-0488-3>.

²⁹Säde Hormio, "Collective Responsibility for Climate Change," *WIREs Climate Change* 14, no. 4 (July 14, 2023), <https://doi.org/10.1002/wcc.830>.

³⁰Zhou, *Supra* note 12.

³¹Ibsa Dawid Mume and Feysal Mohammed, "Review on the Link between Technological Change, Climate Finance, and Market in Mitigating Climate Change," *International Journal of Weather, Climate Change and Conservation Research* 8, no. 1 (January 27, 2022): 1–5, <https://doi.org/10.37745/ijwcccr.15/vol8n1pp15>.

³²Zhifu Mi et al., "Assessment of Equity Principles for International Climate Policy Based on an Integrated Assessment Model," *Natural Hazards* 95, no. 1–2 (January 20, 2019): 309–23, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11069-018-3408-7>.

³³ROBERT FALKNER, "The Paris Agreement and the New Logic of International Climate Politics," *International Affairs* 92, no. 5 (September 2016): 1107–25, <https://doi.org/10.1111/1468-2346.12708>.

³⁴*Ibid.*

³⁵Byungdo Park, "A Study on Capacity Building and Technology Transfer in Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs)," *Korea International Law Review* 66 (October 31, 2023): 19–59, <https://doi.org/10.25197/kilr.2023.66.19>.

³⁶Zefferman, *Supra* note 29.

FACTORS INFLUENCING THE SUCCESS OR FAILURE OF CLIMATE AGREEMENTS IN NIGERIA

Nigeria, a country extremely susceptible to the effects of climate change, must overcome a significant obstacle by converting international climate agreements into practical domestic policy.³⁷ Like many developing countries, Nigeria struggles to strike a balance between economic growth and environmental sustainability concerning long-term climate goals, which may be eclipsed by pressing issues, such as energy security and poverty alleviation.

This creates a conflict between international agreements and prioritizing pressing needs. Technical know-how and strong institutions are necessary for effective climate action. However, Nigeria may encounter constraints in these domains, impeding its capacity to execute intricate accords.³⁸

Progress can be hampered further by a lack of financial resources, especially when it depends exclusively on foreign assistance.³⁹ Long-term climate commitments can be disrupted by political instability and frequent leadership changes, which could also stem from a lack of consistency in policies intended to carry out international agreements and can result from shifting political priorities.⁴⁰ Furthermore, government accountability and transparency are essential for taking effective action and enhancing awareness. However, inadequate public awareness of climate change may make it more difficult to support laws encouraging group action. Promoting public engagement and politics will require ensuring access to pertinent information and utilizing educational campaigns to raise awareness.⁴¹ Developed countries must play a significant role in aiding Nigeria's endeavours, and this aid includes giving out money, transferring technology, and launching capacity-building programs. Fostering trust and cooperation requires equitable agreements that recognize the historical responsibility of developed nations.

IMPLICATIONS FOR FUTURE POLICY AND DECISION-MAKING

The indisputable existence of climate change necessitates a paradigm shift in how policies and decisions are made. However, we can no longer afford to proceed normally, as climate change calls for urgent actions that will transcend future generations.⁴² Future generations' sustainability will be shaped by the decisions we make today, stemming from the major effects of climate change on policy and decision-making in the future and focusing on the pressing need for a thorough and aggressive international response.⁴³ There is broad scientific agreement that human activity causes climate change at a never-before-seen rate. Rising sea levels, harsh weather, and ecological disruptions are just a few of the effects that are already felt globally, and the outlook is bleak. Strong scientific data must serve as the foundation for policy decisions, which should prioritize adaptation measures to increase resilience and mitigation strategies to lower greenhouse gas emissions.⁴⁴ Climate change is not a sprint; it is a marathon, and policymakers must transcend cyclical political cycles and embrace a

³⁷Anwadike, Supra note 13.

³⁸Oludamilare Bode Adewuyi et al., "Challenges and Prospects of Nigeria's Sustainable Energy Transition with Lessons from Other Countries' Experiences," *Energy Reports* 6 (November 2020): 993–1009, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.egy.2020.04.022>.

³⁹Elinor Ostrom, "Beyond Markets and States: Polycentric Governance of Complex Economic Systems," *American Economic Review* 100, no. 3 (June 1, 2010): 641–72, <https://doi.org/10.1257/aer.100.3.641>.

⁴⁰Olashore, Supra note 3.

⁴¹Sander van der Linden, Edward Maibach, and Anthony Leiserowitz, "Improving Public Engagement With Climate Change," *Perspectives on Psychological Science* 10, no. 6 (November 17, 2015): 758–63, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1745691615598516>.

⁴²Bertilsson, Supra note 18.

⁴³Ben Orlove et al., "Climate Decision-Making," *Annual Review of Environment and Resources* 45, no. 1 (October 17, 2020): 271–303, <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-environ-012320-085130>.

⁴⁴Kevin E Trenberth, "Climate Change Caused by Human Activities Is Happening and It Already Has Major Consequences," *Journal of Energy & Natural Resources Law* 36, no. 4 (October 2, 2018): 463–81, <https://doi.org/10.1080/02646811.2018.1450895>.

longitudinal outlook.⁴⁵ Setting challenging but attainable emissions reduction targets in line with the objectives of the Paris Agreement is necessary to achieve this.

Addressing climate change has enormous potential, owing to technological innovations. Future policies should encourage research and development on carbon capture and storage technologies, renewable energy sources, and climate-smart agriculture practices. Promoting global cooperation and information exchange can accelerate progress and guarantee that these innovations are accessible.⁴⁶ Worldwide concerted efforts are necessary for effective climate management. Policymakers should actively engage stakeholders from all sectors, including the public, businesses, and civil society. To foster a sense of shared responsibility for addressing climate change, this calls for increased transparency and accountability in decision-making processes, as well as the promotion of public education and awareness campaigns.

CONCLUSION

This review explores the function of international climate agreements in promoting collaborative actions and facilitating climate change mitigation initiatives in Nigeria. Despite observable advancements in the role of international climate agreements in facilitating climate change mitigation in Nigeria, they have not yet proven to be entirely effective. Additional efforts are necessary to foster global cooperation and collective action towards Climate Change mitigation in Nigeria. It is essential to address these factors for Nigeria to successfully implement climate agreements and contribute to international efforts to combat climate change. It is no longer sufficient to rely on incremental change; policy and decision-making must fundamentally shift in response to climate change. Emphasizing long-term sustainability, upholding intergenerational equity, and encouraging innovation can lead to a more resilient future. To create a world in which people coexist harmoniously with the environment, governments, corporations, and citizens must commit to collaborative actions on a global scale. The Paris Agreement and its mechanisms for cooperation and support exemplify international climate governance, which applies principles of collective action. It is crucial to consider the tenets of collective action theory and to encourage inclusive, equitable, and sustainable group efforts to ensure the ongoing effectiveness of climate agreements.

⁴⁵Kennard, *Supra* note 25.

⁴⁶Mi, *Supra* note 33.