

DAY ONE: UNDERSTANDING CLIMATE CHANGE AND HOW IT AFFECTS NIGERIANS

It is important to advocate and support mitigation measures for climate change in order to ensure a healthy, clean sustainable environment for all. The stepping stone to achieving this is understanding and clearly recognizing the challenge climate change poses in Nigeria

What exactly is climate change?

Climate Change is/are variations in weather conditions such as temperature, humidity, sunshine and rainfall over an extended period of time.

Nigeria has a tropical climate with 2 distinct seasons: wet and dry seasons. These seasons have varying lengths of rainy and dry seasons depending on the geographical location. For example, the southern part of Nigeria has a longer period of rainy season (March to November) than the Northern part (May to September). Dry season is prevalent in the north coupled with high temperatures that may reach an average monthly value of 38 degrees Celsius, while the mean temperature in southern Nigeria hovers around 32-33 degrees Celsius. In the north, the harmattan wind, which is a dry and hot wind, blows longer than it does in southern Nigeria.¹

How has Climate Change affected Nigerians?

Climate change in Nigeria is evident from increase in temperature, rainfall variability (increasing [rainfall](#) in coastal areas and decline in rainfall in the continental areas), drought, desertification, rising sea levels, erosions, floods, bush fires, radiation, and loss of biodiversity.

Climate Change in Nigeria has a major impact on economic growth and livelihoods of millions of Nigerians. Climate change in Nigeria has led to seasons of drought and excess flood, which affected agricultural activities and caused a loss of shelter and most importantly lives. In 2019, a total of **277,555** people were affected by floods and **158** were killed. In 2020 the number of those affected by floods rose to **2,353,647** resulting in the deaths of **69** people, according to Muhammadu Muhammed, NEMA's former head, at the unveiling of the 2021 annual flood outlook by the Nigeria Hydrological Services Agency (NHSA).²

Furthermore, climate change has led to food shortage which is as a result of low crop yield, loss of income, public health crises, loss of road networks in rural communities, decreased hydroelectric power supply.

What are the activities that cause climate change?

- **Emission of greenhouse gases from vehicles:** Some vehicles emit greenhouse gases such as sulphur dioxide and carbon monoxide from their exhaust.

¹ <https://www.futurelearn.com/info/futurelearn-international/impacts-climate-change-in-nigeria>

² <https://nihsa.gov.ng/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/2021-AFO.pdf>

- **Burning of hydrocarbon products:** This releases carbon dioxide and other gases into the atmosphere.
- **Deforestation:** This refers to cutting down trees, usually for agriculture. Trees form a protective barrier against the heat from the sun and cutting them down affects this purpose.
- **Industrial emissions:** Industrial activities and equipment produce greenhouse gases that are emitted into the atmosphere instead.³

Nigeria's current climate goal is to reduce emissions 20% below a business as usual projection by 2030. With international financing, this target rises to 47%.

While oil provides the vast majority of Nigeria's export revenues, the sector is also responsible for much of the country's emissions. The Federal Government has pledged to stop oil companies burning gas as a by-product and instead make them capture it and sell it as an energy source.

Question for Thought: What can you do to mitigate climate change and ensure a healthy, clean and sustainable environment?

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³ <https://www.futurelearn.com/info/futurelearn-international/impacts-climate-change-in-nigeria>