

EDITORIAL COMMENT

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I am pleased to present this Special Issue of the *Journal of Sustainable Development Law and Policy*. This edition focuses on the impact and implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in different sectors (including the roles of multinational companies) in Africa. Sustainable development has been a recurring theme in the international sphere in different mutations. For example, the Brundtland Commission also known as the World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED) defined sustainable development as “the development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs”.¹

The 193-Member United Nations General Assembly formally adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development on 25 September 2015, along with a set of bold new Sustainable Development Goals. The SDGs are the heirs to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and both have been hailed major achievements of the international community.²

The Journal invited submissions for this special issue on “The Role of Multinational Corporations in the actualization of the Sustainable Development Goals in Africa”. Although authors were free to choose any topic that is related to this broad theme, the Journal is particularly interested in recent developments in Africa or best practices from other parts of the world that could inform legal and policy reform Africa. Furthermore, this issue also encouraged contributions that focused on the impact of the SDGs on different sectors in Africa.

We received numerous submissions, each dealing with a different slant of the theme. After a rigorous peer-review process, ten submissions were accepted for publication. This special issue starts with Augustine Edobor Arimoro and Habibah Musa’s submission, where they consider

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- 1 WCED 1987, 3. The Brundtland Commission which was headed by the former Norwegian Gro Harlem Brundtland and the report titled - WCED Our Common Future is credited as the catalyst for the successfully thrusting the notion of “sustainable development” into mainstream discussion around the world.
 - 2 Jan Anton Van Zanten and Rob Van Tulder, ‘Multinational enterprises and the Sustainable Development Goals: An Institutional Approach to Corporate Engagement’ 1 (3-4) (2018) JIBP 208.

how the SDGs can impact positively on the various issues surrounding access to water in Nigeria. Arimoro and Musa suggests that rural communities have critical roles to play in water resources management and implementation of the SDGs in Nigeria. The second submission in the issue is by Cleverline Brown and Nlerum Okogbule. The article discusses some of the harmful environmental practices occurring in the petroleum industry in Nigeria. Brown and Okogbule argue that there is a compelling need for a reassessment of environmentally harmful acts in the country, especially taking into consideration the SDGs and 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The third submission is by Laura Ani. Her submission focuses on the importance of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) in actualizing the SDGs in Africa. The article evaluates the impacts of global CSR on international trade and implications in Nigeria. She argues that the adherence to international CSR will have positive impacts on the implementation of the SDGs in Nigeria.

The fourth submission is by Nojeem Amodu, and focuses on the role of multinational corporations in the implementation or actualization of the SDGs in Africa. This contribution suggests that in the implementation or realization of the SDGs in Africa, states and multinational corporations have an invaluable role to play. The fifth submission, which is by Chairman Okoloise, discusses the role of international financial institutions in emerging markets and developing economies. It assesses the extent to which the implementation of the International Financial Corporation (IFC) Sustainability Framework can feasibly protect resource-rich communities, safeguard human rights, and ensure sustainable development outcomes in Africa. The sixth article is by Olubunmi Afinowi. This submission focuses on adaptation and its application or implementation at national and international. The article examines adaptation to climate change as a developmental challenge and how the the principles of sustainable development can aid climate change action. The seventh submission, by Alex Oche, examines the opportunities and limitations of financing sustainable development initiatives. The next two contributions, respectively by Adenike Akinsemolu and John Kilani, examine the roles of extractive companies in advancing the SDGs. Drawing lessons from practical programmes and initiatives in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region, they analyse how responsible business enterprises can integrate SDG concepts into their spheres of operation to address pollution and other negative externalities. The last submission is a short commentary on innovative approaches for teaching

gender equality in universities, most especially in order to enhance capacity for achieving SDG 5 on gender equality and women empowerment.

The articles in this special issue are just a snapshot on the current state of scholarship and research on the implementation of SDGs in Africa and beyond. However, these articles address some of the most pressing issues on the implementation of the SDGs in Africa and beyond, including the roles that should be played by multinational corporations in this process.

The publication of this special issue would not have been possible but for the efforts of members of the editorial team and our external reviewers who volunteered their time and intellect to enhance the quality of the articles selected. Their immense contribution is gratefully acknowledged. Furthermore, this special issue was developed during the current Covid-19 pandemic which impacted on the submission and publication process. We sincerely thank the various contributors who were able to submit their articles to this special issue despite the turbulence all around.

Sincerely yours,

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