

## **Nigeria's development process, methodology and milestones planned for VISION 20:2020 - 13 years after**

### **Protection of environment and sustainable natural resources**

*Akinsorotan O.A.*

#### **Abstract**

Nigeria is endowed with abundant human and natural resources, hence, her potential of becoming one of the world's prosperous economies cannot be overemphasized. Despite the country's vision of becoming one of the world top 20 largest economies, Nigeria is yet to harness and utilize her endowments to transform her economy. Apparently Vision 2020 goals is not achievable in no distant future. This paper reviewed the level at which Nigeria is in the NV20:2020 plan and suggests measures necessary for the realization of the vision. Nigerian Government should recognise poverty eradication and sustainable management of natural resources as important factors that can propel a nation to the realm of wealthy economy.

**Keywords:** Nigeria, sustainable management, poverty eradication, Vision 2020

Corresponding author

**Akinsorotan O.A.**

ORCID-NO: <http://orcid.org/0000-0003-2891-1060>

Email: [oluseun.akinsorotan@uniosun.edu.ng](mailto:oluseun.akinsorotan@uniosun.edu.ng)

Department of Wildlife and Ecotourism Management, College of Agriculture, Osun State University, Nigeria.

*Received: May 31, 2020*

*Accepted: December 27, 2020*

*Published: June 30, 2021*

---

Research Journal of Health Sciences subscribed to terms and conditions of Open Access publication. Articles are distributed under the terms of Creative Commons Licence (CC BY-NC-ND 4.0). (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0>).

<http://dx.doi.org/10.4314/rejhs.v9i2.8>

**INTRODUCTION**

Planning is a continuous process towards a desired goal (1). The Nigeria 'Vision 2020' is a prospective plan aimed at projecting Nigerian economy to becoming one of the top 20 economies of the world, based on an assessment that the country's resources will be effectively managed towards the attainment of set goals (2). A major step towards achieving the Vision 2020 was a bottom-up strategic planning to ensure effective ownership by all stakeholders. However, efficient harnessing of the country's potential for wealth creation and poverty reduction is key to achieving the vision 2020 goals. Economic development is affected by political stability, barriers to trade, saving rates/foreign aid, educational standards, levels of infrastructure, macroeconomic stability and natural resources (3).

During the 2008 joint meeting of the National Planning Commission (NPC) held at Owerri, Agriculture was recommended as a means of achieving this reality by Moshe Ram, the Israeli Ambassador to Nigeria (2). Environmental protection and sustainable natural resource therefore offers a way out. Furthermore, the delay in meeting these set goals have been linked to different causes such as political instability, mismanagement of resources, decline in competitiveness, corrupt institutions and so on. Some schools of thought also have linked it to the paradox of plenty theory which explains that countries abounding with natural renewable resources are undeveloped and disadvantaged when it comes to development outcomes than countries with fewer natural resources. This paper therefore highlights the needs for environment protection and resource management as a key factor in Vision 2020 by creating a balance between environment and economic development.

**How far has Nigeria gone on Vision 20: 2020?**

The Nigeria Vision 20: 2020 (hereinafter designated NV20:2020), is a long term developmental goal designed to improve the well-being and productivity of its citizens and propel the country into the league of the top 20 economies of the world by 2020 (4). The main objectives of the NV20:2020 are to achieve rapid economic growth and translate the growth into equitable social development through efficient use of human and natural resources (2,5). However, Nigeria has not made the targeted progress due to instability in her plans and decision (6). Nigeria lack baseline

data/information on level performance of key indicators and targets for Vision 2020 (7). The current performance on these indicators towards achieving Vision 2020 can be determined based on the differences observed from the status quo in 2009 to 2019 as described by Uwizeyimana, (8).

Physical performance rating tool system developed and used in Uganda by past researchers Byamugisha and Basheka (2016) is used to measure performance of development initiatives similar to the Government of Nigeria's Vision 2020. Table 1 presents the rating system.

The percentage level of achievement on the key indicator in 2019 can be calculated using mathematical formula:

$$\frac{\text{Achieved in 2019}}{\text{Target for Vision 2020}} \times 100$$

The total period for Vision 2020 is 20year period (2000 – 2020), therefore the year 2019 is equivalent to 99.95% of the total period for Vision 2020. The 99.95% in terms of time is calculated using the formula:

$$\frac{Y}{20} \times 11$$

Where Y = the target value for Vision 2020 indicator at year 20 which is equivalent to the total period (100%) for Vision 2020 and (11) is the time passed since 2009 (the beginning of the implementation of Vision 2020 in Nigeria. 20 = the full term of Vision 2020 (i.e. Year 2000-2020)

For Nigeria, a simple calculation shows that 11 years are equivalent to 55% of the 20 years.

Classification of key indicators:

The key indicators are classified in the five categories as:

- a. Achieved if 100% or above of their targets have been achieved at the 11-year stage
- b. likely to be achieved if their 85% of above of their targets have been achieved at the 11-year stage
- c. May be achieved if between 60% and 84% of their targets have been achieved at the 11-year stage
- d. Unlikely to be achieved if less than 60% of their targets have been achieved at a level at the 11-year stage
- e. No assessment if no data is available for analysis.

Note: it is obvious that there is little or no time left to the end of the Vision 2020 period

From the calculation, the result at 55% shows that Nigeria is unlikely to achieve the vision 2020

target at the 11-year stage (option *d*).

The NV20:2020 blue print included four major areas and necessary measures for the realization of the vision (9). The areas include social (a peaceful, equitable and just society); economic (globally competitive economy); institutional (devising a stable and functional democracy) and environmental – (achieving a sustainable management of the nation's natural resources) (10). Considering agriculture through environmental protection and conservation of our natural resources as one of the sectors in sustaining social and economic development (11, 12). No commensurable effort made by the government towards sustainable management of natural resources (13). Museums, monuments, historic and natural sites have been established (10). However, these sites have various challenges peculiar to them ranging from environmental degradation, poor governance, corruption, lack of security and accessibility (10).

No doubt, Nigeria is richly endowed with numerous natural resources (14). Besides oil and gas, the country's environment has abundant of natural resources (10). These resources (land mass, forests, grasslands, deserts, wild animals) have ecological functions by balancing the ecosystem and provide valuable environmental services and as well as economic benefits for the enhancement of quality of life to its inhabitants at local and global level (15). Therefore, environment represents a wealth of resources which must be protected and sustained in order to achieve the current development plan (Vision20:2020). Environmental sustainability, therefore, refers to the conservation, management and rational utilization of natural resources in such a way to maintain the integrity of each ecosystem (terrestrial, arboreal and aquatic), support all life, ensure the preservation of biodiversity and prevent environmental degradation (16, 17). Since environmental sustainability emphasizes the harnessing of natural and social resources with major considerations for continuity and the future, it remains an aspect of the development process (17,18).

Environmental sustainability facilitates optimal social functioning (16). Environmental pollution and degradation leads to climate change and its negative consequences for humanity, fauna and Flora, biodiversity, ecosystems and services provided to humans (17, 19). Hence, the need to protect the environment, it not just for the present, but for the future as well (17). In addition to the challenges facing the environment, Nigeria

government policies and actions hardly promote and or enable individuals to achieve a high quality of life in ways that do not degrade the environment (15). Many policies and laws are overdue for amendment to meet the realities of present times (17). However, allowing principles and practices that promote healthful and hygienic condition and improve quality of life can ensure a sustainable environment (20). Poverty, deforestation and overexploitation of natural resources, population growth and institutional and management challenges among others cause great havoc to Nigeria Environment with implications that threatens the socio-economic development (15).

Poverty puts individuals in states of lack and want which do not only affect their physical well-being but also impact on their access to information and as such undermine their ability to uphold environmental protection goals (21). The poverty level in Nigeria is high with about half of the population (82 million) now live below the poverty line of 1.9 dollars a day (PREMIUM TIMES, 9/6/2018). Invariably, a considerable proportion of the population lacks basic essentials for survival and hardly be bothered with issues of the environment or, even the future (17). Unfortunately, a high proportion of this poor population also dwells in the rural areas which harbour the largest biodiversity of the Africans geophysical environment (17, 21). The Nigerian environment is therefore, under pressure from people who are themselves too impoverished to consider its protection and sustainability as they make their survival imperatives (17). Unfortunately, the environmental degradation that results from such uncontrolled usage, as a result of poverty, becomes a factor of poverty itself (22, 23). This is because: Environmental degradation and poverty are intrinsically intertwined (17, 24)). The consequence of this linkage is the vicious circle in which poverty causes the degradation of the environment and such degradation in turn perpetuates poverty (25).

Deforestation is the removal of trees without sufficient replacement, which leads to a reduction in habitat, biodiversity and quality of life (26). Anthropogenic activities such as commercial logging, felling and fetching of wood for fuel, traditional slash and burn/clear cutting farming technique and overgrazing by domestic animals (e.g. nomadic cattle grazing) are major factors that drives environmental and ecological degradation (13). A very high proportion of the Nigerian population lives in the rural areas and

directly on the natural environment as well (17). Over 95% of the rural populations in the country use firewood as the major source of household energy (15). In addition, many fell trees for the purpose of income generations and as building materials (15). The problem of deforestation is further exacerbated by the traditional farming method (slash and burn) and open range animal grazing. It has been reported that 96% of the Nigeria forested area has been lost (Director General of Nigerian Conservation Foundation on Vanguard 02/09/2018). The implication of such deforestation is the continued degradation of the soil and the depleted biodiversity of the forest ecosystem (15). This leads to economic losses in the form of agricultural activities as well as problems like atmospheric pollution (13), water scarcity (27), crop failure (28), malnutrition (28), stress migration (29) and even recent clashes between herdsmen and farmers as reported by past researcher (30).

Nigeria with a population of about 200 million clearly means that there is and will be an occurrence of the greatest human needs and a higher dependence on the environment for agricultural lands, residential buildings, industrial and infrastructural development. More people continuously migrate from the rural area and congregate to form new urban centres in the search for jobs and other life opportunities (17). Unfortunately, a combination of failed urban planning and poverty has implied woes for the Nigerian environment (17). The Nigerian environment has been left at the mercy of human attitudes, especially as there exists an absence of political will of policy makers to reflect the growing needs of the ever increasing population (17). This combination of high population growth and rapid urbanization has become the root cause of high rates of environmental degradation, social delinquency, poverty, industrial decay and pollution (17).

Despite the many threats to conservation of natural resources, there has also been a complete roll back of successes which had been attained in the past with regards to the environment (10). Nigeria has a network of protected areas (15). Protected Areas (PAs) “are areas of land and/or sea, especially dedicated to the protection and maintenance of biological diversity, and of natural and associated cultural resources, and managed through legal or other effective means” (31). Nigeria PAs includes seven national parks, 994 forest reserves, five strict nature reserves and 32 game reserves (15). Many of these PAs lack management plans,

buffer zone and enforcement of law (15). At present most natural resources are not adequately conserve due to insufficient funding; weak enforcement of conservation regulations (32); lack of policies and regulations for tapping into economic opportunities through conservation (e.g. tourism) and involving other stakeholders (e.g. Communities, NGOs, private sector) in managing the PAs (15).

The status of most Nigeria natural resources (flora and fauna) conserved are undocumented due to lack of monitoring and evaluation (M&E) of programs (15). Monitoring and evaluation of management effectiveness in PAs are a key component in improving and assessing performance of programs, projects, institution and policies by tracking the activities so as to adjust deficiencies (15). Evaluation involves an assessment of any environmental conservation program, intervention and or project performance few years after implementation (8). Due to lack of M&E some species of wild animals have been extirpated from their native home (e.g. giraffe *Giraffa camelopardalis*) while data on the country's remnant species are lacking in the PAs where they are expected to be conserved (15). The few data that exist are obtained from various researchers on studies on particular taxa and sites of interests (15). Just to mention a few, past studies reported less than 50 lion (*Pantera leo*) remains in Nigeria PAs with a population estimate of 12 in Yankari game reserve and 20 in Kainji Lake National Park (34). Population of antelopes (all species) has decreased across the Nigerian National Park (35). Past study found that some species historical reported in the Old Oyo National Park are no longer found in the park (36). Nigeria Cameroon chimpanzee (*Pantroglodytes ellioti*), other large primates and baboon sized drill (*Mandrillus leucocephaeus*) populations are declining (15). It is obvious, wildlife species are disappearing and the remnant species are declining. In short, many of the PAs lack the potential to sustainably conserve the natural resources, nor achieve the conservation goals and hence could be regarded as mere “paper parks”

## CONCLUSION

Nigeria lacks the political will and coordination to attain NV20: 2020 on protection of the environment and sustainable natural resource. Therefore, more effort should be made by the Government towards sustainable management of natural resources in order to propel the country to the league of the top 20



world largest economies by 2020. There is a need for poverty reduction as this is one possible way by which the government can earn the trust of her citizens and a strategic means towards actualizing the vision. There should also be linkages that ensure structural harmony to achieve the objective of NV20:2020

## REFERENCES

1. Bagheri A, Hjorth P. Planning for sustainable development: a paradigm shift towards a process-based approach. *Sustainable development*. 2007. Mar;15(2):83-96.
2. Eneh OC. Nigeria's Vision 20: 2020-issues, challenges and implications for development management. *Asian Journal of Rural Development*. 2011 Jan;1(1):21-40.
3. Tejvan, P. Factors affecting economic development. 2019. <https://www.economicshelp.org/blog/147654/economics/factors-affecting-economic-development/>. Accessed May 24, 2020
4. Olaseni M, Alade W. Vision 20: 2020 and the challenges of infrastructural development in Nigeria. *Journal of Sustainable Development*. 2012 Feb 1;5(2):63.
5. Akintoye VA, Opeyemi OA. Prospects for Achieving Sustainable Development Through the Millennium Development Goals in Nigeria. *European Journal of Sustainable Development*. 2014 Feb 1;3(1):33-33.
6. Inegbenebor AO, Okolie TA, Udoeye NE, Enesi SY, Onyisi O. Nigeria Vision 20: 2020; Review of Current Status Using Re Development and Gross Domestic.
7. Effiong AN. Policy Implementation and its challenges in Nigeria. *Int'l J. Advanced Legal Stud. & Governance*. 2013;4:26.
8. Uwizeyimana DE. Progress made towards achieving Rwanda's Vision 2020 key indicators' targets. *International Journal of Management Practice*. 2019;12(1):4-6.
9. Ayodele OS, Obafemi FN, Ebong FS. Challenges facing the achievement of the Nigeria vision 20: 2020. *Global advanced research journal of social science*. 2013 Jul;2(7):143-57.
10. National Bureau of Statistics. Nigeria Vision 20: 2020 Abridged Version (2010) [https://www.nigerianstat.gov.ng/pdfuploads/Abridged\\_Version\\_of\\_Nigeria%20Vision%202020.pdf](https://www.nigerianstat.gov.ng/pdfuploads/Abridged_Version_of_Nigeria%20Vision%202020.pdf)
11. Neto F. A new approach to sustainable tourism development: Moving beyond environmental protection. In *Natural resources forum* 2003 Aug (Vol. 27, No. 3, pp. 212-222). Oxford, UK: Blackwell Publishing Ltd.
12. Tallis H, Polasky S. Mapping and valuing ecosystem services as an approach for conservation and natural- resource management. *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences*. 2009 Apr;1162(1):265-83.
13. Mfon P, Akintoye OA, Mfon G, Olorundami T, Ukata U, Akintoye TA. Challenges of Deforestation in Nigeria and the Millennium Development Goals. *International Journal of Environment and Bioenergy*. 2014;9(2):76-94.
14. Adeyemi OO. Corruption and local government administration in Nigeria: A discourse of core issues. *European Journal of Sustainable Development*. 2012 Jun 1;1(2):183-.
15. David M. 118/119 Biodiversity and Tropical Forest Assessment for Nigeria. USDA Forest Service/International Forestry for USAID/Bureau for Africa. Washington, DC. 2008.
16. Moldan B, Janoušková S, Hák T. How to understand and measure environmental sustainability: Indicators and targets. *Ecological Indicators*. 2012 Jun 1;17:4-13.
17. Leke JO, Leke EN. Environmental sustainability and development in Nigeria: Beyond the rhetoric of governance. *International Journal of Development and Management Review*. 2019 May 17;14(1):25-37.
18. Addison J, Stoeckl N, Larson S, Jarvis D, RNTBC BD, RNTBC EA, RNTBC GA, RNTBC YN, Esparon M. The ability of community based natural resource management to contribute to development as freedom and the role of access. *World Development*. 2019 Aug 1;120:91-104.
19. Butchart SH, Walpole M, Collen B, Van Strien A, Scharlemann JP, Almond RE, Baillie JE, Bomhard B, Brown C, Bruno J, Carpenter KE. Global biodiversity: indicators of recent declines. *Science*. 2010 May 28;328(5982):1164-8.
20. Sorensen A, Marcotullio PJ, Grant J. Towards sustainable cities. In *Towards Sustainable Cities 2017 Sep 8* (pp. 2-23). Routledge.
21. Vedeld P, Jumane A, Wapalila G, Songorwa A. Protected areas, poverty and conflicts: A livelihood case study of Mikumi National Park, Tanzania. *Forest policy and economics*. 2012 Aug 1;21:20-31.
22. Barbier EB. The economic linkages between rural poverty and land degradation: some evidence from Africa. *Agriculture, Ecosystems & Environment*. 2000 Dec 1;82(1-3):355-70.
23. Reid D. *Sustainable development: An introductory guide*. Routledge; 2013 Nov 5.
24. Barrett CB, Lee DR, McPeak JG. Institutional arrangements for rural poverty reduction and resource conservation. *World Development*. 2005 Feb 1;33(2):193-7.
25. Amechi EP. Linking environmental protection and poverty reduction in Africa: An analysis of the regional legal responses to environmental protection. *Law Env't & Dev. J.* 2010;6:112.
26. Chakravarty S, Ghosh SK, Suresh CP, Dey AN, Shukla G. Deforestation: causes, effects and control strategies. In *Global perspectives on sustainable forest management 2012 Apr 25*. IntechOpen.
27. Wunder S. Can payments for environmental services reduce deforestation and forest

degradation. Realising REDD. 2009:213.

28. Pienkowski T, Dickens BL, Sun H, Carrasco LR. Linking forests, deforestation, and nutritional outcomes: an observational study in nine African countries. *The Lancet Planetary Health*. 2018 May 1;2:S4.

29. Carr D. Population and deforestation: why rural migration matters. *Progress in Human Geography*. 2009 Jun;33(3):355-78.

30. Mikailu N. Making sense of Nigeria's Fulani-farmer conflict. *BBC news*. 2016 May.

31. IUCN World Commission on Protected Areas, World Conservation Monitoring Centre. Guidelines for protected area management categories. 1994. Available: [http://www.unep-wcmc.org/protected\\_areas/categories/eng/index.html](http://www.unep-wcmc.org/protected_areas/categories/eng/index.html). Accessed 21 February 2014

32. Usman BA, Adefalu LL. Nigerian forestry, wildlife and protected areas: Status report. *Biodiversity*. 2010 Dec 1;11(3-4):54-62.

33. Muhumuza M, Balkwill K. Factors affecting the success of conserving biodiversity in national parks: A review of case studies from Africa. *International Journal of Biodiversity*. 2013 Aug 14;2013.

34. Henschel PH, Azani DE, Burton CO, Malanda G, Saidu YO, Sam MO, Hunter LU. Lion status updates from five range countries in West and Central Africa. *Cat News*. 2010;52(Spring):34-9.

35. Anadu PA, Green AA. Nigeria. Antelopes: Global Survey & Regional Action Plans, part. 1990;3:83-90.

36. Akinsorotan OA. Status and determinants of large mammal occupancy in a Nigerian protected area (Doctoral dissertation, Nottingham Trent University).

Table 1: Physical performance rating tool system on targets or action at 20 year stage an estimated average for lower-middle-income countries (LMICs) in 2020. N.B: Nigeria did not implement the development plan until 2009.

Variable	Result
Likely to be achieved	Calculated on the basis that = 85% of the target reached at 20-year stage, that is, the level of progress against the target or action at 20-year stage is likely to be achieved at the current rate of implementation by the end of 20 years.
May be achieved	Calculated on the basis of performance level between 60% and 84% of the target reached at 20-year stage, that is, the target or action may be achieved if additional effort is made
Unlikely to be achieved	This reflects where the percentage of the annual target reached at the 20-year stage is less than 60%. That is, the level of progress against the target or action at the 20-year stage is considerably below what was planned and the target or action is unlikely to be achieved at the current rate of implementation during the remaining period to the end of the time stated.
No assessment	Where insufficient or no data or information has been provided, an assessment

Source: Adapted from the Government of Uganda's performance measuring system, as reported by Uwizeyimana, (2019)

**How to cite this article:**

Akinsorotan O.A. Protection of environment and sustainable natural resources. *Research Journal of Health Sciences*, 2021, 9(2): 176-181