

ETHICAL IMPLICATIONS OF CLIMATE CHANGE IN NIGERIA

A Paper delivered at the **GOUNI Interdisciplinary Conference on
Climate Change**

Theme: *Harnessing Interdisciplinary Research to Develop
Innovative Solutions to Climate Change*

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1. INTRODUCTION

- ▶ Climate change represents one of the most significant challenges faced by humanity in the 21st century, necessitating an examination of moral responsibilities across various dimensions, including intergenerational justice, equity, and global accountability

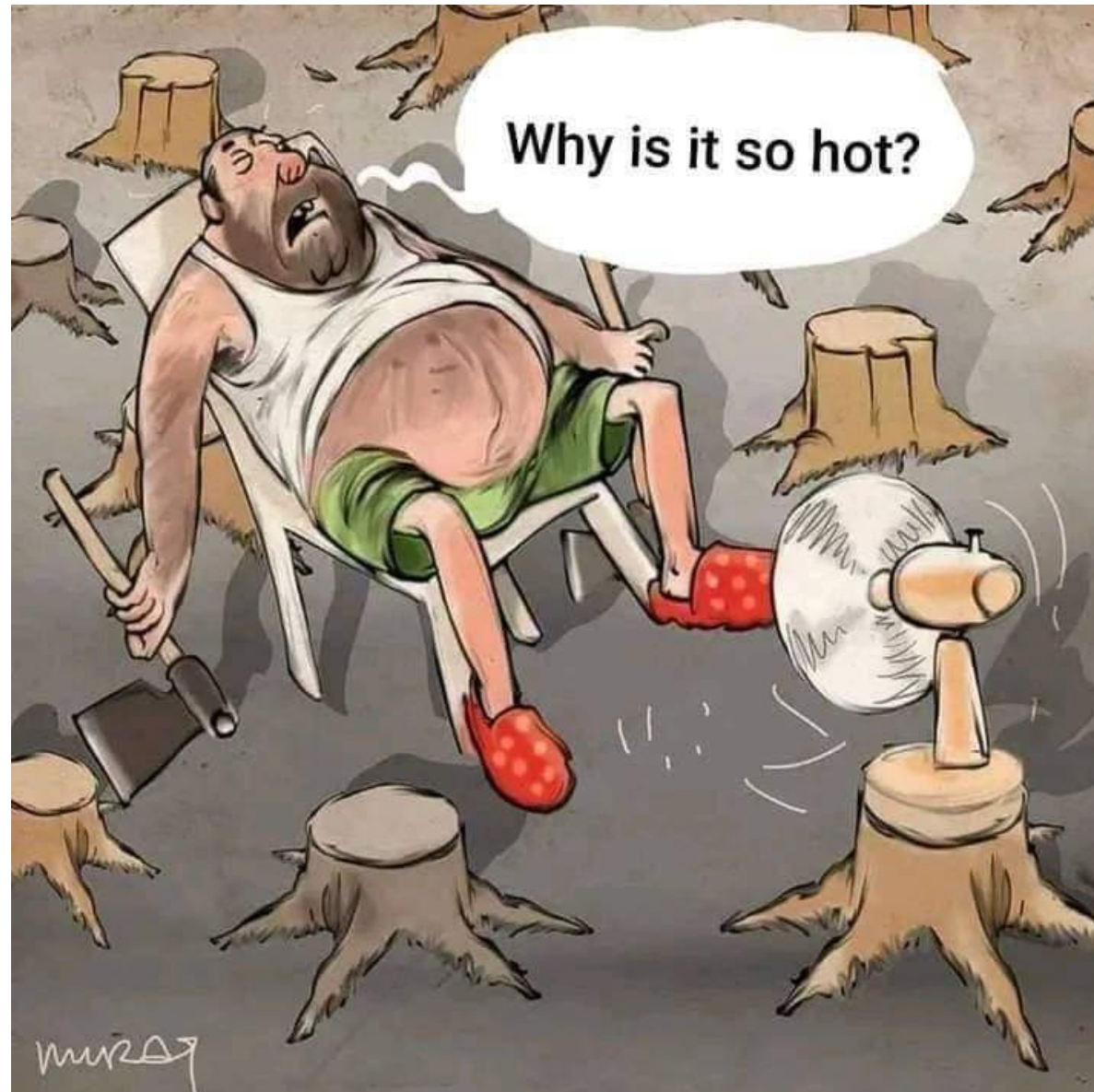
Attitude – Decision – Behaviour: *The environment has no conscience*

- ▶ Importance of Decision in favour of the Climate
- ▶ climate change is surely a matter of life or death, survival or destruction, sustainable development or prognostic degeneration, all in view of the present generation of life and the many more

2. CLIMATE AND HUMAN LIFE AND BEHAVIOUR

► The etymology of "climate" illustrates a rich tapestry of linguistic evolution, cultural interpretation, and scientific inquiry. From its ancient Greek origins, emphasizing the sun's angle and geographical implications, to its contemporary understanding that integrates statistical analysis with social concerns, the term has undergone significant transformation. This evolution mirrors humanity's growing awareness of the intricate interconnections between environmental systems and human societies, emphasizing the importance of understanding climate not just as a scientific concept, but as a vital determinant of our collective future.

Why is it so Hot?



3. NIGERIAN CLIMATE PREDICAMENT

► Need for Change of Attitude

- ❑ Not a concern of the developed World alone
- ❑ Nigeria has been widely described as one of the most climate-vulnerable nations, which is experiencing significant ecological disruptions that complicate its developmental objectives

The Value of a Single Tree



4. ETHICAL FRAMEWORKS FOR ADDRESSING CLIMATE CHANGE

- *Life, in all its forms, holds an intrinsic worth that is inviolable and non-negotiable*

► Philosophical roots of the Ethics of life as absolute value:

- ❖ Kantian Ethics: individuals as ends in themselves
- ❖ Mill's Utilitarianism: life as valuable
- ❖ Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR, 1948) Article 3: *"Everyone has the right to life, liberty, and security of person,"*

- *Be Your Brother's Keeper: The Imperative of Social Responsibility and Care"*

➤ Moral Philosophy:

- ❑ Kantian Ethics: duties to others arise from the inherent dignity of human beings.
- ❑ J. S. Mill's utilitarianism: greatest good for the greatest number
- ❑ Aristotle's Virtue Ethics: character and virtues
- ❑ Philanthropic efforts, Grassroots movements, Volunteerism

5. CLIMATE CHANGE AND VULNERABILITY OF NIGERIAN PEOPLES

- ▶ **5.1 Socio-economic Inequities:** In Nigeria, the poorest communities, who contribute the least to climate change, are disproportionately affected
- ▶ **5.2 Gender Disparities:** Women in Nigeria bear a significant burden of climate change due to their central roles in agriculture and water management.
- ▶ **5.3. Intergenerational Justice:** The actions (and inactions) of the current generation can severely impact future generations

6. GLOBAL RESPONSIBILITY AND HISTORICAL CONTEXT

- ▶ **6.1 Disproportionate Responsibility:** uneven historical responsibility raises ethical questions regarding climate finance and technology transfer from developed to developing nations.
- ▶ **6.2 Climate Justice Frameworks:** Justice in Funding

7. SUSTAINABLE FUTURE: THE WORLD AFTER YOU HAVE LEFT IT

- ▶ Human activities cause greenhouse gases that are warming the world faster than at any time in at least the last two thousand years.
- ▶ Sustainable future calls for a change of attitude in favour of the environment.

8. DECISION FOR BEHAVIOURAL ADJUSTMENT AMONG NIGERIAN PEOPLE

❑ 8.1 Enlightenment

❑ 8.2 Waste Management: *The tragedy of “emechaa” (bus station experience: Fr Christian and Saturday clean-up)*

- *Growing up, I saw my mother practicing “separation of waste”, there are different categories of waste.*
- *Compost in the schools*

❑ 8.3 More Caution in Felling Trees

❑ 8.4 The Advocacy of St Francis of Assisi: *Love for the Environment, Love for All Creation, Love Interconnectedness of all Life*

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

- ❑ **9.1 Community Engagement:** Engagement of local communities in policymaking processes.
- ❑ **9.2 Economic Diversification:** Nigeria must diversify its economy away from fossil fuels and invest in sustainable development.
- ❑ **9.3 Education and Capacity Building:** Training programmes related to climate adaptation strategies can empower communities, particularly women, enhancing their capacity to respond to climatic changes.

10. CONCLUSION

Addressing climate change is a critical global challenge that requires concerted efforts from individuals, communities, businesses, and governments worldwide to reduce emissions, transition to a sustainable future, and protect the planet for future generations.

*Thank you for your
attention*

God bless you