



Virtual Thematic Sessions

Africa Region | 26-29 September 2021



EWHC modest effort in the aggressive global advocacy for biodiversity conservation and sustainability through climate actions, especially in Africa

An Opening Remark Presented by Edel-Quinn Ijeoma Agbaegbu (Mrs), Founder / Executive Director, EWHC (An NGO) and Nigeria's Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) Country Representative, Voluntary Peer Review (VPR) Process, NBSAP; in a Virtual Presentation of EWHC Side-Event, Track 2; During The Africa Climate Week (ACW) Event, On September 26, 2021

Introduction

I wish to start by formally expressing my sincere gratitude and of my team to the organizers of the **2021 ACW Event**, for the opportunity given to EWHC to participate in the Virtual Thematic Sessions, which took the pulse of climate action in the region, explored climate challenges and opportunities, and showcased ambitious solutions; an opportunity for regional stakeholders to have their voices heard and contribute to COP 26 in Glasgow. I sincerely thank the organizers for their great efforts in advancing a significant initiative to build forward, so as to open opportunities to address social inequalities and invest in economic development that is good for humanity and nature.

It is a common knowledge that there is insufficient awareness in many countries and climes, about the importance of biodiversity to life and humanity. Biodiversity is often perceived as a resource to be extracted and exploited through various unsustainable manners. In many ways and actions, many degrade this gift of nature to humanity, and breach many planetary boundaries, leading to loss of biodiversity and ecosystem degradation at unprecedented rates.

Background

Remarkably, Africa is one of the most vulnerable continents to climate change and variability, with negative impacts on the ecosystems and human health, including food and water security. Unfortunately, while changes to the climate may be reversible with time, there is no going back once species become extinct. This puts nature's vital contribution to humanity in jeopardy and endangers economies, food security, cultural diversity and livelihoods. These constitute major threats to peace and security; and calls for urgent actions.

It is heartening to note that new trends are emerging and the importance of biodiversity resources is gradually being recognized and appreciated in many nations of the world, especially in Africa; where more emphasis has been placed in the past on infrastructural, economic and social development, with minimal attention on the conservation of natural resource. It must be emphasized here that global conservation of biodiversity will not be achieved without the sustainable management of areas in which people and nature interact. This is very important because by conserving our biodiversity and ecosystems, we are retaining the capacity of the planet to sustain our prosperity.

Indeed, now, as never before, the global target is to reduce biodiversity loss significantly, while maintaining various types of ecosystems, species and gene pools; as well as to sustainably protect all components of biodiversity. Safeguarding biodiversity on earth has become very critical in overcoming major global challenges, which has provoked the urgent need to promote aggressive advocacy for the global need to present climate actions as key in sustainable ecosystem and livelihood. Every Woman Hope Centre is proud to be associated and involved in this ongoing aggressive advocacy global activity.

EWHC Efforts to Advance Collaborative Action in the Africa Region

The Every Woman Hope Centre, (EWHC), is a Nigeria registered non-governmental organization and a Biosafety Organization / BCH-ORG-SCBD-251066-1: with strength in advocacy for biodiversity sustainability. EWHC made the [first biosafety commitment on the Action Agenda promoting the implementation of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety to the Convention on Biological Diversity to ensure safe handling, transfer and use of living modified organisms](#) to help in raising awareness on the urgent need to halt the loss of biodiversity and restore healthy ecosystems.

The Action Agenda was launched in November 2018, by the Governments of Egypt and China, in collaboration with the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (SCBD), to serve as a global mechanism to inspire, connect and mobilize actions for biodiversity, including biosafety, in support of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework and the Implementation Plan for the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety: www.cbd.int/action-agenda/.

EWHC pledged to mobilize strategic plans and actions for public awareness of biosafety and biodiversity issues and to facilitate awareness-raising activities. EWHC is promoting commitments in Africa on the Sharm El-Sheik, Egypt; to Kunming, China, Action Agenda for Nature and People and the engagement of non-state actors: https://bch.cbd.int/onlineconferences/portal_art23/actionagendaforum/ towards reversing biodiversity loss and promoting positive gains to 2030, as also demonstrated in this ACW-2021 event.

A major significant factor in EWHC's action in the commitment is that by 2025 at the latest, all stakeholders, including students and educators in Africa especially, are aware of the values of biodiversity to manage residual impact of climate change and ecosystem-based solutions to enhance adaptation and resilience-building. In her efforts towards collaborating actions in the Africa region, EWHC is seizing transformative opportunities to integrate approaches for climate-resilient development; to reinforce climate resilience through integrated climate solutions. This will further enhance resilient recovery from COVID-19 and manage climate-change risks comprehensively in key systems, as well as growing back greener Africa.

Impact of EWHC Efforts To Reinforce Climate Resilience Across Africa

In her commitment and efforts to advance collaborative action in the Africa region, EWHC is communicating positive actions to address climate change, towards reducing the worst impacts of climate change across Africa. In this regard, during her December 8, 2020 webinar with the theme; "Motivating Strategic Plans and Actions for Public Awareness on Biosafety and Biodiversity, to Enhance Partnership with Nature", EWHC collaborated with representatives from four African countries which included; Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Nigeria and South Africa, as well as the SCBD. Gambia also indicated interest but could not make it to the webinar. Details of the outcome of the webinar, which serve as a one-stop-shop repository is available at: <https://everywomanhopecentre.org/webinar/2021/03/02/outcome-of-ewhc-webinar-towards-sharm-el-sheik-to-kunming-action-agenda-for-nature-and-people/> Up to this moment, EWHC has continued to facilitate the exchange of information and sharing of experiences and lessons learned to sustain actions to reinforce climate resilience through integrated climate solutions across Africa.

EWHC Agenda

Fortunately, the ACW 2021 has offered additional opportunity to EWHC to offer a holistic and integrated approach to climate change and demonstrate the interlinkages and interdependencies between sustainable development and climate change to make informed policy choices towards low-carbon and climate-resilient sustainable development. EWHC

shall continue to actively fight a global health emergency, without underestimating the ongoing impacts of Climate Change.

EWHC is committed to the actualization of the ultimate objective of all agreements under the UNFCCC, to stabilize greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere at a level that will prevent dangerous human interference with the climate system, in a time frame which allows ecosystems to adapt naturally and enables sustainable development. EWHC identifies this as one of her targets and aims towards achieving the agreements.

This is most essential at this juncture, as climate change is a cross-cutting development issue that affects every aspect of sustainable development and the entire 2030 Agenda. The Paris Agreement on Climate Change, with the 2030 Agenda, together with the Sustainable Development Goals forms a very comprehensive blueprint for eliminating extreme poverty, reducing inequality, and protecting the planet. Along with the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, these documents constitute an integral plan of action for people, planet, including prosperity and requires all countries and stakeholders to act together.

Notably, sustainable development and climate action are deeply interconnected and interdependent that achieving zero-hunger is not possible without protecting food systems from the negative impacts of climate change. Again, cities and communities cannot be sustainable without adequate protection from extreme weather events and ensuring children's health is not possible without addressing air pollution and the increase in climate change-driven, vector-borne diseases. It is also worthy to note that economic development cannot be sustainable without reversing over-reliance on carbon-intensive energy sources.

In relation to this, EWHC's participation in the May 3 – June 13, 2021 twenty fourth meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advise (SBSTTA 24) and the third meeting of the Subsidiary Body on implementation (SBI 3) facilitated effective communication to address these issues and capable of supporting relevant strategies in delivering climate actions, particularly in Africa. In her statement with focus on the CBD/SBI/3/13, EWHC stated that,

“There is urgent need to develop and establish biodiversity systems and institutions, to promote and coordinate biodiversity actions, required to mainstream and integrate biodiversity in all relevant economic sectors and national policies. This approach should involve multiple transformative transitions and integrate a complex set of objectives for newly identified knowledge gaps, as well as project the need to build evidence and design trajectories. EWHC further stated that, there is urgent need to mobilize strategic plans and actions to galvanize urgent and transformative actions by governments and all of societies; and engage more non-state actors in the Implementation Plan of the framework”: [English](#)

Conclusion

Towards a more sustainable Africa, EWHC shall encourage relevant support, partnerships and collaboration for broader climate action and mobilization, towards climate-resilient development. She shall also promote ecosystem-based solutions to adaptation and managing residual impacts of climate change, as well as efforts towards biodiversity conservation. The aim is to build climate resilience in key systems, such as food security, water, health, ecosystems, economies and nature-based solutions. EWHC shall accelerate efforts for promoting coordination and policy coherence at different governance levels; sub-national and national, private sector engagement and enhance synergy between different frameworks towards post-COVID19 recovery alignment. The organization is committed to building inclusivity into the heart of planning processes, including responsive adaptation and implementation, with focus on women, youth, local communities and indigenous peoples.

It is really a privilege for EWHC to continue to further amplify climate actions and mainstream public awareness and appreciation of the diverse values of biodiversity needs, within the global biodiversity framework and ensure the transformation of human behaviour and choice in favour of biodiversity conservation and restoration. We are very willing to key into the provisions of ACW 2021, to take urgent action across societies and contribute positively to integrated approaches to reinforce climate-resilient development across Africa.

THANK YOU!!!!

The Africa Climate Week was

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