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SPECIAL ISSUE ON ENERGY TRANSITION AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN THE GLOBAL SOUTH

IN HONOUR OF

AARE EMMANUEL AFE BABALOLA,

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FCI Arb., LLD (London), LLD (UNILAG), D.LITT. (NDA), FKC, FNSE
Founder and Chancellor of Afe Babalola University, Ado Ekiti (ABUAD)

Accomplished lawyer, farmer, educationist, philanthropist, reformer, leader, role-model, motivator, and trailblazer who on March 11, 2015 became the first African to be conferred with a honorary Doctorate Degree in Law (LLD) by the prestigious University of London, United Kingdom. This Special Issue is in recognition of Aare Afe Babalola's achievements, vision and passion for sustainable development research and education in Nigeria, Africa and globally.

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The Journal promotes the dissemination of research results and scholarly papers by teaching and research scholars in Africa and across the world in broad areas of sustainable development law and policy. The thematic focus of the journal spans across broad areas of sustainable development law and policy ranging from the economic, social, and environmental dimensions. As such papers that explore broad themes of sustainable development such environment, natural resources, green economy, international trade, banking, taxation, public policy, public private partnerships, alternative dispute resolution, human rights, peace, and conflict studies are normally given top consideration.

The Editorial Board of the Journal comprises international development scholars and experts from Italy, United Kingdom, Indonesia, Nigeria, Canada and the United States that provide leadership and lend their expertise to promote and enhance the scholarly relevance of the journal internationally.

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Selected articles would be published in hard copy and prominently displayed on the institutional website as a resource for scholars and practitioners worldwide.

Papers must be based on original research, conform to the usual standard of academic publishing, be fully referenced, and presented in the standard format employed by the series. Papers will be evaluated based on their contemporary relevance, contribution to their selected fields of research, structure and analytical vigor. Please refer to the submission guide below.

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- 2) Articles should include an abstract of approximately 250 words that is not an extract from the article itself.
- 3) Details of the author should be supplied as the first footnote, attached by an asterisk to the author's name.

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CONTENTS

Editorial Comment

Olusola Joshua Olujobi

ARTICLES

1. The Impact of Environmental Protection Commitments on the Implementation of New-Generation Free Trade Agreements in Developing Countries: A Case Study of Vietnam
Nguyen Thi Kim Ngan, Nguyen Thi Hong Yen, Mac Thi Hoai Thuong, Dinh Trong Hiep 1
2. Investing in Green: Bilateral Investment Treaties (BITs) and Their Role in Bangladesh's Renewable Energy Sector
Ramisa Jahan, Mohammad Belayet Hossain 29
3. Hydrogen Development: Legal Challenges and Current Trends
Eduardo G. Pereira, Margarita Nieves- Zarate, Thomas Muinzer, Mutindi Lydia Jacobs, Olusola Joshua Olujobi 51
4. A Review of the Legal Framework on Renewable Energy and the Drive for Energy Sustainability in Nigeria
Olubunmi Ayodele Afinowi 77
5. Assessing Nigeria's Petroleum Industry Act 2021: Implications for the Global Energy Transition
David Oladeji Ehijie Borha, Olusola Joshua Olujobi 104
6. Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) Metrics and Nigeria's Energy Transition: Towards Legal Integration in the Oil and Gas Sector
Issa Akanji Adedokun 139
7. Maximising Economic Recovery and Key Lessons from North Sea and Selective Mature Provinces Experiences
Eduardo G Pereira, Felipe Villasuso, Suhail Diaz, Olujobi Olusola Joshua, Nathaniel Babajide 170
8. Assessing the Impact of International and Regional Legal Frameworks on Petroleum Assets Decommissioning Legislation in Nigeria
Enobong Mbang Akpambang, Oluwatoyin Olayinka Omoniyi, and Mfon Inioluwa Akpambang 206

9. Local Communities in Era of Climate Change: Addressing Challenges Through the Lens of Sustainable Development Goals 2015 Uche Nnawulezi, Olusola Joshua Olujobi, Yusuf Hammed Agboola, Jacques Kabano	246
10. Global Climate Action and Public Health Initiatives: Advancing the Human Right to a Safe and Healthy Environment in West Africa Olalekan Moyosore Lalude, Remilekun Christianah Oluborode, Oladimeji I. Idowu, Dayo Akindipe, Sophia Abiri-Franklin	276
11. Effects of Global Warming on Food Insecurity in Selected West African Countries: Empirical Analysis (2000- 2021) Agboola Hammed Yusuf, Olusola Joshua Olujobi, Uche Nnawulezi, Ganiyu Adewale Elegbede, Abidemi Olukole	305
12. Analysing the Legal and Policy Landscape for Renewable Energy Projects: Implications for Nigeria’s Sustainable Development Godwin Emmanuel Oyedokun	331
13. A Legal Framework for Achieving Net-Zero Emissions: Pathways to Energy Sustainability and Environmental Compliance in Nigeria Olusola Joshua Olujobi, Oluwatosin Kate Olanrewaju-Elufowoju, Dare Ezekiel Olipede	364
14. Enhancing Global Cooperation for Trade and Investment Integration: Legal Mechanisms, Multilateral Agreements, and the Role of International Financial Institutions in Advancing Sustainable Development Grace Perpetual Dafiel	389
15. Bridging the Protection Gap: A Legal Appraisal of Climate Migrants’ Rights in Nigeria and under International Law: A Proposal for Reform Bolarinwa Levi Pius, Olusola Joshua Olujobi	419
16. Legally Green: Navigating Nigeria’s Clean Energy Transition In The Post-Pandemic Era Olusola Joshua Olujobi, Oshobugie Suleiman Irumekhai, Badeniyi Olumide	465

17. Fossil Fuels To a Low-Carbon Future: The Role of Law, Policy and Technology in the Global Energy Transition Adaramola Emmanuel Opeyemi, Ojo Omotola Makanjuola, Prince Pius Imiera	488
18. Harnessing Online Dispute Resolution for Economic Growth in Nigeria: A Legal Framework for Advancing the Sustainable Development Goals Rashidat Ajise and Olusola Joshua Olujobi	511
19. Leveraging Intellectual Property Flexibilities to Advance Nigeria's Energy Transition: A Comparative Analysis with the Public Health Sector for Climate Justice and Sustainable Development Olayinka Akinseesin	533
20. Evaluating the Effectiveness of Public-Private Partnerships in Accelerating Renewable Energy Deployment in Nigeria Surulere Omosuyi Julius, Ajijola Opeyemi Ebenezer, Adeyemi Gideon Oluwatoba, Awobajo Olukayode Adeyemi, Ige Folasade Folakemi	556
21. Examining the Banjul Charter as an Instrument for the Realization of Environmental Justice in Trade and Investment Agreements Olalekan Moyosore Lalude, Dayo Akindipe, Sophia Abiri-Franklin, Sharon Osho	580
22. The Role of Law And The Tripartite Approach to Climate Justice: Lessons For Nigeria From Canada Alex Oche, and Olusola Joshua Olujobi	600
23. Engaging The Natural Law And Positivist Schools of Jurisprudence In The Era of Sustainable Energy Transition Peter Kayode Oniemola and Adebisi Anthony Adepoju	625
24. Climate Financing and The Pursuit of SDGs 7 And 13: A Strategic Pathway To Net-Zero Emissions In Nigeria Fasanmi Folabi Valentine and Olujobi Olusola Joshua	652
25. Renewable Energy Transition in Sub-Saharan Africa: Legal Prospects, Challenges, and Strategic Pathways for Nigeria Oluwatosin Kate Olanrewaju-Elufowoju, Omoniyi Oluwatoyin, Banigo Tamunoipirinye Royal	677

EDITORIAL COMMENTS

Olusola Joshua Olujobi¹

On behalf of the Journal of Sustainable Development Law and Policy, it is with great pleasure that I present this Special Issue dedicated to the highly revered and globally decorated Founder and Chancellor of Afe Babalola University, Ado Ekiti (ABUAD), **Aare Afe Babalola SAN, OFR, CON, LLD (London), LLD (UNILAG), D.Litt. (NDA), FKC, FNSE**, among other distinguished honours. This Issue celebrates his unwavering commitment to energy transition, environmental sustainability, and energy security in Nigeria. His leadership by example through the deployment of renewable energy sources at Afe Babalola University has set an institutional benchmark in achieving consistent, clean energy supply and sustainability.

The Editorial Committee and Board express profound gratitude to our reviewers for their meticulous and insightful evaluation of over two thousand submissions received for this edition. Following a rigorous peer-review process, twenty-five (25) high-quality articles were accepted. These contributions span a wide spectrum of critical themes including climate change, net-zero emissions, and the global energy transition, offering robust legal, policy, and technological analyses relevant to sustainable development across regions.

This Issue begins with a compelling study by Nguyen Thi Kim Ngan, Nguyen Thi Hong Yen, and Mac Thi Hoai Thuong which examines environmental protection obligations under new generation free trade agreements, offering comparative insights from Vietnam. In the second article, Ramisa Jahan and Mohammad Belayet Hossain explore how Bilateral Investment Treaties (BITs) can catalyse foreign direct investment in Bangladesh's renewable energy sector, offering a legal blueprint for sustainable investment in the energy sector in developing or emerging economies. This is followed by the third article by Eduardo G. Pereira, Margarita Nieves-Zarate, Thomas Muinzer, Mutindi Lydia Jacobs, and Olusola Joshua Olujobi which evaluates the legal dynamics shaping hydrogen as alternative sources of energy to fossil fuel energy based. The study unpacks the regulatory gaps and proposing forward-looking policy reforms to guarantee energy security and sustainability.

In the fourth article, Olubunmi Ayodele Afinowi reviews Nigeria's legal framework for renewable energy, identifying structural gaps and suggesting reforms necessary to

¹Professor Olusola Joshua Olujobi is a Professor of Law at the Afe Babalola University, Ado Ekiti, Ekiti State, Nigeria. His main research areas include Petroleum, Energy Resources Law, Mining and Environmental Sustainability Law and Natural Resources Governance. Prof .Olujobi has published extensively on his research areas and his academic papers have been cited and indexed on Scopus, Web of Science and other globally recognised databases and cited by a plethora of public and international agencies. Prof Olujobi is also a member Nigerian Bar Association, and a member of Institute for Oil, Gas, Energy, Environment and Sustainable Development (OGEES Institute), Afe Babalola University Nigeria. Prof Olujobi is the Guest Editor-in-Chief (Climate Change, Greenhouse Gas Emissions, and Nigeria's Ecosystems: A Legal, Economic, and Environmental Appraisal of the Global Net-Zero Transition's Impact on the Oil and Gas Sector Special Issue) Journal of Sustainable Development Law and Policy Afe Babalola University, Ado Ekiti, Ekiti State, Nigeria.

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achieve energy sustainability in alignment with global best practices. The fifth article is an in-depth study by David Oladeji Ehijie Borha and Olusola Joshua Olujobi examining the Petroleum Industry Act 2021 and its implications for Nigeria's alignment with global energy transition demands. The authors provide a critical assessment of the Act's regulatory architecture and its potential to attract investment while fulfilling international climate protection obligations. This is followed by Issa Akanji Adedokun's incisive analysis of Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) metrics, advocating for their legal integration into Nigeria's oil and gas sector to foster a transparent, just, and sustainable energy transition. The seventh article by Eduardo G. Pereira, Felipe Villasuso, Suhail Diaz, Olusola Joshua Olujobi, and Nathaniel Babajide derives strategic lessons from the North Sea basin to inform Nigeria's regulatory approach to mature oil provinces and climate-sensitive energy recovery to promote energy security and sustainability.

The eighth article by Enobong Mbang Akpambang, Oluwatoyin Olayinka Omoniyi, and Mfon Inioluwa Akpambang contribute a regionally contextualised study on decommissioning petroleum assets, underscoring the need for Nigeria to adopt international and regional standards for legal reform to guarantee environmental protection and climate accountability.

The ninth article, by Uche Nnawulezi, Olusola Joshua Olujobi, Yusuf Hamed Agboola, and Jacques Kabano, explores community vulnerabilities to climate change through the lens of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 2015, offering an integrated legal framework for resilience and adaptation in Nigeria. In the tenth article, Olalekan Moyosore Lalude, Remilekun Christianah Oluborode, Oladimeji I. Idowu, Dayo Akindipe, and Sophia Abiri-Franklin examine into the intersection of climate action and public health, proposing a rights-based legal framework to reinforce environmental health governance in West Africa.

The eleventh article by Agboola Hamed Yusuf, Olusola Joshua Olujobi, Uche Nnawulezi, Ganiy Adewale Elegbede, and Abidemi Olukole, provides empirical insights into the link between global warming and food insecurity in West Africa, offering data-driven recommendations for sustainable agricultural policies. In the twelfth article, by Godwin Emmanuel Oyedokun, analyses Nigeria's renewable energy laws, highlighting challenges in implementation and offering legal solutions to accelerate sustainable energy development and sustainability in Nigeria. In the thirteenth article, Olusola Joshua Olujobi, Oluwatosin Kate Olanrewaju-Elufowoju, and Dare Ezekiel Olipede propose a comprehensive legal roadmap for Nigeria's net-zero ambition, advocating regulatory reforms to ensure compliance with international climate commitments. Grace Perpetual Dafiell's fourteenth article investigates the synergy between multilateral trade agreements and financial institutions in fostering inclusive global trade. Her work proposes a strategic legal-institutional model that aligns economic cooperation with SDG implementation. This is followed by the fifteenth article by Bolarinwa Levi Pius and Olusola Joshua Olujobi which critically addresses the legal *lacunae* or gaps surrounding the rights of climate migrants in Nigeria and international law, recommending normative reforms to safeguard vulnerable populations and promote climate justice in Nigeria which is current absent.

The sixteenth article by Olusola Joshua Olujobi, Irumekhai Oshobugie Suleiman, and Badeniye Olumide, explores post-pandemic legal reforms vital to Nigeria's clean energy transition, linking economic recovery strategies with climate-resilient governance. In the seventeenth article, Adaramola Emmanuel Opeyemi, Ojo Omotola Makanjuola, and Prince Pius Imiera, present an interdisciplinary framework for transitioning from fossil fuels to a low-carbon economy, tailored to Nigeria's energy realities or needs. Rashidat Ajise and Olusola Joshua Olujobi, in the eighteenth article, explore how a robust legal framework for Online Dispute Resolution (ODR) can strengthen access to justice, improve efficiency, and support economic growth particularly within the SDGs 2015 framework. In the nineteenth article, Olayinka Akinseesin explores the role of intellectual property flexibilities in supporting energy transition, drawing useful parallels from the public health sector to advocate for climate equity through a comparative legal lens. Surulere Omosuyi Julius, Ajijola Opeyemi Ebenezer, Adeyemi Gideon Oluwatoba, Awobajo Olukayode Adeyemi, and Ige Folasade Folakemi submitted the twentieth article, The contribution assess how Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) can bridge Nigeria's renewable energy access gap through innovative governance mechanisms to guarantee energy security and sustainability.

In the twenty-first article, Olalekan Moyosore Lalude, Dayo Akindipe (PhD), Sophia Abiri-Franklin (PhD), and Sharon Osho advocate for the integration of environmental justice into trade and investment treaties through the Banjul Charter, linking African jurisprudence with global sustainability norms. Alex Oche and Olusola Joshua Olujobi, in the twenty-second article, propose a tripartite legal framework drawing on Canadian best practices for achieving climate justice in Nigeria, offering a unique bridge between theory and actionable policy reform on climate protection framework. Peter Kayode Oniemola and Adebisi Anthony Adepoju, in the twenty-third article, engage in a jurisprudential analysis linking natural law and positivism to energy transition, establishing a principled and theoretical foundation for environmental law and energy law reform in Nigeria. Fasanmi Folabi Valentine and Olusola Joshua Olujobi, in the twenty-fourth article, examine how climate finance mechanisms can strategically drive Nigeria's net-zero trajectory, aligning the national or domestic policies or laws with the SDGs 7 and 13.

The final article which is the twenty-fifth, by Oluwatosin Kate Olanrewaju-Elufowoju, Omoniyi Oluwatoyin, and Banigo Tamunoipirinye Royal, provides a comparative legal analysis of renewable energy transition in Sub-Saharan Africa, emphasising Nigeria's fundamental role and the need for transformative policy and innovations in adoption and utilisation of renewable energy sources in Nigeria.

In conclusion, collectively, the articles in this Special Issue present robust, evidence-based, and multi-disciplinary perspectives on the global energy transition and climate protection governance framework. They offer novel legal, policy, and technological pathways toward sustainable development, particularly within the oil and gas sectors, and beyond.

On behalf of the Editorial Committee, I extend my sincere and hearty appreciation to our Editorial Board, reviewers, and, most especially, Aare Afe Babalola SAN, OFR, CON, LLD President and Founder of Afe Babalola University Ado Ekiti, Ekiti State, Nigeria for his enduring vision, support, and commitment to academic excellence, energy transition to low carbon economy or clean sources of energy, environmental protection, stewardship, energy security and sustainability in Nigeria.

We trust that readers, scholars, policymakers, and legal practitioners will find this collection both intellectually enriching and practically inspiring.

Professor Olusola Joshua Olujobi

Guest Editor-in-Chief

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