

**The Anglican Church, Environment and Poverty: Constructing a  
Nigerian Indigenous *Oikotheology***

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## DECLARATION

I declare that this thesis, unless specifically stated in the text, is my own original work which has not been submitted in any other University.

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Cyprian Obiora Alokwu

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Date

As the Supervisor, I hereby approve this thesis for submission.

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Prof. Steve De Gruchy

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Date

University of KwaZulu-Natal

2009

## ABSTRACT

This research proposes a Nigerian indigenous *oikotheology* to assist the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) better meet the challenges of the “double earth crisis” of poverty and environmental degradation. The thesis begins by arguing that the crisis of poverty and the crisis of ecology are inextricably linked. It does this by examining the situation globally, in Africa and in Nigeria. It argues that for the church to be able to articulate the needed theological paradigm in response to the “double earth crisis”, it is important that it is adequately informed and equipped with environmental knowledge as well as the dynamics of the global capitalist system and its hegemonic influences. This understanding is imperative because these affect the environment and poverty nexus.

The thesis then examines the response of the Anglican Church to the environment and poverty by situating this within the wider biblical, Christian and ecumenical history, and the history of the Anglican Church itself. It then looks at the Anglican Church in Nigeria by investigating the engagement of the three Anglican Dioceses in Anambra State (Nigeria) in environment and poverty issues. It also investigates the understanding of the diocesan clergy on these issues.

Findings from the research field work indicate that a majority of the clergy exhibited an appreciable level of environmental awareness contrary to the hypothesis of the study. However, this knowledge is a “paper knowledge” because of its heavy reliance on the ‘traditional’ view of understanding of the environment. Thus it creates a huge gap between theoretical knowledge and practical commitment on the part of the dioceses. Collective will and practical commitment which are vital for the church’s engagement in poverty and environment issues are therefore lacking, and this leads to the church’s difficulty in significantly living up to its environmental responsibility in practical ways.

In responding to the identified gap, the thesis examines ‘four generations’ of ecological motifs in theology, namely, dominion, stewardship, eco-theology and *oikotheology*. *Oikotheology* is an attempt to strengthen the weaknesses in the Christian ecological thoughts (from dominion to ecotheology) and hence provide an eco-theological framework that will engender commitment and action. However, because of the challenges with which

*Oikotheology* grapples (strong eschatological influences and inaccessibility to African culture), it could not achieve this aim in the Nigerian setting. In a continued search for an eco-theological framework that is more African, the study articulates the synthesis of *Oikotheology* and African indigenous ecological ethics (a fifth generation) as a theological framework which would uniquely appeal to African Christianity in its attempt to collaborate with other disciplines in addressing the challenges of the environment and poverty in Africa and the world.

Key to this synthesis is an examination of Nigerian Igbo proverbs-the *egbe belu* precautionary principle and *onye aghana nwa nne ya* in particular, and the African cosmology in general. This synthesis, considered in our opinion as Africa's gift to humanity and Christendom, will no doubt significantly contribute to the global discussion on the current double earth crisis of environment and poverty.

The thesis concludes with a series of practical suggestions including among others the formation of a National Commission on the environment by the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) as a way of fostering environmental education.

## **DEDICATION**

This thesis is dedicated to the memory of all those who lost their lives in the fight for environmental justice in the Niger Delta region and elsewhere and those who are still genuinely struggling to bring to an end the restiveness brought about by the on-going environmental injustice in the area.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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Above all, to God be all the glory for His enabling grace without which this work would not have been possible.

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## ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

|        |  |
|--------|--|
| ACC    | Anglican Consultative Council                            |
| ACEN   | Anglican Communion Environmental Network                 |
| AIDS   | Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome                      |
| ANSEPA | Anambra State Environmental Protection Agency            |
| CCC    | Climate Change Convention                                |
| CCPD   | Commission on the Churches' Participation in Development |
| CFCS   | Chlorofluorocarbons                                      |
| Circle | Circle of Concerned African Women Theologians            |
| CMS    | Church Missionary Society                                |
| EIA    | Environmental Impact Assessment                          |
| FAO    | Food and Agriculture Organisation                        |
| FEPA   | Federal Environmental Protection Agency                  |
| GDP    | Gross Domestic Product                                   |
| GNP    | Gross National Product                                   |
| HDI    | Human Development Index                                  |
| HIV    | Human Imuno Virus  |
| IMF    | International Monetary Fund                              |
| JPIC   | Justice, peace and integrity of creation                 |
| JPSS   | Just, Participatory and Sustainable Societies            |
| LDC    | Least Developed Countries                                |
| MDGs   | Millennium Development Goals                             |
| MSW    | Municipal Solid Waste                                    |
| NEEDS  | National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy   |
| NEP    | National Environmental Policy                            |
| NERDC  | Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council    |
| NGOs   | Non Governmental Organisations                           |
| NOX    | Nitrogen Oxide   |
| OAU    | Organisation of African Unity                            |
| OECD   | Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development    |
| PPP    | purchasing power parity                                  |
| SACC   | South African Council of Churches                        |

|       |  |
|-------|--|
| SAPS  | Structural Adjustment Programmes                         |
| SEEDS | State Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy      |
| SEPA  | State Environmental Protection Agency                    |
| SPSS  | Statistical Programme for Social Sciences                |
| TEK   | Traditional Ecological Knowledge                         |
| UKZN  | University of KwaZulu-Natal                              |
| UN    | United Nations   |
| UNCED | United Nations Conference on Environment and Development |
| UNCED | UN Conference on Environment and Development             |
| UNDP  | United Nations Development Programme                     |
| UNEP  | United Nations Environment Programme                     |
| URP   | Urban and Regional Planning                              |
| Uvb   | ultraviolet B radiation                                  |
| WB    | World Bank   |
| WCC   | World Council of Churches                                |
| WCED  | World Commission on Environment and Development          |
| WED   | World Environmental Day                                  |
| WHO   | World Health Organization                                |
| WSSD  | World Summit on Sustainable Development                  |
| WWF   | World Wild Fund  |
| WWF   | World Wild Fund  |

## CHAPTER ONE

### 1.0. Introduction

Concern for the state of the environment is a vital issue of our time. This concern has become imperative as local and global environments rapidly change and as humans are being urged to modify their behaviour in order to halt the progression of environmental deterioration.<sup>1</sup> Behavioural change has become a call to be adhered to if we are to: reduce consumption, form the habit of repairing, reusing and recycling and according to Schumacher, live simply so that others may simply live, as we engage in development of various kinds.<sup>2</sup> All over the world, especially during the last two decades, there has been a growing concern and emphasis on what we call the “double earth crisis” of environment and poverty challenges and its complicating nature.<sup>3</sup> The above picture has been captured and vividly presented by Kathleen Darby who asserts that:

we live within a rapidly deteriorating global environment, brought about at least to some extent by our own activity: it is a time of dangerous global warming, a time in which basic natural resources for ongoing life such as clean water and air are becoming exhausted; a time of an exploding human world population; a time in which one or another sort of nuclear catastrophe is possible- each of these matters being greatly complicated in many ways by global economic and political problems that no one seems to know how to address.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> White, Robert. 2004. (ed) *Controversies in Environmental Sociology*. London: Cambridge University Press. P. 6

<sup>2</sup> Jacklyn, Cock. 2007. *The War Against Ourselves. Nature, Power and Justice*. Johannesburg: Wits University Press. p.19

<sup>3</sup> Leal, Robert. 2004. *The Environment and Christian Faith*. Australia: St. Paul’s Publications. p. 20. There has been a lot of literature from different environmentalists on the current environmental crisis, emerging from church organisations, government and corporate organisations. See Simone, A.M. 1999. *Thinking About African Urban Management in an Era of Globalization. African Sociological Review*\_3(2) 1999, 69-98, Hossay, Patrick. 2006. *Unsustainable. A Primer for Global Environmental and Social Justice* (New York: Zed Books and global initiatives such as the United Nations Millennium Report, Declarations and Development Goals, and the World Council of Churches Peace, Justice and Creation Commission, etc. The “double earth crisis” is a term we use to refer to the intricate relationship between environment and poverty challenges on a global context.

<sup>4</sup> Darby, Kathleen. Ray. 2006. *Ecology, Economy and God. Theology that Matters*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press. p.108

The implication of this global earth crisis painted above is that today our beautiful environment has been distorted and destroyed in many ways. The extent of this distortion is such that human existence on the surface of the earth is endangered. The threat to human existence and ‘biodepletion’<sup>5</sup> reminds us of Fidon Mwombeki’s caution that “humanity is dangerously capable of destroying itself and the creation”.<sup>6</sup> The current rate of the earth crisis emanating from the quest for development and other human activities also increases the fear expressed by Sean McDough that “when the earth is disfigured and its fruitfulness impaired, then every succeeding generation of people is automatically condemned to poverty” and the possible extinction of the whole universe.<sup>7</sup> The consequences of focusing only on immediate ends are a contributory factor to the environmental degradation and other problems of our time. Environmental degradation occurs when there is a distortion or damage in the physical, chemical or biological characteristics of air, land and water with harmful effects upon human life and the life of other living species; our industrial processes, living conditions and cultural assets, or that may or will, in due course, waste or deteriorate our raw material resources.<sup>8</sup>

It is important to observe at this juncture that some environmental problems have effects of a global dimension.<sup>9</sup> Environmental problems are issues which have no national boundary and this “proves empirically that environment in one place is environment everywhere”.<sup>10</sup> Therefore an environmental concern in one place should be a global concern because our world is a common heritage for ourselves and the future generations. However, this “global effect-dimension” has to some extent precipitated the disappearance of the much needed

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<sup>5</sup> Biodepletion is a term used for biodiversity extinction. See Paehlke, Robert. 1995. (ed) *Conservation and Environmentalism. An Encyclopaedia*. New York: Garland Publishing Inc. P.77

<sup>6</sup> Mwombeki, Fidon. R. 2001. “Ecology in the New Testament” in Mugambi, J.N.K, and Vahakangas, M, *Christian Theology and Environmental Responsibility*. Nairobi: Action Publishers. p.96

<sup>7</sup> McDough, Sean. 1990. *The Greening of the Church*. New York: Orbis. p.20

<sup>8</sup> Byaruhanga, Karungi T.A. “The Church’s Role in Environmental Protection” in Agbasiere, Joseph and Zabajungu, B.K.1989. (eds) *Church Contribution to Integral Development*. Eldoret, Kenya: Amecea Gaba Pub. p.230

<sup>9</sup> Norman, Thomas. E. 1998. “Church-State Relations and Mission” in *Toward the Twenty-First Century in Christian Mission*. USA: William B. Eerelms Publishing Company. p.370

<sup>10</sup> Muoghalu, Leonard. 2004. “Environmental Problems and their Effects on Human Life: From Awareness to Action” in Mba Chike, Uchegbu Smart, Udeh C.A and Muoghalu, Leonard.(eds) *Management of Environmental Problems and Hazards in Nigeria*. United States of America: Ashgate Publishing Company.p.50

“collective will” to tackle the problem. This is because since environmental problems concern us all, they are in many cases regarded and treated as belonging to no one in particular. Consequently, “collective will” has been replaced with an attitude of nonchalance and apathy to such an extent that people (both Christians and non Christians) seem to regard the problem from a non-personal point of view, as something which does not affect them individually. This nonchalance further complicates the problem.

The *laissez-faire* attitude we have expressed above has made it critically important to remind ourselves that while the environment provides the necessary resources for development to meet people’s needs and sustenance, it is also crucial to be warned that if these resources are irreparably damaged or depleted beyond their capacity to renew themselves, as a result of nonchalance, then the future of life of both people and the universe at large is endangered.<sup>11</sup> In order to avert the impending doom, it has become imperative that there would be collective concern and a shared responsibility. This need has led to a number of increased global efforts from various quarters to make people and governments aware of the value of the environment and the importance of its protection while pursuing development.<sup>12</sup>

It is on the basis of the desired “collective concern” we have mentioned, that Africa’s and particularly Nigeria’s environmental challenges including poverty-related ones, should not be regarded only as a problem for the natural sciences. The quest for the “collective will” has made environmentalism to shift from being the exclusive concern of fringe groups in the society into becoming an area of general concern for all ‘socially’ conscious people.<sup>13</sup> Environmentalism has become inclusive of other fields such as environmental law, environmental ethics, environmental history, environmental philosophy, environmental politics etc. This alliance of disciplines with regard to the environment is mainly because the effects of environmental problems are not only multi-dimensional, they are also global as we noted earlier.<sup>14</sup> Environmental problems pose health, socio-cultural, economic as well as

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<sup>11</sup> Wamback, Andrew. “The Earth is God’s and all that is in it: Development from the Perspective of the Environment” in the *Journal of Theology for Southern Africa*.110 (July 2001) p.77-78

<sup>12</sup> Holdgate, Martin. 1996. *From Care to Action. Making a Sustainable World*. London: Earthscan Publications Ltd. p.73

<sup>13</sup> Leal, Robert. 2004. *The Environment and Christian Faith*. p.12

<sup>14</sup> Norman, Thomas. E. 1998. “Church-State Relations and Mission”. p.370

political problems. Therefore it is reasonable that solutions to the problems be sought from an interdisciplinary perspective.

### **1.1. Foregrounding the Term ‘Environment’**

Since this study is about the church, the environment and poverty and since the environment given its many related contexts is susceptible to various meanings and interpretations, it is important for us at the onset to make some clarifications about the term and explain how it is used in the study. While the term environment has become for many a popular choice, it is not without some problems. The problem with the term ‘environment’ is that it appears abstract, lacking precision and concreteness.<sup>15</sup> For example, not many people would describe where they are living as their environment. In this sense, it gives the impression of something which is not part of us rather than the place or the home where we inhabit which is an integral part of us. The term does not provide a sense of integration of the human and the non human; it rather creates a split between them.

Given the nature of the study, the term environment sometimes does not cover the exact meaning in other contexts, hence the use of a term such as ‘nature’. But the use of nature itself has its own ambiguity when used in certain contexts. The term denotes something that is over and above humans in the sense that humans are not part of it.<sup>16</sup> Given this connotation, we often erroneously assume that nature excludes us-humans. For some people, the term ‘nature’ conjures the image of God-less universe, a cosmos from which its creator is remote. As we shall see in the study, this thinking was dominant in the early Christian tradition. In the study, we will discover that nature was sometimes used to depict a particular context.

We have also used the term ‘creation’ in many of our references in the study. Some have argued that ‘creation’ is a much better term than environment and nature because it is

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<sup>15</sup> Prediger, S. B. 2000. *For the Beauty of the Earth. A Christian Vision for Creation Care*. Michigan: Baker Academic .p.16

<sup>16</sup> See Prediger, S.B. 1995. *The Greening of Theology: The Ecological Models of Rosemary Radford Ruether, Joseph Sittler and Jurgen Moltmann*. Atlanta: Scholar’s Press

expansive and all encompassing; it includes everything-humans, other creatures both celestial and terrestrial.<sup>17</sup> This inclusiveness makes it the choice word for our use in the concept of *oikotheology* as we shall see in the discussion on the concept of the *oikotheology*.

Because of the broad nature of the study we have also used the term ‘earth’ in order to cover as many aspects of the study as possible. The term earth is not abstract, it is specific, precise, concrete, denoting the very stuff which we are made of. According to Prediger, the idea of earth does not imply that we humans are somehow separate and above, “it includes us with all the other inhabitants of this God’s fecund planet. Earth does not promote an unhealthy dualism of culture over against nature; creatures human and non human together inhabit this one planetary home”.<sup>18</sup>

Finally, we used the term ecology to denote specific contexts under which the study was engaged especially with regard to its use of the *oikos* as the root word for both economy and ecology. Throughout the study terms like environment, ecology, creation, nature, are often synonymously used, and this is because the meaning of each is clear from the context in which it is being used.

## **1.2. A Religious Contribution to the Environmental Concerns**

In recognition of the role of religion in environmental discourse, a significant new dialogue emerged on the interface of ecology and theology during the decade of the 1990s.<sup>19</sup> The concept of such an interface is now gaining ground within the formal study of ecology, environmental science, environmental policy, environmental law, environmental economics and natural resource management. Following similar trends, theological studies in the field of environment and development soon became one of the areas in which Christianity expresses its concern for the environment. In view of the theological input it needed to make, there

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<sup>17</sup> See Welker, Michael. 1999. *Creation and Reality*. Minneapolis; Fortress, Kaiser, Christopher. 1996. “The Integrity of Creation: In Search of a Meaning” in *Perspectives* 11, no.4

<sup>18</sup> Prediger, S. B. 2000. *For the Beauty of the Earth. A Christian Vision for Creation Care*. Michigan: Baker Academic.p.17

<sup>19</sup> Carroll, John, E. 2004. *Sustainability and Spirituality*. New York: State University of New York Press. p.6

arose a need to articulate an eco-theological framework which would be responsive to the environmental challenges of our time,<sup>20</sup>-one capable of inspiring practical commitment to environmental responsibility.

The above initiative was encouraged mainly because it has become evident that that the current environmental challenges are not only a social or secular issue; it has a religious dimension. The religious imperative to the environmental debate is premised on the understanding that it not only addresses fundamental human needs,<sup>21</sup> but as a universal characteristic of human societies, it is difficult for humanity to exist in the secular society without religion of any sort or any world view at all.<sup>22</sup> Attempts of many secular societies to eliminate religion and suppress religious concerns have not succeeded for a variety of reasons.<sup>23</sup> Important for us is that religious beliefs and practices instil in humans the awareness that their control and manipulative power over nature has limits and cannot be allowed to go unchecked. Hence we are of the view that world religions have an important role to play in the development of a global environmental ethic. It is on this recognition of the needed interface that the United Nations Development Programme had recently launched a three and half year programme to work with the world's major faiths to tackle climate change-one of the most serious environmental challenges of our time.<sup>24</sup>

This is an important change. A careful study of environmental initiatives suggests that international bodies, national governments, policy planners and even environmentalists had in the past emphasized the techno scientific options to such an extent that they seem to ignore and undermine the role of cultural and religious heritage in environmental protection and sustainable development.<sup>25</sup> This attitude can be explained by the seeming fear that the

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<sup>20</sup> Kamaara, Eunice. 2002. "Justice for Sustainable Development: An African Christian Theological Perspective on the Global Environmental Crisis" in the *Bulletin for Contextual Theology*. Vol. 8: 2 and 3 April and August. 2002. p.54-58

<sup>21</sup> Rasmussen, Larry. 1996. *Earth Community, Earth Ethics*. New-York, Maryknoll: Orbis Books.p.94

<sup>22</sup> Tanner, Kathryn. 1997. *Theories of Culture: A New Agenda for Theology*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press.

<sup>23</sup> Dieter, Hassel and Rasmussen, Larry. 2001 (eds) *Earth Habitat: Eco-Injustice and the Church's Response*. Minneapolis, Fortress Press.p.103

<sup>24</sup> Conradie, Ernst. 2008. *The Church and Climate Change*. p.64

<sup>25</sup> Gosovic, Branislav. 1992. *The Quest for World Environmental Cooperation*. London: Routledge. p. xv

introduction of religion into environmental discourse and efforts would threaten or compromise objectivity, scientific investigation, professionalism and democratic values.<sup>26</sup>

The explanation given for not according recognition and therefore not including religion as one of the disciplines in environmental discourses, that it would compromise scientific methodology and professionalism, is in our opinion, too simplistic and not convincing enough. The reason for this is that environmental investigations are not always conducted from scientific perspectives. To support our argument, we refer to Hunn who argues that scientific methodology is merely one way, and not the only way, to investigate and acquire knowledge in order to provide solutions to humanity's multifarious problems.<sup>27</sup> There are a whole range of avenues through which solutions to environmental problems could be pursued. One of such is religious engagement. This view is collaborated by Ian Barbour who argues that religion has a definite role to play in conservation and environmental protection. According to him, a religious understanding and attitude contributes and shapes our conception of the world and the dynamics of its institutions and social arrangements.<sup>28</sup> This *cosmic dynamics* has therefore necessitated the need to draw science more closely and fully into a working relationship with religion (and, I would add, theology).

This view on the important role of religion in environmental concerns and the need for a relationship between religion and science was supported by the former General Secretary of the World Council of Churches, Philip Potter as long ago as 1979. In a keynote address at the Conference on "Faith, Science and the Future" in that year, Potter posited that an intensification of the dialogue between science and religion would chip away at the wall of

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<sup>26</sup> Ibe, Martin Joe. 2003. *Environmental Ethics and Politics in Developing Countries. Case Study from Nigeria*. Germany: Schoningh. p.11

<sup>27</sup> See Hunn, E. 1999. *The Value of Subsistence for the Future of the World. Ethnoecology, Situated Knowledge / Located Lives*. Tucson: University of Arizona Press. p. 25-26

<sup>28</sup> Ian, Barbour. 1996. "Technology and Theology," in *Bulletin of Science, Technology & Society*, vol. 16, Nos. 1-2. p. 4-7. See additional issues in this journal. This draws relation to other issues of technology and justice. Among the increasing number of theorists drawing attention to this relationship is John B. Cobb, Jr., *Sustaining the Common Good. A Christian Perspective on the Global Economy* (Cleveland, Ohio: The Pilgrim Press, 1994).

separation that once stood between them.<sup>29</sup> This dialogue in our opinion is viewed as part of the church's response and willingness to engage in environmental discourse. The dialogue will create a platform in which both theologians and practitioners in other various fields of sciences would feel at home to engage in meaningful discussions about not only the very existence of the universe, but mainly on the need for its conservation and its governance.

This initiative for the interface between religion and science in general and environmental conservation in particular, is premised on the conviction that such collaboration could help create a self consciously moral society which would enhance environmental conservation grounded on respect for God's creation first, and it could also regulate individualism, materialism and the anthropocentric-induced desire to subjugate nature.<sup>30</sup> Operating on the same wave length with the above opinion, Conradie made a case for the importance of religion and the need for its inclusion in the current effort towards environmental protection. He quoted two important sources that deserve our attention in this regard; first, Mary Evelyn Tucker and John Grim, and second Patricia Mische, to justify the need for this inclusion. Mary Evelyn Tucker and John Grim were quoted as saying that:

it is becoming evident that the abundant scientific knowledge of the crisis is available and numerous political and economic statements have been formulated. Yet we seem to lack the political, economic and scientific leadership to make necessary changes. Moreover, what is still lacking is the religious commitment, moral imagination and ethical engagement to transform the environmental crisis from an issue on paper to one of effective policy, from rhetoric in print to realism in action.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> Drawing upon ecumenical reflection back to the origins of Life and Work Movement (Stockholm, 1925), Potter stresses the importance of the right use of technology in "Science and Technology: Why Are the Churches Concerned?" in *Faith and Science in an Unjust World*. Report of the World Council of Churches' Conference on Faith, Science and the Future, vol. I, ed., by Roger L. Shinn (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 1980), p. 21-29. An earlier expression of this concern can be seen in C. F. von Weizsäcker, *The Relevance of Science: Creation and Cosmogony*, Gifford Lectures, 1959-1960 (London: Collins, 1964). Von Weizsäcker writes, "Anyone neglecting to further his theoretical understanding of our complex world as much as he can, will in the long run do more harm than good in his practical efforts" p. 9.

<sup>30</sup> Dwivedi, O.P. 1996. "Satyagraha for Conservation: Awakening the spirit of Hinduism" in Roger S. Gottlieb (ed) *This Sacred Earth: Religion, Nature, Environment*. New York: Routledge. p.151

<sup>31</sup> Conradie, Ernst. 2008. *The Church and Climate change*. Pietermaritzburg: Cluster Publications. p.63

Similarly, Patricia Mische asserts that:

Science and technology alone cannot resolve ecological threats. Nor can governments or the laws they promulgate ... Sustaining the integrity of creation thus requires not only the external laws governments enact to deal with belligerent behaviour, but also inner governance, laws internalised in our hearts and minds and the will to live by them... Church praxis has special relevance for the development of inner governance and a culture of ecological responsibility. Religions carry the archetypes, the symbols, meanings, values and moral codes around which people coalesce and define themselves, their sense of the sacred, and their relationship with each other and the natural world.<sup>32</sup>

Similarly the Anglican Archbishop of Canterbury, Rowan Williams while supporting the call for Christian involvement in the fight against environmental abuse and climate change in particular, argues that:

Ultimately, the control of climate change, ultimately the welfare of the environment is an issue of survival for everybody. It's not a question that can be addressed by one society alone, by one religious tradition alone, by one state alone; it's something that demands collaboration; but collaboration will only happen effectively when people trust one another to be working for each another's interests in the fullest and clearest way possible.<sup>33</sup>

The statements credited to the above mentioned personalities underscore the importance of religious and especially Christian theological engagement in environmental issues. More importantly, it further lent credence to the much needed synergy between religion and other bodies and organisations committed to environmental conservation.

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<sup>32</sup> Conradie, Ernst. 2008. *The Church and Climate Change*. p.64

<sup>33</sup> Williams, Rowan. 2007. *Climate Change Action a Moral Imperative for Justice*.

[www.archbishopofcanterbury](http://www.archbishopofcanterbury) (Accessed on 16<sup>th</sup> March, 2009)

### 1.3. Christian Engagement through the Four Generations of Ecological Motifs

We have noted above that the role of religion in society has been recognized,<sup>34</sup> including also the role of Christian theology in environmental challenges.<sup>35</sup> The Christian involvement in the environment has a long theological history in spite of being accused for its anthropocentric stance on nature.<sup>36</sup> Lynn White was one of such early accusers who held Christianity responsible for what he called “the historical roots of our ecological crisis”.<sup>37</sup> White vehemently argued that Christianity in practice has been committed to an exploitative attitude, thereby sowing the seeds of the contemporary environmental crisis. But a critical reflection on the contribution of theology in this regard would appreciate the efforts made through theological engagements at different periods in the history of Christian engagement on the environment: Dominion, Stewardship, Ecotheology and *Oikotheology*. These phases which we term the ‘four generation of Christian ecological motifs’ are thoroughly discussed in chapter six. The engagement from Christian ecumenical perspectives comes from the WCC (The World Council of Churches).<sup>38</sup> The WCC could be located between the third and fourth generations of these ecological motifs. The World Council of Churches has contributed immensely to creating awareness and inspiring Christian commitment and action to global ecological issues. The contributions of the World Council of Churches in this regard, are elaborately dealt with in chapter four of this work.

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<sup>34</sup> Villa-Vicencio, C. 1992. *A Theology of Reconstruction: Nation Building and Human Rights*. Cambridge: University Press. P. 264 See Mugambi, J.N.K. 1995. *From Liberation to Reconstruction: African Christian Theology after the Cold War*. Nairobi: East African Educational Publishers. p.135

<sup>35</sup> McDonagh, Sean. 2001. *Why are We deaf to the Cry of the Earth*. Dublin: Veritas, see Maathai, Wangari. 1991. “The Responsibility of the Church towards the Environment” in Kobia, Sam.(ed) *Together in Hope*. 71-76. Nairobi: The National Council of Churches of Kenya.

<sup>36</sup> Harris, F. 2004. *Global Environmental Issues*. England: John Wiley and sons, Ltd. p.301

<sup>37</sup> Attfield, R. 1994. *Environmental Philosophy: Principles and Prospects*. Aldershot: Avebury. p.164 See also Lawrence, S. Hamilton. 1993.(ed) *Ethics, Religion and Biodiversity. Relations Between Conservation and Cultural Values*. U.K: The White Horse Press. p.30

<sup>38</sup> The Justice, Peace, Creation team of the WCC organized a small meeting in September 1999 in Geneva to analyze and evaluate preparations for the Third Ministerial Round of the World Trade Organization (WTO) in Seattle. The group included experts and representatives of networks working on environmental issues, agriculture, international trade and finance, and the funds, programmes and agencies of the UN system. See. <http://www.wcc-coe.org/wcc/what/jpc/index-e.html>.

We have to note that Christian engagement on environmental issues is not just simply aimed at responding to the above accusation to absolve itself of the blame of anthropocentrism. It is, however, to be understood as a way of fulfilling its sacred and social responsibility in the world-especially with regard to environmental protection. In this context, the role of theology is to understand and systematically articulate the crisis, the causes, the effects (present and potential) and provide resources for the church to approach the problem in a more creative and helpful ways.

#### **1.4. Locating the Anglican Engagement within the Generations of Ecological Motif**

Looking at the current ecological challenges from an Anglican perspective, it is noteworthy to observe that the global Anglican Communion had responded to the challenges of development in general and the environment in particular. Its engagement is located between generations two and three. During the 1998 Lambeth Conference, it made a ‘visible’ commitment to environmental protection. The Lambeth Conference resolutions 1.8 and 1.9 of that year specifically deal with creation and ecology respectively. In chapter four we deal with the engagement of the Anglican Communion on development and environment in detail. The full text of the Lambeth resolution on the environment is provided in the appendix (See Appendix).

#### **1.5. Introducing Oikothology as the Fourth Generation of Ecological Motif**

The concept of *Oikothology* which we understand to be the fourth generation of ecological motifs was introduced by Andrew Wamback.<sup>39</sup> This study uses *Oikothology* as one of its principal theories. This will be explained in the section that deals with the theoretical framework. *Oikothology* is regarded as a vehicle for environmental discourse that drives towards awareness, commitment and action. Central to Wamback’s use of the term-

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<sup>39</sup> Wamback, Andrew. 2005. *Constructing an Oikothology: The Environment, Poverty and the Church in South Africa*. PhD Thesis: University of KwaZulu-Natal. Wamback, in his thesis employed the concept of *Oikothology* to address the problem of environment and poverty. He drew the link between ecology and economy as the basis for environmental consideration and poverty alleviation from the Christian perspective. Other themes relating to environment and poverty also emerged from his work.

*Oikothology* is the emphasis on its metaphoric implication. He uses the term “household of God” in relation to the entire universe and indicates that economy and ecology are inextricably linked-having the same etymology from the Greek word “oikos”. He therefore argues that a holistic approach to achieving environmental sustainability and poverty alleviation would be to employ the concept of *Oikothology* to understand how humanity fits into the bigger picture of God’s household-the *oikos*, as well as appreciate the role of humanity in it. The link between ecology and economy which is further extended to include areas of environment and poverty, political economy and global capitalist system is discussed in chapter two, but the Greek etymological link between ecology and economy from where *oikothology* was coined, is explored in chapter six.

*Oikothology* does not only challenge our current life styles and global environmental ethic responsible for the seemingly anthropocentric attitude to the environment, it also seeks to provide individual Christians and the society at large with a dynamic framework for *thought and action* - a practical commitment that fosters environmental integrity and the struggle for social and economic justice. According to Robert Leal, it is “a cry for the church to proclaim its relevance to the society that has lost its way environmentally”.<sup>40</sup> In this regard, *oikothology* occupies a strategic place in bringing about attitudinal change to Christian understanding and attitude on the current environmental problems. The significant role of religion in bringing about this change, is recognized by McDaniel who posits that “when the forces of global capitalism crush various communities, push many into diaspora, distort priorities, leave families fragmented and alienated, drive the multitude into cynism and despair, and consume the lives even of the winners, religion provides transcendent orientation and “antisystemic” force.<sup>41</sup> This “transcendent orientation and antisystemic force” is envisaged to be the gift of *oikothology* to the church. It is assumed that the inspiration and commitment derivable from the concept of *oikothology* would be capable of pushing back death-dealing systems be it socio-political or cultural (including the current global capitalist system responsible for the current environmental problems and the recent global economic crunch) and provide both the church and individuals with an alternative set of values and commitments. Based on the above insights, therefore, *oikothology* is expected to assume the

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<sup>40</sup> Leal, Robert. 2004. *The Environment and Christian Faith*. p.12

<sup>41</sup> McDaniel, Jay. 2000. *Living from the Centre: Spirituality in an Age of Consumerism*. Louis: Chalice Press. p.21

role of a “midwife” in birthing the “antisystemic force” inherent in the global governance of the twenty-first century in many forms.

Warmback undertook his research with a specific focus on the Anglican Church in South Africa. He extensively used the 1998 Lambeth Conference Resolution of the Anglican Church on the environment to capture and introduce the relevance of *Oikothology* to the Anglican Church in South Africa as it searches for solution to the current environmental challenges.<sup>42</sup> The 1998 Lambeth Conference Resolution on environment challenged the church to “become more active in seeking to raise environmental awareness in their liturgies, in their preaching and in their teaching and mission to the world”.<sup>43</sup> Though the Lambeth Conference did not articulate in pragmatic terms how this could be achieved, it nonetheless served as a pointer to the expression of the Christian scripture and teachings in general and the concern of the Anglican Communion in particular that the resources of this world are meant to sustain all life on earth,<sup>44</sup> hence the relevance of Warmback’s use of *Oikothology* as a premise for the church’s engagement on ecology and economic discourse.

Recognizing that a study of this kind has not been done to investigate the response and engagement of the Anglican Church in Anambra State (Nigeria) to the Lambeth call on the environment more than ten years after the Lambeth Conference Resolution, this study therefore focuses on the engagement of the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) on the environment and poverty having being inspired by Warmback’s use of the concept of *Oikothology*.

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<sup>42</sup> See Warmback, Andrew. 2005. *Constructing an Oikothology: The Environment, Poverty and the Church in South Africa*.

<sup>43</sup> The Lambeth Conference Official Website. Lambeth Conference Archives.  
<http://www.lambethconference.org/resolutions/1998/1998-1-9.cfm> (Accessed on 21st march, 2007)

<sup>44</sup> The Lambeth Conference Official Website. Lambeth Conference Archives

## **1.6. The Voice of the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) within the Generations of Ecological Motif**

The importance of including African Christian theology as one of the resources in addressing the environmental crisis cannot be over emphasized. This importance is underpinned by the fact that Christians constitute an important segment of the African population but are seen as a “dormant giant” as far as their involvement in the current environmental challenges is concerned. The involvement of the Anglican Church in this regard has become necessary since Nigeria, most frequently referred to as the “Giant of Africa”, with immense natural and human resources,<sup>45</sup> is currently facing an environmental crisis simply because she has failed to pursue development in the most sustainable way as she struggles to meet the basic human needs of her citizenry. Therefore, getting the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) to be involved in a more committed way in the current environmental challenges, would be of immense benefit to Africa in particular and humanity in general.

Clearly then the response of the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) to the environmental challenges in general and the Lambeth Conference Resolution on the environment in particular is crucial. The importance of Nigeria in Africa (both in terms of population and economy) and the Anglican Church in Nigeria, which has about 17 million members, the second largest province in the Worldwide Anglican Communion after the Church of England and the largest in Africa, cannot be underestimated.<sup>46</sup> The Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) has over 130 dioceses and 10 Ecclesiastical Provinces.<sup>47</sup> The impact of the church with such a large membership cannot *ipso facto* be undermined. Moreover, the impact or rather the influence of the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) on the global Anglican Communion polity also cannot be under estimated. The Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) has recently demonstrated the extent of its influence by bringing the majority of African bishops including a few outside Africa to her side to decide against the acceptance of homosexuality by the global Anglican Communion.

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<sup>45</sup> Ojo-Ade, F. 2001. *Death of a Myth: Critical Essays on Nigeria*. Trenton: African World Press p.34

<sup>46</sup> Church of Nigeria “Introduction” <http://anglican-ng.org/introduction.htm> (accessed on 23rd Sept. 2007)

<sup>47</sup> The Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion). History accessed from <http://www.anglican-ng.org/history.htm> on 23<sup>rd</sup> August 2008

The vote against homosexuality led to an ‘impaired’ relationship between the rest of the Communion and others led by the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion).<sup>48</sup>

The Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) has its numerical strength in the South-East geo-political zone of Nigeria. Anambra State, the study area for this research, is situated in the South East geo-political zone of the country. The three Anglican dioceses in Anambra state viz. Awka, Nnewi and Diocese on the Niger the focus of this research, originally constituted what is known as the “Mother Diocese”, the Diocese on the Niger. This means that the dioceses of Awka and Nnewi were carved out from the Diocese on the Niger. It will therefore be interesting to see how these three dioceses in the Church of Nigeria (Anglican

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<sup>48</sup> Bishop Robinson was the first Anglican bishop to exercise the office of a bishop while in an acknowledged same-sex relationship. This is seen by many to be at the heart of the current controversy in the Anglican Communion. Issues concerning homosexuality are controversial in the Anglican Communion. During the thirteenth Lambeth Conference in 1998, a resolution was passed stating that homosexual acts are incompatible with Scripture by a vote of 526-70; however, it also contained a statement declaring this policy would not be the final word and research would continue. (Lambeth Resolutions are not binding on member churches of the Anglican Communion, but carry considerable moral authority.) Responding to these theological disputes, many provinces, primarily from central Africa also some in Asia, South America and Australia-representing around half of the 80 million practicing Anglicans worldwide-declared a state of impaired communion with their counterparts. Minority groups in Western provinces have stated their opposition to what they consider unscriptural actions by the Churches of England, Canada, Australia, and the ECUSA, and in the United States, some (such as the Anglican Mission in the Americas and the Convocation of Anglicans in North America) have withdrawn their affiliation with the ECUSA and realigned themselves with African provinces such as the Churches of Uganda and Rwanda. This state of affairs led to the consecration by the church of Nigeria of Martyn Minns, who was the former rector of Truro Episcopal Church a bishop and head of the Convocation of Anglicans in North America, a splinter group of American Anglicans. The Church of Nigeria considers him a missionary bishop to the United States, despite protest from Canterbury and the U.S. Episcopal Church. In 2008, four Anglican primates announced that they intend to boycott the Lambeth Conference because of their opposition to Ecumenical Church of the United States-ECUSA's actions regarding homosexual clergy and same-sex unions. These primates represent the Anglican provinces of Nigeria, Uganda, Kenya and Rwanda. In addition, Peter Jensen, Archbishop of Sydney, Australia and Michael Nazir-Ali, Bishop of Rochester, among others announced their intentions not to attend. The Global Anglican Future Conference, a meeting of conservative bishops held in Jerusalem in June 2008 (one month prior to Lambeth), was thought by some to be an alternative Lambeth for those who are opposed to the consecration of Robinson. GAFCON involved Martyn Minns, Akinola and others who consider themselves to be in a state of impaired communion with Lambeth, ECUSA and Canterbury. The June 2008 church blessing of Peter Cowell, an Anglican priest at Westminster Abbey, and David Lord, an Anglican priest serving at a parish in Waikato, New Zealand, renewed the debate one month prior to the conference.

Communion) are engaged in environment and poverty issues in their attempt to translate the 1998 Lambeth Conference Resolution on the environment into action, if at all.

To take the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) forward, especially the three dioceses, in the areas of environment and poverty, therefore, we would return to Warmback's understanding and use of *Oikothology* which connects economy (*oikos-nomos* in Greek) with ecology (*oikos-logos* in Greek) to help us to investigate:

- (i) the engagement of the Anglican Dioceses in Anambra State (Nigeria) in environment and poverty issues.
- (ii) the understanding of key church leaders of the Anglican Dioceses in Anambra state -the clergy on issues of poverty and environment.

This investigation has become important because of our thinking that although the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) has the necessary resources to make a meaningful contribution to the challenges of the environment and poverty in Nigeria it is, however, doing little in this regard because it does not have sufficient *environmental knowledge*, awareness and the requisite "will" to make this happen. Yet, because this is a church we are talking about, it needs a clearly articulated ecological *theology* to guide its action. There is therefore a need for the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) in particular and the church in general to rethink its theology on environment in relation to socio-economic development in the form of an *oikothology*, in order for its members to be environmentally enlightened, sensitized and be practically committed. This will also need to be a Nigerian *oikothology*, drawing from indigenous ecological ethics in particular and African cosmology in general. The above is in recognition of the identified gap in Warmback's use of *oikothology* which did not reflect African culture. Since African Christians are expected to be inspired by the concept of *Oikothology*, it needs to be indigenized in a way that reflects the lived experiences of the African people - this way, they can own and make it their 'property'. As a result of the need for the indigenization of *Oikothology*, in this thesis we make a significant advance on Warmback's use of the term to include the exploration of the synthesis of African ecological ethics, using indigenous ecological knowledge systems in the traditional African context and Christian ecological theology in developing an ecotheology that would respond to the environment and poverty issues from the Nigerian perspectives in particular and African perspective in general. The reflection of African worldview on nature is what we call

the fifth generation of ecological motifs. The indigenization of the concept of *Oikotheology* is discussed in chapter seven. This synthesis is deemed necessary since it has been recognized that the existing indigenous institutions (including ecological ethics) can provide the basis for engagement in the broader context of development, based on a consideration of the environment, the use of local human and natural resources and the belief systems.<sup>49</sup>

The importance of this synthesis also reinforces the relevance of *African Theology* as an instrument of inculturation - one that attempts to establish a symbiotic relationship with African culture and world order. The synthesis further confirms the relevance of the interdisciplinary approach that is needed to tackle the environment and poverty challenges. Moreover, the synthesis represents our attempt in trying to bridge the gap or rather resolve the problem of 'knowledge without corresponding practical' commitment identified from the field work research in chapter five. The development of an indigenous Nigerian *Oikotheology* is therefore regarded as an invaluable contribution which the church can make to the call for a concerted effort in providing solution to the current environment and poverty problems.

### **1.7. The Relevance of the Study**

The literature review justifies the reasons as to why this research topic is relevant to the church's engagement in the current environment and poverty problems. First, the research is practically based on the need to move beyond rhetoric, creating mere environmental awareness, to proposing an *action-oriented* ecological theology which would eventually provide individual Christians in general and the Anglican Church in Nigeria in particular; with a dynamic framework for a praxis that fosters environmental integrity. When practical commitment to issues of the environment and poverty is achieved through the application of the concept *Oikotheology*, the clarion call to *think globally and act locally*,<sup>50</sup> would become an enshrined cultural reality and attitude. This culture would engender collective responsibility in the sense that the current earth problems of environment and poverty would

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<sup>49</sup> Iyam, D.U. 1995. *The Broken Hoe: Cultural Reconfiguration in Biase Southern Nigeria*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. p.47

<sup>50</sup> Jonathan, Harris. Wise, Timothy. A., Gallagher, Kevin. P. and Neva, R. Goodwin. 2001. *A Survey of Sustainable Development. Social and Economic Dimensions*. Washington, D.C: Island Press. p. 297

be perceived locally and people would begin to understand that every individual action directed negatively to the environment would eventually precipitate environmental degradation; therefore each person must be involved in halting the progression of environmental degradation. It is therefore hoped that this praxis would inspire a pragmatic engagement of individuals to environmental issues.

Another dimension to the relevance of this study is the recognized need for a multi-dimensional approach to Nigeria and indeed Africa's environment and development challenges. It is a well known fact that currently, Nigeria and indeed Africa as a continent is plagued by development failure.<sup>51</sup> The problem of environment and development have been identified and discussed for many years.<sup>52</sup> However, most of these discourses have approached the problem from scientific, economic and political dimensions. Various governments, environmentalists and environmental policy makers have in the past failed to recognize the influence of Christianity and the important role its theology could play in addressing environmental challenges in Nigeria, "a nation adjudged to be notoriously religious".<sup>53</sup> In recognition of the fact that solutions to the current environmental challenges require a multi-and inter disciplinary approach, it has become crucial for Christianity as one of the dominant religions in Nigeria, to be part of the solution by articulating a theological response which will address the environment and poverty problems in Nigeria.

According to Awoniyi, the Nigerian Christian community is one of the biggest institutions in Nigeria. In numerical terms, "it is bigger than any political party, trade union or the rank and file of the Nigerian army".<sup>54</sup> There are several examples that illustrate this assertion especially from Christian point of view. First, we have already indicated that the Anglican Church has more members in Nigeria than anywhere in the world. Second the number of the Roman Catholic members in Nigeria is only comparable to those in Brazil in terms of

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<sup>51</sup> Ogbu, Kalu. 2000. *Power, Poverty and Prayer. The Challenges of Poverty and Pluralism in African Christianity, 1960-1996*. New York: Peter Lang. P.52

<sup>52</sup> Conradie, Ernst. 2008. *The Church and Climate Change* .p.1 See also, Karungi, T. A Byaruhanga.1989. "The Church's Role in Environment Protection" in Agbasiere, Joseph T. and Zabajungu B.K (eds) *Church Contribution to Integral Development*. Eldoret Kenya: AMECEA Gaba Publications . p. 228

<sup>53</sup> Ukah, A. F.K . 2003. "Advertising God" in *Journal of Religion in Africa*. (Vol. xxxiii) 2. P. 204

<sup>54</sup> See Awoniyi, H. Olufemi. 1998. *Government Subsidy of Christian Pilgrimage is a Bribe*. Ibadan: Center for Applied Religion and Education. p.11

population. Third, the rate at which Pentecostalism is growing in Nigeria is faster than anywhere else in the world.<sup>55</sup> This religious characterization, with which Nigeria has come to be associated, is therefore seen as an advantage to be explored in the search for a multi-dimensional approach to the environmental challenge which is now needed to bridge the gap created by the non inclusion of Christian theology in environmental discourses over the years. This underscores the relevance of this research.

Moreover, as a value to knowledge and society, it is anticipated that this research will help to deconstruct what we term the “Western cultural dominance” responsible to a large extent for the current dysfunctional global ecological ethics (i.e. the anthropocentric attitude to nature). The impact of the ‘flag’ and the ‘cross’ (colonization and missionary activity) which introduced the Western mechanistic worldview is discussed in chapter seven. From this discussion, we note that traditional African cosmology is opposed to the Western mechanistic worldview which objectifies and commodifys nature, hence the need for us to integrate African ecological ethics and *Oikothology* to deconstruct this mentality. This will thus allow us space to appreciate valuable contributions which the synthesis of our African ecological ethics and Christian theology could make to the development of our country. The synthesis of the values of *Oikothology* and African ecological ethics in our opinion, would be considered Africa’s gift to humanity as humanity grapples with development challenges. It is therefore a great asset waiting to be harnessed.

Furthermore, owing to the fact that no work of this nature has attempted to articulate the role and involvement of the Anglican Church in environment and poverty issues in Nigeria, this research is timely and relevant in the face of the current environmental problems which calls for synergistic approach. This could be appreciated given the population of the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion). In addition to the advantage of its population, if the church could use its ‘influence’ and ‘lobbying strategy’ to engage in the current environment and poverty issues the same way it had engaged in the global Anglican Communion controversy over the homosexual debate, we are left without doubt that it would certainly bring about the needed synergy to the challenges of the environment and poverty.

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<sup>55</sup> Ali, Mazuri. A. 1985 “Religion and Political Culture in Africa” in the *Journal of American Academy of Religion*. 52 (Dec. 1985) p. 820

At the policy level, this research is expected to come up with viable suggestions which will help the Anglican Church in Anambra state (Nigeria) in particular and the church in Nigeria in general to deal with environment challenges as well as make meaningful contribution to national development.

### **1.8. Recurrent Themes in the Thesis**

This thesis draws from the three broad areas in the contemporary field of theology and development studies, namely theological resources for the Church's engagement in development action, development of indigenous theologies in Africa and the relationship between environment and economy.

*Theological resources:* The Christian concern for the environment and by extension to development in general, is premised on the teachings of the bible regarding the world. Biblical scholars and theologians too numerous to mention at this juncture, are in consensus that Christian theology rooted in the insights of the bible is a great resource for addressing the issue of the environment and development.<sup>56</sup>

The problem, however, is whether Christians have understood the mission of the church to the world. The summary of the mission of the church is that the Church is called and sent by God to proclaim and further the reign of God.<sup>57</sup> Broadly understood, the church is called to be engaged in socio-economic, political and cultural issues in order to address both the institutional and structural challenges inhibiting the realization of the reign of God in the society. The extent to which the church understands this mandate will definitely determine its relevance in the society. The interest of the research is to try and find out how the church translates this mandate in the context of the environment and poverty in the face of the seemingly divergent Christian theologies emerging from Africa.

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<sup>56</sup> Clark, Stephen. R. L. 1993. *How to think about the Earth. Philosophical and Theological Models for Ecology*. London: Mowbray. p.1 and 12

<sup>57</sup> Jones, Serene and Lakeland, Paul. 2005. (eds) *Constructive Theology. A Contemporary Approach to Classical Themes*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press. p. 232

The interest is driven by our concern about the aforementioned divergent Christian social theologies. It is important to remind ourselves that what we term the prevailing ‘cacophonous’ theologies on socio-political and economic engagement of the church in society is incongruous, ‘uncontextual’ and out of date in relation to the current theological postulations presently being championed by scholars of theology and development studies. Cox and Haar,<sup>58</sup> identified denominational divides as an antecedent to the ‘cacophonous theologies’ and a major hindrance to a unified Christian commitment in socio-economic and political issues in the society. As long as the church remains divided on how to engage in the socio-economic and political issues in the society, its understanding of furthering the reign of God which is its mission remains elusive.

If the church would be true to its calling to further the reign of God, it has to be mindful of the need to engage in theology contextually. Effective contextualization would produce theologians who, according to Buffel,<sup>59</sup> would engage in “doing theology instead of thinking theology”. Thinking theology makes theology an abstract thing but doing theology empathizes it and translates theories into reality. This emphasis on contextualization is underpinned by the understanding that “any theology that ignores context is worthless and not worth pursuing”.<sup>60</sup> Stressing the importance of contextualization in theology, John de Gruchy asserts that “when people forget context and crisis, they turn abstract, detached, ideological, remote and unhelpful. However, when they remember context and crisis, they show their identification with the people who are subjects and objects of Christian ministry”.<sup>61</sup> ‘Doing theology’ that engenders praxis has therefore become critically important for the church in Africa to respond meaningfully to the socio-political and economic challenges plaguing the continent. This response in our esteemed opinion will add to the

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<sup>58</sup> James, L. Cox and Gerrie Ter Haar. 2003. (eds) *Uniquely African? African Christian Identity from Cultural and Historical Perspectives*. Eritrea: Africa World Press Inc. p. 220

<sup>59</sup> Bufel. O. A. *Journeying with the Poor as they Struggle for Survival and Freedom: Pastoral Work Amongst the Poor*. A Ph.D seminar presentation at the University of KwaZulu-Natal. November 2007.

<sup>60</sup> Parrat, J. 2004.(ed) *Latin America in An Introduction to Third World Theologies*. Cambridge University Press. p.131

<sup>61</sup> De Gruchy J. 1986. *Theology and Ministry in Context and Crisis: A South African Perspective*. London. Collins Publications. P. 36

relevance of the church in a time of secularism and severe criticism of religion by voices such as Richard Dawkins and Christopher Hitchens.<sup>62</sup>

*Development of indigenous theologies in Africa:* Indigenous culture had successfully controlled the proper use of the earth over the years until the Western anthropocentric culture, which was introduced alongside Christianity, became a global phenomenon. The study argues that the Western mechanistic cosmology has to a large extent initiated the process of the destruction of African ecological ethics in particular and African cosmology that informed its moral order in general.

It is important at this juncture to clarify the way in which we have used the word ‘African’ which appears in almost every section of the chapters in the study. So far we are not certain of any generally accepted criterion for accepting what is and what is not African. In our understanding therefore, for something to be regarded as African, it does not need to be believed in or accepted by all Africans. It is enough to originate from Africa, and have a proportion of Africans who believe in or accept it.<sup>63</sup> To illustrate our point, we refer to Kanyike Edward who asserts that “very few Europeans know anything about Hegel let alone believe in what he wrote, but this does not prevent his philosophy from being called both German and European philosophy”.<sup>64</sup> So, in similar way, a practice common among for example, some West African countries can rightly be regarded as African even when such a practice is not found in almost all African countries.

Having said this, African cosmology or ecological ethics is used to represent the worldview and ecological ethics of most traditional African societies. With the above understanding, the study argues that the globalization of anthropocentric and mechanistic culture has not only distorted African ecological ethics, but has also produced a global ecological ethic which is incongruous with the biblical concept of the created order. This globalised culture based on a mechanistic worldview has therefore created the need to explore the synthesis of indigenous ecological ethics and biblical resources. This exciting exploration is predicated on the

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<sup>62</sup> Conradie, Ernst. 2008. *The Church and Climate Change*. p.vii

<sup>63</sup> Kanyike, Edward. 2003. *The Principle of Participation in African Cosmology and Anthropology*. Balaka, Malawi: Montfort Media.p.12

<sup>64</sup> Kanyike, Edward. 2003. *The Principle of Participation in African Cosmology and Anthropology*.

realisation that existing African ecological knowledge if given recognition and support, has the potential to provide the much needed “collective responsibility and practical commitment” for environmental protection and development. This exploration further confirms the validity of ‘African Theology’ in playing complementary role (not second fiddle) to the Western theology in articulating a coherent theological response to issues confronting humanity on daily basis.

Based on the foregoing, the study recognizes the need for the Church, especially the Anglican Church in Anambra state (Nigeria) to deal with environmental issues in Nigeria in pragmatic and creative ways. It could achieve this by appropriating the resources of indigenous culture of the Igbo people of Nigeria. The relevance and the need for the church’s prophetic witness in the current earth crisis could be situated in the long history of Church involvement in social, economic, political and cultural issues, which promoted the well being of all people in church and society during its early period. The historical antecedents of the church provide much insight into the importance of religion in the transformation of states leading to economic developments and social revolutions. Studies in English history, particularly the consequence of the Protestant and Puritan revolutions in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, clearly confirm the significant role Christianity played in contributing to the socio-political development of England during that period and subsequently<sup>65</sup>. Furthermore, during the struggle for the soul of Africa, it was assumed that colonial and imperial enterprises remain unfulfilled or incomplete without religious accompaniment. This fact is hardly contestable judging from the leading role which the church and other religious organizations played in the transformation of Europe and the colonisation of the world from the 16<sup>th</sup> to the 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. In fact, as records show, explorers, priests, administrators, statesmen and soldiers served their respective empires for “God, gold and glory”.<sup>66</sup> The above is very true of the Nigerian experience. Therefore, it would be interesting to see the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) relive once again, the Church Missionary Society’s (CMS) tradition of engaging the local folks through socio-economic empowerment.

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<sup>65</sup> Gustav, H.K. Deveneaux. 2003. “Christianity and National Development in West Africa: Dilemmas and Possibilities” in James L Cox and Gerrieter Haar (eds) *Uniquely African? African Christian Identity from Cultural and Historical Perspectives*. Asmara, Eritrea: Africa World Press, inc. p.157

<sup>66</sup> Gustav, H.K. Deveneaux. 2003. “Christianity and National Development in West Africa: Dilemmas and Possibilities”. p.157

*The Relationship between Environment and Economy:* The church's engagement in a theology that deals with the environment and poverty needs a crucial consideration since it is believed that the two are inseparable.<sup>67</sup> The environment provides the resources for human sustenance but unfortunately the activities of both the poor and the rich impact negatively on the ecosystem. This point is well documented in chapter two and three. Furthermore, the dominant economic paradigm which offers to 'solve' the problem of poverty has unfortunately become the one that is also responsible for much of our current ecological crisis. This statement further underscores the importance of the concept of *Oikothology*, one that deals with the role of the church in environment and poverty issues by taking cognizance of the relationship between ecology and economy. If the problem of poverty is going to be addressed effectively, the current skewed relationship between ecology and economy will have to be straightened in such a way that economic activities do not stifle ecological activities and survival. This is precisely the emphasis of *Oikothology*. Environment and economy (i.e. poverty) are inextricably linked; and caring for the environment is therefore a *sine qua-non*-for economic development and poverty alleviation.

If human life and the life of the earth in general is to be sustained while at the same time trying to achieve economic development, then we need to value and protect the environment. However, economic development cannot be seen in isolation from the relationships people have with one another and with the rest of nature. This is because if the earth's resources are irreparably damaged or depleted through human activity, the earth's life support mechanism would be impaired and the entire life forms would be at the risk of extinction. The study investigated the impact of both the rich and poor on the environment and discovered that the blame heaped on the poor as sole culprits in terms of environmental degradation, is just one side of the story. The other side of the story which would indict the rich as well, is often not told. It however identified a number of issues-population, life style, technology and consumption rates as some of the factors responsible for environmental problems.

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<sup>67</sup> Hallowes, David. 1993. *Hidden Faces. Environment, Development, Justice: South Africa and the Global Context* .Cape Town: Earth life. p.91

## 1.9. Principal Theories upon which the Research Project is Constructed

As an overall theoretical approach, this thesis has used the approach of *Social Theology* as developed by Steve de Gruchy in the Theology and Development Programme at University of KwaZulu -Natal (UKZN). This draws on earlier work in Liberation Theology, Contextual Theology and Public Theology.<sup>68</sup> At heart, this approach aims to work at the interface between faith, social analysis and theological reflection, and emphasises that these elements must correlate in a meaningful way to engender Christian engagement in social issues. According to Henriot and Holland, social analysis is an effort to obtain a more complete picture of a social situation being researched by exploring its historical and structural relationships.<sup>69</sup> It serves as a tool that enables us to grasp the reality with which we are dealing after going through what they called “the pastoral cycle”. The outcome of engaging in social analysis is a theological reflection and action which is what this research is concerned with. Theological reflection is an effort to understand more broadly and deeply the analyzed experience in the light of living faith, scripture, church social teaching and the resources of tradition.<sup>70</sup>

In developing the theological response to the social context, the study uses the concept of *oikothology*. Here, the concept of *Oikothology* is used in relation to “pastoral planning” as explained in the social analysis theory. This is a response of action to a particular social situation.<sup>71</sup> *Oikothology* challenges the church to be actively involved in the current environmental challenges. It does this by providing eco-theological resources for people to make connections between their faith and social realities, including the establishment of symbiotic relationship with nature as a way of achieving this. *Oikothology* was used in the study to address the following issues:

- ✚ God’s absolute ownership of the earth and all that is in it ( psalm 24:1)
- ✚ That the whole earth (ecosystem) is seen as God’s family/household,(*oikos*)

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<sup>68</sup> De Gruchy, S. *Tentative Reflections on Religion, Rationality and Research in Social Theology*. June 2006 (unpublished paper)

<sup>69</sup> Henriot, Peter and Holland, Joe. 1985. *Social Analysis*. United States of America: Maryknoll. P.14

<sup>70</sup> Henriot, Peter and Holland, Joe. 1985. *Social Analysis*.p.9

<sup>71</sup> Henriot, Peter and Holland, Joe. 1985. *Social Analysis* p.9

- ✚ There is a need to safeguard the integrity of creation, sustain and renew the life of the earth.
- ✚ That ecology and economics (environment and poverty) are inextricably linked. Therefore the need to establish an economic system which guarantees ecosystems health. This is based on the understanding that poverty-induced activities contribute to environmental degradation.
- ✚ That the church is mandated to take care of and manage the environment as part of God' family.

The approach of Social Theology and the theoretical framework of *oikotheology* were chosen because they provide clear theoretical and theological guidelines for church engagement in social issues, particularly the current double earth crisis of environment and poverty.

### **1.10. Methodology**

In meeting the objectives of the research, and in order to gain theoretical and background knowledge on the issues being researched, the study made use of secondary sources of information. The main sources of secondary data were books from the University of KwaZulu-Natal library, journals, newspapers and magazines, Church documents from Nigeria (Bishop's synod addresses, etc) government legislation, reports and such other documents as well as the internet resources.

The main primary data source was a self-administered questionnaire that was introduced and completed during the regular diocesan clergy workshops. It was administered to the clergy in the three Anglican Dioceses in Anambra state viz-Diocese on the Niger, Diocese of Awka and Diocese of Nnewi. It was estimated that there would be about 300 respondents to the questionnaire (approx 100 in each diocese), but it was only 91 respondents that eventually participated on the whole. The study made use of fifty (50) closed-answer questionnaire, and the answers were captured and analysed through the Statistical Programme for Social Sciences (SPSS). As a part of the University Research policy, approval for ethical clearance was granted by UKZN for the research and permission was obtained from the three diocesan bishops who scheduled the workshop on three different dates and venues. I provided some background information to the research and its importance. I also provided answers to some

questions that were raised in relation to the questionnaire. Research findings were discussed in chapter five of the work.

The research programme was designed to assess and analyse the perceptions of key people (clergy) in the three dioceses. On the basis of the data collected and analysed, I was able to engage in *theory-building*. This was done by integrating an indigenous Nigerian ecological ethics with Christian theology. The outcome is the articulation of what the study termed an indigenous Nigerian *Oikothology* because of the integration of African ecological ethics. This synthesis is expected to enable the Anglican Church in Anambra state to engage in environment and poverty challenges in a more engaging way.

In examining the engagement of the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) in development issues and particularly in environment and poverty related challenges, I discovered that not much has been written in that regard. As a result, it was not easy to obtain documents from the church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) on their national policy on environment and development. It was equally not easy to get information and materials from the ministry of the environment in Anambra state due to some 'bureaucratic bottle neck'. I visited the ministry several times seeking to get official documents but could not. This shows how difficult it is to conduct a research in the state.

### **1.11. Structure of the Thesis**

Chapter one has presented a general introduction to the study. It has also introduced the reader to the need for the Anglican Church in Nigeria, especially the three dioceses that were the main focus of the research to employ the resources of *oikothology* and African indigenous ecological ethics to engage in development concerns.

Chapter two deals with ecology and economics. It examines the relationship between the environment and poverty (or ecology and economics). In doing this it provides a wide range of dimensions in which poverty was configured. It also looks at the theme from the perspective of both the impact of the global capitalist economy on the environment and also the impact on the livelihoods of the poor.

In chapter three we deal with poverty and environment in Anambra State. The chapter engages with the literature in order to understand the state of the environment and poverty in Nigeria in general and Anambra state in particular. We seek to understand the prevailing factors facilitating the “double earth crisis” of poverty and environment from the Nigerian context in general and Anambra state in particular. In order to do this we provide an historical overview of Anambra state as well as the environmental challenges in it. In trying to understand the link between environment and poverty in the state, we examine how the poor specifically contribute to environmental degradation. We also examine the federal government’s approach to environmental challenges and the institutional and policy framework put in place to address these challenges. Although causes of environmental problems seem to be general in outlook, we observe that there are some problems which are particular to the state.

Chapter four is a ‘transition’ chapter. In this chapter we investigate the historical engagement of the Anglican Church (in a wider ecumenical context) in initiatives about poverty and the environment. It serves as a transition from social analysis to theological engagement. It deals with the response and engagement of the church to the environment and poverty challenges discussed in the previous chapters. It begins by tracing the history of the ecumenical engagement of churches in this regard. It also examines the wider Anglican Communion engagement in environment and poverty issues. Finally it discusses the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) engagement in environment and development initiatives and thus provides the background to the research engagement in chapter five.

In chapter five we examine the understanding and engagement of the Church in dealing with poverty and environment in the state. The main objective of this chapter is through fieldwork research to assess and analyse the level of environmental awareness among the three Anglican dioceses of Niger, Awka, and Nnewi. This chapter focuses on the field work research that was conducted in the three dioceses.

Having analyzed the research findings and being informed by the existing literature in the previous chapters, in chapter six, we seek to understand how theological resources and especially the concept of *Oikothology*, could improve the practical participation of the church in environmental protection and contribute to poverty alleviation. The use of the

concept of *oikothology* was necessitated by the fact that both the creation story and post biblical ecological tradition have not sufficiently inspired practical commitment because they portray in a particular way a deep sense of anthropocentric terminologies. The chapter makes a brief analysis of some key components of the classical Christian thought about nature represented in the generations of Christian ecological motifs, and seeks to introduce the need for, as well as explore the resources of *Oikothology* as the fourth generation of ecological motif. In doing this our expectation is that *Oikothology* could inspire practical commitment for the church's involvement in the environment and poverty challenges.

As part of its theory building, chapter seven articulates the integration of *Oikothology* and indigenous ecological ethics as a more comprehensive theological framework in tackling the environment and poverty challenges in Nigeria. The chapter analytically reflects and suggested how the synthesis of "indigenous knowledge and theological resources" in the form of a Nigerian *Oikothology* could improve the participation of the church in environmental protection and contribute to poverty alleviation. This integration was seen as what is required to bridge the identified gap in the research. This is also seen as a dynamic ecotheological framework full of potentials to engender Christian commitment and action as this was lacking in the concept of *oikothology* because of its strong eschatological influences. It satisfies the demand for a more pragmatic ecotheological framework because it also has the potentials to uniquely fulfil the aspiration of African Christianity.

The final chapter summarizes the thesis and the findings and makes some suggestions to the Anglican Church in Anambra state, which also applies to the wider ecumenical family of churches, including the general public.

We turn now to understand the nature of the problem, by examining the relationship between environment and poverty globally and in Africa (chapter two), and then specifically in Anambra state in Nigeria (chapter three).

## CHAPTER TWO

### **2.0. The Environment and Poverty Nexus**

In this chapter, we are going to discuss the relationship between poverty and the environment. Environment and poverty are inextricably linked. This intricate link therefore makes it difficult to discuss either of them with the exclusion of the other, hence our use of the term “double earth crisis” of environment and poverty. It is imperative to discuss the two together. In doing so, the chapter is structured in four main components. Each component discusses major themes with sub titles. It begins with a general introduction to the global environmental concerns by problematising the environment and poverty nexus. It will thereafter explore the concept of poverty in all its various configurations. An attempt will be made to understand the scale of the “double earth crisis” from global and African contexts and how poverty contributes to environmental degradation in all these different scenarios.

In order to make the poverty and environment nexus very clear, we will then discuss different ways in which the environment is construed, as well as key driving factors of both the global and African environmental crisis. Thereafter, we will undertake an inquiry into the impact of human activities (of both the rich and the poor) on the environment. The impact of human activities on the environment is directly related to political and economic systems, and we investigate the nature and the role of international politics and the nature of international trade relations existing between the rich and poor countries. As a way of shedding more light on the issues of political economies and environmental degradation, the chapter also discusses the dimensions of the current global capitalist economy and its impact on the environment of the poor countries as well as the economy of the poor countries.

This chapter provides the necessary background to understand the nature of the poverty and environmental crisis in Anambra State, Nigeria; as well as the fact that any theological response to the crisis must take seriously the two-way relationship between poverty and the environment, the “double earth crisis”.

## 2.1. Introduction

Growing international concern about the global environment is no accident. It is a response to the fact that the major components of the biosphere, the only environment in the universe known to be hospitable to life, is under attack by many factors on many fronts. These have arisen to a large degree from human activities designed to meet the growing wants and needs of an expanding world population<sup>72</sup> to such an extent that the atmosphere, the oceans, soil cover, the climate system and the range of animal and plant species, have been altered by the intensity of human exploration of the earth's resources in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>73</sup> As a result, the litany of ecological complaints plaguing the world today comprises a long list of urgent problems seeking shared responsibility and solutions.<sup>74</sup> The realization that environmental threats can have serious socio-economic and human costs and that they cannot be solved by the unilateral decisions of states has given impetus in recent years to increased international cooperation to halt or reverse environmental degradation. This shared responsibility has become vitally important considering the fact that human society has reached a critical threshold in its relation to the environment to the point that the extinction of species, the alteration of the climate and the degradation of landscape is no longer mere speculation or imminent, it is already happening.<sup>75</sup>

Human societies have long had a major impact on their environment, and our tendency to exploit it as if it were an inexhaustible resource has repeatedly led to disaster in many ways.<sup>76</sup> In the past, however, pressures on the environment have typically been localized, leading only to local or regional impoverishments. For example, communities responsible for overgrazing their land or polluting their water supply could often move to new areas. Even if they could not, local hunger and disease did not necessarily affect the continued well being of societies in neighboring regions. Primitive peoples, for example, being few in number and

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<sup>72</sup> Veziroglu, T. Nejat. 1990. *Environmental Problems and Solutions. Greenhouse Effect, Acid Rain, Pollution*. New York. Hemisphere Publishing Cooperation. P.1x

<sup>73</sup> Spencer, Nick and White, Robert. 2007. *Christianity, Climate Change and Sustainable Living*. London: SPCK. p.8

<sup>74</sup> Bellamy, Foster, John. 1994. *The Vulnerable Planet. A short Economic History of the Environment*. New York. Cornerstone Books. p.11

<sup>75</sup> Jacklyn, Cock. 2007. *The War against Ourselves*. p.14

<sup>76</sup> Spencer, Nick and White, Robert. 2007. *Christianity, Climate Change and Sustainable Living*. p.34

operating at low energy levels with only basic tools, did very little to alter their environment. The characteristically low natural growth rates of foraging people (ie hunting and gathering groups) who inhabited the earth in prehistoric times ensured that populations remained small.<sup>77</sup> This, combined with their nomadic life style and the absence of any mechanism other than human muscle by which they could utilize the energy available to them, limited their impact on the environment.

The development of food production systems - agriculture and animal husbandry - labelled the Agricultural or Neolithic Revolution, allowed humans to gradually transform their existence and their environment.<sup>78</sup> From the 18th to 19<sup>th</sup> century, there became a gradual but significant change on the impact of human activities on the environment. In the late 20<sup>th</sup> century however, the situation dramatically changed. Society's ability to cause major changes in the atmosphere, and other elements of the environment intensified at an alarming rate. This was strongly influenced and accelerated by demographic and technological development.<sup>79</sup> Growth in the world population and economy, increased and widespread industrialization and the development of international trade and society in general, have occurred on such a scale that severe environmental damage and unsustainable exploitation of the earth's resources are taking place on a global scale.<sup>80</sup>

The damage to the environment over the decades is further exacerbated by the global capitalist system, globalization and the culture of unrestrained consumerism coupled with the quest for development through technology and energy use. The impact of the global economic system and technology on the environment will be discussed in detail below. It was the ability to concentrate and then expend larger and larger amounts of energy which made the earth's human population uniquely able to alter the environment.<sup>81</sup> The ever growing demand for energy to maintain that ability is at the root of many modern environmental problems. As a result, the level of human intervention in the environment increased only

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<sup>77</sup> See Maddox, Gregory. H. 2006. *Nature and Human Societies. Sub-Saharan Africa. An Environmental History*. Oxford: ABC CLIO. p. 27-28

<sup>78</sup> Maddox, Gregory. H. 2006. *Nature and Human Societies. Sub-Saharan Africa*. p.31

<sup>79</sup> Kemp, David. D. 1990. *Global Environmental Issues. A climatological Approach*. New York: Routledge. p.2

<sup>80</sup> Smith, Paul. M. and Waw, Kiki. (eds) 1991. *Global Environmental Issues*. London: Open University. p.1

<sup>81</sup> Kemp, David .D. 1990. *Global Environmental Issues*. p.2

slowly over thousands of years, punctuated by significant events which helped to accelerate the process. As late as the nineteenth century, the environmental impact of human activities seldom extended beyond the local or regional level as we have mentioned earlier. The global impact only became possible with the major developments in technology and the population increase which accompanied the Industrial Revolution. Since then, with the introduction of devices as the steam engine, the eclectic generator, and the internal combustion engine-energy combustion has increased six-fold, and world population is now five times greater than it was in the eighteenth century.<sup>82</sup> The exact relationship between population growth and technology in terms of their impact on the environment remains a matter of controversy. However, there can be no denying the fact that the combination of these two elements are responsible for the increasingly rapid climate change which is jeopardizing the existence of the earth.

### **2.1.1 Understanding the Global Environmental Concerns**

The decade of the 80s were marked by a retreat from social concerns *per se* to broader issues of the environment. Scientists brought to the attention of the people of the world the urgent, but complex, environmental problems bearing on their survival and that of the earth. “Wake-up calls” from different concerned individuals and international organisations became the order of the day. For example, while Kovel calls for eco-socialism, others like Schumacher call for simplicity of life in order to reduce ecological foot print.<sup>83</sup> It was in this decade that for the first time it was discovered that the earth’s ozone layer which filters out much of the ultraviolet rays from the sun, was facing the risk of depletion.<sup>84</sup> Other issues such as the green house effect (global warming), acid rain and deserts consuming agricultural lands were highlighted on a serious global note.<sup>85</sup> Even though these environmental catastrophes were seen mainly as a problem of wealthy nations and a side effect of industrial growth, the “wake

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<sup>82</sup> Kemp, David. 1990. *Global Environmental Issues*. p.4

<sup>83</sup> Jacklyn, Cock. 2007. *The War against Ourselves. Nature, Power and Justice*. P.19

<sup>84</sup> See Meadows, D (ed) 1972. *The Limits to Growth*. New York: Universe Books; Meadows, D. (ed) 1977. *Alternatives to Growth: A Search for Sustainable Futures*. Cambridge Mass: Balinger Publishing. P.73

<sup>85</sup> Conradie, Ernst. 2008. *The Church and the Climate Change*. p.1

-up call” had become so intense so that all the people of the world were challenged to reconsider their use of the earth’s non-renewable resources.

Writing on the current global environmental problems, Patrick Hossay, painted a very frightening picture of the problem when he wrote:

We’re in trouble. Put simply, we are destroying the natural systems on which our lives depend. The pollutants that we have pumped into the air, water and soil have fundamentally changed the earth’s ecological balance. Much of the damage is irreversible. The destruction of the earth’s ozone layer, the acidification of our rain, the poisoning of our rivers, lakes and oceans, the depletion of our soil, the devastation of our forests and the large scale extinctions intensify one another, creating a multi-pronged and devastating attack on the earth’s capacity to support human life. In the short term, our treatment of the earth as a toxic waste dump will lead to mass environmental destruction and tremendous human suffering. In the long term, if unchecked, it will kill us all. But, make no mistake: if we do nothing, we will go.<sup>86</sup>

The physical and biological activities which cause volcanic eruptions, soil erosion, the combustion or decay of vegetable and the most recent global food crisis are all indications that really our earth is in serious danger. The complexity of this problem has necessitated a concerted effort from international organizations, governments and other stake holders to deliberate on these problems.

In an attempt to respond to the situation, many international efforts have been made. The 1972 Stockholm Conference on the Human Environment served as a prelude to the United Nations efforts in development crisis of the 1980s including environmental issues. Since this conference, the United Nations has lead global environmental action and has introduced some basic organisational schemes and programmes for global environmental action.<sup>87</sup>

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<sup>86</sup> Hossay, Patrick. 2006. *Unsustainable. A Premier for Global Environmental and Social Justice*. New York: Zed Books. P.1

<sup>87</sup> Gosovic, Branislav. 1992. *The Quest for World Environmental Cooperation*. London and New-York: Routledge. p.xii For subsequent effort towards global environmental sustainability especially issues relating to the formulation of the Earth Charter, see Hessel, Dieter and Rasmussen, Larry. 2001. (eds) *Earth Habitat. Eco-Injustice and the Church’s Response*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press.p.101-121.

The UN set up a World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED), which was headed by the then Norwegian Prime Minister-Gro Harlem Brundtland, who had a background in several years of political struggle, nationally and internationally, as an environmental minister.<sup>88</sup> As the commission travelled from one country to another throughout the world sensitizing them on the critical environmental situation, they came up with a definition of sustainable development that was linked directly to environmental conservation. In the opinion of the 21 member commission, sustainable development is “development that meets the needs of the present generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs”.<sup>89</sup> Since the Brundtland Commission, several other conferences have been held to further discuss environmental issues. In 1992, the UN Earth Summit was held in Rio De Janario. This Earth Summit came up with *Agenda 21* that is internationally recognized as the blueprint for sustainable development.<sup>90</sup> This was followed in 1997 by the Kyoto protocol, adopted as an addendum to the Climate Change Convention, which includes specific emission reduction targets and timetables for industrialized countries.<sup>91</sup> In 2002, another summit was held in Johannesburg, South Africa.

### **2.1.2. The Problemization of the Environment and Poverty Nexus**

The introduction above launches us into the discussion on global environmental problems. It has also provided the platform for us to begin to explore the interface of poverty and environment. The rationale for starting off with poverty is because of the intricate relationship that exists between poverty and the environment. This is also because the poor are not only seen as a “victim” but have traditionally taken the brunt of the blame for causing society’s many problems including, more recently, environmental degradation. Indra Ghandi was quoted as saying that “poverty is the worst pollution”.<sup>92</sup> This goes on to confirm the general perception that poverty is a major cause of environmental degradation. For example,

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<sup>88</sup> Tham, Chris. *The Response of the Church to the Environmental Degradation*. p.89

<sup>89</sup> Tham, Chris. *The Response of the Church to the Environmental Degradation*. p.89

<sup>90</sup> Tham, Chris. *The Response of the Church to the Environmental Degradation*. p.89

<sup>91</sup> Conradie, Ernst. 2008. *The Church and the Climate Change*. p.25

<sup>92</sup> Jurgen, Moltmann. 1999. *God for a Secular Society. The Public Relevance of Theology*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press. p.93

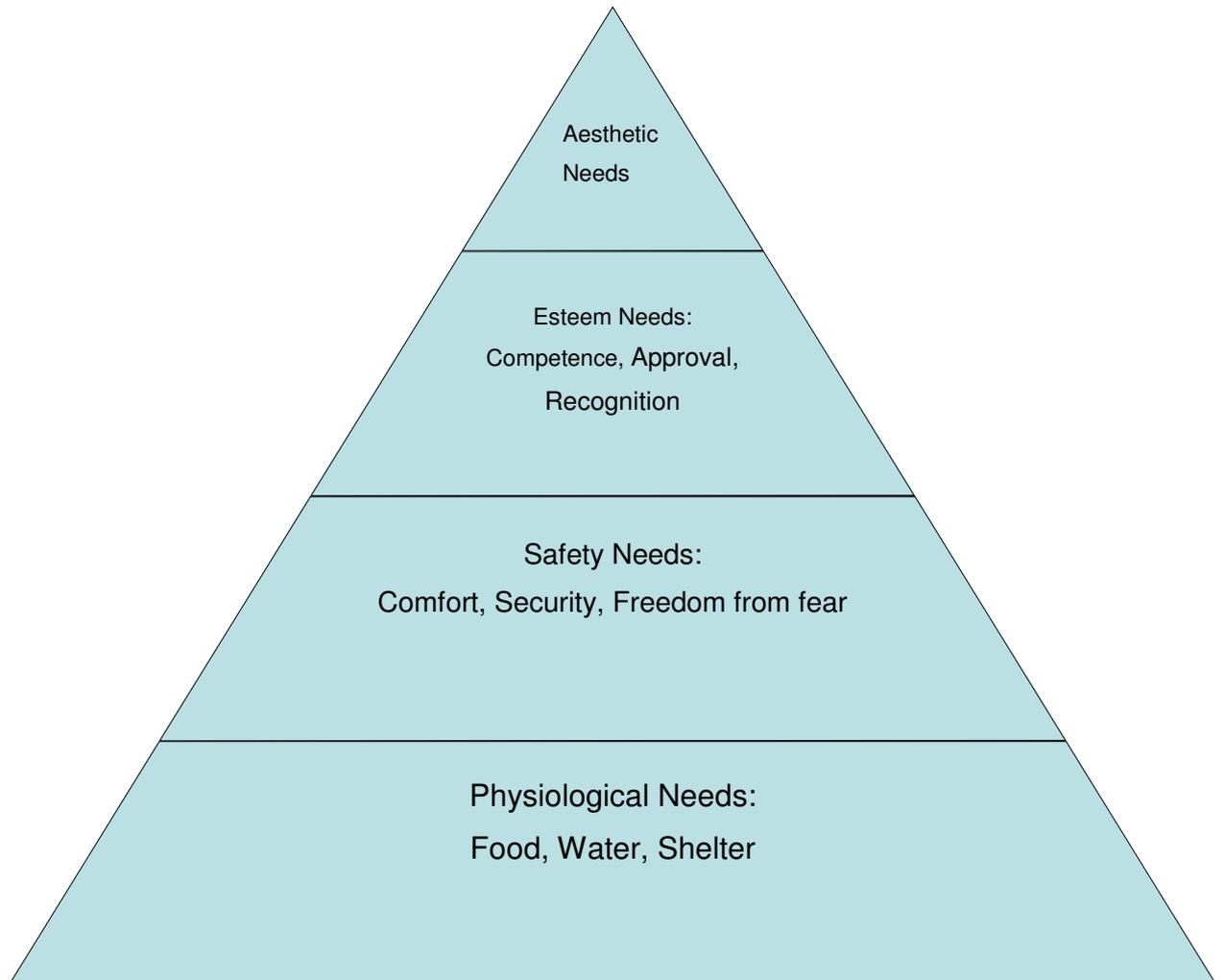
in one of the conclusions of the Bruntland Commission Report, which has been accepted as the blue print for environmental conservation, it was explicitly stated that, poverty is a major cause of environmental problems and that amelioration of poverty is a necessary and central condition of any effective programmes aimed at addressing environmental degradation.<sup>93</sup> Similarly, the World Bank 1992 development report, stated that alleviating poverty is a prerequisite for environmental sustainability and that the poor are both the victims and agents of environmental damage. It goes on to indicate that fifty per cent of the world's population live in rural areas that are environmentally fragile, and that they rely on natural resources over which they have little control.<sup>94</sup>

More depressing is the fact that poor families often lack the resources to avoid degrading their environment, since they are mostly concerned with issues of day to day survival. Therefore, degrading their environment in an effort to survive in the face of economic hardship is not seen as a problem, since they must ensure a steady supply of fuel wood for domestic purposes as well as rely on the environment for other needs. The emphasis on environmental maintenance is therefore regarded by them as a slogan for the rich. In order to elucidate the point we are making, we use Maslow's hierarchy of needs as an illustration.

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<sup>93</sup> Duraiappah, Anantha. *Poverty and Environmental Degradation: A Literature Review and Analysis* CREED Working Paper Series No 8 October 1996 (International Institute for Environment and Development, London Institute for Environmental Studies, Amsterdam)

<sup>94</sup> Mba, Chike., Uchegbu, Smart., Udeh C.A and Muoghalu, Leonard. 2004.(eds). *Management of Environmental Problems and Hazards in Nigeria*. United States of America: Ashgate Publishing Company. p.60



Maslow developed this theory of motivation describing the process by which an individual progresses from basic needs such as food to the highest needs of what he called self-actualization; the fulfilment of one's greatest human potential.<sup>95</sup> According to Maslow, this theory of the hierarchy of needs determines human behaviour and motivates the person to advance from one level of need to another. Maslow ranks human needs as follows: (1) physiological; (2) security and safety; (3) love and feelings of belonging; (4) competence, prestige, and esteem; (5) self-fulfilment; and (6) curiosity and the need to understand.

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<sup>95</sup> Maslow, A. 1954. *Motivation and Personality*. New York: Harper.

Following this theory of hierarchy of needs, the basic needs of the poor are physiological ones. The issue of aesthetics and maintenance of the pristine nature of the environment is seen by the poor as the concern of middle and high income group in the society-the rich.

Therefore, high income concerns are as follows

| Concerns                        | Description   |
|---------------------------------|---|
| Environmental Health            | Allergens, pollutants and health related issues---safety needs (higher level) |
| Transportation services         | Access to good roads, airports etc. – safety needs (comfort)                  |
| Recreational/tourism facilities | Pastimes— aesthetic needs   |
| Aesthetics                      | Open spaces within urban areas, parks, gardens— aesthetic needs               |
| Higher level services           | Tertiary institutions, communication services etc.--- cognitive needs         |

High-  
Income  
(Rich)



And low income concerns are as follows:

| Concerns                 | Description  |
|--------------------------|--|
| Food security            | Survival- Physiological needs  |
| Housing                  | Shelter-Safety needs   |
| Access to basic services | Sanitation<br>Water<br>Health services                                     |
| Employment               | Provision of income to sustain themselves-safety needs/physiological needs |

Low  
Income  
(Poor)

The insights from Maslow's illustration of the hierarchy of needs offers a reason why the poor are not generally concerned about environmental protection because they feel that they

too are not protected since they cannot meet their basic needs. The above insight, therefore, justifies the need to intensify efforts towards poverty reduction as a strategy for engaging the poor in environmental protection programmes. This need is recognized by Jalal, the Asian development bank's chief of the environment department, when he asserts that environmental degradation; rapid population growth and stagnant production are closely linked with the fast spread of acute poverty in many developing countries of the world.<sup>96</sup> He therefore called for effective poverty alleviation programmes as a way forward.

However, the relationship between poverty and the environment is complex. In order to engage meaningfully on this issue, it is necessary to identify different aspects of the poverty syndrome. This identification has become necessary because poverty is a multi-dimensional phenomenon and multi-faceted condition whose meaning is often contested in different disciplines and societies.<sup>97</sup> With an enormous quantity of literature on poverty, the only consensus on the conceptualization of poverty is that it is difficult to define and measure.<sup>98</sup> Poverty defies objective definition because of its multi-dimensional nature. There is as yet no universally accepted definition of poverty.<sup>99</sup> Thus, there is always the difficulty in deciding where to draw the line between the poor and the “non-poor”. Poverty is a cruel trap. It is characterized by a lack of purchasing power, exposure to risk, malnutrition, high mortality rate, low life expectancy, insufficient access to social and economic services and few opportunities for income generation.<sup>100</sup> For many of the people who are ensnared in this painful leg hold, escape on their own can be all but impossible.<sup>101</sup>

Having set the stage through the introduction of the environment and poverty nexus above, we are going to engage in the discussion of poverty. This engagement is underpinned by our

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<sup>96</sup> Duraiappah, Anantha. *Poverty and Environmental Degradation*

<sup>97</sup> Shepherd, Andrew. 1998. *Sustainable Rural Development*. Great Britain, Macmillan Press Ltd. P. 92

<sup>98</sup> Moughalu, L. N. 2004. “Rural Poverty and Environmental Degradation” in Mba, Chike., Uchegbu, Smart., Udeh, C. A and Muoghalu, Leonard. (eds) *Management of Environmental Problems and Hazards in Nigeria*. United States of America: Ashgate Publishing Company. p.140

<sup>99</sup> Aluko, S. 1975 “Poverty: Its Remedies” in *Poverty in Nigeria. The Nigerian Economic Society*. Ibadan.

<sup>100</sup> Olaniyan, O. 2000, “Household Endowments and Poverty in Nigeria” A Paper presented at Centre for the Study of African Economy Conference on Opportunities in Africa. U.K.: University of Oxford

<sup>101</sup> Smith, Stephen. C. 2005. *Ending Global Poverty. A Guide to What Works*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan. P. iv

understanding that both environment and poverty are complex phenomena. As a result, we are going to spend much time defining the concept of poverty in its various manifestations. For a better understanding of the relationship between environment and poverty, we are also going to spend some time defining the term *environment* and how poverty affects environmental sustainability.

## **2.2. Defining Poverty: the Global Perspective**

Having seen the interlocking nature of the relationship between environment and poverty, we are now going to look at different ways in which poverty is defined and understood.

The definition of poverty has a chequered evolution all through the ages and each definition evoked a peculiar strategy for alleviation of poverty.<sup>102</sup> But by the end of the 1960s, when it became clear that economic development along Western lines did not in fact indicate a better standard of living for the people of the Third World, a need for a redefinition of poverty became necessary.<sup>103</sup> In 1973, the World Bank came up with a concept of absolute poverty which meant living below a certain minimum standard.<sup>104</sup> Muoghalu, however, argues that per capita income was not enough to indicate the living conditions of people who were not part of a money economy.<sup>105</sup> As a result of this inadequacy therefore, there arose the need to redefine poverty to include issues relating to the quality of life.

Being cognizant of the complex and contextual nature of poverty, we deemed it necessary therefore, to highlight the many contexts or dimensions in which poverty is configured. This highlight has become necessary because the insights gained will not only help us to be focussed in our discussion; it will also provide an in-depth knowledge of the inherent intricate nature of the relationship between poverty and environment.

In this regard, we begin with the conceptualisation of poverty in the commonest term that refers to it as the deprivation of those things that determine the quality of life, including food,

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<sup>102</sup> Moughalu, L. N. 2004. "Rural Poverty and Environmental Degradation". p. 140

<sup>103</sup> Moughalu, L. N. 2004. "Rural Poverty and Environmental Degradation". p.140

<sup>104</sup> World Bank. 1990a. *World Development Report 1990: Poverty*, Washington, D.C. p.54

<sup>105</sup> Moughalu, L. N. 2004. "Rural Poverty and Environmental Degradation" p.140

clothing, shelter and safe drinking water. It also includes “intangibles” (that is those things that cannot be seen but are fundamental to determining the reality of poverty) such as the opportunity to learn and enjoy the respect of fellow citizens.<sup>106</sup>

### 2.2.1. Absolute and Relative Poverty

Poverty can be conceptualized in absolute or relative terms.<sup>107</sup> Absolute poverty refers to a set standard which is consistent over time and between countries. It is a situation in which income does not meet the level of the basic essential needs of an individual.<sup>108</sup> An example of absolute poverty could be seen in the percentage of the population eating less food than is required to sustain the human body (approximately 2000-2500 calories per day for an adult).<sup>109</sup> It could also mean severe deprivation of, for example food, shelter, education and healthcare and it could generally refer to people who are living on the verge of survival.<sup>110</sup> Absolute poverty prevents people from meeting their most basic physiological needs for food, clothing and shelter. This type of poverty and lack of purchasing power can threaten an individual’s very existence.<sup>111</sup> Relative poverty on the other hand, is the comparison of one person’s wealth with another. In this case, people might be, or at least regard themselves, as poor in comparison to their more affluent neighbours who may own more material assets. They might have low self esteem and feel they do not meet the expectations of their communities, despite the fact that their income may be well beyond the minimum needed to survive and their material wealth is ten times greater than that of the world’s poorest people.<sup>112</sup>

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<sup>106</sup> Nurnberger, Klaus. 1999. *Prosperity, Poverty and Pollution: Managing the Approaching Crisis*. Pietermaritzburg: Cluster Publications. p.61

<sup>107</sup> Moore, David. 2007.(ed) *The World Bank. Development, Poverty, Hegemony*. South Africa: University of KwaZulu-Natal Press. p.68

<sup>108</sup> Nurnberger, Klaus. 1999. *Prosperity, Poverty and Pollution*:p.61

<sup>109</sup> Thomas, Leonard. M. 2006. *Encyclopaedia of the Developing World*. Vol.3, O-Z Index. New York: Routledge. p. 1313

<sup>110</sup> Thomas, Leonard. M. 2006. *Encyclopaedia of the Developing World*. p. 1313

<sup>111</sup> Watt, Patrick. 2000. *Social Investment and Economic Growth. A Strategy to Eradicate Poverty*. UK. Oxfam. p.14

<sup>112</sup> Thomas, Leonard. M. 2006. *Encyclopaedia of the Developing World*. p.1313

The World Bank's usage of the term "extreme poverty" is similar to absolute poverty which it defined as living on less than US \$1 per day. It used the term "moderate poverty" to define those who are living with less than \$2 a day, estimating that in 2001, 1.1 billion people had consumption levels below \$1 a day and 2.7 billion lived on less than \$2 a day.<sup>113</sup> It uses household expenditure as its measuring rod and uses a threshold level<sup>114</sup> to define a poverty line. In other words, people who have a household expenditure below the poverty line are defined as poverty stricken. It is a measuring rod driven by basic needs considerations.<sup>115</sup> There have been numerous criticisms directed at the use of such a narrow indicator to determine poverty levels and critics argue that a broader set of indicators comprising for example, infant mortality and literacy rates should be used.<sup>116</sup>

This broader conceptualization of poverty is necessary because of the complex nature of poverty as we had indicated earlier. This observation is noteworthy because poverty could mean different things to different people. For instance, David Walker provided a scenario where poverty in a given society could mean a mere absence of affluence or prosperity or general well being, whereas in another society, it could mean a mere lack of something which a particular society designates as desirable and worth having. It could equally imply social oppression which includes all the factors responsible for different types and levels of marginalization and exploitation expressed in economic and cultural forms.<sup>117</sup> The above view raises a critical consideration as to whether this notion applies to all societies and in all contexts.

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<sup>113</sup> Anand,S. and Harris, C.J. 1994: "Choosing a Welfare Indicator". *American Economic Review*. P.34-38

<sup>114</sup> The threshold level indicates the minimum amount which is needed by an individual to obtain the basic necessities like food and shelter within a country.

<sup>115</sup> Anand,S. and Harris, C.J. 1994: *Choosing a Welfare Indicator* . p.34-38

<sup>116</sup> Anantha Duraiappah. *Poverty and Environmental Degradation Papers and Proceedings*

<sup>117</sup> Walker, David. 1993. *Challenging Evangelism. Prophetic Witness and Theological Renewal*. Pietermaritzburg: Cluster Publications. p.47

This consideration is imperative to our understanding of poverty and its link with the environment if we note how Anthony O'Connor describes poverty from an African perspective. From his description,

Poverty in most societies means going to bed hungry night after night, 'bed' in this case means no more than a mat on the floor. In many rural areas, it means walking a 10 km round trip to fetch water each day, often water that is even far from pure. In most cities it means living as a family in one small room, and fearing eviction from there when you cannot scrape together the rent.<sup>118</sup>

Viewing poverty from socio-cultural contexts as David Walker suggests, raises the question about whether the poor person's experience in a particular society could be the same with another poor person's experience in another society. Is it possible for a poor person in say, for example, Nigeria to experience poverty in the same way a poor person from United States of America experiences poverty? Of course their experiences would be different because of different socio-cultural contexts in which they exist.<sup>119</sup>

It is becoming clearer from the discussion so far, that the meaning of poverty may be intuitively obvious, but what is not obvious, however is its measurement which is far more complex than it appears.<sup>120</sup> This however, confirms the multidimensional nature of poverty.<sup>121</sup> Recognizing the multidimensionality of poverty would at least help us comprehend this complex concept in its broader spectrum. It would also help us reflect the view points of the poor who often categorize other dimensions besides income as important to quality of life. To buttress our point, the World Bank 2000 study on world poverty, conducted research on some poor people in certain poor countries and asked them to define

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<sup>118</sup> O'Connor, Anthony, 1991. *Poverty in Africa. A Geographical Approach*. London: Belhaven Press .p.21

<sup>119</sup> The Gross National Product (GNP) is an economic term used to describe in monetary value the total annual flow of goods and services in the economy of a nation. The GNP is normally measured by totaling all personal spending, all government spending, and all investment spending by a nation's industry both domestically and all over the world. Most industrialized countries now use the gross domestic product (GDP), which takes account of money earned from or by foreign economies, as their chief economic indicator. The GNP measures the value of all goods and services produced within a nation's borders regardless of the nationality of the producer. For details on this, see Maddison, Angus. 2001. *The World Economy: A Millennial Perspective*. Development Center of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development. P.169-184

<sup>120</sup> UNDP. 1997. *United Nations Development Programme. Human Development Report 1997*. New York: Oxford University Press. p.3

<sup>121</sup> Thomas, Leonard. M. 2006. *Encyclopaedia of the Developing World*. p.1313

what “wellbeing” and “ill being” meant for them. According to the respondents, “wellbeing” was in general sense described as “happiness”, “harmony”, “peace”, “freedom from anxiety” and “peace of mind”. On the other hand, “Ill being” was seen as a “lack of material things”, as “bad experiences”, and as “bad feeling about oneself”.<sup>122</sup> From this example therefore, we could understand that the interpretations of “well-being” and “ill being” often vary between people and cultures and conditions. In Nigeria, for example, “well-being” for the poor could relate to a person’s cultural, educational and social background, whereas in other place, it could mean a different thing altogether. Such is the diverse configuration of poverty across societies.

### 2.2.2. Poverty as the Deprivation of Capabilities

Considering the complex and multidimensional nature of poverty, it is necessary that we should explore as many concepts and contexts as possible to achieve some measure of comprehensivity. In that regard therefore, we turn to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) which sees human poverty as the denial or deprivation of opportunities and choices that would enable an individual “to lead a long, healthy, creative life and enjoy a decent standard of living, freedom, dignity, self-respect and the respect of others”.<sup>123</sup> Similarly, the World Bank identified deprivation as an important component of the problem of poverty. As a result, it moved on to add *empowerment* as a strategy in its attack on poverty by saying that:

Empowerment means enhancing the capacity of poor people to influence the state institutions that affect their lives, by strengthening their participation in political process and local decision making. And it means removing the barriers-political, legal and social- that work against particular groups and building the assets of poor people to enable them to engage effectively in markets.<sup>124</sup>

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<sup>122</sup> Thomas, Leonard. M. 2006. *Encyclopaedia of the Developing World*. p.1313

<sup>123</sup> UNDP. 1997. *United Nations Development Programme. Human Development Report 1997*. New York: Oxford University Press. p.3

<sup>124</sup> Moore, David.(ed) 2007. *The World Bank. Development, Poverty, Hegemony*. Pietermaritzburg: University of KwaZulu-Natal Press. p.180

Both the World Bank and the UNDP's concept of deprivation is drawn from Amartya Sen's idea of including and analyzing social justice in terms of the capabilities that a person has, that is, "the substantive freedoms he or she enjoys to lead the kind of life he or she has reason to value within their specific cultural context".<sup>125</sup> Sen, who was the architect of the capabilities approach, argues that poverty must be seen as the deprivation of basic capabilities rather than merely as lowness of incomes, which as we have noted earlier, had become the standard criterion of identification of poverty. He does not deny the view that low income can be a principal factor that contributes to a person's poverty. His fundamental argument however, is that poverty can be sensibly located in capability deprivation in terms of the freedoms that are available to a person in order for him or her to achieve what he or she aspires in life.

Sen's concept of capability deprivation raises four important issues which are fundamental to the very meaning and understanding of the deprivation theory. Here we attempt to summarize these four important concerns.

The first is the consideration of peoples' freedom to participate in democratic processes that determine one's socio- economic to political and cultural rights. The second relates to an individual's vulnerability to death at a relatively early age and this is determined by the percentage of the population expected to die before the age of 40. The third relates to an individual's exclusion from the world of reading and communication and it is determined by the percentage of adults who are illiterate. The fourth relates to the standard of living and it is also determined by the percentage of people with access to health care services, safe water and the percentage of malnourished children less than 5 years old.<sup>126</sup>

These four concerns are fundamental to a person's survival in consideration of socio-economic and political well being. In Sen's view the economic aspect of poverty involves material needs, typically including the necessities of daily living, such as food, clothing, shelter, or safe drinking water. Poverty in this economic sense may be understood as a condition in which a person or community is lacking in the basic needs that is necessary for a

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<sup>125</sup> Sen, Amartya. 1999. *Development as Freedom*. Great Britain: Oxford University Press. p.87

<sup>126</sup> UNDP. 1997. *United Nations Development Programme. Human Development Report 1997*. New York: Oxford University Press. P.3

minimum standard of wellbeing and life, particularly as a result of a persistent lack of income because of exclusion from economic opportunities and privileges.<sup>127</sup> We are of the opinion that Sen's definition of capabilities in relation to poverty can help us to assess economic systems to determine whether they encourage people to live the type of life they want to live within their specific cultural and social context. This should be the basis of judging any economic system as successful if they provide people with the capabilities they need to achieve their full human potential.<sup>128</sup>

Alongside the economic dimension, the social dimension of poverty analyzes social aspects of poverty and links conditions of scarcity to aspects of the distribution of resources and power in a society. It recognizes that poverty may be a function of the diminished "capability" of people to live the kinds of lives they value.<sup>129</sup> The social aspect of poverty may include a lack of access to information, education, health care or political power. Poverty may also be understood as an aspect of unequal social status and inequitable social relationships, experienced as social exclusion, dependency, and diminished capacity to participate, or to develop meaningful connections with other people in society. According to the report of the World Bank's research with over 20,000 poor people in 23 countries, a whole range of factors which poor people themselves identify as part of poverty include among others, precarious livelihoods, excluded locations, physical limitations, gender relationships, problems in social relationships, lack of security, abuse by those in power, disempowering institutions, limited capabilities, and weak community organizations.<sup>130</sup>

According to Shepherd,<sup>131</sup> other aspects of the social configuration of poverty include poor access to public services and infrastructure, unsanitary environmental surroundings, illiteracy and ignorance, poor health, insecurity, voicelessness and social exclusion as well as low

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<sup>127</sup> Sen, Amartya. 1979. "Issues in the Measurement of Poverty". *Scandinavian Journal of Economics*. Vol.81, p.285-307

<sup>128</sup> Kent, A. Van Til. 2007. *Less than Two Dollars A Day. A Christian View of World Poverty and the Free Market*. Cambridge: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company. p.104

<sup>129</sup> Lipton, Michael and Jacques Van Der Vaag. 1993. "Poverty: A Research and Policy Framework" in Michael Lipton and Jacques Van Der Vaag (eds), *Including the Poor*, Proceedings of a Symposium organised by the World Bank and the International Food Policy Research Institute. Washington, D.C.: The World Bank. p.1-40

<sup>130</sup> World Bank. 1995. *Social Indicators of Development*. Washington, D.C. World Bank.

<sup>131</sup> Shepherd, Andrew. 1998. *Sustainable Rural Development*. p.91

levels of household income and food insecurity. The rest include material deprivation, isolation, dependence and subordination (over landownership, share cropping, and the poor bargaining position of assets, less labourers in labour rich economies), absence from organization, lack of assets, vulnerability to natural disaster and insecurity. It is evident from the foregoing that, it is not possible to define poverty in terms of income level alone. It must be recognized as a multifaceted phenomenon as all the instances above suggest.

#### 2.4. The Scale of Global Poverty

Poverty from this perspective is a widespread global phenomenon. However, it is more concentrated and severe in the developing world. The scale of poverty in the global context is immense, despite the fact that as a result of technological and scientific advancements we live in a relatively affluent era in comparison with the past.<sup>132</sup> Poverty is a phenomenon that does not seem to be under control, but is forever increasing.<sup>133</sup> The World Bank is of the opinion that the spread of poverty is worsening in many parts of the world.<sup>134</sup> The number of the poor is bound to increase if nothing drastic is done to address this problem just as Watkins correctly points out that “left unchecked, poverty will continue to claim victims on a growing scale”.<sup>135</sup> A billion human beings today are bound in poverty traps, in almost unrelenting misery. We have earlier indicated that about 1.25 billion people subsist on less than \$1 per day, and some 2.8 billion-nearly half the world’s population live on less than \$ 2 per day.<sup>136</sup> This staggering figure portrays the scale of global poverty.

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<sup>132</sup>Smith, S. 2005. *Ending Global Poverty: A Guide to What Works*. New York: Palgrave. Macmillan. p.1

<sup>133</sup> Buffel, O.A. 2007. *Journeying with the Poor as they struggle for survival and Freedom: Pastoral Work Amongst the Poor*. p.4

<sup>134</sup> World Bank. 2000. *Can Africa Claim the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*. Washington, D.C. The World Bank. p.83

<sup>135</sup> Watkins, K. 1995. *The Oxfam Poverty Report*. Oxfam Publication. p.4

<sup>136</sup> Smith, S. 2005. *Ending Global Poverty: A Guide to What Works*. p.1. See also, Shaohua Chen and Martin Ravallion, *The developing world is poorer than we thought, but no less successful in the fight against poverty*, World Bank, August 2008. For the 95% on \$ 10 a day, see Martin Ravallion, Shaohua Chen and Perm Sangraula, *Dollar a day revisited*, World Bank, May 2008. <http://www.globalissues.org/article/26/Poverty-Facts-and-Stats> (accessed 11<sup>th</sup> Sept. 2008)

On top of this, the gap between the world's rich and the poor is dramatically widening.<sup>137</sup> Between 1960 and 1995, the growth rate of the developing countries was 1.3 percent per year. In the rich countries it was 2.4 percent. The United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation reports that the number of undernourished people in the world actually rose by 18 million between 1995-1997 and 1999-2001. Figures for the developing countries as a whole indicate that the number of undernourished people has actually increased by 4.5 million per year during this period. Among the 842 million of global total of the undernourished, only 10 million were in the richest countries in the world.<sup>138</sup>

The above reveals the moral and ethical dimension of the poverty debate. The moral and ethical perspective is clearly portrayed in the fact that roughly one in four people in the world lack adequate food and other necessities of life; while the average person in the world's most impoverished countries will die 27 years younger than the average person in the world's richest countries. In fact, less than half of those born in the world's poorest countries can expect to live to the age of 65.<sup>139</sup>

To further clarify our argument from a moral and ethical perspectives, one needs to consider the fact that the 20 percent of the earth's people who live in wealthiest countries consume 58 per cent of the world's energy; the poorest 20 percent consume 5 percent. The wealthiest 20 percent consume 84 percent of all paper products; the poorest consume 1 percent. The wealthiest 20 per cent own 87 percent of the world's vehicles; the poorest 20 percent have less than 1 percent.<sup>140</sup>

The following diagram illustrates the point about the world's poverty distribution. Though this diagram was based on 2005 statistics, the poverty situation has not significantly changed since then.

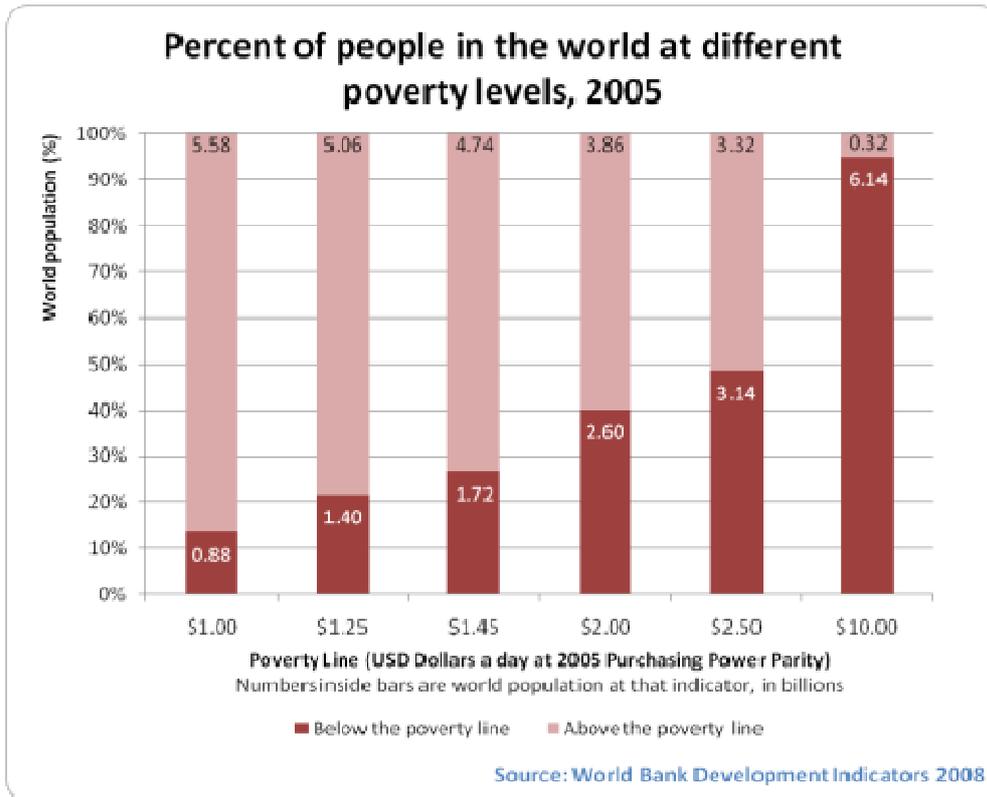
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<sup>137</sup> Rees, John. 2006. *Imperialism and Resistance*. London: Routledge. p.108

<sup>138</sup> Rees, John. 2006. *Imperialism and Resistance*. p.108

<sup>139</sup> UNDP, *Human Development Report 2001. United Nations Development Program*, United Nations, Geneva. Available at [www.undp.org](http://www.undp.org).

<sup>140</sup> Hossay, Patrick. 2006. *Unsustainable. A Premier for Global Environmental and Social Justice*. P.3



This figure is based on purchasing power parity (PPP), which basically suggests that prices of goods in countries tend to equate under floating exchange rates and therefore people would be able to purchase the same quantity of goods in any country for a given sum of money. That is, the notion that a dollar should buy the same amount in all countries. Hence if a poor person in a poor country living on a dollar a day moved to the U.S. with no changes to their income, they would still be living on a dollar a day. The use of the poverty line of \$1 a day had long come under criticism. The new poverty line of \$1.25 a day was recently announced by the World Bank (in 2008) with some additional explanations and reasoning, including that it is a common level found amongst the poorest countries, and that \$2.50 represents a typical poverty level amongst many more developing countries. The new figures from the World Bank therefore confirm concerns that poverty has not been reduced by as much as was hoped, although it certainly has dropped since 1981.

We are of the opinion that while the traditional approach of measuring poverty from income level (\$1 or \$2.5 a day) does illustrate the extent of economic disparity, Sen's capability approach and the human development index (HDI), would best offer us useful insight into the poverty situation of any given context. The Human Development Index (HDI) was

introduced so as to overcome the problems being experienced in using previous polarised measures such as the gross domestic product (GDP) which were used as surrogate indicators of development.<sup>141</sup> The HDI is the most influential of global indicators of development that are built on the results of measuring development.<sup>142</sup> The interesting thing about the HDI is that it focuses on ends -i.e. improvements in the content of people's lives and in their access to benefits.<sup>143</sup> In this regard, it is understood as a normative concept, distinct from economic growth. It covers issues such as possession of valued opportunities and participation, equity, physical and economic security, etc. According to Dreze and Sen, the HDI gives a comprehensive and hence quite often radical, framework for policy analysis because "it touches not only economic, not only social it is also concerned with human resource development or basic material needs".<sup>144</sup>

#### 2.4.1. Understanding Poverty from the African Perspective

John Shao's comment born of lived experience sets the scene for this section:

Poverty in Africa is not a new topic for discussion or debate. Poverty in Africa is a reality that we live with on a daily basis. One does not need to venture far to see naked poverty in Africa. A few steps outside this building will be enough to bring the reality of poverty to the senses of any curious visitor.<sup>145</sup>

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<sup>141</sup> Corning, P.A. "Biological Adaptation in Human Societies: A Basic Needs Approach". *Journal of Bioeconomics* 2:41-86 (2000) [http://www.complexsystems.org/publications/pdf/basic\\_needs.Pdf](http://www.complexsystems.org/publications/pdf/basic_needs.Pdf) (accessed on 3<sup>rd</sup> April, 2008) See <http://hdv.undp.org/satistics/default.cfm>

<sup>142</sup> Haqim, Ul. 1998.(2<sup>nd</sup> Edition). *Reflections on Human Development*. New York and Delhi: Oxford University Press.p.106

<sup>143</sup> Forsyth, Tim. 2005. (ed) *Encyclopaedia of International Development*. London and New York: Routledge.p.323

<sup>144</sup> Dreze, J. and Sen, A. 2002. *India: Development and Participation*. Delhi: Oxford University Press. p. 87 see, Gasper, D. 2004. *The Ethics of Development: From Economism to Human Development*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press

<sup>145</sup> Shao, John. 2001. "Alleviating Poverty in Africa". in *Faith in Development. Partnership Between the World Bank and the Churches of Africa*. United Kingdom: Co publication of the World Bank and Regnum Books International. p.31

Africa, a continent endowed with immense natural and human resources as well as great cultural, ecological and economic diversity, remains underdeveloped,<sup>146</sup> by every established indicator of development.<sup>147</sup> This point is hardly contentious. This is because since 1971 the UN has viewed “Least Developed Countries” as a category of states which are considered as highly disadvantaged in their development process. Of the 48 countries classified by the UN as “least developed” in 2006, 33 were in sub-Saharan Africa.<sup>148</sup> In many ways Sub-Saharan Africa has found itself retreating economically to the point that it was said that “the term poverty and Africa have almost become synonymous because poverty is so pervasive as to be characteristic of the continent”.<sup>149</sup> In Africa, poverty has the many dimensions that we have noted above.

Poverty in Africa is predominantly rural. More than 70 per cent of the continent’s poor people live in rural areas and depend on agriculture for food and livelihood, yet development assistance to agriculture is decreasing.<sup>150</sup> According to the book titled *Africa South of the Sahara*, more than 218 million people live in extreme poverty in Sub-Saharan Africa. Among them are rural poor people in Eastern and Southern Africa, an area that has one of the world’s highest concentrations of poor people.<sup>151</sup> The incidence of poverty in Sub-Saharan Africa is

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<sup>146</sup> Deryke Belshaw, Robert Calderisi and Sugden Chris (eds). 2001. *Faith in Development. Partnership Between the World Bank and the Churches of Africa*. p.31

<sup>147</sup> Ambe, J. Njoh. 2006. *Tradition, Culture and Development in Africa. Historical Lessons for Modern Development Planning*. England: Ashgate Publishing Limited. p.1

<sup>148</sup> Africa South of the Sahara 2008.37<sup>th</sup> Edition. London and New York: Routledge. p.4

<sup>149</sup> Kinoti, George and Kimuyu, Peter. 1997.(eds) *Vision for a Bright Africa. Facing the Challenges of Development*. Nairobi: The African Institute for Scientific Research and Development. p.116

Africa, despite an abundance of resources, natural and human, currently suffers from widespread and persistent poverty and a high degree of income inequality. In 1987, 47 percent of the population was below the international poverty line. By 1998, this rate had declined only marginally to 46 percent. Sub-Saharan Africa is today the region with the highest incidence of poverty in the world. High levels of income inequality (the Gini coefficient for the region as a whole is as high as 44) compound the problem and undermine the prospects for sustainable and equitable economic growth and a significant reduction in the incidence of poverty. On the other hand, the continent is far from homogeneous and the aggregate figures mask important variations in both the incidence of poverty and in income distribution across countries, and within regions in individual countries. <http://www.globalissues.org/article/poverty> (accessed on 12<sup>th</sup> Sept. 2008)

<sup>150</sup> Africa South of the Sahara 2008. 37<sup>th</sup> Edition. London and New York: Routledge. p.4

<sup>151</sup> Africa South of the Sahara 2008. 37<sup>th</sup> Edition. London and New York: Routledge. p.4

increasing faster than the population. Rural poverty in many areas of Africa has its roots in the colonial system and the policy and institutional restraints that it imposed on poor people.<sup>152</sup> In recent decades, economic policies and institutional structures have been modified to close the income gap. Structural Adjustments have dismantled existing rural systems, but have not always built new ones. In many transitional economies, the rural situation is marked by continuing stagnation, poor food production, low incomes and the rising vulnerability of poor people.<sup>153</sup> Lack of access to markets is a problem for many small-scale enterprises in Africa because the rural population is poorly organized to be able to gain entry to market opportunities. This problem is exacerbated by their isolation from the reach of social safety nets and poverty programmes. Indeed, looking at the poverty situation in Africa, it seems government policies and investments in poverty reduction programmes tend to favour urban over rural areas.<sup>154</sup> Furthermore, HIV and AIDS is changing the profile of rural poverty in Africa. It puts an unbearable strain on poor rural households where labour is the primary income-earning asset. About two thirds of the 34 million people in the world with HIV and AIDS live on the African continent.<sup>155</sup> The implication of this is that HIV and AIDS is exacerbating the poverty situation in Africa.

The 2000/1 World Development Report on global poverty put the total number of people in Sub-Saharan Africa living below the World Bank's US\$ 1 per day norm for defining the core poor at 290.9 million in 1998.<sup>156</sup> The poverty situation in Africa has not significantly improved since this report. This is because while it is acknowledged that there is a global increase in the number of people living in poverty, a greater proportion in sub-Saharan Africa is living in poverty than anywhere else in the world.<sup>157</sup> For example, the real income of the average American is more than 50 times that of the average person in sub-Saharan Africa. In

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<sup>152</sup> Maddison, Angus. 2001. *The World Economy. A Millennial Perspective*. Paris: Development Centre of the Organization for Economic Co-Operation and Development. p.164

<sup>153</sup> Africa South of the Sahara 2008. 37<sup>th</sup> Edition. London and New York: Routledge. p.6

<sup>154</sup> Africa South of the Sahara 2008. 37<sup>th</sup> Edition. London and New York: Routledge. P.9

<sup>155</sup> Africa South of the Sahara 2008. 37<sup>th</sup> Edition. London and New York: Routledge.p.6

<sup>156</sup> Adesina, J.O, Yao, Graham and Olukoshi, A. 2006. (eds). *Africa and Development Challenges in the New Millennium. The NEPAD Debate*. New York: Zed Books Ltd. p.33

<sup>157</sup> World Bank, 2001. *World Development Report. Attacking Poverty*. New York: Oxford University Press. See Maddison, Angus. 2001. *The World Economy. A Millennial Perspective*. Development Centre of the Organization for Economic Co-Operation and Development. p.161

fact, it is said that real living standards in the United States 200 years ago were greater than in many African countries today, and about 20 countries in Sub-Saharan Africa are poorer today than they were a generation ago.<sup>158</sup>

Economic conditions in Africa have deteriorated alarmingly.<sup>159</sup> This should not have been the case given the continent's immense development potential and untapped mineral wealth as an old continent (the cradle of human life).<sup>160</sup> It is the source of strategic minerals, such as tantalite, vanadium, palladium, uranium, and chromium. It has the bulk of the world's gold, cobalt, diamonds and manganese.<sup>161</sup> Africa's post colonial economic performance remains dismal and prospects for the new millennium are, bleak.<sup>162</sup> An unfortunate and ugly truth about Africa's development is the fact that present African governments are in many countries far more invidious and worse than the hated, authoritarian colonial state masters that Africans overwhelmingly rejected in the 1990s. This view is supported by many researchers who explain that Africa's weak economic performance and inability to live to the expectations of the majority of those Africans who called for the rejection of colonial rule, is attributed to wide spread corruption and military oligarchies.<sup>163</sup>

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<sup>158</sup> Smith, Stephen. C. 2005. *Ending Global Poverty. A Guide to What Works.*

<sup>159</sup> Ayittey, George B N. 2005. *Africa Unchained. The Blueprint for Africa's Future.* New York: Palgrave Macmillan. P.2

<sup>160</sup> Kanyandago, Peter. 2002. *Marginalized Africa. An International Perspective.* Kenya: Pauline Publications Africa. p.54

See Maddox, Gregory H. 2006. *Sub-Saharan Africa. An Environmental History.* Oxford, England: ABC Clio.p.14, and Kobia, Samuel. 2003. *The Courage to Hope. The Roots for a New Vision and the Calling of the Church in Africa.* Geneva: WCC Publication. P.9, Robert Calderisi. 2006. *Why Foreign Aid Isn't Working. The Trouble with Africa.* New-York: Palgrave Macmillan. p.29

The origin of humanity in Africa is no longer in much debate. For detailed information on this topic, see Maddox, Gregory. H. (ed). 2006. *Nature and Human Societies. Sub-Saharan Africa. An Environmental History.* Oxford, Denver, California: ABC Clio. p.14-21

<sup>161</sup> Ayittey, George B N. 2005. *Africa Unchained. The Blueprint for Africa's Future.* Palgrave. P.2

<sup>162</sup> Ayittey, George B N. 2005. *Africa Unchained. The Blueprint for Africa's Future.* p 3

<sup>163</sup> For details, see Bloom, D.E and Sachs, J.D. 1998. *Geography, Demography and Economic Growth in Africa.* Brookings Papers on Economic Activity. p. 207-296, Collier, P. And Gunning, J.W. 1999. "Explaining African Performance" in *the journal of Economic Literature*, March, p.64-111, Ndulu, B. and O'Connell, S.A 1999. "Governance and Growth in Sub-Saharan Africa" *Journal of Economic Perspectives.* Summer, p.41-66

In 1978, Edem Kodjo, the then Secretary General of the organisation of African Unity (OAU), made what one could regard as a prophetic utterance when he told a group of African leaders that: “Africa is dying. If things continue as they are, only eight or nine of the present countries will survive the next few years. All other things being equal, absolute poverty, instead of declining, is likely to gain ground. It is clear that the economy of our continent is lying in ruins. Our ancient continent is on the brink of disaster”.<sup>164</sup> The present beleaguered economic state of many African countries is just exactly what Edem Kodjo described three decades ago.

#### **2.4.2. The Configuration of Poverty in Africa**

Sub Saharan Africa, despite the rapid urbanization trend, currently remains overwhelmingly rural in character.<sup>165</sup> Living conditions of the majority of people are harsh and largely dependent on climatic, physical natural conditions. Furthermore, the prevailing agricultural techniques and livelihood strategies in some countries have seen little modification for a substantial period. Consequently, in the rural setting, poverty initially was not perceived as the outcome of prevailing economic and political structures in the society since climatic and other cultural and religious factors had a more decisive impact on living conditions.

However, the ongoing process commonly referred to as ‘land pressure’, due to the steady growth of population, has led to increased scarcity and has shifted attention to political decision making in the rural context.<sup>166</sup> Gradually, the struggle for access to natural resources, notably land, grazing areas and water, has emerged as a crucial livelihood issue in various parts of the Sub-Saharan region. Various stakeholders are now getting involved in these struggles, including *absentee* owners of land who compete with local user groups for these scarce resources.

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<sup>164</sup> See Ayitttey, George B N. 2005. *Africa Unchained. The Blueprint for Africa’s Future*. p.3-6

<sup>165</sup> Africa South of the Sahara 2008. 37<sup>th</sup> Edition. London and New York: Routledge. p.10

<sup>166</sup> Africa South of the Sahara 2008. 37<sup>th</sup> Edition. p.10

It is pertinent at this juncture to see how poverty is configured and distinguished in Africa. In this regard, Illife distinguishes four types.<sup>167</sup> They include the following:

- ✚ interstitial (pockets of ) poverty, surrounded by wealth
- ✚ material deprivation combined with isolation and alienation found in marginal areas (peripheral poverty)
- ✚ over- crowding poverty in areas of population pressure and
- ✚ traumatic or sporadic poverty described as *conjunctural* poverty (temporary poverty into which the non-poor may be thrown by crisis)

In Africa, while structural poverty (that is from 1-3 above) has remained, conjunctural poverty has increased dramatically as a result of war, drought, famine and the failure of states to substitute effectively for traditional or pre- colonial institutions. Tiffen and Gichuki are of the opinion that explanations of poverty are varied.<sup>168</sup> In Africa for example, the most salient ones are historical, economic and natural-resource centred and socio-political factors.

(i) The *historical* explanation usually focuses on the impact of colonial and post colonial political economy. Thus, colonial and post colonial capitalist farmers, land settlers, forest reservations and urban development have often marginalized rural populations and removed resources from their control thereby contributing to their impoverishment.

(ii) The *economic* explanation focus on trade and the domination of primary products by global corporations and cartels. In some countries, primary product producers have been cushioned by government price stabilization and subsidies and surplus labour has until recently been absorbed outside agriculture, but this has not been possible in many poor countries. Economists have particularly focused on capital and technology as barriers to increased farm productivity.

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<sup>167</sup> Illife, J.1987. *The African Poor*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press. P.87

<sup>15</sup> Tiffen, M. Mortimore, and Gichuke, F. 1994. *More People Less Erosion: Environmental Recovery in Kenya*. Chichester: Wiley, p.68

<sup>168</sup> Lipton, M. 1989. *Why Poor People Stay Poor: Urban Bias in World Development*. London: Unwin Hyman. p.68

(iii) The *natural resource* explanation argues that the quality of natural resource endowment determines the degree of poverty level of any given society. However, human beings have a remarkable ability to transform their environment through investment of labour, knowledge and technology. For example, land which thirty years ago was seen as eroded could under the use of high technology be improved to support five times the population at higher per capita production levels, with greater food security. Once high population densities are reached, the non-agricultural economy assumes very great importance as agriculture is tied up in very small parcels of land.<sup>169</sup> The poor look to the labour market, common property resources and non farm enterprise. If the rural non-farm economy is stagnant, more and more labour is invested in farming, substituting for capital and reducing returns to labour. A stagnant rural non- farm economy then leads to unemployment, migration, urbanization of poverty and the breakup of families.

(iv) The *Socio-political* explanation centres on the enormous growth of wealth and the middle class in the post colonial societies. Wealth has frequently been accumulated by people with access to the state, which has provided cheap land, credit, technology and protection for big businesses. Some states have been predatory on the poor and have organized the alienation of land on a large scale in favor of urban elites, sometimes using military force. Some of these movements are captured in notions like urban bias, core and periphery and social class.

In explaining the rise of *conjunctural* poverty, caused most frequently in the 1990s by war, analysts such as Shepherd,<sup>170</sup> have highlighted the decline of institutions and the nation state in particular, the growth of international weapons, trade and of political economies of war with interests which benefit rich nations as a major cause of poverty in poor countries. Armed conflict is most frequently related to the uneven geographical and social spread of development inherent in modernization approaches of development which channels public resources extremely unequally, usually reinforcing inequalities of natural resource endowments.

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<sup>169</sup> Tiffen, M. Mortimore, and Gichuke, F. 1994. *More People Less Erosion: Environmental Recovery in Kenya*. p.68

<sup>170</sup> Shepherd, Andrew. 1998. *Sustainable Rural Development*. P.94

We have provided a detailed definition and analysis of the concept of poverty by drawing on the different contexts in which it is understood. One of the recurrent features fundamental to our discussion on poverty is the inextricable link between poverty and environment, for we are facing a “double earth crisis”. The two cannot be treated in isolation. Because of this, in the section that follows, we are going to engage in the definition of environment and examine the different contexts in which it is used.

## **2.5. Conceptualizing the Environment**

In the previous section, we have spent time discussing the different ways in which poverty is defined from a global context and how it is understood in the African context. A prominent feature that keeps reverberating in this discussion is the fact that poverty is a highly contested phenomenon. A significant observation in the discussions is also the fact that poverty contributes to environmental degradation. Bearing this in mind, therefore, we need to shift our discussion now to the issue of the environment with a view to understanding how it is understood as well as the factors causing environmental degradation. This will help us to grasp better the poverty and environment nexus.

A better understanding of the term “environment” would help us to appreciate the interface between it and poverty. Here we are not concerned with the complex scientific definitions of the environment. We are only concerned with the basic issues about what constitutes the environment. This clarification is necessary because of the complexity and variety of meanings of the term “environment”. In readings from the environment, there are varieties of new concepts or old terminology which are placed together within ecological discussions.<sup>171</sup> For example, terms like ecology, biosphere, creation, and nature, are often synonymously used with environment, but the meaning of each may be clear from the context in which it is being used. The term “environment” which is wider in context than “ecology” is taken to mean the complex interaction of physical, chemical, and biotic elements and processes that

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<sup>171</sup> See Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council (NERDC) “Role of Culture and Environment in Curriculum Development for Primary Education in Nigeria” in Udo, Bude.1992. *Culture and Environment in Primary Education: The demand of the Curriculum and the Practice in Schools in Sub-Saharan Africa*. Bonn: German Foundation for International development.p.283

surround and support life and act upon an organism or an ecological community and ultimately determine its form and survival.<sup>172</sup> Environment in other words could be defined as the “sum total of all processes and domains in which the interaction between nature and human civilization take place, it encompasses all natural factors that influence or are influenced by human beings”.<sup>173</sup> It includes all organisms that exist on the earth’s surface that may be considered as consisting of abiotic and biotic factors. In simple terms, the environment means factors that surround and affect a place and whatever is there. A few examples of the forms of environment include: soil, climate, water, vegetation, animals, radio active materials, the atmosphere etc.<sup>174</sup>

The European Union defined the environment as “the combination of elements whose complex interrelationships make up the settings, the surroundings and the conditions of life of the individual and of the society, as they are or as they are felt”.<sup>175</sup> Thus when we use the word environment we do not only refer to natural environment but to all cultural creations of human beings.<sup>176</sup> The environment thus includes the built environment, the natural environment, and all the natural resources, including air, land, and water. Sometimes, the word is used in other narrower contexts, such as a business environment, cultural environment or home environment. We can therefore conclude that the environment is construed in the following contexts:

-  An isolated part of the physical world
-  Our immediate vicinity in the universe that we influence or that influences us
-  The biosphere looked at in-human centred terms

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<sup>172</sup> Simmons, I.G. 1993. *Interpreting Nature: Cultural Constructions of the Environment*. London: Routledge, p.64

<sup>173</sup> Britanica, Micropaedia.1994. vol 4. Chicago: p.512

<sup>174</sup> Byaruhanga, Karungi “The Role of the Church in Environmental Protection” in Agbasiere, Joseph and Zabajungu, B.K 1989. (eds) *Church Contribution to Integral Development* Eldoret, Kenya: Amecea. Gaba Pub, p. 299

<sup>175</sup> Alan, Gilpin. 1997. *Dictionary of Environment and Sustainable Development*. New York: John Wiley and Sons. p.74

<sup>176</sup> See Dokun, Oyeshola.1995. *Essentials of Environmental Issues: The World and Nigeria in Perspective*. Ibadan: Daily Graphic Publications.p.3

- ✚ The global biological and physical system and endowments on which humans depend for existence and wellbeing, and which humanity can only modify with impunity within certain limits
- ✚ people's neighbourhood.<sup>177</sup>

The four major components of the environment are the atmosphere, hydrosphere, lithosphere and biosphere.

The atmosphere is an envelop of gasses that surrounds the earth or any other celestial body.<sup>178</sup> The word atmosphere is a combination of two Greek words, viz; "atmos" and "spaira" respectively meaning vapour and ball.<sup>179</sup> The atmospheres of the planets within our solar system show an amazing diversity in that whereas Venus, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus, Neptune and Titan all have their atmospheres, that of the earth is unique in that it only supports life as we know it.<sup>180</sup>

The hydrosphere is the discontinuous layer of water at or near the earth's surface. It includes all liquid and frozen surface water in oceans, seas, lakes, rivers, streams, underground water, as well as water vapour in the atmosphere. The earth's total amount of water is estimated at 1.4 billion cubic km or 336 million cubic miles.<sup>181</sup>

The lithosphere comes from the Greek word "lithos", which actually refers to stone. So, the lithosphere is the solid earth. It is that part of the earth exposed to or a few centimetres away from the atmosphere or the hydrosphere.<sup>182</sup> It is often called the soil. The land surface of the earth is about 30% of the total area and the land masses are separated by ocean basins. The above three divisions form the geosphere, the non-living world.

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<sup>177</sup> Allaby, Michael. 1997. *Dictionary of the Environment*. Great Britain: The Macmillan Press Ltd. P. 126

<sup>178</sup> Eboatu, A. N. and Okonkwo, E. M 2006. *Environmental Pollution and Degradation*. Awka-Nigeria: Abimac Publishers. p.1

<sup>179</sup> Hill, McGraw. 1971. *Encyclopedia of Science and Technology*, vol.14, McGraw-Hill Book Company. p.450

<sup>180</sup> Eboatu, A. N. and Okonkwo, E. M 2006. *Environmental Pollution and Degradation*. P. 1

<sup>181</sup> The New Encyclopedia Britannica, 1992.vol. 25. 15<sup>th</sup> Edition. The University of Chicago Press. P.911

<sup>182</sup> Eboatu, A. N. and Okonkwo, E. M 2006. *Environmental Pollution and Degradation*. p.2

The biosphere formed the living world. It consists of the animals and the plants on the planet earth.<sup>183</sup> Under normal circumstances, the environment naturally maintains equilibrium. To do this, it is necessary that whatever that is taken off the environment should be compensated for adequately. If this does not happen, then, environmental degradation occurs. It is important to observe that most of the environmental factors are interrelated and interdependent, such that a change in one consequently results in a change in all the others. Human efforts in modifying the environment to satisfy immediate needs and wants have adversely disrupted or even destroyed some of the biotic components that are essential for the sustenance of environmental life. This disruption and destruction also affect development, which is largely dependent on the earth's resources.

Environment and development are inextricably linked in that the environment is a *sine qua non* for development. If human life is to be sustained through development, then we need to value and protect the environment. Development cannot be seen in isolation from the relationships people have with one another and with the rest of the environment. If the earth's resources are irreparably damaged or depleted through environmental problems resulting from people's activities, development and therefore people's future is endangered. Mopholosi Morokong reminds us that the environment is not just endangered species, but it is where we live, work and play, the air we breathe, the water we drink and the land we live on.<sup>184</sup> People are part of the environment. The resources needed for development come from the environment. It determines and affects the whole range of our life, including religious, social, political, cultural and economical activities. It is on the basis of the above therefore that attention must be drawn to the drastic consequences of abuse, negligence and over exploitation of the environment in order to achieve a sustainable development, which is the ideal of every society. If the environment is destroyed, the possibility of development is also destroyed.

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<sup>183</sup> Paehlke, Robert. 1995. (ed) *Conservation and Environmentalism. An Encyclopaedia*. New York: Garland Publishing Inc.p.77

<sup>184</sup> Hallowes, David. 1993. *Hidden Faces. Environment, Development, Justice: South Africa and the Global Context*. Cape Town: Earth life, p.91

## 2.6. Key Aspects of Environmental Degradation-the Global Context

The term “environmental degradation” describes the process of a progressive, long-term drop in the quality of the environment.<sup>185</sup> When something is degraded, its character is changed for the worse and damage is done. According Byaruhanga, environmental degradation occurs “when there is a distortion or damage in the physical, chemical or biological characteristics of air, land and water with harmful effects upon human life and that of other living species; our industrial processes, living conditions and cultural assets, or that may or will, in due course, waste or deteriorate our raw material resources”.<sup>186</sup> The above is also an indication that the use of environmental functions beyond their carrying capacity may in some circumstances transform environmental change into severe environmental problems or degradation.<sup>187</sup> It is important for us to note that there is a kind of interlocking web of cause and effect with regards to environmental degradation. As a result, apart from those elements which explicitly present as either causes or effects, we are also looking at other key elements which sometimes are viewed as causes and at some other times are seen as effects.

Environmental degradation can impact on people in many different ways. It can harm our health, it can reduce our productivity and income, and it can spoil our quality of life, our sense of aesthetics, and could impact people’s spiritual wellbeing. It has often been observed that the rural poor suffer disproportionately, particularly from health and productivity impacts. It is the poor who suffer from water contamination and lack of sanitation. “For the most part, it is the poorest 1.7 billion people in the world who suffer from unsanitary conditions and the poorest 1 billion who have no access to piped water. The 2 million infants who die each year from such conditions are almost from poor families”.<sup>188</sup>

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<sup>185</sup> <http://www.birdlife.org.za/resources/wssd2002/resources.htm>

<sup>186</sup> Byaruhanga, Karungi T. A . 1989. “The Church’s Role in Environmental Protection” in Agbasiere, Joseph and Zabajungu, B.K (eds) *Church Contribution to Integral Development* Eldoret, Kenya: Amecea Gaba Pub. p.230

<sup>187</sup> Christiansson, C. and Tobisson, E. 1999. “Environmental Degradation as a Consequence of Socio-Political Conflict in the Eastern Mara Region of Tanzania” in Hjort, A Oranas, M.A and Mohamed, Salih (eds) *Ecology and Politics: Environmental Stress and Security in Africa*. Uppsala: Scandinavian Institute of African Studies. P.95.

<sup>188</sup> Serageldin, Ismail. 1995. *Nurturing Development: Aid and Co Operation in Today’s Changing World*. Washington, D.C: The World Bank. p.39

We examine below some of the key aspects of the environmental crisis in terms of both cause and effect.

### **2.6.1. Science and Technology**

Both science and technology are driven by the endeavour to know and understand, to change the environment for the better: and to use the goods of the earth for the benefit of oneself and others. However the very success of science and technology gives rise to multiple problems. The paradox of technological advancement is that the solution to one problem leads to the creation of new problem. For example, low crop productivity can be improved by the use of fertilizers, resulting in higher yield. But the constant use of these chemicals destroys the natural fertility of soil, through poisoning of micro-organisms, leaching and changes in the natural arable land, with the risk that such land may eventually become barren.

Technology has both a negative and positive side. Positively, it is the purposive control of the environment, the programmatic extension of our ability to harness the forces of nature for special ends.<sup>189</sup> Understood thus positively, technology can be regarded as the stewardship of our extensive and expanding habitat. Nevertheless, in its operation, there are major ambiguities. The forces of greed, inordinate pride, profiteering and the science embedded in partisan interest have all played their part on the environment. The underlying rationale of technological enterprise is that nature is seen as a “thing” to be used up, controlled and dominated. Technological reason degrades nature to a mere quantity or extension, at the mercy of scientists and technologists.<sup>190</sup> Nature is then treated as raw materials for production. The result of technology has been massive engineering projects - roads, dams, irrigation canals, new towns, and shopping malls etc., which alter the topography of the earth. Chemicals in industries and agriculture are polluting the air, water and soil. The cutting down of trees for paper and other uses is destroying the natural habitat of thousands of living forms. Mining and other extractive industries are rapidly depleting human, scarce energy and mineral resources.

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<sup>189</sup> Gecaga, Margaret. 2000. “Creative Stewardship for a New Earth” in Getui, M and Ogeng, E. A, (eds) *Theology of Reconstruction*. Nairobi: Action. p.30

<sup>190</sup> Gecaga, Margaret. 2000. “Creative Stewardship for a New Earth” p.30

In view of these observations, we could see that ‘value-free’ science and unbridled technology lead to destruction rather than genuine development. At the same time, it would be irrational to ignore the positive aspects of both science and technology. This is because ecologically sensitive or environmentally friendly technology could help in the development and the use our resources for the benefit of all. In this way technology could contribute to environmental sustainability which has recently become the watch word in development arena.<sup>191</sup> Science and technology, which have been used as humankind’s authority to subdue the earth, should instead be used to create harmony in the ecosystem since it is a “double edged sword” which could be harmful or beneficial depending on how it is handled.

### **2.6.2. Population Growth**

Another factor related to environmental degradation is population growth.<sup>192</sup> The untoward effects of population growth on economic development often play themselves out through excessive pressure on natural resources and the desecration of the delicate life-support systems on which humankind depends. Worldwide, there is mounting evidence of rapid deforestation, desertification, and soil erosion. It is most acute where population growth and poverty are most apparent. In most countries on the African continent, the growing population of humans hastened the conversion of productive land into a desert that ultimately leads to famine and other degrading effects on the environment.

Excessive population growth doubtlessly strains the environment and contributes to destruction of the global commons, but excessive consumption is even more damaging.<sup>193</sup> Most of the urban dwellers depend on the rural farmers for food supply. This demand has in turn increased the encroaching and other damaging effects of forest resources. Many trees had been cut down and are still being cut down randomly for fuel wood, timber and charcoal because of high cost of electricity. This excessive deforestation has immensely contributed to

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<sup>191</sup> Gecaga, Margaret. 2000. “Creative Stewardship for a New Earth” p.31

<sup>192</sup> Klugman, Barbara. 1991. “Victims or Villains? Over population and Environmental Degradation” in Jacklyn, Cock and Eddie, Koch (eds) 1991 *Going Green. People, Politics and the Environment in South Africa*. New York: Oxford University Press. p.66

<sup>193</sup> Kegley, Charles. W and Wittkoff, Eugene. R. 2001. *The Global Agenda. Issues and Perspectives* .USA: Mc Graw-Hill Higher Educational Pub. p.377

lack of rain to water plantations and fields and for other domestic purposes. The effects of population and consumption on the environment are given a detailed discussion in the section that deals with the influence of affluent nations on the environment.

### **2.6.3. Pollution**

Another factor related to environmental degradation is pollution. Pollution refers to the amount of waste materials in various forms thrown away. The saying that “a consuming society is also a throwaway society”<sup>194</sup> is typical of many African societies including the Nigerian society. We have to note here that a major characteristic of cities in poor countries of the world, including African countries, is the amount of refuse they generate. This refuse come from residential places, commercial, administrative and industrial activities. Although such refuse cannot be practically avoided, it however, contributes to environmental degradation and the distortion of the aesthetic outlook of cities. The problem of waste management in most poor countries is a big challenge. Most African countries, like other developing countries, do not have the technological and skills capacity for a comprehensive waste management system; hence more than 80% of the waste they generate is not recovered or properly disposed of.<sup>195</sup> As these “mountains of garbage” grow, their safe and effective disposal becomes increasingly difficult for many poor countries. The effects of pollution on the health of the environment and humanity as well, are disastrous in many ways. There are different forms and causes of pollution. Here, we are only discussing air and water pollution because these are the most common that do not require much scientific explanation for the understanding of the ordinary person.

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<sup>194</sup> Kegley, Charles. W, and Wittkoff, Eugene. R. 2001. *The Global Agenda*. p.378

<sup>195</sup> Ayotamuno; Josiah. M and Akuro, E. Gobo. *Management of Environmental Quality: An International Journal*, April 2004, vol. 15, no. 4, p.389-398(10) See, Huib Pellikaan and Robert Van Der Veen. 2002. *Environmental Dilemmas and Policy Design*. Cambridge University Press, UK. p.68

### 2.6.3.1. Air Pollution

Pollution can be defined as “undesirable change in the physical, chemical or biological characteristics of air, land and water, with harmful effect upon human life, and that of other species”.<sup>196</sup> It also refers to the contamination of an environment to the extent that organisms are harmed or the functioning of the ecosystem is impaired. Most human activities generate environmental contaminants (potential pollutants) either deliberately in waste disposed or as environmental accidents.<sup>197</sup>

The Scandinavian countries were the first to express concern about the detrimental environmental impacts of long-range air pollution.<sup>198</sup> The pollutants, which have been of most concern, are sulphur dioxide (SO<sup>2</sup>) and nitrogen oxide (NOX), which are released when oil and gas are burned. The majority of sulphur dioxide emissions come from automobile emissions and power plants in the refineries. Acid rain, acid formed by these oxides in the chemical reaction with water vapour and sunlight, which is then deposited in precipitation, or in dry form, causes damage not only to buildings but also to lakes, rivers and terrestrial ecosystems.<sup>199</sup> Damage to human health from long-range air pollution resulting in volatile organic compounds is one of the greatest threats in many oil exploring countries because of the age-long activities of oil exploration. Volatile organic compounds together with nitrogen oxide is damaging to human and plant health, in contrast to its crucial protective role in the stratosphere.<sup>200</sup>

Industries represent another major source of air pollution. Steel, petroleum, cement, chemicals and paper factories are responsible for large quantities of particulate emissions-ashes, dust and chemicals of various kinds. While these are the major categories, virtually all other production activities emit some air pollutants from the combustion of fuels and the handling of raw materials, solvents and other chemicals. Levy, observes that scientific

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<sup>196</sup> Odum, E. P. 1971. *Fundamentals of Ecology*. Philadelphia: Saunders College. Pub. p.61

<sup>197</sup> Odum, E. P. 1971. *Fundamentals of Ecology*. p.61

<sup>198</sup> Elliot, Lorraine .1998. *The Global Politics of the Environment*. p.38

<sup>199</sup> Elliot, Lorraine .1998. *The Global Politics of the Environment*. p.41

<sup>200</sup> Elliot, Lorraine .1998. *The Global Politics of the Environment*. p.37

evidence now accepts that ground-level ozone is just as harmful to forests and agricultural crops as sulphur emissions.<sup>201</sup>

### **2.6.3.2. Water Pollution**

The pollution of the oceans was for so long paid little attention. This lack of attention was based on the erroneous assumption that oceans have unlimited capacity as a dumping ground, and environmental impact was therefore not considered to be a problem. However, accidents such as the Torrey Canyon oil spill, sharpened public concern about ship based pollution of coastlines and coastal wildlife.<sup>202</sup> About 70% of marine pollution is from land-based sources, which include agricultural run-offs (pesticides and fertilizers), sewage, oil and hydrocarbons, synthetic compounds and a range of heavy metals.<sup>203</sup> Pollution from rivers not only damages coastal ecosystems and disrupts coastal fisheries but is also a threat to human health especially dwellers around coastal communities who depend heavily on the river as their source of livelihood (farmers and fishermen).<sup>204</sup>

### **2.6.4. Survival Strategies**

As we hinted in the discussion above on poverty, the survival strategies of vulnerable people are a contributor to environmental degradation. This is because the largely subsistence agricultural sector of many developing countries has failed to keep up with the rapid population growth of the country and its developmental demand. As a result, the poor have been especially hard hit, notably by devaluations of the currency. A more explicit example of the point we are making here is seen in the way in which the current economic crunch and global food security crisis has particularly affected the poor adversely. This has made basic imported goods, such as food and other basic necessities, more expensive. Similarly, cutbacks

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<sup>201</sup> Elliot, Lorraine .1998. *The Global Politics of the Environment*. p.38

<sup>202</sup> Elliot, Lorraine .1998. *The Global Politics of the Environment*. p.42

<sup>203</sup> Elliot, Lorraine .1998. *The Global Politics of the Environment*. p.42

<sup>204</sup> Brenton, Tony. 1994. *The Greening of Machiavelli: The Evolution of International Environmental Politics*. London: Earthscan Pub. p.135

in services and increases in fees for goods and services; and a rate of inflation that exceeded 60 percent has worsened the situation.<sup>205</sup>

The living conditions of such vulnerable people oblige them to exploit in an uncontrolled manner the existing natural resources to guarantee their survival. In many rural areas for example, people engage in land excavation, cutting down of trees for sale and other activities as strategies for economic survival. All these contribute to the acceleration of environmental degradation. In many developing countries, poverty reduction has been the government's main goal, but our observation is that proper and due emphasis has not yet been placed on agriculture as a viable means of achieving rural development and poverty alleviation.

### **2.6.5. Deforestation**

A forest can be defined as a piece of land covered with plants or trees, either planted by humans or grown wild. It is the greatest supporting element in nature.<sup>206</sup> Deforestation is the indiscriminate act of felling trees for human use or for industrial establishment or agricultural purposes. Deforestation results from clearing of trees and bushes for farming and physical development purposes without concurrent measures for replanting. The effects of deforestation are quite serious.<sup>207</sup> One of the major causes of deforestation particularly in developing countries is the conversion of forestland to agricultural land, both for large-scale agriculture (including ranching and cash cropping) and for subsistence agriculture. Commercial logging is another source of deforestation. Peter and Brown, suggest that logging is responsible for about 20-25% of annual forest loss in most developing countries.<sup>208</sup> Closely related to logging is fuel wood demand. About eighty two percent of energy demands are met by fuel wood in most developing countries.<sup>209</sup> Pollution and population-related factors also contribute to deforestation or "forest death".

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<sup>205</sup> <http://www.inadev.org/profile-nigeria.htm>

<sup>206</sup> Okonkwo, E. M and Eboatu, A. N. 1999. *Environmental Pollution and Degradation*. p.80

<sup>207</sup> Elliot, Lorraine. 1998. *The Global Politics of Environment*. p.80

<sup>208</sup> Porter, Gareth and Brown, Welsh Janet. 1991. *Global Environmental Politics*. Boulder: Westview press. p.97

<sup>209</sup> Thomas, Caroline. 1992. *The Environment in International Relations*. London: Royal Institute of International Affairs. p.250

Forests are ecologically, economically and culturally important at local and global levels. The loss of forests therefore has a number of consequences. Forests help prevent soil erosion and impede water flows, soil nutrient loss, salination of watershed and downstream ecosystems, and the possible increase in floods. An urban preference for charcoal, which is less energy-efficient than “unadulterated” wood, also exacerbates fuel wood demand leading to increase in tree felling.

#### **2.6.6. Desertification**

Desertification is a term widely used to describe the degradation of land capability. It is often regarded as literally the expansion of the true desert into areas previously capable of agriculture production. However, it is best to think of desertification as a “sustained reduction in the biological productivity of land”.<sup>210</sup> Desertification is the reduction in or loss of the biological productivity of land or (land degradation) particularly in dry lands. In some African countries, desertification has reached catastrophic proportions. The causes of desertification include human activities and climatic variations. Changes in land use patterns and ecologically unsuitable agriculture, inducing over cultivation, planting of inappropriate crops, heavy use of fertilizers and chemicals all contribute to the kind of soil erosion and land degradation that results in desertification.<sup>211</sup> The ecological impact of desertification includes decline in soil fertility, loss of biodiversity, and loss of arable land. The socio-economic effects include food scarcity, loss of subsistence livelihoods leading to poverty, malnutrition and forced movements of people.

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<sup>210</sup> Hulme, Mike and Mick, Kelly 1993. “Exploring the Links Between Desertification and Climate Change” in the *journal of the Environment*, vol.35, no.6, July/Aug. p.4-11

<sup>211</sup> Hulme, Mike and Mick, Kelly 1993. “Exploring the Links Between Desertification and Climate Change” p.17

### 2.6.7. Ozone Depletion

Ozone depletion was the first major environmental issue with a planetary dimension to challenge the scientific and diplomatic communities.<sup>212</sup> Ozone depletion is a special form of oxygen which surrounds the earth's atmosphere and which prevents a great deal of ultraviolet radiation from the sun from reaching the earth's surface. Ozone performs the important function of filtering harmful ultraviolet B radiation (uvb). Negotiations on the issue of ozone depletion is regarded as the most successful example of international environmental co-operation to date and as the best model for the further development of international environmental law.<sup>213</sup> It is regarded as one of the *global commons* because the impact of this particular environmental problem will be felt globally regardless of whether a country has contributed to the problem.

The likely effects of ozone depletion include an increase in skin cancers and cataracts, suppression of the immune system in both humans and animals with resultant increase in vulnerability to infectious diseases and a decrease in the productivity of plants. The best known of the offending chemicals are chlorofluorocarbons (cfcs), which are widely found in fridges, air conditioners and aerosols.<sup>214</sup>

Having seen the different contexts in which environment is understood and interpreted and the key factors that contribute and accelerate environmental degradation from a more general perspective, the section below views the environment from African perspectives and examines how the relationship between poverty and environment contribute to environmental criticality in Africa.

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<sup>212</sup> Elliot, Lorraine . 1998. *The Global Politics of the Environment* p.53

<sup>213</sup> Barrow, C. J. 1999. *Environmental Management: Principles and Practice*. London: Routledge. p.41

<sup>214</sup> Brenton, Tony.1994. *The Greening of Machiavelli* p.135

## 2.7. Environmental Criticality in Africa

Large parts of African societies are affected by environmental degradation and natural hazards.<sup>215</sup> These hazards can potentially lead to disasters, a situation which could trigger off certain extreme un-desirable events in societies or between nation states as the case may be. The critical interaction of society and environment in our view did not appear to have received much attention especially in relation to academic engagement in Africa, not the least Nigeria. In other words, while the natural processes in the contexts of disasters have often been researched in depth, the socio-economic and even political contexts and conditions which give them the particular character they acquire in the lives of communities are not sufficiently understood. An adequate understanding of environmental criticality in Africa therefore requires that we seek to understand why and how these problems emerge.<sup>216</sup>

At the start we should note that through the pre-existing extensive ecological knowledge system, Africans had successfully controlled the proper use of the earth's resources over the years until the introduction of the culture of industrial market (one of the effects of colonization) has created its own contradictions, giving humanity the power to extinguish not only itself but also many of the world's species. In the light of the above, we would argue that the loss of the traditional African way of life, and with it, of cultural identity, including of course the ecological knowledge, lies at the root of our environmental problems, socio-

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<sup>215</sup> Spoor, Mak. 2004.(ed) *Globalization, Poverty and Conflict. A Critical Development Reader*. Boston: Kluwer Academic Publishers. p. 23

<sup>216</sup> Africa is facing many environmental challenges which ultimately are affecting its sustainable development. Over the past 30 years, the environment in Africa has continued to deteriorate. Thousands of people in Africa have already died from starvation brought about by environmental degradation. Millions more people are faced with imminent disaster because their water sources have run dry; their land has become so denuded they cannot rear livestock, and the soil so poor they cannot cultivate it. The reduction of tree cover and cultivation on steep slopes are contributing to high rates of soil erosion in many parts of Africa where population pressure is pushing people onto the marginal lands. Deforestation and encroachment on forests reserves is having a direct impact on surface water supply. Poaching in game reserves is on the increase as people try to supplement their meagre diets with bush meat. For details on this, see Kalipeni, Ezekiel (ed) 1994. *Population Growth and Environmental Degradation in Southern Africa*. United States of America: Lynne Rienner Publisher. p.32

economic and political underdevelopment.<sup>217</sup> This argument would be taken further in chapter seven under the section that deals with indigenous African ecological knowledge.

In the light of the above, therefore, it is pertinent for us to identify other factors besides the effects of colonization that are responsible for this environmental criticality. In trying to understand this we must recognise that a conglomeration of factors have been identified as reasons for the reversal of the environmental situation in Africa. The agrarian character of Africa is among the first issues to be considered in this regard. Africa is still very largely rural and agricultural and approximately about 705 million of Africa's poorest live in rural areas.<sup>218</sup> Agriculture is the backbone of many African economies and about 70% of Africa's people derive their living from subsistence farming.<sup>219</sup> In other words, the vast majority of the people in Africa depend directly on the environment for their livelihood.

Throughout the history of humankind, agricultural activities have resulted in changes in the environment. As people create new technologies for the development and utilization of the resources of the earth through agriculture, there is an increasing interface within nature that results in environmental degradation and pollution. Forests are cleared replacing them with erosion-prone grasslands, many chemicals and equipment are introduced to step up productivity: the carbon dioxide content of the atmosphere is enhanced through bush-burning and vehicular emissions; fish and other aquatic organisms have been destroyed in hitherto unknown scale and useful soil organisms have been devastated.<sup>220</sup>

During the past couple of years, Africa's environment has been under intense pressure especially because of the increase in population resulting in over cultivation, over grazing and over exploitation of other resources. These have virtually turned vast areas into waste lands. The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) has estimated that an area twice the

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<sup>217</sup> *Story Earth*. 1993. *Nature Voices on the Environment*. A Compilation of Inter Press Service. California: Mercury House. p.162

<sup>218</sup> Africa South of the Sahara. 2008.37<sup>th</sup> Edition. London and New York: Routledge. p.10

<sup>219</sup> Kinoti, George and Kimuyu, Peter. 1997.(eds) *Vision for a bright Africa. Facing the Challenges of Development*. Nairobi: The African Institute for Scientific and Development. p.193

<sup>220</sup> Okonkwo, E. M and Eboatu, A. N. 1999. *Environmental Pollution and Degradation*. Awka-Nigeria: Abimac Publishers. p.80

size of India is under the threat of desertification in Africa.<sup>221</sup> In many parts of the continent, environmental degradation has reached crisis proportions, with grave consequences for the people. The introduction of heavy industrialized and mechanized agriculture resulted in an increase in environmental degradation and pollution. Although environmental degradation and pollution from agriculture is a global problem, its effects in the developing world, especially in Africa, are even worse.<sup>222</sup> Pollutants from agricultural activities can be categorized into those that stay unchanged in the environment for a very long time and those that are easily decomposed once they are released into the environment. The former are referred to as the persistent pollutants. Certain pesticides and nuclear waste belong to this group. The other group of non-persistent pollutants includes vegetable matter, animal droppings, whole animals or parts thereof, farm garbage and so on. This group is easily taken care of by natural biodegradative process and artificially by any of the techniques for disposing of combustible or decayable materials.<sup>223</sup>

The problem of environmental pollution or degradation resulting from agricultural activities is being exacerbated by the lack of appropriate regulations and control over environmental issues, the absence of knowledge and information about the proper use and disposal of pesticides and fertilizers that are being introduced to the agricultural lands, coupled with improper management of both agricultural and non-agricultural lands have resulted in the presence of significant agricultural pollution in the environment.<sup>224</sup> To elucidate more on this issue, we cite here as an example, the joint statement of the World Health Organization (WHO) and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations (UN) which says that the amount of poor quality pesticides sold in developing countries is alarmingly high.<sup>225</sup> The same statement further states that around 30% of the pesticides marketed in developing countries do not meet internationally accepted quality standard. The implication of the above, therefore, means that agricultural activities accelerate and facilitate

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<sup>221</sup> Africa South of the Sahara 2008. 37<sup>th</sup> Edition. London and New York: Routledge. p.10

<sup>222</sup> Thomas M. Leonard. 2006.(ed) *Encyclopaedia of the Developing World*. Vol. 3 O-Z Index. New York: Routledge. p.1284

<sup>223</sup> Okonkwo. E. M and Eboatu, A. N. 1999.*Environmental Pollution and Degradation*. p.81

<sup>224</sup> Spoor, Mak. 2004.(ed) *Globalization, Poverty and Conflict. A Critical Development Reader*. Bosoton: Kluwer Academic Publishers. p. 262-265

<sup>225</sup> Thomas M. Leonard. 2006.(ed) *Encyclopaedia of the Developing World*. Vol. 3 O-Z Index. p.1284

environmental degradation in developing countries including African countries. This problem has persisted in spite of the UN's attempts to stem the tide of environmental degradation.<sup>226</sup>

Africa's food and agricultural underdevelopment has perpetuated environmental criticality thereby causing the poverty of the rural population and seriously jeopardized the long-term development of the continent. The sheer scale of Sub-Saharan Africa's environmental crisis often leads to pessimism about the region's recovery prospects. The pessimism expressed above is premised on the fact that mechanisms set in motion to cushion the effects of environmental degradation especially in the rural areas seem not to be yielding the desired results. One of the reasons for this is because environmental awareness and education is still very minimal. The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) recognizes both the relationship between poverty and environmental degradation in underdeveloped countries including Africa, as well as the problem of unsustainable production and consumption patterns in developed countries as the driving force behind some of the environmental problems facing the developing countries. The protection of the environment and of natural resources is an essential part of development. Without adequate environmental capital, development is undermined and this may in turn reduce the resources available for investing in combating environmental damage. Given this, poverty alleviation is not only a moral imperative but also a prerequisite for environmental sustainability and sustainable development.<sup>227</sup> The solution to environmental degradation requires a multi dimensional approach. Therefore, awareness and education should form integral components of the efforts toward reduction of environmental degradation.

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<sup>226</sup> It is now more than three decades since the United Nations Organization in its effort to stem the tide of environmental degradation, decided to draw the attention of the world to the challenge of environmental degradation that has engulfed the entire globe. Since the setting up of the World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED), Africa is still struggling to address the environmental concerns which the UN was championing such as the rights of the human family to a healthy and productive environment, the rights of people to adequate food supply, to decent housing, to safe drinking water. Judging from the increased number of environmental problems in Africa, one could conclude that since the setting up of the UN's WCED Africa's environmental problems have greatly increased instead of abating. See Tham, Chris. *The Response of the Church to the Environmental Degradation*. p.89

<sup>227</sup> Moughalu, L. N. 2004. "Environmental Problems and their Effects on Human Life: From Awareness to Action" in Mba Chike, Uchegbu Smart, Udeh CA and Muoghalu, Leonard.(eds) *Management of Environmental Problems and Hazards in Nigeria*. United States of America: Ashgate Publishing Company. p. 95-96

In meeting the above demand, empowering key stakeholders through policy and institutional changes and creating conditions to support sustainable resource management would be the main thrust of strategies for environmental protection in most Sub-Saharan African countries.<sup>228</sup> The region's severe environmental problems like soil erosion and declining soil fertility, deforestation, pollution of water supplies, and biodiversity loss are everyday, real and critical concerns to the African people. The unsustainable management and utilization of natural resources has been exacerbated by poverty and population pressures. With the world's fastest growing population, averaging about 3% a year, it is projected that the region will be home to more than a billion people by the year 2025.<sup>229</sup> The continent's population growth rate ranks one of the highest in the world and therefore places additional strains on all systems including environmental stress.<sup>230</sup>

Moreover, the region is losing its natural resources at relatively rapid rates in comparison with other regions of the world. According to Jacklyn Cock, about six million hectares of primary forest are felled each year and about a third of mangrove swamps have been lost since the 1980s.<sup>231</sup> Africa has a fair share in these losses as we had noted earlier. Its wildlife population of rich and unique species of animals and plants is under increasing pressure. Africa's biological resources are declining rapidly as a result of climate variability, habitat loss, over harvesting of selected resources, and illegal activities. Yet biodiversity contributes to poverty reduction in at least five key areas (food security; health improvement; income generation, reduced vulnerability, ecosystem services).

Environmental degradation contributes markedly to many health threats. For example, the polluted air people breathe, the dirty water they drink, poor sanitation, and insect-transmitted diseases such as malaria in their physical environment contain constituents and properties

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<sup>228</sup> Africa South of the Sahara 2008. 37<sup>th</sup> Edition. London and New York: Routledge. p.3

<sup>229</sup> *Africa South of the Sahara* 2008. 37<sup>th</sup> Edition. London and New York: Routledge. p.10

<sup>230</sup> Global Challenges in Cities. With Focus on Africa. World Health Organization: Undated. p. 1 Persistent poverty has contributed to accelerated degradation of natural resources. The majority of poor people live in rural areas and depend directly or indirectly on terrestrial and marine natural systems for income generation. It is estimated that the two-thirds of the region's people who live in rural areas depend primarily on other natural resources apart from agriculture for income. In Africa, the poor who depend on natural ecosystems for their livelihoods live in the most fragile and degraded rural and urban areas.

<sup>231</sup> Jacklyn Cock. 2007. *The War against Ourselves. Nature, Power and Justice*. p.14

harmful to human health.<sup>232</sup> Lack of availability and low quality of freshwater are the two most limiting factors for development in Africa, constraining food production and industrial activities, and contributing significantly to the burden of disease. Land degradation and water shortages in many parts of Africa are a major threat to the ability of the poor farmers to earn a living from the land. Land quality and productivity are declining in cultivated areas, rangelands and forests which results are reduced agricultural yields, affecting economies and food security; desertification of arid areas, raising competition for remaining resources; and increased potential for conflict. Land degradation impacts are felt most keenly by the poor because they are forced to cultivate on river shores and marginal lands such as desert margins which get degraded more rapidly. The poor also often live in degraded urban environments, including sites close to waste disposal areas or vulnerable to flooding.<sup>233</sup>

The implication of the above for environmental protection and management in Africa has become important considering the intricate link between environment and poverty. The section below continues to examine the dynamics of rural and urban poverty as contributors to environmental criticality in Africa.

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<sup>232</sup> Gosovic, Branislav. 1992. *The Quest for World Environmental Cooperation*. London and New-York: Routledge.p.61

<sup>233</sup> McKinney, M. L. 2002. *Urbanization, Biodiversity and Conservation*. Bioscience 52, Issue 10, Oct 2002. Our view is that lasting poverty reduction is only possible if the environment is able to provide the services people depend on, and if natural resources are used in a manner that does not undermine long-term development. This view is because African's ever increase population demands, creative efforts to find new ways of producing more food from the continent's finite resources while at the same time protect the environment-this is what sustainable development encapsulates. The above raises two pertinent questions. Firstly, have African governments recognized the need to link biodiversity conservation with policies on overcoming poverty, especially in local communities that live around protected areas and in zones richly endowed with biodiversity, through the sustainable use of the resources? Secondly, what are the moral and ethical rationales concerning the allocation and use of land, conservation of fauna and flora, mining rights, consumer protection regulations and so on. Responses to the above vital questions are central to environmental protection and management in Africa because according to Peter Kanyadago, "the best hope for survival of the environment, or of the earth, lies first of all in decent human behaviour that minimizes greed and maximizes equity". For details see Kanyadago, Peter. 2002. *Marginalized Africa. An International Perspective*. Kenya: Paulines Publications. p.26-27

### 2.8.1. Rural Poverty as a Contributor to Environmental Criticality in Africa

The environmental dynamics noted above have necessitated the need for us to examine the relationship between rural poverty and the environment since it is observed that most Africans live in rural areas.<sup>234</sup> This examination is also important because it helps us to find out how the activities of these poor affect this poverty and environment dynamics.<sup>235</sup>

The phenomenon of rural poverty is a contributor to environmental degradation in Africa. In his book *Hope for Africa*, quoted in *Faith in Development*, professor George Kinoti of the University of Nairobi categorically states that poverty (especially rural poverty) is the most pressing of all Africa's problems. "It is at the heart of all the important problems in Africa, be they social, spiritual or moral".<sup>236</sup> According to him, Africa's poverty is manifested in four significant areas, namely, hunger, low income, disease, dehumanization and injustice. These are summarized hereunder:

(i) Hunger: One out of every three Africans does not get enough to eat. This can lead to retarded physical and mental development, disease, disability and premature death. In Nigeria, for example, the majority of the over 100 million people cannot afford more than one meal a day while in Sierra Leone the already bad food situation has been aggravated by rebel wars and military coups.

(ii) Low Incomes: Ravaged nations including Rwanda, Burundi, the democratic republic of Congo, Somalia, Angola and Liberia all have difficulty paying their civil servants and teachers anything at all. In a number of other countries, professionals such as nurses,

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<sup>234</sup> Africa South of the Sahara 2008. 37<sup>th</sup> Edition. p.4

<sup>235</sup> As the world's population is constantly being threatened by poverty and hunger in spite of the current global efforts by governments and international organizations, especially the UNO (through the Millennium Development Goals), towards reducing poverty by 2015, the impacts of human activities, particularly the poor on the environment, has continued to slow down these efforts thereby exacerbating environmental problems. See Jalal, K.F. 1993. *Sustainable Development, Environment and Poverty Nexus*. Occasional Papers No. 7 Asian Development Bank.

<sup>236</sup> Deryke Belshaw, Robert Calderisi and Chris Sugden. 2001. (eds). *Faith in Development. Partnership between the World Bank and the Churches in Africa*. United Kingdom: Regnum Books International. p.33

lawyers, engineers and doctors receive monthly wages that could be considered as peanuts in the developed world. In Nigeria, university professors (many of them trained in the west) earn a little above \$3,000 per year in contrast to their counterparts in Belgium whose population is only 2 percent of the size of Africa in 1997 and whose gross domestic product is higher than all of sub-Saharan Africa, excluding South Africa.

(iii) Disease: Many of the preventable and treatable diseases that have been eradicated or largely controlled in the west are still endemic in Africa, including cholera, malaria, typhoid, and meningitis. Added to the list are ebola and HIV and AIDS and you have a gloomy situation as far as cure or treatment is concerned. Patients are afraid to go to public hospitals because in many cases it is a fast way to the grave. Hospitals have no drugs, the equipment is out dated, and the staff is demoralized.

(iv) Dehumanization and Injustice: On the issue of dehumanization, how can one justify the senseless killing of about 1 million Rwandese by fellow Rwandese in 1994 or the ongoing killing in Darfur or DRC? Almost on daily basis people continue to live on dehumanizing conditions in Africa where injustice has taken many new dimensions. In his book *Lords of Poverty*; Graham Hancock reveals the type of injustice that surrounds the international aid business. He contends that billions of dollars of tax payers' money sent from the west to help the poor of the third world never reached them. Instead the funds went to support the opulent lifestyles of officials administering the aid or buy out collapsing multinational corporations, while whatever remained was eaten up by the corrupt and bureaucratic recipient governments.

As a result of the fundamental issues raised above, coupled with other triggering factors, Africa's poverty has exponentially persisted. The largely subsistence agricultural sector in Africa has consequently failed to keep up with the rapid population growth of the continent and its developmental demand. The result is that Africa, the continent that was once a large net exporter of food, now must import food for her teeming population.<sup>237</sup> The rural poor have been especially hard hit, notably by devaluations of the currency, which make basic imported goods, such as food, more expensive; cutbacks in services and increases in fees for

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<sup>237</sup> <http://www.odci.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/ni.html> (Accessed 25th November, 2007)

services; and a rate of inflation that exceeded 60 percent.<sup>238</sup> A major part of the population lives in absolute poverty. The living conditions of this group oblige it to exploit in an uncontrolled manner the existing resources to guarantee their survival. In most of the rural areas for example, people engage in land excavation, cutting down of trees for sale and other activities as strategies for economic survival. All these contribute to the acceleration of environmental degradation. Poverty reduction is regarded as the government's main goal in many African states (so it is claimed!). The question that needs to be asked is whether African governments have placed proper and due emphasis on agriculture as a viable means of achieving rural development and poverty alleviation.

### **2.8.2. Urban Poverty as a 'Driver' to Environmental Criticality in Africa**

Poverty in Africa is not only an issue of rural concern. It also has an urban dimension. Urban poverty as a social phenomenon has in the recent times gained considerable attention in global environmental discourse.<sup>239</sup> It has been argued that urban poverty is a prominent feature of the underdeveloped countries, where the activities that have characterized the rural areas for a long time are now transferred to the cities resulting in a dual economy in the cities.<sup>240</sup> These dual economies are what Agukoronye referred to as the *firm economy* and the *bazaar economy*.<sup>241</sup> The firm economy consists of the private big investment companies that offer good pay, attractive working conditions and fringe benefits. The bazaar economy on the other hand, consists of a large number of small enterprises, which in themselves are competitive; rely on intensive use of labour, often drawn from the family and close kinship ties.

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<sup>238</sup> <http://www.inadev.org/profile-nigeria.htm> (Accessed 5th November, 2007)

<sup>239</sup> Unsworth, R. 2004. "Making Cities more Sustainable: People, Plans and Participation". in Purvis, M and Grainger, A. (eds) *Exploring Sustainable Development: Geographical Perspectives*. London: Earthscan. p.56

<sup>240</sup> Agukoronye, Okechukwu .C. 2004. "Urban Poverty and Environmental Degradation in Nigerian Cities". in Mba Chike, Uchegbu Smart, Udeh C.A and Leonard Muoghalu. 2004.(eds) *Management of Environmental problems and hazards in Nigeria*. United States of America: Ashgate Publishing Company. p.162

<sup>241</sup> Agukoronye, Okechukwu .C. 2004. "Urban Poverty and Environmental Degradation in Nigerian Cities " p.

The urban poor predominate the bazaar economy and include some skilled and semi-skilled artisans - bricklayers, plumbers, bicycle repairmen, shoemakers and menders, petty traders, hawkers and a wide range of the self-employed, as well as apprentices and journeymen, widows, housewives and women whose husbands earn little income, newly arrived immigrants from the rural areas, students and lower level civil servants.<sup>242</sup> All share a common fate - they receive low income and substandard social and physical amenities and are, therefore, subject to malnutrition and higher mortality rate as well as high percentage of bare subsistence.

The urban poor are *under-urbanized* in terms of housing where the majority of them live in squatter and marginal settlements of rudimentary housing made of wood, thatch, or even cardboards, built on illegally occupied public land or in the derelict old parts of the inner city.<sup>243</sup> They are marginalized in terms of public services-their share being unpaved roads, public water supply or pumps serving too many families, or non-existent poor health services, poor educational facilities in deteriorated public schools, with over crowded classes. The urban poor thus find themselves excluded from the benefits of economic growth and discriminated against in service delivery. They suffer “exclusiveness” even in the squatter settlements which are subject to demolition without notice as in the Maroko example in Lagos state of Nigeria.<sup>244</sup> The exclusion of the poor from access to political decision making and power, high income and standard urban service, often referred to as “marginality”, can be seen as an explanation for their anti-social and anti environmental behaviour. These behaviour traits result from their feeling of hopelessness perpetuated from generation to generation of protracted marginality which ultimately degenerates into an entrenched culture of poverty.<sup>245</sup>

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<sup>242</sup> Agukoronye, Okechukwu. C. 2004. “Urban Poverty and Environmental Degradation in Nigerian Cities”.p. 163

<sup>243</sup> Agukoronye, Okechukwu. C. 2004. “Urban Poverty and Environmental Degradation in Nigerian Cities”.p. 163

<sup>244</sup> Agukoronye, Okechukwu .C. 2004. “Urban Poverty and Environmental Degradation in Nigerian Cities”.p. 163

<sup>245</sup> Agukoronye, Okechukwu. C. 2004. “Urban Poverty and Environmental Degradation in Nigerian Cities”.p. 163

Urban poverty is something that was never anticipated by many people who migrated from rural areas to urban areas. This is because many people who migrated from rural areas came to the cities with the hope of a better life. This anticipation for a better life was mentioned in Aristotle's dictum that "men come together in cities for security; they stay together for good life",<sup>246</sup> but when they finally arrive in the cities, they discover to their disappointment that the housing, jobs, incomes, amenities and the dreamt rosy life of the urban city that had attracted them in the first place are not available or are inaccessible.<sup>247</sup> As had noted earlier, unemployment, lack of accommodation, lack of good drinking water, and lack of sanitation, are some of the characteristic features depicting the appalling conditions of the urban poor in Africa. The inability of the urban poor to access these goods and services subject them to all manners of environmental hazards and vulnerability. The poor are thus thrown into a state of despondency as there is no improvement in the provision of goods and services to the residents of these informal settlements. Urban environmental management and service provision in most African states are at the moment generally believed to be in appalling condition.<sup>248</sup> This worsening situation of service delivery is being continuously exacerbated and accelerated by the spontaneous urban growth being currently witnessed in the continent. Although it has been observed that there is a global trend in the rapid rate of expansion of the urban areas, the fastest growth is believed to be occurring in developing countries and Africa is no exception in this regard.<sup>249</sup>

The above was explicitly presented by the World Health Organization publication titled "Global Challenges in Cities: with focus on Africa" which states that:

Africa's rates of demographic and urban growth are the highest in the world. Urban growth rates in many African countries exceed 4%, whereas in developed countries urban growth is static or even negative. In Africa, the percentage of the population living in urban areas is 37%. This is

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<sup>246</sup> Blumenfeld, H. 1979. *Metropolis and Beyond: Selected Essays*. New York, John Wiley p.34

<sup>247</sup> Srinivas, H. 1996. *Sustainable Partnerships for the Habitat Agenda: New Roles for Professional NGOs*: Paper presented at the city summer (UNCHS-Habitat 11) Istanbul, Turkey 4-6 June 1996

<sup>248</sup> UN-Habitat. 2002. <http://www.unhabitat.org/programmes/urbanisation> (Accessed 3 Oct. 2005)

<sup>249</sup> Brown, M and Pierre, A. 1994. *Ethics and Agenda 21: Moral Implications of a Global Consensus*. New York: United Nations, Bartone, C.R. 2000. [www.elsevier.com/habitat](http://www.elsevier.com/habitat) (Accessed 21 Aug. 2005)

expected to reach 54% in 2030, and in a few countries, it will be as high as 80%.<sup>250</sup>

Rural to Urban migration, including expansion of urban activities and boundaries as well as the natural population growth are some of the key propelling factors to this phenomenon.<sup>251</sup> It has been argued that urban migration in developing countries, more so in Africa is not going to stop or stabilize in the near future.<sup>252</sup> This view is corroborated by Max Spoor who argues that this would be so because:

...urbanization is mainly due to industrialization, but in Africa, while the early trends were linked to industrialization efforts, recent trends are due to more rural neglect, environmental degradation, decline of employment opportunities, collapse of primary commodity prices, intra and inter community conflicts and oppressive and exclusive patterns of power and production based on patriarchy and matriarchy.<sup>253</sup>

To show that urban migration is occurring at a fast rate in Africa, Schwartz argues that although the world's three largest cities in 1960 were all in the developed countries (New York-14.2m; Tokyo 11.0m; and London 9.11m), it is projected that by the year 2015 two of the five largest cities will now be in the developing countries. These two are Mumbai with 26.2m and Lagos with 24.6 m.<sup>254</sup>

The rapid growth of urban cities and the resultant effects of rural migration to urban cities should be seen both in terms of its immediate and cumulative effects on the natural

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<sup>250</sup> Global Challenges in Cities: With Focus on Africa , WHO Undated p.1

<sup>251</sup>Envirofacts undated <http://www.deltaenviro.org.za/resources/envirofacts/urbanisation.html> (Accessed on 12 June 2005).

<sup>252</sup> UNCHS. 1996. An urbanization World Global Report on Human Settlements.UK: Oxford University Press.

<sup>253</sup> Spoor, Mak. 2004.(ed) *Globalization, Poverty and Conflict. A Critical Development Reader*. Bosoton: Kluwer Academic Publishers. p.161. Mitlin, D., and Satterthwaite, D. 1996. "Sustainable development and cities" In C. Pugh, ed., *Sustainability, the Environment, and Urbanization*. London: Earthscan Publications, 23-61.

In Africa, men who come from the matrilineal society cannot own land while women who come from patrilineal societies have no ownership or inheritance rights .These systems also contribute in forcing people who have no access or claim to inheritance to migrate to cities where such discriminations are not in existence.

<sup>254</sup> Schwartz, J. 2002. *Judaism and Global Survival*. New York: Lantern Books. p.67

environment, the built environment and the socio-economic environment.<sup>255</sup> The natural environment generally is placed under pressure because of urban growth and the activities of the urban poor. Natural environment in this context refers to resources, processes and effects related to flora and fauna, human beings, minerals, water, land, air. The built environment which refers to the resources, processes and effects related to buildings, housing roads, railways, electricity, water supply, gas, etc is also subjected to uncontrolled pressure and exploitation. Socio-economic environment on the other hand considers issues relating to resources, processes and effects related to human activities, education, health, arts and culture, economic and business activities, and urban life styles in general.<sup>256</sup>

Our opinion is that a partial consideration of these effects on only an aspect of the environment referred to above at the exclusion of others, poses the inevitable danger of moving towards unsustainable approaches in terms of environmental management. Therefore, a clear understanding of the dynamics of human interaction and the interdependent relationship at play in the three aspects of the *environments* as well as the interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary approach has become vitally important for proper assessment and action towards environmental conservation policy and implementation. This has become crucial to the development of coherent and sustainable policies and programmes aimed at addressing the challenges of urban migration in the continent where it is assumed that the resultant population explosion is occurring at a faster rate than other continents.<sup>257</sup>

The implication of the above therefore calls for urgent and concerted effort in addressing the problem of urban migration and the effects of the urban poor in Africa's environment. Uncoordinated and unmanaged process of urbanization, poses a very serious threat to the environment in many developing countries of the world including Africa. The task of alleviating urban poverty while at the same time protecting or maintaining the ecosystem balance especially with regard to the protection of the environment, is a very critical one because urban migration which comes with a lot of challenges place huge demands on the government.

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<sup>255</sup> UN-Habitat. 2002. <http://www.unhabitat.org/programmes/urbanisation> (Accessed 3 Oct. 2005)

<sup>256</sup> UN-Habitat

<sup>257</sup> Simone, A. M. 1999. "Thinking About African Urban Management in an Era of Globalization". *African Sociological Review* 3(2) 69-98

## 2.8. The Poverty and Environment Debate: Political Economy as a Key Factor

In the previous sections we have been discussing the connection between environment and poverty both from global and African perspectives. Central to this discussion is the issue of interconnectedness of poverty and environment and how human activities contribute and accelerate environmental criticality. More often than not poor countries have taken the blame for environmental criticality, causing many of the environmental problems including environmental degradation. In their effort to absolve themselves of this blame, the poor countries have also thrown punches back at the rich countries; calling them the main culprits as far as global environmental problems are concerned. In this section, we are going to examine the role and contribution of the affluent countries to environmental degradation in poorer countries.

### 2.9.1. The Influence of Affluent Nations on the Environment

It is important to note that environmental impacts which result from anthropogenic activities are not only as a result of poverty but include a whole range of other factors. For example, Frances argues that population and consumption pattern are crucial issues to be considered because the impact of population and consumption pattern on the environment is determined by the size of the population, its affluence (and hence consumption per capita) and the type of technologies used.<sup>258</sup> He explained this point by arguing that an extremely large but poor population using low impact technology could have the same impact as a smaller but more affluent population using highly polluting technology. Therefore, a rough idea of the impact of the global economy on the natural environment could be obtained if one multiplied population numbers with levels of affluence and again with levels of technological development.<sup>259</sup> The impact is equal to population size, multiplied by per capita consumption (Affluence), in turn multiplied by a measure of the damage done by the technologies chosen to supply each unit of consumption. This is further illustrated by the I=pat formula: the I=pat equation has been employed often implicitly as the basis for the study of environmental

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<sup>258</sup> Frances, Harris (ed). 2004. *Global Environmental Issues*. p.10

<sup>259</sup> Nurnberger, Klaus. 1999. *Prosperity, Poverty and Pollution: Managing the Approaching Crisis*. p.70

degradation since the early 1970s.<sup>260</sup> The equation simply states that environmental impacts (I) are a function of population growth (P); the affluence, or rate of consumption of particular societies (A); and the technological innovations that may either enhance rates of consumption or allow societies to reduce impacts on resources through greater efficiency or by the management of degrading influences (T).<sup>261</sup>

This equation is similar to the controversial *limit to growth* debate in which Malthusian notions of environmental change (accentuating the adverse effects of population increase on limited resources) may be offset by more optimistic Boserupian thinking (that emphasizes the ability for technological innovation and adaptation to allow apparent limits to be exceeded).<sup>262</sup> It is equally linked to the *tragedy of the commons* model that proposes environmental collapse will result following unrestricted access of private actors upon public resources.<sup>263</sup> The tragedy of the commons reflects the Aristotelian dictum that “what is common to the greatest number has the least care bestowed upon it”.<sup>264</sup>

The tragedy of the commons has provided a useful concept for our understanding of how we have come to be at the brink of numerous environmental crises. Hardin, G. explains the tragedy of the commons with an illustration of an imaginary pasture “open to all”.<sup>265</sup> Central to Hardin's illustration is a metaphor of herders sharing a common parcel of land (the commons), on which they are all entitled to let their cows graze. In Hardin's view, it is in each herder's interest to put as many cows as possible onto the land, even if the commons are damaged as a result. The herder receives all of the benefits from the additional cows, while the damage to the commons is shared by the entire group. If all herders make this

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<sup>260</sup> Tim, Forsyth. 2003. *Critical Political Ecology. The Politics of Environmental Science*. London: Routledge.p.44. See also Marjorie Hope and James Young (eds) *Voices of Hope in the Struggle to Save the Planet*. New York: The Apex Press. p.324-326

<sup>261</sup> Forsyth, Tim. 2003. *Critical Political Ecology*. p. 44

<sup>262</sup> Forsyth, Tim. 2003. *Critical Political Ecology*. P. 44

<sup>263</sup> Forsyth, Tim. 2003. *Critical Political Ecology*. P. 44

<sup>264</sup> Ostrom, E. 1992. “The rudiments of a theory of the origins, survival, and performance of common-property institutions” in Bromley, D. W. (ed.) *Making the Commons Work: Theory, Practice and Policy*. San Francisco: ICS Press

<sup>265</sup> De Young, R., and Kaplan, S. 1988, *On Averting the Tragedy of the Commons, Environmental Management*. V 12, 273-283. Accessed from: <http://www-personal.umich.edu/~rdeyoung/tragedy.html>(24th March 2009)

individually rational decision, however, the commons are destroyed and all herders suffer. The application of the concept of the tragedy of the commons in its broader sense reveals how many modern environmental problems (e.g., overgrazing on communal/government lands, acid precipitation, ocean dumping, atmospheric carbon dioxide discharges, firewood crises in less developed countries, overfishing), are rooted in the uncaring attitude about the global commons.<sup>266</sup> This uncaring attitude to the commons seen in the way people are acting without restraint to maximize personal short-term gain, constantly causes long-range harm to the environment thereby exacerbating the problems.

The  $I=PAT$  equation has also been linked to some orthodox conceptions of the role of poverty or lack of affluence in environmental degradation. Here, two of the statements reflecting directly on this equation which were made in the 1987 Bruntland Commission are cited for clarity. The first statement reads thus:

Poverty is a major cause and effect of global environmental problems. It is therefore futile to attempt to deal with environmental problems without a broader perspective that encompasses the factors underlying world poverty and international inequality.

The second statement reads thus:

Many parts of the world today are caught in a vicious downwards spiral: poor people are forced to overuse environmental resources to survive from day to day, and their impoverishment of their environment further impoverishes them, making their survival ever more difficult and uncertain.<sup>267</sup>

So far, we can observe that there is a conglomeration of issues involved in environmental degradation, but the general perception blames it all on the poor. However, an analysis of the  $I=PAT$  equation mentioned above recognizes a whole spectrum of factors as being responsible for environmental degradation and provides an insight into a dimension in which responsibility for and solutions to environmental degradation are sought using the ultimate

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<sup>266</sup> Lloyd, W. F. 1977 "On the checks to population" in G. Hardin and J. Baden (ds) *Managing the Commons*. San Francisco: Freeman

<sup>267</sup> WCED (World Commission on Environment and Development) 1987. *Our Common Future*. New York: Oxford University Press. p.27 and 59

and proximate factors as a framework in understanding the working of each of the elements in the formula.

Ultimate causes are defined as the technology responsible for a given type of pollution, such as burning fossil fuel and other related factors while Proximate causes are defined as situation-specific factors confounding the problem, such as population density or rate of growth.<sup>268</sup> A vivid example of the ultimate and proximate factors is industrial growth which leads to accelerating depletion of non-renewable resources, over exploitation of renewable resources and pollution of nature in general and the population growth which increases the pressure on the land, over grazing, erosion, deforestation, slum settlements and so on.<sup>269</sup>

While it is clear that humans are largely responsible for many problems of the planet today, it is apparent too that not all humans have the same *ecological foot print* on the environment. The poor and the rich contribute to the problem alike in different dimensions and proportions. In this perspective, *poverty* and *third world debt* has been shown to result in resource stripping and environmental degradation in an effort to survive or pay off debts.<sup>270</sup> Some environmentalists, from rich nations especially the west, also raise concerns about increasing populations of developing countries. They argue that because of the exponential rate of population growth in poor countries, heavy and excessive burdens have been placed on the world's resources which consequently have led to the current "earth crisis" of environment and poverty problems. Nurnberger illustrated this point when he says that:

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<sup>268</sup> Nurnberger, Klaus. 1999. *Prosperity, Poverty and Pollution: Managing the Approaching Crisis*. p.72

<sup>269</sup> Nurnberger, Klaus. 1999. *Prosperity, Poverty and Pollution: Managing the Approaching Crisis*. p.72

<sup>270</sup> *Poverty facts and statistics; Loss of Biodiversity; Climate change and global warming.*  
<http://www.globalissues.org/EnvIssues/Biodiversity/loss.asp> (accessed 17th august 2008)

Population growth leads to increased pressure on the land. This has ecological consequences. Over-populated areas are vulnerable to soil erosion; grazing is depleted; water resources dry up; rivers are polluted; wild animals are eradicated; forests are chopped down. Flood waters are unchecked and cause erosion. Progressively the natural basis of human survival is destroyed.<sup>271</sup>

So far, it thus appears that the poor are being held responsible for degrading and polluting the environment. However, the insight provided by the proximate and ultimate causes does not exonerate the rich from the blame. Writing on the impact of the rich on environmental pollution, Commoner argues that developed countries with low or negative population growth rates are responsible for 80% of world pollution, primarily in polluting technologies such as automobiles, power generation, plastics, pesticides, toxic wastes, and garbage, war faring, and nuclear weapons wastes.<sup>272</sup>

It is also important to recognize the effects of the consumption pattern of the world's rich nations on the environment. The consumption pattern of just the world's wealthiest country (the United States of America) is so much more than the rest of the developing world.<sup>273</sup> In reaction to the above, the Delhi-based environment organization, the *Centre for Science and Environment*, cautions that if the poor world were to develop and consume in the same pattern as the west to achieve the same living standards, "we would need two additional planet earths to produce resources and absorb wastes ... and good planets are hard to find".<sup>274</sup> A more startling figure on the world's consumption rate by the United Nations 1998 Human Development report reveals that:

Globally, the 20% of the world's people in the highest-income countries account for 86% of total private consumption expenditures. To highlight this inequality further, it considers that approximately 1 billion people suffer from hunger and some 2 to 3.5 billion people have a deficiency of vitamins and minerals yet, some 1.2 billion suffer from obesity one billion people live on less than a dollar a day, the official measure of poverty.

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<sup>271</sup> Nurnberger, Klaus. 1999. *Prosperity, Poverty and Pollution: Managing the Approaching Crisis*. p.33

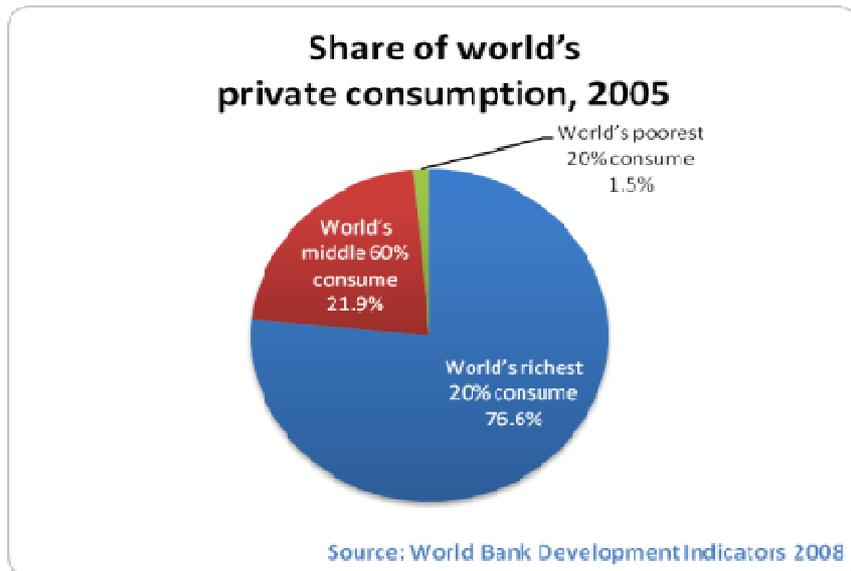
<sup>272</sup> Tim Forsyth. 2003. *Critical Political Ecology*. p.8-9

<sup>273</sup> Centre for Science and Environment: Campaign on forests <http://www.csiendia.org/html/cmp23.html> (Accessed 28th June 2007)

<sup>274</sup> Centre for Science and Environment: Campaign on forests <http://www.csiendia.org/html/cmp23.html> (Accessed 28th June 2007)

However, half the world-nearly three billion people-lives on less than two dollars a day. Yet, just a few hundred millionaires now own as much wealth as the world's poorest 2.5 billion people.<sup>275</sup>

This diagram illustrates the point we are making about consumption pattern of the world's rich nations.<sup>276</sup>



The questions that need to be asked based on the consumption pattern of the rich nations as represented by the diagram are the following:

- (a) how is it that the smaller population of the world consumes far more than the larger population of the world
- (b) why is there so much hunger, that farm workers in poor countries are usually the hungriest people in the world in spite of the fact that their land produces food resources that feed the rich nations?

<sup>275</sup> Poverty facts and statistics; Loss of Biodiversity; Climate change and global warming.  
<http://www.globalissues.org/EnvIssues/Biodiversity/loss.asp> (accessed on 17th August 2008)

<sup>276</sup> *Our Ecological Footprint*, 2000. Gobar Times, Center for Science and Environment p. 84

We have to indicate that the above questions are beyond the scope of this work and as such we are not providing detailed answers. Richard Robbins, professor of anthropology, gives a little insight to the above questions.<sup>277</sup> In order to understand why people go hungry, he argues that one must stop thinking about food as something farmers grow for others to eat, and begin to think about it as commodities companies produce for other people to buy. Food has been contextualized as commodity. In order to produce these commodities in mass, much of the best agricultural land in the world especially in developing countries is used for cultivation purposes such as cotton, tea, tobacco, sugar cane, and cocoa. Similarly, millions of acres of potentially productive farmland are used to pasture cattle-an extremely inefficient land use management system.

Some of these food commodities are grown in the poor countries whose agricultural land is degraded and destroyed as a result. In the same vein, some major agricultural products also involve production practices that affect the health and compromise the safety of workers as well as degrade the environment. For example, rainforests are often cleared to make way for grazing animals to be slaughtered for unhealthy fast food meat consumption, while prime land and the surrounding environment is often degraded when producing cash crops for the wealthier countries of the world. Vandana Shiva captures the effect of these practices when she called attention to the damaging effects of junk-food chains, including KFC and Pizza Hut which are becoming increasingly under attack from major environmental groups because of their environmental impact on both human and the ecosystems health.<sup>278</sup> Intensive breeding of livestock and poultry for such restaurants leads to deforestation, land degradation, and contamination of water sources and other natural resources. For every pound of red meat, poultry, eggs, and milk produced, farm fields lose about five pounds of irreplaceable top soil.<sup>279</sup> These environmentally unfriendly agricultural practices aimed at providing food resources to the rich nations, not only degrade and pollute the environment but also pauperize developing nations even the more.

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<sup>277</sup> Richard H. Robbins, *Readings on Poverty, Hunger, and Economic Development*

<sup>278</sup> Vandana Shiva, 2000. *Stolen Harvest*, South End Press. p. 70-71

<sup>279</sup> Vandana Shiva, 2000. *Stolen Harvest*. p. 70-71

### 2.9.2. Doing Violence to the Environment through Wars

Another critical area where the richer countries contribute to environmental degradation is what has been termed “doing violence to the environment”.<sup>280</sup> The environment is a particularly vulnerable victim of the violence perpetrated through the advancement of the global economic system. The unbridled quest exhibited in the efforts to advance global economic systems most often accelerate the perpetration of violence that forms the basis of social relationships.<sup>281</sup> It has been argued that in order to achieve proper environmental management and to stop exploitation of both weaker countries and their environment, there ought to be an “environmental change of attitude” especially from the richer nations.<sup>282</sup> This change is what Goulet proposes, namely. “austerity or simplicity in using resources and in bridling aspiration to possess goods”.<sup>283</sup>

In this regard, Sale and Schumacher had advocated for what they called “voluntary simplicity” in which they were urging richer countries to change their life styles, to reduce consumption pattern, to move away from a consumer to a conserver economy.<sup>284</sup> They pointed out a number of reasons why a simplification of life in the first world in particular, is important. First, the fact that we are running out of crucial non-renewable resources is enough reason to consider the issue of simplicity of life as a viable option on the part of those who are in most cases guilty of the exploitation of the earth resources. Secondly, the effects of wars on the environment are enormous and devastating. This is particularly clear in many regions of Africa and other third world countries where their economies have suffered great decline as a result of protracted wars - wars that were mainly sponsored by the richer countries in order to protect one form of interest or the other. In highly industrialized countries, war has become too dangerous to be a political option, but in poor countries arms

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<sup>280</sup> Jacklyn, Cock. 1991. *Going Green: People, Politics and the Environment in South Africa*. Oxford University Press. p.1

<sup>281</sup> Hallman, David. G. 2000. *Spiritual Values for Earth Community*. Geneva: World Council of Churches. p.30

<sup>282</sup> Jacklyn, Cock. 1991. *Going Green: People, Politics and the Environment in South Africa*. p.1

<sup>283</sup> Goulet, Denis. 1989. *The Uncertain Promise: Value Conflict in Technology Transfer*. New York: New Horizons Press. p. 225-260

<sup>284</sup> Jacklyn, Cock. 1991. *Going Green: People, Politics and the Environment in South Africa*. p.7

are extensively used to settle disputes, whether in the form of international tensions, civil wars, revolutionary violence, or social unrest. Most of the dangerous weapons of war capable of destroying both humans and their environment are manufactured by the rich nations and sold to the poorer countries in exchange of their natural resources. The result is that further resources are wasted, further environmental destruction takes place, less food is produced, and more people are condemned to poverty.<sup>285</sup>

The human and ecological causalities of conflicts and wars in the affected areas are incalculable. When a country is at war, whether civil or otherwise, basic services such as education and medical services are disrupted. Wars and conflicts have diverted energies and resources away from human improvements.<sup>286</sup> The impact of the mass exodus of people who seek refuge in other countries as a result of war is often not taken into account. According to UNCHR, statistics show that the number of refugees in Africa is about 4.3 million, one third of the world's total. Asia has 4.8 million while Europe has 3.1 million.<sup>287</sup> The effects of the influx of refugees on the environment are very telling. There is the issue of resource depletion, the issue of social unrest and conflicts between the refugees and the host countries.

The threat of arms trade lies not only in the awesome destructive capacity of these weapons of war in terms of environmental destruction, resource stripping, economic stagnation (which occurs because their ailing economies are channeled into acquisition of sophisticated weapon systems rather than to goods which could be utilized for human consumption),<sup>288</sup> but the biosphere again suffers from these conflicts. The following examples illustrate the point we are making here:

The Americans destroyed large areas of forest in Vietnam during the war. The Iraqis incinerated the oil wells in Kuwait when they withdrew. Large regions of the Third World,

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<sup>285</sup> Nurnberger, Klaus. 1999. *Prosperity, Poverty and Pollution*: p.89

<sup>286</sup> Ibe, Martin. Joe. 2003. *Environmental Ethics and Politics in Developing Countries. Case Study from Nigeria*. Germany: Schoning. p.241

<sup>287</sup> UNCHR 1997 p. 98 quoted in K. Jacobson. 1994. *The Impact of Refugees on the Environment: A Review of the Evidence*, Refugee Policy Group: Washington, D.C. p. 77

<sup>288</sup> Nurnberger, Klaus. 1999. *Prosperity, Poverty and Pollution*. p. 89

for instance in Mozambique, Afghanistan, Iraq, Somalia and Cambodia, have become no-go areas because land mines kill and maim people decades after the respective wars have ended.<sup>289</sup>

All these effects of the arms trade on both human development and the environment make war morally reprehensible. In consideration of the above, environmentalists, politicians and economists should begin to calculate the human and environmental costs of these practices and initiate moves that will reverse or halt the trend by articulating policies that will ensure proper environmental conservation and management.

### **2.9.3. The Impacts of Hazardous Waste Trading on the Environment of the Poor and Developing Countries**

From the foregoing, therefore, it is apparent that rich countries have no moral justification to accuse the poor countries of solely contributing heavily to environmental degradation simply because of their perceived exponential population growth. The poor alone cannot be blamed for environmental damage, for it is the rich nations who play a huge role in the environmental degradation of poor countries.<sup>290</sup> In support of this argument, Indian activist and scientist, Vandana Shiva, shows in her work that many people have been forced into poverty due to pressure from foreign industries and multinational corporations to exploit and pollute the environment in ways that destroy biodiversity and affect local populations.<sup>291</sup> Evidence suggests that since the 1970s, rich countries have been migrating their polluting industries and hazardous wastes to the environment of poor developing countries, including Africa.<sup>292</sup> To further buttress this point, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development once estimated that “in 1984 ... on the average, a consignment of hazardous wastes crossed

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<sup>289</sup> World Commission on Environment and Development.1990. *Our Common Future: The Bruntland Commission Report*. Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press. p.7

<sup>290</sup> Hossay, Patrick. 2006. *Unsustainable. A Primer for Global Environmental and Social Justice*. New York: Zed Books. P. 2-3

<sup>291</sup> Vandana Shiva. 2000. *Stolen Harvest*. p. 70-71

<sup>292</sup> O'Neill, Kate. 2000. *Waste Trading among Rich Nations. Building a New Theory of Environmental Regulation*. London: The MIT Press. p1

an OECD frontier every five minutes, twenty four hours per day, three hundred and sixty five days, per year".<sup>293</sup>

Similarly, Greenpeace says that it has documented over 1,000 attempts to export waste all over the globe. These wastes range from sewage sludge to medical waste, radioactive waste to industrial incinerator waste.<sup>294</sup> This obnoxious trade is most commonly associated with shocking cases of waste dumping by firms from United States of America and Western European nations to poorer countries in Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean.<sup>295</sup> The export of dirty and hazardous waste products from North to South arises chiefly because Northern countries want to dump the waste of some of their products in other countries, rather than handling them at home. They also need certain products that can only be produced by polluting the environment, and would prefer such activity not to take place in their own countries.<sup>296</sup>

According to Patrick Hossay, these multinational corporations are able to get away with the obnoxious practice of moving their polluting industries and hazardous wastes to the third world countries which impoverish their environments by their ability to exploit and circumvent their weaker environmental regulations and less effective enforcement.<sup>297</sup> This point is corroborated by Durwood and others.<sup>298</sup> This hazardous waste trade being initiated and encouraged by the rich nations is done deliberately because the case is not the same in their home countries where they have to adhere to strict nationally applied regulatory standards. This standard is usually based on the precautionary principle, which mandates action in the face of risk to the environment. Because of the application of the precautionary principle in their home countries, Africa and other developing countries are seen by First World companies as safe haven for this illegal business.

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<sup>293</sup> Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development. *Monitoring and Control of Transfrontier Movements of Hazardous Wastes*. OECD Environmental Monographs.vol.34. Paris: OECD, 1993b. p.9

<sup>294</sup> Chetley, A. 1990. *A Healthy Business?* London: Zed Books. p.73

<sup>295</sup> O'Neill, Kate. 2000. *Waste Trading among Rich Nations*. p.1

<sup>296</sup> Chetley, A. 1990. *A Healthy Business?* London: Zed Books. p.73

<sup>297</sup> Hossay, Patrick. 2006. *Unsustainable*. P.33

<sup>298</sup> Durwood, Zaelke, Paul, Orbuch and Robert. Housman. 1993. (eds) *Trade and the Environment. Law, Economics and Policy*. Washington, D.C: Island Press. P.10

Hossay's reference to circumventing environmental regulations in poorer countries by the rich nations is made clearer when we cite the case of the Niger Delta region of Nigeria as an appropriate example. The Niger Delta area is the oil rich region where the oil that made Nigeria rich is taken from. Unfortunately this region had suffered unspeakable environmental injustice from the multinational oil corporations whose activities through oil exploration are polluting and exploiting both the people and their environment. The heavy environmental pollution and the guerrilla warfare that is currently going on in the Niger Delta region has some security implications on both the side of the oil companies and the inhabitants of the region. In addition to the security threat to both sides, the environment once again is dealt another blow by the destruction done to it. The Niger Delta problem persists partly because these multinational oil companies are able to circumvent the weak environmental legislation in Nigeria which is lower than environmental laws in their home countries.

International trade in toxic waste provides a further illuminating illustration of the way in which rich nations are polluting the environment of poor countries. To substantiate this claim, we quote from the work of Martin Ibe who argues that:

Industrial countries are responsible for more than 90% of the 360 million metric tons of hazardous waste produced globally each year: inherently unsustainable industrial practices in the richer countries are directly responsible for almost all the world's incinerator ash, dioxin, and PCBs. It is almost impossible to keep a track of what happens to those wastes, but experts believe that at least 30 million metric tons a year cross national borders, with a high percentage going to poorer countries.<sup>299</sup>

In this illegal waste trade, many African countries were willing to accept the toxic shipments because they were accompanied by attractive offers of the much needed foreign exchange. For example, two British firms offered US\$120 million per year to Guinea Bissau in order for them to bury industrial waste material in Guinea.<sup>300</sup> This offer was quite "juicy" because this is equivalent to the annual GNP of the country. Similarly, the president of Benin gave a detailed explanation at the Lome negotiations of the dumping of toxic wastes in his country despite the heavy disapproval of Benin's neighboring states, Nigeria and Togo.<sup>301</sup> Another

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<sup>299</sup> Ibe, Martin. Joe. 2003. *Environmental Ethics and Politics in Developing Countries. Case study front Nigeria.* Germany: Schoning. p.57

<sup>300</sup> Ibe, Martin. Joe. 2003. *Environmental Ethics and Politics in Developing Countries .p.57*

<sup>301</sup> <http://www.american.edu/projects/mandala/ted/nigeria.htm>

example of the exportation of toxics from the rich countries into the poor countries was the *koko* incident. In 1987, an Italian businessman Gianfranco Reffaelli signed an illegal agreement with Nigerian businessman Sunday Nana to use his property for the storage of 18,000 drums of hazardous waste for approximately one hundred US dollar a month.<sup>302</sup> When the leaky substance burst open in the sun, they turned out to be filled with industrial wastes containing asbestos fibers and high levels of PCBs, and many of the people in the community ended up with health problems and a contaminated water supply.<sup>303</sup>

The *koko* incident in Nigeria is one out of the many cases in Africa and other poorer countries where such waste trade is being carried out. Without doubt, hazardous waste poses a threat to human health as was the case in the *koko* incident. Hazardous waste affects human health through leakage of toxins into the ground water, the soil, or the atmosphere and ecosystems may be damaged or even destroyed. A recent study using data from Belgium and Denmark, found that women who live within three kilometers of hazardous waste landfill sites have a 33% risk of having babies with nonchromosomal birth defects than those living farther away.<sup>304</sup> Improper handling and disposal of hazardous waste impose additional burdens on the environment and their effects may be immediate, or long term as wastes decomposes or leaches into the surrounding environment.<sup>305</sup>

Answering the questions on why this trade thrives, Margareta posits that the combination of rapid population growth, unemployment and poverty which characterize contemporary African development could be given as reasons why the above practice has continued.<sup>306</sup> We could argue that putting much emphasis on population growth of poor countries as the single contributory factor to environmental degradation is perhaps over-simplifying the issue. Our argument is that there is more to that flimsy reason. This is because while African countries

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<sup>302</sup> <http://www.american.edu/projects/mandala/ted/nigeria.htm>.

<sup>303</sup> Ibe, Martin. Joe. 2003. *Environmental Ethics and Politics in Developing Countries*. p.57

<sup>304</sup> O'Neill, Kate. 2000. *Waste Trading Among Rich Nations*. p.31

<sup>305</sup> Batstone, Roger, James E. Smith, jr, and David Wilson. 1989. (eds) *The Safe Disposal of Hazardous Wastes: The Special Needs and Problems of Developing Countries*. vol.3. Washington, D. C: World Bank. p.3

<sup>306</sup> Margareta Von Troil. 1993. (ed). *Changing Paradigms in Development-South, East and West*. Nordiska Afrikainstitutet, Uppsala-The Scandinavian Institute of African Studies. p.163

have made efforts to ban the importation of toxic waste into their countries, the Western countries who are producing these wastes have taken only little steps to ban their exports.<sup>307</sup>

#### **2.9.4. The Global Capitalist Economy of Richer Nations and its Impacts on the Environment of Poor Countries**

In the system of contemporary international relations, economic power is a highly complex phenomenon. D. Holzman, an economist, recognizes two fundamental issues which stand out clearly in this trade. The first is the classical monopolistic market power by which the seller (or the buyer) has sufficient control over the supply or demand to be able to influence the conditions of transaction. The second issue relates to the fact that certain governments are in a position to control the flow of an immense volume of resources.<sup>308</sup> In recent times, it is being realized that knowledge on most issues in the area of trade, economic power and environment is still quite limited because of the complex links between trade growth and the environment.<sup>309</sup> There is no doubt that trade and increased economic activity can be beneficial or detrimental to the environment depending on the structures and policies put in

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<sup>307</sup> Maeley, John. 1996. *Trade and the Poor. The Impact of International Trade on Developing Countries*. London: Immediate Technology Publications.p.115. At the Bamako convention in 1990, African heads of states reached an agreement to ban the importation of wastes from the rich countries. But there are reasons to suspect that the West have allies in the World's largest multilateral aid agency who encourages the trade. Our suspicion is linked to an internal World Bank memo which leaked to a British weekly magazine in February 1992. The content of the memo reveals the writings of Lawrence Summers, chief economist and vice president of the bank justifying the reason why the rich countries should pollute the environment of the poor countries. Summers asserts "just between me and you, shouldn't the World Bank be encouraging more migration of the dirty industries to the LDCs..."

<sup>308</sup> Simai, Mihaly. 1990. *Global Power Structure, Technology and World Economy in the Late twenty Century*. London: Pinter Publishers p.77-79. International trade has been going on for thousands of years. There are some references of this even in biblical times. In the Old Testament times, for example, it seems that Israel served as a bridge between Africa and Asia; caravans frequently passed between the two continents.<sup>308</sup> Solomon, the king of Israel, entered into international trade agreements and controlled some trade routes through Palestine and collected tolls from the caravans. See Maeley, John. 1996. *Trade and the Poor. The Impact of International Trade on Developing Countries*. London: Immediate Technology Publications. p.3

<sup>309</sup> Fredriksson, Per.G. 1999. *Trade, Global Policy, and the Environment: The World Bank*. Washington, D.C. p.11

place to safeguard the environment. Environmental protection is essential to economic growth, but if the process of achieving economic growth is based on the current structures of unsustainable production and consumption patterns, international trade and 'brandishing' of economic power can in itself lead to the acceleration of environmental destruction.

The relationship between the rich and poor nations and their respective impacts on the environment go much deeper than some people can imagine as we have seen from the discussions so far. Economics is meant to be about efficient allocation of resources to meet people's needs.<sup>310</sup> In this regard, economic development ideally should be based on the concept of sustainable development with emphasis on people, resources and future generations. Unfortunately, international power politics and ideologies have continued to influence policies in such a way that economic and political decision-making remains hugely concentrated in the hands of a few narrow interest groups-the rich nations to the detriment of the poor and developing ones.<sup>311</sup> According to Payne, the essential elements of hegemonic power, as they relate to the world economy, were comprised of control over raw materials, markets and capital as well as competitive advantages in the production of highly valued goods involving the use of complex or new technology.<sup>312</sup> The result of this hegemony is that the world's resources are disproportionately used to meet a few people's wants, not everyone's needs.

Unequal trade relationships at international levels, coupled with excessive third world debt burden has meant that it has been extremely difficult for the poorer countries to prioritize issues of sustainable development. Unfair debt imposed on the third world countries for

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<sup>310</sup> Meeks, M. Douglas. *The Economy of Grace and the Market Logic*. [www.e-alliance .ch/media/media5302.pdf](http://www.e-alliance.ch/media/media5302.pdf) (Accessed on January 2007)

<sup>311</sup> Ulrich, Duchrow. 1998. *Alternatives to Global Capitalism*. Utrecht: International Books. p.17

<sup>312</sup> Anthony, Payne. 2005. *The Global Politics of Unequal Development*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan. p.22  
See Maeley, John. 1996. *Trade and the Poor. The Impact of International Trade on Developing Countries*. London: Immediate Technology Publications. p.13 The unequal trade relations between the developed and third World countries appear to have widened inequalities between the two. An assessment given by Swedish economist, Gunnar Myrdal, many years ago has proved this to be true. Gunnar asserts that "international trade generally tends to breed inequality and will do so more strongly when substantial inequalities are already established".

decades by the global financial institutions, the international monetary fund (IMF) and World Bank through their harsh structural adjustment programmes (SAPS) have opened up economies rapidly, in socially, politically, environmentally and economically destructive ways, while requiring a prioritization on debt repayment and cut backs on health, education and other critical services.<sup>313</sup> The conditions from these institutions have encouraged concentration on producing just a few cash crops and other commodities primarily for export, using very environmentally damaging “industrial agriculture”, which reduces biodiversity, requiring costly inputs such as environmentally damaging pesticides and fertilizers to make up for the loss of free services.<sup>314</sup>

In 1991, the then chief economist for the World Bank, Larry Summers, (and later US. treasury secretary, under the Clinton administration), who had been a strong backer of the disastrous SAPS, wrote a leaked internal memo, revealing the extent to which international policies have an impact on nations around the world when it comes to environmental and other considerations.<sup>315</sup> International trade can have an impact on a country’s physical environment which damages the base of development. According to the Brundtland Report published in 1987 under the title *Our Common Future*, stresses the link between international trade and the environment. The main link between international trade and sustainable development, it says, “is the use of non-renewable raw materials to earn foreign exchange”.<sup>316</sup>

Developing countries face the dilemma of having to use commodities as exports (for growth) while also having to minimize damage to the environmental resource base supporting this growth.<sup>317</sup> To elucidate on this point for example, the export of timber by developing

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<sup>313</sup> Nurnberger, Klaus. 1999. *Prosperity, Poverty and Pollution*. p.127-128

<sup>314</sup> Summers, Lawrence. “Let them Eat Pollution” *The Economist*, February 8, 1992. Quoted from Vandana Shiva, 2000. *Stolen Harvest*. South End Press, p.65; See also Richard Robbins, 1999. *Global Problems and the Culture of Capitalism* . Allyn and Bacon. p. 233-236 for details.

<sup>315</sup> Summers, Lawrence. *Let them Eat pollution*. p.66

<sup>316</sup> Walden, Bello. 1992. *Adverse Impact of Export-Orientated Industrialization on Third World Environment and Economy*. Penang Malaysia: Third World Features Network.

<sup>317</sup> Walden, Bello. 1992. *Adverse Impact of Export-Orientated Industrialization on Third World Environment and Economy*

countries to earn foreign exchange causes damage to the forests and also has wider environmental implications apart from deforestation. This unfair trade relation according to Vandana Shiva, has also destroyed diverse sources of food, and has “stolen food” from other species to bring larger quantities of specific commodities to the international market, using huge quantities of fossil fuels and water and toxic chemicals in the process.<sup>318</sup> Since the ecosystem enjoys a symbiotic relationship, cattle, earthworms and other species are our esteemed partners in food production, stealing food from them therefore, makes it difficult to maintain food production over time because of the potential threat to the ecosystems health.

Furthermore, in order to overcome mass poverty and achieve environmental sustainability in the poor countries, Nurnberger, argues that power relations in the global economy must be balanced out.<sup>319</sup> This proposal has become extremely imperative since the current trade relation disfavours the poor countries. There is much concentration of bargaining power in the hands of the rich nations either on the supply side or on demand side where the price and quality of commodities, labour, raw materials and so on are dictated by them. He decried a situation:

where products can be withheld to create market shortages and thus attain higher prices; credit facilities can be granted or withheld; only a certain type of product can be marketed; products can be deliberately designed to have a short life span (planned obsolescence); new needs and wants can be created through aggressive advertising and salesmanship; secret agreements can be made between suppliers. All these practices presuppose financial power, sophistication, organisation, political influence and so on, which are concentrated in the centre ( rich nations) rather than in the periphery ( poor countries). As a result, the periphery is the loser in the game.<sup>320</sup>

The above insight on the current global capitalist system and its impact on the poor countries and their environment is a cause for concern. This is because the perception of wealth creation at the expense of more fundamental concerns of humanity within the context of the comprehensive wellbeing of their entire social and natural environments does not promote sustainable development.<sup>321</sup> Schumacher’s ecological philosophy-“we must live simply that

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<sup>318</sup> Vandana, Shiva. 2000. *Stolen Harvest*. p. 12-13

<sup>319</sup> Nurnberger, Klaus. 1999. *Prosperity, Poverty and Pollution*. p.133

<sup>320</sup> Nurnberger, Klaus. 1999. *Prosperity, Poverty and Pollution*. p.131

<sup>321</sup> Nurnberger, Klaus. 1999. *Prosperity, Poverty and Pollution*. p.177

others may simply live”<sup>322</sup> has to be given a serious thought as the Western economic hegemony appears unstoppable. The West seem to have forgotten that not capital but nature is the most indispensable, the most precious and most vulnerable endowment entrusted to humankind; therefore it needs to be preserved so that coming generations will have to live in this fragile earth as much as we do.

## **2.10. Conclusion**

In this chapter we have been dealing with the relationship between poverty and the environment. The chapter began with a general introduction to the global environmental problems by problematising the environment and poverty nexus. It explored ways in which poverty and environment are variously configured at global and African contexts. Key driving factors to global and African environmental criticality were also discussed including the impact of human activities (of both the rich and the poor) on the environment. We noted that these impacts have some political and economic implications given the nature and role of international politics as a predisposing factor which defines the nature of the political economies of both rich and poor nations, as well as the nature of international trade relations existing between the rich and poor countries.

The chapter also discusses the dimensions of the current global capitalist economy and its impact on the environment of the poor countries as well as the economy of the poor countries. From this discussion, we conclude that the issues of environmental degradation and environmental sustainability in poorer countries require the cooperation and assistance of the rich nations since they also contribute to the problem and given the reasons that the poor countries alone cannot deal with the problems. From the discussions we observed that the destruction of the environment and the degradation of human life especially in poor countries are the ugly side effects of the policy choices of the current global economic system which defines the rules of the global game but in a way exacerbates environmental sustainability and proportionally disfavours the capacity of the poor countries to make economic growth.

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<sup>322</sup> Jacklyn, Cock and Koch, Eddie. 1991 (eds) *Going Green. People, Politics and the Environment in South Africa*. New York: Oxford University Press. p.8

The point that is made throughout is that we are facing a “double earth crisis”, and any theological response to poverty *or* the environment has to become a theological response to both poverty *and* the environment. Having made the above observations, let us now turn to the next chapter to see how the relationship between the environment and poverty is being played out in Nigeria in general and Anambra state in particular.

## CHAPTER THREE

### 3.0. Poverty and Environment in Anambra State

In the previous chapter, we dealt with the relationship between poverty and environment, the configuration of poverty in different contexts, the scale of poverty in both global and African contexts as well as the role of international politics and international trade relations in defining the economy of countries especially the poor countries. In this chapter, our objective is through literature study to understand the state of the environment and poverty in Nigeria in general and Anambra state in particular and investigate the interface of environment and poverty.

In order to achieve this objective, we first seek to understand the prevailing factors facilitating the “double earth crisis” of poverty and environment from the Nigerian context in general. In doing this we, examine how the poor specifically contribute to environmental degradation. We also explore the federal government’s approach to environmental challenges and the institutional and policy framework put in place to safeguard the environment. Then the context of poverty and environment in Anambra State is dealt with. This analysis is done by providing a historical overview of Anambra state as well as the environmental challenges in the state. Although causes of environmental problems seem to be general in outlook, yet there are some problems which are particular to the state. Finally we provide a summary which concludes the key issues discussed in the chapter.

### 3.1. Situating the Context of Environment and Poverty in Nigeria

Nigeria, the most populous country in Africa and the tenth largest country by population in the world, is located at the eastern edge of the bulge of West Africa.<sup>323</sup> As with many of the other nations of Africa, Nigeria's national boundaries result from its colonial history and cut across a number of cultural and physical boundaries. The distance from the extreme parts of the country-from East to West is about 1,120 kilometres while that from North to South

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<sup>323</sup> Microsoft Encarta Dictionary. 2006. *Nigeria: Country profile*. Redmond WA Microsoft Cooperation

ranges to about 1,040 kilometres.<sup>324</sup> The entire circumference of the country covers 923, 768 square meters.<sup>325</sup>

The country has boundaries in the North with Niger Republic, in the South with Cameroon, in the East with Chad and in the West with Dahomey and Benin Republic. The Northern end of Nigeria's boundaries touches on the Southern limits of the Sahara Desert while the sandy Atlantic coast, stretching for about 800 kilometres binds the Southern end of the country.<sup>326</sup> In the middle of the Southern part of Nigeria is found the confluence of the River Niger, the most important river in the country (about 4,169 kilometres long) and River Benue, measuring about 790 kilometres. While the Northern part of Nigeria is overwhelmingly a region of sandy savannah, the South is a region of thick rain forest and mangrove vegetation.<sup>327</sup> The middle of the country is made up of tropical forests, which, moving northwards, gradually give way to hilly areas and then to the plateau of the middle belt areas with elevations ranging approximately up to 1,800 meters.<sup>328</sup>

The map of Nigeria in the next page shows all the important cities and the countries that have common boundaries with it.

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<sup>324</sup> Nwafor, J. Chidi. 2002. *Church and State: The Nigerian Experience. The relationship between the church and the state in Nigeria in the areas of Human Rights, Education, Religious Freedom and Religious Tolerance.* Frankfurt: IKO-Velag fur Interkulturelle Kommunikation. p.20

<sup>325</sup> Nwafor, J. Chidi. 2002. *Church and State: The Nigerian Experience. The relationship between the church and the state in Nigeria in the areas of Human Rights, Education, Religious Freedom and Religious Tolerance.* p.21

<sup>326</sup> Nwafor, J. Chidi. 2002. *Church and State: The Nigerian Experience.* p.21

<sup>327</sup> Nwafor, J. Chidi. 2002. *Church and State: The Nigerian Experience.* p.21

<sup>328</sup> Chukwuma, M. 1985. *Nigerian Politics and the Role of Religion.* (Dissertation) Rheinische Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universitat Bonn. P. 37



Source: Microsoft Encarta Encyclopaedia.2005.Microsoft Corporation

Generally, Nigeria has two major climatic seasons in the year, namely the rainy season and the dry season. The rainy season lasts from April to October while the dry season lasts from November to March every year. The rainfall ranges between 500 mm in the far North to 3000 mm in the extreme South. The current change in climatic conditions as a result of global warming, have already been felt, and climatic conditions no longer remain the way they used to be in the past.

### 3.1.2. Population

Nigeria is the most populous country in Africa but exactly how populous it is, is a subject of speculation. Demographic data about Nigeria is always vague. There has been no reliable census in Nigeria. As a result, there have been controversies and even violence over the exact population figure of Nigeria.<sup>329</sup> According to Miles William, the inability to get an accurate figure of the country has been blamed on political manoeuvres by different interest groups.<sup>330</sup> This manoeuvring attitude is precisely the result of the scramble for distribution of political power and the allocation of government revenues among the various regions of the country. The result of this maneuvering is that national census results in the past few decades have been disputed. The United Nations estimates that the population in 2004 was at 131,530,000,<sup>331</sup> with the population distributed as 48.3% urban and 51.7% rural and population density at 139 people per square km. The result of the most recent census by the Government of Nigeria was released on 29 December, 2006. The census gave a population of 140.003.542.<sup>332</sup>

According to the United Nations, Nigeria has been undergoing explosive population growth and it is regarded as having one of the highest growth and fertility rates in the world. By the United Nations projections, Nigeria will be one of the countries in the world that will account for most of the world's total population increase by 2050.<sup>333</sup> Just to illustrate how populous Nigeria is, Sanford Ungar suggests that one out of every six Africans is a Nigerian.<sup>334</sup>

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<sup>329</sup> Ungar, Sanford, J. 1998. *The People and Politics of an Emerging Continent*. New York: Simon and Schuster, INC.p.122

<sup>330</sup> Miles, William,F.S. 1994. *Hausaland Divided. Colonialism and Independence in Nigeria and Niger*. London: Cornell University Press.p.21

<sup>331</sup> Kishlansky, Mark. 2006. Microsoft Student 2007. Redmond WA Microsoft Corporation

<sup>332</sup> Microsoft Student 2007. Redmond WA Microsoft Corporation

<sup>333</sup> <http://www.UN.org/news/press/docs/2005> (accessed on 26 September 2007)

<sup>334</sup> Ungar, Sanford, J. 1998. *The People and Politics of an Emerging Continent*. New York: Simon and Schuster, INC.p.122 See also, Thurstan, Shaw. 1978. *Nigeria: Its Archaeology and Early History*. London: Thames and Hudson. p.68

### 3.1.3. Languages of Nigeria

The number of separate tribal units in Nigeria is currently estimated at 250 groups. Research has also revealed that 395 different languages are spoken in Nigeria.<sup>335</sup> The official language of Nigeria, English, was chosen to facilitate the cultural and linguistic unity of the country. The choice of English as the official language was partially related to the fact that a part of Nigerian population spoke English as a result of British colonization that ended in 1960.<sup>336</sup> The major languages spoken in Nigeria represent three major families of African languages—the majorities are Niger-Congo languages, such as Yoruba, Ibo. The Hausa language is Afro-Asiatic; and Kanuri, spoken in the northeast, primarily Borno State, is a member of the Nilo-Saharan family. Although some of the ethnic groups are said to be closely culturally related, a vast majority of them exhibit, not only linguistic difference but have also been influenced by their ecological, social and cultural milieu to embrace ways of life different from those of other tribes. These languages are grammatically, structurally and phonetically different from one another.<sup>337</sup>

Even though most ethnic groups prefer to communicate in their own languages, English, being the official language, is widely used for education, business transactions and for official purposes. English as a first language, however, remains an exclusive preserve of a small minority of the country's urban elite, and is sometimes adulterated with local languages in some rural areas. With the majority of Nigeria's populace in the rural areas, the major languages of communication in the country remain indigenous languages. Nigerian Pidgin English, often known simply as “Pidgin” or “Broken” English, is also a popular lingua franca, though with varying regional influences on dialect and slang. The Pidgin English or Nigerian English is widely spoken throughout the country and even in the neighboring countries.

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<sup>335</sup> Ungar, Sanford, J. 1998. *The People and Politics of an Emerging Continent*. New York: Simon and Schuster, INC.p.123

<sup>336</sup> Coleman J.S. 1958. *Nigeria-Background to Nationalism*. Los Angeles: University of California Press. p.15

<sup>337</sup> Nwafor, J. Chidi. 2002. *Church and State: The Nigerian Experience*. p.23

### 3.1.4. Economic Overview

Nigeria, most frequently referred to, as the “giant of Africa” is without doubt, a country of immense natural and human resources.<sup>338</sup> In spite of the abundant natural and human resources, ethnic, religious, regional and social conflicts still pose tremendous problems for the country. In this regard, its economic and developmental state has been described as “an economic mixture of boom and backwardness considering the fact that it had achieved rapid economic growth, yet it had very little economic development”.<sup>339</sup> These conflicts have impacted negatively on the Nigerian economy. The late chief Obafemi Awolowo who dominated the Western political landscape of Nigerian politics for more than three decades, identified ethnic and religious dichotomies as some of the factors impinging the growth of Nigerian economy when he stated that “one of the fundamental problems facing Nigeria was that of being a mere geographical expression, than rather a nation. The word Nigerian is merely a distinctive appellation to distinguish those who live within the boundaries of Nigeria and those do not”.<sup>340</sup> Sharing similar sentiment, a prominent Northern Nigerian, late Abubakar Tafawa Belawa, who was the first prime minister of Nigeria, said that

since 1914 the British government has been trying to make Nigeria into one country, but the Nigerian people themselves are historically different in their backgrounds, in their religious beliefs and customs and do not show themselves any sign of willingness to unite. Nigerian unity is only a British invention.<sup>341</sup>

The implication of the above is that many Nigerians exhibit some unpatriotic traits towards the economy of the country. As a result, economic corrupt practices and sabotage became uncontrollably rampant. To show the extent of this economic sabotage, we cite here a comment by General Theophilus Danjuma, one time chief of the armed forces of the federal republic of Nigeria and later the head of a shipping company. “You can smuggle a train into

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<sup>338</sup> Femi, Ojo-Ade. 2001. *Death of a Myth: Critical Essays on Nigeria*. Trenton: African World Press, (Back cover page) Hyden, Goran. 2005. *African Politics in Comparative Perspective*. Cambridge University Press. Cambridge

<sup>339</sup> Guy, Arnold. 1977. *Modern Nigeria*. London: Longman. P.78

<sup>340</sup> Joseph, R. A. 1987. *Democracy and Prebendalism in Nigeria*. Cambridge: CUP. p.184

<sup>341</sup> Meredith, martin. 2005. *The State of Africa. A History of Fifty Years of Independence*. London: Free Press. p. 8

Nigeria today if you are ready to pay the right bribe to customs".<sup>342</sup> What we can deduce from Danjuma's statement is that the employees of the Department of Customs and Excise actually promote smuggling, an act of economic sabotage. This type of corrupt practice is not limited to the Department of Customs. There are other incidences of blatant corruption inside and outside the government and these have actually exacerbated the economic situation of the country.

Nigeria has many natural endowments and it is rich in agricultural products and solid mineral deposits. The most important of these mineral deposits are petroleum oil, limestone, coal, tin, columbite, gold and silver, lead-zinc, gypsun, glass sands, clay, asbestors, iron ore, stone and zircon.<sup>343</sup> Agriculture plays a key role in its economic development and revenue generation. Indeed, in the pre-independent period, and soon after independence, agriculture contributed 80% of its GDP to the economic growth of the country. Nigeria is one of the greatest producers of cocoa. Other important products include rubber, groundnuts, cotton, and soybeans. Over the greater part of the rain forest belt in Nigeria, yam and cassava are the main food crops. Other food crops of varying significance are plantain, maize, cocoyam, rice, fruits and vegetables. The savannah zone of the country provides excellent grassland for cattle rearing and the bulk of the country's cattle and sheep come from the area.<sup>344</sup> The majority of Nigerian farmers are subsistence farmers, who still use traditional farm implements. In less crowded areas, crops are typically planted in rotation, so that soil lies fallow and recharged. In the more crowded areas, farmland is under constant cultivation. This leads to low out-put and environmental exploitation and degradation. This will be discussed later.

The largely subsistence agricultural sector has failed to keep up with rapid population growth. The result is that Nigeria, Africa's most populous country and the country that was once a large net exporter of food, now must import food for her teeming population. Overpopulation

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<sup>342</sup> Ungar, Sanford, J. 1998. *The People and Politics of an Emerging Continent*. New York: Simon and Schuster, INC.p.138

<sup>343</sup> <http://www.nopa.net/usefulinformation/clinton/tick.html>.

<sup>344</sup> Federal ministry of information (Nigeria: Nigeria Hand book, 1973) p.1

has been recognized as one of the major causes of environmental degradation especially in Nigeria.<sup>345</sup>

The discovery of “the black gold”, oil, has over-shadowed all other resources and greater attention is paid to it than any other sector of the economy.<sup>346</sup> The oil boom of the 1970s brought with it mixed blessings. The government of the day failed to make positive use of the oil boom by consolidating infrastructural development and social services. This lack of vision for sustainable development led to a high inflation rate, which further impoverished the poor rural populace. It would not be an overstatement to suggest that government’s inability to strategically manage the oil boom contributed to the present level of underdevelopment and economic quagmire. This is because agriculture, which contributed more than 75% of export earnings before the so called “oil boom” became less productive because of neglect as undue attention was and is still being paid to oil.<sup>347</sup> The point we are emphasising here is that the government failed to articulate a proper economic planning and management policy that would have diversified the nation’s economic sector instead of concentrating so much on the oil sector. In this regard, Anthony Ikein, asserts:

Although oil has brought significant expansion to Nigeria’s economy, there has been no structural development; a situation which successive military administrations in Nigeria have worsened due to their inconsistency, languid enforcement, and implementation of oil policy. Today, the truth is that the oil industry is confronted with a crisis arising from the actions and inactions of the oil multinational corporations, with severe implications for Nigerian state security and that of the inhabitants of the embattled oil-rich region.<sup>348</sup>

Anthony Ikein’s assertion was made almost a decade ago but the recent decline in oil price in the global market makes it relevant to the contemporary situation of the oil sector in Nigeria.

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<sup>345</sup> <http://www.odci.gov/cia/publications/factbook/goes/ni.html>

<sup>346</sup> <http://www.nopa.net/usefulinformation/clinton/tick.html>

However, these mineral resources have been overshadowed by ‘the black gold’-oil. Nigeria actually is one of the major producers of crude oil ranking 5<sup>th</sup> among the OPEC countries .Oil indeed altered dramatically the economic configuration of the country. Although it still represents the biggest source of foreign earnings; the need to diversify the reproductive base of the economy has engendered a host of policy measures to activate the economic potentials of non-oil sector.

<sup>347</sup> <http://www.nopa.net/usefulinformatin/Clinton/tick.html>

<sup>348</sup> Ikein, A. 1990. *The Impact of Oil on a Developing Country*. New York: Praeger

Further exacerbating the situation of the oil industry in Nigeria in recent times is the restive activities of the different militia groups in the Niger Delta region which Ikein warned would have serious security implication for the country. As if Ikein's assertion was a prophecy, the Niger-Delta is today engulfed in a prolonged crisis characterized by assorted forms of conflict including social, economic, political, environmental and armed conflict, which in varying ways, have destabilizing effects, not only on the human rights and human security of the region's people, but on the entire country and global energy security as well.<sup>349</sup>

The conflict-prone situation of the Niger-Delta finds expression in the ready resort to physical violence as the solution to the fundamental questions and issues of fairness, equity, justice, participation, resource control rights, allocation and distribution. For example, violent clashes between state security forces and ethnic militias, violent inter and intra-communal clashes over resource benefits, inter-generational clashes between youths and elders, crass criminality characterized by hostage-taking of foreigners, relatives of government officials and ordinary citizens, as well as political thuggery and cult violence are symptomatic of the crisis of the oil induced problems that has gripped the Niger-Delta. In all these security-challenging scenarios, it is still the poor who suffer the environmental consequence the most and who in many ways contribute to environmental degradation. This insight sets the stage for our discussion on the interface between environment and poverty in Nigeria in general.

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<sup>349</sup> Studies have shown that the anti-state activities of ethnic/youth militias in the region has reduced oil production activities with negative consequences for government revenue, export receipts and foreign exchange earning, and as such on revenue allocation to each of the 36 states in Nigeria. Also, given Nigeria's position as the fifth largest supplier of crude oil to the United States, the Niger-Delta's geo-strategic importance to the global energy equation is not in doubt. See (Obi, C. "Oil, Environment and Conflict in the Niger Delta" *The Quarterly Journal of Administration*, 30(3 & 4), (1999), 15-34, Isike, C, "Emerging threats in the Niger-Delta and Third World security conception: Implications for Nigeria's National Security" in Orobator, S., Feturi, I. & Enaruna, E. (eds.) 2005. *Federal, State and Resource Control in Nigeria*. Benin: F. Parker Publishing Company. Gilbert, L., Uzodike, U. and Isike, C., "the United States Africa Command: security for whom?" *The Journal of Pan African Studies*, 2(9), (March 2009), 266-7

### 3.2. The Interface between Environment and Poverty in Nigeria

Without doubt, one of the most complex problems in achieving environmental sustainability in the developing world including Nigeria is the issue of grappling with poverty both at government and individual level.<sup>350</sup> We are not concerned here with the definition, classification and measurement of poverty. These have been dealt with in chapter two of this work. We are here briefly examining the scale of poverty in Nigeria and how the poor has contributed to environmental degradation over the years.

As we had noted earlier, Africa is usually defined along poverty lines and it has continued to struggle with poverty. There is massive poverty in Africa and Nigeria is no exception. Poverty in the midst of abundance is a popular paradox characterizing the Nigerian economy, a nation blessed with abundant human and natural resources.<sup>351</sup> It is ranked as the sixth largest exporter of petroleum in the world.<sup>352</sup> Nigeria is the largest black nation on earth thus having great potential for human resources. Unfortunately, in Nigeria, about 91 million people, about 15 % live below the poverty line.<sup>353</sup> According to Emeka Anyaoku, poverty is endemic in Nigeria. He writes:

Nigeria had moved from being the 50th nation in the league of well off nations to the current ranking of 176 out of 206 nations. Nigeria also labours under a controversial debt burden currently reconciled at about US\$ 30 billion... Today, the giant of Africa is officially classified as one of the

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<sup>350</sup> Leonard Muoghalu. 2004. "Environmental problems in Nigeria. What Prospects"? In Mba Chike, Uchegbu Smart, Udeh C. A and Leonard Muoghalu. 2004. (eds) *Management of Environmental Problems and Hazards in Nigeria*. United States of America: Ashgate Publishing Company. p.59

<sup>351</sup> See Okonta, I. and Douglas, O. 2001. *Where Vultures Feast: 40 Years of Shell in the Niger Delta*. Benin City: Environmental Rights Action/Friends of the Earth, Nafziger, E.W. 2008. "Nigeria's economic development and Niger-Delta grievances", in *Conference Proceedings on the Nigerian state, Oil Industry and the Niger-Delta*. Port-Harcourt: Harey Publications Company, March 11-13, 149

<sup>352</sup> Sulaiman, Sa'idu (undated) *Rich nation, poor citizens: The Missing Links for Increasing Output and Alleviating Poverty in Nigeria*. Available at: <http://www.africaeconomicanalysis.org/articles/gen/rich-nation.html>

<sup>353</sup> Umo, Joe. 2005. *National Roundup*. Weekly Trust. August 30 - September 5, 2005. p. 3

30 poorest nations on earth, with nearly 70 percent of its citizens living in poverty.<sup>354</sup>

In 2007 Nigeria had an estimated gross domestic product (GDP) of US\$166.8 billion according to the official exchange rate and US\$292.7 billion according to purchasing power parity (PPP). GDP rose by 6.4 percent in real terms over the previous year, yet about 60 percent of the population lives on less than US\$1 per day.<sup>355</sup> The average worker earns less than US\$ 50 per month while his or her monthly bills continue to swell.<sup>356</sup> Many Nigerians are peasant farmers who employ hard labour to produce crops which earn them very little income. In big cities like Lagos, many people cannot afford house rent because of poverty, so they sleep under overhead bridges, in motor parks, petrol stations and abandoned buildings. In daytime, they roam the street scavenging through garbage heaps for food and other materials. Thousands of Nigerians die of curable diseases like malaria, diarrhoea, measles etc, simply because they cannot afford to pay medical bills.

According to Joe Umo, poverty in Nigeria is not just material poverty. It is “poverty of leadership, poverty of justice, poverty of vision and honesty and poverty of integrity. It’s about poverty of patriotic zeal and sense of national duty on the part of leaders and the led”.<sup>357</sup> What Umo is actually alluding to, is that poverty in Nigeria is mainly as a result of a lack of good and people oriented leadership who would give direction and create avenues for people to have access to wealth of the nation. Corruption in high places (that is among the leadership) has perpetrated the persistence of poverty in Nigeria.

Poverty affects individuals physically, psychologically and spiritually and distorts the sense of aesthetics and creates an unsafe environment.<sup>358</sup> To the poor the issue of environmental protection is not a priority because they feel that they are not protected in an environment

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<sup>354</sup> Garland, C. Jean. 2003. *AIDS is Real and It's in Our Church*. TCNN Bukuru Nigeria: African Christian Text Books. p.129

<sup>355</sup> Library of Congress-Federal Research Division Country Profile: Nigeria, July 2008 (12)

<sup>356</sup> Aboribo, Igho R. 2001. “Oil, Politics and the Niger Delta Development Committee: The Tussle for control and Domination”. *African Journal of Environmental Studies*. Vol. 2, No 1 Obadina, T. 2001. 1999. “Nigeria’s Economy at the crossroads” journal of *African Recovery*. vol. 13. No. 1. P.8

<sup>357</sup> Umo, Joe. 2005. *National Roundup*. Weekly Trust. P.3

<sup>358</sup> Ehusani, George. 1996. *A Prophetic Church*. Ede, Nigeria: provincial Pastoral Institute Publications p.13

dominated by the rich and the powerful. Their contribution to environmental destruction could be seen as another way of avenging the unjust treatment meted to them by the society. In some cases those poor people who may have been concerned about environmental protection often lack the resources to avoid degrading their environment. However, as we saw in chapter two, the majority of them are mostly concerned with their day to day survival. In this regard the World Bank Development Report argues that alleviating poverty is a prerequisite for environmental sustainability. This is also because the poor are both the victims and agents of environmental damage. It estimates that fifty percent of the world's poor live on rural areas that are environmentally fragile, and they rely on natural resources over which they have little legal control.<sup>359</sup> In Nigeria like in other developing countries, there is an interface between environment and poverty. The section below, explores such interface.

Ever since the discovery of oil in Nigeria in the 1950s, the country has been suffering from the negative environmental consequences of oil development.<sup>360</sup> The growth of the country's oil industry, combined with a population explosion and a lack of effective environmental regulations, led to substantial damage to Nigeria's environment. Environmental degradation is experienced in a horrendous manner in the Niger Delta region, the centre of the country's oil industry.<sup>361</sup> The country also faces environmental challenges from air pollution and

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<sup>359</sup> Muoghalu, Leonard. 2004. "Environmental problems in Nigeria. What Prospects". p.60

<sup>360</sup> Adediji, A. 2000. "The Politics of Erosion Issues": in Jimoh, H. I and I.P. Ifabiye. *Contemporary Issues in Environmental Studies*. Ilorin. Haytee Press and Publishing. p.138 See also Khan, S. A. 1994: *Nigeria: The Political Economy of Oil*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

<sup>361</sup> Watts, Michael. 2004. "Violent Environments: Petroleum Conflict and the Political Ecology of Rule in the Niger Delta." In Watts and Peet (eds.). *Liberation Ecologies*. London: Routledge. p.104, see Suberu, Rotimi T. 1996. *Ethnic Minority Conflicts and Governance in Nigeria*. Spectrum Books Limited. Ibadan. Ukeje, Charles. 2001. "Youth, Violence and Collapse of Public Order." *Africa Development*. Vol. XXVII, nos. 1&2, p. 337-366. Nigeria's Niger Delta is endowed with vast reserves of oil and natural gas. Despite these resources, the region is marked by deprivation and underdevelopment. The paradox of underdevelopment in a resource-rich region has played a role in increasing violence and instability in the Niger Delta, particularly since the late 1990s. This is because the oil exploration activities actually pose serious threats to the very existence of the oil-producing communities. With polluted and degraded environment, farmers and fisher folk are facing an uphill struggle trying to eke out an existence

desertification, with the encroachment of the Sahara Desert in the north and severe air pollution in overcrowded cities such as Lagos, Abuja and other big cities in the country.<sup>362</sup>

The issue of environmental protection and the need to establish the practice of environmental friendly programmes in national development consciousness are matters of paramount importance. While environmental consciousness in the developed world has witnessed over the past two decades effective mechanisms for pollution abatement through strict adherence to environmental regulation laws, the situation in many third world nations is still characterized by *laissez-faire* attitude.<sup>363</sup> In Nigeria, the problem of environmental pollution is gradually escalating and is about to reach crisis proportions with the problem in some sectors possibly the worst in the world.<sup>364</sup> Commenting on the nation's environmental crisis, Sani Abacha, the late Head of State of Nigeria in his World Environmental Day message to the nation lamented the country's deteriorating environmental situation. He commented thus: "today, across the length and breadth of Nigeria, we are faced with the stark realities of the errors of our past developmental activities and indiscipline life styles".<sup>365</sup> Obviously, he was referring to the non prioritization of environmental issues by successive administrations. In its effort to address the country's environmental problems, the government put in place legislation and established agencies for environmental protection. A number of positive results have been achieved by the nation's main environmental watchdog, the Federal Environmental Protection Agency (FEPA). However, a lot still needs to be done, in terms of improving institutional capacity and adopting economic measures for the management of pollution problems. We, therefore, discuss below the major institutional and policy arrangements put in place for more effective environmental management in Nigeria.

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<sup>362</sup> Ibeanu, O. 2001. "Environment, Human Security and Governance in Nigeria. Notes on a Strategic Plan" Newsletter of the International Human Dimension Programme in Global Environmental Change. No 3/2001

<sup>363</sup> O'Neill, Kate. 2000. *Waste Trading among Rich Nations*. p.1

<sup>364</sup> Abacha, S. 1997. "World Environmental Day Message". *The Nigerian Environment*. Vol.9.No.3 and 4. P.1 and 3

<sup>365</sup> Abacha, S. 1997. "World Environmental Day Message". *The Nigerian Environment*. Vol.9.No.3 and 4. p.1 and 3

### 3.2.1. Background to Environmental Protection Laws in Nigeria

The federal government of Nigeria is not oblivious of the enormity of the environmental problems facing the country. The greatest of them all is the one in the Niger Delta Region. One of the former Ministers for Environment in highlighting the environmental problems and plight of the people of the Niger Delta, was quoted as saying: “as you are well aware, the environmental issues of the Niger Delta which ranges from pollution from various sources, to erosion, both gully and coastal, to biodiversity conservation, are enormous and challenging”.<sup>366</sup>

From the prehistory period, humanity has accumulated environmental know-how and developed strategies for exploring nature. Centuries of farming, explorations, industrial and other human activities have greatly reduced and in some areas abolished the original forests, degraded and polluted the environment.<sup>367</sup> Nigeria produces a lot of waste. This is mostly attributable to the fact that industries were allowed to use a lot of natural resources which in turn produce a lot of waste whose management and disposal are not effectively considered. Most African traditional societies have effective ecological management systems which help to regulate resource use and abuse. In traditional settings, people evolved taboos, superstitions and common rights and formulated laws to improve stewardship of the environment.<sup>368</sup> Most Western countries have long introduced legislation to protect the environment and some of these laws date back to the 19<sup>th</sup> century or even later.

In the third world countries, such as Nigeria, there is often a half-hearted commitment on the part of the government to enforce environmental protection measures.<sup>369</sup> This is mainly because the major preoccupation of the Nigerian government for many years has been the provision of basic social amenities. Environmental protection was synonymous with

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<sup>366</sup> Vanguard Newspaper, August 6, 2004. p.2

<sup>367</sup> Carter, Neil. 2002. *The Politics of the Environment. Ideas, Activism Policy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. p.84

<sup>368</sup> Barrow, C.J. 1999. *Environmental Management: Principles and Practices*. London: Routledge. p.2

<sup>369</sup> Muoghalu, Leonard. 2004. “Environmental problems in Nigeria. What Prospects”? In Mba Chike, Uchegbu Smart, Udeh C.A and Muoghalu, Leonard. 2004. (eds) *Management of Environmental Problems and Hazards in Nigeria*. United States of America: Ashgate Publishing Company. p.56

conservation of natural resources, while concerns for industrial pollution control and hazardous waste management were treated as both esoteric and an attempt to slow down the pace of industrialization.<sup>370</sup> Under such a state of lethargy in environmental protection, a strong catalyst is needed to wake up both government and the populace to their environmental responsibilities. For Nigeria this much needed catalyst for environmental enforcement came only in 1988 in the form of an illegal dumping of toxic wastes of Italian origin.<sup>371</sup> It was this illegal toxic waste dumping that alerted the country of the need to promulgate environmental laws. We will return to this issue later.

Other reasons, apart from government's prioritization of the provision of social amenities while at the same time ignoring the issue of environmental protection, can be deduced for its lackadaisical attitude to environmental protection. In this regard, Muoghalu advances two major additional reasons which are not peculiar to the Nigerian context.<sup>372</sup> The first is that some governments find themselves in a dilemma between the urgency of development and the luxury of allocating very scarce resources to environmental management. According to him, some governments view with suspicion the zeal of the Western World for environmental concerns as a new imperialistic scheme.<sup>373</sup> They see in the scheme a move to retard their economic growth and keep them perpetually as suppliers of underpriced raw materials and consumers of the industrial products of the Western world. They blame the Western world for the environmental degradation of the world and therefore argue that the West should find the solutions to the environmental degradation, while the developing world should be excused.

The second reason he advanced, is the lack of seriousness to tackle environmental issues. This is demonstrated by the fact that even though we have a national environmental protection agency and an enabling law, many of the activities of the agency are very theoretical. Targets are not set for industries for example, to modernize their machines to

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<sup>370</sup> Adelegan, Joseph Akinkugbe. (undated) *The History of Environmental Policy and Pollution of Water Sources in Nigeria (1960-2004):The way forward*

<http://web.fuberlin.de/ffu/akumwelt/bc2004/download/adelegan-abstract201-B2.pdf> (accessed on 5th January 2009)

<sup>371</sup> Adelegan, Joseph Akinkugbe. (undated) *The History of Environmental Policy and Pollution of water Sources in Nigeria*

<sup>372</sup> Muoghalu, Leonard. 2004. "Environmental problems in Nigeria. What Prospects"? P.52

<sup>373</sup> Muoghalu, Leonard. 2004. "Environmental problems in Nigeria. What Prospects"? P.52

minimize the volume of emissions into the atmosphere or to enforce the level of treatment of liquid waste into the environment or water bodies.<sup>374</sup>

The above factors could explain the reason for the late introduction of environmental laws in Nigeria. Environmental legislation was introduced in Nigeria in 1988.<sup>375</sup> It is instructive to note that it required the dumping of toxic and hazardous wastes in Nigeria before the Federal Government woke up to confront the problem of environmental abuse.<sup>376</sup> In this regard therefore, the discovery of an Italian ship in May 1988 with some imported toxic chemical wastes, and the hostile media reaction that accompanied the discovery hastened the creation of the then Federal Environment Protection Agency (FEPA), now the Federal Ministry of Environment, since Nigeria lacked both the institutional and legal framework to tackle the issue.<sup>377</sup>

In December 1988, as part of the emerging coordinated approach to environmental issues, the agency was established by decree.<sup>378</sup> The coming of the FEPA represents a milestone in environmental management efforts in Nigeria. In general, the scope of measures covered by environmental laws includes laws relating to human health, such as measures concerning the quality of water for human consumption, urban waste water treatments, as well as laws concerning other animal life, ground water pollution and marine pollution. Other broader areas, which the law covers, include air pollution such as emissions from industrial plants, gaseous pollution from diesel and other vehicle engines.<sup>379</sup> Conservation of wild species is also included.

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<sup>374</sup> Muoghalu, Leonard. 2004. "Environmental problems in Nigeria. What Prospects"? P.52

<sup>375</sup> <http://www.american.edu/projects/mandala/ted/nigeria.htm>

<sup>376</sup> Akinkugbe, Adelegan, Joseph. (undated) *The History of Environmental Policy and Pollution of Water Sources in Nigeria (1960-2004):The way forward*

<sup>377</sup> Akinkugbe, Adelegan, Joseph. (undated) *The History of Environmental Policy and Pollution of Water Sources in Nigeria (1960-2004):The way forward*, see FGN (1988): *Federal Environmental Protection Agency Decree 58, 1988*, Federal Ministry of Information and Culture, Lagos, Nigeria.

<sup>378</sup> Federal Government of Nigeria FGN (1988): *Federal Environmental Protection Agency Decree 58, 1988*, Federal Ministry of Information and Culture, Lagos, Nigeria.

<sup>379</sup> <http://www.american.edu/projects/mandala/ted/nigeria.htm>

The Federal Environmental Protection Agency (FEPA) is the parent body whose responsibility is the protection and development of the environment in general and environmental technology including coordination of environmental science and technology with similar bodies concerned with the protection of the environment.<sup>380</sup> The Federal Environmental Protection Agency consists of six departments viz: Environmental Conservation and Management, Environmental Quality, Finance and Administration Planning and Evaluation, Inspectorate and Enforcement of Environmental technology.<sup>381</sup>

One of the major problems of refuse management in Nigeria is the lack of an effective institutional framework. This is due mainly to a lack of understanding of the magnitude of refuse and the inability to appreciate the dangers posed by refuse mismanagement. By the existing administrative arrangement in the country, refuse management which is regarded as part of sanitation is under the 36 State Governments plus the Federal Capital Territory Abuja. The efforts of the State Governments to handle refuse particularly in urban areas has not improved significantly, basically because of their inability to appreciate that refuse management requires a separate organization and they have failed to appoint appropriate body to handle refuse management. Meanwhile the Municipal Authorities, the Urban Development Authorities and the Environmental Sanitation Task Forces all take part in handling sanitation which includes refuse management. In order to try to harmonize Sanitation Management, most state governments have established what they now regard as a more permanent institution, the State Environmental Protection Agency (SEPA) whose primary responsibility is pollution control. The conflicts arising from this multiplicity of agencies has equally hampered improvement in refuse management and environmental protection in general.<sup>382</sup>

With regard to the involvement of individuals in waste management, it was discovered that house to house refuse collection is uncommon.<sup>383</sup> Individuals are expected to deposit their

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<sup>380</sup> <http://www.law.pace.edu/env/nigerianlaw/epa/envpa2.html>

<sup>381</sup> Nations of the Earth Report. 1992. United Nations Conference on Environment and Development: National Reports Summaries.p.177

<sup>382</sup> Nations of the Earth Report. 1992. United Nations Conference on Environment and Development: National Reports Summaries. p.177

<sup>383</sup> Muoghalu, Leonard. 2004. "Environmental problems in Nigeria. What Prospects"? P.54

refuse at designated refuse centres, from where the waste management service vehicles can collect them for final disposal. However there is no regular routine collection and as a result, the communal points, commonly called “dumps” which are generally at open spaces along street ends or junctions, usually become nuisance points to urban dwellers. Because they are sometimes left uncollected for months they decompose, create offensive odours, provide breeding places for rodents, flies, scorpions, snakes, ants. Papers and polythenes from households and commercial places are blown around by wind. Consequently most of the refuse end up in the drains and thereby contribute to the pollution of rivers.

Different types of vehicles are used for refuse evacuation but the most common are open tippers. In a few States like Anambra, Lagos, Abuja etc they have some compressing vehicles whose problems are constant breakdown due to inadequate funding and lack of spare parts.<sup>384</sup> Collection of the refuse is done manually with shovels and rakes from communal points by the men who accompany the vehicles and sometimes these things are done haphazardly. In a few cases earth moving vehicles like bulldozers are used but they also breakdown frequently. The vehicles take the refuse to final dumping or land filling sites without sorting them and they dispose of their contents unguarded at any place of their convenience.<sup>385</sup> The above gives a general view of what the problem of waste management looks like in Nigeria.

### **3.2.2. Institutional and Policy Framework for Environmental Management in Nigeria**

Environmental management deals succinctly with land use development and management. To this end, statutory land use planning and development control activities are carried on by means of legal, economic and institutional tools. The establishment and application of these tools vary between nations depending on circumstances that surround their development process.<sup>386</sup>

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<sup>384</sup> Muoghalu, Leonard. 2004. “Environmental problems in Nigeria. What Prospects”? P.54

<sup>385</sup> Personal observation.

<sup>386</sup> Ortolano, L. 1984. *Environmental Planning and Decision-making*. New Jersey: John Wiley Press.p.86

In Nigeria, structural changes in the institutional tools for environmental management are currently underway.<sup>387</sup> The renewal process started in 1988 with the setting up of the National Council on Environment. This council is made up of ministers and commissioners whose ministries are responsible for environmental matters in the country.<sup>388</sup> Since the setting up of the council, government has committed itself to lots of policies and legislation related to the environment. Some of these are the Urban and Regional Planning (URP) decree 88 of 1992 and Urban and Regional Planning (URP Decree 86 of 1992).<sup>389</sup> These laws are meant to facilitate the realization of National Development objectives on environment as contained in the National Urban Development Policy of 1993, National Housing policy 1991 and National Environmental Policy 1989. According to Okeke, the National Urban Development Policy and the National Environmental Policy complement each other to provide direction for the institution of environmental management in Nigeria, and urban policy provides direction for land use planning, development and management and its ultimate goals is: “to develop a dynamic and sustainable system of urban settlements which will foster economic growth, promote efficient urban and regional development and ensure improved standard of living and well being for all Nigerians”.<sup>390</sup>

Okeke opines that this goal collaborates the objectives of the National Environmental Policy which describes guidelines and strategies for achieving the policy goal of sustainable development. In this regard, government organs responsible for environmental management are given clearly defined mandates to ensure efficiency, effectiveness and accountability. In spite of the various environmental management procedures put in place to ensure effective environmental management in Nigeria, environmental problems seem to increase unstoppably.<sup>391</sup> The reason for this scenario is mainly because there is a huge gap in coordinating the operation of government development agencies. In the words of Okeke, “in

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<sup>387</sup> Okeke, Don. 2003. “Government Effort in Environmental Management in Nigeria” in Mba, Chike, Uchegbu Smart, Udeh C.A and Muoghalu, Leonard (eds) *Management of Environmental Problems and Hazards in Nigeria*. USA: Ashgate Publishing Company.p.197

<sup>388</sup> Okeke, Don. 2003. “Government Effort in Environmental Management in Nigerian Cities”.p.197

<sup>389</sup> Okeke, Don. 2003. “Government Effort in Environmental Management in Nigerian Cities”.p.197

<sup>390</sup> Okeke, Don. 2003. “Government Effort in Environmental Management in Nigerian Cities”.p.197

<sup>391</sup> Okeke, Don. 2003. “Government Effort in Environmental Management in Nigerian Cities”.p.198

some cases rivalry impedes progress. The entire system in practical terms lacks vitality, cohesion and direction”.<sup>392</sup>

### **3.3. The Role of the Poor in Environmental Degradation in Nigeria**

The role of the poor in environmental degradation has been examined previously, and given the extent of poverty in Nigeria this is an important element to reflect on here. We observed that the attitude of the poor towards the issues of environmental management and conservation remains the same everywhere with some slight differences because of culture and the predisposing circumstances and situation. How the poor degrade the environment can be best appreciated by examining some attitudes, habits, conditions, activities and occupations associated with the poor resulting from the harsh economy in which they operate and its derived culture of poverty. In Nigeria for example, the poor do contribute to environmental degradation in the following important ways.

#### **3.3.1. Psychological Orientation**

It has been observed that the inhabitants of the poor inner city neighbourhoods, the native enclaves and squatter settlements appear to be the most reluctant to participate in the Nigerian monthly sanitation exercise.<sup>393</sup> National and local television crews have occasionally captured their young ones playing while the adults go about their normal businesses rather than clean up their surroundings on these national environmental sanitation days.<sup>394</sup> Their psychological orientation controls their attitude towards environmental cleanliness. We have illustrated this point earlier in chapter two with Maslow’s hierarchy of needs. Because of this psychological orientation, they see environmental cleaning as a favour to the society that marginalized them. They reasoned therefore, that if they live in an already perpetually

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<sup>392</sup> Okeke, Don. 2003. “Government Effort in Environmental Management in Nigerian Cities”.p.199

<sup>393</sup> Agukoronye, Okechukwu. C. 2004. “Urban Poverty and Environmental Degradation in Nigerian Cities” in Chike Uchegbu Smart, Udeh CA and Muoghalu, Leonard. 2004 (eds) *Management of Environmental Problems and Hazards in Nigeria*. USA: Ashgate Publishing Company. p.161

<sup>394</sup> Agukoronye, Okechukwu .C. 2004. “Urban Poverty and Environmental Degradation in Nigerian Cities” p.161

degraded environment, one-day in-a month clean up makes no difference. By this reasoning they justify their recalcitrant attitude towards national cleaning exercise.

Furthermore, since these poor have lived for a long time in a degraded environment, they no longer perceive environmental degradation as something they should be worried about. To them, environmental degradation has become part of normal life. As a result of this perception, they litter, defecate and dump their refuse anywhere and everywhere.

### **3.3.2. The Housing Environment**

Urbanization comes with a heavy demand for housing. Because of the great number of urban migrants, many African governments including Nigeria have not been able to adequately address the issue of housing especially for the poor.<sup>395</sup> The housing situation in Nigeria at the moment is still very critical. The difficulty of the Nigerian government to provide enough accommodation for its teeming urban poor population has given rise to the ubiquitous sprouting of informal settlements. These informal settlements are usually located in the urban peripheries. These outlying areas are easy to settle in because they are less costly and are very far from the eyes of the government. However, the big problem is that sanitation services that go on in these areas are either grossly inadequate or as in most cases nonexistent.

The inability to meet the economic demands of the urban life style usually forces the poor to relocate to these unwanted pieces of land. These can be near an industry, factory, on hillsides, swamps, rocky areas etc. These locations are liable to rapid environmental degradation and exposure to poisonous industrial wastes both in the air and water. The result of this kind of scenario is that the poor not only degrade their environment, they are susceptible to all manners of diseases and environmental health threats.

A more vivid picture of the appalling urban environmental description was given by Ene Baba-Owo, the Director of a Non-Governmental Environmental Organization-*Clean up Nigeria*.

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<sup>395</sup> Unsworth, R. 2004. "Making Cities more Sustainable: People, Plans and Participation". In Purvis, M and Grainger, A. (eds) 2004. *Exploring Sustainable Development: Geographical Perspectives*. London: Earthscan

We looked at the environmental conditions of the area; we discovered that most people in Ajegunle live in shanties without toilets; bathrooms and good drainage. Inhabitants in some parts of the ghettos pass wastes directly into the canals and water bodies on top of which their toilets and bathrooms are constructed.<sup>396</sup>

The implications of the above for both the natural environment and the health of the urban residents are enormous. This implication draws the links between the urban poor resident's health and the ecosystem's health as well. It also spells out the significance of the interlocking web of relationship between people and their environment-a synthesis of social and natural systems.<sup>397</sup> This implication also helps us to understand the dynamics of the natural and built environments and the role of people especially the poor in the sustainability or otherwise of the environment. A proper understanding of this dynamics, in our view, would apparently lead to the achievement of a better environmental management.

### 3.3.3. Energy Consumption Patterns

Another major source of environmental degradation caused by the poor is their use of fuel wood energy. The rising cost of gas and electricity for domestic use, encourages greater use of biomass sources by the low income population.<sup>398</sup> It is also a common thing to see even those in the middle class shifting to the use of charcoal in some cities because the cost of energy and petroleum fuels are becoming exorbitant that they could no longer afford them. As is the case in the Third World, more than half of the total energy consumption of the poorer households is believed to consist of the traditional fuel wood.<sup>399</sup> Such wood accounts for over 90% of national energy consumption of most African households and about 80% even in oil rich Nigeria.<sup>400</sup>

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<sup>396</sup> <http://www.afrol.com/news/2002/nig002-floods-erosion.htm>

<sup>397</sup> Akanmidu, R. A. 2004. "Poverty Alleviation Programmes and the Politics of Ethical Despair in Nigeria" *The Seventieth Inaugural Lecture*, Ilorin: University of Ilorin

<sup>398</sup> Agukoronye, Okechukwu. C. 2004. "Urban Poverty and Environmental Degradation in Nigerian" p.167

<sup>399</sup> Cecelski, Elizabeth. 1986. *Energy and Rural Women's Work: Crisis, Response and Policy Alternatives*. Background Paper prepared for International Workshop on the Rural Energy Crisis, Women's Work and Basic Needs, 21-24 April 1986: The Hague, Netherlands, Geneva, ILO

<sup>400</sup> Agukoronye, Okechukwu .C. 2004. "Urban Poverty and Environmental Degradation in Nigerian Cities" p.168

Emissions from biomass fuels are dangerous sources of air pollution in the home, where the patriarchal system has made women responsible for cooking all year round.<sup>401</sup> Wood fuels produce pollution concentration higher than fossil fuels under slow burning conditions. Some studies have shown that cooks suffer from smoke and pollutants much more than the residents of dirtiest urban environments suffer from pollution generally.<sup>402</sup>

Other environmental effects associated with wood and other biomass burning include respiratory and eye disease. Constant exposure may lead to bronchitis, pneumonia and death where respiratory defences are impaired. Where emissions contain high concentrations of carcinogens, nasopharyngeal cancer are common among young people who have been exposed since childhood.<sup>403</sup> The use of fuel wood is a rural practice and presents little problems in the villages where only dried wood is used, but the environmental problems it presents in terms of deforestation are enormous and this is often not considered.

### 3.3.4. Inappropriate Land Uses

Several programmes in Nigeria introduced briefly at different times, and aimed at boosting food production, have tended to encourage temporary farming on vacant land. Low income families have taken the opportunity it provides to cultivate plots of land next to their houses. This practice resulted in using every available space for cultivation in an indiscriminate manner. Among the crops cultivated are maize, groundnuts, beans, tomatoes, potatoes and a wide variety of other crops and vegetables. While the nation has not reaped bumper harvest or witnessed the drop in food prices as a result of this practice, it has unfortunately, produced an untold environmental degradation in the form of erosion and flooding. This is associated with improper cultivation methods and blockage of runoff channels as well as the defacement of the landscape.<sup>404</sup>

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<sup>401</sup> WHO. 1984. *Biomass Fuel combustion and Health*. Geneva: World Health Organisation. P.56

<sup>402</sup> Agukoronye, Okechukwu. C. 2004. "Urban Poverty and Environmental Degradation in Nigerian. Cities" p.168

<sup>403</sup> Agukoronye, Okechukwu.C. 2004. "Urban Poverty and Environmental Degradation in Nigerian Cities" p.168

<sup>404</sup> Agukoronye, Okechukwu. C. 2004. "Urban Poverty and Environmental Degradation in Nigerian Cities" p.169

Closely related to the conversion of every vacant urban land into a “urban farm” is the ubiquitous street side artisan “market”. Open spaces on the urban landscape are quickly converted into trading posts or make shift stalls of crude tables no more than one square meter in size.<sup>405</sup> This type of trading involves wrapping with paper or polythene bags some of the items on sale. One of the items usually on sale which constitutes a worrisome environmental degradation is the popular “ice water” or “pure water” made in polythene bags. The litter of ice water or pure water bags is such that it can completely cover the surface of the street tarmac in such a way that it becomes both unsightly and unhealthy. They also block drains and water channels which could lead flooding.

Another incompatible use of the urban landscape which aggravates environmental pollution is the proliferation of small trade and craft stands. Open mechanic workshops, vulcanizers’ corners, shoe shine-mending sheds, gas sales stands and other activity sites have become common features of the city streets, both in open and enclosed spaces. Illegal structures like kiosks, sheds, stalls and *batchers* increase frequently in order to consolidate and legitimize these low-income generating activities. Their nuisance effects, especially the mechanic workshops which include the spill of toxic battery acids, engine oil, grease, petroleum and carbide into sewers and drains pollute both soil and ground water. The pileup of disused vehicles inside and around these mechanic workshops produce junkyard appearance and distorts the aesthetic appeal of the cityscape and the trash and litter of packages of replacement parts, disused and condemned as well as worn out automobile parts, scrap metals and food wrappings highly degrade the environment. These effects have prompted many state governments to try to demolish such illegal structures. The present Anambra state government is making frantic efforts to organize and relocate all mechanic workshops to what it called a “mechanic village”.<sup>406</sup> The idea of moving all the mechanic workshops to a designated mechanic village is expected to reduce the nuisance and environmental degradation such mechanic workshops produce and also increase the aesthetic outlook of the state.

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<sup>405</sup> Agukoronye, Okechukwu .C. 2004. “Urban Poverty and Environmental Degradation in Nigerian Cities”.p.170

<sup>406</sup> Anambra State of Nigeria. Undated. State Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy. Second edition. p.5

### 3.3.5. Non-Provision of Waste Bins

One major characteristic feature of urban cities in Nigeria is the amount of refuse they generate. The refuse does not only come from domestic dwellings, but also from the commercial, administrative and industrial activities, which they require in order to keep going. The demand of modern marketing and other activities cause a huge amount of glass (empty and broken bottles), paper (of various kinds), and plastics to be discarded indiscriminately. Added to the above is the unsightliness of litter in every corner of our urban cities being accelerated mainly by the indiscriminate throwing away of polythene bags and “pure water sachets”. The safe and effective disposal of these wastes has become one of the difficult problems in most Nigerian urban cities. We could get a vivid picture of the refuse situation in most cities in Nigeria from the description given by one Onuorah Stanley, (a practical philosopher) who resides in Onitsha.

I couldn't think of any place worse than Onitsha, the commercial centre of Anambra State and one of the nation's highest ranking commercial cities. Having lived in the city for a good number of years now, I have watched it gradually grow into a city of dirt of all kinds. From Nkpor to Upper Iweka, to Head Bridge back to Fegge, Odakpu, and other parts of the town, you see innumerable heaps of refuse on the roadsides, some even covering the roads. In some cases, you see an unbroken chain of refuse heaps stretching up to half a mile or more. Virtually all the streets and roads in Onitsha are littered with refuse to an alarming indecency, and people practically walk on them. All the gutters have become convenient dustbins where people complacently empty their wastebaskets and their bowels! The numerous markets are the worst hit by this development given the quantity of rubbish they generate. People literally walk, eat and trade very close to and at times on top of stinking wastes that you begin to wonder at their orientation.<sup>407</sup>

The above speaks volumes about waste management issues and sanitation problems in Nigerian cities including rural areas. From our personal observation, this problem is complicated by a number of factors, which includes but is not limited to:

-  People's attitude to public property and places

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<sup>407</sup> Onuorah, Stanley. 2005. *Onitsha, the City of Dirt*. Champion Newspaper: Wednesday, April 13, 2005, Vol 13 No.44. Onitsha is the commercial nerve centre of not just Anambra State (the study area), but the South East geo-political zone

- ✚ Lack of adequate information on the possible health hazards
- ✚ Non provision of dumping sites by the government

The problem of refuse dumping in particular and sanitation in general contributes to an incessant outbreak of epidemics and other health problems.<sup>408</sup> It also distorts the ambience of our cities. The dumping of refuse without an adequate system of management and disposal leads to pollution of the environment, which has some far-reaching effects not only on human beings but also on the ecosystem in general.

### **3.3.6. The Culture of Consumerism and Craze for Imported Goods**

We could be accused of violating the rules of fairness and objectivity if we fail to recognize the rich as “co culprits” together with the poor in environmental degradation. In chapter two points to this fact. This observation which also applies to the Nigerian context is exacerbated by the culture of consumerism especially with its heavy influence on the poor who also try to live like the rich. Consumerism has deeper historical roots and a more insidious grasp on Western cultures.<sup>409</sup> Unfortunately, this culture is fast spreading like a ‘wild fire’ to even the poor countries in the fashion of the current ‘globalization wind’. It is gradually becoming a cultural orientation in Nigeria. Economic globalization is in many ways an extension of consumerism to a worldwide level, posing significant threats to ecological sustainability and social justice.<sup>410</sup> Consumerism is expressed in the habit of acquiring and using of an “increasing number and variety of goods and services as the principal cultural aspiration and the surest perceived route to personal happiness, social status and national success”.<sup>411</sup> In the words of Conradie, “the lifestyles of the consumer class, together with the power of the media and a bombardment of advertisements, have ensured that consumerism now describes

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<sup>408</sup> Mskoli Qotole, Mthetho Xali and Franco Barchiesi. Undated. *The Commercialization of Waste Management in South Africa*. Research Series no. 3

<sup>409</sup> Rodney, Clapp. 1998. *The Consuming Passion: Christianity and the Consumer Culture*. Downers Grove: Inter-Varsity Press. p.28

<sup>410</sup> Herman, Daly and Cobb, John, Jr. 1989. *For the Common Good: Redirecting the Economy toward Community, the Environment and a Sustainable Future*. Boston: Beacon Press. p.12

<sup>411</sup> Conradie, Ernst. 2008. *The church and Climate change*. p.47

the hopes and aspirations of the poor and the lower middle class everywhere in the world”.<sup>412</sup> Consumerism increases the aspiration and hunger among the poor to live like the rich and encourages the rich to live as best as they could without being mindful of the effects of such lifestyle on others and the environment.<sup>413</sup> It undermines the philosophy that calls for entrenchment of frugality as one of the most effective ways of combating ecological degradation and appreciation of nature as a whole.

A similar effect experienced in the culture of consumerism is seen again in the craze for imported goods. Most Nigerians need to re-assess their consumption pattern in order to reduce their ecological foot print being currently driven by the desire for imported goods. The craze with which most Nigerians, especially the middle class population, patronize the imported heavy polluting machines and items in the country needs to be checked. For instance, anyone who is genuinely concerned about environmental health should be worried about the rationale behind the importation of huge number of what is now commonly referred to as “second hand computers” and other forms of information technological accessories into the country. Without doubt, these computers are quite cheap and that is the reason why many could afford them, but they are not durable. We are worried that the use and disposal of such “second hand computers” which do not often last long, constitutes environmental nuisance, degrades and pollutes the environment. But, because the poor are being driven by the culture of consumerism, they also want to possess such items which in the event of their being spoilt (as is often the case), could not be disposed of properly. Since there is no effective disposal mechanism, they are indiscriminately disposed of. This indiscriminate attitude of disposal contributes to environmental degradation.<sup>414</sup>

Similar to the importation of “second hand computers” is the importation of used vehicles popularly called “Tokumbo”. These are vehicles which are rejected in Western countries because they are older and therefore produce huge emissions which pollute the atmosphere. Going by the strict environmental legislation in these Western Countries, these vehicles are

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<sup>412</sup> Conradie, Ernst. 2008. *The church and Climate change*. p.47

<sup>413</sup> Miller, Eric. 1991. *Attracting the Affluent*. Naperville, Illinois: Financial Sourcebooks.

<sup>414</sup> Muoghalu, Leonard. 2004. “Environmental Problems in Nigeria. What Prospects”? In Mba Chike, Uchegbu Smart, Udeh C. A and Muoghalu, Leonard. 2004. (eds) *Management of Environmental Problems and Hazards in Nigeria*. p.52

no longer easily acceptable as efforts are frantically being made to develop cleaner technology in the manufacturing of vehicles that will minimize emissions into the atmosphere. As these vehicles are being rejected in the West, they are being accepted in Nigeria because they are cheap and can be afforded by many Nigerians. Unfortunately many of the owners of these used vehicles are not aware of the environmental health implication of the emissions on the environment and humans. The problem is that the older a vehicle is, the greater is its likelihood to emit obnoxious gases into the atmosphere.<sup>415</sup> A careful observation would reveal how many of these so-called “Tokumbo” vehicles are smoking as they ply our streets and highways, and yet many Nigerians ignorantly would want to own “Tokumbo” vehicles to the detriment of their health and the health of the environment as well.

So far, we have been discussing the development of environmental law and the introduction of institutional and policy framework in Nigeria as well as the role of the urban citizen in environmental degradation. In the section below, we are going to shift our discussion from the national environmental issues to get a picture of the environment and poverty situation in Anambra State. Anambra state is the study area.

### **3.4. The Social and Historical Overview of Anambra State**

The current Anambra State which was carved out from the old and larger Anambra state, came into being on 27 August 1991. It brought into one state, people with a lot of socio cultural similarities. It derived its name from the Anambra River. The state is situated on fairly flat land with tropical vegetation. The climate is humid with substantial rainfall and a mean temperature of 87oF. It has a weak soil that is easily eroded, thus accounting for over 500 erosion sites of varying depth and length.<sup>416</sup>

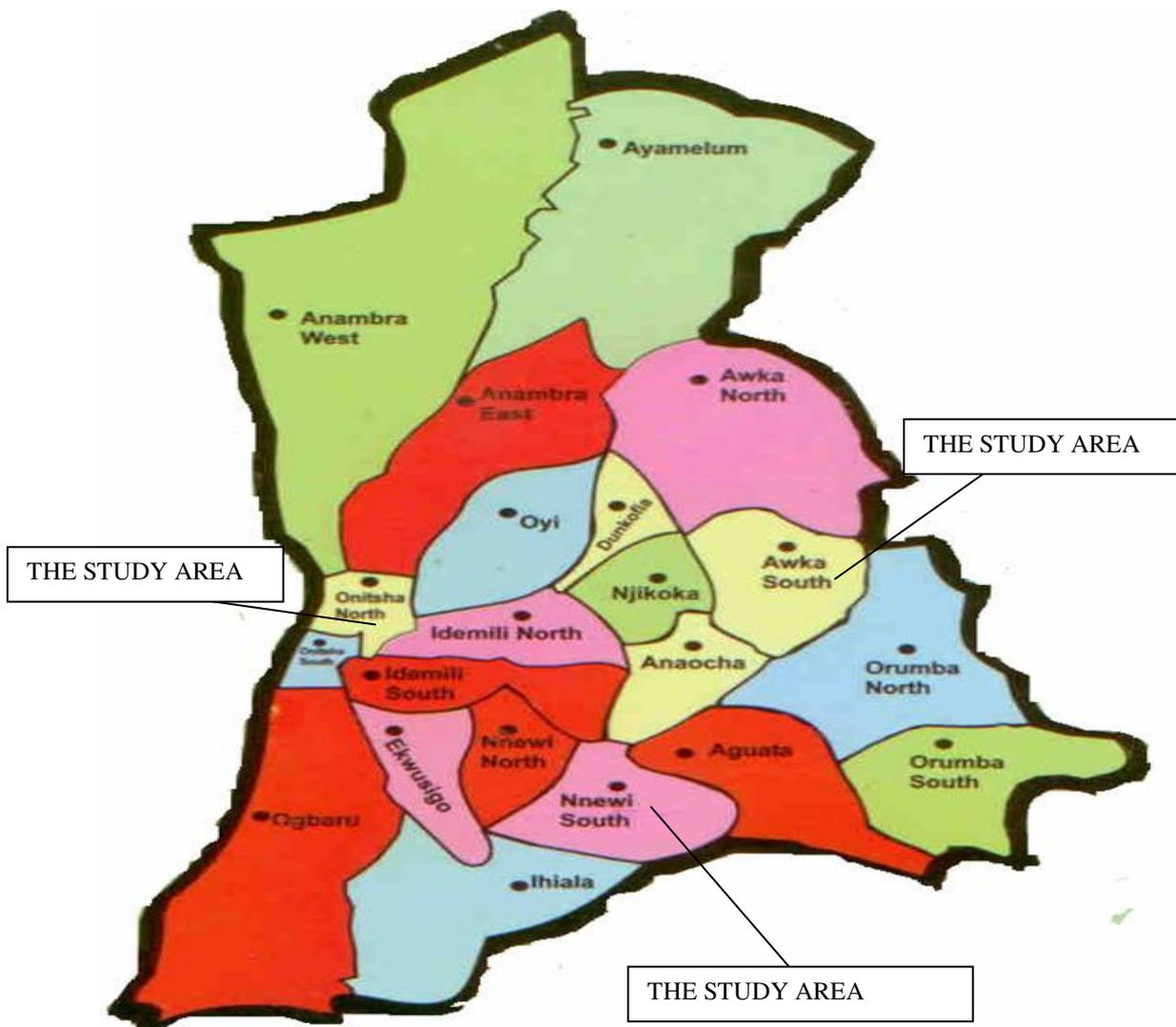
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<sup>415</sup> Muoghalu, Leonard. 2004. “Environmental Problems in Nigeria. What Prospects”? In Mba Chike, Uchegbu Smart, Udeh C.A and Muoghalu, Leonard. 2004. (eds) *Management of Environmental Problems and Hazards in Nigeria*. United States of America: Ashgate Publishing Company. P.56

<sup>416</sup> Anambra State of Nigeria. 2007. *State Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy*. Second edition. Awka: Government House Printer. p.9

The predominant language is Igbo with minor dialectical differences. Anambra people are known to be resourceful and very enterprising especially in the area of commerce. The high level of commercial activities in the state attracts people from different parts of the south eastern region and the entire country. This probably accounts for the cosmopolitan nature of towns like Onitsha and Nnewi.

This map shows the local government areas in Anambra State (the study area). The arrows show the local government headquarters where each of the three dioceses (see chapter five) is located.



Following changes in the economy of Nigeria, and increasing unemployment especially in the rural communities, the state has continued to witness a rapid rate of urbanization with individuals migrating from mainly rural communities to the urban areas in search of greener pastures. The successes of only a few of these individuals in commercial activities together with the general state of poverty and unemployment even for graduates has contributed largely in making education unattractive especially to young boys. Hence, the problem of male drop outs is currently being tackled in the state.

The predominant religion in Anambra State is Christianity. More than 70% of the people are professing Christians.<sup>417</sup> The extended family system is a major characteristic, especially in traditional society. The state is largely patriarchal as the man is regarded as the head and the leader of the family or household. There is a strong preference for male children in order to continue and sustain the family lineage. Community based groups like town unions and village meetings, age grades, men and women groups is a strong platform for initiating self help development activities, instilling discipline, maintaining law and order and the transmission of culture. Community levies for various development projects have become the order of the day and constitute a burden to the very poor.

### **3.4.1. Anambra State Poverty Situation**

Anambra State is arguably the most cosmopolitan of South Eastern States, and represents a strategic access to the South East of Nigeria from the River Niger end.<sup>418</sup> Anambra state has one of the highest levels of manpower resource and the lowest level of poverty incidence in the south east zone.

Despite its endowments, Anambra state has had a disproportionate share of the socio-economic and political crisis that have characterised Nigeria's history as a nation. Apart from the general neglect and mismanagement that characterized military governance in Nigeria,

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<sup>417</sup> Anambra State of Nigeria. 2007. State Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy. Second edition. Government Printer. p.9

<sup>418</sup> Anambra State of Nigeria. 2007. State Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy. Second edition. Awka. p.5

the appalling corruption and mismanagement inherent in the successive civilian administrations in the state; armed conflict in some parts of the state notably, Aguleri and Umuleri; protracted industrial unrest and labour problems; and more recently, unprecedented forms of political instability and tension, all have had devastating effects on the state.<sup>419</sup> Expectedly, these years of crisis were not without some adverse effects on socio-economic development and livelihoods in the state. The statement provided in the report of the State Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy shows a general decline in the socio-economic and political events in the state. It reads thus:

the incidence of poverty increased from 32.2% in 1996 to 53.5% in 2003, enrolment in public schools,(especially in secondary schools) stagnated in 2002. Literacy for individuals, 15 years and above 73.6% in 1999 is believed to have stagnated. Reports show that the proportion of individuals with access to drinking water declined from 49.8% to 49% between 1999 and 2003, due mainly to the near total collapse of public water facilities in major towns like Onitsha. Similarly, percentage of total population with sanitary means of excreta disposal which stood at 85.5% in 1999 is now said to be 49%. Even though there is insufficient data to evaluate the trend in state GDP within the period, there was noticeable decline in average household income.<sup>420</sup>

Some poverty studies had been carried out in the state in the past in order to review the poverty situation and of course, assess policies and institutions addressing poverty reduction in the state. These studies on poverty were carried out by several successive governments in the state to make life more meaningful for the people of the state.<sup>421</sup> After each study, the following options had been available to the state in tackling the enigma.

-  Develop and implement a holistic poverty reduction strategy for the state
-  find out strategic actions that would be supported by socio-economic investigations, or
-  do nothing”.<sup>422</sup>

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<sup>419</sup> Anambra State of Nigeria. 2007. State Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy. Second edition. Government Printer. p.5

<sup>420</sup> Anambra State of Nigeria. 2007. State Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy. Second edition.p.9

<sup>421</sup> Anambra State of Nigeria. 2007. State Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy. Second edition.p.2

<sup>422</sup> Anambra State of Nigeria. 2007. State Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy. Second edition.p.2

From our personal observation, it seemed that the previous administrations in the state did not do much with regard to these reports. This observation is based on the fact that the poverty situation in the state is exacerbating instead of ameliorating. It is because of the need to implement a holistic reduction strategy for poverty in the state, that the State Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (SEEDS) was inaugurated in line with the National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS).

### **3.4.2. Environmental Challenges in Anambra State**

We have previously observed in chapter two that there is a kind of interlocking web of cause and effect with regards to environmental degradation. The same kind of web of cause and effect applies to the environmental degradation in the state. As a result, apart from those elements which explicitly present as either cause or effects, we are also looking at other key elements which sometimes are viewed as both cause and at some other times are seen as effects.

Over 70% of the land of Anambra State, with its fragile geology, is presently being ravaged or threatened by erosion at various levels of development, and stages of maturity and over 20% of the land has been lost to gullies.<sup>423</sup> Major flood disasters accompanied by erosion, gulling and landslide are of regular occurrence. These devastating events have kept the citizens of the state in a state of continuous concern and fear and dismay all year round.

There are about 500 erosion sites in Anambra State.<sup>424</sup> This has constituted a serious threat in many parts of the state. The gully erosion at Agulu and Nanka in the state are already a household word. These are the results of direct and indirect transfer of technology and modern living standards in Anambra State. Similarly, population explosions with its attendant effects have also taken its toll on our environment. Municipal Solid Waste (MSW) more commonly known as trash or garbage-consists of everyday items such as product packaging,

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<sup>423</sup> Anambra State of Nigeria. 2007. State Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy. Second edition.p.72

<sup>424</sup> For the meaning of erosion and its scale, see an overview of the causes of environmental problems in the state on page 123

grass clippings, furniture, clothing, bottles, food scraps, newspaper, appliances, paint and batteries, etc. Every year, Anambra State generates approximately 0.12 million tons of “trash”. Less than 10% of it is recycled while the rest is either incinerated or buried in landfills.<sup>425</sup> With a little forethought, industrialists could reuse or recycle more than 70% of the land fill waste, which include valuable materials such as glass, metal and paper. This would reduce the demand on virgin sources of these materials and eliminate potentially severe forms of environmental degradation with the attendant economic and public problems.

About 86% of landfills in Anambra State are leaking toxic materials into rivers, streams and aquifers.<sup>426</sup> Once the ground water is contaminated, it is extremely expensive and difficult, sometimes even impossible to clean it up. Despite government efforts, data shows that pollution and waste are growing at or above the rate of population and economic growth in Anambra State. Government contributes to the above concerns because it is a major purchaser of goods and services. Major developers greatly influence the way Anambra communities and the economy grows, and generates significant wastes and pollution.

A recent survey conducted for the State of Environment and Forestry revealed that only little above 15% of the 187 industrialists surveyed had any knowledge of what Environmental Management Systems, Environmental Impact Assessments, occupational Safety Standards and Environmental Audits were all about. Regarding environmental protection, almost all opined that Anambra State Environmental Protection Agency (ANSEPA) should be held responsible. Some of these are those concerned with food, petrochemicals, plastics and batteries.

In Anambra State, domestic and industrial waste water go directly into water bodies without treatment. Hazardous chemicals used in the home and industries sometimes find their way into the aquatic environment, causing damage to the ecosystem and contaminating drinking water supplies. For example, Onitsha (population of about 1 million) has no waste water

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<sup>425</sup> Anambra State of Nigeria. 2007. State Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy. Second edition.p.74

<sup>426</sup> Anambra State of Nigeria. 2007. State Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy. Second edition.p.74

treatment plant. All waste water is dumped in the river Niger.<sup>427</sup> Hazardous chemical wastes from industrial sources are often dumped onto poorly prepared and managed landfill sites with little or no separation of toxic wastes. This frequently results in the contamination of drinking water, soil and air. Disposal of liquid wastes such as dyes is also a particular problem in the state.

From the forgoing, it is evident that the environmental problems in the state include:

- ✚ The menace of soil and gully erosion in most part of the state.
- ✚ Indiscriminate disposal of refuse by households and industries
- ✚ Use of dangerous chemicals to catch fish in our ponds, stream, lakes and rivers
- ✚ Deforestation of drainages with solid wastes leading to the flooding of streets and highways during the rains.
- ✚ Building in an unauthorized areas and without approved plans by the relevant authorities
- ✚ Traffic congestion and abandonment of unserviced vehicles on our roads.
- ✚ Inadequacy of safe and portable water supply leading to water borne diseases due to poor hygiene.
- ✚ Building of housing and market stalls on drainages and sewer lines.

These problems had persisted in the administration of successive governments mainly because of the government non commitment to environmental concerns in the state. For example, despite the fact that 70% of total land surface has been ravaged by erosion, no serious attempt has been made to take a comprehensive view of the problem and enforce a state wide land use delineation in which, for example severely ravaged areas would be declared parks backed with aggressive afforestation programme.<sup>428</sup> Another vivid example of lack of government serious commitment to environmental concerns in the state is cited by Muoghalu.

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<sup>427</sup> Muoghalu, Leonard. 2004. "Environmental problems in Nigeria. What Prospects". p.56

<sup>428</sup> Muoghalu, Leonard. 2004. "Environmental problems in Nigeria. What Prospects". p.54

Another instance is demonstrated by the non-enforcement of Local Government planning Authorities of relevant sections (11(1)-(3) of the Nigerian Urban and regional Planning Decree of 1992 with respect to preparing town, rural, local and subject plans. Some of these plans require environmental impact assessment, such as where a building of an office is in excess of four floors or 5.000m<sup>2</sup> of a lettable space or where a building is likely to impact upon the environment, facilities or inhabitants in the community.<sup>429</sup>

### **3.4.3. An Overview of the Causes of Environmental Problems (Degradation) in the State**

Uncontrolled interference with the balance of the ecosystems of localities in the state has brought about an appreciable increase in environmental degradation and problems. The impact of environmental degradation on rural dwellers arises directly out of the damage inflicted upon traditional land and resources, directly through local and other anthropogenic activities, which are the cause of such degradation. As Burger noted, indigenous people live in fragile environments and are the first to suffer from the effects of war on the ecosystem.<sup>430</sup> The Agulu-Nanka erosion problem where people were dispossessed of their lands and forced to live as refugees and homeless people is a clear case. All over the country, people are faced with various kinds of environmental problems. The following are some of the causes of environmental degradation in Anambra state. The major causes include the following:

#### **3.4.3.1. Gully Erosion**

Gully erosion is a phrase used to describe soil removal phenomenon that results in cutting of deep gullies on the surface of the earth.<sup>431</sup> Environmental degradation in Nigeria especially in the south east and in Anambra state in particular has led to the floods devastating several villages. In the book, *Nations of the Earth Report*, published by United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, it was reported that: “Soil erosion is probably the most

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<sup>429</sup> Muoghalu, Leonard. 2004. “Environmental problems in Nigeria What Prospects”. p.54

<sup>430</sup> Elliot, Lorraine. 1998. *The Global Politics of the Environment*. London: Macmillan Press. p.37

<sup>431</sup> Mba, Chike.H. 2004. “Towards Environmental Awareness in Nigeria” in Mba Chike, Uchegbu Smart, Udeh C. A and Muoghalu, Leonard (eds ) *Management of Environmental Problems and Hazards in Nigeria*.USA: Ashgate Publishing Company.p.180

serious nationwide problem; in some areas it has reached catastrophic proportions-including Anambra and Imo states, about 50million people are affected”.<sup>432</sup>

A study commissioned by the state government on the impact of the ecological disaster and how it could be controlled, showed that about 1.030 billion Naira (about 10 million US dollars) will be needed to control the disaster. Anambra state has more than 34 gully erosion sites, a menace, which the authorities say was too much for the state to handle alone.<sup>433</sup>

Commenting on the menacing nature of this phenomenon, Emeka Chikwelu asserts that:

The ecological disaster confronting south eastern Nigeria, particularly Anambra State, and the massive erosion coupled with disastrous gullies and ephemeral soil surface shift need and require immediate attention! The reality of ecological disasters in Nigeria-desert encroachment in northern Nigeria and erosion gullies in eastern Nigeria, requires fundamental paradigm shift in the way Nigeria treats her ecological system.<sup>434</sup>

Erosion may be broadly caused by natural and or human-made phenomena such as over grazing and cutting of trees at random.<sup>435</sup> There are many reasons why erosion is of great concern to the state. This is because it may remove the fertile top soil, change water courses and land forms and cause damage to valuable and expensive human-made structures.

### **3.4.3.2. Flooding**

Flooding appears to be rampant mostly in the riverine areas of the state that are a little bit above sea level, though some hinterland areas of the state occasionally experience flooding incidents. The flooding that occurs in most hinterland areas are usually associated with uncontrolled and improperly channelled flow of rain water. The coastal towns of Anam,

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<sup>432</sup> Nations of the Earth Report. 1992. United Nations Conference on Environment and Development: National Report Summaries.p.175

<sup>433</sup> Toye Olori. *Nigerian floods erosion devastate villages*. <http://www.afrol.com/news/2002/nig002-floods-erosion.htm> (accessed 4th July, 2009)

<sup>434</sup> Chikwelu, Emeka. 2009. *Confronting Ecological Disaster in Anambra State and South Eastern Region of Nigeria*. [http:// Nigeriaworld.com](http://Nigeriaworld.com) (Accessed 12<sup>th</sup> January, 2009)

<sup>435</sup> Okonkwo. E. M and Eboatu, A. N. 1999. *Environmental Pollution and Degradation*. p.161

Nzam, Ogbaru and others are observed to experience annual incidents of flooding mainly during the rainy seasons when the river Niger overflows its bank. The flooding incidents in Anam and other coastal towns in 1995 and 1996 are perhaps still easily remembered by the inhabitants of these towns because of the great destruction caused to the inhabitants in terms of material properties, emotional and psychological trauma.<sup>436</sup> The destruction to people's properties and threat to life is big enough to attract the substantial financial assistance from the Federal Government.

### **3.4.3.3 Pollution**

Another factor responsible for environmental degradation in Anambra state is pollution. Pollution refers to the amount of waste materials in various forms thrown away. We have earlier observed that a major characteristic of urban cities in Nigeria, is the amount of refuse it generates, not only from dwellings, but also from commercial, administrative and industrial activities, which although it requires to keep it going, but at the same time contributes to its degradation. Onitsha, the biggest commercial city in the state and in fact the economic hub of the Eastern States is a typical example of the amount of pollution generated by people's activities in various forms. The effects of pollution on the environment have been succinctly treated in previous chapters.

### **3.4.4. Survival Strategies of Vulnerable People in the State**

The phenomenon of poverty is a contributor to environmental degradation in Anambra state. Poverty is a fundamental component of this work. As a result, some of the poverty issues that were discussed previously are related to the poverty scenario in the state with a few exceptions that are specific to the state. The poor have been especially hard hit, notably by devaluations of the currency, which make basic imported goods, such as food, more expensive; cutbacks in services and increases in fees for services; and a rate of inflation that exceeded 60 percent.<sup>437</sup> An example of the level of poverty in Nigeria was exposed by the

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<sup>436</sup> Chikwelu, Emeka. 2009. *Confronting Ecological Disaster in Anambra State and South Eastern Region of Nigeria*. <http://Nigeriaworld.com> (Accessed 12<sup>th</sup> January, 2009)

<sup>437</sup> Federal Government History and Achievement. <http://www.inadev.org/profile-nigeria.htm> (Accessed on 5<sup>th</sup> March, 2008)

comment of Guy Arnold that “Nigeria is an economic mixture of boom and backwardness considering the fact that it had achieved rapid economic growth, yet, it has very little economic development, and many of its people are still living below the poverty line”.<sup>438</sup>

A major part of the population lives in absolute poverty. The living conditions of this group oblige it to exploit in an uncontrolled manner the existing resources to guarantee their survival. In most of the rural areas for example, people engage in land excavation, cutting down of trees for sale and other activities as strategies for economic survival. All these contribute to the acceleration of environmental degradation. Poverty reduction is the government’s main goal (at least as it claims), but a proper and due emphasis has not yet been placed on agriculture as a viable means of achieving rural development and poverty alleviation. The country has continued to place undue emphasis on the oil sector much to the negligence of agriculture.

### **3.5. Conclusion**

In this chapter, we have been discussing the environment and poverty in the Nigerian context as well as the interface of environment and poverty. We have seen the development of environmental laws in Nigeria and the challenges of institutional and policy framework as far as environmental management is concerned. We equally observed the role of the poor in environmental degradation in Nigeria. Generally speaking, the role of the poor in environmental degradation seems to be the same everywhere. However, because of peculiar Nigerian cultural contexts, the role of the poor in environmental degradation tends to follow some prevailing cultural milieu. A typical example of the peculiar cultural context in which the poor in Nigeria contribute to environmental degradation which is likely to be different from other cultural contexts, is the excavation of soil for economic gain as one of the survival strategies open to them in the face of economic hardship.

The chapter also dealt with the state of the environment and poverty in Anambra state, the study area. Of all the 36 states in Nigeria, Anambra state has one of the worst ecological

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<sup>438</sup> Guy, Arnold. 1977. *Modern Nigeria*. London: Longman. p.78

disaster situations. Onitsha, which is the commercial nerve centre of the state also has a huge sanitation problem to the extent that it is regarded as one of the dirtiest cities in Nigeria.

So far in the thesis, we have engaged in a detailed description and social analysis of the interface of poverty and environment. In the next chapters, we are initiating a major shift from description and social analysis to discussing issues of environment and poverty from the perspective of the church by interrogating her theological engagement in development concerns generally and environment and poverty particularly.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### 4.0. The Church, Poverty and the Environment

This is a transition chapter. It serves as a transition from social analysis to theological engagement. It deals with the response and engagement of the church to the environment and poverty challenges discussed in the previous chapters, by means of a literature survey. It begins with the debate about the importance of religion dealing with the environment as well as the history of the ecumenical engagement of churches in this regard. It also examines the wider Anglican Communion engagement in environment and poverty issues. Finally it discusses the engagement of the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) in environment and poverty initiatives and thus provides the background to the research engagement in chapter five.

### 4.1. Introduction

In the previous two chapters, we have been discussing issues relating to environmental degradation and poverty from a global perspective as well as from the African and Nigerian contexts. From these discussions, we conclude that a conglomeration of issues including the moral and ethical dimensions is identified as the causes of the problem of environment and poverty.<sup>439</sup> As a way of responding to the said moral and ethical perspectives of the environmental problem and working towards ensuring environmental sustainability, David Hallman states:

We find a significant resonance of ideas among the faiths in terms of the sacredness of the earth, the place of the human species as an integral member of the broader life-system, and the need to respect life including that which has gone before and that which will come after. There are certainly distinctions among the faiths in their understandings related to the natural world and our place within it, but the important commonalities provide a solid basis for interfaith collaboration in efforts to help reorient our societies towards greater social and ecological justice.<sup>440</sup>

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<sup>439</sup> Dieter, Hassel and Rasmussen, Larry. 2001 (eds) *Earth Habitat: Eco-Injustice and the Church's Response*. Minneapolis, Fortress Press.p.125

<sup>440</sup> Hallman, David. G. 2000. *Spiritual Values for Earth Community*. Geneva. WCC Publications. p.8

On a similar note, the Anglican Archbishop of Canterbury, Rowan Williams challenged the world's rich and powerful nations to act with justice towards future generations and to the world's poorest. He asserts that:

Christian ethics is also fundamentally about justice; it's about the way in which the love and the mercy of God, the gift of God, is spread abroad for all to share; and those kinds of actions which accumulate, which hoard up bits of the world so as to protect us from one another as human beings, those kinds of activity which privilege the interests of one group over another, those are the activities which God judges. So what we have to ask in our present situation is 'What are those actions that God's justice passes sentence upon?'<sup>441</sup>

Though William's statement does not explicitly relate to the environment *per se*, it does however, provide a clear link to issues of justice which is very fundamental to sustainable development and by extension to environmental sustainability.

Christian involvement in social issues including environment and poverty is premised on its social theology. In our opinion, Christian social engagement is an important way of expressing Christian beliefs and values enshrined in the bible. The bible itself could be seen by many Christians as a useful resource in articulating solutions to human problems. These belief systems and values contained in the bible provide Christians with the foundational influences that affect how they should think and act towards themselves and the world around them.<sup>442</sup> Based on this understanding, it is therefore important for us to examine the response and engagement of the ecumenical church in social issues with regard to environmental concerns over the years.

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<sup>441</sup> Williams, Rowan. 2007. *Climate Change Action a Moral Imperative for Justice*. [www.archbishopofcanterbury.org](http://www.archbishopofcanterbury.org) (Accessed on 13<sup>th</sup> March, 2009). This is a video address of The Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr Rowan Williams to the religious leaders' gathering at the United Nations Bali Climate Change delivered on 19<sup>th</sup> December 2007.

<sup>442</sup> Hallman, David. G. 2000. *Spiritual Values for Earth Community*. Geneva. WCC Publications. p.7

### 4.3. Christian Responses to the Environment

Before turning to the heritage of the ecumenical commitment to environmental issues, we need to note the long-standing reflection on and engagement with God's creation in Christian tradition and in the Bible itself.

This long standing reflection and engagement on God's creation by Christianity provides a necessary counter-point to Lyn White's accusation against Christianity. White being disgusted with Christianity's exploitative teaching and attitude to nature informed by its erroneous biblical interpretation, accused Christianity of the sin of anthropocentrism. He, therefore, held Christianity responsible for what he called "the historical roots of our ecological crisis".<sup>443</sup> White forcefully argues that Christianity in practice has been committed to an exploitative attitude, thereby sowing the seeds of the contemporary environmental crisis. In response to White, we will now examine the Christian response to the environment both from the bible as well as from individual Christians. This examination would offer us an objective insight in either accepting or refuting the accusation against Christianity as having sowed the seed of the contemporary ecological crisis.

#### 4.3.1. The Biblical Witness

Christianity as one of the major world religions is deeply committed to its own project of caring for the earth. It is also involved in many other projects such as the UNDP's project on the environment because of its deep concern for social development in general. This involvement is premised on the teachings of the bible regarding the world. The Judeo-Christian traditional belief in God's creation provides the bedrock for a Christian understanding of nature and humanity's relation to it. There are many positive images of nature portrayed in the Bible that can be applied to the development of a more positive theological approach to the environment. In this regard, we cite just a few examples from the

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<sup>443</sup> Attfield, R. 1994. *Environmental Philosophy: Principles and Prospects*. Aldershot: Avebury. p.164

work of Ibe Martin,<sup>444</sup> to elucidate this point. In the Old Testament, Mosaic laws place some restrictions on how humans treat other created things: restrictions on cutting down fruit trees (Deut. 20: 19-20), command to let the land lie fallow every seventh year (Lev. 25:1-7), eating certain “unclean” animals and dietary restrictions, killing a mother and her off- spring as in the example of the birds’ nest (Deut.22:6-7), humane treatment of animals (eg. Deut. 25: 4). Psalm (96: 11-13 and psalm 148: 1-3) are vivid expressions of the natural world as alive and responding to God in a moral fashion.

There are also New Testament texts which support Christian involvement in environmental protection. Here, we consider two texts from St. Paul which expresses human affinity to the natural world. The first text is Romans 8: 22-23: “We know that the whole creation has been groaning in labour pains until now; and not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the spirit, groan inwardly while we await for adoption, the redemption of our bodies”. In this text, Paul portrays all humanity as struggling through a birth-process aimed at achieving spiritual redemption which is both bodily and material. In similitude to the above text, Paul Santmire, for example alluded to Augustine’s theology and its emphasis which shows how all things, creatures of nature as well as human creatures, are related and have their own values.<sup>445</sup> Augustinian theology, including other Christian traditions underline the Christian understanding of working for the good of nature and society in general.

The second significant text on the issue of discussion is Colossians 1: 15-17: “(Christ) is the image of the invisible God, the first born of all creation; for in Him all things in heaven and on earth were created, things visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominations or ruler or powers—all things have been created through him and for him. He himself is before all things, and in him all things hold together”. Christ is presented in this text by St. Paul both as a product of the creative activity of God and the perfect image of God. Appreciating this text, Paul Collins observes that “The passage actually sets up a striking trinity: God-Christ-Creation. It suggests an intimate link between Christ and the cosmos so that one may well be

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<sup>444</sup> Ibe, Martin Joe. 2003. *Environmental Ethics and Politics in Developing Countries. Case study from Nigeria*. p.13. Ibe has done a lot of comparative work on different religious attitude and engagement on the environment.

<sup>445</sup> Santmire, Paul. H. 1985. *The Travail of Nature: The Ambiguous Ecological Promise of Christianity*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press. p.15

able to argue that to destroy that natural world is to destroy the image of Christ, who is the image of God”.<sup>446</sup>

Apart from the above biblical perspectives, the church’s engagement in the environment and poverty issues has further become necessary for a more apologetic reason. For long, those who criticize Christianity have seen it as a religion that emphasizes the “other worldly” attitude and therefore does not concern itself with the present worldly affairs. This position was not only held by critics, but some Christian fundamentalists even believe and justify their separation from worldly affairs by their wrong application of hermeneutics to some biblical texts such as John 17:16 “*They are not of the world, even as I am not of it*”. The interpretation given to this text by such people and the way they try to live it out in their interaction with the world, have made it possible for them to distance themselves from any worldly involvement they perceived to be incongruous with their understanding of the text. Both the influence of dominion thought and the Platonic-Cartesian dualistic philosophy which made White to accuse Christianity of being responsible for the contemporary ecological crisis, and the wrong hermeneutical application of some biblical texts by some Christians themselves seem to suggest that Christianity actually had indirectly promoted both the perception of “other worldliness” and exploitative attitude to nature. This dominion thought and the Platonic-Cartesian dualistic philosophy will be discussed in details in chapter six. Here we examine what we termed ‘generations of Christian ecological motifs’ by tracing the series of ecological thoughts in the history of Christian engagement in nature.

Recognising its captivity to earlier generations of ecological thinking, and developing a more adequate understanding of the relationship between humans and the earth, would help Christians to give proper interpretation to such passages that were hitherto construed as being heavily influenced by the dominion thought and “otherworldliness” and view them with appropriate lens befitting the 21<sup>st</sup> century. In doing this, Christianity would not only be seen as expressing its long standing historical heritage of commitment to the environment which is seen as a foundation or basis for Christian engagement in environmental issues, but would actually be seen as being practically upholding same. This practical involvement in social responsibility would therefore reaffirm the notion that God is not only concerned with the

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<sup>446</sup> Ibe, Martin Joe. 2003. *Environmental Ethics and Politics in Developing Countries. Case study from Nigeria*.p.14

supernatural, but is active to humanize the world as we know it, and his power is active in the secular life of humankind.<sup>447</sup>

### 4.3.2. Individual Witness

Although we cannot make a full review here given the nature of the study, we will cite a few examples of key individuals who from their personal involvement point to Christianity's history of environmental commitment. We may point, for example, to the attitude and teachings of the early church fathers such as Basil the Great and John Chrysostom which provide us with a positive picture of the early church's commitment to nature and the environment. Other church dignitaries such as Francis of Assisi and Albert Schweitzer also made impressive commitment to the nature.<sup>448</sup> From our point of view, this early church's engagement to the environment is worthy of note for two major reasons. First, it serves the purpose of repudiating the earlier accusations and criticisms against Christianity as being responsible for the current environmental chaos. Second, it also serves as a catalyst, a solid foundation, motivation and the premise for the current theological engagement in the double earth crisis of environment and poverty across the globe.

The above reference provides the background for the preceding discussion. It also helps us to appreciate the fact that Christian churches have in the past decades risen to the challenge of reading the signs of the times and addressing urgent issues that confront humanity.<sup>449</sup> One of such issues centred on development. The word "development" does not occur anywhere in the bible. However, the concept of development was reflected in Christian understanding and therefore has been debated in ecumenical circles during the past decades especially in the 1970s and 1980s.<sup>450</sup> During the late seventies and the eighties, the leadership of the world's

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<sup>447</sup> Tsele, Molefe. "The role of the Christian Faith in development" in Belshaw D, Calderisi R and Sugden C. 2001. *Faith in Development. Partnership Between the World Bank and the Churches of Africa*. Oxford: Regnum. P. 214

<sup>448</sup> Leal, Robert, Barry. 2004. *The Environment and Christian Faith*. Australia: St. Paul's Publication. p.44-50

<sup>449</sup> Rockefeller, Steven. C. And Elder, John. C. 1992. (eds) *Spirit and Nature. Why the Environment is a Religious Issue* p.10

<sup>450</sup> Meadows, D. 1974. *The Limits to Growth: A Report for the Club of Rome*. New-York: Universe Books

different religions began come together to articulate practical ways of addressing the challenges posed by the environmental crisis.

The first interfaith dialogue on the theme of the environment involving prominent representatives from the world religions occurred in Assisi, Italy, in 1986.<sup>451</sup> The *Assisi Declaration* did not contain new ethical or philosophical ideas, but they did mark the beginnings of interfaith cooperation complementing the international collaborative work of philosophers, scientists, activists and government leaders. Two years later, Pope John Paul II and the Dalai Lama met in Rome to discuss issues of world peace, spiritual values and protection of the earth's natural environment.<sup>452</sup>

### 4.3.3. Christian Ecumenical Initiatives

From a Christian ecumenical perspective, the World Council of Churches (WCC), organized in 1970 an important meeting in Montreux, Switzerland, where the issue of development was discussed and this led to the formation of the Commission on the Churches' Participation in Development (CCPD).<sup>453</sup> The CCPD was established to act as a *think tank* and laboratory to help articulate ecumenical reflection and action about development issues. Initially, the ecumenical debate about development issues centred only on certain features and consequences of economic life. The basic structures which produced these consequences were not seriously addressed. Mshana argues that the debate was more descriptive than analytical, more palliative than fundamental, and more remedial than a basic reshaping.<sup>454</sup> Economic growth was seen as the engine of development and, indeed, sometimes equated with development and progress. Development was seen as a linear catching up process.

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The consultation in Bucharest was convened in response to the report *The Limits to Growth* in which an international group of scientists, economists and business and political leaders who formed the so-called Club of Rome sounded an alarm about how natural resource depletion, pollution and population growth were placing an intolerable strain on the earth's resources.

<sup>451</sup> Rockefeller, Steven. C. and Elder, John. C. 1992. (eds) *Spirit and Nature*. p.10

<sup>452</sup> Rockefeller, Steven. C. and Elder, John. C. 1992. (eds) *Spirit and Nature*. p.10

<sup>453</sup> Mshana, Rogate.R. (ed) 2003. *Wealth Creation and Justice. The World Council of Churches' Encounters with the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund*. Geneva: WCC Publications. p.3

<sup>454</sup> Mshana, Rogate.R. (ed) 2003. *Wealth Creation and Justice*. p.3

Countries in the South should follow the examples of the West. It was therefore thought that there should be a transfer of knowledge, expertise, technology and resources from West to South. In this regard, we could infer that the ecumenical debate was not much different from the secular debate on development because of its dependence on secular approach to development issues.

In the course of time and as the participation of Churches from the Southern Hemisphere in the WCC increased, critical voices were raised questioning the fundamental meaning of development. Rich and Dickson identified some of these critical questions to include among others: That the traditional understanding of development focused too narrowly on economic development *per se*, and paid little attention to non economic factors in social transformation, such as cultural and religious divisions.<sup>455</sup> Real social transformation was to be measured by what happens to people, while the traditional notions of development tended to emphasize more abstract economic or political objectives. In fact, the notion of *people centered* development became the distinctive feature of the ecumenical engagement in development issues.

There was a growing concern that, in the name of development, many national and international economic structures were perpetuating or even reinforcing structures of injustice. Thus, many prominent ecumenical ethicists gradually rejected “development” altogether and chose instead to speak of “liberation”. Given the enormous strain on the environment, which growth models of development implied, many began to question whether the ideals of development were even suitable, attainable and desirable.<sup>456</sup>

It is interesting to note that long before the term *sustainable development* became popularized through the 1986 Brundtland Commission, the World Commission on Environment and Development, the World Council of Churches had already begun consulting with scientists, theologians and economists in this regard.<sup>457</sup> This Consultation was convened in response to the Club of Rome’s report, *The Limits to Growth*, which sounded an alarm about how natural resource depletion, pollution and population growth was placing an intolerable strain on the

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<sup>455</sup> Mshana, Rogate.R. (ed) 2003. *Wealth Creation and Justice*.p.4

<sup>456</sup> Mshana, Rogate.R. (ed) 2003. *Wealth Creation and Justice*. p.4

<sup>457</sup> World Commission on Sustainable Development, *One Earth Community*. 1987. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

earth's resources.<sup>458</sup> This consultation led to the WCC adopting a program on what it called "Just, Participatory and Sustainable Societies" (JPSS).<sup>459</sup> The JPSS frame work demonstrated the awareness of the need to link socio-economic justice and ecological sustainability. This has been a recurring theme within the ecumenical community and has been a gift to the broader global community.<sup>460</sup>

The call for justice sets out to challenge and transform social, political and economic institutions which were exploiting the poor.<sup>461</sup> In several of its assemblies and conventions, the WCC broadened its Justice agenda to include a viable theology of nature, a bio centric ethics, and an exploration of the goals of justice, peace and creation from biblical, socio economic and political perspectives. In its General Assembly of 1975 in Nairobi, Kenya, the church leaders called attention to the fact that the world faces an epoch of triumphalism in the use and development of science and technology. Faced with hunger, limited resources and endangered species, and environmental degradation, the world is at the brink of a catastrophe.<sup>462</sup>

From this period onwards, the Council employed such phrases as "just, participatory and sustainable society" and "justice, peace and integrity of creation" to express its deep concern for a new environmental order. In 1983, the just, participatory and sustainable society framework was further expanded at the Vancouver Assembly of the WCC with the inauguration of the Conciliar process on "justice, peace and integrity of creation" (JPIC).<sup>463</sup> Vancouver was responding to a situation of crisis as outlined in the assembly statement on peace and justice: "Humanity is now living in the dark shadows of an arms race more intense

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<sup>458</sup> Meadows, Donella. H. 1974. *The Limits to Growth: A report for the Club of Rome's Project on the Predicament of Mankind*. New York: Universe Books. P.68

<sup>459</sup> Dieter, Hassel and Larry Rasmussen (eds) 2001. *Earth Habitat: Eco-Injustice and the Church's Response*. P. 126

<sup>460</sup> Dieter, Hassel and Rasmussen, Larry (eds) 2001. *Earth Habitat: Eco-Injustice and the Church's Response* P. 126

<sup>461</sup> Ibe, Martin Joe. 2003. *Environmental Ethics and Politics in Developing Countries. Case Study from Nigeria*. p.73.

<sup>462</sup> Ibe, Martin Joe. 2003. *Environmental Ethics and Politics in Developing Countries. Case Study from Nigeria*. p.73

<sup>463</sup> Dieter, Hassel and Rasmussen, Larry (eds) 2001. *Earth Habitat* .p.126

and of systems of injustice more widespread than the world has ever known. Never before has the human race been as close as it is now to total self-destruction. Never before have so many lived in the grip of deprivation and oppression”.<sup>464</sup>

The phrase “justice, peace and the integrity of creation” (JPIC) is a shorthand for a fuller statement which emphasizes the need :“To engage member churches in a conciliar process of mutual commitment (covenant) to justice, peace and the integrity of creation which has become a priority for World Council programmes”.<sup>465</sup> It goes on to state what the Christian response to this situation should be: “The churches today are called to confess anew their faith and to repent for the times when Christians have remained silent in the face of injustice or threats to peace. The biblical vision of peace with justice for all is not one of several options for the followers of Christ but is an imperative for our times”.<sup>466</sup>

In taking the above position, the WCC seems to have shifted from the position of understanding Christian involvement in world affairs largely as a concern of Christian ethics, i.e. to translate the values of the kingdom into achievable social goals. Christian attempts to translate the values of the kingdom (Christian concept) into social goals in a world that is not populated by Christians alone, is tantamount to negating the efforts of promoting social cohesion in the society. The realization of this is the reason why the WCC made the shift by placing emphasis on confessing the faith, which calls for a new understanding of the missionary task of the church. In our opinion, “confessing the faith” appears more missionary in outlook and persuasive in appeal than the previous aim of “translating the kingdom values into social goals”. To realize this intention, the assembly envisaged a “conciliar process of mutual commitment” that would bring the churches together to take a common stand on the urgent issues concerning the survival of humankind. It envisioned such a council taking the churches to a new stage in the covenant relationship into which they had entered at the inaugural assembly at Amsterdam (1948). From this point onwards, justice, peace and the

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<sup>464</sup> Niles, P. 2003: *Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation*. World Council of Churches Article of the Month Series. www.wcc.org (Accessed on 13th March 2009)

<sup>465</sup> Niles, P. 1992.( ed) *Between the Flood and the Rainbow: Essays Interpreting the Conciliar Process of Mutual Commitment (Covenant) to Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation*. Geneva: WCC Publications.

<sup>466</sup> Niles, P. 2003: *Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation*. World Council of Churches Article of the Month Series. www.wcc.org (Accessed on 13<sup>th</sup> March 2009)

integrity of creation (JPIC) became the rallying theme of the WCC. One remarkable result of the JPIC was its emphasis on environmental issues thereby making a gradual evolution from its primary concern for justice to broader issues of socio-economic consideration.

The church's engagement in the Brundtland Commission encouraged other subsequent engagements such as the UN Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) held in Rio de Janeiro in June 1992. The success of this engagement intensified ecumenical involvement in issues of sustainability and an interaction with broader global community.<sup>467</sup>

#### **4.3.4. WCC Involvement in Water and Climate Change Initiatives**

To wrap up this section on the Christian ecumenical initiatives on development in general and environment in particular, we would briefly examine how the ecumenical initiative under the auspices of the WCC has been involved in two specific environmental problems, namely, water and climate change. This examination is very important because of our understanding that water and climate change are key environmental issues relating to the livelihoods of communities. The examination is also important because issues of water and climate change serve as the entry point for any development initiative. Because of the fundamental significance of the two environmental problems specified above, we argue that environmental sustainability and poverty reduction strategies can never be achieved, if they are not adequately addressed.

With reference to water and sanitation, the WCC has shown its concern over the lack of water and sanitation. Water is indispensable to sanitation. The WCC believes that lack of water and sanitation reinforces the cycle of poverty and therefore could diminish the chance to achieve any of the Millennium Development Goals.<sup>468</sup> Because water is a basic precondition for all life, therefore without water, the continuation of life is threatened. Having or not having

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<sup>467</sup> World Council of Churches. 1992. *Searching for a new Heaven and a New Earth: An Ecumenical Response to UNCED*. Geneva: World Council of Churches Publications.

<sup>468</sup> International Needs Australia. <http://www.oikoumene.org/en/resources/documents/wcc-programmes/justice-diakonia-and-responsibility-for-creation/climate-change-water/05-water-preservation-responsible-management-equitable-distribution.html>)

access to water determines life or death. The WCC is therefore concerned that water is being commodified and the poor, as usual, do not have access to it. It states that:

Water is not available for all people on earth. 1.1 billion people do not have access to potable water and 2.2 million people in the developing countries are dying every year, most of them children, from diseases linked to the lack of access to clean drinking water, inadequate health and poor hygiene; 6000 boys and girls die every day from diseases linked to the lack of access to clean drinking water, inadequate health and poor hygiene; 1.5 billion people in the world are suffering from parasite infections due to solid waste in the environment, which could be controlled with hygiene, water and sanitation. Because of distance, women carry heavy burdens of water of about 20 kilograms on their heads, walking an average 6 km. There is also inequality in water use in the world. The population of Nairobi, Kenya pays five times more for water than does the North American citizen. When a toilet is flushed in the North, a person is using the same amount of water that one person in the Third World uses all day to wash, clean, cook and drink. Water accessibility and inequality are major problems. In Sub-Saharan Africa, only 58 percent of the population have access to improved water sources.<sup>469</sup>

The above indicates how serious the problem of water is globally and in Africa and how in spite of all promises made in the context of the Millennium Development Goals, in rural Africa 65% of the population still lack access to adequate water supply and 73% access to adequate sanitation.<sup>470</sup>

As a result of the seriousness of this water situation, the WCC established an Ecumenical Water Network whose aim is to:

-  protect and realize people's access to water around the world
-  making a common Christian witness be heard in the debate on water issues
-  promoting community-based initiatives and solutions to overcome the water crisis

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<sup>469</sup> Rogate R. Mshana. undated. *Preservation, responsible management and equitable distribution: the ecumenical perspective*. Available on (<http://www.oikoumene.org/en/resources/documents/wcc-programmes/justice-diakonia-and-responsibility-for-creation/climate-change-water/05-water-preservation-responsible-management-equitable-distribution.html>)

<sup>470</sup> Rogate R. Mshana. undated. *Preservation, responsible management and equitable distribution: the ecumenical perspective*. Available on (<http://www.oikoumene.org/en/resources/documents/wcc-programmes/justice-diakonia-and-responsibility-for-creation/climate-change-water/05-water-preservation-responsible-management-equitable-distribution.html>)

 protecting water as a gift of God and advocating for water as a human right at the local, regional, and international level.<sup>471</sup>

This water Network is an attempt to urge governments, as well as multilateral institutions to respect the human right to water and to respond to their respective obligations. The WCC argues that Provision of water for all is possible. It therefore demands that the human right to water be recognized at the local and international level in the same way as the right to adequate food.<sup>472</sup> This right must be respected by all sectors of society but states have a particular responsibility in this area.

Similarly, the WCC also expresses its concern over the aggravating impact of climate change which threatens to further alter the water patterns in the world including Africa. Climate change is a global issue because almost everybody is contributing to it and it will definitely affect everybody, including non-humans.<sup>473</sup> Climate change is already causing unpredictable rainfall, prolonged droughts, devastating floods, desertification and drying up of water sources. The existence and future of millions of people is jeopardized.<sup>474</sup>

Although the data regarding climate change is sometimes debated, the seriousness of the situation is generally accepted. As we have already noted, climate change affects everyone including the rich and the poor and according to David Hallman, “Unless we take radical and immediate measures to reduce emissions stemming from unsustainable—in fact unjustifiable, if not simply unjust—excesses in the demands of our lifestyle, the impact will be both alarming and imminent”.<sup>475</sup>

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<sup>471</sup> The Ecumenical Water Network <http://www.oikoumene.org/en/activities/ewn-home.html> (accessed on 24th June. 2009)

<sup>472</sup> Rogate R. Mshana. undated. Preservation, responsible management and equitable distribution: the ecumenical perspective.

<sup>473</sup> See Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, *Climate Change 2007: The Physical Science Basis, Summary for Policymakers*. Available at [www.ipcc.ch](http://www.ipcc.ch), Accessed on 24<sup>th</sup> January 2009.

<sup>474</sup> Northcott, Michael. 2007. *A Moral Climate: The Ethics of Global Warming*. Maryknoll: Orbis Books. p.74

<sup>475</sup> World Council of Churches. 2005. *Climate Change. Justice, Peace and Creation Team*. p.67

Climate change is much more than an issue of environmental preservation, it constitutes a matter of social and economic justice. This is because there is a close link between the economy of the poor and the warming of the planet. In recognition of this, the World Council of Churches has been working on climate change ever since 1990.<sup>476</sup> At the Rio Earth Summit in 1992, the WCC Working Group on Climate Change was formed with participation of representatives from each region.<sup>477</sup> This Working Group with some variation in membership has been the facilitator of the WCC's climate change programme ever since. In 1998 the General Assembly in Harare gave a special mandate to the Justice, Peace and Creation (JPC) team to continue the work on climate change through its "Working Group".

The working group has carried its climate change programme through building networks of engaged people in every region; partnering with member churches, national councils and regional ecumenical organisations in advocacy and project support, including a petition campaign to support agreement on initial reduction targets that finally became the Kyoto Protocol.<sup>478</sup> It has also been consulting with scientific, economic, political and technical expertise on climate change within an ethical framework; utilising electronic communication to mobilise and sustain networks; and linking to other interested agencies and organisations within and beyond the ecumenical family.<sup>479</sup> The WCC through the working group has been urging the industrialized countries to take their responsibility, and together with industrializing countries to start immediately to cut the emission of carbon dioxide, to put advanced alternative energy technology at the disposal of Africa and to assure funding for mitigation and adaptation measures in Africa, as well as in other affected regions of the Global South.

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<sup>476</sup> World Council of Churches. 2005. *Climate Change. Justice, Peace and Creation Team*. p.67

<sup>477</sup> World Council of Churches. 2005. *Climate Change. Justice, Peace and Creation Team*. p.6

<sup>478</sup> World Council of Churches. 2005. *Climate Change. Justice, Peace and Creation Team*. p.6

<sup>479</sup> World Council of Churches. 2005. *Climate Change. Justice, Peace and Creation Team*. p.6

#### **4.4. Development of Key Ecological Themes from Ecumenical Engagement in the Environment and Poverty Discussions**

What we have done so far in the previous section was to trace the history of ecumenical involvement in development debate in general and environment in particular. In this section, we are going to reflect on some key ecological themes that have evolved as a result of the ecumenical response and engagement on environmental issues. In this reflection, we have been greatly assisted by a brief unpublished document by Steve de Gruchy which we have expanded. In this unpublished manuscript, by reflecting on the history of the ecumenical engagement in ecological concerns, de Gruchy suggests five reasons that have emerged as to why Christians in particular, should be involved in the current efforts towards environmental sustainability. The five reasons are:

- ✚ God created this world and it belongs to God
- ✚ If we care for life we must care for the environment
- ✚ Our humanity depends upon the environment
- ✚ Creation is bound up with salvation
- ✚ The earth crisis is a crisis of culture to which the Gospel speaks

Expounding on de Gruchy's framework, we now identify the following key themes which will serve as the building block for our discussion.

##### **4.4.1. God Created this World and it Belongs to Him (Stewardship Responsibility)**

The fundamental standpoint for church's engagement in the environment and poverty issues emanates from its belief that God created and loves His world. He values and cares for it independently of human existence. By this very fact, it is expected that human beings, bearing the image of God (particularly Christians) and as an integral part of that creation, should imitate the concern of God for maintaining and taking care of the earth.<sup>480</sup> In imitating this loving and caring attitude of God, humans are expected to live in a wholesome relationship with the rest of creation so as not to cause such destruction that species, ecosystems and indeed large numbers of people are threatened. In this regard, de Gruchy,

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<sup>480</sup> Spencer, Nick and White, Robert. 2007. *Christianity, Climate Change and Sustainable Living*.p.75

cautiously notes that we cannot *ipso facto* commodify the environment, but are obliged to respect its integrity and honour its creator and owner.<sup>481</sup> Unfortunately, people's non-appreciation of the environment, which is based on a very strong anthropocentric attitude towards nature, is to a very large extent the cause of the current environment and poverty problems.

Closely related to the above reason why the church should be engaged in the current "double earth crisis" of environment and poverty, is the Christian understanding of the implication of the concept of stewardship. In the opinion of Mc-Donagh, God's command in Gen. 1:28 should be seen as a key text in re-shaping the human-earth relationship from the perspective of stewardship.<sup>482</sup> The mandate to exercise dominion over the rest of the creation should not be seen as a warrant for domination and exploitation that it has so often been taken to imply. For Mc Donagh, this mandate suggests that human beings as stewards have the role of managing and preserving the creation for God. Similarly, George, S. Johnson, gives deeper insights of stewardship when he observes that:

The biblical understanding of stewardship implies accountability and participation. To move beyond guilt and powerlessness, we need to move from mastery, control and ownership attitudes to an attitude of stewardship toward all of life. This means becoming caretakers of creation with a sense of identification and partnership, rather than dominion and exploitation. To be a steward of creation is to embrace the world, to love as Christ did, and to be willing to sacrifice for the world rather than escape from the world.<sup>483</sup>

In a similar emphasis, the Archbishop of the province of the Niger and the bishop of Awka diocese, Maxwell Anikwenwa, in his synod address delivered to the First Session of the Sixth synod asserts that we have no right over the earth, since we are caretakers called to responsible exercise of control over it. He therefore cautions that "Our possession of the earth is not a freehold, but leasehold. This means that we are all tenants and not landlords-of all the

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<sup>481</sup> De Gruchy, Steve. 2004. *Theology and Development Studies Handout on Five Reasons why African Christians Should be Concerned about the Environment.*

<sup>482</sup> Gitau, S. K. 2000. *The Environmental Crisis.* Nairobi: Action. p.61

<sup>483</sup> Johnson, G. S. 2000. *Beyond Guilt: Christian Response to Suffering.* Cambridge: Adventure Publications. p.118

lands. This includes where you were born, which you call your family land and the freehold you secured from those who think that they were landlords of the piece of land”.<sup>484</sup>

Talking about the need for proper care of the earth in an intergenerational and non theological terms, but also reflecting the theological concept of stewardship, Michael Watts and Richard Peet, made reference to a quote credited to Karl Max in which he stated that: “Even society as a whole, a nation, or all existing societies put together, are not owners of the earth. They are merely its occupants, its users; and like good caretakers, they must hand it down improved to subsequent generations”.<sup>485</sup>

Furthermore, in an attempt for a renewed effort for Christianity’s commitment to the concept of stewardship, a declaration was made in Assisi the home of St. Francis in 1986 during the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the World Wild Fund (WWF). World Wild Fund is now renamed World Wild Fund (WWF).<sup>486</sup> The Assisi declaration reads thus:

God declared everything to be good, indeed, very good. He created nothing unnecessary and has omitted nothing that is necessary. There exists a divinely willed harmony because the creatures have received their mode of existence by the will of their creator. Dominion (by human beings) cannot be anything other than a stewardship in symbiosis with all creatures.<sup>487</sup>

All the quotations above refer to the stewardship role of humanity towards sustaining the earth. The overarching issue emerging from all of the quotations is a caution that humans are not the owners of the earth and therefore cannot treat it irresponsibly. Stewardship is further treated in greater details in the chapter six under the discussion on the generations of ecological motifs.

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<sup>484</sup> Anikwenwa, Maxwell.S.C. 2002. *Our Common Future-Human Environment*. Presidential Address delivered at the First Session of the Sixth Synod of the Diocese of Awka, Anambra State-Nigeria.

<sup>485</sup> Peet, Richards and Watts, Michael. 2004.(eds) *Liberation Ecologies, Environment, Development, Social Movements*.London and New-York: Routledge.p.3

<sup>486</sup> Gitau, Samson. K. 2000. *The Environmental Crisis. A Challenge to African Christianity*. Nairobi: Action. p.80

<sup>487</sup> Gitau, Samson. K. 2000. *The Environmental Crisis. A Challenge to African Christianity*. P.80

This stewardship concept was popularized by the rule of St. Benedictine monastery. Monastic life does not exist only for itself and profit but for the sake of others. This is how the idea of stewardship should be understood by Christians in dealing with environmental issues.

#### 4.4.2. Creation is bound up with Salvation

Christians believe that Christ created all things and has dominion over all things, and in him all things hold together (Col 1:15-17). We also know from Romans, that creation groans awaiting its redemption, and that we share this groaning as we await the return of Christ. So, our relationship to nature and our harmony with it is a way we express not just our understanding of creation, but also our expectation of redemption. Unfortunately, the violation of God's laws concerning the nature, continually reflected in environmental exploitation, has consequently led to increasing mass-poverty (in certain parts of the world in the twenty first century) despite technological, scientific, and economic advancements.<sup>488</sup> As part of the effort to restore the divine order and God's love for His creation, Christians are obliged to continue working for the fulfilment of what is regarded as the Jesus manifesto in Luke 4: 18-19-“The spirit of the Lord is upon me because he has anointed me: He has sent me to announce good news to the poor, to proclaim release for prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind; to let the broken victims go free, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour”.

The establishment of God's rule on earth is central to the message of holistic redemption epitomised in the mission of Christ. The church views salvation to entail not only the redemption of an individual from his or her sin, it also entails the renewal and transformation of all aspects of creation, including its social and economic structures.<sup>489</sup> Lending his support for the church's engagement in socio- economic and political concerns as part of this redemption agenda, Leonardo Boff, a proponent of Liberation theology, says that:

The gospel is nothing but the proclamation of the reign of God: the full and total liberation of all creation, cosmic and human, from all its iniquities, and the integral accomplishment of God's design in the insertion of all things into his own divine life. Concretely, then, the reign of God translates into community of life ... in a universal communion of brothers and sisters in

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<sup>488</sup> Thomas, Leonard. M. 2006. (ed) *Encyclopaedia of the Developing World*. Vol. 3 O-Z Index. New York: Routledge. p.1316

<sup>489</sup> Kent, A. Van Til. 2007. *Less Than Two Dollars A Day*.p.92

solidarity with one another in the use of the fruit of the earth and the work of human hands.<sup>490</sup>

#### **4.4.3. Our Humanity and Well-being Depends upon the Environment**

God's relationship to creation is not the only reason why the church is obliged to care about the environment. Another important reason or motivation is seen in what Nick Spencer and Robert White wrote about what the bible teaches regarding human relationship to the rest of the creation.

The opening chapters of Genesis highlight the commonalities between humanity and the rest of the animate creation. Genesis 2 uses the same word to describe how animals, birds and humans were formed from the ground. Humans were formed specially from the dust of the ground - that hardly constitutes an accolade of superiority. Humanity shares the same food as other animals and the same breath of life is given to animals and humans alike. To care for the creation is therefore to care for a system of which we are a part and upon which we are utterly dependent.<sup>491</sup>

The implication of the above is that human flourishing and the well-being of the rest of creation are inextricably linked in the biblical narrative. As a result, we need the beauty of the world around us - the air, mountains, rivers, birds, animals, to experience the fullness of the life God has created. Apart from the perspective of aesthetics, the truth is that we also need water, air and food to survive. But, with the loss of each species, and the ugliness of pollution, we do not only dehumanize ourselves and those around us, we are also faced with water shortage and food security threat. The way we respond to our neighbor and all living things is a pointer to our humanity. When we denigrate the environment, we denigrate ourselves.

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<sup>490</sup> Boff, Leonardo. 1989. *Faith on the Edge: Religion and Marginalized Existence*. San Francisco: Harper and Row. 73

<sup>491</sup> Spencer, Nick and White, Robert. 2007. *Christianity, Climate Change and Sustainable Living*. p.82

#### 4.4.4. The Earth Crisis is a Crisis of Culture to which the Gospel Speaks

A deeper analysis of the current earth crisis suggests that:

it is not the environment that is failing - but it is the dominant culture of economic growth and indiscriminate use of nature's resources to satisfy our desires - that is really failing". Thus, the environmental crisis is really a cultural crisis - a crisis of values, of meaning, of purpose and vocation. The Gospel speaks to this crisis-and if Christians have a message to proclaim, then they need to speak about the environment and how we live in and with it.<sup>492</sup>

In the light of the above, the duty of the Church is expressed in the use of its theology and other faith resources to speak and act against the dominant culture of economic growth which does not recognize the integrity of creation. In this regard, the Marxist literary critic Fredric Jameson has greatly contributed to our understanding of the negative effects of the culture of economic growth without boarder or consideration.<sup>493</sup> His examination of the emergence of the cultural dominance of capitalism in the era of postmodernism is insightful and useful particularly for our theological reflection on the crisis of culture with regards to the current environmental crisis. This is because the way he describes the postmodern era as "a time when capitalism penetrates the pre-capitalist enclaves of nature and the unconscious, reducing all human action, including politics to some form of consumption"<sup>494</sup> is precisely at the centre of our theological argument against the current global economic structure hugely determined by the system of global governance. Our theological engagement should therefore be responsible to the integrity of creation. Integrity of creation, as we have noted earlier, is at the heart of the WCC engagement in development issues when it employed such phrases as "just, participatory and sustainable society" and "justice, peace and integrity of creation" to express its deep concern for a new environmental order.<sup>495</sup>

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<sup>492</sup> De Gruchy, Steve. 2004. *Theology and Development Studies Handout on Five Reasons why African Christians Should be Concerned about the Environment*

<sup>493</sup> See Miller, Vincent, J. 2004. *Consuming Religion. Christian Faith and Practice in a Consumer Culture*. New York, London:Continuum.p.63-65

<sup>494</sup> Miller, Vincent, J. 2004. *Consuming Religion. Christian Faith and Practice in a Consumer Culture*.p.65

<sup>495</sup> Dieter, Hassel and Rasmussen, Larry (eds) 2001. p 126

#### 4.5. Global Anglican Perspectives on the Environment

So far we have seen the global ecumenical engagement on development issues in general and environment in particular. We will now go on to specifically investigate the global Anglican Communion's engagement in environment and development issues. For a clearer understanding of the engagement of the church we are talking about, it is deemed necessary to give a concise background information of the Anglican Church. This will enable us understand how it is structured and how it operates, makes decisions and how such decisions are implemented. We have to note that much has been written about the Anglican Church and that in a study of this nature which is not about the history of Anglicanism *per-se*, we would not concern ourselves with much of its historical complexities.<sup>496</sup> Such is by far beyond the scope of this work.

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<sup>496</sup> There are a lot of books and other resource materials published over the decades that provide some useful insights into Anglicanism. For detailed history of Anglicanism, see the following: Paul, Avis. 2000. *The Anglican understanding of the church: An Introduction*. Edinburgh: SPCK. This is a concise treatise on Anglican ecclesiology, its spirit, sources, shape and appeal, and contains a useful up-date bibliography. Paul, Avis. 2002. *Anglicanism and Christian Church*. London: T&T Clark. This book contains a detailed historical discussion on Anglicanism from the sixteen century, with a focus on the development of the Anglican doctrine of the church. See also, Bradshaw, T. 1996.(ed) *Celebrating the Anglican Way*. London: Hodder & Stoughton. This book contains a collection of essays that look at aspects of Anglican belief, ethos, worship, sacraments and prayer. Hannaford, R. 1996. (ed) *The Future of Anglicanism*. Gracewing. Harris, Mark. 1998. *The Challenge of Change: The Anglican Communion in the post-modern era*. New York: Church Publishing Inc. This book was written by an Episcopal priest. It looks at the Anglican Church's understanding of the church, its vocation, its incarnational theology and its estrangement from the world. Jacob, W. M. 1997. *The making of the Anglican Church Worldwide*. London: SPCK. This is an historical survey of how Anglicanism evolved into a worldwide communion from the reformation, focusing particularly on episcopacy and unity. Alister, McGrath. 2000.(ed) *The SPCK handbook of Anglican theologians*. London: SPCK. This is a book in which every significant theologian in Anglican history is reviewed and a survey of Anglicanism in Britain is given. For further explanation on the Thirty Nine Articles of Religion: See: Chapman, Mark (2006). *Anglicanism: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. p. 73, Cross, F. L. and Livingstone, E. A . (eds). (1997) *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church* (3rd ed.) USA: Oxford p.161 1ff, Ayris, Paul; Selwyn, David, (eds). 1993. *Thomas Cranmer: Churchman and Scholar*, Woodbridge, Suffolk, UK: The Boydell Press, D'Aubigné, J. H. Merle. 1972. *The Reformation In England, Volume 2 Book 3*, Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, Blunt, J. *The Reformation of the Church of England-its History, Principles and Results (A.D. 1514-1547)*. London, Oxford, and Cambridge: Rivingtons. P.444-445. Henry, Chadwick. 1988. "Tradition, Fathers, and Councils". In Sykes, S. and Booty, J. (eds) *The Study of Anglicanism*. London: SPCK. Chapman, Mark (2006). *Anglicanism: A Very*

#### 4.5.1. Overview of the Historical and Structural Make up of Anglican Church

The Anglican Church comprises over 80 million members in 44 regional and national member churches around the globe in over 160 countries.<sup>497</sup> When we talk about the Anglican Church, we mean, “a collection of Churches that are in communion with the See of Canterbury, united by allegiance to the thirty nine articles of Religion”.<sup>498</sup> The term *Anglican*, originates from *ecclesia anglicana*, a Medieval Latin phrase meaning ‘the English church’.<sup>499</sup> As an adjective, *Anglican* is used to describe the people, institutions and churches as well as the liturgical traditions and theological concepts developed by the Church of England and the Anglican Communion - a theologically broad and often divergent affiliation of thirty-eight provinces that are in communion with the Archbishop of Canterbury. As a noun, an Anglican is a member of a church in the Anglican Communion. Anglicanism as a term encapsulates the doctrine, religious belief, faith, system, practice and principles of the Church of England and other Anglican churches.<sup>500</sup> The term at its broadest includes churches who uphold and propagate the catholic and apostolic faith and order as they are generally set forth in the book of Common Prayer and churches who have accepted the work of the English Reformation as embodied in the Church of England or on the offshoot Churches which in other countries have adhere at least substantially, to its doctrines, its organization, and its liturgy”.<sup>501</sup> The

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*Short Introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. p.73, Cross, F.L and Livingstone, E. A. 1997. (eds) *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church* (3rd ed.), USA: Oxford p.1611ff, Ayris, Paul; Selwyn, David, eds. (1993) *Thomas Cranmer: Churchman and Scholar*, Woodbridge, Suffolk, UK: The Boydell Press, D'Aubigné, J. H. Merle (1972), *The Reformation In England, Volume 2 Book 3*, Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, Blunt, J. *The Reformation of the Church of England-Its History, Principles and Results (A.D. 1514-1547)*. London, Oxford, and Cambridge: Rivingtons. p. 444-445. Henry, Chadwick. 1988. “*Tradition, Fathers, and Councils*”. In Sykes, S. and Booty, J.(eds) *The Study of Anglicanism*. London: SPCK

<sup>497</sup> The Anglican Communion Official Website. <http://anglicanhistory.org/Canada/fulford/synod-sermon1886.html>.

<sup>498</sup> Gilbert,W. Wilson. 1980. *The Faith of an Anglican*. Glasgow: Fountain. p. 231

<sup>499</sup> Anglican Diocese of Jos. *The Anglican Structure and Systems*. A paper presented to the diocesan ordinands on 16<sup>th</sup> July, 2008. Available on <http://www.anglicandioceseofjos.org/structure.html> (Accessed on 24th April 2009)

<sup>500</sup> Sykes, S. And Booty, J. 1998. (eds) *The Study of Anglicanism*. London: SPCK/Fortress.p. 52

<sup>501</sup> See, Hannaford, Robert.1988. *The Future of Anglicanism. Essays on Faith and Order*. Broughton Gifford: Cromwell Press.p.8-9

Anglican Communion is a loose confederacy of churches, loosely associating with Canterbury.<sup>502</sup> Its primary instrument of global administration is the Lambeth Conference which is held every ten years. Yet, even the Lambeth Conference decisions are not made binding on the Provinces. The provinces are simply required to act in relation to the Lambeth Conference resolutions as they best suit their operating environments.

It has been shown that it is not liturgical uniformity that makes the Anglican Communion a united entity. It is its adherence to the thirty nine Articles of Religion.<sup>503</sup> However, in practice, liturgical uniformity is being aspired to and maintained as a way of sustaining the Anglican ethos and identity. For this reason, churches in remote areas in Africa strive to impose upon themselves the liturgical frame work designed for England with its own peculiarities. One sees this self imposition as one major problem of the Anglican Church. While the English is naturally conservative and this is reflected in its attitude to worship and hence liturgy, the African is dynamic, active outward, living naturally in the realm of excitement, whether in celebration or in mourning.

#### **4.5.2. Brief Description of the Anglican Polity**

Ecclesiastical polity is the operational and governance structure of a church. It also denotes the ministerial structure of the church and the authority relationships between churches.<sup>504</sup> The Anglican Church is autonomous. The church by structure is meant to be synodically administered. What this means is that the decisions of the synod is the highest decision in the church, and in the synod, the three houses of the bishop, priests and laity jointly make decisions on issues. A characteristic feature of Anglicanism is that it has no international juridical authority. All thirty-nine provinces of the Anglican Communion are independent, each with their own Primate and Governing structure.<sup>505</sup> These Provinces may take the form

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<sup>502</sup> Uzuegbunam, Emma. 2007. *Rebranding the Anglican Church for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century* This is an address presented to the delegates and participants at the 2008 Alumni Convention of St. Paul's University College, Awka, Anambra State. P.5

<sup>503</sup> Uzuegbunam, Emma. 2007. *Rebranding the Anglican Church for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*. p.5

<sup>504</sup> Anglican Diocese of Jos. *The Anglican Structure and Systems*. A paper presented to the diocesan ordinands on 16<sup>th</sup> July, 2008. Available on <http://www.anglicandioceseofjos.org/structure.html>

<sup>505</sup> Hannaford, Robert.1988. *The Future of Anglicanism. Essays on Faith and Order*. Broughton Gifford: Cromwell Press.p.8-9

of National churches (such as in Canada, Nigeria or Japan) or a collection of Nations (such as the West Indies, Central Africa or South Asia) or geographical regions (such as Vanuatu and Solomon Islands).<sup>506</sup>

All Provinces of the Anglican Communion consist of Dioceses, each under the jurisdiction of a Bishop. In the Anglican tradition, Bishops must be consecrated according to the structures of apostolic succession, which Anglicans consider one of the marks of Catholicity. Apart from Bishops, there are two other orders of ordained ministry: Deacon and Priest. No requirement is made for clerical celibacy and women may be admitted in the ordained ministry. The church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) has not yet considered women ordination as its priority. Government in the Anglican Communion is Synodical, consisting of three houses of Laity, Clergy and Bishops. National, Provincial, and Diocesan Synods maintain different scopes of authority, depending on their Canons and Constitutions. Anglicanism is not Congregational in its polity: it is the Diocese, not the Parish church, which is the smallest unit of authority in the church, and Bishops must give their assent to resolutions passed by Synods.

There are four instruments of unity which serve the worldwide family of Anglican churches. They are the Lambeth Conference for bishops held every 10 years; the Primates Meetings for the senior archbishops and bishops of the 39 Anglican/Episcopal provinces; the Anglican Consultative Council; and the archbishop of Canterbury in his international role as *primus inter pares*.<sup>507</sup>

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<sup>506</sup> Anglican Diocese of Jos. *The Anglican Structure and Systems*. A paper presented to the diocesan ordinands on 16<sup>th</sup> July, 2008.

<sup>507</sup> Hannaford, Robert. 1988. *The Future of Anglicanism. Essays on Faith and Order*. Broughton Gifford: Cromwell Press.p.9

### 4.5.3. The Lambeth Conference and the Archbishop of Canterbury

Canterbury is the headquarters of the Church of England as well as the official residence and the secretariat of the Anglican Communion Office. The Lambeth Conferences are decennial assemblies of bishops of the Anglican Communion convened by the Archbishop of Canterbury. The first such conference took place in 1867.<sup>508</sup> As we have noted earlier, the Anglican Communion is an international association of national churches and not governing body, therefore Lambeth Conferences serve a collaborative and consultative function, expressing the mind of the communion on issues of the time. Resolutions which a Lambeth Conference may pass have never been regarded as synodical decrees and are without legal effect, but they are nonetheless influential and their weight has increased with each conference.<sup>509</sup>

The Archbishop of Canterbury, regarded as a *Primus inter Pares*, or first among equals has a precedence of honour over the other Primates of the Anglican Communion, even though he does not exercise any direct authority in any province outside England, of which he is Chief Primate.

### 4.5.4. The Anglican Consultative Council

The Anglican Consultative Council (ACC) is the deliberative body and acts as the standing committee of the Lambeth conference.

The Anglican Consultative Council functions to:

- (i) Share information about developments in the provinces and serve as an instrument of common action, often by making resolutions or initiating programs.
- (ii) Advise on inter-Anglican relationships and formations of new provinces.
- (iii) Share resources of all kinds and support for the mission of the global church.

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<sup>508</sup> Hannaford, Robert. 1988. *The Future of Anglicanism. Essays on Faith and Order*. p.20

<sup>509</sup> Conference Resolution Archives. Lambeth Conference Official Website.

<http://anglicanhistory.org/canada/fulford/synod-sermon1886.html>

(iv) Engage in important ecumenical dialogues and interfaith work on an international level.<sup>510</sup>

Each province pays toward the inter-Anglican budget for the work set forth by the ACC and the other instruments of unity as required. The ACC membership includes from one to three persons from each province. The ACC staff includes directors of finance and administration, mission and evangelism, ecumenical and theological studies, and communication.

#### 4.5.5. Anglican Perspectives on the Environment

We have presented an historical sketch and structural overview of the Anglican Church above. Now we turn attention to its involvement in environment and poverty concerns. For us to understand Anglican involvement in environment, it is necessary that we understand the Anglican concept of mission. This understanding is important because it the Anglican *mission concept* that provided the framework for Anglican perspective and engagement on the environment. Archbishop Rowan Williams says this of Anglican involvement in environment and poverty initiatives “Anglicans are in international development because of a certain set of convictions about humanity. We believe that because human beings are made in the image of God, they are not made to be slaves”.<sup>511</sup> The Anglican understanding of mission which is not much different from the universal church concept of mission therefore corroborates this vision of the image of God. Specifically, the Anglican mission goals include the following five elements:

- (i) To proclaim the good news of the kingdom;
- (ii) To teach, baptise, and nurture the new believers;
- (iii) To respond to human needs by loving service;
- (iv) To seek to transform unjust structures of the society.
- (v) To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation and sustain and renew the life of the earth.<sup>512</sup>

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<sup>510</sup> Theodore L. Lewis. The Anglican Consultative Council: Two Missed Chances

<http://www.virtueonline.org/portal/modules/news/article.php?storyid=10633>(Accessed on 25th April, 2009)

<sup>511</sup> Williams, Rowan. Undated. <http://www.archbishopofcanterbury.org/1> (Accessed on 13th March 2009)

<sup>512</sup> Warmback, Andrew. 2005. *Constructing an Oikothology*. p. 78

The fifth mission goal explicitly reflects environmental concerns and introduced a significant dimension to the Anglican concept of mission.<sup>513</sup> In this regard, the Anglican Church began to show the need for involvement in environmental concern when it convened in 1964 an ecumenical group to consider and assess the developing situation of environmental problems.<sup>514</sup> The outcome of the ecumenical gathering was a report entitled *Man in his living environment*. According to Ron Elsdon, the disappointing feature of the report was the almost total absence of theological input and analysis. Since this conference, more detailed attention has been given to the environment at many other conferences and consultations.<sup>515</sup> The most prominent of these conferences as far as issues of the environment is concerned, is the 1988 Lambeth Conference Resolution on the environment.

#### **4.5.6. The 1998 Lambeth Conference Resolution on the Environment**

Over the past decades, the Lambeth Conference had passed a number of resolutions. The Lambeth Conference of 1968 raised the issue of pollution. The Lambeth Conference of 1978, appealed to leaders and governments of the world reminding them that time is running short and as such they should act promptly on issues concerning the environment.<sup>516</sup> In 1988, a resolution on the environment was passed in which the bishops called on each province and diocese as a matter of urgency to inform the faithful about what is happening to our environment and to encourage them to see the stewardship of God's earth for the care of our neighbours as a necessary part of a Christian discipleship.<sup>517</sup>

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<sup>513</sup> Kenyon, Wright. "Integrity of Creation" in Craston, Colin. 1992. (ed) *By Word and Deed : Sharing Good News through Mission*. London: Church Publishing House. p.45-47

<sup>514</sup> Elsdon, Ron. 1981. *Bent World. A Christian Response to the Environmental Crisis*. United States of America: Intersarsity Press. p.14

<sup>515</sup> Examples of such more detailed attentions are seen in the National Evangelical Anglican Congress at Nottingham in 1977. See King, P. 1977. "Global Stewards" in Cundy, I. (ed), *Obeying Christ in a Changing World*. Vol.3. Collins. p. 132-156

<sup>516</sup> Warmback, Andrew. 2005. *Constructing an Oikothology: The Environment, Poverty and the Church in South Africa*. p.81

<sup>517</sup> Coleman, R. 1992. (ed) *Resolutions of the Twelve Lambeth Conferences*. Toronto: Anglican Book Centre

The 1998 Lambeth Conference was remarkable in the history of Anglican involvement in environment. It was in this Conference that the expression of a deep concern and emphasis on the environment was made. It dedicated a section of the resolution with the title “Called to Humanity”.<sup>518</sup> This section dealt with the global environmental problems and identified the environment as one of the key issues of our time. It must be noted that Lambeth saw this as a moral issue, not just a matter of good house keeping. As a moral issue, the Lambeth Conference of 1998 further sought to maintain the biblical vision of creation by calling for a responsible human relationship with the creation. This call is based on the growing realization in many parts of the world that environmental issues are amongst the most important ethical concerns facing humankind at the end of the second millennium.

The Conference realized that if humanity is to sustain God-given life on this planet then we will need to change our attitudes and behavior. The Conference emphasis on behavioral change as a requisite solution to sustaining the earth, in our view, is very appropriate. This is in recognition of the fact that a combination of factors, which includes but not limited to, industrial pollution, deforestation, soil erosion, mineral and fossil fuel depletion, species extinction, over-population, over-consumption, and even unregulated tourism and development, are having devastating global effects on our environment.<sup>519</sup> We have noted and dealt in great details the effects of the rate and the pattern of human consumption on the environment of both the rich and poor countries in chapter two. The Conference noted that the growing evidence of global warming, and with it the enlarging of deserts, raising of ocean levels and erosion of the polar regions, is a sign and warning which humanity must take seriously before it is too late. The observation of the Conference is based on its understanding that it is the poor of the world who often live closest to the results of environmental degradation, and that it is the youth of the world who will inherit the results of the present degradation, it therefore asserts that concern for the environment is closely linked to a concern for justice.<sup>520</sup>

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<sup>518</sup> Coleman, R. 1992. (ed) *Resolutions of the Twelve Lambeth Conferences*. Toronto: Anglican Book Centre

<sup>519</sup> Coleman, R. 1992. (ed) *Resolutions of the Twelve Lambeth Conferences*. p.57 The above resolutions were adapted from the Lambeth Resolutions on the Environment

<sup>520</sup> Coleman, R. 1992. (ed) *Resolutions of the Twelve Lambeth Conferences*. p.57

In the report of section one, Resolution 1: 8, and 1:9 on creation, ecology, and environment, the Conference made the following observations and reaffirms:

(i) That the Biblical vision of Creation according to which: creation is a web of inter-dependent relationships bound together in the covenant which God, the Holy Trinity has established with the whole earth and every living being.

(ii) That the loss of natural habitats is a direct cause of genocide amongst millions of indigenous peoples and is causing the extinction of thousands of plant and animal species. Unbridled capitalism, selfishness and greed cannot continue to be allowed to pollute, exploit and destroy what remains of the earth's indigenous habitats;

(iii) That the servant-hood to God's creation is becoming the most important responsibility facing humankind and that we should work together with people of all faiths in the implementation of our responsibilities.<sup>521</sup>

Since the 1998 Lambeth Conference, the Anglican Church had continued to express its concern that efforts to address such environmental issues raised above be given greater voice and visibility and be better coordinated across the Anglican Communion. In order to see how the Anglican has maintained the above expression, we consider some of its initiatives to further seek ways of giving fresh impetus to environmental issues in the Communion.

#### **4.5.7. Global Anglican Congress on the Stewardship of Creation**

Before the World Summit on Sustainable Development in 2002 in Johannesburg South Africa, the Anglican Communion, under the auspices of the Global Anglican Congress on the Stewardship of Creation, held a conference at the Good Shepherd Retreat Centre, outside Pretoria.<sup>522</sup> This conference was the first official international gathering of Anglicans to

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<sup>521</sup> The Official Report of the Lambeth Conference 1998, Transformation and Renewal, July 18-August 9, 1998. Lambeth Palace; Canterbury, England: Morehouse Publishing.

<sup>522</sup> Warmback, Andrew. 2005. *Constructing an Oikothology: The Environment, Poverty and the Church in South Africa*. p.82

specifically look at issues of the environment.<sup>523</sup> Delegates were invited from all the provinces of the Communion. The deliberations mainly focussed on development and poverty eradication.<sup>524</sup> The Congress produced two important statements. One of the statements was presented by the Anglican Observer to the WSSD. The statement to the WSSD recognized the environmental issue as a moral as well as a scientific issue and urged for a sustainable utilization of the earth's resources for the benefit of the whole earth community. The other statement was in the form of a pastoral letter to the worldwide Anglican Communion.<sup>525</sup> The views presented in these two statements express a strong commitment to both caring for the whole earth community. The initiative of the conference was taken further into the Anglican structures worldwide as reporting back was encouraged.<sup>526</sup>

#### **4.5.8. The Anglican Consultative Council (ACC)**

After the Global Anglican Congress on the Stewardship of Creation and the WSSD, the ACC meeting was held in Hong Kong in September 2002. The meeting passed two resolutions in support of environmental issues.<sup>527</sup> In a resolution on the WSSD it expressed its support thus: The Anglican Consultative Council following the recent World Summit held in Johannesburg, South Africa:

(i) supports actions in the five key areas identified by the Summit, namely water and sanitation, energy, health, agricultural productivity and biodiversity and ecosystem management;

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<sup>523</sup> Warmback, Andrew. 2005. *Constructing an Oikothology: The Environment, Poverty and the Church in South Africa*. p.82

<sup>524</sup> The proceeding of the congress were published in *Healing God's Creation: The Global Anglican Congress on the Stewardship of Creation*. 2004. New York: Morehouse Publishing.

<sup>525</sup> The proceedings of the congress were published in *Healing God's Creation: The Global Anglican Congress on the Stewardship of Creation*. 2004. New York: Morehouse Publishing

<sup>526</sup> Warmback, Andrew. 2005. *Constructing an Oikothology: The Environment, Poverty and the Church in South Africa*. p.84

<sup>527</sup> Warmback, Andrew. 2005. *Constructing an Oikothology: The Environment, Poverty and the Church in South Africa*. p.84

(ii) adds its voice of concern and support to those calling for a renewed and committed international approach to the control of those processes which increase global warming and affect climate change;

(iii) urges each member church of the Anglican Communion to celebrate the Sunday nearest to 5 June, World Environment Day, as Environment Sunday in order to raise environmental awareness across the Communion.

The resolution under the “UN Observer and Environment Network” reads thus:

The Anglican Consultative Council:

(i) asks all churches of the Anglican Communion to place environment care on their agenda;

(ii) asks all Anglicans to make their own personal commitments to care for God’s world, respecting all life, for; the Earth is the Lord’s and all that is in it” Psalm 24:1

(iii) establishes the Anglican Environmental Network as an official network of the Anglican Communion, and,

(iv) endorses for immediate action, the declarations of the Anglican Congress to the United Nations and to the Anglican Communion.

#### **4.5.9. Anglican Communion Environmental Network**

There are a number of networks encouraged by the Anglican Communion. These networks are coordinated through the office of the ACC. The networks include the following: Peace and Justice Network, Youth Network, Refugee Network, Family Network, Urban Network and environmental Network.<sup>528</sup> The Environmental Network is an attempt by the communion to seek practical ways of engaging in environmental issues. Its motivation was to get the issue of the environment on the agenda of the Anglican Church. The aims of the network include the following:

(i) To encourage Anglicans to support sustainable environmental practices as individuals and in the life of their communities.

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<sup>528</sup> Warmback, Andrew. 2005. *Constructing an Oikothology: The Environment, Poverty and the Church in South Africa*. p.86

- (ii) To provide information about policies embraced by synods, councils and commissions, and especially by the instruments of Unity (Statements by the Archbishop of Canterbury, resolutions and Reports of the Lambeth Conference and the Anglican Consultative Council)
- (iii) To support local initiatives by providing information about ideas and best practices developed around the communion.
- (iv) To share information about resources and initiatives that may be of value to Anglicans everywhere.
- (v) To provide an opportunity for interested Anglicans to meet both as a formal network, and informally via electronic media.<sup>529</sup>

#### **4.5.10. Official Statements on the Environment from the See of Canterbury**

In order to “cap” this section on Anglican engagement on the environment, we provide here some official statements made by the two heads of Anglican Communion, whose primacy falls under the period of the establishment of the various environmental initiatives.

##### **4.5.10.1. George Carey 1991-2003**

George Carey was the immediate past Archbishop of Canterbury. His primacy lasted from 1991 to 2003. During his tenure, he moved the Anglican Communion to embrace the difficult task of responding creatively to the environmental challenges facing humanity. On June 4, 2001, on the eve of World Environment Day, he launched a church seminar on environmental issues. In his speech during the launching, he called for greater attention to be paid to the links between poverty and the environment. In order to vividly clarify this link between poverty and environment, he made two important statements which read thus:

A child born in a wealthy country is likely to consume, waste, and pollute more in his lifetime than 50 children born in developing nations. Our energy-burning lifestyles are pushing our planet to the point of no return. It is dawning on us at last that the life of our world is as vulnerable as the children we raise.<sup>530</sup>

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<sup>529</sup> This information is accessed from the Anglican Communion website on [www.aco.org](http://www.aco.org). (25<sup>th</sup> October, 2007)

<sup>530</sup> George, Carey. [www.archbishopofcanterbury](http://www.archbishopofcanterbury) (Accessed on 8<sup>th</sup> march, 2009)

The interaction between the environment and poverty is twofold. Clearly, environmental degradation causes poverty. An obvious example is the link between climate change and expansion of deserts, such as the Sahara with the resulting loss of both arable and grazing land for herds. On the other hand, poverty can be the cause of environmental damage.... Poor people are forced to create conditions that imperil themselves and our world. It is thus very much in the interest of richer countries to bring poorer nations out of extreme poverty to share in the fight against environmental damage.<sup>531</sup>

From the above statements, we could see that Archbishop Cary was concerned about the relationship between poverty and the environment. To some extent, the issue of environmental justice emerged strongly from his the two addresses.

#### **4.5.10.2. Rowan Williams 2003-Date**

As the present Archbishop of Canterbury, Archbishop Rowan Williams has made some remarkable speeches in which environmental issues feature prominently.<sup>532</sup> Archbishop Williams has presented a series of lectures which touched on the environmental crisis especially the problem of the current climate change. Archbishop Williams argues from an environmental justice perspective as to why ecological issues are fundamentally a matter of justice for both human and non human inhabitants of the earth. In his opinion, viewing creation as a gift from God enables humanity to debunk the impression that the earth and its resources are just there for human use only. He further argues that:

For the Christian the connection between ecology and justice is axiomatic, it is no surprise to read in much contemporary writing on ecology that the irresponsible treatment of the environment both reflects and encourages an oppressive politics. To conscript the resources of the natural world into the struggle for power between humans is nothing new; but what recent decades have made clear is that this process has now reached a point at

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<sup>531</sup> George, Carey “Opening address, Environmental Seminar, Bishops’ Meeting. (4<sup>th</sup> June 2001) Accessed from [www.archbishopofcanterbury](http://www.archbishopofcanterbury). (24<sup>th</sup> September 2007)

<sup>532</sup> For some of his speeches, see for example; “Speech in debate on the environment” (17th February, 2005) given during the General Synod in the context of the debate on climate change in which he states that issues around ecology are “inseparably bound up with issues of development and economic justice” Lecture at Chatham: Sustainable Communities” (16 March 2005) Accessed from [www.archbishopof Canterbury](http://www.archbishopofcanterbury). 20<sup>th</sup> June 2006

which the offence against the nature of things is no longer just a matter of moral and theological judgement: it has reached a point at which an offended natural order ‘rebels’, is no longer able to co operate with undisciplined human will.<sup>533</sup>

Archbishop Williams expressed appreciation for some of the church practices which promote environmental friendly living among individual churches. However, he condemned the slow pace at which the practice is taken at the institutional levels of the global Anglican Communion. He also showed dissatisfaction on non-commitment on the institutional level where action on environmental issues are lacking. While commenting on this situation, he says:

A recent and welcome development has been the growth of ‘eco-congregations’, local churches or church groups signing up to a set of environmentally responsible policies for their day to day work as individuals and as communities. But there is still a gap in speech and practice at the level of our institutions as a whole.<sup>534</sup>

Similarly, in a lecture titled “Ecology and Economy” delivered at the University of Kent in Canterbury, Archbishop Williams addressed directly the relationship between ecology and economy. He writes:

The two big “e-words” (ecology and economy) in my title have sometimes been used in recent decades as if they represented opposing concerns.... But this separation or opposition has come to look like a massive mistake. It has been said that ‘the economy is a wholly-owned subsidiary of the environment’. The earth itself is what ultimately controls economic activity because it is the source of the materials upon which economic activity works.... Economy and ecology cannot be separated. We should not be surprised, after all, the two words relate to the same central concept.<sup>535</sup>

This particular quotation from the Archbishop’s lecture is remarkably important to our study. This is because the concept of *oikothology* which draws from ecology and economy is central to our study in the context of the Anglican Communion in general and the Church of

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<sup>533</sup> Rowan, Williams. 2004. Environment Lecture. “Changing the Myths We live by”. Anglican Communion website, [www.aco.org](http://www.aco.org) (Accessed in May 2007)

<sup>534</sup> Warmback, Andrew. 2005. *Constructing an Oikothology: The Environment, Poverty and the Church in South Africa*. p.80

<sup>535</sup> Warmback, Andrew. 2005. *Constructing an Oikothology: The Environment, Poverty and the Church in South Africa*. p.80

Nigeria (Anglican Communion) in particular. Therefore, having observed the Anglican ecclesiastical response to the environmental concerns in general, it is now time to examine the engagement of the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) on environmental issues. The section in the next page, therefore explores this engagement. It does this by providing a brief historical and structural setting of the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion).

#### **4.6. An Historical Sketch of the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion)**

Christianity came to Nigeria in the 15<sup>th</sup> century through the efforts of Augustinian and Capuchin monks from Portugal, but without a strong positive impact.<sup>536</sup> The history of the Anglican Church in Nigeria began on the 17<sup>th</sup> December, 1842 when Henry Townsend of the CMS (The Church Missionary Society) came to Badagry from Freetown, Sierra Leone,<sup>537</sup> to establish what later became known today as the Anglican Church in Nigeria. With the untiring efforts of these missionaries under the auspices of the CMS led mission, the church began to expand to other areas in Nigeria. This expansion led to the establishment of the Lagos mission in 1852 and the Niger Mission at Onitsha in 1857. These missions later became Dioceses in 1919. And from then onwards up to 1977, it gave birth to additional fourteen Dioceses making a total of sixteen Dioceses.<sup>538</sup>

Since the creation of the additional sixteen dioceses in 1977,<sup>539</sup> the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion), which is an important part of the World wide Anglican family with

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<sup>536</sup> The Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion). History accessed from <http://www.anglican-ng.org/history.htm> on 23<sup>rd</sup> August 2008. For detailed history of the Anglican church in Nigeria see, Ajayi, J.F. Ade. 1965. *Christian Missions in Nigeria, 1841-91: The Making of a New Elite*. Longman, Awoniyi, Joel. 1989. *The Story of the Yoruba Bible*. Ibadan: Daystar Press, Ayandele, E.A. .1970. *The Missionary Impact on Modern Nigeria*. Longman, Ekechi, F.K. 1972. *The Missionary Enterprise and Rivalry in Igboland 1857-1914*. London: Frank Cass, Igwe, S.O. 1988. *Education in Eastern Nigeria, 1847-1975*. Ibadan: Evans, Stock, Eugene. 1899. *The History of the Church Missionary Society: Its Environment, Its Men and Its Works. Vols.1-3*. London; CMS Press, Ajayi, J.F. Ade.2001. *A Patriot to the Core. Bishop Ajayi Crowther*.Ibadan; Spectrum Books Limited

<sup>537</sup> Oduyoye, Modupe. 1994. "The Church in Yoruba land 1842-1992". in Akinyele Omoyajowo (ed) *The Anglican Church in Nigeria. 1842-1992. Nigeria: Macmillan*. p.1

<sup>538</sup> Olufosoye, T.O. 1994. Preface. in Akinyele Omoyaow (ed) *The Anglican Church in Nigeria 1842-1992. Nigeria: Macmillan*. P. xvii

<sup>539</sup> *Church of Nigeria. Introduction*. Accessed from <http://www.anglican-ng.org/introduction.htm> on 23<sup>rd</sup> August, 2008

a membership of over 17 million members worldwide,<sup>540</sup> has grown to over 120 Dioceses with ten Ecclesiastical Provinces and ten Archbishops and a primate who oversees the affairs of the church of Nigeria. The Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) is the second-largest province in the worldwide Anglican Communion after the Church of England and the largest in Africa.<sup>541</sup>

#### **4.6.1. Brief Overview of the Structure of Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion)**

We have earlier noted in the section dealing with Anglican Church polity that one characteristic feature of Anglicanism is that it has no international juridical authority. This means that the Anglican Church is structured in a way that encourages autonomy of national churches. In this sense, the church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) is autonomous, not directly dependent on the Church of England. Like all the thirty-nine provinces of the Anglican Communion, the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) has its own Primate and governing structure. The primate of the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) is the head of the Anglican Church in Nigeria.

With this brief introduction on the history of the establishment of the Anglican Church in Nigeria, we now turn our attention to the engagement of the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) in development issues in general and environment in particular.

#### **4.6.2. The Vision of the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion)**

After his election as the successor to the Most Rev. J. Abiodun Adetiloye, the Most Revd. Peter Jasper Akinola, the Primate and Archbishop of the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) saw the need for a new focus and, indeed, a vision for the Anglican Communion.<sup>542</sup> His vision is drawn from the biblical saying in Proverbs 29: 18, “Where there

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<sup>540</sup> *Church of Nigeria. Introduction.* Accessed from <http://www.anglican-ng.org/introduction.htm> on 23<sup>rd</sup> August, 2008

<sup>541</sup> *Church of Nigeria “Introduction”* <http://anglican-ng.org/introduction.htm>

<sup>542</sup> *Church of Nigeria. Vision 2010.* Accessed from [http://www.anglican ng.org/introduction.htm](http://www.anglican-ng.org/introduction.htm) on 23<sup>rd</sup> August, 2008

is no vision, the people perish". He saw the beginning of his episcopacy as a timely opportunity to chart a new future for the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion). He believed that the process of charting this new future must involve the various hierarchies of the Church so that they, together, would evolve a shared vision. Primate Akinola therefore used the occasion of his presentation in Abuja on March 25, 2000 to initiate the process of articulating the vision for the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion).<sup>543</sup> The silence of the Church in challenging prophetically the failure of the national government to articulate micro economic policies to address the socio-economic challenges facing the Nigerian society at large led to a situation whereby Nigeria as a country was faced with tremendous internal wrangling which are deeply rooted in the socio-economic and political structures of the country. In the face of the foregoing challenges, the Church of Nigeria under its new leadership, was inspired to set objectives and goals that would lift it to a higher pedestal, and to design strategies and programmes that would lead to the attainment of the desired goal, namely to be a holistic and prophetic church, in its quest to be relevant not just in spiritual matters but to other areas of life of the Nigerian society.

The process of evolving the vision that would translate the above mentioned goals into practical reality began with a sober, introspective appraisal of the Church. This was required in order to understand the church's current position, before making prognoses for the future. In order to do this constructively, the question about-"Where we want to be" was raised.<sup>544</sup> This question is very critical because it essentially defines the destination to be reached by the church in a recorded time. Put another way, it charts out the future to which resources and efforts of the Church will be devoted. Lastly, the question about "How do we get there?" was also raised to address how the ultimate goal can be attained.<sup>545</sup> In short, we could link the process which evolved in the vision of the church to that of project planning process where stakeholders come together to brainstorm in order to articulate a common vision, goal(s) and objectives.

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<sup>543</sup> The Church of Nigeria Official Website. *Church of Nigeria. Vision 2010*. Accessed from <http://www.anglicanng.org/introduction.htm> on 23<sup>rd</sup> August, 2008

<sup>544</sup> The Church of Nigeria Official Website. *Church of Nigeria. Vision 2010*. Accessed from <http://www.anglicanng.org/introduction.htm> on 23<sup>rd</sup> August, 2008

<sup>545</sup> The Church of Nigeria Official Website. *Church of Nigeria. Vision 2010*.

With the above picture of project planning in mind, the first plenary session was convened to articulate the vision for the Church of Nigeria where participants were introduced to the concept of visioning: the how and the why in two key presentations made by the Primate himself, and Chief Ernest Shonekan, a former Head of State and Chairman of Nigeria's Vision 2010 Committee.<sup>546</sup> The presentations also dwelt, among other things, on the condition of the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) today, the need for a vision for it and the visioning process that would be adopted.

The participants were divided into four working groups. Each group used the papers presented by the Primate and Chief Shonekan as background reference for their discussion. Assisted by experienced facilitators, the groups engaged in a brainstorm, directed at finding answers to the various issues that would bring out the vision of the Church and the strategy and programmes that would lead to the realisation of the vision. At the end of the brainstorm, the four work groups presented their reports to the plenary. The whole groups, sitting in plenary, decided to set up a committee to harmonise all the presentations and come up with a draft Vision for final consideration. An Editorial Committee met and gave guidelines to the Facilitators/Rapporteurs to be used to prepare the draft report for consideration by the Primate and the Standing Committee of the Church of Nigeria. The Standing Committee finally adopted this Vision of The Church of Nigeria after necessary consultations at Owerri on June 5, 2000.

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<sup>546</sup> *Church of Nigeria. Vision 2010.* Shonekan was installed as the interim head of state to lead the country out a looming crisis following the annulment of June 12 1993 election. Shonekan was a top executive of the United African Company, Nigeria's largest conglomerate. His interim regime lasted from August to November, 1993. Gen. Sani Abacha later overthrew the Shonekan led transitional administration in November and installed himself as head of state. <http://www.onlinenigeria.com/shonekan.asp>)

### 4.6.3. The Vision Statement

The vision statement that was adopted in June 2000 reads:

The Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) shall be; bible-based, spiritually dynamic, united, disciplined, self supporting, committed to pragmatic evangelism, social welfare and a Church that epitomizes the genuine love of Christ.<sup>547</sup>

We turn now to examine key elements of the vision.

#### 4.6.3.1. The Key Elements of the Vision

The vision lays stress on spirituality, unity, evangelism, care, love and laying the foundation for enduring growth.<sup>548</sup> Since this study is not about analysing the vision as a document, suffice it say that here we are only highlighting one of the key elements of the vision which defines the role of the church with regard to ensuring social development in the church and society.

#### 4.6.3.2. A Caring Church

The Anglican Communion is fundamentally a caring Church. This means that:

When a neighbour is ill, we should care for him/her. When they are hungry, we should feed them. We should share food and other materials with those in need so that, like the widow of Nain, the Lord can replenish our resources. The Anglican Communion must commit itself to caring for one another within the Church as well as others in Nigeria and the world at large.<sup>549</sup>

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<sup>547</sup> *Church of Nigeria. Vision 2010.* The idea of a self supporting church has been the intention of Henry Venn since the advent of the CMS missionaries in Nigeria. See Yates, T.E.1978. *Venn and Victorian Bishops Abroad. The Missionary Policies of Henry Venn and their Repercussions upon the Anglican Episcopate of the Colonial Period 1841-1872.* Sweden: Swedish Institute of Missionary Research .p.155

<sup>548</sup> Church of Nigeria. Vision 2010.

<sup>549</sup> Church of Nigeria. Vision 2010.

A critical reflection on the above quote, unfortunately, shows that there is insufficient support, care and sharing within and outside the Church especially for those weaker members of the society, women, men and children, who are discriminated against and or denied basic human rights. The Church of Nigeria has not shown interest and therefore had no programme for dealing with these challenges in the past, hence the necessity of such a vision which aspires to fulfill the fundamental role of the church in society.

The committee responsible for social welfare was charged with the task of providing resources for the church to articulate solutions to the challenges of social responsibility by the church. They are responsible for providing resources that would respond to the following issues- care, health, youth, and evangelism and education programme of the church. In this regard the Committee:

- ✚ Shall fashion out policies and programmes and the modalities for health care delivery to members and non-members of the Anglican Communion; and in the process to win new converts, new souls and control migration of members to other Churches or faiths.
- ✚ Shall establish health clinics and hospitals to take care of the health needs of the Church and other members of the society. Such facilities shall provide avenues for evangelism, hospitals, etc. throughout the Dioceses/parishes to improve the health of members and bring more converts to our fold.
- ✚ Provide a framework for giving succour to the helpless including new converts who are abandoned by their people.
- ✚ Assist the widows, widowers, destitutes, poverty stricken and homeless as well as nomads to find succour in the Church, especially in times of need.<sup>550</sup>

Looking at the ‘vision’, it appears to be clear. In summary, it reflects the aspiration of the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) to be bible-based, spiritually dynamic, united, disciplined; self-supporting, committed to pragmatic evangelism, social welfare and a church

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<sup>550</sup> Church of Nigeria. Vision 2010.

that epitomizes the genuine love of Christ.<sup>551</sup> The ‘vision’ portrays the desire and the attempts of the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) to be more responsive to the prevailing socio-economic, political and spiritual situation in the country. This is very symbolic. Its significance lies on the fact that the church of Nigeria since its inception has never articulated anything like this; hence we conclude that the ‘vision’ is something that came at the right time—a right step in the right direction towards becoming a caring church.

#### **4.6.4. The Search for “Environmental Concerns” in the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion)**

Having made the above commendation of the ‘vision’, let us now look at the ‘vision’ with development lens. Looking at the ‘vision’ of the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion), from a development perspective, one would no doubt; see a vague reflection of some elements of development concerns. However, a critical reflection with “development lens” could raise some key fundamental issues. Firstly, the ‘vision’ is mainly concerned with *charity* rather than issues of justice. The ‘vision’ is so inundated with charity that it completely excluded the issues of socio-economic and political empowerment from its priority. Socio-economic and political disempowerment is another form of injustice. Because of this omission which is very significant in development initiatives, we conclude that the ‘vision’ did not reflect in practical terms the core development reality of the nation.

A further probing into the ‘vision’, shows that theological engagement is visibly absent - it did not engage theologically in the prevailing socio-economic and political issues plaguing the country. This observation is categorically based on the fact that issues of low economic growth, unemployment and poverty in its many ramifications which characterized the Nigerian society, are some of the critical areas where the church has not positively made much impact in terms of making its prophetic voice to be heard in an unmistakable, less cacophonous and non confusing manner. The church has not responded empathically to issues of internal economic policies which favour the rich and pauperize the majority of the citizens with its resultant entrenchment and extension of inequality and class divides.

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<sup>551</sup> *Church of Nigeria. Vision 2010*. Accessed from [http://www.anglican ng.org/introduction. htm](http://www.anglican.ng.org/introduction.htm) on 23<sup>rd</sup> August, 2008

From the foregoing, it appears to us that the ‘vision’ does not encapsulate a holistic ministry- a ministry which seeks to touch all aspects of human needs. This therefore shows the extent to which the employment of theology and development as an option is urgently needed in the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) for the transformation of the Nigerian society. This shows how a new theological paradigm for the church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) has become imperative in order for it to challenge in a radical way those structures of the Nigerian society which negatively affect the lives of the people-the marginalized in the society. In this regard, it must aim at societal transformation especially in the areas of socio- economic and political development. This has become imperative since the church if it does not engage or struggle side by side with the people in sharing their joys, sorrows, anxieties and daily burdens, would be irrelevant.

The areas of socio-economic and political concerns are of utmost importance to us because many of the problems which cause suffering and particularly as a result of poverty have their roots in socio-economic and political structures of many societies including the Nigerian society.<sup>552</sup> People are marginalized and pauperized because precisely the socio-economic and political structures are designed that way. Reflecting on the absence of theological engagement in the Nigerian society, Madu asserts that the hour of liberating struggle has struck for theology in Nigeria.<sup>553</sup> What Madu, implies is that our theological discourse should cease to only concentrate on what has been generally referred to as “the ambulance ministry” with the poor, the sick and the troubled, while ignoring the socio-economic and political causes of poverty that make people sick and troubled.<sup>554</sup> Okolo, could not agree more with Madu, when argues that “theology has to engage itself in the political, economic, social and religious transformation of the people, in transforming societal structures which breed humiliation, agony and death for a large section of the Nigerian community”.<sup>555</sup>

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<sup>552</sup> Buffel, O. A. 2007. *Journeying with the Poor as they Struggle for Survival and Freedom: Pastoral Work Amongst the Poor*. Presentation at a PhD Seminar at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, School of Religion and Theology. p.1

<sup>553</sup> Madu, Emeka. J. 2004. *Honest to African Cultural Heritage*. Onitsha: Coskan Associates. p.117

<sup>554</sup> Pattison, S. 1988. *A Critique of Pastoral Care*. London: SCM Press Ltd. p.83

<sup>555</sup> Madu, Emeka. J. 2004. *Honest to African Cultural Heritage*. P.117

Secondly, from the church's 'vision' document, it is clear that the Church of Nigeria does not have a well researched and articulated policy position at the national level which specifically aims at environmental issues in the country. At diocesan levels, there may exist some evidences of diocesan engagement in environmental issues. For example, we know that the Archbishop of the province of the Niger and the bishop of Awka diocese, the Most Rev. Maxwell Anikwenwa, in his 2002 synod address, led the entire synod to deliberate on his synod theme titled "Our Common Future- Human Environment". There may as well be some other dioceses that have engaged in the environment, but this has not been reflected at the national church.

We are inclined, therefore, to believe that the absence of the national environmental policy document of the church of Nigeria is responsible for the reason why the church has not engaged actively in the current environmental problems plaguing the nation. We recall here that the church has not particularly responded to the "enviro-political" debate going on in the Niger Delta region.<sup>556</sup> The silence with which the church is dealing with the Niger Delta issue is deafening enough, and it can no longer afford to be silent on the issue of Niger Delta with its members continuously harassed, displaced and killed while international communities and humanitarian organisations are showing concern. Apart from the Niger Delta issue, the church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) has not shown enough commitment to the issues of development in a more pragmatic way in spite of its vision of being a caring church which is one of its fundamental aspirations. Although it could be argued that other issues of social development are vaguely encapsulated in the social welfare commission, the welfare commission has no definite agenda or programme to engage in the issues of the current "double-earth crisis" of environment and poverty challenges plaguing the world in general and Nigeria in particular.

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<sup>556</sup> The Niger Delta region of Nigeria is the area where the oil that made Nigeria rich is explored. However, insensitivity on the part of the Federal government and the failure of the government's interventionist efforts at ameliorating the suffering of the inhabitants of Niger Delta region has led to increased marginalization, environmental degradation and pervasive poverty. This has consequently reinforced the option of violence as against peaceful engagement with the Nigerian state.

The 'vision' of the church of Nigeria was articulated nine years ago. From the critical reflections on the 'vision' above, our conclusion is that the 'vision' does not provide enough commitment on development issues in general and in environment in particular. As a result of this observation, in the next chapter we are going to find out whether the position of the national church on development has any significant impact on the dioceses. Specifically we are going to examine how the Anglican Church in Anambra State has responded to the above development concerns over these eight years through an analysis of the research field work under took in Anambra State. The research field work is aimed at assessing the level of development awareness among the clergy of the three dioceses of the Anglican Church in Anambra State-Nigeria especially with regard to the current earth crisis of environment and poverty. This research is very critical as we have noted earlier because it will help us to find out whether the gap we identified in the 'vision' of the church of Nigeria does in any way impact on the diocesan and parish engagement in environment and poverty initiatives.

#### **4.7. Conclusion**

We have seen from this chapter the engagement and commitment of the ecumenical body on the environment. Many reasons have been given for this engagement. The global Anglican Communion as an integral part of the ecumenical movement has also been involved in the environment and development initiatives in general. Finally the chapter dealt with the church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) involvement in environment and development issues. In order to ascertain the role of the church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) in environment issues, we examined the church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) vision statement. From the 'vision' of the church, we noted that the vision did not particularly address itself to the issues of the environment. The church does not have national policy position on the environment. The 'vision' instead prioritised charity over justice, and this in our opinion, is incongruous with real development practice.

In order to find out whether the absence of the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) national policy on the environment has any impact on other dioceses in their response to development issues in general and environment in particular, we would in the next chapter engage in a field work research in the three Anglican dioceses in Anambra state to determine

the level of awareness and engagement of both the church and the clergy on environment and poverty issues.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### **5.0. The State of the Church in Dealing with Poverty and Environment Issues in Anambra State**

Building on the previous chapter which provided a broad overview of Christian involvement in ecological issues, and then more specifically the global Anglican church, and then even more specifically, the Anglican Church in Nigeria, this chapter now focuses on the field work research undertaken in the three dioceses. It presents the comments, the analysis and summary of the responses of the clergy who participated in the three diocesan workshops where the questionnaire were administered.

#### **5.1. Introduction**

The primary data source was a self-administered questionnaire that was introduced and completed during regular diocesan clergy workshops. It was administered to the clergy in three Anglican Dioceses in Anambra state. The three dioceses are: Diocese on the Niger which was created in 1920, diocese of Awka which was created in 1987 and diocese of Nnewi, created in 1990. Presently there are nine Anglican dioceses in the state, whereas at the time of the research, there were only five dioceses. We have two major reasons for choosing the three dioceses as our study areas. Firstly, they represent the three senatorial zones in the state.<sup>557</sup> The second reason is based on the fact that they are the oldest Anglican dioceses in the state, and thus have attained some level of structural, institutional and policy development.

The self-administered questionnaire was administered to 91 clergy respondents who participated in the clergy workshop in the three dioceses. The number of clergy in each of the

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<sup>557</sup>.Senatorial zones are political structures (blocks) in a state which a senatorial representative to the National Assembly essentially supervises according to the political arrangement in the Nigerian nation. A senatorial zone is the combination of representative constituencies. Representative constituencies are made up of the various local governments in the state. In Anambra state, the three senatorial zones are, Anambra North, South and Central. This information was provided by Thomas Ekwealor, a Nigerian political science student at the University of South Africa.

three dioceses stands thus: Niger-110, Awka-95 and Nnewi-104.<sup>558</sup> We therefore surveyed 91 out of 309 clergy, or 30% of the total number of clergy in the three dioceses. One must bear in mind that the total number of clergy in each diocese includes both serving and retired clergy, and we are not able to distinguish from the total number those clergy who are already retired. We made use of a self-administered questionnaire with fifty (50) closed-answer questionnaire, and the answers were captured and analysed through the Statistical Programme for Social Sciences (SPSS). We provided some background information to the research before the questionnaires were completed by the clergy. We also entertained some questions that were raised in relation to the questionnaire. The questionnaire is found as appendix A

Conducting this research afforded me an interesting opportunity to interact with clergy from the three dioceses in a unique way that I had not experienced in my previous research engagements. There was some degree of enthusiasm and willingness on the part of the clergy to participate in the research even though no financial incentive was promised. I also observed that some clergy did not return their questionnaire, and this could account for the small number of respondents recorded especially in the diocese on the Niger and diocese of Nnewi. In my effort to understand why some of the respondents did not return their questionnaire, a couple of them confessed to me on personal level that they admired the concepts of the “paper” (ie the questionnaire) and simply wanted to keep the “paper” so as to implement the ideas in their respective parishes. Another important factor that could account for the small number of clergy that completed questionnaire in the workshop is the possibility that some retired clergy may not have attended the workshop.

## **5.2. Summary of Research Findings (General Observations)**

We have observed that there are a couple of questions which we thought would have been answered in the negative by the respondents, but this was contrary to our expectation. Two possibilities could be imagined here as the reason for this. (1) Perhaps, some of the clergy were simply trying to protect the image of their diocese so that their diocese would not be seen as lagging behind in terms of environment and development issues. This therefore made

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<sup>558</sup> This data was obtained from the *Church of Nigeria Year Calendar 2009*. Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion)

them to compromise objectivity to diocesan patronage. (2) It could also be possible that some of these questions are a bit technical, i.e. specialised words/terms which are not translated in a layman's language might have been used without explanation. This suggestion however, appears a bit flimsy because none of the respondents indicated having any difficulty in understanding the questions. But, apart from a few of the questions I thought were not answered honestly, the rest were as objective as they could be.

It was interesting to note that many of the respondents exhibited an appreciable and fair knowledge, understanding and awareness of the environmental issues, even more than I had imagined. This is reflected on the responses provided. However, there are many instances where the ignorance of the majority of the respondents on particular environmental issues becomes apparent. For example, going through the literature in the previous three chapters, we could easily note that there are environmental issues which the respondents seem not to be familiar with in terms of how such issues contribute to the wider environmental challenges. For example, since many parishes do not have compost centers to deal with waste generation, the issue of pollution in the state in general is not going to stop if individuals and institutions who make up the state do not take pollution problems seriously. We noted that soil excavation is a wide spread practice which many poor people adopt as a survival strategy could exacerbate the erosion problem which is already getting out of control in the state. Another critical area where the poor people impact negatively on the environment is the deforestation in the state because most people are using fire wood.

From the research findings and observations based on the responses of the clergy, it was discovered that a vast majority of the clergy exhibited a high level of environmental awareness as shown in the analysis. On a different note, however, it was discovered that *action* is hugely lacking both on the part of the parishes and the dioceses in implementing environmental policies or rather in translating this existing environmental knowledge into practical use. As we have indicated above, there is a problem that emerges from this scenario of knowledge without practical action - a theoretical knowledge that only exists in the minds of individuals. The real, useful and transformative knowledge is the one capable of being translated and used in practical ways to bring about a desired change.<sup>559</sup>

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<sup>559</sup> Goldblatt, David. 2004.(ed) *Knowledge and the Social Sciences: Theory, Method, Practice*. Second Edition. London and New York: Routledge in association with Open University. p.2

It is very disappointing that most of the respondents who claimed to have environmental knowledge have nothing to show for it in terms of their being able to bring about a change in their immediate vicinity. If no environmental awareness campaign or seminar is being organised in local parishes, how are the changes going to come about? This is not in accordance with the principle of Agenda 21 - thinking globally and acting locally.<sup>560</sup> Knowledge is effective when it is able to bring about a desired change but if on the other hand knowledge does not bring a change, then it only becomes what David Goldblat calls “knowing by thinking or reasoning and not knowing by doing”.<sup>561</sup> What we need in the church is knowledge that transcends abstract reasoning for the church to be able to make pragmatic impact in the current search for solution to the environmental problems.

To elucidate on the above point, we have grouped the questions under a series of headings. We will now provide an analysis of the research findings based on these headings.

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<sup>560</sup> See Sitarz, D. 1994 (ed) *Agenda 21: The Earth Summit Strategy to Save Our Planet*. Boulder CO: Earth press. Agenda 21 is a broad action plan adopted at the 1992 Rio Summit to promote environmentally sound and sustainable development in all of countries of the world. Agenda 21 is not legally binding; it is a flexible guide towards the achievement of a sustainable world.

<sup>561</sup> Goldblatt, David. 2004.(ed) *Knowledge and the Social Sciences*: p.2

### 5.3. Diocesan and Parish Concern on Environment and Poverty issues. Questions 1-27

1. The church should concern itself with spiritual matters and leave environment and development issues to the government and NGOs.

|                   | DIOCESE ON THE NIGER |          | DIOCESE OF AWKA |          | DIOCESE OF NNEWI |          | TOTAL      |          |
|-------------------|----------------------|----------|-----------------|----------|------------------|----------|------------|----------|
|                   | No. of Res           | % of Res | No. of Res      | % of Res | No. of Res       | % of Res | No. of Res | % of Res |
| Strongly Agree    | -                    | 0        | 1               | 2.2      | 1                | 4.2      | 2          | 2.2      |
| Agree             | 1                    | 4.5      | -               | -        | 1                | 4.2      | 2          | 2.2      |
| Disagree          | 12                   | 54.5     | 15              | 33.3     | 7                | 29.2     | 34         | 37.3     |
| Strongly disagree | 9                    | 40.9     | 27              | 60.0     | 13               | 54.2     | 49         | 53.8     |
| Missing value     | -                    |          | 2               | 4.4      | 2                | 8.3      | 4          | 4.3      |
| Total             | 22                   | 100.0    | 45              | 100.0    | 24               | 100.0    |            |          |

**COMMENTS:** The response to this question indicates that a vast majority of the respondents disagree with the idea of the church abdicating its social responsibility of environment and development issues to the government and NGOs to concern itself solely with spiritual responsibility. 34 respondents (37.3%) of the respondents disagree with this idea while another 49 respondents (53.8%) indicated a strong disapproval of such a suggestion. However, an insignificant number of respondents representing 2% of the entire respondents strongly felt otherwise together with another insignificant 2% who agree to this idea.

2. The Diocese has not taken environment and development issues very seriously.

|                      | DIOCESE ON<br>THE NIGER |             | DIOCESE OF<br>AWKA |             | DIOCESE OF<br>NNEWI |             | TOTAL            |             |
|----------------------|-------------------------|-------------|--------------------|-------------|---------------------|-------------|------------------|-------------|
|                      | No. of<br>Res           | % of<br>Res | No. of<br>Res      | % of<br>Res | No. of<br>Res       | % of<br>Res | No.<br>of<br>Res | % of<br>Res |
| Strongly<br>Agree    | 1                       | 4.5         | 4                  | 8.9         | 1                   | 4.2         | 6                | 6.6         |
| Agree                | 6                       | 27.3        | 5                  | 11.1        | 7                   | 29.2        | 18               | 19.8        |
| Disagree             | 12                      | 54.5        | 24                 | 53.3        | 11                  | 45.8        | 47               | 51.6        |
| Strongly<br>disagree | 3                       | 13.6        | 8                  | 17.8        | 3                   | 12.5        | 14               | 15          |
| Don't know           | -                       |             | 2                  | 4.4         | -                   | -           | 2                | 2           |
| Missing<br>value     |                         |             | 2                  | 4.4         | 2                   | 8.3         | 4                | 4           |
| Total                | 22                      | 100.0       | 45                 | 100.0       | 24                  | 100.0       |                  |             |

**COMMENTS:** Responding to the above statement, 47 respondents (51%) disagree that their respective dioceses have not taken environment and development issues very seriously. Another set of 14 respondents (15%) also strongly disagree that their respective dioceses have not taken environment and development issues very seriously. In contrast to these, 18 respondents (19.8%) agree that their respective dioceses have not taken environment and development issues very seriously while another 6 respondents (6.6%) strongly agree that their dioceses have not taken environment and development issues very seriously. Four of the total population did not answer the question while 2 respondents claimed they did not know the answer to the question.

3. How regular during the year are environment and poverty concerns reflected in the church's liturgy and teaching?

|                     | DIOCESE ON THE NIGER |          | DIOCESE OF AWKA |          | DIOCESE OF NNEWI |          | TOTAL      |          |
|---------------------|----------------------|----------|-----------------|----------|------------------|----------|------------|----------|
|                     | No. of Res           | % of Res | No. of Res      | % of Res | No. of Res       | % of Res | No. of Res | % of Res |
| Always              | 1                    | 4.5      | 10              | 22.2     | 3                | 12.5     | 14         | 15       |
| As the need arises  | 12                   | 54.5     | 18              | 40.0     | 11               | 45.8     | 41         | 45       |
| Occasional services | 9                    | 40.9     | 14              | 31.1     | 7                | 29.2     | 30         | 32.8     |
| Don't know          | -                    | -        | -               | -        | 1                | 4.2      | 1          | 1        |
| Missing value       | -                    | -        | 3               | 6.7      | 2                | 8.3      | 5          | 5        |
| Total               | 22                   | 100.0    | 45              | 100.0    | 24               | 100.0    |            |          |

**COMMENTS:** The answer to the above question shows that environment and poverty concerns are mostly reflected in the church's liturgy and teachings only when the need arises. This is shown by 41 respondents (45%) of the total population. Thirty respondents which represent (32.8%) believe that environment and poverty issues are reflected in the church's liturgy and teaching during occasional services such as harvest thanksgiving and rogation services as well as other related services. Yet, another set of 14 respondents (15%) are of the view that environment and poverty issues are always reflected in the church's liturgy and teachings. Five respondents did not answer the question while one respondent did not know the answer to the question.

We note a gap between the percentage of respondents in Awka diocese and the two other dioceses. While Niger and Nnewi reflect 4.5% and 12.5% respectively, Awka diocese reflects

22.2%. This indicates that Awka diocese reflects environment and poverty in their liturgy and teaching more than Niger and Nnewi dioceses.

4. Does your parish make an annual budgetary provision to cover environment and poverty related issues?

|               | DIOCESE ON THE NIGER |          | DIOCESE OF AWKA |          | DIOCESE OF NNEWI |          | TOTAL      |          |
|---------------|----------------------|----------|-----------------|----------|------------------|----------|------------|----------|
|               | No. of Res           | % of Res | No. of Res      | % of Res | No. of Res       | % of Res | No. of Res | % of Res |
| Yes           | 5                    | 22.7     | 18              | 40.0     | 7                | 29.2     | 30         | 32.8     |
| No            | 13                   | 59.1     | 20              | 44.4     | 14               | 58.3     | 47         | 51.6     |
| Missing value | 4                    | 18.8     | 7               | 15.6     | 3                | 12.5     | 14         | 15       |
| Total         | 22                   | 100.0    | 45              | 100.0    | 24               | 100.0    |            |          |

**COMMENTS:** Forty Seven respondents (51.6%) said that their respective parishes do not make an annual budgetary provision to cover environment and poverty related issues on the one hand. On the other hand, thirty respondents 32.8% indicated that their parishes do make annual budgetary provision to cover environment and poverty issues. However, fourteen respondents (15%) did not answer the question.

5. Does your Diocese through its publications discuss environment and poverty issues to create awareness?

|               | DIOCESE ON THE NIGER |          | DIOCESE OF AWKA |          | DIOCESE OF NNEWI |          | TOTAL      |          |
|---------------|----------------------|----------|-----------------|----------|------------------|----------|------------|----------|
|               | No. of Res           | % of Res | No. of Res      | % of Res | No. of Res       | % of Res | No. of Res | % of Res |
| Yes           | 13                   | 59.1     | 31              | 68.9     | 12               | 50.0     | 56         | 61.5     |
| No            | 9                    | 40.9     | 10              | 22.2     | 8                | 33.3     | 27         | 29.6     |
| Missing value | -                    | -        | 4               | 8.9      | 4                | 16.7     | 8          | 8.8      |
| Total         | 22                   | 100.0    | 45              | 100.1    | 24               | 100.0    |            |          |

**COMMENTS:** Responding to the above question, Fifty Six respondents (61.5%) affirmed that their dioceses do discuss environment and poverty issues in their respective publications in order to create awareness. On the same question, Twenty Seven respondents (29.6%) revealed that their dioceses do not discuss environment and poverty issues in their publication. Eight respondents refused to answer the question.

## 6. Does your Diocese have an environmental group/ organisation?

|               | DIOCESE ON THE NIGER |          | DIOCESE OF AWKA |          | DIOCESE OF NNEWI |          | TOTAL      |          |
|---------------|----------------------|----------|-----------------|----------|------------------|----------|------------|----------|
|               | No. of Res           | % of Res | No. of Res      | % of Res | No. of Res       | % of Res | No. of Res | % of Res |
| Yes           | 10                   | 45.5     | 35              | 77.8     | 13               | 54.2     | 58         | 63.7     |
| No            | 12                   | 54.5     | 7               | 15.6     | 10               | 41.7     | 29         | 31.8     |
| Missing value | -                    | -        | 3               | 6.7      | 1                | 4.2      | 4          | 4.3      |
| Total         | 22                   | 100.0    | 45              | 100.0    | 24               | 100.0    |            |          |

**COMMENTS:** In response to the above question, 58 respondents (63.7%) answered in the affirmative that their respective dioceses have got an environmental organisation or group while 29 respondents (31.8%) indicated that their respective dioceses do not have an environmental group or organization. It is only 4 respondents (4.3%) that did not answer the question.

## 7. Does your parish have an environmental organisation/group?

|               | DIOCESE ON THE NIGER |          | DIOCESE OF AWKA |          | DIOCESE OF NNEWI |          | TOTAL      |          |
|---------------|----------------------|----------|-----------------|----------|------------------|----------|------------|----------|
|               | No. of Res           | % of Res | No. of Res      | % of Res | No. of Res       | % of Res | No. of Res | % of Res |
| Yes           | 10                   | 45.5     | 17              | 37.8     | 6                | 25.0     | 33         | 36.2     |
| No            | 12                   | 54.5     | 23              | 51.1     | 14               | 58.3     | 49         | 53.8     |
| Missing value | -                    | -        | 5               | 11.1     | 4                | 16.7     | 9          | 9.9      |
| Total         | 22                   | 100.0    | 45              | 100.0    | 24               | 100.0    |            |          |

**COMMENTS:** The majority of the respondents indicated that their respective parishes do not have an environmental organisation or group. This is shown in the percentage of respondents who said no to the question (53.8 %). Those who indicated that their parishes do have environmental organisation or group represent 36.2% of the respondents. Those categorized as missing value, ie who choose not to answer the question constitute 9.9% of the respondents.

8. My Parish has the necessary capacity to implement Diocesan policies on environment and development.

|                   | DIOCESE ON THE NIGER |          | DIOCESE OF AWKA |          | DIOCESE OF NNEWI |          | TOTAL      |          |
|-------------------|----------------------|----------|-----------------|----------|------------------|----------|------------|----------|
|                   | No. of Res           | % of Res | No. of Res      | % of Res | No. of Res       | % of Res | No. of Res | % of Res |
| Strongly Agree    | 3                    | 13.6     | 5               | 11.1     | 5                | 20.8     | 13         | 18.1     |
| Agree             | 14                   | 63.6     | 27              | 60.0     | 15               | 62.5     | 56         | 61.5     |
| Disagree          | 4                    | 18.2     | 5               | 11.1     | 2                | 8.3      | 11         | 12       |
| Strongly Disagree | -                    | -        | 2               | 4.4      | -                | -        | 2          | 2.1      |
| Don't know        | 1                    | 4.5      | 4               | 8.9      | -                | -        | 5          | 5.4      |
| Missing value     | -                    | -        | 2               | 4.4      | 2                | 8.2      | 4          | 4.3      |
| Total             | 22                   | 100.0    | 45              | 100.0    | 24               | 100.0    |            |          |

**COMMENTS:** Answers to the above question reveals that 13 respondents (18.1%) of the respondents strongly agree that their respective parishes have the necessary capacity to implement their diocesan policies on environment and development. Similarly, 56 respondents (61.5%) agree that their parishes have the necessary capacity to implement their diocesan policies on environment and development. However, 11 respondents felt that their parishes do not have the necessary capacity to implement their diocesan policies on the environment and development. 2 respondents share a similar view with the eleven

respondents by showing a strong disagreement that their parishes have the necessary capacity to implement their diocesan policies on environment and development. Five respondents (5.4%) indicated that they did not know the question while four respondents did not answer the question.

9. If your answer to question 8 is negative, which of the following capacities does your parish lack.

|                         | DIOCESE ON THE NIGER |          | DIOCESE OF AWKA |          | DIOCESE OF NNEWI |          | TOTAL      |          |
|-------------------------|----------------------|----------|-----------------|----------|------------------|----------|------------|----------|
|                         | No. of Res           | % of Res | No. of Res      | % of Res | No. of Res       | % of Res | No. of Res | % of Res |
| Personnel               | 1                    | 4.5      | 7               | 15.6     | 2                | 8.3      | 10         | 10.9     |
| Financial Resources     | 7                    | 31.8     | 4               | 8.9      | 6                | 25.0     | 17         | 18.7     |
| Physical Infrastructure | 1                    | 4.5      | 2               | 4.4      | 2                | 8.3      | 5          | 5.5      |
| Committed leadership    | -                    | -        | 1               | 2.2      | 2                | 8.3      | 3          | 3.3      |
| Collective will         |                      |          | 3               | 6.7      | -                | -        | 3          | 3.3      |
| Missing Value           | 13                   | 59.1     | 28              | 62.2     | 12               | 50.0     | 53         | 58       |
| Total                   | 22                   | 100.0    | 45              | 100.0    | 24               | 100.0    |            |          |

**COMMENTS:** Answers to the question indicate that many parishes have the necessary capacity to implement diocesan policies on environment and development. This is reflected on the number of missing value. Missing value symbolises that the question was not answered. With reference to this particular question, answers were not supplied because the respondents felt that their parishes do not lack any necessary resources. The missing value

represents 53 respondents 58% of the entire population. There is however, a set of other respondents who indicated that they lack financial resources to implement diocesan development policy. This set of respondents represents 17.7% of the respondents. There is also another set of respondents who indicated that they lack resource personnel. This set represents 10.9 %. Those who indicated that they lack physical infrastructure represents 5.5%. Those who see the lack of committed leadership and lack of collective will as an impediment to implementing diocesan policy on development are represented by 3.3% respectively.

Here again, we note a gap between the diocese on the Niger and the other two dioceses on the percentage of respondents who indicated that their parishes lack financial resources to implement diocesan policies on environment and development initiatives. This is a bit surprising because the diocese on the Niger apart from being the 'mother diocese' is located in Onitsha, the commercial nerve centre of the entire Eastern states. By virtue of its location in Onitsha, it is not expected that lack of financial resources would be a hindrance to implementing diocesan policies on development projects. If a greater percentage of respondents from Awka and Nnewi dioceses which are 'less urbanized' did not complain of lacking financial resources, Niger which is more 'urbanized' therefore relatively buoyant, ought not complain about lack of financial resources to embark on development projects. Based on the above scenario, it therefore seems to us that the lack of interest rather than lack of financial resources is an inhibiting factor in the diocese.

10. Does your parish have environmental management plan.

|               | DIOCESE ON THE NIGER |          | DIOCESE OF AWKA |          | DIOCESE OF NNEWI |          | TOTAL      |          |
|---------------|----------------------|----------|-----------------|----------|------------------|----------|------------|----------|
|               | No. of Res           | % of Res | No. of Res      | % of Res | No. of Res       | % of Res | No. of Res | % of Res |
| Yes           | 5                    | 22.7     | 18              | 40.0     | 8                | 33.3     | 31         | 34       |
| No            | 15                   | 68.2     | 24              | 53.3     | 13               | 54.2     | 52         | 10.9     |
| Missing value | 2                    | 9.1      | 3               | 6.7      | 3                | 12.5     | 8          | 8.8      |
| Total         | 22                   | 100.0    | 45              | 100.0    | 24               | 100.0    |            |          |

**COMMENTS:** A vast majority of the respondents (57%) of the respondents indicated that their parishes do not have an environmental management plan while 34% showed that their parishes have environmental management plan. 8.8% of the entire respondents did not answer the question.

11. Has your parish ever conducted an environmental impact assessment on any of its ongoing projects?

|               | DIOCESE ON THE NIGER |          | DIOCESE OF AWKA |          | DIOCESE OF NNEWI |          | TOTAL      |          |
|---------------|----------------------|----------|-----------------|----------|------------------|----------|------------|----------|
|               | No. of Res           | % of Res | No. of Res      | % of Res | No. of Res       | % of Res | No. of Res | % of Res |
| Yes           | 6                    | 27.3     | 18              | 40.0     | 8                | 33.3     | 32         | 35.2     |
| No            | 14                   | 63.6     | 22              | 48.9     | 13               | 54.2     | 49         | 53.8     |
| Missing value | 2                    | 9.1      | 5               | 11.1     | 3                | 12.5     | 10         | 11       |
| Total         | 22                   | 100.0    |                 | 100.0    | 24               | 100.0    |            |          |

**COMMENTS:** In response to the above question, 53.8% of the respondents admitted that their parish had never conducted an environmental impact assessment on any of their projects. In contrast to this group of respondents above, is another group of 35.2% who indicated that their parish had conducted an environmental impact assessment on their projects. 11% of the respondents did not answer the question.

12. Has your parish ever conducted an environmental audit exercise?

|               | DIOCESE ON THE NIGER |          | DIOCESE OF AWKA |          | DIOCESE OF NNEWI |          | TOTAL      |          |
|---------------|----------------------|----------|-----------------|----------|------------------|----------|------------|----------|
|               | No. of Res           | % of Res | No. of Res      | % of Res | No. of Res       | % of Res | No. of Res | % of Res |
| Yes           | 2                    | 9.1      | 10              | 22.2     | 8                | 33.3     | 20         | 22       |
| No            | 18                   | 81.8     | 30              | 66.7     | 14               | 58.3     | 62         | 68.1     |
| Missing value | 2                    | 9.1      | 5               | 11.1     | 2                | 8.3      | 18         | 19.8     |
| Total         | 22                   | 100.0    | 45              | 100.0    | 24               | 100.0    |            |          |

**COMMENTS:** On the question of whether the parishes had ever conducted an environmental audit exercise, 62% gave an indication that their parishes had never carried out an environmental audit exercise while 22% gave the indication that they had conducted audit exercise. The percentage of those who did not answer the question stands at 19.8.

13. Does your parish have an environmental officer?

|               | DIOCESE ON THE NIGER |          | DIOCESE OF AWKA |          | DIOCESE OF NNEWI |          | TOTAL      |          |
|---------------|----------------------|----------|-----------------|----------|------------------|----------|------------|----------|
|               | No. of Res           | % of Res | No. of Res      | % of Res | No. of Res       | % of Res | No. of Res | % of Res |
| Yes           | 5                    | 22.7     | 15              | 33.3     | 5                | 20.8     | 25         | 27.4     |
| No            | 15                   | 68.2     | 28              | 62.2     | 17               | 70.8     | 60         | 66       |
| Missing value | 2                    | 9.1      | 2               | 4.4      | 2                | 8.3      | 6          | 6.6      |
| Total         | 22                   | 100.0    | 45              | 100.0    | 24               | 100.0    |            |          |

**COMMENTS:** Responding to the above question, 66% of the respondents indicated that their parishes do not have an environmental officer while 27% of the respondents indicated that their parishes do have an environmental officer. 6.6% of the respondents did not answer the question.

14. Does your parish engage in any poverty alleviation initiative?

|               | DIOCESE ON THE NIGER |          | DIOCESE OF AWKA |          | DIOCESE OF NNEWI |          | TOTAL      |          |
|---------------|----------------------|----------|-----------------|----------|------------------|----------|------------|----------|
|               | No. of Res           | % of Res | No. of Res      | % of Res | No. of Res       | % of Res | No. of Res | % of Res |
| Yes           | 14                   | 63.6     | 36              | 80.0     | 14               | 58.3     | 64         | 70       |
| No            | 7                    | 31.8     | 6               | 13.3     | 7                | 29.2     | 20         | 21.9     |
| Missing value | 1                    | 4.5      | 3               | 6.7      | 3                | 12.5     | 7          | 7.6      |
| Total         | 22                   | 100.0    | 45              | 100.0    | 24               | 100.0    |            |          |

**COMMENTS:** 70% of the respondents indicated that their parishes engage in poverty alleviation initiatives while 21% of the respondents showed that their parishes do not engage in poverty alleviation initiatives at all. The percentage of respondents who did not answer the question stands at 7.6%.

Of interest here is the difference among the dioceses in the percentage of respondents who indicated that their parishes do engage in poverty alleviation initiatives. From the data above, Awka has a higher percentage (80%) than Niger and Nnewi who has 63.6% and 58.3% respectively.

15. If yes, what kind

|                    | DIOCESE ON THE NIGER |          | DIOCESE OF AWKA |          | DIOCESE OF NNEWI |          | TOTAL      |          |
|--------------------|----------------------|----------|-----------------|----------|------------------|----------|------------|----------|
|                    | No. of Res           | % of Res | No. of Res      | % of Res | No. of Res       | % of Res | No. of Res | % of Res |
| Relief             | 14                   | 63.6     | 22              | 48.9     | 10               | 41.7     | 46         | 50.5     |
| Co operative       | 1                    | 4.5      | 7               | 15.6     | 1                | 4.2      | 9          | 10       |
| Skills acquisition | 1                    | 4.5      | 3               | 6.7      | 1                | 4.2      | 5          | 5.5      |
| Agriculture        | -                    | -        | 3               | 6.7      | 2                | 8.3      | 5          | 5.5      |
| missing value      | 6                    | 27.3     | 10              | 22.2     | 10               | 41.7     | 26         | 28.5     |
| Total              | 22                   | 100.0    | 45              | 100.0    | 24               | 100.0    |            |          |

**COMMENTS:** Many parishes who indicated that they engage in poverty alleviation initiatives are mostly providing relief assistance- (50.5%). Those parishes that engage in co - operative ventures as a kind of poverty alleviation strategy stands at 10%. There are also parishes who engage in agriculture and skills acquisition. The percentage of this set of respondents stand at 5.5% each. However, 28.5% of the respondents did not answer the question.

## 16. If no, why not

|                | DIOCESE ON THE NIGER |          | DIOCESE OF AWKA |          | DIOCESE OF NNEWI |          | TOTAL      |          |
|----------------|----------------------|----------|-----------------|----------|------------------|----------|------------|----------|
|                | No. of Res           | % of Res | No. of Res      | % of Res | No. of Res       | % of Res | No. of Res | % of Res |
| Lack of land   | 1                    | 4.5      | 2               | 4.4      | 1                | 4.2      | 4          | 4.4      |
| Lack of fund   | 3                    | 13.6     | 2               | 4.4      | 9                | 37.5     | 14         | 15.3     |
| Not interested | 2                    | 9.1      | 1               | 2.2      | 1                | 4.2      | 4          | 4.4      |
| Not sure       | -                    | -        | -               | -        | -                | -        | -          | -        |
| missing value  | 16                   | 72.7     | 40              | 88.9     | 13               | 54.2     | 69         | 75.8     |
| Total          | 22                   | 100.0    | 45              | 100.0    | 24               | 100.0    |            |          |

**COMMENTS:** Those parishes who are not engaged in poverty alleviation initiatives cited the lack of funds as the reason why they do not have poverty alleviation programmes. This number of respondents represents (15%) of the respondents while 4.4% cited lack of the availability of space (land) as the reason why they have not poverty alleviation programmes. Those parishes who indicated that their parishioners are not interested in poverty alleviation initiatives represent 4.4%. However, there is a set of missing value representing 75.8% indicating those who did not answer the question. By choosing not to answer the question, they implied that their parishes are engaged in poverty alleviation initiatives hence there is no need to answer the question.

17. People in my parish are interested in environment and poverty issues.

|                   | DIOCESE ON<br>THE NIGER |             | DIOCESE OF<br>AWKA |             | DIOCESE OF<br>NNEWI |             | TOTAL            |             |
|-------------------|-------------------------|-------------|--------------------|-------------|---------------------|-------------|------------------|-------------|
|                   | No. of<br>Res           | % of<br>Res | No. of<br>Res      | % of<br>Res | No. of<br>Res       | % of<br>Res | No.<br>of<br>Res | % of<br>Res |
| Strongly Agree    | 3                       | 13.6        | 6                  | 13.3        | 6                   | 25.0        | 15               | 16.4        |
| Agree             | 13                      | 59.1        | 33                 | 73.3        | 12                  | 50.0        | 58               | 63.7        |
| Disagree          | 3                       | 13.6        | 2                  | 4.4         | 3                   | 12.5        | 8                | 8.8         |
| Strongly disagree | 1                       | 4.5         | -                  | -           | -                   | -           | 1                | 1           |
| Don't know        | 2                       | 9.1         | 2                  | 4.4         | 1                   | 4.2         | 5                | 5.5         |
| Missing value     | -                       | -           | 2                  | 4.4         | 2                   | 8.3         | 4                | 4.4         |
| Total             | 22                      | 100.0       | 45                 | 100.0       | 24                  | 100.0       |                  |             |

**COMMENTS:** On the question of whether parishioners are interested in environment and poverty issues, 58% of the respondents indicated that their parishes are interested while 16.4% strongly agree that their parishes are interested in environment and poverty issues. However, 8.8% of the respondents disagreed that their parishes are interested in environment and poverty issues while additional 1% of the respondents strongly disagreed on the question. Similarly, 4.4% of the respondents represented in the missing value box, did not answer the question.

18. If your answer to question 19 is positive, what practical evidence shows that your parish is environmentally friendly.

|  | DIOCESE ON THE NIGER |          | DIOCESE OF AWKA |          | DIOCESE OF NNEWI |          | TOTAL      |          |
|--|----------------------|----------|-----------------|----------|------------------|----------|------------|----------|
|  | No. of Res           | % of Res | No. of Res      | % of Res | No. of Res       | % of Res | No. of Res | % of Res |
| Regular Environmental sanitation                       | 8                    | 36.4     | 16              | 35.6     | 11               | 45.8     | 35         | 38.5     |
| Proper waste management plan                           | -                    | -        | 2               | 4.4      | 2                | 8.3      | 4          | 4.4      |
| Tree planting and vegetation maintenance               | 1                    | 4.5      | 9               | 20.0     | 2                | 8.3      | 12         | 13.1     |
| Environmental Campaigns                                | -                    | -        | -               | -        | -                | -        | -          | -        |
| Proper erosion control and natural resource management | 4                    | 18.2     | 14              | 31.1     | -                | -        | 18         | 19.8     |
| Missing value  | 9                    | 40.9     | 4               | 8.9      | 9                | 37.5     | 22         | 24.2     |
| Total  | 22                   | 100.0    | 45              | 100.0    | 24               | 100.0    |            |          |

**COMMENTS:** On the question of practical evidence to show that parishes are interested in environment and poverty issues and that they are environmentally friendly, 38.5% of the respondents indicated that their parishes engage in regular environmental sanitation. Others (13.1%) show that their parishes embark on tree planting and vegetation maintenance

programmes, while 19.8% of the respondents indicated that their parishes engage in proper erosion control and natural resource management. 4.4% of the respondents show that their parishes have proper waste management plan as practical evidence that they are environmentally friendly. However, a set of respondents representing 24.2% did not answer the question.

19. Does your parish have a waste management plan?

|               | DIOCESE ON THE NIGER |          | DIOCESE OF AWKA |          | DIOCESE OF NNEWI |          | TOTAL      |          |
|---------------|----------------------|----------|-----------------|----------|------------------|----------|------------|----------|
|               | No. of Res           | % of Res | No. of Res      | % of Res | No. of Res       | % of Res | No. of Res | % of Res |
| Yes           | 14                   | 63.6     | 26              | 57.8     | 14               | 58.3     | 34         | 37.4     |
| No            | 6                    | 27.3     | 14              | 31.1     | 8                | 33.3     | 28         | 30.7     |
| Missing value | 2                    | 9.1      | 5               | 11.1     | 2                | 8.3      | 9          | 9.9      |
| Total         | 22                   | 100.0    | 45              | 100.0    | 24               | 100.0    |            |          |

**COMMENTS:** Responding to the question of whether parishes have a waste management plan, 30.7 percent of the respondents indicated that their parishes do not have a waste management plan while 37.4 percent answered that their parishes do have waste management plan. However, 9.9 percent did not answer the question.

## 20. How does your parish deal with waste?

|                           | DIOCESE ON<br>THE NIGER |             | DIOCESE OF<br>AWKA |             | DIOCESE OF<br>NNEWI |             | TOTAL         |             |
|---------------------------|-------------------------|-------------|--------------------|-------------|---------------------|-------------|---------------|-------------|
|                           | No. of<br>Res           | % of<br>Res | No. of<br>Res      | % of<br>Res | No. of<br>Res       | % of<br>Res | No. of<br>Res | % of<br>Res |
| Burning                   | 15                      | 68.2        | 25                 | 55.6        | 15                  | 62.5        | 55            | 60.4        |
| Indiscriminate<br>dumping | 2                       | 9.1         | 7                  | 15.6        | 3                   | 12.5        | 12            | 13.1        |
| Land filling              | -                       | -           | 8                  | 17.8        | 4                   | 16.7        | 14            | 15          |
| Recycling                 | 2                       | 9.1         | 1                  | 2.2         | -                   | -           | 3             | 3.3         |
| Nothing                   | 1                       | 4.5         | 1                  | 2.2         | -                   | -           | 2             | 2.2         |
| Missing value             | 2                       | 9.1         | 3                  | 6.7         | 2                   | 8.3         | 7             | 7.7         |
| Total                     | 22                      | 100.0       | 45                 | 100.0       | 24                  | 100.0       |               |             |

**COMMENTS:** On the question of how the parishes deal with waste, 60.4% of the respondents indicated that they burn the waste. Those who do not have any definite form of dealing with the waste they generate, (13.1%) usually dump it indiscriminately. There are also those parishes that use land fill as an alternative waste management system. This represents 15% of the respondents. However, there are also 2.2% of the respondents who indicated they do nothing about waste while 3.3% indicated they recycle their waste. Those who did not answer the question are 7.7%.

21. Does your parish have a compost centre?

|               | DIOCESE ON THE NIGER |          | DIOCESE OF AWKA |          | DIOCESE OF NNEWI |          | TOTAL      |          |
|---------------|----------------------|----------|-----------------|----------|------------------|----------|------------|----------|
|               | No. of Res           | % of Res | No. of Res      | % of Res | No. of Res       | % of Res | No. of Res | % of Res |
| Yes           | 15                   | 68.2     | 19              | 42.2     | 9                | 37.5     | 29         | 31.8     |
| No            | 6                    | 27.3     | 21              | 46.7     | 13               | 54.2     | 40         | 44       |
| Missing value | 1                    | 4.5      | 5               | 11.1     | 2                | 8.3      | 8          | 8.8      |
| Total         | 22                   | 100.0    | 45              | 100.0    | 24               | 100.0    |            |          |

**COMMENTS:** Responding to the question of whether the parishes have a compost centre, 44% of the respondents said no, while 31.8% said yes. 8.8% of the respondents did not answer the question.

22. Does your parish engage in any tree planting programme/ campaign?

|               | DIOCESE ON THE NIGER |          | DIOCESE OF AWKA |          | DIOCESE OF NNEWI |          | TOTAL      |          |
|---------------|----------------------|----------|-----------------|----------|------------------|----------|------------|----------|
|               | No. of Res           | % of Res | No. of Res      | % of Res | No. of Res       | % of Res | No. of Res | % of Res |
| Yes           | 7                    | 31.8     | 15              | 33.3     | 9                | 37.5     | 31         | 34       |
| No            | 14                   | 63.6     | 26              | 57.8     | 13               | 54.2     | 40         | 44       |
| Missing value | 1                    | 4.5      | 4               | 8.9      | 2                | 8.3      | 7          | 7.6      |
| Total         | 22                   | 100.0    | 45              | 100.0    | 24               | 100.0    |            |          |

**COMMENTS:** With regards to the above question, 34% of the respondents said yes to the question while 44% said no. 7.6% did not answer the question.

23. Has your parish ever organised an environmental campaign in your community?

|                  | DIOCESE ON<br>THE NIGER |             | DIOCESE OF<br>AWKA |             | DIOCESE OF<br>NNEWI |             | TOTAL            |             |
|------------------|-------------------------|-------------|--------------------|-------------|---------------------|-------------|------------------|-------------|
|                  | No. of<br>Res           | % of<br>Res | No. of<br>Res      | % of<br>Res | No. of<br>Res       | % of<br>Res | No.<br>of<br>Res | % of<br>Res |
| Yes              | 3                       | 13.6        | 5                  | 11.1        | 3                   | 12.5        | 11               | 12          |
| No               | 18                      | 81.8        | 35                 | 77.8        | 18                  | 75.0        | 71               | 78          |
| Missing<br>value | 1                       | 4.5         | 5                  | 11.1        | 3                   | 12.5        | 9                | 9.9         |
| Total            | 22                      | 100.0       | 45                 | 100.0       | 24                  | 100.0       |                  |             |

**COMMENTS:** On the question of whether the parishes had ever organised an environmental campaign in their respective communities, 78% of the respondents indicated that they had never organised any while 12% of the respondents indicated that they had organised. 9.9% that did not answer the question.

24. Has your parish ever organised an environmental workshop/seminar?

|               | DIOCESE ON THE NIGER |          | DIOCESE OF AWKA |          | DIOCESE OF NNEWI |          | TOTAL      |          |
|---------------|----------------------|----------|-----------------|----------|------------------|----------|------------|----------|
|               | No. of Res           | % of Res | No. of Res      | % of Res | No. of Res       | % of Res | No. of Res | % of Res |
| Yes           | 5                    | 22.7     | 7               | 15.6     | 3                | 12.5     | 15         | 16.5     |
| No            | 17                   | 77.3     | 32              | 71.1     | 17               | 70.8     | 66         | 72.5     |
| Missing value | -                    | -        | 6               | 13.3     | 4                | 16.7     | 10         | 11       |
| Total         | 22                   | 100.0    | 45              | 100.0    | 24               | 100.0    |            |          |

**COMMENTS:** The majority of the respondents, (72.5%) admitted that their parish had never organised an environmental workshop or seminar while 16% of the respondents indicated that their parish had organised an environmental workshop or seminar. 11% of the respondents did not answer the question.

25. Is environmental education part of your church owned school's curriculum?

|               | DIOCESE ON THE NIGER |          | DIOCESE OF AWKA |          | DIOCESE OF NNEWI |          | TOTAL      |          |
|---------------|----------------------|----------|-----------------|----------|------------------|----------|------------|----------|
|               | No. of Res           | % of Res | No. of Res      | % of Res | No. of Res       | % of Res | No. of Res | % of Res |
| Yes           | 5                    | 22.7     | 10              | 22.2     | 7                | 29.2     | 22         | 24.2     |
| No            | 17                   | 77.3     | 28              | 62.2     | 11               | 45.8     | 36         | 39.5     |
| Missing value | -                    | -        | 7               | 15.6     | 6                | 25.0     | 13         | 14.2     |
| Total         | 22                   | 100.0    | 45              | 100.0    | 24               | 100.0    |            |          |

**COMMENTS:** 39% indicated that environmental education is not part of their church owned school's curriculum while 24% of the respondents said that environmental education is part of their church owned school curriculum. It could be observed that 14% of the respondents did not answer the question.

### **5.3.1. Analysis on the Diocesan and Parish Concern on Environment and Poverty issues. Questions 1-25**

Having presented the above data (questions 1-27) which form a separate component dealing with the diocesan and parish concerns on the environment and poverty issues, we now make an analysis of the component. It is worthy of note that the dioceses have made a significant effort in trying to understand the need for the church to be involved in environment and development issues. This view is represented by the majority of the respondents who indicated that the church should be actively involved in environment and development issues and should not therefore leave environment and development concerns in the hands of governments and NGOs alone. (See question 1). The dioceses have also taken environment and development issues very seriously (question 2). This is reflected in the way in which environment and development issues are being discussed in diocesan publications as a way of creating environmental awareness and education (see question 5) and the way parishioners express their interest in environmental issues (see question 19) as well as the enthusiasm with which they engage in regular environmental sanitation (see question 20), including their engagement in poverty alleviation programmes (see question 16). The establishment of environmental officers at the diocesan levels shows the degree of seriousness the dioceses attached to the issue of environment and development (see question 6). The respondents' level of knowledge about the energy sources that has the lowest impact on the environments is greatly appreciated. (See question 15)

In a more critical analysis about diocesan and parish concern on environment and poverty issues, a very contrasting picture is seen from the response of many of the respondents. Though many of the respondents claimed that the dioceses and parishes have shown enormous interest in the subject matter, there are indications that after all the *picture is not as bright as it first appears to the eyes*. Looking back at chapter three which deals with the 'situation analysis' of the environment and poverty issues in Anambra state, we could

observe that there is not much evidence based on what could be seen, to suggest that the picture presented by the data above is a true reflection of the environmental situation in the state. It seems there is no “corresponding practical commitment” to “theoretical knowledge” expressed at both the diocesan and the parish levels in terms of environment and development issues.

The following examples justify our argument. In question 4, the majority of the respondents, (forty seven respondents-51.6%) reveal that there is no annual budgetary provision to cover environment and poverty expenses in their parishes. If provision is not made to cater for environment and poverty projects, how then could one justify the claim that the dioceses are interested in environment and poverty issues? This question is very critical because meagre financial resources were not given as a reason for this budgetary omission. This is because in question 8 which is about whether the parishes have the necessary capacity (which includes financial resources) to implement diocesan policies on environment and development issues, only 17 respondents to that question showed financial constraints as the hindrance to implementing diocesan policy on the environment. From this insight therefore, not having a budget to run environment and poverty expenses could be seen as not making environment and poverty concerns a priority.

This non prioritization of environment and poverty issues could also explain the reason why there are no environmental officers to oversee environmental organisations at the parish levels (see question 9). Furthermore, the identified lack of “practical commitment” is shown in question 10 (No environmental management plan), question 11 (No environmental impact assessment conducted in on-going projects), question 12 (No environmental audit exercise being done in parishes). This identified lack of commitment is not limited to the dioceses in the state. It is a general problem, a cankerworm that has eaten into the ‘environmental consciousnesses’ of even the state government. An aspect of lack of commitment on the part of the state government is revealed by Leonard Muoghalu who states that “that in Anambra state the administrative structure for the take off of the state environmental protection agency is only now being taken up with the appointment of a director years after other states in the federation have established theirs”.<sup>562</sup> Though Muoghalu’s statement is very instructive, it

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<sup>562</sup> Muoghalu, Leonard. 2004. “Environmental problems in Nigeria. What Prospects”? P 54

reveals the lack of commitment on the part of the state on environment issues, but the church should have shown example of commitment by leading the state to environmental action.

It is equally dissatisfying that most of the respondents indicated that their parishes still burn waste (see question 22) in spite of the current global awareness and effort being made about the need for people to imbibe the culture of reducing, re using and recycling waste. If the majority of the parishes do not have compost centres (see question 23), it simply indicates that the issue of waste management is a huge problem here. It may not be surprising therefore to understand the reason why in chapter three, we made reference to Onitsha as one of the dirtiest cities in Nigeria. Proper waste management is one of the problem areas in many urban areas in Nigeria including Anambra state. Moreover, if the majority of the parishes do not engage in environmental awareness and education and tree planting campaigns (see questions 24, 25 26 and 27), then it is simply an indication that the issue of “collective will and commitment” to engage in environment and development issues is a big problem here. We shall take up this issue in the 5<sup>th</sup> generation discussion.

#### **5.4. Knowledge of Global Anglican Communion Involvement in Environmental Issues (26-30)**

In the previous section (1-25) we gauged the clergy understanding of the diocesan and parish concern in environment and poverty issues. In this section, we are looking at the clergy understanding of the global Anglican Communion involvement in environment issues. This will reveal the extent to which the dioceses are aware and involved in the global Anglican Communion efforts in environmental protection.

26. The Anglican Church is very much involved in environment and poverty issues in Anambra state.

|                   | DIOCESE ON THE NIGER |          | DIOCESE OF AWKA |          | DIOCESE OF NNEWI |          | TOTAL      |          |
|-------------------|----------------------|----------|-----------------|----------|------------------|----------|------------|----------|
|                   | No. of Res           | % of Res | No. of Res      | % of Res | No. of Res       | % of Res | No. of Res | % of Res |
| Strongly agree    | -                    | -        | 14              | 31.1     | 6                | 25.0     | 20         | 22       |
| Agree             | 10                   | 45.5     | 24              | 53.3     | 11               | 45.8     | 45         | 49.5     |
| Disagree          | 2                    | 9.1      | 1               | 2.2      | 1                | 4.2      | 4          | 4.4      |
| Strongly disagree | 3                    | 13.6     | -               | -        | -                | -        | 3          | 3.3      |
| Don't know        | 6                    | 27.3     | 5               | 11.1     | 3                | 12.5     | 24         | 26.4     |
| Missing value     | 1                    | 4.5      | 1               | 2.2      | 3                | 12.5     | 5          | 5.5      |
| Total             | 22                   | 100.0    | 45              | 100.0    | 24               | 100.0    |            |          |

**COMMENTS:** 22% of the respondents strongly agreed that the Anglican Church has been very much involved in environment and development issues in Anambra state while 49% of the respondents simply agreed to the statement. The percentage of respondents who disagreed to the above statement stands at 4.4% while those who strongly disagreed stands at 3.3%. Another large number of respondents representing 26.4% indicated that they did not know the answer to the question while 5.5% of the respondents are categorized as missing value because they did not answer the question.

27. The early missionaries, particularly the Church Missionary Society (CMS), were more committed to poverty alleviation than the Church of Nigeria of today.

|                   | DIOCESE ON THE NIGER |          | DIOCESE OF AWKA |          | DIOCESE OF NNEWI |          | TOTAL      |          |
|-------------------|----------------------|----------|-----------------|----------|------------------|----------|------------|----------|
|                   | No. of Res           | % of Res | No. of Res      | % of Res | No. of Res       | % of Res | No. of Res | % of Res |
| Strongly agree    | 2                    | 9.1      | 18              | 40.0     | 4                | 16.7     | 24         | 26.4     |
| Agree             | 9                    | 40.9     | 11              | 24.4     | 14               | 58.3     | 34         | 37.4     |
| Disagree          | 8                    | 36.4     | 11              | 24.4     | 2                | 8.3      | 21         | 23.1     |
| Strongly disagree | -                    | -        | 3               | 6.7      | -                | -        | 3          | 3.3      |
| Don't know        | 3                    | 13.6     | 1               | 2.2      | 3                | 12.5     | 7          | 7.7      |
| Missing value     | -                    | -        | 1               | 2.2      | 1                | 4.2      | 2          | 2.2      |
| Total             | 22                   | 100.0    | 45              | 100.0    | 24               | 100.0    |            |          |

**COMMENTS:** Responding to the above statement that the early missionaries, particularly the Church Missionary Society (CMS), were more committed to poverty alleviation than the present church of Nigeria, 26.4% of the respondents strongly agreed to this statement while 37.4% of the respondents simply agreed to it. Another sizable group representing 23.1% of the respondents disagreed to the above statement while 3.3% of the respondents strongly disagreed to it. There is still another smaller group representing 7.7% of the respondents who indicated that they did not know the answer to the question. Those who choose not to answer the question represent only 2.2% of the respondents.

28. The Anglican catechism contains some basic environmental teachings.

|                   | DIOCESE ON<br>THE NIGER |             | DIOCESE OF<br>AWKA |             | DIOCESE OF<br>NNEWI |             | TOTAL            |             |
|-------------------|-------------------------|-------------|--------------------|-------------|---------------------|-------------|------------------|-------------|
|                   | No. of<br>Res           | % of<br>Res | No. of<br>Res      | % of<br>Res | No. of<br>Res       | % of<br>Res | No.<br>of<br>Res | % of<br>Res |
| Strongly agree    | 1                       | 4.5         | 2                  | 4.4         | 3                   | 12.5        | 6                | 6.6         |
| Agree             | 10                      | 45.5        | 23                 | 51.1        | 7                   | 29.2        | 40               | 44          |
| Disagree          | 5                       | 22.7        | 7                  | 15.6        | 6                   | 25.0        | 18               | 19.7        |
| Strongly disagree | 3                       | 13.6        | 4                  | 8.9         | -                   | -           | 7                | 7.7         |
| Don't know        | 3                       | 13.6        | 6                  | 13.3        | 5                   | 20.8        | 14               | 15.3        |
| Missing value     | -                       | -           | 3                  | 6.7         | 3                   | 12.5        | 6                | 6.6         |
| Total             | 22                      | 100.0       | 45                 | 100.0       | 24                  | 100.0       |                  |             |

**COMMENTS:** In response to the above statement that the Anglican catechism contains some basic environmental teachings, a good number of the respondents representing 44% of the entire population agreed to the above statement while 6.6% strongly agreed to it. However, another group constituting 19.7% of the respondents disagreed to the statement while 7.7% with similar view strongly disagreed to it. There is also another group who indicated that they do not know whether the statement is true or not. This group represents 15.3% of the respondents. Those who choose not to answer the question stand at 6.6%.

29. Has the Lambeth Conference resolution on environment been widely publicized in your diocese?

|                  | DIOCESE ON<br>THE NIGER |             | DIOCESE OF<br>AWKA |             | DIOCESE OF<br>NNEWI |             | TOTAL            |             |
|------------------|-------------------------|-------------|--------------------|-------------|---------------------|-------------|------------------|-------------|
|                  | No. of<br>Res           | % of<br>Res | No. of<br>Res      | % of<br>Res | No. of<br>Res       | % of<br>Res | No.<br>of<br>Res | % of<br>Res |
| Yes              | 3                       | 13.6        | 14                 | 31.1        | 8                   | 33.3        | 25               | 27.4        |
| No               | 17                      | 77.3        | 25                 | 55.6        | 12                  | 50.0        | 54               | 59.3        |
| Missing<br>value | 2                       | 9.1         | 6                  | 13.3        | 4                   | 16.7        | 12               | 13.2        |
| Total            | 22                      | 100.0       | 45                 | 100.0       | 24                  | 100.0       |                  |             |

**COMMENTS:** In answering the above question, a greater number representing 59.3% of the entire respondents indicated that the Lambeth Conference resolution on the environment has not been widely publicized in their respective dioceses while 27.4% of the respondents claimed that the Lambeth Conference resolution on the environment has been widely publicized in their dioceses. Those who decided not to answer the question represent 13.2% of the entire population.

30. Environment and poverty issues are incorporated into the curriculum of the Anglican theological institutions in Nigeria.

|                   | DIOCESE ON THE NIGER |          | DIOCESE OF AWKA |          | DIOCESE OF NNEWI |          | TOTAL      |          |
|-------------------|----------------------|----------|-----------------|----------|------------------|----------|------------|----------|
|                   | No. of Res           | % of Res | No. of Res      | % of Res | No. of Res       | % of Res | No. of Res | % of Res |
| Strongly agree    | -                    | -        | 1               | 2.2      | 1                | 4.2      | 2          | 2.2      |
| Agree             | 4                    | 18.2     | 16              | 35.6     | 6                | 25.0     | 26         | 28.6     |
| Disagree          | 11                   | 50.0     | 11              | 24.4     | 4                | 16.7     | 26         | 28.6     |
| Strongly disagree | 4                    | 18.2     | 2               | 4.4      | 2                | 8.3      | 8          | 8.8      |
| Don't know        | 3                    | 13.6     | 11              | 24.4     | 10               | 41.7     | 34         | 26.4     |
| Missing value     | -                    | -        | 4               | 8.9      | 1                | 4.7      | 5          | 5.5      |
| Total             | 22                   | 100.0    | 45              | 100.0    | 24               | 100.0    |            |          |

**COMMENTS:** In response to the above statement, 2.2% of the respondents strongly agreed that environment and poverty issues are incorporated into the curriculum of the Anglican theological institutions in Nigeria, while 28.6% agreed. A greater percentage of 28.6% of the respondents equally disagreed to the statement while 8.8% of the respondents strongly disagreed with the statement. Another sizable group representing 26.4% of the respondents said that they do not know if environment and poverty issues are incorporated in the curriculum of the Anglican institutions in Nigeria while 5.5% of the respondents categorized as missing value, choose not to respond to the statement.

#### **5.4.1. Analysis on the knowledge of the global Anglican Communion involvement in environmental issues (Questions 26-30)**

The majority of the respondents indicated that they are aware of the global Anglican involvement in environment and development issues (See question 28) and that the Anglican catechism constrains some basic environmental teachings (see question 30). However, within the same section, it was discovered from the respondents that the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) is not as much committed in poverty alleviation issues as the early missionaries. This observation helps to authenticate our comments on the vision of the church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion). You will recall that our argument in chapter four about the vision of the church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) is that it did not prioritize environment and poverty issues. (See question 29). It was also noticed that the Lambeth Conference resolution on the environment has not been widely publicised in the Dioceses (See question 31). This is an indication that these dioceses have not created enough awareness on the Anglican Communion commitment to environmental concerns. According to our observation in chapter four, this justifies the Archbishop of Canterbury's condemnation of the slow pace at which awareness on environmental information is taken at the institutional levels of the global Anglican Communion. You will remember that we noted earlier that the Archbishop showed dissatisfaction on non-commitment on the institutional level where action on environmental issues are still lacking.

#### **5.5. Individual Clergy Understanding of Environmental Issues (Questions 31-39)**

In this section we are looking at the clergy personal understanding of the environment and poverty or development issues in general. This has become important because if there is going to be a significant change of attitude and behaviour from individual Christians as a result of the church's involvement; the clergy themselves must necessarily be environmentally knowledgeable at personal level. The task of this section is therefore to find out the level of individual clergy knowledge and awareness of environment and poverty issues.

31. What is the commonest form of energy source that people in your parish use for cooking?

|                  | DIOCESE ON<br>THE NIGER |             | DIOCESE OF<br>AWKA |             | DIOCESE OF<br>NNEWI |             | TOTAL         |             |
|------------------|-------------------------|-------------|--------------------|-------------|---------------------|-------------|---------------|-------------|
|                  | No. of<br>Res           | % of<br>Res | No. of<br>Res      | % of<br>Res | No. of<br>Res       | % of<br>Res | No. of<br>Res | % of<br>Res |
| Fire wood        | 13                      | 59.1        | 34                 | 75.6        | 21                  | 87.5        | 68            | 74          |
| Electricity      | -                       | -           | 2                  | 4.4         | 2                   | 8.3         | 4             | 4.3         |
| Fossil fuel      | 6                       | 27.3        | 6                  | 13.3        | -                   | -           | 12            | 13.1        |
| Solar energy     | 1                       | 4.5         | -                  | -           | -                   | -           | 1             | 1           |
| Not sure         | 2                       | 4.5         | 1                  | 2.2         | -                   | -           | 3             | 3.2         |
| Missing<br>value | -                       | -           | 2                  | 4.4         | 1                   | 4.2         | 3             | 3.3         |
| Total            | 22                      | 100.0       | 45                 | 100.0       | 24                  | 100.0       |               |             |

**COMMENTS:** The commonest form of energy source people in most parishes use for cooking is identified as fire wood-(74%). 13.1% indicated that people in their parish use fossil fuel for cooking. Those who indicated that people in their parish use electricity for cooking purposes accounted for only 3.2% of the respondents. Furthermore, 1% of the respondents indicated that people in their parish use solar energy for cooking. Those respondents who indicated that they did not know the answer to the question as well as those who omitted the question represent 3.3% each.

We make an interesting observation here. It is worthy of note that even Niger diocese which is considered as an 'urban' diocese has a higher percentage (59.1%) of respondents indicating that their parishioners use fire wood for cooking. Of course, this is not surprising. You will recall that in chapter three, we noted that one of the emerging features of urban cities in Nigeria is the tendency to acquire or exhibit both the urban as well as rural characters. Some

of the rural features are becoming visible even in urban cities in Nigeria. This incidence of high percentage of fire wood users in Onitsha lends credence to our observation.

32. Which of these energy sources do you think has a lowest impact on the environment?

|               | DIOCESE ON THE NIGER |          | DIOCESE OF AWKA |          | DIOCESE OF NNEWI |          | TOTAL      |          |
|---------------|----------------------|----------|-----------------|----------|------------------|----------|------------|----------|
|               | No. of Res           | % of Res | No. of Res      | % of Res | No. of Res       | % of Res | No. of Res | % of Res |
| Fire wood     | 3                    | 13.6     | 13              | 28.9     | 4                | 16.7     | 20         | 22       |
| Electricity   | 2                    | 9.1      | 10              | 22.2     | 7                | 29.2     | 19         | 20.9     |
| Fossil Fuel   | -                    | -        | 1               | 2.2      | 2                | 8.3      | 3          | 3.2      |
| Solar energy  | 14                   | 63.6     | 11              | 24.4     | 9                | 37.5     | 34         | 37.3     |
| Not sure      | -                    | -        | 8               | 17.8     | 1                | 4.2      | 9          | 9.9      |
| missing value | 3                    | 13.6     | 2               | 4.4      | 1                | 4.2      | 6          | 6.6      |
| Total         | 22                   | 100.0    | 45              | 100.0    | 24               | 100.0    |            |          |

**COMMENTS:** The response from this question shows that 37.3% of the respondents indicated that the energy source with the lowest impact on the environment is solar energy. On the other hand, 22% of the respondents indicated that the use of fire wood has the lowest impact on the environment. 20.9% indicated that the use of electricity has the lowest impact on the environment. The percentage of the respondents who are not sure about the question represents 9.9% while those respondents who did not answer the question stand at 6.6%.

33. Does your parish sing hymns/songs that celebrate the wonder of creation or express our calling to care for the earth?

|               | DIOCESE ON THE NIGER |          | DIOCESE OF AWKA |          | DIOCESE OF NNEWI |          | TOTAL      |          |
|---------------|----------------------|----------|-----------------|----------|------------------|----------|------------|----------|
|               | No. of Res           | % of Res | No. of Res      | % of Res | No. of Res       | % of Res | No. of Res | % of Res |
| Yes           | 19                   | 86.4     | 41              | 91.1     | 16               | 66.7     | 66         | 72.5     |
| No            | 3                    | 13.6     | 2               | 4.4      | 5                | 20.8     | 10         | 11       |
| Missing value | -                    | -        | 2               | 4.4      | 3                | 12.5     | 5          | 5.5      |
| Total         | 22                   | 100.0    | 45              | 100.0    | 24               | 100.0    |            |          |

**COMMENTS:** It is clear from the answer to this question that a vast majority of the respondents indicated that their parishes celebrate the wonder of creation and express their calling to care for the earth through songs and hymns. This is reflected on the number of respondents who answered positively to the question 72.5%. However, a small group of respondents representing 11% of the entire population answered negatively to the question. Those categorized as missing value representing 5.5% choose not to answer the question.

34. The church should be involved in environmental issues.

|                   | DIOCESE ON THE NIGER |          | DIOCESE OF AWKA |          | DIOCESE OF NNEWI |          | TOTAL      |          |
|-------------------|----------------------|----------|-----------------|----------|------------------|----------|------------|----------|
|                   | No. of Res           | % of Res | No. of Res      | % of Res | No. of Res       | % of Res | No. of Res | % of Res |
| Strongly agree    | 11                   | 50.0     | 31              | 68.9     | 16               | 66.7     | 58         | 63.7     |
| Agree             | 10                   | 45.5     | 12              | 26.7     | 7                | 29.2     | 29         | 31.9     |
| Disagree          | -                    | -        | -               | -        | -                | -        | -          | -        |
| Strongly disagree | 1                    | 4.5      | -               | -        | -                | -        | 1          | 1        |
| Don't know        | -                    | -        | -               | -        | -                | -        | -          | -        |
| Missing value     | -                    | -        | 2               | 4.4      | 1                | 4.2      | 3          | 3.3      |
| Total             | 22                   | 100.0    | 45              | 100.0    | 24               | 100.0    |            |          |

**COMMENTS:** The majority of the respondents strongly agreed that the church should be involved in environmental issues. This is represented by 63.7% of the respondents while 31.9% of the respondents simply agreed. It is only a negligible 1% of the respondents who strongly disagreed while 3.3% choose not to respond to the statement.

35. If your answer is positive to question 34, why do we have to take care of the environment.

|   | DIOCESE ON THE NIGER |          | DIOCESE OF AWKA |          | DIOCESE OF NNEWI |          | TOTAL      |          |
|---|----------------------|----------|-----------------|----------|------------------|----------|------------|----------|
|   | No. of Res           | % of Res | No. of Res      | % of Res | No. of Res       | % of Res | No. of Res | % of Res |
| Environment sustains us in terms of its resources | 5                    | 22.7     | 11              | 24.4     | 7                | 29.2     | 23         | 25.3     |
| God commanded us to take care of the earth        | 6                    | 27.3     | 14              | 31.1     | 6                | 25.0     | 26         | 28.6     |
| Our health depends on the ecosystems health       | 4                    | 18.2     | 4               | 8.9      | 7                | 29.2     | 15         | 16.5     |
| It has both intrinsic value and inherent worth    | 4                    | 18.2     | 8               | 17.8     | 2                | 8.3      | 14         | 15.3     |
| To preserve its pristine and scenic nature        | -                    | -        | 2               | 4.4      | -                | -        | 2          | 2.2      |
| Missing value                                     | 3                    | 13.6     | 6               | 13.3     | 2                | 8.3      | 11         | 12       |
| Total   | 22                   | 100.0    | 45              | 100.0    | 24               | 100.0    |            |          |

**COMENTS:** The majority of the respondents who agreed that the church should be involved in environmental issues said so because according to them, God commanded us to take care of the earth. This group of the respondents constitutes 28.8%. Those who said that the church should be involved in environmental issues because the environment sustains us in terms of its resources constitute 25.3%. The percentage of the respondents who said that because our

health depends on the ecosystems health, the church should therefore be involved in environmental issues stand at 16.5%, while those who believed that the church should be involved in environmental issues because the earth has both intrinsic value and inherent worth, constitutes 15.3% of the entire respondents. It is only a smaller group of respondents represented by 2.2% of the respondents that thought that we should care for the earth in order to preserve its pristine and scenic nature. Those who choose not to answer the question categorized as missing value represent 12% of the respondents.

36. The environment is not as important as human lives.

|                   | DIOCESE ON THE NIGER |          | DIOCESE OF AWKA |          | DIOCESE OF NNEWI |          | TOTAL      |          |
|-------------------|----------------------|----------|-----------------|----------|------------------|----------|------------|----------|
|                   | No. of Res           | % of Res | No. of Res      | % of Res | No. of Res       | % of Res | No. of Res | % of Res |
| Strongly agree    | -                    | -        | 1               | 2.2      | 6                | 25.0     | 7          | 7.7      |
| Agree             | -                    | -        | 3               | 6.7      | 3                | 12.5     | 6          | 6.6      |
| Disagree          | 12                   | 54.5     | 19              | 42.2     | 4                | 16.7     | 35         | 38.3     |
| Strongly disagree | 10                   | 45.5     | 19              | 42.2     | 9                | 37.5     | 38         | 41.7     |
| Don't know        | -                    | -        | 1               | 2.2      | -                | -        | 1          | 1        |
| Missing value     | -                    | -        | 2               | 4.4      | 2                | 8.3      | 4          | 4.4      |
| Total             | 22                   | 100.0    | 45              | 100.0    | 24               | 100.0    |            |          |

**COMMENTS:** Those who disagreed that the environment is not as important as human lives accounted for 38.3% of the respondents while 41.7% of the respondents strongly disagreed to this assertion. There are however those who strongly agreed that the environment is not as important as human lives as well as those who simply agreed to the assertion. They accounted for the 7.7% and 6.6% of the respondents respectively. Those who showed that they did not

know the answer to the above statement stand at 1%. The percentage of the respondents who choose not to respond to the statement categorized as missing value stands at 4.4%.

37. Global warming is not a serious threat to environment and development.

|                   | DIOCESE ON THE NIGER |          | DIOCESE OF AWKA |          | DIOCESE OF NNEWI |          | TOTAL      |          |
|-------------------|----------------------|----------|-----------------|----------|------------------|----------|------------|----------|
|                   | No. of Res           | % of Res | No. of Res      | % of Res | No. of Res       | % of Res | No. of Res | % of Res |
| Strongly agree    | 1                    | 4.5      | 3               | 6.7      | 4                | 16.7     | 8          | 8.8      |
| Agree             | -                    | -        | 2               | 4.4      | -                | -        | 2          | 2.2      |
| Disagree          | 6                    | 27.3     | 17              | 37.8     | 10               | 41.7     | 33         | 36.2     |
| Strongly disagree | 11                   | 50.0     | 19              | 42.2     | 7                | 29.2     | 37         | 40.7     |
| Don't know        | 4                    | 18.2     | 1               | 2.2      | 1                | 4.2      | 6          | 6.6      |
| Missing value     | -                    | -        | 3               | 6.7      | 2                | 8.3      | 5          | 5.5      |
| Total             | 22                   | 100.0    | 45              | 100.0    | 24               | 100.0    |            |          |

**COMMENTS:** It is observed from the response to the above statement that those who disagreed to it accounted for the 36.2% of the respondents while those who strongly disagreed to it stand at 40.7%. On the other hand, those who strongly agreed that global warming is not a serious threat to environment and development accounted for 8.8% of the respondents while those with the same view who simply agreed to it is only 2.2%. There is another group who indicated that they did not know the answer to the statement while those who choose not to respond to the statement is accounts for 5.5%.

38. In your opinion, how should we prioritize issues relating to environment, development and people?

|  | DIOCESE ON<br>THE NIGER |             | DIOCESE OF<br>AWKA |             | DIOCESE OF<br>NNEWI |             | TOTAL         |             |
|--|-------------------------|-------------|--------------------|-------------|---------------------|-------------|---------------|-------------|
|  | No. of<br>Res           | % of<br>Res | No. of<br>Res      | % of<br>Res | No. of<br>Res       | % of<br>Res | No. of<br>Res | % of<br>Res |
| People comes first   | 3                       | 13.6        | 9                  | 20.0        | 5                   | 20.8        | 17            | 18.7        |
| Environment and people should be considered on equal terms | 18                      | 81.8        | 24                 | 53.3        | 17                  | 70.8        | 59            | 64.8        |
| Environment comes first                                    | 1                       | 4.5         | 5                  | 11.1        | -                   | -           | 6             | 6.6         |
| Development comes first                                    | -                       | -           | -                  | -           | -                   | -           | -             | -           |
| Not sure   | -                       | -           | 3                  | 6.7         | 1                   | 4.2         | 4             | 4.4         |
| Missing value  | -                       | -           | 4                  | 8.9         | 1                   | 4.2         | 5             | 5.5         |
| Total  | 22                      | 100.0       | 45                 | 100.0       | 24                  | 100.0       |               |             |

**COMMENTS:** In gaining an understanding of the respondents' opinion on how we should prioritize issues concerning environment, development and people, a vast majority of the respondents (64.8%) indicated that environment and people should be considered on equal terms. Those who expressed the opinion that people should come first before development accounted for 18.7% while those with the opinion that environment should come first stand at

6.6%. Those who indicated that they are not sure about the question stand at 4.4% while those who chose not to respond to the statement accounted for 5.5% of the respondents.

39. The activities of the poor impact negatively on the environment.

|                   | DIOCESE ON<br>THE NIGER |             | DIOCESE OF<br>AWKA |             | DIOCESE OF<br>NNEWI |             | TOTAL            |             |
|-------------------|-------------------------|-------------|--------------------|-------------|---------------------|-------------|------------------|-------------|
|                   | No. of<br>Res           | % of<br>Res | No. of<br>Res      | % of<br>Res | No. of<br>Res       | % of<br>Res | No.<br>of<br>Res | % of<br>Res |
| Strongly agree    | 5                       | 22.7        | 5                  | 11.1        | 2                   | 8.3         | 12               | 13.2        |
| Agree             | 10                      | 45.5        | 25                 | 55.6        | 11                  | 45.8        | 37               | 40.7        |
| Disagree          | 5                       | 22.7        | 6                  | 13.3        | 2                   | 4.2         | 13               | 14.2        |
| Strongly disagree | 1                       | 4.5         | -                  | -           | 4                   | 16.7        | 5                | 5.5         |
| Don't know        |                         |             | 4                  | 8.9         | 1                   | 4.2         | 5                | 5.5         |
| Missing value     | 1                       | 4.5         | 5                  | 11.1        | 4                   | 16.7        | 10               | 11          |
| Total             | 22                      | 100.0       | 45                 | 100.0       | 24                  | 100.0       |                  |             |

**COMMENTS:** In response to the above statement, 40.7% of the respondents agreed to it while 13.2% strongly agreed to it. However, 14.2% of the respondents disagreed to it while 5.5% strongly disagreed to it. The percentage of those who indicated that they did not know the answer to the statement is 5.5% while those who choose not to respond to the statement classified as missing value is 11%.

### **5.5.1. Analysis on Individual Clergy Understanding of Environmental Issues. (Questions 31-39)**

There is a high level of individual understanding of environmental issues from the research findings. The responses to questions (34-39) attest to this fact: Almost all the respondents believed that the church should be involved in environment and development issues. The majority of them alluded to both prevailing anthropocentric attitudes and a weak ecological theology as the premise for this involvement. While the respondents acknowledged that the environment is as important as human beings; it is good also for us to note that a vast majority of them understand that global warming poses a serious threat to both humans and development. In this regard, the majority of the respondents recognized the need to consider the environment and human beings on equal terms while pursuing development. This, at least, implies that they are aware of the implication of development projects that are focussed on human beings without regard to the environment. They also acknowledged that the activities of the poor impact negatively on the environment. Chapters three and four discussed exhaustively on the impact of the poor on the environment.

### **5.6. Indigenous and Theological Knowledge on Environmental Issues (Questions 40-50)**

In this final section we are looking at the clergy understanding of the indigenous and theological perspectives on the environment. This will help us to know what the clergy are thinking about the synthesis of indigenous ecological resources and the Christian theological resources in building an ecological framework suitable to African Christianity.

40. Have you ever read any theological book on environment?

|               | DIOCESE ON THE NIGER |          | DIOCESE OF AWKA |          | DIOCESE OF NNEWI |          | TOTAL      |          |
|---------------|----------------------|----------|-----------------|----------|------------------|----------|------------|----------|
|               | No. of Res           | % of Res | No. of Res      | % of Res | No. of Res       | % of Res | No. of Res | % of Res |
| Yes           | 6                    | 27.3     | 24              | 53.3     | 10               | 41.7     | 40         | 44       |
| No            | 16                   | 72.7     | 16              | 35.6     | 11               | 45.8     | 43         | 47.2     |
| Missing value | -                    | -        | 5               | 11.1     | 3                | 12.5     | 8          | 8.8      |
| Total         | 22                   | 100.0    | 45              | 100.0    | 24               | 100.0    |            |          |

**COMMENTS:** Those who responded positively to having read any theological book on the environment is 44% while those who indicated that they had not read any theological book on the environment is 47.2%. However, those who choose not to answer the question are 8.8%. This is interesting given the number of clergy who show some knowledge about the environment, and suggests that this knowledge is not that deep or informed.

41. Which of the following would you exclude from God's family?

|                            | DIOCESE ON<br>THE NIGER |             | DIOCESE OF<br>AWKA |             | DIOCESE OF<br>NNEWI |             | TOTAL            |             |
|----------------------------|-------------------------|-------------|--------------------|-------------|---------------------|-------------|------------------|-------------|
|                            | No. of<br>Res           | % of<br>Res | No. of<br>Res      | % of<br>Res | No. of<br>Res       | % of<br>Res | No.<br>of<br>Res | % of<br>Res |
| Trees                      | -                       | -           | 1                  | 2.2         | 3                   | 12.5        | 4                | 4.4         |
| Rivers and<br>mountains    | 2                       | 9.1         | -                  | -           | 1                   | 4.2         | 3                | 3.3         |
| Other non<br>living things | 11                      | 50.0        | 8                  | 17.8        | 11                  | 45.8        | 30               | 33          |
| Animals                    | -                       | -           | 14                 | 31.1        | 4                   | 16.7        | 18               | 19.7        |
| None                       | 4                       | 18.2        | 22                 | 48.9        | -                   | -           | 24               | 26.4        |
| Missing<br>value           | 5                       | 22.7        | -                  | -           | 5                   | 20.8        | 10               | 11          |
| Total                      | 22                      | 100.0       | 45                 | 100.0       | 24                  | 100.0       |                  |             |

**COMMENTS:** On the question of belonging to God's family, 33% of the respondents indicated that other non living things would be excluded from God's family while 26.4% of the respondents indicated that none would be excluded from God's family. Those who indicated that animals would be excluded from God's family constitute 19.7% of the respondents. Those who indicated that trees would be excluded from God's family is 4.4%. There are however those who indicated that rivers and mountains would be excluded from God's family ( 3.3%). Missing value which symbolises those who choose not to respond to the question stands at 11%.

42. Other members of the ecosystems family should be favourably considered in terms of development.

|                   | DIOCESE ON<br>THE NIGER |             | DIOCESE OF<br>AWKA |             | DIOCESE OF<br>NNEWI |             | TOTAL         |             |
|-------------------|-------------------------|-------------|--------------------|-------------|---------------------|-------------|---------------|-------------|
|                   | No. of<br>Res           | % of<br>Res | No. of<br>Res      | % of<br>Res | No. of<br>Res       | % of<br>Res | No. of<br>Res | % of<br>Res |
| Strongly agree    | 6                       | 27.3        | 13                 | 28.9        | 7                   | 29.2        | 26            | 28.6        |
| Agree             | 15                      | 68.2        | 26                 | 57.8        | 13                  | 54.2        | 54            | 59.3        |
| Disagree          | -                       | -           | -                  | -           | -                   | -           | -             | -           |
| Strongly disagree | -                       | -           | -                  | -           | -                   | -           | -             | -           |
| Don't know        | 1                       | 4.5         | -                  | -           | 2                   | 8.3         | 3             | 3.3         |
| Missing value     | -                       | -           | 6                  | 13.3        | 2                   | 8.3         | 8             | 8.8         |
| Total             | 22                      | 100.0       | 45                 | 100.0       | 24                  | 100.0       |               |             |

**COMMENTS:** An overwhelming majority agreed that other members of the ecosystems family should be favourably considered in terms of development. Those who strongly agreed to this stand at 28.6% while those who simply agreed to the above question is 59%. Only an insignificant percentage of 3.3 indicated that they do not know the answer while 8.8% choose not to answer the question.

## 43. What is your personal understanding of Genesis 1:28?

|   | DIOCESE ON THE NIGER |          | DIOCESE OF AWKA |          | DIOCESE OF NNEWI |          | TOTAL      |          |
|---|----------------------|----------|-----------------|----------|------------------|----------|------------|----------|
|   | No. of Res           | % of Res | No. of Res      | % of Res | No. of Res       | % of Res | No. of Res | % of Res |
| The earth is made for human use   | -                    | -        | 3               | 6.7      | 1                | 4.2      | 4          | 4.4      |
| People should exercise absolute dominion over the earth                     | 7                    | 31.8     | 4               | 8.9      | 3                | 12.5     | 14         | 15.3     |
| It should be understood in the light of psalm 24 (God's absolute ownership) | -                    | -        | 9               | 20.0     | 2                | 8.3      | 11         | 12       |
| Human beings are stewards of God's creation                                 | 15                   | 68.2     | 24              | 53.3     | 17               | 70.8     | 46         | 50.5     |
| Not sure  | -                    | -        | 2               | 4.4      | -                | -        |            |          |
| Missing value   |                      |          | 3               | 6.7      | 1                | 4.2      | 4          | 4.4      |
| Total   | 22                   | 100.0    | 45              | 100.0    | 24               | 100.0    |            |          |

**COMMENTS:** The question regarding the respondents' personal understanding of Gen.1:28 indicate that a vast majority of the respondents (50.5%) indicated that human beings are God's stewards as far as their relationship with creation is concerned. Another group of respondents accounting for 15.3% of the population are of the opinion that people should exercise absolute dominion over the earth. Those who believed that Gen.1:28 should be understood in the light of psalm 24 (God's absolute ownership) stands at 12% while the percentage of those who choose not to respond to the question is 4.4%.

44. The Igbo/African culture has some valuable contribution to make in safeguarding the environment.

|                   | DIOCESE ON THE NIGER |          | DIOCESE OF AWKA |          | DIOCESE OF NNEWI |          | TOTAL      |          |
|-------------------|----------------------|----------|-----------------|----------|------------------|----------|------------|----------|
|                   | No. of Res           | % of Res | No. of Res      | % of Res | No. of Res       | % of Res | No. of Res | % of Res |
| Strongly agree    | 8                    | 36.4     | 23              | 51.1     | 7                | 29.2     | 38         | 41.7     |
| Agree             | 14                   | 63.6     | 19              | 42.2     | 15               | 62.5     | 48         | 52.7     |
| Disagree          | -                    | -        | -               | -        | -                | -        | -          | -        |
| Strongly disagree | -                    | -        | -               | -        | -                | -        | -          | -        |
| Missing value     | -                    | -        | 3               | 6.7      | 2                | 8.3      | 5          | 5.5      |
| Total             | 22                   | 100.0    | 45              | 100.0    | 24               | 100.0    |            |          |

**COMMENTS:** A vast majority of the respondents believed that the Igbo/ African culture has some valuable contribution to make in safeguarding the environment. In this regard, 41.7% strongly agreed to this while 52.7% simply agreed to this fact. Only 5.5% of the respondents did not answer the question.

45. The synthesis of indigenous ecological ethics and biblical resources would best contribute to environmental protection in the Nigerian context.

|                   | DIOCESE ON<br>THE NIGER |             | DIOCESE OF<br>AWKA |             | DIOCESE OF<br>NNEWI |             | TOTAL            |             |
|-------------------|-------------------------|-------------|--------------------|-------------|---------------------|-------------|------------------|-------------|
|                   | No. of<br>Res           | % of<br>Res | No. of<br>Res      | % of<br>Res | No. of<br>Res       | % of<br>Res | No.<br>of<br>Res | % of<br>Res |
| Strongly agree    | 5                       | 22.7        | 12                 | 26.7        | 5                   | 20.8        | 22               | 24.2        |
| Agree             | 14                      | 63.6        | 30                 | 66.7        | 13                  | 54.2        | 57               | 62.6        |
| Disagree          | 1                       | 4.5         | -                  | -           | -                   | -           | 1                | 1           |
| Strongly disagree |                         | -           | -                  | -           | -                   | -           | -                |             |
| Don't know        | 2                       | 9.1         | -                  | -           | 3                   | 12.5        | 5                | 5.5         |
| Missing value     | -                       | -           | 3                  | 6.7         | 3                   | 12.5        | 6                | 6.6         |
| Total             | 22                      | 100.0       | 45                 | 100.0       | 24                  | 100.0       |                  |             |

**COMMENTS:** It is clear from the response that a vast majority of the respondents believed that the synthesis of indigenous ecological ethics and biblical resources would best contribute to environmental protection in the Nigerian context. The percentage of those who strongly agreed to this is 24.2% while the percentage of those who simply agreed is 62.6%. An insignificant 1% of the respondents maintained otherwise while 5.5% claimed that they did not know the answer to the question. Those classified as missing value who choose not to answer the question accounted for 6.6% of the respondents.

46. The cultural practice of road maintenance and erosion control headed by age grades is a valuable resource for environmental protection and management.

|                   | DIOCESE ON<br>THE NIGER |             | DIOCESE OF<br>AWKA |             | DIOCESE OF<br>NNEWI |             | TOTAL         |             |
|-------------------|-------------------------|-------------|--------------------|-------------|---------------------|-------------|---------------|-------------|
|                   | No. of<br>Res           | % of<br>Res | No. of<br>Res      | % of<br>Res | No. of<br>Res       | % of<br>Res | No. of<br>Res | % of<br>Res |
| Strongly agree    | 10                      | 45.5        | 20                 | 44.4        | 11                  | 45.8        | 41            | 45          |
| Agree             | 12                      | 54.5        | 21                 | 46.7        | 9                   | 37.5        | 42            | 46.1        |
| Disagree          | -                       | -           | -                  | -           | 2                   | 8.3         | 2             | 2.2         |
| Strongly disagree | -                       | -           | -                  | -           | -                   | -           | -             | -           |
| Don't know        | -                       | -           | 2                  | 4.4         | -                   | -           | 2             | 2.2         |
| Missing value     |                         |             | 2                  | 4.4         | 2                   | 8.3         | 4             | 4.4         |
| Total             | 22                      | 100.0       | 45                 | 100.0       | 24                  | 100.0       |               |             |

**COMMENTS:** With regards to this question, a vast majority of the respondents are of the opinion that the cultural practice of road maintenance and erosion control headed by age grades is a valuable resource for environmental protection and management. This is reflected in the number of respondents who strongly agreed and those who simply agreed to this 45% and 46.1% respectively. An insignificant percentage of 2.2 indicated this disagreement to the opinion while another 2.2% showed that they do not know the answer. Those categorized as missing value who choose not to answer the question constitute 4.4% of the respondents

47. The practice of the biblical concept of jubilee would contribute to poverty reduction.

|                   | DIOCESE ON<br>THE NIGER |             | DIOCESE OF<br>AWKA |             | DIOCESE OF<br>NNEWI |             | TOTAL            |             |
|-------------------|-------------------------|-------------|--------------------|-------------|---------------------|-------------|------------------|-------------|
|                   | No. of<br>Res           | % of<br>Res | No. of<br>Res      | % of<br>Res | No. of<br>Res       | % of<br>Res | No.<br>of<br>Res | % of<br>Res |
| Strongly agree    | 4                       | 18.2        | 6                  | 13.3        | 3                   | 12.5        | 13               | 14.2        |
| Agree             | 12                      | 54.5        | 27                 | 60.0        | 14                  | 58.3        | 53               | 58.2        |
| Disagree          | 2                       | 9.1         | 2                  | 4.4         | 2                   | 8.3         | 6                | 6.6         |
| Strongly disagree | 1                       | 4.5         | 2                  | 4.4         | 1                   | 4.2         | 4                | 4.4         |
| Don't know        | 3                       | 13.6        | 4                  | 8.9         | 3                   | 12.5        | 10               | 11          |
| Missing value     | -                       | -           | 4                  | 8.9         | 1                   | 4.2         | 5                | 5.5         |
| Total             | 22                      | 100.0       | 45                 | 100.0       | 24                  | 100.0       |                  |             |

**COMMENTS:** The vast majority of the respondents are of the opinion that the practice of the biblical concept of jubilee would contribute to poverty reduction. Those who strongly agreed to this statement represent 14.2% while those with the same opinion who simply agreed to the statement represent 58.2% of the respondents. There are however, a smaller group who have different opinion. Those who disagreed to the statement constitute 6.6% while those who strongly disagreed constitute 4.4%. The percentage of the respondents who said they did not know the answer to the question is 11% while those who choose not to answer the question represents 5.5%.

48. The practice of bush burning for either hunting or farming purposes contributes to environmental degradation.

|                   | DIOCESE ON<br>THE NIGER |             | DIOCESE OF<br>AWKA |             | DIOCESE OF<br>NNEWI |             | TOTAL            |             |
|-------------------|-------------------------|-------------|--------------------|-------------|---------------------|-------------|------------------|-------------|
|                   | No. of<br>Res           | % of<br>Res | No. of<br>Res      | % of<br>Res | No. of<br>Res       | % of<br>Res | No.<br>of<br>Res | % of<br>Res |
| Strongly agree    | 9                       | 40.9        | 20                 | 44.4        | 14                  | 58.3        | 52               | 57.1        |
| Agree             | 10                      | 45.5        | 21                 | 46.7        | 8                   | 33.3        | 39               | 42.8        |
| Disagree          | 2                       | 9.1         | 1                  | 2.2         | -                   | -           | 3                | 3.3         |
| Strongly disagree | -                       | -           | -                  | -           | -                   | -           | -                | -           |
| Don't know        | 1                       | 4.5         | 1                  | 2.2         | -                   | -           | 2                | 2.2         |
| Missing value     | -                       | -           | 2                  | 2.2         | 2                   | 8.3         | 4                | 4.4         |
| Total             | 22                      | 100.0       | 45                 | 100.0       | 24                  | 100.0       |                  |             |

**COMMENTS:** The response to the above statement reveals that a vast majority of the respondents are of the opinion that the practice of bush burning for either hunting or farming purposes contributes to environmental degradation. Those who strongly agreed to this statement represent 57.1% of the respondents while those who simply agreed represent 42.8%. There is however a smaller group of the respondents with different views who disagreed to the statement with only 3.3% while 2.2% of the respondents indicated they did not know the answer to the question. Those categorized as missing value who choose not to respond to the statement is 4.4%.

49. Soil excavation, though a potential cause of soil erosion and environmental degradation, could be justified as a means of economic survival.

|                   | DIOCESE ON<br>THE NIGER |             | DIOCESE OF<br>AWKA |             | DIOCESE OF<br>NNEWI |             | TOTAL            |             |
|-------------------|-------------------------|-------------|--------------------|-------------|---------------------|-------------|------------------|-------------|
|                   | No. of<br>Res           | % of<br>Res | No. of<br>Res      | % of<br>Res | No. of<br>Res       | % of<br>Res | No.<br>of<br>Res | % of<br>Res |
| Strongly agree    | 3                       | 13.6        | 7                  | 15.6        | -                   | -           | 10               | 11          |
| Agree             | 8                       | 36.4        | 15                 | 33.3        | 13                  | 54.2        | 36               | 39.5        |
| Disagree          | 4                       | 18.2        | 10                 | 22.2        | 6                   | 25.0        | 20               | 22          |
| Strongly disagree | 4                       | 18.2        | 7                  | 15.6        | 3                   | 12.5        | 14               | 15.3        |
| Don't know        | 3                       | 13.6        | 4                  | 8.9         | 1                   | 4.2         | 8                | 8.8         |
| Missing value     | -                       | -           | 2                  | 4.4         | 1                   | 4.2         | 3                | 3.3         |
| Total             | 22                      | 100.0       | 45                 | 100.0       | 24                  | 100.0       |                  |             |

**COMMENTS:** It is interesting to note what looks like a more balanced proportion in the opinion of the respondents regarding the statement that Soil excavation, though a potential cause of soil erosion and environmental degradation, could be justified as a means of economic survival. Those who strongly agreed to this statement constitute 11% of the respondents while those who simply agreed to it represent 39.5%. Those who disagreed to the statement represent 22% while those who strongly disagreed to it represent 15.3%. However, those who indicated that they did not know the answer to the question represent 8.8%. Those categorized as missing value represents 3.3%.

50. The use of chemicals and fertilizer could enhance agricultural productivity, however it should be discouraged because it degrades the environment and kills the soil.

|                   | DIOCESE ON THE NIGER |          | DIOCESE OF AWKA |          | DIOCESE OF NNEWI |          | TOTAL      |          |
|-------------------|----------------------|----------|-----------------|----------|------------------|----------|------------|----------|
|                   | No. of Res           | % of Res | No. of Res      | % of Res | No. of Res       | % of Res | No. of Res | % of Res |
| Strongly agree    | 4                    | 18.2     | 12              | 26.7     | 4                | 16.7     | 20         | 22       |
| Agree             | 12                   | 54.5     | 21              | 46.7     | 12               | 50.0     | 45         | 49.5     |
| Disagree          | 4                    | 18.2     | 6               | 13.3     | 4                | 16.7     | 14         | 15.3     |
| Strongly disagree | 1                    | 4.5      | 1               | 2.2      | 2                | 8.3      | 4          | 4.4      |
| Don't know        | 1                    | 4.5      | -               | -        | -                | -        | 1          | 1        |
| Missing value     | -                    | -        | 5               | 11.1     | 2                | 8.3      | 7          | 7.7      |
| Total             | 22                   | 100.0    | 45              | 100.0    | 24               | 100.0    |            |          |

**COMMENTS:** The response indicates that a vast majority of the respondents are of the opinion that the use of chemicals and fertilizer could enhance agricultural productivity, however it should be discouraged because it degrades the environment and kills the soil. In this regard those who strongly agreed to this statement constitute 22% while those with the same opinion who simply agreed to it represent 49.5% of the entire population. Those with opposing view who disagreed represent 15.3% while those who strongly disagreed represent 4.4%. Those who indicated that they did not know the answer represent only 1%. Those classified as missing value who choose not to respond to the question represent 7.7

### **5.6.1. Analysis on the Indigenous and Theological Knowledge on Environmental Issues (Questions 40-50)**

The majority of the respondents indicate that their personal understanding of Genesis 1: 28 is that of God's absolute ownership and that humans are mere stewards of God's creation (see question 43). Almost all agreed that indigenous cultural practices and indigenous ecological ethics have tremendous contribution to make in safe guarding the environment. (See questions 44-49). Many also acknowledged that the use of chemicals and fertilizers could enhance agricultural productivity but could also contribute to soil infertility and environmental degradation (See question 50)

We note that Niger diocese has the highest percentage of clergy who had never read any theological book on the environment. This portends danger for the dioceses if a greater percentage of its clergy are not interested in theological books and resources which provide useful information on the rationale for the church's engagement on the environment and poverty issues. This observation becomes critical when we are reminded that clergy understanding of theological arguments for the church's involvement in development in general and environmental issues in particular is essential to creating awareness and mobilizing the people of God in that direction.

We also note that there is a difference which exists among the three dioceses in their view on the constitution of God's family. For example, 4 of the 22 respondents in the diocese on the Niger believed that none should be excluded from God's family. 22 of the 45 respondents believed that none should be excluded from God's family while none of the 22 respondents in the diocese of Nnewi believe that all should be included in God's family. This has a very serious implication for the concept of *Oikothology*. *Oikothology* is about including all the diverse components of nature in God's one family. If all these respondents do not regard other diverse components in nature as members of God's one family, then the anthropocentric attitude which *oikothology* speaks against will persist.

Almost all the respondents agreed that culture has integral role to play in environmental conservation. This is very interesting to our study. Chapter seven will be dealing with the role of indigenous ecological knowledge in environment and poverty initiatives. Furthermore,

almost all the respondents agreed that soil excavation though a potential cause for soil erosion could be justified as a survival strategy which the poor usually rely on. In chapter two and three, we note that poverty is a driver for environmental degradation. We clarified this assertion by outlining some of the survival strategies which the poor adopt in the face of adverse economic situation. In Anambra state, the practice of soil excavation which is the digging up of top soil (especially sandy soil used in building and other construction activities) for commercial purposes, is hugely contributing to soil erosion , a phenomenon which is currently devastating the entire state.

### **5.7. Conclusion**

In this chapter we have analysed the research field work and made some general observations. The implication of these findings and observations introduces the exigency of a theological framework which would take environmental awareness beyond mere personal ‘theoretical’ knowledge since knowledge without practical commitment could be as useless or even as dangerous as ignorance itself. In our search for an ecotheological model which could inspire practical commitment, we are going to introduce and discuss the concept of *oikothology* in the next chapter. It is expected that the resources of *oikothology* would bridge the gap between knowledge and practical commitment identified in the research work.

## CHAPTER SIX

### 6.0. Conceptualizing Oikothology

In this chapter we want to reflect on the research findings as well as existing literature, to determine how theological resources and especially the concept of *Oikothology*, could improve the participation of the church in environmental protection and contribute to poverty alleviation. This eco-theological framework has become critically important for two main reasons. Firstly, the research findings indicate that there is a gap between theoretical knowledge and practical action on the part of the dioceses. Secondly, we observed that both the creation story and post biblical ecological tradition in what we now term ‘Generations of Christian Ecological Motifs’, have not sufficiently inspired practical commitment because they portray in a particular way a deep anthropocentric attitude to the environment. The chapter makes a brief analysis of some key components of the classical Christian thought about nature represented in the generations of ecological motifs, and seeks to introduce the need for, as well as explore the resources of *Oikothology* as the fourth generation of ecological motif. The expectation is that *Oikothology* could inspire practical commitment for the church’s involvement in the environment and poverty challenges.

### 6.1. Introduction: Analyzing the Generations of Christian Ecological Motifs

In chapter three, we noted that many governments, the United Nations, its agencies and other environmental organisations had taken cognizance of the grievous ecological situation and had also recognized the need to create awareness in order to slow down the trend. In this regard, numerous conferences, seminars and workshops have been held over the years and copious data have been assembled relating to different environmental problems facing humanity.<sup>563</sup> In a continued response to these environmentally challenging situations, a number of discourses over the years have brought scientists, environmentalists, other disciplines and theologians together in a concerted effort to seeking solutions to the current

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<sup>563</sup> Sowunmi, Adebisi.A. 1995. “Giver of Life-Sustain Your Creation” in Hallman, David.G.1995(ed) *Ecotheology. Voices from South and North*. New York: Maryknoll. p.149

environmental challenges and other mutual concerns of our time.<sup>564</sup> In some of these interdisciplinary discourses, conferences and workshops, the current anthropocentric attitude to nature has often been blamed on the influence of Christianity teachings on nature. The critique of the contemporary ecological thinkers makes two general arguments to support their claims. First, they maintained that bible and Christianity are very anthropocentric and thereby teach that human beings are divinely ordained to rule over and dominate nature. Secondly, many Christian writings and theologies denigrate nature and matter generally in comparison to the divine, which is equated with the spirit alone. We would briefly discuss these claims by examining different constructions of Christian ecological motifs at different periods in Christian tradition.

In this section we will examine how Christianity was said to be environmentally bankrupt based on the above accusations as well as discuss how over the years it has attempted to develop some classical theological thoughts about nature in its attempt to further develop an all inclusive ecological theology that seeks to protect the integrity of creation. As we survey the long history of Christian thought regarding nature (see chapter 4), we can see four major generations of eco-theological motifs collectively exercising a formative influence on Christianity at different periods in its history.

### **6.1.1. The First Generation: Dominion Thinking**

It has been alleged that the Christian account of creation (Genesis 1:28 ff.) in which humanity was understood to have been given absolute dominion over the earth and charged to subdue it, encourages a ruthless and selfish exploitation of nature. The creation story in the book of Genesis is an account of the power of God's commanding force which brought things into shape. From chaos to order. Creation therefore is the consequence of the movement from chaos to order. Creation as a whole including the non human world share in the *nephehs*, the breath of God which serves as the invigorating life force.<sup>565</sup> Although both humans and non-

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<sup>564</sup> Gosovic, Branislav. 1992. *The Quest for World Environmental Cooperation*. London and New-York: Routledge. p.xii, see Hessel, Dieter and Rasmussen, Larry. 2001. (eds) *Earth Habitat. Eco-Injustice and the Church's Response*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press.p.101-121.

<sup>565</sup> Breuilly, Elizabeth and Palmer, Martin. 1992. (eds) *Christianity and Ecology*. New York: Cassel. P. 25

humans share the *nephesh*, there is certainly a clear distinction according to the creation account between them. The difference is that humans are made in the image of God. Early writers such as St. Augustine and Boethius have presented this sharp distinction between humans and non humans in terms of reason, intelligence and the ability to be aware of oneself.<sup>566</sup> According to St. Augustine, there is no place for nature in the kingdom of God. That kingdom is only to do with spiritual beings, with eternal souls.

This distinction between humans and non-humans in terms of the *imago Dei* introduces dominion thought over creation which humans have maintained over the ages.<sup>567</sup> Whatever this image implies is still controvertible. Is it intelligence, reason and the ability to be aware of oneself that marks humanity out from the rest of creation as some have suggested?<sup>568</sup> The answer depends on ones view about humanity and its relationship with nature. The Latin phrase *imago Dei*, (image of God) is whatever quality it is that makes human beings and only human beings, an image of God. There has been much debate over the ages about what *imago dei* exactly means. However, it is this picture of humanity as the image of God that gave humanity the impression of having dominion and power over creation-earth. Dominion carries with it a sense of authority to subdue and trample on the rest of creation. Thus after the creation, humanity was given the privilege to name the animals, thus establishing his dominion over them.

According to Mackinnon and McIntyre, “God planned this dominion explicitly for man’s benefit and rule: no item in the physical creation had any purpose save to serve man’s purposes. And although man’s body is made of clay, he is not simply part of nature: he is made in the image of God”.<sup>569</sup> The above points to the expression of an important theological figure, one of the early church fathers, Irenaeus. Irenaeus suggest that the whole purpose of

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<sup>566</sup> Markus, R.A. 1970. *Saeculum: History and Society in the Theology of St. Augustine*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. P. 18

<sup>567</sup> Breuilly, Elizabeth and Palmer, Martin. 1992. (eds) *Christianity and Ecology*. New York: Cassel. P. 25

<sup>568</sup> Markus, R.A. 1970. *Saeculum: History and Society in the Theology of St. Augustine*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. P. 18

<sup>569</sup> Mackinnon, Mary Heather and McIntyre, Moni. 1995. (eds) *Readings in Ecology and feminist Theology*. Kansas City: Sheed and Ward.p. 30-31

the creation history is to provide a place for human life and to bless human life.<sup>570</sup> Wingren Gustaf has suggested that:

Irenaeus does not want to maintain that human beings are not only at home in the whole nature and in their bodies, in particular, but that the whole creation was made for the sake of human beings. Man was not made for its sake (the creation's) he says in a characteristic utterance, but creation for the sake of man. *non enim homo propter ilam, sed condition facta est propter hominem.*<sup>571</sup>

With the above thinking about nature, humanity was understood to have shared in great measure, God's transcendence of nature.

Based on the dominion motif, Christianity and Judaism have been accused of worse than anthropocentricity. Many accusers, for example, Lyn White and Ian McHarg argue that dominion in genesis 1: 26 has been turned into domination and exploitation. White wrote that Christianity teaches that:

We are superior to nature, contemptuous of it, willing to use it for our slightest whim... We shall continue to have a worsening ecological crisis until we reject the Christian axiom that nature has no reason for existence but to serve man ...both our present science and our present technology are so tinctured with orthodox Christian arrogance towards nature that no solution for our ecologic crisis can be expected from them alone. Since the roots of our trouble are so largely religious, the remedy must also be essentially religious, whether we call it that or not.<sup>572</sup>

Ian McHarg, the well-known environmentalist similarly notes that:

In the history of human development, man has long been puny in the face of overwhelming powerful nature. His religions, philosophies, ethics and acts have tended to reflect a slave mentality, alternately submissive or arrogant towards nature. Judaism and Christianity tend to assert outrageously the separateness and dominance of man over nature ...these same attitudes become of first importance when man holds the power to cause

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<sup>570</sup> Santmire, Paul.H.1985. *The Travail of Nature. The Ambiguous Ecological Promise of Christian Theology.* Philadelphia: Fortress Press.p41

<sup>571</sup> Wingren, Gustaf. 1959. *Man and the Incarnation: a Study in the biblical Theology of Irenaeus.* Translated by MacKenzie. Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press See, Lawson, John. 1948. *The Biblical Theology of St. Irenaeus.* London: Epworth Press

<sup>572</sup> Elsdon, Ron. 1981. *Bent World. A Christian Response to the environmental Crisis.* p.11

evolutionary regressions of unimaginable effect or even to destroy all life.<sup>573</sup>

This fundamental notion of human dominion over nature considers humanity no more as part of nature but rather as its lord; thereby emphasizing humanity's ability to use nature's resources unsustainably. As a result of this view, nature has been viewed as a raw material warehouse, a manipulative object and a means of achieving techno-economical ends.<sup>574</sup>

Added to the dominion accusation is the influence of Platonic Greek thought and continuing strands of Gnosticism<sup>575</sup> in Christian tradition which had tended to "spiritualize" Christianity to the detriment of the world of matter.<sup>576</sup> Plato in his writing viewed the physical world of matter as a dim reflection of a shadow of a timeless world of ideals, which he conceived as existing in a higher reality. He acknowledged that within each person "there was an eternal spirit, which had an inherent urge to escape its earthly body and regain its original heavenly abode".<sup>577</sup> Plato was not alone in this dualistic philosophical thought. Rene Descartes, a key thinker in the Western Enlightenment, was also influenced by this platonic dualistic thinking. For Descartes, the spirit is distinct and separated from the body. The idea of two distinct bodies residing in one substance is what is called hypostatic union and this explains Descartes notion of humanity as being two distinct essences combining to form one composite person.<sup>578</sup> For him, it may be said that the body is not essential, that is it is accidental for the

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<sup>573</sup> Elsdon, Ron. 1981. *Bent World. A Christian Response to the environmental Crisis*. p.11

<sup>574</sup> Ibe, Martin. Joe. 2003. *Environmental Ethics and Politics in Developing Countries*. p

<sup>575</sup> King, Karen. 2003. *What is Gnosticism?* Cambridge: Harvard University Press. p.1

Gnosticism-gnosis-esoteric knowledge of spiritual truth held by the ancient Gnostics to be essential to salvation. Gnosticism is the thought and practice especially of various cults of late pre-Christian and early Christian centuries distinguished by the conviction that matter is evil and that emancipation comes through gnosis. The term is used so widely in so many different senses that it's precise meaning in any given case is often hard to discern. The term is not only used to refer to certain types of ancient Christian heresy, but it has come to have significant application in a variety of other areas, including philosophy, politics and psychology.

<sup>576</sup> Leal, Robert. 2004. *The Environment and Christian Faith*. p.19

<sup>577</sup> King, Karen. 2003. *What is Gnosticism?* Cambridge: Harvard University Press. p.4

<sup>578</sup> Reith, Herman.1986. *Rene Descartes. The Story of a Soul*. Notre Dame: University Press of America. P.158-

soul to be joined with the body. It was the *nous* or somehow superhuman and divine activity of thought itself which was immortal, eternal, incorruptible and separated from the body.<sup>579</sup>

The influence of such a dualistic philosophical doctrine caused conflict within the early church (and since) in its attempt to formulate a doctrinal position. The influence of Plato's dualistic understanding of the world gave rise to a number of sects with similar thought patterns. This contributed to the emergence of Gnosticism in Christian theology. The Gnostics believed that God was not connected to the world because the world is matter and therefore evil. God literally withdrew from the world. God was thought of and seen as light and good, while matter was regarded as darkness and evil. Matter (nature) was seen as a prison, ruled by malevolent powers that enslave human beings especially through the agency of the human body. This notion of the inferiority of creation is fundamentally fraught with problems. Conradie posits that "if what is material and bodily is inferior and unimportant", the possibility of opting for asceticism therefore abounds. Asceticism is the teaching that the body must be suppressed in the interest of the spirit. The notion which regards creation as inferior also has the tendency to engender licentiousness, the belief that whatever we do with the body is of no ultimate relevance.<sup>580</sup> Among the Gnostics, there was an influential personality, Marcion, who not only thought that the God of the New Testament was quite different and superior to the creator God of the Old Testament, but extended and popularised the platonic dualistic thinking of nature.

Paul Santmire, one of the most respected eco-theologians of recent times, acknowledged that the influence of the Platonic dualistic tradition in the early ages of Christianity which stresses a sharp distinction between spirit and matter strengthened the anthropocentric stance for which Christianity was accused of.<sup>581</sup> The dualistic tradition denigrates matter and exalts the spirit. This thought process dates back to the Hellenistic age, when the Greek culture

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<sup>579</sup> See also Magnus, Bernd and Wilbur, James.B. 1969. (eds) *Cartesian Essays: A Collection of critical Studies*. The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff.p.93 See also

<sup>580</sup> Conradie, Ernst. 2005. *An Ecological Christian Anthropology. At Home with Earth?* England: Ashgate Publishing Company. p.24

<sup>581</sup> Leal, Robert. 2004. *The Environment and Christian Faith*. p.19

dominated the Mediterranean world. This period is made up of the first few centuries after Christ, “a time when, with great difficulty, orthodox Christian doctrine was being defined”.<sup>582</sup>

In trying to absolve Christianity of the series of accusations of anthropocentrism, apologists presented what they thought to be a better hermeneutical understanding of the dominion debate by arguing that the verse does not suggest exploitation as the accusers had argued.<sup>583</sup> Instead, it describes humanity acting as God’s representative. The problem with this is that it is still about humanity representing God in the exercise of authority over the rest of the creation. In this hierarchical structure, it is God, humans and then the rest. The logic here is that God who is pure spirit, is at the apex of this hierarchy, while non-spiritual beings which include plants, animals and inanimate objects, are at the bottom. Among the spiritual beings, besides God, are the angels and human beings. All other creatures below human beings in the hierarchy are non-spiritual beings. In this arrangement, human beings do not see themselves as part of the whole because of the dominion they were understood to be exercising over nature.

This image of hierarchical structure runs through the writings of some of the early Christian theologians. Though this could be said to be the influence of Platonic thought but Christianity has inherited it. According to Origen, God created the world primarily as a kind of purgatory where fallen human beings are educated through trials and tribulations to return to the realm of pure spirit from which they have fallen.<sup>584</sup> Origen’s opinion about the relationship between humanity and nature is very radical judging from his statement that “the world of flesh is the world of demons and that nature is a cage or prison and humanity’s spiritual quest it to extricate themselves from it.”<sup>585</sup> Similarly, Thomas Aquinas, though he lived nearly a thousand years after Origen reflected in his theology themes which are similar to Origen. Although Aquinas admitted that each being has integrity of its own, he emphasized the hierarchical nature of creation much like Origen. According to him, among living creatures, human being is the most spiritual, rational and sublime. He asserts:

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<sup>582</sup> Leal, Robert. 2004. *The Environment and Christian Faith*. p.19

<sup>583</sup> Leal, Robert. 2004. *The Environment and Christian Faith*. p.13

<sup>584</sup> Santmire, Paul. H. 1985. *The Travail of Nature*:p.9

<sup>585</sup> Ibe, Martin. Joe.2003. *Environmental Ethics and Politics in Developing Countries*.p.45

As we observe ... imperfect beings serve the needs of more noble beings; plants draw their nutrients from the earth, animals feed on plants, and these in turn serve man's (sic) use. We conclude, then, that lifeless beings exist for living beings, plants for animals, and the latter for man.... The whole of material nature exists for man, inasmuch as he is a rational animal.<sup>586</sup>

With the dominion understanding and the Greek dualistic thinking about the world, the seed of alienation from nature was sown. This alienation seed has grown and actually influenced many of the church writings from the pre-reformation to post reformation period. The writings of theologians such as Martin Luther and Calvin, especially in their thinking about salvation, attest to the above point. In this regard, Martin Ibe, accused Protestantism represented by Luther and Calvin, of being responsible for the elimination of the notion of natural revelation to the extent that it focussed almost exclusively on the question of salvation of the individual through personal faith and emphasized at the detriment of the sacramental, instinctive and natural symbols.<sup>587</sup>

The major criticism of the dominion motif is that it has made humans to become alienated from nature because of our anthropocentric thinking that we are superior and separate from it. In this regard, Larry Rasmussen, identified the alienation thinking with the "apartheid habit" of distinguishing between humanity and non-nature, leaving the impression that we are an ecologically segregated species, that we are somehow separate, hence "apart" from the ecosystems in which we live.<sup>588</sup> This alienation thinking of humans as being separate from nature has in a way fuelled the quest to dominate, manipulate and exploit nature for human purposes especially in the advancement of science and technology.

Apart from the science and technology perspective the human alienation from the rest of the earth community has some fundamental theological implications. Conradie identifies the following implications of such alienation: (1) A theological emphasis on the absolute transcendence of God. (2) An anthropological emphasis on humans as sojourners here on earth. (3) A soteriology which focuses on human salvation from the earth instead of the

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<sup>586</sup> Ibe, Martin. Joe.2003. *Environmental Ethics and Politics in Developing Countries*.p.45

<sup>587</sup> Ibe, Martin. Joe.2003. *Environmental Ethics and Politics in Developing Countries*.p.46

<sup>588</sup> Rasmussen, L.L. 1996. *Earth Community. Earth Ethics*. Maryknoll: Orbis Books. p75-80

salvation of the whole earth and (4) an escapist eschatological fascination with heavenly hereafter where disembodied souls will live in the presence of God.<sup>589</sup>

This dominion, dualistic, and apartheid thinking has continued as a significant influence in the thinking of the Western society in many ways about, first the environment, and secondly about the less civilized nations of the world especially the African continent. The slave traders, the colonizers and the apartheid perpetrators who came to Africa did not see Africans as fully humans enough.<sup>590</sup> The dominion, dualistic and apartheid thinking was strongly influenced the way they see Africans, people to be dominated and exploited because they are inferior and therefore apart from them, the colonizers.

Because of these dominion, dualistic and apartheid criticisms, we have rejected the first generation of ecological motif as an ideal eco-theological motif. More so it is not appealing to the Africans because of their past slavery and colonial experiences. As a result we move to the second generation of ecological motif in search of an eco-theological motif which does not emphasize domination over nature and which could be more acceptable to Africans.

### **6.1.2. The Second Generation: Stewardship**

The attempt to re-create the doctrine of nature with lesser emphasis on domination, dualistic and apartheid thinking lead us to the second generation, namely, the idea of stewardship, what Christopher Southgate refers to as the “default position” of our time for persons concerned about the environment<sup>591</sup>. This second generation seeks among other things to affirm the inherent worth, the goodness and the integrity of creation. According to McDonough, God’s command in Gen. 1:28 should be seen as a key text in re-shaping the human-earth relationship from the perspective of dominion to stewardship.<sup>592</sup> For McDonough, this mandate suggests that human beings as stewards have the role of managing

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<sup>589</sup> Conradie, Ernst. 2005. *An Ecological Christian Anthropology. At Home with Earth?* P.26

<sup>590</sup> Fieldhouse, D.K.1983. *Colonialism 1870-1945. An Introduction.* London: The Macmillan Press Ltd

<sup>591</sup> Southgate, Christopher. 2006 “Stewardship and its Competitors: A Spectrum of Relationships between Humans and Non-Human Creation.” in Berry, R. J.(ed) *Environmental Stewardship: Critical Perspective-Past and Present.* London: T & T Clark International. p. 185-95

<sup>592</sup> Gitau, S. K. 2000. *The Environmental Crisis.* Nairobi: Action. p.61

and preserving the creation for God. In the biblical understanding and usage, a steward is one given responsibility for what belongs to another.<sup>593</sup> The Greek word that is translated as steward is *oikonomos*, one who cares for the household or acts as its trustee.<sup>594</sup> The word *oikos*, meaning household, is used to describe the world as God's household. Christians, then, are to be stewards of the whole household (creation) of God. *Oikonomia*, "stewardship," is also the root of our word "economics." As we shall see in generation four below, *oikos*, moreover, is the root of our modern word, "ecology." Thus in a broad sense, stewardship, economics, and ecology are, and should be, related—a point made more specifically in generation four.

Stewardship has to do with how we bring all of the resources at our disposal into efficient use in our participation in the saving activity of God.<sup>595</sup> Environmental stewardship is one part of our work as God's stewards. As stewards of the natural environment we are called to preserve and restore the air, water, and land on which life depends. Moreover, we are called to see that all life has a sufficient share of the resources of nature. With new hope rooted in Christ and with more obedient living as stewards of the earth, we can participate in God's healing of creation.

An appreciation of the concept of stewardship is the recognition that it has at least shifted from the strong anthropocentric position inherent in the first generation of ecological motif. However, even if it is granted that our care for God's property is to be viewed from the context of managerial premise, its anthropocentric emphasis is not without problems. Apart from the picture of God as an absentee landlord with humans as the landlord's steward, the relationship of humans to the rest of nature can still be construed as one of management. Stewardship responsibility in this regard, is therefore, not enough to provide us with the notion of the inherent worth, the goodness and the integrity of creation. This is because the

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<sup>593</sup> Fretheim, Terence E. 2005 *God and the World in the Old Testament, A Relational Theology of Creation*. Nashville: Abingdon. See Naess, Arne. 1989 *Ecology, Community and Lifestyle*. Translated by David Rothenberg. New York: Cambridge University Press.

<sup>594</sup> Kaufman, Gordon D. 2000 "Response to Elisabeth A. Johnson." in Hessel, Dieter T and Rosemary Radford Ruether. (ed) *Christianity and Ecology, Seeking the Well-Being of Earth and Humans*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press. P. 23-27

<sup>595</sup> Moltmann, Jürgen. 1993. *God in Creation*. Minneapolis: Fortress.

stewardship motif is still not able to counter the flawed interpretation of *imago Dei*, the thinking and belief that the human person being made in the image of God is the steward of the earth, and therefore acting on God's behalf as God's vice-regent. The stewardship motif is reflective of the hierarchical dualism that perpetuates the vision of humanity as superior to other life forms. Human superiority reflected in the stewardship motif is fundamentally flawed because it made the exploitation of the rest of nature possible in the first place. According to Ruth Page "stewardship, even when enlightened by modern knowledge, chastened by past excess, and Christianized, is still basically about manipulation of the natural world..."<sup>596</sup>

From the above therefore, it is apparent that a major weakness of the stewardship motif is that much of the ecological theology and secular ethics, values in nature and the ethical obligations are articulated in languages and categories that reflect only human perspectives, capacities and experiences.<sup>597</sup> The inherent and intrinsic worth of nature is in most of these ecotheological discussions relegated to the background. As a result, humans still see themselves as being at the top of a hierarchy rather than as simply a part of the web of life created by God. This arrogant attitude which makes humanity to feel 'in charge' of nature has contributed to the exploitative attitude of humanity towards nature.

Another major criticism of the stewardship motif has come from Ruth Page and others who apply a feminist hermeneutic approach to the stewardship interpretation of *imago Dei*. They draw attention to "a danger of one-sidedness in the exclusive use of the (managerial) stewardship model" to paternalistic thinking.<sup>598</sup> The problem with the assumption that only humans are made in the image of God is that humans, therefore, are bestowed with a God-ordained superiority over creation. "That superiority, even if exercised in the form of benevolent stewardship, may be but a mere reflection of a concept of God that envisions the divine primarily as a transcendent sovereign acting from a distance, present to creation only

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<sup>596</sup> Page, Ruth. 2006 "The Fellowship of All Creation." in Berry, R. J.(ed) *Environmental Stewardship: Critical Perspective-Past and Present*. London: T & T Clark International. p. 97-104

<sup>597</sup> Lisa, H. Sideris. 2003. *Environmental Ethics, Ecological Theology and natural Selection*. P.168

<sup>598</sup> Page, Ruth. 2006 "The Fellowship of All Creation". p.89

when God chooses to intervene, either directly or indirectly through appointed emissaries”.<sup>599</sup> To counter anthropocentrism, including that of the stewardship model, ecofeminists draw attention to the connection between patriarchy and androcentrism directed toward women (and to others of secondary status on the basis of race and class) and to that directed to Earth’s other kind. There is therefore a need for continued search for understanding the interlocking and non-hierarchical web of life. This leads to the third generation.

### 6.1.3. The Third Generation: Eco-theology

It is because of the excesses of anthropocentrism inherent in the second generation-stewardship motif, that ecotheology emerged to propose a “more modest, eco-centered attitude” to nature that will replace what Robert Leal calls anthropo-solism (human-only-ism”.<sup>600</sup> The third generation concept of ecotheology stresses the idea of interconnectedness. Interconnectedness is what ecotheologians think when they speak of “our own nature as constituted by our relationships with other living things”.<sup>601</sup> Ecotheology emphasizes that “all that exists, coexists”.<sup>602</sup> This was implied by Larry Rasmussen’s idea of ‘earth community’ to acknowledge the shift in science from the mechanistic to the relational understanding of natural systems,<sup>603</sup> to the affirmation of the doctrine of creation in theological connotation which emphasises that creation is a community in which the whole and its parts bear an integral dynamism and spirit both of which are expressions of divine creativity.<sup>604</sup> Essential to the principle of earth community is the understanding that there ought not to be a distinction between human life and nonhuman life. Both share the same source of being. We

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<sup>599</sup> Ruether, Rosemary Radford. “Toward an Ecological-Feminist Theology of Nature” in Mackinnon, Mary Heather and McIntyre, Moni. (eds)1995. *Readings in Ecology and Feminist Theology*. Kansas City: Sheed and Ward.p.89-91

<sup>600</sup> Leal, Robert. 2004. *The Environment and Christian Faith*.p.15

<sup>601</sup> Lisa, H. Sideris. 2003. *Environmental Ethics Ecological Theology and Natural Selection*. p.219

<sup>602</sup> Boff, Leonardo. 1995. *Ecology and Liberation*. Maryknoll: Orbis Books.p.36

<sup>603</sup> Rasmussen, Larry. 1996. *Earth Community, Earth Ethics*. Maryknoll: Orbis Books.p.324

<sup>604</sup> Rasmussen, Larry. 1996. *Earth Community, Earth Ethics*. Maryknoll: Orbis Books.p.324

are kin to all else because we share a common origin in divine creativity including an ongoing journey as *creation continua*.<sup>605</sup>

A dominant thought in eco-theological discourse is that humans are kin with all other life-forms because of humanity's common evolutionary heritage. In this sense interdependence as a biological continuum stresses human genealogical relationship, a shared genetic material with other organisms.<sup>606</sup> From ecotheological perspectives, interconnectedness is the fabric of nature's well being. It is used to express the ecosystemic relationships in which the activities and fate of one member of the system have consequences for all others.<sup>607</sup> So long as these links are not damaged or severed, the ecosystem health would be ensured and all beings will generally flourish.

A significant paradigm shift in the ecotheological discourse is the introduction of ecofeminism. Ecofeminism emphasizes kinship among all humans and with other life forms. From an ecofeminist perspective, kinship is integral to the elimination of patriarchy in human affairs and makes explicit the biological connection of humans with all other species and the earth itself.<sup>608</sup> Ecofeminists affirm that humans are a part of an interconnected web of life and therefore contend that the patriarchal foundations of Judaism and Christianity condone and even encourage masculine virtues of strength, power and domination in the attitudes that humans adopt towards nature.<sup>609</sup> From the standpoint of an ecofeminist conception of kinship, the recognition that humans are different from other species (after all we are those creatures in which "evolution become conscious of itself") does not necessarily rule out that other life forms and earth's many inanimate elements image the divine.<sup>610</sup> Psalm 148 implies as much when it calls to sea monsters and all deep waters, lightning and hail, snow and

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<sup>605</sup> Edwards, Denis.1995. *Jesus the Wisdom of God. An ecological Theology*. Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books.p. 143

<sup>606</sup> Nash, Roderick.1989. *The Rights of Nature: A History of Environmental Ethics*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press.

<sup>607</sup> Lisa, H. Sideris. 2003. *Environmental Ethics Ecological Theology and Natural Selection*. p.219

<sup>608</sup> Ruether, Rosemary Radford. 1994 *Gaia and God: An Ecofeminist Theology of Earth Healing*. San Francisco: Harper San Francisco.

<sup>609</sup> Page, Ruth.1996. *God and the Web of Creation*. London: SCM. p. xiii, xviii

<sup>610</sup> Flader, Susan L., and J. Baird Callicott, (eds).1991 *The River of the Mother God and Other Essays by Aldo Leopold*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press.

clouds, storm winds, mountains and hills, fruit trees and all cedars, animals wild and tame, creatures that crawl and fly, young men and women too, old and young alike to praise God's name.<sup>611</sup>

Ecofeminism emphasizes a very strong solidarity with the whole 'earth community'. Interpreted through the lens of creaturely kinship, solidarity in this context draws attention to humanity's profound bondedness with all people, all forms of life, and with God, who in Christian revelation is triune.<sup>612</sup> Emphasis on solidarity serves as a remedial to the shortcomings of an anthropocentric stewardship interpretation of human superiority. Solidarity stresses that "the "right relationship" of humans with the Creator and with the earth is marked by the humble awareness, brought to our attention by biological evolution, that like the rest of creation, we are made of elements found throughout the cosmos".<sup>613</sup> A solidarity relationship to all other creatures of earth is not one of sameness but of mutual connectedness and interdependence. As such, every aspect of creation, alone and collectively, reflects the glory of the triune God.

Though there has been a significant shift from dominion to stewardship and to co-existence expressed from the first generation of ecological motifs to ecotheology, the major criticism of ecotheology is that it is developed and championed from the global North by the rich. Much of the ecological theology and environmental ethics, are articulated in languages and categories that reflect a romantic attitude to nature.<sup>614</sup> It does not deal in pragmatic ways with issues of poverty and ethical responsibility of humans especially with regards to economic activities. This criticism becomes a relevant one when considered from an African perspective where poverty is wide spread. From this African poverty context consideration, we conclude that it is difficult for Africans to take the issue of ecotheology seriously unless issues of economy are addressed. Until this is done ecotheological discourse will remain distrusted as a white people's (western) romanticism for the earth. Bearing this criticism in

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<sup>611</sup> Flader, Susan L., and J. Baird Callicott, (eds).1991. *The River of the Mother God and Other Essays by Aldo Leopold*.

<sup>612</sup> Johnson, Elizabeth A. 1993. *Women, Earth and Creator Spirit*. New York: Paulist.

<sup>613</sup> Johnson, Elizabeth A. 1993. *Women, Earth and Creator Spirit*

<sup>614</sup> Lisa, H. Sideris. 2003. *Environmental Ethics, Ecological Theology and natural Selection*. New York: Columbia University Press. P.168

mind, we now engage in the search for an eco-theological discourse which would avoid the mistake of being overloaded with unacceptable anthropocentric influences and able to deal with the reality of people in the South. We now move to an analysis of the fourth generation, *Oikothology*.

## 6.2. The Fourth Generation: Oikothology

Oikothology responds to the criticisms made against the previous three generations of ecological motifs in theology, dominion, stewardship and eco-theology. It is critical of the abusiveness that comes from dominion theology, and the anthropocentrism inherent in stewardship theology. While supporting the basic concerns of eco-theology, it seeks a greater relationship between ecology and economy so that the issues of the environment and poverty can be strongly related (as shown in Chapters 2 and 3). In this section we now examine Oikothology in more detail.

### 6.2.1. *Oikos* as the link between ecology and economy

Within the notion of “oikos” theology is the etymological link between ecology and economy. According to Robert Leal, ecology is a more recent term which was popularized by media personalities such as David Suzuki and David Attenborough.<sup>615</sup> It was first used by the biologist Ernst Heckle (1834-1919) to refer to the scientific discipline that concerns itself with relationships between a living thing and its outside world.<sup>616</sup> It is the study of organisms in relation to the place in which they live (their habitat) and the interaction among and between the living and non living components of the place being studied (the eco systems). Ecology studies the conditions of existence of living beings and interactions of all kinds between them and their environment.<sup>617</sup>

Ecology is a combination of two Greek words, *oikos* and *logos*. As stated above, *oikos* means house or home (family) and *logos* means word or study. In this sense, ecology may be defined as a study or the ‘logic’ of one’s house or home. It relates to the dynamic relationship

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<sup>615</sup> Leal, Robert. 2004. *The Environment and Christian Faith* .p.9

<sup>616</sup> Ibe, Martin. Joe. 2003. *Environmental Ethics and Politics in Developing Countries*.p.9

<sup>617</sup> Gottlieb, Roger. 1996. (ed) *This Sacred Earth: Religion, Nature Environment*. New York: Routledge.p.151

that constitutes the total life of the household. It could also be understood to mean the whole resources, life-forms and all the supporting systems available to the ecosystem. Here, life or life-form should be understood in a more comprehensive and non technical form, to refer to what biologists classify as non-living, rivers, landscapes, ecosystems in general.<sup>618</sup> Economy on the other hand, relates to laws or rules (*oikos-nomos*) for the household or the art of administering the household.<sup>619</sup> Larry Rasmussen suggests that economics implies “knowing how things work and arranging these ‘home systems’-ecosystems, so that the material requirements of the household of life are met and sustained”.<sup>620</sup>

The word *oikos* is also the root of *oikoumene*, the whole inhabited world. In this context, the word is not exclusively limited to the church as the household of God. This is seen in the manner in which the term is used broadly and interchangeably by different ecological theologians. For example; the protestant theologian, Schubert Ogden makes the connection this way “because God’s love itself is subject to no bounds and excludes nothing from His embrace, there is no creature’s interest that is not also God’s interest and therefore, necessarily included in the redeeming love of God”.<sup>621</sup> Broadening the term, Konrad Raiser, the then General Secretary of the WCC points to these wider connections:

*Oikoumene*, understood as the one household of life created and preserved by God, thus extends beyond the world of humankind, of the one human race, to creation as a whole. It reminds us that human history is bound up with the history of all living things and the human household is incapable of surviving without being related to the other households which are its natural environment.<sup>622</sup>

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<sup>618</sup> Garrison, Glenn.G. 1994. *Moral Obligations to Non-Human Creations: A Theocentric Ethic*. Ph.D. Dissertation, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. p.276

<sup>619</sup> Conradie, Ernst. M. 2005. *An Ecological Christian Anthropology. At Home with Earth?* p.7

<sup>620</sup> Rasmussen, Larry. 1996. *Earth Community, Earth Crisis: Ecology and Justice Series*. New York: Maryknoll. p.91

<sup>621</sup> Mary, Evelyn Tucker and Grim, John. A. 1994.(eds) *Worldviews and Ecology. Religion, Philosophy, and the Environment*. New York: Mary Knoll. p.80

<sup>622</sup> Raiser, Konrad. 1991. *Ecumenism in Transition: A Paradigm shift in the Ecumenical Movement?* Geneva: WCC publications.p.85-88

Ernst Conradie directs us to the view expressed by Larry Rasmussen who points to the links between economy, ecology and the ecumenical movement by making reference to this concept of *oikos* (household). He states that:

Creation is pictured as a vast public household. The English words ‘economics’ ‘ecumenics’ and ‘ecology’ all share the same root and reference. ‘Economics’ means providing for the household’s material and service needs and managing the household well. But the word also has a theological meaning. One of the classic theological expressions for bringing creation to full health is the unfolding drama of ‘the divine economy’...One of the marks of that economy is shared abundance. ‘Ecumenics’ means treating the inhabitants of the household as a single family, human and nonhuman together, and fostering the unity of that family. ‘Ecology’ is knowledge of that systematic interdependence upon which the life of the household depends. And if English had adopted the Greek word for steward (*oikonomos*), we would immediately recognize the steward as the trustee, the caretaker of creation imaged as *oikos*.<sup>623</sup>

In a more scientific and ecological context, Ernst Haeckel, the German biologist who first coined the word “ecology” refers to “the science of relations between organisms, their characteristics, especially their life-cycles, their environments, in particular the kinds of environment in which they flourished, their place in the totality of all organisms and environments, the totality being understood as connected and related to one another through flows of resources and energy”.<sup>624</sup> Ecology, as we have seen, broadly means the study of the home. The environment generally, at least at the scale of the planetary system, planet earth, is taken as home, though some would argue for the “cosmos” as a more encompassing term.<sup>625</sup>

The relevance of this term with regards to the whole of creation is appreciated in its ability to integrate economy, ecology and the entire world order as a holistic entity. It is used to capture the necessity of a comprehensive notion of justice which is capable of speaking to both economic injustice and ecological degradation. The cry for eco-justice is eloquently expressed by Pope John Paul II who said that: “It is manifestly unjust that a privileged few should continue to accumulate excess goods, squandering available resources, while masses of people are living in conditions of misery at the very lowest level of subsistence. Today the

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<sup>623</sup> Conradie, Ernst. 2005. *An Ecological Christian Anthropology. At Home with Earth?* p.7

<sup>624</sup> Bramwell, A. 1989. *Ecology in the 20th Century*. New Haven: Yale University Press. p.43

<sup>625</sup> Carroll, John. E. 2004. *Sustainability and Spirituality*. p.11

dramatic threat of ecological breakdown is teaching us the extent to which greed and selfishness-both individual and collective-are contrary to the order of creation”<sup>626</sup> Janet Parker and Robert Richards had similarly criticized the prevailing economic dogma based on abstractions and reductions which conflate human well-being with increasing GNP and a reductive view of the human person as *homo economicus* whose essence is unlimited wants. Rather, they rather argue that relationships - to other individuals, to community, to the land are at least as important as possession of commodities, and these relationships are often destroyed by growth-oriented economies which alienate individuals from their human and natural communities.<sup>627</sup>

Another insightful approach is seen in the recent work done by Steve De Gruchy in trying to address the problem created by what he called the “Brown and Green Agendas” debate.<sup>628</sup> The brown agenda is concerned with poverty and represents the agenda of many people in the global South. The green agenda is concerned with the environment but it is mostly the agenda of people who are not poor. These two color images symbolically represent the debate on the relationship between ecology and economy with regards to the environment. Clearly, the problem with this debate is the absence of complementarity which De Gruchy cautioned by reminding us that “the choice between brown and green agendas is not an either/or , but very definitely a both/ and, and it is the blending of the both that we bring to the foreground when we speak of the need for an olive agenda”.<sup>629</sup> The Olive agenda integrates the brown and green agendas. This integration is also what the fourth generation-oikothology seeks to achieve.

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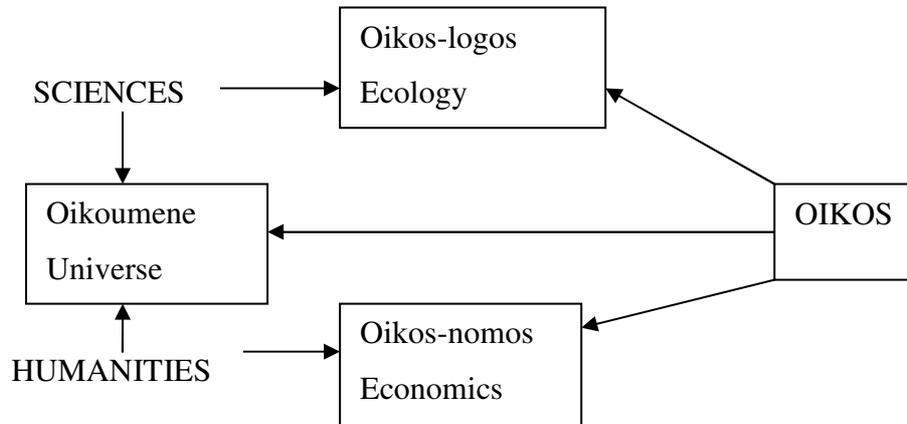
<sup>626</sup> John Paul II. 1990. “Peace with God the Creator-Peace with all Creation”. Quoted in Scharper, S.B and Cunningham, H. 1993. *The Green Bible*. Maryknoll: Orbis Books. p.71-72

<sup>627</sup> Parker, Janet and Roberta, Richards. 1996. in Dieter T. Hessel (ed) *Theology for Earth Community. A Field Guide*. New York: Mary Knoll.p.128

<sup>628</sup> For details, See De Gruchy, Steve. 2007. “An Olive Agenda: First Thoughts on a Metaphorical Theology of Development” *The Ecumenical Review*, 59,

<sup>629</sup> De Gruchy, Steve.2007. “An Olive Agenda

The simple diagram below summarizes the connection we are trying to make between ecology and economics held together by their etymology-the concept of *oikos*.<sup>630</sup>



This diagram shows how *oikos* as a root word links ecology (*oikos-logos*) and economics (*oikos-nomos*) to the universe (*oikoumene*) and also shows how both the sciences and humanities try to understand the universe (*oikoumene*) through the study of ecology and economics respectively. The concept of *oikothology* which we will turn to shortly is an attempt to provide a theological framework from this *oikos* etymology. *Oikothology* seeks to protect the *oikoumene* in the human pursuit of economic growth by utilizing the ecological resources in a less anthropocentric way.

### 6.2.2. The Emergence of *Oikos* as a Theological Concept

In Christian ecological theology, the concept of *oikos* has emerged as a theological framework depicting the ideal state of relationship which humans ought to exhibit in their quest for the utilization of ecological resources to advance economic growth. *Oikos* as a theological construct, propounded by Andrew Warmback, is fast gaining ground as the ideal eco-theological orientation to be pursued if the current anthropocentric stance of the church must be changed. According to Conradie, the impetus behind the emergence of *oikos* as an eco-theological concept is precisely the need to include all life forms in the household of God.<sup>631</sup> He goes further to assert that the dominant rhetoric of liberation theology, black

<sup>630</sup> This diagram emerged as a result of my discussion with Steve De Gruchy

<sup>631</sup> Conradie, Ernst. 2005. *An Ecological Christian Anthropology. At Home with Earth?* p.220

theology and a culture of human rights is that “every human being has an equal dignity and integrity before God”, therefore *oikos* as an eco-theological ideology would provide the antidote for this inclusiveness.

The basic meaning of *oikos* in general Greek and Hellenistic usage is given as “house” or “dwelling”, and related meanings of “domestic affairs”, wealth” as well as “family” or “family property”.<sup>632</sup> In both the Septuagint and the New Testament, the use of the phrase the “house of God” is common in referring to the temple, which also came to refer to the community.<sup>633</sup> It is acknowledged that the word can also include public buildings. According to Louw and Nida, *oikos* may be categorised in the domain of constructions with a subdomain of buildings as ‘a building consisting of one or more rooms and normally serving as a dwelling place’.<sup>634</sup>

As a kinship term, it could also refer to the “family” or “household”.<sup>635</sup> According to Wamback, fundamental to *Oikothology* is the concept of a home or house.<sup>636</sup> In this regard, the earth is seen as household (family) of God in a metaphoric sense and it describes how the earth should be viewed in understanding human relationship with it. The idea of “home for all” expressed in *Oikothology* includes the material as well the non material entities as belonging to the bigger family of God. Wamback argues that:

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<sup>632</sup> Wamback, Andrew. 2005. *Constructing an Oikothology: The Environment, Poverty and the Church in South Africa*

<sup>633</sup> Gerhard, Friedrich. 1976.(ed) *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*(volume V;translated and edited by Geoffrey W. Bromiley; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans. p119,

<sup>634</sup> Louw, Johan P. and Eugene A. Nida (eds) 1989. *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament based on Semantic Domains*.Vol.1. Cape Town: Bible Society of South Africa. p.81

<sup>635</sup> Louw, Johan P. And Eugene A. Nida (eds) 1989. *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament based on Semantic Domains*.Vol.1. Cape Town: Bible Society of South Africa. p.113

<sup>636</sup> Wamback, Andrew. 2005. *The Environment, Poverty and the Church in South Africa. Constructing an oikothology*. p 180

In a home there is the structure as well as mutuality of care, assurance of belonging, sustenance and support. A home implies domestic relations of interrelatedness and interdependence, without rivalry and oppression. It is about community and reconciliation, wholeness, connectedness, love, sacrifice, generosity, and welcoming the stranger.<sup>637</sup>

Oikothology should not be conceived of in an anthropocentric understanding of consisting of only human beings. The notion behind *Oikothology* is predicated on the understanding of a wider family setting which includes (especially in the African context) extended family members, ancestors, friends, neighbours, visitors, foreigners. It also includes domestic animals-goats, dogs, fowls and is extended to other life forms. A typical African form of greeting would usually ask about the well being of one's 'human' family members as well as domestic animals, an indication of the inclusion of animals as part of one's family. At the heart of *Oikothology* is the conceptualization of the earth as the bigger house which humans inhabit together with multiple other forms of life.<sup>638</sup>

Our optimism is that this concept with all its associated metaphors, the earth as our *Oikos*, our common home/family, would provide a dynamic framework which does not only challenge our current life styles and the global economic and ecological ethics, it would also provide individual Christians and the society at large with a praxis that fosters environmental integrity and the struggle for social and economic justice. It is "a cry for the church to proclaim its relevance to the society that has lost its way environmentally and economically".<sup>639</sup> It critiques the current global anthropocentrism, utilitarianism and the capitalist system and further expresses the idea that certain things should not be done to nature and that wanton acts of despoliation or cruelty or over-exploitation of natural resources, should be avoided as exceeding the legitimate role of mankind will be disastrous to both the environment and humanity.

Reacting to the importance of ecological anthropologies especially the one in the form of *Oikothology*, Conradie postulates that there can be no serious commitment to social and

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<sup>637</sup> Wamback, Andrew. 2005. *The Environment, Poverty and the Church in South Africa*. p.181

<sup>638</sup> Conradie, Ernst.M. 2005. *An Ecological Christian Anthropology. At Home with Earth?* p.221

<sup>639</sup> Leal, Robert. 2004. *The Environment and Christian Faith*. p.12

economic justice which does not include an ecological responsibility and vice versa.<sup>640</sup> His position is informed by his understanding that the well being of people is inseparably linked with that of all life on earth. As we established in chapter two and examined in Nigeria in chapter three, environmental degradation is not an issue which should be treated separately from the issues of poverty, deprivation and economic exploitation - these are all important elements in the context of *oikos* in its various configuration. Similarly, Dieter Hessel, posits that the real definition of eco-justice is:

A combination of ecology and social justice, 'eco-justice' refers to the interlocking web of concern about the earth's carrying capacity, its ability to support the lives of its inhabitants and the human family's ability to live together in harmony. It highlights the interrelatedness of such pressing issues such as world hunger and world peace, the energy crisis and unemployment, appropriate technology and good work, biblical stewardship and feminist consciousness, radical justice and pluralistic community, life style choices in response to poverty and pollution.<sup>641</sup>

Based on Hessel's definition of eco-justice, Conradie therefore concludes that human actions must be considered in terms of its benefit to the entire household of God, the *oikos*, since the failure to always be conscious of this, will only lead to one inevitable thing, disastrous environmental consequences.<sup>642</sup> In order to escape the inevitable disaster which Conradie cautioned, we need to understand the principle of interdependence as being central to the postulations of *Oikothology*.

### **6.2.3. Locating *Oikothology* in the Principle of Interdependence**

With Conradie's caveat in mind, this section argues that a better understanding of the relevance of *Oikothology* in providing stimulation and practical commitment on the part of Christians with regard to the current global environmental problems, hinges on the appreciation of the principle of interdependence as being central to the concept of *Oikothology*. This view is premised on the observation that among environmentalists,

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<sup>640</sup> Conradie, Ernst. 2005. *An Ecological Christian Anthropology. At Home with Earth?* p.8

<sup>641</sup> Hessel, D.T. 1985.(ed) *For Creation's Sake. Preaching, Ecology and Justice*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press.p.12

<sup>642</sup> Conradie, Ernst. 2005. *An Ecological Christian Anthropology. At Home with Earth*.p.8

particularly ecotheologians, the principle of interdependence, interconnectedness and interrelationship form the backbone of environmental ethics.<sup>643</sup> These three words are often used interchangeably to describe the links that exist in respect to the biological and moral relationship between humans and all other life-forms. The idea of interdependence is offered as a corrective, a better alternative to relationships of domination, oppression and models of anthropocentric ideology that reinforce a mechanistic world view that objectifies nature. Interdependence promotes solidarity and expresses human similarity, our kinship with other life-forms and situates humanity within a larger network of beings.<sup>644</sup>

Interdependence could be applied in two broad senses, namely, interconnectedness and interrelatedness. Interconnectedness is used to express the ecosystemic relationships in which the activities and fate of one member of the system have consequences for all others.<sup>645</sup> Interdependence in this sense of interconnectedness is what ecotheologians think when they speak of “our own nature as constituted by our relationships with other living things”.<sup>646</sup> In this context, interdependence implies that human species and other non-human species have been modified in the context of all other organisms with whom humanity have come into contact.<sup>647</sup> This process is an on-going process which is happening in an ecosystem as organisms are acting and being acted upon at any given time. This process is better understood in what is commonly expressed in terms of food chains in nature, the hydrological cycle or the web of life.<sup>648</sup> Animals engaged in this sort of interrelationship are not necessarily close relatives in the biological sense but kinship in a broader ethical context implies that all beings are related.

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<sup>643</sup> Birch, Charles and Cobb, John. 1981. *The Liberation of Life: From the Cell to the Community*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. P.87

<sup>644</sup> Lisa, H. Sideris. 2003. *Environmental Ethics Ecological Theology and Natural Selection*. p.219

<sup>645</sup> Lisa, H. Sideris. 2003. *Environmental Ethics Ecological Theology and Natural Selection*. p.219

<sup>646</sup> Lisa, H. Sideris. 2003. *Environmental Ethics Ecological Theology and Natural Selection*. p.219

<sup>647</sup> Lisa, H. Sideris. 2003. *Environmental Ethics Ecological Theology and Natural Selection* .p.219

<sup>648</sup> Carson, Rachel. 1962. *Silent Spring*. New York: Houghton Mifflin.p.23 The concept of food chain originated with the Cambridge zoologist Charles Elton in 1920s, the popular acceptance of the idea owes much to Rachel Carson and the disturbing picture she presented in the silent spring of pesticides spreading through an entire community by means of these links between organisms. Carson describes the effects of DDT and its ability to be passed on from one form of organism to another through all the links of the food chain.

The second element in the principle of interdependence is interrelatedness. Interrelatedness as we have noted earlier consists in the “genealogical, evolutionary continuity that exists between all living things”.<sup>649</sup> A good observation worthy of note in this respect is that the ecological model of interrelationship supports a holistic understanding of well-being that says “the health of nature and my health as well as the health of other beings are interrelated”.<sup>650</sup> Biophilic mutuality and symbiosis are indications of nature’s proper functioning and these become disrupted by human intervention that brings death to biotic communities.<sup>651</sup>

From the foregoing, we have seen the importance of the principle of interdependence in maintaining a benign condition natural to ecosystems. In this regard, the importance of *Oikothology* is acknowledged because of its interrogation on the fundamental concerns of how human beings, especially Christians, understand and relate to nature, bearing in mind our interdependence to nature. This understanding would stimulate a contextual and pragmatic engagement in which the dominant global capitalist culture, manifesting in the current environment and economic injustices, would not only be interrogated but held responsible for the global economic and ecological crisis in which we currently find ourselves.

Oikothology raises up a set of important questions that get to the heart of the principle of interdependence. It asks how human beings perceive themselves in nature, i.e. whether human beings see themselves as one of the many components in a global ecosystem, or whether they are separate from nature, having dominion over it and using it as a means to achieving their ends irrespective of how their actions affect the ecosystem. This then leads on to ask whether the church as an agent of change understands its role and responsibility beyond ecclesiastical and spiritual concerns to engage pragmatically in issues of economic justice and the broader social and environmental concerns.

How well or bad the church responds to these concerns, determines its readiness to engage with the challenges of the current global earth crisis of the environmental and poverty situation. This is because our perception of the place and role of humanity in the bigger

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<sup>649</sup> Lisa, H. Sideris.2003. *Environmental Ethics Ecological Theology and Natural Selection*. p.220

<sup>650</sup> McFague, Sallie. 1997. *Super, Natural Christians*. Minneapolis: Fortress. p.108

<sup>651</sup> Ruether, Rosemary Radford. 1994. *Gaia and God: An Ecofeminist Theology of Earth Healing*. San Francisco. Harper Collins. p4

picture of nature could influence greatly our response to the above concerns. Our understanding is informed by what we make of some ethical, philosophical and theological treatise that underpins different biases we always hold towards nature. Yet whatever our bias or perception is, the irony is that our influenced actions do not only affect the health of the ecosystem, our own health is as well jeopardized. Human activities that affect the environment have a lot to do with the health of the environment.

### **6.3. Unfinished business on the agenda of Oikothology**

We have examined four generations of ecological motifs in theology, namely, dominion, stewardship, eco-theology, and now oikothology. We have seen how oikothology has sought to consciously integrate the concerns of ecology and the environment with concerns of economics and poverty. It is a theological way of expressing the ‘olive agenda’<sup>652</sup> which seeks to integrate the brown agenda of poverty with the green agenda of the environment. For these reasons we consider Oikothology to be an important theological contribution to the earth crisis. From our perspective, however, there is some unfinished business on the agenda of Oikothology, and we need to examine this below.

At the same time, (like the previous three motifs), *Oikothology* has a key weaknesses, namely that within the African context it is not fully accessible to African Christianity. Like the other generations of ecological motifs that we have discussed, oikothology is laden with western terminology. This is because its proponent, Andrew Warback, is of English origin who lacked the African cultural orientation and terminology (proverbs and idioms) to drive home the fundamental issues which oikothology is dealing with in the African way. Because it also uses a lot of ‘white’ personalities as its reference point, its appeal and accessibility to African Christians remains doubtful. This is not in itself a criticism of the work done by Warback, but rather a challenge to others to take up the task of relating Oikothology to African cultures. In the following chapter we will pursue, in greater detail, what we consider to be a necessary fifth generation of ecological motifs, namely, an indigenous oikothology.

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<sup>652</sup> De Gruchy, Steve. 2007. “An Olive Agenda”

We turn now to those matters that remain on the agenda of oikothology.

### **6.3.1. The Earth is not yet Our Home (No feeling of Homeliness)**

Without doubt, the *oikos* metaphor when considered from the reality of our ‘home’ experience carries with it some degree of discomfort and a sense of marginalization. As we saw in chapter two and three, the home experience in the context of African society in many instances, (especially from the underside of the society) presents a picture of “homelessness” and lack of a “sense of place”. Therefore the usage of *oikos* metaphor to refer to the home, would certainly affect our understanding of the earth as our home in a negative way. The question which the *oikos* metaphor keeps reverberating is: how can this earth with all the injustices, poverty, hunger, and sufferings of different kinds, possibly be the “home for all”? This is so since our lived experience in it portrays it as a home full of suffering and injustices. We can argue from our lived experience in this *oikos* that the degree of marginalization, exclusion and unequal treatment meted to some of the members of the household especially from the global-oikos perspective, is to say the least unfair and unpleasant.

The reality of poverty and injustice in our global *oikos* does not arise from the lack of resources in the *oikos*. It is rather a deliberate and wilful violation of the rule of home management (*oikos-nomos*). As we saw in chapters 2 and 3, the global economic system (*oikos-nomos*) and its structures have been largely responsible for the current flawed and dysfunctional nature of *oikoumene*. The global capitalist structures exacerbated by the effect of globalization have excluded a lot of people and other members of the ecosystem from the resources of the *oikos* which is vital for their sustenance.

The above assertion is corroborated by Bloomquist who posits that:

The differing impacts of economic globalization matter. They complicate and often confound what can be generalized prescriptions to be applied on the same way to all. It is because we are interrelated in one body-rather than

as competing rivals-that we are pulled into more complex analyses of what is really going on.<sup>653</sup>

Globalization could potentially distort the notion of the world (*oikoumene*) as a “global village”, an idea inherent in *oikos* theology. It promotes only an aspect of the term by efficient application and distribution of global communication systems and services while discouraging the vital aspect of inter-connectedness which the idea of global village seeks to convey. This latter aspect of inter-connectedness is more relevant to the concept of *Oikothology*. In a village setting, there is an expression of mutuality, relatedness and equity which is very much valued as the hall-mark of village life. Sadly, the impact of globalization which manifests in the excessive drive for exploitation, hoarding, greed, ecological destruction and apparent show of individualism not only sacrifices the spirit of co-operation and community affinity; it also destroyed the understanding of the entire village life system.

In his argument against globalization and its effects on the *oikos*, Botmann maintains that “globalization is at odds with the life of *oikos*, the community base of being and the household narrative of the bible”.<sup>654</sup> Adding to the barrage of criticism of globalization is also the voice of Kathleen Darby. Darby argues that the havoc done by globalization is not limited to the economic sphere but that it has uprooted and divided communities and that the weaker members of the community suffer the effects more than others.<sup>655</sup> Understanding Darby’s voice in the context of *oikos* would include the ecosystem in the category of weaker members who suffer the effects of globalization most. This is witnessed in the rapid consequences of increased consumption and pollution through the global economic activity on the environment. This point has been exhaustively discussed in previous chapters where we noted the impact of human consumption on the environment as well as the alarming rate at which humans pollute their environment in their various activities. Liberalized trade

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<sup>653</sup> Bloomquist, Karen. L. 2004. “Communion, responsibility, accountability” 261-288, in Bloomquist, Karen. L. (ed). *Communion, responsibility, accountability: Responding as a Lutheran Communion to Neoliberal Globalization* (Documentation No.50/2004; Geneva: The Lutheran World federation, 2004) p.263

<sup>654</sup> Warmback, Andrew. 2005. *The Environment, Poverty and the Church in South Africa: Constructing an Oikothology*. P.196

<sup>655</sup> Darby, Kathleen. Ray 2006.(ed) *Ecology, Economy and God. Theology that Matters*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press. p.173

conditions have increased the volume of trade. This meant the acceleration of the depletion of natural resources and the destruction of the ecosystems.<sup>656</sup>

A proper understanding of *oikos* as a “global village”, the *oikoumene*, would inspire us to share the *oikos* resources equitably to all especially the *hoi poloi* of the *oikos*. There should not be those who are marginalized and disproportionately treated that they become poor, and those who are rich within the same household. A *bona fide* member shares in the wealth of the family. Our argument here is that if the ecological systems are properly maintained and the rule of economic governance adhered to, there will be sufficient resources for all the members of the *oikos*. However, inequitable distribution of the ecological resources and mismanagement of the economic systems is at the heart of the current global economic quagmire. Recognizing greed as a fundamental problem in the world economic order, Mohandas Gandhi starkly puts it “the earth provides enough for everyone’s need, but not for everyone’s greed”.<sup>657</sup>

There is no doubt that the difficulty in maintaining ‘justice’ in the global economic governance is also one of the root causes of the dysfunctional posture of the global economic system. This point is noted by Meeks in what he termed the danger of commodification which he explained in the following way:

According to the gospel and the depth of human wisdom, what is necessary for life cannot be a commodity or exclusively a commodity. Thus social goods such as food, housing, jobs, education and health care should not be exclusively distributed according to the market logic and social goods such as justice, belonging, respect, affection, and grace should not be distributed in any sense according to the logic of exchanging commodities. Otherwise, it is inevitable that those with nothing to exchange will get left out of the home. In the market society, however, there is nothing that cannot, in principle, be distributed as a commodity. Everything is for sale.<sup>658</sup>

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<sup>656</sup> Vandana, Shiva. 2000. *Stolen Harvest: The Hijacking of the Global Food Supply*. Cambridge: South End Press. 75

<sup>657</sup> Darby, Kathleen. Ray. *Ecology, Economy and God. Theology that Matters* p.173

<sup>658</sup> Meeks, Douglas, M. *The Economy of Grace and the Market Logic*. [www.e-alliance.ch/media/media-5302.pdf](http://www.e-alliance.ch/media/media-5302.pdf) (Accessed on 9<sup>th</sup> July 2007)

In a similar understanding, Rasmussen asserts that the most significant task of any economy is the continuation of life. He describes the way in which economics has shifted away from what he terms ‘oikos economy’ to include (i) a culture that sees nature as interchangeable parts and machine-like rather than organic and communitarian; (ii) The quest and propensity to generate affluence by expanding to new worlds until the globalised West became a full “planetary wave”; and (iii) the shift of economics from “the household and its community to the firm or corporation” in which businesses exist to maximise profits whereas households exist to maximise the quality of life of its members.<sup>659</sup> These concerns reflect some of the issues covered in the two previous chapters especially with the inextricable link between ecology and economy.

The role of oikothology in the current economic chaos which marginalizes and excludes the weaker members of the *oikos* is to seek an alternative economic system which would ensure a more sustainable economic justice. It is one which is based on the understanding of what it means to be human, which does not allow the economy to be treated as a final goal but rather as a means towards an end.<sup>660</sup> Daly and Cobb advocated a decentralized “community of communities” instead of the current global economy dominated by the cruel practices of free trade. They posit that community-oriented economics requires viewing humans as more than consumers and the land as more than matter and rent. They emphasise measuring economic welfare on the basis of education, health, and environmental quality, rather than GNP.<sup>661</sup> Their view was collaborated by both Amartya Sen and the UNDP in their respective perspectives by arguing that the concept of capabilities deprivation and ‘Human Development Index’ which we have already dealt with in chapter two are fundamental to assessing economic welfare.

Daly and Cobb’s idea was encapsulated in the differences we make between the pre-capitalist markets and the present capitalist market as originally enunciated by Aristotle. Aristotle

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<sup>659</sup> Rasmussen, Larry. L. 1996. *Earth Community, Earth Ethics. Ecology and Justice Series*. Maryknoll: Oris Books.p.91

<sup>660</sup> Ian, Linden. “Globalization and the Church: an overview” in Charles, Reed. 2001.(ed) *Development Matters: Christian Perspectives on Globalization*. London: Church House Publishing. p.9

<sup>661</sup> Parker, Janet and Roberta, Richards. 1996. in Dieter T. Hessel (ed) *Theology for Earth Community. A Field Guide*. New York: Mary Knoll. p.128

analysed this difference by drawing a distinction between the need-oriented economy and the money-accumulation economy.<sup>662</sup> The basic point is that Aristotle regarded the *oikonomia*, the household economy as being designed to supply the basic needs of the members of the household and of the community as a whole (*koinonia ,polis*). To maintain this basic needs of the household, he insists on production for use as against production for gain as the essence of house holding . Our practical experience in this *oikos* is incongruous with the ideas being expressed by *Oikothology*. This incongruousness is being continuously reinforced by denial of access to the resources of the *oikos* to some members of the *oikos*, which brings us to the next issue on the agenda.

### 6.3.2. Exclusion from the land resources of the *oikos*

The basic and underlying significance of land resources to humanity cannot be controverted. Land and all its resources are seen as a significant gift factor in God's relationship with the world. Land is regarded as a source of life which also reflects in people's culture.<sup>663</sup> According to Afigbo, "land is seen as God's gift to humanity for use and as a sacred heritage transmitted by the fore fathers as a bond between the living and the dead, to be held in trust by each generation for the unborn generation".<sup>664</sup> We can see in Afigbo's understanding of land, a reflection of the intergenerational concept because of its emphasis on the unborn generation. The importance of land in Africa is multifaceted. It houses the dead beneath the surface, houses the living on the surface as well provide food for the living. Land is fundamental to social, political and economic life of African people. Emeka Madu reminds us that besides its economic attributes, land continues to have great social value, as a place of settlement, providing a location within which people live and to which they return. It also has "symbolic and ritual associations, such as burial sites, sacred woodlands, and spiritual life".<sup>665</sup> A significant number of studies and research work have demonstrated that land issues

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<sup>662</sup> Polanyi, Karl. 2004. First Part: Background to the Present Situation: Pauperisation and the Global Dominance of Finance. quoted in Ulrich, Duchrow. 1998. Alternatives to Global Capitalism: Drawn From Biblical History, Designed for Political Action. Utrecht: International Books.p.55

<sup>663</sup> Walter, Bruggemann. 1977. *The land: Place as a Gift, Promise and Challenge in Biblical Faith*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press.

<sup>664</sup> Afigbo, A. E. 1981. *Ropes of Sand. Studies in Igbo History and Culture*. Ibadan: University Press Ltd. p.54

<sup>665</sup> Madu, Emeka. 2004. *Honest to African Cultural Heritage*. Onitsha: Coskan Associates Publishers. p.41

including land tenure have strong linkages to development goals such as: poverty reduction and economic growth.

People's identity is tied to the land and it is expressed in the songs they sing, the art they create, their celebrations, their rituals and various rites of passages. An average traditional Igbo in particular and perhaps Africa in general, lives in close association with land because of its potential for human sustenance and the provision of the basic necessity of "need oriented-economy". Landownership and resource control has often been considered as the key factor that determines an individual's socio-economic status. There is the saying in Igbo that "he who has land has wealth". This implies that for people to create wealth and be economically empowered, they need land for agriculture, housing, and other resources accruing from the land. One of the fundamental challenges inherent in the use of *oikos* as a metaphor that symbolizes 'home for all' is to interrogate, understand and explain the narratives of those members of the "home" who have been denied the right to land and its resources.

We note that the denial of access to land and its resources to many members of the *oikos* in a way perpetrates the cycle of injustice. It is also a distortion of humanity's affinity to the earth. Based on the above facts, the concept of the *oikos* is therefore presented in a negative image. The underlying principle of *Oikothology* is that the earth belongs to God and that human beings are but stewards.<sup>666</sup> If the earth belongs to God and God wants every member of the *oikos* to have a sense of belonging, how then it that people are excluded from this home? The above question draws our attention to the affirmation expressed in the document adopted by South African Council of Churches (SACC) reminding us that:

A Christian understanding of social struggles and development must begin with an affirmation that this is God's earth, and all that we seek to do in, with and to it, should be done out of this recognition. This means that all human life, and all living things, including the earth and its bounty, is a gift from God and that it should be cherished, respected and enjoyed, and any right to private property must be circumscribed by this recognition of God's fundamental ownership of all things. Every human owner must therefore

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<sup>666</sup> The Earth belongs to God: Some African Church Perspectives on the World Summit for Sustainable Development (WSSD) and beyond. This was adopted at the African Regional Consultation on Environment and Sustainability held in Kenya from 6-10 May, 2002.

recognize the ‘social mortgage’ on property, meaning that property should be stewarded for the good not just of the owner but for the good of others. We cannot therefore be party to any process or system that treats life or the earth as a commodity, nor anything that does not recognize that all people of the earth hold ownership of the resources of the earth in common, what is sometimes known as the “global commons”.<sup>667</sup>

Contrary to the above theological pronouncement, land and its resources in many contemporary African states is no longer seen as belonging to God as was previously assumed. In our view, and this is supported by Andrew Warmback, the emerging understanding especially with the culture of globalization and trade liberalization is that “land now belongs to transnational corporations, international financial institutions, foreign investors” and the wealthy individuals who control the resources of the land to the detriment of the less powerful members of the society.<sup>668</sup> In order to buttress our point, we are going to provide three examples-the Niger Delta, the South African apartheid policy and culturally constructed gender divide, as case studies to show how the multinational corporations, state policies and culture deprive and exclude people from the land.

### **6.3.2.1. The Niger Delta Experience**

We have made reference to the issue of the Niger Delta in chapters two and three. If we consider the agitation going on in the Niger Delta area of Nigeria from the point of view of human security, it best describes our point that the exclusion from the land and its resources has created a gap between the lived experiences of the weaker members of the *oikos* and the idealistic posture which the concept presents. Here, we are quick to identify a clash between idealism and empiricism. Our argument is that because *Oikothology* is both a descriptive and normative concept, it describes the reality and prescribes the ideal what ought to be, but does not provide enough inspiration through which the ideal could be achieved. Because of the identified gap-the clash between idealism and empiricism, it is easy for those who have been excluded from the ‘common wealth’ of the *oikos* to develop a feeling of detachment and alienation from the *oikos*.

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<sup>667</sup> This is God’s earth: Adopted by SACC and Church representatives on 19 June 2002 in preparation for the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) SACC

<sup>668</sup> Warmback. Andrew. 2005. *The Environment, Poverty and the Church in South Africa: Constructing an Oikothology*. P.204

### 6.3.2.2. The South African Apartheid Experience

The experiences of the Niger *Deltans*, other people in Africa and beyond who suffer similar environmental and or economic injustice and exclusion from (the common wealth) of the *oikos*, would likely be the same, namely, having a strong sense of distaste for the home as well as a feeling of homelessness. In this regard, the South African apartheid experience tells a lot more on this. Warmback's opinion on the damaging effects of the apartheid regime on both the South African family system and community life vividly expresses our point.

The apartheid policies destroyed home life for many both literally and figuratively. A battery of legislation placed restrictions on people's ability to establish a meaningful home. The Group Areas Act and the establishment of homelands meant that people had to be forcibly removed from the land of their birth and set up home in often inhospitable circumstances. The migrant labour system, in which workers had to move from their home of birth to some "new" home, has led to much suffering. The context has been one in which home life has been systematically destroyed through the iniquitous policy of apartheid and many have come to experience a sense of not being at home in the country of their birth.<sup>669</sup>

This practice of depriving people of both their land and the resources has resulted in the distortion and disorientation of the psyche of those who experienced such deprivation. In South Africa for example, it is perceived that the impact of the apartheid system has disorientated the mind of the average black person. This example becomes more vivid and real when we see large numbers of street children, men and women roaming and wandering about in South African cities all because they do not have a place called home of their own. These people do not have the experience of a home, they do not know what it means to belong to a home, let alone enjoy the 'common wealth' of the *oikos* and the comfort which the *oikos* can offer. Our opinion about this phenomenon is a pessimistic one. This pessimism is informed by the current housing situation in South Africa which is believed to be overwhelming at the moment.<sup>670</sup>

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<sup>669</sup> Warmback, Andrew. 2005. *The Environment, Poverty and the Church in South Africa Constructing an Oikothology*. p.185

<sup>670</sup> Unsworth, R. "Making Cities more Sustainable: People, Plans and Participation". In Purvis, M and Grainger, A. (eds) 2004. *Exploring Sustainable Development: Geographical Perspectives*. London: Earthscan.

The situation is not peculiar to South Africa; other African countries are experiencing similar problems. The difficulties in meeting the demands of providing housing to such a large number of people have therefore given rise to the ubiquitous sprouting of informal settlements. These informal settlements are usually located in the urban peripheries, the margins of the society. Here again, we see marginalization and exclusion of the weaker members from the *oikos* and the comfort of the *oikos*. The implication of the state of homelessness being experienced by such a large number of people who feel excluded from the real home has further complicated and overshadowed the homely and inclusive image which *oikos* expresses.

### 6.3.2.3. The Culture of Gender Discrimination

Another form of exclusion from the ‘common wealth’ of the *oikos* is the influence of culturally constructed practices which exclude women from owning land. In many regions of the world, and in Africa, gender and cultural inhibitions constrain women’s right to own land. The extent to which these culturally constructed influences are powerful vary from society to society. In Africa, gender discrimination is however, reinforced by both religion and the culture in the name of patriarchy. The land tenure system does not recognise the right of women to have access to land.<sup>671</sup> Women often have to suffer because they cannot make decisions on land related issues and more often than not, they are not even consulted in such decision-making.

As a result, women have little effective access to wood from planted trees on farms and as natural trees and shrubs dwindle, they are forced to meet household energy needs from crop residues such as maize stalks, low-grade twigs and purchased fuel wood thereby increasing their domestic burden. Furthermore, cultural beliefs in many African societies are still discriminative of women on issues of land use and access. For example, there is the cultural belief in some African societies that “if a woman plants a tree, she will become barren or that her husband will die, or that she will be accused of directly challenging the authority of her husband and this could lead to divorce”.<sup>672</sup> Such cultural beliefs limit women’s access to land. The Circle of Concerned African Women Theologians have helped us to see the ways in

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<sup>671</sup> Tony, Bins. 1995. *People and Environment in Africa*. UK: University of Sussex. p.108

<sup>672</sup> Tony, Bins. 1995. *People and Environment in Africa*. UK: University of Sussex. p.108

which culture and religion are used as a subjugation tool in the *oikos* and in this context; it is the women who suffer the effects.<sup>673</sup>

*Oikothology* does not encourage class or gender discrimination; in fact it is against any type of discrimination in any form. However because of the challenges we have identified earlier, it does not have enough strong appeal which is capable of stopping the rampant discrimination in the *oikos*.

### 6.3.3. Heaven Theology

Having made the above observations, we now turn to the next issue outstanding on the agenda which we have identified in the concept of *Oikothology*, other worldliness. Because of the harsh and bitter experiences of majority of the members of the *oikos*, the idea of *Oikothology* does not appeal to many especially those at the margins of the society who have been structurally and systematically excluded from the home and its resources. The realities of the home, the prevailing injustices in the *oikoumene*, the harsh global economic conditions under which many live, therefore do not inspire us to feel that we are at home on earth. We therefore continue to long for a real home and feel like the apostle Paul who said:

I consider that the sufferings of this present time are as nothing compared with the glory to be revealed for us. For creation awaits with eager expectation the revelation of the children of God, for creation was made subject to futility, not of its own accord but because of the one who subjected it, in hope that creation itself would be set free from slavery to corruption and share in the glorious freedom of the children of God. We know that all creation is groaning in

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<sup>673</sup> Phiri, Apawo Isabel. 2000. *Women, Presbyterianism and Patriarchy. Religious Experience of Chewa Women in Central Malawi*. Blantyre: CLAIM.p.17. The Circle of Concerned Women is the space for women of Africa to do communal theology. These concerned women are engaged in theological dialogue with the cultures, religious, sacred writings and oral stories, which shape the African context and define African women. Circle members attempt to reflect together on issues of justice across boundaries of gender, faith and belief. For details see Kanyoro, Musimbi. R. A. 2006. "Threading More Beads in the Story of the Circle" in Phiri, Isabel Apawo and Nadar, Sarojini (eds) *African Women, Religion and Health. Essays in Honour of Meceroy Ambaaa Ewudziwa Oduyoye*. Pietermaritzburg: Cluster Publications.p.19

labour pains event until now...we also groan within ourselves as we wait for adoption, the real redemption of our bodies.<sup>674</sup>

The above text and others with similar expressions have heavily influenced our Christian cosmology. They have instigated and reinforced the notion of the alienation of human beings from the rest of the earth community. The extent of this alienation is such that Christians have been preoccupied with what Conradie called an “otherworldliness” which does not encourage a sense of belonging here on earth. Instead, “it fosters a sojourner sensibility”.<sup>675</sup> The description of heaven is very enticing, it invokes a feeling of longing and the conditions therein are unimaginable compared to the prevailing harsh conditions of injustice inherent in the present *oikos*. For example, the book of Revelation describes the beauty of the heavenly condition with the following tantalizing expressions:

Therefore, they are before the throne of God and serve him day and night in his temple; and he who sits on the throne will spread his tent over them. Never again will they hunger, never again will they thirst. The sun will not beat upon them, or any scorching heat. For the lamb at the centre of the throne will be their shepherd; he will lead them to springs of living water. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.<sup>676</sup>

Those who have suffered discrimination, deprivation and exclusion in this world would certainly find enough consolation and comfort from the above biblical text. This would not only arouse the thinking that we are sojourners on this *oikos* but would reinforce the longing for the eternal home where there is no form of suffering or discrimination or deprivation as described in the text. This anthropological emphasis on humans as sojourners here on earth has permeated and dominated most of our liturgy and traditions which look with misgiving on the world and its creatures. Behind this belief is the conviction that the world is an inimical place and in no sense the believer’s true home.

Thomas Hoyt, describes how some black American Christians who have experienced extreme racial discrimination have been influenced by this thinking. As a result, they have over

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<sup>674</sup> The African Bible. 200. Paulines Publications Africa: Nairobi. Romans 8: 18-23

<sup>675</sup> Conradie, Ernst. 2005. *An Ecological Christian Anthropology. At Home on Earth?* P.26

<sup>676</sup> The Book of Revelation Chapter 7. 15-17. This passage of the bible is usually read during burial services in churches as a consolation that the Christian is going to a better place-heaven.

spiritualized the scripture to the extent that creation is viewed as evil indicating that the earth is not a place to be longed for. We have already noted a similar thinking held by the early Christianity in its dualistic division between the soul and matter which was influenced by platonic and Gnostic ideology. According to Hoyt, these Black Americans believed that “...the idea of man’s (sic) improving the world is not biblical. It is a poor concept, certainly not based on upon the truths of scriptures, and it has caused some to assume roles God never intended or called them to have. God’s plan is to let things get worse and worse (2 Tim. 3: 13), and only the return of Jesus Christ will alter world condition for the better”.<sup>677</sup>

Echoing a similar view as the one above, one of the clergy respondents in my field work research wrote an additional note on the back of the questionnaire to indicate his disapproval of any effort towards making the world a better place. He wrote

The earth is reserved for fire. Any human effort to make the earth paradise must be aborted. We are strangers here. People should concentrate on eternity. It is God who said, I will destroy the earth. Why are you troubling yourself to make it good? Don’t you think you are indirectly opposing God?.<sup>678</sup>

This sojourner attitude to earth has so much influenced the thinking of many African Christians who easily use some proverbs to justify this thinking about heaven and further use it to console themselves about the adversities of the world. Here we cite just one of such proverbs. *Uwa bu afia*. The translation of this Igbo<sup>679</sup> proverb would read thus: “The world is a market place”. This proverb implies that living in the world is like going to a busy market place where important transactions take place, and when one has finished his or her market transaction, he or she will go home, i.e. to die and leave the market place and return home to the comfort of heaven. This type of proverb which portrays the vanity of this world and the longing for the other world which is viewed as a place of comfort is found in many African

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<sup>677</sup> Thomas, L. Hoyt. 1996. “Environmental Justice and Black Theology of liberating Community” in Dieter, T. Hessel (ed) *Theology for Earth Community. A Field Guide*. New York: Mary Knoll. p.172

<sup>678</sup> This quotation is taken from one of the clergy response to the questionnaire I administered to the clergy of Nnewi Diocese.

<sup>679</sup> The Igbo nation as it is often called is one of the three major ethnic tribes in Nigeria. Their language is also known as Igbo language. They live in the south eastern geo-political zone of the country. The three dioceses in the study area are situated in the Igbo land.

societies. Benjamin Ray provides us with much insight into these kinds of proverbs. According to him, the underlying implication of such proverbs is that human life is a “fleeting visit to a foreign land, an impersonal place of potential conflict, in contrast to the homelike comfort of heaven,” where we return to dwell with many of our family members and loved ones who had gone before us.<sup>680</sup>

Adding to the perpetuation of the perception of the earth as not being our home is the influence of songs in Christian liturgy. The musicological function in entrenching and sustaining the thinking about heaven as a place of comfort in contrast to earth as a place of suffering, is seen among Christian denominations as a driving force in this regard. Music being an integral part of the church liturgy has a tremendous influence on people’s emotions and thus could influence their belief system. Certain kinds of music could have inspirational, emotional and therapeutic effects. According to Njoku quoted by Don Ohadike, in the African epistemological viewpoint, religion and music which are always accompanied by dance, tied up together instrumental sounds and body movements and this could provide some soul rejuvenating effects.<sup>681</sup> In the same way, there are certain church hymns, songs and choruses that offer some spiritual rejuvenation in celebrating the fact that our home is indeed in heaven. This has greatly influenced the dominant thinking among Christians that this earth is not our home. For example, Jim Reeves’s famous song which we cite here, clarifies our point: *This world is not my home*

This world is not my home I'm just a passing through  
 My treasures are laid up somewhere beyond the blue  
 The angels beckon me from heaven's open door  
 And I can't feel at home in this world anymore  
 Oh Lord you know I have no friend like you  
 If heaven's not my home then Lord what will I do  
 The angels beckon me from heaven's open door  
 And I can't feel at home in this world anymore

The lyrics of another popular hymn; the Golden Bell 556 which is usually song during Christian burial services also elucidates our point.<sup>682</sup>

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<sup>680</sup> Ray, Benjamin. 2000. *African Religions. Symbols, Rituals and Community*. United States of America. Prentice Hall. P. 102

<sup>681</sup> Ohadike, Don. C. *Sacred Drums of Liberation*. p. xxx

<sup>682</sup> This hymn originally belonged to the Lutheran Hymnal. It was written by T.K.Taylor based on Hebrews 4:9. See.[http://www.ctsfw.edu/etext/hymnals/tlh/a\\_stranger](http://www.ctsfw.edu/etext/hymnals/tlh/a_stranger)

Heaven is my home  
 Only a sojourner  
 Heaven is my home  
 Danger and sorrow stand  
 Round me on every hand  
 Heaven my fatherland  
 Heaven is my home.

What though the tempest rage  
 Heaven is my home  
 Short is my pilgrimage  
 Heaven is my home.  
 And times wild, wintry blast  
 Soon will be over-past  
 I shall reach home at last

There at my Saviour's side  
 Heaven is my home  
 I shall be glorified  
 Heaven is my home  
 There are the good and blest  
 Those I love most and best  
 And there I too shall rest  
 Heaven is my home.  
 I am but a stranger here

Heaven is my home  
 Therefore I'll murmur not  
 Heaven is my home  
 Whatever my earthly lot  
 Heaven is my home  
 For I shall surely stand  
 There at my Lord's right hand  
 Heaven is my Fatherland  
 Heaven is my home

This hymn and others like it reinforce the thinking among critics that Christians have little interest in the earth as Ludwig Feuerbach wrote that “nature, the world, has no value, no interest for Christians. The Christian thinks of himself and the salvation of his soul”.<sup>683</sup> The longing for this salvation has further intensified such heavenism,<sup>684</sup> with heaven as the true home of Christians, the place where they are destined to dwell for eternity. This stands in sharp contrasted to earth which is only a temporary stopping place for humans *en route* to heaven.

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<sup>683</sup> Leal, Robert. 2004. *The Environment and Christian Faith*. p.42

<sup>684</sup> Norman C. Habel and Vicky Balabanski 2002. (eds)*The Earth Story in the New Testament*. London: Sheffield Academic Press. p3

Similarly, Chris Sugden has this to say of his fellow evangelicals:

It is hard for evangelicals to take the environment seriously as a mission concern. Evangelicals are ‘gospel people’, and the gospel is focused on the salvation of people from sin. Ideas that the trees and the land and the rivers, let alone the foxes and the butterflies are worth the time, attention, and the resources of the Christian constituency have struggled to find acceptance in evangelical counsels.<sup>685</sup>

If we are sojourners here on earth as the hymns indicate, then it means that the earth is not our home and if the earth is not our home, we should not feel obliged to have any vested interest in the earth. This sojourner attitude regarding the earth, if not balanced, promotes a *laissez faire* attitude to the sustenance of the earth. It engenders a very strong notion of what some Igbo preachers termed *anaba-aghalu* attitude. The *anaba-aghalu* image conjures a very strong feeling of *foreignness*, of not being at home, of being uncomfortable in a foreign land. This notion forces the foreigner to feel alienated and disinterested in the affairs of the host country. This feeling produces a strong nostalgic effect, “an acute home sickness” in the person that she is constantly conscious of her status as a foreigner with a wishful longing to go home. She is so obsessed with this feeling that she develops a lackadaisical attitude to her host. All her thoughts would centre around her home and how to make it a real home. Whatever she does is influenced by this notion of *anaba-aghalu* which constantly reminds her that the host country is not his home. She is always driven homewards where her real home is. She would invest in the host country and the gains from such investments would be used to build up her real home and sometimes she does not consider the well being of the host. She can do anything to ensure her utmost benefit regardless of how it affects the well being of her host.

This feeling of *anaba-aghalu* somehow has a therapeutic dimension which offers consolation to the person in the foreign land especially in the face of difficult situations. The consolation, predicated on the understanding that the foreign land is not his home, that one day; he would go back to his home land where he would be comforted; provides all the encouragement he needs to keep going in spite all odds. The *anaba-aghalu* construct which is mostly portrayed, preached and reinforced during church burial rites has almost become a metaphor for the

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<sup>685</sup> Sugden, Chris. 1993. ‘Guest Editorial’ *Evangelical Review of Theology*. 17 no. 2 119

earth and what our attitude to it should be as people who are expecting a better home in heaven. According to *anaba-aghalu* image, the purpose of life is not to redeem the earth, but to prepare for the real home-heaven.

Because of the challenges posed by the oikos metaphor, Conradie strongly cautioned against too much emphasis on our being at home on earth. He portrays how the oikos metaphor as our home, contrasts sharply with the concept of eschatology in Christian thought.<sup>686</sup> Eschatology is traditionally understood to be concerned with the doctrine of the last things. It is from the Greek word *eschatos*, denoting what is in the last time.<sup>687</sup> The goal of all eschatological remarks is to change a person's behaviour in the present life and to prompt that person to become fully engulfed in the hereafter. This kind of eschatological thinking about the future raises a pertinent concern: how can we as human beings begin to celebrate the fact that we are at home on earth when we continue on regular basis to experience suffering and pain in different forms. If indeed this *oikos* is our ultimate home, then it is not a place of comfort, not a place to be. If it is not a place to be, the question is, when will it finally be? There is a strong eschatological opinion by many that the world awaits a future home where there is an end to the present sufferings and pains. This earth is not yet the new earth because it does not provide a home for all its creatures argues Conradie. In fact, due to these challenges associated with ecotheology and particularly in the concept of *Oikothology*, John Passmore, the Australian philosopher, argues that Christianity is limited in what it can say and do in the current ecological challenges.<sup>688</sup> He believes that because there is an ever-present dualism in Christian thought which drives a wedge between God and nature, Christianity's traditional longing for another world (which he associates to eschatology) actually sanctions hostility toward nature.

The above raises an eschatological controversy. This controversy is heightened by the lack of consensus among scholars with regard to the tension between the 'already' and the 'not yet'

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<sup>686</sup> Conradie, Ernst. 2005. *An Ecological Christian Anthropology. At Home on Earth?* P.16

<sup>687</sup> Erwin, Fahlbusch, Jan, Milic, John Mbiti, Lukas Vischer Geoffrey, W. Bromiley. (eds) 2001. *The Encyclopedia of Christianity*.vol.2. E- I .Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company. p.122

<sup>688</sup> Edwards, Denis. 2001. (ed) *Earth Revealing, Earth Healing*. Minnesota: The Liturgical Press. P. 161

views of eschatology (futuristic eschatology and realised eschatology).<sup>689</sup> Futuristic eschatology is encapsulated in the hope of the new earth to be established by the reign of Christ, while realised eschatology is reflected in the incarnation of Christ. Both aspects of eschatological dimensions are widely recognised in Christian tradition. Since this eschatological tension does not constitute an integral part of this study, suffice it to refer to the mediating work of Oscar Cullmann and others who provided a ‘linking bridge’ as a way of diffusing the tension between the futuristic and realised positions on eschatology.<sup>690</sup> Cullmann suggests that the reign of God is both ‘already’ and also ‘not yet present in its full’ visible form’. This *via media* position is best understood when we reflect on the relationship between creation and consummation. According to Conradie, “continuity between creation and consummation implies that we do not need to look for a true home somewhere else” presumably in heaven. The earth will only become our home in the eschatological consummation.<sup>691</sup> To support his stand on this, he quoted Douglas John Hall who insists that:

The Christian is a stranger in the world, never quite at home in it, because he or she remembers-the hopes for-a righteousness, justice and peace that the world does not know, though it is of its essence and the very thing towards which it daily beckoned. Yet this homelessness must not tempt the Christian into otherworldliness, whether of the religious or secular utopian variety; this is the world God loves, and must not be substituted for by some other, no matter how desirable.<sup>692</sup>

A critical look at this quotation clearly indicates the gap in the use of *Oikothology* in providing a check between anthropocentrism and alienation. This view has been echoed by Conradie who argued that *Oikothology* does not provide enough “clarification on the relationship between the earth and eschaton, this earth and the new earth, our humanity and the new humanity in Jesus Christ”.<sup>693</sup> However we need to be reminded that, it is of utmost importance that the interest of the earth should also be our interest because if this earth is destroyed due to human irresponsibility or neglect out of longing for another world, our existence here on earth would also be destroyed since we still inhabit this earth. The words of

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<sup>689</sup> Erwin, Fahlbusch, Jan, Milic, John Mbiti, Lukas Vischer Geoffrey, W. Bromiley. (eds) 2001. *The Encyclopedia of Christianity*. vol.2. E-I. Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company. p.124

<sup>690</sup> Conradie, Ernst. 2005. *An Ecological Christian Anthropology. At Home on Earth?* P.17

<sup>691</sup> Conradie, Ernst. 2005. *An Ecological Christian Anthropology. At Home on Earth?* P.17

<sup>692</sup> Conradie, Ernst. 2005. *An Ecological Christian Anthropology. At Home on Earth?* P.228

<sup>693</sup> Conradie, Ernst. 2005. *An Ecological Christian Anthropology. At Home on Earth?* P.228

Thomas Berry in his “The Great Work: Our Way into the Future”, speaks volumes about our human responsibility to nature:

That future can exist only when we understand the universe as composed of subjects to be communed with, not as objects to be exploited. "Use" as our primary relationship with the planet must be abandoned. While there are critical issues in providing food, shelter, and livelihood to vast numbers of peoples, those issues themselves ultimately depend on our capacity to sustain the natural world so that the natural world can sustain us. All our sciences and technologies and all our social institutions become dysfunctional if the natural life systems cease to function.<sup>694</sup>

Considering the barrage of criticisms against Christians in their quest for another *oikos* while still in this present home, we need to caution that it would be wrong to think of the absolute future as simply involving the wilful neglect and destruction of the present *oikos*. As a result, therefore, we need to continue intensifying our struggle to strengthen the concept of *Oikothology* in a more creative way to inspire human responsibility for the present *oikos*.

The need to resolve the above mentioned tension and further exploration of ideas in order to strengthen the concept of oikothology has made me to recall once again the astonishing comments of one of the clergy respondents with regards to Christian involvement in the affairs of this world. Given all that has been noted in this thesis, one should be deeply concerned that in this century and age there are ministers (not just Christians) who still hold the type of views expressed by my respondent, namely, that this world is already destined for destruction therefore any Christian effort in making it a better place could be regarded as opposing God’s purpose. Reference to this view is particularly important to this study because it is coming from one of the “religious opinion moulders” in the society whose words and actions are considered influential.

In order to deconstruct this kind of erroneous opinion about Christian involvement in worldly affairs which keeps resonating in Christian thinking and liturgy as we have seen from the various Christian world views (particularly the proverbs and hymns we referred to above), we need to aid our understanding of this important theological issue with Dietrich Bonhoeffer’s

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<sup>694</sup> Eco-Justice Ministries-*Quick Tips for church Administration* .[www.eco-justice.org/default.asp](http://www.eco-justice.org/default.asp) (accessed on 12<sup>th</sup> September 2007.)

understanding of Christian's duty to God and the world. This will be very useful to our understanding of our relationship to nature as well as our role in it. It will also give us a new insight to properly understand what we mean when we say that the oikos 'is our home' and what we mean when we say that the oikos is 'like our home'.

#### **6.3.4. Oikothology and the “ultimate and the penultimate”**

In order to understand Bonhoeffer's theological and ethical views on Christian social involvement, we need to dig a little bit into his background to appreciate what informed his theology and ethics. Dietrich Bonhoeffer, a German Lutheran pastor and theologian was born in 1906. He participated in the German Resistance Movement against the Nazism. He was a founding member of the Confessing Church and was involved in the plots planned by some members of the German Military Intelligence to assassinate Adolf Hitler. He was arrested, imprisoned and eventually executed by the Hitler government.<sup>695</sup> He was one of the few Christian theologians of his day to take such a bold stand against the regime. It could be understood that it was Bonhoeffer's understanding of Christianity and Christian ethics that inspired him to be actively involved with the social and political struggles of his day. His understanding of what a Christian involvement in worldly affairs should be, informed his many ethical writings that contributed to the shaping of Christian theological understanding of social involvement.

His theology and ethics is partially a response to the lip service and empty actions of Christians of his time. The church often functions on “cheap grace”, as Bonhoeffer termed it, in which “the Christian life comes to mean nothing more than living in the world and as the world, in being no different from the world.”<sup>696</sup> The church has been secularized to the point where humans do not need God, according to Bonhoeffer, and religion has been transformed into a ritualistic, meaningless part of life. Bonhoeffer, in reaction to the compartmentalization of Christianity, wrote in one of his letters from prison, “What is bothering me incessantly is the question of what Christianity really is, or indeed who Christ really is, for us today.”<sup>697</sup>

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<sup>695</sup> Robin, W. Lovin. 1984. *Christian Faith and Public Choices*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press.p.129-137

<sup>696</sup> Dietrich, Bonhoeffer. 1995. *The Cost of Discipleship*. New York: Touchstone. p.51

<sup>697</sup> Dietrich, Bonhoeffer. 1971. *Letters and Papers from Prison*. New York: Touchstone. p. 311

This question is still very relevant for us today as we struggle to define our role as Christians in environmental management and consideration together with the pressing issues of poverty alleviation. Bonhoeffer's theology is completely against limiting God's sphere of influence and separating God from present social reality as some Christians do today. For Bonhoeffer, the Christian must enter into the world, just as Christ did, and be a witness to God's truth, and to do this, the church must exist practically in the world but not be secularized by the world. For the church to effectively accomplish the task of social engagement, Bonhoeffer proposed what he termed the relationship between the "ultimate and penultimate things" as Christians' motivation for social engagement. He recognizes the issue of justification by faith as the basic turning-point and the end-point of a process in which every Christian constantly finds him/herself, but argues that faith would be a "false, illusory, hypocritical self motivation, which never justifies, were it not accompanied by love, hope and works".<sup>698</sup>

In terms of reality, justification by faith is an "ultimate" or "last thing" because nothing can be regarded with greater seriousness than this event,<sup>699</sup> but it does not stop with it. It is preceded by the "penultimate". Bonhoeffer avoids separating "ultimate" things from "penultimate" things as two different entities. The "world can continue being the world", but (as a penultimate thing) it is at the same time related to what is "ultimate" (analogously to the way in which the law and the gospel are distinct and yet related).<sup>700</sup> This dialectical posture of "ultimate and penultimate things" does not see the two worlds of a Christian as distinct but not as separate at the same time. The two worlds are not to be united into one, but they are also not to be separated to the point where they cannot interact. Bonhoeffer does not advocate the Christianization of the world or the secularization of Christianity. He, instead, posits that the Christian's responsibility is both to God and to other people. This responsibility is premised on the understanding that because Christ is the summation of reality, all of the Christian's actions are part of the reality of Christ, and thus all of his or her actions on the physical earth are to be done in submission to Christ. This means that in Christ the reality of God encounters the reality of the world and allows us to take part in this real encounter. It is

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<sup>698</sup> Ilse Todt, Heinz Eduard Todt, Ernst Feil and Clifford Green. 2005. (eds) *Dietrich Bonhoeffer. Ethics. Dietrich Bonhoeffer Works*, volume 6. p.148

<sup>699</sup> Robin, W. Lovin. 1984. *Christian Faith and Public Choices*. Press. p.129

<sup>700</sup> Heinz Eduard Todt, Ernst Feil and Clifford Green. 2005. (eds) *Dietrich Bonhoeffer. Ethics*. p.153

an encounter beyond all radicalism and all compromise, for Christian life means “participating in Christ’s encounter with the world”.<sup>701</sup>

The physical world, in Bonhoeffer’s theological understanding, is the “penultimate”, while the spiritual world is the “ultimate”, and although this may imply that the spiritual world is superior in our anthropocentric orientation, the physical world is in no way to be neglected but should be appreciated. The Christian is not to separate him or herself from the temporal, physical world to exist only in the eternal, spiritual world but is actually to exist simultaneously in both. The church is to be in the world (rooted in reality) and for the world, but not of the world.

We are not Christ, but if we want to be Christians, we must have some share in Christ’s large-heartedness by acting with responsibility and in freedom when the hour of danger comes, and by showing a real sympathy that springs, not from fear, but from the liberating and redeeming love of Christ for all who suffer. Mere waiting and looking on is not Christian behavior. The Christian is called to sympathy and action, not in the first place by his own sufferings, but by the sufferings of his brethren, for whose sake Christ suffered.<sup>702</sup>

With the above quotation in mind, we now attempt to explore the “ultimate” and “penultimate” terms so as to assist Oikothology to engage with the negative impact of ‘heaven theology’. The dialectical understanding of the “ultimate” Kingdom of God and the “penultimate” of the present reality on earth led Bonhoeffer to a Christian faith that was practically played out in every moment of history. Bonhoeffer’s theology helps us to understand the justification for Christian involvement in social issues because this is seen in his conviction that Christ is actively working not only in the church but also in the present socio economic and political reality. The nature of God’s involvement in society begins with an understanding of the Kingdom of God.

Just as in other parts of his theology and ethics, Bonhoeffer presents the Kingdom of God in a dialectical manner; in one sense the Kingdom of God has already come; it exists in Christ as Lord of the Christian’s life which extends into the political and social reality of the day. In

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<sup>701</sup> Heinz Eduard Todt, Ernst Feil and Clifford Green. 2005. (eds) *Dietrich Bonhoeffer. Ethics*. p.159

<sup>702</sup> Dietrich, Bonhoeffer. 1995. *The Cost of Discipleship*. p.57

contrast though, the Kingdom of God has not yet come, because it fully exists in the second coming of Christ. Since Christ has not yet returned and established the “ultimate” kingdom, Bonhoeffer’s theology sees Christian involvement as an affair of the present socio-economic and political reality in which the Christian should actively participate as an ambassador of Christ. The Christian is not to act for social justice in order to bring in the kingdom of God, nor is he or she to overlook the present day political and social realities simply because they are the “penultimate” to the ultimate of Christ’s return. Instead, the Christian is to bring Christ into this world through actions for the world which is the result of realizing that the Kingdom of God is right now in his or her heart and also in the world, although it is yet to be fully realized at the consummation of time. The fact that it is not yet fully realized would not debar the Christian from actions that would serve the good of the world.

For a better understanding of the arguments from Bonhoeffer regarding the ‘ultimate’ and the ‘penultimate’ things as a motivating force for Christian engagement in social action, especially with regard to the current environmental challenges, we will use an *Igbo* proverb to appreciate its indigenous meaning. The choice of the proverb at this juncture is based on the fact that much of the idiomatic expressions and reflective thought of Africans are expressed and understood better in proverbs. In traditional African society, one can hardly hear anyone speak a few sentences without citing a proverb.<sup>703</sup> Speaking without citing proverbs is like eating soup that has no salt in it. African proverbs contain observations gathered from common everyday events and experiences concerning the nature, life and behavior of human beings as well as those of animals, birds, plants and other natural objects, even supernatural objects and beings. A great number of proverbs express philosophical thoughts, religious beliefs and the social structure of traditional African societies.

The proverb goes like this: *Nwa agbogho anaghi eji maka na o luru di kwusi iza mbara nna ya*. “A lady who has been betrothed (engaged) to a man with a house better than her father’s cannot for that reason refuse to sweep her father’s compound while she still lives in it”. The significance of this *Igbo* proverb to our understanding of Bonhoeffer’s ‘ultimate’ and ‘penultimate’ things with regard to our relationship to the world is very instructive. It implies that although we are still in the world in our earthly dwelling, waiting for the marriage feast

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<sup>703</sup> Dzobo, N.K. 1972. *African Proverbs: Guide to Conduct*, Vol.I, University of Ghana, Cape Coast

(the heavenly banquet) like the woman in our proverb, we are still obliged to take full responsibility of God's creation (our father's house) as the woman in the proverb is obliged to keep clean her father's compound even though she is expecting to leave it for a better married family.

If the church could apply Bonhoeffer's ethics and theology as a motivation for Christian involvement in social action in this sense, a more active Christian community that would not exclude the current reality of the earth for the future reality of the Kingdom of God would emerge, and ethics would not only be based on duty to God but also on duty to humanity. However, if the church would continue with the present *laissez-faireism* in social involvement which unfortunately has characterised its nature and being, the church would not be absolved from the sins of ecological murder and suicide. The image which ecological murder or suicide conjures is intended to bring a clearer picture of what we are doing to the earth by our unwholesome activities. This introduces us to the next section, a discussion on ecological destruction.

### **6.3.5. Destruction of the Oikos as a Form of Suicide**

Bonhoeffer's ultimate and penultimate term has greatly helped us in understanding the basis of our involvement in social action, and provides a spring board upon which our environmental action should be based. We can no longer excuse or justify our environmental inaction on the flimsy excuse that we are strangers here on earth. To continue doing this, would be tantamount to what we called "environmental suicide". We shall use the term "environmental suicide" to relate to the commonalities between human suicide and its ethical implication and the environment, and to see how the impact of our activities on the environment could be perceived as being suicidal.

Suicide poses an ethical issue that ultimately relates to matters of values and how we reason about them. The story of what various people have thought and done about suicide does not even provide the answer about what is right and or wrong about it. The reality of suicide knows no demographic boundary. All over the world, suicide is seen in different ways.<sup>704</sup> In

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<sup>704</sup> Donnelly, John. 1998.(ed) *Suicide. Right or Wrong?* New York: Prometheus Books. p.59

recognition of the many forms of arguments both for and against suicide and in relation to the concept of oikotheology, we are using the “principle of the value of life” as our premise. Suicide for whatever reason cannot be justified based on the argument for the “principle of the value of life”. The argument for the “principle of the value of life” is of Christian origin, and it is sometimes called the principle of the sanctity of life.<sup>705</sup> The term sanctity of life is located in the conceptualization of life as God-created and carries similar meanings such as “respect for life”, inviolability of life” and these expressions are used interchangeably.

The argument using the “principle of the value of life” is based on the view that even if we know we are going to heaven, suicide is wrong because life is “of value”, of “irreducible value” or “of absolute value”. The concern is that suicide fails to “respect life” or to observe the “sacredness of life”; and that it denies the fact that life is “inviolable” “holy” and to be revered.<sup>706</sup> The point we are making here is that irrespective of the social condition of an individual’s life, and regardless of the value he or she places upon his or her own existence, and even with a very strong belief in heaven, life is in itself understood to be of absolute value and therefore should not be destroyed.

Emmanuel Kant and Thomas Aquinas both viewed suicide as abominable. They viewed suicide as having features analogous to theft, because suicide steals God’s purpose of creation and is a “throwing of the gift in the giver’s face”, a rebellion against God.<sup>707</sup> Human beings are sentinels on earth, says Kant, and God is our owner, we are his property. Aquinas in his own view argues that suicide is a violation of self-love, love of neighbour or society and a breach of God’s sovereignty over us. He regarded suicide as having features analogous to theft, because suicide steals God’s gift of life and so misappropriates the property that belongs to God. In a much similar understanding, Donnelly regarded life as being a divine monopoly, Life is God’s.<sup>708</sup> He argues that to take one’s own life therefore is to invade Jesus Christ’s property because he has saved us and we are therefore his. This mystical understanding formed the basis for the moral and canonical prohibition of suicide.

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<sup>705</sup> Battin, Margaret. Pabst. 1995. *Ethical Issues in Suicide*. New Jersey: Prentice Hall. p.114

<sup>706</sup> Battin, Margaret. Pabst. 1995. *Ethical Issues in Suicide*. p.115

<sup>707</sup> Donnelly, John. 1998.(ed) *Suicide. Right or Wrong?* New York: Prometheus Books. p.13

<sup>708</sup> Donnelly, John 1998.(ed) *Suicide. Right or Wrong?* New York: Prometheus Books. p.61

The issue we are dealing with here is to answer the question of how the destruction done to the environment is considered as suicide. Our argument is based on the concept of *Oikotheology* which situates our relationship with other members of the *oikos* together with the entire ecosystems. It therefore follows that whatever we do to the *oikos* affects us for we are part of the *oikos*. In destroying any member of the *oikos*, we are equally destroying ourselves. It is in this sense that it is considered as suicidal. When we destroy the environment with all its life support systems, then we are ultimately affected in many different ways which would lead to death. To illustrate this point, we would refer to the issue of using poisonous substances for fishing which when consumed by humans has the potential to harm or even lead to death.

Another aspect of harm done to the environment that is related to environmental suicide is what is termed eco-cide. An early reference in 1969 described ecocide as the murder of the environment. The term was used in relation to environmental damage especially due to war. It is also a term for a substance that kills species in an ecosystem to disrupt its structure and function.<sup>709</sup> Ecocide means destroying our ecosystem by actions of the human species. Human activity like war and the profligate use of our ecosystem's resources is ecocidal.<sup>710</sup> Environmental activists believe that human beings are committing ecocide through industrial civilization's effects on the global environment.<sup>711</sup> Murder and suicide are abhorrent in almost every culture. No culture accepts murder or suicide, regardless of the longing for heaven.

#### 6.4. Conclusion

In this chapter we have spent a great deal of time trying to understand the evolution of the generations of Christian ecological motifs in Christian ecological engagement from the first generation to the fourth generation. We have identified their strengths and weaknesses with oikotheology appearing as the ideal ecotheological framework so far. This does not however

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<sup>709</sup> Turnipseed, Tom. 2005. *Ecocide*. CommonDreams.org <http://www.commondreams.org/views05/0722-30.htm> (Accessed on 14th December, 2008)

<sup>710</sup> Turnipseed, Tom. 2005. *Ecocide*. CommonDreams.org

<sup>711</sup> Hossay, Patrick. 2006. *Unsustainable. A Premier for Global Environment and Social Justice*. London: Zed Books. p.22-34

suggest that it is without its own weaknesses. It is based on the above understanding that we continue to seek ways of strengthening the concept of *oikothology* to provide us with a conscience that seeks the common good of the *oikos* and to abhor actions against the environment. In our bid to do that, we have used Bonhoeffer's ultimate and penultimate terms for our involvement in social action as well activities against the environment that are considered as environmental suicide. In recognition of the fact that *Oikothology* is not a stand-alone concept, we propose to synthesize the concept of *Oikothology* with indigenous (Igbo) ecological ethics in the next chapter to provide a comprehensive model of ecological theology suitable for African theology in general and Igbo Christianity in particular.

## CHAPTER SEVEN

### 7.0. Proposing an Indigenous Oikotheology

Our task here in this chapter, is to engage in the process of theory building. This process of theory building involves seeking ways of responding creatively with fresh vision, commitment and invigorating moral force to articulate an ecological synthesis which would not only respond to or address the gaps identified in the *Oikotheology*, but at the same time produce an eco-theological framework that would be indigenous to African Christianity. It is worthy of note that this proposed synthesis, namely, *indigenous Oikotheology*, is a ‘child’ born out of the interface of issues of faith, social analysis and theological reflection all emanating from both the literature and the research findings.

### 7.1. Introduction

Our analysis of the research, the discussion on the concept of *Oikotheology*, as well as engagement with other literature, has raised the need for an eco-theological model, *oikotheology*. In this chapter we argue that it needs to be in dialogue with indigenous ecological ethics capable of invoking Christian commitment to the issue of environmental challenges and poverty alleviation especially in Africa and in Nigeria in particular. This interface between *Oikotheology* and indigenous ecological ethics has become vitally important because of the outstanding agenda items we identified in the *Oikotheology* in chapter six. As we have noted in our discussion, *Oikotheology* seeks to integrate ecology and economy in such a harmonious way that the survival or flourishing of neither human nor other life is undermined or threatened. However, *Oikotheology* is not without some challenges especially if considered from African cultural context.

Apart from the gaps on the agenda we discussed in chapter six, a significant cultural gap exists which is fundamental to our engagement with *Oikotheology*. This gap is the lack of reflection on African culture. In other words, questions around the view of African culture on the environment are not heavily reflected. As a result of this gap (the visible absence of African culture in *Oikotheology* which is critical to the relevance of *Oikotheology* in Africa), we need to seek ways of making *Oikotheology* part of our indigenous ‘property’ in order to

reflect the indigenous thinking of African Christians in particular and Africans in general on issues of ecology and economy. The importance of making *Oikotheology* an integral part of the ongoing 'African theological engagement' is underpinned by the need to use indigenous theologies to connect to the gospel in a more creative and appealing manner. Our argument for the indigenization of *oikotheology* is that it is a creative way of responding to ecological challenges in an African way since *oikotheology* uses Western terminology to articulate its appeal. African indigenous ecological ethics uses idioms and proverbs which unlike the Western terminology is reflective of African culture and hence more appealing to the African mind.

Furthermore, the need for this dialogue has become compelling because of the influence of the Western traditional Christianity on African cosmology.<sup>712</sup> Before the advent of Christian religion in Africa, Africans had a well articulated cosmology and particularly ecological ethics which served their time and age. The African cosmology had for many distant centuries as far as one could dig into the past, presented a concept of the world which is diametrically opposed to the traditional Western cosmology.<sup>713</sup> We could argue without fear of contradiction that the influence of the Western cosmology and particularly Western traditional Christian thinking is to a certain extent at the heart of the current moral erosion and hence ecological chaos in Africa. To justify our claim, we cite here Friday Mbon's criticism of Africans unreasonable copying of Western ideology and its negative influence on the Africans. He writes:

One of the greatest social as well as religious problems facing contemporary Africans is that they are too easily susceptible to borrowing ideologies and *mondus oparandi* from other cultures usually without thinking carefully and critically enough about the possible consequences and implications of what they are borrowing. Africans borrow, for instance, Western political and economic schemes, western academic programmes, western religious models of worship, alien criteria for judging what is right or wrong-in other words, they even borrow alien ethics. That kind of

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<sup>712</sup> Olupona, Jacob. 1991. (ed) *African Traditional Religions in Contemporary Society*. New York: Paragon House.p.26. see Ray, Benjamin. 1976. *Religion, Symbol, Ritual and Community*. New Jersey: Englewood Cliffs, Westerlund, David. 1985. *African Religion in African Scholarship: A Preliminary Study of the Religious and Political Background*. Stockholm: Wiksel International

<sup>713</sup> Fred Lee Hord (Mzee Lasana Okpara) and Jonathan Scott Lee. 1995.(eds) "I am Because We Are" *Readings in Black Philosophy*. United States of America. The University of Massachusetts Press. p.49

uncritical borrowing has led many Africa countries to what Joseph Kenny has called “identity fluctuation” by which he means the assimilation of new or outside values.<sup>714</sup>

We would return to this assertion later in our discussion. As a result of the erosion of “African morality” which we could argue, has resulted in the current environment and poverty challenges, we need therefore, to intensify efforts at re-discovering African cultural values in general and ecological ethics in particular by inquiring about those ecological resources which restrained exploitation of the environment as well as protected the poor in African societies over the centuries. This inquiry is vital, because if our forebears in Africa had lived in their environment over the centuries without degrading it or depleting its resources unsustainably, and if poverty is not a phenomenon that was not widespread as we experience it today; then there is obviously a need for the children of Africa to drink from the ‘well of morality’ and ‘wealth of ecological knowledge’ of our fathers and mothers which had sustained them and their environment.

Indigenous ecological knowledge or traditional environmental knowledge (TEK), as we shall see in the discussion to come, has a lot to offer to the modern Africa as a panacea in her struggle to deal with the challenges of poverty and environmental criticality. In this regard, TEK needs to be recovered not just in argument with westerners, but for the sake of Africans themselves. The recovery of the indigenous ecological knowledge should not be seen as an attempt to reify “africanness”, but on the one hand to contribute to a global discussion and the other hand to find a language and cosmology that roots Christianity in African culture. In this way it could contribute significantly to the global environmental discussion on the current ‘earth crisis. Poverty and environmental criticality as fundamental issues of concern to Africa’s development have been exhaustively discussed in chapter two. The process of the re-discovery of African morality mentioned above would strengthen and make *Oikothology* an indigenous ‘property’.

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<sup>714</sup> Mbon, Friday.1991. “African Traditional Socio-Religious Ethics and National Development. The Nigerian Case” in Olupona, Jacob (ed) *African Traditional Religions in Contemporary Society*. New York: Paragon House.p.102 See Kenny, Joseph. 1984. “Religious Movements in Nigeria-Divisive or Cohesive: Some Interpretative Models” in *Orita: Ibadan Journal of Religious Studies*, xvi, no. 2

We are not left in doubt that this ‘indigenous property’, the synthesis of *Oikotheology* and African ecological ethics should be seen as a welcome development in the emerging theological discourse on ecology especially one that deals with the response of the church in Nigeria and Africa in general. The confidence expressed above stems from our research findings where an overwhelming majority of the respondents recognized the synthesis of *Oikotheology* and African ecological ethics as a practical and effective ways of responding to the environment and poverty challenges in Africa than the simply Western stewardship construct which is still fraught with strong anthropocentrism.

Moreover, apart from the ecological considerations mentioned above, this synthesis has also become important to us because the traditional African society which was noted for its notion of the all embracing and protective practice, the extended family system, is unfortunately being seriously threatened by the presence of the Western mechanistic ideology. The importation into Africa of the Western worldview that sees the world mechanistically, to a large extent emphasizes individual over communal nature of human existence. This point would be expanded in the section that deals with the African understanding of community life and corporate existence. However, suffice it to say that one of the negative impacts of the influence of the Western worldview is that today many modern Africans have become more individualistic than our traditional fore fathers. This individualistic culture has played down on the significance attached to life. As we shall see, life in all its form is sacred. The result of the above is that today in Africa cases of tribal or ethnic wars sometimes escalating to the level of genocide have taken place. The 1994 Rwandan genocide and similar incidents across the continent in recent times serves as a vivid example of what tribal or ethnic war can do to a people who no longer have regard for the sacredness of life.

In addition to the escalating incidence of tribal or ethnic wars in Africa, the idea of xenophobic behaviour or attitude towards foreigners was hitherto relatively unknown in the traditional African society because no one is strictly considered as a stranger to the point of being marginalized or mistreated. In fact, in many African societies noted for their deep sense of hospitality, strangers’ safety is guaranteed in such a way that would not allow for mistreatment of any kind. Julius Gathago has provided us with a useful insight on the issue of African hospitality. He writes: “A traveller through our country would stop at a village, and he or she didn’t have to ask for food or for water. Once he stops, the people give him or her

food, entertain him or her. That is African hospitality...”.<sup>715</sup> It is therefore regrettable to note that the hospitality for which many African societies are known for is gradually being replaced with xenophobia as an acceptable norm in the contemporary African society. In Africa today we hear many cases of discriminatory and even xenophobic behaviour against foreigners. The 2008 xenophobic attack on foreigners in South Africa elucidates our point.

Furthermore, this synthesis of *Oikotheology* and African indigenous ecological ethics is also of significant importance for some theological considerations. There has been a growing concern, indeed a loud acclamation expressed by African theologians on the need for African theology not only to be independent of theologies from ‘outside’ but also to take a giant lead in the world Christianity whose centre of gravity is shifting southwards with Africa becoming the most Christian continent.<sup>716</sup> In this regard, there were at least three prominent African theologians who initially championed this cause. These were Bolaji Idowu (Nigeria), John Mbiti (Kenya), and Vincent Mulago (Zaire).<sup>717</sup> Because of this passionate call for indigenization of Christianity in Africa any theological model that does not take cognizance of the above expressions would certainly be fiercely contested with such academic vigour strong enough to attract the support of later African theologians such as Mugambi, Oduyoye, Pobe, Kalu, Phiri, who identified with the above mentioned call.

These theologians and others have argued, and in fact, stressed the need for African theology to take the centre stage in the continent.<sup>718</sup> African theology speaks to the historical situation

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<sup>715</sup> Gathogo, Julius. 2008. “African Philosophy as expressed in the Concepts of Hospitality and Ubuntu” in *Journal of Theology for Southern Africa*, March 2008.130

<sup>716</sup> See Nwangwu, M.G. 2008. “Religious Vows in Traditional Context”. *Africa Ecclesia Review*. 50 (1&2) 133-151, Nwalye, H. 1999. “Formation of Women Religious as Agents of Evangelization for the Church as Family of God” *Africa Ecclesial Review* 41 (1) 267-281, Lott, A. 1995. Inculturation of Religious Community Life in Africa. *Africa Ecclesial Review* 37 (1) 239-254, De Gruchy, S. Undated. *Caution, Creativity and Construction*. Unpublished Manuscript.

<sup>717</sup> See Bediako, Kwame. 1995. *Christianity in Africa. The Renewal of a Non-Western Religion*. New York:Orbis Books. P.114.

<sup>718</sup> See Mugambi, J.N.K. 1995. *From Liberation to Reconstruction: African Christian Theology after the Cold War*. Nairobi: East African Educational Publishers, Pobe, John, S. 1979. *Toward An African Theology*. United States of America. Parthenon Press, Ikenga-Metu, Emefie. 2002. (ed) *The God's in Retreat. Continuity and Change in African Religion. (The Nigerian Experience)* Enugu: Fourth Dimension Publishers Co. Ltd. p. 242,

of African people and seeks to relate the African personality to the Divine life.<sup>719</sup> Therefore, such calls coming from earlier mentioned theologians of African origin who contend that “a high proposition of the world’s serious theological thinking and writing will have to be done in Africa, if it is to be done at all”,<sup>720</sup> further motivates the need for indigenous eco-theological model.

It is interesting to note that both Andrew Walls and Philip Jenkins who are not Africans, share the same view point with these African theologians. Philip Jenkins particularly points out that not only had the “centre of gravity of Christianity moved to Africa”, but that Christianity is playing significant political and socio-economic roles in Africa.<sup>721</sup> With *Oikotheology* pulling the economic and ecological strings together, we can conclude without doubts that there is a real need for this indigenous theological engagement in Africa where-as we saw in chapters 2 and 3-both economic and social issues are at the moment plaguing developmental efforts.

## **7.2. Asking the Relevant Questions about Africa’s Ecological Past**

The discussions above provide us with the justification for the synthesis of *Oikotheology* and African indigenous ecological ethics. For us to be able to effectively embark on this journey of ecological reconstruction with regard to the current environmental situation in Africa, we need therefore, to look at Africa’s past ecological path, as well as the present path of ecological chaos and ask the pertinent question about how we got into the present moral and ecological mess. The answer to the pertinent question determines how we progress into the future by constructing a sustainable ecological path for Africa. This has some fundamental implications for Africa’s future economic stability.

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Walls, Andrew. F. 1976. “Towards Understanding Africa’s Place in Christian History” in John Pobee. *Religion in Pluralistic Society*. New York; E. J. Brill. p. 182

<sup>719</sup> Ikenga-Metu, Emefie. 2002. (ed) *The God’s in Retreat. Continuity and Change in African Religion.(The Nigerian Experience)*. Enugu: Fourth Dimension Publishers Co. Ltd. p. 242

<sup>720</sup> Walls, Andrew. F. 1976. “Towards Understanding Africa’s Place in Christian History” in John Pobee. *Religion in Pluralistic Society*. New York; E.J. Brill. p. 182-184

<sup>721</sup> Jenkins, Philip. 2002. *The Next Christendom*. New York; Oxford University Press.p.85, see

In order to do this we need to begin with presenting an overview of the African worldviews, its cultural heritage, values and ecological construct. We need to understand African myths that explain various cultural practices. We equally need to understand African proverbs that convey certain fundamental values. Understanding the traditional ecological knowledge of Africans is also important for the consideration of a broad range of questions regarding their understanding of nature-human relations. This is because different groups of people in various parts of the world perceive and interact with nature differently, and have different traditions underpinning their ecological ethics. Their perceptions and knowledge of the universe are in part shaped by their values, worldviews, and religion in the broader sense.

In other words, when people attempt to answer fundamental questions about the place and relationship of humanity with the universe, their ideas about the universe accumulate and definite views and systems begin to emerge.<sup>722</sup> As a thought process, there can be no end to the development of people's views about the universe. Thus worldview can be defined as "the complex of their beliefs and attitudes concerning the origin, structure of the universe and the interaction of its beings with particular reference to man (sic)".<sup>723</sup> Worldviews are embedded in the people's experience and, then, expressed or re-enacted in their cultures.<sup>724</sup> Nature is full of mystery and such mystery poses a challenge to people's understanding of the society in which they live. Society therefore constructs a worldview in an attempt to unravel the mystery of the universe. The society's worldview underpins their culture. It reflects their ethos and value systems. The society constructs culture in their encounter with and effort to understand and relate with nature, in order to harness its resources for the nurture of the society. In this encounter with nature in order to harness its resources, the role of religion is vitally important. Religion is central to African thinking. This is because for the African, every facet of life was and still associated or defined in religious terms, and "every adventure of life, as well as instruments of governance were clothed in rituals and symbolism".<sup>725</sup>

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<sup>722</sup> Ibe, Martin Joe. 2003. *Environmental Ethics and Politics in Developing Countries*. p19

<sup>723</sup> Emefie, Ikenga-Metu .1999. *God and Man in African Religion. A Case Study of the Igbo of Nigeria*. Enugu: Snaap Press Ltd. P. 76

<sup>724</sup> Ogbu, Kalu. 2000. *Power, Poverty and Prayer. The Challenges of poverty and pluralism in African Christianity, 1960-1996*. New York: Peter Lang. p.58

<sup>725</sup> Cited in Ilesanmi, Simeon. 1997. *Religious Pluralism and the Nigerian State*. Athens: Center for International Studies. Ohio University. p. xx

Environmental discourse is heavily loaded with statements about the way indigenous and traditional societies relate to their environment.<sup>726</sup> The 1987 report of the World Commission on Environment and Development (the Brundtland Report), referred to the harmony with nature and the environmental awareness which characterized the traditional way of life of many indigenous people. To confirm the assertion,<sup>727</sup> Margaret Thatcher, the former British Prime Minister, praised the primitive people of the rain forest for having a “one-ness” with their environment that has been lost in the urban jungle.<sup>728</sup> Similarly, in his opening address to the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in 1992, (the Rio Earth Summit), Maurice Strong said “we must reinstate in our lives the ethic of love and respect for the earth which the traditional peoples have retained as central to their value system”.<sup>729</sup>

From the references above, one of the salient observations we can make is on the value of belief systems and the way indigenous and traditional peoples act towards their environment (that they do not dominate or destroy it, that they live sustainably within it), and beliefs about what they think, feel or know about their environment (that they respect it and possess ecological wisdom).<sup>730</sup> In this perspective, traditional ecological knowledge promoted harmony between humankind and the environment and a healthy concept of how to relate to it. Unfortunately, what has been known about African cultures - especially their ecological ethics - has come largely from academic studies in ethno-archaeology and anthropology, usually by foreign scholars who often regarded the indigenous people as “primitive”.<sup>731</sup> As a result of this preconceived notion of primitiveness, colonizing powers imposed on indigenous people their own cultures, which they in their arrogance and ignorance considered to be

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<sup>726</sup> Cooper, David. E. and Palmer, Joy. A. 1998.(eds) *Spirit of the Environment. Religion, Value and the Environmental Concern*. London: Routledge. P.86

<sup>727</sup> World Commission on Environment and Development.1987. *Our Common Future*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. p.115

<sup>728</sup> Cooper, David. E. and Palmer, Joy. A. 1998.(eds) *Spirit of the Environment*. p.87

<sup>729</sup> United Nations. 1993. Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 3-14 June 1992, vol.11: Proceedings of the Conference. New York: United Nations. p.50

<sup>730</sup> Cooper, David. E. and Palmer, Joy. A. 1998.(eds) *Spirit of the Environment*.p.87

<sup>731</sup> Mugambi, J.N.K. 2002. “From Liberation to Reconstruction” in Katangole E. (ed) *African Theology Today*. p.127

superior and “civilized”.<sup>732</sup> However, the fact still remains that the so called ‘superior’ cultures, as we shall see later, have been the ones largely responsible for the degradation of the environment as well as the economic crisis of the impoverished ex-colonies. Walter Rodney’s book, *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*, speaks volumes of the above assertion.<sup>733</sup> This therefore, is a clear indication of the failure of the colonial ideologies and life styles.<sup>734</sup>

In order to deconstruct the worldview that has been largely responsible for Africa’s ecological problems, we have to, as a matter of necessity and urgency, listen to the wise counsel of Amilcar Cabral. Cabral has called for what he referred to as *re-Africanization* process. He explains that *re-Africanization*, which not unlike Soyinka’s ‘redefinition of social purpose’, is a process through which the African alienated elites must undergo in order to divest themselves of the bourgeois culture of the colonizers since the application of this culture has proved to be counterproductive in terms of Africa’s economic and ecological situation.<sup>735</sup> In this process of *re-Africanization*, the African elite is expected to experience a spiritual reconversion in which he or she is edified by the grassroots where African culture is dynamic and real. According to him, African culture is nourished by the living reality of the concept of bondedness and regrets harmful influences as much as any kind of subjection to foreign cultures.

Amilcar is not alone in this call for re-Africanization. In Nigeria for example, a similar call was mounted by the late Mbounu Ojike, through his many writings advocating for a return to African culture that he became popular for his slogan “boycott the boycottables” which was a call to stem the mad rush in Nigeria of his day to adopt European cultural habits. He lamented:

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<sup>732</sup> Steven A. Wolfgram. 2006. *Global Development and Remote African Villages. Environmental Conservation and Cultural Survival in Cameroon*. United States of America: The Edwin Mellen Press. p.46

<sup>733</sup> For details on the impact of colonization on Africa, see Rodney, Walter. 1982. *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*. Washington, D.C: Howard University Press

<sup>734</sup> Sowunmi, Adebisi.A. 1995. *Giver of Life-“Sustain Your Creation*. p.153

<sup>735</sup> Quoted in Young III, U. Josiah. 1993. *African Theology. A Critical Analysis and Annotated Bibliography*. London: Greenwood Press. P. 26

I have never in all my safari seen a country like mine. It is a country that despised its songs, its dance, a nation of people who think of progress and civilization in terms of imbibing whatever is foreign. It is a people that has rejected its fashion, its drink, its food, its ideals of marriage, also neglected its music.<sup>736</sup>

We are tempted to believe that Cabral's proposal about *re-Africanization* process would redirect our minds back to African roots, to African culture, and enable us to make use of the African ecological ethics that is embedded in African indigenous environmental knowledge. There is no doubt that traditional or indigenous people's lifestyles can offer modern African societies many lessons in the management of our natural resources. In the light of this, therefore, the call about going back to our traditional roots, needs a careful consideration, since the traditional communities are the repositories of vast accumulations of indigenous knowledge and experience that could link humanity back to nature-this is what this study seeks to articulate through the synthesis of *Oikotheology* and African ecological ethics. The disappearance of such indigenous ecological ethics rooted in African tradition regrettably, would be a loss for the larger society not only for Africans, since the larger society could learn a great deal from Africa's indigenous skills in sustainably managing very complex ecological systems.<sup>737</sup>

However, much as this call is heart warming and exciting to well meaning Africans, there is need to 'tread with caution' as we embark on this journey of *re-Africanization* because of the ambiguities envisaged in such journey. This is because those who are championing the cause for going back to our roots have not been able to demarcate the extent or the limit to which we should go. A clear delineation of this process is absolutely necessary because a complete turnaround is practically impossible in this era of modernity and its 'globalized cultural influences'. We have gone thus far, and going back to our original state (if that is what is being suggested), is no longer possible; the past now exists in our memory. We cannot take it back no matter how hard we may attempt. The only way we can express our longing for those good old days - the beautiful idyllic world of our fathers and mothers - to be taken into the

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<sup>736</sup> Ikenga-Metu, Emezie. 2002. (ed) *The God's in Retreat. Continuity and Change in African Religion.(The Nigerian Experience)*. Enugu: Fourth Dimension Publishers Co. Ltd.p.240

<sup>737</sup> Berkes, Fikret. 1999. *Sacred Ecology: Traditional, Ecological Knowledge and Resource Management*. Philadelphia: Taylor & Francis. p.35

present as far as African ecological ethics is concerned, is to begin to cherish those ecological ethics which promote the concept of bondedness and preserve the integrity of creation.

Having made the above introductory observations about the need for the synthesis of *Oikothology* and African ecological ethics, let us now examine the nature of the African cosmology which shaped our understanding and underpinned our relationship with the entire earth community before Western worldviews impacted upon the African mind.

### **7.3. Understanding African Ecological Ethics through African Cosmology**

How we think about the world affects the way we live in and relate with it. This is very important for our discussion because our understanding of nature, our cosmology, affects the way we understand ourselves, the way we relate to other people, and, of course, the way we relate to the earth and other forms of life.<sup>738</sup> Owing to colonial experience, globalization and Western modernity, the people of Africa, as we shall see later, have been influenced by a cosmology inherited from the West. This Western cosmology is mechanistic in nature. It is a perspective that views all things as lifeless, commodities to be understood scientifically and to be used for human ends.<sup>739</sup> But, this alien cosmology is contradictory to the African perception of cosmology.

Belief in God is prevalent in Africa and it is generally believed everywhere in Africa that the universe was created by God.<sup>740</sup> The traditional African conceives of the universe beyond the diversity of its forms as a fundamentally one cosmic reality in its visible and invisible forms. To some extent, both the visible and the invisible elements of nature are interlinked, human life is inseparably bound to nature, and both human life and the life of other creatures are one with the divine. Harold Turner has instructively presented an ecological aspect of primal

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<sup>738</sup> Sindima, Harvely. "Community of Life: Ecological Theology in African Perspective" in Birch, B.C, Eakin, W. and McDaniel, J.B. 1990. *Liberating Life: Contemporary Approaches to Ecological Theology*. Maryknoll: Orbis .p.137

<sup>739</sup> Sindima, Harvely 1990. "Community of Life: Ecological Theology in African Perspective" p.137

<sup>740</sup> See Mbiti, John. 1986. *Bible and Theology in African Christianity* Nairobi: Oxford University Press, Idowu, Bolaji. 1965. *Towards an Indigenous church*. London: Oxford University Press.

religion which also reflects African sense of kinship with nature in his six-feature analysis of primal world view. He writes that there is:

...a sense of kinship with nature, in which animals and plants, no less than human beings, had their own spiritual existence and place in the universe as interdependent parts of a whole. Accordingly, any object of the natural human beings or become tutelary and guardian spirits whilst the environment itself is used realistically and unsentimentally but with profound respect and reverence and without exploitation.<sup>741</sup>

It is therefore unthinkable for Africans to objectify nature as ‘the other’ or to see nature as having only instrumental value. The African notion of bondedness of all things fosters a sense of care for all of creation. This sense of bondedness is embedded in individual personality and this guides the individual’s behaviour from birth to death, through puberty and marriage. The processes of acquiring the sense of bondedness, involves some levels of socialization through which the individual as it were is implanted with the consciousness of cosmic oneness. This therefore explains why when African people die outside their ancestral home, they would be brought back to their place of birth to be laid to rest so as to be gathered with the rest of his or her kindred.<sup>742</sup> Traditionally, Africans do not allow their own to be buried outside their birth place.

According to Ikenga-Metu, “the dichotomy which is so characteristic of the Greco-Christian world view is strikingly absent in the traditional African world view. There is no clear cut distinction or opposition between the visible and the invisible, the material and the spiritual, the temporal and the non-temporal, the sacred and the profane”.<sup>743</sup> The traditional African worldview is against the Western cosmology which is static, objective, dichotomised and in fact dualistic in its distinction between body and soul, matter and spirit.<sup>744</sup> The traditional African is, of course, sensitive to his or her external world, to the material aspect of beings and things. For him or her, matter in the sense of the European understanding is quite different. According to Fred Lee Hord,

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<sup>741</sup> Turner, Harold.”The Primal Religions of the World and their study” in Hayes Victor.1977.(ed) *Australian Essays in World Religions*. Bedford Park: Australian Association for World Religions.p.27-37

<sup>742</sup> Pobee , John. S. 1979. *Toward An African Theology*. United States of America. Parthenon Press. P.50

<sup>743</sup> Emefie, Ikenga-Metu. 1985. *Comparative Studies of African Traditional Religions*.p.51

<sup>744</sup> Fred Lee Hord (Mzee Lasana Okpara) and Jonathan Scott Lee. 1995.(eds)“I am Because We Are”. p.49

Matter in the African understanding serves only as a system of signs which translates the single reality of the universe. In this sense, the whole universe appears as an infinitely small and at the same time an infinitely large, network of life forces which emanate from God and end in God who is the source of all life forces. It is he who vitalizes and devitalizes all other beings, all the other life forces.<sup>745</sup>

Similarly, Ibe Martin, quoting from Innocent Egbujie, succinctly summarises this African understanding of cosmic oneness as thus:  
 “Beyond and above the visible tactile physical world, there is a non-visible, non-tactile world which envelops the former. It permeates the former through and through; it is simultaneously within and outside of the earth and the seas”.<sup>746</sup>

Consequently, there is not only “less separation between subject and object, between self and non-self, but fundamentally all things share the same nature and the same interaction one upon another ... the living, the dead and the first ancestors, from the stone to the divinities a hierarchy of power but not of being, for all are one, all are here, all are now”.<sup>747</sup> As a result of this cosmic oneness, it is generally believed that the deities inhabit the natural phenomena with which they are associated like rivers, forests, sky or sun. The ancestors are believed to be around their homes and hearths and take part in all important family affairs. This idea of cosmic oneness or corporate identity as Mugambi calls it, is central in the traditional African cosmological thinking. According to Mugambi, the community to which a person belongs extends to include past and future generations. “The family extends beyond the conjugal unit to include the whole ethnic clan, and more extensively, the whole ethnic group”.<sup>748</sup>

In terms of the creation story, there abound almost irreconcilable versions of creation stories in Africa. These differences could be as a result of different patterns of observation used by different societies to explain their existential reality. While some societies use models drawn from the visible physical world (the order of the planetary bodies), others draw their models from ecology, the sea, desert or fauna. Despite these differences in creation stories, the African understanding of creation is unanimously religious in nature. According to Mbiti,

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<sup>745</sup> Fred Lee Hord (Mzee Lasana Okpara) and Jonathan Scott Lee. 1995.(eds)“I am Because We Are”. p.49

<sup>746</sup> Ibe, Martin. Joe. 2003. *Environmental Ethics and Politics in Developing Countries*. p.21

<sup>747</sup> Emefie, Ikenga-Metu. 1985. *Comparative Studies of African Traditional Religions*. p.51

<sup>748</sup> Mugambi, J.N.K. 1988. *African Heritage and Contemporary Christianity*. p.136

when people in Africa say that the universe was created by God, they are automatically looking at the universe religiously.<sup>749</sup> Based on Mbiti's observation, we can say, therefore, that the African view of the universe is profoundly religious as opposed to the Western mechanistic view. Shutte, could not agree more with this view. He asserts that "In African culture, every aspect of life has a religious character. Religion is not sectarian or the concern of a distinct organisation as in European culture".<sup>750</sup> Africans see the universe as a religious entity and treat it as such.<sup>751</sup> The religion and the tradition of Africans are inextricably linked with their cosmology and these give value to their individual and corporate existence. The two cannot be separated. "They eat religiously, drink religiously and for them religious activities invigorate the person, supplying him (sic) with help from deities and unseen external forces and also protecting the person from dangerous activities of the spirits".<sup>752</sup>

The traditional African understanding of the universe is two-fold with a very thin line separating the two: the visible world and the invisible world. While the visible world is populated by human beings and all material surroundings like sky, mountains, earth, rivers, forests and so on, the invisible world consists of the heavenly part (sky) inhabited by the creator and deities, and "the spirit land" of the ancestors, the spirits, disembodied spirits, all located somewhere in the ground.<sup>753</sup> Following this classification, many African people hold that the universe is in the form of a three-tier creation, namely: the heavens, the earth and the underworld, which lies below it.

The heavenly part of the universe is the home of the stars, sun, moon, meteorites, sky, the wind and the rain, with all the phenomena connected with them such as thunder and lightning, storms, eclipses and so forth. It is also thought to be the home of God, although people cannot locate where he dwells. 'The sky', 'heaven', or 'beyond the clouds' are used to describe his dwelling place. While some people believe that God has other beings living with

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<sup>749</sup> Mbiti, John. 1980. *African Religion and Philosophy*. Ibadan: Heinemann. p.108-109

<sup>750</sup> Shutte, Augustine. 2006. (ed) *The Quest for Humanity in Science and Religion: The South African Experience*. Pietermaritzburg. Cluster Publications. P.xxv

<sup>751</sup> Ibe, Martin Joe. 2003. *Environmental Ethics and Politics in Developing Countries*. p.20

<sup>752</sup> Madu, Raphael. O. 1996. *African Symbols, Proverbs and Myths: The Hermeneutics of Destiny*. Frankfurt: Peter Lang. p. 150

<sup>753</sup> Ibe, Martin Joe. 2003. *Environmental Ethics and Politics in Developing Countries*. p.20

or close to him, his messengers or ministers, others think he is completely living alone. The earth, too, is full of created things. It is symbolically looked upon as the mother of the universe hence the expression “mother earth or the goddess earth”.<sup>754</sup> This expression perhaps explains the reason why some societies perform certain rituals as a mark of respect and reverence to the earth. In Africa, many objects are held in high esteem as a form of religious prescription. Such things as mountains, waterfalls, rocks, some thick and big forests and trees, birds and animals attract religious reverence and significance.

From the foregoing, it is evident enough that the significance of the African world view in relation to ecological consideration is *sine qua non* to understanding African indigenous ecological ethics in order to be able to offer the needed synergy to the current ecological problems in Africa. This is because the traditional African worldview is responsible to a very large extent for the profound communion Africans had with the universe before the influence of colonization and Christianity. Metu agrees with this assertion when he argues that:

The main object of an African is to live a life in harmony with humanity and with nature. Man (sic.) strives to be in harmony with God, the deities, and his fellow men both living and dead. He feels himself in intimate rapport and tries to maintain harmonious relationship with the animal, vegetation and other elements and phenomena in the universe. For him, the first evil is disintegration for this would spell disaster for himself and his immediate world. The ideal thing is integration, communion and harmony.<sup>755</sup>

The above quotation about the traditional African people’s sense of intimacy and harmonious relationship with nature justifies the belief that traditional Africans were ecologically responsible even before the advent of Christianity. This is evidently seen in the African belief that the deities have the responsibility to *police* people as it were to ensure integration and harmony of the ontological order. This consciousness obliges people to always ensure that their relationship with nature is not in any way impaired. Any impaired relationship with nature, they believed, would attract unfavourable consequences to them.

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<sup>754</sup> Emeife, Ikenga-Metu. 1985. *Comparative Studies of African Traditional Religions*. p.56

<sup>755</sup> Emeife, Ikenga-Metu. 1985. *Comparative Studies of African Traditional Religions*. p.71

The importance of moral order in African society is of fundamental significance. It is understood that God gave moral order to people so that they might live happily and in harmony with one another and with nature. This moral order is instrumental to the establishment of customs and various institutions in all societies, to safeguard the life of individuals and the community of creatures which humans are part of. Each society is able to formulate its values because of this moral order. These values deal with relationships among people, and between people and God and other spiritual beings, and humanity's relationship with the world of nature.<sup>756</sup> To act contrary to this moral order is considered an abomination against nature and humanity. The functionality of the moral order ensured that Africans maintained and lived in close relationship and harmony with nature before the introduction of the Western culture which dichotomizes and distinguishes between spirit and matter on one hand and between humans and nature on the other hand.

#### **7.4. Deep Ecology: Key to Understanding African Ecological Ethics**

From the foregoing, we could see that the traditional African ecological understanding is holistic in perspective. Comparing it therefore with the postulations of deep ecology would enhance our understanding as we seek creative ways of integrating the concept of *oikothology* with African ecological ethics. The fundamental argument in the concept of deep ecology is that “all things in the biosphere have an equal right to live and blossom and to reach their own individual forms of unfolding ...”.<sup>757</sup> This aspect of an equality of right to exist introduces the principle of *biocentric equality* in deep ecological discourse. The basic assumption of the concept of biocentric equality is that all organisms and entities in the ecosphere as part of the interrelated whole are equal in intrinsic worth.<sup>758</sup> Naess suggests that biocentric equality as an intuition is true in principle, though in the process of living, all

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<sup>756</sup> Ibe, Martin Joe. 2003. *Environmental Ethics and Politics in Developing Countries*. p.22

<sup>757</sup> Sterba, James. P.(ed) 2000. *Earth Ethics. Introductory Readings on Animal Rights and Environmental Ethics*.(second Edition) New Jersey: Prentice Hall. p.151

<sup>758</sup> Sterba, James. P.(ed) 2000. *Earth Ethics. Introductory Readings on Animal Rights and Environmental Ethics*. p.151

species use each other as food, shelter, etc <sup>759</sup>. The way to gain a deeper understanding of this concept is for us (humans) to view our relationship with nature from a symbiotic perspective.

Looking at the environment from a symbiotic perspective and the understanding of human beings in maintaining this principle, gives insightful perception of the mutual predation which is a biological fact of life. In his support of the principle of biotic equality, Aldo Leopold, cautioned against human claims of being superior to nature when he said that humans are plain citizens of the biotic community, not lord and master over all other species.<sup>760</sup> The principle of mutual predation or symbiotic relationship mentioned above is also reflected in the traditional African view of nature. The traditional African does not see the whole ecosystem simply as a resource to be exploited and used for human consumption. They also recognize innate powers in nature-spiritual powers of nature, dangerous animals and even plants that have the potential to harm humans. This perception of innate powers residing in nature has a unique regulatory or restraining influence over humans. In this regard, human beings do not consider themselves the only predators in nature. This also helps to foster a sense of mutual predation.

A consideration of the traditional African cosmology from the perspective of the biocentric equality portrays humans as part of the integral part of the biotic community. Therefore in African view any harm inflicted on nature is also harm done to humans whether they realize it or not. This implies that for the traditional African, there are no boundaries in the relationship of humanity and the rest of nature because all is interrelated. The insight from the principle of biocentric equality is that humans should perceive things (as individuals) in their own rights as entities. It is also a call to respect all human and non human individuals in their own rights as parts of the whole without feeling the need to set up hierarchies of species with humans at the top. The above insight is also very instructive. It provides us with a clearer understanding of the concept of *Oikothology* by helping us to understand how to live with the minimum rather than maximum impact on other members of the *Oikos* in general. It serves as a useful link between *Oikothology* and African ecological ethics in their respective

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<sup>759</sup> Sterba, James. P.(ed) 2000. *Earth Ethics. Introductory Readings on Animal Rights and Environmental Ethics.* p.151

<sup>760</sup> Sterba, James. P.(ed) 2000. *Earth Ethics. Introductory Readings on Animal Rights and Environmental Ethics.*p.151

expressions that human and nonhuman lives on earth have value in themselves and that these values are independent of the usefulness of the nonhuman world for human purposes. We have noted before that *Oikotheology* and the traditional African cosmology are both against the dominant anthropocentric world view of nature which deep ecology also expresses. To further elucidate on this, we summarize hereunder the contrast between the dominant world view and deep ecology and note how the dominant world view is also in sharp contrast to both *Oikotheology* and the traditional African cosmology.<sup>761</sup>

| Dominant world view                                   | Deep ecology   |
|---|--|
| Dominance over nature                                 | Harmony with nature  |
| Natural environment as resource for humans            | All nature has intrinsic worth/ biospecies equality                      |
| Material/economic growth for growing human population | Elegantly simple materials needs(material goals serving the larger goal) |
| Belief in ample resource reserves                     | Earth supplies limited resources   |
| High technological progress and solutions             | Appropriate technology; nondominating science                            |
| Consumerism   | Doing with enough/recycling  |
| National/centralizes community                        | Minority tradition/bioregion   |

The summary above provides us with a clearer picture of the essential elements identified in the concept of deep ecology and how these elements are related or similar to both *Oikotheology* and the traditional African cosmology. From the picture, we can see a thread running through to knit them perfectly together. Having painted the above picture of the link between oikotheology and traditional African cosmology, let us take a look at the constitution of the traditional African ecological knowledge and see how it has helped the African safeguard their environment.

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<sup>761</sup> James, P. Sterba. 2000 (ed). *Earth Ethics*. p.153

## 7.5. Conceptualizing African Traditional Ecological Knowledge

We have noted earlier that before the penetration of Africa by the Europeans, Africans had developed a system of preserving their environment.<sup>762</sup> This is in spite of the fact that traditionally, Africans had no written literature regarding their relationship with nature. However, this does not imply that they are environmentally bankrupt. On the contrary, they are environmentally 'rich'. This can be observed from their rich oral history. Samson Gitau in his book, *The Environmental Crisis*, has argued that Africa has a rich environmental culture and that if one wishes to understand the traditional African attitudes towards the environment, he or she has to listen to their myths, taboos, stories, proverbs, and beliefs. One will also have to observe their symbols and rituals.<sup>763</sup> Among the *Igbos* of Nigeria, some ethical prescriptions (taboos) are associated with some rivers and forests to safe guard them from pollution, abuse and exploitation. In other African societies, certain animals and plants are also associated with spirits in a particularly close way that ensured humans do not over exploit or deplete environmental resources.<sup>764</sup> This ensured environmental sustainability

The rich cultural and ecological knowledge system existing before the advent of Western Missionaries, colonial education systems, and the industrial market culture had enormous influence on the life of the traditional African. We would return to the issue of the Western missionary activities and the culture of the industrial market culture later on. Traditionally, there is the concept of moral order which guides both the religious as well as the secular life of an individual. Indigenous African religion as we have observed earlier, has always taught that God is both within and without creation, present in all things as one all-pervading life

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<sup>762</sup> Kalipeni, Ezekiel (ed) 1994. *Population Growth and Environmental Degradation in Southern Africa*. United States of America: Lynne Reinner Publisher. p.31

<sup>763</sup> Gitau, Samson. 2000. *The Environmental Crisis. A Challenge to African Christianity*. Nairobi: Action Publications. p.30

<sup>764</sup> Dary II Forde (ed) 1998. *African World . Studies in the Cosmological Ideas and Social Values of African Peoples*. Hamberg: LIT James Currey with the IAI. P.10. See Rukuni, Mandivamba. 2007. *Being Afrikan. Rediscovering the Traditional Unhu-Ubuntu-Botho Pathways of Being Human*. Arcadia: Mandala Publishers.p.113-119

force.<sup>765</sup> As a result of this religious belief, it is traditionally held that God gave people moral order so that they could live happily and in harmony with one another and the environment.

I remember vividly as a child growing up in a rural village under the guardianship of parents who were traditional *Igbos* that we were encouraged to inculcate this moral order in our daily life.<sup>766</sup> We were taught to observe some ecological ethics. For example, we were taught not to defecate near the village stream where drinking water was fetched. We were taught that violation of this prohibition would attract some severe sanctions from the deity who owns the stream. We were taught to observe the moral code which the *Igbos* call *omenani*. This *omenani* was believed to have been handed down from the earth goddess from time immemorial. The elements of *omenani* are made up of purely, religious social, economic and political restrictions.<sup>767</sup> These prohibitions known as *nso ani* (what the earth-goddess abhors) are meant to enforce moral order in the society and people strictly adhered to them. The violation of these *nso-ani* by any member of the society in any form could attract severe penalties from both the society and the gods. Ilogu had articulated some of these *nso-ani* to include but not limited to the following;

- ✚ Stealing yam either from the barn or from the farm
- ✚ Homicide
- ✚ Incest
- ✚ Suicide especially by hanging
- ✚ Poisoning someone
- ✚ Theft of domestic fowls especially a hen in its hatching pot
- ✚ Killing of a pregnant goat.<sup>768</sup>

A careful look at the above list of what is considered as *nso-ani* shows that most of the prohibitions which, if violated, could attract severe punishments have some ethical ramifications. We must note that the ethical recognition given to these sets of *nso-ani* help to

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<sup>765</sup> Dary II Forde (ed) 1998. *African World . Studies in the Cosmological Ideas and Social Values of African Peoples*. P. 46

<sup>766</sup> Being a Nigerian who hails from the Eastern part of the country-the Igboland (the study area), I am very familiar with the Igbo culture. Hence I can discuss same with some degree of easiness.

<sup>767</sup> Burns, Allen. 1951. *History of Nigeria*. London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd. P. 235-236

<sup>768</sup> Ilogu, E.C. 1974. *Christianity and Igbo Culture*. Onitsha: University Publishing Company. p.123

safeguard nature as a whole. Generally speaking, traditional ecological ethics was based on the maxim; “do not do to others what you would not want them to do to you”. We cannot claim however, that this maxim is peculiar to the Africans. This is because indigenous peoples all over the world - Pacific Islanders, American Indians, and Aboriginal Australians - have similar mechanisms informed by their beliefs and philosophies regarding the land and their relationships to the land and the rest of the environment.<sup>769</sup> A similar axiom which is generally portrayed in almost all indigenous cultures is for example, the widely held belief that the land is ‘mother’, the source of nourishment, survival and indeed life.<sup>770</sup> The implication of this idea of the earth being regarded as ‘mother’ is a call for reverence of some sort to be extended to it. In some communities, it is believed that land cannot be owned by the people since it is believed that the people are owned by it.

Indigenous people have an excellent knowledge of their environment. This afforded them the wisdom of not attempting to over exploit its wide range of resources. Many communities are known to use more than a hundred different plant species for dietary, medicinal and other domestic purposes.<sup>771</sup> The indication of their harmonious existence with the environment and judicious exploitation of it, is that they can remain for generations, over thousands of years, in the same area; hunting was solely for food and other basic needs, not for sport or fun.<sup>772</sup> Communal spirit and kinship bond were very strong, negative individualism, selfishness and greed were discouraged.

## **7.6. Traditional Ecological Knowledge in Perspectives**

In the search for an environmental ethics towards an ecologically sustainable society, indigenous peoples and traditional ecological knowledge have attracted considerable attention from both scholars and environmental movements as a viable option to be considered. Traditional ecological knowledge may be defined as “a cumulative body of

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<sup>769</sup> Sowunmi, Adebisi. A. 1995. Giver of Life-“Sustain Your Creation” in Hallman, David. G .1995(ed) *Ecotheology. Voices from South and North*. New York: Maryknoll. p.153

<sup>770</sup> Sowunmi, Adebisi. A. 1995.Giver of Life-“Sustain Your Creation” in Hallman, David.G .1995(ed) *Ecotheology. Voices from South and North*. New York: Maryknoll. p.153)

<sup>771</sup> Sowunmi, Adebisi.A. 1995.Giver of Life-“Sustain Your Creation. p.153

<sup>772</sup> Sowunmi, Adebisi.A. 1995.Giver of Life-“Sustain Your Creation. p.153

knowledge, practice and belief evolving by adaptive processes and handed down through generations by cultural transmission, about the relationship of living beings (including humans) with one another and with their environment”.<sup>773</sup> As a body of knowledge, traditional ecological knowledge includes the worldview or religious traditions of a society. It is both cumulative and dynamic, building on experience and adapting to change, as societies constantly redefine what is considered “traditional”.<sup>774</sup> It is an attribute of societies with historical continuity in making a living in a particular place.

Traditional ecological knowledge may also be considered as a sub-set of indigenous knowledge, defined as local knowledge held by indigenous peoples or local knowledge unique to a given culture or society.<sup>775</sup> Traditional environmental knowledge is not stored in books; it is retained and transmitted verbally, through subsistence practices and through cultural myths and taboos. There is controversy over the term, traditional and or indigenous. Some scholars consider that the term implies backwardness, and instead favour “indigenous” or “local.” Others point out that many indigenous peoples themselves see “tradition” in a positive light. They do not take it to mean inflexible adherence to the past but rather to mean time-tested and wise.<sup>776</sup> In this study we use both traditional and indigenous interchangeably but in a non-derogatory sense.

Traditional ecological knowledge is comprised of a wide range of understandings of ecosystems and this includes traditional modes of agriculture especially in the form of shifting cultivation. Essentially, in this agricultural system, a family clears or slashes and burns a piece of wooded area. The ashes are left to act as fertilizer for the next two years or so. Different types of crops are grown concurrently on the same plot. This protects the soil from turning into laterite, bricklike soils. After three years of cultivation, one moves on to

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<sup>773</sup> Posey, Darrell A. and Graham Dutfield. 1996. *Beyond Intellectual Property: Towards Traditional Resource Rights for Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities*. Ottawa: International Development Research Centre. p.67

<sup>774</sup> Grenier, L. 1998. *Working with Indigenous Knowledge. A Guide for Researchers*. Ottawa: International Development Research Center. p.62

<sup>775</sup> Berkes, Fikret. 1999. *Sacred Ecology: Traditional. Ecological Knowledge and Resource Management*.p.45

<sup>776</sup> Warren, D.M. 1992. *Indigenous Knowledge, Biodiversity, Conservation and Development. International Conference on Conservation of Biodiversity in Africa: Local Initiatives and Institutional Roles*. Nairobi: Kenya. p.1

another piece of land while the former stays fallow to regenerate. Regeneration may take up to ten years or more. However, such a system entails a reasonably low population density. The system of shifting cultivation was practiced in most African countries until recently when it became no longer possible due to high population densities.<sup>777</sup> Other areas where traditional environmental knowledge is projected include agro forestry, animal raising, hunting, fishing and gathering.<sup>778</sup>

### 7.6.1. The Significance of Traditional Ecological Knowledge

It is interesting to observe that the significance of traditional ecological knowledge has been recognized in the international arena and that the number of publications has grown rapidly since the 1980s.<sup>779</sup> However, its relevance in environmental management and development discourse in general, including the relationship between it and Western science has remained controversial.<sup>780</sup> This controversy emanates from the fact that scientists tend to be sceptical, demanding evidence when confronted with traditional knowledge that may not easily lend itself to scientific verification.<sup>781</sup> The problem of credibility is compounded because some traditional knowledge which may include elements, such as the religious dimensions of the environment, (these could not be easily verified in a scientific manner), do not make sense to science. For example, many of the African societies believe that some non-living parts of the environment (including rivers and mountains), as well as all living beings, have spirit or at least is connected to one spirit or the other.

Their (i.e African's) cosmologies were based on the existence of a Supreme Being who was spirit and creator, and the source of all power and energy. He granted existence to all created things. He animated the gods, the spirits and human beings, animals, rivers, trees, rocks and all matter. Their metaphysics conceived the creator as the Universal Vital Force that

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<sup>777</sup> Kalipeni, Ezekiel. 1994. (ed) *Population Growth and Environmental Degradation in Southern Africa*. p.31

<sup>778</sup> Wolfgram, Steven. A. 2006. *Global Development and Remote African Villages. Environmental Conservation and Cultural Survival in Cameroon* .p.45

<sup>779</sup> See Werner. and Begishe, K.Y. 1980. *Ethnoscience and Applied Anthropology. Indigenous Knowledge Systems and Development*. Washington, D.C. University of America Press.p.149

<sup>780</sup> Wolfgram, Steven A. 2006. *Global Development and Remote African Villages*.p.48

<sup>781</sup> Steven A. Wolfgram. 2006.*Global Development and Remote African Villages*.p.48

animated and energized all things whose real essence consisted not in matter but in the energy and power infused into them by the Creator.<sup>782</sup>

In the face of such a belief grounded purely on religious conviction, it becomes difficult for science to make any scientific verification because it has no tools for the study of the spiritual dimensions of the environment. Nevertheless such beliefs are important for our understanding of traditional ecological knowledge. On their own part, traditional knowledge holders are also sceptical of ‘science people’ and tend to dismiss scientists who do not have extensive first-hand knowledge of a specific land area. As a result, they are often baffled by the preoccupation of scientists to measure and quantify almost everything and dismiss any that does not hold valid scientific proof.

From the above, we identify issues of power relations concerning authority over knowledge as fundamentally important in the synergy between traditional knowledge and scientific knowledge. This tension becomes more complex because not many “educated people” are willing to accept the fact that Western scientific methodology is merely one way, and not the only way, to acquire knowledge and provide solutions to humanity’s multifarious problems. Unfortunately, the superiority of scientific method has gained more acceptance as the dominant knowledge system at the exclusion of traditional knowledge.<sup>783</sup> As a result of this perceived “superiority” of Western Science over traditional knowledge, Western science is seen as having a monopoly on truth and regards knowledge and insights that originate outside institutionalized Western science as unacceptable fallacy. Practitioners in the field of Western science, therefore tend to dismiss understandings that do not fit their own which come from other bodies of knowledge such as TEK. As a result, it has become the sole basis of environmental decision-making by many environmental policy makers and development agencies throughout the world including Africa.

However, in his defence of traditional environmental knowledge,(TEK) Hunn articulates some fundamental reasons for his insistence that traditional environmental knowledge should be considered as another method of acquiring knowledge alongside the Western scientific

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<sup>782</sup> Asante, Emmanuel, 1985. “Ecology: Untapped Resources of Pan-Vitalism in Africa” in *African Ecclesial Review* 27 p.290

<sup>783</sup> Werner, and Begishe, K.Y. 1980. *Ethnoscience and Applied Anthropology. Indigenous Knowledge Systems and Development*. Washington, D.C. University of America Press.p.149

method and therefore argues that it should be preserved. From our analysis of Hunn's arguments four important issues emerged, namely-(i) that TEK it is a locally grounded science and therefore it supplements Western science. (ii) The preservation of TEK is imperative because it is an intellectual monument to our common humanity.(iii) TEK provides a kind of human alternative or human diversity option to the globalization of the Western market culture. (iv) The use of traditional knowledge contributes to conceptual pluralism, and expands the range of approaches and information needed to solve environmental problems.<sup>784</sup>

Furthermore, Wolfman sees the potential of TEK to build upon ecologically sustainable local knowledge and belief systems as an important asset for environmental conservation. This potentiality for him, and we agree with him, justifies its significance.<sup>785</sup> He argues that there are tangible and practical reasons why traditional ecological knowledge is important for the rest of the world's people. We have attempted to make a summary of Wolfman's argument. The following important issues are of significant consideration for us. Firstly, it is a source of biological knowledge and ecological insights and as such it is important for the sustainability of difficult-to-manage ecosystems such as tropical forests. Secondly, it is important for community-based conservation by connecting human values with conservation values. Because of this, its in-depth local environmental knowledge and trends over time for a given site are important for environmental assessment. Thirdly, traditional knowledge is essential for development, especially for "bottom-up" (as opposed to top-down) development planning with people. Fourthly, because traditional ecological wisdom is a source of inspiration for environmental ethics. Belief systems of many indigenous groups incorporate the idea that humans are part of the natural environment, and their relationship with nature may be characterized as peaceful co-existence.<sup>786</sup>

Based on the inestimable importance of TEK, Posey and Graham cautioned that Traditional knowledge and Western science need not be thought of as opposites, rather, it may be useful to emphasize the potential complementarities of the two, and to look for points of agreement

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<sup>784</sup> Hunn, E. 1999. *The Value of Subsistence for the Future of the World. Ethnoecology, Situated Knowledge /Located Lives*. Tucson: University of Arizona Press. P.25-26

<sup>785</sup> Wolfgram, Steven. A. 2006. *Global Development and Remote*.p.48

<sup>786</sup> Wolfgram, Steven. A. 2006. *Global Development and Remote*.p.48-51

rather than disagreement.<sup>787</sup> These observations are significant. This significance reflects the explosion of interest in traditional ecological knowledge in recent years and therefore justifies the need to derive ecological insights from indigenous practice, and the need to develop a new ecological ethic based in part on indigenous wisdom. This synergy is waiting to be explored from theological perspective, hence the need to attempt synthesising oikotheology and TEK.

So far, we have been discussing African understanding of cosmology from ecological perspectives. A fundamental question which the discussion seems to be bringing out clearly is this, if Africans had such a wonderful ecological worldview that made them to view nature as part of themselves, why is it that today, many Africans defecate, litter and exploit their environment in contrast to the age long ecological tradition influenced by their cosmology? This is a crucial question that demands our attention. Our attempt to provide answers leads us to our next discussion on the impact of colonialism and the missionary activities on Africa's worldview in general and ecological ethics in particular.

### **7.7. The Impact of the 'Flag' and the 'Cross' on African Cosmology: Changing Patterns in Moral Order**

In order for us to answer the above question about why modern Africans in sharp contrast to their traditional forefathers, pollute their environment, we shall examine the following salient factors to see how they contribute to the 'moral erosion' leading to the current environmental criticality that we discussed in chapter two. This has become vitally important if we consider that, once upon a time, we had beautiful environment in Africa which today have been destroyed.

In Africa, the Western worldview, Western religion and African culture have interacted in such a way that has resulted in what looked like a cultural-religious symbiosis. What does not often come out clearly and what many seem not to pay more attention however, is that colonization which brought with it the Western worldview and the missionaries to Africa, brought changes and tensions between the indigenous African tradition and Western tradition.

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<sup>787</sup> Posey, Darrell A. and William I. Balee, 1989.eds. *Resource Management in Amazonia: Indigenous and Folk Strategies*. New York: New York Botanical Gardens.p.76

A real understanding of the true nature of these tensions and the consequences of the presence of the ‘flag’ and the ‘cross’ (colonialism and Christianity)<sup>788</sup> in Africa may perhaps not be possible in this work given its focus and scope. It will probably take a longer historical view before the true assessment could be made. As a result of this difficulty, our interest in this section is not to provide an in-depth appraisal of the colonial and missionary activities in Africa. It is rather to identify some of the areas of friction between the traditional African worldview and the Western worldview and how the later in a dramatic shift attempted to annihilate the former through what we now termed ‘moral erosion’ of the African society.

Before we begin this inquiry, it is worth noting that this inquiry is compounded by the mixture of praise and criticism in assessing the nature of the tensions that existed as a result of both colonization and the missionary enterprise. This mix of praise and criticism beclouds the real image. This concern has been raised by Lukas de Vries who observed that because “on the one hand, missionaries are condemned as ‘hounds of imperialism’ and on the other hand, they are praised for the development of the independent states of Africa” it becomes difficult to make an outright condemnation or commendation of both.<sup>789</sup> For example, both Kwame Bediako and Sanneh Lamin and other African theologians are all in agreement that Christianity cannot be condemned out-rightly as a destroyer of our culture. They all agreed that the missionaries also helped to preserve the indigenous culture by translating the scriptures into indigenous languages.<sup>790</sup>

But, in spite of the positive impacts of the missionary activities, the difficulty for many in acknowledging it persists because according to Lukas “there is such a close relationship between the history of the mission and of the colonies that for certain periods it is difficult to state whether the idea of mission took priority or whether colonizing plans actually formed the driving motive ...”.<sup>791</sup> Such is the problem of trying to separate the two but all we can say

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<sup>788</sup> The cross and flag was a term used by Aylward Shorter for colonization and the missionary activities in Africa. For details on this see Aylward, Shorter. 2006. *Cross and Flag in Africa. The White Fathers During the Colonial Scramble(1892-1914)* Maryknoll: Orbis Books

<sup>789</sup> De Vries, Luka, J. 1978. *Mission and Colonialism in Namibia*. Johannesburg: Ravan Press. p. 74-75

<sup>790</sup> See Bediako, Kwame. 1995. *Christianity in Africa. The Renewal of a Non-Western Religion*. New York:Orbis Books. and Sanneh, Lamin. *Translating the Message. The Missionary Impact on Culture*. New York: Orbis Books

<sup>791</sup> De Vries, Luka, J. 1978. *Mission and Colonialism in Namibia*. Johannesburg: Ravan Press. p. 74-75

is that there is a partnership or collaboration of some sort between the two. The missionaries did play significant roles in colonial politics as well as did the colonial authorities in assisting the missionaries in gaining access to the local authorities which would have been otherwise impossible. Having provided the above background, let us now have a brief reflection on the nature of the tensions that played out in the traditional African societies during the period of both the colonial and missionary enterprise in Africa. This reflection is necessary in order for us to understand the impact or how the missionaries influenced the mindset of the majority of Africans which in a way impacted on the African ecological ethics. This reflection is not intended as a criticism of the missionary enterprise in Africa *per se* but as an insight into the genesis of the environmental criticality in Africa.

One of the major tensions that played out during the colonial and missionary period in Africa was seen in the nature of the disruptive force which rocked the traditional African society to its very foundation. Commenting on the disruptive nature of both the missionary activities and colonialism, Ayandele argues that no attempt should be made to undermine the sociological impact of the missionary teaching on any society.<sup>792</sup> This is because according to him the missionary was necessarily a revolutionary on a grand scale. As such no society could be Christianized without it being upset to a considerable extent. The disruptive nature of the missionaries in the society is seen in the behaviour of those converted to Christianity. Most of them, immediately after conversion to Christianity, began to show signs of disrespect for their tradition thereby leading to the destruction of the high moral principles and orderliness of indigenous society. This resulted in changing the mental outlook of such people in such a way that they imitated European values slavishly whilst holding in irrational contempt valuable features of the traditional culture. Emefie Ikenga-Metu, captured our point so well that he left no one in doubt about the disruptive force that accompanied the missionary activities in Africa. He wrote:

The school was used effectively to inculcate the total rejection of African culture and to teach European language and culture. To be educated for a Nigerian meant not only to speak and write the English language but also to

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<sup>792</sup> Ayandele, E. A. 1976. *The Missionary Impact on Modern Nigeria-1842-1914: A Political and Social Analysis*. London: Longman.p.330-333

dress like the English, imitate the English, and eventually to fully adapt the English culture.<sup>793</sup>

Expectedly, the result of this kind of scenario is that the well ordered African traditional society gradually began to disintegrate. The individual now begins to emphasize relationship on individual basis rather than the social unit such as the family and age grade to which he or she was previously linked to. This type of individualized life style has some serious implications for the social well being of the society.

Such tensions described above and similar issues that disrupt the well ordered traditional African sense of moral order compounded the problem of the crisis of values for the Africans. Commenting on the damage done to the African culture by Western civilization and Christianity, Frantz Fanon likened DDT, a type of pesticide, to Christianity. According to Fanon, as pesticides kill germs, so does Christianity destroy the traditions of the colonized peoples.<sup>794</sup> Fanon might not have any particular problem with Christianity *per se*, except the way European imperialists used it to brainwash and distort the mentality of the colonized black people. The imperialists used religion as a disguise to perfect their colonization agenda and the result is what Stephen Neil described as the exploitation and impoverishment of the weaker and defenceless peoples and the destruction of what is good in the ancient civilization.<sup>795</sup> Taking a similar stand with Fanon, Apollos Nwauwa has this to say about the effects of Western civilization (including Christianity) on the African minds:

Of all the tactics that the Europeans use to subvert African cultures ...none is more ingenious than the principle of assimilation. Outwardly, assimilation is harmless yet its consequences could be devastating. One of the aims of assimilation is to achieve political and cultural control by mounting a vicious attack on the victim's consciousness and self esteem. When put in motion, the victim begins to hate the customs of his people, their language, music and religion. Now, he listens to Mozart and Beethoven, rather than Fela Kuti and Sunny Ade. And rather than visit his

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<sup>793</sup> Ikenga-Metu, Emefie. 2002. (ed) *The God's in Retreat. Continuity and Change in African Religion.(The Nigerian Experience)*. Enugu: Fourth Dimension Publishers Co. Ltd. p.238-239

<sup>794</sup> Fanon, Frantz. 1967. *The Wretched of the Earth*. New York: Penguin. p.42

<sup>795</sup> Neill, Stephen. 1966. *Colonization and the Christian Missions*. London: McGraw-Hill Books Company. 11

relatives and ancestral shrines in the countryside, he spends his vacations in Paris, London and Rome.<sup>796</sup>

Through both the sociological process of acculturation and inculturation, Africans were forced to absorb and internalize the norms of western culture.<sup>797</sup> This was perfected through preaching and education by churches, which changed African traditional value systems. For example, when European Missionaries arrived in Africa, they added the image of the triune God to African traditional deities, civil and international law as well as Ten Commandments to Africa's customary and tribal taboos in particular and African world order in general.<sup>798</sup> This distortion was evidently manifest in various ways, particularly in a cultural imperialism taught and preached in schools and churches.<sup>799</sup> Soon many Africans became immersed with such imperialistic ideology that a complete disorientation process was set in motion resulting in the conditioning of the people's emotions and relationships to suit the new reality-the imperialistic world views. Sindima has cautioned that "if a people's thought system is corrupt, their values system is destroyed; the world or cosmology that informs their way of life has been ruined."<sup>800</sup> Sindima further argues that the importation of the Western cosmology, which views the world from mechanistic perspective, is hugely responsible for not only the current ecological crisis but the erosion of moral order in African society as well. The mechanistic thinking views the world to be like a machine with many parts, each working according to the laws of nature. To understand the world, one has only to know these laws. Society as well, is conceived as a mega machine in which nature and people are objectified. The model of living in this mega machine is accordingly mechanical. People are seen as atomistic individuals whose interactions and interrelationships are valued according to function and utility alone. Feelings and emotional needs are not important. Hence, concern and care do not enter everyday living. Moral conduct in a mechanistic society is often guided by self interest, and often there is no agreement on what is moral. Mechanistic society

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<sup>796</sup> Ohadike, Don. C. 2007. *Sacred Drums of Liberation. Religions and Music of Resistance in Africa and the Diaspora*. Eritrea: Africa World Press, Inc. p. xxxv

<sup>797</sup> Mugambi, J.N.K. 2002. "From Liberation to Reconstruction" in Katangole E. (ed) *African Theology Today*. Scranton: The University of Scranton Press. 195

<sup>798</sup> Cox, James. L. and Gerrie Ter Haar (eds) 2003. *Uniquely African?* p.12

<sup>799</sup> Sindima, Harvely .1990. "Community of Life: Ecological Theology in African Perspective". p.138

<sup>800</sup> Sindima, Harvely .1990. "Community of Life: Ecological Theology in African Perspective". p.138

undermines the ties that bind persons and their communities to one another and to the cosmos.<sup>801</sup>

This Western mechanistic view of nature which was firstly introduced through the process of colonization and Christianization, but in recent times being reinforced through the process of globalization and modernity; has distorted Africa's moral order in general including its earlier understanding of nature in particular. Nature, which hitherto in African thinking, was broadly understood in terms of cosmic oneness is now understood and treated merely as a material to be subjugated and manipulated. It now has only instrumental value, determined by the extent to which people could use it to advance their own goals. Our understanding of the instrumental value placed on nature by the Western culture could be enhanced by Martin Ibe's reference to the publications of the German Bishops in which they blamed the Western industrial culture for contributing to the current ecological chaos:

When the economists developed modern economic theories in parallel with emerging industrialization processes, they viewed the socio-economic system as separate from and independent of the natural environment. They considered natural resources to be free goods available for extraction, and societies returned waste to the environment without cost or further considerations.<sup>802</sup>

With this strange meaning and understanding of nature exported to Africa through the already mentioned processes, the rise of materialistic philosophy and its attendant life style was enthroned in Africa. The materialistic philosophy evidently manifest in the culture of capitalism and individualistic life style is gradually destroying the African notion of corporate existence. For the African, life involves a tendency toward self-transcendence.<sup>803</sup> In the traditional Igbo society and, arguably in the rest of Africa, people achieve fulfilment through the realization and the application of the concept of human bondedness of life expressed in the communal or corporate existence. Writing about the communal nature of the traditional societies, Ayandele asserts:

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<sup>801</sup> Sindima, Harvely. 1990. "Community of Life: Ecological Theology in African Perspective". p.139

<sup>802</sup> Ibe, Martin. Joe. 2003. *Environmental Ethics and Politics in Developing Countries. Case study front Nigeria*.p.37

<sup>803</sup> Sindima, Harvely.1990. "Community of Life: Ecological Theology in African Perspective". p.143

But indigenous Nigerian society was communal, perhaps more so than the Greek *polis*. Every member of the group, village or tribe, from the highest to the lowest, was no more than a unit in an organic whole controlled by an ironbound code of duties, taboos and rights, on the faithful performance of which by every individual the cohesion, order and welfare of the group depended. It was only as a unit in the organic whole that he must think, speak, believe and act. The individual had to submit to the collective will and authority of the community in this manner because it was only in this way that he and the community could live.<sup>804</sup>

Ayandele was right to note some fundamental features of the traditional African society such as the corporate nature of societal existence before the arrival of the colonizers and missionaries who introduced individualism over and above the collective and communal life of the traditional African society.

Furthermore, the importation of the Western world view of a mechanistic world with its attendant materialistic philosophy has distorted our cherished African cosmology and replaced it with excessive quest for materialism. As a result, everything has been monetised. Everything is measured in terms of its material value. The global capitalist system has annihilated the spirit of *onye aghana nwanne ya* for which the Igbos are known. Because the Western mechanistic view considers everything from the perspective of economic growth, economic activity as a means of achieving this growth has therefore been dominated by unwholesome culture that does not take cognizance of the notion of humanness let alone the integrity of creation. The global capitalist system has less regard for the ways in which individuals and societies including transnational and multinational corporations achieve economic progress which explains the reason why Africa and other developing countries have been deeply exploited by the depletion of their natural resources to advance economic growth. The global capitalist system, characterised by the wielding and brandishing of “naked economic power” and promulgation of trade rules which overrule more important priorities and the ethical imperatives of our time,<sup>805</sup> is also responsible for much of the ecological destruction going on in Africa and other developing countries. This point has been dealt with

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<sup>804</sup> Ayandele, E. A. 1976. *The Missionary Impact on Modern Nigeria-1842-1914: A Political and Social Analysis*. London: Longman.p.330-333

<sup>805</sup> Reed, Charles.2001. (ed) *Development Matters: Christian Perspectives on Globalization*. London: Church House Publishing. p.9

in chapter two and three where we discussed the influence of the affluent nations on the economy of the poorer nations including trade or international relations.

In recent times, the neo-colonialist culture in globalization garb, has further precipitated the annihilation of African sense of humanness and moral order. As the global economic recession is being felt harshly across the globe and pressures are mounted on super-economic nations to provide a plausible counter strategy to cushion the effects of this economic crunch and possibly redeem financial institutions from total collapse, it has become necessary for the appraisal of the global economic policies to repudiate the notion that trade, finance and investment are instruments for economic growth,<sup>806</sup> without the consideration of human wellbeing, economic justice and integrity of creation. The lessons of the current global food crises, economic crunch and difficult financial situation is a warning that if the earth which provides humanity with the resources to achieve economic growth in all its ramifications, continued to be viewed with the Western mechanistic lens, and treated as such, then, not only the existence of humanity is in jeopardy but the totality of nature.

Having seen from our discussion so far the impact of the ‘cross’ and ‘flag’ on the moral fibre of African society, we propose a way forward out of this ecological quagmire. This proposal starts with the rationale for the synthesis of oikothology and African ecological ethics

### **7.8. Opening *Oikothology* to the Insights and Perspectives of TEK**

In our quest for an integrated eco-theological model, the synthesis of *Oikothology* and indigenous ecological knowledge is proposed as an ideal option that would make for an ecologically sustainable society. This proposition is predicated on the understanding that both *oikothology* and African traditional ecological ethics have much in common in terms of their emphasis on viewing nature as an integrated unit. Based on this observation, it has become imperative to synthesize traditional ecological ethics with *Oikothology* so as to produce an indigenous model that would appeal to the African Christians. This synthesis corresponds with Sindenma’s suggestion that Christianity should be open to transformation through the

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<sup>806</sup> Reed, Charles. 2001. (ed) *Development Matters: Christian Perspectives on Globalization*. p.9

insights of various indigenous traditions, that it should be open to the possibilities of creative transformation by contact with the wisdom and vision of other sources.<sup>807</sup> This inclusion is necessary because Christianity should investigate the indigenous knowledge of the people and build into it the resources of the gospel's ethics to enrich its capacity for a truly human living.<sup>808</sup>

This suggestion also applies to other areas of development as well because the understanding of how existing indigenous ecological ethics can provide the basis for development models, based on a consideration of the environment, the local use of human and natural resources and the belief systems cannot be over emphasised in development discourse.<sup>809</sup> This point is a valid one since the question of how Africans re-conceptualize development so as to escape from the theories of the past which did not yield much fruit, demands an urgent answer if the current ecological problems plaguing the continent would be solved.<sup>810</sup>

Another important point which we need to reiterate in this regard, perhaps more relevant, is the conceptual tension between African culture and the Western culture. In spite of this tension we are still of the view that many Africans are rooted to their culture. It is a truism that the traditional African approach to ethical relations has suffered neglect; however, it is still relevant in the contemporary African society.<sup>811</sup> Although the introduction of Christianity and mechanistic regulations has interfered with traditional African patterns of life, attempted to obliterate and annihilate it, the matrix of that life has not yet been completely destroyed. This claim is acknowledged in the fact that the majority of Africans, irrespective of their levels of education, are still deeply rooted in their heritage. There is always a longing of the expression of "Africanness". The African Christian is not left out of this categorization, hence the need to introduce an ecological ethics that would reflect both his Christian and African identity. This categorization makes sense when one considers the fact that Jesus himself, being a Jew, identified with his Jewish heritage. Most of his ethical teachings were

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<sup>807</sup> Sindima , Harvely. 1990. "Community of Life: Ecological Theology" in *African Perspective*.p.137

<sup>808</sup> Kalu, Ogbu. 2000. *Power, Poverty and Prayer*.p.54

<sup>809</sup> Kalu, Ogbu. 2000. *Power, Poverty and Prayer*.p.54

<sup>810</sup> Kalu, Ogbu. 2000. *Power, Poverty and Prayer*.p.56

<sup>811</sup> Mugambi, J.N.K. 2002. "From Liberation to Reconstruction" in Katangole E. (ed) *African Theology Today* p.133

taken from traditional Jewish life because according to him, he has not come to abolish but to fulfil it.<sup>812</sup> The challenging task before African Christianity is to follow the examples of Christ who identified with his heritage while preaching the message of the kingdom of God. In this regard, Jesus example should be seen as our model.

John Pobee gives authentic backing to our point when he emphatically observed that: “although Christianity was originally born in the Jewish matrix, it ultimately moved into Gentile setting... The great systems of Plato and Aristotle had proved a solvent in which the old myths disappeared or remained only as a conventional vehicle of poetic thought”.<sup>813</sup> We need to experience African culture in Christianity. The only reason why this experience is taking long to happen according to Pobee, is the application of the concept of *Tabula Rasa* to denigrate African culture. *Tabula Rasa* in this context, is the doctrine that there is nothing good in the non-Christian culture on which the Christian missionary can build and consequently every aspect of the traditional non-Christian culture must be destroyed before Christianity can be built up it.<sup>814</sup> We see Mugambi sharing the same opinion with Pobee when he argues that for the African to appreciate the impact of the Gospel, he needs to appreciate his cultural and religious heritage. “Jesus appreciated the heritage of his people. So did the Roman Christians, and the German Christians, and the English Christians, and the Irish...”<sup>815</sup>

Our understanding of the need to appreciate African ecological ethics and the important role it could play in the search for a synergistic approach to the current global ecological crisis when it is integrated with Christian ecological ethics, would best be understood by the analogy of the Christian message as a ship. Analogously, the Christian message is likened to a cargo ship which set out from Jerusalem with features of Jewish culture as cargo. It stopped in Rome and the Roman Christianity selected those elements of the Christian teachings that are suitable to their culture and set the ship sailing to Europe but also loaded the ship with

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<sup>812</sup> Mugambi, J.N.K. 2002. “From Liberation to Reconstruction” in Katangole E. (ed) *African Theology Today* p. 160

<sup>813</sup> Pobee, John. S. 1979. *Toward An African Theology*.p.58

<sup>814</sup> Pobee, John. S. 1979. *Toward An African Theology*.p.58

<sup>815</sup> Mugambi, J.N.K. 2002. “From Liberation to Reconstruction” in Katangole E. (ed) *African Theology Today* p. 160

their own culture input. When the ship landed in other Europe nations, the Europeans offloaded the ship, took those goods that are compatible with their culture, made their own cultural input and sent it off to Africa. When the ship came to Africa, it was unfortunately accepted with all the contents, without making any contribution. Considering this analogy, it is now time for the African Christianity to use its rich culture to make its own contribution to universal Christianity. The justification for this call has become critically important considering the observation made by Wambutda that “Christianity as imported from Europe and America contains strange and sometimes disgusting features of alienation with which Africans are most uncomfortable with”.<sup>816</sup> In line with this observation, many scholars of African studies, including theologians, have come out with various proposals of how Christianity could be made incarnate in the lives of African peoples.<sup>817</sup> Gwinyia H. Muzorewa is one of such scholars who called for “indigenization” of Christianity. According to Gwinyia, indigenization is a process of making Christian faith more relevant to the lived experiences of the indigenous people-in this case the Africans. It is a careful and innovative adaptation of the Christian faith and practice to their African milieus.<sup>818</sup>

In the light of the need for the indigenization of Christianity, one of the major challenges in the use of the concept of Oikothology is that it is a general eco-theological concept whose premise is from the Western ideology - for its seeks to reconstruct the Western cosmology. We need therefore to make it an indigenous Africa eco-theological concept in a creative way that will reflect African culture. This has become important because the non reflection of the African culture makes it foreign to the typical African mind. In the light of above, therefore, we will attempt to initiate a process of indigenizing the concept of Oikothology by the use of Igbo terminology which brings out clearly the meaning and implication of Oikothology. This process we anticipate would make oikothology more accessible to the African culture.

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<sup>816</sup> Wambutda,D. 1986. *An African Christian Looks at Christian Missions in Africa. Readings in Missionary Anthropology 11*. California: William Carey Library.p.40

<sup>817</sup> Okadigbo,C. 1975. *The Philosophical Foundations of the African Personality*. Unpublished Notes. Enugu: Bigard Memorial Seminary.p.1 According to Okadigbo, the quest for black resurgence proposes a pristine African culture which has been eroded and displaced by Euro- Christian civilization. In fact, it is on record that the missionaries who came to Igbo land were not patient with the customs of the people.

<sup>818</sup> Gwinyia H. Muzorewa. 1995. *The origins of Development of the African Theology*. Maryknoll: Orbis Books. p.249

This way the traditional Igbo Christian will identify the concept of Oikothology in their culture and therefore accept its message.

### 7.8.1. Making Oikothology Accessible to the African Culture

The Igbo understanding of communal and corporate existence is seen in their articulation of the notion of *onye aghana nwanne ya*.<sup>819</sup> *Onye aghana nwanne ya*, is the belief and practice of kinship and solidarity. In the traditional Igbo understanding, people are born into a human society, not just into the nuclear family and this marks out the communitarian nature of the Igbo people. This communitarian nature of the Igbo society is sometimes reflected in some of the Igbo names. For example, my Igbo name is *Obiora*. This literally translates as “the people’s wish is granted”. It signifies that the birth of a child into my nuclear family is not just the wish of my family alone; it represents the collective wish of the community. Another name which portrays this communitarian understanding is the Igbo name *Nwora*. *Nwora* simply translates as “people’s child” and it shows that a child belongs to the people (the community) not just the family.

The communitarian nature of human existence has a wider spectrum. It cuts across Africa.<sup>820</sup> There is this African proverb that says that it takes the whole village to raise a child. The indication of this proverb is the same as the Igbo understanding that people belong to the society. The traditional African believes that humanity is closely connected to each other and to other creatures itself. This is explained in the *obiter dictum* “we are, therefore I am”. This is what Mbiti means when he said that an individual does not exist apart from the community. He writes: “What happens to the individual happens to the whole group, and what happens to the whole group happens to the individual. The individual can only say: “I am, because we

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<sup>819</sup> This simply transliterates: Let no one leave his/ her brother /sister behind. It is an Igbo philosophy of life which seeks to encourage the concept of brotherliness-“being our brother’s keeper”

<sup>820</sup> See Karenga, M. 2004. *Maat: The Moral Ideal in Ancient Egypt: A Study in Classical African Ethics*. New York: Routledge, Kascence, P. 1994. “Ethics in African Theology” in Villa-Vicencio, C. and De Gruchy, J.W. (eds) *Doing Ethics in Context: South African Perspectives*. New York: Orbis Books. P.138-147, Menkiti, I.A. 1984. “Person and Community in Traditional African Thought” in Wright, R.A. (ed) *African Philosophy: An Introduction*. Lannham, MD: University Press of America.p.171-181

are, and since we are, therefore I am”.<sup>821</sup> The phrase “being in plenitude” best describes the traditional African notion of persons because it emphasizes the unity or connectedness of persons to one another, to the community and to nature. No less explanation could be offered to understand the phrase “being in plenitude” than the eloquent elucidation by Sindima in the following quotation:

We cannot understand persons; indeed we cannot have personal identity, without reference to other persons. Nor can we understand ourselves without reference to nature. People understand themselves and gain identity only in a total framework of life. They are defined as they engage in work, ritual practice and symbolic activities. But they must also understand themselves as belonging to nature, as living the life of nature. It is through their relationship with nature that people discover their identities and approach the possibility of living life fully. As nature opens itself up to people, it presents possibilities for experiencing the fullness of life, possibilities for discovering how inseparably bonded people are to each other and to all creation.<sup>822</sup>

In Africa, a strong sense of community is what holds the society together. To have an insight into the communal sense of the African society, one need to understand the expression made in the work of Adama and Naomi Doumbia who wrote:

Anyone who is ill, hurt, or weak affects every one of us, and the entire community will participate in the healing. We chant, dance, drum and make offerings and sacrifices to communicate with the spirits for their assistance. The love and support of the community alone is often enough to bring about a quick recovery. We value generosity and acts of selflessness, which are essential to the well-being of our environment. Each person has a place in our communities. Everyone is needed, valued, and appreciated.<sup>823</sup>

According to Botman, the concept of *oikos* could be equated to the African notion of *ubuntu*.<sup>824</sup> He goes further to claim that the *oikos* concept is not only key to the Bible but that it is also a central concept in Africa. *Ubuntu* as a concept is a bit difficult to translate to other

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<sup>821</sup> Mbiti, John. 1980. *African Religion and Philosophy*. Ibadan: Heinemann. p.108-109

<sup>822</sup> Sindima, Harvely. 1990. “Community of Life: Ecological Theology in African Perspective”. p.143

<sup>823</sup> Doumbia, Adama and Naomi. 2004. *The Way of the Elders. West African Spirituality and Tradition*. Saint Paul, Minnesota: Llewellyn Publications.p.86

<sup>824</sup> Botman, H. Russel. undated. “The Oikos in a Global Economic Era: A South African Comment” Available at [http://www.crvp.org/book/series02/11-6/chapter\\_x.htm](http://www.crvp.org/book/series02/11-6/chapter_x.htm). Accessed on December 3, 2007.

meanings, but its basic meaning is that it is the essence of being human. It emphasises that “my humanity is caught up and inextricably bound up in yours ...I am because I belong”.<sup>825</sup> This fosters a strong sense of community. Community recognizes that we live in one household, that we need one another to survive and thrive. Both the concept of *Oikos* and *ubuntu* are related to the Igbo notion of *onye aghana nwanne ya*. The notion of *onye aghana nwanne ya* aims not only at recognizing the humanness and the dignity of the individual members of the community especially the weaker ones, it also seeks to ensure that their rights in whatever form are guaranteed. It fosters the collective well being and happiness of the whole community. In this regard, there is justification for a community member to be happy while a fellow community member is suffering. The notion of *onye aghana nwanne ya* simply stipulates that you cannot leave your fellow community member alone in his or her suffering.

It is important for us to note that both the concept of *ubuntu* and *onye aghana nwanne ya* are anthropocentric in context. Given the context of its usage, it is not a problem in our own consideration. This is because the context is anthropomorphically suitable for our understanding of our relationship to nature. Using these terms in an anthropomorphic context therefore helps us to understand better our human community by using our analogous human terminology. Since anthropomorphism in this context helps us to understand how we are related to one another and depended on one another in the human community it also provides us with the understanding of how we are related to the whole ‘earth community’. These concepts should not be understood in isolation from the context of the whole ‘earth community’. When we understand these concepts in anthropomorphic context, we would then appreciate the precautionary principle of *egbe belu* concept and how it is applied in the ‘earth community’. We shall return to the *egbe belu* principle later.

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<sup>825</sup> Rukuni, Mandivamba. 2007. *Being Afrikan. Rediscovering the Traditional Unhu-Ubuntu-Botho Pathways of Being Human*. Arcadia: MandalaPublishers.p143

### 7.8.2. The African Understanding of Community as a basis for Understanding the Concept of Family from the Perspectives of *Oikotheology*

In Africa, the word ‘community’ refers to more than a mere association of atomic individuals.<sup>826</sup> Its African wider context refers to an organic relationship between individuals and nature.<sup>827</sup> It is similar to both the principle of interrelatedness which as we have noted earlier recognizes the “genealogical, evolutionary continuity that exists between all living things”.<sup>828</sup> It is equally related to Larry Rasmussen’s ‘earth community’ which emphasizes that there ought not to be a distinction between human life and nonhuman life because humanity share the same source of being. This idea of humanity sharing a common origin with other non human life is expressed in African cosmology. K. A. Busia writes:

Their (ie Africans’) cosmologies were based on the existence of a Supreme Being who was Spirit and Creator, and the source of all power and energy. He granted existence to all created things. He animated the gods, the spirits and human beings, animals, rivers, trees, rocks and all matter. Their metaphysics conceived the creator as the Universal Vital Force that animated and energized all created things whose real essence consisted not in matter but in the energy and power infused into them by the Creator.<sup>829</sup>

The above understanding of common origin of all created things obliges the traditional Africans to conceive their ontological relationship among all things. As such the traditional African does not see him/her self in isolation from the other creatures, nor does he/she see other creatures in isolation from themselves.

As we have seen from the foregoing discussions, the African understanding of the term ‘community’ broadly suggests bondedness. It refers to the act of sharing and living in communion and communication with each other and with nature. To communicate is to stay in a relationship and inculcate a sense of sharing. This is what Sindima meant by saying that “in community we share and commune with selves who are other than ourselves and yet

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<sup>826</sup> Sindima, Harvely. 1990. “Community of Life: Ecological Theology” in *African Perspective*. p. 145

<sup>827</sup> See Nicolson, Ronald. 2008. (ed) *Persons in Community. African Ethics in a Global Culture*. Pietermaritzburg: University of KwaZulu-Natal Press.p.39

<sup>828</sup> Lisa, H. Sideris.2003. *Environmental Ethics, Ecological Theology and Natural Selection*. p.220

<sup>829</sup> Busia, K.A .1969. *Purposeful Education in Africa*. 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. Mouton: The Hague.p.14

united to us”. Sindima goes further to suggest that ‘persons’ are not individual entities or strangers to one another. It is the community which defines the person as person, “not some isolated static quality of rationality, will or memory”.<sup>830</sup> Since people belong to the fabric of life, their life-like nature must be respected. This call for respect is also a charge to the community to create possibilities for persons to realize full personhood. In a community of life where all are bonded together, everyone is responsible for everyone else”.<sup>831</sup>

Setiloane’s biocentric theology sheds more light in our understanding of the parallel meaning of community in relation to *Oikothology* and African sense of community especially as it relates to the Igbo notion of *onye aghana nwanne ya*. The parallelization of the meaning of ‘community’ which is also at the heart of *Oikothology* and African understanding underlines the conceptualization of the earth as the bigger house which humans inhabit together with multiple other forms of life.<sup>832</sup> In this parallelization, we employ Setiloane’s use of the term biocentric theology to emphasise the inclusive nature of community life in all its forms.<sup>833</sup> The term “biocentric” was originally formulated by Leopold in his notion of land ethic which implies an expansive notion of community. This term was later broadened as “ecocentric” or “biocentric” ethics by different philosophers over the decades to mean that we are all part of a biotic or ecological community.<sup>834</sup> As a result; the understanding of ‘ecocentrism’ or ‘biocentrism’ has come to mean that all living things have intrinsic worth, i.e. value in and of themselves, not just instrumental or utilitarian value. The overarching principle of such a land ethic involves the extension of our human ethics to include the other species with which we share the land. In this perspective, all ethics rests upon a single premise: “that the individual is a member of a community with interdependent parts and the land ethic simply enlarges the boundaries of the community to include soil, waters, plants and animals”.<sup>835</sup> Therefore “biodiversity is necessary not only for utilitarian and humanitarian reasons (for maintaining the present and future health of the entire biosphere, for enhancing the quality of

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<sup>830</sup> Shutte, Augustine. 1993. *Philosophy for Africa*. South Africa: University of Cape Town. p.46

<sup>831</sup> Sindima, Harvely, 1990. “Community of Life: Ecological Theology” in *African Perspective*. p.145

<sup>832</sup> Conradie, Ernst. 2005. *An Ecological Christian Anthropology. At Home with Earth?* p.221

<sup>833</sup> Setiloane, Gabriel. “Towards a Biocentric Theology and Ethic Via Africa “in *Journal of Black Theology in South Africa* 9: (1) May 1995: 61

<sup>834</sup> Jacklyn, Cock. 2007. *The War Against Ourselves. Nature, Power and Justice* . p.48

<sup>835</sup> Jacklyn, Cock. 2007. *The War Against Ourselves. Nature, Power and Justice*. p.48

life, and for aesthetic enjoyment), but its own sake. Ecocentrism expands the goods of the human community to embrace and include within it the good of the biotic community”.<sup>836</sup>

Setiloane borrowed this term and uses it in a theological context to imply that the success of life in the Christian perspective is found in the ability to maintain relationship with all life. This relationship is also expressed in the Igbo concept that seeks to promote the principle of ‘live and let live’. The Igbos strongly believe in the precautionary notion of *Egbe belu, ugo belu, nke si ibe ya ebena, nku kwaa ya*. When translated, it reads; “let the kite perch as well as the eagle. If anyone refuses the other, let its wing be cut off.” The rationalization of *egbe belu* precautionary principle tries to enforce respect for all life forms. It is a concept which recognizes the right of existence of all life and insists that no one particular life has the right of refusal to existence to other life forms.

The *egbe belu* precautionary principle seeks to guarantee the protection of all the community members including the weaker ones who would ordinarily not been able to protect themselves. The application of this principle ensures safety in the whole community of life as none is discriminated against for any reason. This healthy relationship which the *egbe belu* principle promotes ideally eliminates greed in its various dimensions as only one’s legitimate rights and needs are sufficiently satisfied. Given the protection of rights which the *egbe belu* principle seeks to promote, we want to use it in a creative way to refer to the interdependent and interconnected nature of relationship which ought to exist between the human and non human communities. In doing this we would divide the ‘earth community’ into two interconnected entities represented by the *ugo* (eagle) which we likened to the human community and *egbe* (kite), the non human community. The Igbo proverb says that “*onodu ugo anaghi adi egbe mma*. This means that the presence of the eagle is always a threat to the kite. Though both of them are birds of prey, one is more threatening than the other, and in the presence of the eagle the kite will not be able to find food. In the African traditional understanding, both human community and the non human community pose a threat to each

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<sup>836</sup> Merchant, Caroline. 2004. *Reinventing Eden: The Fate of Nature in Western Culture*. New York: Routledge. p.211

other. Nature is understood as possessing some mysterious forces (spiritual and natural).<sup>837</sup> There is therefore the belief that there is a spiritual world of powers or beings more powerful and ultimate than human which sometimes poses a threat to humanity.<sup>838</sup> As a result, Turner asserts that because the universe being thus a personalized phenomenon:

man (sic) therefore lives with an awareness of the presence of transcendent powers which, however, are ambivalent. Not only is there the hierarchy of benevolent ancestors, and of spirits, divinities and high gods, but there is also the range of evil spirits, of demons and malevolent divinities and the lesser, more earth-born occult powers of wizards and witches.<sup>839</sup>

In spite of these very powerful manifestations of spirits and demons in the universe humanity possesses a more threatening, exploitative and harmful power than the non human community. To understand this, one needs to reflect on the statement by Temple Placide who says that: “Man (sic) is the supreme force, the most powerful among all created forces. He dominates plants, animals and minerals...his fullness of being consist in his participation to a greater or less extent in the force of God”.<sup>840</sup> In this regard, both humanity and nature possesses some forces and therefore can prey on each other like the kite and the eagle, but humanity like the eagle is more predatory and plundering than the kite-nature.

But the *egbe belu* precautionary principle maintains that both communities, (ie the kite and the eagle), because of their interconnected and interdependent relationship must co-exist. However, if any would refuse the other the right of existence, then it wings would be cut off. The wing, understood in our context is definitely seen as a tool of survival and existence, so when it is cut off; existence becomes difficult. If humanity exercises it plundering power over nature to the point of extinction, its existence would therefore be impossible. This is an indication or rather warning that if human existence would flourish it is imperative and in fact, obligatory for humanity to exercise restraint towards nature. The *egbe belu* principle is

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<sup>837</sup> See Sindima, Harvey. 1990. “Community of Life: Ecological Theology in African Perspective” in Birch, B.C, Eakin W. and McDaniel, J.B. (eds) *Liberating Life: Contemporary Approaches to Ecological Theology*. Maryknoll: Orbis. p.143

<sup>838</sup> Turner, Harold. “The Primal Religions of the World and their study” quoted in Hayes Victor.1977.(ed) *Australian Essays in World Religions*. Bedford Park: Australian Association for World Religions.p.27-37

<sup>839</sup> Turner, Harold. *The Primal Religions of the World and their study*

<sup>840</sup> Temples, Placide. 1959. *Bantu Philosophy*. Rue Descartes, Paris: Prescence Africaine. P.65

in outright condemnation of the saying that ‘might is right’. The importance of this principle when properly applied is of immense benefit to the earth community in two significant ways.

First, it has the restraining ability to minimize the occurrence of poverty since each member of the community being responsible for the other, simply takes what is needed for their survival. Second, it restrains human exploitation of nature since the mysterious force of nature could angrily react against humanity. Therefore, it is dangerous for one not to recognize the right of existence of others or to disturb the constant cycle of existence which affects the corporate existence of the earth community.

Perhaps, the best model for human community as understood in the African context is the extended family system in relation to the concept of *Oikothology*. We have noted that *Oikothology* as a kinship metaphor refers to the ‘family’ or ‘household’.<sup>841</sup> With this understanding in mind, the African sense of the extended family system describes how individual members of the society are related to one another and this could also be applied to how humans understand their extended relationship with nature-the bigger family in the realm of existence. The notion of ‘home for all’ expressed in *Oikothology* includes the whole community of life which Warmback describes thus:

In a home there is the structure as well as mutuality of care, assurance of belonging, sustenance and support. A home implies domestic relations of interrelatedness and interdependence, without rivalry and oppression. It is about community and reconciliation, wholeness, connectedness, love, sacrifice, generosity, and welcoming the stranger.<sup>842</sup>

Reflecting on the above quotation with regards to *Oikothology* it should be understood that in the African context of wider family setting, the extended family members include ancestors, friends, neighbours, visitors, foreigners. It also includes domestic animals-goats, dogs and fowls. At the heart of oikothology is the conceptualization of the earth as the bigger house which humans inhabit together with multiple other forms of life.<sup>843</sup>

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<sup>841</sup> Louw, Johannes P. And Eugene A. Nida (eds) 1989. Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament based on semantic domains. Vol.1. Cape Town: Bible Society of South Africa.pg.113

<sup>842</sup> Warmback, Andrew. 2005. *Constructing an oikothology: The Environment, Poverty and the Church in South Africa*. p.181

<sup>843</sup> Conradie, Ernst. 2005. *An Ecological Christian Anthropology. At Home with Earth?* p.221

The extended family is capable of being extended to include anyone, not only the immediate family members i.e. those related by blood, kinship or marriage. Because of this extension, everyone is considered as a family member, no one is a stranger. The world is our common family and the earth the property of all.<sup>844</sup> Since the interface is clear between the concept of *Oikothology* and the African notion of community especially the Igbo notion of *onye aghana nwanne ya*, it has become necessary therefore, to integrate these two in order to form a coherent ecological model that would not only serve African Christianity but one that would be Africa's gift to Christendom in particular and humanity in general, in its quest for ecological solution.

## 7.9. Conclusion

In this chapter we have discussed the values of the African traditional ecological knowledge in general and Nigerian indigenous ecological resources in the form of the Igbo proverbs in particular. Having recognized the relevance of the African indigenous traditional ecological knowledge to the study because of its richness and potentials to providing solutions to the environment and poverty challenges in Africa, we have therefore articulated the synthesis of the Nigerian indigenous/African ecological ethics especially the egbe belu precautionary principle with *oikothology*. This, in our opinion, would not only respond to or address the gaps identified in the *oikothology*, but at the same time produce an eco-theological framework that would be indigenous, and hence accessible to African culture.

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<sup>844</sup> Menkiti, I. A. 1979. "Person and Community in African Traditional Thought". In Wright, R.A. (ed) *African Philosophy*. New York: University Press of America. p.159

## CHAPTER EIGHT

### 8.0. Conclusion and Recommendations

We are virtually at the end of our work. In this conclusion chapter, our task is to make some general conclusions based on the findings of the study as a whole. These observations would enable us to recommend some plan of action which we believe would assist the church in Nigeria and particularly the Anglican Dioceses in Anambra State, to engage positively in tackling the current environment and poverty challenges in Nigeria. The work generally is expected to contribute to the global discussion on the current double earth crisis of the environment and poverty. This is because the practical application of the concept of *Oikothology* as we have laboriously argued in the work could also provide insights to further research on the role of the church in environment and development issues.

The successful transition from theory to action in our attempt to indigenize the concept of *Oikothology* would require that we remind ourselves in this concluding chapter of some salient issues we have been dealing with in the work, namely (i) the interconnectedness between environment and poverty and hence the use of the concept of *oikothology* which draws from ecology and economy as an ecotheological resource.(ii) Our inherited theology-heaven theology and the influence of the dominion thought which do not take environmental issues seriously have to a large extent been at the root of our ecological crisis. (iii) In trying to construct a heaven theology that takes the earth seriously, we have identified the need to recognize the importance of culture, hence the synthesis of *oikothology* and the African indigenous ecological ethics. From the above salient themes which ran through the work we now make the following conclusions.

### 8.1. Environment and Development

The thrust of the study is principally centred on the engagement of the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion), especially the three Anglican dioceses in Anambra State, on issues of the environment and poverty. The study notes that the prevailing Western mechanistic understanding of how the environment is viewed, including of course our inherited heaven theology, has to a very large extent been responsible for the unfriendly human behaviour and

unsustainable attitude in utilizing the resources of the environment. Therefore, the study is of the opinion that for the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) in particular and the entire Christendom in general to be able to engage positively in the current environmental challenges as well as respond to the challenges of poverty, it has to be actively involved in the process of deconstructing the narrow mechanistic understanding of the environment as well as constructing a theology whose influence does not denigrate the environment.

In this regard, the task of the study was therefore to provide the church with an eco-theological framework for this deconstruction process. The outcome of the study which is based on the construction of the concept of *Oikothology* by Andrew Warmback, is the synthesis of African indigenous ecological ethics. It is anticipated that this synthesis will now help the church to understand the term environment in its broader context - to include non-humans as well as humans especially reflecting the African cultural understanding. In this regard, it is essential that the earth's resources are utilized in the most sustainable manner in order to sustain the entire *oikos*. It is equally imperative that the distribution of these resources is done in the most equitable way to ensure that the basic needs of the majority of the people are met. These have been the central postulations of the concept of *oikothology* throughout the study. This could be the very beginning of the many steps needed to address the environmental challenges as well as ensure poverty reduction in Nigeria, Africa and the world in general.

However, the study notes that the prevailing global economic structures and policies not only encourage despoliation of the environmental resources but also entrench hegemony which excludes the majority of the citizens of the world from enjoying the resources of the *oikos*. The global economic structure has deeply entrenched inequality, class division and perpetuated poverty on a large scale. It is on the above note that the study argues that poverty alleviation and environmental sustainability would still be a mere rhetoric as long as these economic policies and structures that engender hegemony are not addressed. The overhauling of the current dysfunctional global economic structure will only become possible if our understanding of how the environment and its resources should be utilized is positively changed by adopting a new understanding and attitude towards the environment from the perspective of *oikos* and the synthesis of the concept of *Oikothology* and African indigenous ecological ethics.

## **8.2. The Response of the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) to Environment and Development Issues**

Our observation based on the response of the church (especially the three Anglican Dioceses in Anambra State) to environment and development issues is that the church has been very slow to respond to environment and development issues. The basis of this conclusion hinges on the reflection of the church's inaction on development issues in general and on environmental concerns in particular. We do not want to make a blanket statement here. As such, we could see that in some areas of social concern, the church has tried to respond to some specific issues demanding its attention at any particular point in time. For example, the church has made some remarkable contributions to the challenges of HIV and AIDS, but in development issues generally and environment in particular, it has not positively made much impact.

This invisible commitment is attributable to the church's naive knowledge of the inextricable link between environment and poverty alleviation and development issues in general. The church's naive knowledge is portrayed in the manner in which it has in practice seemed to have followed the traditionally perceived view that ecological and economic concerns are separate and that the church's primary assignment is to proclaim the gospel: development issues is not considered as its main evangelical or mission thrust. This observation is made more vivid by the absence of a national policy document on development or on the environment in the church of Nigeria. In the vision of the church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) issues of development are not specifically spelt out let alone include environmental issues.

The absence of a national policy document in the church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) could suggest at least two things. It is either that the church has no priority on development issues, or that it is not aware of its potential as an agent of change to influence the ways in which development is understood and pursued. This suggestion, could perhaps explain the reason why the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) has maintained a very disturbing silence even on the critical issues of environmental injustice going on in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria. The study notes that the Church of Nigeria's non prioritization of development issues stood in sharp contrast to its vision which sought to position the church

as a “caring church”. But the caring vision of the church has not been felt in the areas of development in general and in environment and poverty in particular. There is therefore the need for the church of Nigeria’s vision of a “caring church” to extend to all other areas and to include all members of the *oikos*.

### **8.3. Insufficiency of Oikothology to Provide Enough Practical Commitment**

The thinking behind the proposal of *Oikothology* as an ecotheological framework is that it could provide the church as a whole as well as the individual members with the praxis which inspires action against environmental abuse. However, the observation made by the study is that *Oikothology* alone could not fulfil this promise of inspiring practical commitment to environmental action because of the challenges and the gaps we have already discussed in the work. These challenges and gaps are essentially associated with both the church’s various teachings and liturgical practices which emphasize much of the eschatological longing for another world. As a way of revitalizing *Oikothology* in order to invoke both inspiration and commitment, we proposed the synthesis of African ecological ethics with *Oikothology*. Building on the strengths of this synthesis, an Africanized or indigenized form of *Oikothology* could provide the basis for the appreciation of African theology which seeks to integrate those cherished African traditions with Christian values to produce a coherent Christian ecological model more akin to African Christianity. The dialogue between *Oikothology* and African traditional ecological ethics is therefore seen as a positive way of doing this.

### **8.4. The Poor are not the Sole Culprits**

From literature to experience, there has been a heavy resonance of the view that environmental degradation is not only caused by the poor. There has been a wide spread view that the poor are to be blamed solely for degrading the environment. Contrary to this view, the study concludes that a whole range of factors are responsible for environmental degradation. These factors which have been discussed in the study include poverty, affluence and technology. In this regard, therefore, both the poor and the rich are guilty of the same offence. Therefore, the poor should not be made the “scapegoat”.

In bringing the research to a close through the above general observations, we now want to make practical suggestions on how to translate the synthesis of the concept of Oikothology and African indigenous ecological ethics into action. These suggestions are expected to keep up the theory building process. The suggestions below emerged as a result of our interaction with a whole range of literature including the research findings.

### **8.5. From Theory to Practice**

From our research findings, the study observes that although the clergy who responded to the questionnaire exhibited some levels of environmental knowledge, it concludes that this is still a “paper knowledge” since the knowledge has not been practically translated and utilized in a manner that justifies its relevance. Based on the church’s “invisible contribution” or nonchalance to respond and engage in environmental issues in a more practical way in spite of the purported knowledge by the clergy, the study further concludes that practical commitment and action are very vital for church’s engagement in the fight against environmental abuse and poverty alleviation. This conclusion is based on the understanding that mere rhetoric unaccompanied by practical or contextual theologizing would not provide the church with the needed inspiration to be practically committed to environment and poverty challenges.

In this regard, the church is reminded of the caution that any theology that does not reflect the lived experiences of the people is not worth pursuing in the first place. In view of this caution, the church needs to engage theologically from ‘inside’ in order to be active and proactive in its engagement on environmental issues. This is because the church as an agent of social change is expected to change itself first before it can show the world how to change in several ways. The process of this change starts from the church acknowledging its past mistakes, predominantly its-anthropocentric teachings and attitudes against nature. This, it could do by appreciating the values of *Oikothology* and the synthesis of African ecological ethics as proposed by the study. A proper appreciation could result to the teaching and preaching of a vision of what our attitude to the environment could and should be; and by practicing same in order to give hope to the world as the world gropes in darkness in its struggles with the current environment and poverty challenges.

For the church to engage in this redemptive work which could actually demonstrate its practical concern to environmental issues, it has to set up a national body on the environment.

#### **8.5.1. Formation of National Commission on the Environment in the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion)**

It is unfortunate that the dynamics of building partnerships with the government, NGOs and the private sector have not been fully explored by the church in the way in which the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) and the Anglican Dioceses operate in the State and the nation at large. Our suggestion in this regard is that the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) needs to set up a Commission comprised of group of interested and committed development experts. The task of the National Commission on Environment should include among other things to formulate development polices which also covers environment and poverty issues for the communion. It would also help dioceses to set up environmental NGOs as well as assist them to network with other environmental agencies both at the national and international levels. Through this type of networking, the much desired synergistic approach to the current environmental challenges could be achieved. The Commission could also make proposals and provide resources as well as technical assistance to the church in order for it to respond creatively to ecological problems. This Commission could in time metamorphose into Christian Institute of Ecological studies, but its primary assignment should be to help Anglican Dioceses form a faith based environmental organisation.

#### **8.5.2. Establishment of Church Environmental Society**

There already exists in the church (both at diocesan and parish levels) many organisations and societies with various aims and objectives. The church with the help of the proposed Commission, could also introduce an environmental society consisting of Christians who are interested in environmental issues. This society with the assistance of the national commission on the environment, will be responsible for articulating resources (both theological) to address environmental problems of the church and the immediate community where the church is located. The society will design and engage in activities like tree planting programmes, grassing, erosion control measures, and church compound beautification to

improve the aesthetic outlook of the church with flowers and ornamental trees. Planting trees is one of the most costs-effective ways to attack carbon dioxide building up in atmosphere.

Our vision is that this society will link with other environmental organisations or societies in the State and in the country as well like the “Earth keepers” to join hands together in the fight against environmental degradation. This society will be entrusted with the responsibility of organising environmental campaigns, workshops and seminars from time to time where environmental activists, policy makers and environmentalists will be invited to speak to the local congregation on the need for environmental conservation, the causes and prevention of environmental degradation and other relevant environment and poverty issues. The establishment of this society if adopted should be seen as a practical expression of the church’s commitment to caring for the rest of the local community, thereby maintaining its relevance in the society. The need for the establishment of the society is seen from the research findings which showed that majority of the parishes do not have environmental society or organisation.

### **8.5.3. Environmental Education**

The church enjoys the monopoly and advantage of being influential, inspirational, as well as being near to the people more than any other secular institution. As a “teaching institution” the church should make use of this advantage of proximity and influence, to create avenues through which it could teach, inspire and influence people to understand the need to protect and conserve the environment. As we had noted earlier, the bible is rich with ecological resources for this teaching ministry. Bible study sessions and “Friday Communicants’ Bible Classes” could provide a good opportunity for such teachings. The need for this teaching has become imperative realizing that environmental illiteracy and lukewarmness is still widespread at both the local and urban communities. The problem is not much about knowledge but about commitment. Many people have the basic environmental knowledge about how to protect the environment and avoid environmental destruction but lack the will to utilize this knowledge in a way that engenders environmental sustainability.

The church has the potential - the resources to inspire commitment and collective will of the people, hence the need for it to vigorously engage in environmental education using all the resources at its disposal. Environmental education done within the framework of contextual

theology by the church has the ability to create awareness, transform, inspire practical commitment and bring about the desired change of attitude to environmental issues. Environmental education done as a contextual bible study should aim at educating and encouraging people to adopt environmentally friendly behaviour at all levels. An effective implementation of a contextual bible study on the environment could also lead to social transformation at different stratum of the society. It could bring about an environmental reorientation to such an extent that people would begin to imbibe the desired norm of not only appreciating nature, but the clarion call to reduce, reuse, and recycle would be an entrenched reality.

The above suggestion is based on the belief that effective environmental education initiated and spearheaded by the church could not only influence the collective conscience of individual church members, it could as well serve as instrumental tool of influence on the government. The church has its members in different levels and positions in the government. This could therefore make it easy for the church to influence the government to adopt a “political will” to genuinely engage in environment and poverty issues. You could recall that in chapter four, we noted that the issue of political will is one of the major challenges in Anambra state which impacts negatively on the environmental situation in the state. The church could actually help to address the problem of “political will” by influencing its members at different levels of governance including the legislative arm of the government to adopt policies that would engender environmental sustainability. In this way, the church could also influence the government to respond to micro economic policies that subjugate, marginalize and pauperize the greater percentage of the society. Better micro economic policies and provision of the basic human needs would minimize the incidence of environmental exploitation which many poor usually adopt as a survival strategy.

Although churches as places of worship could serve as effective channels for environmental education such as the bible study and the Sunday school, there is also the need to extend environmental education to the church owned schools at all levels, from Nursery to Higher institutions. The church should encourage its own schools to incorporate environmental studies in its curriculum where special attention should be paid to environment and poverty issues and the integrity of creation. In fact, we are suggesting that environmental studies should be made a compulsory subject in church owned schools. This suggestion is important

considering the fact that majority of the respondents indicated that the Lambeth Conference resolution on the environment has not been widely publicized in their respective parishes. Therefore, environmental education in this way could be seen as a good opportunity of not only publicizing the Lambeth Conference resolution on the environment but also as a way of contributing to environmental solution in general.

At institutional level, the church should encourage the training of its personnel. For an effective environmental education to take place, that is to bring about attitudinal change and appreciation of nature, the clergy should first be environmentally educated. The Diocesan clergy workshops are good avenues for such informal education. This is necessary because in some cases, the clergy is as environmentally illiterate just as the lay members. Such a reality is most likely to precipitate the inability of environmental education facilitators to integrate other pertinent areas of development and environmental concerns including the underlying socio-economic causes of environmental degradation and poverty problems.

Similarly, theological students while in training should be taught the importance of appreciating nature to enhance proper environmental management. With regard to the above, we propose theology and development study as a module in the theological institutions of the church.<sup>845</sup> Theology and Development study is a more innovative and practical way of responding and engaging theologically in socio-economic, political and cultural issues of importance to the church. The church needs as a matter of necessity to articulate a well researched theological curriculum in this field of theological study. Environmental concerns together with other socio-political and economic issues should form integral part of this Theology and Development module. This proposal is in recognition of the fact that the dynamics and challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century society has placed additional demands and pressures (socio-economic, political and cultural other than the normal theological demands) on the ordained ministry, therefore, a re-appraisal of paradigm for theological education in the church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) has become imperative.

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<sup>845</sup> Theology and development study as a specialized field of study cuts across the three main 'traditional' disciplines in theology viz-Practical Theology, Christian Ethics and Missiology. We must admit the structural weaknesses inherent in our current theological education which are tied into an inflexible, 'traditional' view on academic standards incognizant of the social realities out there in the society we are expected to impact positively.

The proposal has become vitally important if the church would be able to fulfil the missiological mandate which is its *raison d'être* as well as respond to these other demands (socio-economic and political) which the society expects of it. Consequently the church needs to equip fully and in diverse forms all members of the ordained ministry in order to achieve this. The equipment of the ordained ministry to meet these challenges require that the church must shift from the existing 'traditional' theological education model to a new missional and pastoral model that would better reflect the shape of 21st century Nigerian society. With this in mind, the overall aspirations of the proposed theology and development studies would therefore be among others to:

- ✚ To connect theological learning and societal challenges.
- ✚ To ensure that theology is not study in isolation but connected and applied to real ministry situations
- ✚ To enable students in subsequent ministry positions to be able to apply their learning to the challenges they face and to connect culture and theology
- ✚ To enable those who are trained to be open theologically to fresh challenges in a lifetime of ministry

The above points are essential in view of the need for African theologians to reflect the realities-socio-economic, political and cultural of the African society. In this way theology would no more remain abstract or foreign to many African Christians. This is also the pint we made when we proposed the synthesis of oikothology and the African indigenous ecological ethics.

As a theology and development student, I have been deeply enriched and motivated by the insights from the School of Religion and Theology of the University of Kwazulu-Natal, for their programme in theology and development studies. When such programmes are introduced in our theological institutions, those who have given themselves to the ordained ministry would be provided with the "theological wherewithal" to meet the challenges of the 21 century society in which the church has been called to minister.

#### **8.5.4. Publications**

The church could also offer environmental education through the publication of books, journals and pamphlets with practical suggestions on how to relate to the environment. The Dioceses could organize environmental essay competition for all its junior schools (primary and post primary) as a way of getting the student to develop interest in environmental issues. These essays would be part of the publications in the diocesan “News letter” or other forms of publications.

#### **8.5.5. Establishment of Environmental Sunday**

The church could create space to include in its calendar a Sunday in a year to be observed as *Environmental Sunday*. Environmental Sunday ‘spiced up’ with educative and transformational activities could last for a whole week could be seen as an occasion for the church to reaffirm its commitment of being ecological responsible. It could also use the opportunity to remind individual Christians of the need to be environmentally sensitive. On Environmental Sunday, biblical texts, conduct of worship including prayers as well as sermons would be aimed at reflecting environmental concerns using the bible as the basis. This should be slightly different from the church’s tradition of observing Rogation Sundays. Here, our suggestion is that Environmental Sunday could be held on the weekend closest to June 5, which the UNO has established as “World Environmental Day”.

The Environmental Sunday could also be used to re-dedicate old members as well as induct new members of the environmental society. Our suggestion is that special collections will be organised and certain percentage be taken to the Diocesan Office. This part of the special collection would serve as a contingency fund, which the Diocese could dispense in offering relief assistance to those severely affected by natural /environmental disasters such as flood, or erosion in different parts of the Diocese. The fund would also be used to address other pertinent environmental issues in the diocese.

## **8.6. Conclusion**

This concluding chapter has dealt with some salient issues the work has been dealing with, as well as provide a general observation of the study. It also provided some recommendations- from theory to action. Some of these observations are specifically applicable to the three dioceses in Anambra state and the church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion). While others in broader contexts concern the global environment and development initiatives. Since the work cannot claim to be exhaustive there are openings for further research in order to enrich our common understanding and hence articulate collective solutions to the current double earth crisis of the environment and poverty.

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## APPENDICES

### Appendix 1

#### Research Questions

What is the understanding and engagement of the Anglican Dioceses in Anambra State (Nigeria) on Environment and Poverty?

Background to the questionnaire.

Apart from the general mandate for church's engagement in social action, including the areas of poverty and the environment, the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) and thus the Anglican Church in Anambra State, has the specific commitment of the World Wide Anglican Communion to be engaged in concerns to do with the environment and poverty.

This research will investigate the extent to which the three Anglican Dioceses of Niger, Awka and Nnewi in Anambra state have taken up this engagement.

To understand the above issues, this research project aims to address the following questions. Do these dioceses show in practical terms an understanding of the mandate to be engaged in environment and poverty issues?

What is the depth/level of clergy understanding, and commitment to environment and poverty issues?

How has this understanding and commitment, been translated to the grass roots (parish levels).

Are there factors impacting on the ability of these dioceses to respond to the issues of environment and poverty?

Are the laity active participants in translating the Diocesan policies on environment and poverty?

In order to pursue these questions, this research aims to undertake field research in the three dioceses, with the aid of a questionnaire. Below are a set of questionnaires which have been adapted from Southern African Faith Communities Environment Institute, The Episcopal Diocese of Connecticut, the Eco-Justice Ministry and other Faith Environmental

Organisations. I have personally formulated some questions as well as modified the adapted ones to suit the Nigerian context.

Personal data

Name (optional) \_\_\_\_\_

Diocese \_\_\_\_\_

Parish \_\_\_\_\_

Status (Clergy/Laity) \_\_\_\_\_

Year of ordination \_\_\_\_\_

Position (eg. Archdeacon, Canon, Chaplain etc) \_\_\_\_\_

Academic qualification (Degree, Dip, Cert etc) \_\_\_\_\_

An Environmental Check-up for Parishes

Please answer the following questions below. You are free to supply any missing option or additional information for clarity. Choose from the options provided.

1. The church should concern itself with spiritual matters and leave environment and development issues to the government and NGOs.

|                   |       |            |          |                      |
|-------------------|-------|------------|----------|----------------------|
| Strongly<br>agree | Agree | Don't know | Disagree | Strongly<br>disagree |
|-------------------|-------|------------|----------|----------------------|

2. The Diocese has not taken environment and development issues very seriously.

|                |       |            |          |                   |
|----------------|-------|------------|----------|-------------------|
| Strongly agree | Agree | Don't know | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
|----------------|-------|------------|----------|-------------------|

3. How regular during the year are environment and poverty concerns reflected in the church's liturgy and teaching?

|        |       |                    |   |            |
|--------|-------|--------------------|---|------------|
| Always | Never | As the need arises | Occasional Services eg. Harvest, Rogation etc | Don't know |
|--------|-------|--------------------|---|------------|

4. Does your parish make annual budgetary provision to cover environment and poverty related issues? Yes/No

5. Does your Diocese through its publications discuss environment and poverty issues to create awareness?

6. Does your Diocese have an environmental group/ organisation?

7. Does your Parish have an environmental organisation/Group Yes/No

8 My parish has the necessary capacity to implement Diocesan policies on environment and Development.

|                |       |            |          |                   |
|----------------|-------|------------|----------|-------------------|
| Strongly agree | Agree | Don't know | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
|----------------|-------|------------|----------|-------------------|

9. If your answer to question 8 is negative, which of the following capacities does your parish lack?

|                       |                        |                 |                            |                         |
|-----------------------|------------------------|-----------------|----------------------------|-------------------------|
| Personnel<br>/Experts | Financial<br>resources | Collective will | Physical<br>infrastructure | Committed<br>leadership |
|-----------------------|------------------------|-----------------|----------------------------|-------------------------|

10. Does your parish have environmental management plan? Yes /No

11. Has your parish ever conducted environmental impact assessment on any of its on-going projects? Yes /No

12. Has your parish ever conducted an environmental audit exercise? Yes /No

13. Does your parish have an environmental Officer? Yes /No

14 Does your parish engage in any poverty alleviation initiative? Yes /No

15. If yes, what kind (Supply the missing option)

|        |              |                    |             |                |
|--------|--------------|--------------------|-------------|----------------|
| Relief | Co-operative | Skills acquisition | Agriculture | Missing option |
|--------|--------------|--------------------|-------------|----------------|

16. If no, why not (Supply the missing option)

|              |              |                |             |                |
|--------------|--------------|----------------|-------------|----------------|
| Lack of land | Lack of fund | Not interested | Not<br>sure | Missing option |
|--------------|--------------|----------------|-------------|----------------|

17. People in my parish are interested in environment and poverty issues

|                   |       |            |          |                   |
|-------------------|-------|------------|----------|-------------------|
| Strongly<br>agree | Agree | Don't know | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
|-------------------|-------|------------|----------|-------------------|

18. If your answer to the question above is positive, what practical evidence shows that your parish is environmentally friendly? (Tick applicable options)

|                                  |  |                              |  |                         |
|----------------------------------|--|------------------------------|--|-------------------------|
| Regular environmental sanitation | Proper erosion control and Natural resource management | Proper waste management plan | Tree planting and vegetation maintenance | Environmental campaigns |
|----------------------------------|--|------------------------------|--|-------------------------|

19. Does your parish have a waste management plan? Yes /No

|         |                        |           |              |         |
|---------|------------------------|-----------|--------------|---------|
| Burning | Indiscriminate dumping | Recycling | Land filling | Nothing |
|---------|------------------------|-----------|--------------|---------|

20 How does your parish deal with waste?

21. Does your Parish have a compost centre? Yes/No

22. Does your parish engage in a tree planting programme/campaign? Yes /No

23 Has your parish ever organised an environmental campaign in your community? Yes/No

24 Has your parish ever organised an environmental workshop/seminar? Yes /No

25 Is environmental education part of your church-owned schools' curriculum? Yes / No

### Knowledge of Anglican involvement in environmental issues

26. The Anglican Church is very involved in environment and poverty issues in Anambra state.

|                   |       |            |          |                   |
|-------------------|-------|------------|----------|-------------------|
| Strongly<br>agree | Agree | Don't know | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
|-------------------|-------|------------|----------|-------------------|

27. The early missionaries (particularly the CMS) were more committed to poverty alleviation than the church of Nigeria of today.

|                   |       |            |          |                      |
|-------------------|-------|------------|----------|----------------------|
| Strongly<br>agree | Agree | Don't know | Disagree | Strongly<br>disagree |
|-------------------|-------|------------|----------|----------------------|

28. The Anglican catechism contains some basic environmental teachings.

|                   |       |            |          |                      |
|-------------------|-------|------------|----------|----------------------|
| Strongly<br>agree | Agree | Don't know | Disagree | Strongly<br>disagree |
|-------------------|-------|------------|----------|----------------------|

29 Has the Lambeth Conference resolution on the environment been widely published in your diocese? Yes /No.

30 Environment and poverty issues are incorporated into the curriculum of the Anglican theological institutions in Nigeria.

|                   |       |            |          |                      |
|-------------------|-------|------------|----------|----------------------|
| Strongly<br>agree | Agree | Don't know | Disagree | Strongly<br>disagree |
|-------------------|-------|------------|----------|----------------------|

**Personal understanding on environmental issues**

31. What is the commonest form of energy source people in your parish use for cooking?

|           |             |             |              |          |
|-----------|-------------|-------------|--------------|----------|
| Fire wood | Electricity | Fossil fuel | Solar energy | Not sure |
|-----------|-------------|-------------|--------------|----------|

32. Which of these energy sources do you think has a lowest impact on the environment?

|           |             |             |              |          |
|-----------|-------------|-------------|--------------|----------|
| Fire wood | Electricity | Fossil fuel | Solar energy | Not sure |
|-----------|-------------|-------------|--------------|----------|

33. Does your parish sing hymns/songs that celebrate the wonder of creation or express our calling to care for the earth? Yes/ No

34 The church should be involved in environmental issues?

|                |       |            |          |                   |
|----------------|-------|------------|----------|-------------------|
| Strongly agree | Agree | Don't know | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
|----------------|-------|------------|----------|-------------------|

35. If your answer is positive to question above, why do we have to take care of the environment?

|   |  |  |   |  |
|---|--|--|---|--|
| Environment sustains us in terms of its resources | To preserve its pristine and scenic nature | God commanded us to take care of the Earth | Our health depends on the ecosystems health | It has both intrinsic value and inherent worth |
|---|--|--|---|--|

36. The environment is not as important as human lives.

|                |       |            |          |                   |
|----------------|-------|------------|----------|-------------------|
| Strongly agree | Agree | Don't know | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
|----------------|-------|------------|----------|-------------------|

37. Global warming is not a serious threat to environment and development.

|                |       |            |          |                   |
|----------------|-------|------------|----------|-------------------|
| Strongly agree | Agree | Don't know | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
|----------------|-------|------------|----------|-------------------|

38. In your opinion, how should we prioritise issues relating to environment, development and people?

|                         |                         |                   |  |          |
|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------|--|----------|
| Development comes first | Environment comes first | People come first | Environment and people should be considered on equal terms | Not sure |
|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------|--|----------|

39. The activities of the poor impact negatively on the environment

|                |       |            |          |                   |
|----------------|-------|------------|----------|-------------------|
| Strongly agree | Agree | Don't know | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
|----------------|-------|------------|----------|-------------------|

Cultural and Theological knowledge on environmental issues

40. Have you ever read any theological book on environment? Yes/No

41 Which of the following would you exclude from God's family?

|              |       |                    |                         |         |
|--------------|-------|--------------------|-------------------------|---------|
| Human beings | Trees | Rivers, Mountains, | Other non living things | Animals |
|--------------|-------|--------------------|-------------------------|---------|

42. Other members of the ecosystem family should be favourably considered in terms of development issues.

|                |       |            |          |                   |
|----------------|-------|------------|----------|-------------------|
| Strongly agree | Agree | Don't know | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
|----------------|-------|------------|----------|-------------------|

43 What is your personal understanding of Gen. 1:28?

|                                 |   |  |   |          |
|---------------------------------|---|--|---|----------|
| The Earth is made for human use | People should exercise absolute dominion over the Earth | Gen. 1: 28 should be understood in the light of Psalm 24(God's absolute ownership) | Human beings are stewards of God creation | Not sure |
|---------------------------------|---|--|---|----------|

44 The Igbo/African culture has some valuable contributions to make in safe guarding the environment.

|                |       |            |          |                   |
|----------------|-------|------------|----------|-------------------|
| Strongly agree | Agree | Don't know | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
|----------------|-------|------------|----------|-------------------|

45 The synthesis of indigenous ecological ethics and *biblical resources* would best contribute to environmental protection in the Nigerian context.

|                |       |            |          |                   |
|----------------|-------|------------|----------|-------------------|
| Strongly agree | Agree | Don't know | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
|----------------|-------|------------|----------|-------------------|

46. The cultural practice of road maintenance and erosion control headed by Age grades is a valuable resource for environmental protection and management

|                |       |            |          |                   |
|----------------|-------|------------|----------|-------------------|
| Strongly agree | Agree | Don't know | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
|----------------|-------|------------|----------|-------------------|

47. The practice of the biblical concept of Jubilee would contribute to poverty reduction

|                |       |            |          |                   |
|----------------|-------|------------|----------|-------------------|
| Strongly agree | Agree | Don't know | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
|----------------|-------|------------|----------|-------------------|

48. The practice of bush burning for either hunting or farming purposes contributes to environmental degradation

|                |       |            |          |                   |
|----------------|-------|------------|----------|-------------------|
| Strongly agree | Agree | Don't know | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
|----------------|-------|------------|----------|-------------------|

49. Soil excavation, though a potential cause of soil erosion and environmental degradation, could be justified as a means of economic survival.

|                |       |            |          |                   |
|----------------|-------|------------|----------|-------------------|
| Strongly agree | Agree | Don't know | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
|----------------|-------|------------|----------|-------------------|

50. The use of chemicals and fertilizer could enhance agricultural productivity; however it should be discouraged because it degrades the environment and kills the soil.

|                   |       |            |          |                   |
|-------------------|-------|------------|----------|-------------------|
| Strongly<br>agree | Agree | Don't know | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
|-------------------|-------|------------|----------|-------------------|

**Appendix 2**

## Diocese of Awka Output

1. The church should concern itself with spiritual matters and not environment and development

|         |                   | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---------|-------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid   | strongly agree    | 1         | 2.2     | 2.3           | 2.3                |
|         | Disagree          | 15        | 33.3    | 34.9          | 37.2               |
|         | Strongly disagree | 27        | 60.0    | 62.8          | 100.0              |
|         | Total             | 43        | 95.6    | 100.0         |                    |
| Missing | System            | 2         | 4.4     |               |                    |
| Total   |                   | 45        | 100.0   |               |                    |

2. The Diocese has not taken environment and development issues very seriously

|         |                   | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---------|-------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid   | Strongly agree    | 4         | 8.9     | 9.3           | 9.3                |
|         | Agree             | 5         | 11.1    | 11.6          | 20.9               |
|         | Don't know        | 2         | 4.4     | 4.7           | 25.6               |
|         | Disagree          | 24        | 53.3    | 55.8          | 81.4               |
|         | Strongly disagree | 8         | 17.8    | 18.6          | 100.0              |
|         | Total             | 43        | 95.6    | 100.0         |                    |
| Missing | System            | 2         | 4.4     |               |                    |
| Total   |                   | 45        | 100.0   |               |                    |

3. How regular during the year are environment and poverty concerns reflected in the church's liturgy and teaching

|         |                     | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---------|---------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid   | always              | 10        | 22.2    | 23.8          | 23.8               |
|         | As the need arises  | 18        | 40.0    | 42.9          | 66.7               |
|         | Occasional services | 14        | 31.1    | 33.3          | 100.0              |
|         | Total               | 42        | 93.3    | 100.0         |                    |
| Missing | System              | 3         | 6.7     |               |                    |
| Total   |                     | 45        | 100.0   |               |                    |

4. Does your parish make annual budgetary provision to cover environment and poverty related issues

|         |        | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---------|--------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid   | Yes    | 18        | 40.0    | 47.4          | 47.4               |
|         | No     | 20        | 44.4    | 52.6          | 100.0              |
|         | Total  | 38        | 84.4    | 100.0         |                    |
| Missing | System | 7         | 15.6    |               |                    |
| Total   |        | 45        | 100.0   |               |                    |

5. Does your diocese through its publications discuss environment and poverty issues to create awareness?

|         |        | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative<br>Percent |
|---------|--------|-----------|---------|---------------|-----------------------|
| Valid   | Yes    | 31        | 68.9    | 75.6          | 75.6                  |
|         | No     | 10        | 22.2    | 24.4          | 100.0                 |
|         | Total  | 41        | 91.1    | 100.0         |                       |
| Missing | System | 4         | 8.9     |               |                       |
| Total   |        | 45        | 100.0   |               |                       |

6. Does your diocese have an environmental group/ organisation?

|         |        | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative<br>Percent |
|---------|--------|-----------|---------|---------------|-----------------------|
| Valid   | Yes    | 35        | 77.8    | 83.3          | 83.3                  |
|         | No     | 7         | 15.6    | 16.7          | 100.0                 |
|         | Total  | 42        | 93.3    | 100.0         |                       |
| Missing | System | 3         | 6.7     |               |                       |
| Total   |        | 45        | 100.0   |               |                       |

## 7. Does your parish have environmental organisation/group?

|         |        | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---------|--------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid   | Yes    | 17        | 37.8    | 42.5          | 42.5               |
|         | No     | 23        | 51.1    | 57.5          | 100.0              |
|         | Total  | 40        | 88.9    | 100.0         |                    |
| Missing | System | 5         | 11.1    |               |                    |
| Total   |        | 45        | 100.0   |               |                    |

## 8. My Parish has the necessary capacity to implement Diocesan policies on environment and development

|         |                   | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---------|-------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid   | Strongly agree    | 5         | 11.1    | 11.6          | 11.6               |
|         | Agree             | 27        | 60.0    | 62.8          | 74.4               |
|         | Don't know        | 4         | 8.9     | 9.3           | 83.7               |
|         | Disagree          | 5         | 11.1    | 11.6          | 95.3               |
|         | Strongly disagree | 2         | 4.4     | 4.7           | 100.0              |
|         | Total             | 43        | 95.6    | 100.0         |                    |
| Missing | System            | 2         | 4.4     |               |                    |
| Total   |                   | 45        | 100.0   |               |                    |

9.If your answer to question 8 is negative, which of the following capacities does your parish lack

|         |                         | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---------|-------------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid   | Personnel               | 7         | 15.6    | 41.2          | 41.2               |
|         | Financial Resources     | 4         | 8.9     | 23.5          | 64.7               |
|         | Collective will         | 3         | 6.7     | 17.6          | 82.4               |
|         | Physical Infrastructure | 2         | 4.4     | 11.8          | 94.1               |
|         | Committed leadership    | 1         | 2.2     | 5.9           | 100.0              |
|         | Total                   | 17        | 37.8    | 100.0         |                    |
| Missing | System                  | 28        | 62.2    |               |                    |
| Total   |                         | 45        | 100.0   |               |                    |

10. Does your parish have environmental management plan

|         |        | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---------|--------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid   | Yes    | 18        | 40.0    | 42.9          | 42.9               |
|         | No     | 24        | 53.3    | 57.1          | 100.0              |
|         | Total  | 42        | 93.3    | 100.0         |                    |
| Missing | System | 3         | 6.7     |               |                    |
| Total   |        | 45        | 100.0   |               |                    |

11. Has your parish ever conducted an environmental impact assessment on it projects

|         |        | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---------|--------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid   | Yes    | 18        | 40.0    | 43.9          | 43.9               |
|         | No     | 22        | 48.9    | 53.7          | 97.6               |
|         | 3      | 1         | 2.2     | 2.4           | 100.0              |
|         | Total  | 41        | 91.1    | 100.0         |                    |
| Missing | System | 4         | 8.9     |               |                    |
| Total   |        | 45        | 100.0   |               |                    |

12. Has your parish ever conducted an environmental audit exercise?

|         |        | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---------|--------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid   | Yes    | 10        | 22.2    | 25.0          | 25.0               |
|         | No     | 30        | 66.7    | 75.0          | 100.0              |
|         | Total  | 40        | 88.9    | 100.0         |                    |
| Missing | System | 5         | 11.1    |               |                    |
| Total   |        | 45        | 100.0   |               |                    |

13. Does your parish have an environmental officer?

|         |        | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---------|--------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid   | Yes    | 15        | 33.3    | 34.9          | 34.9               |
|         | No     | 28        | 62.2    | 65.1          | 100.0              |
|         | Total  | 43        | 95.6    | 100.0         |                    |
| Missing | System | 2         | 4.4     |               |                    |
| Total   |        | 45        | 100.0   |               |                    |

14. Does your parish engage in any poverty alleviation initiative?

|         |        | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---------|--------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid   | Yes    | 36        | 80.0    | 83.7          | 83.7               |
|         | No     | 6         | 13.3    | 14.0          | 97.7               |
|         | 4      | 1         | 2.2     | 2.3           | 100.0              |
|         | Total  | 43        | 95.6    | 100.0         |                    |
| Missing | System | 2         | 4.4     |               |                    |
| Total   |        | 45        | 100.0   |               |                    |

15. If yes, what kind

|         |                    | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---------|--------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid   | Relief             | 22        | 48.9    | 62.9          | 62.9               |
|         | Co operative       | 7         | 15.6    | 20.0          | 82.9               |
|         | Skills acquisition | 3         | 6.7     | 8.6           | 91.4               |
|         | Agriculture        | 3         | 6.7     | 8.6           | 100.0              |
|         | Total              | 35        | 77.8    | 100.0         |                    |
| Missing | System             | 10        | 22.2    |               |                    |
| Total   |                    | 45        | 100.0   |               |                    |

16. If no, why not

|         |                | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---------|----------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid   | Lack of land   | 2         | 4.4     | 40.0          | 40.0               |
|         | Lack of fund   | 2         | 4.4     | 40.0          | 80.0               |
|         | Not interested | 1         | 2.2     | 20.0          | 100.0              |
|         | Total          | 5         | 11.1    | 100.0         |                    |
| Missing | System         | 40        | 88.9    |               |                    |
| Total   |                | 45        | 100.0   |               |                    |

## 17. People in my parish are interested in environment and poverty issues

|         |                | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---------|----------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid   | Strongly agree | 6         | 13.3    | 14.0          | 14.0               |
|         | Agree          | 33        | 73.3    | 76.7          | 90.7               |
|         | Don't know     | 2         | 4.4     | 4.7           | 95.3               |
|         | Disagree       | 2         | 4.4     | 4.7           | 100.0              |
|         | Total          | 43        | 95.6    | 100.0         |                    |
| Missing | System         | 2         | 4.4     |               |                    |
| Total   |                | 45        | 100.0   |               |                    |

## 18. If your answer to question 19 is positive, what practical evidence shows that your parish is environmentally friendly

|         |  | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---------|--|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid   | Regular environmental sanitation                       | 16        | 35.6    | 39.0          | 39.0               |
|         | Proper erosion control and natural resource management | 14        | 31.1    | 34.1          | 73.2               |
|         | Proper waste management plan                           | 2         | 4.4     | 4.9           | 78.0               |
|         | Tree planting and vegetation maintenance               | 9         | 20.0    | 22.0          | 100.0              |
|         | Total  | 41        | 91.1    | 100.0         |                    |
| Missing | System   | 4         | 8.9     |               |                    |
| Total   |  | 45        | 100.0   |               |                    |

19. Does your parish have a waste management plan?

|         |        | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---------|--------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid   | Yes    | 26        | 57.8    | 65.0          | 65.0               |
|         | No     | 13        | 28.9    | 32.5          | 97.5               |
|         | 4      | 1         | 2.2     | 2.5           | 100.0              |
|         | Total  | 40        | 88.9    | 100.0         |                    |
| Missing | System | 5         | 11.1    |               |                    |
| Total   |        | 45        | 100.0   |               |                    |

20. How does your parish deal with waste

|         |                        | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---------|------------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid   | Burning                | 25        | 55.6    | 59.5          | 59.5               |
|         | Indiscriminate dumping | 7         | 15.6    | 16.7          | 76.2               |
|         | Recycling              | 1         | 2.2     | 2.4           | 78.6               |
|         | Land filling           | 8         | 17.8    | 19.0          | 97.6               |
|         | Nothing                | 1         | 2.2     | 2.4           | 100.0              |
|         | Total                  | 42        | 93.3    | 100.0         |                    |
| Missing | System                 | 3         | 6.7     |               |                    |
| Total   |                        | 45        | 100.0   |               |                    |

21. Does your parish have a compost centre?

|         |        | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---------|--------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid   | Yes    | 19        | 42.2    | 47.5          | 47.5               |
|         | No     | 21        | 46.7    | 52.5          | 100.0              |
|         | Total  | 40        | 88.9    | 100.0         |                    |
| Missing | System | 5         | 11.1    |               |                    |
| Total   |        | 45        | 100.0   |               |                    |

22. Does your parish engage in tree planting programme/ campaign?

|         |        | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---------|--------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid   | Yes    | 15        | 33.3    | 36.6          | 36.6               |
|         | No     | 26        | 57.8    | 63.4          | 100.0              |
|         | Total  | 41        | 91.1    | 100.0         |                    |
| Missing | System | 4         | 8.9     |               |                    |
| Total   |        | 45        | 100.0   |               |                    |

23. Has your parish ever organised an environmental campaign in your community

|         |        | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---------|--------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid   | Yes    | 5         | 11.1    | 12.5          | 12.5               |
|         | No     | 35        | 77.8    | 87.5          | 100.0              |
|         | Total  | 40        | 88.9    | 100.0         |                    |
| Missing | System | 5         | 11.1    |               |                    |
| Total   |        | 45        | 100.0   |               |                    |

24. Has your parish ever organised an environmental workshop/ seminar

|         |        | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---------|--------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid   | Yes    | 7         | 15.6    | 17.9          | 17.9               |
|         | No     | 32        | 71.1    | 82.1          | 100.0              |
|         | Total  | 39        | 86.7    | 100.0         |                    |
| Missing | System | 6         | 13.3    |               |                    |
| Total   |        | 45        | 100.0   |               |                    |

25. Is environmental education part of your church owned school's curriculum

|         |        | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---------|--------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid   | yes    | 10        | 22.2    | 26.3          | 26.3               |
|         | No     | 28        | 62.2    | 73.7          | 100.0              |
|         | Total  | 38        | 84.4    | 100.0         |                    |
| Missing | System | 7         | 15.6    |               |                    |
| Total   |        | 45        | 100.0   |               |                    |

26. The Anglican Church is very involved in environment and poverty issues in Anambra state

|         |                | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---------|----------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid   | Strongly agree | 14        | 31.1    | 31.8          | 31.8               |
|         | Agree          | 24        | 53.3    | 54.5          | 86.4               |
|         | Don't know     | 5         | 11.1    | 11.4          | 97.7               |
|         | Disagree       | 1         | 2.2     | 2.3           | 100.0              |
|         | Total          | 44        | 97.8    | 100.0         |                    |
| Missing | System         | 1         | 2.2     |               |                    |
| Total   |                | 45        | 100.0   |               |                    |

27. The early missionaries particularly the CMS were more committed to poverty alleviation than the church of Nigeria of today

|         |                   | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---------|-------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid   | Strongly agree    | 18        | 40.0    | 40.9          | 40.9               |
|         | Agree             | 11        | 24.4    | 25.0          | 65.9               |
|         | Don't know        | 1         | 2.2     | 2.3           | 68.2               |
|         | Disagree          | 11        | 24.4    | 25.0          | 93.2               |
|         | Strongly disagree | 3         | 6.7     | 6.8           | 100.0              |
|         | Total             | 44        | 97.8    | 100.0         |                    |
| Missing | System            | 1         | 2.2     |               |                    |
| Total   |                   | 45        | 100.0   |               |                    |

28. The Anglican catechism contains some basic environmental teachings

|         |                   | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---------|-------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid   | Strongly agree    | 2         | 4.4     | 4.8           | 4.8                |
|         | Agree             | 23        | 51.1    | 54.8          | 59.5               |
|         | Don't know        | 6         | 13.3    | 14.3          | 73.8               |
|         | Disagree          | 7         | 15.6    | 16.7          | 90.5               |
|         | Strongly disagree | 4         | 8.9     | 9.5           | 100.0              |
|         | Total             | 42        | 93.3    | 100.0         |                    |
| Missing | System            | 3         | 6.7     |               |                    |
| Total   |                   | 45        | 100.0   |               |                    |

29. Has the Lambeth conference resolution on environment been widely publicized in your diocese

|         |        | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---------|--------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid   | Yes    | 14        | 31.1    | 35.9          | 35.9               |
|         | No     | 25        | 55.6    | 64.1          | 100.0              |
|         | Total  | 39        | 86.7    | 100.0         |                    |
| Missing | System | 6         | 13.3    |               |                    |
| Total   |        | 45        | 100.0   |               |                    |

30. Environment and poverty issues are incorporated into the curriculum of the Anglican theological institutions in Nigeria

|         |                   | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---------|-------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid   | Strongly agree    | 1         | 2.2     | 2.4           | 2.4                |
|         | Agree             | 16        | 35.6    | 39.0          | 41.5               |
|         | Don't know        | 11        | 24.4    | 26.8          | 68.3               |
|         | Disagree          | 11        | 24.4    | 26.8          | 95.1               |
|         | Strongly disagree | 2         | 4.4     | 4.9           | 100.0              |
|         | Total             | 41        | 91.1    | 100.0         |                    |
| Missing | System            | 4         | 8.9     |               |                    |
| Total   |                   | 45        | 100.0   |               |                    |

31. What is the commonest form of energy source people in your parish use for cooking?

|         |             | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---------|-------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid   | Fire wood   | 34        | 75.6    | 79.1          | 79.1               |
|         | Electricity | 2         | 4.4     | 4.7           | 83.7               |
|         | Fossil fuel | 6         | 13.3    | 14.0          | 97.7               |
|         | Not sure    | 1         | 2.2     | 2.3           | 100.0              |
|         | Total       | 43        | 95.6    | 100.0         |                    |
| Missing | System      | 2         | 4.4     |               |                    |
| Total   |             | 45        | 100.0   |               |                    |

32. Which of these energy sources do you think has a lowest impact on the environment?

|         |              | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---------|--------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid   | Fire wood    | 13        | 28.9    | 30.2          | 30.2               |
|         | Electricity  | 10        | 22.2    | 23.3          | 53.5               |
|         | Fossil Fuel  | 1         | 2.2     | 2.3           | 55.8               |
|         | Solar energy | 11        | 24.4    | 25.6          | 81.4               |
|         | Not sure     | 8         | 17.8    | 18.6          | 100.0              |
|         | Total        | 43        | 95.6    | 100.0         |                    |
| Missing | System       | 2         | 4.4     |               |                    |
| Total   |              | 45        | 100.0   |               |                    |

33. Does your parish sing hymns / songs that celebrate the wonder of creation or express our calling to care for the earth?

|         |        | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---------|--------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid   | Yes    | 41        | 91.1    | 95.3          | 95.3               |
|         | No     | 2         | 4.4     | 4.7           | 100.0              |
|         | Total  | 43        | 95.6    | 100.0         |                    |
| Missing | System | 2         | 4.4     |               |                    |
| Total   |        | 45        | 100.0   |               |                    |

## 34. The church should be involved in environmental issues

|         |                | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---------|----------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid   | Strongly agree | 31        | 68.9    | 72.1          | 72.1               |
|         | Agree          | 12        | 26.7    | 27.9          | 100.0              |
|         | Total          | 43        | 95.6    | 100.0         |                    |
| Missing | System         | 2         | 4.4     |               |                    |
| Total   |                | 45        | 100.0   |               |                    |

## 35. If your answer is positive to question 34, why do we have to take care of the environment

|         |   | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---------|---|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid   | Environment sustains us in terms of its resources | 11        | 24.4    | 28.2          | 28.2               |
|         | To preserve it pristine and scenic nature         | 2         | 4.4     | 5.1           | 33.3               |
|         | God commanded us to take care of the earth        | 14        | 31.1    | 35.9          | 69.2               |
|         | Our health depends on the ecosystems health       | 4         | 8.9     | 10.3          | 79.5               |
|         | It has both intrinsic value and inherent worth    | 8         | 17.8    | 20.5          | 100.0              |
|         | Total   | 39        | 86.7    | 100.0         |                    |
| Missing | System  | 6         | 13.3    |               |                    |
| Total   |   | 45        | 100.0   |               |                    |

## 36 The environment is not as important as human lives

|         |                   | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative<br>Percent |
|---------|-------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|-----------------------|
| Valid   | Strongly agree    | 1         | 2.2     | 2.3           | 2.3                   |
|         | Agree             | 3         | 6.7     | 7.0           | 9.3                   |
|         | Don't know        | 1         | 2.2     | 2.3           | 11.6                  |
|         | Disagree          | 19        | 42.2    | 44.2          | 55.8                  |
|         | Strongly disagree | 19        | 42.2    | 44.2          | 100.0                 |
|         | Total             | 43        | 95.6    | 100.0         |                       |
| Missing | System            | 2         | 4.4     |               |                       |
| Total   |                   | 45        | 100.0   |               |                       |

## 37. Global warming is not a serious threat to environment and development

|         |                   | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative<br>Percent |
|---------|-------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|-----------------------|
| Valid   | Strongly agree    | 3         | 6.7     | 7.1           | 7.1                   |
|         | Agree             | 2         | 4.4     | 4.8           | 11.9                  |
|         | Disagree          | 17        | 37.8    | 40.5          | 52.4                  |
|         | Strongly disagree | 19        | 42.2    | 45.2          | 97.6                  |
|         | 34                | 1         | 2.2     | 2.4           | 100.0                 |
|         | Total             | 42        | 93.3    | 100.0         |                       |
| Missing | System            | 3         | 6.7     |               |                       |
| Total   |                   | 45        | 100.0   |               |                       |

38. In your opinion, how should we prioritize issues relating to environment, development and people

|         |  | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---------|--|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid   | Environment comes first                                    | 5         | 11.1    | 12.2          | 12.2               |
|         | People comes first   | 9         | 20.0    | 22.0          | 34.1               |
|         | Environment and people should be considered on equal terms | 24        | 53.3    | 58.5          | 92.7               |
|         | Not sure   | 3         | 6.7     | 7.3           | 100.0              |
|         | Total  | 41        | 91.1    | 100.0         |                    |
| Missing | System   | 4         | 8.9     |               |                    |
| Total   |  | 45        | 100.0   |               |                    |

39. The activities of the poor impact negatively on the environment

|         |                | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---------|----------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid   | Strongly agree | 5         | 11.1    | 12.5          | 12.5               |
|         | Agree          | 25        | 55.6    | 62.5          | 75.0               |
|         | Don't know     | 4         | 8.9     | 10.0          | 85.0               |
|         | Disagree       | 6         | 13.3    | 15.0          | 100.0              |
|         | Total          | 40        | 88.9    | 100.0         |                    |
| Missing | System         | 5         | 11.1    |               |                    |
| Total   |                | 45        | 100.0   |               |                    |

40. Have you ever read any theological book on environment?

|         |        | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---------|--------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid   | Yes    | 24        | 53.3    | 60.0          | 60.0               |
|         | No     | 16        | 35.6    | 40.0          | 100.0              |
|         | Total  | 40        | 88.9    | 100.0         |                    |
| Missing | System | 5         | 11.1    |               |                    |
| Total   |        | 45        | 100.0   |               |                    |

41. Which of the following would you exclude from God's family?

|         |                         | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---------|-------------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid   | Trees                   | 1         | 2.2     | 4.3           | 4.3                |
|         | Other non living things | 8         | 17.8    | 34.8          | 39.1               |
|         | Animals                 | 14        | 31.1    | 60.9          | 100.0              |
|         | Total                   | 23        | 51.1    | 100.0         |                    |
| Missing | System                  | 22        | 48.9    |               |                    |
| Total   |                         | 45        | 100.0   |               |                    |

42. Other members of the ecosystems family should be favourably considered in terms of development

|         |                | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---------|----------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid   | Strongly agree | 13        | 28.9    | 33.3          | 33.3               |
|         | Agree          | 26        | 57.8    | 66.7          | 100.0              |
|         | Total          | 39        | 86.7    | 100.0         |                    |
| Missing | System         | 6         | 13.3    |               |                    |
| Total   |                | 45        | 100.0   |               |                    |

## 43. What is your personal understanding of Genesis 1:28?

|         |   | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---------|---|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid   | The earth is made for human use   | 3         | 6.7     | 7.1           | 7.1                |
|         | People should exercise absolute dominion over the earth                     | 4         | 8.9     | 9.5           | 16.7               |
|         | It should be understood in the light of psalm 24 (God's absolute ownership) | 9         | 20.0    | 21.4          | 38.1               |
|         | Human beings are stewards of God's creation                                 | 24        | 53.3    | 57.1          | 95.2               |
|         | Not sure  | 1         | 2.2     | 2.4           | 97.6               |
|         | 41  | 1         | 2.2     | 2.4           | 100.0              |
|         | Total   | 42        | 93.3    | 100.0         |                    |
| Missing | System  | 3         | 6.7     |               |                    |
| Total   |   | 45        | 100.0   |               |                    |

## 44. The Igbo/ African culture has some valuable contribution to make in safeguarding the environment

|         |                | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---------|----------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid   | Strongly agree | 23        | 51.1    | 53.5          | 53.5               |
|         | Agree          | 19        | 42.2    | 44.2          | 97.7               |
|         | Don't know     | 1         | 2.2     | 2.3           | 100.0              |
|         | Total          | 43        | 95.6    | 100.0         |                    |
| Missing | System         | 2         | 4.4     |               |                    |
| Total   |                | 45        | 100.0   |               |                    |

45. The synthesis of indigenous ecological ethics and biblical resources would best contribute to environmental protection in the Nigerian context

|         |                | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---------|----------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid   | Strongly agree | 12        | 26.7    | 28.6          | 28.6               |
|         | Agree          | 30        | 66.7    | 71.4          | 100.0              |
|         | Total          | 42        | 93.3    | 100.0         |                    |
| Missing | System         | 3         | 6.7     |               |                    |
| Total   |                | 45        | 100.0   |               |                    |

46. The cultural practice of road maintenance and erosion control headed by age grades is a valuable resource for environmental protection and management

|         |                | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---------|----------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid   | Strongly agree | 20        | 44.4    | 46.5          | 46.5               |
|         | Agree          | 21        | 46.7    | 48.8          | 95.3               |
|         | Don't know     | 2         | 4.4     | 4.7           | 100.0              |
|         | Total          | 43        | 95.6    | 100.0         |                    |
| Missing | System         | 2         | 4.4     |               |                    |
| Total   |                | 45        | 100.0   |               |                    |

47. The practice of the biblical concept of jubilee would contribute to poverty reduction

|         |                   | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---------|-------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid   | Strongly agree    | 6         | 13.3    | 14.6          | 14.6               |
|         | Agree             | 27        | 60.0    | 65.9          | 80.5               |
|         | Don't know        | 4         | 8.9     | 9.8           | 90.2               |
|         | Disagree          | 2         | 4.4     | 4.9           | 95.1               |
|         | strongly disagree | 2         | 4.4     | 4.9           | 100.0              |
|         | Total             | 41        | 91.1    | 100.0         |                    |
| Missing | System            | 4         | 8.9     |               |                    |
| Total   |                   | 45        | 100.0   |               |                    |

48. The practice of bush burning for either hunting or farming purposes contributes to environmental degradation

|         |                   | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---------|-------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid   | Strongly agree    | 20        | 44.4    | 46.5          | 46.5               |
|         | Agree             | 21        | 46.7    | 48.8          | 95.3               |
|         | Don't know        | 1         | 2.2     | 2.3           | 97.7               |
|         | Strongly disagree | 1         | 2.2     | 2.3           | 100.0              |
|         | Total             | 43        | 95.6    | 100.0         |                    |
| Missing | System            | 2         | 4.4     |               |                    |
| Total   |                   | 45        | 100.0   |               |                    |

49. Soil excavation, though a potential cause of soil erosion and environmental degradation, could be justified as a means of economic survival

|         |                   | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---------|-------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid   | Strongly agree    | 7         | 15.6    | 16.3          | 16.3               |
|         | Agree             | 15        | 33.3    | 34.9          | 51.2               |
|         | Don't know        | 4         | 8.9     | 9.3           | 60.5               |
|         | Disagree          | 10        | 22.2    | 23.3          | 83.7               |
|         | Strongly disagree | 7         | 15.6    | 16.3          | 100.0              |
|         | Total             | 43        | 95.6    | 100.0         |                    |
| Missing | System            | 2         | 4.4     |               |                    |
| Total   |                   | 45        | 100.0   |               |                    |

50. The use of chemicals and fertilizer could enhance agricultural productivity, however it should be discouraged because it degrades the environment and kills the soil

|         |                   | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative<br>Percent |
|---------|-------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|-----------------------|
| Valid   | Strongly agree    | 12        | 26.7    | 30.0          | 30.0                  |
|         | Agree             | 21        | 46.7    | 52.5          | 82.5                  |
|         | Disagree          | 6         | 13.3    | 15.0          | 97.5                  |
|         | Strongly disagree | 1         | 2.2     | 2.5           | 100.0                 |
|         | Total             | 40        | 88.9    | 100.0         |                       |
| Missing | System            | 5         | 11.1    |               |                       |
| Total   |                   | 45        | 100.0   |               |                       |

**Appendix 3**

## Diocese on the Niger Output

1. The church should concern itself with spiritual matters and not environment and development

|                   | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid Agree       | 1         | 4.5     | 4.5           | 4.5                |
| Disagree          | 12        | 54.5    | 54.5          | 59.1               |
| Strongly Disagree | 9         | 40.9    | 40.9          | 100.0              |
| Total             | 22        | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |

2. The Diocese has not taken environment and development issues very seriously

|                      | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|----------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid Strongly agree | 1         | 4.5     | 4.5           | 4.5                |
| Agree                | 6         | 27.3    | 27.3          | 31.8               |
| Disagree             | 12        | 54.5    | 54.5          | 86.4               |
| Strongly Disagree    | 3         | 13.6    | 13.6          | 100.0              |
| Total                | 22        | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |

3. How regular during the year are environment and poverty concerns reflected in the church's liturgy and teaching

|                     | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid always        | 1         | 4.5     | 4.5           | 4.5                |
| As the need arises  | 12        | 54.5    | 54.5          | 59.1               |
| Occasional services | 9         | 40.9    | 40.9          | 100.0              |
| Total               | 22        | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |

4. Does your parish make annual budgetary provision to cover environment and poverty related issues

|                | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|----------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid Yes      | 5         | 22.7    | 27.8          | 27.8               |
| No             | 13        | 59.1    | 72.2          | 100.0              |
| Total          | 18        | 81.8    | 100.0         |                    |
| Missing System | 4         | 18.2    |               |                    |
| Total          | 22        | 100.0   |               |                    |

5. Does your diocese through its publications discuss environment and poverty issues to create awareness?

|           | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-----------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid Yes | 13        | 59.1    | 59.1          | 59.1               |
| No        | 9         | 40.9    | 40.9          | 100.0              |
| Total     | 22        | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |

6. Does your diocese have an environmental group/ organisation?

|       |       | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-------|-------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid | Yes   | 10        | 45.5    | 45.5          | 45.5               |
|       | No    | 12        | 54.5    | 54.5          | 100.0              |
|       | Total | 22        | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |

7. Does your parish have environmental organisation/group

|       |       | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-------|-------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid | Yes   | 10        | 45.5    | 45.5          | 45.5               |
|       | No    | 12        | 54.5    | 54.5          | 100.0              |
|       | Total | 22        | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |

8. My Parish have the necessary capacity to implement Diocesan policies on environment and development

|       |                | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-------|----------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid | Strongly agree | 3         | 13.6    | 13.6          | 13.6               |
|       | Agree          | 14        | 63.6    | 63.6          | 77.3               |
|       | Don't know     | 1         | 4.5     | 4.5           | 81.8               |
|       | Disagree       | 4         | 18.2    | 18.2          | 100.0              |
|       | Total          | 22        | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |

9. If your answer to question 8 is negative, which of the following capacities does your parish lack

|         |                         | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---------|-------------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid   | Personnel               | 1         | 4.5     | 11.1          | 11.1               |
|         | Financial Resources     | 7         | 31.8    | 77.8          | 88.9               |
|         | Physical Infrastructure | 1         | 4.5     | 11.1          | 100.0              |
|         | Total                   | 9         | 40.9    | 100.0         |                    |
| Missing | System                  | 13        | 59.1    |               |                    |
| Total   |                         | 22        | 100.0   |               |                    |

10. Does your parish have environmental management plan

|         |        | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---------|--------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid   | Yes    | 5         | 22.7    | 25.0          | 25.0               |
|         | No     | 15        | 68.2    | 75.0          | 100.0              |
|         | Total  | 20        | 90.9    | 100.0         |                    |
| Missing | System | 2         | 9.1     |               |                    |
| Total   |        | 22        | 100.0   |               |                    |

11. Has your parish ever conducted an environmental impact assessment on it projects

|         |        | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---------|--------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid   | Yes    | 6         | 27.3    | 30.0          | 30.0               |
|         | No     | 14        | 63.6    | 70.0          | 100.0              |
|         | Total  | 20        | 90.9    | 100.0         |                    |
| Missing | System | 2         | 9.1     |               |                    |
| Total   |        | 22        | 100.0   |               |                    |

12. Has your parish ever conducted an environmental audit exercise?

|         |        | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---------|--------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid   | Yes    | 2         | 9.1     | 10.0          | 10.0               |
|         | No     | 18        | 81.8    | 90.0          | 100.0              |
|         | Total  | 20        | 90.9    | 100.0         |                    |
| Missing | System | 2         | 9.1     |               |                    |
| Total   |        | 22        | 100.0   |               |                    |

13. Does your parish have an environmental officer?

|         |        | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---------|--------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid   | Yes    | 5         | 22.7    | 25.0          | 25.0               |
|         | No     | 15        | 68.2    | 75.0          | 100.0              |
|         | Total  | 20        | 90.9    | 100.0         |                    |
| Missing | System | 2         | 9.1     |               |                    |
| Total   |        | 22        | 100.0   |               |                    |

14. Does your parish engage in any poverty alleviation initiative?

|       |       | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-------|-------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid | Yes   | 14        | 63.6    | 63.6          | 63.6               |
|       | No    | 7         | 31.8    | 31.8          | 95.5               |
|       | 4     | 1         | 4.5     | 4.5           | 100.0              |
|       | Total | 22        | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |

15. If yes, what kind

|         |                    | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---------|--------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid   | Relief             | 14        | 63.6    | 87.5          | 87.5               |
|         | Co operative       | 1         | 4.5     | 6.3           | 93.8               |
|         | Skills acquisition | 1         | 4.5     | 6.3           | 100.0              |
|         | Total              | 16        | 72.7    | 100.0         |                    |
| Missing | System             | 6         | 27.3    |               |                    |
| Total   |                    | 22        | 100.0   |               |                    |

16. If no, why not

|         |                | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---------|----------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid   | Lack of land   | 1         | 4.5     | 16.7          | 16.7               |
|         | Lack of fund   | 3         | 13.6    | 50.0          | 66.7               |
|         | Not interested | 2         | 9.1     | 33.3          | 100.0              |
|         | Total          | 6         | 27.3    | 100.0         |                    |
| Missing | System         | 16        | 72.7    |               |                    |
| Total   |                | 22        | 100.0   |               |                    |

## 17. People in my parish are interested in environment and poverty issues

|                      | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|----------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid Strongly agree | 3         | 13.6    | 13.6          | 13.6               |
| Agree                | 13        | 59.1    | 59.1          | 72.7               |
| Don't know           | 2         | 9.1     | 9.1           | 81.8               |
| Disagree             | 3         | 13.6    | 13.6          | 95.5               |
| Strongly Disagree    | 1         | 4.5     | 4.5           | 100.0              |
| Total                | 22        | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |

## 18. If your answer to question 19 is positive, what practical evidence shows that your parish is environmentally friendly

|  | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|--|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid Regular environmental sanitation                 | 8         | 36.4    | 61.5          | 61.5               |
| Proper erosion control and natural resource management | 4         | 18.2    | 30.8          | 92.3               |
| Tree planting and vegetation maintenance               | 1         | 4.5     | 7.7           | 100.0              |
| Total  | 13        | 59.1    | 100.0         |                    |
| Missing System   | 9         | 40.9    |               |                    |
| Total  | 22        | 100.0   |               |                    |

19. Does your parish have a waste management plan?

|         |        | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---------|--------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid   | Yes    | 14        | 63.6    | 66.7          | 66.7               |
|         | No     | 6         | 27.3    | 28.6          | 95.2               |
|         | 3      | 1         | 4.5     | 4.8           | 100.0              |
|         | Total  | 21        | 95.5    | 100.0         |                    |
| Missing | System | 1         | 4.5     |               |                    |
| Total   |        | 22        | 100.0   |               |                    |

20. How does your parish deal with waste?

|         |                        | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---------|------------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid   | Burning                | 15        | 68.2    | 75.0          | 75.0               |
|         | Indiscriminate dumping | 2         | 9.1     | 10.0          | 85.0               |
|         | Recycling              | 2         | 9.1     | 10.0          | 95.0               |
|         | Nothing                | 1         | 4.5     | 5.0           | 100.0              |
|         | Total                  | 20        | 90.9    | 100.0         |                    |
| Missing | System                 | 2         | 9.1     |               |                    |
| Total   |                        | 22        | 100.0   |               |                    |

21. Does your parish have a compost centre?

|         |        | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---------|--------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid   | Yes    | 15        | 68.2    | 71.4          | 71.4               |
|         | No     | 6         | 27.3    | 28.6          | 100.0              |
|         | Total  | 21        | 95.5    | 100.0         |                    |
| Missing | System | 1         | 4.5     |               |                    |
| Total   |        | 22        | 100.0   |               |                    |

22 Does your parish engage in tree planting programme/ campaign?

|         |        | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---------|--------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid   | Yes    | 7         | 31.8    | 33.3          | 33.3               |
|         | No     | 14        | 63.6    | 66.7          | 100.0              |
|         | Total  | 21        | 95.5    | 100.0         |                    |
| Missing | System | 1         | 4.5     |               |                    |
| Total   |        | 22        | 100.0   |               |                    |

23. Has your parish ever organised an environmental campaign in your community

|         |        | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---------|--------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid   | Yes    | 3         | 13.6    | 14.3          | 14.3               |
|         | No     | 18        | 81.8    | 85.7          | 100.0              |
|         | Total  | 21        | 95.5    | 100.0         |                    |
| Missing | System | 1         | 4.5     |               |                    |
| Total   |        | 22        | 100.0   |               |                    |

24. Has your parish ever organised an environmental workshop/ seminar

|           | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-----------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid Yes | 5         | 22.7    | 22.7          | 22.7               |
| No        | 17        | 77.3    | 77.3          | 100.0              |
| Total     | 22        | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |

25. Is environmental education part of your church owned school's curriculum

|                | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|----------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid yes      | 5         | 22.7    | 23.8          | 23.8               |
| No             | 15        | 68.2    | 71.4          | 95.2               |
| 3              | 1         | 4.5     | 4.8           | 100.0              |
| Total          | 21        | 95.5    | 100.0         |                    |
| Missing System | 1         | 4.5     |               |                    |
| Total          | 22        | 100.0   |               |                    |

26. The Anglican Church is very involved in environment and poverty issues in Anambra state

|                   | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid Agree       | 10        | 45.5    | 47.6          | 47.6               |
| Don't know        | 6         | 27.3    | 28.6          | 76.2               |
| Disagree          | 2         | 9.1     | 9.5           | 85.7               |
| Strongly disagree | 3         | 13.6    | 14.3          | 100.0              |
| Total             | 21        | 95.5    | 100.0         |                    |
| Missing System    | 1         | 4.5     |               |                    |
| Total             | 22        | 100.0   |               |                    |

27. The early missionaries particularly the CMS were more committed to poverty alleviation than the church of Nigeria of today

|                      | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|----------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid Strongly agree | 2         | 9.1     | 9.1           | 9.1                |
| Agree                | 9         | 40.9    | 40.9          | 50.0               |
| Don't know           | 3         | 13.6    | 13.6          | 63.6               |
| Disagree             | 8         | 36.4    | 36.4          | 100.0              |
| Total                | 22        | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |

28 The Anglican catechism contains some basic environmental teachings

|                      | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|----------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid Strongly agree | 1         | 4.5     | 4.5           | 4.5                |
| Agree                | 10        | 45.5    | 45.5          | 50.0               |
| Don't know           | 3         | 13.6    | 13.6          | 63.6               |
| Disagree             | 5         | 22.7    | 22.7          | 86.4               |
| Strongly Disagree    | 3         | 13.6    | 13.6          | 100.0              |
| Total                | 22        | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |

29. Has the Lambeth conference resolution on environment been widely publicized in your diocese

|         |        | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---------|--------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid   | Yes    | 3         | 13.6    | 15.0          | 15.0               |
|         | No     | 17        | 77.3    | 85.0          | 100.0              |
|         | Total  | 20        | 90.9    | 100.0         |                    |
| Missing | System | 2         | 9.1     |               |                    |
| Total   |        | 22        | 100.0   |               |                    |

30. Environment and poverty issues are incorporated into the curriculum of the Anglican theological institutions in Nigeria

|       |                   | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-------|-------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid | Agree             | 4         | 18.2    | 18.2          | 18.2               |
|       | Don't know        | 3         | 13.6    | 13.6          | 31.8               |
|       | Disagree          | 11        | 50.0    | 50.0          | 81.8               |
|       | Strongly Disagree | 4         | 18.2    | 18.2          | 100.0              |
|       | Total             | 22        | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |

31. What is the commonest form of energy source people in your parish use for cooking?

|         |              | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---------|--------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid   | Fire wood    | 13        | 59.1    | 61.9          | 61.9               |
|         | Fossil fuel  | 6         | 27.3    | 28.6          | 90.5               |
|         | Solar energy | 1         | 4.5     | 4.8           | 95.2               |
|         | Not sure     | 1         | 4.5     | 4.8           | 100.0              |
|         | Total        | 21        | 95.5    | 100.0         |                    |
| Missing | System       | 1         | 4.5     |               |                    |
| Total   |              | 22        | 100.0   |               |                    |

32. Which of these energy sources do you think has a lowest impact on the environment?

|         |              | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---------|--------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid   | Fire wood    | 3         | 13.6    | 15.0          | 15.0               |
|         | Electricity  | 2         | 9.1     | 10.0          | 25.0               |
|         | Solar energy | 14        | 63.6    | 70.0          | 95.0               |
|         | Not sure     | 1         | 4.5     | 5.0           | 100.0              |
|         | Total        | 20        | 90.9    | 100.0         |                    |
| Missing | System       | 2         | 9.1     |               |                    |
| Total   |              | 22        | 100.0   |               |                    |

33. Does your parish sing hymns / songs that celebrate the wonder of creation or express our calling to care for the earth?

|           | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-----------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid Yes | 19        | 86.4    | 86.4          | 86.4               |
| No        | 3         | 13.6    | 13.6          | 100.0              |
| Total     | 22        | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |

34. The church should be involved in environmental issues

|                      | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|----------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid Strongly agree | 11        | 50.0    | 50.0          | 50.0               |
| Agree                | 10        | 45.5    | 45.5          | 95.5               |
| Strongly Disagree    | 1         | 4.5     | 4.5           | 100.0              |
| Total                | 22        | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |

35. If your answer is positive to question 34, why do we have to take care of the environment?

|   | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid Environment sustains us in terms of its resources | 5         | 22.7    | 26.3          | 26.3               |
| God commanded us to take care of the earth              | 6         | 27.3    | 31.6          | 57.9               |
| Our health depends on the ecosystems health             | 4         | 18.2    | 21.1          | 78.9               |
| It has both intrinsic value and inherent worth          | 4         | 18.2    | 21.1          | 100.0              |
| Total   | 19        | 86.4    | 100.0         |                    |
| Missing System  | 3         | 13.6    |               |                    |
| Total   | 22        | 100.0   |               |                    |

36. The environment is not as important as human lives

|                   | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid Disagree    | 12        | 54.5    | 54.5          | 54.5               |
| Strongly Disagree | 10        | 45.5    | 45.5          | 100.0              |
| Total             | 22        | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |

## 37. Global warming is not a serious threat to environment and development

|                      | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|----------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid Strongly agree | 1         | 4.5     | 4.5           | 4.5                |
| Don't know           | 4         | 18.2    | 18.2          | 22.7               |
| Disagree             | 6         | 27.3    | 27.3          | 50.0               |
| Strongly Disagree    | 11        | 50.0    | 50.0          | 100.0              |
| Total                | 22        | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |

## 38. In your opinion, how should we prioritize issues relating to environment, development and people

|  | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|--|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid Environment comes first                              | 1         | 4.5     | 4.5           | 4.5                |
| People comes first   | 3         | 13.6    | 13.6          | 18.2               |
| Environment and people should be considered on equal terms | 18        | 81.8    | 81.8          | 100.0              |
| Total  | 22        | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |

## 39. The activities of the poor impact negatively on the environment

|         |                   | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---------|-------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid   | Strongly agree    | 5         | 22.7    | 23.8          | 23.8               |
|         | Agree             | 10        | 45.5    | 47.6          | 71.4               |
|         | Disagree          | 5         | 22.7    | 23.8          | 95.2               |
|         | Strongly Disagree | 1         | 4.5     | 4.8           | 100.0              |
|         | Total             | 21        | 95.5    | 100.0         |                    |
| Missing | System            | 1         | 4.5     |               |                    |
| Total   |                   | 22        | 100.0   |               |                    |

## 40. Have you ever read any theological book on environment?

|       |       | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-------|-------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid | Yes   | 6         | 27.3    | 27.3          | 27.3               |
|       | No    | 16        | 72.7    | 72.7          | 100.0              |
|       | Total | 22        | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |

41. Which of the following would you exclude from God's family?

|         |                          | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---------|--------------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid   | Rivers and mountains     | 2         | 9.1     | 11.8          | 11.8               |
|         | Others non living things | 11        | 50.0    | 64.7          | 76.5               |
|         | None                     | 4         | 18.2    | 23.5          | 100.0              |
|         | Total                    | 17        | 77.3    | 100.0         |                    |
| Missing | System                   | 5         | 22.7    |               |                    |
| Total   |                          | 22        | 100.0   |               |                    |

42. Other members of the ecosystems family should be favourably considered in terms of development

|       |                | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-------|----------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid | Strongly agree | 6         | 27.3    | 27.3          | 27.3               |
|       | Agree          | 15        | 68.2    | 68.2          | 95.5               |
|       | Don't know     | 1         | 4.5     | 4.5           | 100.0              |
|       | Total          | 22        | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |

43. What is your personal understanding of Genesis 1:28

|   | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid People should exercise absolute dominion over the earth | 7         | 31.8    | 31.8          | 31.8               |
| Human beings are stewards of God's creation                   | 15        | 68.2    | 68.2          | 100.0              |
| Total   | 22        | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |

44. The Igbo/ African culture has some valuable contribution to make in safeguarding the environment

|                      | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|----------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid Strongly agree | 8         | 36.4    | 36.4          | 36.4               |
| Agree                | 14        | 63.6    | 63.6          | 100.0              |
| Total                | 22        | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |

45. The synthesis of indigenous ecological ethics and biblical resources would best contribute to environmental protection in the Nigerian context

|                      | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|----------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid Strongly agree | 5         | 22.7    | 22.7          | 22.7               |
| Agree                | 14        | 63.6    | 63.6          | 86.4               |
| Don't know           | 2         | 9.1     | 9.1           | 95.5               |
| Disagree             | 1         | 4.5     | 4.5           | 100.0              |
| Total                | 22        | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |

46. The cultural practice of road maintenance and erosion control headed by age grades is a valuable resource for environmental protection and management

|                      | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|----------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid Strongly agree | 10        | 45.5    | 45.5          | 45.5               |
| Agree                | 12        | 54.5    | 54.5          | 100.0              |
| Total                | 22        | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |

47The practice of the biblical concept of jubilee would contribute to poverty reduction

|                      | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|----------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid Strongly agree | 4         | 18.2    | 18.2          | 18.2               |
| Agree                | 12        | 54.5    | 54.5          | 72.7               |
| Don't know           | 3         | 13.6    | 13.6          | 86.4               |
| Disagree             | 2         | 9.1     | 9.1           | 95.5               |
| Strongly Disagree    | 1         | 4.5     | 4.5           | 100.0              |
| Total                | 22        | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |

48. The practice of bush burning for either hunting or farming purposes contributes to environmental degradation

|                      | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|----------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid Strongly Agree | 9         | 40.9    | 40.9          | 40.9               |
| Agree                | 10        | 45.5    | 45.5          | 86.4               |
| Don't know           | 1         | 4.5     | 4.5           | 90.9               |
| Disagree             | 2         | 9.1     | 9.1           | 100.0              |
| Total                | 22        | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |

49. Soil excavation, though a potential cause of soil erosion and environmental degradation, could be justified as a means of economic survival

|                      | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|----------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid Strongly agree | 3         | 13.6    | 13.6          | 13.6               |
| Agree                | 8         | 36.4    | 36.4          | 50.0               |
| Don't know           | 3         | 13.6    | 13.6          | 63.6               |
| Disagree             | 4         | 18.2    | 18.2          | 81.8               |
| Strongly Disagree    | 4         | 18.2    | 18.2          | 100.0              |
| Total                | 22        | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |

50. The use of chemicals and fertilizer could enhance agricultural productivity, however it should be discouraged because it degrades the environment and kills the soil

|                      | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|----------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid Strongly agree | 4         | 18.2    | 18.2          | 18.2               |
| Agree                | 12        | 54.5    | 54.5          | 72.7               |
| Don't know           | 1         | 4.5     | 4.5           | 77.3               |
| Disagree             | 4         | 18.2    | 18.2          | 95.5               |
| Strongly Disagree    | 1         | 4.5     | 4.5           | 100.0              |
| Total                | 22        | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |

**Appendix 4**

Diocese of Nnewi output

1. The Diocese has not taken environment and development issues very seriously

|         |                   | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---------|-------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid   | Strongly agree    | 1         | 4.2     | 4.5           | 4.5                |
|         | Agree             | 7         | 29.2    | 31.8          | 36.4               |
|         | Disagree          | 11        | 45.8    | 50.0          | 86.4               |
|         | Strongly Disagree | 3         | 12.5    | 13.6          | 100.0              |
|         | Total             | 22        | 91.7    | 100.0         |                    |
| Missing | System            | 2         | 8.3     |               |                    |
| Total   |                   | 24        | 100.0   |               |                    |

2. The church should concern itself with spiritual matters and not environment and development

|         |                   | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---------|-------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid   | Strongly agree    | 1         | 4.2     | 4.5           | 4.5                |
|         | Agree             | 1         | 4.2     | 4.5           | 9.1                |
|         | Disagree          | 7         | 29.2    | 31.8          | 40.9               |
|         | Strongly Disagree | 13        | 54.2    | 59.1          | 100.0              |
|         | Total             | 22        | 91.7    | 100.0         |                    |
| Missing | System            | 2         | 8.3     |               |                    |
| Total   |                   | 24        | 100.0   |               |                    |

3. How regular during the year are environment and poverty concerns reflected in the church's liturgy and teaching

|         |                     | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---------|---------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid   | Always              | 3         | 12.5    | 13.6          | 13.6               |
|         | As the need arises  | 11        | 45.8    | 50.0          | 63.6               |
|         | Occasional services | 7         | 29.2    | 31.8          | 95.5               |
|         | Don't know          | 1         | 4.2     | 4.5           | 100.0              |
|         | Total               | 22        | 91.7    | 100.0         |                    |
| Missing | System              | 2         | 8.3     |               |                    |
| Total   |                     | 24        | 100.0   |               |                    |

4. Does your parish make annual budgetary provision to cover environment and poverty related issues

|         |        | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---------|--------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid   | Yes    | 7         | 29.2    | 33.3          | 33.3               |
|         | No     | 14        | 58.3    | 66.7          | 100.0              |
|         | Total  | 21        | 87.5    | 100.0         |                    |
| Missing | System | 3         | 12.5    |               |                    |
| Total   |        | 24        | 100.0   |               |                    |

5. Does your diocese through its publications discuss environment and poverty issues to create awareness?

|         |        | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---------|--------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid   | Yes    | 12        | 50.0    | 60.0          | 60.0               |
|         | No     | 8         | 33.3    | 40.0          | 100.0              |
|         | Total  | 20        | 83.3    | 100.0         |                    |
| Missing | System | 4         | 16.7    |               |                    |
| Total   |        | 24        | 100.0   |               |                    |

6. Does your diocese have an environmental group/ organisation?

|         |        | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---------|--------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid   | Yes    | 13        | 54.2    | 56.5          | 56.5               |
|         | No     | 10        | 41.7    | 43.5          | 100.0              |
|         | Total  | 23        | 95.8    | 100.0         |                    |
| Missing | System | 1         | 4.2     |               |                    |
| Total   |        | 24        | 100.0   |               |                    |

7. My Parish have the necessary capacity to implement Diocesan policies on environment and development

|         |                | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---------|----------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid   | Strongly agree | 5         | 20.8    | 22.7          | 22.7               |
|         | Agree          | 15        | 62.5    | 68.2          | 90.9               |
|         | Disagree       | 2         | 8.3     | 9.1           | 100.0              |
|         | Total          | 22        | 91.7    | 100.0         |                    |
| Missing | System         | 2         | 8.3     |               |                    |
| Total   |                | 24        | 100.0   |               |                    |

8. If your answer to question 8 is negative, which of the following capacities does your parish lack

|         |                         | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---------|-------------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid   | Personnel               | 2         | 8.3     | 16.7          | 16.7               |
|         | Financial Resources     | 6         | 25.0    | 50.0          | 66.7               |
|         | Physical Infrastructure | 2         | 8.3     | 16.7          | 83.3               |
|         | Committed leadership    | 2         | 8.3     | 16.7          | 100.0              |
|         | Total                   | 12        | 50.0    | 100.0         |                    |
| Missing | System                  | 12        | 50.0    |               |                    |
| Total   |                         | 24        | 100.0   |               |                    |

9. Does your parish have environmental management plan

|         |        | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---------|--------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid   | Yes    | 8         | 33.3    | 38.1          | 38.1               |
|         | No     | 13        | 54.2    | 61.9          | 100.0              |
|         | Total  | 21        | 87.5    | 100.0         |                    |
| Missing | System | 3         | 12.5    |               |                    |
| Total   |        | 24        | 100.0   |               |                    |

10. Has your parish ever conducted an environmental impact assessment on it projects

|         |        | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative<br>Percent |
|---------|--------|-----------|---------|---------------|-----------------------|
| Valid   | Yes    | 8         | 33.3    | 38.1          | 38.1                  |
|         | No     | 13        | 54.2    | 61.9          | 100.0                 |
|         | Total  | 21        | 87.5    | 100.0         |                       |
| Missing | System | 3         | 12.5    |               |                       |
| Total   |        | 24        | 100.0   |               |                       |

11. Has your parish ever conducted an environmental audit exercise?

|         |        | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative<br>Percent |
|---------|--------|-----------|---------|---------------|-----------------------|
| Valid   | Yes    | 8         | 33.3    | 36.4          | 36.4                  |
|         | No     | 14        | 58.3    | 63.6          | 100.0                 |
|         | Total  | 22        | 91.7    | 100.0         |                       |
| Missing | System | 2         | 8.3     |               |                       |
| Total   |        | 24        | 100.0   |               |                       |

12. Does your parish have an environmental officer?

|         |        | Frequency | Percent | Valid<br>Percent | Cumulative<br>Percent |
|---------|--------|-----------|---------|------------------|-----------------------|
| Valid   | Yes    | 5         | 20.8    | 22.7             | 22.7                  |
|         | No     | 17        | 70.8    | 77.3             | 100.0                 |
|         | Total  | 22        | 91.7    | 100.0            |                       |
| Missing | System | 2         | 8.3     |                  |                       |
| Total   |        | 24        | 100.0   |                  |                       |

13. What is the commonest form of energy source people in your parish use for cooking?

|         |             | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---------|-------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid   | Fire wood   | 21        | 87.5    | 91.3          | 91.3               |
|         | Electricity | 2         | 8.3     | 8.7           | 100.0              |
|         | Total       | 23        | 95.8    | 100.0         |                    |
| Missing | System      | 1         | 4.2     |               |                    |
| Total   |             | 24        | 100.0   |               |                    |

14. If yes, what kind

|         |              | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---------|--------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid   | Relief       | 10        | 41.7    | 71.4          | 71.4               |
|         | Co operative | 1         | 4.2     | 7.1           | 78.6               |
|         | Skills       | 1         | 4.2     | 7.1           | 85.7               |
|         | acquisition  |           |         |               |                    |
|         | Agriculture  | 2         | 8.3     | 14.3          | 100.0              |
|         | Total        | 14        | 58.3    | 100.0         |                    |
| Missing | System       | 10        | 41.7    |               |                    |
| Total   |              | 24        | 100.0   |               |                    |

15. If no, why not

|         |                | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---------|----------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid   | Lack of land   | 1         | 4.2     | 9.1           | 9.1                |
|         | Lack of fund   | 9         | 37.5    | 81.8          | 90.9               |
|         | Not interested | 1         | 4.2     | 9.1           | 100.0              |
|         | Total          | 11        | 45.8    | 100.0         |                    |
| Missing | System         | 13        | 54.2    |               |                    |
| Total   |                | 24        | 100.0   |               |                    |

## 16. People in my parish are interested in environment and poverty issues

|         |                | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---------|----------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid   | Strongly agree | 6         | 25.0    | 27.3          | 27.3               |
|         | Agree          | 12        | 50.0    | 54.5          | 81.8               |
|         | Don't know     | 1         | 4.2     | 4.5           | 86.4               |
|         | Disagree       | 3         | 12.5    | 13.6          | 100.0              |
|         | Total          | 22        | 91.7    | 100.0         |                    |
| Missing | System         | 2         | 8.3     |               |                    |
| Total   |                | 24        | 100.0   |               |                    |

## 17. If your answer to question 19 is positive, what practical evidence shows that your parish is environmentally friendly

|         |  | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---------|--|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid   | Regular environmental sanitation         | 11        | 45.8    | 73.3          | 73.3               |
|         | Proper waste management plan             | 2         | 8.3     | 13.3          | 86.7               |
|         | Tree planting and vegetation maintenance | 2         | 8.3     | 13.3          | 100.0              |
|         | Total                                    | 15        | 62.5    | 100.0         |                    |
| Missing | System                                   | 9         | 37.5    |               |                    |
| Total   |  | 24        | 100.0   |               |                    |

18. Does your parish have a waste management plan?

|         |        | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---------|--------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid   | Yes    | 14        | 58.3    | 63.6          | 63.6               |
|         | No     | 8         | 33.3    | 36.4          | 100.0              |
|         | Total  | 22        | 91.7    | 100.0         |                    |
| Missing | System | 2         | 8.3     |               |                    |
| Total   |        | 24        | 100.0   |               |                    |

19. How does your parish deal with waste?

|         |                        | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---------|------------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid   | Burning                | 15        | 62.5    | 68.2          | 68.2               |
|         | Indiscriminate dumping | 3         | 12.5    | 13.6          | 81.8               |
|         | Land filling           | 4         | 16.7    | 18.2          | 100.0              |
|         | Total                  | 22        | 91.7    | 100.0         |                    |
| Missing | System                 | 2         | 8.3     |               |                    |
| Total   |                        | 24        | 100.0   |               |                    |

20. Does your parish have a compost centre

|         |        | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---------|--------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid   | Yes    | 9         | 37.5    | 40.9          | 40.9               |
|         | No     | 13        | 54.2    | 59.1          | 100.0              |
|         | Total  | 22        | 91.7    | 100.0         |                    |
| Missing | System | 2         | 8.3     |               |                    |
| Total   |        | 24        | 100.0   |               |                    |

21. Does your parish engage in tree planting programme/ campaign?

|         |        | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---------|--------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid   | Yes    | 9         | 37.5    | 40.9          | 40.9               |
|         | No     | 13        | 54.2    | 59.1          | 100.0              |
|         | Total  | 22        | 91.7    | 100.0         |                    |
| Missing | System | 2         | 8.3     |               |                    |
| Total   |        | 24        | 100.0   |               |                    |

22. Does your parish engage in tree planting programme/ campaign?

|         |        | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---------|--------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid   | Yes    | 9         | 37.5    | 40.9          | 40.9               |
|         | No     | 13        | 54.2    | 59.1          | 100.0              |
|         | Total  | 22        | 91.7    | 100.0         |                    |
| Missing | System | 2         | 8.3     |               |                    |
| Total   |        | 24        | 100.0   |               |                    |

23. Has your parish ever organised an environmental campaign in your community

|         |        | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---------|--------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid   | Yes    | 3         | 12.5    | 14.3          | 14.3               |
|         | No     | 18        | 75.0    | 85.7          | 100.0              |
|         | Total  | 21        | 87.5    | 100.0         |                    |
| Missing | System | 3         | 12.5    |               |                    |
| Total   |        | 24        | 100.0   |               |                    |

24. Has your parish ever organised an environmental workshop/ seminar

|         |        | Frequenc<br>y | Percent | Valid<br>Percent | Cumulative<br>Percent |
|---------|--------|---------------|---------|------------------|-----------------------|
| Valid   | Yes    | 3             | 12.5    | 15.0             | 15.0                  |
|         | No     | 17            | 70.8    | 85.0             | 100.0                 |
|         | Total  | 20            | 83.3    | 100.0            |                       |
| Missing | System | 4             | 16.7    |                  |                       |
| Total   |        | 24            | 100.0   |                  |                       |

25. Is environmental education part of your church owned school's curriculum

|         |        | Frequency | Percent | Valid<br>Percent | Cumulative<br>Percent |
|---------|--------|-----------|---------|------------------|-----------------------|
| Valid   | yes    | 7         | 29.2    | 38.9             | 38.9                  |
|         | No     | 10        | 41.7    | 55.6             | 94.4                  |
|         | 4      | 1         | 4.2     | 5.6              | 100.0                 |
|         | Total  | 18        | 75.0    | 100.0            |                       |
| Missing | System | 6         | 25.0    |                  |                       |
| Total   |        | 24        | 100.0   |                  |                       |

26. The Anglican Church is very involved in environment and poverty issues in Anambra state

|         |                   | Frequenc<br>y | Percent | Valid<br>Percent | Cumulative<br>Percent |
|---------|-------------------|---------------|---------|------------------|-----------------------|
| Valid   | Strongly<br>agree | 6             | 25.0    | 28.6             | 28.6                  |
|         | Agree             | 11            | 45.8    | 52.4             | 81.0                  |
|         | Don't know        | 3             | 12.5    | 14.3             | 95.2                  |
|         | Disagree          | 1             | 4.2     | 4.8              | 100.0                 |
|         | Total             | 21            | 87.5    | 100.0            |                       |
| Missing | System            | 3             | 12.5    |                  |                       |
| Total   |                   | 24            | 100.0   |                  |                       |

27. The early missionaries particularly the CMS were more committed to poverty alleviation than the church of Nigeria of today

|         |                | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---------|----------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid   | Strongly agree | 4         | 16.7    | 17.4          | 17.4               |
|         | Agree          | 14        | 58.3    | 60.9          | 78.3               |
|         | Don't know     | 3         | 12.5    | 13.0          | 91.3               |
|         | Disagree       | 2         | 8.3     | 8.7           | 100.0              |
|         | Total          | 23        | 95.8    | 100.0         |                    |
| Missing | System         | 1         | 4.2     |               |                    |
| Total   |                | 24        | 100.0   |               |                    |

28. The Anglican catechism contains some basic environmental teachings

|         |                | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---------|----------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid   | Strongly agree | 3         | 12.5    | 14.3          | 14.3               |
|         | Agree          | 7         | 29.2    | 33.3          | 47.6               |
|         | Don't know     | 5         | 20.8    | 23.8          | 71.4               |
|         | Disagree       | 6         | 25.0    | 28.6          | 100.0              |
|         | Total          | 21        | 87.5    | 100.0         |                    |
| Missing | System         | 3         | 12.5    |               |                    |
| Total   |                | 24        | 100.0   |               |                    |

29 Has the Lambeth conference resolution on environment been widely publicized in your diocese

|         |        | Frequenc<br>y | Percent | Valid<br>Percent | Cumulative<br>Percent |
|---------|--------|---------------|---------|------------------|-----------------------|
| Valid   | Yes    | 8             | 33.3    | 40.0             | 40.0                  |
|         | No     | 12            | 50.0    | 60.0             | 100.0                 |
|         | Total  | 20            | 83.3    | 100.0            |                       |
| Missing | System | 4             | 16.7    |                  |                       |
| Total   |        | 24            | 100.0   |                  |                       |

30. Environment and poverty issues are incorporated into the curriculum of the Anglican theological institutions in Nigeria

|         |                   | Frequency | Percent | Valid<br>Percent | Cumulative<br>Percent |
|---------|-------------------|-----------|---------|------------------|-----------------------|
| Valid   | Strongly agree    | 1         | 4.2     | 4.3              | 4.3                   |
|         | Agree             | 6         | 25.0    | 26.1             | 30.4                  |
|         | Don't know        | 10        | 41.7    | 43.5             | 73.9                  |
|         | Disagree          | 4         | 16.7    | 17.4             | 91.3                  |
|         | Strongly disagree | 2         | 8.3     | 8.7              | 100.0                 |
|         | Total             | 23        | 95.8    | 100.0            |                       |
| Missing | System            | 1         | 4.2     |                  |                       |
| Total   |                   | 24        | 100.0   |                  |                       |

31. Which of these energy sources do you think has a lowest impact on the environment?

|         |                 | Frequenc<br>y | Percent | Valid<br>Percent | Cumulative<br>Percent |
|---------|-----------------|---------------|---------|------------------|-----------------------|
| Valid   | Fire wood       | 4             | 16.7    | 17.4             | 17.4                  |
|         | Electricity     | 7             | 29.2    | 30.4             | 47.8                  |
|         | Fossil Fuel     | 2             | 8.3     | 8.7              | 56.5                  |
|         | Solar<br>energy | 9             | 37.5    | 39.1             | 95.7                  |
|         | Not sure        | 1             | 4.2     | 4.3              | 100.0                 |
|         | Total           | 23            | 95.8    | 100.0            |                       |
| Missing | System          | 1             | 4.2     |                  |                       |
| Total   |                 | 24            | 100.0   |                  |                       |

32. Does your parish engage in any poverty alleviation initiative?

|         |        | Frequenc<br>y | Percent | Valid<br>Percent | Cumulative<br>Percent |
|---------|--------|---------------|---------|------------------|-----------------------|
| Valid   | Yes    | 14            | 58.3    | 66.7             | 66.7                  |
|         | No     | 6             | 25.0    | 28.6             | 95.2                  |
|         | 4      | 1             | 4.2     | 4.8              | 100.0                 |
|         | Total  | 21            | 87.5    | 100.0            |                       |
| Missing | System | 3             | 12.5    |                  |                       |
| Total   |        | 24            | 100.0   |                  |                       |

33. Does your parish sing hymns / songs that celebrate the wonder of creation or express our calling to care for the earth?

|         |        | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---------|--------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid   | Yes    | 16        | 66.7    | 76.2          | 76.2               |
|         | No     | 5         | 20.8    | 23.8          | 100.0              |
|         | Total  | 21        | 87.5    | 100.0         |                    |
| Missing | System | 3         | 12.5    |               |                    |
| Total   |        | 24        | 100.0   |               |                    |

34. The church should be involved in environmental issues

|         |                | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---------|----------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid   | Strongly agree | 16        | 66.7    | 69.6          | 69.6               |
|         | Agree          | 7         | 29.2    | 30.4          | 100.0              |
|         | Total          | 23        | 95.8    | 100.0         |                    |
| Missing | System         | 1         | 4.2     |               |                    |
| Total   |                | 24        | 100.0   |               |                    |

35. If your answer is positive to question 34, why do we have to take care of the environment

|         |   | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---------|---|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid   | Environment sustains us in terms of its resources | 7         | 29.2    | 31.8          | 31.8               |
|         | God commanded us to take care of the earth        | 6         | 25.0    | 27.3          | 59.1               |
|         | Our health depends on the ecosystems health       | 7         | 29.2    | 31.8          | 90.9               |
|         | It has both intrinsic value and inherent worth    | 2         | 8.3     | 9.1           | 100.0              |
|         | Total   | 22        | 91.7    | 100.0         |                    |
| Missing | System  | 2         | 8.3     |               |                    |
| Total   |   | 24        | 100.0   |               |                    |

36. The environment is not as important as human lives

|         |                   | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---------|-------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid   | Strongly agree    | 6         | 25.0    | 27.3          | 27.3               |
|         | Agree             | 3         | 12.5    | 13.6          | 40.9               |
|         | Disagree          | 4         | 16.7    | 18.2          | 59.1               |
|         | Strongly disagree | 9         | 37.5    | 40.9          | 100.0              |
|         | Total             | 22        | 91.7    | 100.0         |                    |
| Missing | System            | 2         | 8.3     |               |                    |
| Total   |                   | 24        | 100.0   |               |                    |

## 37. Global warming is not a serious threat to environment and development

|         |                   | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---------|-------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid   | Agree             | 4         | 16.7    | 18.2          | 18.2               |
|         | Don't know        | 1         | 4.2     | 4.5           | 22.7               |
|         | Disagree          | 10        | 41.7    | 45.5          | 68.2               |
|         | Strongly disagree | 7         | 29.2    | 31.8          | 100.0              |
|         | Total             | 22        | 91.7    | 100.0         |                    |
| Missing | System            | 2         | 8.3     |               |                    |
| Total   |                   | 24        | 100.0   |               |                    |

## 38. In your opinion, how should we prioritize issues relating to environment, development and people

|         |  | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---------|--|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid   | People comes first   | 5         | 20.8    | 21.7          | 21.7               |
|         | Environment and people should be considered on equal terms | 17        | 70.8    | 73.9          | 95.7               |
|         | Not sure   | 1         | 4.2     | 4.3           | 100.0              |
|         | Total  | 23        | 95.8    | 100.0         |                    |
| Missing | System   | 1         | 4.2     |               |                    |
| Total   |  | 24        | 100.0   |               |                    |

## 39. The activities of the poor impact negatively on the environment

|         |                   | Frequenc<br>y | Percent | Valid<br>Percent | Cumulative<br>Percent |
|---------|-------------------|---------------|---------|------------------|-----------------------|
| Valid   | Strongly agree    | 2             | 8.3     | 10.0             | 10.0                  |
|         | Agree             | 11            | 45.8    | 55.0             | 65.0                  |
|         | Don't know        | 1             | 4.2     | 5.0              | 70.0                  |
|         | Disagree          | 2             | 8.3     | 10.0             | 80.0                  |
|         | Strongly disagree | 4             | 16.7    | 20.0             | 100.0                 |
|         | Total             | 20            | 83.3    | 100.0            |                       |
| Missing | System            | 4             | 16.7    |                  |                       |
| Total   |                   | 24            | 100.0   |                  |                       |

## 40. Have you ever read any theological book on environment?

|         |        | Frequenc<br>y | Percent | Valid<br>Percent | Cumulative<br>Percent |
|---------|--------|---------------|---------|------------------|-----------------------|
| Valid   | Yes    | 10            | 41.7    | 45.5             | 45.5                  |
|         | No     | 11            | 45.8    | 50.0             | 95.5                  |
|         | 5      | 1             | 4.2     | 4.5              | 100.0                 |
|         | Total  | 22            | 91.7    | 100.0            |                       |
| Missing | System | 2             | 8.3     |                  |                       |
| Total   |        | 24            | 100.0   |                  |                       |

41. Which of the following would you exclude from God's family?

|         |                          | Frequency | Percent | Valid<br>Percent | Cumulative<br>Percent |
|---------|--------------------------|-----------|---------|------------------|-----------------------|
| Valid   | Trees                    | 3         | 12.5    | 15.8             | 15.8                  |
|         | Rivers and mountains     | 1         | 4.2     | 5.3              | 21.1                  |
|         | Others non living things | 11        | 45.8    | 57.9             | 78.9                  |
|         | Animals                  | 4         | 16.7    | 21.1             | 100.0                 |
|         | Total                    | 19        | 79.2    | 100.0            |                       |
| Missing | System                   | 5         | 20.8    |                  |                       |
| Total   |                          | 24        | 100.0   |                  |                       |

42. Other members of the ecosystems family should be favourably considered in terms of development

|         |                | Frequency | Percent | Valid<br>Percent | Cumulative<br>Percent |
|---------|----------------|-----------|---------|------------------|-----------------------|
| Valid   | Strongly agree | 7         | 29.2    | 31.8             | 31.8                  |
|         | Agree          | 13        | 54.2    | 59.1             | 90.9                  |
|         | Don't know     | 2         | 8.3     | 9.1              | 100.0                 |
|         | Total          | 22        | 91.7    | 100.0            |                       |
| Missing | System         | 2         | 8.3     |                  |                       |
| Total   |                | 24        | 100.0   |                  |                       |

## 43. What is your personal understanding of Genesis 1:28

|         |   | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---------|---|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid   | The earth is made for human use   | 1         | 4.2     | 4.3           | 4.3                |
|         | People should exercise absolute dominion over the earth                     | 3         | 12.5    | 13.0          | 17.4               |
|         | It should be understood in the light of psalm 24 (God's absolute ownership) | 2         | 8.3     | 8.7           | 26.1               |
|         | Human beings are stewards of God's creation                                 | 17        | 70.8    | 73.9          | 100.0              |
|         | Total   | 23        | 95.8    | 100.0         |                    |
| Missing | System  | 1         | 4.2     |               |                    |
| Total   |   | 24        | 100.0   |               |                    |

## 44. The Igbo/ African culture has some valuable contribution to make in safeguarding the environment

|         |                | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---------|----------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid   | Strongly agree | 7         | 29.2    | 30.4          | 30.4               |
|         | Agree          | 15        | 62.5    | 65.2          | 95.7               |
|         | Don't know     | 1         | 4.2     | 4.3           | 100.0              |
|         | Total          | 23        | 95.8    | 100.0         |                    |
| Missing | System         | 1         | 4.2     |               |                    |
| Total   |                | 24        | 100.0   |               |                    |

45. The synthesis of indigenous ecological ethics and biblical resources would best contribute to environmental protection in the Nigerian context

|         |                   | Frequenc<br>y | Percent | Valid<br>Percent | Cumulative<br>Percent |
|---------|-------------------|---------------|---------|------------------|-----------------------|
| Valid   | Strongly<br>agree | 5             | 20.8    | 23.8             | 23.8                  |
|         | Agree             | 13            | 54.2    | 61.9             | 85.7                  |
|         | Don't know        | 3             | 12.5    | 14.3             | 100.0                 |
|         | Total             | 21            | 87.5    | 100.0            |                       |
| Missing | System            | 3             | 12.5    |                  |                       |
| Total   |                   | 24            | 100.0   |                  |                       |

46. The cultural practice of road maintenance and erosion control headed by age grades is a valuable resource for environmental protection and management

|         |                   | Frequenc<br>y | Percent | Valid<br>Percent | Cumulative<br>Percent |
|---------|-------------------|---------------|---------|------------------|-----------------------|
| Valid   | Strongly<br>agree | 11            | 45.8    | 50.0             | 50.0                  |
|         | Agree             | 9             | 37.5    | 40.9             | 90.9                  |
|         | Disagree          | 2             | 8.3     | 9.1              | 100.0                 |
|         | Total             | 22            | 91.7    | 100.0            |                       |
| Missing | System            | 2             | 8.3     |                  |                       |
| Total   |                   | 24            | 100.0   |                  |                       |

47. The practice of the biblical concept of jubilee would contribute to poverty reduction

|         |                   | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---------|-------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid   | Strongly agree    | 3         | 12.5    | 13.0          | 13.0               |
|         | Agree             | 14        | 58.3    | 60.9          | 73.9               |
|         | Don't know        | 3         | 12.5    | 13.0          | 87.0               |
|         | Disagree          | 2         | 8.3     | 8.7           | 95.7               |
|         | strongly disagree | 1         | 4.2     | 4.3           | 100.0              |
|         | Total             | 23        | 95.8    | 100.0         |                    |
| Missing | System            | 1         | 4.2     |               |                    |
| Total   |                   | 24        | 100.0   |               |                    |

48. The practice of bush burning for either hunting or farming purposes contributes to environmental degradation

|         |                | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---------|----------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid   | Strongly agree | 14        | 58.3    | 63.6          | 63.6               |
|         | Agree          | 8         | 33.3    | 36.4          | 100.0              |
|         | Total          | 22        | 91.7    | 100.0         |                    |
| Missing | System         | 2         | 8.3     |               |                    |
| Total   |                | 24        | 100.0   |               |                    |

49. Soil excavation, though a potential cause of soil erosion and environmental degradation, could be justified as a means of economic survival

|         |                      | Freque<br>ncy | Percent | Valid<br>Percent | Cumulative<br>Percent |
|---------|----------------------|---------------|---------|------------------|-----------------------|
| Valid   | Agree                | 13            | 54.2    | 56.5             | 56.5                  |
|         | Don't know           | 1             | 4.2     | 4.3              | 60.9                  |
|         | Disagree             | 6             | 25.0    | 26.1             | 87.0                  |
|         | Strongly<br>disagree | 3             | 12.5    | 13.0             | 100.0                 |
|         | Total                | 23            | 95.8    | 100.0            |                       |
| Missing | System               | 1             | 4.2     |                  |                       |
| Total   |                      | 24            | 100.0   |                  |                       |

50. The use of chemicals and fertilizer could enhance agricultural productivity, however it should be discouraged because it degrades the environment and kills the soil

|         |                      | Frequency | Percent | Valid<br>Percent | Cumulative<br>Percent |
|---------|----------------------|-----------|---------|------------------|-----------------------|
| Valid   | Strongly agree       | 4         | 16.7    | 18.2             | 18.2                  |
|         | Agree                | 12        | 50.0    | 54.5             | 72.7                  |
|         | Disagree             | 4         | 16.7    | 18.2             | 90.9                  |
|         | Strongly<br>disagree | 2         | 8.3     | 9.1              | 100.0                 |
|         | Total                | 22        | 91.7    | 100.0            |                       |
| Missing | System               | 2         | 8.3     |                  |                       |
| Total   |                      | 24        | 100.0   |                  |                       |