

My Dear Friends and Colleagues:

As we embark upon the new year of 2007, our efforts in continuing to define the development pursuits of Africa must be expanded so that Africa's development priorities can be emphasized and brought to the attention of stakeholders in Africa's future. Matters of environmental protection and conservation, economic development, political stability, democratic governance, sustainable growth, civil strife and globalization will continue to loom large in Africa for years to come.

The contributors in this spring 2007 issue of the *Journal of Sustainable Development in Africa* (JSDA) are quite cognizant of the fact that Africa must take control of its destiny through the governments of the countries of Africa. Their unique perspectives, from their disciplinary training, and professional standpoints are quite instructive, informative and challenging to institutions, governmental and non-governmental agencies, businesses and individuals. Above all, these articles lay solid foundations upon which further work must continue as we continue to seek short, medium and long term solutions to Africa's development problems. Strategies for development in all facets of holistic development are provided in some of the articles.

Corrective measures to existing policies that are not sustainable are provided and in some cases, important interrogations of policies and misguided efforts provide excellent opportunities for good management practices. The articles are no doubt provoking and they are both theoretical and applied. Their relevance is unquestionable because they offer excellent steps and paths for sustainable development and growth.

These articles present the wealth of opportunity for investment in Africa but they caution for appropriate strategies and correct engagement of the environment in Africa. The reader is bound to see how global issues impact African countries particularly with matters concerning environment, health, power, public and private policies and development in general. Some of the articles provide cogent discussions on how to promote environmental improvements as fundamental elements for development strategies. A reader is bound to move away with a better understanding of the need to improve the quality of life of people, the quality of development and growth, and more importantly how to protect the "environmental commons" such as the wetlands in Zimbabwe and other countries of Africa.

It is my strong belief that there are many challenges that will continue to confront African countries in the years ahead but it is also my belief that as long as scholars and developers focus on the following issues, the mitigation of use and the reduction of negative impacts of development can be achieved on the continent. The issues are as follows:

1. How to achieve less ecological damage brought about as a result of haphazard developments that do not adhere to an overall master-plan for cities, towns and municipalities. Zoning for residential, industrial, commercial and agricultural/environmental development.
2. Paying attention to ecological urbanization.
3. Adapting to the trends or realities of globalization as dictated by market forces.
4. Paying close attention to the climate change in Africa as this would impact the agricultural production and would result in famine. The past trend in the Southern Africa region should be informative and instructive.
5. Human settlement and poverty reduction must continue to be addressed all across Africa.

Many of the articles in this issue have provided excellent departure points for future work. It would certainly be interesting to see what the policy responses would be from governmental and non-governmental agencies. The proposal for actions is imperative at this point and it would be interesting to see whether the actions would be at the local, national, or regional level. Scholars must continue to provide analyses of the African situation so that developers would benefit from such work and the people of Africa would be the beneficiaries of cutting edge research.

The theoretical and applied perspectives of the articles in this issue would no doubt provide a prism for examining and understanding sustainable development matters and human vulnerability and enhance the understanding of the nexus between the social and environmental dimension of sustainable development and sustainability.

We thank you for your continued support and comments.

Sincerely yours,



Valentine Udoh James, Ph.D.; CES
Editor-in-Chief