
NIGERIAN CLIMATE POLICY REPORT & RECOMMENDATION (508 words)

Nigeria is Africa's most populous country, with roughly 233 million people, and its largest economy, with a GDP of about \$568 billion in 2024 (NDC 3.0, p. 5). Oil and natural gas are the backbone of the economy, accounting for two-thirds of government revenue (NDC 3.0, p. 5), and Nigeria ranked sixth globally among liquefied natural gas exporters in 2024 (EIA, 2025). In electricity generation, natural gas dominates at 77%, with hydropower providing 22% and solar a negligible 0.5% (IEA, 2023). Yet only about 61% of Nigerian households had access to electricity in 2023, and even those with access face frequent blackouts, leaving millions reliant on diesel generators or traditional biomass (EIA, 2025). This gap between fossil fuel wealth and energy poverty sits at the heart of Nigeria's climate challenge.

Emissions have been climbing steadily. Nigeria's Third National Communication (NC3), submitted to the UNFCCC in 2020, found that the biggest source of emissions by far is deforestation, which alone accounts for about half of all national emissions (NC3, 2020). Energy came in second at 34%. The picture has only gotten worse, since the NDC 3.0 found that national emissions rose 48% between 2000 and 2022, reaching 515 million tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (Mt CO₂e), with the energy sector growing fastest (NDC 3.0, p. 6). Gas flaring adds further to the toll; Nigeria flared approximately 229 billion cubic feet of gas in 2024, up 12% from the prior year, making it the seventh-worst flaring country in the world (EIA, 2025). Despite all this, Nigeria's share of global emissions remains just 0.73%, with per-person emissions well below the global average (NDC 3.0, p. 21).

Nigeria's NDC 3.0 (September 2025) commits to cutting emissions 29% by 2030 and 32% by 2035 from a 2018 baseline, targeting net-zero by 2060 (NDC 3.0, p. 14). The Climate Action Tracker rates these commitments as "Almost Sufficient" – not yet consistent with 1.5°C, but achievable with moderate improvements (Climate Action Tracker, 2025). The biggest obstacle is money, as the NDC requires \$337 billion, with 80% expected from international donors, and sufficient funding has not yet been secured (NDC 3.0, p. 21; Climate Action Tracker, 2025).

Key policies include targeting 52% renewable electricity by 2030, ending routine gas flaring by 2030, and scaling up electric vehicles (NDC 3.0, pp. 16-17). The single biggest mitigation opportunity remains stopping deforestation, which the NDC 3.0 estimates carries a mitigation potential of 304.8 Mt CO₂e (NC3, 2020; NDC 3.0, p. 19).

Recommendation: Nigeria's most impactful near-term reform is scaling up decentralized renewable electrification, particularly solar home systems and mini grids in rural areas. With solar at just 0.5% of electricity generation and 39% of households still off-grid, the gap is enormous (EIA, 2025; IEA, 2023). The Rural Electrification Agency, which already runs the Solar Power Naija program targeting 25 million underserved people, should be significantly scaled up through the international climate finance channels Nigeria is already pursuing (EIA, 2025). This would simultaneously address energy poverty, cut emissions, and reduce the deforestation pressure that no amount of forestry policy alone can fix.

Bibliography

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