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Energy Transition in Nigeria: Investigating the Socio-Political and Economic Inhibitions to a Just Transition in the Niger-Delta Region

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Outline of Presentation

- Introduction
- Nigeria's Energy Transition Plan (ETP)
- The Niger-delta Socio-political & Economic Context
- Research Findings : Inhibitions to Just Transition in the Region
- Recommendation
- Conclusion



Introduction



The Global Climate Change underpins the significance for energy transition.



The Niger Delta is Nigeria's energy heartland — rich in oil and gas, yet marked by poverty, environmental degradation, and energy inequality.



National energy transition goals often overlook deep-rooted socio-cultural dynamics and community-level realities.



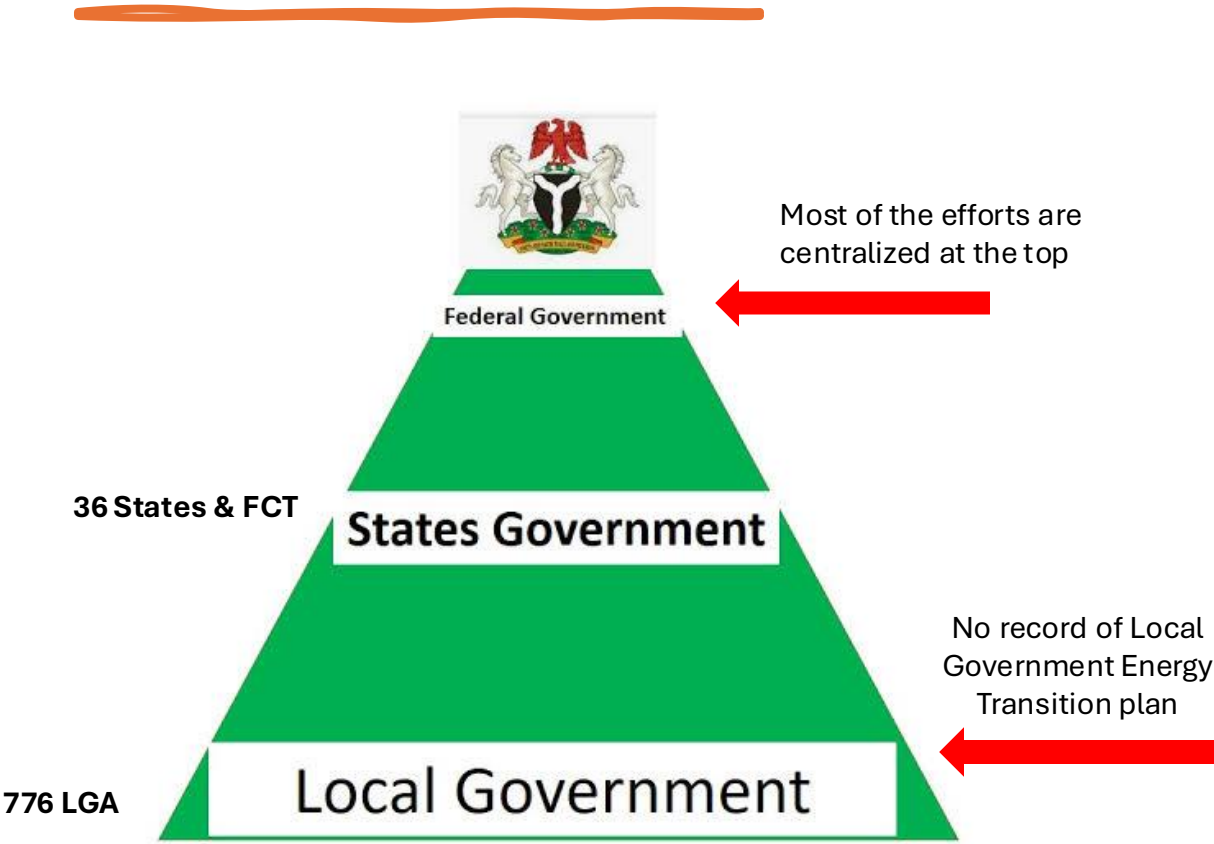
Nigeria has commitment to carbon neutrality by 2060 whilst meeting the nation's energy needs - with an Energy Transition Plan in motion since 2021.

Nigeria's Energy Transition Plan (ETP) : Sectoral Strategies

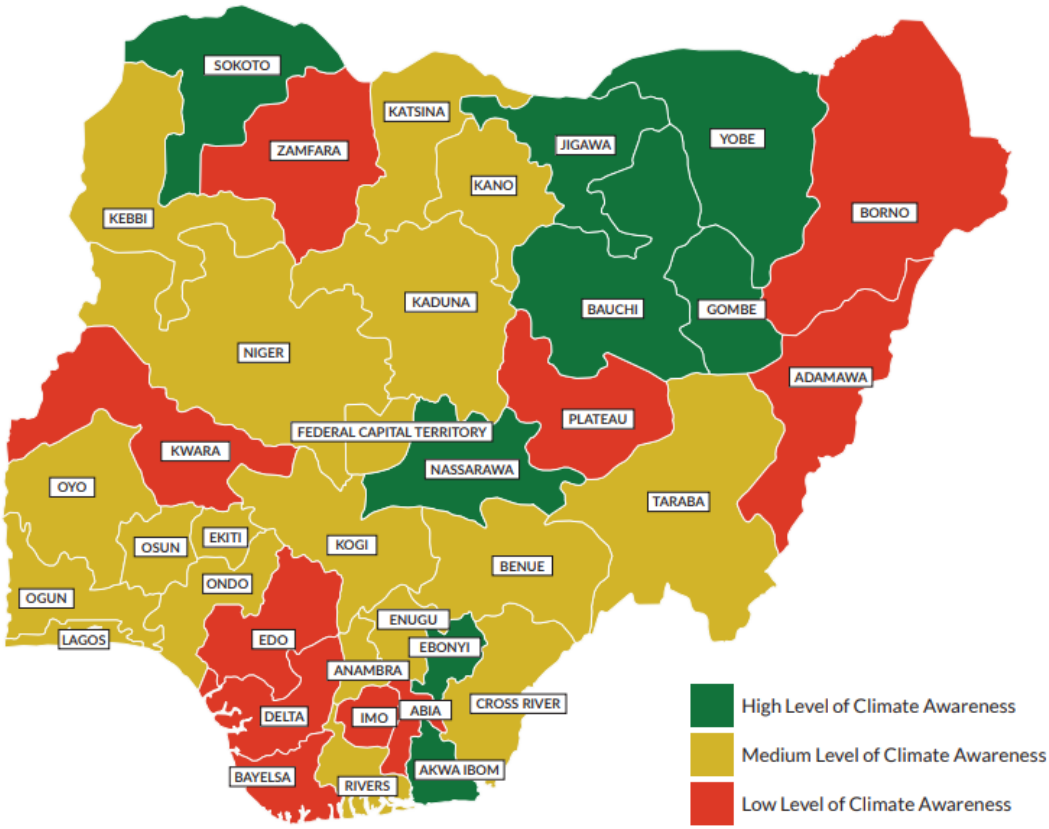
- **Power:** Shift from diesel/petrol generators to renewable energy.
- **Transport:** Cut emissions by ~97% via widespread adoption of electric vehicles.
- **Cooking:** Replace firewood, kerosene, and charcoal with LPG by 2030 (in under 5 years).
- **Oil & Gas:** Lower emissions by reducing flaring and fugitive emissions in line with global climate action.
- **Industry:** Achieve ~97% emissions cut through decarbonizing cement, ammonia, and switching to zero-emission heating.



Nigeria's Energy Transition Plan (ETP): Implementation Governance Strategy



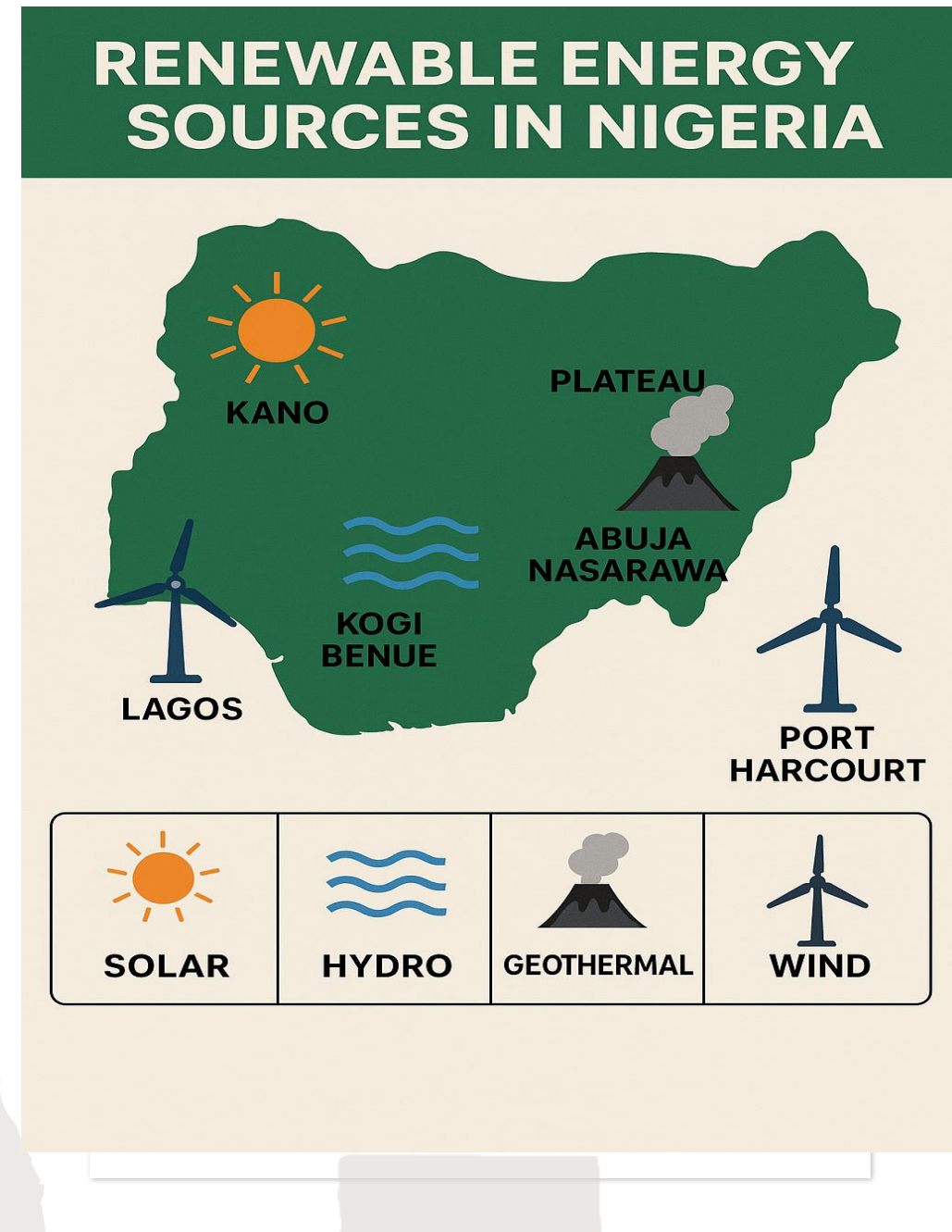
CLIMATE IMPACTS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS AT THE SUBNATIONAL LEVEL IN NIGERIA



Source: Centre for climate change 2023

Potentials for Renewables in Nigeria

- Lagos and PH has potential for wind energy
- The hinterland around Kogi, Benue, Mambila has potential for Hydro
- Around Plateau, Abuja, Nasarawa potential for Geothermal
- The Northern State potential for Solar. Offshore windfarms are also veritable sources of clean energy.



The Niger-delta Socio-political & Economic Context

- A strong traditional institution exist in the community, they are co-opted into oil politics and influenced by government and oil & gas companies (Folami, 2017; Babatunde, 2018).
- Before Oil and gas, the Niger-delta was a , Fish, Palm oil, Cocoa, Rubber, Yam Plantain, Cassava, and Ironwork, Pre-Colonial Trading Hub with European Powers, like Portugal (Nwachukwu and Mbachu, 2018).
- Oil and Gas exploration started between 1903-1936, first oil export happened in 1958 (Steyn, 2009; Okorobia and Olali, 2018).
- The Niger-delta region is the energy hub and the main stay of Nigeria's economy (Oviasuyi and Uwadiae, 2010).




Earning from Oil and Gas (NBS Records)	Amount derived	
2022	\$35.772 billion	
2023	\$30.86 billion	
2024	N50. 88tn naira	

Aso Rock opting for N10bn solar questions presidency belief in national grid- Political posturing for energy transition or Poor Judgement under current economic realities ?

1. Question on rural energy poverty
2. National assets that could better use this type of intervention
 - National Hospital
 - Lekki Free trade zone
 - Aba and Nnewi Manufacturing hubs
 - Agricultural production hubs
 - National broadcasting and telecoms


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21st April 2025




<https://punchng.com/high-bills-presidency-budgets-n10bn-for-solar-power/>

Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) in Nigeria

- An economically viable alternative to cushion the effect of subsidy removal
- A wasted opportunity to drive energy transition

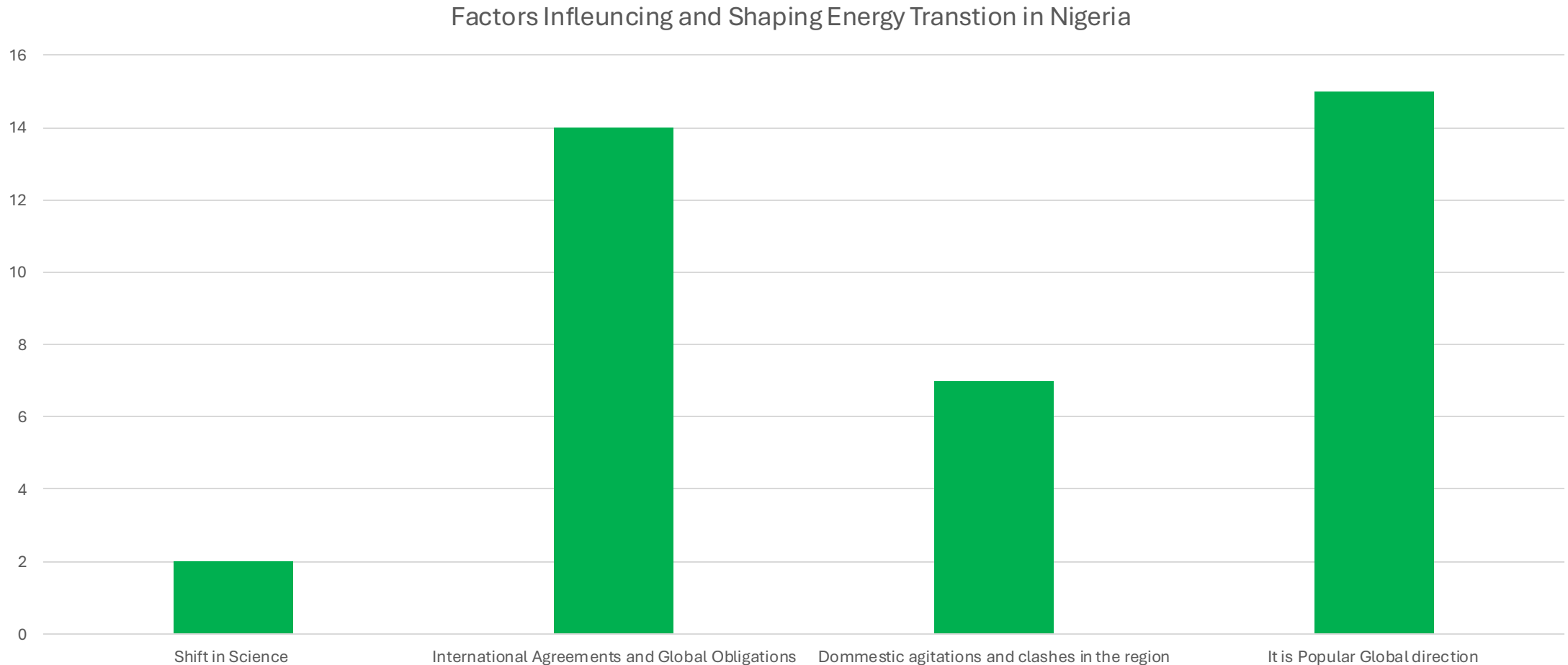




The Importance of Energy Transition to the Niger-Delta, Nigeria

- Allow Nigeria play its part as part of the global effort to reduce the impact of climate change.
- Respondent 14: "we've been oil rich for 70 years or more and there is nothing to show for it "Oil and Gas exploration has not worked for the people of the Niger Delta, it is time to move away from it". "\$30billion from oil export and over \$20 billion from diaspora capitation remittance in 2023, oil is not profitable to us, employing less than 20,000 out of 200million people".
- From an economic standpoint, it creates new opportunities for investment and job creation. Environmentally, it tackles climate change and pollution issues. Socially, it is an opportunity to repair trust, ensuring energy access and equity, especially for rural areas still facing energy poverty.

Factors Influencing the drive for Energy Transition in Nigeria : Respondents Perception






Socio-Political Factors Inhibitions to Energy Transition

- Respondent: Funding Politics/Power: "Oil and Gas funds power and no incumbent powers will do nothing to jeopardize their arrangement"
- "Nigeria's long history with fossil fuel extraction, there is a deeply entrenched interest in the continued exploration of oil and gas. It also accounts for why Nigeria has identified **gas as a transition fuel**
- Endemic corruption might be a stumbling block
- Trade Unions Interest: Workers in the oil and gas industry could be retrained and absorbed in the clean energy sector
- Inconsistent leadership, policy shifts, and the politicization of energy decisions
- Fossil fuel interest groups like oil marketers are actively lobbying National assembly

Economic Inhibitions to Energy Transition in the Niger-Delta

- Limited access to capital, high start-up costs for clean technologies, and insufficient market incentives are significant barriers, solar companies in Yenagoa face challenges in securing financing
- Nigeria's energy policy: Nigeria's status as a key hydrocarbon province and Government strategies favour fossil fuel exploration and income generation instead of pursuing renewable options
- Economic Silos: Lack of Synergies between tiers of government and economic policies along governance value-chain (Federal, State, Local)
- Ownership of lands and energy transition ventures – "Community" participation or exclusion
- Inadequate private sector interest, partnerships, and investment with government institutions to promote renewable energy.
- Weak Political will behind energy transition across all tiers of government.
- Excessive interest in natural resource exploitation and extraction



Social and Equity Considerations for Just Transition in the Niger-delta

- Energy Poverty in rural Niger-delta is a major problem
- Energy access in Nigeria is markedly unequal. Urban areas benefit from improved supply, whereas rural regions, particularly in the Niger Delta, are neglected
- Upskilling for participation and inclusion in energy value chain at community levels
- Cultural resistance to energy transition
- History of marginalization of communities in the Niger-delta
- Poor awareness on energy transition in the local communities of the Niger-delta
- Lack of confidence and trust in Government energy plan amongst the locals
- Community participation is lacking on energy deals, just as oil and gas has excluded the people
- Addressing the failures of the current oil and gas industry at community levels

Recommendations

- **Justice & Ownership/Political ecology of Energy transition:** Identify who owns the process and which populations are impacted. Justice must be locally defined.
- **Cultural Realities:** Deep-rooted practices (e.g., firewood use) influence energy choices; solutions must align with lived realities.
- **Current Energy Access:** Over 50% lack grid access; 10–15 GW comes from small generators — decentralized systems are crucial.
- **Beyond Aid & Loans:** Transition from dependency (e.g., Chinese-funded projects) to homegrown energy sovereignty.
- **Breaking Silos:** Enable sector-specific legislation and community-driven models; create adaptable local energy frameworks.
- **Invest in Decentralized Renewables:** Support rural micro-grids and awareness to bridge knowledge gaps.
- **Tackle Root Fragilities:** Address issues tied to oil sector failure — democracy, colonial legacies, and workforce transformation.
- **Education Reform:** Decolonize curricula, build skills, and embed renewables into cultural values and everyday life



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