

Environmental Governance and Opportunities for Disaster Risk Reduction in Nigeria

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Abstract : Environmental governance is not new, but may consist of a series of actions taken to establish sanity and ensure sustainable environment. While there is a growing accord linking disaster risk reduction with the management of environment and natural resources, little is known about failure to act which constitute vulnerability and how improved governance reduces risk globally. The paper reviews emerging trends in the field of application of governance tools and approaches for reducing disaster risk. The Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA) enjoin all stakeholders to stimulate the sustainable use and management of ecosystems, which promote the implementation of integrated environmental and natural resource planning that incorporate disaster risk reduction, including structural and non-structural measures, such as integrated management of fragile ecosystems. The methodology adopted is a case study of disaster-prone sites, prompting guided analysis on which hazards are traceable to environmental degradation, why a degraded environment reduces community resilience; how healthy ecosystems provide natural defense, and which opportunities exist to address gaps in reduction of disasters in Nigeria. The paper further analyses the interaction between disaster risk and environmental change. It is established that environmental governance remains a challenge; which implies that there is the need for a shift in traditional approaches to disaster risk management; exploring new initiatives and allowing environmental managers to be docketed as disaster risk managers in context, potentially opening up a window of dialogue on disaster risk management.

Keywords : disaster, ecosystem, environment, risk

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