

Political Economy of Climate Governance, Environmental Quality and Sustainable Development in Nigeria: Role of Institutional Quality as a Moderator

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Abstract

This paper explores the complex nexus between climate governance, environmental quality and sustainable development in Nigeria from a political economy perspective. The study specifically includes the moderating effect of the institutional quality. The research used a mixed-method design, combining structured survey data (N = 450) from six geopolitical representative states with thematic qualitative insights. Descriptive statistics, ordinary least squares (OLS) regression and thematic synthesis were used to analyse these dynamics. Empirical findings investigate that current climate governance initiatives have a positive but weak direct impact on environmental quality and sustainable development, structural bottlenecks, including rent-seeking behaviours, institutional fragmentation, and regulatory capture, severely undermine climate governance policies. Crucially, the moderation analysis demonstrates that institutional quality is a critical facilitator; the interaction between climate governance and institutional quality has a strongly significant positive effect on both environmental quality and measures of long-term sustainable development. The findings underline the fact that any technical or financial solutions to climate change in Nigeria are likely to remain largely sub-optimal without a systematic overhaul of governance structures. The study calls for the institutional divorce of environmental regulatory bodies from political interference, the formal inclusion of subnational actors into the national climate architecture, and the establishment of a clear and protected management frameworks for green assets.

Keywords: Climate governance; Environmental quality; Sustainable development; Institutional quality; Political economy

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1. Introduction

The triple challenges of climate change, environmental degradation and unsustainable developmental trajectories constitute an urgent macroeconomic and ecological crisis facing Sub-Saharan Africa in the 21st century. Nigeria, the most populous and one of the largest economies on the continent of Africa, has a strong epicentre of this dilemma. The nation's crude oil extraction history has produced a deep-rooted socio-ecological dynamic of short-term fiscal revenue extraction, which always conflicts with long-term environmental management and sustainable economic planning (Saboori et al., 2024). Over the last decade, Nigeria's ecological zones have experienced the tangible impacts of global climate change, with an increased velocity between 2022 and 2025 (Udoinyang, 2025). These include the advancing desertification and severe droughts in the northern Sahelian belt, catastrophic seasonal flooding, coastal erosion and persistent oil-spill contamination in the southern coastal hubs and the Niger Delta region. These socio-environmental stressors are serious threats to agricultural productivity, aggravate resource-based agrarian-pastoralist conflicts, destroy physical infrastructure and deepen multi-dimensional poverty among vulnerable communities (Widianingsih et al., 2024).

An aggressive, structurally consistent and transparent climate governance system is needed to decouple economic performance from ecological destruction and to achieve the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), in particular SDG 13 (Climate Action), SDG 15 (Life on Land) and SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth). To address these critical needs, Nigeria has implemented several key laws and policies, including the Climate Change Act, the Energy Transition Plan, and numerous environmental protection laws at the national level. But the actual impact of these policy interventions remains very limited. Lack of translation of policy commitments into real improvement environmental quality is not a technical or a financial problem; it is rooted in entrenched political economy constraints (Adebayo, 2025). Climate governance is not an institutional vacuum; it is a field of power relations, a field of resource allocative vulnerabilities, elite political bargains and institutional incentive structures. The structural vulnerabilities, such as systemic rent-seeking, overlapping regulatory mandates between federal and state agencies, administrative opacity, and regulatory capture by the seekers continue to undermine policy enforcement in Nigeria's political economy (Naxera & Krčál, 2025). In this sense, the quality of institutions (measured in terms of key dimensions such as legal enforceability, government effectiveness, control of corruption, regulatory quality and administrative accountability) seems to be a crucial moderating vector. Strong institutions lower transaction costs, restrict political interference, ensure transparent allocation of resources, and strictly enforce statutory



compliance at all levels of government administration (Saboori et al., 2024). However, due to the lack of institutional quality, the well-rent-seeking, ecological-mate mitigation and adaptation policies may become the instruments of political rent-ecological modernisation theory, environmental quality degradation, and unattainable sustainable development goals (Zhao, 2026). Therefore, it is important to understand the moderated and nuanced relationship between climate change governance frameworks, environmental quality and sustainable development governance for effective policy solutions.

The main purpose of this study is to critically assess the political economy of climate governance, environmental quality and sustainable development in Nigeria with a primary focus on isolating the moderating role of institutional quality. The study has the following specific objectives to achieve:

1. To evaluate the direct impact of climate governance structures on environmental quality metrics and sustainable development outcomes across Nigeria's geopolitical zones.
2. To investigate how structural political economy constraints, including rent-seeking and bureaucratic friction, influence the implementation velocity of national climate action frameworks.
3. To empirically measure the moderating influence of institutional quality on the relationship linking climate governance to environmental quality and sustainable development in Nigeria.

-Research Questions

This study seeks to address the following core research question:

1. To what extent do existing climate governance frameworks directly improve environmental quality and promote sustainable development outcomes across Nigeria?
2. In what ways do political economy dynamics, such as institutional rent-seeking and elite capture distort the operational efficiency of environmental regulatory framework?
3. How does institutional quality significantly moderate the nexus between climate governance, environmental quality, and sustainable development indicators in Nigeria?



-Research hypotheses

To gain statistical validity and to test the underlying theoretical claims, the following research hypotheses hypothesis are formulated:

H₁: Climate governance frameworks have a significant positive direct effect on environmental quality and sustainable development in Nigeria seeking.

H₂: Institutional quality significantly and positively moderates the relationship between climate governance and environmental quality, such that the positive impact of governance is amplified under conditions of high institutional integrity.

H₃: Institutional quality significantly and positively moderates the impact of climate governance on sustainable development outcomes within the Nigeria macro-economy.

-Theoretical Literature

The theoretical foundation of this study is an integrated synthesis of three complementary analytical paradigms: the political economy theory of the rentier state, the ecological modernisation theory and the institutional theory of governance. This study combines these structural, technological and administrative perspectives to develops a holistic conceptual framework, which captures the macro-political constraints, environmental pathways and institutional realities that govern Nigeria's sustainable development trajectory.

The basic lens through which to understand the vulnerabilities and constraints within the Nigerian state is the political economy theory of the rentier state. The theory posits that States that derive their public revenues from source rents (e.g., crude oil exports) tend to have a state apparatus that is structurally divorced from domestic taxation and civic accountability (Adebayo, 2025). Then, the state institutions shift their focus from wealth creation and the provision of public goods to rent-seeking. The rentier political economy systematically creates disincentives for the strict regulatory enforcement because state survival is closely tied to unhindered resource extraction, environmental regulatory agencies are thus frequently underfunded, politically marginalised or structurally impaired (Naxera & Krčál, 2025). This has resulted in a regulatory capture where the state show that in short-term hydrocarbon revenues than environmental seeking, explaining why flaring of gas and land degradation exist despite statutory bans.

The danger of the rentier theory is that it may lead to an analytical emphasis on structural pessimism. To this end, this paper applies the ecological modernisation theory, which posits that environmental degradation can be decoupled from economic growth through some institutional reforms, clean technological innovations and state-led environmental governance (Lu et al., 2025; Zhao, 2026). This paradigm suggests that the adoption of a proactive environmental statecraft and the embedding of sustainability principles at the core of macroeconomic policies can contribute to ecological crises. In a developing economy, issuance of green bonds, carbon pricing regimes and decentralised renewable energy transitions are mechanisms that enable ecological modernisation. But ecological modernisation in the real world is wholly dependent upon the functional capacity and integrity of state institutions.

The institutional theory of governance addresses this critical contingency, it suggests that institutions are the formal and informal “rules of the game” that govern economic, political, and social interactions (Saboori et al., 2024). Seen this way, the operational efficiency of any policy instrument is a direct function of the institutional matrix within which it is embedded. The mechanism for the moderation hypothesis is provided by institutional theory applied to environmental seeking. Its indicated by climate governance frameworks (independent variable) that do not automatically lead to better environmental quality, or sustainable development (dependent variable) unless mediated by high institutional quality. It provides for strong institutions that reduce transaction costs, limit rent-seeking, enforce legal requirements and hold the administration accountable. Institutional quality is therefore an important criterion isolating the theoretical imperatives of climate governance into operational ecological modernisation and, at the same time, ecological modernisation theories that hinder policy implementation. The study advocates the synthesis of the three paradigms for sustainable development in Nigeria, involving a move away from policy design towards reforming the institutional architecture to dismantle rentier blockages and to facilitate a real ecological transition.

From 2023 to 2026, there has been an exponential growth in decentralised scholarship on the nexus of climate change, institutional operations and sustainable development in sub-Saharan Africa. More scholars have rejected the simplistic bivariate models in favour of complex multivariate configurations which take into account the structural institutional realities. For instance, a seminal study by Ishaku (2026) evaluated the effect of green fiscal policy on environmental degradation in selected Sub-Saharan African countries. Using a dynamic panel generalised method of moments (GMM) approach, the author show that despite the existence of legislative climate frameworks



across the region, the actual capacity to reduce carbon dioxide emissions is severely hampered by institutional weaknesses, particularly corruption and weak contract enforcement. He concluded that environmental regulations are still toothless without deep institutional reform which is also supported by the study of Adeyemi et al. (2025).

Recent empirical enquiries in Nigeria have been largely concentrated on the political economy of the energy transition and resource governance. Shittu et al. (2024) used a dynamic computable general equilibrium (CGE) model to analyse the macroeconomic and environmental impacts of the 2023 fuel subsidy removal in Nigeria. They conclude that the removal of subsidies indeed reduces the domestic consumption of fossil fuels in theory and increases the fiscal space for sustainable infrastructure development, but the actual reallocation of these funds towards green investment is highly vulnerable to bureaucratic rent-seeking and institutional diversion. This confirms the ability of the state's institutional structure, based in a rentier economy, to subvert the reforms of the ecological modernisation agenda in terms of fiscal policy. Ferdi (2025) conducted a similar study to explore the role of national governance institutions in the nexus of natural resource wealth and FDI inflows in resource-dependent countries. They find that weak property rights and fluid regulatory frameworks tend to attract polluting and non-sustainable FDI to resource-rich countries such as Nigeria. On the other hand, high decentralised quality redirects investment profiles towards green innovations and sustainable pro-theologians. The structure about development of institutional quality as an environmental mediator has been validated in broader emerging market contexts.

Epor and Akande (2025) examine green finance, financial inclusion and its impact on sustainable development indicators from emerging economies. Their empirical evidence indicated that the improvements of environmental quality are highly non-linear and sensitive to the thresholds of the institutional and regulatory development. In this context, Oanh and Dinh (2024) discovered that climate governance digital tools and green financial systems have a significant and positive impact on environmental sustainability indicators only under a high level of bureaucratic stability and legal accountability indices. Oluwafemi (2026) conducted qualitative content analysis of the political and institutional barriers to effective climate governance in Nigeria. The study found that the fragmented scholarship of environmental governance in Nigeria generates a significant horizontal disconnect between policy formulation at the federal tier and the realities of implementation at the sub-national tier. As a result, local environmental degradation can continue unabated as a result of weak sub-national institutional capacity. The recent empirical works are analytically deep, but there is a critical research gap in the literature.

Most existing studies on Nigeria either rely exclusively on macroeconomic secondary time-series data which often obscures local socio-political dynamics or focus on narrow qualitative case studies of specific ecological zones like the Niger Delta. There is an absolute dearth of integrated, mixed-methods empirical research that explicitly treats institutional quality as a structural moderating variable operating across both quantitative survey dimensions and qualitative thematic frameworks across all geopolitical regions of Nigeria. Furthermore, the literature has not adequately integrated the political economy of the 2023–2026 post-subsidy economic landscape with primary institutional data regarding the enforcement of the Climate Change Act. This study aims to directly bridge this gap by deploying an integrated primary data-driven approach combining cross-sectional survey metrics and rigorous thematic analysis to isolate and quantify the moderating threshold of institutional quality on Nigeria's climate governance outcomes.

2- Methods

This study uses a convergent parallel mixed-methods design whereby quantitative survey administrations and qualitative key-informant sessions are concurrently administered to ensure empirical robustness. The broader target audience of this study is environmental regulatory officers, public administrators, civil society actors, community leaders and academic researchers in environmental economics and governance in Nigeria. A multi-stage stratified random sampling technique was employed to select six states from the six distinct geopolitical zones in Nigeria to ensure geographical and socio-ecological representativeness. The selected states include Kano State (North-West), Borno State (North-East), Benue State (North-Central), Lagos State (South-West), Rivers State (South-South) and Enugu State (South-East). The stratification covers a spectrum of climate vulnerability from northern arid desertification zones to southern coastal-industrial belts. The total sample size calculated for the quantitative and logical respondents in the six states was 500, 450 valid questionnaires were successfully collected, indicating an excellent 90% response rate. Simultaneously, 24 purposive key informant interviews (KIIs) were conducted with senior environmental officers and civil society leaders (4 per state) to elicit rich data for thematic synthesis.

Data was collected using a pre-tested structured instrument titled “Climate Governance and Institutional Quality Questionnaire (CGIQQ)” and a semi-structured KII guide over a period of four months. The quantitative instrument utilised a 5-point Likert scale to measure latent constructs, including Climate Governance Efficacy (CGE), Environmental Quality Perceptions (EQP), Sustainable Development Indicators (SDI),



and Institutional Quality Metrics (IQM). To guarantee data reliability, a pilot study was carried out, yielding an overall Cronbach’s alpha coefficient of $\alpha = 0.86$, with all individual sub-scales exceeding the conventional $\alpha = 0.70$ threshold, demonstrating strong internal consistency. Methodological execution strictly adhered to ethical research protocols; formal ethical approval was secured from institutional review boards (Approval No.: IU/REC/2026/016), approved on the 9th of February, 2026 before the field data collection started, and all field interactions were predicated on signed informed consent, guaranteed anonymity, and strict compliance with data privacy regulations.

Sample Distribution and Decentralised Presentation

The granular institutional centralised demographic breakdown of the sample across the selected states is systematically organised in Table 1 below.

Table 1:
Field Distribution and Demographic Profiles of Sample (N = 450)

State (Region)	Selected Respondents' Primary Occupation	Age Distribution (%)	Sex (%)	Educational Degree (%)	Questionnaire Distributed	Questionnaire Returned
Lagos (SW)	Environmental Officers, Urban Planners, Civil Servants	18-35: 32% 36-50: 48% 51+: 20%	Male: 54% Female : 46%	B.Sc/HND: 42% M.Sc: 45% PhD: 13%	85	78
Rivers (SS)	Pollution Control Experts, NGO Advocates, Academics	18-35: 25% 36-50: 52% 51+: 23%	Male: 61% Female : 39%	B.Sc/HND: 35% M.Sc: 48% PhD: 17%	85	76
Enugu (SE)	Community Development Officers, Forestry Personnel	18-35: 38% 36-50: 44% 51+: 18%	Male: 52% Female : 48%	B.Sc/HND: 55% M.Sc: 35% PhD: 10%	80	72
Kano (NW)	Agricultural Extension Officers, Local Administrat	18-35: 41% 36-50: 42% 51+: 17%	Male: 68% Female : 32%	B.Sc/HND: 60% M.Sc: 32% PhD: 8%	85	75

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Borno (NE)	Humanitarian Logistics Officers, Climate Advocates	18-35: 45% 36-50: 40% 51+: 15%	Male: 70% Female : 30%	B.Sc/HND: 58% M.Sc: 34% PhD: 8%	85	74
	Land Resources Officers, Farmer Association Reps	18-35: 30% 36-50: 50% 51+: 20%	Male: 58% Female : 42%	B.Sc/HND: 50% M.Sc: 40% PhD: 10%	80	75

Source: Author's Fieldwork, 2026.

The strategic selection of these six states is justified by the necessity to capture the highly diverse ecological, economic, and institutional configurations across Nigeria. Lagos provides an urban-industrial coastal perspective plagued by intense industrial pollution, while Rivers State embodies the core political economy of oil extraction and systemic environmental devastation in the Niger Delta. Enugu captures the unique erosion and deforestation dynamics of the South-East. The northern selection, on the other hand, picks for specific climate stressors: Kano, a major commercial-agricultural hub experiencing rising temperatures; Borno, the extreme geopolitical frontline of climate-induced displacement and Sahelian desertification; Benue, the Middle Belt “Food basket” that is especially vulnerable to violent climate-driven farmer-herder conflict. The demographic profile reflects a group that is highly educated and professionally mature and able to provide technically valid answers to difficult questions of institutional governance.

3. Results

The descriptive analysis examines the baseline perceptions of the respondents on the key operational variables of the study.

Table 2:
Descriptive Statistics Core Variables

Construct Latent Variable	Mean Score (μ)	Standard Deviation	Variance	Skewness	Kurtosis	Interpretation
Climate Governance Efficiency (CGE)	2.64	0.88	0.77	0.31	-0.62	Suboptimal/Week
Environmental Quality Index (EQI)	2.18	0.74	0.55	0.54	-0.18	Degraded/Poor
Institutional Quality Metrics (IQM)	2.32	0.81	0.66	0.42	-0.45	Week/Compromised
Sustainable Development (SDI)	2.55	0.85	0.72	0.28	-0.58	Low Progress

The descriptive indices indicate that the operational effectiveness of climate governance and institutional frameworks in Nigeria Stakeholders as very suboptimal. The mean score on the Climate Governance Efficacy ($\mu = 2.64$ on a 5-point scale) indicates that stakeholders perceive policy instruments as poorly implemented. This is reflected in a critically low score for Environmental Quality ($\mu = 2.18$), which indicates ongoing severe ecological degradation. Importantly, the Institutional Quality score ($\mu = 2.32$) indicates an institutional deficit that lies behind the failure of regulatory frameworks. These governance deficiencies are characterised by low standard deviations, indicating a high level of agreement among respondents across all geographical zones.

- Regression Analysis

Hierarchical ordinary least squares (OLS) regression analysis was used to test hypotheses and analyse moderating effects. To avoid multicollinearity, the interaction term was created by multiplying mean-centred scores of Climate Governance and Institutional Quality (CGE x IQM). Before creating the interaction term, all the predictors were mean-centred following Aiken and West to reduce multicollinearity. Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) values ranged from 1.34 to 1.89, below the threshold of 5, confirming that there is no multicollinearity involved. To address the issues of bias in common-methods, Harman's single factors test was conducted; 28.4% of variance (< 50% threshold) was explained by the first factor. Endogeneity was checked using World

Governance Indicators lagged institutional quality as instrumental variable; results remained consistent.

Table 3:
Hierarchical Regression Results (Dependent Variable: Sustainable Development - SDI)

Predictor Variables	Model 1 (β)	Model 2 (β)	Model 3 (β)	SE Model 3	t-statistic Model 3	p-value	Sig
Constant	1.84***	1.12***	0.94***	0.112	8.39	<0.001	*
Climate Governance (CGE)	0.18**	0.12*	0.08	0.044	1.82	0.069	Ns
Institutional Quality (IQM)	—	0.44***	0.38***	0.053	7.17	<0.001	*
Interaction Term (CGE x IQM)	—	—	0.32***	0.054	5.93	<0.001	*
R-squared	0.032	0.224	0.298	—	—	—	—
Delta R-squared	—	0.192	0.074	—	—	—	—
F-Statistic	14.82***	64.55***	63.14***	—	—	—	*

Note : *p < 0.001; *p < 0.01; p < 0.05; ns = non-significant. Interaction term mean-centred. VIF 1.34 – 1.89

The hierarchical regression testing moderation were presented in table 3. In model 1, it shows climate governance has a weak direct effect ($R^2 = 3.2\%$). Model 2, institutional quality increases ($R^2 = 22.4\%$); in model 3, interaction (CGE x IQM) is positive and are highly significant ($\beta = 0.32$, $t \Delta 5.93$, $p < 0.001$, $R^2 = 7.4\%$), which confirm complete moderation. CGE ($p = 0.069$) becomes non-significant indicating climate governance only improves sustainable development when institutional quality is high.

- Thematic Qualitative Analysis

Qualitative insights extracted from the 24 key informant interviews were transcribed and analysed using a recursive thematic synthesis framework to contextualise the numerical output.

Table 4:
Thematic Matrix of Qualitative Political Economy Obstacles

Core Emerging Themes	Key Illustrative Informant Codes Insights	Empirical Grounding
1. Budgetary Rent Extraction	“Climate allocations and green funds are routinely diverted into administrative overheads and patronage networks at the state level.” (KII-Rivers-02)	High Pervasiveness
2. Bureaucratic Overlap	“The ongoing friction between the federal Ministry of Environment and state agencies creates a compliance vacuum that polluters exploit.” (KII-Lagos-04)	Structural Bottleneck
3. Enforcement Asymmetry	“We possess statutory powers under the Climate Act, but political interference from elite actors prevents us from penalising major violators.” (KII-Kano-01)	Regulatory Capture

The thematic matrix illuminates the hidden political economy mechanisms driving the poor performance indicators observed in the quantitative models. Informant testimonies across all six geopolitical zones emphasise that institutional quality is systematically compromised by three forces: budgetary rent extraction, severe bureaucratic overlap, and enforcement asymmetry. The qualitative data demonstrates that the failure of climate governance is not due to a lack of legislative design, but rather a deliberate dilution of regulatory power caused by rentier state interests. This provides strong empirical support for the regression model and exactly explains why the institutional quality must be a primary moderating catalyst.

4. Discussion

The empirical findings of this mixed-methods study provide clear and interlinked perceptions of how the political economy of resource extraction, climate governance and sustainable development operate in Nigeria. The quantitative descriptive data (Table 2) show that the current climate governance efforts are not delivering sufficient results ($\mu = 2.64$) and environmental degradation is still high ($\mu = 2.18$). This is in line with the qualitative results in table 4, pointing to more structural problems such as budget diversion and regulatory capture. When these results are evaluated through the rentier



state theory, it becomes obvious that Nigeria's dependence on resource rents has created a governance framework that systematically weakens environmental oversight to protect short-term revenues. This dynamic explains why the direct path from climate governance to sustainable development in Model 1 of the regression analysis (Table 3) is so weak ($\beta = 0.18$). This demonstrates that passing legislation like the Climate Change Act cannot, on its own, make real progress working within a compromised institutional framework.

The primary finding of this research is a positive and statistically significant interaction effect (CGE x IQM) in the moderation model ($\beta = 0.32$, $p < 0.001$). This provides a strong rationale for Hypotheses 2 and 3 that institutional quality is the key driver to unleash effective climate action. Climate policies are often undermined by rent-seeking behaviour, and green funding is lost due to bureaucratic inefficiency in weak institutional quality. But the better the quality of institutions, the more consistent the enforcement of rules, the more effective the controls on corruption and the more administrative processes link between climate governance and sustainable development becomes.

These findings are consistent with ecological modernisation theory, which states that resolving environmental crises requires enhancing the institutional capacity of the state. The results are consistent with recent regional studies of Ishaku (2026); Adeyemi et al. (2025) who observes that green fiscal policies are not efficient in the absence of strong legal institutions. The results of Shittu et al. (2024) also confirmed that the fiscal benefits of subsidy reforms are easily lost if the funds are not transparently managed. The study emphasises the need to widen the scope for technical policy formulation for sustainable development in Nigeria through synthesis of quantitative data and thematic insights. The real progress is in building strong institutions to resist the rentier state and to gradually enforce environmental regulations across the country.

5. Conclusion

This study examined the political economy of climate action, environmental quality and sustainable development in Nigeria, adopting a comprehensive mixed-method assessment, with special focus on the significant moderating role of institutional quality. Empirical evidence shows that Nigeria's climate governance initiatives cannot achieve their goals on their own. The country has passed modern environmental laws, but their effectiveness is severely limited by the rent-seeking nature of the country, overlapping bureaucratic structures and weak enforcement mechanisms typical of a rentier state. Importantly, moderation analysis suggests that institutional quality is the



missing link. Increasing accountability, bolstering the rule of law and curbing corruption are crucial to ensuring that climate governance is effective in delivering climate action and translating it into improved environmental quality and meaningful progress on sustainable development goals.

More detailed correlational analysis is recommended for future research to better understand the reasons for large variation in environmental policy enforcement across states and regions of Nigeria. Future research should also investigate the political economy of green asset management in the context of emerging economic changes after subsidy reforms between 2023 and 2026. More constructs are needed to follow up on whether the savings in fiscal resources are really being reallocated to decentralised renewable energy projects and climate adaptation for vulnerable climate-centric solutions.

Based on the empirical evidence and qualitative insights of this study, the following specific recommendations are proposed for key institutional stakeholders: To the Nigerian Government's Legislative Chambers, grant full autonomy to Environmental Regulatory Agencies and formally insulate the National Council on Climate Change (NCCC) and the National Environmental Standards and Regulations Enforcement Agency (NESREA) from political and executive interference. They must be capable of control without political interference and their funding should be secured by direct first-line charges on the federation account.

To State Governments and Sub-National Institutions: A unified intergovernmental climate taskforce should be established to harmonise federal and state environmental mandates, eliminating regulatory overlap and closing the compliance loopholes currently exploited by polluting industries. State governments should establish transparent open-access registries for monitoring the allocation and use of ecological funds.

To Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) and International Development Partners: Develop Community-Led Oversight Structures that strengthen local civil society groups to act as independent watchdogs. These groups should be on guard about the use of green budgets and environmental compliance and use legal means such as the Freedom of Information (FOI) Act to hold public institutions and extractive industries to account.

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