

**CLIMATE CHANGE AND TROPICAL COASTAL VULNERABILITY IN THE
GULF OF GUINEA, NIGERIA**

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DECEMBER, 2021

**CLIMATE CHANGE AND TROPICAL COASTAL VULNERABILITY IN THE
GULF OF GUINEA, NIGERIA**

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**A THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE SCHOOL OF POSTGRADUATE STUDIES IN
PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF
DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY (Ph.D) IN INDUSTRIAL CHEMISTRY
IN THE DEPARTMENT OF CHEMISTRY, COLLEGE OF SCIENCE AND
TECHNOLOGY, COVENANT UNIVERSITY, OTA, OGUN STATE, NIGERIA.**

DECEMBER, 2021

ACCEPTANCE

This is to attest that this thesis is accepted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Industrial Chemistry in the Department of Chemistry, College of Science and Technology, Covenant University, Ota, Nigeria

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DECLARATION

I, OLOYEDE, MARY OMOLARA (13PCC00477) declare that this research was carried out by me under the supervision of Prof. Akan B. Williams and Prof. Nsikak U. Benson of the Department of Chemistry, College of Science and Technology, Covenant University, Ota, Nigeria. I attest that the thesis has not been presented either wholly or partially for the award of any degree elsewhere. All sources of data and scholarly information used in this thesis are duly acknowledged.

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Signature and Date

CERTIFICATION

We certify that the thesis titled “**CLIMATE CHANGE AND TROPICAL COASTAL VULNERABILITY IN THE GULF OF GUINEA, NIGERIA**” is an original research work carried out by **OLOYEDE, MARY OMOLARA (13PCC00477)** in the Department of Chemistry, College of Science and Technology, Covenant University, Ota, Ogun State, Nigeria, under the supervision of Prof. Akan B. Williams and Prof. Nsikak U. Benson. We have examined and found the work acceptable as part of the requirements for the award of Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D) degree in Industrial Chemistry.

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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to the Almighty God, my help in ages past and my hope for years to come.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I deeply appreciate the Almighty God, the Alpha and Omega, without whom I would not have gone this far. To Him be ALL the glory.

I am immensely grateful to the Chancellor and Chairman, Board of Regents, Covenant University, Dr. David O. Oyedepo, for providing this platform that has given me the opportunity not only to pursue my academic career but also to be a part of the glorious vision that Covenant University is driving. I sincerely thank the Vice-Chancellor, Covenant University, Professor Abiodun H. Adebayo; the Registrar, Dr. Oluwasegun P. Omidiora and the entire management team for their leadership role towards the success of this programme. I appreciate the Dean, School of Postgraduate Studies (SPS), Professor Akan B. Williams and the Sub-Dean, SPS, Dr. Emmanuel A. Amoo. The Dean, College of Science and Technology, Professor Victor T. Omotosho is also appreciated.

My genuine appreciation goes to my Supervisor, Professor Akan B. Williams, and Co-supervisor, Professor Nsikak U. Benson, for their mentorship, tutelage, words of advice and encouragement, all through the duration of this programme.

My heartfelt gratitude also goes to Professor Joseph A. O. Olugbuyiro (Head, Department of Chemistry) and Dr. Joseph A. Adekoya (PG Co-ordinator, Department of Chemistry) for their timely advice and support towards the completion of this programme. My sincere thanks also go to the entire Faculty and Staff of the Department of Chemistry for their overwhelming support, constructive criticisms, impactful teachings, and constant words of encouragement.

Words would fail me to express how much I appreciate my in-laws, Professor and Mrs. Samuel A. Oloyede and family, for their unwavering support, prayers, sacrifices, love, words of advice and encouragement all through these years, I feel so blessed to be part of the Oloyede family.

To every member of my extended family, who supported me in any way, I appreciate you all.

To my dear mother, Mrs. M.A. Adesina, and siblings, Mrs. O.A. Sam-Pepple and Mr. A.S. Adesina, who walked through this journey with me, cheering me up and making me believe in myself, I am indeed grateful for everything. God bless you all.

To my dear husband and best friend, Mr. O.V. Oloyede, thanks for being a pillar of support all these years. Thanks for believing in me, I deeply appreciate you. To my dear children- Joanna, Nathaniel, Naomi, and Bethel, thanks for your understanding and prayers during the duration of my programme. I love you all.

To my late father, Engr. C.O. Adesina, I hope you are smiling down on me from heaven above. I wish you were here to see your little girl finally on her way to actualizing the dream of being a Professor, which you have always believed, prayed, and desired for her. I remember you always; keep resting in the bosom of your maker.

To everyone who supported me in ways too numerous to mention, but whose name does not appear on this page, be rest assured that I remember and acknowledge your kind deeds. God bless you all.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|---------|--|
| AOGCMs | Atmospheric and Oceanic General Circulation Models |
| CC | Climate Change |
| CFCs | Chlorofluorocarbons |
| CORDEX | Coordinated Regional Climate Downscaling Experiment |
| CVI | Coastal Vulnerability Index |
| DEM | Digital Elevation Model |
| DESYCO | Decision Support System for Coastal Climate Change Impact Assessment |
| EEA | European Environmental Agency |
| GIS | Geographic Information System |
| GWP | Global Warming Potential |
| HCFCs | Hydrochlorofluorocarbons |
| IAMs | Integrated Assessment Models |
| IPCC | Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change |
| LU/LC | Land Use/Land Cover |
| NIOMR | Institute for Oceanography and Marine Research |
| NOAA | National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration |
| RCP | Representative Concentration Pathway |
| SimCLIM | Simulator of CLIMate Change Risks and Adaptation Initiatives |
| SLAMM | Sea Level Affecting Marshes Model |
| SRES | Special Report on Emission Scenarios |
| SST | Sea Surface Temperature |
| UNEP | United Nation Environmental Programme |
| UNFCCC | United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change |
| USCCSP | United States Climate Change Science Programme |
| USEPA | United States Environmental Protection Agency |
| WCRP | World Climate Research Programme |

ABSTRACT

Coastal regions are essential spots on earth as they are hosts to various important ecosystems, natural resources, and an increasing population. They are mainly affected by sea-level rise, which is one of the effects of climate change. This study quantifies and classifies the vulnerability of the Nigerian coastline to increase in sea levels. This involved calculating the coastal vulnerability index (CVI) employing physical and geomorphological variables, and socioeconomic indicators that characterized the coastline vulnerability. Two approaches were utilized in this study to obtain the Coastal Vulnerability Index (CVI): an analytical hierarchical process (AHP) based approach to coastal vulnerability studies and the CVI formula proposed by Gornitz (1991). The Nigerian coast was divided into seventeen (17) segments based on geomorphic units. The different vulnerability variables were assigned ranks ranging from 1 to 5, with 1 indicating the lowest and 5 indicating the highest vulnerabilities. The geomorphological and physical parameters include coastal slope, bathymetry, geomorphology, wave height, mean tidal range, shoreline change rate and relative sea-level rise, while the socioeconomic parameters include population, cultural heritage, land use/land cover and road network. Also, the trends and effects of some ocean variables of the Nigerian coastline were analysed, with the aim of identifying the potential drivers of sea level changes. This was achieved by the analysis of tide and oceanographic data obtained from both local and international agencies. Statistical analysis was carried out using MATLAB and XLSTAT. Sea level change projection was carried out using simCLIM. A comparison of CVI values was carried out and the AHP based approach appeared to be a more realistic approach in assessing coastal vulnerability as it is systematic and stepwise. The calculated CVI values (AHP method) ranged from 11.25 to 41.66 with a median value of 23.60. Based on Gornitz approach, the calculated values ranged between 3.51–4.77 and 3.08–5.00 for PVI and SoVI, respectively. However, the aggregated coastal vulnerability index computed using this approach ranged from 3.29 to 4.70. The results obtained from both approaches showed that 59–65% of the entire Nigerian coastline is under moderate to high vulnerability to sea-level rise. These data indicated how the coastal populations are highly vulnerable to both physical–geomorphological and socioeconomic stressors. Coastal vulnerability maps, highlighting the various ranking regions with low, moderate, and high vulnerability were generated in this study. The median projected sea-level rise values using simCLIM ranged from 11.86 cm to 49.22 cm for RCP 2.6; 11.73 cm to 58.91 cm for RCP 4.5; 11.28 cm to 62.28 cm for RCP 6.0; 11.92 cm to 84.25 cm for RCP 8.0, respectively. From the results of this study, there is evidence of rise in sea level occurring in the Nigerian coastline. The projections also predict a continuous increase in sea level in the coming years. Therefore, the results obtained from this study would assist coastal planners in the identification of vulnerable regions along the Nigerian coastline and subsequently influence decisions that would mitigate the predicted impacts of the associated hazards of climate change in the regions.

Keywords: Climate change, sea level change, coastal vulnerability, analytical hierarchical process, coastal vulnerability index