# GREEN LIVING: A PANACEA FOR SECURED ENVIRONMENT


## ABSTRACT

Green environment also referred to as ecofriendly, nature friendly or nature green refers to goods and services, laws, guidelines and policies that help to reduce, minimize the harm upon the ecosystem or the environment. Going green are practices that lead to more environmentally friendly practices that help to protect the environment and sustains natural resources. Green science is all about sustainability to secure the environment by reducing, reusing and recycling for continuity of species. Green spaces filter pollutants and dusts from the air. They produce shade and lower temperature in urban areas. They also increase productivity, promote green living that helps to conserve energy and prevent air, water and noise pollution. They are borne for the environment and prevent health deterioration. Going green can improve general efficacy of a business and can trim operation costs for the business. The environment is the most important resources for life where we get water, power and oxygen hence regarded as our closest neighbor needed for survival. Going green is a choice and it contributes towards the betterment of the planet and makes the place a better place to live for both current and future generations. Green homes are more durable, reduce carbon footprint, increase creativity, healthy air sufficiency, boost economy, increase floral diversity and allow non-toxicity of products. The study concluded that we have been living on nature and living green is the only time we pay back. Living green brings happiness and satisfaction to one because green is natural, wealthy, fruitful and productive hence helping to keep the environment secured.



**Keywords:** Green living, biodiversity, secured environment

## INTRODUCTION

Green living also called sustainable living; ecofriendly is a lifestyle that attempt to reduce individuals or society's use of earth's natural or personal resources. Studies after studies including that of Agbogidi and Erhenhi (2017), Agbogidi (2018) have shown that our current lifestyle or living practices impact global warming, food shortages, water depletion and energy shortages. The only way out of this predicament is to adopt a green living. The United Nations Environmental Protection Agency (2017) stated that green living means making sustainable choices about what we eat, how we travel, what we buy, how we use and deposit it. According to Okoh (2015) green living is to sustain a healthy environment and economy.

Going green are practices that lead to mere environmentally friendly practices that help to protect the environment and sustain natural resources, thereby improving the economy. Green economy aims at reducing environmental risks and ecological sacrifices for sustainable development without degrading the environment (UNEP, 2011).

## WHY SHOULD WE GO GREEN?

In spite of all the benefits obtained from ecosystems and the environment (Agbogidi, 2019), a lot of threats are challenging, population explosion now estimated to be 7.7 billion (WHO, 2019) is an overriding factor. Anthropogenic forces and factors impact on the environment negatively. These include deforestation, desertification, extractive industries like mining, dredging, oil and gas, global warming, climate change, poor/bad agricultural activities such as land clearing, inappropriate irrigation, overgrazing, intensive farming, over drafting, introduction of exotic species, flooding, soil erosions, pollution of all kinds, salinisation, unsustainable exploitation and consumption, acid rains, soil acidification, plastic pollution, mass extinction, urban sprawl and commercial development, drought. All these have activities have led to different forms of environmental degradation, ecological crisis and ecological collapse (Common and Stagl, 2005; Stockton, 2015; UNEP, 2018).

Greening the environment will improve upon nature for the perceived benefits of humanity, optimize ecosystem services. Going green improves soil conditions and subsequently the conditions, structure and functionality of soil organisms (Agbogidi, 2015). Soil ecosystem and soil organisms function best when the environment is green as against brown environment

(McKee, 2017; Devlin, 2018). Green environment helps to restore lost glory of the environment. As earlier established, ecological collapse stemming from various environmental degradation needs to be restored and resuscitated and the only way out is green living.

The environmental consequence of energy harvesting and consumption is diverse. The heightened commercialization of various renewable energy resources also has their unfavoured environmental effects on man and his animals. Fleischer (2019) noted that 87% of the oceans and 77% of lands have been altered by anthropogenic activities and about 23% of the planet landmass remains as wilderness. Green living is not just about the ability to produce clean energy, but also, technologies that allow cleaner production processes as well as the growing market for products which consume less energy from fluorescent light bulbs to organic and locally produced food hence green living include products, processes and services that reduce environmental impact or improve natural resource use.

**How to go green**

The following are some of the ways to start living green that can be incorporated into our daily lifestyle:

1. Reduce energy consumption. This can be carried out in the following ways
    - Zero waste home: keep only belonging that you use and enjoy on a regular basis to reduce waste
    - Reduce purchases
    - Observe eco-Sabbath where you abstain from usage maybe one hour, week, some minutes, you don't use machines, no resource use
    - Replace dispose with reusable ones
    - Share with friends like books, magazines, games, movies, newspapers
    - Improvise to cut down waste
    - A free home. Replace paper napkins with cloth napkins.
    - Make bulk purchases. Buy only what you need. Avoid creating trashes, waste free lunches, mug – to – go, i.e. go with a mug.
    - Adopt environmentally responsible activities.
    - Shutdown your computers and some big energy users in the offices and homes. Turn off when not in use.
    - Choose the right light; LED bulbs are more energy efficient light option.

- Unplug idle electronics like television, microwaves, scanners, printers and phone chargers to reduce energy use.

2. Reuse
   - Buy new improves special products
   - Switch from disposable to reusable products like food, beverage containers, cups, plates, writing pads and towels.
   - Donation – donate and buy used household items, clothes, furniture, dishes, books, appliances, electronic containers.
   - Buy durables; teach thrifts frugal printing, use both sides of a piece of paper for note taking, printing documents.
   - Rechargeable batteries, refurbished computers.
3. Recycle your plastic bottle tops, recycle bins, cell phones, CDs and DVDs, green papers, eco-jewelry.
4. Refuse – refuse product that create wastes, refuse give – away from individuals, business and other bodies.
5. Pot – warm composting, mulching, grass cycling (leave grass clipping on the lawn) as fertilizers (Agbogidi, 2015).
6. Your food – switch to animal free vegan diet. It is a powerful way to protect our environment, improves your health and ensures everyone has enough to eat. United Nations (2018) noted that the livestock sector (primary cows, chickens and pigs are the top 2 or 3 most important contributors to our series of environmental problems. Cutting beef out of diet reduces $CO_2$ emission by 2,400 pounds annually. Besides, the greatest amount of grains required to feed livestock reduces the amount of food available for the world's hunger population (Delvin, 2018). This can be carried out through the following:
   - Responsible food shopping – shop at farmer's market, food co-ops, local health food stores.
   - Reduce food waste. Roughly 1/3 of food produced every year gets lost or wasted. Our God is against waste hence Jesus ordered his disciples to pick the left over after feeding the 5,000 people that came to listen to Him (Luke 9v12-17)
   - Support efforts to increase healthy food choices in school lunches.

- Food's carbon footprint – eating a low carbon diet is critical for reducing climate change
- No genetically modified food. The disadvantages of GMO far outweigh the advantages so buy goods not containing non-GMO say cotton, corn.
- Avoid processed foods. Eat unprocessed / unpackaged feeds where possible. Nature is rich, nature is green, and nature is wealthy.

7. Conserve energy. Paint your house / home light colour in warm climate and dark colour in cold climate.
8. Conserve water
    - Plant natural plants
    - Be involved in mulching
    - Steam vegetables instead of boiling
    - Encourage restoration techniques.
    - Tree planting afforestation, reforestation. Trees play a role in influencing the climate by reflecting the heat back to the atmosphere (Agbogidi and Eshegbeyi, 2008). They give shade from sun, purify the atmosphere by absorbing carbon monoxides and other greenhouse gases as well as helping to build up soil structure and serve as wind brake (Agbogidi and Erhenhi, 2016).
    - Home gardening / backyard wildlife habitat, nature can provide foods for birds, insects and other animals. Plant native species support 10 to 50 as many as species of wildlife as non-native plants (Agbogidi and Adolor, 2014; Agbogidi and Benson, 2014).
9. Green your work. Be environmentally conscious. Green plants are primary producers outside other environmental and ecological roles they play (Agbogidi, 2019). Make a deliberate attempt to purse sustainable development. Responsible production and consumption is the key to green living and environmental management.
    - We should learn to protect the environment in our own way because the environment is our closest neigbour. Deliberate attempt should be made by all and sundry to protect plants the foundation of food chains and webs. Natural areas like sacred groves, herbaria, botanical gardens, forest reserves, sanctuaries, natural reserves (Agbogidi and Aghofore, 2014; Agbogidi, 2021).

- In-situ and ex-situ conservation centers should be encouraged (Agbogidi and Okonta, 2014; Agbogidi and Enabulele, 2014).
- Attention and focus should be shifted from the use of non-renewable energies like petroleum, gas, diesel, kerosene and coal towards the use of renewable sources of energy like wind, sun, water (Agbogidi, 2020). Biofuels can also be obtained from corn, wheat, sugar beet, sugar cane, vegetable oils, liquid animal fats, green diesel fro algae and other plant sources like Jatropha, wood, soya bean, biogas from soil, animal manure and other digested organic materials like discarded food scraps and plant materials like lawn clippings.

**Effects of threats to the environment**

1. Food insecurity as currently being experienced. We eat Mr. available now.
2. Heightened level of poverty.
3. Disease outbreak and epidermis
4. Loss of biodiversity, species endangerment and extinction and co-extinction
5. Unstable ecosystems
6. Reduction in the outputs and services rendered by ecosystems
7. Ecological crises and collapse

**The way forward**

1. Environmental education to all and sundry at every level of education starting from the home (Agbogidi, 2003).
2. Importance of green environment and ecosystem services and benefits should be emphasized.
3. Aggressive public enlightenment programmes
4. Ecosystem approach to biodiversity conservation
5. Environmental greening, afforestation and reforestation
6. Responsible production and consumption
7. Everyone is an environmental steward.

**Environmental performance index**

The Environmental performance index (EPI) is a method of quantifying and numerically marking the environment the environmental performance of a state. The EPI is based on air quality, water and sanitation, heavy metals, biodiversity and habitat forest, fisheries, climate and energy, air pollution, water resources and agriculture. The list of green countries in the world and their EPI grading or score is shown in Table 1.

**Table 1:** The green countries in the world and their EPI grading/score

| Rank | Country | EPI Score |
|---|---|---|
| **1** | Switzerland | 87.42 |
| **2** | France | 83.95 |
| **3** | Denmark | 81.60 |
| **4** | Malta | 80.90 |
| **5** | Sweden | 80.51 |
| **6** | UK | 79.89 |
| **7** | Luxembourg | 79.12 |
| **8** | Austria | 78.79 |
| **9** | Ireland | 78.77 |
| **10** | Finland | 78.64 |

Source: Fresher (2017).

Ripple *et al.* (2017) noted that Johannesburg, South African city is the most important economic and financial centre of the state in the entire African continent but it does not forget to protect its green area for the citizens.

Table 2 shows the ten most ecofriendly cities of the world.

Table 2: The ten most ecofriendly cities of the world.

| S/N | Ecofriendly cities |
|---|---|
| 1. | Copenhagen |
| 2. | Amsterdam |
| 3. | Stockholm |

| | |
|---|---|
| 4. | Berlin |
| 5. | Portland |
| 6. | San Francisco |
| 7. | Cape Town |
| 8. | Vancouver |
| 9. | Helsinki |
| 10. | Reykjavik |

Source: Fresher (2017).

The nine most greenish cities around the world are presented in Table 3.

Table 3: The nine greenish cities around the world.

| S/N | Greenish cities around the world |
|---|---|
| 1. | Oslo |
| 2. | Helsinki |
| 3. | San Francisco |
| 4. | London |
| 5. | Curitiba |
| 6. | Vancouver |
| 7. | Stockholm |
| 8. | Amsterdam |
| 9. | Copenhagen |

Source: Fresher (2017)

The 20 most environmentally friendly countries are listed in Table 4.

Table 4: The 20 most environmentally friendly countries in the world.

| S/N | Countries | EPI rating |
|---|---|---|
| **1** | Finland | 90.68 |
| **2** | Iceland | 90.51 |
| **3.** | Sweden | 90.43 |
| **4.** | Denmark | 89.21 |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **5.** | Slovenia | 88.98 |
| **6.** | Spain | 88.91 |
| **7.** | Portugal | 88.63 |
| **8.** | Estonia | 88.59 |
| **9.** | Malta | 88.48 |
| **10.** | France | 88.20 |
| **11.** | New Zealand | 88.00 |
| **12.** | United Kingdom | 87.38 |
| **13.** | Australia | 87.38 |
| **14.** | Santeria | 87.04 |
| **15.** | Croatia | 86.98 |
| **16.** | Switzerland | 86.93 |
| **17.** | Norway | 86.90 |
| **18.** | Austria | 86.64 |
| **19.** | Ireland | 86.60 |
| **20.** | Luxembourg | 86.58 |

Source: Fresher (2017).

**Conclusion**

Ecosystem services are useful from cradle to grave. Living green is the only way and time we pay back nature we have been living on. Green living indeed guarantees a secured environment. It brings happiness and satisfaction to one because green is natural, wealthy, fruitful and productive hence helping to keep the environment secured.

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