

Creative Climate Cities Profile LAGOS



GEOGRAPHICAL AREA

3,577 sq. km



POPULATION

21,000,0000



GDP

\$136,000
(PPP) million

CITY STRATEGY LINKS

The Lagos State Development Plan (LSDP) 2012-2025

The Lagos State Environmental Protection Agency (LASEPA)

Lagos State Ministry of Tourism, Arts & Culture

Welcome to Lagos



Culture Fact

Lagos has been a significant contributor to the Nigerian Modernist scene. The city has embraced Nigerian Modernism in the post-colonial era, which is evident in its art and architecture, e.g. the Didi Museum, opened in 1983¹.



Climate Fact

Nigeria aims to generate 30% of its total energy from renewable sources by 2030. A \$350 million World Bank loan will be used to build 10,000 solar-powered mini-grids by 2023 in rural areas².

Introduction

Lagos is Nigeria's largest city and also the most populous – in Nigeria and on the African continent. Composed of more than 250 ethnic groups, it is a melting pot of cultural traditions and has experienced a recent wave of social and creative entrepreneurialism³. If taken as a country on its own, Lagos would be amongst the largest economies in Africa, having diversified its economy to include manufacturing, transport, construction and retail, and considerably reducing its dependence on oil⁴. Today, Lagos has emerged as a major hub for the headquarters of national and global companies as well as technology start-ups and the creative industries. Lagos Island is home to the Nigerian National Museum, displaying a notable collection of Nigerian art, including statues, carvings, archaeological and ethnographic exhibits.

The city is also home to Nigeria's diverse and rapidly growing film industry – sometimes referred to as “Nollywood” – which produces around 1,500 films each year⁵. It is also recognised as a leader in the Afrobeats music movement. In 2018, Universal Music Group, the world leader in music-based entertainment, announced a new strategic division called Universal Music Nigeria, based in Lagos.

Environmental Ambition

Climate change is already impacting Lagos, increasing the intensity of droughts, heavy rains and thunderstorms. Waste management and availability of clean water are also prevalent environmental issues across the city. Taking a more dynamic and holistic approach to environmental protection, Lagos State Government has adopted several new strategies and agencies to tackle environmental challenges, for example: the Cleaner

¹UNESCO. <https://en.unesco.org/creativity/story/lagos-nigeria-1>

²Thomson Reuters. <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-nigeria-britain-renewables-analysis/oil-rich-nigeria-turns-to-renewable-energy-as-population-booms-idUSKBN11419F>

³UNESCO. <https://en.unesco.org/creativity/story/lagos-nigeria-1>

⁴Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung. <https://ng.boell.org/2015/07/02/lagos-and-its-potentials-economic-growth>

⁵World Cities Culture Forum. <http://www.worldcitiescultureforum.com/cities/lagoscscopy>

Lagos Initiative which is focussed on revitalising the entire Solid Waste Management sector. The State Government is also investing in carbon emissions reduction, commissioning the Lagos Solar Project to power public institutions and rural schools through solar PV systems. It has also planted 7.5m trees in the previous 11 years to protect against extremes of climate and pollution and improve the biodiversity of the area⁶.

Now, the Lagos State Government has the opportunity to leverage the power of its distinguished creative industries to lead action on climate change. Through encouraging their uptake of environmental actions, Lagos will support a healthier, greener and cleaner city.

Connecting Creative & Climate Action in Lagos

1. Creative Programmes & Campaigns

Creative content and activities that engage audiences on themes of climate and the environment

- **Lagos Biennial 2019**, 'A Song for Lagos', is endorsed by the Lagos State Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture and will investigate how contemporary artists and designers are responding to environmental challenges and possibilities. The theme was inspired by the impact of urbanisation on ideas of citizenship, as well as the sustainability of natural resources, and socio-economic equality.
- **Art X Lagos (2018)**, West Africa's first international art fair, included **Gerald Chukwuma**, one of Nigeria's fastest rising contemporary artists living and working in Lagos, whose work engages with environmental themes. The figures in Chukwuma's carvings are fleshed out with scraps of tin cans – the artist describes the link between his art as a form of environmental awareness, and as a means of recycling the past so that it speaks the present.
- **Lagos Photo Festival**, organised by African Artists' Foundation, featured **Drowning World** which explores the effects of climate change. The photographs take audiences beyond faceless statistics and into the individual experiences of the victims - a sequence of 'Submerged Portraits' is the heart of the project.
- Jelili Atiku, born in Lagos, is a Nigerian multimedia artist concerned by human rights and justice. Atiku's work is inspired by the psychosocial and emotional effects of events such violence, war, poverty, corruption and climate change.
- On a national level, **Arts for SDGs Nigeria** will select artists and poets to produce work based on the framework of the Sustainable Development Goals. The key focus for 'Arts for SDGs 2019' will be on Climate Change (SDG 13) and Mental Health (SDG 3).

⁶Vanguard. <https://www.vanguardngr.com/2018/07/lagos-state-planted-7-5m-trees-in-11-years-official/>

2. Resources & Support

Investment, training and materials that support environmental knowledge and practical action

- Based in Lagos, the **Five Cowries Arts Education Initiative** (launched in 2017) offers more inclusive pathways into education by integrating the arts into teaching to improve learning outcomes. Five Cowries delivers programmes that engage children with social and environmental issues, including conservation, pollution, citizenship, health, migration and technology. It is supported by Lagos State Waterways Authority and collaborates with the Ministry of Transport.
- Lagos State Parks and Garden Agency** (a subsidiary of the Ministry of Environment) is tasked with greening Lagos and has called on artists across the State to be part of an open-air art gallery, launched in 2017 in Muri Okunola Park, Victoria Island.
- The Ministry of Environment supports **Wecyclers**, a social enterprise which promotes environmental sustainability, socio-economic development and community health by providing recycling services in densely-populated urban neighborhoods in Lagos.
- The Ministry of Tourism supports the **Nigerian Conservation Foundation**, a Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) dedicated to nature conservation and sustainable development in Nigeria. The Foundation established the Lekki Conservation Centre in Lagos which is considered an iconic site for nature conservation and ecotourism, comprising 78 hectares of mangroves, secondary forest, savanna grassland and the

world's second-longest canopy walkway⁷. In addition, the Oso-Lekki breakwater (located at Lekki Peninsula, Lagos) is the site for the state fishing and cultural festival. The Lagos State Government has recognised Lekki Conservation Centre within the 'listed sites' for the preservation, protection and restoration of historical properties and cultural heritage in Lagos State.

3. Partnerships & Innovation

Diverse disciplines and communities sharing and co-developing ideas and resources that accelerate environmental action

- Lagos Urban Development Initiative** is an organisation that brings like-minded organisations and people together to advocate for a more inclusive, liveable and sustainable Lagos. Environmental-focused projects include the **Linear Park Project** (championed by Lagos State Parks and Garden Agency) which connects urban parks and gardens and non-motorised transportation: 'it seeks to sustainably connect and conserve wetlands in Lagos whilst promoting biking and bikeability and climate smart agriculture thus making the city more resilient and inclusive'.
- Playable City Lagos** was delivered in collaboration with **Future Lagos** and the British Council. In March 2016, Playable City Lagos produced a residential lab that brought together creative practitioners from Lagos and the UK to explore playful interventions inspired by themes of mobility and engagement with the local environment.

⁹Earth Journalism. <https://earthjournalism.net/stories/can-public-private-partnerships-preserve-the-dwindling-biodiversity-of-lagos>

- **Lagos Smart City** workshops brought together architects, urban planners, artists, computer scientists and university students to explore the smart city concept for Lagos, particularly regarding smart and sustainable mobility.
- **United Nations Information Centre Lagos** is the body aiming to implement the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in an inclusive way, adapting the SDGs into the Lagos State Development Plan.
- Nigeria's **Economic Recovery and Growth Plan** (2017 – 2020) aims to 'place the economy on a path of growth that is diversified, inclusive and most importantly sustainable and resilient'.
- Nigeria's Ministry of Information, Culture and Tourism has been investing in eco-tourism. The Nigeria **Tourism Development Master Plan** was developed to strengthen capacity and promote sustainable development –connecting preservation of both natural and cultural heritage: 'tourism, when properly developed and managed, can serve as a mechanism for protecting natural environments; preserving historical, archaeological and religious monuments; and, stimulating the practice of local cultures, folklore, traditions, arts and crafts, and cuisine'.

4. Policy & Strategy

Guiding policy and strategy frameworks that drive climate and environmental action, investment and accountability

- The **Lagos State Development Plan** 2012-2025, is a policy document that harmonises all existing high level policy documents operational in the State. It identifies four 'development pillars' from which the state and the private sector can together advance: economic growth, infrastructure development, social development and security; and sustainable environment. This presents a key opportunity for encouraging collaboration between cultural and environmental representatives and stakeholders.

Highlights

1

Creative Programmes & Campaigns

Lagos Biennial 2019 'A Song for Lagos' will investigate how contemporary artists and designers are responding to environmental challenges and possibilities. The theme was inspired by issues including the impacts of urbanisation, the sustainability of natural resources, and socio-economic equality.

2

Policy & Strategy

The Lagos State Development Plan (LSDP) 2012-2025 is a policy document **that** identifies four development pillars from which the state and the private sector can work together to advance: economic growth, infrastructure development, social development and security, and a sustainable environment.

3

Resources & Support

Lagos Urban Development Initiative advocates for a more inclusive, liveable and sustainable Lagos. Environmental-focused projects include the Linear Park Project, championed by Lagos State Parks and Garden Agency.

4

Partnerships & Innovation

Five Cowries Arts Education Initiative engages children with social and environmental issues including conservation, pollution, citizenship, health and migration.

Where Next?

Spotlight

SUSTAINABLE FASHION

Various design-based activities – often initiated from a grassroots level – are underway to develop Nigeria's sustainable fashion industry and reduce environmental pollution. Based in Lagos, **Cyrus45 Factory** is an avant-garde upcycling initiative founded by Olabanke Banjo in 2016. One initiative involves upcycling tyres from refuse dumps, incinerators and the roadside, into innovative and modern furniture and products. **Olayemi Samson**, a Lagos-based creative entrepreneur is supporting recycling while making a style statement, recycling used plastic bags to make various products **by hand**, such as raincoats, school bags, shoes and car covers.

A number of opportunities have been identified:

7

1. **Share good practice**

Research creative and cultural initiatives across the city which engage with environmental themes and practices, making them publicly available through an online resource. This will encourage new collaborations and good practice exchange and help build environmental knowledge, awareness and inspiration within the sector. It would also recognise traditional ecological, indigenous and local knowledge and encourage citizens and practitioners to appreciate local culture, ethics and skills.

2. **Develop policy and implementation plans**

Organise a regular meeting - or working group - to support ongoing collaboration and implementation of city strategy which connects environmental and cultural activities with other city ambitions such as economic diversification and tourism development. This is particularly relevant given the international creative businesses partnering with and opening offices in Lagos.

3. **Connect social, environmental and cultural activity**

Lagos has identified social inclusion and access as a key priority for its cultural strategy. Connecting social justice with environmental issues and developing projects and collaborations informed by sustainable development principles will deliver co-benefits to citizens and stakeholders, demonstrating the city's commitment to sustainable development.

4. **Build the business case**

Work with the city-owned and operated parks, theatres and museums to invest in environmental improvement; this could include carbon and cost-saving projects such as building upgrades, low-carbon technologies and staff training etc. Collecting data – both environmental impact and investment data – will support the development of a business case for investing in cultural buildings and events to reduce their environmental impacts.

5. **Support practical environmental action within public art**

Embed environmental sustainability in public art frameworks, not just in terms of encouraging creative programming and art work, but also practical guidelines relating to the environmental impact of materials, sourcing, construction and transportation.

With special thanks to:

Polly Alakija, Chairman of the Board of Lagos State
Council for Arts and Culture



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SUSTAINING CREATIVITY

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