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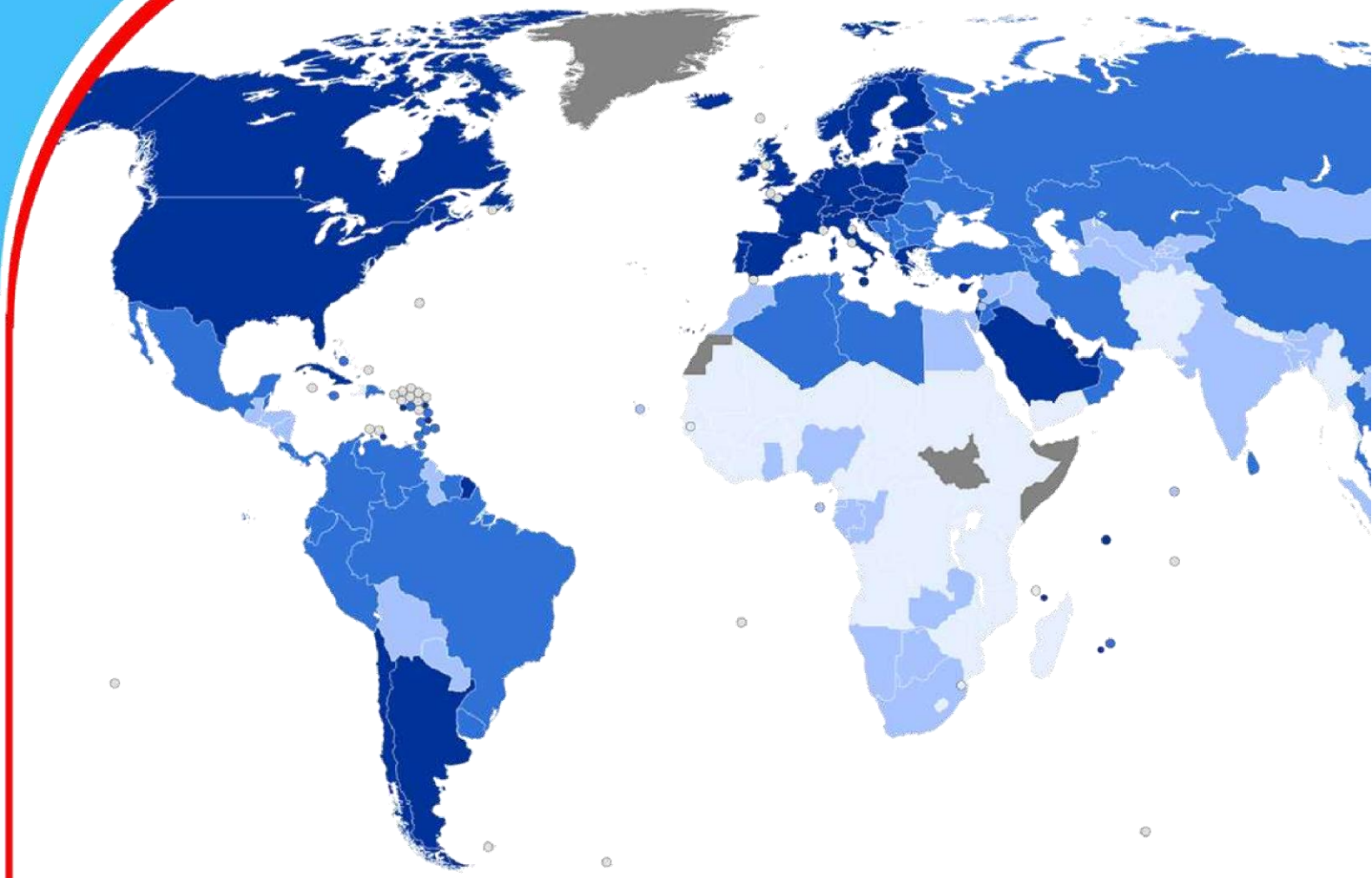

From Sustainable Development to Sustainable Retreat, Brundtland to Lovelock: what has Africa in it?

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From Sustainable Development to Sustainable Retreat, Brundtland to Lovelock: what has Africa in it?

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Abstract

Purpose: The purpose of this paper was to show that James Lovelock proposed "Sustainable Retreat" opposed to the UN Predatory Sustainable Development doesn't fit the African ecology and development, African ecology as well as others of less developed and developing countries are preys to coalition UNSustainable Development. It tries to answer the question: What has African ecology in sustainable development/retreat?

Methodology: Using the archaeologico-critical method, this paper traces, evaluates the history of sustainable development/retreat and show cases the possibility of an African "special development/technology status" in a new sustainable development which is ecology-centered.

Findings: Findings show that first, concerning Lovelock's Sustainable Retreat, Africa is still at embryonic phase of its development/technology so it cannot be put into the industrialized nations' policy of sustainable development/retreat. Secondly, the UNO-born Sustainable Development/Technology which emerged with the UN Brundtland's commanded Report of 1987 is a bluff at the service of hyper neoliberal forces (market forces). Furthermore, to show that "Business as usual" follows its normal trend under the auspices of an accomplice UN-Sustainable Development accords and goals while the ecological macro equilibrium of the planet deteriorates. This masked coalition Sustainable Development-neoliberal forces has pushed industrialization technology too far to the point where if it is not halted and retreated the planet's ecological equilibrium will crash.

Unique Contribution to Theory, Practice and Policy: The unique contribution of this paper to theory is transcending sustainable development/retreat and forging a new development set up that fits the African ecology. The recommendations are such that the UN-Sustainable Development pyramid domination of economy over social and environment is inversed and that the social, environment dominate the economy and finally that the special status is void of the idea of Africa as "depot of raw material", nations' dependency on ecological resources as principal source of income and the formation of local, national and regional African "tug of war" with predatory international neoliberal forces. **Keywords:** *Sustainable Development/Technology, Sustainable Retreat, Special Development/Technology Status, neoliberal forces, Brundtland's Report.*

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Introduction

In an attempt to reconcile the exploitation of our planet's resources without jeopardizing the needs of the future generation, and viewing the hyper exploitation of these resources by our Industrial Revolution, the United Nations foresaw an imminent extinction of these resources by industrialized nations at the detriment of the future generation. Regarding this, it ordered for the organization of World Commission on Environment and Development in 1983 chaired by the then Norwegian minister of environment and prime minister Gro Harlem Brundtland at the end of which the term "Sustainable Development". This term is better understood as "Sustainable Industrialization Technology" was created and according to which: "Humanity has the ability to make development sustainable to ensure that it meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs"[1]. In other words the reconciliation between environment and economic growth. Unfortunately for this salvaging initiative it shall be progressively infiltrated by hyper neoliberal forces, for sustainable development is an impediment to their capital-centric exploitation of the planet's resources. Sustainable development (1987), The 2030 Sustainable Development Goals[2] (SDGs) (2015), added to numerous climate accords are bluffs as "profit making" follows is its normal trend. The fate of the future generation as described in Hans Jonas' *The Imperative of Responsibility. In Search of an Ethics for the Technological Age*[3], and Edgar Morin' "d'une communauté de destin"[4] is found wanting. It is in reaction to the bluff nature of Gro Harlem's panacea that the British ecoethicist James Lovelock proposes a "Sustainable Retreat" [5] to replace the obsolete Sustainable Development. Lovelock while criticizing sustainable development treated it as: "business as usual"[6] in disguised. Humanity's advancement in the exploitation of the planet's resources through unethical technology must retreat. Looking at the power of neoliberal forces on countries' politics, can sustainable retreat resist these economic forces, given that in globalization, it is the economy that dictates on politics? Giving that Africa is still in the pre-industrial stage (raw material depot), what can be the stakes of African ecology in sustainable development and Lovelock's Sustainable Retreat? The first phase traces the archeology of Sustainable Development as in Brundtland's *Our Common Future* and in 2035 Sustainable Development Goals and its infiltration by capitalist

[1] World Commission on Environment and Development, *Our Common Future* or *Brundtland Report*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1987. p.16.
[2] It is a 2015 come together of leaders from 193 countries who after meeting produced 17 goals on which the planet could be handled sustainably.
[3] Jonas Hans, *The Imperative of Responsibility. In Search of an Ethics for the Technological Age*, Chicago, The Chicago University Press, 1984. 255p.
[4] Morin Edgar, *La Voie. Pour L'avenir de L'humanité* , Paris, Bayard, 2011.p.30.
[5] Ephraim James LOVELOCK, *The Revenge of Gaia: Earth's Climate in Crisis and the Fate of Humanity*, New York, Basic Books. 2006. p.8.
[6] Ephraim James Lovelock, *The Vanishing Face of Gaia a Final warning*, New York, Basic Books. 2009. p.37.

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forces. Secondly, a leap to a sustainable retreat by Lovelock and its probability to resist the hyper capitalist forces and finally, the stakes of African ecology/development with sustainable retreat.

1. U.N.O and the emergence of Sustainable Development paradigm.

The understanding of the paradigm of sustainable development is best if it is subscribed under the umbrella of the United Nations Organization (UNO) in the sense that its pillars are economics, environment and social which are all global and internationalized issues. Most of the world's issues are handled by the UNO after its creation in the post Second World War and has mandate to see into issues plaguing humanity and its planet both at the national and international levels. In a context of capitalist industrialization, our ecology (environment), economic growth and fate of the future generation are in antagonism thus the problem can be best be handle globally by international institutions as the UNO. What is the route to sustainable development?

1.1 Pre-sustainable development environmental summits.

The emergence of the term sustainable development in Brundtland's report of 1987 doesn't mean that the UN wasn't engaged in issues concerning the well being of the environment. Let us inquire into the human activity circumstances that alerted environmental threats. The emergence of ecological crisis and the evolution of the UN role is developed in Moise Tsayem Demaze's 2011 *Géopolitque du développement durable. Les états face aux problèmes environnementaux internationaux*[7]. In the second part of this text, the author traces the coming into play of sustainable development and its global mobilization by the UN: "D'après Organizations des Nations Unies qui est largement à l'origine de l'émergence de la diffusion de ce concept dans le monde, il s'agit de résoudre les problèmes environnementaux en mettant en œuvre « un développement qui soit efficace économiquement tout en étant socialement équitable et écologiquement supportable»[8]. This means that economic development should be accompanied with social equity and the preservation of the environment.

The first alerts on the need for a sustainable economy were seen first with neo-Malthusian writers like in Paul Ehrlich's 1968 book *The Population Bomb*[9], and Dennis Meadows' 1972 publication *The Limits to Growth*[10]. According to the neo-Malthusians the increase in human population brings in competition and an increase in the degradation of the environment, in other words, demographic boom corresponds to a boom in the earth's resources and could equally lead to a decrease in economic productivity exposing the human population to famine and increase in mortality. It is the Meadows' report of 1972 as already signaled above which really distinctly showed the relationship human societies and the environment in a context demographic growth

[7] Moise Tsayem Demaze's , *Géopolitque du développement durable. Les étates face aux probléme environementaux internationaux,* Rennes, Presses Universitaires de Rennes, 2011.288p.
[8] Ibid., p.78.
[9] Paul Ehrlich, *The Population Bomb*, Standford, Ballantine Books, 1968, 201p.
[10] Dennis Meadows, *The Limits to Growth*, Potomac Associates Book, 1972, 205p.

and growing economic exploitation of natural resources. This report was under the auspices of the Rome Club created in 1968 by the Italian industrialist Aurelio Peccei. It brought together industrialists, scientists, and civil servants to debate on economic growth and its link to environmental problems in a context of demographic growth. This report by the Rome Club and Paul Ehrlich publication of population bomb showcased the impact our population and economic activities had on the health of the environment. Such threats to the environment alerted the UN to organize the 1972 Stockholm Conference during which the term "ecodevelopment"[11] was created. This conference is considered by Moise Tsayem as: l'acte initial de la genèse du development durable"[12]

The Stockholm Conference and ecodevelopment as embryonic stages of 1987 sustainable development. The UN 1972 Stockholm is considered by most environment specialist as the determinant conference during which the foundation for sustainable development was laid. This conference according Moise Tsayem is named summit on human environment: "l'énvironnement humain" ou "premier sommet de la Terre[13]. It also acted as a frame work for a global debate on environmental problems caused by demographic boom and Anthropic activities. Concerning the actors in this conference, it is necessary to indicate that it was mostly developed nations that mobilized themselves because they were preoccupied with degradation of the environment in its relation with economic and industrial growth. Developing and less developed were busy with problems of poverty and under development. Debates and negotiations between these two categories of nations gave birth to the concept of ecodevelopment whose goal according to Moise Tsayem is to put the environment at the forefront of world top priorities: "Par ce concept d'écodévelopment, ONU voulait mettre l'environnement au centre des préoccupations de la communauté internationale, considérant que l'environnement regorge de resources naturelles indispensables aux développement et que l'amélioration des conditions de vie, notamment dans les pays en développement ne devrait pas se faire au détriment de la préservation de l'environnement »[14]. The goal therefore was to reconcile the environment and development while promoting an ecocentric approach of development, that is to say a development is ecologically viable and based on a rationing use of resources furnished by the environment.

Other fruits from the deliberations of the conference was the creation UN Environmental Programme (UNEP) formed in the same 1972. The UNEP became the UN organ in charge of politics and international management of the environment. The scenting of the minor role played by less developed and developing nations in this conference, even the developed nations hadn't

[11] Moise Tsayem Demaze's , *Géopolitque du développement durable. Les étates face aux probléme environementaux internationaux,*op. cit., p.82.
[12] Ibid., p.81.
[13] Idem
[14] Moise Tsayem Demaze's , *Géopolitque du développement durable. Les étates face aux probléme environementaux internationaux,*op. cit., p.82.

time to implement the fruits of the conference. The concept of eco-development was fast shortlived as the expression "Sustainable Development" came into usage in 1974.

1.2 Brundtland's Report as birthday of sustainable development.

Before being internationalized as a UN term for the sustainable exploitation of today's resources without jeopardizing the future generation, the term was created by Hendry Kissinger American geopolitical consultant in 1974. It was with Gro Harlem Brundtland's Report of 1987 that the term became officially recognized in the internationally. An inquiry into Brundtland's Report and how far it helped in sustainably exploiting our resources in less developed, developing and developed nations.

While celebrating the 10th birthday of the Stockholm conference in 1982, the UN presented the global state of the environment and the exploitation of its resources, looking at it, it wasn't satisfactory. So, the UN adopted resolution 38/161 of 19 December 1983 creating a special commission called World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED), this commission had the mandate to produce a report on the global environmental perspective by the year 2000 and beyond with recommendations for a sustainable development. As already mentioned in the introduction of this paper, Madam Gro Harlem Brundtland, former Norwegian minister of environment and prime minister was the president of the commission thus the appellation *Brundtland's Report or Our Common Future*. The commission tabled its report in 1987.

The 300 page report made a global perspective of the environment and humanity while incorporating ecological, economic, social and political aspects for a sustainable development. Moise Tsayem indicates that this report written in English was translated into French as: "développement soutenable", développement viable" et enfin "développement durable"[15].

Chapter II of the Report title: towards Sustainable Development, in its section 3 (Strategic Imperatives) and sub 7 (merging environment and economics in decision making) summarizes the view that Brundtland's Report defines and organizes Sustainable Development by insisting on the reconciliation between the environment and economic growth on the one hand and the negative effects that the environment suffers from due human activities and the mode of life and consumption of western nations. The report equally calls for an international solidarity calling on nations to work in such a way that sustainable development should contribute to the amelioration of the wellbeing and at the re-absorption of social inequalities notably between developed and developing countries. It focused principally on the satisfaction of the less privilege, that is to say less developed and developing nations.

In sub section 7, resolutions 72 and 73, the report gives a quintessence of the concept of sustainable development:

The common theme throughout this strategy for sustainable development is the need to integrate economic and ecological considerations in decision making. They are, after all, integrated in the workings of the real world. This

[15] Ibid., p.83.

will require a change in attitudes and objectives and in institutional arrangements at every level. Economic and ecological concerns are not necessarily in opposition. For example, policies that conserve the quality of agricultural land and protect forests improve the long-term prospects for agricultural development. An increase in the efficiency of energy and material use serves ecological purposes but can also reduce costs. But the compatibility of environmental and economic objectives is often lost in the pursuit of individual or group gains, with little regard for the impacts on others, with a blind faith in science's ability to find solutions, and in ignorance of the distant consequences of today's decisions. Institutional rigidities add to this myopia[16]

It should be noted that the report is holistic as it touches all the aspects of human activities and its impact on the environment, it gives priority to a vision on the preservation of the earth by adopting ways of living that do not harm the earth beyond remediation and does harm the future of the planet those to live on earth. The mode of life of western countries is guilty of these atrocities committed on the environment. Sustainable development didn't take off as stipulated in Brundtland's Report, it needed another follow up summit: the 1992 Rio Janeiro Earth Summit.

1.3 Post Brundtland's Report: the 1992 Rio de Janeiro as concretion and globalization of Sustainable Development.

The Rio de Janeiro 1992 conference also known as the "Earth Summit" has as objective to debate, internationalize sustainable development and fight against ecological ills in a global scale. Given that the Brundtland Report which saw the official birth of sustainable development was still to be put into the policies of different nations, the Rio Conference was to this light. It equally finetuned measures of reconciling the north-south cleavage in order to obtain a common front in the fight against these ills. A common front needed to be formed because the two poles (north-south) had different priorities, while nations of the north (developed nations) were preoccupied with the state of biodiversity and climate, those of the south (less developed and developing) had interest but in the fight against poverty.

To actually materialize their engagements, participants at the Rio conference adopted three texts which are not legally binding: Agenda 21, the Rio Declaration and the declaration of principles relating to the preservation of flora. First, Agenda 21 is a 40 chapter document grouped in 4 sections which has as objective the putting in place and actual functioning of sustainable development by formulating strategies about issues that directly touch humanity and a plan of action of resolving them throughout the 21st century. Secondly, the Rio Declaration on environment and development is text with 27 principles defining the rights and duties of states concerning sustainable development and also precises the conditions of sustainable development like the fight against poverty, the amelioration of living conditions, adequate demographic conditions, appropriate modes of production and consumption, etc. To Moise Tsayem, this document indicates the principle of precaution and that of pollute and pay as the main functioning rule of sustainable development: "Ce texte énonce en outre le principe de précaution et le principe pollueur-payeur

[16] World Commission on Environment and Development, *Our Common Future* or *Brundtland Report*, op.cit.p.55.

comme principe directeurs du développement durable"[17]. What followed next was the ratification of the different aspects of the Rio conference by nations. Unfortunately, the application of sustainable development didn't yield the expected fruits thus the programming of the 2002 Johannesburg conference.

The Johannesburg conference and the difficulty of implementing sustainable development. Also called world summit on sustainable development, its objective was to assess how far the implementation of sustainable development has gone 10 years after the Rio summit. The Johannesburg summit insisted on the social aspect of sustainable development such as equity, intercultural dialogue, health and poverty than on environmental aspects of sustainable development. The summit noted that the implementation of sustainable development based on its three pillars (economic, social and environmental) were new to the different nations and difficult to take off. The ideological and political antagonism between nations of the north and those of the south was still a difficult equation to balance. The less developed and developing nations' preoccupation was the cancellation of their debts and the fight against poverty while the developed had interest in issues of climate change and biodiversity. This dichotomy of views weakens the formation of a common front in the implementation of sustainable development.

Two documents were adopted from this conference: The Johannesburg Declaration and the working document of the Johannesburg resolutions. The declaration obliged signatories to put in place policies that will permit the kick off of sustainable development and the working document was a guide to help nations effectively implement sustainable development: "En somme, Johannesburg n'a apporté rien de nouveau par rapport à Rio; "les pays riches ont recyclé les promesses qu'ils n'ont pas su respecter depuis 20 ans", s'indignait Jeffrey Sachs, conseiller de Koffi Annan, alors secrétaire générale de l'ONU, à la fin du sommet"[18]

We can notice that from Stockholm (1972), Brundtland Report (1987), Rio (1992) and Johannesburg 2002, much interest is successively accorded to economics, to environment associated economics and the social aspect comes last. One can insinuate that it is a calculated move by develop nations to scam the less develop and developing nations of its resources. Sustainable development might have been a salvaging idea but it is either the weaknesses of the UN to implement it or the UN is an accomplice of neoliberal forces that are guilty of ecological predation.

2. Sustainable development or disguised neoliberal.

From the first conference on the threat of our economy on the present and future generation, to its internationalization under the term sustainable development by the UN and even subsequent summits on this concept of sustainable development, it is clear that Sustainable Development has

[17] Moise Tsayem Demaze's , *Géopolitque du développement durable. Les étates face aux probléme environementaux internationaux,*op. cit., p.85.
[18] Ibid., p.88.

failed in its paradigmatic protection of the present and future generation. It is clear that the UN which is the genitor of sustainable development is an accomplice of neoliberal forces (environmental predators).

2.1 Bluffed-sustainable development by an accomplice UN and kept at the services of neoliberal forces.

The non-legal binding character of the UN resolutions on sustainable development, justified in its game of ratification, the inequality of nations, dichotomy of priorities between partynations are clear arguments that sustainable development was a calculated creation of the UN to supply the world's resources to capitalist forces.

First, the non-legal binding character of the UN resolutions on sustainable development, justified in its game of ratification. UN resolutions on sustainable development are never accompanied by any legal constraints, the organizers and champions of these summits always recommend and no legal sanctions befall any nation that doesn't respect or ratify the resolutions.

There is never a coercive legislation on nations to treat sustainable development resolutions as emergency. The duration to ratify these resolutions is vague and takes different durations and form before ratification into the different pillars of sustainable development of nations (economic, social and environment). Ratification and proper implantation goes at each nations will and priority while the planet burns. The failure to first of all erect the environment (nature) to a legal subject as proposed Michel Serres is an obstacle to the involvement of the environment in legal matters as humans: "Conversely, rights of symbiosis are defined by reciprocity: however much nature gives man, man must give that much back to nature, now a legal subject"[19]

While taking the case of the Rio de Janeiro conference, Moise Tsayem describes all sustainable development resolutions as not legally binding: "Pour concrétiser leurs engagements, les États qui ont participé au sommet de Rio ont adopté trios textes principaux juridiquement non contraignants"[20]. To him, there equally exist ambiguities in the role and task of the different actors in the sustainable development paradigm and in our opinion giving the chance to capitalists to continue scamming the environment unsustainably: "Les fondateurs en development durable appellant le monde entier à s'engager dans la mise en oeuvre de ce paradigme. Mais les instances de décisions et d'actions ne sont pas précisément définies. Aussi, subsistent de nombreuses ambigüités quant au rôle et aux tâches de divers acteurs: ONU, communauté internationale, Etats, organisateurs régionales de type Union européenne ou africaine, ONG, collectivités locales etc. »[21]

[19] SERRES (Michel), *The Natural Contract*, trans from French. Elizabeth MacArthur and William Paulson, Michigan, The University of Michigan Press, 1990, p. 38.
[20] Moise Tsayem Demaze, *Géopolitque du développement durable. Les étates face aux probléme environementaux internationaux,*op. cit., p.85. [21] Ibid.,p.95.

Secondly, inequality between nations. In terms of ecological and natural resources, there is an uneven distribution of these resources, so what is seen in a given continent or ecological zone as an endangered in another it is seen as biodiversity nuisance.

Finally, the dichotomy of priorities or preference. The same idea holds with variation of priorities or preferences, while developed countries are battling with ecological and terrorism issues, less developed and developing nations are concerned with poverty alleviation and cancelation of their debts. Taking the case of Africa and that of sub-Saharan African André Liboire Tsala Mbani sees the strangeness of the paradigm of sustainable development to the sub region, giving that African is still at pre-industrial phase of its development: "La notion de développement durable présente une consonance particulière lorqu'elle est adaptée au continent africain sub-sahélien. Le problème se pose en ces termes: comment concilier les exigences de développement de ce continent et la protection de l'environnement, surtout lorsqu'on sait que l'Afrique se situe encore au stade préindustriel de son développement ? »[21]. He suspects such moves by industrialized nations who first class predators of ecological resources in advising African nations to preserve their forest reserves. Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are as bluffing as non-respected sustainable development accords.

Sustainable Development Goals[22], another 2030 bluff? After the willful failure to kick-start sustainable development resolutions and recommendations, the UN set up a horizon during which certain fundamental elements must have been ratified and gone into effect in the different nations. In 2015, 193 leaders came together to face the future thus the birth of SDGs which is a 17 point agenda to relieve humanity within the next 15 years from poverty, hunger, climate change etc. This 17 point agenda is following the same fate as the former sustainable development accords. The cases of no poverty (agenda 1), zero hunger (agenda 2), quality education (agenda 4), climate action (agenda 13)[23] and many others don't seem to ever be realized in Africa and sub-Saharan Africa. It is for this reason that we consider to be another distraction to by market forces to continue extorting the less developed and developing of its resources.

In a nutshell, it is in this light that Hervé Kempf in *Comment les riches détruisent la planète* considers sustainable development as disguise by developed nations to escape from ecological issues and destroy the plant: "Le « développement durable » est une arme sémantique pour évacuer le gros mot « écologie ». Y a-t-il d'ailleurs besoin de développer encore la France, l'Allemagne ou les États-Unis ? …« développement durable » n'a pour fonction que de maintenir les profits et d'éviter le changement des habitudes en modifiant, à peine, le cap. Mais ce sont les profits et les habitudes qui nous empêchent de changer de cap. Quelle est la priorité ? Les profits, ou le bon cap?

[21] André Liboire TSALA MBANI, "Les enjeux d'un humanisme écologique", in *Nkà'Lumière, Revue interdisciplinaire de la faculté des lettres et sciences humaines*, N° 13, 1er Semestre, 2015. p.215.
[22] Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) was set in 2015 by the United Nations General Assembly intended to be achieved by the year 2030 as part of UN Resolution 70/1, the 2030 Agenda.
[23] http://www.un.orgsustainabledevelopment.

»[24]. Isn't it possible for each continent to preserve it ecological reserves according to cultural and sociological affiliation without forcefully doing it under the umbrella of sustainable development controlled by an accomplice UN? Why did slave trade, colonization/imperialism and the world wars succeed? Isn't the difficulty of sustainable development to kick-start a dupe such that developed countries keep exploiting the earth's resources unsustainably? What comes out clear is the prosperity of capitalist activities, what James Lovelock calls "Business as usual".

2.2 The dominance of "business as usual" over the fate of the future generation.

The same duping taking place under the UN born sustainable development is the same happening in the fight against climate change caused by industrial pollution. All attempts to come to an agreement to curb green house gases emission has never been respected by neoliberal powers like United States of America and allies in this group. It is paramount to understand that the voluntary inability of development economies kick-start sustainable development is because it would retard their economy of production and profit making, the inability holds in the respect of climate change accords and what interest them is business while global temperatures irreversibly increase. The fate that followed sustainable development which in the real sense is sustainable industrialization technology is following climate change accords. These climate accords saw their emergence in the Rio conference of 1992 and have successively being evolving through the different Conference of Parties (COPs). They are international conventions on climate change and biological diversity, added these two major conventions are that on the fight against desertification in countries touched by drought. We can quote the Paris convention on desertification (1994), the Kyoto protocol (1997), Montreal (2000), Bali (2007) and the recent popular 2018 Paris accord which shockingly saw Donald Trump refused signing and ratification.

Taking the case of the Kyoto protocol, and the analogy of 1938 Munich agreement blocking Hitler's aggression but which was simply duping the other parties to the so called peace agreement, James Lovelock sees great powers as playing over time for their businesses to flourish just like Hitler did: "The Kyoto agreement was uncannily like that of Munich, with politicians out to show that they do respond but in reality playing for time"[25]

It is following this look of things that he accuses countries with advanced industrialization of focusing on profit making than the reduction of green house gases and environmentally harmful technology: "To expect sustainable development or a trust in business as usual to be viable policies is like expecting a lung-cancer victim to be cured by stopping smoking; both measures deny the existence of the Earth's disease, the fever brought on by a plague of people"[26]. This behaviour is fueled by the false belief that we own the Earth or that we are its stewards, allows us to pay lip service to environmental policies and programs but to continue with business as usual. He openly

[24] Hervé Kempf, *Comment les riches détruisent la planète*, Paris, Seuil, 2007, pp.28-29.
[25] Ephraim James LOVELOCK, *The Revenge of Gaia: Earth's Climate in Crisis and the Fate of Humanity*, op.cit. p.21.
[26] Ibid.,p.4.

pins points the United States economy for being skeptical about climate warming caused by their unhealthy technology: "Opposing this view, particularly in the United States, are the many who still regard global warming as a fiction and favour business as usual. Their thinking is well expressed in the recent novel by Michael Crichton, *State of Fear*"[27]. Instead of persisting in the sustainable development or sustainable technology which is a well calculated dupe by the UN the Lovelock proposes Sustainable development.

3.Towards "Sustainable Retreat": retreat or perish.

This is the originally of this paper, the concept of sustainable retreat after the lamenting failure of sustainable development and how Africa can fine-tune its ecological and economic policy with the world while taking sustainable development as a yard stick. The concept of sustainable retreat is the creation of the British ecoethicist James Lovelock amidst the unmasking of the disguised UN-sustainable development-market forces coalition to exploit the planet's resources irrationally. The technology used for the exploitation of the planet's resources, western production and consumption have gone too far under the umbrella of a tricked sustainable development in favour of market forces that the planet and its inhabitants wouldn't bear if it continuous. It is in this context that he thought of a pull-back technology and a changed in western production and consumption as panacea to this unfriendly environmental technology.

3.1 Sustainable Retreat as panacea to authentic ecological sustainability.

Sustainable retreat is an alternative economic idea for policy makers to save the planet: "Just as we as individuals try alternative medicine, our governments have many offers from alternative business and their lobbies of sustainable ways to "save the planet," and from some green hospice there may come the anodyne of hope". Taking the example of Napoleon's troops excess penetration into Moscow during the Napoleonic wars and how they couldn't retreat and died due to winter ice, our technology reserves the same fate for us and our planet. The question is this: "If our present world is wholly unsustainable, how do we retreat from it sustainably?"[28]

To him, we are so obsessed with the idea of progress and with the betterment of humanity that we regard retreat as a dirty word or something to be ashamed of. In chapter VII of *The Revenge of Gaia: Earth's Climate in Crisis and the Fate of Humanity*, Lovelock develops the salvaging concept of sustainable retreat: "Technology for a Sustainable Retreat"[29] he explains why we must retreat using Napoleon's case mentioned above:

> In certain ways the human world is re-enacting the tragedy of Napoleon's advance on Moscow in 1812. In September of that year, when he reached the Russian capital, he had already gone too far, and his precious supplies were daily being consumed while he consolidated his capture. He was unaware that the irresistible forces commanded by General Winter were siding with the Russians, allowing them to counter-attack and

[27] Ibid.,p.3.
[28] Ephraim James LOVELOCK, *The Revenge of Gaia: Earth's Climate in Crisis and the Fate of Humanity*, op.cit p.82.
[29] Ibid., p.163.

> regain their losses. The only way he could have avoided defeat was an immediate and professionally executed retreat so that his army could remain intact to fight another time. The quality of generalship is measured in military circles by the ability to carry through and organize a successful retreat.[30]

Humanity can learn from the British case when their army withdrew from Dunkirk. Withdrawal is a sign of strength and survival not weakness. The British remember with pride the successful withdrawal of their army from Dunkirk in 1940 and do not see it as an ignominious defeat: "It was certainly not a victory but it was a successful and sustainable retreat. The time has come when all of us must plan a retreat from the unsustainable place that we have now reached through the inappropriate use of technology; far better to withdraw now while we still have the energy and the time"[31]. The retreat from Dunkirk was not just good generalship: it was aided by an amazing expression of spontaneous unselfish good will from those numerous civilians who willingly risked their lives and their small boats to cross the channel to rescue their army: "We need the people of the world to sense the real and present danger so that they will spontaneously mobilize and unstintingly bring about an orderly and sustainable withdrawal to a world where we try to live in harmony with Gaia"[32].

How do we retreat when our technology and civilization is handled by ecological predators? Edgar Morin adds to Lovelock's sustainable retreat the notion of global fear that threatens all humanity. In our interpretation it could be like the Corona Virus of December 2019 (COVID19) that is causing global threat without discrimination: "d'êtres humains de toutes origines, menacés des memes dangers mortels"[33], but the difficulty in Morin's "éco-politique planétaire" is that it is pyramid-like where the international controls the regional and the local whereas it is the difficulty we noticed with sustainable development. A successful sustainable retreat or planetary ecological politics could inverse the pyramid, that is to say the local, national and regional controls the global and the reverse like the case with sustainable development. The retreat could take regional, national and local realities are considered and harnessed into technology, civilization and ecological policies. The case of COVID19 treatment has proven the efficiency of local, national, and regional particularities. What can African in its pre-industrial phase and as an ecological giant gain from sustainable retreat?

3.2 The stakes of African ecology faced with Sustainable Development and Retreat.

Findings noted that Africa and sub-Saharan have never been industrialized or developed, so the concepts of sustainable development or sustainable technology as well as sustainable retreat do not concern Africa looking at level of industrialization. The criteria for a sustainable development, technology and retreat is when a nation must have advanced in its development or

[30] Ephraim James LOVELOCK, *The Revenge of Gaia: Earth's Climate in Crisis and the Fate of Humanity*, op.cit.p.191.
[31] Idem.
[32] Ibid., p.92.
[33] Edgar Morin, *La voie. Pour l'avenir de l'humanité*, Paris, Fayard, 2011, .p.26.

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technology such that it "becomes a diabetic or obese development" and needs to cut down like an obesity patient cuts from excess retreat. This is the meaning of retreat explained using the analogy of diabetes and obesity.

In the global application of sustainable development as well as Lovelock's Sustainable retreat, less developed, developing countries including Africa ought to be given but a different task and role since it concerns advanced industrialized economies that need to withdraw from their environmental unfriendly technology/development. If African is put in the same parcel as other developed nations with different ecological/ development priorities with Africa, the possibility is high that both initiatives are not serious and want exploit the pre-industrial African of it enormous. We see in the same light as Hervé Kempf who wonders if developed countries still want to develop and developing sustainably. We cannot develop what is already developed, using the examples of developed nations, he said: "Y a-t-il d'ailleurs besoin de développer encore la France, l'Allemagne ou les États-Unis?"[34]

Africa needs a "special development/technology status". Less developed, developing and developed nations do not dispose the same level of technology, ecological resources and sociology should not equally have a holistic approach to these issues. The African approach in balancing macro-ecosystem should specific to its originalities. Sustainable development/ retreat are specific to developed nations.

We are in search of an African-adapted industrialization technology. This African adapted industrialization is based on equilibrium between it and macro-ecosystem. We can avoid the developed nation's approach that is predatory to the environment to avoid a situation of sustainable retreat. Africa is fortunate to start its industrial race when developed nations had attain theirs, so they can draw inspiration and harnessed theirs to fit their local, national and regional ecological policies. They can right the wrongs of sustainable development by ensuring that it is not controlled by an international organization like the UN which to our modest view is an accomplice to market forces that exploit the planet's resources irrationally for capitalist tendencies: "profit an all cost", it can equally reverse the pyramid of sustainable development where in the economy tops the social and the environment to the social and environment toping the economy. Pierre Rabhi, an African ecologist (ethicist) what he call "La croissance en question"[35]. In his opinion, "progress", taking the model of developed nations' failed because of their negligence to listen to nature and since Africa is still at the verge of industrializing it could listen to nature:

> Nous sommes de plus en plus nombreux à penser que notre modèle d'existence moderne est erroné et ne peut être aménagé. Mais comment et par quoi le remplacer? Y a t-il une alternative? Encore faut-il se libérer des vieux schémas et des références périmées qui nous rendent impuissants à penser le monde autrement. La première chose dont il faut prendre conscience, c'est que les critères liés à la nature sont indispensable. C'est la nature avant tout qui doit nous inspirer car elle est la seul garante véritable de notre pérennité. Sans elle,

[34] Hervé Kempf, *Comment les riches détruisent la planète*, op.cit, p.29.
[35] Pierre Rabhi, *La part du colibri. L'espèce humaine face à son devenir*, éditions de l'Aube, 2009, p.21. [37] Ibid., p.22.

> aucun projet n'est assuré d'un lendemain. Nous pouvons vérifier quotidiennement la fragilité et vulnérabilité et les naissance sociales, écologiques, économiques générées par l'ordre que nous avons établi non seulement en l'ignorant, mais plus encore en agissant contre elle[37]

Pierre Rabhi's view gives a clue to the foundation of how an African adapted industrial development could be. For African countries whose industrializations took already the developed nations' anti- ecology approach, they benefit from Lovelock's "sustainable retreat" without falling victim of civilization scapegoat as Lovelock warns: "We as a civilization are all too much like someone addicted to a drug that will kill if continued and kill if suddenly withdrawn. We are in our present mess through our intelligence and inventiveness"[36]. Finally, Africa should engage in a pacific "tug of war" with ecological predators and infiltrators of ecological local, national and regional legislations.

Conclusion

This paper was in search of a genuine futurist development/technology which is void of predatory capitalist forces. Using the archeologico-critical approach, the birth, evolution of the UNO-born Sustainable Development marked by the publication of Brundtland's Report and its different follow up conferences, accords and Goals were traced. At the end of it, it was noted that sustainable development in its varying forms up to the recent 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are an accomplices of neoliberal forces. The inequality of industrialization/ priorities amongst nations, the non-judicial character of the recommendations/ resolutions and the pyramidal domination of economy over social and environment's sustainability are palpable arguments that the UN piloted sustainable development is a bluff camouflages "business as usual". The unsustainable exploitation of the planet's resources using an unfriendly environment technology has pushed humanity to a position where this paper recommends humanity must retreat otherwise he perishes. This idea saw the birth of the term "Sustainable Retreat" by James Lovelock which is an ethics for "a missed development". It is also recommended that Africa is still at pre-industrial phase of its industrialization and needs "a special ecological status" which generates from the local, national and regional not as the UN internationally dictated goals and accords on development that don't match with African pre-industrial realities. Finally, it recommended that Africa can establish a pacific "tug of war" with market forces in matters of preservation of their ecology. In conceiving African ecological policies, it should shun developed nations predatory technology and escape from the syndrome of "Africa the raw material farm" and the dependency of exporting crude raw materials as prime source of our income.

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