

# Sustainable Economy: Biotechnology the Way to Go

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*Nigerian researchers have been enjoined to take advantage of the international research and development opportunities in Biotechnology to build her knowledge-driven bio-economy.*

This was the submission of the keynote Speaker, Professor Benjamin Ubi, at the recently concluded 8th International Biotechnology Conference, Exhibition and Workshop (IBCE&W) with the theme, "Biotechnological Innovations: Panacea to Sustainable Economy," which took place at Covenant University, Ota.

Professor Ubi, who is a professor of Plant Breeding and Biotechnology and the President, Biotechnology Society of Nigeria (BSN), noted that building a robust bio-economy can transform the abundant biological resources that abound in Nigeria into value-added finished products.



Professor Benjamin Ubi, President, Biotechnology Society of Nigeria, delivering his Keynote Address at IBCE&W Conference Hosted By Covenant University

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This, he said, would lead to attainment of food security for an increasing population, affordable drugs for quality healthcare delivery, food and clothing needs among others.

Biotechnology, he said, is multidisciplinary in nature and involves input from several associated disciplines such as engineering, computer science, biostatistics, cell and molecular biology, microbiology, genetics, physiology as well as virology among others. "Harnessing the integrated knowledge from all these disciplines for the efficient utilization of Biological systems underscores the indispensable role of Biotechnological innovations as a panacea to sustainable economic development," he added.

Biotech innovation, he noted, are applicable in diverse ways particularly in the industry, health, environment and agriculture. "Biotechnological innovations provide a vast array of opportunities in industry development. Several sectors of the economy are influenced by Biotechnology and there is therefore the need for a robust Research and Development initiative in Nigeria for strengthening and diversifying our economy," he submitted.

The Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Covenant University, Professor Shalom Chinedu, while declaring the conference open, noted that it was time to translate all the research findings into tangible products that have economic value.

Professor Chinedu, who stood in for the Vice-Chancellor, Professor AAA. Atayero, stated that Biotechnology could help to develop the economy. "As a people, we cannot afford to fold our hands. For the economy to really thrive, we have to look inward and start from where we are and move forward," he noted.

In her earlier remarks, the Head, Department of Biological Sciences, which organised the event, Dr. Grace Olasehinde emphasised the importance of Biotechnology in solving global challenges of financial and food crisis, climate change, environmental degradation, increased prevalence of disease as well as security threats among others.

"It is clear that Biotechnology is very important in tackling these global challenges. Research and innovation have been identified as the only way to deliver new sources of sustainable growth to national and global economy. If the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goal 8 (SDG 8) must be fulfilled, then Biotechnological innovations must be embraced more than ever before, especially in Africa," she explained.

