

Oando Clean Energy Hosts Minister of Environment to Strengthen Partnership on Plastic Waste Management

Oando Clean Energy Limited (OCEL), a subsidiary of Oando PLC, yesterday hosted Nigeria's Honourable Minister of Environment, Balarabe Abbas Lawal, at its Lagos headquarters for a strategic engagement focused on deepening collaboration to address the country's growing plastic pollution challenge and advance Nigeria's circular economy agenda.

The meeting featured discussions on introducing a revolutionary biodegradable additive into single-use plastic manufacturing as a practical solution to reducing plastic waste in the country.

Representatives from Oando Clean Energy, the Federal Ministry of Environment, and partner companies, Polymateria and Hercules, explored actionable pathways to reduce plastic waste through innovation, policy alignment, and stakeholder engagement.

The Honourable Minister commended Oando Clean Energy for its leadership in advancing sustainable solutions and its commitment to promoting environmentally friendly alternatives to waste management challenges in the country. He noted that private-sector participation in waste management represented a significant milestone in Nigeria's ongoing environmental efforts, emphasizing the government's readiness to support such initiatives through regulatory guidance, collaboration with state governments, and the integration of solutions, such as the newly proposed biodegradable technology, developed in Imperial College, London by Polymateria, into its ongoing national frameworks.

According to him, *"It is exciting to know that we are now able to degrade plastics when we have long thought they were non-degradable. With this technology, we can safely degrade these materials while also promoting recycling. We are currently developing a framework in collaboration with the state governments, and with this addition, we can now revisit the drawing board to see how to best incorporate it and scale its adoption."*

Ademola Ogunbanjo, President and CEO of Oando Clean Energy Limited (OCEL), commended the Ministry's commitment to fostering collaboration with the private sector to ensure significant, lasting impact in tackling Nigeria's waste management challenges. He explained, *"To ensure immediate action and shared understanding among industry players, we propose a government-supported certification framework that could recognize and exempt manufacturers using biodegradable technologies from existing single-use plastic bans."*

Ogunbanjo further highlighted the advantage of the Polymateria solution, noting its ability to be seamlessly integrate into existing manufacturing processes. He reassured that adopting biodegradable additives would not result in job losses, as manufacturers would only need to incorporate around 2% of these additives into their current production master batch. *“We believe the Ministry can encourage widespread adoption of this and other environmentally friendly solutions by allowing manufacturers who use compliant technologies to continue production, exempting them from existing bans, which contributes to a cleaner yet productive Nigeria,”* he added.

Speaking on the practicality of the solution to the Nigerian environment, Richard Horne, Chief Executive Officer, Polymateria, commented, *“Nigeria is a perfect climatic environment for the technology as it combines high heat, high humidity, moisture and high exposure to sunlight, which are the factors that cause the plastic to biodegrade over a short period of time, breaking down into a recognizable food source for bacteria.”*

In addition, Horne emphasized that the solution works and feels like regular plastics, is easily adaptable to the existing supply chain, and is highly scalable. This solves the problem of plastics that accumulate in landfills or find their way into waterways.

Engr. Dr. (Mrs.) Bahijjahtu Abubakar, FNSE, Director, Department of Pollution Control & Environmental Health, Federal Ministry of Environment, commended the innovation and expressed optimism about its potential health and environmental benefits. She highlighted the growing concern around microplastics entering the human bloodstream and underscored the importance of introducing solutions such as Polymateria's technology to mitigate such risks.

In expressing appreciation for the Minister's visit, Oando Clean Energy reaffirmed its commitment to partnering with the Federal Government to develop practical and scalable solutions for Nigeria's plastic waste crisis. Ogunbanjo emphasized that collaborations like this are key to transforming the nation's waste management landscape, noting, *“We are proud to work alongside the Ministry to address one of Nigeria's most pressing environmental challenges.”*

The meeting concluded on a note of shared optimism, with mutual agreement on next steps including joint technical workshops, policy development, and cross-industry cooperation, all aimed at driving Nigeria toward a cleaner and more sustainable future.