

# Yoruba Indigenous Religion and Conservation of Natural Resources for Environmental Sustainability the Perspective of *Ọsá Méjì* in *Ifá* Divination System

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**Abstract**— *Activities of science, technology and industrialization have in no small measure harmed the environment of human kind and endangered their natural life and habitat. Manmade chemical compounds have changed everything about the inhabitants of the earth. Human life is tainted with artificial materials including the food we eat on daily basis. The rapid degradation of the eco-system over the last century, have been the concern of every segment of the world at large. Industrial advancement which has made mankind's life better has indeed aggravated the earth's environmental degradation in the areas of global warming, rise in sea levels, oil spillages that is fast threatening the extinction of sea animals, acidic rains, increase in atmospheric Co<sup>2</sup>, ozone layer depletion, toxic disposition, noise pollution, air pollution and so on. These are the effects of human activities, which has been attributed to the rise of industrialization and overzealous surge for scientific innovations and technological inventions to make life better and easy as envisaged by these groups of scientists and technologists, which is also a concern for the environmentalists, naturalists, and the world at large.*

**Keyword**— *Indigenous Religion, Cultural Practice, Natural Resources, Sustainability*

## I. INTRODUCTION

The failure of the world's planet looks more gloomy and uncertain due to the contribution of human activities scientifically, technologically and industrial wise. Frequent and severe natural disasters that make the world a dangerous place to live today are as a result of changes in earth's atmosphere and oceans caused by man. Our homes and offices are filled with artificial materials made with chemicals including pharmaceuticals and fabrics from synthesis. However, this world of chemicals jogs our brains to ask questions on how they affect the environment and our own health in general.

Although the fact cannot be denied that science, and technology have given us many useful and helpful products, the fact also remains that in the process of disposing of the waste, we often do this at considerable risk and cost to our environment causing air pollution, becoming

victims of toxic waste, water pollution, oil spillage resulting in coral reefs dying on daily basis. Again, industrial advancement and progress we have made which ought to be a soothing balm on the aching knees of the world is the very progress that is aggravating the earth's environmental problems and constantly ruining the world on daily basis. For instance, activities and advancement in the development and manufacturing of nuclear weapons have not only wreaked havoc on our planet earth, but it also caused unnecessary rivalry, flexing of muscles by the so called super powers causing unnecessary wars from a trivial matters that could be settled amicably. Although this is no news even in our local setting, in the past, fetching of water or abduction of a prince or princes could cause a devastating war between two rival villages where each member will have the opportunities to flex his muscle. Through these advancements, bombs, guns, grenades and weapons of mass destructions are made and are sold round the world even to

countries that do not need them or could not manufacture them to wage wars. By this they eliminate and cut short the life of those who could have been useful in many developmental areas other than war that is sowing the seeds of hatred and scorn rather than love and peaceful co-existence.

Again, modern transportation system has contributed in no small measure to make travelling much easier. However, this same system has contributed to myriads of problems like global warming, noise pollution which can cause hearing loss, stress, high blood pressure and sleeplessness to mention but a few. Although some people may argue that harmful remedies could be harmful, the fact remains that the only harmful part of the matter is when instructions and dosage recommendations are not followed by the users.

This paper, therefore, discussed the roles of the Yoruba indigenous religion and cultural resources, preservation of wildlife and proper and adequate interaction and exploration of the environment for peaceful co-existence that had been in place for ages.

### **The Impacts of Science, Technology and Industrialization on the Conservation of Natural Resources**

The industrial revolution of 1840 that conveyed in new technology in Europe and America brought about new manufacturing processes. Since then, efforts have been intensified in technological advancement and industrialisation of developed countries around the world and the impact of these developments are felt positively and negatively all over the world including developing countries particularly on natural earth through pollution and decline of natural resources. Industrial revolution brought into being factories with power stations that generate fossil fuels, which in turn pollute the air. Industrial waste also pollutes the water due to inappropriate means of disposing it.<sup>1</sup> The digital revolution is directly relevant to the social practices in nature conservation today. Mass-produced high-tech sensors and related technology make it possible, better, faster and cheaper capture of data on nature.<sup>2</sup>

With the growing population at a rapid pace around the world today, the demand for food, shelter and clothing has almost tripled in the last few decades. To meet

the growing demand, there is a direct action that we have come to recognize as Deforestation, result in and in fact has resulted in a rat infestation and has also denied our planet earth of useful herbal remedies that can be taken in any forms to care for human inadequacies in the area of health, which is better than the synthetic drugs we take today. According to the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), an estimated 18 million acres of forest are lost each year<sup>3</sup>. All these and much more are human activities that have become issues of global concern owing to the threat posed to the safety of the environment, the sustainability and continuing existence of Planet Earth. Natural resources are also depleted as a result of the fast consumption, too fast for natural resources to be replenished. The rate at which deforestation and mining resources are dwindling is in an alarming rate particularly in Yoruba society of south western Nigeria. This is due to effective technological development effects of which are felt negatively on the soil erosion, water and over consumption of resources. For instance, timber is increasingly becoming unavailable commodity these days, either as a result of indiscriminate felling without replacement because of modernization (construction of industry and estate buildings etc). Forests that are big part of human lives in terms of the food, cleaner air, and furniture are fast becoming history. The effect of these forest losses are felt in Africa more than any other parts of the world, possibly because of our poor of maintenance culture.<sup>4</sup>

In response to this alarming challenge, there is a global awakening and consciousness for campaigns and worldwide sensitization clamouring for the use of biodegradable products, eco-friendly production processes, campaign for green revolution, natural and wildlife conservation. Therefore, creating awareness through the use of information technology for the sustenance of natural resources is crucial<sup>5</sup>.

However, with the majority of ethical practices and precautionary measures rooted in Western ideologies and ethical principles, critical explorations of environmental ethics must go beyond the western horizon if proper headway would be made. Hence, the relevance of indigenous knowledge of the people in this matter is significant. After all, as the Yoruba people would say,

<sup>1</sup> The impact of Tech on the Environ. 2019, *Edinburgh Sensors*.

<sup>2</sup> Rene Van der wal, 2015, Digital Technology and the Conservation of Nature, *AMBIO. A Journal of Human Environment*, Springlink.com, [www.kva.se/en](http://www.kva.se/en), retrieved on 13/12/2020

<sup>3</sup> Rinkesh, ND, *70+Breathtaking Facts About Deforestation that Will Leave you Spellbound*, [www.conserve-energy.future.com](http://www.conserve-energy.future.com), retrieved on 05/01/2021

<sup>4</sup> *Forest Loss Slows globally as Sustainable Management Grows; Fao Publishes Key Findings of Benchmark Global Forest Resources Assessment*, Fao-News [room@faw.org](mailto:room@faw.org), retrieved on 14/12/2020

<sup>5</sup> M.S Meena and Kin singh, 2012, information and communication technologies for sustainable natural resource management, <https://mpra.ub.unimuenchen.de/45818/>, retrieved on 24/12/2020

before the existence of the corn, fowls had been eating something else, were they not?

### Yoruba Indigenous Religion, Cultural Practices and the Conservation of Natural Resources as Viewed by *Ogbè Alará (Ogbè túá)* in *Ifá* Divination System Toward Environmental Sustainability

Indigenous peoples nevertheless are vital stewards of the environment<sup>6</sup>. The Yoruba are no exception. The Yoruba are a religious group. Religion, according to Idowu<sup>7</sup>, guides everything they do from birth to death. Yet it is this religion that is contributing increasingly to the destruction of our natural resources through the establishment of infrastructural facilities, worship centres and prayer camps most especially by Christians and Muslims. These two modern religious groups in

Yorùbáland,<sup>8</sup> unlike traditional religion that gives room for sacredness of groves, water, mountains and hills, who does not tamper with nature anyhow, believe that these sacred places were occupied by demons that must be chased out and their places converted to useful purposes without any thought of a replacement. Traditional laws and taboos play significance roles in preserving national environment in the past, most especially sacred groves.<sup>9</sup> For instance, during a visit to Osun sacred grove at Oshogbo, Osun State, we were told that killing of monkeys in the grove is a taboo because they are sacred animals in the grove. As a result, the animals move freely with people. Through these prohibitions, a lot of natural resources have been conserved including mineral resources which *Ifá* recognised and which are related to the *Irúnmọ̀lẹ̀* who are the custodian of these resources till today as described in *Òsá Méjì*<sup>10</sup> where *Ifá* says;

*Onípé Oṣoro*

*Èyìn ló kó ọmọ wẹrẹwẹrẹ ti èyìn ọsà wá*

*A kii bini ká pani jẹ*

*Eran kii jẹ labalábá*

*Àjẹ kii jẹ eku olóṣé*

*Ògún kii jẹ irin*

*Òòsànlá kii jẹ òjé*

*Ifá kii jẹ ikin*

*Sàngó kii jẹ ọṣé*

*Obalufon kii jẹ bàbà*

*Bùkú kii jẹ òwú*

*Eyinlè kii jẹ orúpò rẹ*

*Òṣun kii jẹ ide`*

Onipe Osoro

You were the ones that brought little children from the back of lagoon

We don't give birth to someone and devour the person

Goat doesn't eat butterfly

Witches don't eat Olose (a kind of rat)

Ogun doesn't eat iron

Oosanla doesn't eat Brass

Ifá doesn't eat Ikin (divination kennels)

Sango doesn't eat ose

Obalufon doesn't eat millet

Buku doesn't eat cotton

Eyinle doesn't eat his house

Osun doesn't eat Ide

Here *Ifá* stipulates and forbade these divinities from eating the resources mentioned in the *Ifá* verses themselves and till today, devotees of these divinities are disallowed from eating the resources and have thereby preserved them.

Therefore, as Christina Eghenter<sup>11</sup> puts it, we have a lot to learn from indigenous people about conservation, sustainable use, and taking care of nature. Pamela<sup>12</sup> is also in support of this view by saying that indigenous and local

countries play important roles in maintenance and management of biodiversity and land scape. Through their value system that is eco-respect and eco-friendly, the Yoruba, according to Bewaji<sup>13</sup>, are able to gear toward

<sup>6</sup> 6 ways indigenous peoples are helping the world achieve #Zero Hunger, [www.fao.org/indigenous-peoples/en](http://www.fao.org/indigenous-peoples/en), retrieved 18/12/2020

<sup>7</sup> E. Bolaji Idowu, 1962, *Olodumare God in Yoruba Belief*, Nigeria: Longman Nigeria Limited, 5

<sup>8</sup> Fola D. Babalola, 2011, *Roles of and Threats to Yoruba Traditional Beliefs in Wilderness Conservation in South West Nigeria*, USDA Forest Services Proceedings RMRS PE, 4

<sup>9</sup> Geoffrey O Anoliefo, 2015, influence of traditional taboos practices on national resources conservation in uli, ihiala local govt area of anambra state Nigeria; sustainable county

development, journal of environmentl sustainability, vol. 4/issue 4 <https://scholarworks.rit.edu/jes/vol4/issue4>

<sup>10</sup> Akin Fagbenro Beyioku, 1940, *Ifa*, Lagos: Hope Rising Press, 16

<sup>11</sup> Cristina Eghenter, 2019, *Learning conservation from indigenes people, 2020 w w f – world wide fund for nature*

<sup>12</sup> Pamela McElwee, in Annie Sneed, 2019, *what conservation efforts can learn from indigenous countries*, [www.scientificamerican.com](http://www.scientificamerican.com), retrieved 22/11/2020

<sup>13</sup> John Ayotunde Isola Bewaji, *Yoruba Values and the Environment*, [www.NEWS.CLASS.UFL.EDU](http://www.NEWS.CLASS.UFL.EDU), retrieved on 28/12/2020

sustainable human habitation. This is not different from the opinion of Zerihun D Dottana<sup>14</sup> that the traditional peoples possess different kinds of values, myths, taboos, beliefs and practices that relate to nature and its resources. This knowledge's are found in their cultural heritage that has been used from generation to generation. That is, culture plays a significant role in the conservation of the environment<sup>15</sup>.

As earlier said, besides religion, agricultural remains the most significant driver of global deforestation as a result of food consumption patterns through improvement of technological activities and population growth.<sup>16</sup> However, the Yoruba, through their traditional agricultural practices are resilient to climate change. Throughout the centuries, the Yoruba indigenous people have developed agricultural techniques through the use of shifting cultivation method that gives room for plant and

tree replacements at the same time nourish the soil by planting different kinds of crops each year.

In the area of health, conventional medicine focuses on experiment and disease causing pathogens while traditional medicine believes that man is both a somatic and spiritual entity and disease that can be as a result of many other factors beyond the physical among which could be anger of ancestors or evil spirits, witches or wizards, divinities and manner less behaviours. Therefore, they do not take care of the symptom alone rather, the sociological, psychological and environmental factors, thereby approaching the issue through holistic and culture based methods to achieve result<sup>17</sup>. This is where offering of *ebo*-sacrifices come to play a big role in the life of humanity to achieve success not only in health related matters but also in social, political, religious and economic issues. For instance, *Ifá* in *Ogbe Alara*<sup>18</sup> attests to this fact where *Ifá* says:

*Ọ́rúnmílà ló di ọ̀fùlẹ̀, Ifá mi ẹ̀rù wúwo*

*Ifá ní kí Akápò lọ rẹ̀ẹ̀ mú ohun ẹ̀rù tó wúwo wá*

*Akápò mú eku méjì olúwéré*

*Ifá ní kí ẹ̀ ẹ̀rù tó wúwo.*

*Ọ́rúnmílà ló di ọ̀fùlẹ̀, Ifá mi ẹ̀rù wúwo*

*Ifá ní kí Akápò lọ rẹ̀ẹ̀ mú ohun ẹ̀rù tó wúwo wá*

*Akápò mú ẹ̀ja méjì abìwẹ̀gbàdà*

*Ifá ní kí ẹ̀ ẹ̀rù tó wúwo.*

*Ọ́rúnmílà ló di ọ̀fùlẹ̀, Ifá mi ẹ̀rù wúwo*

*Ifá ní kí Akápò lọ rẹ̀ẹ̀ mú ohun ẹ̀rù tó wúwo wá*

*Akápò mú obidiẹ̀ méjì abẹ̀dọ̀ lùkẹ̀lùkẹ̀*

*Ifá ní kí ẹ̀ ẹ̀rù tó wúwo.*

*Ọ́rúnmílà ló di ọ̀fùlẹ̀, Ifá mi ẹ̀rù wúwo*

*Ifá ní kí Akápò lọ rẹ̀ẹ̀ mú ohun ẹ̀rù tó wúwo wá*

*Akápò mú ewúré méjì abámú rẹ̀dẹ̀rẹ̀de*

*Ifá ní kí ẹ̀ ẹ̀rù tó wúwo.*

Orunmila says it is soft, Ifá says the load is heavy

Ifá says his bearer (devotee) should go and bring a heavy load

The bag bearer (devotee) brought two rats

Ifá says it is not a heavy load

Orunmila says it is soft, Ifá says the load is heavy

Ifá says his bag bearer (devotee) should go and bring a heavy load

The bag bearer (devotee) brought two fishes

Ifá says that is not a heavy load

Orunmila says it is soft, Ifá says the load is heavy

Ifá says his bag bearer (devotee) should go and bring a heavy load

The bag bearer (devotee) brought two hens

Ifá says it is not a heavy load

Orunmila says it is soft, Ifá says the load is heavy

Ifá says his bag bearer (devotee) should go and bring a heavy load

The bag bearer (devotee) brought two goats with big breasts

Ifá says it is not a heavy load

<sup>14</sup>Zerihun Doda Dottana, 2005, *Indigenous knowledge, the environment and national resource management: the adverse impacts of development interventions, a review of literature paper presented at the sensitization, [www.researchgate.net/publications](http://www.researchgate.net/publications)*

<sup>15</sup> Kennedy M. Kanene, 2016, indigenous practices of environmental sustainability in the Tonga country od southern Zambia, *jamba – journal of disaster ris studies, [www.jamba.org.za](http://www.jamba.org.za)*.

<sup>16</sup> Jose Graziano da silva, 2016, state of the world's forests in brief, forests and agriculture: Land – use challenges and opportunities, Food and Agriculture organisation of the united nations P 4 & 8.

<sup>17</sup> Omawumi O. Makinde, 2013, *Exploiting the Values of Indigenous Knowledge in Attaining Sustainable Development in Nigeria: The Place of the Library, <https://digitalcommons.unl.edu/libphilprac>*, retrieved 18/12/2020

<sup>18</sup> Awodiran Okanlawon Agboola, 2017, *Ifa: Ohun Ijinle Aye*, Lagos: Fagbenga Ventures Nigeria, 83

<i>Ọ̀rúnmìlà ló dí òfùlẹ̀, Ifá mi ẹ̀rù wúwo</i>	Orunmila says it is soft, Ifá says the load is heavy
<i>Ifá ní kí Akápò lọ rẹ̀é mú ohun ẹ̀rù tó wúwo wá</i>	Ifá says his bag bearer (devotee) should go and bring a heavy load
<i>Akápò mú ẹnlá méjì tó fò páàrà páàrà nígbó idó</i>	The bag bearer (devotee) brought two big cows that hovered in the bush of Ido
<i>Ifá ní kùí ẹ̀ ẹ̀rù tó wúwo.</i>	Ifá says it is not a heavy load
<i>Ọ̀rúnmìlà, mo jéwó òbùn, dáşo rómi</i>	Orunmila I surrender cover me with cloth
<i>Mòpé Èlẹ̀jẹ̀lú</i>	Mope Elejelu
<i>Ọ̀kinkin tí méyín ẹ̀nu fọ̀n</i>	He that blew trumpet with elephant tusk
<i>Afèdèfẹ̀yò</i>	He that speaks parable
<i>Ọ̀pitàn Ifẹ̀</i>	The story teller of Ife
<i>Kí wá ní ohun ẹ̀rù tó wúwo?</i>	What is the load that is heavy?
<i>Orunmila ní kí Akapo lo ree toju obi meji to yanju</i>	Orunmila says his bag bearer (devotee) should go and make arrangement for two kola nuts
<i>Oun ni eru to wuwo</i>	It is the heavy load
<i>Ifá ní obì ní òun yóó ma fì bí ikú nù lóri Akápò</i>	Ifá says it is kola nut that would be used to push off death on the head of the bag bearer (devotee)
<i>Ifá ní obì ní òun yóó ma fì bí àrùn nù lóri Akápò</i>	Ifá says it is kolanuts that would be used to push off sickness on the head of the bag bearer (devotee)
<i>Ifá ní obì ní òun yóó má fì bí òfò nù lóri Akápò</i>	Ifá says that it is kolanuts that would be used to push off losses from the head of the bag bearer (devotee)
<i>Ifá ní obì ní òun yóó ma fì bí gbogbo ibi nù lóri Akápò</i>	Ifá says that it is kolanuts that would be used to push off every evils on the head of the bag bearer (devotee)
<i>Ifá ní obì ní òun yóó ma fì bí ire ajé wá fún Akápò</i>	Ifá says that it is kolanuts that would be used to attract money on the head of the bag bearer (devotee)
<i>Ifá ní obì ní òun yóó ma fì bí ire omọ wá fún Akápò</i>	Ifá says that it is kolanuts that would be used to attract children on the head of the bag bearer (devotee)
<i>Ifá ní obì ní òun yóó ma fì bí ire gbogbo wá fún Akápò</i>	Ifá says that it is kolanuts that would be used to attract every goodness on the head of the bag bearer (devotee)
<i>Ọ̀rúnmìlà ní kí Akápò fì obì yí lé Ifá</i>	Orunmila told the bag bearer to place the kolanuts on Ifá
<i>Làì la àwọ̀n obì yí</i>	Without opening them
<i>Akápò ẹ̀ ẹ̀bẹ̀</i>	The devotee complied
<i>Ibí lọ, Ire de</i>	Misfortune left, goodness came in

By offering of *ẹ̀bọ* in different forms, whether consumed by human beings, animals or placed in a particular place and allowed to decay there, we are giving

back to nature what had been taken from nature without damaging or tampering with nature in any form. Emissions from such *ẹ̀bọ* always have cooling effect on the air, the

natural environment and on the people living in such places. As asked by Awo Fasusi<sup>19</sup>, have you heard that an epidemic broke out as a result of eating or placement of any ẹbọ? Rather, in times of epidemic breakout, ebo is usually used to avert or prevent its happening. In the same manner, herbalists, while harvesting plants to care for human health also tries to give back to nature what belongs to nature? For instance, whenever they harvest herbs, particularly the root of some plants, they have a habit of planting back another herb in replacement of the ones harvested for the next generations. As explained by an informant, if a herbalist harvested some parts of a tree root, as a payment, a pledge or a token of appreciation for what he took from the tree, (for the tree to dish out active ingredients for him or her to achieve success in the treatment of his or her client) he or she would bury a kolanut in the place he dug out the root. If eventually the kolanut germinates (which is usually the case), he has directly or indirectly replaced what he took from nature because the kolanut will grow to a big tree for others to use in the foreseeable future<sup>20</sup>.

Therefore, the ultimate goal of life in Yoruba society, according to Bewaji<sup>21</sup>, is that of mutual survival. He explained further that when you tap the palm tree for wine, you do it respectfully without cutting the shoot, even though it would have brought you more juice. It is the height of abomination to uproot the palm tree, set fire to it at the bottom, to drain the juice from the top, even though what you get will be instantly more potent. Though a practice in neighboring cultures, the Yorùbá detest such. It is not in the habits of the Yoruba indigenous people to fish in a permitted rivers, lakes and ponds and kill every fish in such places. Rather, babies of the fish are left to grow for future purpose. In the same manner, baby lambs (called ewe) are not killed for eating except if killed accidentally and in such a situation, it may be thrown away in the bush or buried to nourish the soil. Again, it is believed by the Yoruba that *òjejò kò gbòdò jẹ tinú ẹ̀*- he that eats snake must not eat animal found in it. What this implies is that no farmer would harvest his crops before maturity. It is regarded as unnatural way of life that is dangerous to the future of the entire society.

Also, the Yoruba indigenous people see themselves as connected to nature and as part of the same system as the environment in which they live. Therefore, they conserve, restore forests and natural resources like rivers, hills and sacred groves. This is done by prohibiting other members of the community from felling trees and killing animals from such forests and sacred groves, disallowed community members from entering such rivers except authorized devotees to prevent pollution at the same time protect animals living there to avoid extinction of such animals. By doing this, they help alleviate the effects of climate change<sup>22</sup>. Till today; there are still some families that are forbidden from eating certain animals, birds and plants including mushrooms. The family of Olu Oje does not eat *ẹyẹ ẹ̀gà*- weaving bird<sup>23</sup>. While the entire people of Ondo city don't eat *Òkété*- giant rat<sup>24</sup>.

Through Yoruba indigenous of preparing and eating of foods like *móin móin*, *èkuru*, *ẹ̀kọ*, *àşaró*, *èbiripò*, *iyán*, *ikókọre*, and so on, they help preserve nature, live a healthy life and healthy living environments. Majority of these foods are prepared with earthen pots, leafs and eaten with clay pots and leafs that release some active ingredients in those materials into the foods that are beneficial to human system. Disposing these materials too is easy, for they quickly decay and go back to nature to nourish the soil. Unlike these days that the world relies only on few food items like rice, wheat, beans and cereals, at the same time prepared with artificial ingredients and parked in plastic materials that are injurious to human health. The nutritious food system of indigenous people can help man expand its narrow food base because they are resilient to climate change for they understood the nature of their environment, the crops and adaptability method<sup>25</sup>.

## II. CONCLUSION

In the Yorùbá indigenous cultural practice that we have just explored, we have realised that indigenous and local communities tend to succeed at conservation and maintenance of natural resources because they understand the ecosystems of their environment very well with a long stand history because they are closer to the ground which McElwee<sup>26</sup> says will help them respond more quickly to changes or threats. Social norms, taboos, prohibitions and

<sup>19</sup> Fasusi Asaolu, an Ifa Priest, *Oral Interview*, Ajangbadi Area, Lagos State, 02/11/2020

<sup>20</sup> Jenfo Adenle Kelewe, an Herbalist, *Oral Interview*, Mogaji Owe, Moniya Area, Ibadan, Interviewed on 23/12/2020

<sup>21</sup> John Ayotunde Isola Bewaji, *Yoruba Values and the Environment*, [www.NEWS.CLASS.UFL.EDU](http://www.NEWS.CLASS.UFL.EDU), retrieved on 28/12/2020

<sup>22</sup> Jumoke Adenrele, Osun Priestess, *Oral Interview*, Beere, Ibadan, 23/12/2020

<sup>23</sup> Adeboye Babalola, 1973, *Awon Oriki Orile*, U.K: Wm. Collins, Sons and Co. Ltd, 30

<sup>24</sup> Adegbuyi Clement, Ondo Indigene, *Oral Interview*, July 2020  
<sup>25</sup> <http://www.fao.org/traditional-crops/moringa/en/>, retrieved on 12/11/2020

<sup>26</sup> Pamela McElwee, in *Annie Sneed, 2019, what conservation efforts can learn from indigenous countries*, [www.scientificamerican.com](http://www.scientificamerican.com), retrieved. 22/11/2020

rules enforced also help in regulating their natural resources. Finally, viewing and looking at the issue of conservation of natural resources for environmental sustainability from the perspective of western world may not help the situation. Rather, people in charge like governments and scientists need to be friends with the indigenous people and tap from the vast reservoir of local knowledge of those who have reciprocal relationship with nature, who rather than

viewing nature as existing to serve humans—as much of Western culture has historically regarded things as said by Brondízio<sup>27</sup>. Besides, the knowledge of the Yoruba Ifá cannot be thrown away completely because this is all encompassing in the life of the people because they relied on it in everything they do. This is demonstrated in *Owonrin Meji*<sup>28</sup> where Ifá says;

<i>Àgbongbòn ní sawo wòn lode Ìlòre</i>	Agbongbon is the priest of Ilore
<i>Àgbàyàngìdì ní sawo òkè Ìjèrò</i>	Agbayangidi is the priest of Ijero hill
<i>Àgbà yàngídí yàngìdì ní wòn ndì ní àtìpa</i>	
<i>A dIfá fún Olóyímèfùn</i>	Cast divination for Oloyimefun
<i>Nígba tò fẹ̀ bulẹ̀ Olówu roko,</i>	When he wanted to farm on Olowu's land
<i>Wòn ní kó bọ̀ eégún ilé,</i>	He was asked to offer sacrifice to the masquerade of the house
<i>Ó bọ̀ eégún ilé</i>	He offered the sacrifice to the masquerade of the house
<i>Eégún ilé ò gbẹ̀bọ̀,</i>	The masquerade of the house refused to accept the sacrifice
<i>Wòn ní kó bòdòsà ọjà,</i>	He was asked to appease the gods of the market
<i>Ó bòdòsà ọjà ẹ̀bọ̀ rẹ̀ ò gbà.</i>	He did but his sacrifice was not accepted
<i>Wòn ní kó bori,</i>	He was asked to offer sacrifice to Ori
<i>Ó bori, ori pá</i>	He offered and the head became bald
<i>Wòn ní kó bọ̀lẹ̀,</i>	He was asked to appease the land
<i>Ó bọ̀lẹ̀, ilẹ̀ lu...</i>	He appeased and the land caved in...

Ordinarily, going to make a new farm shouldn't be a problem that would involve consulting Ifá for, but because the Yoruba believed that *Ifá* leads and pivoted in every human endeavours. He involved the services and advice of *Ifá*. Therefore, we should not throw away the baby with the birth water.

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*Olaleye / Yoruba Indigenous Religion and Conservation of Natural Resources for Environmental Sustainability the Perspective of Òsá Méjì in Ifá Divination System*

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