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Currency

The official unit of currency is the naira, consisting of 100 kobo.

Government

General

Nigeria, located on the W coast of Africa, is bounded on the W by Benin, on the N by Niger, on the NE by Chad and Cameroon, and on the S by the Gulf of Guinea.

A belt, from 10 to 60 miles wide, fronts the coast and consists of dense mangroves and swamps. Tropical forests, rich in palm-oil trees and mahoganies, are located behind this belt.

A few mountains rise in the S portion of the country except along the E boundary. A large plateau, from 609 to 1,828m high, lies N and E of the junction of the Niger River and the Benue River.

The climate varies, being equatorial in the S part of the country, tropical in the central part, and arid in the N.

Buoyage System

The IALA Buoyage System (Region A) is in effect. See Chart No. 1 for further IALA Buoyage System information.



Flag of Nigeria

Nigeria gained independence from the United Kingdom in 1960. In 1985, the government was assumed by an Armed Forces Ruling Council after two military coups. In 1993, a transitional civilian council took control of the country. Under the 1978 constitution, the country is a sovereign federal republic.

The President is the head of state and is popularly elected to serve a maximum of two 4-year terms. The Legislature consists of a 360-member House of Representatives, directly elected to 4-year terms, and a 109-member Senate, also directly elected to 4-year terms. The country is divided up into 36 states, each administered by a local directly-elected governor, and one federal territory.

The legal system is based on English common law, tribal law, and Islamic law.

The capital is Abuja.

Holidays

The following holidays are observed:

New Year's Day	January 1
Good Friday	Varies
Easter Monday	Varies
Labor Day	May 1
Democracy Day	May 29
Independence Day	October 1
Christmas Day	December 25
Boxing Day	December 26

Id-el-Fitr, Id-el-Adha, and Id-el-Maulud are observed Islamic holidays, the dates of which vary from year to year and are subject to the appearance of the moon. In addition, all Muslims rigidly observe Ramadan, the ninth month of the Islamic year, as a 30-day fast during the hours of daylight.

Industries

The major industries include crude oil production, natural gas processing, and the mining of coal, iron ore, marble, columbite, lead, and zinc.

Other industries are textiles, cement, building materials, food products, footwear, chemicals, printing, ceramics, fertilizer, wood products, timber, palm oil processing, livestock raising, fishing, leather goods, and the mining of tin, uranium, and gold.

The principal crops include millet, sorghum, plantains, oil palms, maize, yams, rice, cassava, groundnuts, cottonseed, cocoa, and peanuts. The most important species of lumber are mahogany, iroko, obeche, abwa, ebony, and camwood.

Languages

The official language is English. Numerous native dialects are also spoken. It is reported (1997) that French has been declared an official language.

Pilotage

Pilotage is compulsory within the four Sea Pilotage Districts within the Exclusive Economic Zones of the Nigerian coast. The districts are contained within an area bound by the following points:

- 4°30.33'N, 8°24.12'E.
- 4°01.80'N, 8°20.42'E.
- 3°26.50'N, 7°24.42'E.
- 3°28.75'N, 6°00.00'E.
- 4°49.12'N, 5°00.00'E.
- 6°00.00'N, 4°30.00'E.
- 6°00.00'N, 3°10.00'E.

- 6°23.75'N, 3°10.00'E.

The boundaries of the four Sea Pilotage Districts are, as follows:

- District A (Calabar River Oil Terminal).**—The navigable area between 8°24.12'E and 7°24.42'E.
- District B (Bonny Offshore Terminal and Brass Oil Terminal).**—The navigable area between 7°24.42'E and 6°00.00'E.
- District C (North Apoi Oil Terminal, Forcados Oil Terminal, and Escravos Oil Terminal).**—The navigable area between 6°00.00'E and 4°30.00'E.
- District D (Kuramo and Lekki).**—The navigable area between 4°30.00'E and 3°10.00'E.

Regulations

Ship Entry Notice (SEN)

Two months prior to arrival in Nigerian waters, agents must register vessels with the Nigerian Ports Authority (NPA) in order to obtain a Ship Entry Notice (SEN). This does not apply to vessels carrying petroleum products in bulk or in ballast. Vessels cannot enter the territorial waters of Nigeria without a SEN.

Special Requirement

Before entering any of the creeks, rivers, or channels in Nigerian waters, vessels are required to broadcast their intentions and keep a continuous watch on 500 kHz or 2182 kHz as necessary.

Vessels should broadcast their positions frequently to facilitate safe navigation, but such messages must be discontinued on request by any naval, military, or port authority or any Nigerian radio station or authorized officer.

VHF Communications

All VHF communication is subject to the following regulations:

- VHF channel 16—Used as a calling and listening frequency by vessels, the harbormaster, the pilot station, and the signal station.
- VHF channels 14, 13, 12, 11, and 9—Reserved for the sole use of the NPA. Agents and vessels are not to use these channels unless required to do so by the NPA.
- VHF channels 22, 23, 24, and 25—Reserved as working channels for vessel to vessel and agent to vessel communications.
- VHF channel 21—Reserved as a calling and listening frequency for communication between agents and their land mobile station.
- VHF channels 17, 18, 19, and 20—Reserved as working channels for communications between shore stations other than the NPA.

The manner of operation under these restrictions is, as follows:

- All vessels will keep simultaneous listening watches on VHF channels 16 and 21. They will use VHF channel 16 when calling the harbormaster, pilot station, signal, or other vessels. Vessels will use VHF channel 21 when calling their agents.

2. All non-NPA fixed stations will keep watch on VHF channels 16 and 21. They will use channel 16 when calling the pilot station, harbormaster, and signal station. For calling their respective vessels, they will use VHF channel 21. After establishing contact, they will switch over to a mutually acceptable channel from amongst those assigned above as applicable. Agents will only use VHF to contact the NPA station as a last resort and only when the more conventional methods such as telephones and messengers fail.

3. The NPA stations will use VHF channel 16 for contacting vessels, tugs, and operational centers. They will use VHF channel 11 for other NPA internal communications. After establishing contact, these stations will select a working channel other than VHF channel 16, 14, or 11. The fire service will continue to use VHF channel 14 while maintaining a listening watch on VHF channel 16.

Oil Terminals—ETA Reporting

Vessels are required to report their ETA at the terminal anchorage or fairway lighted buoy 7 days in advance. If the vessel is leaving the previous port less than 7 days prior to arrival at the terminal, the vessel's ETA at the terminal should be sent 72 hours, 48 hours, and 24 hours in advance.

Any amendments to the ETA of more than 12 hours should be sent immediately.

Vessels should contact the terminal directly when within VHF range.

Time Zone

The Time Zone description is ALFA (-1). Daylight Savings Time is not observed.

World Time Zone Chart

<http://www.odci.gov/cia/publications/factbook/ref/pdf/802801.pdf>

U.S. Embassy

The U.S. Embassy is situated at 7 Mambilla Street, Abuja. The mailing address is P.O. Box 554, Lagos.

U. S. Embassy Nigeria Home Page

<http://usembassy.state.gov/nigeria>