

ABSTRACT

The environment includes the air, land, water and everything that it produces that sustains humans within. Humans in order to access these resources both for their survival, development and to sustain their position in the global market, has exploited these resources in a manner that has depreciated the integrity of the environment by causing depletion of land fertility, global warming of biodiversity, killing aquatic lives, deforestation, etc. This pollution in Nigeria emanates mostly from the oil sector, from spillages caused by process of oil exploitation and corroded pipes, and a serious and rampant case is the incidence of oil theft.

The Nigerian society has however, not ignored the developments of activities of oil gangs, supported by communities heads, war lords and political sponsors, and, has consequently set out some measures to battle these strain in the Nigeria economy. These measures include regulations such as the constitution federal republic of Nigeria 1999. The criminal code, the national oil spill detection and response Agency (established) Act, the petroleum industry bill, etc.

This paper shall examine the challenge of oil theft in the Nigerian environment and the efficacy of the measures set out to tackle the problem of crude oil theft.

The paper shall conclude by recommending increase in local participation to secure oil pipelines, government collaboration with international communities to tackle oil theft, creation of job opportunities to engage jobless youth in locale where these pipelines are laid, educating the joint task force on issues of environmental pollution.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1. BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Since the discovery of oil in Oloibiri a village in the Niger Delta by the Shell British Petroleum in 1956, the Nigerian economy has not only boosted financially but also have suffered the negative impact of oil activities going on in the territory.

The Niger Delta region is blessed with 606 oil fields of which 360 are on shore and 246 off shore. The oil industry in Nigeria contributes a good percentage of Nigeria's economy earnings; however it has also become a source of loss in the Nigerian economy budget. This is associated with the oil spills from the oil

exploitation, and a more reoccurring and disturbing issue, is the activities of the oil thieves.

Oil theft has become the order of the day, with our daily national newspapers parading these issues and no improvement in its reduction. The activities of oil thieves have resulted in negative impacts in the environment, the Nigerian economy (national budget) and have also posed insecurity threats.

Unfortunately, the perpetrators of these crimes have monarchs and political backings and always get away with these crimes. All of these activities have only degraded the environment of the Nigeria State.

Laws/regulations and measures have been set out by the federal government to reduce and discourage the activities of the oil thieves. Regrettably, these laws have been weakened by its enforcement strength, unemployment, institutional weakness of the relevant agency, and bribery and corruption, hence, the government must first deal with the root of the problem before looking at the rest of it. This research work attempts to examine the challenge of crude oil theft in the Nigerian society and make recommendations.

1.2. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This study seeks to study the challenges of halting crude oil theft in the Niger delta region and also assess the environmental integrity in Nigeria.

1.3. SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The scope of this study is centered on the assessment of environmental integrity in Nigeria and the challenge of crude oil theft in the south southern part of Nigeria making use of the environmental rights action as a case study.

1.4. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- Ø To know the challenges of crude oil theft so as to proffer solutions.
- Ø To know the impact of crude oil theft on environmental integrity in Nigeria.
- Ø To study those laws and strengthen the laws that prohibits environmental degradation.

1.5. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- Ø What are the challenges of crude theft in Nigeria?
- Ø Does crude oil theft have a negative impact on environmental integrity?
- Ø What are the laws prohibiting environmental degradation and crude oil theft and can these laws be strengthened for optimal benefits?

1.6. RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS

H_0 : crude oil theft does not affect the environmental integrity of the Niger delta region.

H_1 : crude oil theft affects the environmental integrity of the Niger delta region.

1.7.DEFINITION OF TERMS

ENVIRONMENT:the surroundings or conditions in which a person, animal, or plant lives or operates.

CRUDE OIL THEFT:Mixture of naturally occurring hydrocarbons that is refined into diesel, gasoline, heating oil, jet fuel, kerosene, and literally thousands of other products called petrochemicals. Crude oils are named according to their contents and origins, and classified according to their per unit weight (specific gravity). Heavier crudes yield more heat upon burning, but have lower API gravity and market price in comparison to light (or sweet) crudes.

POPULATION:a summation of all the organisms of the same group or species, which live in a particular geographical area, and have the capability of interbreeding. In ecology, the population of a certain species in a certain area is estimated using the Lincoln Index.

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