

PDF - ENVIRONMENTAL POLLUTION IN NIGERIA: ISSUES AND SOLUTIONS - researchcub.info As a result of these, the need to combine industrial development and environmental protection arose. Acts of legislation for environmental protection, known as environmental laws, were then enacted. However, the researcher is seeking to provide an highlights on the various issues of environmental pollution and the challenges encountered in establishing an effective environmental enforcement programme and the solutions proffered by the government in tackling these problems (Wikipedia, 2015).

Oil is the primary base of Nigeria's economy and is also the cause of major environmental and social problems in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria. Over the years, oil exploration, production, and refinement in Nigeria has resulted in various environmental and ecological problems that range from oil spills, gas flares, habitat destruction, air and water pollution, and land degradation. Also, a major cause of oil pollution in that same region is also to a great extent, from the activities of illegal oil bunkering and illegal refineries operated indigenes and some highly placed individuals in government. The chemical properties of spilled oil often affect the productiveness of soil and pollute water bodies, thereby causing irreparable damage to agricultural lands as well as aquatic bodies.

Gas flaring is a significant environmental and economic problem in and Nigeria emits approximately 70 million metric tons of carbon dioxide annually (US EIA1999). This adversely affects the socio-economic actives of local communities, which is primarily based on fishing and farming (Egunjobi1993). It is estimated that in one region alone in the Niger Delta, flaring is statistically likely to cause 49 premature deaths, 5000 respiratory illnesses among children and some 120,000 asthma attacks and 8 additional causes of cancer each year (Environmental Rights Action and the Climate Justice Programme).

Another major environmental issue ravaging Nigeria is water pollution. According to Anukam (1997), the main source of water pollution in Nigeria has to do with forestry activities. Deforestation and improper soil tillage practices increase the concentration of soil particles that make their way into water bodies and in turn increases their sediment loads.. The discharge of industrial waste materials into bodies of water is another major source of pollution in Nigeria. Discharges from industries such as petroleum, mining, iron and steel, pharmaceuticals, and textiles among others have increased the contents of sulfates and nitrates in water bodies and has altered properties such as color and odor (Adelegan 2004). These metals and other chemical substance increase the toxicity of water bodies as well as soils. A large percentage of Nigerians derive most of their domestic and drinking water from ponds, stream, and shallow wells. Hence, water pollution is a major health concern that places the health of about 40 million people at risk of diseases such as cholera, dysentery, diarrhea, and typhoid (Anukam 1997, Adelegan 2004, Orubu 2006).

Domestic and industrial waste has also constituted a major source of environmental pollution in Nigeria. The improper disposal and ineffective management of municipal solid waste and industrial waste creates major environmental and aesthetic problems in most of Nigeria's urban areas. Due to overpopulation and the creation of slums, most municipal areas currently generate more waste than they can manage (Ogbonna and Ekweozor, 2002). This has led to the accumulation of waste heaps in "several areas, blocking motorways and making passage along alleys and pavements difficult" (Ajayi and Ikporokpo 2005). The most common method of waste disposal in Nigeria is waste transfer from one region to another and incineration. The first involves the transfer of waste from a region that is considered to have a higher aesthetic value to

one that has a lower one. The waste incineration method of waste disposal often results in air pollution due to the release of gases such as carbon monoxide, sulfur dioxide, oxides of nitrogen, halogenated carbons, and other particulate matter.

There is need for government to enact and implement necessary environmental laws to control the issues of environmental pollution and this can be done by putting necessary environmental pollution enforcement structures in place to curb the spate of environmental pollution in Nigeria.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Irrespective of the numerous environmental laws enacted to protect the environment, environmental degradation has continued unabated. Oil spillage and gas flaring activities are still commonplace in Nigeria, especially in the oil-rich Niger Delta. Gas flaring has also continued unabated irrespective of the Nigerian government's directive to end flaring by 2010 (Kalu, 2009). The Idoho oil spill incidence of 1997 spilled 40,000 barrels of crude oil into the environment. It travelled all the way from Akwa Ibom state to Lagos state dispersing oil through the coastal states, up to the Lagos coast. According to the Department of Petroleum Resources, between 1997 and 2001, Nigeria recorded a total number of 2,097 oil spill incidents amounting to 1,947,600 barrels of crude oil.

Thousands of barrels of oil have been split into the environment through our oil pipelines and tanks in the country. Enforcement of environmental regulations is still poor as industries continue to discharge untreated waste water into the environment. Heaps of refuse are always a constant sight to behold in Nigerian streets and markets.

Most recently, in December 2011, the SPDC's Bonga offshore platform spilled about 40, 000 barrels of crude oil into Nigerian waters. On January 16 2012, a gas explosion occurred at the Finuwa oil field owned by Chevron Nigeria Limited. The Nigerian government was shockingly silent about these two incidents. This study however wants to identify the problems of environmental pollution and proffer solution to the issue.

1.3 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The following are the objectives of this study:

- To identify the issues of environmental pollution in Nigeria.
- To analyze the impact of environmental pollution in Nigeria.
- To determine the solutions to the challenges of environmental pollution in Nigeria.

1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- What are the issues of environmental pollution in Nigeria?
- What is the impact of environmental pollution in Nigeria?
- What are the solutions to the challenges of environmental pollution in Nigeria?

1.5 HYPOTHESIS

HO: Environmental pollution is not a major challenge in Nigeria

HA: Environmental pollution is a major challenge in Nigeria

1.6 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The following are the significance of this study:

The outcome of this research will educate the general public on the issues and the adverse effect of environmental pollution in Nigeria.

The findings from this study is going to necessitate measures that will lead to demand for improved implementation of environmental pollution control laws in Nigeria

This research will also serve as a resource base to other scholars and researchers interested in carrying out further research in this field subsequently, if applied, it will go to an extent to provide new explanation to the topic.

1.7 SCOPE/LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

This study on environmental pollution in Nigeria will cover all cases of environmental pollution ranging from air and water pollution due to oil exploration and refining, effluent waste from industries, dump sites all over Nigeria market and streets and even noise pollution.

LIMITATION OF STUDY

Financial constraint- Insufficient fund tends to impede the efficiency of the researcher in sourcing for the relevant materials, literature or information and in the process of data collection (internet, questionnaire and interview).

Time constraint- The researcher will simultaneously engage in this study with other academic work. This consequently will cut down on the time devoted for the research work.

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