

United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) Assessment Report and the Question of Environmental Justice in Nigeria: The Ogoni Community Experience

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Abstract

Decades of oil exploration and exploitation in the Niger Delta region have no doubt affected the environment and lives of the Niger Delta people while oil spills and indiscriminate flaring of gas has equally caused ecological devastation in the oil-rich region. Thus, this paper examined the need to address environmental problems confronting the Niger Delta region and Ogoni community in particular. The study combined the frustration aggression theory and the theory of relative deprivation to buttress the fact that unethical practices of oil prospecting companies in the Niger Delta region created unrest and conflict in the region. In terms of methodology and scope, the study was based on the descriptive qualitative research method while emphasis was placed on the Niger Delta region and Ogoni community in particular. Data for the study were sourced from secondary sources while the analysis was based on content analysis which Babbie, (2010) described as “the study of recorded human communications such as books, websites, paintings and laws”. Findings in the study revealed that multinational oil companies operating in the Niger Delta region engaged in unethical practices that are detrimental to the ecosystem and human life. Further findings also revealed that policy actions and reports that will guarantee peace sustainable development and environmental justice in the Niger Delta region have not been effectively implemented by the Nigerian government and the multinational oil companies hence, the resurgence of violence and insecurity in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria. However, to ensure environmental justice and sustainable peace and development in the Niger Delta region, there is urgent need for the Nigeria government and the national assembly to review and re-examine all policies, legislations and committee reports relating to the Niger Delta region and the oil and gas sector in Nigeria with a view to addressing the socio-economic, political and environmental problems confronting the Niger Delta region.

Keywords: *Oil, Niger Delta region, Environmental problems, Ogoni community and Environmental justice.*

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Background to the Study

Unethical practices and activities of multinational oil companies in the Niger Delta is characterized with the production and emission of dangerous chemicals and industrial waste that are inimical to man and the environment hence, the adverse effect of gas flaring on the environment and people explains why life expectancy and fertility is low in the Niger Delta region. The non-challant posture of the Nigerian government and policy makers caused the relationship between the multinational oil companies and their host communities to degenerate from nonviolence to arms struggle via the 1998 Kaiama declaration where Niger Delta youths from over 500 communities and 40 clans representing, 25 representative organizations met on 11th December 1998 and agreed to take their destiny in their own hands. The result was the proliferation of militia groups and camps throughout the Niger Delta region. This no doubt led to the militarization of the entire Niger Delta region from 1998-2017. In the case of Ogoni community, environmental pollution coupled with the marginalization and exclusion of the people in the oil and gas sector led to the formation of Movement for the Survival of Ogoni People (MOSOP) in 1988, with Dr. Garrick Leton, a former federal minister as president and writer Kenule Sarowiwa, as publicity secretary.

Records and statistics indicate that MOSOP was formed to pressurize the Nigerian government and SHELL to improve the lots of the Ogoni people by taking urgent steps to address their socio-economic and environmental problems such as oil-spills, environmental pollution, and the provision of basic social amenities etc. By 26 August, 1990, MOSOP in an attempt to attract local and international sympathy published the Ogoni-Bill of Rights which was forwarded to the then Head of State, Gen. Ibrahim B. Babangida. In July 1992, Ken Sarowiwa explained the plight of the Ogoni people when he told the United Nations Working Group of Indigenous Populations at its 10th Session in Geneva that: my Ogoni people are the object of genocide in which environmental degradation has been a lethal weapon in the war against them. (Kalama, 2012). Describing the Ogoni case as a case of genocide in Nigeria Ikporukpo (2011) stated thus: the Ogonis are embattled and imperiled since oil was discovered in the area in 1958, they have been the victims of a deadly ecological war in which no blood is spilled, no bones are broken and no one is maimed. But people die all the time. Men, women and children are at risk: plants wild life and fish are destroyed, the air and water are poisoned and finally the land dies. Today ogoni's have been reduced to a waste land (Sarowiwa, 1995 cited in Ikporukpo 2011). In the light of the above, the level of ecological damage done to the environment in Ogoni land and Niger Delta region coupled with the efforts made to address the issues forms the major thrust of this paper.

Theoretical Framework and Conceptual Analysis

This study combined the frustration aggression theory and the relative deprivation theory to explain the fact that environmental pollution arising from the activities of multinational oil companies adversely affected the land and people of the Niger Delta region and Ogoni land in particular. The original formulation of the frustration aggression theory by Dollard et. al. (1939) focused on the limited interference with an expected attainment of a desired goal on hostile (emotional) aggression hence, implying that when people find it difficult to achieve their goals and targets in any given system or society, they are bound to react otherwise by

demonstrating aggressive traits and tendencies. Recent events have shown that the frustration aggression theory is intended to suggest to scholars and researchers of human nature that when he sees aggression he should turn a suspicious eye on possibilities that the organism or group is confronted with frustration; and that when he views interference with individual or group habits, he should be on the lookout for, among other things, aggression (Green, 1941). The frustration-aggression theory states that aggression is caused by frustration and when people are prevented from reaching their targets, they become frustrated. This frustration according to frustration-aggression theorists can then turn into aggression when something triggers it (Berkowitz, 1980).

Aggression in this context is usually directed towards the cause of the frustration but where this is not possible, the aggression may be displaced or directed to others hence, the Niger Delta people have for so long craved to enjoy the proceeds of the oil deposit in their lands but unfortunately what they get in return is pollution, gas flaring, and environmental disaster caused by activities of oil companies. It is on record that the frustration that emanated from the insensitivity of the Nigerian state and oil companies eventually turned the Niger Delta region into a complex operating environment, characterized by intra and inter-ethnic conflicts between the oil producing communities and the oil companies, armed groups and the oil companies and the Nigerian security forces. This clearly shows that when people perceive that they are been alienated, oppressed and prevented from achieving a goal, their frustration is likely to turn into aggression like the case in Nigeria's Niger Delta region. In the same vein, relative deprivation as applied in the study is the experience of being deprived or denied of something to which one believes oneself to be entitled to have (Walker and Smith, 2001).

Relative deprivation therefore refer to the discontent people feel when they compare their positions to those of similar situation and find out that they have been less than their peers hence, it is a condition that is measured by comparing one group's situation to the situations of those who are more advantaged. Beyertz, 1999 and Schaefer, 2008 described relative deprivation as “the conscious experience of a negative discrepancy between legitimate expectations and present actualities. In their words:

It is used in the social sciences for describing feelings or measures of economic, political, or social deprivation that are relative rather than absolute. The concept of relative deprivation has important consequences for both behavior and attitudes, including feelings of stress, political attitudes and participation in collective action...

Within the context of this study, one can conclude that the activities and unregulated practices of multinational oil companies in Niger Delta Region explains why the conflict in the region escalated between 1995-2008 hence, prompting the federal government of Nigeria under former President Umaru Musa Yar'Adua to issue the amnesty proclamation for Niger Delta youths who were engaged in armed struggle against the Nigerian state in June 2009.

Conceptual Analysis

This aspect of the study examined the views of scholars on the subject matter. Ikporukpo (2011) noted that in spite of the availability of various resources, it is the exploitation of

petroleum that has made the Niger Delta the most economically significant region in Nigeria. In his words: the resource together with its politics, has also won the area international significance. Since 1956, when oil was first discovered in commercial quantities at Oloibiri in the central part of the delta, there have been considerable new discoveries with a consequent rapid growth in production. He added that environmental justice involves the distribution of environmental costs fairly among people and areas and where possible between the present and future generations. According to him, where some areas or people are disproportionately exposed to an environmental diseconomy from an activity which benefits all areas and people, environmental injustice exist. He gave the principles of environmental justice as; equality, equity and compensation. Ishiyama, (2003), corroborated the above position and added that environmental justice also includes fairness in participation of groups and areas in environmental decision making. While commenting on activities of oil prospecting companies in the Niger Delta, Ikporukpo (2011) stated thus; the exploration for and exploitation of oil in the Delta region necessitated the provision of seismic routes, exploration roads, carnivals and associated facilities, which affect the biota and fauna. In his words: furthermore, spills and the flaring of gas found in association with oil have environmental implications. All stakeholders recognize that oil exploration and exploitation have implications for the environment.

Ken Sarowiwa (1992) stated clearly that multinational oil companies in Nigeria do not respect international standards in their operations. According to him:

Shell must bear full responsibility for the genocide of the Ogoni which is ongoing even now. The record of the company in environmental issues in Nigeria has been most appalling. When Chevron began to prospect for oil in Ogoni twelve years ago in 1980, it had the example of Shell to go by. The most notorious action of both companies has been the flaring of gas sometimes in the middle of the villages...or very close to human habitation...next to the flaring gas comes the frequency of oil spills.

While the debate over the issue of environmental justice in the Niger Delta still rages on, scholars are of the opinion that oil exploration and exploitation can still go on without environmental degradation. Thus, the general view point of the communities and the non-governmental organizations (NGOs) is that whereas the Niger Delta region bears the environmental brunt of oil production in Nigeria, other parts of the country benefits more from the activity. However, Soremekun and Obi 1993 cited in Ikporukpo (2011) stated clearly that at the very root of oil politics in Niger Delta is the question of an equitable distribution of the benefits from oil exploitation. In their words: two aspects of this issue may be identified. These are distribution between the oil producing Niger Delta region and other parts of the country and that between the urban and the rural areas of the Niger Delta. It is therefore pertinent to note that since the United Church of Christ Commission for Racial Justice (1987) report on toxic waste and race in the U.S.A, which popularized the idea of environmental justice, the concept has been subjected to a multiplicity of interpretations. For instance, concepts like environmental civil rights (Hartely, 1995), environmental ethics(Singer,1988, Thero,1995), environmental racism (Fisher, 1995, Hartely, 1995, Bullard, 2013), toxic colonialism (Bullard, 2003), and even environmental blackmail (Bullard, 1990) have been applied. The following concepts were also examined;

1. **Niger Delta Region (NDR):** The Niger Delta Region is made up of an intricate network of distributaries and creeks, which empty into the Atlantic ocean at the Southeastern coast of Nigeria and its both lands and offshore zone are the centers of petroleum production in Nigeria According to Ikporukpo (2001) the Niger Delta Region is the largest area of wetland in Africa and is indeed one of the world's largest. In his words: with a land area of about 70,000km² and population of about 7 million, the region accounts for about 7.5% of the country's landmass. He added that the region has the following ecological zones: the coast in land, the Sandy barrier island, Mangrove swamp forest zone, Fresh water swamp zone and the low land rain forest zone. The diverse ecological setting in the region provides varied opportunities for resource use and development. According to Ikporukpo (2011) the fish, soil and forest resources have been the basis of human livelihood and development hence, fishing is the main occupation in the coastal sandy barrier and mangrove swamp zones. Preboye (2005) argued that the term Niger Delta has been over politicized and extended beyond the cove delta for selfish and political reasons. In his words: states in the actual Niger Delta region include the present day Rivers State, Bayelsa State, Delta State and parts of Ondo, Akwa Ibom and Cross Rivers States respectively. Within the context of this paper, the Niger Delta region refers to the nine (9) states listed in the Niger Delta Development Commission Act 2000. The states are Abia State, Bayelsa State, Cross River State, Delta State, Ondo State, Edo State, Imo State, Akwa Ibom and Rivers States respectively.

2. **Ogoni Community:** The Ogoni Kingdom is one of many indigenous people in the South-south region of Nigeria. They number about 1.5 million people and live in a 404 square-mile (1,050km²) homeland which they also refer to as Ogoni or Ogoni land. According to Ben Ikari (2016) Ogoni land is divided into six kingdoms, Namely; Babbe, Gokana, Ken-khana, Nyo-khana, Eleme and Tai. The major occupation of the people is fishing and farming. It is important to note that through non-violent protest, Ken Sarowiwa and the Movement for the Survival of Ogoni People (MOSOP) was able to internationalize the Ogoni struggle via a written petition to the United Nations General Assembly which send a fact finding team to Ogoni land between 1990-1993 when the Ogoni Bill of Rights was presented to the general public. However, Ogoni community in this study refers to the four Local Government Areas of Khana, Gokana, Eleme, and Tai respectively.

3. **United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP):** This is an agency of the United Nations charged with the responsibility of protecting the environment and eco-system across the world. Its mandate is to ensure that human actions and activities do not result into environmental degradation and pollution hence, it formulates policies that preserves human life and the human environment and also monitor and ensures compliance among states, individual, institutions, and organizations. Within the context of this study emphasis was placed on the United Nations Environment Programme assessment report on Ogoni community from 2009-2011.

Summary of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) Assessment Report on Ogoni Community

The report which took UNEP scientists three years to produce (2009-2011) includes the following:

- 1) Ensure that all drinking water wells where hydrocarbons were detected are marked and that people are informed of the danger.
- 2) Provide adequate sources of drinking water to those households whose drinking water supply is impacted.
- 3) People in Nsisioken Ogale who has been consuming water with benzene over 900 times the World Health Organization (WHO) guidelines are recorded on a medical registry and their health status assessed and followed-up.
- 4) Initiate a survey of all drinking water, wells around those wells where hydrocarbon were observed and arrange measures as appropriate based on the results.
- 5) Post signs around all the sites identified as having contamination exceeding intervention values warning the community not to walk through or engage in any other activities ant these sites.
- 6) Post signs in areas where hydrocarbon were observed on surface water warning people not to fish, swim or bath in these areas.
- 7) Inform all families whose rain water samples tested positive for hydrocarbons and advise them not to consume the water.
- 8) Mount a public awareness campaign to warn the individuals who are undertaking artisanal refining that such activity are damaging their health.

Operational Recommendations

1. Immediate steps should be taken to prevent existing contaminated sites from being secondary sources of ongoing contamination while further risk assessment and investigations are undertaken for detailed planning of the cleanup of Ogoni land during a recommended transition phase.
2. All sources of ongoing contamination, including the artisanal refining which is currently ongoing in the creeks, must be brought to a swift end before the cleanup of the creeks, sediments and mangrove can begin.

Recommendations for Public Health

Everyone who has consumed water from contaminated sources should be requested to undertake a comprehensive medical examination by physicians knowledgeable about the possible adverse health effects of the hydrocarbons detected.

Recommendations for Government

The report recommends that the government of Nigeria establishes an Ogoni-land Environmental Restoration Authority to oversee implementation of this study's recommendations.

Recommendations for Oil Industry Operators

SPDC Procedures for oil spill cleanup and remediation need to be fully reviewed and over hauled so as to achieve the desired level of environmental restoration. In addition to procedures and cleanup methods, contracting and supervision also needs to be improved.

Evidence of Environmental Degradation and Pollution in Ogoni Community

This section of the paper examined the works and opinions of scholars including materials derived from secondary sources hence, tables, graphs and pictures will be presented and analyzed descriptively through content analysis which Babbie (1981) described as a form of descriptive research method. While x-raying the United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP) Assessment report on Ogoni land and expressing the need for a general cleanup of the Niger Delta environment, Ledum Mitee (2011) in a report captioned “oil spills in Ogoni: The big cover-up by Shell”, published in the Newswatch Magazine stated that the Ogoni people are disappointed that the federal government of Nigeria was not taking urgent action on the UNEP report. In his words: “people are dying every day as a result of that pollution and the government is saying it is going to study the report. When a similar incident happened in the Gulf of Mexico in the United States in 2010, President Barack Obama was there at least two or three times, and liaised with the British Petroleum Company to beat its management into compliance with the regulations. While affirming that fact that environmental pollution abound in the Niger Delta region, Ikporukpo (2011) noted that the degree of pollution has been scandalously high in the Niger Delta region because of negligence by the oil companies hence, citing Sarowiwa 1992, he added that “the pollution is a machination by the oil companies to exterminate the people of the Niger Delta region, especially the Ogoni. In other words, it is an “ecological war' of environmental strangulation”. Holding the oil companies accountable for environmental pollution in the Niger Delta region Sarowiwa 1992:81 cited in Ikporukpo (2011) stated thus:

Shell must bear full responsibility for the genocide of the Ogoni, which is going on even now. The record of the company in environmental issues in Nigeria has been most appalling. When Chevron began to prospect for oil in Ogoni twelve years ago in 1980, it had the example of Shell to go by. The most notorious action of both companies has been the flaring of gas sometimes in the middle of villages... or very close to human habitation.... next to the flaring of gas comes the frequency of oil spills.

The activities of oil companies with respect to gas flaring in the Niger Delta are clearly expressed in the table below.

Table 1: Showing Flaring of Natural Gas in Major Oil Producing Countries (% of Gross Production in 1991)

COUNTRY	% FLARED
USA	0.6
Holland	0.0
Britain	4.3
EX USSR	1.5
Mexico	5.1
OPEC COUNTRIES	
Nigeria	76.0
Libya	21.0
Saudi Arabia	20.0
Iran	19.0
Algeria	4.0
Opec Total	18.0
World Total	4.8

Source: Adapted from Defining an Environmental Development Strategy For the Niger Delta (vol.1, World Bank Report, 1995:59).

The dangers inherent in the activities of oil multinational corporations in the Niger Delta region was re-echoed by the Nigerian government in its National Development Plan document which stated that:

Oil spillage, environmental pollution and other related hazards have begin to constitute very serious danger to the safety and security of life and property of the inhabitants of oil producing areas. There has also been serious disruption of economic life in some cases especially in erstwhile agricultural and fishing areas as a direct result of oil production activities. Problems caused include massive destruction of fishes through oil poisoning abandonment of farm land where oil production is being undertaken, loss of soil fertility especially in areas affected by oil spillage, etc.(Federal Republic of Nigeria 1981: 129).

The table below further illustrates the dangers caused by the activities and operations of multinational oil companies in the Niger Delta.

Table 2: Showing oil activities and their impact on the Environment of Niger Delta

Activities/Event	Activities/Event
Exploration including geological survey, and geophysical investigations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Destruction of forest land, vegetation and farm land as well as human settlement. - Noise pollution and vibration from seismic shooting - Adverse effects on animals and human - Population (onshore) and on fisheries (new/offshore). - Disturbances/destruction of flora and fauna habitats. - Dislocation of economic activity. - Tension on social environment as a result of disagreement arising from compensation.
Product/process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Water pollution from long term effects of produced water (with high salinity). - Air pollution from gas and processing evaporation and flaring. - Production of heat that kills vegetation of the area-suppresses the growth and - Flowering of plants and reduces agricultural productivities and wild life concentration in the area.
Drilling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Accumulation of toxic materials, oil pollution in the sea, beaches or land. - Destruction of fisheries production. - Destruction of breeding ground for marine fisheries - Alteration of the taste of fish - Killing of bottom dwellers. - Pollution of underground water (waste pots). - Adverse health effects on humans. - Social tension arising from compensation disagreements, etc.
Refining	Air pollution and waste water impacting negatively on human health and ecosystem.
Oil Spillage	Destruction of farm land, fishery and aquatic resources and mangrove ecosystem; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Water pollution - Social tension as a result of disagreement over compensation.

Tanker loading location	Water pollution from ballast and tank washing. - Deck drainage, spillage during loading operation.
Storage depot	- Land pollution from effluent water and solid and solid waste of chemical cans, drums etc. - Destruction of farm land for the establishment of storage depots. - Water pollution from effluent water. - Air pollution from gaseous fumes during loading.
Transportation	Disruption of sea-bed by dredging for pipeline installation. - Sedimentation along pipeline routes. - Water pollution from consequences of leaks from fracturing or breaking pipes. - Air pollution by transport tankers. - Destruction of environmentally sensitive area. - Erosion and floating of the area exposed to activity.
Marketing	- Pollution of immediate environments from retail routs. - High harzard potential where located near residential building.

Source: Adapted from Okoli, AL Chukwuma (2013).

Citing Ibeanu and Luckham, (2006) Okoli (2013) argued that apart from the issue of environmental abuse, the activities of oil multinationals have brought untold degree of impoverishment and livelihood crisis to the people of Niger Delta. He maintained that rather than bring prosperity to the region, oil exploration from the data above have caused large scale environmental degradation, destroyed rural livelihoods, and aggravated poverty as reflected in the table below.

Table 3: The Niger Delta Human Poverty index for 2005

S/No	STATE	Probability Birth of Not Surviving to Age 40	Adult literacy Rate	Unweighed Average	HPI-I
1	Abia	26	26	34	29.169
2	Akwa-Ibom	27	28	35.5	30.649
3	Bayelsa	30	31	39	33.826
4	Cross River	26	28	33	29.3
5	Delta	20	18	27	22.355
6	Edo	22	18	28	23.399
7	Imo	25	29	32	28.949
8	Ondo	30	31	42.5	35.442
9	Rivers	24	24	30.5	26.53
10	Niger Delta	25.556	25.889	33.4	28.847

Source: Adapted from Okoli, AL Chukwuma (2013:pp.72)

The foregoing analysis clearly indicate that the impoverishment of the people of the Niger Delta has been worsened by social and political deprivation and marginalization hence, according to a report by the foundation for partnership initiatives in the Niger Delta (PIND) cited in Okoli 2013:

The population of the Niger Delta region is young with nearly two-thirds of its population estimated at 29 million below 30 years of age. Despite vast oil resources, the Delta region is characterized by extremely high poverty levels. 70 percent of youths in the region live below the poverty line. The youth (15-24 years) unemployment rate is 40 percent, far exceeding the national average youth unemployment rate is 14 percent. Youth unemployment and under-employment has ultimately become both a driver of conflict and a formidable obstacle for peace and regional development (PIND, 2011).

This clearly affirms that there has been high incidence of state violence and corporate irresponsibility on the part of the Nigerian state and her unholy allies, the oil multinationals. According to Okoli (2013), all these have gone with far reaching consequences on the land and people of the Niger Delta. The figures and pictures below further revealed cases of environmental injustice in Ogoni community and the Niger Delta region in general.

Figure 1: Showing contaminated sites in K-Dere Community.



UNEP officials at the site of an oil blow-out in Ogoni

Source: Adapted from Kalama, 2012

Figure 2: Showing UNEP Officials on a guided tour of oil contaminated Communities in Ogoni land.



UNEP scientists on a guided tour of a contaminated site in Ogoniland

Source: Adapted from Kalama, 2012

In view of the above analysis, Ugochukwu (2014) posited that apart from militancy and communal crisis, about 17,302,419 persons had died in the oil-rich Niger Delta region from 2000-2006. Citing a 2006 Federal Ministry of Health record, he reiterated that these deaths were recorded as resulting from 14 diseases including Onchocerciasis (fever blindness). In his words; “The other epidemics like cholera, tripanomiasis (skin diseases), Diarrhea (dysentery and with blood) Typhoid, food poisoning, tuberculosis etc. are largely as a result of oil exploratory and pollution in the region.” It is therefore pertinent to add that the activities of oil companies in Ogoni community and the Niger Delta region have socio-economic and political implications on the environment and the people hence, concerted efforts should be made by all the stake holders to address the issues as highlighted in this paper.

Concluding Remarks and Recommendations

This study examined the problems associated with oil exploration and exploitation in Ogoni community and the Niger Delta region in general. As Adeyemo (2008), puts it, oil pollution causes serious damages to life and property as well as to soil and vegetation, and in the seas and rivers, a lot of damage is done to marine lives and organisms. Where rivers are source of drinking, such river becomes unfit and unsafe for drinking and consequently put lives of inhabitants to danger. Gurr (1994), posits that when people (minorities) are excluded and alienated from the socio-economic and political sphere, the tendency for compliance and obedience to societal rules and norms will be very insignificant (low). Thus, the analysis has shown that the Ogoni people and the entire Niger Delta Region still suffer from environmental and economic threats to their survival; this explains why militancy has continued despite the proclamation and implementation of the amnesty policy. Also from the study, it shows that delay in the implementation of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) Assessment report on Ogoni community and coupled with the unethical practices of oil companies has helped to promote distrusts, insecurity and violence in the Niger Delta region which has frustrated and trapped the youths into criminality. However, to achieve sustainable peace and development in the Niger Delta region, greater collaboration between the federal government of Nigeria, the multinational oil companies and all stake holders is

required in the fight against environmental degradation, population and the general clean up Ogoni community as specified in the UNEP report.

Considering the neglect of other sectors of the economy which resulted to the strain and over dependence on oil, the Nigerian government should as a matter of urgency diversify Nigeria's economy in order to embrace agriculture and other sectors which will in turn eradicate poverty and ensure sustainable growth and development in the oil rich region. There is also need to review and re-examine laws and policies that give undue advantage to multinational oil companies in order to ensure equality, justice and fairness. In this regard, the national assembly (House of Representatives and Senate) should facilitate and give accelerated hearing to the Petroleum Industry Bill and others that will ensure environmental justice, peace, sustainable growth and development in the Niger Delta region. In addition, the issue of environmental justice should be given priority attention by regulatory agencies in Nigeria hence, multinational oil companies in the oil and gas sector in Nigeria should be compelled to pay adequate and appropriate compensation and repair of damaged oil installation facilities in Ogoni land and the Niger Delta in general.

Conclusively, the paper argues that there is urgent need to check the activities of oil multinational companies and the negative implications of oil exploration and pollution on human environment and health. In the same vein, the paper further recommends the need to also consider the use of biological remediation to detoxify and restore damaged ecosystem since pollution and other related issues can never be divorced from exploration and production of crude oil.

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