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ENVIRONMENTAL POLLUTION AND DEGRADATION IN NIGERIA: A LEGAL APPROACH

By

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Abstract

Nigeria has a total land area of 983,213 km^2 occupied by about 200 million people. The interaction of these millions of people with their environment has left indelible mark on the landscape. Urbanization, deforestation, desertification, over population and all kinds of pollution are some of the resultant effects of man's interaction with his environment. These changes occur as the people attempt to acquire their seemingly endless desire for food, shelter, recreation and infrastructural facilities. Environmental Pollution and degradation are the most serious of all environmental problems, and poses a major threat to the health and well-being of millions of people and the global ecosystem. This article looks at the meaning of pollution and degradation to the environment, the causes of Environmental Pollution, the legal reliefs stating out the environmental Laws that protect the environment in Nigeria. The paper further recommends ways to avoid Pollution and concludes that Environmental Pollution and Degradation cannot be avoided rather it can be minimized.

Keywords: Environment, Pollution, Protection, Oil and Gas, Pollutants, Oil Spill, Environmental Degradation,

Introduction

Generally, the environment is used to refer to our surroundings.[1] It is in the above general sense that Environment is conceived in this Paper. There are several definitions of Environmental pollution. Environmental pollution is the addition of any substance (solid, liquid, or gas) or any form of energy (such as heat, sound, or radioactivity) to the environment at a rate faster than it can be dispersed, diluted, decomposed, recycled, or stored in some harmless form. [2] The major kinds of pollution, usually classified by environment, are air pollution, water pollution, and land pollution. Modern society is also concerned about specific types of pollutants, such as noise pollution, light pollution, and plastic pollution.[3]

Pollution can also be defined as the direct or indirect contamination of the environment as a result of human activity, of substances, vibrations, heat or noise into the air, water or land which may be harmful to human health or the quality of the environment, result in damage to material property, or impair or interfere with amenities and other legitimate uses of the environment.[4] Pollution can also be seen as the introduction of contaminants into the natural environment that causes adverse change[5]. The contamination is usually understood to be of an unwanted constituent, contaminant or impurity in a natural environment. They can come in the form of biological, chemical, physical or radiological substance.

Environmental pollution has existed for centuries but only started to be significant following the industrial revolution in the 19th century. Pollution occurs when the natural environment cannot destroy an element without creating harm or damage to itself. The elements involved are not produced by nature,

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[1] O Fagbohun, *The Law of Oil Pollution* (Odade Publishers, 20I0) 41.

[2] J A Nathanson**,** <https://www.britannica.com/science/pollution-environment> accessed 30 January 2023.

[3] (n2)

[4] A Farmer, *Managing Environmental Pollution* (1997) 3.

[5] Merriam Webster Collegiate, (10th Edition 1999 Springfield).

and the destroying process can vary from a few days to thousands of years (that is, for instance, the case for radioactive pollutants). In other words, pollution takes place when nature does not know how to decompose an element that has been brought to it in an unnatural way.[6]

Also, Pollution has further been defined by the National Environmental Standards and Regulations Enforcement Agency (Establishment) Act 2007,[7] as man-made or man-aided alteration of chemical, physical, or biological quality of the environment beyond acceptable limits and "pollutants" shall be construed accordingly.[8] Pollution is defined as the introduction into the environment of substances harmful to humans and other living organisms. Pollution includes contaminants in the air, in water, or on land. Natural environments and human health can be negatively affected by pollutants released during energy production and use depending on the level of chemicals or pollutants released.[9] The most common forms of oil and gas pollution are air and water pollution, which can occur at any stage of production or use. Oil and natural gas do not produce the same kind of pollutants, and some of these pollutants can be more toxic than others.[10] Pollutants are harmful solids, liquids, or gases produced in higher than usual concentrations that reduce the quality of our environment.[11] Some forms of pollution from the oil and gas industry include;

a. **Water Pollution**: Conventional and unconventional oil and gas production generates a large volume of wastewater, including produced water. This is usually contaminated with toxic chemicals and heavy metals. It is often disposed of in storage pits, which in some jurisdictions must be lined. These pits can emit air pollution, including benzene (a carcinogen), hydrogen sulphide and volatile organic compounds harmful to cardiovascular health and to local ecosystems. Wastewater is also disposed of in injection wells drilled into porous rock (such as sandstone or limestone), which should be isolated from sources of drinking water. In some locations, wastewater is applied to fields, spread on roads or treated for reuse by drilling companies. Wastewater and other liquid waste from oil and gas production can overflow from pits after rainfall, polluting soil and surface water, or can seep into the ground from unlined pits, torn lining materials or poorly installed liners. This can affect vegetation, soil stability and groundwater, with potential consequences for human and animal health.[12]

b. **Air Pollution:** Air pollutants result from burning oil and natural gas. In addition, pollutants can leak out of storage tanks during oil and gas production and distribution. Different kinds of oil emit different amounts of a pollutant depending on the oil's content. Natural gas is composed primarily of methane a colorless, odorless, nontoxic, and flammable gas that is the main component of natural gas. Methane can also leak from storage tanks.[13] Other air pollutants released by oil and natural gas include the Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs) such as benzene, formaldehyde, and other toxic substances. They combine with nitrogen oxides to create ground-level ozone, commonly known as smog. Hydrogen sulphide (H_2S) released by flaring and venting diesel fuel or natural gas, Polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs) are found in oil and gas formations and are produced when they are burned and particulate matter (PM) released by dust, exhaust, and other air emissions.[14]

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[6] Conserve Energy Future, 'Causes, Effects and Wonderful Solutions to Environmental Pollution' <https://www.conserve-energy-future.com/causes-and-effects-of-environmental-pollution.php> accessed 16 August 2023.
[7] NESREA ACT, 2007
[8](n7), s 37, Interpretation Section.
[9]Ballotpedia, 'Oil and Natural Gas Pollution' <https://ballotpedia.org/Oil_and_natural_gas_pollution> accessed 10 February 2023.
[10]*Ibid.*
[11] I. Manisalidis and others, 'Environmental and Health Impacts of Air Pollution: A Review' (2020) (8) *Journal of Environmental Health and Exposome*; 1.
[12] A Scott and S Pickard, 'FAQ 3: Oil and Gas, Poverty, the Environment and Human Rights' <https://odi.org/en/about/our-work/climate-and-sustainability/faq-3-oil-and-gas-poverty-the-environment-and-human-rights/> assessed 5 February 2023.
[13] (n 9).
[14](n9)

Air pollution has various health effects. The health of susceptible and sensitive individuals can be impacted even on low air pollution days. Short-term exposure to air pollutants is closely related to COPD (Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease), cough, shortness of breath, wheezing, asthma, respiratory disease, and high rates of hospitalization (a measurement of morbidity). The long-term effects associated with air pollution are chronic asthma, pulmonary insufficiency, cardiovascular diseases, and cardiovascular mortality. According to a Swedish cohort study, diabetes seems to be induced after long-term air pollution exposure.[15] Moreover, air pollution seems to have various malignant health effects in early human life, such as respiratory, cardiovascular, mental, and perinatal disorders leading to infant mortality or chronic disease in adult age including cancer.[16]

c. **Land Pollution:** Oil spills on land can occur via pipeline leaks, railroad accidents, poor oil storage, natural seeping into land or soil, poor working practices, drilling accidents, and more. Inland oil spills can prevent water from being absorbed by the soil, and spills near agricultural operations or grassland can harm plant life and ecosystems. Cleaning up inland spills can depend on the kinds of soil affected, the geology of the area, the presence of groundwater sources, and how deep they are and access to the areas affected by the spill. Responses to these spills involve preventing the oil from contaminating groundwater sources or running off into surface waters like rivers and streams.[17]

Environmental Pollution must be taken seriously, as it has a negative effect on natural elements that are an absolute need for life to exist on earth, such as water and air. Indeed, without it, or if they were present on different quantities, animals including humans and plants could not survive.[18]

Causes of Environmental Degradation /Pollution

A lot of factors are responsible for environmental pollution which can be attributed to advancement in technology, civilization and economic oriented activities. They are as follows:

1. **Oil Pollution**

Discharge of spills of oil can have serious effects on marine systems. Routine discharge from tankers carrying oil or pipeline vandalization can contribute to chronic levels of oil pollution in coastal waters, occasionally be severe enough to form oily patch that can smother or poison marine life and form tar balls and other residues on beaches and other areas. Significant spills can smother marine fauna and flora in affected areas, become entrained in sediments poisoning benthic life, affect shallow reefs, and blanket lagoons, intertidal areas, and valuable beaches. Spills of refined products near marine habitat areas such as coral reefs and wetlands can have extremely toxic effects on marine life.

Offshore oil and gas exploration results in the discharge of drilling fluids(muds), cuttings, and formation waters that can affect marine life especially in productive benthic habitat areas.[19]Oil Bunkering and oil theft is a major oil pollution channel on the Land and sea.[20]

2. **Industrial Pollution**

Industrial wastes are disposed into the marine environment thereby causing pollution. Industrial effluents released into the marine environment are problematic particularly when they exceed the natural

[15]I C Eze and others, 'Long Term Air Pollution Exposure and Diabetes in a Population-Based Swiss Cohort' [2014] *Environment International*; 70.

[16] R Kelishadi and P Poursafa, 'Air Pollution and Non-Respiratory Health Hazards for Children' (2010) (6) *Archives of Medical Science*; 483–95

[17] (n16)

[18] (n 3).

[19] UNEP Regional Seas Reports and Studies No. 12(1982) Environmental Problems of East African Region

[20]Alexandra Gillies, *Corruption and Reform in Nigeria's oil sector* (University of Cambridge, 2002).

carrying capacity of receiving waters or when they contain toxic substances, especially those which are persistent and tend to accumulate in marine habitat or coastal areas.[21]

3. Pollution from Domestic Sources

In terms of marine pollution, domestic sewage mainly contributes organic substances in dissolved and suspended form plus nitrogenous compounds, phosphates and some other inorganic salts. The major problem stemming from sewage discharge and excreta disposal along the coastline are the bacteriological constituents. Due to the very close vicinity of discharge points and coastal recreational or shell fish areas, pathogens are in short circuit back to the human target via the coastal environment. Endemic prevalence of infectious disease with regularly occurring epidemic outbreaks are the result of this situation. It is considered as one of the major public health problems of the region than as a contributor to marine pollution of any significance.[22]

4. Agrochemical Pollution

Any chemical used in large quantities on agricultural fields are partially subject to wash out and transport with surface run-off during rainy season. This process is further accelerated by soil erosion. Fertilizers are in principle following the same pattern. Their chemical nature however corresponds to the usual soil constituents. Their wash outs lead, therefore, only to an increase in concentration of certain minerals salts particularly nitrogenous and phosphorous compounds. Their impact on the coastal water is similar to domestic sewage as they are both stimulating eutrophication of estuarine and lagoon waters. [23]

5. Industries

Industries have been polluting our environment especially since the beginning of the industrial revolution, notably due to the increasing use of fossil fuels. In the 19th century and for a significant part of the 20th century, coal has been used to make machines work faster, replacing human force. Though pollution by industries mainly causes air pollution, soil and water contamination can also occur. This is particularly the case for power-generating industries, such as plants producing electricity (May they be a dam, a nuclear reactor or some other type of plant). Water pollution is a major issue as many industries dump wastes into rivers, lakes, ponds, and streams.[24] These water sources feed major crops and food becomes contaminated with a variety of chemicals and bacteria, causing rampant health problems.[25]

6. Transportation

Ever since men abandoned animal power to travel, pollution of the environment has become higher and higher. Its levels have only been increasing until now. Similarly, to industries pollution caused by transport can mainly be attributed to fossil fuels. Indeed, humans went from horse carriages to cars, trains (which, before electricity, used to be propelled by coal), and airplanes. As the traffic is increasing every day, pollution follows that evolution[26]. Pollution from cars, trucks, and other vehicles is and has been our major environmental pollution issue for almost a century now. The problem is we did not realize this until the problem had manifested to monumental proportions.[27] We can take as an example the transportation of petrol through pipelines; if there is a leak in the pipeline, the environment will automatically be polluted. At the same time, if the tanker transporting the petrol from its production plant to the place where it will be consumed leaks or sinks, the water will get contaminated.[28]

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[21] *Ibid.*
[22] (n 20).
[23] (n 20).
[24] T E Higgins, *Pollution Prevention Handbook* (CRC Press, 1995).
[25] Earth Eclipse, Causes, Effects and Solutions to Environmental Pollution<https://www.eartheclipse.com/environment/causes-effects-solutions-to-environmental-pollution.html> accessed on 12 March 2023.
[26] (n 20).
[27] (n 25).
[28] (n 25).

7. **Agricultural and Increase in Population**

Agriculture is mainly responsible for the contamination of water and soil. This is caused by the increased use of pesticides, as well as by the intensive character of its production. Almost all pesticides are made from chemical substances and are meant to keep diseases and threatening animals away from the crops. However, by keeping these forms of life away, harm is almost always made to the surrounding environment as well. Furthermore, as agriculture gets more and more intensive to feed the increasing world population, more environments and ecosystems are destroyed to make space for the crops. Some of them, like rapeseed used to make oil demand a lot of space for a relatively small output.[29]

According to a study by UNEP GLOBAL, environment outlook, excessive human consumption of the naturally accruing non-renewable resources can out strip available resources in the near future and remarkably destroys the environment during extraction and utilization. Over population simply means more pollution and fast extraction of natural resources compared to how they are being replaced.[30]

8. **Trading Activities**

Trading activities including the production and exchange of goods and services. Concerning goods, pollution can be caused by packaging (which often involves the use of plastic, which is made from fossil fuels) or transport, mainly.[31]

9. **Noise Pollution**

This involves noises generated from road ways, industries, air craft and other allied generators, which constitutes excessive noise that ends up polluting the quietness of the environment.[32]

10. **Abandonment of Oil Wells**

Another aspect of oil exploration that has affected the environment is the abandonment of an oil field after the oil has been drilled without any definite effort to restore it to its status quo ante as much as may be practicable.[33] The case of Oloibiri in Bayelsa state which has been abandoned for over Sixty (60) Years is a case in hand.[34]

11. **Production Activities**

Most products we have such as leather, furniture, paper etc. are all produced from raw materials extracted from the natural environment. Tree falling, deforestation activities, animal hunting have led to tremendous degradation of the environment by altering their natural states. Today, excessive rainfalls, flooding, extinction of animals have been linked to these activities which has threatened the environment and its inhabitants.[35]

12. **Land Fills**

One of the calamitous effects of landfills is the destruction of nearby environmental health together with the ecosystem. The landfills discharge various kinds of chemicals on the land adjacent to forest various natural habitat, and water system such as underground surface water which makes the environment unappealing to the survival. of trees vegetation, animal and humans. It even interferes with the animal's interactive food chain because the chemicals contaminate plants and waters which are consumed by animals. Besides the foul smell from the landfills and periodic burning of the wastes makes living unbearable.[36]

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[29] (n 25).
[30] (n 25).
[31] (n 25).
[32] (n 25).
[33] Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection<https//www.dep.state.pa.us> accessed 20 April 2023.
[34] Vanguard News< https://www.vanguardngr.com> Accessed 14 March 2018.
[35] (n 25).
[36] (n 25).

13. **Improper Land Use Planning and Development**

The unplanned conversion of lands into urban settings, mining areas, housing development projects, office spaces, shopping malls, industrial sites, parking areas, road networks, and so on leads to environmental pollution and degradation of natural habitats and ecosystems. Mining and oil exploration, for instance, renders land unusable for habitation and causes other forms of environmental degradation by releasing toxic materials into the environment. Improper land use has led to the loss and destruction of millions of acres of natural environments across the globe.[37]

14. **Heat Wave**

Urban heat island is a direct cause of the unprecedented construction activities that are being carried out right now, and urban heat island causes trapping of pollutants. Urban heat island is an effect caused due to trapping of solar radiation by concrete and cement which are materials which trap heat very well. This heat island effect caused constructed circulation of air, which trap pollutant released in urban areas and does not allow for the mixing of the air, thus decreasing the air quality. Cities or metropolitan areas are typically warmer with slightly higher temperatures compared to their adjacent rural areas. This temperature difference is due to the unusual state known as the urban heat island (UHI).[38]

Some Common Pollutants:

1. **Ammonia:** Ammonia is produced from a few industrial processes, but by far the biggest source in agriculture. The increasing use of fertilizer has caused a large increase in emissions. Emissions occur from the fields where excess nitrogen fertilizers are applied. It is also a cause of nitrate ingress into ground waters and is a serious water pollution.[39]

2. **Carbon Monoxide:** Combustion of the carbon in fossil fuels lead to the production of large quantities of carbon dioxide (a greenhouse gas). Partial oxidation of carbon can lead to the production of carbon monoxide, which is toxic to humans.[40]

3. **Heavy Metals:** A large number of metals are toxic to plants and animals. The most publicized heavy emissions are those of lead in motor vehicle exhausts where the lead is specifically added to petrol as an anti-knocking agent. The metals of most concern are arsenic, cadmium, cobalt, copper, chromium, iron, lead, manganese, mercury, nickel, silver, tin, titanium, vanadium, and zinc. However, it is arguable that more extensive impacts do occur in fresh water and marine eco systems.[41]

4. **Nitrogen Oxide:** Nitrogen Oxides are produced by the combustion of all fuels, from coal and gas fired stations to motor vehicles, Some Nitrogen can come from fuel itself.[42]

5. **Particulate Matters:** The term particulate covers a wide range of pollutants, ranging from visible dusts that might act as a neighbourhood nuisance, to very small particles that may cause considerable health problems. Dust may be defined as solid matter that is small enough to be raised and carried by the wind. A number of industrial sources produce dusts. For example, quarrying and from unpaved roads and soot.[43]

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[37]Earth eclipse, what are Causes and Effects of Environmental Degradation? <artheclipse.com/environment/causes-and-effects-environmental-degradation.html>accessed 25 June 2023

[38]Conserve -Energy- Future, Causes, Effects and Solutions to Urban Heat Island <https://www.conserve-energy-future.com/effects-solutions-urban-heat-island.php>Accessed 14th March 2023.

[39] Alexandra Gillies, *Corruption and Reform in Nigeria's oil sector* (University of Cambridge, 2002).

[40]*Ibid*

[41] (n 26).

[42]*Ibid.*

[43] Alexandra Gillies, *Corruption and Reform in Nigeria's oil sector* (University of Cambridge, 2002).

6. **Pathogens in Fresh Water:** The discharge of untreated or poorly treated sewage from both human and animal sources can lead to fresh waters contamination, containing a wide variety of human pathogens, and these can pose serious problems to human health. These organisms can range from viral diseases such as hepatitis, bacterial infections to protozoans such as Entamoeba, and can also include parasitic worms such as tapeworms and Schistosoma.[44]

7. **Organic Pollution:** The discharge of plant and animal materials (Organic pollution), which provides a carbon source for the growth of microorganism and higher plants and animals can be a serious pollution problem. The measure of organic pollution is the 'biological oxygen demand (BOD) of the water. The more material available for decay, the higher the oxygen use by the microorganisms and hence the higher the BOD.[45].

Legal Framework

The Nigerian constitution and other subsidiary legislations make fundamental provision for environmental protection and clearly identifies important components of environment.

1. **The Nigerian Constitution**[46]

The Constitution as the national legal order, recognizes the importance of improving and protecting the environment and makes provision for it. Relevant sections are:

a. *Makes it an objective of the Nigerian State to improve and protect the air, land, water, forest and wildlife of Nigeria.*[47]
b. *No treaty between the Federation and any other Country shall have the force of law to the extent to which any such treaty has been enacted into law by the National Assembly*. Establishes, though impliedly, that international treaties (including environmental treaties) ratified by the National Assembly should be implemented as law in Nigeria.[48]
c. Which guarantee fundamental human rights to life and human dignity respectively, have also being argued to be linked to the need for a healthy and safe environment to give these rights effect.[49]

2. **National Enforcement Standards and Regulation Enforcement Agency Act (NESREA) 2007**

The Act establishes the National Environmental Standards and Regulation Enforcement Agency and it is currently the major federal body charged with the protection of Nigeria's environment. NESREA was created to replace the defunct Federal Environmental Protection Agency (FEPA). The Act states that the Agency is authorised to enforce compliance with laws, guidelines, policies and standards of environmental matters.[50] Its authority extends to the enforcement of environmental guidelines and policies, such as the National Policy on the Environment, 1999. But as a flagship Act it should not have excluded or removed oil and gas from its purvey.[51]

3. **Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC) Act 2000**

The Act[52] empowers the agency to take environmental problems arising from the exploration of minerals in the Niger Delta which includes oil spill. To advise the Federal Government and state Government on the prevention and control in tackling environmental pollution, control and management.

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[44] (n43)
[45] (n43*)*
[46]The Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria 1999 (As amended).
[47]*Ibid*, s 20.
[48]The Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria 1999 (As amended),s 12 (1).
[49] (n 46), s 33 and 34.
[50]NESREA Act 2007, s 7(a)
[51]*Ibid* , s7 (c).
[52]NDDC Act, Cap N84 LFN 2004, s 7.

4. National Oil Spill Detection and Response Agency Act 2006

National Oil Spill Detection and Response Agency (NOSDRA) Act is another legislation which, regulates issues of oil pollution, its management, responses, remediation, and clean-up operations in Nigeria.

The Act provides for the establishment of the National Oil Spill Detection and Response Agency and for other related matters.[53] Accordingly, s l (1) of the Act which is the establishment section provides thus:

> There is established an agency to be known as the National Oil Spill Detection and Response Agency (in this Act referred and to as the agency') with responsibility for preparedness, detection and response to all oil spillages in Nigeria.[54]

From the above provision of section 1 (1) of the Act, it is clearer that the fulcrum of the entire Act is to establish an agency and position it in such a way that the agency will be prepared to detect and response to all oil Pollution and spillages in Nigeria.[55] Accordingly, the Agency[56]created by the Act in adherence to the implementation of the stipulations of the 1990 Convention on Oil Pollution Preparedness, Response and Co-operation. Therefore, it appears that the Act is solely concerned with the detection, remediation, clean-up and management of all incidents of oil spillages in Nigeria. Among others, NOSDRA is statutorily charged with the following core duties:

a) To be responsible for surveillance and ensure compliance with all existing environmental legislation and the detection of oil spills in the petroleum sector.
b) Receive reports of oil spillage and coordinate oil spill response activities throughout Nigeria etc.[57]

Further, in accordance with the provisions of the Act, oil spillers are duty bound to report any incident of oil spillage to the Agency in writing not later than 24hours after its occurrence and failure to report same attracts penalty of Five Hundred Thousand, Naira (N500,000.00) only for each day the incident of the spillage is not reported.

Reckoning from the day of its occurrence.[58] Similarly, failure of an oil spiller to clean- up-the 'impacted site to all practical extent including remediation attracts a further fine of One Million Naira (Nl, 000,000.00).[59]From, the above, it appears that with respect to the protection of the environment from oil spillage and pollution, the agency is statutorily positioned to punish spillers, protect the environment and also to collaborate with other sister institutions in the event of disastrous spills.[60] However, in the exercise of the powers conferred on the Agency by virtue or s. 26 of the NOSDRA Act and all other powers enabling it in that behalf, the Agency accordingly made two (2) Regulations which simultaneously came into effect on the, 26th day of May 2011. While the Act only imposed fine against defaulters (spillers) by way of penalties, the Regulations made provisions for penalties as well as payment of compensation to victims of oil spillage in certain instances.

5. The Nigerian Minerals and Mining Act 2011

The Act clearly states that the holder of a Mineral title shall. In exercise of his rights under the mineral title, have regard to the effect of the mining operations on the Environment and take such steps as may be necessary to prevent pollution of the environment resulting from the mining operations.[61]

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[53]Long Title of the NOSDRA Act.
[54]NOSDRA Act 2006, s 5.
[55]*Ibid.*
[56]*Ibid*, s 1(1).
[57]*Ibid*ss 6(1), (c), (d), (e), (2), (3), (4) and 7.
[58] (n 54), s 6(2).
[59] (n 54), s 6(3).
[60] (n 54), s 19.
[61]The Nigerian Minerals and Mining Act 2011, s 111.

Conclusion and Recommendation

Environmental Pollution and Degradation can't be avoided. It can be minimized based on present realities. As long as human beings exist in their billions, the environment will be degraded to provide for their needs and shelter and pollution by products will be created. This paper recommends as follows:

1. Agencies like National Environmental Standards and Regulation Enforcement Agency (NESREA) and National Oil spill Detection and Response Agency who are responsible for the protection and sustainable development of the environment and its natural resource should be proactive in dealing with issues of Environmental Pollution and Degradation. For instance, the oil spill incident in the Gulf of Mexico which occurred on the 20th of April 2010, practical steps were taken from April 20thto August 5th 2010 to remediate the environment and pay compensation. Meanwhile, several spills take place daily in the Niger Delta Region of Nigeria and little or nothing has been done about it.
2. **Proper Sewage Treatment**: If we have proper sewage treatment plants in Nigeria, it can reduce and mitigate the causes of Environmental pollution through waste.
3. **Numerous Regulatory Agencies with overlapping functions**: Agencies like NESREA, NOSDRA etc. with overlapping functions should be merged for effectiveness and efficiency.
4. **Poverty**: Government should promote poverty alleviation policies. In order to curtail sabotage and vandalization of pipeline in regions where it is prevalent.
5. **Regulatory Capture**: Industry tools should be provided at when due to the necessary agencies to stop regulatory capture in Nigeria.
6. Government should have the political will and firmness to tackle Companies that will not follow best international practice in Nigeria. Government must stand up to take right decisions without favouritism or nepotism.
7. The government should ensure that waste recycling plants are built in strategic areas of the country in order to reduce pollution.
8. Government at all levels in Nigerians should intentionally fight corruption within its systems.