

Oil Exploitation and Marine Pollution: Evidence from the Niger Delta, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT This study examines two cases of oil spillages and their concomitant impact on the flora and fauna of the Niger Delta region of Nigeria, where much of Nigeria's oil and gas is exploited. It seeks to evaluate how the oil firms and the federal government responded to the despoliation of the environment occasioned by the Texaco/Funiwa-5 oil blow out and the Qua Iboe oil spillage. The study makes use of both primary and secondary sources of information and data to analyze the issues in contention. The findings of the study show that neither Texaco nor Mobil made genuine effort to combat the oil spilled from their various platforms until much harm had been done to the environment. Indeed, the study revealed that Nigerian environmental laws are lax and inadequate. The author suggests the need for government to impose strict liability for environmental degradation. The Nigerian government should go beyond command and control approach to pollution abatement and adopt various economic instruments to combat oil industry-induced environmental pollution. The paper concludes that the oil producing companies in Nigeria should adhere to international best practices in oil exploitation.