Making Policies Work: Between Environmental Policies and Environmental Protection
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By Environmental Rights Action/Friends of the Earth Nigeria and Oilwatch Nigeria

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**Introduction**

The health of the environment is a good indicator of the health of any nation. Governments have a duty to give the environment topmost priority beyond mere political pronouncements. The ravages of pollution, deforestation/desertification, erosion and sundry manifestations of environmental degradation show that much still needs to be done to ensure environmental protection in Nigeria. A wide gap exists between pronouncements and action and this needs to be urgently closed because the vast majority of Nigerians live close to the environment.

There are several institutions with responsibilities for environmental protection, including the National Environmental Standards and Regulation Enforcement Agency (NESREA), established on 30 June 2007 as the main environmental law enforcement agency of the federal government. NESREA's coverage, unfortunately, excludes the oil and gas sector. In this brief, more attention is paid to the oil and gas sector as this is perceived as the sector that has the most negative impact on the Nigerian environment. Subsequent briefs will pay more detailed attention to other sectors.

This briefing paper examines provisions that are supposed to aid a healthy environment in the country and suggests actions that should be taken to ensure that citizens have space to participate in decision-making concerning the environment.

**Background**

Like other peoples, Nigerians see the utilitarian as well as aesthetic nature of their environment. They see the inherent opportunities for meeting their needs through farming, games, fuel and fishing. The environment is indeed the source of diverse resources upon which life is sustained. The process or mode of extraction utilised to meet that end can reverse this life-giving relationship. Thus the environment that gives life can also became a lethal space.

Within the colonial era, regulation of economic activities, considered significant for the realisation of economic interest of the colonizer, for the purpose of protecting the environment was not popular among policy makers. If at all, it was mostly restricted to public health and sanitation. **Today general notion of environmental concerns go little beyond the infamous monthly environmental sanitation exercises and demolitions of alleged illegal structures.**

The question of determining the role played by local communities in this process requires understanding, conceptually, the character of environmental policy making and implementation processes in Nigeria.

The process of creating participatory space for citizens and communities in the process of policy formulation and enforcement is political and can be conflictive as is in case in the oil/gas sector. This can be seen as a characterised by the development of distinctive power relations.

Although there is a wide assortment of views regarding how the policy process proceeds, observers agree that it is dynamic. It is a “complex analytical and political process to which there is no beginning or end, and the boundaries of which are uncertain,” notes Charles Lindblom.¹

Another scholar sees it as a “continual process of identifying problems, formulating governmental responses or policies, organising administrative mechanisms for carrying out the policies, and evaluating the extent to which policy objectives are achieved.”

Protecting the environment has not only become a key policy concern of governments and civil society, it has become a troubling political issue. This is, perhaps why environmental policy makers are prone to framing their responses to environmental issues in terms of priority for economic growth, a situation that almost inevitably negates the objective. This happens both by means of pollution and by near total neglect of the environment in order to impede the machineries of revenue generation.

In many parts of the developing world, as in Nigeria, calculation of cost and benefits of human activities on people and their environment are hardly comprehensive. Exclusion of local communities in the policy process is the result of the priority given to economic growth than to protecting the environment and health of human beings.

**Environmental Regimes and Local Communities**

Two phases of environmental regimes in Nigeria can be distinguished: the era before 1988 and the one after (post-1988). The former, consist of laws, including those formulated by the colonial state, in which protection of the environment from oil exploration and production activities was supposed to be implanted. In this era, there was neither a national policy on environment nor concern for protection of the environment. These regimes took the form of Acts, Decrees, Legislations and Edicts. Although many of them cannot stand alone as environmental laws, they are embedded in other substantive laws or policies that can be invoked for the protection of the environment. The Minerals Act (CAP 121) of 1958, for example, has provisions for measures that must be taken to prevent and regulate pollution of ecosystems. This, to some extent, is admirable, for a colonial government, habitually berated for being insensitive to socio-economic and environmental needs of the colonized.

The Petroleum Act of 1969, amended by Decrees No.16 of 1973, No. 49 of 1976, and No.37 of 1977, has remained a major law. It vests ownership of all petroleum in the state. It also makes provision for protection of pollution of

> Inland waters, rivers, water courses, the territorial waters of Nigeria or the high seas by oil, mud or other fluids or substances which might contaminate the water, banks or shoreline or which might cause harm or destruction to fish, water or marine life and where any such pollution occurs or has occurred, shall take prompt steps to control and if possible, end it.

Full enforcement of this law is currently lacking. This remains an obstacle to protecting the environment from oil pollution.

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The post-1988 era is marked by rules, regulations and standards, beginning from 1989. It is instructive that Nigeria signed most of its international treaties and conventions on environmental issues during this era. For example, Nigeria signed the international Oil Pollution Response Co-operation Convention in 1990. It also formulated the National Oil Spill Contingency Plan in that year, for which the National Oil Spill Detection and Response Agency (NOSDRA) is expected to coordinate its full implementation. Following adoption of the International Convention for the prevention of pollution of the sea by oil in 1954, the Oil in Navigable Waters Act was formulated in 1968.

There has been no substantial progress in the implementation of both the Minerals Act and the Petroleum Act of 1969 especially in the areas of monitoring and control of effluent discharge, oil spill contingency plan, oil spill records and so on. The Editorial of Vanguard newspapers rightly captured this frustration particularly in the area of prevention of oil spills by the government when it said, “if the oil companies were willing to comply with the existing national environmental legislations in their areas of operations, NOSDRA’s challenges would have been minimal.”

Under the Petroleum Act of 1969, powers granted the Minister over rules and regulations for the prevention of oil pollution are underutilised, abused or neglected. The political relationship forged with oil companies, with the result of failure to ensure that gas flaring is put to end, is instructive. Oil companies continue to discharge their waste, such as the associated or produced water, into rivers and seas with impunity. Weak monitoring and punishment of this environmental crime continues because of conflicts in the roles of the Department of Petroleum Resources (DPR) and NOSDRA, for example. With government officials at DPR depend on laboratories and equipment provided by oil companies and NOSDRA depending on facilities of the polluters to access scenes of accidents no credible monitoring and quality control process for the prevention of oil pollution can be achieved.

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7. NOSDRA was established in 2006 by an Act, by the federal government to compel oil companies to protect the environment from oil spills. This role has not been effectively carried out.
National Policy on Environment (NPE)

An international workshop, which held from September 12 to 16, 1988 in Lagos, lead to an end of the pre-1988 era. The workshop introduced the new era by setting the stage for the emergence of an NPE which was previously non-existent. The goals of the NPE include achieving sustainable development in Nigeria by ensuring the following:

a. Securing for all Nigerians a quality of environment adequate for their health and well-being;

b. Conserving and using the environment and natural resources for the benefit of present and future generations;

c. Restoring, maintaining and enhancing the ecosystems and ecological processes essential for the functioning of the biosphere to preserve biological diversity and the principle of optimum sustainable yield in the use of living natural resources and ecosystems;

d. Raising public awareness and promoting understanding of essential linkages between environment and development and to encourage individual and community participation in environmental improvement efforts; and

e. Cooperating in good faith with other countries, international organisations/agencies and effective prevention or abatement or transboundary environmental pollution.

The policy recognises the important role citizens or communities may play in the formulation and implementation of environmental policies. Evidence shows how both governments and companies have downplayed public participation in public policy. This exclusionary approach needs to be discontinued.

EIA: A veritable tool for environmental defence

The promulgation of the Environmental Impact Assessment Decree (EIA) No. 86 of 1992 has been a milestone in the provision of opportunities for involvement of local communities in the prevention of oil pollution. Unfortunately, this has not been realised.

The Act has potential for the promotion of environmental democracy across the nation because it requires the participation and consultation of communities wherever large-scale projects are to be executed or where major land conversions are proposed to take place. It provides a tool for community engagement when lands are to be taken up for plantations, farms, industrial set-ups, etc.

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7 At least five federal Ministries were responsible for the management of the environment in Nigeria prior to 1988 and before the establishment of the Federal Environmental Protection Agency/Federal Ministry of Environment, namely, federal Ministries of Agriculture and Water Resources; Transport; Health; Industries, Budget and Planning; and Works and Housing.

The Petroleum Industry Bill (PIB)

It has been expected that the PIB, would respond and fill the gaps in existing laws such as the Petroleum Act of 1969 but despite its seeming comprehensive nature, the PIB is an incremental duplication of many unresolved environmental issues in many previous and existing laws. One of the highlights in the draft Bill (at the time of preparation of this brief) is the provision for the establishment of a Host Community Development Fund. If passed into law, ten per cent of net profits of oil companies could be given to oil-bearing communities.

However, the draft bill also prescribes that where a pipeline is vandalised in a community, the community would be penalised and funds to fix the situation would be obtained from this fund. This essentially criminalises communities in an unacceptable manner of collective punishment. Local and State governments are equally held accountable for incidents in their territories. This cannot be justified because neither of these tiers of government controls security apparatuses in the country.

The PIB is not clear about seriously halting the criminal act of gas flaring. It is hoped that these and other anomalies will be corrected before passage of the bill into law.

Serious environmental politics in the oil region have been responses to peoples’ collective uprising against the ecological damage caused by oil companies and the neglect by governments. Locals challenge the State and oil companies over the mode of extraction, production and distribution of oil and benefits. Unfortunately, responses to these issues on the part of government have been mainly incremental, and inadequate. Many believe this is because the Nigerian State has been captured by its own oil revenue seeking interest and this is compounded by oil companies’ interest totally anchored on profits.

The net consequence, including the failure of environmental policy is a deficit in environmental protection. Oil related ecological disasters in the Niger Delta are routine. The late Ogoni environmental rights activist, Kenule Saro-Wiwa, described the level of ecological issues created by oil companies in the region as an ecological war. This war has had grave consequences on people and their environment, and raised awareness and debate on relevant public policy.

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9 Sale of oil forms the base of revenue accruing to government at all levels. About 95 per cent of the country’s foreign exchange comes from it, while more than 85 per cent of national income is derived from oil and gas production.

10 Kenule Saro Wiwa was hanged by the Nigerian state in 1995 along with eight other Ogoni environmental activists. A military court set up by the late General Sani Abacha who was then Head of State convicted them. The court claimed that they (nine Ogoni leaders) were responsible for the death of four Ogoni politicians, who were actually mobbed by angry Ogoni youths under the platform of the Movement for the Survival of Ogoni People (MOSOP). The four were accused of working against the environmental struggles of the Ogoni people.

An array of laws on the environment exists. Below is a Selection\textsuperscript{12}

1. National Environmental Standards and Regulations Enforcement Agency (NESREA) Act
2. Harmful Waste (Special Criminal Provisions) Act – this law prohibits dumping of harmful wastes in the air, land or water of Nigeria. Punishment includes life imprisonment.
3. Hydrocarbon Oil Refineries Act - if this were to be strictly enforced there would be less incidents of bush or illegal refining in the oil fields
4. Associated Gas re-injection Act
5. The Endangered Species Act
6. Sea Fisheries Act
7. Oil Pipelines Act
8. Petroleum Products and Distribution (Management Board) Act
9. Territorial Waters Act
10. Nuclear Safety and Radiation Protection Act
11. Nigerian Mining Corporation Act
12. Quarantine Act
13. River Basins Development Authority Act
14. Civil Aviation Act
15. Factories Act – focuses on workers safety issues. It also punishes acts of nuisance.
16. Water Resources Act
17. Hides and Skins Act
18. Federal National Park Act

Solid Minerals

Solid minerals abound in Nigeria but the ascendancy of crude oil as a major income earner lead to the neglect of this sector. Nigeria has significant deposits of coal and iron ore, gold, uranium, tantalum and diamond. Uranium is found in six of the thirty-six states in Nigeria.\textsuperscript{13}

The move away from mining may have had salutary effects on the Nigerian environment if abandoned mines had been properly decommissioned. The tin mines of Jos remain lethal pits while the coal mines of Enugu have been partially converted into refuse dumps. Besides, haphazard artisanal mining wreaks havoc on the environment and in the case of gold mining in Zamfara State has led to the death of hundreds of children from lead poisoning.

In 1995 the Ministry of Solid Minerals Development was established and has the aim of boosting non-oil exports. A new Minerals and Mining Act came into effect in 2007. The direction is mainly to enhance resource extraction and revenue generation. Environmental protection is incidental and not central.

\textsuperscript{12}For a comprehensive look at the laws see ERA’s \textit{Environmental Law of Nigeria: A Critical Review (2004)}

\textsuperscript{13}Mining in Nigeria. http://www.mbendi.com/indy/ming/af/ng/p0005.htm
Erosion ravaged areas

Flooding at Ikarama, Bayelsa State (photo by Alagoa Morris)

Floods and Erosion have become very serious environmental problems in Nigeria. Gully erosion in Eastern Nigeria has wreaked havoc on communities leaving yawning gaps on soil once held together by thick vegetation, swallowing houses and submerging farmlands. It is estimated that 35 million tonnes of soil are washed away by erosion annually in Nigeria.

Coastal erosion is a major challenge in the South. This problem is aggravated by sea level rise. In some areas, canalisation and movements of heavy machineries and vessels compound coastal erosion. It is estimated by the federal ministry of agriculture estimates that 35 million tonnes of soil are washed away by erosion annually in Nigeria, mostly by gully erosion in the southeast, where the rain forests were most severely depleted in the last three decades. Between 1981-1994 Nigeria has been said to have lost some 3.7 million hectares of forest and farmlands to erosion and other forms of soil degradation. About 285,000 Km², or just under a third of Nigeria’s land area has been lost to this phenomenon over the past three decades.¹⁴

The National Environmental (Soil Erosion and Flood Control) Regulations 2011 aim at reducing the consequences or effects of flood and erosion on vulnerable areas through controlling of human activities capable of upsetting the soil. Soil erosion and flood have taken severe dimensions in recent times.

Socio-economic effects of soil erosion in Orumba North Local Government Area of Anambra State have been quite high. In the same vein, increasing gully erosion in the Ankpa area of Kogi and Ling local government area of Taraba State remains serious. The 2012 flood in Nigeria which occurred from July to November 2012 affected 7.7 million people, killed 363 and rendered 2.1 internally displaced. Farmlands, homes, and personal and public properties were destroyed.

Forestry

Nigeria has one of the highest rates of deforestation in Africa and this is not because there are no policies, laws and regulations. Apart from the national forestry policy, some states in Nigeria equally have laws governing forestry in their territories. There is also the Forestry Law, Cap 55, the National Park Services Act of 1999 and the contentious Land Use decree of 1978.

The National Park Services Act allows the right of communities to participate in the management of the parks. How this works out in reality is contestable. The Forestry Law, Cap 55 also allows for community management of forests but realizing this requires strenuous efforts by communities.

Forest conservation in Nigeria faces many challenges including conversion into plantations of rubber and palm oil as well as the entry of UN-REDD programmes. It is feared that the REDD programmes will bring about restricted access to community forests and human rights infringements while at the same time tacitly granting the rich countries the right to pollute at home thereby compounding the threat of climate change that it is supposed to reduce.

Dependence on fuel wood for energy is a serious challenge all across Nigeria, and more so in forest deficit zones such as Northern Nigeria. Careful management of forest resources would be help the situation if holistic approach is adopted and built with close collaboration by communities.

Desertification and Displacements

Northern Nigeria is zone in Nigeria that is severely threatened environmentally. The area is semi-arid and experiences variable and unpredictable rainfall, overgrazing and seasonal fires. Combined with poverty, increasing violence and population growth comprehensive environmental policy changes are needed. Desertification is a major problem in at least eleven States in this zone: Adamawa, Bauchi, Gombe, Borno, Yobe, Jigawa, Kano, Katsina, Zamfara, Sokoto and Kebi States Nigeria is said to be losing about 351,000 km² to desertification representing 38% of it's total land mass. One way out is to extend the proposed African Union backed African Great Green wall of trees initiative over the entire Northern Nigerian.

Legislations aimed at tackling the problem do exist. These include the National Environmental (Desertification Control and Drought Mitigation) Regulations of 2011. Effectiveness of these legislations, however, depends on the role being played by affected communities. At the moment such roles are undermined and removed from the policy process. The policies and implementation are rather top-down and pro-policy elite, who are far removed from the direct impacts of the problem.

Manufacturing

A recent study of the discharge of heavy metals into the Challawa River in Kano can be taken as an indication of the level of pollution of water bodies by industries in Nigeria’s key cities. The environment is impacted by heavy metals in industrial effluents into water bodies including River Challawa in Kano, Nigeria. Like other rivers, the Challawa River is used for many purposes including irrigation, fishing and water supply. Levels of heavy metals in such rivers exceed the maximum permissible limit of Nigeria and WHO. The story plays out across the nation.

Activities of corporations require adequate environmental regulation, monitoring, inspection and evaluation in order to check and ensure proper environmental governance such that dangerous pollutants are avoided from hurting people and the environment. Nigeria has numerous environmental laws and regulations that could help to achieve this. For example, the Harmful Waste Decree No. 42 of 1988 prohibits the “carrying, depositing and dumping of harmful wastes on any land, territorial water, contagious zone, exclusive economic zone of Nigeria or its inland water ways.” The decree prescribes penalties for violation of the law.

The Environmental Impact Assessment Act is equally useful for tackling these problems. Interestingly, recent sets of regulations such as the National Environmental (Surface and Groundwater Quality Control) Regulations 2011, seeks chemical and biological as well as physical veracity of surface and groundwater. In the same vein, the National Environmental (Coastal and Marine Areas Protection) Regulations 2011 aim at protecting marine and coastal resources from harmful activities of individuals and corporations.

Solid Waste and Sanitation

The handling of solid and liquid wastes in Nigeria leaves much to be desired. Where solid wastes are dumped at designated places, such dumpsites are often abandoned burrow pits from where earth fillings may have been excavated for roads or similar construction works. These pits are neither designed nor built to serve as dumpsites. They are just holes in the ground and convenient spots to keep wastes away from population centres. It would appear that the thinking is that once the mountains of waste are not in sight, then they are safely kept away. But with pits that are not lined, heavy metals and others get leached into the ground waters.

Most of our cities do not have integrated sewage handling systems and households and building complexes are served by individual septic tanks and soak away pits. We need little imagination to see that this is not a healthy way to dispose of wastes especially when we know that the construction of those pits are not closely supervised for quality control. With little by way of recycling of waste products, plastics clog the Nigerian environment causing serious nuisance and drainage blockages.

**Critique of current tools**

All too often people argue that environmental laws in Nigeria are inadequate, a key problem with these laws may lie in the failure of policy makers and implementing officials to involve local community folks in the policy processes. Where provisions of involving them are made, as in the case of the EIA, poor interpretation and implementation become the order of the day. Yet, participation of local communities remains critical for the successful implementation of environmental regulations.

In any case, there are several problems associated with exclusion of local communities from the processes. One, legal opportunities or framework for regular demand of environmental accountability from corporations, government and individuals by community people can be lost. This may be one reason there has been rising quest for litigation against corporate environmental crimes in foreign courts in recent times.

Second, the environment is not yet seen as a human right. Environmental justice movement activists globally, are increasingly demanding that governments and corporations recognise and protect this right. Governments therefore have to reform their judiciaries and laws in preparation for the challenges associated with this great need.

**Recommendations**

This brief could not possibly attempt to cover the gamut of environmental issues in Nigeria. Those mentioned have had to be treated with great brevity on account of the nature of this endeavour. However, we can surmise that the Nigerian environment is in a desperate state and urgent steps need to be taken to review existing policies and laws, and then to take steps to address the needs staring the nation in the face.
We recommend as follows:

- Declaration of a National Environmental Emergency
- A national environmental audit and assessment
- Review and popularising of existing laws regulations and policies
- Encouragement of public participation at both the level of formulation and implementation.
- Waste management planning for the entire nation covering all kinds of wastes: medical, solid, liquid wastes, etc
- Environmental education integrated into school curriculum right from primary school level, especially with regard to recycling, reuse and waste disposal.
- Promotion of massive afforestation, private, family & community woodlots, special small scale fuelwood plantations, protection of existing forests, etc
- Detoxification of the Nigerian environment
- Ecological Funds strictly monitored and used to remediate or restore damaged environment - Strict sanitation and waste management. Reforestation. oil spills clean up.
- Separation of duties of various government agencies and ensuring coherence between them to ensure convergence of efforts.

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About ERA/FoEN

Brief History

Environmental Rights Action/Friends of the Earth Nigeria (ERA/FoEN) was founded on the 11th of January, 1993 as a Nigerian Advocacy Non-governmental organisation, concerned with the protection, preservation and conservation of the natural environment, and the sustainable exploitation of its natural resources. ERA/FoEN is the Nigerian chapter of the Friends of the Earth International (FoEI) the world environmental justice federation campaigning to protect the environment and to create sustainable societies. ERA is dedicated to the democratisation of development, defence of human ecosystems in terms of human rights and promotion of environmentally responsible governmental. Commercial, community and individual practise in Nigeria through the empowerment of local people. ERA/FoEN is the co-ordinating NGO in Africa for Oilwatch International and the current host of the secretariat of the Oilwatch International. ERA is a prize winner of the Sophie award (1998) and also the recipient of the Bloomberg award.

ERA seeks global objectives and collaborates with national and international partners in the pursuit of its global objectives.

Mandate and Objectives

ERA derives its mandate from Article 24 of the African Charter of Human and People’s Right: That “All people shall have the right to (a) generally satisfactory environment favourable to their development”. ERA seeks to achieve a number of objectives in the area of protection of the environment and democratisation of development. It is also committed to the preservation of human ecosystem within the framework of human rights, and the promotion of sustainable and responsible management of natural resources and the environment.

Projects undertaken

Ø Promotion and coordination of NGO's in Africa towards empowering communities and creating awareness to respond in defence of their environmental human rights.
Ø Working as a Chapter of Friends of the Earth International (FoEI) in partnership projects on extractive industries, forestry issues, and food sovereignty. ERA won the pioneering edition of the Sophie Awards in 1998 for its achievement in environmental development.
Ø Attracting policy recognition and corrective measures for the ecological disasters created by petroleum exploration and mining activities.
Ø Attracting government policy change in compliance with the World Health Organisation (WHO) Framework Convention on Tobacco Control.
Ø Promoting political and economic policies for the development of the long neglected areas of the oil producing Niger Delta region of Nigeria.
Ø Creating awareness and public sensitization about Genetically Modified Organisms, and Agrofuels.
Ø Poverty eradication support programmes including community empowerment and Resource Centres development.
Ø Promoting best practices in sustainable natural resources exploitation and development including its impact on the people.
Ø Embarking on community environmental monitoring/ trainings

ERA Publications
Areas of Focus

Ø Natural resources and community conservation
Ø Energy and Mining.
Ø Environmental education and training.
Ø Democracy outreach
Ø Gender issues.
Ø Legislative and legal processes in areas of mandate.
Ø Media and Publication.
Ø Anti-Tobacco campaigns.

Other Areas
Ø “Oilwatching in South America: A Pollution Tour of Venezuela, Curacao, Peru and Ecuador” by Nnimmo Bassey 1997.
Ø Environmental Testimonies, 2000.
Ø “We Thought It Was Oil But It Was Blood (Poems)” by Nnimmo Bassey, 2002.
Ø “Before the Earth Bleeds Again” by Godwin Uyi Ojo and Jaye Gaskiya (eds), 2004.
Ø The Shell Report: Continuing Abuses in Nigeria – 10 Years After Ken Saro Wiwa”, 2005 ERA/ FoEN.
Ø Proposed Environmental Bill of Nigeria, 2004 ERA.

Reporting the Nigerian Environment (2010)

The Nigerian Environment and the Rule of Law (2009)


Mired in a Fossil Trap (2011)

Do not Play Politics with Hunger (2011)

Periodical and Features Publications

ERAction (Official magazine of ERA/ FoEN), published since 1998 to date

Field monitoring reports.

Quarterly Newsletters (Environmental Impact and Hotplate)

ABOUT OILWATCH

1. Oilwatch is a network that builds solidarity and fosters a common identity among peoples of the Global South. Oilwatch understands similarities in the current pattern of resource exploitation in countries of the Global South, which reflects historical legacy of disempowerment of peoples, plunder of natural resources and destruction of environment, and considers the recognition of the right of peoples to self-determination as primary in the resolution of environmental problems.

2. Oilwatch is a network of RESISTANCE to the negative impacts of fossil fuels (coal, gas and oil) extraction and related industries on PEOPLES and their environment.

3. Oilwatch exists and works to stop the expansion of socially destructive and environmentally damaging oil activity in the tropics and other parts of the Global South.

4. Oilwatch members support all initiatives of local peoples to resist coal, oil and gas activities. These initiatives include monitoring of devastation and violations that arise directly or indirectly from oil activity, and support for local demand for compensation and restoration.

5. Oilwatch is a network, which applies and fosters DECENTRALIZATION. It works more as a movement rather than a centralized entity.

6. Oilwatch supports nations and communities that resist the destructive activities of oil companies.

7. Oilwatch creates consciousness of a model of development that is non-fossil fuel-based, socially responsible, and is environmentally sensitive and protective.

8. Oilwatch promotes exercising of rights of nature, human rights and collective human rights of communities affected by the oil activity to oppose exploration and exploitation, facing companies and governments at the local, national and international level. It demands and advocates that communities that resist hydrocarbon operations should be recognized rather than suppressed.

9. Oilwatch encourages energy sovereignty, promotes energy autonomy and works with alternative politics of communities, regions and countries to initiate the pathway towards energy sovereignty, in such a way that it promotes the abandonment of the oil model. The aim is to anticipate a political proposal that gives substance to our strategies of resistance that allows new alliances with other sectors and for us to obtain greater legitimacy with society.

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