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Our ocean our future

Our ocean our future, this story is based on the Ogoni land which is part of the Nigerian delta, the Ogoni being one of the largest. Approximately 500,000 Ogoni people live in the 404 square miles of Ogoni land where they have been for at least 500 years.

The Ogoni people are a small minority group in Nigeria where the total population of 134 million is made up of over 250 ethnic groups. The Ogoni people are diverse group made up of six kingdoms where all speak four main languages.

The Ogoni have a close connection to the land and water both physically and spiritually. The traditional lifestyle of the Ogoni is based on fishing in the river waters and farming yams and cassava on the fertile land of the delta. The Ogoni people practice animism and worship of the river as a god before the advent of oil drilling in the Ogoni land.

In the year 1950s several companies including shell set up operation in the delta region of Nigeria which the operation is being carried out extensively in the Ogoni region, since then, the land, water and air has been polluted to such an extent that Ogoni people livelihood is threatened.

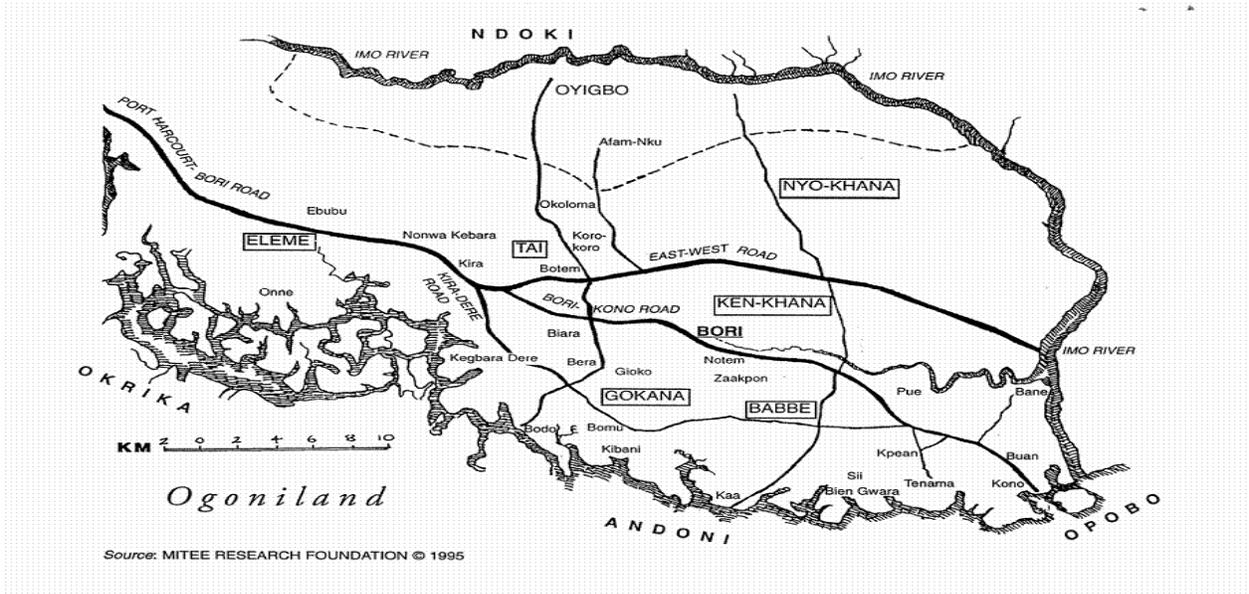
The effect of pollution on the Nigerian delta has been great as a result of oil spills, which have damaged the Ogoni land dramatically. At least One Hundred pumping stations and marine pipelines crisscross Ogoni land. The pipeline run over farm land and through villages; leaks and spills are common occurrence, from 1970 to 1982, 1,581 oil spill incidence were recorded in the Niger Delta. Over 1.5 million gallons of which were as a result of shell. Shell runs oil operation in over one hundred different countries, 40% of the company spill were in Nigeria. What a little shell has done to clean up these spills. Blowouts from pipelines results in to the destruction of the farm lands and rendering of water in the Ogoni land not consumable.

The industrial waste dumped into the Ogoni rivers makes fishing a means of which is a means of supplying food for the tribe no longer an option, because very few fish survive in this condition. The ground water is contaminated and not safe for drinking and the rain water is also unfit for drinking since it falls as acid rain.

The air has also been severely polluted. The natural gas that is a byproduct of drilling is flared off horizontally from five flaring stations, some of which are in close proximity to homes and villages. There is a massive amount of carbon dioxide created during flaring off. Gas that could be sold or donated to local people for use as domestic fuel. Gas flaring combined with Methane and soot during oil drilling in Ogoni land produce low air quality which is linked to cancer, asthma and other lung diseases. The flaring has been associated with poor crop yield and plant growth in the Ogoni land.

The Ogoni people organized a body called “MOSOP (Movement for Survival of Ogoni People)”. The body is the strongest force of opposition to shell and the Nigerian government. Many other NGO’s such as amnesty international and greenpace are involved. Mosop was created to protect human right of the ogoni people but is now seen as a violent organization since they are always agitating and causing pipeline vandalization and prevention of oil and gas staff from performing drilling operations.

IMAGES



1.1 MAP OF OGO NI LAND



1.2 OGO NI LAND BEFORE EXPLORATION OF CRUDE OIL Source: google images



1.3 Ogoni Land After Exploration & Exploitation of Crude Oil



1.4 Ogoni People Protesting Against the Activity of Shell

source:google images