

A network of taboos, sacred groves and beasts jealously guarded the ecosystem. They were prime examples of sustainable societies.

With the advent of oil exploration, exploitation and politics, the land, sea and air of the Niger Delta have been despoiled to unimaginable degrees. The people are now hungry, diseased, oppressed and marginalised. Their economic and social life has been distorted. Their lands and waterways have become barren. For the sake of future generations of Nigerians, this trend must be halted and reversed.

The future of Nigeria will be determined by how the agitation in the Niger Delta communities is resolved. The scenario is clear for all to see. 90% of all revenue generated in Nigeria comes from this area. This same area represents the most neglected parts of the country. Steps to eliminate the glaring poverty and misery in the Niger Delta will send a signal to other areas of the country that the discoveries of other resources in their own backyard do not spell doom for them. The recovery of the Niger delta will signal the recovery of Nigeria.

- Empowerment of civil groups to focus on issues of civil life, forming alliances on agreed positions for greater effect.
- Communities to insist on control of resources found in their territories.
- Exchange of information, materials and experiences between groups working on similar issues as a veritable means of education.
- Rejection of political restrictions such as the requirement of registration before operating as a political party. Insistence on presentation of political platforms or issues as a means of receiving votes rather than the purchase of votes with cash or gifts.
- Encouragement of activities (such as co-operatives, rural banking and micro-credit) to raise the economic power of the people.
- The people know best how to interact with their environment. Lessons must be taken from them if the environment is to be cared for in a sustainable manner.