



# ENVIRONMENTAL RIGHT EDUCATION MANUAL

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**Centre for Environment, Human Rights and Development (CEHRD)**

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## **Abbreviations**

AU	-	African Union
UNDP	-	United Nations Development Programme
IOCs	-	International Oil Companies
MNCs	-	Multinationals Corporations
UN	-	United Nations
CDC	-	Community Development Committee
CEHRD	-	Centre for Environment, Human Rights and Development
CSOs	-	Civil Society Organizations
FGD	-	Focus Group Discussion
LGA	-	Local Government Area
NGO	-	Non-Governmental Organization

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They do not represent the views of any other person, institution or organization.

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## **FOREWORD**

Environmental right is the right to enjoy the best attainable state of the total environment; the right to a general satisfactory environment favourable to development. The right to a healthy environment for the achievement of human development goals is the purpose for environmental rights. Although, often embedded in human rights, environmental right has gradually gained recognition as man's foremost right ever since Ken Saro-Wiwa succinctly asserted, "the Environment is man's first right. Without a safe environment, man cannot exist to claim other rights be they social, political or economic". Therefore, the protection of the environment is essential for the realization of human rights because human rights can only be enjoyed in an environment that is free of pollution and other forms of degradation.

Environmental rights, though yet to be fully legislated in Nigeria, is the primary right that determines the actualization of fundamental rights. Several agencies have been established by legislation in the country to ensure the protection of the environment, and by extension the rights linked to a clean and healthy environment. However, these agencies have been grossly ineffective viz-a-viz their capacity to protect the environmental rights of the citizens.



Primarily, limited knowledge on the part of the citizens has been a major frustration in the attainment of environmental rights as most citizens are not aware of available platforms to seek redress when their environmental rights are violated. The understanding of what constitutes environmental rights and the mechanisms of seeking peaceful redress by local communities, civil societies, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and other professionals in Nigeria, is limited. Also, it is imperative to deepen understanding of environmental right, rejig the contextual management agencies and instruments to monitor and prosecute those that abuse and violate these rights.

This manual seeks to educate and build the capacity of all and sundry in Nigeria on the fundamentals of environmental rights and the available opportunities for seeking redress when violation occurs. The manual will serve as a veritable reference and training material on the subject matter especially for students, practitioners and environmental and human rights institutions working in regions that experience similar contextual environmental issues as Nigeria. It would stimulate responsible or sustainable environmental stewardship.

**Prof. Nenibarini Zabbey**  
**Coordinator, CEHRD**

## 1. Introduction

The health of a nation is determined by the health of its environment. The environment is the medium and forces that provide support for human activities. Therefore, Government has the responsibility to give sufficient attention to environmental issues. Citizens are the first stewards or protectors of the environment. Also, the citizens have the duty to hold other actors including the government at different levels (Federal, State and Local Government) accountable whenever there are cases of environmental violation. But the citizens cannot effectively hold other stakeholders (e.g., the private sector, government) accountable without knowing their right to a safe and clean environment, what constitutes a violation or abuse, and the need for environmental right protection and how to seek redress. It is in this regard that this manual is designed as a tool for advocacy and environmental right literacy.

The manual focuses on man and the protection of the environment. It defines and identifies what constitutes environmental right, compares environmental and human rights; highlights the need for environmental right education and outlines opportunities for seeking redress, among other environmental issues of importance.

In preparing the manual, a mixed approach was adopted for data collection. This include desk-based research, secondary data, focus group discussions, civil society and community

consultations, and key informant interviews. This enabled a citizen's participatory approach and feedback mechanism in identifying broadly the existing background knowledge of the stakeholders of what constitute environmental right and human rights. The data derived from these multi-stakeholder sources were harnessed with expert views to develop this manual.

Most importantly, the manual highlighted the need to prioritise environmental rights, and established the need for a mutual relationship between man and the environment. This environmental rights manual will be useful to basic and high school learners, to imbibe basic principles of environmental protection and conservation, and contribute their parts to achieving specific aspects of the sustainable development goals.

## 2. Man and The Environment

The relationship between man and the environment is often described as conflictual and not mutual and symbiotic. In order to explain these concepts for better understanding of the manual, the first section is dedicated to the subject of environment – what it means, types, interaction with living organisms as well as other related and conceptual issues.

### **What is Environment?**

Different scholars and writers have written several books and articles on the subject of 'Environment'. This is perhaps not just because it is imperative to do so, but more importantly for two obvious reasons. Firstly, the environment is critical for man and other living organisms, as their continuous existence and survival is dependent on the health and safety of the environment. The environment provides the basic needs of all living organisms including man. Food, shelter, clothing and other forms of nourishment is provided by the environment. Secondly, the dynamics of the environment and the daily recurrent environmental issues make it very viable and possible for continuous analysis and interpretation. Though the environment is differently defined by scholars and institutions, the Nigeria Environmental Impact Assessment Act (2004) defines the environment “as the components of the earth and includes land, water and air, including all layers of the atmosphere, all organic and inorganic matter and living organisms, and the interacting

natural systems that include components referred to herein”. The Webster’s New Collegiate Dictionary agrees with this definition when it defines the environment as “the complex of physical, chemical, and biotic factors (e.g., climate, soil, and things) that act upon an organism or an ecological community and ultimately determine its form and survival”. A closer examination of the definitions stated above revealed some important features or ingredient of the environment, for the purpose of this manual, we shall point out few of them:

- I. The environment consists of all objects and external conditions surrounding a living organism;
- II. Environment shapes the growth and development of living organisms including man;
- III. Land, air, water etc., are all parts of the environment;
- IV. The environment houses everything needed by all living organism including man;
- V. The survival and continual existence of all living organism including man is determined by the environment.

### **Types of Environment**

The subject of environment is broad. Thus, we have the natural and human environment, to mention a few. The natural environment is concerned with the non-human-made surrounding in which both the living and non-living things occupy. Writing about the human environment, a renowned Professor and his colleague (Arokoyo & Umeuduji, 2004)

joined in categorizing the human environment into physical and cultural environment. The physical environment consists of those noticeable things which are found in the same place where man lives and carry out his day-to-day activities. Land, water, climate are examples that easily comes to the mind. It however has two parts, the abiotic and biotic component. Whereas the abiotic component is about things that are non-living, the biotic component comprises of the living elements of the physical environment. Examples of biotic component include but not limited to living organism that lives on land, water, and air. The next is the cultural environment. Culture has been defined as people's way of life. It includes the values, beliefs, life-style and norms of the people. The belief of a people affects how they relate with nature and the environment. Cultural environment therefore focuses on the influence of culture on the environment. For instance, the culture of cutting down trees without re-planting affects the environment negatively.

### **The Relationship between Man and the Environment**

History is replete with stories about the struggle between man and the environment. Two theories stand out in this regard. There is the Environmental Determinism with scholars like Huntington, Semple and Buckle as major exponent. Cloke et al. (1991). This theory explained that the natural environment determines the action of man in the human

environment and man only functions within the framework of opportunities provided by the environment. According to Bonnet (2008), Environmental Possibilism as espoused by Vidal de la Blache argued that man is the master of the environment and he is at liberty to transform the environment in ways and manner that it will favour him. This kind of thinking has led to man's activities affecting the environment. The following factors are responsible for this non-mutual relationship between man and the environment:

- I. The use of technology that are not friendly with the environment;
- II. The quest for productivity and increased yield;
- III. Lack of ethical considerations in harvesting the resources of nature;
- IV. The increase in human population that has resulted in the manipulation of the environment;
- V. The unending quest for maximum profit.

From the foregoing, man's relationship with the environment is two-sided. On one hand, the environment is exacting influence on man and vice versa. It is however important to note that in recent times man has become a major threat to the environment. There is therefore the need for mutual relationship between man and the environment. Man must avoid excessive exploitation of the environment and embrace environmental improvement practices such as tree-planting.



### **3. Understanding Environmental Rights**

Environmental rights are those rights of the individual on the environment. It connotes access to and living in a surrounding free from pollution or anything that will cause harm. The environment enables human survival, including land, shelter, food, water and air. These are purely ecological rights, including the right to certain creatures to survive or the right for an individual to enjoy pristine landscape.

Environmental rights have been expanded over the years to include political rights such as the rights to indigenous peoples; the right to information and participation in decision-making relating to the environment; freedom to protect the environment and fight for environmental justice; and the right to resist undesirable and harmful developments. Several of these rights, particularly the political claims, are well-established and enshrined in various conventions and agreements. The creation of some of these rights, as well as the acceptance of others that are not yet legally documented, and could be credited to the ongoing struggles of indigenous peoples and communities around the globe.

Environmental rights and human rights are important and interwoven rights—environmental rights are made up of basic human rights; human rights cannot be properly enjoyed without a clean, safe and healthy environment. Environmental rights are human



rights. The right of a people, their livelihoods, health, and sometimes their very existence is dependent on the quality of their surrounding environment. The recognition of environmental rights as human rights (right to a healthy ecology) is enshrined in the constitution of many countries across the world. In Nigeria, environmental rights form part of the fundamental human rights in Nigeria by virtue of the provision of Article 24 of the African Charter on Human and Peoples Rights which has been domesticated in Nigeria.

Right to safe and healthy environment is part of the third-generation human rights. Third-generation human rights are those rights that go beyond the mere civil and social, or economic and cultural rights as expressed in many human rights instruments. Also known as Solidarity human rights, they are rights that try to go beyond the framework of individual rights to focus on collective concepts, such as community or people. Among the rights considered as third generation rights are right to healthy environment, right to natural resources, right to intergenerational equity and sustainability and right to development.

#### 4. Environmental Right as Human Right

The entrance of the right to healthy environment into human rights instruments is traceable to the First World Conference on Human Development organized by the United Nations (UN) in Stockholm in 1972. It was at the conference that the Declaration of the Human Environment was approved, proclaiming the right to a clean environment for the first time at the international level. Principle 1 of the declaration states that:

*Man has the fundamental right to freedom, equality, and adequate conditions of life, in an environment of a quality that permits a life of dignity and well-being, and he bears a solemn responsibility to protect and improve the environment for the present and future generations.*

This declaration was followed ten years later by the U.N. World Charter for Nature (1982), which proclaimed that, in recognition of the fact that humankind is part of nature, "Nature shall be respected and its essential processes shall not be impaired" (principle 1).

Twenty years after the Stockholm meeting, the World Conference on the Environment and Development, known as the Earth Summit, took place in Rio de Janeiro in 1992. One of the

documents adopted at this conference was the Declaration of Rio, which affirmed: "The right to development must be fulfilled so as to equitably meet developmental and environmental needs of present and future generations" (principle 3).

Right to safe environment is contained in article 24 of the African Charter on Human and Peoples Rights which has been domesticated in Nigeria. For the purposes of learning, this is reproduced below:

**ARTICLE 24**

All peoples shall have the right to a general satisfactory environment favourable to their development.

**ARTICLE 25**

State Parties to the present Charter shall have the duty to promote and ensure, through teaching, education and publication, the respect of the rights and freedoms contained in the present Charter and to see to it that these freedoms and rights as well as corresponding obligations and duties are understood.

**Point to note:**

The African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights (also known as the Banjul Charter) is a regional human rights instrument that is intended to promote and protect human rights and basic freedoms in the African continent.

Oversight and interpretation of the Charter is the task of the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights, which was set up in 1987 and is now headquartered in Banjul, Gambia. A protocol to the Charter was subsequently adopted in 1998 whereby an African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights was to be created. The protocol came into effect on 25 January 2005.

Following the position of the African Charter, environmental rights can be narrowed down to a set of powers that individuals or communities can exercise. The right to participate in making decisions on environmental issues and development policies, the right to information on environmental matters, the right to access courts in order to make demands and seek justice when right to safe environment is threatened, violated or infringed upon and the right to environmental education. Environmental rights not only aspire to preserve nature, but also to protect biodiversity and to achieve the conditions necessary for a more just and healthy life for all.

## **Environmental Right vs. Human Right**

Ken Saro-Wiwa, the famous environmental activist who was initially spokesperson and later President, of the Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People (MOSOP) argued that environmental right is man's first right. All humans depend on the environment. A safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment is integral to the full enjoyment of a wide range of human rights, including the rights to life, health, food, water and sanitation. Without a healthy environment, we are unable to enjoy human right or fulfill our aspirations or even live at a level commensurate with minimum standards of human dignity. At the same time, protecting human rights helps to protect the environment. When people are able to learn about, and participate in the decisions that affect them, they can help to ensure that those decisions respect their need for a sustainable environment.

It is in recognition of the importance of environmental rights that many States, including Nigeria, now incorporate right to a healthy environment in their constitutions or national laws.

### ***The 1999 constitution of Nigeria states that:***

“The state shall protect and improve the environment and safeguard the water, air and land, forest and wildlife of Nigeria” (Section 20).

Also, in recognition of the importance of environmental rights, in March 2012 the UN Human Rights Council decided to establish a mandate on human rights and the environment, to, among other tasks, study the human rights obligations relating to the enjoyment of a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment, and promote best practices relating to the use of human rights in environmental policymaking. Mr. John Knox was appointed in August 2012 to serve as the Independent Expert (2012 – 2015) and as the Special Rapporteur on human rights and the environment (2015 – 2018).

In March 2018, the Human Rights Council further extended the mandate and appointed Mr. David S. Boyd as the Special Rapporteur on human rights and the environment as of 1 August 2018 (Available at [www.srenvironment.org](http://www.srenvironment.org)).

Given the importance and the need to protect the environment, the Human Rights Council Resolution as at 38/11 (2018) is as follows:

- (a) To continue to study the human rights obligations relating to the enjoyment of a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment, in consultation with governments, relevant international organizations and intergovernmental bodies, including the United Nations Environment Programme and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and relevant multilateral environment agreements, human rights

mechanisms, local authorities, national human rights institutions, civil society organizations, including those representing indigenous peoples and other persons in vulnerable situations, the private sector and academic institutions;

- (b) To continue to identify, promote and exchange views on good practices relating to human rights obligations and commitments that inform, support and strengthen environmental policymaking, especially in the area of environmental protection, and in that regard to disseminate and consider updating documents elaborated by the previous mandate holder, as appropriate;
- (c) To promote and report on the realization of human rights obligations relating to the enjoyment of a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment, taking into account the reports and documents produced by the previous mandate holder, and to disseminate his or her findings by, inter alia, continuing to give particular emphasis to practical solutions with regard to their implementation;
- (d) To work on identifying challenges and obstacles to the full realization of human rights obligations relating to the enjoyment of a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment and protection gaps thereto, including in the context of sustainable development.



## **5. The Need for Environmental Right Education**

The previous section has treated the subject of ‘Environmental Right’ including what constitutes environmental rights and other related issues. This section will however focus on the need for environmental right education. Currently, education serves as the basis for determining and controlling everything. In the words of Nelson Mandela “Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world”. Given the important role education plays in the society, creating awareness through formal, non-formal or semi-formal medium about the environment and our rights in the environment is important. Before we consider some of the reasons for environmental right education as identified in the literature and highlighted by practitioners, let us reiterate that The African Commission on Human and Peoples’ Rights provided one of the best insight on what is environmental right and the need to educate the people on these rights. Under Article 24 of the African Charter, environmental right is defined as “The right to enjoy the best attainable state of physical and mental health and the right to a general satisfactory environment favourable to development”.



***The following are the reasons why environmental right education is important:***

**a. Environmental literacy**

Through environmental right education, citizens will be aware of their environmental rights and also know how to protect their right on the environment. This in no small measure helps in promoting better understanding of environmental issues and the need to seek redress where there is violation.

**b. Awareness creation**

Increasing the knowledge of the people is a step in the right direction towards safeguarding our environment. Through awareness creation people gain mastery knowledge of the environment and what constitutes their rights in the environment. Seeking redress and fighting for a healthy environment becomes possible as a result of the level of awareness.

**c. Promotion of Good Environmental Culture and Behaviour**

Culture has been defined as people's way of life. It includes but not limited to the values, beliefs, life-style and norms of the people. It has been established that the beliefs of a people affects how they relate with their environment. Environmental right education will help in instilling the right beliefs and views in the mind of the people thereby building the right environmental behaviour and culture in the society.

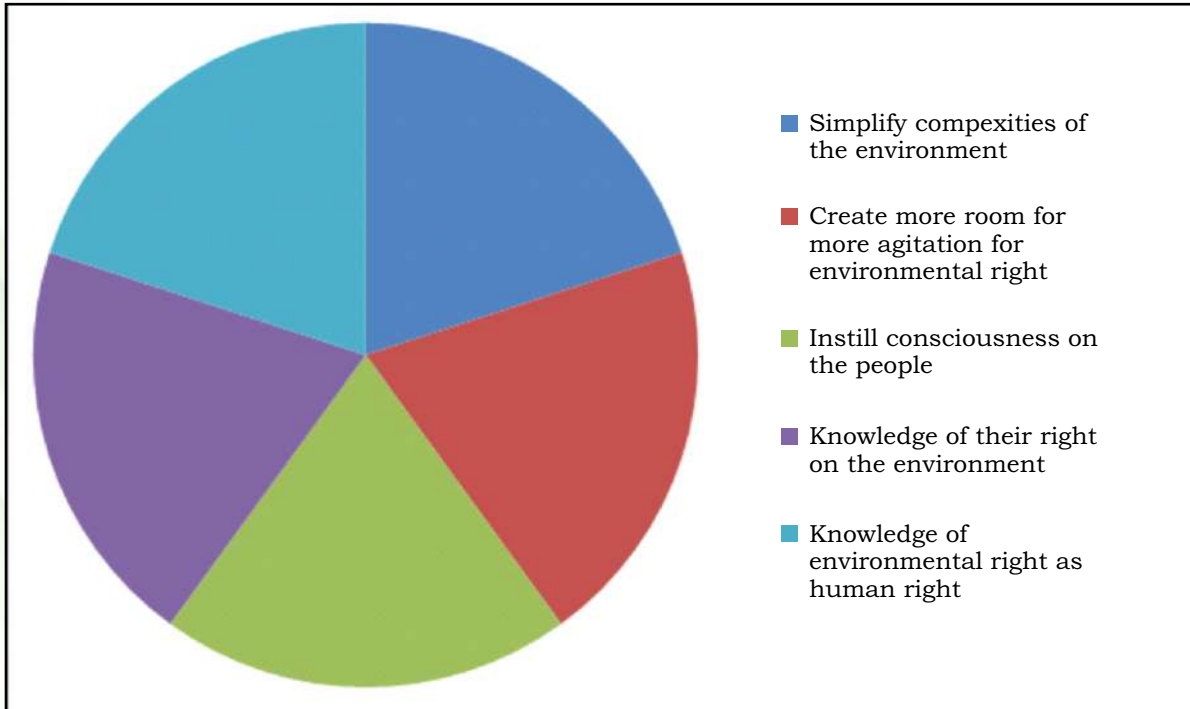
**d. Raising Environmental Advocates**

Environmental right advocates and activists are needed to champion environmental issues and concerns. Environmental justice will be a mirage without these advocates. Environment right education will therefore create room for more people to be informed, thereby producing more advocates/activists for environmental rights.

**e. Value Addition**

Environmental rights education helps in inculcating positive values in the mind of the citizens towards the environment and the need for its protection, including the need for them to demand for the restoration of their environmental rights when violated.

The following additional views were expressed by stakeholders during capacity building workshop on 'Environmental Rights' organized by the Centre for Environment, Human Rights and Development (CEHRD) in Port Harcourt.



**Fig. 1: Stakeholder views on the need for environmental rights education**

As indicated in Figure 1 above stakeholders drawn from communities, civil society organizations (CSOs), academia, environmental rights practitioners and policy makers agreed that:

- i. Environmental right education will help to simplify the complexities of the environment and the avenues available for seeking redress where there are violations.
- ii. It will create room for more demands for our right on the environment.
- iii. It will instill consciousness on the people on the right use of the environment.
- iv. It will bring to the people the knowledge of their environmental right as human right.
- v. It serves as a medium for sensitization and re-orientation.

## **6. Environmental Right Abuse and Violations**

Environmental rights are said to be violated when state actors are the perpetrators. However, when non-state actors or private individuals are involved, it is known as abuse. Violation or abuse of environmental rights means the infringement on environmental rights. It means the breach of human rights laws with respect to environmental rights. Whether abuse or violation, when it occurs, the environment becomes unsafe, unhealthy or unclean for those who depend on it.

Human and environmental rights abuses and violations have assumed a worrisome dimension in the Nigerian society in many aspects. Exclusion of citizens from decisions on environmental issues, lack of access to information on dangers of environmental practices, lack of environmental justice and access to justice, pollution and degradation of the environment are forms of environmental rights violations.

### **Environmental Rights Violation/Abuse: Victims and Perpetrators**

The right to safe and healthy environment is different from other rights which may be individualistic. When environmental rights are infringed upon, the impacts are felt by everybody within the environment, including those responsible for the problem. For instance, when water or air is polluted, it affects everybody within the environment.

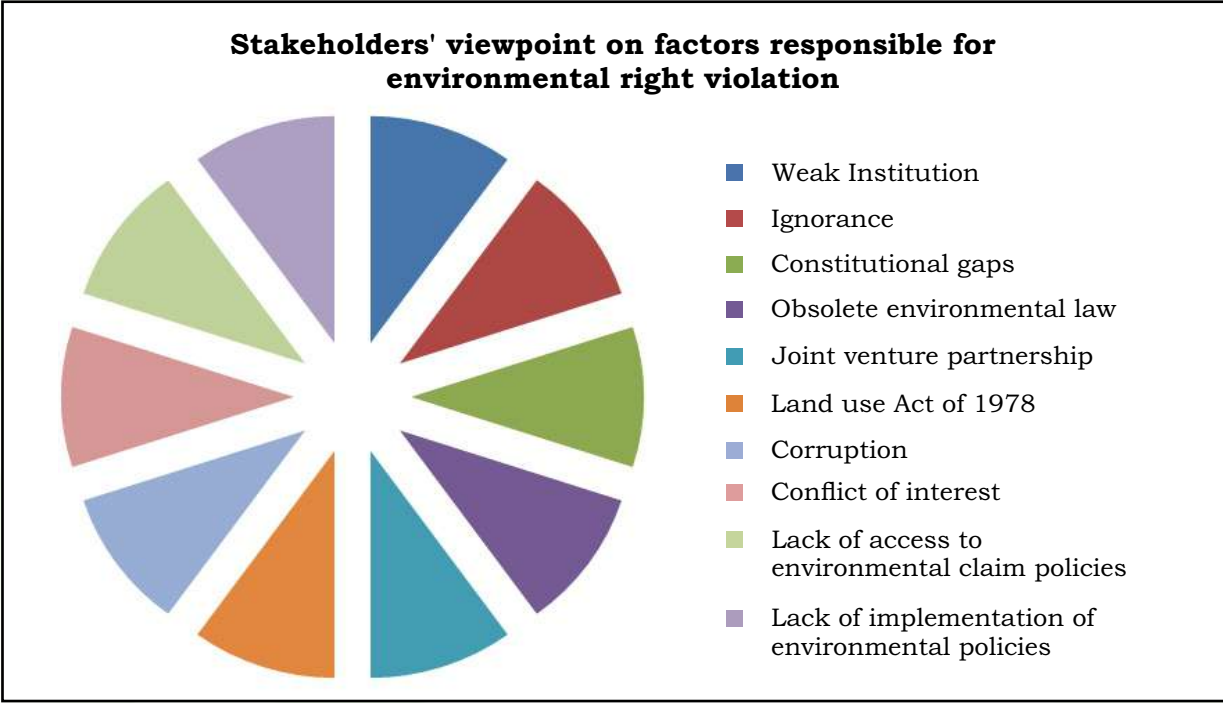
Unfortunately, rather than taking actions to protect environmental rights, governments and their agents, individuals as well as industries, through their activities have continued to trample on these rights and threaten the survival of man. Some common practices of man that make the environment unsafe include littering, improper waste disposal, poor waste management, using chemicals to fish, illegal use of pesticides in agriculture, noise, illegal oil bunkering, artisanal oil refining (kpofire), burning of oil bunkering facilities by state agents etc.

In Nigeria, the major violators of environmental rights are the multinational corporations in partnership with the government. For example, in the Niger Delta region of the country, oil corporation's activities are responsible for massive pollution of the environment, including oil spillages and, gas flaring. They are responsible for the discharge of dangerous pollutants into the environment, including water, farmlands and the atmosphere as well as the releasing of particulates, sulfur dioxide, nitrogen dioxide, carbon monoxide, and ozone. These chemicals have continued to deplete the ozone layers, resulting to climate change which has become a major threat to survival of the earth.

Communities have responsibilities to perform in preventing abuses, this include but not limited to encouraging environmental improvement practices such as tree-planting. Similarly, States have an obligation to prevent violations from occurring in the first place,

including through general and precautionary measures to address environmental risks in a systemic manner. This may require, for example, conducting environmental risk assessments, air and water quality control, environmental regulation and emergency planning, timing and using available resources by taking concrete steps and monitoring progress. Artisanal oil refining that is seriously escalating the damage to the environment must not be left out, government must take proactive steps in stopping those involved and ensure that such illegal business that is causing harm, do not thrive in our environment. Importantly, States must also put in place procedures that allow concerned individuals to take action when confronted with environmental degradation.

In a focus group discussion with environmental rights stakeholders in a workshop organized by CEHRD in Port Harcourt, the following factors were identified as responsible for environmental right violation:



**Fig. 2: Stakeholder views on factors responsible for environmental right violation**



In the figure above, stakeholders identified weak institution, ignorance, constitutional gap in the area of environmental right, obsolete environmental laws and policies, joint venture partnership between the government and the International oil companies (IOCs) that makes government judge in their own case and inactive, limitations in Land use Act of 1978, systemic corruption, conflict of interest and lack of implementation of environmental policies and access to environmental claim policies, as factors responsible for environmental right violation. Ibaba (2011), Ladan (2007), Aigbokhaevbo & Aniekwu (2013), Musa & Bappah (2014) and Allen (2014) etc are among the scholars in the literature who share this same line of thought.

What is also worthy of note is that individuals and organizations can actually seek redress where there are cases of environmental right abuse or violation. The avenues and processes involved as well as the strategy that could be utilized are what the chapter on 'Opportunity for seeking redress' has been designed to achieve.

## **7. Environmental Right Stewardship and Advocacy**

Environmental stewardship implies the actions taken by individuals, groups or networks of actors, to protect, care for or responsibly use the environment in pursuit of environmental and/or social outcomes in diverse social ecological contexts (Benneth 2018; Enqvist et al., 2018; Mensah 2019). Exercising stewardship is caring for nature's gifts, including the environment, our own personal talents and other resources.

According to Merriam Webster Dictionary, stewardship is “the conducting, supervising, or managing of something; especially the careful and responsible management of something entrusted to one's care.” It is, therefore, incumbent on community members and the government to ensure that nature's abundant resources are carefully managed in the most sustainable manner possible.

Environmental advocacy on the other hand, is presenting information on nature and environmental issues and encouraging the audience to adopt more environmentally sensitive attitudes.

Under the human rights framework, Article 24 of the African Charter on Human and Peoples Rights which has been domesticated in Nigeria, state parties have the stewardship duty to

protect, respect and fulfil or create the conditions for the fulfilment of rights, including environmental rights within their territories. Environmental advocacy is the instrument or tool used to awaken state and non-state actors to take this responsibility and address environmental issues. In other words, where stakeholders fail or fault on environmental stewardship, environmental advocacy is triggered to ask stakeholders to take action.

***Article 25 of the African Charter states that:***

State Parties to the present Charter shall have the duty to promote and ensure through teaching, education and publication, the respect of the rights and freedoms contained in the African Charter and to see to it that these freedoms and rights as well as corresponding obligations and duties are understood.

HOWEVER, individuals and groups have important roles to play towards the protection of environmental rights. They should, among others:

- A. Constantly remind the state of its duty to protect and respect rights to safe and healthy environment;
- B. Demand respect for these rights;
- C. Take steps or actions towards the protection of the rights;
- D. Be advocates of environmental rights. Advocacy on environmental rights, friendly practices is part of the duties assigned to individuals and the state.

“Every individual and every organ of society, keeping this Declaration constantly in mind, shall strive by teaching and education to promote respect for these rights and freedoms and by progressive measures, national and international, to secure their universal and effective recognition and observance, both among the peoples of Member States themselves and among the peoples of territories under their jurisdiction.” (United Nation, Universal Declaration of Human Rights).

## **8. Opportunities for Seeking Redress**

In the past, environmental wrongs resulting in human harm were not interpreted as violations of international human rights laws. But things are changing. With the inclusion of environmental rights as human rights, environmental wrongs are now interpreted and treated as human rights violation, applying human rights laws and principles. Several opportunities/mechanisms exist for seeking redress when environmental rights are violated.

When rights are violated, states are obligated to investigate such violations and ensure victims are compensated and perpetrators brought to justice. In 2015, CEHRD published a report that looked at effective remedy and recourse options for victims of environmental degradation related to oil extraction in Nigeria (CEHRD, 2015).

The report analyzed past and current environmental related cases being pursued in courts in Nigeria and in extra-territorial jurisdictions (e.g., in the Netherlands and UK). The report also examined recourse options that could be explored by victims of environmental violation inspired by the different forms of Right to a Remedy as adopted by the UN General Assembly in 2005:

- 1) Restitution.
- 2) Compensation.
- 3) Rehabilitation.
- 4) Satisfaction.
- 5) Guarantees of non-repetition.

Specifically, victims can do the following in seeking redress:

- A. Document the issue taking video and pictures of the evidence; you can also get recording of eyewitnesses.
- B. Report via traceable means the issue to relevant authority available, presenting your evidence.
- C. Engage the media to create more awareness on the issue.
- D. Approach human or environmental rights organizations to assist them in seeking redress. This can be done through petitions.
- E. Adopt different forms of non-violent actions, such as protests, civil disobedience, etc. to demand for justice.
- F. Send petitions to state and national law makers as well as regulatory agencies.
- G. Institute legal actions in local courts.
- H. Seek international support and take legal actions to international courts.

## **9. Conclusion**

As seen from the discussions in this study, environmental rights and human rights are important and interwoven. Environmental rights must therefore not be de-emphasized. It must be given utmost priority and consideration beyond political statements and conference speeches. Civil society organizations should among other things, intensify campaign and awareness on the level of environmental right abuse and violation. This could be done through increase collaboration with other CSOs and the media on environmental right reporting. The government as a matter of necessity must prioritize environmental right issues and ensure individuals, communities and corporations adopt best innovation and practices that will reduce risk on the environment. Environmental stewardship at all levels of the society cannot be overemphasized. Implementing existing and relevant environmental policies, establishment of environmental court and streamlining the activities of the different government environmental agencies to avoid conflicting roles are also bold step that need to be taken by the government to protect environmental rights of the citizens.

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**CEHRD's Mission** "To galvanize stakeholders to protect human rights and achieve sustainable development through inclusive engagements".

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