



Changing Economic World

Environmental Impacts of Economic

Development in Nigeria

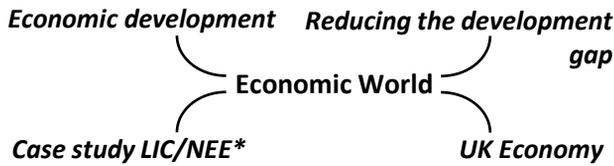
quiz



read



The Big Picture



Key Terms



Deforestation – The removal of a wide area of trees.



Greenhouse gases – Gases that trap heat in the atmosphere.



Niger Delta – The delta of the Niger River sitting directly on the Gulf of Guinea on the Atlantic Ocean in Nigeria.



Sanitation – The provision of clean drinking water and sewage disposal.



Mining and Oil Extraction

Oil extraction in the Niger Delta has had a significant impact on the environment. Oil spills have destroyed aquatic ecosystems and burning gases associated with oil extraction has caused considerable air pollution, released greenhouse gases and led to respiratory problems for local people. Tin mining has caused soil erosion and has polluted water supplies.

Royal Dutch Shell has caused devastating environmental pollution due to two massive oil spills at Bodo in Ogoniland, a small region of the Niger Delta. In 2008, there was a rupture of the Bodo-Bonny trans-Niger pipeline that pumps 120,000 barrels of oil daily through the community. 20 sq km of creeks and inlets, on which Bodo and as many as 30 other settlements depend, has been destroyed. At the time, no attempt was made to clean up the spill, which collected in creeks, washing in and out with the tide, infiltrated farmland, and entered the water table.

Compensation has been paid to the community. However, none of this was spent on cleaning up the area. It is estimated that it will cost more than \$100m to clear the effects of the oil and restore the mangrove swamps that once lined the rivers and creeks.

It was not until an investigation by the United Nations that steps were taken to clean up the area, some ten years after the spill.



Industrial Development

The rapid growth of industry in Nigeria has led to the development of unregulated, large-scale industrial developments without planning permission. This has led to:

- toxic chemical discharge into drains and open sewers in cities such as Lagos and Kano. This poses a considerable danger to public health and ecosystems.
- due to the widespread emission of poisonous gases that affect the health of local people and contribute to climate change.
- up to 80% of Nigeria's forests have been lost. Deforestation has led to increased soil erosion and climate change gases being released into the atmosphere. An important carbon store has been lost due to deforestation.



Urban Growth

The rapid growth and urban sprawl of cities such as Lagos have considerably impacted the environment. The countryside has been lost to the construction of squatter settlements and industry. Inadequate sanitation and increased domestic and industrial waste have caused watercourses to become polluted. Urban growth has also led to a rapid increase in traffic, increasing air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions.