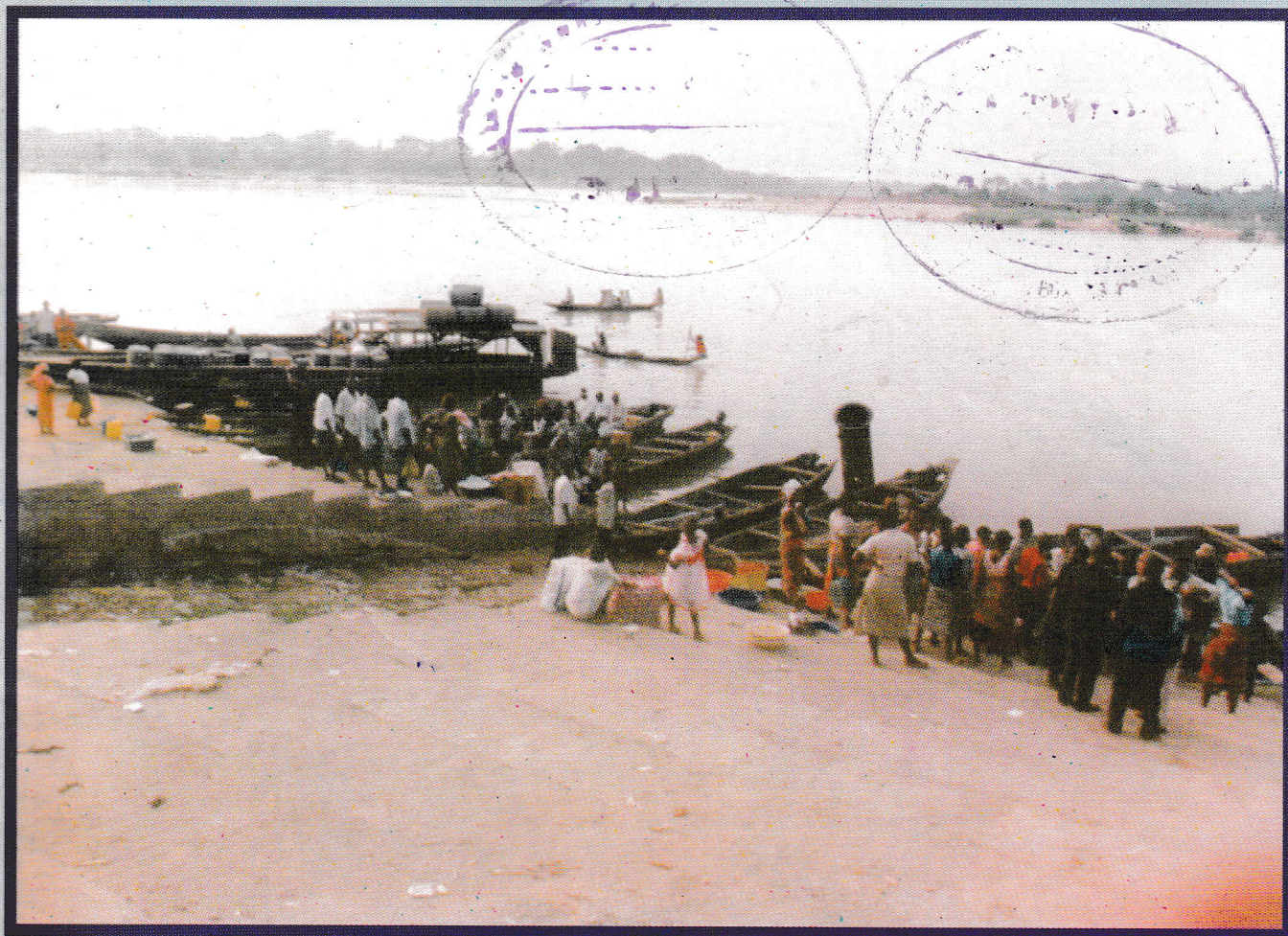


ERAction

Environmental
Rights Action/
Friends of
the Earth, Nigeria



NIGER DELTA

Challenges Before Obasanjo

January-March 1999 #02

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ENVIRONMENTAL RIGHTS ACTION (Friends of the Earth, Nigeria)

PROTECTING THE ENVIRONMENT, DEMOCRATISING DEVELOPMENT



"Through outstanding courage, the organisation (ERA) has demonstrated that the work for human dignity, the environment and democracy must go hand in hand. This is not least important to emphasise in a year when we are celebrating the 50th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights"

**– Elin Enge,
Chairperson, Sophie Foundation, Oslo, Norway**

ERAction

ERAction is the quarterly magazine of the Environmental Rights Action/Friends of the Earth, Nigeria. It is published to disseminate information on environmental human rights; to stimulate debate and campaign for environmental sustainability, corporate responsibility and democratic development and report on the people, the issues and struggles of all sensitive citizens and organisations for the protection of all human ecosystems. This is done within the context of national and international politics. In other words, while examining environmental problems, ERAction shall lay emphasis on the underlying political causes and the possibility of mobilising and deploying countervailing political forces to put an end to these problems. ERAction is about political ecology.

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Views expressed in this magazine do not necessarily represent those of ERA. Articles, reports, letters and reactions are welcome and should be addressed to the Editor at any of the under-listed addresses.

ENVIRONMENTAL RIGHTS ACTION

Environmental Rights Action (ERA) is a Nigerian advocacy non-governmental organisation concerned with the protection of the environment and the democratisation of development. ERA is committed to the defence of human ecosystems within the framework of human rights and the promotion of environmentally responsible practices by governments, corporations and the people. It takes its mandate from Article 24 of the African Charter of Human and People's Rights which states that: All people shall have the right to (a) generally satisfactory environment favour-

able to their development.

ERA is the Nigerian chapter of Friends of the Earth International (FoEI) as well as the co-ordinating NGO in Africa for OilWatch International, the global network of groups concerned about the effects of oil on the environment of people who live in oil-producing regions. The organisation is also a member of the African Forest Action Network (AFAN). ERA is winner of the Sophie Prize, 1998, the international award in environment and development.

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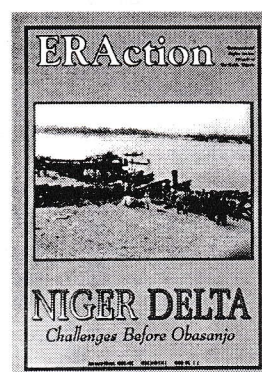
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GRATITUDE

To all ERA supporters, especially KEPA, SSNC, NOVIB, NC-IUCN, OXFAM-GB, ICCO, FoE-US, FoE-International and Oilwatch International

Cover: Life in the Niger Delta: People waiting for transportation

With claims like this!



Shell Petroleum Development Company (Nigeria) Limited claims that it is operating in the Niger Delta in a way that considers the needs of the local people, and moreover that it has invested millions of dollars in community support projects. Specifically, Shell's Managing Director, **Mr. Ron van den Berg**, was reported in *The Guardian* (Lagos) of October 9, 1998, as saying that Shell's community development expenditure rose from \$2 million per year in the 1960s to over \$30 million in 1997.

The **Environmental Rights Action's** extensive work in the Niger Delta does not support this claim. Decades of oil activities by **Shell, Elf, Agip, Chevron, Mobil, Texaco etc** in the region have led to environmental degradation, economic impoverishment and cultural destabilisation. Today, the Niger Delta has been recognised by several international environmental groups like **Friends of the Earth International** and **Greenpeace** as one of the most ecologically endangered human ecosystems in the world.

Support ERA's campaign to make the Nigerian environment safe for our people.

For more information, contact:

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