

# Oil and gas exploration in the ecuadorian amazon forest thesis proposals examples...

[Business](#), [Company](#)



# **Oil and Gas Exploration in the Ecuadorian Amazon Forest**

Town/City

Abstract

There is a projected 3.8 million cubic meters of oil connected pollution in the Ecuadorian Amazon forest. From 1964 to 1992 Texaco, currently owned by Chevron, extracted oil from reservoirs beneath the Amazon rainforest in Ecuador and not carefully discarded the drilling solids as well as liquids connected to oil extraction in pitfall through the forest. Furthermore, Texaco's processing plants pumped the wastewater into the local water systems. The slapdash dumping of about 18 billion gallons of wastewater as well as 17 million gallons of waste oil has yet to be correctly assessed and hundreds of thousands of native peoples have suffered, as a result (Rohter 2007, p. 65). This has resulted to various, environmental and social impacts. Moreover, the pollution has led to various health problems to the indigenous people in the area. The research will use different methods of collecting data, which will include archival sources, interviews, government documents, and visuals. Legal issues will be considered during the study to avoid possible litigation arising.

## **Introduction**

The western Amazon comprises parts of Ecuador, Colombia, Peru, Bolivia as well as western Brazil. The region is one of the most biodiverse parts of the world for several taxa, comprising insects, plants, birds, amphibians, and mammals. Underlying this setting of amazing biological, as well as cultural diversity, are huge reserves of oil and gas, several yet untapped. Moreover,

record oil prices and increasing global demand are currently stimulating extraordinary levels of new oil and gas exploration as well as extraction (Sawyer 2004, p. 76). It is the nations of the Amazon region, and not the indigenous peoples who live on much of the land, who affirm their constitutional ownership of subsoil natural resources. The national governments restrict definite geographic areas or “ blocks,” which are zoned for hydrocarbon activities, which they might let to state and conglomerate energy firms for exploration and production (United Nations 2007, p. 7). Exploration of oil in the western Amazon started in early 1920s in Ecuador and Peru, with a production booming during the 1970s. The consequent three decades have seen several huge projects, like many oil projects in the central Ecuadorian Amazon, the Camisea gas project in Peru, and the Urucu gas project in Brazil (Ceballos, et. al., 2005, p. 65).

In America, oil pollution is far less obvious; however, in less rich nations lacking strict oil development regulations as good enforcement, the polluting effects of slapdash oil development are far more obvious. In 1964, oil production started in the pristine rainforests of northeastern Ecuador. Nonetheless, in just 30 years, oil pits spread over an area the size of Rhode Island in the Amazon rainforest have leaked toxic waste into the tributaries and streams of the Amazon River because of careless oil waste management (Ceballos, et. al., 2005, p. 65). Moreover, thousands of people from the native tribes of Ecuador have felt the ruthless effects of the pollution. Several have suffered from illnesses due to pollution. They have been forced to shuffle, frequently with little aid from the government, and they have lost fertile land meant for farming (Soares et al 2006).

Oil production has availed immense economic benefits to Ecuador's government; however, it has too brought devastation to the environment and anguish to the people that occupy the land. Oil firms, particularly Texaco (now Chevron), used defective practices whilst extracting as well as transporting oil which has resulted in polluting the northeast region of Ecuador with billions of gallons of toxic wastewater as well as crude. The native inhabitants of that area have been forced to move and numerous have developed illnesses from the toxic pollution. The problem in Ecuador is very multifaceted since it has numerous dimensions. First there is the noticeable environmental impact (Baker 2008). 18 billion gallons of wastewater, as well as 17 million gallons of waste oil, have been not carefully and inappropriately dumped into unlined oil pits and the streams, as well as rivers of northeastern Ecuador. The oil pollution is so enormous that the litigation between Chevron and the indigenous people of Ecuador is the biggest environmental court case ever with a proposed fine of about \$27 billion (Sawyer 2004, p. 76). The second, and uniformly, if not more significant aspect of the problem is the social impact, which the pollution has had on the indigenous inhabitants of Ecuador. They have been forced to relocate from their indigenous lands, desert their ordinary lifestyles and several have died from cancers and rashes. The paper will examine environmental and social impacts of oil and gas exploration in the Ecuadorian Amazon forest. The proposal will also address effects of oil and gas exploration in the Ecuadorian Amazon forest as well as economic effects of the exploration (Dew et. al., 2003, p. 154).

## Research Questions

- What are the impacts of oil and gas exploration in the Ecuadorian Amazon forest to the native people?
- What are the environmental impacts of oil and gas exploration in the Ecuadorian Amazon forest?
- Does oil and gas exploration in the Ecuadorian Amazon forest have any social impacts to the people in the region?
- Does the oil and gas exploration in the Ecuadorian Amazon forest have any economic impact to the region?

## Aims and objectives

The proposal has the following aims and objectives:

### Methodology

The proposal will adopt different methods of collecting data in order to get valid and up-to-date data concerning the topic on oil and gas exploration in the Ecuadorian Amazon. In order to achieve the project goals, there will be a need to compile information from formerly finished research, as well as secondary data from books, recorded interviews, and archived publications (Griffiths 2007, p. 165). In addition, there will efforts make contact with indigenous people to gain understanding to their experiences with development and of their perspectives on future solutions. The information acquired will be used to fashion a Conceptual Site Model (CSM), which depicts the problems experienced, the sources of these problems, and the impacts created, as a result (Rohter 2007).

Recorded interviews will be useful because it was conducted among

professionals and inhabitants on the needed information. The proposal will identify professional interviews done in relation to the fields of sanitation, social relations, environment, the world economy, biology, and oil pollution and interviewed them utilizing question and answer and conversational techniques. Interviews with these sources frequently result to extra contacts. The contacts will include members of environmental as well as human rights organizations like the Social, Amazon Watch, and Environmental Research Institute, and Stratus Consulting (Rohter 2007, p. 65). The recorded interviews will also involve those of government organizations, such as the EPA, and non-government organizations like the Washington Offices on Latin America. The rationale of the interviews is to supply us with the analysis of the present condition in Ecuador and permit us to gain experience vicariously via people directly involved or with helpful knowledge (Baker 2008).

Visuals will be effective in assessing the situation at Ecuador concerning oil and gas exploration in the region. Visual representations will play a leading role to fully understanding the nature of the problem in the region. In many instances, these visual representations may be founded via firsthand experience, which means visiting the area will be very important. On the other hand, instead of travelling videos such as " Justicia Now" and " Crude" can be used to get the needed information (United Nations 2007).

Furthermore, archival report will provide the much needed information concerning the assessment on the effect of oil and gas exploration in the Ecuadorian Amazon forest. The most important source of literature that will be utilized to analyze the present state of pollution in Ecuador will be the

Cabrera Report. The Cabrera Report is a methodological document utilized during the “ Aguinda v. Texaco” case that summarizes the condition of pollution in Ecuador and comprises a projected cost of total damages, which have resulted from the pollution (United Nations 2007, p. 7). Appendices C, F and H1 of the report relate the condition of pollution in Ecuador most openly. Appendices F and H1 give a history of Texaco’s operations in Ecuador and offer an inventory of all the waste pits used during oil production (Rohter 2007, p. 65). Appendix N comprises remediation methods, which technical experts have considered and why they are helpful, chiefly in Ecuador. In addition, Site evaluation will be an indispensable component of research; there is a need to analyze numerous site evaluation processes used in diverse areas of the world (Young et. al., 2004, p. 8). Several cases will be examined will include the “ Florida State Regulations and Processes for Oil Contaminated Site Assessment” as well as a report, which outlines the processes utilized to evaluate the pollution at petroleum-affected sites in the Corrientes Region of Northern Peru, a region with geography the same to Ecuador, called Evaluation of the Success of Remediation Efforts at Petroleum-affected Sites in the Corrientes Region of Ecuador. The Florida State Regulations and Processes for Oil Contaminated Site Assessment documentation that is accessible to the public and also can be accessed it through internet. This document was created in union with the EPA (Baker 2008)).

In addition, government documents will provide the needed information on the state of and gas exploration in the Ecuadorian Amazon. Government information will be synthesized to quantify the state of oil development in

the region. This is because the national government restrict particular geographic regions or ' blocks,' which are zoned for hydrocarbon activities that they might lease to state, as well as multinational corporations for production and exploration.

Generally, this project will utilize secondary data as a method of collecting data since there are several facets to the problem. Videos offered a visual account of the pollution and the multiple dimensions of remediation which will be required. Technical data will be gathered via literature reviews whilst individual experiences and professional views were recorded in interviews. Through integration of scientific data with the expertise of people in applicable fields as well as the experiences of people involved with the state, it will be easier to make recommendations for further research (Associated Press, 2007).

## **Ethics & Health & Safety issues**

Ethics play a leading role during the research and should be valued while undertaking the research. Because the research deals with a region occupied by the natives, there is need to approach the population observing the necessary ethics. The information that will be given by the professionals and natives should be treated with high confidentiality. Personal details and sensitive information during the interview should be confidential to avoid any form of litigation arising. Failure to make this data confidential will jeopardize the loyalty of the interviewee. Furthermore, when approaching government offices looking for information, it will be important to follow all the relevant protocols in getting the right documents to extract the information.



Furthermore, safety issues should be a priority. While visiting the site for evaluation and to collect the needed information, safety should be a priority (Young et. al., 2004, p. 8). This is because the region has many harmful animals and insects; therefore, demanding the need to be careful while collecting data. In addition, the terrain is not friendly, and a lot of care should be observed while moving from one point to another. In terms of health matters, because the region is full of exploitation of gas and oil, there is a need to take some positive initiatives such as wearing masks, boots and the rights attire to avoid hazards related to oil and gas production as well as exploration. This is because the gases produced when inhaled can result to cancers, skin diseases among other diseases. Therefore, critical adherence to the needed ethical, health, and safety is critical towards attainment of the objectives of the research in question (Rohter 2007, p. 65).

## **Conclusion**

Whist the history of gas and oil extraction as well as exploration in the Ecuadorian Amazon is one of huge ecological as well as social interruption, the prospect should not replicate the past. Thus, road less extraction would highly lower social as well as environmental effects. Appropriate consideration to the rights of the native indigenous people as well as absolute protection of lands of natives living in voluntary isolation, who, by their definition cannot offer sound consent, will bring exploration within broadly conventional international ethics of social justice. Impartial, regional scale premeditated environmental evaluations would safeguard piecemeal damage in many areas. Lastly, the internal community can play a leading

role in broadening the alternatives to the region's countries as well as its native people (Rohter 2007, p. 65).

## List of References

Associated Press . 2007. " Brazil to expand search for oil in Amazon".

Available: <http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/21420635/>. Accessed 2014 March 23.

Baker DR. (2008). Chevron could lose billions over Ecuador suit. San Francisco Chronicle. Available: <http://www.sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi/c/a/2008/04/03/BU8AVUOAE.DTL>. Accessed 2014 March 23.

Bilsborrow RE, Barbieri A, Pan WK, 2004, Changes in population and land use over time in the Ecuadorian Amazon. " Acta Amazonica" 34: 635–647.

Ceballos G, Ehrlich PR . 2006. Global mammal distributions, biodiversity hotspots, and conservation. " Proc Natl Acad Sci U S A" 103: 19374–19379.

Ceballos G, Ehrlich PR, Soberon J, Salazar I, Fay JP . 2005. Global Mammal Conservation: What Must We Manage? " Science", 309: 603–607.

Dew JL, Greenberg JA, Franzen M, Di Fiore A . 2003. Road to extinction: GIS modeling of road development and hunting pressure on Amazonian primates. " American Journal of Physical Anthropology" S36: 89.

EarthRights International, Racimos de Ungurahui, Amazon Watch . 2007. " A legacy of harm: Occidental Petroleum in indigenous territory in the Peruvian Amazon". Washington DC: EarthRights International.

Erwin TL, Pimienta MC, Murillo OE, Aschero V. 2004. Mapping patterns of  $\beta$ -diversity for beetles across the western Amazon Basin: A preliminary case for improving conservation strategies. Proc " Calif Acad Sci," 56: 72–85.

Franzen M. 2006. Evaluating the sustainability of hunting: a comparison of harvest profiles across three Huaorani communities. “ Environ Conserv” 33: 36–45.

Greenberg JA, Kefauver SC, Stimson HC, Yeaton CJ, Ustin SL, 2005, Survival analysis of a neotropical rainforest using multitemporal satellite imagery. “ Remote Sensing of Environment” 96: 202–211.

Griffiths T . 2007.“ Exigiendoresponsabilidad al BID y la CFI en Camisea II: una revisión de estándaresinternacionalesaplicables, y diligencia y conformidaddebidas”. San Francisco: Amazon Watch.

Hearn K . 2008. For Peru's Indians, lawsuit against big oil reflects a new era. “ Washington Post”. Available: <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/story/2008/01/31/ST2008013100037.html>. Accessed 2014 March 23.

Killeen TJ, Douglas M, Consiglio T, Jørgensen PM, Meika J . 2007., Dry spots and wet spots in the Andean hotspot. “ J Biogeography”, 34: 1357–1373.

Malhi Y, Roberts T, Betts R, Killeen T, Li W, et al., 2008. Climate change, deforestation, and the fate of the Amazon. “ Science” 319: 169–172.

Napolitano DA, Ryan AS . 2007. The dilemma of contact: voluntary isolation and the impacts of gas exploitation on health and rights in the KugapakoriNahua Reserve, Peruvian Amazon. “ Environ Res Lett” 2: 1–12.

O'Rourke D, Connolly S . 2003. Just oil? The distribution of environmental and social impacts of oil production and consumption. “ Ann Rev Environ Resource” 28: 587–617.

Pimm SL, Jenkins CN. 2005, Sustaining the Variety of Life. “ Scientific American”, 293: 66–73.

Rohter L . 2007. Vast pipelines in Amazon face challenges over protecting

rights and rivers. “ New York Times”. Available: <http://www.nytimes.com/2007/01/21/world/Americas/21pipeline.html> Accessed 2014 March 23.

Rosenfeld AB, Gordon D, Guerin-McManus M . 2001. “ Reinventing the well: approaches to minimizing the environmental and social impact of oil development in the tropics. In: `Bowles IA, Prickett GT, editors. Footprints in the jungle”. New York: Oxford University Press.

San Sebastián M, Hurtig AK . 2004. Oil exploitation in the Amazon basin of Ecuador: a public health emergency. “ Pan Am J Publ Health” 15: 205–211.

Sawyer S., 2004. “ Crude chronicles: indigenous politics, multinational oil, and neoliberalism in Ecuador.” Durham: Duke University Press.

Soares BS, Nepstad DC, Curran LM, Cerqueira GC, Garcia RA, et al., 2006, Modeling conservation in the Amazon basin. “ Nature” 440: 520–523.

Steege H , Pitman NCA, Sabatier D, Castellanos H, van der Hout P, et al. 2003. A spatial model of tree  $\alpha$ -diversity and  $\beta$ -density for the Amazon Region. “ Biodiversity and Conservation” 12: 2255–2276.

The Energy & Biodiversity Initiative . 2003. “ Integrating biodiversity conservation into oil and gas development.” Washington DC: Conservation International.

United Nations. 2007. United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Available: <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/issues/indigenous/declaration.htm>. Accessed 2014 March 23.

Wunder S. 2003. “ Oil wealth and the fate of the forest”. New York: Routledge.

Young BE, Stuart SN, Chanson JS, Cox NA, Boucher TM . 2004. Disappearing Jewels: The Status of New World Amphibians. " Arlington: NatureServe".