

Corporate social  
responsibility is likely  
to gain growing  
importance for  
business...



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Introduction The advent of globalization has come to present a different view on how society perceives corporations and the role they should play in the society. In the past, corporations had assumed the unique functional role of agents of economic growth since they were the sole providers of goods and services, and creating jobs which of course were felt by all in the society. But as corporations grew in size and acquired more power, such perceptions are changing especially as expectation are that, their growth should match with the needs of the society and its evolution over time (Ransom, 2007).

### Definition

This paper defines as “ the commitment of business to contribute to sustainable economic development, working with employees, their families, their local community and society at large to improve their quality of life in ways that are both good for business and development” 1 especially as it is framed to accommodate the aspirations of the corporations and the local communities in which they operate. This paper further adds that, since in every society infrastructure basically represents a luxury, corporations should strive at meeting the human standards of the society in which they operate by giving back to that society all that can be considered as humanly from an ethical standpoint. But hardly this is the case. Take the case of CSR problems that arise between SHELL and the indigenes of the Niger-Delta area in Nigeria in which during operations, their main sources of livelihood (i. e. rivers and farmlands) are polluted and destroyed. These damages often lead to conflicts between the oil firms and the host communities.

### CSR and environmental impact

Today, the environment is facing increasing pressure from large scale and

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rapid industrialisation due to modernisation and globalisation that is causing heavy damage all due to mass consumption of the earth's resources. In a bit to purify the environment, the western world government's have enacted new environmental legislation aimed at an introduction of major new regulatory regimes such as Pollution Prevention and Control (PPC) in England & Wales, where the Environment Agency (EA) is developing new methods of environmental risk screening and targeting of regulatory effort based on the better regulation principles.

Under the dynamics of globalisation, economic integration, and global environmental governance, issues of global warming and CO2 emissions have been increasing receiving attention today. This evolution has been unfolding since the 1992 Rio Conference on Environment and Development, through the 2002 Johannesburg Earth Summit and to the Kyoto Protocol. Corporate social and environmental responsibility can be seen in this as an overall background tool that has emerged from the presupposition that the aggregate benefits of globalisation supersede the costs of managing environmental damages in as much as environmental management is properly managed. While rich countries such as USA and China are increasingly amongst the world's heavy polluters, developing countries are those paying accountability for all the CO2 emissions. Rich countries have taken this as a concern to help them avoid further regulation that should demonstrate that business can, and should, undertake responsible social and environmental actions beyond compliance but use it as an attempt to show the moral and technical critics that business is absolutely key to delivering sustainable outcomes that can bring development to developing societies. 2

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## Conclusion

CSR since it is defined and implemented by all parties depending on their needs still has to undergo thorough scrutiny. But at the same time, if we all think this concept is to help protect our environment, political will at the level of implementing the existing legislation already enacted such as the Kyoto Protocol, 1992 Rio conference resolutions, and The Johannesburg Earth Summit resolutions is so required. Most governments are still very reluctant to reduce their CO2 emissions and companies have increasingly been involved by influencing some governments as to the course of action they should take when it comes to emissions. If we all think we have to preserve our environment, it should be an affair of all and not just NGO's as the case presently may be.

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