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Course Title: GST122

Course Code: Communication in English

College/Department: Law

Level: 100

Assignment: You were taught that in writing an academic essay, you should start with the perception of a problem. Perceive a problem in your present environment, formulate a researchable topic for it and write an essay on it.

Erosion menace in the Southeastern region of Nigeria

Erosion is a slow process which continues to persist in Nigeria because of the different agents such as water, wind and tillage. The menace of soil erosion especially gully in no doubt represents a major ecological challenge facing most states in the southeastern region of Nigeria.

Erosion is the geological process in which earthen materials are worn away and transported by natural forces. In earth science, erosion is the action of surface processes that removes soil, rock or dissolved material from one location on the Earth’s crust, and then transports it to another location. There are different types of erosion which include the splash erosion, sheet erosion, gully erosion and the rill erosion. Gully erosion is however the most prevalent in the southeastern region of Nigeria. Gully erosion occurs when water is channeled across unprotected land and washes away the soil along the drainage lines.

The observations and researches carried out within the southeastern region of the country has shown us the major causes of soil erosion. Climatic factors are one of the major causes of soil erosion. Heavy rainfall on surface earth materials, under reduced or altered vegetative cover, results in gully erosion. Also, the soil nature and topography can contribute to how erosion impacts the area. The nature of the soils in the southeast is easy prone to damages. According to Ezerika and Adetona (2011), the Imo/Anambra basis is predominated by the Awka-Orlu cuesta which is an area susceptible to ground surface cracks, landslides, mass movement and tectonic movements during the rainy season that results to all kinds of land degradation and soil erosion predominantly. Apart from all the natural causes of erosion, humans are also involved in causing soil erosion. Poor road design, construction and abrupt termination of drains all result in causing gully erosion. Also, some other human factors like overgrazing, excessive farm activities, over-population and mining result in soil erosion. In most states within the southeastern region of Nigeria, human interference with the environment through continuous excavation of borrow-pits and anthropogenic activities result in distortion or removal of soil vegetable cover, are pivotal to soil erosion.

Erosion poses a big threat to human life and the human environment. The Nigeria gully erosion crisis has been ongoing since before 1980, and affects communities large and small. It is an ecological, environmental, economic and humanitarian disaster resulting in land degradation, loss of lives and properties. Erosion has its most striking features on the land surface of South-eastern Nigeria with Anambra state being the most affected. The effect of gully erosion is felt in both rural and urban areas. One of the effects of soil erosion is the distortion, destruction and breakage of major road networks. Some of these roads include Uturu-Isuikwuato road at Mgbelu Umunnekwu, Abia state, Orlu-Mbee/Eziama road, Imo state, Nanka-Ekwulobia road, Anambra and so many other roads. Also, another effect is the destruction of life and property for example in Oko community of Anambra, deep gullies have widened into craters threatening to sweep away 826 families. There is also decreased agricultural sustainability due to unavailable fertile lands for agriculture and reduction of lands available for erection of residential buildings, industries and other structures.

Soil erosion is a continuous process accelerated by climatic and human activities and as such can be managed. The cultivation of close-growing vegetation/grassland, such as carpet grass and trees such as oil palm, serve as a vegetative cover to reduce kinetic energy of raindrops, intercept runoff and induce infiltration on bare soils, can aid in avoiding erosion. Bad cropping techniques such as bush burning, clean weeding, over-grazing, poor drainage channels, continuous cropping and deforestation should be avoided so as to reduce dryness of the soil, soil compaction and breakages that will ensure movability and transportability of soil particles by agents of denudation. Also, rural farmers should be educated on the impact of soil erosion through the use of sensitization campaigns and seminars so as to reduce the menace erosion poses.

In conclusion, soil erosion is a continuous natural phenomenon which cannot be stopped entirely but can be managed and minimized if properly taken care of.