GOVERNANCE IN AFRICAN OIL-PRODUCING COUNTRIES: STATE, MULTINATIONAL COMPANIES AND CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS

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Introduction

For the past fifteen years the oil scene has been going through a series of profound changes. The pressure, which non-governmental organizations (NGOs) exert on multinational oil companies, has made many of these companies rethink and revise their course of action. One of the most visible consequence of this pressure has been the appropriation by oil actors of the ethical discourse of NGOs (on issues such as environment, human rights, transparency and good governance). Since the 1990s the notion of corporate social responsibility has become so widespread that no international oil company can afford not to abide by it, at least at the discourse level. The adoption of an ethical discourse by the main players of the international oil scene, however, is not without consequences on their behavior, and, as a result, on the relationship between international oil companies and governments of oil-producing countries, and on the governance in those countries.

After a brief presentation of the context in which the oil industry has become target of civil society organizations in Nigeria, this paper will examine the case of the Chad-Cameroon pipeline project. We intend to show how, as a reaction to the ongoing critical stance of NGOs, ethicaldiscourse has gradually come to impose itself as the norm, both for the oil industry and within the international financial institutions such as the World Bank . Indeed, the mobilization of NGOs against the Chad-Cameroon project at the end of the 1990s urged the international community to invent new ways of acting. As a result the World Bank imposed direct financial control on Chad, thus implicitly overlooking the principle of sovereignty. The principle of sovereignty has in a way become subordinated to the principle of responsibility and accountability, which operates as a structural component of the relation between states, the international community and transnational private financial actors (Barnet and Finnemore, 2004). The new ethical norms, initiated by NGOs and propagated by the companies, are imposed on governments and influence their capacity to act independently (Warpner and Ruiz, 2000).

1. Oil in Sub-Saharan Africa: general overview

Half a dozen of significant oil producers are located in Sub-Saharan African: Nigeria, Angola, Sudan, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Congo-Brazzaville, Chad, as well as Mauritania and Cameroon. Some of these countries (Nigeria, Angola, Gabon, Congo, and Cameroon) have been producing oil for decades – with dismal development outcomes. Others (Equatorial Guinea, Sudan, Chad, and more recently Mauritania) have only recently begun producing and exporting oil. Several other countries (e.g., São Tomé and Principe) may soon be joining the list as almost all the governments across the continent (including Morocco, Mozambique, Sierra Leone, Senegal, Niger, or Uganda) have granted exploration licenses.

While some countries like Cameroon, Gabon and Congo-Brazzaville are gradually nearing the end of their oil era (their reserves are rapidly declining and no new discovery has been made recently), others are greatly increasing their production.[1] In the next few years, for example, Nigeria plans to increase its output to more than 3 million barrels per day (bpd). Angola, the second largest producer of the region, plans to boost its production from 1.5 to 2 millions bpd. Over the last 20 years, Angola increased proven reserves by 500 percent, one of the highest rates in the world during that period. Angola's deepwater discoveries have been called "the oil jackpot of the 21st century."

Gulf of Guinea: Oil Production and Reserves

	Oil Production – 2006		Oil Reserves – at end 2006	
	Thousand barrels daily	Share of world total	(Million barrels)	Share of world total
Nigeria	2.460	3.0%	36.000	3.0%
Angola	1.400	1.8%	9.000	0.7%
Sudan	400	0.5%	6.400	0.5%
Equatorial Guinea	360	0.5%	1.300	0.2%
Congo-Brazzaville	260	0.3%	1.900	0.2%
Gabon	230	0.3%	2.100	0.2%
Chad	150	0.2%	900	0.1%
Cameroon	63	0.1%	400	<0.1%

Source: BP Statistical Review of World Energy June 2007.

At a global scale, Africa's oil doesn't account for much: the current production of the continent represents only 6% of global oil production, and reserves account only for less than 5% of the world's total. Africa, tough, is important because it is a region open to foreign investors, the Gulf of Guinea is generally viewed by the oil industry as one of the world's "hotspots", for oil production and exploration. For that reason, that region has become the leading deepwater offshore oil production centre. All the major international oil companies are rushing into this new oil eldorado. Over $50 billion will be spent on African oil fields by the end of the decade, making it the largest investment in African history.

2. The oil curse in Africa

While African oil producers have disparate colonial legacies and different sizes and populations, they share an extreme dependence on petroleum and present the same pattern of "misdevelopment". This section will focus on the relationship between oil and poverty and, more specifically, on oil revenue management and its potential to contribute to poverty reduction and sustainable development.

The current African oil boom can be seen as a moment of great opportunity for countries beset by wide-scale poverty. Especially as it occurs at a time when foreign aid to Africa from industrialized countries is falling and being replaced by an emphasis on trade as a means for African countries to escape poverty. The promise that oil will boost the standard of living of Africans echoes repeatedly throughout the Gulf of Guinea, raising popular expectations to sometimes-soaring heights. Many think that oil will provide a revenue stream to break the cycle of poverty that plagues the continent. They believe that oil will bring jobs, food, schools, healthcare, agricultural support and housing.

Unfortunately, the past experience of oil-producing countries over the past several decades tells us a radically different story. The dramatic development failures that have characterized most oil-producing countries indicate that petrodollars have not helped developing countries reduce poverty; in many cases, they have actually exacerbated it (Karl, 1997). Like many oil exporters in other regions, long-time African oil producers such as Nigeria, Angola, Congo-Brazzaville, Cameroon and Gabon, have been largely unable to convert their oil wealth into broad-based poverty reduction. Nor have these countries been able to diversify their economies or prepare for a post-oil future. To the contrary, petroleum has become a magnet for conflict and, in some cases, civil war.

African oil-producing countries exhibit all classic oil related patterns. With the emergence of the oil sector in the 1970s, the so-called "Dutch Disease" set in. Initially, oil development seemed to work – at least for some time. Especially at the beginning, oil exploitation can provide positive outcomes as per capita income may rapidly increase. These positive outcomes, however, are undermined by greater and greater rent-seeking (Gary, 2003).

Because profit margins are so huge, the rent generated by petroleum generally outrivals all other revenue sources. Even healthy pre-existing economic activities can be quickly disrupted and replaced by the growing reliance on petrodollars. It is easier to import food or consumer goods than to produce it if a government has the cash, and it is far simpler to buy technological know-how than to develop it. Thus, the fiscal advantage of petroleum can actually serve as a handicap, hindering the development of other productive activities. When oil windfalls push up the real exchange rate of a country's currency, it tends to render most other exports noncompetitive. The decline of the agriculture and manufacturing sectors of oil countries not only makes them more dependent on oil, thereby exacerbating other problems of dependency, but it can also lead to a permanent loss of competitiveness. Meanwhile, the oil sector cannot make up the shortfall: because oil is an enclave and a highly capital-intensive activity, it provides little employment and relatively few linkages with the rest of the economy.

Nigeria, sub-Saharan Africa's largest oil producer, is a classic illustration of the oil dependency in Africa's oil-producing countries. The country abounds in proven reserves (approximately 36 billion barrels) and is currently the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries' (OPEC) 6th producer behind Saudi Arabia, Venezuela, Iran, the United Arab Emirates, and Kuwait. Nigeria has earned more than $350 billion over the past 40 years. But these oil riches have done little to change the situation of the poor. More than 70 percent live on less than a dollar a day, 50 percent lack sanitation and clean water, and infant mortality is among the highest in the world. In Angola as well, despite the country's exceptional revenues generated by the oil industry, more than 70 percent of the population lives on less than $1 per day, half of the population does not have access to clean water, infant mortality is unusually high and life expectancy is around the relatively low sub-Saharan average.

As oil becomes the dominant economic activity of a country and the leading export activity, governments become dependent on oil money. For those governments, oil is the main source of revenue and foreign exchange and, as a consequence, the economic basis of their power. Oil-led development has a strong tendency to concentrate both production and revenue patterns, and this occurs in countries where economic and political power often is already very concentrated (Matsugana, 2000). Only those who control political power can grant the opportunity to make money from oil, and only those who receive this opportunity can provide the revenues to keep regimes in power. This does not occur to the same extent in more diffuse wealth-generating activities based on, say, fertile soil or fisheries, where the barriers to entry are far lower, the actors more numerous, and the benefits more dispersed.

This dependence on oil revenues negatively affects the capability of states and their ability to govern (Leite, 1999). There is a vicious circle in which the more governments spend, the more they need oil revenues. As a consequence, oil dependence today is overwhelming: in Nigeria, petrodollars account for more than 85 percent of federal government revenue, more than 95 percent of export earnings and approximately 40 percent of GDP. Like Nigeria, Angola's oil dependence is legendary. (The main difference from Nigeria is that more than 97 percent of Angola's oil is drilled offshore, so there is little interaction between companies and local communities.) This situation somehow repeats itself in many other oil-producing countries around the world, including Venezuela, Kazakhstan, Russia, Iran, etc. Only a handful of relatively small countries (such as Dubai, Norway, etc.) have been able to broaden its productive base and not fall into the pitfall of the resource curse.

The problem is that high vulnerability to oil revenues makes it difficult to plan or project government spending levels. In almost every oil-producing country, various development schemes over the past decades have been launched and then abandoned because of declines in oil revenues due to a sudden drop of the oil price. The volatility of oil prices – the rapid fluctuation from $10 to $80 per barrel and back – makes planning extremely difficult and undercuts efforts to turn oil wealth into other more permanent forms of sustainable development. Furthermore, volatility has been shown by scholars to be bad for investment, income distribution, educational attainment and poverty alleviation. Everywhere, the result has been painful. In Nigeria for example, the percentage of people living in poverty increased from 28 percent in 1980 to 70 percent today.

3. Unrest in Nigeria

The deterioration of the socio-economic situation has been accompanied by political decay, a rise in oil-related human rights violations and violence, most notably in Nigeria, in the Niger Delta where most oil is produced. There is a cycle of activism, militancy and repression linked to oil, as spills and other environmental problems result in the loss of livelihoods for many residents. In 1995, the international outcry at the hanging of Ken Saro-Wiwa and other Ogoni activists protesting the despoiling of their Niger Delta lands and other events have had bottom line impacts on the industry.

Given the environmental degradation caused by oil exploitation and neglect by the local authorities, which are generally corrupt, the local population tends to turn straight to the oil companies to obtain the profits from what they consider to be "their" oil. Since government institutions are practically non-existent on the ground (or at least are nowhere to be seen) companies are the only representatives of public authorities that are accessible to the local populations. For although companies pay considerable sums to the state in the form of royalties and income taxes, most of the population of the Niger Delta feels completely excluded from the benefits of oil activities. Regularly and in a more and more violent way, young members of these forgotten people demonstrate their hostility to the oil companies. Pressure is applied in various ways, ranging from sabotage of pipelines, kidnapping employees and occupation of installations, including shallow water platforms. The oil companies find themselves caught in a vicious cycle, where their activities and the revenues they generate distort the political life, increase the tendencies toward the formation of a rent economy and the collapse of political institutions, and exacerbate the popular frustrations of which they are the first victims, while at the same time being seen as guilty by sections of public opinions in Western countries.

Oil companies have become a target for communities that see little benefit from money paid to federal, state and local governments. They complain of serious environmental damage and human rights violations and hold multinational oil companies partly responsible. Thus, security has become a major concern. In addition, organized criminal gangs have engaged in "bunkering," or oil theft, loading oil barrels on cargo ships and reportedly costing oil companies at least 20 percent of their production. The situation become so difficult that oil companies have begun to change their strategies.

The dramatic development failures that have characterized most oil dependent countries has ultimately impacted the activities of the oil companies. These are now under pressure and are increasingly worried about "reputational risk". Communities in the producing areas demand greater benefits and less harm to their environment. At the international level, lobbying and consumer campaigns have targeted particular companies for activities ranging from oil spills to alleged involvement in human rights abuses. The fear of consumer boycotts, threats of litigation, and negative publicity from lawsuits are also worrisome for international oil companies, some of whom have faced difficult public pressure around the globe, such as Shell in Nigeria.

Since the mid-1990s, the Niger Delta region has frequently suffered from violence that opposes local communities and ethnic groups demanding a better access to positions of power and, more specifically, a redefining of the distribution of oil rent in their favor. Confronted with this double threat (local instability and accusation at the international level), companies are adopting various strategies to change this image, through programs which are intended to enable the local populations to benefit directly from the presence and activity of the oil companies. These efforts, not surprisingly, are well publicized by the oil companies. They insist on the fact that the companies' investments are not just in developing oil resources and generating revenues for the governments but are also used to pay scholarships to students, to build roads, schools, clinics and housing; to provide job training; to fund small businesses, or even to support the fight against AIDS. Every year, a company like Shell spends more than $50 million on community development projects in the Niger Delta. However ,where there is little media attention and activities are mostly offshore, (e.g., Congo-Brazzaville or Equatorial Guinea), there is also less philanthropy. These programs, tough, have become an element that cannot be ignored in the strategy of the companies to seek legitimacy from the local populations as well as international observers (NGOs for example).

Sometimes, oil company-funded social development projects are well designed, useful and address an expressed need of the community. Other times, oil company projects can sometimes amount to no more than cash payout to a local leader to win silence or to quell agitated youth activists. Over the long run, however, these actions can actually exacerbate community tensions or other cleavages. In the Niger Delta region, much of the infrastructure built by the oil companies is usually not operational since there is no public finance to take charge of the running costs (teacher's salaries, health equipment, maintenance of roads, etc.). Without any lasting impact on local development, because of lack of partnership with the public authorities (often non-existent), these programs seem essentially intended as a response to the critics and to pressure from the local populations and international NGOs. Companies are not well suited to be development agencies. They are private oil companies: their aim is to do business, not development. While some of the companies' efforts may produce laudable outcomes, corporate philanthropy cannot be an answer to the failure of local and national governments to respond to the needs of their people. Development is not the core business of an oil company: they might be willing to pay and to finance projects, but it cannot be their responsibility to run schools and hospitals. In fact, the companies find themselves not only obliged to make hundreds of ineffective appointments, but above all, to take the place of the State in order to assure the minimum of public services. Thus they are locked in a vicious cycle where, by taking on the role of the state in order to buy short-term social peace, they perpetuate a situation (the weakening of the State) which is the source of the problems they are facing.

The risk that oil companies face in their activities in Nigeria result from the problems of governance peculiar to the rent economies which are characteristic of oil-producing countries (Mitchel, 2002). The oil companies, however, being private economic actors, are not in a position to respond to these systemic problems. Particularly in Nigeria, corruption is a problem of systemic order linked to the development of rent economies and the concomitant collapse of the institutional structures of the state. Since they act from an industrial and financial, not political, perspective, the companies are overcome by inertia in their relations with governments, whose legitimacy they cannot call into question, even in the name of ethical principles. Lacking an appropriate international legal framework and in the absence of an international organization able to impose it, they perpetuate a system which they know is deadlocked and whose consequences will seriously jeopardize the development of the region. Cleary, there is a need for institutions, i.e., for a public authority able to design and implement a development strategy. This is the idea behind the Chad-Cameroon oil project: its aim is to build those institutions through an oil project.

4. The Chad-Cameroon Project

The Chad-Cameroon Oil and Pipeline Project is the most significant, and most closely watched, experiment designed to change the pattern of the "oil curse" and promote poverty reduction through targeted use of oil revenues.

Widely touted as a "model" for other oil-exporting countries, this $3.7 billion project involves ExxonMobil, Chevron, Petronas (the Malaysian state oil company), the World Bank, the governments of Chad and Cameroon, and other actors. The project is due to carry oil from the Doba fields in southern Chad through a 1,000 km underground pipeline, with a capacity of 250,000 bpd, to the Cameroon coast. The project plans to produce about 1 billion barrels of oil from the Doba fields over a period of 25 years, from 2003 onwards. The World Bank estimates that Chad will gain over $2.5 billion in revenues over the life of the project while Cameroon will gain over $500 million in transit fees (based on an oil price of $15 barrel). These revenues will more than double Chad's previous budget expenditures. These figures sound high, although they represent only a small portion of the profits from the project. Nevertheless, petrodollars will profoundly transform Chad, one of the poorest countries on earth. But like in other countries in the past, oil revenues will flow into a country with weak institutions.

Oil was discovered in landlocked Chad in the 1970s, but decades of political instability and the country's limited infrastructure hampered progress in developing the industry. In the 1990s, when the news of a proposed Chad-Cameroon pipeline spread, local and international civil society organizations, especially environmental, human rights and faith-based groups, raised strong concerns that the benefits of the project would not reach the poor in this context of endemic corruption and political repression. Local and international groups launched an advocacy campaign against the project, citing Chad's history of corrupt governance and political repression. Civil society groups also believed that plans to address the impact on the environment, compensation for relocated peoples, and the problem of revenue management were inadequate. Some were against the project under any conditions, while others argued that political and state capacity reforms needed to take place well before any oil should flow.

Concerned by Chad's political instability and by the growing civil society's pressure, the multinational oil companies actively sought World Bank involvement in the project. For the oil companies, the World Bank participation was attractive because it could provide a "political cover" as well as a source of financing for the governments of Chad and Cameroon to participate in the oil consortium developing the project.

This successful campaign led the World Bank to negotiate as part of the loan agreement a legal framework for the management and use of oil revenues from Chad's oilfields. Because its own reputation was at stake, the World Bank required the government of Chad and the oil companies to make significant changes in the project. An elaborate individual and community compensation plan was implemented to compensate those affected by pipeline and oil field construction. The compensation rates were adjusted to a more realistic level after lobbying by local civil society groups in Cameroon and Chad. The oil consortium agreed to devote significant resources towards complying with social and environmental safeguards. The pipeline was re-routed from its initial path to avoid some of the most environmentally sensitive areas and to protect indigenous communities. More generally, the pipeline was built according to western industrial and environmental standards rather than the local ones.

Moreover, the World Bank, as a requirement for its participation, obliged the government of Chad to pass a new revenue management law. The new law was passed in 1999 and stipulates a division of direct oil revenues according to a specific formula: 80 percent of direct oil revenues must be devoted to expenditures in five priority sectors (education, health, rural development, infrastructure, and water and environmental resources), 10 percent to be transferred into an offshore account to be used for poverty reduction programs in a post-oil future (i.e. a "Fund for Future Generations"), 5 percent to be allocated as a supplement to the Doba oil-producing region, etc. The Law also establishes a Revenue Oversight Committee (*Collège de Contrôle et de Surveillance des Ressources Pétrolières*), an independent government-civil society committee whose task is to "verify", "authorize" and "oversee" expenditure of oil revenues.

As good as the revenue management law sounds on paper, critical weaknesses in the law certainly remain. Taken together, these weaknesses mean that much of the state revenues raised from the oil sector will be outside the control of the law and the oversight mechanisms established to monitor them. This potentially gives wide latitude for rent-seeking on the part of both the government and the private sector. Fiscal control is only exercised over special accounts that correspond to direct revenues generated by royalties and dividends. Other indirect revenues, such as taxes and custom duties generated by the oil project, are not covered. These levies may represent as much as 45 percent over the life of the project (Gary, 2004).

The Chad-Cameroon Pipeline Project is nevertheless the biggest international effort to date to focus an oil development project on a poverty reduction outcome. Multinationals, NGOs, International Financial Institutions, and governments are working to increase the benefits and minimize the harm of this oil project to local populations. International and local civil society groups are closely monitoring the project. In Chad, the explicit goal is to build government capacity to manage massive new oil wealth in a transparent and fair manner. To date, results have been mixed. The government demonstrated its lack of commitment to the provisions of the revenue management law in 2005 when, citing Chad's growing security crisis, it amended the law to suppress the Future Generations Fund, increase the allocation to recurrent government expenditures and expand the definition of priority sectors to include security. The World Bank considered these amendments in breach of the 2000 loan agreement, and the bank suspended payments until a fresh agreement was reached in 2006.[2]

The experience of the Chad-Cameroon project to date shows that timing, sequencing, and governance are key. State capacity and good governance are necessary to provide sustainable development; but they are not pipelines, and they cannot be built in the same time frame. Yet the Chad revenue management plan is being widely considered by civil society groups as an example for other oil-exporters. Certainly, the World Bank effort on the Chad-Cameroon project is an innovative experiment, in the context of past development failures based on oil, and elements of the project could possibly be replicated elsewhere. Chad's Revenue Management Law and the Revenue Oversight Committee are novel institutions that could play a useful role if properly supported, and they could be adapted for other country contexts. But very special circumstances led to the Chad-Cameroon Project: Chad is landlocked, requiring massive investment to bring the oil to market; moreover, Chad is extremely poor, making the leverage of the World Bank particularly strong prior to the oil boom. Because of the criticism heaped on companies operating in countries at war (such as Sudan for example), foreign oil companies decided that they could not go forward in conflict-ridden Chad without World Bank participation and strong conditionality. This is in stark contrast to Equatorial Guinea for example, where oil is offshore and the companies decided they did not need World Bank participation.

Conclusion

Africa's trade relationship with the rest of the world is dominated by "extractive industries", especially oil, gas and mining. These sectors accounted for more than 50 percent of Africa's exports and 65 percent of all foreign direct investment during the 1990s. For most African oil-producing countries, notably Nigeria, the failure to develop has been catastrophic. The gap between the promise of petroleum and the perversity of its performance in recent times is enormous. Study after study demonstrates that, as a group, countries dependent on oil as their leading export have performed worse than other developing countries on a variety of economic indicators.

But while the record of oil exporters in Africa (as well as in Asia, Latin America or the Middle East) shows that oil-dependence is most often a perilous development path, negative outcomes from oil booms are not inevitable. Resource booms can certainly be an obstacle to sustainable development, but they can also be beneficial. Norway (a relative newcomer on the oil scene) has used the benefits from North Sea petroleum to earn the highest place on the United Nations Development Program's list of best development performers. Thus, the country where people live best, according to a wide range of economic indicators, is an oil exporter. This means that the underlying development problems around oil are not inherent in the resource itself.

Whether countries succeed in turning oil revenues into long-term benefits for their people, ultimately depends on the quality of public policy. But without improving their democratic institutions and administrative capacity, it is unlikely that African oil exporters will be able to use petrodollars to fuel poverty reduction; instead, oil monies are more likely to make matters worse for the poor. A first step towards these goals is to build transparency. Amongst others, International Financial Institutions, (IFIs) like the International Monetary Fund (IMF) or the World Bank, are very important players shaping the environment for African governments. While their own direct contributions to projects are not always large, they play, as shown in the case of the Chad-Cameroon pipeline, a critical role in order to increase institutional capacities and political accountability. Much remains to be done, as international financial institutions can also exacerbate the problems of oil-exporting countries. Structural adjustment, for example, emphasizes reducing the size of bureaucracies as well as the privatization of key industries like oil. But Africa's oil producers do not necessarily need less government. As Russia's experience shows in the oil sector, privatization in the context of power concentration and corruption merely moves rent-seeking into a different arena of the public-private nexus.

The primary responsibility for managing Africa's oil wealth in a transparent, fair, and accountable way lies with Africa's governments. Building democratic states capable of focusing on reducing poverty is one of the key challenges facing Africa in the 21st century. Africa's governments, though, are only one part of a web of interests and relationships in the African oil boom. Other key actors determining the outcomes of this boom are foreign oil companies, International Financial Institutions like the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, export credit agencies, International NGOs, and Northern governments. Many of these actors are now making tentative steps to address the "resource curse" problem generated by Africa's oil boom. They have begun to recognize that improving the distribution of benefits from oil production is not only an ethical mandate, but also an essential ingredient towards a more stable and sustainable world. The IMF and World Bank are taking steps to increase transparency in Africa's oil economies. Corporate actors are increasing their philanthropic programs and engaging in dialogue with civil society on ways to increase transparency in the sector. And Northern governments, such as the U.S. and U.K., are beginning to acknowledge the need to address the perils of oil-led development.

These actions, while welcome, are not enough. Because developing oil fields and building pipelines happens faster than the construction of efficient states and good governance, only a sustained, coordinated and coherent international effort – a "big push" to change the policy environment – by the relevant actors involved in Africa's oil boom can improve the prospects for transforming Africa's oil wealth into improvements in the lives of the poor. Only a concerted change in the incentive structure surrounding oil can help to ensure that petroleum revenues will be well managed.

Notas

1 For a complete presentation of the African oil scene, see Copinschi and Nöel (2005).

2 The July 2006 agreement commits the government to spend 70 percent of its budget on agriculture, education, environment, de-mining, good governance, infrastructure and rural development programs, and to put any revenues in excess of projections in the Future Generations Fund. The agreement also includes a commitment by both the government and the Bank to strengthen the capacity of the Collège.

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Resumo

Governança nos Países Africanos Produtores de Petróleo: Estado, Companhias Multinacionais e Organizações d Sociedade Civil

A mobilização da sociedade civil tem obrigado as empresas multinacionais de petróleo a adotar o princípio de responsabilidade nas suas relações com os governos dos Estados produtores. Ao obrigarem-se a respeitar princípios "éticos" nas suas ações, as empresas põem em xeque o princípio da soberania. O caso do Tchad é exemplar: o Banco Mundial, sob pressão de algumas ONGs, determinou que o governo adotasse uma lei de gestão que garantisse o uso das rendas do petróleo no financiamento de projetos de desenvolvimento. Este artigo analisará as interações entre os diferentes tipos de atores e seus respectivos recursos de poder em um contexto em que as questões locais (onde se encontra o petróleo) se articulam com as questões globais do mercado do petróleo. As ONGs têm participado diretamente na definição de novas normas da governança cujo campo de aplicação é potencialmente mundial.

Palavras-chaves: governança, África, petróleo, sociedade civil.

Abstract

The mobilization of civil society has forced multinational oil companies to adopt the responsibility principle in their relations with the producing states' governments. In making themselves respect "ethical" principles in their actions, the companies jeopardize the principle of sovereignty. The case of Chad is exemplary: the World Bank, under pressure from some NGOs, has determined that the government has to pass a budget law which will guarantee the use of oil money in the financing of development projects. This article will analyze the interactions between the different kinds of players and their respective sources of power in a context in which the local issues (where the oil is found) articulate with the global issues of the oil market. The NGOs have taken part directly in the definition of new governance norms, whose field of application is potentially global.

Key words: governance, Africa, oil (petroleum), civil society.