



PRESS RELEASE

ANOTHER WHALE WASHED ASHORE AT ASANTA IN THE ELLEMBELLE DISTRICT

We bring to the notice of the general public the washing ashore of a dead whale at the beach of Asanta fishing community in the Ellembelle District of Western Region of Ghana. The incident occurred on Tuesday, October 8, 2013. **This is the 17th occurrence since 2009 and the sixth (6) within one month.** This is an indication that something wrong is happening in the marine environment and needs to be investigated. This situation is worrying and it is causing increasing public resentment, especially for those living in coastal communities.

It must be noted that the responses from regulatory agencies such as the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and Fisheries Commission on these issues leave a lot of concerns un-addressed. For instance, the possibility of the potential impact of offshore petroleum activities in the washing ashore of the whales was dismissed without having conducted any investigations. This has rather increased public fears on the adequacy of response to any major environmental pollution. The coastal and marine environments are unique systems that must be protected at all times with all the resources that are available. The significance of these ecosystems is evidenced through their multiple values and uses. We should therefore take steps to protect it and learn from best practices elsewhere.

Against this background, we reiterate our call on this issue as follow:

- **The Environmental Protection Agency, Fisheries Commission, Wildlife Division of the Forestry Commission and all relevant bodies should conduct thorough investigations to ascertain the death of these whales.**
- **The Environmental Protection Agency should revise the Guidelines of Oil & Gas operations and include the requirement of at least a Preliminary Environmental Assessment for all offshore seismic exploration surveys.**
- **The Fisheries Commission as a matter of urgency should enforce Section 93 of the Fisheries Act, 2002, Act 625, and get all oil companies to conduct Fisheries Impact Assessment as required by Law.**

THANK YOU

**THIS PRESS RELEASE IS FROM FRIENDS OF THE NATION (A SOCIO-ENVIRONMENTAL NGO)
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Friends of the Nation (FoN) is a socio-environmental, research and advocacy NGO, based in the Sekondi-Takoradi in the Western Region of Ghana. FoN serves as a catalyst for increased action on good governance of natural resources including minerals, coastal resources, fisheries, oil and gas, etc.