

# **FOREST POLICY, LAW & ADMINISTRATION**

## **DEFINITIONS:**

Forest Policy could be defined as a plan of actions designed to indicate what proportions nation's land area should be allocated or allotted.

How the areas so dedicated are to be developed and how the products are utilized to the maximum benefit of the public simply put, forest policy could be considered as consisting of those principles which govern the actions of the people with respect to forest reserves.

The forest policy is important for the following reasons:

The long period of growth of timber requires continuity of management even beyond life span of a man.

Timber and most forest resources are renewable. Appropriate management policy is adopted in ensuring that they are kept at high level yield and productivity.

The influence of the forest is far beyond the piece of land on which it is located. Hence a policy must be adopted in which could prevent the wanton destruction of the forest if the public is to enjoy to the fullest the benefits of the goods and services derived from the forest. There are many competing land users. A policy is therefore needed to reduce the conflict amongst these users. A forest policy is adopted to avoid scarcity of forest resources and to prevent abuse of forest land.

The forest policy provides avenue for the chief conservator of forests C:C:F. to constructively argue his case out without political prejudice or misappropriation.

In making forest policy, the following factors must be considered:

- (1) Type of soil
- (2) Climatic factors
- (3) The desirable spp.
- (4) Growth rate of spp.
- (5) Silvicultural characteristics
- (6) Human population and growth rate
- (7) Pattern of wood consumption
- (8) Import & Export Possibilities
- (9) Technical Advancement
- (10) Economic development programme.

Hence the formulation of forest policy should be an interdisciplinary effort. This is because it could require the contribution of an economist, the forest managers, the town planners, silviculturists, forest pathologists to mention just a few.

The forest policy therefore contains either the national or state forestry objectives and goals.

Amongst those which are for example the Nigerian policy covers include:

Consolidation of forest estate.

Protection of soil through forest vegetation.

Protection from forest fire.

Conservation and improvement of water supply through the presence of forest and the management of such forests.

Keep the survey and inventory of forest resources up to date.

Planting and improvement of poorly stocked land e.g. Marginal Land.

Multiple use of forest land.

Establishment of integrated wood based industries rather than stopping at forest product processing enterprises.

Exploitation of high quality manufacture – forest products.

The adoption of the forest policy is the constitutional duty of the legislature which means that the formulation and preparation of forest policy is done by executive house of the government based on the advice made by the forestry services. Once passed and adopted and accepted by the government it becomes a law. You have to note that the forestry services is the originator of a forest policy, advises the government on the content of forest policy and executes the forest policy.