

MACHINERIES/TOOLS USED IN IMPLEMENTING OR FORMULATION OF FOREST POLICY

Among them are:

Public ownership of land.

Public regulation of private land

Financial assistance to approved desirable projects

Provision of technical assistance

Research

Education

Tariffs and trade assistance

Forest Protection against fungal, bacterial, fire pests attacks.

Land Use Planning

NIGERIAN FOREST POLICY AND OTHER FORMS OF LAND USE

Urban Development – settlements, facilities like roads and other land consuming projects.

Agricultural Sector – food crop production, cash crop production.

Industrial – Civil, Military

In Nigeria, Agriculture, forestry, industry and urban development forms the major land use sector. In many developing countries relationship are being established between forestry and agriculture in one hand and between forestry and urban development on the other hand. In Nigeria this relationship has never been established.

The attempt to develop this has been failed by lack of communication and the change from subsistence economy to an industrial economy.

Forest have disappeared due to the conversion of forest land to Agricultural land which is usually accompanied by prolonged cultivation, frequent burning and uncontrolled exploitation of forest products, expansion of settlements and increased industrial activities both in the manufacture and mining sectors.

It appears there is a general lack of appreciation and general understanding of the benefits derivable from forest resources. Among these are the wood products vegetative products, animal products, water, recreational facilities, soil stabilization flood reduction, modifications of the climatic conditions and other environmental facilities/amenities. Some of the benefits may be obtained from a single forest. It must be appreciated that although a single forest may simultaneously produce various benefits, an attempt to increase the yield of these goods and benefits may lead to serious conflicts.

The intensive use of the forest for one product might not be compatible with its intensive use for another product e.g. Yankari.

There is no difficulty in land use when the piece of land has to be put into only one use like protective forestry. But it so often happens that uses to which land can be put are many and there arises a question of which purpose or use to which the land should be put.

Generally, there are two ways of resolving this conflict. These are economic and non-economic considerations. In pure financial considerations have many antagonists particularly among foresters who contend/argue forestry cannot compete with agriculture economically. Ranganatan (1950) argued that these are many incentives rather than financial benefits for keeping the land under forest use imperpetuality.

Similarly Eggeling (1949) suggested that each of the uses to which land could be put could be considered against its own background and must be judged by its merits. While this idea could be accepted Gane (1969) suggested that the social benefits of forestry are more crucial in the developing countries.

For example at Uyo, there are more suggestions that the forestry department should play a great role in arresting gulley erosion which does not only washes away rich agricultural lands dangerously but are a menace to villagers and farms. In the same vein, the social cost and social benefit should be seriously considered whether to put a piece of land to grazing or afforestation of the northern zone of the country.

In recent years, a lot of work has been done on analyzing the chief determinants of land use. Several factors have been frequently discussed and these are as follows:

The cost/benefit ratio of the different Land Uses.

Supply and demand for competing products.

The labour requirements.

Their different pattern of scale.

The possibility of using their products for Industrialization.

The comparative advantage in international trade of produce the various products.

The possible contribution to the balance of payments.

Other aspects include economic location of the crops and the technical status of the industry that will use the product. A change of allocation of resource often occurs in a free and unplanned economy unless a state of equilibrium in the resource allocation is reached.

The various land use censuses since 1960 revealed a pattern of frequent change of land between the main subsistence and plantation crops.

Equilibrium is thus an ideal and it is rarely achieved in a free for all situations. So a prerequisite of proper land use is a land capability classification which aims at orderly and systematic arrangement for the stability of various soils for different crops because of diverse need, taste and prejudices. It often happens that in spite of the knowledge of the land, the wrong crop is grown, the best species are not used and the most efficient labour is not employed.

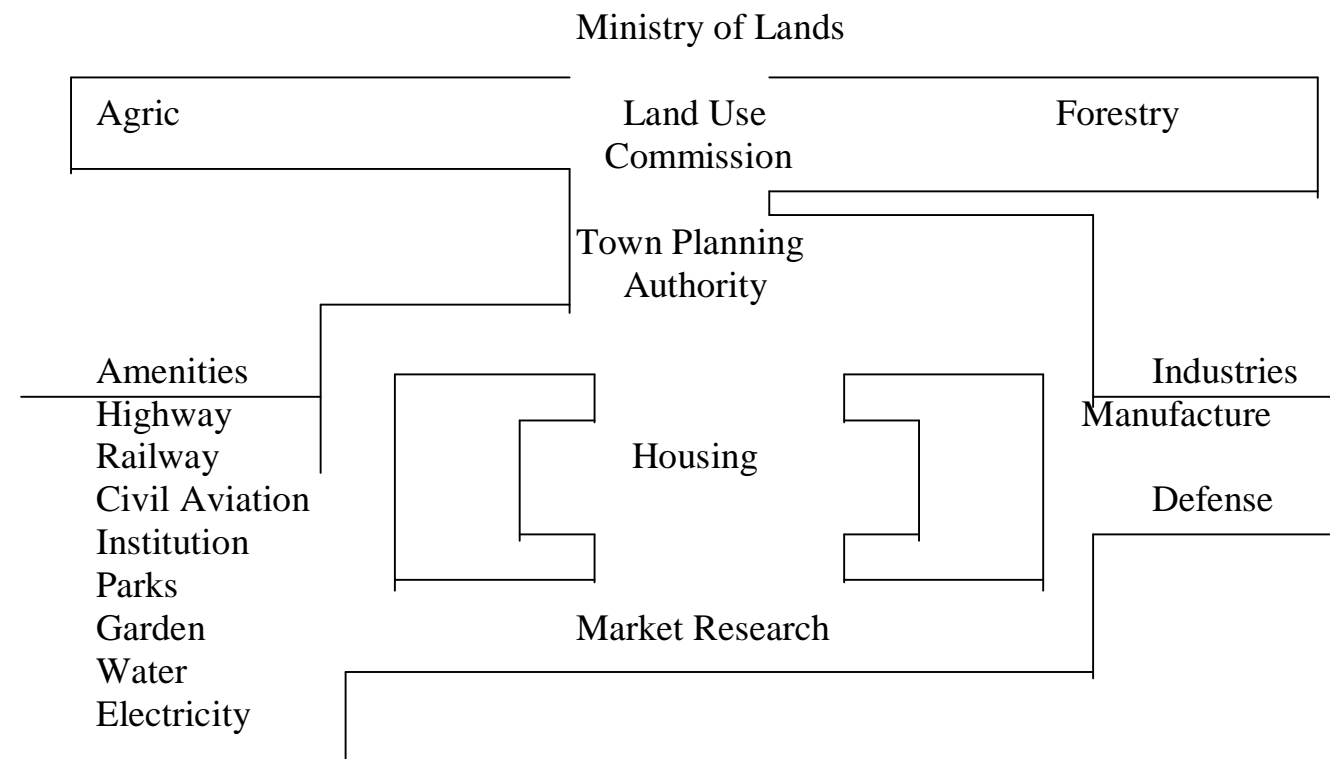
It is not sufficient merely to know what land is capable of yielding. Their ultimate profitable utilization is essential. The need for a land use plan in the country cannot be over emphasized. In view of the present unco-ordinated, fragmented and departmental approach which is incompatible to forest economic development method.

Competition between agriculture and forestry is generally between timber crops and agricultural crops of tree such as cocoa, coffee, rubber, tea etc. Although the gestation period for agricultural crops is shorter, a true comparison can be made only by adopting this kind of criteria for 2 types of crops. The fact that forestry is a long term project is not withstanding. In Nigeria, the absence of private forestry is a major draw-back. In a competitive economy the price/cost ration fortunately decides the use to which land is put but this is not so in this country. In reducing the present drift it is suggested that a land use plan should be based on land capability classification that demand of the economic development process of the country should always be born in mind.

The state ministry of land should be reorganized with the creation of division which will cater for the allocation of rural lands for different uses. The concept which could reduce the competition among land users in the multiple uses of land for purpose which is compatible should be adopted.

It must be appreciated however that multiple use of land may not be a national objective for a forest policy unless it is accompanied by the same recognition of the possibilities of obtaining a maximum yield of every aspect of the potential forest benefits. In other words, multiple use must be seen and accepted as the production of some amount of different potential benefit.

Finally, the state ministry of land should be made to become more functional, cooperate bodies so that all important land uses are brought together and an avenue created for more free and accurate flow of information among them. This will reduce conflicts and will also allow a more purposeful land use planning.



NATIONAL FOREST POLICY

When we consider the staffing conditions of the states forestry services, we discover that most forestry services are underemployed or under-staffed. Productivity is therefore generally low and the cost of administration is enormous. In certain states, the forestry services are charged with administering the forestry policy and low. In addition, since forestry administration is business oriented, its primary functions are the conservation, management and sale of forest products.

This affords a unique position for forestry service demands good organization, structure and management, competence of the personnel based on the limited overall size of the forest estate and considered along a number of states. It will be obvious that present administration of forest policy is not economically satisfactory.

Despite this shortcomings, we have 19 C.C.F. and two directors to administer the various forest policy in the country. The position becomes clearer where we compare Nigerian forestry with what obtains in Australia, Canada and U.S.A. where forestry is highly developed and the character of the industry being quite different from what obtain here.

In these countries, forest occupies a higher proportion of land than in Nigeria, where 4/5 of the 10% are savanna. Apart from the duplication of posts and enormous overhead cost, a comparison of forestry gross revenue and expenditure even during peak production shows a large annual deficit. It is therefore considered necessary to streamline the machinery for implementing and controlling the forest policy in supporting a unitary forest administration.

The following reasons can be advanced:

The state forest authorities are in the final analysis, agents of Federal Government and their annual budget or expenditure is met mostly by the Federal Government so that the present divisions into various classes are at both artificial and wasteful in terms of money provision or monetary considerations.

For a more scientific and progressive management of wood land in the country the administration should be central.

Unification affords a good chance to produce better results due to better management, economic utilization and development.

Centralization will reduce the total annual deficit incurred on forest administration in the country.

The FRIN under the present administration is supplied to spread activities throughout the country to maintain a federal coverage. This inhibits an efficient use of personnel and other scarce resources because management is not handled by the same authority and problems which require simple investigations are often overlooked or referred to FRIN for a painfully slow and delay solutions. Also, states do not concern themselves with seemingly wider

problem which could have been helpful to other states e.g. Bendel now Edo& Delta states State derives large revenue from forestry but does nothing about research.

Finally the responsibility for forestry contributes greatly to the uneven development of the different parts of the country.

A central administration should encourage a more beneficial use of resource and will reduce the present unfinished assignments and projects which is characteristics of contract officers. Moreover, the localization of forestry administration has soiled the image of forestry and has resulted in a hetero-genous standard of policy interpretation and execution.

But serious shortcomings about unification are as follows:

- (a) Reduction of different parts of the country into vestiges of the federal or central body and this may create problem for forestry administrators particularly in the enforcement of forestry laws and acquisition of land for forestry.
- (b) The bigger the forestry department, the more number of decisions to be taken and the harder it becomes to coordinate such decisions.
- (c) Decision making process becomes slow, this is a result of more specialists men would have to be consulted.