

Recreational Forestry, Social Forestry and Deteriorating Nigerian Environment

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Abstract : Developing countries including Nigeria are greatly saddled with problems emanating from environmental deterioration. These problems are glaringly threatening the existence of mankind. A wide range of factors contribute to environmental problems and prominent among these are: increase in human population, deforestation, industrialization, urbanization, ignorance and socio-economic activities. The economic function of the forest has for quite a long time played a major role in the economic life of the people of Nigeria while the social function such as the recreational use of the forest has until today play very little role in the cultural development of the country. Recreation forest ameliorates the environment, reduces psychological stress, and broadens individual outlook and horizon. Unfortunately domestic tourism of recreational forest is not developed and almost unknown due to poverty and non existence of recreational facilities. Social forestry is seen as a sustainable means of combating ecological problems especially in third world countries such as Nigeria. The programme also provides social and economic benefits to the rural people. As a rural-based activity, people's participation is crucial for its success. There is need to create awareness on recreational forestry and social forestry as well as harness their resources for the country .This paper therefore highlights the constraints in the practice of social and recreational forestry in developing countries and suggests ways to motivate the rural people to participate in the programme. . Attempt has been made to trace the causes and consequences of Nigerian environmental deterioration, while suggestions on possible solutions are proffered .

Keywords : recreational, social, deteriorating, forestry

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