

## Forest Policies and Management in Nigeria: Are Households Willing to Pay for Forest Management?

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**Abstract :** Nigeria is rich with abundant resources with an immense contribution of the forest resource to her economic development and to the livelihood of the rural populace over the years. However, this important resource has continued to shrink because it is not sustainably used, managed or conserved. The loss of forest cover has far reaching consequences on regional, national and global economy as well as the environment. This paper reviewed the Nigeria forest management policies, the challenges and willingness to pay (WTP) for management of the community forests in Ogun State, Nigeria. Data for the empirical investigation were obtained using a cross-section survey of 160 rural households by multistage sampling technique. The WTP was assessed by the Dichotomous Choice Contingent Valuation. One major findings is that, the Nigerian forest reserves is established in order to conserve and manage forest resources but has since been neglected while the management plans are either non-existent or abandoned. Also, the free areas termed the community forests where people have unrestricted access to exploit are fast diminishing in both contents and scale. The mean WTP for sustainable management of community forests in the study area was positive with a value of ₦389.04/month. The study recommends policy measures aimed at participatory forest management plan which will include the rural communities in the management of community forests. This will help ensure sustainable management of forest resources as well as improve the welfare of the rural households.

**Keywords :** forests, management, WTP, Nigeria

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