

Chapter Five

Forest Reserves as Challenges to Nigeria's National Security

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Introduction

The protection of forests and woodlands in their natural state for economic, ecological and socio-cultural needs of the people has long been part and parcel of the traditions and practices of various cultures across the globe (Imasuen *et al*, 2013; Amusa *et al*, 2017). The various traditional measures employed to ensure the preservation of forests and woodlands were given further notch by colonial authorities at the outset of colonial administration in many regions of the world through the constitution of forest reserve areas. This was imperative in view of the increase in human population and unsustainable land use practices, particularly shifting cultivation and its attendant harmful impact on the forest areas (Adeyoju, 1995).

Given their critical role in human life and national development, as well as concern over the severe depletion and in some cases near or complete exhaustion of the forests and their resources, governments in all regions of the world have continued to establish forest reserves, national parks, game reserves and other categories of protected areas. The United Nations has mandated that 25 percent of the surface area of every country should be set aside under permanent forest cover as the minimum ecological requirement for the socioeconomic survival of the people (Ladan, 2014). Ironically, there is an emerging nexus between forest and national security in many countries, especially within the sub-Saharan region of Africa.

In Nigeria, forests and forest reserves have become bases for insurgents to launch attacks. They have become hideouts for armed robbers, criminals, cattle rustlers, kidnappers and unknown gunmen who unleash terror on local people. In the light of this, it is important to examine more

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scrupulously the nexus between forest and national security. There is a need to understand how forests impact security situations and how the situations in turn impact forests, and what needs to be done to mitigate the negative upshots along the continuum. Among others, this chapter takes a look at the role of forestry and forest reserves in the Nigerian economy and national development, status of forest reserves and management in the country, the causal link between forest and insecurity, and recommendations for mitigating the challenges of forest reserves to Nigeria's national security.

Conceptual Clarifications

Forests and Forest Reserves

The word "forest" means different things to different people. To a layman, forest is generally understood as a woodland or large area of land that is thickly covered with trees, shrubs and other undergrowth. But Lund (2015) lists over 1,500 different operational definitions of the term that are in texts. The definitions are as diverse as the diversity of the forest itself in terms of types, species composition, goods and services produced and purposes of management, among others. In a general sense, there are four broad categories of forest definitions in use: administrative, land-use, land-cover and potential land capability (Watson *et al*, 2000). The administrative definitions are based primarily upon the legal designations of land, and commonly bear little relationship to the vegetation growing on the land. On the other hand, land-use definitions are based upon the primary purpose that the land serves. The land-cover definitions define forests based upon the type and density of vegetation growing on the land, while the potential land capability definitions of forest relate to land which is currently producing (or, in some cases, capable of producing) a forest; a biome with enough precipitation to support various tree species.

Some of the common definitions of forest that have been developed and widely used include that of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and United States National Vegetation Classification (USNVC). The FAO (2006) defines a forest as any vegetal formation covering a minimum land area of 0.5 ha with a minimum of ten (10) percent crown cover of trees (minimum height 5 m) and/or bamboos, generally associated with wild flora, fauna and natural soil conditions,

and not subject to agricultural practices. According to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), a forest is a minimum area of land of 0.05-1.0 ha with tree crown cover (or equivalent stocking level) of more than 10-30 per cent with trees with the potential to reach a minimum height of 2-5 meters at maturity *in situ* (UNFCCC, 2001). The United States National Vegetation Classification (USNVC) System sees forest as consisting of trees with overlapping crowns forming 60 to 100 percent cover (USNVC, 2017). Güneş and Coşkun (2008) refer to forest as a collection of trees and shrubs grown either naturally or cultivated by humans, and producing woody materials or any kind of forest yield.

From the above definitions, it is evident that the crown-cover threshold and the land-use criterion are some of the most critical factors defining a forest. The trees and other woody vegetation dominate a forest whether in its present state or projected lifespan. Generally, the forest is composed of living and non-living parts. The living part of a forest includes the trees, shrubs, vines, grasses and other herbaceous (non-woody) plants, mosses, algae, fungi, insects, mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians, and micro organisms living on the plants and animals as well as the soil. These living organisms interact with one another and with the non-living components of the environment, which include the soil, water, and minerals, to make up the forest ecosystem; an intricate and interrelated system. Whereas, a forest is usually considered as an area filled with trees, in some quarters any tall densely packed locale of vegetation may also be regarded a forest, even underwater vegetation such as kelp forests, or non-vegetation such as fungi and bacteria.

Meanwhile, a forest reserve is an area so designated and constituted under a forest act or ordinance in order to give it the desired or legal protection (Nieuwenhuis, 2010). Agbeja (2020) defined it as an area of land constituted under law that aims at ensuring and securing the availability and contribution of forest goods and services to long term development of a nation. Essentially, it is an area of forest set aside and preserved by the government. Forest reserves are established mainly for the sustainable use of natural forest ecosystems, to conserve habitats in their natural state, conserve areas for scientific research and education and to protect vulnerable or endangered species or landscapes. More importantly, they serve as source of timber supply and are managed through legal or other effective means. In Nigeria, forest reserves are owned by the State Governments and managed by the State Forestry Departments (SFDs)

who have professional training and are performing their duties.

In forest management, there are three main types of forests: State Forests (SFDs). However, these are forests that are managed by the government and obtained from the state and services. Forests include National Parks, Nature Reserves, and Forest Reserves.

Security

There is plethora of definitions of security, but the emphasis, concept, and scope are different. However, the concept of security is derived from where the threat is coming from, meaning freedom from fear, or threat. This is the concept of security (2020) who defines security as the state of being free from threats or threatened by threats. Security is an emotional or psychological state. In this instance, security is the usage of force to protect structures, and people, and to ensure they are secure. It is also a given issue or a problem, and lastly, security is to define, conceive, and implement security policies.

From the above definitions, it is evident that security is a preoccupation of the state across the globe. The concept of security is traditional. The concept of security is from danger, and the School of Thought.

who have professional and technical staff including uniform guards for performing their various responsibilities.

In forest management, there are also areas referred to as "free areas". These are forested areas that are not under strict management by the SFDs. However, permission to exploit trees from them still has to be obtained from SFDs. They provide additional sources of forest products and services. Furthermore, there are "conservation or protected areas" including National Parks, Game Reserves, Wildlife Sanctuaries and Strict Nature Reserves (SNR) among others which are managed by the federal governments.

Security

There is plethora of definitions of the term, *security*. This is based on the emphasis, concerns and perspectives of different people and organisations. However, the *Online Etymology Dictionary*, reveals that the word 'secure', from where the noun *security* is formed derived from Latin *securus*, meaning freedom from anxiety: *se* (without) + *cura* (care, anxiety). In other words, security connotes safety – the state of being free from danger or threat. This is in tandem with the position of Wahab and Ogbogbo (2020) who defined *security* "as a condition or feeling of not being threatened by something or somebody physically, psychologically, emotionally or financially". Nonetheless, security as a term is often used in three broad segments. The first is the general, everyday use of the term. In this instance, security refers to the desire for safety or protection. Second is the usage of the word for political purposes; relating to political processes, structures, and actions utilised to ensure a given political unit or entity is secure. It is also frequently used as a political tool to assign priority to a given issue or perceived threat within the broader political realm. Third, and lastly, security can be employed as an analytical concept to identify, define, conceptualise, explain, or forecast societal developments such as security policy, institutions, and governance structures (Ball, 2019).

From the analytical point of view, the concept of security has become a preoccupation of scholars, analysts, policy makers and organisations across the globe for the past decades. Two major Schools of Thought to the concept have been identified. These are: Traditional and Non-Traditional. Traditional School of Thought defines security to mean safety from danger and from external attack or infiltration. According to this School of Thought, the referent object of security is the state. Here, security

is associated with peace and prevention of conflict through all forms of military means. On the other hand, the Non-Traditional School of Thought attempts to expand the definition of security. It considers other issues such as environment, political, economic and social threats that endangers the lives and properties of individuals in addition to the survival of the state. It argues that a predominantly military definition does not appreciate the fact that the greatest threat to state survival may not be military but environmental, health, political, social and economic (Afolabi, 2015). In other words, security is more than military security or security from external attacks. To this extent, security as a concept is broad in nature and includes economic security, social security, environmental security, food security, security of life and technological security among others.

Buzan (1991) distinguished among three levels of analysis to the understanding of the concept of security. These are the individual level, national level and international level. Individual security also refers to as personal security involves those values people seek to secure including life, health, status, freedom and wealth. It covers safety from physical threat, economic threat and social threat, among others. National security is understood as the protection of the state from external aggression. It is described as the protection and maintenance of the national interest of a state or nation. It is the capacity to control those domestic and foreign conditions that the public opinion of a given society believes are necessary for it to enjoy its own self-determination or autonomy, prosperity and well-being. On the other hand, international security is described as the efforts and measures taken by nations, regional and international organisations to ensure mutual survival and safety through the use of diplomacy and military actions. International security is often used synonymously with national security or state security in the global.

National Security

Conventionally, "security" in the context of international relations is understood as "national security" (Maduagwu, 2020). It encompasses both military defence and welfare of citizens. It ensembles two broad elements, that is, state security and human security. Although scholars have strived to treat national security and human security as two distinct concepts, it has been pretty difficult to separate the two as one cannot be achieved at the expense of the other. As submitted by Maduagwu (2020), it is not enough that the state protects its territorial integrity and the physical

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lives of its citizens, the state has the additional responsibility of ensuring that the citizens live in a conducive atmosphere that would enable them to attain maximum happiness. In other words, national security means the protection of the citizens and the state from harm and all forms of threats.

Meanwhile, harm or threat to national security may be internally or externally induced (Wahab and Ogbogbo, 2020). Internally-induced threat to national security comprises all factors that can threaten the peace, freedom and existence of virtually everything that affects humans, institutions and environment within a given territorial space. Internally-induced security threats manifest in form of civil strifes, insurgency, banditry and terrorism among others. On the other hand, externally-induced threat arises when there is an external aggression against the state. It also connotes threats that escalate beyond state boundaries, often as a result of activities that occur within a state. They may be perpetuated by both nation and non-nation state actors. Overall, violence associated with insurgencies, civil strifes and terrorist activities has increased national security problems in many regions and thrown up a lot of issues, including the need to address poverty, toxic ideology, issues of marginalisation, bad governance, ungoverned spaces, corruption, and electoral malpractices among others.

National security is vital for cohesion, peace and sustainable development of a nation state. Thus, an enduring national security strategy is one that offers a broad-based prosperity that leaves no one behind while providing social security investments that protect the poor, vulnerable and unemployed to ensure a just and equitable distribution of wealth.

Theoretical Perspectives on the Causes of Conflicts and Insecurity

The literature on conflict shows a general consensus that conflicts and insecurity are hardly ever mono-causal in nature. In other words, a number of factors usually interconnect to explain and escalate all security challenges. These factors are often divided into *pivotal or direct factors* and *indirect factors* (de Koning and Capistrano, 2007). Pivotal factors lay at the root of conflict. They are embedded in political, cultural and economic systems that are inevitably confrontational in nature. They relate to the lack of legitimacy, effectiveness and inclusiveness of state governance as well as explicit discriminatory policies and practices towards certain classes, or

minority groups, and patterns of socio-economic exclusion and cultural deprivation. On the other hand, indirect factors are escalating factors that worsen a security situation. They are further divided into mobilising factors, aggravating factors, and conflict triggers. Mobilising factors concern issues that are used by conflict gladiators to rally support for their cause, or shape the people around a shared grievance. Aggravating factors do not feed conflicts in themselves but act upon conflict, either in an escalating or de-escalating manner. The ready availability of firearms and presence of valuable commodities in a conflict zone give impetus to a conflict that is already started. Conflict triggers are events that inflame a violence often takes over. A number of theories have evolved dealing with internal conflicts and security challenges and each built around the relative importance and nature of pivotal, mobilising and aggravating factors. These include: greed and grievance (relative deprivation), environmental scarcity, natural resource abundance, political-ecology, geographical and ungoverned space theories.

Greed and Grievance

The proponents of the greed and grievance or relative deprivation theory argued that people's willingness to rebel against the political system or authority would increase if the gap between their expectations and actual achievements would grow. The theory suggests that the abysmal failure of state, especially in addressing critical challenges to development in many of its parts, is responsible for internal insurrection by armed militia groups against the state (Karim *et al*, 2020). However, it has been shown that grievance-based theories could not explain why some societies have not gone into turmoil despite severe deprivations (de Koning and Capistrano, 2007). Another problem grievance theory could not come to terms with, was the collective action problem: why join a resistance and risk your life if the struggle can also be accomplished without you. To handle these deficiencies, several elements were added which gradually relegated the importance of initial grievances born out of deprivation. While grievances are still considered to be at the base of civil unrest they have to be mobilised, led, and targeted in a certain way in order to have an effect in the form of organised armed struggle.

Environmental Scarcity

There are two Schools of Thought related drivers of conflict and School of Thought, a major increasing environmental scarcity. The second School of Thought groups that are principally capture high value natural resources of the environmental scarcity and quantity of renewable resources access act singly scarcity of cropland, water. This scarcity of natural resources. First, resource scarcity whereby certain groups are challenge existing power or rural rebellion. Altern generate population movement communal conflicts of inhabitants. A second was destabilising effect on referred to as the ingenuity. Ingenuity is and is embodied in human can overwhelm efforts reduce a country's anti-state grievances weakened state loses boosting the probability (Capistrano, 2007).

Natural Resource

Natural resource challenges emerge perspective. It was commodities, especially

Environmental Scarcity

There are two Schools of Thought that have identified the environment-related drivers of conflict and security challenge. According to the first School of Thought, a major motivation for people to engage in conflict is increasing environmental scarcities and related rural peoples grievances. The second School of Thought looks at how political elites and opposition groups that are principally driven by economic greed tend to violently capture high value natural resources. Homer-Dixon (1994), an exponent of the environmental scarcity position argues that decreases in the quality and quantity of renewable resources, population growth, and unequal resources access act singly or in various combinations to increase the scarcity of cropland, water, forest and fish for certain population groups. This scarcity of natural resources generates social conflict in two ways. First, resource scarcity leads to resource capture by dominant groups whereby certain groups are marginalised, feel resented and are inclined to challenge existing power relations. This can take the form of insurgency or rural rebellion. Alternatively, environmental scarcities are likely to generate population movements to ecologically fragile areas where inter-communal conflicts of an ethnic nature are likely to arise with local inhabitants. A second way in which scarcity causes conflict is through its destabilising effect on political, social and economic innovation. This is referred to as the ingenuity gap. As scarcity becomes worse, some poor societies will face a widening gap between their supply and demand of ingenuity. Ingenuity is understood as society's capacity to deal with scarcity, and is embodied in human capital, institutions and technologies. Scarcities can overwhelm efforts to produce constructive change and can actually reduce a country's ability to deliver reform. In the face of scarcity a weakened state loses its moral and coercive authority, leaving room for anti-state grievances and rebel groups and elites challenging authority, boosting the probability of serious turmoil and violence (de Koning and Capistrano, 2007).

Natural Resource Abundance

Natural resource abundance as a theory of internal conflicts and security challenges emerged in direct contrast with the environmental scarcity perspective. It was postulated that the presence of abundant primary commodities, especially in low-income countries, exacerbates the risk of

violent conflict and security challenges (Bannon and Collier, 2003). It was further posited that while the availability of resources used to be perceived as creating an opportunity to engage in conflict, the struggle for these resources is now a principal object, or motive for armed conflict. The proponents of this theory believe that not the impoverished or marginalised, but criminal and opportunist rent seekers who are able to orchestrate rebellion, are inclined towards violence.

Political-Ecology

The political-ecology theory stresses that the physical state of the environment, like the abundance and scarcity of natural resources, is mediated by political institutions and processes and eventually determines whether conflict and security challenges erupt and deteriorate into violence. In other words, there is no direct relationship between natural resources, or the environment, and conflict. Political ecologists argue that proclaiming conflict to be "environmental" or "natural resource based", obscures the real roots of the conflict that are located in issues of distribution and discrimination, and global political and economic processes (de Koning and Capistrano, 2007).

Geographical

The geographical theory says that geographical factors play a critical role in shaping the motivations for internal conflict and security challenge as well as in influencing the way in which the conflicts are fought, and who will prevail. Geographical factors refer to the distance of a conflict area to the capital, the presence of natural resources and whether or not the conflict area is located along international boundaries. The underlying hypothesis is that remote border zones with high value natural resources are susceptible to prolonged armed conflicts. In addition, some authors have stressed that rough terrain factor, i.e. areas that are difficult to penetrate, like dense forests or mountainous areas, offer an advantageous environment for rebel parties over conventional government troops (de Koning and Capistrano, 2007).

Ungoverned Space

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control the space (Whelan, 2006). The physical aspect refers to land and maritime areas, while the non-physical aspect refers to the financial space that can be utilised by criminal groups to transact money for nefarious activities. The United States Department of Defense refers to ungoverned space as a place where the state or central government is unable or unwilling to extend control, effectively govern, or influence the local population, and where a provincial, local, tribal or autonomous government does not fully or effectively govern, due to inadequate governance capacity, insufficient political will, gaps in legitimacy, the presence of conflict, or restrictive norms of behaviour (Lamb, 2008). The 2007 RAND study "Ungoverned Territories" explores ungoverned territories through two dimensions: *ungovernability* and *conduciveness* to terrorism. The report measures governability using four indicators: the level of state penetration into society, the extent to which the state retains a monopoly of force, the extent to which the state can control its borders, and whether the area is vulnerable to external intervention. More importantly, it measures ungovernability by the malfunctioning or non-functioning of state institutions, which indicates: potential vacuums for other forces to fill; the degree of local compliance with national law; the degree of collaboration with the state by potentially disaffected groups; and the extent of local acceptance of state legitimacy. In addition, RAND's "Ungoverned Territories" identifies four variables that influence whether an area is conducive to insurgents or terrorists exploitation. They are: adequacy of infrastructure and operational access (for instance: communications, official or unofficial banking, or transport); sources of income (from, for instance: drugs, human trafficking, diamonds, or piracy), favourable demographic and social characteristics (success depends on some popular support or acquiescence often reinforced by a history of conflict with the center); and invisibility (pertaining to being physically inhospitable and geographically remote).

Overview of Contemporary Security Challenges in Nigeria

The Nigerian state is embroiled in manifold security challenges and these have attracted the attention of many scholars in recent times (Olaniyan, 2016; Karim *et al*, 2020; Ojo, 2020). The challenges are less predictable with blurred boundaries between external and internal risk factors. Some of these challenges include: insurgency, terrorism, violent extremism, armed

banditry, kidnapping, pastoralists and farmers conflicts, cattle rustling, and militancy and separatist agitations among others. In particular, the security challenges from insurgency, terrorism and violent extremism remain an existential threat to the Nigerian state and her citizens. The major culprit in this regard is the Boko Haram terrorist group with activities mainly in the North Eastern part of the country. While the activities of this group have largely been degraded by the combined efforts of the Armed Forces of Nigeria and other security agencies as well as the Multi-National Joint Task Force (MNJTF), there are still concerns that the group remains a threat with potential to carry out intermittent attacks on isolated targets. The effects of the terror campaign of the group have already manifested in mass displacement and migration, creation of a large number of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs), undermining governance, rule of law, national cohesion and economic activities. Other effects include destruction of infrastructure and human rights violations.

In the same vein, the criminal activities of armed bandits and kidnap gangs are preeminent threats confronting the nation. Their major activities include kidnapping and cattle rustling which are on the increase due to high economic payoffs in terms of derivable financial benefits. While kidnapping is widespread across the country, cattle rustling is predominant in the Northern states of Zamfara, Katsina, Kebbi, Kano, Kaduna, Plateau, Benue, Nasarawa, Bauchi, and Taraba. Meanwhile, trend analysis suggests a correlation between banditry, militia groups, kidnapping and cattle rustling, in what appears to be a convergence of various illegal networks (National Security Strategy, 2019). This has led to loss of lives and property and ultimately undermines peace in the country with grave implications for human security.

Similarly, violent conflicts between pastoralists and farmers are now widespread in the country with severe consequences in terms of loss of lives, property and disruption of the normal functioning of the society. These conflicts undermine the fabric of the country's corporate existence as they exacerbate the various fault lines with grave implications. At the heart of these conflicts are the quest for land, grazing routes, water and other resources. Climate change, population explosion and growth of new settlements are veritable sources and causal factors of most of these conflicts.

In recent years, militancy in the Niger Delta and separatist agitations in the Southeast and Southwest have also persisted and become significant

security concerns. Some of the specific regional and national concerns are that the mobilisation of violence.

Role of Forestry and National Development

Forest reserves and through production citizenry. Some of the inputs in production roundwood, sawnwood, paper among others, natural foods and directly to the household, oilseeds, latexes, gum, billion people around (Popoola, 2014).

Forest-based industries also provide people worldwide, and early 60s, forest of the GDP with timber (2016). Records show 4.1, 8.0 and 28.8 per cent (Alabi, 2006). For especially as the sector and has also attracted of industrial production and palm produce favourable balance.

There are also from the forest for protection of water and volume of water quality and maintenance hazardous wind

security concerns. Separatist agitations threaten national cohesion with specific regional and national security implications, including the chance that the mobilisation of protesters could potentially escalate into armed violence.

Role of Forestry and Forest Reserves in the Nigerian Economy and National Development

Forest reserves and other forest areas perform economic service functions through production of many goods and services for the welfare of the citizenry. Some of the goods are needed as raw materials which serve as inputs in production systems. Trees are used as timber for industrial roundwood, sawnwood, wood-based panels, fuelwood, charcoal, pulp and paper among others. The forests also serve as an invaluable repository of natural foods and non-timber forest products (NTFPs) that contribute directly to the household economy. These include different arrays of nuts, oilseeds, latexes, gums, resins, rattan, vanilla, and game meats. About 1.6 billion people around the globe earn their livelihoods in and from forests (Popoola, 2014).

Forest-based industries such as sawmills, paper mills and furniture industries also provide sources of employment and income for millions of people worldwide. In Nigeria, before the discovery of oil in the late 50s and early 60s, forestry and agriculture sectors contributed over 80 percent of the GDP with timber being a major export commodity (Idumah *et al*, 2016). Records showed that export revenue from the forest sector grew at 4.1, 8.0 and 28.8 percent between 1950-60, 1960-70 and 1970-80 respectively (Alabi, 2006). Forestry and forest industries have been a pacemaker, especially as the sector embraces the earliest processing plant in the country and has also attracted a large number of entrepreneurs at different levels of industrial production. In addition to the exports of cocoa, groundnuts and palm produce, forest products had been the mainstay of the country's favourable balance of payments in the past.

There are also environmental and ecological service functions arising from the forest ecosystem. These include hydrological benefits (such as protection of watershed, reduced sedimentation, controlling the timing and volume of water flows, controlling soil salinisation, protecting water quality and maintaining aquatic habitats), disaster prevention (including hazardous winds, floods and landslides), biodiversity conservation

(fostering the preservation of wild flora and fauna), carbon sequestration and storage (forests and trees mitigate climate change by absorbing carbon dioxide and storing carbon), landscape and scenic beauty among others. The forests also provide numerous socio-cultural service functions for the people. Many nature-based tourism and ecotourism activities revolve around forests. Ecotourism provides a means by which people may use the forest and its resources, especially the wildlife, without extracting resources or degrading the environment. The wildlife species in particular, attracts many visitors from other parts of the world, and this is a major foreign exchange earner (Adejumo *et al*, 2014). Activities such as big photographic safaris, relaxation, meditations and even simple trekking and camping depend on the continued existence of the forest species, habitats and ecosystems.

In addition, forest reserves are used for scientific and research purposes. These are functions vital to deepening our understanding of the natural world. It is certain that there will be new uses to which species, habitats and ecosystems can be put, and these are likely to be revealed by research. Forest resources are particularly important in medicine, including immunology and other studies on diseases. For thousands of years, the people have known and exploited the curative and therapeutic properties of many forest plant species. With the tremendous diversity of species in the forests that are yet to be described, future cures for many diseases await discovery, particularly in the form of natural chemicals derived from plants, fungi and microorganisms. Furthermore, forest resources provide genetic materials that are important for crop and livestock improvement.

Status of Forest Reserves and Management in Nigeria

In Nigeria, there are 445 gazetted forest reserves located in different parts of the country (Federal Ministry of Environment, 2020). The Forestry Ordinance was promulgated in 1890 as the legal instrument for the constitution of forest reserves in the country. The first forest reserve in the country, Mamu forest reserve (now Onigambari), was created in 1899. By 1950, about 8% of the total area of Nigeria was under forest reservation. The creation of forest reserves slowed down after independence and ceased around 1980 with about 11% of the total land area of the country gazetted as forest reserves (Onochie, 1984). Table 5.1 shows the reserved forests and their percentages of the total land area according to geopolitical zones

of the country as at 1984. 1 percent of the total land are 60 percent of the initial fore due to agricultural encro development and urbanisat

Table 5.1: Distribution of Forest

S/N	Geo-political zone	To
1	North-West	
2	North-East	
3	North Central	
4	South West	
5	South East	
6	South South	
	Nigeria	

Source: Onochie, 1984

As stated earlier, fo managed by the respect management of forest quite fortuitous. The la are obsolete. The level out in the forest areas basic infrastructure a reserves in the coun resources. There is a vehicles to carry out c and principles of susta the constituted forest insufficient. There is making in forests and riddled with incidenc

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of the country as at 1984. Whereas the original goal was to reserve 25 percent of the total land area of the country, by the year 2000 more than 60 percent of the initial forest reserve areas are reported to have been lost due to agricultural encroachment, illegal logging, infrastructural development and urbanisation (ITTO, 2006).

Table 5.1: Distribution of Forest Reserves in Nigeria by Geopolitical Zone in 1984

S/N	Geo-political zone	Total land Area (sq.km)	Area of Reserve Forest (sq.km)	% of land Area Reserved as Forest
1	North-West	205,096.03	31,190.19	15.21%
2	North-East	278,148.03	18,215.36	6.55%
3	North Central	234,754.96	24,084.95	10.26%
4	South West	77,656.44	12,958.77	16.69%
5	South East	28,612.55	446.31	1.63%
6	South South	83,784.50	13,075.94	15.61%
	Nigeria	90,055.61	99,991.92	10.99%

Source: Onochie, 1984

As stated earlier, forest reserves in the country are controlled and managed by the respective states in which they are located. However, the management of forest and other protected areas in the country has been quite fortuitous. The laws and policies associated with their management are obsolete. The level of supervision, monitoring and surveillance carried out in the forest areas leave much to be desired. Staffing and provision of basic infrastructure are grossly inadequate. The management of forest reserves in the country is generally hampered by limited funds and resources. There is a dearth of modern working equipment and patrol vehicles to carry out day-to-day activities by workers. Management plans and principles of sustained yield forestry have been abandoned in most of the constituted forest reserves. Inventory records on forest resources are insufficient. There is inadequate participation of local people in decision-making in forests and forestry related matters. The forestry sector is also riddled with incidences of illegal activities.

As a corollary to the above, many forests and gazetted areas have become the hideouts of choice for criminals while they go on their crime

sprees. Contrary to the noble objectives for which they were constituted, many forest reserves have become a source of security concern both at the local and national scale. They have become bases for insurgents and hideouts for armed robbers, criminals, cattle rustlers, kidnappers and unknown gun-men who unleash terror on local people (Ladan, 2014). Insecurity in and around forest areas has emerged as the greatest threat to their existence. This has a lot of negative upshots, including compromise in ecological integrity of the forests and loss of valuable species. It is also now difficult to carry out field works and research activities in many of the forest reserves owing to insecurity. In addition, ecotourism activities which revolve around forests and provide means of foreign exchange earnings for the country can no longer take place. All of these, at the moment, portend an ominous picture for forest reserves in Nigeria.

Forest Reserves and Insecurity: The Causal Links

A causal relation and aggravating role of the forest in persisting internal conflicts have been documented by many authors (Ladan, 2014; Olaniyan 2017). However, the link between insecurity, violent conflict and forest is not a modern day phenomenon. According to Donovan *et al* (2007), forests have figured prominently in wars for thousands of years as, among other roles, a source of raw materials, a venue of war, or as a buffer zone separating opposing groups. Since earliest times, the forest has been considered a strategic resource providing impediment to invaders as well as refuge and resources to residents and rulers alike. From the forest came the raw materials for construction of ramparts and battering rams, the charcoal to produce the metal and subsequently the munitions and the timber and naval stores to build the navies, which played a key role in the defense strategy of the major powers well until the end of the nineteenth century. Invading armies are reported to also look to local resources, including forests, to meet their needs, both for the provisioning as well as the protection of their forces. For societies under siege, local forests are said to provide substitute resources to ease the hardship of wartime blockade. Even after cessation of violent conflict, forests have continued to play an important role providing the victors the resources to reward family, friends, loyal followers and other favourites for their support.

The close relation between timber as a major forest product and conflict has attracted the attention of several international institutions with the

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coinage of the term, "conflict timber". The Global Witness (2002) in a report on the Liberian Timber industry and its role in supporting rebel-president Charles Taylor, defined conflict timber as "timber that has been traded at some point in the chain of custody by armed groups, be they rebel factions or regular soldiers or by a civilian administration involved in armed conflict – either to perpetuate conflict or take advantage of conflict situations for personal gain." Apart from Liberia, the conflict timber phenomenon has been observed in other countries such as Myanmar, Cambodia, DRC, the Philippines, Sierra Leone, Guinea and Ivory Coast. Timber trade usually offers a viable fall back for opposition parties in conflict that have not been able to attain their goal of state capture, regional autonomy or secession (Le Billon, 2005).

Illegal exploitation of forest resources and extortionate terrorism such as kidnapping and hostage taking provide major means of financing rebellious battles in most African countries. In the DRC, rebel groups are involved in illegal timber logging and charcoal production generating revenue to the tune of \$30 million annually (IRIN, 2009). Rebel groups also derive financial resources from animal poaching in the forest. Warburton (2014) reported that about 100 elephants are poached everyday in Africa for ivory and sold in Asia for up to \$3000 per kilogramme.

The forest has also continually remained a well suited terrain as a hideout for rebel groups. They can stay, mobilise, and gain strength in the forest, without knowing or at least without disturbance from government troops. In addition, the forest often enables rebels to counteract the numeric advantage and better equipment of government forces. Vietnam is a well-known case of forest being used as a hideout and battle tactic. Goro (2007) argues that the chances of survival of American soldiers in the Vietnamese jungle were very low even without having to confront the enemy in battle. Vietnamese guerrillas on the other hand survived on local foods and were able to prevent and cure sicknesses. In battle they appeared invisible to American soldiers by hiding in tunnels and swiftly moving locations within the forest. Thus, the US failure to neutralise the Vietcong can largely be attributed to the rough terrain factor. Similar observations have been made about rebel groups in the Philippines, Indonesia, Colombia, the DRC, Angola and Western Africa countries of Liberia and Ivory Coast (Donovan *et al*, 2007).

Forest Reserves and Insecurity in Nigeria

In Nigeria, forest serves as a fortress for the various belligerent and criminal elements that have continued to wreak havoc and pose all forms of security challenges to the country. As submitted by Albert (2017), Sambisa forest is today synonymous with the Boko Haram crisis. It has been reported that Boko Haram organises most of its attacks from the forest and then flees back into its dark recess after such attacks on various communities in the North East. The Sambisa forest was also reported to be the place where the over 200 girls abducted from Government Secondary School, Chibok, in Borno state were taken. From Sambisa forest, some of the girls are believed to have been taken across the border to neighbouring countries because the forest links them. Despite the efforts of the Nigerian military towards taking the forest, Sambisa remains the operational headquarters of Boko Haram. It provides the insurgents with a space to organise their prayer sessions, interrogate and execute their abductees, produce their media instruments and carry out their military training. They also take all seized weapons and vehicles there. It has indeed served as a safe haven for them.

In the same vein, Olaniyan (2017) reported that Burra Forest in the Ningi Local Government Area of Bauchi State also serves as a hideout for Boko Haram insurgents. The forest is a corridor linking the Falgore and Saminaka forests in Kano and Kaduna states, respectively. It is stated that some of the Boko Haram members relocated to this forest when the Nigerian military started bombarding Sambisa Forest. The Boko Haram militants use the sanctuary of the forest to engage in kidnapping for ransom and the killing of civilians. Olaniyan (2017) further reported that Kala-Balge Forest has served as one of the campsites of the Boko Haram militants. In addition, Balmo Forest in Bauchi and Galda Forest in Gombe are other forests reported to have served as strongholds of the Boko Haram group for stockpiling weapons and launching vicious attacks.

A vast number of kidnappers, armed bandits and cattle rustlers also operate from deep inside forests where they keep their victims for ransom and/or rape. These forests transcend all the different parts of the country from north to south, and east to west. Some of the forest areas notorious for kidnapping and banditry activities include Kamuku (Kaduna state), Falgore and Gomo (Kano state), Yuga and Lame-Burra (Bauchi state), Okija (Anambra state) and Rugu (Katsina state).

The forest has also... and combat worthiness of the... security challenges in the country... for the security forces (Albert... works against the smoothening... but on the other hand... (2017). Forest features like... creeks, etc. while providing... elements tend to weaken... (Fearon and Laitin, 1990)... movement of military vehicles... and other war-related... criminals take great advantage... in asymmetric battles with... landmines, lay ambushes... military operations.

The wanton exploitation... including logging of... elephants and rhinoceros... incalculable damage... combatants and international... negatively. Military equipment... forces have adverse impacts... and general environment... such as air and water... health problems, reduced... biodiversity richness.

Recommendations to Nigeria's National

There is a strong link... abhors vacuum, it is... will continue to exploit... forest to carry out... Kingdom Foreign Affairs... bring with its train... It is something that...

The forest has also been a major encumbrance to force capabilities and combat worthiness of the various agencies involved in confronting security challenges in the country. The forest is seen as a force de-multiplier for the security forces (Albert, 2017. Force de-multiplier is a factor that works against the smooth operation of a military unit on the one hand, but on the other hand empowers the enemy (Simpkin, 1985 cf Albert, 2017). Forest features like rugged terrains, hills, mountains, valleys, thickets, creeks, etc. while providing safe haven for insurgents and other criminal elements tend to weaken counter-insurgency and security operations (Fearon and Laitin, 1999). The forest terrain sometimes hinders the movement of military vehicles, heavy duty armoured personnel carriers, and other war-related ordinances. Many at times, insurgents and other criminals take great advantage of their knowledge of forest terrain to engage in asymmetric battles with the military within the forest areas. They set landmines, lay ambushes, capture and sometimes kill soldiers during military operations.

The wanton exploitation of forest resources by insurgents and criminals, including logging of timber species, charcoal production, poaching of elephants and rhinoceros for ivories and extortionate terrorism inflict incalculable damage on the forest. In the same vein, movements of combatants and internally displaced persons (IDPs) affect forest resources negatively. Military equipment used by both insurgents and government forces have adverse impacts on the forest as a whole. Forest destruction and general environmental disruptions may manifest in immediate issues such as air and water pollution, while longer-term effects may include health problems, reduction in agricultural output and diminishing biodiversity richness.

Recommendations for Mitigating the Challenges of Forest Reserves to Nigeria's National Security

There is a strong link between ungoverned spaces and insecurity. As nature abhors vacuum, it is simply obvious that insurgents and criminal elements will continue to exploit the ungovernability and conduciveness of any forest to carry out their nefarious activities. As submitted by the United Kingdom Foreign and Commonwealth Office (2015), ungoverned spaces bring with its train powerful overtones of threat, instability, and insecurity. It is something that should be avoided at virtually any cost. From the

foregoing, it is obvious that issues related to forest governance can no longer be relegated to the background in national polity and discourses. In the light of this, the following recommendations are made towards mitigating the challenges of forest reserves to Nigeria's national security:

- (i) State Governments in Nigeria should strengthen their various Forestry Services by prioritising Sustainable Forest Management practices; developing and adhering to Forest Management Plans; and improve funding resources, equipment, staffing and capacity building for all categories of forestry staff. It is important to stress that forest reserves governance is under the purview and authorities of State Governments in the country. Therefore, the onus of seeing to their effective management begins with them.
- (ii) Forest Guards should be integrated into the Nigerian security system, trained accordingly and adequately equipped to effectively police the forests and deal with any armed threat from any group.
- (iii) The Federal Government through the Federal Ministry of Environment, Federal Department of Forestry and States' Forestry Services should undertake a comprehensive Forest Resources Assessment of the country in order to ascertain the state and status of the forest reserves.
- (iv) Local communities around forest reserves and protected areas should be actively involved in management and conservation efforts of the forests. This is important so that they do not feel alienated but rather consider the forests as part of their everyday existence- a notion that has long helped indigenous people to develop a rich knowledge of the environment that goes beyond the purely utilitarian Western view.
- (v) Aerial surveillance and monitoring should be carried out periodically in the different forest reserves for both research and protection purposes. This will help in early detection of encroachers, illegal activities and criminal gangs.
- (vi) The Nigerian security agencies must learn more about the forests around them in times of peace in order to take great advantage of their knowledge of forest terrain while engaging insurgents who may want to use the forest as a base.

Conclusion

Forests are a key component of the support system in Nigeria. However, forest reserves have been neglected over the years, leaving them as ungoverned spaces and a number of forest reserves. They provide refuge for armed conflicts and through the destruction of that issues related to forest attention in national policy.

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Conclusion

Forests are a key component of Nigeria's landscape. They act as a life-support system in view of both the products and services they provide. However, forest reserves management in the country has been grossly neglected over the years. To this end, many of them have become ungoverned spaces and environmental force de-multiplier. Consequently, a number of forest reserves now pose serious challenges to national security. They provide refuge, funds and food for insurgents and terrorists. In turn, armed conflicts and military operations also negatively impact the forest through the destruction of the environment. In the light of this, it is hoped that issues related to forest governance will begin to receive the necessary attention in national polity and discourses.

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Chapter Six

Economic Recession in Nigeria

G. T. Ijaiya, T. A. Ijaiya and B. A.

Introduction

Drawing from Schumpeter that was based on the view that in economic activities, 'the economic process that is bound to happen in the long periods are the periods of depression' (Schumpeter, 1934; Ijaiya, 2020).

The occurrence(s) of the (or both) driven dependent economic, political and environmental degradations). The most recent Depression of the 1930s, the oil crisis of the 1970s, the global economic crisis and the COVID-19 pandemic (Yesufu, 1996; Mordi, Eng, Ijaiya *et al*, 2020).

For all of these economic challenges, independent nation were not immune to occurrences excluding the global economic crisis implied, they were external to Nigeria. And since Nigeria has not withstood the shocks caused by the global economic crisis (Ayagi, 1990; Yesufu, 1996; Ijaiya *et al*, 2017ab).

This is the same as the theory of