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Economic contributions of the forest to the economy of Edo State, Nigeria

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Abstract

Evidence from the results of this current study showed that there are significant contributions from the forest to the economy of Edo State. A total of 217 mills using wood as raw materials are established in the state. The study showed that the revenue that accrued to government from 1991 - 2002 is reasonable. Apart from about 10,000 workers employed by the wood working mills the government has a number of other workers in its payroll. The control staffs are not enough and this resulted in illegal activities with negative impact on the environment. Other forest products which enhance the income of the local people are numerous. Edible fruits gathering for sale is mostly by women. The most preferred fruits are the fruits of chrysophyllum albidum and most frequent timber species is Terminalia ivorensis. It was noted that the communities were not satisfied with the government's activities as it holds the forest in trust for the communities. To avoid the clamour for resource control with its attendant problems of violence, destruction of lives and properties like what is happening in Niger Delta, inclusion of local communities in forest management and conservation efforts is recommended. Further more, to ensure survival of existing wood based industries, reasonable revenue to government, reduction of unemployment, economic empowerment of local women etc, increased funding of the forestry sub-sector to meet its obligations (Forest regeneration, conservation protection etc) is suggested.

Key words: Economic, forest, communities, non timber produce, revenue.

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