

## **Legal Issues in Sustainable Forest Management in Nigeria**

**Oluwatoyin O Ajayi**

Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife

### **Abstract:**

Generally, forests have social, economic, cultural, aesthetic and ecosystem values. It is also a veritable sink and reservoir of carbon dioxide which is critical for achieving emission reduction for climate change. Nigeria is blessed with large tracts of forested lands. Located in the tropics, the southern belt of Nigeria is endowed with lush green vegetation that supports life, livelihoods, diverse ecosystems and biodiversity. However, Nigeria's vast forest cover is fast disappearing with myriads of challenges at curbing and reversing the trend. Deforestation due to illegal logging and smuggling activities have contributed in no small measure to denuding the country's forest cover. The article is set to look at the importance of forests, factors necessitating loss of forest cover, laws and institutions governing forestry management in Nigeria, the challenges facing the sector, and to proffer solutions to some of the challenges in order to engender sustainable management of Nigerian forests. The article will adopt the doctrinal research method by reviewing existing literature on the topic. It will x-ray laws like the NESREA Act and the subsidiary legislations pertinent for forest protection, Environmental Impact Assessment Act 1992, policies like the National Forest Policy 2020.

### **Keywords:**

Forest, Issues, Legal, Management, Sustainable.