

UNIT 5 SUSTAINABLE FOREST MANAGEMENT

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

The concept of sustainable forest management evolved with the advancement of civilization, and the associated rapid depletion of forest resources by man. Through several development strategies therefore, man has continued to enjoy full and inexhaustible benefits and services which both natural forests, forest reserves and forest plantations provide not only for his survival and development, but also for the preservation of his environment.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

By the end of this unit, you should be able to explain the principles and strategies for sustainable forest management.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Sustainable Forest Management

This is defined as the stewardship and use of forests and forest lands in a way, and at a rate, that maintains their biodiversity, productivity, regenerative capacity, vitality and their potential to fulfill, now and in the future, relevant ecological and social functions, at local, national and global levels, and that does not cause damage to other systems.

The seven thematic areas of sustainable forest management are

- i. extent of forest resources
- ii. biological diversity
- iii. forest health and vitality
- iv. productive functions and forest resources
- v. protective functions and forest resources

- vi. socio-economic functions; and
- vii. legal, policy and institutional framework.

3.2 Strategies for Sustainable Forest Management

i. Ecosystem Approach

This is a strategy for the integrated management of land, water and living resources that promotes conservation and sustainable use in an equitable way. It is based on the application of appropriate scientific methodologies focused on the levels of biological organization, encompassing the essential structures, processes, functions and interactions among organisms and their environment. It recognizes man and his cultural diversity, as an integral component of the ecosystem.

ii. Independent Certification

Third-party certification schemes evolved in the 1990s as a credible tool for communicating the environmental and social performance of forest operations. The potential users include forest managers, investors, environmental advocates, business consumers of wood and paper, and individuals. It helps individual organizations to develop standards of good forest management, and also independent auditors to issue certificates to forest operations that comply with those standards. The certificate verifies that the forests are well-managed (based on a particular standard) and ensures that certain wood and paper products come from responsibly-managed forests. There are several different systems of third-party certification. Some common standards are Canadian Standards Association (CSA), Forest Stewardship Council (FSC), Sustainable Forestry Initiative (FSI) and Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification Schemes (PEFC).

4.0 CONCLUSION

In this unit, you have learned that sustainable forest management maintains biodiversity, health, socio-economic functions and safety of forests at local, national and global levels, through ecosystem approach and independent certification.

5.0 SUMMARY

Forests need to be sustainably managed through appropriate scientific methodologies and development of standards of good forest management, in order to realize the full benefits of forests to Man.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

- 1) What is meant by “sustainable forest management”?
- 2) Identify and describe the strategies for ensuring the sustainable management of forests.

7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sustainable_forest_management

[http://www.answers.com/topic/sustainable-forest-management?
cat=technology](http://www.answers.com/topic/sustainable-forest-management?cat=technology)

[http://www.answers.com/topic/sustainable -forestry](http://www.answers.com/topic/sustainable-forestry)