

Annual Report

of the

WESTERN STATE FORESTRY ADVISORY COMMISSION

1st October, 1968 to 31st March, 1971



Western State of Nigeria

MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES

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Left to Right Dr S. K. Adeyaju, Lecturer in Forestry; Chief Henry A. Akinloye; Mr Bola Ige, Hon. Commissioner for Agriculture and Natural Resources; Mr A. M. Oseni, Director of Federal Forest Research; Professor A. L. Mabogunje, Chairman of the Commission; Mr J. L. Ladipo, MFR, Chief Conservator of Forests (Ex-officio member); His Highness the Osemawe of Ondo, Oba Tewogboye II, CBE; Mr D. L. McNeil, President of the Nigerian Timber Association; His Excellency Brigadier (now Major-General) R. A. Adebayo, Military Governor of the State; His Highness Oba A. O. Odebunmi, the Olowu of Owu Ijebu; Mr T. S. B. Aribisala, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture and Natural Resources; Mr S. A. Oloko, Legal Practitioner; Dr A. A. Adegbola, Associate Professor of Animal Science.

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INTRODUCTION

Background to the Establishment of the Commission

1. This is the first annual report of the Western State Forestry Advisory Commission. It covers the period from the official inauguration of the Commission on 8th October, 1968 through the preparation and publication of the Edict establishing the Commission on 1st January, 1970, to the first full year of un-interrupted activity between 20th February, 1970 and 31st March, 1971.

2. It is relevant that the background history of the establishment of the Commission be briefly stated in this Report in order to appreciate the circumstances of its birth. In paragraphs 18 and 19 of the Future Policy of the Ministry of Agriculture and Natural Resources laid on the Tables of the Western Regional Legislature as Sessional Paper No. 9 of 1959, the Government re-affirmed its adoption of an earlier policy on Forest Management and stated, *inter alia*, that 'The policy to be followed for developing the forest wealth of Western Nigeria will be to continue to ensure that the exploitation of the Government's forest reserve is controlled so that regeneration takes place in an orderly and profitable manner at the same time as the existing natural wealth is tapped to the best advantage. . . . steps are being taken to ensure that the most economic use is made of the land and the forest resources of Western Nigeria. These measures are designed to keep Government's policy for exploitation, regeneration and expansion of the country's forest estate in line with the most modern trends and practice.'

The foregoing is an acknowledgement by Government of the policy of rational exploitation of the forest to be followed by regeneration in a manner consistent with sustained yield of timber, and other forest products. In other words, it was intended that exploitation should be rationally regulated, and that the exploited area is regenerated in order to ensure continued availability of timber and other forest products. The enthusiasm of government at a later stage to make forestry a 'going concern' led to over-exploitation of the forest estate without adequate financial provision for replacement of the exploited crop.

Timber Exploitation Prior to 1966

3. The total area of high forest reserves in the State containing exploitable timber of economic value is 2,302 square miles. Prior to 1954, fifty-five square miles of this had been exploited leaving 2,247 square miles for rational exploitation. In pursuance of the policy of exploitation on a sustained yield basis, felling was regulated on a hundred-year rotation and only one hundredth part of the forest reserves *i.e.*, about 22.5 square miles was available for exploitation annually. Thus, in conformity with the policy statement enumerated by government, 22.5 square miles should be regenerated annually and, in fact, exploitation did not attain this level before 1961. Regretably, however, there was a wide departure from the laid down policy as from that year.

4. Up to 1960-61, the average annual area exploited was 16.25 square miles which was below the permissible annual cut. Table I below shows progress of exploitation from 1954-1965.

TABLE I
ANNUAL AREAS EXPLOITED AND REGENERATED, 1954-1965

Year (a)	EXPLOITED (in sq. mls.)				REGENERATED (in sq. miles)				Exploited but (j)
	Under Licence (b)	On Special permit (c)	Total (d)	High Forest left over (e)	Natural (f)	Artificial (g)	Line planting (h)	Total (i)	
1954-55	16.63	—	16.63	—	14.38	0.15	—	14.53	—
1955-56	13.23	—	13.23	2,230.37	17.98	0.15	3.0	21.13	—
1956-57	17.38	—	17.38	2,227.14	14.48	0.20	6.0	20.68	—
1957-58	16.72	—	16.72	2,209.76	15.57	0.20	5.5	21.17	—
1958-59	16.45	—	16.45	2,193.04	13.97	0.20	5.5	19.67	—
1959-60	16.55	—	16.55	2,176.59	16.55	0.18	5.5	22.23	—
1960-61	16.80	—	16.80	2,160.04	15.95	0.23	5.0	21.8	—
1961-62	18.80	9.00	27.80	2,143.24	17.25	0.28	5.0	22.53	—
1962-63	23.05	24.50	47.55	2,115.44	15.78	1.97	—	17.75	—
1963-64	25.70	48.60	74.30	2,067.89	13.94	2.55	2.0	18.49	—
1964-65	24.00	70.55	94.55	1,993.59	9.64	2.64	—	12.28	—
	205.31	152.65	357.96	1,899.04	165.39	8.75	37.5	211.64	146.32

5. It can be seen in column (c) of Table I that the introduction of the Special Permit in 1961/62 caused a dislocation of the exploitation schedule, and increased the annual cut considerably beyond that permissible under the accepted exploitation rotation. Table II shown below gives the state of exploitation more clearly:

TABLE II
STATEMENT OF ANNUAL CUT

Year (a)	Total Area Exploited (in sq. mls) (b)	Annual Under-cut (in sq. mls.) (c)	Annual over-cut (in sq. mls.) (d)
1954-55	16.63	5.87	—
1955-56	13.23	9.27	—
1956-57	17.38	5.12	—
1957-58	16.72	6.78	—
1958-59	16.45	6.05	—
1959-60	16.55	5.95	—
1960-61	16.00	5.70	—
1961-62	27.80	—	5.30
1962-63	47.55	—	25.05
1963-64	74.30	—	51.80
1964-65	94.55	—	72.05
<i>Total 1954-65</i>	357.96	44.74	154.20

The total annual over-cut which is the difference between Columns (c) and (d) was 109.46 square miles amounted to about five years advance fellings. At the rate of felling during 1964-65, the forest reserves in the State would have been fully exploited at a quarter of the rotation and the State would have had to wait for about fifty years to obtain timber in commercial quantity from the areas exploited earlier. In fact, the waiting period could be more since the area regenerated was far less than the area exploited. It is significant to note that the period of increased rate of exploitation co-incided with the period of political unrest in Western Nigeria. The political climate was confused and, in that confusion, existing rational forest management policy was jettisoned and the policy of irrational exploitation and exploitation without regeneration prevailed. Even though the area exploited increased considerably, 146.32 square miles of the 357.95 square miles exploited were not regenerated. It was at this critical stage in the history of development of forest management in the State that the army took over government of the country on 15th January, 1966 to restore order, stability and good government. As in most other aspects of administration of Government Ministries at the beginning of Military rule, mis-management was spot-lighted in the Forestry Division of the Ministry of Agriculture and Natural Resources, and measures were promptly taken to correct the situation.

Establishment of the Mabogunje Committee on Forest Policy and Management

6. On the 25th May, 1966, the then Military Governor, of Western Nigeria, the late Lt.-Col. F. Adekunle Fajuyi, M.C. set up a Committee to examine and advise on Government policy on forest management in Western Nigeria. The terms of reference of the Committee were as follows:

- (i) to examine
 - (a) the existing policy relating to preservation and control of forests in Western Nigeria;
 - (b) the current licences and permits for the exploitation of forest concessions and determine which ones were properly authorised or otherwise within the prescribed regulations and procedure, and advise on appropriate action to regularise same;
 - (c) the current regulations and procedure being adopted in the management of forest reserves in the Region.
- (ii) to examine what defects in the above might lead to abuses and to undesirable practices;
- (iii) to identify any dishonest practices and make specific or general recommendations whereby they could be prevented or eliminated in the cause of good public policy, and in the interest of maintenance of reasonable standards of forest exploitation throughout Western Nigeria.

7. The Committee comprised Professor A. L. Mabogunje of the University of Ibadan as the Chairman; Dr K. F. C. King, Department of Forestry, University of Ibadan; Dr G. J. A. Ojo, Senior Lecturer and Acting Head of Department of Geography in the University of Ife; Mr A. K. Jaiyesimi, Conservator of Forests in the Ministry of Agriculture and Natural Resources; Mr Y. O. Adio, Senior State Counsel in the Ministry of Justice, Ibadan (who at a later stage, was succeeded by Mr A. O. Olowofoyeku, a Senior State Counsel of the same Ministry); and Mr A. O. Adekunle, Acting Conservator of Forests in the Ministry of Agriculture and Natural Resources, as the Secretary.

8. The Committee first directed its attention to considering the validity or otherwise of licences and special permits under which larger areas than were necessary had been exploited. Consequent upon the Interim Report submitted to Government by the Committee on the 22nd July, 1966, all forms of exploitation permits irregularly issued to upset the accepted annual felling cycle of 22.5 square miles were cancelled. At the end of 1967, the area committed to exploitation in the State was forty-two square miles made up of twenty-four square miles under valid licences, ten square miles for the Swiss-Nigerian Wood Industries Limited (a Government sponsored Wood Complex Mill), and eight square miles under special Permits in Ekiti and Idanre forests. It is quite evident that no forest area can be made available for allocation to new licencees or permittees, even under the new felling cycle of fifty years which Government had accepted provisionally to replace the one hundred-year felling cycle. The recommendation made specifically to alter the felling cycle is reproduced:

'the reduction of the felling cycle in the natural forests from one hundred years to fifty years for a trial period of five years during which growth data on various tree species would be collected for a final decision as to the realistic length of the felling cycle, and cancellation of licences and permits issued illegally or irregularly the guiding principle of forest management being the principle of sustained yield.'

9. In its final report, the Committee made far reaching recommendations which accelerated the pace of development of forest management in the State, and increased the financial contribution of government towards the development. The more

outstanding of the recommendations are the take-over of management and control of forestry functions by the State Government from Local Government Councils which hitherto had exercised such functions, thus improving the efficiency of their staff and consequently increasing forest revenue collection, and the establishment of a Forestry Commission, whose role as a watch-dog in the forestry administration of the State is set out in this Report. The summary of the recommendations of the Committee is set out on pages 3 to 16 of the Mabogunje Report.

CHAPTER I

ESTABLISHMENT OF THE COMMISSION

10. The recommendation in respect of the establishment of a Forestry Commission appears in paragraph 5 of the Report and it is reproduced in full here-under:

'Because of the highly commercial nature of forestry activities, we recommend the setting up of a high-powered Forestry Commission comprising nine persons: *two* representing the Timber Trade and Industry, *two* representing forest owners, *three* other persons, two of whom should have special knowledge of forestry and none of whom should be a member of Parliament or any Regional Legislature, the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Agriculture and Natural Resources and the Chief Conservator of Forests as Secretary. The Commission would formulate and administer a long-term policy of planned forest management and forest industry control, and supply the machinery for long-term financing divorced from the system of annual departmental appropriation. Its Chairman should not be a Civil Servant.'

11. The Executive Council of the State, in accepting the recommendation with modification, directed:

(a) 'That there should be established a high-powered Statutory Advisory Forestry Commission with effect from 1st April, 1968.

(b) That the Commission be referred to as the "Forestry Advisory Commission". Thus the Commission is set up to play an advisory role and does not possess executive powers. In regard to membership of the Commission, the Council directed that the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Agriculture and Natural Resources should not be a member since he would still have to advise the Minister on any proposal or recommendation tendered by the Commission. It concluded that the Chief Conservator of Forests should serve on the Commission as an ex-officio member, and that a senior official of the Ministry of Agriculture and Natural Resources should be appointed Secretary. The Council's decisions were later embodied in the Part 1A of the Forestry (Amendment) Edict, 1969 which, among other things, legally established the Commission and set out its functions.

Appointment of members of the Commission

12. On 10th May, 1968, members of the First Forestry Advisory Commission were appointed by the Military Governor of the State, Brigadier (now Major-General) R. A. Adebayo, for a period of three years. They were as follows:

Members selected for their expert knowledge in Forestry and Law

- (a) (i) Professor A. L. Mabogunje, Chairman.
- (ii) Mr A. M. Oseni, Federal Director of Forest Research, Ibadan.
- (iii) Dr S. K. Adeyoju, Lecturer in Forest Policy, Law and Administration, Department of Forestry, University of Ibadan.

- (iv) Dr A. A. Adegbola, Associate Professor of Animal Science, University of Ife. He represented agricultural interests.
- (v) Mr S. A. Oloko, a Legal Practitioner in Ibadan and Deputy Chancellor of the Anglican Church Diocese, Ibadan.
- (vi) The Chief Conservator of Forest, Ibadan Mr J. L. Ladipo, MFR (ex-officio members).

Members selected as representatives of owners of Forest Reserves, i.e., Councils and/or Communities owning forests:

- (b) (i) His Highness, the Osemawe of Ondo, Oba Tewogboye II, C B E.
- (ii) His Highness, the Olowu of Owu Ijebu, Oba A. O. Odebunmi.

Members selected as representing the Timber Trade

- (c) (i) Mr H. Brisbane, President of the Nigeria Timber Association and General Manager of the A.T. and P. Limited, Sapele.
- (ii) Chief H. A. Akinloye, Secretary of the Western Nigeria Timber and Sawmill Association.

Appointment of a Secretary

- (d) Mr A. O. Adekunle, a Conservator of Forests in the Ministry of Agriculture and Natural Resources, Ibadan, was appointed as Secretary to the Commission.

Inauguration of the Commission

13. The official inaugural ceremony of the Commission was presided over by His Excellency, the Military Governor of the State on 8th October, 1968 at the Executive Council Chambers, Ibadan supported by State Commissioners including Honourable State Commissioner for Agriculture and Natural Resources, Mr Bola Ige, the Head of the Civil Service and Secretary to the Military Government, Mr Peter Odumosu, the Permanent Secretary Ministry of Agriculture and Natural Resources, Mr T. S. B. Aribisala, Senior Government officials including Senior Forest Officers at Headquarters, Ibadan as well as heads of Forestry Circles. Members of the Timber Trade were also represented.

14. In his speech, the Governor traced the history of the establishment of the Advisory Commission and congratulated its members who were the first to be appointed. He reminded them that their appointment stemmed out of the belief that their personal quality, professional competence and position in the community would help to enhance forestry development in the State and remove political interference and all the ills that had befallen forestry and the timber industry in recent years. In his own speech, the Honourable State Commissioner for Agriculture and Natural Resources reminded members that the Forestry Advisory Commission was the greatest hope of the Ministry in assisting government in achieving rational forest management in the State. Although it would be a high-powered advisory body, its advice would hardly be set aside without valid reasons. The deliberations of the Commission and the strength of its advice should be such that it should be difficult to set them aside.

First Business Meeting of the Commission

15. The first business meeting of the Commission followed immediately after the ceremony. Members felt that although they had been elected to serve on the Commission and their election publicly announced, the Commission had not been

legally constituted and its terms of reference had not been defined. They felt unable to carry on under the circumstances but decided that meetings should continue to be held hoping that the instrument constituting the Commission and the terms of reference would be published soon. Two meetings were held in that year on 8th October and 20th December, 1968. After these further meetings were adjourned until the Commission was legally constituted.

Forestry (Amendment) Edict, 1969

16. The Edict codifying the recommendations of the Mabogunje Committee Report which were accepted by government providing for the constitution, establishment, and functions of the Forestry Advisory Commission was published in the *Western State Gazette* No. 1, Vol. 19 of 1st January 1970 as Forestry (Amendment) Edict, 1969.

CHAPTER II

ACTIVITIES OF THE COMMISSION—FOREST REGENERATION

17. From the 20th February, 1970 when the Commission resumed sittings and to the end of the financial year on 31st March, 1971, five meetings were held, *viz.*, 20th February, 1970, 19th June, 1970, 20th October, 1970, 22nd January, 1971 and 5th March, 1971.

18. One of the notable achievements of the Commission during the period under review was that it effectively persuaded government to vote substantial amount of money to the Forestry Division to prosecute its regeneration activities. The need to create man-made forests and to improve the stocking of the existing natural forests as in insurance against a possible future shortage of wood and wood products has been emphasized. The ever-increasing population of the world in general and the increasing standard of living of our people in particular are such that there is bound to be a corresponding increase in the demand for these products which existing natural forests cannot meet in their present state of low stocking. It is, however, regretted that although money was voted in the State budget, funds were not actually released by the Treasury when needed, or in sufficient amount to meet current operations. The position regarding the total fund made available during the period under review is shown below:

<i>Year</i>	<i>Total Amount voted £</i>	<i>Total Amount released £</i>	<i>Balance £</i>
1969-70	250,000	189,000	61,000
1970-71	200,000	150,000	50,000

It is clear that only about three-quarters of the money voted for regeneration was actually released.

19. The Commission would like to advise that the practice of placing an embargo on money voted for regeneration until the Treasury approves its release should be discontinued. The procedure obstructs the implementation of forest regeneration operations at the scheduled season. Forest regeneration operations, like farming operations, coincide with the climatic or weather cycle. Failure to carry out an operation when the season is due makes it impossible for subsequent operations to be executed, or the year's regeneration target to be achieved. An improvement in the procedure for fund releases should be made. It is important that the fund voted for each year's programme of work as recommended by the Mabogunje Committee and accepted by the government should be adequate and that fund is released in time for each season's operations; also that if part of a year's vote is not spent for any reason and work programme is not fulfilled, the unspent part of the vote should be made available in the following year to enable back-log of work to be completed along with the current year operations. It is also important that regeneration programme approved in the 1970-1974 Development Plan be completed by the end of the development year. This is only possible if adequate fund is made available at the correct time.

20. The Forest Service is very much unlike other government services. It has responsibility for, and it is intimately involved in growing the forest and producing raw materials for wood-based industries. Forest trees take at least a generation to reach timber size and because of this, many people do not see the wisdom in investing capital on forest regeneration. Forest areas are not regenerated once and for all. Approximately, equal areas must be regenerated annually. This means that the volume of work and therefore fund required increases progressively every year. Existing budgeting system is based on availability of funds. This is not ideal for forest regeneration hence the Mabogunje Committee recommended that a bulk allocation of money should be guaranteed to the Forest Service for a Five-year period at a time. Also, that a Trust Fund be established into which will be paid a proportion of the timber fees for use to develop some of the physical infrastructure of forestry, and rehabilitate the natural forest. These recommendations were accepted by the government. The Trust Fund has been created and money is being paid into it already but the government has not implemented the aspect dealing with making available bulk allocation of fund. We are convinced that if these recommendations were implemented, our forests will contribute tremendously to the economy of this state. The value of forest produce that will be produced annually from year 2,000 A.D. will be of the order of £80 million.

21. The State has a forest estate of 5,050 square miles, 2,746 square miles of which are savanna and presently unproductive of timber. The need of the people for wood and wood products is increasing as a result of increase in population and improved standard of living. In order to meet these demands adequately and avert any possible importation of wood and wood products that might result, the existing forest must be re-stocked. Natural regeneration is impossible in the savanna areas of the Estate, and it has not been successful in the high forest nor has it accelerated the growth rate of desirable species occurring in them owing to adverse environmental factors. The herb and shrub layer is dense thus inhibiting fall of seeds into the soil; the lower canopy is dense thus casting dense shade on the small amount of favoured sites, and the seed-bearing trees are few and scattered and are incapable of providing adequate seeds for regeneration. In short the, factors for successful regeneration by natural methods are either absent or in-adequate in most of the high forest estate. To avert the danger of shortage of timber and its products, resort to creating plantation forest must be had and the government should make fund available in bulk for this purpose in adequate amount over a long term.

CHAPTER III

ACTIVITIES OF THE COMMISSION—PLANTATIONS

22. The present stock of timber in the natural forests of the State and in the comparatively small areas of existing man-made forests cannot altogether meet the ever rising demands for wood and wood products for domestic consumption as well as for export. While it is desirable to investigate the uses to which a large number of the commercially un-exploitable species in the natural forest can be put in order to increase timber yield per unit area, there is the urgent need to establish large areas of plantations of fast-growing large-volume producing indigenous as well as exotic species to meet these demands. Assessment of available wood resources revealed that yield ranges between 200 cubic feet per acre in poorer areas to 300 cubic feet in richer areas. This is inadequate to meet demands.

23. The Mabogunje Committee has forecast a shortage of wood and wood products at the turn of this century, *i.e.* about thirty years hence. Fortunately, such plantations of fast-growing commercially desirable species as are being contemplated would mature in about thirty years. The yield from them would be available to be added to that from the natural forests to meet demands. While the felling cycle for the plantations would be thirty years, that for the natural forest would be fifty years, providing about 11.5 million cubic feet (hoppus) of round timber annually from an annual coupe of thirty-six square miles or a little over. The estimated requirement in year 2000 A.D. would be about 65 million hoppus feet of saw logs and wood-based panels as against 16 million hoppus feet which is consumed at present.

24. Increasing world population makes ever increasing demands on the world's timber resources the utilisation of which must therefore aim at obtaining maximum production. The Western State cannot afford to delay improvement measures in wood resources utilisation. Expansion of the Western State forestry plantation programme should be designed to meet the challenge of increased use of timber and thus prevent shortage in the near future. The target is to have 422,000 acres of wood plantations by the end of the century. To achieve this, the Forestry Division has set out to plant 14,080 acres of various species a year. In addition to this, 2,000 acres of *Gmelina* plantations are to be established annually for five years to meet the pulp wood requirements of a proposed pulp/paper industry in the State and 2,240 acres of Teak plantation for fifty years to sustain the ever-growing demand for this species in domestic and export markets.

25. The Forestry Division is making strenuous efforts to give effective protection against depletion of the forest of its timber resources by wanton exploitation and illegal logging, and also against fire ravages to which the new plantation is susceptible during the dry season, and more important against persistent agitation for de-reservation. Lack of adequate fund has slowed down progress in the plantation programme, and the annual target has not been reached in any one year. Out of a total of 18,320 acres of plantation to be established annually, acreages planted during the period under review are given below:

1969-70	8,070.40
1970-71	8,819.20

There is no doubt that larger areas can be planted if funds are provided adequately and at the proper season. It is desirable that funds be made available annually to tend and maintain the plantations during the first four years of their establishment. It is bad economy to invest large sums of money to grow plantations only to neglect them in their early years of development when they have to compete with forest weeds and shrubs which invariably smother them, or impede their rapid growth.

26. The Commission undertook a field inspection of forest reserves to assess achievements in project areas, and study local problems. The Forestry Division had persistently focussed attention on the fact that adequate measures were not being taken to guarantee the supply of timber for the future generation. It is lamentable to note during the visits that because of the failure to make fund available to the Division, tending of the inadequate areas already established under plantations was not being carried out adequately. Cleanings had been neglected with the result that young crops were swamped over by weeds and shrubs, and the bigger ones were draped by heavy climbers and ropes which have deformed their stems thus lowering their economic value. It is bad economy to have deprived the Division funds for tending work—including fire-tracing. Some of the plantations had been burnt by fire. We notice that plantations worth over £1.2 million had been left un-tended. It has been mentioned above that at the moment in this State, we are consuming not less than 16 million cubic feet of wood in all forms annually. Our requirements would amount to over 60.00 million cubic feet at the end of this century but only about a third of this can be supplied from the existing natural forest if any part of it is not de-reserved. It is desirable therefore that funds are made available over a period of years for all aspects of plantation work—establishment, tending of young seedlings and maintenance of the older crops to ensure that wood is made available for use in the immediate future.

CHAPTER IV

ACTIVITIES OF THE COMMISSION—DEVELOPMENT OF FOREST INDUSTRIES

27. The Commission attaches great importance to the development of forest industries especially the wood processing industries because of their contribution to the socio-economic advancement of the State.
28. The State has great potential for industrial wood processing from the mixed tropical species in the high forest reserves, and from its Teak and Gmelina Pulp-wood Plantations but the level of technology in logging and processing is low resulting in a great deal of waste both in the forests and at the mills. Logging methods and processing techniques must be improved. Local processing of logs, rather than export must be encouraged although it is desirable to maintain existing level of export in processed form rather than timber. Wood processing has a multiplier effect on the local economy and the Commission would like to see an improvement in all aspects of the timber industry, and more processing of wood in the State. The importance which development of forest industries holds in the economy cannot be over-stressed and any financial investment in wood-based industry and the considerable financial grant which government might make to forest regeneration would be worth-while. The wood industry in a locality increases the wealth of the locality. Money circulates, and re-circulates and in doing so creates additional wealth in the local economy, and provides jobs thus preventing depopulation.
29. The Commission has directed its minds to the problems of improving the production level and quality of products of indigenous sawmiller as compared with their overseas competitors. These difficulties touch on expertise and in-adequate or limited capital. During its three-day tour of the forestry areas, the Commission later had a most successful meeting with sawmillers and matters pertaining to the improvement of sawmilling standard prevalent in the State as well as attendant wood-wastes were discussed. With regular on-the-job-training for their saw-doctors and mill operators, considerable improvement in quality of sawn produce could be attained. As regards lack of capital to expand their trade and acquire more efficient machineries, the Commission advised that physical integration of their capital and resources was essential. Sawmillers could utilise their resources more efficiently and economically by integration. Operating as a one-man business enterprise was not helpful. Four major decisions were taken at the meeting with the sawmillers, *viz*:

(i) *Guidance to Sawmillers from the Commission.* The Commission committed itself to give help to the association of indigenous sawmillers to achieve a higher level of efficiency and bring to its fold all other sawmillers still outside it. Members felt that the Association should publish a monthly news-letter providing information on market conditions in the timber trade in relation to supply and demand for timber, and lumber, level of prices, equipment available in the market and where obtainable any current information on timber and sawmilling research.

(ii) *Market Research.* An organisation should be established for finding market for mill-sawn wood for the Association both locally and overseas. In this connection, standard of processing in the industry must be raised to internationally acceptable level. The Federal Department of Forestry should ensure compliance to standards to be imposed in the proposed grading rules for the country.

(iii) *Foreign Licences.* The Commission felt that if the policy of indigenisation of the sawmill industry is to be achieved, sawmillers must be organised into efficient co-operative units and pool their resources together in order to qualify for take-over of timber exploitation and processing when licences currently held by expatriate firms expire in 1976.

(iv) *Sawmill Training School.* Saw-doctors and sawmill operators have shown awareness of their incompetence in their trade, and have expressed a desire for formal training. It is desirable that a training school should be built for this grade of personnel. On-the-job training should be provided for those already in the trade.

30. Members of the Commission visited the £1.2 million Swiss-Nigeria Wood Industries Limited Plymill at Epe during the period under review. The Mill which is jointly owned by the Western State Government and a Swiss Company ('Holuweg') as the technical partner has a production capacity of 24,000m³ or 665,500 cubic feet (hoppus). It was commissioned on 8th October, 1970 but had not started production and has depended so far on wood supply from local timber loggers and some concessionaires. It has not commenced exploitation in its ten-square mile annual coupe concession in Omo Forest Reserve. It is the view of the Commission that, as much as possible, exploitation should be undertaken on behalf of the Company by existing local tree-takers and timber contractors operating as co-operatives.

31. The attention of the Commission was drawn to a proposal, at its meeting of 22nd January, 1971, relating to a joint enterprise between the State Government and Messrs Technoforestexport of Ruomania to establish a second Plymill in Ondo Division. The Commission was dismayed that contrary to the Western State Forestry (Amendment) Edict, 1969 No. 1 of 1970 Part 1A, 3 B (a) (i) which enjoins the Commission, among other things, to advise the Executive Council on the formulation of short-term and long-term policies with respect to the establishment of forest industries, no attempt was made to seek the views of the Commission on the proposal at an early stage in the discussion and negotiations with the Ruomanians. A letter of protest was addressed to His Excellency the Military Governor of the State, Brigadier (now Major-General) R. A. Adebayo on the issue. It is hoped that in future, attempts will be made to prevent a recurrence of such regrettable oversight. The proposal is to establish a plant that will produce, in a year, 90,700 cubic metres (or about 32 million cubic feet) of sawn timber, plywood, chipboard and veneer, 70,000 sets of furniture doors and window frames, and 2,988 cubic metres of caschets. In terms of raw material needs, the proposed industry would require at its initial phase virtually all the forest reserves available for exploitation. This would impose a limitation on the future growth of the industry, and a strain on the forest estate, and also amount to a departure from the principle of rational exploitation. As regards the size of forest available for exploitation, the Mabogunje Committee on page 104 paragraph 32 of its Reports puts, in its right perspective, the issue of a second integrated wood industry as follows:

'Under a fifty-year felling cycle and taking account of recent large-scale indiscriminate allocations, only thirty-six square miles of forest will be available annually. If exploited fully, this area will yield about 11.5 million cubic feet (hoppus) of found timber. It comes at once to mind that forests in Western Nigeria are large enough to sustain at least two mills of the size of Epe mills.

At present, including the concession for Epe mills, the total annual coupe in Western Nigeria is thirty-three square miles. Only three square miles are therefore available for a second plymill. However, a number of timber agreements are expiring in 1976 and in some cases, licencees have selected their last coupes and therefore have no interest in the remaining area. No irreparable harm will be done to this forest if between now and 1976, an annual over cut of seven square miles is allowed. This over-cut can be easily made up while renewing licences in 1976 and by reducing at an appropriate point in time, the total annual coupe to twenty-nine square miles for a determined period. This proposal is rational under a sustained yield policy based on the total area of the regional forest estate'.

In other words, it is possible to provide another ten square miles of high forest for a second integrated wood industry in the State only in the full knowledge that future sustained yield from the forest estate is already impaired. It is the advice of the Commission that the proposed integrated wood industry be initially reduced in scale in view of the limited amount of available raw materials. The Commission drew attention of the Governor to the implication of greater financial grant by government to regenerate an additional ten square miles annual coupe after exploitation, and the effect which the 'clear-felled' policy envisaged in the process of exploitation would have on existing tree-takers, timber contractors and sawmillers in Ondo area. Hitherto, they have depended on salvaging non-plymill species to meet their requirements. There would be hardly any commercially utilisable species left when the company has exploited and vacated a coupe.

32. It is strongly recommended that government should give special priority to the development of a new processing complex—integrated sawmilling, furniture and joinery, veneer and plywood and particle board units—during the current Four-year Development Plan. Use must be found for mill-wastes such as off-cuts and sawdust. Particle board permits the full utilisation of residues and so-called wastes from primary manufacture. The earliest plants for the manufacture of particle boards were built where wood residue was available in the vicinity of furniture factories. Particle board does not require timber logs as its raw material. The value of forest products that will be produced annually from year A.D. 2000 is estimated at £60 million. Improvement in the exploitation, processing and utilisation techniques of existing natural forests and the new plantations being established will increase yield of raw materials for a whole range of wood-based industries (including cottage industry such as charcoal) which have acquired great importance in many industrially advanced countries. By planned expansion and development, forestry can help substantially to increase the revenue of the State as it is doing in such countries as Norway and Sweden. Timber has an expanding world market and the traditional West African tropical hard woods (Mahoganies or Red woods) have an attraction in overseas markets.

33. The re-organisation of existing sawmills by locating them in strategic places, and the development of new wood-based industries will not doubt help to absorb a good deal of rural labour. The increased use of labour in growing, harvesting, processing and transportation of timber, or the processed products offer opportunities for reducing un-employment in the State. Forestry and forest industries have a catalytic effect on rural development. Towns and villages have sprung up in areas which have served as the base for exploitation and timber processing. While

government's financial investment in forestry will enable the Forestry Division to achieve its regeneration targets and play its revenue—collection role effectively it will also create employment opportunities to the rural communities.

34. Members of the Commission feel that there should be established a bridge of communication between the tree-grower, that is the Forestry Division and tree-users, the timber industry. As a step towards integration of the industry, the Commission gave consideration to the marketing of timber and other forest products. Members proposed that marketing of timber and other forest products be taken off the State Forestry Division and executed by a Timber Marketing Board which should operate at national level. It further proposed that a delegation of four drawn its members should visit Ghana to study the set-up and operation of Ghana Marketing Board.

CHAPTER V

ACTIVITIES OF THE COMMISSION—RE-ORGANISATION OF FOREST MANAGEMENT

35. Forestry activities have expanded considerably during the last ten years and the organisational set-up of the Forestry Division in the Ministry of Agriculture and Natural Resources which was adequate when its activities were mainly on forest reservation, consolidation, protection and small-scale exploitation is no longer suitable and adequate under a more intensive forest management system which is commercially oriented.

36. The Forestry Division, as at present constituted, is headed by the Chief Conservator of Forests assisted by a Deputy Chief Conservator of Forests and two Conservators who form the Headquarter staff. Included at the Headquarter organisation are the Wildlife Conservation including the Agodi (Zoological) Garden, the Forest Inventory, Forest Research, Forest Economics and Forest Utilisation Units. (The last two units are yet to be established). Each Conservator deals with specific forestry subjects, and has no territorial control.

37. For the administration of forestry activities outside the Headquarter, the State is divided into four forestry Circles comprising two or more administrative (political) Divisions, each is headed by a Senior Assistant Conservator of Forests. The Circle is sub-divided into Charges made up of one or more administrative districts at head of which is an Assistant Conservator of Forests, assisted by junior and senior Technical Assistants. The Charge is sub-divided into Forest guard's beats for the purpose of collection of timber revenue and forest protection. For silvicultural operations, the charge is divided into work units each of which is supervised by a Forest (Junior Technical) Assistant. The supervisory staff include Chief Rangers who head the revenue collection and forest protection section, and the Higher Forest Superintendents who oversee the work of the Forest Assistants. The Game Unit is headed by an Area Game Warden who has his own field staff.

38. The Chief Conservator of Forests as head of the Division is the Chief professional adviser of Government in matters pertaining to forestry including timber trade and wood-based industries. His duties also include the execution of the State Governments' policy on forestry, wild life management, forest parks and conservation of soil and water. Forestry has entered a phase of intensive management and for the greatly increased responsibility, it is the considered view of the Commission that the ejection of highly qualified professional experts in the various specialised fields be pursued vigorously by government. Forestry in the State should be developed as a commercial enterprise which is not at present and the Division needs to be remodelled to cope with increased work-load, responsibility and specialisation. The Forest Service is unlike other Public Services which are advisory, or perform support functions. The Forester plants his own crops and manages them himself. He is not an extension worker who imparts knowledge to farmers, or interprets Agricultural policies of government to them. He is a forest manager who is intimately involved in the growing, exploitation, processing and sale of forest crops. As a revenue-yielding service, its organisation should be commercially oriented. It is the opinion of the Commission that the Division should be created as a separate Ministry, or as an executive Forestry Commission and provided with funds over a long-term to finance its activities.

39. The Commission has urged the Forestry Division to implement, without further delay, the government's directive to establish the Economics and the Utilisation units which the Mabogunje Committee recommended. It noted that approach has been made to the Canadian International Development Agency for assistance in these fields. It has also urged the Division to pursue an *ad-hoc* research programme to solve local forestry problems on forest management, exploitation and utilisation. Administration of forestry in Nigeria is constitutionally a State responsibility, but forest research has been a Federal responsibility before and after independence. However, some States including the Western State maintain a research unit in their Forestry Service. The Western State Research Unit was re-constituted following the recommendations of the Mabogunje Committee 'to prosecute vigorously a programme of much-needed ad-hoc research designed to provide answers to many of the problems of forest management production, exploitation and utilisation.' The Federal Department of Forest Research engages in fundamental research of long-term nature and has little or no time for short-term research into local problems peculiar to each State and which require immediate solution. In the Western State, the Research Unit embraces the Forest Management, Forest Inventory, Forest Economics and Forest Utilisation including Sawmilling consultancy and extension services. The Unit is less than two years old, nevertheless some progress has been made within the scope of present budget and available personnel. About 300 square miles of high forests have been inventoried sample plots for growth measurements have been laid out in the Gmelina Pulp/Paper Project plantations, as well as the natural forests and in the man-made forests established during the last ten years. Growth measurements have been taken in these areas, and results will be published when sufficient comparative data have been collected. The Unit still has a long way to go to attain the stage of development commensurate with the dimension and complexities of its tasks. It is emphasized that the Unit is devoted essentially to apply research in the sense that all its research is directly related to solving specific forestry problems.

CHAPTER VI

Conclusions

Prospects and Programme for the next year

40. The Forestry Advisory Commission acknowledges the co-operation and assistance given to it by the Ministry of Agriculture and Natural Resources in general and the Forestry Division in particular during the period under review. Members, are convinced that if its recommendations and advice on the various aspects of its activities are implemented, our forests will contribute tremendously to the economy of this State.

41. In the ensuing year, the Commission hopes to direct its attention to the following subjects.

- (i) Problems of wood takers, sawmills, etc.
- (ii) The up-grading of sawmills
- (iii) The establishment of a Timber Marketing Board
- (vi) Provision of adequate vote for regeneration
- (v) The Gmelina Pulp/Paper Project
- (vi) The Proposed Second Plymill
- (vii) Improved training for saw doctors and operators.
- (viii) Export promotion of wood products
- (ix) Development of the Savanna Forests

42. In conclusion, we would like to acknowledge with gratitude to His Excellency, the Military Governor of the State the opportunity given to us to serve him and the State, and it is with greatest pleasure that we present the Report on our activities.

WE ARE,

Professor A. L. Mabogunje—*Chairman*
Oba Tewogboye II, C B E, *Osemawe of Ondo—Member*
Oba A. O. Odebunmi, *Olowu of Owo—Member*
Dr S. K. Adeyoju—*Member*
Chief H. A. Akinloye—*Member*
Dr A. A. Adegbola—*Member*
Mr S. A. Oloko—*Member*
Mr A. M. Oseni—*Member*
Mr J. L. Ladipo, *Chief Conservator of Forests—Member*
Mr A. O. Adekunle—*Secretary*