

Transforming Nigerian Forests into Economic Hubs: World Bank's New Commitment

The World Bank has pledged its support to Nigeria in transforming the country's forests into economic hubs, aiming to tackle insecurity and environmental degradation. Minister of Environment, Balarabe Lawal, announced the collaboration in Abuja alongside World Bank representatives, including Ndiame Diop, Nigeria's Country Director, and Chakib Jenane, Regional Director for West and Central Africa. By integrating infrastructure and economic activities within forests, the initiative aims to deter banditry and foster sustainable development.

This support will enable Nigeria to develop communities along its coastal areas from Lagos to Calabar, in partnership with state governments. Lawal highlighted efforts to balance forest cultivation and prevent illegal logging as crucial to sustaining these resources. The project is aligned with Nigeria's ACREsAL initiative, which addresses land degradation and climate change in 19 Northern states and the Federal Capital Territory.

Additionally, the government's introduction of a blue economy framework marks a historic step towards economic diversification, especially within environmental sectors. This collaboration with the World Bank not only underscores Nigeria's commitment to environmental sustainability but also aims to enhance security and boost local economies by turning forests into centres of economic activity.

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