

**COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE, ANIMAL SCIENCES AND VETERINARY MEDICINE**

SCHOOL OF AGRICULTURE AND FOOD SCIENCE

**Department: CROP SCIENCES**

**Option: Horticulture**

**Year 4**

 **Module**: AGRICULTURE EXTENSION AND POLICIES

 **Component: AGRICULTURAL AND NATURAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT**

 **POLICIES AND LAWS**

 **ASSIGNMENT REPORT**

**Q.** SWOT analysis of Rwanda National forestry Policy 2018

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**RWANDA NATIONAL FORESTRY POLICY 2018**

INTRODUCTION

The forestry policy consists of the laws and regulations that guide the protection and management of nation’s forests. In small words, it is the relationship between different people and natural world (resources). The policy is attested to review the existing forestry policy of 2010 to boost its impact on the economic and ecological functions of Rwanda. The Forest resources have been playing and are still playing important roles to the country’s economy and supporting the livelihood of Rwandans. The country has identified the crucial role forests have to play in its development agenda. Rwanda’s forests also protect watersheds, downstream wetlands and support agriculture. However, due to dense and rapidly increasing population on a fragile land resource, forests have been threatened by deforestation and continuous degradation of forest resources (MINILAF, 2018).

Forest Sector Strategic Plan (FSSP) of 2018-2021 must be viewed as government’s directions on how to achieve the medium to long-term policy actions presented in the 2018 National Forest Policy (NFP) for the development and management of forest sector.

Natural forests which cover 11.9% of total land area are endowed with the ecological role such as biodiversity conservation. With the conservation effort, Rwanda has set a target to increase its forest cover to 30% of the total country land area through afforestation and reforestation by 2020. To date, 18.7% of total area has been allocated to forest plantations of which the main role is to satisfy the needs of the population in terms of biomass energy, timber and service wood.

**Objectives of the policy**

* Making the forestry sector, one of the pillars for sustainable development and climate resilience to improve livelihoods of present and future generations.
* Policy promotes in situ soil conservation through agroforestry and forest landscape restoration of which Rwanda has pledged to restore two million hectares and enhances Rwanda’s green growth while ensuring that forest are sustainably managed through full compliance with social and environmental safeguards. The government of Rwanda will continue to honor its commitments in regards to forest and its biodiversity conservation.

**The linkage of the NFP to other National policies**

According to (MINILAF, 2018) shows that the policy is in line with other sector policies that deal with natural resources and environment:

* ***Agriculture policy:*** The agriculture sector holds a key role in sustaining efforts to improve agricultural productivity and addresses the challenge of soil degradation through promotion of agroforestry practices and forest management.
* ***Land policy:*** National land policy stresses that the agroforestry should be part of the agricultural landscape on the hills, given the fact that it contributes to soil protection.

* ***Energy policy***: Rwanda energy policy recognizes the need to shift consumption from biomass based energies to clean energies like electricity and LPG that will reduce pressure on forest resources.
* ***Biodiversity Policy:*** National biodiversity policy considers the rehabilitation of degraded ecosystems in Rwanda as an urgent and major task that requires the commitment of significant resources from both national budgets and other sources.
* ***Environment Policy:*** Rwanda’s environmental problems are associated with bad management of natural resources such as land, forests and water.
* ***Wildlife Policy:*** Rwanda’s wildlife protected areas significantly contribute to the production of global public goods and services, such as protection of biodiversity, climate stabilization, carbon sequestration and global waters. The policy stresses that any adverse impacts on the ecosystems can dramatically and negatively alter humans’ capacity to survive.

**SWOT ANALYSIS OF RWANDA NATIONAL FORESTRY POLICY 2018**

**STRENGTHS**

* The forest sector plays a big role in job creation. The largest proportion of employment is generated by charcoal production (61.8%) followed by wood production (19.2%), both located in the production areas, while distribution and selling cover 6% and 12.8% of the generated employment, respectively.
* Tourism being a growing industry in Rwanda has, in 2016 and now is considered as largest earner of foreign exchange.
* Contribution to national economy: The contribution of the forest and timber sector to the national economy will be increased by promoting value addition on all steps of the supply chain starting from efficient forest management to efficient timber processing and sophisticated manufacturing of timber end products.

**WEAKNESS**

* Excessive pressure on private and public forests leads to over-exploitation and poor productivity and stocking.
* The absence of organization and skill of small land owners’/ farmers limits achieving maximum yields from their woodlots.
* Poor participation of youth
* Varying degree of crop intensity and uniformity

**OPPORTUNITIES**

* Environmental protection ranked among national priorities and mainstreamed in all economic development sectors for efficient carbon credits and low carbon development;
* Many sector policies, programs and projects deal with environment, biodiversity, food security, energy, watershed management, land management or landscape and forest restoration with forestry as one of the key interventions;
* Made in Rwanda program and support accorded to private sector to lead sector development to explore opportunities in forest landscape restoration, forest value addition and non-timber forest products;
* Increased awareness of environmental services of forest ecosystems and the initiation of payment for ecosystems services for their sustainability;
* High linkages in integrated programs from different sectors like forest landscape restoration, integrated water resources management, agriculture, etc.
* High level political will illustrated by putting in a place institutions with a clear mission to develop the forest sector and create favorable investment facilities;
* Overarching policies and strategies prioritize green growth development, biodiversity, climate change and afforestation/reforestation which promote landscape restoration approaches;
* Compliance with regional and international conventions and agreements will lead to access to climate finance, green bonds for private sector participation in the forest sector and other sources of funding.

**THREATS**

* Excessive and illegal cutting of forests
* Uneven distribution of forest resources over the country
* Low productivity of existing manmade forests and poor quality of forest genetic material
* Low involvement of the private sector
* Predominance of one species and poor agroforestry practices
* Land for reforestation and afforestation
* Limited technical capacity in the sector (MINILAF, 2018)

# References

FORESTRY, M. O. (2018). *Forest Sector Strategic Plan 2018 – 2022.* Kigali: MINISTRY OF LANDS AND FORESTRY.