



# Green Scenery

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The Country's Natural Resources Are Nature's Gift To Us What We Make Of Them Are Our Gift To Posterity

**Press Release for Immediate Release.**

**Tuesday 3rd July 2018.**

Green Scenery expresses concern on the Sierra Leone government's lifting of the temporary ban on timber export according to a Government press release of 27<sup>th</sup> June 2018. The ban was announced on 9<sup>th</sup> of April 2018 and very much welcomed by environmentalists as deforestation in Sierra Leone had taken alarming dimensions with an approximated 3% forest cover left as estimated by some experts.

The government has allowed shipment of 13,000 containers. The volume of wood stocked in the containers, each forty feet long and the stockpile situated at the Hastings Airfield is not only colossal in quantity, but despicably embarrassing for a country with now 3% forest cover to allow its forests to be butchered and sold off.

Knowing these procedures from the former government to evoke and revoke bans as log stocks accumulate and ready for export, Green Scenery calls on the new government to protect the environment by making the ban permanent. "We urgently need a new direction that will lead to re-forestation and a stop to de-forestation," said Joseph Rahall, Director of the environmental NGO, Green Scenery.

While other countries protect their natural resources, logs have been persistently shipped from Sierra Leone over the past ten years and Sorius Samora's documentary in 2011 is a testament to this assertion.

A recent video shared on social media graphically documented stockpiles of logs in the Hastings Airfield axis raising public emotions on the environmental damage already caused by logging. Put together, the approximately 13,000 containers to be exported, the 893 containers at the Quay awaiting shipment, the stockpile of logs at the Hastings Airfield, and the un-quantified logs exported in the past can be aptly referred to as 'ecocide' (ecological genocide).

Most of the species extracted largely come from Northern Sierra Leone where climatic conditions are of drier Savannah-like, and by UN Convention to Combat Desertification definition, desert-like. Worrisome, also is that some of the species are not of coppice nature and therefore have no chance to rejuvenate. "Except we take on exceptional measures Sierra Leone and future generations stand to lose against the interest of logging companies and governments who are desperate to generate revenue by all means", fears Joseph Rahall.

In the government press release, the status of the logs to be shipped is not clear, whether confiscated or not. It is also not clear how much revenue this massive shipment will attract. Furthermore, the country is yet to be informed if the ban will be re-established. Green Scenery urges the government to clarify these concerns and to make permanent the ban on logging. Sierra Leone has lost so much of its natural endowments that the government must put measures in place to ensure they benefit future generations.

**END.**

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