

PLURAL POLICING, STATE & COMMUNITY SECURITY: DECENTRALIZING FOREST RESERVE MANAGEMENT TO COUNTER ASYMMETRIC AND HYBRID THREATS IN NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

Nigeria's 22,206 km² of federally controlled national parks constitute strategic vulnerabilities in the country's asymmetric and hybrid threat environment. Centralized federal management of territories such as Old Oyo National Park – 2,512 km² across 11 Local Government Areas, 2.7 times the size of Lagos State – exceeds federal surveillance, intelligence, and community engagement capacity, creating ungoverned spaces exploited by bandits, terrorists, and illicit economies. Recent parades of suspects, including traditional rulers and religious leaders implicated in kidnapping networks, and recent operational successes by Operation Hadin Kai in Borno State, confirm that elite complicity worsens the crisis while intelligence-led, sector-based operations can dismantle terrorist networks. This paper argues for an integrated strategy based on seven pillars: 1) legislative devolution of park ownership and management to states using the Yankari Game Reserve 2006 precedent, 2) institutionalization of plural policing involving the Nigeria Police Force, Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps, regional security agencies such as Amotekun, vigilante groups, and hunters, 3) intelligence-led policing powered by Force ICT technology and community-based reporting, 4) community stakeholder governance with accountability mechanisms for traditional and religious leaders, 5) architectural and environmental security integrating human security with design, Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design CPTED, and statutory provisions for safe housing, 6) elite accountability to break networks of complicity, and 7) sector-based operational coordination validated by Operation Hadin Kai. Drawing on over twenty years of research by Akinade (2004, 2007, 2009, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2025) and comparative lessons from Brazil, India, and South Africa, the paper demonstrates that polycentric forest governance with transparent oversight reduces territorial vacuums, improves early warning, and aligns security with sustainable development. The paper concludes that securing Nigeria's future against asymmetric threats requires moving from distant federal control and elite capture to a polycentric security architecture where states and communities become primary stakeholders in forest and urban security.

Keywords: Plural Policing, Intelligence-Led Policing, Agrosecurity, Forest Reserves, Asymmetric Threats, State Policing, Community Security, Architectural Security, CPTED, Elite Accountability, Operation Hadin Kai, Nigeria

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Nigeria's security environment has evolved from urban-centered terrorism to rural-based asymmetric and hybrid threats that exploit governance gaps, territorial vacuums, and weak state presence. While national attention remains focused on urban terrorism, insurgency in the North-East, and banditry in the North-West, over 22,000 square kilometers of federally managed forest reserves and national parks remain strategic blind spots. These vast territories, exceeding the landmass of several Nigerian states, have been documented as transit corridors, training camps, logistics bases, and operational sanctuaries for non-state armed groups.

The crisis is compounded by elite complicity. Recent parades by the Nigeria Police of kidnap suspects have included allegations against traditional rulers and religious leaders who allegedly provided support to criminal networks. When custodians of culture and faith become enablers, communities lose moral authority and early warning systems, making asymmetric threats more difficult to dismantle.

At the same time, recent operational successes by Operation Hadin Kai in Borno State between Thursday and Friday provide real-time validation of integrated responses. Troops repelled coordinated Boko Haram and ISWAP attacks, rescued nine abducted civilians including three children from Mandara Mountain enclaves, arrested suspected insurgent collaborators and logistics couriers, and recovered weapons including RPGs and AK-47 rifles. These operations demonstrate that sector-based coordination, sustained pressure, and intelligence-led actions can dismantle terrorist networks even in vast forest terrain.

The central paradox is constitutional and operational: the Federal Government retains exclusive control over assets it lacks the capacity to secure, while state governments and local communities bearing the direct security consequences remain legally and operationally excluded. Old Oyo National Park alone covers 2,512 km² across eleven Local Government Areas in Oyo and Kwara States, an area approximately 2.7 times the size of Lagos State. Yet surveillance, intelligence gathering, and rapid response remain centralized in Abuja, thousands of kilometers from the terrain.

This position paper, aligned with the 19th Annual International Security Conference theme "Securing Nigeria's Future: Integrating Strategies for Asymmetric and Hybrid Threats", proposes an integrated strategy centered on plural policing, intelligence-led operations, interagency collaboration, devolution of forest reserve management, architectural security, elite accountability, and sector-based coordination validated by Operation Hadin Kai. The argument rests on the premise that Nigeria's future security architecture must shift from centralized monopoly and elite capture to polycentric governance where states, Local Government Areas, and accountable communities become co-producers of security. This approach draws directly from Akinade's framework in *Managing Strategic Security and Crime Prevention Models* (2017), *Community Conflicts and Violence* (2009), and *Human And Social Security* (2007).

2.0 PROBLEM STATEMENT

Four interlinked problems define the current forest security crisis in Nigeria.

2.1 Scale-Capacity Mismatch

Nigeria's National Park Service manages seven national parks covering 22,206 km² with limited personnel, aerial surveillance capability, and real-time intelligence infrastructure. The ranger-to-area ratio is

approximately 1:9.8 km², far below the International Union for Conservation of Nature standard of 1:2 km² for effective protection. The Nigeria Police Force, Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps, and other federal agencies face competing priorities across 774 Local Government Areas, leaving forest borders under-policed. The result is a “control gap” where state authority exists on paper but not on terrain. As Akinade observes in *Managerial and Operational Skills For Modern Security Practices* (2007), operational skills and resources must match territorial scale.

2.2 Asymmetric Exploitation by Non-State Actors

Criminal networks exploit three structural advantages: intimate knowledge of forest terrain, absence of permanent security presence, and weak trust between communities and state agencies. Communities bordering Gashaka-Gumti, Kainji Lake, Cross River, Old Oyo, Chad Basin, Kamuku, and Okomu National Parks have reported the existence of camps from which attacks are coordinated and launched against neighbouring towns and villages. Hybrid threats merge traditional banditry with organized crime, terrorism financing, kidnapping for ransom, and illicit resource extraction.

2.3 Elite Complicity and Governance Deficit

Federal exclusivity removes security and development decisions from actors closest to the problem. More critically, evidence of traditional rulers and religious leaders supporting kidnapping networks shows that elite capture undermines both state and community security. Akinade (2009, *Community Conflicts and Violence*) warns that when local gatekeepers are compromised, criminal networks gain protection, logistics, and legitimacy. This betrayal collapses community trust and discourages intelligence sharing.

2.4 Environmental Design Deficit

In urban centres bordering forests, poor planning, unregulated construction, and lack of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design CPTED create additional vulnerabilities. Akinade (2007, *Human And Social Security*) argues that human security in cities requires control strategies for construction work, statutory provisions on environmental quality for residential housing, and integration of safety and sustainability into housing policy. When forests are insecure and urban design ignores crime prevention, both rural and urban populations face compounded risk.

3.0 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK & LITERATURE REVIEW

3.1 Asymmetric and Hybrid Threats

Asymmetric threats involve conflicts where weaker actors avoid direct confrontation with state forces, instead using surprise, terrain, concealment, and civilian camouflage. Hybrid threats combine conventional and unconventional tactics, regular and irregular forces, and criminal with political objectives. Nigeria’s forest reserves provide ideal conditions for both. Recent Operation Hadin Kai reports show Boko Haram and ISWAP fighters using gun trucks, motorcycles, RPGs, and coordinated assaults from multiple axes, confirming the hybrid nature of the threat. Akinade (2025, *Security Perceptions, Logic Thinking and Innovations*) argues that threats must be analyzed through logic, perception, and innovation.

3.2 Plural Policing Theory

Plural policing rejects the notion of state monopoly on security. It recognizes the Nigeria Police Force, Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps, Nigeria Customs Service, Nigeria Immigration Service, regional security agencies such as Amotekun, vigilante groups, hunters, and community watch groups as legitimate

security actors. Operation Hadin Kai's sector-based deployment in Borno demonstrates plural coordination across military sectors. Akinade (2004, Operational Framework For Policing; 2017, Public Policing and Private Protection) demonstrates that security is produced through multiple actors operating within a coordinated framework. The framework must include accountability for all actors, including elites.

3.3 Intelligence-Led Policing

Intelligence-Led Policing shifts policing from reactive response to predictive action driven by data, analysis, and community intelligence. Recent police operations that tracked and arrested kidnap gang leaders over time, and Operation Hadin Kai's rescue of children who escaped after sustained offensives in Saha and Chinene, demonstrate ILP in practice. In forest contexts, ILP depends on local knowledge, Geographic Information System mapping, drone surveillance, and real-time reporting. Akinade (2009, Security Systems & Criminal Justice) defines ILP as decision-making driven by analyzed information.

3.4 Agrosecurity and Environmental Protection

Akinade (2019, Agrosecurity, Bioterrorism and Environmental Protection) links food security directly to forest governance. When forests become crime havens, farmers abandon border farms, creating food insecurity. Ungoverned forests also enable agroterrorism through deliberate introduction of pests, livestock diseases, or contamination of water sources. The recovery of herbicides and food supplies from suspected logistics couriers in Borno validates this nexus.

3.5 Architectural Security and Human Security

Akinade (2007, Human And Social Security: The Challenges and Prospects of Sustainable Development In Nigeria) expands security discourse to include architectural security: integrating human security with design, human security in cities, control strategies for construction work in urban centres, crimes, safety, sustainability and housing, crime prevention through environmental design, construction hazards and solutions, and statutory provisions and policies on environmental quality for residential housing and accommodation. CPTED principles — natural surveillance, natural access control, territorial reinforcement, and maintenance — are critical for communities bordering forests.

3.6 Elite Accountability and Community Trust

Akinade (2009, Community Conflicts and Violence) stresses that sustainable security requires accountability of traditional and religious institutions. When elites are complicit, communities withdraw cooperation. Mechanisms for oversight, transparent revenue sharing, and consequences for abuse of office are essential to restore trust.

3.7 Sector-Based Operational Coordination

Operation Hadin Kai's structure — with Sector 2 conducting patrols around Amuda and Sector 3 operating along Damasak-Gubio — validates sector-based coordination in vast terrain. This model decentralizes command, places operational decisions closer to terrain, and enables rapid response. Akinade's polycentric governance framework supports similar sectorization at state level for forest reserves.

3.8 Foreign Comparative Literature

Brazil's Amazon model uses state environmental police and community brigades under federal standards, reducing illegal logging by 34 percent between 2012 and 2022. India's Joint Forest Management program

gives communities 50 percent revenue share and has created over 100,000 village forest guards. South Africa's provincial conservation agencies operate under national biodiversity law, achieving faster local response and better community relations.

4.0 ANALYSIS: THE CASE FOR DECENTRALIZATION

4.1 Constitutional Precedent: The Yankari Model

Yankari Game Reserve was a federal national park until Bauchi State successfully lobbied for its return in 2006 through an amendment to the National Park Service Act. Post-transfer, Bauchi State increased eco-tourism revenue, expanded community employment, and established stronger local security presence. Yankari proves federal ownership of national parks is reversible and state management can improve security and development outcomes. Akinade (2007, Territorial Conflicts And Cross-Borders Issues) cites Yankari as evidence that federal ownership is policy, not permanence.

4.2 The Old Oyo Case Study

At 2,512 km² across eleven Local Government Areas, Old Oyo National Park exceeds the operational radius of any single federal command. The park spans ten LGAs in Oyo State and one LGA in Kwara State. Oyo State Government and the South-West regional security agency Amotekun possess superior local intelligence capacity, language capability, and community trust. Yet legal restrictions prevent formal jurisdiction within the park. Criminal elements exploit this jurisdictional ambiguity.

4.3 Security-Development Nexus

Insecurity in forest-bordering communities correlates directly with unemployment and lack of economic stakes. When communities benefit from eco-tourism, sustainable forestry, agro-tourism, and conservation programs, they become "human sensors" against intrusion. Federal control concentrates revenue in Abuja while poverty persists at the forest edge. State and community control reverses this dynamic. Akinade (2008, National Security, Social Cohesion And Sustainable Development) argues that sustainable development requires local benefit.

4.4 Architectural Security at Forest-Urban Interfaces

Communities adjacent to Old Oyo and Kainji Lake face dual threats: forest-based criminals and urban crimes enabled by poor environmental design. Akinade (2007, Human And Social Security) identifies construction hazards, unregulated building, and absence of CPTED as factors that worsen safety in peri-urban settlements. Control strategies for construction work, statutory provisions on housing quality, and integration of safety into urban planning are essential complements to forest devolution. When states manage forests, they can also enforce building codes and land-use plans that prevent criminal access routes from forest to town.

4.5 Elite Complicity as a Force Multiplier for Crime

Recent parades of suspects, including traditional rulers and religious leaders allegedly supporting kidnapping networks, illustrate how elite complicity multiplies criminal capacity. Akinade (2009, Community Conflicts and Violence) identifies elite capture as a key driver of persistent insecurity. Without accountability mechanisms, devolution risks transferring control to local elites instead of communities. Polycentric governance must therefore include checks and balances on all stakeholders.

4.6 Sector-Based Validation from Operation Hadin Kai

Operation Hadin Kai's success in Borno between Thursday and Friday validates sector-based decentralization. Sector 2 rescued three children from Mandara Mountain enclaves after sustained offensives. Sector 3 foiled kidnappings along Damasak-Gubio Main Supply Route. The 68 Battalion ambushed ISWAP reconnaissance operatives. These results show that sector command, local patrols, and community reunions work in forest-mountain terrain analogous to national parks. The model should be replicated through state-led Forest Security Coordination Centres.

4.7 Interagency Collaboration Imperative

No single agency can secure 22,000 km² of forest. Effective response requires the Nigeria Police Force for criminal investigation, Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps for infrastructure protection, Nigeria Customs Service and Nigeria Immigration Service at borders, Amotekun for regional coordination, and community vigilantes for ground intelligence. State-level coordination platforms can fuse these actors under intelligence-led command. Akinade (2017, Managing Strategic Security) framework of Structure-Skills-Strategy alignment is essential.

5.0 RECOMMENDATIONS: AN INTEGRATED STRATEGY

To secure Nigeria's future against asymmetric and hybrid threats emanating from forest reserves, this paper recommends eight integrated actions.

5.1 Legislative Devolution

The National Assembly should amend the National Park Service Act to enable transfer of ownership and primary management of parks to host states, replicating the Yankari 2006 model. The Federal Government would retain regulatory oversight, conservation standards, and national policy direction. Draft amendment language is provided in Appendix B.

5.2 Institutionalization of Plural Policing

Each state hosting a national park should establish a Forest Security Coordination Centre bringing together the Nigeria Police Force, Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps, state security outfits, community vigilantes, hunters, and traditional rulers under a unified intelligence-led command structure. The organizational structure follows Akinade (2004, Operational Framework For Policing).

5.3 Intelligence-Led Technology Deployment

The Force ICT Department, in collaboration with states, should deploy shared GIS mapping, drone surveillance, and community-based reporting applications. Data from community reports should feed directly into the Nigeria Police Force Crime and Incident Database for analysis and action. Akinade (2025, Security Perceptions & Logic Thinking) stresses that technology must be matched with local logic. Operation Hadin Kai's use of intelligence to track and rescue abductees validates this approach.

5.4 Community Stakeholder Model with Elite Accountability

Local communities must have formal representation on park management boards. Revenue from tourism, forestry, and agriculture should be shared equitably using a 60-30-10 model: 60 percent to state and Local Government Areas for operations, 30 percent to communities for development projects, and 10 percent to a federal conservation fund. Traditional and religious leaders must be included with defined codes of

conduct and oversight mechanisms to prevent complicity. Training curricula should be based on Akinade (2018, Community Policing) and (2009, Community Conflicts and Violence).

5.5 Architectural Security and CPTED Integration

State governments, upon assuming park management, must integrate architectural security into peri-urban planning. This includes: control strategies for construction work in urban centres bordering forests, enforcement of statutory provisions and policies on environmental quality for residential housing and accommodation, adoption of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design principles, and mitigation of construction hazards. Akinade (2007, Human And Social Security) provides the framework for linking human security with design, safety, sustainability, and housing. Forest-to-town access roads, market layouts, and residential layouts must be designed to maximize natural surveillance and territorial reinforcement.

5.6 Elite Accountability Mechanisms

States must establish independent oversight committees within Forest Security Coordination Centres to monitor the conduct of traditional and religious leaders involved in park governance. Allegations of complicity must be investigated promptly and prosecuted under existing laws. Transparent revenue disclosure will reduce opportunities for elite capture.

5.7 Sector-Based Operational Coordination

Drawing from Operation Hadin Kai's sector model in Borno, states should divide forest reserves into operational sectors with dedicated command, intelligence, and rapid response units. Sector commanders should coordinate directly with Force ICT for real-time data and with community leaders for early warning. This decentralizes decision-making and reduces response time.

5.8 Regional Security Agency Integration

Where regional outfits such as Amotekun exist, federal policy should recognize them as partners in forest security. The Deputy Inspector General, South-West Zone, should lead pilot implementation in Old Oyo National Park before scaling to Kainji Lake National Park spanning Niger and Kwara States.

6.0 METHODOLOGY

This position paper adopts a mixed doctrinal-policy-case study methodology consistent with legal and security research standards.

6.1 Doctrinal Legal Research

Primary legal sources analyzed include the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria 1999 as amended, Land Use Act 1978, National Park Service Act Cap N65 Laws of the Federation 2004, and Administration of Criminal Justice Act 2015. Doctrinal analysis follows Akinade's approach in Security Systems, Law Enforcement, Criminal Justice And Public Safety (2009). The Yankari Game Reserve transfer of 2006 is examined as constitutional precedent for devolution.

6.2 Policy Analysis

Federal versus state capacity is evaluated using National Park Service 2024 Annual Report data. Nigeria Police Force operational data from the Crime and Incident Database 2024 are used to assess intelligence

gaps. Recent Operation Hadin Kai statements provide real-time data on sector-based operations, rescues, and logistics interdiction. Policy evaluation follows Akinade’s Managing Strategic Security and Crime Prevention Models (2017) framework.

6.3 Case Study Method

Three primary cases are examined: Yankari Game Reserve, Bauchi State, as a successful devolution model; Old Oyo National Park, 2,512 km² across eleven Local Government Areas in Oyo and Kwara States; and Operation Hadin Kai operations in Borno State as validation of sector-based intelligence-led operations. Case selection reflects Akinade’s emphasis in Territorial Conflicts And Cross-Borders Issues (2007) on terrain-specific analysis.

6.4 Literature Synthesis

Secondary data are drawn from Akinade’s fourteen ISN Publications spanning 2004 to 2025, including Human And Social Security (2007) and Community Conflicts and Violence (2009), Nigerian academic journals on security governance, and international scholarship including Ostrom (1990) and Metz (2015).

7.0 COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

Table 1: Comparative Forest Governance Models

Country	Governance Model	Key Features	Security and Conservation Outcome	Lesson for Nigeria
Brazil	State Environmental Police plus Community Brigades	Amazon states manage forest policing; federal agency IBAMA sets standards; community brigades patrol	34 percent reduction in illegal logging between 2012 and 2022	State-level coordination with federal standards works
India	Joint Forest Management JFM	Communities receive 50 percent revenue from forest products; over 100,000 village forest guards employed	Improved forest regeneration and reduced poaching	Revenue-sharing creates human sensors
South Africa	Provincial Conservation Agencies	Nine provinces operate parks under national biodiversity legislation	Faster response and improved community relations	Devolution with national standards is effective
Nigeria	Current Federal National Park Service Only	Central command in Abuja; less than one ranger per ten square kilometers; weak community ties; elite complicity	Parks function as crime havens and kidnapping corridors	Model fails at territorial scale
Nigeria	Proposed State plus Local Government plus Community plus Federal Oversight	Transfer ownership; Forest Security Coordination Centre at state level; revenue sharing 60-30-10; CPTED integration; elite accountability; sector coordination	Yankari post-2006: increased tourism and security. Operation Hadin Kai: rescues and logistics interdiction	Polycentric governance per Ostrom 1990

8.0 LEGAL REVIEW: CONSTITUTIONAL AND STATUTORY FRAMEWORK

8.1 1999 Constitution

Section 214 places “Police” on the Exclusive Legislative List. Section 4(7) grants States residual powers over “public order” and environmental matters. Akinade (2009, Security Systems & Criminal Justice) argues this creates legal space for state security outfits. Transfer of park management to states does not require constitutional amendment if framed as management.

8.2 Land Use Act 1978

Section 1 vests all land in the Governor of each state, held in trust for the people. Federal ownership of parks creates tension with this provision. Transfer of management to states resolves the conflict.

8.3 National Park Service Act 2004

Section 2 establishes the National Park Service and vests parks in the Federal Government. Amendment in 2006 transferred Yankari Game Reserve to Bauchi State. Akinade (2007, Territorial Conflicts) cites this as precedent. Appendix B contains draft amendment language for 2026.

8.4 Administration of Criminal Justice Act 2015

ACJA empowers State Attorneys-General to prosecute federal offenses with the consent of the Attorney-General of the Federation. If states manage parks, ACJA provides legal basis for prosecuting forest crimes locally, including cases involving elite complicity.

8.5 Environmental and Housing Statutes

Akinade (2007, Human And Social Security) highlights statutory provisions and policies on environmental quality for residential housing and accommodation. State control of forests enables enforcement of building codes, land-use regulations, and CPTED guidelines in peri-urban areas affected by forest insecurity.

9.0 IMPLEMENTATION ROADMAP: PILOT UNDER DEPUTY INSPECTOR GENERAL SOUTH-WEST ZONE

The Deputy Inspector General of Police, Force ICT Department and South-West Geopolitical Zone, is positioned to pilot the integrated model.

Table 2: Three-Phase Implementation Roadmap

Phase	Timeline	Key Activities	Lead Actors	Expected Output
Phase 1: Institutional Setup	0 to 6 months	Establish Old Oyo Forest Security Coordination Centre; deploy Force ICT GIS and drone data sharing; stakeholder mapping; CPTED audit of border communities; code of conduct for traditional and religious leaders; sectorize park into operational zones	Nigeria Police Force, NSCDC, Amotekun, Oyo and Kwara State Governments, Host Communities	Operational FSCC; real-time data sharing platform; CPTED baseline report; accountability framework; sector commands
Phase 2: Legal and Capacity Building	6 to 18 months	Lobby National Assembly for NPS Act amendment; train 500 community vigilantes; integrate hunters as Forest Guides; enforce construction control strategies; prosecute elite complicity cases; sector-based patrols	National Assembly, State Governments, Institute of Security Nigeria, Communities	Amended legislation; trained community security force; safer construction practices; deterrence; sector patrol capacity
Phase 3: Revenue and Scale	18 to 36 months	Implement 60-30-10 revenue sharing model; launch eco-tourism projects; replicate model to Kainji Lake National Park; integrate housing safety policies; publish annual transparency reports; scale sector model	State Governments, Local Government Areas, Private Sector Investors	Sustainable financing; model replication; improved urban safety; restored trust; sector coverage

9.1 Phase 1 Details

Forest Security Coordination Centre structure follows Akinade (2004, Operational Framework For Policing): Command Desk, Intelligence Desk, Operations Desk, Community Liaison Desk, and Technology Desk. Force ICT provides satellite imagery, drone feeds, and mobile reporting applications. CPTED audits identify poorly lit access roads, unplanned settlements, and abandoned construction sites that serve as criminal routes from forest to town. Codes of conduct for elites are adopted at inception. Park is sectorized like Operation Hadin Kai sectors.

9.2 Phase 2 Details

Training curriculum is based on Akinade (2018, Community Policing) and (2007, Human And Social Security): conflict resolution, intelligence gathering, human rights standards, conservation ethics, construction hazard mitigation, and CPTED principles. Hunters are formalized as “Forest Guides”. State housing agencies enforce statutory provisions on environmental quality for residential accommodation. Prosecution of elite complicity demonstrates that no actor is above the law. Sector patrols replicate Operation Hadin Kai’s local presence.

9.3 Phase 3 Details

Revenue model adapts Akinade (2019, Agrosecurity): sixty percent to state and Local Government Areas, thirty percent to communities, ten percent to federal conservation fund. Akinade (2007, Human And Social Security) emphasizes that sustainability and housing safety must be funded from this revenue to prevent re-emergence of ungoverned spaces. Annual transparency reports reduce elite capture. Sector model scales to other parks.

10.0 INTEGRATING AGROSECURITY, BIOTERRORISM AND ARCHITECTURAL SECURITY

Akinade (2019, Agrosecurity, Bioterrorism and Environmental Protection) warns that ungoverned forests enable agroterrorism through deliberate introduction of pests, livestock diseases, or contamination of water sources. Old Oyo National Park borders farming communities in Iseyin, Oje-Owode, and Tede Local Government Areas.

Akinade (2007, Human And Social Security) extends this to urban centres: construction and the environment must be managed to prevent criminals from using building sites as staging areas. Control strategies for construction work, crimes, safety, sustainability and housing are therefore inseparable from forest security. Devolution allows states to integrate forest security with agricultural extension and urban planning departments. Community forest guards can serve dual functions: security surveillance and early warning for crop disease, while town planning officers enforce CPTED and housing standards. Operation Hadin Kai’s recovery of herbicides and food supplies from logistics couriers confirms the agrosecurity link.

11.0 CONCLUSION

Nigeria’s 22,206 square kilometers of federal parks are not merely conservation assets; they constitute strategic security terrain. The current centralized model has produced scale-capacity mismatch, asymmetric exploitation by non-state actors, and governance deficits that alienate host communities. Evidence of elite complicity, including traditional and religious leaders supporting criminal networks, shows that insecurity is sustained by networks, not just individuals. At the same time, Operation Hadin Kai’s recent successes in

Borno State prove that sector-based, intelligence-led operations with sustained pressure can rescue civilians, interdict logistics, and degrade terrorist capacity even in vast forest-mountain terrain.

The fundamental question remains: why should the Federal Government maintain exclusive control over assets it cannot adequately secure, monitor, or develop for public benefit, while local elites undermine accountability?

The answer lies in the integrated strategy proposed in this paper: legislative devolution using the Yankari precedent, institutionalization of plural policing based on Akinade's operational framework, intelligence-led operations powered by Force ICT, community stakeholder governance with elite accountability, architectural security that integrates human security with design and CPTED, and sector-based coordination validated by Operation Hadin Kai.

Comparative evidence from Brazil, India, and South Africa, combined with over twenty years of research by Akinade across security management, criminal justice, agrosecurity, and human security, and validated by real-time operations in Borno, confirms that polycentric forest and urban governance with transparency outperforms centralized control and elite capture for large, populated territories. The Deputy Inspector General of Police, South-West Zone and Force ICT, is strategically positioned to pilot this model in Old Oyo National Park and scale to Kainji Lake and other parks.

As Akinade argues in *Security Perceptions, Logic Thinking and Innovations* (2025), *Community Conflicts and Violence* (2009), and *Human And Social Security* (2007), security innovation requires logical analysis, political courage, design thinking, and accountability. Leadership requires courage. States must emulate Bauchi. The Federal Government must embrace subsidiarity. Communities must claim ownership. Traditional and religious leaders must be held to the same standards as other citizens. Only through this transformation can Nigeria convert its forests and peri-urban settlements from threat vectors into assets for security, conservation, and sustainable development.

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13.0 APPENDICES

Appendix A: Map of Seven Federal National Parks and Old Oyo Local Government Areas

Geographic distribution of Gashaka-Gumti, Kainji Lake, Cross River, Old Oyo, Chad Basin, Kamuku, and Okomu National Parks, with detailed LGA boundaries for Old Oyo spanning Oyo and Kwara States.

Appendix B: Draft Clause – National Park Service Act Amendment 2026

“Notwithstanding Section 2 of the National Park Service Act Cap N65 Laws of the Federation 2004, the Governor of a State may, with the approval of the National Assembly, assume ownership and primary management responsibility for any national park located wholly or partly within that State, subject to compliance with federal conservation standards and regulations established by the National Park Service.”

Appendix C: Forest Security Coordination Centre Organizational Structure

Command Desk, Intelligence Desk, Operations Desk, Community Liaison Desk, Technology Desk. Structure based on Akinade (2004, Operational Framework For Policing). Includes oversight sub-committee for elite accountability and sector command structure based on Operation Hadin Kai model.

Appendix D: Revenue Sharing and Housing Safety Model

Sixty percent to State Government and Local Government Areas for operations and infrastructure development; thirty percent to host communities for development projects and housing safety upgrades; ten percent to Federal Government conservation fund. Model adapted from Akinade (2019, Agrosecurity) and Akinade (2007, Human And Social Security).

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