



African Forest Forum

A platform for stakeholders in African forestry



Guidelines to the **African Forest Forum Strategy** 2015 - 2020

Definition	The African Forest Forum (AFF) is an association of individuals who share the quest for and commitment to the sustainable management, use and conservation of the forest and tree resources of Africa for socio-economic wellbeing of its peoples and for the stability and improvement of its environment. This strategy is expected to help us clarify priorities, make effective decisions, optimize resource use, improve performance, and better respond to the needs of stakeholders.
Vision	<p>AFF seeks to be the leading forum that links and unites stakeholders in African forestry within and outside the continent.</p> <p>In AFF's understanding, becoming the 'leading forum' implies being a recognized entity for uniting stakeholders on the conservation and management of African forests to meet the social, ecological and economic needs of present and future generations</p>
Mission	To contribute to the improvement of the livelihoods of the people of Africa and the environment they live in through sustainable management and use of tree and forest resources on the African continent.
Goal	The goal of the AFF is to galvanize a common African voice and opinion, and mobilize resources that are required to address forestry and related issues that cut across countries and regions with a view of enhancing the relevance and contribution of forestry to the people of Africa and their environment.
Purpose	The purpose of the AFF is to provide a platform for information sharing and expertise and create an enabling environment for independent and objective analysis, advocacy and advice on relevant policy and technical issues pertaining to achieving sustainable management, use and conservation of Africa's forest and tree resources as part of efforts to reduce poverty, promote economic and social development and protect the environment.
Strategic objectives	<p>The four key strategic objectives of the AFF in the short and medium term (5-15 years) are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Build and strengthen networking among the many and varied stakeholders in forestry in Africa. ▶ Develop, solicit funding for, and implement specific programs, projects and activities that address already identified priority issues and opportunities in African forestry. ▶ Raise the profile of forestry, highlight threats to forest resources and the environment, and champion better management of African forests. ▶ Undertake an institutional organizational development of AFF, including its Secretariat and governance structures

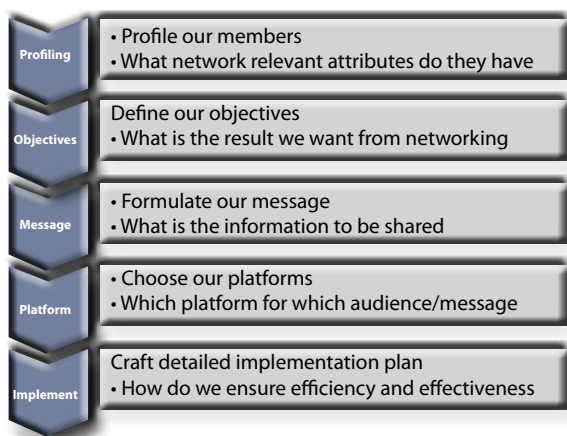


1 Networking

The main thrust of this strategic objective is to engage the many and varied stakeholders in food

The main thrust of this strategic objective is to build and strengthen networking among the many and varied stakeholders in forestry in Africa with the purpose of sharing relevant information among stakeholders in African forestry. To achieve this we will employ the cutting edge in knowledge management concepts, processes and tools available for the explicit and systematic management of vital knowledge - and its associated processes of creation, organization, diffusion, use and exploitation - in pursuit of AFF's objectives. It is important to note that knowledge encompasses both tacit knowledge (in people's heads) and explicit knowledge (codified and expressed as information in databases, documents etc). Our networking program will address the processes of knowledge development and transfer for both these basic forms.

Our Networking Strategy



Our members

What network relevant characteristics do they possess?

- ▶ **Extensive knowledge and skills in forestry and related areas**
- ▶ **Eager to advance AFF's vision and mission**
- ▶ **Universal access to emails**
- ▶ **Moderate access to internet**

Our objective

What is the result we aim for from networking activities?

- ▶ Inform, educate, guide
- ▶ Motivate, call to action
- ▶ Connect, position
- ▶ Increase AFF's visibility and influence

Our message

What is the information, knowledge and skills to be shared?

- ▶ Best practices in SFM
- ▶ Emerging issues in forestry and related fields

Our platforms

What are the primary information sharing platforms to be employed?

- ▶ Face-to-face (meetings, workshops, dialogues, negotiations)
- ▶ Email, Website, Blogs
- ▶ Social networking
- ▶ WIKIs, knowledge management, training (institutions)

Our implementation plan

How do we ensure efficiency and effectiveness of our networking activities?

- ▶ IP Policies
- ▶ Processes
- ▶ Resources
- ▶ M&E systems



2 Programming

The main thrust of this strategic objective is to develop, solicit funding for, and implement specific programs, projects and activities that address the following priority issues and opportunities in African forestry:

Modernizing and improving public forest administrations • Development of business models that link primary forest production to markets • Opportunities and challenges in developing and managing forest plantations • Improving forest concessions to enhance sustainable forest management • Enhancing commercialization of tree crops on farms • Rehabilitation of degraded forests and parklands • Strengthening forestry education and research • Enhancing community based forest management contribution to livelihoods and environmental protection • Forests and climate change: awareness, adaptation, mitigation and carbon trade • Support to Africa in international negotiations on forestry • Forest-water relations: safeguarding water supplies and livelihoods • Bio-energy: potential, constraints and threats to forestry and livelihoods • Transferring to Africa lessons, experiences, information, technologies and science on development of SFM from outside the continent • Information management and dissemination • Facilitate good governance of forest resources and fair trade in their products.


Our Programming Strategy




Setting priorities

- ▶ Undertake a proper analysis of forestry and related issues in Africa
- ▶ Take into account variance of issues across space and time
- ▶ Ensure that priorities are the result of engagement with stakeholders and do not duplicate or conflict with other ongoing initiatives
- ▶ Ensure alignment with national & sub-regional priorities

Identifying objectives and targets

- ▶ Objectives should be set in terms of desired outcomes
- ▶ Objectives and targets should be SMART (specific, measureable, achievable, relevant, timebound)
- ▶ Ensure complementarity among economic, social and environmental outcomes to achieving the stated objectives and put in place mitigatory measures if conflict exist
- ▶ Ensure women and minority groups interests are cared for in the program/project design
- ▶  Involving stakeholders in development and implementation

- ▶ Ensure key stakeholders at national and regional levels are identified and engaged
- ▶ Put in place a mechanism to ensure identified stakeholders are effectively involved throughout the program/project stages
- ▶ Set participation & communications methods (face-to-face, electronic) to be used
- ▶ Clarify partners' role and expectations
- ▶  Monitoring and evaluations
- ▶ Establish proactive technical oversight that monitors process models, lessons learned, and continuous feedback from stakeholders
- ▶ Budget for independent, impartial and scientific evaluation
- ▶ Monitoring should clearly build on specified objectives and targets
- ▶ Ensure both output and outcome monitoring indicators are functional
- ▶ Ensure there is adequate baseline information for evaluation of impacts
- ▶ The scope of evaluations should include lessons learned with corrective action, forecasting outcomes from past performance, as well as integrity of the deliverables




3 Advocacy

The main thrust of this strategic objective is to raise the profile of forestry, highlight threats to forest resources and the environment, and champion better management of African forests. In defining and delivering our message we consider the local culture and collaborate closely with local stakeholders. We take into consideration the policy dimension, civil society dimension, democratic space dimension, and individual gain dimension.

Our Forestry Advocacy Strategy



The issues

- ▶  What do we want to change?
- ▶ Untapped opportunities in forest products & services for poverty alleviation
- ▶ Low political profile of the forestry sector
- ▶ Weak forestry institutions across the continent
- ▶ Inadequate participation of Africa in relevant global processes

Key players

Whom do we want to influence?


- ▶ Local government,
- ▶ National government including core ministries (agriculture, environment, water authorities),
- ▶ Civil society, private sector,
- ▶ International donors, and multi-lateral organizations.

Our allies

With whom can we work?

- ▶ Forestry practitioners
- ▶ Public forest services
- ▶ Regional bodies
- ▶ Development partners

Approaches and tools

- ▶  What approaches and tools work best?
- ▶ Meetings, lobbying, negotiation & dialogue
- ▶ Reports, letters & policy briefs
- ▶ Mass media & media releases
- ▶ Email & internet

Monitoring and evaluation

How do we measure our progress?

- ▶ Setting SMART objectives (SMART = Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-Bound)
- ▶ Assessing the resources needed
- ▶ Formulating verifiable indicators and sources of verification
- ▶ Setting up reporting systems



4 Organizational development

Our core values: Transparency in all that AFF does • Accountability to the AFF constituency • Integrity that ensures that AFF can be trusted in all aspects of its work • Honesty in handling resources, implementing AFF activities and reporting • Professionalism in all that AFF does • Respect for others, including those who depend on forest and tree resources and AFF stakeholders • Observance of ethics in all aspects of the work of AFF.

Our guiding principles: Benefiting humanity and the environment • Equitable access to and use of forest and tree resources • Applying the best available knowledge in the management of tree and forest resources • Increasing the forest cover • Inter-sectoral integration and synergy • Working in partnership with relevant stakeholders • Observance of rights and privileges of people residing in and around forests.

Our Organizational Development Strategy



AFF's performance

Our performance is made visible through the activities we conduct to achieve our mission as well as the outputs and their effects. Based on the following four main parameters, we will identify 10–15 key performance indicators we will regularly monitor to assess our own performance.

- ▶ Effectiveness: AFF must move decisively towards the attainment of its mission and realization of its goals
- ▶ Efficiency: AFF must be able not only to provide exceptional services but also provide good value for money in both quantitative and qualitative terms
- ▶ Relevance: AFF must adapt to changing contexts and capacities and keep its mission, goals, programs, and activities agreeable to its key stakeholders and constituents

- ▶ Financial viability: AFF must be made financially viable via multiple sources of funding, positive cash flow, and financial surplus

Organizational capacity

We consider AFF's capacity in terms of the following seven main, interrelated areas that we believe are the foundation of our performance:

- ▶ Strategic leadership: includes leadership, strategic planning, governance, structure, and niche management
- ▶ Human resources: includes planning, staffing, developing, appraising and rewarding, and maintaining effective human-resource relations
- ▶ Financial management: includes financial planning, financial accountability, and financial statements and systems
- ▶ Infrastructure: includes facilities management and technology management
- ▶ Program management: includes planning, implementing, and monitoring programs and projects
- ▶ Process management: includes problem-solving, decision-making, communications, and monitoring and evaluation
- ▶ Inter-institutional linkages: includes planning, implementing, and monitoring networks and partnerships

Our short-term strategy is to outsource the management of human resource, finance and infrastructure to the host institution while we employ cutting edge management tools such as Balanced Scorecard for our performance management system.



Organizational motivation

AFF, like all other organizations, has its own rhythm and personality that impact highly on its performance. We consider the following as being the key elements of our organization's motivation:

- ▶ History: though brief, we recognize our success & failures and learn from them to perform better
- ▶ Mission: AFF will continue to ensure that its mission remains relevant, clear, linked to its goals, & shaping staff's attitude & behavior
- ▶ Culture: we understand the culture of our organization is the sum of our values, beliefs, customs, traditions, and meanings related to fulfillment of our mission. AFF endeavors to make its key values & principles explicit and puts in place systems to reinforce them so as to ensure staff maintains good morale, high level of commitment, exhibit good will and have positive attitude towards change.
- ▶ Incentives or rewards: incentives are important not only to individual careers but also to the overall success of our organization. AFF will, therefore, ensure that our incentive system (monetary or otherwise) is regularly updated and encourages good performance as well as remain consistent, fair, and equitable.

External environment

AFF will have a limited ability to change its environment, but we see value in understanding it better so that we can adapt to it better and develop appropriate strategies:

- ▶ Stakeholder: we appreciate the importance of identifying our stakeholders and understanding their roles and expectations vis-à-vis AFF. The forum will set a strategy to keep stakeholders close to our governance and operations.
- ▶ Administrative and legal: AFF will be influenced by the rules and procedures of the host organization and the host country as well as expectations of stakeholders and major donors
- ▶ Technological: existing systems in the wider environment support the technology needed for AFF's work. The forum will continue to tap into cutting edge technology to achieve its objectives
- ▶ Economic: comprises the forces and trends affecting the availability and worth of AFF's resources. The forum will adopt risk management measures against these.
- ▶ Social, cultural & political: AFF can be affected by the prevailing social, cultural & political environment. The forum will monitor changes in these parameters and strategize on the best way to adapt to these changes without compromising its performance.

Our Key Partners Include:

African Development Bank (AfDB) • Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO) • African Forestry and Wildlife Commission (AFWC) • African Forest Research Network (AFORNET) at the African Academy of Sciences (AAS) • United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF) • African Union Commission (AU) • New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) • United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) • World Conservation Union (IUCN)-Eastern Africa Regional Office • Commission des Forêts d'Afrique Centrale (COMIFAC) • Royal Swedish Academy for Agriculture and Forestry (KSLA) • International Tropical Timber Organisation (ITTO) • Many African forestry research, education and development institutions and networks •





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