



# THE African Forest Forum

A platform for stakeholders in African Forestry

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## AFF Governing Council Approves the 2012 Annual Report, Plan and Budget for 2013

*The year 2012 heralded the beginning of a new initiative: the African Forests, People and Climate Change Project.*

The African Forest Forum (AFF) Governing Council has endorsed the 2012 annual report and approved the workplan and budget for 2013.

The Council was happy with the accomplishments of 2012 and expectations are high that 2013 will even be more productive.

The year heralded the beginning of a new initiative: the African Forests, People and Climate Change Project which supports an emerging AFF Climate Change Program (AFF-CCP). The goal of AFF-CCP is to create capacities of stakeholders to strengthen the role of Africa's forests and trees to adapt to climate change and mitigate its adverse effects in various landscapes in ways that will enhance livelihoods, sustain biodiversity and improve the quality of the environment. The target groups of the activities of AFF-CCP are national, regional and international policy- and decision makers, the research and education community, NGOs and interested individuals, farmers and rural communities,

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the private industry and trade sector, and not forgetting the forests, trees and biodiversity in general. A special group of beneficiaries are African political and development organizations which AFF has established partnerships through agreements and other means.

The project activities will be spread across the continent, initially semi-arid areas (Sahel belt); the woodlands of West, East and Southern Africa; and moist forests in Central and West Africa. These activities will be undertaken in three broad working areas, namely: policy and advocacy; capacity building and skills development; and learning, information generation and knowledge management.

Already in 2012, a number of activities were undertaken and some of the outputs include:

1. Documentation on the status of forestry in initiatives like Great Green Wall of Sahara and Sahel Initiative (GGWSSI), regional climate change strategies, and plans by regional economic communities/groupings. The intention is to use this information to strategically raise the profile of forestry in these initiatives and plans.

2. Information on the status of NAMAs and NAPAs in West Africa, Central Africa, Eastern Africa, Southern Africa and the Sahel countries. This information will assist in identifying how the forestry niche in NAMAs and NAPAs can be strengthened.

3. Reports on the capacities (human, financial and physical) of public forest administrations in climate change work, viz. Southern, Eastern, Central, Sahel region and West Africa. This information will be of use in developing approaches to work with and strengthen these institutions.

4. Documentation on existing trade and trade potentials on forest products and services within and between regions, including negative trade impact of cross border trade as well as market distortions viz. Southern, Eastern, Central, Sahel region and West Africa. This information will be of use in providing guidance on how to enhance trade within and between countries and regions on the continent, as well as in strengthening the private sector in forestry.

With regard to capacity building and skills development, the following were undertaken in 2012:

1. Training needs on climate change for educational and research institutions in Africa were assessed and documented viz. Anglophone and Francophone African countries.

2. Capacity needs of civil society organizations and local communities in addressing climate change were assessed and documented viz. Anglophone and Francophone African countries.

3. Training modules for professional, technical and informal training were developed, viz. Anglophone and Francophone African countries. These modules were based on the training and capacity needs assessment.

Identification of training and capacity needs was done during a workshop held in Nairobi, Kenya, from 12 to 16 November 2012 which was attended by trainers and researchers in agriculture and forestry from training and research institutions and civil society organizations from Southern, Eastern, Central and, West Africa and the Sahel.

The workshop was attended by 54 participants from 22 countries, namely Zambia, Zimbabwe, Ethiopia, Kenya, Ghana, Gabon, Burkina Faso, Malawi, Niger, Nigeria, Botswana, Cameroon, Mali, Senegal, Uganda, Togo, Sudan, Burundi, Tanzania, Benin, Namibia, and Ivory Coast. It was also attended by staff from FAO and ICRAF.

With respect to the work to be undertaken in 2013, the key focal areas will be;

- Validating and testing the training modules developed in 2012 through four sub-regional workshops.
- Finalizing the studies that were undertaken in 2012 through development of targeted papers that will be used to share this information through an Africa-wide workshop, in addition to publishing journal articles from this work.
- Initiating studies on the nexus between biofuel production, fibre production in forests and agricultural crops production.

- Evaluating how to mainstream recommendations into national policies from international discourses on forests and those related to forests.

- Initiate an examination of training curricula basing on outputs from a needs assessment of educational/training and research institutions, as well as of civil society organizations carried out in 2012.

### **Communication Strategy**

The AFF took an important step in streamlining the generation and dissemination of information it handles. In this regard, AFF has also put together a comprehensive communication strategy to support the realization of its strategic objectives. The strategy is based on the findings of a member survey conducted in November 2012 which indicated that AFF needs to engage more stakeholders outside its membership.

The strategy is intended to streamline communication activities - both internal and external – with a view to effectively meeting information needs of AFF stakeholders, who mainly consist of members, partners, policymakers, donors and others in both the public and private sectors.

By providing clear guidelines for generating, storing and disseminating relevant information, the strategy is expected to enhance knowledge management within AFF, which in turn would result into achieving its strategic objectives.

### **Information Products and Website**

During the period ending 2012, AFF also produced five policy briefs and four fact sheets mainly on climate change, forest livelihood, adaptation and mitigation, carbon market and management of African forests.

The website has been upgraded and re-organized to feature the major themes AFF is involved in. UNFCCC and other partners working in the area of climate change have also been sign posted. The website's functionality was also

expanded to include social networking integration to facilitate easy information sharing among a network of stakeholders in the area of forest and climate change.

In addition, AFF produced a brochure and two flyers in both English and French. Also, a 250p book on "Climate change and African forest and wildlife resources" was published and later translated into French.

### **Science, Policy and Practice**

As part of its mandate to strengthening the link across science, policy and practice, AFF participated in a Forest Policy Day', which was jointly organised by ITTO as part of the first IUFRO-FORNESSA Regional Congress under the theme: "The Policy/Science Interface for Sustainable Forest Management in Africa".

During the event, Prof. Godwin Kowero, Executive Secretary, AFF, highlighted AFF's commitment to forging partnerships across science, policy, and practice, and underscored the need to effectively communicate scientific findings to policymakers to foster good forest governance.

Prof. Fred Owino- Chair of Members' Forum of AFF also gave a keynote speech during the event. AFF Secretariat staff also made presentations during the event. Professor Emmanuel Chidumayo, Senior Programme Officer at AFF made a well-received presentation "Forest Conservation in Sub-Saharan Africa in the Light of Climate Change" and plenary keynote presentation on "Forest Conservation in Sub-Saharan Africa in the Light of Climate Change".

Dr. Larwanou Mahamane, Senior Programme Officer at AFF made two technical presentations during the conference: "Variability in growth of *Acacia nilotica* (L.) Wild. Ex Delile provenances in a Sudano-Sahelian zone of Niger, West Africa" and "The Ecological and socio-economic importance of *Balanites aegyptiaca* in the traditional parkland system of Tahoua region in Niger".

## Message from the Executive Secretary

The relationship between forest resources and climate change cannot be overemphasized. It works both ways, in that climate change affects forests and also forests affect climate.

However, lack of adequate knowledge and training on this relationship on one hand, and the low political action on forestry made worse by low investments in the forestry sector, makes Africa's forests the potentially very vulnerable to the adverse impacts of climate change on the forests themselves and on the people who depend on them, in addition to missing out on opportunities that forests provide to facilitate climate mitigation and adaptation. This partly explains why Africa's resilience and adaptive capacity to climate change remains weak and must therefore be addressed aggressively.

In this regard, and as a small contribution to this effort, the African Forest Forum is implementing a project titled "The African Forests, People and Climate Change" that is funded by the Swiss Agency for Development Corporation (SDC) ; and whose focus is to create capacities of stakeholders to strengthen the role of Africa's forests and trees to adapt to climate change and mitigate its adverse effects in various landscapes in ways that will enhance livelihoods, sustain biodiversity and improve the quality of the environment.

In the short to medium term the expected outcomes of this project are: (1) Increased awareness on forests and climate change issues and promotion of appropriate changes in policies and practices; (2) Improved capacity to address forest related climate change; (3) Sound information basis to back production, adaptation, mitigation and policy processes that involve forests and trees.

The AFF annual report, presented to the Governing Council during its meeting in March, highlights significant achievements resulting from the implementation of the programme, as already alluded to in other sections of this Newsletter. Suffice to add that in this second year of implementation, the programme is building on the achievements of the previous year and consolidating and value adding to studies that were initiated in the first year. This will be a year of validating the training modules that were developed during the first year through four sub-regional workshops. At the end of these workshops the modules will be finalised and released to the wider audience for use. Already some institutions have begun using them.

In addition, AFF will refine the reports made on several studies undertaken in 2012, with a view to producing not only journal articles whose publication as a special edition of a journal that has reasonable circulation in Africa is being explored; but also policy briefs and fact sheets to various audiences. AFF will considerably expand its scientific information base on climate change issues as they relate to forests and trees.

AFF continues to streamline its information management. For example AFF has already developed a communication strategy to effectively meet information needs of its stakeholders; and this strategy will begin to be implemented in 2013. This is in addition to revamping our website; the main information hub of AFF.

I take this opportunity to commend our staff at the Secretariat for their hard work; our members for their commitment and implementation of the bulk of this agenda; members of the Governing Council and its committees for their wise counsel and guidance; and our partners and stakeholders for their support.

## Africa Loses Forestry Icon

The forestry and academic fraternity in Africa is mourning the loss of an industrious and dedicated professional, Dr Iba Kone, who passed on at the Nairobi Hospital in April, 2013 after developing heart complications.



Dr Iba Kone has contributed immensely in the development of forestry in Africa through various initiatives.

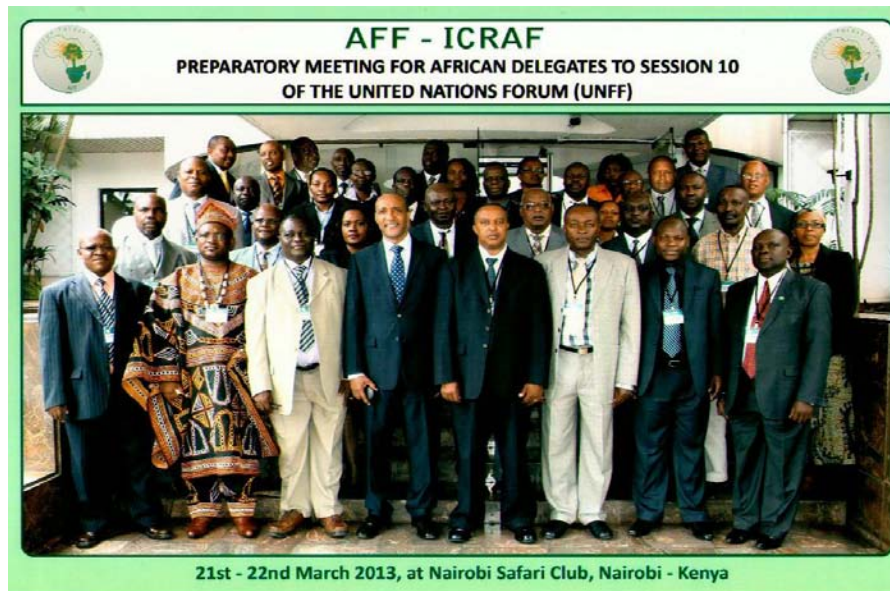
He was the Founder Member of the Governing Council and Coordinator of the African Forest Research Network (AFORNET) at AAS (1998-2011) and a board Member of FORNESSA.

He was also a member of the Ivorian Association of Agriculture and Forestry and the Ivorian Association of Sciences.

He once served as a board member of the International Union of Forest Research Organizations (IUFRO). His contribution will be greatly missed.

May God rest his soul in eternal peace!

## AFF Convenes African Delegates Meeting in Preparation for UNFF Session 10



*The meeting was meant to rally African delegates to take a common stand on important issues affecting forestry in the continent and articulate them properly during the UNFF10 session.*

Sessions of the United Nations Forum of Forests (UNFF) provide African forestry stakeholders with an opportunity to influence strategic decisions pertaining to the management, conservation and sustainable development of global forest resources. However, for the African voice to be heard at the global arena, it is important for delegates taking part in these sessions to take a common stand on important issues affecting forests in the continent.

It is for this reason that the African Forest Forum convened a meeting for African delegates in preparation for the 10th UNFF session that was held in Istanbul, Turkey on April 8-19, 2013.

The preparatory meeting was held on March 21, 2013 in Nairobi, Kenya, a month prior to the 10<sup>th</sup> UNFF session.

The meeting, financially supported by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), was organized and guided by the Technical Support Team (TST), a sub-committee of the AFF Governing Council.

Twenty Three (23) countries were represented at the meeting, including members of the TST, the Kenya Permanent Mission in New York and representatives of the African Union and the South African Development Community (SADC).

At the end of the meeting, the following outputs were realized:

- A strategy developed to guide negotiations by African Group at UNFF10;
- The roles of TST and African Group in these negotiations better understood;
- A position paper to be tabled at UNFF10 developed;
- Areas for strengthening capacity for negotiations identified.

The presentations and discussions focused on the following five themes:

- Forests and economic development;
- Emerging issues, multi-stakeholder dialogue, regional and sub-regional inputs, enhanced cooperation;
- Implementation of the Non-legally Binding Instrument (NLBI);
- Means of implementation for sustainable forest management;
- Other key issues.

## *AFF's Contribution and gain*

During the opening session, the Director of the UNFF Secretariat, Ms. J McAlpine, made special mention of the AFF and spoke in glowing terms of the work that the Forum has done to amplify and to mobilize the regional thinking of the African Continent.

AFF organized a daily coordination meeting for the African Group to meet in the morning each day agree on key issues to be resolved. The AFF Secretariat also provided translation and secretarial assistance to the African Group. The Democratic Republic of the Congo chaired the African group. Sebastian Malele, who is also Vice-Chair of AFF, was thus able to chair the meetings.

AFF attended all the meetings of the African Group, and wherever possible gave advice and assistance to the African delegates. The TST actively went through draft negotiating texts and made inputs throughout. These inputs provided the basis for the negotiations and were invariably taken on board during the G77 plus China closed session negotiations.

In addition to the formal sessions of the UNFF, members of the delegation attended side events pertaining to Africa. The Landscape Restoration Project which is achieving international fame indicated that they would like to hold further discussions with the AFF to see what joint work can be done. Linda Mossop-Rousseau has been a member of the Landscape Restoration Project since 2005 and thus served as entry point.

Godwin Kowero gave a presentation at a side event which was very well received. The side event was on "Dry forests of Sub-Sahara Africa: challenges and opportunities in their management". The side event was organized by UNCCD on the broad theme "Dry forests: Drought, water scarcity and the global development agenda", on April 12, 2013.

AFF also held several informal meetings with delegates, representative of regional organizations and old contacts and discussed issues as well as future opportunities to work together. Useful side meetings were held with Mia Crawford, a special advisor to the Swedish Government, and Jürgen Blazer, who was in the Swiss delegation.

There was greater interaction with the African delegates and more often than not negotiating teams asked for “on the spot” advice while AFF accommodated these requests during the full course of the meeting.

### **AFF Pushes Africa’s Agenda at the 10th UNFF Session gain**

The African Forest Forum (AFF) was actively engaged in pushing the Africa agenda on forestry during the 10th session of the Forum on Forests (UNFF). AFF actively participated in the Tenth Session of the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF) held on 08 - 19 April 2013 Istanbul, Turkey.

Under the theme “Forests and Economic Development”, the session brought together about 1300 delegates who deliberated on a range of issues including: forests and economic development; means of implementation (MoI) for sustainable forest management (SFM).

Discussions also centered on emerging issues, including the outcomes of the UN Conference on Sustainable Development (UNCSD or Rio+20), the post-2015 development agenda and the future of the international arrangement on forests (IAF).

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AFF was ably represented by a delegation of five including Oyebo Macarthy Afolabi (AFF GC Chair, TST member), Linda Mossop-Rousseau (TST Chair, GC member), Godwin Kowero (AFF Executive Secretary), Larwanou Mahamane (Senior Program Officer), and Yonas Yemshaw (Senior Program Officer).

### **AFF Develops Training Modules on Forest Based Climate Change**

*The modules, the first of their kind in Africa, have been developed to fill existing training gaps in forest based climate change adaptation, mitigation and carbon trading.*

The African Forest Forum (AFF) has developed a set of comprehensive training modules on forest based climate change adaptation, mitigation and carbon trading.

This follows a rigorous and participatory exercise spearheaded by AFF that identified training needs in these areas for academic, research, civil society and private sector training institutions in Africa.

The workshop identified the training needs on forests and climate change for educational and research institutions at professional and technical levels, as well as for informal groups that are mainly made up of civil society organizations and local communities.

Based on the identified gaps, the training modules focus on the following areas: Science of Climate Change, Forests and Climate Change Adaptation, Forests and Climate Change Mitigation, and Carbon Trading and Marketing

In an effort to cater for the different needs, the modules have been designed as comprehensive packages for professional, technical and informal groups.

The modules are intended to build the capacity and develop skills that will enable African people and their institutions to positively manage the impacts of climate change.

The overall objective of the training for professionals is to build and strengthen the capacity of professionals to understand, explain, and work with the linkages between forests and climate change, particularly taking actions that could strengthen the role of forests in climate change mitigation and adaptation.

The component for informal groups training is modified to suit specific themes that will be handled in the form of short term training, workshops and seminars, among other modes.

After validation, the national governments will translate the action plans into bankable projects for funding by donor agencies and also through internal resources.

### **AFF at the Centre of African model Forest**

The African Forest Forum (AFF) participated in a conference which brought together professionals from different fields in Africa, Europe, Asia and America to discuss key issues affecting the African continent.

The African Model Forest Conference (AMF Conference) has grown to become one of the most important and effective means for promoting a green economy in Africa.

It brings together more than 400 professionals in different fields drawn from Africa, Europe, Asia and America to discuss key issues affecting the African continent including climate change, economy, demography, natural resources management, energy and sustainable technologies.

THE AFRICAN FOREST FORUM

A PLATFORM FOR STAKEHOLDERS IN  
AFRICAN FORESTRY

The African Forest Forum (AFF) has become one of the most influential players in the design and organization of the conference. As member of the Governing Council, Dr Mahamane Larwanou has been involved in making key decisions about the conference; he has provided valuable input into the final output of this year's conference.

Under the theme 'Africa: Governance and Change, Innovation and Green Social Business' the 2013 edition was held from March 12 to 15 at the Palais des Congrès of Yaoundé in Cameroun. It focused on three areas:

- Change and adjustment: Africa in the new global economy

- African responses and innovations
- Biodiversity, markets and value chains.

The conference takes the form of keynote lectures, workshops and interactive spaces for exchange, debates, coffee tables, and exhibition.

The theme of the conference: Emerging Africa: Governance and Change, Innovation and Green Social Business are divided into three sub-themes.

Designed to discuss the African emergence over the next 30 years, the conference is organized every three (3) years by the African Model Forest Network in conjunction with its Annual General Meeting.

It is an avenue for rural actors, regional and global leaders to come together and share thoughts for action and change in the perspective of real and lasting transformation of African societies.

Participants are drawn from the private sector, international organizations, governments, embassies, and universities, rural and urban entrepreneurs to promote their business, products and improve their visibility. An exhibition during the AMF Conference offered a range of opportunities to actors of various sectors.

The next conference will be held in 2016, exact date and venue will be decided later.

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