



CALL FOR ONLINE MODERATORS FOR COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE

ON

SUSTAINABLE FOREST MANAGEMENT: THE CRITICAL PATHWAY FOR
BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION AND RESILIENCE IN AFRICA

October 2025

ABOUT OUR ORGANIZATION

The African Forest Forum (AFF) is an association of individuals who share the pursuit and commitment to the sustainable management, wise use, and conservation of the forest and tree resources of Africa for the betterment of the socio-economic wellbeing of its people and for the stability and improvement of its environment. The purpose of AFF is to provide a platform and create an enabling environment for independent and objective analysis, advocacy, and advice on relevant policy and technical issues pertaining to achieving sustainable management, wise use, and conservation of Africa's forest and tree resources as part of efforts to reduce poverty, protect the environment, and promote economic and social development.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Africa hosts eight of the world's 34 biodiversity hotspots which support a variety of plant and animal species including their genetic diversity. Covering about 624 million Ha (23 per cent of Africa's land area), the forests ecosystems range from woodland forests, tropical and subtropical forests, montane forests, dry forests to mangrove forests of Africa's coastline (Cormier-Salem, 2018). In addition to supporting habitats, these ecosystems secure livelihoods and economies of the countries, contributing to achievement of Agenda 2063 and sustainable development goals.

Over two thirds of Africa's population rely directly and indirectly on forest biodiversity for goods and services that contribute considerably to both local and national economies. Recent estimates (Shackleton, C. M., & de Vos, A., 2022) show that about 677 million rural population in Africa use Non-Timber Forest Products (NTFPs) for household subsistence and income. The forests and trees also harbour the wildlife biodiversity that is at the center of many African countries' tourism industry, a leading foreign exchange earner.

Despite the continent's wealth of resources, Africa recorded a net forest loss of about 3.9 million Ha between 2010-2020 (FAO, 2020) threatening the sustainability of the ecosystems and the life forms they support. In particular, forest biodiversity loss is a factor of habitat destruction and fragmentation, invasive species, climate change and global warming (IPBES 2018). To effectively safeguard these ecosystems and enhance their functionality, policies and regulatory frameworks have been developed at global, regional and national levels.

With regard to biodiversity conservation, the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the Nagoya and Cartagena protocols were adopted to ensure biodiversity conservation, sustainable use of biodiversity components, and fair and equitable sharing of benefits from the use of genetic resources. Proper management of forests provides a viable solution in mitigation of biodiversity loss and climate crisis while sustaining livelihoods. Notably, strong emphasis on forest restoration, and management would be essential for biodiversity conservation, and therefore attaining the Kunming–Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KMGBF) targets of the CBD (CBD, 2024).

In Africa, the Sustainable Forest Management Framework (2020-2030) guides countries on the sustainable use and conservation of forests with the aim of maintaining and enhancing multiple forest values through human interventions. Sustainable Forest Management (SFM) enhances biodiversity benefits by

maintaining forest ecosystem functions, conserving habitat heterogeneity, and supporting species richness across multiple scales. Furthermore, the application of SFM principles promotes resilience to anthropogenic pressures and climate variability, thereby ensuring the continued provision of biodiversity-related ecosystem services essential for both human well-being and ecological stability.

It is within this context that African Forest Forum is organizing a Community of Practice (CoP) titled Sustainable Forest Management: The critical pathway for biodiversity conservation and resilience in Africa. The CoP is being organized to explore the technological, social, policy, institutional and financial innovations in shaping the future of biodiversity management in Africa. Proposed interventions include socially inclusive biodiversity governance and management frameworks, capitalizing forest biodiversity benefits into national accounting systems and carbon and biodiversity finance solutions, among others.

1.1 RATIONALE

In the context of the 2025 annual work plan for Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) supported project on *“Transforming the African Forest Forum to enhance its capacity to improve livelihoods and environmental stability through better management of African forest and tree resources”*, AFF is recruiting two regional experts to moderate an online Community of Practice (CoP) on Sustainable forest management: the critical pathway for biodiversity conservation and resilience in Africa . The CoP is expected to build a good understanding on the critical contribution of Africa’s forests to biodiversity conservation and socio-ecological resilience with the view to synthesize and communicate these insights to African stakeholders. The CoP will subsequently explore social, governance and financial innovations needed to shape secure forest biodiversity management in Africa.

The CoP will be hosted on a conducive Howspace platform and will involve both webinar series and web-based interactions. The online moderators will be expected to encourage / engage and guide stakeholders to attend the webinar series and the web-based discussions and share their knowledge, experiences and best practices on promoting sustainable forest management for biodiversity conservation in Africa. At the end of each session, the moderators will synthesize views, lessons and recommendations to be posted on the CoP’s Howspace, easily accessible to all community members.

1.2 PURPOSE OF THE CONSULTANCY

The aim of this Community of Practice (CoP) is to provide a platform for sharing of knowledge, resources and best practices amongst African forestry and biodiversity stakeholders, with focus on the critical contribution of sustainable forest management to biodiversity conservation and resilience in Africa.

1.3 SPECIFIC TASKS

The key tasks of this assignment are as follows:

- i. Provide relevant inputs to the concept note and proposed programme for the CoP, including topics for the online discussion forum.
- ii. Promote the CoP, identify a wide range of stakeholders and start engaging them on the “Howspace” platform at least one week before the webinar sessions.

- iii. Work with AFF Secretariat, to tailor discussion topics in line with the thematic area of the CoP as well as the project outcomes.
- iv. Identify and engage a broad range of stakeholders including relevant networks, individuals, and institutions with specific expertise and experiences on forestry and biodiversity conservation, then invite them to participate to enrich the online discussion.
- v. Coordinate, in collaboration with AFF, daily presentations on the selected topics to guide the online discussion.
- vi. Actively guide the discussion to ensure it remains focused on the agenda, address all discussion questions and at the end of each session, draft and post a daily summary note.
- vii. Daily tasks of the CoP's moderator, to be done during the 2-hour webinar and Chat sessions starting from the 24 – 28 November 2025 include:
 - Welcome participants to the virtual discussion.
 - Introduce the topic, prepare, and deliver presentations and/or facilitate their delivery by identified guest speakers and drive discussions to address any open/pending issues.
 - Provide encouragement/energizer to drive the discussion when no contributions have been posted, by posing/fielding questions, contacting members directly through the platform, posting complementary content such as documents, websites, and text.
- viii. Propose and discuss with the CoP members plausible approaches and a strategy to sustain interactions on the platform after the two-weeks' webinar series.
- ix. Document key issues raised, and actions proposed by the CoP members.

1.4 DELIVERABLES

This assignment aims to deliver the following:

- Useful resources for the e-discussion uploaded and shared regularly.
- Daily and weekly summaries of the e-discussions
- A strategy and action plan to sustain interactions and peer-to-peer learning among the community after the webinar sessions.
- Final report of the assignment to be submitted one week after the end of the COP sessions.

1.5 MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS AND SKILLS

The online discussion moderators must have the following qualifications and skills:

- At least a master's degree in forestry, natural resource management, environmental studies and related fields with experience in management of biodiversity, a PhD will be an added advantage.
- At least five years' working experience in forest resources management and environmental governance frameworks at multiple scales, in the context of conservation of biodiversity.
- Have proven writing skills with experience in writing technical reports, policy documents and the like, on topics related to sustainable forest management, forest protection, biodiversity management and ecosystem services.
- Excellent communication skills in both English and French (Bilingual)

- Experience in moderating CoPs, multi-stakeholders' participatory actions or events at regional level is desirable.

1.6 DURATION OF ASSIGNMENT

The work is expected to take one (1) calendar month, commencing on 12 November 2025. The online regional facilitator will work from own location but be in close consultation with relevant staff at the AFF Secretariat while keeping to an agreed delivery schedule.

1.7 DEADLINES

Applications must be received by the AFF Secretariat on or before 5 November 2025.

Consultancy activities must begin no later than 12 November 2025.

1.8 HOW TO APPLY

Please email your application to AFF, attaching: (a) A cover letter stating how you meet the above qualifications and experience requirements; (b) An updated CV; and c) a brief proposal on how you would approach the CoP. Indicate the subject line: "Consultancy: Online regional Moderator for a Community of Practice on *Sustainable forest management: the critical pathway for biodiversity conservation and resilience in Africa* to d.gitonga@cifor-icraf.org with a copy to d.mutta@cifor-icraf.org, d.dali@cifor-icraf.org and exec.sec@afforum.org . Only successful applicants will be contacted.