



A PLATFORM FOR STAKEHOLDERS IN AFRICAN FORESTRY

STRENGTHENING AFRICAN CAPACITY TO MONITOR AND REPORT ON COMPLIANCE TO INTERNATIONAL PROCESSES RELATED TO FORESTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE



AFRICAN FOREST FORUM WORKING PAPER SERIES

Copyright © African Forest Forum 2015

All rights reserved

African Forest Forum (AFF)

P.O. Box 30677-00100, Nairobi, Kenya.

Phone: +254 20 722 4203

Fax: +254 20 722 4001

Email: exec.sec@afforum.org; Website: www.afforum.org

Citation: Gondo, P. C. (2015). Strengthening African capacity to monitor and report on compliance to international processes related to forests and climate change. AFF Working Paper (3)2. Nairobi. African Forest Forum.

Cover Photograph: AFF/2015

Disclaimer

The designations employed and the presentation of material in this publication do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the African Forest Forum concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area or its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries regarding its economic system or degree of development. Excerpts may be reproduced without authorization, on condition that the source is indicated. Views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect those of the African Forest Forum.

STRENGTHENING AFRICAN CAPACITY TO MONITOR AND REPORT ON COMPLIANCE TO INTERNATIONAL PROCESSES RELATED TO FORESTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE

Peter C. Gondo

Contents

List of tables and boxes.....	ii
List of boxes	ii
ACRONYMS	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	v
1. INTRODUCTION.....	1
2. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STUDY	2
2.1 Purpose and Objectives of the Study	2
2.2 Scope of the Study	2
3.0 STUDY METHODOLOGY	3
3.1 Methods.....	3
3.2 Study Limitations.....	3
4.0 ANALYSIS OF INTEGRATION OF INTERNATIONAL AND REGIONAL AGREEMENTS INTO FOREST SECTOR PROGRAMMES AND PLANS	4
4.1 United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)	4
4.2 Convention on Biological Diversity	7
4.3 United Nations Convention to Combat Drought and Desertification (UNCCD).....	9
4.4 Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES)	12
4.5 The Non-legally Binding Instrument on all types of forests (NLBI)	13
4.6 RAMSAR Convention	14
4.7 Criteria and Indicators (C&I)	15
4.8 Certification	15
4.9 Regional and sub-regional protocols and initiatives	16
5.0 INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY STRENGTHS AND GAPS.....	20
5.1 Challenges.....	20
5.2 Opportunities.....	21
6. CONCLUSION	22
6.1 A Proposed approach for improved incorporation, monitoring and reporting.....	22

6.2	Awareness raising	23
6.3	Identification of pertinent issues to the forest sector from each agreement.....	24
6.4.	Participation in the development and incorporation of relevant issues in the national strategy	24
6.5	Forest sector specific strategy and action plan.....	24
6.6	Integration with on-going activities in the national forest development programme	24
6.7	Capacity building	25
6.8	Coordination and stakeholder participation mechanisms	25
6.9	Resource mobilisation.....	25
6.10	Implementation Plan	25
6.11	Monitoring and evaluation.....	26
REFERENCES.....		27

List of tables and boxes

Table 1. Lead institutions by thematic area	17
---	----

List of boxes

Box 1. Key forest related ideas and provisions from UNFCCC	4
Box 2. Convention on Biological Diversity.....	7
Box 3. Key forest related provisions from the UNCCD convention.	10
Box 4. Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species key provisions:.....	12

ACRONYMS

AFF	African Forest Forum
AFF-CCP	African Forest Forum Climate Change Programme
AFLEG	Africa Forest Law Enforcement and Governance
C&I	Criteria and Indicators
CBD	United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity
CBFM	Community-based Forest Management
CBNRM	Community-based Natural Resources Management
CITES	Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species
COMIFAC	Commission des Forêts d'Afrique Centrale (Commission for the Forests of Central Africa)
CCA	Communal Conservation areas (CCAs)
COP	Conference of the Parties
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations
FD	Forest Department
FI	Forest Instrument
FSC	Forest Stewardship Council
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GGWSSI	Great Green Wall for the Sahara and the Sahel Initiative,
ITTA/ITTO	International Tropical Timber Agreement/Organisation
IUCN	International Union for the Conservation of Nature
JFM	Joint Forest Management
LME	Large Marine Ecosystem
NAMAs	Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Actions
NAPs	National Action Plans
NBSAP	National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plan
NCB	National Coordinating Body
NCE	National Council for the Environment
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development
NFDC	National Forestry Development Committee
NFP	National Forest Programme
NLBI	Non-legally Binding Instrument on All Types of Forests
NTFP	Non-Timber Forest Product
PFE	Permanent Forest Estate
PFM	Participatory Forest Management
PES	Payment for Ecosystem Services
REDD	Reduced Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation
RRI	Rights and Resources Initiative
REMA	Rwanda Environment Management
SADC	Southern Africa Development Community
SFM	Sustainable Forest Management
SMP	Simple Management Plan

SDC	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC)
TFS	Tanzania Forest Service Agency
UN	United Nations
UNCCD	United Nations Convention on Combating Desertification
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UNFF	United Nations Forum on Forests
VNRC	Village Natural Resource Committee

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This study has benefited from the expertise and contributions of a number of experts. I would like to express my sincerest gratitude to many experts from the lead forest agencies of Cameroon, Nigeria, Rwanda, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe that have made valuable contributions to the study. I also wish to acknowledge and thank the many experts and resource people who contributed valuable inputs at various stages in the process of developing this draft document: Mrs. Annie Madzara. Special thanks to Barbara Owour, for all the administrative and logistical support and to Dr. Samuel Assembe CIFOR (Cameroon), Dr. Jean Baptiste Nduwayezu (Rwanda) Mr. Ibrahim Adebayo (Nigeria), Vincent Ziba (Zambia) and Mr C. Gumbie (Zimbabwe) for facilitating and coordinating meetings and visits in their respective Countries. Finally I would like to thank Dr. Larwanou Mahamane for providing guidance for the study and editing the first drafts.

1. INTRODUCTION

The African continent remains the most vulnerable region in the world to the impact of climate change, mainly due to weak resilience and adaptive capacity. There is limited knowledge on the relationship between forests and climate change in Africa; and especially on adaptation and mitigation to the adverse effects of climate change, as well as capitalizing on the opportunities that climate change and variability offer the continent. Understanding, strengthening and further developing the relationship between forest and climate is therefore key issue to Africa's future development. This is because of the key roles forests and trees outside forests play in the lives of people and animals on the continent, as well as on the economies of African countries and the environment in which the people, livestock and wildlife live in. However, the nature of this relationship and its impact is greatly influenced by how international forest and climate change and related agreements are incorporated into national policies and practices. With respect to the Africa, it is important to understand how individual African countries are implementing ideas and recommendations that come from international conventions, agreements, protocols, and other initiatives (all of them are in this text referred to as international agreements) that have a bearing on how climate change and variation could affect forests and vice versa. This could facilitate positioning the forest sector better to contain the adverse effects of climate change as well as take advantage of opportunities that come with the same. It would also make it easier to profile Africa and its sub-regions both at regional and international levels. This could lead to enhanced collaboration and support from institutions and other players that support the implementation of these international agreements, and especially during this era when forests are increasingly seen as contributing not only to international public goods but to international services like carbon sequestration that has global implications.

The study whose results are reported in this document was commissioned by the African Forest Forum with the several objectives, namely: to assess how individual African countries are implementing the forest, climate change and related international conventions; how these international conventions are adding value to their national forestry sector policies and programmes; and to develop an approach on how Africa can to monitor and report on compliance to international processes related to forests and climate. The study was conducted in eight African countries, namely: Cameroon, Rwanda, Gabon, Nigeria, Zambia, Zimbabwe and Niger and Tanzania.

2. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STUDY

The forest sector serves as a platform for synergy among the Rio conventions, as well as other multilateral environmental agreements. On the other hand, sustainable management of forests and forest ecosystems at national and global levels is best achieved through synergy actions between the national forest policies and programmes and the international agreements. Incorporating international agreements into forestry programmes will also enable the individual national forest departments or their equivalent to harness financial and technical resources that are channeled through these agreements. Possible elements and options for joint approaches between the international agreements and national forest policies and plans appear to lie in the areas of sustainable forest management (SFM), forest landscape restoration, forest knowledge, equitable benefit sharing, land degradation, biodiversity, forest products, other ecosystems services, management and climate change response, and governance of forests. These are the areas that feature strongly in both the individual international agreements related to forests and those in national policies and plans and have a strong inclination towards climate change activities. The international agreements evaluated are: NLBI, UNFCCC, UNCBD, UNCCD, ITTA, CITES, AFLEG, and the Ramsar Convention.

2.1 Purpose and Objectives of the Study

The purpose of this study was to develop and test an approach to monitor and report on compliance by various actors in African forestry to international agreements on climate change, as well as related protocols, conventions and other instruments.

The specific objectives of this study are to:

- i. Assess how provisions of the international conventions have been integrated within country forest policies and plans.
- ii. Develop recommendations for improving monitoring compliance and reporting on international conventions.
- iii. Develop a fact sheet and policy brief for monitoring compliance and reporting on international conventions.

2.2 Scope of the Study

Geographically, the study covered three African regions namely the semi arid Sahel, woodlands of East and Southern Africa and the moist forest areas of the Central and West Africa Region. Eight countries that participated in the study include Niger and Nigeria in West Africa; - Cameroon and Gabon in Central Africa; Rwanda and Tanzania in Eastern Africa while from Southern Africa the countries are Zambia and Zimbabwe.

3.0 STUDY METHODOLOGY

3.1 Methods

The study relied on country primary and secondary data collected during country visits and internet search. The study was carried out using rapid appraisal tools with a major reliance on key informant open-ended one-on-one interviews. The stakeholders that were targeted included national forestry departments or their equivalent, and the national focal points responsible for implementing forest and climate change related agreements. Other respondents included environmental NGOs, research institutions and special working groups and forums, multilateral agencies including (IUCN, UNDP/UNEP, FAO).

Structured questionnaires were sent to the contact persons in advance and were also used as guides to the interviews. Data collected were analyzed and compared with previous studies and relevant literature review. The questionnaire was designed to collect information on:

- the provisions of the international arrangements (the one on specifically on climate change-UNFCCC, and others related to forests and climate change) which the various African countries have ratified;
- the national level climate change policies and plans and other related mechanisms;
- how provisions of the international arrangements have been integrated within national policies and plans, and particularly looking at the value they bring into them,
- the contradictions with national policies and plans,
- the opportunities that emerge from implementing the conventions,
- the main actors/stakeholders in the implementation process,
- in-country coordination mechanisms;
- monitoring and reporting frameworks; and
- the challenges in integrating the provisions of these international agreements into national policies and plans and how they are being addressed.

The study consulted a number of literature sources including convention texts, regional protocols, national policies and planning frameworks like NAMAS and NAPAs. Many unpublished internal documents from various agencies were also reviewed.

3.2 Study Limitations

Questionnaires and responses were received from eight countries whilst detailed country visits and interviews were limited to six countries only that were considered to be representative of Central Africa, West Africa, East and southern Africa. The low response to questionnaires from the other countries presented a major challenge and therefore the results are discussed are largely limited to the study countries. Communicating with the various countries to make appointments was a huge challenge. Email communications were either responded to late or not responded to at all. In some instances the researcher had to rely on phone calls. Initially, the consultant had envisaged meeting the forestry department staff who were expected to be familiar with how other climate and forest related and other agreements were being implemented and how they were adding value to the forest policies and programmes. It however turned out that the forestry departments were not very conversant with how administered by other agencies were implemented therefore it became necessary to interview staff responsible for the international and regional agreements in other departments. Information was generally not readily available in the forestry departments and staff turnover further complicated the situation since some staff familiar with some agreements had left and new staff were not that familiar with some of these issues.

4.0 ANALYSIS OF INTEGRATION OF INTERNATIONAL AND REGIONAL AGREEMENTS INTO FOREST SECTOR PROGRAMMES AND PLANS

This section presents a summary of the key findings with particular focus on the views of African Countries on the major influences of the agreements and how these have been incorporated into forest programmes and plans on the continent. This is based on the detailed responses and findings from eight study countries namely Cameroon, Gabon, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe. The results in this section are presented by type of agreement in order to bring out the predominant, unique situations and comparisons between Countries.

4.1 United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)

Climate change and change in climate variability pose serious risks to the environment and to life itself. All people and all sectors are likely to be affected and have recognized the need to take action in climate change adaptation and mitigation. Climate change constitutes a direct threat to forest ecosystems, forest-dependent peoples and society as a whole through reduced delivery of products and forest ecosystem services (FAO, 2011). The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) has had significant influence and impact on the forest sector in many Countries in Africa since it came into effect. The convention brought with it new concepts and new requirements for forestry development and management on one hand and increased emphasis on already existing concepts and practices on the other (Box 1).

Box 1. Key forest related ideas and provisions from UNFCCC

The objective of this Convention and related protocols is to achieve stabilization of greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere at a level that would prevent dangerous interference with the climate system. New forest related ideas and concepts include:

- Reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation (REDD+)
- Carbon trade
- Developing national climate change response programmes
- Preparing and managing greenhouse gas inventories, including emission database management
- Assessing vulnerability and adaptation
- Disaster risk management
- Role of forests in mitigation and adaptation
- Developing and transferring clean technology
- Clean Development Mechanism and guidelines on afforestation and deforestation
- Kyoto protocol
- National Forest Inventory systems
- Monitoring Reporting and verification of carbon and GHG
- Information and networking, including databases

New forestry concepts and priorities from the convention and related protocols to Forestry policies and plans

The main new aspect brought by the UNFCCC is the importance of forests to combating climate change given their role as both carbon sinks and sources. The convention has placed particular emphasis on the mitigation role of forests in this regard. The specific issues that were highlighted by most Countries can be summarised as follows:

- An opportunity for raising the profile of forests at national and international level
- The need to revise forest policies and legislation to recognise and support the role of trees and forests in climate change

- The importance of forest ecosystem services as global goods and the need for accurate valuation and development of appropriate mechanisms for payment for environmental services:
 - Carbon sequestration
 - Ecosystem stabilisation
 - Hydrology and water quality
 - Biodiversity
 - Erosion control
- The need to look at forestry in relation to other land uses and their inter-connectedness. This has necessitated adoption of integrated land management or landscape approaches
- Forest resources assessment methods and inventories have been broadened to take into account carbon both above and below ground. This has led to changes in inventory methodology and the technical skills required by forest inventory experts.
- Carbon trade as carbon is now a major forest produce.
- REDD+ as a key approach for mitigating climate change
- Carbon/forest enhancement strategies
- Capacity development for managing carbon and other products and services, to be able to measure and monitor changes to support carbon trade.
- Broadened scope of sustainable forest management (SFM) and its role in mitigating climate change.
- New cross-sectoral and multi-stakeholder coordination platforms for SFM and climate change,
- Up-scaling afforestation and reforestation especially in degraded forest areas
- Emphasis on incentives for forest management
- The need for controlled or planned land use change.

Integrating climate change concepts and priorities into forestry policies and plans

Almost all the countries have taken steps to incorporate the emerging issues and provisions from the UNFCCC into the forest sector. The main approach that has been used by most countries to integrate the new concepts and priorities from the climate change convention and related protocols is the review of forest policies and legislation. For example Tanzania reviewed its forest policies and laws in 1998 and is currently revising them again to incorporate new and emerging issues such as REDD+. Rwanda's Forest law of 1988 was revised in 2009 to take into account emerging issues related to climate change and other conventions. The new law was gazetted in 2013. Currently the government and development partners are working on the ministerial orders to facilitate implementation of the law. Unfortunately in other countries such as Nigeria and Zambia the forest policies and laws have been revised but have taken long to be approved or adopted due to lengthy processes and political challenges.

A few countries have included climate change issues in their constitution (e.g. Zimbabwe) and in their long term national development plans. These have been followed by the incorporation of climate change policies and action plans and or national climate change response strategies that provide a framework for response to climate change for all sectors in an integrated manner. Examples include Kenya, Botswana, Namibia and Zimbabwe. These frameworks have provided very good guidance to the forest sector and have seen the forest strategies developed further and articulated in national forest programmes or their equivalent.

Many other countries, such as Gabon, Niger and Zimbabwe have followed a project approach wherein they developed climate change projects focusing on one or more aspects. Most of the

projects have been donor funded, especially under the United Nations and World Bank climate change programmes. Whilst some of these projects have helped the countries to develop comprehensive forestry climate change strategies, in other countries this may have resulted in fragmentation and a piecemeal approach that is not strategic or not part of the national forestry development plans. This appears to be the case in Cameroon, Zimbabwe and Zambia which are yet to finalise their national forest programmes (NFPs).

In some countries, for example Cameroon and Tanzania, guidelines for preparation of forest management plans have been reviewed to incorporate climate change and REDD+ considerations. Rwanda conducted a study on the economics of climate change and established that the cost of climate change was equivalent to 1% of GDP. Following this study, Rwanda has mainstreamed climate change issues into the country's Vision 2020 development plan. This culminated in the production of a national strategy called "Cross-sectoral Strategy on Climate Change and Environment, Green Growth and Climate Resilience Strategy". This now guides the mainstreaming of climate change issues into the country's forestry and other sectors.

Coordinating implementation of climate change activities

In most countries in Africa, the ministry responsible for environment is the lead ministry and coordinates all national activities related climate change. In these cases, the Environmental Management Agency is the focal point for climate change and usually hosts the designated national authority (DNA). In more recent years however, some countries have established a climate change department which undertakes this function. Examples of countries with a climate change department include Nigeria and Zimbabwe.

In almost all the study countries, stakeholder coordination is through an inter-ministerial committee and a multi-stakeholder committee below it. Other government departments, civil society organisations (CSOs), business and other stakeholders participate in the multi-stakeholder committee. In some Countries such as Tanzania and Zimbabwe the inter-ministerial committee is under the President or Vice President's Office to ensure that climate change is treated as a national and not sectoral or environment issue only. In Cameroon, the members of the steering committee are formally appointed and are relatively permanent and this helps ensure continuity and commitment. Unfortunately, in many of the other countries, the meetings of the committees are ad hoc and called for by government when there is need for input from stakeholders, e.g. when writing national communication reports. In fact some stakeholders believe stakeholder involvement is still cosmetic and there tends to be no follow up on issues emerging from the ad hoc meetings. Furthermore, in many of these countries the multi-stakeholder platforms do not exist at sub-national level; hence stakeholder participation is quite weak. A more structured arrangement with a clear and concrete agenda and provision to take on-board new and emerging issues appears to be more desirable.

In almost all these countries, the agencies responsible for forestry are members of the steering and multi-stakeholder committees and are also the focal points for REDD+. Other Countries such as Rwanda have a number of thematic working groups and committees with multi-stakeholder platforms that allow for stakeholder participation and input into national processes. For instance, the thematic working group on forests meets quarterly and is chaired by the Forestry Department with one of the development partners serving as a vice chair.

4.2 Convention on Biological Diversity

The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) provides for the conservation of biological diversity, the sustainable use of its components and the equitable sharing of benefits arising out of the utilization of genetic resources (Box 2). CBD has had significant impact on sustainable forest management in many countries in Africa, particularly on community based forest management. Furthermore several of the recently agreed Aichi Biodiversity Targets which have to be reached by 2020 relate to forestry and provide for synergies between other conventions. These are targets 5, 7, 11, 14 and 15 especially on the management of protected forest areas. The elaboration and support for the forest programme has helped to promote integration of the convention's provisions into the forest sector. Other notable programmes that have facilitated integration of biological conservation into the forest sector include the programme of work on islands, inland, mountains and dry lands. The Initiative for Tropical Forests Biodiversity under ITTO, REDD+ and the Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and Benefit Sharing are some of the initiatives that link CBD to sustainable forest management.

Box 2. Convention on Biological Diversity

Main objectives: Conservation of biological diversity, sustainable use of its components and the equitable sharing of benefits arising out of the utilization of genetic resources.

Key forest related provisions:

- National biodiversity conservation planning
- Payment for ecosystem services
- Identifying and monitoring biodiversity and its conservation
- In-situ conservation, including protected area system management
- Preserving indigenous and local knowledge, innovations and practices
- Developing and introducing economic and social incentives
- Utilising environmental impact assessment for biodiversity conservation
- Regulating access to, and transfer of, genetic resources
- Regulating the commercialisation and ensuring benefit-sharing from genetic resources
- Managing information, notably through clearing house mechanisms
- Implementing the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety
- Accessing financial resources

Experiences in implementing biodiversity activities in the forestry sector

The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) has had significant impact on sustainable forest management in many countries in Africa, especially on the management of protected forest areas. Implementation of the convention has brought renewed interest in management of protected areas. This has resulted in some countries gazetting new protected areas and others improving the management of existing protected forest areas in line with the convention's targets. However in many countries in Africa, there has been no establishment of new protected areas in response to the convention as many countries already had more than 10% of their land area already under protected forest areas. An example is Zimbabwe where the protected areas cover 15% of the total land area.

The convention's emphasis on community participation and the need for mechanisms of ensuring equitable benefit sharing coincided with the adoption of community-based natural resources management approaches. This has had a major influence on the design of these mechanisms in different countries. In Africa in general, this has led to the adoption of community-based forest management policies and programmes. The concepts of access and benefit sharing have been widely adopted and domesticated in many countries. In Zimbabwe this was achieved through the development and adoption of the access and benefit sharing (ABS) regulations and other mechanisms especially under the CAMPFIRE programme where

revenues from trade in natural products are shared between communities, private operators and the local authority. The importance of biodiversity has strengthened the need to develop mechanisms for payment for ecosystem services (PES).

In general implementation of the convention has helped countries to access additional funding for forest biodiversity conservation especially for protected areas and threatened ecosystems and species.

In some countries such as Tanzania there has been increased financial support for protected area systems to meet total expenditures required for their management. Financial and technical assistance towards developing the national biodiversity strategy and action plan has helped to improve stakeholder interaction and dialogue. For most of the study countries, especially Cameroon, Tanzania, and Zimbabwe, implementing the CBD has helped access funding from the Global Environment Facility (GEF). Significant funds have also been raised from philanthropists through international non-governmental organisations (NGOs) such as Conservation International, IUCN and WWF.

In many countries there has been increased establishment of mutually beneficial community-public-private partnerships especially in ecotourism, game ranching and farming, and development of tourism infrastructure and related industries. However in a few countries, for example Nigeria, the NBSAPs were not fully implemented due to low funding, poor coordination and lack of effective monitoring and evaluation systems.

Value added of Convention on Biological Diversity to forestry policies and plans

The new areas and concepts to the forest sector that were highlighted by most of the study countries are:

- Access to, and equitable sharing of, benefits from genetic resources.
- Valuation of natural resources and ecosystem services
- Emphasis on retention and management of existing protected areas
- Increased emphasis on fragile ecosystems such as wetlands coastal zones, mountainous ecosystems, arid and semi-arid ecosystems
- Focus on conservation of forest biodiversity
- Emphasis on sustainable use concepts and ecosystem approaches
- Stakeholder and community participation
- Need to develop methodology for habitat loss assessment

However a few of the study countries, for example Zambia and Cameroon, indicated that the convention had not brought new issues to the sector but merely placed greater emphasis and focus on some aspects that were already part of their sustainable forest management programmes.

Integrating new and emerging biodiversity concepts and priorities into forestry policies and plans

The main strategies used by countries to incorporate the new and emerging biodiversity concepts and priorities into the forest sector programmes include:

- Review and updating of forest policies and legislation
- Development of specific forest biodiversity programmes and projects

The main framework for guiding biodiversity conservation in all countries in the National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAP) developed with support from the Convention. Forest biodiversity conservation in Nigeria for example, is one of the four forest policy objectives:– “Ensure ecosystem stability through conservation of forest biodiversity,

water catchments and soil fertility”. The forest policy incorporates biodiversity conservation strategies including assessment of biodiversity values and the forest management strategies are geared towards biodiversity conservation. However, while almost all African countries have forest policy and legislative provisions on biodiversity closely linked to, or drawn from, the National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs), Zambia has gone further and introduced a statutory instrument on Joint Forest Management (JFM) to provide a legal mechanism for equitable access and benefit sharing. Zimbabwe has introduced a statutory instrument, SI 61 of 2009, on access and benefit sharing.

Currently most of the countries are in the process of revising and updating their NBSAPs to incorporate new ideas in line with the Convention’s 2011-2020 strategic Plan and AICHI targets. Some of the countries, e.g. Nigeria and Zimbabwe that are already planning to review and update their national forest programmes are planning to incorporate the new and emerging biodiversity issues into their NFPs.

Coordinating implementation of biodiversity conservation activities

The leadership for biodiversity is quite varied. In some countries the lead agency for CBD is the Department of Natural Resources (e.g. Zambia), in others it is the Environment Management Agency, whilst in a few countries it is the Forest Department (e.g. Cameroon). The incorporation of biodiversity issues into the Forest sector is generally stronger and more systematic where the forestry agencies are the lead or have their own biodiversity focal point. Coordination with other sectors in all countries studied is through the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP) that provides the national biodiversity conservation framework. Currently most of the countries are revising and updating their NBSAPs to incorporate new and emerging issues and in line with the Convention’s 2011-2020 strategic Plan and forest related AICHI targets.

In most countries there is a multi-stakeholder National Biodiversity Steering Committee that coordinates inputs of all key stakeholders into the development of national level biodiversity policies, legislation, strategies and action plans.

4.3 United Nations Convention to Combat Drought and Desertification (UNCCD)

New forestry concepts and priorities from the convention and related protocols to forestry policies and plans

Land degradation is recognized as a major threat to livelihoods in Africa as it leads to loss of soil productivity leading to low agricultural production and food insecurity. It also leads to destruction or disruption of the hydrological systems which ultimately affects water availability especially in arid areas. In many countries in Africa conflicts over scarce water resources are already being experienced. The situation is expected to get worse due to climate change that is projected to cause more frequent droughts in many parts of the continent. Despite the importance and critical nature of the convention (Box 3), it has not been given the attention it deserves in most African countries.

Box 3. Key forest related provisions from the UNCCD convention.

The objective of this Convention is to combat desertification and mitigate the effects of drought in countries experiencing serious drought and/or desertification, particularly in Africa. The main ideas and provisions of the convention are:

- Integrated land management and land use planning
- The transfer and/or development of economically, socially and environmentally appropriate technology
- Training and technology for alternative, renewable energy sources
- Promotion of alternative livelihoods
- Community participation
- Effective early warning and advance planning covering drought and food production
- Information systems including to collect, analyse and exchange information
- Systems for research and development
- Technical and scientific co-operation
- Joint research programmes for the development of appropriate technologies

The new concept, emerging issues and concepts that are brought by the convention to existing forestry and related policies were identified by the study countries as:

- Emphasis on the role of trees and forests in land degradation management and combatting desertification
- The need to rehabilitate degraded forest areas
- Prioritisation of afforestation and reforestation activities in rehabilitating degraded forest areas
- Integrated land management
- Early warning systems
- Ecological monitoring

Integrating new concepts and priorities from the UNCCD convention into current forestry and related policies and plans

Most of the countries in Africa are party to the convention and have developed National Action Plans (NAPs) that incorporate forest activities. These provide the strategic framework within which forestry activities must be undertaken and the main strategies that must be included in the NFP. In Tanzania and Zambia these have been incorporated in the NFP. In other countries they have been incorporated into the forest sector, e.g. Zimbabwe, using the project approach as opposed to strategic long term programmes. Many countries have developed specific land degradation and desertification projects for example countries like Nigeria that are participating in the implementation of “the Great Green Wall of the Sahel Initiative. In a few countries, the forestry sector has integrated sustainable land management activities as part of land use planning and sustainable forest management. In Niger, farmer managed natural regeneration programmes for rehabilitation of degraded areas are major programmes in the forest sector. In other countries land degradation activities are undertaken by environment management agencies or desertification agencies (e.g. Nigeria) and the result is that government has not been allocating financial resources for rehabilitation of degraded forest lands to forest departments but to these agencies. This has hampered the integration of the convention into the forest sector in these countries especially in Nigeria where all related funding is channelled to the Drought and Desertification Authority (DDA).

Coordinating implementation of UNCCD convention activities

The lead agency for the convention in most of the countries is the environmental management agency and very few countries have a focal point for the convention in the agencies responsible for forestry. The overall coordination framework is generally defined in a country’s NAP which is overseen by the lead agency. In most of the Countries there is an inter-ministerial committee which provides policy guidance on the implementation of the UNCCD. In Tanzania, they have

established a National Coordinating Body (NCB) in the Vice President's Office to perform this function, whilst in Nigeria this function is performed by the National Council on Environment. Under this committee is a national technical committee, which is a multi-sectoral and multidisciplinary committee drawing members from different government departments, public institutions, NGOs and the private sector. It provides technical guidance on the NAP process.

In other countries such as Zimbabwe, a specific multi-stakeholder National Task Force on Land Degradation was established to coordinate implementation of the NAP. The task force has thematic working groups focusing on different areas such as energy and natural resources, water, forests and biodiversity and research and training. Within the forest sector itself there are very few countries that have established mechanisms for coordinating implementation of forestry activities at national and sub-national levels. An example is Nigeria which has a National Forestry Development Committee with representatives from all state forest departments, other government departments, NGOs and the private sector. In other countries (e.g. Zambia and Zimbabwe) multi-stakeholder steering committees were only established during the development of national forestry programmes in compliance with the methodology stipulated by the National Programme Facility but these were discontinued as soon as the process ended.

Experiences in implementing the convention on combatting drought and desertification

Implementation of forestry activities under the convention has been prominent in the dry areas especially in the Sahelian Countries. For example in Nigeria the government has initiated an afforestation programme implemented by the DDA. The country is also participating in the Great Green Wall of the Sahel Initiative that is supported by the European Commission and other development partners. In other countries emphasis has been on afforestation and reforestation especially for the rehabilitation of degraded forests and degraded lands. In Tanzania the government has promoted joint forest management programmes that have seen the participation of local communities in the rehabilitation of degraded forest areas for their own benefit. In Zimbabwe the government, through the Forestry Commission and the Environment Management Agency have been promoting rehabilitation of degraded lands with particular focus on gully reclamation and protection of major catchment areas. Other countries have been promoting farmer managed natural regeneration following its successful implementation in Niger.

Implementation of the convention has led, in a few countries, to use of land use plans that clearly designate forest areas for different purposes. NGOs have played a significant role in advocating for changes in land tenure and land use planning practices to encourage the participation of local communities in integrated land management. The major challenge experienced by countries is that of limited funding for land combatting land degradation. The only major source of funding has been the GEF whilst the Global Mechanism has not been that prominent in the region.

4.4 Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES)

The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) controls international trade through regulating export and import of endangered flora and fauna (Box 4).

Box 4. Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species key provisions:

- Control of international trade through the issuing of export and import permits.
- Coordinate international trade in accordance with the Convention and to prohibit and penalize trade in contravention of it
- Issuing an export permit, which is only granted when authorities of the state of export after they have advised the convention that the export will not be detrimental to the survival of that species. To ensure they are satisfied that the specimen was not obtained in contravention of the laws of that State for the protection of fauna and flora, that any living specimen will be so prepared and shipped as to minimize risks of injury, damage to health or cruel treatment, and that an import permit has been issued for the specimen
- Ensure that the import will be for purposes which are not detrimental to the survival of the species concerned, and be satisfied that the recipient of a living specimen will care for it adequately.

In general, the implementation of the CITES convention in most African countries has been left to agencies responsible for wildlife management. Where these agencies are not the same as the forest agencies, there has virtually been little implementation of the convention. However in recent years, particularly with the growing focus on combating illegal logging and trade, there has been growing incorporation of provisions of this convention in the forestry sector.

New forestry concepts and priorities from the convention and related protocols to forestry policies and plans

The main new issues and priorities brought by the convention into the forest sector are:

- Identifying and maintaining a list of endangered species
- The need to combat illegal logging and other illegal activities in the forest sector
- The need for controlled trade in endangered plants and some timber species Guidelines for trade in endangered species

Integrating new concepts and priorities from the CITES convention into current forestry and related policies and plans

Provisions of the convention have been incorporated mainly through the revision of forest policies and legislation and integration into the NBSAPs and national forest programmes. Plants and some timber species are now on the endangered species. In Nigeria, the Endangered Species Act has been reviewed to include plant species with particular focus on endemic species. The timber species that are listed in appendix 2 are ebony and Mahogany. In countries that are implementing Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade programmes such as Cameroon, control of illegal logging of listed tree species is integral part of the programme.

Coordinating implementation of the CITES convention activities

In terms of coordination, Wildlife Management Agencies are responsible for coordination of CITES activities in most countries. However in countries in west and central Africa, where the wildlife and forestry management are in the same department, e.g. in Cameroon and Nigeria, the focal point for the convention is in the forestry and wildlife department. In Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe, both the designated CITES management and scientific authorities are wildlife-oriented institutions. In other countries, for example Nigeria, there is a national CITES technical committee comprising representatives from various sectors. In a few countries e.g. Cameroon the implementation of the convention has been closely integrated into the FLEGT programmes.

Experiences in implementing the CITES convention activities in the forestry sector

This is generally one of the conventions that is not prominent in the forest sector in most Countries. Implementation has however generally increased with the implementation of AFLEFT programmes in recent years. There are a number of endangered tree and other plant species that are now listed especially in appendix 2 and these include: mahogany and ebony, *Prunus africana*, *Pericopsis elata*. There are attempts to have other species that are under pressure from exploitation listed in appendix 3. In Cameroon the two species are namely *Bubinga* (*Guibortia spp*) and *Wenge*, a *Melitia spp* and in Rwanda the timber species *Oscilis lancolata spp*. In Cameroon the listed species are now deliberately included in the Forest management plans in the concession area where the species occur.

In general there is limited expertise for implementing the provisions of the convention in most Countries. For example in Nigeria and Zimbabwe, there is no deliberate training of staff especially in identification and policing of trade in endangered species This is exacerbated by weak capacity of other agencies especially the police and customs as they hardly receive training in identification of products from the endangered tree species. There is need to strengthen enforcement to ensure full compliance. In countries where CITES is coordinated by the Wildlife management authorities such as Tanzania, Rwanda, Zambia, and Zimbabwe, there is poor coordination amongst stakeholders. In fact in some cases, the importance of coordination is not fully appreciated by all stakeholders.

4.5 The Non-legally Binding Instrument on all types of forests (NLBI)

New forestry concepts and priorities from the Forest Instrument to Forestry policies and plans

The Non-legally Binding Instrument on All Types of forests (NLBI), also commonly known as the Forest Instrument (FI) is little known, beyond the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF) focal points in most of the African countries despite the fact that the instrument was adopted in 2007. In Rwanda the NLBI is not known in the Forestry Department, despite that Rwanda's forest policy and landscape restoration programme have been show-cased by UNFF at one of the UNFF sessions. The only countries that have made some progress towards implementing the Forest Instrument are countries that participated in the FAO supported pilot projects implementing the Forest Instrument between 2010 and 2013 (FAO, 2013) which include Nigeria, Zambia and Zimbabwe among the study countries.

These countries have conducted awareness raising workshops of the FI and assessments of their forestry programmes in relation to the FI. Main gaps and priority areas were identified and an action plan for implementing and coordinating the activities was developed. The new things that the countries consider to have come from the forest instrument include:

- Emphasis on the concept of Sustainable Forest Management (SFM)
- Emphasis on adopting a holistic approach that addresses all (environmental, social and economic) the functions and benefits from forests
- National Forest Programmes or their equivalent
- Forest Financing Strategies
- Criteria and Indicators
-

Integrating new concepts and priorities from the NLBI into current forestry and related policies and plans

The main approaches that have been used to incorporate the new ideas and concepts into the forest sector include revision of forest policies and legislation(e.g. Nigeria, Zambia and Zimbabwe are planning to review their forest policies and legislation based on the assessments they conducted under the pilot activities mentioned above), development and or review of

national forest programmes. Cameroon has not deliberately implemented the FI but developed a national forest programme in 2005 that has most of the elements in the FI. However there are also several key concepts that have not been articulated and these include application of criteria and indicators for sustainable forest management and comprehensive forest financing strategies. Nigeria, Zambia and Zimbabwe have undertaken, or initiated, development of their national forestry programmes with support from the NFP Facility but these have not been finalised yet. These countries have also conducted stakeholder awareness raising workshops on the Forest Instrument in 2013, and have undertaken assessments of their current forestry programmes to identify the extent to which they are implementing the provisions of the Forest Instrument as well as gaps and priority areas for action.

Coordinating the implementation of the NLBI

The forest agencies are the lead agency in most of the countries and host the United Nations Forum on Forests focal point. Coordination and multi-stakeholder participation has been through national multi-stakeholder steering committees that were established during the NFP process. In Nigeria coordination was through the National Forest Development Committee. In all the study countries, the UNFF focal points are also members of National Environment Committees which helps to coordinate with other agencies and environmental conventions relevant to the forest sector.

Experiences in implementing the NLBI

The main experience highlighted by the countries that have attempted to implement the FI is that the instrument provides an over-arching framework for a comprehensive forestry programme that covers all the key elements of sustainable forest management. The implementation of the FI has also highlighted the importance of adopting a multi- and cross-sectoral approach. This has helped to raise the profile of forestry at national level. The major concerns however are that there is virtually no direct financial and technical support for implementing the Forest Instrument unlike the situation with the environmental conventions that are funded by the GEF. This is despite the fact that there is an incentive window for REDD+ and SFM under the GEF. All the countries noted the need for raising awareness among stakeholders on the importance of the FI and how to implement it. FAO recently published a guide on how to implement the Forest Instrument which is based on experiences from the few countries that have piloted the process (FAO, 2013)

4.6 RAMSAR Convention

Although many African countries are signatory to the RAMSAR convention, very few forest departments are involved in the implementation of the convention's provisions. One of the major reasons is that the management of wetlands falls under other government agencies especially agencies responsible for wildlife management or environment. The new things brought by this convention to forestry and related policies and programmes are very similar to those from CBD and include:

- Use of ecosystem approach
- Cross-sectoral approach to coordination in natural resources management

Development of management plans for the wetlands that include:

In Nigeria the Division of Wildlife Management is responsible for the convention and has facilitated the development of a wetlands policy that includes development of management plans for different types of wetlands including;

- Swamp forests
- Delta forests
- Mangrove forests

- Flood plain
- Peatlands
- Coastal marines
- Dams and reservoirs

Unfortunately the policy has not yet been approved and its provisions have not been incorporated in the national forest programme. In Tanzania, all Ramsar sites are coordinated by the Wildlife Division of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Tourism. There is no specific national policy on wetlands and for Ramsar sites, but there is a strategy and guidelines for the preparation of management plans. The Country has since established its first Marine Ramsar site, the Rufiji-Mafia Kilwa which has a substantial amount of mangrove forests. On the other hand, in many countries like Rwanda, Zimbabwe and Zambia, there have virtually been no deliberate attempts to incorporate provisions of the convention into the forest sector.

Translation and adoption of scientific data on wetlands and their relationship to forests especially in land locked countries is generally limited. This is largely due to the sectoral approach to natural resources management and the non-use of landscape and ecosystem approaches. The uncoordinated development and management of natural resources has led to degradation of wetlands in many countries. Where the wetland management guidelines and plans were adopted, there has been improved management of wetland and mangrove forests leading to enhancement of alternative livelihoods for communities living around these areas.

4.7 Criteria and Indicators (C&I)

Although most of African countries are aware of, and even participated in, some international and or regional criteria and indicators (C&I) development processes very few have adopted them. Among the study countries, Cameroon is the only country that adopted and adapted criteria and indicators. Cameroon adapted the criteria and indicators that were developed by ITTO and adopted the national criteria and indicators in 2004. The national criteria and indicators now form the basis for certification in the country. Nigeria also based the development of their national criteria and indicators on the ITTO criteria and indicators. The country finalised their national criteria and indicators several years ago but the criteria and indicators were not published or implemented. In fact very few stakeholders, and even officers in the Forest Department, are aware of the existence of these criteria and indicators. Other Countries acknowledge having participated in the development of criteria and indicators but have not initiated any processes to develop or implement any national criteria and indicators. Examples are Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe that participated in the development of SADC and dry forests C&I processes without adopting any for national application.

All the study countries however recognised the importance of having and implementing criteria and indicators for monitoring progress towards sustainable forest management. The new and important things that the criteria and indicators have brought to forestry programmes are:

- Standardised approaches for assessing progress towards achieving SFM
- A Standardised basis for certification

The Countries that have not adopted the criteria and indicators cited lack of prioritisation and lack of technical capacity as the major constraints.

4.8 Certification

Although the importance of forest certification is recognised in Africa, many countries have had challenges with implementation and hence adoption of forest certification is still very low. Forest certification has not been prioritised in countries that do not export timber or other forest

products. Some exporting countries such as Cameroon, Zambia and Zimbabwe adopted forest certification and had some of their forests certified by 1998. These countries had some forests certified under the Forest Stewardship Certification (FSC) scheme. Unfortunately, they were not able to sustain this for long due to a number of challenges including high certification costs. For example in Zimbabwe, the indigenous Zambezi teak forests in one concession area were certified under the FSC for about five years but the company stopped after they lost their export market and could not sustain paying for the certification based on domestic prices of their products.

Most African Countries that are members of the ITTO are applying certification to improve and monitor management of their forests. For example, Cameroon is a member of the ITTO and ATO. Cameroon promotes certification of forests under both public and private management. A total of 3 million ha have been certified under various schemes. The total certified forest area under FSC is about 1million ha. Other forests have been certified by SGS-OLB. Other certification schemes are on chain-of-custody (COC) and also the Timber Legality Verification and Trade Certification (TVLT). In terms of area under management, Cameroon now has a total of 14 million ha out of a total forest area of 22 million ha.

4.9 Regional and sub-regional protocols and initiatives

In Africa there are a number of regional forestry protocols and in the study countries the protocols encountered include COMIFAC and ECOWAS forestry convergence plan and the SADC forestry protocol.

Central African Forests Commission (COMIFAC)

The Central African Forests Commission (COMIFAC) forest convergence plan has been very influential to the management of forests in the member Countries as the regional block members are committed to harmonizing their forest management approaches. Cameroon participated in the design of the COMIFAC convergence plan and recently conducted an evaluation of the extent to which the Convergence Plan is being implemented in the country. The evaluation showed that Cameroon is implementing 85% of the provisions. The outstanding 15% is largely in the areas of research and harmonization of policies. Cameroon is still using the 1994 law. There are plans to review the national forest law and national forest plan, to incorporate new and emerging issues from climate changes, FLEGT and other international and regional obligations. Rwanda is a member of COMIFAC and there have been attempts to incorporate obligations and activities in the Convergence plan. However the country has not been very active having ratified the COMIFAC treaty in 2013 although it signed it in 2005. Generally participation in COMIFAC convergence plan has been weak but is now expected to improve.

Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)

The ECOWAS region has a forest convergence plan since November 2013 that will be implemented by the member states. It is a product of The Forests Dialogue process in West Africa that was initiated by sub-regional institutions in the forestry and wildlife sectors with the support of international intergovernmental or non-governmental institutions and organizations. This process was an answer to the need felt in the sub-region regarding the poor cooperation between West African countries in the area of forest and wildlife sustainable management. The Forests Dialogue process has led to the development of this Convergence Plan for the Sustainable Management and Conservation of Forest Ecosystems in West Africa (Convergence Plan on Forests (CPF) in short) to serve as a reference framework on the basis of which member states agree to 'federate' their national and sub-regional actions in order to achieve the sustainable management of forests and wildlife and the enhancement of forests ecosystems in the sub-region. The CPF is thus a tool to implement the ECOWAS strategy

regarding the sound management of natural resources, environmental preservation and sustainable development in our ecosystem. Based on ECOWAS' vision, the CPF has the following objective: West African countries manage in a sustainable and concerted manner forest and wildlife resources in the sub-region for the welfare of their populations and environmental preservation by 2025.

The priority intervention areas for the CPF are:

1. Harmonization of legislative and regulatory frameworks and forest policies
2. Knowledge on the state of forest ecosystems dynamics
3. Management of forest ecosystems and reforestation
4. Biodiversity conservation
5. Enhancement of ecosystem goods and services for food security, economic stability and environmental sustainability
6. Forest research and development
7. Information, education and communication

The ECOWAS Secretariat is in the process of kick-starting the implementation of the CPF, and in 2014 it held several meetings with key stakeholders and through such meetings identified lead institutions that will catalyse the development and implementation of activities in the seven thematic/priority areas as summarized in the table below.

Table 1. Lead institutions by thematic area

Priority Areas of Intervention	Proposed Team Leader of the Thematic Group
1. Harmonization of legislative and regulatory texts	ECOWAS
2. Knowledge of resources and of the state of forest ecosystems dynamics	CRA-CILSS
3. Forest ecosystems management and reforestation	FAO
4. Biodiversity conservation	IUCN
5. Enhancement of ecosystems' goods and services for food security, economic stability and environmental sustainability	UEMOA
6. Forest research and capacity strengthening	CIFOR
7. Information, education and communication	AFF

The lead institutions will work with a number of international, regional, sub-regional and national institutions in the identified broad areas.

Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) Forestry Protocol

The SADC Forestry Protocol has the following objectives, to:

- promote the development, conservation, sustainable management and utilisation of all types of forests and trees;
- promote trade in forest products throughout the Region in order to alleviate poverty and generate economic opportunities for the peoples of the Region; and
- achieve effective protection of the environment, and safeguard the interests of both the present and future generations.

To achieve the objectives of this Protocol, State Parties shall co-operate by:

- a. assisting and supporting each other to address issues of common concern including deforestation, genetic erosion, climate change, forest fires, pests, diseases, invasive alien species, and law enforcement in a manner that makes the best use of the technical, financial and other resources in the Region;
- b. promoting the sustainable management of shared forests, taking into account other Protocols;

- c. facilitating the gathering and monitoring of information and the sharing and dissemination of information, expertise and technology concerning forests, forestry and forest industries, throughout the Region;
- d. developing human resources in the forest sector through establishing regional facilities for building technical capacity and other means;
- e. promoting trade and investment based on the sustainable management and utilisation of forests, including developing and agreeing on common standards for sustainable forest management and forest products;
- f. harmonising approaches to sustainable forest management, forest policy, legislation and enforcement, and issues of international concern;
- g. promoting respect for the rights of communities and facilitating their participation in forest policy development, planning, and management with particular attention to the need to protect traditional forest-related knowledge and to develop adequate mechanisms to ensure the equitable sharing of benefits derived from forest resources and traditional forest-related knowledge without prejudice to property rights;
- h. promoting the intangible, cultural and spiritual value of forests;
- i. establishing equitable and efficient ways of facilitating public access to forests especially by neighbouring communities;
- j. establishing appropriate institutions and funding mechanisms to support the implementation of this Protocol; and
- k. taking other appropriate measures to give effect to this Protocol.

The Protocol entered into force on 29 May 2009, thereby making it mandatory for Member States to implement it. Following the ratification of the Protocol by Member States, an implementation strategy for the Protocol, the SADC Forestry Strategy 2010-2020, has been developed. The Strategy outlines 8 priority areas for development of programmes/projects:

1. Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation,
2. Protection of Key Catchment Forests,
3. Community Based Forest Management,
4. Forestry and Poverty Reduction,
5. Enhanced trade in SADC, including combating illegal logging and trade,
6. Fire management and cross-border cooperation,
7. Forest assessment and management of a Regional Database, and
8. Capacity improvement in SADC.

Following the development of the SADC Forestry Strategy, SADC developed the following programmes:

- SADC Regional Fire Management Programme;
- SADC Support Programme on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD+); and
- SADC Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT) Programme.

The FLEGT Programme aims at promoting legal harvesting and trade of forest products (both timber and non-timber), within the SADC region, and between the region and other countries; based on:

- sustainable forest management,
- with the participation of all relevant stakeholders including communities, and
- with strong, independent and transparent law enforcement agencies.

The strategy is also guiding the establishment of a Regional Timber Association aimed at harmonizing the timber industry sector in the SADC Region into a meaningful economic entity, from which the local producers, communities and governments realize better economic benefits, as well as ensuring fair trade and marketing of forest products.

One of the major benefits has been the pooling and sharing of resources and expertise in critical areas such as forest mapping and inventory, education and training and development of MRV methods for REDD+.

Abidjan Protocol

This protocol was signed in 1981 by 22 parties on the west coast of Africa for coordinated management of large coastal marine ecosystems. Unfortunately the convention has not been very active due to low funding. There were efforts to revive the convention in 2007 especially with the support to the Guinea Current Large Marine Ecosystem (GCLME) project. The major focus of the convention is the management and rehabilitation of mangroves. The new things brought by the convention to the forest sector include increased focus on management of mangrove forests, rehabilitation and restoration of degraded mangroves and economic use of Niper palm, an invasive that replaces mangroves, and opportunities for coordination with other forestry programmes e.g. REDD+ on blue carbon. In Nigeria there is a national steering committee on the GCLME which provides a multi-stakeholder coordination platform. Unfortunately the relevant provisions of the convention have not been integrated into the national forest programme even though the focal point for the convention is in the Federal Forestry Department. Implementation of the convention has been affected by lack of resources.

5.0 INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY STRENGTHS AND GAPS

5.1 Challenges

Under staffing, lack of skills and the uneven knowledge landscape present challenges to implementation, monitoring and reporting of international conventions and agreements in many Countries. This is worsened by fragmentation, weak coordination and lack of a deliberate and systematic approach for analysing and incorporating provisions of conventions into national forest action plans programmes

Many Countries have suffered heavy losses of technical staff following macro-economic reforms that curtailed staff recruitment in many government and other public institutions. Forestry Departments have not been spared. The result is that the responsibility for implementing some conventions is assigned to officers who already have a full time job and treat conventions responsibilities as an additional task and not a core responsibility. The net effect of this is that integration of the provisions from the agreements is not given adequate attention

Incorporating the international agreements and protocols requires investment of resources towards stakeholder engagement, awareness and training. Unfortunately the survey and other studies have revealed that most African forestry lead agencies are underfunded. Most rely on external donor funding for implementing most of the thematic areas of SFM. National policy and planning, which covers implementation of international conventions, is one of the least supported budgets by the fiscus (Gondo, 2012).

Although many Countries have multi-stakeholder platforms and or national steering committees and thematic working groups, it is a common observation that most stakeholder meetings are *ad hoc*, often held to facilitate completion of specific national tasks such as producing Country reports. Often these meetings are not held regularly and follow up is often absent. This weakens monitoring and evaluation as the implementation of most conventions relies on a broad base of information sources. The capacity of lead forestry agencies to share information across sectors on important decisions taken at each of the COPs is weak. Related to this is the weak capacity of convention focal points to train other stakeholders. E.g. the implementation of CITES and FLEGT requires scientific and management authorities in each country to work closely with the police, customs and traffic departments. Many African Countries do not have the capacity (financial resources and adequate skills) to provide the training and facilitate the cohesion necessary across these different sectors of government and other relevant stakeholders.

In Countries such as Zambia and Nigeria lengthy and bureaucratic processes have delayed the approval and implementation of revised forest policies and laws that have formally incorporated the provisions of relevant international conventions/protocols. These go through lengthy processes and political scrutiny. This bureaucracy is worsened by the fact that some politicians most likely do not see or appreciate the added value of collaborating in implementing international conventions. This is disheartening to the staff as the policies and laws are now due for revision before they are even implemented.

Another challenge observed during the study is that some focal point staff are junior level staff and do not have the capacity or access to higher policy and decision making levels to influence departmental programming and resource allocation. Thus unless the senior managers in the agencies take interest, most of their recommendations are not taken on board.

Vertical linkages between international, regional and national, sub-national, local and community level stakeholders ensure a comprehensive implementation, monitoring and reporting. While the sub national institutions and mechanisms to cascade collaboration within the forestry sector are absent in most countries, Sub-national and local level stakeholder participation is weak, though engaging at all the levels is important but very expensive. However, whilst most countries may have national planning frameworks for the forestry sector particularly in the form of NFP, a number of these countries lack comprehensive monitoring and evaluation frameworks that encompass national policy and international agreements objectives, indicators and means of verification. Establishing congruency between targets set in international agreements to national targets, requires technical skills and country situational analysis to ensure that the targets remain realistic and achievable at national level.

5.2 Opportunities

It is important to note that the countries have strengths that they can build on to improve on monitoring and reporting. In all the studied countries, the international agreements are assigned to a focal ministry or department and some, to a responsible officer. This gives presence and a reference point at least for coordination and communication purposes on the agreement. The lead forest agencies can draw on the knowledge and capacities of these focal points to strengthen their own capacity to assess the important elements to be incorporated into the forest sector. The implementing/hosting agencies of these agreements have received support from international bilateral and multilateral institutions such as the UNDP, GEF and FAO. This support has helped in the facilitation of various processes, conducting studies and training. Some governments such as Cameroon and Rwanda have financing mechanisms for allocating funds towards the implementation of these agreements. However, in many cases funding has been limited to a few core activities such as supporting focal points and officials to attend international meetings.

The other strength is that all the lead forest agencies are aware and understand the importance of implementing and monitoring the relevant provisions of the agreements although this understanding and awareness is not common or uniform across all key stakeholders. In all the countries there is recognition of the need for updated comprehensive National Forest Programmes and the need for coordinated SFM. Many of the study countries, for example Zimbabwe, Zambia, Nigeria, and Cameroon are at stage where their national forest programmes are due for revision or updating. This offers them an opportunity to do this in a more deliberate and systematic way. Other countries have the opportunity of incorporating provisions of the conventions/protocols as part of implementing the forest instrument. Some of the countries that have initiated this process include Nigeria, Zambia and Zimbabwe (FAO, 2013). Some of the agreements have initiated programmes for reviewing and updating implementation at national level. For example most countries are currently reviewing their NBSAPs with support from the CBD convention in a bid to improve implementation in the different sectors at national level. This offers resources and the opportunity for incorporating biodiversity into forest sector programmes. In some cases joint activities (incorporating international agreements) are already taking place though not deliberately or consciously.

6. CONCLUSION

This section of the study was designed to explore compliance by various actors in African forestry to international agreements on climate change, as well as related protocols, conventions and other instruments. The study reveals that generally countries have taken steps to integrate some provisions of international agreements on climate change and related protocols, instruments, processes and initiatives to varying degrees. However the integration has not been systematic and the approaches have been fragmented. This is exacerbated by lack of awareness of some of the agreements which in turn affected how the forestry agencies engage with upstream and downstream stakeholders.

Most forest agencies that have the mandate to integrate the agreements into national policies and plans have limited human and financial capacity to do so. Most of the focal points are very lean on resources and power and have limited capacity for tracking the developments around the agreements and for regularly reviewing and updating their own programmes to take such developments into account. Most operations of the focal points, where they exist, are funded from external sources and often funds are project based.

Although most countries have national coordination platforms, these are not very effective and do not operate at, or link with, sub-national levels. Furthermore, the agreements are coordinated by different ministries such that even when the provisions of an agreement are relevant to the forestry sector, the uptake is constrained because either the forestry sector is not made aware of the opportunity or there is no coordinating mechanism for mainstreaming agreements that affect different sectors of the national economy.

A major challenge observed in most countries is that bureaucratic processes hinder the timely review of forest policies and national forest programmes aimed at incorporating new ideas, emerging issues and new approaches. This has negatively affected the incorporation of provisions from the agreements, even when these have been identified.

Finally, most countries do not have clear mechanisms for monitoring and reporting on the extent of integration and impacts or value added of international and regional agreements. As a result there is no basis for informing policy reviews at national level. In addition some countries do not have any basis for negotiation at regional or global level. It is therefore recommended to establish a systematic approach for monitoring and reporting. The proposed approach is presented in the section below.

6.1 A Proposed approach for improved incorporation, monitoring and reporting

Several approaches to build the capacity of developing countries to comply with international processes related to forestry and climate change have been developed since the adoption of the Rio conventions (FAO, 2013, Eyebe *et al*, 2012, FAO 2011, Gardner, *et al*, 2011, Tchoumba, B. 2002). The majority of these approaches have been from the perspective of ensuring that the issues related to the agreements have been mainstreamed rather than from a perspective of the forest sector assessing, integrating and monitoring compliance with the forestry and climate change related agreements. Whilst the mainstreaming approach has helped to ensure the issues from the relevant agreements are taken on board, they have tended to be narrowly focused on one attribute or function of forests rather than the full scope of functions or attributes. Furthermore this approach has tended to be a one off exercise instead of being a process that allows for continuous tracking of developments and emerging issues relevant to the forestry sector and how these could improve sustainable forest management, monitoring compliance with the agreements and generating information for reporting to the agreements.

The FAO, in 2011, developed a guide for integrating climate change into national forest programmes (FAO, 2011). The guide focused on integrating climate change into the forestry sector and many aspects of the approach are applicable to integrating biodiversity (CBD, 2007 and 2012) or combatting land degradation into the forest sector (Bakarr and Apel, 2010, Gardner *et al*, 2011). In fact similar approaches have been used for mainstreaming biodiversity into various programmes in some African countries e.g. Cameroon (Eyebe *et al*, 2012). The major limitations of these approaches are that they do not focus on integration of the new ideas and priorities of the agreements into the forest sector in a comprehensive and synergistic manner. They also do not provide a systematic approach for monitoring and reporting to the international and regional agreements.

The review of information on compliance of the African forestry sector to various forestry and related international agreements has revealed that there is need for a systematic approach for helping countries to effectively incorporate relevant provisions and ideas into the forest sector. There is also need for an approach that would enable countries to monitor and report to the various agreements in a synergistic and cost effective manner. This would provide the requisite data that would make it easier to profile Africa better at both regional and international levels. It could also lead to enhanced inter-sectoral coordination and collaboration with other players that support the implementation of these agreements, since many of them target the securing and production of international public goods and services that are enjoyed regionally and globally.

Following the study on current practices and experiences it is proposed to adopt an approach that comprises the following elements:

1. Awareness raising and imparting knowledge of what is in each convention
2. Designation of focal points for the agreements in the lead forest agency
3. Identification of pertinent issues to the forest sector from each agreement
4. Facilitation of the incorporation of these in the national frameworks –strategy/policies
5. Capacity building at relevant levels
6. Establishing and/or strengthening coordination and stakeholder participation mechanisms
7. Participation of the forest sector representatives in national level steering committees and thematic working groups
8. Development of forest sector specific –strategy and action plan (NFP or equivalent) and regular updating to take on-board new and emerging issues
9. Resource mobilisation- financing strategy that has links with financing mechanisms of the agreements as well as domestic and other sources of financing
10. Development of sector implementation plan

6.2 Awareness raising

The first step before the provisions of any agreement can be integrated into the national forest programmes is to raise awareness of the convention amongst the forest sector stakeholders so that all understand the provisions and obligations of the agreement and how these relate to the forest sector. This process should be facilitated by the lead forest agency. In order to capture the issues and outcomes from the awareness raising initiatives and to follow up on the agreed actions the lead forest agency will need to appoint a focal point or office to drive the process.

6.3 Identification of pertinent issues to the forest sector from each agreement

A key outcome of the awareness raising and knowledge sharing exercise is the identification of issues, provisions and obligations that are relevant to the forest sector. This is a very critical step as it allows the lead forest agency and the key stakeholders to identify what is expected of them and to define their potential roles and responsibilities in the implementation of the agreement.

6.4. Participation in the development and incorporation of relevant issues in the national strategy

In almost all the countries, and also as a requirement of most international agreements, a national strategy is developed with facilitation from national government and the national focal point for the agreement. For example, the National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs) and National Action Plans (NAPs) have been developed in nearly all the African Countries for implementing the conventions on Biological Diversity (CBD) and Convention on Combatting Desertification and Drought (UNCCD) respectively. The development of these national strategies and action plans is through a multi-stakeholder and cross-sectoral process that clearly identifies the roles and responsibilities of different sectors and the actions to be implemented by different stakeholders. It is imperative that the lead forest agency at this stage facilitates the participation of key stakeholders in the forest sector to ensure that their roles and responsibilities and how they relate to other sectors are clearly articulated in the national framework for implementing the agreement. This will not only provide direction and guidance to the sector but will also articulate how the sector will coordinate with stakeholders from other sectors at national and other levels.

6.5 Forest sector specific strategy and action plan

Drawing on the guidance and responsibilities assigned under the national strategy, the lead forest agency should facilitate the development of a forest sector implementation strategy and action plan for the agreement. This is a multi-stakeholder process that should involve all the key stakeholders in the sector as well as other sectors that impact on or are impacted on by the forest sector. The strategy should clearly articulate the objectives, expected outcomes, linkages with the national strategy and the roles and responsibilities of all the relevant actors.

6.6 Integration with on-going activities in the national forest development programme

In order to avoid duplication and overlaps, it is important to integrate the sector's specific plan into the existing national forest development programme (NFP, Master plan etc.) This is critical for enabling countries to maintain a strategic focus whilst taking on board new and emerging issues coming from the conventions/protocols. This process involves an inventory of on-going programmes and projects under the existing national forest programme and assessing where the strategies and activities identified in the sector specific strategy and action plan fit. Where there are existing programmes where these fit e.g. afforestation programmes, then these actions are integrated into the on-going programmes to take advantage of existing capacities, institutional, human and other resources. Where they do not fit into any existing programme or project then the national forest programme is updated and the new strategies are incorporated as new programmes, strategies or action plans. In this manner the national forest development plans are updated to incorporate the new issues and the responsibilities and roles of different stakeholders.

6.7 Capacity building

The integration and implementation of the provisions of international as well as regional agreements come with requirements for new or additional capacities (human, financial, technical or technological, infrastructure, knowledge and skills). It is therefore prudent to undertake a capacity needs assessment for the lead forest agency and the key stakeholders in the sector (guided by their roles and responsibilities). The results of the assessment will help in the development of a capacity building plan that will include among others the resources required, the possible sources of resources, and the schedule of training (especially for skills and knowledge upgrading) and the necessary partnerships for implementing the capacity building plans

6.8 Coordination and stakeholder participation mechanisms

Implementation of most of the conventions/protocols and agreements requires a multi-stakeholder and multi-sectoral approaches. It is therefore imperative that the lead forest agency establishes the relevant multi-stakeholder platforms for coordination of the participation and inputs from all the key stakeholders. Where forest sector multi-stakeholder platforms already exist, e.g. the national forest development committee of Nigeria, then the same platform can be used but ensuring that it can be expanded to take on board new stakeholders representing the new activities and stakeholders if these were not represented before.

There is also need to ensure that there is link with national coordination and stakeholder participation platforms. For example in many countries there are national environment steering committees or convention specific steering committees and thematic working groups. It will be important to ensure that the relevant representatives of the forest sector participate or are represented in the national committees and relevant thematic working groups to facilitate coordination and input into the national level as well as providing linkage with the sector specific multi-stakeholder platforms.

6.9 Resource mobilisation

In order to facilitate implementation of the new activities related to the new agreements, it is important to identify the required resources, particularly human and financial resources, and plan for their mobilisation. The resource mobilisation plan should be linked to the forest financing strategy for the national forest development plan and the financing mechanisms of the agreement. Most countries have developed forest financing strategies for their national forest programmes and therefore the mobilisation of the additional resources should be linked to these to avoid competition, conflict or duplication. This is why this should be done as part of the integration to existing programmes described in 11.5 above. In addition most agreements are linked to some financing mechanism. For example the UNFCCC, CBD, UNCCD and NLBI have financing windows under the GEF. It is therefore important to link the resource mobilisation strategy to accessing resources from these mechanisms in line with the requisite guidelines and procedures for each funding mechanism. In some cases this requires development of new capacities and new institutions e.g. the Designated Implementing Authority (DNA) and Designated Implementing Entity (DIE) for accessing the Clean Development Mechanism and the Adaptation Fund respectively.

6.10 Implementation Plan

The implementation plan of the specific agreement should be made an integral part of the implementation plan of the national forest programme. This should clearly stipulate the responsibilities of the various stakeholders, time-frames for execution and completion, expected results and performance indicators and the resources to support implementation and

their source. The plan expected results and targets should be aligned with the agreement's targets and expected results as well as the national forest management results and targets. This is important for ensuring that implementation of the agreement contributes to attainment of national forest development goals as well as overall national goals and aspirations.

6.11 Monitoring and evaluation

Monitoring and evaluating progress in implementation is an important component of implementing international agreements as it will assist the stakeholders to:

- Continuously assess their progress towards achieving SFM goals and objectives.
- Gain a better understanding of the enablers and challenges encountered in implementing the conventions
- Provide a basis for collaborative and institutional learning at national and sub-national levels
- Provide a basis for accountability at national and international levels about actions taken in relation to implementing the agreements and the national forest programme.

At national level the monitoring data will provide a basis for reporting on forestry activities and achievements to various national and international processes such as the multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) and regional agreements.

To facilitate monitoring, there is need for the forest lead agency to have a monitoring and evaluation system that tracks progress in the implementation of the agreements as part of tracking progress in the implementation of the national forest programme. The monitoring system should be an integral part of the overall national forest monitoring system to avoid duplication and inefficient use of resources. It should however have the specific indicators for measuring progress towards achievement of the goals and objectives of the agreements. In this regard, the monitoring approach should be able to check and track the integration of the agreement at each of the stages outlined above.

The focal point of each agreement should, as much as possible, participate in the conference of the parties (COP) and other negotiation meetings to facilitate tracking of new developments and programmes developed by the parties and provide feedback to the lead forest agency and the multi-stakeholder platform to ensure incorporation of these into the sector specific programme. For example, the recently agreed AICHI targets of the CBD include forest targets and these would be made known to the relevant sector stakeholders and incorporated into the national forest programme and action plans of the both the lead agency and the relevant stakeholders. This will also facilitate the tracking and monitoring of implementation at national level and reporting back to the COP. The focal point and the lead forest agency and other key stakeholders should periodically review progress in the implementation of the various programmes and their impacts at national and sub-national level to enable them to provide feedback to the COP and to participate in COP activities and negotiations from an informed position. The reviews will also help in the periodic updating and strengthening of the national forest programmes and action plans.

REFERENCES

1. **Africa Forest Law Enforcement and Governance (AFLEG)**, Ministerial Declaration at the Ministerial Conference 13-16 October, 2003, Yaoundé, Cameroon, October 16, 2003 Available on ec.europa.eu/development/icenter/.../AFLEG_Declaration_2003.pdf
2. **Bakarr, M.I and Apel, U, 2010**. Combating Land Degradation through Integrated Ecosystem Management. Global Environment Facility.
3. **CITES Convention Text** available on www.cites.org/eng/disc/text.php
4. **Convention of Biodiversity Text of the CBD**, Available on <http://www.cbd.int/convention/text/>
5. **ETFRN, 2014**: Linking FLEGT and REDD+ to Improve Forest Governance. ETFRN News Issue No.55.
6. **FAO, 2011 An approach for integrating climate change into national forest programmes in support of sustainable forest management. Climate Change for Forest Policy-Makers. FAO Rome**
7. **FAO, 2013** *Implementing the Non-legally Binding Instrument on All Types of Forests.* , Rome, Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations.
8. **Federal Ministry of Environment, Abuja, Nigeria 2012**: National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan.
9. **Feresu, S.B (ed) 2010**: Zimbabwe Environment Outlook: Our Environment, Everybody's Responsibility. Government of the Republic of Zimbabwe. Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources Management
10. **Forest Stewardship Council (1994). Principles and Criteria for Forest Stewardship Supplemented by Explanatory Notes and Rationales 1994**
11. **Gardner T, A et al, 2011 A framework for integrating biodiversity concerns into national REDD+ programmes. Biol. Conserv. (2011), doi:10.1016/j.biocon.2011.11.018**
12. **Gondo, P. 2012. An overview forest Financing in Africa** available on www.un.org/esa/forests/pdf/aheg
13. **International Tropical Timber Agreement, 2006**. Available on <http://www.itto.int/itta/>
14. **National Forest Programme in Tanzania, 2001-2010. United Republic of Tanzania, 2001.**
15. **Ramsar, (1994). The Convention on Wetlands text, as amended in 1982 and 1987.** Available on <http://www.ramsar.org/cda/en/ramsar-documents-texts-convention-on/main/ramsa>
16. **Rwanda Environment Management Agency, 2011**: Guidelines for mainstreaming climate change adaptation and mitigation in the environment and natural resources sector in Rwanda. Rwanda Environment Management Agency.Rwanda
17. **Tchoumba, B. 2002**. Status of Implementation of Forest-Related Clauses in the CBD. An analysis of Cameroon's implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity with a focus on Forests. <http://www.fern.org/sites/fern.org/files/pubs/reports/cbd/cameroon.pdf>
18. **UNCCD - Text of the Convention including all Annexes** .Available on www.unccd.int
19. **UNFCCC, Full Text of the Convention**, Available from https://unfccc.int/essential_background/convention/background/items/1349.php
20. **Zaelke, D., and Stilwell, M., and Young, O. In: Zaelke D, Kaniaru D, Kružíková E (Eds.) (2005), Making Law Work: Environmental Compliance and Sustainable Development, Vol. 1, pp. 29-52.**
21. **Zimbabwe Second National Communication to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, 2012**. Government of the Republic of Zimbabwe. Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources Management

African Forest Forum



Contact us at:
African Forest Forum
P.o. Box 30677-00100 Nairobi GPO Kenya
Tel: +254 20 722 4203 Fax: +254 20 722 4001
www.afforum.org

