



African Forest Forum

A platform for stakeholders in African forestry



Assessment on how information shared by AFF for improving policy formulation and implementation, and forest governance in African forestry has been used by stakeholders

Follow-up Assessment Report



About AFF

Established in 2007 as a non-political, non-governmental, objective, independent and not for profit international organisation, the African Forest Forum (AFF) is an association of individuals with a commitment to the sustainable management, wise use and conservation of Africa's forest and tree resources for the socio-economic well-being of its peoples and for the stability and improvement of its environment.

AFF exists to voice the concerns of African forestry stakeholders, and to use science, indigenous knowledge, and experience to advocate for the increasing relevance of forests and trees outside forests to peoples' livelihoods, national economies, and the stability of the environment.

In this regard, AFF provides independent analysis and advice to national, regional, and international institutions and actors on how economic, food security and environmental issues can be addressed through the sustainable management of forests and trees outside forests. Operationally, AFF mobilises resources to address forestry and related issues that cut across countries and different African sub-regions with a view of enhancing the relevance and contribution of forests and trees outside forests to the livelihoods of the people of Africa and stability of their environment.

Vision

The leading forum that unites all stakeholders in African forestry

Mission

To contribute to the improvement of the livelihoods of the people of Africa and the environment they live in through the sustainable management and use of tree and forest resources on the African continent.

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ASSESSMENT ON HOW INFORMATION SHARED BY AFF FOR IMPROVING POLICY FORMULATION AND IMPLEMENTATION, AND FOREST GOVERNANCE IN AFRICAN FORESTRY HAS BEEN USED BY STAKEHOLDERS

Follow-up Assessment Report

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AFF	African Forest Forum
FLEGT	Forest Law Enforcement, Good Forest Governance and Trade (FLEGT) in forest products and services (as used in this document)
REDD+	Reduced Emissions from Deforestation and forest Degradation in developing countries, and the role of conservation, sustainable management of forests, and enhancement of forest carbon stocks in developing countries.
SFM	Sustainable Forest Management
KFS	Kenya Forest Service
FOB	Free on Board
NTFP	Non-Timber Forest Product

1. INTRODUCTION

Since its inception, the African Forest Forum has undertaken various activities to promote good forest governance, law enforcement and fair practices in marketing and trade of forest products (FLEGT)¹. The activities are aimed at strengthening capacity of forestry practitioners to formulate evidence-based policies, regulations and governance mechanisms that effectively support sustainable forest management and transparent trade. This objective has been achieved mainly through enhancing advocacy, professionalism and ethics in the forestry sector, by for example, provision of up to date information on status and opportunities for enhancing forest law enforcement and marketing and trade in forest products; strengthening of national forestry associations; and facilitating formation of regional forestry associations.

Towards this end, AFF conducted regional workshops for African forestry experts, that shared information it generated on forest law enforcement, forest governance and trade in forest products between 8th and 10th July 2015 in Mombasa, Kenya, and between 23rd and 25th May 2016 in Abuja, Nigeria. The overall objective of these workshops was to deliberate on measures and mechanisms that could contribute to strengthening forest policies and governance structures, in order to better support sustainable management of forest and tree resources, as well as facilitate transparent trade in forest products at both national and sub-regional levels. The expected outcomes of the workshops were:

- Mechanisms for strengthening forest law enforcement (including containing illegalities in the sector) and good forest governance identified and shared among stakeholders;
- Mechanisms for strengthening professionalism and ethics in forestry identified and shared among stakeholders;
- The voice of forestry actors at the sub-regional level, through professional forestry associations amplified; and,
- Stronger linkage of national plans in forestry with those at the sub-regional level secured.

After the workshops, AFF conducted an assessment in March 2019 to determine the significance of the workshop outcomes. The purpose of this assessment was two-fold namely:

¹ In this text FLEGT is used as an abbreviation of forest law enforcement, good forest governance and trade in forest products and services.

- a) To assess the extent to which the workshops were effective in achieving the expected outcomes;
- b) To assess the extent to which the information shared by AFF has been used by African countries to facilitate changes in forest policies (e.g. review, develop, revise) and governance structures that support sustainable management of forests and tree resources as well as in facilitating transparent trade in forest products.

2. METHODOLOGY

The assessment adopted a descriptive research design for both quantitative and qualitative approaches to data collection and analysis and it targeted 86 African forestry experts who participated in the regional workshops described above. A questionnaire was developed and sent to all the targeted respondents out of which 26 responded, giving a response rate of 30.23%. The assessment took a census approach in order to ensure full participation of all workshop participants. The quantitative data was analyzed using SPSS and exported to Microsoft Excel to generate frequencies and percentages that were presented in tables. Qualitative data was analyzed manually through thematic content techniques, presented in text, and supported with verbatim quotes where necessary.

3. EVALUATION FINDINGS

3.1 Knowledge and skills gained and changes in perceptions as a result of AFF workshops

This section describes skills and knowledge acquired by the participants from the workshops, and how their perceptions on FLEGT changed because of the information from the workshops. Some quotes from individual participants are presented verbatim.

3.1.1 Participants' perception of the workshop information that are relevant to strategy formulation processes

All the key themes handled during the workshop were appreciated by the respondents.

Some of these were on:

- Forest governance, law enforcement;
- Professional forestry associations;
- Digital monitoring of forest resources;
- Illegal trade in forest products;

- Development of community leadership and rights of indigenous people,
- Safety of forestry workers;
- Policy formulation, revision and implementation;
- Estimating the value of forest products;
- The REDD+ mechanism;
- Forest protection and climate change of forest cover;
- Public-private partnerships in forestry;
- Marketing and trade in forest products.

The following sections highlight some changes in perceptions on some of these themes as reported by the participants and citing very specific quotes from some.

3.1.2 Change in participants' perception on "Forest governance and law enforcement" as a result of the AFF workshops

The workshop changed the perceptions of the respondents on forest governance and law enforcement. This would then influence their actions, including increasing transparency in forest management and securing political goodwill in order to facilitate good forest management and law enforcement, and revision of outdated laws and regulations. Some of their responses include the following:

"I did see the urgency to review the obsolete forestry laws and regulations and enhance enabling forestry law enforcement"

~Director of Forestry, Delta State, Nigeria (FAN Council Member), West Africa

"The information shared during the workshops was very helpful. I now have great expertise in these areas."

~Coordinator, Central Africa

"Positively. I am dedicated to promoting the transparent management of forest resources to ensure their sustainability."

~General Manager, West Africa

"The sharing of information on forest laws and regulations has made it possible to understand that the lack of commitment of political authorities is the cause of the non-application of the laws."

*~PCF / PRIF_AO Process Monitoring Focal Point Assistant to the Atacora Forest Inspection Chief
West Africa*

3.1.3 Change in participants' perception on "Marketing and trade in forest products" as a result of the AFF workshops

The workshop changed perceptions of the respondents on marketing and trade in forest products. Some of their actions influenced by this include, expanding trade in forest products to global markets, increasing transparency and better governance in marketing

and trade, developing better taxation and government revenues through trade information, better control of trade to increase profitability. These are some of the views from respondents:

“That forest products marketing and trade can be globally linked, unified and controlled.”
~Director of Forestry, Delta State, Nigeria (FAN Council Member), West Africa

“There is not yet a systematic change, however the governance and transparency are gaining ground through the stakeholders and will get better.”
~Coordinator, Central Africa

“Burkina Faso is in the process of developing its forest taxation and the information will be taken into account.”
~Technical advisor, West Africa

“Trade in products has been better controlled, considering the existing potential. Better profits have been obtained in recent years.”
~General Manager, West Africa

3.1.4 Change in participants' perception on “professional forestry associations” as a result of the AFF workshops

The workshop changed the perceptions of the respondents on professional forestry associations. Some of the changes include the role that a professional association should play in contributing to the sustainable management of forest resources and promotion of the legal timber trade. Also included is strengthening of capacities of the members to better manage their forest enterprises, more judicious exploitation of forest resources, and link the timber trade and its impact on climate change in order to sensitize their members to avoid logging practices that contribute to global warming.

These are some of the views from respondents:

“Professional forestry associations remain to be desired to work in a transparent way.”
~Consultative advisor, Questions environmental in charge, East Africa

“That Forester and professional associations have one basic interest and that is to have a sustainable forest management regime.”
~Director of Forestry, Delta State, Nigeria

“The information shared from professional forestry association encouraged my organization to register with FAN as a sister association.”
~Wood Exporters and Furniture Factory, West Africa

“The old trend of exploitation without respect for regulations is beginning to disappear and the involvement of professional associations in governance and transparency is more and more noticed.”
~Coordinator, Central Africa

“Through a strong involvement of forestry associations in carrying out forest operations and monitoring traceability”.

~General Manager, West Africa

"Professional forestry associations" have a role in the application of laws and regulations.

~PCF / PRIF_AO Process Monitoring Focal Point Assistant to the Atacora Forest Inspection Chief
West Africa

“The idea that we had professional associations before the Abuja workshop was relatively wrong. Participation in the seminar raised awareness of the role that a professional association should play in contributing to the sustainable management of forest resources. Our perception of professional associations has shifted from a simple group of forest products traders who are profit-hungry and to defend their interests to an association of forest entrepreneurs who must contribute to the development and respect of the texts by the administrations, which favors the controlled exploitation of forests, the industrialization of African timber, the promotion of the legal timber trade, the strengthening of the capacities of the members to better manage their forest enterprises, and the more judicious exploitation of forest resources. It is also very important that the professional forestry trade associations of forest products keep in mind and link the timber trade and its impact on climate change in order to sensitize their members to avoid logging practices that contribute to global warming.”

~President, West Africa

“My capacity was strengthened on the same and I now know our role well, the opportunity we have on the platform of African forestry associations is the ability to advance our forest management agenda on the continent.”

~Secretary General, West Africa

3.2 Use of gained knowledge and skills in policy formulation and implementation processes

This section describes how the participants used the knowledge and skills gained from the workshops to support policy formulation and implementation processes within their various regions.

3.2.1 Participants' general use of the knowledge and skills gained from the AFF FLEGT workshops

Most of the respondents used the knowledge acquired from the workshops to raise awareness and sensitize people on issues related to FLEGT such as environmental protection. This led to greater participation of civil society groups in conservation efforts as well as setting up of micro-afforestation initiatives; to develop and implement structured

trainings on FLEGT issues, to increase advocacy on FLEGT, and provision of technical support in policy formulation and implementation. These are some of the views from respondents:

“I conducted sensitization on the responsibility for environmental protection through reforestation and promotion of forestry. The result is that micro-afforestation initiatives have been installed. There is greater involvement of the non-profit associations in the conservation of the environment.”

~Consultative advisor on environment, East Africa

“I did awareness among forestry stakeholders and the result is that tracking has improved from source (forest) to end (Markets). Foresters are more aware of dangers in corruption. Timber movement better monitored and regulated.”

~Secretary general, East Africa

“Have been involved in tree planting campaigns on radio in the state, I have also been involved in the implementation of the forest product pricing tariff, monitoring has been enhanced. For the tree planting Campaigns radio and television jingles and a state launching of the programme at the State headquarter and tree species seeding supply to the public or citizen.

~Director of Forestry, Delta State, Nigeria (FAN Council Member), West Africa

“Participation in fora, workshops etc. We conduct independent forest monitoring and reports are reviewed by a validation committee and published. The government is taking into account recommendations from the validation committee to hold forest companies accountable. Reports of independent monitoring missions and their publication are important and contribute to good governance. Sanctions or the payment of fines following reports are added values of good governance.”

~Coordinator, Central Africa

“I mainly conducted training at the regional level (13 regions) where modules on the deontology and planning and monitoring techniques were discussed. Above all, I found a good assimilation and the evaluations of these trainings revealed the commitment of the staff to apply the established rules.”

~Technical advisor, West Africa

“I did an elaboration of legal texts and development of a new institutional framework to improve management mechanisms for forest and wildlife resources.”

~General manager, West Africa

“I did advocacy for capacity building of forest officers, placement of professional training of forest managers and the launch of the National School of Water, Forests and Hunting.”

~PCF / PRIF_AO Process Monitoring Focal Point Assistant to the Atacora Forest Inspection Chief, West Africa

“Report followed by a fact sheet addressed to the Minister of the Environment of the sub-regional workshop organized by AFF on “Strengthening forest law enforcement,

forest governance and trade in forest products in West Africa". 23 to 25 May 2016 in Abuja, Nigeria. The sensitization of the members of the association on the sustainable use of the forest resources through the respect of the texts. Production and distribution of regulatory texts on exploitation and marketing. Popularization of the procedures manuals for export and import of wood. I did awareness raising for reforestation actions and for wood processing at least 2nd degree before export. I participated in setting up a watch committee to help eradicate fraud in the timber sector."

~President, West Africa

"I continuously raise awareness on the magnitude, trends and flows of illicit trade in forest products."

~Consultant, West Africa

"I have been involved in community engagements and recruitment of Ecoguards for environmental restoration. The recruitment of Ecoguards has been a real solution to reduce illegal exploitation. Restoration actions have been an alternative to reduce pressures on forest resources."

~Director General, West Africa

"I did capacity strengthening on regulation and resource management, this enhanced the adherence to the cost of operating the standards of the wood cutting. For resource management it allowed for control in wood resources and a good management of the village fund."

~Secretary General, West Africa

3.2.2 Participation in forestry related policy formulation process

Majority of the respondents, constituting 84.6%, mentioned that they had participated in forestry related policy formulation processes since they took part in the workshops on FLEGT organized by AFF. This meant that, they got opportunity to use the knowledge and skills gained to contribute to policy formulation as detailed in Section 3.2.3. This also provides proof (if there was need) that participants to these regional workshops were carefully chosen for expected impact.

3.2.3 Issues addressed through policy formulation process

The policy formulation processes in which the stakeholders engaged sought to address issues such as illegal harvesting / logging of forest products (as reported by 84.6% of the respondents), illegal trade in forest products (84.6% of the respondents), laxity in law enforcement (76.9%) and weak forest management (76.9%). Table 2 below presents a summary of the analysis on respondents' feedback on issues addressed in the policy formulation processes they participated in.

Table 1: Issues addressed through the policy formulation process

Issues addressed through the policy formulation process	Proportion (%)
Illegal harvesting (logging) of forest products	22 (84.6)
Illegal trade in forest products	22 (84.6)
Laxity in law enforcement	20 (76.9)
Weak forest management	20 (76.9)
Weak administration	14 (53.8)
Poor leadership at work	12 (46.2)
Workers conditions	14 (53.8)
Poor forest condition	18 (69.2)
Conduct of forestry workers, including professionalism and ethics at work	14 (53.8)
Safety of workers in workplaces	10 (38.5)

Apart from these areas that were addressed, some more specific individual feedback from the respondents is indicated below:

“I did advice on review of the Forestry Law, review of Forest product pricing (Tariff).”
 ~Director of Forestry, Delta State, Nigeria (FAN Council Member), West Africa

“Influenced digitization of forest information repository in KFS.”
 ~Assistant Chief Conservator of Forests, East Africa

“My contribution was to do an analysis on the effect of each point. And recommend a technical approach”
 ~ Wood Exporter, West Africa

“As a representative of civil society, our focus was on respecting the rights of indigenous peoples, respecting working conditions and their rights, improving governance and participatory forestry.”
 ~Coordinator, Central Africa

“My contribution in the policy formulation process was by engaging in discussions and the elaboration of the different documents.”
 ~Technical advisor, outside the hierarchy, West Africa

“My contribution in the policy formulation process was on technical support on specific issues.”
 ~General Manager, West Africa

“Strengthening was in environmental scanning and harmonization of texts with neighboring countries.”

~PCF / PRIF_AO Process Monitoring Focal Point Assistant to the Atacora Forest Inspection Chief
West Africa

“My contribution during the policy formulation process was in making proposal for the Benin's accession to the FLEGT process to benefit from its agreement in terms of its contribution to the sustainable management of forests, the popularization and the effective application of the texts on the trade and the export of wood , reinforcement of participatory forest management by involving professional associations more in decision-making and drafting clear texts for the promotion of wood industries to add value.”

~President, West Africa

“My contribution was to ensure that we take into account the needs of communities in the policy documents.”

~Director General, West Africa

“My contributions were in making people understand the regulations; what the law allows and what it forbids.”

~Secretary general, West Africa

3.2.4 Utilization of information shared during the AFF policy formulation workshops

Among the respondents who had participated in policy formulation, majority (90.9%) were able to use information shared during the workshop. This was an indication that the information shared during the workshop was relevant, meeting informational needs during policy formulation process and provided participants with the right knowledge and skills to handle the policy formulation processes more effectively.

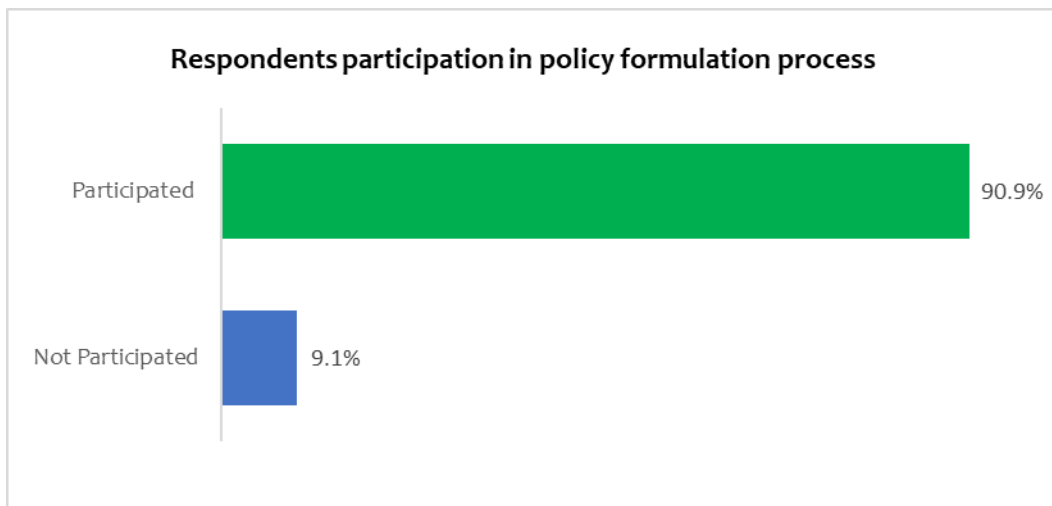


Figure 1: Respondents participation in policy formulation process

3.2.5 Participation in a policy implementation processes related to forest governance

A significant proportion of the respondents (84.6%) reported to having participated in policy implementation processes related to forest governance (more details in Section 3.2.6) since they were trained by AFF on FLEGT. The trainings imparted the respondents with the requisite knowledge and skills, as evidenced in Section 3.2.3, hence giving them the confidence to participate in the processes.

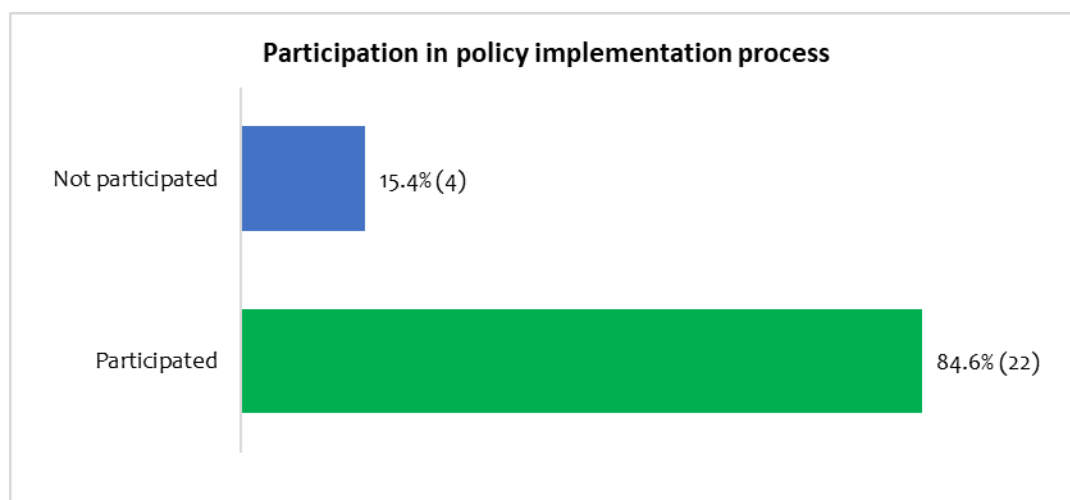


Figure 2: Respondents participation in policy implementation process

3.2.6 The policy document(s) that the respondents participated in implementing

The respondents reported having participated and making contributions in implementing several policies that are outlined in the following documents in their respective countries:

- National Forest Policy and National Policy on Climate Change, **Burundi**
- A policy on Private Participation in Forestry and Delta State Revenue gazette (Includes Forest product pricing), **Nigeria**
- Information sharing policy for forest resource, **West Africa.**
- National Trust Forest Fund, **Kenya**
- Forest Policy, Voluntary Partnership Agreement, REDD +, Land and Indigenous Peoples Rights through FPIC, Participatory Forestry, Independent Observation (IO), **Nigeria**
- National agro-silvo-pastoral, fisheries and wildlife policy, **Burkina Faso**
- Forest and wildlife policy, forest codes and wildlife protection and hunting regulations, **West Africa.**
- Forest Policy Document Forest Tax Document Forest Code National Forest Investment Plan (NFIP), **Benin**
- National forest policy, **West Africa.**
- Domestic energy strategy, **Niger**

3.2.7 Participation in policy implementation and the outcomes

Respondents were able to indicate instances where they have been able to participate in policy implementation and the outcomes of such efforts. It was clear that most of policies implemented were effective, for example in promoting forestry and agroforestry to combat climate change; raising resources for conservation and managing forest resources; advocating for good governance, environmentally friendly logging, workers' rights and their conditions and the rights of indigenous peoples; and better decision-making on sustainable management and the fight against the degradation factors of forest and wildlife resources. A sample of their responses is as follows:

"I participated in implementing the National Forest Policy and National Policy on Climate Change,

Yes, the policy has been effective in guiding developments in forestry in my country. The public has come to understand that forestry and agroforestry are the best way to mitigate climate change. There is even a national program called "Ewe Burundi Urambaye"; this to increase the plant cover at the national level"

~Consultative advisor, Questions environmental in charge, East Africa

"I participated in implementing the information sharing policy for forest Resource. The policy is in the process of actualization and impact yet to be felt."

~Assistant Chief Conservator of Forests, East Africa

"I participated in implementing the National Trust Forest Fund. Yes, the policy has been effective in guiding development in forestry in my country, the Levies being paid by exporters in the state for evacuation of logs are not returned to forestry department by government of those state. This had resulted to increased deforestation and land degradation. The trust fund is now being used to conserve and manage forest resources."

~Wood Exporters and Furniture Factory, West Africa

"I participated in implementing the Forest Policy, Voluntary Partnership Agreement, REDD +, Land and Indigenous Peoples Rights through FPIC, Participatory Forestry, Independent Observation (IO). Yes, these policies are considered effective and guide the evolution of forestry in my country even the sub-region because, these policies advocate good governance, environmentally friendly logging, workers' rights and their conditions and the rights of indigenous peoples."

~Coordinator, Central Africa

"I participated in implementing the National policy on environment and climate change and the national agro-silvo-pastoral, fisheries and wildlife policy. The results are mixed, as the country has adopted the program-budget and results-based management approaches, the implementation of which is still tentative due to inadequate funding."

~Technical advisor, West Africa

"I participated in implementing the Forest and wildlife policy, forest codes and wildlife protection and hunting regulations. Yes, the policy has been effective because they

have led to better decision-making on sustainable management and the fight against the degradation factors of forest and wildlife resources.”

~General Manager, West Africa

“I participated in implementing the Forest Policy Document, Forest Tax Document, Forest Code, National Forest Investment Plan (NFIP). Yes, the policy has been effective, forest policy is the basis for forest resource management guidance in the country.”

~PCF / PRIF_AO Process Monitoring Focal Point Assistant to the Atacora Forest Inspection Chief, West Africa

Since my interaction with the African Forest Forum, I have participated in implementing the following policies:

- 1. Update of the law 93-009 of July 1993 governing the forest regime in the Republic of Benin in 2012*
- 2. Drafting Inter-ministerial Order 0053 / MEPN / MIC / DC / SGM / DGFRN / DGCE on import and export of timber in the Republic of Benin Decree N ° 2017-200 of 29 March 2017 on new exploitation, marketing and export measures for timber and wood products in the Republic of Benin*
- 3. Validation of the West African convergence plan for forest management*
- 4. Elaboration of criteria and indicators of sustainable management*
- 5. Elaboration of the manuals of the procedures for export and import of wood*
- 6. National committee for the validation of timber export quotas for export*
- 7. National committee of support for the actions of reforestation*
- 8. Update and adoption of the document on the new forest policy and the Benin Forest Code in July 2018*

Yes, the policies are effective in shaping the management of forest resources in my country though the following challenges still exist. The current laws are more oriented towards the protection of natural resources to the point where the economic aspect of the sector risks disappearing if nothing is done. There is very little participation of civil society representatives and the private sector in the adoption of policies, so that policies do not always reflect the reality and example is the case of Benin of the Decree 2017-200 of March 29th, 2017 bearing new measures of exploitation, marketing, export of the wood and the prod wood in the Republic of Benin) in its article 6 where the taxable values relate to the FOB value and not the market value of the timber. This creates a very high cost of non-competitive investment in Beninese teak wood on the international market, as well as sloppy sales, unsold wood storage in forests and non-compliance with development plans.

~President, West Africa

3.3 Respondents' recommendation on areas of priority in Forest Policy, Governance and Management for future AFF trainings

Respondents made recommendations on various aspects of priority in forest policy, governance, and management that they thought would be of significance in future trainings.

These include:

- Management of community afforestation;
- Cross-border trade in forest products;
- Issues that are gender specific
- Alternative livelihoods for forest dependent people;
- Continuous review since policy directions are dynamic and keep on changing;
- Knowledge on forest and wildlife resources;
- Rapid forest inventory techniques;
- Mapping of forest resources;
- Mechanism for mobilizing financial resources for forest management;
- Training of customs officers and water and forests officers is required on the concepts of costing wood raw material, taxable bases on wood, FOB value of wood and the market value of wood to enable them to better address the notion of wood taxes;
- New technologies for sawing and recycling wood waste in the private sector;
- Patent rights to forest products from African forests, and;
- Forest inventory and valuation of NTFPs.

The African Forest Forum, with its partners, will take these up gradually as opportunities arise, in formulating its programmes and projects. In a way these areas represent the needs of African forestry stakeholders, not only in training programmes, but also in generating more information that could be shared through training.



African Forest Forum

A platform for stakeholders in African forestry



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