



THE African Forest Forum

A platform for stakeholders in African Forestry

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Message from the Executive Secretary

It is my pleasure to welcome four new members to the AFF Governing Council, and whose knowledge and experience in matters related to forestry can add much value and bring fresh insights into our work. They are : Prof Gerald Monela- (Vice Chancellor, Sokoine University of Agriculture), Mr Ibro Adamou (Director of Forestry, Niger), Dr. Ms Marie Louise Avana-Tientcheu (Coordinator, Regional Centre for Specialized Training in Agriculture, Yaoundé, Cameroun) and Dr Aissetou Yaye (Executive Secretary, African Network for Agriculture, Agroforestry & Natural Resources Education - ANAFE).

The new members joined us during the 10th Governing Council meeting in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, on March 20-21, 2014 where the Governing Council approved various reports and recommendations from its committees including the 2014 Plan of Work and Budget for two of our projects, new members and other operational matters. They join our team at a time of encouraging growth in membership which now stands at 855, with 185 new members having been approved by the Governing Council during the meeting in Addis Ababa.

On a different but equally positive note, AFF has received a grant from the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) for a five year project on “Strengthening sustainable forest management in Africa”.

The overall objective of the project is “to generate and share knowledge and information through partnerships in ways that provide inputs into policy options and capacity building for improved forest management that better address poverty eradication and environmental protection in Africa”. The operationalization of this objective will be through six components that are linked to the project’s six specific objectives:

1. Partnership platform for catalyzing institutional change;
2. Knowledge management and brokerage for enhanced management of forest resources in Africa;
3. Forest and tree resources management for enhanced human livelihoods;
4. Forestry policy, regulation, governance and trade in forest and tree products;
5. Strengthening Africa’s capacity for sustainable management and use of forest and tree resources;
6. Supporting Africa’s engagement in global and regional forestry processes and implementation of agreements.

As our volume of work expands, we look forward to an even stronger collaboration with our stakeholders in delivering on these activities.

Thank you!

Membership to AFF swells to 855!

The membership to the African Forest Forum (AFF) continues to grow, and with 185 new members approved by the Governing Council in March 2014 to join AFF the total membership rises to 855, spread over 47 African countries and 13 from outside Africa.

This is a clear indication that more and more professionals and stakeholders in African forestry are interested in AFF. Members to AFF are drawn from diverse backgrounds such as academia, government ministries and departments, NGOs, the private sector, and farmer organizations. This diversity is not only an indication of the multi-disciplinary nature of forestry and tree resources but also essential in ensuring all dimensions in this sector have a voice in the affairs of AFF.

Governing Council of AFF holds its 10th meeting in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

The Governing Council of the African Forest Forum (AFF) and its committees met in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia on March 17-21, 2014. The following committees met prior to the meeting of the Governing Council on March 20-21: Task Force on Resources Mobilisation, Finance Committee, Working Group on Climate Change, Working Group to Promote Forestry in African Initiatives, Technical Support Team (TST) to International and Regional Negotiations and the Executive Committee. The Governing Council meeting was opened by His Excellency Ato Kebede Yimam, State Minister, Ministry of Environment and Forests. Wondo Genet College of Forestry and Natural Resources, Hawassa University, was the local partner institution in organizing the meetings in Addis Ababa; and AFF is very grateful for this support. AFF thanks the Government of Ethiopia for the various forms of support extended to it, and including an invitation to join the Ministry of Environment and Forests in activities to commemorate the International Day of Forests.

The business of the Governing Council started by receiving four new members as follows: Prof Gerald Monela, Vice Chancellor of Sokoine University of Agriculture (SUA), Tanzania, is the new representative for Eastern Africa, while

Mr Ibro Adamou, Director of Forestry, Niger, will represent the West African region.

Dr. Ms Marie Louise AVANA TIENTCHEU, Coordinator of the Regional Centre for Specialized Training in Agriculture based in Yaoundé, Cameroun will represent Central Africa while Dr Aissetou Yaye, ANAFE's Executive Secretary, will be the second representative from civil society organizations.

Under Article 7 of the AFF Constitution, voting members of the Governing Council and the Executive Committee shall, in principle, hold tenure for a maximum of five consecutive years that can be extended by the Governing Council when necessary. The 21 voting members are the fifteen (15) representatives from the African continent, equally and equitably drawn from the five geographical sub-regions, two members from civil society organizations, two from the private sector, and two from outside the African continent. At the end of the first five years, a number of members of the Governing Council and the Executive Committee, not exceeding one-third, shall retire from office. This being the sixth year of AFF, the GC approved replacement of four GC members.

The Governing Council received and approved various reports and recommendations from its committees. These included approval of the 2014 Plan of Work and Budget for the SDC and Sida supported projects; new

members to AFF and other operational matters of AFF.

The SDC project focuses on three working areas: 1) Policy and advocacy, 2) Capacity building and skills development and 3) Knowledge management; while the Sida supported project focuses on six components as described earlier.

The meeting of the Governing Council coincided with the International Day of Forests that is celebrated on March 21st every year. On this day, all members of the Governing Council joined their colleagues from Ethiopia to celebrate the event at Menagesha Suba Forest located some 55 km west of Addis Ababa. The event was well attended by government and non-government institutions working on forest related issues.

AFF and the East African Parliamentary Committee discuss draft forestry bill

A consultative meeting was held on February 26, 2014, in Nairobi, Kenya between the East African Parliamentary Committee on Agriculture, Tourism and Natural Resources (ATNR) and the African Forest Forum (AFF) to discuss key elements in a draft forestry bill developed by the Committee. AFF was represented by the Executive Secretary, Prof. Godwin Kowero and Senior Programme Officer, Dr. Yonas Yemshaw. The Committee was represented by Hon. Ndahayo Isabelle (Burundi), Hon. Mike Sebalu (Uganda), Hon. Nkanai Ole Nkanai (Kenya), Hon. Murunya (Tanzania) and Hon. Bazivamo Christophe (Rwanda). Prior to the meeting AFF had already provided input into the draft forestry bill.

In this meeting, AFF pledged to continue providing technical input as needed by the Committee, in addition to exploring other avenues of mutual interest with regard to forestry and tree resources. The Committee informed of a meeting to be held in Bujumbura, Burundi on March 10-13 to further develop the draft bill, after which it will undergo the process of public hearing in the five partner states before being tabled in various organs of the East African Community.



The 10th AFF Governing Council Meeting
For more information visit www.afforum.org

Convergence Plan for the Sustainable Management and Utilization of the Forest Ecosystems in West Africa

The Economic Commission of West African States (ECOWAS) has begun the process of implementing the Convergence Plan for the Sustainable Management and Utilization of the Forest Ecosystems in West Africa. The plan was adopted during a Meeting of Ministers responsible for Forestry and Environment held on 9 -12 September, 2013 in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, attended by the AFF Executive Secretary, Prof. Godwin Kowero.

As a follow-up to this meeting, ECOWAS member states convened a three-day meeting in Lomé, Togo Republic, on 4-6 March 2014 to develop the architecture for implementing the plan. The African Forest Forum (AFF) was represented at this meeting by its Senior Program Officer, Prof. Mahamane Larwanou. The meeting was attended by the following ECOWAS Member States ; Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, The Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Senegal and Togo, and by sub-regional and international organizations, namely the AfDB, EBID, CILSS, UEMOA, ECOWAS, the IUCN, FAO, USAID, ENDA, the African Forest Forum and the Nigerian Conservation Foundation, ENDA, and resource persons. The objectives of the meeting were:

- i. recall the **Priority Intervention Areas of the Logical Framework** and funding mechanisms for the implementation of the Convergence Plan for Sustainable Management of Forest Ecosystems in West Africa;
 - ii. present the **draft outlines of transboundary and shared initiatives of member countries as part of the implementation of the FCP in West Africa in the short and medium term (2015-2019)**;
 - iii. explore **opportunities for the development of partnerships and cooperation frameworks** for a collaborative implementation based on shared responsibilities and roles among the different stakeholders according to Priority Intervention Areas (PIA) and/or intermediate results of the FCP WA Logical Framework.
 - iv. make recommendations for the operational implementation of the Forest Convergence Plan in West Africa.
- The meeting enabled stakeholders (Member States, IGOs, International Organizations and CSOs) to forge a

common understanding on FCP with regard to:

- the need to establish an appropriate financing mechanism;
- the effective involvement of countries in financing the implementation of the FCP;
- the capacity building of CSOs;
- the design of a roadmap to ensure monitoring of the process with the temporary identification of team leaders of thematic groups based on principles and criteria proposed by the meeting, as well as the formulation of terms of reference (ToR) of each thematic group within a reasonable period of time, organization of the first meeting of each thematic group for the validation of the ToR, choice of team leaders and the operational launching of the implementation of the FCP.

To move the process forward, ECOWAS was mandated by member states to:

- identify thematic team leaders based on principles and criteria proposed at the meeting;
- outline the ToR for each thematic group;
- support member states in paying interest on facilities;
- organize the first meeting of each thematic group for the validation of the ToRs of thematic groups, selection of team leaders and the actual launching of the implementation of the FCP;
- monitor the conditionalities for financing forestry projects by different funding organizations, inform member states about them and interpret to them as often as the case may be;
- develop a strategy for resource mobilization for the FCP;
- establish a group of partners for the environmental sector;
- develop an effective communication strategy.

Other recommendations emanating from the meeting were:

- civil society groups should be involved in development of proposals for the implementation of the convergence plan;
- member states should demonstrate more commitment to the process;
- the private sector should be brought on board in this process;
- improve communication and cooperation between regional bodies.

The African Bioenergy and Biofuels Business initiative

The economic and environmental potential of bioenergy and biofuels in Africa is attracting increasing interest from potential investors. In this regard,

the African Bioenergy and Biofuels Business Assessment (ABBBA) project is exploring possibilities of unleashing the economic potential of bioenergy and biofuels in East Africa. ABBBA is a three-year project implemented by the Co-operation Arena for Sustainable Development in Africa – Kenya (CASDA) and Global Challenge based in Stockholm, Sweden. The project seeks to foster investments in forestry and African biomass and bioenergy sector that meet high sustainability standards.

Experts drawn from Government departments, Non-Governmental Organizations and the private sector converged in Nairobi, Kenya, on 11 February 2014, to explore investment opportunities in bioenergy and biofuels with special attention to Kenya. At the meeting were 15 experts from Government institutions represented by Kenya Forest Service (KFS) and National Environmental Management Authority (NEMA); NGOs represented by Green Africa Foundation; and the private sector represented by Western Biofuels and Sugar Company Ltd.

Specifically, the workshop set-out to gauge ABBBA progress and also gather more information on the latest opportunities and constraints for bioenergy and biofuels expansion in Kenya. During the meeting, presentations were made on various aspects of bioenergy and biofuels followed by a brief panel discussion on emerging issues. Key presentations during the meeting included:

- progress update on ABBBA - Global Challenge provided,
- regional policies on biofuels and bioenergy - Kenya Forest Service,
- main needs and constraints for bioenergy and biofuels expansion in Kenya - Global Challenge,
- main opportunities within the bioenergy sector - Green Africa Foundation.

AFF was represented at the workshop by the Senior Programme Officer, Yonas Yemshaw who provided input into the discussions based on AFF's on-going study entitled, 'Biofuel production and utilization in East Africa'. Participants expressed interest in getting a copy of the study upon completion. The meeting also created an opportunity for CASDA and AFF to explore potential for continued collaboration.

The Swedish International Development Corporation Agency (Sida) supports a five year programme

The African Forest Forum (AFF) has received a grant from Sida for a five year project on “Strengthening sustainable forest management in Africa” The overall objective of the project is “to generate and share knowledge and information through partnerships in ways that provide inputs into policy options and capacity building for improved forest management that better address poverty eradication and environmental protection in Africa”.



In order to operationalize this objective the project will:

- facilitate the emergence of a strong partnership platform through which stakeholders identify challenges related to sustainable management of forest and tree resources and co-create solutions;
- catalyze efforts to enhance sustainable management practices with the potential to improve resilience of forests and trees against adverse effects of climate change;
- facilitate formulation and harmonization of evidence-based policies, regulations and governance mechanisms in a bid to strengthen public and private institutions for effective management of SFM and transparent trade;
- strengthen the capacity of institutions and individuals involved in forestry related initiatives in order to achieve forest compatible development;
- facilitate collation, synthesis and provision of access to, and exchange and management of critical information and knowledge demanded by stakeholders in African forestry;
- strengthen African participation in relevant regional and international

debates and negotiations. This is intended to enhance informed adoption and implementation of international and regional forest and related agreements among African countries.

To realize its objectives the project is structured into six components all of which are inter-related. They are: 1) Partnership platform for catalyzing institutional change; 2) Knowledge management and brokerage for enhanced management of forest resources in Africa; 3) Forest and tree resources management for enhanced human livelihoods; 4) Forestry policy, regulation, governance and trade in forest and tree products; 5) Strengthening Africa’s capacity for sustainable management and use of forest and tree resources; and 6) Supporting Africa’s engagement in global and regional forestry processes and implementation of agreements.



Menagesha Suba Forest

The African Model Forest Network Holds its 12th Board Meeting

The African Model Forest Network held its twelfth board meeting on February 11-13, 2014 in Cameroun where AFF was represented by its Senior Programme Officer, Prof. Mahamane Larwanou.

Under the theme “Review and prospects of the RAFM (2010-2014, 2014-2024)”, the meeting focused on the following five key agenda items:

- retrospective assessment of the IFMA programme,
- strategic plan up to 2024 and short-term prospects,
- short term management of the RAFM (2014-2015) and urgent actions to consider
- Board matters,
- countries’ presentations,
- way Forward.

The next African Model Forests Conference will take place in 2015 in Dakar, Senegal. In this respect, the board tasked the Secretariat to work

hard for the organization of this important event.

Ad hoc Expert Group (AHEG) on International Arrangement on Forests

An Ad hoc Expert Group (AHEG) on International Arrangement on Forests (IAF) held a meeting in Nairobi on February 24-28, 2014 as part of inter-sessional activities of UNFF. Outputs from the meeting will form the framework for evaluating the performance and effectiveness of IAF at the eleventh session of the UNFF (UNFF 11) in May 2015.



During the meeting, several presentations were made to guide the discussions. AFF Executive Secretary, Prof. Godwin Kowero, gave a key note speech titled: “The future of international arrangement on forests and potential links to sustainable development goals.” The presentation covered a wide range of issues including justification for IAFs existence, prominence of forestry issues on the global scene, restructuring IAFs to be more responsive and accountable, as well as forestry and sustainable development goals.

The AHEG is tasked to review the performance and effectiveness of the IAF within the context of Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) resolutions 2000/35 and 2006/49, as well as the attainment of the multi-year programme of work. To this end, AHEG will review the inputs provided by various stakeholders, as well as the outcome of the work of the independent assessment of the IAF, and based on this review put forth a set of recommendations providing a strategic direction on the function and institutional arrangements of the IAF for the period beyond 2015 to UNFF11.

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