



# AFF Newsletter

SPECIAL EDITION: THE XIV WORLD FORESTRY CONGRESS, DURBAN, SOUTH AFRICA

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## THE XIV WORLD FORESTRY CONGRESS FORESTS AND PEOPLE: INVESTING IN A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

Once every six years, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) holds the World Forestry Congress, a landmark forum that brings together the world's foresters and forest supporters to deliberate, share and exchange their knowledge, views and latest findings in the sector, so as to project a new vision for the future.

The XIV World Forestry Congress was held in Durban, South Africa, from 7 to 11 September 2015 with the theme, "Forests and People: Investing in a Sustainable Future". One of the most pressing issues discussed by the delegates was - you guessed it – investing in forestry, results in an investment in people and consequently an investment towards sustainable development.

Over 4,000 participants from 142 countries, representing governments and public agencies, international organizations, the private sector, academic and research institutions, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and community and indigenous organizations attended the five day plenary and thematic dialogue sessions.

In his opening remarks, H.E. Cyril Ramaphosa, Deputy President of South Africa said, "we are confident this congress will help map the future of the forestry sector as a critical pillar of the sustainable development of our planet." He further lauded the efforts of

AFF towards preparation of the Global Forum saying, "I am pleased to note that the African Forest Forum had the foresight and dedication to ensure that Africa was able to meet and prepare for this Congress over the last three days".

H.R.H Prince Laurent of Belgium, FAO Special Ambassador for Forests and the Environment, emphasized the need for awareness raising among the youth on the challenges and opportunities facing the forestry sector while calling for investments in research and forest education with particular attention to gender equity.

H.E. Dr. Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma, Chairperson of the African Union Commission, encouraged the conference delegates to come up with recommendations that would feed into the anticipated global agreements on climate change at the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP 21) to be concluded at the end of the year.

FAO Director-General José Graziano da Silva used the platform to officially launch FAO's latest Global Forest Resources Assessment (FRA) 2015, a resource that reveals how the world's forests have changed over the last 25 years and that provides the latest information on the state of sustainable forest management.



View of the dais during the XIV WFC opening plenary. Photo by IISD/ENB 2015 <http://www.iisd.ca/forestry/world-forestry-congress/wfc-14/images/7sep/3K1A6947.jpg>

United Nations Secretary General Ban Ki-moon, via webcast video, emphasized the role of SFM as vital for several sustainable development goals, while calling on forest managers to raise the potential for SFM to complement the Post-2015 Development Agenda.

For the first time on the African continent, delegates to the Congress comprehensively and with passion tackled key topical issues on: the role of forests in socio-economic development and food security; building resilience with forests; integrating forests and other land uses; encouraging product innovation and sustainable trade; monitoring forests for better decision making;

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## MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

It is with great pleasure that the African Forest Forum brings you this special edition of our October 2015 newsletter. This newsletter has a strong focus on the XIV World Forestry Congress, held for the first time on the African continent, from 7-11 September 2015 in Durban, South Africa. It also gives some highlights from a Pre-XIV World Forestry Congress workshop on the theme *"Forests, people and environment: Some perspectives from Africa"* that was organized by AFF, in collaboration with

African Union Commission, the Network for Natural Gums and Resins in Africa, the Centre for Sustainable Development- University of Ibadan and the Forest Research Network of Sub-Saharan Africa.

The Congress, whose theme was *"Forests and People: Investing in a Sustainable Future"*, was attended by nearly 4000 delegates from 142 countries, offered a good platform to discuss better ways for managing and protecting the world's forests for the sake of humanity and the environment we all live in. With an ambitious agenda to among other things, explore the niche of forests and forestry in the 2030 Agenda on sustainable development, delegates at the Congress offered a vision for forests and forestry as a way of contributing to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) for a sustainable future to 2050 and beyond.

The Congress outcome, the 'Durban Declaration', offers a set of four key recommendations that see forests playing a decisive role in food and livelihood security as well as the fight against climate change. It calls for ways for improving policies and practices that promote integrated approaches to land use and addressing the causes of deforestation. The declaration also highlights the need for further investment in forest education, communication, research and the creation of jobs - especially for the youth. New partnerships among the forest, agriculture, finance, energy, water and other sectors, as well as strong engagement with indigenous peoples and local communities are equally stressed in the declaration.

As we look ahead to the twenty-first session of the Conference of the Parties (COP) in Paris, we are encouraged by the outcome of the Congress as well as the maturity of the dialogue. It is clear from the collective ideas and experience of the global forestry community that the next six years will hold promising pathways towards unlocking the true potential of forests in sustainable development. Our challenge is to now ensure that these strategies are turned into concrete actions.

This newsletter highlights some of the key messages and insights from participants to the Pre-XIV World Forestry Congress workshop, organized by AFF and partners, in support of the Durban Declaration and of whom were honored to share, network and participate in this unique experience. We wish to thank the Government and people of South Africa for hosting and various forms of support to the pre-XIV WFC workshop in Durban. In the same vein, we wish to thank the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) and the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida). We also gratefully acknowledge the generous assistance accorded unto us by the Conference Secretariat in making our pre-event a success.

Godwin Kowero  
Executive Secretary, African Forest Forum

## XIV World Forestry Congress

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and improving governance by building capacity.

The fourteenth World Forestry Congress (XIV WFC) concluded with a declaration that sets out a vision for 2050 where forests play a decisive role of improving food and livelihood security as well as climate change mitigation and adaptation. Dubbed the 'Durban Declaration,' its plan of action outlines a series of steps that are crucial towards achieving the 2050 vision. These steps include; further investment in forest education, communication, research and the creation of jobs, especially for young people. The declaration stresses the need for new partnerships among the forest, agriculture, finance, energy, water and other sectors, in addition to strong engagement with indigenous peoples and local communities<sup>1</sup>.

The Congress also issued messages to the UN Sustainable Development Summit and the Conference of the Parties (COP) to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

### THE DURBAN DECLARATION<sup>2</sup> 2050 vision for forests and forestry

The XIV World Forestry Congress offers the following vision for forests and forestry as a way of contributing to achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and a sustainable future to 2050 and beyond:

- Forests are more than trees and are fundamental for food security and improved livelihoods. The forests of the future will increase the resilience of communities by providing food, wood energy, shelter, fodder and fibre; generating income and employment to allow communities and societies to prosper; harbouring biodiversity; and supporting sustainable agriculture and human wellbeing by stabilizing soils and climate and regulating water flows.
- Integrated approaches to land use provide a way forward for improving policies and practices to address the drivers of deforestation; address conflicts over land use; capitalize on the full range of economic, social and environmental benefits from integrating forests with agriculture; and maintain multiple forest services in the landscape context.
- Forests are an essential solution to climate change adaptation and mitigation. Sustainably managed forests will increase the resilience of ecosystems and societies and optimize the role of forests and trees in absorbing and storing carbon while also providing other environmental services.

<sup>1</sup> For more information, see <http://www.iisd.ca/forestry/world-forestry-congress/wfc-14/html/enbplus10num19e.html>

<sup>2</sup> For more information on the Durban Declaration, see [http://www.fao.org/fileadmin/user\\_upload/wfc2015/Documents/Durban\\_Declaration\\_draft.pdf](http://www.fao.org/fileadmin/user_upload/wfc2015/Documents/Durban_Declaration_draft.pdf)

## PRE-XIV WORLD FORESTRY CONGRESS WORKSHOP DEVELOPS KEY MESSAGES FOR GLOBAL FORUM



Africa Day special event held on 8 September 2015 in Durban, South Africa: Photo by IISD/ENB 2015 <http://bit.ly/1I2P03I>

In Africa, nearly all issues in the forestry debate of today revolve, directly or indirectly, around deforestation and forest degradation. Although current information as reported by FAO indicates a decrease in net forest loss in Africa, deforestation still remains a key challenge in many countries. The pre-XIV World Forestry Congress workshop was a unique opportunity for stakeholders in African forestry to better understand the broader context in which deforestation, forest and land degradation has been taking place and especially why it is so rapid in Africa as compared to other continents.

Participants were able to dive into the society – forestry nexus with a view of coming up with ways through which forestry can be better profiled and managed in ways that could improve livelihoods, national incomes and the environment. These voices were a reminder that the forestry landscape has been very dynamic, with new actors emerging to fulfil unique roles in forest management as well as new demands on the sector.

Discussions about the evidence of change also included the latest information on the status of forestry in the continent. Special focus was given to important trends and challenges affecting development of the African forestry sector. Parallel sessions brought to light ways for addressing deforestation and forest degradation; innovative ideas for enhancing Africa's adaptive capacity to climate change; the crucial

role of good forest governance in promoting environmental sustainability, and empowerment of indigenous host communities to cater for their socio-economic needs through their active participation in development initiatives.

By looking at the thematic presentations spread over the workshop's 9 sessions and 5 plenaries, it can be safely concluded that there is not a single recipe to enhance progress towards forest-related sustainable development on the continent. Rather, a range of actions, programs, policies, institutions and innovative projects will need to be pursued by actors in government, civil society organisations, local communities, youth and the private sector. In light of this, key messages from the two day workshop were identified, discussed and presented by AFF's Executive Secretary, Prof. Godwin Kowero during Africa

Day – a special event of the XIV WFC held on 8 September 2015 in Durban.

Concluding from the discussions: Africa is in need of a new narrative that captures the urgency of the environmental challenges facing its forests as opportunities for partnerships, income generation, innovative governance are inspiring stakeholders to take action while at the same time bridging the information gap on the society – forest relationship is critical for a truly integrated, systemic approach to forest related development. The messages also suggest that, these challenges can be overcome if managed under a holistic vision, where the main principles focus on gender mainstreaming, good forest governance, sustaining the forest resource base, wise and sustainable use of forest products and ecosystem services, and public private-participation in forest management. The following summary for decision makers sets out priority actions that can be taken by policy makers and forestry stakeholders locally, regionally and globally in order to deliver an economically beneficial African forestry sector.



1 Africa's current forest cover of 624 million hectares (23% of land area) represents natural capital that supports rural livelihoods as well as national economies with great potential to participate in global economy.

2 Africa's forests are under extreme pressure due to agricultural expansion, and over exploitation, attributed to rapid population growth, while urbanization coupled with economic growth has led to higher demand for forest goods.

3 Addressing deforestation and forest and land degradation are primary areas of focus by African forest stakeholders towards restoration of the integrity and functionalities as well as resilience of forests for enhanced contribution to national economic development, poverty alleviation and environmental sustainability.

4 The African business environment has changed considerably in the recent times. New actors have emerged to fulfil unique roles in forest management.

5 Africa presents considerable economic opportunities that would require synergies from the private and public sectors, civil societies, academia and research communities to realize the sustainable development goals. Specifically, innovation and technology development are critical for catalyzing the forest sector to participate more meaningfully in economic development and to also reduce Africa's vulnerability to climate change and other shocks.

**7** In order to build and strengthen professionalism and work ethic in the sector the strengthening and establishment of professional forestry associations is absolutely necessary. This could be through clear policy incentives that can support their growth and development to enable these associations to effectively occupy their unique niche in the sector.

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## MORE THAN 130 PARTICIPANTS CONVENE IN DURBAN TO DEBATE LINK BETWEEN AFRICAN FORESTS, PEOPLE AND ENVIRONMENT

**9** Well-functioning forest law enforcement and governance institutions are critical for the sustainable management of African forests, and to also address illegal activities in the sector, including illegal logging and trade in timber, a major issue that is depriving legal producers of incomes and governments of tax revenues.

**10** The important role of traditional institutions and traditional knowledge in forest governance is receiving increasing attention.

Integrating traditional forest management knowledge and practices with scientific approaches is recommended, including the participation of local communities in forest management and utilization. Targeting the socioeconomic needs of indigenous communities, including mainstreaming of gender roles in forestry, holds significant prospect for sustainability and viability of forest based climate change intervention initiatives.

**11** The important role of regional economic communities in addressing forestry related trans-boundary issues at political and technical levels is also receiving considerable attention, especially so within the framework of regional and sub-regional economic integration.

Also the need for aligning Africa's programmes with international processes is gaining currency. Various projects, programmes and initiatives have been developed on natural resources, and forest resources in particular, to position the various sub-regions in the development of Africa's forestry agenda. Many of these initiatives are few and at their infancy, the continent still needs to do much more at the sub-regional and regional levels, and this requires considerable resources.



*Plenary session of the Pre-XIV WFC workshop held at the Inkosi Albert Luthuli International Convention Centre in Durban. Photo © AFF 2015.*

In the lead up to the XIV World Forestry Congress, more than 130 participants converged in Durban, South Africa, on September 04-05, 2015, for the pre-XIV World Forestry Congress workshop to examine important trends in African forestry that could influence the roles of forests and trees in national economic development, livelihoods and environmental stability among other forest values.

The two-day workshop was organized by the African Forest Forum in collaboration with the African Union Commission, the Network for Natural Gums and Resins in Africa, the Centre for Sustainable Development-University of Ibadan, and the Forest Research Network of Sub-Saharan Africa, with financial support from the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation and the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency. It was hosted and also partly supported by the Government of South Africa.

The opening ceremony began with a welcome address by Mr. Macarthy Oyebo, Chairman of the AFF Governing Council. Mr. Oyebo expressed his gratitude to the Government and people of South Africa for hosting the pre-XIV WFC workshop. He said that it was in the mandate of AFF to mobilize stakeholders from the African forestry community for broad based participation at the Congress. He informed the delegates that a total of 130 participants

had been sponsored to attend the XIV World Forestry Congress, and had been chosen on merit and geographical location based on the assessment of their responses to the concept note and call for papers on the workshop theme.

In her keynote address, Ms. Edith Vries, Director General of the Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries in South Africa appreciated the leadership of Prof. Kowero and the work of the African Forest Forum in ensuring that Africa had one voice in important regional and global issues. She went on to state, "We further applaud the role of the Forum (AFF) in facilitating attendance and the contribution of African delegates at international and regional negotiations related to forestry. We see this role growing as global events continue to shape the development agendas in Africa through globalization and supra-national sustainable development initiatives."

Ms. Vries noted that forestry had become one of the important sectors in Africa that needed attention for growth and more protection, particularly in the context of the negative impacts of climate change. In view of this, she stressed the importance of forests in mitigating the harmful effects of climate change of which needed to be relayed far and wide. She called for concerted global action towards protecting and developing forest resources or risk failing present and future generations.

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In his presentation titled, *"Investing in African forestry: a few important issues and trends,"* Prof. Kowero informed participants that the African business environment had changed considerably in recent times. Specifically, the rate of forest loss had remained relatively unchanged while Africa was faced with the dual challenge of a growing unemployed youth population and the need for improving the standards of living for its people. In addition, the private sector, local communities and civil society were seen to have been taking up roles in forestry management more and more, while the governments' facilitating role had become increasingly crucial to ensure that policy formulation would effectively respond to present, new and emerging demands on forestry.

With respect to this changing business environment, Prof. Kowero highlighted the need for innovations in approaches to address the forest challenges in light of the new players including the private sector, local communities and the civil society.

Participants went on to focus on various issues related to workshop's central theme, *"Forests, people and environment: some perspectives from Africa"*, conceived as a platform where representatives of the African forestry community could discuss, learn, share, agree and disagree on key issues related to the interaction between people, forest and tree resources, and the environment on the continent. Further, build meaningful African participation and contribution to the deliberations of XIV World Forestry Congress.

Forty eight presentations were made in the four thematic sessions during the two-day workshop.

Topics included rehabilitation of degraded lands using trees; managing forests in the context of climate change; forest governance, marketing and trade in forest products; and socio-economic issues in forestry. The event brought together a range of stakeholders including representatives of national governments, civil society, academia; small holder producers, private sector, women and youth groups.

## VOICES FROM THE CONTINENT

**“We need to link forestry with rural economies to ensure that in the process of growing trees, other beneficial uses of forests are promoted such as agro-forestry, in order to meet local needs”.**

*Ms. Edith Vries, Director General of the Department of  
Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, South Africa*

**“Mangroves are forests that grow in the sea. They provide an important habitat for a wide variety of fish and when combined with salt marshes and seagrasses they are known as blue carbon ecosystems - important for mitigating the effects of climate change”**

*Dr. James Kairo, Mangrove Scientist, Kenya Marine and Fisheries Research Institute, Kenya*

**“Better forestry management is critical to water supply in an era of increasing population and climate change pressures”**

*Ceaser Kimbugwe, Water Aid, Uganda*

**“When local communities lose control of forests, degradation follows”**

*Dominique Walubengo, Director, Forest Action Network Kenya*

**Forests are essential parts of rural livelihood. Income from private small scale forests is able to boost rural economy.**

Adekunle, V.A./ Federal University of Technology, Akure, Nigeria



## SIGHTS AND SOUNDS OF DURBAN



### Pre-XIV WFC workshop and the 14th World Forestry Congress in pictures



A view of the Inkosi Albert Luthuli International Convention Centre (ICC), venue of WFC XIV. Photo credits: Larwanou Mahamane/AFF 2015



Ms. Edith Vries, Director General of the Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries in South Africa delivering the keynote address at the opening of the Pre-XIV WFC workshop in Durban. Photo © AFF/2015



AFF participants of the pre-XIV WFC workshop held from 4-5 September 2015 at the ICC, Durban. Photo credits: Larwanou Mahamane/AFF 2015



AFF Participants at the Pre-XIV WFC workshop in Durban Photo © AFF/2015





*Mr. Macarthy Oyebo, Chairman of the AFF Governing Council, delivering his welcome address at the opening of the Pre-XIV WFC workshop in Durban. Photo © AFF/2015*



(From left) Prof. Godwin Kowero, Executive Secretary, African Forest Forum (AFF); Colin Dyer, Director, Institute for Commercial Forestry Research (ICFR); and Bráulio Ferreira de Souza Dias, Executive Secretary, Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) Photo by IISD/ENB 2015 <http://bit.ly/1WqQyJv>



*Prof. Godwin Kowero, Executive Secretary, AFF and XIV WFC Secretary General, Mr. Trevor Abrahams addressing AFF participants at the Pre-XIV WFC in Durban. Photo © AFF/2015*



*Mr. Bheki Cele, Deputy Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, South Africa at the Opening Ceremony of the XIV WFC. Photo by IISD/ENB 2015 <http://bit.ly/1l2W40j>*



*Delegates during plenary, XIV WFC. Photo by IISD/ENB 2015 <http://www.iisd.ca/forestry/world-forestry-congress/wfc-14/images/8sep/3K1A7629.jpg>*



*AFF secretariat at the ICC in Durban, South Africa. Photo © AFF/2015*





AFF participants at the venue of the 14th World Forestry Congress (WFC XIV) in Durban South Africa. Photo © AFF/2015

## Video interviews with AFF participants at the XIV WFC



Watch Prof. Godwin Kowero explain his view on the economic challenge climate change presents to the African continent <http://www.afforum.org/resources/video>



Watch Dr James Kairo of Kenya Marine and Fisheries Research Institute, shed light on the benefits of mangroves in Africa <http://www.afforum.org/resources/video>



Watch Ceaser Kimbugwe of Water Aid Uganda on the link between forestry management and water supply in an era of increasing population and climate change pressures <http://www.afforum.org/resources/video>



Watch Dominique Walubengo of the Forest Action Network on the link between local communities control over forests and degradation <http://www.afforum.org/resources/video>

## AFF IN THE MEDIA



Sydney Phiri, Radio presenter and host of the Talk Show – Our Heritage on Channel Africa.

Several media interviews were coordinated by the AFF secretariat while in Durban, to help raise the profile of forestry, highlight threats to forest resources and the environment, and champion better management of African forests and trees. These interviews featured on Channel Africa – the International radio service of the SABC – that hosts various experts on interesting and important issues affecting Africa and the globe. As a major player in the field of continental and international broadcasting, AFF panelists used this platform to voice key messages on important thematic areas including; forests and people, forests and indigenous knowledge systems as well as forests – our heritage.

The following are links to the podcasts:

- *African Dialogue, 9 Sep 14th World Forestry Congress*. Interviewees include: Trevor Abrahams, Secretary General of the 14th World Forestry Congress; Prof. Godwin Kowero, Executive Secretary of the African Forestry Forum and Dr. Aissetou Yaye, Executive Secretary of The African Network for Agriculture, Agroforestry and Natural Resources Education (ANAFE). <http://iono.fm/e/207269>
- *Our Heritage, 17 Sep Forest and people (part 1)*. The podcast features Prof. Godwin Kowero, Executive Secretary of the African Forest Forum <http://iono.fm/e/209597>
- *Our Heritage, 9 Oct Forests Our Heritage*. The podcast features Dominic Walubengo (Kenya) and Dennis Kayambazinthu (Malawi) <http://iono.fm/e/216506>
- *United Nations Radio: News feature with Prof. Godwin Kowero, Executive Secretary of the African Forestry Forum* <http://www.unmultimedia.org/radio/kiswahili/2015/09/mzigo-wa-kiuchumi-kwa-ajili-ya-tabianchi-ni-mzito-kwa-bara-la-afrikaprof-kowero/#.ViS-Dn4rK0I>

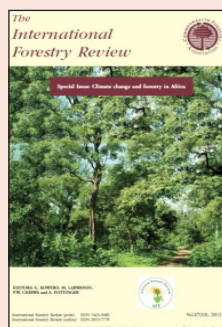
## NEW PUBLICATIONS AND TOOLS



*Forests and Trees: Their roles and opportunities in Africa's economic development, food security and environmental health*

This publication by Bjorn Lundgren aims to highlight and promote the great potential roles of forests and trees in Africa's economic development, food security and environmental health, and to indicate what requirements need to be addressed in order to realize these potentials.

Available at: [http://www.afforum.org/sites/default/files/English/English\\_13.pdf](http://www.afforum.org/sites/default/files/English/English_13.pdf)



*International Forestry Review Vol. 17 (S3), 2015*

This Special Issue of the International Forestry Review presents results from AFF led pan-African studies on a broad range of issues including: Traditional management practices for the restoration of degraded forest, woodland and agricultural landscapes; Trade in wood and non-wood forest products; Biophysical and socio-economical vulnerability of communities in different forest ecosystems; Climate change mitigation actions and adaptation programmes in Africa; Climate change in policies and plans related to forests at regional and sub-regional levels; and Capacities of public forest administrations in climate change activities.

Available at <http://www.afforum.org/publications/journal-articles>



## UPCOMING EVENTS

Dates / Location	Event
12-23 October 2015 Ankara, Turkey	12th session of the Conference of the Parties (COP 12) to the UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD)
16–21 November 2015 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia	51st Session of the International Tropical Timber Council and Associated Sessions of the Committees
23-24 November 2015 Nairobi, Kenya	Meeting of the AFF Project Steering and Advisory Committee for both Sida and SDC projects
24 November 2015, Nairobi, Kenya	Meeting of the Finance Committee of AFF
25-27 November 2015 Nairobi, Kenya	Meeting of the Executive Committee of AFF
December 2015 Mombasa, Kenya	Regional Training Course on Forest Certification for Eastern and Southern Africa
1 to 4 December 2015 Mombasa, Kenya	Training workshop for African forestry experts on forest related international agreements
30 November -11 December, 2015, Paris, France	COP 21 of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change UNFCCC)

### A new adventure for Yonas Yemshaw



AFF sadly announces the departure of Dr. Yonas Yemshaw, Senior Programme Officer, from the Secretariat. Yonas will be embarking on a new adventure outside the forestry sector after nearly seven dedicated years with AFF.

His infectious dedication and amazing leadership will be sorely missed but the invaluable contributions and legacy that he has left with the Knowledge Management and Communications Unit will not be easily be forgotten. We wish Yonas all of the best and look forward to collaborating with him again in the near future!

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