



African Forest Forum

A platform for stakeholders in African forestry

Call for consultancy services

on strengthening capacity among stakeholders for production and trade in gums
and resins in Africa

February 2019

1. INTRODUCTION

The African Forest Forum (AFF) is a pan-African non-governmental organization with its headquarters in Nairobi, Kenya. The purpose of AFF is to provide a platform and create an enabling environment for independent and objective analysis, advocacy and advice on relevant policy and technical issues pertaining to achieving sustainable management, use and conservation of Africa's forest and tree resources as part of efforts to reduce poverty, promote gender equality, and economic and social development. Through all its programmes and activities, AFF seeks to promote the empowerment of all marginalized groups, particularly women, who have remained vulnerable to the impacts of climate change and whose representation, priorities and needs are seldom addressed in the forestry sector.

2. BACKGROUND TO THE CONSULTANCY TASK

Forests and trees provide goods and services that are key assets for reducing vulnerability to the effects of climate change. The forest contributions to climate change adaptation are critically important in African dryland ecosystems, that face many climate-related challenges, including recurrent drought, erratic and scanty rainfall patterns which negatively affect livelihood options of dependent communities. In fact, dryland communities are characterized as the poorest and most vulnerable of the continent, frequently exposed to conflicts over limited resources as well as household food insecurity. It is therefore prudent that alternative livelihoods options, for example, through diversification, should be promoted as a coping strategy to improve the resilience of these climate sensitive populations. Sustainable exploitation and trade of non-timber forest products are widely documented for their contribution to livelihoods of local communities.

Dry forests are endowed with a rich diversity of woody species, many of which are known to produce a variety of non-timber forest products such as commercial gums and resins. The exploitation and trade in gums and resins has strongly emerged as an alternative livelihood support and climate-resilient strategy for African dryland communities. Different types of *Acacia*, *Boswellia*, *Commiphora*, *Senegalia* and *Vachelia* and other woody species exuding gums and resins (gum Arabic, frankincense, myrrh and hagar) are raised in many countries where they are used for various domestic purposes. They are traded locally and are also part of cross-border trade that provides many socioeconomic, cultural, and medicinal values, in addition to important environmental functions of the trees. However, in many African countries, the production of gums and resins has been observed to be far below existing potential. Further, producers of gums and resins usually have little economic incentive to manage dry forests responsibly due to inconsistent low prices they receive as compared to other actors in the value chain. Preliminary studies on gums and resins value chain analysis in selected countries highlight the active role of women and youth as the main producing actors. Underdeveloped markets and value chains and lack of financial capital and technical skills are key constraints in the gums and resins sector.

Previous studies in some major producing countries such as Chad, Ethiopia, Kenya Somalia and Sudan highlight some issues of concern for the development of the gums and resins sector including: inadequate technical capacity and business skills among actors for efficiency gains in

gums and resins value chains; lack of financial support; absence of mechanisms to improve the capacity of actors to develop bankable projects; absence of or weak collaboration and networking with the private sector investors and/or microfinance institutions to provide start-up funds; and weak organisational capacity of collector groups to foster cooperation and coordination in the collection of gums and resins as well as in trade in the same. In addition, lessons learnt from previous African Forest Forum studies on forest products, including non-wood products, also emphasize the urgent need for the development of value-adding technologies, identification and employment of right marketing strategies, building the required capacities, instituting supporting legal procedures/frameworks, proper assessment of the resource base and market conditions.

If these issues are properly addressed, it is expected that individual producers, and by extension the producing countries, will obtain better prices from their products. Better prices will then raise the value of the dry forests from which these products are harvested, and possibly cultivate interest in their conservation and consequently strengthening their resilience to, for example, the adverse effects of climate change.

It is in this context that AFF intends to expand its work on various issues related to gums and resins, including value chain analysis in selected dry forest countries. The aim of such interventions is to promote entrepreneurship opportunities and technologically efficient means for value addition, improve conditions for building resilience to climate change for communities depending on these products through improving their livelihood support options, and improving national incomes and employment opportunities among actors and producing countries. This is also in line with the African Union Commission desire, as communicated to AFF, to look at ways women and marginalized groups in the gums and resins value chain can be empowered in order to improve their livelihoods.

3. RATIONALE AND PURPOSE OF THE WORK

The African Forest Forum in its 2019 annual work plan for the “African Forests, People and Climate Change” programme, is recruiting a reputable African institution in the area of gums and resins that, can jointly with AFF, recruit and supervise consultants to undertake studies that are expected to generate knowledge on the state of production and trade in gums and resins on the continent.

4. SPECIFIC TASKS TO BE SUPERVISED BY THE SELECTED LEAD INSTITUTION:

Under the supervision of the lead institution, the jointly recruited consultants will:

- Harmonize study methodologies to facilitate comparing findings among selected countries;
- Assess key actors and their role in production and trade of gums and resins;
- Identify and profile types of gums and resins exploited/traded by each of the different actors’ categories with focus on women and youth;
- Create and update databases of actors involved in gums and resins and subsequently link with AFF and NGARA databases;
- Carry out ground truthing to verify information on resource base, update existing maps and estimate the production potential of gums and resins;

- Undertake value chain analysis on gums and resins at country level, in addition to assessing their marketing and trade;
- Undertake training needs assessment on actors in gums and resins, and from the identified gaps, update existing training curriculum and manuals;
- Carry out a review of existing national policies and institutional frameworks relevant to gums and resins;

5. DELIVERABLES BY THE LEAD INSTITUTION

- The lead institution will be expected to deliver the following at the end of the consultancy period:
- A synthesis report of about 40 pages that includes key findings from selected countries reports;
- Final reports by individual consultants, each of about 40 pages, that include information on items (ii) to (viii) in Section 4 above;
- One draft journal article based on each consultant’s report, and one based on the synthesis report, all to be finalised jointly with relevant staff at the AFF Secretariat.

6. MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS AND SKILLS

- The interested institution should meet the following minimum qualifications and skills:
- Be a renown and officially registered organisation with proven work experience on gums and resins in Africa;
- Have a close and well documented working relationship with gums and resins producing actors, institutions and countries;
- Have a good record and experience on securing and managing projects related to value chain and economic analysis of forest-based products, with special focus on gums and resins,
- Demonstrate good networking and partnership capacity.

7. APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

The applicant shall submit the following:

- Cover letter stating how the above requirements are met;
- A brief proposal/concept note containing:
 - Any previous interactions with African Forest Forum;
 - The potential countries to be selected for the study and their selection criteria;
 - How the studies will be implemented and coordinated by the institution;
 - Synthetic presentation of the organisation

8. DURATION

The work, including field work and reporting by national consultants, is expected to be carried out in a period of two-person months, spread over a period of four calendar months.

9. DEADLINES

Applications must be received by the AFF Secretariat before 18 February 2019.

- The successful applicant will be informed by 25 February 2019.
- The selected institution together with AFF will recruit national consultants not later than 04 March.

10. HOW TO APPLY

All applications must be submitted by e-mail with the subject line: **“Consultancy No: 02-115 “Strengthening capacity among stakeholders for production and trade in gums and resins in Africa”** to Dr. Marie Louise Avana-Tientcheu and Dr. Vincent O. Oeba of the AFF Secretariat through the following e-mail addresses: m.avana@cgiar.org and v.oeba@cgiar.org and copied to exec.sec@afforum.org .