



**RESEARCH FELLOWSHIPS**

**ON**

**ASSESSMENT OF TRENDS OF IMPACTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE ON FOREST AND  
TREE-RESOURCES AND COPING MECHANISMS IN AFRICA**

01-2.1.1 Call for Proposals

November 2019

## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

The African Forest Forum (AFF) is a pan-African non-governmental organisation with its headquarters in Nairobi, Kenya. It is an association of individuals who share the quest for and commitment to the sustainable management, use and conservation of the forest and tree resources of Africa for the socio-economic wellbeing of its peoples and for the stability and improvement of its environment. 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 marginalised groups particularly women, whose representation, priorities and needs are seldom addressed in the forestry sector by facilitating specific activities that would enhance their equal participation and representation.

AFF has secured funding from the Swedish International Development Agency (Sida) to implement a project entitled "*Strengthening management and use of forest ecosystems for sustainable development in Africa*". The overall goal of the project is "to generate and share knowledge and information through partnerships in ways that provide inputs into policy and decision-making options and capacity building, for improved forest management that better address poverty eradication and environmental protection in Africa". One of the key project objectives is to improve knowledge and capacities of African stakeholders in responding to adverse effects of climate change through better management and use of forest ecosystems and trees outside forests.

## **2.0 BACKGROUND**

Climate change and climate variability has impacted African forestry sector in different ways. For example, the changes in hydrological cycles that are linked with various processes characterized by physical, chemical and biological interactions, have resulted in reduced rainfall availability to support plant growth, good functioning of forests and other livelihood sources on the land surface. The temperature rise has also resulted in increase of forest fires and pests and disease incidences affecting forest and tree resources that has recorded reduced supply of seeds, nuts, resins as well as products used in pharmaceutical and botanical medicine, including for the cosmetic industry in Africa. Overall, climate change and variability are projected to affect the relationship and biological balance between forest, tree resources and their environment. In this regard, a deeper understanding of the complex relationships between a changing climate and forests and tree-resources is vital to enable those in forestry sector to develop appropriate mitigation and adaptation responses, strategies and mechanisms to address the impacts (positive and negative) of climate change and variability.

## **3.0 RATIONALE**

The African Forest Forum is providing research fellowships for post graduate research that could address these issues, as well as strengthen the capacity and expertise in forestry among young professionals in Africa. More specifically, this call for research proposals focuses on the enhancing our understanding of the relationship between climate change and forests and trees, and between climate change and forest-based ecosystem services in Africa. The studies are expected to generate knowledge that will improve African stakeholders' understanding of the impacts of climate change and variability on forest and tree-resources, as well as the effects on provision forest-based ecosystem services. The study results will in turn support the development and/or strengthening of sound adaptation policies for improving resilience of the biophysical and social systems. The fellowships will provide grants to support postgraduate students to undertake in-depth studies in selected countries covering various forest types, including the rain forest, mangroves, woodland and savanna, and parklands of the Sahel.

#### **4.0 THE CALL**

Fellowships will be awarded to undertake in-depth studies using appropriate methodology to assess, in selected countries the relationship between climate change and forests and trees; and climate change and forest-based ecosystem services in Africa, through several activities, including to:

- i. Identify and document trends in climate change and their effects on different forest types and trees outside forests;
- ii. Identify and document trends in climate change and their effects on different forest-based and tree-based ecosystem services;
- iii. Analyse the relationship between forestry sector activities for climate change adaptation and mitigation and forest and tree-based ecosystem services;
- iv. Evaluate forest and tree management options to sustain their ecosystem services under changing climate;
- v. Identify and analyse options for improving the livelihoods of people depending on forest and tree resources under changing climate; and
- vi. Evaluate trade-offs between improvement of ecosystem services and enhancing the livelihood of forest dependent people.

Research fellowships will be provided to a total of 12 postgraduate students (9 PhD and 3 MSc) from African countries in 2019/20 who are enrolled in African institutions and willing to undertake relevant research related to climate change and forests as part of their doctoral and master's Program at an African university.

#### **5.0 ELIGIBILITY**

Applicants must meet general and the specific eligibility criteria outlined below.

##### **5.1 GENERAL ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA**

- a) Applicant must be a citizen of an African nation.
- b) Proposed fellowship project and activities must be clearly related to and are likely to advance forest and people adaptation to climate change in Africa within the thematic focus area selected.
- c) All application materials must be complete and received by the AFF Secretariat on or before the application deadline.
- d) All applicants must be supervised by a faculty member with expertise in the thematic focus of the fellowship.

##### **5.2 SPECIFIC ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA**

Prospective research fellows must:

- Have a master's for PhD studies or bachelor's degree for MSc studies, plus 2 or more years' professional experience related to forestry management, climate change or environmental policy and planning.
- Be enrolled in a university as a graduate student and must have completed course work in a relevant field at the time of application.

The application package:

- a) An institutional support form or letter that confirms the applicant's university/college formal endorsement of his or her ability to participate in the research fellowship with the name of a potential main research supervisor indicating his/her willingness to supervise and guide the student research from inception to completion.
- b) A research proposal description with clearly defined research questions/objectives, methodology on the research area and targeted tasks that can be completed within the

fellowship period and explaining how the supported activities will improve the overall scientific quality and the utility of the research. Evidence must be provided that the proposal has been accepted for that level of study by the university/college.

- c) A budget estimate showing the approximate cost related to each research activity.

## **6.0 GRANT TERMS**

Research fellows will be matched with an African host institution, where they will reside for at least part of their fellowship experience. Each PhD fellow will receive up to **USD 10,000** for research and **USD 2,000** for professional supervision; and each MSc fellow will receive up to **USD 7,500** for research and **USD 1500** for professional supervision.

## **7.0 APPLICATION ASSESSMENT AND FELLOWS' SELECTION**

All applicants who meet the general and specific eligibility criteria will subsequently be evaluated against the following criteria:

- a) Quality of the research proposal with well stated objectives and methodology.
- b) Technical merit of the proposed work.
- c) Qualifications and capabilities of the applicant to undertake the proposed research work.
- d) Appropriateness of the proposed budget.
- e) Appropriateness of proposed host institution and supervisor's expertise.

## **8.0 HOW TO APPLY**

### **8.1 Applications must be submitted as follows:**

- a) Complete the AFF Fellowship application form "ASSESSMENT OF TRENDS OF IMPACTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE ON FOREST AND TREE-RESOURCES AND COPING MECHANISMS IN AFRICA"
- b) Attach all the supporting documents and submit by email to: [d.mutta@cgiar.org](mailto:d.mutta@cgiar.org), [h.bouda@cgiar.org](mailto:h.bouda@cgiar.org), and [v.oeba@cgiar.org](mailto:v.oeba@cgiar.org) with a copy to [exec.sec@afforum.org](mailto:exec.sec@afforum.org)

### **8.2 DEADLINES**

- a) Applications must be received by the Secretariat before or by **06 December 2019**.
- b) Successful applicants will be informed by **13 December 2019**.
- c) Fellowship research activities should begin no later than **1 February 2020**

Should you have any questions, please contact the AFF Secretariat at the following address: [d.mutta@cgiar.org](mailto:d.mutta@cgiar.org), [h.bouda@cgiar.org](mailto:h.bouda@cgiar.org) and [v.oeba@cgiar.org](mailto:v.oeba@cgiar.org) with a copy to [exec.sec@afforum.org](mailto:exec.sec@afforum.org) of the African Forest Forum | [www.afforum.org](http://www.afforum.org), Box 30677-00100, Nairobi, Kenya.