



Terms of Reference

for

Online Discussion Moderators  
(AFF Communities of Practice)

April 2021

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The African Forest Forum (AFF) is a pan-African non-governmental organization 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 people 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 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

Achieving sustainable management of Africa's forest resources calls for an interdisciplinary approach and an understanding of a wide range of economic, scientific and policy issues. Experts and practitioners in different sectors every so often lack access to relevant information and knowledge-sharing platforms to exchange ideas, seek advice and focus research efforts. Across the continent, this limited access to information is amplified by intricate themes that require continuous learning. As identified in the *AFF Knowledge Management Strategy (2021-2025)*<sup>1</sup>, Communities of Practice (CoPs) can serve as an efficient and easily accessible way for information sharing and learning.

Communities of Practice are active networks whose members are interested in learning about the same topics (FAO,2016) and, as such, can draw on AFF's membership to advance knowledge sharing, innovation and the uptake of best practices to solve critical problems. Applied to sustainable forest management and climate change related challenges, functional communities of practice allow a geographically and professionally varied audience to tackle the complexity of issues by deepening their knowledge and sharing expertise.

With this rationale, AFF is establishing an initial community and online learning network of 5 communities namely: (i) AFF Research Fellows; (ii) Alumni for AFF-HAFL fellowship programme; (iii) Public Private Partnerships in forestry in Africa (iv) Forest-based adaptation and mitigation options among African stakeholders (v) interested parties on Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) to the Paris Agreement (vi) Gums and Resins actors.

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<sup>1</sup> The AFF Knowledge Management Strategy (2021-2025) highlights the institution's roles in KM as: serving as a virtual host and convener for communities of practice; offering a digital platform to host existing knowledge tools; coordinator and connector for knowledge; and an amplifier of current efforts.

### **3. OBJECTIVE**

Under the supervision of selected staff at the AFF Secretariat, online discussion moderators are required to engage, capture the views, findings, and recommendations of a wide range of stakeholders and groups involved in AFF's Communities of Practice located on the intranet.

### **4. SCOPE OF WORK**

The discussions could also coincide with key workshops, meetings or forums and launched by the African Forest Forum (AFF) to boost participation. The key tasks of this assignment will be to:

- i) Engage a broad range of stakeholders to enrich the global conversation on sustainable forest management challenges and solutions.
- ii) Collaborate with Discussion Co-Chairs and AFF Secretariat to tailor discussion topics in line with the chosen topics for discussion.
- iii) Provide input to relevant networks, individuals and institutions specific to the area of focus and invite them to participate in the online discussions.
- iv) At the end of each discussion, work with the Discussion Co-Chairs and AFF Secretariat to draft and post a summary note, at a chosen frequency, to be shared more broadly, possibly through AFF online platforms.
- v) Work with Secretariat to identify a list of people to act as first responders to e-discussions (3 per discussion). These people will be asked to write a response to the e-discussion on the day of its launch to help spur dialogue (the quality of the response sets the tone for following contributions).
- vi) Actively moderate the discussion to ensure it remains focused on the agenda, discussion questions and draft the final summary report (5 pages maximum); to be shared more broadly, possibly through AFF online platforms.

### **5. DELIVERABLES**

This assignment aims to deliver the following:

- Up-to-date virtual 'space' with relevant content;
- About 50-100 comments generated during a three-week e-discussion (per topic).
- Useful resources for the e-discussion uploaded and shared regularly.
- Final report of e-discussions and posted within 2 weeks of the end of the 3-week discussion period, and to be shared more broadly, possibly through AFF online platforms.

### **6. MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS AND SKILLS**

The online discussion moderators must have the following qualifications and skills:

- At least a master's degree in forestry or natural resource management with experience in forest planning and forest management; a PhD will be an advantage.
- At least five years' working experience in sustainable forest planning and forest

management.

- Have written at least a book chapter, and or published peer reviewed journal papers on topics related to sustainable forest management and climate change adaptation and mitigation in different forest type.
- Excellent writing and oral communication skills in English. Knowledge of French is an additional advantage.

## **7. DURATION OF ASSIGNMENT**

The work is expected to take three (3) weeks spread over a period of one (1) calendar month, commencing on **17 May 2021**. Online moderators shall work from their locations but be in close consultation with relevant staff at the AFF Secretariat while keeping to an agreed delivery schedule.

## **8. DEADLINES**

- (i) Applications must be received by the AFF Secretariat on or before 3 May 2021.
- (ii) Successful applicants will be informed by 10<sup>th</sup> April 2021.
- (iii) Consultancy activities must begin no later than 17 May 2021.

## **9. HOW TO APPLY**

Please email your application to AFF, attaching: Cover letter stating how you meet the above qualifications and experience requirements; An updated CV. Indicate the subject line: **“Consultancy: Online Discussion Moderators for AFF Communities of Practice”** to [d.gitonga@cqiar.org](mailto:d.gitonga@cqiar.org) with a copy to [exec.sec@afforum.org](mailto:exec.sec@afforum.org). Only successful applicants will be contacted.