



CONCEPT NOTE

SUB-REGIONAL TRAINING WEBINARS FOR FRANCOPHONE, AND ANGLOPHONE
AND LUSOPHONE AFRICA

ON

MAINSTREAMING INTO NATIONAL POLICIES, PLANS AND ACTIONS OF DECISIONS
FROM GLOBAL AND REGIONAL CLIMATE CHANGE RELATED PROCESSES

SEPTEMBER 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, enhance economic and social development and protect the environment. Through all its programmes and activities, AFF seeks to promote the empowerment of all marginalized groups, particularly women and youth, who continue to be vulnerable to the impacts of climate change and whose representation, priorities and needs are rarely adequately addressed in the forestry sector.

To this end, the African Forest Forum, with funding from the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) and the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) is implementing two projects titled "*Strengthening management and use of forest ecosystems for sustainable development in Africa*" and "*African forests, people and climate change*" respectively. Both projects seek to generate and share knowledge and information through partnerships in ways that will provide inputs into policy options and capacity building efforts for improved forest management that will better address climate change impacts as well as contribute to poverty alleviation and environmental protection in Africa. Specifically, both projects aim 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. To fulfil this objective, AFF seeks to develop strategic human capacity in African institutions that could strengthen national forest governance through, among others, mainstreaming Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) into national development strategies and policies that are related to forestry in order to improve the contribution of the forest sector to human wellbeing, climate resilient economic growth and healthy ecosystems in the African continent.

In this regard, AFF has conducted studies on:

- how effective African countries have been in participating in multilateral environmental processes related to forestry, and mainstreaming decisions from them into their national contexts;
- national forest governance responses to the Paris Agreement and other global and regional climate change policies and initiatives; and
- Africa's capacity to monitor and report on compliance to MEAs, as they relate to forests and climate change.

These studies revealed the following:

- a) Many African countries lack a critical mass of people knowledgeable of the processes and decisions emanating from the multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs). This is partly because the countries lack strong representation to these discourses, there is inadequate in-country consultation prior to MEA meetings, and sharing of information from the MEA meetings with key stakeholders at country levels is low.
- b) Further to this insufficient understanding of the MEAs there is poor ownership by key national stakeholders, of decisions emanating from the intergovernmental processes, making implementation of the same very low in some countries. Consequently, while many African

governments have signed, ratified or acceded to forest and climate related international agreements, including those from the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), compliance by these countries has been limited. The integration of the provisions of these agreements into national forestry policy and decision-making processes has not been systematic, and implementation fragmented.

- c) The challenge from the above two shortcomings is exacerbated by a weak engagement of upstream and downstream stakeholders by forestry agencies charged with integrating MEA decisions at national level.

Based on findings on the capacity needs assessment among African forestry stakeholders on the above issues, AFF has developed a training module entitled *Training module on effective engagement of African delegates in international multilateral processes* in both English and French to guide capacity building efforts aimed at equipping delegates with skills for effective engagement in multilateral environmental processes, and to strengthen national implementation of multilateral environmental agreements in the forestry sector.

It is within this context that the African Forest Forum (AFF), in its annual work plan of activities for 2021, is organizing two sub-regional training webinars (one for Francophone Africa and another for Anglophone and Lusophone Africa) to support national governments by building a critical mass of experts on intergovernmental processes to strengthen their understanding of the complexity of the international agreements in order to better present Africa's position in the processes. This capacity will be valuable given that a new generation of national policy and planning frameworks are expected at the dawn of this decade as the global community negotiates new global frameworks such as the UNCBD Aichi Targets 2021-2030, among others. To this end the training will build institutional capacities of African countries to domesticate decisions from these agreements.

2. TRAINING OBJECTIVES

The overall objective of the training webinars is to strengthen the capacity of the African forestry stakeholders to effectively engage in multilateral environmental processes that relate to forestry and climate change, as well as mainstream MEA decisions into forestry related national policies, plans and activities, as an effective way of contributing to the achievement of national environmental, social and economic goals.

The specific objectives are to:

- a) Strengthen the capacity of forestry actors on the concept, theory and approaches in effective international negotiations;
- b) Sensitise and enhance awareness on multilateral environmental processes, and especially those relevant to the forestry sector.
- c) Provide a forum for key actors to thoroughly examine the obligations of individual countries arising from forestry related multilateral environmental agreements, exchange knowledge and experiences, and identify shortcomings in countries' legal, policy and institutional frameworks as well as opportunities for effective coordination of the governance system in mainstreaming MEAs into national forestry instruments; and
- d) Determine and recommend appropriate measures to contain constraints in mainstreaming MEAs into national forestry processes.

3. EXPECTED RESULTS AND OUTCOMES

- a) Strengthened capacity of stakeholders for effective negotiations, ratification and implementation of MEAs;
- b) Enhanced understanding of key actors at the national level, of provisions of the environmental multilateral agreements and other key climate change related international initiatives and implications for existing national policies, laws and institutional frameworks; and
- c) Strengthened capacity for developing national and regional structures that help adapt, domesticate, monitor and report progress on implementation of environmental climate related international agreements and other forest related international initiatives.

4. VENUE AND DURATION

Two sub-regional webinars will be organised one for Francophone Africa and the other for Anglophone and Lusophone Africa using the hybrid approach. Overall, 11 national face-to-face meetings will be organized and digitally connected to regional experts, AFF Secretariat and other stakeholders willing to participate remotely. The two webinars are planned to take place for a duration of 3 days each, from 06 to 08 October 2021, for the Francophone African countries, and from 13 to 15 October 2021 for the Anglophone African countries.

5. PARTICIPANTS

The training webinars will bring together about 20 participants per country from public forest administrations, non-governmental organizations, research, academia, private sector as well as youth and women-based organizations engaged in the fields of climate change, forestry and related sectors in sub-Saharan Africa. The target countries include: Angola, Botswana, Cameroon, Cote d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, Madagascar, Malawi, Mozambique, Rwanda, Zimbabwe. However, interested stakeholders from other countries are also invited to register and attend virtually.

Forestry stakeholders within and outside target countries interested to attend the webinars are invited to register online before 30 September 2021 using links:

1.Sub-regional training webinar for Francophone Africa on mainstreaming into national policies, plans and actions of decisions from global and regional climate change related processes

When: Oct 6, 2021 11:00 AM Nairobi

Register in advance for this meeting:

https://zoom.us/meeting/register/tJUudu-hrjktGNM2sYmmxt1OF_pHaZBRikrb

2.Sub-regional training webinar for Anglophone and Lusophone Africa on mainstreaming into national policies, plans and actions of decisions from global and regional climate change related processes

When: Oct 13, 2021 11:00 AM Nairobi

Register in advance for this meeting:

<https://zoom.us/meeting/register/tJMkdeCspj4uG9CxnDISzRs6vYyxb0T-Misg>

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting

For further information please contact:

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