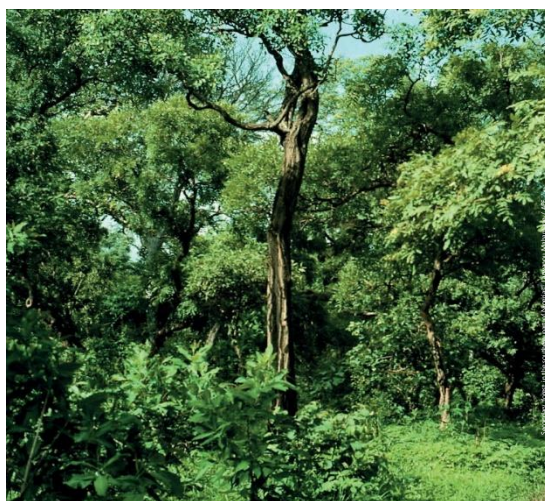




African Forest Forum

A platform for stakeholders in African forestry



AFF Knowledge Management Strategy (2021-2025)



AFF KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

(2021-2025)

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AFF	African Forest Forum
CAK	Competition Authority of Kenya
CoP	Community of Practice
DOI	Digital Object Identifier
ICRAF	World Agroforestry Centre
ILRI	International Livestock Research Institute
ISO	International Organization for Standardization
KA	Knowledge Audit
KEFRI	Kenya Forestry Research Institute
KM	Knowledge Management
KMCG	Knowledge Management Coordination Group
KMS	Knowledge Management System
KPI	Key Performance Indicators
KRA	Kenya Revenue Authority
ORCID	Open Researcher and Contributor ID
PMER	Planning, Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting
SDC	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
SFM	Sustainable Forest Management
Sida	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency

1. INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT

The African Forest Forum (AFF) is a key player in African forestry and continues to play an important role in supporting sustainable forest management nationally, sub-regionally and continentally; providing a bridge between science-based knowledge and strong policies to support sustainable forest management (SFM); and all the time effectively working within a science- policy- management framework.

As a knowledge brokerage institution, AFF facilitates activities that generate science-based knowledge; collects and collates information; analyzes and synthesizes information to meet various ends dictated by stakeholders needs; and disseminates the same widely. AFF therefore pursues knowledge and information management strategies aimed at ensuring the right information on African forestry is available to all its staff, members and stakeholders, at the time they need it and in the way they prefer.

AFF aims to leverage this knowledge in order to become the leading forum that unites stakeholders to sustainably conserve, manage and use Africa's forest and tree resources to meet the social, ecological and economic needs of present and future generations.

As a knowledge brokerage agency, AFF is continually challenged to better and more systematically tap collective knowledge and wisdom gained through years of experience and learning, and to develop and implement new and productive ways to process and share this knowledge.

With this in mind, AFF commissioned a study to undertake a thorough knowledge audit/assessment which guided the review and development of a robust Knowledge Management Strategy that will support AFF's organizational strategy and achievements of its mandate.

AFF's approach to Knowledge Management (KM) was analyzed in order to identify and understand strengths, weaknesses and challenges, learn from AFF's experience and examine good practices in other likeminded organizations. Both formal and informal methods were used to gather inputs, including one-on-one interviews, questionnaire-based surveys, SWOT analysis, focus group discussions and desk reviews.

Key findings from the Knowledge Management Audit were clustered and presented according to the four key accelerators of the knowledge management process: people (human capital); processes; technology and infrastructure; and governance.

The KM Audit findings and recommendations were then used to inform the development of the AFF KM Strategy. The KM Strategy aims to strengthen AFF's position as a leading forestry knowledge brokerage institution; enhance coordination and integration of knowledge

management at AFF; and institutionalize a knowledge management culture conducive to collaboration internally and externally with stakeholders and cohesive to the structure of the organization. It emphasizes better quality standards and commensurate resources, accountability mechanisms, and buy-in from all stakeholders.

The proposed strategy for knowledge management at AFF is anchored on the following strategic objectives:

Strategic Objective 1: Generating, customizing and connecting knowledge.

Strategic Objective 2: Using knowledge for policy and action.

Strategic Objective 3: Leveraging knowledge through collaboration and partnerships.

Strategic Objective 4: Mobilizing resources and building capacities.

The AFF KM Strategy spells out the guiding principles for implementation, roles and responsibilities, resources requirements and monitoring and evaluation considerations.

The Knowledge Audit and KM Strategy was presented to and discussed by the AFF Secretariat staff on Thursday 19th November 2020 to secure ownership by the institution, cultivate consensus building and strategic planning.

During this meeting, the capacity of the AFF Secretariat staff was built in the understanding knowledge management at AFF, implementation of the proposed AFF KM Strategy including guiding principles, roles and responsibilities, tools and techniques, resource requirements, barriers to implementation and monitoring and evaluation.

The Strategy will then be presented to other AFF stakeholders including Governing Council, Executive Committee, Experts, Members and Partners for buy in and strategic planning.

2. KNOWLEDGE AUDIT METHODOLOGY

A phased approach was used to develop a Knowledge Management Strategy for AFF, including a series of questionnaire-based surveys, KM audits, SWOT analysis, one-on-one interviews, focus group discussions and desk reviews, which are elaborated below.

- In-depth meetings were held with the AFF Executive Secretary to understand AFF's strategic direction with regards to knowledge management.
- A comprehensive desk review of secondary information/data was undertaken to map out AFF's strategic direction with regard to knowledge management. The information sources included AFF strategy documents and knowledge products, and other information on AFF

website (www.afforum.org) and social media platforms, as well as literature on knowledge management.

- An inception workshop was held on 29th October 2019 with AFF staff to enhance awareness on Knowledge Management and communicate the intent and methodology for the Knowledge Audit.
- Meetings with the AFF Senior Communications Specialist to get an overview of the current state of knowledge management at AFF and draw up an interview schedule with key informants including staff, members and partner organizations. Purposive sampling was done with guidance from the AFF staff to select the right people to interview. Appropriate tools were developed to guide the semi structured and open-ended interviews.
- In-depth interviews were held (a) at the governance level, with AFF's Governing Council and committee members, (b) internally, with AFF senior leadership, technical experts and administrative and finance staff, and (b) externally, with AFF partners, members, non-members. The interviews were conducted face-to-face, on phone and electronically.
- A Knowledge Audit was undertaken to provide an evidence-based assessment of where AFF needs to focus its knowledge management efforts, including identification of AFF's core knowledge assets and flows, knowledge gaps, and recommending strategies to manage them.
- The Knowledge Audit also involved benchmarking AFF's strategies, policies, practices and systems against comparable institutions and leaders in the KM field to identify lessons learned from their experiences and opportunities for improvement. The institutions included the International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI), the World Agroforestry Centre (ICRAF), Kenya Forestry Research Institute (KEFRI), African Medical and Research Foundation (AMREF), Kenya Revenue Authority (KRA) and Competition Authority of Kenya (CAK).
- A tool associated with the new International Organization for Standardization (ISO) standard was further used to assess the robustness and effectiveness of AFF's strategies, policies, practices and systems.
- An inception workshop was held with AFF staff to enhance awareness on knowledge management and communicate intent and methodology for the Knowledge Audit.
- A SWOT analysis was conducted to assess the internal and external environments for implementing an enhanced KM agenda and to inform AFF strategic planning processes.

3. AFF KNOWLEDGE AUDIT

The analysis of KM at AFF was undertaken based on a tool adopted from ISO 30401:2018 Knowledge Management in organizations, which sets requirements and provides guidelines for establishing, implementing, maintaining, reviewing and improving an effective management system for managing knowledge in organizations.

The framework formed the basis of the KM Strategy which is expected to contribute to retaining and strengthening AFF's position as a leading African forestry knowledge brokerage institution, enhance coordination and integration of knowledge management at AFF and institutionalize a knowledge management culture at AFF that is conducive to collaboration internally and externally with stakeholders and cohesive to the structure of the organization.

A SWOT analysis was conducted to assess the internal and external environments for implementing an enhanced KM agenda and to inform AFF strategic planning processes.

3.1 SWOT analysis of Knowledge Management at AFF

Strengths

- Strong commitment and buy-in for KM by AFF senior leadership.
- Recognition and credibility at national, regional and international level as authority on Africa forestry issues.
- Ability to convene experts on forestry and related professionals.
- Skilled pool of motivated technical experts, with immense tacit and explicit knowledge on Africa forestry issues.
- Expanding body of knowledge and evidence base.
- Growing membership base and network of country platforms.

Weaknesses

- Limited human and financial resources to undertake full roles of KM.
- Limited knowledge platforms and channels.
- Undefined knowledge culture within AFF.
- Lack of clarity on how to measure impact of AFF knowledge.
- Almost all documentation is available in English; only a few are translated to French.

Opportunities

- Ability to maximise AFF knowledge to influence and impact major policy making processes at Pan-African scale.

- Unique placement to link research, policy analysis, and practitioners' knowledge through rigorous analysis and learnings.
- Leverage technical and professional support from key strategic partners such as ICRAF.
- Maturity of AFF knowledge agenda to influence and inform critical contributions at national, regional and international levels.
- Leverage and mobilize global knowledge to enhance south-south knowledge exchanges.
- Build a strong internal knowledge culture and collaboration with partners through communities of practice.
- Tap co-funding for KM from other donor organisations including bilateral and multilateral donors.

Threats

- Donor funding pool currently limited to Sida and SDC.
- Uncertain hosting arrangement with ICRAF from 2021.
- Risk of knowledge attrition and erosion of institutional memory.
- Limited scope to bridge Anglo- and Franco-phone divide in Africa.

3.2 Knowledge Audit findings

Key findings from the Knowledge Management (KM) Audit were clustered and presented according to the four key accelerators of the knowledge management process: people (human capital); processes; technology and infrastructure; and governance. General concerns relating to continuous organizational improvement are also outlined.

3.2.1 People (human capital)

- **Leadership commitment:** AFF's leadership is committed to supporting the knowledge management process and allocating available resources towards KM. AFF senior leadership and staff generally have a good understanding of KM, appreciate the value that KM can bring to the organization and agree that there is a conducive environment at AFF to generate and share knowledge.
- **AFF membership participation:** AFF is an association of over 2000 individual members who form a strong pool of forestry and related professionals. However, only approximately 40 percent of AFF members actively participate in the Forum activities. Members need to understand the benefits of membership so that their expertise and tacit knowledge can be harnessed.
- **Competence and professional expertise:** AFF technical staff and consultants comprise highly competent and skilled individuals who possess immense tacit knowledge on African

forestry issues. However, it was noted that the capacity of the national and regional technical experts to produce good quality reports on time can be a challenge in some cases.

- **Staffing:** The AFF secretariat is lean on staff which is necessary for optimal functionality. This however has the downside of staff only engaging on Key Performance Indicators (KPI) leaving KM related issues unattended.
- **Roles and responsibilities in KM:** AFF staff exhibit team spirit but the roles and responsibilities related to knowledge management are still not clearly defined. Currently there is no staff member specifically dedicated to handle knowledge management issues at AFF; there used to be one in the past who left for greener pastures. KM activities are handled by the Senior Communications Specialist. There exists high professional capacity to develop knowledge products, but this capacity is usually stretched and there is little time left to follow through on some obligations related to KM.
- **Contractual engagements:** the engagement of external consultants is essential to tap knowledge and skills from experts in the broader community of stakeholders. However, it was observed that engaging experts on a short-term, project basis could contribute to attrition of AFF's tacit knowledge.

3.2.2 Processes

- **Knowledge capture and generation:** AFF technical and support staff generate a lot of data, information and knowledge that needs to be effectively managed for documentation and use both internally and externally. However, concerns were raised regarding the staff workload, especially for the technical staff which is heavy and therefore there is not enough time to engage in knowledge management activities. It was noted that some knowledge process, such as website hosting, are contracted to ICRAF, the host institution.
- **Knowledge production:** knowledge production requires time and expert guidance. For example, to consolidate and harmonize issues or to distill to get key messages from diverse documents and develop knowledge products targeted for specific audiences can be challenging.
- **Knowledge dissemination:** there is often little time left to technical staff to do liaison with knowledge products audiences and monitoring application of knowledge products; a Planning, Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting (PMER) Specialist assists in this. Some roles that support KM are not clearly allocated for; however, the dissemination of knowledge products and engagement on social media platforms is currently the responsibility of the Senior Communications Specialist that could be further supported by a knowledge management specialist. It is important that these knowledge products become part of intentional design and planned for, including dissemination and tracking

of use. This will require that a KM coordination unit is strengthened for AFF to fully benefit from KM.

- **Organisational processes:** reviewing and realigning knowledge management at AFF is ongoing and there is strong support and engagement from top leadership and Secretariat staff. Embedded knowledge exists at AFF in the procedures and templates used in the core organizational processes including; Finance and Administration, Human Resources and Procurement. In some cases, templates developed by ICRAF, such as procurement guidelines and human resources management policy. Procurement and handling of human resources are contracted to ICRAF.
- **Meetings:** AFF staff meet regularly to plan and give updates on work progress, and there is a conducive environment to generate, collate, synthesize and share data, information and knowledge.
- **Learnings and experiences:** lessons learnt from project implementation should be captured, documented and disseminated and built into the subsequent project planning processes.
- **Institutional knowledge:** the institutional knowledge and expertise of AFF founder members was acknowledged and needs to be documented and shared for posterity.
- **Exit interviews:** tacit and institutional knowledge are not systematically captured when staff leave, and historical context and lessons learnt not adequately captured. There is need for embedded knowledge to be systematically collated and documented for use both internally and externally.
- **Incentivizing knowledge:** there is need for opportunities for AFF staff to share insights and new knowledge, especially informally. There should be consideration of rewards and recognition for activities related to management of knowledge.
- **Measuring success and impact:** AFF undertakes periodic surveys to assess patterns of access, use, outcomes, impact and challenges of its knowledge products and services on target audiences. The assessments indicate an increasing uptake of knowledge products and services, primarily through info-mail, the website, publications (found mostly on the website), regional and national workshops, stakeholder platforms and through direct technical advice from the Secretariat.

3.2.3 Technology and infrastructure

- **Knowledge storage and retrieval:** AFF staff have access to a cloud-based Microsoft OneDrive hosted by ICRAF to store all work documents. It was noted that this system was underutilized as most staff members prefer using external hard drives.
- **Visibility:** AFF technical staff and experts produce considerable relevant and useful knowledge products. However, the visibility and reach of AFF's online and physical

publications need to be increased. Similarly, the profiles and online visibility of AFF technical staff, experts and members need to be enhanced.

- **AFF website:** management of the AFF website is outsourced to the host organization, ICRAF. Useful and up to date information on regional, continental and global forestry issues are made available on the website, including opportunities for capacity building in forestry and related areas. Concerns raised regarding the AFF website include:
 - the need to make it more dynamic and interactive to enhance member engagement and knowledge exchange,
 - the need to boost the current online repository to include relevant and up to date maps, photos, multi-media formats, datasets and databases.
 - consider a more user-friendly interface and use of infographics to present information.
 - thematic representation of content on the website so that the information is easily accessible and with fewer clicks.

3.2.4 Governance

- **Institutionalizing KM:** AFF top leadership including the Governing Council Members, the Executive Committee Members, Executive Secretary (CEO), and all Secretariat staff recognize the key role that KM plays in contributing to AFFs leading role on African forestry as well as a knowledge brokerage institution. They all support the efforts to institutionalize KM at AFF.
- **Knowledge Management Strategy:** although AFF has a Knowledge Management Strategy, it is outdated and lacks an implementation plan.

3.2.5 Continual improvement at AFF

Concerns raised relating to continuous improvement include;

- AFF staff and stakeholders need to better understand KM and its value add to the organization.
- Institutional memory and tacit knowledge of long serving staff, founder members and members of the Governing Council needs to be captured and shared. This can be through face to face or video recorded interviews.
- Young and upcoming scientists within AFFs membership need to be mentored by older and more experienced members.
- Further training for staff and members on various tools to enhance knowledge collation, sharing and use needs to be undertaken.
- Are AFFs stakeholders fully aware of the knowledge products and services available?
- What are the best ways to get AFF knowledge products to its intended beneficiaries?

4. STRATEGIC RESPONSE TO ENHANCE KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT AT AFF

The KM Audit recommendations and SWOT Analysis were then used to inform the development of the AFF KM Strategy. This was a highly consultative process with review and inputs from the AFF staff. Additionally, an in-depth review of the existing KM Strategy was undertaken to identify challenges and gaps.

The KM Strategy aims to strengthen AFF's position as a leading African forestry knowledge brokerage institution; enhance coordination and integration of knowledge management at AFF; and institutionalize a knowledge management culture conducive to collaboration internally and externally with stakeholders and cohesive to the structure of the organization. It emphasizes better quality standards and commensurate resources, accountability mechanisms, and buy-in from all stakeholders.

AFF will depend on this KM strategy as an important tool to deliver its programs and achieve its mission. It should be noted, however, that knowledge assessments must remain as part of the continuous and iterative process to keep knowledge management at AFF relevant and responding to current and future KM needs. The knowledge management strategy and action plan for AFF should therefore be in tandem with other relevant AFF strategies and policies. It should also be in line with other action plans that specifically articulate how AFF will develop, use and share knowledge.

The aim of transforming AFF's knowledge agenda is to: *enhance knowledge identification, re-purposing, re-packaging and dissemination through effective communication; enhance the translation of knowledge into policy and action; leverage knowledge through partnerships; and develop resources and capacity development for knowledge management.*

5. AFF KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

AFF's Knowledge Management Strategy is anchored on the following strategic objectives:

- i) **Strategic Objective 1:** Generating, customizing and connecting knowledge.
- ii) **Strategic Objective 2:** Using knowledge for policy and action.
- iii) **Strategic Objective 3:** Leveraging knowledge through collaboration and partnerships.
- iv) **Strategic Objective 4:** Mobilizing resources and building capacities.

The KM Strategy spells out the focus and recommend actions, guiding principles for implementation, roles and responsibilities, tools and techniques, resources requirements and monitoring and evaluation considerations.

6. THE ACTION PLAN

The action plan seeks to support ongoing KM activities and to operationalize the strategic objectives of AFF's KM strategy, covering the period up to the end of 2025. The action plan should be updated periodically to allow AFF to take stock of progress made and identify further areas needing attention moving forward.

As mentioned earlier the Strategy is anchored on the four strategic objectives, which respond to and expand on the priorities and gaps identified by the KM audit and complement KM activities already on-going throughout the organization.

The strategic objectives with an overview of the recommended action areas are enumerated below. An activity schedule with more detailed tasks by each action area—together with timelines and lead responsibilities is given in Section 7.

6.1 Generating, customizing and connecting knowledge

This action area addresses AFF's focal role in building a knowledge base on sustainable forest management in Africa, and systematically managing and sharing AFF's knowledge and experience.

6.1.1 Enhancing how knowledge is generated and captured

Generating and capturing knowledge should be informed by the gaps and priorities identified through programmatic activities, as well as by identification of evidence gaps in the broader context of sustainable forest management and forest-based response to issues like climate change, green growth and circular economy.

It seeks to tap opportunities to embed knowledge management more systematically in how AFF works, so that it can better access, use and re-use both the tacit and documented knowledge it has at its disposal, especially the knowledge and know-how of its staff, consultants/experts, and partners.

Strategic activities recommended:

- Develop knowledge creation guidelines for use by AFF's potential authors and contributors.
- Implement after-action reviews and evaluation learning events.

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- Deepen engagement with sector thought leaders—through increased technical consultations and liaisons—to identify knowledge gaps to be addressed by AFF.

6.1.2 Improving quality and timeliness of how knowledge is produced and customized.

This action area addresses the processes at AFF of how knowledge is generated, processed and disseminated. It aims for a structured approach to planning, design and implementation of knowledge management that will enable AFF make informed decisions faster, and result in timely and efficient delivery of knowledge products and services, as well as enhanced sharing and use of knowledge. It also aims for putting in place mechanisms and incentives to ensure that knowledge products are strategic, demand- driven and of high-quality.

Strategic activities recommended:

- Develop a dashboard to track and monitor the production of knowledge products through the pipeline—from concept origination, drafting, peer review, editing and design/layout, printing to dissemination.
- Review templates for uniform ‘look and feel’ of AFF knowledge products in conformity with AFF branding and identity guidelines.
- Develop concept note outlining required incentives and mechanisms to ensure strategic, quality knowledge products, including quality assurance/peer review of AFF knowledge products.

6.1.3 Enhancing how knowledge is shared and promoted for wider reach.

Sharing of experiences and knowledge is vital across African countries, and the world at large. This action area seeks to make AFF knowledge available to its broader membership, sector community and wider public through enhanced dissemination and outreach. It also seeks to leverage learning events—including roundtables, sector dialogues, conferences and webinars—to raise the relevance, usefulness, and impact of major knowledge publications.

For example, an aspect for expanding pan-African collaborations in sustainable forest management could be the standardization of terms and concepts. The establishment of a common language is crucial for effective collaboration across national borders, especially in Africa which is divided across two broad language zones, Anglophone and Francophone.

The majority of AFF knowledge products are available in English; only a few have been translated into French. It is recommended that AFF seeks out partners to collaborate in developing a standardized and common terminology in order to improve the communication efficacy.

Strategic activities recommended:

- Maintain and regularly update corporate calendar/database of global, regional, and thematic events and engagements to support AFF's top leadership in prioritizing what knowledge to share and documentation.
- Develop and maintain a regularly updated dissemination and outreach plan for AFF knowledge products.
- Develop a multilingual glossary of forestry terminology to establish a common language base across Anglo- and Francophone Africa.

6.1.4 Optimize functionalities for how knowledge is organized and made easily accessible.

This action area seeks to expand distribution of AFF knowledge products through specific lists targeting other authors to encourage citations. It also seeks to develop appropriate taxonomy and metadata to improve searchability of AFF publications.

Strategic activities recommended:

- Ensure all AFF publications have permanent DOI (Digital Object Identifier) and ORCID (Open Researcher and Contributor ID) to promote author citations.
- Track online use and impact of AFF publications with citation metrics like Altimetric.
- Utilize open-source library automation software—Google Scholar, Research Gate and KOHA—to ensure listing of AFF publications.

6.2 Using knowledge for policy and action

6.2.1 Position AFF as thought leader on African forestry

This action area seeks to maximize the value-addition roles of AFF flagship knowledge products—such as “The State of Forestry in Africa”—which have longer shelf life; are high impact; are authoritative; consolidate the latest thinking; and represent AFF's intellectual face and the best of its work.

The action area also recommends AFF to explore production of a new series of knowledge products that systematically synthesizes the lessons learned and scalable practices from voluminous publications into succinct and reader-friendly formats with quick take-away messages.

Strategic activities recommended:

- KM Working Group to oversee an implementation plan for conceptualization, development, production, dissemination and positioning of flagship publications.

- Develop a concept note for flagship products, “Results from the Field” series and “Country-driven policy series”—defining purpose, frequency, selection criteria, format, roles and responsibilities, audiences and dissemination strategy.

6.2.2 Build AFF knowledge hub for sharing and uptake of knowledge

This action area seeks to harness information technology infrastructure to smoothen the generation, sharing, and use of knowledge. In particular, it recommends some improvements in knowledge storage and retrieval, dissemination, exchange, and collaboration. A key recommendation is to facilitate access to knowledge services through an easily searchable repository of knowledge solutions and to improve the dissemination of tacit knowledge.

The proposed web platform, linked to the AFF website, will be an online catalogue whereby AFF can showcase and encourage sharing of knowledge and partnership-building. Content formats may include: GIS maps, forest vulnerability maps, forest cover data, sustainable forestry management indicators, among others. More can also be done to build on OneDrive—the online storage platform hosted at ICRAF—as a common internal repository of project documents that will be accessible to all project and operational teams.

Strategic activities recommended:

- Set up an interactive, user-friendly knowledge portal to host moderated online discussions forums.
- Popularize use of OneDrive as a knowledge management tool that enables staff to share and disseminate information gathered or needed in project or working groups.

6.2.3 Using innovative solutions to support knowledge sharing

This action area will support AFF staff and membership in their efforts to facilitate knowledge exchange and learning, and to promote linkages for knowledge exchanges between countries and across regions. It also seeks to establish AFF as the go-to place for virtual discussion forums on forestry and related issues. Further, the use of emerging technologies to compile the most relevant knowledge resources into appropriate formats could lead to efficiency gains in access, storage and retrieval of knowledge products.

Strategic activities recommended:

- Organize virtual meetings, such as webinars, on topical issues on forestry and related areas.
- Expand diversification of knowledge formats in print, digital and multi-media formats, including podcasts, data visualizations and YouTube videos.
- Adapt publications dissemination formats beyond PDFs, towards formats that are more reader friendly and can be easily downloaded and used by mobile devices, hand-held readers and tablets.

6.2.4 Build portfolio of knowledge products for practitioners and policy makers

Strategic activities recommended:

- Continue to regularly develop toolkits and practitioner manuals, and policy briefs on a demand-driven basis.

6.3 Leveraging knowledge through collaboration and partnerships

6.3.1 Mapping AFF's knowledge base

A mapping of existing knowledge management initiatives and improved understanding of the demand for knowledge related to forestry will be needed to inform the implementation of the AFF knowledge management strategy. A well-functioning technical skill registry can also provide a clearer picture of the stock of knowledge in AFF, and possibly serve as a new portal through which AFF members and partners can directly identify and interact with experts in specific fields.

Strategic activities recommended:

- Map forestry professionals and other stakeholders in forestry related sectors.
- Develop profiles of *AFF Knowledge Champions* for publication on AFF website and online platforms.
- Develop an expertise locator system, based on area of experts' area of specialization.

6.3.2 Build strategic partnerships with like-minded sector institutions.

A mapping of AFF's existing and potential strategic partnerships will be needed to inform a strategy for nurturing and formalizing collaborations with knowledge partners. Collaborative initiatives could include joint research activities and co-authoring/co-publishing of knowledge products.

Strategic activities recommended:

- Undertake mapping of AFF's existing and potential financial, technical and knowledge partnerships.
- Develop strategy to identify co-authoring/co-publishing opportunities with strategic partners.
- Explore and initiate knowledge partnership agreements with strategic partners.

6.3.3 Strengthen Community of Practice (CoP) to support knowledge development and use

This action area focuses on online forums or interactive platforms via which individuals and communities create and share user-generated content. It seeks to strengthen knowledge sharing through increased use of knowledge collaboration platforms, in particular through Communities of Practice, by ensuring that knowledge generated or shared at AFF learning events are widely accessible and scalable by enhanced communication techniques. It highlights AFF roles in KM as: serving as virtual host and convener for communities of practice; offering a digital platform to host existing knowledge tools; as coordinator and connector for knowledge; and an amplifier of current efforts.

Strategic activities recommended:

- Develop and enhance intranet and social media tools supporting CoPs.

6.4 Mobilizing resources and building capacities

This action area will help to strengthen AFF's capacity to learn, adapt and improve. It focuses on mechanisms and incentives that can more clearly encourage AFF staff, members and partners to generate, seek out, share, and use and re-use knowledge.

6.4.1 Institutionalize KM within AFF

This action area is about securing buy-in for a strategic approach to knowledge management at AFF and entrenching the KM function into institutional systems and processes. It also focuses on clarifying institutional and individual roles, responsibilities, and relationships on knowledge-management related functions. This action area recommends the establishment of a Knowledge Management Coordination Group (KMCG) to promote organization-wide collaboration on KM and ensure better coordination of KM-related initiatives.

The KMCG should comprise of staff with specific KM responsibilities, program leads and AFF top leadership. Its membership can be expanded to ensure broader representation, including from the Governing Council, members and knowledge partners. The specific brief is to: identify and advice on knowledge gaps and opportunities, including taking the lead on flagship products; identify and pursue opportunities for collaboration and improved coordination of KM across the AFF community; encourage collaboration, learning and sharing of experiences in KM implementation across the organization; and review progress of implementation of the KM action plan.

Strategic activities recommended:

- Ensure KM is embedded in AFF strategic plans.
- Ensure sustained top leadership support for resourcing and implementing the AFF KM strategy.

- Establish KM working group to guide AFF's knowledge agenda.
- Engage KM expert to take lead of KM function.
- Ensure knowledge management is explicitly embedded in job descriptions, individual performance plans and staff evaluations.

6.4.2 Build internal and external capacities for KM

The recommended actions seek to ensure that the AFF community—including staff, top leadership, Governing Council, members and partners—are equipped to better understand and play more active roles in knowledge management.

Strategic activities recommended:

- Develop and implement learning plans and opportunities to fill knowledge gaps within the AFF fraternity, including staff, members and partners.
- Build internal skills through training and awareness workshops on: technical writing, report writing, writing for blogs, knowledge synthesis, social media tools, skills and techniques.
- Explore incentives that offer greater recognition to staff efforts in promoting knowledge exchange, collaboration and learning activities.
- Create opportunities for tapping young talent through internships and mentorships.

6.4.3 Optimize knowledge retention to enhance learning

It further recommends innovative approaches to knowledge retention to mitigate risks associated with loss of institutional knowledge as staff transition, and longer-term consultants/experts move on. It recommends introducing a "learning from leavers" programme to reduce loss of critical knowledge when staff retire.

Strategic activities recommended:

- Document the story of "the 10-year AFF journey" both in terms of organizational growth, the knowledge story and lessons learnt.
- Create internal opportunities to capture and share institutional knowledge, for example, through 'Brown Bag Lunches' or internal dialogues.
- Optimize knowledge retention through introduction of exits interviews and 'learning from leavers' program.

6.4.4 Monitor and track KM

Strategic activities recommended:

- undertake an AFF audience survey to track the use and impact of knowledge products, and to improve targeted knowledge sharing.

- Track online knowledge use, uptake and impact using social media metrics.
- Develop indicators for measuring KM and report periodically to AFF top leadership on KM performance and progress against selected indicators.

7. IMPLEMENTING THE AFF KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

To ensure effective implementation of the AFF Knowledge Management Strategy, the following activity schedule (7.1) and roles and responsibility (7.2) is proposed.

7.1 Activity schedule

The following activity schedule is recommended to be implemented as AFF rolls out its five-year strategic plan and the actions incorporated in AFFs schedule of operations. It is proposed these actions should be implemented by a full time Knowledge Management Specialist based at the AFF Secretariat.

Recommended Actions
Action area 1: Generating, customizing and connecting knowledge
<p><i>Action 1a: Enhancing how knowledge is generated and captured.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Develop knowledge creation guidelines. ○ After-action reviews and evaluation learning events. ○ Engagements with sector thought leaders.
<p><i>Action 1b: Improving quality and timeliness of how knowledge is produced and customized</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Review templates for uniform 'look and feel.' ○ Develop knowledge tracking dashboard. ○ Develop quality assurance/peer review guidelines.
<p><i>Action 1c: Enhancing how knowledge is shared and promoted for wider reach</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Maintain updated corporate database of global, regional, and thematic events and AFF engagements.

Recommended Actions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Develop updated dissemination and outreach plan for AFF knowledge products. ○ Develop a multilingual glossary of forestry terminology.
<p><i>Action 1d: Optimize functionalities for how knowledge is organized and made easily accessible.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Develop permanent DOI and ORCID to promote author citations. ○ Track online use and impact of AFF publications with citation metrics using Altimetric. ○ Utilize open-source library automation software—Google Scholar, Research Gate and KOHA—to ensure listing of AFF publications.
Action area 2: Using knowledge for policy and action
<p><i>Action 2a: Position AFF as thought leader on sustainable forest management</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Establish KM Working Group. ○ Develop a concept note for flagship products, “Results from the Field” series and “Country-driven policy series.
<p><i>Action 2b: Build AFF knowledge hub for sharing and uptake of knowledge.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Set up an interactive, user-friendly knowledge portal to host moderated online discussions forums. ○ Popularize use of OneDrive as a knowledge management tool.
<p><i>Action 2c: Using innovative solutions to support knowledge sharing</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Organize virtual meetings, such as webinars, on topical issues on forestry and related areas. ○ Expand diversification of knowledge formats in print, digital and multi-media formats, including podcasts, data visualizations, infographics and YouTube videos. ○ Adapt publications dissemination formats beyond PDFs, towards formats that are more reader friendly and can be easily downloaded and used by mobile devices, hand-held readers and tablets.
<p><i>Action 2d: Build portfolio of knowledge products for practitioners</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Continue to regularly develop toolkits and practitioner manuals, and policy briefs on a demand-driven basis.
Action Area 3: Leveraging knowledge through collaboration and partnerships
<p><i>Action 3a: enhance AFF role as a learning organization</i></p>

Recommended Actions

- Map forestry professionals and other stakeholders in forestry related sectors.
- Develop profiles of AFF Knowledge Champions for publication on AFF website and online platforms.
- Develop an expertise locator system, based on area of experts' area of specialization.

Action 3b: Enrich AFF membership base, and build strategic partnerships with like-minded sector institutions

- Undertake mapping of AFF's existing and potential financial, technical and knowledge partnerships.
- Develop strategy to identify co-authoring/co-publishing opportunities with strategic partners.
- Explore and initiate knowledge partnership agreements with strategic partners.

Action 3c: Strengthen Community of Practice (CoP) to support knowledge development and use.

- *Develop and enhance intranet and social media tools supporting CoPs.*

Action area 4: Mobilizing resources and building capacities

Action 4a: Institutionalize KM within AFF

- Ensure KM is embedded in AFF strategic plans.
- Ensure sustained top leadership support for resourcing and implementing the AFF KM strategy.
- Establish KM working group to direct AFF's knowledge agenda.
- Engage KM expert to take lead of KM function.
- Ensure knowledge management is explicitly embedded in job descriptions, individual performance plans and staff evaluations.

Action 4b: Build internal and external capacities for KM

- Develop and implement learning plans and opportunities to fill knowledge gaps within the AFF fraternity, including staff, members and partners.
- Build internal skills through training and awareness workshops on: technical writing, report writing, writing for blogs, knowledge synthesis, social media tools, skills and techniques.
- Explore incentives that offer greater recognition to staff efforts in promoting knowledge exchange, collaboration and learning activities.

Recommended Actions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage younger forestry professionals at universities and early career scientists through mentorship opportunities and groom to take up knowledge brokering roles.
<p><i>Action 4c: Optimize knowledge retention to enhance learning</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Document the story of “the 10-year AFF journey” both in terms of organizational growth, the knowledge story and lessons learnt. Create internal opportunities to capture and share institutional knowledge, for example, through ‘Brown Bag Lunches’ or internal dialogues. Optimize knowledge retention through introduction of exits interviews and ‘learning from leavers’ program.
<p><i>Action 4d: Monitor and track KM</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake an AFF audience survey to track the use and impact of knowledge products, and to improve targeted knowledge sharing. Track online knowledge use, uptake and impact using social media metrics. Develop indicators for measuring KM and report periodically to AFF top leadership on KM performance and progress against selected indicators.

7.2 Roles and responsibilities

Ownership of the KM strategy is critical for its implementation. Strategy implementation requires knowledge management roles and responsibilities that involve all key AFF leadership and operational staff, including members and partners. The key strategic roles and responsibility are summarized below.

Actor	What they need to do?	Why they need to do it (Outcome)
1. AFF top leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Constituting the KM team Aligning roles and responsibilities in KM and partnerships Aligning roles and responsibilities in KM and partnerships. 	Leadership role that will enable effective implementation of the KM Strategy.

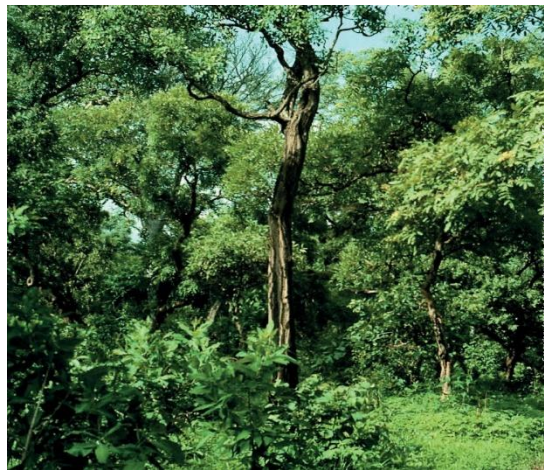
Actor	What they need to do?	Why they need to do it (Outcome)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Structuring partnerships into more organized entities • Provide leadership in KM- including leading adherence to guiding principles. • Provide resources for implementation. 	
2. AFF KM Working Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assume an advisory and supervisory role. • Overseeing the implementation of the KM Strategy and the ongoing management of the KM System • Review and provide advice/feedback on the KM Strategy and the action plan for effective implementation. • Monitor the implementation of the KM Strategy. • Recommend developments and improvements of the KM strategy during the implementation to keep the strategy up to date and effective. • Review feedback from end-users of the KM system and recommend solutions when necessary. • Budgeting and prioritization of KM activities according to available resources. 	Overall responsibility on the KM initiatives
3. Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help improve the dissemination of publications. 	Communication is part and parcel of knowledge management.

Actor	What they need to do?	Why they need to do it (Outcome)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure the visibility of the organization's knowledge products, services and activities. • Branding, standardization and quality control of KM products • Ensure appropriateness of the content to end users 	
4. Corporate services – human resources, administration, finance and information technology.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement training and other capacity building activities for KM. • Establish/enhance mechanisms for incorporating knowledge activities into the key performance indicators (KPIs) of individual staff to streamline knowledge in AFF operations. • Ensure that all ICT-based knowledge tools are available and tailored to the needs of AFF 	Cross-cutting functions
6. AFF staff, members and partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inculcate user driven development of knowledge products. • Embrace technology, innovations and other processes that will promote dissemination of KM products to end users • Participate in learning reviews – internal and external- to improve and promote use of knowledge products and services 	Application of KM integrated process within the system



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