

Call for proposals for pilot projects

on

Sustainable land management for livelihood improvement and stability of ecosystems in the context of changing climate in Africa

MAY 2022

1. **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 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.

AFF has secured funding from the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) to implement the project entitled “*Strengthening management and use of forest ecosystems for sustainable development in Africa”.* The project seeks 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 addresses poverty eradication and environmental protection in Africa. In contributing to fulfilling the overall project objective the project aims to enhance the capacity of key stakeholders to sustainably manage the forest resource base in ways that enhance the supply of ecosystem goods and services, including through: Sustainable Land Management approaches that maximise economic, social and ecological benefits; gender sensitive interventions to contain loss of forest cover; and sustainable management of forests. Further, the project aims 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 in ways that are gender responsive.

1. **Background**

Africa’s forests cover more than 636 million hectares, representing 23% of the continent’s landmass. The forest landscape comprising considerable forest variations including the Congo Basin, the Guinean forests, the coastal forests, the afromontane forests, and many other types of woodlands, is characterized by exceptional richness in biodiversity of high ecological and economic importance. These forests provide valuable goods and services for forest dependent communities. Both rural and urban households are heavily reliant on wood fuel for energy, and the forest products contribute considerably to both local and national economies. Forest-dependent communities also derive intangible benefits from forests through their functions as cultural symbols and sacred sites. Forests are therefore vital for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals in Africa.

However, these forests are threatened by deforestation and forest degradation that impact on forest cover leading to a general decline. The direct causes are, among others, a) agricultural expansion; b) unsustainable commercial harvesting and exploitation for fuelwood and other products; c) infrastructure expansion, including mining and urban expansion; d) inappropriate land and tree tenure regimes, and e) climate change. The indirect drivers include increasing poverty and food insecurity; weakness or lack of visionary policy (and conflicting sectoral policies); inappropriate institutional structures; limited access to appropriate technology; cultural/socio-political habits; and uncontrolled demography. Given that, often, it is the poorest in rural and urban communities that are most dependent on forests; hence deforestation and forest degradation increase their vulnerability, and hampers efforts to improve their livelihoods.

Moreover, there is overwhelming evidence that Africa is the most vulnerable continent to the adverse impacts of climate change and variability largely due to weak adaptive capacity. In this regard, climate change and variability continue to create serious challenges to the sustainability of biophysical and social-economic systems. The continued erosion of such systems is slowing down socio-economic development and jeopardizing the environmental stability of most of the African countries, especially in their efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals and Africa Agenda 2063, among other national and regional development aspirations.

To reverse the current trends in deforestation and forest degradation in Africa, and vulnerability to climate change impacts, strategies need to be designed and implemented that address drivers of forest loss. Livelihood improvement linked to forest protection has been advocated as an important solution and should be promoted to mitigate forest cover loss and in building the resilience of communities to climate change impacts. It is also evident that the focus on women, youth and marginalized groups is critical in the design of interventions for building resilience of biophysical and socio-economic systems as one of the means to strengthen adaptation capacity of people and plants to the adverse impacts of climate change.

For its annual plan of work for 2022, AFF plans to facilitate the implementation of four pilot projects that will promote adoption of:

1. Land use management policies and practices that explicitly incorporate forest biodiversity and ecosystem services as well as conservation needs that enable land users to maximise the economic, social and ecological benefits from land.
2. Viable alternative sources of livelihood that are compatible with containing forest cover loss in different forest types while simultaneously promoting economic and social empowerment of stakeholders, especially women and youth.
3. Gender sensitive forest-based measures and policies that improve the adaptation and resilience to adverse effects of climate change on forests and on people who depend on them.
4. **The Call**

Support will be provided to a total of four pilot projects on different forest types in Africa for community-based organisations or national non-governmental organisations who are actively involved in activities related to forestry and climate change. The duration of the support for the pilot projects is initially for 2 years and concept notes should focus on all the following outputs:

* Innovative ideas for protecting and sustainably managing the forest resource base to enhance supply of ecosystem goods and services,
* Viable alternative sources of livelihoods that have potential to contain forest cover loss, taking gender (women and youth) into consideration
* Sound gender sensitive adaptation measures or practices that improve the resilience of the biophysical and social-economic systems to changing climate.

Proposals must be highly visible, technically and financially sound, and lead to qualitatively and quantitatively measurable concrete results. They should incorporate the dissemination of knowledge. The demonstration character is particularly important. A successful pilot project should be accessible to all potential stakeholders and aims to encourage other stakeholders to use the innovative solutions including technologies, techniques, and methods demonstrated in the project.

**4. Eligibility**

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

***4.1 General eligibility criteria***

1. Applicant must be a community-based or non-governmental organisation registered in an African nation.
2. Proposed pilot project and activities must be clearly related to, and likely to advance forest protection, forest conservation, socio economic development and adaptation to climate change in Africa.
3. All application materials must be complete and received by the AFF Secretariat on or before the application deadline.
	1. ***Specific eligibility criteria***

Prospective applicants must be a local community-based organisation (CBO), or a national non-governmental organisation (NGO) in Africa with demonstrated capacity to undertake the above tasks at a community level and should meet the following minimum qualifications and skills:

1. Be a renown and officially registered organisation with proven realisations in the sector of forestry in an African country.
2. Have close and well documented working relationships with key forestry institutions in their location and in-country.
3. Have a good record and experience on securing and managing projects related to forestry at the community level, with special focus on sustainable land and forest management approaches, forest-based livelihoods, and climate change as well as gender considerations and capacity building.
4. Demonstrate good networking and partnership capacity.

**5. Application requirements**

The applicant shall submit the following:

* Cover letter stating how your organisation meets the above requirements;
* A profile of the organisation including mandate, registration certification and scope of activities covered
* A profile of the people in the organisation including CVs of the people to participate in the implementation of the pilot project
* Name of at least one potential local partner
* A reference and support letter from at least one potential local partner indicating their organisations’ willingness to partner from inception to completion.
* A concept pilot project proposal by completing the provided Application Form titled:

“APPLICATION FOR PILOT PROJECT PROPOSALS ON SUSTAINABLE LAND MANAGEMENT FOR LIVELIHOOD IMPROVEMENT AND STABILITY OF ECOSYSTEMS IN THE CONTEXT OF CHANGING CLIMATE IN AFRICA”

**6. Grant Terms and budget**

A modest grant of up to **USD 12,000** will be awarded to support the field activities of the pilot project over a duration of two years.

The funding should mainly invest in field activities with potential to benefit local communities. The funding should not cover salary of permanent staff of the organisation, however a maximum of 13% of the budget could cover administrative costs. The rest of the budget should cover all field activities and required inputs.

**7. Application assessment and selection**

All applications that meet the general and specific eligibility criteria will subsequently be evaluated against the following:

1. Quality of the project proposal with clearly stated objectives, methodology and expected results.
2. Technical merit of the proposed work.
3. Qualifications and capabilities of the applicants to undertake the proposed work.
4. Appropriateness of the proposed budget.
5. Appropriateness of the organisation and partners.

**Concepts development:**

The following key criteria will be used for evaluation of the concepts

1. Relevance of the action to the objective of the call: The concept note should clearly address the choses priority sustainable land management practices to contain loss of forest cover in the area, livelihood improvement alternatives that are compatible with containing loss of forest cover in the project area, and on sound gender sensitive adaptation measures and policies that improve the resilience of the biophysical and social-economic systems to changing climate.
2. Link to national priorities and SDGs: The concept note should demonstrate that the proposed work and activities are aligned with the priorities of the country in which the organisation operates (by referring to specific provisions / orientations in national policies and strategies)
3. Address local communities’ needs: The concept should demonstrate that it addresses local communities’ needs (e.g., referring to specific orientations or priorities in local development plans) or ideally based on credible information originating from consultations and engagement with stakeholders, involving the beneficiaries and target group at the community level and with emphasis on particular interest groups and gender considerations. The involvement of women and youth is critical. The concept note should show how the project stakeholders will be involved in implementing the pilot project.
4. Cost effectiveness and leverage co-funding: It is expected that the proposed project will meet cost effectiveness criteria as well as demonstrate ability to leverage co-funding, either in cash or in-kind from sources within and outside their countries. The pilot project could also target a missing component / aspect of an ongoing initiative; with potential to drive / strengthen the success of that initiative.
5. Sustainability of the action: The concept should show how sustainability will be secured after completion of the action. This can include aspects of necessary follow-up activities including potential for replication, built-in strategies, ownership etc. This can also be in the form of a clear business model sustaining itself after the pilot project has ended.
6. Theory of change: The pathway to achieving the desired change through the project intervention has to be clear in an iterative and incremental manner. This will be critical in giving clarity on the logical implementation design with inbuilt mechanism to lead to the desired change.
7. Organisational mandate: Evidence that the organisation is mandated legally and has basic capacity to support project implementation. An official registration certificate should be provided.

**8.0 How to apply**

Please submit your application quoting the number and title of this consultancy on the subject line as: “Consultancy no: 01-1.1.3.3 AFF Application for pilot project proposals - On Sustainable land management for livelihood improvement and stability of ecosystems in the context of changing climate in Africa” and email to the following address: **d.mutta@cgiar.org****,** **d.dayamba@cgiar.org****,** **m.ojoyi@cgiar.org**with a copy to**exec.sec@afforum.org****.**

***8.1 Application must include the following:***

1. A completed AFF Proposal application form “Application for pilot project proposals - On

Sustainable land management for livelihood improvement and stability of ecosystems in the context of changing climate in Africa”

1. All the supporting documents listed at point 5.0 above.

***8.2 Deadlines***

1. Applications must be received by the AFF Secretariat before or by 07 June 2022.
2. Successful applicants will be informed by 20 June 2022.
3. Pilot project activities should begin no later than 21 July 2022
4. **Duration of assignment**

The implementation of the pilot activities shall be for a period of 2-year duration from **21 July 2022.** The applicant will be in close consultation with relevant staff at the AFF Secretariat while keeping to agreed delivery schedule. In case of any need for clarification please contact d.mutta@cgiar.org, d.dayamba@cgiar.org, m.ojoyi@cgiar.org, with a copy to exec.sec@afforum.org.