



African Forest Forum

A platform for stakeholders in African forestry



Strengthening Management and Use of Forest Ecosystems for Sustainable Development in Africa

Project progress report (January – December 2020), funded by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida)

Sida Contribution ID 13331



About AFF

Established in 2007 as a non-political, non-governmental, objective, independent and not for profit international organisation, the African Forest Forum (AFF) is an association of individuals with a commitment to the sustainable management, wise use and conservation of Africa's forest and tree resources for the socio-economic well-being of its peoples and for the stability and improvement of its environment.

AFF exists to voice the concerns of African forestry stakeholders, and to use science, indigenous knowledge, and experience to advocate for the increasing relevance of forests and trees outside forests to peoples' livelihoods, national economies and the stability of the environment.

In this regard, AFF provides independent analysis and advice to national, regional and international institutions and actors on how economic, food security and environmental issues can be addressed through the sustainable management of forests and trees outside forests. Operationally, AFF mobilises resources to address forestry and related issues that cut across countries and different African sub-regions with a view of enhancing the relevance and contribution of forests and trees outside forests to the livelihoods of the people of Africa and stability of their environment.

Vision

The leading forum that unites all stakeholders in African forestry

Mission

To contribute to the improvement of the livelihoods of the people of Africa and the environment they live in through the sustainable management and use of tree and forest resources on the African continent.

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AFF	African Forest Forum
AUC	African Union Commission
COVID-19	Corona Virus Disease 2019
ES	Executive Secretary
FAO	Food and Agricultural Organisation
GC	Governing Council
GCF	Global Climate Finance
GGW	Great Green Wall
GEF	Global Environmental Facility
GFFFN	Global Forest Financing Facilitation Network
GHG	Green House Gases
HAFL	Bern University School of Agricultural, Forest and Food Sciences
ICRAF	World Agroforestry
KMC	Knowledge Management and Communications
MEA	Multilateral Environmental Agreement
MOUs	Memoranda of Understanding
NDC	Nationally Determined Contributions
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organizations
PMER	Planning Monitoring Evaluation and Reporting
PSAC	Project Steering and Advisory Committee
RA	Research Agreement
REDD+	Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and forest Degradation in Developing countries
ROC	Republic of Congo
SDC	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
Sida	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
SLU	Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences
UNFF	United Nations Forum on Forests

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The African Forest Forum (AFF) is a pan-African international organization which aims at providing a platform and creating an enabling environment for independent and objective analysis, advocacy and advice on relevant policy and technical issues pertaining to sustainable management, use and conservation of Africa's forests and tree resources, as part of efforts to eradicate poverty, promote gender equality, economic and social development and stability of the environment.

AFF has an ongoing three-year Sida supported project entitled '*Strengthening management and use of forest ecosystems for sustainable development in Africa*' that aims at generating and sharing 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.

During its first year of project implementation in 2020, the AFF Secretariat concentrated its efforts on prioritised forestry issues to studies that could generate and/or update knowledge and information to strengthen and deepen understanding of the issues. To this end, the Secretariat established and executed partnership arrangements to accomplish this, including creating partnerships with various universities on the African continent through Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) and Research Agreements (RAs) on the prioritised studies, and also recruiting experts from various sub-regions in Africa to conduct other additional studies prioritised in the 2020 Plan of Work and Budget. The expected project outputs were aimed at strengthening knowledge and understanding on the issues and contributing to the achievement of expected project outcomes; all ultimately contributing to strengthened forest management on the continent.

In the context of the COVID-19 pandemic that was characterised with restricted travel, face to face gatherings, and workplace closures, the project activities were successfully executed through virtual convenings to deliberate on technical operational aspects of the studies, and desk-based analyses to consolidate baselines for the prioritised studies in preparation for field research. Large face to face gatherings had to be deferred to a later period when the COVID-19 restrictions would have eased.

The following is a brief on the achievements for the period 01 January to 31 December 2020:

1. Partnerships with fifteen universities in Africa created through Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) and Research Agreements for sixteen postgraduate students. In addition, consultancy contracts with 14 regional and 15 national experts. The agreements and contracts establish contractual obligations for each partner in the execution of agreed scope of work in line with the expected project outputs and outcomes.

The expert studies are on:

- Analysis of sustainable land use management policies and practices in different forest types in Africa;
- Strengthening the capacity of stakeholders in African forestry to contain loss of forest cover in different forest types;
- Assessment of forest planning and forest management in different forest types in selected African countries;
- The potential of African countries for the production and use of liquid biofuels as a strategy for developing green and circular economies in Africa;
- Analysis of AFF's knowledge management processes and products;
- Gender analysis of AFF's programmes, plans and activities; and
- Assessment of AFF's efficiency and effectiveness in planning, implementation and utilisation of resources

The postgraduate research studies are on:

- Assessment of trends of impacts of climate change on forest and tree resources, and coping mechanisms in Africa; and
 - Assessment of gender responsive resilience to climate change of forest related biophysical and socio-economic systems.
2. Baselines and harmonized research approaches elaborated for the studies listed in 1. above through inception reports and workshops that harmonized the study methodologies developed by the experts. The inception reports elaborated the conceptual frameworks for the studies, outlining a sequenced approach to the key result areas. Harmonized methodologies included tools for data collection and analysis for each result area; as well as consensus on key institutions and respondents to consult for in-depth studies on the priority forestry issues.
 3. Systematic desk-based overview on issues, status and trends on the key result areas for the studies listed in 1. above established through thirteen structured literature review reports developed by the experts. The literature review reports present a critical analysis of current evidence on the key result areas, issues, themes and indicators gathered through a survey of scholarly sources including books, journal articles, government publications and project reports. The analysis is also valuable in revealing gaps in knowledge that would inform research questions for further in-depth field studies and leading to a more focused collection of primary data that could contribute to a better understanding of the priority issues.
 4. Stakeholders from governments, research and academia, civil society and media worldwide improving their understanding of various forestry issues through information availed by AFF web-based platforms as demonstrated through 462,915 visits made to AFF's website from 152 countries during the reporting period. Also, a total of 2,564,877 pages were opened and 24,329 documents including 214 AFF knowledge products downloaded from it: in addition to an increase to 1,058 followers on twitter and 3,484 likes on Facebook.

1. INTRODUCTION

After the approval of the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) and the African Forest Forum (AFF) Agreement on the three-year Sida support to AFF on a project namely, *Strengthening management and use of forest ecosystems for sustainable development in Africa* (Sida Contribution No. 13331 signed on 9 September 2019), the AFF Secretariat prepared the first Plan of Work and Budget for implementation of the project activities from September 2019 to December 2020. The Plan of Work and Budget was reviewed and endorsed by the Project Steering and Advisory Committee (PSAC) and approved by the Executive Committee of the AFF Governing Council during their consultations and meetings held in September and November 2019.

This current report presents progress made on the implementation of the Sida support over the period: 01 January to 31 December 2020 (*The report for September to December 2019 was already submitted and approved in 2020*). The overall objective 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 addresses climate change impacts, poverty eradication and environmental protection in Africa. The objective is to be achieved through the implementation of five project components, each addressing the critical issues of corresponding objectives, but all of which are intricately inter-related.

1.1 The project components, objectives and outcomes

The project has five components, eight interlinked objectives and twenty expected outcomes as outlined below:

Component 1. Sustainable management and use of land-based ecosystems with the preservation of biodiversity.

Objective 1: To identify and promote opportunities for protecting and sustainably managing the forest resource base on the continent as well as the supply of its ecosystem goods and services.

Outcome 1.1: Gender disaggregated stakeholders increasingly protecting forest lands and adopting appropriate sustainable land use management policies and practices.

Outcome 1.2: Stakeholders, by gender, capacitated to use improved knowledge, skills and best practices to contain loss of forest cover.

Outcome 1.3: Stakeholders, by gender, in African forestry capacitated to sustainably manage the forest resource base in ways that enhance the supply of ecosystem goods and services.

Component 2. Climate change and ecosystem services

Objective 2: 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.

Outcome 2.1: Better understanding cultivated on the relationship between forests and trees, ecosystem services, and climate change in different contexts.

Outcome 2.2: Better understanding of measures to increase the resilience to adverse effects of climate change on forests and tree resources and on people who depend on them, disaggregated by gender.

Outcome 2.3: African stakeholder institutions capacitated to implement recommendations and decisions from global climate change agreements, including NDCs, REDD+ and the Kyoto Protocol under the Paris Agreement.

Component 3. Renewable energy

Objective 3: To examine the potential for production and use of liquid biofuels in Africa as a means towards developing green and circular national economies.

Outcome 3.1: An understanding of the scale of production, use and potential for biofuels in Africa.

Outcome 3.2: An appreciation of the manner in which land shifts in the production of biofuels, food and primary forestry on the continent.

Outcome 3.3: Better understanding of the relationship between production and consumption of biofuels and greenhouse gases (GHGs).

Component 4. Multilateral Environmental Agreements

Objective 4: To enhance national forest governance by strengthening African capacity to effectively participate in multilateral environmental processes, and mainstream and implement decisions from them into their national policies and activities.

Outcome 4.1: African delegates to MEA discourses effectively negotiate and articulate their forestry related interests.

Outcome 4.2: African stakeholders have better understanding of new and emerging issues related to forestry.

Outcome 4.3: African stakeholders capacitated to implement recommendations and decisions from MEAs on forests and related issues.

Outcome 4.4: African stakeholders capacitated to access global funding opportunities that come with the MEAs.

Component 5. Strengthening AFF as an institution

Objective 5a: To strengthen the capacity of the Knowledge Management and Communication (KM&C) Unit in managing and sharing of information.

Outcome 5.1: Stakeholders receiving and using quality and timely reliable information from AFF.

Outcome 5.2: Stakeholders have improved access to AFF knowledge products and services.

Objective 5b: To strengthen the Planning, Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting (PMER) Unit to effectively support AFF activities.

Outcome 5.3: AFF operating with improved processes and efficiency in the management of its projects and services.

Outcome 5.4: AFF programmes, plans and activities are gender sensitive and responsive.

Objective 5c: To strengthen the Finance and Administration (F&A) Unit for improved management of financial and administrative functions.

Outcome 5.5: Enhanced capacity for financial monitoring, accounting and reporting.

Outcome 5.6: Enhanced efficiency in administration of AFF activities.

Objective 5d: To improve overall governance and oversight on AFF activities.

Outcome 5.7: The Governing Council and its committees, together with PSAC, providing good policy guidance to AFF Secretariat and effective oversight on its plans, activities and finances.

1.2 The project approach

In addressing these five components, AFF seeks to influence and facilitate organizations (governmental and non-governmental) and individual stakeholders to take actions that lead to improved forest management in ways that would eventually strengthen sustainable development in Africa. This will be done through promoting approaches for protecting, planning and sustainably managing the forest resource, and supply of ecosystem goods and services on the continent (Component 1), catalyzing research and development on the relationship between climate change and forests, forest ecosystems, and people (Component 2), and on renewable bio-based energy options dynamics (Component 3). Also, through facilitating capacity development of African stakeholders on climate change resilience (Component 2), on participating in and addressing concerns from global forest related discourses, and on new and emerging issues (Component 4); in addition to strengthening mechanisms for knowledge brokerage to broader constituencies of influence, as well as monitoring, evaluation and reporting on impacts of project outcomes for organizational history and learning (Component 5).

To this end AFF will undertake independent and objective analyses (with respect to activities comprising these components) and provide evidence-based advice (based on outputs from the work done through these components) to national, regional and international institutions and other actors, on how economic, livelihood, climate change, food security and other environmental issues can be addressed through better management and use of forest ecosystems and trees outside forests in the context of sustainable development. Further, gender issues as relate to the project components will be explicitly considered through identified project activities that specifically target women and youth. To AFF, gender is not only having sufficient numbers of women in activities but also putting emphasis on policies and actions whose outputs increase benefits to women and youth.

1.3 Synergies between the Sida and SDC supported projects

In implementing the project synergies with the SDC supported project on *African Forests, people and climate change* are critical in leveraging expertise and resources required for

addressing themes/issues that have been prioritized by both projects. To this end the activities already identified in the 2020 Plan of Work and Budget for both projects were coordinated to strengthen implementation of the two projects in a complementary manner that would secure the delivery of respective project outputs and ultimately contribute to the achievement of projects' outcomes and impacts. The project also builds on the foundation laid by a previous Sida funded project on *Strengthening sustainable forest management in Africa*, that was implemented in 2014-2019 as well as from previous phase of the SDC-supported project.

The areas of synergy are outlined below:

With respect to Component 1 of the Sida support on Sustainable management and use of land-based ecosystems with the preservation of biodiversity, both projects aim to contribute to enhanced livelihoods, employment, national incomes and through improved management of forests, trees and ecosystems, including for NTFPs. The Sida grant is supporting analyses that will identify and promote alternative livelihood options that are compatible with containing forest cover loss. On the other hand, the SDC support is promoting entrepreneurship on climate resilient livelihood opportunities focusing on gums and resins. Also, a partnership initiative between FAO, Great Green Wall (GGW) and AFF is focusing on non-timber forest products value chains for improved livelihoods and socio-ecological resilience to climate change impacts in the Sahel region. Another partnership between AFF and SLU has focused on charcoal and honey value chains analyses, also aimed to promote livelihood improvement options.

With respect to Component 2 of the Sida support on Climate change and forest ecosystems, both projects aim to assist stakeholders to integrate both adaptation and mitigation options in response to the impacts of climate change. The Sida support is catalyzing research on the relationship between climate change and forests, and people, including gender groups, through postgraduate fellowships in partnership with fifteen universities in Africa. The SDC support is focusing on capacity development of African stakeholders on climate change resilience, through the development and adoption of an already AFF developed "Mitigation and Adaptation Framework", research fellowships on international forestry and climate change through the AFF- Bern University School of Agricultural, Forest and Food Sciences (HAFL) partnership and developing contextualized training compendiums on forests and climate change adaptation and mitigation.

With respect to Component 3 of the Sida support on Renewable energy, both projects aim to enhance understanding of the manner in which land shifts in the production of biofuels, food and primary forestry on the continent. Prior SDC support contributed to analyses on the dynamics on biofuel production and use in the context of climate change. The Sida support will build on the analyses and is exploring the potential for production and use of liquid biofuels in Africa as a means towards developing green and circular national economies.

With respect to Component 4 of the Sida support on Multilateral Environmental Agreements, both projects aim to strengthen Africa's capacity to participate in multilateral environmental processes and addressing global concerns including new and emerging trends. Both Sida and SDC support contribute to the forest related multilateral processes, as well as climate change global policies and initiatives; however, the Sida support is focused to a greater extent on forest related processes while the SDC support is more on climate change processes. Both Sida and SDC support focus on capacity building of African countries on mainstreaming MEAs in their national policies, plans and activities. During the reporting period the SDC support focused on development of training modules for capacity building on development of bankable projects to mainstream MEAs. The Sida support will, once the training modules are ready, facilitate, jointly with SDC support, the training of trainers for development of projects to mobilize global financial resources targeting sources such as GCF, GEF, GFFN-UNFF. An AFF- Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences (SLU) research partnership on impact of COVID-19 pandemic on sustainable livelihoods, forests, and conservation in Africa will contribute to discussions at regional and global discourses.

With respect to Component 5 of the Sida support on Strengthening AFF as an institution, both Sida and SDC support jointly facilitate i) strengthening of mechanisms for knowledge brokerage to broader constituencies of influence on stakeholder needs; ii) strengthening of the institution's capacity for knowledge management; iii) strengthening of the institution's capacity for managing its financial, human and physical resources; iv) improving of communication with AFF members through web-based platforms, WhatsApp groups, info mail and other social media; v) improving of the planning, monitoring, evaluation and reporting systems on impacts of project outcomes for organizational history and learning; vi) strengthening of the capacity for gender mainstreaming in all AFF activities and programmes; and vii) improving of overall governance and oversight on AFF activities.

1.4 The Covid-19 Context

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic that was declared by WHO in March 2020, the AFF Secretariat prepared a COVID-19 Business Continuity Plan for the project that provided for the effective delivery of the POWB in the context of restricted travel (in-country and international) and face to face gatherings. Consequently, activities that could proceed through desk top analysis, virtual platforms and in-country field visits were prioritized and facilitated during 2020.

In this regard, the activities that could proceed through desk top analysis and virtual platforms were prioritized and successfully facilitated during the first half of 2020. Accordingly, desk-based deliverables for consultancies namely inception reports, literature review reports and data collection tools; and for postgraduate research fellowships namely MOUs and Research Agreements with the universities where the students are registered, and research methodologies for the students harmonized to take into account AFF's interests were concluded in advance of field research. The successful delivery of the documents comprised the milestones on the experts' contracts and research agreements.

In the second half of the year many countries in Africa lifted lockdowns thus permitting travel within countries and small gatherings but very limited cross-border movements. Consequently, those activities that required field research, travel and face to face meetings were implemented during the second half of 2020. During this period the AFF Secretariat facilitated field research in those countries and engaged additional experts at the national level to conduct country studies to contribute to the project sub-regional analyses. Large gatherings, including workshops and training sessions, have been deferred to 2021 and have been factored into the 2021 Plan of Work and Budget.

This approach enabled the Secretariat to make progress on the POWB amidst the COVID-19 pandemic work environment. The Secretariat continues to conduct regular monitoring of the evolving COVID-19 pandemic conditions in African countries, in order to gauge the evolving enabling work environment that would be safe and secure for AFF staff, experts and other project implementing partners, while ensuring high quality of deliverables is achieved.

Scientific staff at the AFF Secretariat also participate in undertaking some of the activities and in coordinating and supervising all the project activities. They also provide the required reporting on the project activities, as well as ensure that the project outputs reach the desired audiences. In 2020 the AFF Secretariat had five scientific staff for all its scientific activities. They were supported by three technical specialists, a senior administrative officer and a senior finance officer. One additional scientific staff, at senior programme level was being recruited to report for work in January 2021.

This report focuses on key intervention areas that were undertaken during the year 2020. Achievements on the project components are as presented in the next section.

2. PROGRESS AND ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2020

2.1 Component 1. Sustainable management and use of land-based ecosystems with the preservation of biodiversity

The project objective under this component is *to identify and promote opportunities for protecting and sustainably managing the forest resource base to enhance supply of ecosystem goods and services*. The fulfilment of this objective is expected to yield three project outcomes as presented below.

Project outcome 1.1 Gender disaggregated stakeholders increasingly protecting forest lands and adopting appropriate sustainable land use management policies and practices;

The main project activity which has to be undertaken in order to realise this outcome is analysis of existing sustainable land management policies and practices in different forest types in Africa, specifically moist/rain forest, mangroves, woodlands, and parklands, and taking gender into consideration. The analysis will contribute to evidence-based adoption of land use systems that enable land users to maximise the economic, social and ecological benefits from the land while protecting forests. The following were achievements made towards this process during the reporting period.

Harmonized methodologies for analysis of sustainable land use management policies and practices in different sub-regions in Africa developed

Harmonised and easily replicable methodologies for effective analysis of sustainable land use management policies and practices in eastern, central, western and southern Africa sub-regions achieved through two virtual meetings organised on 23 and 27 April 2020. The meetings brought together six sub-regional experts contracted to conduct the sub-regional analyses. The experts agreed on:

- deliverables on key result areas that would provide outputs which, if implemented, could contribute to better protection of forest lands;
- approaches for sampling, the study sites, forest types to be studied, information and data to be collected in each country and sub-region;
- stakeholders and institutions to consult; and
- COVID-19 compliant timelines.

Inception reports for analysis of sustainable land use management policies and practices in different sub-regions in Africa produced

Based on the results of the virtual meetings on harmonising the study methodologies, four inception reports, one for each sub-region, were prepared by the experts. These reports establish the foundational baseline for the studies. The reports elaborate the conceptual framework for undertaking the studies; issues, themes and indicators to be studied; the methodological approaches and tools to generate data on key result areas; key stakeholder groups to engage, as well as the detailed COVID-19 compliant timetable.

Literature review reports on sustainable land use management policies and practices in different sub-regions in Africa produced

In the context of the elaborated conceptual framework, a desk-based systematic overview of existing evidence on sustainable land use management policies and practices in the different forests types in different sub-regions was produced through 4 structured literature review reports, one for each sub-region. The literature review reports resulted in a) documentation of sustainable land use management policies and practices for different forest types in countries in all the sub-regions; their potential to protect forests; and identifying gender sensitive tools and mechanisms for protecting forests for adoption by

stakeholders, and b) a critical evaluation of all the research that has been conducted on each key result area, and of information documented in published as well as in grey literature including policy documents, project reports, etc on the countries.

Specifically, the literature review focused on the following Key Results:

Key Result Area 1: Land management approaches and practices, including policies, institutions and legal measures guiding them, applied in different forest type areas documented;

Key Result Area 2: The sustainability of promising land management approaches and practices identified under Key Result Area 1 above assessed;

Key Result Area 3: The potential of the identified land management approaches and practices under Key Result Area 2 above, in terms of their compatibility with (a) the forestry development and (b) protection of forests and (c) development and protection of trees outside forests evaluated;

Key Result Area 4: The extent to which forest stakeholders are incorporating the identified Sustainable Land Management (SLM) approaches and practices in their forest plans and activities assessed;

Key Result Area 5: Gender roles in protecting forest lands and in adoption of appropriate SLM approaches and practices in selected different forest types assessed; and

Key Result Area 6: Institutional, policy, legal mechanisms and other measures that can be employed to enhance protection of forest lands in the study areas, identified.

The synthesis of this work presents the current status and trends on the key result areas in different forest types in all the countries, and gaps in knowledge and information required for the studies. Based on this analysis, a representative sample of the countries was selected for in-depth studies through field visits. Subsequently, the experts are currently conducting in-depth studies in selected countries where lockdowns have been lifted. In some countries where cross-border movement is still restricted national consultants have been engaged to support the sub-regional experts in data collection.

The findings of the studies will subsequently be shared with relevant stakeholders during 2021 through a planned stakeholders' information sharing workshop, the COVID-19 pandemic permitting.

Project outcome 1.2 Stakeholders, by gender, capacitated to use improved knowledge, skills and best practices to contain loss of forest cover

The main project activity that has to be undertaken in order to realise this outcome is assessment of dynamics of drivers of forest cover change, more specifically those that drive deforestation and forest degradation. This is in addition to evaluation of initiatives such as gender sensitive livelihood options, undertaken to contain forest cover loss in different forest types in Africa. The analyses will contribute to development of evidence-based strategies and approaches that would equip stakeholders with effective gender-sensitive technologies, skills and best practices to contain forest cover loss while simultaneously

promoting economic and social empowerment of relevant forest dependent stakeholders. *This activity is being undertaken in synergy with the SDC supported project.*

The following were achievements made towards this process during the reporting period.

Harmonised methodologies for analytical assessment of drivers of forest cover change, and evaluation of initiatives undertaken to contain forest cover loss in different forest types in Africa developed.

Two virtual meetings organised on 23 and 27 April 2020 produced harmonised and easily replicable methodologies for effective assessment of dynamics of drivers of forest cover change that drive deforestation and forest degradation, and evaluation of gender sensitive initiatives that could contain forest cover loss in eastern and southern Africa sub-regions, and central and west Africa sub-regions. The meetings brought together two regional experts contracted to conduct the sub-regional analyses. The sessions agreed on:

- deliverables on key result areas that would lead to strengthened capacities of stakeholders to contain forest cover loss;
- approaches for sampling and study sites selection;
- forest types to be studied;
- information and data to be collected in each country and sub-region;
- stakeholders and institutions to consult; and
- COVID-19 compliant timelines.

Inception reports for assessment of drivers of forest cover change and evaluation of initiatives to contain forest cover loss in different forest types in Africa produced.

Based on the results of the virtual meetings on harmonising the study methodologies, two inception reports, one for eastern and southern Africa sub-regions, and the other for central and west Africa sub-regions, were prepared by the experts. These reports establish the foundational baseline for the studies. The reports elaborate the conceptual framework for undertaking the studies; issues, themes and indicators to be studied; the methodological approaches for each key result area; key stakeholder groups to engage; data collection and analysis tools, as well as the detailed COVID-19 compliant timetables.

Literature review reports on drivers of forest cover change and evaluation of initiatives to contain forest cover loss in different forest types in Africa produced.

In the context of the elaborated conceptual framework, a desk-based systematic overview of existing evidence on dynamics of key drivers of forest cover change in the different forests types in different sub-regions was produced through two structured literature review reports, one for central and west Africa sub-regions, and one for eastern and southern Africa sub-regions. The literature review reports provided a) comprehensive documentation of drivers of forest cover change and their dynamics, as well as livelihood options in different forest types in all the sub-regions; and b) a critical evaluation of research that has been conducted on each key result area, and of information documented in published as well as in grey literature, including policy documents, project reports, etc., on the countries.

Specifically, the literature review focused on the following Key Result Areas:

Key Result Area 1: The key drivers responsible for forest cover loss in different forest types and their dynamics, with explicit gender considerations identified and analysed;

Key Result Area 2: Gender-based measures and initiatives taken by various stakeholders to reverse deforestation and forest degradation trends evaluated; and

Key Result Area 3: With respect to Key Result Area 2 above, a comprehensive analysis of viable alternative sources of livelihood that have potential to contain forest cover loss while simultaneously promoting economic and social empowerment of stakeholders, especially women and youth conducted.

The synthesis of the reports presents the current status and trends on the key result areas in all the countries and gaps in knowledge and information required for the studies. Based on this analysis, a representative sample of the forest types and countries were selected for in-depth studies through field visits. Subsequently, the experts are currently conducting in-depth studies in selected countries where lockdowns have been lifted. In some countries where cross-border movement is still restricted national consultants have been engaged to support the sub-regional experts in data collection.

The findings of the studies will subsequently be shared with relevant stakeholders during 2021 through a planned stakeholders' information sharing workshop, the COVID-19 pandemic permitting.

Project outcome 1.3 Stakeholders, by gender, in African forestry capacitated to sustainably manage the forest resource base in ways that enhance the supply of ecosystem goods and services

The main project activity that has to be undertaken in order to realise this outcome is to evaluate ways for improving forest planning and forest management of different forest types in selected countries in Anglophone, Lusophone and Francophone Africa, with the aim to enhance the supply of forest ecosystem goods and services. The findings will contribute to development of training modules, based on gaps identified, that would equip stakeholders with improved knowledge, skills and best practices for effective planning and management of forests and tree resources, including NTFPs, for enhanced supply of ecosystem goods and services.

The following were achievements made towards this process during the reporting period.

Harmonised methodologies for evaluating ways for improving forest planning and forest management in selected countries in Africa to enhance the supply of forest ecosystem goods and services developed.

Two virtual meetings, organised on 24 and 28 April 2020, produced harmonised and easily replicable methodologies for evaluating ways for improving forest planning and forest management in selected countries in Anglophone, Lusophone and Francophone Africa. The meetings brought together two regional experts contracted to conduct the sub-regional analyses. The sessions agreed on:

- deliverables on key result areas that would contribute to strengthened capacities of stakeholders for effective forest planning and forest management;
- approaches for sampling and sites selection, and forest types to be studied;
- information and data to be collected in each country and sub-region;
- stakeholders, and institutions to consult; and
- COVID-19 compliant timelines.

Inception reports for evaluating ways for improving forest planning and forest management in selected countries in Africa to enhance the supply of forest ecosystem goods and services in Africa produced.

Based on the results of the virtual meetings on harmonising the study methodologies, two inception reports, one for Anglophone and Lusophone countries, and the other for Francophone countries, were prepared by the experts. The reports establish the foundational baseline for the studies. The reports elaborate the conceptual framework for undertaking the studies; issues, themes and indicators to be studied; the methodological approaches for each key results area; key stakeholder groups to engage; data collection and analysis tools, as well as the detailed COVID-19 compliant timetables.

Literature review reports on evaluation of ways for improving forest planning and forest management in selected countries in Africa to enhance the supply of forest ecosystem goods and services in Africa produced.

In the context of the elaborated conceptual framework, a desk-based systematic overview of existing evidence on forest planning and forest management processes in different forest types in different countries and sub-regions was produced through two structured literature review reports, one for Anglophone and Lusophone countries and one for Francophone countries. The literature review reports resulted in a) comprehensive documentation of processes for forest planning and forest management for different forest types in different countries; including capacity requirements and gaps analysis and b) a critical evaluation of the research that has been conducted on each key result area, and of information documented in published, as well as in grey literature, including policy documents, project reports, etc., on the countries.

Specifically, the literature review focused on the following Key Result Areas:

Key Result Area 1: Planning processes applied in different forest types in the selected countries evaluated.

Key Result Area 2: Adequacy of the plans (annual, short, long term, tree and stand level, etc.), in terms of: quality of information and tools; adequacy of knowledge and skills used for planning and management; sensitivity to gender considerations; and constraints in planning and ways to contain them evaluated;

Key Result Area 3: Extent of compliance to plans by implementing institutions, constraints experienced and how to overcome them evaluated;

Key Result Area 4: State of management of the forest types in the selected countries, including constraints experienced and measures to improve various operations that characterise forest management evaluated; and

Key Result Area 5: Training module or guidelines that can support capacity building in forest planning and forest management developed.

The synthesis of the reports presents the current status and trends on the key result areas in all the countries and gaps in knowledge and information required for the studies. Based on the analysis, a representative sample of the forest types and countries were selected for in-depth studies. Subsequently, the experts are currently conducting in-depth studies in selected countries where lockdowns have been lifted. In some countries where cross-border movement is still restricted national experts have been engaged to support the sub-regional experts in data collection.

The findings of the studies will subsequently be shared with relevant stakeholders during 2021 through a planned stakeholders' information sharing workshop, the COVID-19 pandemic permitting.

2.2 Component 2. Climate change and forest and tree-based ecosystem services

The project objective under this component 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*. The fulfilment of this objective is expected to yield the following project outcomes:

Project outcome 2.1: Better understanding cultivated on the relationship between forests and trees, ecosystem services, and climate change in different contexts

The project activities that have to be undertaken in order to realise this outcome are in-depth studies on the assessment of trends of impacts of climate change on forests, tree-resources, and on forest ecosystem services, as well as coping mechanisms in selected African countries covering the Sahel parklands, moist forests, mangroves, and woodlands. The improved stakeholders' understanding of the impacts of climate change and variability on forests, tree resources, and forest ecosystem services is expected to in turn support the development and/or strengthening of sound adaptation policies for improved resilience of the biophysical and social systems.

The studies are being conducted through postgraduate fellowships, in partnership with African universities where the students are registered. The studies will thus also result in capacity development and professional expertise in forestry among young professionals in Africa through joint research work undertaken between AFF and the universities through postgraduate programmes. *These studies are being conducted in synergy with the SDC supported project.*

The following were achievements made towards this process during the reporting period.

Harmonised methodologies for analysis of relationships between forests and trees, ecosystem services, and climate change in different contexts developed.

Virtual meetings organised on 6 and 7 May 2020 produced harmonised and easily replicable methodologies for analysis of relationships between forests and trees, ecosystem services, and climate change in different contexts. The meetings brought together twelve postgraduate research fellows and their supervisors to deliberate on the contribution of each student's research proposal to targeted AFF project activities, expected project outputs, and outcomes. For each student's research, the students and their supervisors agreed on:

- specific assessments to be conducted;
- deliverables on key result areas that could contribute to improved availability of up to date quality knowledge on relationships between forests and trees, ecosystem services, and climate change in different forest contexts; as well as contribute to the development of sound policies on climate change adaptation and resilience; and
- project compliant timelines.

Partnerships with African universities on postgraduate research created

Based on the outcome of the virtual meetings to harmonise the study methodologies, partnerships between the AFF Secretariat and African universities were created to provide a legal framework for collaborative research through development of Memoranda of Understanding (MOU). To this end MOUs have been concluded with ten universities as follows:

1. Pan African University, housed at the University of Ibadan, Nigeria
2. Université Alassane Ouattara, Côte d'Ivoire
3. Université D'Abomey-Calavi, Benin
4. Université de Yaoundé, Cameroon
5. Université Marien Ngouabi, Central African Republic
6. Université Nazi Boni, Burkina Faso
7. University of Dschang, Cameroon
8. University of Parakou, Benin
9. Wondo Genet College of Forestry and Natural Resources, Ethiopia
10. University of Zambia, Zambia

This is in addition to an on-going MOU with l'Université Ouaga 1 Professeur Ki-Zerbo, Burkina Faso that will be extended for a further five years upon its expiry in July 2021.

Further to the MOUs, a total of twelve Research Agreements that outline the scope of specified research have been signed with the eleven universities for twelve postgraduate research proposals as presented below.

1. *Assessment of Mau forest cover, climate change and impacts of evictions on livelihoods in Rift-valley, Kenya* by Alice Jebiwott, a PhD student at the Pan African University at the University of Ibadan, Nigeria
2. *Dynamique de l'arboriculture fruitière, des services écosystémiques et réduction de la vulnérabilité des populations aux changements climatiques dans la région des hautes terres de l'Ouest Cameroun* (Dynamics of fruit trees, ecosystem services and reduction of the vulnerability of populations to climate change in the highlands region of West Cameroon) by Danielle Morelle Tchouankap Chimi, a PhD student at the University of Dschang, Cameroon
3. *Social capital for forest and tree management and adaptation to climate variability and change: The case of pastoral and agro-pastoral Borana collaborative forest management, Southern Ethiopia* by Reta Regassa Jetu, a PhD student at the Hawassa University, Wondo Genet College of Forestry and Natural Resources, Ethiopia
4. *Climate change impacts on forest ecosystem services and livelihoods in Ethiopia: A case of Yayoo forest biosphere reserves* by Ferede Abuye, a PhD student at the Hawassa University, Wondo Genet College of Forestry and Natural resources, Ethiopia
5. *Impact des changements climatiques et de la dynamique du couvert végétal sur les services écosystémiques des aires protégées au sud du Burkina Faso* (Impact of climate change and the dynamics of plant cover on the ecosystem services of protected areas in southern Burkina Faso) by Rene Comlan Yaovi, a PhD student at the Université Nazi Boni (UNB), Burkina Faso
6. *Tendances climatiques, impacts sur les services écosystémiques des forêts et stratégies d'adaptation des communautés rurales au Bénin* (Climate trends, impacts on forest ecosystem services and adaptation strategies of rural communities in Benin) by Djidjoho Loth Gbossa, an MSc student at the University of Parakou, Benin
7. *De nouvelles informations sur l'adaptation et la vulnérabilité hydraulique au changement climatique pour 15 espèces d'arbres tropicaux d'Afrique centrale : caractéristiques anatomiques du bois et traits fonctionnels des feuilles* (New information on adaptation and hydraulic vulnerability to climate change for 15 species of tropical trees in Central Africa : anatomical characteristics of the wood and functional features of the leaves) by Geraud Mankou, a PhD student at Université Marien Ngouabi, ROC
8. *Menaces induites par les changements climatiques sur la résilience écologique des forêts tropicales du Cameroun: cas des forêts semi-décidues de Belabo* (Threats induced by climate change on the ecological resilience of tropical forests in

- Cameroon: the case of the semi-deciduous forests of Belabo) by Guylene Ngoukwa, a PhD student at Université de Yaoundé, Cameroon
9. *Effets des changements climatiques sur les Ressources forestières du couloir Dahomey gap En republique du Benin* (Effects of climate change on the Forest Resources of the Dahomey gap corridor in the Republic of Benin) by Romeo Brice Chadi, a PhD student at Université D'Abomey-Calavi, Benin
 10. *Séquestration du carbone dans le sol par le reboisement pour une meilleure gestion des terres au Burkina Faso* (Carbon sequestration in the soil through reforestation for better land management in Burkina Faso) by Sata Diawara, a PhD student at Université Joseph Ki-Zerbo, Burkina Faso
 11. *Changements hydroclimatiques et vulnérabilités biophysiques dans le Sud-ouest de la Côte d'Ivoire* (Hydroclimatic changes and biophysical vulnerabilities in the southwest of Côte d'Ivoire) by Yaya Doumbia, a PhD student at Université Alassane Ouattara, Côte d'Ivoire
 12. *Assessing the impacts of climate change on forests using remote sensing and GIS techniques: Case study of Kanona national forest, Zambia* by Davidson Mwele, an MSc student at University of Zambia.

Progress reports are to be submitted every six months.

Project outcome 2.2: Better understanding of measures to increase the resilience to adverse effects of climate change on forests and tree resources and on people who depend on them, disaggregated by gender;

The project activities that have to be undertaken in order to realise this outcome are in-depth studies on assessment of gender responsive resilience to climate change of forest related biophysical and socio-economic systems in selected countries covering Sahel parklands, moist forests, mangroves, and woodlands. The improved stakeholders' understanding of the measures on how to increase the resilience of biophysical and social-economic systems is expected to in turn support development and/or strengthening of sound gender sensitive adaptation policies and measures.

The studies will be conducted through postgraduate fellowships in partnerships with African universities. The studies will thus also result in capacity development and professional expertise in forestry among young professionals in Africa through joint research work undertaken between AFF and the universities through postgraduate programmes. *These studies will be conducted in synergy with the SDC supported project.*

The following were major achievements made towards this process during the reporting period.

Harmonised methodologies for assessment of measures on how to increase the resilience of biophysical and social-economic systems taking into account relevant gender and marginalized groups interests developed.

A virtual meeting organised on 7 May 2020 produced harmonised and easily replicable methodologies for assessment of measures on how to increase the resilience of biophysical and social-economic systems to climate change and variability. The meeting brought together six postgraduate research fellows and their supervisors to deliberate on the contribution of each student's research proposal to targeted AFF project activities, expected project outputs, and outcomes. For each student's research the students and their supervisors agreed on specific assessments to be conducted, deliverables on key result areas that would lead to improved availability of up-to-date quality knowledge on resilience of biophysical and social-economic systems taking into account relevant gender and marginalized groups; and project compliant timelines.

Partnerships with African universities on postgraduate research created

Based on the outcome of the virtual meeting to harmonise the study methodologies, partnerships between the AFF Secretariat and the universities were created to establish the legal framework for collaborative research under Memoranda of Understanding (MOU). To this end, MOUs have been concluded with four more universities namely:

1. Federal University of Agriculture, Abeokuta, Ogun State, Nigeria
2. Université Dan Dicko Dankoulodo de Maradi, Niger
3. Université de Lomé, Togo.
4. University of Pretoria, South Africa

Further to the MOUs, a total of four Research Agreements that outline the scope of specified research have been signed with the four universities for four postgraduate research proposals as follows:

1. *Evaluation des impacts socio-économiques et environnementaux des sites dégradés récupérés et stratégies d'adaptation face au changement climatique dans la région de Maradi* (Assessment of the socio-economic and environmental impacts of degraded sites recovered and adaptation strategies to climate change in the Maradi region) by Hamadou Idrissa Zakari, an MSc student at Université Dan Dicko Dankoulodo de Maradi, Niger
2. *Contribution des agroforêts à café-cacao dans l'adaptation face aux changements climatiques dans la préfecture de Wawa : zone écologique IV du Togo* (Contribution of coffee and cocoa agroforests in adapting to climate change in the prefecture of Wawa : ecological zone IV of Togo) by Affi Christelle Attiogbe, a PhD student at Université de Lomé, Togo
3. *Climate change and climate justice : a gender analysis of REDD+ piloted site in South Nigeria* by Basiru Adeniyi Okanlawon, a PhD student at Federal University of Agriculture, Abeokuta, Ogun State, Nigeria
4. *Climate Change, Forests and Forest Products : Gendering vulnerability and adaptation strategies of Forest Dependent Communities in Lusaka and Mumbwa Districts, Zambia* by Chibuye Florence Kunda, a PhD student at University of Pretoria, South Africa (Zambia)

Progress reports for all postgraduate students will be submitted every six months.

Discussions on Research Agreements with two other universities are on-going for two students and are expected to be concluded shortly. The COVID 19 is hampering progress due to constrained access to some key staff at some of these universities that handle contractual agreements.

2.3 Component 3. Renewable energy

The project objective under this component is *to examine the potential for production and use of liquid biofuels in Africa as a means towards developing green and circular national economies*. The fulfilment of this objective is expected to yield the following project outcomes: a) *Outcome 3.1: An understanding of the scale of production, use and potential for biofuels in Africa*; b) *Outcome 3.2: An appreciation of the manner in which land shifts in the production of biofuels, food and primary forestry on the continent*, and c) *Outcome 3.3: Better understanding of the relationship between production and consumption of biofuels and greenhouse gases (GHGs)*.

The project activities that have to be undertaken in order to realise the three outcomes are assessments of the potential of African countries for the production and use of liquid biofuels as a strategy for developing green and circular economies on the continent in selected Anglophone and Francophone countries. The improved understanding of the scale of production of liquid biofuels, existing and likely future opportunities or prospects, in addition to challenges in production and use of biofuels in Sub-Saharan Africa will contribute to evidence-based planning for the growth and development of this sector in ways that generate incomes to local people and nations, without compromising food and environmental security. *These studies are being conducted in synergy with the SDC supported project.*

The following were achievements made towards this process during the reporting period.

Harmonised methodologies for assessments of the potential of African countries for the production and use of liquid biofuels as a strategy for developing green and circular economies on the continent developed.

Two virtual meetings organised on 24 and 28 April 2020 produced harmonised and easily replicable methodologies for effective assessments of the potential of African countries for the production and use of liquid biofuels as a strategy for developing green and circular economies in central, eastern, southern and western Africa sub-regions. The meetings brought together four sub-regional experts contracted to conduct the sub-regional analyses. The experts agreed on deliverables on key result areas that would lead to improved availability to stakeholders of up to date knowledge on liquid biofuels; approaches for sampling and site selection; information and data to be collected in each country and sub-region; stakeholders and institutions to consult; and COVID-19 compliant timelines.

Inception reports for assessments of the potential of African countries for the production and use of liquid biofuels as a strategy for developing green and circular economies on the continent produced.

Based on the outcome of the virtual meetings to harmonise the study methodologies, four inception reports, one for each sub-region, were prepared by the experts. These reports establish the foundational baseline for the studies. The reports elaborate the conceptual framework for undertaking the studies; issues, themes and indicators to be studied; the methodological approaches for each key result area; key stakeholder groups to engage; data collection tools; as well as the detailed COVID-19 compliant timetables.

Literature review reports on potential of African countries for the production and use of liquid biofuels as a strategy for developing green and circular economies on the continent produced.

In the context of the elaborated conceptual framework, a desk-based systematic overview of existing evidence on production and use of liquid biofuels in different countries and sub-regions was produced through four structured literature review reports, one each for the central, eastern, west and southern Africa sub-regions. The literature review reports resulted in a) comprehensive documentation of the scale of production, use and potential for liquid biofuels in Africa in the context of food-fiber-fuel nexus in selected countries; and b) a critical evaluation of research that has been conducted on each key result area, and of information documented in published as well as in grey literature including policy documents, project reports, etc on the countries.

Specifically, the literature review focused on the following Key Result Areas:

Key Result Area 1: Status of biofuel production at regional level, including land allocated for production of liquid biofuels; availability of feedstock; use of agricultural crops; production, processing and consumption of biofuels; and GHG emissions associated with biofuel production and use in selected countries assessed;

Key Result Area 2: Opportunities, challenges and prospects in production and use of biofuels, as well as coping mechanisms for addressing the challenges evaluated;

Key Result Area 3: Effect of liquid biofuel production on cropland in forest margins and the implications on food security and primary forest cover loss (deforestation and forest degradation) assessed;

Key Result Area 4: Competitiveness of African biofuels in the international market assessed; and

Key Result Area 5: Policy, regulatory and institutional frameworks relevant to the sustainable production, processing, transport and consumption of liquid biofuels in the context of changing climate identified.

The synthesis of the reports presents the current status and trends on the key result areas in all the countries and gaps in knowledge and information required for the studies. Based on the analysis, a representative sample of countries producing liquid biofuels were selected for in-depth studies. Subsequently, the experts are currently conducting in-depth studies in selected countries where lockdowns have been lifted. In some countries where cross-border movement is still restricted national experts have been engaged to support the sub-regional experts in data collection.

The findings will be shared with relevant stakeholders during 2021 through a planned stakeholders' information sharing workshop, the COVID-19 pandemic permitting.

2.4 Component 4: Multilateral Environmental Agreements

The project objective under this component is: *to enhance national forest governance by strengthening African capacity to effectively participate in multilateral environmental processes, and mainstream and implement decisions from them into their national policies and activities.* The fulfilment of this objective is expected to inter alia yield two project outcomes namely, a) *Outcome 4.2: African stakeholders have better understanding of new and emerging issues related to forestry;* and b) *Outcome 4.4: African stakeholders capacitated to access global funding opportunities that come with the MEAs.*

The project activities that have to be undertaken in order to realise the two outcomes are to undertake studies/reviews on new and emerging issues related to forestry; and identify and document global funding opportunities that are relevant to African forestry. *These activities are being undertaken in synergy with the SDC supported project.*

During the reporting period the following were achieved:

The AFF Secretariat compiled and shared knowledge on topical new and emerging issues through regional and international webinars organised through partnership initiatives as follows:

- A presentation entitled *Forests and tree-based livelihoods in Africa: some COVID-19 effects* delivered during the AUC, FAO and AFF webinar on “COVID-19 and forestry sector: Challenges, opportunities and strategies for better resilience in Africa.”
- Four presentations on: *Note with perspectives on charcoal business in Africa; Charcoal value chain business model and livelihoods; Charcoal ban in Kenya; and Charcoal trade in Niger* delivered during the SLU-Global, AFF webinar on “Sustainable Business Models for Charcoal in Africa.”

With respect to global funding opportunities that are relevant to African forestry, the project, in synergy with SDC supported project, has recruited 10 experts to build stakeholders' capacities to develop bankable projects. While SDC supported project will focus on the analysis and preparation of training modules for such training, the Sida support will support the organising of capacity building workshops for various stakeholders on forestry. It is estimated the training will produce about ten concept notes that could be developed with national stakeholder for submission to funding sources and initiatives such as GEF, GCF, etc.

2.5 Component 5. Strengthening AFF as an institution

The project objectives under this component are: a) *to strengthen the capacity of the Knowledge Management and Communication (KMC) Unit in managing and sharing of information;* b) *to strengthen the Planning, Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting (PMER) Unit to effectively support AFF programmes and activities;* c) *to strengthen the Finance and Administration (F&A) Unit for improved management of financial and administrative*

functions; and d) to improve overall governance and oversight on AFF activities. These activities are being undertaken jointly with the SDC supported project.

Achievements on each of these objectives during the reporting period is presented below.

Objective 5a: To strengthen the capacity of the Knowledge Management and Communication Unit in managing and sharing of information.

The fulfilment of this objective is expected to yield two project outcomes namely, a) *Outcome 5.1: Stakeholders receiving and using quality and timely reliable information from AFF*, and b) *Outcome 5.2: Stakeholders have improved access to AFF knowledge products and service.*

The project activities that have to be undertaken in order to realize the two outcomes are: sustaining momentum on dissemination of knowledge and information generated by AFF members and partners; and analyses of AFF's knowledge management processes to inform development of a robust organisational knowledge management system.

During the reporting period, the following were accomplished:

- a) *Increased knowledge and information shared and accessed through web-based and journal platforms.*

The AFF's Knowledge Management and Communications Unit continued, as was with prior Sida support, to sustain the momentum on dissemination of knowledge and information generated by the AFF members and the Secretariat. The Unit is guided by the African Forest Forum (AFF)'s Communication Strategy designed to connect with key audiences that include governments, United Nations entities, international organizations, Regional Economic Communities (RECs), research institutions, civil society, private sector, youth groups and other stakeholders. A functional and robust portal for sharing information has been established and linked to 118 new global forest related databases and networks and also has crosslinks to 48 third party and partner organizations. This portal has been instrumental in collecting and sharing articles on recent developments and information in forestry.

Specific knowledge products disseminated:

During the reporting period thirteen knowledge products developed by the previous Sida supported project *Strengthening sustainable forest management in Africa* were finalized, formatted, laid out as documents produced under *AFF Working Paper Series* and some as *Reports*, were shared with stakeholders through the AFF website as follows.

1. Obiri, D. B., Oduro A. K., Nutakor. E., and Acquah, S.B. 2019. Public and private sector development on forest products industry in Ghana. AFF Working Paper. African Forest Forum, Nairobi.
2. Cheboiwo, K. J. 2018. Potential for private sector development in Africa. A synthesis report for Eastern African countries of Kenya, Tanzania, Rwanda and Ethiopia. AFF Report. African Forest Forum, Nairobi.

3. African Forest Forum. 2018. Protocol for surveillance of forest and tree pests in West and Central Africa AFF Report (French), African Forest Forum, Nairobi
4. Assogbadjo, E.A and Vodouhe, G. F. 2019. Review of land use, land use change and forest sector potential for green economy in Francophone West and Central African countries. AFF Working Paper. African Forest Forum, Nairobi.
5. Katsvanga, C. A. and Mudyiwa S. M. 2020 Training needs analysis and forestry curricula evaluation in professional and technical institutions in sub-Sahara Anglophone countries. AFF Working Paper. African Forest Forum, Nairobi.
6. Nganje, M. 2019. Positioning forestry as an entry point and pathway for green economy development in West Africa. AFF Working Paper. African Forest Forum, Nairobi.
7. African Forest Forum. 2018. The State of Forestry in Africa: Opportunities and Challenges (English and French version)
8. African Forest Forum. 2019. Strengthening public private partnerships for advancement of the Ghanaian forest products sector: Public Private Partnerships: strategic investments for all-inclusive forestry sector development. AFF Policy Brief Volume 7, Issue 2.
9. Popoola, L. 2017. Public-private-partnerships in the forest sector and sustainable livelihood development in Nigeria: African Forest Forum Working Paper, Vol (4) 5, Nairobi.
10. Tieguhong J. C. 2017. Public-Private Partnerships (PPP) in the forestry sector in Central Africa: African Forest Forum Report, Nairobi
11. Kyeyune R. 2018. Public private partnerships in the forest sector in Africa: A country report for Uganda. AFF Working Paper Vol 5: Issue 6
12. Nganje M. 2018. Transboundary forest resources in West and Central Africa. African Forest Forum Report, Nairobi
13. Nasroun T. H. 2019. Strengthening Public Private Partnerships for promoting sustainable forest management in the Republic of Sudan. AFF Report.

At the strategic level, digital communication has been used to transform the work of AFF, its partners and stakeholders in African forestry. Participation at multi-sector, multi-discipline conferences and dialogues has enabled a digital conservation community of practice, research and policy. The concerted thinking and agenda-setting that flows from such interactions will help to ensure that digital technology maintains the momentum on the sustainable management of forests.

Furthermore, delivery of messages and information products in easily understandable formats and language has helped support capacity building in many areas central to the practice of forestry as well as on seemingly new and emerging areas in AFF's work. As a result, it is anticipated that despite the rise in the occurrences of zoonotic diseases like COVID-19 in the future, AFF's profile, reputation and membership will continue to gain visibility on local, regional and international news channels, digital sites and social media platforms.

In the reporting period, the website recorded the following:

1. A total of 164,429 unique visitors, which is the total number of visitors to the AFF web site from January to December 2020 irrespective of the number of times they visited the web site.
2. Received 462,915 visits, which is the total number of individual visitors who visited the AFF website and actually browsed during January to December 2020. The number represents the total number of visitors, irrespective of the number of times they visited the AFF web site.
3. A total of 2,564,877 pages opened and 24,329 documents including 214 AFF knowledge products were downloaded from the website, during January to December 2020 by all visitors to the web site.
4. Hits during January to December 2020 were 2,467,197 which is the number of file requests made in the AFF website by all visitors.
5. The number of AFF followers on twitter increased to 1,058 and Facebook likes to 3,484
6. The number of countries represented by the visitors during 2020 were 152. The geographical spread was worldwide, spreading from Africa, to the Americas through Europe to Asia.

b) Measures for strengthening AFF's knowledge management system prescribed

Enablers and processes for the development of a robust organizational knowledge management system for AFF were identified through a thorough four-phased knowledge audit assessment conducted on AFF's knowledge brokerage activities. During the first three phases, the Knowledge Audit/Assessment Report was produced that maps critical knowledge assets at AFF, documents AFF's understanding of knowledge management in the context of AFF's strategy; and assesses the current state of knowledge management at AFF in the context of the Knowledge Management Framework. The audit also identified gaps to be addressed to enable AFF to systematically maximize on its collective knowledge expertise and the experience of its diverse constituency and membership to raise its profile, relevance, authority, influence and impact on the African continent and globally.

Based on the findings a Knowledge Management Plan was also developed to guide AFF towards revision and realignment with the overall AFF's organizational strategy to more effectively deliver on its important role in supporting sustainable forest management (SFM) nationally, sub-regionally and continentally, by providing a bridge between science-based knowledge and strong policies to support SFM in Africa.

(c) AFF Knowledge Management Strategy (2021-2025) developed

The findings and recommendations of the AFF Knowledge Management Audit led to the development of the AFF Knowledge Management Strategy in line with AFF's current strategic direction. The 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 that is conducive to collaboration internally and externally with stakeholders and cohesive to the structure of the

organization.

The strategy emphasizes better quality standards and commensurate resources, accountability mechanisms, and buy-in from all stakeholders. The proposed framework for knowledge management at AFF is anchored on the following four 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

Further, a training session on best practices in knowledge management was conducted for AFF Secretariat staff to equip them with knowledge skills for effective operationalization of the Knowledge Management Strategy.

Objective 5b: *To strengthen the Planning, Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting (PMER) Unit to effectively support AFF activities*

The fulfilment of this objective is expected to yield two project outcomes namely, a) *Outcome 5.3: AFF operating with improved processes and efficiency in the management of its projects and services;* and *Outcome 5.4: AFF programmes, plans and activities are gender sensitive and responsive*

Outcome 5.3: AFF operating with improved processes and efficiency in the management of its projects and services;

The project activity that has to be undertaken in order to realise the outcome 5.3 is development of a robust system for monitoring and evaluating AFF interventions at all levels including capacity building for AFF staff on integrated project management systems and tools. These are aimed at improving monitoring, uptake and adoption at all levels of forest - based interventions.

During the reporting period progress was made on the following:

The procurement of an “integrated project management system” was initiated in the second half of 2020 and will be concluded in first quarter of 2021. It is expected that the adoption of such a techno-serve system which might integrate programming and finance will ultimately improve AFF’s monitoring and reporting.

Data collection tools developed for follow ups and evaluation of impacts of the following AFF training and knowledge products:

1. Assessment of how knowledge on sustainable forest management and leadership has been used by forestry stakeholders to influence national and regional agenda
2. Assessment of how knowledge on forest governance has been used to strengthen forest governance and promote sustainable forest management in eastern and southern Africa
3. Assessment on use and uptake of AFF’s knowledge products among different African forestry stakeholders

These impact surveys will be launched in the first quarter of 2021.

Outcome 5.4: AFF programmes, plans and activities are gender sensitive and responsive

The project activity that has to be undertaken in order to realize the outcome 5.4 is gender analysis for AFF's programmes; based on the findings develop a gender strategy for AFF's programmes and activities; and build the capacity of AFF Secretariat staff using the same.

During the reporting period the following were achieved:

A gender specialist was recruited to conduct the gender analysis, building AFF's capacity for gender mainstreaming and develop the strategy for AFF.

An inception report for gender mainstreaming of AFF's programs was produced which elaborated the conceptual framework for gender analysis, methodology and approach for conducting a gender audit on AFF's plans and activities as well data collection tools.

Subsequently a training was conducted for AFF staff and some Governing Council members on the KOBO collect data collection tool which was used to conduct the gender analysis. The survey was conducted through the KOBO collect tool on AFF staff, Governing Council members and partners in different countries in Africa, and a focused group discussion organised to collect further data and information. The analysis was conducted, and a gender analysis report is being drafted that will inform the development of the AFF gender mainstreaming strategy. Also, a training module on gender mainstreaming will be developed to be used for training AFF staff, Governing Council and partners in early 2021.

Objective 5c: To strengthen the Finance and Administration (F&A) Unit for improved management of financial and administrative functions.

The fulfilment of this objective is expected to yield two project outcomes as follows:

Outcome 5.5: Enhanced capacity for financial monitoring, accounting and reporting

The project activities that have to be undertaken in order to realize this outcome are: adoption and operationalization of techno-serve systems; training of AFF Secretariat in planning, implementation and utilization of resources; and development of AFF Finance Policy.

During the reporting period the following were achieved:

The AFF Secretariat developed Terms of Reference for a consultancy on training of AFF Secretariat on efficiency and effectiveness in planning, implementation and utilization of resources. A consultancy firm was recruited to first conduct analysis on AFF's efficiency and effectiveness in planning, implementation and utilization of resources. The analysis was conducted and a training session on the subject planned in early 2021.

Further, the document “AFF Rules and Regulations” is currently under review. The review report will give way to the drafting of “AFF’s Finance Policy” that will take into account emerging trends in financial standards.

Outcome 5.6: Enhanced efficiency in administration of AFF activities

The project activities that have to be undertaken in order to realize this outcome are: Improvement of professional capacity of administration staff; a training needs assessment on human resource issues (HRM) among staff members; development of an administrative strategy for AFF; and strengthening the administration function to improve efficiency in service delivery.

To this end a concept note on these activities to deliver on the project outcome has been developed. The planned activities will be conducted virtually in early 2021 or through face-to-face seminar approaches, the COVID-19 pandemic permitting.

Objective 5d: To improve overall governance and oversight on AFF activities

The fulfilment of this objective is expected to yield one project outcome namely *Outcome 5.7: The Governing Council and its committees, together with PSAC, providing good policy guidance to AFF Secretariat and effective oversight on its plans, finances and activities.*

The project activities that have to be undertaken in order to realize the two outcomes are consultative meetings on governance of AFF’s programmes and activities by the Governing Council and its committees, and the Project Steering and Advisory Committee (PSAC). The PSAC and the Executive Committee of the Governing Council have held virtual consultations that facilitated the operations of the Secretariat as follows:

(a) Approval of Sida and SDC supported projects’ operational progress reports for 2019

Progress reports

Three progress reports were extensively discussed and recommended for approval by the Governing Council through the Sixth Meeting of the Project Steering and Advisory Committee (PSAC) that was successfully organised via skype and email exchange on 23 to 31 March 2020. The same had been earlier considered by the Executive Committee in November 2019. The reports are:

1. The final report on Sida supported project *Strengthening sustainable forest management in Africa* that was implemented from April 2014 to July 2019;
2. The progress report for the Sida supported project *Strengthening management and use of forest ecosystems for sustainable development in Africa* for the period September to December 2019; and
3. The progress report for the SDC supported project *African Forests, People and Climate Change* for the period November 2018 to December 2019.

Consequently, these reports were approved for submission to respective donors in line with partnership agreements.

(b) Approval of Sida and SDC supported projects' Plans of Work and Budgets for 2020.

Plans of Work and Budgets for the Sida and SDC supported projects were extensively discussed and recommended for approval by the Governing Council through the Sixth Meeting of the Project Steering and Advisory Committee (PSAC) that was successfully organized via skype and email exchange on 23 to 31 March 2020. The same had been earlier considered by the Executive Committee in November 2019. These were:

1. The 2019-2020 Plan of Work and Budget (POWB) for the Sida supported project *Strengthening management and use of forest ecosystems for sustainable development in Africa*; and
2. The 2020 POWB for the SDC supported project *African Forests, People and Climate Change*.

Consequently, these plans of work and budgets were approved for submission to the donors in line with partnership agreements and paved the way for execution of the approved activities.

(c) Approval of Sida and SDC supported projects' operational progress reports for 2020

Operational progress reports for the Sida and SDC supported projects for 2020 were extensively discussed at the Executive Committee virtual meeting that was successfully organised on 04 December 2020. The Executive Committee recommended the reports for appropriate processing by the Seventh Meeting of the Project Steering and Advisory Committee (PSAC) that is planned for early 2021, and approval by the Governing Council.

The reports are:

1. The progress report for the Sida supported project *Strengthening management and use of forest ecosystems for sustainable development in Africa* for the period January to December 2020; and
2. The progress report for the SDC supported project *African Forests, People and Climate Change* for the period January to December 2020

(d) Approval of Sida and SDC supported projects' Plans of Work and Budgets for 2021.

Plans of Work and Budgets for the Sida and SDC supported projects for 2021 were extensively discussed at the Executive Committee virtual meeting that was successfully organised on 04 December 2020. The Executive Committee recommended the Plans of Work and Budget for appropriate processing by the Seventh Meeting of the Project Steering and Advisory Committee (PSAC) that is planned for early 2021, and approval by the Governing Council.

The plans of work and budgets are as follows:

1. The 2021 Plan of Work and Budget (POWB) for the Sida supported project *Strengthening management and use of forest ecosystems for sustainable development in Africa*; and

2. The 2021 POWB for the SDC supported project *African Forests, People and Climate Change*.

These meetings are organized in synergy with the SDC supported project. The Governing Council committees and the PSAC meetings are organized to provide governance oversight, strategic guidance, scientific quality assurance, as well as financial oversight, thus ensuring that project implementation stays on course and that all practices reflect AFF's values of quality participation and inclusivity and pass the threshold of international standards and are consistent with Sida and AFF values and principles.

2.6 Theses and journal papers published from previous Sida support

Two students on Ph.D. studies supported under the previous Sida supported phase *on Strengthening sustainable forest management in Africa (2014-2019)* completed their research, prepared dissertations, and successfully defended their theses and graduated during the reporting period. Two theses and three journal papers have been published or reported on during the reporting period from the research results obtained by students on the fellowship programme on the previous Sida support as follows:

Theses completed:

1. Justinian Mushumbusi Bamanyisa, 2019. *The role of co-operatives in reducing greenhouse gas emissions and enhancing sinks through land use, land-use change and forestry in Tanzania*. PhD thesis submitted to the Sokoine University of Agriculture, Morogoro, Tanzania through its constituent college Moshi Cooperative University.
2. Ferdinand Handavu, 2019. *Land-use and land-cover change and carbon stock estimation in the Copperbelt miombo woodland of Zambia*. PhD thesis submitted to, University of Pretoria, Pretoria, South Africa.

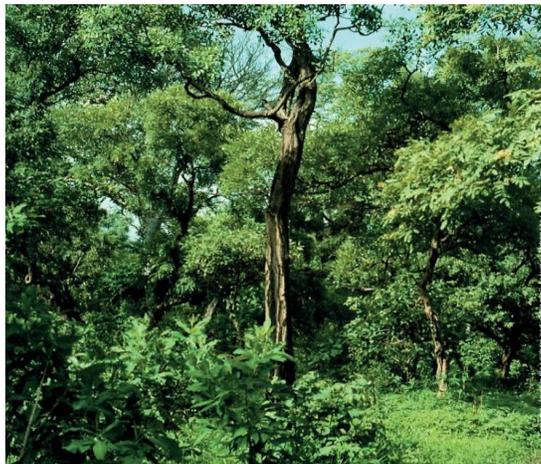
Journal papers published:

1. Justinian M Bamanyisa, Deo Shirima, Willy Makundi and Pantaleo Munishi, 2019. The Role of Co-Operatives in Carbon Trading in Community Managed Carbon Enhancement Activities in Tanzania. *International Journal of Community and Cooperative Studies* Vol.7 No.3, pp.62-77, August 2019. European Centre for Research Training and Development UK (www.eajournals.org)
2. Ferdinand Handavu, Paxie W. C. Chirwa, Stephen Syampungani, 2019. Socio-economic factors influencing land-use and land-cover changes in the miombo woodlands of the Copperbelt province in Zambia. *Forest Policy and Economics* 100 (2019) 75-94.
3. Berhanu Terefe & Dong-Gill Kim. 2019. Shifting cultivation maintains but its conversion to mono-cropping decreases soil carbon and nitrogen stocks compared to natural forest in Western Ethiopia. *Plant and Soil*. An International Journal on Plant-Soil Relationships; ISSN 0032-079X; Plant Soil DOI 10.1007/s11104-019-03942.



African Forest Forum

A platform for stakeholders in African forestry



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