



African Forest Forum

A platform for stakeholders in African forestry



Communication and Knowledge Management at AFF: Achievements made in January to December 2021

*A report prepared by the Knowledge Management and
Communications (KMCOMM) Unit*



About AFF

Established in 2007 as a non-political, non-governmental, objective, independent and not for profit international organization, 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 mobilizes 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.

Cover photos: Makungu Seedlings and Clonal Central Nursery owned by Green Resources Ltd- Mufindi District, Tanzania (credit: Prof. Reuben J.L Mwamakimbullah, President- Tanzania Association of Foresters); private commercial plantation in Somanya, a district in the Eastern region of Ghana (photo © African Forest Forum); women smallholder farmers in Kenya (credit: McKay Savage/Wikimedia Commons).

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COMMUNICATION AND KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT AT AFF: ACHIEVEMENTS MADE IN JANUARY TO OCTOBER 2021

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1. INTRODUCTION

Forests and forestry continue to be very much profiled on the global agenda and their relevance to other sectors of national economies is increasingly being recognized. The processes that have precipitated these phenomena have involved considerable interaction among many stakeholders. The African Forest Forum (AFF) continues to contribute to these processes by generating knowledge on African forestry and providing a platform for the networking and interchange of forest related information among the many stakeholders involved in the African forestry sector.

The Knowledge Management and Communication Unit at AFF ensures that knowledge is generated, shared and used by many stakeholders many stakeholders in African forestry. These audiences include governments, international organisations, African Regional Economic Communities, academic and research institutions, civil society, private sector, youth groups and other stakeholders, and as guided by institution's *Short- and Medium-Term Strategic Plan (2021- 2025)*.

In this regard, the specific communication activities are to:

- Update, and implement the AFF communication strategy.
- Provide communication writing, reviewing and editorial assistance for AFF reports (annual and semi- annual), publications, and other documents.
- Identify high interest areas and prepare articles, blogs, newsletters, etc., from AFF's work and disseminate the same.
- Prepare AFF communication materials e.g., brochures, banners, flyers and posters.
- Generate content for website as well as for other social media and ensure impact goals are achieved.
- Coordinate the production, translation, printing and dissemination of various knowledge products; and
- Create and maintain media relations as well as prepare media materials and distribute the same through media outlets.

Knowledge Management (KM) activities are to:

- Update, and implement the AFF knowledge management strategy.
- Identify and/or create, strengthen and maintain forestry networks and databases.
- Develop, organize, and maintain the AFF website, intranet and social media platforms.
- Monitor, improve and maintain knowledge management practices, tools, polices, and sources.
- Develop and facilitate information creation/sourcing, organizing, archiving, retrieving and sharing practices in AFF.

2. COMMUNICATION ACTIVITIES AND OUTPUTS

2.1 Update and implement AFF communication strategy

The Digital Revolution (also known as the Fourth Industrial Revolution) is well underway. Accelerated by the COVID-19 pandemic, it is altering the way we live, work, and relate to one another. Digital technologies can be used for development purposes and for solving societal problems, including those related to sustainable forest management (SFM). However, the very same technologies threaten to leave developing countries, and especially those in African countries, even further behind.

As a platform that facilitates change in the forestry sector, the African Forest Forum has embarked on its own digital transformation process. At the sixteenth meeting of the Governing Council held in April 2021, representatives from in and out of the African continent unanimously adopted the digital transformation elements as part of the *AFF Knowledge Management Strategy* for 2021 to 2025.

This new enabling focus adopts a two-pronged approach: using digital to enhance the work of the institution at an operational level; and using digital to provide a bridge between science-based knowledge and strong forest-related policies focusing on immediate action for the most vulnerable.

At the institutional level, the strategy uses digital technologies to improve the quality, relevance and impact of AFF's work, while also improving the efficiency of AFF's operational systems and internal processes. The overall goal is to better understand the potential of digital technologies, articulate their use and value, and readily apply them to promote sustainable management of forestry resources in ways that address the needs of the African people and the environment they live in.

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.

New communication initiative

In response to the Formas call for projects that communicate and popularise research and research findings within its areas of responsibility, AFF in collaboration with the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences (SLU), University of Niamey and Kenya Forestry Research Institute (KEFRI) submitted a joint project for funding. Namely: *“AfricanYouth4Forestry.”*

This project provides a coordinated and coherent framework at regional level to amplify the voices of African youth and place them at the heart of sustainable forest management (SFM) to benefit from the economic, social and environmental value of all types of forests. It provides a platform for young people to engage with policy makers, researchers and practitioners to understand better their role in shaping the future of forests, share their concerns, and guide them on how to make changes towards transformational change.

The *“AfricanYouth4Forestry”* project turns to African youth to:

- Increase their knowledge, awareness and pride in Africa’s forests and tree resources based on evidence based research.
- Stimulate reflection, discussion, engagement and innovation on how future African forests should be governed, protected and used.
- Strengthen the capacity of African youth to sustainably protect and develop the forest resource within a green economy.
- Provide a platform for youth voices to be heard in forest governance and decision-making processes.

The primary target audience is youth from rural and urban areas, between 15-25 years of age in Kenya and Niger. This includes young people-led associations, networks, youth entrepreneurs and leaders from different educational backgrounds. While the project is targeted at national level, it recognizes that youth from across Africa may find the information beneficial due to increased speed and availability of internet access. Secondary audiences will include policy makers, research institutions, CBOs/NGOs, private sector, extension agents, international community and other stakeholders in African forestry.

Channels are chosen to reach different sections of the youth population. Training workshops and forums will give youth a space to better understand the challenges and opportunities facing the sector, voice their concerns or views and share creative solutions using data. Traditional channels of communication such as community radio and television stations will be used to share human interest stories backed by research statistics in local dialect. Fireside chats with successful young entrepreneurs in forest management will aim to encourage engagement in sustainable forest related projects.

Digital campaigns will be used to elevate forestry research findings through imagery, infographics and memes to make the content go viral. Instagram, Facebook, WhatsApp, will be used to support powerful opportunities for social expression. Multimedia products i.e. podcasts, Vlogs, animations, blogs hosted on the project’s knowledge platform will provide on-the-go

education for environmental awareness and inspire the audience to adapt suggested solutions to their circumstances.

The project is grounded in the theory and practice of Development Communication thinking that supports the shift toward a more participatory and inclusive approach to sustainable development (Servaes, 2003). It is based on the two-way model of communication that seeks to engage stakeholders, investigate the current knowledge and behaviours before designing the strategies.

2.2 Provide writing, reviewing and editorial assistance for AFF reports (annual and semi-annual), publications, and other documents

AFF produces a range of products that provide members and other stakeholders the latest information, based on research and similar studies, on African forestry and related areas, as well as on important events that have a bearing on national, regional and global forestry and related issues.

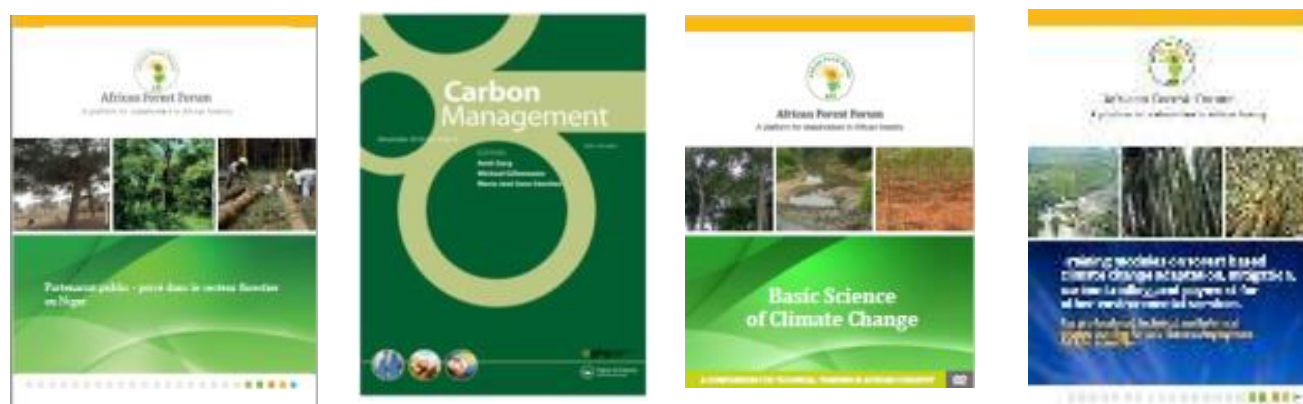


Figure 1: Selection of AFF knowledge products

The total number of information materials freely available on the website by December 31, 2021 was 229. They include: Journal articles (56), policy briefs (20), factsheets (8), reports (41), publications under AFF Working Paper Series (58), training modules (2), newsletters (17), edited proceedings of meetings (1), books (5), compendium (9), and corporate documents (12). Figure 2 below shows the amount of content developed by AFF from the year 2018 to 2021. There has been an increase, specifically in the number of journal articles, reports and publications under AFF Working Paper Series that have been published on the website over the period 1 January-31 December 2021.

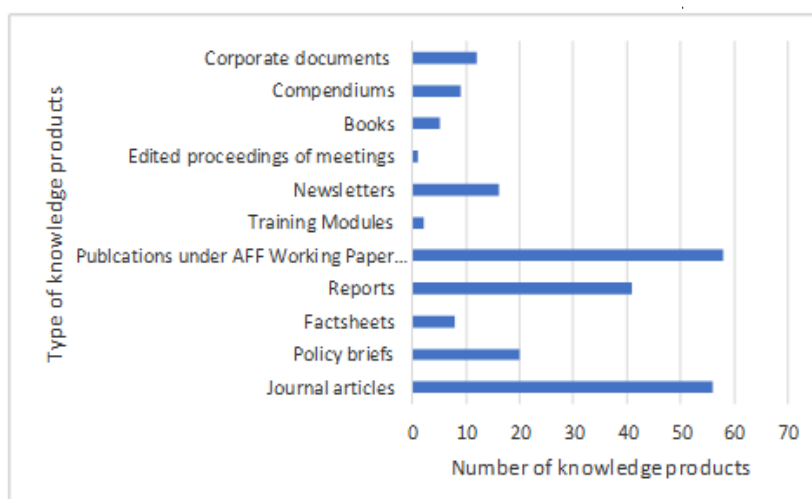


Figure 2: AFF range of knowledge products available on the website (December 31, 2021)

In 2021 (January-December 31) there were **18,505 PDFs** downloaded from the website with **3,486,334** pages opened. The most downloaded document was AFF’s flagship publication, *“The State of Forestry in Africa: Opportunities and Challenges.”*. The second and third most popular knowledge products were on the private forestry sector in Kenya and Tanzania respectively. This indicates increasing private sector interest in AFF knowledge products given their involvement in the institution’s activities. The fourth most downloaded document was a concept note on an upcoming regional training workshop on forest and tree-based climate change mitigation to be held in Arusha Tanzania in early December 2021. This training workshop has generated significant attention from stakeholders from across the continent, demonstrating importance of the subject area.

Four out of ten publications are in French demonstrating an increase in interest in AFF’s knowledge products from Francophone countries.

The data also reveals that the key areas of interest based on the top downloads are: forest law enforcement; good forest governance; managing forest tree pests and diseases; carbon markets; trade in forest products and services; public-private-partnerships in primary and secondary forestry production; climate change in forestry; effective engagement in multilateral environmental processes and agreements. This information is relevant to many African forestry stakeholders and facilitate decision making on many issues and at various levels, as well as in policy formulation and implementation.

Table 1: Top 10 downloaded documents (January –December 31, 2021)

No.	Publication
1.	AFF, 2019. The State of Forestry in Africa: Opportunities and Challenges. African Forest Forum, Nairobi Kenya. 186 pp
2.	Cheboiwo, J. K. (2016). Private forestry sector in Kenya: status and potential. AFF Report. African Forest Forum, Nairobi.

No.	Publication
3.	Mwamakimbullah, R. (2016). Private forestry sector in Tanzania: status and potential. AFF Report. African Forest Forum, Nairobi.
4.	Concept note on AFF regional training workshop on forest and tree-based climate change mitigation for African forestry stakeholders.
5.	Fobissie, K., Chia, E. and Enongene, K. 2017. Mise en œuvre de la REDD+, du MDP et de la CDN du secteur AFAT en Afrique francophone
6.	Gichora, M., Kojwang', H., & Bosu, P. 2017. Statut et tendances de la gestion des ravageurs et des maladies des forêts et arbres en Afrique
7.	Abdo, M. 2014. Pratiques, techniques et technologies de restauration des paysages dégradés du Sahel.
8.	Modules de formation sur les changements climatiques et les forêts: adaptation, atténuation, marché du carbone et paiements des services environnementaux Pour les professionnels, les techniciens et les groupes informels des pays Francophones de l'Afrique subsaharienn
9.	Milimo, P.B. 2014. Forest and climate change policies, strategies and programmes in the EAC and IGAD sub-regions. African Forest Forum, Working Paper Series 2(18), 49 pp
10.	African Forest Forum (2017). The Status of Tree and Forest Pests and Diseases in the Eastern African Sub-region: Sustainable Forest Management in Africa. African Forest Forum Working Paper, Vol (3)18, 2017, Nairobi.

Source: Google Analytics (2021).

In addition, the Knowledge Management and Communications Unit has provided writing, review and editorial assistance towards the development of publications under AFF Working Paper Series, technical reports, publications and other documents. Table 2 below shows a list of knowledge products finalized and/or published on the AFF website in the relevant 'Publication and Resources' section, as well as the Homepage.

Table 2: List of AFF knowledge products finalized and/or published on the AFF website (January -December 31, 2021)

Year	Publication
2019	<i>La filière bois en côte d'Ivoire: productions primaire et secondaire, relation entre les acteurs, tendance future et contribution à l'économie nationale et aux moyens de subsistance des populations</i>
2019	<i>Partenariat public – privé dans le secteur forestier au Burkina Faso</i>
2019	<i>Land use land cover change and the comparative impact of co-management and governmentmanagement on the forest cover in Malawi (1999-2018)</i>
2020	<i>Tree species composition and diversity in Miombo woodlands between co-managed and government-managed regimes, Malawi</i>
2021	<i>Partenariat public - privé dans le secteur forestier au Niger</i>
2021	<i>Aboveground and belowground tree biomass and carbon stocks in the miombo woodlands of the Copperbelt in Zambia</i>
2019	<i>Assessment of how information shared by AFF on tree improvement and germplasm management is being used by African forestry stakeholders</i>

2019	<i>Assessment on how information shared by AFF for improving policy formulation and implementation, and forest governance in African forestry has been used by stakeholders</i>
2021	<i>Sustainable Business Models for Informal Charcoal Producers in Kenya</i>
2019	<i>AFF 10th Year Anniversary Celebrations Report</i>
2021	<i>AFF Newsletter Volume 8 Issue 1</i>

2.3 Identify high interest areas and prepare articles, blogs, newsletters, etc., from AFF's work and disseminate

In 2021, a number of announcements of activities and high interest areas were shared with AFF members via info-mail and posted on the AFF website for the general public as well as on social media platforms (Table 3). These included several calls for consultancy services, job opportunities, newly released publications, events and related news from around the globe. Twenty out of the forty-five announcements were AFF consultancy opportunities, while information on webinars and opportunities from partner organizations featured prominently.

Table 3: List of AFF announcements and articles disseminated to AFF members and stakeholders in African forestry (January -December 31, 2021)

No	Title of announcement / article
1.	<i>Invitation to join the AFF Community of Practice on NTFPs value chains</i>
2.	<i>COP 26: Panel discussion on innovative gender and nature-based solutions for climate change in the Congo Basin</i>
3.	<i>Invitation to register for the achieving sustainable forest management through research and development in SADC webinar</i>
4.	<i>AFF Call for editing and proofreading services for English to French translated training compendiums</i>
5.	<i>Job Opportunity: FSC Communications Manager, Africa</i>
6.	<i>AFF Regional training workshop on forest and tree-based climate change mitigation for African forestry stakeholders</i>
7.	<i>Climate Change Negotiations for Young African Negotiators Online Course</i>
8.	<i>CBFP Study Package Publications</i>
9.	<i>Call for ten (10) experts to review training compendiums for technical and professional training on forests and climate change adaptation in African forestry</i>
10.	<i>Call for expert to review knowledge products on enhancement of national forest governance to respond to the Paris Agreement</i>
11.	<i>Call for ten (10) experts to review training compendiums for short course on forests and climate change adaptation and forests and climate change mitigation</i>
12.	<i>Appel à candidatures: Évaluation des chaînes de valeur du bois de scierie en Afrique</i>
13.	<i>Deadline extended: evaluation of efficiency of sawn timber value chains in selected countries in Africa</i>

No	Title of announcement / article
14.	<i>Call for applications: post-doctoral fellowship on interaction between forest, people and climate change in Africa</i>
15.	<i>Extended deadline-IUFRO World Day: Digital Forest Science Forum 2021 on 28-29 September</i>
16.	<i>Call for English to French translation services of AFF Training Compendiums</i>
17.	<i>AFF Call for experts to review knowledge products on integration of forest and tree-based mitigation and adaptation in response to climate change</i>
18.	<i>Knowledge Management Consultant for facilitating workshop on KM at AFF</i>
19.	<i>AFF call for experts to review knowledge products on integration of forest and tree-based mitigation and adaptation in response to climate change</i>
20.	<i>Consultancy: Online Discussion Moderators for AFF Communities of Practice</i>
21.	<i>Call for national experts: strengthening capacity among African forestry stakeholders for implementing REDD+ in Anglophone and Lusophone Africa</i>
22.	<i>AFF Call for National experts for assessment of forest planning and management in different forest types in Zambia, Zimbabwe, Angola, Mozambique</i>
23.	<i>AWARD One Planet Fellowship call for young climate researchers seeking career acceleration opportunity</i>
24.	<i>International Climate Protection Fellowship</i>
25.	<i>Pre-call Announcement for RUFORUM Young Scientists Award (YSA)</i>
26.	<i>New FAO publication on forest-related disasters</i>
27.	<i>Join the Global Network for Young Professionals in Forestry!</i>
28.	<i>Advertisement for two Post-Doctoral positions in Environmental Management</i>
29.	<i>"Deadline extended: evaluation of efficiency of sawn timber value chains in selected countries in Africa" is locked</i>
30.	<i>Webinaires sous-régionaux sur le partage d'informations et d'expériences sur les réponse de la gouvernance forestière nationale de l'Accord de Paris et la contribution des ressources forestières des zones sèches au renforcement de la resilience des communautés face au changement climatique en Afrique</i>
31.	<i>AFF webinar on national responses to the Paris Agreements and gums and resins in Africa</i>
32.	<i>Vacancy: International Forestry and Natural Resources Specialist</i>
33.	<i>Call for Applications: The Leadership Program for Emerging African Women in Science</i>
34.	<i>New Job Openings – FSC</i>
35.	<i>XV World Forestry Congress Newsletter – Vol. 5 / June 2021</i>
36.	<i>XV World Forestry Congress: Call for side events</i>
37.	<i>Innovate4Climate (I4C) 2021</i>
38.	<i>XV WFC new call for abstracts for papers and posters</i>
39.	<i>OWSD PhD Fellowships</i>
40.	<i>International Day of Forests 2021</i>
41.	<i>Mobilising Private Investment in the Great Green Wall</i>
42.	<i>"The launch of call for proposals for community-based forest/land management demonstration initiatives by FAO and ECOWAS"</i>
43.	<i>Save the Date – 1st African Forum on Urban Forests (5-9 July 2021) Virtual</i>
44.	<i>Postponement of XV World Forestry Congress!</i>
45.	<i>Women in Forestry Africa</i>

2.4 Generate content for website as well as social media and ensure impact goals are achieved

Traffic is one of the most important indicators of general interest in the African Forest Forum. It is an important indicator of site reach and growth. By analyzing number of visits, an insight into how overall site performance could be attained can be gauged. The access statistics presented in table 4 below show how many times visitors accessed the website and includes unique visitors, number of visits, pages and hits. The analysis of these metrics provides insights into the frequency of use and overall appeal of the website to users.

2.4.1 Unique visitors

A visitor is sometimes referred to as a unique visitor or unique user to clearly convey the idea that each visitor is only counted once through the IP address of the computer or device the user is browsing from. Monthly unique visitors refer to the total number of distinct individuals requesting pages from a website within a 30-day window. Table 4 below tracks unique visitors to measure the overall level of traffic to the AFF website.

Table 4: Unique visitors to the AFF website

Month	Unique visitors	Number of visits	Pages	Hits
Jan 2021	21,290	65,293	274,679	300,838
Feb 2021	17,586	53,874	235,741	257,954
Mar 2021	16,878	42,701	186,188	214,019
Apr 2021	14,096	43,156	196,705	222,399
May 2021	21,266	52,425	216,517	257,649
Jun 2021	53,136	86,268	261,254	405,062
Jul 2021	31,407	68,716	264,070	296,529
Aug 2021	34,107	80,520	277,560	325,049
Sep 2021	29,807	67,634	294,803	345,230
Oct 2021	17,495	42,466	391,243	460,513
Nov 2021	22,220	64,760	519,420	582,245
Dec 2021	19,797	61,783	368,154	410,121
Total	299,085	729,596	3,486,334	4,077,608

Source: Google Analytics (1 January-31 December 2021)

According to Google Analytics, the AFF website recorded **729,596** from **299,085** visitors from **152 countries** worldwide (January-December 2021). In the previous year (same period), there were 462,915 visits from 164,429 visitors from 153 countries to the website. This shows a growth in total audience size by **134,656 unique visitors**. The data also shows that in 2021 the audience viewed a total of **3,486,334** pages. This is an increase of 1,388,424 pages (40%) from the previous year. The reason for this could be due to increased interest in AFF's work by the general public owing to regular web announcements and press coverage of on-going activities, through local, regional and international media channels

For instance, the highest number of visits were recorded in the months of **June (86,268)** and **August (80,520)**. In the month of June, there were six (6) consultancy opportunities advertised. These include Calls for (i) ten (10) experts to review training compendiums for short course on forests and climate change adaptation and forests and climate change mitigation (ii) evaluation of efficiency of sawn timber value chains in selected countries in Africa (re-advertised; English and French) (iii) post-doctoral fellowship on interaction between forest, people and climate change in Africa (iv) English to French translation services of AFF training compendiums and (v) review knowledge products on integration of Forest and tree based mitigation and adaptation in response to climate change.

Whereas the month of August marked the start of sub-regional webinars organized AFF on ‘*national responses to the Paris Agreements and gums and resins in Africa*’ that incorporated media roundtables that facilitated exchange of knowledge and experiences among the African stakeholders working on climate change and forestry issues. The virtual and in-country events were largely attended with participants who accessed the website for more information.

2.4.2 Website hits

The website’s total hits¹ in the year 2021 (Jan-December) were **4,077,608**. This indicates an increase of 1,610,411 hits as compared to 2021. While an analysis of this type of data is hardly a true reflection of the site’s performance, it shows that there is engagement from the audience with the number and variety of files integrated within the web pages.

2.4.3 Source of traffic

According to Google Analytics (2021), most visitors to the website came from (i) direct traffic (ii) organic search (iii) e-mail (iv) social media (v) referral. Visitors of whom manually entered the URL of the AFF website or had it bookmarked are the first source of traffic and shows that users of AFF’s website have an interest in its content. Organic traffic originating from a search engine, such as Google or Bing is the second source of traffic.

This is a direct reflection of AFF’s continued improved ranking through site optimization, competitive keywords, consistent announcements and efforts in the sharing of information. E-mail or info-mail that contain direct links to the AFF website are the third source of traffic while social media and referrals from partner websites are the fourth and fifth sources of traffic respectively.

2.4.4 Geographical location

The highest visits and subsequent new users to the website originate from the following ten countries, and in that order: United States of America, United Kingdom, India, Kenya, Nigeria, China, Canada, South Africa, Australia and Indonesia. Seven out of the top 10 countries are from the international community with Canada and Indonesia making a debut to the top 10 list. This demonstrates widespread appeal of the institution’s mandate and activities.

A close analysis of the top 50 countries visiting the website, indicate impressive visits from French speaking countries including, Benin, Niger, Cote d'Ivoire, Senegal, Togo, Burkina Faso, Gabon, French Guinea, among others. This finding could bear positive light on the ongoing AFF activities in West and Central Africa that may be driving traffic to the site, in addition to the considerable on-going efforts to translate many of the documents on the website into French.

The United States of America had the highest number of new users visiting the website with a total 5629 sessions. While users from Kenya spent the most amount of time of the website. The 'average session duration' is a metric that measures the duration of a user's entire visit to a website. However, it is not entirely accurate as it does not record the time users spend on the page they exited from. The United States of America had the highest number of new users visiting the website with a total 5629 sessions.

Table 5: Geographical location of users to the AFF website (Jan-October 2021)

Country	New Users	Sessions	Pages / Session	Avg. Session Duration
United States	5458	5629	1.34	16.61
India	1094	1164	1.22	28.52
United Kingdom	931	994	1.40	35.70
Kenya	847	2071	2.98	255.75
Nigeria	604	824	2.11	104.60
China	613	620	1.08	2.69
Canada	520	591	1.43	35.10
South Africa	512	603	1.81	69.28
Australia	509	530	1.11	18.58
Indonesia	420	433	1.15	21.88

2.5 Coordinate the production, translation, printing and dissemination of various knowledge products

To build the capacity and skills on climate change issues related to forestry among African forestry stakeholders in Francophone Africa, AFF is in the process of recruiting consultants to provide English to French translation services for five forestry related training compendiums on (i) carbon markets and trade (ii) climate modelling and scenario development and (iii) international dialogues and processes in climate change (Table 6). This is in addition to translating other knowledge products that are in English. Once translated the compendiums

¹ Hits are also known as request and it is the total number of files loaded when a single page is requested from the web server. This includes photos, graphics, text etc.

and other knowledge products will be made available to audiences from French speaking countries.

Table 6: List of AFF training compendiums for English to French translation

	Document title	Language	Number of pages
1.	Carbon markets and trade: a compendium for professional training in African forestry	English	140
2.	Carbon markets and trade: a compendium for technical training in African forestry	English	72
3.	Carbon markets and trade: a compendium for short courses in African forestry	English	84
4.	Climate modelling and scenario development: a compendium for professional training in African forestry	English	92
5.	International dialogues, processes and mechanisms on climate change: compendium for professional and technical training in African forestry	English	132

2.6 Create and maintain media relations, prepare media materials and distribute same to media outlets

Media roundtable discussions on “*building climate resilient communities in African forests through the Paris Agreement*”

AFF in collaboration with NGARA hosted virtual round table discussions with representatives of African media and selected experts on 30 -31 August 2021 (Francophone Africa) and 06-07 September 2021 (Anglophone Africa) as parallel events to the webinars. Twenty-five (25) participants representing a diverse group of media outlets (print, local broadcast news, radio, scientific publications) and influential bloggers participated in the online events.

The aim of the virtual discussions was to strengthen the capacity of science reporters to better understand and effectively report on how African countries are handling adverse climate change impacts on the forestry sector and people that depend on it. They provided a forum for experts to provide national and regional journalists with context and perspectives on the most urgent issues in national forest governance responses to the Paris Agreement; and development of gums and resins sector for climate resilient communities on the continent.

The roundtables undoubtedly were one of a kind, very informative, stimulating, rich in content and an eye opener to English and French speaking African journalists whose understanding of forestry, climate change nexus went a notch higher. Besides gaining new insights on the state of forests in Africa from the scientists, the journalists were made to appreciate the critical role of this ecosystem to livelihoods of local/ indigenous communities, in diverse areas like provision of food, fiber, water, firewood, building materials and aesthetic beauty.

The media participants were able to authoritatively connect forests and the overall human survival, economic growth, social cohesion and climate mitigation and adaptation thanks to the two regional media round tables. It was also impressive to hear the scientists break down jargon to deliver a coherent assessment of the status of African forests, threats, their remedies and opportunities. The journalists pledged their commitment to the plenary sessions of the webinar towards being part of national debates geared towards raising the visibility of forests in economic development, climate action, gender parity and food security. They reiterated that their task moving forward would be to reach out to scientists, policymakers and researchers on a constant basis, interview them on the status of forests in the continent and emerging threats if any.

Media coverage

In a run up to the information sharing webinars, a press release, backgrounder and promotional flyer were circulated to publicize the online events. The press release was sent to major media outlets and posted on the AFF web page (www.afforum.org), as well as on Facebook and Twitter social media sites. In addition to physical representation of selected media houses, the events were open to virtual journalists interested in learning more about the research findings.

The media and outreach activities during the regional workshop generated a favourable return on investment, with millions of AFF members, African forestry stakeholders, and the general public impacted on. **Forty-one (41) articles (32 English, 2 French, 7 Kiswahili) were published by twenty-three (23) media houses with coverage spread across the East, West, South and Central Africa**, as well as with the wider international community (Annex 2).

These media outlets included Africa Science News; Africa Climate Reporters; Atlantic Chronicles; Botswana Guardian (online and print); Centre for Coordination of Agricultural Development in Southern Africa (CCARDESA); Channel Africa; Eco-Outlook; Enviro News Nigeria; Gambia Radio & Television Service (GRTS); InstantNews; Kenya Tribune, Msumba News Blog, Mwananchi, News-Europe.fr, Nipashe newspapers; MyJoyOnline.com; Tanzania Broadcasting Corporation (TBC), TBC FM, The Midweek Sun; The Post; The Voice; Pan African Media Alliance for Climate Change (PAMACC) News Agency; Talk Africa; Xinhua News Agency.

Table 7 below presents a summary of media coverage for the regional information sharing webinars. The estimated cost of buying space taken up by the media articles, of which AFF did not pay for (Advertising Value Equivalent, AVE) is **USD 19,757.50**.

Table 7: Summary of media coverage for the regional information sharing webinars

No	Media	Type	Reach	Average /Length	Unit cost USD	Total AVE USD
1.	Africa Science News	International online science news site	Global	300 words	150.00	150.00
2.	Africa Climate Reporters	International online science news site	Global	300 words	2 articles @ 150.00	300.00
3.	Atlantic Chronicles	Online news site based in Cameroon	Cameroon / wider regional community	300	150.00	150.00
4.	Botswana Guardian (online)	Online news site based in Botswana	Botswana / wider regional community	300	3 articles @ 150.00	450.00
5.	Botswana Guardian (print newspaper)	National print newspaper	Circulation of 22,000+ copies weekly and readership excess of 110 000 people in Botswana	1/2 page	3 articles @ 1.350.00	4,050.00
6.	CCARDESA	Online news site founded by SADC member states	SADC; Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Tanzania, Botswana, Zambia, Malawi, Angola, Eswatini, Lesotho	300	2 articles @ 150.00	300.00
7.	Channel Africa	Electronic and online media	Africa and international community	45'00	1 podcast @ 2,914.50	2,914.50
8.	Channel Africa	Electronic and online media	Africa and international community	15'00	2 sound bites @ 971.50	1,943.00
9.	Eco-OUTLOOK	Bi-monthly newspaper in Cameroon on environment and climate change issues.	Cameroon	300	150.00	150.00
10.	Enviro News	International online science news site	Global	300	150.00	150.00

No	Media	Type	Reach	Average /Length	Unit cost USD	Total AVE USD
11.	Gambia Radio & Television Service (GRTS)	National Radio and Television Station	Gambia	12'57	1 radio clip @ 950.00	950.00
12.	InstantNews	News site for Francophone Africa	DR Congo and French speaking African countries	300	150.00	150.00
13.	Kenya Tribune	Online news site in Kenya	Kenya and East African region	300	150.00	150.00
14.	Msuba News Blog	Online news site in Tanzania	Tanzania and East African region	300	2 articles @150.00	300.00
15.	Mwananchi Newspaper	Leading newspaper in Tanzania with circulation of 50,000 - 60,000 copies	Tanzania and East African region	Full page	2,700.00	2,700.00
16.	MyJoyOnline	Online news site in Ghana	Ghana and wider African region	300	150.00	150.00
17.	News-Europe	International online news site	Europe and international community	300	150.00	150.00
18.	Nipashe Newspaper	Swahili daily newspaper in Tanzania with daily circulation of 28,000-30,000 copies	Tanzania and East African region	1/2 page	1,350.00	1,350.00
19.	Nipashe online	Online news site in Tanzania	Tanzania and East African region	300	150.00	150.00
20.	Tanzania Broadcasting Corporation	Electronic media	53 million viewers	2'30 sec	2 interviews @ 400.00	800.00
21.	TBC radio	Electronic media	National	2'30 sec	400.00	400.00

No	Media	Type	Reach	Average /Length	Unit cost USD	Total AVE USD
22.	The Midweek Sun	National newspaper with a circulation of 21 000 copies and readership of 100 000 people	Botswana	1/2 page	1,350.00	1,350.00
23.	The Midweek Sun online	Online news site in Botswana	Botswana and wider global community	300	150.00	150.00
24.	The Post	Online news site	National	300	150.00	150.00
25.	The Voice	Online news site	National	300	150.00	150.00
26.	PAMACC News Agency	International online science news site	Global			
27.	The Talk Africa	Online news site	National	300	150.00	150.00
28.	Xinhua News Agency	International news site	Over 1 billion readers	300 words	6 articles @150.00	900.00
Advertising Value Equivalent (AVE)						19,757.50

Some of the media engagements involved interviews with staff from the AFF Secretariat, its partners and members. These media outlets included Channel Africa – the International Radio Service of the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC) – that featured soundbites of Prof. Godwin Kowero, AFF Executive Secretary-CEO via electronic and online podcasts on issues regarding African forest’s contribution in building climate resilient communities.

Xinhua News focused on some key recommendations of the information sharing workshop such as the need for: policy reforms, adoption of appropriate technologies, enforcement of laws, community engagement and innovative financing to reverse forest degradation in the continent. Further, how the continent's dryland ecosystem is a reservoir of abundant natural products including honey, edible insects, roots and tubers that could be harnessed to promote food security and incomes. Other stations that carried similar stories based on the press release included the Tanzania Broadcasting Corporation (TBC), TBC FM, Mwananchi Newspaper, Eco-Outlook, Kenya tribune, News-Europe.fr, Africa Climate Reports, myjoyonline.com, Cameroon Radio Television (CRT), The Midweek Sun, The Talk, The Voice, PAMACC News Agency, among others.

The amount of media coverage (41 articles) was a great improvement from the year 2020 which was dominated with COVID-19 related news. The coverage was similar in number to the 2018 information sharing workshops and an improvement from 2016 which featured 17 articles, while in 2015 only 4 articles were featured in the media. As a result, attention to and coverage of forestry issues has substantially improved; with AFF's profile, reputation and membership gaining visibility on local, regional and international news channels, sites and social media platforms.

Media coverage was also secured in support of AFF's Regional training workshop on forest and tree-based climate change mitigation for African forestry stakeholders held from 6-10 December in Arusha Tanzania. Five (5) articles featured in the East African, The Guardian, Nipashe and ippmedia.com

'Youth in African Forestry' podcast

The African Forest Forum (AFF) and the Hanns Seidel Foundation (Kenya and Ethiopia) with support from Strathmore University in Kenya recognize the unique opportunities and challenges facing a youthful population in the forestry sector. Through a joint podcast entitled, 'Youth in African Forestry', a platform will be provided for young people to engage with researchers and practitioners to address critical issues about the African forestry sector and explore how they can be resolved in an effort to enhance sustainable forest management and use on the continent, as well as link these processes to today's global society. Such issues will include:

- **Why are forests and trees important? How can they be sustained? (20 min):** The podcast should include three panelists from the Regional Sustainability Network (RSN)-network drawn from (a) the dry forest zone in the Sahel region of western and north-central Africa (b) countries that have large areas of tropical rain forests (c) independent youth
- **What are the threats to forest resources? What is the future of forests? (20min):** The podcast should include three panelists as highlighted above.
- **What are the benefits of forests? Give some examples of how you have gained from forestry activities (20-30min):** This will be a virtual discussion among five (5) youths working in different areas of forestry including; nature-based enterprises, eco-tourism, non-timber forest products (NTFPs) value chains (production, harvesting and processing) among others.

The podcast will feature pre-recorded views on each of the above topics with youth participants as indicated above and an expert. The structure of the podcast will be conversational, ensuring that each guest gets equal (pre-recorded) speaking time. The content will also be formatted into bite-sized episodes to make for a limited run series spread over three weeks. In view of this, the presenter will build anticipation for the conversations to be held in the subsequent week during each episode.

3. KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT ACTIVITIES AND OUTPUTS

3.1 Update, and implement the AFF knowledge management strategy

Knowledge is one of the primary tools in AFF's mission to promote the sustainable management and use of tree and forest resources on the African continent. The *AFF Knowledge Management Strategy (2021-2025)*, aims to strengthen AFF's position as a leading forestry knowledge brokerage institution on the continent. It provides a conceptual framework for the generation, management, sharing, communication and transfer of knowledge of forest related information among the many stakeholders involved in the African forestry sector.

The strategy is based on a needs' assessment undertaken with the AFF Secretariat staff, members and partners. Key capacity gaps identified through this process included; low levels of awareness on knowledge management as an important tool in organizational management; lack of awareness of various tools available to enhance knowledge collation, sharing and use; low levels of cooperation and learning from stakeholder' experiences in knowledge management; streamlined roles and responsibilities in KM and partnerships for effective implementation of the KM Strategy.

In pursuit of this, AFF engaged a Knowledge Management consultant to strengthen the information and knowledge management capacity of Governing Council members and partners from Anglophone Africa through a one-day virtual workshop held on 18 November 2021. The virtual workshop sessions focused on the strategic direction for AFF's knowledge agenda, by promoting; an appreciation of the role of KM in general; an understanding of the processes, procedures, roles, tools and techniques for managing knowledge at AFF; Understanding of the individual roles on developing an internal culture of knowledge sharing and collaboration and effective participation in a Community of Practice (CoP) in sustainable forestry management.

3.2 Identify and/or create, link with, strength and maintain forestry networks and databases

AFF has developed forestry contacts databases that contain information on several experts, students and individuals involved in forestry issues and AFF activities across the continent.

- Database of Alumni for AFF-HAFL Fellowship Programme
- Database of experts and actors in private sector forestry
- Database of LULUCF Research Fellowship Awardees
- Database of interested parties on Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs)
- Database of Non-Timber Forest Products (NTFPs) Value Chains

3.3 Develop, organize, update and maintain the AFF website, intranet and social media platforms

3.3.1 AFF website and intranet upgrade

There have been progressive initiatives to improve AFF's website and intranet to increase interaction, provide ready access to AFF's knowledge products and ensure the institution's profile is visible in the online space. In line with the recommendations of the *AFF Knowledge Management Strategy (2021-2025)*, it's imperative that these digital platforms be further restructured from an information center to a knowledge hub. AFF is in the process initiating a tender process through ICRAF to upgrade the site's interoperability, introducing standardized library systems, applying advanced metrics tools, widening AFF's knowledge base and increasing AFF's online authority. Through these interventions, it is anticipated that the institution's profile will be raised considerably, enabling it to become a key player in African forestry.

The following are key areas of improvement:

a. Interoperability

- The current platform does not link authors to publications thereby making their collective contribution untraceable.
- Categorization of knowledge products by keyword, programme, geographical coverage etc. has not been implemented.
- There are no consolidated pages for topical areas of coverage, links to international aspects like forestry and global goals e.g. Global Forest Goals, and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
- The current querying provision is limited and cannot consume complex requests.

b. Library system

- Current provision does not meet standard cataloguing expectation.
- Publication content currently are not being picked by Google Scholar due to missing schema.
- Inability to import and export publication content in internationally accepted format, e.g., MARCXML.
- Minimal participation in body of researchers, e.g., ResearchGate and Open Researcher and Contributor ID (ORCID).

c. Metric tools

- Missing Digital Object Identifier (DOI) URLs on publications to ascertain link permanency.
- Absence of citation measuring tools, e.g., [Dimensions Count](#) and [Google Scholar](#).
- Inability to ascertain attention surrounding AFF research. Missing [Altmetric Score](#).

d. AFF's knowledge base

- Scarce information on Africa-based databases and applications on forestry and forest policy.

- Missing interactive querying platform to get desired service from database or application.
- Lacking a common African forestry policy hub.

e. AFF’s online authority

- Lack of built-up keywords defining the organization’s role and mandate.
- Only definitive searches, e.g. “African Forest Forum” yields a first page result.

3.3.2 AFF Social media platforms

Social media networks like Facebook, and Twitter have supported virtual interaction among AFF members and forestry stakeholders during the COVID-19 period. Topics that dominated conversations on social media included COVID-19 and the forestry sector, sustainable forest management and the interlinkages between forestry and climate change, along with the XV World Forestry Congress. The most popular posts include calls for consultancy, job and scholarship opportunities.

As a result, there has been an increase in Facebook followers from **3,484 to 4,016 followers** while Twitter is up **from 1,073 in 2020 to 1,091** (figure 3 and 5 below).

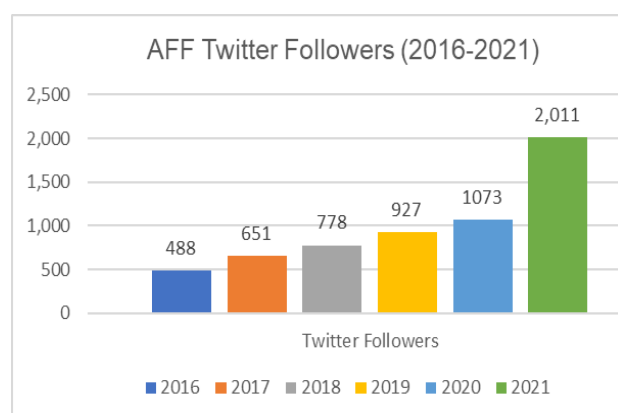


Figure 3: AFF Twitter Followers (2016-2021)

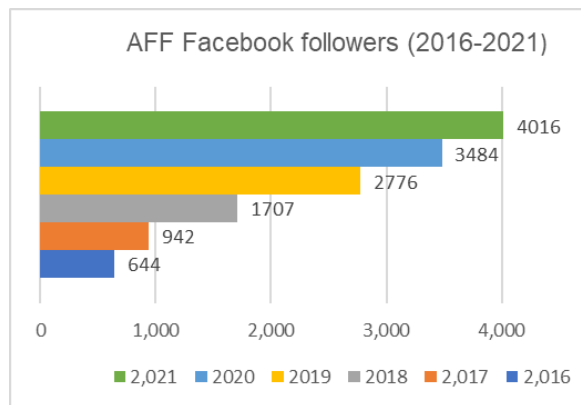


Figure 4: AFF Facebook Followers (2016-2021)

3.3.3 AFF membership

AFF has a total of **2,596 members**, with 90% being ordinary members while the rest (10%) are associate members (mainly students). Since its establishment, AFF has progressively admitted members on an annual basis (table 8).

Table 8: Number of applications for AFF membership over the years

Year	Admission	Cumulative
2007	242	242
2008	141	383
2009	64	447
2010	76	523
2011	66	589
2012	35	624
2013	33	657

2014	183	840
2015	271	1111
2016	410	1521
2017	335	1856
2018	200	2056
2019	158	2214
2019-2021	382	2596

AFF members come from all over the world. They are drawn from academia, government ministries/departments, NGOs, the private sector, farmer organisations, among others concerned with the promotion of, support of, or research into forests, forest management and forest products, and trees outside forests. AFF uses these diverse backgrounds to work for the sustainable management and use of tree and forest resources in order to protect the environment and improve the lives of African people. AFF members interact and share experiences, insights and expertise on issues related to forestry.

AFF Members come from 83 countries worldwide; of these, 51 are African countries. Only 4-member states of the African Union, namely Equatorial Guinea, Libya, Sahrawi Republic and São Tomé and Príncipe are yet to be represented.

Membership from outside Africa, referred to as “Friends of African forestry”, is from 32 countries namely: Albania, Australia, Austria, Bangladesh, Belgium, Bhutan, Brazil, Cambodia, Canada, China, Denmark, Falkland Islands, Finland, France, Germany, India, Ireland, Indonesia, Italy, Norway, Philippines, Portugal, Slovakia (Slovak Republic), South Korea, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sweden, Switzerland, The Netherlands, United Kingdom, United States, Vietnam. The region with the highest number of members is Western Africa (832), followed by Eastern Africa (601), Southern Africa (356), North Eastern Africa (601), Central Africa (262) and outside Africa (130).

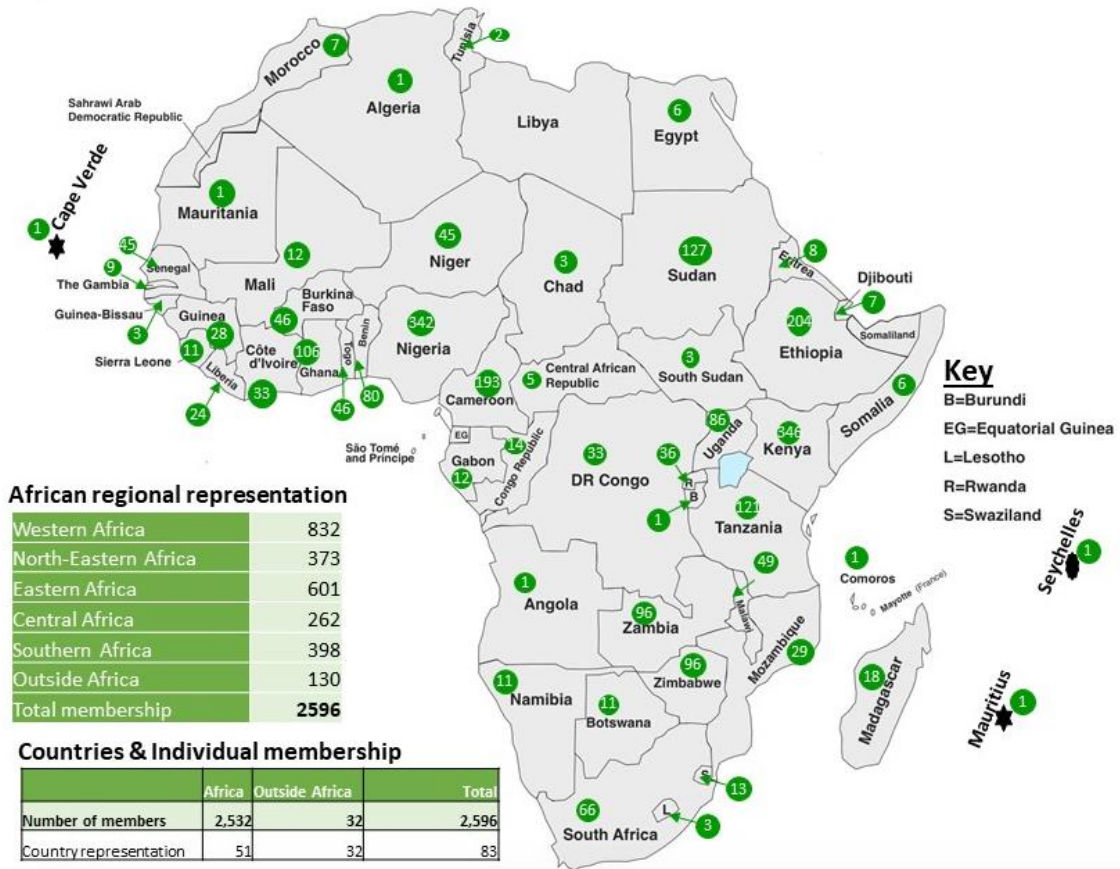


Figure 6: Geographical distribution of AFF members. Source: AFF data (2021)

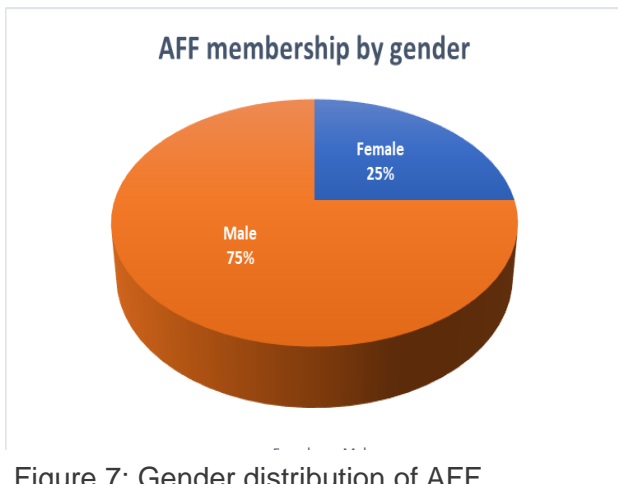


Figure 7: Gender distribution of AFF membership

71% of AFF members have either MSc or PhD level degree qualifications, 24% with a bachelor’s degree and 4% with a diploma. The remaining 1% have a certificate level training. Members are predominantly male (75% of the total), while 25% are female - reflecting the forest profession in general.

They are actively contributing their time and expertise towards advancing the mission of AFF by voluntarily availing their individual resources in a pool for sharing through the AFF members’ intranet.

By 2021, members exchanged among themselves, through the intranet, 674 full text journal articles which received 28,920 views and have been downloaded 12,477 times.

3.3.4 AFF info-mail to members

An average open rate is a measure of how many email recipients open an email as compared to the total number of emails delivered within a campaign.

In 2021, AFF recorded an open rate of **38% out of a total of 54 info-mails** shared with its members. The statistics reveal how active AFF members are. Some just apply for membership and do not follow up on AFF's activities after being granted membership status. Countries with the highest number of members opening the AFF info-mails are: Kenya, Nigeria, Ethiopia, Cameroon and USA. Further, most members clicked and open their info-mails in the middle of the day (Nairobi time), giving insight on the best hours of the day to guide future sharing of information.

3.4 Monitor, improve and maintain knowledge management practices, tools, polices, and sources

AFF recently launched a Communities of Practice (CoPs) programme to enable sharing of information and experience amongst stakeholders in African forestry. Communities of Practice are active on-line learning and communication networks whose members are interested in learning about the same topics.

AFF hosted its first virtual Community of Practice on forest related Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) under the Paris Agreement from 6-22 October 2021. The aim of the on-line Community of Practice forum was to provide a platform for sharing of knowledge, resources and best practices amongst these African stakeholders, with a focus on forestry and land use in the NDCs.

Specifically, the platform aimed to provide a forum to share best practice and useful resources for:

- Developing and updating of forest based NDCs in preparation for COP 26 in Glasgow
- Aligning national policies and institutional frameworks with mitigation and adaptation measures in forestry and land-use sectors
- Implementing forest related mitigation and adaptation measures and programmes
- Accessing international climate financing instruments for forest-based mitigation and adaptation contributions
- Building skills and capacity for developing and reporting forest and land use contributions to NDCs, as well as for policy mainstreaming and implementation of forest-based mitigation and adaptation programmes

The platform engaged stakeholders involved in forestry and climate change policies and processes including national focal points for NDCs, UNFCCC, REDD+, UNFF as well as NGOs, public forestry and environmental administrators, and related private sector stakeholders in sub-Saharan Africa. Live interactions took place using a web-based platform specifically set up for the purpose. In the final week, the web-based platform was augmented by daily webinars using video communications platform (Zoom).

The online forum attracted considerable interest amongst stakeholders involved in forestry and climate change policies and processes including national focal points for NDCs, UNFCCC, REDD+, UNFF as well as NGOs, public forestry and environmental administrators, and related private sector stakeholders in sub-Saharan Africa. A total of 280 people registered to participate in the on-line forum on forest-based NDCs. Of these, 100 joined the web-based platform and between 34-44 joined daily zoom webinars.

The timing of this Community of Practice event coincided with the lead up to COP 26 in Glasgow and was therefore very topical. Participants showed a keen interest in all themes discussed and expressed appreciation of the information and resources shared. The online chat sessions and the interactive webinar sessions provided an opportunity for information sharing and discussion amongst participants.

AFF held its second Community of Practice on Non-Timber Forest Products (NTFPs) Value Chains from 15 November – 3 December 2021 for interested actors.

ANNEX 1: IMPLEMENTATION OF 2021 COMMUNICATIONS AND KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT ACTION PLAN

COMMUNICATIONS TOOL	BASELINE (2020)	TARGET (DEC 2021)	ACHIEVEMENT (JAN-DEC 2021)	SOURCE OF DATA COLLECTION	FREQUENCY OF MONITORING	PERSON RESPONSIBLE (2020) ²
WEBSITE²						
Page views per year	2,097,910	2,500,000	3,486,334	Google Analytics	Monthly	DG
Number of visits	462,915	500,000	729,596	Google Analytics	Monthly	DG
Number of unique visitors	138,756	200,000	299,085	Google Analytics	Monthly	DG
Number of website hits	2,467,197	2,500,000	4,077,608	AFF records	Monthly	DG
PUBLICATIONS						
Number of knowledge products	214	230	229	AFF records	Semi-Annually	DG
Number of opened pages	1,379,672	3,000,000	3,486,334	Google Analytics	Semi-Annually	DG
Number of impact stories	40	40	40	Survey	Annually	PMER
PROMOTIONAL MATERIAL						
Number of information packages distributed	400	50	60	AFF's own records	Per event	DG/BO
Number of info-mails circulated	48	50	51	AFF records	Per event	DG
SOCIAL MEDIA						
Number of Twitter followers	1,058	1100	2,011	Twitter	Monthly	DG
Number of Facebook	3,484	3,600	4,016	Facebook	Monthly	DG
MEDIA						
Number of press kits distributed	0	0	28	AFF press office	Monthly	DG
Number of journalists in media database	80	90	80	AFF press office	Monthly	DG
Number of journalists who are AFF members	60	80	60	AFF database	Annually	DG
Number of AFF media articles	4	5	45	Google Alerts	Monthly	DG
Number of audio or visual files	0	5	5	Google Alerts	Monthly	DG
Communication Partnerships	2	3	2	AFF own records	Annually	DG
AFF MEMBERSHIP						
Membership applications per year	382	150	50	AFF intranet	Monthly	DG

Persons responsible for implementation of the 2021 Communications Action Plan is Daphine Gitonga (DG), Senior Communications Officer



African Forest Forum

A platform for stakeholders in African forestry



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