



CONCEPT NOTE

TRAINING WORKSHOP ON FOREST PLANNING AND FOREST MANAGEMENT IN DIFFERENT FOREST TYPES IN EASTERN AND SOUTHERN AFRICA

24 – 28 JULY 2023 | ARUSHA, TANZANIA

1. INTRODUCTION

The African Forest Forum (AFF) is a pan-African non-governmental organization with its headquarters in Nairobi, Kenya. It is an association of individuals who share the quest for and commitment to the sustainable management, use and conservation of the forest and tree resources of Africa for the socio-economic wellbeing of its people and for the stability and improvement of its environment. The purpose of AFF is to provide a platform and create an enabling environment for independent and objective analysis, advocacy and advice on relevant policy and technical issues pertaining to achieving sustainable management, use and conservation of Africa's forest and tree resources as part of efforts to reduce poverty, promote gender equality, enhance economic and social development and protect the environment. Through all its programmes and activities, AFF seeks to promote the empowerment of all marginalized groups, particularly women and youth, who continue to be vulnerable to the impacts of climate change and whose representation, priorities and needs are rarely adequately addressed in the forestry sector.

To this end, AFF, with funding from the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) is implementing a project titled "*Strengthening management and use of forest ecosystems for sustainable development in Africa*" that seeks to generate and share knowledge and information through partnerships in ways that will provide inputs into policy options and capacity building efforts for improved forest management that will better address climate change impacts, as well as contribute to poverty alleviation and environmental protection in Africa. One of the key project objectives is *to identify and promote opportunities for protecting and sustainably managing the forest resource base of the continent as well as the supply of its ecosystems' goods and services*. To fulfil this objective, AFF aims to develop strategic human capacity in African institutions to strengthen sustainable forest management through improving the capacity for forest planning and forest management.

2. BACKGROUND

Forest management requires the execution of silvicultural practices in a forest while at the same time taking into account economic, social, ecological and cultural aspects. For this to happen, a plan is a prerequisite. This therefore makes planning an important component of sustainable forest management (SFM). For example, such plans help the resource owners to identify what can be done to enhance and protect the values of forests, maximize returns on existing and emerging investment opportunities and secure supply of essential ecosystem services. The planning process has to be inclusive; for example, to allow various stakeholders to participate in the development of the plans and also in forest management. In this regard the plans should clarify the roles and responsibilities of the various stakeholders. Also, in the context of inclusivity, gender consideration in forest planning is critical because men, women and youth play different but complimentary roles in forest management, harvesting, and use of forest resources. Excluding women, for example, will deny the planning process as well as forest management considerable skills and knowledge possessed by this group.

Good forest plans can only be developed when reliable, timely and adequate information is available to guide the planning process. Such plans can then facilitate proper management of forests when supporting resources are available, thus making it possible to achieve socio-economic and environmental policies and objectives. However, scientific literature and other writings paint a picture that many countries on the continent lack this type of information for planning forest activities, in addition to other constraints associated with managing the forests sustainably. Further, information on assessment of Africa's forests, stand dynamics, and capacity to meet increasing demands of growing populations on a sustainable basis is largely lacking. The implication is that forests in African countries are not managed sustainably due to these shortfalls. As forests continue to play increasingly critical roles to the welfare of people and survival of animals and plants, as well as to the protection of the environment, the development of good management plans to guide sustainable supply of ecosystem goods and services is inevitable

To this end AFF conducted capacity gaps analyses on forest planning and forest management in Anglophone, Lusophone, and Francophone countries in Africa through an evaluation of forest planning and forest management processes in different forest types. Specifically, the evaluation analysed:

- a) The adequacy for forestry planning processes in different forest types
- b) The extent of compliance to plans by implementing institutions, the constraints experienced and how to overcome them
- c) The state of management of different forest types, the constraints experienced and measures to improve various operations that characterise forest management
- d) The effectiveness of current forest management practices in different forest types at achieving the supply of forest ecosystem goods and services

Based on the outcome of the gap analysis AFF has developed training guidelines entitled *Training guidelines for forest planning and forest management in Africa* to guide capacity building efforts aimed at equipping African stakeholders with better knowledge, skills and best practices for effective forest planning and forest management activities in order to improve the supply of ecosystem goods and services and eventually raising the contribution of the forest sector to human wellbeing, climate resilient economic growth, and healthy ecosystems in the African continent.

It is within this context that AFF, in its annual work plan of activities for 2023, is organizing a training workshop to strengthen the capacity of African forestry stakeholders to formulate forest plans and undertake forest management activities that will strengthen sustainable forest management and more effectively enhance the supply of forest ecosystem goods and services.

3. TRAINING OBJECTIVES

The overall objective of the training workshop is to strengthen the capacity of the African forestry stakeholders to improve forest planning processes and best practices in forest management as a means to strengthen their ability to effectively deliver forest ecosystem goods and services in the context of a changing socio-political, cultural and economic environment.

The specific objectives are to:

- a) To equip the forestry stakeholders with information and tools to formulate forest plans for different forest types.
- b) To equip the forestry stakeholders with tools and skills for undertaking activities related to forest management in different forest types.
- c) To provide an opportunity for African forestry stakeholders from different countries to meet and exchange lessons and experiences on forest planning and forest management processes.

4. EXPECTED OUTCOMES:

- a) Capacity of stakeholders to develop forestry plans for different forest types enhanced
- b) Capacity of stakeholders to undertake forest management activities in different forest types enhanced.
- c) A network of transformative forestry practitioners that can respond to new and emerging concepts related to forestry management in a changing socio-economic and political environment established.

4. VENUE AND DURATION

A face to face workshop is planned in Arusha, Tanzania, for a duration of 5 days from 24 to 28 July 2023.

6. PARTICIPANTS

The training workshop will bring together about 40 participants from countries in eastern and southern Africa sub-regions representing public forest administrations, non-governmental organizations, research, academia, private sector as well as youth and women-based organizations engaged in forestry initiatives.

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