



AFRICAN FOREST FORUM
a platform for stakeholders in African forestry

THE AFRICAN FOREST FORUM AND ITS ENGAGEMENT WITH THE PROMOTION OF SFM IN AFRICA

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Africa's forests

- » Estimated forest area in Africa is close to **675 million hectares** accounting for about 17% of global forest area and 23% of the total land area in the region.
- » Africa is home to 25 percent of the world's remaining rainforests.
- » More than 70 percent of the population in Sub-Saharan Africa depends on forests and woodlands for its livelihood; one fifth of rural families' daily needs come from forests.
- » Woodlands and forests supply approximately 60 percent of all energy.
- » In general, value-added in the forestry sector has not increased, the forestry sector is not a major driving force for economic growth and development, the forestry sector has been left behind, particularly in rapidly growing economies.
- » Net forest loss in the region was **4.0 million ha year⁻¹** (1990–2000) and **3.4 million ha year⁻¹** (2000–2010).



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Forest area in Africa, 1990–2010 (FRA 2010)

Sub-region	Area (1 000 ha)			Annual change (1 000 ha)		Annual change rate (%)	
	1990	2000	2010	1990–2000	2000–2010	1990–2000	2000–2010
Central Africa	268 214	261 455	254 854	-676	-660	-0.25	-0.26
East Africa	88 865	81 027	73 197	-784	-783	-0.92	-1.01
North Africa	85 123	79 224	78 814	-590	-41	-0.72	-0.05
Southern Africa	215 447	204 879	194 320	-1 057	-1 056	-0.50	-0.53
West Africa	91 589	81 979	73 234	-961	-875	-1.10	-1.12
Total Africa	749 238	708 564	674 419	-4 067	-3 414	-0.56	-0.49
World	4 168 399	4 085 063	4 032 905	-8 334	-5 216	-0.20	-0.13



Key challenges

- » Combating **deforestation**, degradation and illicit trade in forest products and wildlife.
- » **Value addition**. Africa accounts for about 16% of the global forest area, but only 2% of global value-added and exports.
- » Improving forest resilience to effects of **climate change** and enhancing their role in mitigation and adaptation.
- » Effectively managing **land use conflict** between agriculture and forestry. Agriculture is the main driver of deforestation.
- » **Empowering local actors** in the areas of forest management, benefit sharing, law enforcement, gender equity, tenure security and conflict management.
- » Strengthening the **capacity of public and private** forest institutions for improved effectiveness, efficiency, transparency, accountability, and inclusiveness



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African Forest Forum (AFF)

- » AFF 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 peoples and for the stability and improvement of its environment.
- » AFF's **Vision** is to be the leading **forum that links and unites stakeholders** in African forestry within and outside the continent.
- » AFF's **Mission** is to contribute to the improvement of the **livelihoods of the people of Africa and the environment they live** in through sustainable management and use of tree and forest resources on the African continent.
- » AFF **Goal** is to **galvanize a common African voice and opinion**, and mobilize resources that are required to address forestry and related issues that cut across countries and regions with a view of enhancing the relevance and contribution of forestry to the people of Africa and their environment.



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Raison d'être

- » In the last several decades much of Africa's forests has been lost to **deforestation and degradation** prompting numerous policy, legislative, and institutional reforms as well as initiatives, programs, and projects.
- » Effective management and use of Africa's forests is a priority to public as well as private actors but there has **been limited success in analysing lessons in a systematic and unbiased way** to support these efforts.
- » The **purpose** of the AFF is to **provide a platform for information sharing and expertise** 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 economic and social development and protect the environment.



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AFF's Activities: networking and information sharing

- » AFF plays a prominent role in generating **high quality, up-to-date information supporting evidence based decisions** in forestry as well as updating stakeholders on developments in the sector.
- » AFF provides collaborative opportunities through its rapidly **growing membership currently over 1,000 individuals**, from academic, governmental, non-governmental, and commercial institutions, the private sector, farmer organisations, and other bodies with commitment to the sustainable management, wise use and conservation of Africa's forest and tree resources. On their own volition the members are actively sharing contacts, expertise and publications on the AFF intranet.
- » Currently, AFF's **website** has over a million page hits and over 5,000 unique web visitors a year. In 2014, the website shared over 25,000 forest news articles.



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AFF's Activities: key knowledge products

- » AFF has developed key knowledge products in areas that are fast gaining currency, not only in the forestry sector but in the broader areas of rural development and livelihoods support.
- » One such product is a **compendium on “non-timber forest products and services”** from forests that are crucial to supporting rural livelihoods. The compendium is for training professionals and technical staff (those offering diploma and certificate training) on several areas including harvesting, processing and marketing of these products.
- » Another product is a **book on “climate change and African forests and wildlife resources”**. The book, apart from providing a better understanding of the link between forests and climate change to the wider public, is also widely used, like the NTPF compendium, by universities and technical colleges in Africa in the areas of forestry as a key reference text.



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AFF's Activities: supporting RECs

AFF provides policy and other advice to the regional economic communities in Africa. For example,

- » AFF has successfully raised the profile in the Southern African Community (SADC of Forest Law Enforcement, Good Forest Governance and Fair Trade in forest products (abbreviated as FLEGT- and not the European FLEGT).
- » As a result the SADC countries have developed a **SADC FLEGT Programme** to guide its activities in these areas as a way to strengthening compliance to forest laws and regulations, as well as improving the institutional and other governance structures and approaches in the sector.
- » As for improving fair trade in forest products and strengthening the private sector in wood processing and marketing of forest products, the SADC countries established a **SADC Timber Association** concept that will guide these activities in the SADC member countries.



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AFF's Activities: supporting RECs ...cont'd

- » AFF has worked closely with parliamentarians from the East African Community in drafting an “**EAC Forest Management and Protection Bill**” for the countries within the community. The bill is now with the East African Legislative Assembly. On its adoption it will guide the practice of forestry in the EAC countries, as well as trans-boundary forestry activities.
- » with respect to the Economic Community of Western African States (ECOWAS),AFF contributed to the development of the **ECOWAS Forest Policy**. It also contributed to the development of the **ECOWAS Convergence Plan** for the Sustainable Management and Utilization of Forest Ecosystem in West Africa.
- » This Plan has seven priority intervention areas, with “**Information, education and communication**” being the area where AFF is a lead institution selected to guide activities under it.



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AFF's Activities: livelihoods of rural people

- » With respect to improving the livelihoods of rural people through combating land degradation and desertification, AFF has, in the context of the **Great Green Wall of the Sahara and Sahel Initiative (GGWSSI)**, assisted Djibouti, Ethiopia, Tchad, Niger and Mali in developing, for the first time, national strategies and plans for implementing relevant activities within the GGWSSI belt. The countries are now implementing projects developed within this context.
- » AFF also collaborates with AUC , FAO, UNCCD, CILSS, and SOS Sahel in the **African Drylands Week events**. The African Drylands Week is a regional forum that brings together experts, representatives of local populations, and policy makers from international, regional and local organizations to deliberate on Africa's drylands development, focusing on successes and challenges they face, including sustainable land management.



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AFF's Activities: international negotiations

AFF continues to strengthen African participation in international dialogues related to forestry, and this has resulted into a **vibrant, well organised, articulate and strategic African Group** at these negotiations. For example,

- » all African specific resolutions developed by the African Group in 2013 to guide the continent's input to UNFF10 found their way into the global resolutions developed at the session.
- » Similarly, AFF organized a preparatory meeting for UNFF11 in Kenya during April 13-15, 2015 bringing together African delegates. In that meeting delegates discussed the UNFF11 agenda, drafted common positions in key issues, got trained in negotiations skills and strategized on how to negotiate during UNFF11.
- » AFF also was present in New York during UNFF11 session to backstop the African Group during the actual negotiation sessions.



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AFF's Activities: capacity building

- » AFF has developed “**Training modules on forest based climate change adaptation, mitigation, carbon trading, and payment for other environmental services**” that are widely used by professional, technical, and informal groups.
- » AFF has **built the capacity of 357 trainers in ten African countries in rapid carbon estimation** in forests, as well as in marketing and trade in forest carbon, guided by these modules.
- » The trainers form the **pioneer groups** in offering such training in their own countries as well as undertaking these assessments for their institutions and other stakeholders in forest carbon.
- » By training staff from NGOs, government extension services and related institutions that work with local communities AFF has ensured that **this training reaches local communities** through such actors.



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THANK YOU!

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