



REPORT ON

CLIMATE CHANGE AND AFRICAN FORESTS AND WILDLIFE: LESSONS AND WAY FORWARD

BRAZZAVILLE, REPUBLIC OF CONGO

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Prepared by

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1. INTRODUCTION

On the occasion of the 17th Session of the African Forestry and Wildlife Commission (AFWC), the African Forest Forum (AFF) collaborated with the FAO Regional Office for Africa (FAO-RAF) to hold a pre-session workshop on “Climate change and African forests and wildlife: lessons and way forward”. The workshop was held in Brazzaville at the Palais du Congres on 20 and 21 February 2010.

The Workshop was opened by Professor Donatien N’zala, Director General of Forestry for the Republic of Congo. Opening remarks were also given by Mr Sebastien Malele, the Vice-Chair of the Governing Council of African Forest Forum, and by Mr Foday Bojang, representative of the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO).

The workshop was attended by 86 participants from 29 African countries, namely: Algeria, Benin, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Chad, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Malawi, Mali, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Republic of Congo, Senegal, South Africa, Sudan, Tanzania, Togo, Zambia, and Zimbabwe. There were participants from international, regional and sub-regional institutions including ECOWAS, LATF, AUC, UNEP, UMEOA and the FAO.

The objective of the workshop was to promote sustainable forestry and wildlife management in Africa through:

- i) Creating sufficient awareness on influence of climate change on African forests and wildlife and their productivity;
- ii) Equipping national and regional forestry and wildlife related institutions with knowledge to better tackle climate change issues related to mitigation and adaptation;
- iii) Sharing information on effects of climate change, carbon trade and market opportunities, and lessons from existing climate change related projects amongst participants;
- iv) Creating a body of knowledge/expertise on climate change issues of relevance to African forestry and wildlife sectors.

2. THE WORKSHOP PROCESS

The workshop had plenary sessions in which twelve presentations belonging to four themes were made as follows:

Theme 1: Climate change: the broader context

- International debates on climate change: participation and implications for the forestry sector.
- Global change processes: linkage to forest resources.
- African forests in present and emerging climate change arrangements: the African Forest Forum position
- Reduced Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD)

Theme 2: Climate change in major ecological zones of Africa

- Climate change issues and approaches in the African rain forests.
- Climate change in the woodlands of Eastern and Southern Africa: effects, mitigation and adaptation.
- Climate change in the West African Sahel and savannas: impacts on forest ecosystems and tree resources.

Theme 3: Climate change and wildlife in Africa

- Climate change issues and approaches on wildlife in Eastern and Southern Africa.
- Climate change issues and approaches on wildlife in West and Central Africa

Theme 4: Adaptation, mitigation, policy and socio-economic aspects

- Community based adaptation to climate change: A typology of information and institutional requirements for uptake of existing technologies
- Climate change and forestry: socio-economic considerations for Africa
- Some policy aspects and approaches to climate change in African forestry

The presentations were followed by discussions.

Theme one set the broader context of climate change discussions by outlining the evolution of international debates on climate change, global change processes, and climate change arrangements. A paper entitled ‘Getting REDD Right for Africa’ gave an overview of key forestry related issues and recommendations. Various country experiences were cited including deforestation of Mau Forest in Kenya, the melting snows of Kilimanjaro, disappearance of lake Chad, floods in Budalangi – Kenya as well as experience in implementation of Reduced Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD) from the host country, Republic of Congo.

Theme two covered the major ecological zones of Africa as they relate to climate change issues. Specifically, the rain forests, the Sahel region, as well as woodlands and savannas were presented. The distribution, significance and status of these resources as well as threats, vulnerabilities and resilience were explored. Operational, institutional, and governance arrangements for adaptation and mitigations were proposed.

Theme three focused on the link between climate change and wildlife in Africa with particular reference to Eastern, Southern, Central and West Africa. The state of wildlife resources as well as threats and impacts from climate change and variability were discussed. New opportunities in terms of strong political will, gazettement of wildlife parks, and increased engagement from NGOs and donors were also cited. Issues of monitoring, reporting, and verifying in regard to climate change were also highlighted.

Theme four dealt with policy and socio-economic aspects of climate change. Community based approaches and other institutional arrangements were discussed in relation to uptake of existing technologies. The link between gender and climate change was also discussed. The final presentation touched on the policy context of the climate debate as well as the forest sector and ex-sector policy options for climate action.

3. HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE PRESENTATIONS

The presentations and the plenary discussions iterated that climate change is a real social, economic and environmental threat for Africa. Various studies in parts of Africa have confirmed a significant rise in temperature and increased frequency of extreme events affecting food, water, health, livelihood as well as security of Africans. Climate change also affects forests through change in temperature, precipitation, and CO₂ concentration resulting in shift or shrinkage of ecological ranges, phenology and species composition, reduced productivity and growth, as well as exposure to increased risks of fire, insect, diseases and moisture stress.

The meeting further noted that the burden of climate impacts is highly uneven. While developed countries emit the bulk of GHG, developing countries, like those in Africa, are more vulnerable because of warmer temperature, less precipitation and more ecological and climatic variation across the continent. This situation is exacerbated by greater dependence on agriculture, forests and natural resources, limited infrastructure and low-input extensive agriculture, low income, poverty and malnutrition as well as poor social services (health and education) prevalent in developing countries.

As one solution, carbon trade in Africa represents significant means to transfer finance by polluters to Africa. However, the continent's participation in these markets is still minimal. The constraints include high transaction costs of engagement involving issues such as additionality, measurability, permanence, leakage prevention, local level benefits, and environmental benefits. Also lacking is adequate information about carbon benefits to potential buyers, obtaining information about project partners, and capacity for organizing project participants and ensuring parties fulfill their obligations. Transaction costs per unit of emission reduction are higher for projects involving many smallholders and forest communities.

Africa's ability to cope with climate change and variability, therefore, depends to a large extent on the careful choice of policy actions by its governments and the international community. To that end the following were the key highlights from the workshop:

Climate change in a broader context

1. A better understanding of the underlying causes of deforestation and forest degradation, and the promotion and development of policies and approaches that promote sustainable forest management (SFM) are central to any climate change initiative in the forest sector.
2. At the national level, the national forest programs (NFPs) provide a good basis for developing new governance arrangements. As such, within the context of NFPs, countries can set targets to reduce deforestation and degradation with an aim to achieve minimal forest loss and carbon emissions.
3. Much of forest loss is as a result of extensive agriculture. There is therefore a need for the development and implementation of a strategy to reduce competition for land, improve productivity of crop and livestock systems, as well as exploit synergies and tradeoffs through agroforestry and similar technologies.
4. Many Sub-Saharan African countries have weak public sector forestry and wildlife institutions that are limited, not only in terms of budget and staff, but also in terms of low political profile. There is an urgent need to strengthen the capacity of these institutions, including enabling them to put large areas of forest under SFM and those under wildlife be managed sustainably.

5. There is insufficient, reliable and consistently generated information by national forest and wildlife service institutions to support decision making and better management of these resources. African countries will need assistance to build their capacity to assess forest and wildlife resources, both for their ability to maintain or increase human resilience to climate change, and to also assess resources that are specifically vulnerable to climate change.
6. There are many unknowns in adaptation to climate change that require urgent attention in both forest and wildlife sectors. Therefore, it is necessary to improve research and extension programs. To that end, regional networks and forums need to be supported as they play a key role.

Climate change and forest resources

7. Because of the diversity of forest types and conditions, deforestation profile, as well as capacities of individual countries on the continent, there is a need for context specific policy and action to climate change with focus on creating new value-added for pro-poor investment. There is also value in domesticating international instruments, agreements, and laws by mainstreaming them into national planning agendas and development activities, taking local realities into account.
8. Forests should not only be viewed as carbon sinks, but to also include their role in the socio-economic lives of the African people, as well as the ecosystems services they provide. Markets need to be developed particularly for water supply, carbon, and biodiversity products, and based on secure property rights and a more equitable benefit sharing.
9. Any strategy to address climate change in Africa must also enhance the livelihood of people who depend on forests for their livelihood; the rights of indigenous people, women, youth, and other vulnerable groups; through clarifying tree and land tenure and rights.
10. Support should be given to existing policies, incentives plans and activities, in the public and private sectors, by local communities and individuals and other actors, that increase supply of forest and tree products and services because they target reducing deforestation, degradation, as well as increasing reforestation and afforestation; all are key to containing adverse climate change impacts.
11. Policies and approaches that improve energy efficiency are critical due to the overwhelming dependence on forests for energy. Demand side interventions should focus in increasing the efficiency and sustainability of harvesting, processing, as well as consumption of forest products for various purposes, notably for energy, food, and fibre.
12. CDM restriction to afforestation and reforestation as defined under the Kyoto protocol does not suit many African forestry conditions. This is in addition to complex CDM modalities and procedures, among other constraints that hinder development of qualified CDM projects.
13. REDD, in its various forms, must not be seen as a sector specific issue, but must be integrated into overall national development planning while remaining consistent with overall global mitigation strategy. The scope of REDD is limited and needs to be expanded to cover all types of land uses including agriculture, agroforestry and other land uses (AFOLU). To improve on REDD initiatives it is necessary to learn from the failings of CDM.

Climate change and wildlife resources

14. Climate change is negatively affecting wildlife and increasing human-wildlife conflict. A strategy of halting habitat loss and 'overharvesting' is urgently needed to contain this.

15. Responses to minimise impacts of climate change on wildlife should include expansion of protected areas, where possible; limiting commercial hunting; as well as enhanced trans-boundary cooperation and enforcement of international agreements.
16. Establishing seasonal feeding areas and improving connectivity of habitats to facilitate dispersal to appropriate habitats will need to be included in climate change adaptation strategies for wildlife.
17. Involvement of local people in planning and implementation of interventions in wildlife management and use is critical to securing local level participation, sharing of costs and benefits, and limiting human-wildlife conflicts.

4. CONCLUSIONS

The participants, both in the plenary and informally, expressed their appreciation for the collaboration between AFF and FAO to bring together such a rich body of information on climate change as it relates to forests and wildlife in Africa.

The need for improved productivity of agriculture and focus on local level benefits for stemming forest loss was emphasized throughout the discussions.

Other points of emphasis included the need for clarification of tree and land tenure, control of commercial hunting for endangered animal species, as well as policy coordination across sectors.

The meeting asked AFF to facilitate “Quantifying and Monetizing Forest Ecosystem Services”. This can be done by (a) making quantification in monetary terms of the ecosystem services provided by African forests as one of the activities of AFF; (b) AFF setting up a task force to guide this activity, by for example reviewing available data and approaches to developing them in the context of African forests, recommending a protocol for doing this that can be readily applied by African countries, and thirdly to actually apply this to some selected African forest situations.

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Annex 2. Workshop Programme



17TH SESSION OF THE AFRICAN FORESTRY AND WILDLIFE COMMISSION

Pre-Session Workshop on “Climate change and African forests and wildlife: lessons and way forward”

February 20-21, 2010, Brazzaville, Republic of Congo

Programme

19 February 2010

Arrival of participants and resource people in Brazzaville, Republic of Congo

20 February 2010

Chairperson: *Yonas Yemshaw (AFF)*

08:00-09:00 Registration (*Evelyn Lubembe*)

- 09:00-09:10 Welcome Remarks: Representative of Host Country
- 09:10-09:20 Remarks from Chair of Governing Council-AFF
- 09:20-09:30 Remarks from representative of FAO
- 09:30-9:45 Opening remarks: Guest of Honour
- 9:45- 10:00 Workshop objective and overview (Godwin Kowero)

10:00-10:30 Tea/coffee break

Theme1: Climate change: the broader context

Chairperson: Foday Bojang (FAO)

- 10:30-11:05 International debates on climate change: participation and implications for the forestry sector (*Macarthy Oyebo*)
- 11:05-11:40 Global change processes: linkage to forest resources (*Alfred Opere*)
- 11:40-12:15 African forests in present and emerging climate change arrangements: the African Forest Forum position (*Godwin Kowero*)
- 12:15:-13:00 Reduced Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD) (*Boudzanga Georges Claver*)

13:00-14:00 Lunch

Theme2: Climate change in major ecological zones of Africa

- 14:00-14:45: Climate change issues and approaches in the African rain forests (*David Okali*)
- 14:45 – 15:30: Climate change issues and approaches in the African woodlands and savannas (*Emmanuel Chidumayo*)

15:30-16:00 Tea/coffee break

- 16:00 -16:45: Climate change issues and approaches in the Sahel region (*Larwanou Mahamane*)

21 February 2010

Theme 3: Climate change and wildlife in Africa

Chairperson: Donatien Nzala

- 09:00-09:45: Climate change issues and approaches on wildlife in Eastern and Southern Africa. (*Emmanuel Chidumayo*)
- 09:45-10:30: Climate change issues and approaches on wildlife in West and Central Africa (*Paul Donfack*)

10:30-11:00: Tea/coffee break

Theme 4: Adaptation, mitigation, policy and socio-economic aspects

Chairperson:

11:00-11:45: Community based approaches to climate change: A typology of information and institutional requirements for uptake of existing technologies (*Yatich Thomas*)

11:45-12:30: Socio-economic considerations for African forestry in climate change (Balgis Osman Elasha)

12:30 - 14:00 Lunch

14:00 - 14:45: Policy and economic aspects for Africa forestry in climate change (Yonas Yemshaw/Godwin Kowero)

14:45 - 15:30: Workshop Highlights

15:30-16:00 Tea/coffee break

16:00-16:30: Workshop closing

22 February 2010: Departure of participants