



African Forest Forum

A platform for stakeholders in African forestry

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The Executive Secretary
African Forest Forum

AFF now has more than 600 members!

We are excited to share the news with you that AFF is growing rapidly, now having more than 600 members from 47 African countries as well as from Australia, Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, India, Sweden, United Kingdom, and the United States of America. About 94% of members are from Africa while the remaining 6% are from overseas. Over 40% of members have PhD level qualifications. Members come from the academia, government ministry/department, NGOs, private sector, and farmers' organisations. All of these members have been individually vetted and approved by the Governing Council. They are actively contributing their time and expertise towards promoting the mission of the African Forest Forum.

The GC holds its Seventh Meeting in Mombasa

The Seventh Meeting of the African Forest Forum Governing Council was held on 2-3 March 2011, in Mombasa, Kenya. Members deliberated on a robust agenda to launch forth the forum for the year 2011. Among other things, the GC assessed the Annual Report of the AFF for the year 2010. The GC was satisfied with Technical and Financial Reports as well as the Audit Report for the year 2010 and commended the Secretariat for good performance during the year. The GC also scrutinized and approved the Plan of Work and Budget for the current year, 2011.

AFF plan of work and budget doubles in 2011

The three-year programme supported by Sida, entitled "Programme to support forest management in Africa" is still on-going with a set of seven projects/components and a budget of U\$1,308,428 for the year 2011. Additionally, the entry phase program supported by Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) has a provisional budget for year 2011 to the tune of U\$700,000 (of which US\$300,000 has already been secured for the period ending June 30, 2011; the remainder will be negotiated in the second half of 2011).

A total of 15 project proposals have also been developed from the Sida funded project on Swedish-Africa collaboration. Currently, there is donor interest in five of them. The proposal on 'Strengthening capacities to implement and monitor nfp processes in East and Southern Africa' received U\$139,500 in funding support recently from the NFP Facility. Three proposals on 'transboundary resources', 'certification', and 'germplasm' have attracted interest from Sida. The Swedish Forestry Agency has approved the proposal on 'Empowering producer stakeholders' for U\$119,000. The five proposals in all will raise about U\$400,000. That will raise the 2011 budget of AFF to U\$ 2.3 million.

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AFF wraps up GGW work in Djibouti, starts for 5 other countries

The AFF continued to grow and receive requests for support from different stakeholders. In 2010, the AFF supported the Government of Djibouti in developing its strategy and plan of action for the implementation of the Great Green Wall for Sahara and Sahel Initiative (GGWSSI). The AFF is also leading similar work in Chad, Ethiopia, Niger and Mali, in collaboration with the African Union Commission (the institution leading the GGWSSI) and the FAO Regional Office for Africa.

COMIFAC and ITTO join the GC

At the invitation of the African Forest Forum Governing Council (GC), representatives of the Central African Forests Commission (COMIFAC) and the International Tropical Timber Organisation (ITTO) attended the Seventh Session of the GC. These two institutions will be represented at the GC as members with observer status.

The COMIFAC representative, Mr Daniel Mbolo, thanked the AFF leadership for this invitation to the GC meeting and promised to bring the two institutions together in many activities of common interest. "COMIFAC is eager to collaborate with the AFF in the implementation of our strategy 2009-2014 in conformity with our Convergence Plan", he said, adding "We firmly believe COMIFAC and AFF are highly complementary and, therefore, will have stronger and durable partnership in the years ahead."

The Executive Secretary of the ITTO, Mr Emmanuel Ze Meka, likewise, emphasized the complementarity of objectives with the AFF, in particular on the following areas: promotion of the sustainable management of forest; the promotion of forest law enforcement and governance; the rehabilitation of degraded and secondary forests; the fight against climate change; the promotion of environmental services and many other fields dealing with sustainable development. Mr Ze Meka expressed a bright future for collaborations, stating "The similarity of objectives and partners between the two institutions is clear indication of a potentially strong cooperation in the coming years." Currently, an MoU between AFF and ITTO is at a draft stage.

AFF launches Annual Report for 2010

The year 2010 has been one of excitement and growth for the African Forest Forum (AFF). In summary, the programmatic work of AFF was implemented as expected. The number of AFF members is increasing throughout the five sub-regions in Africa and outside the continent. Also, the number of the observer institutions at the Governing Council meetings has increased following the approval, by the Governing Council, during its meeting in April 2010, of COMIFAC and ITTO.

The AFF is already in discussions with the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) on further support, and has received about US\$300,000 for initial activities for eight months beginning November 2010, and they include planning an AFF/SDC supported programme of activities spanning 2011-2013. Collaboration is also being cultivated with UN-REDD Programme at UNEP, UNEP-Regional Office for Africa (ROA) and the Permanent Interstate Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel (CILSS).

Implementation of all activities, across all projects, has been coordinated by a small Secretariat of four staff. Whereas the AFF Secretariat did not experience serious problems in facilitating the implementation of all these tasks, strengthening the AFF Secretariat to undertake additional responsibilities will be necessary, and especially

with the expected increase of work due to additional funding.

Please click [here](#) for the full annual report.

The AFF and the Swedish Forest Agency launch a joint project

The AFF and the Swedish Forestry Agency have launched, a new project on “Empowering producer stakeholders” in eastern and southern Africa. The overall aim of the project is “to empower forest-based producer stakeholders in east and southern Africa through building and strengthening their technical, organisational and marketing capacity in partnerships with relevant Swedish and other institutions”.

The first phase of this project is an outlook study that is guided by the following two objectives:

- To increase the understanding of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats for different types of forest/tree producer groups in east and southern Africa for economic and social development and poverty reduction.
- To use the study to assess the nature of support needed and solicit assistance for concerted action to strengthen the capacity of these different forest/tree producer groups

Upcoming events

Climate Change and Governance in Forestry: lessons and way forward for Southern Africa, June 02-03, 2011, Lusaka, Zambia

The African Forest Forum (AFF) and the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) in collaboration with Swedish International Development Agency (Sida), Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), and Forest Department of Zambia will launch a workshop entitled “Climate Change and Governance in Forestry: lessons and way forward for Southern Africa” during June 02-03, 2011 in Lusaka, Zambia.

The workshop objectives will be to:

- Share lessons and experiences on how climate change features/manifests in African forestry,
- Develop a shared understanding of the challenges and opportunities related to climate change in the southern African forestry sector,
- Share experiences, and lessons on FLEGT in southern Africa, and
- Identify key issues/lessons of relevance to the forestry sector in southern Africa and way forward with them.

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