

FAQ: The African Forest Forum

A platform for stakeholders in African forestry

What is the African Forest Forum?

The African Forestry Forum (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.

Why the Forum?

The purpose of the Forum 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 and promote economic and social development.

What is its goal?

The goal of the Forum is to galvanise the African voice and opinion, and mobilise resources on 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.

How will it achieve its goal?

The Forum facilitates:

1. Networking among the many and varied stakeholders in forestry in Africa.
2. Development of specific programmes, projects and activities that address priority issues and opportunities and facilitate their funding.
3. Advocacy activities that have a potential to raise the profile of forestry, highlight threats to forest resources and the environment, and champion better management of African forests.

For whom is the Forum?

The potential beneficiaries of the activities of the Forum are national, regional and international policy- and decision-makers, farmers and rural communities, the private industry and trade sector, the research and education community, consumers of forest/tree-derived products, government institutions, NGOs with forest, environment, social and other foci of work, individuals, and others.

How does the Forum work?

The Forum works through its members and Secretariat. Networking through electronic media will be the main mechanism for exchanging information, ideas and views. The Members Forum, the Governing Council, the Executive Committee, and the Secretariat are the key

organs of the Forum. The Members Forum shall hold electronic and virtual meetings as the situation and agenda may require.

What does the Forum do?

The Forum does the following, among other activities:

1. Constitutes permanent and *ad hoc* task forces, think tanks and committees from among its membership to analyse and give advice on specific issues, problems and potentials.
2. Commissions experts and institutions to carry out studies and research tasks to generate knowledge in general or for specific institutions and organisations on request.
3. Organises workshops, seminars and conferences as and when appropriate.
4. Is represented at relevant international and regional meetings on forests.
5. Initiates and implements pilot projects, normally in collaboration with African and/or other partner institutions.
6. Issues reports, publications and other relevant material emanating from its work.
7. Provides a systematic information base on forests and trees in Africa, and a monitoring and evaluation mechanism for developments relevant to these resources.

Who are members of the Forum?

The members of the AFF are individuals with a commitment to the purpose and goal of the Forum. The Forum will also have observers from key organisations. Today, there are more than 300 individuals from all over the continent and beyond who are members of the Forum.

Partners of the Forum

The Forum works with a variety of partnerships, formal and informal, within and outside the continent, and with forestry and non-forestry bodies. The Forum already has links with the many regional and international partners, including:

- African Development Bank (AfDB),
- African Academy of Sciences (AAS),
- African Forestry and Wildlife Commission (AFWC),
- African Network for Agriculture, Agroforestry & Natural Resources Education (ANAFE),
- African Union Commission (AUC),
- Centre for International Forestry Research (CIFOR),
- Commission des Forêts d'Afrique Centrale (COMIFAC),
- Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO),
- National Forest Programme Facility at FAO,
- New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD)
- PROFOR at the World Bank,
- Royal Swedish Academy of Agriculture and Forestry (KSLA),
- United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA)
- United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF),
- World Agroforestry Centre (ICRAF),
- World Conservation Union (IUCN) – Eastern Africa Regional Office,
- International Tropical Timber Organisation (ITTO)

In addition, a large number of African forestry research, education and development institutions and networks, and others are partners to the Forum.

The Founder Members established the Forum on January 26, 2007. The first meeting of the Governing Council (GC) was held on 15-16 October in Nairobi. On December 6, 2007, the Forum was officially registered as an International NGO domiciled in Kenya, and has also been registered in Tanzania and Niger.