



WFC2015
XIV World Forestry Congress

Forests and People: Investing in a Sustainable Future

7-11 SEPTEMBER 2015 Durban | South Africa

Africa at XIV World Forestry Congress

Introduction

Forests are an invaluable asset for humanity. They provide livelihoods for billions of people, help achieve environmental sustainability, and serve as a source of social and spiritual values for people. Given the high dependence of its human populations on forests and wildlife resources in order to meet daily social and economic needs at local levels, sustainable management of forest and wildlife resources in Africa cannot be achieved without the direct involvement of society at all levels, especially those who are daily reliant on the natural resources for their livelihoods.

As the most important and inclusive gathering of the global forest community, the 14th World Forestry Congress (WFC) will provide a platform for African governments, academics, civil societies, the private sector, forest users and people who have an interest in forests to discuss and share information and knowledge on forests and forestry, and find ways of addressing key issues for sustainable development.

The World Forestry Congress offers an opportunity to consolidate responses to climate change challenges and to showcase ambitious Sustainable Forest Management activities (SFM) being implemented in Africa. In a bid to highlight the contribution of forests and forestry toward the soon to be revealed post 2015 development agenda, the African Union Commission in collaboration with the African Development Bank (AfdB), African Forest Forum, FAO of the United Nations, Government of the Republic of South Africa, NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Agency (NPCA) and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, will organize Africa day with the theme: ***“Addressing climate change in Africa through sustainable forest management”***. This would complement other side events, exhibitions, launches and networking planned during the Congress.

Africa Day

Africa day is intended to provide a platform for sharing information and knowledge on past, existing and planned initiatives on forest and forestry development issues in Africa. It is planned to improve coherence between forest use and its sustainability and the future of forest with looming climate changes threats and responses. It also aims

to enhance understanding of, and support for African communities' investment in forest and forestry, while creating synergies and partnerships for smarter investments in forest and agriculture in Africa.



During this Day, the African Union and its partners would draw the attention of the Congress participants under the theme: “Addressing climate change in Africa through sustainable forest management”.

Key themes for discussion will include:

- Sustainable forest management in Africa: from conservation of tropical forests to restoration of drylands and degraded ecosystems
- Forestry’s contribution to Food and nutrition security and sustainable development
- Governance in forest and wildlife management in Africa
- Forest and Forestry financing in Africa
- Sustainable land uses
- Forests and climate change adaptation and mitigation.

Deliberations at the Africa Day will be largely based on the issues emanating from the pre-congress conference organized by the African Forest Forum which brings together African stakeholders to examine the achievements, challenges and opportunities regarding forests and forestry in Africa.

Specific Objectives

The Africa Day aims at advancing transformative development agenda that can serve the needs of investment on forest and forestry issues. Specifically it will provide forum for:

- Showcasing and bringing light to forest sustainability issues in Africa
- Providing a multi-stakeholder platform for interaction between policy makers, scientists and practitioners
- Open debates that set the context for Africa-relevant issues and themes within the larger framework of sustainable development in Africa
- Knowledge sharing among stakeholders working in Africa
- Promoting quality scientific research, field experience and evidence-based policy.

This event will build on, and be informed by, actions on the ground, forums, initiatives, consultations, conferences, meetings and workshops held in the past 10 years, such as the Malabo declaration, the Forest Convergence Plans of the Central African Forestry Commission and the

Economic Community of West African States; the Africa Common Position on Sustainable Development Goals and post-2015 development agenda. The East African Community Forest Management and Protection Bill; EAC Climate Change Strategy and EAC Climate Change Master Plan and IGAD’s Environment and Natural resources Strategy.

Tentative Schedule

The high level dialogue planned for September 9, 2015 is expected to start at 15:30pm. The opening ceremony of Africa Day will involve high representatives of AUC, FAO, South African Government, Member States' representatives attending the Congress and partners. The high-level panel discussion is envisaged as a one and half hour activity and will be followed by a press conference.

15:30 Opening (TBC)

- Executive Secretary of the African Forest Forum
- Director General of FAO
- President of the AfDB
- Executive Secretary of UNECA
- Chairman of the African Union
- Government of the Republic of South Africa

16:00 Presentation on Initiatives, challenges and perspectives of Forest and Forestry in Africa

- Present initiatives in Africa: Sustainable forest management (G. Kowero TBC)
- Africa and climate change (UNECA, Fatima Deton TBC)
- Forestry investment in Africa (AfDB, Ms. Clotilde Mollo Ngomba)

17:00 Panel Discussion on the Future of Forest and Forestry in Africa (Panelist: AUC, FAO, NPCA, AFF and AfDB)

17:30 Press Conference

Languages

Interpretation and translation: All documents and events will be in the official languages of the Congress (French, English and Spanish).

Africa pavilion: Exhibition and Knowledge platform

The Africa Pavilion is meant to provide snapshots of forests, trees and forestry from east, west, central, north and southern Africa. The events in the pavilion which will go on for the whole duration of the Congress will include side events organized by African stakeholders, briefing meeting/group consultations presentations, film shows, poster sessions and cultural events etc.

The pavilion would be a shared-space in which partners showcase to the worlds their works in Africa, their goals, objectives and forestry strategy as far as forest management is concerned. It will be managed by AUC. African stakeholders can use the pavilion for their various functions based on approval of the AUC.

Other potential activities in the Pavilion

- Regional consultations;
- African meetings/consultations; Promotional items, film shows;
- Media coverage/ interviews/ press conferences;
- Partnership/stakeholders meetings.

Expected Outcomes:

- Greater African ownership of the African agenda on forest and forestry development issues;
- Greater awareness of what countries, institutions, organizations and individuals are doing to address sustainable forest management and development across Africa;
- African multimedia products highlighting the forest and forestry development agenda;
- Worldwide media exposure for Africans at the 14th WFC;
- Physical and virtual networking spaces;
- Better understanding on the part of the global community on the challenges and opportunities in Africa for SFM.

Mobilizing Partners

Mobilizing the support and involvement of various African institutions is critical to the success of the Africa events. To measure the impact of the event, in terms of the legitimacy, influence and depth of knowledge realized there, it is important to engage a wide range of organizations and individuals who can bring unique experience and knowledge to the events, and share their insights on initiatives and activities, as well as their connections, networks and diversity.

Potential partners would include:

- African Union member states
- Donor agencies: African Development Bank, USAID, European Union, GIZ, JICA
- Regional Economic Communities: AMU/UMA, CEN-SAD, IGAD, COMESA, EAC, CEEAC-ECCAS, CEDEAO-ECOWAS, IGAD and SADC
- Research Institutions: FARA, ICRAF, CIFOR
- Intergovernmental organizations: IUCN, WWF, WCS, CILSS
- Regional Forestry Commission: COMIFAC
- United Nations: UNECA, UNEP, UNDP, UNCCD.