



THE SUSTAINABLE FOREST MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK FOR AFRICA (2020-2030)



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Acknowledgement

The African Union Commission is greatly indebted to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations for the financial and technical support provided for the development of the Sustainable Forest Management Framework for Africa. We appreciate the commitment of the FAO Africa Regional Office in Accra, Ghana in seeing the finalization of the document through.

We are also thankful to the African Forest Forum for contributing immensely to the technical production of the Framework. Special thanks are also extended to Member States and Regional Economic Communities for their collaboration in the production of this Framework.

Preface



Extending over 624 million hectares (ha), covering 20.6 percent of the continent's land area and representing 15.6 percent of the world's forest cover, Africa's forests have a unique role in contributing to the attainment of the aspirations of the Agenda 2063, the Africa We Want, which envisages a prosperous continent with the means to drive its own development through the sustainable, long-term stewardship of its resources.

African forests are crucial at regional and global scales for maintaining environmental quality and stability. They provide globally important ecosystem services and are indispensable for achieving the objectives of the UN Sustainable Development Goals including SDG1, SDG2, SDG 13, SDG15 and SDG 14. . Sustainable Forest Management (also contributes to the attainment of the Global Objectives on Forests of the United Nations Forum on Forests and other global and regional forest related frameworks and instruments.

Forests and trees in Africa offer considerable support to agriculture, serving, for example, as reservoirs of land for the expansion of agriculture and providing supporting ecosystem services such as pollination, soil conservation, water retention and climate moderation.

Many opportunities exist to increase action to overcome Africa's challenges and achieve sustainable forest management on the continent. They include the Great Green Wall for the Sahara and the Sahel Initiative, the Pan-African Action Agenda on Ecosystem Restoration for Increased Resilience and many sub-regional, regional and global programmes and partnerships. There is increasing recognition of the importance of forests in climate change adaptation and mitigation as reflected in many of the Nationally Determined Contributions of the AU Member States as part of their efforts in the implementation of the Paris Agreement.

However, Africa's forest sector is faced with many challenges that limit its capacity to provide meaningful and sustainable ecosystem services including contributing to socio-economic development. These include: weak forest and land-use policies, unsustainable forest management practices; competition for land from the agriculture, mining, livestock, energy sector and settlements. Moreover, the forest sector is given low priority in national plans and resources allocations.

Reflecting the above realities, the vision of the AU Sustainable Forest Management Framework (2020 -2030) was collaboratively developed with the active participation of AU Member States and the Regional Economic Communities under the coordination of the African Union Commission. It aims to foster sustainable management and to address the above mention challenge undermining the value and the role of the forest sector.

> Preface

Through the implementation of this framework, Africa hopes to stimulate trade, sustain livelihood and boost rural incomes. Therefore, this framework serves as a guideline for AU Member States and other African stakeholders in the forestry sector to assist them in their efforts to eliminate deforestation and forest degradation by 2063.

Furthermore, it provides a scope and priority areas for investments and partnerships in the forest sector. Moreover, the framework creates an enabling environment for collaboration and policy harmonization between RECs and the African Union Commission, as well as among Member States. It, thus, serves as a basis strengthen, monitoring and reporting at continental level including African Small Islands Developing states.

Let us all join forces for sustainable forests of all types in Africa.

H.E. Amb. Josefa Leonel SACKO

Commissioner for Rural Economy and Agriculture

Acronyms and abbreviations

AEPP	African Environment Partnership Platform
AFF	African Forest Forum
AFR100	Africa Landscape Restoration Initiative
ARDWE	Agriculture, Rural Development, Water and Environment
AU	African Union
AUC	African Union Commission
CAADP	Comprehensive African Agriculture Development Programme
DAFF	Department of Agriculture Fisheries and Forestry (of South Africa)??
EAC	East African Community
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
GEF	Global Environment Facility
IGAD	Intergovernmental Authority on Development
NDCs	Nationally Determined Contributions
NEA	National Environment Agency
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development
NGARA	Network for Natural Gums and Resins in Africa
NWFP	Non-wood forest products
ODA	Official Development Assistance
RECs	Regional Economic Communities
REDD+	Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and forest Degradation (and the role of conservation, sustainable management of forests and enhancement of forest carbon stocks)
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SFM	Sustainable Forest Management
SFMF	Sustainable Forest Management Framework
NGARA	Network for Natural Gums and Resins in Africa
UN	United Nations
UNCCD	United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
USD	United States dollar(s)



INTRODUCTION

WHY A SUSTAINABLE FOREST MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK FOR AFRICA?

Extending over **624 million hectares (ha)**, forests in Africa covering **20.6 percent of the continent's land area** and 15.6 percent of the world's forest cover (FAO, 2016a). They underpin key sectors of many African countries, including energy, forestry, agriculture, tourism and water, and support the livelihoods of millions of people. Forests are crucial at a continental scale for maintaining environmental quality and stability. They provide locally to globally important ecosystem services, such as the protection of water and soil resources, biodiversity conservation and climate-change adaptation and mitigation. Forests, therefore, are crucial for achieving the objectives of African Union (AU)'s 2063 Agenda as well as the UN's Sustainable Development Goals including SDG1, SDG2, SDG 13, SDG15, SDG 14, and SDG 17.

Africa's forest sector is, however, faced with many challenges that constrain its capacity to provide meaningful and sustainable ecosystem services including contributing to socio-economic development. The continent's forest area declined by 2.8 million ha per year between 2010 and 2015 (FAO, 2016a), a much higher rate than in anywhere else in the world. The continent's forestry sector challenges include: poor forest and land-use policies and ineffective implementation of good policies; unsustainable forest management; competition for land from the agriculture, mining, livestock and energy sectors and from settlements; disputes over land; and general political conflict and instability. Moreover, the forest sector is given low priority in national plans and resources allocations and is negatively affected by many governance issues. Only a handful of countries possess organized private forest sectors capable of stimulating sectoral growth. Furthermore, the adverse effects of climate change threaten to further undermine forests and forestry in Africa.

In response to such challenges, the Heads of State and Government of the African Union¹ adopted – at the 23rd Ordinary Session of the AU Assembly in Malabo, Equatorial Guinea, in June 2014 – the Malabo Declaration on Accelerated Agricultural Growth and Transformation for Shared Prosperity and Improved Livelihoods. This declaration directed the African Union Commission (AUC), in collaboration with African ministers responsible for forestry and energy, to **put in place a Sustainable Forest Management Programme (SFMP)** to assist AU member states and Regional Economic Communities (RECs) to sustainably manage and develop their forest sectors for socio-economic development and environmental protection.

THE PREPARATION PROCESS OF THE SUSTAINABLE FOREST MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK FOR AFRICA

At the request of the African Union Commission, the SFM Framework for Africa (SFMF) presented in Part III of this document was prepared with the technical and financial support of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) in collaboration with the African Forest Forum. Its development involved expert consultation workshops; an extensive desk review followed by an electronic survey and feedback; consultative visits to selected countries; and validation of the draft background report in a workshop. This document was subsequently subjected to a regional validation workshop held in Nairobi, Kenya, in July 2019, convened by AUC with FAO's technical and financial support, which brought together senior forestry officials from member states, representatives of Regional Economic Communities and other stakeholders and partners (incl. research. Academia, NGOs, and other international and regional partners) prior to its submission for further review and approval by the Specialized Technical Committee on Agriculture, Rural Development, Water and Environment in October 2019 and, subsequent adoption by the AU Assembly in early 2020.

¹ Assembly/AU/Dec.538 (XXIII).



PART I. AFRICA'S FORESTS

THE IMPORTANCE OF AFRICA'S FORESTS

Africa has an estimated 624 million ha of forest, 98.8 percent of which are natural forests. Forests types and cover include rainforests and other humid forests; dryland forests; savannahs and woodlands; mountain forests; mangrove forests; and plantations (FAO, 2016a) (Table 1; Figure 1). In addition, trees outside forests form an important component of Africa's wood resources.

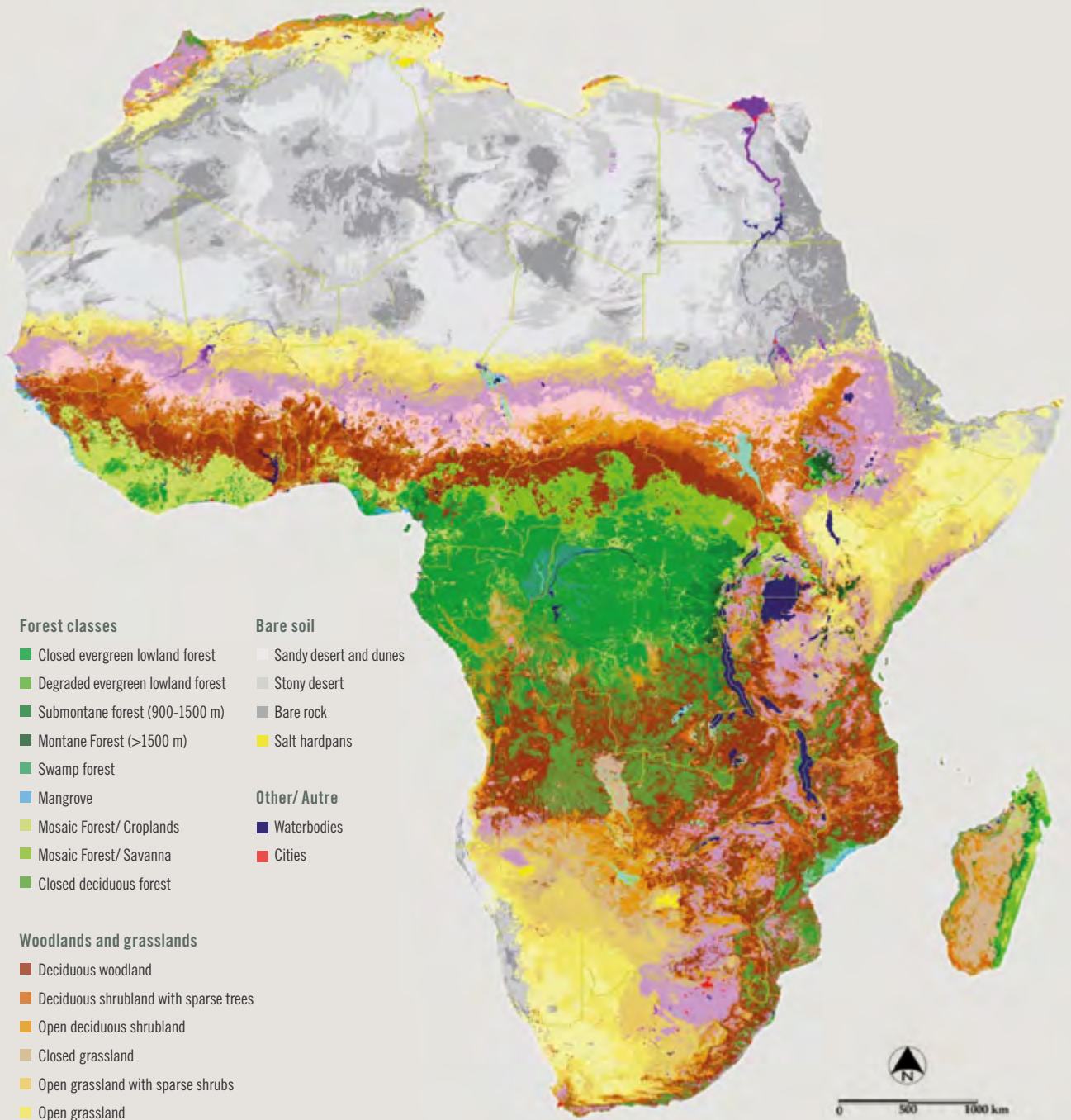
Forests – and trees in other land uses such as agriculture – have immense potential to contribute to **Africa's socio-economic development**. They provide a wide range of products and ecosystem services and are a source of resilience for communities in the face of climate change. Forests and trees help millions of farmers, pastoralists and other forest-dependent people meet basic needs for income, food and nutrition security, medicines, shelter, cooking, heating, timber and livestock fodder.

TABLE 1. AFRICA FORESTS IN NUMBERS

AFRICA'S FORESTS IN NUMBERS	
Total forest area (million ha)	624
Natural forest (million ha)	600
Planted forests (million ha, 2015)	16
Forests in Africa's drylands (million ha) (Bastin et al., 2017)	286
Trees outside forests in Africa's drylands (million trees, 2016) (FAO, 2016b)	4710
Mangrove forests (million ha, 2015)	3.2
Net annual forest change (million ha, 2010–2015)	-2.8
Carbon in above- and below-ground biomass (gigatonnes, 2015)	60
Total wood removals (million m ³) (2011)	614
Forests managed principally for protection of soil and water (million ha, 2015)	50
Forests managed for multiple uses (million ha, 2015)	133
Forests managed principally for ecosystem services or cultural or spiritual values (million ha, 2015)	67
Forests managed principally for conservation of biodiversity (million ha, 2015)	92
Forests within protected areas (million ha, 2015)	101
Forest area burned (million ha, 2010)	19
Forest area with reduction in canopy (million ha, 2015)	50
Forest area under management plans (million ha, 2010)	140
Forest area certified under international schemes (million ha, 2014)	6.4
Public ownership (million ha, 2010)	535
Private ownership (million ha, 2010)	71
Unknown ownership (million ha, 2010)	2
Employment in forestry (thousand persons, 2010)	1109

Source: FAO (2016a).

FIGURE 1. LAND-COVER MAP OF AFRICA DERIVED FROM SPOT VEGETATION DATA, 2000



Forest classes

- Closed evergreen lowland forest
- Degraded evergreen lowland forest
- Submontane forest (900-1500 m)
- Montane Forest (>1500 m)
- Swamp forest
- Mangrove
- Mosaic Forest/ Croplands
- Mosaic Forest/ Savanna
- Closed deciduous forest

Bare soil

- Sandy desert and dunes
- Stony desert
- Bare rock
- Salt hardpans

Other/ Autre

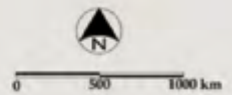
- Waterbodies
- Cities

Woodlands and grasslands

- Deciduous woodland
- Deciduous shrubland with sparse trees
- Open deciduous shrubland
- Closed grassland
- Open grassland with sparse shrubs
- Open grassland
- Sparse grassland
- Swamp bushland and grassland

Agriculture

- Croplands (>50%)
- Croplands with open woody vegetation
- Irrigated croplands
- Tree crops



Africa's wood industries comprise a high proportion of informal and small-scale operations. In Ghana, for example, the formal forest sector employs 50 000 workers and the informal sector employs 260 000. The country's informal sawmill sector provides an estimated 97 000 jobs and earns about USD 18 million annually, mostly in undeclared revenues. The charcoal industry in the United Republic of Tanzania generates an estimated USD 650 million per year and employs about 2 million people. In Rwanda, the wood-energy sector is reported to contribute about 5 percent of the country's gross domestic product and the timber sector contributes about 1.3 percent. In Cameroon, sawmills employ about 45 000 people in the informal sector (about triple the number employed in the formal sector) (FAO, 2011).

Forests play important roles in the **spiritual and cultural** lives of African people. Moreover, the continent's natural forest resources are receiving attention globally because of their **high biodiversity**, potential for industrial **timber exports** and capacity to **mitigate global climate change** and provide livelihood "safety nets" as well as promote **rural development**.

Forests and trees in Africa offer **considerable support to agriculture**, serving, for example, as reservoirs (paradoxically) of land for the expansion of agriculture and providing supporting ecosystem services such as pollination, soil stabilization, water retention and climate moderation. There is increasing recognition of the importance of the role of forests in protecting watersheds and thereby increasing food security in Africa: land and water management are key pillars of the continent's agricultural strategy and forests contribute to sustainable land and water management.

Most agriculture in Africa is rain-fed and therefore highly vulnerable to climate variability. When crops fail, many rural communities become highly reliant on forests and trees for wild foods such as fruits, tubers, fish, bushmeat, edible insects, beeswax and honey. Forests are also sources of traditional medicines and income.

Woodfuel (firewood and charcoal) dominates the supply of energy in Africa, comprising up to 91 percent of total wood use. It is estimated that, in 2013, Africa produced 649 million m³ of woodfuel, which was 35 percent of global production in that year. Africa's per-capita consumption of woodfuel is estimated at 0.585 m³ (FAO 2015a), more than twice the global average (0.259 m³). The number of people in Africa dependent on charcoal is projected to increase from 583 million in 2000 to 823 million in 2030 (Gondo, 2010). In East, West and Southern Africa, more than 90 percent of rural people depend on wood as their primary energy source (UNEP and NESDA, 2004; NEA, 2002). There is an urgent need to develop legal and sustainable woodfuel production and marketing systems in Africa because it is unlikely that effective substitutes (i.e. that are cheap, affordable and sufficient) will be widely available in many countries in the short to medium term (Chipeta and Kowero, 2015).

Much of the trade of non-wood forest products (NWFPs) is at the local community level, although certain NWFPs, such as gum arabic, shea butter, baobab, marula and wild nuts are traded internationally. NWFP enterprises tend to be very small, informal and disorganized and are therefore generally not captured in official statistics. Nevertheless, they are gaining prominence in Africa and making important contributions to socio-economic development in many countries. NWFPs act as safety nets in times of food insecurity and provide income opportunities for otherwise marginalized people. In South Africa, 27 million people benefit from medicinal plants, wild fruit and other forest-based foods, and 20 million tonnes of medicinal plants are harvested annually in natural forests and traded (DAFF, 2015). The Sudan is the largest producer of gums and resins worldwide, meeting about 80 percent of global demand.

The production of shea fruit, which is widely consumed by local people and also sold in local and urban markets, in the woodlands, dry savannahs and forests of West Africa involves 20 000 women farmers.

The kernel contains 31–62 percent edible fat (Nikiema and Umali, 2007) and is used to produce shea butter, which is traded internationally.

The marketing of medicinal plants is an important activity in many countries in Africa, including South Africa, Morocco (valued at USD 12.8 million per year in each of these two countries), Cameroon (USD 2.9 million per year) and Egypt (USD 12.4 million per year). Algeria produces about 6 000 tonnes of cork each year from 460 000 ha of forest. Tunisia exports 10 000 tonnes of pine seeds annually, and Guinea produces more than 100 000 tonnes of bushmeat.

The woodcarving industry is important in eastern and southern Africa. In Kenya, for example, the industry employs about 80, 000 people and generates about USD 20 million per year (Choge, Cunningham and Ellery, 2005).

CHALLENGES TO SUSTAINABLE FOREST MANAGEMENT IN AFRICA

Africa faces many challenges to ensure adequate provision of high-quality forest products and ecosystem services. These can be classified as economic, social and cultural; policy and governance; institutional; technical; and environmental. Table 2 summarizes the key areas of concern in each of these categories.

TABLE 2. KEY AREAS OF CONCERN FOR FORESTS IN AFRICA

CATEGORY	KEY AREAS OF CONCERN
Economic, social and cultural	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Underestimation of the contributions of forests to wealth creation, employment and poverty eradication › Poorly defined mechanisms for access and benefit-sharing arrangements to support SFM › Exclusion or limited inclusivity of gender aspects, especially women and youth, in SFM activities and benefits › Weak wood-processing industry characterized by old and obsolete machinery, reducing the capacity to increase sustainable production, value adding, marketing and trade › Unethical trade practices, lack of good product standards for most forest products, and limited market information › Informal nature of forest production, which is dispersed, uncoordinated and rarely in national plans and which receives little investment or other forms of assistance › Rapid population growth and increased pressure on forest resources
Technical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Lack of regular assessment and monitoring of forest resources for effective planning and management › Poor data storage, access and sharing at all levels of forest planning, management and monitoring › Limited professional and technical capacity to address climate change as it relates to forests › Inadequate deployment of harvesting and storage technologies for timber and other forest products › Inadequate institutional capacity to address the need for high-quality germplasm in the planted-forest sector › Declining technical forestry training institutions and education standards
Environmental	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Impacts of climate variability and climate change on forests and trees outside forest › Increased deforestation, forest degradation and loss of biodiversity › Challenges to forest health, such as those posed by fire, pests and disease, invasive species, the overexploitation of wood and non-wood forest products, poor harvesting practices, poor management, overgrazing, air pollution and extreme climatic events › Increased land degradation and desertification, especially in Africa's drylands

> (table 2 continued)

CATEGORY	KEY AREAS OF CONCERN
Institutional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Duplication of institutional mandates for natural resource management and protection, leading to competition for overstretched and limited financial resources › Inadequate coordination and fragmented intervention in the forest sector and between sectors › Weak leadership and coordination, resulting in a lack of synergy between fragmented and overlapping SFM-related initiatives, programmes and projects supported by various technical and financial partners at the national and subnational levels › Weak institutional frameworks for forest-related sectors such as mining, agriculture and other land uses as well as for climate-related and other environmental issues › Weak forest administration frameworks, which need reform and additional resources › Inadequate participation of the private sector in forest development due, among other things, to unfavourable policies and institutional and legal frameworks › Insufficient participation of civil-society organizations in forest management due to lack of policy or its failure. › Need for updated curricula for professional and technical training and education that adequately address challenges related to research, training and capacity building in SFM › Inadequate/insufficient implementation mechanisms to address cross-border forest-related issues
Policy and governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Insufficient cross-sectoral collaboration and mainstreaming of sustainable practices in other economic and production sectors (e.g. agriculture), putting the health and integrity of forest resources at risk › Limited mainstreaming of multilateral environmental agreements, decisions and other instruments of SFM into national plans and programmes › Lack of policy convergence, resulting in duplication › Weak mechanisms for instituting effective tenure reform and for the participation of indigenous peoples and local communities in forest ownership and management › Undefined policy frameworks on how to share responsibilities at the national and regional levels for the environmental strategies developed › Limited or inadequate promotion of the forest ownership and access rights of local and indigenous groups › Corruption and illegal exploitation › Weak management of natural resources due partly to a lack of clearly defined ownership of resources and partly to a lack of technical capacities for forest inventory, management, use, control and monitoring › Insecure forest tenure and restricted access to forests as well as a lack of effective mechanisms for land-tenure reform › Inadequate mainstreaming of forestry into national development plans and strategies › Limited coordination and harmonization between agriculture, food security, infrastructural development and forestry › Insecurity and conflicts, leading to large movements of people and livestock with consequential negative impacts on SFM › Inadequate and sometimes lack of local rule of law that would enable good governance and create mutually supportive and cooperative relationships among governments, civil society and the private sector › Inadequate mechanisms for raising domestic public funds for the forest sector



PART II. PREREQUISITES FOR SUSTAINABLE FOREST MANAGEMENT IN AFRICA

Sustainable forest management (SFM) can be viewed as the sustainable use and conservation of forests with the aim of maintaining and enhancing multiple forest values through human interventions. People are at the centre of SFM because it aims to contribute to society's diverse needs in perpetuity.

FAO's 2015 Global Forest Resources Assessment (FAO, 2016) shows that, although SFM is gaining ground globally, it remains a major challenge, especially in Africa. Box 1 summarizes the prerequisites for SFM, drawn from successful initiatives in Africa and beyond.

BOX 1. PREREQUISITES FOR SUSTAINABLE FOREST MANAGEMENT IN AFRICA

- **Incremental development of forest policies and institutions** is an important aspect of SFM as it provides opportunities to address mistakes over time and react to emerging issues. Unfortunately, forest policy reforms and implementation of institutional reforms in Africa have often been undertaken in a hasty manner making it difficult to incorporate all aspects of forest management, environmental conservation and societal development.
- **Local communities play a leading role** in the development of policies on forest management. The role of government is to link communities and to articulate national policies that embrace and respect the key cultures and values of local communities. Thus, the way in which local communities organize themselves and select their leaders is crucial. The emergence of forest producers' cooperatives in Sweden and smallholder tree farmers in Bangladesh, India and South Africa are examples of good local leadership. External influences tend to distort choices towards global perspectives before national prerogatives have been consolidated.
- **Stability of the political environment** is a necessary condition for SFM. Countries ravaged by civil instability are unlikely to achieve SFM, irrespective of the policy and institutional situation. The movement of displaced persons in many parts of Africa has had negative impacts on forest resources.
- **Gradual demographic changes, which allows for easy planning and monitoring** of the development and use of forest resources is necessary for SFM.
- **Addressing serious biological or environmental threats**, such as pests, diseases, droughts and floods, which can have devastating effects on forest resources, is necessary if SFM would be realized.
- **Secure long-term property rights** (ownership and/or user rights) are crucial for building confidence in investments in forests and trees, which may take many years to mature. Equally important is the stability and predictability of legal, financial and trade regulations. All these aspects are important for encouraging private investment in forestry.
- **Adequate human and institutional capacity is necessary.** There must be a good match between societal expectations for forests and the technical competence and institutional capacity to deliver forest products and services.
- **Transparency** in the way in which forest-related businesses are developed and managed is essential.
- **Recognition and safeguarding** of the multiple products and functions of forests is crucial because the over extraction of certain products may have negative impacts on the delivery of other forest products and ecosystem services.
- **Periodic assessments of forest resources** are needed to ensure the availability, regularity and quality of information and data on forest resources and thereby enable stakeholders to plan and monitor forest management and to adapt management as new challenges arise.
- **It is necessary for governments to provide an enabling policy and legislative environments to facilitate the operations of all stakeholders in SFM**
- **Effective communication and awareness creation on forest ecosystem values is an important prerequisite for attainment of SFM.**

PART III. THE SUSTAINABLE FOREST MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK FOR AFRICA

A VISION FOR AFRICA'S FORESTS

The aspiration of Africa Vision 2063 is that, by 2063, Africa will be a prosperous continent with the means to drive its own development through the sustainable, long-term stewardship of its resources. Africa will be a continent of seamless borders, and cross-border resources will be managed through dialogue and cooperation. Africa must, therefore, consolidate the positive turn-around, using the opportunities of demographics, natural resources, urbanization, technology and trade as a springboard to ensure its transformation and renaissance to meet the people's aspirations. Reflecting this, the vision of the Sustainable Forest Management Framework (SFMF) is that, by 2063:

Africa will have zero deforestation and forest degradation and its forests will be protected, sustainably managed and restored through collaborative, cross-sectoral and transformative efforts to ensure the prosperity, food security and resilience of its people.

SFMF OBJECTIVES AND PRIORITIES

In line with Agenda 2063, and to contribute to the vision for forests articulated above, **the proposed SFMF** has been developed to guide AU member states, and enhance coordination efforts of RECs, on forest-related priorities in the continent. By facilitating and implementing the SFMF, member states will be best placed to reverse deforestation and forest degradation, prevent and combat land degradation and desertification, mitigate and adapt to climate change, conserve biodiversity, improve food and nutrition security, and build a green economy.

The specific objectives of the SFMF are to:

- Provide strategic guidance to Member States and RECs on Sustainable Forest Management.
- Facilitate Africa-wide monitoring and reporting on Sustainable Forest Management.

- Facilitate harmonization of policies and legal frameworks across Africa.
- Serve as a basis for coordinating knowledge management, exchange of best practices and information.
- Facilitate establishment of partnerships and investments in Sustainable Forest Management.

The first phase of SFMF time-frame is 2020-2030. The design of subsequent phases will take into account evaluation of the 2020-2030 phase and emerging issues. The objectives of the SFMF will be achieved only if AU member states and RECs invest in and develop their forest sectors and engage and work collaboratively with all relevant sectors, stakeholders and society as a whole.

Africa's forestry sector is faced with a multitude of challenges which would need to be addressed if SFM would be achieved. However, given the planned period for implementing this framework (2020 – 2030), it would be prudent to set critical priority areas to address during the 10 years planned period. In view of this, the **priorities for SFM in Africa are to:**

- Enhance the value of forests, sustainable production, processing, markets and trade for forest products and ecosystem services.
- Develop capacity and knowledge management for SFM.
- Develop supportive policies and institutional frameworks for SFM.
- Restore degraded forests and landscapes for building resilience and sustainable livelihoods.
- Build partnerships and mobilize resources for achieving SFM.

These five priorities are further articulated defining for each priority, objective, desired outcomes, major intervention areas (actions), indicators, responsible implementers, and supporting partners. These are presented below.



Furthermore, the following six key areas that are not specific to forests also need to be addressed:

- Governments need to adopt **environmental and social safeguards** to increase the benefits of sustainable development and to avoid unnecessary harm to the environment and affected communities.
- **Alternative solutions are needed** to laws and regulations that restrict the use of forests and trees by forest-dependent people. The legal and customary rights of indigenous peoples to own, access, use and manage their lands, territories and resources must be recognized, respected and taken into account in forest management.
- **Wider policies on taxation and public finance** should promote and not constrain SFM. Such policies should encourage investments in the forest sector (which, in the long run, will increase tax revenues for government). As part of the implementation of the SFMF, governments should encourage dialogue between enterprises and forest-worker organizations to ensure respect for workers' rights and duties in accordance with the International Labour Organization's Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work.
- **Gender-sensitive approaches and tools should be mainstreamed** to provide men and women with equal opportunities to participate in and

benefit from SFM. Roles and job opportunities should be created for the youth in SFM, while ensuring the engagement of young people in forest-related decision-making.

- **Wider issues of governance need attention.** Certain armed conflicts in Africa have been at least partly financed by timber sales. Addressing this requires a mix of national law enforcement to prevent local military groups from engaging in timber operations on the one hand and international initiatives to prevent such timber from entering consumer countries on the other. In addition to international environmental agreements, international humanitarian laws can help mitigate the negative impacts of armed conflicts on forests. Another issue affecting forests is forced displacement, which may occur due to various factors (such as climatic, environmental, cultural, economic, social and political, and combinations of these). It is within the power of African governments to address such factors.
- **Synchronization of policies and laws across sectors.** There is a need to synchronize policies across all production sectors to achieve sustainable development. The agriculture, energy, water and land sectors all have impacts on the forest sector, and a common platform is needed to discuss issues and synchronize plans.

PRIORITY AREAS OF THE SUSTAINABLE FOREST MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK FOR AFRICA

PRIORITY 1.

Enhancement of the value of forests and the sustainable production, processing, marketing's and trade for forest products and ecosystem services

OBJECTIVE 1.

Enhance the recognition of the diverse values of forests and trees outside forests and the sustainable production, processing, marketing and trade for forest products and ecosystem services

DESIRED OUTCOMES	AREAS OF INTERVENTION (ACTIONS)
The contribution of forests and trees outside forests is adequately captured in the system of national accounts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Conduct assessments and studies to show the monetary, social, cultural, and environmental values of forests and trees outside forests to improve the recognition by national policy and decision-makers › Raising awareness of, and advocating for, forests and the contributions of SFM to the green economy, sustainable cities, urban and rural livelihoods and resilient landscapes for food security, nutrition, energy, peace and stability in Africa
Sustainable markets for wood and non-wood forest products enhanced	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Develop market information system › Develop capacity for sustainable forest production and marketing
Ecosystem services and livelihood security ensured	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Disseminate, and train on, adaptive best practices › Promote and support community-based ecotourism › Cultivate interest and investment in forest areas
The state of food security improved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Promote, support and implement adaptive practices
Value chains for forest products and services improved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Conduct studies on existing value chains › Identify and act on the opportunities internally and externally
The processing and value addition of forest products improved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Introduce new processing technologies at all levels. › Build capacities of local producers of forest products › Enhance access to financial services
Transparency of trade in forest products improved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Control illegal exploitation of forest products
The system of cross border trade in forest products harmonized	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Develop an effective system for tracking the cross border movement of forest products
Fiscal systems and law enforcement regarding forest products aligned	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Build the capacity of law enforcement agencies › Improve networking and information sharing

Forests underpin key sectors of many African countries, including energy, forestry, agriculture, tourism and water, and they support the livelihoods of millions of people. However, forests' contribution to the national economy are grossly undervalued. Forests are of crucial importance at the continental level for maintaining the quality and stability of the environment, and provide significant ecosystem services of local and global importance such as the protection of water resources and soils, conserving biodiversity, and adapting to and mitigating climate change. Forests are therefore essential for the realization of the African Union Agenda 2063 and the UN Sustainable Development Goals. However, forest products in Africa, especially wood, are mostly processed only to primary and secondary levels making them

uncompetitive in the international markets. The sector is characterised by the predominance of informal practices, which compromises the proper and official recording of the sectors contribution the economic, social and environmental development of African countries.

In view of the above, there is an urgent need for African countries to develop sustainable production and marketing systems through the modernization of their production and processing facilities in order to produce the required quantity and quality of products. By recognizing the value of forests, the contribution of the forestry sector to the socio-economic development, food security and nutrition, climate change adaptation and mitigation will be enhanced.

INDICATORS	WHO IMPLEMENTS	SUPPORTING PARTNERS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Number of studies/assessments conducted › Value of forest products consumed at national level, and exported › Number and frequency of awareness campaigns conducted for Senior government leaders, community and religious leaders (these need to be systematic and institutionalized) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Member states › (public institutions in charge of forestry, finance, planning), etc.) › Member States, RECs and AU 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Development partners › Private sector › Civil society organizations › Academic and research institutes › Local communities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Reliable, functional information system available › Number of people trained on marketing techniques 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › National authorities › Non-state actors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Private sector › Development bilateral and multilateral partners
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Type and number of adaptive practices disseminated › Number of community-based ecotourism initiatives adopted › Volume and size of investment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Member states 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Private sector › Bilateral and multilateral partners › NGOs › Local communities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Amount of resources invested 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Governments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Private sector › Bilateral and multilateral partners
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Number of studies conducted › Number of opportunities identified and acted upon 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Governments, academic and research institutions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Private sector › Bilateral and multilateral partners
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Number and types of appropriate technologies introduced › Number of people trained › Number of people community organizations with access to financial services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Private sector › Governments › CSOs/CBOs › Financial institutions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Private sector › Development partners
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Policies and regulations effectively enforced › Number of cases reported and prosecuted › Reduced rate of illegal activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Member states 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Bilateral and multilateral partners
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Effective tacking system put in place › Common tariffs and enhanced customs cooperation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Member States 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Private sector › Development partners
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Number of trained law enforcement officer › Number of networks strengthened and/ or developed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Member states 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Bilateral and multilateral partners; NGOs; CSOs

PRIORITY 2.

Capacity Development and Knowledge management for SFM

OBJECTIVE 2.

To improve capacity and knowledge for sustainable forest management by the year 2030

DESIRED OUTCOMES	AREAS OF INTERVENTION (ACTIONS)
Increased monitoring and assessment of forest resources in Africa	<ul style="list-style-type: none">› Develop capacity to support the preparation of comprehensive forest resource assessments at the national, sub regional and regional levels› Conduct regular (five-yearly) outlook and status reports on Africa forests (covering the regional and sub-regional levels)› Assess the biodiversity uses and management of forests in and outside protected areas with a view to improving their management, and addressing social and environmental challenges.› Develop and implement plans and mechanisms to ensure the dissemination and use of forest monitoring and assessment by different actors and sectors
Enhance knowledge management and access to information on forest resources in Africa at all levels	<ul style="list-style-type: none">› Formulate knowledge-based national and regional forest investment plans that can serve as key resource mobilization instruments for the greater involvement of the private sector in forest development› Establish and strengthen online platforms or portals for forest information systems to enable the transparent monitoring of forests and trees at the national and regional levels and the collection, management and sharing of data and findings across sectors.› Establish and strengthen forest information and monitoring systems for national and transboundary protected areas› Support existing publications, or create new fora, to disseminate scientific, technical and policy knowledge and exchanging experiences and views on the sustainable use and conservation of all types of forest landscapes in Africa› Assess capacity gaps of local communities in and around forests and protected areas and undertake targeted capacity development for wider community involvement in SFM› Develop or improve existing mechanisms for the participatory monitoring and evaluation of the impacts of forest-related policies, programmes, plans, projects and strategies› Set up harmonized regional targets to monitor and report on progress in the implementation of subregional forest-related strategies (e.g. the ECOWAS and COMIFAC Convergence Plans, the SADC Forestry Protocol, the IGAD Forestry Policy and Strategy and the EAC Forestry Policy and Strategy)
Capacities of national forestry institutions and forest producer organizations to implement SFM strengthened	<ul style="list-style-type: none">› Assess existing capacities, capacity needs and opportunities of institutions and organizations in the forest sector in support of SFM in all forest types› Assess capacity development needs of local producer organizations and communities› Develop and implement capacity building strategies and programs for local organizations and communities to participate in SFM› Develop and implement capacity-building strategies and programmes at the national and regional levels to respond comprehensively to technical and institutional needs for SFM.› Compile, analyse and disseminate SFM good practices, tools and success stories in Africa and elsewhere using country-level, sub regional and regional platforms and other tools› Introduce the principles and practices of SFM to relevant institutions and organizations at all levels of governance
Strengthened regional multidisciplinary forestry research and education to meet economic, social and environmental challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none">› Integrate indigenous knowledge in research› Prioritize funding for forestry research to address national and continental needs› Strengthen networking and coordination among national research/academic institutions, public and private sector

There is limited and fragmented capacity as well as knowledge for sustainable forest management across the continent. It is therefore necessary to enhance and strengthen capacities of forest sector institutions, forest producer groups and communities in Africa through; assessment of capacity gaps, designing and implementing appropriate capacity building tools and programs. There is also need to adopt adequate innovative technics in the monitoring of forests,

developing of forest information management systems and access to information on forest resources to enable informed decision making at all levels. Building strong infrastructure and collaborative mechanism for knowledge management through locally researched, published and disseminated findings is also critical in keeping pace with the ever changing environmental, socio-economic and political dynamics in forestry management.

INDICATORS	WHO IMPLEMENTS	SUPPORTING PARTNERS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Number of countries with integrated forest information system › Number of management plans addressing habitat fragmentation, connectivity and conserving endemic species › Number of plans and tools for monitoring and assessment of forests developed and implemented 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › National institutions, Regional Economic Commissions, AU › National and sub-regional agencies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › FAO, WB, AFF, AfDB and other UN agencies and development partners
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Number of forest investment plans developed and implemented › Number of operational and accessible platforms and portals to share forest information › Number of trained extension agents to disseminate information to local communities › Number of countries with shared forest information management systems › Number of publications, policy briefs and technical papers produced and disseminated and exchange visits undertaken. › Number of capacity gaps assessment reports and number of capacity building programs developed and implemented 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › National and sub-regional agencies › National and sub-regional agencies, FAO › National agencies, NGOs, Research institutions, Publishers, media houses › National agencies, community leaders, NGOs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Training and academic institutions, NGOs, CSOs donors and other development partners
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Number of reports on capacity needs assessment done, number of opportunities identified › Number of capacity building strategies and programs developed and implemented › Number of good practices, tools and success stories compiled, published, disseminated at country level, sub regional and regional platforms › Number of institutions, organizations introduced to SFM principles and good practices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › National and Sub regional agencies, training institutions › National agencies, local producer umbrella organizations, NGOs › National agencies, NGOs › Regional, sub regional and national agencies, research and academic institutions › Regional, sub regional and national agencies › National agencies, NGOs 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Number of research work that integrated indigenous knowledge › Amount of additional funding allocated to forestry research 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › National governments, RECs and research institutions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › FAO, financial institutions, development partners, academia

PRIORITY 3.

Political and institutional framework for Sustainable Forest Management

OBJECTIVE 3.

Strengthen the political and institutional frameworks of member states and regional economic communities to achieve SFM in Africa

EXPECTED OUTCOMES	AREAS ON INTERVENTIONS (ACTIONS)
National Policy and Institutional Frameworks are strengthened and harmonized with International Agreements and relevant regional frameworks on forests	<ul style="list-style-type: none">› Analysis and compilation of national forest regulations and policies and their harmonization with international and regional SFM treaties and agreements› Adaptation and harmonization national and sub-regional forest policies and regulatory frameworks to support SFM
Policy and institutional frameworks for SFM are harmonized at all levels	<ul style="list-style-type: none">› Gender-sensitive reforms in SFM policies are undertaken.› Integration of tenure and livelihood security policies and strategies in sustainable development projects and programs› Strengthening institutional frameworks to support forest carbon governance and operationalize mechanisms for sharing benefits with local communities
Guidelines for SFM are developed and implemented	<ul style="list-style-type: none">› Promote land use planning in urban, peri-urban and rural areas and support their use to improve their resilience to climate change› Development of strategies, incentives, plans and guidelines to increase adoption of agroforestry practices› Development of effective approaches and mechanisms to guide the decentralization of forest management and forest revenue management for the benefit of local communities.› Develop forest resource value chains using appropriate new technologies
Institutional frameworks for SFM are harmonized	<ul style="list-style-type: none">› Creating synergies between other sectoral policies and regulatory frameworks› Creation of an institutional framework favorable to the development of Public-Private Partnerships› Creation of an enabling environment that facilitates the involvement of the private sector and professional associations which respect SFM standards› Development and / or strengthening of institutional frameworks to support ecosystem services and benefit sharing



Policy and institutional framework exist in many countries and regions. However, there is a need of strengthening the existing frameworks and align them to regional and international agreements on forest and related fields to ensure sustainable forest management in Africa.

INDICATORS	WHO IMPLEMENT	SUPPORTING PARTNERS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Number of countries that have strengthened and harmonized their national policies and institutional frameworks with international and regional SFM-friendly frameworks › Number of national and subregional policy and regulatory frameworks adapted, harmonized and implemented 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Member States, AUC and RECs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Bilateral, multilateral, cooperation › FAO, AfDB, COMIFAC, ECCAS, ECOWAS, etc. › Multilateral, bilateral funding mechanisms › National and international civil society › Universities and High Schools › Private sector › Development partners › Research communities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Number of countries having integrated gender aspects in reforms of their forest policies › Number of countries that have integrated SFM in their planning and national budget › Number of countries with integrated in their policies, programs, projects, interventions and strategies to secure forest tenure and improve livelihoods local communities › Level of improvement in the living conditions of forest-riparian populations because of communities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Member State, RECs, AUC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Bilateral, multilateral, cooperation › FAO, AfDB, COMIFAC, ECCAS, ECOWAS, etc. › Multilateral, bilateral funding mechanisms › National and international civil society › Universities and High Schools › Private sector › Development partners › Research communities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Number of strategies, guidelines, land use plans developed › Number of countries that have implemented rural, urban and peri-urban land use plans › Number of greening plans in urban and peri-urban areas developed by each AU member states in line with SFM › Number of countries that have developed strategies, plans and guidelines to increase agroforestry in the agriculture sector › Number of countries that have developed approaches and mechanisms related to the decentralization of forest management and forest revenue for the benefit of local communities › Number of countries that have developed strategies, incentives, plans and guidelines for the development of forest value chains 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › AUC, RECs, Member States 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Bilateral, multilateral, cooperation › FAO, AfDB, COMIFAC, ECCAS, ECOWAS, AFF, etc. › Multilateral, bilateral funding mechanisms › National and international civil society › Universities and High Schools › Private sector › Development partners › Research communities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Number of countries that have established multisectoral institutional frameworks for harmonization of their plans, programs and projects for SFM › Number of private partners involved in SFM and the level of achievement of their concrete actions › Number of private companies and professional associations using monitoring and evaluation tools for implementation of SFM standards in their ESMP › Training Package on the Assessment of Forest Ecosystem Services › Number of local committees created for carbon benefits management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › AUC, RECs, Member State 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Bilateral, multilateral cooperation, FAO, AfDB, COMIFAC, ECCAS, ECOWAS, AFF, etc. › Multilateral, bilateral funding mechanisms › National and international civil society organizations › Universities and High Schools › Private sector › Development partners › Research communities

PRIORITY 4.

Restoration of degraded forests and landscapes

OBJECTIVE 4.

To reduce deforestation, forest and land degradation and restore forests and landscapes for enhancing resilience and sustainable livelihoods

DESIRED OUTCOMES

AREAS OF INTERVENTIONS (ACTIONS)

Deforestation is reduced

- › Assess the rate of deforestation at the regional and national levels
- › Identify and analyse the drivers of deforestation and forest degradation and develop strategies for addressing them
- › Promote and protect community rights and forest tenure security to support their participation in sustainable forest management
- › Create a conducive environment to facilitate private sector engagement in forest certification.

Degraded forests and landscapes are restored

- › Undertake comprehensive participatory assessments of restoration needs and opportunities at the national and regional levels
- › Support approaches and mechanisms at the national and regional scales aimed at improving the supply of, and access to all local species and high-quality fast-growing native species or propagative materials to meet restoration needs
- › Promote the implementation of community forestry practices
- › Develop and implement national, transboundary, subregional and regional programmes for the restoration of degraded forests and landscapes (e.g. through assisted natural regeneration, planting, agroforestry)
- › Identify and share information on cost-effective restoration approaches and strategies (e.g. assisted natural regeneration, planting, enrichment planting and sustainable management)
- › Capacity building of all stakeholders on new approaches and strategies of restoration of degraded forests and landscapes

Climate variability and climate change, coupled with increased population pressure for farmlands and forest products, have caused serious forest and land degradation, deforestation and loss of biodiversity particularly in Africa's dryland areas. Other challenges to forest health, such as fires, pests and disease, poor harvesting practices, poor management and overgrazing also significantly contribute to forest and land degradation in Africa. There is therefore, need for increased efforts to restore degraded forest and landscapes in order to increase the production and protection functions of forests beyond what they are today.

28 African countries are already engaged in the African forest landscape restoration initiative coordinated by NEPAD-AUDA to restore over 100 million of degraded forests and landscapes. National platform for restoration have also been established in many countries. Despite these initiatives, the situation of forest and land degradation remain virtually unchanged and therefore a challenge. In view of this, African countries need to increase their efforts to stem and reverse the adverse degradation processes and address the root causes of degradation.

INDICATOR	WHO IMPLEMENTS	SUPPORTING PARTNERS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Rate of deforestation (baseline) › for each country established › Drivers of deforestation and forest degradation identified and analysed › Measures taken to reduce deforestation and forest cover recovered › Area of forest brought under community management › Area of forests certified 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Member state, RECs, AUC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Bilateral, multilateral, UN-REDD Program cooperation › AfDB, FAO, COMIFAC, ECCAS, ECOWAS, AFF, etc. › Multilateral, bilateral funding mechanisms › National and international civil society › Universities and schools › Private sector › Development partners › communities › Research
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Assessments' reports at the national and regional levels › Data base of high quality native species › Number of seed centers supported and operational for the sustainable supply of seeds of native species › Network of seed centers supported. › Number of technologies and best practices identified and disseminated › Area of degraded forests and land restored/ under restoration › Area of forest brought under local community management. › Ecosystem services improved › Type and extent of information shared › Number of stakeholders trained 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Member state, RECs, AUC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Bilateral, multilateral, UN-REDD Program cooperation › AfDB, FAO, COMIFAC, ECCAS, ECOWAS, AFF, etc. › Multilateral, bilateral funding mechanisms › National and international civil society › Universities and schools › Private sector › Development partners communities › Research institutes

PRIORITY 5.

Enhanced partnerships and resource mobilization for achieving SFM

OBJECTIVE 5.

To establish strong partnerships and collaboration for mobilizing resources through a robust information and communication system

DESIRED OUTCOMES	STRATEGIC INTERVENTIONS (ACTIONS)
Strong partnerships and collaboration established	<ul style="list-style-type: none">› Develop and strengthen collaborative partnerships› Support the development, expansion and sustenance of existing networks, alliances and partnerships› Seek partnerships and alliances with countries in other continents with proven credentials, knowledge and interest in specific areas of SFM› Strengthen partnership in the management of transboundary forest resources› Strengthen partnership to implement global SFM instruments› Establish partnerships with indigenous communities and vulnerable groups› Support indigenous communities to enable them effectively take part in SFM› Encourage the private sector to create economic, social and environmental benefits into their business plans› Promote and support the involvement of non-governmental and community-based organizations
Strategy for resources mobilisation developed and implemented	<ul style="list-style-type: none">› Communicate and implement the strategy› Develop or strengthen national strategies for resources mobilization› Disseminate information package and conduct awareness raising sessions› Support local communities and organizations to access the local, national, regional and international funds
Capacity enhanced for resource mobilization and partnership development	<ul style="list-style-type: none">› Build capacity of all stakeholders for development of partnership and resources mobilisation› Enhance the capacity of member states and forest sector institutions to mobilise resources from various sources› Enhance the capacity of vulnerable groups (women, youth, indigenous communities) to present competitive proposals to attract funds› Strengthen access to information related to funding opportunities› Establish information system on available funding opportunities

Functional and sustainable collaborative partnerships based on shared interests, commitments, and responsibilities are important to implement the SFMF. This is needed to bring together various sectors and institutions (technical and financial) outside the forestry sector at national, regional and international levels.

To implement the SFMF, member states need to build strong partnerships with their bilateral and multilateral partners and develop resource mobilization strategies to attract funding from various sources at national, sub-regional, regional and international levels. Transboundary cooperation is also essential in mobilizing resources.

INDICATORS	WHO IMPLEMENTS	SUPPORTING PARTNERS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Number of networks alliances and partnerships developed, expanded and maintained › Number of partnership agreements signed › Number of new partnerships on transboundary forest resources formed and functional › Number of meetings and consultations held by member states and International Partners › Application of decisions made concerning the implementation of international instruments regarding SFM › Number of functional partnerships with indigenous communities and vulnerable groups › Number of people directly benefiting from the private investment › Number of new business start-ups that consciously integrate environmental consideration in their socio-economic activities › Number of NGOs and CBOs supported 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Government institutions, development partners, private sector, CSOs › Government, development partners › Government and private sector › Government, development partners and private sector 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Community-based actors (e.g. producers, processors, traders and consumers) › CSOs, Private sector, development partners. › Local communities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Number of countries with new or strengthened resources mobilization strategies › Number and quality of information packages published and shared › Number of initiatives and projects funded 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Government, development partners and private sector 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Amount of financial resources mobilised › Number of applications for resources › Rate of funding allocated to member states in Africa › Number of initiatives from vulnerable groups funded by trust funds foundation and other financial institutions › A functional platform established, used and regularly updated 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Governments, AUC, RECs and development partners › Governments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Trust funds foundations, private sector, CSOs › Development partners, NGOs, global funding mechanisms (GEF, GCF, etc.)



PART IV. OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPLEMENTING THE SUSTAINABLE FOREST MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

There are many opportunities to support African countries in increasing action on SFM, including:

→ Increasing recognition from governments

There is an increasing recognition of the importance of forests and trees and African countries have developed forest policies in the past few decades. These provide the basis for scaling up and improvement

→ International environmental arrangements

Global concern about climate change has increased attention on the role of forests in the carbon cycle. Payments for carbon sequestration and reduced greenhouse-gas emissions as a means for mitigating climate change are increasing through voluntary and compliance markets. Global mechanisms such as REDD+² and the Clean Development Mechanism offer opportunities to increase resources – financial, technological support, capacity and skills – for SFM in Africa.

The implementation of the Paris Agreement on Climate Change counts a lot on SFM. No doubt that many of the National Determined Contributions submitted by African countries strongly incline towards forests and other land based interventions.

→ Inclusion of forestry activities in nationally determined contributions and land degradation neutrality targets

The inclusion of forest-based activities in the nationally determined contributions (NDCs) of countries to climate-change mitigation and adaptation represents an opportunity to increase SFM in Africa. Three climate commissions launched at the 22nd meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework

² REDD+ = reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation (and the role of conservation, sustainable management of forests and enhancement of forest carbon stocks).

Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) also provide opportunities to support and expand SFM in Africa: these are the Climate Commission for the Sahel Region (chaired by the Government of the Niger); the Climate Commission for the Congo Basin (chaired by the Government of the Congo); and the Climate Commission for the Island States (chaired by the Government of the Seychelles).

Under the UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) and in response to SDG 15.3.1, more than 100 countries, including 51 African countries³, have engaged in target-setting processes for land degradation neutrality through sustainable land management and restoration, including on forestland. Forest conservation is also an indispensable component of the Aichi Biodiversity targets for the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD).

→ The Pan-African Action Agenda on Ecosystem Restoration for Increased Resilience And the UN Decade on Ecosystem restoration (2021-2030)

A ministerial conference adopted the **Pan-African Action Agenda on Ecosystem Restoration for Increased Resilience**⁴ in November 2018. The aim of the Action Agenda, the development of which was led by the AU and the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), is to conserve and sustainably manage land and ecosystems while also reducing, mitigating or reversing the impacts of land and ecosystem degradation; reducing and halting biodiversity loss; combating land degradation and desertification; mitigating climate change; reducing disaster-related risks; and restoring ecosystem conditions and processes to increase resilience, ecosystem functions and sustainable benefits. The

³ www.unccd.int/actions/ldn-target-setting-programme

⁴ www.cbd.int/doc/c/274b/80e7/34d341167178fe08effd0900/cop-14-afr-hls-04-final-en.pdf

Action Agenda provides a framework for harmonized and coordinated action on ecosystem restoration by AU member states and partners across Africa. Furthermore, in March 2019, a UN decade on Ecosystem restoration (2020-2030) was adopted by the UN General assembly.

Other strategies and programmes developed by the AU that offer opportunities for the implementation and championing of SFM include the African Strategy on Combating Illegal Exploitation and Illegal Trade in Wild Fauna and Flora in Africa, adopted in May 2015; the AU wildlife strategy; the African Landscape Restoration Initiative (AFR100) coordinated by NEPAD; and the Great Green Wall for the Sahara and the Sahel Initiative, which is expanding to embrace drylands in Eastern, Southern and other parts of Africa.

→ **Increased investment in forest genetic resources**

The use of good-quality tree germplasm is crucial for the success of any tree-planting or restoration programme, with the potential to increase profits by increasing forest productivity and wood quality and reducing wood production costs, while also increasing biodiversity conservation and resilience to climate change. The efficient supply of good germplasm is essential in Africa, where there is only limited land available for large-scale restoration and forest plantations and thus a strong need to achieve high productivity. Several African countries have developed and are implementing strategies and programmes to maintain and improve forest genetic resources to support SFM. A good foundation exists, therefore, for building capacity for the production of high-quality reproductive material, including seed supply, conservation and management.

→ **Increasing trade based on the sustainable production, processing, value adding and marketing of forest products and services**

There is considerable trade between countries in Africa: the annual trade of sawnwood, for example, includes at least 80 000 m³ between Cameroon and Chad; 12 000 m³ between Cameroon and Nigeria; 6 000 m³ between the Central African Republic and Chad; and 50 000 m³ between the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Uganda, Burundi

and Rwanda. Most of this trade is informal, and formalizing it would not only increase national government revenues through better tax collection and increase employment but also facilitate industrialization in the sector through value adding. The same is true for NWFPs: in 2017, the Network for Natural Gums and Resins in Africa (NGARA), supported by the AUC, FAO and others, developed a strategic framework for the marketing and prioritization of natural gums and resins that will help in developing sustainable approaches for these important NWFPs (NGARA, 2017).

→ **Uptake of forest certification in Africa – using markets to drive SFM**

Forest certification offers multiple potential economic, social and environmental benefits and opportunities, but uptake in Africa has been low. A significant barrier for many forest managers in Africa is that they lack the capacity to undertake certification audits and to maintain operations to a certification standard. There is an overall lack of local experts in forest certification, locally based forest certification auditors and certification bodies, and financial support for forest certification. Nevertheless, forest certification has made advances in West and Central Africa, where a number of countries have developed national certification standards (although only a few have certified forests). Of all African countries, South Africa has made most progress in forest certification.

→ **Use of criteria and indicators for SFM in Africa**

Some African countries have developed and are implementing criteria and indicators that are useful in conceptualizing, implementing and monitoring progress towards SFM. Some countries also have national working groups on forestry that draw attention to SFM and promote action to combat deforestation; among other things, such working groups have helped develop national principles, criteria and indicators for SFM and forest certification, and they have conducted other activities contributing to the attainment of SFM. Some countries, therefore, have developed a certain level of capacity to participate in and guide development towards SFM.

→ Availability of guidelines and tools on SFM in drylands in sub-Saharan Africa

FAO prepared the *Guidelines on Sustainable Forest Management Practices in Drylands of sub-Saharan Africa* (FAO, 2010) to help improve forest planning and management in Africa's drylands and thereby the contributions of forests to the well-being of local people. The guidelines were developed with the assistance of forestry experts and partners active in the region. Forest policymakers and practitioners in Africa can capitalize on these and other guidelines, such as the *Global Guidelines for the Restoration of Degraded Forests and Landscapes in Drylands* (FAO, 2015b) which was developed in an effort to increase the uptake of SFM in dryland forests. FAO has also developed Collect Earth, a tool for assessing and monitoring forests, trees and restoration opportunities, including in dryland forests and landscapes, in collaboration with Google and other partners.

→ Availability of new tools and technologies in forestry

Africa is beginning to invest in science and technologies – such as remote sensing, geographic information systems, Collect Earth, Biomass Geo-Wiki and Forests Down-welling Surface Short-wave Radiation Flux – useful for measuring forest-cover change and providing other information on forests. Financial instruments such as M-Pesa have considerable potential for enabling money transfers to places where formal banking facilities are absent – which could be very useful in African forestry, especially for small and medium-sized enterprises.

→ Education and training institutions in forestry and related fields

Existing forestry institutions (faculties, schools and departments) in Africa provide undergraduate and postgraduate academic trainings in forest-related subjects at an acceptable standard. Some of these institutions are attempting to adapt their curricula to new priorities and issues such as community forestry, agroforestry, integrated land uses, forest-product industries and climate change. Other tertiary institutions (colleges) produce skilled forestry practitioners with certificates or diplomas. There is capacity in Africa, therefore, to produce forestry professionals capable of guiding the implementation of SFM.

→ Forestry research institutions

African forest research institutions exist with responsibility for conducting applied research. There are also regional and international research institutions in forest-related fields, either headquartered in or with offices or activities in Africa. Such research resources can be harnessed and combined with other available resources to assist in achieving SFM.

→ Funding opportunities for African forestry

New and innovative forestry financing mechanisms exist and are being used by countries to finance forestry activities. Regional, national and local institutions are benefiting from financing opportunities through international agreements and their associated financing instruments. The Paris Agreement on climate change, for example, recommends the scaling up of climate finance to USD 100 billion per year by 2020, including through the Green Climate Fund, some of which could be applied in forest-related climate-change adaptation and mitigation in Africa. The Global Environment Facility (GEF-7 programme) is funding SFM-related impact programmes in the Congo Basin, on dryland forests and landscapes, and on food systems, land use and restoration (including in Africa).

→ Subregional, regional and international collaboration and partnerships in forestry

Existing international, regional and subregional collaborations and partnerships in forestry can leverage SFM in Africa. International institutions supporting African forestry include the FAO, UNFCCC; the Convention on Biological Diversity; the UNCCD, the UN Forum on Forests, the UN Environment Programme (UNEP) and the UN Development Programme. Many international non-governmental and research organizations have a presence in Africa and substantial programmes on forests, such as the International Union for Conservation of Nature, the World Agroforestry Center and the World Wide Fund for Nature.

The African Union Commission, the Regional Economic Communities, the African Development Bank and the Central African Forestry Commission provide funding and coordination for SFM in Africa.

The Great Green Wall for the Sahara and Sahel Initiative of the African Union provides an important opportunity for sustainable forest management.

The Comprehensive African Agriculture Development Programmes (CAADP) aiming for transformation agricultural development can be capitalized on for synergies and resource mobilization.

Furthermore, the existence of the African Union Strategy to Combat Illegal Exploitation and Illegal Trade of Fauna and Flora provides an excellent case for synergies as well as a common platform for resource mobilization, capacity building and advocacy.

A number of institutional frameworks and bodies provide policy advice in the region, which the SFMF could build on and make use of to support its implementation. These include:

- African Union's Specialized Technical Committee (STC) on Agriculture, Rural Development, Water and Environment (ARDWE) provides the overall policy framework for forest related issues on the continent;
- The FAO African Forestry and Wildlife Commission, which brings together 51 member countries, as well as other observer countries and organizations, and gathers the highest technical-level country representatives responsible for forestry and wildlife issues, typically the heads of forestry and wildlife institutions in member countries;
- NEPAD-AUDA, which coordinates, implements and evaluates regional and continental programmes with a mandate from the AU to focus on human-capital development, industrialization, science and innovation, regional integration and infrastructure and natural resource governance and food security. NEPAD-AUDA also coordinates AFR100 and Climate Smart Agriculture;
- The African Union Great Green Wall for the Sahara and the Sahel Initiative platform and the African Environment Partnership Platform (AEPP) led by NEPAD to “coordinate, mobilize resources, foster knowledge and align support for the implementation of the Environment Action Plan”. The AEPP was launched at the 22nd Conference of the Parties to the UNFCCC in Marrakech, Morocco, in November 2016;

- the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment, which provides leadership in Africa on environmental issues by promoting international participation, building capacity in environmental management and encouraging the ratification of multilateral environmental agreements; and
- The Africa NDC hub, created by the African Development Bank, which serves as a resource pool for African countries and public and private local and international support institutions to deliver effectively and efficiently on commitments under the Paris Agreement.

Subregional institutional frameworks include:

- the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), which developed a convergence plan for SFM;
- the Economic Community of Central African States, supported by COMIFAC with a forest convergence plan;
- the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC), which has developed a Protocol on Forestry;
- the East African Community (EAC), which is developing its Forestry Policy and Strategy;
- the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) for the Horn of Africa, is in the process of developing its Forestry Policy and Strategy;
- the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa;
- the Arab Maghreb Union for North Africa, and
- The Economic Community of Saharan States (CEN-SAD) with a strong commitment on the implementation of the Great Green Wall for the Sahara and Sahel Initiative

African countries have made various partnership arrangements with these and other entities and development partners to increase sustainable forest use with the aim of improving environmental outcomes and the livelihoods of African people.

→ Other institutions and networks

Other institutions and networks in Africa with a role in promoting SFM include the:

- **African Forest Forum**, which provides a platform and creates an enabling environment for

independent and objective analysis, advocacy and advice on all relevant policy and technical issues pertaining to the sustainable management, use and conservation of Africa's forest and tree resources as part of efforts to reduce poverty, protect the environment and promote economic and social development;

- **Africa Forest Enterprises Connect Network**, which is committed to the development of locally controlled forest enterprises for livelihood improvement in Africa;
- **Forest and Trade Networks for Legal and Sustainable Forest Management in Africa and Asia**, which promote the conservation and sustainable management of tropical forests by assisting developing countries to improve forest governance while contributing directly to the implementation of the European Union's Action Plan for Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade;
- **African Women's Network for Community Management of Forests**, which is involved in sustainable forest resource management in Africa;
- **African Community Forestry Network**, which brings together community-led organizations working in agroforestry and forestry across Africa;
- **African Academy of Sciences**, which honours achievers in African science and technology and acts as a development-oriented mobilizer of the African science and technology community with the aim of facilitating the development of scientific and technological capacity for science-led development in Africa; and
- **NGARA**, which brings together a broad set of stakeholders (e.g. farmers, collectors, traders, governments, non-governmental organizations, exporters and importers) with a common desire to improve the production and quality of locally produced gums and resins for domestic, regional and international markets.

These and other similar institutions and networks can be mobilized and recognized in national, subregional and continental plans and resourced to support SFM on the continent.

The SFMF will be implemented by sub regional, regional and national institutions and bodies, building

on existing coordination and financing mechanisms and opportunities.

The AU Assembly will provide political support, direction and a common Africa-wide position on forests and forestry. AU member states and RECs will champion and support SFM in the various Africa subregions, based on their specificities and mandate. They will report periodically to the AU Assembly and its Specialized Technical Committee on progress in implementing the SFMF.

The AUC, member states and RECs may find it suitable to use the African Forestry and Wildlife Commission, a regional body of FAO, AFF and other regional and global forest management frameworks, instruments and processes to promote the dissemination of the SFMF; provide a forum for discussion of priorities and means of implementation; share good practices and tools; and monitor and report on its implementation.

To implement the SFMF, countries and RECs will need to mobilize resources from a mix of funding sources at the national, subregional, regional and international levels.

National forest financing strategies could be developed where they do not exist, emphasizing the mobilization of financial resources from all possible sources and sectors to ensure support for the key activities necessary for achieving SFM and promote investment in, and payments for, forest goods and ecosystem services.

The development of national forest funds (sometimes called national forest conservation funds) has become common in Africa as countries seek to mobilize resources for SFM. Most national forest funds comprise revenues from a range of sources, such as government budgetary allocations; revenues generated from sales of forest products and ecosystem services; forest-related taxes and fees; fines; and donations. Such funds may be supported by the establishment of decentralized forest funds, especially at the level of local authorities and communities.

Strategies to increase domestic funding for forestry should aim to both increase public revenues from forests and create a more favourable climate for



private investment. Such strategies, therefore, should include increasing revenue collection, improving expenditure policies, reforming macroeconomic policies (e.g. on taxation), and putting in place required incentives, subsidies and technical and institutional support. Approaches should include the appropriate pricing of goods and services produced from public forests and the adoption of market-based instruments to capture revenues from these. Market prices should reflect the true scarcity values of forest resources. Another option is to set up special forest funds – financed by levies or taxes – to fund specific activities associated with forest development and sustainable management. National carbon funds (designed to manage taxes levied from carbon emitters) and environment funds can also be important sources of finance for SFM in Africa.

At the subregional level, continuing and enhancing the current trend towards coordination and cooperation is key. Examples include the strategies and programmes developed by subregional bodies, such as ECOWAS's Forest Convergence Plan, the SADC's Protocol on Forestry, and COMIFAC's Forest Convergence Plan. Such initiatives have been instrumental in mobilizing financial resources for forest management in their subregions. The most notable of these approaches is the Congo Basin Forest Fund, hosted by the African Development Bank, which mobilized significant resources for forests in Congo Basin countries. Similar initiatives could be developed for the other RECs and relevant subregional institutions, networks and groups, including existing subregional financing bodies and institutions, such as the West Africa Development Bank and the East Africa Development Bank.

At the regional level, the African Development Bank has become a major source of forest funding in Africa, and its share has also increased significantly. It appears that the bank's role in the forest sector will continue to grow as demand increases: its forest-sector portfolio has benefited many countries, with projects on industrial plantations, conservation, restoration of degraded forests, agroforestry and institutional capacity.

Given the overall declining trend in official development assistance (ODA), it will be important

to maintain efforts to increase **bilateral and multilateral funds** for SFM in Africa and to use ODA to leverage other sources of financing. Used properly, ODA can still play an effective role, especially in removing barriers, providing seed money for private entrepreneurs, delivering technical assistance, and linking investors and consumers with domestic forest owners, processors and entrepreneurs.

Multilateral environmental funding mechanisms such as the GEF provide new and additional grants and concessional funding to meet the agreed incremental costs of measures for achieving agreed global environmental benefits and rising from the resolutions of conferences of the parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, the UNFCCC and the UNCCD. Since 1991, the scope of GEF's forest-related activities has expanded from a focus on biodiversity to include integrated ecosystem management, combating land degradation through sustainable land management, and, since 2007, financing SFM. Under GEF-7, three impact programmes relevant to Africa were developed specifically to scale up financing for transformative impacts in SFM and sustainable land management and address drivers of degradation – one for SFM in dryland landscapes (with FAO as the lead agency for its development and implementation), SFM in the Congo Basin landscapes (with UNEP as the lead agency), and the other on food systems, land use and restoration (with the World Bank as the lead agency).

The Green Climate Fund and other climate finance sources, mechanisms and initiatives have emerged relatively recently with the aim of helping developing countries adapt to and mitigate climate change. Mechanisms (some of which stand on their own while others are managed by global financing institutions) include the Clean Development Mechanism of the UNFCCC; REDD+; the United Nations Programme on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation; the World Bank's Forest Carbon Partnership Facility; the Adaptation Fund; Climate Investment Funds; the Strategic Climate Fund; the Forest Investment Programme; the Programme for Scaling up Renewables; the Clean Technology Fund; and voluntary carbon markets.

PART V. MONITORING, EVALUATION AND REPORTING ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SFM FRAMEWORK FOR AFRICA

INTRODUCTION

To keep track of the implementation process of the Framework, there is need to put in place a mechanism for monitoring, evaluation and reporting on regular basis. This is imperative to keep all stakeholders abreast of achievements, challenges and opportunities and build on existing monitoring and reporting frameworks and avoid the overburden of reporting.

The key element of monitoring, evaluation and reporting will be the creation and operationalization of an Expert Working Group to provide technical oversight for the implementation of the Framework. The Expert Working Group will be drawn from all regions of the continent. Partner institutions will also take part in the sessions of the Expert Working Group as observers. The Expert Working Group will meet once a year and its meetings will be convened by AUC which will serve as the secretariat.

Halfway into the implementation phase of the Framework, a mid-term evaluation will be conducted to take stock of the achievements, challenges and opportunities. This will allow necessary adjustments to be made to improve efficiency and effectiveness of the Framework.

Established reporting processes and channels of the African Union will be used. The Regional Economic Communities will provide regional synthesized reports to the African Union Commission on regular basis in line with the sessions of the Special Technical Committee (STC) on Agriculture, Rural Development, Water and Environment. The African Union Commission, as the secretariat, in collaboration with the Expert Working Group will collate subregional reports and prepare them for submission to the STC for endorsement. The report will then be submitted to the higher organs of the African Union for adoption and further guidance.

OBJECTIVES OF MONITORING, EVALUATION AND REPORTING MECHANISM

The overall objective is to track progress and milestones against planned activities especially in terms of achieving the outcomes and impacts of interventions.

The specific objectives are to:

- enhance regular systematic and objective assessment of implementation;
- to provide a regular reporting on the implementation of the Framework;
- to strengthen understanding of the multiple-layered underlining factors driving deforestation and land degradation;
- to identify and document successful practices and approaches.

The overall success of the SFMF will be measured using the following three indicators under SDG 15 (“Life on Land”) and Aspiration 1 of the Agenda 2063 (A prosperous Africa, based on inclusive growth and sustainable development) and Objective 7 (Environmentally sustainable and climate resilient economies and communities) of Agenda 2063. Measuring and reporting of progress will be based on SDG indicators reported by countries such as:

- SDG 15, (15.1 Forest area as a percentage of total land area,
- SDG 15.2.1 Progress towards sustainable forest management⁵ and;
- Forest area under SFM as a percentage of total forest area).

A State of African forests or an Outlook on Forests and SFM in Africa will be prepared and published periodically using and analysing collected data, with support of FAO, AFF and other partners.

⁵ www.fao.org/sustainable-development-goals/indicators/1521/en/



TABLE 2. IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX OF M & E AND REPORTING

OUTCOMES	INTERVENTIONS/ ACTIVITIES	INDICATORS	RESPONSIBILITIES (KEY STAKEHOLDERS)	PARTNERS NEEDED TO SUPPORT
An effective and efficient monitoring, evaluation and reporting mechanism established and operationalized	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Establish a detailed monitoring and evaluation mechanism at AUC level › Create and operationalize an Expert Working Group to guide implementation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Monitoring and evaluation document › Expert Working Group created › Reports of the meeting of the Group 	› MS, RECs and AUC	› FAO, AFF, WWF, IUCN, TRAFFIC & others
A functional secretariat established at the AUC to support M&E and Reporting	› Setting up a secretariat	› Reports of the secretariat	› AUC	› RECs and partners
State of African forests report published periodically	› Secretariat	› Five-yearly report on the estate of forests in Africa	› AUC	› Development partners, AfDB, AFF, FAO, UNDP, NGOs
Commitments at all levels maintained and enhanced	› Conduct regular monitoring, evaluation and reporting at all levels (continental, regional and national levels)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Strong partnerships established › Adequate resources mobilized 	› MS, RECs and AUC	› FAO, AFF and › all other partners

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