

EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY



SECRETARIAT

EAC SUBREGIONAL INPUT TO THE ELEVENTH SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS FORUM ON FORESTS (UNFF)

Submitted to the UNFF Secretariat

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**EAC Secretariat
P.O. Box 1096
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Regional/Sub-regional Organization: East African Community (EAC)

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General Information

The multi-year Programme of work – MYPOW (2007–2015) of the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF) sets a new focus on regional collaboration and partnerships. Since its eighth session in 2009 the Forum has solicited inputs from relevant regional and sub-regional forest-related mechanisms, institutions, organizations and processes as an integral part of session deliberations.¹

The eleventh session of the UNFF (UNFF11) will be held from 4 to 15 May 2015 in New York. In accordance with the Forum’s MYPOW, the overall theme of UNFF11 is *Forests: progress, challenges and the way forward on the international arrangement on forests (IAF)*, with the following sub themes:

1. Reviewing the effectiveness of the international arrangement on forests and consideration of all future options

¹ The Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), the parent body of the Forum, through its resolution 2006/49, agreed to “Strengthen interaction between the Forum and relevant regional and subregional forest-related mechanisms, institutions and instruments, organizations and processes, with participation of major groups, as identified in Agenda 21, and relevant stakeholders to facilitate enhanced cooperation and effective implementation of sustainable forest management, as well as to contribute to the work of the Forum.” (paragraph 2)

2. Reviewing the progress towards the achievement of the Global Objectives on Forests (GOFs) and the implementation of the Non-Legally Binding Instrument on All Types of Forests (hereinafter referred to as the “Forest Instrument”)
3. Reviewing the contribution of forests and the IAF to the internationally-agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs),

In completing this questionnaire, you may choose to extract the relevant information and include it in your submission, if information is already available in existing reports and/or documents. Otherwise, you may provide the reference or document itself to the UNFF Secretariat, indicating the relevant section. Please note that the Year 2007 – the year of the adoption of the Forest Instrument (2007), should be used as a baseline throughout the document.

Moreover, in view of the limitation of sizing of the pertinent Secretary-General’s report, the Forum Secretariat suggests no more than 250 words of written input per answer. We would be most grateful if you could send your inputs to unff@un.org, fax: +1 917-367-3186, by **30 September 2014**. In light of time constraints and financial limitations, you are kindly asked to provide your input in English.

Section 0. Overview of the East African Community

The East African Community (EAC) is the regional intergovernmental organisation of the Republics of Kenya, Uganda, the United Republic of Tanzania, Republic of Rwanda and Republic of Burundi with its headquarters in Arusha, Tanzania.

The Treaty for Establishment of the East African Community was signed on 30 November 1999 and entered into force on 7 July 2000 following its ratification by the original three Partner States – Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania. The Republic of Rwanda and the Republic of Burundi acceded to the EAC Treaty on 18 June 2007 and became full Members of the Community with effect from 1 July 2007.

A. Mission and Vision

The **Vision** of EAC is a prosperous, competitive, secure, stable and politically united East Africa; and the **Mission** is to *widen and deepen Economic, Political, Social and Culture integration in order to improve the quality of life of the people of East Africa through increased competitiveness, value added production, trade and investments.*

The EAC's core values are:

- Professionalism
- Accountability
- Transparency
- Teamwork
- Unity in Diversity and Allegiance to EAC ideals

B. Aims and Objectives

The EAC aims at widening and deepening co-operation among the Partner States in, among others, political, economic and social fields for their mutual benefit. To this extent the EAC countries established a Customs Union in 2005 and a Common Market in 2010. The next phase of the integration will see the bloc enter into a Monetary Union and ultimately become a Political Federation of the East African States.

C. Enlargement of the Community

The realisation of a large regional economic bloc encompassing Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania and Uganda with a combined population of more than 130 million people (2010*), land area of 1.82 million sq kilometres and a combined Gross Domestic Product of \$74.5 billion (2009*), bears great strategic and geopolitical significance and prospects of a renewed and reinvigorated East African Community.

D. Overview Of The Organization Of The East African Community

The East African Community is organized on the basis of the principle of shared responsibilities through various organs and specialized institutions. The following is the Decision Making at the Community:

a) **The Summit of Heads of State or Government.**

The Summit consists of Heads of State or Government of the Partner States and is responsible for giving direction and impetus to the development and achievement of the objectives of the Community. This is the vision setting organ of the Community.

b) **The Council of Ministers**

The Council of Ministers is the policy organ of the Community and consists of Ministers responsible for East African Community affairs in the Partner States and such other Ministers, as the Partner States shall determine. The Council of Ministers may constitute Sectoral Councils to address specific areas of cooperation on its behalf.

c) **The Coordination Committee**

This consists of Permanent Secretaries responsible for East African Community affairs in the Partner States and such other Permanent Secretaries, as the Partner States shall determine. The Committee reports to the Council of Ministers and coordinates the activities of the Sectoral Committees.

d) **The Sectoral Councils/Committees**

These are established by the Council of Ministers on the basis of the recommendations of the Coordination Committee, which spells out their composition and functions. The Sectoral Councils/Committees prepare comprehensive implementation programmes, setting out priorities with respect to the various sectors as well as monitoring their implementation.

The smooth functioning of the above organs is based on the provisions of the Protocol on Decision-Making of the Community, the Rules of Procedure for Summit Meetings, the Rules of Procedure for Council Meetings and the Rules of Procedure for Sectoral Committees.

Operational Organs and Institutions

a) ***The East African Court of Justice***

The East African Court of Justice as established under Chapter Eight of the Treaty is the organ charged with the interpretation and application of the Treaty. The Court's appellate, human rights and other jurisdictions are to be determined by the Council of Ministers by way of a Protocol that is currently under consideration.

b) ***The East African Legislative Assembly***

The East African Legislative Assembly is established under Chapter Nine of the Treaty and is the legislative organ of the Community. Its membership consist of 27 elected members, nine from each Partner State, plus five ex-officio members who include the three Ministers responsible for East African Community affairs, the Secretary General and the Counsel to the Community.

c) ***The Secretariat***

The Secretariat is established under Chapter Ten of the Treaty and is the executive organ of the Community. It is headed by the Secretary General who is the Accounting Officer of the Community and is assisted by four Deputy Secretaries General.

Autonomous Institutions of the Community

The EAC has established a number of autonomous Institutions, which include:

The East African Development Bank

The East African Development Bank, headquartered in Kampala, Uganda, is one of the surviving institutions of the Community. The Bank operates on a Charter and its shareholders are the partner States' Ministries of Finance. The Bank is involved in the cross-border financing of regional development programmes and projects, small and medium scale industries.

The Inter-University Council for East Africa (IUCEA)

Following the collapse of the old East African Community, the three Partner States signed a Memorandum of Understanding in 1980 that established the Inter-University Council for East Africa (IUCEA). This is therefore, one of the surviving institutions of the Community. The main objective of the IUCEA is to "facilitate contact between the universities of East Africa, to provide a forum for discussion on a wide range of academic and other matters relating to higher education, and to help maintain high and comparable academic standards" in the universities of East Africa. Currently the IUCEA brings together 89 member universities, both public and private and has an established governance Structure. The headquarters of IUCEA is in Kampala, Uganda. Some policy issues of the IUCEA are brought to the attention of the Council through the Sec TORAL Council on Education, Culture and Sports.

The Lake Victoria Fisheries Organization

The Lake Victoria Fisheries Organization (LVFO) was established through a Convention signed by the three Partner States in 1994. The objective of the LVFO is to foster cooperation among Partner States through harmonization and development of national measures aimed at conservation, management and utilization of the living resources of Lake Victoria in a coordinated and sustainable manner. The mandate of LVFO is, in addition to what is provided for in the Convention, also covered under Article 9 of the Treaty and Article 8 of the Protocol for the Sustainable Management of Lake Victoria. LVFO headquarters is in Jinja, Uganda

The Lake Victoria Basin Commission

The Lake Victoria Basin Commission (LVBC) was established by the Protocol on the Sustainable Management of Lake Victoria as an apex institution of the Community responsible for the coordination and management of the sustainable development of the Lake Victoria Basin. Signed in November 2003, the Protocol provides for the scope of cooperation, the principles and objectives as well as the functions and institutional framework of the Commission.

The ratification of the protocol in December 2004 paved the way for the operationalization of the LVBC as an autonomous institution of the East African Community. The headquarters of the LVBC are in Kisumu, Kenya.

E. Current status of EAC Integration Agenda

The regional integration process is at a high pitch at the moment as reflected by the encouraging progress of the *East African Customs Union*, the establishment of the *East African Common Market and Monetary Union*, and the negotiations towards *East African Federation* all underscore the serious determination of the East African leadership and citizens to construct a powerful and sustainable East African economic and political bloc.

F. Cooperation on Management of Forest Resources

Cooperation in Management of Natural resources is provided for under Chapter 19 of the Treaty where the Partner States recognize that a clean and healthy environment is a prerequisite for sustainable development and agree to take concerted measures to foster cooperation in the joint and efficient management, conservation and sustainable utilization of natural resources within the Community.

Cooperation on sustainable management and Conservation of Forest resources is also provided for under the Protocol on Environment and Natural Resources , the Protocol for Sustainable Development of the Lake Victoria Basin and the EAC Fourth Development Strategy where EAC identified Sustainable resource use, management, conservation of environment, natural resources and adaptation to climate change as a development objective and further identifies Promoting and protecting indigenous/traditional knowledge associated with biological resources and eco-systems and Strengthening National plans, programmes and legislation for forest management, inventory and monitoring, information sharing on trade in illegally harvested forest products as one of the Strategic interventions.

Section I: Progress towards the implementation of the forest instrument and the achievement of the GOFs as well as the contribution of forests and the IAF to the internationally-agreed development goals, including the MDGs

A. Progress towards implementation of the Forest Instrument

1. Briefly describe actions (e.g. regulatory, financial/economic and informational/educational) taken by your respective regional, sub-regional organization/process to foster political commitment for sustainable forest management (SFM).

The East African Community (EAC) Partner States have recognized the importance of Forests and the need of having regional forests conservation policy and strategy to among other things, maximize the contribution of forest sector in improving people's livelihoods, biodiversity conservation and economic development. This endeavor is supported by chapter 19, article 114, section 2 (a) (i) of the EAC treaty which calls for Partner States to adopt common policies for the development, conservation and management of natural forest, commercial plantations and natural reserves. Also, the 4th EAC development strategy (2011-2016) focuses amongst other things at strengthening national plans, programmes and legislations for forests management, inventory and strategic interventions for sustainable conservation.

Please describe the main challenges encountered and/or lessons learned.

The main challenges encountered includes conflicting policies, inadequate collaboration in forests management among Partner States, inadequate capacity in planning and program implementation at national levels.

2. Briefly describe efforts taken at the regional level to foster economically, socially and environmentally sound measures that act as incentives for the sustainable management of forests.

The efforts taken to foster economically, socially and environmentally sound measures was to initiate the development of a robust and comprehensive regional policy to support forest conservation and complement national forest conservation initiatives.

Please describe the main challenges encountered and/or lessons learned.

The main challenges encountered includes inadequate budget allocations to implement forestry programs, inadequate enforcement of forest legislations, deforestation and fragmentation of forest ecosystems in the region. The lessons learned is the need for increased budget allocations, strengthening the mechanism for the law enforcement and broad participation of stakeholders in forest management and conservation.

3. Briefly describe actions taken to enhance regional cooperation to promote international trade in forest products from sustainably managed forests harvested.

The actions taken to enhance regional cooperation to promote trade in forest products from sustainably managed forests includes implementation of the EAC common market protocol which aim at promoting trade among the Partner States by removing Non

Tarrif Barriers (NTB)

Please describe the main challenges encountered and/or lessons learned.

Unsustainable exploitation of forests in the forms of illegal logging, unbalanced terms of the international trade and outdated forests management plans in the major forest reserves are main challenges experienced.

4. Briefly describe actions taken to enhance regional cooperation to address illicit international trafficking in forest products through the promotion of forest law enforcement and good governance.

Actions taken to enhance regional cooperation to address illicit international trafficking in forest products include revising National Forest Policies legislations and programs, strengthening check up at the main borders control, ban in the transferring of logs and decentralization of the forest sector. Furthermore, through Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT) Program, EAC Secretariat is supporting Partner States to strengthen the ongoing institutional reforms in the forests sector specifically in the area of good governance and technical capacity building.

Please describe the main challenges encountered and/or lessons learned.

Conflicting policies and inadequate collaboration among the stakeholders undermine efforts in combating trafficking of forest products in the region. Lack of Regional Forest Policy and Regional Forests Law enforcement and Governance Strategy also jeopardize the fights against illicit trade in forest products.

5. List and briefly describe activities aimed at mobilizing new and additional resources from all sources for SFM.

The activities aimed at mobilizing new and additional resources for SFM includes soliciting resources for the implementation of REDD+ scheme and funds generated by the CDM Projects.

Please describe the main challenges encountered and/or lessons learned.

The main challenges encountered is inadequate or inappropriate finances to compensate community for their involvement in REDD+ Projects and complicated procedures for establishing CDM Projects.

B. Progress towards the achievement of the GOFs

1. Please describe actions taken by your respective regional, sub-regional organization/process and/or by other major stakeholders in your region/sub-region to help achieve the following:

GOF1, “Reverse the loss of forest cover worldwide through sustainable forest management, including protection, restoration, afforestation and reforestation, and increase efforts to prevent forest degradation”

Support regional forest management and conservation through implementation of article 114, section 2(a) (i) of the EAC Treaty and EAC 4th development strategy. The EAC 4th development strategy recognize the contribution of natural resources sectors including forestry and call for the rationale exploitation to ensure sustainable development. The EAC CC Policy adopted by in 2010 recognize the importance of forests in climate change mitigation and emphasize the need to enhance the reduction of Green House Gases (GHG) emmissions through afforestation, reforestation, promotion of energy efficiency and efficient crop production system.

Also, through the Tripartite Climate Change Programme, EAC Secretariat is implementing Climate-Smart Agriculture in collaboration with COMESA and SADC. The purpose of the programme is to increase investments in climate resilient and carbon efficient agriculture and its linkages to forestry, land use and energy practices in the COMESA-EAC-SADC countries by 2016. The initiaves focusses at among other things promotion of agro forestry systems and improved range land management in the region through the reduction of uncontrolled burning and increased sequestration of carbon in the soil or vegetation.

GOF2, “Enhance forest-based economic, social and environmental benefits, including by improving the livelihoods of forest dependent people”

Wide stakeholders participation including forests dependent community and equitable sharing of benefists acruing from forests resources had been advocated. Furthermore, some forest adjacent communities are also benefiting from the new innovations such as REDD+ scheme and other Carbon markets.

GOF3, “Increase significantly the area of protected forests worldwide and other areas of sustainably managed forests, as well as the proportion of forest products from sustainably managed forests”

Initiatives to implement EAC Climate Change Policy and Strategy contribute significantly in sustainable forests management. Climate change mitigations initiatives focusses at among other things at controlling deforestations and forests degradation to enhance carbon sequestration by the forests, reduce loss of forest area, forest cover and encroachment by promoting Climate Smart Agriculture/ Conservation Agriculture.

GOF4, “Reverse the decline in ODA for SFM and mobilize significantly increased, new and additional financial resources from all sources for the implementation of SFM”

Apart from government budget allocations, additional financial resources for the implementations of SFM emanate from fees and levies imposed on forest products penalties and fines labelled against violators of forest legislations and contributions from development partners.

2. Please provide additional information specific to your respective regional, sub-regional organization/process on progress towards the achievement of the GOFs.

EAC Secretariat is in the processes of developing regional forestry policy and strategy to support conservation and development of forest sector in the region. The envisaged policy will guide and determine the present and future decisions and actions and will be aligned with regional development goals and strategies.

C. Contribution of forests and the IAF to the internationally-agreed development goals, including the MDGs

1. Please describe studies or initiatives in your respective regional, sub-regional organization/process that capture the contribution of forests to the achievement of the internationally-agreed development goals, including the MDGs.

As to date the Environment and Natural Resources department of the Secretariat have initiated a couple of activities though not specific to Forest involve the aspects of SFM. One of these initiatives is the Trans-Boundary ecosystem conservation workshop part of the efforts in conserving Trans-boundary areas of ecological importance will be aimed at reversing the loss of forests

2. What indicators have been, or could be, used to assess the contribution of forests to the MDGs?

Indicators that could be used to assess the contribution of forests would be empowerment of communities surrounding forests especially SFM's, through education, employment and sustainable utilisation of forest resources GOAL 1 (eradication of extreme poverty and hunger) could be realised in the near future especially around forested regions. Periodic environmental audits on forests and their surrounding areas could be used to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the implemented policies aimed at reducing and reversing forest degradation, that would be in line with MDG 7 (ensuring environmental sustainability)

3. Please provide additional information specific to your respective regional, sub-regional organization/process on MDGs forest-related work.

Currently the Secretariat is engaging the Partner States to develop or rather consider the Trans-Boundary ecosystem bill and Regional Biodiversity Conservation Strategy and Action Plan (RBCSAP), these will encourage harmonized policies and laws when it comes to the management of Trans-boundary ecosystems that tend to be vulnerable to environmental degradation. Some of these biodiversity significant Trans-boundary ecosystems lay within different types of forests in the region.

Section II: Review of the effectiveness of the current IAF and the future options

1. From the perspective of your respective regional, sub-regional organization/process, please provide a general evaluation of the strengths, weaknesses and areas for improvement of the current IAF.

The strengths of IAF are increasing recognition by parties as the body to stimulate and spearhead international forests conservation agenda. The major weakness is IAF has no legal binding instrument.

2. Has the input of your respective regional, sub-regional organization/process been adequately taken into account in the Forum's deliberations?

Somehow

3. What measures has your organization undertaken to strengthen the current IAF? Please list the most important measures (maximum five):

- i. Regular contributions and participations to the IAF agenda;
- ii. Implementation of IAF decisions;

4. How would your respective regional, sub-regional organization/process envisage a strengthened regional/sub-regional component in a future IAF?

Advocating for IAF to have legal backing or legal instrument.

5. Has your respective regional, sub-regional organization/process worked jointly with member organizations of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF)² and/or major stakeholders to support the work of UNFF? If yes, please evaluate the overall collaboration.

Good.

6. How would your respective regional, sub-regional organization/process envisage a strengthened collaboration with CPF member organizations and/or major stakeholders in a revised IAF?

Stronger international cooperation could be strengthened in areas of capacity building , scientific research, grass root training and education.

² CPF member organizations: Centre for International Forestry Research (CIFOR), Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO), International Union of Forest Research Organizations (IUFRO), Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), Secretariat of the Global Environmental Facility (GEF), Secretariat of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), United Nations Forum on Forests Secretariat (UNFF), Secretariat of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), World Agroforestry Centre (ICRAF), The World Bank, International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)