



FORESTRY RESEARCH NETWORK FOR SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

CONSTITUTION

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ARTICLE I

Name and Scope of Action

1. The Network is known as Forestry Research Network for Sub-Saharan Africa, with acronym FORNESSA.

2. The Network is a non-profit, non-governmental scientific organisation open to forestry and forest-related organisations and individuals. It embodies three sub-regional networks; the Association of the Forestry Research Institutions of Eastern Africa

(AFREA) which has 10 member countries, the Forest Research Network of the Conférence de responsables de Recherche Agronomique Africains (CORAF) which has 20 member countries and the Southern African Development Community (SADC) which represents research institutions in the 14 SADC states.

Commented [OA1]: Not sure this is an appropriate terminology as it is one of sub-regional networks

Commented [OA2R1]:

Commented [OA3]: Are all these organisations still in existence> The CORAF I know is not just for forestry issues and I am sure it will not want to be subsumed under any organisation

ARTICLE II

Goal

To support and strengthen forestry research in order to contribute to the conservation, sustainable management and utilization of forest resources in Sub-Saharan Africa.

ARTICLE III

Objectives

1. Support sub-regional networks in their capacity building efforts.
2. Foster regional co-operation in forest research.
3. Articulate and advocate African forestry agenda and development in global fora.

ARTICLE IV

Membership

1. Groups of membership

The Network consists of three groups of membership.

1.1 Member organisations

Forest research organisations and forest-related science organisations which apply for membership and are accepted by the Steering Committee.

1.2 Individual members

Individual members of member institutions that are engaged or have been engaged in research on forest or forest-related subjects and who wish to participate in FORNESSA activities.

1.3 Honorary members

Persons from or outside the region who have rendered particularly important service to the Network may receive honorary membership. The General Assembly approves their appointments on recommendation of the Steering Committee.

2. Admission to membership

Admission to membership shall be decided by the Steering Committee.

3. Termination of membership

3.1 Each member may resign from the Network by registered letter. The member shall send this resignation letter to the Chairman.

3.2 Membership may be terminated by the Steering Committee upon failure to pay membership fees for three consecutive years.

Commented [OA4]: Does this imply that member organisations must submit application to be part of fornessa? What of individuals whose organisations are not interested in applying? What is the place of affiliation with iufro? How many organisations among the current members actually submitted any application? I know my organisation did not.

Commented [OA5]: If the organisation is already a member, do individual members from the same organisation have to apply again?

Commented [OA6]: Was the membership of anybody among the current members decided by the steering committee?

Commented [OA7]: I have never paid any due as I did not know that dues are to be paid. I am surer this goes for many members which means most of us may not actually be members based on this clause!!!

4. Rights of members

Members are entitled to:

- 4.1 Participate in General Assembly meetings.
- 4.2 Submit proposals to the Network.
- 4.3 Access FORNIS website.
- 4.5 Submit reports or papers for upload unto FORNIS website.
- 4.6 Receive information and publications from the Network.
- 4.7 Be eligible to be appointed and serve as FORNESSA office holders upon approval of the Steering Committee.
- 4.8 Member institutions shall have the right to appoint representatives to participate and vote in meetings.
- 4.9 Participate in all scientific meetings organised by FORNESSA and/or held under its auspices.

Commented [OA8]: Are member institutions the ones to vote or individuals?

5. Duties of members

It shall be the duty of every member to promote FORNESSA, to observe its constitution and to pay membership fees regularly and punctually.

ARTICLE V

Organs and Structure

1. Steering Committee

- 1.1 The Steering Committee of FORNESSA is its executive organ.

Commented [OA9]: Is there any steering committee on ground?

- 1.2** It is composed of the Chairman, Executive Secretary/Coordinator, nominated members from the component sub-regional networks and representatives from partner organizations such as FAO, IUFRO, ETRN and forestry-related CGIAR Centres.
- 1.3** Members of the Steering Committee are elected by the Network's General Assembly.
- 1.4** The Steering Committee approves FORNESSA's budget, income and expenditure and advices on the appropriate membership fees.
- 1.5** If any of the members vacates his/her office during term of office, a replacement will be ratified by the General Assembly.
- 1.6** All members of the Steering Committee may participate in voting with the exception of the Chairman who votes to break a tie. Decisions require a simple majority vote.
- 1.7** Acceptance of decisions requires a majority of votes, on the condition that more than half of the voting members are present.
- 1.8** The Steering Committee meets whenever there is a FORNESSA Networking Week/Congress, or on the Chairman's or at least one-third of its voting members request.
- 1.9** Members deliberate and advice the Chairman on major issues concerning the Network's policy and strategy.
- 1.10** Decide on the place and appropriate date of the next Congress/ Network Week.
- 1.11** Decide on changes in the constitution.

2. Secretariat

- 2.1 The secretariat is headed by the Executive Secretary/Coordinator and assisted by staff appointed by the local institution.
- 2.2 The Executive Secretary/Coordinator is appointed by the Steering Committee and serves a term of 5 years renewable upon appraisal by the Steering Committee.
- 2.3 The secretariat sees to the business of the Network and reports to the Chairman.
- 2.4 The secretariat may be designated by the Chairman to represent the Network vis-à-vis official bodies and third parties.
- 2.5 The secretariat is authorized to sign legally binding contracts.
- 2.6 The Network's financial matters are overseen by the secretariat, under the supervision of the Chairman.
- 2.7 The secretariat prepares the annual budget for approval by the Steering Committee.

3. Chairman

- 3.1 The Chairman presides over the Steering Committee and the meetings of the General Assembly of the Network.
- 3.2 The Chairman casts the decision vote whenever there is a tie.
- 3.3 The Chairman is elected by the General Assembly and represents the Network on official bodies or third parties.
- 3.4 The term of office for the Chairman is 5 years after which the person is not eligible for re-election.
- 3.5 The Chairman takes the necessary decisions between General Assembly meetings with agreement from the Steering Committee.

3.6 The Chairman designates the Executive Secretary or the Coordinator or any of the other members of the Steering Committee to act in his/her stead as the need may arise.

3.7 If the Chairman is unable to carry out his/her duties, the Steering Committee shall appoint the Executive Secretary/Coordinator as Chairman. If the Executive Secretary/Coordinator is unable to act, a Chairman shall be appointed from the other members of the Steering Committee. This appointment must be ratified by the General Assembly.

Vice Chairman

3.8 The Vice Chairman performs the functions assigned to him/her by the Chairman and acts as the Chairman if the latter is unable to serve.

3.9 The Vice Chairman is elected during the Congress/Networking Week by the General Assembly.

3.10 He/she is not eligible for re-election as Vice Chairman after serving a full term.

3.11 If for any reason a Vice Chairman is unable to carry out his/her duties or if he/she has to assume the chairmanship, the Steering Committee shall appoint an alternative from among its members to serve until the end of the term.

4. Executive Secretary/Coordinator

4.1 The Executive Secretary/Coordinator is the head of the Network's secretariat.

4.2 The Executive Secretary/Coordinator performs functions assigned to him/her by the Chairman.

4.3 The Executive Secretary/Coordinator is elected by the General Assembly to serve a term of 5 years and is eligible for re-election.

4.4 If he/she cannot for any reason(s) perform his/her functions, the Steering Committee shall appoint another from among its members. The General Assembly must ratify this appointment.

5. The Congress (Network Week)

5.1 The Congress is the general assembly of members of FORNESSA. It is concerned with scientific, technical, policy and business matters, such as election of office holders.

During Congress, the Chairman may inform the Congress of decisions of the Steering Committee regarding the functioning of the Network. Decisions on any issue brought before members require a simple majority vote.

5.2 The Congress is comprised of all members based on article 1V.

5.3 The Congress usually meets every 5 years.

5.4 The Chairman or his/her designated Steering Committee member normally presides in person over sections of the Congress.

6. Thematic Groups

6.1 The thematic activity of the Network is spread over a number of thematic groups.

6.2 Each thematic group has one coordinator and one or more deputy coordinators.

6.3 If a thematic group coordinator fails to carry out his/her duties, the deputy coordinator will replace him/her or another member, after consultation with the respective thematic group members and approval by the Steering Committee.

6.4 All individual members of the Network are entitled to join one or more thematic groups.

7. FORNIS Webmasters

7.1 The FORNIS webmasters are composed of a group of webmasters and information managers of one or more FORNESSA member institutions.

7.2 Their duty is to maintain the FORNIS website to enhance the level of networking among FORNESSA members and also to give the Network a better visibility at both regional and global levels.

ARTICLE VI

Membership Fees

Membership fees are payable annually and are due by the end of the first quarter (March) of each year. The membership fee rates shall be decided by the Steering Committee.

ARTICLE VII

Dissolution of the Network

1. The voluntary dissolution of the Network shall be decided on by a General Assembly meeting specifically organised for this purpose.

2. The assets of the Network shall be transferred to a forestry institution or a forest related science institution named by the Steering Committee. A member institution shall be appointed by the Steering Committee to be the executioner of this.

ARTICLE VIII

Languages and Difficulty in Interpretation

1. The Steering Committee at its discretion shall publish the constitution in other languages other than English.
2. In case of difficulty in interpretation, the English language version is considered to be authoritative.

ARTICLE IX

Amendments to the Constitution

1. Proposed amendments to the constitution shall be circulated to members at least 10 working days prior to the general meeting at which the amendments will be discussed.
2. The amendments to the constitution must be accepted by a quorum. Copies of the amendments shall be published (see Article VIII) and circulated to all members.