



FORNESSA Thematic Group on Forests and Climate Change

Aide Memoire from the Networking meeting in Blantyre, Malawi

During the FORNESSA Networking Meeting in Malawi in 2009 the Forests and Climate Change Group discussed common on-going country research activities related to climate change in the sub-region and identified gaps that exist in climate change research. Research activities were grouped under two main themes:

1. Forests and climate change adaptation.
2. Forests and climate change mitigation.

1. Forests and climate change adaptation

Under climate change adaptation the following were discussed:

- a) How forests adapt to climate change – environmental drivers.
- b) Enhancing the resilience of forest fringe communities to climate change (enrichment planting of endangered/threatened species; alternative livelihood opportunities, etc).
- c) Modelling climate change impacts (e.g., on vegetation, tree phenology, etc).
- d) Tree-soil-water interactions in relation to climate change.
- e) Evaluation of vulnerability/coping/adaptation strategies in the various countries.

2. Forests and climate change mitigation

Under this theme the group discussed the following:

- a) Capacity building for CDM and REDD.
- b) REDD (extent of degradation and impacts on forest-dependent communities, etc).
- c) Forest management for climate change mitigation (involving forest fringe communities – the social dimension).

Having discussed the above in detail, research priorities were determined by scoring the relevance, importance and urgency of each of the identified areas of research and the following were agreed on (in order of priority):

Adaptation

1. Enhancing the resilience of forest fringe/forest dependent communities to climate change.
2. How forest adapt to climate change: environmental drivers.
3. Modelling climate change impacts (e.g., on vegetation, tree phenology, etc).
4. Evaluation of vulnerability and coping/adaptation strategies in the various countries.
5. Tree-soil-water interactions.

Mitigation

1. Capacity building for CDM and REDD.
2. REDD/REDD+ (extent of degradation and impacts on forest-dependent communities, etc) and Payment for environmental services.
3. Forest management for climate change mitigation (involving forest fringe communities – the social dimension).

Action Plan (2009 – 2010)

1. E-discussions on topical issues that have been identified within the forest and climate change theme.
 - a. Team members to compile state of knowledge on the priority research topics/themes.
 - b. Co-ordinator synthesises information for preparation of state-of-knowledge report (for publication on the FORNIS website).
2. Joint proposals to be developed on the priority areas identified by the group by June 2010.
3. Regional meeting to discuss project implementation and the way forward.
4. Project implementation.

Proposed Timelines

Activity	Period					
	2009		2010			
	Jul-Sep	Oct-Dec	Jan-Mar	Apr-Jun	Jul-Sep	Oct-Dec
1. Assessment of State-of-knowledge	X					
2. Preparation of S-K report		X				
3. E-discussions for project development	X	X				
4. Proposal development			X	X		
5. Fund-raising for project implementation				X	X	
6. Regional meeting to plan activities						X
7. Project Implementation						X

Achievements so far

So far the group has contributed to the preparation of a Regional Scientific Report and a Regional Policy Brief on Forests and Climate Change Adaptation in Africa. These have further revealed some of the gaps in knowledge that require research attention, and build on the gaps identified during the Networking Meeting in Malawi.

The key messages in the Policy brief were presented on behalf of FORNESSA and IUFRO by the Coordinator of the Group, Dr. Steve Makungwa, during the Climate Change Talks (Cop 15) in Copenhagen in December 2009. The Regional Scientific Report and the Policy Brief will be launched at the XXIII IUFRO World Congress in COEX, Seoul, in Korea in August 2010.

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What remains for the group to do to take forward the planned activities for the rest of the year is to continue with the E-discussions at the FORNIS portal, focussing on the salient priority research areas and the additional research gaps identified in the Scientific Report, and to come up with tangible proposal(s) that we can seek funding for in 2011.

Group representatives

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