East and Southern Africa Forest Observatory

Inception Meeting
March 10, 2021
Project overview
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CIFOR
Overall objective

Support the improvement and implementation of OFESA prototype, create a reliable system of monitoring to assist countries in reporting on their climate obligations.

Rationale

Accessible and reliable data is key for improved management of multifunctional landscapes and strengthening monitoring systems. However, main barriers that inhibit these monitoring systems remain:

- Limited technical capacity of lead forestry agencies, partners to collect data on forest cover trends.
- Limited capacity to analyse data, identifying trends and threats to forests.
- A negative attitude towards data sharing limiting potential for regional meta-analysis and use in decision making.
OFESA will support national and regional level tracking of performance under several obligations such as Paris Agreement and AFR100.

Duration: 36 months (Aug 2020-Aug 2023)

Geographical scope: 5 countries

Ethiopia, Kenya, Mozambique, Tanzania, Uganda

Contribution to the SDGs:

- SDG 13: Climate Action
- SDG 15: Life on Land
Background

OFESA II builds on the recommendations of OFESA I. The report *The current state of Eastern Africa’s forests* provided recommendations for the long-term implementation of the observatory.

Key elements identified for a functioning observatory system:

1. Governance structures (e.g. rules, data sharing policies, frameworks)
2. System of incentives
3. Funding
4. Capacity building
5. Collaborations
1. Governance structures

- Data sharing policy and framework – mechanism to control the access to data for accountability & prevent the misuse of data developed with all relevant stakeholders.

- Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) & contracts – needed for the coordination of collaborations by specifying roles & responsibilities of the different actors in data chain including timeframes; data contribution by various actors to the observatory.

- Communication strategy.
2. System of incentives

To motivate the actors to contribute data & create demand for the observatory.

Should be based on stakeholders/actors needs.

Examples: addressing pressing policy & management pressing issues, value addition aspects - including country-specific indicators or thematic areas.
3. Funding

For the data generation process, capacity building & facilitation of meetings through supplementing budgets especially for data that isn’t available or collaboratively mobilize funds to support the processes.

4. Capacity building

(tailored towards stakeholders needs)

Training
Upgrade existing equipment or provision of new equipment & software
Learning Platform
Assistance with recruiting new staff to improve their capacity in terms of human resources
Facilitation to attend conferences and exchange visits to partner states for learning
5. Collaborations

- Engage with actors & involve them from the beginning (bottom-up approach)
  - Develop a relationship, build trust & good will which affects the willingness to share data.
  - Create awareness about the project.

- A network for data generation & analysis
  - Identify and work with an actor with authority and power to mobilize other actors and push the agenda particularly political bodies to create this network.
  - Include multiple actors at various levels.
  - Have mandated institutions in the sector for a continuous data flow & align activities with the work plans of the institutions.

- Linkages with similar initiatives to reduce duplication of efforts
Key result areas

**Result 1.** Development of a sustainable governance framework for the long-term service of the OFESA.

**Result 2.** Human capacities in terms of management and use of environmental information are strengthened, and information is available.
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<tr>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Expected outputs</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Result 1</td>
<td>Result 2</td>
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**Activities**

- Mapping of the key actors
- Development of a governance framework for data sharing
- Development of a targeted communication strategy and a monitoring and learning framework
- Data analysis to generate information
- Populating and maintaining the database of the observatory with updated data
- Address the absence of regionally comparable datasets, due to different forest definitions, classification standards and data collection methods, gaps and data quality issues
- Collaboration with training and environmental information institutions (e.g. JRC-Ispra), to build the capacity of national agencies in forest monitoring techniques, data analysis and reporting
- Capacity building to raise capacity in, and awareness of the benefits of data sharing
- Pilot low-cost data gathering and monitoring in selected countries
- Development of a 2023 synthesis report on the State of Forests focusing on key topics

**Expected outputs**

- A map of identified key actors and their current cooperation dynamics, potential support
- A data sharing framework e.g. data-sharing policy, to facilitate sharing of data among participating
- A communication strategy
- Story maps and info graphics are published, analytical dashboard
- Case studies from selected areas are developed and disseminated
- Reference datasets developed, which enable generation and systematic validation of data products
- A gap analysis identifying the needs and informing the development of capacity building programs
- Workshops and learning forums conducted, A training tool/modules developed
- A guide with examples of low-cost data-gathering systems connected to and supporting the OFESA tested in selected locations
- State of the Forests, leading to enhanced awareness of the OFESA use and potentials, and informed decision making of national forest agencies, policy makers and other actors
## Theory of Change

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Problem</th>
<th>Constraints</th>
<th>Inputs</th>
<th>Outputs</th>
<th>End of Project Outcomes</th>
<th>Impact</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Policy makers, funders, practitioners, and citizens do not have access to comprehensive data/information on latest trends and threats to forests | **Limited Capacity:**  
- to collect data on the trends and threats to forests  
- to analyze existing data and identify trends and threats to forest  
- Data Sharing  
- inadequate awareness and appreciation of the benefits of data sharing among stakeholders  
- lack of data sharing framework/s  
- Data Generation  
- absence of regionally comparable datasets on forests  
- Data Governance Framework/s  
- lack of sustainable governance framework/s  
- lack of a communication strategy and monitoring and learning framework | **Build capacity in forest monitoring techniques, data analysis and reporting targeting National Forest Agencies**  
- Build capacity to collect, analyze and transfer data to central databases, targeting community scouts and forest rangers | **Knowledge and Skills Enhanced**  
- Forest monitoring techniques, data analysis and reporting among national forest agencies  
- Ability to collect, analyze and transfer data to a central database by community scouts and forest rangers | **Increased Data Sharing**  
- Stakeholders’ awareness of the need to share data has increased  
- Development of data sharing frameworks/policies  | **Better environmental and socio-economic decision-making and reduction in deforestation** |

- **Development of reference datasets**  
- Data reference sheets with regionally comparable data sets | **Increased Availability of Data**  
- Sustainable governance framework  
- Communication strategy and a monitoring and learning framework | **Application of forest monitoring techniques, data collection, analysis, reporting and data sharing knowledge and skills** |

** Availability of better, regular and more systematic information on forest trends and threats**
What OFESA is building from the prototype

Eric Wabwile
Ngugi Kimani
RCMRD
Countries and institutions involved
What is contained in the observatory?

### Total Forest Cover (1,000 Ha)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total Forest Cover</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>4,724</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>3,557</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>4,047</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>4,136</td>
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<tr>
<td>2015 (Projected)</td>
<td>4,413</td>
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### People and Economy

(a) **Employment**

22 thousand people are directly employed by the

(b) **Economic Value**

The forestry sector contributed USD 330.3 million

### Drivers of Deforestation and Degradation

- Agriculture
- Commercial Logging and Charcoal
- Woodfuels
- Forest Fires
- Infrastructure Extension
- Population Growth
Hotspot areas

• Working with the 5 countries to identify their exact needs and challenges in the selected thematic areas and choosing hotspot areas that can be used for monitoring.

• Provide links to data and information relevant to inform decisions on forest management.
Partners

Implementation

Including partners such as COMIFAC, RAPAC, RIFFEAC, and the EU-JRC.

Including IUCN, UN – WCMC, EU-JRC, IGAD, IOC, EAC and SADC, and the national governments of the 24 participating countries.
Communications and visibility
The State of the Forests

• Key output to be developed in collaboration with partners.

• Will present comparable multi-country information on priority themes that provide a regional overview of the state of forests.

• Preliminary topics established, consultations planned with countries, regional economic communities and the EU.

• Initial topics identified from review of country strategies/plans include:
  • Forest restoration
  • REDD+
  • Forest governance
  • Forest monitoring
  • Biodiversity conservation in protected areas

• Next step: Feedback from countries on priority themes
Brochure

- Upcoming activities
- Proposed priority topics
- OFESA’s contributions

Website

- apps.rcmrd.org/ofesa → ofesa.net
- Update – first half of 2021
- Newsletter/news section
- User feedback welcome
OFESA is not only about gathering streamlined data, but also making it accessible. To succeed, our communications must be user-centric.