

Recommendations

for Forest Research, Policy Formulation and Institutional and Legislative Reforms

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Recommendation for Research and training

1. **Recognizing** the need to bring scientific knowledge to bear on the development of forest policies and management; **recognizing further** the existing large gaps in knowledge and the inadequate means and resources available to national research institutions and universities, we recommend that governmental policy-decision makers not only promote research (through a firm commitment toward adequate research capacity building) but also value scientific information and seek their application in forest policy formulation and planning processes. We **furthermore**

recommend that forest research scientists produce, in a timely manner, relevant and reliable data/knowledge in order to earn continued commitment and support from governments and donors.

2. **Recognizing** the needs for new skills to face up emerging challenges associated with sustainable management of natural resources, and the implementation of international agreements and conventions from Rio, we recommend that national governments and development partners support formal and in-service training as well as school curriculum revision and development.
3. **Recognizing** the importance of technology transfer to and adoption by target groups, including the rural poor, we recommend that governments and development partners support and strengthen extension services, educational initiatives and training at the local communities level.

4. **Recognizing** the spread of pluralism, decentralization and participatory processes in the management and planning of natural resources throughout sub-Saharan Africa; **recognizing further** that local people and their administrations are in most cases not well equipped to face up their new responsibilities, we recommend that research programmes include the needs of the rural poor who may not be able to clearly express their research needs. Research into non-wood-forest products (e.g., medicinal plants, boswellia species) and fuelwood supply and demand for example should be promoted. **processing and marketing of products**

5. **Recognizing** that forest research at national research institutions is proceeding with less than a critical mass of scientists and missing expertises in key disciplines, we recommend that regional and sub-regional forest research networks be strengthened to effectively foster collaboration between research scientists and institutions, promote exchange

of information in order to avoid unnecessary duplication of efforts.

6. **Recognizing** the huge research needs in sub-Saharan Africa coupled with the region's limited human and financial research capacities, we recommend that interdisciplinary forest research needs at the local, national and eco-regional levels be identified and prioritised.
7. **Recognizing** the incomplete knowledge about forest resources availability and value, and the feasibility of sustainable forest management options, we recommend that research be extended into forest inventories and monitoring techniques, as well as the development of efficient methods for the valuation of all forest goods and services, and for the identification of costs and benefits of sustainable forest management, **including biodiversity conservation.**
8. **Recognizing** the contribution of natural factors (e.g., drought, wind, high temperature) to land degradation; and recognizing further that

accurate and reliable data on some of these factors are grossly inadequate, we recommend that research into the dynamics of dryland climatic regimes, which are complicated by their variability through time and space, should be promoted to effectively mitigate the effects of these natural factors rather than reacting to them as they occur.

9. **Recognizing** the important role of drylands, sub-humid and humid lands vegetation in carbon sequestration; and the need for Africa to meaningfully contribute to the international debate on global warming, we recommend that experimentations to generate supportive data, including should be undertaken and their results published **and disseminated**.
10. **Recognizing** that the issue of land tenure and property rights remains a teething problem related to land degradation in Africa; recognizing further how land tenure and the rapid land use changes taking place in the continent should be managed to promote sustainable resource use, we recommend that

research into case studies on the land tenure/ownership – land use dynamics should be promoted.

Recommendations for Policy

11. **Recognizing** the increasing degradation of forestlands, and the urgent need to create enabling environments for sustainable forest management throughout sub-Saharan Africa, we recommend that the linkages between forest science and forest policy and planning processes should be improved.

12. **Recognizing** that land degradation in sub-Saharan Africa is highly correlated with land use changes and practices, we recommend that national overall land use plans, which optimise the allocation of lands and the rehabilitation of degraded lands with the different landscapes and forest ecosystem types, should be carefully drawn up consultatively, with the participation of all stakeholders, including local populations. It is **further recommended** that

land use preferences should be captured in the plans and the full social costs and benefits of land use alternatives should be properly evaluated.

13. **Recognizing** that people's motivation to change negative perceptions and behaviour is needed for sound land use practices and active participation in land resources management, we recommend that the vision embedded in national land use plans should be clearly and consistently communicated to all stakeholders, together with the required actions, opportunities and responsibilities agreed upon to conserve, utilize, manage, restore/ rehabilitate the forest ecosystems sustainably.
14. **Recognizing** the necessity to improve on the quality of forest management decisions and pricing policies, we recommend that information/knowledge on extent of social, economic and biophysical consequences of forestland degradation should be scientifically generated and disseminated to all stakeholders, including those in other land-

based sectors, such as agriculture, fisheries, and mining.

15. **Recognizing** the urgency to reverse environmental degradation, especially forests and forest resources, we recommend the creation within national forest services, units to be charged with the restoration of degraded primary forests, the management of secondary forests and the rehabilitation of degraded forestlands. These units should be adequately supported and monitored so that they become centers of excellence cooperating in network mode.

16. **Recognizing** that forests and forest resources are valued by and accessible to a variety of stakeholders, we recommend that multiple-use management should be the single most important management option in rehabilitating degraded forest landscapes. A single purpose restoration scheme in many situations may not be a valid option in the long-term.

17. **Recognizing** the urgent need to complement public funds with external sources of funding to support adequately sustainable forest management, including the effective rehabilitation of degraded forest lands, we recommend that funding opportunities associated with the implementation of relevant international conventions should be carefully sourced out and seriously considered.

Recommendation for Institutional and Legislative reforms

18. **Recognizing** the tendency of governments to reduce their financial support to research, which forces public institutions to seek alternative ways of funding, and promotes the entry into the research area of profit-oriented enterprises and non-profit organizations (e.g., NGOs), we recommend that governments find more flexible and innovative ways of integrating the new institutional arrangements which are now emerging, including the development of mixed public and private

partnerships and joint ventures in research as well as the increasing involvement of non-public research organizations. The new roles and niches of these organizations and their interactions and coordination should be carefully planned for the benefit of national forest sectors.

19. **Recognizing** the necessity to promote the entry of new partners, including private-for-profit enterprises, in the forestry research sector, we recommend that governments work on creating a favourable environment, including economic and political stability, advantageous legal conditions which could promote joint ventures and protect research results through patents and copyrights; the possibility of for national research centers to be contracted to carry out research for private companies and vice versa.

20. **Recognizing** the opportunities and challenges associated with the adoption of the multi-partner approach to forest research, we recommend that the new institutional

arrangements include a clear identification of national research priorities as well as the definition of responsibilities for the different partners. The research agenda of national research institutions could now focus more on basic and applied research and the needs of the rural poor; and over areas less attractive to profit-oriented organizations.

21. **Recognizing** that much of the conflicts and unsustainable practices in forest land uses are due to the unclear legislation over land ownership and rights, we recommend that forest legislations should be reformed, including clear and understandable land tenure and property rights, together with a meaningful framework for their application and reinforcement in order to prevent further unsustainable land conversion and degradation.

