



1st IUFRO-FORNESSA Regional Congress

“Forests and Trees: Serving the People of Africa and the World”

25-29 June 2012, Nairobi, Kenya

Closing Plenary

THE NAIROBI RESOLUTION

The IUFRO-FORNESSA Regional Congress “Forests and Trees: Serving the People of Africa and the World” provided a unique forum for presentation and discussion of the results of current research related to forests and trees in Africa and globally. The Congress explored a broad range of current and emerging issues of great importance for the future of forests and their capacity to provide the environmental, economic, social, cultural, and health benefits that sustain rural and urban societies on the African continent and worldwide.

Convened one week after the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20), the discussion at the Congress reinforced the recommendations of the Rio+20 Sustainable Development Dialogues on forests, especially the recommendation to “*promote science, technology, innovation and traditional knowledge in order to face forests main challenge: how to turn them productive without destroying them.*”

Population increase on the African continent and the increasing demands on forests and trees require landscape-scale sustainable and resilient production of goods and services. Congress participants highlighted key needs for

enhancing goods and services from forests and trees in African landscapes, particularly taking into account the linkages between food security, water and the role of forests and trees.

Meeting local livelihood needs while enhancing biodiversity and environmental goods and services at landscape scales requires new perceptions of responsibilities, a new goal of global sustainability, and planetary stewardship targeting the next generation of scientists and policy makers.

We, the participants of this Congress therefore commit ourselves to:

- Adopt people-centred approaches for forest research and education focusing on environmental, social and economic pillars;
- Further expand the scope of forest research, training and education to address issues relevant to global sustainability including land use, livelihoods and environment issues;
- Increase information sharing and knowledge management through fostering regional cooperation and networking in African forest research and providing opportunities for scientists to contribute to global issues;
- Combine traditional knowledge with formal scientific research results to design forest and tree management systems to meet local and broader societal needs at varying spatial scales;
- Develop reward systems for successful uptake and adoption of research outputs and build impact analysis in the research project design;

- Invest in science-society communication, including the training on effective communication of research findings, to improve the impact of research for all beneficiaries and improve the link between research, policy and practice; and
- Provide effective platforms for engagement of scientists, policy makers and stakeholders through national, sub-regional and regional mechanisms.

In order to make progress on this, the Congress participants urge governments to effectively address the following issues:

- Policies and associated governance frameworks need to recognize local people as users and beneficiaries of forest and tree resources. They should make it possible to effectively address competing land uses;
- Governance frameworks should also provide for conflict resolution, equitable sharing of benefits and gender equity through adequate policies including locally-relevant incentives;
- Governments should embrace and operationalise participatory forest policy formulation and forest management; and
- African Union Heads of State and Government to fully implement their commitment of devoting at least 1% of GDP for research and development, as endorsed by the Nairobi Ministerial Declaration of April 2012.