



**Regional
Model Forest
Network-Asia**

**Regional Model Forest Network-Asia
Strategic Plan 2025–2030**

**Promoting the sustainable management of
forest landscapes in Asia through the Model
Forest approach**



**International
Model Forest
Network**

**Regional Model Forest Network-Asia
Strategic Plan 2025–2030**

**Promoting the sustainable management of
forest landscapes in Asia through the Model
Forest approach**

Cover photo: Margowitan Model Forest, East Java province, Indonesia

Contents

A regional strategy for Asia's Model Forest landscapes	1
Asia's Model Forests.....	4
RMFN-Asia's purpose and past achievements	5
From landscape plans to global goals.....	7
Challenges and opportunities in Asia's forest landscapes	8
Theory of change	12
RMFN-Asia's focal areas in 2025–2030.....	13
Model Forest principles	15
Five key approaches	16
Governance	18
Working in partnership	19

A regional strategy for Asia's Model Forest landscapes

Asia's forest landscapes are ecologically, socially and economically dynamic areas with considerable biological and cultural diversity. Their protection, adaptation and restoration are essential for addressing climate change and biodiversity loss.

But these landscapes face many challenges. They range from governance-related issues and demographic changes, to human-wildlife conflict and ongoing deforestation. Local people have limited opportunities to develop sustainable livelihoods, and there is also a widespread lack of finance for sustainable landscape management.

The Model Forest approach enables stakeholders in forest landscapes to address such challenges collaboratively. Model Forests gather diverse partnerships of individuals, groups and organizations to develop and realize a shared vision of sustainable development in a large forest landscape. This approach allows stakeholders to resolve conflicts, identify opportunities and implement solutions to challenges relating to forests and their management.

By bringing together different groups, the partnerships at the core of Model Forests can find innovative solutions that balance economic, environmental, social and cultural goals within an overall framework of sustainability. This long-term process fosters

trust and transparency, which are both key to sustainable outcomes.

The Regional Model Forest Network–Asia (RMFN–Asia) is a community of practice promoting the sustainable management of forest landscapes using the Model Forest approach. It was established in 2000 and is now one of six regional networks under the International Model Forest Network. The network's eight Model Forests are in China, India, Indonesia, Japan, the Philippines and Thailand. Viet Nam is also considering establishing a Model Forest.

RMFN–Asia envisions a future in which the region's forest landscapes are sustainably managed through inclusive and collaborative approaches that reflect stakeholders' needs and values. The network's mission is to enhance Asia's forests and other ecosystem services at the landscape level to sustainably meet stakeholders' needs and values.

This document presents RMFN–Asia's strategic plan for 2025–2030. It introduces Asia's Model Forests (page 4), highlights RMFN–Asia's purpose and past achievements (page 5) and shows how Model Forests are relevant to national policy goals and international commitments on climate change and biodiversity (see page 7).

Forest landscapes and their stakeholders

A forest landscape is an area with a variety of land uses that provide social, cultural, economic and environmental values. Such landscapes can contain farms, protected areas, human settlements, rivers and other features, as well as natural or planted forests. The stakeholders may include national and local government agencies, community groups, Indigenous Peoples, non-governmental organizations, academic institutions, businesses and private landowners.

It then describes the key challenges and opportunities in forest landscapes that define the context for this strategic plan (page 8) and presents our theory of change (page 12). From 2025 to 2030, we will collectively focus on four linked areas:

1. Resilience to climate change
2. Forest landscape restoration and livelihoods
3. Gender, youth and social inclusion
4. Sustainable finance

These four areas (see box page 3 and page 13) represent broad categories of work that will not always apply to all Model Forests, each of which will also have its own activities. In implementing this strategy, RMFN–Asia commits to adhere to the International Model Forest Network's six

principles (page 15). Tactically, we will use five core approaches (see page 16).

RMFN–Asia's member Model Forests, its Chair and RECOFTC as its Secretariat will implement the strategic plan in partnership with the Center for International Forestry Research and World Agroforestry, the International Union for the Conservation of Nature and the Faculty of Forestry at Kasetsart University in Thailand (see page 19). The Department of Natural Resources of Canada is supporting this collaboration through its Global Forest Leadership Program.

Together, we will use our knowledge and networks to support progress towards sustainable forest landscape management in Asia's Model Forests and will promote wider uptake of lessons and experiences from these landscapes.

What is a Model Forest?

A Model Forest is both a place and a process. The term refers to a forest landscape in which different stakeholder groups jointly manage natural resources according to a shared strategy.

Model Forests find practical solutions to challenges related to forest conservation, economic development and community well-being. By bringing together diverse stakeholders, Model Forests facilitate knowledge exchange, capacity building and collective action.

Model Forests are also living laboratories, in which the partners can develop and refine approaches to forest landscape management that can be scaled up and implemented elsewhere.

Four focal areas

Resilience to climate change

RMFN-Asia will increase climate resilience through nature-based solutions in forest landscapes. Such solutions can combine traditional ecological knowledge alongside new tools and technologies, facilitate adaptive learning, and promote ecological diversity, through diverse partnerships and approaches.

Forest landscape restoration and livelihoods

RMFN-Asia will use practical and innovative approaches to restore forest landscapes and enhance livelihoods. This will include implementing inclusive, collaborative and localized strategies to improve landscape governance, address human-wildlife conflicts and environmental degradation, alleviate social and economic inequality, and promote climate resilience.

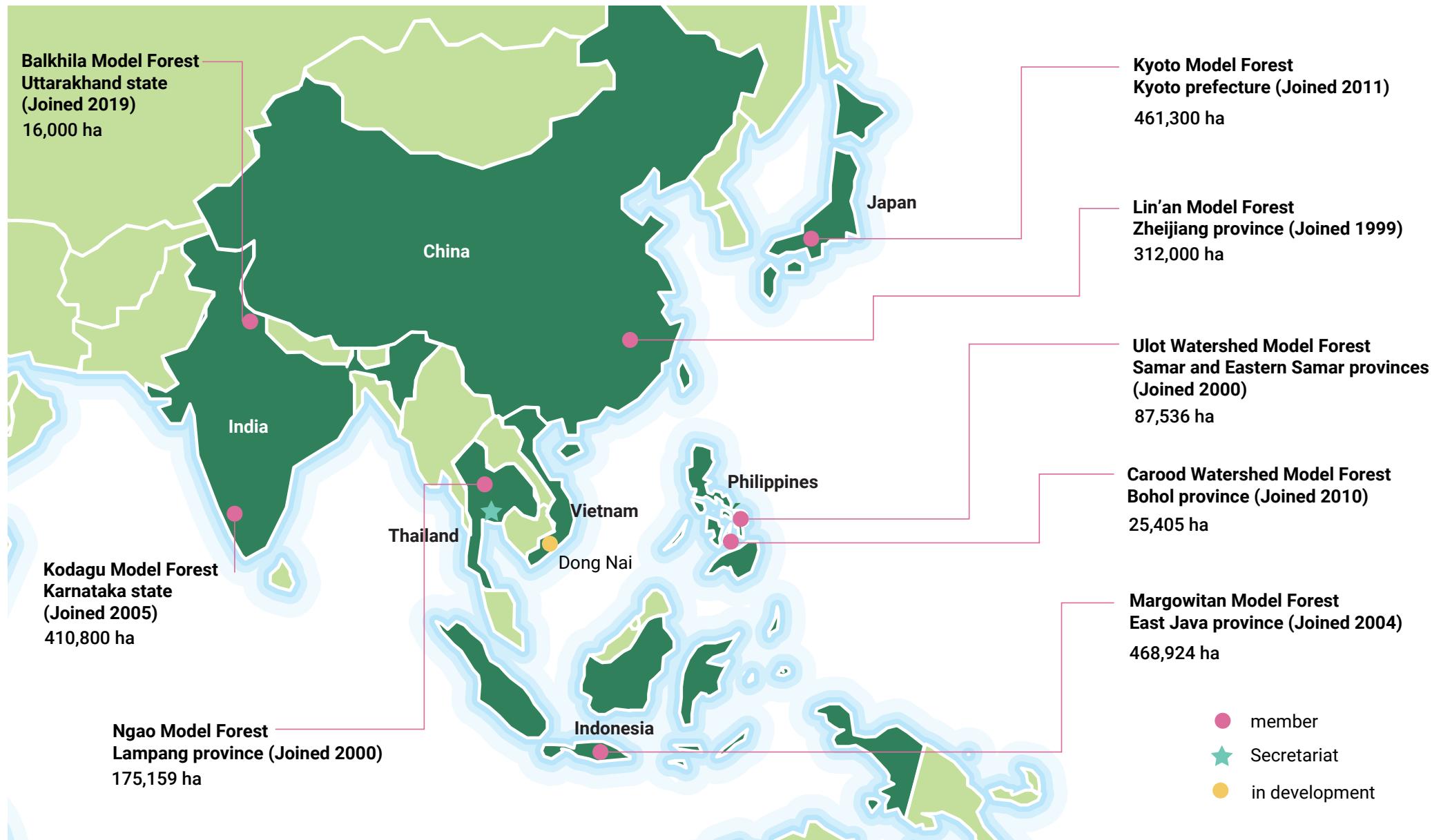
Gender, youth and social inclusion

RMFN-Asia will increase the representation and empowerment of women, youth, Indigenous Peoples, ethnic minorities and people with disabilities in decision-making and management processes in forest landscapes. This will include using transformative approaches that lead to sustainable improvements to social and economic equity, while preserving customary rights and fostering the exchange of knowledge between generations.

Sustainable finance

RMFN-Asia will enhance the capacity of forest landscape stakeholders to access financial resources. This will include opportunities from carbon markets, biodiversity finance mechanisms and alternative income-generation initiatives to facilitate sustainable development of their forest landscapes.

Asia's Model Forests



RMFN–Asia's purpose and past achievements

RMFN–Asia exists to facilitate learning, cooperation and exchange among its member Model Forests. It also provides technical support and training to enhance the capacities of stakeholders in Model Forests to work collaboratively towards sustainable management of forest landscapes. In its 2020–2024 strategic period, RMFN–Asia and its member Model Forests focused on six areas:

Forest restoration and biodiversity conservation: Model Forests maintained or increased forest cover and biodiversity, increasing landscape productivity and the provision of ecosystem services. In Kodagu Model Forest in India, sacred forests were protected and restored. In Ngao Model Forest in Thailand, the establishment of

community forests helped to restore and protect the forest landscape.

Landscape governance: Model Forests fostered stakeholder engagement and cooperation in natural resource protection. They improved relations among communities and other stakeholders, increased private sector participation and strengthened capacities for forest landscape restoration. In Margowitan Model Forest in Indonesia, the development of stakeholder partnerships increased local people's involvement in agroforestry and in managing recreation forests in the landscape. In Japan, the Kyoto Model Forest facilitated the cooperation of private companies and civil society groups in restoring and managing degraded forest plantations.



Ulot Watershed Model Forest, Samar and Eastern Samar provinces, the Philippines

Climate change: The contributions of some Model Forests to provincial or regional disaster risk management plans showed how the Model Forest approach can help to develop climate-resilient landscapes. In Balkhila Model Forest in India, strengthened partnerships increased recognition among stakeholders that Indigenous traditional practices are crucial to building climate resilience.

Poverty alleviation, livelihoods and food security: All Model Forests worked towards improving local livelihoods. In the Philippines, the Ulot Watershed Model Forest boosted community-based ecotourism. In China, the Lin'an Model Forest improved plantation productivity and farmer incomes through demonstrating forest landscape restoration approaches.

Gender equity and equality: Model Forests successfully promoted gender equity and the inclusion of local communities and Indigenous Peoples. In India, the Balkhila Model Forest supported and championed the key roles of women in mountain agriculture and afforestation.

Water security: Model Forests helped to maintain or improve watershed functions through the development of sustainable practices and conservation and restoration initiatives. In the Philippines, stakeholders in the Carood Watershed Model Forest collaborated to update and successfully implement their landscape's integrated watershed management plan.



Ngao Model Forest, Lampang province, Thailand

From landscape plans to global goals

Model Forests provide a voluntary and neutral platform for national government representatives and local organizations to discuss the landscape's sustainability and resource management issues. By facilitating dialogue among diverse landscape stakeholders, Model Forests create opportunities to strengthen governance and collaborative landscape planning.

The link between national policymakers and local operations provides Model Forest partners with the opportunity to influence national and subnational policy and planning, contributing, for example, to provincial fire-risk management, climate adaptation and disaster risk management plans.

Model Forests also serve as cost-effective testing grounds for approaches that governments could use to meet international commitments and voluntary goals, including:

- Commitments under the **UN Framework Convention on Climate Change** and work to both strengthen pre-2030 forest commitments and communicate 2035 forest targets in nationally determined contributions (NDCs) under the **Paris Agreement on Climate Change**.

- The UN Convention of Biological Diversity's **Global Biodiversity Framework**, including its targets on ecological restoration and on protecting 30 percent of land and water by 2030 through Protected Areas and Other Effective Area Based Conservation Measures (OECMs).¹
- Implementation of the **ASEAN Agreement on Transboundary Haze Pollution**.
- The **Global Forest Goals of the UN Forum on Forests** which provides a global framework for actions at all levels to sustainably manage forests and trees and to halt deforestation and forest degradation. The goals are conjoined with the **UN Global Goals** (the Sustainable Development Goals).
- The **Bonn Challenge**, a global goal of bringing 350 million hectares of degraded and deforested landscapes into restoration by 2030.
- The **UN Decade of Ecosystem Restoration**, a global initiative that aims to prevent, halt and reverse the degradation of ecosystems on every continent and in every ocean by 2030.



Carood Watershed Model Forest, Bohol province, the Philippines

¹ OECMs are sites outside protected areas that are governed and managed in ways that produce long-term positive outcomes for biodiversity.

Challenges and opportunities in Asia's forest landscapes

Demographic shifts

Rural populations are ageing. Many young people are migrating to urban areas in search of work, in part because they are not interested in rural livelihoods and in part because there are more opportunities elsewhere. This results in labour shortages in rural sectors and communities, and the loss of traditional knowledge. In some areas, COVID-19 reversed the trend, with youth returning to their home villages through choice or necessity. Engaging youth in sustainable management practices is key to addressing the challenges of ageing populations and ensuring that forest landscapes are managed effectively for future generations.

Economic stressors

Poverty rates have generally fallen in Asia in recent decades and development has improved, but inequality remains high. Economic stressors such as the COVID-19 pandemic and rising prices linked to the war in Ukraine have exacerbated inequality and, in some areas, increased the number of people living in extreme poverty. During the pandemic, forest services and products became crucial safety nets for local people in some areas. Sustainable forest landscapes must encompass approaches that can mitigate the impacts of economic downturns and boost resilience of its local populations.

Deforestation and environmental degradation

Deforestation and environmental degradation remain key challenges to the sustainable development of Asia's forest landscapes. Small-scale encroachment often occurs on forest margins when

environmental, economic or political pressures drive local people to clear land to grow crops or build homes. Such pressures can include climate change impacts, displacement, soil degradation, crop pests and diseases, fluctuating prices for cash crops and timber, and rising farming costs that increase people's debt. Medium and large-scale deforestation for agriculture, plantation forests or infrastructure development can result from ineffective governance and enabling environments that promote policies and incentives inconsistent with landscape sustainability. Addressing the drivers of deforestation and environmental degradation is essential to conserving species and habitats, and ensuring that forest landscapes are resilient to climate change.

Climate change

Climate change is having profound impacts in Asia. Changing precipitation patterns linked to global warming are causing more frequent and severe droughts, floods, wildfires and landslides. Cyclones and rising sea levels are causing physical damage and contributing to soil salinization in coastal regions. Other climate-related threats include the spread of pests and diseases that harm crops and trees, and the loss of species that cannot adapt to the changing environment.

These impacts all pose significant threats to forest landscapes and the people who live there. They threaten lives, food security and the linked social-ecological systems on which people depend. They also exacerbate the other economic, social and ecological challenges to the sustainable management of Asia's forest landscapes. It is essential therefore to increase the resilience of forest landscapes and the people living there to current and projected climate change.

Governance challenges

Governance, management and decision-making processes concerning forest landscapes are inherently complex. They often cross jurisdictional and national boundaries, represent varied land uses and management objectives. They involve diverse stakeholder groups and embody an array of livelihoods, spiritual beliefs and cultural practices. This complexity creates many challenges.

Effective communication among stakeholder groups and collaborative decision-making also remain challenging – in part because of funding constraints. This can lead to conflict between and among stakeholders. Factors that exacerbate these challenges include inconsistencies in policies, laws and regulations and how they are implemented. A lack of government guidelines for interdepartmental and stakeholder cooperation also contributes to the challenges.

Growing appreciation of the services forests provide

There is growing recognition that managing forest landscapes for the ecosystem services they provide is essential for climate-resilient sustainable development. These services include conserving biodiversity, maintaining watershed functions, stabilizing landscapes, storing carbon, providing space for recreation and maintaining cultural and spiritual well-being. Some of these services, particularly carbon storage and conservation, can attract policy support and new sources of finance.

However, applying the ecosystem services approach is challenging. A lack of data makes it difficult to quantify and value the benefits forests provide. It is also difficult to integrate ecosystem services into policymaking due to the need to coordinate across sectors and reconcile conflicting stakeholder interests. Further challenges relate to the fair sharing of benefits from



Kodagu Model Forest, Karnataka state, India

ecosystem services; the legal, financial and technical barriers facing smallholders and communities that want to participate in markets for ecosystem services; and the implementation of payments schemes that compensate people who manage forests that provide wider public benefits.

Increasing human-wildlife conflict

The expansion of agriculture into forested areas is increasing conflict between people and wildlife, as when animals destroy crops or attack people. Innovative and sustainable solutions are needed to mitigate such conflicts and address their human and economic costs.

Inadequate rights for local communities

Local communities, including Indigenous Peoples and ethnic minorities, that have managed their land for generations are

often well placed to partner with other stakeholders to develop and maintain sustainable forest landscapes. But despite recent improvements in the recognition of rights over land and forest resources, customary forest tenure remains largely unprotected. This presents a barrier to the sustainable management of forest landscapes. The global goal of protecting 30 percent of land by 2030 creates an opportunity for governments to recognize areas that communities manage if these areas can be shown to conserve biodiversity.

Gender inequality and social exclusion

In Asia, marginalized groups including women, youth, Indigenous Peoples, ethnic minorities, and people with disabilities are not adequately involved and influential in decisions made about the forest landscapes on which they depend. Decision-making processes often fail to consider the roles of



Balkhila Model Forest, Uttarakhand state, India

marginalized groups in landscapes or the social and economic impacts that decisions could have on these groups.

This can perpetuate or worsen inequitable social and economic relations in forest landscapes. It can also have unforeseen negative ecological consequences. It is increasingly urgent that women, youth and other marginalized groups are included in decision-making processes at local, national and regional levels. Representatives of these groups must be empowered to take on leadership roles that can foster greater influence and inclusion.

Inadequate finance for sustainable landscape management

Ensuring that forest landscapes offer economic opportunities to local people is crucial for addressing poverty and economic

inequality and for conserving or enhancing biodiversity and ecosystem functions. However, local people often face significant financial, regulatory and capacity barriers to participating in the sustainable management of products and services from forest landscapes.

Investments can help by diversifying livelihoods, enhancing capacities and fostering innovation. Government stakeholders also require ongoing financial support for governance, cooperation and resource mobilization to achieve forest sustainability. The growing carbon market and conservation-linked funding mechanisms offer new financial opportunities, but effective resource mobilization, capacity development, partnerships and transparent governance are crucial to ensure benefits reach local stakeholders and contribute to sustainable development.

Theory of change

<p>By focusing on developing solutions to challenges in forest landscapes, such as:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">demographic shifts, economic stressors, deforestation and environmental degradation, climate change; poor governance, human-wildlife conflict, inadequate rights for local communities and Indigenous Peoples, gender inequality and social exclusion, inadequate finance for sustainable landscape management
<p>... and by seizing opportunities, such as:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">growing appreciation of the services forests providenew sources of finance linked to climate action and conservation
<p>... if RMFN-Asia and its partners:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">mobilize resourcespromote community-based approaches to natural resource managementsupport participatory action research, innovation and technology developmentstrengthen institutions and empower youth, women and other marginalized groupsdevelop effective approaches for communication and advocacy
<p>... and adhere to the International Model Forest Network's principles, so that:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">partnerships are representative of diverse stakeholders, values and interestslandscapes are recognized in social, cultural, economic and ecological termsthere is a commitment to conservation and sustainable managementgovernance and management processes are participatory, transparent and accountableprogrammes of activities reflect stakeholder needs, values and management challengesstakeholder capacity is developed, and results and lessons learned are shared through networking
<p>... this will:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">strengthen resilience to climate changeenhance forest landscape restoration and livelihoodsincrease finance for sustainable forest landscapesdeliver transformative change in relation to gender, youth and social inclusion
<p>... and help to ensure that:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">forest landscapes are sustainably managed through inclusive and collaborative approaches that reflect stakeholders' needs and values.

RMFN–Asia's focal areas in 2025–2030

To achieve its vision and advance sustainable forest landscape development in the region, RMFN–Asia will focus on four interconnected areas in the 2025 to 2030 strategic period:

Resilience to climate change

RMFN–Asia will develop, highlight and share knowledge on nature-based approaches that build resilience to climate change in forest landscapes. We will enhance the knowledge and resources available to Model Forest stakeholders, facilitating adaptive learning about climate-related threats and responses. To build resilience, we will develop diverse partnerships and approaches that reflect the social and ecological complexity of Asia's Model Forest landscapes.

We will strengthen equity and social inclusion, promote landscape biodiversity and combine traditional knowledge with emerging tools and technologies. Our focus on climate resilience should increase policy support and funding for Model Forests, identify new livelihood opportunities, and raise awareness among youth and others about the importance of sustainable forest landscapes for future generations. We also expect it to contribute to the development and implementation of local, national and regional policy (see page 7).

Forest landscape restoration and livelihoods

RMFN–Asia will develop inclusive, collaborative and localized approaches to implementing forest landscape restoration and improving local livelihoods in the pursuit of sustainability. We aim to produce and share knowledge on forest landscape restoration approaches that demonstrably improve governance and decision-making processes, reduce human-wildlife conflict, address environmental degradation, improve social and economic equality, and build climate resilience. This focus will also enable Model Forests to identify and help to address key challenges to scaling up forest landscape restoration and sustainable livelihoods development.

We will support inclusive, collaborative approaches that raise awareness and capacity among all landscape stakeholders, enabling them to adapt to change. Sustainable livelihood approaches that we will support include agroforestry, ecotourism, collection of non-timber forest products and opportunities that arise from integrating forest landscapes into carbon, conservation and ecosystem markets.

We will also promote the development and use of practical and innovative approaches to sustainable livelihood development, forest

Climate resilience

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change has defined climate resilience as “the ability of social, economic and environmental systems to cope with a hazardous event or trend or disturbance, responding or reorganizing in ways that maintain their essential function, identity and structure while also maintaining the capacity for adaptation, learning and transformation”.

landscape restoration and decision-making processes. Examples of approaches include using traditional ecological knowledge and practices to build climate resilience, planting living fences to keep elephants away from crops or carrying out participatory rural appraisals to identify new livelihood options. We would also utilize state-of-the-art technologies for landscape management, including geographic information systems and the use of drones and smartphone applications for mapping and monitoring.

Gender, youth and social inclusion

RMFN–Asia aims to address the inequitable economic and social relations of women, youth, Indigenous Peoples and other marginalized groups in forest landscapes and ensure that projects and processes avoid impinging on customary rights.

We will improve the representation of marginalized groups in decision-making processes and in programme and project negotiations, design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation. Tactics may include building the capacities of women and other marginalized groups to participate in decision-making processes, ensuring that women play leadership roles and creating self-help or entrepreneurial groups for youth, women and other marginalized people.

RMFN–Asia’s commitment to youth inclusion includes building and maintaining connections with schools, colleges and universities. Including young people is key to the sustainability of forest landscapes. Older generations can teach them their traditional

skills and pass on ecological knowledge and, in turn, the younger generation can share with older people what they have learned in urban educational institutions, especially regarding innovative technological approaches.

As Model Forests can enable governments and decision makers to test new policies or programmes before scaling up, our focus on gender, youth and social inclusion is critical to ensure that wider policy processes consider marginalized groups.

Sustainable finance

RMFN–Asia will produce and highlight knowledge on actions that enable people to benefit economically from sustainably managed products and services from forest landscapes. We will support Model Forests to diversify local livelihoods, enhance financial and general management capacities, and promote innovation to improve economic efficiency.

RMFN–Asia and our partners will mobilize resources for Model Forests and strengthen the capacities of Model Forest stakeholders to access finance from development funds, corporate or philanthropic entities and public funds. We will seize opportunities from the carbon market and from conservation and climate finance, and will also work with Model Forests to explore other opportunities for stakeholders to generate income. We will ensure that robust mechanisms are in place for sharing benefits and for acquiring the free, prior and informed consent of people likely to be affected.

Model Forest principles

The International Model Forest Network's six principles shape the approach and philosophy of RMFN-Asia and all Model Forests worldwide:²

- 1. Partnership:** Each Model Forest is a neutral forum that welcomes voluntary participation of representatives of stakeholder interests and values in relation to the landscape.
- 2. Landscape:** Each Model Forest encompasses a large-scale biophysical area and a broad range of forest values, including social, cultural, economic and environmental concerns.
- 3. Commitment to sustainability:** Stakeholders are committed to the conservation and sustainable management of natural resources and the forested landscape.
- 4. Governance:** The Model Forest management process is representative, participatory, transparent and accountable, and promotes collaboration among stakeholders.
- 5. Programme of activities:** The activities undertaken by a Model Forest reflect the Model Forest's vision and the stakeholders' needs, values and management challenges.
- 6. Knowledge-sharing, capacity building and networking:** Model Forests build stakeholder capacity to engage in the sustainable management of natural resources, and collaborate to share results and lessons learned through networking.

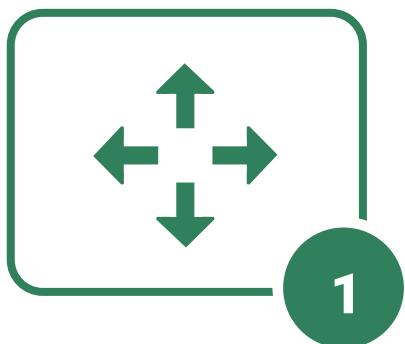


Margowitan Model Forest, East Java province, Indonesia

² For more detail on the principles and what they mean in practice, see: <http://imfn.net/model-forest/model-forest-principles/>

Five key approaches

Over the next five years, RMFN–Asia and our partners will follow the guiding principles of the International Model Forest Network (see page 15) and apply the following approaches:



Resource mobilization

RMFN–Asia and its partners will collaborate to increase the flow of financial, material and human resources needed to support the network's work and to enable its member Model Forests to achieve their goals. We will prioritize ensuring that stakeholders have the incentives and resources they need to engage in sustainable forest landscape development.



Research, technology development and innovation

RMFN–Asia will support research to identify barriers to sustainable forest landscape development and ways to overcome these obstacles. This will include employing approaches that harness traditional ecological knowledge as well as exploring the use of new tools and technologies. We are committed to promoting participatory action research and technological development, ensuring that local stakeholders are actively involved. RMFN–Asia will share findings and new solutions within the network and beyond, so that best practices can be scaled up for broader impact.



Institutional strengthening and stakeholder empowerment

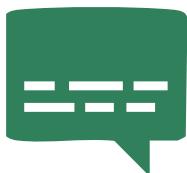
Through capacity-building activities, RMFN–Asia will support and strengthen the stakeholder partnerships working towards sustainable forest landscape management in Model Forests. We will also support activities that empower and give visibility to representatives of marginalized groups, including youth and women. We expect that enabling such individuals to act as role models and leaders will boost participation by marginalized groups in the efforts of Model Forests to develop sustainable forest landscapes.



4

Community-based natural resource management

RMFN-Asia will support and advocate for approaches that enable communities in forest landscapes to manage local natural resources. Integrating the knowledge, needs and values of these stakeholders into decision-making processes is key to fostering inclusive governance and ensuring the sustainability of forest landscapes.



5

Communication and advocacy

RMFN-Asia aims to increase awareness of approaches to forest landscape management that Model Forests show to be effective, and encourage uptake of these approaches both in and beyond Model Forests. We will share best practices, new tools and other lessons learned within RMFN-Asia and with wider networks of policymakers, practitioners, researchers and partners. To do this, individual Model Forests and the RMFN-Asia will facilitate networking and stakeholder dialogue, hold meetings, participate in events, publish findings and undertake joint projects with partner organizations.



Kyoto Model Forest, Kyoto prefecture, Japan

Governance

RMFN-Asia is governed by an Advisory Committee whose members include representatives from each Model Forest and national focal points from each country that has appointed one. It makes decisions by consensus.

The Advisory Committee is responsible for RMFN-Asia's overall operation, direction and policy-setting. It provides strategic direction to the RMFN-Asia Secretariat, promotes the Model Forest approach and is responsible for networking among members and making other major decisions.

Preecha Ongprasert, Director of Forestry Foreign Affairs at Thailand's Royal Forest Department, is the Chair of the Advisory Committee.

Operating principles

RMFN-Asia operates in accordance with the following principles:

1. Creating transparency and accountability for members
2. Building on partnerships
3. Cost-sharing
4. Consensus building
5. Equitability in decision-making and resource allocation
6. Unity in diversity
7. Respect for differences of values and political, cultural, social and economic conditions
8. Prioritizing the sustainable management of forests and natural resources



Lin'an Model Forest, Zhejiang province, China

Working in partnership

RMFN–Asia will work in partnership to implement this strategic plan.

RMFN–Asia's members and partners will contribute resources and knowledge to achieving the network's vision around our strategic focal areas. Below are examples of the roles and activities RMFN–Asia members and partners may undertake in 2025–2030.

International Model Forest Network (IMFN) Secretariat

The IMFN Secretariat will collaborate with RMFN–Asia to champion Asia's Model Forests and share their success stories with international audiences, especially at international policy meetings such as the annual conferences of parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change.

RMFN–Asia Model Forests

Each Model Forest and its landscape partners will collectively develop and implement their own programme of activities to achieve a vision that is in line with the International Model Forest Network's six principles (page 15) and RMFN–Asia's four focal areas (page 13). The Model Forests will support the RMFN–Asia Secretariat in creating and distributing communication products to share knowledge and lessons learned within the network and externally. They will also work to promote their initiatives and the broader Model Forest approach to regional and global audiences.

RECOFTC

Since January 2024, RECOFTC has been serving as RMFN–Asia's Secretariat. It supports the network's day-to-day operations, facilitates knowledge sharing, coordinates meetings and maintains internal communications. The Secretariat coordinates with the RMFN–Asia Chair and works closely with the International Model Forest Network Secretariat in Ottawa, Canada.

RECOFTC will promote the RMFN–Asia and the Model Forest approach regionally and globally through communication and outreach efforts, aiming to encourage broader uptake of insights for transitioning towards low-carbon, climate-resilient, nature-positive and inclusive sustainable landscape management. RECOFTC will also use its convening power at the regional level to facilitate connections and access to resources. It will draw on its capacity building and technical expertise, particularly in gender, youth and social inclusion, community-based fire management, sustainable forest livelihoods, climate change resilience and sustainable financing.

Center for International Forestry Research and World Agroforestry (CIFOR-ICRAF)

CIFOR-ICRAF, through its Global Landscapes Forum, connects RMFN–Asia with its global and regional partner organizations, dialogues, and government contacts. These connections will provide networking and knowledge-sharing opportunities for RMFN–Asia, helping ensure that Model Forest practices are even better integrated into broader action networks and shaping regional and global policy frameworks. The special focus is on the youth within the Model Forests through the Youth in Landscapes initiative and the GLFx local chapter networks. Furthermore, CIFOR-ICRAF collaborates with RMFN–Asia to support specific capacity development action and formal education. It will help establish a regional university network around RMFN–Asia and engage in innovative curriculum design to mainstream IMFN principles in education programs. With this, the CIFOR-ICRAF contribution will strengthen RMFN–Asia's knowledge base by sharing good practices, innovating regional curricula, and developing communication and outreach products to raise RMFN–Asia's visibility at the regional and global levels.

International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN)

IUCN's activities with RMFN-Asia focus on promoting and supporting nature-based solutions in the landscapes of Model Forests; mainstreaming gender into Model Forest practices; inviting Model Forests to share their knowledge and experiences on forest landscape restoration at relevant events; and assisting RMFN-Asia members in securing funding.

Faculty of Forestry at Kasetsart University, Thailand

The Faculty of Forestry will establish a graduate programme focused on sustainable forest landscape management and fund research in Model Forest landscapes.



Regional Model Forest Network-Asia Annual Advisory Committee Meeting from 24-26 January 2024 at Ngao Model Forest, Lampang province, Thailand



rmfnasia.org

This document has been
published with the support
of the Government of Canada



RMFN-Asia Secretariat

