

Tool I.

The Model Forest Concept

I. Introduction

Model Forest

A Model Forest is a voluntary association of people that live in a particular territory, and are interested in discovering, defining enhancing and guarantying its sustainability; and in sharing their experiences and their knowledge to contribute to global environmental goals.

Mediterranean Model Forest Network (MMFN)

In the Mediterranean Model Forest Network we study the particularities of the Mediterranean region. We develop common objectives, we generate dynamic work environments, and we establish patterns of collaboration between members. We promote the exchange of knowledge, cooperate in common interest areas, and collectively develop innovative capacities.

The Network and its Model Forest cooperate in the development of their activity programs. They are in permanent communication to avoid environmental conflicts and they aim to promote global sustainable development opportunities, in the framework of international commitments and agreements.



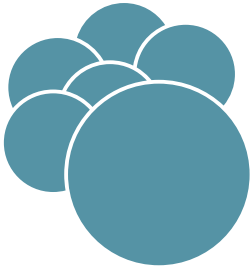
What is a Model Forest?

Model Forests are based on an approach that combines the social, cultural and economic needs of local communities with the long-term sustainability of large landscapes in which forests are an important feature. By design they are voluntary, broad-based initiatives linking forestry, research, agriculture, mining, recreation, and other values and interests within a given landscape.

Model Forests are as much about the people who sustain themselves from the forest as they are about trees and forest products - they're a fully working landscape of forests, farms, protected areas, rivers and towns.

In a Model Forest a variety of people with differing interests and perspectives form a neutral partnership based on the following goal: to manage their own natural resources in a way that makes the most sense to them given their history, economic and cultural identities and in a way that does not jeopardize future generations.





MMFN:

Objectives

- To promote the Model Forest concept.
- To promote and support the development of Model Forest in the Mediterranean region.
- To take advantage of the opportunities that networking provides, to share knowledge, to promote innovative initiatives and to join efforts to work in the development of a more sustainable world.

Goals

- To ensure that each Model Forest fully represents the environmental, social and economic characteristics of each territory or landscape on which it is developed.
- To ensure a balance between the concepts of territorial sustainability and global scale sustainability.
- To promote teamwork, cultural and knowledge exchange and the development of new ways of learning and collaboration among Network members.

The partnership defines what sustainability means in their own context, develops a common goal, governance structure and strategic plan, then works collaboratively to achieve the goals set out in that plan.

These goals typically strive to harmonize economic and non-economic priorities and to focus, for example, on education, research, or developing local level indicators (LLI) to monitor progress toward sustainability within the Model Forest area. In addition, Model Forest partnerships are very effective in identifying economic opportunities that are not based on timber alone. In that light, a Model Forest is best thought of as a long-term process rather than a project.

Model Forests are unique in several ways: the comprehensiveness of their approach, the scale of operation, the breadth of their partnerships, the level of policy they aim to effect and the importance placed on networking.

Geographically, the Model Forest must represent wide variety of uses and values at play within a particular landscape, such as a watershed.

Principles and Attributes

Because the conditions under which the sustainable management of forest landscapes can vary from one site or region to another, the Model Forest concept was designed to be flexible. Model Forests set their own priorities relating to conservation of biodiversity, cross-cultural awareness, economic diversification, public education, and agricultural improvements, as examples.

But if no two sites are identical, how does the Network function? What binds these diverse sites together? Model Forests are linked through a common philosophy that forms the basis for networking and knowledge sharing: the Model Forest Principles and Attributes (PA) Framework. The PA



Framework provides a baseline as to what constitutes a Model Forest and sets out supporting attributes. Model Forest representatives at the 2005 IMFN Global Forum in Turrialba, Costa Rica, requested such a tool to help ensure the Network's integrity. At the 2008 Global Forum in Hinton, Canada, they voiced their support for the resulting framework.

International Model Forest Network Principles and Attributes of Model Forests						February 2008
1 Partnership	2 Landscape	3 Commitment to Sustainability	4 Governance	5 Program of Activities	Knowledge-sharing, Capacity Building and Networking	
Each model forest is a neutral forum that welcomes voluntary participation of representatives of stakeholder interests and values on the landscape	A large-scale biophysical area representing a broad range of forest values, including social, cultural, economic and environmental concerns	Stakeholders are committed to the conservation and sustainable management of natural resources and the forested landscape	The model forest management process is representative, participative, transparent and accountable, and promotes collaborative work among stakeholders	The activities undertaken by a model forest are reflective of the model forest's vision and stakeholder needs, values and management challenges	Model forests build stakeholder capacity to engage in the sustainable management of natural resources, and collaborate and share results and lessons learned through networking	
Model forest stakeholders represent diverse values and interests from various sectors of society who work towards a common vision for the sustainable management of the area	The natural resources in the model forest are recognized by the stakeholders in social, cultural, economic and ecological terms	Sustainable management practices promote the generation and equitable distribution of economic and social benefits derived from natural resources	Stakeholders work together using consensus-based processes to attain the model forest's vision and objectives	Model forest management processes include effective planning and monitoring systems	Model forests contribute to local and national capacity building in the sustainable management of natural resources	
The model forest aims at having representatives from the public, private and volunteer sectors, community organizations, academia and research institutions involved in its activities	The model forest has a geographically defined area encompassing diverse ecosystems, resource management administrations and tenure arrangements	Model forests foster economic growth and diversification aimed at sustainable community development	A vision for the sustainable management of the landscape and its natural resources is developed jointly by the stakeholders	A strategic plan, with a program of activities reflective of stakeholder needs, values and issues, considers national forest programme objectives and other plans developed by broader jurisdictions	Model forests undertake and promote training and mentorship activities	
Involvement in all aspects of governance in the model forest is voluntary and inclusive	Forest and other natural resources provide communities with a range of goods, services and values	Model forests promote innovative mechanisms for pursuing the sustainable management of natural resources within a framework of just and equitable distribution of costs and benefits	The model forest is a forum for exploring options to effectively address natural resource management conflicts	Practical mechanisms for implementing and monitoring the strategic plan are in place	Model forest communication and outreach activities have demonstrable influence on stakeholders and the general public	
No discrimination against groups or individuals exists within the model forest partnership	The model forest is a working landscape reflective of the diverse interests and values of the stakeholders and the uses of the area's natural resources	Model forests support actions for maintaining ecological integrity on a landscape	The actions of the model forest are governed by principles of trust, transparency and collaborative decision-making, while respecting various interests and values	Model forests facilitate innovation in the sustainable management of natural resources	Model forests exchange experiences and lessons learned with other model forests and organizations	
		Model forests explore and promote practices that contribute to maintaining and/or restoring the ecological integrity of the landscape	Clear policies, procedures and practices are in place for stakeholders to express their views and influence decision-making	Model forests facilitate and promote research and the implementation of new and innovative ideas, processes, approaches and techniques in the sustainable management of natural resources	Model forests share their achievements and lessons learned nationally, regionally and internationally using various activities and approaches	
			The model forest has a structure that is transparent and accountable, sets priorities and manages activities effectively	Model forest planning processes make use of the best available traditional and scientific knowledge	Model forests develop and participate in networking activities	
			Committees, staffing or other executive mechanisms for developing and implementing activities are in place	The model forest process generates information and synthesizes knowledge that informs local and national policy-making and global sustainability initiatives	Model forests engage in collaborative activities with other model forests	
					Model forests participate in activities and governance structures aimed at strengthening national, regional and international model forest networks	



International
Model
Forest
Network

During the Global Forum 2008 IMFN members unanimously accepted to adopt a Model Forest Principles and Attributes (P&A) Framework that includes guiding principles to model forest development and operation. Although no two model forests are identical, these guiding principles and attributes provide a common thread for uniting the various sites across the Network.

The framework includes the following six principles: a broad-based partnership, a large landscape, a commitment to sustainability, good governance, a broad program of activities reflective of stakeholder values, and a commitment to knowledge sharing, capacity building and networking.

You can download a pdf document with the Principles and Attribute of Model Forests in the following link: <http://www.imfn.net/system/files/A%20Framework%20v24-01-2008.pdf>

International Model Forest Network

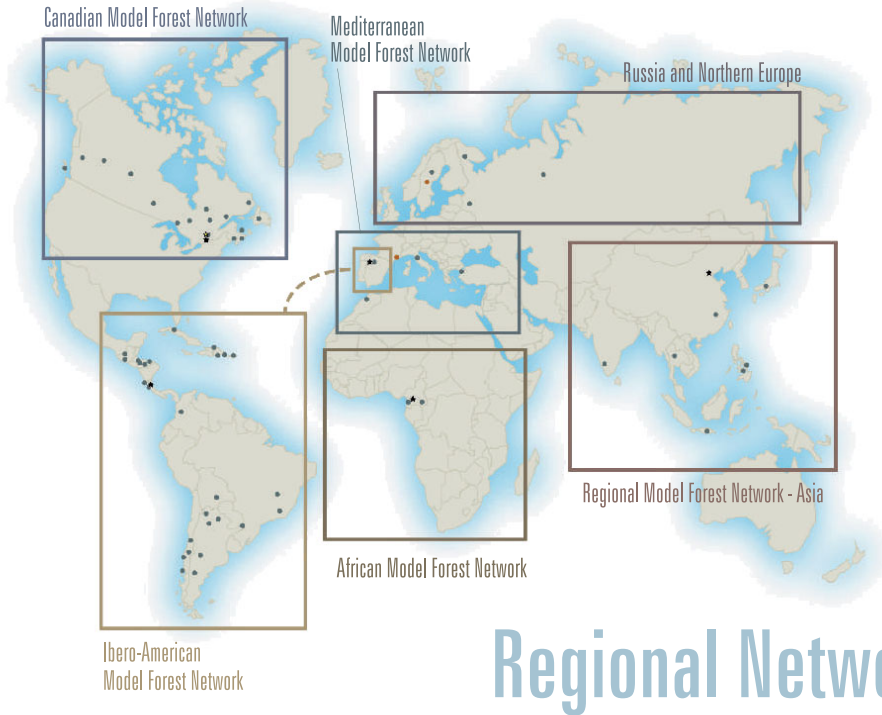
The International Model Forest Network (IMFN) is a global community of practice whose members and supporters work toward the common goal of the sustainable management of forest-based landscapes through the Model Forest approach. The IMFN is comprised of all member Model Forests around the world.

Model Forests are based on a flexible approach to landscape and ecosystem management that combines the social, environmental and economic needs of local communities with the long-term



International Model Forest Network

- member
- candidate
- ★ Regional Model Forest Secretariat
- ★ IMFN Secretariat



Regional Networks

sustainability of large landscapes in which forests are an important feature. By design, they are broad-based initiatives linking a broad mix of stakeholders and sectors and other values and interests within a given landscape.

Three aspects central to a Model Forest are a large landscape, broad partnerships and a commitment to sustainability.

- Landscape: A large-scale biophysical area representing a broad range of forest values, including environmental, social, cultural and economic concerns
- Partnership: Each Model Forest is a neutral forum that welcomes voluntary participation of representatives of stakeholder interests and values on the landscape
- Sustainability: Stakeholders are committed to the conservation and sustainable management of natural resources and the forest-based landscape

Our Vision

To support, through Model Forests, the management of the world's forest resources in a sustainable manner, reflecting environmental and socio-economic issues from the perspective of local needs and global concerns.

A primary goal of the IMFN Secretariat is to establish a global network of Model Forests that represent most of the world's major forest ecosystems.

Our Mission and Objectives

The primary objective of the IMFN is to establish a global network of Model Forests that will represent most of the major forest ecosystems of the world. The IMFN strives to ensure that all partners, regardless of political or economic status, can contribute to and share in the benefits of the Network as they work toward the sustainable management of forest-based landscapes. IMFN's key objectives are:

1. To foster international exchange of ideas and solutions relating to the sustainable management of forest-based landscapes and natural resources
2. To support cooperation in critical aspects of research that underlie new approaches to sustainable landscape and natural resource management
3. To support ongoing international policy discussions on the criteria and principles of sustainable development

Locally, regionally, nationally and globally, Model Forests share experiences, successes and lessons learned on critical aspects of sustainable management.

As a long-term goal, the Network will serve as a foundation for international cooperation on the sustainable development of forest landscapes and natural resources around the globe.

Mediterranean Model Forest Network

The Mediterranean Model Forest Network was officially announced by representatives from Spain at the 2008 IMFN Global Forum. The Urbión Model Forest was established in 2006 in Spain's Castilla y León region. While the Model Forest initially became a member of the Ibero-American Model Forest Network, there was also a vision to expand Model Forest development throughout the Mediterranean region with its unique forests and landscapes.

Since the 2008 establishment of the Mediterranean Model Forest Network, 13 regions and countries have joined and are in the process of developing Model Forests. In 2011, two new Model Forests, Ifrane in Morocco and Yalova in Turkey, have joined the International Model Forest Network (IMFN). In 2012, the Montagne Fiorentina Model Forest in the Tuscany region of Italy became a member of the Network.

Members of the Mediterranean Model Forest Network: Region of Castilla y León (Spain), Region of Murcia (Spain), Region of Corsica (France), Region of Provence-Alps-Costa de Azul (France), Region of Sardinia (Italy), Region of Tuscany (Italy), Region of Istria (Croatia), Prefecture of Magnesia (Greece), Region of Western Macedonia (Greece), Turkey, Tunisia and Morocco.

A Model Forest partnership develops, applies, measures and monitors a package of projects that reflects its needs and expectations.





Co-financed by the European Union

IPA Adriatic Model Forest project

"Adriatic Model Forest" - AMF is an international project funded by the European Union pre-accession fund IPA Adriatic - CBC programme with total budget of 1,590.108,32 EUR. Duration of project is 28 months, starting in September 2012 and ending in December of 2014.

The AMF project is led by Croatian Forest Research Institute who is the pioneer of the Model Forest approach in the Adriatic region.

Project has 10 partners: Croatian Forest Research Institute, Institute for Adriatic Crops in Split, Sibenik - Knin County, Municipality of Ferrara, Biotechnical Faculty from Montenegro, Faculty of Forest Science/Agricultural University of Tirana, Institute of Forestry in Belgrade, Public enterprise „Vojvodinasume“, Faculty of Forestry of Sarajevo and Region of Epirus - Regional Unit of Thesprotia.

The aim of the AMF project is the transfer of knowledge and experience in the establishment of the Model Forest local processes at the partners' territories. Main project result should be creation of the Model forest in Croatian region of Dalmatia by utilising proven "Five steps methodology" of the Mediterranean Model Forest Network.

The overall objective of the project is to enhance sustainable regional and national development in the Adriatic countries based on management and use of forests as a resource, by establishing and employing multipurpose, cross-sector and cross-border forest sector cooperation.

The sub-objectives of the project are:

- to improve territorial information exchange around forest in a participatory network through renewed interactive approaches;
- to draft an implementation plan per regional partnership;
- to set up a coordination of regional policies through the joint understanding and application of the Model Forest concept;
- to test the Model Forest concept in each territory with the intention to create innovating and efficient tools for territorial governance with which decision makers will have the complete information they need to make the best choice for their territory;

- to extend the existing Mediterranean Model Forest Network hosting new Partners and the dissemination of this model of territorial governance in the rest of Europe;
- to increase utilization of wood and non wood forest products through increased forest growth, without hampering any ecosystem services, protective functions or environmental and social values of the forest.

Project is implemented through 4 different work packages: Cross-border project management and coordination (WP1), Communication and Dissemination (WP2), Exchange of experiences dedicated to the identification and analysis of good practices (WP3) and Pilot experimentation: Implementation of a Model Forest in Dalmatia (WP4).

For further information, please check: <http://www.ipa-amf.eu/>

Model Forest initiatives in the project:

- River Mirna Basin Model Forest (Croatia)
- Dalmatia Model Forest initiative (Croatia)
- Albania Model Forest initiative
- Bosnia and Herzegovina Model Forest initiative
- Montenegro Model Forest initiative
- Republic of Serbia Model Forest initiative
- Republic of Serbia, Vojvodina Province Model forest initiative
- Municipality of Ferrara Model Forest initiative (Italy)
- Thesprotia Model Forest initiative (Greece)





MODEL FOREST

River Mirna Basin

River Mirna Basin Model Forest (Croatia)

Constitution assembly was in April 2013 with 38 founders. It is settled in Motovun.

Has 5 working groups and strategic priorities:

1. Forestry and renewable energy resources
2. Agriculture, breeding and sustainable development
3. Rural and cultural tourism
4. Protection and valorisation of non wood forest products
5. Nature protection, education and information

The “River Mirna Basin“, with a total surface of 116.200 ha or 1.162 km².

Main characteristics: River Mirna, Mountain chain Cicarija, Adriatic coast, White truffle habitats, Administrative limits– going after borders of the Towns and Municipalities.

Number of partners partnership:

→38 founders of the MF association

→34 members of the working groups

Type of partners:

- Regional administrative units (Region, Towns, Municipalities) 17
- Public companies 2
- Public institutions 2
- Civil associations 7
- Private companies 3
- Sole trades 5
- Tourist offices 2

Totals: 60,50 % public →18,4 % civil → 21 % private

The mission: The activities of the Model Forest are based on an open and responsible cooperation between partners whose interests and needs are different, but they are united with a wish to contribute to economic, social and environmental well-being of the area where they live and work.

www.rivermirnabasin.org



Dalmatia Model Forest initiative (Croatia)

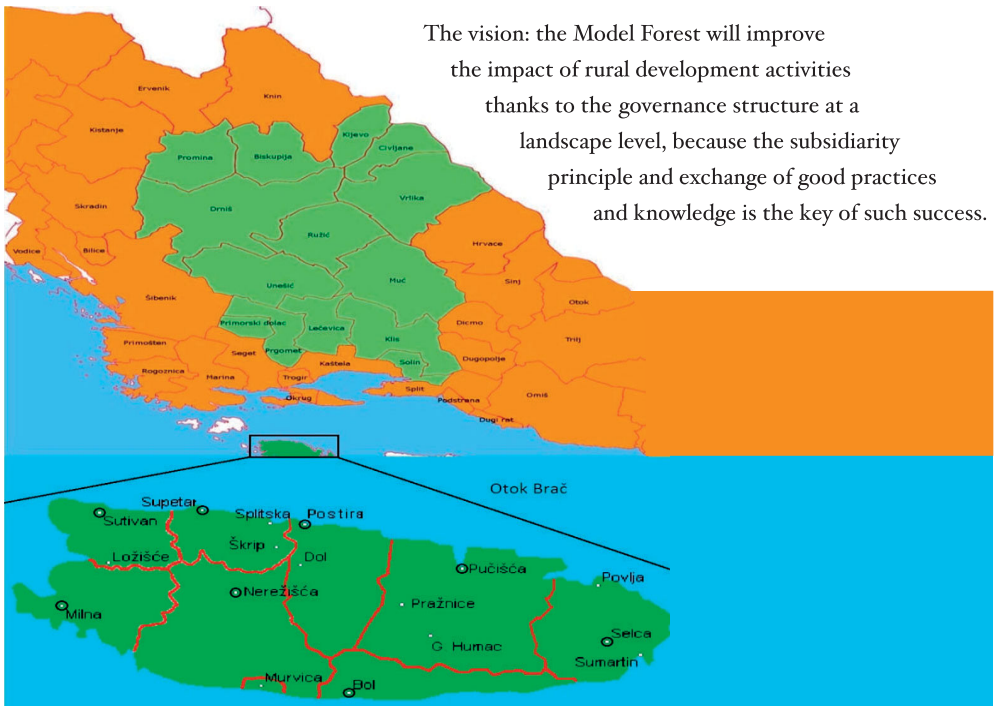
The initiative of the Institute for Adriatic crops and karst reclamation and Šibenik - Knin County

The preselected site: 236.780 ha with homogenous land cover with environmental, social, cultural and economical coherence. This includes 22 cities and municipalities.

Main characteristics: Covers coastal part, county hinterland and many protected areas. Model Forest in Dalmatia is defined by partnership and will have administrative limits/boundaries.



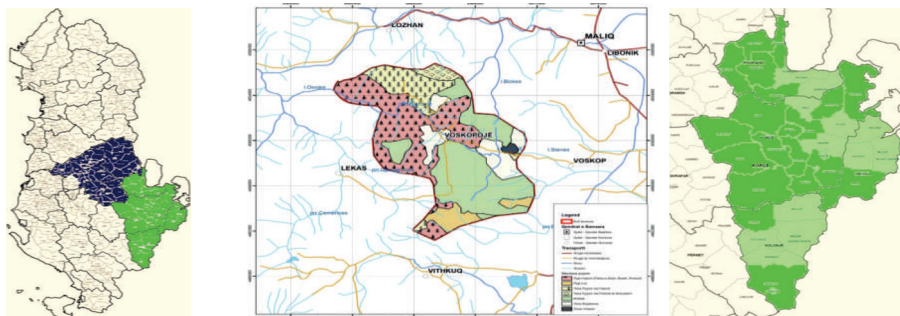
The first partnership: 14 partners from public (10), private (2) and civil (2) sector: 70% public - 30% private.



Albania Model Forest initiative

The initiative of Agricultural University, Faculty of Forestry Science in Tirana

The preselected site: District of Korca, in the south-east of Albania, with a population of 200.000 inhabitants (30% living in the city and 70% in rural areas). The Model Forest should concern around 55.720 ha.



Main characteristics of the site: Very good geomorphology and climatic conditions; A good soil and a lot of water resources; Growth many type of forest ecosystems; A very large area covered by pasture ecosystems; An agricultural land and small urban areas; Very rich biodiversity.

The first list of local stakeholders:

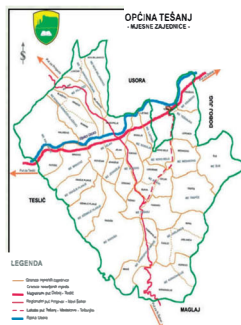
- Voskopoja Municipality
- Forest Service of Korca and Voskopojë
- Tourism office in Voskopoja
- Chairpersons of villages
- Owners of hotels and restaurants
- Associations of: agro-tourism, private forests, communal and pasture forests, hunters, skiers, women
- Religion institutions
- School pupils and resident students in Voskopja
- Private collectors of medicinal plants and Beekeepers
- Other with livestock and farming activity, mines and hydropower
- Universities: Faculty of Forestry Science of Tirana and Faculty of Agricultural of Korca.



Vision : The use of natural resources, including the forest and pasture ecosystems and according to the new contemporary concepts, could perfectly fit with the Model Forest concept. This could become a unique platform for this territory, for a sustainable management with a final aim to develop the forest sector in balance between nature and human society.

Bosnia and Herzegovina Model Forest initiative

The initiative of the Faculty of Forestry in Sarajevo



The site: Around the Municipality of Tešanj (163 km², 283 citizens/km²), with its 16,300 ha and 7,563 ha of forest.

Main characteristics: Forest ownership: State 5,436 ha (72%) - Private 2,126 ha (28%). Large enough to reflect values: social, cultural and economic. Small enough to be: manageable with sense of belonging. Boundary: the administrative border of the Tešanj Municipality.

The partnership: Pre-identified stakeholders in MF Tešanj Bosnia and Herzegovina



1. Institutions from public sector (Cantonal forest office of Zeničko-Dobojski Canton, Public enterprise "Rad" Tešanj, Agency for development of Tešanj municipality, Department for geodesy of Tešanj municipality).



2. Institutions from private sector mainly represented by companies in private property that are dealing with production of natural water for drinking ("Celvik-kiseljak" Ltd., "Prirodni kiseljak Princes" Ltd., "Tešanjaska vrela" Ltd., "Zema" Ltd., "Oaza" Ltd., "Hifa oil" Ltd.



3. Representatives of entrepreneurs (The association of entrepreneurs Jelah - Tešanj)



4. Representatives of various associations (Association of mountaineers, Association of fisherman "Bliner", Moto -cross club "Pila", Bike club Tešanj, Hunting association "Kiseljak", Beekeepers association "Pčela", Farmers association Tešanj, The farmers and entrepreneurs association "Šije", The women agriculture association Tešanj, The scout association "Crni vrh", The association "Eco youth" Jablanica, Sports association of Tešanj municipality).



The vision: This governance structure at landscape level would have a great potential to be a solution for current problems in the forest sector. It enables active participation of all interested stakeholders in managing of natural resources in respected area.



Republic of Serbia, Vojvodina Province Model Forest initiative

The initiative of the Institute of forestry, Belgrade

Potential Model Forest site should include area of Nature Park "Golija" and National Park "Kopaonik" which represents an administrative area that covers five municipalities. This area is very accessible by road and incorporate range of different stakeholders that are involved in the management of this landscape. Major interest groups are from the field of forest management, which are also involved in the management of these two protected areas. Beside them, there is a range of other actors that have their role and involves municipalities, non-governmental organizations, private forest associations, association's of non-wood forest product collectors etc.

The main stakeholders of the partnership that have been identified on the field are:

- Public enterprise "Srbijašume"
- Public enterprise "National park Kopaonik"
- Eco Association "Zeleni Putokaz"
- Association for development of "Ibar" valley
- Rural tourism household „Domaćinstvo Šekler“
- Regional agency for spatial planning and economic development of Raška and Morava District
- Farmer from selo „Lisine“
- Local Municipalities (Raška, Ivanjica, Kraljevo, Brus, Sjenica)

Total area of this potential Model forest site is around 86.922,00 ha.

Vision: Potential Model forest site should represent an integrative management approach of landscape that involves variety of different stakeholders, gathered around partnership which helps them in the management of their own resource on sustainable and economic way.



Republic of Serbia Model Forest initiative, Vojvodina Province

The initiative of „Vojvodinašume“ Public Enterprise

Boundaries of the site: The administrative boundaries of the Municipality of Pećinci define the pre-selected Model Forest area.

Main characteristics:

- The area is famous for its culture and tradition kept; Pećinci Municipality is extremely flat area with fertile soil suitable for high quality crops of all sorts.
- This area has high temperature geothermal water springs.
- Obedska bara is a vast swamp – forest area stretching along the left inundation bank of the Sava river in Southern Srem.
- Obedska bara is situated at about 40 km west from Belgrade and 75 km south from Novi Sad, representing a unique combination of detached river beds, ponds, marsh vegetation, wet meadows and forests, with extremely rich biodiversity.

In the partnership, the main local stakeholders:

- Agency for Development of Municipality PEĆINCI
- PE „VOJVODINAŠUME“
- EKO-EKOLOGIČNO
- Association of breeder of domestic species
- „ŠANAC“ - Agricultural estate
- Cultural Centre PEĆINCI
- Museum of bread „JEREMIJA“
- Women's association „SREMICA“

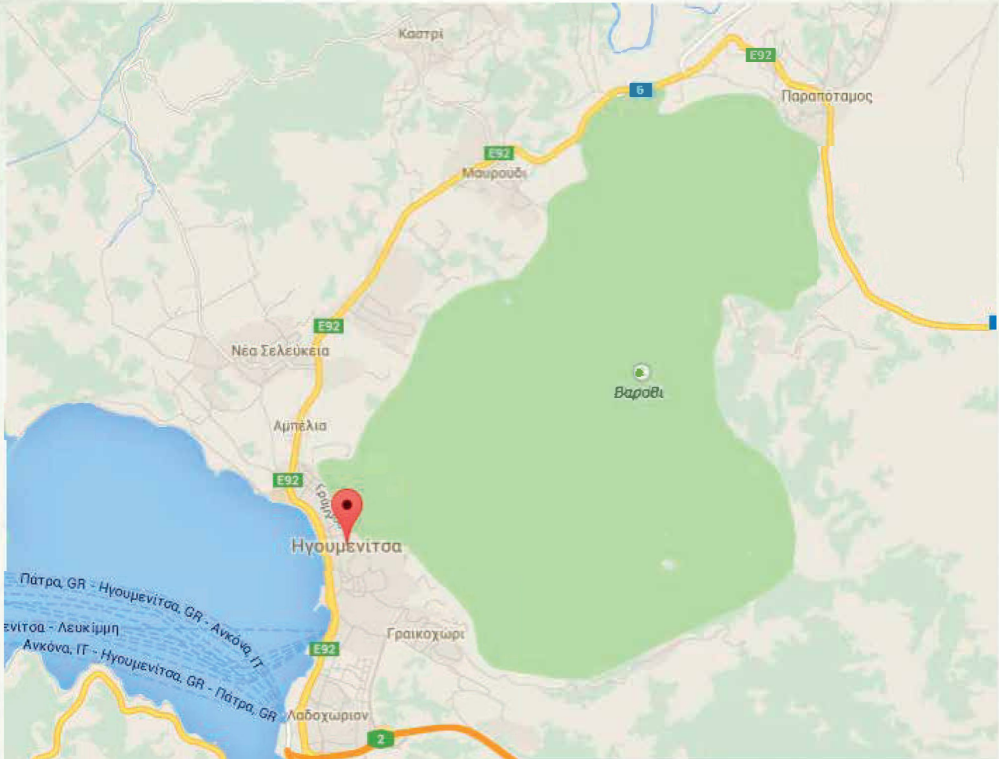
The vision: The future Model Forest has the potential to improve the impact of rural development activities thanks to the governance structure at a landscape level, because the tool (which possess joint strength of many stakeholders) can generate new policy related to rural development at landscape level.



Thesprotia Model Forest initiative (Greece)

The initiative of the Region of Epirus, Regional Unit of Thesprotia

Boundaries of the site: the suburban Forest of the Municipality of Igoumenitsa.



Main characteristics: It is an artificial forest of 1.100 ha, under the management and supervision of the Regional Unit of Thesprotia.

The main local stakeholders in the partnership: 6 so far, mostly public organizations (% public/private: 90%-10%). The aim is to try and to attract more private partners.



The vision: Event though there are many difficulties, the implementation of a Model Forest could be very helpful to boost a full collaboration among various stakeholders. This tool could combine many different aspects, like forest management and economic activities, for a better understanding of the potentialities of our territory.

IPA Adriatic Cross-border Co-operation Programme 2007-2013

The IPA Adriatic Cross-border Programme 2007-2013 is part of European Commissions' (EC) regional policy instruments for pre-accession assistance (IPA). IPA CBC Programme is originally designed for three EU Member States (Greece, Italy, Slovenia) and four candidate and potential candidate countries: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Croatia (prior to EU accession) for the period 2007-2013.

Programme's priority 2 Natural and cultural resources and risk prevention that covers approximately 30% of total funding offered financial support to projects aiming to preserve and promote the programme territories' valuable cultural sites, exchanges of experiences and best practices. Under the measure 2.2 Natural and cultural resource management and prevention of natural and technological risks is financed the project Adriatic Modal Forest AMF <2°ord./0085>.

Project AMF - Adriatic Model Forest assembles relevant regional institutions in the field of forestry sciences and local municipalities in a partnership which puts in place a sustainable forest management based on the "model forest" methodology in each of the partners' territories.



Picture 1. Adriatic IPA CBC Programme 2007-2013. source: ec.europa.eu

Priority Axis	EU Investment	National Public Contribution	Total Public Contribution
Economic, Social and Institutional Cooperation	49 947 100	8 814 194	58 761 294
Natural and Cultural Resources and Risks Prevention	49 947 100	8 814 194	58 761 294
Accessibility and Networks	49 947 099	8 814 194	58 761 293
Technical Assistance	16 649 033	2 938 065	19 587 098
Total	166 490 332	29 380 647	195 870 979

Table 1. Adriatic IPA CBC Programme 2007-2013 Breakdown of finances by priority axis. source: ec.europa.eu



Co-financed by the European Union

2. Establishing a Model Forest

There is no standard template for developing a Model Forest. The creativity of your local partnership, as well as your regional, cultural and other circumstances, will all influence the form and function of the Model Forest you ultimately develop. The six steps above summarize the process Model Forests have generally used so far.

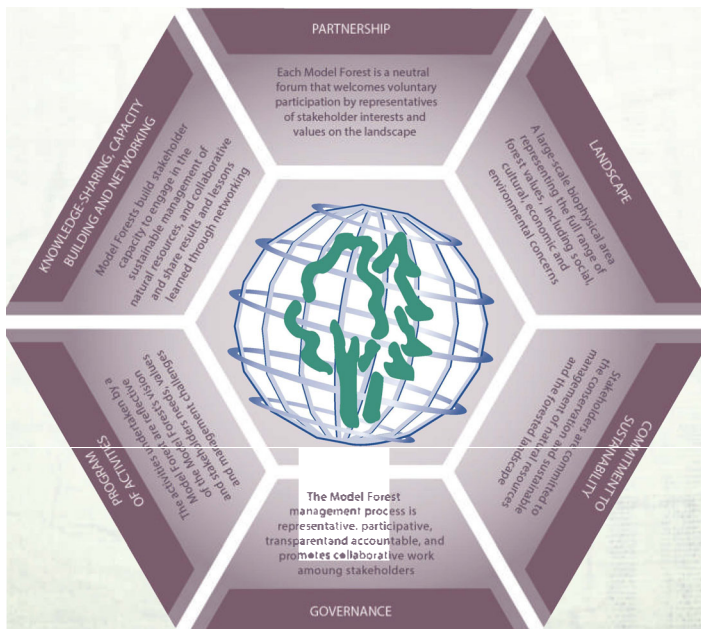
Establishing your Model Forest could take two years or more, although it usually takes much less time. Depending on how much technical support is available in your region, the roles and responsibilities involved in setting up the Model Forest will be shared between the IMFN Secretariat and your regional and/or national Model Forest network office.

GENERAL PROCESS FOR ESTABLISHING A MODEL FOREST

1. Become familiar with the approach
2. Region/County become a member of the Mediterranean Model Forest Network
3. Select an area
4. Identify an initial stakeholder group
5. Hold workshops to discuss Model Forest development
6. Prepare a Model Forest strategic plan
7. Begin the program
8. Become declared Candidate Model Forest
9. Become declared Model Forest

2.1. *Become familiar with the concept*

Since the inception of Model Forests, documentation of their experiences has increased and become more systematic. There are now many effective ways for you to become familiar with the Model Forest concept. These include communicating with the IMFN Secretariat, accessing regional network and Model Forest websites, and reviewing Model Forest documents, including from established Model Forests.



The process of becoming familiar with the concept is usually led by the group or individual that initiated your Model Forest and often includes visits to existing Model Forests. Experience shows that visits are highly effective. They enable you to see working examples of how different Model Forests operate, from management to project delivery. They make the concept of Model Forests tangible and demonstrate their benefits. Visits also reveal how partnerships work because they illuminate decision-making processes, consensus-building strategies and approaches to conflict resolution.

2.2. Region/County become a member of the Mediterranean Model Forest Network

The International Network has grown steadily over the last 10 years. The current level of maturity of the IMFN demands to structure a membership issues and the preservation of the partner. In order to a region or country to became member of the Mediterranean Model Forest Network they must sign jointly with the MMFNS and the IMFNS the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) of the MMFN.

The Parties hereby convene to collaborate with the objective of establishing a network of territories that share as a common aim to develop the Model Forest concept in the Mediterranean environment, under the name of Mediterranean Model Forest Network and as part of the International Model Forest Network.

At the highest operational level the Mediterranean network has two functions: at site level to promote locally-based forest landscape governance through the creation of Model Forests; and regionally to develop and support networking opportunities among Model Forests across the Mediterranean in order to accelerate learning and innovation in support of the goals agreed upon in this MoU.

2.3. Select an area

A Model Forest is a landscape that represents a range of values and issues in a geographic area. Besides forested areas, most Model Forests also encompass agricultural land, rivers and lakes, towns and sometimes cities, protected areas and other landscape features.

It is the stakeholder group that selects the boundaries of the Model Forest. Sometimes boundaries are chosen early, before the letter of intent is submitted to join the International Model Forest Network.

Sometimes the selection comes later, because the stakeholder group has asked for advice in choosing an area.

You should define a rationale for why you have chosen a particular boundary. Doing so can help you identify the values and issues of the stakeholders involved.

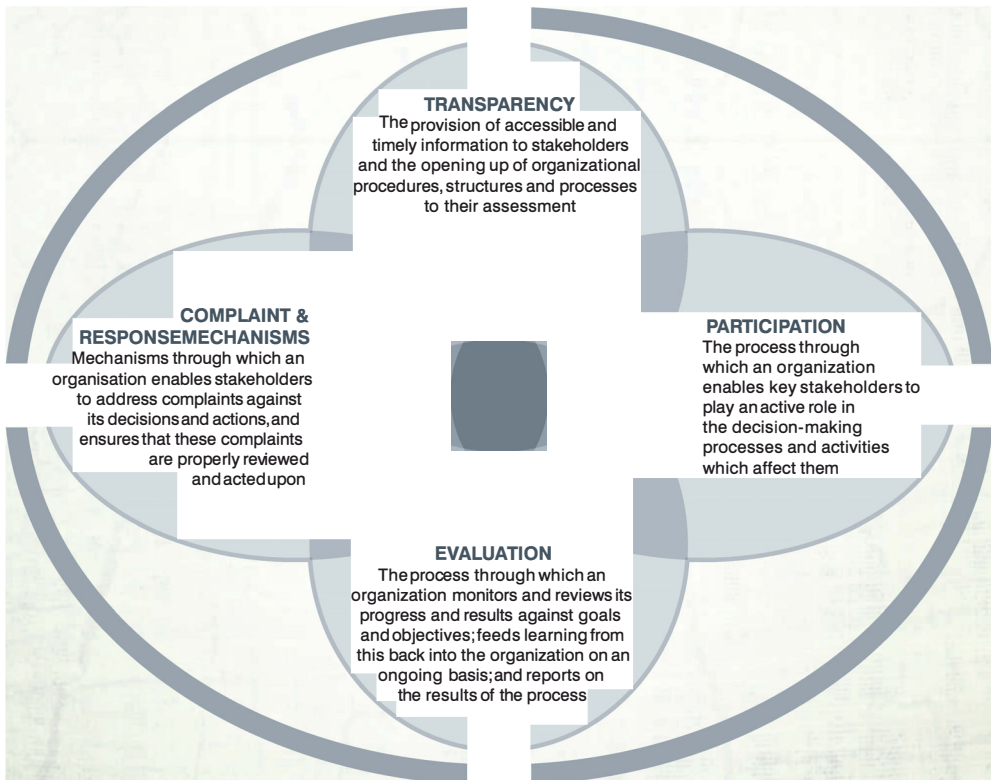
2.4. Identify an initial stakeholder group

Model Forest stakeholders are individuals, groups or institutions that are interested in, are affected by or can affect (positively or negatively) your Model Forest's decisions about resource management and programming priorities. Stakeholders need not reside within the physical boundaries of your Model Forest. In fact, many Model Forests involve organizations from outside, such as universities and research institutions. As well, although some stakeholders remain constant throughout the life of a Model Forest, others change over time as issues, programming and needs change.

Participation must include the ability to be involved at all levels of decision-making, including making Model Forest policies and identifying and carrying out activities.

In many Model Forests, the stakeholders who voluntarily work together to identify a common vision and address issues of mutual interest, and who are formally recognized in the Model Forest's governance structure, are referred to as "partners."

FIGURE 1: GAP FRAMEWORK OF ACCOUNTABILITY



GOVERNANCE VERSUS MANAGEMENT

Your initial stakeholder group may be small, but it will likely grow over time. Model Forests tend to encourage new stakeholders to participate as gaps are identified in knowledge, issues or representation. Some organizations become interested in participating when they learn more about Model Forests and their activities.

FIGURE 2: GOOD GOVERNANCE PRINCIPLES

GOOD GOVERNANCE PRINCIPLES	A TOOL FOR ASSESSING PARTNERSHIPS BASED ON GOOD GOVERNANCE PRINCIPLES
Legitimacy and Voice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Everyone who needs to be is at the table. • There are forums for bringing stakeholders together. • The forums are managed so that the various voices are listened to and the dialogue is genuine and respectful. • There is a consensus orientation among those at the table.
Direction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All stakeholders share a joint and clearly articulated vision of their goal. • All stakeholders see how their organization can contribute to the vision. • Roles and responsibilities are clearly defined. • Stakeholders have adequately adjusted to any changes to the vision over time.
Performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a clear idea among participants of what constitutes success. • Performance is monitored and reported on. • The framework for performance measurement and reporting is developed jointly. • There are sufficient resources to build and maintain the partnership. • The different contexts in which the stakeholders work are understood and accepted.
Accountability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The accountabilities of all participants are clear. • There is an open, transparent and accountable relationship among the stakeholders. • The stakeholders accountability relationships to their respective organizations are recognized and respected. • The partnerships effectiveness is reported publicly.
Fairness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All stakeholders believe they receive sufficient value from the partnership. • The stakeholders, and the broader public, benefit from the partnership. • The laws that govern each stakeholder are recognized and respected.

Here are some factors to consider when identifying stakeholders:

- **Influence** – Influence goes beyond how much power a stakeholder wields to bring about change. It also includes the absence of influence. Consider the needs and interests of those who may be affected by decisions but have no power to influence those decisions.
- **Responsibility** – Examine a potential stakeholder’s responsibilities. These may include regulatory responsibility for compliance with laws, policies and regulations; contractual or legal responsibility to other organizations; financial responsibility to donors or others that provide resources; and ethical or moral responsibility to those that are affected by, or that can affect, decision-making in the Model Forest.
- **Representation** – Consider not only the different values and uses of the landscape that the Model Forest should represent, but the legitimacy of a representative and the number of interests represented. Legitimacy here refers to the extent to which a stakeholder truly represents its interests. The parties stakeholder claims to represent should support the claim.

KEY QUESTIONS

Are any values, resource uses or issues not represented or under-represented in your stakeholder group?

Are there stakeholders or other groups not currently involved that could help achieve your identified goals?

Do your stakeholders represent a diversity of interests? Stakeholders may include industry, community groups, government agencies, non-governmental environmental and forestry groups, academic and educational institutions, national parks, indigenous groups, private landowners and others.

Once you have identified an initial stakeholder group, the next step is to develop an organizational structure that allows for active participation and decision-making by the group. As noted before, it is important that your decision-making process be participatory and transparent, and reflect cultural, social, political and economic realities. In addition, your governance structure should support consensus building among stakeholders.

You should also realize that not all stakeholders will want to be involved in the same capacity or with the same intensity. Although all the stakeholders are equal, their roles and responsibilities will vary in absolute terms, as well as over time and activity. Some will be passive partners who see their membership as an ongoing opportunity to publicly support the concept and its local application. Others will have niche interests and may limit their participation to annual or technical meetings. Still others will plunge into periods of intensive involvement, followed by lulls that reflect the annual management, planning and project delivery cycles. While many may play an active role in Model Forest governance, others may participate only through working groups and specific projects.

KEY QUESTIONS

Does your governance structure demonstrate, in practice, methods of encouraging meaningful participation by stakeholders?

Is your Model Forest managed by consensus and is the decision-making structure transparent?

Has your Model Forest established technical or advisory committees to develop your program and report to the stakeholder committee?

What opportunities exist for stakeholder involvement in Model Forest decision-making, particularly for new groups?

Does your governance structure include an effective means of involving new stakeholders over time?

Does your governance structure exclude or inhibit involvement by any groups?

Does your Model Forest have a committee of stakeholders that identifies goals for sustainable management, sets priorities and development targets, and establishes policy guidelines for the overall program?

Can most of the population access the Model Forest through a stakeholder who represents their principal activity, value or area of interest?

How can your Model Forest be organized to most effectively involve people, carry out its activities and achieve its strategic directions?

As you develop a governance structure for your Model Forest, keep in mind these principles:

- Your governance structure should be guided by principles of accountability, transparency and consensus.
- The final governance structure must be developed by your stakeholders and be consistent with your local context.
- Governance structures can vary considerably while still maintaining the basic Model Forest principles.

2.5. Hold workshops to discuss Model Forest development

Because your stakeholders will be diverse, it is strongly recommended that you conduct planning exercises in the form of workshops and meetings. Successful planning helps stakeholders reach consensus about the Model Forest's strategic directions, including its vision, objectives and expected impacts. It also helps them agree on the means to accomplish these goals – the implementation strategy.

For a Model Forest to accurately represent its membership, it must define its structures and processes so it can be accountable to its stakeholders.

An initial workshop is an ideal time to develop a common understanding of the Model Forest concept, to get commitment to proceed with development and to identify a process for moving forward. Additional workshops can focus on preparing the strategic plan (see step 6 below). During these workshops, you can closely review boundaries, key issues and challenges, ideas for a vision and objectives, and proposed program areas. This way the partnership can arrive at a final understanding and consensus on what is being proposed, how plans will be implemented, and how roles and responsibilities will be divided.

The number of workshops and meetings you will need for development depends on various factors:

- Number of needs, issues and challenges to be addressed
- Amount of time available for the process
- How committed stakeholders are to the Model Forest development
- How well stakeholders understand the Model Forest concept and the importance of planning
- Level of awareness of the needs and issues of each stakeholder
- Level of understanding of national priorities and international conventions
- Level of agreement on the Model Forest priorities
- Level of trust among stakeholders

Your stakeholder group may be small at first, but it should grow over time.

Generally, the more stakeholders involved, the longer the process takes. However, it is important to involve all stakeholders in development to get their input and support for decisions. You may need different approaches for different stakeholders to ensure their full participation.

2.6. Prepare a Model Forest Strategic Plan

Preparing a strategic plan is a key step in establishing your Model Forest. Stakeholders must meet, understand each other and seek consensus on the broad vision for the landscape, the mutual values they hold and the actions required to sustain those values. You can use this process as an important partnership-building exercise.

The strategic plan typically details the composition of your partnership, describes your land base and documents the objectives that will guide your partnership. In the initial stages, the strategic plan may in fact be a “Model Forest development plan” – a document that outlines how you intend to move forward with your development in terms of addressing the six Model Forest principles and preparing a multi-year strategic plan.

The strategic plan helps your Model Forest in the following ways:

- Defines the purpose of your Model Forest and builds consensus on a common vision for sustainably managing the landscape
- Develops objectives that are consistent with your vision and mission and that are within your capacity to implement
- Communicates those objectives to all stakeholders and other interested organizations
- Develops a sense of shared ownership among stakeholders and an increased level of commitment to the Model Forest
- Ensures that your resources are used effectively by identifying areas where they are most needed
- Provides a clearer focus to stakeholders
- Provides a base from which you can measure progress

It is important to set aside ample time for the strategic planning process. Usually the process is led by those who took part in the familiarization process described above, together with other local experts and stakeholders. A workshop or series of workshops and meetings typically facilitates the planning. Throughout, you can get technical assistance and advice from the IMFN Secretariat, the regional office and other Model Forests.

You are also encouraged to seek national endorsement of your Model Forest through the appropriate government department or ministry. You can pursue this at various stages in the process, but it is best to involve national-level departments or ministries early on. In fact, these bodies are usually key stakeholders in your Model Forest.

General Outline of a Model Forest Strategic Plan

- Description of the Model Forest area
- Key issues, challenges and stakeholder needs
- History of Model Forest development
- Strategic directions
 - Vision/mission
 - Objectives
 - Expected impacts
 - Logic model
- Implementation strategy
- Financial plan
 - Expenses
 - Funding
- Governance and administration
- Other
 - Signature page
 - Executive summary
 - Annexes



It is important to pay attention to landscape elements that may be common to several or all stakeholders and those that may affect a particular stakeholder.

2.7. Begin the program

Once your strategic plan has been finalized and endorsed by stakeholders, you can begin your Model Forest program. Here are some other plans and strategies to consider at this stage:

- **Annual Work Plan** – Outlines the activities you will undertake in a given year to achieve your Model Forest’s strategic directions. This is a detailed planning document with specific budgets for each activity. For more information, see the Framework for Model Forest Annual Work Planning.
- **Impact Monitoring and Evaluation Framework** – Helps you measure and report on the outcomes and impacts of your activities compared to the strategic plan. For more information, see the Impact Monitoring and Evaluation Handbook for Model Forests.
- **Communications Strategy** – Clarifies your key messages and target audiences, and identifies the best ways to deliver the messages to the audiences. The strategy identifies who will take the lead on communications activities, lays out a time frame for delivery, and outlines the advantages and challenges involved in meeting your communications objectives. A communications strategy integrates your outreach and public awareness activities for greater impact and better use of resources. Some communications information is available on the IMFN website (www.imfn.net).
- **Resource Mobilization Strategy** – Outlines the available and required resources for your programs, the gaps between them, potential sources for the funding you require and plans for engaging potential donors. This strategy ensures that all stakeholders understand their role in securing the financial, human and technical resources needed to implement the strategic plan and achieve the expected impacts.



Model Forest stakeholders usually know what direction and activities they want to pursue. Developing a strategic plan helps clarify stakeholders’ roles and ensures that they all share a vision for the sustainable management of their forested landscape. More importantly, the plan acts as a strategy for achieving that vision.

An effective governance structure is designed to accommodate a diversity of involvement, and to ensure accountable and transparent decision-making.

2.8. Become declared Candidate Model Forest

The IMFN Secretariat and your regional network will jointly review your strategic plan. In the case of the Mediterranean region is the Mediterranean Model Forest Network Secretariat, that in collaboration with the IMFN Secretariat, will review the **strategic plan**, then either approve the application or request additional information. Representatives of the IMFN Secretariat and regional network will also visit your site at an agreed-upon time during the review.

In order to be declared Candidate, the Model Forest must fulfill:

- Site selected and defined
- Partnership actually constituted
- Organizational structure
- Strategic Plan and financial arrangements completed
- Program of activities ready to be implemented

At the review stage, regular communication between you and the IMFN Secretariat and your regional network (in this case, the MMFNS) is important so that your application proceeds smoothly, without any unforeseen difficulties. At this stage you will receive timely feedback, as well as guidance and advice on any issues identified during the review. Likewise, you should submit your own questions or documents quickly. Regular, timely feedback ensures that you benefit fully from the knowledge and experience of the IMFN Secretariat, regional network and other Model Forests. It also ensures that new sites are consistent with the global principles and attributes of Model Forests. Once all technical and substantive issues have been addressed, your Model Forest will be officially accepted as part of the International Model Forest Network as Candidate Model Forest.

2.9. Become declared Model Forest

Once the Candidate Model Forest begin their work and after launching the activities presented in the Strategic Plan, there is a final valuation by the IMFNS and the corresponding regional network (in this case the MMFNS) in order to analyze the Candidate Model Forest activity.

The final steps are:

- Official recognition
- The Model Forest is operational and has implemented its activities program
- The partners have demonstrated their adherence to concrete Model Forest
- A joint Secretariats (IMFN–RMFM) and supports agreement for the new Model Forest (according with the Principles and Attributes of the international Network)
- The Model Forest has begun to network with members of its regional network or the IMFN.



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