



Red Iberoamericana  
de Bosques Modelo

**RIABM**

Ibero-American Model Forest Network

## ***Model Forests: Platforms to Address Climate Change***

*Model Forests provide an opportunity to create a collaborative culture and a favorable political environment for the implementation of global environmental policies. The Ibero-American Model Forest Network (RIABM) facilitates communication, horizontal cooperation and technical assistance, helping to promote understanding and local action on complex concepts such as climate change.*

We live in a changing world and climate change is currently one of the major global drivers of this change, which impacts the economic sector, social behavior and environmental quality both locally and globally. As a result of these changes and impacts, forestry management of natural resources have also been affected.

Under the new conditions and needs, people should be informed, prepared and organized to confront them. With a better understanding of the drivers of change, it is possible to create strategies to respond to global environmental, political and economic challenges.

The Model Forest concept is a valuable mechanism for long-term and regionally-led participation and for forging partnerships between organizations and institutions to move towards forest management and sustainable human development.

Miembro de



Nuestros socios





## *Sustainability as a Starting Point*

One of the principles of the Model Forest concept is to promote the value of local actors defining what sustainability means to them in their particular context. Thus, each Model Forest works through partnerships to design and implement local applications to national and global initiatives for sustainable development.

A Model Forest is an "integrated forest landscape" where local actors manage forest resources for their economic, social and cultural benefit. Forming partnerships are encouraged, as are management practices of natural resources that are environmentally safe, socially acceptable and economically viable. This has proven to be a path that helps to facilitate the adaptation and mitigation of climate change impacts.

As multi-stakeholder platforms, they unite groups across sectors with an interest in the sustainable management and good governance of forested landscapes. These spaces are also a place for conducting research on systems, promoting of environmental awareness and organizing actions to address climate change.

## *Available to All*

The discussion of the phenomenon known as climate change has been focused for many years on a technical and scientific debate. It is undisputed that the technical and scientific terminology often used in discussions of climate change makes it difficult for the general public to gain an accurate understanding of the discussions. Consequently, while governments are keen to implement the projects of mitigation and adaptation to climate change, there is a lack of understanding in the field as to where these projects will be rolled-out.

Reducing Emissions for Deforestation and Forest Degradation plus Conservation (REDD+) promotes sustainable forest management and increased storage of forest carbon. Model Forests are attractive platforms to implement REDD+ pilot projects in the region. Similarly, international conventions or agreements often face localized challenges. Model Forests are a platform to translate policy into practice.

In the Ibero-American and International Model Forest Networks, Model Forests jointly conducted projects and training that allow them to share their experiences and strengthen their capacities. They also conduct joint training and collaborative projects and motivate political support to create opportunities for effective local activities.

## *From Global Politics to Local Experience*

Since 2008, the IAMFN has implemented three projects that contribute to the global climate change agenda.

Through the organization and promotion of activities for sustainable economic development, Model Forests demonstrate leadership and commitment in response to changes in local and global markets, and trends associated with the mitigation and adaptation to climate change.

Green Wood is a social organization in the Atlantis Model Forest in Honduras that helps build the capacities of artisans in the production of furniture and other wood products made from non-traditional species and forestry waste. This is a good example of how local development combines environmentally sustainable, economically viable and socially participative actions. This initiative assists local communities in forest management, handicraft production and marketing of products through the use of available tools, while reducing the use of precious woods.

In Central America and the Caribbean the regional project “Biodiversity Restoration and Community Development”, implemented using Analog Forestry between 2008 and 2010, included the participation from the Model Forests of Atlantis in Honduras, Reventazón in Costa Rica and Colinas Bajas in the Dominican Republic. RIABM, the Tropical Agricultural Research and Higher Education Center (CATIE) and Falls Brook Centre of Canada supported the establishment of demonstration sites and capacity building in all three Model Forests. Moreover, it facilitated the exchange of information and knowledge among the forests on the management system. The demonstration sites, with the capacity created in local organizations and producers, has led to the creation of national centers for Analog Forestry. Furthermore, the knowledge and experience can be shared with other Model Forests interested in this mechanism for restoration of degraded areas.

The Knowledge Generation Project for Effective Learning and Development (KEDLAP) involved five Model Forests: Jujuy in Argentina, Araucaria Alto Malleco in Chile, Chiquitano in Bolivia, Reventazón in Costa Rica and Lachuá in Guatemala. It is another good example of how RIABM contributes to understanding and finding local solutions to climate change.





From 2008 to 2010, participants of the KEDLAP project built a collaborative knowledge network between key strategic organizations and volunteers involved in the RIABM. This project sought to validate the importance of information exchange processes and collaborative learning as a determining factor for effective development practice. In order to promote knowledge management, a culture of systematization of experiences in the Model Forest and the exchange of knowledge in the network, participants found it was necessary to provide local-level capacity building by providing tools and a facilitator to support the systematization of relevant experiences, local benefits and exchange knowledge with other Model Forests members.

**The Ibero-American Model Forest Network (RIABM)** links areas where initiatives for the proper management of forests and natural resources are conducted. RIABM is a voluntary partnership between Model Forests backed by government representatives from each member country, which is attached to the Secretariat of the International Model Forest Network (SIABM). The Network currently links 29 Model Forest territories, thanks to the commitment of 15 member countries.

#### **Contact Us**

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