

Strengthening best practice through continuous forest education across the tropical world

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Alliance for Responsible Forest Management

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Setting the scene

Part 1: Deforestation and degradation

The demand for timber and forest area is increasing over time

Between the period of 2000-2010, global production forests decreased at the rate of $\sim 5.2 \text{ mil ha}^{-1} \text{ yr}^{-1}$, while global demand for forest and timber products increased, highlighting the need to improve forest management practices (FAO 2014, ITTO 2011).

The rate of forest loss in the period 2010-2015 amounted to 12 million ha, whereas in the following period 2015-2020 it declined to an estimated 10 million ha. Since the year 1990, a total of 178 million ha or $5.9 \text{ ha}^{-1} \text{ yr}^{-1}$ has been lost (FAO, 2020).

Global market pressures, dietary preferences, and loss and waste along agricultural value chains drive demand for agricultural and forest products, which, in turn, drive deforestation and forest degradation (IPCC, 2019).

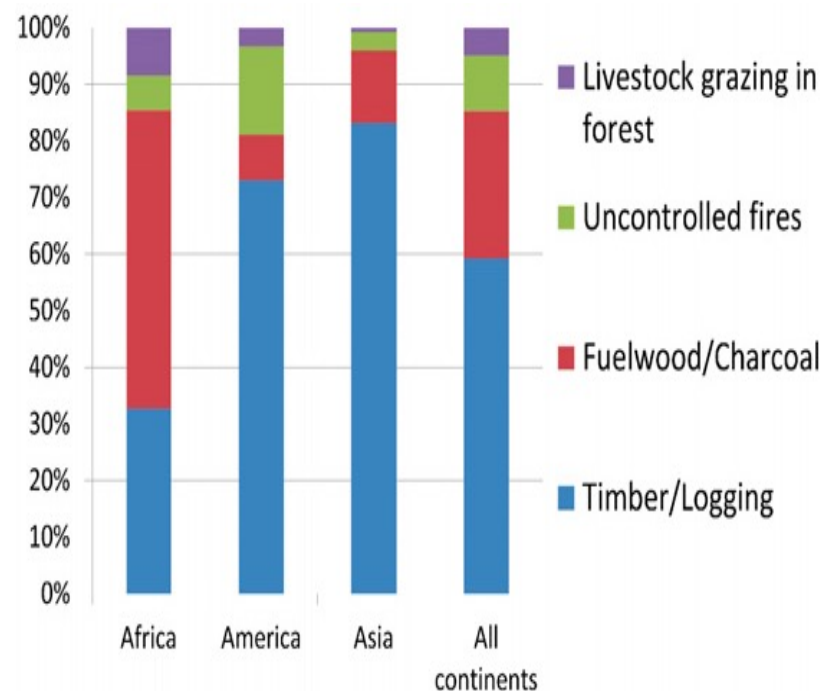


Figure 1: Continental-level estimations of the relative disturbed forest area fraction of degradation drivers based on data from 46 tropical and sub-tropical countries. Adapted from Hosonoma *et al.* (2012).

Setting the scene

Part 2: Market-based certifications

- Certification does not refer to specific protocols on 'how' forest management planning, harvesting and storage should be implemented, rather they focus on the 'why', leading to challenges in developing improved capacity.
- The cost of certification can be prohibitive with only a modest improvement on price, i.e., ~5%. Limited financial incentive to increase the number of certification areas to levels needed at scale and at pace, to tackle climate change.
- 438 million hectares of commercial and non-commercial forests have been certified, representing 11% of the estimated 4 billion hectares of the world's forests.
- 30 million ha of tropical forest has been certified, representing 15% of the 200 million ha of forests globally designated for commercial production. Therefore 170 million ha or 85% of commercial tropical forests are managed without employing certification standards and frequently apply harvest rates beyond sustainable levels.

Setting the scene

Part 3: Global Forest Education

Forestry education is insufficient, outdated, and deteriorating, with graduates unprepared to meet the needs of the evolving workplace.

- **Global assessment on forest education** examined education and training related to forests, trees outside forest and other wooded land, including delivery and science at the primary, secondary, vocational and university levels (Rekola and Sharik, 2022).
- **Insufficient curriculum**, with limited teaching approaches, a low diversity of students with females and racial/ethnic minorities hesitant to enrol, with forest education facing gaps in resources, support and governance.
- **Need for regionally appropriate, relevant and inclusive solutions** considering digital divides, language barriers and a gender and racial/ethnic balance in forest education and the workforce.

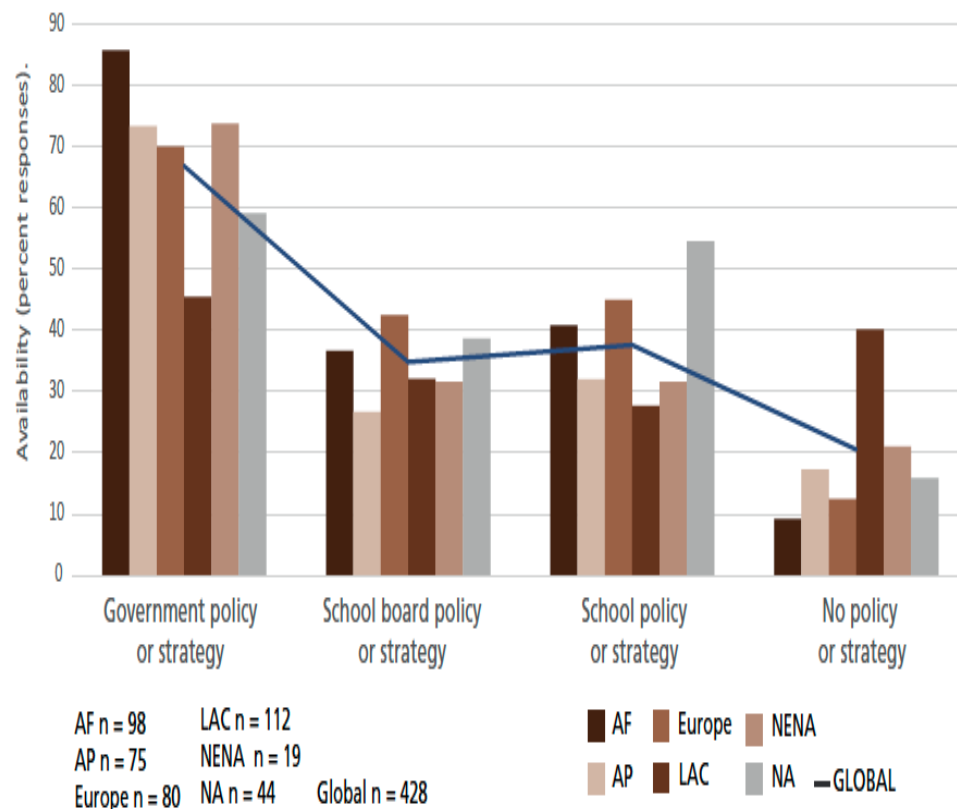


Figure 2: The availability of strategies for improvement of forest-related education at the technical and vocational education and training level. AF = Africa, AP = Asia-Pacific, LAC = Latin America and the Caribbean, NENA = Near East and North Africa, NA = North America. Adapted from Rekola and Sharik (2022).

Alliance for Responsible Forest Management (ARFM)

- An **independent** international not-for-profit non-governmental charitable foundation with the goal to accelerate the implementation of responsible forest management across the tropical world in Africa, Asia-Pacific, Latin America and the Caribbean.
- ARFM develops **best practice** material and coordinates a network of **regional training centres** to strengthen practitioners on best practices in the mosaic of **natural, planted and conservation forests, including the rehabilitation of degraded forests**.
- ARFM supports governments, private and civil society, communities, certification bodies, auditors, and Ministerial/Directorship level (executive courses)
- Creating a long-term contribution (adaptation) to utilise forests sustainably and address gaps in awareness, best management practices, implementation, improved knowledge and capacity development across the tropical world.



Alliance for Responsible Forest Management (ARFM)

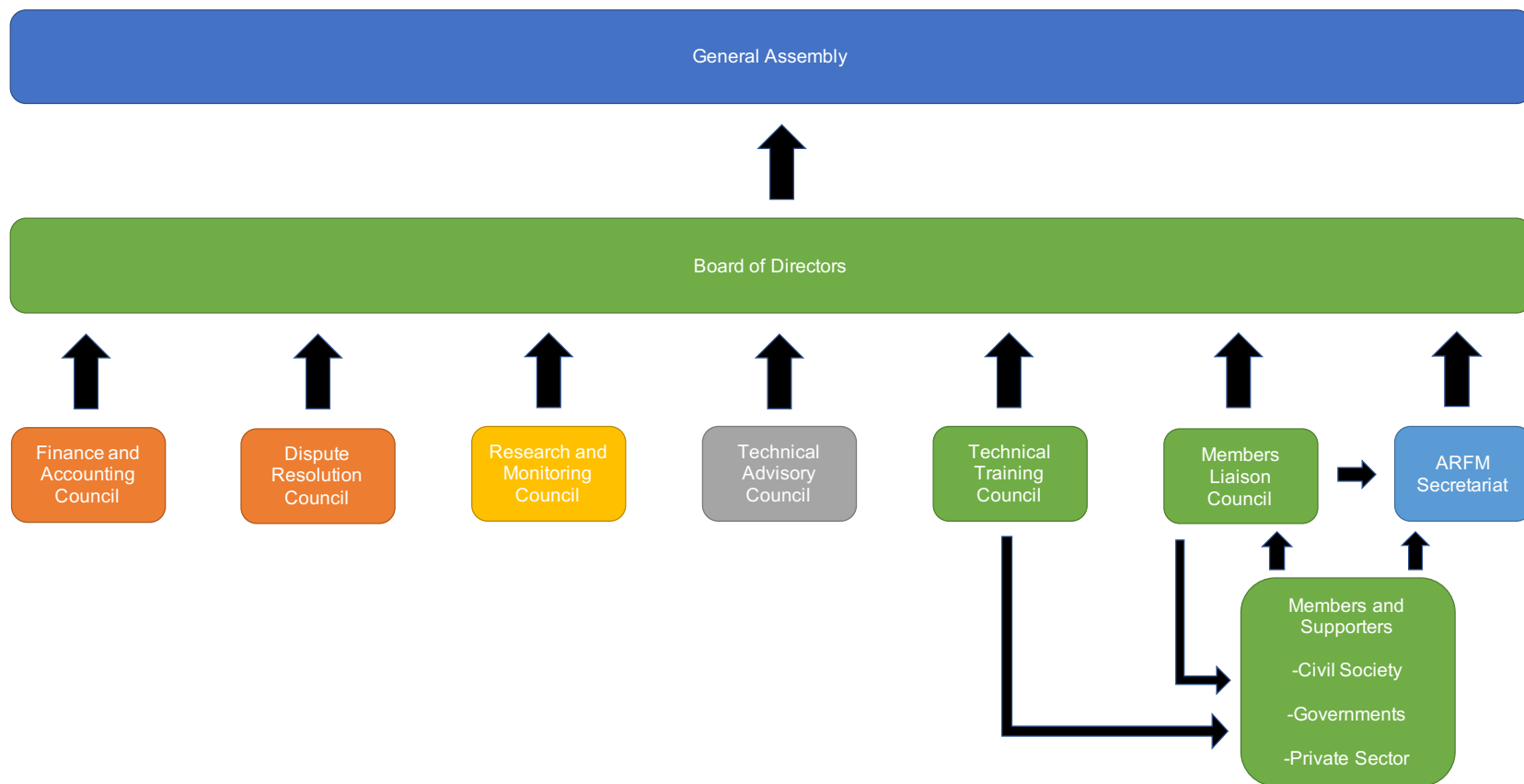


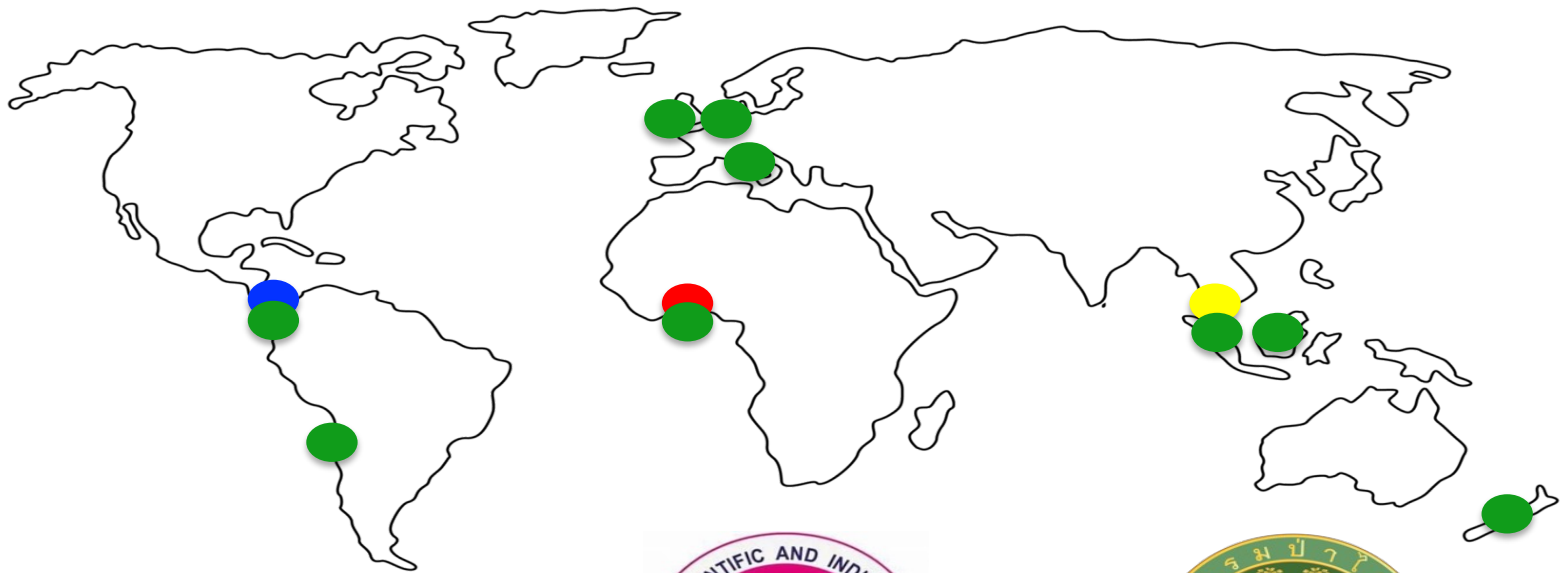
Figure 3: Organisation chart of the Alliance for Responsible Forest Management.





Building development capacity

- **Easy access to objective, high-quality forest education and learning materials**, including through digital platforms, tools, and field-based practical training centres, is essential to strengthen responsible forest management across the tropical world.
- **Continuous strengthening of forestry education and training is required at the local and regional levels to address human resource limitations**, which need to be overcome if responsible forestry management is to be achieved.
- Providing **migrants** and those working on the fringe with **improved education and employment opportunities, improved gender equality**, balanced household employment capacity and overall improved livelihoods.
- Strengthening forest education must be applied at scale, and at pace, from government to community level, to coherently address current environmental, social and economic issues of each region.



ARFM Technical Institutional Partnerships



-  *The Tropical Agricultural Research and Higher Education Center (CATIE)*
-  *The Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR), Forestry Research Institute of Ghana (CSIR-FORIG)*
-  *Royal Forest Department Thailand (RFD)*
-  *ARFM Executive Board Member (EB Member)*

Alliance for Responsible Forest Management

- Coordinated integrated education with modular training components to address the entire forest management cycle in natural, planted and landscape forest management:
- Training through blended learning, i.e., classroom-based (virtual and in-person), and on-site practical education.
- Training consists of a 'full course' (~20-30 per class), **AND modules**, to allow (additional) participants to focus on specific topics, i.e., mapping, planning, communication, etc. Courses will run 9-10 times per year per centre.
- **Instruction in languages widely used in each region**, i.e., English, French, Indonesian, Mandarin, Malaysian, Portuguese and Spanish.
- Material developed with quantifiable metrics inserted to support the monitoring and improvement of training material over time, with voluntary reporting of data. All material is updated every 4-5 years.



Alliance for Responsible Forest Management

Draft modules:

1. Forest conventions, agreements and policies
 2. Natural forest management and conservation integrity management
 3. Planted forest ecosystem management
 4. Forest landscape and catchment restoration
 5. Community forestry and indigenous forest concepts
 6. Coastal forest management, i.e., mangroves
 7. Agroforestry and sustainable management of landscapes
 8. Sustainable management and reduced impact strategies for forested land and landscapes
 9. Climate change, biodiversity and adaption
 10. Downstream and forestry value adding
 11. Urban forestry
 12. Monitoring and evaluation procedures and practices
- Cost per participant: ~ **USD 4-5 k** for 28 day course at ARFM education centre, including transport, food, accommodation, instruction. Class sizes 20-30.
 - Each participant receives a **Certificate of Completion**, valid for 3 years, where refresher courses are offered, or they may take all the modules again.
 - **Executive course** of (3 days) are planned for Ministerial and Directorship level, including business leaders, finance sector, other industries.



Framing regional programmes of excellence

The big picture

-Around the world, from top-down policy to bottom-up practitioners, we are all hearing the same thing...improve capacity building in a practical manner for **ALL** at the landscape-level, to address climate, biodiversity, migration and sustainable development issues.

What does this mean?

-**Inclusive:** training is not just for commercial practitioners, management and policy makers, but also for communities and migrants. Too many countries voice the same problem of how to address 'non-sustainable community practices', and/or, how to address the influx of migrants and how to educate them and bring them into the workforce (expensive and takes years, resulting in compound impact on the natural environment).

-**Impact:** training is perceived as a process that takes long durations of time. If too short, likely ineffective. If too long, likely expensive and overly complicated. AFRM can address this gap with channelled 'module-based' training for *immediate impact*.

-**Credible, independent and easy:** Developing an independent, robust, **regional** module-based programme can support governments, practitioners and communities without impeding on national sovereignty and country- or state/provincial- based approaches. The key is that we are not developing something from scratch, but providing the vehicle for credible, independent and streamlined training programmes that are continuous and not project- or donor finance- specific, such that we can build steady data points to determine what does(not) work. **There are so few continuous training organisations globally and none are coordinated.**

Collaborative Partnerships

ARFM Technical and financial collaborative partnership types:

- **Bilateral funding:** Via ARFM Technical Institutional Partners, for financial guarantee, history of managing large sums of money, ease of authorisation and facilitation, etc.
- **Multilateral funding:** Via host countries of ARFM Technical Institutional Partners, i.e., Costa Rica, Ghana, Thailand.
- **Regional champions:** Hosts regional centres and becomes a Technical Institutional Partner (multiple centres/region needed).
- **Direct support:**
 - **Ordinary:** Becoming a member with a voice in various issues.
 - **Supporter:** Financially supporting best practice across the tropical world.



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- Strengthening forest education must be applied at scale, and at pace, from government to community level, to coherently address current environmental, social and economic issues of each region.
- ARFM is a **‘de-risking’** and **‘implementation-support’** tool, supporting countries and projects meet environmental, social and financial safeguards, and working towards sustainable inclusive development across the tropical world.



Next steps

- ARFM is rolling out in 2024 starting with Asia-Pacific.
- The donor is interested to replicate the work by engaging regional development funding agencies in Africa and Latin America and the Caribbean. **If interested, please approach for more information.**
- We seek additional regional financial and technical partnerships and alliances:
 - Countries/governments
 - Technical organisations
 - Financial organisations
 - Social organisations
 - **If interested, please approach for more information.**





Thank-you

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