



This page: Chiquitano Model Forest, Bolivia  
 Opposite page: Turrialba volcano spewing steam, Reventazón Model Forest, Costa Rica

## The Ibero-American Model Forest Network

### Development of a Regional Model Forest Network in Ibero-America

The first Model Forest in Latin America was established in Chile in 1998. That same year, Argentina committed to developing one Model Forest in each of its five forest regions. Growing interest in Model Forest development in the region led, in 2002, to the Latin America and Caribbean Model Forest Network (LAC-Net) being established. The Secretariat for the new regional network was based in the United Nations Development Programme offices in Chile.



Risaralda Model Forest,  
Colombia

In 2004, Brazil and Costa Rica joined LAC-Net and the organization's headquarters moved from Chile to the Tropical Agricultural Research and Higher Education Center (CATIE) in Costa Rica. When Spain joined in 2007, the network changed its name to the Ibero-American Model

**Since 2008, the Analog Forestry Project has established pilot biodiversity restoration sites and offered practical training for landowners.**

Forest Network (IAMFN). Today the IAMFN is the largest regional network in the International Model Forest Network (IMFN), with 25 Model Forests established in 12 countries across Central America, South America and the Caribbean and in Spain.

The IAMFN is governed by a Board of Directors made up of one national-level representative from each member country, one Model Forest representative per country, and one representative from each of the IMFN Secretariat, CATIE, CUSO-VSO and the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization.

## Model Forest Activities and Regional Priorities

The vision of the Model Forests of the IAMFN is to be a regional benchmark for the sustainable management of natural resources on a landscape scale, supported with widespread social participation. The IAMFN contributes to public policies on the sustainable management of natural resources by promoting cooperation among Model Forests, institutions and countries in the region through knowledge exchange and innovative practices. The IAMFN members are collectively working toward this by:

- Consolidating existing Model Forests and the growth of the network while connecting with one another
- Strengthening the capacity of the IAMFN to provide support to its members, including helping them achieve financial sustainability
- Disseminating and transferring technical knowledge across the network through the sharing of best practices and activities
- Contributing to processes that encourage the formulation, implementation and evaluation of public policies related to sustainable development

## Regional Projects

In addition to supporting Model Forest development, the IAMFN Management Team at CATIE facilitates Model Forest cooperation with other organizations and engagement in regional-level activities. Two key regional-level activities implemented in collaboration with partner organizations include the Analog Forestry Project and the Ibero-American Landscape Management Network.

Since 2008, the **Analog Forestry Project** has established pilot biodiversity restoration sites and offered practical training for landowners in three Model Forests: Atlántida (Honduras), Reventazón (Costa Rica) and the Colinas Bajas (Dominican Republic).

Analog forestry methodology and organic production practices were taught. As well, demonstration sites and tree nurseries were established, with a large variety of trees, shrubs and plants cultivated in them. This project created the capacity for local communities not only to restore degraded land but also to diversify their cultivation practices. This resulted in new forms of income generation, as well as an increase in organic production practices.

The experience and development tools gained through the project will be shared with other Model Forests in the region, as well as other organizations with similar biodiversity restoration

and poverty reduction goals. It will also serve as the foundation for extending biodiversity restoration projects based on analog forestry throughout Ibero-America. With funding from CIDA, the project is coordinated by the IAMFN, CATIE and the Falls Brook Centre (a Canadian centre for rural development and training).

The Ibero-American Landscape Management Network (RIMAP) is a network linking research groups that are partners of Model Forests in eight countries (Argentina, Bolivia, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Honduras, Puerto

*Analog forestry is "a system which seeks to establish analog ecosystems with architectural structures and ecological functions similar to the original climax or sub climax vegetation. It also seeks to strengthen rural communities, socially as much as economically, through the use of species that provide commercial products."*

*Source: International Analog Forestry Network (<http://www.analogforestrynetwork.org/>)*

Rico and Spain). The goal of the project is to promote and coordinate the management and restoration of degraded forest-based landscapes in the Model Forests. This Community of Practice also focuses on sharing knowledge by organizing or supporting the organization of regional workshops and meetings and the production of publications distributed through the Ibero-American Model Forest Network. RIMAP is funded by the Ibero-American Science and Technology Development Program.

Analog forestry planting project in Reventazón Model Forest, Costa Rica





## Milestones

- 1998** Chiloé Model Forest established in Chile, the first Model Forest in Latin America  
Futaleufú Model Forest established in Argentina
- 2000** Formoseño Model Forest established in Argentina
- 2001** CUSO-VSO cooperants first placed in Model Forests in the region
- 2002** Jujuy Model Forest established in Argentina  
Araucarias del Alto Malleco Model Forest established in Chile  
Latin America and Caribbean Model Forest Network (LAC-Net) established
- 2003** Sabana Yegua Model Forest established in the Dominican Republic  
Reventazón Model Forest established in Costa Rica
- 2004** LAC-Net headquarters moved from Chile to Costa Rica  
Mata Atlántica Model Forest established in Brazil
- 2005** Five Model Forests join the network: Norte de Neuquén (Argentina), Chiquitano (Bolivia),  
Pandeiros (Brazil), and Panguipulli and Cachapoal (Chile)
- 2006** Altíntida Model Forest established in Honduras  
Urbión Model Forest established in Spain
- 2007** LAC-Net changes name to the Ibero-American Model Forest Network (IAMFN) when  
Spain joins the network  
Four Model Forests join the network: Yaque del Norte (Dominican Republic),  
Yoro (Honduras), Las Tierras Adjuntas (Puerto Rico), and San Pedro (Argentina)
- 2008** First IAMFN Congress, Soria, Spain  
Five Model Forests join the network: Risaralda (Colombia), Tucumán (Argentina),  
Lachuá and Los Altos (Guatemala), and Sabanas de Manacas (Cuba)
- 2010** Colinas Bajas Model Forest established in the Dominican Republic  
Choroteqa becomes candidate Model Forest in Costa Rica

## Looking Forward

In 2009, the IAMFN Board of Directors identified the following set of priorities for the IAMFN:

- **Land use planning and sustainable development** – Model Forests will facilitate enhanced stakeholder engagement in the development and implementation of land use plans.
- **Social responsibility** – Model Forests will assist in enhancing stakeholder capacity related to corporate social responsibility and increase cooperation with the private sector.
- **Research program** – A proposed IAMFN Research Fund will help identify opportunities for collaboration and strengthen cooperation between Model Forests and local universities.
- **Micro-credit, micro-entrepreneurship and competitive funds** – These approaches, which build on the successful experiences of several Model Forests in the IAMFN, will be encouraged in other Model Forests to promote personal and collective development initiatives.
- **Local leadership for sustainable development** – A school of leaders within the IAMFN will systematically train young people with the goal of enhancing collaborative leadership capacity across the regional network.

Top left: Forestry education in Urbión Model Forest, Spain

Top right: Araucarias del Alto Malleco Model Forest, Chile

## CASE STUDY

### Argentina's Jujuy Model Forest: Building Credibility and Trust

The Jujuy Model Forest is located in the northwestern part of Argentina. Within it are mountainous terrain, two major river valleys, extensive farmland and urban areas. Most of the forested area is cloud forest (Yungas), rich in biodiversity as well as being a major source of timber. In 1999, a small group of volunteers began to hold open community workshops and meetings with organizations from a variety of sectors to promote the idea of creating a Model Forest in Jujuy.

It was a difficult time in Argentina's history, a time of crisis, uncertainty and discontent with the country's political leadership. The volunteers worked for two years through workshops designed to explain the Model Forest philosophy and its potential for creating an organization that is participatory, open and focused on finding concrete solutions to the issues faced by the stakeholders. In 2002, the Jujuy Model Forest was established and accepted into the International Model Forest Network.

Today the Jujuy Model Forest is a successful collaboration of over 30 partner organizations and has many projects underway. Examples include development of criteria and indicators of sustainable forest management (in collaboration with Canada), establishment of a forest seedling nursery and a seed bank of native tree species, forestry education in elementary schools, and tree planting.

These plans are contributing to integrated landscape management and cooperation among stakeholders, as well as strengthening governance and decision-making through community participation.

For a full description of the work of the Jujuy Model Forest, see [www.bmj.org.ar/index.php](http://www.bmj.org.ar/index.php)



Two rural inhabitants of Jujuy Model Forest sharing goat cheese they made, with a member of the Jujuy Model Forest technical team. From left to right: Doña Rosa Mendoza, Don Bauza and Iván Escalier (Jujuy MF member)

## CASE STUDY

### Costa Rica's Reventazón Model Forest: Strengthening Development of Conservation and Protected Areas

The Reventazón Model Forest occupies a geographically and culturally diverse region in the province of Cartago in the central region of Costa Rica. The Model Forest includes rare virgin cloud forest, active volcanoes, several national parks and an important archaeological site, as well as highly populated suburban and industrial areas and extensive agricultural land.



The Model Forest has provided opportunities for implementing many of the country's conservation policies and several international initiatives. Begun as part of the Mesoamerican Biological Corridor project, the Model Forest has supported development of the Talamanca Central Volcanic Biological Corridor and the Ribereño Interurbano Subcuenca Reventado Agua Caliente Biological Corridor. By strengthening these two biological corridors, the Model Forest is promoting ecosystem connectivity in addition to community participation and cross-sectoral planning with local environmental organizations. The corridors assist in creating social agreements that promote the conservation of biodiversity and the sustainable use of natural resources, while also improving the quality of life of residents in the surrounding areas.

A diverse organic farm in Reventazón Model Forest, Costa Rica



## CASE STUDY

### Chile's Araucarias del Alto Malleco Model Forest: Economic Diversification through Local Products

Since December 2008, local economic diversification has been the focus of the Araucarias del Alto Malleco Model Forest in Chile. Following award-winning research on the piñon, a fruit of the protected *Araucaria araucana* tree, the Model Forest developed a program that aims to improve the local economy using non-timber forest products such as the piñon, rosehips and mushrooms. Success was achieved through streamlining the production chain, bringing together

collectors, formalizing the legal status of an all-women entrepreneur group, placing value-added products in the marketplace and increasing local identity. The program emphasizes that community involvement in the sustainable use of natural resources can foster local development.

## CASE STUDY

### Canada-Argentina Collaboration on Developing Local-Level Criteria and Indicators for Sustainable Forest Management

The desire to measure and track their progress toward the goal of sustainability is driving countries to experiment with varying reporting frameworks. Since 2007, the Argentinean and Canadian Model Forest Networks have been collaborating to transfer Canadian Model Forest experiences in the development and implementation of local-level indicators for sustainable forest management. The work, both in Canada and Argentina, is enhancing capacity to report on the impacts of forest management activities at a local level within a framework based on global criteria.



C&I workshop, Argentina

Top: *Araucaria araucana* trees in the Araucarias del Alto Malleco Model Forest, Chile