

Mediterranean
Model Forest Network

The Model Forests of Mediterranean

TREASURES TO DISCOVER



The International Model Forest Network



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Network

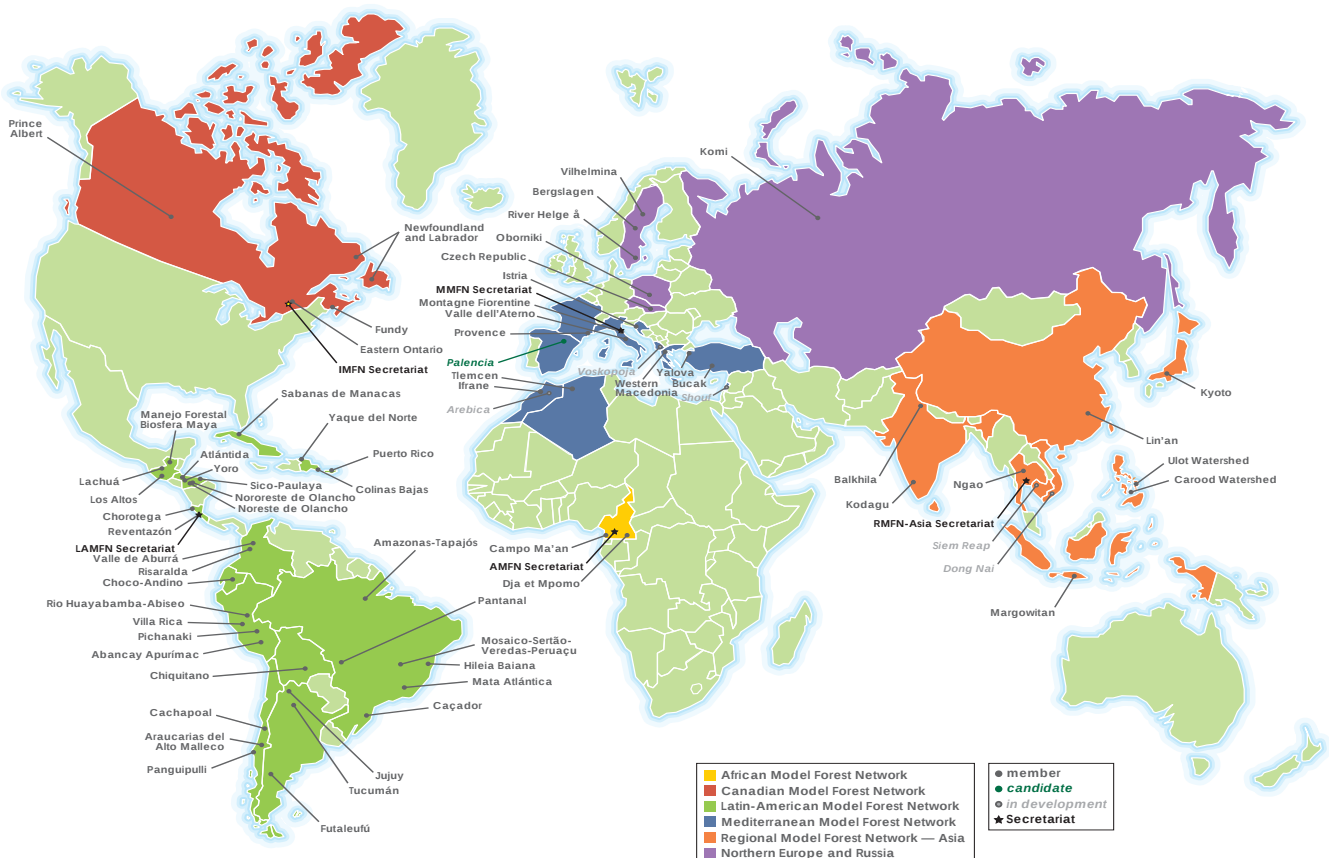


The International Model Forest Network (IMFN) is a voluntary global community of practice whose members and supporters work toward the sustainable management of forest-based landscapes and natural resources through the Model Forest approach.

A Model Forest can be described as a large-scale landscape encompassing many different land uses; a specific partnership-based approach to sustainable forest management; and a long-term process that adheres to a broad set of principles to promote sustainability. The partnership is voluntary and made up of stakeholders – such as local community associations, indigenous peoples, governments, academia, and industry – representing the environmental, social and

economic forces at play within the landscape. The partnership works to define a shared, locally relevant operational vision of natural resource management and then collaborate to achieve it in concrete terms for the benefit of all stakeholders. Model Forests bring joint solutions and innovative strategies to shared challenges such as climate change, governance, land degradation, food security, wildfires, markets and livelihoods, health and well-being, and land-use conflicts.

The strength of the IMFN is being part of a broader movement that now brings together 60+ Model Forests in 30+ countries on 5 continents. The world's largest network dedicated to sustainable landscape governance.



The Mediterranean Model Forest Network



The International Model Forest Network is organised into six regional networks coordinated (where possible) by a Regional Secretariat.

For over ten years, the role of Secretariat of the Mediterranean Model Forest Network (MMFN) has been managed by the Region of Castile and León (Spain), which launched the Mediterranean Network in 2008. In line with the Network's principles promoting the rotation of responsibilities among member countries, the Region of Tuscany put itself forward for the role of Secretariat for the five-year period 2019–2023, supporting its activities, including through a dedicated financing plan.

Since April 2019, on the occasion of the periodic meeting of the Mediterranean Network (Med Forum), the Tuscany Region has therefore assumed the role of MMFN Secretariat. In order to perform this role effectively, it has set up an internal governance structure composed of the relevant regional offices and staff from the Union of Municipalities of Valdarno Valdisieve and the Montagne Fiorentine Model Forest. At the end of its first term in April 2024, the International Secretariat (Government of Canada) and the Mediterranean Secretariat agreed, in view of the excellent cooperation and the significant growth of the Mediterranean Network, to renew their commitment for a second term until 2028.

The Secretariat's activities consist of coordinating the Model Forests belonging to the Mediterranean Network with regard to: providing the necessary assistance to apply for membership of the network; dissemination through newsletters and social media channels; organising events to promote the exchange of experience and know-how on key topics

in Model Forests; planning within the framework of EU, national or other programmes and fund-raising activities; providing support for the preparation, implementation, dissemination and consolidation of cooperation projects on key issues for Model Forests, including maintaining relations between projects; monitoring the various activities in order to capitalize on members' experiences for the benefit of the entire network and forest-related sectors across the Mediterranean region; support innovation and experimentation in order to find solutions suited to the specific contexts of the Mediterranean basin; liaise with the secretariats of other regional networks and with the international secretariat based in Canada.

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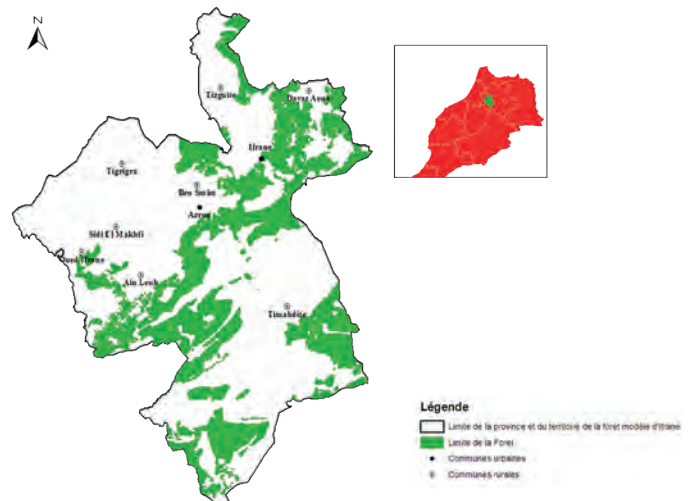
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The Ifrane Model Forest Association (AFMI) has worked since 2010 for inclusive sustainable development in Morocco's Ifrane Province. Built on participatory governance, AFMI serves as a territorial lab supporting local communities and forest ecosystems. It promotes innovative pilot projects, environmental education, and stakeholder dialogue. AFMI embodies a resilient, equitable, and sustainable model within the Mediterranean Model Forest Network.



Integrated Restoration Project at Ifrane National Park

The Integrated Restoration Project in Ifrane National Park, led by AFMI, stems from direct consultation with users. It revives ancestral natural resource management practices adapted to current socio-economic realities. It includes the rehabilitation of traditional pastoral systems (Agdal and rotation), sowing local perennial forage species, and reforesting cedars on fragile sites. This inclusive nature-based approach aims to restore ecosystems, strengthen climate resilience, value local knowledge, and generate sustainable income.



Montagne Fiorentine Model Forest

ITALY

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The Montagne Fiorentine Model Forest Association is a voluntary and non-profit organization, located in Tuscany, in the eastern part of the province of Florence on the border with the province of Arezzo.

The territory of the Model Forest extends for 548 km², with a population of 64,000 inhabitants, including: San Godenzo, Londa, Pontassieve, Rufina, Pelago, Rignano sull'Arno, Reggello. The Association wants to contribute to improving the integration and sustainability of the management of forests and the territory, increasing the cohesion and overall awareness of all the socio-economic components that directly or indirectly relate to the territory itself.



FORSA – Forest Therapy for Community Well-being

FORSA promotes Forest Therapy as an innovative way to enhance physical and mental health while supporting mountain community regeneration. Active in the Montagne Fiorentine area, it highlights local forests through guided walks, immersive experiences, and mindfulness in nature. Four trails were selected for their environment, accessibility, and beauty. The project uses a scientific, multidisciplinary approach and involves local authorities, wellness experts, and communities to foster inclusion, well-being, and sustainable territorial development.



Provence Model Forest

FRANCE

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Among the most forested areas in France, the forests in Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur are threatened by the risk of fire, growing urbanization and a reduction in traditional forest activities, pushing local stakeholders to re-examine the place and multifunctional role of regional forests.

The communities, businesses and associations in the region have come together to jointly promote the sustainable management of natural spaces through the development of the most emblematic large forests in Provence: Garlaban, Étoile, Sainte Baume and Maures. The Provence Model Forest is looking to be a model for innovation and environmental performance, uniting all stakeholders in a common vision for the forests and the sharing of everyone's knowledge and experience.



Thinking the Mediterranean Forest of Tomorrow

The Provence Model Forest energizes the Mediterranean forest with innovative projects centered around the strawberry tree, mastic tree, cork oak, and chestnut tree. Research, cosmetics, design, and the local economy all converge to breathe new life into these natural resources. Together with its partners, it relies on science, education, and creativity to unlock the potential of our forests and launch a new, sustainable, and inspiring era for the region.



Istria Model Forest

CROATIA

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The Istria Model Forest spans 116,200 hectares along the northern edge of the Istrian Peninsula. Since its establishment 11 years ago, the MF has initiated various efforts focused on the valorisation and protection of non-wood forest products, particularly the rare and valuable white truffle.

The MF's main objective is to promote the social and environmental benefits of forests through education and training programs in the field of forest pedagogy.

One of its most recognized events is the annual Festival of Forests and Forest Resources, which gathers around 1,500 participants each year. The association also actively participates in various EU-funded projects related to sustainable forest management.



Forest Pedagogy

The Model Forest Istria is a pioneer of forest pedagogy in both Istria and Croatia, bringing this innovative form of education to wider audiences.

Since 2018, the MF has been organizing workshops for children and sessions for adults on forest pedagogy methods. These activities are carried out in cooperation with schools and kindergartens, offering free training programs.

In partnership with FSC International, it published a handbook for high school students titled "Forest Knowledge Boxes." MF Istria also developed an interactive e-book, "In the Forest as in the Classroom," to support the training of future forest pedagogues.



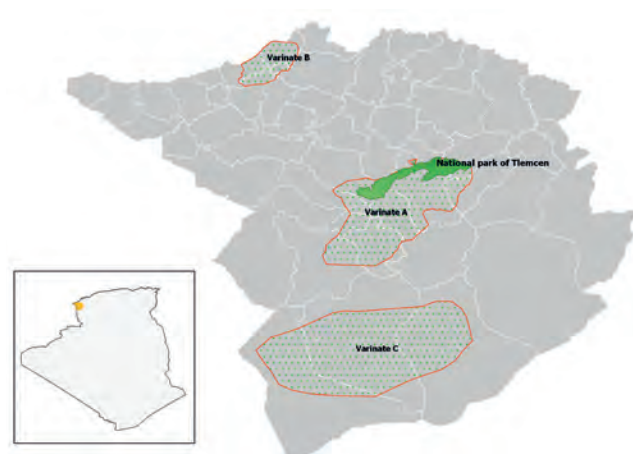
Tlemcen Model Forest

ALGERIA

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Spans 156,000 ha in northwest Algeria's Tlemcen Province. It includes urban, rural, forested mountain, and wetland areas across the Tlemcen (south) and Traras (north) Mountains. The Tlemcen Model Forest applies six sustainable forest management goals: capacity building, natural resource protection, steppe management, local development, environmental education, and communication. These strategies promote local participation, biodiversity conservation, sustainable agriculture, and economic development. Since joining the International Model Forest Network, TMF has launched many related projects.



Establishment of a Nursery for Aromatic and Medicinal Plants in the Locality of Ain El Fetouh, Municipality of Ain Ghoraba

The Tlemcen Model Forest received UNDP support for a project in Aïn El Fetouh (Aïn Ghoraba) to develop a nursery and domesticate 12 aromatic and medicinal plants to protect local vegetation. A 1-hectare pilot site was used to test sustainable planting in line with economic, social, and environmental goals. The project promotes local resource valorization and economic diversification. Aromatic plants offer major potential due to growing interest in their essential oils for health care and other industries, with increasing global demand.



Yalova Model Forest

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The Yalova Model Forest is located in the Yalova region in northwestern Turkey. More than 58% of Yalova's landscape is covered by forests, while over 30% consists of agricultural land. The region's forest area (46,613 ha) received FSC certification in 2013 and remains certified to this day. Located along the Sea of Marmara to the north, part of the area's activities are connected to the maritime sector. Yalova Model Forest is a strong example of sustainable forest management, with a focus on recreation, tourism, and non-wood forest products such as nuts, mushrooms, honey, and resin.



In Türkiye, another Model Forest was created in 2015, Bucak, but it is currently suspended.



Green-Blue Tourism Cruise Road

The “Green-Blue Tourism Cruise Road” is a sustainable rural development project in Yalova, led by local institutions. It aims to connect villages through a scenic route from west to east, creating forest parks and promoting interaction between people, nature, and local communities. The project values Yalova's natural, cultural, and historical heritage, encouraging eco-tourism and supporting local economies.



Valle dell'Aterno Model Forest

ITALY

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Media Valle dell'Aterno is an area of about 30 thousand hectares. A large part insists within the Sirente-Velino Regional Natural Park.

The idea of Model Forest was born to connect the small villages and the active people and institutions that so far have acted mainly on their own, facing depopulation that has reduced local communities to a minimum, to manage, conserve and promote the territory as a whole. The association involves 15 municipalities plus associations, NPOs, SMEs, private citizens.

There are five commissions: Forest and Landscape, Culture and Associations, Tourism, Agriculture, International Relations.



Project STAI

Project STAI by Valle Aterno Model Forest is the ongoing project funded by Action Aid Italy and Realizza Il Cambiamento Foundation.

The goal is to support new and future small agrosilvopastoral business enterprises in the Media Valle dell'Aterno area.

FMVA formed a young professional group to develop the project together with the following partners: Slow Food Abruzzo, University of L'Aquila, three municipalities (members of FMVA), San Demetrio Ne' Vestini, Tione degli Abruzzi, Fagnano Alto.

It follows a number of activities throughout 2024 - 2025, including classes for small business entrepreneurs, private citizens, labs and innovation business incubators in the agri-food area.



Western Macedonia Model Forest

G R E E C E

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Western Macedonia Model Forest is located in the region of Western Macedonia, the northern part of Greece and borders with Albania and North Macedonia.

The Region of Western Macedonia covers a total surface of 945,100 Ha (7.2% of country's total) and the number of inhabitants is 255,056. The nature of the region is mountainous, while Aliakmonas travels down through it. It is the only region without sea coast. Western Macedonia is divided into the regional units of Grevena, Kastoria, Kozani and Florina.



Forestival

“FORESTIVAL” in Western Macedonia (Aug 31–Sep 1, 2025) was a major success, attracting visitors from across Greece. It featured forest products, interactive workshops, children's games, and forest-inspired food. Highlights included forest therapy, plant sound experiences, and the Joelette wheelchair debut—promoting accessibility and inclusion. A concert closed the first day, leaving attendees inspired and eager for future events.



Palencia Model Forest Candidate

SPAIN

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The Palencia Model Forest spans over 4,000 km² in northern Spain, with rich forest landscapes covering over 40% of the area. Its objective is to boost the local forest bioeconomy through initiatives such as the creation of Palencia's first 20,000 ha Mycological Park, three Close-to-Nature Forestry demonstration plots with monitoring devices, and training in Continuous Cover Forestry. It also collaborates on projects like RebolloLife and SingleTree to promote sustainable timber use and ecosystem resilience.



Close to Nature forestry

The Palencia Model Forest organizes hybrid training courses on close-to-nature forestry, aimed at empowering local communities - especially youth - in the sustainable use of underutilized species like *Quercus pyrenaica*. Delivered partly online via the Cese for "Selviaula" platform and partly in the field, the course combines theory with hands-on practice. Two successful editions have already taken place, complemented by a conference on entrepreneurship in forest bioeconomy.



Atlas-Midelt Initiative

MOROCCO

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AFMAM aims to conserve landscapes, ecosystems, species, and genetic diversity, while promoting sustainable human and ecological development. It carries out environmental education, research, and pilot projects. Its strategy involves close collaboration with local communities, partners, and experts, with a strong focus on gender inclusion and alignment with Morocco's Forest Strategy 2020–2030. AFMAM seeks win-win partnerships within the International Model Forest Network. Its action area is Midelt Province (13,626 km²; 289,337 people), rich in forest resources (465,677 ha) across the Middle and High Atlas.

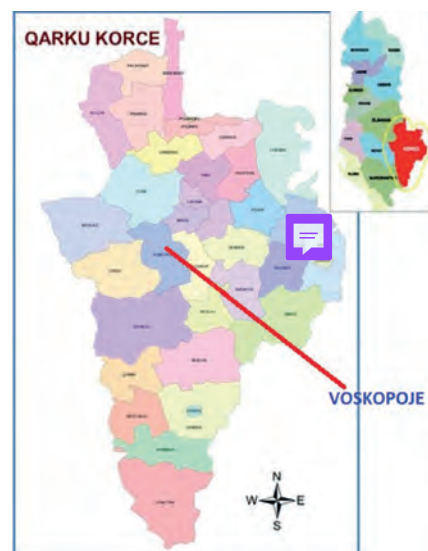


Voskopoja Initiative

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Voskopoja Model Forest, located in southeastern Albania, is a high-altitude region with rich biodiversity, including forests, meadows, and medicinal plants. It spans 64 km² with five surrounding villages. Agriculture, including livestock farming and agro-tourism, is the main economic activity. Voskopoja has 7 historic churches and is a designated Historic and Touristic Area. It offers opportunities for sustainable economic development, including agro-forestry, and is accessible year-round for research and tourism. Key stakeholders include local governments, private owners, and associations.



Shouf Initiative

LEBANON

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The Shouf Model Forest, nestled within Lebanon's largest biosphere reserve, promotes inclusive, landscape-level sustainability. Its objectives include conserving biodiversity, enhancing community-based forest and water management, and fostering rural resilience. Key activities focus on participatory governance, agro ecology, and ecotourism. As a Model Forest candidate, SBR integrates local knowledge and innovation to tackle climate challenges while strengthening socio-economic ties across the territory.



Kroumirie Mogods Initiative

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Located in northwestern Tunisia, the Kroumirie-Mogods Model Forest (2,900 km²) aims to combine ecological conservation and sustainable local development. It promotes forest landscapes, particularly cork oak forests, through initiatives like participatory mapping, non-timber forest product development, and traditional practice awareness. Notable achievements include the recognition of heather honey and lentisk oil as protected designations and the opening of the National Cork Museum in Tabarka.







LEGEND



Tuscany Region_MMFN Secretariat



Model Forest



Model Forest Candidate



Model Forest Initiative

International Model Forest Network



International
Model Forest
Network



Mediterranean
Model Forest Network



Regione Toscana

Model Forest of Mediterranean Network



Associazione
FORESTA MODELLO
delle MONTAGNE
FIORENTINE



FORESTA MODELLO
Valle dell'Aterno



Candidate Model Forest



Initiative Model Forest

ATLAS-MIDELT - Morocco
VOSKOPOJA - Albania
SHOUF - Lebanon
KROUMIRIE - MOGODS - Tunisia



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