

CFF COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE (CoP)

Scaling up the efforts for the implementation of CFF toolbox



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Background

The Community and Family Forests (CFF) program has developed a portfolio of **solutions and tools** to facilitate access and increase the uptake of FSC certification by small-scale producers and low-intensity and community managed forests. Since 2023, the program has been in full deployment of its toolbox.

However, **to scale up the implementation efforts**, it is important to raise awareness and develop the capacity of local resources, selecting people who have the potential to disseminate information about FSC solutions and tools, as well as the skills to become trainers or facilitators, fostering medium and long-term processes towards responsible forest management and, eventual, FSC certification.

To this end, **training initiatives and supporting materials to develop practitioners have been prioritized**. FSC has now available infographics, e-learning courses, as well as CIP and EVT Facilitator Toolkits.

We know that one-off trainings for facilitators will not be enough. FSC offers **ongoing training, technical advice, and peer-to-peer support** to build expertise and proper technical capacity on FSC tools of people working on the ground with our toolbox.



Proposed solution: CFF community of practice



The CFF community of practice aims to establish and maintain a **collective group of practitioners** who engage in a **participatory process** to acquire and share knowledge, build capacities, and foster an action-based learning approach.

This community will be instrumental in **disseminating information, training stakeholders** on FSC solutions and tools, and **facilitating long-term processes** towards responsible forest management and FSC certification.

Key aspects:

- Developing a **peer-to-peer network** to enhance skills and technical knowledge.
- Offering **ongoing support and technical advice** to ensure continuous capacity building.

The theory behind

“

A **community of practice (CoP)** is a group of people who "share a concern or a passion for something they do and learn how to do it better *as they interact regularly*"

Lave & Wenger, 1991.

”

Three characteristics of a community of practice (CoP)

DOMAIN



Community members have a **shared domain of interest**, competence and commitment that distinguishes them from others.

This shared domain creates **common ground**, inspires members to participate, guides their learning, and gives meaning to their actions.

COMMUNITY



Members pursue this interest through **joint activities**, discussions, problem-solving, information sharing, and relationship building.

The notion of a community creates the social fabric for enabling collective learning. A strong community fosters interaction and encourages a willingness to share ideas.

PRACTICE



Community members are actual **practitioners** in this domain of interest and build a shared repertoire of resources and ideas that they take back to their practice.

While the domain provides the general area of interest for the community, the practice is the specific focus around which the community develops, shares and maintains its core of collective knowledge.

Enhancing FSC's impact through the community of practice



CFF community of practice: favourite participants

CFF CoP focus is on the profile of the potential participants more than on the quantity!

Commitment to Participation

Participants who demonstrate a strong interest and availability to regularly attend meetings and actively contribute.



Interest in Certification and Responsible Forest Management

Participants with some background in or a strong interest in learning more about forest management and FSC certification.



Interest in Facilitation and Capacity Building

Participants who have experience in or an interest in learning more about facilitation and training techniques.



Application-Oriented Mindset

Participants who can clearly identify when and where they plan to apply the learnings from the community of practice.



Experience in Working with Community and Family Forest Stewards

Participants who have some experience working with or supporting community and family forest stewards.



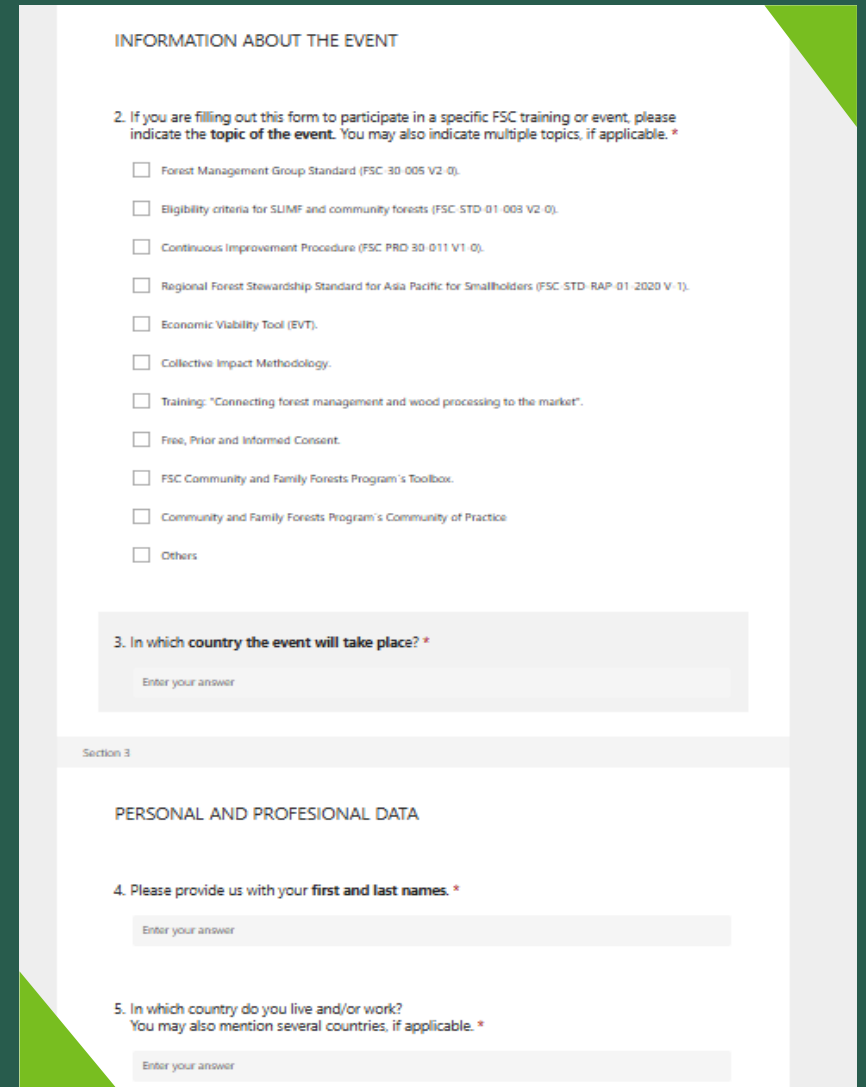
Ensuring targeted participation: Facilitator Form

The CFF team has developed a **Facilitator Form** to ensure that participants selected for capacity-building initiatives and Community of Practice events align with the goals of the program.

Purpose: Applicants must complete the form before participation. The form gathers important information about each candidate's background, including previous experiences, areas of interest, and their potential to apply what they have learned

How the Facilitator Form Helps FSC:

- Make an **informed decision** on whether to **accept or reject** the application for participation.
- By understanding participants' needs and experiences, FSC can prepare **events tailor-made for participants**.
- To create a growing **database of CFF facilitators**, enabling continuous engagement and tracking of facilitators for future opportunities.



The screenshot shows a digital form titled "INFORMATION ABOUT THE EVENT". It contains a list of checkboxes for various FSC standards and tools, followed by a text input field for the event location. Below this is a section header "Section 3" and another titled "PERSONAL AND PROFESIONAL DATA". This section includes a text input field for names and another for the country of residence or work.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE EVENT

2. If you are filling out this form to participate in a specific FSC training or event, please indicate the **topic of the event**. You may also indicate multiple topics, if applicable. *

- ☐ Forest Management Group Standard (FSC 30-005 V2-0).
- ☐ Eligibility criteria for SLIMF and community forests (FSC-STD-01-008 V2-0).
- ☐ Continuous Improvement Procedure (FSC-PRD-30-011 V1-0).
- ☐ Regional Forest Stewardship Standard for Asia Pacific for Smallholders (FSC-STD-RAP-01-2020 V-1).
- ☐ Economic Viability Tool (EVT).
- ☐ Collective Impact Methodology.
- ☐ Training: "Connecting forest management and wood processing to the market".
- ☐ Free, Prior and Informed Consent.
- ☐ FSC Community and Family Forests Program's Toolbox.
- ☐ Community and Family Forests Program's Community of Practice
- ☐ Others

3. In which country the event will take place? *

Enter your answer

Section 3

PERSONAL AND PROFESIONAL DATA

4. Please provide us with your **first and last names**. *

Enter your answer

5. In which country do you live and/or work?
You may also mention several countries, if applicable. *

Enter your answer

Empowering action: what happens in the community of practice

Technical advice and support



As mentioned above, the CoP is about putting things into practice.

Through the CoP we will **provide technical advice and support to CoP members implementing responsible forest management processes and/or FSC certification**

Transfer knowledge



The **exchange of experience is one of the most appreciated activities by practitioners**, where they can learn from the real-life experience of others, who may be from the same country or from other countries in the region, or even from other realities in other regions.

Collaborative learning and creative initiatives



Beyond dialogue, the CoP promotes hands-on collaboration and encourages members to work together on **learning-by-doing projects**. Additionally, the CoP is a **creative space where participants can propose new activities**, fostering a dynamic environment where collaborative initiatives and innovative ideas can take shape and grow.

Suggested steps to establishing a CoP

A CoP can be established at various geographical scales, **starting regionally** to build a strong foundation of shared experiences and examples **before scaling down to more local levels**.

STEP 1

Engage Participants: Invite individuals who align with the CoP's "favourite participants" profile. Start with people trained in Continuous Improvement, EVT, or any other facilitator training, and invite them for the first CoP meeting.

STEP 2

Experience Sharing at First Meeting: Ensure, especially in the first meeting, that someone highlights a meaningful experience and allows for interactive exchange, demonstrating the CoP's collaborative nature.

STEP 3

Regular Meetings & Rotating Leadership: Organize consistent meetings and activities like field days, and rotating organizational responsibilities to involve all members.

STEP 4

Offer Training & Support: Provide ongoing training and technical support based on member needs. If necessary, the CFF team can especially support capacity building.



These communities will **be coordinated by FSC's Network Partners** and can receive targeted support from the CFF team.

STEP 6

Track Progress: Define and measure clear progress indicators (outputs) and outcomes to evaluate the success and impact of the CoP.

STEP 5

Set Up a Communication Channel: Establish a permanent platform for discussions, event updates, and sharing resources like documents and photos between meetings.

Expanding knowledge sharing: regional and sub-regional communities of practice



Communities of Practice at the regional or sub-regional level can be **coordinated by FSC's regional or sub-regional teams**, with support from the Community and Family Forests (CFF) team.

Their **objective** is similar to national-level Communities of Practice but with a **focus on exchanging knowledge and good practices** across borders at the regional level.

The **goal** is to **learn from and be inspired** by experiences beyond national borders, complementing national Communities of Practice.

However, **activities** within the Regional Community of Practice will be **primarily virtual**.

OUTPUT INDICATORS



- # CoP meetings (national/regional)
- # participants in CoP meetings
- # recurrent participants
- # training for CoP participants (national/regional)
- # participants trained
- training quality (metrics training evaluation results)
- # uses of communication platform

SUGGESTED OUTPUT & OUTCOME INDICATORS



OUTCOME INDICATORS



- # training about FSC and CFF tools conducted by CoP members for others
- # times CFF tools used
- # SLIMF or Community Forests processes supported
- # SLIMF or Community Forests certification processes supported
- # SLIMF or Community Forests certified

KEY ELEMENTS



Domain

A joint enterprise

Community

A mutual engagement

Practice

A shared repertoire



COMMUNITIES OF PRACTICE

“Groups of people who share a concern or passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly” (Wenger & Wenger-Trayner, 2005, p.1).

GROUP MEMBERSHIP

- Core members
- Peripheral members
- Distributed leadership from within
- Fosters pedagogical change

BOUNDARIES

- Define your community of practice
- Boundaries overlap to allow for shared learning over multiple communities.

CHALLENGES

- Group size
- Consistency of core members
- Conflict in interests/practice
- Maintaining fluidness

HOW COMMUNITIES OF PRACTICES SUCCEED

- Strong foundations are formed
- Shared and ongoing learning
- Commitment and participation
- Members are able to work through conflict for better outcomes

Community of Practice (CoP) 2023-2024

Project lead	CFF program
Region	Latin America
Budget	00
Timeline	2024
Stakeholders	NP of Argentina, Chile, Ecuador, Bolivia, Perú, Colombia, Mexico. LARO team members
External Partners	Representatives from Non-governmental organizations and from governmental institutions.



Learnings

- ### Learning 1

When events are held online, it is even more important to provide time for participants' presentations and other dynamics to create an open environment for conversation.
- ### Learning 2

The CIP is acknowledged to make FSC certification more possible for communities, smallholders and supporting organizations in some Latin-American countries.
- ### Learning 3

The Community of Practice is a model that is highly appreciated by practitioners.

“

**If you want to go fast, you
go alone.**

**But if you want to go far,
you need to go together.**

African proverb

”

Thank you



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