



**Mediterranean
Network**

FORUM/26

WEBINAR SERIES



SESSION #2

**Forest therapy: integrating
environmental science, medicine
and economics**

Led by the Mediterranean Model Forest Network

17 February 2026

(10 - 11:30 CET)

Online



International
Model Forest
Network

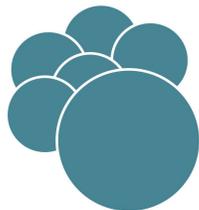


Mediterranean
Model Forest Network

The MMFN

A brief overview...

Speaker: Toni Ventre
MMFN General Secretary



The International Network



Based on early success, at the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) in Rio de Janeiro the Government of Canada invited other countries to join in forming an **International Model Forest Network** to share lessons learned and accelerate sustainability goals globally. What began with 10 sites in Canada has now spread to 35 countries with more than 60 MF in operation covering over 70 million hectares.

In **1995**, the International Model Forest Network's Secretariat (IMFN) was officially established in Ottawa where it continues to be hosted by the Natural Resources Canada - Canadian Forest Service.

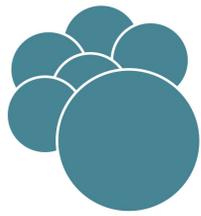
61 Model Forests.
37 countries.
65+ Million hectares.



International
Model Forest
Network

The world's largest network dedicated to sustainable landscape governance.

@modelforest
imfn.net #IamModelForest



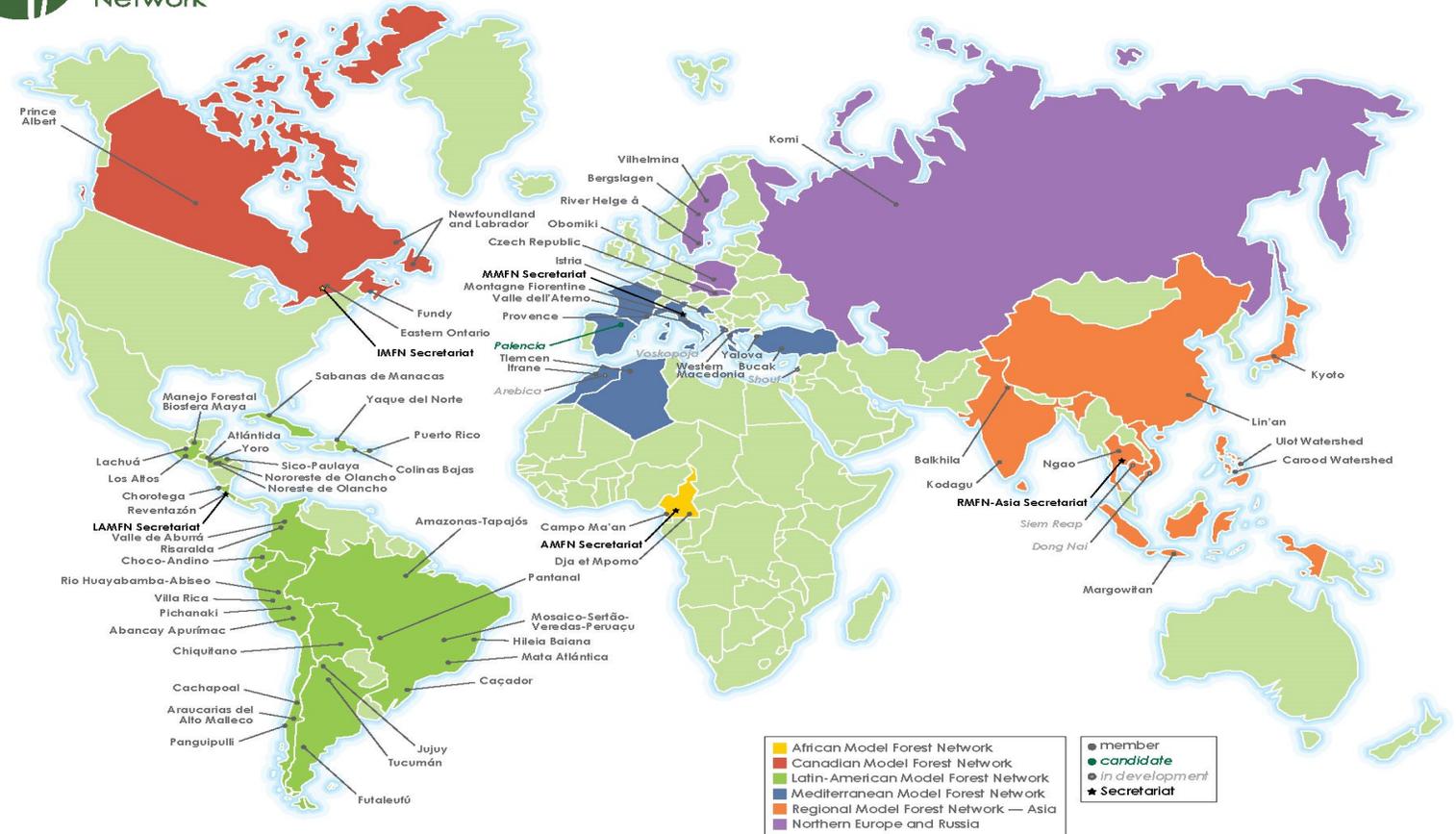
The International Network

Regional Model Forest Network



There are currently six Regional Networks under the International Model Forest Network.

Regional Model Forest Networks define, articulate and manage a regional program of work by those who know the area best. These regional programs may be formal or informal and reflect the priorities, strengths and opportunities that are unique to a particular region.





Mediterranean
Model Forest Network



International
Model Forest
Network

Governance

IMFN Secretariat
International Model Forest Network

CANADIAN
MF
Regional
Secretariat

AFRICAN
MF
Regional
Secretariat

ASIA MF
Regional
Secretariat

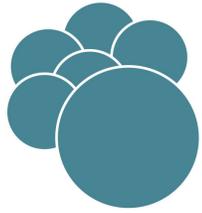
LATINO
AMERICAN
MF Regional
Secretariat

NORTHERN
EU E
RUSSIA MF
Regional
Secretariat

MEDITERRANEAN MF Regional Secretariat



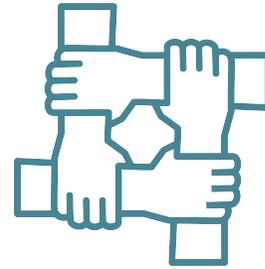
TUSCANY REGION REPRESENTS since APRIL 2019 MF SECRETARIAT
with the support of Union of Municipalities Valdarno e Valdisevie and Montagne
Fiorentine Model Forest (the first MF in Italy)



Model Forest Principles



Landscape



Partnership



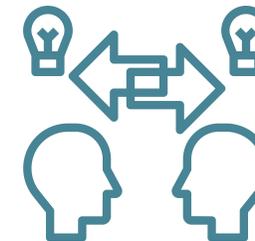
Sustainability



Governance



Program of activities



Knowledge sharing, capacity building and networking

MMFN - 14 members

To date, there are 9 Model Forests and 5 MF Initiatives in 12 countries...over 1.5 million hectares





What is a Model Forest?

In short



A Model Forest is best understood as a process for bringing a diverse partnership of individuals and groups together to realize a common vision of sustainable development in a large landscape.

Three main pillars do a Model Forest :



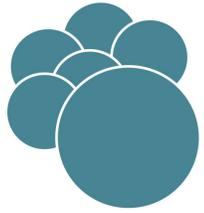
LANDSCAPE: a large-scale biophysical area representing a broad range of forest values, including environmental, social, cultural and economic concerns



PARTNERSHIP: a neutral forum that welcomes voluntary participation of representatives of stakeholder's interests and values on the landscape



SUSTAINABILITY: stakeholders are committed to the conservation and sustainable management of natural resources and the forest-based landscape



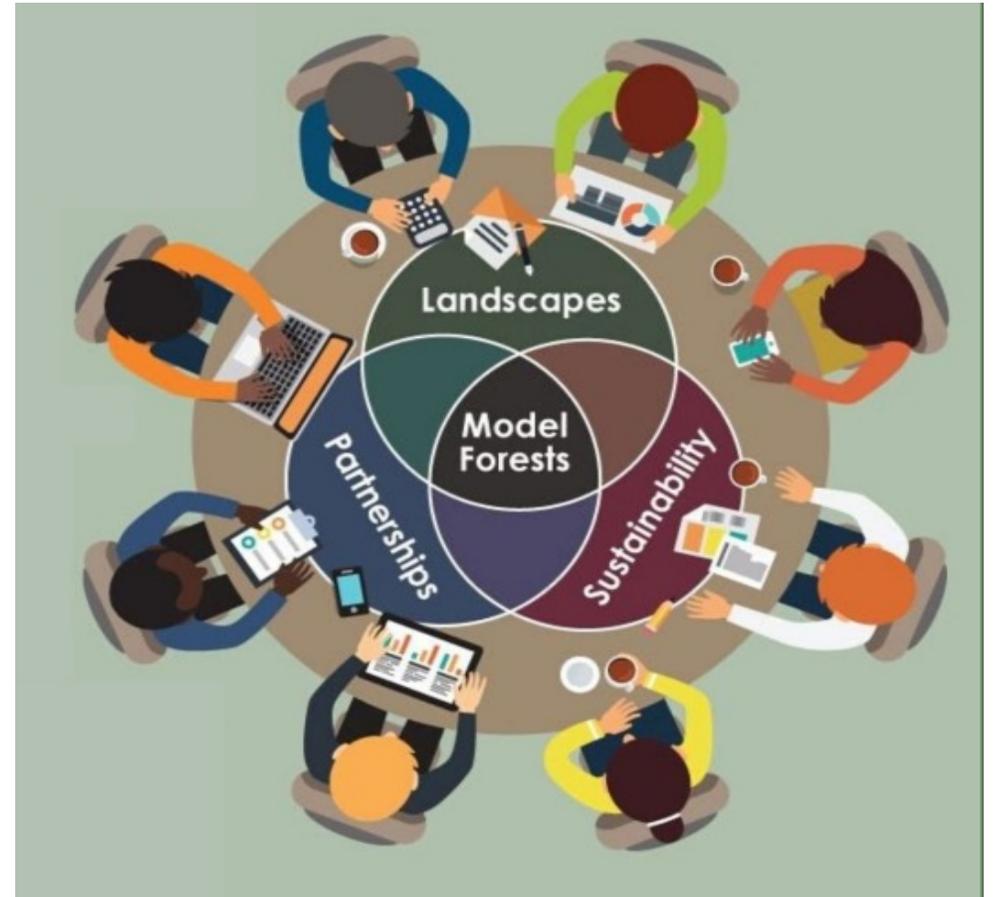
The International Network

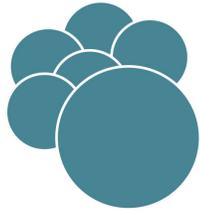
Why the Model Forest idea was born



The Model Forest idea was born to:

- **bring together all of the relevant stakeholders** in a given territory to form a long-term collaborative partnership;
- **serve as a neutral forum** to encourage constructive discussion and inclusive participation;
- **develop, test and implement initiatives** based on science, innovation and traditional knowledge;
- **act as the middle ground** between policy and practice;
- **change the way we think about**, and act towards, our natural resources and each other.





Networking makes us stronger

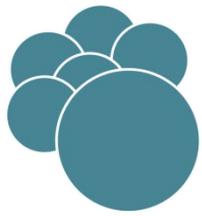
the deep effectiveness of two networking levels...



Working “in a network” means working in connection with others, enriching partners with specific skills, sharing experiences and know-how. Through networking and sharing lessons learned, time is saved by avoiding mistakes already made and opportunities for success are accelerated. Networking gives us flexibility and allows the participation of the most competent, suitable and interested parties in achieving a specific result. **The Mediterranean Model Forest Network is inspired by this system and contributes to global environmental sustainability goals.**

A real
GLOCAL
network!!





INTERNATIONAL AND NATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS

Institut za poljoprivredu i turizam Poreč



Institute of Agriculture and Tourism Poreč

Istituto croato di ricerca forestale (KR)

Istituto di Agricoltura e Turismo Porec (KR)



ERIAFF network
European Regions for Innovation in Agriculture, Food and Forestry



Slow Food®



Fondazione Cesefor (SP)



iuFOR
GESTIÓN FORESTAL SOSTENIBLE

iuFOR (SP)

Instituto Universitario de Investigación



PEFC ITALIA (IT)



FSC ITALIA (IT)



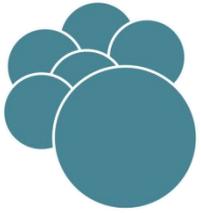
UNIVERSITÀ DEGLI STUDI FIRENZE

Università di Firenze (IT)



Universidad de Valladolid

Università di Valladolid (SP)



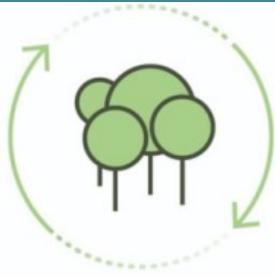
SHARED PROJECTS — EU Program...but not only

The aim of proposing a series of actions based on the exchange of knowledge, cooperation in areas of common interest and the collective development of innovation capacity to empower educators, youth workers, educational leaders and their support staff. In

environmental education.



ONEforest



Forest-ED

erasmus + 

ASMed” From the Apennines to the Shouf: migrations of experience and knowledge across the Mediterranean”



AGENZIA ITALIANA PER LA COOPERAZIONE ALLO SVILUPPO



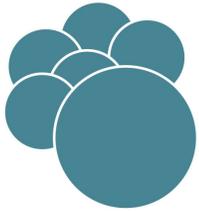


..... and each MF project:

...a list ...it's too long

- just...some examples
- Ecotourism (all)
- **Forest pedagogy (Istria and PACA) and forest therapy (FMMF)**
- Landscape and forest restoration (Ifrane, Arebica, PACA)
- Forest Workers training (FMMF)
- No Wood products valorization (PACA, Tlemcen and Istria)
- Local Timber Trade Mark (FMMF)
- Renewable Energy Sources (Biomass heating plants and districts) development (FMMF, Valle Aterno)
- Collaboration project with protected areas
- To be continued....





Networking makes us stronger

and collaboration is .

FOR.SA | FORESTE
E SALUTE

CONVEGNO

“FORESTE E SALUTE”

EUROPE: INSIGHTS FROM ODEL FOREST NETWORK

BY TONI VENTRE AND PABLO SABIN

Online Webinar

Forests Without Border

Latin America &
Bosques sin Fronteras
América Latina y

10:30 - 11:30

ESPERIENZE DALLA FORESTA MODELLO DI KYOTO

*Dott. Kazunori Ito of Meiji University of International
Medicine, Kyoto, Giappone*

11:30 - 11:45



Toni Ventre
General Secretary of MMFN



Abdekrim
Marzouk
Ifrane Model Forest
Morocco



Philippe Gabriel
Villard
Provence
Model Forest
France



Matteo Mazzoni
Montagne
Fiorentine
Model Forest
Italy



Forest Therapy and Forest Bathing in MMFN..

In France the Provence Model Forest has promoted forest therapy for five years through public events, publications, and communication tools. It also supports ProvenceSylva, an association founded in 2022 to coordinate site owners, trained guides, and leisure providers to develop and promote forest bathing in Provence.

In Greece the Western Macedonia Model Forest promoted forest therapy through two key public events during the last year, Forestival 2025 and “Forest for All.” Both events offered guided forest therapy and forest bathing experiences, combining wellness activities with environmental education and public awareness, and engaging a wide audience in nature-based well-being.

In Croatia, the Istria Model Forest actively explores the role of forests in both education and health and wellness. Among the Model Forest’s partners are forest schools for children and experts in forest bathing.

These experiences are also showcased during the annual Festival of Forests and Forest Fruits, which attracts more than 2,000 visitors.





Forest Therapy and Forest Bathing fit in SFM and ..vice versa

- 1. Forest therapy strengthens the social value of forests**
- 2. Forest therapy encourages low-impact, sustainable use**
- 3. Economic diversification for rural areas**
- 4. Incentive for maintaining high-quality forest ecosystems**
- 5. Scientific validation supports long-term planning**



Thanks a lot - Muchas Gracias

MMFN Secretariat Team

more information at
<https://www.medmodelforest.net/>

Speaker: Toni Ventre

