Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

Global Webinar Series on Sustainable Forest-based Bioeconomy Approaches

Webinar #2 – Financing the future: unlocking investments for a thriving forest-based bioeconomy

Tuesday, 29 April 2025
15.00–16.45 (UTC +2)
Zoom

Context

The forest-based bioeconomy represents a significant opportunity to address global challenges, with substantial benefits in carbon sequestration, job creation and sustainable development. Forest ecosystems provide crucial services that extend well beyond traditional resource production and consumption and are strategic assets for meeting economic, social and environmental objectives.

Although forests offer a wealth of opportunities for people and the planet, the expectations placed on them are growing. Managing the risks and trade-offs associated with the delivery of the broad range of forest services presents many challenges.

According to projections published in *Global Forest Sector Outlook 2050* (FAO, 2022a), the consumption of forest products is expected to increase significantly in coming decades, with estimates of a 37 percent increase by 2050 (compared with 2020). Global demand for raw materials will likely grow by 25–45 percent, depending on the efficiency with which industry residues are used. Meeting this growing demand will require innovation across value chains, as well as increased capital allocation, to expand forest production and processing capacities.

Access to finance will be a key enabler of the transformation towards sustainable forest management and higher value for forest resources and associated value chains. The financial landscape for forest-based value chains is broad and complex, encompassing many mechanisms and context-specific considerations; these include differences in financing sources (both public and private), financial instruments (e.g. debt, equity, grants and blended finance), geographical dimensions (international and domestic), uses (products and services), and risk-mitigation measures (e.g. guarantees and fiscal policies) (FAO, 2022b; UNFF, 2016). Approaches to finance and investment are relatively mature in some jurisdictions; in others, however, radical innovation may be required to enable the quantum of investment needed for forests to sustainably deliver economic, social and environmental outcomes.

Considering these challenges and opportunities, the upcoming webinar will explore diverse financial mechanisms – from innovative investment approaches to expanding climate finance and market-based solutions. Unlocking these opportunities is key for building a resilient and thriving forest-based bioeconomy that balances economic growth with sustainability.

Webinar overview

The webinar will examine financing issues, opportunities and modalities for the forest-based bioeconomy, with a focus on the Global South. It will provide an assessment of the current financial landscape and highlight innovative approaches and success stories in various contexts. By exploring existing mechanisms and emerging solutions, the session will identify effective strategies for enhancing financial access across regions and sectors and at differing operational scales (from small to large industrial).

Who should attend?

The Global Webinar Series is designed to engage and empower a diverse audience committed to knowledge-sharing and advancing sustainable forest-based bioeconomy approaches. It brings together policymakers and government officials seeking actionable insights into the development of effective policies and strategies; private-sector entities and entrepreneurs exploring innovative business opportunities; scientists and researchers focusing on cutting-edge bioeconomy studies; civil-society organizations and non-governmental organizations advocating for inclusive solutions; local communities, women's groups and Indigenous Peoples seeking to benefit from equitable development; students and young professionals eager to shape careers in sustainability; and international organizations wanting to align their efforts for impactful global collaboration.

Provisional agenda

Moderator: Lyndall Bull, Value-added Innovation Coordinator, FAO Forestry Division

Item	Speaker
Welcome and Poll	• Lyndall Bull
Opening remarks	**Co-Chairs** • **Somvang Phimmavong,** Director General, Department of Forestry, Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, Lao People's Democratic Republic • **Emilie Molin,** Deputy Director, Ministry of Rural Affairs and Infrastructure, Sweden
Keynote "Financing the Transition to Sustainable Forest-Based Bioeconomies"	• **Klas Sander**, Senior Environmental Economist, World Bank
Poll	
Expert Panel: Innovative Financing Solutions	• **Salima Mahamoudou,** Investment Manager II, Blended Finance for Restoration, Global Restoration Initiative, World Resources Institute • **Shauna Matkovich,** Founding Director, The Forest Link • **Petri Lehtonen -** Forest Finance Expert, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations • **David Brand -** Chair, International Sustainable Forestry Coalition and Executive Chair, New Forests
Q&A	
Close	• Lyndall Bull

Funded by:

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