



Food and Agriculture Organization
of the United Nations

«Open and Transparent Forest Data: Innovation and Technology for Climate Action»

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Key messages

- Improving the transparency of forest-related data and information within the Enhanced Transparency Framework of the Paris Agreement is vital.
- A robust National Forest Monitoring System will help countries to meet the requirements of the Enhanced Transparency Framework.
- Innovation and technology have a fundamental role to accelerate accurate, open and transparent forest data for Climate Action.



FAO/GEF CBIT-Forest project

- A two-year (2019-2021) global project to step up developing countries' ability to collect, analyze and disseminate forest-related data, to make forest data transparent and accessible in line with the Enhanced Transparency Framework (ETF).
- Aims to increase institutional and technical capacities and to boost knowledge-sharing and awareness-raising about the ETF particularly in the forest sector.

How

- 26 countries targeted as well as 187 countries and territories included.
- Strengthened network of key partners such as UNFCCC, GFOI, UNEP, UNDP, IFSA, etc.
- Upgraded FAO Global Forest Resources Assessment (FRA) [reporting and dissemination platform](#), to make forest data reporting easier in the future.
- Knowledge and training material, including [E-learning course](#) to enable access to knowledge about the ETF and forests to anyone anywhere.
- [Tool](#) developed to facilitate the assessment of gaps and needs in a country's NFMS.
- Outreach and sharing of case studies and best practices on transparency in the forest sector ([Costa Rica](#), [Democratic Republic of the Congo](#), [Bangladesh](#)).



Forêts et transparence au titre de l'Accord de Paris



Organisation des
Nations Unies pour
l'alimentation et l'agriculture



United Nations
Framework Convention on
Climate Change



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CBIT
forest

Online course

English

<https://elearning.fao.org/course/view.php?id=587>

Spanish:

<https://elearning.fao.org/course/view.php?id=610>

French :

<https://elearning.fao.org/course/view.php?id=616>



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Start

Forests and transparency under the Paris Agreement

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Lesson 1

LESSON 1

The Enhanced Transparency Framework and forests

Lesson 1 explains how the Paris Agreement charts a new course in global efforts against climate change, and illustrates the requirements under the Enhanced Transparency Framework (ETF), showing how they build on the Measurement, Reporting and Verification (MRV) framework.

The lesson also reviews the fundamental role of forests in absorbing and storing carbon from the atmosphere and highlights interrelations between the collection and analysis of forest-related data and the requirements foreseen under the ETF.

30 minutes

Lesson 2

LESSON 2

The National Forest Monitoring System

This lesson reviews the National Forest Monitoring System, its goals and scope.

It also illustrates the principles that should inform a sustainable National Forest Monitoring System and describes, through real examples, the key guidance elements required to strengthen national forest monitoring capacities, increasing their transparency and long-term reliability.

30 minutes

Lesson 3

LESSON 3

Forest data for the Enhanced Transparency Framework under the Paris Agreement

This lesson discusses how a National Forest Monitoring System (NFMS) that is informed by principles of transparency, accuracy, consistency, completeness and comparability enables countries to produce **reliable** and **transparent data**, and thus to meet the reporting requirements under the Enhanced Transparency Framework (ETF).

30 minutes



NFMS assessment tool

Free and accessible already in English, French and Spanish

NATIONAL FOREST MONITORING SYSTEM ASSESSMENT TOOL - version 2
Based on the voluntary guidelines on national forest monitoring and REDDcompass

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Date: [dropdown]
Language: English
Country: [dropdown]

- Institutional arrangements [Click here](#)
- Measurement and estimation [Click here](#)
- Reporting and verification [Click here](#)
- Analysis [Click here](#)

Available at: <http://www.fao.org/23e167e2.pdf>

BACK



Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

Case study Bangladesh

An integrated national forest monitoring system for sustainable forest management and conservation in Bangladesh

Supporting long-term planning, implementation and monitoring of multi-objective forest-related activities

Context

Bangladesh is highly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. To support and improve decision-making on climate change mitigation and adaptation, access to robust data and information is key. The reliability of the forest sector and the availability of comprehensive forest-related data are supporting long-term planning, implementation and monitoring of forest-related activities that serve multiple purposes.

Previously, forest data and information were scattered across different forest administrative offices managed by the Forest Department (FD) under the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC). There was inadequate documentation and archiving, data were incomplete and there were inconsistencies in data produced by different entities. To address these issues, the Bangladesh Forest Information System (BFIS) was launched in December 2018 by the FD. BFIS is the first forest information system in the country to assess, monitor, document, plan and implement forest management and conservation activities at national scale. It is an integrated and comprehensive system where all forest-related information is organized into categories to enable searches and visualization of information.

Actors and stakeholders

The Resources Information Management System (RIMS) unit of the FD under the MoEFCC is responsible for BFIS maintenance and updates. It is hosted in the Data Centre of the Bangladesh Computer Council. The BFIS platform was developed with technical input from FAO and financial support from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the UN-REDD Bangladesh National Programme.

Replicability and upscaling

Administrative protocols allow FD managers to share data as appropriate. A user manual has been developed for system operation and maintenance as well as guide end users in the right to information Act, a data-sharing policy has been formulated to provide data under FD terms and conditions. All BFIS documents are referenced and archived, and the information is well documented.



Objectives

- Provide access to the most current, consistent, documented and reliable information on forest resources through a single web-based platform, taking into account the latest international standards for data documentation and information and communications technology (ICT) development.
- Facilitate data sharing, accessibility and management of forest-related data from a centralized and integrated web-based platform.
- Use the data for planning, implementing and monitoring multi-objective forest management and conservation activities, such as natural resources management, biodiversity monitoring, greenhouse gas accounting, commercial purposes, and climate change mitigation.
- Facilitate monitoring of the impacts of activities to achieve various national targets, including the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) related to the forest and land sector, the country's 7th Five Year Plan, the Bangladesh Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan (BCCSAP), the Country Investment Plan (CIP), and the Bangladesh Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), as well as other local and field level activities.
- Support digitalization in Bangladesh by enhancing the utilization of innovative digital technologies.

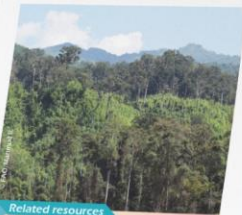
Challenges

Challenges to the sustainability of the platform include financial sustainability and lack of information technology (IT) professionals and other skilled personnel with strong technical capacities for the coordination and management of information systems in the FD.

Testimony

Mr Md Amir Hossain Chowdhury, Chief Conservator of Forests, Bangladesh Forest Department has stated that:

"The Bangladesh Forest Information System (BFIS) will contribute to preserving and maintaining all scattered information in one place, therefore the Forest Department has a key role in contributing towards the goal of digital Bangladesh. The Government of Bangladesh fund will be managed for BFIS maintenance. The BFIS modules will be enriched and updated on a regular basis so that all stakeholders will benefit through BFIS."



Related resources

- Chakma, A., Chakma, P. & Henry, M. 2018. Proceedings of Bangladesh Forest Information System launching, 18 December 2018. Rome, FAO and Dhaka, Bangladesh Forest Department (also available at <http://bfs.mforest.gov.bd/library/proceedings-of-bangladesh-forest-information-system-launching/>)
- Satter, N. & Henry, M. 2017. Proceedings of the training on the Bangladesh Forest Information System (BFIS), 6-9 June 2017, Rome, FAO, and Dhaka, Bangladesh Forest Department (also available at <http://bfs.mforest.gov.bd/library/proceedings-of-the-training-on-the-bangladesh-forest-information-system-bfis/>)

Impact

- Seven modules have been developed and organized into four categories: (1) development activities; (2) management and conservation; (3) forest assessment; and (4) knowledge management. The modules have user-friendly interfaces and allow users to manage and access forest-related data and databases, maps and reports that were not previously available in digital format. More modules are under development.
- A rich collection of university theses, survey data, manuals and technical reports from different projects and institutions involved in the forestry sector are digitally available from central databases.
- Enhanced ability of officials to manage databases related to forest cover assessment is resulting in improved data collection, processing and analysis for future use and planning. A total of 259 people, including 70 women, have been trained under the UN-REDD Bangladesh National Programme; and technical capacities strengthened on a number of topics, including GIS, forest statistics and modelling, development of allometric equations, activity data and emission factors for REDD+ forest reference levels, etc.

Success factors

- Country ownership and responsibility:** The Resources Information Management System of the Forest Department is responsible for managing and updating the BFIS and its modules. Currently, the FD is developing the Site-Specific Planning and Plantation modules, and several other modules are underway.
- Institutionalization of BFIS:** A Service Level Agreement has been signed between the FD and the Bangladesh Computer Council, ensuring the sustainable management and maintenance of the BFIS. The BFIS platform has also been integrated with the FD website.
- Integration and consistency with existing information sources:** All the reports related to forest resources inventory, assessment and monitoring are available in BFIS. The BFIS GeoPortal module is compatible with the ISO standard Land Cover Classification System for producing consistent and comparable land cover data. The GeoPortal is also interoperable with GeoNode, which is an open source geospatial content management system for interacting and sharing geospatial data. An ArcGIS [geographic information system] plugin has been developed to upload large data files in the GeoPortal, as well as other data formats such as GeoDB.
- Well-defined data and information-sharing policy:** A data-sharing policy has been approved by the MoEFCC.
- Participatory discussion process:** Feedback on the development of the BFIS has been collected from various stakeholders (academicians, sector specialists, FD, end users, etc.) and used to improve the platform and its functionalities.
- Feasibility, including cost efficiency:** Long-term funding is required to ensure the sustainability of BFIS. Some modules, such as the Site-Specific Plans, are currently being developed with World Bank funding under the Sustainable Forest and Livelihood (SUFAL) project.



The platform is accessible via bfs.mforest.gov.bd/bfis/
The BFIS video is accessible via www.youtube.com/watch?v=B7zCcyNbhk
For more information, please contact bfs.rims.fdi@gmail.com



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The "good practice" study on which this leaflet is based was developed under the project: Building global capacity to increase transparency in the forest sector trust fund of the Global Environment Facility (GEF)

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Case study Bangladesh

<http://www.fao.org/3/cb1912en/cb1912en.pdf> (EN)



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Thanks for your attention

<http://www.fao.org/in-action/boosting-transparency-forest-data/en/>

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