

# Institutionalization of forest data

## Lesson 3: Stepwise approach and best practices linked to an NFMS legal instrument

Text-only version

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This lesson describes the **stepwise approach** adopted by FAO to **guide** the development of a **legal instrument** aimed at institutionalizing a National Forest Monitoring System (NFMS). It introduces the NFMS **legal assessment matrix** and the **checklist tool** to assist countries in identifying relevant elements contained in legal and institutional arrangements for NFMS, presenting some **lessons learned**. Lastly, it describes the importance of an **NFMS assessment tool** to assist countries in strengthening their NFMS, paving the way for the establishment of a future **National Forest Monitoring (NFM) strategy**.

## Learning objectives

At the end of this lesson, you will be able to:

- understand the stepwise approach to adopting an NFMS legal instrument;
- apply the NFMS legal assessment matrix and the checklist tool, identifying good practices of countries that have adopted successful legal provisions; and
- describe the NFMS assessment tool and set the scene for an NFM strategy.

## Importance of focusing on NFMS legal instruments

As we saw in **Lesson 2**, FAO has provided assistance to countries to strengthen their legal capacity to establish an NFMS. The approach has been to develop an in-depth understanding of legal and regulatory aspects related to NFMS and support the design of robust and coherent legal frameworks at national level.



The main counterparts are **national governments** that have expressed concerns about the need to update or review existing legal frameworks to institutionalize an NFMS.

## Activities performed by a team of technical experts

Typically, a team of national and international legal and other technical experts performs the following activities:

1. It then develops detailed recommendations addressed to the government, highlighting weaknesses and constraints.
2. It conducts a systematic analysis of the legal framework related to forest, land and natural resources.
3. It contributes to the drafting of new laws and regulations, or other specialized legal instruments that may refer to a specific subject area, through participatory and inclusive processes.



### FAO's legal support approach

The approach adopted in providing legal support to countries is based on the long experience of **FAO's Development Law Service (LEGN)** and the **Forestry Division (NFO)** in helping nations to analyse and improve their laws governing forest, land and natural resources. The type of assistance provided varies, depending on the country's particular needs and circumstances. **FAOLEX** is a comprehensive legal database that facilitates direct access to relevant laws and policies.

### National officials and consultants

A feature of most advisory projects is capacity building through participatory legal training of national officials and consultants.

## Stepwise approach to adopting an NFMS legal instrument

The stepwise approach is based on:

- systematic **gap analysis** of the legal framework;
- development of detailed **recommendations** for government, highlighting weaknesses and constraints; and
- a contribution to the **drafting of new laws and regulations**.

In order to support countries in setting in place a **legal framework aimed at regulating their NFMS**, the following **stepwise approach** has been adopted.

### Stepwise approach for developing in-depth NFMS legal analysis

This table summarizes a stepwise approach for developing an in-depth legal analysis and drafting an NFMS legal instrument that will support regulation of the NFMS (FAO, 2021). **Steps 1 and 2** correspond to the legal review, **Step 3** to the gap assessment, and **Step 4** to the law-making process.

Legal review	Gap assessment	Law-making
1. Legal analysis of the forest and related legal frameworks, focusing on NFMS aspects, including international reporting commitments, and existing normative regarding the use of forest data Current forest > 20 % canopy cover.	2. Define the articles to be contained in a decree, agreement or law, which are needed to bridge the gaps and recommend legal reforms.	3. Based on the findings of the validated legal report, draft the NFMS legal instrument.
4. Interview key stakeholders of the different institutions involved in NFMS activities, to have a better understanding of the related challenges and gaps which will be reflected in the final legal report.	5. Identify the most appropriate legal instrument to introduce norms and procedures for the operation of their NFMS aspects, in coordination with relevant institutions.	6. Share the draft legal instrument or the proposal of legal reform with relevant stakeholders to integrate their views in the final version.
		7. Channel the final draft NFMS legal instrument through the appropriate national entity for adoption.

<b>STEP 1</b>	The first step is to <b>collect relevant laws</b> and <b>analyse the existing forest-related legal framework</b> , focusing on aspects related to the National Forest Monitoring System. In particular, the legal expert assigned to this task identifies and collects the norms and provisions (of laws and regulations) that establish the institutional framework and defines the roles and mandates of the institutions involved in NFMS activities at national and subnational levels.
<b>STEP 2</b>	The second step will entail <b>organizing interviews with key actors</b> of the institutions involved in the activities, to have a better understanding of the challenges, relevant tools and risks identified in NFMS implementation. The expert will <b>identify the platforms, fora and other dialogue mechanisms</b> that can facilitate an exchange of data in the process of building an NFMS. A legal analysis containing <b>key recommendations</b> will then be conducted, and validated by key stakeholders through national workshops.
<b>STEP 3</b>	In the light of these recommendations, the legal expert, in collaboration with the legal units of relevant forest-related institutions, will present <b>options for developing relevant provisions</b> that regulate and provide clarity on the roles and functions of the institutional entities involved in the NFMS, identifying the most appropriate legal instrument.
<b>STEP 4</b>	<p>The <b>draft legal instrument</b> (e.g. decree, resolution, ministerial agreement) will be shared with key stakeholders through national workshops, to receive their feedback. The revised version will then be channelled through the appropriate institution for adoption. Alternatively, single provisions or a series of articles can be drafted and incorporated in the forest-related instrument under revision by the national authorities (forest law or regulation).</p> <p>This is explained in the paper '<a href="#">Institutionalization of forest data: Establishing legal frameworks for sustainable forest monitoring in REDD+ countries</a>'</p>

### NFMS legal assessment matrix

The NFMS legal assessment matrix can facilitate the identification of legal provisions and gaps related to access to forestry information, by assessing legislation indicating the type of information, sources,

modalities and receptors/users of forest data produced by national institutions. These tasks can be undertaken by the legal teams of the forestry institution, in collaboration with FAO if no resources are available to recruit a legal consultant. This does not replace an in-depth legal analysis on the subject matter.

Relevant aspects regulated by law that relate to access to information and data-sharing issues	Access to information by users generated by public institutions	Conditions and requirements for sharing (not confidential) data between public institutions (within the same or different institutions)	Conditions and requirements for sharing (confidential) data between public institutions, that might need to be aggregated	Information flow between the institutions that generate environmental/forest information with identification of roles and responsibilities	Definition of the conditions, modalities and requirements to access environmental/forest information by users
Legal Instruments containing provisions related to data-sharing and access to inform issues	<p><b>Each cell can be filled by including relevant provisions or articles regulating each single aspect indicated in the column, if no legislation is available, a gap is detected.</b></p>				
Constitution					
Access to Information law					
Forestry law					
Others					
Observations					



In 2020, the matrix was developed to assist the National Forest Conservation Institute of Honduras in carrying out a legal gap analysis and developing a data-sharing protocol.

## Legal instruments adopted by countries in the case studies

The experience gathered through the **case studies presented in the following slides** highlights important lessons learned, which may benefit other countries.

**A** It will be fundamental to have **clarity on the way that a country's NFMS operates**, and establish interoperability mechanisms to ensure data accessibility among different institutions and coordination of consultative bodies.

**B** A system that defines the **information flow from national to subnational level, and vice-versa**, is essential. If that involves other sectors, the different ministries and competent entities should be involved from the beginning in the design of the monitoring system. Their corresponding roles and functions should then be defined within the same legal instrument.

**C** Finally, having **clarity on the government's priorities** is also a critical ingredient, to ensure that the draft legal instrument responds to the country's concrete needs.



### Types of legal instrument

In conditions of legal uncertainty, it will often take longer than expected to introduce legal reforms to address these issues effectively. Progress will depend on **political will** and **priorities settled by the government**. On the other hand, if the **forestry or climate change legislation** is under consultation, this may present an opportunity to raise such concerns, and encourage informed discussions among the parties to institutionalize an NFMS.

Reliance may also be placed on **secondary legislation** adopted by the executive body, which does not require the approval of the legislative body, such as a ministerial regulation or a decree.

Other effective legal instruments may be **contracts** among the interested and affected parties. The government and relevant institutions will then contractually **agree** how to share **responsibilities** and forest data **information** (e.g. data-sharing agreements).



## Case studies showcasing legal instruments adopted by countries to establish an NFMS

We showcase best practices through a **selection of country case studies**. Each one demonstrates concrete results in establishing legal arrangements to strengthen the foundations for an NFMS.

The description of the case studies is based on national experiences, and therefore presents a variety of processes, timing and types of legal instrument and content. The aim is not to compare one country with another, but to **learn from their achievements** in a complementary manner.



An analysis of the case studies, together with the VGNFM, led to the design of a checklist, which identifies relevant elements contained in legal and institutional arrangements for an NFMS.

### **Checklist tool to assist countries in identifying features that should be included in an NFMS legal instrument**

This checklist may facilitate the assessment of their inclusion in the legal text during the drafting process, and help to clarify if further consultations are needed to that end. This is neither exhaustive, nor does it imply that countries need to make more effort to improve their norms, but it enables a rapid assessment to be made in order to ascertain whether the major indicative elements contained in the recommendations are reflected in the legal texts. An example of an NFMS legal instrument from Colombia is available in [FAOLEX](#).

## Latin America: Case studies of developing an NFMS legal instrument

**Latin American and Caribbean countries (LAC) cases** are presented with a summary of the main elements contained in the legal instruments endorsed by the competent bodies.

### **➡ Peru**

In Peru, Forests, Wildlife Law n. 29763 and its regulations (2015) address implementation of the National Forest and Wildlife Information System (SNIFFS), led by the General Direction of Information, Forests and Wildlife Management of the National Forest and Wildlife Service (SERFOR). In 2017, SERFOR developed a conceptual framework, a descriptive guide of its components, and a governance plan describing how SNIFFS will operate. Resolution n.33/21 was adopted in 2021 by SERFOR-MINAGRI (Ministry of Agrarian Development and Irrigation) approving the document's "content, scope and

generalities of the monitoring module of the SNIFFS” and allocating responsibility to conduct those activities to the Directorate for the Control of Forest and Wildlife Heritage Management.

#### Checklist of key elements contained in the legal instrument establishing the Peru NFMS

Topics	Inclusion in the legal instrument
Clear definitions and concepts	x
Inclusion of principles (transparency, interoperability etc.)	x
Designation of responsible entities	x
Definition of functions among the different entities involved	x
Involvement of national, subnational entities and other key actors	x
Coordination mechanisms	x
Governance structure in place	x
Integrated reporting processes and methodological aspects	x
Financial sustainability	x
Alignment with national legislation	x

#### ➤ Paraguay

In 2018, Paraguay adopted law 6256/2018, regulating the functioning of its NFMS. In 2020, the President of the Republic adopted decree n. 3246/2020, jointly developed by the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development (MADS) and the National Forest Institute (INFON) to implement that provision. The decree contains guiding principles, definitions and provisions aimed at guaranteeing financial sustainability and clarifying institutional responsibilities. Within 90 working days from the date of this decree, MADS and INFONA shall enter into an interinstitutional cooperation agreement on the technical and operational aspects for carrying out and implementing the NFMS.

#### Checklist of key elements contained in the legal instrument establishing the Paraguay NFMS

Topics	Inclusion in the legal instrument
Clear definitions and concepts	x
Inclusion of principles (transparency, interoperability etc.)	x
Designation of responsible entities	x
Definition of functions among the different entities involved	x
Involvement of national, subnational entities and other key actors	x
Coordination mechanisms	x
Governance structure in place	x
Integrated reporting processes and methodological aspects	x
Financial sustainability	x
Alignment with national legislation	x

## ➡ Costa Rica

Costa Rica has developed a national system for monitoring land cover, land use and ecosystems (SIMOCUTE), where different institutions and entities share data and information, based on established requirements and standards. In 2017, the Minister of Environment, Minister of Justice, Minister of Agriculture and Livestock and Director of the National Geo-environmental Information Center of Costa Rica submitted a draft decree for consultation aimed at regulating its functioning. The executive decree entered into force in 2021, after final rounds of consultations.

### Checklist of key elements contained in the legal instrument establishing the Costa Rica NFMS

Topics	Inclusion in the legal instrument
Clear definitions and concepts	x
Inclusion of principles (transparency, interoperability etc.)	x
Designation of responsible entities	x

Definition of functions among the different entities involved	<b>x</b>
Involvement of national, subnational entities and other key actors	<b>x</b>
Coordination mechanisms	<b>x</b>
Governance structure in place	<b>x</b>
Integrated reporting processes and methodological aspects	<b>x</b>
Financial sustainability	<b>x</b>
Alignment with national legislation	<b>x</b>

## 🔄 Ecuador

- In June 2019, Ecuador's Ministry of Environment (MoE) adopted a Ministerial Agreement to draw up institutional guidelines for the functioning of the NFMS. This served to ensure that the NFMS was more institutionalized, that integrated forest management was improved, and that there was compliance with relevant national and international commitments.
- The NFMS is designed to be holistic, multi-purpose and flexible, so as to integrate emerging issues and enable the planning of periodic revisions related to different aspects of natural heritage that come under the responsibility of the MoE.
- A special focus has been placed on developing coordination mechanisms with other units, as well as cooperation mechanisms with other state institutions, including academia, research institutes, cooperation organizations and private enterprises.
- The long-term financial sustainability of the NFMS still remains to be secured.

### Checklist of key elements contained in the legal instrument establishing the Ecuador NFMS

Topics	Inclusion in the legal instrument
Clear definitions and concepts	<b>x</b>
Inclusion of principles (transparency, interoperability etc.)	<b>x</b>

Designation of responsible entities	<b>x</b>
Definition of functions among the different entities involved	
Involvement of national, subnational entities and other key actors	<b>x</b>
Coordination mechanisms	<b>x</b>
Governance structure in place	
Integrated reporting processes and methodological aspects	<b>x</b>
Financial sustainability	
Alignment with national legislation	<b>x</b>

## 🔄 Honduras

- In Honduras, the first step was to consolidate the Forest Monitoring and Management Information System (SIGMOF) and its team's capacities within the Wildlife, Protected Areas, Forest Development and Conservation Institute (ICF).
- Subsequently, the ICF took the lead internally to develop a ministerial agreement regulating SIGMOF.
- The objective of SIGMOF is to implement a platform aimed at generating statistics and spatial information in an integrated and efficient manner through the ICF.
- The information provided by SIGMOF is then updated according to existing legal commitments, and other obligations assumed at international level.
- The Consultation Council identifies financial opportunities to strengthen SIGMOF, which is essential to guarantee its sustainability in the long term.
- Fostering internal capacities within the ICF and having clarity on the governance structure of SIGMOF were paramount to developing a regulatory framework founded on a solid basis.
- In 2019, the Ministry of ICF adopted an Agreement (Acuerdo 2/2019) aiming to create and operationalize SIGMOF. The overall objective was to implement a platform aimed at facilitating the management, production, consultation and interpretation of data and statistics related to forests and land-use change, in order to duly inform decision-making processes.

**Checklist of key elements contained in the legal instrument establishing the Honduras NFMS**

Topics	Inclusion in the legal instrument
Clear definitions and concepts	x
Inclusion of principles (transparency, interoperability etc.)	x
Designation of responsible entities	x
Definition of functions among the different entities involved	x
Involvement of national, subnational entities and other key actors	x
Coordination mechanisms	x
Governance structure in place	x
Integrated reporting processes and methodological aspects	x
Financial sustainability	x
Alignment with national legislation	x

**➡ Colombia**

- Legal options for an NFMS in Colombia were assessed at the very early stages of NFMS development.
- Strong political will and commitment from the Government and stakeholders was essential to a smooth process of institutionalizing the NFMS.
- The FAO legal checklist tool was used to guide the process of developing preferred legal instruments and support was provided through the UN-REDD Programme.
- A coordinated approach to the National Forest Information System, the National Forest Inventory and the Forest and Carbon Monitoring System has proved to be a successful solution in Colombia, recognized by decree 1655/2017, which regulates their functioning.

**Checklist of key elements contained in the legal instrument establishing the Columbia NFMS**

Topics	Inclusion in the legal instrument
Clear definitions and concepts	x
Inclusion of principles (transparency, interoperability etc.)	x
Designation of responsible entities	x
Definition of functions among the different entities involved	x
Involvement of national, subnational entities and other key actors	x
Coordination mechanisms	x
Governance structure in place	
Integrated reporting processes and methodological aspects	x
Financial sustainability	
Alignment with national legislation	x

### Asia-Pacific and Africa: Case studies of developing an NFMS legal instrument

Country cases from **Asia-Pacific and Africa** show relevant aspects linked to the development of an NFMS legal instrument or a data-sharing agreement that may converge with the adoption of regulatory instruments.

#### ➞ Democratic Republic of the Congo

In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the NFMS is managed by the Direction of Forest Management and Inventories (DIAF) and the Direction of Sustainable Development (DDD) of the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development (MEDD). Efforts have been to improve coordination mechanisms, not yet regulated by law.

#### ➞ Sri Lanka

In Sri Lanka, the NFMS was officially launched on May 2017. In order to facilitate its establishment, several institutions entered into a data-sharing agreement under the auspices of the Forest Department.

Although this agreement may be considered an interim measure before reinforcing institutional arrangements among various national entities, it has been instrumental in advancing the establishment of the NFMS. Efforts are still required to collect forest data, consolidate information systematically, and formalize the establishment of the NFMS.

## ➡ Uganda

In Uganda, a comprehensive review was recently conducted of the roles and responsibilities related to the NFMS and its alignment with national forest policy, in order to promote its institutionalization. Institutional mandates and the Government's responsibilities in relation to the forestry sector are clearly defined, but not yet formalized by law.

Further attention is required, including strengthening coordination among key entities, guaranteeing financial sustainability (principally for staffing), and clarifying data access rights.

### Checklist of key elements aiming to be reflected in the legal instrument establishing the Uganda NFMS

Topics	Inclusion in the legal instrument
Clear definitions and concepts	x
Inclusion of principles (transparency, interoperability etc.)	Discussion ongoing*
Designation of responsible entities	x
Definition of functions among the different entities involved	x
Involvement of national, subnational entities and other key actors	Discussion ongoing*
Coordination mechanisms	x
Governance structure in place	x
Integrated reporting processes and methodological aspects	x
Financial sustainability	Discussion ongoing *
Alignment with national legislation	x

*\*At the time of publication of this technical brief.*



## Towards more transparent information systems

Since the majority of countries have now ratified the Paris Climate Agreement and made ambitious commitments to reduce carbon emissions from the forest sector in their Nationally Determined Contributions, National Forest Monitoring Systems are increasingly being used to manage forest- and land-related data. It is therefore imperative to develop information systems that are transparent, multi-purpose and accessible to the public.



### Stronger commitment and political will

The countries showcased display a strong commitment to institutionalizing their NFMS, and this is reflected in **political decisions** taken to adopt legal instruments for their sustainability. Each of the case studies describes significant progress made in establishing **coordination mechanisms among relevant institutions** to facilitate data-sharing through unique information systems, while drawing up guiding principles and harmonized methodologies to operationalize the NFMS.

However, it remains clear that major efforts will be required to implement those recently adopted NFMS regulations, even if a growing number of countries are demonstrating increased capacities and concrete willingness to move in that direction.

## Clear and sustainable forest-related institutional mandates

Due to the evolving context, in order to ensure that clear and sustainable forest-related institutional mandates are established by law and supported by sound governance structures, the following aspects will be critical:

**Legal expertise:** This will ensure that institutional and legal elements are embedded in the NFMS design, which will in turn help to develop legal instruments for establishing and implementing options.

**Strengthening human and technical:** capacities, while creating the conditions to design, implement and evaluate options for improved climate action in the forest sector, will require setting in place institutional arrangements for the collection, analysis and reporting of related data.

## Capacity assessment in forest monitoring

Building an NFMS is a complex national-scale effort that must consider multiple **institutional, technical and financial aspects**. The system should increase transparency and the reliability of information produced, and ensure a long-term perspective, through participatory processes that include multiple stakeholders with different skills, who must be identified and informed throughout. The stakeholders should draw on their breadth of knowledge to identify needs and gaps in order to achieve a robust and sustainable NFMS that captures and delivers continuous information on a country's forests.

In the context of forest monitoring, a national capacity assessment aims to provide a broader picture of an NFMS, in terms of strengths, weaknesses and opportunities. To support efforts towards sound and impactful forest monitoring, FAO has developed an **NFMS assessment tool** to help countries identify capacity gaps and weaknesses, in order to address their real needs in a targeted manner.

## The NFMS assessment tool

The NFMS assessment tool is based on FAO's VGNFM reinforced with the REDD compass resources of the Global Forest Observations Initiative (GFOI). It also incorporates 50 years of FAO experience gained in the field.

### ➡ What is the NFMS assessment tool?

The assessment tool, which provides an easy way to use and implement the VGNFM, is **free, Excel-based and available in Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish**. The tool supports the strengthening of an existing NFMS, including capacity assessment of the system and facilitation of dialogue with key national stakeholders, helping to pool their first-hand knowledge of a problem or development challenge and identify possible solutions. It also helps to identify the institutional dynamics, strengths, weaknesses and opportunities for improvement of an NFMS.

### ➡ What is the aim of the NFMS assessment tool?

The tool aims to assist countries in carrying out a comprehensive capacity assessment of forest monitoring across three complementary themes:

1. institutional arrangements;
2. measurement and estimation; and
3. reporting and verification.

In addition to an in-depth legal gap analysis, it may be used to identify institutional gaps and needs to operationalize an NFMS.

### ➡ How can a country benefit from the tool?

The NFMS assessment tool aims to assist countries in strengthening their NFMS by:

- facilitating understanding of FAO's VGNFM;
- identifying needs, gaps and weaknesses, enhancing opportunities to focus a country's efforts and investments;
- helping to organize international cooperation and build a workplan together with stakeholders and partners;
- assessing progress in identifying capacity gaps in forest monitoring;
- encouraging harmonization of processes to set up a stronger and more robust NFMS.



The NFMS assessment tool is available in Lesson 2 of the course: [Forests and Transparency under the Paris Agreement](#).

### What does the tool consist of?

The NFMS assessment tool is aimed at country stakeholders responsible for forest monitoring through good practices. The tool presents good practice guidance and examples for three complementary themes - **institutional arrangements, measurement and estimation, and reporting and verification**.

The graphic highlights institutional arrangements as the foundation of a robust and sustainable NFMS, which the other two themes build on.

#### Measurement and estimation

- |                                       |   |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| • identification of information needs | • operational design (field and remote sensing)       |
| • preparation                         | • design for field data collection and remote sensing |
| • data management and archiving       | • data management, data analysis and documentation    |

#### Institutional arrangements

- institutionalization
- developing partnerships and collaboration
- mandate
- stakeholder identification and engagement
- developing national capacity
- impact assessment
- integration of young experts
- strengthening research and research institutions in forest monitoring

#### Reporting and verification

- communication and dissemination
- preparation and submission of reports

## National Forest Monitoring Strategy

A National Forest Monitoring (NFM) Strategy is a comprehensive plan that outlines the **goals and objectives of a country in Forest Monitoring**. It is essential to have an NFM Strategy as it provides direction and coherence to government actions, promotes accountability and transparency, and ensures the efficient use of resources. Here are some key reasons why designing and implementing an NFM Strategy is essential:

**Aligning priorities:** A National Strategy helps to align national priorities with the needs and aspirations of the people. By setting out a clear vision, objectives and targets, the government can focus on delivering policies and programmes that are in the country's best interests.

**Coordination and collaboration:** A National Strategy facilitates coordination and collaboration among different government departments and agencies and between the public and private sectors. This helps to avoid the duplication of efforts, improve efficiency, and achieve better outcomes.

**Efficient resource allocation:** A National Strategy helps to allocate resources efficiently and effectively. By prioritizing areas of investment and targeting resources where they are most needed, the government can maximize the impact of its spending.

**Accountability and transparency:** A National Strategy provides a framework for accountability and transparency. By setting out clear objectives and targets, the government can be held accountable for its performance and make progress towards achieving its goals.

**Risk management:** A National Strategy can help to identify and mitigate risks to the country's security, stability and prosperity. By anticipating potential challenges and developing contingency plans, the government can be better prepared to deal with crises and emergencies.

### Importance of an NFM Strategy

An NFM Strategy is important because it provides a framework for aligning priorities, coordinating actions, allocating resources, ensuring accountability, and managing risks. Designing and implementing an NFM Strategy requires careful planning, stakeholder engagement, and effective communication. However, the benefits of having a National Strategy far outweigh the costs, and it is an essential tool for any country that wants to monitor its forest resources.

### Summary

In this lesson, you have learned that:

- In order to support developing countries in moving towards a more **solid institutional setting**, FAO has adopted a stepwise approach to guiding the development and adoption of a **legal instrument** aimed at institutionalizing an **NFMS**.
- Thanks to the support of the **checklist tool**, good practices and lessons learned from successful countries are useful to demonstrate concrete results in establishing **legal arrangements** to strengthen the **foundations** for an **NFMS**.
- The **NFMS assessment tool** facilitates the identification of needs and gaps in order to establish or strengthen a country's NFMS across three complementary themes: institutional arrangements; measurement and estimation; and reporting and verification.
- An **NFM Strategy** can outline the goals and objectives of a country in Forest Monitoring, providing **direction** and **coherence** to government actions, and promoting **accountability** and **transparency**.