

EFI GOVERNANCE programme

Liaising transformative research with informed policy support

Why a EFI Governance Programme?

Governance, together with Bioeconomy and Resilience, is one of the three EFI strategy themes (see EFI Strategy [link](#)). EFI's past experience and capacities on global forest governance have been linked to the FLEGT and REDD Unit (<https://www.efi.int/flegt>), which during the last 12 years, has worked on forest governance at policy implementation level, namely on FLEGT and REDD questions, at the interface of Europe and 15 tropical countries¹ in three continents. In order to realise the new EFI strategy, in recent years EFI has substantially increase its internal research capacities on forest governance and has also promoted within its more than 120 member organizations in Europe (many of them world leading research organizations in forest policy and governance) a *Forest Policy and Governance Research Network* to enhance transnational scientific collaboration under the leadership of University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences, Vienna (BOKU). In addition, EFI works at the science policy and science media interface, both very much relevant to develop an informed dialogue on global forest governance, as exemplified through the policy support facility <https://www.efi.int/policysupport> and the flagship activity under the Lookout Station initiative (<https://thelookoutstation.com/>). Finally, EFI has established a new partnership with **CIFOR** in order to maximise synergies in the context of the new Governance Programme. The established collaboration with **IUFRO** in recent years (e.g., Young Scientist Initiative) can be as well a good basis to identify joint initiatives under the new Programme.

1 Challenges and ambition

Sustainably managed forests have globally an immense potential to contribute to more sustainable patterns of the planet's socio-economic and environmental systems – replacing fossil fuels and non-renewable raw materials, and providing nature-based solutions through their ecosystem services.

However, also important threats and challenges are affecting forests globally. In most tropical countries, deforestation and degradation of primary forests is a major concern of global implications, while in temperate and boreal forests main concerns are related to the impacts of climate change and on how to address the multifunctional role of forests to serve increasingly conflicting societal demands.

Unlocking the potential of the world's forests to contribute to sustainable development requires good governance to address trade-offs and to maximise synergies between different forest goods and services as well as expectations

¹ 15 tropical countries (Cameroon, Central African Republic, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of Congo, Gabon, Ghana, Guyana, Honduras, Indonesia, Laos, Liberia, Malaysia, Republic of Congo, Thailand, Vietnam) are negotiating and implementing FLEGT agreements with EU

between the stakeholders. All this requires scientific knowledge and appropriate science-policy-practice-media dialogues.

The **Governance Programme ambition** is to generate solution-oriented and science-based knowledge to promote an informed governance dialogue to support actions to sustainably manage all types of forests and halt deforestation and forest degradation.

2 Aim, topics and activities

The **aim** of the Governance programme is to make a contribution to good forest governance in order to stop deforestation and forest degradation and promote sustainable forest management globally as a fundamental basis for sustainable development. The following **topics** are a priority for research in the governance programme:

- Understanding, comparing and characterising failures and successes as a basis for new forest governance mechanisms to address deforestation and unsustainable use of forest resources in different world regions.
- Drawing lessons from FLEGT and REDD and developing ways forward for combined synergies.
- Analyzing the role of sustainable finance, agricultural commodities supply chains and international trade in deforestation and sustainable forest management.
- Exploring the role of media, information and market transparency in supporting good governance and sustainable forest management.

A unique element of the Governance Programme is the direct access to experienced policy support and governance experts, namely from EFI's FLEGT and REDD Unit as well as decision makers and practitioners closely collaborating with them.

Examples of key **activities** are:

- **Interdisciplinary studies on forest governance** to assess challenges, opportunities and trends in different world regions.
- **Research-practice and research-media tandems** to address and communicate urgent forest governance questions in short time.
- **Science-policy-practice and science-media events** on global forest governance questions resulting on policy and journalistic papers.

3 Location, resources

The Governance programme will be coordinated from the EFI Office in Bonn. The Government of Germany, through the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry in Germany (BMEL), will be a main funder of the programme. EFI will seek funding from other interested countries as well as EU sources. Staff of the programme will

also be present in EFI Barcelona to ensure cooperation with experts and scientists located there.

Additional benefits of Bonn

Bonn is the hub for international organizations, research institutes, public administration and NGOs dealing with sustainable development, environmental and natural resource governance globally. Moreover, there are several research and policy support institutions and initiatives of high relevance for forest governance located in Bonn. This Bonn-based global network will specifically facilitate EFI's work at the science-policy interface.