



Forest Policy Modelling Forum: preparatory meeting highlights

On September 25, 2023, forest policy modellers participated in a preparatory meeting for the Forest Policy Modelling Forum (FPMF). Petr Havlík and Fulvio Di Fulvio introduced the Forum's rationale and objectives as well as the Forum's concept. Justin Baker presented examples of similar Fora from North America. Modellers presented a high-level overview of their modelling work using the EU scale GLOBIOM-G4M models, CBM model, and examples of national application of models in Czechia, Hungary, Ireland, and Slovakia. Andrey Lessa presented the strategy for operationalizing the FPMF and achieving harmonization across models and scales, outlining key building blocks such as aligning pathways, scenario definitions, and a common reporting template through the ForestNavigator Portal.

During the day, participants detailed the Forum's aim and governance: Participants stressed the importance of concentrating on designing pathways for achieving national and European policy targets and alignment across scales and models. The focus was shifted from determining exact policy questions to how to achieve targets and what future challenges might be. Furthermore, the Forum's role in addressing future challenges and the need for modelling to adapt to new demands and look beyond current commitments was widely supported.

A discussion on how to engage with various stakeholders beyond policymakers resulted in widespread agreement that the Forum should create knowledge and clarity of its results to the wider community. Participants discussed the role of modelers in aligning also to international policies and the importance of incorporating local scales. While it may not be feasible to include forest and land managers in the Forum itself, it is of critical importance to ensure these policy makers can use the Forum's results in their decision making, by making local implementation of actions consistent with pathways modelled at the different scales.

Participants emphasized the importance of linking data and data updates to the initiative for monitoring but also to allow for an improved understanding of differences across models. As a first step, modellers have agreed to run a simple scenario using same data to allow for cross model output comparison. It was stressed that integration across different models is an open invitation. Participants discussed concerns and strategized how to harmonize inputs and potential differences across models (such as climate drivers). Critical questions and discussion focused on defining the modeling scales for the Forum, level of spatial resolution and its relevance, and focus on implementing various targets, especially in relation to carbon removal certification schemes and understanding the impacts of natural disturbances at larger scales. The need for a joint understanding of issues like disturbances and CO₂ fertilization impacts in scenarios was highlighted, along with the Forum's potential role in providing recommendations based on adopted commitments in the forest sector.

A substantial future task of modellers is to develop consistent scenarios across scales and regions. Participants reiterated the need to find alignment while providing suggestions and strategies to define it. This substantial task will be a priority for an upcoming meeting. Next steps include further online meetings to compare existing models runs towards creation of stylized common scenarios, which will help to prepare for the first FPMF meeting in Brussels, September 2024. Further updates on date and location will be shared publicly when available.