

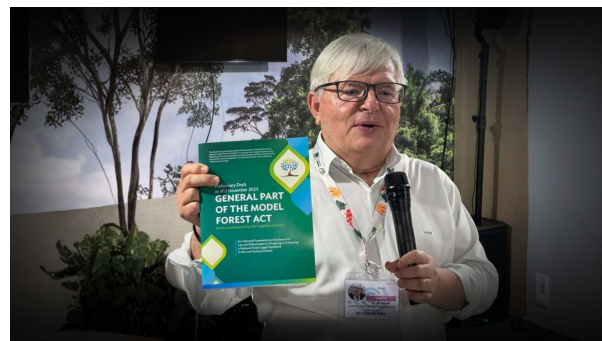


The Model Forest Act Initiative (MoFAI)

THE MODEL FOREST ACT INITIATIVE

Q1 2026, NO. 15

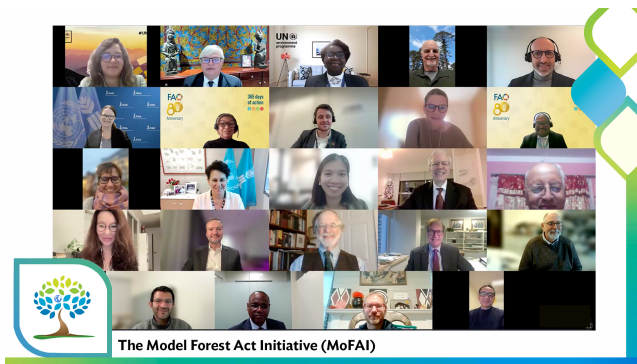
MOFAI UPDATES



MoFAI unveils preliminary draft at COP30 and convenes first Partners and Advisory Council Meeting

2025 has underscored—again—why forest governance matters. New satellite-based analysis for 2024 recorded 6.7 million hectares of tropical primary rainforest loss, driven largely by fires. In Southeast Asia, there are some encouraging signs: Indonesia reduced primary forest loss by 11% (2023–2024), and Malaysia saw a 13% decline, even as long-term pressures and conversion risks remain across the region. In the Pacific, forest loss also continues, for example, Papua New Guinea lost about 75,000 hectares of natural forest in 2024. These mixed trends reinforce the need for practical, adaptable legal tools that countries can tailor to their circumstances - an aim at MoFAI's core.

At UNFCCC COP30 in Belém, MoFAI presented the preliminary draft of the General Part of the Model Forest Act at the COP30 Forest Pavilion. The session convened judicial leaders, policymakers, and forest stakeholders to (i) introduce MoFAI as a global partnership for modernizing forest law, (ii) consult on key innovations and implementation needs, and (iii) identify post-COP30 entry points for piloting, capacity-building, and integration into national legal frameworks—toward the planned 2026 launch of the General Part and its companion Legislative Guide.



MoFAI then convened its first Partners and Advisory Council Meeting on 2 December 2025, with the Executive Board, Advisory Council, Drafting Committee, and Secretariat. Participants reaffirmed MoFAI's "shopping cart" approach and advised on next priorities, including refining the preamble/principles, reviewing ESIA-related provisions in light of the 2025 ICJ climate advisory opinion, addressing bioeconomy-driven wood demand (including the role of planted/secondary forests), and strengthening integrity and anti-corruption safeguards. Partners also highlighted the Legislative Guide as central to country application, including through peer review and collaboration. The next meeting is tentatively planned for late March/early April 2026.

Finally, MoFAI, through ADB's Law and Policy Reform Program, also helped advQance Fiji's forestry reform, culminating in Parliament's enactment of the [Forestry Act 2025](#) on 1 December 2025. Working with international and national experts, including a MoFAI Drafting Committee member, the team supported the review of successive drafts, piloted selected elements of MoFAI's **General Part** in the Fijian context, and helped develop an implementation plan to support operationalization. The Act is now law, with commencement pending implementation readiness.

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For more information, please contact: mofaisecretariat@adb.org

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