GLF FORESTS 2025

Defining the next decade of action

24-25 APRIL 2025 | Bonn, Germany, and online
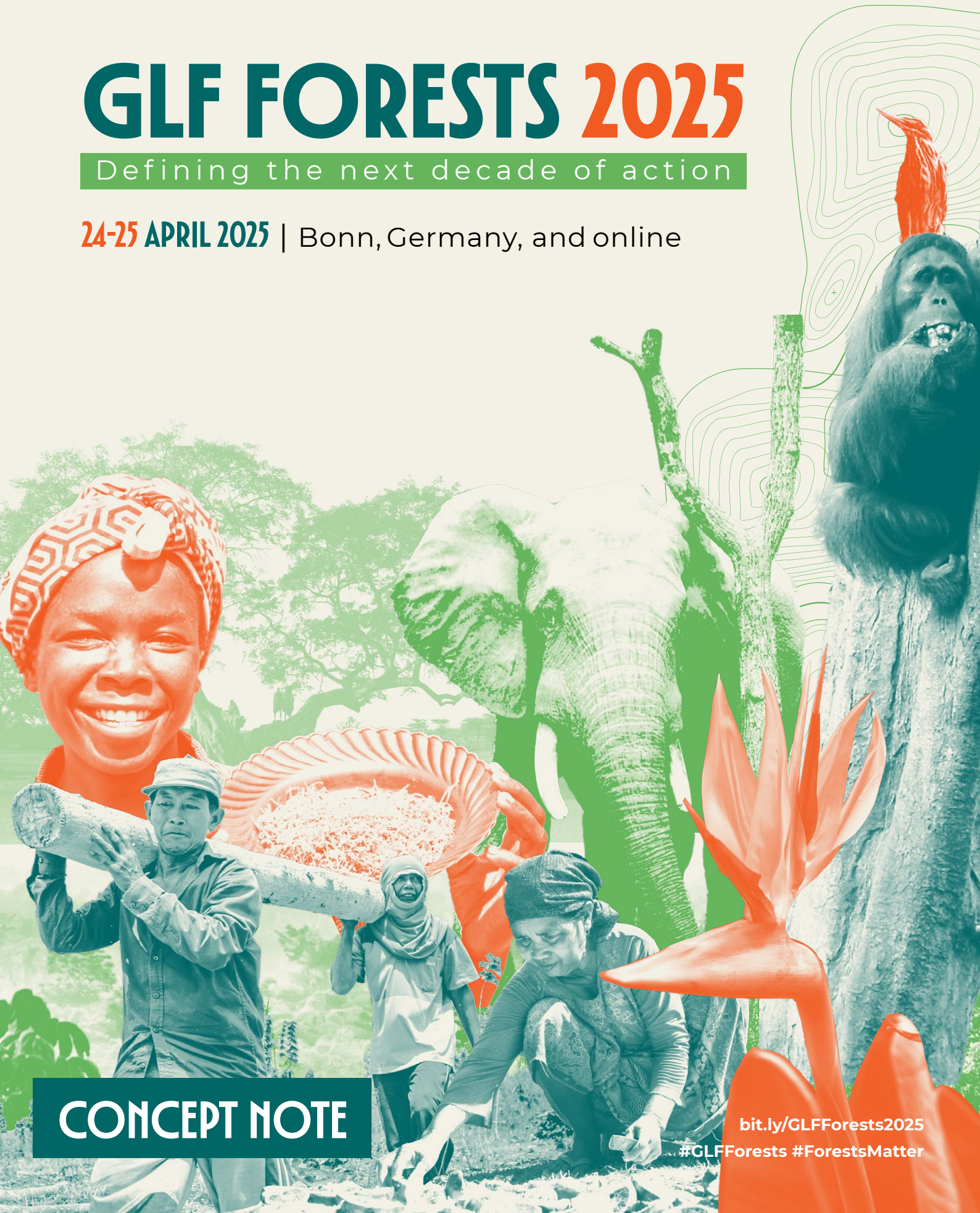
CONCEPT NOTE

CONTEXT

In 2024, global heating reached 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels, underscoring the urgent need for stronger climate action.

Forests play a critical role in nature-based solutions for climate and biodiversity, acting as essential carbon sinks, biodiversity reservoirs, and providing livelihoods for 1.6 billion people and food for 800 million. From tropical rainforests to temperate woodlands and coastal ecosystems, forests serve as vital carbon sinks, making them pivotal to addressing the climate crisis.

But the world's forests are under mounting pressure, and we now face the triple challenge of phasing out fossil fuels, sustainably transforming land use and achieving all of this through a just transition.

Held between the 2024 UN Climate Change Conference (COP29) in Baku, Azerbaijan, and the upcoming COP30 in Belém, Brazil, this conference will give the global community a unique opportunity to redefine the role and future of forest ecosystems – not only as a cornerstone of mitigation and adaptation, but also as catalysts for equitable and sustainable development and an integral part of human health and wellbeing.

So, what do we need to do to protect – and sustainably manage – forests over the next decade?

It is time to collectively envision and commit to a decade of bold climate action that prioritizes forest conservation, restoration and sustainable land use, ensuring their resilience and the well-being of the communities that depend on them and delivering benefits for the entire planet.

The decisions we make now will shape the future of our planet and determine whether we can secure a livable and thriving future for all.

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EVENT OBJECTIVES

GLF Forests 2025 is the ideal opportunity to develop the full potential of forest ecosystems and place them at the heart of climate and biodiversity action. It calls for the reshaping of international policy agendas and action at the pace and scale required to prevent climate catastrophe. It is important now to start thinking long-term and develop a strong agenda for climate action for the next decade and beyond.

Co-organized by CIFOR-ICRAF and the Global Landscapes Forum (GLF), this hybrid conference will gather hundreds of stakeholders in Bonn and online to define a future where forest ecosystems play a central role in securing a productive, protective, sustainable and just planet.

In this future, forests will be embedded in functional, healthy and productive landscapes that protect natural resources such as biodiversity, water and carbon for generations to come.

The event will:

- Facilitate the development of ideas and exchange of best practices, innovative solutions and traditional and scientific knowledge on forest conservation, restoration and sustainable management;
- Showcase impacts and learnings from forestry research and development programs, including 15 years of global comparative research on REDD+
- Foster South–South collaboration, strengthen partnerships and promote inclusive and transdisciplinary coalition building to drive collective action for forests;
- Pave the way for placing forest ecosystems at the forefront of the COP30 agenda and across the Rio Conventions by synergizing global policy goals
- Define priorities and actionable recommendations for the next decade of forest research, policy and action.

TOPICS TO BE EXPLORED

This conference builds on decades of experience and work on forests and climate at CIFOR-ICRAF and our many co-organizing partners. The following topics, to be explored at the conference, will be refined in collaboration with event partners, including a Knowledge Committee set up to provide the highest levels of thematic expertise.

Forest policies: Strengthening forest-based climate change mitigation, adaptation and resilience at COP30 and beyond

- Facilitate multi-actor dialogues to unify action on forests, mangroves and peatlands, bridging geopolitical divides and ensuring ecosystem resilience, despite policy shifts.
- Bridge the gap between high-level policy commitments and grassroots action by showcasing scalable models and successful case studies of forest conservation that were enabled by effective policy design.
- Discuss strategies to better integrate national action plans under the Rio Conventions through more cohesive planning.

@ Ricky Martin/CIFOR-ICRAF

Nature and climate finance

- Explore forest financing instruments, including domestic mechanisms (national forest funds, conservation trust funds, environmental fiscal reforms , etc.), market solutions (green bonds, impact finance, etc.), and blended finance models
- Promote direct access to finance and support locally-led and -owned funding mechanisms for local communities and Indigenous Peoples for equitable, inclusive and sustainable financing
- Achieve high-integrity carbon markets, addressing challenges in transparency, accountability and equitable benefit distribution as well as their role in supporting public finance instruments
- Showcase effective national policies and regulations that strengthen the implementation of Article 6 of the Paris Agreement

Rights and a just transition

- Identify and promote pathways that prioritize Indigenous, Afro-Descendant, local, women and youth leadership in forest conservation and climate action
- Discuss equitable solutions for addressing land use pressures, including recognition of Indigenous and community land rights
- Expand direct support to Indigenous Peoples and local communities to amplify their impact, influence broader landscapes, and contribute to nationally determined contributions and national biodiversity strategies and action plans.

Food, fibres, fuels: Biomass-based products and sustainable (forest-based) bioeconomy

- Foster resilient and multifunctional landscapes and balance the competing demands of food production, bioenergy, carbon storage and biodiversity conservation through an integrated landscape approach.
- Showcase innovations in sustainably sourced biomass-based products (e.g. timber, bioenergy and bioplastics) and forest-related entrepreneurship to reduce reliance on fossil fuels and promote bioeconomy
- Discuss implications of forest and non-forest policies (e.g. trade policies)

AI and technology

- Showcase cutting-edge technologies such as AI-powered deforestation and forest degradation detection systems, forest carbon monitoring platforms and mapping tools to promote transparency
- Promote community-led tech solutions and explore how to bridge the digital divide to make technologies and AI accessible to and beneficial for marginalized groups

@Nanang Sujana/CIFOR-ICRAF

EVENT FORMAT

This two-day hybrid conference will shape the global narrative around the critical role of forests in a sustainable and just future at a pivotal moment for global climate action.

The first day will offer a hybrid program of plenaries, sessions and interactive networking, developed and targeted for a broader global audience, bringing in 100 in-person participants and an additional 1,000 online participants from across Asia, Africa, Europe and Latin America. Through the open segment and campaign, this setting offers an opportunity for wider conversations, campaigns and shifting narratives at a global level.

A second day will be exclusively in-person. This will provide space for more in-depth workshops, roundtables and networking, offering attendees the opportunity to co-develop ideas and strategies to define the next decade of action for forests.

The event will be interactive and multilingual with simultaneous interpretation, allowing attendees to express a diverse range of perspectives and collectively craft a just path forward.

WHO IS THIS EVENT FOR?

GLF Forests 2025 will bring together a diverse array of attendees, including eminent forestry experts, practitioners and leaders in policy, research and international development, Indigenous and community leaders, youth activists, business and finance specialists and many more.

COMMUNITY AND ACTION

The voices of youth and local partners, including Restoration Stewards, the Youth in Landscapes network and GLFx chapters, will have a central role in shaping the conversation at GLF Forests 2025. Local experts and practitioners will share their knowledge on the cultural and ecological values of forests, as well as their vital role in tackling climate change and reversing biodiversity loss.

OUTREACH AND ENGAGEMENT

GLF Forests 2025 offers a powerful platform to influence global agendas ahead of COP30. Its two-day hybrid format allows for inclusive participation, facilitating dialogue across continents and time zones to maximize global reach and impact.

Pre- and post-event campaigns will engage diverse audiences, Social Media Ambassadors and partners across online channels and both traditional and social media.

@ Marlon del Aguila/CIFOR-ICRAF

ABOUT GLOBAL LANDSCAPES FORUM

The Global Landscapes Forum (GLF) is the world's largest knowledge-led platform on integrated land use, dedicated to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and Paris Climate Agreement. The Forum takes a holistic approach to create sustainable landscapes that are productive, prosperous, equitable and resilient and considers five cohesive themes of food and livelihoods, landscape restoration, rights, finance and measuring progress. It is led by the Center for International Forestry Research and World Agroforestry (CIFOR-ICRAF), in collaboration with its co-founders UNEP and the World Bank and Charter Members.

Charter members: CIAT, CIFOR-ICRAF, CIRAD, Climate Focus, Conservation International, Crop Trust, Ecoagriculture Partners, The European Forest Institute, Evergreen Agriculture, FAO, FSC, GEF, GIZ, ICIMOD, IFOAM - Organics International, The International Livestock Research Institute, INBAR, IPMG, IPAM Amazonia, IUFRO, Rainforest Alliance, Rare, Rights and Resources Initiative, SAN, SouthSouthNorth, TMG-Think Tank for Sustainability, UNCCD, UNEP, Wageningen Centre for Development Innovation part of Wageningen Research, World Farmer Organization, World Bank Group, World Resources Institute, WWF International, Youth in Landscapes Initiative (YIL)

Funding partners