



*Model Forests in Canada*

*International Model  
Forest Stewards*

**LESSON PLAN**



*Exploring Model Forest Frameworks in Canada*



# International Model Forest Stewards

Students will explore the importance of sustainable forest management practices, along with the Model Forest concept, and how it fits within the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. Working in groups, they will then explore the Model Forest Toolkit, using guided activities and handouts that lead them to propose a new Model Forest site.



Group or Discussion Activity



Research activity



Writing and Recording Activity



Extension

## Activity Information

**Level:** Grades 10–12

**Subject:** Geography and Social Sciences

**Estimated duration:** 90 minutes

**Materials:** *Starting a Model Forest* handout, *Proposed Model Forest Scoring Sheet* handout, laptops or tablets for research

## Learning Outcomes

Students will explore the concept of a Model Forest and how they align with the [United Nations Sustainable Development Goals](#). They will then select a local site that would be a good fit to become a Model Forest, and through the provided worksheet they will characterize how their proposed site fits within the Model Forest Network. They will then present their findings to the classroom and select a winning Model Forest.

## Teacher Background

The 1990s was a period of conflicting views within Canada’s forest industry, as various stakeholders like environmentalists, governments, Indigenous groups, communities, and forest professionals grappled with forest resource management. To solve this issue, the idea of Model Forests emerged, where each site was a “model” for others to learn from and collaborate with, and the aim was to shift the focus from solely valuing forests for timber, to also considering the social, environmental, economic, and cultural values of forests. The inception of ten Model Forests provided a neutral platform to explore and share diverse values and interests, and address common challenges facing sustainable forest management such as; logging practices, biodiversity conservation, and economic stability.

The success of these Model Forests led the Canadian government to establish an International Model Forest Network (IMFN) during the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) in Rio de Janeiro. The network served as a platform to share learnings and experiences from the Model Forests in Canada to global partners. The IMFN Secretariat was formally set up in 1995 and is currently housed by the Canadian government at Natural Resources Canada – Canadian Forest Service in Ottawa. Currently there are four Model Forests in Canada, with a diverse network of international Model Forests



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globally. The IMNF focuses provides a framework for social and scientific research, new technological developments, and capacity building for inclusive, equitable, and sustainable forest management that align with the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

### SOURCES

#### International Model Forest Network:

[imfn.net/about/history-of-the-imfn](http://imfn.net/about/history-of-the-imfn)

[imfn.net/model-forest/model-forests-and-sdgs](http://imfn.net/model-forest/model-forests-and-sdgs)

#### United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs - Sustainable Development:

[sdgs.un.org/goals](http://sdgs.un.org/goals)

## Procedure

### STEP 1

Start by asking what makes sustainable forest management important (considers all aspects and values of the forest and incorporates social, economic and environmental factors). Provide examples of some sustainable forest management activities, both at a small scale and a large scale. A small-scale activity might be harvesting trees for firewood, which would involve carefully removing select diseased trees from the forest working with a forest professional.

A large-scale activity might be a Model Forest demonstration activity on a sensitive landscape or a forest company initiating a public education campaign.

### STEP 2

Introduce the concept of a Model Forest including:

- A history of how the International Model Forest Network came to be (see [Teacher Background](#))
- Model Forests consist of forests, farms, protected areas, rivers, and towns, and aim to follow these [Six Broad Principles](#) focusing on social, environments, and economic needs of local communities and landscape sustainability at its core, which are:
  - Partnership
  - Landscape
  - Commitment to Sustainability
  - Governance
  - Program of Activities
  - Knowledge-Sharing, Capacity-Building, and Networking
- Canada currently has [four Model Forests](#), and under the International Model Forest Network, there are [six Regional Networks](#) globally in the following areas:
  - African Model Forest Network
  - Northern Europe and Russia
  - Latin-American Model Forest Network
  - Mediterranean Model Forest Network
  - Regional Model Forest Network-Asia

### STEP 3

Divide the class in groups of 4-5. Have each group spend 10 minutes reading over the [United Nations Sustainable Development Goals](#) to understand the core concepts.

### STEP 4

Each group should determine a provincial, regional, or local area such as a park, wetland, woodlot, ravine etc. that would be a good fit to become a Model Forest. Ensure there is no duplication on site picked by each group. Have students refer to [Chapter 1 of the Model Forest Toolkit](#) and fill out the Application Form form to assure that their selected site would be a good Model Forest site. The application should:

- Define the Landscape
- Identifying Model Forest Stakeholders
- Assessment of Sustainability Measures
- Governance Plan
- Program of Activities
- Knowledge Sharing, Capacity Building and Networking



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### STEP 5

Print out the *Starting a Model Forest* handout and distribute it to each group, and the *Proposed Model Forest Scoring Sheet* handout, and distribute it out to each student.

### STEP 6

Have each group create a digital presentation (i.e., PowerPoint or Google Slides) that includes:

- Introduction slide
- Reasons on how their site fits each of the six principles
- Conclusion slide

Each group presents their presentation to the class.

### STEP 7

Once all the presentations are finished, have the students vote for the winning group based on the *Proposed Model Forest Scoring Sheet* they filled out. Please note, that the groups cannot fill out a rubric for their own group.



### Extension

Divide the class into five groups and have students explore Regional Networks under the IMFN including:

- African Model Forest Network
- Northern Europe and Russia
- Latin-American Model Forest Network
- Mediterranean Model Forest Network
- Regional Model Forest Network-Asia

Choose a Model Forest within these networks, research the chosen networks, and present their findings to the class.

- Define the Landscape
- Identifying Model Forest Stakeholders
- Assessment of Sustainability Measures
- Governance Plan
- Program of Activities
- Knowledge Sharing, Capacity Building and Networking



# Starting a Model Forest

RESOURCE | Chapter 1 of Model Forest Toolkit: [imfn.net/model-forest/model-forest-toolkit/starting-a-model-forest](https://imfn.net/model-forest/model-forest-toolkit/starting-a-model-forest)

Site Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Site Location: \_\_\_\_\_

## Model Forest Toolkit Application Checklist

### 1. Landscape boundary

There is no set size that a Model Forest has to be. Landscape boundaries are usually determined through either ecological features such as a watershed, or administrative features such as a municipality. Determine a landscape boundary for your site, and provide a little description of it. For example, if it's a park, what landscapes are found around its perimeter?

Ecological boundary

Administrative boundary

Other

Describe the selected site boundary in the space provided below either using a diagram or a written description.



**2. Identifying stakeholders**

In the Model Forest Network, stakeholders also known as partners work together to reach the common goals and objectives of the Model Forest. Examples of stakeholder responsibilities include contributions such as: financial, research, policy, technological, community engagement. In this section, select who the key stakeholders for your proposed Model Forest, and determine the responsibilities they hold. Select all that apply:

**Stakeholders**

Check all stakeholders that apply to your Model Forest

**Responsibilities**

Write down the responsibilities for each checked stakeholder

**Industry**

**Community groups**

**Indigenous peoples**

**Government agencies**

**Non-governmental organizations**

**Academic and research institutions**

**National parks**

**Private landowners**

**Other**



### 3. Commitment to sustainability

List the top three sustainability goals for your site based on the UN Sustainable Development Goals: [sdgs.un.org/goals](https://sdgs.un.org/goals)  
In addition, mention any research or technological advancements planned at the site.



### 4. Assessing the Governance

Determine the governance structure for your Model Forest. How will you encourage active participation and representation of diverse interests?

a. How will your proposed Model Forest be managed?

(i.e., partnership with representatives from each stakeholder group?)

b. How will strategic and management decisions be made about your Model Forest to ensure transparency?

(i.e., consensus and voting to ensure fair decision-making)

c. How will you report on programs and activities taking place in your Model Forest?

(i.e., technical or advisory groups or committees that report to the stakeholder)

d. How will you ensure no groups are excluded from participating in the governance of your proposed Model Forest?



### 5. Program of Activities

Outline activities that will be conducted at your proposed Model Forest. Consider the following:

- What social, economical, historical, and ecological aspects of forest management are considered in your activities?
- How do the activities enhance scientific knowledge and new technologies?
- Education and outreach activities to raise community awareness of the Model Forest and its programs/projects?
- What, if any national forest values are encompassed in the program? Please visit the following link to learn more about these values: [nationalforest.org/about/who-we-are](https://nationalforest.org/about/who-we-are)
- What indicators will be used to measure the success of the proposed Model Forest? (i.e., number of native trees planted, number of nature hikes hosted)



**6. Knowledge Sharing, Capacity Building, and Networking**

Outline how you will collaborate with other Model Forests in the Network to share the findings, successes, and challenges of the projects at the site (i.e., attendance at Conferences, webinars, meetings).



# Proposed Model Forest Scoring Sheet

Grade each group out of five, with one (1) being the fewest points, and five (5) being the highest.

	Site Name	Site Name	Site Name	Site Name	Site Name
Defining the Landscape (1-5)					
Identify the stakeholders (1-5)					
Sustainability Practices (1-5)					
Governance Plan (1-5)					
Programs of Activities (1-5)					
Knowledge Sharing / Capacity Building (1-5)					
<b>Total Score</b> (out of 25)					

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[cif-ifc.org](http://cif-ifc.org)

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International  
**Model Forest**  
Network

The **International Model Forest Network** is dedicated to sustainable landscape governance by bringing together diverse partners to develop a common vision of sustainable development in a large landscape. To learn more about Model Forests in Canada and internationally, visit: [imfn.net](http://imfn.net)