



COP30 FOREST PAVILION:

A Shared Commitment to Our Planet

2025 UN Climate Change Conference (UNFCCC COP30)

10-21 November 2025, Belém, Brazil

The Model Forest Act Initiative (MoFAI): Modernizing National Forest Laws to Address Climate Change and the Global Forest Crisis

Wednesday, 12 November 2025 | 15:00–18:00

Lead: Brazil

Format: Hybrid

Concept Note

I. Background

The Model Forest Act Initiative (MoFAI) is a groundbreaking global effort to transform national forest laws to address the 21st century challenges of climate change, biodiversity loss, and the transition to a sustainable bioeconomy. It supports the development of the General Part of the Model Forest Act and an accompanying Legislative Guide as knowledge resources for lawmakers and policymakers seeking to design or enhance national forest legal frameworks that respond to modern realities. MoFAI offers a systematic, scalable, and collaborative approach to deliver the expertise, efficiency, and innovation needed to meet the urgency of the global forest crisis.

The General Part of the Model Forest Act is conceived as a framework law - a legal blueprint that provides a coherent structure adaptable to diverse legal systems. It is intended to guide, not prescribe. The text provides carefully considered principles, definitions, and institutional arrangements that countries may selectively draw from in drafting or reforming their national forest laws. This flexible design allows for progressive development through additional parts, implementing regulations, and context-specific adaptations over time.

MoFAI employs a structured, interdisciplinary, and evidence-based process, integrating perspectives from law, science, policy, and economics. Its drafting process follows a multi-stakeholder and globally consultative approach, ensuring that the resulting model law reflects both global best practices and national realities. The General Part and Explanatory Guide are being developed by a high-level drafting committee composed of judges, legal scholars, and scientific experts, informed by extensive regional and thematic consultations.

As part of its development process, MoFAI has been convening a series of consultations and knowledge-sharing dialogues across regions to capture national contexts, legal innovations, and practical challenges in forest governance. Since its launch in July 2023, consultations have been held in Nepal, the Philippines, Indonesia, Japan, Rome, New York, and the Amazon region, generating valuable insights for the evolving draft of the General Part.

The COP30 MoFAI session in Belém continues this consultative trajectory. It aims to:

- Present the Model Forest Act Initiative as a global partnership advancing modern forest governance frameworks;
- Collect insights from judicial leaders, policymakers, and experts on key innovations, legal instruments, and relevant provisions from different countries and regions;
- Strengthen networks and partnerships supporting legal modernization in the forest sector; and
- Prepare for the global launch and dissemination of the General Part of the Model Forest Act and its Explanatory Guide in 2026.

II. Objectives

The session aims to:

1. Present the preliminary working draft of the General Part of the Model Forest Act.
2. Co-create and validate the draft text through consultations with COP30 delegates, ensuring it captures global best practices and aligns with national and regional legal priorities.
3. Identify post-COP30 collaboration and entry points for pilot implementation, capacity-building, and integration into national legal frameworks.

Expected Outcomes:

- Consolidated feedback from COP30 stakeholders including governments, judicial leaders, international organizations, and civil society representatives.
- Strengthened international cooperation for forest law reform and judicial capacity-building.

III. Programme/Schedules of Events/Speakers

Proposed Agenda

15:00–15:30 High-Level Opening

Chair: TBD

Welcoming Remarks:

- Hon. Chief Justice Antonio Herman Benjamin, National High Court of Brazil (STJ), President of the Global Judicial Institute on the Environment and MoFAI Chair
- Thomas M. Clark, General Counsel, Asian Development Bank
- Dr. Robert Nasi, Director General, Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR)

15:30 – 16:15 Presentation and Overview of the Model Forest Act

Facilitator:

- Prof. Nick Bryner, MoFAI Co-Rapporteur

16:15–18:45 — Dialogue among Forest Stakeholders

Session format: Roundtable discussion and open floor consultation

- **Moderated exchange on:**
 - Challenges in Designing, Implementing, and Enforcing Forest Law in the Context of Climate Change
 - Key provisions and legal design elements
 - Institutional and capacity-building needs for implementation
 - Collaboration opportunities for MoFAI pilot activities

17:45 – 18:00 Closing Summary: Next Steps and Roadmap to 2026 Launch of the Model Forest Act

- Hon. Chief Justice Antonio Herman Benjamin

IV. Expected main messages

1. Judicial and legal reform are essential to realizing climate and biodiversity commitments through effective forest governance.

2. The Model Forest Act offers a practical, adaptable legal framework that countries can use to modernize forest legislation in line with contemporary governance and rights-based principles.
3. Collaborative leadership among global institutions, through MoFAI, can bridge the gap between international environmental goals and national legal systems.

V. Focal Point/Contact

- Professor Nick Bryner, MoFAI Rapporteur - nickbryner@gmail.com