



International
Model Forest
Network

MODEL FOREST TOOLKIT

THE MODEL FOREST TOOLKIT IS A HOW-TO MANUAL FOR NEW AND EXISTING MODEL FOREST MANAGERS AND OTHERS INTERESTED IN THE PRACTICE. LEARN HOW TO SET UP A MODEL FOREST, UNDERTAKE STRATEGIC PLANNING, ORGANIZE AND RUN DAY-TO-DAY ACTIVITIES, COLLECT AND DEMONSTRATE IMPACT, AND SHARE YOUR SUCCESSES WITH DONORS, PARTNERS AND FOLLOWERS.

CHAPTER 4

MODEL FOREST WORK PLANNING

ALSO AVAILABLE

- CHAPTER 1 — STARTING A MODEL FOREST
- CHAPTER 2 — MODEL FOREST STRATEGIC PLANNING
- CHAPTER 3 — MODEL FOREST GOVERNANCE
- CHAPTER 5 — MODEL FOREST MONITORING AND EVALUATION
- CHAPTER 6 — MODEL FOREST COMMUNICATIONS

CHAPTER 4

MODEL FOREST WORK PLANNING

An Annual Work Plan (sometimes called an operational plan, action plan, or activity plan) links your strategic planning to the day-to-day activities of your Model Forest. It helps set priorities, implement projects and activities, and contains detailed planning and specific budgets for each activity.

STEP 1: SELECT ACTIVITIES

Start by identifying activities you will undertake in the coming year. Develop and review the activities in a transparent and inclusive way by involving stakeholders in planning workshops, working groups or soliciting project proposals. To help prioritize your list of possible activities and make final selections, ask yourselves the following questions:

- Which activities and associated impacts are key to achieving the Model Forest's strategic directions?
- Which activities need to be completed before others can be initiated?
- Which activities are easier or quicker to implement?
- Does the activity fit well with the available resources and opportunities?
- What problems or constraints must the project overcome to succeed?
- Are the target beneficiaries clearly identified? Are the beneficiaries able, interested and willing to participate?

RESULT: A prioritized list of activities for each program area.

STEP 2: SUMMARIZE SELECTED ACTIVITIES AND PROJECTS

Create a summary of each project/activity that includes:

- Project name
- Description: a brief overview of the activity or project, its importance or rationale, and the links between it and other activities in your Model Forest
- Partners: a list of organizations participating in the proposed project, highlighting the lead proponent and other participating organizations
- Activities: a list of the major activities, their outputs (deliverables), and expected completion dates
- Target beneficiaries: identify and describe those expected to benefit from your proposed project
- M&E links: highlight the project's links to your Model Forest impact indicators and targets (see Model Forest Monitoring and Evaluation)
- Progress: describe any progress, either from previous Model Forest projects or from other activities that contribute to the proposed project
- Financial summary: outline your budget and funding sources, both cash and in-kind contributions
- Management: an overview of how the activities and/or project will be managed and by whom
- Contact: the name, address, telephone number and email address of the main contact person.

RESULT: A summary for each selected project.

STEP 3: PRODUCE A WORK PLAN

Consolidate this information into a single document — your Annual Work Plan. This plan will help strike a balance between what activities stakeholders would like to do and what can reasonably be done given available resources.

General outline of a Model Forest Annual Work Plan:

1. Introduction

A summary of how the work plan was developed, any key points your Model Forest wants to highlight and any major changes since the previous year (e.g., stakeholders, budgets, governance).

2. Link to Strategic Plan

Using a logic model, simple table or narrative, illustrate how the proposed activities link to your expected Model Forest outcomes and impacts.

3. Financial summary

Present the overall budget for the Annual Work Plan by consolidating the activity related budgets into a single table, identifying both the available resources and the additional resources needed to effectively implement the work.

4. Project summaries

Include the project summaries developed in Step 2.

RESULT: A draft Annual Work Plan.

STEP 4: WORK PLAN APPROVAL

The Annual Work Plan needs to be reviewed and accepted by all Model Forest stakeholders. Some questions to consider:

- Are the proposed projects consistent with the strategic directions outlined in the Model Forest Strategic Plan?
- Will the proposed activities lead to achievement of the Model Forest's expected outcomes and impacts?
- Are the proposed activities based on the needs, issues and challenges faced by stakeholders?
- Will the proposed activities meet the needs of those they are designed to help?
- Does the Model Forest have the capacity to implement the proposed activities?
- Are the participating organizations clearly identified for the proposed activities?
- Is an activity lead identified?
- Are the budgets realistic, accurate and complete?
- Has the need for resources, and the ability to compete for and secure them, been assessed?
- Can the proposed activities be completed within the one-year time frame of the work plan?
- Does the plan show that all interested stakeholders have been involved in the planning process?

A designated lead, whether the Model Forest coordinator or planning committee, etc., needs to take ultimate responsibility for ensuring the Annual Work Plan moves along and is implemented.

RESULT: A final Annual Work Plan.

STEP 5: IMPLEMENTING AND MONITORING

After the Annual Work Plan is approved, it is beneficial to identify a lead who is in charge of day-to-day project management and will ensure the work moves ahead.

The project lead should also ensure that both gender and environmental dimensions are considered for each activity.

Some gender dimensions include:

- Gaining an understanding of gender relations, the division of labour between men and women, and who has access to and control over resources
- Using participatory processes and including a wide range of male and female stakeholders at both the governmental and civil society levels
- Identifying barriers to women’s participation and productivity (e.g., social, economic, legal, political, cultural)
- Gaining an understanding of women’s practical needs and strategic interests, and identifying opportunities to support both
- Considering the project’s different impacts on men and women, and identifying any consequences to address
- Establishing baseline data, ensuring sex-disaggregated data, setting measurable targets and identifying expected outcomes and impacts and their associated indicators
- Outlining expected risks and developing strategies to minimize them.

Some environmental dimensions include:

- Understanding the environmental features of the project site and their possible effect on the project (e.g. seasonal changes)
- Identifying possible environmental effects of the project and their significance
- Implementing strategies and measures to alleviate or eliminate the project’s negative effects and increase its benefits, and monitoring the project to ensure that these measures are effectively implemented
- Integrating environmental outcomes and impacts into the project’s other outcomes and impacts.



Photo: Prince Albert Model Forest, Canada

Often, the project lead is in charge of monitoring and reporting on the impacts generated (or not) by the project, as guided by the Model Forest’s Monitoring and Evaluation Framework.

RESULT: Activities and projects implemented over the course of the year with results to feed into the Model Forest’s reporting processes.

NEXT:
CHAPTER 5:
MODEL FOREST MONITORING
AND EVALUATION

