



Collaborative Partnership on Forests

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Wangari Maathai Forest Champions Award

The Wangari Maathai Forest Champions Award recognises inspiring individuals who have helped to conserve, restore, and sustainably manage forests. The award was established by the Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF) in 2012 in memory of Kenyan environmentalist and Nobel Peace Prize winner Wangari Maathai.

The CPF is seeking an extraordinary individual to be named the seventh Wangari Maathai Forest Champion (2024).

We are looking for a candidate with a track record of outstanding achievements in improving forests and the lives of people who depend on them.

Forests have huge climate change mitigation and adaptation potential, provide us with invaluable ecosystem services, host most of the world's terrestrial biodiversity and sustain the livelihoods of millions of people. Forests located

on indigenous and tribal territories in Latin America alone contain about 14% of the carbon stored in tropical forests. This demonstrates the importance of protecting, valuing, and harnessing forests for climate action.

The loss of forests and biodiversity at alarming rates and continued unsustainable practices are serious issues that need to be tackled to reach the Global Forest Goals and the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030.

Almost 90 percent of forest losses between 2000 - 2018 occurred in tropical areas, with rainforests in South America and South-Southeast Asia most affected. Forest management needs to become more attractive than its alternative which is to change land use, and the world's degraded lands must be urgently restored. Indeed, restoration, afforestation, and agroforestry are crucial if we are to reach the Global Forest Goal of a 3% increase in forest area worldwide by 2030.

More than ever, Forest Champions are needed to address these challenges, advocate for change and inspire others to follow in their exemplary path. Only together with the brightest minds, convincing arguments, innovative and impactful actions, we can manage all types of forests and forest landscapes more sustainably, recognize forests' multiple values and unlock the potential of their goods and services.

Do you know inspiring forest champions who are making a difference in their communities, forest landscapes and/or around the world? You are invited to nominate them for the 2024 Wangari Maathai Forest Champions Award.

Among the achievements we are looking for in our 2024 Forest Champion are a track record of work:

- in reducing forest loss
- increasing the area of forests
- increasing the use of sustainably grown wood and non-wood products
- contributing to building resilient forest communities
- improving livelihoods and youth engagement.

Note: Applications related to grassroots and youth-led initiatives are particularly encouraged.

How to make a nomination

The closing date for nominations is 10 February 2024. You can submit your nominations in English, Spanish or French.

If you experience trouble using the online form, please submit your nomination via email to the CPF Secretariat at cpf@fao.org. The application form should be followed when submitting nominations.

What the CPF offers

Funding: The awardee/s will receive a cash prize of \$USD 20,000.

Spotlight: The awardee/s will receive travel support to participate in a prestigious international forest event. This will provide the recipient with the opportunity to present their ideas and work to a larger audience, gain visibility and build their network.

Selection criteria

- The nominated candidates will be assessed by an expert jury on the following criteria:
- Impact on communities through reducing forest loss and/or increasing forest area and/or using sustainably grown wood and non-wood forest products and/or addressing human-wildlife conflicts in relation to forests.
- Innovative aspects of the work, level of innovation, including technical, social or financial innovation, application and feasibility of the innovative aspects.
- Empowerment of others, considering also social, gender and youth aspects, to act through strengthened networks, social commitment, outreach and/or improved recognition of value of forests.

- Transferability and scale, including local, national, regional, or global contexts and/or application in other countries or regions, including South-South cooperation and the work/activities scale.

Eligibility

- Applicants should be nominated by a third party.
- Nominees may be individual persons, living or recently deceased.
- Professional and research contributions will only be considered if they are conducted outside of work-related responsibilities.
- Applications received from a nominee's family member or business partner are not eligible for consideration.

Selection

The awardee/s will be selected by an expert jury appointed by CPF members. The jury will consider gender and regional balance when selecting potential awardees.

The awardee/s will be notified of their selection via email in the first half of 2024 and invited to a prestigious international event where the award ceremony will take place.

Contact

cpf@un.org

Related links

[2022 Wangari Maathai tribute film >](#)

[Wanjira Mathai on her mother's legacy & the Award >](#)

[2011 Wangari Maathai tribute film >](#)

[XV World Forestry Congress >](#)

Past winners

[Forest Champions Award 2022 >](#)

[Forest Champions Award 2019 >](#)

[Forest Champions Award 2017 >](#)

[Forest Champions Award 2015 >](#)

[Forest Champions Award 2014 >](#)

[Forest Champions Award 2012 >](#)

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