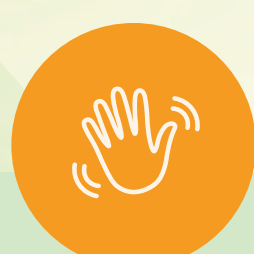




General
Assembly
2025 **Panama**

Implementing the Regional Forest Stewardship Standard (RFSS) for Smallholders in Asia-Pacific

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Introduction

- 400+ million* smallholders farmers in Asia-Pacific depend on forests for income and daily life. RFSS is designed specifically for real-world use: it simplifies complex certification, making sustainable forest management practical and affordable for smallholders (<20ha).
- Purpose-built for Asia-Pacific: Developed in 2021 for real-world use in India, Indonesia, Thailand, and Vietnam.
- Meets real needs: Plain language, flexible requirements, lower audit costs, works for both timber, ecosystem services, and non-timber forest products (NTFPs).
- Aims to empower more smallholders to participate directly in responsible forestry, to improve ecological, social, and economic outcomes.



Innovative approach

- **Strong capacity building:** 30+ trainings and workshops across India, Indonesia, Thailand, and Vietnam to boost readiness for implementation.
- **Broader scope:** Since 15 August 2025, scope expanded from plantations (NTFPs, ecosystem services, timber) to include natural forests (NTFPs and ecosystem services).
- **Local authority engagement:** Strengthened understanding of RFSS application among smallholders and its contribution to community livelihoods and forest conservation.



Main objectives

- **Implement RFSS on the ground** in target countries with active involvement of local actors.
- **Support RFSS implementation** through training, workshops, and capacity building with stakeholders.
- **Expand RFSS impact** by increasing certifications and forest area under responsible management.

Progress in numbers as of July 2025



- Certifications:
28 certifications under RFSS
- Forest area:
92,000+ ha certified under RFSS
- Workshops:
30+ conducted
- Stakeholders engaged:
985+



Sources: FAO, CIFOR

