



New Membership Criteria as of January 2019

Background

The Global Partnership on Forest and Landscape Restoration is a proactive global network that supports all stakeholders to restore the world's lost and degraded forests and their surrounding landscapes. The GPFLR was initiated in 2003 by a small consortium of like-minded organizations and Governments, spearheaded by the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN).

The Partnership's purpose is to catalyze dynamic, voluntary action through sharing diverse experiences on restoration efforts which deliver tangible benefits to both local communities and nature through a landscape approach. The Partnership also encourages political commitments on forest and landscape restoration, in the context of the [Bonn Challenge](#).

Criteria and process for new admitting new members

The organization currently has 29 members (December 2018). Membership consists of Governments, international organizations, and non-governmental organizations. Membership should remain open to Governments and to organizations that are not-for-profit and have a significant portion of their work focused on forest and landscape restoration. Membership is not open to individuals. By joining the Partnership, members agree to support the FLR principles, ensure that they underpin their restoration efforts, and make tangible contributions as described below on a regular basis.

Membership in the Partnership is free of charge, and should remain free. However, the Partnership relies on the active participation of its members to generate the added value of the Partnership. Members are expected to share information and knowledge freely with other members, and they are expected to make in-kind contributions. For example, members can contribute through one or preferably several of the following activities:

- Share expertise with other partners and contribute to broader FLR capacity development;
- Share, data and knowledge, such as case studies, with other members and provide content for the GPFLR website;
- Provide funding for, e.g., developing country member participation in GPFLR meetings, GPFLR events or the website;
- Disseminate and promote Partnership products;
- Participate regularly in email discussions, or in virtual or in-person meetings, including the annual members' meeting (taking place at least once every 2 years);
- Periodically second staff to the e-Secretariat; and allow staff, if they are elected to the Steering Committee, to serve in that function as part of their regular duties, and consider to host GPFLR meetings e.g. the Annual members meeting.

In future, it is proposed that prospective new members will detail in their membership application which functions they expect to fulfill. It is also proposed that the Steering Committee periodically reviews the membership list, and that inactive members who do not contribute any of the functions or provide other input regularly, are reminded to share information, or actively participate in the Partnership in other ways, and eventually can be removed from the membership list if they remain inactive.

The current process to become a member is informal and quick; prospective new members fill a simple short form, available on the Partnership website, and send it to the Secretariat. The Secretariat circulates the application to all members, for a 14-day no-objection period. After this period, the new member is admitted. Following a surge in membership applications in 2017, the Partnership decided to put new membership admissions on hold until the criteria and process were reviewed. It is proposed that membership admission resumes after the 2018 Partners' meeting, based on the criteria and process proposed in this document.

The new process should remain informal and quick; however, it is proposed to add two new requirements. Firstly, it is proposed that new members can only apply based on a joint invitation from at least two existing members; and secondly, that prospective new members specify in their application the activities through which they can contribute to the Partnership as a whole (see above). This condition is not applicable to governments.

Specifically related to governments, they join as a whole not by agency. For example, the U.S. may be represented by the U.S. Forest Service but it is the U.S. that is the partner and any U.S. agency is allowed to participate in GPFLR meetings and activities. The same applies to all Government members.

Gaps in membership: focus for new admissions

The current member base consists mostly of international organizations, and Non-Governmental Organizations, headquartered in Europe or North America; and all the country members OECD countries.

In terms of international organizations members, there is a gap that the Steering Committee advises to close, if possible: currently, all member organizations of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF) are also members of the GPFLR, with three exceptions: the Secretariat of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC); the UN Development Programme (UNDP) and the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES, which only became a member of the CPF in 2018). If these organizations see value in being active members, they should be encouraged to apply, to achieve full overlap between the CPF and GPFLR membership.

There is currently no private sector member (only one non-for profit private foundation based in the Netherlands). Instead of inviting companies to join, it is recommended to consider private sector representation via an alliance such as World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD). The GPFLR should also explore how the Global Restoration Council can tap into the private sector. Individual companies and alliances will both be subject to the 2-member nomination rule.

It is proposed that the Partnership should be open to all countries who are committed to and implementing forest and landscape restoration. However, it should be clear, in particular for developing countries, that the Partnership is an informal network, and has no resources to facilitate travel of members to international meetings; countries are expected to actively share knowledge with other members through virtual or other means (see above).

In other words, membership in the GPFLR is a commitment that requires their own resources (or resources provided by a third party), and yields information and knowledge in return. The option of joining annual partners meeting through online connections will be explored for future meetings, to facilitate members' active participation. The GPFLR will create a document outlining the benefits of countries joining the partnership.

Members are encouraged to identify organisations representing youth and relevant communities e.g. farmers, Indigenous People's, and to invite them to join the Alliance.

Overall, it is proposed to keep the structure of the GPFLR light, considering its voluntary nature and lack of full-time staff or officials. It is proposed to maintain the original 'spirit' of a coalition of like-minded organizations, based on voluntary collaboration; and making best use of limited resources including through electronic means. It is envisaged that the membership criteria and process proposed here will maintain this spirit of the Partnership.