

The Collaborative Capacity Lab

CAPACITY-BUILDING FOR NATURE-BASED CLIMATE SOLUTIONS

Background

There is an urgent need to build sustainable global capacity for climate change mitigation, adaptation, and transparency. Despite years of training programs, national workforces in many countries still cannot leverage available climate finance to achieve their existing Nationally-Determined Contributions (NDCs). There are severe shortages of global experts who can use international standards of carbon accounting to conduct land use inventories, report these under the Paris Agreement, and review other nations' reports. Additionally, increasing ambition on nature-based solutions to climate change is critical to building a 1.5 °C world as well as realizing Sustainable Development Goals.

The Collaborative Capacity Lab (CCL) is a train-the-trainer program that will build professional workforces in 42 countries¹ across Central Africa, Latin America, Southeast Asia, and the Pacific to fill large capacity gaps in implementation of nature-based climate change solutions, carbon accounting in the land use sector, and technical expert reviews of submissions to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

Project overview

In four years, the CCL will train 400 new leaders in designing, financing implementing, and monitoring natural climate solutions through four new regional Certificates in Advanced Nature Based Solutions (CANBS). The four CANBS programs will be taught by faculty from **RIFFEAC** (Réseau des Institutions de Formation Forestière et Environnementale de l'Afrique Centrale) in Central Africa, **CATIE** (el Centro Agronómico Tropical de Investigación y Enseñanza) in Latin America, **RECOFTC** (the Center for People and Forests) in Southeast Asia, and **USP** (the University of the South Pacific), with **the Carbon Institute** serving as an international secretariat. This way, capacity building will be anchored in strong regional institutions to ensure the CCL's impacts are both measurable and sustained.

The CANBS programs will teach rigorous use of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's (IPCC) Guidelines for Greenhouse Gas Inventories, the required accounting standards for the Paris Agreement, and mentor 160 new experts in Enhanced Transparency Framework (ETF) reviews, an essential and yet unmet element of the Paris Agreement. The CCL will mentor 24 faculty to design the regional CANBS programs, each one accredited to international standards.

The CCL will support the IPCC in its invitation to civil society to increase the number and diversity (gender, geographic, constituency) of developing country experts who

¹**RIFFEAC**: Burundi, Cameroon, Chad, Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Republic of the Congo, Rwanda. **RECOFTC**: Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Myanmar, Nepal, Thailand, Vietnam. **CATIE**: Belize, Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru. **USP**: Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, Niue, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tokelau, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu.

can master the IPCC guidelines for national climate actions and reporting under the Paris Agreement. **The CCL will support the UNFCCC** in building strong developing country cohorts of expert reviewers to ensure that Parties can meet the requirements of the ETF and that representation of reviewers is globally diverse. **The CCL will support civil society** in coordinating with existing regional projects and aims to develop memoranda of understanding with regional development banks, IGOs, NGOs, foundations, and the private sector.

Global results

By 2024, the Collaborative Capacity Lab will produce:

1. Four *capacity-building factories* within RIFFEAC, CATIE, RECOFTC, and USP running comprehensive CANBS programs to implement nature-based solutions. Each program will be internationally accredited and endorsed by the Carbon Institute as having met the highest teaching standards;
2. 400 highly trained CANBS graduates, with a total of 24,000 course hours of advanced accounting and nature based solutions instruction delivered;
3. CANBS programs that progressively approach gender equity, with initially at least 40% faculty and course participants being female;
4. 160 new UNFCCC Expert Reviewers nominated by their governments, given additional support to ensure their competence as reviewers under the ETF;
5. An additional \$2.5 to \$5 million implementation fund offering project seed funding and fellowships for CANBS students and faculty. The fund will be modeled after the Fulbright program and will help support high talent professionals focusing on nature-based solutions.

Work plan

The CCL will work through a jointly developed work plan, which will include:

1. Establishing a representative international **governing council** to oversee implementation, finances, scholarship and the project management team;
2. An academic and government **advisory panel**, to oversee academic programs, faculty mentoring, accreditation, institutional and governmental engagement;
3. **Scoping studies**, to identify pre-existing strengths, gaps, and opportunities;
4. **Sustainability plans**, to ensure the four CANBS programs are regionally anchored, supported by member countries, and sustainably financed;
5. **Curriculum design** and **faculty mentoring** to ensure high academic quality;
6. **Recruitment** of participants from a range of communities in each region;
7. **Professional development** and **career-building** programs;
8. Continuous evaluations and **adaptive management systems** to ensure ongoing CANBS quality and support from member countries.

Budget

The CCL partnership was formally announced at COP25 in Madrid, with representatives from the UNFCCC and the IPCC lending their support. The partnership is seeking donors to raise an initial commitment of \$500,000 to begin work with a goal of \$10 million in financing to support the four new capacity building factories. The CCL will operate over four years from its inception, with 90% of the funds being spent regionally.