



FIFTY-SECOND SESSION  
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**PROGRESS REPORT ON THE ITTO FELLOWSHIP PROGRAMME  
(FREEZAILAH FELLOWSHIP FUND)**  
(Item 18 of the Provisional Agenda)

**Introduction**

1. This document is prepared pursuant to Decision 4(XXVII), which requested the Executive Director to prepare progress reports on the implementation of the ITTO Fellowship Programme for Council's review during its regular Sessions.
2. In keeping with this Decision, this document reports on the work related to the implementation of the ITTO Fellowship Programme since the end of the Fifty-first Session of the ITTC and outlines measures to be considered at the Fifty-second Session regarding the operation of the Freezailah Fellowship Fund.

**Progress in Implementation**

3. Advertisement and Dissemination of the ITTO Fellowship Programme

The Secretariat continues to advertise relevant information on the ITTO Fellowship Programme in the Tropical Update (TFU), the Tropical Timber Market Information and on the ITTO website <http://www.itto.int/>.

In addition, TFU Volume 25 Number 2 published excerpts of an ITTO Fellowship report on understanding of wildfires in Togo. Due to the current suspension of the Fellowship Programme, no applications were received under the Autumn cycle 2016.

4. The ITTO Fellowship Network website based on the social network platform was implemented at <http://www.ittofellownet.org/> in June 2014. It aims to: (1) promote the sharing of knowledge and information among ITTO Fellows and alumni on the sustainable management and use of tropical forests and forest resources and other related issues; (2) provide a forum for collaborative work among ITTO Fellows and alumni, and (3) provide a platform for pursuing common interests, such as career development opportunities and networking. The network will serve to provide up-to-date information on alumni activities and events worldwide. More than 790 fellows have already registered by the end of September 2016, and have been actively exchanging knowledge and experiences. More fellows are expected to join the network.

5. Status of Fellowship Awards

The Fellowship Programme, which began in 1989, has enabled 1,342 young and mid-career people from 49 countries working for governments, universities, research institutions, NGOs and the private sector to pursue their professional development and improve their career prospects. 30.5% of the fellowships have been awarded to people from Asia-Pacific, 32% to people from Africa, 24.6% to people from Latin America/Caribbean, 9.8% to people from developing consumer countries and 3.2% to people from consumer countries, who carried out their activities in producer member countries. 71.5% of the fellowships awarded were in the field of Reforestation and Forest Management, 20.1% in Forest Industry and 8.4% in Economics, Statistics and Markets.

The Programme mainly supports short-term activities, such as short training courses and internships (30%), participation in international conferences and workshops (17.1%), and study and

demonstration tours (8.1%). In addition, it also helps people to prepare manuals and monographs (6.5%), and provides small grants for post-graduate studies (29.8%). The Programme encourages capacity development of women foresters, and has supported 406 women to undertake fellowship activities, accounting for 30.3% of the total number of fellowships. For the first time in the history of the ITTO fellowship programme, the number of female awardees exceeded the number of male awardees in 2015. While 86.4% of the fellowships have been completed, 8.2% are still operational and 5.3% had to be terminated for unavoidable reasons.

### **Impact Assessment**

An impact assessment of the Fellowship Programme, conducted in summer of 2016, showed that the Fellowship Programme has made significant contributions to human capacity development in ITTO producer member countries. The survey questionnaires were sent to 220 fellows who received fellowship awards between 2010 and 2014. A total of 155 fellows (70.4%) from 28 countries responded. In terms of their contribution to promoting reforestation/forest conservation in their home country, 82% of the respondents answered that they have made very large or moderate contributions. About 88% of the respondents indicated that they have been able to improve the productivity and performance of their home institution by developing new programs or innovative ways of working. 42% indicated that the knowledge and skills acquired through the Fellowship program has helped them to influence national forestry and environmental policy in their home countries. 61% of respondents indicated that they are currently working on international forestry issues, such as on climate change and REDD.

85 percent of the respondents currently hold either Ph.D. (42%) or Masters Degree (58%) in forestry or related disciplines, and more than 1/3 of the fellows received those degrees through the activities supported by the Fellowship Programme. More than 60 % of the respondents achieved a relevant job position or job promotion immediately after completion of their fellowships, and 73% of respondents answered "totally related" or "strongly related" to the question whether any job promotion or new job position was due to the skill or knowledge that they gained from the fellowship.

The Programme has, therefore, made a significant contribution to human capacity development in ITTO producer member countries.

### **Funding**

6. The total funding provided to the Fellowship Programme to date amounts to approximately US\$10 million. Funding has been provided through the generous voluntary contributions from Japan (69%), U.S.A. (17%), the Netherlands (8%), Australia (3%) and others (3%) including Sweden, U.K., Bali Partnership Fund Sub-Account (b) and the private sector.
7. Recalling Decision 4(XXVII) which sets a maximum amount of US\$300,000 per year for fellowship awards, until such time that appreciable increases in funding become available, Council may wish to approve additional funds to cover awards, programme support, and other costs including Fellowship Network for 2017. The Secretariat estimates that to maintain the Programme at the current level of 50-60 awards per year, an amount of US\$400,000 would be needed in 2017.

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