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ITTO FELLOWSHIP PROGRAMME 2023 & 2024 (FREEZAILAH FELLOWSHIP FUND)

(Item 13 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-ninth Session of the ITTC and outlines measures to be considered at the Sixtieth 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 the ITTO Fellowship Programme in the Tropical Update (TFU), the Tropical Timber Market Information, on the ITTO website and our social media platforms, as well as at various events.

4. Status of Fellowship Awards

The Fellowship Programme, which began in 1989, has enabled more than 1,400 young and mid-career people working for governments, universities, research institutions, NGOs and the private sector to pursue their professional development and improve their career prospects.

The Programme mainly supports short-term activities, such as short training courses and internships, and study and demonstration tours. It also provides funds for Manuals/Technical Documents Preparation/Publication/Dissemination, sponsors people to participate in Conference/Seminar/Workshop and provides small grants for post-graduate study.

The Programme provides funds to individuals of ITTO member countries covering a wide range of geographic regions: 40% of the fellowships have been awarded to people from Africa, 30% to people from Asia-Pacific and 30% to people from Latin America/Caribbean. It also focuses on gender balance and encourages capacity development of women foresters. Around 40% of the total number of fellowships have been awarded to female applicants.

Funding

5. The total funds for the Fellowship Programme to date amount to approximately US\$9.8 million. Funding has been provided through the generous voluntary contributions from Japan, U.S.A, the Netherlands, Australia and others including Sweden, U.K., Finland, Bali Partnership Fund Sub-Account (b), the private sector and individual donors. Total available fund for the ITTO Fellowship Programme (2024 cycle) is **US\$ 145,865.38**.

6. 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 related costs. The Secretariat estimates that to maintain the Programme at the level of 20-30 awards per year, an amount of US\$200,000 would be needed in 2025.

Report of the Fellowship Selection Panel

7. Fellowship selection for 2024 was conducted electronically, and the finalization of the selection of successful applicants for 2024 Cycle was made through email exchanges by the Selection Panel and Secretariat. The Selection Panel of 2024 are as follows:

Producers:	Mr. Joseph Appiah-Gyapong	(Ghana)
	Ms. Athenas Castello Branco Hurtado	(Peru)
	Mr. Arsene Ewossaka	(République of Congo)

Consumers:	Mr. Hiroyuki Saito	(Japan)
	Ms. Rata Muda	(New Zealand)
	Mr. Daniel Carl	(USA)

Supported by Secretariat:

Ms. Sheam Satkuru
Ms. Elsie Yang Lingyun

8. The ITTO Secretariat received a total of 91 applications which were rigorously screened. A total of **19** eligible applications were pre-selected/shortlisted by the Secretariat after a preliminary selection process and recommended to the Fellowship Selection Panel for consideration of fellowship grants. The Selection Panel considered these 19 applications: 7 from Asia Pacific (1 from Cambodia, 2 from India, 2 from Myanmar, 2 from Vietnam); 7 from Latin America: (1 from Brazil, 2 from Colombia, 1 from Mexico and 3 from Peru), and 5 from Africa (3 from Benin and 2 from Togo).

Of the 19 shortlisted applicants, 11 are female and 8 are male; 12 were in the field of Reforestation and Forest Management (RFM), 6 were in the field of Forestry Industry (FI) and 1 was in the field of Economics, Statistics and Markets (ESM).

When reviewing these 19 applications, the Panel used the following selection criteria:

- i) Consistency of the proposed activities with the ITTO Fellowship Programme's objective and priority areas;
- ii) Qualifications of the applicants to undertake the proposed fellowship activities;
- iii) Applications and benefits of the skills and knowledge to be acquired or advanced under the fellowship activities; and
- iv) Reasonableness of costs in relation to the proposed activities.

The Panel took into account the geographic and gender balance, and also took into consideration the ITTO priority areas set in the ITTO Strategic Action Plan in the selection process. The concluded selection result is: 15 applications are fully supported and recommended by panel members for fellowship grants, and 4 applications are recommended for ITTO fellowship grants subject to budget modification/reduction.

The Panel recommends to Council to approve awarding the 19 fellowships with a total budget of **US\$131,382.76**. The recommended applicants are listed in the Appendix to this report.

9. Due to the limited time available during the Council Session, all consultations with the Fellowship Panel Members were conducted successfully through e-mail exchanges/virtually before the Council Session. The final report will be presented to the Council by the ITTC60 Vice-Chairperson, Mr. Carlos Espinosa Peña (Panama), who will provide a short brief on the selection of awardees recommended by the Panel Members.
10. The 2025 Fellowship Selection Panel is scheduled to be appointed either during the ITTC60 or before the summer in 2025.

Appendix

List of Fellowship Awardees Selected by ITTO Fellowship Selecion Panel (2024 cycle)

Registration Number	Name	Sex	Nationality	Field	Language	Type of Activity	Title/Theme of Proposed Activiity	Proposed budget (in US\$)	ITTO contribution (in US\$)	Revised/ approved Budget for funding (In US\$)	Remarks
002_24A	Hemalatha Velappan	F	India	FI	E	Study Tour	Ground-truth Evaluation of <i>Tectona grandis</i> (Teak) Plantations in Panama	3,196.00	3,196.00	3,196.00	
003_24A	Donald James	M	India	FI	E	Short Training Internship	Short Training on Next Generation Wood DNA-barcoding and Timber Tracing for Sustainable Forest Management and Trade in Thünen Institute of Forest Genetics, Grosshansdorf, Germany	9,200.00	9,200.00	9,200.00	
004_24A	Cho Cho Naing	F	Myanmar	RFM	E	Post-Graduate Degree Program	Pursuing Master’s Programme in Natural Resources Management (NRM) in School of Environment, Resources and Development, Asian Institute of Technology (Thailand)	5,000.00	5,000.00	5,000.00	
007_24A	Corina del Rosario Hidalgo Gonzales	F	Peru	RFM	S	Post-Graduate Degree Program	Master’s Program in tropical forestry in Technical University of Dresden (Technische Universität Dresden/TU Dresden), Germany	4,447.00	4,447.00	4,447.00	
020_24A	Jeimy Blanco Flórez	F	Colombia	FI	E	Short Training Internship	Training internship as a visiting scientist in the Center for Wood Anatomy Research (CWAR) at the Forest Products Laboratory (FPL) of the Forest Service, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) in Madision, USA	9,057.00	9,057.00	9,057.00	
032_24A	Nguyen Tu Kim	M	Viet Nam	FI	E	Short Training Course	Study on Wood identification using near-infrared (NIR) and geographical identification of wood origine using stable isotope,Forestry and Forest Products Research Institute,Tsukuba, Ibaraki,Japan	9,815.00	9,815.00	9,815.00	
035_24A	Pheakkdey Nguon	M	Cambodia	FI	E	Technical Document Preparation/Publication/Diss emination	Producing a manuscript for publication on the Functioning of public institutions to implement the EU Deforestation Regulation and its impacts on private sector in Indonesia and Lao PDR	9,972.00	9,972.00	9,972.00	
036_24A	Badibalaki Tagba	M	Togo	RFM	F	Post-Graduate Degree Program	PhD Study on “Agroforestry parks in southwest Togo: agroecology, carbon sequestration and socio-economic aspects”	9,999.94	9,999.94	8,545.94	Subject to budget modification
038_24A	Thinn Thinn	F	Myanmar	RFM	E	Technical Document Preparation/Publication/Diss emination	Preparing a document for the assessment of mangrove community forests in two townships in the Ayeyarwady Delta, Myanmar,Forest Department,Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar	10,000.00	10,000.00	7,000.00	Subject to budget modification
039_24A	Ame Guelly	F	Togo	RFM	E	Post-Graduate Degree Program	PhD in Agriculture Forest Economics and Management.,Beijing Forestry University, Beijing, China	8,225.75	8,225.75	8,225.75	

040_24A	Betzy Muñoz Diaz	F	Peru	RFM	S	Post-Graduate Degree Program	The International Master's Program in Management and Conservation of Tropical Forests and Biodiversity in CATIE (the Tropical Agricultural Research and Higher Education Center), Costa Rica	40,200.00	700.00	700.00	
042_24A	Massogble Atindehou	F	Benin	RFM	E	Technical Document Preparation/Publication/Dissertation	Towards sustainable management of the endangered old native trees of classified forests of Adakplame and Dogo-Kétou in Benin	9,000.00	9,000.00	9,000.00	
055_24A	Rodéric SAGBO	M	Benin	RFM	E	Post-Graduate Degree Program	Biodiversity Monitoring and Conservation Training Program in the Doctoral School of Agronomic and Water Sciences, University of Parakou, Benin	4,611.49	4,611.49	4,611.49	
061_24A	Luisa Fernanda	F	Colombia	RFM	S	Post-Graduate Degree Program	Master of Science in Forestry, University of Tolima, Ibagué, Colombia	10,000.00	10,000.00	6,500.00	Subject to budget modification
063_24A	Catty Marisela	F	Peru	ESM	S	Technical Document Preparation/Publication/Dissertation	Designing and publishing a digital publication on “Key factors limiting and benefiting Public Procurement of Legal and Sustainable Timber and Wood Products by the Peruvian State”	8,900.00	8,900.00	8,200.00	Subject to budget modification
067_24A	Alexandre Monteiro de Carvalho	M	Brazil	FI	E	Participation in Conference/Seminar/Workshop	Participating in the World Conference on Timber (WCTE 2025) - Advancing Timber for the Future Built Environment, June 22-26 2025, University of Queensland, Brisbane, Australia	6,440.00	6,440.00	6,440.00	
071_24A	María del Carmen	F	Mexico	RFM	S	Technical Document Preparation/Publication/Dissertation	Publication of a field manual for the community: Mangrove restoration and monitoring in Mexico”	4,061.58	4,061.58	4,061.58	
073_24A	Destiny Amoussou	M	Benin	RFM	F	Post-Graduate Degree Program	Postgraduate Study program: Structural characteristics, morphological variability and reproduction by seed of Pericopsis laxiflora (Benth ex Baker) Meeuwen (Fabaceae) in Benin	9,361.00	9,361.00	9,361.00	
091_24A	Tran Van Sang	M	Viet Nam	RFM	E	Post-Graduate Degree Program	The PhD program in Management of Resources and Environment, University of Science - Vietnam National University, Hanoi, Viet Nam (The doctoral thesis is on biomass and carbon stocks estimation of mangrove using satellite data and machine learning for payment of forest environment services)	8,050.00	8,050.00	8,050.00	