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ITTO FELLOWSHIP PROGRAMME 2024 & 2025 (FREEZAILAH FELLOWSHIP FUND) (Item 12(a) of the Provisional Agenda)

Introduction

1. This document is prepared pursuant to Decision 4(XXVII), which requested the Executive Director to present 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 Sixtieth Session of the ITTC and outlines measures to be considered at the Sixty-first 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 and promote the ITTO Fellowship Programme in the Tropical Update (TFU), the Tropical Timber Market Information, on the ITTO website www.itto.int and 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, study and lecture/demonstration tours. It also provides funds for Manuals/Technical Documents Preparation/Publication/Dissemination, sponsors people to participate in international/regional 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.

5. Brief on the Implementation of fellowships awarded in 2024

Nineteen (19) fellowships from 10 different producer member countries were awarded in 2024 during the Sixtieth Session of the ITTC, of which 7 were 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). 11 are female and 8 are male.

The total approved funds for the 2024 cycle of ITTO Fellowship Programme were **US\$ 145,865.38**.

Of the 19 approved fellowships, 17 fellowship activities are currently under implementation and 2 have successfully completed.

Funding Status

6. 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 funds for the ITTO Fellowship Programme (2025 cycle) are **US\$ 154,739.51**.
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 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 2026.

Report of the Fellowship Selection Panel for the 2025 cycle

8. Fellowship selection for 2025 was conducted electronically, and the finalization of the selection of successful applicants for 2025 Cycle was made through email exchanges by the Selection Panel and Secretariat. The Selection Panel of 2025 are as follows:

Producers:	Mr. Joseph Appiah-Gyapong	(Ghana)
	Ms.Athenas Castello Branco Hurtado	(Peru)
	Mr. Arsene Ewossaka	(Republic of the Congo)
Consumers:	Mr. Hiroyuki Saito	(Japan)
	Ms. Rata Muda	(New Zealand)
	Ms. Cassandra Price	(Australia)

Supported by Secretariat:

Ms. Sheam Satkuru
Ms. Elsie Yang Lingyun

9. The ITTO Secretariat received a total of 90 applications which were rigorously screened. A total of **20** eligible applications were pre-selected/shortlisted by the Secretariat after preliminary selection process and recommended to the Fellowship Selection Panel for consideration of fellowship grant. The Selection Panel considered these 20 applications, made up of 8 from Asia-Pacific: Australia (1), India (2), Indonesia (3), Myanmar (1) and Vietnam (1); 8 from Latin America: Mexico (3), Panama (3) and Peru (2), and 4 from Africa: Benin (2), Togo (1) and Côte d'Ivoire (1).

Of the 20 shortlisted applicants, 10 are female and 10 are male; 14 are in the field of Reforestation and Forest Management (RFM) and 6 are in the field of Forestry Industry (FI).

When reviewing these 20 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 considered the geographic and gender balance and also took into consideration the ITTO priority areas set in the current ITTO Strategic Action Plan in the selection process. The concluded selection result is: **16** applications are fully supported and recommended by panel members for fellowship grant, and **4** applications are recommended for ITTO fellowship grant subject to budget modification/reduction.

The Panel recommends to Council to approve awarding the 20 fellowships with a total budget **of US \$136,760.82**. The recommended applicants are listed in the Appendix to this report.

10. 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 ITTC61 Vice-Chairperson, Ms. Cassandra Price, who will provide a short brief on the selection of awardees recommended by the Panel Members.
11. The 2026 Fellowship Selection Panel is scheduled to be appointed either during the ITTC61 or before the summer of 2026.

Appendix

**LIST OF APPROVED FELLOWSHIP Awardees
(2025 Fellowship cycle)**

Registration Number	Name	Sex	Nationality	Field	Area	Language	Type of Organization	Type of Fellowship Activity	Title/Theme of Proposed Activity	Proposed budget (in US\$)	ITTO contribution (in US\$)	Revised/Approved Budget for funding (In US\$)	Remarks
001_25A	Antonius Sugianto	M	Indonesia	FI	AP	E	University	Short Training Course	Intensive Training Course on Wood Finishing and Furniture Restoration at Melbourne School of Fine Woodworking, University of Melbourne, Australia	9,785.00	9,685.00	9,685.00	
003_25A	Oscar Gaitan Peñalva	M	Panama	RFM	LA	S	Public Service (Government)	Post-Graduate Degree Program	Master's Degree in Watershed Management, Tropical Agricultural Research and Higher Education Center (CATIE), Cartago Province, Turrialba, Costa Rica	9,650.00	9,650.00	6,150.00	Subject to budget reduction
006_25A	Fitta Setiajiati	F	Indonesia	RFM	AP	E	University	Post-Graduate Degree Program	PhD research on Effectiveness of Voluntary Incentive Programs in Java's Community-Based Forest Management, Indonesia	5,498.00	5,498.00	5,498.00	
011_25A	Muhammad Daulay	M	Indonesia	RFM	AP	E	University	Post-Graduate Degree Program	PhD Program in Forestry Science, Faculty of Forestry, Universitas Gadjah Mada, Yogyakarta, Indonesia (The doctoral dissertation research is entitled "Actor, Interest, and Power Dynamics in the Implementation of Mangrove Rehabilitation Policy: A Case Study in the Mahakam Delta, East Kalimantan, Indonesia")	12,032.57	3,560.57	3,560.57	
016_25A	Koffi Amekpo Ségnika	M	Togo	RFM	AF	F	University	Post-Graduate Degree Program	PhD Research entitled "Endogenous Knowledge and Diversity of Tree Species Used in Crafts in the Forest Zone (Ecological Zone IV) of Togo: Implications for the Restoration of Natural Ecosystems", Laboratory of Botany and Plant Ecology, University of Lomé, Togo	9,890.74	9,890.74	9,890.74	
019_25A	Ahamide Dègninou Yélognissè Innocent	M	Benin	RFM	AF	F	University	Post-Graduate Degree Program	Postdoctoral Study/Research in Botany and Plant Ecology, Laboratory of Botany and Plant Ecology, University of Abomey-Calavi, Benin (the postdoctoral research project is entitled "Diversity, Socio-economic Value, Distribution, and Ecological Status of Priority Timber Species for Conservation in the Ouémé-Boukou Classified Forest in Benin: Implications for Reforestation and Sustainable Management of Forest Resources in the Protected Area.")	7,531.40	7,531.40	7,531.40	
023_25A	Karol Durand Vera	F	Peru	RFM	LA	S	Public Service	Post-Graduate Degree Program	Master's Degree in Conservation and Management of Tropical Forests and Biodiversity at the Tropical Agricultural Research and Development Center Teaching (CATIE), Turrialba, Cartago, Costa Rica	36,900.00	9,960.00	5,010.00	Subject to budget reduction

024_25A	Chavira-Ríos Sonia	F	Mexico	E	LA	E	Others	Post-Graduate Degree Program	Master's Program in Sustainable Forest development, Faculty of Agricultural and Forestry Sciences, Autonomous University of Chihuahua/Universidad Autónoma de Chihuahua (UACH), Delicias, Mexico	10,000.00	10,000.00	10,000.00	
030_25A	Monica Konjengbam	F	India	RFM	AP	E	Public Service	Study Tour	Forest Governance in Conflict-Affected Landscapes: A Short-Term Learning Visit to the Department of Plant Sciences, University of Cambridge, UK	9,800.00	9,800.00	9,800.00	
034_25A	Javier Valdivia Navarro	M	Mexico	RFM	LA	S	Others (Private Sector)	Short Training Course	The proposed activity includes two integrated components: 1) Completion of the "Project Manager Professional Certification Program" delivered by Tecnológico de Monterrey, and 2) Preparation for and completion of the Project Management Professional (PMP®) Certification Exam administered by the Project Management Institute (PMI), Monterrey, Mexico.	5,034.00	5,034.00	4,887.00	Subject to budget reduction
037_25A	Cristhiam Aizprua Rios	M	Panama	FI	LA	S	Public Service (Government)	Short Training Course	Short training in Dendrochronology at the Tropical Wood Anatomy Laboratory, National University of Loja, Ecuador.	2,539.00	2,539.00	2,539.00	
042_25A	Jennia Monrroy	F	Panama	FI	LA	E	Others	Short Training Course	Bamboo U 11-Day Build & Design Course organized by Bamboo U, Badung, Bali, Indonesia (July 3 -14, 2026)	7,018.00	7,018.00	7,018.00	
046_25A	Guadalupe Olvera Licona	F	Mexico	FI	LA	S	Research Institute	Short Training Internship	Short training internship on Procedures for the Anatomical Identification of Tropical Woods at the Anatomy Laboratory of the National Agrarian University of La Molina, Lima, Peru	2,432.00	2,432.00	2,432.00	
053_25A	Corina Erika Navarrete Macedo	F	Peru	RFM	LA	S	NGO	Short Training Course	Online Diploma Program in Artificial Intelligence in Pontifical Catholic University of Chile, Santiago, Chile	3,220.00	3,220.00	2,920.00	Subject to budget reduction
055_25A	Soloum Clement Teteli	M	Benin	RFM	AF	E	University	Short Training Internship	Short Training Internship on mycorrhizae culture and production of inoculum for <i>Isobacterlinia doka</i> and <i>Pterocarpus erinaceus</i> to strengthen their restoration strategy at National Laboratory for Research on Plant Production (LNRPV), Senegalese Institute for Agricultural Research (ISRA), Senegal	8,873.11	8,873.11	8,873.11	
057_25A	Brittany Hogben	F	Australia	FI	C	E	University	Post-Graduate Degree Program	PhD in Biological Sciences, the University of Adelaide, Adelaide, Australia	6,366.00	6,366.00	6,366.00	
067_25A	Rathna Venkatesh	F	India	FI	AP	E	Research Institute	Short Training Course	Advanced In-Situ Assessment and Conservation of Wooden Structures, University of Ljubljana, Ljubljana, Slovenia	9,700.00	9,700.00	9,700.00	
073_25A	Kone Abdoulaye	M	Côte d'Ivoire	RFM	AF	F	Others	Post-Graduate Degree Program	Feasibility study for the conservation, reforestation, and natural restoration of mangroves in the Port Gautier Classified Forest, Côte d'Ivoire, Doctoral School of	8,950.00	8,950.00	8,950.00	

									Biology, Environment, and Health, Félix Houphouët-Boigny University, Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire				
077_25A	Doan Tuan Minh Thanh	M	Viet Nam	RFM	AP	E	Public Service	Post-Graduate Degree Program	PhD Program in Forest Resources Management, Vietnam National University of Forestry, Hanoi, Vietnam (the PhD research thesis is entitled: Community-based Protection Forest Management in the North-Central Coastal Province)	8,950.00	8,950.00	8,950.00	
078_25A	Nweni Naing	F	Myanmar	RFM	AP	E	International Organization	Post-Graduate Degree Program	Field Research in Myanmar for the Master's Program on Gender and Development Studies, School of Environment, Resources and Development, Asian Institute of Technology, Bangkok, Thailand.	7,000.00	7,000.00	7,000.00	