

## Trees Outside Forests (TOF) Certification Standard Initiative India

The Network for Certification and Conservation of Forests (NCCF), a non-profit organisation, was established with the purpose of developing India's National Forest Management certification standards. We have already progressed significantly in the development of national standards for natural forests, and the draft standard is in the public domain right now, open for stakeholder comments. **As a natural progression of that process, we have initiated an ambitious project for the development of assessment standards for Certification of Trees Outside Forests (ToF), the first of its kind in the world, through a multi stakeholder Standard Development Group (SDG).**

The term ToF, refers to all trees that are grown outside the “recorded forest area”; and includes both agroforestry as well as urban forestry, and includes within its ambit trees growing in private lands in agroforestry, farm forestry, along farm bunds and homesteads, in orchards and in common and state non-forest lands in parks and gardens, along roads, canals and railway line in rural or urban areas etc.. These ToF resources cater in a major way to meeting the requirements of wood fiber in India, especially from the pulp and paper, plywood and composite products and the handicrafts and furniture industry. However, due to the small scale and unorganized nature of the ToF practitioners, these tend to remain on the fringes of the certification universe. **Globally, the wood fiber based industries are moving towards sustainability and certification, and keeping the ToF outside the certification ambit is impacting the uptake of these resources by the industry, as well as denying them the benefits of certification. It is keeping these issues in mind that the NCCF decided to embark on this mission.**

The major buy in for international and national stakeholders, as identified by us are:

- Bringing a majority of the non-aggregated and unorganised forestry sector into the certification stream and enabling them to upgrade their practices and responsibly manage them. The standard shall seek to enforce the rigours of the international forest management certification standards on ToF practitioners, while at the same time recognizing that their small scale and unorganised nature and thus integrate the same in the forest produce supply chain.
- Certification of ToF will certainly open huge market for certified raw material under ownership of small and medium farmers providing them incentives. This will reduce the ever increasing pressure on the natural forests to meet the certified raw material demand.
- Market availability of certified forest products obtained from responsibly managed sources currently exclude Trees outside Forests as these resources are formally not included within the scope of forest management certification; creating a market barrier for small holdings. Yet these trees are contributing an ever-increasing share of global forest production (currently estimated at 10%) and the farmers who hold the majority of these resources are already on the margins of an economy and are in need of instruments which proactively support their integration and access to increased livelihood opportunities. Agroforestry also contributes significantly towards environmental services, employment generation and food security. The ToF standard will help in safeguarding the interests of the small/ medium enterprises.

The NCCF recognises the role of trees outside forests, which will support smallholders and promotes expanding the influence on sustainable management beyond forest boundaries at the landscape level. **The ToF standard shall be part of the globally aligned certification thought process, which, while meeting the stringent global requirements of sustainability, would also be sympathetic to the forestry and resource management concerns within India.** The standard development activity would be a multi-stakeholder activity, drawing on the expertise and experiences of subject matter experts and stakeholders across the economic, environmental, social and political spectrums.

**In view of above, NCCF hereby calls for the nomination for members at individual as well as institutional capacities to be a part of Standard Development Group (SDG) for developing the standard for TOF certification.**

SDG is an apex body to be involved in the development and improvement of the standard. The body will have prerogative to monitor, control and supervise the standard development process. Considering your organisation as a prominent stakeholder in this forestry and forest products supply chain, we would be delighted to have you as part of the team.

If you acquiesce to the same, we request you to provide your particulars in the format of Annexure 1 along with relevant enclosures and send it to [tof.mail@nccf.in](mailto:tof.mail@nccf.in) .



Expression of Interest Application Form  
Standard Developing Group (SDG) Trees outside Forests (TOF) Certification Standard

Particulars	Details
Name of Person	
Organization	
Address	
Department/Wing	
Telephone number & Mobile	
Email address	

**Terms and Conditions**

In consideration to my selection as a member for Standard Development Group of Trees outside Forests (TOF) Certification, I agree to the following:

1. All members of the standard development group would be provided with equal opportunities to contribute to the development or revision of the standard and submit comments.
2. The members of SDG shall meet once in 2-3 months at a place pre-decided by NCCF.
3. To guide and support TWG members to develop and formulate TOF Certification standard.
4. The SDG members may be involved in pilot testing of the standards and collating the results, once the draft standard has been finalized.
5. The NCCF shall not compensate any member for the time devoted or any professional fees /expenses.

**Note:** Send the filled form with the attachments at [tof.mail@nccf.in](mailto:tof.mail@nccf.in)

Weblink to the Terms of Reference for Standard Development Group and Technical Working Group [http://nccf.in/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/NCCF\\_TOR\\_TOF.pdf](http://nccf.in/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/NCCF_TOR_TOF.pdf)

I acknowledge the requirements for the participation as set forth in this application.

Date:

Place:

Sign\_\_\_\_\_