

## Statutes and membership information

### 1. Organs of the SwissForestLab

Members of the SwissForestLab are entitled to vote and can be elected to the various bodies of the SwissForestLab. The Steering Committee decides on unclear cases. Decisions are passed by a majority vote (Mehrheitsentscheid). The organs of the SwissForestLab, their structure and explanations of the decision paths are shown at the end of the text in a graph (Fig. 1). In addition to the General Assembly, the central decision-making body is the Steering Committee, which is elected every three years by the members. The members of the Steering Committee may be re-elected once. There is one exception as long as the SwissForestLab is hosted and primarily financially supported by one institution. During that time, the head of the SwissForestLab must be an employee of that institution, and for the sake of internal organisational continuity, this person can be re-elected several times.

### 2. Membership requirements and procedures

Members of the SwissForestLab are scientists from the career stage of the postdoctoral researcher (and higher) working in Switzerland in forest ecosystem research and related fields. Members of the SwissForestLab can be scientists who work at a Swiss research institution. It is mandatory that the members provide infrastructure and/or research projects and/or metadata and/or models as described under point 2.1.

Researchers who are employed abroad and carry out research projects in Switzerland or cooperate with research projects in, or with researchers of, the SwissForestLab join as “associate members”. National non-scientific institutions in the areas of forestry practice, politics or administration can also join as associate members. Associate members may attend the General Assembly, however have no active or passive voting rights.

In the normal procedure, the head of a working group (usually a professorship at a university, or a research group leader) will apply for membership and propose, by name, scientists in her or his group who should also be members of the SwissForestLab. Individual applications are also possible from scientists without a management function whose superiors are not members of the SwissForestLab.

Admission to the SwissForestLab must be applied for in writing, enclosing the curriculum vitae and details of the network contribution (see 2.1). In the case of a proposal from a person in a leadership position who proposes other members of his or her working group, the CV of that group leader is sufficient. The Steering Committee of the SwissForestLab decides on the admission of members and associate members. Membership begins when the Executive Office confirms membership (via e-mail). The membership is automatically extended by 1 year and can be terminated by e-mail, with a notice period of four weeks by e-mail. Ongoing cooperations involving the exchange of data and the use of models and infrastructure should be continued and successfully concluded.

#### 2.1 Network contribution of the members to the SwissForestLab

a) **Integration of an infrastructure** into the SwissForestLab platform. Examples are experimental sites or sites where long-term measurements are carried out, research installations such as measuring towers, cranes, scaffolds, etc. The respective infrastructure is presented on the SwissForestLab website with metadata (special view on EnviDat). This makes it easier for other persons to find the infrastructure and establish contact. The integration of an infrastructure into the SwissForestLab exclusively results in a better visibility, there are no obligations on the part of the member who brings the infrastructure into the SwissForestLab with regard to the use for or transfer of data to third parties.

and/or

(b) **integration of measurement and analysis metadata.** Members provide the metadata, which is then published on the website (special view on EnviDat). The use of the data is determined project-specifically between the cooperation partners. The existing data policy of the individual institutions is retained. The SwissForestLab explicitly calls on all members to an Open Data Policy.

and/or

**Integration of models and the corresponding program codes.** Members provide information about their models. The SwissForestLab explicitly calls on all members to an Open Source Policy. The use of the programmes is determined project-specifically between the cooperation partners.

and/or

**Integration of research projects** into the SwissForestLab (visible on the SwissForestLab website). Members can contribute their own projects to the platform that have already been funded through other sources. The project can thus benefit from the existing expertise, experimental areas and methodological approaches in the SwissForestLab and strengthen joint research approaches of the SwissForestLab. These projects can then be supplemented, for example, by additional experiments. Furthermore, new interdisciplinary projects can be designed in a cooperation between SwissForestLab. These projects can then be financed proportionately or completely by external donors or, if financial resources are available, by the SwissForestLab.

Data generated in the context of seed money projects (see 3.2) are subject to the Open Data Policy, are published and are freely available (while safeguarding the interests of the postdocs or doctoral students in these projects).

## 2.2 Publication Logo

It must be ensured that the logo of the institution of the respective member can be published on the SwissForestLab website. The Executive Office coordinates with the first member of an institution how any necessary permits can be obtained. Conversely, members shall ensure that the SwissForestLab logo is used in presentations, on flyers, etc., provided that resources and/or infrastructure have been used in the project presented.

## 2.3 Provision of metadata

Metadata are the basis for successful new collaborations in the SwissForestLab. Members who contribute to the SwissForestLab in the form of infrastructure, models, methods or data have to make the relevant metadata accessible. This shall take place after a reasonable period of time after the commencement of membership. This can be done via web links to existing metadata (or similar). It is possible to store the metadata in the WSL data portal EnviDat and the coordination (executive office) of the SwissForestLab provides organisational support for this storage method. This data is then made available for full-text data searches on the SwissForestLab website ([www.swissforestlab.ch](http://www.swissforestlab.ch)) and on the EnviDat data portal ([www.envidat.ch](http://www.envidat.ch)). Metadata of new infrastructures, models, methods or data made available to the SwissForestLab during membership shall also be made accessible as mentioned above.

## 2.4. Membership fee:

On 09.02.2024, the General Assembly decided to introduce annual membership fees. Three variants of

membership fees were introduced:

- Group of >10 members: 1'500 CHF per year
- Groups of ≤10 members: 1'000 CHF per year
- Individual: CHF 200 per year

Membership includes:

- Organization of thematical workshops (max 3 calls per year)
- Financial support to organize meetings, workshops and invited speakers in the members institution
- Yearly summer school
- Yearly Science Day to showcase the members research
- Every two years a SwissForestLab Dialog with practitioners and stakeholders
- Access and support to EnviDat (for non-WSL members)
- News flash and social media to showcase your research
- Continued acquisition of further means for SFL projects
- Members of the SFL get discount for events organized by the SFL.

The annual membership fee will be invoiced by the Executive Office after prior notification.

Every year, the Executive Office asks the group leader applicants to update the list of group members.

## **2.5. Acknowledgement**

Members mention the SwissForestLab in the acknowledgement of publications, presentations, and posters if relevant data, models or collaborations as well as infrastructure within the framework of the SwissForestLab have been used for the content of the publication.

## **3. Use of the SwissForestLabs for members**

1. Participation in excellent and relevant forest ecosystem research
2. Participation in the WSL SeedMoney projects (made available by WSL within the framework of the Strategic Initiative SwissForestLab) and the possibility to submit project proposals for future internal project calls of SwissForestLab.
3. Use of the platform as a central information hub
  - a. Website with metadata (infrastructure, data, methods)
  - b. Facilitation of contact with potential project/cooperation partners
  - c. Promotion of contacts to forest owners, industry and other application-related interfaces
  - d. Networking/exchange between young scientists with senior experts
4. Support in planning projects, experiments and events
5. Support in the acquisition of third-party funds. The aim of SwissForestLab is to acquire additional resources for research, workshops and training, which individual groups cannot obtain on their own, e.g. through EU, industry, foundations or other fellowship programmes.
6. Participation in seminars, workshops, summer schools

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Approved by the SwissForestLab Steering Committee on the 19.12.2024 and the SwissForestLab General Assembly on the 21.1.2025

## Decision Paths SwissForestLab



**Fig. 1: Structure and decision paths**

- The members of SwissForestLab elect the Steering Committee from the group of members every 3 years during the General Assembly of SwissForestLab. The members are scientists who work at a Swiss research institution and who meet the requirements set out above in the text (submission of data, projects, infrastructure, models; membership accepted) (see point 2). They represent their member organisations.
- The associate members of the SwissForestLab are scientists who are employed abroad and carry out research projects in Switzerland or cooperate with research projects in or with researchers of the SwissForestLab. National non-scientific institutions in the areas of forestry practice, politics or administration can also join as associate members. They represent their partner organisations. Associate members may attend the General Assembly, however have no active and passive voting rights.
- External Advisors can be recruited from the member and partner organisations.
- The Steering Committee decides on the accession of new members and associated members. It consists of 5 members (if possible, from different member organisations). The Steering Committee elects a Chair as well as an Executive Board consisting of 2 members, which carries out the routine work together with the Executive Office and prepares decision-making processes. One of the two persons of the Executive Board acts as Executive Director of the Executive Office. The Chair of the Steering Committee chairs the Executive Board and the Steering Committee decides on projects, events etc.