

Initiative spotlight: Bhutan national CSFE



LESSONS LEARNT:

Avoiding assumptions in the market assessment ensures that climate-smart actors concentrate on the right efforts.

- For instance, unlike most CSFEP markets, Bhutan has a history of building with timber. Consequently, the emphasis was not on raising awareness of building with timber but on **understanding the proper use of forests and the consequences of improper use.**

Engaging an on-the-ground partner, preferably a conservation NGO, will help balance the conversation to ensure the timber industry and its interests do not overly skew it

CONTEXT

- **Bhutan has one of the highest rates of forest cover in the world, at [71%](#)**, but these forests are under threat from illegal harvesting and fires.
- **22,000 houses must be built by 2050 to fulfil the demand for affordable, low-carbon urban housing.** Bhutan is experiencing exponential population growth which is placing pressure on the forest resources, and increasing the built environment footprint. Under current approaches, these pressures will be detrimental to the nation's carbon negative status.
- **Timber-based construction has been part of Bhutan's ecosystem historically; there is an opportunity to return to these methods sustainably**

CSFEP'S APPROACH AND ROLE

- CSFEP was brought on board alongside [Bauhaus Earth](#) and [Arup](#) to sustainably transform Bhutan's urban construction sector and ultimately **support the Government of Bhutan to create a national climate-smart forest economy**
- The partners began with a scoping mission and then focused on three main activities: developing **Thimphu's 20-year structural plan**, creating a **business case for manufacturing sector** investment, and establishing a timber-based construction research and development unit
- Alongside partners such as Bauhaus Earth, Arup, and GOA, **CSFEP supported the development of a business case to attract investors** into Bhutan's timber manufacturing sector
- CSFEP serves as the **forestry partner**, advising project partners to ensure that all plans are climate-smart

IMPACT

COMMUNITY

- Construction of a **climate-smart pilot building** as a prototype for ecosystem actors
- Development of a business case for securing investment in timber manufacturing, which is expected to result in a **climate-smart manufacturing sector that can supply materials for the built environment in a way that supports the forests**