

Professional advisory services

Through timber construction, there is a future in which forests can support cities and, in return, cities can support forests. As the global population increases, particularly in cities, the construction sector is expected to exponentially grow in order to accommodate the demand for housing and other infrastructure. Current construction techniques are a significant contributor to the global climate crisis and urgently need to be transformed. By substituting the carbon-intensive materials commonly used in construction with forest economy biomaterials, such as wood and bamboo which sequester carbon, we can create buildings with reduced carbon emissions. However, this timber construction industry is still in its nascency and there is a need to address its market gaps and leverage opportunities to accelerate its development and increase its uptake.

These interventions for the mass timber construction industry can be segmented into seven main categories of solutions that affect the value chain and enablers of the ecosystem. Through various internal and external discussions, Climate Smart Forest Economy Program (CSFEP) has categorized potential solutions as relating to i) Finance and insurance; ii) Product and process certifications; iii) Communication and awareness building; iv) Timber knowledge ecosystem; v) Forest management and timber policies; vi) Value chain linkages; and vii) Timber-based real estate. The proposed solutions can be executed as for-profit, philanthropic, or blended ventures, with the services developed as individual offerings or paired with complementary services in a single offering. Additionally, while some solutions may be set up as a free-standing entity, other solutions may be similar to services provided by existing actors in or adjacent to the CSFE sector. In the case of the latter, it may make sense to approach these existing providers as potential partners to find a suitable and effective home for needed services.

TIMBER KNOWLEDGE ECOSYSTEM

One of the challenges faced is that there are few options for targeted advisory services to serve the mass timber industry and help actors navigate the growing market. The lack of frameworks and decision-making tools to assess opportunities and trade-offs is a hurdle for stakeholders. Actors across the value chain are unable to access quality thought partners who can advise on how to most effectively and efficiently address the challenges and questions specific to the climate-smart forest economy (CSFE). These include challenges faced in production and processing, sourcing, supply chains, policy and advocacy, sustainability optimization, safeguard implementation, organizational transformation, and timber reuse.

A firm offering top-tier strategic advisory support services for actors looking to understand how to optimize their CSFE work or to pivot their organization to align with CSFE and 3S (sink, storage, and substitution)¹ goals will address this market gap. The firm can provide research, problem-solving, and advisory support for actors all along the CSFE value chain and for those looking for organizational transformation support. It can also position itself as a thought leader in the growing industry and the go-to trusted service provider for all forest economy and carbon accounting questions for the sector.

Philanthropic and private companies are already partially fulfilling this need and could expand their offering to support ecosystem enablers as well. For example, Wood Works is a non-profit providing free technical support for commercial and multi-family wood buildings and Mass Timber Services provides a suite of services to clients across the mass timber construction value chain. Wood Works offers free one-on-one project technical assistance, continuing education, design tools, and on-demand resources.

¹ The 3S Framework (carbon Sink, carbon Storage, and biomaterial Substitution) quantifies carbon benefits and tradeoffs along forest economy value chains. Refer to the [Climate Smart Forest Economy Program](#) for more

Testimonials from users have emphasized the value of their resources and technical assistance across the timber construction process. Adding to their credibility as a needed market resource is their association with mass timber manufacturers, suppliers, and notable industry bodies such as the American Wood Council.

A team of strategy and management advisory professionals with experience across a variety of sectors would be needed to support decision-making at this advisory firm. The organization will leverage connections to policymakers and investors to develop a robust enabling environment and bring in cross-sector expertise to provide insights on lessons learned and best practices.

If you would like to know more about these types of firms you can reach out to [Wood Works](#) and [Mass Timber Services](#).