



---

# **FORESTRY PROFESSIONALS OUTREACH PROGRAMME**

**FY2025/26**





**FORESTRY  
PROFESSIONALS  
OUTREACH  
PROGRAMME REPORT  
2025/26**

---

**CONTENTS**

|                                        |   |
|----------------------------------------|---|
| 1. Introduction.....                   | 4 |
| 2. Objective.....                      | 4 |
| 3.Findings and observations .....      | 5 |
| 4.Recommendations and conclusion ..... | 6 |



**FORESTRY  
PROFESSIONALS  
OUTREACH  
PROGRAMME REPORT  
2025/26**

---

## **Acronyms**

|        |                                  |
|--------|----------------------------------|
| B-BBEE | Broad-Based Economic Empowerment |
| FSC    | Forest Sector Code               |
| FSCC   | Forest Sector Charter Council    |

## **1. Introduction**

The Forest Sector Charter Council (FSCC) is mandated to oversee, facilitate, monitor and report on the implementation of the Amended Forest Sector Code (FSC) in line with the Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment (B-BBEE) Act. As part of this mandate, the Council undertakes stakeholder awareness and capacity-building initiatives aimed at strengthening understanding and awareness of B-BBEE, promoting compliance with the Amended FSC and preparing future forestry professionals to contribute meaningfully to the transformation agenda.

During the 2025/26 financial year, the Forestry Professionals Outreach Programme was implemented through the inaugural Youth Skills and Enterprise Development Webinar, held under the theme **"Raise Your Hand if You Want to Be Part of the Discussion."** The webinar represented an important platform for bringing together forestry students, graduates, young professionals, industry experts, government representatives and academic institutions to deliberate on issues affecting youth participation within the forestry sector.

The webinar focused on addressing skills shortages, graduate unemployment, enterprise development opportunities and the role of transformation in creating sustainable career pathways for young professionals. It further provided participants with practical insights into industry and government expectations, employment opportunities and entrepreneurship, while encouraging active dialogue between the forestry sector and the next generation of professionals. The positive participation from all seven forestry higher education institutions and key industry stakeholders and experts demonstrated the growing importance of collaborative initiatives aimed at preparing young people for meaningful participation within the forestry sector.

## **2. Objective**

The objective of the Forestry Professionals Outreach Programme was to create an interactive platform that equips forestry students and young professionals with a broader understanding of transformation within the forestry sector while exposing them to employment, skills development and enterprise opportunities. The programme further sought to strengthen collaboration between academia, industry and government, bridge

the gap between education and employment, and encourage meaningful participation by young people in advancing the objectives of Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment (B-BBEE) and the Amended Forest Sector Code.

### **3. Findings and observations**

The inaugural Youth Skills and Enterprise Development Webinar attracted strong interest from across the forestry sector, with registrations received from all seven South African higher education institutions offering forestry qualifications, together with representatives from government departments, industry organisations and forestry companies. This broad participation demonstrated the relevance of the initiative and the growing demand for structured engagement between students, graduates and the sector's stakeholders.

Discussions throughout the webinar confirmed that graduate unemployment and the shortage of practical workplace experience remain significant challenges facing young forestry professionals. Of significance was the strong acknowledgement that, while graduates possess academic qualifications, there remains a need to strengthen workplace readiness, professional skills and practical industry exposure to improve employability. The discussions further highlighted the importance of aligning academic programmes with evolving industry requirements.

The value of transformation in creating employment and enterprise opportunities for young people could not be overlooked. Presentations on graduate development programmes, recruitment processes, entrepreneurship and personal career journeys provided practical examples of how B-BBEE particularly Skills Development and Enterprise and Supplier Development initiatives can contribute to youth empowerment within the forestry sector. These presentations encouraged participants to consider both employment and entrepreneurship as viable career pathways.

Interactive question-and-answer sessions generated a high level of participation, with sixty-three (63) questions submitted during the webinar. The discussions reflected genuine interest from the audience regarding career development, industry and government expectations, recruitment processes and available opportunities. Questions that could not be addressed during the live sessions were subsequently answered by the

presenters, demonstrating the Council's commitment to ensuring meaningful stakeholder engagement.

The collaboration between the Forest Sector Charter Council and Forestry South Africa further demonstrated the value of strategic partnerships in supporting youth development initiatives. The sponsorship of participant incentives and continued commitment to future webinars reinforced industry support for collaborative interventions aimed at developing future forestry professionals.

#### **4. Recommendations and conclusion**

The Forestry Professionals Outreach Programme successfully achieved its objective of creating a platform that connected students, graduates, industry representatives and government to discuss the challenges and opportunities facing young professionals in the forestry sector. The inaugural Youth Skills and Enterprise Development Webinar demonstrated the value of collaborative engagement in promoting transformation, strengthening industry awareness and preparing graduates for successful careers within the forestry sector.

It is recommended that the Youth Webinar become an annual flagship initiative of the Forestry Professionals Outreach Programme, with continued collaboration between the Forest Sector Charter Council, Forestry South Africa, higher education institutions and industry stakeholders. Future webinars should continue to focus on graduate employability, enterprise development opportunities, workplace readiness and transformation, while expanding opportunities for mentorship, practical skills development and interaction with employers.

Furthermore, the webinar recordings should continue to be promoted through the FSCC website and social media platforms to extend their reach beyond the live event. Feedback received from participants regarding the timing of the webinar, suggesting hosting the webinar outside the examination period. Building on the success of the inaugural event, the Council should continue strengthening partnerships that contribute towards developing a skilled, inclusive and transformation-oriented forestry workforce capable of supporting the future and long-term sustainability of the sector.