Attachment-2 (A3-19)

AFoCO Annual Report 2018

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About the Asian Forest Cooperation Organization (AFoCO)

The Asian Forest Cooperation Organization (AFoCO) is an intergovernmental organization that is committed to strengthening regional forest cooperation and taking concrete actions to promote sustainable forest management and address the impacts of climate change. The precursor of AFoCO is the ASEAN-ROK Forest Cooperation (AFoCo), which was formalized in 2012 after the ASEAN-ROK Commemorative Summit in June 2009.

On a global scale, forests are essential resources that are of inestimable value. However, despite their importance in combating climate change, sustaining livelihoods and providing various ecosystem services, vast areas of forests continue to be overexploited or degraded. The achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the global agenda for forestry requires concerted efforts and inter-sectoral collaboration. By reaching out to member countries across Asia, AFoCO has been concentrating its efforts in addressing emerging forestry issues to contribute to the sustainable management of forests and achieve our vision of a Greener Asia.

AFoCO consists of two organs – the "Assembly" and the"Secretariat". The Assembly is the highest decision-making body of AFoCO and it comprises of Representatives appointed by the Parties to the Agreement on the Establishment of AFoCO. The Secretariat provides administrative support to the Organization and plays an important role in implementing the decisions of the Assembly. The Headquarters of AFoCO, including the Secretariat, is located in Seoul, the Republic of Korea.

As of December 2018, AFoCO's portfolio consists of 14 member countries including 7 Parties and 7 Observers, who cooperate and support its activities.

FIVE STRATEGIC PRIORITIES TO 2023

Since 2012, AFoCO has been working closely with its member countries towards achieving the global goal of increasing forest cover, implementing the Paris Agreement on climate change, and

improving livelihoods and income generation. Looking forward, AFoCO will continue to develop and implement programs and projects in line with its five strategic priorities (2019-2023):

1 Initiating customized restoration & reforestation models

Customized restoration and reforestation models in target countries will be established and capacity building activities such as training courses and study tours will be implemented. AFoCO will design projects to ensure the proper involvement of local communities, systematic benefit-sharing mechanisms among stakeholders, and long-term sustainability of people and the environment.

2 Supporting research & development in climate change adaptation approaches

Scientific researches and studies on the development of climate change adaptation methodologies and approaches for vulnerable areas in the region will be carried out. AFoCO will support the implementation of field surveys and analytical studies on the risks, vulnerability, and impacts of climate change on major forest types as well as the development of relevant technical and policy recommendations.

3 Introducing systematic management on forest-related disasters

Proven forest-related disaster management technologies and integrated systems will be introduced. AFoCO will target disaster-prone areas such as hotspots of forest fires and landslides and carry out projects that cover both preventive and control measures such as forest fire monitoring and management, erosion and landslide control, the establishment of demonstration sites, and capacity building activities.

4 Local livelihood improvement & community-based small enterprise development

Communities and forest ecosystems in the region will both benefit from the implementation of proven forest-related activities for local livelihood improvement and small enterprise development, such as payments for forest ecosystem services and forest and community-based ecotourism. Advanced communication and imagery technologies will also be introduced to enhance the effectiveness of these activities.

5 Strengthening institutional capabilities, diversifying resources, & promoting regional actions

AFoCO will explore alternative funding sources to continue efforts. Identify common issues and challenges among member countries, and engage in international fora and dialogues to promote common interests and positions at the global level.

I MILESTONES 2009-2017

2009 -2012

Drawing on its expertise and experiences gleaned from national reforestation and forest rehabilitation programs between the 1960s and 1980s, the Republic of Korea (ROK) has ambitious visions to promote and support sustainable development in the Asian region. The ROK proposed the establishment of the Asian Forest Cooperation Organization (AFoCO) at the ASEAN-ROK Commemorative Summit in June 2009 to share best practices and technologies to narrow the development gap among countries in the region.

After a great deal of time and effort, the Agreement between the Governments of the Republic of Korea and the Member States of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations on Forest Cooperation (AFoCo Agreement), as the initial stage, came into effect on 5 August 2012. Since then, all ASEAN Member States and the Republic of Korea have been cooperating closely to address critical forestry-related issues in the region.

On 28 August 2012, the first session of the Governing Council was held in Seoul. Following the meeting, two institutional bodies – a Governing Council comprised of 11 representatives from all parties and a Secretariat based in Seoul was set up on September 1st, 2012, in accordance with the Agreement. The first ASEAN-ROK Special Ministerial Meeting on Forestry was held on August 30th, 2012.

2013

On 25 January 2013, in Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar, the 2nd Session of the Governing Council was held. The meeting considered and approved numerous issues related to the Secretariat's activities and plans. The meeting set up the Working Group for the establishment of the Asian Forest Cooperation Organization (WG-AFoCO) to provide the platform for broadening members. Further discussion on the vision, mission, objectives, scope, and areas of cooperation of the future AFoCO was also undertaken.

Soon after, the 3rd Session of the Governing Council was convened in Singapore on 18 October 2013. Among other matters, the Governing Council considered and agreed on the extension of the ASEAN-ROK Forest Cooperation Agreement for two more years.

The meeting endorsed the Landmark Program to be implemented for ten years. The Landmark Program includes the establishment of the Regional Education and Training Center (RETC) Myanmar, the operation of training courses and scholarship programs, as well as the implementation of forest rehabilitation projects in Cambodia, Lao PDR, and Vietnam.

The First Meeting of the Dialogue for the Establishment of AFoCO was organized in Busan, Korea on 11-12 December 2013. There, the Secretariat presented the draft Agreement on the Establishment of AFoCO and started to make the framework for the establishment of AFoCO.

2014

The year 2014 marks an important milestone as the ASEAN-ROK Forest Cooperation was extended for two more years, following the approval of the Governing Council and timely entry into force of the instrument of extension on 5 August 2014. With this, ASEAN-ROK Forest Cooperation has entered its second phase to continue providing a proper framework for the implementation of on-going activities. On 30 April 2014, the 4th Session of the Governing Council was held in Manila, the Philippines, to deal with several agenda including the assessment matters. The AFoCO Fellowship Program was first introduced at this Session.

In December of the same year, the 5th Session of the Governing Council convened in Busan, Korea. The Governing Council endorsed projects and witnessed the signing of MOUs for the Landmark Program Restoration Projects and regional projects.

2015

2015 has been the busiest year in the history of ASEAN-ROK Forest Cooperation. According to Dr. Hadi S. Pasaribu – former Executive Director of ASEAN-ROK Forest Cooperation, the year 2015 was referred to as the "Pinnacle Year," and he believed that the spirit and momentum of this cooperation would lead to more dynamic regional forestry cooperation and stronger support for future initiatives.

Indeed, there were many achievements in 2015. The Landmark Programs gained full momentum with the projects in Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, and Vietnam while capacity building activities such as technical training courses and scholarship awards have been offered for all ASEAN Member States. Officials from Cambodia, Lao PDR, and the Philippines joined the Secretariat for a one-year assignment as the first batch of the Fellowship Program. This year also marked the adoption of the Agreement on the Establishment of AFoCO. This has given way to the formal process for the establishment of a treaty-based intergovernmental organization. To step-up cooperation and outreach into the global arena, the Secretariat also organized joint activities with partner institutions, to name a few, ASEAN-Korea Centre, RECOFTC, AFoCo Forest Week in Seoul and collaborative activities at 6th International Wildland Fire Conference in Pyeongchang, ROK.

ASEAN-Korea Youth network workshop on 11th August 2015

2016

As the ASEAN-ROK Forest Cooperation entered its final year in 2016, many special events were organized, especially the AFoCO RETC construction in Yangon, Myanmar, Regional Projects, Fellowship Program, and transitional arrangements. The prospective parties to AFoCO started respective domestic processes for signing and ratification of the Agreement on the Establishment of the Asian Forest Cooperation Organization.

On 30 March 2016, the 8th Session of the Governing Council was held in Bandar Seri Begawan, Brunei Darussalam. The Governing Council agreed on the administrative procedure to follow after the completion of the ASEAN-ROK Forest Cooperation. Each country also shared respective progress on the internal procedures to become a party to AFoCO. The Governing Council approved two new projects in Malaysia – Thailand, and Brunei-Indonesia-Philippines-Singapore.

In 2016, the AFoCo Secretariat received four Fellowship Officials from Vietnam, Malaysia, Indonesia, and Thailand. They played vital roles in facilitating upcoming regional projects and assisted the Secretariat in communication with members on top of their associated team responsibilities.

The Special Session of the Governing Council was held on 26 July 2016 in Bangkok, Thailand as the final session of the Governing Council before entering the interim arrangements on 4 August 2016. The meeting agreed on the detailed transitional arrangements to the Interim Secretariat under the 8th Session of the Governing Council.

Onsite monitoring of the RETC Office

In 2016, four parties signed the Agreement, followed by the Republic of Korea, Timor-Leste (June), Indonesia (August), Bhutan (September), and Vietnam (October).

2017

In the first month of 2017, after the interim arrangements put in place in 2016, AFoCO organized a Roundtable Discussion for AFoCO Strategy Development in Seoul to seek advice and recommendation in setting the direction and the planning of AFoCO Strategy from six (6) professionals and professors who have been working in relevant institutions and universities in the fields of forestry and international development. Based on these inputs and recommendations, the discussion resulted in the identification of AFoCO's priority areas.

Two scholars from the pioneer batch of AFoCO Landmark Scholarship Recipients who commenced their studies in 2015 completed their dissertations and graduated in February 2017. In March 2017, a total of five new scholarship recipients from Lao PDR, Myanmar, the Philippines, Thailand, and Vietnam were selected to receive the 2017 Landmark Scholarship.

On 23 December 2017, the AFoCO Regional Education and Training Center (RETC) completed its construction with a total floor area of 5,014.4 m^2 divided into three (3) functional zones: education

& training zone, accommodation zone, and support zone. The establishment of RETC aims to strengthen the capacity building of the member countries in the forestry sector by providing modern facilities and equipment necessary for forestry education and training.

The year 2017 was also a milestone of the signing of the AFoCO Agreement by four more parties, Cambodia (February), Brunei Darussalam (May), Myanmar (July), Mongolia (August). Moreover, four Parties have deposited respective instruments of ratification in this year.

II MEETINGS & EVENTS

13 March 2018	*The signing of AFoCO Agreement by Lao PDR* H.E. Dr. Liane Thykeo, Minister of Agriculture and Forestry of Lao PDR, signed the Agreement on the Establishment of the Asian Forest Cooperation Organization on 13 March 2018 at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Korea in Seoul. Lao PDR is the 10th country to sign the Agreement. H.E. Dr. Liane Thykeo signing the Agreement
28 March 2018	*Deposit of Instrument of Ratification by Myanmar* Myanmar became the 5th Party to deposit its instrument of ratification, and AFoCO officially entered into force on 27 April 2018.
4 June 2018	*The signing of AFoCO Agreement by the Philippines* On 4 June 2018, H.E. Mr. Roy Cimatu, Secretary of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, signed the AFoCO Agreement. The signing was arranged during the occasion of the State Visit of the President of the Philippines to Korea. The Philippines became the 11th country to sign the AFoCO Agreement. H.E. Mr. Roy Cimatu signing the Agreement
10 August 2018	*Deposit of Instruments of Acceptance by Cambodia* The Instrument of Acceptance of the Kingdom of Cambodia was duly deposited on 10 August 2018.
23 August 2018	*Deposit of Instruments of Ratification by Brunei Darussalam* The Instrument of Ratification of Brunei Darussalam was duly deposited on 23 August 2018.

1. Inauguration of AFoCO

3 May 2018

A major milestone was reached on 27 April 2018 when the Agreement on the Establishment of AFoCO entered into force 30 days after the date of deposit of the fifth instrument of ratification by Myanmar, and AFoCO was officially established as an international organization.

The formalization of AFoCO was celebrated during the Inauguration Ceremony, which took place on 3 May 2019 in Seoul. The Ceremony was attended by the Ambassadors of member countries, the 1st Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Minister of Korea Forest Service, and some 90 representatives and guests from other organizations and institutions.

2. Grand Opening Ceremony of the AFoCO RETC

14 July 2018

On 14 July 2018, more than 130 guests were invited to the Grand Opening Ceremony of the AFoCO Regional Education and Training Center (RETC) to celebrate and commemorate its official opening.

H.E. U Ohn Winn, the Union Minister of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Conservation of Myanmar and Mr. Ryu Kwang-su, the Vice Minister of Korea Forest Service welcomed Ambassadors and representatives of AFoCO member countries as well as the ASEAN Senior Officials on Forestry (ASOF) Leaders of the AFoCO member countries to the ceremony

3. Executive Director Selection Committee Meetings

9-10 August & 11-12 October 2018

In accordance with the decisions of the 2nd Technical Meeting for AFoCO held in December 2017, the Executive Director Selection Committee composed of representatives nominated by Parties and Signatory countries was organized.

The First Meeting of the Executive Director Selection Committee was held on 9-10 August 2018 in Seoul. The Committee adopted the rules of procedure, including the evaluation criteria for the candidates, schedule, and work plan of the Committee, as well as the text for the vacancy announcement.

The Committee convened again from 11-12 October during the Second Executive Director Selection Committee Meeting to carry out the interview process and shortlist up to five candidates. The Meeting conducted a final deliberation and selected a final candidate to be recommended to the Assembly.

4. First Session of the Assembly of AFoCO

12-13 November 2018

Prior to the First Session of the Assembly, the Preparatory Meeting was convened to review the program, agenda, and composition of the documents for the First Session of the Assembly. The Preparatory Meeting reviewed and made improvements to the meeting documents for consideration and decision of the Assembly.

The First Session of the Assembly was successfully held on 12-13 November 2018 in Seoul, Korea. All Parties were present to make strategic decisions to establish AFoCO as a key player in the region and officially set up the framework of the organization. Signatory countries, as well as observer countries, were also present to witness the significant event.

After extensive and thorough discussions, the Assembly endorsed necessary internal regulations and the strategic plan for the next five years, and appointed Mr. Chencho Norbu, as the first Executive Director of AFoCO. Mr. Norbu delivered his acceptance statement through a video message and extended his appreciation to the Executive Director Selection Committee and the Assembly. Emphasizing that the restoration of the degraded areas is a priority in the region, he stated that the Secretariat would continue its effort to implement concrete actions.

Mr. Chencho Norbu began his term on 1 January 2019

The Assembly also made important decisions on the implementation of future projects and approved four projects in Bhutan, Cambodia, Timor-Leste and Viet Nam. These AFoCO projects

will be implemented for 3 to 5 years, with a total project budget of USD 2.3 million. The Assembly also endorsed the work plan and approved the budget for the next two years.

Strategic Plan (2019-2023)

In order to keep in track with global megatrends including Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) and to align the priority areas to be delivered for the members in a distinctive and effective manner, the Secretariat started planning on the development of organization strategy in 2016 in accordance with the objectives set out in Article 2 of the Agreement on the Establishment of AFoCO.

As part of the strategic plan development, external and internal factors for AFoCO were studied systematically and reflected in the strategic plan. Three external factors – global megatrends, national policy priorities, and regional players in the forestry sector – were studied, and their corresponding opportunities and threats were identified in political, economic, socio-cultural, and technological perspectives.

The Strategic Plan identified five priority areas for five years (2019-2023).

- Initiating customized restoration and reforestation models
- Supporting research and development in climate change adaptation approaches
- Introducing systematic management on forest-related disasters
- Local livelihood improvement and community-based small enterprise development
- Strengthening institutional capabilities, diversifying resources, and promoting regional actions

III PROJECTS & COOPERATIVE ACTIVITIES

1 Landmark Program

1.1 Establishment of Regional Education and Training Center (RETC)

Situated at Hmawbi Township, Yangon, Myanmar, the AFoCO RETC, is a two-story training facility built on a total area of 28,419m^2 with a total floor area of 5,014 m^2. The Center consists of lecture rooms, laboratories, meeting venues, a conference hall, and accommodation facilities. As a subsidiary organ of AFoCO, the AFoCO RETC plays a key role in strengthening the capacities of member countries and young leaders in the forestry sector through quality training and education programs.

The **AFoCO RETC** was established to educate and foster exemplary leaders in the forestry sector to realize the goal of a Greener Asia; provide practical and problem-solving oriented education programs to train government officials in the field of forestry to practice and promote sustainable forest management, and contribute to improving the livelihood of forest communities.

To date, more than 2000 trainees have benefitted from the training courses under the Landmark Program. In the coming years, the AFoCO RETC will function as an important platform for international cooperation in the forestry sector and empower member countries to deal with pressing regional forestry issues and achieve shared global and regional forestry objectives.

1.2 Component 2: Development of Education and Training Programs for Capacity Building

Certificate ceremony of the first training course held at the RETC on 1 June 2018

The AFoCO RETC was opened and operated from 2018, and various capacity building activities were implemented there. The Secretariat organized four (4) of the regular short-term training course, two (2) customized training courses, and one (1) community development training course at RETC. The Secretariat also organized one (1) training program for RETC staff in Korea to build their capacity.

1.2.1 Regular Short-term Training

In 2018, a total of four (4) of the short-term training courses were organized as usual and delivered

at the RETC.

Visit 50-year old Teak Plantation Site in Bago Yoma

National Forest Inventory and REDD+ (28 May – 1 June 2018)

The very first training course at the RETC was organized on national forest inventory (NFI) and REDD+ for 20 participants. During the 5-day training course, participants were taken through 11 topics by seven (7) experts and researchers from the Myanmar government, UN-REDD+ Myanmar, and the Green Climate Fund, providing knowledge on evolving issues in NFI and REDD+ and sharing best practices in the region.

Community Forest Management for Livelihood and CFED (8 - 13 October 2018)

The training course titled on Community Forest Management for Livelihood and Community Forest-Based Enterprise Development (CFED) was organized in collaboration with RECOFTC for 20 participants. The training course focused on the conceptual understanding of community livelihood and CFED and basic experience to support communities.

Participants interviewing local sellers in the focus group discussion

The training course specifically aimed to 1) facilitate potential identification of entrepreneurs and assess local context supportive to enterprise development, 2) use participatory tools to facilitate the short-listing of potential enterprise ideas, 3) facilitate simple value chain surveys to select promising enterprise ideas, and strategy development steps to commercialize products/services, and 4) understand the importance of developing enterprise strategies and business plans.

Forest Fire Management for Training of Trainers (22 – 26 October 2018)

The training course welcomed a total of 20 technical-level government officials and forestry experts

involved in national forest fire management. The objectives of the training course were to provide opportunities for participants to learn best practices related to forest fire management and to provide a deeper understanding of conceptual ideas to strengthen the capabilities of officials in formulating forest fire management guidelines based on advanced forest science technology.

Field visit to Hlaing Yoma reserved forest for learning forest fire management in teak plantation site

Forest Restoration and Reforestation for High-Level Policy Makers (28 – 30 November 2018)

The training course was organized inviting 20 high-level officials involved in national forest restoration and reforestation. Since the participants are high-level officials, the training focused on sharing the exemplary practices on policy and management of national and/or cross-boundary forest restoration and reforestation efforts as well as discussing challenges and lessons learned from the previous reforestation experiences and guide on-going and future reforestation efforts to Asian countries to develop their own forest restoration and reforestation model.

1.2.2 Customized Training

Since the RETC aiming at strengthening the capacity building in forestry, the Secretariat has been promoting the RETC to relevant organizations and institutes in the field of forestry. In this regard, the Secretariat facilitated organizing two (2) customized training programs at the RETC upon the

requests.

2018 Young Forester Research Program (2 - 9 July 2018)

The Young Forester Research Program was the first customized training course held at RETC, and a total 19 Korean professors and students participated in this training course. The training course aimed to understand forest biology and forest resources management in tropical forests in Myanmar.

Tree Plantation Practice of Young Forester Research Program

Visit Teak Tree Plantation Site of Young Forester Leadership Program

2018 Young Forester Leadership Program (15 – 19 August 2018)

The Young Forester Leadership Program was organized in collaboration with the Korea Forestry Promotion Institute (Kofpi) as an AFoCO's customized training course, and a total of 20 Korean undergraduate students participated in this training course to nurture global manpower in forestry and understand international forestry.

1.2.3 Community Development Training

To empower local people, the Secretariat has planned to organize community development training courses. The first training targeting local people was organized for 80 school teachers in Hmawbi Township, where the RETC is located on 12 August 2018. The training aimed to encourage awareness of the importance of forests and forestry and to promote the RETC to the local people nearby.

1.2.4 Capacity Building for RETC Staffs

The Workshop on 'Capacity Building for RETC Staffs' was carried out from 22 April to 5 May 2018 in the Republic of Korea. A total of three (3) RETC staff including Acting Head participated in the workshop and have learned experiences and know-how from relevant regional training institutes such as the Forest Training Institute of the Korea Forest Service and the Rural Community International Education and Exchange Center.

Capacity Building Workshop at Forest Training Institute of Korea on 24-27 April 2018

1.2.5 Scholarship Program

The Secretariat awarded the scholarship certificate to the three (3) new scholarship recipients who started their study in 2018.

1. Ms. Areeyapat Petcharat from Thailand (Doctoral degree program)
2. Mr. Tran Hai Long from Viet Nam (Master's degree program)
3. Ms. Su Yi Hnin from Myanmar (Master's degree program)

The Secretariat also congratulated the two (2) graduate candidates, Mr. Muhammad Sulaeman from Indonesia and Ms. Baisone Inthirath from Lao PDR, who completed the scholarship program.

1.3 Component 3: Restoration of Degraded Forest Regions

1.3.1 Establishment of Forest Genetics Center for Restoration of Major Timber Species in Cambodia (AFoCO/005/2014)

Cambodia and other regions in the Greater Mekong Subregion (GMS) had lost huge forest cover over the past 30 years from 1973 to 2009. The forest cover in Cambodia reduced by 22 % in a

period between 1973 and 2010 posing a threat to several species, including, and notably Dalbergia cochinchinensis, one of the valuable and native species in Cambodia.

Therefore, this restoration project (2016-2025) aims to implement a long-term tree breeding plan for three (3) main timber species, namely, D. cochinchinensis, Dipterocarpus intricatus, and Pterocarpus macrocarpus; and, strengthen the restoration and tree breeding capabilities of the Forestry Administration in Cambodia.

In technical cooperation with the National Institute of Forest Science of the Republic of Korea (NIFoS), the project is establishing the country's first clonal seed orchard for three major timber species in Cambodia.

The major activities undertaken in 2018 under this project to fulfill its objectives are as follow:

- Four thousand seedlings of D. intricatus raised at the nursery were planted in the second project site in Chan Sor (4 ha) as part of the Progeny Test Plantation. Further, grafted seedlings of P. macrocarpus and D. cochinchinensis representing 100 mother trees were planted as part of the clonal and seedling seed orchard (3 ha);
- Plantlets in the cultural room and seedlings of orchids produced from tissue culture are being raised in the greenhouse for mass production. Protocol testing will be continuously be done for the culture of vascular plants, particularly the three species. This is complement the seed orchard;
- Training and extension programs were conducted to villagers living around the project area on the benefits of the forest, seed germination, grafting, maintaining seedlings, tree planting, forest fire suppression, and so on. The training helped to impart knowledge and awareness on forestry activities especially the tree breeding plan of the country;
- Students and lecturers from the faculty of forestry, Royal University of Agriculture, have organized a study tour to the Khun Ream Forest Research Station. During this period, the students studied the on-going project as well as former research techniques/activities that have been carried out in the field.
- Researchers from the NIFoS of the Republic of Korea continued their technical backstopping to the project staff. A student from Seoul National University continued researches at the project sites for his master's degree from 2017.

Aerial photos of the project site in Khun Ream (left) and Chan Sor (right) in 2018

1.3.2 Rehabilitation and Development of Mangrove Forest Ecosystem in Thai Binh Province, Viet Nam (AFoCO/006/2014)

These mangrove forests play a very important role in the livelihood of the coastal people in Viet Nam besides their role in the conservation and stabilization of the coastal land, especially from the increasing number of heavy floods and typhoons due to climate change.

Mangrove survival in northern Viet Nam, where Thai Binh province is located, is constantly challenged by low temperatures at relatively higher latitudes. The mangrove forest in the province saw a significant decline (19%) from 2000 to 2012. Therefore, this project (2015-2024) is aimed towards rehabilitating and developing the Mangrove forest ecosystem in the province and shall be done mainly through (i) new planting, supplementary planting (enrichment), and protection of mangrove forest; and (ii) training for capacity building and communication.

Major activities implemented this year include:

- New planting (30 ha) and supplementary planting (30ha) of mangrove forest were complemented in Thai Thuy and Tien Hai ;
- Tending work completed in 100 ha and Tending and protection of mangrove forest planted in 2017 (60 ha).
- The four communes have directed communal forest protection groups to strictly patrol the forests and promptly prevent and detect any violations to the forests. 800ha of existing mangrove forests have been well protected.
- The "Guidelines for Forest Plantation and Protection for Mangrove Forest Management and the M&E Framework in Thai Binh Province" developed in 2017 was revised and updated.

Local patrol group in front of young mangrove trees planted in 2016 and 2017 in Thuy Xuan commune, Thai Thuy district, Thai Binh province

1.3.3 Village-Based Forest Rehabilitation in Lao PDR (AFoCO/008/2014)

The overall objective of the project (2016-2025) is to increase forest cover by the restoration of

degraded forest areas, strengthen the capability of government agencies, local authority, and villagers in implementing National Forest Rehabilitation Policy and contribute to poverty reduction by providing direct income to local people, particularly, the poor.

Drawing on the ROK's experiences in national forest rehabilitation, the project is introducing a new concept of "village-driven forest rehabilitation," focusing on capacity building to boost villagers' ownership of forests with new practical methodologies.

The following activities were done in the two project sites of Lao PDR; Paksong in Champasak province and Sangthong in Vientiane capital to achieve the objective of the project in 2018;

- A total of 94,300 seedlings were produced in the two project sites for ex-situ conservation plantation and enrichment planting;
- About 37 ha and 18 ha of degraded forest land have been reforested in Paksong and Sangthong respectively, through the establishment of ex-situ conservation plantation, which, in turn, produces future quality seed sources of valuable native tree species;
- 35 ha and 30 ha of degraded forest land have been regenerated through enrichment planting by Village Forest Development Groups (VFDGs) in Sangthong and Paksong respectively, with native tree species; and,
- Village Forest Protection Groups (VFPGs) conducted regular patrolling for the whole project sites (3,020 ha) in Sangthong and Paksong. Further, consultation session by local technicians was held to train VFDGs and VFPGs, including the cross-village visits .
- The "Guidelines for Village-driven Forest Rehabilitation and the Project M&E Framework" was improved and revised with the practical data and methodologies from the two projects sites.

VFDGs and VFPGs of Sangthong visited Paksong (left) and those of Paksong visiting Sangthong (right)

2 Regional Projects

2.1 Promotion of Forest Rehabilitation in Cambodia and Viet Nam though Demonstration Models and Improvement of Seed Supply System (AFoCO/003/2014)

The project (2014-2019) aims to promote reforestation and rehabilitation in Cambodia and Viet Nam by improving the tree seed supply system. This will improve tree seed collection and nursery practices and make quality seeds readily accessible to seed users and forest restoration practitioners.

Cambodia is more focused towards improving the local seed supply system and demonstration of good practices to encourage peoples, and Viet Nam focuses more on the improvement of the existing seed sources, seedling production system, and support local communities on the reforestation in a watershed area.

With the support of the project, seed sources and the supply chains for economically and ecologically important tree species will be surveyed and established across implementing countries. The demonstration models established will serve as study sites for future capacity building activities on forest restoration and rehabilitation.

The summarized annual achievements are:

- In Cambodia, two seed production area was developed; one ha each for plantation of Acacia auriculiformis and A. mangium in 2017 (2 ha in total). Regular maintenance and monitoring of the area was also conducted;
- In Cambodia, maintenance and monitoring of the existing seed production area in Kbal Chhay Watershed Protected Area (10 ha), the seed production areas of indigenous, high-value timber species (3 ha), and the demonstration sites (2 ha) were also done timely. These include, weeding, fires maintenance, refilling, and other tending operations;
- In Cambodia, 22.5 kg of superior seeds of Dalbergia oliveri, Xylia xylocarpa, and Afzelia xylocarpa were collected for use in the seed testing laboratory.
- Further, seed collection equipment was distributed to identified local seed suppliers for efficient collection of seeds ;
- One thousand copies of the book on "Direct seeding for forest restoration" in Khmer, Cambodia, were published. The book is a compilation of the lessons learned on forest restoration by direct seeding and the identified seed sources in natural forests;
- In Viet Nam, 91 ha Community-based forest management (CFM) model in Xom Khoe, Mai Chau – Hoa Binh, including 1 ha medicinal trial planting (Sa nhân tím: Amomum longiligular)

under the CFM forest canopy, 15 ha of Agroforestry model, and 1 ha medicinal trial plot in Ky Son, Cao Phong , Viet Nam has been well protected and managed;

- A three-day training course on "the impact of forest rehabilitation on soil, water and biodiversity in target sites of Hoa Binh" was organized for 30 relevant participants in Hoa Binh province, Viet Nam; and,
- In Viet Nam, a project monitoring by the Secretariat was conducted from 21 to 25 May in 2018, to check the project progress and address challenging issues.

Identified local seed suppliers (left) and the publication "Direct Seeding for Forest Restoration" (right)

2.2 Facilitating the Participatory Planning Of Community-Based Forest Management Using Geographic Information System and Remote Sensing Technologies in Forest Resources Management in The Philippines, Indonesia and Thailand (AFoCO/004/2014)

Four thousand eight hundred three project sites covering 2.9 million hectares had been placed under the Community-Based Forest Management (CBFM) program across the country in the Philippines. Similarly, Indonesia provides legal access to communities managing state forest, through Community Forest, Village Forest, Private Forest, and People's Plantation Forest. Thailand, as part of its 2007 National Constitution (Article 56), recognizes communal rights in the conservation and use of natural resources.

CBFM is hailed by advocates for its effectiveness in promoting conservation and maintaining traditional livelihoods, while simultaneously developing local economies. However, to manage the forest, a community-driven management plan is a must, and accordingly, the technical capacity of communities needs to be strengthened, especially in areas of planning, monitoring, and implementation of forest management activities, projects, and programs.

In this context, this project (2014-2019) promotes the use of Geographic Information System (GIS) and Remote Sensing (RS) in CBFM in the preparation of community-level forest management (CFM) plans by fostering local technicians in the community. Within the framework of national programs and policies, three (3) pilot sites were selected in each country, and the outputs of the project were identified accordingly for developing workable CFM in the future.

Major achievements of the project in 2018 are:

- Plantation: Around 123 ha plantation (30 ha in Region-1 and 30 ha Region 5, 63 ha in Region-11) have been established in the Philippines while Indonesia established an agroforestry plot for a total of 28 ha at the three (3) pilot sites. Thailand established three pilot sites: forest plantation in Nhkhom (6 ha), and tree buffer zone respectively in Mae Tha and Klong Cha which separates community forest and farming areas by trees. Other structures required for establishment and maintenance of plantations such as farmer's hut and water reservoir have also been constructed;

- A database on management and monitoring system for the CBFM: While Thailand pilot-tested the database for a year before the final launch in 2017, the Philippines developed the database management and monitoring system for the CBFM – People's Organizations (communities) and conducted the Users Appreciation Testing (UAT) of the database. Indonesia, on the other hand, finalized 3-D mapping using a drone in Cempaka Forestry Partnership, Lampung Province ;

- Enterprise/livelihood development activities: the Philippines hired an Enterprise Development Specialist to assist in the enterprise/livelihood development activities. Indonesia conducted nine (9) training/technology transfers on coffee processing at Cempaka Forestry Partnership, Pringwesu Regency, Lampung Province on 11-12 April 2018,

and series of training/ technology transfer to support the development of forest-based agribusiness of the three (3) pilot sites. Thailand conducted a workshop for the selection of potential forest-based enterprise held in Bangkok on 25-26 May 2018;

- Advocacy activities: Indonesia produced a Documentary video on the plantation activity and area profiling of Cempaka Forestry Partnership, and four (4) Info Brief on the technology transfer on; honey and rattan processing for supporting forest-based agribusiness, developing CBFM plan through assisted forest inventory, and incentive scheme to increase community participation in forest management at the AFoCO project sites;
- Capacity-building activities: Besides the various capacity development programs implemented to fulfill the above-mentioned objectives, Indonesia organized a cross country visit for member countries and AFoCO to the province of West Sumatra on 1-5 October 2018 while Thailand conducted one on 5-9 November 2019 which was participated in by the representatives from the Philippines, Thailand and AFoCO Secretariat; and,
- The Secretariat conducted monitoring of the project from 16 to 25 July 2018, to check the project progress and address challenging issues in the implementation of the project.

3-D mapping on Cempaka Forestry Partnership: Digital Terrain Map (left) and Contour Map (right)

2.3 Development of High Valuable Species in Disturbed Terrestrial Ecosystem (AFoCO/009/2018)

The project (2015-2018) was initiated in 2015 to improve sustainable forest management and livelihood of local people in Viet Nam and Thailand through the development of high-value species. The development of suitable high-value species in each of the project sites will be utilized as a mechanism to manage forests sustainably and improve the livelihoods of the local communities. A total of 14 ha and 16 ha of planting and tending models in Viet Nam and Thailand respectively are used for local vocational training and learning sites for sustainable forest management concerning economically valuable species.

Main achievements in 2018 are:

In Thailand, the project helped improve the livelihood of the rural people by generating additional income through the corn and pineapple plantations and sale of wild forest produce, for example, mushroom and bamboo (Cephalostachyum pergracile in Loei, Dendrocalamus sericeus in Nan) collected from the green forest near by their community;

- In Thailand, vocational training was imparted on making bamboo chopsticks besides providing them machinery for making chopsticks (cutting machine, sticking machine, arraying machine and packing machine) ;
- In Viet Nam, Illicium verum in Cao Bang province and Cinnamomum cassia in Bac Kan province were identified as a highly valuable species. Therefore, a series of activities were conducted to develop and improve the management of the two species. Training curricular was developed and six times of vigorous training were provided to around 180 participants; and,
- In Viet Nam, 2 ha of planting models and 5 ha of tending models of Illicium verum were established in Cao Bang province, and 2 ha of planting models and 4 ha of tending models of Cinnamomum cassia was established in Bac Kan province.

Vocational training for bamboo chopsticks in Thailand

2.4 Domestication of Endangered, Endemic, and Threatened Plant Species in Disturbed Terrestrial Ecosystem in Malaysia and Thailand (AFoCO /010/2015)

Domestication of endangered, endemic, and threatened species (EETS) is known as one of the effective approaches to conserve the germplasm. It is also important to recover the ecological functions of ex-mining areas.

In this context, the project (2016-2022) aims to develop and transfer domestication techniques of EETS in disturbed terrestrial ecosystems and conserve biodiversity in Thailand and Malaysia. The selected EETS consisting of national and IUCN Red List species are planted in ex-mining areas of each country.

It aims to strengthen bilateral cooperation between the two nations in the field of biodiversity conservation, domestication, and eco-tourism through pilot testing, workshops on best practices and technology transfer, and capacity development. This project is expected to enhance the capacity of Malaysia-Thailand in reclamation, rehabilitation, and restoration of degraded forest ecosystem through domestication of EETS, exchange of expertise, and capacity development.

Major achievements during 2018 are as follow:

- In Thailand, 10 EETS has been planted in an area (Mae Mot and Takuapa) of 5.3 ha. Further, 4,800 EETS seedlings have been procured for future use ;
- In Thailand, the manual on "Weeds at Mae Moh mine" was published in November 2018;
- Malaysia conducted the cross-visits to Bogor Botanical Gardens in Indonesia on 2-5 March 2018, while Thailand organized the Regional Workshop on "Domestication of EETS in Disturbed Terrestrial Ecosystem" from 28 November to 1 December 2018, with 43 participants from 8 countries; and,
- Official from Malaysia attended and presented preliminary results of this project in the 10th International Symposium on Plan-Soil Interactions at Low pH on 25-28 June 2018 and the 28th Malaysian Society of Plant Physiology Conference on 28-30 August 2018.

Various attempts to increase soil quality at the project site in ex-mining areas in Chiang Mai: rice straw (top) used as mulching material around the seedling base to retain soil moisture content after watering (bottom left). Banana shoots were planted as nursing plants (bottom right).

2.5 Capacity building on the application of landscape approach to support the sustainable natural resources management in Brunei Darussalam, Indonesia, Philippines, and Singapore (AFoCO/011/2016)

Forest Landscape Restoration (FLR) is a planned process targeted at regaining ecological functions and enhancing human well-being in deforested or degraded forest landscapes. The participation of local communities constitutes a key aspect of the FLR approach, from planning through implementation.

This Project (2016-2019) aims to strengthen trans-boundary cooperation of respective forestry sector within ASEAN countries through establishment of four (4) different learning sites for increasing the local capacities in the FLR: peatland restoration with agroforestry in Indonesia, assisted natural regeneration in the Philippines, coastal forest rehabilitation in Brunei Darussalam, and urban forestry with enhancing biodiversity in Singapore.

The achievements in 2018 are:

- The Philippines constructed a bunkhouse for the storage of seedlings and training. Three (3) sessions of training on Vulnerability Assessment and Assisted Natural Regeneration were conducted with a local expert. Further, to share and learn from each other, the Philippines hosted the Cross-Country Visits on 25-28 September 2018, where a total of 16 delegates visited the 30 ha ANR demonstration learning sites in Candelaria;

- Brunei Darussalam obtained approval from the ministry to award the project to the selected contractor and accordingly, site preparation of the learning site (0.5 ha) started on 19 November 2018;

- Indonesia launched Peatland Agroforestry Farmer Groups in Kalampangan and Tumbang Nusa villages for agroforestry practices in peatland areas. A workshop on "Designing Community based Peat Swamp Forest Restoration" was conducted on 15 May 2018. In line with the local training, scientific research to identify fungus species for rapid soil decomposition was continuously conducted. Indonesia hosted the cross-country visit on 20-23 November 2018. The 15 delegates visited the 4 ha demonstration site and agroforestry peatland at Tumbang Nusa Research Station, Plangya Raya – Central Kalimantan; and,

- Project monitoring by the Secretariat was conducted from 24 to 31 August 2018, to check

the project progress and address challenging issues.

An opening ceremony of the bunkhouse in the Philippines celebrated by the Peoples Organization of the project site.

Annex: Financial Report 2018