

DATE: 2019.08.21**REF.NO.:** IM-275

MISSION REPORT

Title	Mission Report on Project Monitoring and the 5th Project Coordination Meeting (AFoCO/010/2016)
Organizer	AFoCO Secretariat
Date	3-9 August 2019
Location	1) Mae Mot, Lampang province, Thailand; 2) Takua Pa, Pang Nga province, Thailand; 3) Bidor, Malaysia; and, 4) Forest Research Institute of Malaysia
Participants	Soozin Ryang

I. Objective of the mission

1. To conduct the project monitoring and
2. To attend the 5th Project Coordination Meeting in Malaysia

II. Summary

[1] Project Monitoring

1. This project is the first attempt for both countries to conserve nationally endangered and internationally threatened (IUCN Red-list) tree species of each country (*In overall, both countries decided to call these species as Endemic, Endangered, and Threatened Species, EETS*). It was observed that un-expected technical difficulties have been addressed as learning-by-doing practice (e.g. collecting seedlings, maintain the survival rates after plantation, etc.).
2. This project is technically leaning on knowledge and expertise of the Malaysian side. However, it was observed that there were not enough discussions between the two countries in its beginning. Particularly, it might have been better if there was a technical workshop between the two countries before Thailand selected the site and species, which was not possible at that time due to administrative pressures by the Thai Ministry after signing the MOA. It was one of the main causes of Thailand to rush on activity completion without enough review and discussion internally. Considering that this year is the final year of planting all EETS to the project site, the Secretariat suggested Thailand side to invite Malaysian experts to the project sites for checking up the methodologies on post-plantation.
3. There are two main reasons to use ex-mining areas as the domestication of these species. Firstly, in the mid-latter stage of ex-mining restoration, it needs to bring diverse rainforest species into the site, which enables more sustainable restoration

process compared to planting fast-growing species only. Both countries' project sites have already passed 15-25 years after reclamation, so the domestication of EETS to ex-mining areas is regarded as a very good methodology. Secondly, the ex-mining areas have a secured land tenure by the government so that in a long-term view, to conserve EETS into the ex-mining areas has fewer worries about their losses.

4. In view of cost-efficiency, both countries show high seedling procurement cost compared to other AFoCO projects: USD 6~20/seedling in Thailand, and USD 40/seedling in Malaysia. According to a Malaysian expert, it is significant to purchase seedlings after a certain age in order to maintain a high survival rate after plantation, which is also the main reason to keep the high seedling cost. Moreover, in the case of Malaysia, the cost-norm of seedlings are already set by the Singaporean market price, which is approximately three times higher than the Malaysian one. Therefore, Malaysian side has to buy seedlings following the Singaporean market price. There was a discussion to develop other options to decrease the unit cost with the Malaysian side, but it was not possible.
5. However, the Secretariat and both countries realized that this project has disregarded its value in conserving EETS, which may be vanished soon and which need to be calculated in its proper value conversion. It may be underestimated if these projects are only approached in view of the plantation. This project needs to approach in view of the establishment of biodiversity conservation rather than being regarded as a simple plantation project. Furthermore, it is observed that this project is the only biodiversity conservation project of AFoCO, which will be a very good example in the future when a similar project is developed. In this regard, cost-benefit analysis on biodiversity conservation may be a recommendable action to provide a more proper value assessment to the project.
6. Thailand and Malaysia have been conducting the project activities as planned in overall. Detailed actions to be followed-up will be specifically developed in the monitoring report.

[2] 5th Project Coordination Meeting

1. The Meeting checked the annual progress and discussed technical matters, particularly about post-planting activities, including maintenance methodologies.
2. The Meeting agreed to visit the project site in Thailand together for the on-site check-in October 2019.
3. The Meeting agreed to continue to discuss the technical matters at the Regional Workshop in Malaysia on 7-8 November 2019, back-to-back with the 6th PCM.

III. Follow-up action for AFoCO Secretariat

1. (by 10 Sep. 2019) Finalization and distribution of the monitoring report
2. (by Nov. 2019, 6th PCM) Follow-up actions of the monitoring results

IV. Remarks

The DSA and accommodation were partly provided by Malaysian side, which covered three of total seven days, and two of total five nights.

08/21

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