

INTRODUCTORY SPEECH

AFoCO in the Triple Challenges Facing Asia and the Globe

Mr. Ricardo L. Calderon
Executive Director of AFoCO

COVID-19 Pandemic



(Source: Ministry of Culture, Sports, Tourism of Korea)



(Source: KT/Pann Rachana)



(Source: REUTERS/Navesh Chitrakar)

COVID-19 Pandemic



“... The COVID-19 pandemic has evolved from a major public health crisis to become also a major economic and jobs crisis, the full extent of which is still unfolding. The economic impact is enormous, as we are facing the most severe recession in nearly a century, with long-lasting repercussions for people, firms and governments.”



(Source: Ministry of Culture, Sports, Tourism of Korea)

(Source: REUTERS/Navesh Chitrakar)

COVID-19 Pandemic



“The pandemic is also inextricably intertwined with global environmental issues such as biodiversity loss, climate change, air and water pollution, and waste management, both in terms of its origin and the implications for environmental outcomes and the future well-being of societies around the world. ...”



(Source: Ministry of Culture, Sports, Tourism of Korea)

(Source: REUTERS/Navesh Chitrakar)

COVID-19 Pandemic

Figure 1.1.1 Daily new COVID-19 cases in developing Asia

New and more infectious variants are driving outbreaks across the region.

Per million population, 7-day moving average

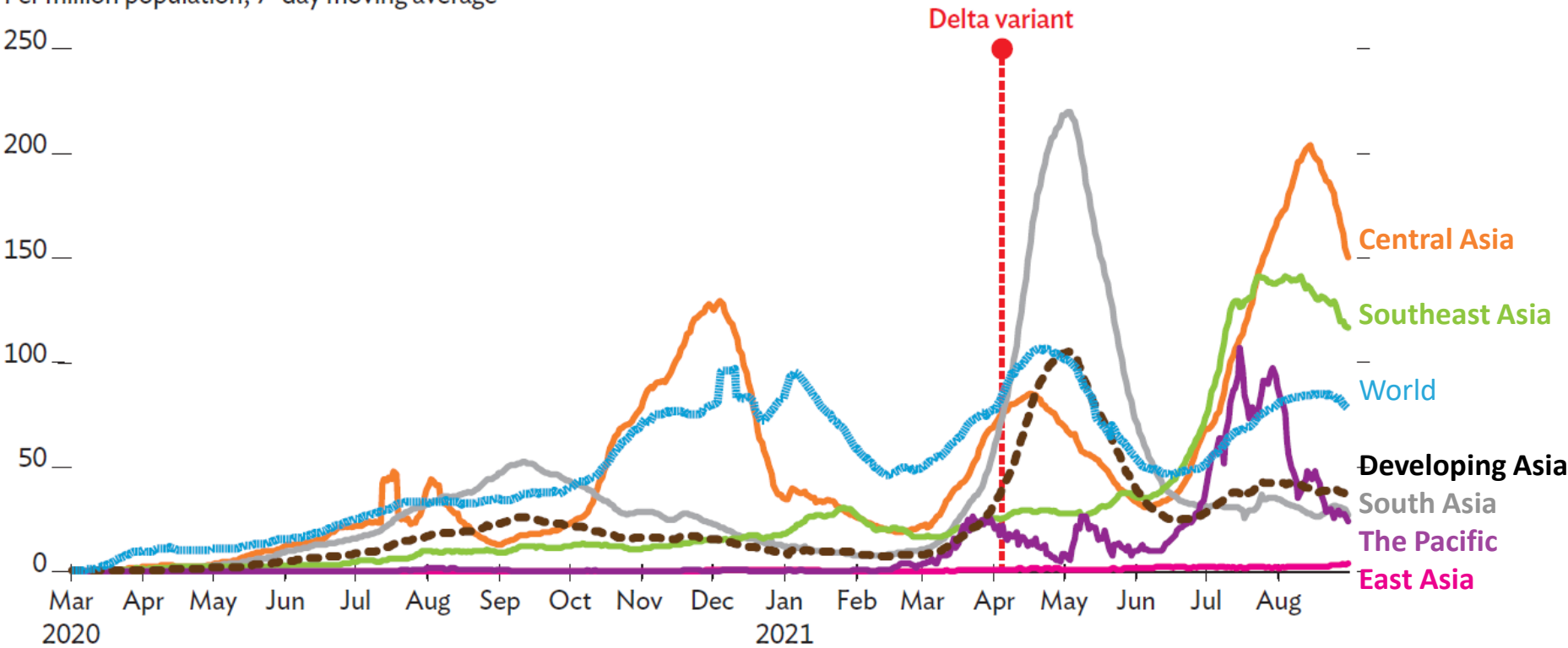
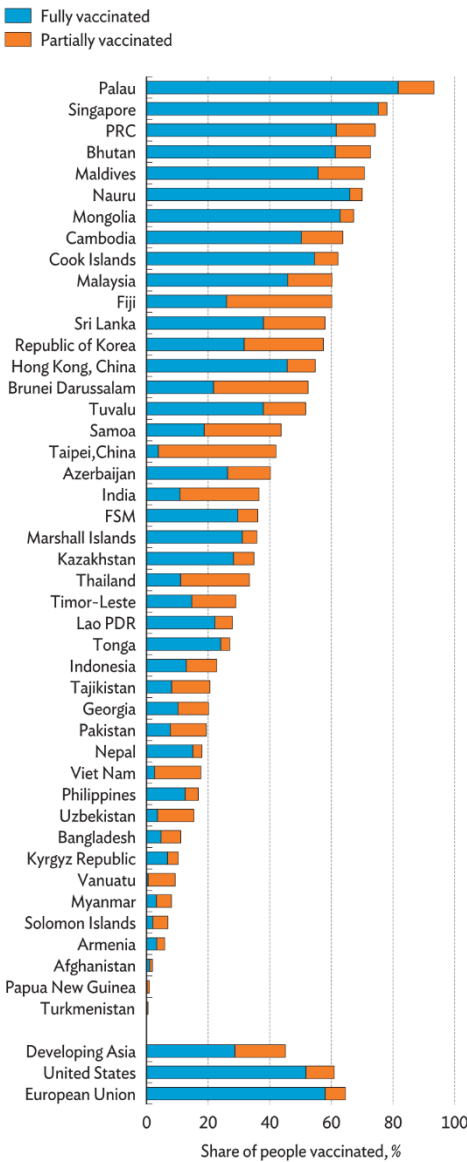


Figure 1.1.2 Vaccinated against COVID-19

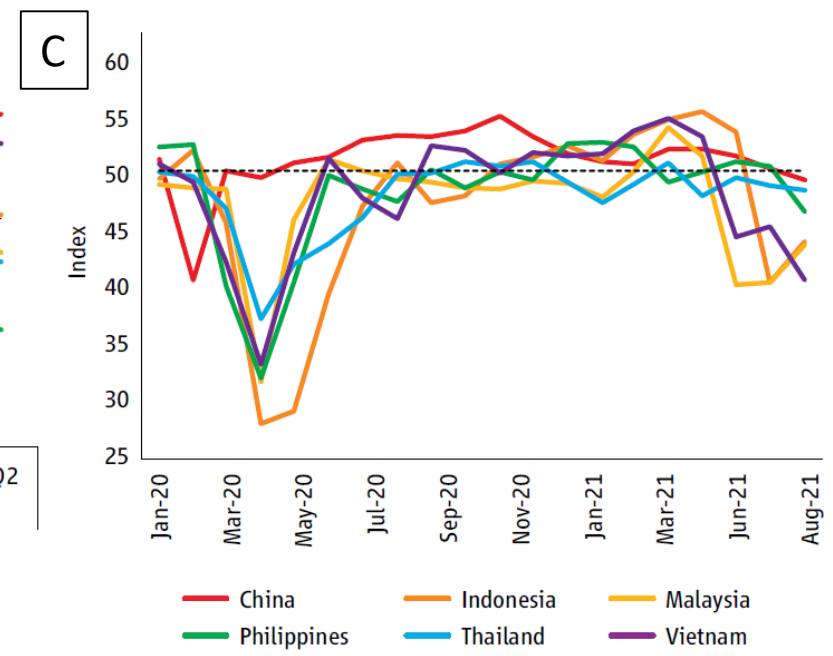
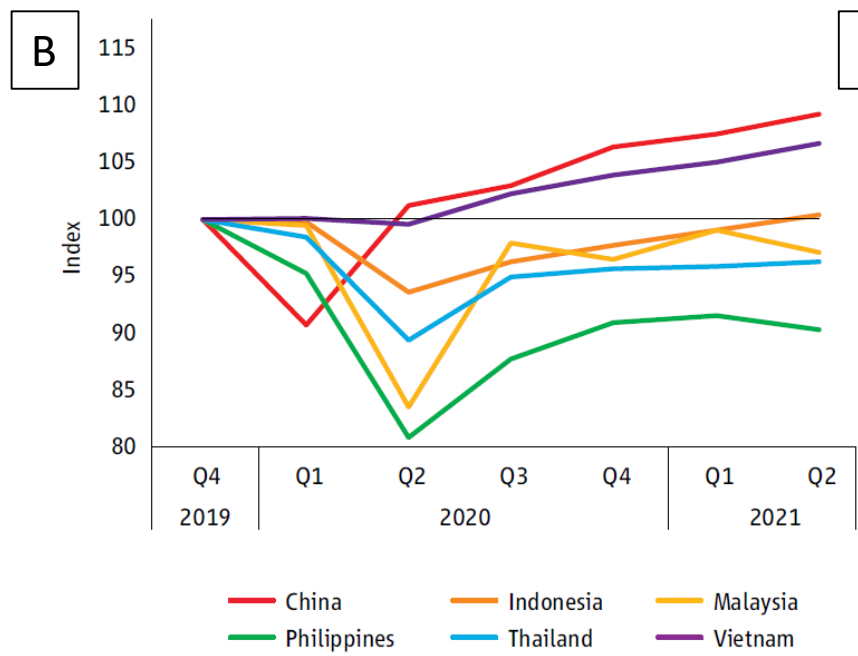
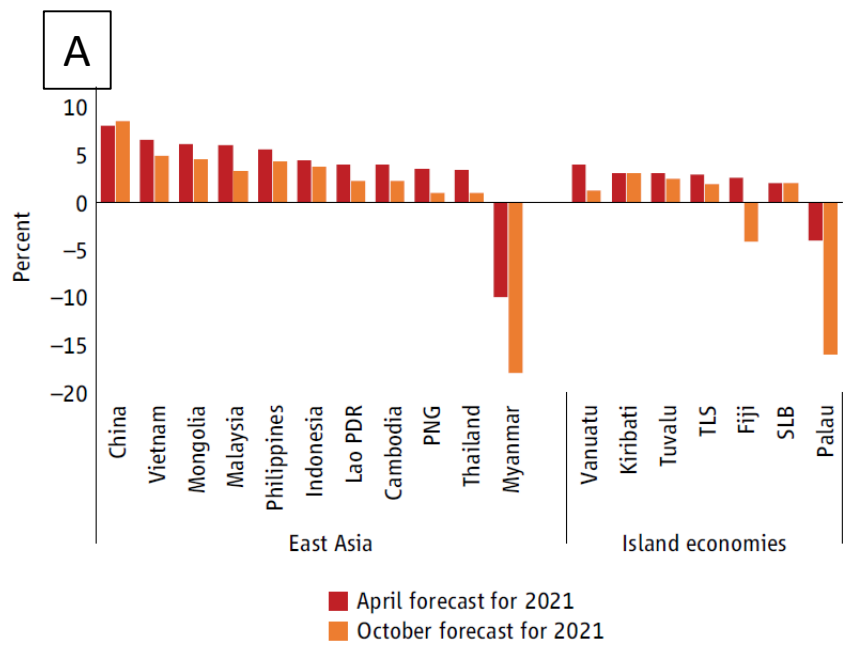
Developing Asia's vaccination progress remains uneven and lags behind advanced economies.



(Graphics source: ADB, 2021)

Economy under COVID-19 Pandemic

- World Bank (2021) reported the pattern of uneven economic recovery across East Asia and Pacific countries. And it was further forecasted the speed of recovery will face a setback, except for China [A].
- GDP of China and Vietnam had bounced back and reached beyond the pandemic levels in 2020 [B].
- But the Purchasing Managers Index (PMI) demonstrates that the market conditions are recently drastically contracting in Viet Nam [C] (World Bank, 2021).



Economy under COVID-19 Pandemic



73% OF HOUSEHOLDS REPORTED INCOME DECLINE

- 8,000 households surveyed in 8 Association of Southeast Asian Nation (ASEAN) countries*
- 54%-84% income decline range across these countries



44% OF HOUSEHOLDS REPORTED AT LEAST ONE MEMBER LOST THEIR JOB OR HAD WORKING HOURS REDUCED

- 25%-75% range across surveyed countries

PERCENTAGE WHO REPORTED A DROP IN INCOME, BY GROUP

- Household businesses/self-employed: 83%
- Farmers/fishermen: 60%
- Wage earners: 59%
- Remittance recipients: 56%



55% OF HOUSEHOLDS EXPERIENCED FINANCIAL DIFFICULTIES

- 27%-85% range across surveyed countries



(Source: ADB, 2020)

COVID-19 Pandemic and Forests



Global Forest Goal 1.

Reverse the loss of forest cover worldwide through SFM, including protection, restoration, afforestation and reforestation, and increase efforts to prevent forest degradation and contribute to the global effort of addressing climate change.



Global Forest Goal 2.

Enhance forest-based economic, social and environmental benefits, including by improving the livelihoods of forest dependent people.

COVID-19 Pandemic and Forests



Global Forest Goal 1.

Reverse the loss of forest cover worldwide through SFM, including protection, restoration, afforestation and reforestation, and increase efforts to prevent forest degradation and contribute to the global effort of addressing climate change.

- **Indonesia:** Increasing pressure on the forest, driven by the increased demand for forest product demand (Golar et al., 2020)
- **Cameroon, Gabon, DRC:** Deforestation for the establishment of palm trees (Walters et al., 2021)
- **Nepal:** Increased illegal logging and hunting & cancellation of regular forest management practices and capacity building activities (Giri, 2021)

COVID-19 Pandemic and Forests



Global Forest Goal 2.

Enhance forest-based economic, social and environmental benefits, including by improving the livelihoods of forest dependent people.

- **Thailand:** Job loss in the forest sector & decrease of income in forest-based tourism sites (Giri, 2021)
- **Fiji, Gabon, Hawaii, Pakistan, Tanzania:** Job loss from the collapse of tourism (Walters et al., 2021)
- **Mexico:** Reduced demand on forest products and subsequent job loss (Tomaselli, 2021)
- **Germany & Slovakia:** Increased visits to forest and urban green spaces forest visits (Weinbrenner et al. 2021; Pichlerová et al., 2021)

COVID-19 Pandemic and Forests



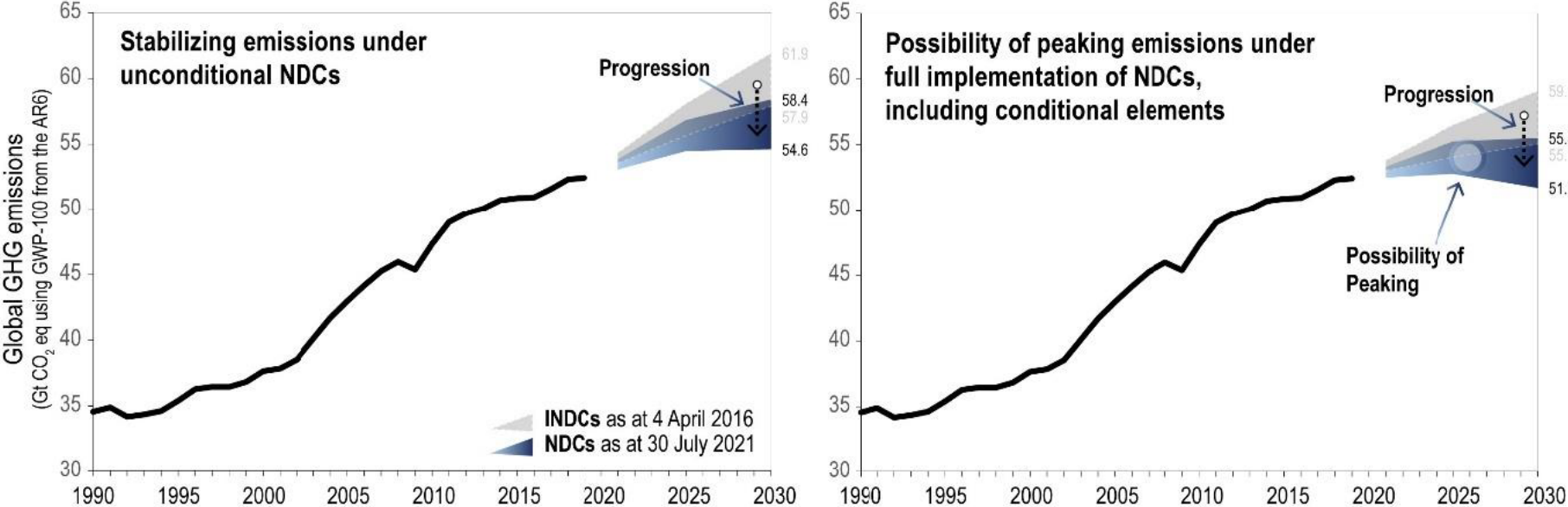
Global Forest Goal 2.

Enhance forest-based economic, social and environmental benefits, including by improving the livelihoods of forest dependent people.

- **7 Asian countries:** Livelihood assets enhanced under the ‘community forestry’ regime increased of resilience of the communities to the socio-economic impacts of the pandemic (RECOFTC, 2021)
- **India:** Empowered local communities exhibited better crisis management (Walters et al., 2021)
- **Guatemala:** Increased usage of traditional medicine by indigenous people (Walters et al., 2021)

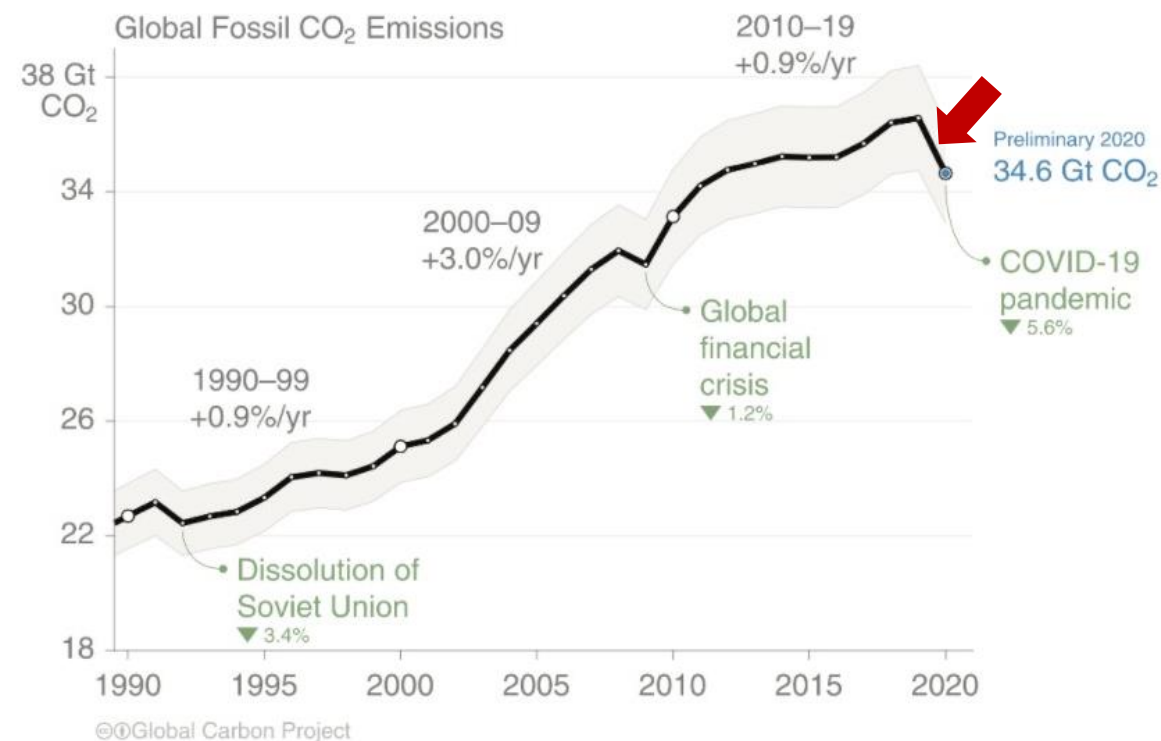
Updated and Enhanced Climate Commitment

Historical and projected total global emissions according to nationally determined contributions

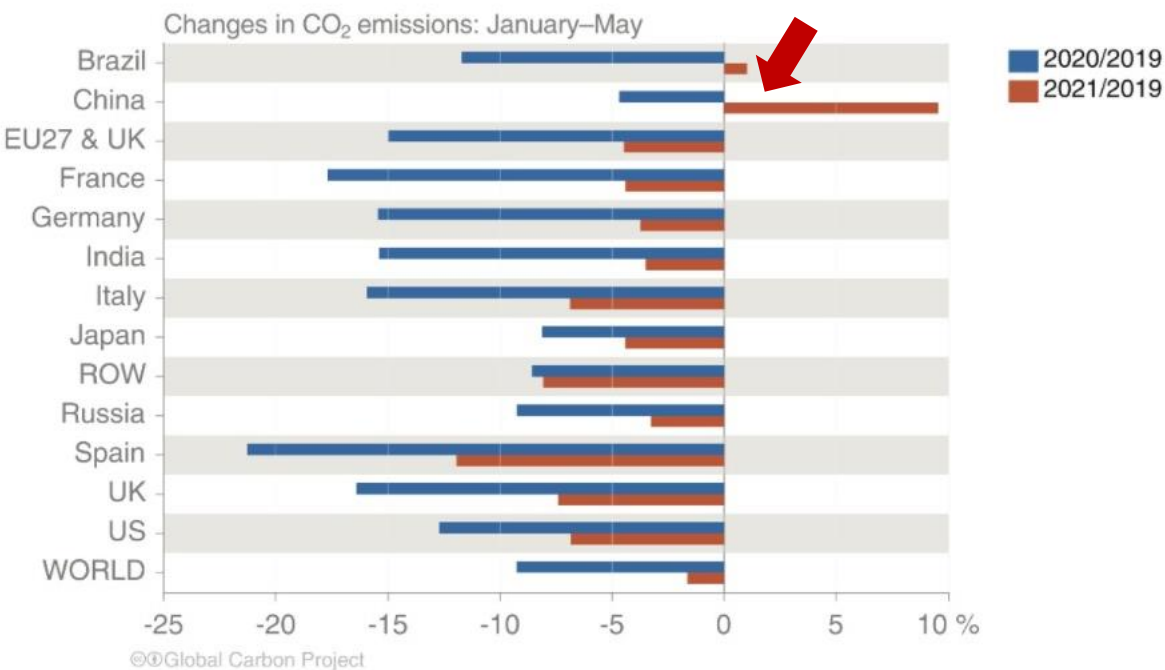


Note: Emissions with LULUCF in 2030 resulting from implementation of the new or updated NDCs are estimated to be 59.1 (57.2–61.0) Gt CO₂ eq considering unconditional elements and 56.2 (54.3–58.1) Gt CO₂ eq assuming full implementation.

Impact of COVID-19 on Climate Change

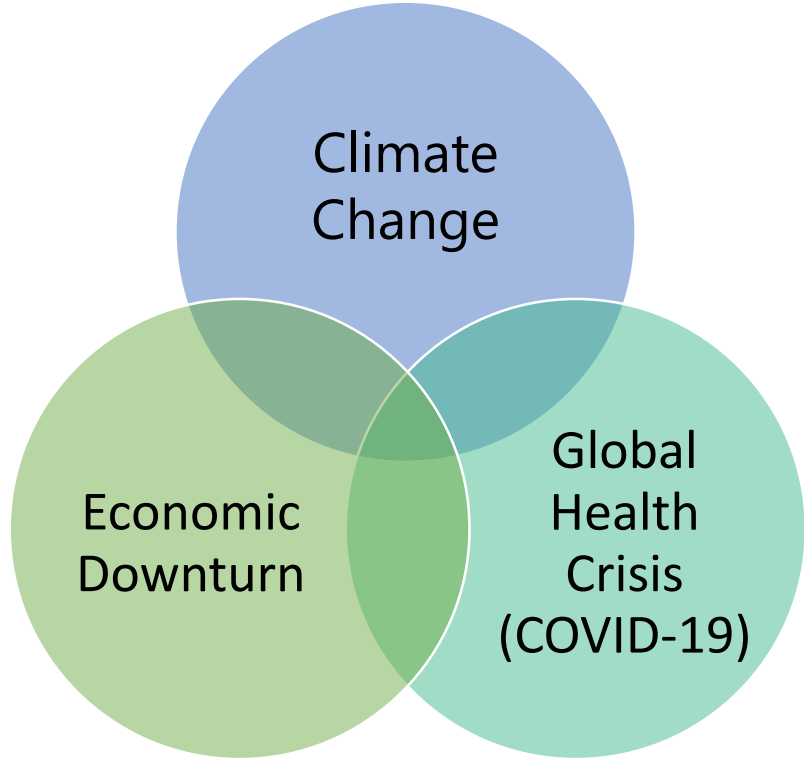


Global fossil CO₂ emissions which include coal, oil, gas and cement production. Data updated from Friedlingstein et al. (2021)



Changes in fossil fuel CO₂ emissions for the world and a selected group of countries for January–May in 2020 and 2021 compared with the same period in 2019 (Carbon Monitor).

Triple Challenges Facing Asia and the Global



Triple challenges

What are the roles of Forest, ... and AFoCO?



Implications for Regional Forest Cooperation



- The global challenges affect us all. Every nation has a stake and responsibility in addressing them.
- To confront a global problem, we need a **global solution**.
- And **regional cooperation** can mediate global and national mechanisms and generating more politically grounded problem solving mechanisms (Hettne and Soderbaum, 2006).

Annual Thematic Dialogue

An annual dialogue session and platform for forward-looking discussions that aims to:

1. Gather the collective interest of member parties and partners in order for AFoCO to successfully carry out its regional and global responsibilities
2. Engage diverse stakeholders in order to make the operations of AFoCO relevant to on-going policy processes and contexts in member countries

2021 Thematic Dialogue – Objectives

Theme of the 2021 session

“Roles of AFoCO in Unleashing the Full Potential of Forests to Meet Paris Climate Goals and Building Back Better and Greener from COVID-19”

- 1. Explore and discuss the potential roles of Asian forests and forest sector in global action on climate change and COVID-19 recovery
- 2. Collectively identify and prioritize actions to be delivered through AFoCO to make Asian forests more responsive to global call for actions; and
- 3. Showcase best practices and future directions of AFoCO to potential partners to prepare the ground for cooperative activities

2021 Thematic Dialogue – Program Overview

Time (KST)	Agenda/Presentation Topics	Session moderator
13:00 – 13:05	Opening Remarks	Mr. Lobzang Dorji President, Assembly
13:05 – 13:20	Introductory presentation: AFoCO in the Triple Challenges Facing Asia and the Globe	Mr. Ricardo Calderon, ED of AFoCO
<u>Session 1.</u> Roles of AFoCO in unleashing the full potential of forests to meet Paris climate goals and building back better and greener from the COVID-19		
13:20 – 13:40	Inspirational Speeches 1: “ Making Asian forests and trees enhance resilience to climate change ”	Mr. Alexandre Meybeck, CIFOR
13:40 – 14:00	Inspirational Speeches 2: “ Lessons learned from the impact of COVID-19 on forest - why forests matter in post COVID-19 recovery ”	Dr. Chandra Silori, RECOFTC
14:00 – 15:00	Moderated discussion (I)	Dr. Misun Park, SNU

2021 Thematic Dialogue – Program Overview

Time (KST)	Agenda/Presentation Topics	Session moderator
Session 2. Strategic Reflections on Selective Outputs of the 2021 Activities		
16:00 - 16:15	Presentation on the outputs of the “Assessment of AFoCO Project Impact and Best Practices” consultancy	Dr. Jürgen Blaser, Bern University
16:15 - 16:55	Moderated open discussion (II)	Mr. Chencho Norbu, Technical Advisor for AFoCO
16:55 - 17:10	Presentation on the outputs of the UNFF16 Side event on “Improvement on the GFGs Implementation: Streamlining forest-related reporting and developing methodologies for measuring the performance”	Dr. Lee Yeong-joo, AFoCO
17:10 - 17:50	Moderated open discussion (III)	Mr. Chencho Norbu
17:50 – 18:00	Closing remarks	Mr. Jin Sunpil, VED of AFoCO

AFoCO, as a formal regional cooperation body

Asian Forest Cooperation Organization (AFoCO) is a treaty-based intergovernmental organization, established upon the entry into force of a multilateral agreement on ***27 April 2018***.

AFoCO aims to **strengthen regional forest cooperation by transforming proven technology and policies into concrete actions in the context of SFM to address the impacts of climate change.**

Our membership currently consists of 15 Asian countries are participating as ***Parties (13 countries)*** and ***Observers (2 countries)***.



A greener Asia with resilient forests, landscapes, and communities

with a mission to

***strengthen cooperation in the forest sector and
promote action-oriented practices of sustainable forest management
through policy support, capacity development, and inclusive partnerships
to address the adverse impacts of climate change.***

Post-Dialogue Action Plan

Three Dimensions of Regional Cooperation

Network Expansion	Policy Decision Support	Capacity Building
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public-Private partnership Partnership with Universities and Organizations Partnership with International Organization 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Political knowledge Scientific Knowledge Practical Implementation Knowledge 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Time to modify capacity building program Assess the preferred and relevant competencies

Post-Dialogue Action Plan

- The need to **mobilize financial resources** to fully operationalize our strategic priorities is **EVIDENT**
- The need to **fully harness investments** from the private sector, public and private financial institutions is **APPARENT**
- The need to **develop capacities** at all level including the enhancement of our forestry institutions is a **MUST**

THANK YOU

<http://afocosec.org/>

