

2020 ANNUAL REPORT



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ISBN 979-11-972527-9-2 (hard copy)

ISBN 979-11-92009-00-1 (electronic copy)

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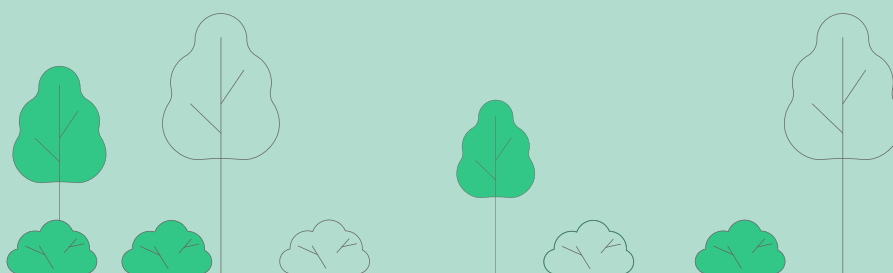
Printed and published in the Republic of Korea
Asian Forest Cooperation Organization

2020 ANNUAL REPORT



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Mr. Chencho Norbu at a project site visit to Cempaka Forest Partnership in Lampung Province, Indonesia, in 2019

MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

In spite of the COVID-19 situation globally, 2020 was a year of progress for AFoCO both locally and internationally in terms of networking and online collaborations. Some highlights of our achievements include the development of the Landscape Partnership Asia concept in collaboration with the Center for International Forestry Research and World Agroforestry (together: CIFOR-ICRAF) and Global Evergreen Alliance; submission of applications for Green Climate Fund (GCF) accreditation; listing as an eligible organization for Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) funding; and the endorsement of AFoCO's Permanent Observer status by the 75th session of the United Nations General Assembly.

Field activities like project-monitoring site visits were affected by the COVID-19 outbreak, but the year provided opportunities to explore virtual consultations and networking using available technologies. The Secretariat team was in constant touch with the designated officers of the member countries, and with the international agencies and organizations working on the planned activities virtually. We thank you for your patience and kind cooperation.

It is also fortunate to report that effective contact tracing and testing by the Republic of Korea, with support from the public, allowed the country to avoid a lockdown. This situation allowed AFoCO Secretariat to pursue its locally planned activities effectively. To celebrate all 13 founding member countries becoming Parties to AFoCO, the AFoCO Secretariat, in partnership with the Korea Forest Service, hosted a reception for the Ambassadors of member countries and some European Union countries, and international organizations based in Seoul. At the 4th Assembly session held virtually in November, the work plan and budget for 2021, proposed projects by some Parties, and the committee's recommendation of Mr. Ricardo L. Calderon of the Philippines for the role of executive director were approved.

AFoCO will continue to be the bridge that enhances cross-sectoral cooperation and coordination in the forestry sector among member countries as well as partner institutions and organizations to make Asia a greener and happier place to live for the years to come.



CHENCHO NORBU

First Executive Director of the
Asian Forest Cooperation Organization

ABOUT AFoCO

Established in 2018, the Asian Forest Cooperation Organization (AFoCO) is a treaty-based international intergovernmental organization that is committed to strengthening forest cooperation and taking concrete actions to promote sustainable forest management and address the impacts of climate change. The initial iteration of AFoCO was the ASEAN-ROK Forest Cooperation, 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 on addressing emerging forestry issues to contribute to the sustainable management of forests and achieve our vision of a Greener Asia.

As of December 2020, with Mongolia depositing its instrument of ratification in July 2020 and Malaysia being granted Observer status in March 2020, AFoCO's membership consists of 15 member countries, including 13 Parties and 2 Observers (Singapore and Malaysia), who cooperate and provide support in the implementation of its programs and projects. The headquarters of AFoCO, including the Secretariat, are located in Seoul, the Republic of Korea.

FIVE STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

INITIATING CUSTOMIZED RESTORATION & REFORESTATION MODELS

Establishment of locally customized restoration and reforestation models in target communities and adoption and application of such techniques in other areas



SUPPORTING RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT IN CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION APPROACHES

Implementation of scientific studies on forestry adaptation approaches and policy adoption of vulnerable member countries to apply relevant adaptation methodologies and approaches



INTRODUCING SYSTEMATIC MANAGEMENT OF FOREST RELATED DISASTERS

Establishment of demonstration sites for control and management of forest-related disasters and extensive application of such technology-based techniques where appropriate



LOCAL LIVELIHOOD IMPROVEMENT & COMMUNITY-BASED ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT

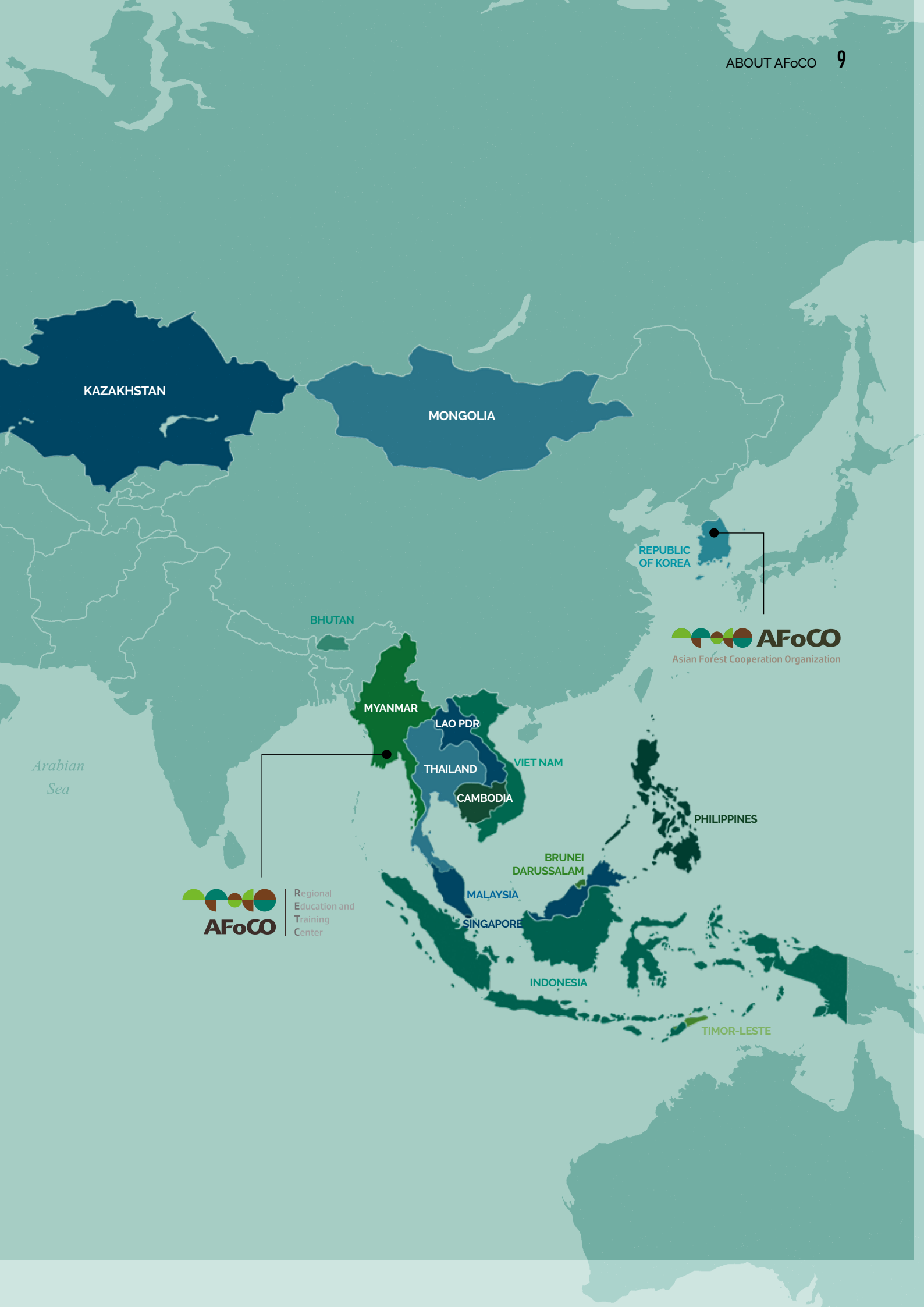
Identification and implementation of best practices on payments for ecosystem services, ecotourism, and community-based enterprise development in target areas and policy adoption in target countries



STRENGTHENING INSTITUTIONAL CAPABILITIES, DIVERSIFYING RESOURCES & PROMOTING REGIONAL ACTIONS

Development into a credible and accountable organization that takes action to deal with regional and international issues





KAZAKHSTAN

MONGOLIA

REPUBLIC OF KOREA

BHUTAN

MYANMAR

LAO PDR

VIET NAM

THAILAND

CAMBODIA

PHILIPPINES

BRUNEI DARUSSALAM

MALAYSIA

SINGAPORE

INDONESIA

TIMOR-LESTE

Arabian Sea



Asian Forest Cooperation Organization



Regional Education and Training Center

MILESTONES IN 2020

November 11, 2020

Joining the Global Partnership on Forest and Landscape Restoration

AFoCO is now officially on board the Global Partnership on Forest and Landscape Restoration (GPFLR). The partnership is a proactive global network that unites governments, organizations, academic/research institutes, communities, and individuals under a common goal.

Participation in the partnership will allow AFoCO to highlight its activities within the GPFLR and to a global audience, contributing to agenda-setting and global discussions and action on forest and landscape restoration. The partnership will also provide many new opportunities for collaboration with members to advance specific forest and landscape restoration opportunities, while contributing to the scaling up of restoration efforts. Especially with the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration just about to kick off, involvement in the partnership is timely and significant.

December 2020

Proposal to be an ODA-eligible international organization

Recognizing the relevance of AFoCO's mandate to the global development agenda and direct contributions from its work program to the promotion of the economic development welfare of developing countries, the Republic of Korea proposed according AFoCO with Official Development Assistance (ODA) eligibility at the upcoming annual deliberation on the Converged Statistical Directives for the Creditor Reporting System and the Annual Development Assistance Committee (DAC) Questionnaire by the DAC Working Party on Development Finance Statistics (WP-STAT) in December 2020.

AFoCO's mission and activities are directly linked to the promotion of sustainable development and well-being in developing nations, and the organization is ready to become a credible and effective channel for multilateral development assistance for DAC members and development partners.

December 15, 2020

AFoCO becomes Permanent Observer in UN General Assembly

With full support from the Korean government, Parties and Observers to AFoCO, and the Permanent Representative of the Republic of Korea, the UN Resolution (A/RES/75/149) on the Permanent Observer Status of AFoCO was fully supported by all 15 member countries of AFoCO as well as non-member countries such as Germany, Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Qatar, and Turkey.

AFoCO is the only forest sector international organization in Asia to be granted Permanent Observer status. Permanent Observers to the UN General Assembly receive a standing invitation to participate in its Assembly sessions.

With this new opportunity, AFoCO intends to increase its visibility in the international arena, and explore partnerships that contribute to achieving relevant global goals. AFoCO will also provide valuable insights and share best practices on climate change mitigation through the forest sector, which is linked to cross-sectoral areas such as community livelihood, watershed management, and life on land, in particular. Actions that contribute towards attaining the UN Global Forest Goals and the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration will also be initiated.

December 23, 2020

Signing of Headquarters Agreement with the Republic of Korea

The "Headquarters Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Korea and the Asian Forest Cooperation Organization" (Headquarters Agreement) was signed by H.E. Ms. Kang Kyung-wha, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Korea and Mr. Chenchu Norbu, Executive Director of the Asian Forest Cooperation Organization (AFoCO) in 2020. The Headquarters Agreement will support AFoCO and facilitate its operations and mission of responding to climate change and realizing sustainable forest management.

The Headquarters Agreement recognizes the legal personality, inviolability of the headquarters, and privileges and immunities on legal procedures and its properties as an intergovernmental organization based in Korea. Reaffirming strong relations and cooperation with the Korean Government, AFoCO's activities, while being in line with global goals in the forest sector, will contribute to realizing relevant foreign and forest-related policies of the host country.

Partnerships

In line with the general principle of building strategic partnerships with entities with complementary strengths, partnership arrangements were concluded with several institutions based in Korea.

The **National Institute of Forest Science (NIFoS)** of Korea has strong research and training capacity in diverse fields of the forest sector and wide experience in research and development of new technologies and their applications. With its renewal on February 6, the partnership between AFoCO and the NIFoS is expected to serve as a channel and platform for researchers and scientists in AFoCO member countries to share and learn from ongoing studies.

AFoCO also inked a partnership agreement with the **Korea Foundation for International Healthcare (KOFIH)** on August 11. The AFoCO-KOFIH partnership will contribute toward addressing global concerns, especially the relationship between healthy ecosystems and human well-being. With the outbreak of the pandemic, the role of forests in the climate change agenda and the benefits forests provide in terms of human health and well-being, as well as biodiversity conservation and wildlife habitat protection, have become emerging issues.



We value
Sustainability
Transparency
Innovation
Responsible
Leadership

Start

Forest

AFoCO

Cooperation
Realization

Eco

Korea National Arboretum





ENGAGEMENT & OUTREACH

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IN RELEVANT EVENTS

24-27 FEB 2020

OFFICIAL VISITS TO PARTIES

CAMBODIA

COURTESY CALL ON MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE, FORESTRY, AND FISHERIES OF CAMBODIA

H.E. Veng Sakhon, Minister of Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries of Cambodia, expressed appreciation for the activities implemented under AFoCO's projects and for the strong support of the Korean government. Appreciating the bilateral relationship between the two countries, he looked forward to more technical-level cooperation and noted Cambodia's focus on income generation in the forest sector and long-term forest management. He highlighted that cooperation will continue and further conveyed that he welcomes and supports all activities under AFoCO.

FIELD VISIT TO PROJECT SITES IN CAMBODIA

The Secretariat team visited the progeny test plantation site and seed orchard in Siem Reap of the AFoCO Landmark Program on establishing a forest genetics research center for the restoration of major timber species in Cambodia.



- 1 Courtesy call on H.E. Veng Sakhon, Minister of Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries of Cambodia
- 2 Seed orchard in Khun Ream (15 ha)
- 3 Nursery of the AFoCO Landmark Program, Khun Ream Forest Research Station

LAO PDR

COURTESY CALL ON DEPUTY MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY OF LAO PDR

H.E. Thongphath Vongmany, Lao PDR's Deputy Minister of Agriculture and Forestry, noted that his country's strong commitment on forest restoration is due to its geophysical characteristics. Lao PDR is a mountainous country, and 38% of the length of the Mekong River, which flows through 6 countries, is in Lao PDR. Lao PDR wishes to propose an AFoCO project on the protection of existing forests, including ecotourism in due course.

FIELD VISIT TO PROJECT SITES IN LAO PDR

Site visits were arranged at the project site of the Landmark Program on village-based forest rehabilitation in Lao PDR. The Secretariat team visited the 60-ha plantation site, the primary school of the village, the village nursery jointly managed by 6 villages, and AFoCO project field office located within the village office.

4 Courtesy call on H.E. Thongphath Vongmany, Deputy Minister of Agriculture and Forestry of Lao PDR

5 Tree planting at Nongboua Primary School in Sangthong District, Lao PDR

6 Visit to the plantation site in Sangthong District, Lao PDR



21 JUL 2020

BRIEFING RECEPTION FOR AMBASSADORS & PARTNERS BASED IN SEOUL

In partnership with the Korea Forest Service, AFoCO organized a briefing reception on July 21. A total of 53 participants attended the reception, with high-level representation from the Korea Forest Service, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, diplomatic missions in Seoul, and international organizations. The Secretariat introduced AFoCO and its projects, including a brief background and history of the establishment.

The director general of the ASEAN Affairs of the Ministry of the Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Korea as well as the Ambassadors and representatives from the diplomatic missions expressed their support for the organization's works in the region.

One of the key agendas of the briefing was to share information on AFoCO's application for Permanent Observer status in the UN General Assembly and the proposal to include AFoCO in the list of international organizations eligible for official development assistance under the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development's Development Assistance Committee (OECD-DAC).





- 1 Exhibition area showcasing videos, photos, project publications, and capacity building activities (opposite page)
- 2 H.E. Mr. Frode Solberg, Norwegian Ambassador to Seoul, delivering his congratulatory remarks
- 3 Group photo taken at the briefing session
- 4 Dr. Park Eunsik, Vice Executive Director of AFoCO, introducing AFoCO and its flagship programs and projects
- 5 Dr. Lee Yeongjoo, Director of the Planning and Budget Division of AFoCO, shared information on AFoCO's application to the UN General Assembly and proposal to be an ODA-eligible international organization

26-27 AUG 2020

GLOBAL CONSULTATION ON THE PEACE FOREST INITIATIVE

AFoCO, on the invitation of the UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), participated in the two-day Global Consultation on the Peace Forest Initiative (PFI) held from August 26-27, 2020 as a partner of UNCCD. The Global Consultation shared the draft terms of reference of the initiative and initial pilot ideas. As a follow-up, the Secretariat held a technical meeting with the Parties to share information on the initiative to the Parties and initial ideas on the potential activities and cases that can be considered under the PFI.

Peace Forest Initiative (PFI)

Peace Forest Initiative was launched on September 11, 2019 on the margins of the 14th Session of the Conference of Parties of UNCCD (COP 14). The PFI is a global initiative serving as a partnership framework with a focus on land degradation neutrality (LDN) in fragile and conflict-affected regions. The overall objective is to promote peace and build trust between neighboring countries through trans-boundary cooperation in sustainable land management, including forests.

22 OCT 2020

SIGNING OF AGREEMENT FOR RESTORING ASIAN DRYLANDS: LANDSCAPE PARTNERSHIP ASIA

With a vision to restore at least 10 million hectares of degraded forests and agriculture land in the dry areas of Central, East, South, and Southeast Asia, the Landscape Partnership Asia (LPA) is the result of collaboration among its three founding partners: Asian Forest Cooperation Organization (AFoCO), Center for International Forestry Research and World Agroforestry (CIFOR-ICRAF) and Global EverGreening Alliance (GEA). Envisioned to be the largest land restoration program in Asia, the partnership officially started on October 22, 2020 with the signing of the partnership agreement between the founding organizations. Under the agreement, AFoCO serves as the Secretariat of the LPA.

LPA will include a variety of partners from the public, private, and civil society sectors. Thirteen countries have already signified their commitment to engage in the partnership. The partnership seeks for and builds on the funding, implementation, technical, and political commitments of partners to mobilize resources and capacity to turn large swathes of drylands and drought-prone areas into productive and resilient landscapes. The partnership will build on scalable restoration successes and complement government efforts to expand and accelerate the achievement of targets. A multi-sectoral platform will be established to implement performance-based investments in the restoration of Asian drylands, building on successes already achieved.

These investments will mitigate the climate crisis, build agricultural and environmental resilience, and improve livelihoods through the development of small-to-medium-sized enterprises and value chains.

Evidence-based techniques will be deployed for dryland restoration, bioenergy production, farm and forest financing, business and value-chain development, and institutional and social-equity building across a range of landscapes at different scales to speed greening and improve livelihoods. Knowledge will be shared across Asia, inviting specialist expertise from Africa and other dryland regions, to develop a coherent body of "green, blended development" knowledge and successes on the ground, which will further sustain the expansion of scale.

A trans-Asian monitoring and evaluation system that assists national governments with measuring progress in relation to targets and feeds these achievements into international commitments will also be implemented under the partnership. This initiative will link to other restoration initiatives — such as the Bonn Challenge, the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration, and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations' Asia-Pacific Forest Landscape Restoration — to create synergies.



- 1 Chencho Norbu (1st Executive Director of AFoCO)
- 2 Chris Armitage (CEO of Global EverGreening Alliance)
- 3 Robert Nasi (Managing Director of CIFOR-ICRAF)
- 4 Tony Simons (Executive Director of CIFOR-ICRAF)



LANDSCAPE
PARTNERSHIP
ASIA



25-26 NOV 2020

FOURTH SESSION OF THE ASSEMBLY OF AFoCO



For the first time in the history of AFoCO, the Parties' representatives met virtually for the Assembly. The 4th Session of the Assembly was held on November 25-26, 2020. Representatives and delegates from 12 Parties and 1 Observer participated in the event, including Bhutan, Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Kazakhstan, Lao PDR, Mongolia, Myanmar, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Viet Nam, and Singapore. The 4th Session of the Assembly adopted seven decisions.

Despite the new normal due to COVID-19, AFoCO made efforts to minimize disruptions to its operations. Earlier this year, Mongolia deposited its instrument, and Malaysia officially delivered its intention to become a Party to AFoCO. This session was the first Assembly Session convened after all 15 countries who engaged in dialogue for the establishment of AFoCO became Parties and Observers.

The Assembly celebrated many remarkable achievements during this year. With strong support from its 13 Parties and 2 Observers, AFoCO mainstreamed its vision and mission into the global arena by applying for Permanent Observer status at the United Nations General Assembly.

The organization's Resource Mobilization Strategy was also introduced to the representatives. Comprehensively, the Assembly enjoyed and welcomed the strategy for mobilizing resources from new and diverse sources. The Secretariat applied for granting ODA-eligibility status to the Development Assistance Committee of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD-DAC). The Green Climate Fund (GCF) is in the first stage of assessing AFoCO. For efforts against climate change, the Assembly further welcomed the idea to explore the GCF's Readiness and Preparatory Support Program.



The Assembly explored a new cross-level approach and cooperation to increase member countries' policy relevance in facilitating the project formulation and resource mobilization process. In governance, member countries welcomed an idea to utilize communication platforms, including through a policy archive, the consolidation of country profiles, and policy updates. The high-level annual thematic dialogue will be the main arena to review and update the policy. Simultaneously, the Annual Technical Workshop will work as the technical body to collect on-site situations and views provided by project implementing agencies in reviewing project performance and management strategies.

Pearls of the Assembly's wisdom paved the road for forthcoming years, particularly for the establishment of a subsidiary body. The AFOCO Regional Education and Training Center (RETC) will create and operate more blended education and training programs in response to the post-COVID-19 era. Member countries also expected the RETC to serve as a hub that facilitates the accumulating and sharing of forest and forestry knowledge.

The Assembly also welcomed new projects in Lao PDR and Timor-Leste, with a total project budget of USD 2.1 million for the next 5 years.

The forest sector in Asia possesses the immense potential to contribute to COVID-19 recovery by harnessing cooperative interactions between human health, resilient forest landscapes, and sustainable livelihoods. The Secretariat will promote and advocate forest-based actions in the context of building a more resilient world after COVID-19 and greening the recovery from the pandemic. Respecting member countries' local conditions, the Assembly shared a view on coping measures, such as the application of premium communication tools and equipment, including but not limited to webcams and microphones, to keep project stakeholders updated and on responses.

The Assembly looked forward to great opportunities at the UN Food and Agriculture Organization's (FAO) 15th World Forestry Congress hosted by the Korea Forest Service, Republic of Korea, in May 2022.

OCT – DEC 2020

PARTNERSHIP ACTIVITIES WITH THE NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF FOREST SCIENCE (NIFoS)

The AFoCO-NIFoS collaboration is a program dedicated to joint research and capacity building of young researchers. The collaboration will provide avenues to strengthen the research network among AFoCO member countries in order to provide a platform where researchers, scientists, and scholars of AFoCO members can share information. Keeping forest-sector research alive will support producing necessary data and information, which will support policymakers to make good decisions.



Under the collaboration, AFoCO-NIFoS research projects in Bhutan (Assessment of adelgid diversity and distribution in conifer forest of Bhutan to mitigate future outbreaks) and Kazakhstan (Investigation of the resistance of black saxaul (*Haloxylon aphyllum*) forms to gall-forming insects) were launched, and two international events were organized virtually in 2020.

The International Union of Forest Research Organizations (IUFRO) Seoul Congress 10th Anniversary Celebration and IUFRO-KOREA, Inc. Establishment Ceremony was held on October 28. The ceremony was organized virtually with representatives from each member organization of IUFRO-KOREA, who shared the achievements of the 2010 IUFRO Seoul Congress and the way forward for international cooperation in forestry research.



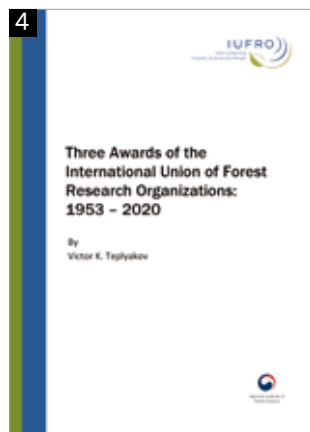
The 2020 International Virtual Forum on Greening and Land Degradation Neutrality in Dryland was organized on December 1-2 in partnership with the IUFRO Research Group 1.10, AFoCO, Asia Forest Institute in the Republic of Korea, NIFoS, and Research Institute of Forestry in the Republic of Uzbekistan. Some 100 participants from the Republic of Korea, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Mongolia, China, Myanmar, India, Ethiopia, the United State of America, and Canada joined the forum.

The urgent greening and restoration of degraded forests and landscapes in drylands is essential if the global community is to meet the challenges posed by desertification, food insecurity, climate change, and biodiversity loss, among other negative trends. In particular, the drying up of the Aral Sea and a generally drier climate accounted for the progressive desertification in Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan.

The forum noted that

- 13 million hectares of forests are lost globally every year, and continuous land degradation in drylands has led to the desertification of an area of 3.6 billion hectares.
- Globally, 2 billion hectares of land is degraded, resulting in the annual loss of 24 billion tons of fertile soil and subsequent effects on 1.5 billion land-dependent people worldwide.
- Annually, 75 million to 125 million tons of toxic salt is carried through the air from the bottom of the Aral Sea along with dust, covering an area 40 km wide and 400 km long
- For the development of the Aral Sea region and the drained bottom of the sea, it is necessary to develop forest plantations with drought-resistant trees (e.g. Saxaul).

The forum also recommended that dryland restoration should be approached at the landscape level, as the functionality and sustainability of drylands — both in ecological and socio-economic terms — more than anywhere else depends on the seasonal availability of limited resources such as water and biomass over large territories, and the long-distance movements and strategies that people, livestock, and wildlife have developed over the ages to access them and ensure both ecological and socioeconomic sustainability.



- 1 Meeting with the president of the NIFoS during the signing of the AFoCO-NIFoS collaboration (opposite page)
- 2 Publication in commemoration of 10th Anniversary of the IUFRO Seoul Congress (opposite page)
- 3 Publication on the compilation of researcher commended with IUFRO Awards
- 4 Proceedings of the 2020 International Virtual Forum on Greening and Land Degradation Neutrality in Dryland
- 5 Group photo at the 2020 International Virtual Forum on Greening and Land Degradation Neutrality in Dryland

JUL – NOV 2020

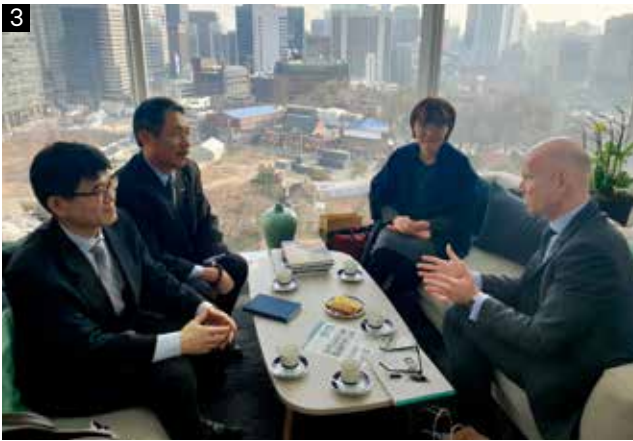
REACHING OUT TO DIPLOMATIC MISSIONS & PARTNERS AND PARTICIPATION IN RELEVANT EVENTS



To keep diplomatic missions of member countries and potential partner countries based in Seoul informed of AFoCO activities, the Secretariat paid courtesy calls on the ambassadors of Brunei Darussalam, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Mongolia, Singapore, Thailand, Timor-Leste, the European Union, Germany, Norway, and Switzerland. Courtesy visits to relevant institutes such as Green Climate Fund (GCF) and Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) were also arranged.

The Secretariat was also invited to relevant events to share views on the potential of forest-based solutions in addressing community livelihood improvement and environmental issues, the role of the forest sector in addressing climate change, and examples of adaptation practices through AFoCO projects.

Date	Event Title	Organizer
July 10	High-level roundtable of International Organizations and NGOs	KOICA
September 2	Bonn Challenge anniversary event	IUCN
September 18	Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Forum	Cannes Lions Korea
October 7	Meeting of the ASEAN Senior Officials on Forestry	ASEAN
October 19-21	FAO Asia-Pacific Urban Forestry Webinar	FAO
November 9	XV World Forestry Congress, 200-day Countdown Event: A Forum on "Messages From Forests"	Korea Forest Service
November 23	Expert Meeting on the Transformation of the ROK's Development Cooperation	Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Korea and UNDP



- 1 Sharing AFoCO's experiences at the SDGs Forum organized by Cannes Lions Korea (opposite page)
- 2 Meeting with the GCF Secretariat in Incheon
- 3 Courtesy call on the Norwegian ambassador at the country's embassy in Seoul
- 4 XV World Forestry Congress, 200-day Countdown Event: A Forum on "Messages From Forests"





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- Viet Nam – Forest Fire Suppression and Sustainable Forest Management for Community (Sep. 16-18, 21-23)

38 Other Trainings & Workshops

- Online Webinar on 'Integrated Highland Wildfire, Smoke and Haze Management in the Upper Indochina Region' (Dec. 16-17)

39 AFoCO LANDMARK SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

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AFoCO RETC – BUILDING CAPACITIES IN FORESTRY

7

TRAINING COURSES

3 REGULAR COURSES
3 COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COURSES
1 CUSTOMIZED COURSE

1,111

PARTICIPANTS

320 PARTICIPANTS
771 PARTICIPANTS
20 PARTICIPANTS

**Participant numbers indicated in man-days*

AFoCO is committed to offering quality training courses that develop the capacities of member countries to deal with pressing forestry and environmental issues such as deforestation, forest degradation, and climate change. The AFoCO Regional Education and Training Center (RETC) in Hmawbi Township, Yangon Region, Myanmar, was established to:

- Educate and develop leaders to practice good governance in the forestry sector
- Provide practical and problem-solving oriented education programs to improve and promote sustainable forest management
- Enhance knowledge and practices to promote sustainable livelihoods for forest-dependent communities
- Serve as a hub for meaningful discourse and the implementation of customized forest restoration and rehabilitation models in Asia

Out of 37 capacity building activities planned in 2020, a total of seven training and education programs were organized according to the training and education plan for 2020. All the requirements to complete training courses were identified in a timely manner. However, the COVID-19 pandemic hindered the conducting of the capacity building activities. With reference to the initial training plan for 2020, 30 training activities, including the Green Fund Program and the customized training were canceled and adjusted on the basis of the instructions and protocols of the Secretariat and the Myanmar Government.

Due to the coronavirus outbreak, there are standing concerns about the infection and spread of the coronavirus. The RETC developed a prevention and control protocol for COVID-19 to take preventive measures against the coronavirus and minimize the possibility of coronavirus infection of staff and visitors at the RETC in Myanmar.

REGULAR COURSES	Jan. 13-17 AFoCO RETC	Community-based Forest Fire Management
	Feb. 3-7 AFoCO RETC	Project Development and Project Proposal Writing
	Feb. 24-28 AFoCO RETC	Reforestation and Community Participation
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COURSES	Jan. 25-31 AFoCO RETC	Bamboo-shoot Production and Rattan Furniture-making
	Aug. – Nov. Cambodia	Community Awareness Raising Education on Climate Change (8 one-day sessions)
	Sep. 16-18, Sep. 21-23 Viet Nam	Forest Fire Suppression and Sustainable Forest Management for Community (three-day course, held twice)
Other Trainings & Workshops	Dec. 16-17 (Virtual)	Integrated Highland Wildfire, Smoke and Haze Management in the Upper Indochina Region

TRAINING COURSES

REGULAR TRAINING COURSES

COMMUNITY-BASED FOREST FIRE MANAGEMENT

Forest fire management in the 21st century faces unprecedented challenges. The frequency, extent, and intensity of forest fires have increased significantly in many parts of the world. It is unlikely that conventional forest fire management approaches will continue to be effective in the future given these challenges, and there is a need to come up with innovative and forward-looking approaches to deal with forest fires.

In recent years, community-based fire management has been widely recognized and applied to strengthen cooperation among various stakeholders as well as to promote the participation of local authorities in the joint prevention and control of forest fires. This means that fire management policies and strategies cannot rely solely on technological solutions but should incorporate social considerations in integrated approaches to effectively manage forest fires.



Training on "Community-based Forest Fire Management" was organized at the AFoCO Regional Education and Training Center (RETC) in Myanmar from Jan. 13-17, 2020 with the aim of enhancing understanding of community-based forest fire management, sharing knowledge and experiences on best practices of forest fire management in Member Countries, and strengthening the capabilities of officials in the use of advanced forest science technology.

Four speakers, including Dr. Veerachai Tanpipat, consultant to the director general of the Royal Forest Department of Thailand, delivered lectures on seven training topics: 1) principles and practices of community-based forest fire management, 2) international trends and future research directions of forest fire management and intro to community-based water management toward integration with forest fire management, 3) ground suppression and safety, 4) the Korean forest fire information system, 5) the global and ASEAN forest fire information system, 5) fire behavior and fire weather, and 7) unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) for forest fire control and practice. Participants from each member country introduced the current status and issues in their countries and developed action plans containing forest fire management strategies that can be applied in their countries.

Participants were given demonstrations on mechanical suppression and ground suppression techniques, and also had the chance to practice operating drones to monitor and suppress forest fires in the AFoCO Experimental Forest located near the RETC.



PROJECT DEVELOPMENT AND PROJECT PROPOSAL WRITING

AFoCO projects are being formulated across the five priority strategic areas of AFoCO, dealing with restoration and reforestation models, R&D for climate change adaptation, forest community livelihood and small enterprises, response mechanisms to forest-related disasters, and enhancing institutional capacities and regional cooperation. Every year, following the dissemination of a call for proposals, the organization receives proposals targeted at resolving forestry issues aligned with member countries' national policies, programs, and priorities.

While there is an existing procedure in the project formulation and appraisal, the dearth of well-formulated and technically sound project proposals remains one of the major constraints faced by member countries during fund-related negotiation. In the national context, there is a shortage of manpower with appropriate knowledge and skills in project concept note development and full proposal development. Likewise, there was a general sentiment during the previous Project Development Training that the introduction of tools and methodologies in project development, as well as clarifying the requirements of the project manual, is needed.

In early February, 21 government officials from AFoCO member countries gathered at the AFoCO RETC in Myanmar to learn about how to formulate sound and aid-worthy projects that reflect stakeholders' needs and address AFoCO's Strategic Priority Areas. The interactive 5-day course was the second project development course organized by AFoCO.

Through group work and discussions, participants were given ample opportunities to share information on the project-related materials of AFoCO and develop their project formulation skills. Potential AFoCO projects to be implemented at the country and regional levels in the future also arose from the discussions. As part of the enhancement of the course, several tools such as problem analysis (guided by problem and objective tree development), stakeholders' analysis, and logical frameworks were integrated in the training modules, including exercises using the trainees own national context and future needs. Toward the end of the training, participants of each country were able to apply the tools in the development of actual project concept notes.

The training covered two major topics – 1) project development to learn AFoCO project formulation processes and identify potential country-specific and regional projects, and 2) the improvement of project proposal skills. Participants suggested that separate training curricula be designed for each topic to leave more time for discussions and enhance the effectiveness of the training. As project development is directly linked with the whole cycle of project management, the current modules and contents may be reviewed in consideration of transforming the training into project management training.

REFORESTATION AND COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

Forest cover continues to decrease and threaten people's livelihoods despite many efforts in forest rehabilitation and restoration. According to the Global Partnership on Forest and Landscape Restoration (CPFLR), more than 2 billion ha of the world's deforested and degraded landscapes can potentially be restored. Asia is no exception, especially in tropical forests. The UN Food and Agriculture Organization reported that between 2000 and 2015, forest area in Southeast Asia alone has been reduced to about 32 million ha, with about -0.35% in annual change in forest cover. The Republic of Korea's (ROK) forests cover 63 % of its land area today after large-scale reforestation efforts in the 1970s and 1980s. The success of ROK's reforestation programs has gained worldwide recognition, and the country is now being promoted as a reforestation model for other countries.

Forest rehabilitation and restoration in Asia is one of the major goals of the Asian Forest Cooperation Organization (AFoCO). In line with AFoCO's Strategic Priorities, the AFoCO RETC runs regular training courses on three core training topics: forest rehabilitation and reforestation, forest fire management, and community-based forest management.



This year's forest rehabilitation and reforestation course, under the theme "Reforestation and Community Participation," was organized in collaboration with the FAO. The training course was held from Feb. 24-28, 2020 at the AFoCO Regional Education and Training Center in Myanmar.

A total of 20 participants from eight AFoCO member countries gathered together to learn about reforestation and community participation, food security, and gender matters and discussed challenges and lessons learned from previous

reforestation experiences to help guide ongoing and future reforestation efforts. As part of the field trip, participants visited two teak plantation sites run by the Forest Department of Myanmar as well as a private teak production company in Taik Kyi Township, Yangon Region, Myanmar to gain insight on the management of nurseries and teak plantations in Myanmar.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT TRAINING COURSES

BAMBOO-SHOOT PRODUCTION AND RATTAN FURNITURE-MAKING

In Myanmar, 70% of people living in rural areas are highly dependent on forests, forest products as well as non-timber forest products to meet their basic needs and sustain their livelihoods. In areas with abundant raw rattan materials, local communities will be able to make profits from the manufacture of rattan furniture and

handicrafts in small- and medium-sized enterprises. This will contribute greatly toward improving livelihoods.

The community development program in the 2020 plan was designed in the form of livelihood development training to create opportunities for local people to earn substantive income for daily subsistence and reduce dependency on forest resources.



The Community Development Training on Local Livelihood Development, "Bamboo-shoot production and rattan furniture making" was implemented with the objectives of training local people in making handicrafts, furniture, and other products from non-wood forest products, enhancing the development of community forestry enterprises to promote alternative incomes through community forestry products, and reducing pressures from the unsustainable use of forests for their livelihoods. A total of 27 trainees from community forest user groups across the country attended this training.



Trainers from Myanmar's Forest Department gave lectures on bamboo-shoot harvesting techniques, processing of bamboo-shoot based foodstuffs such as pickled bamboo-shoots, basic facts on bamboo plantation establishment for bamboo-shoot production, and methods for preserving rattan furniture. Trainees learned both theoretical and practical knowledge on rattan furniture making during the hands-on practice sessions. On the last day of the training, trainees embarked on a study tour to rattan furniture and handicraft manufacturers in the region to learn how to process raw materials to create finished products and learn more about market trends and demand for rattan furniture.

CAMBODIA – COMMUNITY AWARENESS-RAISING EDUCATION ON CLIMATE CHANGE

The Training Sessions on Community Awareness Raising Education on Climate Change were held from August 2020 to November 2020 in Krayea Commune, Santuk District, Kampong Thom Province, Cambodia consistent with the COVID-19 policies of the Cambodian government. For this training session, 54 participants including 19 women attended: 2 commune council members, 18 village leaders, and 34 community forestry members.

Cambodia's significant and strategic goals in agricultural development are food security, increased income generation, job creation, and increasing nourishment for all people through improved productivity and agricultural diversification, while protecting and conserving the environment to ensure food security and sustainable forestry (NFP 2010).



This training course was aimed at informing and alerting Cambodia's rural communities about climate change, teaching them how to participate in addressing global issues through participatory mitigation, and preparing them for adaptation. The capacity of the participants — the rural people — in poverty alleviation was also expected to improve. Moreover, as they are the forest community and forests play an important role in combating climate change, their community forests should also be better protected and restored. The training was split into eight sessions as follows:

- Introduction to climate change
- Climate change: causes and impacts
- Climate change and community health
- Climate change and community forest
- Climate change and community agriculture
- Climate change and gender mainstream
- Climate change: How can we make a difference?
- Climate change: How can we adapt?



Each sessions' schedule was usually divided into three steps: opening ceremony, lectures and instruction, and closing ceremony.

- The opening ceremony involved registration of the participants, welcome remarks by the manager, an opening speech by the commune leader, and group photos.
- Lectures and instructions consisted of brainstorming, plenary and group discussions, a flipcharts presentation, extra explanations and clarifications, and a participatory group exercise.
- The closing ceremony consisted of a course evaluation, session summary, closing remark by the manager, and closing speech by the commune leader.

Lectures and instructions constitute the main body of each session during which new information and knowledge is transferred. However, the opening ceremony is a procedure necessary for local authorities to participate in the training session, monitor progress, and share concerns, problems, and suggestions for the participants. And the closing ceremony is a procedure important for local authorities to participate in an official endorsement of the training session and share opinions, suggestions, and recommendations for their people.





VIET NAM – FOREST FIRE SUPPRESSION AND SUSTAINABLE FOREST MANAGEMENT FOR COMMUNITY

The training courses on forest fire suppression and sustainable forest management for community have been successfully organized in Nhu Thanh and Nhu Xuan districts, Thanh Hoa province, Viet Nam. The course focused on training the community members in order to improve their capacity to:

- Prevent forest fires in the defined provinces. The courses included theoretical and practical parts and can be applied in other provinces with standard training materials.
- The nature of forest fires (reasons for forest fires, areas in the forest that should receive special attention, high seasons for forest fires)
- Detect hot spots and trouble spots and prevent their emergence, as well as inform the public efficiently of the evidence of these spots
- Respond in the best way to a forest fire and follow correct procedures after the extinction of a forest fire, as wells to recall who to inform and how to check on old fire locations
- Identify and implement best practices on payments for ecosystem services, ecotourism, and reforestation through knowledge, information, policies, regulations of sustainable forest protection, and management
- Make efficient sustainable forest management plans and village regulations

The courses welcomed 30 community members from villages surrounded by forest and forest fire-sensitive areas in Nhu Thanh district, Thanh Hoa province and 20 community members from such areas in Nhu Xuan district, Thanh Hoa province, Vietnam.



During the training courses, four topics were covered: 1) Forest fire suppression knowledge and skills, 2) Introduction to the basic contents of the Law on Forestry 2017, 3) Guidance on building village-level forest protection regulations and planning community forest management, and 4) Instructions for using fire suppression tools and equipment. Most participants were satisfied with the teaching contents and methods. The training was conducted in accordance with the experiences of the participants. Each training session facilitated learning and sharing among participants rather than just featuring one-way communication from facilitator to participants. Participants were actively involved in all phases of the learning process through group activities including discussion, self-learning, group work, presentations, and exercises.

The participants were expected 1) to obtain basic knowledge and skills in forest fire suppression and in sustainable forest management, 2) to acquire the awareness to develop a community group to conduct participatory efforts on forest fire fighting in their area and sustainable forest management plans and village regulations, 3) to strengthen their capacity for forest fire suppression and forest protection promotion.



OTHER TRAININGS & WORKSHOPS

ONLINE WEBINAR ON 'INTEGRATED HIGHLAND WILDFIRE, SMOKE AND HAZE MANAGEMENT IN THE UPPER INDOCHINA REGION'



The AFoCO Regional Education and Training Center (RETC) has been organizing training courses with a focus on forest rehabilitation and reforestation, forest fire management, and community-based forest management in order to train leaders to ensure good governance for a Greener Asia. Unfortunately, due to the COVID-19 outbreak, some training programs planned in 2020 have been canceled since March 2020.

In efforts to continue providing capacity development opportunities, the AFoCO RETC teamed up with Kasetsart University in Thailand to organize an online webinar on "Integrated Highland Wildfire, Smoke, and Haze Management in the Upper Indochina Region" from December 16-17. The two-day webinar aimed to strengthen the capabilities of forestry officials in the utilization of advanced forest fire prediction and detection technologies and share knowledge and experiences on fire detection and suppression practices applied in Thailand and Myanmar.

A total of 10 government officials from the Forest Department of Myanmar participated in the online webinar. Dr. Veerachai Tanpipat from the Upper ASEAN Wildland Fire Research Unit in Thailand, Assistant Professor Dr. Kobsak Wanthonchai from Kasetsart University, Mr. Ronald Macatangay, and Ms. Nion Sirimongkonlertkun delivered lectures on forest fire ecology, forest fire detection systems, smoke and haze information systems, and fire detection applications (Chiang Rai Model).

The online webinar was held in order to share about forest fire ecology and community-based forest fire management, promote understanding of forest fire information systems and mixing height and particulate matter, and contribute to the current base knowledge of forest management with an emphasis on advanced fire management technology and the impact of forest fires on the environment.

AFoCO LANDMARK SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

The AFoCO Landmark Scholarship Program has been providing outstanding scholars from ASEAN Member States with opportunities to pursue higher education at universities in the Republic of Korea. Since the Landmark Scholarship Program welcomed its pioneer batch in 2015, the Secretariat has awarded scholarships to 21 government officials from seven ASEAN Member States. As one of AFoCO's flagship capacity building programs, the Landmark Scholarship Program has produced two doctoral graduates and ten master graduates in various fields of forestry to date.

For the 2020 academic year, AFoCO awarded scholarships to two recipients: Minh Quang Nguyen from Viet Nam (MSc course at Kongju National University) and Aomjitr Sena from Thailand (MSc course at Park Chung Hee School of Policy and Saemaul of Yeungnam University). The organization also celebrated the successes of three scholars who graduated from their universities in 2020.

2020 GRADUATES

"I can now relate the theories and concepts with the actual scenarios of a localized environment and natural resources issues and challenges facing my country. The program sparked a realization that complex challenges require a systematic approach to respond to these peculiarities and recommend solutions and strategies. I am now ready to propose enhancements to the current policies, plans, programs, and projects of the department to protect and conserve of the environment and natural resources."

Ma Carmina M. Canua (Philippines)

*MSc in Biological and Environmental Science
Dongguk University*



"The knowledge and experiences I gained through my study in Korea will help me one step further in achieving my goal of becoming a foremost expert in my field of study. This will also help position me better in the forestry sector so that I can actively seek opportunities to collaborate with other relevant organizations and government agencies. Moreover, I would like to become a bridge for future cooperation between the Vietnamese Academy of Forest Sciences and AFoCO."

Tran Hai Long (Viet Nam)

*MSc in Forest Environmental Science
Seoul National University*

"The Landmark Scholarship Program has provided me with a good opportunity to improve my competencies in fulfilling our country's national development through forestry. The international experience that I gained in the Republic of Korea will definitely help me in my professional career and self-growth, and eventually, become a professional in the forestry field, especially in forest welfare systems."

Nur Syamsi Muhammad (Indonesia)

*MSc in Forest and Environment Policy,
Yeungnam University*



AFoCO FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM



Vireak Chhorn (Cambodia), Nguyen Duy Vuong (Viet Nam), and Lhab Tshering (Bhutan) (from left to right)

The AFoCO Fellowship program has been implemented on an annual basis to build effective cooperation and communication networks through better understanding of working environments and procedural matters among the Parties and the Secretariat. In 2020, the Secretariat welcomed three fellowship officials: Lhab Tshering from Bhutan, Vireak Chhorn from Cambodia, and Nguyen Duy Vuong from Viet Nam.

Aiming to provide the fellowship officials with an opportunity to explore and gain expertise and knowledge that can be adapted and transferred to improve their knowledge in relevant fields, a series of study visits to relevant agencies and institutions of Korea were organized under four main themes:

- 1) Management of Forest Genetic Resources
 - National Forest Seed Variety Center
 - Anmyeondo Pine Seed Orchard
- 2) Forest Restoration and Policy
 - Headquarters of the Korea Forest Service
 - Eastern Regional Office of Forest Service
 - Daegwallyeong Specialized Restoration Area
- 3) Monitoring and Management of Forest Disasters
 - Forest Aviation Headquarters
 - Forest Fire Restoration Area (Goseong province & Naksan temple)
- 4) Forest Welfare and Recreation
 - National Recreation Forest Management Office
 - Anmyeondo Recreational Forest
 - Chollipo Arboretum

2020 FELLOWSHIP OFFICIALS

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"One of the important assignments I was engaged in AFoCO was the development of the Landscape Partnership Asia (LPA) program. Along with my team, I was also involved in the development of several Secretariat-led project concepts and proposals and the development of the Guidelines on Environmental and Social Management System of AFoCO. The review of project concept notes and proposals submitted by the AFoCO member countries was also one of my main responsibilities in AFoCO. The field visits to KFS headquarters, regional offices and centers were a great learning experience during the fellowship program, which helped me enhance my knowledge on forest restoration, rehabilitation, recreation, and technology (such as forest fire aviation/management, drone, seed, and gene bank technology) in the Republic of Korea. I feel that these knowledge and technologies can be shared and implemented in my country with some amount of customization as similar issues and needs exist there too."

Lhab Tshering*Department of Forests and Park Services, Bhutan*

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"The opportunity to work on resource mobilization helped resolve my questions on how international organizations get funds and manage them to operate their activities. I assisted in drafting the Resource Mobilization Strategy for AFoCO, and by doing so, I was able to gain a deeper understanding and enhance my knowledge by exploring and reviewing the documents of other international organizations. For my assignment related to policy relevance, I collected forest-related policies of the AFoCO's member countries and consolidated them into a single document. I worked on the draft forestry baseline and informational documents of individual countries, also known as the Country Profile and Context (CPC). I had a chance to draft the CPC for four countries — the CLMV countries Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, and Viet Nam. This work inspired me to pursue a higher degree in forestry policy. Last but not least, I worked on the publication of the Khmer version of the comic-based textbook, *Exploring the Forest with Tory and Sully*."

Vireak Chhorn*Forest Administration, Cambodia*

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"During my time in AFoCO, I assisted in the development of a Project Implementation Plan (PIP) matrix, a detailed physical and financial plan of the project that covers its entire duration; supported the organization of annual Project Inception Meetings and Project Steering Committee meetings with the implementing agencies in member countries; helped consolidate the monthly project updates from the implementing agencies for the monthly meeting of the Secretariat; and drafted project-related news articles for the website. I was able to learn the methods required for effective project management and tools for evaluation, analysis, and monitoring. From the study visits, I got to visit and learn about plantation and sustainable forest management in Korea, as well as advanced technologies and useful techniques applied in the protection, planting, and management of forests."

Nguyen Duy Vuong*Vietnam National University of Forestry, Viet Nam*

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PROVISION OF FORESTRY EQUIPMENT TO MEMBER COUNTRIES

AFoCO has been facilitating donation activities to support capacity building activities in member countries, since 2018. Over the last two years, a number of central and local government agencies of the Republic of Korea have donated various refurbished items and equipment. Currently, such equipment is being used by forestry agencies in Cambodia and Myanmar, while all the member countries have the same opportunity whenever they attend the international training session at the AFoCO RETC in Yangon, Myanmar as participants.

Year	Donor	Donation	Beneficiary	
2018	Korea Forest Service (General Affairs Div.)	• 30 desktop computers	AFoCO RETC	
	Jeollanam-do Hwasun-gun Office (1) Busan Gangseo-gu Office (1)	• 2 forest fire-fighting vehicles	AFoCO RETC	
2019	Korea Forestry Promotion Institute (KoFPI)	• 50 desktop computers	AFoCO RETC	
	Seo-gu Office, Busan (1) Yangyang-gun Office, Gangwon-do (1) Chilgok-gun Office, Gyeongsangbuk-do (3) Haeundae-gu Office, Busan (1) Sokcho City Hall, Gangwon-do (1) Jeongseon-gun Office, Gangwon-do (1) Donghae City Hall, Gangwon-do (2) Uljin-gun Office, Gyeongsangbuk-do (1)	• 11 forest fire-fighting vehicles	AFoCO RETC (1) Forest Department of Myanmar (5) Forestry Administration of Cambodia (5)	
	Korea National Arboretum (KNA)	• 60 desktop computers 400 masks	AFoCO RETC and Forest Department of Myanmar	
	Korea Forest Service (Forest GIS Division)	• 99 tablet PCs installed with the mobile application Forest Inventory Survey Tool (FIST)	AFoCO RETC	
	2020	Korea Forest Service (General Affairs Division)	• 130 desktop computers	Forestry Administration of Cambodia (60) Department of Forestry of Lao PDR (60) AFoCO Secretariat (10)
		Local companies Keunchang InterGreen and Ubee Trading Corp with technical assistance from the Korea Forestry Promotion Institute (KoFPI)	• 229 pieces of forestry equipment (of 16 types)	AFoCO RETC
	Uiwang City Hall, Gyeonggi-do	• 67 pieces of forestry equipment (of 4 types)	AFoCO RETC	



Under the AFoCO program to improve fire management in Member Countries, the Republic of Korea donated five fire forest vehicles to the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries of Cambodia in 2020. Following the ceremony, the Secretariat staff conducted a hands-on training on the operation and maintenance for officials in charge and distributed manuals on to guide officials on how to regularly inspect and maintain the vehicles. The Cambodia government also plans to distribute the vehicles to regions across the country.

Year	Donation	Beneficiary
2019	5 forest fire vehicles	Forest Department of Myanmar
2020	5 forest fire vehicles	Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries of Cambodia

- 1 KNA officials re-packing the donated computers after refurbishing them
- 2 Donation Ceremony for Computer Equipment and Masks from KNA held on July 7, 2020
- 3 Donation Ceremony for IT Equipment and Mobile Application from KFS held on September 25, 2020
- 4 Donation Ceremony for Forestry Equipment held on November 4, 2020
- 5 Samples of forestry equipment donated by Keunchang InterGreen and Ubee Trading Corp







PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

46 COOPERATION WITH THE PRIVATE SECTOR

- 46 'Plant for the Planet' Mangrove Restoration Project

48 ONGOING PROJECTS

- 48 Establishment of Forest Genetics Center for Restoration of Major Timber Species in Cambodia (AFoCO/005/2014)
- 50 Rehabilitation & Development of Mangrove Forest Ecosystem in Thai Binh Province, Viet Nam (AFoCO/006/2014)
- 52 Establishment of the AFoCO Regional Education and Training Center in Myanmar (AFoCO/007/2014)
- 54 Village-Based Forest Rehabilitation in Lao PDR (AFoCO/008/2014)
- 56 Domestication of Endangered, Endemic & Threatened Plant Species in Disturbed Terrestrial Ecosystems in Malaysia & Thailand (AFoCO/010/2016)
- 58 The Registration of Small-scale Private Forest Plantations in Cambodia (AFoCO/012/2019)
- 60 Improving *Pinus caribaea* Morelet for Plantation on Degraded land in Viet Nam's Northern Mountainous Region (AFoCO/013/2020)
- 62 Sustainable Community-based Enterprise Development for Improved Rural Livelihood in Bhutan (AFoCO/017/2020)

64 NEW PROJECTS

- 64 Integrated Pest & Disease Management in Teak Plantations in Bago Region, Myanmar (AFoCO/014/2020)
- 64 Model Forest for Livelihood Improvement of Forest Dependent Communities through Development of Community-based Enterprise & Forest Conservation in Myanmar (AFoCO/015/2020)
- 65 Development of Agroforestry Models for Promotion of Reforestation in the Different Zones in Timor-Leste (AFoCO/018/2020)
- 66 Assessment of Adelgid Diversity and Distribution in Conifer Forest of Bhutan to Mitigate Future Outbreaks (AFoCO/019/2020)
- 67 Investigation of the Resistance of Black Saxaul (*Haloxylon aphyllum*) Forms to Gall-forming Insects (AFoCO/020/2020)

68 LIST OF AFoCO PROJECTS

COOPERATION WITH THE PRIVATE SECTOR

'Plant for the Planet' Mangrove Reforestation Project in Myanmar

- ▶ **Duration** August – December 2020
- ▶ **Budget** USD 74,000
- ▶ **Project Site** Letkokkon Village, Kawhmu Township, Yangon Region, Myanmar



AFoCO joined hands with the Korea Association for UN Environment, a national committee of the UN Environment Programme, to carry out mangrove restoration in Letkokkon Village, Kawhmu Township, Yangon Region, Myanmar. Funded by SK Innovation, the 'Plant for the Planet' mangrove restoration project was implemented in cooperation with the Ministry of Natural Resources & Environmental Conservation of Myanmar. The project aimed to restore 18 ha of mangrove forests in the project site in Myanmar and help build the capacities of local communities to cope with natural disasters, in efforts to respond to climate change and secure biodiversity in the region.

Despite delays in planting activities due to the COVID-19 pandemic in Myanmar, a total of 45,000 seedlings from four mangrove species were successfully planted across 18 ha of plantation from 31 October through 27 November 2020. The active participation of local people in the mangrove planting activity resulted in the successful completion of the project and also helped generate income for the participating communities.

The well-organized preparation work such as the selection of the project site and securement of the mangrove seedlings resulted in the success of the mangrove planting in November 2020.

Following the planting activities, the withered seedlings have been replaced with the 100 vital mangrove seedlings and the weeds around the all planted seedlings were controlled to guarantee the initial growth phase in December 2020. From 2021, the follow-up management including weeds control will be conducted by the local the local community near the project site for two years.

To prepare for the mangrove planting activities, mangrove propagules of four species collected through consultative meetings between the AFoCO RETC and the Forest Department of Myanmar were cultivated in the mangrove nursery located near the project site. The four mangrove species are as follows:

No.	Scientific Name	Local Name	No. of Seedlings
1	<i>Sonneratia apetala</i>	Kam-Pa-La	5,000
2	<i>Rhizophora apiculata</i>	Byu-Chay-Htouk (A-Pho)	10,000
3	<i>Bruguiera gymnorhiza</i>	Byu-Oke-Saung	15,000
4	<i>Bruguiera sexangula</i>	Byu-Shwe-Wa	15,000
TOTAL			45,000



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- 1 Officials from the Forest Department guiding members of local communities during the planting process
- 2 Local communities carrying out planting activities
- 3 Project signboard installed at the project site



3

ONGOING PROJECTS

LANDMARK PROGRAM

Establishment of Forest Genetics Research Center for Restoration of Major Timber Species in Cambodia

(AFoCO/005/2014)



- ▶ **Duration** 2016–2025
- ▶ **Budget** USD 2,185,000 (AFoCO Funding: USD 1,500,000; National Contribution: USD 685,000)
- ▶ **Project Site** Khun Ream and Chan Sor, Siem Reap, Cambodia

Despite the implementation of a series of restoration projects in Cambodia, there remain fundamental questions regarding the source of seeds. Most of the time, seeds have been collected or purchased without clear genetic information at different places across the country. Especially for major timber species such as *Dalbergia cochinchinensis*, the quality of seeds in terms of genetic superiority cannot be guaranteed. For more effective and efficient restoration of major timber species, it is necessary to produce genetically improved seeds within Cambodia through a long-term tree breeding plan. However, there is limited experience and knowledge on tree breeding in Cambodia.

Objectives

- Implement a long-term tree breeding plan
- Strengthen the restoration and tree breeding capabilities of the Forestry Administration in Cambodia

Achievements in 2020

- Conducted weeding among established progeny and in the seed orchard to fully control grasses
- Conducted workshops, documentation work, field visits, and other activities to raise awareness about forest protection among local people
- Reconstructed firebreaks around the project site to provide protection from fire and also use for patrolling and monitoring
- Promoted the growth of seedlings by applying fertilizer and practicing interplanting
- Produced grafted seedlings to replace dead trees in the clonal seed orchard by collecting scions from other seedling
- Conducted regular patrols to protect the management area, including the seed source (2,835.5 ha)
- Took measurements for the research plots and assisted natural regeneration (ANR) to monitor the annual growth of selected tree species
- Conducted consultations with experts and meetings via online communication tools
- Recorded pests and diseases attacking the progeny test plantation and seed orchards
- Organized a three-day study tour to the Khun Ream Forest Research Station to study projects that have been carried out in the field
- Conducted monitoring online due to the COVID-19 pandemic to monitor the progress of the project and provide direction for project implementation

Year	AFoCO Budget (USD)	Main Activities
2016	321,245	Establishment of 8 ha of progeny test plantation and 2 ha of clonal seed orchard
2017	205,715	Establishment of 12 ha of progeny test plantation, 2ha of clonal seed orchard and 1 ha of seedling seed orchard and maintenance
2018	180,000	Establishment of 4 ha of progeny test plantation and 1 ha of seedling seed orchard and maintenance
2019	111,780	Maintenance of 30 ha of seed orchards and 200 ha of former research plots and the restoration area
2020	128,510	Maintenance of 30 ha of seed orchard and 200 ha of restoration area and former research plots, support research of university students
AFoCO Budget Expended		USD 947,250





- 1 Forest fire control activities conducted with local authorities
- 2 Removal of infected seedlings
- 3 Under graduate students conducting research in the tissue culture laboratory



3

LANDMARK PROGRAM

Rehabilitation & Development of Mangrove Forest Ecosystem in Thai Binh Province, Viet Nam

(AFoCO/006/2014)



- ▶ **Duration** 2016-2023
- ▶ **Budget** USD 1,720,978 (AFoCO Funding: USD 1,500,000; National Contribution: USD 220,978)
- ▶ **Project Site** Thai Thuy and Tien Hai Districts, Thai Binh Province, Viet Nam

With the approval of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development of Viet Nam, the Viet Nam Administration of Forestry is implementing this project entitled "Rehabilitation and Development of Mangrove Forest Ecosystem in Thai Binh Province, Viet Nam" and funded by the Asian Forest Cooperation Organization (AFoCO). The project is vital to enhance the protective function of mangrove forests, protect the ecological environment and biodiversity, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and contribute to the improvement of local farmers' livelihoods.

Objectives

- Afforest, rehabilitate and sustainably manage mangrove forest ecosystems in Thai Binh province
- Raise awareness and enhance knowledge and capacity for local communities on rehabilitation, protection and sustainable development of mangrove forests, biodiversity conservation, climate change mitigation, and livelihood improvement strategies

Achievements in 2020

- Despite the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, project activities have been implemented as planned and achieved targeted indicators. Planted forests have been growing well, and existing forests have been safely protected
- Strengthened activities of communal forest protection groups such as weekly group meetings, regular forest patrols, and reporting to commune authorities to address violations
- Conducted activities to raise awareness about forest protection among local people
- 100 ha of forest planted in 2016 and 2017 will be handed over to four communes for management and protection in the beginning of 2021 upon completion of handover procedures in accordance with the current regulations
- Organized a training session on December 13, 2020 at Dong Long Commune, Tien Hai District to explain legal regulations in the forestry sector
- As of December 2020, there were no significant violations of protection measures covering 800 ha of existing mangrove forests



Year	AFoCO Budget (USD)	Main Activities
2016	348,545	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New plantation of 20 ha and supplementary plantation of 20 ha of forests • Good protection of 800 ha of existing forests • Organization of two training sessions for local communities on forest plantations and forest protection
2017	352,148	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New plantation of 30 ha and supplementary plantation of 30 ha of forests • Good protection of 800 ha of existing forests • Organization of a study tour to Thailand to exchange experience in forest plantations, forest protection, and ecotourism development • Organization of three training sessions for local communities on forest plantations and forest protection
2018	390,413	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New plantation of 30 ha and supplementary plantation of 30 ha of forests • Good protection of 800 ha of existing forests • Organization of one study tour to Malaysia to exchange experience in forest protection and ecotourism development • Organization of two training sessions for local communities on community-based forest protection
2019	139,050	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good tending and protection of 160 ha of forests planted from 2016 to 2018 • Good protection of 800 ha of existing forests • Organization of a training session for local communities on mangrove-based livelihood improvement
2020	106,344	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good tending and protection of 160 ha of forests planted from 2016 to 2018 • Good protection of 800 ha of existing forests • Organization of a training session for local communities to explain legal regulations in the forestry sector
AFoCO Budget Expended		USD 1,336,500



- 1 Newly planted forest in Thuy Xuan Commune in 2020
- 2 Online project monitoring session
- 3 6th Project Steering Committee (PSC) Meeting held virtually in December 2020



LANDMARK PROGRAM

Establishment of the AFoCO Regional Education and Training Center in Myanmar

(AFoCO/007/2014)



- ▶ **Duration** 2014-2023
- ▶ **Budget** USD 29,354,977 (AFoCO Funding: USD 8,734,091; National Contribution: USD 20,620,886)
- ▶ **Project Site** Ye-Twin-Kone village, Hmawbi Township, Yangon Region, Myanmar

There has been rising demand for capacity building in the forestry sector for sustainable development in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) region. ASEAN Vision 2020 clearly recognizes the forestry sector as a model for sustainable development by harmonizing environmental, social, and economic policies between the 10 member countries of ASEAN. The Republic of Korea (ROK) proposed the AFoCO Landmark Program consisting of four projects, including the establishment of the AFoCO Regional Education and Training Center (RETC). This proposal was approved by the 3rd session of the Governing Council of the AFoCO Agreement held in Singapore on October 18, 2013, and Myanmar was selected to host the AFoCO RETC through a comprehensive evaluation process based on the criteria of project sustainability, administration capacity, site appropriateness, infrastructure, and cost efficiency.

Objectives

- Construct a regional education and training center for the forestry sector
- Supply the center with research equipment and training facilities
- Enhance regional capacity of forest-related personnel and institutions by delivering education and training courses

Achievements in 2020

- Maintained the access road to the site before the rainy season to secure accessibility
- Conducted an on-site visit to the National Kandawgyi Botanical Garden in Pyin Oo Lwin for reference with the support of the Forest Department of Myanmar
- Conducted a feasibility study for the establishment of an ex situ conservation site within the experiment forest site with the Forest Department of Myanmar according to an official request from the Korea National Arboretum (KNA)
- Made the preliminary survey and measurement of the access road to the site
Prepared to submit the layout of the access roads after the preliminary survey
- Provided the Forest Department of Myanmar with a basic design concept translated into English to ensure greater cooperation
- While monitoring the coronavirus situation in Myanmar and Korea, AFoCO will reschedule an on-site visit with the help of the Korea Arboreta and Gardens Institute (KoAGI) team so that design development will commence in 2021



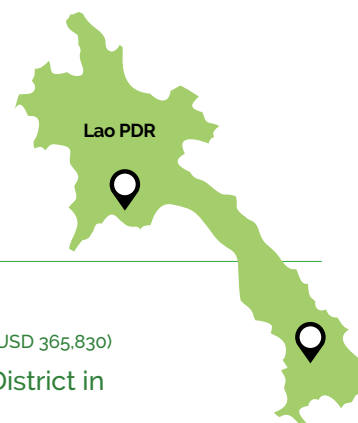
Year	AFoCO Budget (USD)	Main Activities
2014	1,348,728	• MOU signing for the project implantation
2015	3,876,531	• Completed the design development for the RETC establishment • Commenced the RETC construction
2016	888,816	• Completed the structural work for the RETC establishment
2017	1,379,692	• Completed the RETC construction • Provided the RETC equipment
2018	253,991	• Began the operation of the RETC • Organized 6 education and training programs
2019	47,350	• Completed the concept design for the establishment of the AFoC Experimental Forest • Organized 41 education and training programs
2020	0	• Completed the RETC defective work • Organized 7 education and training programs • Completed the access road survey for the establishment of the AFoCO Experimental Forest
AFoCO Budget Expended		USD 7,795,108

- 1 Participants of the 2020 community development course posing in front of the AFoCO RETC
- 2 Participants of the regular training on 'Project Development and Proposal Writing' attending the training orientation at the conference hall
- 3 Participants of the regular training on 'Reforestation and Community Participation' attending an interactive training session in a lecture room



LANDMARK PROGRAM

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



▶ Duration	2016-2025
▶ Budget	USD 1,865,830 (AFoCO Funding: USD 1,500,000; National Contribution: USD 365,830)
▶ Project Site	Paksong District in Champasak Province & Sangthong District in Vientiane Capital, Lao PDR

About 79% of Lao PDR is covered in mountains. The country has suffered a rapid decline in forest cover over the past few decades, and the causes of this deforestation reported in many official documents are similar to other developing nations. People in the country are largely dependent on the forests for their livelihoods, and in order to recover the degraded forests and increase forest cover, the government together with local authorities and international organizations has continued to make significant efforts in applying different measures. This project — developed by the Department of Forestry (DoF) with strong support from the AFoCO Secretariat and technical assistance from a team of Korean experts and a national consultant — is designed to increase national forest cover, reduce rural poverty, enhance forest carbon stocks, and contribute to mitigating global climate change.

Objectives

- Increase forest cover through the restoration of degraded forest areas and strengthen the capability of government agencies and local authorities, including villagers, to implement national forest rehabilitation policy
- Contribute to poverty reduction by providing direct income to local people, particularly the poor

Achievements in 2020

- Most of the activities planned in 2020 were implemented. All village heads, as well as villagers around the project sites, engaged in the implementation of the project's activities. Many people visited the project sites in Sangthong and Paksong to exchange views and discuss their experiences
- Produced and maintained 30,000 seedlings of native species and 30,000 of Cardamom seedlings in the nursery
- Planted 2 ha of Cardamom sp. in Kongtoun to establish an ex situ Cardamom conservation plantation
- Patrolled forest rehabilitation areas twice a month
- Planted 30,000 seedlings in 83 ha and conducted enrichment planting in 78 ha
- Ensured the maintenance and protection of the ex situ conservation plantation of Sangthong (20 ha) and Paksong (40 ha) by families who have signed a contract with project staff
- Organized Arbor Day Events including awareness-raising material and engagement with a media specialist in Sangthong and Paksong
- Provided 110 numbers trekking shoes, and appropriate IT equipment such as monitors, cameras, speakers, etc. to improve long distance communication due to the outbreak of COVID-19

Year	AFoCO Budget (USD)	Main Activities
2016	388,400	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Surveyed and demarked project's rehabilitation sites of about 2,770 ha (400 ha in Paksong and 2,370 ha in Sangthong) • Completely developed the Village-based Forest Rehabilitation Guidelines • Conducted training for project staff to implement the village-based forest rehabilitation concept and guideline
2017	176,175	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Produced about 118,300 seedlings for an ex situ conservation plantation and enrichment planting • Established about 6 ha of ex situ plantation
2018	198,500	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Produced about 94,500 seedlings for enrichment planting • Established about 51 ha of ex situ plantation • Planted about 35 ha of enrichment areas
2019	136,625	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Produced about 94,300 seedlings for enrichment planting • Planted about 50 ha of enrichment areas
2020	187,300	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Produced about 94,300 seedlings for enrichment planting • Planted about 155 ha of enrichment areas
AFoCO Budget Expended		USD 1,087,000



- 1 Trekking shoes provided to villagers carrying out planting activities
- 2 Seedling production in Nalath nursery, Sangthong District
- 3 Tree planting ceremony in Sangthong District



Domestication of Endangered, Endemic, and Threatened Plant Species in Disturbed Terrestrial Ecosystems in Malaysia and Thailand (AFoCO/010/2016)

-
- ▶ **Duration** 2016 - 2022
 - ▶ **Budget** USD 5,293,919 (AFoCO Funding: USD 1,200,000; National Contribution: USD 4,093,919)
 - ▶ **Project Site** Malaysia - FRIM Research Station at Bidor, Perak
Thailand - Mae Moh Mine, Lampang, Takua Pa, Phang Nga
-



Malaysia and Thailand include mega-biodiversity landscapes, and rapid development and climate changes have inevitably caused degradation of terrestrial ecosystems. The problem of forest degradation and potential biodiversity loss is critical, and Malaysia and Thailand are addressing the problems through research and development activities. Domestication of endangered, endemic, and threatened species (EETS) is one of the most effective approaches to conserve germplasm. The project plots will be seed production area of EETS after the project is finished in 2022.

Objectives

- Domesticate national red-list species in both countries
- Strengthen cooperation between Malaysia and Thailand on the conservation of biodiversity, domestication techniques, and technology transfer
- Exchange knowledge and lessons learned on best practices in rehabilitation and biodiversity conservation

Achievements in 2020

In Malaysia:

- Produced site locality maps
- Assessed plant growth and determined site properties
- Analyzed soil samples

In Thailand:

- Selected sites at Mae Moh mine, Lampang province and Takua Pa, Phang Nga province. The area is 5.3 ha and 4.8 ha at the Mae Moh site and 0.5 ha at the Takua Pa site
- Produced site locality maps at the Mae Moh mine plot, including a boundary map, existing trees map, and planted EETS map
- Purchased 1,000 seedlings of banana shoots for use as nursing plants
- Approved site preparation & EETS planting and tending at Mae Moh site internally
- Completed planting and tending of the Takua Pa plot site
- Finished soil collection and soil analysis

Year	AFoCO Budget (USD)	Main Activities
2016	350,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Carried out site selection and characterization in Malaysia and Thailand were carried out Completed internal process for the appointment of a suitable contractor to prepare sites for planting and supply planting stock Carried out planting and tending in Malaysia Successfully established a total of 4,38 ha of plots in Lampang and Phang Nga, Thailand Domesticated a total of nine EETS in Thailand
2017	63,684	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completed establishment of 3 ha plot comprised of 10 EETS in Malaysia Carried out tending of 4,38 ha of plots in Thailand Successfully domesticated a total of 19 EETS in both countries
2018	320,870	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Carried out internal process of appointing a contractor to establish another 3.6 ha at TTAC, SPF Bidor, Malaysia Established another 5.3 ha of plots in Thailand Domesticated total of 12 EETS in Thailand Grew an additional four EETS in both project sites in Thailand
2019	188,015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Established another 3.6 ha plot in Malaysia with 18 EETS Domesticated a total of 17 EETS at the 6.6-ha plot in Malaysia and 12 species of EETS at the 9.68-ha plot in Thailand Domesticated a total of 28 EETS in 16.28 ha in both countries, with one common species — a highly sorted high-value timber species listed as endangered on the IUCN Red List (IUCN 2.3), <i>Neobalanocarpus heimii</i>
2020	145,251	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Carried out the internal process of appointing a contractor to establish an additional 1 ha plot in Malaysia Carried out tending of 6.6 ha of plots in Malaysia for 2021 Carried out tending of 16.28 ha in Thailand Only 3.6 ha of AFoCO-established plots was tended in 2020, and the AFoCO plot established in 2017 was only tended from March to July 2020
AFoCO Budget Expended		USD 1,067,820



- Neobalanocarpus heimii* attained mean height of 3.2 m at 3 years after planting
- Vegetative measurements carried out in 2017 plot in Malaysia

The Registration of Small-scale Private Forest Plantations in Cambodia

(AFoCO/012/2019)



- ▶ **Duration** 2020 - 2021
- ▶ **Budget** USD 275,110 (AFoCO Funding: USD 249,410; National Contribution: USD 25,700)
- ▶ **Project Site** Han Chey Mountain in Han Chey commune, Kampong Siem District, Kampong Cham province

Cambodia's natural forests, which have experienced significant declines in recent decades, have been under the management of the state and, until recently, there has been limited recognition and encouragement associated with the establishment of private forest plantations. This situation has discouraged the private sector, as well as those small-scale farmers who, except for their concerns about ownership claims and user rights, might otherwise have invested in plantation development. There is increasing recognition now of the constraints associated with excessive reliance on funding from the government for reforestation and forest restoration activities. However, that limits the application of those activities to a relatively small proportion of the country's degraded forestlands

Objectives

- The main objective of the project is to initiate the piloting of small-scale private forest plantations and prepare for a succeeding phase of the project in which the rate of establishment of those plantations is increased.
- The project will institutionalize the means to encourage the establishment of sustainable small-scale private forest plantations.

Achievements in 2020

- Developed and endorsed the guidelines and incentives to encourage the establishment of small-scale private forest plantations.
- Prepared comparative assessments of the patterns of growth and market demand to use in the selection of species to provide in the establishment of small-scale private forest plantations.
- Provided capacity building and outreach activities to initiate pilot plantations and prepared plans to support the continued establishment of small-scale private forest plantations

The project distributed more than 80,000 seedlings (covering around 250-300 ha of agroforestry plantations) to 2,102 households, as well as to public institutions, for planting on their private land and in their home gardens in 16 communes in three districts of Kampong Cham province in 2020. However, plantations established by households and public institutions are still in too early a stage to see the benefits associated with more forest cover, local livelihood improvement, and increases in investment in local development.

Year	AFoCO Budget (USD)	Main Activities
2020	132,647.50	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of guidelines on registration • Development of guidelines on Registration of Small Scale Private Forest Plantations were developed • Distribution of 80,000 seedlings of various native species and fruit trees to local communities and public institutions to plant on their land and in their home gardens
AFoCO Budget Expended		USD 132,647.50



1,2 National Consultation and Extension Workshop on Rules and Guidelines for Private Forest Registration held in November 2020
3 Tree planting in Kampong Cham





Improving *Pinus caribaea* Morelet for plantation on degraded land in Viet Nam's northern mountainous region (AFoCO/013/2019)

-
- ▶ **Duration** 2020 - 2023
 - ▶ **Budget** USD 576,285 (AFoCO Funding: USD 486,000; National Contribution: USD 90,285)
 - ▶ **Project Site** Northern mountainous region of Viet Nam
-

Viet Nam has been making great efforts to reforest barren land and bare hills, increase forest cover, and gradually restore poor natural forests to better-quality forests. However, due to land degradation, poor nutrition, and a severe climate combined with extensive farming practices, the access to and effective application of advanced technologies remain limited. One of the top priorities of Viet Nam's forestry sector is to improve the quality of seedlings in order to create high-yield plantation forests and supply high-quality raw materials for the timber processing industry. For degraded land, *P. caribaea* is a top priority because this species has superior characteristics to other native pine species such as rapid growth, good stem shape, and good resistance to insects and diseases. Despite its potential growth, this species has not been widely planted due to the lack of high-quality seed sources because of the limitations of seeds from seed orchards. Thus, it is essential to research and develop *P. caribaea* seedlings in order to ensure improved seedlings for forest plantations. In order to improve the productivity of planted forests, selection of appropriate seedlings and application of advanced silvicultural techniques are feasible and necessary scientific solutions.

Objectives

- Improve high-quality *P. caribaea* seedling production through the selection of at least 150 plus trees
- Develop and transfer guidelines on intensive forest plantations to production by planting 1 ha of model forests from seedlings produced
- Propose and develop appropriate techniques to use *P. caribaea* timber in the timber processing industry to meet market demands

Achievements in 2020

- Selected plus trees and collected seeds
- Established seed orchard and transformed seed stand
- Improved propagation techniques for *P. caribaea* through seedling production, cutting, and grafting
- Conducted surveys to select suitable sites and design plantation models for *P. caribaea*
- Determined suitable sites to plant *P. caribaea* in the northern mountainous region
- Surveyed and assessed domestic and international markets of pine wood and *P. caribaea* timber
- Completed *P. caribaea* timber preservation techniques such as temporary post-harvesting and post-sawing
- Developed techniques to produce *P. caribaea* wood finger joint boards
- Supported inception meeting expenses for staff attending training courses abroad

Year	AFoCO Budget (USD)	Main Activities
2020	152,721	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organized the Project Inception Meeting Conducted the survey sites activities in five provinces, selected 150 plus trees, collected and preserved seeds Established a seed orchard and 99- ha transformed seed stands Finalized the technical guidelines and organized the training courses on propagation, timber preservation, and production techniques Conducted a survey of field sites for models plantation models and assessed markets the inside and outside of the country market
AFoCO Budget Expended		USD 152,721



- 1 Field survey site of seed forests in Ba Vi, Hanoi
- 2 Survey of veneer production and processing
- 3 Grafting of *Pinus caribaea*

Sustainable Community-based Enterprise Development for Improved Rural Livelihood in Bhutan

(AFoCO/017/2020)



- ▶ **Duration** 2020 - 2025
- ▶ **Budget** USD 1,400,000 (AFoCO Funding: USD 1,000,000; National Contribution: USD 400,000)
- ▶ **Project Site** 12 districts (Bumthang, Chukha, Thimphu, Paro, Haa, Gasa, Wangdue Phodrang, Punakha, Tsirang, Lhuentse, Trashigang, Pemagatshel) in Bhutan

The Kingdom of Bhutan is located in the Eastern Himalayas and is heavily forested, with more than 71% of forest cover. In 2002, the Community-based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM) Framework was developed. CBNRM is a practical expression of decentralization and an approach to improve the governance of natural resources at the local level. It is also a practical approach for improving livelihood security and environmental sustainability. CBNRM encompasses community forest (CF) and non-wood forest product (NWFP) management groups. Though CF and NWFP management groups have been established, the initiation of enterprise development as well as product design, development, and the marketing of products is very limited. Weak governance, poor management, a lack of skills and networking facilities, and limited financial resources are also major challenges faced by the groups.

Objectives

- Promote CF and NWFP industries by establishing community-based enterprises.
- Develop alternative income sources for the livelihoods of rural communities.
- Enhance knowledge and technology on climate change adaptation through sustainable forest management.

Achievements in 2020

- Identified potential NWFP/CF for enterprise development
- Held consultation meetings for enterprise development in CFs on Payments for Ecosystem Services (PES) and ecotourism, wood-based enterprises and NWFPs in the Gasa, Bumthang, Tsirang, Punakha, Paro, and Wangdue Phodrang districts
- Supported the construction of infrastructure such as trails, gazebos, and signage for ecotourism enterprises in Gasa district
- Facilitated market linkages (buyer-seller meetings, auctions)
- Prepared business plans and standard operating procedures for ecotourism enterprises in collaboration with the Department of Agriculture Marketing and Cooperatives
- Sharing proposals on enterprise development from field offices on ecotourism, wood-based enterprises and PES
- Formed an evaluation committee from different offices and agencies to evaluate proposals and declare the results

Year	AFoCO Budget (USD)	Main Activities
2020	45,500	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ecotourism enterprise development at Gasa • Capacity building on resource assessment to field foresters • Capacity building on silviculture with CF management group members • Workshop on good governance in CF management for CF management group members • Evaluation of one ecotourism enterprise and one wood-based enterprise • Consultation meetings on enterprise development in the Gasa, Bumthang, Tsirang, Punakha, Paro, and Wangdue Phodrang districts
AFoCO Budget Expended		USD 45,500



- 1 A community consultation on the establishment of ecotourism enterprises
- 2 Training on resource assessment in CF, with CF management group members
- 3 Training on silviculture for CF management group members

NEW PROJECTS

Integrated Pest & Disease Management in Teak Plantations in Bago Region, Myanmar (AFoCO/014/2020)

-
- ▶ **Duration** 2020 - 2025
 - ▶ **Budget** USD 955,360
 - ▶ **Project Site** Myanmar
-

Goal & Objectives

The project aims to contribute to maintaining healthy forests and the vitality of the West Bago Yoma Region through exploring pest and disease lists, possible control and prevention measures, and by enhancing capacity building programs for all stakeholders.

- Manage teak forests in a sustainable manner through effective integrated pest and disease management
- Improve capacity and facilities for pest and disease research and management for teak forests
- Create a network for teak pest and disease management

Expected Outputs

- Investigated seasonal incidence, level of severity, and relationship between outbreaks of pests and diseases with environmental factors
- Developed possible control measures for individual pests and diseases and monitoring systems
- Build capacities on systematic pest and disease management
- Upgraded the diagnostic laboratory and museum in the Forest Research Institute (FRI) and conducted research
- Formed the teak forest pest and disease management working group

Model Forest for Livelihood Improvement of Forest Dependent Communities through Development of Community-based Enterprise & Forest Conservation in Myanmar (AFoCO/015/2020)

-
- ▶ **Duration** 2020 - 2023
 - ▶ **Budget** USD 952,000
 - ▶ **Project Site** Myanmar
-

Goal & Objectives

The project aims to strike a balance between sustaining the livelihoods of rural people and biodiversity conservation. It is necessary to fill gaps for rural development and enhance knowledge on forest conservation by promoting existing extension activities by the Forest Department. The establishment of a model forest village is an ideal approach that can maintain balance between the sustainability of forests and local livelihoods through the generation of alternative income-generating opportunities, community participation in forest conservation, development of community forestry and agroforestry, and systematic management of land-use practices.

- Establish model forest villages to improve rural livelihoods and ensure sustainable landscapes
- Develop community-based tourism activities and community-based enterprises

Expected Outputs

- Improvement of community forest (CF), home garden, sustainable shifting cultivation (a shifting cultivation practice that has a defined rotation and a well-prepared plan), and community-based tourism
 - Development of community-based tourism and community-based enterprise
 - Improved knowledge on updated forestry techniques, management, and policy of the Forest Department.
- The out comes of this project will also address the rural development policy of Myanmar drafted in 2019

Development of Agroforestry Models for Promotion of Reforestation in the Different Zones in Timor-Leste (AFoCO/018/2020)

▶ Duration	2021 - 2024
▶ Budget	USD 605,580
▶ Project Site	Timor-Leste

Goal & Objectives

The project aims to establish field-tested agroforestry systems/models in different agro-ecological zones, which are effective in reforestation and livelihood improvement, and build the institutional capacity to promote reforestation by demonstrating and scaling up agroforestry systems/models in combination with community-based natural resource management (CB-NRM) approaches.

- Develop institutional capacities
- Promote the CB-NRM mechanism
- Coordinate and collaborate with the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries (MAF) DPs
- Strengthen linkages through knowledge sharing at the regional level

Expected Outputs

- Promote reforestation throughout the country by developing and disseminating agroforestry-based reforestation models suitable for introduction in different natural conditions in typical agro-ecological zones in the country and effective in satisfying the needs of local communities
- Strengthen institutional capacity of the MAF's Directorate General for Forestry, Coffee and Industrial Tree Plantations (DGFCIP) and relevant offices to promote reforestation and sustainable forest management in collaboration with MAF DPs, non-governmental organizations, and local communities
- Build and strengthen linkages with relevant stakeholders in the country as well as the region (especially with AFoCO member countries) for knowledge sharing and scaling-up of agroforestry-based reforestation models

Assessment of Adelgid diversity and Distribution in Conifer Forest of Bhutan to Mitigate Future Outbreaks (AFoCO/019/2020)

- ▶ **Duration** 2020 - 2022
 - ▶ **Budget** USD 60,796
 - ▶ **Project Site** Bhutan
-

Goal & Objectives

The project aims to create awareness on forest health issues and renewed interest among forestry professionals and forest-dwelling communities in the study of some of the enigmatic forest insects that have the potential to develop into pests due to changing climate and declining forest health.

- Determine the species of adelgids found in Bhutan
- Survey and assess the distribution of adelgids in the conifer forests of Bhutan
- Develop management strategies for controlling the spread of adelgids in the conifer forests of Bhutan
- Train forestry professionals and local communities in the identification, survey, and control of the insect
- Monitor the spread of the insect

Expected Outputs

- Confirm species of adelgids in Bhutan will through DNA analysis
- Carry out adelgid diversity and distribution surveys conifer forests
- Incorporate forest pest and disease outbreak reporting and monitoring incorporated into the Spatial Monitoring and Reporting Tools
- Scientific paper on adelgid diversity and distribution in Bhutan to be published
- Train forestry professionals and community forestry members on surveying, monitoring, and management of the pest

Investigation of the Resistance of Black Saxaul (*Haloxylon aphyllum*) Forms to Gall-forming Insects (AFoCO/020/2020)

-
- ▶ **Duration** 2020 - 2022
 - ▶ **Budget** USD 32,684
 - ▶ **Project Site** Kazakhstan
-

Goal & Objectives

The project aims to study the resistance of specified black saxaul plants among the species damaged by gall-forming insects. With the advent of modern equipment and new teaching methods, it became possible to study plant resistance to damage by pests at a high level. These studies will help to reveal the concept of the specificity of saxaul resistance.

- Analyze pest foci and clarify the species composition of gall-forming pests in the foci of saxaul, and the allocation within the population of individual saxaul plants not damaged by pests in the lesion
- Carry out laboratory tests for biochemical composition in plants and their genetic structure, as well as the study of anatomical and morphological features of plants not damaged by pests
- Collect plant materials from resistant plants within the species for further study of the heritability of this characteristic

Expected Outputs

- Undertake an analysis of the pest foci and clarification of the species composition of gall-forming pests in the foci of saxaul and its allocation within the population of individual plants of saxaul not damaged by pests in the lesion.
- Carry out laboratory tests for biochemical composition in plants and their genetic structure, as well as the study of anatomical and morphological features of plants not damaged by pests
- Collect plant materials from resistant plants within the species for the possibility of further study of the heritability of this property

LIST OF AFoCO PROJECTS

PROJECT CODE	TITLE	PROJECT DURATION	IMPLEMENTING COUNTRIES
AFoCO/001/2013	Reclamation, Rehabilitation & Restoration of Degraded Forest Ecosystems (RRR-DFE) in Mekong Basin Countries	2013-2015	KH, LA, MM, TH, VN
AFoCO/002/2013	Capacity Building on Improving Forest Resources Assessment and Enhancing the Involvement of the Local Communities to Address the Impact of Climate Change	2013-2016	BN, KH, ID, LA, MM, PH, TH, VN
AFoCO/003/2014	Promotion of Forest Rehabilitation in Cambodia & Viet Nam through Demonstration Models & Improvement of Seed Supply System	2015-2019	KH, VN
AFoCO/004/2014	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	2015-2020	PH, ID, TH
AFoCO/005/2014	(Landmark Program) Establishment of Forest Genetics Research Center for Restoration of Major Timber Species in Cambodia	2016-2025	KH
AFoCO/006/2014	(Landmark Program) Rehabilitation and Development of Mangrove Forest Ecosystem in Thai Binh Province, Viet Nam	2016-2023	VN
AFoCO/007/2014	(Landmark Program) Establishment of Regional Education and Training Center in Myanmar	2014-2023	MM
AFoCO/008/2014	(Landmark Program) Village-based Forest Rehabilitation in Lao PDR	2016-2025	LA
AFoCO/009/2015	Developing High Valuable Species in Viet Nam & Thailand as a Mechanism for Sustainable Forest Management & Livelihood Improvement for Local Communities	2016-2019	VN, TH
AFoCO/010/2016	Domestication of Endangered, Endemic and Threatened Plant Species in Disturbed Terrestrial Ecosystems in Malaysia and Thailand	2016-2022	MY, TH
AFoCO/011/2016	Capacity Building for Landscape Approach to Support the Sustainable Natural Resources Management in Brunei, Indonesia, Philippines, and Singapore	2016-2019	BN, ID, PH, SG
AFoCO/012/2019	The Registration of Small-scale Private Forest Plantations in Cambodia	2020-2021	KH
AFoCO/013/2020	Improving <i>Pinus caribaea</i> Morelet for Plantation on Degraded Land in Viet Nam's Northern Mountainous Region	2020-2023	VN
AFoCO/014/2020	Integrated Pest and Disease Management in Teak Plantations in Bago Region, Myanmar	2020-2025	MM

PROJECT CODE	TITLE	PROJECT DURATION	IMPLEMENTING COUNTRIES
AFoCO/015/2020	Model Forest for Livelihood Improvement of Forest Dependent Communities through Development of Community-based Enterprise and Forest Conservation	2020-2023	MM
AFoCO/016/2021	Promotion of Vertical Integration in Wood Processing through People's Organizations in Community Based Forest Management Areas in the Philippines	2021-2026	PH
AFoCO/017/2020	Sustainable Community-based Enterprise Development for Improved Rural Livelihood in Bhutan	2020-2025	BT
AFoCO/018/2020	Development of Agroforestry Models for Promotion of Reforestation in the Different Zones in Timor-Leste	2021-2024	TL
AFoCO/019/2020	(AFoCO-NIFoS Project) Assessment of Adelgid Diversity and Distribution in Conifer Forest of Bhutan to Mitigate Future Outbreaks	2020-2022	BT
AFoCO/020/2020	(AFoCO-NIFoS Project) Investigation of the resistance of black saxaul (<i>Haloxylon aphyllum</i>) forms to gall-forming insects in Kazakhstan	2020-2022	KZ
AFoCO/021/2021	(AFoCO-NIFoS Project) Performance of Cluster Method in Rehabilitating Degraded Lands in Cambodia	2021-2023	KH
AFoCO/022/2021	(AFoCO-NIFoS Project) Research on Forest Enrichment using High Valuable Native Species in Hoa Binh Province, Viet Nam	2021-2023	VN
AFoCO/023/2021	Innovative Solution for Climate Change and Biodiversity Landscape Strategy to Support SDGs in Indonesia	2021-2024	ID
AFoCO/024/2021	Conservation and Development of Forest Ecosystems Biodiversity Resources at Cat Tien National Park	2021-2025	VN
AFoCO/025/2021	Integrated Village-driven Forest Rehabilitation and Livelihood Improvement in Viengthong District, Bolikhamxay province, Lao PDR	2021-2026	LA
AFoCO/026/2021	Re-greening the Bare Lands in Timor-Leste through Promotion of Locally Customized Restoration Models	2021-2024	TL
NEW	Capacity Building on Enhancing Resilience to Forest Fire and Local Livelihood in CLMV Countries	5 years	KH, LA, MM, VN

Note: BT - Bhutan, BN - Brunei Darussalam, KH - Cambodia, ID - Indonesia, KZ - Kazakhstan, LA - Lao PDR, MY - Malaysia, MN - Mongolia, MM - Myanmar, PH - Philippines, SG - Singapore, TH - Thailand, TL - Timor-Leste, VN - Viet Nam



IV

FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

The financial highlights are based on the Annual Financial Report prepared for the fiscal year of 2020 started on 1 January 2020 and ended on 31 December 2020 in accordance with paragraph 7.5 of the Financial Regulations.

Administrative Account for operating cost was managed based on the annual budget plan approved by the Third Session of the AFoCO Assembly (Decision 33-III-9R), which amounts to USD 4,469,538. The revenue secured for the operating cost in FY2020 amounted to 95.2% (USD 4,256,357) of the planned budget approved by the Assembly. Around 98.5% of the mandatory contribution from the Parties to the operating cost assessed by the Assembly for FY2020 was paid in the form of cash (99.2%) and in-kind (0.8%) contribution. This accounts for 90.3% of the total revenue actually secured for the operating cost in FY2020. Around 9.7% of the total revenue in FY2020 was secured through voluntary contributions from the Parties and other donors including private sector entities as follows: UN Food and Agriculture Organization, UN Environment Program, National Institute of Forest Science, Korea National Arboretum, Korea Forest Welfare Institute, Uiwang City, Keunchang Co., Ltd., and Ubee Trading Corporation.

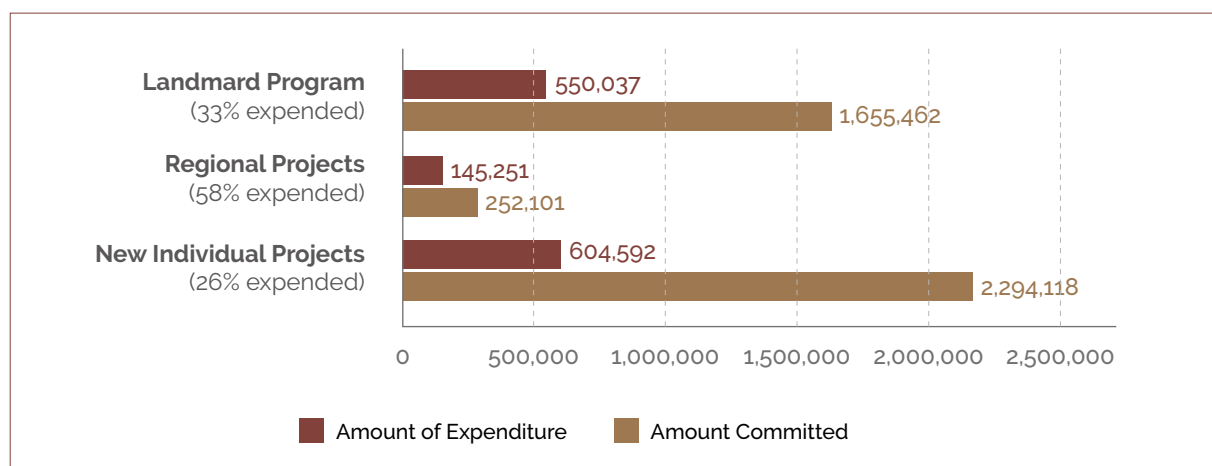
The total expenditure for the operating cost in FY 2020 was around USD 3,188,030. The budget execution rate for the operating cost was relatively low (74.9%) as compared to previous years due to the COVID-19 restrictions on organizational interventions.

Status of the Administrative Account for Operational Expenditures

Description	Actual Amount (USD)
Revenue	
Mandatory Contributions	3,845,523.66
Voluntary Contributions & Other Sources	410,823.40
Other Incomes	9.45
Total Annual Revenue (A)	4,256,356.51
Expenditure	
A. Salaries and Benefits	1,193,258.29
B. Official Travel	46,856.52
C. Special Activity	54,932.00
D. General Operating Expenses	1,410,181.82
E. Hospitality	25,964.71
F. Asset Acquisition	222,845.88
G. Provisions and Contingencies	0.00
H. Others	233,991.02
Total Annual Expenditure (B)	3,188,030.24
Net Total (A-B)	1,068,326.27

The total amount of voluntary contributions received to the Special Accounts for financing cooperative activities (Programs and Projects) in FY2020 amounted to USD 4,201,681, which was committed by the Korea Forest Service for ongoing Landmark Program (USD 17,463,887) activities, regional projects (USD 252,101), and the eight (8) new projects (USD 2,294,118).

Status of the Special Accounts for Cooperative Activities (Programs & Projects)



Programs and Projects	Committed Amount	Executed Amount
Landmark Program	1,655,462	550,037
Regional Projects	Cambodia and Vietnam (R003)	84,034
	Malaysia and Thailand (R010)	168,067
New Individual Projects	Cambodia (NP012)	132,648
	Vietnam (NP013)	152,721
	Myanmar (NP014)	386,660
	Myanmar (NP015)	373,500
	Philippines (NP016)	361,353
	Bhutan (NP017)	45,500
	Timor-Leste (NP018)	102,000
	CLMV (PP-2019-MC-008)	739,736

The total amount of expenditures for cooperative activities from the Special Accounts in FY2020 was USD 1,299,880 (31% of total amount committed in FY2020), composed of USD 550,037 for the Landmark Program, USD 145,251 for two (2) on-going regional projects, and USD 604,592 for eight (8) new projects approved by the Assembly since 2018. The relatively low rate of fund execution under the Special Accounts in FY2020 is mainly attributable to the delay of inception arrangements for newly approved projects and restrictions in field verification activities for ongoing projects which are difficult to replace with virtual meetings amid the ensuing COVID-19 pandemic.

The Secretariat analyzed the impacts and challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic on project implementation and inception arrangement through a series of project management meetings, and developed the "General Guidelines on COVID-19 Coping-up Measures" to devise catch-up plans and alternative activities in 2021 to achieve project goals.

V

PARTNERSHIP & COMMUNICATION

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78 PUBLICATIONS

RESPONSIBLE MINISTRIES IN MEMBER COUNTRIES

AFoCO works closely with the responsible ministries in our member countries to carry out programs and projects in line with our strategic priorities in the areas of restoration and reforestation, climate change adaptation, management of forest-related disasters, local livelihood improvement, and strengthening institutional capabilities.

PARTIES

Bhutan

Department of Forests and Park Services, Ministry of Agriculture and Forests



Brunei Darussalam

Forestry Department, Ministry of Primary Resources and Tourism



Cambodia

Forestry Administration, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries



Indonesia

Agency for Standardization of Environment and Forestry Instruments, Ministry of Environment and Forestry



Kazakhstan

Forestry and Wildlife Committee, Ministry of Ecology, Geology and Natural Resources



Lao PDR

Department of Forestry, Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry



Mongolia

Ministry of Environment and Tourism



Myanmar

Forest Department, Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation



Philippines

Forest Management Bureau, Department of Environment and Natural Resources



Republic of Korea

Korea Forest Service



Thailand

Royal Forest Department, Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment



Timor-Leste

Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries



Viet Nam

Viet Nam Administration of Forestry, Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development



OBSERVERS

Malaysia

Ministry of Energy and Natural Resource



Singapore

National Parks Board, Ministry of National Development



STRATEGIC PARTNERS

AFoCO believes in inclusive engagement to ensure sustained multilateral cooperation and the delivery of positive impacts through our projects and initiatives. AFoCO has forged long-term partnerships with international organizations, research institutions and universities through partnership agreements as well as engagement in fora, dialogues, and meetings. In the coming years, we will continue to seek opportunities for collaboration and resource mobilization to expand our portfolio of programs and projects and contribute towards achieving both regional and global forestry objectives.

PARTNERS



United Nations
Convention to Combat
Desertification



GOODWILL AMBASSADOR



CAMERATA SALZBURG is a chamber orchestra
based in Salzburg, Austria

PUBLICATIONS



AFoCO and AFoCO RETC Brochures

Brochures providing an overview of AFoCO and the AFoCO RETC



AFoCO Portfolio

One-page leaflet featuring AFoCO's project fund distribution and key capacity building programs



AFoCO Membership Procedures

One-page leaflet with details on how to become a member of AFoCO



Building a Green & Sustainable Future Together

This brochure provides brief information on AFoCO's flagship programs to seek support for its inclusion in the ODA List of ODA-eligible international organizations.



AFoCO Annual Report 2019

The Annual Report 2019 highlights events, projects, and activities carried out in 2019



AFoCO – A Photo Journal (Jan 2019 to Dec 2020)

A photo book covering selected highlights and events of AFoCO from 2019 through 2020.



Asian Forest Cooperation Organization

8F, 9 Gukhoe-daero 62-gil, Yeongdeungpo-gu
Seoul, Republic of Korea 07236
+82-2-785-8971 (O) / +82-2-785-8970 (F)
contact@afocosec.org / www.afocosec.org