

Sixth Session of the Assembly
29-30 March 2022, Virtual

Agenda Item 7

Promotion and Enhancement of Partnership through Partner Countries and Partner Organizations

Background

1. Consistent with the Decision of the Assembly of the Asian Forest Cooperation Organization (AFoCO) during the Fifth Session (Decision 41-V-21), the Assembly considered the advantages and opportunities of building a strategic partnership working consistently with the relevant initiatives.
2. Recalling the objectives set out in Paragraph 2(e) of Article 3 of the ‘Agreement on the Establishment of the Asian Forest Cooperation Organization’ (hereinafter ‘the Agreement’), the organization is mandated to promote partnerships between the Parties and with other entities to carry out cooperative activities by building upon the current initiatives of other forest-related international agreements and organizations.
3. The Assembly recognizes that participation of countries and entities beyond Parties and Observers of AFoCO complement the organization’s action by access to new knowledge, expertise, financing and broad reach – resources that are critical to advancing organization’s work.
4. Based on Decision 41-V-21R, Promotion and Enhancement of Partnership, the Secretariat prepared a draft of a new category of participation and engagement for AFoCO including preparation of relevant rules of procedure.

Purpose and Principles of Partnership

5. The partnership is a voluntary and collaborative relations between AFoCO and partner countries or partner organizations in which partners agree to work together to achieve a common purpose, to contribute financial and/or knowledge resources, and to share benefits. It will directly or indirectly support the activities of AFoCO and help the organization to advance its mandate by building a strategic partnership, tapping the knowledge and expertise for capacity building, and leveraging other resources.

Category of partnership

7. The term **Partner** is a category for engagement to AFoCO which gives the organization wider windows and opportunities of cooperative network and resources. A Partner is a country or an organization that collaborates with AFoCO in terms of projects and programs.
8. There are two types of partners:
 - a. Partner Country is the government of a country which is outside the Asian region, but has the intention of collaborate with AFoCO.
 - b. Partner Organization is an organization, either public or private, irrespective of its geographical location, working in relevant sectors with the intention of collaborate with AFoCO.

Eligibility

9. Partners are willing to support the vision and mission of AFoCO, support AFoCO's policies and activities, and contribute to AFoCO's programs and projects.

Roles of Partners

10. The Partners may:
 - a. Provide and share their knowledge and experience for achieving the AFoCO's vision and mission for mutual benefits.
 - b. Provide voluntary contribution, exchange of human resources, and sharing best practices and tools for projects and programs.
 - c. Propose activities for fulfilling the AFoCO's objectives.
11. Partners may participate in AFoCO's meetings and activities by the invitation. Partners may participate in decision-making procedures for programs or projects that the Partner supports or to support.

Benefits for the Partners

12. Partners may have interests and concerns on global partnership on forest and climate change through or with AFoCO as follows:
 - a. Partners can have the leverage to mobilize resources with governments and international organizations
 - b. Partners can expand and positively influence on AFoCO's policies and make impacts on the issues of the forest and forestry sector, biodiversity, and climate change in Asia
 - c. Partners can participate in AFoCO's meetings and activities by invitation
 - d. Partners may send experts to work in the AFoCO programs or projects they are supporting for.

Procedures to become the Partner

13. The proponent Partner shall take any of the following procedures:
 - a. The proponent Partner shall express their intention to become a Partner to AFoCO by sending a Letter of Intention (LOI) to the Secretariat, or any Party to AFoCO may propose to the Secretariat to invite the country or the organization as a Partner Country or a Partner Organization in writing.
 - b. Upon the receipt of the LOI or proposal, the Secretariat will review and seek the consent of the Assembly.
 - c. The Assembly shall consider the LOI or the proposal based on the Secretariat's recommendation and grant the Partner status.

Rules of Procedures for Partners

14. The Rules of Procedures for Partners Countries and Partner Organizations of the Asian Forest Cooperation Organization appears in **Annex-1**.

Points for consideration

15. The Assembly may wish to:
 - Recall Decision 41-V-21R Promotion and Enhancement of Partnership and further endorse the engagement and participation of Partner Country and Partner Organization; and
 - endorse the Rules of Procedure for Partners, accordingly.
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Annex-1.

Rules of Procedures for Partners Countries and Partner Organizations of the Asian Forest Cooperation Organization

RULE 1. PURPOSE AND PRINCIPLES OF PARTNERSHIP

1.1. Recalling the objectives set out in Paragraph 2(e) of Article 3 of the 'Agreement on the Establishment of the Asian Forest Cooperation Organization' (hereinafter 'the Agreement'), the organization is mandated to promote partnerships between the Parties and with other entities to carry out cooperative activities by building upon the current initiatives of other forest-related international agreements and organizations.

1.2 Consistent with the Decision of the Assembly of the Asian Forest Cooperation Organization (AFoCO) during the Fifth Session (Decision 41-V-21), the Assembly considered the advantages and opportunities of building a strategic partnership working consistently with the relevant initiatives.

1.3 The Assembly recognizes that participation of countries and entities beyond Parties and Observers of AFoCO complement the organization's action by access to new knowledge, expertise, financing and broad reach – resources that are critical to advancing organization's work.

1.4 The partnership is a voluntary and collaborative relations between AFoCO and partner countries or partner organizations in which partners agree to work together to achieve a common purpose, to contribute financial and/or knowledge resources, and to share benefits. It will directly or indirectly support the activities of AFoCO and help the organization to advance its mandate by building a strategic partnership, tapping the knowledge and expertise for capacity building, and leveraging other resources.

RULE 2. DEFINITION AND CATEGORIES OF PARTNER

2.1 **Partner** is a category of engagement and participation to AFoCO for countries or an organizations that collaborates with AFoCO in terms of projects and programs.

2.2 '**Partner Country**' is the government of a country which is outside the Asian region, but has the intention of collaborate with AFoCO.

2.3 '**Partner Organization**' is an organization, either public or private, irrespective of its geographical location, working in relevant sectors with the intention of collaborate with AFoCO.

RULE 3. ROLES OF PARTNERS

3.1 The Partners are willing to support the vision and mission of AFoCO, AFoCO's policies and activities, and contribute to AFoCO's programs and projects.

3.2 The Partners may provide and share their knowledge and experience for achieving the AFoCO's vision and mission for mutual benefits

3.3 Partners may provide voluntary contribution, exchange of human resources, and sharing best practices and tools for projects and programs.

3.4 Partners also may propose activities for fulfilling the AFoCO's objectives.

3.5 Partners may participate in AFoCO's meetings and activities by the invitation.

RULE 4. REPRESENTATION OF PARTNERS

The Partner shall notify the Secretariat the appointed focal official and its contact information. In the event that the appointed focal official is changed, the Partner shall immediately notify the Secretariat in writing the newly appointed focal official with its contact information.

RULE 5. PROCEDURES TO BECOME THE PARTNER

5.1 To become a Partner to AFoCO,

5.1.1 any proponent country or organization, as provided in Rule 2, shall communicate its intention to become a Partner by sending a Letter of Intention to the Secretariat; or

5.1.2 any Party to AFoCO shall propose, in writing to the Secretariat, to invite a country or an organization as a Partner.

5.2 The Letter of Intention or the proposal from the Party shall explicitly indicate the following:

5.2.1 official Name of the Country or Organization or Entity;

5.2.2 name and position of the focal official of the prospective Partner;

5.2.3 information on the potential mutual benefits of the Partner and AFoCO; and

5.2.4 its commitment to comply with relevant policies and the Rules of Procedures of AFoCO.

5.3 The Secretariat will review and submit its recommendation to the Assembly for consideration.

5.4 The Assembly shall consider the Letter of Intention or the proposal to invite with the Secretariat's recommendation, and grant Partner status.

RULE 6. TENURE OF PARTNER

6.1 While the Partners does not need to repeat this process once admitted, it has to notify its participation in relevant meetings, when invited, according to Rule 7.

6.2 The Partner status approved by the Assembly shall commence immediately upon approval.

6.3 The Assembly shall review, on a regular basis, the activities of the Partners. Either the Assembly or Partners, in writing, may withdraw or waive the Partner status granted.

6.4 The Executive Director shall inform the President of Assembly of any communication from the Partners.

RULE 7. PARTNERS' PARTICIPATION IN AFOCO

7.1 The Executive Director may notify those entitled to be Partner or those under consideration as Partner status of the date and place of relevant meetings, including Assembly sessions and its provisional agenda through a formal notification.

7.2 The Partner shall submit the composition of their delegation in written form to the Secretariat at least seven (7) calendar days in advance of the relevant meetings which the Partner delegation is invited to and intending to attend.

7.3 A Partner may, upon the invitation of the President, attend the session of the Assembly. The delegate of the Partner may speak only on the subject at hand, subject to approval of the President and if there is no objection made by a Party.

7.4 A Partner may consistently attend meetings; and solicit, collect and communicate information from AFoCO on matters that the Assembly is considering which the Partner is directly engaged in.

7.5 A Partner may collect and disseminate information from AFoCO, which the Partner is not directly engaged in, provided that the Partner is given written consent from the President of the Assembly.

7.6 Partners may participate in decision-making procedures only for the programs or projects that the Partners support or will support.

7.7 Partners may send experts to work in the AFoCO programs or projects they are supporting for.

RULE 8. AMENDMENT

The provisions of this Rules of Procedures may be amended upon proposal by the Executive Director in consultation with the Partners, the Parties to the Agreement, and subsequent approval by the Assembly.

RULE 9. REPORT AND REVIEW

The Secretariat shall report on the status of the Partners to the Assembly during the regular session of the Assembly.

RULE 10. EFFECTIVE DATE

The Rules of Procedures shall take effect on the date of adoption of the Assembly.