

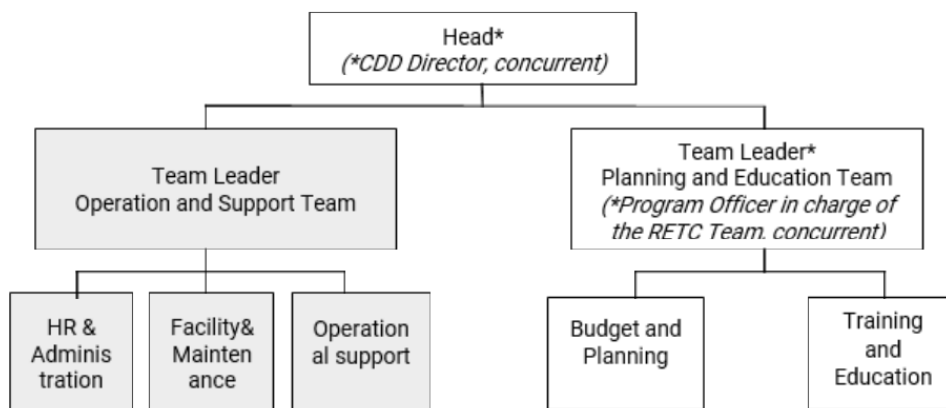
Sixth Session of the Assembly
 29-30 March 2022, Virtual

Agenda Item 8

Update on the Operationalization of the Capacity Development Division

I. Introduction

- Pursuant to the organizational structure of the Secretariat endorsed at the 4th Session of the Assembly (Decision 40-IV-20R), the Secretariat prepared the operationalization plan for the Capacity Development Division (CDD), a division of the Secretariat coordinating the institution's strategies and actions in capacity building in a cross-cutting manner.
- The division consists of two teams, namely Regional Education and Training Center (RETC) Team and Capacity Development Coordination (CDC) Team.
- The division also coordinates the operation and management of the RETC, a subsidiary body of the Secretariat. The Director for CDD is concurrently the Head of the RETC accordingly. The organogram of the RETC is appeared in **Figure-1**:



Note: Boxes colored in gray are the government officials dispatched from the Forest Department (FD) of Myanmar and the local workers hired by FD.

Figure-1. Organogram of the RETC

II. Main Activities of Capacity Development Division and Annual Plan for 2022

4. Regional Education and Training Center (RETC) Team

4.1 The RETC Team deals with issues and activities run by the RETC, including (1) regular short-/long-term training, (2) in-country community development training, (3) customized training with partners, (4) thematic workshops and conferences, (5) maintenance and operation of the RETC, (6) management of the experimental forest at RETC, (7) establishment of the RETC online campus including e-learning courses development, and (8) other partnerships and matters related to RETC arising in Myanmar (e.g., support to the Secretariat on the Host Country Agreement). The Team outreaches and operates in the name of the AFoCO Regional Education and Training Center.

4.2 Below is the progress update on the RETC's activities in 2022:

- Regular short-/long-term training:
 - The RETC will organize the training virtually in principle in 2022.
 - The RETC is exploring alternative venues to organize in-person training in the member countries, followed by requests at the 5th Session of the Assembly.
 - The RETC will operate the in-house capacity-building programs for the RETC staff to maximize the capacities of the center's staff as well as the post-COVID preparation.
- Customized Training with Partners: The RETC will conduct three types of joint capacity-building activities with FAO, ITTO, and IUCN, as reported at the 5th Session of the Assembly.
- In-country Community Development Training: The RETC has increased the number of participating countries from three to five, following recommendations at the 5th Session of the Assembly.
- RETC Experimental Forest Development: The design for the experimental forest will be developed by Korea Arboreta and Gardens Institute (KoAGI). The design will be enhanced by the survey amongst the member countries and by regional and international partners. The KOAGI will organize an international symposium on this subject at the XV WFC in May 2022.
- RETC Maintenance and Operation: The RETC is not open to the public yet for the COVID-19 situation in the host country. However, the RETC organizes in-person capacity-building activities targeting the local communities and students as approved by the Assembly.
- RETC Online Campus: As a pilot activity prior to the establishment of the campus, the RETC is developing e-learning modules under the program entitled "AFoCOxSNU Forestry 101." In cooperation with Seoul National University (SNU), the modules aim to introduce the conceptual background and scientific theories in successful governance in the forest and forestry sector of the Republic of Korea. Upon the budget

availability, the RETC will further explore potential partners to develop additional e-modules.

5. Capacity Development Coordination (CDC) Team

5.1 The CDC Team deals with capacity building issues and activities at the Secretariat, including (1) Capacity Building Roadmap 2030, (2) Science and Technology Exchange Partnerships (STEP) Program, (3) NIFoS Research Project, (4) Scholarship Program, (5) Fellowship Program, (6) Internship Program, (8) training and capacity building activities hosted by the Secretariat, and (9) other partnerships and matters arising in the Host Country of the Secretariat.

5.2 Currently, the Program Officer in charge of the CDC Team is vacant, and the Team's activities are under coordination by the RETC Team of the Capacity Development Division. Below is the progress update on the activities by the CDC Team in 2022:

- Capacity Building Roadmap 2030: The roadmap will be developed and imparted in the Organization's Strategic Plan 2024-2030. As of March 2022, the Secretariat is preparing the focus group meetings based on the results from the need assessment and baseline analysis.
- STEP Program: The program explores the expansion of topics with potential partnering institutes in addition to the Baekdudaegan National Arboretum (BDNA), including Forest Aviation Headquarters of KFS, Graduate School of International Agricultural Technology of Seoul National University, and Korea National Arboretum, and National Institute of Forest Science (NIFoS) of KFS.
- NIFoS Research Projects: The Secretariat will actively follow up the "Asia Forest Forum," the Pre-Congress event of the XV WFC organized by AFoCO, which is expected to lead to the development of the research network in the long run.
- Fellowship Program: A new type of fellowship program is proposed by the Secretariat to enhance the in-house capacity of the Secretariat (see paragraph III in the document).
- Internship Program: The Internship Guidelines have been developed by the Secretariat (**Annex-1**). The Secretariat will further consider a global secondment program sponsored by the member countries and other partnered organizations in the long run.

5.3 With reference to observations in due course of the capacity building roadmap 2030, it is viewed that there is a global call to the inter-governmental organizations to bridge science-based policy development and governance enhancement. In this context, it would be a valued consideration for AFoCO to install a Research and Development Center as part of the long-term capacity building of the organization with key players in research and development in the member countries. It is expected to provide qualified opportunities for training and education to the member countries as well.

III. A Proposal for the Expanded Fellowship Program

6. The Secretariat has been endeavored to make its critical position to deliver the member countries' voice to the global discourses and declarations such as UNFCCC, UNCBD, UNCCD, and UNFF, with the collective professional knowledge from the member countries.

7. To engage the professional expertise that can be infused by the member countries, the Secretariat can accommodate diverse demands and needs of the member countries and strategize goals and missions of the Organization, including resource mobilization that will facilitate the Organization's better communications with the global society.

8. The Secretariat views that the fellowship program may positively affect the Secretariat's functionality, wherein the expanded scope and size may be necessarily considered in the near future. On the basis of lessons learned from the existing program, the Expanded Fellowship Program has the following features:

8.1 The maximum number of positions for fellowship officials will be increased up to ten a year on the basis of budget availability and demand from the concerned teams of the Secretariat.

8.2 The duration of a term can be from one to two years upon the internal assessment by the Secretariat and mutual consent between the sending Party and the Secretariat.

8.3 The scope of expertise and experience for candidates are expanded to include capacity building, planning, geographical information system, project development and management, and monitoring in the areas of forest resources management, biodiversity conservation, and climate change mitigation and adaptation, including REDD+ inter alia.

8.4 The candidates' expertise and professional background will be continuously tapped by AFoCO as the extended workforce. They may come from the Bureau or other offices within the Department or Ministry, and upon return to their home country they are expected to prioritize the handling of AFoCO projects and activities.

8.5 Fellowship Officials will be categorized into two groups: Category-I and Category-II. The scope of Category-I and Category-II is defined as the level of professionalism and expertise of her/him dedicated to the area of work, in accordance with the assessment criteria of the Secretariat.

9. The proposed guidelines on the Expanded Fellowship Program are in **Annex-2**.

IV. Points for consideration

10. The Assembly may wish to:

- take note of the information, and;
- endorse the proposed Expanded Fellowship Program.

Guidelines on Internship Program

I. Introduction

1. AFoCO Internship Program is a program for talented people who are interested in sharing their new insights, innovative ideas, and latest research experience with AFoCO, for a period of one (1) to six (6) months.
2. An Internship at AFoCO is a great opportunity to gain hands-on work experience while contributing to the vision and missions of AFoCO towards a greener Asia. During the period of the Internship Program, Interns are trained and experienced as International civil servants.

II. Objectives of the Guidelines

3. These guidelines embody the terms and conditions of the program and the roles and responsibilities of Interns who participate in the AFoCO Internship Program, including Interns sponsored by other entities.

III. Status of Internship Program

4. AFoCO Internship Program is operated on an unpaid and full-time basis. Interns shall cover all costs associated with their Internship, including visas, travel to and from the duty station, insurance, transportation, accommodation, and living costs. Interns shall not be any employment status during the Internship period. The duration shall not be extended.
5. AFoCO Internship Program welcomes sponsored Interns. Academia, institute, or other types of organizations should conclude a Letter of Agreement with AFoCO before sending their sponsoring Interns.
6. AFoCO Internship Program receives Interns who meet the criteria of the Terms of Reference (TOR) developed by the Program Officer, who will supervise the Interns during the Internship period as a supervising officer.

IV. Eligibility Criteria

7. An applicant shall dedicate her/himself to participating in the Internship on a full-time basis during the Internship period.
8. An applicant should be able to adapt to an international multicultural environment, have good oral and written communication skills in English, and be knowledgeable in the use of basic computer programs.
9. An applicant who is majored in forestry, environment, biodiversity conservation, agriculture, social science, political science, laws, International relations, development studies, accounting, communications, human resources management, information technology, social media, or graphic design will be an asset.
10. An applicant should be enrolled in or graduated from an undergraduate or graduate degree program. There is no age limit. The nationality of an applicant is prioritized in the member

countries of AFoCO unless the TOR specifies otherwise.

11. An applicant who is a first-degree relative (i.e., parent, sibling, or child) or spouse of the current staff of AFoCO is not eligible for the Internship Program.

12. An applicant should hold appropriate VISA and immigration status prior to the start of the Internship in case the duty station is not the country of the applicant's nationality.

13. An applicant must hold valid medical insurance coverage for her/his stay in the duty station in their own capacity.

14. An applicant must be responsible for their own accommodations during the Internship period.

V. Application Procedures

15. The application will be announced on the website of AFoCO. Based on the following activities, the TOR will be specified by the prospective supervising officer:

- Promoting and advocating implementation and accomplishments of program activities;
- Coordinating the AFoCO publicity activities of the Organization; and,
- Undertaking other duties as may be assigned by the supervising officer.

16. Interested applicants should apply online, with enclosure of documents stipulated in the call: personal statement, curriculum vitae, and degree certificate inter alia to the Secretariat by the given deadline for application. Applicants should submit the valid information of VISA and immigration status, in case the duty station is not the country of an applicant's nationality. Other requirements may be requested additionally to the applicant after the selection.

17. The Secretariat will conduct an interview in person or by teleconference in English.

18. The Secretariat will inform the applicants of the final list of Interns. In case of cancellation/refusal of offer, selected applicants must notify whether they will accept the Internship or not no later than one week following receipt of the written offer.

VII. Status and Responsibilities for Interns

19. All Interns are working at the Secretariat based in Seoul, Republic of Korea, unless the Terms of Reference (TOR) specify otherwise (e.g., Regional Education Training Center in Myanmar, other project offices in the member countries).

20. Acceptance as Interns is a formal commitment to perform their duties and regulate their conduct solely in accordance with the interests of AFoCO, except for administrative instructions from sponsoring institutions.

21. Interns are not considered the staff personnel or Officials of AFoCO, under no circumstances, privileges, and immunities extended by the host country.

22. Interns should submit a final report on achievements delivered throughout the program before the completion of the Internship period, in supervision with the supervising officer. The supervising officer manages the Intern's time and attendance and encourages to produce the outputs and deliverables during the period.

23. In case of resignation in the middle of the period, the Intern shall notify her/his supervising officer no later than two weeks in advance.

24. The Secretariat reserves the right to terminate the Internship if the Intern's performance is unsatisfactory or the Intern has failed to comply with the terms of her/his agreement.

25. Upon the completion of the program, Interns shall be provided the Internship Certificate.

VI. Financial Support and Benefits

26. Interns shall not receive any salary or stipend directly from AFoCO. The sponsoring institutions may directly provide stipends or allowance for sponsored Interns if any.

27. An Intern shall be entitled to 1 day of leave per 20 working days (Monday to Friday a week except for official holidays). Upon the duration of the whole working day, the Intern can apply for consecutive leave.

28. When an Intern is required to take official travels as part of their duties, any transportation, meals, and accommodation associated with such travels will be borne by the Secretariat unless covered by sponsoring institutions.

VII. COVID-19 Instructions

29. Prior to the lapse of the Internship period, Interns are required to satisfy the conditions of the up-to-date COVID-19 regulations of the duty station.

VIII. Final Provisions

30. The Secretariat ensures that infrastructure is in place to support the Interns, such as sufficient workspace, subject to the nature of the TOR.

31. All other matters not provided in the Guidelines may be set by written provisions mutually agreed upon unless there is a specific instruction from the sponsoring institutions.

32. These Guidelines shall be supplemented or amended upon proposal by the Secretariat.

Guidelines on Expanded Fellowship Program

(Working Document)

I. Introduction

1. The AFoCO Fellowship Program is a program for government officials of AFoCO Member Parties dispatched to the AFoCO Secretariat to experience the working environment and processes of the international entity, as well as to maximize the in-house capacity of the Secretariat.
2. The program is expected to:
 - Provide an effective position to the Secretariat to deliver the member countries' voice to the global discourses and declarations such as UNFCCC, UNCBD, UNCCD, and UNFF, with the collective professional knowledge from the region.
 - Accommodate diverse demands and needs of the Member Countries and strategize goals and missions of the organization, including resource mobilization.
 - Strategize the organization's vision and missions working as the Secretariat's Professional Staff;
 - Infuse professional expertise and experience of the region and country in sustainable forest management, biodiversity conservation, and climate change, including nature-based solutions;
 - Build an effective communication network among the Parties and the Secretariat;
 - Expand the cooperation with the Parties better understanding of the working environment and procedural matters among the Parties and the Secretariat; and
 - Improve the task management of the Secretariat, and share knowledge and experiences in the Asian region.

II. Objectives of the Guidelines

3. These guidelines embody the terms and conditions of service and the duties and obligations of the dispatched government officials for the AFoCO Fellowship Program (hereinafter referred to as "Fellowship Officials").

III. Status of Fellowship Officials

4. During the period of the Fellowship Program, the Fellowship Officials are international civil servants. They shall not seek nor receive instructions from any country or authority external to AFoCO. By accepting appointments as Fellowship Officials, they pledge themselves to discharge their functions and regulate their conduct with the interests of AFoCO only in view.

5. Fellowship Officials will be categorized into Category-I and Category-II. The scope of Category-I and Category-II is defined as the level of qualification and expertise of her/him dedicated to the area of work, in accordance with the assessment criteria of the Secretariat.

6. Fellowship Program is operated on a fixed-term basis. The duration for Category-I is one year, and that for Category-II is two years.

7. The total number of Fellowship Officials working at the Secretariat shall be ten in a maximum per year, on the basis of budget availability and demand of work of the Secretariat. The Executive Director shall examine the expected workloads and funds availability before determining the total number of Fellowship Officials to be accommodated in each term.

IV. Duties and Responsibilities for Fellowship Officials

8. During the working period in the AFoCO Secretariat, the Fellowship Officials shall abide by the Code of Conduct for Staff Members of AFoCO and observe the normal working hours and official holidays established by the Staff Regulations of AFoCO.

9. The Fellowship Officials shall inter alia perform the following activities:

- Coordinating the AFoCO publicity activities in the Parties (Category-I and II);
- Making arrangements for upcoming events with relevant Parties and providing secretarial services (Category-I and II);
- Promoting partnerships and advocacy for implementation and accomplishments of program activities with Member Countries (Category-I and II);
- Performing other secretariat functions as may be required by the Assembly (Category-I and II);
- Coordinate and facilitate given tasks at the level of Professional staff of the Secretariat, considering existing duties and responsibilities of the concerned position (Category-II); and,
- Undertaking other duties as may be assigned by the Executive Director (Category-I and II).

10. The Fellowship Official shall develop and submit their work plan within two weeks after the commencement of duties at the Secretariat. Before completing his/her service, the Fellowship Official shall also submit a final report on his/her services and achievements delivered throughout the program. Accordingly, the Certificate of Completion will be provided.

V. Nomination and Approval Procedures

11. Candidates for the Fellowship Program shall be nominated by the Representative of the respective Parties, following the vacancy notice of the Secretariat.

12. Each Representative of the Party may nominate a maximum of two candidates for each Category of the Fellowship Program guided by the following criteria.

A. General

- a. The candidate should be a permanent government official of the Parties, with age not more than 45 years old;

- b. Candidates should be willing to take care of AFoCO projects as project staff or lead AFoCO-related activities upon returning to their duty station; and,
- c. Candidates should be in good health and willing to travel outside of Headquarters.

B. Category-I

- a. Candidates should have a minimum of five (5) years of work experience in the governmental institutions of the Parties;
- b. Candidates should have an academic background in forestry, environment, or biodiversity conservation. Candidates may come from the Bureau or other Offices within the Department or Ministry;
- c. Candidates with expertise or experience in capacity building, planning, geographical information system, project development, implementation, and monitoring in the areas of forest resources management, biodiversity conservation, or climate change mitigation and adaptation, including REDD+, will be an advantage; and,
- d. Candidates should be computer literate, fluent in spoken and written English.

C. Category-II

- a. Candidates should have a minimum of ten (10) years of work experience in the governmental institutions of the Parties;
- b. Candidates should have an advanced university degree, i.e., a Master's degree or equivalent, in forestry, environment, biodiversity conservation, social science, political science, international relations, development studies, or related discipline. Candidates may come from the Bureau or other Offices within the Department or Ministry;
- c. Candidates with professional expertise or experience in capacity building, planning, geographical information system, project development, management and monitoring in the areas of forest resources management, biodiversity conservation, or climate change mitigation and adaptation will be an advantage;
- d. Knowledge and skills required for a range of issues related to Land Use, Land-Use Change and Forestry (LULUCF) sector under the UNFCCC will be an advantage; and,
- e. Candidates should be computer literate, excellent oral and written communication skills in English. The applicants who have resided and studied at an educational institution in an English-speaking country will be an advantage.

13. Nominated candidates by the Representative should submit their curriculum vitae, personal statement, and medical certificate to the Secretariat by the given deadline for application.

14. The Secretariat will conduct an interview in English via teleconference within two weeks after the application deadline. If the English proficiency of the candidate is deemed unsatisfactory, the Secretariat may request the corresponding Representative to recommend an alternative candidate or decide not to select anyone for the batch.

15. The final list of the candidates for each term will be decided by the Executive Director, considering the results of the interview evaluation and geographic and gender balance among the awardees.

16. The Executive Director shall inform the Representatives of the final list of the candidates and issue an appointment letter to each successful candidate. The Secretariat shall provide the necessary support for the final candidate to take a necessary administrative process for the commencement of duty on time.

VI. Financial Support and Benefits

Salary

17. Salary for the Fellowship Officials shall be paid by the respective entity that sends the Fellowship Officials according to their relevant domestic regulations. The amount of salary to the Fellowship Officials by the sending entity during the period of his/her service at the Secretariat shall be credited as an in-kind contribution from the respective Parties. For that, the Representative shall inform the statement after completing service to the Secretariat in writing.

Allowances

General

18. A Fellowship Official shall be provided with official residences during his/her service at the Secretariat. If an official residence is not available, a housing allowance shall be provided to cover the actual rental costs, with the ceiling rate of KRW 800,000 per month. If a refundable fixed deposit is required for any housing rental arrangement, the deposit cost shall be covered by and returned to the Secretariat in full without any deduction.

Category-I

19. A Fellowship Official shall be entitled to living allowances paid at the gross rate of KRW 1,600,000 per month.

20. Once during her/his service, a Fellowship Official shall be provided with an economy-class round trip air ticket using the most direct route for up to three dependents to the duty station.

Category-II

21. A Fellowship Official shall be entitled to living allowances paid at the gross rate of KRW 2,400,000 per month.

22. Once during her/his service, a Fellowship Official without dependents shall be provided with an economy-class round trip air ticket for up to three dependents using the most direct route to visit the duty station.

23. Once during her/his service, a Fellowship Official without dependents shall be provided with an economy-class round trip air ticket using the most direct route for special leave to the home country.

24. Living allowances will be additionally provided to a Fellowship Official with dependents up to three at the rate of KRW 40,000 per month for a spouse and KRW 50,000 per month for a child.

Annual Leaves

25. A Fellowship Official shall be entitled to fifteen days of annual leave per year. The Secretariat shall not compensate the remaining annual leave at the time of separation from service.

Health Insurance

26. A Fellowship Official with dependents, s/he, and her/his dependents shall be covered by the National Health Insurance applicable under the laws and regulations of the Republic of Korea.

Travel Cost for Mobilization and Demobilization

27. A Fellowship Official in Category-I shall be provided with an economy-class round trip air ticket using the most direct route when he/she is authorized to travel upon appointment and release from the task after completion of the term. Dependents shall not be accompanied.

28. A Fellowship Official in Category-II shall be provided with an economy-class round trip air ticket using the most direct route when he/she is authorized to travel upon appointment and release from the task after completion of the term. When the Fellowship Official has accompanying dependents, those dependents shall also be provided with the same level of round-trip air tickets as the Fellowship Official.

Travel Cost for Official Mission

29. When a Fellowship Official is required to take official travels as part of his duties, any expenses associated with such travels will be borne by the Secretariat through paying travel expenses equivalent to those for Professional staff of the Secretariat undertaking similar travel for official purposes.

VII. Final Provisions

30. All other matters not provided in these Guidelines may be referred to the arrangements set by the Staff Regulations of AFoCO.

31. These Guidelines shall be supplemented or amended upon proposal by the Executive Director and subsequent approval by the Assembly.