

- Mr. Ricardo Calderon, Executive Director of Asian Forest Cooperation Organization (AFoCO)

- Dr. Ho Sang Kang, Executive Director of Asia Forest Institute

Excellency chairs

Colleagues and friends

Ladies and gentlemen,

My name is Vo Dai Hai. I am a president of Vietnamese Academy of Forest Sciences. I would like to take this opportunity to express my appreciations and thanks to organizers for inviting to this important pre-congress event: **Asian Forest Forum: Research, Capacity Development and Good Governance**.

Vietnamese Academy of Forest Sciences is a leading forestry research institute in Vietnam. It covers a range of forestry researches and development, including tree breeding and improvement, forest ecology and silviculture, forest health, forest engineering, non timber forest products, institution and policies etc...

Ladies and gentlemen,

We are currently facing to the biggest environmental challenge – it is climate change. The Paris Agreement aims at:

- Holding the increase in the global average temperature to well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels and pursuing efforts to limit the temperature increase to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels.
- Increasing the ability to adapt to the adverse impacts of climate change and foster climate resilience and low greenhouse gas emissions development.
- Making finance flows consistent with a pathway towards low greenhouse gas emissions and climate-resilient development.

The recent COP26 re-affirms Paris Agreement Targets. In addition, the leaders of 141 countries have made a declaration on forests and land uses which commits to working collectively to halt and reverse forest loss and land degradation by 2030 while delivering sustainable development and promoting an inclusive rural transformation.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Forests provide a range of ecosystem services and play an important role in mitigating emissions and adverse impacts of climate change as well as natural disaster reduction. We have been combatting climate change, especially mitigate emissions from deforestation and forest degradation. However, to achieve the temperature rise target, we need more actions, resources and international collaboration.

Like many countries in Asian, Vietnam is facing challenges in responding to climate change, in particular deforestation free development and sustainable forest management. Vietnam aims to have net zero emissions by 2050 and reduces 30% of methane emissions.

With that, I would like to share my points with regard to forest research cooperation and actions in our Asian countries.

Firstly, you may all agree that the critical forest issues in the region are:

- Deforestation and forest degradation are ongoing that lead to loss and decline of biodiversity and ecosystem services. Deforestation and forest degradation are still a significant emission sources.
- Adverse impacts of climate and limited capacity to adapt to climate change, especially vulnerable communities
- Unsustainable forest management as economic development and poverty.
- Ineffective institutions and lack of financial investment for conserving and managing sustainably forests.

Secondly, how we work together to address the mentioned issues. I think forest research collaboration should provide understanding and scientific evidences for the followings:

- Promotion of sustainable forest management to combat deforestation and forest degradation.
- Restoration of forest landscapes to help enhance climate change mitigation and adaptation.
- Development of forest-based solutions for climate change mitigation and adaptation and for natural disaster reduction.
- Development of incentive policies and institution and promotion of payment for ecosystem services, especially development of carbon market.
- Agriculture deforestation free development.
- Sustainable livelihood development for forest dependent communities.
- Capacity building, cooperation and information sharing among Asian countries, especially the transboundary issues related forest conservation and timber trading.

Thirdly, it is about coordinating regional cooperation. The regional research collaboration is critically needed and we should consider the following:

- Set up a taskforce for regional research collaboration which has members of key Asian national research institutes;
- Collaborate with existing Inter-government organizations, with engagement of national research institution members.
- Develop: 1) strategic forest research plan for the regions; 2) support implementation of regional programs and project for prioritized issues, i.e. Asian forestry certification scheme; 3) support implementation of country's projects for the mentioned issues above.

Thank you very much.