

OVERVIEW

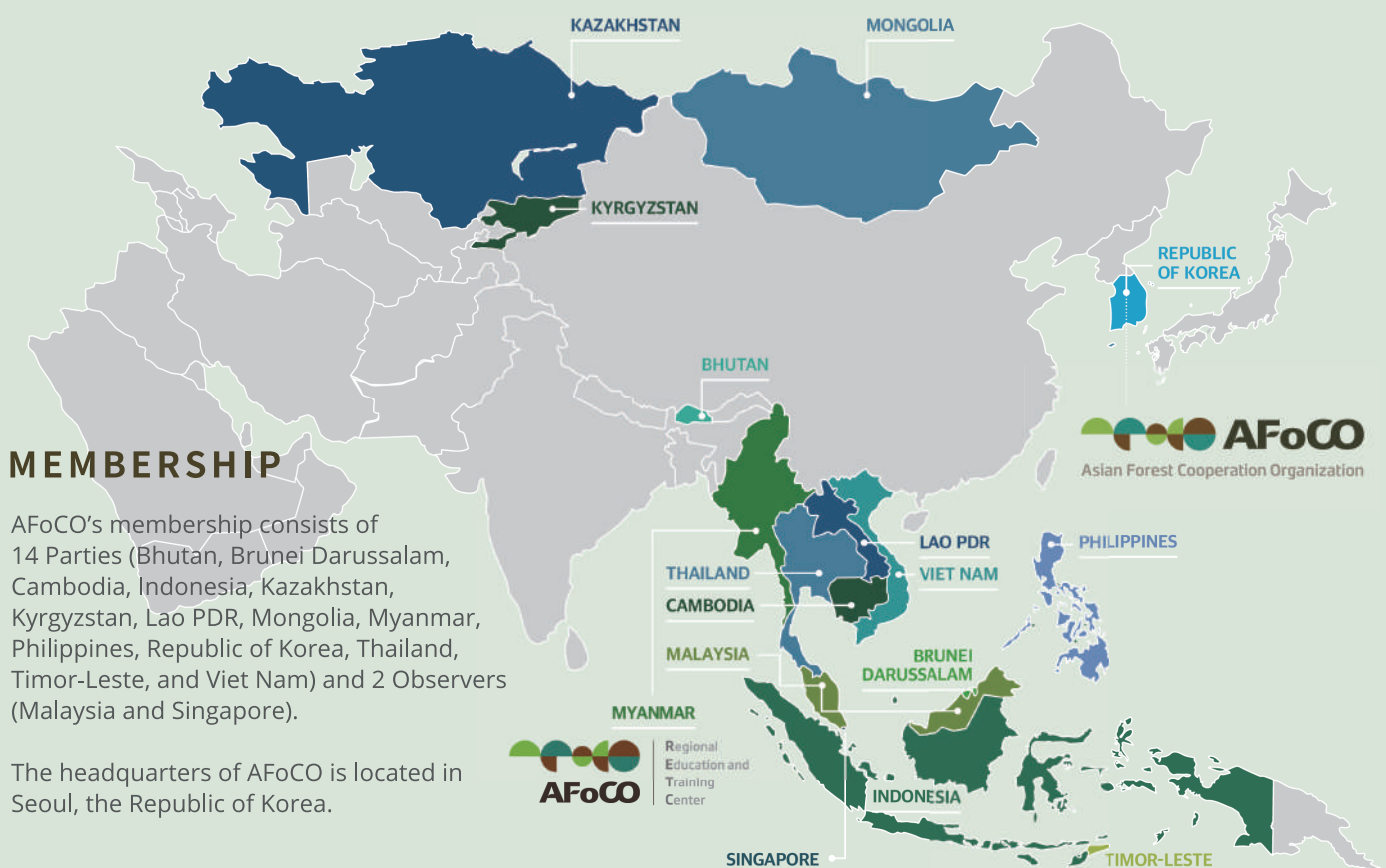
As the world faces compounding challenges of climate change and pandemic risks, the international community continues its collective efforts to contribute to achieving Sustainable Development Goals. The Asian region is laden with rich forest resources. Still, it remains vulnerable to the threats of climate change and forest devastation due to socio-economic and environmental factors caused by economic growth pressures and natural disasters.

The Asian Forest Cooperation Organization (AFOCO) is a treaty-based 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. Through action-oriented practices, AFOCO aims to contribute to the global goals of increasing forest cover and implementing the Paris Agreement on climate change. AFOCO is a Permanent Observer to the United Nations General Assembly and an ODA-eligible International Organization enlisted under the OECD-DAC.

Since the initial phase, AFOCO has been committed to facilitating the transfer and translation of best policies and experiences into site-specific actions where it is most needed. Through its member-driven approaches, various contextualized projects have been developed and implemented to achieve its mission.

These include promoting sustainable forest management practices, maintaining healthy ecosystem services, addressing climate change and its impacts through REDD+ initiatives, forest landscape restoration, and building resilience of forests and communities against forest-related disasters like forest fires. In over 30 project sites, more than 4,500 ha of forest have been restored and managed. AFOCO has facilitated the implementation of participatory forest management to empower local communities in 42 community forests in Member Countries, and AFOCO's programs and projects have promoted ecosystem services in 8 model forests, contributed to enhancing livelihoods through forest-based activities in 46 villages, and strengthened the institutional framework of member countries through supporting improvements of national forest policies and laws.

AFOCO Regional Education and Training Center (RETC) located in Myanmar operates diverse training and workshops to address capacity development needs in the forest sector. Young forestry professionals from Member Countries have also benefitted from AFOCO's flagship capacity-building programs such as the Landmark Scholarship Program, Fellowship Program, and the Science and Technology Exchange Partnership (STEP) Program.



VISION & MISSION

AFoCO envisions a greener Asia with resilient forests, landscapes, and communities. This will be achieved through enhanced cooperation in climate change adaptation and mitigation, sustainable forest management and livelihood improvement programs. Under the broader scope of climate change impacts, AFoCO will promote and undertake action-oriented forest cooperation programs and projects to achieve its mission. For sustainable forest management, AFoCO works to rehabilitate degraded forest land and address deforestation and forest degradation. It also explores common interests and positions among the member states as a unique intergovernmental organization in the forest sector.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES



MILESTONES

- 2009** | Proposal to establish the Asian Forest Cooperation Organization (AFoCO) by the Republic of Korea (ROK) at the ASEAN-ROK Commemorative Summit in Jeju, Republic of Korea
- 2012** | Formalization of the initial phase through the ASEAN-ROK Forest Cooperation
- 2013** | Implementation of activities under the ASEAN-ROK Forest Cooperation mechanism and the Dialogue for the Establishment of AFoCO
- 2015** | Adoption of the Agreement on the Establishment of AFoCO and preparation for its entry into force
- 2018** | Formal establishment of AFoCO as an intergovernmental organization
Opening of AFoCO RETC in Yangon region, Myanmar
- 2019** | 1st AFoCO Ministerial Meeting
- 2020** | Granted Permanent Observer status by the United Nations General Assembly
Accreditation as an observer intergovernmental organization to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD)
- 2021** | Entry-into-force of the Headquarters Agreement between the Government of the ROK and AFoCO
Enlisted as an international organization eligible for Official Development Assistance (ODA) under the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's Development Assistance Committee (OECD-DAC)
- 2022** | 2nd AFoCO Ministerial Meeting
Accreditation as an observer intergovernmental organization to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)

INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

The principal organs of AFoCO are the Assembly and the Secretariat. The Assembly is the policy-making body composed of the Representatives of all Parties. The Executive Director, elected and appointed by the Assembly, heads the Secretariat, which administers and coordinates the activities and day-to-day operations of the organization as mandated by the Assembly. Subject to guidance by the Assembly, the Executive Director enters into agreements on behalf of the organization for the implementation of activities of the organization.

MEMBERSHIP

Membership to AFoCO is open to any country geographically located in Asia. Application for membership to AFoCO is based on the Agreement for the Establishment of AFoCO. A country intending to become a new member of the organization shall seek approval of its membership from the Assembly of AFoCO prior to its accession to this Agreement. To become a Party to the Agreement, a country should follow the following procedures:

- Submission of a letter of intent to become a Party, or any Party's proposal to invite a country to become a new member of AFoCO
- The Assembly's endorsement is based on a no-objection basis
- Submission of an Application Form to the Secretariat
- Countries who have submitted the Application Form shall be given Observer Status
- Notification to the respective country to take necessary domestic procedures for the accession
- Deposit of the instrument of accession
- Becoming a Party to the Agreement after 30 days of deposit