

NEWSLETTER

FRIENDS OF ASIA AND ASIAN FORESTS

2024
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2024 AFoCO Annual Technical Workshop

The 2024 Annual Technical Workshop, co-hosted by the AFoCO Secretariat and the Royal Forest Department of Thailand, was successfully concluded in Bangkok, Thailand, September 9–11. Approximately 80 participants attended the workshop to discuss challenges to, and solutions for, project management. The workshop began with an opening speech by Chongho Park, the Executive Director of AFoCO, followed by a congratulatory remark by the Deputy Director-General of the Royal Forest Department.

The three-day workshop covered a wide-range of topics, including project management and performance reviews, a ten-year assessment of AFoCO's projects, revision of the AFoCO Project Manual, strategic planning and project development, updates on carbon projects, and a presentation by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) on nature finance for forest management. Moreover, the first AFoCO Photo Exhibition was held as a side event, with 24 projects participating.

During the carbon project session, representatives from Climate Asset Management (CAM) and the Acorn Project from Cambodia, Kyrgyzstan, Lao PDR, and Viet Nam shared their insights and findings. Participants gained insights into CAM's investment process and standards, while representatives from the Acorn Project shared progress on project development and implementation, emphasizing strategies to overcome existing challenges.



First FAAF Colloquium

On August 27, AFoCO successfully held the first FAAF Colloquium at the AFoCO Secretariat in Yeouido, Seoul. The event focused on engaging practitioners from companies and institutions interested in developing and participating in forest carbon projects within the voluntary carbon market (VCM). More than 40 participants attended, including representatives from KB Securities, KT&G, NH Investment & Securities, SK E&S, SK Securities, Emart, Pulmuone, Good Neighbors Global Impact, Sampo Industry, Korea Investment & Securities, Hanwha Investment & Securities, Export-Import Bank of Korea, Korea Forest Service, and Korea Forestry Promotion Institute.

The colloquium began with an overview of the latest trends in the international voluntary carbon market and procedural steps for developing forest carbon projects. Emphasis was placed on the growing demand for high-quality carbon credits and the importance of maintaining market credibility to influence future price scenarios. Furthermore, examples of on-going carbon projects were introduced, including the Cambodia Mekong REDD+ Project supported by Woori Bank and the Kyrgyzstan Agroforestry Carbon Project supported by Rabobank. During the interactive Q&A session, participants discussed definitions and standards for high-quality carbon credits, new methodologies after recent carbon credit scandals, and the potential to generate sufficient emission reductions within project timelines. Significant interest was also shown in the details of the Mekong REDD+ Project and the validity of credits for the Cambodia project.



AFoCO Launches **World Bank Technical Assistance Project** in Mongolia¹

On August 6, AFoCO held an inception workshop for the World Bank-funded project, Mongolia Green Resilient Landscapes, in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia. At the 76th UN General Assembly, President Khurelsukh Ukhnaa of Mongolia announced the goal to plant 1 billion trees by 2030; the One Billion Trees National Movement (BTNM) was officially launched in October 2021. This project aims to apply carbon initiatives to BTNM by assessing carbon reduction potential and developing the tools and capabilities required to create an investment plan that integrates carbon finance. Meanwhile, Saldangiin Odontuya, an opposition party member of parliament, was appointed Minister of Environment and Climate Change on July 10.



KFS Seminar on Promoting Overseas Forest Carbon Accumulation and **Private Participation**

On September 23, the Korea Forest Service (KFS) held a seminar, Promoting Overseas Forest Carbon Accumulation and Private Participation, at Seoul National University. About 100 people attended, including companies interested in overseas forest resource development projects and international reductions, ESG management companies, and forest-related organizations. The international seminar featured presentations on key achievements of the Laos REDD+ Program through the World Bank's Forest Carbon Partnership Facility (FCPF), new trust funds, and the SCALE initiative for future performance-based rewards. It also covered perspectives on the voluntary carbon market and various forest carbon project examples, as well as updates on REDD+ in Korea and Japan. The seminar included a topic on Article 6 of the Paris Agreement and international reductions in the forestry sector, followed by presentations on considerations and development directions for private companies implementing REDD+ projects, overseas forest investment policies by the Korea Forest Service, and overseas forest investment cases by the Korea Forestry Promotion Institute (KOFPI).

¹ <https://afocosec.org/newsroom/news/project-highlights/afoco-embarks-on-world-bank-technical-assistance-project-mongolia-green-resilient-landscapes>

T'way Air Leads **Forest Conservation Efforts** in Kyrgyzstan

On July 22, T'way Air signed an MOU with AFoCO at T'way Air's Training Center in Gangseo-gu, Seoul, agreeing to collaborate in preserving natural and tourism resources in overseas destinations. The signing ceremony was attended by Hong-geun Jeong, CEO of T'way Air, Chongho Park, Executive Director of AFoCO, and other related personnel. To practice carbon neutrality, T'way Air will engage in activities such as creating a Welcome to Forest'way program for preserving environments, establishing sustainable governance in collaboration with local communities, governments, and international organizations, and promoting travel and exchange in Central Asia while preserving tourism resources.



Indonesia's President-Elect Prabowo Plans **USD 65 Billion Green Fund** Through Carbon Credits²

According to Reuters on September 16, Indonesia's President-elect Prabowo Subianto announced plans to launch a USD 65 billion green fund by 2028 by selling carbon credits for projects like tropical rainforest conservation. One of Prabowo's climate policy advisers, Ferry Latuhihin, stated that a new agency would be established to manage the green fund and operate carbon offset projects, including forest conservation, reforestation, peatland and mangrove restoration, to generate internationally tradable carbon credits. President-elect Prabowo, who takes office on October 20, pledged to increase economic growth from the current 5% to 8% over his five-year term, forecasting that attracting investments in green projects would create jobs and help achieve growth targets.

² <https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/indonesias-prabowo-plans-65-bln-green-fund-selling-carbon-credits-2024-09-13/>

NY Climate Week Presents Global Action Plan to Put Climate Response ‘On-Track’ Within a Year

On September 22, the Climate Group called on governments, businesses, and the global climate community to take bold annual actions, during the opening of Climate Week NYC 2024³. They emphasized the need for urgent and specific actions to bridge the gap between climate change response goals presented by scientists and actual emission reductions. The 2022 Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report warned that greenhouse gas emissions must be reduced by 43% by 2030, but emissions remain high, with coal and oil use still increasing. Ahead of COP29, the Climate Group stressed that the lack of implementation can no longer be tolerated and called for specific annual climate actions. CEO Helen Clarkson proposed a Global To-Do List with seven key actions for the year.

Climate Group Releases Global To-Do List

- **Support for Coal Workers:** Policies are needed to quickly phase out coal use, including measures such as providing three years of compensation for coal workers.
- **Expansion of Renewable Energy:** G20 countries must address regulatory and permitting issues hindering the expansion of renewable energy and meet the target of tripling renewable energy capacity by 2030.
- **Ban on Re-lining Coal-Based Furnaces:** Transition to electric furnaces and green hydrogen production to reduce coal use in blast furnaces.
- **Methane Reduction:** Establish a global agency to reduce methane emissions and empower it to audit emissions data from fossil-fuel companies by the next COP.
- **Enhancing Energy Efficiency:** Set a goal to improve energy efficiency in buildings by 5% within 12 months, with governments providing appropriate investment incentives.
- **Green Procurement:** All governments and companies should procure low-carbon food, steel, and concrete, and actively adopt renewable energy and electric vehicles.
- **Tax on Oil and Gas:** Impose a new levy on oil and gas companies to raise funds for the transition.

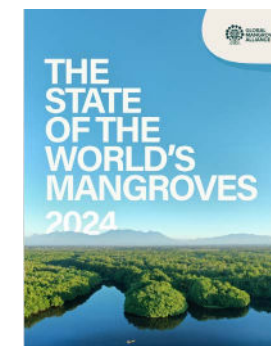
³ Climate Week NYC is the world's largest climate event held annually in New York, featuring over 600 events and activities in in-person, hybrid, and online formats. Business leaders, political change-makers, local decision-makers, and representatives from civil society around the world gather at this event to accelerate climate action and promote transformational change. It is hosted by the international non-profit organization Climate Group and was held in partnership with the United Nations General Assembly from September 22 to 29 in 2024.

Lao PDR Begins Results-Based Payments for The World Bank's REDD+ Program⁴

On July 9, Laos received USD 16 million in support from The World Bank's Forest Carbon Partnership Facility for emissions reductions verified under the REDD+ mechanism, targeting six provinces in northern Laos. This makes Lao PDR the second country in the Southeast Asia-Pacific region, after Indonesia, to receive results-based payments. Laos aims to reduce up to 8.4 million tons of carbon emissions from the project area and can request an additional USD 26 million upon further verification.

Mangrove Status Report Released on World Mangrove Day 2024⁵

On July 26, on International Day for the Conservation of the Mangrove Ecosystem, the Global Mangrove Alliance (GMA) and IUCN jointly released The State of the World's Mangroves 2024 report. The report includes the world's first ecosystem 'red list' assessment, which indicates that half of the world's mangrove ecosystems are at risk of collapsing by 2050. The report emphasizes the importance of new data and improved mapping technology to address these issues.



⁴ www.forestcarbonpartnership.org

⁵ <https://www.mangrovealliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/SOWM-2024.pdf>

⁶ <https://verra.org/verra-reinstates-southern-cardamom-redd-project/>

⁷ <https://carbonherald.com/new-research-reforestation-is-more-cost-effective-than-previously-understood/>

Verra Resumes Southern Cardamom REDD+ Project in Cambodia⁶

On September 10, Verra lifted suspension of the Southern Cardamom REDD+ project after a 14-month investigation. The investigation, which started in June 2023, followed Human Rights Watch's allegations of human rights violations. Verra and validation/verification bodies (VVBs) concluded that the implementing organization, Wildlife Alliance, had addressed all allegations and taken necessary measures to mitigate future risks.

Cost-Effectiveness Study of Natural Forest Regeneration and Reforestation for Climate Mitigation⁷

A study published on July 24 in the scientific journal, Nature Climate Change, found that allowing trees to naturally regrow on 46% of deforested lands is more cost-effective and sequesters more carbon than reforestation (restoring degraded forests by planting new trees). The researchers also discovered that combining both natural regeneration and reforestation methods removes about 40% more carbon than using either method alone (44% more than natural regeneration alone, and 39% more than reforestation alone). The study indicates an opportunity to remove ten times more carbon than previously estimated by the IPCC through low-cost reforestation.

Climate Asset Management Reaches USD 1 Billion Milestone⁸

On September 23, CAM announced the close of its Natural Capital Fund and Nature-Based Carbon Fund, raising over USD 1 billion. CAM’s CEO, Martin Berg, stated that, "Reaching the one billion dollar milestone is evidence of the vision of our founding investors and team". Projects include regenerative agriculture in Australia, sustainable forestry in New Zealand, and agroforestry in Africa, covering over 2 million hectares.

Status of Climate Commitments by Fortune Global 500 Companies⁹

Climate Impact Partners released the sixth annual report of the climate commitments of Fortune Global 500 Companies. The report states that 45% of companies have pledged to achieve net-zero emissions by 2050, an increase of 6 percentage points from 39% last year. However, the percentage of companies setting net-zero targets in line with the Science-Based Targets initiative (SBTi) fell from 18% to 17%, due to missing SBTi submission deadlines, resulting in 239 companies being removed from its dashboard. The proportion of companies indicating their intention to use carbon credits increased by 2% to 42%, while 2% said they would not use them, and 56% did not disclose their stance.

Viet Nam Suffers 170,000 ha of Forest Damage Due to Typhoon Yagi¹⁰

On September 24, the Forestry Department held a meeting to discuss restoration and stabilization of forest production after Typhoon Yagi. Deputy Director Trieu Van Luc reported that by 4:00 p.m. on September 23, a total of 170,000 ha of forest had been damaged across 13 provinces and cities. Particularly, approximately 12 million cubic meters of timber (small wood) were affected, significantly reducing the supply of raw material for Viet Nam’s wood-processing industry.

Companies, Including Amazon, Purchase USD 180 Million Worth of Carbon Credits from Amazon Rainforest Conservation Projects¹¹

According to a Reuters article on September 24, Amazon and at least five other companies are set to purchase carbon offset credits worth approximately USD 180 million to support the conservation of the Amazon rainforest in Pará, Brazil, through the LEAF Coalition, an initiative established in 2021 with the support of various companies and governments, including those of the United States and the United Kingdom.

⁸ <https://climateassetmanagement.com/insight/climate-asset-management-secures-commitments-in-excess-of-1-billion-for-natural-capital-projects/>

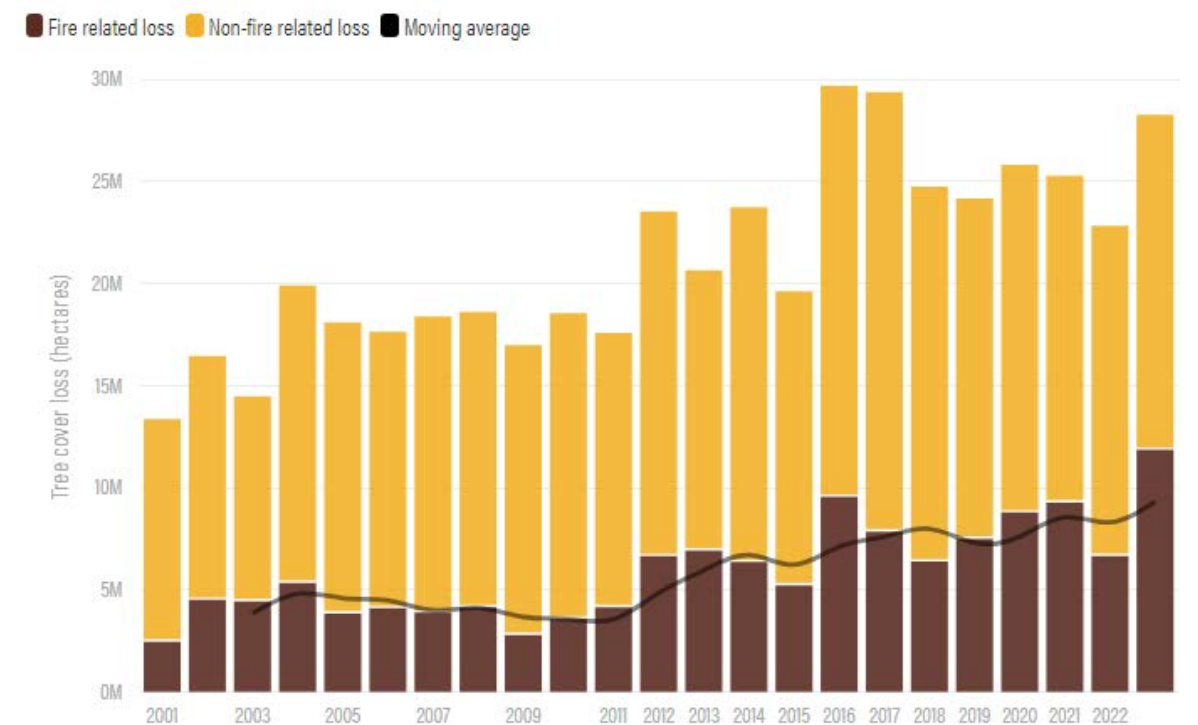
⁹ <https://trellis.net/article/4-surprising-charts-about-climate-targets-from-the-worlds-500-largest-companies/>

¹⁰ <https://vietnamagriculture.nongnghiep.vn/over-170000-hectares-of-forest-damaged-by-typhoon-no-3-d401089.html>

¹¹ <https://www.reuters.com/sustainability/firms-including-amazon-buy-180-million-carbon-credits-namesake-rainforest-2024-09-24/>

Global Wildfires Worsening, Latest Data Reveals¹²

Tree cover loss due to fires compared to other drivers of loss, 2001-2023



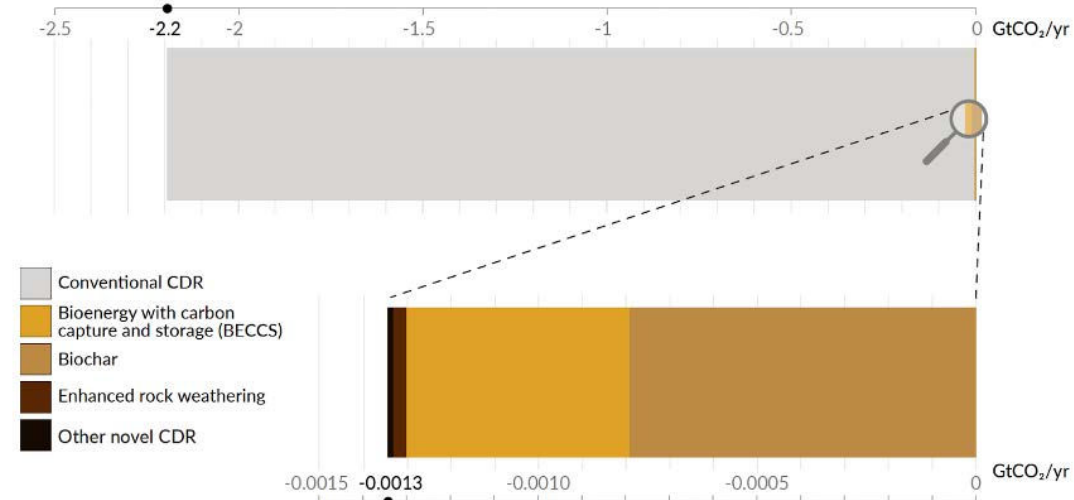
Researchers at the University of Maryland have reported that the area affected by wildfires increased by approximately 5.4% annually from 2001 to 2023, with annual wildfire damage reaching about 6 million hectares. This upward trend in wildfire occurrence has been particularly evident in recent years, with 2020, 2021, and 2023 ranking as the fourth, third, and worst years on record, respectively. In 2023 alone, nearly 12 million ha were burned, surpassing the previous record by about 24%. Climate change is one of the main factors driving the increase in wildfires. Extreme heat events have become five times more frequent compared to 150 years ago and rising temperatures create drier landscapes that are more prone to larger and more frequent wildfires. From 2001 to 2023, approximately 70% of wildfire damage occurred in subarctic regions. In these areas, tree cover loss due to wildfires has increased by about 138,000 ha annually (roughly 3.6%) over the past 23 years, accounting for about half of the total global increase during this period. In addition to climate change, human activities inside and outside forests make them more vulnerable to wildfires, particularly in tropical and other regions, contributing to increased fire-related tree cover loss. Ending forest conversion and degradation is key to improving forest resilience and preventing future fires. Integrating wildfire risk mitigation into forest management strategies in fire-prone areas can help protect forest carbon, create jobs and support rural communities.

¹² New Data Confirms: Forest Fires Are Getting Worse | World Resources Institute (wri.org)

Global Carbon Dioxide Removal (CDR) Status Report¹³

Only a tiny fraction of all carbon dioxide removal results from novel methods

Total amount of carbon dioxide removal, split into conventional and novel methods (GtCO₂/yr)



Amount of carbon dioxide removal (CDR) is the sum of conventional CDR (2013-2022) and novel CDR (2023)

The second edition of the Global Carbon Dioxide Removal Status Report addresses the current state of the carbon removal industry, the path toward meeting the Paris Climate Agreement goals, and the key factors influencing progress. Published by the German Institute for International and Security Affairs and Oxford University, the report provides a sober yet hopeful assessment of human-led carbon removal. It states that achieving the Paris Agreement goals will require the restoration of Earth's native ecosystems over the next 25 years, removing billions of tons of carbon from the atmosphere, and increasing durable, technology-based carbon removal rates approximately 1,500 times from current levels.

In recent times, almost all carbon removal is achieved through nature-based pathways. In 2023, human activities removed about 2.2 billion tons of CO₂ from the atmosphere, storing it in carbon sinks capable of sequestering carbon for decades or longer. Over 99.90% of this removal was achieved through conventional, nature-based pathways, such as forest restoration and improved forest management. Other nature-based removal methods include wetland restoration and soil carbon sequestration. Of the 1.3 million tons of CO₂ removed through new methods, most was achieved through three pathways: bioenergy with carbon capture and storage (BECCS); biochar; and enhanced rock weathering. Nature-based removal must nearly double over the next six years to stay on track. To meet the Paris climate targets, annual carbon removal must increase from the current 2.2 billion tons to over 4 billion tons by 2030, with nature-based removal activities like ecosystem restoration and agroforestry providing around 97% of this increase

¹³ <https://trellis.net/article/the-state-of-carbon-removal-in-3-charts/>

Viet Nam's 2021–2030 National Forestry Plan: Key Objectives and Insights¹⁴

On August 24, Viet Nam's Prime Minister approved the 2021–2030 National Forestry Development Plan with a vision toward 2050. The plan aims to enhance the quality of forests while maintaining a forest cover rate of 42–43%, promoting sustainability in the forestry sector. Key targets include the following.

The planned forest area for the 2021–2030 period targets approximately 15.85 million ha, including 2.45 million ha of special-use forests (15.5%), 5.23 million ha of protection forests (33%), and 8.16 million ha of production forests (51.5%). Viet Nam also plans to establish an international timber trade center to promote the processing and trading of timber products, modernize and automate equipment and technology, and upgrade educational facilities to develop skilled labor. Additionally, Viet Nam will work to enhance poverty in key forest areas to encourage participation in forestry production by mountain communities and ethnic minorities.

2021–2030 National Forestry Plan

- **Maintain 42–43% Forest Cover Rate:** focus on improving the quality of existing natural forests.
- **Average Annual Forestry Production Growth Rate of 5–5.5%:** with timber and non-timber exports reaching USD 20 billion by 2025 and USD 25 billion by 2030. Domestic consumption values will reach USD 5 billion and USD 6 billion by 2025 and 2030, respectively, with domestic timber production reaching 3.5 million m³ by 2025 and 5 million m³ by 2030.
- **Special-Use Forest Areas:** Annual planting of 238,000 ha of production forests and 8,600 ha of protection and special-use forests. Restoration of 22,500 ha of natural forests per year, with sustainable forest management certification achieved for over 1 million ha by 2030.
- **Generating Income from Production Forests:** Increase income from production forests by 1.5 times by 2025 and double by 2030 compared to 2020 levels.
- **Forest Environmental Service Revenue:** Annual increase of 5%, reaching approximately VND 3.5 trillion (USD 140 million) per year during 2021–2025 and VND 4 trillion (USD 160 million) per year during 2026–2030
- **Support Infrastructure Development:** Develop forest information technology and infrastructure systems, particularly for wildfire prevention and suppression.
- **Ensuring Sustainable Management:** By 2030, ensure 100% of institution-managed forests are sustainably managed to enhance the conservation of natural resources and biodiversity, ensure forest protection functions, and minimize legal violations.

¹⁴ <https://www.vietnam-briefing.com/news/vietnams-2021-2030-national-forestry-planning-key-objectives-and-implications.html/>

Cambodia's Development Project on High-Quality Restoration Species

Cambodia, which currently has one of the fastest-growing economies among ASEAN Member States, saw its forest area decline from about 73.10% (13.2 million ha) of its total land area in 1973 to approximately 41% (8.7 million ha) in 2020, with a loss of around 2.83 million ha of forest since 2000 alone, accelerating the trend. To combat continuous deforestation caused by development and preserve forests, the Cambodian government has been implementing the National Forest Program (2010–2029). The program focuses on restoring degraded forests throughout the country, with primary goals including biodiversity conservation, livelihoods' improvement for local communities, poverty eradication, and environmental protection. However, during the initial implementation of the program, Cambodia faced challenges in ensuring high-quality genetic resources (seeds and seedlings), which hindered the successful execution of policies due to the lack of a forest genetic resource management system.

In response, AFoCO, in collaboration with the Institute of Forest and Wildlife Research and Development under the Forestry Administration of Cambodia, launched the Forest Genetic Resource Research Center for Major Timber Species Restoration in Cambodia project in 2015. This 10-year project aims to strengthen Cambodia's capacity for tree breeding and forest restoration, targeting high-value timber species through the establishment of infrastructure for systematic genetic resource management and the formulation of a comprehensive and long-term tree-breeding strategy.



Through this project, Cambodia has pursued the long-term breeding program by focusing on three major timber species: *Dalbergia cochinchinensis*, *Pterocarpus macrocarpus*, and *Dipterocarpus intricatus*. *Dalbergia cochinchinensis* is a native species listed as 'endangered' on the IUCN Red List. The project has carried out tasks such as breeding tests, selection of individuals within natural populations, collection of breeding material, and seedling production. As a result, Cambodia established its first Korean-style seed orchards (6 ha each) in Khun Ream and Chan Sor in Siem Reap Province, along with 24 ha of progeny-testing plantations, 16 ha of demonstration forests, and 200 ha of genetic resource conservation forests.

The project has benefited from long-term support, with the initial phase involving active collaboration with the National Institute of Forest Science of Korea. This partnership helped systematically transfer Korea's advanced tree-breeding technologies, enhancing the success rate and sustainability of the project. Moreover, public awareness activities about species' conservation encouraged voluntary participation by local communities in managing genetic resource conservation forests. The project also successfully established a foundation for securing high-quality genetic resources for the endangered *Dalbergia cochinchinensis*, leading to additional funding support of GBP 409,897 through the Darwin Initiative from the UK government (2018–2021), demonstrating the project's effectiveness.



A Garden for the Earth, Carbon Garden (Lee Yu Mi)¹⁵



Picture1 | The Carbon Garden "SUM: Addition" Created with Kongju University Students at the National Sejong Arboretum

The sweltering summer has finally passed, and the autumn that follows is even more precious and beautiful. The forests and gardens around us capture the essence of autumn through deepened colors and sometimes fragrant scents. Experiencing unpredictable weather changes makes us realize that we are truly living in a climate crisis. In a time where even the smallest efforts to reduce carbon must be undertaken with sincerity, creating and nurturing gardens that beautify and



Picture2 | Carbon Gardening for the Earth, Presented by the Korea Arboretum and Garden Management Service

bring joy to our surroundings can be approached in a way that benefits the planet. The word "garden" in English is derived from the root "gan," meaning an enclosed space or act of enclosing, and "oden" or "eden," which signifies joy or pleasure. The Chinese character for "garden" (園) encompasses soil, pond, fence, and flowers. However, the true charm of a garden lies in its ability to improve the ecological environment and its potential to play a social and cultural role through the process of gardening. While forests have traditionally been viewed as a foundational resource, they are now also considered a means for healing. Bringing them closer to our everyday lives through gardens can provide both joy and ecological benefits. Through gardens and gardening, we have the power to change the world we live in and our own lives. The essence of gardens comes from the forest. The role of a garden can be broadly divided into environmental and socio-cultural aspects. By creating ecological spaces in cities, gardens can address various environmental issues, such as climate regulation, absorbing fine dust, enhancing biodiversity, reducing carbon emissions, and absorbing radiant heat. Moreover, gardens go beyond merely improving urban environments; they are connected to historical spaces with natural elements and diverse cultural

¹⁵ Former head of the National Sejong Arboretum

spaces, expanding into cultural activities like education, performances, and tourism. This multifaceted coexistence can mitigate the occurrence of diseases like COVID-19, reduce individual and social isolation, combat digital addiction, and address pressing challenges like the decline of local communities. Gardens serve as carbon sinks because they absorb carbon dioxide from the atmosphere through photosynthesis and store it in above-ground (trunk, branches, leaves) or below-ground (roots) structures. Here are some ways to maximize this effect: Each tree species has different carbon storage capacities, so if possible, choose species with relatively high carbon absorption rates. Although carbon storage is often associated with large trees, effective models using multi-layered planting techniques consider the biomass of shrubs to optimize photosynthesis.



Increase the soil's carbon storage capacity by using biochar, a carbon-rich material that decomposes slowly and is known as a "carbon prison." This not only improves carbon storage but also enhances plant growth conditions, promoting even more active carbon sequestration. Efficiently utilizing rainwater not only reduces carbon emissions but also offers economic benefits. Rainwater is better for plant growth compared to tap water, making it a valuable "fertilizer" from the sky. Deadwood also stores carbon for a long time, so using wood materials for garden structures and objects like benches and decks is advisable. Additionally, to minimize the carbon footprint, source all garden materials, including stones, locally, prune trees to maximize photosynthesis, reduce lawn areas, and use organic compost instead of chemical fertilizers, which contribute to global warming. Low-maintenance gardens like Dry Gardens or Rock Gardens, which use drought-tolerant plants that thrive with natural rainfall, are excellent choices. Gardens are spaces of biodiversity, where various life forms, including plants, coexist. By practicing carbon gardening, we take a step further toward a healthier and happier Earth.



11th AFoCO Assembly

(October 30–31, Seoul, South Korea)

The 11th AFoCO Assembly will be held in Seoul from October 30 to 31, 2024, with delegations from Member Countries gathering to discuss key decision-making matters. The Assembly will include a report on the progress of the Friends of Asia and Asian Forests (FAAF) initiative, along with discussions on expanding member participation in FAAF and promoting public-private partnership projects. Additionally, the agenda will cover AFoCO's future strategic action plan as well as the development of projects related to forest restoration and climate change responses.

2 Second FAAF Forum

(October 29, Seoul, South Korea)

The Second FAAF Forum will be held at the Fairmont Ambassador Hotel in Seoul on October 29, 2024, with the theme, Bridging Governments and Private Sector Partners for Asia. The forum will bring together government representatives from AFoCO's 16 Member Countries and business leaders focusing on ESG and sustainability. Key attendees will include former UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, Minister of the Korea Forest Service, ministers from AFoCO Member Countries, and heads of relevant institutions. The forum will provide opportunities for public-private cooperation to promote sustainable forest management, carbon neutrality, ESG, and CSR practices, focusing on strengthening trust and collaboration between governments and businesses. AFoCO will also collaborate with Rabobank, Climate Asset Management, and Gold Standard to explore innovative financial mechanisms utilizing forests in the Asian region, contributing to climate change response and achieving carbon neutrality goals.

The 2024 United Nations Biodiversity Conference of the Parties (COP16)

(October 21, November 1, Cali, Colombia)

COP16 will be the first biodiversity COP since the adoption of the Global Biodiversity Framework. During COP16, governments will review progress in implementing the new Framework and assess how well the National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs) align with planned goals. Governments will also conduct further negotiations on the monitoring framework, advance resource mobilization (especially funding for implementation), and finalize a multilateral mechanism for fair and equitable access and benefit-sharing (ABS) related to the use of digital sequence information on genetic resources. COP16 will bring together participants from over 190 countries, including governments, observer organizations, indigenous communities, businesses, youth groups, civil society, academia, and the general public.

2024 United Nations Climate Change Conference

(October 30–31, Baku, Azerbaijan)

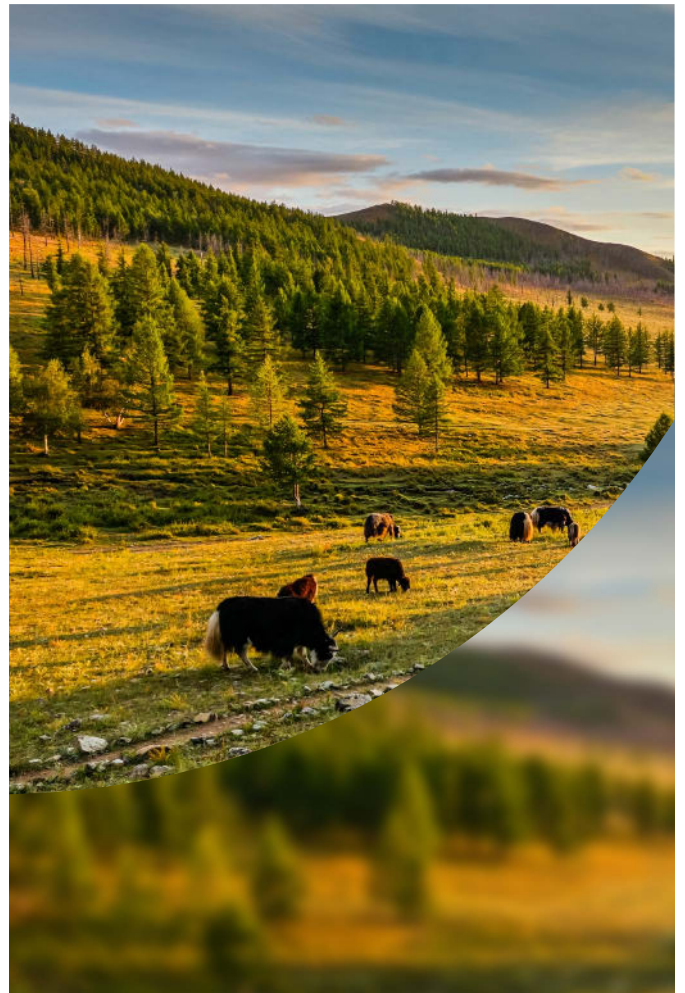
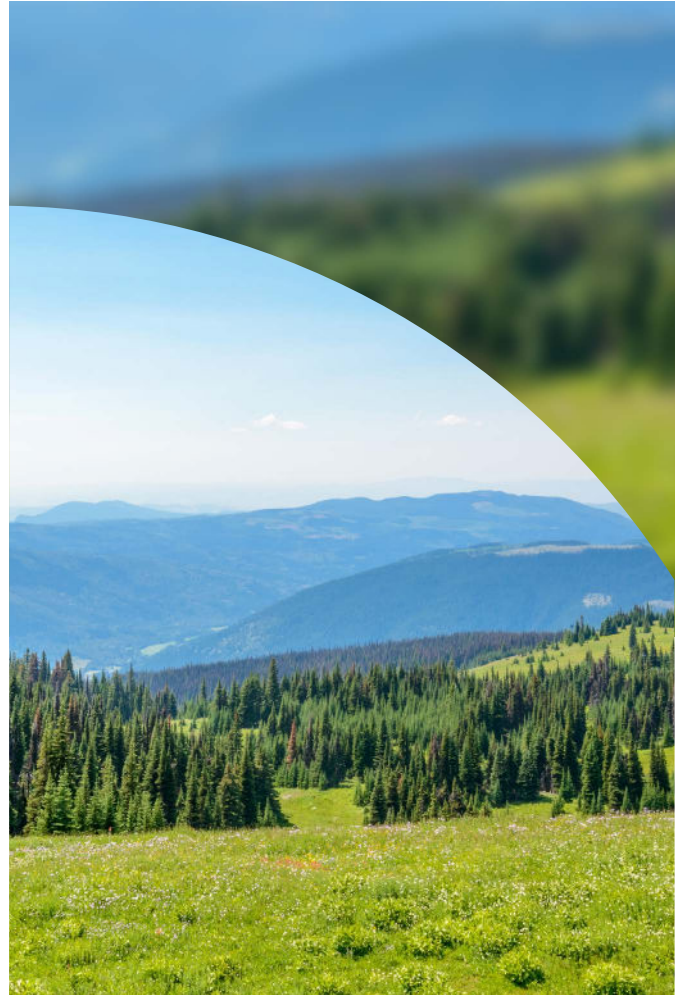
The 2024 United Nations Climate Change Conference of the Parties (COP29) is set to take place from November 11 to 22, 2024, in Baku, Azerbaijan. This conference will be a key opportunity for countries to come together to discuss concrete action plans to address climate change and set new targets to promote the implementation of the Paris Agreement.

At COP29, countries will review their progress toward achieving climate goals and discuss ways to strengthen national efforts to reduce carbon emissions. Additionally, the introduction of innovative financial mechanisms for climate adaptation and resilience, as well as cooperation with the private sector, will be key agenda items. COP29 is expected to be a significant milestone for strengthening international cooperation to address the global climate crisis and for promoting sustainable development.

AFoCO, in collaboration with the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF) and various partners, will operate a Forest Pavilion within the Blue Zone. The Forest Pavilion is specially designed to highlight the critical role forests play in combating climate change and addressing challenges related to achieving the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) during COP29 and COP30 (in Brazil). During COP29, AFoCO will co-host a side event with Gold Standard, leading discussions on private-sector collaboration and the contribution of forests.

The 16th Session of the Conference of the Parties (COP16) of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD)

The 16th Session of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD COP16) will take place from December 2 to 13, 2024, in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, with the theme, Our Land, Our Future. Marking the 30th anniversary of the launch of COP, this will be the first UN Climate Change COP held in the Middle East and North Africa region, which are directly affected by desertification, land degradation, and drought. AFoCO will co-host a side event in collaboration with the African dryland initiative, AFR100. This event will include the KFS, UNFF, IUCN, Global EverGreening Alliance, CIFOR-ICRAF and other international organizations and NGOs to raise awareness of the urgency of the situation in degraded and desertification areas and discuss collaborative solutions.



NEWSLETTER

FRIENDS OF ASIA AND ASIAN FORESTS

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