

A Decade of Achievements
and Future Horizons of the

AFoCO Scholarship Program

“Empowering Future Leaders in Forestry and Environmental Science”



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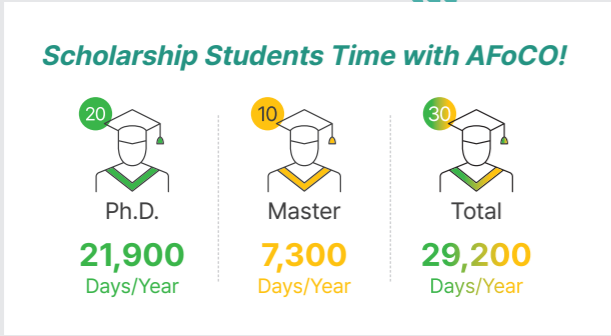
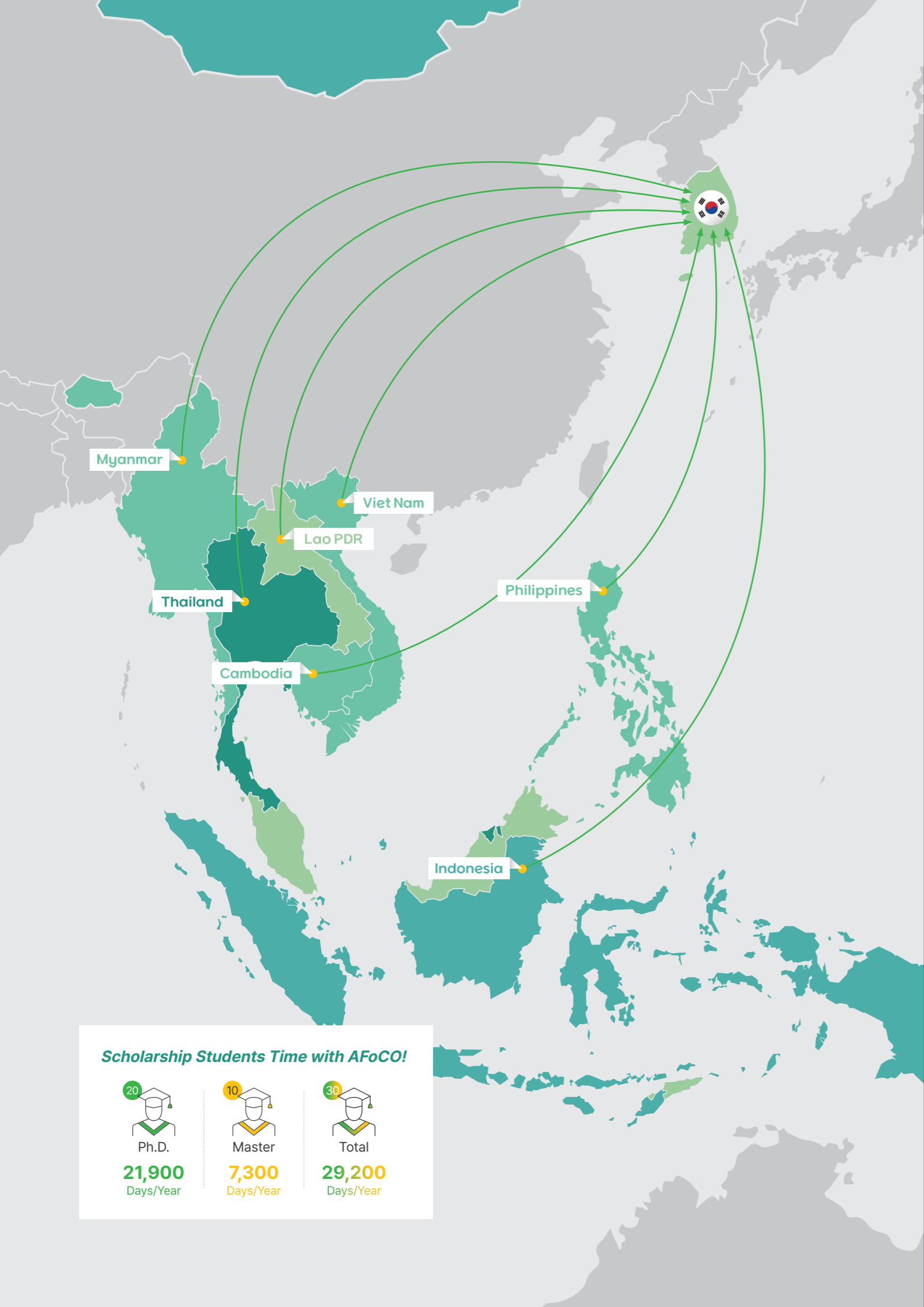
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The AFoCO scholarship students are the future stewards of our forests, the leaders who will champion sustainability and conservation for generations to come.

1 Greetings from the Executive Director



The AFoCO Landmark Scholarship Program represents our unwavering commitment to empowering a new generation of leaders in forestry, and I am delighted to congratulate on its remarkable progress and achievements for the last 10 years. Through this program, we are investing not only in education but also in the resilience and sustainability of our natural resources. It brings me with pride to see this initiative grow into a beacon of hope and opportunity for aspiring forestry professionals across our member countries.

I want to express my heartfelt gratitude to each of students for their unwavering dedication to the AFoCO Landmark Scholarship Program. Their passion for promoting sustainable forestry and environmental stewardship is truly inspiring. Our esteemed professors' guidance and mentorship are instrumental in shaping the next generation of forestry leaders. Their efforts are dedicating a lasting, positive impact on our forests and communities.

Last but not least, my deepest thanks to the government of the Republic of Korea for its steadfast support, generously sharing its experience and knowledge with all member countries.

As we enter the next phase of this program, we aim to expand its reach, deepen its impact, and continue fostering regional collaboration. Together, we are building a greener, more resilient future, paving the way for innovative solutions to enhance forestry management in line with the Sustainable Development Goals. We look forward to welcoming all member countries as part of this inspiring journey.

Chongho Park

Chongho Park
Executive Director

2 History of the AFoCO Landmark Scholarship Program

The Landmark Scholarship Program stands as a key component of the AFoCO Landmark Program (2014-2023), the organization's long-term signature initiative. Supported by the Republic of Korea, the scholarship program has founded a cornerstone of AFoCO's capacity-building efforts. Since signing multiple Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) with partner universities, the AFoCO Landmark Scholarship program has been supporting financing government officials from ASEAN Member States to pursue graduate degrees in forestry in the Republic of Korea since 2015. These partnerships have strengthened regional collaboration and enhanced the capacity-building efforts of future leaders in the forestry sector. As a result, a total number of 30 AFoCO Scholars were fostered, equipped with a deep understanding of critical forestry issues, and they are ready to influence forestry policies and drive sustainable practices in their home countries. The program is entering its new phase of development with an expanded model and structure, which will continue to seek ambitious young professionals dedicated to advancing the forest sector's role in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

2014

- Launch of the Landmark Program (March, 2014)
- Memorandum of Understanding between *Yeungnam University* and ASEAN-ROK Forest Cooperation Secretariat (March, 2014)
- Memorandum of Understanding between *Kongju National University* and ASEAN-ROK Forest Cooperation Secretariat (December, 2014)
- Memorandum of Understanding between *University of Seoul* and ASEAN-ROK Forest Cooperation Secretariat (December, 2014)

2015

- Memorandum of Understanding between *Kangwon National University* and ASEAN-ROK Forest Cooperation Secretariat (June, 2015)
- Memorandum of Understanding between *Chungnam National University* and ASEAN-ROK Forest Cooperation Secretariat (July, 2015)
- Memorandum of Understanding between *Chungbuk National University* and ASEAN-ROK Forest Cooperation Secretariat (July, 2015)
- Memorandum of Understanding between *Kookmin University* and ASEAN-ROK Forest Cooperation Secretariat (November, 2015)
- Memorandum of Understanding between *Dongguk University* and ASEAN-ROK Forest Cooperation Secretariat (December, 2015)

2016

- Memorandum of Understanding between *The College of Agriculture and Life Sciences of Seoul National University* and The Interim Secretariat for the Asian Forest Cooperation Organization (December, 2016)

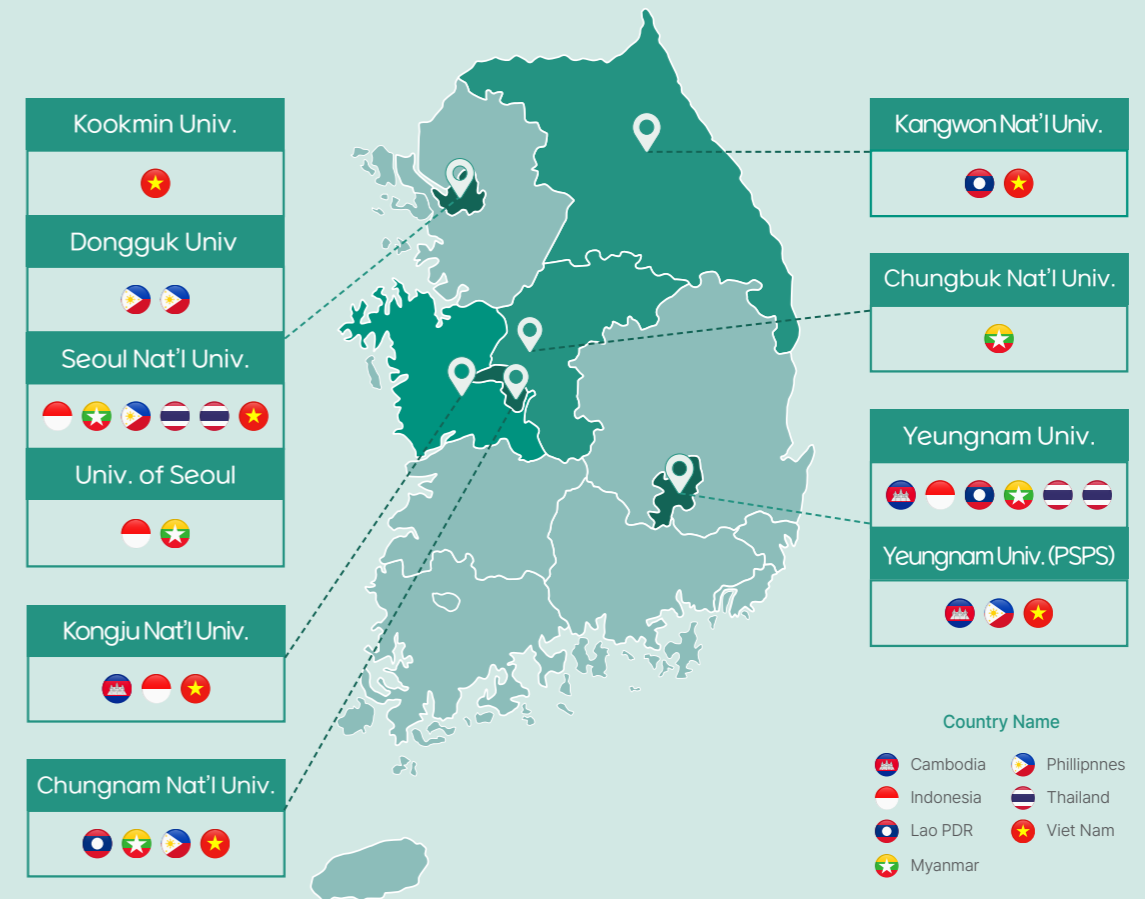
2022

- Memorandum of Understanding between *Graduate School of International Agricultural Technology of Seoul National University* and The Asian Forest Cooperation Organization (February, 2022)



30
students

**FROM 7 MEMBER COUNTRIES
IN 10 UNIVERSITIES**



The AFoCO Landmark Scholarship has been instrumental in nurturing future leaders in sustainable forestry management across its member countries. From 2015 to 2024, 30 scholarship students from 7 member countries have been awarded this prestigious scholarship, enhancing their academic and professional capacities in forestry and related fields. The consistent allocation of scholarships over the years highlights a strategic approach to capacity building and professional development in the forestry sector. By investing in education and capacity building. We're paving the way for future leaders to drive sustainable forest management practices, ensuring a greener and more resilient future for the region.

“ We look forward to welcoming more scholars and expanding our impact in sustainable forestry management. ”

3 Enhance Your Future with the AFoCO Landmark Scholarship



Fostering Leadership

Develop future leaders in forestry and environmental conservation with a profound understanding of regional forestry issues, ready to make a significant impact in their communities and lead conservation projects.



Enhancing Forestry's Contribution to SDGs

Support young professionals dedicated to sustainable forestry practices and reap the long-term benefits of pursuing graduate studies in Korea for their home countries.



Educational Advancement

Gain in-depth knowledge and expertise in sustainable forestry practices, ecosystem management, biodiversity conservation, and climate change mitigation through our fully funded advanced studies program.



Capacity Building

Join a cadre of skilled professionals equipped with advanced knowledge and technical skills to champion sustainable forest management practices.



Research and Innovation

Undertake groundbreaking research projects addressing critical issues in forestry and environmental conservation, contributing innovative solutions and significant advancements to scientific knowledge and practical applications.



Networking and Collaboration

Network with international experts, researchers, and practitioners, fostering the exchange of ideas, best practices, and collaborative efforts to tackle environmental challenges across the region.



Implementation of Best Practices

Apply your acquired knowledge and skills in your home country, introduce and implement best practices in sustainable forestry, advocate for policy changes, and develop programs that promote environmental conservation at local, national, and regional levels.

4 HEAR FROM OUR SCHOLARS

Aomjitr Sena



- Master of Science in Environmental and Forestry, Forest and Environmental Policy Major
- Department of Sustainable Development
- Yeungnam University
- 2020-2022

Current Affiliation

Forest Research and Development Office, Royal Forest Department, Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment

Country

THAILAND



“It was great timing to join the AFoCO Landmark Scholarships program during the pandemic. Korea has a good system and technology to encourage students to study through the online system with full attention. The AFoCO team has strong support so students can be convenient and comfortable living in a foreign country.

I get more experience with different cultures and get to know foreign friends. It was a precious time at that age to have various kinds of friends, especially since we have the same type of work. This valuable experience built up my personality.

I had an experience visiting the AFoCO secretariat and getting to know other students on the same scholarship. We have shared our story and study plan which makes us more motivated to continue to complete our course.”

Thesis Summary: Value Chain of Siamese Rosewood in Thailand

Siamese rosewood was listed in CITES Appendix II under trade restrictions by CITES regulation. There are around 26 species of Dalbergia in Thailand. Due to the Chinese market, the price has risen enormously, leading to heavy illegal logging in the country for more than ten years. This study aimed to understand the rosewood value chain in Thailand, identify core issues, and map the chain link to the international market. 2009-2021 Thailand exported rosewood accounting for 4.3 billion USD to China. Now the price is relatively stable. In the domestic market, the price is around 500,000 baht/m³, but in the final market, the price has risen to 151,384 Yuan/Ton or 738,000 baht/Ton. Rosewood trees in the country found in National Park total of 1,372,000 trees account for 295,140 m³, under Forest plantation registered 75,971 trees and under Forest industry organization's plantation total 236 ha. Amending laws and regulations to support timber economic growth will be an excellent way to increase market competition. Otherwise, Thailand will lose opportunities in the timber industry.

Baisone Inthirath



- Master in Forest Resources and Ecological Restoration
- Department of Sustainable Development
- Yeungnam University
- 2017-2018

Current Affiliation

Forestry Research Center(FRC), National Agriculture and Forestry Research Institute (NAFRI), Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (MAF). Vientiane Capital City

Country

LAO PDR

“My study experience with the AFoCO Landmark Scholarship Program at Yeungnam University was transformative. AFoCO, as a treaty-based intergovernmental organization, addresses global forestry challenges and promotes sustainable development. The program's comprehensive curriculum, which balanced theoretical knowledge with practical application, gave me invaluable insights into critical environmental issues like climate change and forest degradation.

The support from AFoCO was outstanding, offering resources and mentorship that allowed me to focus on my studies and apply my learning effectively. The hands-on learning, through fieldwork, projects, and internships, bridged the gap between theory and real-world application, enhancing my skills in forest management and ecological restoration.

One of the program's greatest benefits was the networking opportunities it provided. I connected with global experts, policymakers, and peers, expanding my professional network and fostering collaborative relationships. The field visits deepened my understanding of forest management challenges and solutions, while financial support allowed me to focus entirely on my studies, resulting in significant academic achievements.

Overall, the AFoCO Landmark Scholarship enriched my academic and professional journey, equipping me with the knowledge, skills, and connections to contribute effectively to sustainable forestry and ecological restoration.”

Thesis Summary: Rubber tree growth and soil chemical properties between mono-cultured and stylo-mixed rubber plantations in Van and Lao villages, Lao PDR

My study compared rubber tree growth (diameter at breast height and height) and soil chemical properties (N, P, K, pH, and %OM) between mono-cultured and stylo-mixed rubber plantations in Van and Lao village, Nalae District, Luang Namtha Province, during January 2016 to January 2018. Two treatments: mono-cultured (control) and stylo-mixed rubber plantations were replicated six times using a Randomized Complete Block Design (RCBD).

Results indicated that stylo-mixed rubber plantations achieved superior growth, with a diameter increase of 7.21 cm (3.61 cm/year) and a height increase of 363.44 cm (181.72 cm/year), compared to the mono-cultured treatment, which showed a diameter increase of 5.11 cm (2.56 cm/year) and a height increase of 185.02 cm (92.45 cm/year). The stylo-mixed treatment also had a higher percentage of trees at a 10-15 cm diameter level (77%) compared to the control (63%), with a slightly higher number of tapped trees (8% vs. 7%).

The study concluded that stylo-mixed rubber plantations improve both rubber growth and soil chemical properties, encouraging the adoption of intercropping to enhance soil quality and farmer livelihoods.



Edward Fortes Dumrique



- Master's Degree in Forest and Environmental Policy and Ecological Restoration
- Sustainable Development Department
- Park Chung Hee School of Policy and Saemaul (PSPS), 2023-2024

Current Affiliation

Department of Environment and Natural Resources - Forest Management Bureau (DENR-FMB)

Country

PHILIPPINES

“The AFOCO Landmark Scholarship program provided me with a smooth and fulfilling academic experience, offering comprehensive support for both academic and career development. The program's structure, strong community, and assistance from the AFOCO team ensured success for scholars from diverse backgrounds. It opened doors to invaluable networking opportunities through seminars, workshops, and conferences, connecting me with professionals and peers.

The hands-on learning experiences, such as field visits and special lectures, deepened my understanding of Korean community development, particularly the Saemaul Undong, which is highly relevant to my work in community-based forest management in the Philippines. The scholarship's financial support allowed me to focus entirely on my studies, leading to high academic achievements and a successful research study. The experience has greatly enhanced my knowledge and skills for future contributions to sustainable forestry and community development.”

Thesis Summary: Comparative Analysis of Saemaul Undong of South Korea and Community-Based Forest Management Program of the Philippines

This research explores the potential integration of Saemaul Undong principles and strategies to strengthen the implementation of the Community-Based Forest Management (CBFM) program in the Philippines through a comparative analysis. The research design adopts a mixed-methods approach which involves a thorough analysis of relevant documents and literature (qualitative), and a structured survey questionnaire (quantitative). A total of 55 participants (Korea: 10, Philippines: 45) were surveyed in this study.

The study reveals a statistically significant difference in perceived effectiveness between Saemaul Undong and CBFM in forest management but no significant difference in poverty alleviation, community empowerment, governance, and overall implementation and impact. The comparative analysis reveals the integration potential of Saemaul Undong principles and strategies into CBFM such as the match system, incentive-based, establishment of training institutes, and cooperative governance structures among others. Moreover, the study reveals that while CBFM already incorporates some elements of SMU, the implementation is not as robust and effective compared with SMU. This suggests the principle of “mindset change” from SMU that could significantly enhance CBFM's effectiveness.



Khaing Hsu Wai



- Master's degree & Environmental Horticulture
- Department of Environmental Horticulture
- University of Seoul
- 2024-2026

Current Affiliation

Staff Officer in the Natural Forest and Plantation Division in the Forest Department, Naypyidaw, Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation

Country

MYANMAR

“Receiving this scholarship program has been instrumental in my academic journey as a graduate student in Korea. It can enhance both personal and professional growth and while the demands of academic and research work, along with navigating diverse cultural settings, can present challenges to make a highly regarded opportunity in the field of environmental science. This program offers a unique and enriching study experience about forestry and environmental conservation. I can benefit from an academic curriculum focused on sustainable development coupled with research opportunities that contribute to real-world solutions.

The financial assistance provided by the AFOCO Landmark Scholarships relieved me from the stress of tuition fees and living expenses, allowing me to dedicate my time to research without financial distractions. This support will be crucial during a pivotal field visit to the plantation sites of dry zone areas, where I have to gather data for my thesis. This opportunity is to develop effective reforestation techniques that maximize the survival and growth rates of this species in the central dry zone's challenging conditions. The combination of hands-on learning from field visits and the financial stability provided by the scholarship enabled me to achieve significant academic milestones and contribute meaningfully to the field of environmental science.”

Thesis Summary: Growth Response to Four Major Species Planted to Environmental Factors in the Central Dry Zone of Myanmar

Myanmar is the sixth most deforested country in the world. More than 56% of the forest land in the dry zone area of Myanmar has been degraded by many factors mostly by humans (overutilization of fuel woods, expansion of agricultural lands, and overgrazing). There are tremendous efforts to combat deforestation in the central dry zone by promoting greening programs. Forming the Dry Zone Greening Department is one of the biggest programs within the working areas of 3 regions, 13 districts, and 53 townships. Acacia catechu (Sha), Albizia lebeck (Myanmar Kokko), Azadirachta indica (Tama, neem), and Tectona hamiltonian (Dahat), are the major tree species used in planted forests in dry zone areas. Understanding the growth patterns and natural regeneration processes is crucial for developing effective rehabilitation strategies and suggesting practical guidelines in reforestation projects, including planting techniques, maintenance practices, and monitoring protocols.



Michelle N. Ojeda



- Master of Science in Biological and Environmental Science
- Department of Biological and Environmental Science
- Dongguk University
- 2021-2023

Current Affiliation

Department of Environment and Natural Resources - Forest Management Bureau (DENR-FMB)

Country

PHILIPPINES

“The two-year Master’s Degree on Biological and Environmental Science provided a very good avenue for the undersigned to broaden her knowledge not just in forestry but also in other aspects of biological and environmental science. All in all, the Master’s Degree program at Dongguk University is very satisfactory considering all the aspects of learning. This program is recommended to all interested students who want to take up a Master’s degree in Korea.

The AFoCO Landmark Scholarship is very helpful to those who want to take up graduate studies to learn from Korea’s conservation efforts, experiences and best practices and learn from the best professors in the field of environmental conservation and related fields as well as learn Korea’s culture.

Since the students in the classes are of various nationalities which includes Korean, Vietnamese and Nepali, among others, their experiences in their respective countries in terms of conservation and protection of their natural resources as well as their rehabilitation and reforestation efforts were shared to everyone and analyzed which of their strategies are applicable in the Philippines.

During my time as scholar, there were no field visits due to travel restrictions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. In terms of financial support, it is a very big help to the students since they can focus solely on studying and not worry about the financial part since there is support from the program.”

Thesis Summary: Carbon Stock Assessment of a Reforestation Site within Mt. Arayat Protected Landscape, Pampanga

The study was conducted in a reforestation site established in 2012 through the National Greening Program located in Mt. Arayat Protected Landscape (MAPL), Pampanga, Luzon, Philippines. It aims to provide an accurate assessment on the contribution of reforestation sites in biomass production and carbon storage and to estimate the potential of these plantations to contribute to climate change mitigation efforts of the country.

Minh Hieu Bui



- Master of Science in Forest Management
- Department of Forest Management
- Kangwon National University
- 2022-2024

Current Affiliation

Forest Science Center of Northwestern Vietnam (FSCN), Vietnamese Academy of Forest Sciences (VAFS), Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD)

Country

VIET NAM

“The AFoCO Landmark Scholarship program was a transformative experience that allowed me to fully focus on my studies and research at Kangwon National University, under the guidance of Professor Jung Kee Choi. The program provided a comprehensive education environment, supporting my academic journey without financial concerns. I benefited greatly from field trips, scientific conferences, and networking opportunities, connecting with experts and colleagues from around the world. These experiences expanded my understanding of forestry, enhanced my research skills, and equipped me with practical insights necessary for my future career. The program also helped me develop a global perspective on sustainable forestry and conservation. With AFoCO’s support, I successfully completed my master’s thesis, which has significantly advanced my professional and academic growth. I am truly grateful to AFoCO for this invaluable opportunity, which has had a lasting impact on my career path and prepared me to contribute meaningfully to forest protection and sustainable development.”

Thesis Summary: Impact of Thinning Intensity on the Biomass of Coniferous Plantation in South Korea

Thinning is important in forest management, it can impact the stability of the ecosystem. However, there is not much data on how it affects biomass and carbon stock. This study was conducted to analyze the effect of thinning intensity on biomass within coniferous plantations (*Pinus densiflora*, *Pinus koraiensis*, *Larix kaempferi*) located in Gangwon and North Gyeongsang provinces, South Korea. Experimental plots were established, representing control (0% basal area removed), light thinning (20% basal area removed), and heavy thinning (40% basal area removed). The inventory spanned 9 years, repeated four times at a 3-year interval. According to the analysis results, thinning intensity had a strong influence on the biomass storages of individual trees. As the thinning intensity increased, the biomass of individual trees was found to increase, while the total stand biomass decreased. In control plots, total biomass was the greatest, but the majority of stand biomass came from smaller trees in DBH when compared to the thinned plots. Thinning also influenced the increment of stand biomass. In control plots, stand biomass increased the most but the growth rate was the lowest. This study is expected to be useful with basic information for establishing forest management plans to achieve diverse goals including biomass, sawtimber production, and carbon management.



Muhammad Sulaeman



- Ph.D Program Environmental Horticulture
- University of Seoul
- 2015 – 2018

Current Affiliation

Inspectorate General,
Ministry of Environment
and Forestry

Country

INDONESIA

“I had a very memorable experience during this program. I could feel studying in a different environment with a better education culture. I also got to know fellow students from various countries which further enriched my insight. We shared experiences and knowledge with each other.”

During this program, I made several field visits where I could find conditions that were very different from those in the field conditions in my country. This further enriched my knowledge and experience in dealing with various problems that I would face in applying the knowledge I gained after returning to my country.”

Thesis Summary: Conservation Prioritization in Forest Management Planning to Support of REDD+ (Case Study in Forest Management Unit of Jeneberang, Indonesia)

Land degradation is a serious threat to the sustainability of the Jeneberang KPH forest area. This condition threatens the existence of the ecosystem in the Jeneberang KPH forest landscape, so it is very important to regain the function of the Jeneberang KPH forest landscape as an ecosystem buffer through forest landscape restoration activities. The characteristics of the ecosystem are very complex so that they require simplification that can represent the ecosystem as a whole. Therefore, it is necessary to design a model that can be used as a standard in planning forest function restoration activities (restoration).

This model will help forest planners and managers, because forest planners and managers still need tools that can be used to determine the ecological criticality of the land and select potential forest patches to increase forest ecosystem connectivity.

This study aims to obtain a forest management model to support the implementation of REDD+. To obtain this management model, there are several specific objectives that must be achieved, namely:

- 1) Preparing land suitability data to restore ecosystems in order to reduce carbon emissions from deforestation and forest degradation
- 2) Formulating a forest carbon dynamics model based on ecological and social studies to save forest carbon through the REDD+ system
- 3) Creating a forest management model to reduce emissions from deforestation and degradation forests

The benefits of this research are obtained:

- 1) Conservation framework and procedures for determining forest landscape restoration priorities with a more appropriate landscape analysis approach
- 2) Contributing to forest planning by providing alternative forest zoning management and evaluation activities.
- 3) Providing useful information for policy makers for low-emission forest development



Pinky B. Dayandante



- Master of Science in International Agriculture Development and Cooperation
- Graduate School of International Agricultural Technology
- Seoul National University
- 2023-2024

Current Affiliation

Department of Environment
and Natural Resources -
Forest Management Bureau
(DENR-FMB)

Country

PHILIPPINES

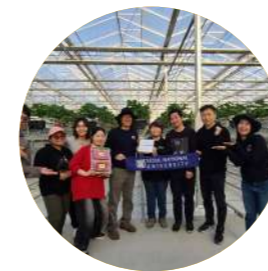
“Being part of the AFoCO Landmark Scholarships program was a privilege since it provides opportunities for higher education on forestry-related fields at universities in the Republic of Korea. It helped me gain a lot of experience not only in class but also in learning the culture of Korea. My study experience was incredibly enriching. The program offered financial support, enabling me to focus entirely on my studies. The exposure with other scholars in the program also helped me broaden my understanding in their different fields of expertise. The program significantly enhanced my academic and professional growth in forestry.”

The scholarship significantly advanced my academic and career prospects in forestry. It greatly enhanced my skills and understanding of international cooperation and development. It provided me with networking opportunities and connected me with other professionals outside of the field of forestry.

The program’s financial support has been crucial. It has alleviated my financial worries, enabling me to concentrate entirely on my studies. This focus led to significant academic achievements, including good grades and nearly completion of my research projects.”

Thesis Summary: The Landscape of International Forestry Cooperation in the Philippines

The Philippines, an archipelago with a rich biodiversity, has experienced significant forest cover loss over the decades, primarily due to human-induced activities such as intensive logging, agricultural expansion, and policy failures. International forestry aid plays a crucial role in addressing these problems by supporting national or local forestry initiatives. This study examined the landscape of international forest cooperation in the Philippines. It identified the key actors, delivery mechanisms, and project objectives in international forest cooperation and analyzed the trends and characteristics across different temporal changes. The analysis included quantitative and qualitative content, examining 23 donors - 16 countries, two development banks, and five organizations - that contributed USD 174.62 million in forestry aid to the Philippines. The study reveals that Japan, the Asian Development Bank (ADB), Germany, the Republic of Korea, and the Global Environment Facility (GEF) are the most significant donors, with notable peaks in disbursements linked to specific policy objectives, including Rio Markers, investment projects, and the environment. The Philippine government plays a crucial role in project implementation, with a recent shift towards leveraging loans and other financial instruments in recent years. While international forestry aid has positively impacted forestry initiatives, challenges in sustainable management persist. These findings offer valuable insights for policy formulation to enhance international forest cooperation, sustainable forestry, and environmental protection in the Philippines.



Siriluck Thammanu



- Ph.D. (Forest Environmental Science)
- Department of Forest Science
- Seoul National University
- 2017-2021

Current Affiliation

Forest Research and Development Office, Royal Forest Department, Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment

Country

THAILAND

“My Ph.D. experience at Seoul National University, supported by the AFoCO Landmark Scholarship, profoundly impacted my life and career. It equipped me with advanced knowledge and skills in forestry that I now apply to my work at the Royal Forest Department, particularly in community forest management. The scholarship gave me the invaluable opportunity to study abroad, which significantly enhanced my expertise in sustainable forest management.

My dissertation focused on sustainable management of forest resources, balancing forest economics with conservation. Through a case study at Ban Mae Chiang Rai Lum Community Forest, I gained new insights into community forest management, which I now apply and share with my department to address forest challenges in Thailand. I also collaborate with other sectors to expand successful forest management practices.

My Ph.D. studies have strengthened my ability to address forest issues in Thailand, particularly in educating rural communities on sustainable management. The knowledge and methodologies I gained in Korea will help me contribute to both national development and international cooperation on forest-related issues in the future.”

Thesis Summary: Effects of Community Forest Management on Biodiversity and Utilization of Non-Timber Forest Products in Northern Thailand

Forest resources are crucial to local livelihoods, and effective management of community forests is likewise essential to the sustainability of those resources. The study area was Ban Mae Chiang Rai Lum Community Forest located in Pa Mae Phrik National Forest Reserve in northern Thailand.

The study area features exceptionally diverse plant species as 197 species, 144 genera, and 62 plant families were recorded. Elevation, distance to streams, soil moisture, organic matter, and distance to communities were the factors that were most impactful on tree composition and distribution.

The study area was rich in NTFPs as 160 of the populating species have medicinal uses, 89 are used as food, 37 as extractives, 32 as fuelwoods, and 12 species as fibers. A majority of surveyed households (68.55%) depended on NTFPs. The value of the harvested NTFPs was 6.35% of the annual community income.

In addition, NTFP dependence and participation in CFM were directly related to the socio-economics of identifiable groups in the community and their engagement in CFM processes.



Siswo



- Ph.D. Forest Science
- Department of Forest Science
- Kongju National University
- March 2021 - Feb 2024

Current Affiliation

Center for Standard Implementation of Environment and Forestry Instruments, Agency for Standardization of Environmental and Forestry Instruments, Ministry of Environments and Forestry

Country

INDONESIA

“I had the honor of being an AFoCO Landmark Scholarship recipient in 2021, which made my dream of earning a Ph.D. a reality. Despite challenges from the COVID-19 pandemic, I pursued my doctoral degree at the Department of Forest Science, Kongju National University. The program provided me with not only academic growth but also invaluable social and cultural experiences, expanding my understanding of Korean culture and building global connections with international peers. This scholarship enhanced my career prospects as a scientist and forestry practitioner, preparing me to collaborate with both government and non-government organizations. I am deeply grateful for AFoCO’s financial support and the guidance from Professor Yun Chung Weon, which enabled me to complete my program on time.”

Thesis Summary: Tree Vegetation and The Ecosystem Functions in the Reforested Area of Kulon Progo Community Forestry

This study has assessed the influence of tree vegetation and associated environmental factors on the highlighted ecosystem or ecological functions in the case study of the protected forest of Kulon Progo community forestry, Yogyakarta, Indonesia. Overall, different stand types showed significant differences in the composition and species characteristics, mainly in terms of canopy coverage or canopy density. Development of the dense canopy trees followed by decreasing intensity of below-stand utilization provide more organic matter and good conditions for soil organic carbon storage and accumulation. Moreover, the combination effect of the denser canopy coverage and high values of soil organic matter and soil organic carbon as well as the less intensity of below-stand utilization simultaneously improve basic soil functions related to soil stability, water infiltration, and nutrient. In addition, tree vegetation with denser canopy coverage, higher soil organic matter and soil organic carbon, provide positive effects on understory herb-layer composition by showing more native forest species (shade-tolerant and semi shade-tolerant species) and more seedling availability reflecting the potential for tree regeneration.



Su Yi Hnin



- Master of Forest Resources and Ecological Restoration
- Department of Forest Resources and Ecological Restoration
- Park Chung Hee School of Policy and Saemaul (PSPS), Yeungnam University
- March 2018 - August 2019

Current Affiliation

Nature and Wildlife Conservation Division, Forest Department, Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation

Country

MYANMAR

“After completing my Bachelor’s in Forestry in 2012 and four years with the Forest Department, I received the AFoCO Landmark Scholarship in 2017 to pursue an M.Sc. at Yeungnam University. The program provided not only financial support but also academic guidance, networking, and practical learning through field visits. It broadened my understanding of sustainable forestry and conservation, while enhancing my problem-solving skills. Networking with professionals and engaging in seminars deepened my knowledge of climate change and forest restoration. Field visits bridged theory and practice, providing valuable insights. This scholarship has significantly impacted my growth, preparing me to contribute effectively to environmental conservation.”

Thesis Summary: Assessing Local Community’s Preference for Conservation of Wetland: The Case Study of Moeyungyi Wetland Wildlife Sanctuary in Myanmar

This study focused on assessing the influencing factors on local community preferences for wetland conservation (Willingness to Pay, WTP) and public awareness regarding the Moeyungyi Wetland Wildlife Sanctuary (MWWS) in Myanmar. The research involved surveying 320 households from 14 villages around MWWS, which heavily depend on its ecosystem services.

The results showed that 74.8% of respondents supported the proposed bids for wetland sustainability, valuing MWWS for its importance to their livelihoods. The average WTP was estimated at 17,859.4 Kyats annually (US\$ 11.91) or 1,488 Kyats monthly (US\$ 0.99). Age and household size negatively influenced WTP, while income and education levels positively influenced WTP at a 95% confidence level. Environmental knowledge was also positively correlated with WTP.

The study found that 56.6% of respondents had general knowledge of wetlands, and over half had participated in awareness programs, mainly through community meetings. Overall, WTP was not significantly affected by the length of residence, as most respondents were native to the area.



Wencilito Hintural



- Ph.D. Forest Resources major in Urban Forestry and Planning
- Department of Environment and Forest Resources
- Chungnam National University
- 2023-2026

Current Affiliation

Department of Environment and Natural Resources - Ecosystems Research and Development Bureau

Country

PHILIPPINES

“Landmark Scholarship has significantly enhanced my research capabilities and academic journey. This program underscores AFoCO’s commitment to fostering education and capacity-building in sustainable forest management. By offering scholarships tailored to students from the Asian region, AFoCO strengthens forest cooperation among member countries.

The scholarship has provided access to a network of leading scholars and practitioners in forestry and climate change, broadening my perspective and deepening my understanding of diverse approaches to sustainable forest management. Engaging with experts and fellow scholars has expanded my network and provided valuable insights into regional strategies for addressing forestry challenges.”

Thesis Summary: Enhancing Urban Green Space Sustainability: A Comprehensive Analysis of Ecosystem Services, Environmental Cost-Benefit, and Policy Effectiveness in Manila, Philippines

This study investigates strategies to enhance the sustainability of urban green spaces (UGS) in Manila City, Philippines, focusing on ecosystem services, environmental benefit-cost analysis, and governance strategies. Climate change exacerbates the urban heat island (UHI) effect, increasing heatwaves and undermining urban livability. UGS can mitigate these impacts through various ecosystem services, including carbon sequestration and pollution removal, yet their potential remains underutilized. Manila faces environmental challenges such as flooding, pollution, and rapid urbanization, which strain its green spaces. This study is divided into three chapters:

1. Impact Evaluation of Urban Green Space Expansion: Utilizes i-Tree Canopy and Life Cycle Assessment (LCA) frameworks to evaluate current and potential benefits of tree cover, assess economic values, and determine impacts on climate change mitigation.

2. Carbon Footprint Analysis of Rizal Park: Quantifies ecosystem services of Rizal Park, including carbon sequestration and pollution removal, and assesses economic costs and benefits of various maintenance scenarios, evaluating their effects on the park’s carbon footprint.

3. Spatiotemporal Analysis of Urban Green Spaces and Policy Effectiveness: Analyzes land cover changes to evaluate the effectiveness of urban greening policies, identifies gaps and enablers in policy frameworks, and proposes recommendations for improving governance and policy implementation.



5 AFoCO Partner Universities

Chungbuk National University

Degree offered Ph.D. / M.Sc.
School/College College of Agriculture, Life and Environment Sciences
Department Forest Science



Chungbuk National University



The Department

Education Purpose

The agricultural and biological industry has been a cornerstone of human history, providing essential food resources and contributing to survival and progress. Today, it remains a future-oriented industry with a crucial role in passing down essential knowledge to future generations. Ensuring a secure food supply, preserving biodiversity and natural environments, producing eco-friendly agricultural products, and offering high-value agricultural products and services are vital for the stable growth of the agricultural economy. Moreover, enhancing infrastructure and nurturing experts in agriculture and biology are central to the mission.

About the Department

Chungbuk National University's Department of Forestry, dedicated to producing experts in the forestry field through comprehensive education and research. The program covers a wide range of topics, including forestry, landscaping, forest economics, and forest policies. Recently, the department has also established a major in forest healing, a field that is gaining significant attention for its innovative approach to health and well-being through nature.

The Department of Forestry boasts a team of experienced faculty members who are leaders in their fields. Students have the opportunity to engage in advanced research projects that address real-world challenges and contribute to the body of knowledge in forestry and environmental sciences.



Source: Website of Chungbuk National University

Chungnam National University

Degree offered Ph.D. / M.Sc.
School/College College of Agriculture and Life Sciences
Department Environment and Forest Resources



Chungnam National University



The Department

Education Purpose

The Department of Environment & Forest Resources at Chungnam National University is committed to training experts who can tackle the complex and pervasive problems facing forests today. Through a multidisciplinary approach, the department promotes rigorous study and analysis of the natural environment, equipping students with the knowledge and experiences necessary to meet the environmental challenges of tomorrow.

About the Department

The Department of Environment and Forest Resources offers an interdisciplinary approach to understanding and addressing environmental and forest-related issues. The department's comprehensive program integrates natural and social sciences, providing students with a well-rounded education that encompasses both technical skills and socio-environmental perspectives.

By combining these fields, the department prepares students to develop effective solutions for forest management and environmental conservation. This interdisciplinary approach ensures that graduates are well-equipped to address the complex challenges facing forests and natural resources.

The Department of Environment and Forest Resources aims to produce graduates who are not only knowledgeable but also ready to take on leadership roles in environmental and forest resource management. Its alumni are well-prepared to make a significant impact on the future of environmental conservation and sustainable forestry.



Source: Website of Chungnam National University

Dongguk University

Degree offered Ph.D. / M.Sc.
School/College College of Life Science and Biotechnology
Department Biological and Environmental Science



Dongguk University



The Department

Education Purpose

The Department of Biological and Environmental Science at Dongguk University is at the forefront of addressing some of the most pressing global issues today. As a rapidly growing discipline, The department is dedicated to finding scientific solutions to critical challenges such as climate change, desertification, air pollution, biodiversity loss, and shortages of food, energy, and clean water.

About the Department

The Department of Biological and Environmental Science at Dongguk University offers high-quality teaching and cutting-edge scientific research to tackle these complex problems. The programs are designed to provide students with a deep understanding of how basic biological science can be applied to solve environmental issues. Key focus areas include natural conservation and the sustainable use of biological resources, leveraging advanced technologies such as biotechnology, nanoscience, and bioenergy.



Source: Website of Chungnam National University

Kangwon National University

Degree offered Ph.D. / M.Sc.
School/College College of Forest and Environmental Sciences
Department Environment and Forest Resources



Kangwon National University



The Department

Education Purpose

The College, the only one of its kind in Korea, educates students to effectively produce, manage and utilize forest resources and to help foster ecological principles that are necessary in industrial society in the student consists of the Division of Forest Resources and the Departments of Wood Science & Technology, and Department of Paper Science & Engineering.

About the Department

The Division of Forest Resources contains three Programs: "Forest Resources Development," "Forest Resources Production," and "Forest Resources Protection."

- Forest Resources Development
 In the Department of Forest Resources Development, professional knowledge and technology are acquired for the effective management and protection of a forest's natural resources that are based on the biological theory of forest ecology.
- Forest Resources Production
 The Program of Forest Resources Production provides students with knowledge in the field in accordance with the newly growing recognition of the importance of forests.
- Forest Resources Protection
 The Program of Forest Resources Protection offers courses to protect and foster forest trees, forest wildlife, and other secondary products from insects, disease, forest fire, pollution and climatic disasters.



Source: Official Instagram of Kangwon National University

Hear from the Professor



Professor Kang Hodeok
 Department of Biological and Environmental Science

The AFoCO scholarship students were academically well-prepared and had valuable field experience. Despite limited Korean proficiency, they effectively communicated in English and actively participated in class discussions. Students from the Philippines and Vietnam demonstrated strong research skills, delivering impressive presentations on forest-related topics and publishing their work in scientific journals. Regular meetings are recommended to share updates on global issues like climate change and REDD+. AFoCO should continue monitoring their progress after returning to their home countries.



Kongju National University

Degree offered Ph.D. / M.Sc.
School/College College of Natural Sciences
Department Forest Science



Kongju National University



The Department

Education Purpose

With the aim of inculcating a deeper understanding of precious forest resources, the Department of Forest Resources provides chances to learn dendrology, forestry, forestry management, forest ecology, forest and environment, forest utilization and other topics.

About the Department

At Kongju National University's Department of Forest Resources, the vital importance of forests is recognized. The mission is to raise public awareness about the significance of forests and promote a harmonious, healthy, and beautiful coexistence with nature. The department strives to cultivate thriving forests filled with diverse plant and animal life, robust ecosystems that purify water and air, and accessible, well-maintained forest paths and infrastructures for public enjoyment and relaxation.

The Department of Forest Resources offers a wide range of forest science courses in forest ecology, forest development and tree breeding, forest management, forest engineering, forest healing, and other fields (forestry machinery, tree pathology) taught by five professors. Through field education in the forests near the school and as far away as Naeseorak, students are provided opportunities to experience and understand the principles and laws of the ecosystem and to communicate with nature.



Source: Website of Kongju National University

Kookmin University

Degree offered Ph.D. / M.Sc.
School/College College of Science and Technology
Department Forestry, Environment and Systems



Kookmin National University



The Department

Education Purpose

The Program provides candidates of demonstrated academic and research abilities with opportunities to develop and strengthen their research capabilities and knowledge to advanced levels. Doctoral thesis involves intensive research resulting in an original and scholarly contribution to knowledge in the field of his/her study. The candidate is expected to initiate and conduct the research program under general direction of a supervisor

About the Department

The Department of Forest Environment Systems aims to foster professional talents through the acquisition of knowledge and technology that can promote and sustain the economic, social, environmental, ecological, and cultural values of forests. This department focuses on fostering professional talents who can research and operate not only traditional forest science and technology but also cutting-edge complex science and technology in order to preserve and manage forest resources such as forestry resources, water resources, recreation resources, wild bird resources, and cultural resources in a sustainable and scientific manner, as well as multi-purpose management and use of forests.

- Department of Forestry, Environment, and Systems
The objective of the Department of Forestry, Environment, and Systems is: to use a scientific system approach to forests and the environment ; to foster practical skills for multi-purpose management and sustainable use; to execute the preservation and maintenance of natural resources; to research methods for preserving the beauty of forests and improving mental and physical health; and to produce new experts equipped with the expertise necessary to create the most appropriate communication between man and nature.
- Department of Forest Products and Biotechnology
The Department of Forest Products & Biotechnology provides undergraduate and graduate students with the knowledge and research tools to create the next generation of lignocellulosic resources, ranging from traditional forest products to renewable biobased products, for meeting the social needs of low-carbon, green growth in the 21st century.



Source: Website of Kookmin University

Seoul National University

Degree offered Ph.D. / M.Sc.
School/College College of Agriculture and Life Sciences
Department Forest Environmental Science and Environmental Materials Science



Seoul National University



The Department

Education Purpose

The Department of Forest Sciences at Seoul National University is dedicated to fostering the sustainable management and utilization of forest resources. Recognizing the critical role of forests as environmental assets, the department has been restructured into two specialized programs: Forest Environmental Science and Environmental Materials Science. The goal is to tackle key issues in biology, conservation, management, and the utilization of forest resources, and to share research findings with the scientific community, resource user-groups, and the public.

About the Department

The major in forest environmental science covers important issues and emphasizes the various virtues and functions of forests and environmental resources. The students in this major focus on how to maintain and enhance the functions of forest ecosystems, how to efficiently manage and use forest resources, and how to restore the destroyed environments or disturbed ecosystems. This course of study aims to produce well-trained people who are capable of keeping forest resources (wildlife, forest materials, water, and recreation resources) sustainable, as well as researching methods for efficient conservation, use, and management of forest resources.

The environmental materials science program offers diverse basic and applied courses as well as laboratory and field practices in physics and chemistry to teach students how to utilize wood more effectively and efficiently both in industry and daily life. The major is designed to create and disseminate knowledge about wood, paper science and engineering, and forest products and their utilization, through lectures, labs, and practices.

Hear from the Professor



Professor Kang Kyu-Suk
Department of Forest Sciences
Forest Environmental Science Major

The AFoCO scholarship students showed strong dedication to their academic and research responsibilities, even when faced with unfamiliar subjects like forest genetics and tree breeding. In particular, they deeply appreciated learning advanced seed selection programs not taught in their home countries. The Landmark Scholarship program effectively highlighted the importance of international cooperation for forest conservation in Asia. AFoCO students are grateful for the scholarship and recognize the need for international collaboration to advance forestry research. It is hoped that they will continue to contribute to international forest cooperation and research upon returning to their home countries.



Seoul National University-Pyeongchang

Degree offered Ph.D. / M.Sc.
School/College Graduate School of International Agricultural Technology
Department International Agricultural Development and Cooperation



Seoul National University-Pyeongchang



The Department

Education Purpose

Graduate School of International Agriculture and Technology (GSIAT) which consists of five majors including Applied Animal Science, Food Technology, Crop Biotechnology, Green Ecosystem Engineering, and International Agricultural Development and Cooperation is an educational institution that fosters the global experts to promote international and industry-university cooperation in the fields of international agriculture, forestry, and green bioindustry. Each major at GSIAT establishes a cluster of an industry, academy, and institute to provide an optimal research and practice environment based on practical and field-oriented education at the Pyeongchang campus of Seoul National University. With the experience of conducting several international projects with Asian, African, and Latin American countries, GSIAT is aiming to contribute to the development of the international community by advancing relevant technologies with the developing countries as well as sharing Korea's experience in this field.

About the Department

The International Agricultural Development and Cooperation major focuses on the analysis of policy discourse, policy instruments, communication, and governance aiming to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development goals (SDGs) by identifying and interpreting the problems related to agriculture and forest management, thereby broadening the understanding of related phenomena and suggesting new solutions. Green Ecosystem Engineering major aims to present a new paradigm in the energy & materials sector by developing conversion technologies to utilize the most abundant lignocellulosic biomass for the production of environment-friendly fuels, chemicals, and materials for substituting existing fossil resources, such as coal and crude oil.

The environmental materials science program offers diverse basic and applied courses as well as laboratory and field practices in physics and chemistry to teach students how to utilize wood more effectively and efficiently both in industry and daily life. The major is designed to create and disseminate knowledge about wood, paper science and engineering, and forest products and their utilization, through lectures, labs, and practices.



Source: From left to right; www.donga.com, www.facebook.com/gsiat, and www.kado.net

University of Seoul

Degree offered Ph.D. / M.Sc.
School/College College of Natural Science
Department Environmental Horticulture



University of Seoul



The Department

Education Purpose

The core objectives emphasize the development of logical analysis skills in environmental horticulture and the proficient use of various technologies and information. This foundation is complemented by a series of detailed objectives:

Analytical Skills and Technology Utilization:

- To develop students' logical thinking and analysis skills, incorporating in-depth knowledge of environmental horticulture along with technology and information utilization.

Self-Directed Learning and Problem Solving:

- To foster creative problem-solving abilities and future-oriented thinking, essential for those aiming to lead in the horticultural industry.

Communication and Leadership:

- To enhance self-expression, communication, and public leadership skills, preparing students for effective discussion, coordination, and ethical responsibilities in a global community.

About the Department

The department covers a diverse field of study which includes air pollution and plant science, environmental biochemistry, plant pathology, plant molecular biology, environmental soil science, environmental control of horticultural plants, plant genetics and breeding and environmental floriculture. Students can study alleviation of air pollution by plants, plant physiological ecology, plant protection, tissue culture and biotechnology, remediation of contaminated soil by plants, greenhouse and plant factory crop production, plant propagation and urban environmental floriculture and forestry.



Source: Website of University of Seoul

Yeungnam University

Degree offered Ph.D. / M.Sc.
School/College Park Chung Hee School of Policy and Saemaul (PSPS)
Department Sustainable Development - Forest Resources and Environmental Policy Major



Yeungnam University



The Department

Education Purpose

The Park Chung Hee School of Policy and Saemaul (PSPS) was established to share Korea's experiences in the socio-economic development with the rest of the world and thus contribute to the development of poorer countries and the general progress of mankind. In order to achieve this goal, the PSPS invites promising young students and leaders from other countries--developing countries in particular--to educate them about the state philosophy and leadership of President Park Chung Hee, the public policies and programs that the Korean state initiated and implemented during the development era of the 1960s and 1970s, including forestation programs and the strategy and experience of Saemaul Undong. It also aims to produce competent experts in the field of 'international development cooperation.'

About the Department

The Forest Resources and Ecological Restoration major under the Department of Sustainable Development aims to grow leaders to inherit and further develop the ideas of the Saemaul spirit. Practicing the Saemaul spirit involves understanding and practicing a new concept of forest science which emphasizes the importance of forest resources and constructs a new paradigm for silviculture, forestry, preservation and utilization of forest resources. The objective of this program is to contribute to the restoration of the forest ecological system by sharing the accumulated knowledge of forestation with the world through the education and marketing of the new forms of forest rehabilitation technology.



Source: Website of Yeungnam University

6 Way forward: Expanding Opportunities for a Greener Tomorrow

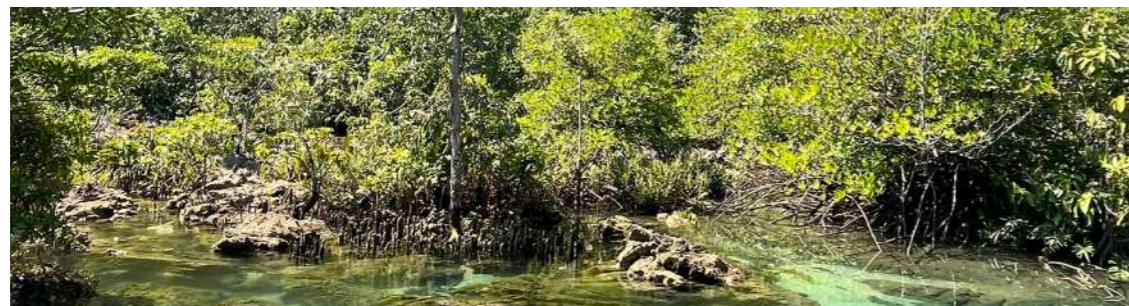
The AFoCO Landmark Scholarship Program has successfully nurtured future leaders in sustainable forestry and environmental conservation for the last decade. As we move forward, our mission is to expand the program's impact and establish a unique identity that sets it apart from other initiatives. The path ahead is clear. We will broaden our global reach, enhance support systems, and increase visibility across AFoCO member states and beyond.

We will expand global partnerships, inviting more member countries and institutions to join us. By engaging a wider network, we will not only increase the number of scholarship recipients but also diversify research outputs. Our goal is to establish partnerships with universities worldwide, offering joint-degree and credit exchange programs that provide students with exposure to both local and international forestry practices, enriching their academic and professional experiences.

To support academic and research excellence, we will attract high-achieving students and provide them with strong financial and academic support. By increasing research funding and facilitating participation in international conferences, we will ensure our scholars receive the guidance and opportunities they need to thrive. This commitment will make the AFoCO Scholarship highly competitive on the global stage.



Finally, we will build a strong alumni network, establishing a dedicated online platform for our graduates to connect, share experiences, and collaborate on research. This network will serve as a powerful community where alumni can mentor current students and contribute to the program's ongoing success. By leveraging their global expertise in forestry and environmental sectors, our alumni will showcase the AFoCO Scholarship's success in shaping impactful leaders for the future.



Join us on a transformative journey with the AFoCO Scholarship Program and help shape the future of forestry and environmental conservation.

Together, we will make a lasting impact on the forestry sector and create a more sustainable world.

7 Acknowledgment

Landmark Scholarship Students

1 Mr. Neab Keng	Cambodia	16 Ms. Carmina M. Canua	Philippines
2 Mr. Nhem Sareth	Cambodia	17 Mr. Edward Fortes Dumrique	Philippines
3 Mr. Teav Tepkosal	Cambodia	18 Ms. Michelle N. Ojeda	Philippines
4 Mr. Muhammad Sulaeman	Indonesia	19 Ms. Pinky B. Dayandante	Philippines
5 Mr. Nur Syamsi Muhammad	Indonesia	20 Mr. Wencelito Hintural	Philippines
6 Mr. Siswo Remove	Indonesia	21 Ms. Aomjitr Sena	Thailand
7 Ms. Tri Sayektiningsih	Indonesia	22 Ms. Areeyapat Petcharat	Thailand
8 Ms. Baisone Inthirath	Lao PDR	23 Ms. Chulalak Kaewsongsi	Thailand
9 Mr. Phayvanh Alounsavath	Lao PDR	24 Ms. Siriluck Thammanu	Thailand
10 Mr. Somsanouk Pathammavongsa	Lao PDR	25 Mr. Duy Vuong Nguyen	Viet Nam
11 Mr. Aung Aung	Myanmar	26 Mr. Minh Hieu Bui	Viet Nam
12 Ms. Ei Sandi Sett	Myanmar	27 Mr. Minh Quang Nguyen	Viet Nam
13 Ms. Khaing Hsu Wai	Myanmar	28 Mr. Tran Hai Long	Viet Nam
14 Ms. Su Yi Hnin	Myanmar	29 Mr. Tran Thi Mai Anh	Viet Nam
15 Mr. Thant Sin Aung	Myanmar	30 Mr. Vo Trung Kien	Viet Nam

Landmark Scholarship Supervisors

1 Chang-Duck Koo	Chungbuk National University	10 Joo-Sang Chung	Seoul National University
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3 Se-Bin Kim	Chungnam National University	12 Mi-Sun Park	Seoul National University
4 Ho-Duck Kang	Dongguk University	13 Sang-Jun Im	Seoul National University
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6 Chung-Weon Yun	Kongju National University	15 Su-Young Woo	University of Seoul
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9 Chang-Yong Choi	Seoul National University		

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8 Contact Information



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About the
Scholarship Program

The Secretariat
Location



Asian Forest Operations Organization

