

Seventh Session of the Assembly
26-27 October 2022

Agenda Item 3

Report of the Executive Director on the work and long-term plan of the organization

1. In accordance with Paragraph 4(d) of Article 9 of the Agreement on the Establishment of AFoCO, the Executive Director will address the Representatives to the Assembly and report highlights and major areas of activities on the work of AFoCO. Following the recommendation and guidance of the Assembly during the Fifth Session of the Assembly, the updates will focus on the decisions adopted at the immediate past session of the Assembly.

2. The key decisions and endorsements adopted at the Sixth Session held on 29 March 2022 are as below:

- a. Rules of Procedure for Partner Countries and Partner Organizations (Decision 41-V-21R-ADD-1)

Based on Decision 41-V-21R, Promotion and Enhancement of Partnership, Partner Countries and Partner Organizations provides new category of participation and engagement for AFoCO. The Sixth Session of the Assembly endorsed the Rules of Procedures for Partners Countries and Partner Organizations of the Asian Forest Cooperation Organization.

The Secretariat, through various occasions, has promoted new category of participation and engagement to potential partner organizations. The Secretariat received intentions from 3 institutions to be reported in Agenda item 4.

- Ojeong Resilience Institute
- Chamber of Forest Engineers of Turkiye
- Forest for Peace

- b. Guidelines on Expanded Fellowship Program (G-5-22S)

The Assembly welcomed the introduction of the expanded fellowship program and endorsed the Guidelines on Expanded Fellowship Program. In accordance with the Guidelines, the Secretariat has undertaken a needs assessment and proceeded with invitation procedures.

c. Approval of new projects at 2022 Special Session (Decision 44-VI-22S)

Following the approval of the project "Establishment of ASEAN-Korea Garden in Cambodia," the Secretariat conducted 1) re-validation of the project site in Siem Reap Province, Cambodia, in cooperation with the Forestry Administration of Cambodia and Korea-Mekong Forest Cooperation Center in view of the recent developments on its project context vis-à-vis Recreational Forest Project of the KFS; 2) market/cost survey for the construction of the ASEAN-Korea Garden in Cambodia, in cooperation with eligible design and construction companies, and 3) project consultation meeting with Forestry Administration (FA) of Cambodia.

3. Highlights of activities since the 6th Session of the Assembly

a. Private sector grant program (REDD+ Feasibility study in member countries)

- The Secretariat developed the AFoCO Green Partnership which is a private sector engagement platform and introduced the platform during the Corporate Forum held in February 2022. Some private companies that participated in the Forum expressed their interest to partner with AFoCO. The Secretariat, in consultation with interested private companies and the Parties, developed specific plan and undertook the REDD+ feasibility, which are with SKForest in the Philippines, Yuhan-Kimberly in Mongolia, and Woori Financial Group in Cambodia.

b. Engagement at UN processes and initiatives

- The Secretariat participated at UNCCD COP 15 held in May 2022 to promote AFoCO and its activities. The Secretariat was granted provisional Observer status by the UNFCCC and it will be formalized at its COP 27 to be organized in November 2022.
- The Secretariat attended 2022 United Nations High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development under the theme of "Building back better from the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) while advancing the full implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development" in July 2022. The Secretariat participated in sessions especially focused on SDG 4 Quality Education, SDG 5 on Gender Equality, SDG 15 Life on Land, and 2023 SGD Summit.
- The Secretariat considered formally engaging in the UN Decade of Ecosystem Restoration to increase access to broader networks of public and private organizations supporting restoration and seek fundraising opportunities. After consultation and signing of partnership arrangement with UNEP, AFoCO is officially recognized as a Supporting Partner to UN Decade of Ecosystem Restoration since 22 August 2022.

- c. Engagement at XV World Forestry Congress (WFC)
 - AFoCO organized a total of 7 events, including the Pre-Congress of the XV WFC, and engaged in 15 sessions and side events at the WFC. AFoCO also had the opportunity to have physical meetings and explored partnerships with 14 partners during WFC. There were 136 delegates and participants from 23 countries who supported and participated in AFoCO events during the XV WFC.

- d. Second AFoCO Ministerial Meeting
 - AFoCO Ministerial Meeting was organized at the occasion of the XV WFC. The Meeting was attended by the honorable Ministers and high-level officials responsible for forestry from 11 Parties and Observer Country. The Meeting reiterated that the forest sector needs to maximize the emerging opportunities. As the global commitments and investments in the forest sector are increasing, the meeting shared views that it is imperative to clearly identify and integrate the role of the forest sector in national priorities, including its contribution to regional and international commitments. The points raised at the Meeting is summarized in the Chairperson's Summary of the Second AFoCO Ministerial Meeting.

- e. Fund Confirmation for Multi-country Programs and Projects
 - AFoCO launched a multi-country program with funding confirmation from the ASEAN-Korea Cooperation Fund (AKCF) on Capacity Building on Enhancing Resilience to Forest Fire and Local Livelihood in CLMV Countries. The project manager is recruited in May 2022 for implementation for activities.
 - Funding for the Mekong-Korea Cooperation Fund (MKCF) project is confirmed for information, communication and technology (ICT) for adaptation to climate change and forest fire management in Mekong region.

Points for consideration

- 4. The Assembly may wish to take note of the information and provide further guidance and recommendations.
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