

# ANNUAL TECHNICAL WORKSHOP

FOR PROJECT MANAGEMENT  
& PERFORMANCE REVIEW



WORKSHOP HIGHLIGHTS

9 - 11 SEPTEMBER 2024



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# 1. Introduction

In line with the provisions of the AFoCO Project Manual (Section 10.3), the Asian Forest Cooperation Organization (AFoCO) Secretariat has been organizing the Annual Technical Workshop (ATW) for Project Management and Performance Review since 2020. The purpose of the workshop is to revisit the project achievements and progress since the last session of the ATW, which was held on 18 to 20 September 2023 in Hanoi, Viet Nam. While reflecting and sharing the overall experiences from the projects, the core of the discussions focused on project development ideas among the Implementing Agencies (IAs).

This year, the AFoCO Secretariat organized the fifth ATW in collaboration with Thailand's Royal Forest Department as co-host in Bangkok, Thailand, from 9 to 11 September 2024. Coinciding with the workshop, the first AFoCO Project Photo Exhibition was held to visually capture the essence of AFoCO's projects. In total, about 80 participants from 13 different member parties of AFoCO attended the ATW in 2024. The workshop comprised four (4) different sessions to cover diverse topics with the project managers, staffs, and national focal points who joined the workshop.

**Session I.**

**Impacts of Completed Projects**

**Session II.**

**Progress of Ongoing Projects**

**Session III.**

**New Projects**

**Session IV.**

**Carbon Projects**

<b>DAY 1 - PROJECT MANAGEMENT &amp; PERFORMANCE REVIEW</b>		
8:20 – 9:00	Registration	
9:00 – 9:10	Opening Remarks	Dr. Chongho PARK, Executive Director of AFoCO
	Congratulatory Remarks	Mr. Bannaruk SERMTHONG, Deputy Director General, Royal Forest Department
09:10 – 09:30	Intro to Workshop	Ms. Ji Yea CHA, Program Officer, Project & Program Division, AFoCO
<b>SESSION I. IMPACTS OF COMPLETED PROJECTS</b>		
09:30 – 10:30	AFoCO/006/2014, Viet Nam	Ms. LUONG Thi Khanh Linh, Project Staff for AFoCO/006/2014
	AFoCO/013/2020, Viet Nam	Dr. BUI Trong Thuy, Project Manager for AFoCO/013/2020
	AFoCO/018/2020, Timor-Leste	Mr. Mario GODINHO, Project Manager for AFoCO/018/2020
	AFoCO/023/2021, Indonesia	Ms. Ayun WINDYONINGRUM, Project Manager for AFoCO/023/2021
10:30 – 10:50	<i>Coffee Break</i>	
10:50 – 11:15	Q&A Session	Dr. Eun-Pyo HONG
<b>SESSION II. PROGRESS OF ONGOING PROJECTS</b>		
<b>Ongoing Projects: (1) Customized Restoration &amp; Reforestation Models</b>		
11:15 – 12:15	AFoCO/005/2014, Cambodia	Mr. SEAB Kimsrim, Project Staff for AFoCO/005/2014
	AFoCO/008/2014, Lao PDR	Mr. Phavanar SOMBANPHENG, Project Manager for AFoCO/008/2014
	AFoCO/025/2021, Lao PDR	Mr. Phavanar SOMBANPHENG, Project Manager for AFoCO/008/2014
	AFoCO/026/2021, Timor-Leste	Mr. Bartolomeu DE JESUS SOARES, Project Staff for AFoCO/026/2021
12:15 – 13:45	Lunch Break	
13:45 – 14:30	AFoCO/030/2022, Thailand	Dr. Bunjirtluk JINTARIDTH, Project Manager for AFoCO/030/2022
	AFoCO/031/2022, Viet Nam	Dr. NGUYEN Thuy My Linh, Project Coordinator for AFoCO/031/2022
	AFoCO/039/2023, Mongolia	Mr. Batsukh TUMUR, Project Manager for AFoCO/039/2023
14:30 – 14:55	Q&A Session	Prof. Jisoon CHANG
14:55 – 15:15	<i>Coffee Break</i>	
<b>Ongoing Projects (2): Climate Change &amp; Biodiversity Conservation</b>		
15:15 – 16:15	AFoCO/024/2021, Viet Nam	Mr. PHAM Ngoc Duong, Project Coordinator for AFoCO/024/2021
	AFoCO/036/2022, Cambodia	Mr. KHORN Norin, Project Staff for AFoCO/036/2022
	AFoCO/038/2023, Cambodia	Mr. LIC Vuthy, Project Manager for AFoCO/038/2023
	AFoCO/040/2023, Philippines	Mr. Ronino GIBE, Project Manager for AFoCO/040/2023
16:15 – 16:40	Q&A Session	Prof. Jisoon CHANG
<b>Ongoing Projects (3): Systematic Management of Forest Resources and Disasters</b>		
16:40 – 17:25	AFoCO/014/2020, Myanmar	Dr. THANT Shin, Deputy Project Manager for AFoCO/014/2020
	AFoCO/028/2022, Kazakhstan	Mr. Yernar SARSENBAYEV, Project Manager for AFoCO/028/2022
	AFoCO/032/2022, CLMV	Dr. LEE Yeongjoo, Regional Project Manager for AFoCO/032/2022
17:25 – 17:50	Q&A Session	Prof. Jisoon CHANG
17:50 – 18:00	Wrap-up	AFoCO Secretariat
19:00 – 20:30	<i>Welcome Dinner</i>	

<b>DAY 2 - PROJECT MANAGEMENT &amp; PERFORMANCE REVIEW</b>		
<b>Ongoing Projects: (4) Local Livelihood Improvement &amp; Community Based Enterprises</b>		
08:20 – 09:35	AFoCO/015/2020, Myanmar	Dr. INKYIN Khaine, Deputy Project Manager for AFoCO/015/2020
	AFoCO/016/2021, Philippines	Ms. Janelyn FRANCISCO, Project Manager for AFoCO/016/2021
	AFoCO/017/2020, Bhutan	Mr. Lhab TSHERING, Project Staff for AFoCO/017/2020
	AFoCO/027/2022, Cambodia	Mr. PAK Sngoun Pisey, Project Manager for AFoCO/027/2022
	AFoCO/035/2022, All	Dr. Junghwan PARK, Regional Project Manager for AFoCO/035/2022
09:35 – 09:50	Q&A Session	Prof. Jisoon CHANG
09:50 – 10:10	<i>Coffee Break</i>	
<b>SESSION III. NEW PROJECTS</b>		
10:10 – 11:00	AFoCO/029/2022, Philippines	Mr. Ildonso L. QUILLOY, AFoCO National Focal Point for Philippines
	AFoCO/042/2024, Vietnam	Dr. HOANG Van Sam, Project Manager for AFoCO/042/2024
	AFoCO/043/2024, Lao PDR	Mr. Xaysompheng SENKHAMYONG, Project Manager for AFoCO/043/2024
	AFoCO/044/2024, Kazakhstan	Mr. NIYAZ Zholbarys, Project Manager for AFoCO/044/2024
	AFoCO/045/2024, Kyrgyzstan	Mr. Kanaat MUSURALIEV, Project Manager for AFoCO/045/2024
11:00 – 11:20	Q&A Session	Dr. Eun-Pyo HONG
11:20 – 12:00	Synthesis and Way Forward	Dr. PHAM Duc Chien, Director, Project & Program Division, AFoCO
12:00 – 13:30	<i>Lunch Break</i>	
13:30 – 18:00	Field Trip to Bang Kra Jao	
<b>DAY 3 - AFoCO PROJECT MANUAL &amp; FUTURE PROJECT DEVELOPMENT</b>		
08:30 – 09:30	Presentation on 10-year Evaluation of AFoCO	Dr. Eun-Pyo HONG Prof. Jisoon CHANG
09:30 – 11:40	AFoCO Project Manual Revision	Dr. Seonghan LEE, Team Leader, Project Team 1, Project & Program Division, AFoCO
11:40 – 12:00	Introduction to Information & Data Platform (IDP)	Ms. Pudsakorn NEAMSAWAT, AFoCO Fellowship Official
12:00 – 13:00	<i>Lunch Break</i>	
13:00 – 15:00	Project Development & AFoCO's Strategic Plan	Dr. Kikang BAE, Team Leader, Strategic Planning Team, Plannign & Operations Division, AFoCO
<b>SESSION IV. CARBON PROJECTS</b>		
15:00 – 15:05	Session Introduction	Ms. Youngju HAN, Program Officer, Project & Program Division, AFoCO
15:05 – 15:25	CAM Project Info Session	Mr. Tripurari PRASAD, Investment Manager, Climate Asset Management (CAM)
15:25 – 15:45	Q&A Session	AFoCO Secretariat
15:45 – 16:45	AFoCO-Acorn Project, Cambodia	Mr. KHORN Vantha, Project Focal for AFoCO-Acorn
	AFoCO-Acorn Project, Kyrgyzstan	Mr. Islambek AMANTAIEV, Project Focal for AFoCO-Acorn
	AFoCO-Acorn Project, Lao PDR	Mr. Phayvanh ALOUNSAVATH, Project Focal for AFoCO-Acorn
	AFoCO-Acorn Project, Viet Nam	Dr. LE Xuan Truong, Project Focal for AFoCO-Acorn
16:45 – 17:05	Q&A Session	AFoCO Secretariat
17:05 – 17:30	Closing & Photo Exhibition Award	Mr. Sunpil JIN, Vice Executive Director of AFoCO

## 2. Session I. Impacts of Completed Projects

The first session of the workshop featured presentations on the impacts of completed projects. This session comprised four (4) completed projects:

- AFoCO/006/2014 (Viet Nam)
- AFoCO/013/2020 (Viet Nam)
- AFoCO/018/2020 (Timor-Leste)
- AFoCO/023/2021 (Indonesia)

Project managers and staff presented its achievements, impact, and sustainability, offering insights of project implementation experience. Following this, a Q&A session encouraged discussions on project sustainability and impact. Each of the four (4) completed projects provided valuable ideas relevant to both project implementation and management.

AFoCO/006/2014 (Viet Nam)



AFoCO/013/2020 (Viet Nam)



AFoCO/018/2020 (Timor-Leste)



AFoCO/023/2021 (Indonesia)



# Rehabilitation and Development of Mangrove Forest Ecosystem in Thai Binh Province, Viet Nam

This project aims to conduct a survey and develop a detailed design for new afforestation and supplementary plantings. The plan also includes the protection of mangrove forest.

## Mangrove forestation in Thái Bình Province

The project established and developed 4 ha of model forests plantation including pure plantation, mixed plantation, non-timber forest products (NTFPs), and native species. A detailed design was also developed, featuring forest status maps covering 960 ha. Additionally, seed orchards were established to produce *P. caribaea* seedlings, supporting mangrove forest conservation and generating income. Compared to other forest types, these mangrove forests mitigate climate change more effectively as significant carbon sinks.

## Fostering commune-level forest management

To promote sustainable management of mangrove forests, the project implemented community-based management practices. The Provincial Project Management Board has developed four (4) mangrove forest management and protection regulations within the project area in collaboration with the Thái Bình Provincial Forest Protection Department and the People's Committees. To support the commune-level forest management teams, technical handbooks on planting, care, and protection of mangrove forests were distributed. As of now, the Thái Bình Provincial Project Management Board has transferred all transportation resources for monitoring, inspection, forest patrol, and protection activities. Following the completion of the project, Thái Bình Province plans to develop eco-tourism in the project area, creating economic incentives for local communities to support forest conservation.

The establishment of these mangrove forests represents an essential step in combating climate change and enhancing ecological stability. The project strengthened the role of mangroves as natural defenses against coastal erosion, storm surges, and flooding. Indeed, the mangrove forests protected the villages from destructive impacts of Typhoon Yagi in 2024. This experience reinforces the commune's commitment to safeguard mangrove forests. Climate resilience and benefits provided by mangrove forests will also continue after the project ends.

## Project Overview

**Duration:** 2014-2023

**Budget:** US\$ 1,650,000

### Project Site:

- Thai Thuy and Tien Hai Districts, Thai Binh Province



Project site in 2015 (top) and 2019 (bottom)



# Improving *Pinus caribaea* Morelet for Plantation on Degraded Land in Viet Nam's Northern Mountainous Region

This project aims to develop *Pinus caribaea* forests on degraded land in the northern mountainous regions. The goal is achieved by improving high-quality seedling production, developing intensive cultivation techniques, and establishing appropriate *P. caribaea* timber processing and preservation technology to provide raw materials for the timber processing industry.

## Successful establishment and maintenance of 4 ha seed orchard

The project selected plus trees and established seed orchards, each covering 2 ha in Quang Ninh and Vinh Phuc. To support seed orchard maintenance, technical guidelines on post-harvesting and propagation have been developed. Several training courses on propagation techniques and seed production were also conducted. Additionally, two (2) reports on the domestic and international consumption of *P. caribaea* timber were developed to assess the current timber market. The project has significantly improved the processes related to *P. caribaea*, enhancing its market value and supporting the timber industry. Potential income is expected to be generated for local communities, and techniques tested during the project will be applied for the expansion of models.

## Creation of soil maps and model forest plantation

The project created soil condition maps for five (5) provinces: 1) Quang Ninh; 2) Bac Giang; 3) Vinh Phuc; 4) Ha Noi, and; 5) Son La. Based on data collection and forest plantation management, a model forest plantation was developed. The project is expected to enhance soil quality on degraded land by increasing forest coverage. All models developed through the project will be maintained including tending and protection activities.

Overall, this project represents remarkable advancement in the *P. caribaea* timber industry and model forest plantation. The project not only increases forest coverage but also serves as a milestone for long-term forest management and restoration in Viet Nam.

### Project Overview

**Duration:** 2020-2023

**Budget:** US\$ 576,285

**Project Site:**

- Northern mountainous region of Viet Nam



Production of high-quality seedlings



Pure plantation model of *P. caribaea*



Training courses on forest rehabilitation



# Development of Agroforestry Models for Promotion of Reforestation in the Different Zones in Timor-Leste

This project aims to develop and disseminate agroforestry-based reforestation models suitable for various natural conditions across typical Agro-Ecological Zones (AEZs) in Timor-Leste, effectively meeting the needs of local communities. To achieve this, six (6) participatory land use planning (PLUP) initiatives across four (4) targeted municipalities were established.

## Strengthening capacity of stakeholders for sustainable forest management

Capacity building is important to ensure the sustainable forest management after the project period. This has been achieved through Capacity Development Needs Analysis (CDNA) workshop and a study tour for government representatives, NGOs, and local communities. As a result, approximately 300 farmers have acquired knowledge on PLUP and agroforestry practices. The project has enriched understanding of various agroforestry models to improve sustainable land management. Agroforestry knowledge of farmers and communities has also been increased as a mean to maximize land productivity.

## Advanced scientific data on tree growth to develop restoration models

The project has improved scientific knowledge regarding tree growth across various AEZs. Over a three-year period, monitoring data on tree growth was collected, indicating the survival rate of 47.77% for planted trees as of August 2024. This data will serve as a reference for future planning and development of reforestation models in Timor-Leste.

The project has generated meaningful insights through the establishment of demonstration plots for agroforestry models. The project plots are expected to function as living classrooms for learning best practices and exchanging knowledge on sustainable land management.

### Project Overview

**Duration:** 2021-2024

**Budget:** US\$ 605,580

**Project Site:**

- 6 sites located in 4 Municipalities (Bobonaro, Liquica, Covalima, and Ermera) representing 4 AEZs



Project steering committee meeting



Demonstration plot in Covalima municipality



# Innovative Solutions for Climate Change and Biodiversity Landscape Strategy to Support SDGs in Indonesia

This project aims to introduce innovative solutions to sustainable management practices and enhance the capacities of Forest Management Units (FMUs) and local communities. It focuses on supporting Indonesia's emissions reduction targets and biodiversity landscapes, contributing to Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs 1, 8, 13).

## Enhanced FMU governance through the nation's first FMU long-term Forest Management Plans

The project has trained FMU officials in the use of GIS tools and in forest carbon stock assessments for capacity building. To support the mitigation actions listed under the Indonesia's Net Sink 2030 strategy, the AFoCO project has assisted three (3) FMUs in developing detailed plans of long-term forest management.

## Establishment of 40 ha of demonstration plots in 3 forest ecosystems and installed Permanent Sampling Plots (PSPs) for long-term monitoring

The restoration and rehabilitation demoplots of the project present a model that would enable farmers to genuinely benefit from alternative livelihoods through the harvest and sale of forest commodities. This would help shift farmers away from their reliance on palm oil harvest. The project also established a silvofishery model/pilot area with three (3) mud crab enclosures to promote the cultivation of mud crabs as a sustainable mangrove management approach.

## Research contributions

Research papers have been published international proceedings and journals based on the analyses through the project activities:

- Forest cover change of karst forests in Maros regency, South Sulawesi, and peat forests in Sumbawa regency, West Nusa Tenggara
- Value chains and market analysis of potential commodities for Tuah Tani Tonggak Negeri forest farmers

Efforts to develop the first climate-adaptive, long-term forest management plans for FMUs were supported by capacity-building at provincial and community levels. FMU officials received mentoring on forest management plan development and training in monitoring forest resources through demonstration and permanent sampling plots. Local communities in forest farmer groups were equipped with skills to sustainably harvest and produce livelihood commodities.

## Project Overview

**Duration:** 2021-2024

**Budget:** US\$ 800,000

### Project Site:

- Mangrove ecosystem of Amplang Plampang FMU, Sumbawa Regency, West Nusa Tenggara Province
- Karst and lowland ecosystem of Bulusarang FMU, Maros Regency, South Sulawesi Province
- Tropical peatland forest of Kepau Jaya Forest Area with Specific Purpose (FWSP), Kampar Regency, Riau Province
- PSPs in Minas Tahura FMU, Siak Regency, Riau Province



Launch of the 'Field Guide Book to Birds of Amplang Plampang FMU'



Mud crab silvofishery area in the mangrove demo plot within Ampang Plampang FMU in West Nusa Tenggara

# DISCUSSION

## Project Implementation

- Despite delays caused by COVID-19, projects were implemented even during lockdown periods with support from the project management team and relevant stakeholders.
- In Viet Nam, additional preparations arose from changing rules and regulations, particularly from line ministries.
- Other challenges were observed including institutional arrangements, changing government regime, and new policies. These were successfully addressed through the leadership of the Director General, National Focal Point, Management Personnel, and staff.

## Glimpses of the Session





## Summary

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Projects in Viet Nam, Timor-Leste, and Indonesia were successfully completed, each addressing key priorities in sustainable forestry. In Viet Nam, mangrove forests were established as model forests, serving as critical carbon sinks and natural disaster defenses, while improved timber production and processing techniques of timber species provided economic benefits for local communities. In Timor-Leste, agroforestry models were successfully implemented across multiple municipalities, enhancing sustainable land use. In Indonesia, forest governance was strengthened through a model approach to sustainable forest ecosystem management, which included the development of climate-adaptive, long-term forest management plans, capacity-building, and the introduction of alternative livelihoods.

Despite challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, all projects achieved their objectives as planned. The positive impacts on government and local stakeholders in the participating countries demonstrate potential for replication in future initiatives.

## 3. Session II. Progress of Ongoing Projects

The second session of the workshop featured presentations on the progress of ongoing projects. This session was divided into four (4) different groups according to the theme of projects:

1. Customized Restoration & Reforestation Models
2. Climate Change & Biodiversity Conservation
3. Systematic Management of Forest Resources and Disasters
4. Local Livelihood Improvement & Community-based Enterprises

During the presentation, project managers and other participants shared information on the activities, outcomes, challenges, suggestions and lessons learned. Following this, a Q&A session led by moderators facilitated the discussion on the common and session-specific questions. Each of the 14 ongoing projects had the chance to present useful ideas not only for project implementation, but also for project management.



### 3.1. ONGOING PROJECTS:

## Customized Restoration and Reforestation Models

In response to degradation and deforestation, restoration practices are vital to increase forest cover. AFoCO has designed and established restoration and reforestation models tailored to specific ecological contexts. For Group 1, a total of seven (7) presentations under the theme of “Customized Restoration and Reforestation Models” were explored by project managers and staffs.



### Cambodia (AFoCO/005/2014)



As part of the project “**Establishment of Forest Genetics Research Center for Restoration of Major Timber Species in Cambodia,**” suitable areas for the demonstration forest site in Khun Ream were identified, and propagation of planting materials was completed. 25 top-growth provenances of *Dalbergia cochinchinensis* and *Pterocarpus macrocarpus* were also selected, and 1,500 seedlings were propagated through grafting in Khun Ream. In total, two (2) project sites were maintained, covering 24 ha of progeny test plantation and 5 ha of seed orchard. Furthermore, fireline was renovated to prevent forest fires.



### Lao PDR (AFoCO/008/2014)



Village-driven patrols

In the project “**Village-Based Forest Rehabilitation in Lao PDR,**” village-driven forest patrols were conducted twice a month across the target areas in Sangthong and Paksong. 5,000 black pepper seedlings were procured, and additional income for local villagers was generated through sale of seedlings, enrichment planting, maintenance, and protection of rehabilitated areas. The villagers constructed a natural water supply system from Kongtoun Mountain, providing clean water to nearby communities. Study tours and exchange programs were also organized.



### Lao PDR (AFoCO/025/2021)



Enrichment planting

In the project “**Integrated Village-Driven Forest Rehabilitation and Livelihood Improvement in Viengthong District,**” five (5) villages conducted natural regeneration across 650 ha and enrichment planting on 91 ha in 2023. This year, 150,000 seedlings were produced for enrichment planting across 91 ha. A total of eight (8) target villages are projected to carry out enrichment planting on 185 ha. To mitigate forest encroachment and reduce destruction, Village Forest Protection Groups (VFPGs) conducted monthly patrols.



## Timor-Leste (AFoCO/026/2021)



Seedling maintenance

The project **“Re-greening the Bare Lands in Timor-Leste through Promotion of Locally Customized Restoration Models”** aimed to tackle pressing issues related to land degradation, unsustainable agricultural practices, and unclear land tenure. maintenance activities have been conducted for saplings planted in Manuatuto. To date, a total of 74,715 saplings have been planted with 62,215 in Manututo Municipality and 12,500 in Aileu Municipality. Electricity installation and road construction were completed in the field office.



## Thailand (AFoCO/030/2022)



The project **“Improving Local Community’s Livelihoods and Engagement in Livelihoods and Engagement in Sustainable Forest and Land Management in Thailand through Forest Landscape Restoration”** focuses on converting 1,961 ha of sloped land in Pa Leaw Luang sub-district, involving 586 farmers, from agriculture land to agroforestry land. Forest trees were planted, and vetivers cultivated for soil and water conservation. To strengthen community enterprises, value-added products such as herbal freeze-dry items and bamboo biochar were developed, along with improved marketing channels.



Customized agroforestry models for farmers



## Viet Nam (AFoCO/031/2022)



Vegetation treatment

The project on **“Rehabilitation of Degraded and Potentially Deserted Forest Land in the Northwest Region of Viet Nam through Application of Integrated Technical Measures”** protected and monitored the enrichment of degraded forest models across four (4) provinces: 1) Hoa Binh; 2) Lai Chau; 3) Son La, and; 4) Dien Bien. Currently, 20 ha of rehabilitation models are regularly tended and protected. Vegetation treatments are also conducted three times a year in conjunction with replanting, pest control, and protective activities. Through regular checks on water meters and soil traps, data on water flows and soil conditions was collected. Additionally, four (4) training courses on soil reclamation and erosion control measures were organized, engaging all relevant stakeholders.



## Mongolia (AFoCO/039/2023)



Conducting trainings at the project site

The project “**Forest Restoration Demonstration through High-Capacity Tree Nursery Establishment and Building in Support of the Billion Tree National Movement (BTNM) in Mongolia**” commenced on Plant Tree Day 2024, planting 1,000 trees. The project implementation agency conducted a survey of soil, water, and infrastructure in collaboration with regional forestry department and water experts. A tree nursery was established in Dornod and Tuv provinces, and 94 ha of reforestation planting was conducted successfully with high survival rates.

## DISCUSSION

### Project Implementation

- Limited knowledge of tree breeding techniques and asexual propagation methods for timber species lead to inadequate project planning. To address this issue, it was suggested to organize study tours or field visits to successful AFoCO project sites.
- Since the preparation of tender documents has been conducted strictly according to the approved plan, unforeseen costs cannot be calculated in advance and were covered by budget reallocations.
- In Viet Nam, the project site was infested by termites and crickets. To minimize chemical use and enable regular pest and disease monitoring, timely treatment measures were implemented. Additionally, prolonged and severe drought conditions were caused by El Niño. To maintain soil moisture, the project applied super absorbent polymer particles. Water containers and an irrigation system were also installed to facilitate tree watering, and the bases of the trees were covered with straw to reduce excessive loss of moisture.

## Glimpses of the Session



## 3.2. ONGOING PROJECTS:

### Climate Change and Biodiversity Conservation

As climate change intensifies, the world faces unprecedented threats, leading to significant declines in biodiversity. AFoCO has developed and implemented projects to mitigate these impacts and foster resilient ecosystems. For Group 2, a total of four (4) presentations on “Climate Change and Biodiversity Conservation” were conveyed by project managers and officers, each offering a comprehensive perspective.

#### Viet Nam (AFoCO/024/2021)

As part of the project “**Conservation and Development of Forest Ecosystems Biodiversity Resources at Cat Tien National Park (CNTP),**” the information book on CNTP and monitoring of key species was published. Invasive and floating plants were controlled in Crocodile Lake, and the greenhouse for orchid genus resource conservation was also established at CNTP. Additionally, intensive grazing pasture management for ethnic minority communities was implemented, and workshop was conducted to seek solutions for minimizing the impacts of climate change.



Monitoring at CTNP

#### Cambodia (AFoCO/036/2022)



Construction of ASEAN-Korea garden

In the project “**The Establishment of ASEAN-Korea Garden in Cambodia,**” the company for garden construction was selected, and the groundbreaking ceremony was held. As of 15 August 2024, the ASEAN-Korea Garden is 35% constructed. Additionally, the Forest and Biodiversity Handbook has been drafted to provide information on the main species in the 2-ha project area.



#### Cambodia (AFoCO/038/2023)



Training session on plantation

Under the project “**Advancing Restoration of Native Agarwood - *Aquilaria crassna* and *A. malaccensis* - for Sustainable Use and Management in Southwestern Cambodia,**” several training sessions on Agarwood were organized to raise awareness and build capacity. To assess the current field status, surveys and interviews on native Agarwood habitats were conducted. Consequently, a habitat map was created, and 20 parent trees were listed for future seed sources. 25,000 Agarwood seedlings out of the target 50,000 were also planted across 17 ha.



## Philippines (AFOCO/040/2023)



The project “**Forest Restoration using Philippine Threatened and Endemic Tree Species in Bacon Manito Geothermal Reservation in Support of the Philippines Forestry Sector National Greening Program**” includes several activities:

- Local communities and farmers' associations were organized.
- Regular forest patrols were conducted, along with tracking the growth performance and survival rate of seedlings in the restoration site.
- More than 62,500 seedlings of priority species were produced for the 100 ha of restoration project.
- A propagation protocol for at least 10 Philippine Threatened and Endemic Tree Species (PTES) was developed, achieving a survival rate of 70% to 100%, which is higher than average.
- The design of an arboretum as well as documentation of existing and new mother trees of the PTES was completed.

Various training sessions and regular courtesy meetings were also held, and printed pocket guidebook for forest restoration was developed. As a result, local community awareness and engagement in natural resources conservation was improved, while local livelihoods were enhanced through involving them in seedling production activities.



Propagation of PTES



Meeting with farmers' association

## DISCUSSION

### Project Implementation

- Exceptional heat wave and prolonged dry condition delayed the project activities for restoration. To address this, an alternative watering schedule and the strategic placement of a water system were implemented for efficient collection, and remote nursery was improved to ensure the survival of propagated seedlings.
- To overcome challenges of extended deliberation process, the development of scenario plans for all major activities was recommended to enable immediate action.
- In the case of Philippines, community leadership was changed. It was addressed by conducting an additional courtesy call, meetings, and project presentations to the concerned local government units including potential new leaders.

# Glimpses of the Session



### 3.3. ONGOING PROJECTS:

## Systematic Management of Forest Resources & Disasters

To ensure the sustainable use of forest resources while reducing disaster risks, systematic management approaches are required. AFoCO has developed integrated forest management strategies, enhancing resilience to events such as forest fires and landslides. For Group 3, a total of three (3) presentations focusing on “Systematic Management of Forest Resources and Disasters” were delivered by project managers.

### Myanmar (AFoCO/014/2020)



Under the project on **“Integrated Pest and Disease Management in Teak Plantations in Bago Region,”** a training on pest surveys was conducted at AFoCO RETC, and regular pest surveys were carried out to develop possible control measures. The diagnostic laboratory and museum facilities were also upgraded, and research activities were conducted to disseminate findings to the forest department and private sector. As a result, possible control measures and capacity for pest and disease management was enhanced.



Pest and disease survey training at AFoCO RETC



Regular pest survey

### Kazakhstan (AFoCO/028/2022)



The project **“Pilot Project on Inventory of Unaccounted Forests in Kostanay and North Kazakhstan Regions and Automation of Information Collection on Forestry”** successfully collected forest inventory data in the Kostanay region and field-tested a draft version of a data management program. Consultation workshop was also conducted to develop digital program on forest data management.



Conducting field inventory



Consultation workshop



## Regional Project (AFoCO/032/2022)



The project “**Capacity Building on Enhancing Resilience to Forest Fire, and Local Livelihood and Market Linkages**” encompass activities in the four (4) CLMV countries:

1) Cambodia; 2) Lao PDR; 3) Myanmar, and; 4) Viet Nam.

- In Cambodia, the electricity connection to Forest Fire Management Committee and Forest Fire Control/Monitoring Room was established, along with the development of a mobile app and analytical tools.
- In Lao PDR, training on marketing development, workshop on gender mainstreaming, and site verification for a lookout tower were completed.
- In Viet Nam, capacity building for community forest enterprises was undertaken alongside technology transfer for Golden Camellia kombucha, packaging design updates, and site assessments.
- Across CLMV countries, feasibility study and technology transfer for forest fire management was completed through workshops and field exercises.

As a result, an integrated fire management system was developed, and capacity had been successfully built in forest fire management. Additionally, micro, small, and medium enterprises in conjunction with market linkages in community forestry were strengthened. This experience highlighted the importance of proactive country engagement and legal coordination for improving project progress as well as the need to strengthen the role of regional office to enhance communication.

## DISCUSSION

### Project Implementation

- Fluctuations in foreign currency exchange rates can lead to delays in project activities. Additionally, differences in domestic financial and budget administration procedures between the host country and AFoCO can further delay budget transfers and disrupt project timelines. To mitigate these risks, it is important to anticipate such issues during the project planning phase. This can be achieved by incorporating leeway in the work plan, allowing for additional time to accommodate potential financial or administrative delays.
- In Kyrgyzstan, limited internet access in remote areas was identified as a challenge. To address this, it was suggested to involve local foresters for knowledge sharing and launch AFoCO monitoring and reporting system.
- Managing a regional project is challenging as each country has different government structures and regulations, which affects how the project operations. Some countries have centralized governments, making coordination easier, while others have multiple layers of bureaucracy.
- In the case of regional project, sufficient funding from AKCF (ASEAN Korea Cooperation Fund) and Korea Forest Service is available, particularly for forest fire management. However, future financial allocations may need to be adjusted based on discussions with the project steering committee and management group.

### Stakeholder Engagement

- Stakeholder management has been identified as a critical component of the project. Despite this, engaging with both local and central government officials, as well as with communities in remote areas, remains a significant challenge across the region. To address these complexities, regular visits and ongoing monitoring are essential to ensure successful implementation.

# Glimpses of the Session



### 3.4 ONGOING PROJECTS:

## Local Livelihood Improvement and Community Based Enterprise

Community-based enterprises are pivotal in improving local livelihoods by providing economic resilience. These initiatives enable communities to benefit from their natural resources and encourage them to conserve the environment. For Group 4, a total of five (5) presentations centered on “Enhancing Local Livelihoods and Community Based Enterprises” were showcased.

### Myanmar (AFoCO/015/2020)



The project on **“Model Forest for Livelihood Improvement of Forest Dependent Communities through Development of Community-Based Enterprise and Forest Conservation”** established several community-based enterprises. Through investment and training, enterprises were developed which produce mushrooms and utilize forest residues. Honey production training was also conducted, and the first coffee-based agroforestry demonstration plot was established.



Mushroom production



Demonstration of agroforestry plot

### Philippines (AFoCO/016/2021)



Lumbering machineries

Under the project **“Promotion of Vertical Integration in Wood Processing through People’s Organizations in Community Based Forest Management Areas in the Philippines,”** lumbering machineries were procured, and tree plantations were established. A wood processing facility was installed to process timber from the plantations. A market study was also conducted to promote the timber products.

### Bhutan (AFoCO/017/2020)

As part of the project **“Sustainable Community-Based Enterprise Development for Improved Rural Livelihood in Bhutan,”** infrastructure for wood enterprises was developed, and nursery construction was undertaken. Consequently, timber from community forests generated additional income, which is important for sustainability of the project.





## Cambodia (AFoCO/027/2022)



The project on **“Site Restoration and Sustainable Management of Community Forest Using Multiple Use Tree Species and Agroforestry”** established a forest patrol tower for fire watching, which also serves as wildlife observation tower to promote ecotourism. Two (2) tree nurseries were created to supply seedlings, and enrichment planting using a line planting technique was conducted in the degraded evergreen forest. For restoring forest, 72 community forest members actively participated in planting activities and regular patrols.



Patrol tower

## Regional Project (AFoCO/035/2022)



Regional workshop on NTFP

Under the regional project **“Improved Local Community Livelihoods through Increased Benefits from Non-timber Forest Products (NTFPs): Modeling Scalable Community-Based Enterprises in Asia,”** each of the nine (9) participating countries have conducted resource assessments, market analyses, and value-chain analysis reports for their selected NTFP products. To strengthen the capacity of national project leads, three (3) regional workshops have been organized. A tailored mentoring program was also implemented to enhance community-level skills, considering the unique characteristics of each NTFP product.

## DISCUSSION

### Project Implementation

- Due to delays in project implementation approvals following the internal procedures of participating countries, it has been challenging to synchronize project timelines across participating countries.
- Each country has selected different NTFP commodities and operates on varying schedules, making it difficult to provide a comprehensive and synchronized mentoring service. To address this issue, a strategy of assigning dedicated mentors to each country for tailored mentoring has proven to be effective.
- Frequent staff turnover, different fiscal years between AFoCO and Bhutan, and delays due to poor road conditions and extreme weather were also mentioned.
- Although the overall project budget is substantial, the division among numerous participating countries results in relatively small-scale projects. Therefore, a key outcome of this initiative is to enhance the capacity of country project managers in structuring and managing NTFP activities that improve local community livelihoods. A primary goal is for these strengthened capacities to serve as a foundation for developing and proposing new income-generating projects for local communities.

# Glimpses of the Session



## Summary

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The projects under AFoCO are being successfully implemented across 10 countries, and ongoing projects encompass a diverse range of activities focused on four (4) themes: 1) Customized Restoration and Reforestation Models; 2) Climate Change and Biodiversity Conservation; 3) Systematic Management of Forest Resources and Disasters, and; 4) Local Livelihood Improvement and Community-Based Enterprise.

Under the theme of “Customized Restoration and Reforestation Models”, significant efforts have been made in forest research, forest patrols, and tree propagation to enhance forest resilience. Restoration models contextualized to local conditions have also been developed.

For “Climate Change and Biodiversity Conservation”, AFoCO projects have managed protected areas and restored habitats of native species. Indeed, seedling propagation for threatened and endemic tree species are being conducted in Philippines.

Projects centered on “Systematic Management of Forest Resources and Disasters” have made considerable advances in pest and disease control as well as in forest inventory management. Particularly, the regional project participating four (4) countries is developing an integrated fire management system and strengthening market linkages for local livelihoods.

Aligned with the theme of “Local Livelihood Improvement and Community-Based Enterprise”, enterprises focusing on NTFPs and eco-tourism have been established and developed through community engagement. The regional workshop involving all member parties also facilitated knowledge-sharing on community-based enterprise models and NTFPs.

Despite common challenges such as project delays, extreme weather, and unstable foreign currency rates, these issues have been effectively addressed through adaptive management practices. Each project has demonstrated remarkable achievements on improvement of forest cover and quality, forest management, and capacity building in local communities. Moving forward, AFoCO plans to continue expanding its projects to amplify these positive impacts.

## 4. Session III. New Projects

The third session of the workshop showcased presentations on the progress of five (5) new projects launched in 2024, followed by a Q&A session.

### Philippines (AFoCO/029/2022)



The project on **“Ensuring Functioning of Cultural Ecosystem Services in an Urban Setting: Assimilating Nature for Forest Healing and Experiential Learning in Ninoy Aquino Parks and Wildlife Center”** developed a tree nursery design, organized a workshop on the establishment of a forest bathing area, and finalized the plan for a forest healing program.

### Viet Nam (AFoCO/042/2024) & Lao PDR (AFoCO/043/2024)

The project **“Establishment of ASEAN-Korea Garden in Viet Nam”** aims to strengthen regional forest cooperation and promote ecotourism. To achieve this, feasibility study was conducted, and Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) were signed between Vietnam



National University of Forestry and AFoCO. The design of the garden is under development.

Similarly, the project **“Establishment of ASEAN-KOREA Garden in Lao PDR”** conducted on-site survey and site site assessment. The garden design is in progress.



### Kazakhstan (AFoCO/044/2024)



The project **“Technology and Capacity Enhancement for Massive Production of Quality Planting Materials to Support National Forestation Goals in Kazakhstan”** aims to develop forest nurseries to restore areas affected by forest fires. The preliminary design for a forest nursery complex was completed, and the installation of necessary equipment for the seedling line is in progress.



## Kyrgyzstan (AFoCO/045/2020)



In the project “**Conservation of Useful and Rare Tree Species in Kyrgyzstan through Establishment of a Seed Storage in order to Retain Significant Resource,**” the site has been identified for constructing the seed storage facility. The greenhouse and seed laboratory are already operational within Frunze Forest Enterprise, where the seed storage facility will be established.

## DISCUSSION

### Project Implementation

- In the case of Kyrgyzstan, considering tax when developing a project budget plan and the lack of experience in seed storage facilities were noted as challenges. For successful project implementation, it was suggested to exchange experiences and cooperate with Korean experts.
- Delay in official approval and procedures led to parallel efforts in formulating plans and terms of references. Additionally, fluctuations in exchange rates were also identified as issues.

### Project Relevance and Coherence

- The ASEAN-Korea Garden in Viet Nam aligns with national forestry strategies and climate goals. It also supports biodiversity conservation and the creation of green spaces, addressing urban ecological issues and the impacts of recent natural disasters.
- The objectives of the ASEAN-Korea Garden in Lao PDR are connected to national green growth strategies and urban development plans. It comprised biodiversity conservation, educational outreach, and the enhancement of green spaces in Vientiane.
- The project on construction forest nursery in Kazakhstan aligns with national tree planting orders and goals to increase forest coverage, addressing recent forest fire.
- The project in Kyrgyzstan is focusing on improving seed storage facilities to enhance seed quality and planting success, which aligns with strategic priorities for forest management.

### Funding Environment

- **Moderator (Dr. Eun-Pyo Hong)** Recent policy changes in Korea have reduced Official Development Assistance (ODA) budget allocations for multilateral activities. Nonetheless, significant contributions from member countries such as Philippines and Kazakhstan represent a shift from previous practices, where donor countries typically provided full funding for these initiatives. To adapt to the changing funding environment, AFoCO is encouraged to seek additional support from national governments to enhance project impact. Even modest contributions can underscore the value of AFoCO's activities and secure ongoing support from Korean authorities.

## Glimpses of the Session



## Summary

The new projects in four (4) countries were successfully initiated in 2024. Each project is addressing environmental needs and forest welfare services, distinct from previous projects. In Philippines, the project is developing plant nursery and forest bathing area, while Viet Nam and Lao PDR are establishing ASEAN-Korea Garden based on site assessments. In Kazakhstan, the project on massive production of seedlings completed preliminary design of forest nursery, and in Kyrgyzstan, greenhouse and seed laboratory are being operated for seed conservation.

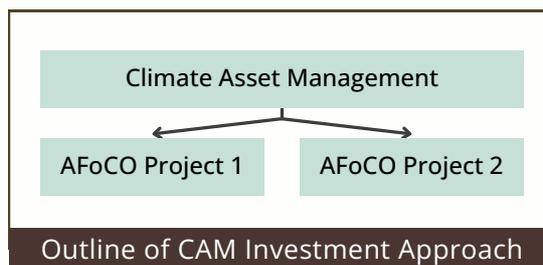
Despite official approval and budget issues, all projects are on track to achieve their objectives. These initiatives reflect AFoCO's commitment to fostering green space solutions and enriching community welfare.

## 5. Session IV. Carbon Projects

The final session of the workshop featured presentations on carbon projects, including one by Climate Asset Management and updates on the progress of four (4) ongoing AFoCO-Acorn carbon projects. A Q&A session followed, addressing participants' questions and fostering further discussion.

### 5.1 CAM Project Information

Climate Asset Management (CAM) is a specialized asset management company focused on natural capital, aiming to deliver impactful and profitable climate solutions. Recently, CAM has committed \$200 million to support projects that align with its goals including AFoCO's carbon project. In this context, CAM briefly outlined its indicative investment procedures as follows:



1. Screening stage: Projects conduct initial assessments including a project information note and a feasibility study.
2. First stage of Investment Committee (IC): The project partners access to a virtual data room, and the investment team conducts desktop diligence, submitting screening notice to IC.
3. Second stage of IC: Site visit is conducted, and a non-binding term sheet is agreed upon. Comprehensive due diligence is also performed, leading to the submission of the first investment proposal to the IC.
4. Third stage of IC: Third-party due diligence and transaction documents are completed, and the final investment proposal is delivered to the IC.

To ensure robust outcomes, benefits generated from carbon projects will be shared among stakeholders. All carbon projects supported by CAM are required to meet the Climate, Community & Biodiversity (CCB) Standards to prevent social performance-related issues.



## 5.2 AFoCO-Acorn Agroforestry Projects

In 2023, AFoCO entered a Memorandum of Understanding with Rabobank, a global financial institution headquartered in the Netherlands. The partnership aims to support smallholder farmers in accessing the voluntary carbon market. In this initiative, AFoCO has been engaged as a local partner of Rabobank's Acorn project to improve farmer livelihoods and contribute to combating climate change. The following describes the procedures of Acorn's carbon projects:

1. Planning timeline and intake questions
2. Collecting documentation including a project summary, eligibility checklist, agroforestry design, and assessments
3. Approval by Plan Vivo, a comprehensive framework to for certifying Carbon Removal Units (CRUs)
4. Contracting and government letter
5. Farmer onboarding including surveys, data collection, and land tenure documentation
6. Defining adjustment factors and delivering Acorn Design Document
7. Project onboarding to mark a major output of the carbon project
8. Generating and selling CRUs
9. Monitoring and reporting in conjunction with payments to farmers

In this session, project focal points from Kyrgyzstan, Cambodia, Lao PDR and Viet Nam shared information on the progresses, challenges, lessons learned, and future strategies related to ongoing project development and implementation efforts.

### Projects Under Implementation

#### Kyrgyzstan



First Farmer Council meeting



An agroforestry farmer in Kyrgyzstan

In Kyrgyzstan, the AFoCO-Acorn project is in the phase of defining adjustment factors and delivering ADD. For farmer onboarding, a total of 46 people were trained through training on usage of the Acorn Data Collection Tool (DCT). Currently, 20 full-time data collectors are actively onboarding farmers in six (6) provinces across Kyrgyzstan. Total of 11,400 farmers were onboarded to Acorn with approximately 9,000 ha. In addition, ground truth data was collected in two (2) regions. Combined with remote sensing data, ground truthing is being used to estimate pre-existing biomass as well as to determine the distribution of key existing tree species in the carbon baseline. The project distributed over 105,000 seedlings (combining five different tree species) to 500 farmers to plant as boundary windbreaks. As a part of the project, the first project council meeting was also held consisting 50 farmers from all six provinces. The monitoring of randomly selected 1,500 onboarded farmers with existing agroforestry was conducted across the provinces.



## DISCUSSION

### Project Implementation

- The knowledge of farmers regarding agroforestry is limited, and local farmers are concerned that the project may result in the government reclaiming their land. To address this, it was suggested to conduct training sessions and workshops to bridge the knowledge gap. Additionally, engaging local leaders or influencers to advocate for the project can enhance its credibility and encourage greater participation.
- To establish agroforestry systems, initial investment such as purchasing saplings and fertilizers is required. Some householders do not have sufficient capital to engage in the project, and most farmers need immediate income returns to cover the upfront costs, especially in the first year of onboarding. Furthermore, project failure may occur due to flooding, pests, drought, and other relevant environmental issues, resulting in financial loss. To address these issues, support for initial investment costs was suggested. Subsidies or grants can be provided to cover the initial costs which are essential for project implementation.
- Collecting detailed data such as species and estimated age of trees on the farms is time-consuming, and the process is delayed due to the rainy seasons. Some farmers do not possess smartphones, making it difficult to report collected data.
- In Viet Nam, the density of macadamia in existing models (100 trees/ha) is low to generate sufficient CRUs to incentivize local participation in the project. Therefore, it is crucial to conduct additional planting within and along the borders of the agroforestry model using fast-growing and multi-purpose trees.
- Various challenges have been observed in several countries. In Kyrgyzstan, logistical problems were encountered because the project sites are located in diverse and remote regions. In Lao PDR, many farmers do not possess clear ownership titles to agricultural fallow land, and the farms are already too full to accommodate new participants, resulting in unfeasibility of project.

### Glimpses of the Session





## Summary

Carbon projects were presented for the first time at the ATW. CAM opened the floor with nature-based carbon credit initiatives, and the progress of the AFoCO-Acorn projects in four (4) countries was reviewed. The projects in Cambodia, Lao PDR, and Viet Nam are currently in the midst of data collection, whereas the project in Kyrgyzstan is generating carbon credits. Despite challenges such as data collection and initial investment costs, AFoCO is successfully implementing carbon projects. These efforts will create both environmental and economic impacts, providing benefits for ecosystems and local communities.

## 6. AFoCO Project & Future Project Development

In conjunction with presentations on projects discussed in the previous sessions, the workshop also focused on AFoCO projects and future development. It covered four (4) main topics:

1. Presentation on 10-year evaluation of AFoCO
2. AFoCO project manual revision
3. Introduction to the Information and Data Platform (IDP)
4. Project development & AFoCO's strategic plan

Each presentation had the chance to share key updates on AFoCO's project management and contribute to outlining the organization's future direction, providing comprehensive insights.

### 6.1 Presentation on 10-Year Evaluation of AFoCO's Achievements in Forest Cooperation

The Secretariat conducted an external assessment of AFoCO's achievements in forest cooperation with member parties over the past decade, aiming to analyze project outcomes, identify best practices, and provide lessons learned and recommendations to guide future project directions. Two external experts—Dr. Ji-soon Chang, former Director of the Official Development Assistance Bureau under the Prime Minister's Office of the Korean government, and Dr. Eun-Pyo Hong, Chairman of the Korea ESG Management Institute—shared key findings and recommendations from the evaluation.

AFoCO's achievements over the past 10 years through project interventions were recognized as exemplary in the context of multilateral Official Development Assistance, based on the following observations:

1. AFoCO's project development and implementation model, led by proponent member countries, has established an efficient management system tailored to field activities. This approach fosters a strong sense of project ownership and enhances overall impact.
2. AFoCO's emphasis on capacity building and active engagement with key stakeholders, including local communities, has created a robust foundation for the sustainability of its projects.
3. AFoCO has successfully broadened its financial base, including securing large-scale private funding. It has also scaled up projects effectively by leveraging existing performance and local cooperation networks.



The assessment recommended enhancing Results-Based Performance Management to support the effective implementation of AFoCO's 2nd Strategic Plan (2024–2030). Key focus areas include: 1) clear and transparent procedures; 2) robust and pre-defined criteria for project appraisal, monitoring, and evaluation; 3) an objective and readily accessible project database, and; 4) attainable and measurable objectives, indicators, and targets.



## 6.2 AFoCO Project Manual Revision

The Secretariat proposed an amendment to the AFoCO Project Manual at the 10th Session of the Assembly, held on April 2024 in Bishkek, Kyrgyz Republic, to address unforeseen circumstances and challenges encountered since its enactment in 2019, including diverse requirements from various donors in the project development and management process.

The Secretariat held the final consultation meeting with Member Parties on the amendment during the 2024 ATW. During the Final Consultation Meeting, national focal points or their representatives were invited to provide additional comments on the draft, beyond the feedback already submitted, and the Secretariat has finalized the amendment to the AFoCO Project Manual with the agreement of all member parties.

This amendment is focused on improving the project manual to be applicable to all AFoCO Projects and enhancing the quality of proposal by strengthening the pre-verification of project ideas and the project appraisal process. The amendment is also intended to stipulate current practices we follow for project implementation and management which are yet to be properly reflected in the current manual.



## 6.3 Introduction to Information & Data Platform (IDP)

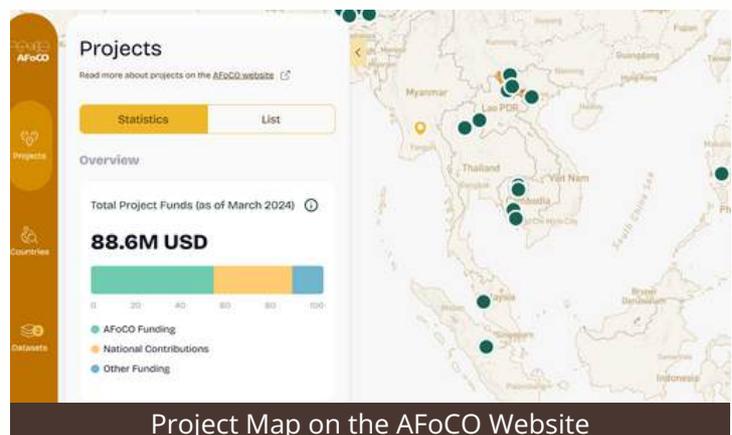
The AFoCO Secretariat developed an open map-based Information and Data Platform (IDP) for public access. This initiative aims to propagate and promote achievements of the projects of AFoCO. The IDP is expected to visualize the progress of the AFoCO Strategy 2024-2030 as well as the 10-year Climate Action Plan. Designed to improve access to and use of project data across member countries, the platform features an interactive **project site map** with project areas demarcated and overviews of key project data, making it easier for stakeholders to find and utilize information.

### Main Discussion

The AFoCO Secretariat announced that the AFoCO Project Map is now accessible on the AFoCO website. The platform is being updated regularly to ensure the accuracy of data and information for all AFoCO projects with the goal of completion by 2024. Demonstrations were conducted to guide users on how to navigate the platform. Participants suggested that the platform could be further improved by including information on capacity-building activities, as these activities are integral to most of projects.

### Follow-up Actions

An updated template for indicator information has been introduced to prevent miscalculations of total intervention areas including plantation, reforestation, and conservation areas. The Secretariat requested the cooperation of member countries in submitting their data. Preparations are underway to incorporate information on project-level capacity-building programs to feature on the dashboard.



Project Map on the AFoCO Website

## 6.4 Project Development & AFoCO's Strategic Plan

Following the approval of the **AFoCO Strategic Plan (2024-2030)**, the Secretariat has been working to develop a comprehensive action plan in collaboration with member countries and external experts. This process included two (2) technical workshops held on 1 and 22 August 2024. To gather final comments and explain how the action plan will guide AFoCO's project development moving forward, the Strategic Planning Team organized this session.

### Main Discussion

During the session, the finalized action plan was presented, detailing Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), key activities, and targets for each program priority area. The Secretariat highlighted that KPIs were aligned with relevant Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and targets for each program priority area were tailored based on the specific situations and goals of member countries. It was emphasized that when developing concept notes and proposals, project proponents must align their potential targets with the Strategic Plan's objectives and ensure consistency with the identified program targets.

For effective implementation, the Secretariat outlined a robust evaluation framework, which will be used to assess the alignment of the Strategic Plan with the 1.5°C Paris Agreement goal and the SDGs by 2030:

- The AFoCO Strategic Plan (2024-2030) will undergo regular assessments by a committee comprising members from the AFoCO Secretariat, as well as national and international experts.
- The evaluation will take place in two (2) phases: 1) Mid-term Evaluation in 2027 and 2) Final Evaluation in 2030.



### Follow-up Actions

The action plan will be endorsed at the upcoming Assembly and member countries will be guided to apply the scheme for the new project development from 2025 onwards.



## 7. Conclusions & the Way Forward

The workshop successfully concluded, featuring sessions filled with fruitful discussions, exchanges of experiences, and insights among Member Parties. In summary, the workshop objectives were achieved, aligning with the project performance review of AFoCO projects and collective commitment to continuous learning for effective and efficient project implementation. Through AFoCO projects, forest coverage and quality have seen significant improvements, greatly contributing to climate change mitigation across the Member Parties. Biodiversity conservation efforts have been strengthened, along with advancements in policy, regulatory frameworks, and technical procedures. These projects have also improved local livelihoods and awareness, while capacity-building activities have encouraged knowledge sharing.

Building on the discussions of the 2023 ATW, which was held as a three-day workshop in Hanoi, the 2024 ATW expanded its focus beyond project performance review. 10-year evaluation of AFoCO, project manual revision, Information and Data Platform (IDP), AFoCO's strategic action plans, and nature finance for forest management were presented to participants, which will be essential to improve overall project management. Therefore, this workshop provided an insightful perspective, highlighting future development based on collaborative efforts and workshop outcomes.

Through discussions from the 2024 ATW, several key areas have been identified to guide future project development and implementation:

1. Strengthen the management and implementation of ongoing projects to achieve planned objectives.
2. Amend the AFoCO Project Manual and related guidelines.
3. Enhance the capacity of Implementing Agencies (IAs) and the Secretariat in project identification, development, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation.
4. Strengthen active participation, communication, and knowledge exchange among stakeholders, particularly local partners and communities.
5. Promote the mobilization of funding from various sources including private sectors.



## 8. AFoCO Project Photo Exhibition

The first AFoCO Project Photo Exhibition was organized in Bangkok from 9 to 11 September 2024, under the theme of “showcasing AFoCO’s project sites and activities”, concurrently with the 2024 ATW. AFoCO project managers and staffs submitted photos taken over the last year via Google Forms, and the jury evaluated entries in advance. A total of 70 photos from 24 projects were entered, and one (1) representative photo was displayed as a finalist for each project. Workshop participants explored the projects through photos and contributed to deciding winners via public vote. As a result, six (6) winners were selected by combining the jury score and public vote, and they were presented with award certificates and prizes.

Photo submission period	8 July 2024 ~ 23 August 2024
Photo exhibition	9 ~ 11 September 2024
Public vote	9 ~ 10 September 2024
Award ceremony	1 September 2024

### Photo Exhibition

In conjunction with the 2024 ATW, workshop participants enjoyed the wonderful moments in the photo exhibition with coffee and finger foods. The public vote was also available from 9 to 10 September 2024, and each exhibition visitor has in principle maximum three (3) votes. The public votes complying with the voting rules were reflected in the winner selection.



### Award-winning Photos

The AFoCO Project Photo Exhibition highlighted efforts to successfully manage AFoCO projects. While all entries were outstanding, the winners were determined based on the jury's pre-evaluations of the entries and public vote scores. The award-winning photos captured the essence of projects such as addressing deforestation and biodiversity loss. The winners of the AFoCO Project Photo Exhibition are proudly presented.

## Gold Award



Indonesia 

### Watering and Growing New Green Hope among the Burnt Pine Stumps

This photo was taken as part of the project titled '*Innovative Solution for Climate Change and Biodiversity Landscape Strategy to Support SDGs in Indonesia (AFoCO/023/2021)*.' It received high scores in both the judges' evaluation and the public vote. The judges praised the photograph for effectively capturing the project's key highlights. As a result, project AFoCO/023/2021 was honored with the Gold Award.

## Silver Award

Cambodia 

**First Participatory  
Scenery for Project  
Activities toward  
Successful Restoration  
of Native Agarwood  
Species in Cardamom  
Mountain, Southwestern  
Cambodia**

AFoCO/038/2023



Lao PDR 

**Together Forever**

AFoCO/025/2021

## Bronze Award



Myanmar 🇇🇵

Tree+

= (CO2-) (Livelihood+)

AFoCO/015/2020



Philippines 🇵🇭

Getting Lost  
in the City's Oasis

AFoCO/029/2022



Thailand 🇹🇭

Forest Landscape Restoration in the Area  
of Santisuk Sub-district, NAN Province

AFoCO/030/2022

## Award Ceremony

The award ceremony for the first AFoCO Project Photo Exhibition was held on the last day of the 2024 ATW, 11 September 2024. The award certificates and prizes were granted to the winners by Mr. Sunpil Jin, Vice Executive Director of the AFoCO. The Gold Award was presented to the project “Innovative Solution for Climate Change and Biodiversity Landscape Strategy to Support SDGs in Indonesia (AFoCO/023/2021)”. The Silver Award was honored to the project code AFoCO/038/2023 (Cambodia) and AFoCO/025/2021 (Lao PDR). The Bronze Award was given to the project code AFoCO/015/2020 (Myanmar), AFoCo/030/2022 (Thailand), and AFoCO/029/2022 (Philippines).



## Glimpses of the Exhibition



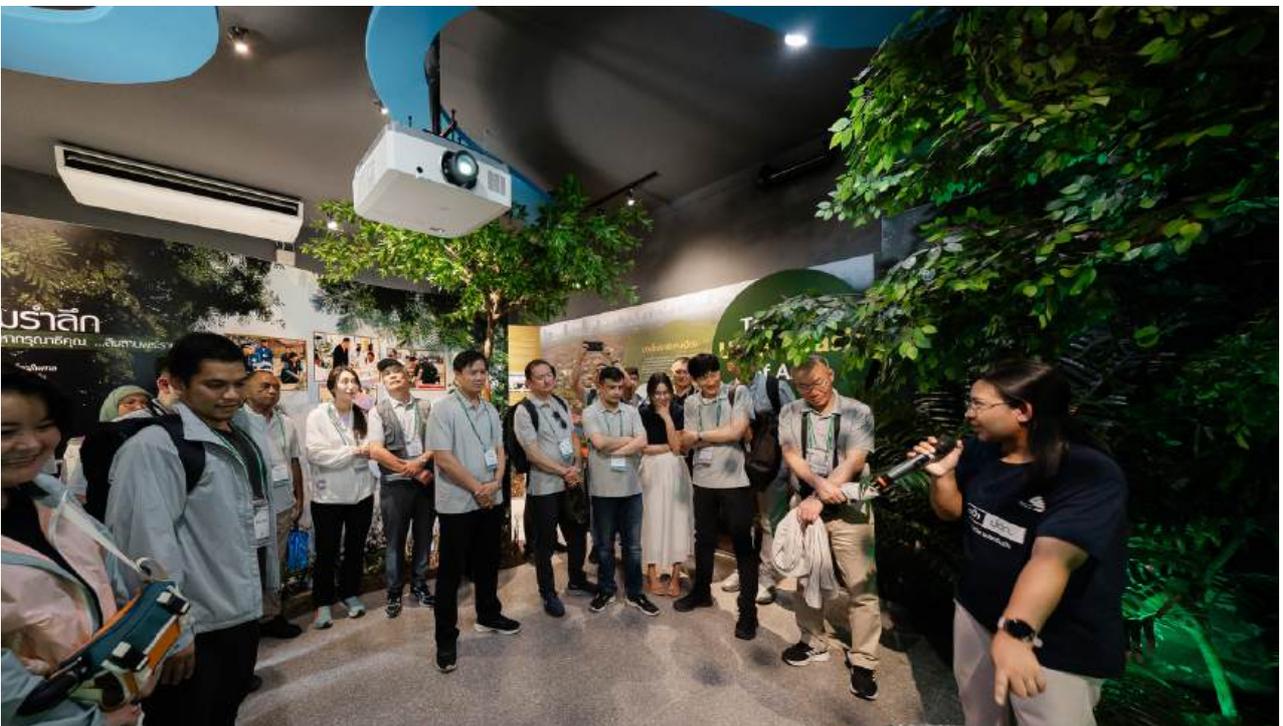
## Conclusion

The first AFoCO Project Photo Exhibition was successfully concluded. It provided a valuable platform for open dialogue including various stories behind projects. AFoCO project managers, staffs, and national focal points deepened their understanding of AFoCO's projects and strengthened connections within member parties. The exhibition also underscored the significance of visual storytelling in raising awareness and promoting advocacy for sustainable development. The insights and relationships built during this event will contribute to enhancing impactful actions in the future steps of AFoCO.

# Field Visit to Community Forest, Bang Kra Jao



Visit to the Bang Kra Jao in Thailand



Exhibition in Bang Kra Jao



Community Forest Tour in Bang Kra Jao



NTFP program in Bang Kra Jao



## Our Speakers & Presenters



**Dr. Chongho PARK**  
Executive Director of AFoCO



**Mr. Sunpil JIN**  
Vice Executive Director of AFoCO



**Mr. Bannaruk SERMTHONG**  
Deputy Director General of  
Royal Forest Department, Thailand



**Mr. Ildefonso L. QUILLOY**  
AFoCO National Focal Point  
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**Mr. SEAB Kimsrim**  
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**Ms. LUONG Thi Khanh Linh**  
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**Mr. Phavanar SOMBANPHENG**  
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## Annex. List of AFoCO Projects

\*This list includes AFoCO projects featured at the workshop.

Project Code	Country	Period	Title
AFoCO/005/2014	Cambodia	2016-2025	Establishment of Forest Genetics Research Center for Restoration of Major Timber Species in Cambodia
AFoCO/006/2014	Viet Nam	2016-2023	Rehabilitation and Development of Mangrove Forest Ecosystem in Thai Binh Province, Viet Nam
AFoCO/008/2014	Lao PDR	2016-2025	Village-based Forest Rehabilitation in Lao PDR
AFoCO/013/2020	Viet Nam	2020-2023	Improving <i>Pinus caribaea Morelet</i> for Plantation on Degraded Land in Viet Nam's Northern Mountainous Region
AFoCO/014/2020	Myanmar	2020-2025	Integrated Pest and Disease Management in Teak Plantations in Bago Region, Myanmar
AFoCO/015/2020	Myanmar	2020-2024	Model Forest for Livelihood Improvement of Forest Department Communities through Development of Community-Based Enterprise and Forest Conservation
AFoCO/016/2021	Philippines	2021-2026	Promotion of Vertical Integration in Wood Processing through People's Organizations in Community Based Forest Management Areas in the Philippines
AFoCO/017/2020	Bhutan	2020-2025	Sustainable Community-Based Enterprise Development for Improved Rural Livelihood in Bhutan
AFoCO/018/2020	Timor-Leste	2021-2024	Development of Agroforestry Models for Promotion of Reforestation in the Different Zones in Timor-Leste
AFoCO/023/2021	Indonesia	2021-2024	Innovative Solution for Climate Change and Biodiversity Landscape Strategy to Support SDGs in Indonesia
AFoCO/024/2021	Viet Nam	2021-2025	Conservation and Development of Forest Ecosystems Biodiversity Resources at Cat Tien National Park
AFoCO/025/2021	Lao PDR	2021-2026	Integrated Village-driven Forest Rehabilitation and Livelihood Improvement in Viengthong District, Bolikhamxay Province, Lao PDR

Project Code	Country	Period	Title
AFoCO/026/2021	Timor-Leste	2021-2026	Re-greening the Bare Lands through Promotion of Locally Customized Restoration Models in Timor-Leste
AFoCO/027/2022	Cambodia	2022-2027	Site Restoration and Sustainable Management of Community Forest Using Multiple Use Tree Species and Agroforestry
AFoCO/028/2022	Kazakhstan	2022-2026	Pilot Project on Inventory of Unaccounted Forests in Kostanay and North Kazakhstan Regions and Automation of the Collection of Information on Forestry
AFoCO/029/2022	Philippines	2022-2025	Ensuring Functioning of Cultural Ecosystem Services in an Urban Setting: Assimilating Nature for Forest Healing and Experiential Learning in Ninoy Aquino Parks and Wildlife Center
AFoCO/030/2022	Thailand	2020-2023	Improving Local Community's Livelihoods and Engagement in Sustainable Forest and Land Management in Thailand through Forest Landscape Restoration
AFoCO/031/2022	Viet Nam	2022-2026	Rehabilitation of Degraded and Potentially Deserted Forest Land in the Northwest Region of Viet Nam through Application of Integrated Technical Measures
AFoCO/032/2022	Cambodia Lao PDR Myanmar Viet Nam	2022-2027	Capacity Building on Enhancing Resilience to Forest Fire and Local Livelihood in CLMV Countries
AFoCO/035/2022	11 Member Parties	2022-2026	Improved Local Community Livelihoods through Increased Income from Non-timber Forest Products (NTFP): Modeling Scalable Community-Based Enterprises in Asia
AFoCO/036/2022	Cambodia	2023-2026	The Establishment of ASEAN-KOREA Garden in Cambodia

Project Code	Country	Period	Title
AFoCO/038/2023	Cambodia	2023-2025	Advancing Restoration of Native Agarwood – <i>Aquilaria crassna</i> and <i>A. Malaccensis</i> – for Sustainable Use and Management in Southwestern Cambodia
AFoCO/039/2023	Myanmar	2023-2025	Forest Restoration Demonstration through High Capacity Tree Nursery and Capacity Building in Support to “Billion Trees” National Campaign in Mongolia
AFoCO/040/2023	Philippines	2023-2025	Forest Restoration using Philippine Threatened and Endemic Tree Species (PTES) in Bacon Manito Geothermal Reservation in Support to the Philippines' Forestry Sector's National Greening Program
AFoCO/042/2024	Viet Nam	2023-2024	Establishment of ASEAN-Korea Garden in Viet Nam
AFoCO/043/2024	Lao PDR	2024-2025	Establishment of ASEAN-Korea Garden in Lao PDR
AFoCO/044/2024	Kazakhstan	2024-2025	Technology and Capacity Enhancement for Massive Production of Quality Planting Materials to Support National Forestation Goals in Kazakhstan
AFoCO/045/2024	Kyrgyzstan	2024-2025	Conservation of Useful and Rare Tree Species in Kyrgyzstan through Establishment of a Seed Storage in order to Retain Significant Resource



## **Asian Forest Cooperation Organization (AFoCO)**

AFoCO is a treaty-based intergovernmental organization that is committed to strengthening forest cooperation and taking concrete actions to promote sustainable forest management and address the impacts of climate change.

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