ANNUAL TECHNICAL WORKSHOP

FOR PROJECT MANAGEMENT
& PERFORMANCE REVIEW

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AFoCO

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	AFoCO/038, Cambodia	Mr. Lic Vuthy, Project Manager
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DAY 1 - PROJECT PERFORMANCE REVIEW		
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14:00 – 17:00	*Field Visit*	
17:00 – 18:00	*Buffet Dinner*	

Session 1. Project Peformance Review

The first session of the workshop featured presentations on both ongoing projects and completed projects. The first three sessions focused on three thematic areas, while the final session highlighted on lessons learned and best practices from the completed projects.

1. Community-based Participatory Restoration and Management
2. Forest Restoration and Rehabilitation Projects
3. Biodiversity Conservation Projects
4. Completed Projects

During the presentation, project managers and participants from 22 ongoing projects and 6 completed projects shared insghts on project progresses, outcomes, challenges, recommendations and lessons learned. The Q&A sessions, moderated by designated facilitators, further enriched the discussion by addressing both common and theme-specific questions.

1.1 Community-based Participatory Forest Management

In response to increasing degradation and deforestation, community-based participation restoration and management practices have become essential for enhancing forest cover and ensuring sustainable forest management. To address these needs, AFoCO has developed and implemented restoration and reforestation models tailored to specific ecological contexts. During session 1.1, a total of eight (8) presentations were delivered under the theme of "Community-based Participatory Restoration and Management."

AFoCO/005/2014 *CAMBODIA*

As part of the project **"Establishment of Forest Genetics Research Center for Restoration of Major Timber Species in Cambodia,"** significant progress was achieved through regular maintenance activities such as weeding and pruning of the Progeny Test Plantation (PTP) and Seed Orchard (CSO). These activities help protect the research plots from forest fire, enhance tree growth, and prevent pests and diseases. A 6-hectare demonstration forest was also established with 3,000 grafted seedlings of *Dalbergia cochinchinensis* and *Pterocarpus macrocarpus*, sourced from selected plus trees, and systematically planted for research and analysis. Furthermore, the project actively promoted education and capacity building by hosting interns, collaborating with researchers, and advancing tissue culture research for the mass production of quality planting materials. The Tissue Culture Laboratory continues to support students and researchers in their studies and experimental work.

Seedling propagation

AFoCO/027/2022 *CAMBODIA*

Grafting techniques used for species propagation

Tree nursery established

The project **"Site Restoration and Sustainable Management of Community Forest using Multiple Tree Species and Agroforestry,"** has made significant progress in advancing forest restoration and community-based livelihood initiatives. Two tree nurseries were established to support restoration efforts in both community forest and coastal areas, with an annual production capacities of 15,000 and 60,000 planting materials, respectively. These nurseries not only supply seedlings for restoration activities but also generate income for local communities through the sale of propagated seedlings to local markets and private buyers—9,000 seedlings were sold from the Nakta Thmar Prong nursery in 2025 alone.

Furthermore, 70 hectares of degraded evergreen forest have been successfully restored using 12,000 high-value tree seedlings, surpassing the 2025 target of 60 hectares.

AFoCO/038/2023 *CAMBODIA*

Agarwood Enrichment Planting

Under the project **"Advancing restoration of native Agarwood-*Aquilaria crassna* and *A. malacensis* for sustainable use and management in Southwestern Cambodia,"** a total of 35.5 hectares were planted with 50,100 Agarwood seedlings. The plantations were successfully established across all project target sites, including monoculture plantations on family-scale lands and company lands. Capacity building activities on native Agarwood propagation, plantation development and establishment, ecosystems management, and other related technical aspects were conducted for partner local communities. In addition, enrichment planting in the forests of various Community Forestry sites has already been completed.

To increase awareness on the importance of sustainable management of native Agarwood species and to encourage communities on establish their own Agarwood plantations, field surveys for plantation establishment were carried out in all target sites. The survey focused on three key aspects : the market demand, market strategies and techniques, and the supportive policies for strengthening the Agarwood production industry. Consultations with relevant ministerial agencies and ground surveys were also undertaken to further inform project planning and implementation.

AFoCO/025/2021 *LAO PDR*

The project **"Integrated village-driven forest rehabilitation and livelihood improvement in Vengthong district, Bolikhamxay, Lao PDR"** has made significant progress in forest restoration and protection in Phou Khaen through the application of the Forest Restoration Model "ViDFoRM." A total of 200,000 seedlings were produced and planted by eight participating villages, covering 336 hectares of degraded forest, with only 64 hectares remaining to complete the enrichment planting target this year. Additionally, ten villages conducted regular monthly forest patrols to prevent illegal logging and forest fires. For livelihood enhancement, the project supported forest-dependent communities by planting of 40,000 charcoal tree seedlings in village common areas and distributing 20,000 rubber seedlings to 37 families. Training sessions and capacity-building program on rubber plantation establishment were also provided to strengthen local skills and promote sustainable income generation. Furthermore, project monitoring meetings were organized to track progress, share updates, and discuss next steps with key stakeholders, ensuring that all activities remain well-coordinated and aligned with the overall forest restoration and community development goals.

Villagers of Sobna village planting 40,000 seedlings of charcoal trees (Cartoxylum formosum)

200,000 seedlings produced for enrichment plantation

AFoCO/016/2020 *PHILIPPINES*

Value addition training

Installed Wood Processing Plant Facility

The project **"Promotion of vertical integration in wood processing through peoples organization in Community-based Forest Management Areas in Philippines"** aims to promote the engagement of two CBFM POs in value-adding activities in wood production, establish market linkages to support the operation of their wood-based enterprises, and recommend enabling policy guidelines for implementing vertical integration as business model for CBFM POs.

Under this project, the engagement of CBFM POs in value-adding wood production activities has achieved 30% of the target for capacity-building initiatives. Procurement of machinery and equipment has reached 81%, with the remaining 19% allocated for the installation of a Furnace-Type Lumber Dryer (FTLD) in Region 7. The WPP facility for PO NUFAI in Region 7 has been completed, and the establishment of new tree plantations has reached 70% (14 out of 20 hectares) through local PO efforts, with full completion expected within the year.

AFoCO/039/2023 *MONGOLIA*

The project titled **"Forest Restoration Demonstration through High-Capacity Tree Nursery Establishment and Building in Support of the Billion Tree National Movement (BTNM) in Mongolia"** has made significant progress in forest restoration and nursery development. Several nurseries were established and strengthened to increase seedling production, including a 70-hectare high-capacity nursery developed in collaboration with local citizens and forest communities to boost household income and provide planting materials for rehabilitating wildfire-degraded areas.

Another large-scale nursery covering 20 hectares was established near the capital, with the capacity to produce two million seedlings annually to support forest restoration in Ulaanbaatar and contribute to the Billion Tree National Movement. These initiatives are not only increasing seedling stock but also creating sustainable income sources and strengthening community engagement in forest restoration.

For restoration efforts, baseline socio-economic surveys and detailed forest restoration maps were completed, and 10-year management plans were developed for two key project sites. Seeds have been collected for restoring 100 hectares in the Ereen Mountain Range and 20 hectares in Deendiin Valley, with community training conducted to support rehabilitation efforts.

High capacity tree nursery

Plantation establishment at Ereen Mountain Range, Dornod aimag

AFoCO/032/2022 *REGIONAL PROJECT*

The project "**Capacity Building on Enhancing Resilience to Forest Fire, and Local Livelihood and Market Linkages"** encompasses activities across the four (4) CLMV countries: Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, and Viet Nam.

The project has made notable progress in strengthening fire monitoring, prevention, and response systems through out the CLMV countries. Fire lookout towers equipped with CCTV were installed in Cambodia, Lao PDR, and Myanmar, significantly enhancing early detection capacities. In addition, two fire engines were provided to Cambodia, while Lao PDR received one fire engine and a pick-up truck to support on-ground firefighting operations. A mobile application for real-time fire status dissemination and monitoring was also launched in three languages—English, Khmer, and Vietnamese—further improving accessibility and coordination among project sites.

To strengthen CLMV Community Forest Enterprises, the project facilitated exchange visits, marketing summits, gender training, and livelihood technology exchanges to enhance economic opportunities that promote forest protection. Training modules and guidelines were developed at policy, operational, and community levels to ensure effective knowledge transfer and institutional strengthening.


operation training in the field


Fire lookout tower installed

AFoCO/035/2022 *REGIONAL PROJECT*


Regional Workshop


Value addition


Sustainable Resources Management

The project on " **Improving local community livelihoods through increased income from non-timber forest products (NTFP): Modeling scalable community-based enterprises in Asia** " promotes nature-based, inclusive solutions to improve community livelihoods through CBNE development and capacity building, enhances NTFP income via value addition and market access, ensures sustainable resource management, and fosters institutional support for CBNEs.

The project made significant progress at both the regional and country levels. At the regional level, workshops were organized, including themes such as *Road Map Development with CBNE Modeling* and *CBNE Development and Management, SRM, and Market Study*. The project also implemented a mentoring program across all 11 member countries and conducted coordination and monitoring to address challenges and ensure effective implementation.

At the country level, the project upgraded products through standards and certifications, enhanced value addition through new designs and prototypes, and promoted sustainable resource management. Examples include establishing Moringa nurseries in Viet Nam, propagating Jernang-producing rattans in Indonesia, developing pollinator forage maps in Kazakhstan, and rehabilitating mining-degraded forests using NTFP species in Mongolia.

Q&A and Discussion *Moderated by Dr. Pham Duc Chien, Director, Project & Program Div.*

Contribution to national policies, forests, and local livelihoods

- AFoCO projects not only align with the national forestry policies of member countries but also make significant contributions to forest conservation, restoration, and the improvement of local livelihoods. For instance, in Cambodia, projects have supported forest tree breeding, forest-fire management, restoration, and conservation efforts. In Lao PDR, the projects have advanced forest restoration and community livelihood development, while in Mongolia, they have provided high-quality seedlings and enhanced the capacities of forestry staff and local communities.

Community participation

- Community participation is vital to the success, impact, and sustainability of any project. Relevant communities should be actively involved throughout the entire project cycle - from formulation and development to implementation, monitoring, evaluation, and the management of project results after completion. Specifically, in the Agarwood-focused AFoCO/038 project in Cambodia, community engagement plays a key role in addressing the urgent need to conserve a nearly extinct species. Through active involvement in replanting and restoration activities, community forests contribute to both species conservation and the creation of sustainable livelihood opportunities.

Risk management

- Before developing any project proposal, the Implementing Agency (IA) should conduct comprehensive feasibility studies, drawing on lessons from previous similar projects and initiatives. It is essential to assess and integrate mitigation plans for policy, political, administrative, and operational risks, recognizing these as constant factors. Additionally, a robust monitoring and evaluation system should be established to ensure the project's smooth and effective implementation.

Strengthening institutional and community capacities and dissemination

- Strengthening institutional and community capacities is fundamental to ensuring effective project implementation, management, and long-term sustainability. To sustain and scale up achievements, strategic dissemination of project information—both internally and externally—should be integrated into the overall project framework.

Regional projects

- Given that each country operates under a different administrative system while the regional project follows a unified framework, effective communication and continuous engagement are essential to ensure shared understanding and smooth implementation. Some countries initially perceived the project as a bilateral ODA initiative; however, it is, in fact, a regional program. To scale up and sustain the regional project, strategic dissemination of information is critical.


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1.2 Forest Restoration & Rehabilitation Projects

Forest Restoration and Rehabilitation projects aim to restore degraded forest ecosystems, enhance biodiversity, and strengthen community resilience across member countries. These projects promote the use of native species, sustainable forest management practices, and community-based restoration approaches to ensure long-term ecological balance and improved livelihoods.

AFoCO/014/2020 *MYANMAR*

The project **" Integrated Pest and Disease Management in Teak Plantations in Bago Region, Myanmar"** has made significant progress in strengthening teak pest and disease management through research, capacity building, and institutional development. A research paper on teak pests and diseases-covering damage symptoms and environmental factors was published, along with a technical guideline booklet for control and prevention. Various workshops, trainings, seminars, and study tours were conducted to enhance technical skills in integrated pest and disease management, supported by demonstration and control plots. In addition, the diagnostic laboratory and museum at FRI were upgraded, enabling continuous research and effective dissemination of findings to the Forest Department and the private sector. A functional Teak Forest Pest and Disease Management Working Group was also established to sustain and expand the project's long-term impact.

Booklet of technical guidelines

Establishment of Demonstration and Control Plots

AFoCO/026/2021 *TIMOR-LESTE*

Measuring growth rates at ANR site in Fahiria suco, Aileu Municipality

The project **"Regreening the bare lands through promotion of locally customized restoration models in Timor-leste,"** has made substantial progress through stakeholder meetings and workshops, the construction of nurseries for seedling production, and the successful planting of 150 hectares—comprising 4,000 seedlings for the 20-hectare ANR site and 31,868 seedlings for the remaining 130 hectares. Additional activities include water harvesting, construction of irrigation canals and access roads, and the installation of an information board to raise public awareness. To ensure smooth and safe project implementation, a four-wheel vehicle, a three-wheel motorbike, and necessary field equipment were also procured for technical and field personnel.

AFoCO/031/2022 *VIET NAM*

The project **"Rehabilitation of degraded a deserted forest land in North-West region of Viet Nam through application of integrated technical measures,"** aims to develop and implement integrated technical measures tailored to varying levels of forest land degradation in Northwest Viet Nam. It seeks to establish and evaluate four rehabilitation models across four provinces—Hoa Binh, Lai Chau, Dien Bien, and Son La—by combining field-based practices with advanced scientific technologies. Additionally, the project focuses on compiling technical guidelines and policy briefs on the sustainable management and utilization of degraded and potentially desertified forest lands, while also promoting knowledge transfer and raising awareness among stakeholders through capacity-building initiatives.

Measuring soil erosion volumes in Dien Bien

Significant progress has been achieved, including the completion of silvicultural maintenance activities such as weeding, hoeing, and fertilization at all rehabilitation model sites. The survival rate of planted trees has been notably high—80% in Hoa Binh and Dien Bien, and 75–80% in Lai Chau—demonstrating strong site adaptation. Complementary planting of economically valuable NTFPs such as rattan, *Morinda officinalis*, jackfruit, and *Camarum tramdenum* was also carried out. Meanwhile, 12 soil erosion monitoring systems are being maintained to assess surface water flow and evaluate ecosystem recovery. Furthermore, four training programs were organized across the project areas to strengthen local capacity in propagation, planting, and sustainable harvesting of multi-purpose forest species, supported by practical field exercises for hands-on learning.

AFoCO/028/2022 *KAZAKHSTAN*

Map processing for unaccounted forest areas

The project **"Pilot project on inventory of unaccounted forest in Kostanay and North Kazakhstan regions and automation of the collection of information on forestry,"** aims to identify and map unaccounted forest areas across the Kostanay and North Kazakhstan regions, covering approximately 29,399 hectares by the end of 2025. In addition, it seeks to develop a fully functional digital program for forest data management to enhance monitoring, planning, and decision-making within the forestry sector.

Significant progress has already been made, including the successful marking and map generation of unaccounted forest areas, as well as the preparation of forest inventory descriptions and plantation plans. Baseline data for the North Kazakhstan region are currently being processed, and a draft version of the data management platform has also been developed. Collaborative efforts involving forestry experts, software developers, and relevant agencies have supported system testing and refinement. Moreover, four training seminars were conducted for forest engineers, representatives from forestry agencies, and other stakeholders to build capacity for the ongoing development and use of the digitalized data management system.

AFoCO/044/2024 *KAZAKHSTAN*

Under the project **"Technology and Capacity Enhancement for Massive Production of quality Planting Materials to Support National Forestation Goals in Kazakhstan"** the development of the mechanized forestry complex has progressed steadily. All technical documents have been prepared and finalized, and the project has received full approval from all stakeholders. Guidelines have also been developed for the three core nursery components: the seed seeding line, growing area, and quenching area. Preparatory construction work- such as backfilling, installation of concrete piles, and foundation construction- have been completed, and the delivery of sowing equipment marks another significant step toward establishing the complex's full infrastructure.

In parallel, planting activities for a 25-hectare area near Shchuchinsk City began in April 2025, focusing on pine species. Maintenance works are ongoing, and an inventory of forest crops has recorded a survival rate exceeding 70%, meeting regional standards of the Akmola region. Complementing these field efforts, national and regional capacity-building programs have been carried out, including training for local communities on the benefits and utilization of forests and non-timber forest products (NTFPs), as well as forest reproduction training for forestry workers and other stakeholders. These initiatives are helping to build practical practical skills and strengthen sustainable forest management knowledge across the region.

Conducting training on forest reproduction

Pine tree plantation at Burabi National Park

AFoCO/045/2024 *KYRGYZSTAN*

The project **"Conservation of Useful and Rare Tree Species in Kyrgyzstan through Establishment of a Seed Storage in order to Retain Significant Resource"** aims to establish a seed storage facility and a national seed management system in the Kyrgyz Republic to ensure the long-term preservation and quality assessment of forest seeds for producing high-quality planting material.

This year the project's progress has focused on establishing the seed storage facility and strengthening related capacities. For the seed storage facility in the Chuy region (planned capacity: 5 tons), the Terms of Reference (ToR) for the design and cost estimate documentation have been developed and approved. Essential preparatory activities- such as drafting the design, conducting the topographic survey, and calculating technical loads have been completed.

In addition, an international study tour was successfully organized to gather best practices for sustainable forest seed storage management. The physical construction of the storage facility will begin after the finalization and selection of the contractor.

Study visit to the National Seed Variety Center in South Korea

Capacity building for local forestry workers

Acorn Agroforestry Carbon Project *KYRGYZSTAN*

Boundary Planting for Landscape Restoration

introducing additional income for small holder farmers

The **AFoCO-Acorn Project in Kyrgyzstan**, focuses on promoting sustainable agroforestry practices, strengthening climate-resilient land management infrastructure, restoring degraded landscapes, improving food security, and enhancing policy support for climate resilience. to date, the project has trained 20 Trainers of Trainers and 1,000 farmers on climate-smart agroforestry, developed knowledge materials such as agroforestry postcards in collaboration with Acorn, and conducted monitoring visits covering 1,500 farmers in 2024 and 500 farmers in 2025. Boundary tree planting was implemented for 500 farmers using five tree species, with plans to expand further by the end of 2025. Additionally, 200 farmers received incentive payments to support income generation, and consultations were carried out with forest user groups on Assisted Natural Regeneration techniques to enhance soil moisture retention and ecosystem recovery.

Moreover, the project strengthened policy advocacy and partnerships by opening an AFoCO office in Kyrgyzstan in April 2025 to facilitate closer collaboration. A major policy milestone was the signing of an agreement with the Government of Kyrgyzstan to implement carbon projects, alongside the development of a Road Map for accessing the Voluntary Carbon Market in partnership with GIZ.

Despite these notable achievements, the project continues to face challenges, including delays resulting from changes in the certifier's strategy and difficulties in onboarding farmers from remote regions. However, the establishment of the project office has helped build farmer confidence. Lessons learned highlight the importance of active engagement and capacity-building workshops to improve understanding of carbon initiatives and strengthen farmer participation.

Promote natural regeneration and protection of biodiversity corridors.

Building partnership with government, private sector and civil society for scalling

Mekong REDD+ Project Phase 1 *CAMBODIA*

The project aims to generate forest carbon credits through REDD+ by reducing deforestation and enhancing carbon removal, using bundled community forestry as a key platform. It also seeks to secure sustainable livelihoods and increase income for participating local communities through the promotion of community-based forest enterprises and ecotourism development. Furthermore, the project focuses on strengthening knowledge, awareness, and institutional capacity to effectively implement community forestry carbon projects and mechanisms.

Tree nursery constructed

Significant progress has been made in strengthening forest land tenure security and improving community livelihoods. The boundaries of 14 Community Forests (CFs) have been assessed and demarcated, with 324 CF poles, signboards, and tags have been installed to clarify land ownership and prevent encroachment. Six forest outposts have been constructed to enhance patrolling and forest protection efforts. For livelihood improvement, the project supported the Resin and Honey Enterprise in Samaky CF through training, facility upgrades, and marketing assistance. Two solar-powered water pumps were installed in Chaompich and Samaky CFs, benefiting 180 households, particularly women-led ones.

Installation of solar energy-based water pumps

Six CF outpost successfully constructed

Development of community-based ecotourism

Additionally, ecotourism facilities were renovated and expanded in Chaompich and Borey Ou Svay CFs, creating new livelihood opportunities for more than 50 community members. A nursery with a capacity of over 20,000 seedlings was established, to support reforestation efforts, with more than 12,000 seedlings planted and distributed.

Despite these achievements, several challenges persist. Illegal activities such as land encroachment and forest degradation continue, necessitating replanting with native species. The project also faced delays in Verra registration due to procedural requirements, and budget adjustments were required to align with evolving on-ground realities. Nevertheless, stronger forest law enforcement has produced positive outcomes—many villagers have voluntarily returned encroached lands, demonstrating increasing awareness and commitment to forest conservation and sustainable community development.

Q&A and Discussion *Moderated by Mr. Choi Sungho, Team Leader of Project Team 2*

Project Implementation

- Project implementation has encountered delays due to structural changes in government and administrative systems, as seen in Timor-Leste and Kyrgyzstan. Outdated local infrastructure and frequent re-approval requirements necessitated repeated documentation and adaptation. Similarly, lengthy national approval processes have caused persistent delays. These factors underscore the importance of anticipating bureaucratic risk during initial project planning. Another recurring challenge concerns the import and clearance of equipment, which often involves complex customs procedures and heavy taxation. One proposed solution is to formalize AFoCO's status as an international grant organization to enable tax exemptions.

- Delays in the finalization of carbon methodologies (e.g., VM0048 for REDD+) have also affected project timelines, particularly for those awaiting validation or registration with Verra. These cases highlight the need for adaptive planning and interim mitigation measures to maintain project momentum despite external procedural constraints.

- Another risk arises from changes in certifier policies, such as new restrictions on pre-sale of carbon credits. Such shifts can directly influence project viability and farmer trust. To address this, project teams have introduced incentive-based mechanisms—such as early benefit payments and continuous community engagement—to ensure participation and build long-term credibility.

- Social challenges, especially resistance to changing traditional cultivation practices, continue to pose obstacles. Projects have found success in combining technical innovations with livelihood-based strategies, linking forest restoration to income generation through carbon markets and NTFPs.

- These experiences demonstrate that long-term sustainability depends on balancing policy support, institutional flexibility, and local ownership. Integrating market incentives into project design not only strengthens community participation but also establishes a replicable model for scaling up carbon and restoration initiatives across AFoCO member countries.

- REDD+ Projects (e.g., Cambodia Mekong REDD+): Focus should remain on establishing credible MRV systems while ensuring community rights and engagement. Delays in Verra registration require interim measures to safeguard project credibility and maintain field activities.

- Agroforestry Projects (e.g., Kyrgyzstan Acorn Project): Sustainability depends on ensuring that carbon credit revenues translate into tangible livelihood benefits. The delay in CRU payments underscores the need for transparent communication, phased payment systems, and strong farmer motivation mechanisms.


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1.3 Biodiversity Conservation Projects

Biodiversity conservation projects under AFoCO focus on protecting and restoring vital ecosystems while promoting sustainable resource use and active community participation. These initiatives aim to safeguard native species, rehabilitate degraded habitats, and strengthen ecosystem resilience against climate change. Through activities such as forest restoration, wildlife habitat improvement, and community-based resource management, they not only improve biodiversity but also create livelihood opportunities for local communities. By integrating scientific research, traditional knowledge, and innovative conservation practices, these projects contribute to regional and global biodiversity goals.

AFoCO/024/2021 *VIET NAM*

The project **"Conservation and development of forest ecosystems biodiversity resources at Cat Tien National Park,"** has achieved significant results in both ecological restoration and livelihood development. In 2025, restoration activities included the rehabilitation of five hectares of Crocodile Lake wetlands through invasive species removal and the restoration of 50 hectares of grassland at Nui Tuong. These interventions, along with the establishment of 20 artificial mineral sites and the cleaning of two water holes, have improved forage availability and enhanced habitat quality for native ungulates such as gaur and deer.

The project strengthened local capacity and boosted income opportunities by facilitating study visits for 50 buffer zone households, organizing four market surveys and business networking activities to improve farmers' knowledge andmarket access, and hosting a Tourism Promotion Conference to support sustainable livelihood development through community-based tourism.

Habitat Improvement: Ramsar-Crocodile Lake and Ungulate Grasslands

AFoCO/029/2022 *PHILIPPINES*

Forest healing training

The project **"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"** has completed a valuation study on ecosystem services and initiated consultations on a Payment for Ecosystem Services (PES) scheme to ensure long-term sustainability. Infrastructure development is progressing, including the enhancement of the arboretum and facilities for forest healing and experiential learning.

Capacity development is well underway, with initial training programs conducted on forest healing and experiential learning. These efforts are building partnerships with local organizations and will soon inform the formulation of new policies and guidelines for urban forest development and forest bathing implementation.

AFoCO/040/2023 *PHILIPPINES*

The project **"Forest Restoration using Philippine Threatened and Endemic Tree Species (PTES) in Bacon Manito Geothermal Reservation in Support of the Philippines Forestry Sector National Greening Program"** aims to restore 100 hectares of forest using threatened and endemic species, while also establishing a 2-hectare arboretum to produce 50,000 quality seedlings and develop 10 propagation protocols. A core objective is to institutionalize Private-Public Partnership (PPP) restoration models and facilitate knowledge sharing.

The project has made significant progress in both physical restoration and knowledge dissemination. The restored 100 hectares area is now undergoing continuous maintenance and protection. The 2-hectare EDC–AFoCO Arboretum has been opened to the public and showcases a range of native tree species. Knowledge transfer is ensured through the creation of a PTES information database and the development of a book featuring 12 propagation protocols, soon to be published. Importantly, the project is currently formulating recommendations on Private-Public Partnership (PPP) based forest restoration, intended to be translated into national policy, and is supporting capacity-building training programs for local communities and forest workers.

Restored 100 ha denuded forest using PTES

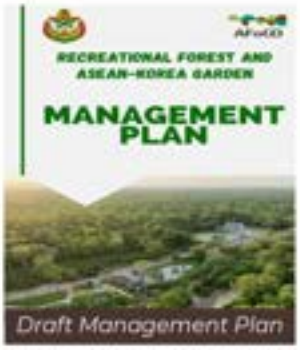
2-hectare BINHI Arboretum Established (with 20+ PTES)

AFoCO/036/2023 *CAMBODIA*

Under the project **"The establishment of ASEAN-KOREA GARDEN in Cambodia"** the construction of the ASEAN-Korea Garden has been completed, with its inauguration scheduled for November 2025. A *Forest Biodiversity Handbook* was developed to showcase key tree species and other biodiversity found within the garden. An international exchange program in the Republic of Korea was also organized to gain insights into forest recreation and garden management, which will help inform adaptation and implementation in Cambodia.

Aerial view of the ASEAN-KOREA Garden

Meetings and workshops were conducted to gather feedback for drafting the business and management plan for the Recreational Forest and the ASEAN-Korea Garden, which is now in its finalization stage. To strengthen sustainable market links, enhance forest education, and promote forest finance, a National Tourist Network Workshop was held to foster collaboration and build partnerships among stakeholders. Additionally, a dedicated webpage and social media platforms have been developed to serve as a centralized information hub and to facilitate online reservations.



Draft Management Plan

AFoCO/042/2024 *VIET NAM*

The project **"Establishment of ASEAN-KOREA GARDEN in Vietnam"** aims to create and expand green spaces in Hanoi while advancing conservation research and cultivating high-value plant species to address climate change. It also promotes environmental education and awareness on biodiversity conservation, sustainable management, and ecotourism across the ASEAN region, while strengthening collaboration among Vietnam, Korea, and other ASEAN member states. Currently, the project is progressing with ongoing site assessments and the planning and design of the ASEAN-Korea Garden.

Checking the site map to confirm the location of the planned garden.

A scientific workshop on the garden was organized, and a study visit to Korea was conducted to build capacity and share knowledge on plant species selection, design, planting, and nurturing models for research and environmental education integrated with plant conservation. Efforts are underway to establish a comprehensive database of plant species in the garden. A book documenting the plant species found within the garden and the VNUF campus has already been published. Additionally, an environmental education program promoting biodiversity conservation and environmental management has been developed and implemented, while a website for the ASEAN-Korea Garden and its educational programs is currently under development.

AFoCO/043/2024 *LAO PDR*

Soil analysis for suitability of tree planting

Under the project **"Establishment of ASEAN-KOREA GARDEN in Lao PDR"** site assessment, soil collection, and soil analysis activities are currently being carried out to ensure appropriate species selection. A technical consultation meeting on the design and development of the garden has also been convened. The design concept and master plan are being developed in alignment with key components - conservation, education, and research, with the aim of enhancing the urban environment through green initiatives and supporting the advancement and modernization of the botanical garden.

Q&A and Discussion *Moderated by Dr. Lee Yeongjoo, Head of Regional Office for Mekong*

Multi-stakeholder Collaboration and Community Engagement

- Multi-stakeholder collaboration has been essential for successfully integrating habitat restoration with livelihood development. Community engagement plays a crucial role: ecotourism creates income opportunities while motivating local people to actively participate in forest protection, ecosystem restoration, and biodiversity conservation.

- Private sector involvement has been critical in expanding conservation efforts. By connecting local products to broader markets and supporting sustainable tourism, private entities help achieve both ecological and economic goals.

Challenges in Adapting Forest Healing Methodologies

- The Philippines project encountered both administrative and operational obstacles when adapting forest healing methodologies. On the administrative side, delayed fund releases severely disrupted project timelines—budget approvals and cash disbursements took several months. National procurement policies also caused implementation delays.

- Operationally, the initial lack of local forest healing expertise created difficulties. Partnering with a certified international forest healing practitioner resolved this challenge and reinvigorated the project. This success has sparked national interest, with other Philippine protected areas now seeking forest healing guidelines.

Key Success Factors in Restoration

- Technical innovation, thorough documentation, and capacity building are essential for achieving high propagation success rates and improving restoration efficiency.

Species Selection Strategies

- Cambodia's botanical garden prioritized species based on climate adaptability, site suitability, and resilience to environmental stresses (pests, diseases, extreme weather). Native species were emphasized to preserve ecological integrity and ensure long-term viability.

- Vietnam used a structured design with thematic zones—flowering zones, innovation zones, and conservation zones—each with specific selection criteria. Conservation zones featured high-value species for protection, while flowering zones showcased aesthetically appealing plants. All selections focused on sustainability and adaptation to local conditions.

Stakeholder Engagement and Sustainability

- Lao PDR stressed the importance of stakeholder participation throughout all project phases: planning, development, operation, and management. Active engagement and transparent communication help identify priorities and streamline activities.

- The country also emphasized needs for: robust operation and maintenance systems, data-sharing platforms to improve visibility and collaboration, and long-term financing mechanisms to sustain projects beyond initial implementation.


15-16 September 2025
Seoul Botanic Park, Republic
5 Annual Technical Workshop
ject Management & Performance Review
AFoCO


25
nnual Technical
orkshop
Project Management
erformance Review
PROJECT OUTPUT 2: To advance the development and modern
Lao botanical garden with a focus on conservation, education,
enhancing the urban environment through green initiatives.
Master Plan
AFoCO


yong (AFoCO/043)


for Project Management
& Performance Review
15-16 September 2025
Seoul Bot ark, Republic of Korea


15-16 September 2025
Seoul Botanic Park, Republic of Korea


yxompheng Sengkhamyong (AFoCO/043)

Summary

The projects under AFoCO are being successfully implemented across 12 countries, and ongoing projects encompass a diverse range of activities aligned with three thematic areas: 1) Community-based participatory restoration & management ; 2) Forest Restoration and Rehabilitation ; and 3) Biodiversity Conservation.

Under the theme of "Community-based participatory restoration and management", projects have shown that success is most effectively achieved when initiatives are designed in partnership with local communities rather than imposed by external authorities. Genuine community participation fosters ownership, accountability, and long-term sustainability of project outcomes. For example, in Cambodia, involving local communities in nursery management has demonstrated multiple benefits: it generates income opportunities, supports regular maintenance of nursery operations, and ensures a reliable supply of quality planting materials. Such integration of livelihood activities within project design strengthens local commitment, as communities are more inclined to protect and restore forest resources when they directly benefit from the outcomes.

Under the "Forest Restoration and Rehabilitation", the experiences across AFoCO member countries highlight that successful restoration depends on context-specific, inclusive, and technically sound approaches. Projects implemented across Timor-Leste, Viet Nam, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and the Mekong region underscore the value of developing locally adapted restoration models that address ecological variability and community needs. Integrating silvicultural practices, agroforestry systems, and soil conservation measures has proven effective in improving of planted species survival rates and accelerating the recovery of degraded landscapes.

Aligned with the theme "Biodiversity Conservation", relevant projects emphasize the integration of ecological restoration with community livelihoods, education, and cultural engagement. Efforts such as habitat rehabilitation in Viet Nam, restoration using threatened species in the Philippines, and the establishment of ASEAN-Korea Gardens in Cambodia, Viet Nam, and Lao PDR demonstrate the importance of linking science, conservation, and local benefits. These initiatives highlight that effective biodiversity conservation relies on innovation, community participation, and strong institutional and policy support for long-term sustainability.

AFoCO's ongoing initiatives are strengthening member countries' readiness for large-scale forest and landscape restoration by developing robust MRV systems, piloting projects to assess threats and identify suitable species, and establishing essential infrastructures such as nurseries and seed storage facilities. These efforts enhance forest carbon management, promote livelihood opportunities, and reduce investment risks. To ensure long-term sustainability, AFoCO also supports business plan development, capacity building, and regional knowledge exchanges, reinforcing its commitment to resilient and self-sustaining restoration across member countries.

1.4 Impacts of Completed Projects

Session 1.4 featured the achievements of six (6) completed projects:

- AFoCO/008/2014 (Lao PDR)
- AFoCO/015/2020 (Myanmar)
- AFoCO/017/2020 (Bhutan)
- AFoCO/018/2021 (Timor-Leste)
- AFoCO/023/2021 (Indonesia)
- AFoCO/030/2022 (Thailand)

Project managers and staff presented their achievements, impact, and sustainability outcomes, offering insights into project implementation experiences. Following this, a Q&A session encouraged discussions on project sustainability and impact. Each of the six (6) completed projects contributed valuable ideas relevant to both project implementation and management.

AFoCO/008/2014 (Lao PDR)

AFoCO/015/2020 (Myanmar)

AFoCO/017/2020 (Bhutan)

AFoCO/030/2022 (Thailand)

AFoCO/018/2020 (Timor-Leste)

AFoCO/023/2021 (Indonesia)

Village-based Forest Rehabilitation in Lao PDR

The project aims to demonstrate village-based forest rehabilitation concepts in degraded forests, generate broad public support for the implementation of national forest rehabilitation policies; and to provide incentives to local villagers through various means.

Rehabilitation of degraded forest

The Village Forest Protection Group (VFPG) is responsible for managing and protecting the 2,770 hectare project site. Together with the project staff, the VFPG produced the seedlings used in the forest rehabilitation activities. Through these efforts, a total of 813 hectares of degraded forest land were rehabilitated by planting 455,000 seedlings of native forest tree species.

Community-Based Actions and Support Facilities for Forest Rehabilitation

To raise awareness and encourage community participation, an Arbor Day event was organized annually at the project site, engaging both public and private sectors in the village-based forest rehabilitation initiative. To support improved site monitoring and protection, two watchtowers were constructed in Katoud and Kongtoun villages, along with the two check dams to strengthen soil and water conservation efforts.

Community members were compensated for their involvement in seedling production, enrichment planting, site maintenance, and protection. To enhance accessibility and operations, a 4-kilometer access road was built connecting the villages to the ex-situ conservation plots, and two water tanks were installed to support watering and maintenance of new seedlings.

Project Overview

Duration: 2014-2025
Budget: US$ 7,50,000
Project Site:
Kongtoune Village, Paksong district, Champasak province, Lao PDR

2 watch towers constructed

Villagers patrolling 2,770 ha forests

455,000 seedlings of native species produced

The project in Laos demonstrated that community participation is essential for successful forest restoration. By combining technical training with financial incentives, it strengthened trust between villagers and government officials, resulting in active engagement in rehabilitation activities. This community-driven model also influenced national forest policies. It has since been integrated into the revised National Forest Policy and the Forestry Strategies 2035 and 2050, making income generation a core component of forest restoration. As a result, Laos now benefits from a sustainable, village-based framework that aligns community incentives with long-term national reforestation and conservation goals.

Community-Based Forest Model for Livelihood Enhancement and Conservation

This project aims to establish model forest villages to improve rural livelihoods and promote sustainable landscape management; develop community-based tourism and community-based enterprise; and strengthen human resources and capacity building initiatives.

Project Overview

Duration: 2020-2025
Budget: US$ 952,000
Project Site: Paukkhaung Township (Pyay District); Ywarngan Township (Taungyi District) and Pindaya Township (Taungyi District) in Myanmar

Community-Based Forest Conservation and Sustainable Agroforestry Initiatives

The project has successfully advanced forest conservation and community-based agroforestry in Southern Shan State and Bago Region. A total of 889 acres of Lwetant Community Forests were conserved, and demonstration agroforestry plots were established to showcase sustainable practices. These community forests not only serve as models for surrounding villages but also provide potential sites for community-based tourism. Additionally, an 8-acre multi-species plantation spanning in Daik Oo was established, and a research based on these activities was submitted, accepted, and published in the 36th Research Congress on Forestry, Mining, and Environment in Myanmar.

Conservation of Lwetant CF

Integrating Rural Livelihoods with Sustainable Forest and Water Management

The project has also strengthened livelihood opportunities and improved the sustainable management of natural resources. Socio-economic assessments of Non-Timber Forest Products (NTFPs) informed strategies for their sustainable production. Chemical-free coffee production under silk oak trees (*Grevillea robusta*) has enhanced rural incomes by supporting community-based enterprises. Technical workshops on forest conservation and rural development engaged forest technicians, local communities, and other stakeholders. Assessments of water use patterns and related business opportunities further supported efforts to sustainably management manage forest and water resources within the project area.

Harvesting and caring for coffee fruits from Coffea arabica plants.

Multi-species plantation (8 acres) in Daik Oo, Bago Region

The project encountered several challenges that provide valuable lessons for future implementation. Administrative delays, such as difficulties in fund transfer, and external shocks, including post-COVID-19 impacts and earthquake damage to equipment, disrupted workflow and project continuity. Moreover, limited technical knowledge in forest conservation and livelihood improvement, challenges in mobilizing communities for collective action, language barriers, and the time required to build trust highlighted the importance of strengthened capacity building, proactive planning, and strong community engagement strategies.

Community-Based Enterprise Development for Livelihood Improvement in Bhutan

This project aims to strengthen rural livelihoods by promoting the establishment of community wood-based enterprises, non-wood forest product enterprises, and ecotourism initiatives. It places a strong emphasis on capacity-building programs to enhance sustainable forest management, ensuring that local communities and forestry officials are equipped with the skills and knowledge needed to manage the forest resources responsibly while generating long-term economic benefits.

Project Overview

Duration: 2020-2024
Budget: US$ 1,400,000
Project Site: 12 Districts (Bumthang, Chukha, Thimphu, Paro, Haa, Gasa, Wangdue, Punakha, Tsirang, Lhuentse, Trashigang, Pemagatshel)

Advancing Community Enterprises for Sustainable Livelihoods and Ecotourism

The project successfully established five community-based enterprises, five ecotourism initiatives, and five non-wood forest product (NWFP) enterprises, creating new livelihood opportunities while promoting sustainable forest use. The project also procured NWFP packaging equipment to enhance product quality, market competitiveness, and income generation, thereby supporting the long-term sustainability of NWFP enterprises. A consultation meeting was also conducted with local communities benefiting from the ecotourism enterprise development. This engagement strengthened community participation and ownership while fostering collaboration for sustainable ecotourism growth. A strategic blueprint was developed to guide eco-friendly infrastructure development and promote a community-driven tourism experience.

Training on bamboo shoot pickle production with local community members in Tsirang District

Capacity Building for Sustainable Forest and Enterprise Management

Capacity-building activities were prioritized to support sustainable forest and enterprise management. Training on silvicultural practices was conducted for field forestry officials to strengthen technical skills and improve forest productivity. Local communities in Tsirang District also received training on NWFP product development to enhance their capacity to create value-added forest products, thereby improving income opportunities and market access. Additionally, an exposure visit to successful community-based NWFP and ecotourism enterprises in the Philippines was organized to facilitate knowledge exchange and the adoption of best practices for strengthening local enterprise sustainability.

Sunkosh Ecotourism Landscape in Tsirang

Stocking of Nursery by local people

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 suited to diverse natural conditions across typical Agro-Ecological Zones (AEZs) of Timor-Leste, ensuring they effectively meet community needs. To accomplish this, six (6) Participatory Land Use Planning (PLUP) initiatives were carried out across four (4) targeted municipalities.

Promoting Community-Based Agroforestry and Sustainable Land Management

A total of 14-hectares demonstration plots were established across four AEZs, where six agroforestry models were tested and used as living classrooms for farmers and stakeholders. Additionally, six PLUPs were completed across six sucos in four municipalities, strengthening community-based land management. Traditional *Tara Bandu* ceremonies were held to formalize community commitments toward sustainable land use and resource conservation.

Institutional Capacity Strengthening and Knowledge Sharing

To enhance institutional capacity, a capacity development needs analysis workshop was conducted, and a national agroforestry reference manual is currently being drafted. A study tour to Indonesia and three farmer trainings were organized to improve technical knowledge and promote farmer-to-farmer learning. For knowledge sharing and partnership strengthening, project results were presented in MALFF-DP meetings and AFoCO workshops. Three Project Steering Committee (PSC) meetings were convened to provide oversight and ensure coordination with SAPIP, EU Agroforestry, WB, and FAO projects. Additionally, a project website was launched, and a lessons-learned video was produced to support broader dissemination and knowledge exchange.

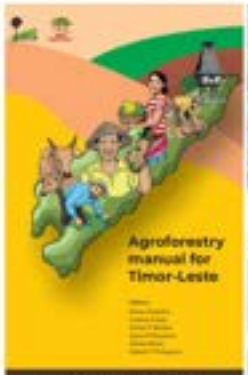
The project encountered challenges in managing community expectations and balancing technical and socio-economic objectives across multiple sites. Key lessons include the importance of clear communication, early integration of multidisciplinary expertise, and aligning stakeholder interests.

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

14 ha demonstration plots established in 4 AEZs

Agroforestry plot in Vatubaro Village,Liquica Municipality



Agroforestry Manual

6 PLUPs completed in 6 sucos (4 municipalities)

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

The project developed climate-responsive long-term forest management plans for three FMUs in Riau, South Sulawesi, and West Nusa Tenggara, integrating specific mitigation actions, locations, timelines, and budgets to support Indonesia's FOLU Net Sink 2030 targets. These long-term plans have included specific mitigation activities in terms of the types of activities, locations, time, and costs required.Through a co-implementation model, FMUs actively participated in decision-making process and now serve as custodians of the restored landscapes, ensuring long-term monitoring and maintenance. FMUs were also engaged in training programs, RPHJP preparation, and the management of demonstration plots, further strengthening collaboration and capacity-building efforts.

Customized Restoration Models

Restoration models integrating livelihood opportunities were established across three critical ecosystems in Indonesia: peatlands, mangroves, and karst lowlands. In Riau Province's tropical peatlands, a 15-ha demonstration plots significantly improved carbon storage capacity while enhancing forest structure and biodiversity. In South Sulawesi's karst lowlands, the project supported the recovery of 10 hectares of biodiversity-rich forests, ensuring the sustainability of local ecosystems. These restoration models serve as effective examples of increasing carbon stocks while promoting biodiversity conservation which can be replicated across other regions in Indonesia.

In West Nusa Tenggara's mangroves, it established a 15-ha mangrove restoration and silvofishery demonstration plot with three mud crab cages.

Community Empowerment and Capacity Building

The project tailored education and training, enabling FMUs and villagers to take leadership roles in climate mitigation and ecosystem restoration is one of the key pillars of the project. Through training in carbon accounting, sustainable forest management, and agroforestry techniques, community members acquired essential skills to actively contribute to national climate goals. Community participation in decision-making processes fostered a sense of ownership and responsibility, which is critical for the long-term success of restoration efforts. This capacity-building efforts not only ensures the sustainability of the project's impacts but also equips local stakeholders to effectively manage restored ecosystems in the future.

Project Overview

Duration: 2021-2024
Budget: US$ 800,000
Project Site: Mangroves of Ampang Plampang FMU, Sumbawa Regency, West Nusa Tenggara Province; Karst & lowlands of Bulusarang FMU, Maros Regency, South Sulawesi Province; Peatlands of Kepau Jaya Forest Area with Specific Purpose (FWSP), Kampar Regency, Riau Province

15-ha mangrove plot in Sumbawa regency


15-ha demo plot Maros regency

Publication showcasing project best practices

Enhancing Community Livelihoods and Sustainable Land Management in Thailand through Forest Restoration

This project aims to increase forest coverage in the target areas by restoring and rehabilitating degraded forest or land using the Restoration Opportunity Assessment Methodology (ROAM) and Forest Landscape Restoration (FLR). It also seeks to promote sustainable land management in the agricultural sector and develop a sustainable land use model to halt land degradation among beneficiaries in the target areas. Additionally, the project aims to enhance the capacity and engagement of local people, local authorities and relevant stakeholders in sustainable agriculture, sustainable land management and sustainable forest management.

Key Accomplishments

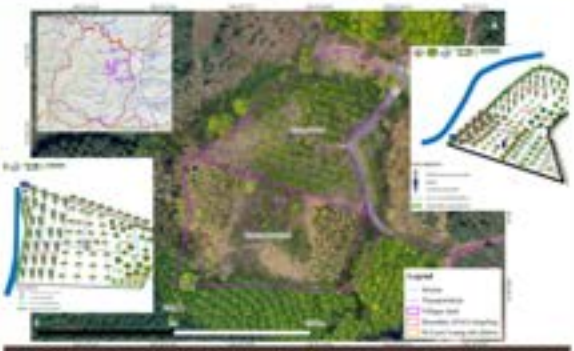
The project successfully reviewed 10-years of baseline forest cover in the target areas to identify changes, trends, and underlying drivers of forest loss. it also analyzed existing land use maps and provincial city plans to determine the legal designations of the target areas and to identify degraded sites with potential for restoration. Community and stakeholder pre-consultation meetings were held to discuss current land use and assess local land needs for multiple purposes.

Monitoring and evaluation (M&E) research on Forest Landscape Restoration (FLR) implementation was carried out to assess progress and challenges. The project also reviewed national policy frameworks on integrated Sustainable Land Management (SLM) to guide local applications. As key outputs, a sustainable land and water management plan was developed and officially endorsed by local authorities, along with a climate-smart agriculture plan aligned with national frameworks and applied within the target areas.

The project added value to local raw materials, helping increase household income and fostering the development of unique community brands. It also demonstrated a replicable model of sustainable land and forest restoration rooted in soil and water conservation principles. Through the promotion of agroforestry and integrated farming systems, the use of microorganisms, and zero-waste innovations for soil revitalization, the project enhanced local ecosystems. Improved farm-level water resource management further contributed to reversing land and forest degradation while supporting climate-resilient livelihoods.

Project Overview

Duration: 2023-2024
Budget: US$ 453,921
Project Site: Pa Leaw Luang sub-district, Santisuk district, Nan province, Thailand



FLR integrated with agriculture, agroforestry, non-chemical agriculture, and forest plantation

Develop the local climate smart agriculture plan and its implementation

Establishing or scaling up existing groups of farmer cooperatives and entreprenuers

- In Lao PDR (AFoCO/008), the Department of Forestry of Lao PDR is institutionalizing and scaling up the village-based forest management model developed under the project by embedding community participation and incentive mechanisms into national forest policies and laws. Recognizing that restoration cannot succeed without livelihood benefits, the model strategically links community-based forest management with incentive mechanisms. These lessons led to amendments in forest laws and the integration of village-driven rehabilitation approaches into the National Forest Policy (2020) and Forestry Strategy 2035–2050, providing clear national guidelines for implementing similar community-based restoration projects across the country.

- In Myanmar (AFoCO/015), three key strategies are being implemented to replicate and scale up the Model Forest Village concept while maintaining a balance between sustainable forest management and community livelihoods. First, the project has established Model Forests and Villages to designate reserve forests for conservation and promote sustainable forest use. Second, a framework with eight criteria for Model Forests has been developed and integrated into the National Program, ensuring long-term policy support and institutional sustainability. Lastly, the project promotes socio-economic development alongside conservation by introducing agroforestry practices, constructing small-scale infrastructure, and linking conservation communities with broader economic opportunities through small and medium-scale community enterprises.

- From Bhutan (AFoCO/017), the project has successfully encouraged a major shift among local communities from subsistence forest use to income generation by developing business models through forest-based community enterprises based on non-timber forest products (NTFPs), ecotourism, and other value-added forest resources. To sustain these gains, government support should focus on legally recognizing forest-based enterprises as formal business entities or cooperatives, beyond their current status as components of community forestry. Such recognition will enable them to access markets, receive institutional support, and operate within a clear legal and policy framework, ensuring their long-term sustainability while maintaining the principles of community forestry.

- In Timor-Leste (AFoCO/018), One of the notable contributions of the project is the development of viable and scalable agroforestry models that can be mainstreamed as core national strategies to facilitate forest restoration and land management, as key priorities in Timor-Leste's national forest policy.The project successfully integrated these agroforestry models into national reforestation and climate-resilient agriculture policies, supported by participatory land-use planning and local action frameworks.

- In Indonesia (AFoCO/023), the project strengthened forest governance by enhancing the capacity of Forest Management Units (FMUs) and improving communication and collaboration with local communities and stakeholders. The experiences gained are now being reflected in the development of the national long-term forest management plan. A key lesson is that continuous communication and engagement with stakeholders from the early stage of project implementation are essential for success. These experiences and approaches, centered on stakeholder participation, knowledge sharing, and strong local collaboration, will guide the application of successful FMU-based forest management strategies across the country.

Q&A and Discussion *Moderated by Dr. Lee Seonghan, Team Leader of ODA Projects Team*

- Lastly, Thailand (AFoCO/030) emphasized forest landscape restoration and land-use planning as key strategies to address illegal encroachment, promoting collaboration between forestry, environment, and agriculture sectors. To sustain and scale the project's achievements, RFD of Thailand will position the project as a model for national forest protection and land-allocation efforts; embed practices from the 33 pilot farms into land-use planning and FLR guidelines; institutionalize coordination among the Royal Forest Department, Environment, and Land Development agencies; formalize community engagement for degraded-land restoration; and couple conservation with livelihood tools—ecotourism, market access, and SME linkages—so communities have lasting incentives to participate.

- Collectively, the discussions demonstrate how community-driven approaches are increasingly being institutionalized within national forest policies and strategies, ensuring that the achievements of AFoCO projects extend well beyond their implementation period. Overall, these country experiences illustrate a shared transition from project-based interventions to policy-anchored, community-inclusive forest management systems. The key to sustaining and scaling these achievements lies in continuous policy alignment, institutional coordination, and the creation of tangible livelihood incentives that make communities active custodians of forest landscapes across the region.

Summary

After 10 years of project implementation in Laos, the project demonstrated that community participation is crucial for successful forest restoration, improving livelihoods and shaping national forest policies toward a sustainable, village-based reforestation framework. In Myanmar, the project successfully carried out forest conservation and agroforestry initiatives in Southern Shan State and Bago Region. Key achievements included establishing Community Forests and multi-species plantations, conducting socio-economic assessments of NTFPs, organizing a technical workshop, and assessing water use patterns to help improve rural livelihoods and resource sustainability. In Bhutan, the project helped transition local communities from subsistence use to income-generating use of forest resources by building enterprise skills and fostering stronger community ownership, although policy changes are still required to legally formalize these new forest-based enterprises.

In Timor-Leste, The project established 14 hectares of agroforestry demonstration plots across four zones, completed PLUPs with strong community commitment, drafted a national agroforestry manual based on a capacity needs assessment, and strengthened knowledge sharing through meetings, trainings, and digital outreach. In Indonesia, the project effectively communicated forest management approaches to stakeholders and communities, helping influence long-term national forest policy. Additionally, a related initiative on Sumbawa Island enhanced community awareness of the role of mangrove restoration in combating climate change through effective communication and stakeholder engagement, reinforcing the importance of collaboration for project success. In Thailand, the project conducted a comprehensive review of historical forest cover data, legal land classification, and national policy frameworks to inform the development and local endorsement of integrated plans for sustainable land management, restoration, and climate-smart agriculture, supported by stakeholder consultation and continuous monitoring and evaluation.

1.5. Thematic Presentations

Session 1.5 of the workshop showcased presentations by the Strategic Planning Team, focusing on AFoCO's strategic direction, risk management, and innovative financing. It highlighted the 2024–2030 Strategic Plan, aligned with the SDGs and the Paris Agreement, tracked through 24 Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for the strategic plan, and supported by the Climate Benchmarking Platform to mobilize funding. The session also outlined the Environmental and Social Management System (ESMS) for managing project risks with local community consent, followed by an introduction to the Blended Finance approach by the Capacity Building Team, which combines public and private capital and integrates nature- and market-based solutions to make projects sustainable and investment-ready.

Assessment of AFoCO Strategic Plan 2024-2030

As an action oriented organization, AFoCO's Strategic Plan 2024-2030 was built for outcomes aligned with the SDGs and Paris Agreement. To assess achievements, AFoCO will use 24 KPIs mapped across Program Priority Areas and Cross-Cutting Themes developed together with the Member Countries. Roughly, half are core KPIs for system wide comparability while the rest are optional for context specific programs.

For the assessment, annual progress monitoring will be conducted every year to collect data, track KPIs, and produce annual summaries. In 2027, a comprehensive midterm review will be conducted to assess the progress and effectiveness, identify gaps and make adjustments. At the end of 2030, a final review and evaluation will be conducted to collect and review the long term achievements and sustainability. Further, a post 2030 Impact Assessment will be conducted for a deeper look and analysis of the environmental, social, institutional, and policy effects. This systematic process ensures that AFoCO will have a yearly pulse, a mid-course correction, a final assessment, a longer horizon impact view to ensure sustainability and attainment of the goal towards a Greener Asia with resilient forests, landscapes, and communities.

Mr. Kim Hyungmin,
Assistant Program Officer,
Strategic Planning Team, AFoCO

Demo of Climate Action Match-Making Platform (CAMP)

Ms. Jang Jiyeong, Assistant Program Officer, Strategic Planning Team, AFoCO

The strategic planning team is developing the Climate benchmarking platform, CAMP. It was introduced as an online marketing place and information center at the last special Assembly. It aims to mobilize and diversify funding sources, particularly from the private sector and external stakeholders, with a focus on nature-based climate action programs.

The AFoCO Secretariat is conducting regular tree planting activities in cooperation with member countries. Projects are showcased on the CAMP website under three thematic areas, ***mangrove restoration, forest fire, and tropical forest***. Currently, six project sites from six countries have been uploaded. Through a letter of intent, four more projects have been received from three countries, Thailand, Brunei, and Kyrgyzstan. These will be uploaded soon. CAMP will be officially launched in October globally, and will encourage interest and active participation.

Intro of Enviornment &Social Management System (ESMS) Guideline

The purpose of the ESMS guideline is to offer a clear, critical set of procedures for environment and social engagements. The ESMS guideline will provide a workflow for identification, risk assessment and categorization, mitigation planning, as well as the implementation of all environment and social risks associated with certain applicable projects. The scope of this ESMS guideline will apply to the entire process of our project development, implementation, and management.

It is necessary to identify the risks and categories in the project concept development stage. During the project appraisal, there will be a committee who will identify the ESMS related matters and evaluate it. Lastly, it is necessary to monitor those risks during the project implementation. The key requirement on the proposal is to include risk assessment and mitigation. The ESMS Plan must be accomplished to reduce the identified risks.

Dr. Bae Kikang, Team Leader, Strategic Planning Team, AFoCO

The incorporation of the ESMS guidelines in project implementation will help in risk identification and management to provide clearer directions achieve impacts. AFoCO will provide the necessary guidance to support all Member Countries in effectively applying the ESMS guideline throughout the project lifecycle.

AFoCO's Blended Finance Approach

Ms. Ryang Soazin, Team Leader, Capacity-building and Evaluation Team, AFoCO

Over the past decade, with the generous support of the Korea Forest Service, AFoCO has built a substantial portfolio of forestry projects. The positive reputation and brand value of AFoCO's project achievements have accumulated as a solid foundation. However, with the diminishing amount of Official Development Assistance (ODA) around the world, using grants to manage and organize projects is no longer a pragmatic choice. It is a critical moment to transition from grants to blended finance.

AFoCO's grant-funded projects can serve as early-stage risk mitigation tools, laying the groundwork necessary to attract private investment and enable scalable financing solutions. ODA-backed projects provide an entry point for scalable financing models by connecting government-supported initiatives with private investors. Given the current limitations of AFoCO's ODA resources, exploring additional financial streams has become increasingly necessary. Blended finance offers a strategic combination of public and private funding to reduce investment risks and mobilize private capital—an essential approach, as large-scale climate and forestry initiatives often exceed the capacity of traditional ODA funding.

During the 12th Assembly Session, AFoCO initiated partnerships with three organizations to develop innovative planning and financing mechanisms. The three partnerships formed under the Task Force on private sector engagement and blended finance include: (i) Artha Network Inc.; (ii) Economics of Mutuality (EoM); and (iii) Merry-Year Social Company (MYSC). These partnerships aim to link AFoCO's strong reputation and project portfolio with new financial opportunities and private-sector actors.

- The first partnership was formed with Artha Networks, a global advisory platform that connects impact opportunities with mission-aligned private investors engaged in sustainable forestry and climate-related projects. Through this collaboration, AFoCO seeks to unlock private capital, particularly from high-net-worth family offices, private foundations, and impact investors in Europe and Asia.
- AFoCO's second partnership with Mutual Value Labs (MVL), grounded in the principles of the Economics of Mutuality, aims to analyze forest-related value chains and identify key stakeholders, especially major global corporations that can play a role in sustainable forest development.
- The third partnership involves MYSC, an accelerator known for nurturing promising start-ups in the region. In cooperation with MYSC, AFoCO is identifying high-potential start-ups and working to develop a blended finance fund that will support project implementation.

To ensure long-term financial sustainability, AFoCO emphasizes the integration of nature-based solutions (NbS) and market-based solutions (MbS). Adopting a landscape approach that incorporates NbS and MbS allows projects to move beyond restoration and transform into sustainable, global market models. Incorporating carbon opportunities—such as REDD+, agroforestry, and afforestation/reforestation (AR)—can further enhance project value. These integrated approaches ensure that existing ODA projects evolve into sustainable, market-driven initiatives.

Market-based approaches will require engagement with product-based enterprises and investors, ultimately contributing to stronger governance structures for forestry-based public–private partnerships. Such mechanisms may include reforestation, restoration, forest conservation, carbon credit systems, agroforestry enterprises, and sustainable ecotourism models. AFoCO's push for innovative NbS combined with MbS stems from its view of forests not solely as ecosystems, but as living economies. By connecting ecological restoration with livelihood improvement and job creation, AFoCO seeks to strengthen community resilience while protecting natural resources.


AFoCO
MOU Signing Ceremony
AFoCO and IFSA Korea

Session 2. Blended Finance & Climate Change Cooperation

Session 2 of the workshop highlighted AFoCO's priority to transition to a Blended Finance model, using ODA as seed funding to de-risk projects and attract private investment. By integrating nature- and market-based solutions—such as carbon credits, agroforestry, and high-value NTFPs—projects aim to generate financial returns while enhancing local livelihoods. The AFoCO Climate-Forest Cooperation Framework ensures that projects are market-ready, institutionally aligned, and policy-coherent to support long-term sustainability.

2.1 Blended Finance for Forest Climate Action: From Grants to Scalable Landscape Solutions

ODA-funded projects are regarded as AFoCO's seed initiatives. AFoCO's ODA project concepts originate from member countries' own ideas, government-led activities, and national strategies. This provides a strong foundation for developing land finance products. Through this approach, grant-based projects can function as early-stage refining mechanisms to attract private capital and leverage scalable financing models that link government-backed ODA projects with private investors. These ODA projects are designed to evolve into sustainable, market-driven models. Activities such as payments for ecosystem services (PES), non-timber forest product (NTFP) development, and agroforestry are already embedded within these grant-funded projects. In the case of PES, AFoCO typically establishes the basic framework and agroforestry-related infrastructure through grants. Building on this groundwork, the transition to market-based solutions enables AFoCO to identify potential business sectors and entities that can generate greater impact and long-term sustainability for local communities.

Ms. Ryang Soozin, Team Leader, Capacity-building & Evaluation Team, AFoCO

AFoCO's role is to identify landscape-based opportunities across its project sites, including carbon project potential, partnerships with private enterprises, and strengthened forest-based public–private collaboration. This also involves advancing relevant policies and frameworks to support these efforts. A landscape-level approach is essential, incorporating multi-sectoral activities and diverse combinations of NbS, MbS, and carbon-related initiatives.Traditional plantation activities remain valuable, and adding a carbon component can further enhance local livelihoods.

To support this transition, AFoCO is developing a capacity-building tool known as the Project Preparation Facility. Through this tool, all stakeholders act as catalysts to bridge ODA and private investment through innovative networks that can transform short-term aid into scalable, long-term forest economies. The organization envisions building a blended finance ecosystem within the region in collaboration with diverse partners.

Finally, AFoCO plans to launch the AFoCO–ASEAN Forest Living Lab for market innovation and public–private partnerships. It will also develop three to five pilot projects in collaboration with private investors. From 2028 onward, AFoCO expects to establish and implement its own blended finance models, enabling the scaling up of all projects. Ultimately, AFoCO positions itself not only as a connector but also as a catalyst—transforming ODA-supported initiative into long-term, scalable economic and environmental solutions.

2.2 AFoCO Climate-Forest Cooperation Framework

Dr. Kim Donghwan, Program Officer, Carbon Projects Team, AFoCO

AFoCO acknowledges that its current resources are insufficient to achieve its broader goals. To scale its impact, AFoCO must identify valuable sites and adopt effective implementation models. In selecting these models, there is a need to comply with the standards and requirements of its partners, who may have their own motivations or intentions behind their investments. NWith this in mind, AFoCO has proposed the development of a Climate Forest Cooperation Framework—a guiding document designed to help identify opportunities to enhance carbon stocks, integrate additional carbon layers, and ensure that sustainable development goals are met. This framework also emphasizes improving the welfare of local forest-dependent communities and safeguarding forest biodiversity.

Furthermore, AFoCO proposes establishing an integrated program development approach that would enable the growth of both grant funding and private-sector investment. The proposed framework is closely aligned with existing project plans and climate action strategies, and it supports key priorities such as land restoration, forest rehabilitation, community-based solutions, and digital innovation.

The framework is structured into three phases. The first phase is readiness, the second involves on-site and in-forest actions, and the third focuses on valuation and marketization. In the ***readiness phase***, the organization develops policies and plans that support the implementation of national and sub-national REDD+ initiatives and other forest-related activities, including PPAs and CCTs. This phase also involves capacity building, as well as research and development efforts that contribute to policy formulation and planning. Collaboration with relevant stakeholders and partners forms another key component of this stage. The ***on-site and in-forest actions phase*** emphasizes the practical implementation of activities in the field. This includes the measurement and monitoring of PPA actions, along with capacity building and technology transfer to ensure effective and sustained field-level interventions. In the ***valuation and marketization phase***, the organization enhances knowledge management through improved data and information systems, supports national and international reporting, and facilitates the publication of project accomplishments. This phase also aims to increase access to finance from both public and private sectors, including opportunities related to the marketization of ecosystem services.

For implementation, AFoCO follows a six-step process. First, the AFoCO Secretariat conducts a preliminary analysis to develop and propose Project Concept Notes (PCNs) through a desk review. Next, the draft PCNs are circulated to member countries to confirm their cooperation needs. The PCNs are then refined through closed coordination between the Secretariat and the respective AFoCO Member Countries. After refinement, a feasibility study is carried out to assess the finalized PCNs. Following this assessment, agreements are prepared and signed with AFoCO Partners, who are willing to provide diverse types of funds including but not limited to grants, and investment. The final step involves implementing, monitoring, and evaluating the Project Partnership Agreements in accordance with the AFoCO Project Manual, including the identification of additional partners.

2.3 Case Studies in Member Countries

Initial Mapping of Potential Sites in Myanmar

The initial mapping of potential sites in Myanmar focused on a technical assessment process for potential Afforestation/Reforestation (A/R) and REDD+ sites and to share the preliminary results of a desk-based assessment. The presentation outlined a six-stage operational procedure for implementing the AFoCO Climate-Forest Cooperation Framework, beginning with a preliminary analysis and drafting of PCNs. It then detailed a technical assessment process that utilized MODIS satellite imagery and IPCC guidelines to identify potential sites for both A/R and REDD+ projects, as well as for mangrove restoration.

Based on the spatial and temporal analysis, the assessment identified Southern Shan State as having the highest deforestation rate over the past decade, indicating strong potential for A/R and REDD+ project development. The analysis also highlighted the Southern Yangon Coastal Zone as highly suitable for mangrove restoration and rehabilitation, as the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation (MONREC) has designated the area as a green belt to protect against natural disasters such as storms and flooding, and to prevent saline water intrusion into farmlands. Furthermore, during a virtual meeting with officials from the Myanmar Forest Department, it was agreed that Southern Shan State is the most suitable site for upland forest A/R and carbon project implementation under the AFoCO Framework, while, the Southern Yangon Region was confirmed as the preferred site for future blue carbon initiatives through mangrove restoration and rehabilitation.

Initial Survey of MbS opportunities in Cambodia

The preliminary study in Cambodia identified several key elements for developing MbS. Since MbS represented a new initiative, the team initially faced uncertainty. However, operational procedures were eventually developed in collaboration with project partners, and surveys were conducted with identified stakeholders, including local communities, enterprise actors, and one agricultural cooperative.

AFoCO's assessment revealed that although a clear business entity exists in the form of a paper company with established market channels, a gap persists between farmers and the company. Farmers seek stability and support, while the company requires a consistent supply of raw materials to maintain revenue flows. This situation suggests that while investments in inclusive business models are promising, further consideration is needed on how best to channel investment to support the company's efforts to sustainably source materials from local farmers. Investors consistently emphasize that grant-based projects play a critical role in de-risking private investments. The presence of such grant-based initiatives increases investor openness and reduces hesitation toward exploring investment opportunities.

Mr. Nay Aung, Fellowship Official, Carbon Projects Team, AFoCO

Ms. Emily Marie Lim, Program Officer ODA Projects Team, AFoCO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Session Closing

The last session of the ATW was closed by Team Leaders from the Project and Program Division of AFoCO, who provided insights on the enabling role of blended finance in AFoCO's project portfolio.

Dr. Lee Seonghan, Team Leader, ODA Projects Team, AFoCO

Dr. Lee Seonghan, Team Leader of AFoCO's Project Team 1, highlighted mentioned that many member countries rely on public finance and development cooperation to restore forest and enhance community livelihood and address the growing impacts of climate change. To achieve long-term impact by engaging the private sector, blended finance can leverage ODA outcomes. Blended finance models should complement rather than replace market investments by serving as a market catalyst, building foundations to address SDG challenges such as feasibility, institutional readiness, and reputational considerations.

He added that market outcomes require measurement beyond securing private investment; assessing readiness and progress through phased market engagement is crucial. The first phase, market readiness, focuses on foundational tasks such as value chain mapping, identifying potential buyers, and conducting price modeling to prepare for intervention. The second phase, market engagement, involves practical connections through community-based products, testing CSR collaborations, and signing agreements with private partners. The final market transaction phase materializes research outcomes. Progress in the first two phases constitutes success even if the project does not reach the final phase. Institutional integration enhances sustainability by improving investor profitability, ensuring continuity beyond project life, and facilitating effective investments.


Mr. Choi Sungho, Team Leader, Carbon Projects Team, AFoCO

Mr. Choi Sungho, Team Leader of AFoCO's Project Team 2 (Carbon Projects), emphasized that AFoCO's platform must be institutionalized and consolidated to transcend individual projects, forming an integrated structure linking policies, technologies, financing, and field implementation. Such a structure will facilitate member countries' access to international carbon markets and foster trust for public and private capital participation. Projects must align with member countries' policies, including carbon, national development, forest, agricultural, and rural development strategies.

As an intergovernmental organization, AFoCO ensures policy coherence and government endorsement, a strength not easily matched by private institutions or NGOs. AFoCO's distinct product centers on a community forest-based, participatory model that incorporates five key pillars—nurseries and reforestation to support jobs and seedlings, agroforestry systems that enhance sequestration, payments for ecosystem services, livelihood co-benefits such as NTFPs and ecotourism, and digital MRV for transparent monitoring. This integrated approach links carbon and non-carbon sectors to industries, improving local livelihoods through agroforestry while generating measurable carbon results. AFoCO also invests in strengthening institutional, technical, and financial capacities among member countries and local communities, supporting blended finance structures for long-term sustainability. Its unique position as Asia's sole intergovernmental forest and climate organization underscores AFoCO's capability to shape the future proactively—well captured by Peter Drucker's saying: "The best way to predict the future is to create it."

Synthesis & Way Forward

After nearly two days of intensive work, the AFoCO Annual Technical Workshop (ATW) 2025 concluded successfully. The Workshop brought together 96 participants from 12 AFoCO member countries, along with representatives from donor agencies and partner organizations.

The Event provided a valuable platform to present and discuss the status, performance, impact, sustainability, and emerging opportunities of 28 AFoCO projects—22 ongoing and 6 completed—implemented under ODA Projects, REDD+ Projects, Carbon Projects, and related programs. The Workshop also reviewed the Assessment of the AFoCO Strategic Plan and discussed the Blended Finance and Climate Forest Cooperation Framework, both of which are vital for guiding future project development and fundraising efforts.

Through the presentations and discussions, several priority areas requiring focused attention were identified:

Strategic Alignment and Project Guidelines
Under the new AFoCO Strategic Plan 2024–2030, the AFoCO Project Manual and Guidelines have been reviewed and updated to reflect the revised strategic directions. The Manual now serves as the primary reference for project development, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation. AFoCO will continue updating relevant annexes, finalizing and applying the "Blended Finance and Climate Change Cooperation Framework" in collaboration with member countries and partners, and developing additional guidelines as needed.

Project Implementation and Synergies
Ongoing ODA, Carbon, REDD+, and related projects are being effectively implemented and managed to achieve their intended objectives, supported by enhanced efforts to disseminate and publish project results. For projects experiencing delays, stronger engagement from implementing agencies and national focal points will be required to ensure timely progress and successful completion.

New Project Development
New ODA projects will incorporate market-based approaches—such as carbon markets, payment for ecosystem services (PES), and sustainable product certification—and will be aligned with REDD+ and carbon initiatives to strengthen synergies and maximize impact.
For the nine new ODA project proposals, thorough preparation—including feasibility studies and project appraisal consultations—is essential to ensure they are ready for approval at the 13th Session of the Assembly and are successfully implemented thereafter. Strengthened cooperation among donors, investors, partners, and member countries will be critical in developing high-quality proposals that support effective implementation, sound management, meaningful impacts, and long-term sustainability.

Capacity Building
Capacity-building activities will continue through project-specific training and the programs delivered by AFoCO's Regional Education and Training Center (RETC) in Myanmar. These efforts aim to further strengthen knowledge and skills in project management, development, implementation, monitoring, reporting, evaluation, and other relevant areas.

Resource Mobilization
The "Blended Finance and Climate Change Cooperation Framework" will guide AFoCO's efforts to expand and diversify its funding base. AFoCO will continue to build partnerships and promote cooperation with donors, investors, and the private sector to secure sustainable financial resources.

AFoCO Project Photo Exhibition

The Second AFoCO Project Photo Exhibition was organized in Seoul from 15 to 16 September 2025 concurrently with the 2025 ATW. The exhibition took participants on a visual journey that highlighted the remarkable progress of AFoCO projects and the inspiring impacts being made in the field. AFoCO project managers and staffs submitted photos captured over the past year since the 2024 ATW via Google Forms, which were carefully evaluated by a jury in advance. A total of 38 photos were submitted from 28 projects, and after selecting only one representative photo per project, 26 photos were selected as the final entries for the exhibition. During the workshop, participants explored powerful stories through the photos and actively contributed to the selection process by casting their votes. Ultimately, six (6) winners were selected through a combination of jury scores and public voting, and they were honored with award certificates and prizes.

The AFoCO Project Photo Exhibition highlighted efforts made to successfully manage AFoCO projects. While all entries were outstanding, the winners were selected based on the jury's pre-evaluations and public voting scores. The award-winning photos captured the essence of projects related to forest restoration and improve livelihoods through sustainable community based enterprise . The winners of the AFoCO Project Photo Exhibition were proudly announced.

Gold Award

Philippines AFoCO/040/2023

Bayani of the forest: carrying the future one seedling at a time Brgy. Cabacongan, Manito, Albay Region, Philippines

A local forest aide—hailed as a bayani (hero)—strides through the mountains of the Philippines, bringing life back to the land through reforestation. Each native seedling he carries is not just a tree, but a promise of restored forests, renewed biodiversity, and sustainable livelihood.

Silver Awards

Viet Nam AFoCO/024/2021

Indochinese gaur and sambar deer grazing on restored grasslands in Cat Tien National Park, Viet Nam

Bhutan AFoCO/017/2020

Tradition meets nature: a Sunkosh ecotourism jewel in Tsirang

Bronze Awards

Timor-Leste

AFoCO/026/2021

Natural balance: Casuarina & Savana

Mongolia

AFoCO/039/2023

Where communities and seeds take root

Kazakhstan

AFoCO/044/2024

Preparing for spring planting

2nd AFoCO Project Photo Exhibition - Award Ceremony

The award ceremony for the second AFoCO Project Photo Exhibition was held on the last day of the ATW, 16 September 2025. The Gold Award was presented to the project "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/040/2023)". The Silver Award was honored to the project code AFoCO/024/2021 (Vietnam) and AFoCO/017/2020 (Bhutan). The Bronze Award was given to the project code AFoCO/044/2024 (Kazakhstan), AFoCO/039/2023 (Mongolia), and AFoCO/026/2021 (Timor-Leste).

Ms. Kelzang Choden, Fellowship Official, ODA Projects Team, AFoCO

Gold Award - AFoCO/040/2023 (Philippines)

Silver Award - AFoCO/024/2021 (Vietnam)

Silver Award - AFoCO/017/2020 (Bhutan)

Bronze Award - AFoCO/044/2024 (Kazakhstan)

Bronze Award - AFoCO/039/2023 (Mongolia)

Bronze Award - AFoCO/026/2021 (Timor-Leste)


for Project Management
& Performance Review
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Photo
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Workshop Closing

Mr. Jin Sunpil
Vice Executive Director of AFoCO

The 2025 ATW was concluded by AFoCO's Vice Executive Director, Mr. Jin Sunpil. In his closing remarks, he noted that this year's ATW successfully brought together 28 project teams from AFoCO member countries, offering a meaningful platform to report on progress, identify challenges, and explore innovative solutions. From ongoing initiatives to recently completed projects, the presentations and discussions demonstrated a collective commitment and underscored the importance of regional collaboration in addressing complex and evolving forestry issues.

This year's thematic session placed particular emphasis on project sustainability, effective monitoring strategies, and the integration of management approaches to enhance project insights and strengthen the reporting of regional cooperation efforts. He also underscored the importance of scaling up successful models and translating project achievements into national policies to ensure long-term impact.

As the workshop came to a close, Mr. Jin encouraged participants to take the momentum of the ATW back to their respective organizations. He urged them to share the knowledge gained, reflect on the lessons learned, and continue seeking innovative ideas that foster stronger performance on the ground. While the path toward forest conservation and sustainable development is often challenging, he emphasized that the shared goals, collective dedication, and unity within the AFoCO community provide confidence and inspiration for continued progress.

He extended his sincere appreciation to all participants for their valuable contributions, active engagement, and commitment throughout the workshop. He also expressed his anticipation of reconnecting with everyone at future AFoCO events, including the next ATW in 2026. In closing, he wished all participants safe travels and continued success, reaffirming the shared commitment to building a greener, more resilient, and sustainable Asia together.

Photo Highlights - Seoul Botanic Park

Photo Highlights - National Museum of Korea

Photo Highlights - Our Speakers & Presenters

Dr. Nam Songhee
Director General, International Affairs Bureau,
Korea Forest Service

Dr. Park Chongho
Executive Director of AFoCO

Mr. Jin Sunpil
Vice Executive Director of AFoCO

Mr. Ray Thomas F. Kabigting
AFoCO National Focal Point
for Philippines

Mr. Seab Kimsrim
Project Manager,
AFoCO/005/2014

Mr. Pak Sngoun Pisey
Project Manager,
AFoCO/027/2022

Mr. Lic Vuthy
Project Manager,
AFoCO/038/2023

Mr. Phavanar Sombanpheng
Project Manager,
AFoCO/025/2021

Mr. Batsukh Tumur
Project Manager,
AFoCO/039/2023

Dr. Lee Yeongjoo
Head of Regional Office
for Mekong, AFoCO
presenting on AFoCO/032/2022

Dr. Park Junghwan
Regional Program Manager
Project Team 3, AFoCO
presenting on AFoCO/035/2022

Dr. Zar Chi Hlaing
Project Staff,
AFoCO/014/2020

Mr. Elton Ferreira
Project Staff,
AFoCO/026/2021

Dr. Nguyen Thuy My Linh
Project Coordinator,
AFoCO/031/2022

Mr. Yernar Sarsenbayev
Project Manager,
AFoCO/028/2022

Mr. Duman Dukenbayev
Project Cordinator,
AFoCO/044/2024

Mr. Nursultan Omurkan Uulu
Senior Specialist, International Cooperation Department, Forest Service of Kyrgyzstan

Mr. Islambek Amantaev
Project Coordinator, Acorn Project in Kyrgyzstan

Mr. Aziret Azhibaev
Project Staff, Acorn project in Kyrgyzstan

Mr. Khorn Vantha
Project Focal, Mekong REDD+ Project in Cambodia

Mr. Pham Duong
Project Coordinator, AFoCO/024/2021

Ms. Melodyann Malano
Project Manager, AFoCO/029/2022

Mr. Ronino Gibe
Project Manager,
AFoCO/040/2023

Mr. Khorn Norin
Project Manager,
AFoCO/036/2023

Dr. Hoang Van Sam
Project Manager,
AFoCO/042/2024

Mr. Xaysompheng Sengkhamyong
Project Manager,
AFoCO/043/2024

Dr. Oupakone Alounsavath
Project Manager,
AFoCO/008/2016

Dr. Inkyin Khaine
Project Manager,
AFoCO/015/2020

Mr. Sonam Tobgay
Project Manager,
AFoCO/017/2020

Mr. Adalfredo Rosario Ferreira
Advisor, AFoCO/018/2021

Ms. Ayun Windyoningrum
Project Manager,
AFoCO/023/2021

Mrs. Chatnapa Promlaaongwan
Project Staff, AFoCO/030/2022

Mr. Alex A. Cheng
Forest Protection Lead,
AFoCO/040/2020

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Program Officer,
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Mr. Nay Aung
Fellowship Official,
Carbon Projects Team, AFoCO


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Mr. Duman Dukenbayev (AFoC
Mr. Nursultan Omurkan Uulu (
Mr. Aziret Azhibaev (AFoCO/A


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Annex. List of AFoCO Projects

*This list includes AFoCO projects (ongoing and scheduled for completion in 2025).

Code	Country	Period	Title
AFoCO/005	Cambodia	2016-2025	Establishment of Forest Genetics Research Center for Restoration of Major Timber Species in Cambodia
AFoCO/008	Lao PDR	2016-2025	Village-based Forest Rehabilitation in Lao PDR
AFoCO/014	Myanmar	2020-2025	Integrated Pest and Disease Management in Teak Plantations in Bago Region, Myanmar
AFoCO/015	Myanmar	2020-2024	Model Forest for Livelihood Improvement of Forest Department Communities through Development of Community-Based Enterprise and Forest Conservation
AFoCO/016	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	Bhutan	2020-2025	Sustainable Community-Based Enterprise Development for Improved Rural Livelihood in Bhutan
AFoCO/018	Timor-Leste	2021-2024	Development of Agroforestry Models for Promotion of Reforestation in the Different Zones in Timor-Leste
AFoCO/023	Indonesia	2021-2024	Innovative Solution for Climate Change and Biodiversity Landscape Strategy to Support SDGs in Indonesia
AFoCO/024	Viet Nam	2021-2025	Conservation and Development of Forest Ecosystems Biodiversity Resources at Cat Tien National Park
AFoCO/025	Lao PDR	2021-2026	Integrated Village-driven Forest Rehabilitation and Livelihood Improvement in Viengthong District, Bolikhamxay Province, Lao PDR
AFoCO/026	Timor-Leste	2021-2026	Re-greening the Bare Lands through Promotion of Locally Customized Restoration Models in Timor-Leste
AFoCO/027	Cambodia	2022-2027	Site Restoration and Sustainable Management of Community Forest Using Multiple Use Tree Species and Agroforestry
AFoCO/025	Timor-Leste	2021-2026	Re-greening the Bare Lands through Promotion of Locally Customized Restoration Models in Timor-Leste
AFoCO/027	Cambodia	2022-2027	Site Restoration and Sustainable Management of Community Forest Using Multiple Use Tree Species and Agroforestry
AFoCO/028	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	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	Thailand	2020-2023	Improving Local Community's Livelihoods and Engagement in Sustainable Forest and Land Management in Thailand through Forest Landscape Restoration

Code	Country	Period	Title
AFoCO/031	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	Cambodia Lao PDR Myanmar Viet Nam	2022-2027	Capacity Building on Enhancing Resilience to Forest Fire and Local Livelihood in CLMV Countries
AFoCO/035	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	Cambodia	2023-2026	The Establishment of ASEAN-KOREA Garden in Cambodia
AFoCO/038	Cambodia	2023-2025	Advancing Restoration of Native Agarwood – *Aquilaria crassna* and *A. Malaccensis* – for Sustainable Use and Management in Southwestern Cambodia
AFoCO/039	Myanmar	2023-2025	Forest Restoration Demonstration through Hgih Capacity Tree Nursery and Capacity Building in Support of "Billion Trees" National Movement in Mongolia
AFoCO/040	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	Viet Nam	2023-2024	Establishment of ASEAN-Korea Garden in Viet Nam
AFoCO/043	Lao PDR	2024-2025	Establishment of ASEAN-Korea Garden in Lao PDR
AFoCO/044	Kazakhstan	2024-2025	Technology and Capacity Enhancement for Massive Production of Quality Planting Materials to Support National Forestation Goals in Kazakhstan
AFoCO/045	Kyrgyzstan	2024-2025	Conservation of Useful and Rare Tree Species in Kyrgyzstan through Establishment of a Seed Storage in order to Retain Significant Resource
/			Acorn Project in Kyrgyzstan (Carbon project)
/			Mekong REDD+ Project in Cambodia

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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