

ANNUAL REPORT 2025

Asian Forest Cooperation Organization

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Message from the Executive Director



In 2025, AFoCO made significant progress in advancing innovative financing for sustainable forest landscapes across Asia. We moved our carbon initiatives from concept to implementation while laying the foundation for greater private sector investment in forest restoration.

One important milestone was achieved in Kyrgyzstan, where farmers participating in the Rabobank-supported agroforestry project received their first Carbon Removal Unit (CRU) incentive payments. This demonstrated that carbon finance can generate tangible benefits for rural communities while supporting sustainable land management.

At the same time, AFoCO expanded its partnerships to accelerate blended finance for forest restoration. We began collaborating with Pollination, Artha Network, and Merry Year Social Company (MYSC) to develop investment-ready carbon projects and mobilize private capital across our Member Countries.

These achievements reflect AFoCO's commitment to turning innovative approaches into practical solutions. We will continue to strengthen partnerships, scale up innovative financing, and support our Member Countries in restoring forests, improving livelihoods, and building climate resilience.

I sincerely thank our Member Countries, partners, and local communities for continued trust and collaboration. Together, we will build healthier forests, stronger communities, and a greener Asia.

Together, towards a Greener Asia!

Executive Director **Park Chongho**

Park Chongho

AFoCO Overview

Asian Forest Cooperation Organization

The Asian Forest Cooperation Organization (AFoCO) is an intergovernmental organization established in 2018 to promote sustainable forest management and strengthen regional cooperation in addressing climate change and forest-related challenges across Asia.

As of December 2025, AFoCO comprises 17 Member Countries, including 15 Parties: Bhutan, Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Mongolia, Myanmar, the Philippines, the Republic of Korea, Tajikistan, Thailand, Timor-Leste, and Viet Nam, as well as two observer countries, Malaysia and Singapore.

AFoCO is headquartered in Seoul, Republic of Korea, where its Secretariat is located. The AFoCO Regional Education and Training Center (RETC) is based in Yangon, Myanmar. The AFoCO Regional Office for the Mekong (ROM) is located in Ha Noi, Viet Nam.

Milestones

2018

- Establishment of AFoCO as an international organization (IO)
- Opening of AFoCO RETC in Myanmar

2021

- Enlisted as an IO eligible for Official Development Assistance (ODA) under the OECD-DAC;
- Entry-into-force of the HQ Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Korea and AFoCO;
- Accredited as observer IO for participation at Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)

2024

- Launch of the 'Friends of Asia and Asian Forests (FAAF)' Initiative

2020

- Granted Permanent Observer status by the United Nations General Assembly;
- Accreditation as an observer IO to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD)

2022

- Admission as observer IO to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)

2023

- Implementation of AFoCO Strategic Plan (2024-2030)
- Adoption of 'AFoCO 10-year Climate Action Plan' by the Assembly

AFoCO
RETC

MYANMAR

BHUTAN

LAO
PDR

MONGOLIA

KAZAKHSTAN

KYRGYZSTAN

TAJIKISTAN

REPUBLIC
OF KOREA

AFoCO
Secretariat

VIETNAM

AFoCO
ROM

PHILIPPINES

BRUNEI
DARUSSALAM

MALAYSIA
SINGAPORE

INDONESIA

TIMOR-LESTE

AFoCO in Snapshots

2025 Budget



2025
PROJECT
FUNDING

37.2%

14.0%

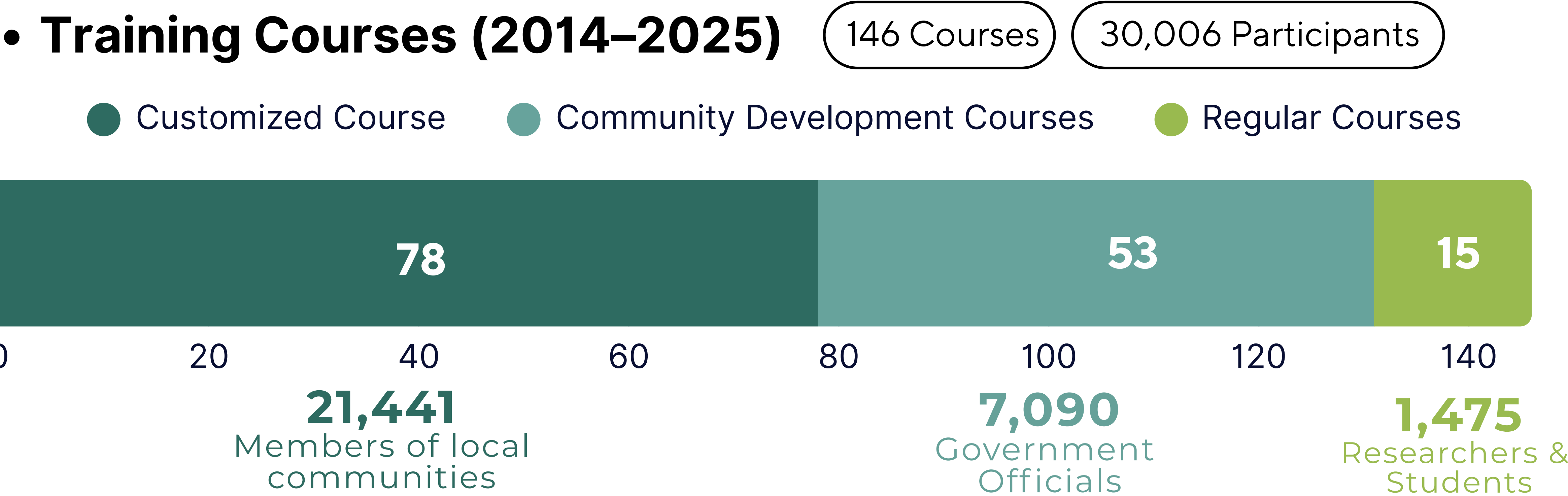
2.7%

46.1%

Building Capacities in Member Countries

AFoCO’s flagship capacity building programmes support the development of the next generation of forestry professionals across Asia, strengthening capacities at both national and local levels.

*AFoCO’s capacity building programs: Fellowship Program, Landmark Scholarship Program, and Science & Technology Exchange Partnership (STEP) Program



AFoCO’s Carbon Emissions in 2025

AFoCO is committed to environmental sustainability, including efforts to measure, monitor, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions associated with its operations.



Strategic Priorities (2024–2030)

AFoCO’s cooperation with Member Countries is guided by three Program Priority Areas (PPAs) and supported by a set of Cross-Cutting Themes (CCTs).





Engagement & Partnerships

- 01 Engagement
- 02 Partnerships

Engagement

Twelfth & Thirteenth Session of the Assembly

“Building Bridges Between Forests and Finance”

The 12th and 13th Sessions of the AFoCO Assembly, held in May and October 2025, reflected AFoCO’s growing focus on climate finance, forest-carbon development, and multi-partner collaboration.

The 12th Session, held in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia and attended by representatives from 14 Member Countries, reviewed progress under the AFoCO Climate Action Plan 2025–2034 and discussed approaches to new project and programme development under the AFoCO Strategic Plan 2024–2030. Discussions also focused on private sector engagement, forest-carbon initiatives, and opportunities to strengthen collaboration with development finance institutions and strategic partners.

Pollination and the Asian Development Bank (ADB) shared perspectives on the development of high-integrity nature-based solutions and forest-carbon projects, highlighting opportunities and challenges associated with scaling investments in climate and nature. The Assembly emphasized the importance of ensuring environmental integrity, investment readiness, and long-term sustainability in the development of forest-carbon initiatives.



Dr. Oupakone (Lao PDR), President of the 12th Assembly, delivering remarks.



Kyrgyzstan delegation delivering its statement at the 12th Assembly.



Cambodia delegation delivering its statement at the 12th Assembly.

Building on this momentum, the 13th Session of the AFoCO Assembly, held in Seoul, Republic of Korea, advanced AFoCO’s strategic priorities on climate finance, partnership development, and institutional growth.

The Assembly approved nine new projects across Member Countries and reviewed progress under the Strategic Plan 2024–2030, including private sector engagement, blended finance, resource mobilization, and cooperation with development partners. Updates were also provided on key institutional platforms and climate and forest-related initiatives.

The Secretariat further reported progress toward accreditation with the Green Climate Fund (GCF) and the Adaptation Fund (AF), marking an important step toward expanding AFoCO’s access to international climate finance.



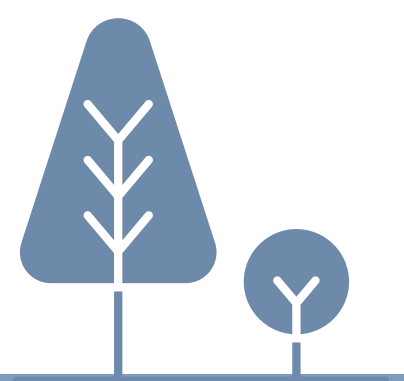
AFoCO Executive Director Park Chongho delivering remarks at the 13th Assembly.



Director Pham Duc Chien speaking at the 13th Assembly.



Indonesia delegation at the 13th Assembly.



2025 AFoCO Annual Thematic Dialogue (ATD)

“Catalyzing AFoCO’s Potential through Private Investment and Multi-Partner Collaboration”



The 2025 Annual Thematic Dialogue (ATD), held on 13 May in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia, brought together more than 60 participants to explore how blended finance, technological innovation, and multi-stakeholder partnerships can accelerate forest investment across Asia.

The Dialogue highlighted AFoCO’s evolving role as a regional platform for forest-carbon and nature-based investments. Discussions focused on developing investable project pipelines, mobilizing private capital, leveraging innovative technologies, and strengthening partnerships to deliver measurable climate and development outcomes.

AFoCO at Events in 2025



2025 International Day of Forests

On March 21, AFoCO and Korea Forest Service (KFS) jointly organized a commemoration for the 2025 International Day of Forests at the Korea National Arboretum in Pocheon.



Global Mountain Dialogue for Sustainable Development

On April 24 in Bishkek, Executive Director Park Chongho participated in the “Global Mountain Dialogue”, hosted under the auspices of the President of the Kyrgyz Republic.



20th session of the UNFF

On May 9, AFoCO participated in the 20th session of the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF20) in New York, reaffirming its commitment to forest cooperation and co-hosting a side event on scaling up integrated landscape approaches through partnerships, policies, and finance.



2025 Seoul International Garden Show

On May 22, AFoCO unveiled “The Spring Grove” at the 2025 Seoul International Garden Show, celebrating forests and global unity. “The Spring Grove” highlighted the cultural and ecological values of forests through an immersive public experience.



UNFCCC COP30

From November 11 to 23, during the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change Conference of the Parties (UNFCCC COP30) in Belém, Brazil, AFoCO hosted flagship side events on blended finance and contributed to discussions at the Korea Pavilion and the Global Carbon Council (GCC) Pavilion on carbon markets, NDC implementation, blue carbon, Article 6.2 cooperation, and nature-based solutions.

Partnerships

3rd FAAF Forum “From Carbon to Co-Benefits: Rethinking Forest Investment in Asia”

Held on 27 October 2025 in Seoul, Republic of Korea, the 3rd FAAF Forum brought together representatives from governments, international organizations, civil society, and the private sector to discuss pathways for scaling forest and landscape restoration through innovative financing and partnerships.



(From left) Mr. Suho LEE, MOFE, Ms. Veronica Kim, SK Securities, Ms. Joanne SAWICKI, Cerescom Ltd, Ms. Myounghwa Hwang, Save the Children Korea, Mr. Pengyu Li, WEF, Dr. Dindo Campilan, IUCN, Mr. Kook-Hyun Moon, FAAF



(From left) Mr. Simon Baldwin, SecondMuse, Mr. Ken Hynes, Artha Networks Inc, Ms. Soozin Ryang, AFoCO, Mr. Kwang W. Kim, AFoCO



(From left) Dr. Gun Gun Hidayat, MoFor, Mr. Shagdarsuren Zuunai, Billion Tree Fund, Mr. Pengyu Li, WEF, Dr. Tongil Kim, AFoCO

The Forum emphasized the need to move beyond carbon markets by integrating biodiversity conservation, community resilience, and inclusive financing approaches.

Speakers from organizations including Ministry of Finance and Economy (MOFE), SK Securities, IUCN, the World Economic Forum (WEF), UNFF, and the KFS highlighted the growing importance of blended finance and public-private collaboration in delivering nature-positive outcomes.

“Enabling Blended Finance for Forest and Landscape Restoration”

The discussion explored how blended finance can mobilize investment for forest and landscape restoration by combining public funding, private capital, and innovative business models.

Drawing on experiences from Asia and beyond, speakers highlighted the importance of de-risking mechanisms, forest-positive value chains, and strong monitoring and verification systems to attract investment and scale high-integrity nature-based solutions.

“Mobilizing Resources through Collaborative Platforms”

The discussion highlighted the role of collaborative platforms in mobilizing resources for forest and landscape restoration.

Participants underscored the importance of trust, transparency, and enabling policy environments in scaling partnerships and blended finance solutions.

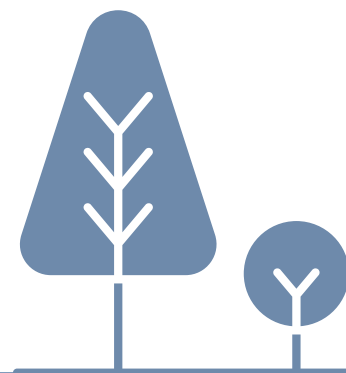
What is FAAF?

FAAF (Friends of Asia and Asian Forests) is an AFoCO-led corporate engagement platform that brings together companies seeking to contribute to sustainable development across Asia through forest-based solutions.

FAAF supports efforts to address climate and environmental challenges while contributing to climate action, biodiversity conservation, net-zero ambitions, and the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).



Group Photo of the 3rd FAAF Forum on 27 October, 2025



Growing Partnerships: New MOU Signed in 2025



Artha Networks Inc.



Merry Year Social Company (MYSC)



Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources of Kazakhstan, and KT&G



YUHAN, National Forest Agency of Mongolia and “Billion Trees”



African-Asian Rural Development Organization (AARDO)



Save The Children Korea



IFSA Korea



General Directorate of Forestry and Wildlife (GDF) of Cambodia



Pollination



Billion Tree Fund

Greening Asia with Private Sector

Greening Kazakhstan with KT&G



In June 2023, large scale forest fires in the Abai Region of Kazakhstan caused extensive damage to forest ecosystems in the Semey area, highlighting the growing vulnerability of forest landscapes to climate-related disasters.

In response, KT&G, the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources of Kazakhstan, and AFoCO signed a tripartite agreement on Earth Day 2025 to support long-term forest restoration and ecosystem recovery efforts in the affected region.

Under the initiative, approximately 100 hectares of fire-damaged land will be rehabilitated between 2025 and 2027 through reforestation and ecosystem recovery activities.

Greening Mongolia with YUHAN Corporation



In Batsumber, Mongolia, nearly 20% of forest areas have been affected by wildfires since 2000, leaving large areas of degraded forest landscapes vulnerable to further ecological decline.

In response, Yuhan Corporation, Mongolia's National Forest Agency, AFoCO and the Billion Trees NGO launched the "Yuhan 4RE (Resilient, Regenerative, Responsible Reforestation): Restoration of Wildfire-affected Forests in Batsumber" Project on 30 September 2025.

The project aims to restore fire-damaged forest areas through the annual planting of 36,000 seedlings while promoting resilient and sustainable forest recovery.

Greening Mongolia with Emart



Mongolia's Terelj National Park has been affected by ongoing desertification, resulting in gradual forest degradation in the area.

Emart has joined Mongolia's Billion Tree National Movement (BTNM) through a project titled "Forest Tomorrow," which supports the establishment of a designated "Tomorrow's Forest" in the park.

In 2025, Emart initiated project implementation on a designated 4.4-hectare site within Terelj National Park and commenced a phased reforestation program.

The project sets a target of planting 15,000 trees by 2028, with activities planned in stages to ensure survival rates, ecological suitability, and long-term maintenance of the planted forest area.

Greening Kyrgyzstan with T'way Air



On April 14, 2025, T'way Air commemorated its Bishkek route by planting 1,000 trees.

The activity was carried out with the participation of AFoCO, the Kyrgyzstan Forest Service, the Embassy of the Republic of Korea to the Kyrgyzstan, and T'way Air volunteers near Manas International Airport as part of the second year of the "Thousand-Year Forest" initiative.

The project site, covering approximately two hectares, currently hosts more than 2,000 trees, transforming previously vacant land into a functional green space near the Tian Shan mountain range.

Greening Korea with Mapletree Korea

In support of urban greening and forest restoration efforts in the Republic of Korea, Mapletree planted 63 trees at Boramae Park in Seoul on 30 April and a further 335 trees at Gwangneung Forest in Pocheon on 30 September in collaboration with IFSA Korea.

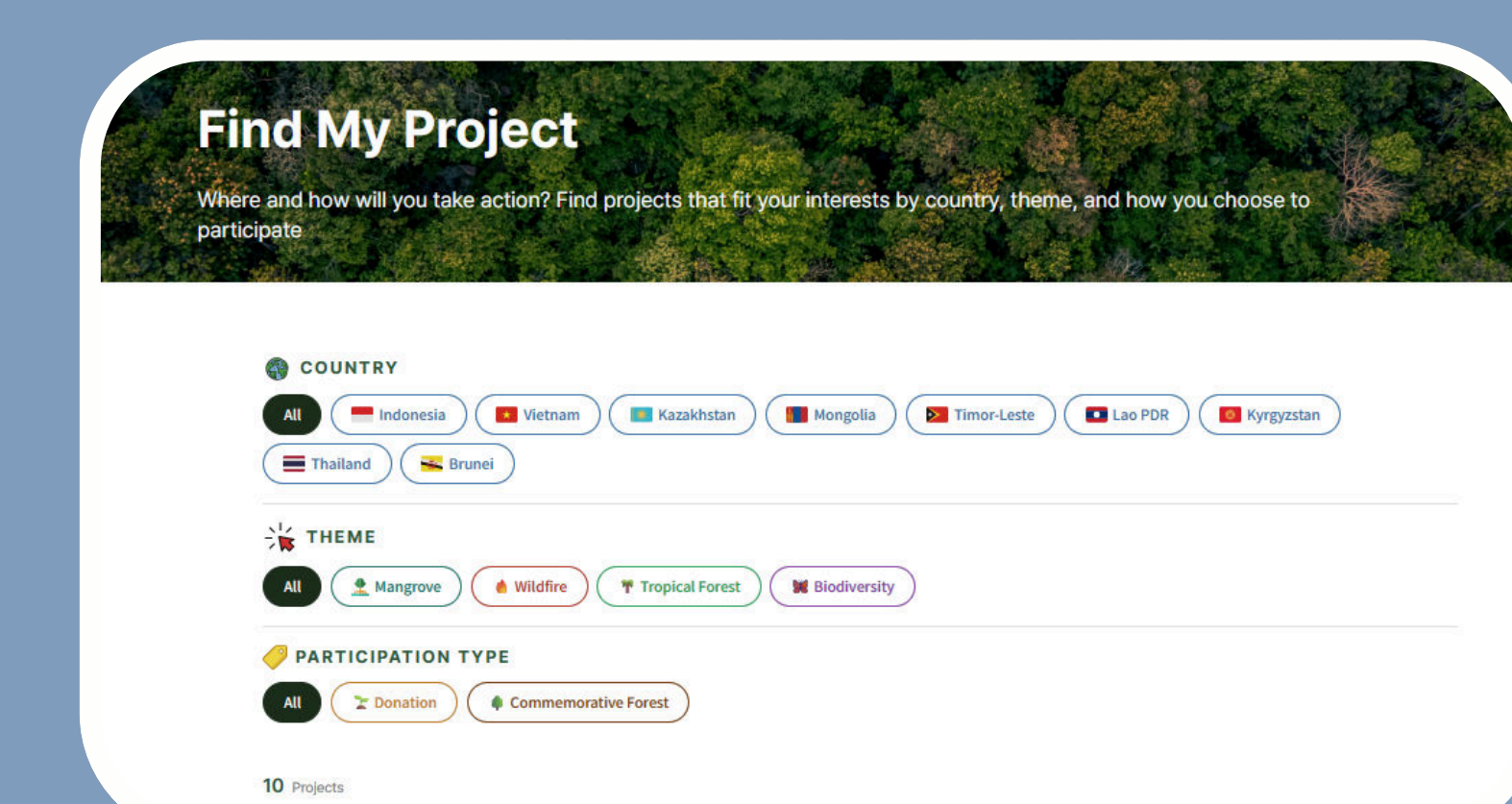


Climate Action Matching Platform (CAMP)

Recognizing the growing importance of private sector engagement in addressing environmental challenges, AFoCO launched the Climate Action Matching Platform (CAMP) in 2025.

CAMP is an online donation platform that connects forest and climate action projects across Asia with individuals, institutions, and companies interested in supporting nature-based solutions.

Through CAMP, visitors can explore project opportunities, engage in climate action initiatives, and contribute to building resilient forests and communities across Asia, while supporting sustainable forest restoration efforts throughout the region.



English Page
<https://en.afococamp.com>

Korean Page
<https://afococamp.com>



QR code



AFoCO's Actions Across Asia

- 01 Regional Actions
- 02 Country Actions
- 03 Empowering Member Countries

Regional Actions

We foster regional cooperation to advance sustainable livelihoods, forest restoration and forest fire management across Asia.

Improving Local livelihoods through Non-Timber Forest Products (NTFPs)

Participating Countries (11)



BHUTAN, CAMBODIA, INDONESIA, KAZAKHSTAN, LAO PDR, MONGOLIA, MYANMAR, PHILIPPINES, THAILAND, TIMOR-LESTE AND VIETNAM

For many rural communities across Asia, forests are both a home and a livelihood. Running from 2022 to 2026, the project supports local communities in developing sustainable livelihoods through non-timber forest products (NTFPs), including medicinal plants, wild foods, and handicraft materials. By promoting community-based enterprises, the project helps generate income, strengthen local economies, and encourage the sustainable management of forest resources.

In 2025, the project advanced community-based enterprises across 11 participating countries from planning to active operation.

More than 40 value-added products were developed or certified, 18 business and Sustainable Resource Management plans were finalized, and 6 private-sector partnerships were established. Over 150 capacity building programs engaged more than 2,500 community members, and 4 country Road Maps were completed and substantially advanced.

Best Practice: Community-Based Wild Honey Enterprise in Cambodia



Packaged honey products ready for sale



Local beekeepers harvesting wild honey



Stainless steel honey processing equipment



Community members tasting honey products



First Lady Dr. Pich Chanmony Hun Manet visited the PCBE Booth

Communities in Preah Vihear Province have long harvested wild honey, but limited processing equipment and basic packaging made it difficult to attract wider markets.

Through AFoCO's NTFP Project, the Preah Vihear Community-Based Wild Honey Enterprise (PCBE) improved its processing facilities and packaging, helping to enhance both product quality and presentation.

These improvements led to strong results at the Cambodian Product Fair held in Phnom Penh from 26–28 September 2025, where PCBE sold more than 40 liters (56 kg) of wild honey over three days. The booth also drew attention from First Lady Dr. Pich Chanmony Hun Manet and senior government officials, who praised the quality of the honey and the community's efforts.

Outstanding Country Achievements

Bhutan

In Bhutan, local communities are generating income through the production and sale of bamboo handicrafts.

With support from the project, the enterprise has secured the necessary licenses and certifications and upgraded its processing facilities.

These efforts have helped build a sustainable forest-based business that creates economic opportunities for the communities.

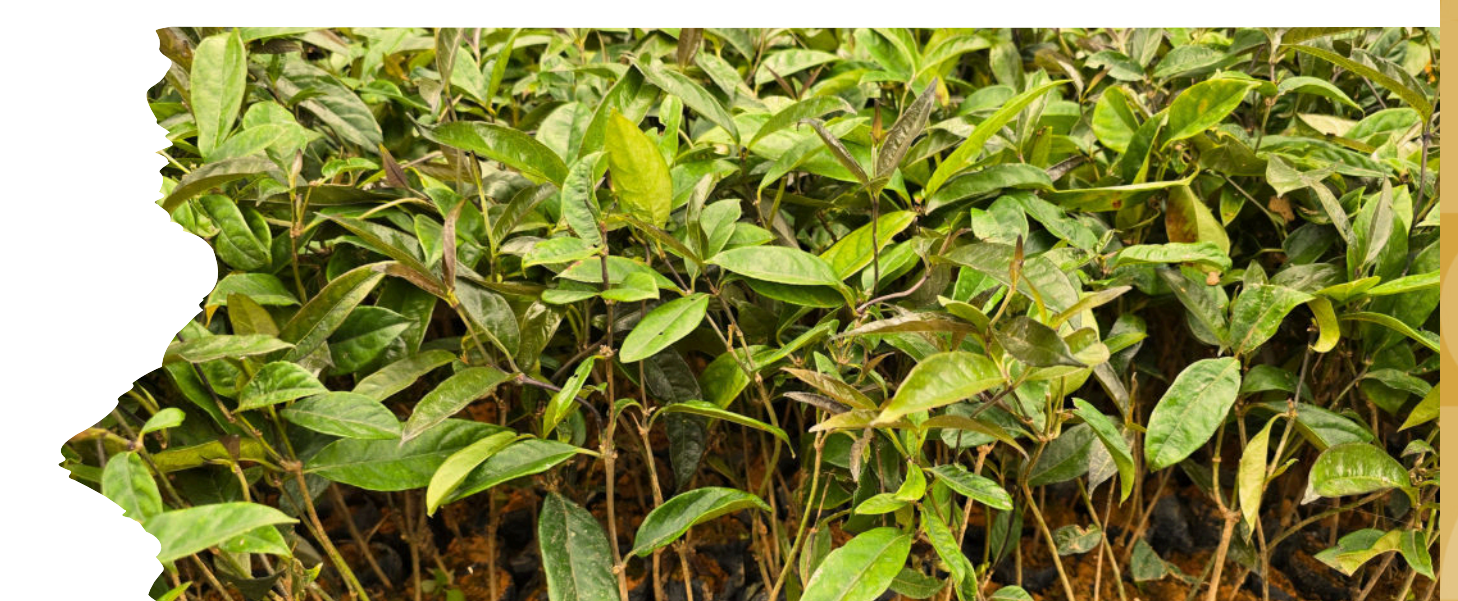


Bamboo products crafted by villagers in Mongar District, Bhutan

Viet Nam

Through the NTFP Project, forest-based enterprises are being strengthened in two regions of Viet Nam. In Lao Cai, a processing facility for *Morinda officinalis* was established in partnership with Traphaco Sapa, while in Thanh Hoa, a bamboo enterprise is being developed with EcoBamboo.

Local authorities have also endorsed development road maps for both provinces, supporting the long-term growth of these enterprises.



Morinda officinalis



Members of the women's cooperative in Leluei village, Myanmar

Myanmar

In Myanmar, a detailed GIS-based bamboo inventory was completed across four Reserved Forests to better understand and manage local bamboo resources. In addition, a 25-member women's cooperative was formally established in Leluei village, supported by a revolving fund that helps members start and grow small enterprises. This directly links bamboo-based enterprise development with women's economic empowerment.

Thailand

Through the NTFP Project, communities in Omkoi District, Thailand, are adding value to locally harvested gooseberries by producing products such as soap, shampoo, conditioner, and toothpaste.



Soap and conditioner made from gooseberry

Strengthening Regional Cooperation on Forest Fire Management

Participating Countries (4)



CAMBODIA, THAILAND, LAO PDR, AND VIETNAM

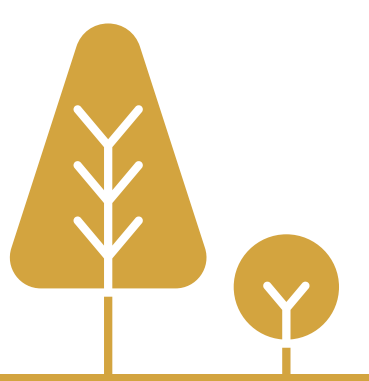
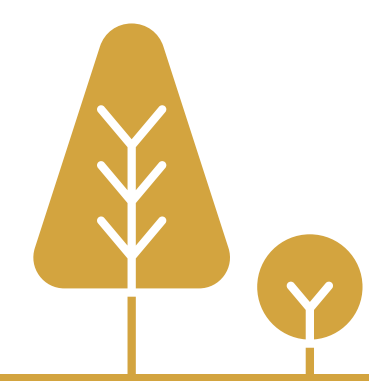
The Assuring the Future of Forests with Integrated Risk Management (AFFIRM) project, funded by the Republic of Korea and jointly led by FAO and AFoCO, addresses key gaps in data availability, information, and understanding of forest-related risks, as well as the lack of an integrated approach to risk management for forest sustainability.

In 2025, a comprehensive review of institutional and legal frameworks for forest fire management across Cambodia, Lao PDR, Thailand, and Viet Nam was completed and is scheduled for official publication by FAO.

In July, a regional workshop in Siem Reap, Cambodia brought together participants from all four countries to share and analyze national policies, deepening regional cooperation on integrated forest fire management.



2025 AFFIRM Regional Workshop in Cambodia



Building Resilience to Forest Fires in the Mekong Region

Participating Countries (4)



CAMBODIA, LAO PDR, MYANMAR, AND VIETNAM



Forest fires in the Mekong sub-region pose significant threats to both forest ecosystems and the livelihoods of communities that depend on them. Since 2022, AFoCO has implemented a regional project supported by the ASEAN-Korea Cooperation Fund (AKCF) and the Korea Forest Service to strengthen integrated forest fire management and support local livelihoods across Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, and Viet Nam.



In 2025, firefighting vehicles, equipment, and lookout towers equipped with early-detection systems were provided to Lao PDR and Myanmar. Alongside this infrastructure investment, more than 200 community members received hands-on training in fire suppression and forest protection techniques.

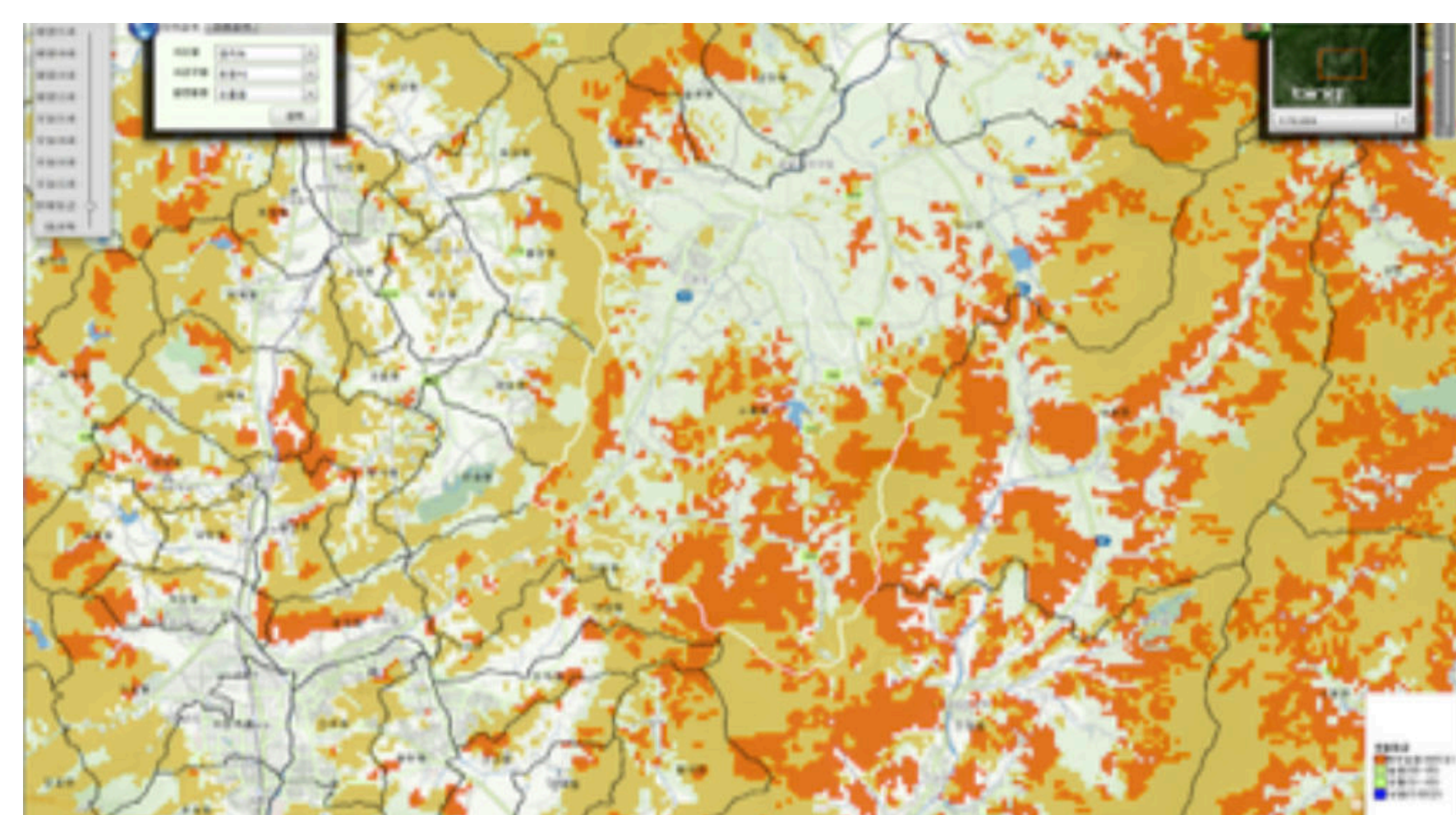
Recognizing that sustainable fire management requires addressing the underlying socioeconomic drivers of unsafe fire use, the project also invested in community livelihoods. Through targeted training, workshops, and a Market Summit, local communities were supported in developing forest-based enterprises that offer viable alternatives to practices that contribute to fire risk. By strengthening both the technical and livelihood dimensions of forest fire management, the project is working toward a more resilient and fire-safe Mekong sub-region.

ICT-based Forest Fire Prevention and Control

Participating Countries (2)



CAMBODIA AND VIETNAM



Forest Fire Danger Rate Map

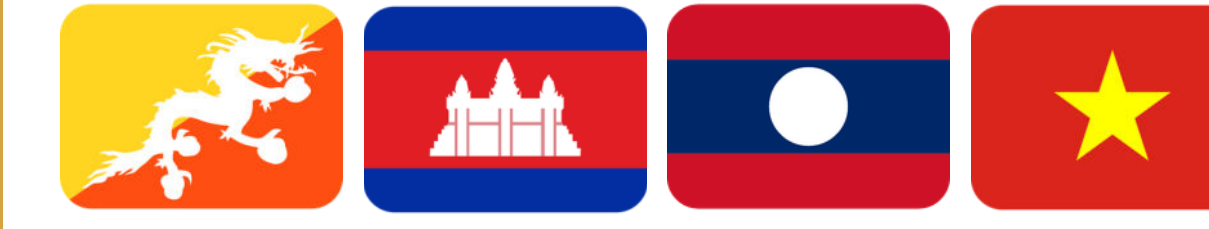
Supported by the Mekong-Republic of Korea Cooperation Fund (MKCF), the project strengthens forest fire resilience in Cambodia and Viet Nam through the development of an ICT-based Forest Fire Management System (FFMS).

In 2025, the FFMS was fully developed and installed in both countries. The system enables real-time monitoring of forest fire risks and supports evidence-based decision-making for forest protection planning, providing national agencies with a more reliable and responsive tool for managing fire threats.

To maximize the system's impact, both countries strengthened relevant policies and carried out capacity-building activities to ensure that the FFMS is used effectively at the institutional level. Community-level awareness campaigns were also conducted to help local populations better understand forest fire risks and the importance of prevention.

Landscape Restoration with endangered tree species

Participating Countries (4)



BHUTAN, CAMBODIA, LAO PDR, AND VIETNAM

The SAFE (Sustaining an Abundance of Forest Ecosystems) project supports the restoration of degraded lands using tree species listed on the IUCN Red List.

A collaborative initiative between the AFoCO, Korea Forest Service and UNEP, the project focuses on the conservation and restoration of vulnerable forest ecosystems with high biodiversity value in selected Asian countries.

In its first year of field implementation, the project put into practice the Community Forest Management Plans (CFMPs) developed in 2023 and 2024 across four participating countries: Bhutan, Cambodia, Lao PDR, and Viet Nam. Drawing on a range of site-appropriate approaches, the project rehabilitated 64.3 hectares of degraded forest land, marking a significant milestone in the project's early stages.

To ensure that restoration efforts are tracked rigorously and consistently, AFoCO developed a dedicated monitoring framework to systematically assess restoration progress across all four countries. Baseline monitoring was conducted in each country, establishing a foundation for measuring long-term ecological outcomes.

Building on this progress, the project has set an ambitious target for 2026: the restoration of 113.5 hectares across the four participating countries. This includes 33.5 hectares in Bhutan, 20 hectares in Cambodia, and 30 hectares each in Lao PDR and Viet Nam. These efforts will continue to contribute to the recovery of biodiversity-rich forest ecosystems and the long-term resilience of forest-dependent communities across the region.



Country Actions

We address country specific climate and forest challenges through forest restoration and conservation, capacity building, and sustainable livelihood initiatives, while advancing carbon finance mechanisms that help ensure local communities benefit from forest conservation.



BHUTAN

| Forest Resource Management and Livelihood Enterprises

Bhutan's rural communities heavily depend on forest resources, including wild vegetables, medicinal herbs, and timber, to support their food security and livelihoods.

To increase rural income while ensuring sustainable forest management, AFoCO is implementing activities across 12 districts nationwide.

The project strengthens community forest and non-wood forest product (NWFP) management groups and supports the development of forest-based enterprises. Communities operate wood and non-wood processing facilities as well as eco-tourism sites across districts including Trashigang, Bumthang, Lhuntse, Paro, Gasa, Tsirang, and Haa.

Activities range from furniture production and incense processing to hot stone bath and eco-camp operations, all of which are community-managed and contribute to income generation and the sustainable use of forest resources.



CAMBODIA

| Forest Genetics Research Center for Climate-Resilient Native Timber Seed System

In the wake of widespread deforestation in Cambodia, AFoCO established Forest Genetics Research Centers at Khun Ream and Chan Sor to restore major timber species.



In 2025, the centers advanced climate-resilient native timber seed systems, maintaining six hectares of seed orchards, 24 hectares of progeny test plantations, and roughly 180 hectares of experimental forests, supported by a 2,835-hectare protection zone. Annual nursery output stands at around 25,000 seedlings, with refined propagation techniques developed for key native species.

Beyond field operations, the centers serve as a national learning hub, hosting training, university field courses, and thesis research, and producing a technical textbook and tree breeding guideline for future restoration programs.



| Strengthening Community Forest Management

In Neakta Thmor Prung Community Forest, Preah Sihanouk Province, 398 families depend on the forest for income and daily needs, yet degraded forest conditions have long constrained the community's economic potential.

In 2025, AFoCO's restoration project delivered concrete results: two tree nurseries with a combined annual production capacity of 85,000 seedlings were established, and more than 160 hectares of degraded forest land were restored. Agroforestry systems were introduced across 31 hectares of farmland managed by 17 households, and a 10-year Forest Restoration Plan was jointly developed with local authorities and community members.



| ASEAN-Korea Garden in Cambodia



In Khun Ream Commune, Siem Reap Province, the ASEAN-Korea Garden has been developed as a platform for biodiversity conservation, environmental education, and sustainable ecotourism.

Built by AFoCO and Cambodia's Forestry Administration with technical guidance from the Korea Arboretum and Gardens Institute (KoAGI), the garden features 10 thematic zones promoting native species conservation and ecosystem restoration. With construction completed in 2025, the garden is set to open officially in 2026, marking a significant milestone in Cambodia-Korea forest cooperation.

| Restoring Native Agarwood Forest

Agarwood is one of the most valuable tree species in Cambodia prized for its resin used in perfumes and traditional medicine. In Cambodia's Cardamom Mountains, native agarwood trees have steadily declined due to overharvesting and habitat loss.

Running from 2023 to 2026, AFoCO has been working to reverse this trend through community-based restoration. By 2025, more than 50,000 agarwood seedlings had been planted across 35.5 hectares of community forests and smallholder plantations. Technical training on seed collection, nursery management, and sustainable agarwood production was also provided to support local livelihoods and forest restoration.

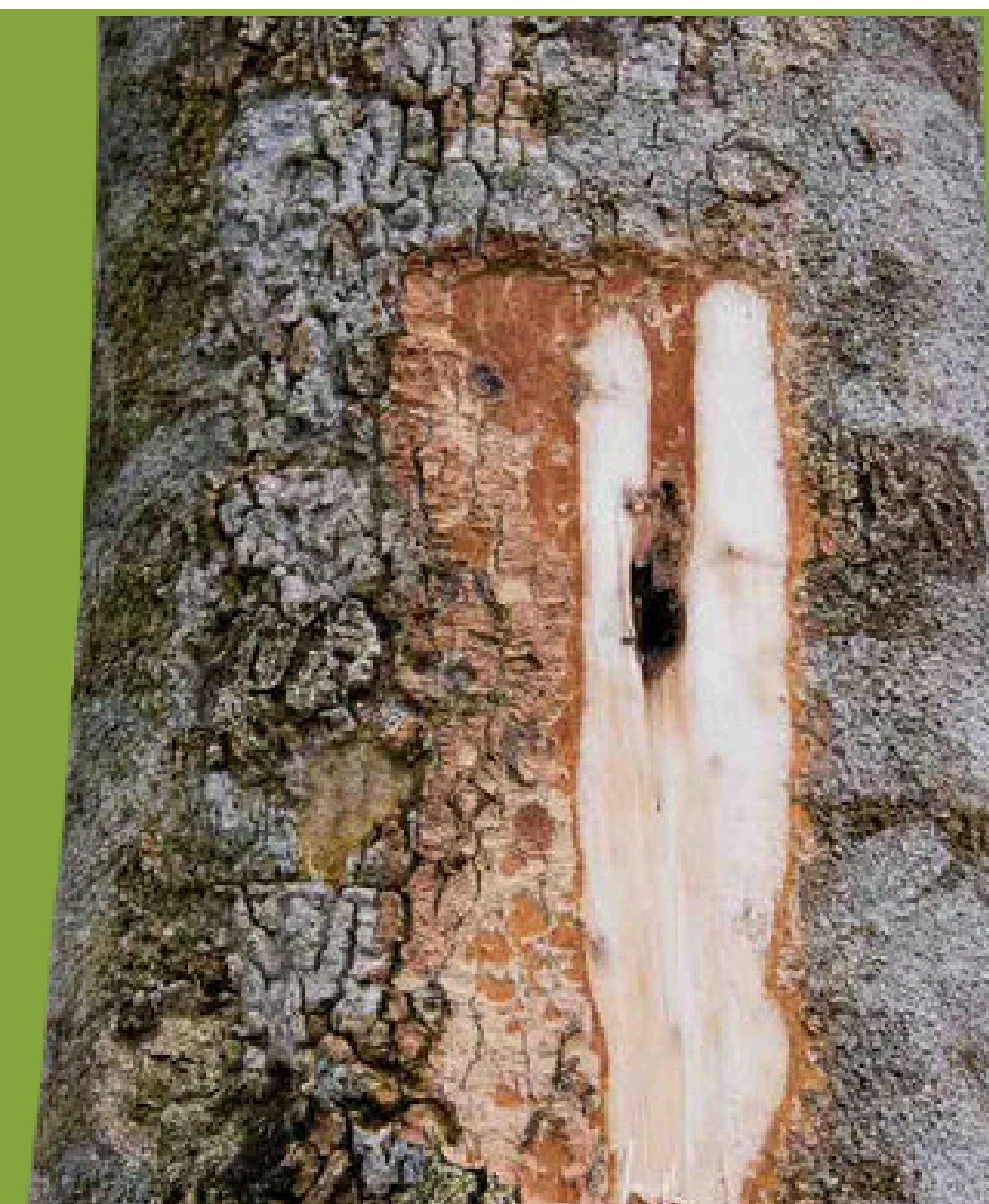
Agarwood is returning to our forests.



What is Agarwood tree?

Agarwood tree (*Aquilaria* species) is native to Southeast Asia's tropical forests and are medium to large evergreen trees that can produce a fragrant resin in their heartwood when naturally infected or injured.

Agarwood plays an important ecological and economic role, supporting biodiversity and providing sustainable livelihood opportunities for local communities.



 KAZAKHSTAN | **Modern Mechanized Tree Nursery**

Wildfires and desertification have placed significant pressure on forests across Kazakhstan, making the reliable production of quality seedlings essential to any restoration effort.

In Akmola region, AFoCO established a mechanized nursery complex at the Northern branch of the Republican Forest Breeding and Seed Center. The facility features an 18×100-meter greenhouse, a hardening zone, and an automated seed sowing line, with capacity to produce 1.5 million containerized seedlings across two rotations.

Complementing the nursery, 200,000 Scots pine seedlings were planted across 25 hectares of shelterbelts around Shchuchinsk.

Two seminars trained 125 forestry specialists, and a regional roundtable brought together experts from Russia, Belarus, and Kazakhstan to exchange experience on closed-root system technologies.



Seed sowing machine



| Digitalizing Forest Inventory

Across Kazakhstan, forests play a vital role in regulating water resources, conserving biodiversity, and storing carbon. However, many forest areas remain outside official forest records, leaving them vulnerable to fires, illegal logging, and pests.

AFoCO addresses this challenge by supporting the identification and registration of unrecorded forests. In 2025, field inventories and satellite surveys conducted in Kostanay and North Kazakhstan Regions identified 63,625 hectares of previously unaccounted forest, including 31,965 hectares in Kostanay and 31,660 hectares in North Kazakhstan.

At the same time, a Forest Information System was developed to digitize forestry records dating back to 2010, streamline reporting processes, and support real-time data analysis.

 LAO PDR | **Village-Driven Forest Restoration Model**

In Bolikhamxay Province, 10 villages within the Phou Khaen Protection Forest are piloting the Village-Driven Forest Restoration Model (ViDFoRM), an integrated approach that combines forest protection, ecological restoration, and livelihood improvement on degraded forestland.

ViDFoRM places local communities at the center of restoration efforts. Rather than treating forest restoration and livelihood enhancement as separate objectives, the model actively engages communities in planning and implementing restoration activities while creating sustainable income opportunities through the use of non-timber forest products (NTFPs).

Since 2021, the project has produced more than 200,000 seedlings, supporting enrichment planting across 2,600 hectares and assisted natural regeneration on an additional 400 hectares of degraded forestland. Community members have also participated in forest restoration activities while generating income from NTFP-based enterprises established on restored lands.



 MYANMAR | **Strengthening Teak Pest and Disease Management**



Teak plantations in Myanmar's Bago Region face persistent threats from pests and disease, with outbreaks that can cause significant losses if left unmonitored.

The project introduced practical monitoring tools and demonstration plots that serve as on the ground testing and learning sites, alongside upgraded diagnostic laboratories capable of identifying emerging threats.

Locally adapted technical guidelines and outreach materials have helped translate research findings into everyday practice, while workshops, seminars, and training activities have built the skills of rangers, technicians, and forest managers across the region.

A dedicated teak pest and disease management working group has since been established, creating a sustained framework for knowledge and a foundation for more resilient teak forest management over the long term.





MONGOLIA | Tree Nurseries to Combat Desertification

Restoring degraded forests at scale requires both reliable planting material and communities equipped to sustain the effort. Running from 2023 to 2025, the project operates across two sites, Bayan-Uul soum in Dornod Aimag and Deendiin Valley near Ulaanbaatar, where AFoCO works alongside the National Forest Agency to build that capacity.

Two high capacity nurseries anchor the work: a 70-hectare facility in Bayan-Uul, Dornod Aimag and a 20-hectare nursery in Khan-Uul District, Ulaanbaatar together producing millions of seedlings annually. The nurseries supplied tree seedlings for the restoration of 124 hectares of degraded land across both sites.

53 households also participate in seedling production and sales, while 15 training sessions covering more than 60 technical topics have equipped local communities and forestry professionals to sustain the effort beyond the project's close.



PHILIPPINES | Urban Forests for People and Nature



In the Ninoy Aquino Parks and Wildlife Center (NAPWC) in Quezon City, the AFoCO-DENR FRESH Project is advancing a model for cultural ecosystem services in an urban context, integrating forest bathing, experiential learning, biodiversity conservation, and public engagement within one of Metro Manila's key green spaces.

In 2025, the project supported the development of forest healing facilities, arboretum enhancement, and ecosystem service valuation studies. It also strengthened the capacities of local personnel and forest bathing operators through trainings and learning exchanges, while promoting in-situ conservation through the planting of endangered and vulnerable native species.

In addition, educational signages were installed across the arboretum, and multi-stakeholder consultations helped shape an operational and policy framework for forest bathing at NAPWC.



| Wood Processing and Forest Enterprise Development



In the Philippines, community forestry has long struggled with limited value addition. The project works with two Community-Based Forest Management People's Organizations across two regions: NUFAl in Negros Oriental, Visayas, and MATILFAMCO in Agusan del Sur, Mindanao.

By supporting vertical integration across plantation establishment, timber processing and utilization, the project aims to turn community managed forests into viable, self-sustaining enterprises. Wood processing facilities have been established at both sites and are now fully managed by the communities themselves.

10 hectares of new tree plantations have also been established to maintain a steady supply of raw materials.

| A Flagship Model of Partnership-Driven Forest Restoration

In the Bacon Manito Geothermal Reservation in Albay, Philippines, the project restored 102 hectares of degraded watershed forest in 2025 using 20 Philippine Threatened and Endemic Tree Species (PTES).

The project recorded over 90% tree survival rates, reflecting the effectiveness of site based restoration, continuous maintenance, and adaptive management practices.

A key factor behind this success was the project's practical Public-Private Partnership (PPP) approach. Implemented by the Energy Development Corporation (EDC) in collaboration with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), AFoCO, and the Alliance of Bacon Manito Farmers Association Inc. (ALBAFAI), the project brought together the private sector, government agencies, local communities, and academic institutions through complementary roles and shared restoration goals.

Beyond restoration activities, the project established a 2-hectare arboretum featuring 39 PTES species for conservation and education, while developing 15 propagation protocols to support native species conservation and sustainable seedling production.

From 11 to 19 August, the project also supported the visit of the Gyeonggi Climate Delegation to successful restoration sites, promoting regional cooperation and youth engagement in climate action.



 VIETNAM | **Biodiversity Restoration in Cat Tien National Park**

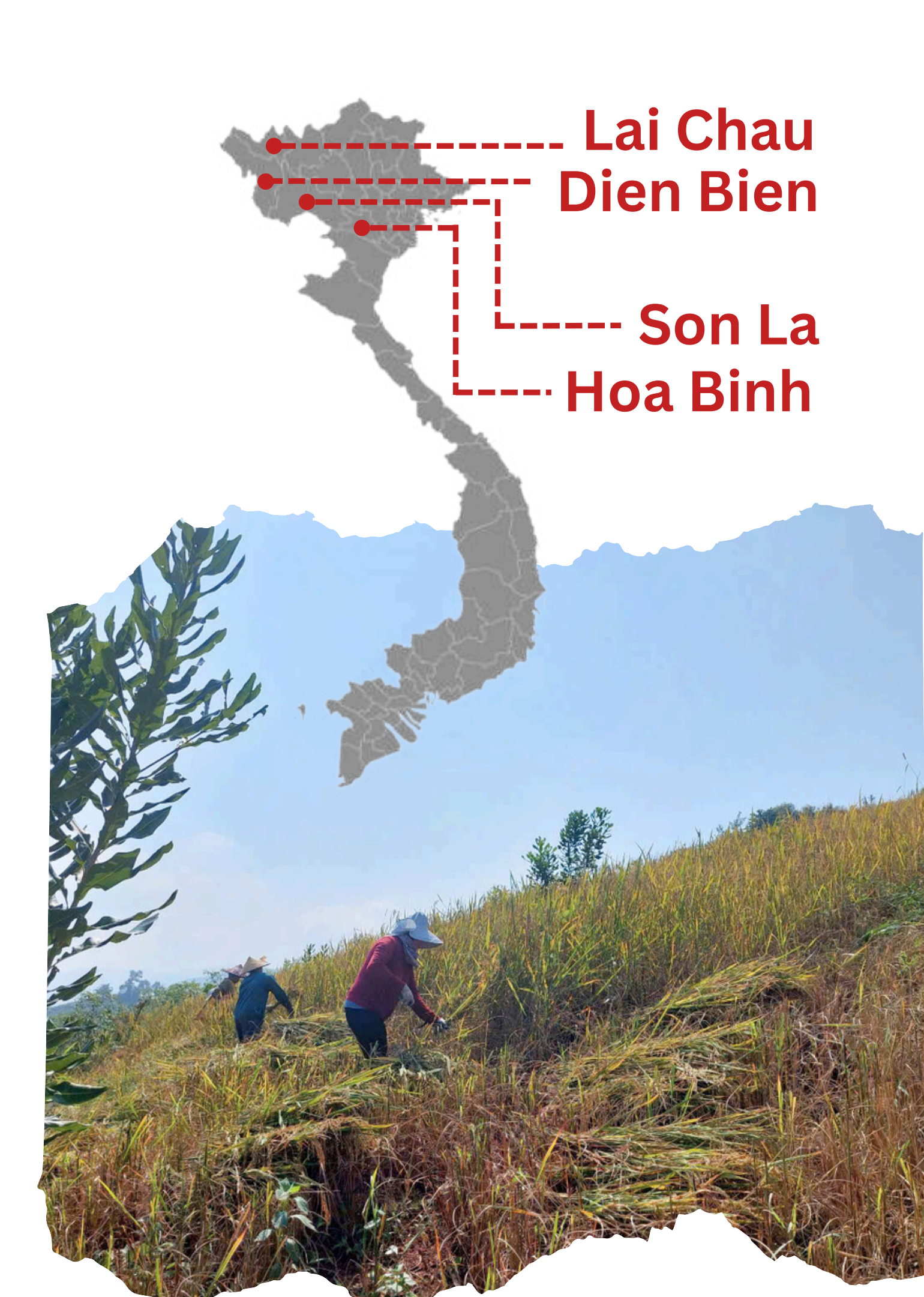


In Vietnam's Cat Tien National Park, restoration efforts in 2025 addressed both ecological recovery and community livelihoods.

10 hectares of wetlands and grasslands were restored, a 5-hectare Golden Camellia plantation was established, and invasive species management for *Mimosa pigra* was strengthened across the park.

Community engagement ran alongside the ecological work. More than 500 local stakeholders participated in training on patrolling, climate adaptation, and eco-tourism, while environmental education and homestay initiatives supported sustainable livelihoods in surrounding communities.

Community-Led Forest Restoration in Vietnam's Northwest Regions



In Vietnam's northwest region, degraded hillside forests have long posed a threat to watershed stability, affecting water flow, soil retention, and the livelihoods of communities that depend on healthy forest landscapes. The project works across four provinces, Hoa Binh, Son La, Lai Chau, and Dien Bien.

Now in its third year, the project maintains four 20-hectare demonstration plots, each focused on restoring ecological functions through the planting and management of native and high-value species. The selected species, including *Michelia mediocris*, *Parashorea chinensis*, cinnamon, macadamia, and rattan, were chosen for both their ecological role and their potential to generate income for local communities, integrating livelihood support directly into the restoration model.

Implementation is community-based. Local foresters and farmers carry out ongoing site maintenance, including weeding, fertilization, and canopy management, to support forest growth on hillsides increasingly exposed to drought conditions.

ASEAN-Korea Garden in Vietnam

Located at the Vietnam National University of Forestry in Xuan Mai, Hanoi, the ASEAN-Korea Garden is being developed as a five-hectare green space on an active university campus, a setting that positions it naturally as both a site of learning and a living example of biodiversity conservation.

By placing the garden within an academic environment, the project creates a space where students, researchers, and the wider public can engage directly with the forest species and ecosystems of the ASEAN region. Alongside its educational role, the garden supports regional forest cooperation and cultural exchange among ASEAN Member States and the Republic of Korea.



(Left) Rendering image of the ASEAN-Korea Garden in Viet Nam
(Bottom) Construction site of the garden



 TIMOR-LESTE | **Hillsides Forest Restoration in Timor-Leste**

On the steep and degraded hillsides of Aileu and Manatuto municipalities, communities are gradually restoring damaged landscapes through sustained forest restoration efforts.

A 20-hectare assisted natural regeneration site has been established in Aileu Municipality, alongside 130 hectares of multi-species reforestation using Casuarina, sandalwood, Acacia, and other native species, as well as 7 hectares of sandalwood plantations in Manatuto Municipality. Together, these sites are emerging as model landscapes for restoration in the region.



In Balak, Manatuto Municipality, a newly constructed training hall now provides a dedicated space for workshops and knowledge exchange among villagers and local officials, strengthening local capacity for ongoing restoration efforts.

At the same time, government technical teams, researchers, and farmers are jointly mapping degraded landscapes and examining the social and economic drivers of forest loss, while identifying ecosystem goods and services that can support livelihood-oriented restoration approaches.

We are seeing greenery return to hills that were once bare and dry.



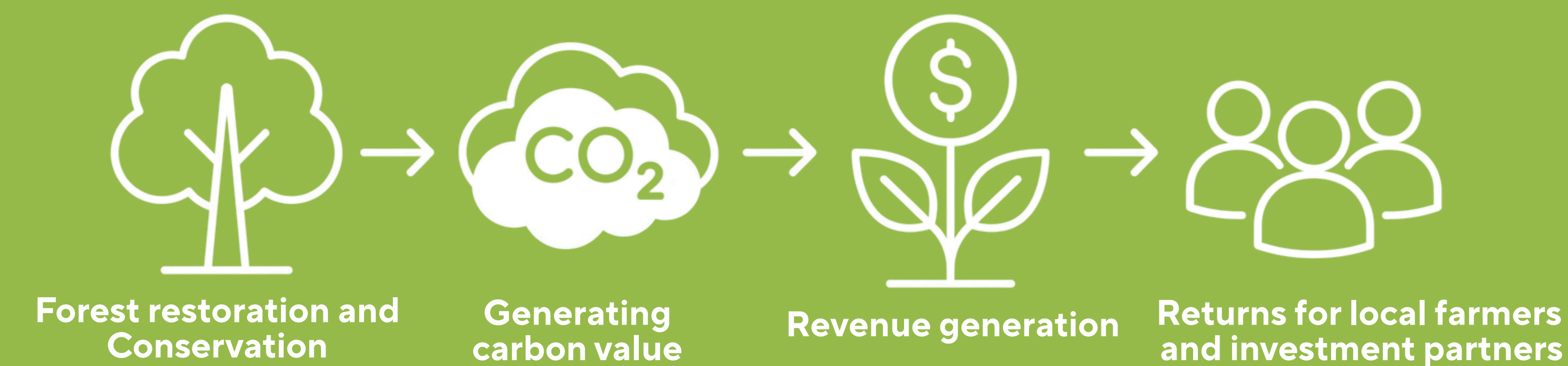
Carbon Project

“Carbon” as a Sustainable Nature-Based Solution

AFoCO continues to promote innovative nature-based solutions that unlock the economic value of forests across Asia. Through forest restoration and conservation, trees sequester carbon, creating opportunities to generate revenue through carbon markets and performance-based financing mechanisms.

Together with income from sustainably produced forest resources, these carbon finance models provide lasting economic benefits for local communities and investors, while contributing to climate mitigation, forest conservation, and sustainable development.

Forest-Based Carbon Finance Mechanism



AFoCO Carbon Projects Under Implementation

Building on this approach, AFoCO expands carbon finance opportunities through a growing portfolio of forest-carbon initiatives across Asia.

01 KYRGYZSTAN

- The Acorn Agroforestry Project in Kyrgyzstan, led by AFoCO with Rabobank and the Government of Kyrgyzstan, supports smallholder agroforestry and carbon market-based income.



02 CAMBODIA AND LAO PDR

- Projects support REDD+ implementation and community-based forest livelihoods while strengthening readiness for participation in voluntary carbon markets (VCM) in Cambodia and Lao PDR.



03 MONGOLIA

- The Mongolia Green Resilient Landscapes project, supported by the World Bank, develops carbon accounting tools and investment plans to enable large-scale forest restoration.



KYRGYZSTAN | Agroforestry and Carbon Benefits for Smallholder Farmers



The Acorn Agroforestry Project in Kyrgyzstan is a collaborative initiative led by AFoCO in partnership with Rabobank and the Government of Kyrgyzstan. Operating across six provinces, the project supports smallholder farmers in adopting agroforestry systems that generate income through voluntary carbon markets, while contributing to climate resilience, rural livelihoods, and biodiversity conservation.

Participating farmers plant and manage fruit trees, generating income through agricultural activities.

In addition, carbon removals resulting from tree planting are measured and verified, enabling the generation and sale of carbon credits that provide an additional income stream directly linked to sustainable land management.

In 2025, farmers received their first Carbon Removal Unit (CRU) incentive payments, a milestone demonstrating that verified carbon removals can deliver direct, measurable income for rural households.

To strengthen local capacity, Training of Trainers (ToT) sessions were conducted in June and July 2025, reaching approximately 1,000 farmers and local facilitators. By September 2025, nearly 14,000 farmers had been onboarded across Jalalabad, Batken, Osh, Chui, Talas, and Issyk-Kul Provinces.



For the first time, our trees are bringing us carbon income. By planting trees, we are investing in a better future for our land and our families.



 CAMBODIA AND LAO PDR



Preparing REDD+ and A/R as Financeable Greening in Cambodia

In Cambodia, the Mekong REDD+ Project Phase I, jointly implemented with the Forestry Administration and Woori Bank, identified potential sites for REDD+ and afforestation/reforestation activities across Siem Reap and Kampong Thom provinces.

Activities including assisted natural regeneration, enrichment planting, flooded forest restoration, and afforestation are laying the groundwork for Verra (VCS+CCB) validation and long-term carbon market participation, while contributing to Cambodia's NDC commitments.

On the ground, the project supports forest-dependent communities in generating income from standing forests rather than through forest conversion or resource depletion.

In Koh Han, community-based ecotourism, supported by a revolving fund, collective marketing, and a women-led service team, attracted 14,572 visitors and earned the ASEAN Champion Award on Ecotourism forum in 2025.

In Choampich Community Forest, a solar-powered water pumping system was installed in Koh Sneang Village and reduced the burden of water collection, allowing community members to devote more time to forest-based livelihood activities.

“Community Livelihoods and Forest Carbon: REDD+ in Mekong Region”



Koh Sneang village in Cambodia



Solar water Pump in Koh Sneang village



Koh Han's community-based ecotourism received ASEAN Champion Award

I Developing country-specific REDD+ operational standards in LAO PDR

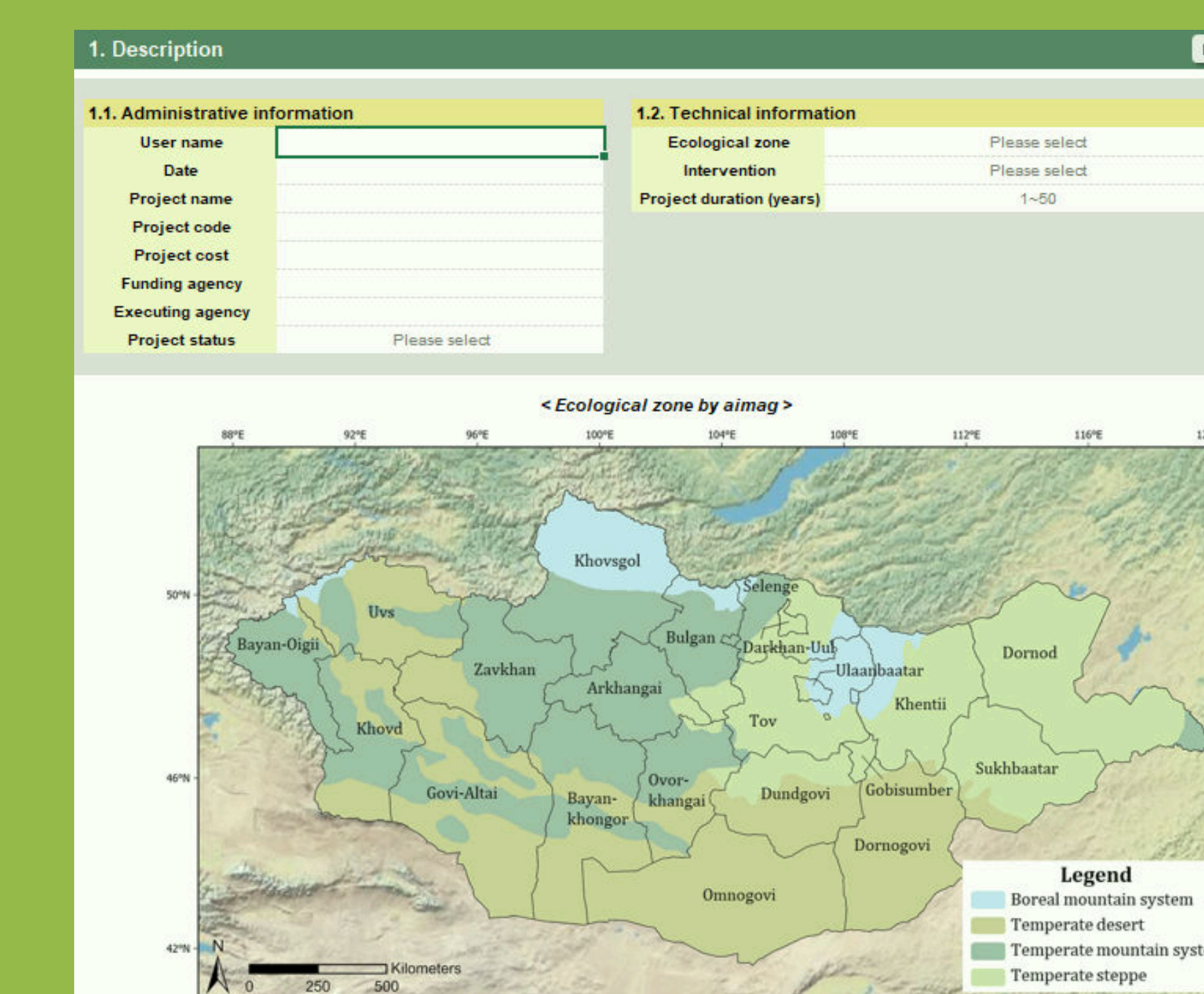
In Lao PDR, AFoCO supported the development of country-specific REDD+ operational standards under Article 6 of the Paris Agreement.

The work focused on establishing practical procedures for forest-carbon project implementation, covering project approval, registration, MRV, safeguards, ITMO issuance and transfer, and corresponding adjustment, alongside support for the ADB TA-10240 Responsible Forestry Preparation Project.

These efforts strengthened Lao PDR's institutional and technical capacity for REDD+ implementation and positioned the country for future participation in international carbon markets.

 MONGOLIA | **Carbon Finance Investment Models**

The Mongolia Green Resilient Landscapes Technical Assistance (TA) project, supported by the World Bank, enhances Mongolia's efforts to strengthen the climate impact of the Billion Tree National Movement (BTNM) by developing tools and technical capacities to assess the carbon sequestration potential of various silvicultural and forest restoration interventions.



Mongolian Carbon Accounting Tool (MCAT)

• Mongolian Carbon Accounting Tool (MCAT)

A key output is the Mongolian Carbon Accounting Tool (MCAT), developed by AFoCO and Seoul National University to assess the carbon sequestration potential of the Billion Tree National Movement. MCAT applies a biomass estimation model derived from national forest inventory data (NFI 2014 and 2017) and field surveys conducted in 2025, enabling carbon accounting tailored to Mongolia's national circumstances.

• Green Investment Plans (GIPs)

Based on MCAT, three Green Investment Plans (GIPs) were introduced as bankable, forest landscape restoration opportunities across Arkhangai, Bulgan, and Tuv provinces. The plans target degraded forest restoration, sea buckthorn agroforestry, and riparian zone rehabilitation respectively, each designed to generate significant carbon removals and investment value over a 40-year period.

Pollination: Mobilizing Private Investment for Nature-Based Carbon Projects

In 2025, AFoCO strengthened its private-sector engagement in carbon finance by signing a Memorandum of Understanding with Pollination, a global climate and nature-focused investment and advisory firm. The MoU establishes a non-exclusive cooperation framework for originating, assessing, and developing nature-based carbon projects across AFoCO Member Countries, combining AFoCO's regional forestry expertise with Pollination's experience in structuring carbon finance and investment-ready projects.

Under this partnership, the AFoCO and the Pollination will work together to identify forest conservation, restoration, and afforestation opportunities with strong potential to generate verifiable carbon credits and attract climate finance.

By advancing these opportunities toward bankable, investor-ready carbon projects, the partnership supports our broader efforts to mobilize private capital for forest-based climate action, while also contributing to sustainable forest management and community livelihoods across the region.



Empowering Member Countries

We strengthen the capacity of member countries through training, knowledge sharing, regional exchange, and practical field experience.



AFoCO supports member countries in addressing critical forestry and environmental challenges through targeted capacity-building programmes and technical training on issues such as deforestation, forest degradation, and climate change.

| Annual Technical Workshop

“Strengthening Project Performance and Exploring Sustainable Forest Finance”

In 2025, AFoCO convened the Sixth Annual Technical Workshop on Project Management and Performance Review at Seoul Botanic Garden from 15 to 16 September. The workshop brought together more than 90 participants from 13 Member Countries, the AFoCO Secretariat, and the Korea Forest Service.

The workshop served as a platform to link project performance review with AFoCO’s growing focus on forest-carbon development and blended finance. In addition to reviewing the progress and results of ongoing and completed projects, thematic discussions on blended finance and the AFoCO Climate–Forest Cooperation Framework highlighted pathways for transforming ODA-funded interventions into scalable nature-based solutions capable of attracting long-term investment and market participation.



| Forest Fire Management in Asia (FFMA)



In 2025, AFoCO, in partnership with the French Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs (MEAE) and the Korea Forest Service (KFS), launched the Forest Fire Management in Asia (FFMA) Initiative during the 13th Session of the AFoCO Assembly held in Seoul, Republic of Korea, on 29 October.

The initiative seeks to strengthen regional capacities for wildfire prevention, preparedness, and response by fostering cooperation and knowledge exchange across three priority ecosystems: tropical forests, peatlands, and dryland mountainous areas.

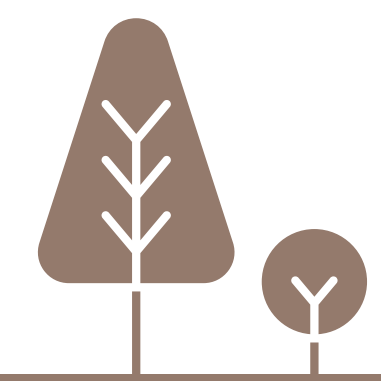
Following its launch, the initiative brought together forest fire practitioners from across Asia and connected them with leading expertise from Europe and the region. Recognizing the distinct fire dynamics and management requirements of different ecosystems, FFMA promoted ecosystem-specific approaches to wildfire management through technical exchanges, operational training, and field-based learning.



A key component of the initiative was the implementation of ecosystem-specific Training of Trainers on Forest Fire Suppression (TOTFFS) programmes, which included fire behaviour analysis, prescribed burning, operational simulations, and field exercises tailored to regional fire environments.

FFMA also expanded cooperation in higher education and professional development through the AFoCO–EPHE PSL University Joint Master’s Programme and advanced training opportunities in France for forest fire practitioners.

By integrating operational training, education, research, and policy cooperation, FFMA continues to evolve into a long-term regional platform for forest fire management across Asia.



| KEYS and STEP Program

In 2025, AFoCO, in collaboration with the Korea Arboreta and Gardens Institute (KoAGI), implemented the Keep Eternally Your Seeds (KEYS) and Science and Technology Exchange Partnership (STEP) Programs in the Republic of Korea to strengthen technical capacities, foster professional networks, and promote regional cooperation on biodiversity conservation and sustainable forest management across Asia.

• Keep Eternally Your Seeds for Future (KEYS) Program

The KEYS (Keep Eternally Your Seeds for Future) Program, AFoCO's flagship training initiative on seed conservation, supports Member Countries in strengthening genetic resource management through practical training and seed deposits at the Baekdudaegan Global Seed Vault.

In June 2025, 11 forestry and biodiversity professionals from nine Member Countries participated in a two-week training program at the Baekdudaegan National Arboretum. The program covered the full seed conservation process, including seed collection, germination testing, laboratory analysis, packaging, storage, and international transport. Participants also developed country specific action plans to support the application of acquired knowledge and skills in their respective institutions.



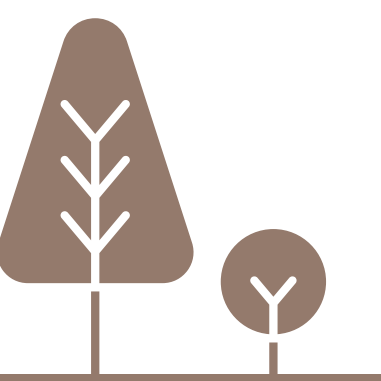
• Science and Technology Exchange Partnership (STEP) Program



The STEP Program promotes technical exchange and knowledge sharing by providing forestry professionals with opportunities to learn from Korea's experience and institutional practices.

In June 2025, experts from Kazakhstan and the Kyrgyzstan participated in a technical exchange program at the Sejong National Arboretum, where they explored arboretum and nursery management systems, including greenhouse climate control, automated irrigation technologies, and plant collection management.

The program also introduced innovative approaches to sustainable landscape management, including AI-assisted landscape design, green infrastructure planning, biodiversity conservation policies, and environmental education programs implemented in arboreta and botanical gardens.



| AFoCO Fellowship Program

The AFoCO Fellowship Program provides government officials from Member Countries with opportunities to gain practical experience at the AFoCO Secretariat while strengthening cooperation and mutual understanding between the Secretariat and Member Countries.

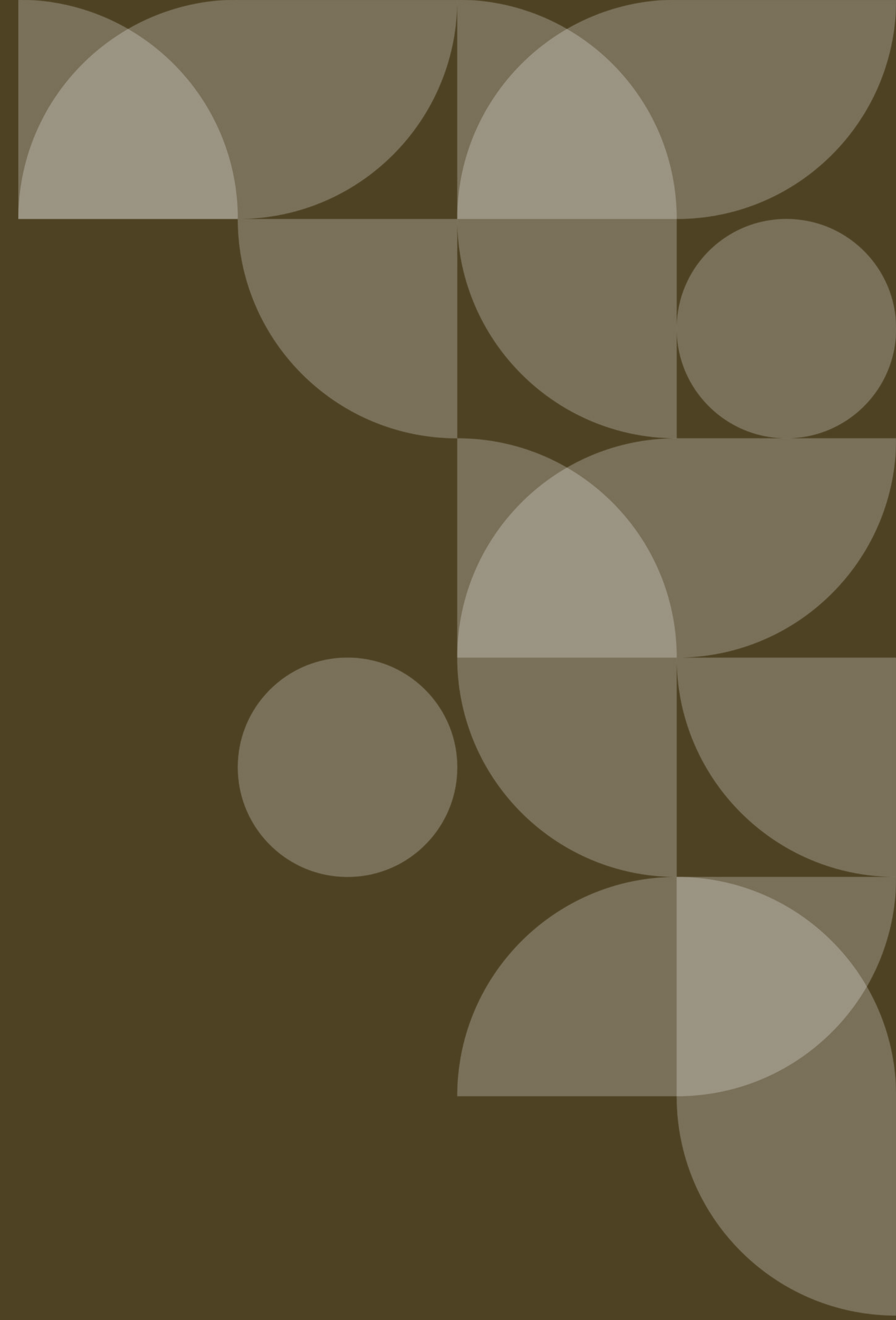
In 2025, six fellowship officials from Bhutan, Kazakhstan, Mongolia, Myanmar, the Philippines, and Thailand joined the Secretariat. Assigned across different teams, the fellows contributed directly to AFoCO's programs and operations while gaining firsthand experience in regional forestry cooperation.



The program also offered a range of professional development opportunities. Fellows participated in technical training at the Forest Aviation Headquarters of the Korea Forest Service, where they gained practical knowledge of forest fire suppression and drone operations. They also took part in the STEP and KEYS program, enhancing their understanding of seed conservation, plant genetic resource management, arboretum operations, and nursery management practices.

Through these experiences, the Fellowship Program helps build a network of forestry professionals equipped to advance sustainable forest management and regional cooperation across AFoCO Member Countries.





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.

Address: 12F, SIMPAC Building, 52, Gukjegeumyung-ro, Yeongdeungpo-gu, Seoul 07330, Republic of Korea

Email: contact@afocosec.org

Homepage: www.afocosec.org

ISSN 2983-3469 (hard copy) / ISSN 2983-3477 (electronic copy)
Published in the Republic of Korea © AFoCO, 2025