

## **Intervention Notes to the United Nations High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development**

<Wednesday, 6 July 2022, 09:00 AM - 12:00 PM>  
SDG 4 and interlinkages with other SDGs - Quality education  
by  
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Thank you distinguished madam moderator for allowing the Asian Forest Cooperation Organization (AFoCO) to be part of the SDG discussion, especially for the SDG 4 quality education. As the inter-governmental organization representing forests and forestry concerns and issues of 16 member countries in Asia, AFoCO provides a significant contribution to lifelong learning as a means for escaping poverty and as an enabler of progress across the 2030 Agenda.

Particularly, capacity development is our cross-cutting investment as contained in our strategic plan. We invest in the training of frontline forestry practitioners, forest policymakers, researchers, and local communities as well. We have been operating the Landmark Scholarship Program since 20/14 to provide funding for master's and doctorate programs in forestry to study in top universities in the Republic of Korea as a long-term investment for the next generations. We have our Science and Technology Exchange Partnership Program for forest researchers' capacity building. Our project portfolio currently valued at 77.9 million US dollars invested in 26 ongoing projects in our member countries involves investment in livelihood development and community-based enterprise development including training of Forest dependent people and stakeholders.

During the COVID-19 pandemic period, the interest in education in our member countries has grown even more. We observed that the member countries are trying to re-gain many opportunities that they did not have during the corona period. More inclusive and cross-sectoral manner which can deal with, not only environmental but also socio-economic aspects, that is what the member countries of AFoCO in Asia are demanding in the forest and forestry sector targeting 2030 and beyond. To respond to the voice, AFoCO is more committed to establishing the research network to support the countries' evidence-based policy making, the voice for enhancing innovation and technology capacities, which will contribute to strengthening nature-based solutions to respond to climate change.

We believe that this will be eventually linked to the issue of how we can maintain sustainable financial resources to support. For that, we would like to emphasize the critical role of the private sector. At the recently held Capacity Building Workshop on Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs), the participating countries shared a common understanding that still quality education is needed to properly invite the private sector for a successful institutional framework of the countries for the forest-based PPPs. In order to ensure transparent information sharing, as well as to encourage a sustainable supply chain amongst stakeholders, we have recently launched the AFoCO Green Partnership to encourage the private sector to be actively involved in forest cooperation. We believe that it finally contributes to the achievements of the multiple SDGs toward a resilient society. Thank you.