

**National Report to the Fourth Session of the
United Nations Forum on Forests**

Republic of Korea

March 2004

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II. Progress on the Implementation of the IPF/IFF proposals for action and Related Issues

1. General

1.1. Assessment of the IPF/IFF Proposals for Action on the National Level (Including the relevance, priority, current status, and planned actions in terms of implementation)

- In 2002, the Korea Forest Research Institute ("KFRI") assessed and analyzed the responsible parties, relevance, and urgency as regards the implementation of the IPF/IFF Proposals for Action, in addition to the measures required for the actual process of implementation.
- In 2003, KFRI studied the urgency and the progress of implementation by conducting a survey on the policy developers of the Korea Forest Service (KFS) regarding the IPF/IFF Proposals for Action on behalf of the government. Based on the analyses, KFRI plans to carry out a gap analysis in 2004 and to study potential obstacles to the implementation in order to set the priorities of implementation at the government level and reflect such in the policy measures. Such steps are intended to enhance the effectiveness of the implementation through close monitoring.

1.2. Development and Implementation of the National Forest Plan and the Forest Policy Framework

- In 2003, Korea revised the "4th Forest Development Plan," the national forest planning for the period from 1998 to 2007, in order to reflect the increasing need to develop a national implementation system and to manage forests in an ecologically and environmentally healthy way in line with international standards and criteria for sustainable forest management set out by UNFF and the Montreal Process. The revised 4th Forest Development Plan is aimed at "a green country where humans and forests co-exist in harmony. "
- The basic direction of the Plan is to categorize the forest policies and measures based on economic, eco-environmental, and social functions of the forest in order to support "Sustainable Forest Management", thus to promote the participation of citizens and to reflect the unique characteristics of each region. Among the main changes was the enactment of the Forest Area Management Act in 2003 in order to pursue environment-friendly utilization and preservation of mountainous areas in the wake of the reckless and indiscriminate development of the mountains, which has become a grave social issue.
- Moreover, as part of the efforts to preserve the forest ecosystem, the government, back in 2001, devised the conservation and management of the Baekdoo Mountains, the backbone of the forest ecosystem on the Korean peninsula. The measures included the

establishment of the scope and expansion of areas designated for conservation of forest genetic resources. In 2003, the government enacted the "Act for the Protection of the Baekdoo Mountains" reinforcing the national commitment to the preservation of the forest ecosystems by law.

1.3. Mechanism/Initiatives to Promote the Participation of Stakeholders in Forest- Related Planning, Decision Making and Management

- Proactive participation of stakeholders is encouraged as part of the fundamental direction in the revised 4th Forest Development Plan with various institutionalized measures to encourage participation .
- When major decisions are made such as a revision in the Forest Development Plan or enacting new acts, the government holds public hearings for the participation of stakeholders and interested parties. In 2003, in order to facilitate people's participation in forest management, the government also improved the forest policy monitoring system and invited forest policy monitors (2,000 people) from three sectors: forest-related employees, civil servants, and ordinary citizens. The monitors are provided with related information and are encouraged to give their opinions via e-mail in an effort to enhance the participation of citizens and interactive two-way communications.

Implementation of the IPE/IFF Proposals for Action Regarding the Themes of the 4th UNFF Conference

2. Social and Cultural Aspects of the Forest

2.1 Seek ways to share the benefits derived from the use of forest genetic resources on a fair and equal basis, and discuss the intellectual property right issues including the specification of the origin of the forest genetic resources in consideration of the related projects carried out under the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and other international treaties.

- Korea actively pursues both *in-situ* conservation at the site of natural habitats as well as *ex-situ* conservation using arboretums to realize sustainable utilization and conservation of forest genetic resources. Furthermore, a comprehensive information system called National Bio-Species Knowledge Information System will be built to disseminate knowledge and information.
- In order to enhance the *in-situ* conservation of forest genetic resources, the Korean government will reinforce its management of forests in a way to meet the goal of forest genetic resources conservation, expand natural habitat conservation areas especially focusing on the conservation of rare plants, develop new forest rehabilitation techniques in

consideration of divergent regional characteristics and build eco-forests to preserve wild plant genetic resources *in-situ*, along with plans to use the forests as recreational and emotional relaxation places for citizens.

- To strengthen *ex-situ* conservation, the government enacted the Act for Creation and Promotion of Arboretums in 2001. The Act calls for the formulation of an updated Arboretum Promotion Basic Plan every five years. The 1st Arboretum Promotion Basic Plan has been implemented since January of 2004 when the Plan was first developed. Korea first opened the national arboretum in 1999 to strengthen the *ex-situ* conservation of forest genetic resources through propagation and plantation of plants and researches on the conservation of forest genetic resources and to provide a site for study of nature to the Korean people along.
- The government also established the first National Bio-Species Knowledge Information System in 2001 to build a database of plant resources information to promote conservation and utilization of plant resources in a sustainable way. The system is capable of being updated on a real time basis, providing a convenient service by setting up a cooperative system with industry, academia and related institutions. The system will be continuously supplemented and updated.

2.2 Strengthen the role of women in the implementation of SFM by reinforcing capabilities and encouraging proactive participation in forest management centered on local communities.

- As in other nations, the working population in agricultural as well as mountainous villages have been on the decrease and grown older. On the other hand, the proportion of female in the work population has become increasing. As of year 2002, agricultural and mountainous villages had a population of 3,530,000 accounting for 7.4% of the total population (47,639,000). Out of the population in agricultural and mountainous villages, the number of males was 1,715,000 accounting for 48.6% and the number of females was 1,815,000 accounting for 51.4%.
- The Korea government fully understands that women have played an important role in economic growth of Korea. In 2001, the government established the Ministry of Gender Equality in order to promote women's contribution to the development of society and nation. The Ministry of Gender Equality has tried to strengthen women's role and to encourage women's participation in social activities through the settlement of gender equality, the development of training and education for women, the extension of maternity leave period, the increase of number of childcare institutions and the increase of percentage of female's employment. In 1993, only 6 of 87 new employees of KFS (7%) were women, but the percentage of female's employment increased to 32% (16 of 50 new employees) in

2003. The percentage of female's employment is expected to be on the increase in the future.

- The KFS has provided technical and financial supports to promising foresters who own a certain size of forest land areas and have a will to manage the forest in a sustainable and active way. In 1997, the number of female foresters was only 2, but it was increased to 17 in 2002 and has been on the rise. In the near future, it is expected that much more women will participate in the development of forest policy, researches and management.

2.3 Participation of regional communities and local people in the SFM program. a) Recognize and respect local customs, traditional lifestyles, and culture of local communities; b) participate in policy decision makings in linkage with forest management; c) pursue sustainable development of mountain villages; and d) promote capacity building and technology transfer in order to accomplish SFM for the benefit of regional communities and local people.

- As used herein, local people refers to residents of rural and mountain villages. Mountain villages comprise a high proportion of forests and fields with low income level in general. They are mostly alienated in terms of access to social, economic and cultural benefits and further hampered by weak industrial bases. These are depopulated areas where the maintenance level of essential infrastructure is generally low.
- According to a national mountain area classification survey in 1996 and the national mountain village basic survey in 2003, mountain villages were found to cover a wide area, accounting for 45.9% of the entire nation, and up to 58.5% of all national forests. This demonstrates the significance of mountain villages in terms of the implementation of the sustainable forest management. Thus, there is a consensus that more must be done to improve the prospects of mountain villages for encouraging the sustainable utilization of the rich forest itself and its recreational resources.
- Accordingly, the Forest Policy Basic Law was enacted in 2001, followed by revisions focusing on the improvement of mountain villages. In 2003, a basic survey was conducted on mountain villages nationwide to formulate a basic plan for realizing a better quality of local people's life.
- The Forest Village Promotion Basic Plan will reflect a variety of issues such as the comprehensive maintenance (nurturing of the forest resources and expanding the management bases) of the forest, production, processing and sale of non-timber products, building of infrastructure of roads and houses of the mountain villages, developing and passing down of indigenous culture and traditions of mountain villages, and the promotion of green tourism and eco-tourism.
- In addition, the government has organized research forums to disseminate various success

stories of management of mountain villages, promoted various income-generating projects considering the regional diversities and provided technologies for the development of such areas in an efficient manner.

- The government also plans to build a comprehensive mountain village information network so that the central and local governments as well as the general public alike can share forest related information to promote 'green tourism' in and around mountain villages across the nation.
- Furthermore, in order to improve the image of mountain villages and disseminate information as to the need for building eco-friendly mountain villages, the government will develop a standard model to fit each type of mountain villages and nature-friendly housing models to provide better living conditions to mountain villagers.

3. Traditional Forest Related Knowledge

3.1. Investigate, categorize and apply traditional forest related knowledge (TFRK) to accomplish SFM, and conduct studies on TFRK with knowledge holders

- Traditional forest related knowledge is rapidly being lost as the result of swift industrialization and urbanization. Currently, such knowledge can be found only in temple forest management, and in small-scale gathering of non-timber forest products such as edible and medicinal herbs, and pine mushrooms, etc.
- KFS revised the 4th Forest Development Plan to designate specific forest resources worth protecting in terms of tradition as Traditional Forest Heritages and to build a database for their systematic management. These traditional forest heritages include the existing trees being under protection, provincial forests around villages, old trees of historical interest, and ornamental trees, KFS has a plan to protect them from diseases and harmful insects and to improve their surroundings for their sustainable conservation.

3.2. Investigate, categorize and apply traditional forest related knowledge (TFRK) to accomplish SFM, and conduct studies on TFRK with knowledge holders

- In 2004, KFRI plans to analyze the research trends and related laws at home and abroad to determine the definition, scope and list of TFRKs which can be applied in Korea. This is to promote the utilization of TFRKs related with sustainable forest management.

3.3. Support the implementation of the protection system on intellectual property rights and / or traditional forest related knowledge, and facilitate a fair and equal distribution of the benefits arising from the introduction of innovative methods and

the use of implementation methods

- The Korean government fully understands that R & D play a critical role in economic growth. In this regard, the government has established laws to protect Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) and put them in force. Korea Intellectual Property Office (KIPO) is responsible for the IPR policies of Korea and administering the IPR laws by examination and registration of the patent etc.
- In 2003, KFS set a new standard for quality certificate of charcoal, charcoal vinegar and preservative treatment wood to guarantee the producer's as well as the consumer's rights. This standard is being under a minor revision and will come into operation on July 1, 2004. In the near future, more items will be included in the standard. The standard is expected to make a contribution to the establishment of order in the circulation of wood products.

4. Scientific Forest Related Knowledge

4.1. Raise funds to provide scientific knowledge to all stakeholders using new and innovative methods, enhance the capabilities and support national and regional research institutes and their networks

- KFRI holds annual regional research forums and seminars to disseminate recently developed forestry technologies, case studies, and research trends at home and abroad to researchers in local institutions and foresters.
- KFRI has been conducting researches that meet the demands of forestry and timber industry and distributing the results by operating a consultant team. The subjects in great demand include cultivation of chestnut trees and oak-mushrooms, forest disease and insect control, and wood preservation, etc. KFRI also produces technical guidebooks and disseminates them to consumers.
- KFS grants research funds to universities, industrial bodies, and regional research institutes to promote and support forestry-related researches and industry/academia/institute cooperative studies aiming at nurturing local forestry and timber industry. On top of it, every year, KFRI offers a scholarship to a regional institute's researcher who has done an excellent work.

4.2. Promote the utilization of scientific research in the policy-making process by reflecting scientific knowledge when determining research priorities, discussing knowledge gaps, and developing policies

- KFRI is currently conducting a study based on "the Forest Scientific Technology Development Basic Plan". With the determination of research priorities, this plan has been developed to provide the forest policy-makers with required scientific information and to

meet the goals of "the 4th Forest Development Plan" and "the Vision for the 21st Century Forests".

- KFRI is performing Korea-China and Korea-Mongolia joint projects on preventing yellow dust storms and combating desertification of the northeast Asian region. With the financial support of Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA), KFRI provides forestry-related researchers and civil servants from developing countries and countries in economic transition with training programs on forest management and reforestation of deforested lands. KFRI has agreed on a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with CIFOR, FFPRI of Japan, and FORINTEK of Canada and is carrying out joint researches.

5 Criteria and Indicators for Sustainable Forest Management

5.1. Improve the forest resource assessment methods on the national level

(Including monitoring, assessment, reporting, concept, terminology and definition)

- The global community has been rapidly developing the SFM concept through the Helsinki Process (1993) and the Montreal Process (1993) since the development of criteria and indicators for SFM was first discussed by ITTO back in 1989.
- The basic concept of SFM is to concurrently meet the social, ecological and economic demands on forests by rationalizing the various functions of the forest. KFS has established and has been implementing the "Sustainable Forest Management Guidelines" in order to embody the SFM by establishing, systemizing and disseminating the forest management technology by its function. With such system in place, it will help not only to enhance the economic functions of the forest such as timber production, promotion of timber industries and income increase of mountain villages, but also meet the public demands for common benefits such as the preservation of the natural ecosystem, protection of wild animals and plants, provision of recreational spaces, and enhancement of territorial integrity.
- The statistical data required to assess forest resources on the national level were first produced in 1948. However, at that time, it was a rough estimation on the size of forest areas and growing stock based on the mere collection of existing data. A modern nationwide forest resource survey has been conducted since 1972. The nationwide forest resource survey is a rotational survey by region with a 10-year cycle, and the 4th nationwide forest resource survey (1996-2005) is currently under way. So far, 3,500 permanent plots have been set up around the country and growing stock has been estimated. In addition, digitized forest type maps (1:25,000) have been produced by taking and deciphering black-and-white aerial photographs (1:15,000).

- KFS is actively pursuing the use of remote sensing technology and geographic information system (GIS) to enhance the efficiency of forest surveys and monitoring. To cope with domestic and overseas needs for statistical data on the forest environment, KFS is seeking to adopt the annual inventory system with a five-year cycle, which measures and investigates forest environment indicators such as forest- tree resources, lower vegetation, soil status, proportion of dead trees, and biomass.
- In addition, in order to convert the forest resource assessment on the national level into the measurements, evaluation, and reporting schemes based on international criteria and indicators of forest sustainability, Korea is working on the criteria and indicators measurement and monitoring systems to assess the sustainability of domestic forests.

5.2. Develop and utilize the criteria and indicators of SFM

**(apply to the national or quasi-national level planning, management or monitoring),
and participate in regional or international criteria and development of indicators**

- Korea has continuously contributed to the development of the criteria and indicators applicable to temperate and boreal forests as a member nation of the Montreal Process from the very beginning. In 1995, Korea ratified the Declaration of Santiago in Chile and its list of criteria and indicators, and analyzed the domestic applicability of the criteria and indicators of the Montreal Process.
- The Korea government has investigated and analyzed criteria and indicators (C & Is) developed in other nations and reviewed their applicabilities to Korean cases. The government set up a model forest before the full application of the C & Is to the whole nation. To date, a draft list of around 82 criteria has been drawn up. The government plans to further develop additional criteria and indicators in the near future after in-depth discussions with related parties.
- In 2003, the government produced and distributed informative pamphlets on the SFM to enhance the level of understanding of the concept. It carried out training sessions for management teams of national forests on the criteria and indicators of the Montreal Process with an emphasis on the implementation methods applicable to the nation. It also plans to provide training to those who are responsible for forest administration in local governments.

III. Preparation of the National Report

- KFS and related departments of KFRI were involved in the production of this report. In the course of producing the report, we renewed our understanding that the current reporting

agenda of social and cultural aspects of forest, traditional forest related knowledge, and scientific knowledge are newly required functions compared to the traditional economic aspects of the forest, and that we need to continually develop and improve related policies in the future. Regarding traditional forest related knowledge, we are faced with a lack of sufficient data analyzed so far, but fortunately an intensive study in this field is planned to be launched this year.

- The fact that IPF made 149 proposals, while IFF made 144 proposals, on a wide range of issues reminded us of the potential difficulties in evaluating the implementation progress on individual forest policies. we lack sufficient understanding of them.
- We also learned that we need to align the various IPF/IFF proposals to the domestic forest policies based on the urgency for action, and reflect such in accordance with the development of forest policies in the future.