



MEDIA ALERT, 20 OCTOBER 2020: Immediate

Signing of agreement for restoring Asian drylands: Landscape Partnership for Asia

22 October 2020

16:00 – 17:00 UTC +9

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Seoul, Republic of Korea, 20 Oct 2020 – Leaders of the Asian Forest Cooperation Organization (AFoCO), World Agroforestry and Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR-ICRAF), Global EverGreening Alliance (Alliance) will sign on 22 October a landmark partnership agreement to restore drylands and drought-prone areas in Asia.

The Landscape Partnership for Asia will contribute to efforts to restore economic and environmentally productive functions to drylands and drought-prone areas to achieve national and global targets for food security, climate mitigation and adaptation, biodiversity conservation, social equity, bioenergy, governance and economic growth, specifically, to prevent more land degradation, store substantial amounts of carbon and increase biodiversity.

The Partnership will deploy proven and cost-effective solutions that can be expanded to large scale. These will include farmer-managed and assisted natural regeneration; agroforestry; sustainable forest, land, rangeland and water management; bioenergy production; financial instruments; and value-chain development with accompanying social-equity and institutional capacity building. These solutions will help mitigate the climate crisis, build agricultural and environmental resilience, and improve livelihoods through development of small-to-medium enterprises and value chains.

‘For these reasons, we hope to emphasize the importance of cooperation between communities, scientists, researchers and political stakeholders and strengthen governance and institutional capacities for forest and land restoration’ said Chenchu Norbu, executive director of AFoCO, which is hosting the secretariat of the Partnership.

‘This is one of the most important agreements for land restoration in the world,’ said Tony Simons, executive director of CIFOR-ICRAF. ‘With more than 14 countries signed up or interested already,

ranging from Kazakhstan through Mongolia to Indonesia, covering millions of hectares of degraded forest and agricultural land, the signing of this agreement is an historic moment leading up to the United Nations Decade of Ecosystem Restoration.'

'We will achieve the ambition through a consortium of partners in the governmental, non-governmental and private sectors through establishing a network of "engagement landscapes",' said Robert Nasi, managing director of CIFOR-ICRAF. 'Engagement landscapes allow focus in geographical locations that aim to take an intensive, systematic approach to collaborative research over the long term.'

'The Partnership will draw on the collective experience of diverse stakeholders across sectors and borders, supporting local innovation at the grassroots and improving access to knowledge and markets,' said Christopher Armitage, chief executive officer of the Alliance. 'This will empower rural communities to really own and benefit from more sustainable landscape management well beyond the end of the Partnership in 2032.'

These groups will include governments, research and development organizations, the private sector, multi-sectoral platforms, civil-society networks and community-based associations that will implement performance-based investments in the restoration of Asian drylands and drought-prone areas, building on successes already achieved.

The Partnership will deploy proven techniques with a well-established track record for dryland restoration across a range of biophysical and socioeconomic landscapes at wide scale to speed greening and improve livelihoods.

Knowledge will be shared across Asia, inviting specialist expertise from Africa and other dryland regions, to establish a coherent body of 'green, blended development' knowledge and successes on the ground that will sustain further expansion of scale.

The Partnership will also implement a trans-Asia monitoring and evaluation system that assists national governments to measure progress in relation to targets and that will feed these achievements into international commitments, linking to other restoration initiatives such as the Bonn Challenge, the Decade of Ecosystems Restoration, and the Forest Landscape Restoration programme of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations for Asia-Pacific.

If you miss this event, tune in to the [Global Landscapes Forum 'One World, One Health](#), where the announcement will be shared with delegates.

MEDIA ENQUIRIES

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ABOUT THE FOUNDERS OF THE LANDSCAPE PARTNERSHIP FOR ASIA

Asian Forest Cooperation Organization (AFoCO)

Formalized in 2018, AFoCO is an intergovernmental organization committed to strengthening forest cooperation by transforming proven technologies and policies into concrete actions in the context of sustainable forest management to address the impacts of climate change. Through concerted efforts with member countries, AFoCO strives to undertake and promote action-oriented forest cooperation programs in Asia on sustainable forest management; enhancing forest carbon stocks and supporting related initiatives; addressing deforestation and forest degradation; strengthening capacity building and research and development in the forest sector; and partnerships that build on forest-related international efforts and global initiatives.

Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR) and World Agroforestry (ICRAF)

The Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR) and World Agroforestry (ICRAF) envision a more equitable world where forestry and landscapes enhance the environment and well-being for all. CIFOR-ICRAF are non-profit, scientific institutions that conduct research on the most pressing challenges of forest and landscape management around the world. Using a global, multidisciplinary approach, the aim is to improve human well-being, protect the environment, and increase equity. Their work focuses on innovative research, developing partners' capacity, and actively engaging in dialogue with all stakeholders to inform policies and practices that affect forests and people. Their work spans the globe, with expertise in the 'global South'. Founded in 1993 and 1978 respectively, CIFOR-ICRAF are members of CGIAR, a global research partnership for a food secure future dedicated to reducing poverty, enhancing food and nutrition security, and improving natural resources.

Global EverGreening Alliance

Since early 2012, the Alliance has brought together leading research, technical and development organizations. The Alliance harnesses collective energies and builds on the shared vision to restore degraded land and improve the sustainability, profitability and reliability of smallholders' farming systems. The Alliance provides a collaborative platform to support and facilitate massive-scale environmental restoration and sustainable agricultural intensification projects, increasing biodiversity, and both mitigating and adapting to the impacts of climate change on a globally significant scale.