

Intervention Notes of Asian Forest Cooperation Organization (AFoCO)

Agenda COFO/2024/8.4 FAO's Work on Integrated Wildfire Management

Thank you, Chair, distinguished delegates, and colleagues.

I am honored to have this opportunity to speak on behalf of the Asian Forest Cooperation Organization, to address this vital topic of integrated forest fire management, or IFM.

Wildfires pose a growing global threat, intensified by climate change and land-use changes. As highlighted by the FAO, fire intensity, scale, and duration are increasing, requiring a shift from suppression to a holistic approach. AFoCO fully supports this paradigm shift and the principles outlined by the FAO.

AFoCO Strategy 2024-2030 aligns closely with the FAO's approach to IFM. We emphasize the importance of sustainable fire management and the reduction of wildfire impacts through integrated risk management. Our collaborative efforts with the Korea Forest Service and other partners on the AFFIRM (Assuring the Future of Forests with Integrated Risk Management) mechanism are prime examples of this commitment.

The Global Fire Management Hub is a significant step forward in strengthening the capacities of countries to implement IFM. AFoCO is proud to be a part of this initiative, contributing to the technical support targeting the Mekong region.

We recognize the significance of institutional-level capacity-building, particularly for fostering fire behavior analysts and suppression practitioners, as part of sustainable forest management, while minimizing emissions and maximizing carbon sequestration.

We also acknowledge the critical role of community engagement in comprehensive fire and water management. We believe that involving local communities in fire prevention, readiness, response, and recovery is essential for creating resilient and sustainable landscapes.

In conclusion, AFoCO stands ready to support FAO's efforts in advancing integrated forest fire management. We are committed to leveraging our strategic initiatives to enhance sustainable fire management practices, promote community resilience, and foster global cooperation.

Thank you.