

[YLC26 PR BRIEF]

1. Background (배경)

The Asian Forest Cooperation Organization (AFoCO) is an intergovernmental organization established in 2018 to promote sustainable forest management and address climate change in Asia. AFoCO develops and implements projects that focus on forest restoration and conservation, forest-based circular economy, forest disaster risk management, and forest governance, while facilitating policy and technical cooperation, capacity building, and knowledge sharing tailored to national contexts. Through action-oriented practices, AFoCO aims to contribute to the global goals of increasing forest cover and implementing the Paris Agreement on climate change.

The situation: Transitioning from a single-donor model reliant on the Korean Government, AFoCO has successfully diversified its financial structure. The organization is now focused on expanding resource mobilization through innovative mechanisms, including blended finance, private sector ESG/CSR engagement, and carbon market participation. AFoCO is looking for trustworthy partners who believe in its mission—those willing to invest, collaborate, and take action together for a greener Asia.

Why Asian forests?

According to the UN-REDD Programme, “forests are the fastest, cheapest climate solution.”

According to the FAO, Asia’s forests account for 15 percent of the world’s total forest area and act as a significant global carbon sink, removing about 0.9 Gt CO₂ per year between 2021 and 2025. The region also recorded the highest net gain of forest area between 2010

and 2020, highlighting Asia's leading role in forest restoration and expansion. Investing in Asia's forests is one of the highest-leverage, cost-effective ways to tackle the climate crisis.

Forest investment also strengthens livelihoods, biodiversity corridors, and disaster resilience. It opens opportunities to commercialize non-timber forest products (NTFPs), creating sustainable, circular value chains that generate financial returns for investors while supporting ecosystem integrity. AFoCO's projects ultimately aim to improve the livelihoods of forest-dependent people. Through strong on-the-ground partnerships and rapport with local communities, AFoCO ensures systematic monitoring and continuously integrates field challenges and lessons learned into its work.

Why AFoCO?

AFoCO's projects ultimately aim to improve the livelihoods of forest-dependent people. As a treaty-based international organization, AFoCO engages directly with the governments of Member Countries and ensures sustainability of its actions through post-project management. With access to a diverse pool of experts, AFoCO applies science-based approaches. Through strong on-the-ground partnerships with local communities, it continuously integrates field challenges and lessons learned into its work, maximizing impact.

2. The Challenge (과제)

Intergovernmental organizations are often perceived as bureaucratic and institutional rather than human and inspiring.

The challenge is to build a more relatable, emotionally engaging **brand narrative** that shows AFoCO not just as a policy platform but as a simple, human story people can easily approach.

Develop a strategic **PR campaign** that visually and narratively integrates **at least two or more of AFoCO's five core Initiatives** (Asian Living Lab, Forest Fire Management, Landscape

Partnership, Mangrove, and REDD+ Readiness). Your goal is to move away from a fragmented institutional image and create a cohesive "Umbrella Story" that audiences can grasp at a glance. Propose an Earned Media and stakeholder engagement strategy that shows how these diverse programs work together as a single, human-centric solution for Asia's forests, building trust and credibility among the public.

These are AFoCO's priority:

1. Forest Fire Management in Asia Initiative
2. REDD+ Readiness Initiative
3. Asian Forest Living Lab Initiative
4. AFoCO Mangrove Initiative
5. Landscape Partnership Initiative
3. Target Audience (타겟)

How can potential partners invest in AFoCO?

Group	Why they matter	Desired action
Primary - Potential Partners and Donors	They have financial capacity to support scalable forest projects.	Engage with AFoCO through funding, partnerships and/or joint initiatives.
Secondary - General Public in the Republic of Korea	Public awareness and support in Korea help sustain national commitment to AFoCO's mission.	Build awareness of AFoCO's role as a global platform initiated by Korea, take pride in its achievements, and advocate for ongoing government support for its programs.

※ AFoCO is open to engaging a wider audience beyond its primary and secondary target groups.

4. Insight (인사이트)

Forests are far more than just trees. Forests are living spaces that sustain life in countless ways. They provide a wide range of essential ecosystem services—from carbon storage to biodiversity conservation. Beyond biology, they are the source of recreation, culture, and inspiration, deeply woven into the myths and livelihoods of countless communities across Asia.

For those living in concrete cities, forests may seem like distant, unreachable worlds. But for foresters, the connection is everywhere—even a weed struggling through a roadside crack is a reminder of nature's resilience.

Forests are intricate and full of wonder. Even planting a single seed invites a heavy weight of questions: *whose land, whose consent, whose future? Which species belong here, and who will care for them?* This complexity can be overwhelming, but you don't have to carry it alone. With AFoCO, these questions find answers.

Step into the world of foresters—people always ready to get their hands in the soil, to grow hope, and to bring the forest to life.

5. Strategy (전략 방향)

The solution needs to address five critical pillars:

- **Brand Differentiation:** Unlike general environmental IOs, AFoCO is an intergovernmental body with deep local roots. Highlight our unique position as a bridge between governments, local communities, and the private sector across Asia.



- **Evidence-Based Trust:** Move beyond vague promises. Showcase AFoCO's commitment to knowledge sharing and technical expertise. AFoCO uses data, satellite monitoring, and scientific research to prove that our impact is real and measurable.
- **Beyond Greenwashing:** Address the skepticism around carbon offsetting. Demonstrate that AFoCO prioritizes transparency and integrity. We ensure real climate action.
- **From Seeds to Sustenance:** Planting a seed is just the beginning, not the end. Shift the focus from 'planting numbers' to 'long-term stewardship.' Highlight the complex reality of forestry—maintenance, survival rates, and sustainable livelihoods. Demonstrate that AFoCO is in it for the long haul, ensuring that thriving forests directly support the economic well-being of the communities who call them home.
- **Low-Risk Investment Start:** Emphasize that AFoCO projects are initiated with Official Development Assistance (ODA) funding, providing a lower entry risk for co-investors and enabling stable, results-driven partnerships.

6. Key Message (핵심 메시지)

1. Asian forests matter—ecologically and economically.
2. AFoCO is an action-oriented intergovernmental organization.
3. Multisectoral cooperation—especially public–private partnerships (PPPs)—is essential.

7. Personality

- **Tone:** Grounded, authentic, and dynamic — expert yet approachable.



- **Vibes:** Think National Geographic's curiosity and Patagonia's activism meets Asian traditional performance art and puppetry. Environmental-scientific rigor meets cultural and emotional warmth.
- **Attitude:** "Boots on the ground." We are the doers, not just the talkers.
- **Visuals:**
 - **Tactile & Organic:** Emphasize textures like wood grain, soil, rattan, and woven leaves. Avoid sleek, artificial surfaces.
 - **Handcrafted:** Use aesthetics that suggest human touch and craftsmanship (e.g., traditional Asian patterns, hand-carved wood) to symbolize our hands-on approach.
 - **Kinetic & Lively:** Instead of static landscapes, capture the movement of life—the sway of trees, the work of foresters, or the rhythm of nature. Think of a dancer focused intensely on their craft without a flashy stage—pure, focused, and human.

8. Campaign Dos and Don'ts

✓ *DO:*

- Reflect the full scope of Sustainable Forest Management (SFM). SFM is the balanced stewardship and use of forests that sustains ecological health, economic use, and community livelihoods, ensuring forests regenerate and remain productive over time.
- Focus on people. Feature the communities that rely on and protect the forests—such as local residents sustaining their livelihoods through agroforestry.
- Highlight diversity. AFoCO's capacity-building programs primarily support local communities in Asia, especially women.
- Break stereotypes. Show the professionalism and diversity of people working with AFoCO. Many of our partners are forest scientists, firefighters, satellite technology specialists, and leaders.

- Dive into real stories. Visit the AFoCO website to find stories and articles about specific projects. Use these concrete details to build your narrative.
- Weave in local culture. Reflect the cultural richness of AFoCO's Member Countries.
- Capture the spirit of the foresters. Highlight their teamwork, spirit, and daily lives in the field.
- Draw inspiration from trees and forest ecosystems. Look at the details and capture the interconnectedness of life in the forest. What elements make up a tree? What roles do fungi play? What about birds or forest fruits?

Ø **DON'T:**

- Don't show forests without people. Avoid empty landscape shots.
- Don't portray forests as conservation-only, hands-off spaces—static, untouched landscapes disconnected from people, livelihoods, and sustainable management and use.
- Don't feature white men as the protagonists. Remember, our organization is the *Asian Forest Cooperation Organization*.
- Don't resort to clichés. Avoid stereotypical or prejudiced depictions of Asians and women.
- Don't limit "Asian culture" to the usual suspects. Please look closely at our list of Member Countries (including Southeast and Central Asia) and represent them accurately.
- Don't use fear tactics. The audience is not illegal loggers. Focus on positive, empowering narratives.
- Don't rely on overly digital or AI-generated aesthetics. We support projects rooted in manual craftsmanship and tangible goods. Additionally, our target audience is often conscious of the environmental footprint associated with Generative AI.



- Don't create generic environmental messages. Avoid creating a campaign that could apply to any other environmental NGO or IO. The campaign should clearly convey AFoCO's unique identity and mission.
- Don't use an all-green or all-brown palette. Green or brown works well as a key visual, but it shouldn't be the sole color used.

8. Submission Requirements (제출 요구사항)

*파일명: YLC26_PR_제출자료명(예: Presentation/Presentation Image/Written Submission)_접수번호

*제출양식: 10-slide Presentation (16:9 PPT), Digital Presentation Image(A3 사이즈 jpg, jpeg), Written Submission(A4 세로방향 PDF)

*제출방법: 아래 제출자료의 파일명을 통일하여 하나의 폴더로(폴더명: 접수번호) 저장 > 압축> 업로드

*제출자료 및 파일명에 소속회사명, 본인 이름, 소속회사 CI 등 참가자 식별이 가능한 내용이 있는 경우 심사에서 제외될 수 있습니다. 업로드 전에 자료를 한번 더 확인해주세요.

Each team will be submitting the following for the PR competition:

1. A 10-slide presentation – including images and English text. It should bring your idea and campaign to life in response to the brief. This will be presented to the Jury.

2. A digital presentation image – a visual overview of your work, including images and English text. It should concisely summarise the brief, execution and results.

3. A four-part written submission to give more context to your work. This includes:

a. Background (150-word limit) – overview of the brief, objectives and situation

- b. **Creative idea (150-word limit)** – how the idea was designed to earn attention from the target audience
- c. **PR strategy (150-word limit)** – explain the insight, key message, target audience
- d. (consumer demographic, individuals, organisations), creation and distribution of assets
- e. **PR execution (150-word limit)** – explain the implementation, timeline, and scale.

10. Appendix

1. [AFoCO project in Indonesia promotes mangrove restoration and silvofishery in Sumbawa](#)
2. [Reviving native Agarwood in Cambodia's Cardamom Mountains: A model for restoration and sustainable livelihoods | AFoCO](#)

[AFoCO and Timor-Leste's Green Vision: mangroves, sandalwood, and coffee projects take center stage](#)

1. Forest Fire Management in Asia Initiative

The Forest Fire Management in Asia (FFMA) Initiative is a flagship regional program that strengthens Asia's capacity to prevent, respond to, and recover from forest fires through advanced training, education, and international cooperation. Jointly supported by the Republic of Korea and France, FFMA operates as a five-year program (2026–2030) delivering ecosystem-specific training of trainers, advanced technical training, and graduate-level education, while promoting science-based approaches and cross-border coordination. Through hands-on fieldwork, research, and knowledge exchange, FFMA builds a skilled regional workforce and enhances climate resilience across Asia's forests.

2. REDD+ Readiness Initiative

The AFoCO REDD+ Readiness Initiative supports Member Countries in strengthening their preparedness for REDD+ implementation by advancing sustainable forest management and contributing to global climate action.

Through strategic partnerships, resource mobilization, and targeted technical and policy support, the Initiative aims to complete the REDD+ readiness phase and enable access to results-based payments and cooperation under Article 6 of the Paris Agreement.

empowering member countries to meet their NDC targets while ensuring resilient forests and forest-dependent communities.

3. Asian Forest Living Lab Initiative

The Asian Forest living lab initiative is a flagship 10-year framework under AFoCO's Climate Action Plan (2025–2034) that transforms project sites into "living laboratories" to test and scale science-based solutions for climate change, forest degradation, and ecosystem restoration.

Endorsed by AFoCO's Assembly and Partners, it is implemented through three programs: AFoCO-ASEAN (multi-country collaboration and policy-relevant research), AFoCO-NIFoS (thematic expert-led work such as mangrove restoration and climate adaptation), and AFoCO-KOAGI (forest genetic resources and seed management, including the Baekdudaegan Global Seed Vault).

Together, these programs link research, policy, and practice to deliver scalable, climate-resilient forestry solutions across Asia.

4. AFoCO Mangrove Initiative

The AFoCO Mangrove Initiative, launching in 2026 under the AFoCO Climate Action Plan (2025–2034), integrates policy, science, finance, and community action to strengthen mangrove restoration across Member Countries.

Guided by a dedicated Working Group and supported by GIS-based MRV systems, it aims to enhance the resilience, sustainability, and climate action role of mangrove ecosystems through coordinated, phased implementation.

5. Landscape Partnership Asia Initiative

Landscape Partnership Asia (LPA) is a regional Initiative launched in 2022 to advance large-scale landscape restoration and nature-based solutions in Asia through strong multi-partner collaboration, with AFoCO serving as Secretariat.

Bringing together organizations such as CIFOR-ICRAF, the Global Evergreening Alliance, and IUCN, LPA develops projects, mobilizes finance, and shares knowledge linking biodiversity, climate resilience, and sustainable livelihoods.

By engaging in global platforms and building investment-ready project pipelines, LPA is positioning itself as a leading regional framework for transformative landscape level action in Asia.