2024 INTERNATIONAL SEMINAR

OUTCOMES AND KEY INSIGHTS
: FROM GREEN CARBON TO BLUE CARBON

30 September – 1 October 2024

Suva, Fiji

Korea Forest Service

AFoCO
Asian Forest Cooperation Organization

Contents

1. Introduction

1. Introduction

I. Background

The Pacific islands are home to some of the world's most diverse and extensive mangrove ecosystems. These ecosystems provide a myriad of ecological, economic, and social benefits, including coastal protection, carbon sequestration, and support for biodiversity. However, they are increasingly threatened by climate change, rising sea levels, and human activities such as deforestation and land conversion. Recognizing the critical importance of mangroves, various international and regional organizations have called for enhanced efforts to conserve and restore these vital ecosystems.

In this context, the Asian Forest Cooperation Organization (AFoCO) is exploring the feasibility of establishing a Mangrove Technology Center in the Pacific Islands. This initiative, led by the **Korea Forest Service** as an Official Development Assistance (ODA) project, aims to leverage Korea's expertise in forest management and technology to strengthen partnerships with Pacific countries

The theme for 2024 international Seminar is "**From Green Carbon to Blue Carbon: Fostering Korea-Pacific Forest Partnerships: Sustainable Solutions at the Mangrove Technology Center in the Pacific Islands**".

The objectives of the 2024 international Seminar are as follows:

- To identify opportunities for collaboration and partnership between Korea and the Pacific Islands in the field of forest management and conservation;
- To share knowledge and best practices in mangrove conservation and reforestation across Asia - Pacific regions;
- To explore the feasibility and potential benefits of establishing a Mangrove Technology Center in the Pacific islands;
- To encourage networking and cooperation among participants for future projects
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II. Date : 30 September – 1 October

III. Venue : Grand Pacific Hotel, Suva, Fiji

- ZOOM Link:

https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87674675256?pwd=BPMMo5Bk62FLMda8wM6HYP8cSTwETX.1

- Meeting Room ID: 876 7467 5256

* No passcode required.

The event will be organized in a hybrid format, meaning that the participants may join either virtually or in person.

IV. Targeted Participants

- Relevant government agencies in both Korea and the Pacific Islands.
- Scholars and researchers specializing in natural resources and mangrove ecosystems
- Experts from international organizations (IGOs) and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) specializing in mangrove conservation.

Ⅴ. Program

DAY 1, 30th September 2024		
Time	**Agenda/Presentation Topics**	**Session moderator**
08:50-09:00	**Registration**	
9:00–9:30	**Opening Remarks** Sang Seop Lim (Minister of Korea Forest Service) **Welcome Remarks** Sunpil Jin (Vice Executive Director of Asian Forest Cooperation Organization) **Special Remarks** Kyungeun Jang (Minister counselor of Embassy of the Republic of Korea in Fiji)	MC Hansol LEE
09:30-09:50	**Self-Introductions** Brief introduction of all participants	
09:50-10:00	**Group Photo**	
10:00-10:30	**Opening Session** **Inspirational Speeches** ● **"Achievements of the Republic of Korea's Global Forest Cooperation and Proposed Strategies for Future Development"** *Min young Chang (Director, Korea Forest Service)*	MC Hansol LEE
10:30-10:50	**Coffee Break & Network**	
10:50–11:50	**Plenary Session 1** **: Presentations by representatives from Pacific Islands Countries** ● **Topics:** ✓ Overview of the current state of forests ✓ Ongoing climate change initiatives ✓ Status of REDD+ Implementation ✓ Proposals for collaboration with Korea	MC Hansol Lee

	• **Fiji –** *Tevita Bulai (Acting Executive Director Research & Development, Ministry of Forestry, Fiji)* • **Solomon Islands –** *Julia Manioli (Chief Forestry Officer, Ministry of Forestry Research, Solomon Islands)* • **Kiribati -** *Kaaroti Henry (Environment Inspector, Ministry of Environment, Lands, and Agricultural Development, Kiribati)* • **Vanuatu -** *Dean Wotlolan (Senior Officer Conservation, Department of Environmental Protection and Conservation, Vanuatu)* • **Papua New Guinea**– *Ken Nobi (REDD+ officer, Climate Change and Development Authority, Papua New Guinea) - Virtual*	
11:50-12:10	**Q&A**	
12:10-13:30	***Lunch break***	
13:30-14:30	**Plenary Session 2** **: Current Research on Green & Blue Carbon by Leading Research Institutions** • **"Korea's Efforts to Restore Mangrove Forest"** *Su Young Woo (Professor,* Seoul University) – Virtual • **"Mangrove Studies in Solomon Islands"** *Myknee Q Sirikolo (Director, National Herbarium of Solomon Islands)* • **"Sustaining Mangrove Ecosystems: Policy, Restoration, and Governance Insights "** *Jalesi Mateboto (Natural Resources Management Advisor, SPC)* • **"Data-Driven Strategies for unlocking Blue Carbon Potential in Mangrove Ecosystem?** *Freddie Alei (Lecturer, University of Papua New Guinea)*	Moderator 1: Vaeno Wagne Vigulu
14:30-14:50	**Q&A and Discussion**	Moderator 1: Vaeno Wagne

		Vigulu
14:50-15:10	**Coffee Break & Network**	
15:10-16:30	**Plenary Session 3** **Harnessing Blue Carbon Potential Through Mangrove Ecosystem Management and Regional Collaboration** • **"Collaborative Pathways to Blue Carbon: Mangrove Ecosystem Management and Regional Synergy"** *Milika Sobey (Senior Technical Advisor, GIZ)* • **"Best Practices: Mangoro Market Meri in Papua New Guinea"** *Mazzella Maniwavie (Program Manager, The Nature Conservancy of PNG) - Virtual* • **"Scaling Nature-based Solutions to Climate Change: Restoring Mangroves and Building Resilience through Community Action"** *Bridget Kennedy (Director, Conservational International)* • **"Local Leadership in Forest Conservation: Strategies for Effective Community Involvement "** *Stephen Suti Agalo (Local Activist, Solomon Islands)* • **"Beyond Green Carbon Projects in Solomon Islands"** *Lesley Vigulu (NGO, Solomon Islands)*	Moderator 2 Mr. Samuela Lagataki
16:30-17:00	**Q&A and Discussion**	Moderator 2 Mr. Samuela Lagataki
18:00-	***Welcome Dinner***	

DAY 2, 1st October 2024		
Time	**Agenda/Presentation Topics**	**Session moderator**
09:00-09:10	**Registration**	
09:10-09:20	**Recap**	MC Hansol Lee
09:20-09:40	**Keynote Speech 1** • **"The Pacific Islands' Forest Research Journey: Insights, Progress, and Emerging Trends"** *Marika Tuiwawa, University of South Pacific*	
09:40-10:00	**Keynote Speech 2** • **"Pacific Mangrove Technology Center: Pioneering Blue Carbon Solutions for a Sustainable Future"** *Kangoh Lee (Chair of Executive Committee, APFF)*	
09:50-10:10	***Coffee Break & Network***	
10:10-11:40	**Plenary Session: Stakeholder Dialogues on Strengthening Korea-Pacific Islands Partnership for Sustainable Development** • **"KOICA Overview and Opportunities for Future Partnerships"** *Jie Soo Lee (Deputy Director, KOICA)* • **"UNCCD's approach to Green GDP Projects"** *Duckha Jeon (Program Officer, UNCCD) - Virtual* • **"Research Collaboration Strategies Using the National Institute of Forest Science's Mangrove Technology Center"** *Bora Lee (Researcher, Warm Temperate and Subtropical Forest Research Center, National Institute of Forest Science)- Virtual*	Moderator 3 Dr. Sang In Kang
11:40-12:30	**Panel Discussion**	Moderator 3 Dr. Sang In Kang
12:30-12:40	**Wrap-up Event**	
12:40-	**Lunch & Network**	
※ Please note that the schedule and speakers are subject to change based on local conditions and the need to maintain a well-balanced program		

VI. Profiles of Speakers and Moderators

Sang-seop Lim

Korea Forest Service

Opening Remarks

Sang-seop Lim is currently the Minister of the Korea Forest Service (KFS), with over 20 years of experience in forestry and landscape architecture. Previously, he served as Deputy Minister (2022-2024) and Director General of both the Forest Protection Bureau (2021-2022) and the Planning and Coordination Bureau (2020-2021). He holds a Ph.D. in Forest Resources Management from the University of British Columbia, a Master's in Landscape Architecture, and a Bachelor's in Agriculture from Seoul National University. In 2019, he was awarded the Order of Service Merit (Red Stripes) for his contributions to forest management.

Sunpil Jin

Asian Forest Cooperation Organization

Welcome Remarks

Jin Sunpil, joined the Asian Forest Cooperation Organization as Vice Executive Director in February 2021. Having led overseas projects by the Korea Forest Service in AFoCO Party countries, Mr. Jin brings close to 25 years of extensive experience and leadership in both international and domestic forestry policy development as well as project planning and implementation. Prior to joining AFoCO, he served as the Director General of the Forest Aviation Headquarters of the Korea Forest Service and was in various senior management positions.

Mr. Jin graduated from the Department of Forestry of Seoul National University and also holds a master's degree from the Korea National Defense University.

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Minyoung Chang

Korea Forest Service

Inspirational Speeches

Ms. Minyoung Chang is the Director of the Global Forest Resources Division at the Korea Forest Service (KFS), leading international forest projects including Overseas Forest Investments, ODA, and REDD+ programs. Since joining the KFS in 1995, she has held key roles in both domestic and international forestry policy. She was Deputy Director of the Arboretum Development Project (2015-2017) before earning a Master's in Public Administration from York University in the UK. In 2019, she became Deputy Director of the Global Forest Resources Division and now oversees various international forestry initiatives.

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Vaeno Wayne Vigulu

Solomon Islands National University

Moderator

Dr. Vaeno Wayne Vigulu has more than 20 years of experience in forest policy development and management. He is the current Dean of the Faculty of Agriculture, Fisheries, Forestry, and Environment at Solomon Islands National University. He worked as a Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Forestry and Research for 8 years. Between 2015 and 2023, he supervised multiple ministries, focusing on sustainable forest practices. He also advised on forest management plans and community development initiatives aimed at sustainable resource use. Additionally, he contributed to research on agroforestry systems and participated in community training programs related to sustainable forest resource management.

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Tevita Bulai

Ministry of Forestry, Fiji

Speaker

Tevita Bulai currently serves as the Executive Director of Research and Development at Fiji's Ministry of Fisheries and Forestry. He has been actively involved in various initiatives, including the establishment of the Sandalwood Growers Association to support community-based sandalwood nurseries and plantations across Fiji. His work focuses on improving the sustainability and market systems of the sandalwood industry, ensuring equitable benefits for local growers. Additionally, he plays a key role in enforcing forestry laws and promoting sustainable forest management practices through the Ministry's Forest Monitoring, Control, and Surveillance (MCS) project.

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Julia T. Manioli Aimaea

National Herbarium, Solomon Islands

Speaker

Ms. Julia. T. Manioli Aimaea has been dedicated to natural resource management and conservation for nearly 20 years. She majored in Marine and Fisheries Biology at University of Papua New Guinea and researched on marine animals such as zooplankton. In 2006, she collected socio-economic data for coastal Choiseul communities as a Trainee with the Nature Conservancy. From 2006 to 2009, she held the position of Fisheries Policy Officer with the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) in Solomon Islands. Since 2011, she has served as Chief Forestry Officer at the National Herbarium and Botanical Garden Division under the Ministry of Forestry and Research.

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Whay-Khan Yeeting

Ministry of Environment, Lands, and Agricultural Development in Kiribati

Speaker

Mrs. Whay-Khan Yeeting majored in Marine Affairs and Geography at University of the Sotuh Pacific in Fiji. She joined the Environment and Conservation Division of the Ministry of Environment, Lands, and Agricultural Development as a Waste Project Officer in Kiribati in 2017. She is currently involved in environmental compliance monitoring as an Environmental Inspector. Her work focuses on safeguarding Kiribati's distinct ecosystems, ensuring that conservation regulations are adhered to, and promoting sustainable practices that protect the country's natural environment. Her journey reflects a profound commitment to the protection and preservation of Kiribati's unique natural heritage.

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Kaaroti Henry

Ministry of Environment, Lands, and Agricultural Development in Kiribati

Speaker

Ms. Kaaroti Henry has been an officer at the Environment and Conservation Department since 2019, focusing on biodiversity conservation and climate change. She coordinated Kiribati's Sixth National Report on biodiversity goals in 2019 and worked on mangrove planting and community engagement from 2020 to 2021. In 2022, she contributed to developing the Integrated Environment Natural Resources Co-Management Plan. Now, as a Senior Biodiversity Conservation Officer, she leads technical programs on nature-based solutions and environmental regulations under Kiribati's Integrated Environment Policy.

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Dean Launder Wotlolan

Department of Environmental Protection and Conservation, Vanuatu

Speaker

Mr. Dean Launder Wotlolan has broad experience in biodiversity sector. He majored in Environmental Studies and completed a Master of Arts in Geography. Currently, he manages national biodiversity strategies and biodiversity-related projects as a Senior Officer Conservation in the Department of Environmental Protection and Conservation. He implements the conservation components of international conventions such as United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity (UNCBD) and Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora. (CITES). For developing environmental registries, he is responsible for the establishment, registration, and monitoring of Community Conservation Areas (CCAs) and Marine Protected Areas (MPAs). Additionally, he participates in national and international meetings working with biodiversity initiatives.

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Ken Nobi

Climate Change and Development Authority, Papua New Guinea

Speaker

Ken Nobi serves as a REDD+ officer at the Climate Change and Development Authority (CCDA) in Papua New Guinea. In this role, he focuses on implementing the REDD+ (Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation) program, which aims to mitigate climate change by reducing deforestation and promoting sustainable forest management practices. His work involves coordinating efforts to enhance forest conservation, improve land-use policies, and engage local communities in sustainable practices to ensure the long-term health of PNG's forests

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Mark Pilon

Forest Authority, Papua New Guinea

Speaker

Mark Pilon is associated with the Forest Authority of Papua New Guinea (PNGFA), which is heavily involved in promoting sustainable forest management practices. The PNGFA has been focusing on increasing local forest business development, eco-forestry, and value-added processing of forest products. In addition, the Authority has been actively working on sustainable forestry policies and practices, supported by international collaborations, including securing significant funding from the French and British governments for forest sustainability initiatives. These efforts aim to balance economic growth with environmental conservation in Papua New Guinea

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Su Young Woo

University of Seoul

Speaker

Professor Woo Su-young, who earned his bachelor's and master's degrees in Forestry from Seoul National University and a Ph.D. in Plant Ecology from the University of Washington, has been a professor at the University of Seoul since 2002. He researches tree responses to stress environments and plant physiology. During his tenure, he has served in various roles, including Director of Admissions, member of the Seoul Green Parking Committee, and Editor-in-Chief of the English journal *Forest Science and Technology*. He also led a restoration research team for cork oak in Tunisia and is currently a regular member of the Korean Academy of Science and Technology.

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Myknee Q Sirikolo

National Herbarium of Solomon Islands

Speaker

Myknee Qusa Sirikolo is the Director and Curator of the National Herbarium and Botanical Garden Division in the Ministry of Forestry and Research in the Solomon Islands. He has an extensive background in forestry and conservation, having studied forest management in the Solomon Islands, biodiversity conservation in Fiji, and plant conservation in the UK and Taiwan. Over the past 30 years, he has contributed significantly to mangrove research in the Solomon Islands and Melanesia, co-authoring the book "Mangroves of Solomon Islands" and working on biodiversity conservation across the Pacific. He is now focused on community-based forest carbon activities and blue carbon initiatives in the region.

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Jalesi Mateboto

SPC-Land Resource Devision

Speaker

Mr. Jalesi Mateboto is the Natural Resources Management Advisor, leading the Sustainable Forests and Landscapes Management programme at the SPC Land Resources Division (LRD). He had been serving in the Pacific region for the past 23 years. As a trained forester, he provides strategic advice and guidance to LRD and SPC member countries and territories on various forest-related issues. Prior to joining SPC, he spent three years in the private sector, six years with Fiji's Forestry Department and another three years with a regional NGO focusing on community forestry.

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Freddie Alei

University of Papua New Guinea

Speaker

Mr. Freddie Alei currently works as a lecturer at University of Papua New Guinea (PNG), specializing in Environmental Science and Geography with over a decade of experience in environmental science and forestry. He worked as PNG Blue Carbon Research Coordinator, REDD+ Consultant, and GIS Expert, focusing on projects related to climate change mitigation, forest governance, and biodiversity across the Pacific region. He is interested in Environmental Policy and Research, Environmental Assessments, Environmental Protection, and small to medium Forestry and Agriculture projects to help develop the PNG Economy using GIS and Remote Sensing Techniques, while contributing to rural development through projects such as environmental evaluation and management.

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Samuela Lagataki

FAO

Moderator

Samuela Vakaloloma Lagataki is a retired civil servant with over 30 years of experience in forestry, specializing in areas such as forest policy, planning, law enforcement, sustainable management, and climate change adaptation. He worked for the Fiji Ministry of Forestry from 1993 to 2018, then transitioned to roles in the private sector and NGOs. Currently, he consults for the Fiji Forest Landscape Restoration project under the GCF with FAO, collaborating with international experts and the Fiji Ministry of Forestry to support local data collection and project coordination.

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Milika Sobey

GIZ

Speaker

Dr. Milika Naqasima Sobey is currently a Senior Technical Adviser for Coastal Ecosystems at GIZ Pacific. With 20 years of academic experience at the University of the South Pacific, her research focused on freshwater systems and marine environments, particularly nutrient cycling, fisheries, coral reef ecology, and water quality. She managed climate change adaptation projects for IUCN Oceania, concentrating on mangrove ecosystems across several Pacific countries. Additionally, she worked on the GEF-funded Ridge to Reef Program, first as a Project Implementation Adviser and later as Science Leader. Dr. Sobey has also addressed water quality, freshwater fisheries, and catchment management issues in various Pacific Island countries. She earned her BSc and MSc from the University of the South Pacific and her PhD from the University of Essex in the UK.

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Ruth Konia

The Nature Conservancy

Speaker

Ruth Konia is the Country Director for the Papua New Guinea Program, where she leads strategy, fundraising, and teams. With a long career in conservation and development in both the private and NGO sectors, Ruth has expertise in community outreach, collaborative leadership, and policy design, working with local communities, governments, and international partners. Since joining The Nature Conservancy in 2011, she has led communications and helped launch the Mangoro Market Meri Program in 2017, supporting women in mangrove communities. She also serves on the Global Greengrants Fund Pacific Islands Advisory Board, focusing on grant-making in PNG.

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Mazzella Maniwavie

The Nature Conservancy

Speaker

Mazzella Maniwavie, Papua New Guinea's first female mangrove scientist, is a climate activist focused on mangrove conservation and restoration. With a Master's in Marine Biology and Ecology from James Cook University, she works with The Nature Conservancy to promote sustainable mangrove management and tackle climate change. Her efforts include developing educational programs and conservation legislation while advocating for gender equality in science.

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Bridget Kennedy

Conservation International

Speaker

Bridget has over 13 years of experience in climate change, ocean conservation, and community development, with nearly 9 years in the Pacific. After university, she volunteered with the Peace Corps in Benin, focusing on community projects related to water, health, and sanitation. She later worked at Conservation International in Washington, D.C., and since 2015, has been based in Fiji, leading conservation programs across the Pacific. Her work focuses on ocean biodiversity, fisheries management, and nature-based climate solutions. Bridget holds a degree in Political Science and French and a master's in Environmental Science from Johns Hopkins specializing in climate and conservation finance.

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Stephen Suti Agalo

Natural Resources Development Foundation

Speaker

Mr. Stephen Suti Agalo has extensive forestry experience across most of the Solomon Islands and possesses a deep understanding of the Solomon Island's vegetation and topography. He led the out-growers extension program at Kolombangara Forest Products Ltd for 16 years. Since 2008, he has been involved in conservation projects, including REDD+ and the Protected Areas Act at the Natural Resources Development Foundation (NRDF). In the Protected Areas Act and NAKAU program, he collaborated with tribal members and chiefs who have knowledge of land tenure. From 2020 to 2022, he headed a mangrove conservation project, and voluntarily worked with the Saefanoa tribe to conserve the Bina Harbour water catchment area under the Protected Areas Act 2010 and Regulation 2012.

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Lesley Vigulu

Landscape Sustainable Solution

Speaker

Mr. Lesley Sayok Vigulu has extensive experience in environmental management, agroforestry, and sustainable solutions. He has been serving as Operations Manager at Landscape Sustainable Solution (LSS) and concurrently coordinating projects for the Livelihoods in Forest Ecosystem Recovery (LIFER) program since 2023. With a solid background in both operational management and field experience, he continues to contribute to the protection of natural ecosystems and the promotion of sustainable practices in the Pacific region.

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Marika Tuiwawa

University of South Pacific

Keynote Speaker

Marika Tuiwawa is a prominent biologist and curator of the South Pacific Regional Herbarium at the University of the South Pacific (USP). He has been instrumental in biodiversity conservation, particularly in Fiji, and has collaborated on numerous research projects related to the region's ecosystem, plants, and environmental conservation. His expertise spans across multiple areas, including taxonomy, ecology, and the management of Fiji's biodiversity. Additionally, he is involved with both government and non-governmental organizations, contributing significantly to environmental and conservation efforts in the South Pacific.

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Kang-Oh Lee

Asia-Pacific

Forest Forum

Keynote Speaker

Mr. Kang-Oh LEE is the current Chair of the Executive Committee at the Asia-Pacific Forum. He earned a master's degree in the Forest Resource Department at Seoul National University, and he is an expert in forest cooperation with over 20 years of experience in the Forest sector. Mr. Lee is the former president of the Korea Forestry Promotion Institute (KOFPI) and worked as Managing Director at One Hundred Year Forest Social Coop and Chief Officer at Seoul Children's Grand Park. His focus has been on research and planning for urban park management and forest management.

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Sang In Kang

Korea Environmental Institute

Moderator

Dr. Sang In Kang is a chief research fellow of Korea Environment Institute (KEI). He started his professional career as a junior staff at the Bank of Korea in 1990. Before joing the KEI in 1998, he got a Ph.D. in International Economics from University of Pantheon-Sorbonne in Paris France. At KEI, he worked on the development of the System of Environment and Economic Account and Sustainable Development Indicaters for Korea. He led as a director the researches on the Korean Green Growth Strategy at the National Research Coulcils of Korea. He served for the OECD Environment Directorate and the UNOSD as a senior expert. Recently he is in charge of Loss and Damage negotiation as as a member of Korean delegation to the UNFCCC and Paris Agreement. He published multiple policy research papers and reports on Trade and Environment, Green Growth, and Climate Change.

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Jie Soo Lee

KOICA

Speaker

Jie Soo Lee has joined KOICA in Fiji this year after serving as the Deputy Country Director in Sri Lanka, where she played a key role in projects aimed at enhancing the Ocean University of Sri Lanka's capacity. Her work there focused on emphasizing the importance of higher education in the maritime industry, which is crucial for economic development. Additionally, she has been active in initiatives that aim to bring technical expertise to promote sustainable resource management in the region

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Duckha Jeon

UNCCD

Speaker

Jeon Duckha has been serving as a Programme Officer at the UNCCD Global Mechanism since December 2023. His responsibilities at the UNCCD include developing programmes related to Sand and Dust Storms (SDS) and driving Private Sector Engagement efforts. With over a decade of experience in forestry policy, Jeon brings in-depth expertise in both international and domestic contexts. Before joining the UNCCD, Jeon worked at the Korea Forest Service (KFS) from 2011, where he was involved in key forestry and environmental initiatives. His academic background includes a bachelor's degree in Forest Environmental Studies from Seoul National University and a master's degree from Oregon State University, further enhancing his credentials in sustainable forest management and environmental conservation.

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Bora Lee

National Institute of Forest Science

Speaker

Bara Lee is a Research Officer at the Warm-Temperate and Subtropical Forest Research Center, National Institute of Forest Science (NIFoS) in Jeju, South Korea. With a Ph.D. in Plant Ecology from the University of Bayreuth, Germany, she specializes in carbon dynamic modeling in various ecosystems, climate change, and remote sensing. Currently, she is leading a mangrove ecosystem research project, focusing on the impacts of climate change on these critical habitats and functions of carbon absorption. Dr. Lee has participated in various projects on forest ecosystems, remote sensing technologies, and ecological vulnerability, contributing to significant advancements in forest management and ecological research.

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Hansol Lee

Asia Pacific Forest Forum MC

Hansol Lee is currently a researcher at the Asia-Pacific Forest Forum (APFF) and a consultant for the Asian Forest Cooperation Organization (AFoCO). She holds an academic background from Graduate School of International Agricultural Technology of Seoul National University, where her research concentrated on international forest policy, particularly in areas such as carbon financing, non-timber forest products and transboundary natural resource management. She began her professional journey working on local food circular economy projects at the Korea Rural Economic Institute. Since joining AFoCO, she has been developing organizational strategies and climate action plans, supporting REDD+ feasibility studies, and creating country profiles for 14 nations. Currently, she is actively engaged in projects aimed at establishing a botanical garden in Timor-Leste, creating a Mangrove Technology Center in the Pacific Islands, and facilitating forestry project collaborations with the private sector in Mongolia and Kyrgyzstan

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2. Keynote Speeches

2. Keynote Speeches

I. Inspirational Speech

The Inspirational Speech delivered by the Korea Forest Service highlighted the significant achievements in reforestation and the development of national strategies for sustainable forest management. The Korea Forest Service emphasized its commitment to sharing these experiences and best practices with Pacific countries, aiming to strengthen forestry collaboration across the region. It also outlined national strategies focused on sustainable forestry practices, climate resilience, and the integration of innovative technologies to enhance forest conservation efforts. The address encouraged deeper partnerships and knowledge exchange to support the restoration and management of forest ecosystems, contributing to global environmental sustainability goals.

For the opening, Minyoung Chang, Director of Korea Forest Service (KFS) delivered the inspirational speech for cooperation with the Pacific Countries. The presentation outlined the KFS's global forest cooperation efforts, starting with South Korea's reforestation success, where 63% of the country's land is now forested, and a total growing stock of 1,062 m^3 achieved through public participation and government-led programs. The KFS's international focus spans 39 countries, including projects in Mongolia, Indonesia, and Cambodia, with goals such as combating desertification, restoring mangrove forests, and promoting sustainable agroforestry. She emphasized the role of forests in mitigating climate change, noting that forests absorb significant CO_2 emissions, though global forest areas continue to decline.

The KFS is heavily involved in REDD+ (Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation) initiatives in countries like Cambodia, Myanmar, and Laos, which not only mitigate greenhouse gases but also enhance biodiversity and local livelihoods. The KFS plans to establish a REDD+ center in Laos by 2024 and expand its partnerships to at least three countries by 2027, leveraging its established forest cooperation networks.

Table 1. Inspirational Speech from the Korea Forest Service

II. Keynote Speech 1: “The Pacific Islands' Forest Research Journey: Insights, Progress, and Emerging Trends”

The keynote speech highlighted the region's advancements in forest research, emphasizing the integration of traditional knowledge with modern scientific techniques. The speaker detailed progress in understanding Pacific Islands' ecosystems, focusing on forest restoration, carbon sequestration, and biodiversity conservation. Emerging trends and innovative methodologies were discussed alongside the importance of regional collaboration and enhanced research capacities. The address concluded with a call for continued commitment to protecting these critical ecosystems in the face of climate change and environmental challenges.

Marika Tuiwawa, Professor at the University of the South Pacific and Dean of Herbarium, delivered a keynote presentation that primarily focused on his experiences and study life in the Pacific Islands, particularly in Fiji. His presentation highlighted the diverse vegetation types found in the Rewa Delta, including Rhizophora and Bruguiera forest types, mixed mangrove zones, and anthropogenic forest types. The study recorded a significant variety of species, including 61 native species (with 48 indigenous and 13 endemic) and 114 exotic species.

The research also identified notable fauna, such as the endemic Fijian swallowtail butterfly and various rare beetles and moths, emphasizing the need for long-term monitoring and studies on seed viability and insect predation in mangroves. Key threats to the ecosystem, like invasive species (e.g., Mikania micrantha and Annona glabra), were discussed, with recommendations for further research on managing these threats. The presentation underscored the importance of integrating cultural knowledge with scientific research to develop effective conservation strategies for the region's unique mangrove habitats.

Table 2. Keynote Speech from University of South Pacific

III. Keynote Speech 2: “Pacific Mangrove Technology Center: Pioneering Blue Carbon Solutions for a Sustainable Future”

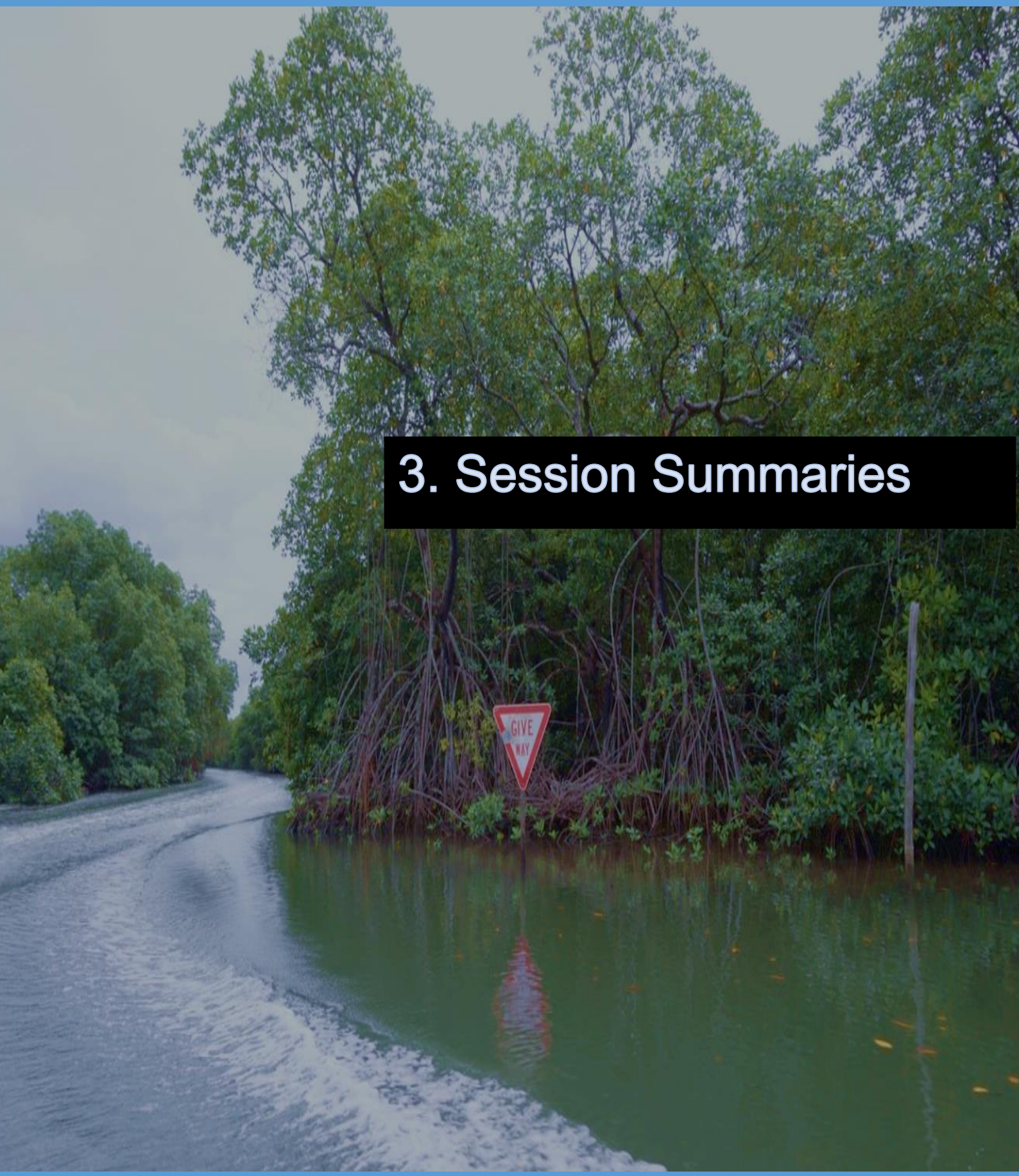
The keynote speech focused on future plans and collaborative efforts for establishing the Mangrove Technology Center in the Pacific regions. The speaker outlined the vision for the center to serve as a hub for research, innovation, and sustainable management of mangrove ecosystems. Emphasis was placed on bringing together governments, international organizations, NGOs, and local communities to develop cutting-edge technologies and strategies for mangrove restoration and conservation.

Kangoh Lee, Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Asia-Pacific Forest Forum, delivered a presentation titled "The Pacific Mangrove Technology Center: Pioneering Blue Carbon Solutions for a Sustainable Future." He emphasized the need for concrete actions over mere discussions, stating, "Too much talk, too little action," to highlight the urgency of addressing climate change and advancing mangrove restoration efforts in the Pacific Islands.

He shared lessons from Korea's successful reforestation strategies, which can be applied to the Pacific Islands' mangrove conservation. He discussed the vision for the Pacific Mangrove Technology Center to act as a hub for research, policy support, technological innovation, and community engagement. The center aims to enhance mangrove restoration, develop sustainable management practices, and use advanced technologies like satellite imaging and carbon markets.

He called for collaborative efforts among governments, international organizations, NGOs, and local communities to tackle challenges like climate change, governance issues, and the loss of traditional knowledge. Kangoh Lee announced the ‘Pacific Mangrove Network’ to role of the Korea Forest Service and AFoCO in supporting these initiatives and driving tangible actions to conserve mangrove ecosystems across the Pacific region.

Table 3. Keynote Speech from Asia-Pacific Forest Forum



3. Session Summaries

3. Session Summaries

I. Plenary Session 1: Presentations by representatives from Pacific Islands Countries

During Plenary 1, representatives from Pacific Island Countries presented an overview of the current state of their forests, highlighting both the natural resources and the challenges faced due to deforestation and land degradation.

They discussed various ongoing climate change initiatives aimed at promoting sustainable land management, reforestation, and conservation of their unique ecosystems. Emphasis was placed on the progress of REDD+ implementation, showcasing each nation's efforts to reduce emissions from deforestation and forest degradation while enhancing carbon stocks. The session concluded with proposals for collaboration with Korea, focusing on joint initiatives to strengthen forest conservation, climate resilience, and blue carbon development in the Pacific region.

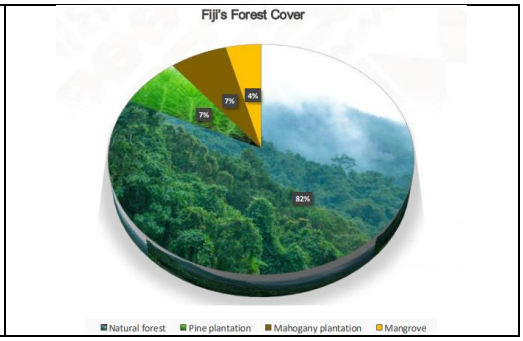
1) Fiji

Tevita Bulai, Executive Director of the Ministry of Forestry, outlined the current state of Fiji's forests and its climate initiatives. Fiji's forest cover spans 1.1 million hectares, comprising 82% natural forests, 7% pine plantations, 6% mahogany plantations, and 4% mangroves. The Ministry is leading efforts to plant 30 million trees over the next 15 years, enforce a diameter limit for harvesting native forests, and rehabilitate degraded areas.

Fiji's REDD+ program, which completed its readiness phase in 2020, aims to reduce or remove 2.5 million tons of CO^2 by 2024, generating $12.5 million in carbon results-based payments through the World Bank's Forest Carbon Partnership Facility. The program focuses on forest protection, sustainable natural forest management, reforestation, industrial plantations, and climate-smart agriculture. Notably, 85% of the carbon payments will be directed to local communities, ensuring equitable benefit-sharing.

In addition, Fiji has proposed a collaboration with Korea through a Memorandum of Understanding with the Korea Forest Service. Although this MOU was developed in 2023, it remains unsigned, highlighting an area of potential partnership that has yet to be fully realized.

Table 4. Photo of Fiji Representative



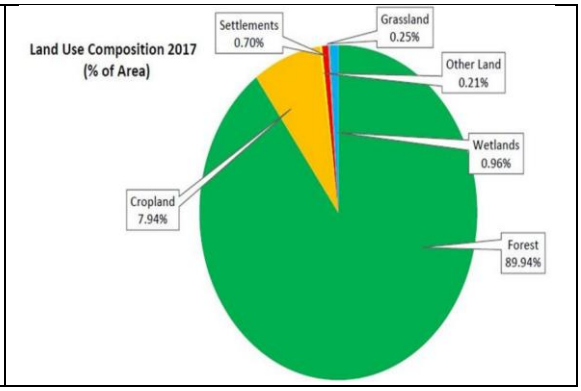
2) Solomon Islands

Julia Aimaea, Chief Forestry Officer, Ministry of Forestry Research (MOFR)'s presentation on Solomon Islands' forests and collaborations highlights the MOFR efforts in sustainable forest management and climate change initiatives. Solomon Islands has 80% forest cover, primarily tropical rainforests, but only 30% of this is considered commercial. The MOFR's key initiatives include reforestation, sustainable forest management, and community-based forestry, aimed at restoring degraded forests and empowering local communities.

The REDD+ program, initiated in 2014, has made progress with the establishment of forest reference levels and ongoing capacity building, but work remains on finalizing strategies, safeguards, and monitoring systems. Collaboration with international organizations like the United Nations and regional stakeholders plays a critical role in implementing climate change actions.

Additionally, Solomon Islands has strong ties with Korea, particularly through projects focused on plant research and the establishment of a Pacific Mangrove Technology Center. This partnership is expected to further strengthen forest conservation and blue carbon efforts.

Table 5. Photo of Solomon Islands Representative

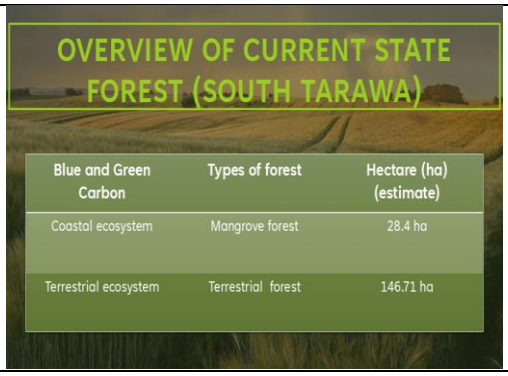


3) Kiribati

Kaaroti Henry's presentation, "From Green Carbon to Blue Carbon: Kiribati," focused on the unique environmental challenges faced by Kiribati, a nation of 33 low-lying atoll islands with elevations ranging from 3 to 5 meters. The presentation detailed the current forest status in South Tarawa, noting 28.4 hectares of mangrove forests as part of its coastal ecosystem (blue carbon) and 146.71 hectares of terrestrial forests (green carbon).

The discussion highlighted active climate change initiatives in Kiribati, including projects for mangrove planting, seagrass restoration, coral planting, and coastal vegetation efforts. It also emphasized the progress of REDD+ implementation through the enforcement of the Environment Act 2021, adherence to the Kiribati Integrated Environment Policy (KIEP) 2021-2036, and various community engagement programs. Lastly, the presentation proposed collaboration to strengthen existing programs and integrate new technologies to align with REDD+ objectives, aiming to bolster Kiribati's resilience to climate change while enhancing both green and blue carbon initiatives.

Table 6 Photos of Kiribati Representative



4) Vanuatu

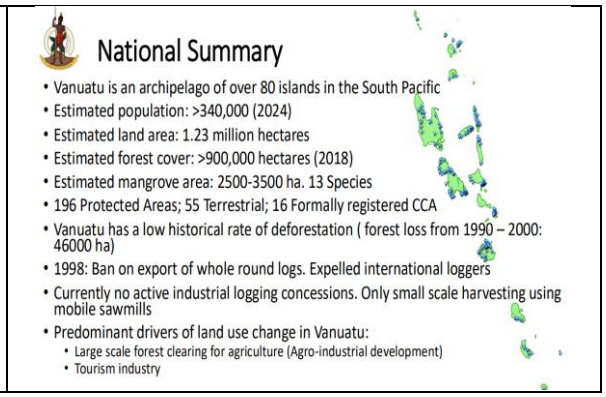
Dean Wotlolan, Senior Officer Conservation, Department of Environmental Protection and Conservation, highlights its climate change and conservation efforts, focusing on forest and mangrove ecosystems.

Key climate change initiatives include a Low Emission Development Strategy, the MACBLUE project for mangrove conservation, and the REDD+ program. Moreover, major actions include establishing a dedicated REDD+ unit and technical committees to guide project implementation and stakeholder coordination, involving local communities, civil society, and provincial governments.

The country has developed a comprehensive REDD+ strategy, addressing deforestation drivers, land tenure, and carbon rights, supported by analytical studies and environmental frameworks. Vanuatu's approach includes creating a National Forest Monitoring System to enhance measurement and reporting of forest resources and readiness for REDD+ implementation.

Collaboration proposals focus on scaling up REDD+ activities, ensuring equitable benefits for communities, engaging in international readiness processes, and expanding voluntary markets for ecosystem services under a jurisdictional approach to sustainable land use.

Table 7 Photos of Vanuatu Representative



5) Papua New Guinea

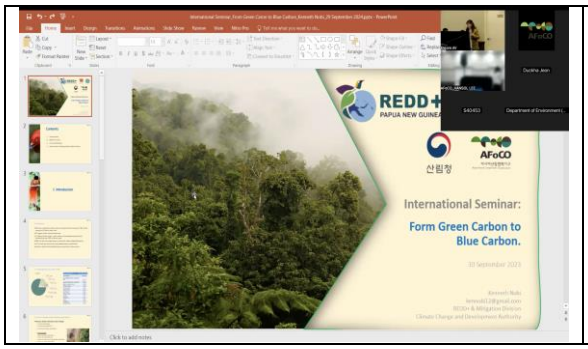
The presentation by Kenneth Nobi, REDD+ Officer of Climate Change and Development Authority, Papua New Guinea (PNG) highlights its comprehensive REDD+ efforts to mitigate deforestation and forest degradation.

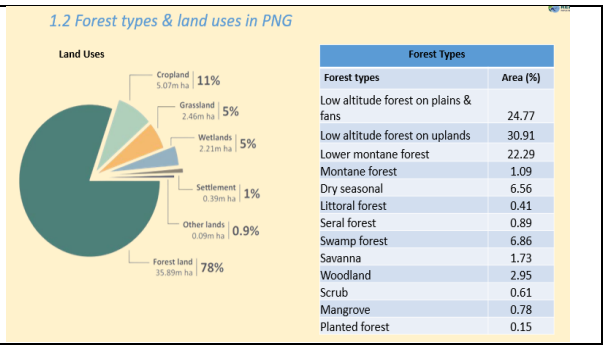
PNG has established a strong policy framework, including the National REDD+ Strategy, Forest Reference Levels, and Safeguards Information System, in line with the Warsaw Framework and the UNFCCC guidelines. Key actions include enhancing land-use planning, strengthening forest management practices, and developing legal frameworks like the Climate Change (Management) Act.

PNG's approach focuses on sustainable land use, reviewing logging concessions, and promoting both commercial and family agriculture to enhance livelihoods. Additionally, PNG is actively working on the Blue Carbon Pathway, aiming to develop a Blue Carbon Policy, baseline assessments, and technical capacity for seagrass and tidal marshes conservation.

The country remains committed to achieving net-zero emissions, with ongoing efforts to update its National GHG Inventory and align with its Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs).

Table 8. Photos of Papua New Guinea Representatives





II. Plenary Session 2: Current Research on Green & Blue Carbon by Leading Research Institutions

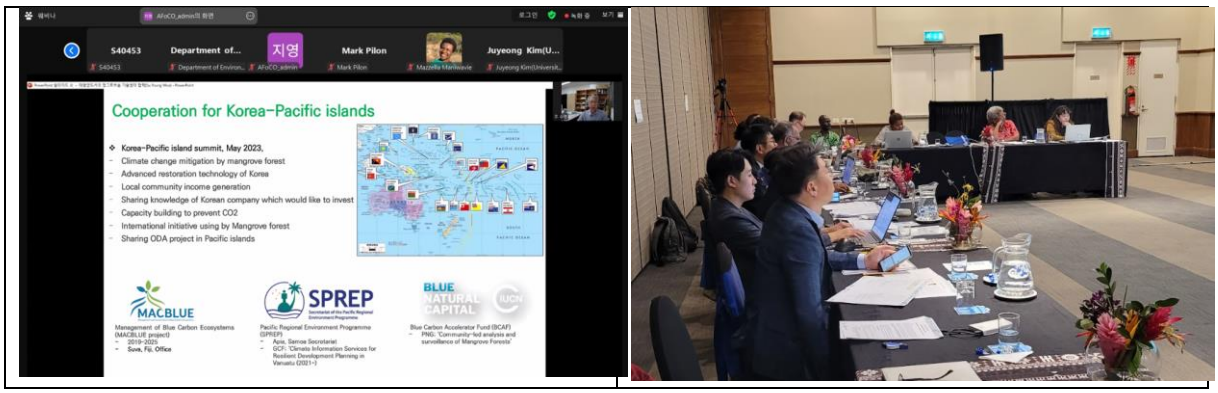
In Plenary Session 2, leading research institutions focused specifically on the role of mangroves in green and blue carbon dynamics, emphasizing their crucial function in climate change mitigation and coastal resilience. Presentations highlighted the immense carbon storage potential of mangrove ecosystems, which act as significant carbon sinks, sequestering atmospheric CO_2 more efficiently than many terrestrial forests. Researchers discussed the latest techniques for measuring carbon stocks within mangrove habitats, the impacts of sea-level rise and human activities on these ecosystems, and restoration strategies to enhance their resilience. The session underscored the need to prioritize mangrove conservation in climate policies, given their dual benefits in supporting biodiversity and providing natural defenses against coastal erosion and extreme weather events.

1) **"Korea's Efforts to Restore Mangrove Forest"**- *Su Young Woo (Professor, University of Seoul)*

Su Young Woo, Professor of Forest Ecology and Physiology at the University of Seoul, presented Korea's efforts in mangrove restoration, emphasizing global collaboration and innovative techniques. He highlighted the global decline in mangrove coverage and their role as natural defenses against coastal erosion.

Key initiatives included Korea's involvement in the Mangrove Alliance (MAC), restoration projects in Fiji, and the MACBLUE project for blue carbon management in the Pacific. He proposed establishing a Mangrove Center in the Pacific to coordinate restoration, share technology, and support capacity building. The center would aim to strengthen international networks, promote blue carbon restoration, and generate sustainable income for local communities through effective mangrove management.

Table 9. Presentation from University of Seoul



2) **“Mangrove Studies in Solomon Islands”-** *Myknee Q Sirikolo (Director, National Herbarium of Solomon Islands)*

The presentation by Myknee Q Sirikolo on the "Status of Mangroves in the Solomon Islands" provided a comprehensive overview of the significance of mangrove ecosystems in relation to green and blue carbon within the Solomon Islands. It covered the current state of mangroves, which occupy approximately 3% of the country's land area (about 50,000 hectares), and highlighted their critical role in supporting marine and fisheries resources. The presentation discussed the biodiversity of mangrove habitats, detailing over 40 plant species across 22 genera, and outlined their distribution and ecological functions.

Key threats to the mangrove ecosystems were identified, including habitat destruction, climate change impacts, coastal erosion, pollution, and unsustainable practices like logging and mining. In response to these challenges, the presentation emphasized opportunities for sustainable mangrove management, academic research, and economic development through partnerships with local and international stakeholders.

The session concluded with the announcement of two significant initiatives: the development of a new "National Mangrove Policy Framework" and the upcoming release of the "Mangrove Life in Solomon Islands Management & Conservation Manual," aimed at guiding conservation efforts and sustainable use of mangrove resources in alignment with integrated coastal zone management strategies.

Table 10. Presentation from National Herbarium of Solomon Islands

3) **“Sustaining Mangrove Ecosystems: Policy, Restoration, and Governance Insights ”** - Jalesi Mateboto (Natural Resources Management Advisor, SPC)

The presentation by Jalesi Mateboto, Natural Resources Management Advisor at SPC, titled "Sustaining Mangrove Ecosystems: Policy, Restoration, and Governance Insights," provided a regional perspective on mangrove conservation in the Pacific. It emphasized the crucial role of mangroves in protecting coastlines, supporting biodiversity, and providing livelihood opportunities for local communities. The presentation detailed the mangrove coverage across Pacific Island nations, highlighting both their ecological significance and the threats they face, such as habitat loss and climate change.

Jalesi Mateboto outlined SPC's efforts in mangrove restoration, including projects like the MacBlue Project, REDD+ initiatives, and collaborative restoration efforts in Fiji. The discussion also covered governance frameworks in countries like Palau, Samoa, Tonga, and Fiji, stressing the importance of integrating legal structures with traditional management practices.

The presentation concluded with guiding principles for effective mangrove restoration, emphasizing community participation, scientific knowledge, and collaboration with stakeholders. It also explored opportunities for enhancing mangrove management in the Pacific through potential collaborations with Korea, focusing on policy alignment, capacity building, and combining traditional knowledge with modern technologies.

Table 11. Presentation from SPC

4) **“Data-Driven Strategies for unlocking Blue Carbon Potential in Mangrove Ecosystem?-** Freddie Alei (Professor, University of Papua New Guinea)

The presentation by Freddie Alei, Professor at the University of Papua New Guinea, titled "Data-Driven Strategies for Unlocking Blue Carbon Potential in Mangrove Ecosystems," focused on enhancing the understanding and management of blue carbon ecosystems, particularly in the Pacific region. The presentation emphasized the Pacific Blue Carbon Program's goal of supporting governments in monitoring and restoring coastal blue carbon ecosystems to promote low carbon growth, climate resilience, and sustainable development.

Freddie Alei outlined the key steps in blue carbon science, including data management, carbon sampling, and habitat mapping, with specific applications to Papua New Guinea. The program also highlighted training and capacity-building initiatives in carbon sampling and policy development to enhance local expertise. A major component of the strategy involved integrating satellite data and Earth observation techniques for accurate mangrove mapping and change detection.

The presentation concluded with a discussion of preliminary results and challenges faced in implementing these strategies, including logistical issues, communication barriers, and funding constraints. The program's approach aims to integrate traditional knowledge with modern technologies to support sustainable management of blue carbon habitats in the region.

Table 12. Presentation from University of Papua New Guinea

III. Plenary Session 3: Harnessing Blue Carbon Potential Through Mangrove Ecosystem Management and Regional Collaboration

In Plenary Session 3, global and local NGOs highlighted their initiatives and strategies to maximize the blue carbon potential of mangrove ecosystems. They focused on best practices in conservation, restoration, and sustainable management. The session highlighted the importance of community involvement and combining traditional knowledge with science. NGOs also discussed challenges like funding, policy issues, and climate change, urging stronger partnerships among governments, businesses, and communities for effective solutions.

1) **"Collaborative Pathways to Blue Carbon: Mangrove Ecosystem Management and Regional Synergy"-** Milika Sobey (Senior Technical Advisor, GIZ)

Milika Sobey, Senior Technical Advisor at GIZ, focused her presentation on two key projects: MESCAL (Mangrove Ecosystems for Climate Change Adaptation and Livelihoods) and MACBLUE (Management and Conservation of Blue Carbon Ecosystems).

The MESCAL project has achieved significant milestones, including baseline biodiversity surveys, new mangrove species records, economic valuations, and the development of the Pacific Mangrove Monitoring Network (PacMan) database. It has also led to policy and legislative reviews, the revival of multi-stakeholder committees, and the creation of co-management plans for pilot sites, culminating in the development of the Pacific Mangroves Charter. The MACBLUE project focuses on mapping and monitoring mangrove ecosystems, documenting ecosystem services, and assessing policy options for conservation and rehabilitation. It aims to strengthen coastal biodiversity conservation through local management approaches and incentives for protecting coastal carbon sinks. Regional synergies have been fostered through carbon stock assessments, policy development, and mangrove and seagrass mapping across Pacific countries, enhancing collaborative efforts for blue carbon conservation.

Table 13. Presentation from GIZ

2) **“Best Practices: Mangoro Market Meri in Papua New Guinea”-** Mazzella Maniwavie (Program Manager, The Nature Conservancy)

Mazzella Maniwavie, Program Manager at The Nature Conservancy (TNC) of Papua New Guinea, focused on empowering women to manage mangrove ecosystems for climate resilience and community well-being. The Mangoro Market Meri Program links women to markets, promotes nature-based learning, and supports blue carbon initiatives to enhance local livelihoods.

Key projects under this program include the Dogura Mangrove Rehabilitation Project, which involves community-based planting techniques and has successfully engaged over 50% women in nursery operations. The program also highlights the economic impact, with communities earning over K60,000 in the last two years from mangrove seedling sales. Additionally, the Bautama Mangrove Boardwalk Project aims to enhance educational resources and community engagement through partnerships and environmental awareness initiatives.

Mazzella emphasized the importance of gender-inclusive approaches, recognizing the unique roles women play in mangrove conservation. The presentation also highlighted gaps in mangrove data, policy challenges, and the need for sustainable financing mechanisms to support blue carbon initiatives in Papua New Guinea. The TNC is actively collaborating with government and international partners to build a comprehensive Blue Carbon Policy and integrate these efforts into national climate strategies.

Table 14. Presentation from The Nature Conservancy

3) **“Scaling Nature-based Solutions to Climate Change: Restoring Mangroves and Building Resilience through Community Action”-** Bridget Kennedy (Director, Conservational International)

Bridget Kennedy, Director at Conservation International, highlighted the importance of mangrove restoration as a nature-based solution (NbS) for climate adaptation. The presentation outlined the Fiji Blue Carbon Project's goals to enhance awareness, scientific understanding, and protection of Fiji's coastal ecosystems while developing carbon trading pathways and benefit-sharing mechanisms.

Bridget emphasized the role of community engagement in restoration efforts, with local communities involved in activities like in-situ nursery setup, planting, and debris removal. The project integrates traditional ecological knowledge with modern scientific techniques, such as GIS and remote sensing, to guide restoration strategies. Initial successes in restoring degraded mangrove sites have shown positive impacts on biodiversity, community resilience, and livelihoods.

The presentation concluded with a call to strengthen policies that integrate NbS, build capacity, and leverage financing to scale these solutions across the region. Emphasizing the importance of youth and community voices, Bridget Kennedy underscored the need for stronger partnerships to ensure the successful implementation of nature-based solutions in addressing climate change.

Table 15. Presentation from Conservation International

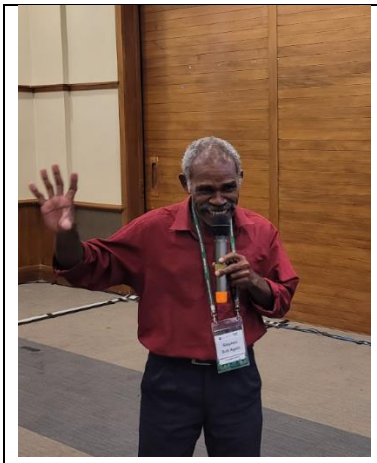
4) **“Local Leadership in Forest Conservation: Strategies for Effective Community Involvement ”**-Stephen Suti Agalo (Local Activist, Solomon Islands)

Stephen Suti Agalo, a local activist from the Solomon Islands, presented "Local Leadership in Forest Conservation: Strategies for Effective Community Involvement," highlighting the critical role of communities in preserving forest ecosystems. He emphasized the importance of traditional knowledge and leadership, drawing on the cultural values of land stewardship passed down through generations in Malaita, where land is viewed as sacred and integral to community identity.

Stephen discussed the conservation efforts in areas like SAEFANOA and RAFEA LAND, where local leaders successfully mobilized their communities to stop logging operations and establish protected areas. He also highlighted the expansion of conservation initiatives to East Kwaio, where over 160 landholders are now involved in preserving their land for ecological and cultural reasons.

The presentation underscored the challenges local leaders face, such as pressure from logging companies and economic incentives to sell land, as well as the need for stronger partnerships with government and NGOs. Stephen emphasized the importance of community ownership, sustainable livelihoods, and the integration of traditional knowledge with modern conservation strategies to ensure long-term forest conservation and resilience in the Solomon Islands.

Table 16. Presentation from Winrock International



5) **“Beyond Green Carbon Projects in Solomon Islands”**- Lesley Vigulu (NGO, Solomon Islands)

Lesley Sayok Vigulu from Landscape Sustainable Solutions (LSS) presented "Beyond Green Carbon Projects in Solomon Islands". The presentation provided an overview of the forestry sector in the Solomon Islands, highlighting its substantial forest cover and the challenges faced in managing customary and protected lands.

Lesley detailed the ‘Livelihood in Forest Ecosystem Recovery (LIFER) Project’, funded by the Australian Government, which focuses on sustainable forest management, agroforestry, and enhancing community livelihoods through research and restoration practices. The project involves various strategies, including assisted natural regeneration, enrichment planting, and agroforestry, to support post-logging and post-mining restoration.

The presentation emphasized the role of LSS in promoting green and blue carbon initiatives, with a focus on mangrove restoration at degraded sites. Lesley outlined the way forward, calling for stronger policies and legislation, livelihood-supporting pathways, and international collaborations to enhance landscape restoration efforts in the Solomon Islands. The potential for partnerships between organizations like KFS, AFoCO, and the Solomon Islands Government was highlighted as a critical step for advancing community forestry and sustainable management practices.

Table 17. Presentation from Landscape Sustainable Solutions

IV. Plenary Session 4: Stakeholder Dialogues on Strengthening Korea-Pacific Islands Partnership for Sustainable Development

In Plenary Session 4, titled "Stakeholder Dialogues on Strengthening Korea-Pacific Islands Partnership for Sustainable Development," representatives from KOICA (Korea International Cooperation Agency), UNCCD (United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification), and the National Institute of Forest Science (NIFoS) engaged in discussions to enhance collaboration between Korea and the Pacific Islands. The focus was on building robust partnerships to support sustainable development initiatives across the region.

1) **"KOICA Overview and Opportunities for Future Partnerships"-** Jie Soo Lee (Deputy Director, KOICA)

The presentation by KOICA (Korea International Cooperation Agency) at the seminar highlighted its role as Korea's leading development cooperation organization. KOICA emphasized its commitment to poverty reduction, improving quality of life, gender equality, sustainable development, and strengthening international partnerships. The agency operates through a wide range of bilateral and multilateral projects, focusing on areas like humanitarian assistance, economic development, and capacity building in partner countries.

KOICA's midterm strategy includes a strong emphasis on climate action and agricultural and rural development to promote sustainable growth. The presentation detailed their approach to international cooperation, which involves training programs, dispatching experts, and supporting infrastructure development in partner nations. KOICA also outlined pathways for collaboration, inviting stakeholders to engage in projects aimed at enhancing the well-being of communities in developing countries while contributing to the global Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Table 18. Presentation from KOICA

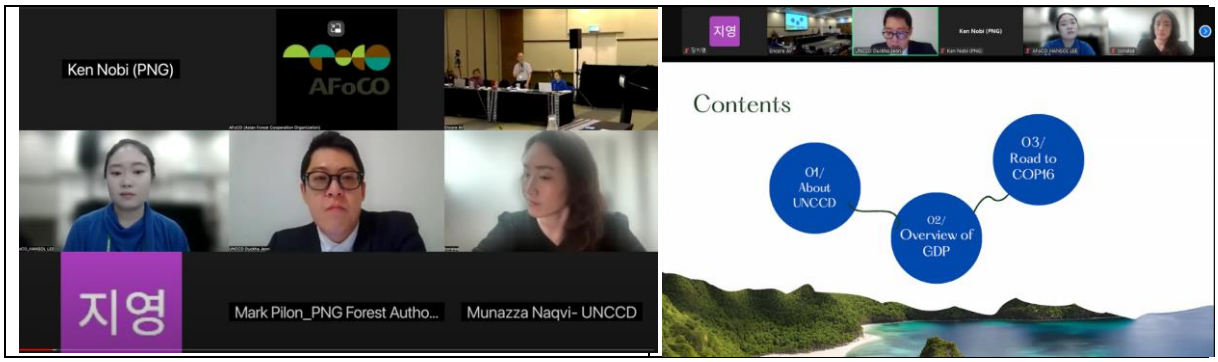
2) **“UNCCD’s approach to Green GDP Projects”-** Duckha Jeon (Program Officer, UNCCD) - Virtual

The UNCCD (United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification) presentation at the seminar, delivered by Duckha Jeon, focused on its Greening Drylands Partnership (GDP) initiative. The UNCCD highlighted its role as a key international treaty dedicated to protecting and restoring land, linking environmental conservation with sustainable land management.

The GDP initiative, launched in collaboration with UNEP and KFS, focuses on addressing land degradation, desertification, and drought in various regions, with projects in 18 countries across Africa, Asia, Eastern Europe, and the Americas. The presentation detailed case studies from countries like Ethiopia, Mongolia, and Armenia, showcasing achievements in land restoration, sustainable management, and community development.

Looking ahead to COP16, the UNCCD emphasized the importance of land conservation for global challenges like food security, water availability, and climate resilience. The organization called for continued international collaboration and resource mobilization to address these critical issues.

Table 19. Presentation from UNCCD



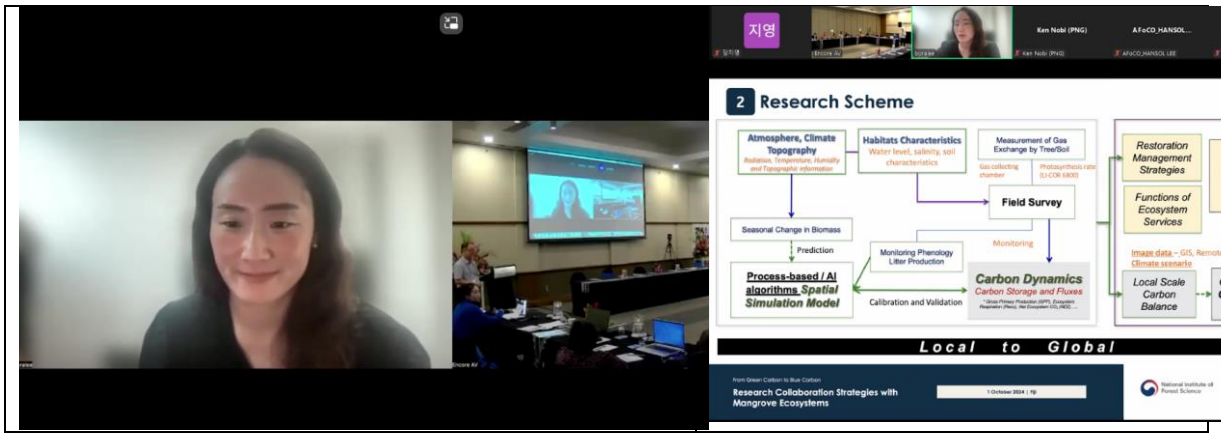
3) **"Research Collaboration Strategies Using the National Institute of Forest Science's Mangrove Technology Center"** - Bora Lee (Researcher, Warm Temperate and Subtropical Forest Research Center, National Institute of Forest Science)

The National Institute of Forest Science (NIFoS) presented its research collaboration strategies centered on the development of the Mangrove Technology Center, emphasizing its role in addressing the climate crisis through blue carbon solutions. The presentation highlighted the ecological importance of mangroves in carbon sequestration and climate change mitigation, with a focus on species adapted to saline environments in the Indo-West Pacific region, including Korea.

NIFoS outlined cooperative research efforts aimed at evaluating the carbon capture potential of mangroves and developing propagation techniques suited to local conditions. The strategy includes using AI-driven models and remote sensing technology to estimate carbon storage and spatial variability. The collaboration also involves research agreements with international partners like CIFOR-ICRAF to advance knowledge and capacity in mangrove conservation.

The goal is to integrate scientific research into effective management practices, enhancing carbon absorption in coastal areas and ensuring sustainable restoration of mangrove ecosystems. NIFoS emphasized the need for global partnerships and the adoption of innovative technologies to maximize the ecological and economic benefits of mangroves as part of a broader strategy for climate resilience and sustainable development.

Table 20. Presentation from NIFoS



4. Discussion Highlights

4. Discussion Highlights

The Discussion Highlights centered on six key takeaway points, along with the questions and answers raised during the seminar.

1) Enhanced Data Sharing and Monitoring:

- Establish a centralized data hub to collect, analyze, and share information on mangrove health and carbon stock changes using remote sensing and GIS technologies.

2) Community-Led Conservation Initiatives:

- Support community-led mangrove restoration projects that create sustainable livelihood opportunities and increase local ownership of conservation efforts.
- Increase public awareness about the value of mangrove ecosystems and their role in climate change mitigation through educational campaigns, media outreach, and community events.
- Promote sustainable ecotourism activities centered around mangrove ecosystems to generate economic benefits for local communities.

3) Capacity Building and Training Programs:

- Develop targeted training workshops on the latest restoration techniques, carbon assessment methods, and mangrove ecosystem management for local practitioners.
- Facilitate knowledge exchange programs and internships with experts from Korea and other regions to enhance skills and technical expertise in Pacific Island communities.

4) Public-Private Partnerships (PPP):

- Engage the private sector, including multinational companies and local businesses, in funding and participating in mangrove conservation initiatives.

5) Integration of Blue Carbon into National Climate Policies:

- Encourage Pacific Island countries to include blue carbon strategies as part of their Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) under the Paris Agreement.
- Align mangrove conservation goals with national and regional climate adaptation and mitigation policies to maximize their impact on global carbon reduction targets.

6) Development of Mangrove Technology Centers:

- Establish regional Mangrove Technology Centers in the Pacific Islands to serve as hubs for innovation, research, and training in mangrove restoration and blue carbon solutions.
- Focus on technology transfer, research and development, capacity building, and coordinating regional conservation efforts through these centers.

- *List of Q&A*

Day 1

All Sessions:

1. **Q:** ***How often does your ministry conduct forest inventories, and when is the next one planned?***

- A: The data presented was from our Ministry of Forestry's website. Unfortunately, the individual who was supposed to attend the seminar could not make it, so I used this information. An updated version might be available soon.

2. **Q:** ***Why did Vanuatu decide to impose a total ban on foreign loggers?***

- A: After independence, Vanuatu experienced a high rate of deforestation due to logging companies from Malaysia. The government saw this as a threat, so we decided to ban the export of raw logs to control deforestation and protect our forests.

3. **Q:** ***What is the connection between Fiji's carbon-crediting scheme under the Nakau regime and REDD+ in forestry?***

- A: The Nakau scheme has been ongoing since we initiated REDD+ projects. We are collaborating closely with the Nakau team.

4. **Q:** ***How does Fiji collaborate with Nakau projects?***

- A: We ran a pilot project in one of our Carbon Credit Agreement (CCA) registered sites. Having these carbon credits tied to protected areas has been crucial, as we have learned a lot from the NGO facilitating the process.

5. **Q:** ***What challenges do Vanuatu and Fiji face with operationalizing carbon trading under the FCPF program? Are there market opportunities you are exploring?***

- A (Vanuatu): We only have one site and it's voluntary. The main challenge is the lack of data. Once we gather more data, we can expand the project.
- A (Fiji): We are still in the process of completing our emission reduction program by 2025 with World Bank funding. For now, we are focusing on building capacity and completing all necessary steps.

6. **Q:** ***Are there any ongoing carbon-credit activities in Papua New Guinea?***

- A: We are still in discussions, but the actual implementation is yet to be established.

7. **Q:** ***What are the main causes of deforestation in Kiribati?***

- A: The exact deforestation rate is unclear, but the main reasons include lack of awareness among communities about the importance of mangrove ecosystems. Additionally, development activities along the coast contribute significantly to deforestation.

8. **Q:** ***What is the survival rate of mangroves in your rehabilitation program, and what technical methods are applied?***

- A: The survival rate is around 40-50%, and one of the challenges we face is algae growth. We are currently using four mangrove species for rehabilitation, with the black mangrove being the most common.

9. **Q (to all panelists):** ***As REDD+ has been implemented in Fiji since 2009, are there enough stakeholders participating?***

- We are encouraging more stakeholders to join. We learned from our past mistakes in 2004. Now, we have stricter policies and regulations in place, with improved forest governance and carbon regulation.

10. **Q: What is the forest harvesting rotation cycle in the Solomon Islands?**

- A: Some areas are harvested every three years, and we have seen an improvement in prices over time.

11. **Q: With 80-90% of Pacific Island land being customary, how does this affect forest management, especially in terms of natural disasters and development?**

- A: In the Solomon Islands, customary land ownership provides security. However, it's crucial that communities have discussions to determine how long they want to protect their land. The key is to sit down with resource owners and ensure participation in decision-making.

12. **Q: In the context of mangrove projects, the definition of 'threat' is essential for project qualification under REDD+. What are your thoughts on the current definition, and should mangroves be re-evaluated?**

- A: For mangrove projects, we are conducting ecosystem evaluations. Whether or not a threat exists, mangroves should be recognized as critical ecosystems that provide immense value for human life and biodiversity. We need a more targeted approach, such as cost-benefit analyses for specific areas like the Solomon Islands.

Day 2

All Sessions:

1. **Q:** ***Can regional organizations propose projects to KOICA?***

- A: Yes, although the budget is limited, regional organizations can propose multinational cooperation projects or intellectual cooperation through training courses.

2. **Q:** ***Are there plans for KOICA to open an office in Papua New Guinea?***

- A: Currently, there are no plans to reopen an office, but project concept papers can be submitted through the Korean Embassy in Papua New Guinea.

3. **Q:** ***How does UNCCD measure the success of its projects?***
   - A: Success is measured through outcomes, outputs, and stakeholder interviews, following specific evaluation guidelines.

4. **Q:** ***What are the main activities and outcomes of the Fiji and Tonga GDP Project?***
   - A: The project focuses on mapping invasive species in select islands. The project has been approved, and agreements with SPC are being finalized.

5. **Q:** ***How is carbon storage in mangroves measured?***
   - A: It is measured using remote sensing and AI models to track tree growth, biomass, and environmental factors. However, more data is needed to improve accuracy.

6. **Q:** ***Why don't some mangrove species grow together in large patches?***
   - A: Factors like soil minerals, salinity, and environmental disturbances influence species growth patterns. Research is ongoing to better understand these factors.

7. **Q:** ***Are there efforts to breed mangrove species that can grow in various environments?***
   - A: Research is primarily focused on propagation and nursery techniques. Breeding for broader adaptability is an area of interest, with ongoing efforts in related institutions.

8. **Q:** ***How can research and policies related to mangroves be integrated into Pacific countries' initiatives?***
   - A: Integration requires linking local data with global trends, sharing best practices, and developing community-based models involving local governments and international partners.

9. **Q:** ***What are the key challenges faced by mangroves in the Pacific Islands?***
   - A: Coastal development, urbanization, mining, and deforestation pose significant threats to coastal protection and biodiversity.

10. **Q:** ***How can mangrove ecosystems be protected and restored in the Pacific Islands?***
    - A: The strategy must be community-based, given the customary land use systems. Protection against urban development, mining, and deforestation is crucial for biodiversity and local livelihoods.

11. **Q:** ***What role does Korea play in mangrove conservation in the Pacific?***
    - A: Korea provides technical support, knowledge sharing, and project assistance. However, Pacific nations must take ownership of the mangrove technology centers, with Korea assisting in research and capacity building.

12. Q: ***How can Korea and the Pacific Islands collaborate on mangrove restoration?***

- A: Collaboration involves establishing data hubs, sharing knowledge, creating mangrove technology centers, and strengthening policies for mangrove restoration, particularly for blue carbon projects.

13. Q: ***How can Pacific Island countries address the lack of research and awareness about mangroves?***

- A: Strengthening research infrastructure, raising awareness, and developing policies aimed directly at mangrove protection are key to overcoming these challenges.

14. Q: ***What is the process for Pacific Island governments to collaborate with KOICA?***

- A: Governments submit project concept papers, which KOICA reviews. If selected, the project undergoes further study and planning to align with development priorities and KOICA's climate action goals.

5. Conclusion

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In conclusion, we would like to emphasize that the Korea Forest Service is set to establish the Mangrove Technology Center, fulfilling a commitment made in the action plan of the Korea-Pacific Islands Summit held in May 2023. This center will serve as a pivotal hub for research, technology transfer, capacity building, and regional coordination in mangrove restoration and conservation. It will also strengthen cooperative networks between Korea and Pacific Island nations, enhancing collaborative efforts in sustainable forest management and addressing climate change challenges.

Furthermore, we recently held a successful international seminar that brought together governments, global and local NGOs, IGOs, and academia under the theme 'From Green Carbon to Blue Carbon.' This event highlighted the importance of collaborative efforts and knowledge exchange in advancing our shared goals of ecosystem restoration, blue carbon enhancement, and sustainable development.

This will be the first step toward moving forward, laying the foundation for continued cooperation and innovation in addressing the pressing environmental issues we face today. Together, we aim to create a future where the restoration and conservation of mangrove ecosystems play a central role in global efforts to combat climate change and protect vulnerable communities.