

## **Opening Remarks**

**10<sup>th</sup> International Conference on  
Traditional Forest Knowledge and Culture in Asia  
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Good Morning Ladies and Gentlemen,

First and foremost, allow me to express my upmost gratitude on behalf of APAFRI to Korea Society of Forest Science and National Institute of Forest Science (NIFoS) for organizing this conference in the campus of Seoul National University. We are also delighted and would like to recognize the involvement of AFoCo in this conference.

This conference is made possible largely by the generous financial contributions of NIFoS (previously known as Korea Forest Research Institute (KFRI)) to. APAFRI is honored to be entrusted with the task of managing the fund APAFRI for organizing activities in the Asia Pacific region, which had increased steadily over the years.

This conference is the 10<sup>th</sup> in the series, and APAFRI is honoured to be involved in at least three of the past conferences: the 7<sup>th</sup> in Seoul, Korea, 8<sup>th</sup> in Nanjing, China, and 9<sup>th</sup> in Bogor, Indonesia. In addition, APAFRI with partners such as Forest Research Institute Malaysia (FRIM) has organized a series of workshops specifically of the Southeast Asian nations. We have active participation of colleagues from Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines and Vietnam. Participating in these workshops and conferences had also prompted the involvement of colleagues in these countries to conduct surveys and studies, to collect and document the traditional forest related knowledge in their countries.

All these efforts, however, have at best only managed to scratch the surface of the tremendously vast and complicated subject matters of traditional knowledge. The challenges are often more than just technical in nature. There is an urgency in stepping up research in this area, as these knowledges are often encrypted in folk lore and old sayings that could only be deciphered by a fast diminishing group of elders in the tribal communities.

Ladies and Gentlemen, APAFRI as a regional network for the forestry research fraternity would continue to pursue its objectives of promoting and assisting in the development of the region's scientific research and development culture and

capacity, as well as to foster the establishment of institutional and professional collaboration among the region's forestry researchers and academicians.

APAFRI is therefore honoured to be invited to join the Asia Centre for TFRK which is currently hosted by NIFoS in Seoul, Korea. As of this year, we understand that AFoCo has also accepted the invitation to be a member of the Centre. We hope to see more and more countries from the region to participate and share their experiences.

APAFRI hope to be more proactive in the years to come, and shall endeavour to extending participation of these activities to all members of APAFRI from the other sub-regions in Asia and the Pacific.

Thank you very much, and I wish you all a very successful and fruitful deliberation during these autumn days in Seoul.