

Korea's Remarkable Success in Forest Rehabilitation



Background

Until the late 19th century, under the forest conservation policy of the Chosun Dynasty, most forests were well-managed. The growing stock reached up to 700 million m³(cubic meter).

During the Japanese colonization and the Korean War Korean forests suffered excessive and massive cutting for fuel and financial use. Even after this turbulent period, degradation kept escalating due to the reckless cutting and slash-burn cultivation during the turbulent period. Consequently, the growing stock was only 6m³ per hectare after the war.

National Forest Rehabilitation Project (implemented nationwide)

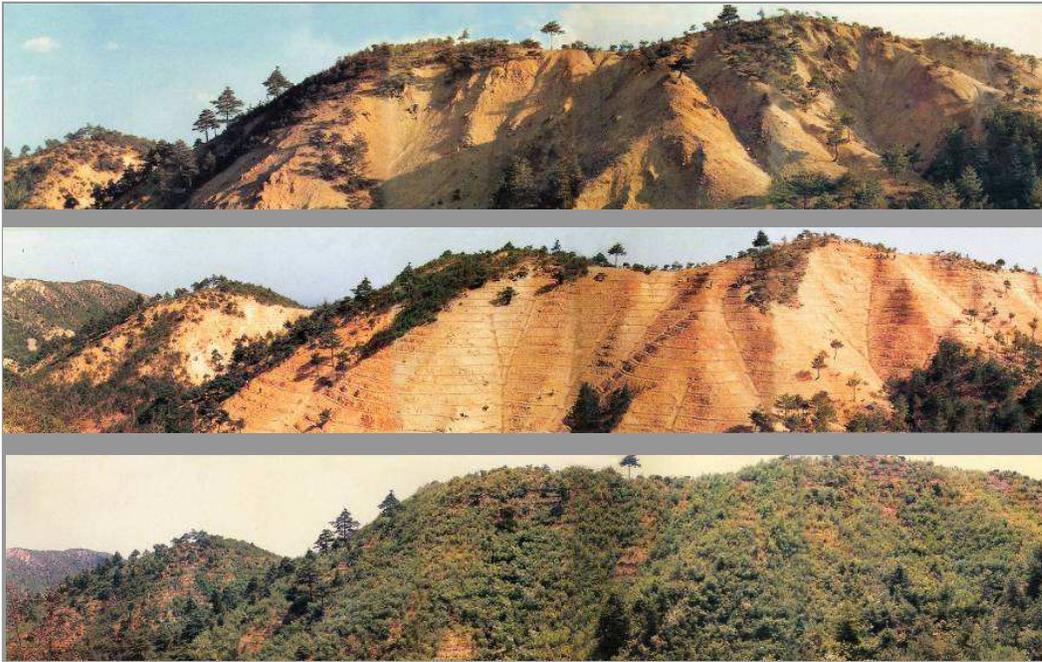
Korean government set up 10-year National Forest Plans so-called 'Forest Rehabilitation Project' to restore the denuded forests after the legal and institutional preparations in the 1960s.

Under the first plan from 1973 to 1978 and the second plan from 1979 to 1987, the groundwork was established to undertake forest rehabilitation activities, and the institutional and legal framework was reinforced. To raise public awareness of forestation, March and April were appointed as the national planting period and April fifth as Arbor Day. Moreover, supportive projects for local people were carried out to promote sustainable use of forest resources and to encourage their participation in forest rehabilitation. The Korea Forest Service undertaken erosion control projects to prevent natural disasters, and applied advanced biotechnology to control forest diseases and pests as well.

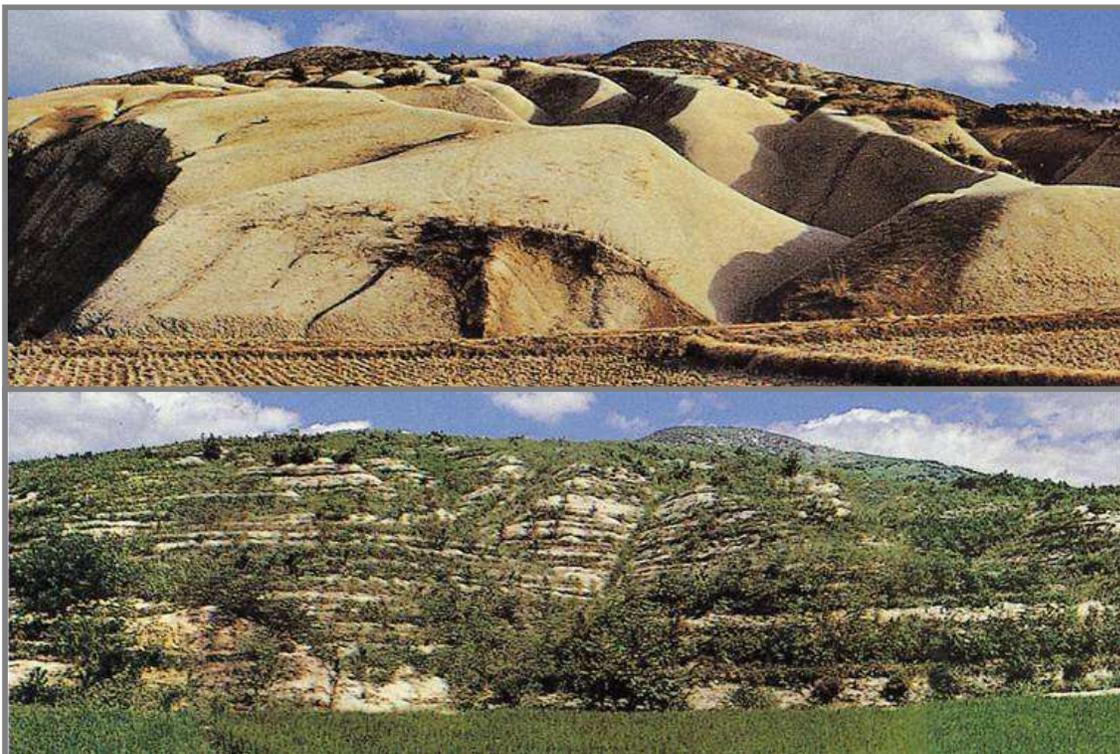
The first and second plans from 1973 to 1987 benefited from the strong-willed government and active participation of the people. As a result, degraded forests successfully rebounded for such a short period of time. 80 large-scale commercial forests were built, and about 2.1 million hectares of degraded forests was successfully rehabilitated.

Today, forests cover 6,370,304ha accounting for 64% of the total landmass, and growing stock per ha reaches 109.4 m³ (Sources of 2009). Based on this remarkable success and experiences, the Korea Forest Service can further increase diverse benefits of Korean forests with high biodiversity, and pursue sustainable forest management.

Pictures of forest rehabilitation sites in Young-il district



It shows a clear transition from a denude forest on the top down to a richly planted forest. The middle picture shows an erosion control work done on the same spot.



One of erosion control project sites in Yeong-il, North Gyeongsang province. The project was undertaken in 1973 and implemented for five years. This notable success is attributed to public participation and a well-implemented process.

This picture shows one of great views of Korea's current forests thanks to the successful forest rehabilitation project.



◎ For more information on Korea's National Forest Plan

http://english.forest.go.kr/foahome/user.tdf?a=common.HtmlApp&c=1006&page=/html/eng/police/nfp/nfp_010_010.html&mc=ENG_POLICE_NFP_010

◎ For the video clip of Young-il Bay erosion control project :

http://english.forest.go.kr/foahome/user.tdf?a=user.board.BoardApp&c=2002&board_id=GPB_ENG_VOD&mc=ENG_NEWS_050&seq=87

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