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CHAPTER 24

SUMMARY OF THE VIII SEOUL INTECOL CONGRESS AND SUBSEQUENT PROGRESSES IN ECOLOGY IN KOREA AS WELL AS IN EAST ASIA

1. INTRODUCTION

Since the first INTECOL Congress was held in The Hague, The Netherlands, in 1974 with the theme, “*Structure, Functions and Management of Ecosystems*,” subsequent Congresses have followed: 2nd INTECOL- Jerusalem (Israel) 1978, “*The Future of Ecology*”; 3rd INTECOL in Warsaw (Poland) was cancelled for political reasons; 4th INTECOL- Syracuse (U.S.A.) 1986, “*Global Connections in Ecological Theory and Practice*”; 5th INTECOL- Yokohama (Japan) 1990, “*Development of Ecological Perspectives for the 21st Century*”; 6th INTECOL- Manchester (U.K.) 1994, “*Progress to Meet the Challenge of Environmental Change*”; 7th INTECOL- Florence (Italy) 1998, “*New Tasks for Ecologists after Rio 1992*.” At the beginning of the 21st Century, ecological issues have never been more important both at a global scale and at a national level. The International Congresses of Ecology provided important fora to learn more about these issues, to discuss recent advances in ecological science, and to highlight deficiencies in the knowledge, which we urgently need to address. After the VII Congress in Florence, Italy, 1998, the VIII Congress in Seoul, Korea, provided an important opportunity for ecologists to continue the advancement of the science of ecology, and to learn at first hand of the many pressing problems that need to be addressed. The motto of the congress was “*Ecology in a Changing World*.” This paper was prepared to summarize the activities and to report the progress and achievements of the Congress.

2. THE BACKGROUND OF THE CONGRESS

The VIII INTECOL Congress was co-hosted by the International Association for Ecology (INTECOL) and the Ecological Society of Korea (ESK) and organized by the Local Organizing Committee (LOC). The Ministry of Environment of the Republic of Korea, Kookmin Bank, KT Ltd., Asiana Airlines, Yuhan-Kimberly Ltd.

and Pulmuwon Ltd., were the Gold-sponsors of the Congress. While the Korea Research Foundation, Seoul Metropolitan Government, and the Korea Science and Engineering Foundation, the Korean Federation of Science and Technology Societies, the Korean Association of Biological Sciences, Korean Forestry Society, and Korean Institute of Landscape Architecture were the major domestic sponsors, the Ecological Society of Japan, Chinese Academy of Sciences, the Ecological Society of America, the British Ecological Society, International Long-Term Ecological Research Network, and the International Association for Landscape Ecology were the major international sponsors.

The Ecological Society of Korea decided to host the VIII INTECOL Congress in October 2000. After the decision was made, the first Joint Meeting between INTECOL and the delegates of the ESK was held in Florence, Italy, December 2000. During the meeting, the specifics for the VIII Congress, including the date, venue, motto, the publication of circulars, fund raising, schedule of the Congress, etc., were discussed. While the Korean delegates offered to discuss the proposal with the ESK and to communicate their recommendations and concerns to INTECOL, all the participants agreed to move ahead with the plans for the next Congress. During the Congress, the specifics of the 1st Circular, such items as General Information, Scientific Program, Excursions, Call for Symposia and Papers, and other important issues for the Congress were discussed. During the period of December 14-15, 2001, the 2nd Joint Meeting between the INTECOL Promoting Committee and the LOC was held in the COEX Convention Center, Seoul, Korea. At the meeting, after the progress reports of the INTECOL Board and the LOC were presented, details of the Congress, such as an overview of the schedule, plenary and special lectures, finance and budget, publicity, venue, promotion of ecological societies at the national or regional levels, publications, public relations, the social program of the INTECOL Congress, student prizes, tour programs, website, exhibition, accommodation, cooperation between the INTECOL and LOC, etc., were discussed. The outcomes of the event were significant in the sense that it reaffirmed the prospects of success for the congress. The 3rd Joint Meeting between INTECOL Promoting Committee and LOC was held during the period of April 27-28, 2002 at COEX Convention Center, Seoul, Korea. At the Meeting, all the details for hosting the Congress were discussed and specific problems were addressed. These Joint Meetings provided the Local Organizing Committee with the platform for the successful launch of the Congress. In addition to the International Promoting Committee and LOC, Advisory Board, Technical Board, and Sub-Committees were organized and more than 20 sub-committees were formulated under the LOC. For the Congress, weekly or biweekly meetings of LOC were held more than 50 times before the opening of the Congress.

3. MAJOR ACTIVITIES

The VIII International Congress of Ecology in Seoul, a worldwide academic festival for the ecologists and environmentalists, provided an opportunity for enhancing research capabilities of domestic scientists in the field as well as