

Country: Democratic People's Republic of Korea



Committee: Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

Agenda #1: Strategies for advancing sustainable agricultural practices in the green transition

The Democratic People's Republic of North Korea is a nation located on the Korean Peninsula, where the current leader, Kim Jong-un, has been in charge since 2011 after his father's passing. After the end of World War II and the division of Korea into two separate countries, North Korea has limited participation in global affairs due to its isolation. Since then, it has maintained a unique socialist system with the goal of creating a self-sufficient economy and defending its citizens from external threats. North Korea joined the FAO in 1973 as a member of the United Nations. North Korea has been involved in various agricultural development projects and food security initiatives, although its participation is limited due to factors such as isolation, political climate, and economic challenges. Despite recurring food shortages caused by harsh weather, economic sanctions, and inefficient farming practices, the FAO has provided North Korea with support through agricultural development projects and food aid during periods of famine, such as the devastating 1990s famine.

North Korea has been actively promoting sustainable agriculture practices, aiming for a "green transition" in its agricultural sector. The government emphasizes agroecology, which combines ecological principles with farming to improve food security and reduce environmental

damage. To combat soil degradation caused by years of intensive farming, the country focuses on soil conservation methods such as crop rotation, organic fertilizers, and reforestation, while also integrating these practices into its policy framework for agriculture. Despite efforts to promote self-reliance and address food security issues through sustainable practices, challenges persist due to limited resources and economic constraints exacerbated by political isolation and external sanctions.

North Korea is one of the most food-insecure countries in the world. Malnutrition and hunger are widespread, particularly among children, women, and vulnerable populations. North Korea's agriculture is facing significant challenges due to its self-imposed isolation from the rest of the world. This isolation has made it difficult for farmers to access the resources they need to grow food. Imagine trying to farm without modern tools, high-quality seeds, and fertilizers. It would be a tough task, right? That's exactly what North Korean farmers are facing. They're forced to use old-fashioned techniques that produce less food, making it harder for people in the country to get enough to eat. This problem has been ongoing for many years, and it's not just about lack of resources. The government's restrictions on international trade have also limited access to new technologies and expertise that could help improve agriculture. The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) is an organization that works with countries around the world to improve their food security. [1] They've been working with North Korea to provide technical assistance in areas like agro-forestry, soybean cultivation, and fruit production. While this is a good start, more needs to be done. In recent years, North Korea has shown little interest in engaging with international organizations like the World Health Organization (WHO) or the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), which provide vital health and nutrition services. Interestingly, North Korea has agreements with Russia, which include sending soldiers to fight in

Ukraine. It's also been reported that the Russian president gave some wild animals to North Korea's zoo as a gift. Some people think there may be an agreement between the two countries to improve agriculture and food supply.

North Korea is embracing a Chinese Model for increased productivity [2]. North Korea's government has been prioritizing agricultural production in recent years due to its critical impact on regime stability and public dissatisfaction with food shortages. However, the country's agricultural sector faces challenges such as short-sighted policies, lack of incentives, corruption, and limited resources like fertilizer and equipment. To achieve long-term economic development, North Korea must address these issues and improve food security, which can be learned from China's experience in the 1980s. By giving farmers ownership of land, similar to China's reforms, North Korea may be able to increase productivity and solve its food shortages.

North Korea is highly vulnerable to climate change, which affects its agriculture sector in significant ways. The country's unique geography, with a combination of mountains and coastal areas, makes it prone to various climate-related hazards. North Korea's people face natural disasters that threaten its fragile ecosystem and vulnerable population. [3] Floods destroy homes and crops, while storms bring torrential rains and hail that damage infrastructure and livelihoods. These have an effect on agricultural production, this results in food insecurity. Coastal floods and storms have a significant threat to communities and ecosystems along the coast, and outbreaks of bacterial infectious diseases such as cholera and typhoid fever further worsen the situation. The country's geography and administration makes it particularly harder to deal with these disasters, which have severe consequences for life, infrastructure, and economic development besides affecting the agriculture sector in significant ways. Climate change has a significant impact on agriculture, which contributes significantly to North Korea's economy and employs a substantial

portion of its workforce. Since 20% of its GDP and 36% of its workforce depend on agriculture according to the FAO [4], North Korea is one of the countries most vulnerable to the effects of climate change.

North Korea has established strong relationships with China and Russia, two nations with renowned space programs. [5][6] These strategic partnerships provide a significant boost to North Korea's ability to handle the challenges originated by climate change. By leveraging the expertise and technological capabilities of its allies, North Korea can enhance its weather forecasting capabilities, enabling farmers to make informed decisions about planting, irrigation, and harvesting. This will be particularly crucial in the face of increasingly unpredictable weather patterns caused by climate change.

Rural areas in North Korea may have problems with not having enough food, limited access to healthcare and basic necessities, many children working instead of going to school, difficulty getting an education or job skills, and being vulnerable to human rights abuses, creating a cycle of poverty and inequality that affects generations. To address these issues, it's essential for the government and organizations to provide support and resources to rural communities, such as food aid, healthcare services, and educational programs. This can help break the cycle of poverty and create opportunities for people in rural areas to improve their lives and access basic necessities like food, water, and shelter. [7]

1. <https://www.fao.org/countryprofiles/index/en/?iso3=prk>
2. <https://www.38north.org/2024/03/north-koreas-agricultural-policies-embracing-a-chinese-model-for-increased-productivity/>
3. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Category:Natural_disasters_in_North_Korea

4. <https://www.fao.org/democratic-peoples-republic-of-korea/fao-in-dpr-korea/en/>
5. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roscosmos>
6. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chinese_space_program#:~:text=Major%20programs%20include%20China%20Manned,1%20and%20Tiangong%20space%20station.
7. <https://www.ohchr.org/en/ohchr-democratic-peoples-republic-korea-dprk>