
Haven of Nature
Korea DMZ - European Green Belt
Global Inspiration
GyeongGI-Do
BfN
Federal Agency
for Nature
Conservation

Gyeonggido and BfN(German Federal Agency for Nature Conservation)
made an agreement in <*Joint declaration of Intend between Gyeonggido and BfN for wise use of Korea DMZ and European Greenbelt*>.

Both organizations have undertaken cooperative projects as followings;

UNWTO the 4th World Ecotourism Conference in Jeju Island, Korea ('12),
Official participation of German BfN Europeance Greenbelt 10th anniversary Event, Germany ('13)
Joint publication of《TWO LINE, Korea DMZ - German Greenbelt》Photo book('13) Joint traveling TWO LINES photo exhibition in Korea, USA, and Germany('13 - '14)
Co-host of Gyeonggido DMZ International Workshop in Ansan, South Korea('16)

This book is also a part of collaborative work between Gyeonggido and BfN.

Haven of Nature

: Korea DMZ - European Green Belt

Introduction

An irony of history retro-revolving with the primitive life

The scientific development has been enhancing human beings' life on average, but it has also cast a dark shadow on its hidden side: disruption and destruction of natural ecosystem. The world's ecosystem in general has been exposed to a variety of pollutants. Fortunately, the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) on the Korean peninsula is the sole area where ecosystem has been recovering. Therefore, the ecosystem of the DMZ is our asset that will shine more in the future.

One heartbreaking fact is that its unique value is the result of the fratricidal Korean War. Ironically enough, the horrible war symbolizing "destruction" presented us a seed of hope: the DMZ, a painful belt of the Korean peninsula.

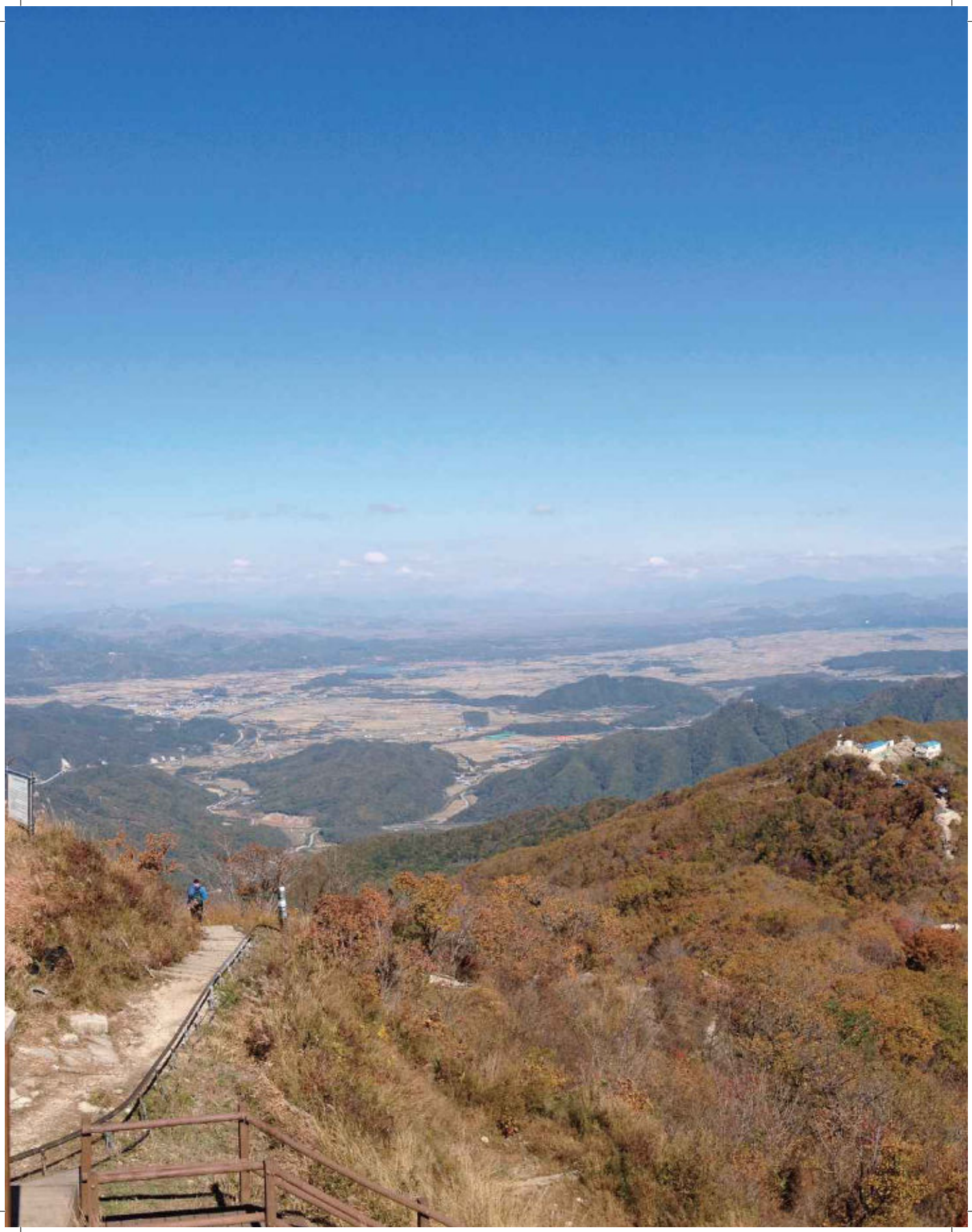
The sharp confrontation and conflict still exist between North and South Korea. However, much of the vestige of the war symbolized by the DMZ are gone as the history continues since the end of the war. Instead, "ecological value of the future" has been filling up and it will continue to do so.

Accordingly, this guidebook will cover "ecological value" of the DMZ, an asset that we should preserve and take pride in in the future. You will observe the beautiful natural environment of the DMZ, a variety of birds, animals and plants that inhabit there as well as the DMZ—a wetland and geopark.

It is not enough to put the wonderful provision of nature and landscape of the DMZ in this guidebook. But we hope that it would encourage you to think of the ecological value of the DMZ once again.

Haven of Nature

Korea DMZ - European Green Belt



Godaesan Mountain

Contents

The real history of the DMZ will be written in the future

The scientific development has been enhancing human beings' life on average, but it has also cast a dark shadow on its hidden side: disruption and destruction of natural ecosystem. The world's ecosystem in general has been exposed to a variety of pollutants. Fortunately, the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) on the Korean peninsula is the sole area where ecosystem has been recovering. Therefore, the ecosystem of the DMZ is our asset that will shine more in the future.

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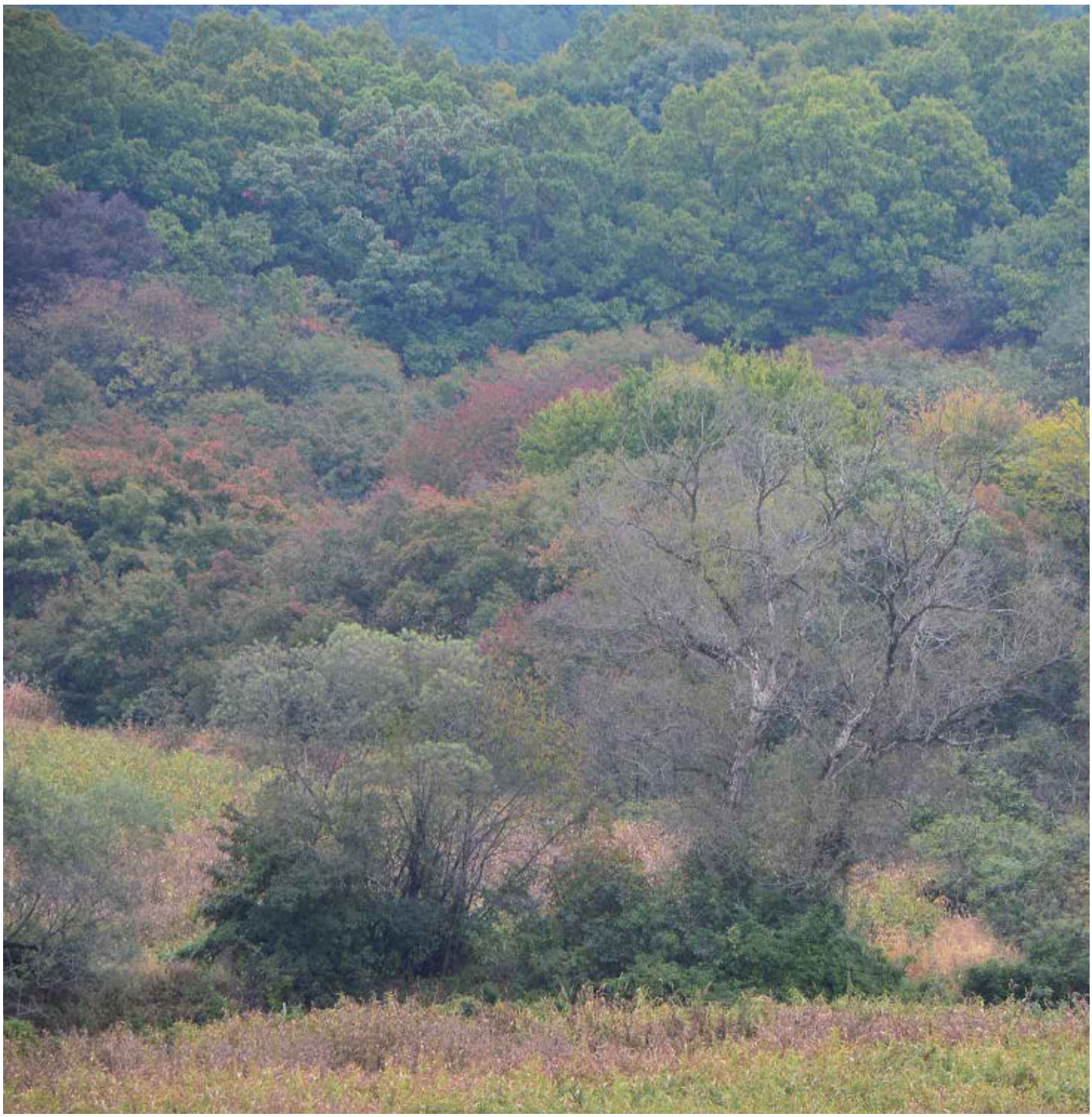
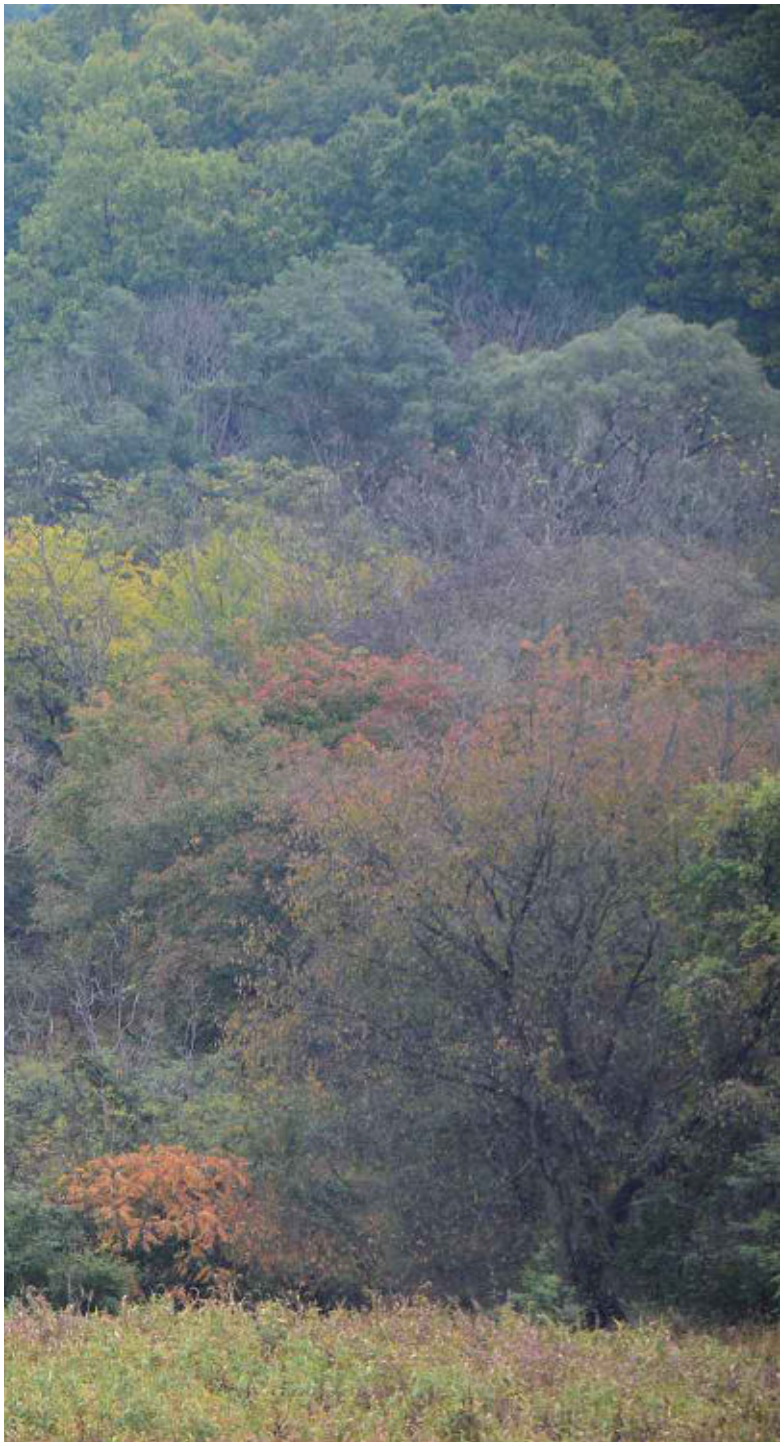




Flowers along the barbed wire fences in Imjingang River Eco TrailFlowers along the barbed wire fences in Imjingang River Eco Trail

A cry of the DMZ that speaks its ecological value

The DMZ, which has been rarely visited by anyone, shows the great power of recovery of the nature. That's why a valley of the DMZ where a singe tree barely survived turns from the legacy of war to the legacy of ecology. Then, what is the essence of the value of DMZ, which has become the ecological legacy of human beings?

We need a few key words here. The first keyword is diversity. If you look at the map, the DMZ boasts various geological and topographical characteristics. This is because the DMZ crosses the Korean peninsula from island areas in the West Sea, plains in the western part of the country through the central inland area, central mountainous area and to the eastern mountainous area and the coastal area in the East Sea.

This fact alone is sufficient for the DMZ to become an important asset of human beings. In addition, the Jusangjeolli and red cliff formed along Imjingang River prove that the DMZ is qualified for a geopark.

The second keyword is scarcity. There was a report (Ministry of Construction and Transportation, 2002) that a few exotic species, for example, frost aster and Amorpha fruticosa, appeared in the area, but two Korean special plants, Echinosophora koreensis and Hanabusaya asiatics are growing and six natural monuments including musk deer and goats are living.

However, such scarce animals and plants do not mean that the DMZ is a scarce place. In the DMZ, there are 1,864 sorts of plants are growing naturally: 142 families, 629 genera, 1,499 species, 4 subspecies, 294 varieties, 57 races, and 10 hybrids. This accounts for almost 50% of the whole plants living on the Korean peninsula. In short, the DMZ is an unpolluted"herbarium of the Korean peninsula."The scarcity of the DMZ

White-naped cranes

lies in the fact that such a unique place cannot be found anywhere in the world.

In the following pages, we are going to prove that the ecological system of the DMZ is healthy through the natural scenery and vegetation (plant ecosystem), wetlands, and migratory birds.

The DMZ is a subject of academic research and study. It is also an asset of human beings. Therefore, even after the reunification of the country we should preserve the DMZ that is restoring its aboriginality from the ashes of the war. Such efforts should not be made in the Korean peninsula only; they should be completed as practical "system," not just meaningless slogans, based on support and participation of people around the world, including the UNESCO.

Imjingang River Peace Wetlands

Natural scenery of the DMZ

A panorama that starts from sea and islands and connects to canyons and lava plateau

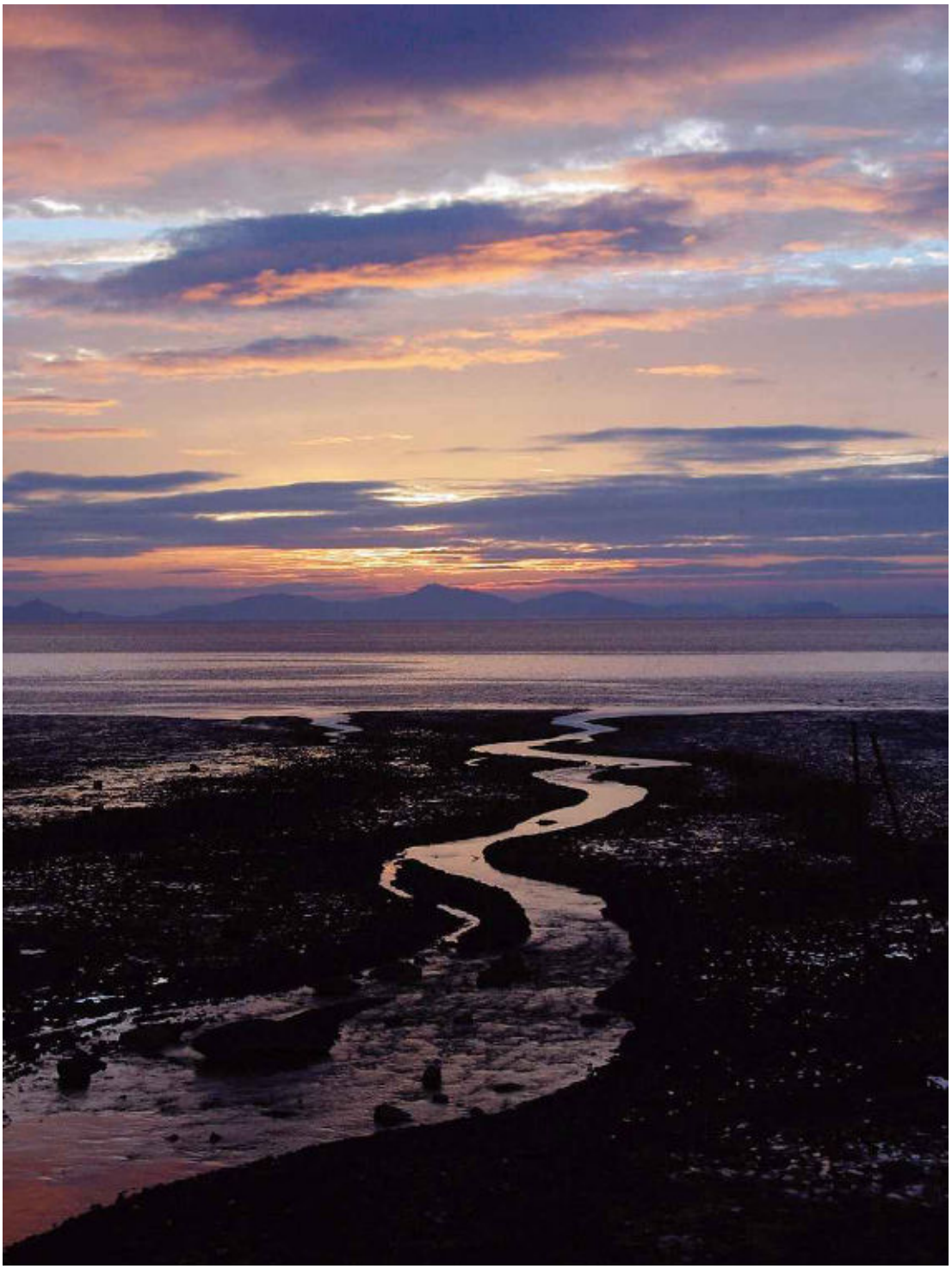
The natural scenery of the DMZ that belongs to Gyeonggi-do that starts from the West Sea and connects to the central inland area shows the characteristics of the axis that crosses the Korean peninsula from east to west.

Baengnyeongdo, the western end of the DMZ, boasts magnificent views as indicated by its nickname, "Haegeumgang of the West Sea." Dumujin, which shows off wave-cut terraces and sea cliffs, Sagot Beach, one of two landing strips formed naturally in the world, all of them are the subjects of ecological research and tourist attractions. In addition, the whole area of Ganghwado where a number of tide land and mud flat are located, is famous as tourist spot.

Tideland or mud flat in Ganghwado

Dumujin

Sagot Beach



mud flat in Ganghwado

Odusan Mountain

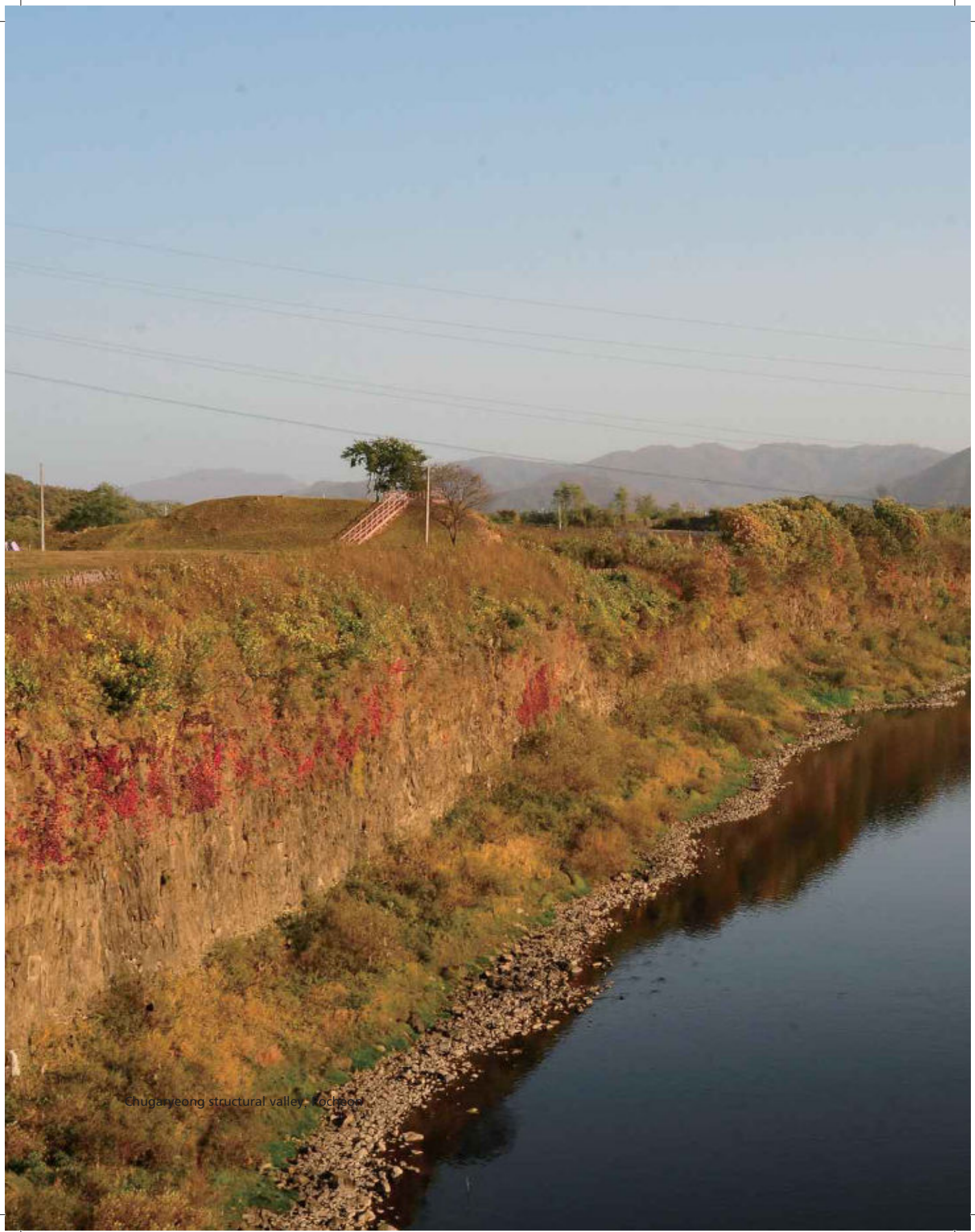
Moving inland with the beautiful scenery of the West Sea behind, the DMZ presents a totally different look. There you can meet Hangang River Estuary where wetland and a mud flat exist on a large scale. Hangang River Estuary is the last natural estuary formed in South Korea and therefore more efforts are needed for protection. In addition, the Odu Mountain Unification Observatory constructed on the site where Imjingang River is flowing in Hangang River, offers a wide view of Gimpo and Ilsan Plain.

Plains in Gimpo area

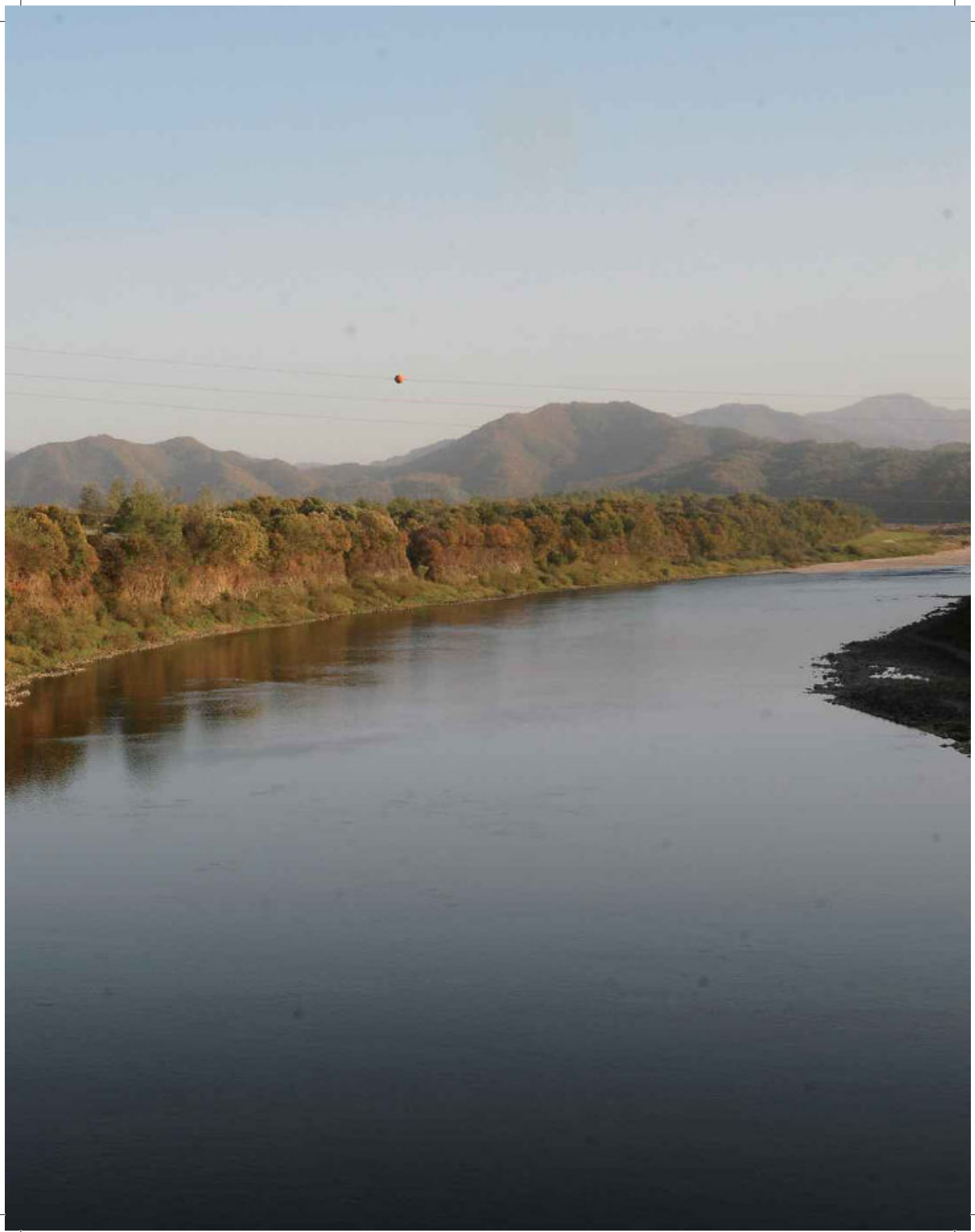
Plains in Paju area

The DMZ in the western inland area that covers Dongducheon, Yangju, and Pocheon, presents a chance to meet various geographical features, including tough mountain areas and hilly basins. Above all, the Dongducheon area is surrounded by mountains, a typical mountainous area of the Korean peninsula while Yangju has a wide area of hilly terrains at an altitude of 100m. Pochen, located at the end of the western inland of the Korean penisula, is an oval shape basin with 7km width and 10km length.

Dongducheon



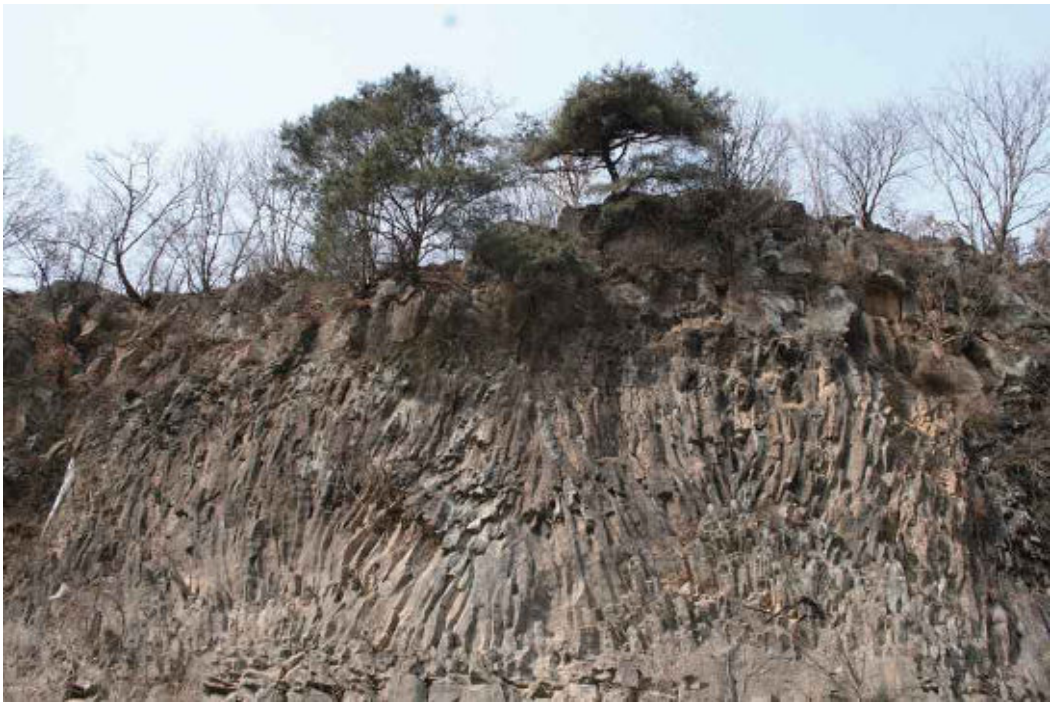
Chugaryeong structural valley, Jodrsan



Yeoncheon in the central inland, is part of Chugaryeong structural valley affected by volcanic activity. Based on the lava plateau, a canyon which is 10–30m deep, was formed where Hantangang River and Imjingang River are flowing in. The huge scenery is one of the most curious views available inland, except for Jeju. In particular, the Jusangjeolli is the subject of geographical study. The lava plateau above the canyon has become rich soil, making autumn a fertile season.

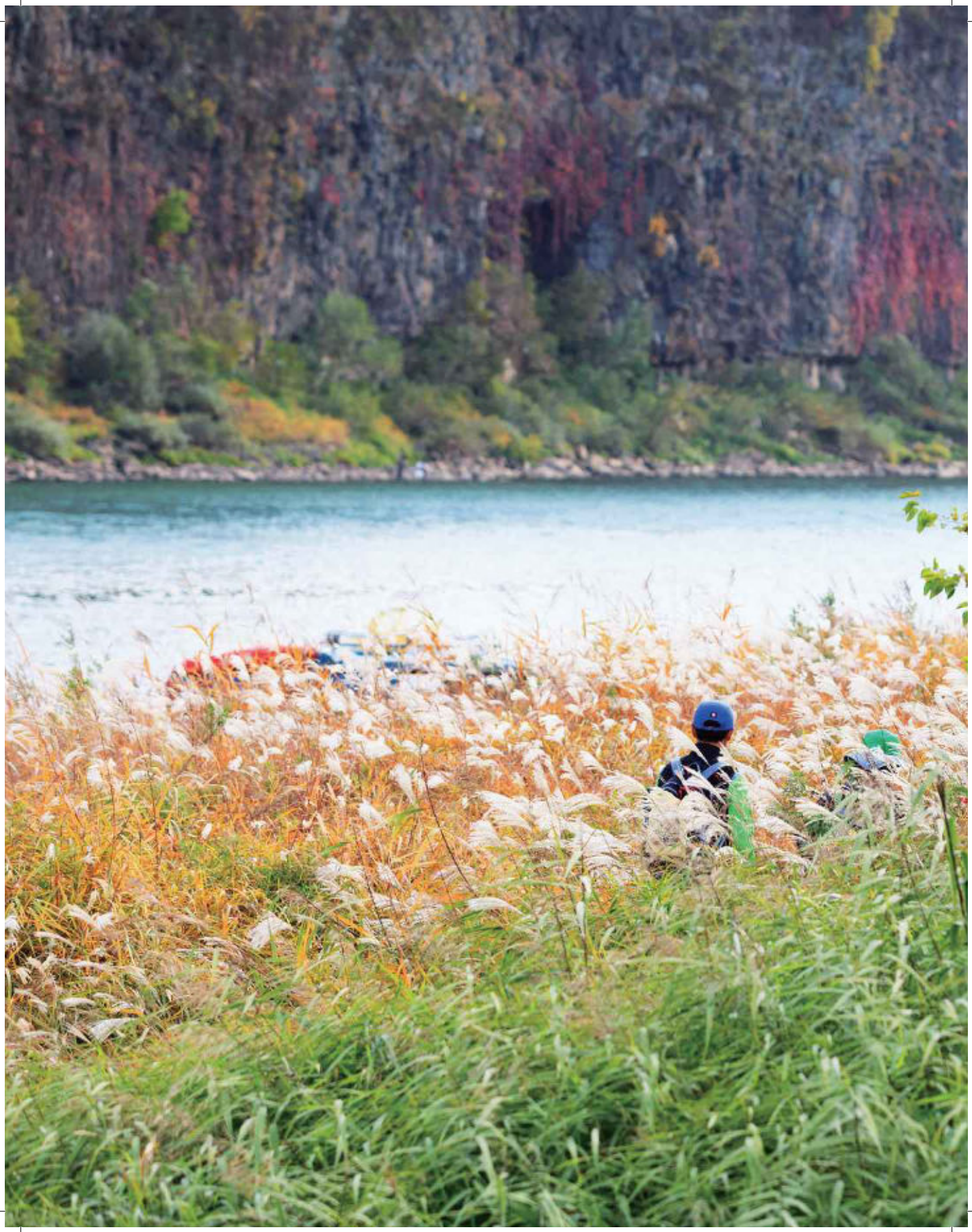
Water spider habitat, Eundae–ri

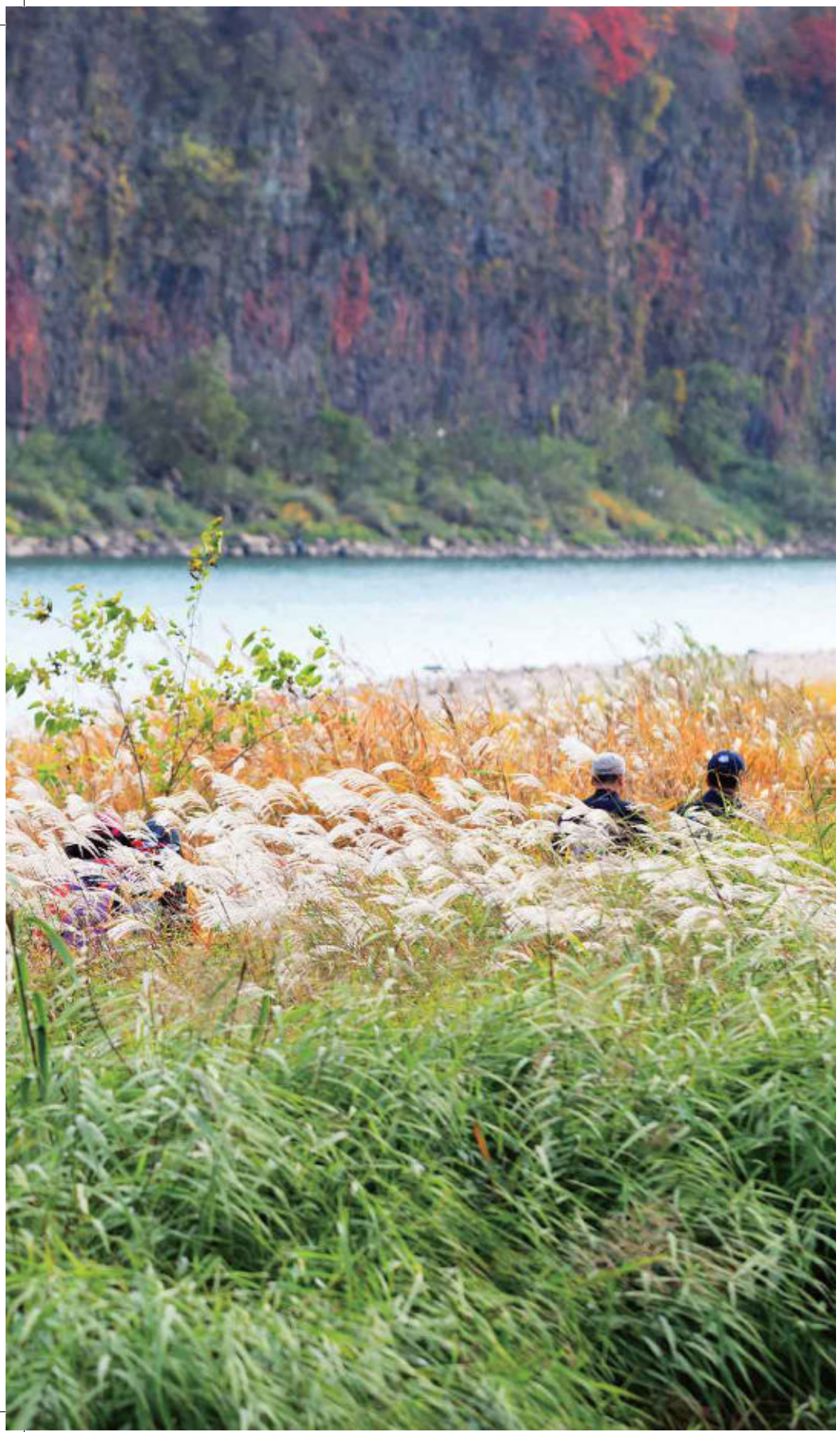
Water spider, Eundae–ri



Jusangjeolli

Imjingang River Peace Wetlands

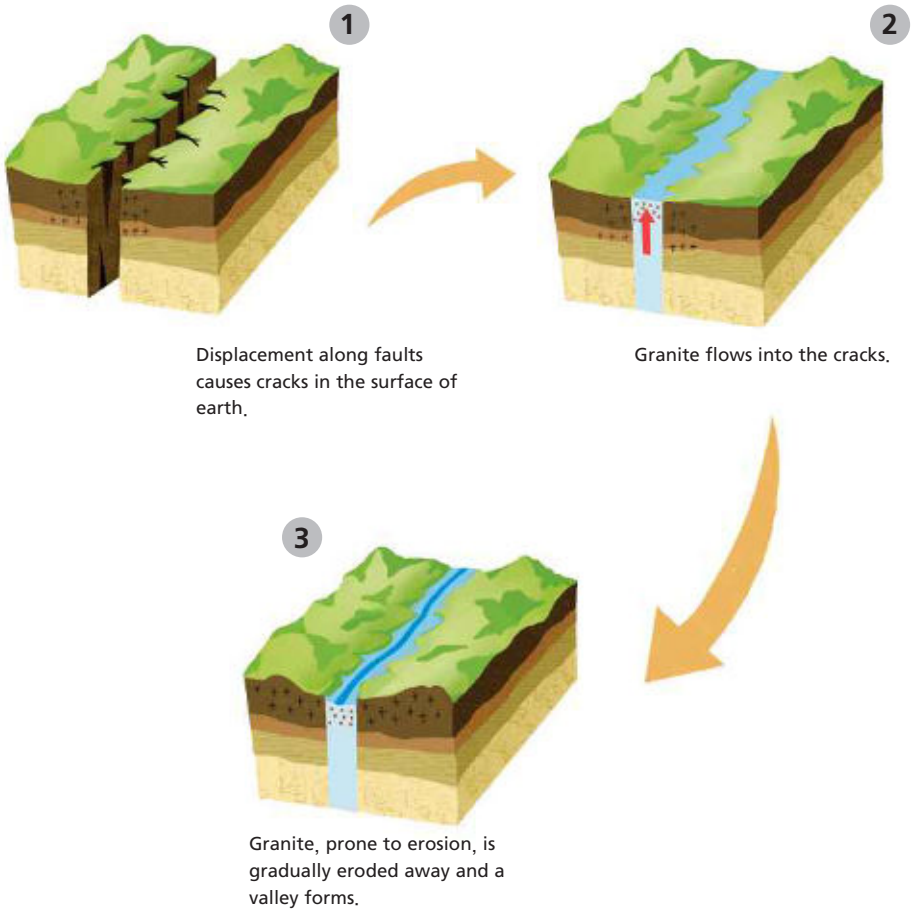




Jusangjeolli along
Chatancheon Stream,
Yeoncheon

Chugaryeong structural valley, the narrowest and longest valley in the Korean peninsula

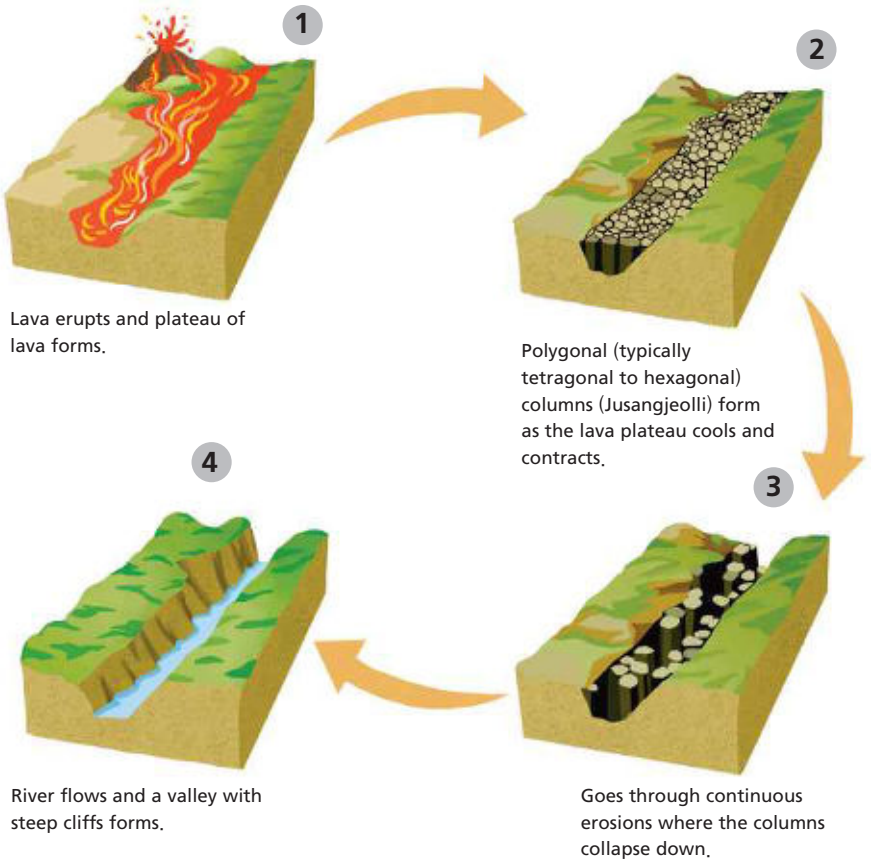
The valley was named as Chugaryeong structural valley because the valley is 180km long formed between Seoul and Wonsan and it is flowing through Chugaryeong near Wonsan. It is said that a flat area was created so that the Gyeongwon Line between Seoul and Wonsan was allowed to be built. In particular, Chugaryeong structural valley formed along the DMZ is an important border line that divides the Korean peninsula into north and south. It is a subject for academic purposes.



Chugaryeong structural valley

Jusangjeolli and red cliff, the historical witness of the geography of the Korean peninsula

The whole area of Hantangang River and Imjingang River is a treasure house because vertical red cliffs formed as a result of erosion are found here and there. In particular, in the whole area of Yeoncheon, grand views sights are available from small and big falls, including Jaein Falls, Jusangjeolli, and planticular joints. The area is designated as the country's seventh national geopark and efforts are under way to become the UNESCO Global Geopark.



Jusangjeolli

DMZ, secret woods lied in the forest and valleys

The whole DMZ area includes a variety of ecological system including natural wetland restored to the original status, grassland, stream wetland, and forest in initial succession. Of course, it is not an isolated area, so it does not have as high number of indigenous species as Jeju. However, the DMZ has a high degree of biological diversity as almost half of plants living in the Korean peninsula are to be found.

You can easily imagine that the DMZ is a primeval forest with no access by human beings for more than 60 years. Interestingly, vegetation within the DMZ shows that most are forest in the second succession stage or wetland due to lumbering for military purposes and forest fires. In particular, pine trees, Korea's representative plant, are not found except for dry ridges. Instead, introduced species, for example, false acasia, that are resistant to forest fire, make up the laregest part of the forest.

Hanabusaya asiatica

Saussurea diamantica

Amorpha fruticosa

Dickin's sedge

Japanese black pines

In Ongjin, Ganghwa, and Gimpo, located in the Hangang estuary, which mainly consists of salt marsh, oak trees are the largest group. At Baengnyeongdo and Daecheongdo, pine trees and Korean hornbeam colony are representative plants while Japanese black pines are mainly distributed on the beach. In particular, sweetbrier colony and Dickin's sedge colony are widely growing in sand hills developed under the effect of sea breeze.

Sand hills area

◁ Japanese black pines colony

Sand hills area

In the whole area of Yeoncheon including Godaesan Mountain, oriental oak colony and Mongolian oak colony are well grown. The CCL area of Paju, which consists of hills and plains at an altitude of less than 500m, is made up of farmland, grassland, false acasia forest, forest in the second succession stage, and self-growing forest.

In the meantime, the CCL area of Jangdan-myeon, Paju, consists of Asian black birch forest and oak forest.

Oak trees

Vegetation types in the DMZ

Region	Administrative district	Location	Representative vegetation types (dominant species)
Western coastal areas	Gimpo–si, Gyeonggi–do	Wolgot–myeon	Mongolian oak tree, Pine tree, Oak tree
		Munsusan Mountain	Pine tree, Mongolian oak tree, Konara oak tree
	Ganghwa–gun, Incheon Metropolitan City	Ganghwado Island	Oak tree, Pine tree, Black locust tree
		Mud flat in Ganghwado Island	Salt marsh
		Gyodongdo Island	Oak tree, Pine tree, Mongolian oak tree
	Ongjin–gun, Incheon Metropolitan City	Daecheongdo Island	Pine tree, Korean hornbeam tree, Japanese black pine tree, Mongolian oak tree
		Okjuk–dong, Daecheongdo Island	Sand hills vegetation
		Baekryeongdo Island	Pine tree, Korean hornbeam tree, Japanese black pine tree
Central and western inland areas	Cheorwon–gun, Gangwon–do	Jeokgeunsan Mountain, Daeseongsan Mountain	Mongolian oak tree
		Anamsan Mountain	Oriental oak tree
		Geumhaksan Mountain	Mongolian oak tree, Pine tree, Oriental oak tree
		Plains	Willow tree, Amur maple tree, Black locust tree, Alder tree
	Yeoncheon–gun, Gyeonggi–do	Godaesan Mountain	Oriental oak tree, Pine tree, Mongolian oak tree
		Yawolsan Mountain	Oak tree, Mongolian oak tree
		Cheondeoksan Mountain	Oak tree, Mongolian oak tree
	Paju–si, Gyeonggi–do	Daeseong–ri, Gunnae–myeon	Oak tree
		Geogok–ri, Jangdan–myeon	Salt marsh
		Gunnae–ri, Jangdan–myeon	Asian black birch tree, Black locust tree, Oak tree, Mongolian oak tree
Central and eastern mountainous area	Yanggu–gun, Gangwon–do	Yongneup Swamp of Daeamsan Mountain	High moor
		Upstream of Suipcheon	Hydrophytes
		Baekseoksan Mountain	Mongolian oak tree
	Hwacheon–gun, Gangwon–do	Huinbausan Mountain	Mongolian oak tree, Pine tree
		Jaeansan Mountain	Mongolian oak tree, Pine tree
Eastern coastal area	Goseong–gun, Gangwon–do	Hyeonnae–myeon Songhyeon–ri	Mongolian oak tree, Oriental oak tree, Oak tree, Willow tree, Alder tree, Manchurian alder tree
	Goseong–gun and Inje–gun, Gangwon–do	Hyangnobong Peak mountain range	Mongolian oak tree, Manchurian fullmoon maple tree, Loose–flower hornbeam tree, Konara oak tree, Lime tree

Oriental oak trees

Asian black birch trees

Willow trees

Loose–flower hornbeam trees

▽Pine trees

Seongdong wetland

Wetland, a heaven of fish, amphibians, and reptiles

Wetland is called "Kidney of the nature" because it is surrounded by rivers, ponds, and swamps so that it contains moisture all the time. Land ecosystem and aquatic ecosystem meet here, so biodiversity is enough for wild animals and plants to inhabit and spawn. Accordingly, a variety of amphibians and reptiles are found in the whole area of the DMZ: as many as 20 types of amphibians and reptiles in one city or county. For example, gureongi (serpent), the first grade endangered species, and Korean Golden Frog, Korean terrapin, and rock mamushi, all second grade endangered species.

Sannam wetland

Siam-ri wetland

Janghang wetland

Jangdan peninsula

Distribution map of wetlands

Elk

Swan goose

Dumortier's daylily

Wildcat


Cucumber herb
Motherwort
Loose-flower hornbeam tree
Gojindong Valley
Goseong-gun
Migratory birds' habitat, Songjiho Lake
Dutayeon
Jigyeon Falls
Galmok Valley
Hwacheon-gun
Yanggu-gun
Migratory birds' habitat, Songjiho Lake
Chuncheon-si
White-naped cranes
Spoonbill
Eagle-owl

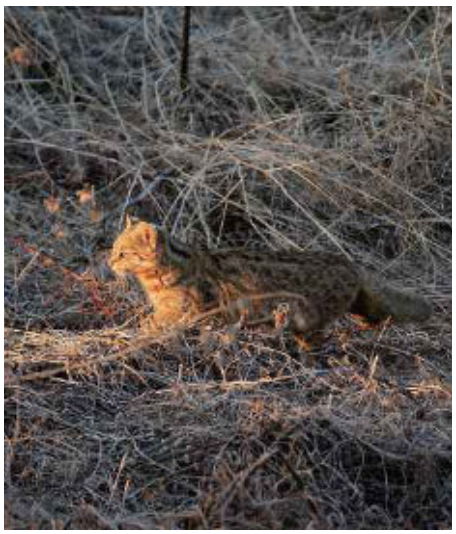
Jusangjeolli and red cliff

Black–tailed gull

Goat willow

Fruits of Amorpha fruticosa

Golden eagle



Wildcat

Egret

Swan goose

Eagle–owl

Saussurea diamantica

Hanabusaya asiatica

Japanese black pines

Dickin's sedge

Gureongi (serpent)

Rock Mamushi

Dickin's sedge colony

Korean barberry

Korean golden frog

Water spider habitat, Eundae–ri

Eagles

Ragweed

Nodding lily

Gooseneck
loosestrife

Imjingang River in spring

Various types of freshwater fishes are inhabiting in water system of Imjingang River and Hangang River as well as wetland. They include Cyprinid Fish and Siniperca scherzeri, natural monuments as well as 10 endangered species designated by the Ministry of Environment. By family, it is reported they amount to 47 carp families and 30 mudskipper families. Endangered species' habitats are those of Gobiobotia macrocephala and gobiobotia brevibarba in the upper region of Imjingang River at Yeoncheon.

Siniperca scherzeri

Cyprinid fish

White–naped cranes

DMZ ecosystem run by natural monuments

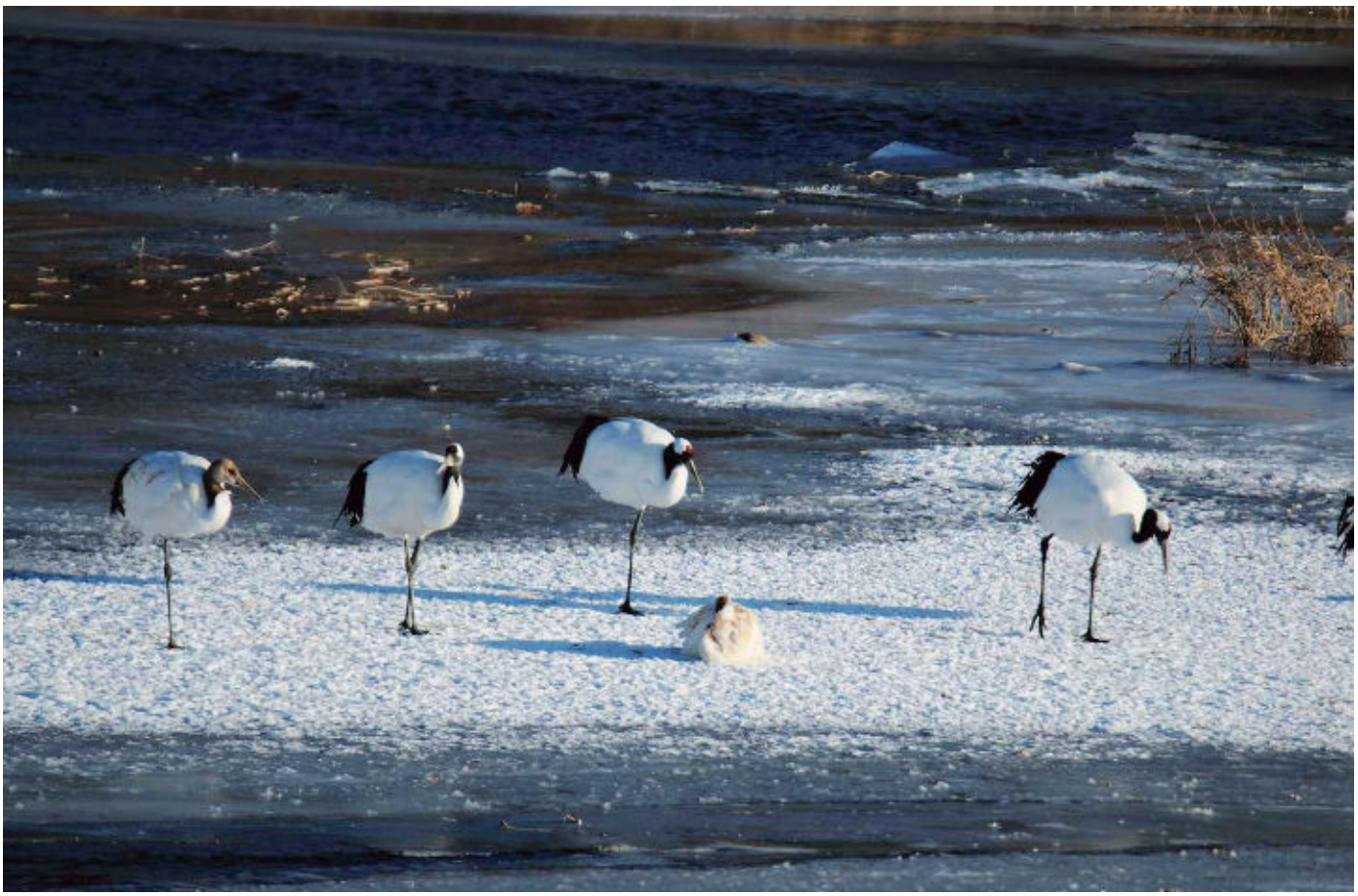
The DMZ ecosystem of Incheon and Gyeonggi covers mud flat of Ganghwa and habitats of blackfaced spoonbills (Natural Monument No. 419), habitats of Chinese Egrets and black-tailed gulls (Natural Monument No. 360) in Sindo Island, Ongjin, and habitats of white-naped cranes (Natural Monument No. 250) at Gimpo and Paju. Hangang River Estuary is designated as wetland sanctuary. The recovered natural environment is creating an excellent ecosystem. Then what types of mammals and birds are living in these areas?

Wild goose

Chinese mergansers

Black–faced spoonbills

Egret



Cranes

According to all literature so far, 6 orders, 17 families, and 51 species of wild mammals, except for livestocks that have become wild, are living in the DMZ area including island in the West Sea. Among them, musk deer, goat, flying squirrels, Asiatic Black Bear, otters, and Spotted Seals are designated as the country's natural monuments. By region, 15 species are living in the west, 32 in the center, and 31 in the east part of the peninsula. In particular, hundreds of Spotted Seals that are inhabiting only around Baengnyeongdo should be carefully protected because the total population is on the decline due to the worsening environment in China where they spend winter.

Goat

Asiatic Black Bear

Otter

Spotted Seal

Flying squirrel

Musk deer

According to report so far, 15 orders, 52 families, and 263 species of birds are living in the DMZ area. In contrast to mammals, the most types of birds, 180 species, are living in the west. This is because Ganghwa in the West Sea has sufficient conditions for inhabitation.

In particular, the DMZ is an important criterion and site in an effort to preserve endangered birds. For example, only 1,400 blackfaced spoonbills are alive around the world, and many of them are inhabiting in Yudo, Bido, a desert island, and Seokdo at Hangang River Estuary. They are also drawing attention around the world as the wintering site for Japanese cranes, another endangered species. White-naped cranes are also living here. Jangdan-bando, a wintering spot for eagles should also be protected and preserved.

Eagles

Cranes

Spoonbills

Brackish water zone

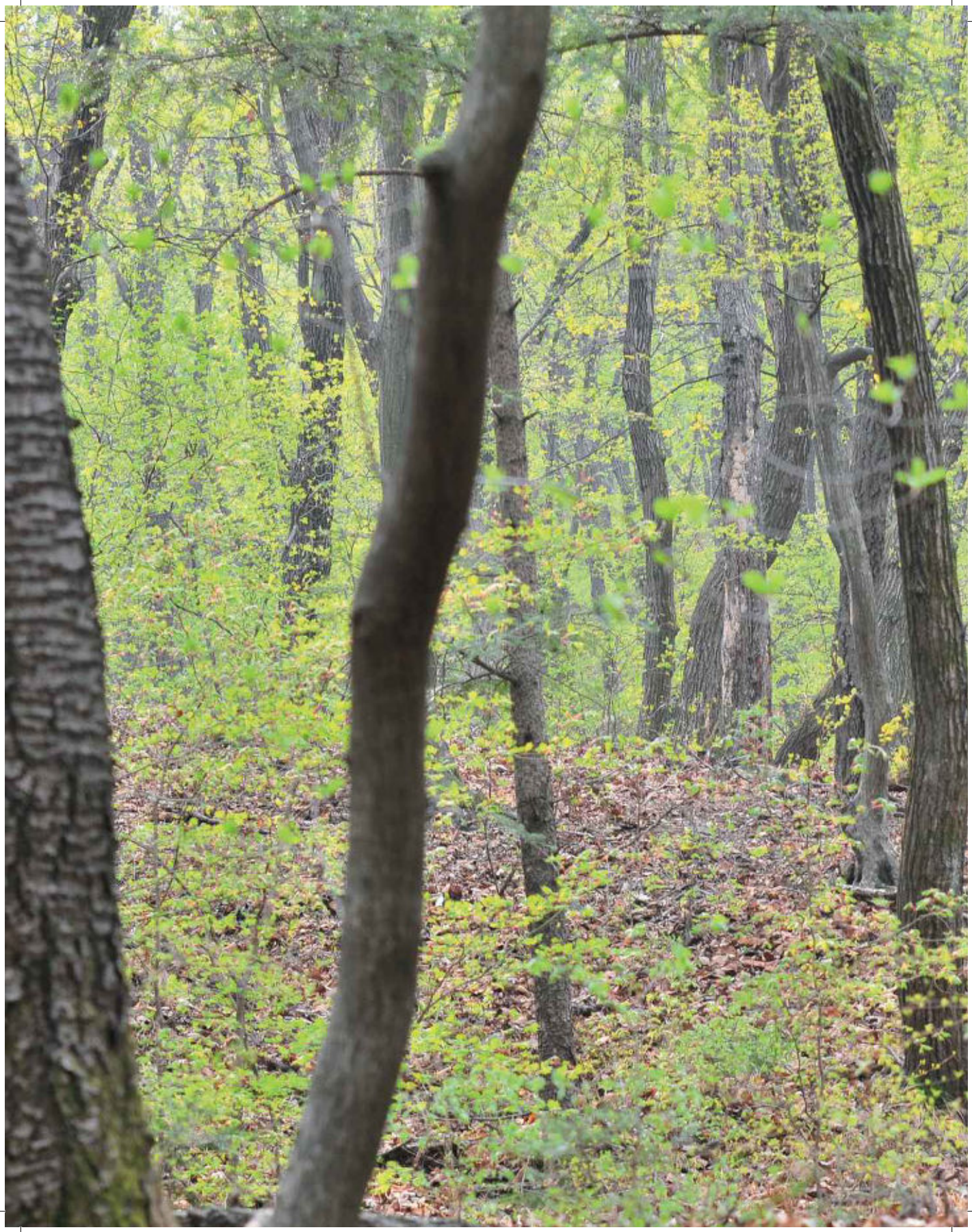
A brackish water zone refers to an area where freshwater and seawater meet and get mixed. In general, species that move between sea and rivers are found at a brackish water zone. Hangang River Estuary was designated as wetland protected area because the special ecosystem of a brackish water zone exists. In particular, no estuary bank was established on Hangang River Estuary, the only one among four estuaries in Korea. That's the reason why more than 20,000 water birds including white-naped cranes, visit the area from mid-October to early March every year, generating magnificent views.

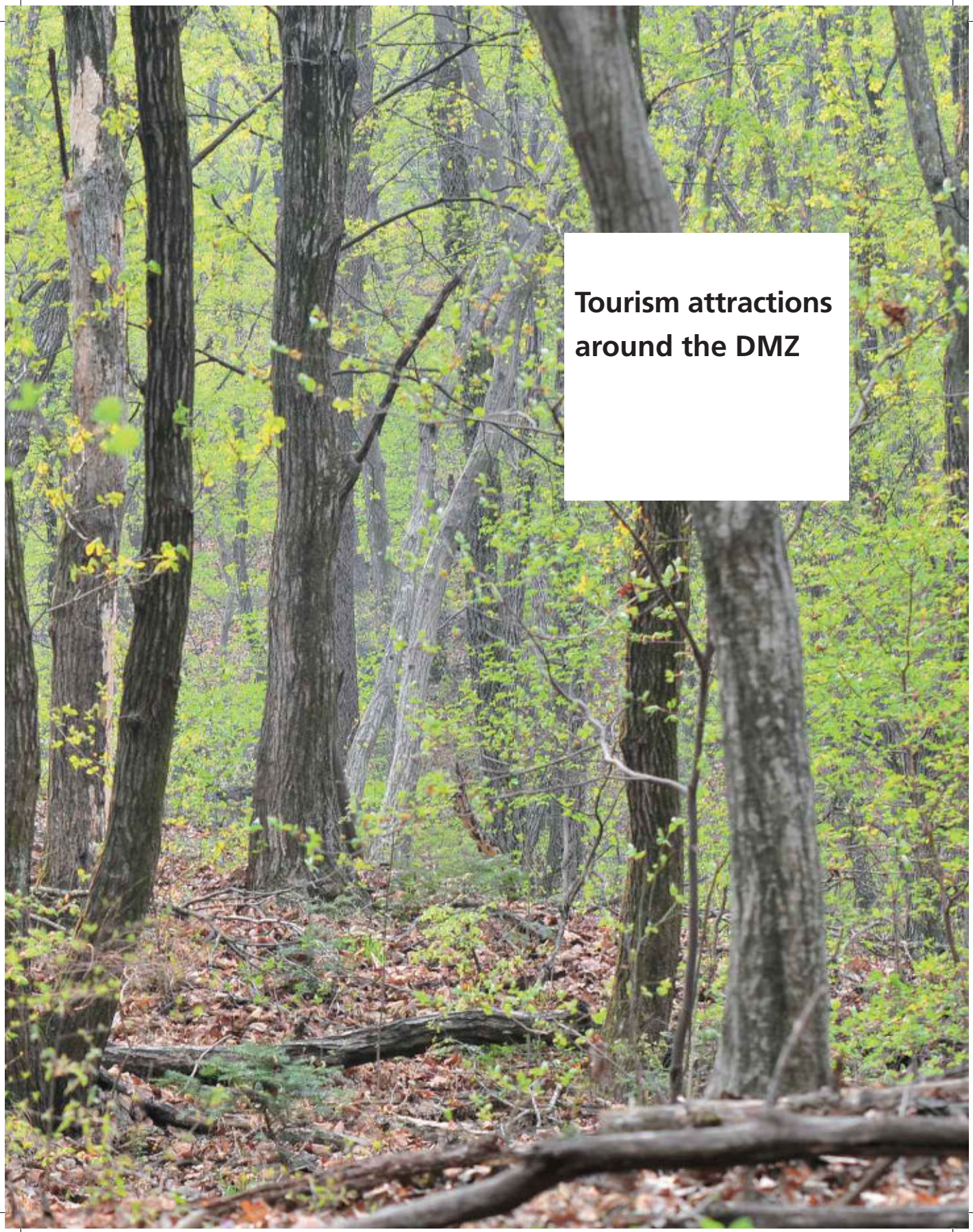
White-naped cranes

Cattle egrets

Blue bird

Korean buzzard





Tourism attractions around the DMZ

Tourist route to experience ecosystem, history, and security travel

The area surrounding the DMZ is the sole tourist place where people can experience the security conditions of the Korean peninsula as suggested as one of 25 top tourism attractions in Asia by TIME magazine. This is because the DMZ is a history museum that shows the history of the region from the Old Stone Age to the period of the Three States, Joseon Dynasty to modern times. It is an environment-friendly place where eco-tourism is possible. It is also a security tourism attraction that enhances the sense of security.

Historical heritage

Prehistoric Site of Jeongok-ri

It is a historic site that caused a sensation to the study of Paleolithic relics where the West had been predominant after first-ever discovery of "the Acheulean type" stone implement in the East Asia. Since the discovery in 1978 by an American soldier, more than 10,000 remains from the Paleolithic era have been discovered through 18 excavation projects until now. It is located adjacent to Hantangang River resort in Yeoncheon-gun and offers pleasure of walking in the forest along the river.

Sunguijeon Shrine Site

It is a shrine situated at Misan-myeon, Yeoncheon-gun, Gyeonggi-do. The founder King Taejo Lee Seong-gye of Joseon Dynasty, who felt political liability for dynastic revolution, made it a royal shrine for Goryeo where memorial tablets of King Taejo and seven kings of the Goryeo Period were held and ancestral rites for them were performed. The name Sunguijeon was created during the reign of King Munjong, son of King Sejong, while massively rebuilding the shrine. At that time, the shrine was also assigned to be managed by descendants of royal families of Goryeo. Baesincheong building where the memorial tablets of 16 loyal officials of Goryeo including Jeong Mong-ju had been once enshrined was burned down during the Korean War and has been restored from 1972 year by year until now.


花石亭

Royal Tomb of King Gyeongsun

It is a Tomb of the last King Gyeongsun of Silla designated as Historic Site No. 224. Today's location in Gorangpo-ri, Jangnam-myeon, Yeoncheon-gun was found during King Yeongjo period of Joseon Dynasty. It is the only Royal Tomb of Silla situated in other region than Gyeonju, the ancient capital of Silla. It is very humble and plain unlike other extremely splendid Royal Tombs in Gyeongju presumably because it was built after collapse of the kingdom. Visitors can feel the forlorn end of Silla, a kingdom that sustained for almost 1,000 years that went on until the fifty-sixth monarch.

Hwaseokjeong Pavilion

Hwaseokjeong is a pavilion designated as Gyeonggi-do Tangible Cultural Heritage No.61 in 1974 located on top of the cliff along Imjingang River. The pavilion is a Choikgong type building which has 3 open sections at the front and 2 along both sides with Paljak type roof and double-layered eaves. The style of pavilion derives from Joseon Dynasty. It was originally told that the pavilion was built in honor of Gil Jae, a great Confucian scholar of late Goryeo Dynasty but there are many more episodes related to Yulgok Yi I. It is said Yi I was so taken by landscape of the pavilion that he used to visit the pavilion with his students even after resigning from the government post. The plate hung inside the pavilion has poem Palsebusi inscribed on it written by Yi I when he was 8 years old.


伴鶴亭

Bangujeong Pavilion

Bangujeong is a pavilion where Bangchon Hwang Hui, a writer and a renowned premier of late Goryeo and early Joseon period, lived out the rest of his days with seagulls for company after resigning from the position of prime minister. It was a place for Confucian scholars of Joseon Dynasty to pay tribute to accomplishments of Hwang Hui. After being destroyed during the Korean War, the pavilion was restored by descendants through reconstruction in 1967. Nearby sandy plain along Imjingang River adds scenic beauty of the pavilion and on a clear day, visitors can expect to see the Songaksan Mountain far distant in Gaeseong. Next to Bangujeong Pavilion is Yeongdang Shrine where Hwang Hui's portrait and ancestral rites were held.

Grave of Doctor Heo Jun

It is a Grave of Doctor Heo Jun, renowned physician regarded as a sainted doctor of the Orient representing Joseon Dynasty. Heo Jun wrote the voluminous medical book Dongui Bogam consisting of 25 volumes. The grave was excavated in 1991 by an ancient literature researcher residing in America. He discovered the grave in Hapo-ri, Jingdong-myeon, Paju-si located in the Demilitarized Zone across Imjingang River based on the genealogy record of Yangcheon Heo Clan. The tumulus was discovered severely damaged but the letters "Yangpyeong Gun Hoseong Gongsin Heo Jun" were found in the worn-out gravestone.

Eco-Tourism

Imjingang River Peace Wetlands

Peace Wetlands formed along Imjingang River at the entrance to Taepung Observatory is the only eco-theme park in the country where visitors can vividly observe cranes that flew from Russia to Korean Peninsula for wintering. It is a great place for eco-bird watching of cranes as well as experience-oriented education across the ecological environment of Imjingang River and the Demilitarized Zone. Visitors can freely see the aloof and tidy figures of cranes standing at a height of around 140cm. It also offers a pleasure of discovering "Korean Golden Frog" released last year for species restoration.

Pyenghwa-Nuri-gil

Pyeonghwa-Nuri-gil is about 63.7km-long walking trail along Imjingang River which originates from Masikryeong Valley in Hamgyeongbuk-do and runs through Hwanghae-do before flowing into Yeoncheon and features many historic sites. The northernmost walking trail connects the four DMZ border areas: Gimpo, Goyang, Paju, and Yeoncheon. It includes Village An-gil, Non-gil, Jebang-gil, Coastal barbed-wire fence, Hangang River downstream and Imjingang River where visitors can enjoy clean nature and historical sites simultaneously. Among the three divided parts of the walking trail, no. 2 course especially features the beautiful harmony of historical sites and superb scenery.

Imjingang River Jusangjeolli

Jusangjeolli is beautiful rock pillars situated along Imjingang River to the north starting from Hapsumeori (Dogampo,) confluence of Imjingang River and Hantangang River. Surrounding area is designated as seventh national geological park in the country. Jusangjeolli cliffs around Chatancheon Stream flowing through Hantangang River, Imjingang River and Yeoncheon were formed along the river in geometric shapes as lava plateau made by the past volcanic activities was eroded by river. Hantangang River offers a truly marvelous landscape as it runs through the only valley in Korea running lower than flatland.

Jaein Falls

Considered as the most spectacular geological spot and starting point of exploring Hantangang River Valley situated in Yeoncheon. Jaein Falls, about 350m north from Hantangang River mainstream has been known as no.1 scenic spot of Yeoncheon since the old times. The waterfall is around 18m in height and offers a landscape appearing in traditional Korean painting as it features a harmony of the falls and pond surrounded by cliffs of round basaltic rocks in oval shape. Basaltic rocks in the cliffs around Jaein Falls were formed by lava flown around half a million years ago.

Peace and Security Tourism

Imjingak Resort

Imjingak Resort, located only 7km south of the cease-fire line, is ironically a famous tourist attraction reminiscent of the scars of division. It is the northernmost end of Tongil-ro, north limit line for civilian's entry and railroad disconnection point between the two Koreas. Imjingak is a four-storied building (B1-3F) with a total floor space of 2,442㎡. It serves as a convenience facility for people yearning for unification as well as "temporary home" for the people missing hometown. Restaurants and souvenir shops are on the 1st and 2nd floor, exhibition room displaying the lives of North Korean people on 3rd floor and observatory on the rooftop.

Imjingak Pyeonghwa-Nuri

It is a cultural complex formed after the World Peace Festival in 2005, built at a wide grass hill (area of about 990,000㎡) inside the Imjingak Resort. It is another name symbolizing Imjingak and formed to transform Imjingak from a symbol of division and the Cold War to peace and unification. Various culture and art programs including performances, exhibitions and films as well as donation programs are run throughout the year. It helps the children in North Korea through various donation programs.

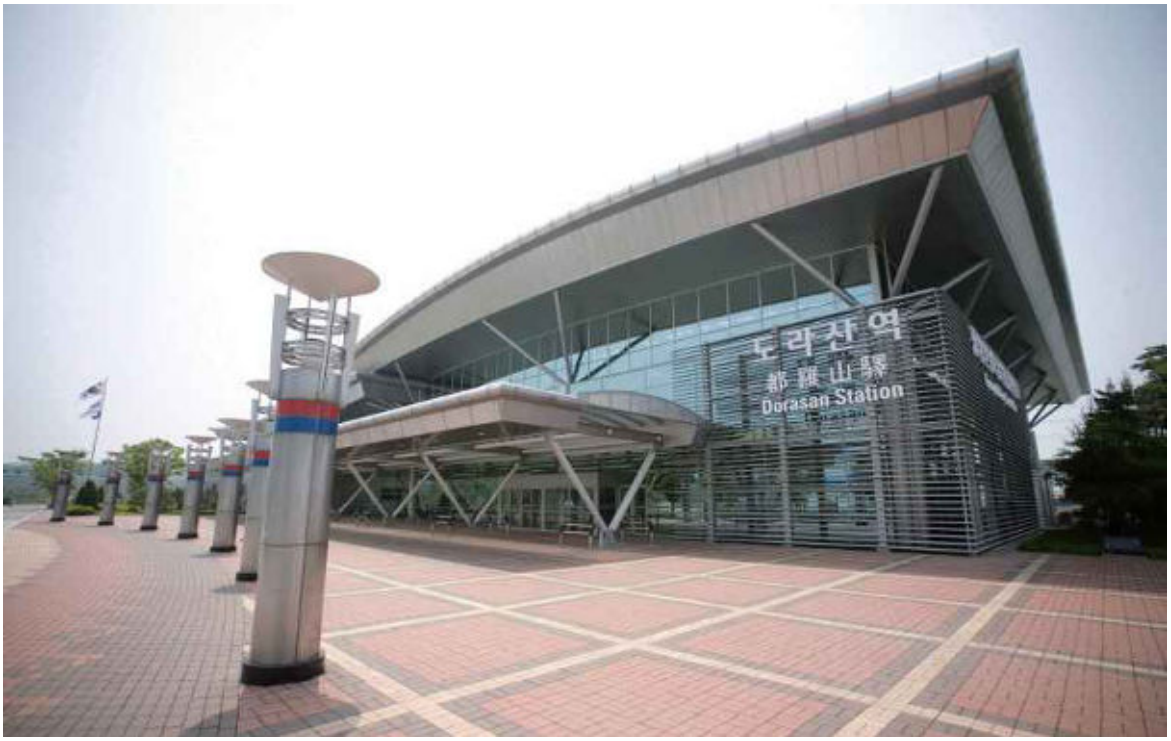

임진각
IMJINGAK

Dorasan Station

It is the northernmost stop for Gyeongui Line below the Civilian Control Line in Dorasan-ri, Gunnae-myeon, Paju-si, Gyeonggi-do. Its name derives from Dorasan Mountain 156m above the sea level. Dorasan Station was built in early February, 2002 by Gyeongui Line restoration project which kicked off in 2000 and construction to connect 4km railway section from Dorasan Station north to Imjingang Station south was completed. It is located only 30m distant from the Southern Limit Line so visitors can see Dorasan Mountain and barbed wire fences. It is settling down as one of the symbolic places representative of desires for unification on the Korean Peninsula.

Dorasan Peace Park

Park construction was finished in June, 2008 and opened to the pubic since September, 2008. Especially, "the Forest of Unification" was formed with offerings and tree donation of peace-loving Gyeonggi-do residents. Now, it is utilized as educational place for the youth to learn values of peace and ecology through the DMZ history. Visitors can experience ecology of the DMZ through the Korean peninsula-looking eco-pond with a scale of 7,246㎡ and 627㎡ observatory deck. The exhibition hall in the park displays the history of Dorasan and materials on ecology of the DMZ in up-to-date three dimensional images.


도라산역
都羅山驛
Dorasan Station


도라산평화공원
DORASAN PEACE-PARK

Panmunjeom

Panmunjeom has become one of the world's attractions as it has been serving a venue for inter-Korean talks since July 27, 1953 when the Armistice Agreement was signed. The name is used to refer to "the Joint Security Area (JSA)" where around 10 buildings including main meeting hall of the Military Armistice Commission and "the Freedom House" of UN are located. After holding a preparatory Red Cross meeting between the two Koreas (August, 1971) and July 4 South-North Joint Communique (1972,) Panmunjeom is gaining the world's attention as a scene and a symbolic place of tragic history of Korean people in the Korean Peninsula.

Odusan Mountain Unification Observatory

Located at a peak of Odusan Mountain in Seongdong-ri, Tanhyeon-myeon, Paju-si, Odusan Unification Observatory is a venue where visitors can overlook the land of North Korea across river. It is a security tourist attraction more than 10 million people have visited since its opening in 1992. It was so strategically important a military position that it even appears in Samguk Sagi or the History of the Three Kingdoms. Looking through binoculars, you may clearly see lives of North Korean residents in Gwansan Peninsula located in Gaepung-gun, Hwanghaebuk-do. Exhibitions are held in various forms with a theme of longing for unification in the renovated exhibition halls displaying lives in North Korea.


통일전망대

The 3rd Tunnel

The 3rd Tunnel, one of tunnels that North Korea dug to infiltrate into the south, was discovered in October, 1978 at a point 4 km south of Panmunjeom. It stretches over 1,635m in length, 2m in width, and 2m in height and is located only 52km away from Seoul. It is estimated to be capable of mobilizing approximately 30,000 troops per hour. The scale is similar to the 2nd Tunnel, but it was thought to be more threatening when it comes to infiltrating into Seoul than the 1st and 2nd Tunnels. It is accessible by car from Seoul in about 45 minutes only.

Camp GREAVES "DMZ Experience Center"

It is one of the oldest US army facilities since the Armistice Agreement was signed. It was the only returned place by US Army within the Civilian Control Zone after stationing for about 50 years since 1953 when the US Forces Korea was first stationed in Korea until 2004 when the US forces left Korea for Iraq. The camp was modified into a peace and security experience facility for civilians. An entire building of the US Army officer's residence was remodeled into youth hostel and opened in 2013 as accommodation "Camp Greaves DMZ Experience Center." It is the first camp-type youth hostel in the DMZ as well as a peace security experience facility.

Taepung Observatory

Taepung Observatory was built in December, 1991. It is situated at Suribong Peak, the highest point of Bikkisan Mountain in Jung-myeon, Yeoncheon-gun located 65km and 140km from Seoul and Pyeongyang respectively. Especially, it is well known for being the closest military observatory to North Korea on the 155mile-long cease-fire line between the two Koreas. Back during the Korean War, it was also a route for main unit of North Korean forces to pass through the area and attack towards Uijeongbu and Seoul. Now, visitors can overlook Imjingang River flowing through the DMZ, Ohjang-dong farm in North Korea, April 5 Dam as well as cranes staying over the winter.

Seungjeon OP (Observation Post)

Seungjeon Observatory is a front-line observation post run to observe activities of enemy. It is also famous for "January 21 Infiltration Road" where the North Korean commandos infiltrated into the South in the past. Using binoculars in the post, visitors can view North Korean guard posts and line of barbed wire fences so close that one would feel like one can touch them. The Yeoncheon plain is also visible. The plain has not been accessible till today since becoming a part of the DMZ. Scene of the fertile Yeoncheon plain that has turned into a wild land is another reminder of sadness of division and commitment for unification.

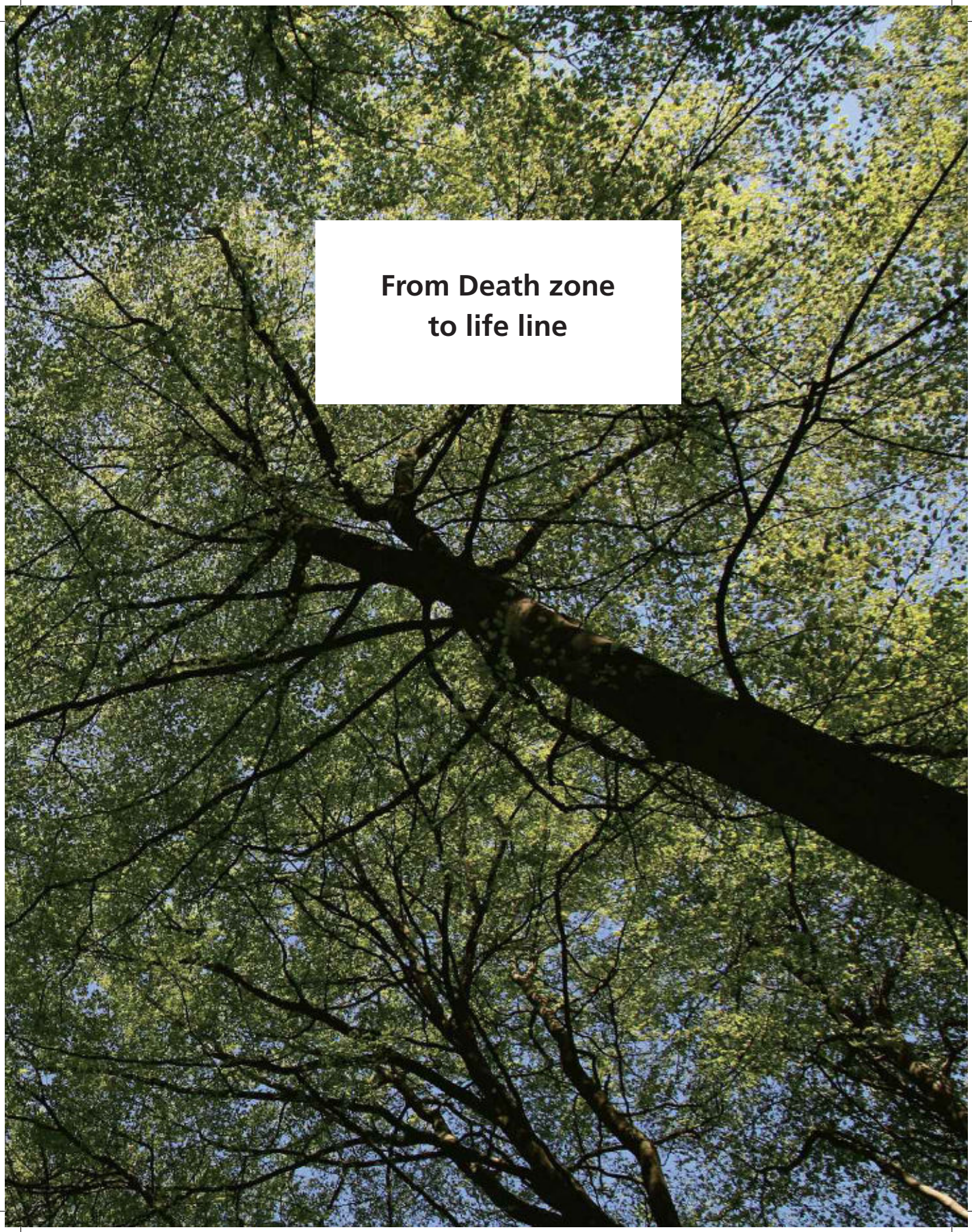
Closing Remarks

A poet once said, "Even amid a black night, you will see a hand come along you can hold together beneath the sky." The DMZ could possibly have been the "hand to hold together" for Korean people under the hopeless circumstances of war. Untouched nature is said to be natural resources by itself. That being said, the DMZ is a favor done by our history and restored ecology of the DMZ is precious resources that cannot be compared against anything else.

Preservation of this precious gift is entirely in our hands and efforts should be made to allow this value of the future to be the asset of our offspring. That way alone, we will be able to preserve the DMZ, which turned into a repository of biodiversity.

The DMZ is a habitat for scarce plants growing naturally all over the place as well as 2,930 sorts of higher plants and the vertebrates. This "ecological axis" that links east and west of the Korean peninsula will settle down as a monumental place for celebrating reunification in the near future as well as world-renowned attraction for tourists and study of natural ecosystem.

To make that happen, various efforts to take actions, respectful of ecological value of the DMZ, have to be preceded out of our hands from now on.



From Death zone to life line

From Death Zone to Life Line

– More than 10 years of experiences from the European Green Belt Initiative

Dr. Uwe Riecken[1], Dr. Karin Ullrich[1]

The European Green Belt is the area of the former Iron Curtain which divided Europe for around forty years into East and West. In the shelter of the border fortifications and areas with restricted access, nature could flourish and develop without much of a disturbance. As a result today we have a Green Belt running through Europe from the Barents Sea in the north to the Black Sea in the southeast. It is more than 12.500 km long and traverses eight biogeographic regions and 24 countries.

In 2003 the first political conference on the European Green Belt was organized by the German Federal Agency for Nature Conservation (BfN) in Bonn with Mikhail Gorbachev, the former president of the USSR, as guest of honor. This was the starting point of the European Green Belt initiative. The initiative consists of national focal points for each country along the Green Belt and a number of NGOs out of which four are working as regional coordinators for the four regions of the European Green Belt. Joint target is to protect the natural treasures along the Green Belt, including wilderness areas like vast forests, cultural landscapes, important water ecosystems and coasts as well as rare species like the European brown bear or wolf.

In 2014 the European Green Belt Association was founded. To share the European experiences with other countries in the world several

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workshops were organized and a formal cooperation between the German Federal Agency for Nature Conservation and the Gyeonggi Province, Rep. of Korea was established for five years (2012-2017).

After 14 years a lot of achievements have been accomplished in different regions of the European Green Belt. On the other hand, many challenges remain for future work. In this paper a brief overview on the history of the European Green Belt Initiative, selected activities and projects and future challenges is given.

1. Introduction

For more than 40 years an Iron Curtain divided Europe into East and West. This became true in Central Europe especially after the construction of the Berlin Wall in 1962 when this border became more and more non-traversable. Fences, mine fields, watch towers and effective border patrols formed a death zone with many victims consequent to their endeavor to cross this border fleeing from the political situation in Eastern Europe. This situation also caused a strictly reduced economic development of the border regions and in many places a decreasing human population. The only winner of this inhuman situation was nature. In the shelter of the border fortifications and areas with restricted access nature could persist and develop without much disturbance. As a result, today we have a Green Belt running through Europe from the Barents Sea in the north to the Black Sea in the southeast (Fig. 1). It is more than 12.500 km long and traverses eight biogeographic regions and 24 countries (Riecken et al. 2006). It consists of wilderness areas like vast forests, cultural landscapes, important water ecosystems and coasts and hosts a number of rare and threatened species like the European brown bear, lynx, and the European otter or the wolf (Schwaderer and Spangenberg 2006: 133-134, Schwaderer et al. 2009: 288-290, Schwaderer et al. 2016).

Fig. 1: Course of the European Green Belt (http://www.europeangreenbelt.org/, 29 March 2017)

2. The European Green Belt initiative – How it started

In different parts of the European Green Belt the high ecological value of the border regions along the former Iron Curtain has been recognized even long before the fall of the Iron Curtain. In order to protect these regions cooperative activities across these borders have started at various points of time, e.g. in Fennoscandia (Karivalo and Butorin 2006: 44), Germany (Frobel et al. 2009: 399-403; Riecken and Finck 2012: 22-27, Riecken and Ullrich 2010: 19-22), the area of the transboundary National Park Lake Neusiedl-Fertö-Hanság (Kirchberger and Karpati 2006: 105-

107, Knolle et al. 2009: 418-419) on the Austrian-Hungarian border and in the Balkan region (Schwaderer and Spangenberg 2006: 133-134).
The knowledge about the value of these border regions and the ensuing activities led to the idea to join them together as a European initiative in order to strengthen the regional efforts and to learn from each other. Thus, in 2003 a first political conference on the European Green Belt was organized by BfN in Bonn (Engels et al. eds 2004). At this conference Mikhail Gorbachev, the former president of the USSR and the president of Green Cross International, was present (Fig. 2) and it was possible to gain his support as a patron of the European Green Belt Initiative. Besides, other high-ranked politicians were present and gave support to the beginnings of the initiative, e.g. the then German minister for environment, and the then Russian and Czech vice-ministers for environment (Engels et al. eds 2004).

Fig. 2: Mikhail Gorbachev, the former president of the USSR and president of Green Cross International, as a guest of honour at the first pan-European Green Belt conference in July 2013 in Bonn (© U. Euler)

The first of the Pan-European Green Belt Conferences of the working group as a consequence was held in Sarród in Hungary in 2004. It was hosted by the Fertö-Hanság National Park, which forms a transboundary

national park together with the Lake Neusiedel National Park in Austria (Kirchberger and Karpati 2006: 105-107, Knolle et al. 2009: 418-419). This transboundary park is not only a best practise example for successful transboundary cooperation in nature conservation and sustainable development but it also contains the historic location of the Pan European Picnic, where in 1989 activists from Hungary and people from East Germany gathered and for the first time managed to break through the border fences, an important event preceding the fall of the Iron Curtain. Roughly 15 years after this event the participants of the conference visited this location, where they were joined by the then Hungarian minister for environment. During this conference, for the first time, a broad overview on the situation of the European Green Belt and the activities carried out by different governmental and non-governmental organisations was outlined. Two years later, the conference documentation was published by IUCN (Terry et al. eds, 2006) as the first comprehensive publication on the European Green Belt.

The most important outcome of this conference was the set-up of a programme of work, listing direct actions needed for the implementation of the European Green Belt, giving a framework for an institutional structure and stakeholder participation and last, but not least, naming activities needed as a basis for setting up and running the initiative (Anonymous 2006: 208-214). In the follow-up, many activities within the initiative were based on the implementation of this programme of work. From most of the 24 countries, governmental and non-governmental organisations have joined the European Green Belt Initiative in order to protect the natural treasures along the Green Belt. For each geographical region a regional coordinator has also been established (Table 1).

Table 1: The regions and regional coordinators of the European Green Belt

Region	Regional Coordinator
Fennoscandia	Baltic Fund for Nature (BFN) St. Petersburg, RUSSIA E-mail: bfn@bfn.org.ru
Baltic Green Belt (established as a new region in 2012)	Regional Association of BUND Friends of the Earth Germany in Mecklenburg-West Pomerania, Schwerin, GERMANY E-mail: bund.mv@bund.net
Central Europe	BUND-Friends of the Earth Germany, Project Office Green Belt, Nuremberg, GERMANY E-mail: gruenesband@bund-naturschutz.de
Balkan	European Nature Heritage Fund (EURONATUR), Radolfzell, GERMANY E-mail: info@euronatur.org

Fig. 3: Green Belt of Fennoscandia: Koli National Park, border between Finland and Russia

Fig. 4: Baltic Green Belt: Lahemaa National Park, Estonia

Fig. 5: Central European Green Belt: Inner-German Green Belt, © Klaus Leidorf

Fig. 6: Balkan Green Belt: Lake Skutari, border between Montenegro and Albany

3. Overall targets of the Green Belt Initiative

Over the years the significance of the European Green Belt in various contexts became very obvious. This is reflected by the targets of the European Green Belt Initiative. These are to preserve the Green Belt as

- backbone of a Pan-European Ecological Network(PEEN) which contributes to rendering Natura 2000 and Emerald Sites into a true network of protected areas and to the Green Infrastructure for Europe,
- a common heritage and memorial landscape along the former Iron Curtain,
- a model area for the conservation and restoration of a functional ecological network where also the economic, social, and cultural

needs of local communities are respected,

- a framework for cross-border cooperation on regional and municipal level as well as for protected areas,
- a best practice example for successful cooperation of GOs and NGOs in a transboundary context,
- a contribution to the cohesion of Europe and the consolidation of peace, and
- last, but not least, as a marketing instrument for nature conservation because of its historic and cultural dimension.

(Anonymous 2006)

4. Cooperation GO – NGO

Ever since the idea of setting up a European Green Belt initiative first came up, BUND (Friends of the earth Germany) and BfN have been closely cooperating in their work for the European Green Belt and soon have been joined in their efforts by many others. Among these, in addition to BUND, we want to especially mention EuroNatur, as both NGOs have engaged themselves strongly for the initiative and its development. Other important NGO partners along the Green Belt are e.g. IUCN (Belgrade office), Baltic Fund for Nature, and many other NGOs mostly working on a more regional or national level. These examples stand for the exceptionally good cooperation between GOs and NGOs in the European Green Belt Initiative in general.

5. The first ten years

Since the beginning quite a number of pan-European and regional meetings on the European Green Belt have taken place. These were very important to develop the initiative further but also to establish contacts across borders and regions and thus create a network between the various actors (Riecken and Ullrich 2014). This helped to further

develop the initiative as such but especially to initiate transboundary and multinational projects. In table 2 an overview of the most important pan-European conferences is given.

Table 2: Important pan-European conferences of the European Green Belt initiative during the first 10 years

year	locality and occasion
2003	Bonn, Germany: first international conference on the European Green Belt
2004	Fertö-Hansag National Park, Hungary: First draft of a Program of Work (PoW), IUCN opened the green belt secretariat
2009	Linz, Austria: Linz was a European culture capital. At this occasion in the castle museum at Linz a newly built wing of the museum was opened with a large exhibition on the European Green Belt accompanied by a substantial catalogue (Wrbka et al. eds 2009).
2010	Kuhmo, Finland: connected to the 20th anniversary symposium on the Finnish-Russian Friendship Reserve (IUCN 2010).
2012	Mavrovo National Park, Macedonia: Decision on the future structure of the European Green Belt Inititive after IUCN got out of the function of a Green Belt secretary, due to financial problems
2013	Berlin, Germany: occasion of the 10th anniversary of the initiative (see ch 5)

The overall importance of the European Green Belt is documented by a mapping project which brought together all accessible information on protected areas along the entire Green Belt (IUCN 2007, Schlumprecht, Kreutz and Lang 2009). Today there are e.g. 40 national parks along the former Iron Curtin. 16 of them are transboundary or have adjoining national parks on the other side of the border (Fig. 7).

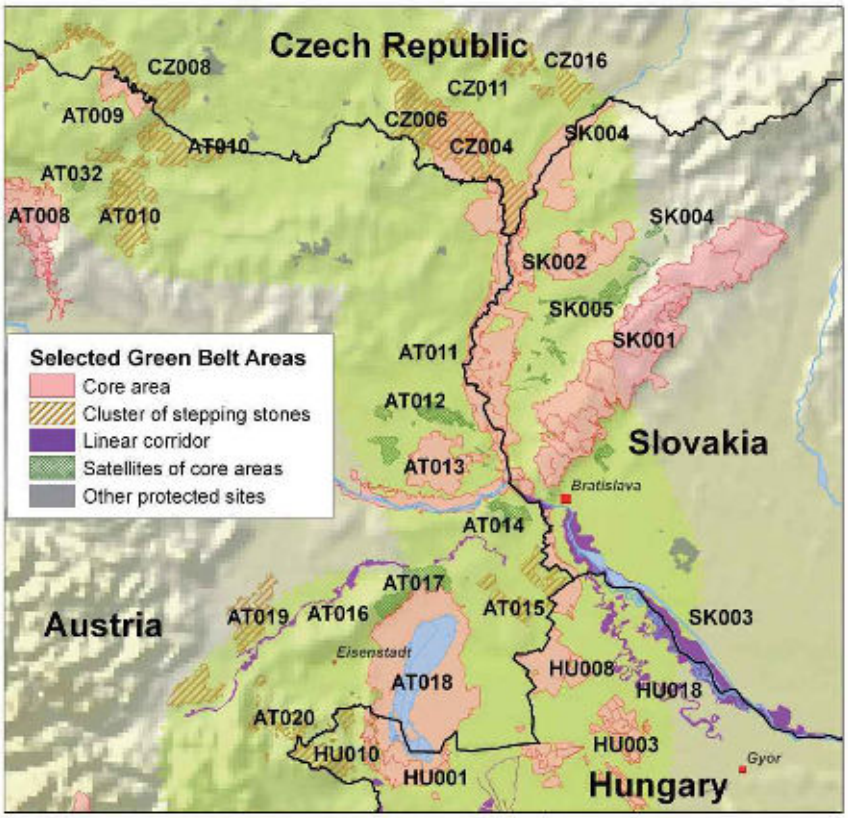

Fig. 7: Example map of protected areas along the European Green Belt (Schlumprecht, Kreutz and Lang 2009)

Very important multinational projects are INTERREG-projects funded by the EU, of which the Greennet-project was already the third project (Marschall et al. eds 2012). All of these projects served not only to produce results focussed on the practical implementation of the European Green Belt, e.g. measurements to enhance sustainable regional development, to improve and implement an integrated Coastal Zone Management, to support Baltic Sea biodiversity and reduce eutrophication, or to integrate human activities with the natural environment in protected as well as non-protected areas. It showed that these projects also were extremely important for the evolution of well-functioning regional networks of

actors, for streamlining ideas and approaches as the basis for a Corporate Identity of the Initiative and for an efficient public relations and lobbying work.

The INTERREG-project 'Baltic Green Belt' (Sterr et al. eds 2012) even led to the formation of a new sub-region within the European Green Belt Initiative, the Baltic Green Belt Region. Based on the importance of these projects for the initiative we hope that this kind of support of the EU will continue making future projects of this size and multinational dimension possible.

For the long-term success of the initiative and the advancements made in the protection and development of the Green Belt, various commitments made from the political to the practical level will be decisive. The additional historic and cultural dimension and significance of the initiative combined with a lot of public relations and lobbying work has led to great political support for the protection and development of the Green Belt in Germany by almost all parties.

On 17 February 2010 for the most northern part of the Green Belt a 'Memorandum of Understanding on cooperation on the development of the Green Belt of Fennoscandia' was signed by the Ministry of the Environment, Finland, the Ministry of the Environment, Norway, and the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment, Russia. This agreement aims at transboundary cooperation in terms of an ecologically, economically, socially and culturally sustainable development along the Finnish-Norwegian, Finnish-Russian and Norwegian-Russian parts of the Green Belt. Main focus has been laid on the cooperation between different scientific organizations, NGOs and administrations of different levels and here especially the administrations of the protected areas (Juvonen 2012).

The importance of the Green Belt initiative is recognised not only on a regional level but the European Commission in 2013 adopted

a communication on the development of a Green Infrastructure for Europe (GI) (European Commission 2013). One proposed tool for the implementation are EU-level GI projects. As an example of such a project the European Green Belt Initiative was presented (European Commission 2013: 9-10).

Nature conservation in the Green Belt benefits from the high degree of political attention for the memorial of the former division of Europe. But on the other hand nature conservation offers an opportunity to keep this memorial alive.

The significance of the European Green Belt for nature conservation, the common heritage and memorial landscape may best be reflected by the interest it raises in other parts of the world outside Europe. To share the European experiences with other countries in the world several workshops were organized e.g. during the World Conservation Congress 2012 (Jeju, Republic of Korea) or the World Parks Congress 2014 (Sydney, Australia).

Special interest in the Green Belt exists in the Republic of Korea due to the parallels existing between the European Green Belt and the Korean Demilitarized Zone, the so called DMZ, a still existing strongly guarded border splitting the Korean peninsula (Park 2013). Based on this special interest in February 2012 the Governor Moon-soo Kim of Gyeonggi-Province, one of two South Korean provinces adjoining the Korean DMZ, and the president of BfN, prof. Beate Jessel, signed a declaration of intent on the future cooperation on the DMZ and the Green Belt for five years.

This declaration has been followed by various joint activities like the organisation of several workshops (e.g. 2016 at the ESP conference in Ansan City, Republic of Korea) and a joint publication 'The two lines' (Gyeonggi do et al. 2013).

6. The 10th anniversary of the Initiative

Ten years after the first conference in Bonn, which was the starting point of the initiative, a new political impulse was to be given by a high-level celebration. The main building of the German Ministry for Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety in Berlin was chosen as location. This building touches the line of the former Berlin wall. A modern extension of this historic building has been constructed over a remaining piece of the Berlin wall.

The 10th anniversary of the European Green Belt Initiative was celebrated with three international events on 15 and 16 May 2013 in Berlin, Germany. On 15 May 2013 the German Federal Ministry for Environment in cooperation with BUND, EuroNatur and BfN celebrated a ceremonial act. During this ceremony several ministers, ambassadors and representatives of the 24 states adjoining the Green Belt received a Green Belt award for their commitment and as incentive to strengthen the activities for the Green Belt (Fig. 8). The price was awarded by BUND and EuroNatur on behalf of the Coordination Group of the European Green Belt Initiative. Several of the appointed representatives underlined their political will to support the pan-European initiative: an official Joint Declaration of Intent was signed by eleven states during the event. In the follow-up for additional countries signed the declaration during a second signing ceremony on 4 September 2013 and other Green Belt countries followed. Today 20 out of 24 countries have signed or support the declaration

Fig. 8: Representatives from the Green Belt countries receiving the Green Belt award during the official celebration of the 10th anniversary of the European Green Belt Initiative (Berlin, 15 May 2013, © Sascha Hilgers, BMUB)

In the evening of 15 May about 90 people, stakeholders of the 24 European Green Belt countries, and a delegation from South Korea met at the GreenNet Evening Reception[2] in the history-charged Berlin Wall Memorial. The reception was dedicated to deepening international cooperation and exchange.

The anniversary celebrations were followed by an international symposium on 16 May in the German Ministry for the Environment, jointly organized by BUND, EuroNatur and BfN. Janez Potočnik, European Commissioner for the Environment, welcomed the participants via video message and pointed out the great potential of the European Green Belt for building a green infrastructure across the continent.

2 Organized by BUND within the Central European INTERREG- project "GreenNet - Promoting the ecological network in the European Green Belt", co-financed by ERDF

7. Where are we now?

During the first few years, IUCN with its regional office for Europe in Brussels operated a Green Belt secretariat, which was later on located in Belgrade. In 2010 this secretariat was closed due to structural changes in the organization of IUCN and due to the lack of financial support. In 2011 a research and development study was launched by BfN to develop ideas on how to establish a sustainable structure for the initiative and a sustainable financial foundation. The first outcome of this study was the implementation of a coordination group which consists of twelve persons, coming from the four regions, each represented by the regional coordinator, one national focal point and one NGO. Main tasks of this group were to assist the scientific project, discuss the results, organize the pan-European meetings and represent the Initiative towards the public and decision-makers e.g. in the EU.

On 24 September 2014 the European Green Belt Association e. V. was founded during the 8th pan-European conference in Slavonice, Czech Republic. Today it has more than 30 members – all of them are either representatives from ministries and from nature conservation authorities or non-governmental organizations (Schwaderer et al. 2016). In 2016 during the 9th pan-European Green Belt conference in the Koli National Park, Finland the draft of a working program for the association was outlined.

8. Future perspective

Projects are of course nice to have and so far formed a very important basis for the work on the European Green Belt. However, other developments, like the conservation status of an area or region can have great implications for its protection and development. With regard to the European Green Belt the question whether it could be nominated as a UNESCO world heritage site and might benefit from this was

brought up repeatedly in the past. As experiences with the nomination of other world heritage sites showed, it is not easy to fulfil the UNESCO criteria for a world heritage site and always leads to a very complicated and demanding process. This induced BfN to commission a feasibility study on the suitability of the European Green Belt or of parts of it for a nomination as world heritage site (Gaudry et al. 2014). In this study various scenarios were created and checked including the advantages that might arise for the Green Belt but also the efforts that would be needed to achieve this goal. In total the results show, that a nomination would be possible and could be successful. Nevertheless this idea is still in discussion within the Green Belt community and no official initiative for a nomination has been started by now.

For the future the initiative will try to fulfill the targets documented before and in the drafted working program of the European Green Belt Association and therefore wants to:

- develop and install a sustainable financial foundation for the association,
- enhance public relations and lobby work, e.g. by publications, webpage[3], new social media but also by direct contacts to national and international decision-makers like the EU commission,
- implement new transboundary projects (like the INTERREG-projects) for different regions,
- help to establish new protected areas along the Green Belt and to improve the management quality of existing ones, and
- strengthen national and regional NGOs by the means of projects and activities focusing on capacity building.

Based on the very successful cooperation between the different stakeholders of the Green Belt initiative we are very optimistic that these targets will be met in the future.

3 See: http://www.europeangreenbelt.org/

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