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# The Moments in Jeju



# Altteureu Airfield:



## Charting a Course for Dark Tourism on Jeju

Even on the tranquil island of Jeju, dark tourism exists waiting to be explored. Dark tourism involves visiting sites steeped in historical pain to witness, hear, and learn from events that unfolded during darker, more troubled times. Jeju Island has weathered the hardships of Japanese colonization and ideological conflict. Considering the island's history of frequent invasions and seizures from the mainland, including the devastating "Jeju April 3<sup>rd</sup> Incident", it's fair to say that the entire region is intertwined with the concept of dark tourism. However, regardless of the tour's intentions, incorporating the remnants of the still-healing wounds into the tour theme can be uncomfortable for both victims and tourists. Dark tourism, therefore, demands reflection on dark history and careful, sensitive preparation to remember and commiserate with it. In this respect, the *Altteureu* Airfield can be considered a model for the direction the dark tourism industry should take on Jeju Island.

### *Altteureu* Airfield, Where History's Scars Remain

*Altteureu*, which means "lower field" in Jeju, was one of the few fertile plains on the island up until the Joseon Dynasty, where locals would farm a variety of crops. However,



from the 1920s onward, the Japanese military repurposed it as a wartime outpost along with *Jeongtteureu* Airfield (now Jeju Airport). During the occupation, the Japanese forced the residents of Moseulpo to build a military airfield between the 1920s to mid-1930s. Within the 66-hectare airfield, 20 hangars, measuring 20-meter wide, 4-meter high, and 10.5-meter long, were constructed, with 19 still standing in their original form today. *Seotal Oreum*, the site of the April 3<sup>rd</sup> massacre, is where the hangars are located. In a bomb shed built by the Japanese, a large crater was formed from frequent explosions, and Jeju residents who were imprisoned due to their participation in a civilian-led uprising known as the April 3<sup>rd</sup> Incident were gathered there and massacred by the South Korean government.

The airfield itself took on a crucial role with the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese War in 1937, as fighters from Omura's naval air force launched from here to bomb the Chinese city of Nanjing, some 700

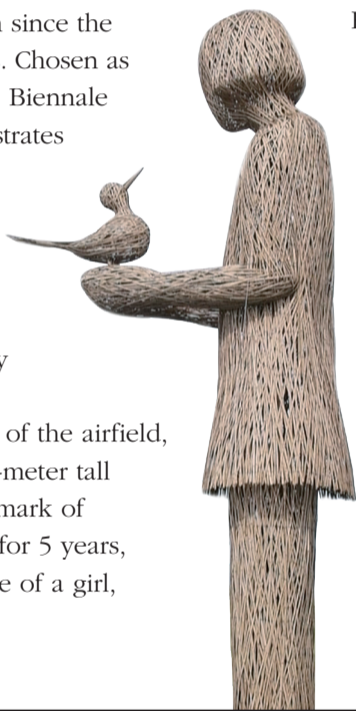


kilometers away. During the Pacific War in the 1940s, 60,000 to 70,000 elite Japanese troops, including the Kwantung Army, were stationed on Jeju Island, the force that was equivalent to a quarter of the island's population. One can imagine how extensive the forced mobilization of civilians was at the time due to the heavy military presence. Post-liberation, the Ministry of National Defense took control of the site, and on November 29<sup>th</sup>, 2006, the hangar, underground bunker cave, and artillery site were designated as registered cultural properties of Korea's modern cultural heritage. Today, local farmers lease portions of the land from the Ministry, cultivating garlic, sweet potatoes, radishes, and other crops. The scene of bygone airplane hangars and soil-covered fields, juxtaposed with farmers diligently working the land, emanates an eerie peace. Kim Ji-yeon, art director of the inaugural Jeju Biennale, describes these scenes as "a process of healing the pain of war through the act of farming."

## From a Land of Hurt to a Field of Peace

The *Altteureu* Airfield, bearing the scars of forced labor and the April 3<sup>rd</sup> massacre, now resembles any other farmland in the region, only it continues to draw attention as a site for dark tourism since the installation of several key artworks. Chosen as an exhibition space for the 1<sup>st</sup> Jeju Biennale in 2017, *Altteureu* Airfield demonstrates that dark tourism, reflecting on the dark scars of the past, not only involves remembering and commemorating through art but also provides a means of comforting individuals living today through this process.

At the entrance to the parking lot of the airfield, Choi Pyeong-gon's *Blue Bird*, a 9-meter tall sculpture that has become a landmark of *Altteureu* Airfield and Jeju Island for 5 years, was captivating visitors. The statue of a girl,



crafted from woven bamboo inspired by the bamboo spears used by the *Donghak* peasant army, blended seamlessly into the southwestern Jeju sky. However, unlike the pointed spears of the *Donghak* army, the gentle curves of the girl in *Blue Bird* conveyed a message of peace while inheriting the resistance message of the *Donghak* Revolution.

Artworks were also installed in the airplane hangars at the airfield. *Memory* by Kang Moon-seok portrayed a Jerosen-model fighter jet with a broken wing, a lightweight fighter used by the Japanese Naval Air Force during the Pacific War. Another collaborative work by Kang and Park Kyung-hoon in 2010 was featuring a fighter plane reduced to a mere steel frame, adorned with ribbons that visitors have voluntarily tied to the frame, symbolizing their wishes for peace. Potatoes and sweet potatoes thrived around the hangars housing these works, some doubling as storage for farming equipment, illustrating the seamless



Underground Bunker Cave

integration of art and everyday life at *Altteureu*. Although the Biennale has concluded, the installed works remain, welcoming visitors.

However, with the passage of time, the lifespan of the works is coming to an end and some of them have been demolished, leaving a deep regret.

With the recent legalization of the free use of public property, the Jeju Island government is actively discussing the creation of a peace park around the airfield. It is a moment for further reflection on how to articulate peace at *Altteureu*, a museum of war without a roof.

# TOUR INFORMATION  
# ALTTEUREU AIRFIELD ###

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Discovering  
Jeju's Natural  
Beauty at

# Camellia Hill



Vibrant red camellia flowers against the white snows of deep winter have become one of the must-see sights in Jeju. There's a saying that a trip to Jeju in winter is a camellia trip. Camellias can be found throughout the island, but for those seeking to immerse themselves in a camellia forest that blooms from fall to spring, there is no better place than Camellia Hill. Located in Andeok-myeon, Seogwipo, Camellia Hill stands as the largest camellia arboretum in Asia, attracting countless tourists each day.

## Camellia Hill, the Largest Dongbaek Garden in Asia.

True to its name, Camellia Hill is covered in *dongbaek*, the Korean word for camellia flowers. It took 40 years of dedicated effort to transform the mid-mountainous terrain, approximately 250 meters in altitude, into the thriving arboretum it is today. As the largest camellia garden in the East, it spans over 200,000 square meters and houses a lush forest of 600 trees with 500 camellia varieties from over 80 countries. From native Korean camellias to sasanqua (the Japanese and Chinese variety), European camellias, and Asia-Pacific camellias, different shapes and colors of camellias grace the hill, each blooming at its own distinct time of the year. While camellias are often regarded as unscented, Camellia Hill is home to six out of the eight scented camellia species, offering visitors a chance to savor the sweet, subtle scent of their blossoms.

Upon entering Camellia Hill, you are greeted by an old camellia tree, with its distinctive reddish buds, a common sight in every Jeju neighborhood. Following a tranquil wildflower path that winds along traditional Jeju stone walls, you'll encounter the European Camellia Forest Course, where more than 100 camellia species from across Europe bloom in a kaleidoscope of white, pink, crimson, and red hues. As you walk deeper into the forest, the petals gently fall, creating a red-hued carpet on the ground. Legend has it that when lovers pass through this forest, this forest will have their love consummated, much like the camellia's exquisite final display. While the



outdoor areas beckon couples and families for their colorful camellia groves and picturesque photo opportunities, the large and small greenhouses are especially beloved by flower enthusiasts. These greenhouses shelter over 600 different potted camellia species, lovingly tended by the gardeners at Camellia Hill throughout the year. The 102 square meter large greenhouse also has a charming flower café, where you can enjoy a cup of tea surrounded by the beautiful blooms.

### # TOUR INFORMATION # CAMELLIA HILL ###

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## Capturing Jeju's Four Seasons



Camellias are not the sole attraction on this hill, however. There are over 250 species of plants native to Jeju Island, including Siebold's chinquapin, a species of evergreen tree found in subtropical East Asia. These indigenous plants, with their varying bloom times, fragrances, shapes, and colors, combine with the camellias to create a constantly evolving and uniquely beautiful landscape as the seasons shift. Spring still reigns supreme atop Camellia Hill, earning its title as the "queen of the seasons." The camellia variety known as *chunbaek* begins its bloom in March, signaling the first arrival of Spring. It is soon followed by the vibrant pink chrysanthemum, the symbol of Jeju Island,

then by purple moss phlox and more than 100 varieties of azaleas. Cherry blossoms and vivid tulips reach their zenith to bring the true essence of spring to life. Within the greenhouses, visitors are greeted by geraniums, boulevards, and various other plants alongside the vast array of camellias.

Hydrangeas in full bloom represent summer at Camellia Hill. Visitors will find an arrangement of different varieties, including the *sansuguk* hydrangea, native to Jeju Island. While Hydrangeas typically begin to bloom in May and reach their peak in midsummer, Camellia Hill offers an early display because the hydrangeas are grown in greenhouses before being planted along the paths. During the Hydrangea Festival, the number of visitors rivals that of the Camellia Festival. For an autumn experience at Camellia Hill, be sure to head to the Autumn Garden. Surrounded by camellia trees and Jeju stone walls with the majestic Hallasan and Sanbongsan mountains in the background, this garden boasts 60 varieties of grasses and 100 flowering plant species. You can marvel at the undulating sea of grasses, including the pink muhly and ruby muhly, as well as the beauty of autumn flowers like cosmos and globe amaranth. Of course, winter paints a scene of unmatched beauty atop Camellia Hill, with hundreds of red camellias in full bloom against a pristine white snow-covered landscape.



## 40 Years of Passion and Dedication to Camellia Arboretum

The current Camellia Hill is the result of President Yang Eon-bo's unwavering love for camellias, a devotion that has spanned four decades. Fascinated by the enduring beauty of the camellia, which blooms red in the white snow and then fades without a trace, Mr. Yang had a dream in the 1970s to gather all the camellias of the world in a single place. Since then, his lifelong passion for camellias was ignited and he has been studying them ever since.

In 1984, Mr. Yang committed himself to the planting of camellias in earnest. He cleared his orchard of all citrus trees, and planted camellias in their place without the use of electricity or any power tools, gradually expanding the area of his flower bed. One by one, camellia seedlings began to grow on the steep, uncultivated hillside. In 1998, he quit his other business ventures entirely and switched to full-fledged landscaping, creating the magnificent camellia garden we see today.

Faced with a shortage of camellia experts, and a lack of books or papers on the subject in Korea, he traveled to more than 130 countries around the world, including Japan, China, and Europe, collecting materials and seeds. He continued to import camellia seedlings from abroad, resulting in more than 500 of the 2,000 global camellia species adapting to Jeju's soil, thriving, and blooming. On November 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2008, Mr. Yang opened Camellia Hill at 271 Sangchang-ri,

Andeok-myeon, Seogwipo-si.

Fifteen years later, President Yang's daily routine remains the same. Every day, he wakes up at dawn, dons a pair of cotton gloves, and strolls through the 60,000 *pyeong* (around 200,000 square meters) of his camellia garden. His hope is that visitors to Camellia Hill will fully enjoy the beauty of camellias and the natural splendor of Jeju, all while gazing at the backdrop of Hallasan Mountain and the Jeju Sea. Camellia Hill continues to inspire and comfort countless individuals today.



# Cacao Family

Goes Local,  
Then Global



Chocolate is a key commodity in many tourist destinations, including Jeju Island, which offers a variety of cacao-infused products. In the same way that locally-produced chocolate has become one of the most popular souvenirs from the world-famous island of Hawaii, Jeju offers its own signature cacao. Visitors in Hawaii often enjoy visits to cacao farms and chocolate factories. Interestingly, chocolate was never originally from or traditionally consumed in Hawaii. The first cacao trees were imported from Guatemala in the 1830s. If a tree as delicious as the cacao tree could one day be cultivated on Jeju Island, could chocolate come to be considered a local delicacy there as well? CEO Kim Jeong-ah shares the journey of Cacao Family, a business coexisting with the local community, cultivating cacao trees, and creating delicious chocolate products using fair-trade cacao.

## How the Ancient Mayan Culture of Cacao Came to Jeju Island

Sehwa-ri, a small rural village in Gujwa-eup on the eastern tip of Jeju Island, is unlike the nearby tourist spots. It's secluded, but not devoid of visitors, dotted with charming cafés and shops. The Cacao Family, established in 2018, is a cacao shop and experience bar to roast its own cacao, make chocolate, and sell it. It's also a social enterprise that supports local producers in Guatemala, Cambodia, and other countries through fair trade, fostering mutual benefit with local communities. Their range of cacao products includes cacao beans, chocolate, caramel, cacao nibs, and cacao tea.

It's evident from her words that Kim Jeong-ah, the CEO of Cacao Family, also known as the "bean master," loves cacao. The company was founded by Kim Jung-ah and Lee In-wook, who fell in love with cacao



in 2007 when they moved to Antigua, Guatemala with their three children to work on the family business. Kim first became immersed in the culture of eating healthy cacao, not just the sweetened variety that so many are used to.

**"In Guatemala, there is an authentic cacao food culture dating back to the ancient Mayans, where the nutritious bean is sprinkled over rice, or boiled in water and consumed as a tea. Having experienced this culture, I was drawn to chocolate and other cacao-based foods and beverages that retain these authentic flavors. I knew there was great potential for this business beyond the borders of South America."**

The couple's interest in cacao led them to address an imbalance in its distribution, dominated by large corporations and middlemen profiting at the expense of local farmers. Frustrated by this unfairness and the poverty it perpetuates by causing young people to leave their communities in search of jobs, the couple chose to make chocolate using the bean-to-bar method. This means that the raw material, cacao beans, is sourced from local farms, then roasted, melted, and produced by the makers themselves. This allows them to make chocolate that tastes and smells like pure cacao while ensuring fair profits for the farmers. The company also established a local subsidiary in Guatemala to improve the lives of farmers by promoting fair trade and addressing profit imbalances.

"Cacao Family is a 'cacao specialty grocery store' that reinterprets the cacao culture of the Mayan people of Central and South America in the mysterious land of Jeju. Upon entering the store visitors are greeted by the sweet aroma of chocolate and receive a letter from Roy, guiding them to discover the cacao of the Mayans. That's Roy in the picture here, who is actually my husband, and typically explores the world, meeting local producers in search of the best ingredients."



## Guatemalan Cacao Expands Worldwide from Jeju Island



Beyond making chocolate, Cacao Family is a social enterprise committed to the

sustainability of Sehwa-ri. More than just making chocolate, their aim is to have a positive influence within their local community. Their Carrot Project was the first in a series of projects to do just that.

**“The biggest problem in the village at the time was a surplus of carrots. So we organized five events over three weeks in the form of a festival to bring together a wide range of customers from the community. We held a ‘carrot farmer feast’ for the local farmers, put together an art exhibition with local artists, and even developed a carrot dessert tour program that connected bakeries and cafés from Woljeong-ri to Jongdal-ri. The result was that we were able to gather people interested in buying carrots directly from the farmers, selling around 26 tons of carrots.”**

The “Sehwa-ri World Travel” program was another iconic project developed in collaboration with various Sehwa-ri shop owners. There are many unique shops in Sehwa-ri with their own unique stories to tell. Yet, many tourists, unaware of these narratives, tend to visit just one shop before leaving. Based on the idea that each shop encapsulates the cultures of different countries, they organized a series of cultural programs for each country. Instead of focusing solely on individual shops, the initiative presented tourists with themed content encompassing the entire Sehwa-ri village. The result was a huge success.



**“While managing our Sehwa-ri store, the realization hit me: ‘You can’t do this alone.’ So, I convinced the other store owners that it would be more enjoyable to do something like this together, rather than being strictly profit-driven. I was sure that by interacting with one another, a neighborhood that felt more like a family would start to emerge.”**

Cacao Family’s goal of this year is to promote Guatemala’s single-origin raw products globally, by expanding beyond Jeju and Korea. To do this, they’ve already taken several key steps, including establishing an R&D center and an HACCP-certified manufacturing facility to ensure proper food safety. In Guatemala, plans are underway to build a production plant and a technical school.

**“In Guatemala, all the cacao beans that are grown are exported overseas, keeping the people of Guatemala engaged mainly in primary agriculture. Establishing a local processing plant would not only generate employment opportunities but also contribute to improving farmers’ incomes.”**

Kim’s next step is to head back to Jeju with the goal of progressing from “bean to bar” to “farm to bar” by successfully cultivating cacao on the island. While successful cacao cultivation occurred on Jeju Island in 2019, it was not with Guatemalan seeds. Given the worldwide decline in cacao seeds and the rise of GMO cacao and chocolate, the challenge is certainly worth taking up. Cacao Family is currently collaborating with the Jeju Agricultural Research & Extension Service and the Biodiversity Research Institute to study original cacao species and develop products. “Cultivating cacao on Jeju could serve as a global model, creating significant synergy in the sixth industry, alongside the secondary and tertiary sectors.” Something about the sparkle in her eye as she says this seems to foretell the spread of thriving cacao trees across Jeju Island.

## Adds Flavor and Narrative to Jeju’s Local Harvest



# Yumyum-jeju

Agriculture, coupled with tourism, stands as the cornerstone of Jeju’s local economy. Over the period from 2016 to 2021, Jeju has consistently grown

99.5% of the tangerines, 68.4% of the broccoli, 53.0% of the carrots, 25.1% of the cabbages, and 24.4% of the radishes produced in Korea. However, like any rural area, Jeju’s agricultural sector grapples with challenges such as an aging and shrinking workforce alongside rising costs. The good news is that the seeds of change have already been sown, and there is a shared resolve to enhance the primary industry by intertwining it with manufacturing (secondary industry) and tourism (tertiary industry) to address these issues “Yumyumjeju” emerges as a local brand that embodies this sort of transformative potential.

## Eating Your Way Through Jeju’s Changing Seasons

Yumyumjeju specializes in producing minimally processed food, particularly jams, using agricultural products from Jeju. Since they exclusively rely on local produce, the items available vary according to the changing seasons. In winter, carrots and tangerines; in spring, *cheonhyehyang* (a larger cousin of the tangerine); in summer, pumpkins, tomatoes, and figs; in fall, *ttanggyul* (young tangerines). Then, when winter comes back around again, the symbolic sweet



and sour tangerines of Jeju are back on the menu. Kang Eun-young, the CEO of Yumyumjeju, first became interested in Jeju's produce when carrot prices plummeted in 2015. Witnessing surplus carrots being fed to horses sparked her concern about the community's challenge of dealing with unsold produce. This prompted Kang to explore innovative new ways of utilizing surplus carrots and other agricultural leftovers, ultimately leading to the creation of Yumyumjeju.

**"It was frustrating to see quality carrots go to waste, so I wondered what other alternative uses they could be used for. So, I sliced up a few and prepared them like you would for orange marmalade and made a jam. At the farmer's market, the first batch sold out in two hours. Surprised by the sustained interest in these sorts of jams, I decided to officially launch Yumyumjeju."**

Since its inception, Yumyumjeju has expanded its products to include not only carrot-based items but also various other local products such as onions, chestnut squash, kiwi, and tomatoes. Notably, the tangerine marmalade, made from Jeju's signature fruit, constitutes a staggering 60% of the brand's total sales.



**"At the time everyone, including me, was skeptical about tangerine jam in Jeju, given how common the fruit is. People thought, 'Who could ever sell jam made from tangerines?' However, the response surpassed everyone's expectations. While tangerines are commonplace for locals, for tourists they remain the representative fruit of Jeju."**

## Proximity in Production: Working with Jeju Farmers

Yumyumjeju maintains a close collaboration with local eco-friendly farmers, utilizing their produce, eco-certified ingredients, and engaging in continual communication to source the best seasonal ingredients. Notably, the company selects only eco-friendly produce, even utilizing ingredients like tangerine peels, which have added nutritional value when compared to the fruit itself.



**"People tend to favor the sweet tangerines picked in December, but the best tangerines to make jam with are the ones picked in November. They're a little less sweet, but have this delightful tangy acidity. As they ripen, they lose much of that acidity, so I make our signature 'marmalang' from tangerines picked in November."**

"Marmalang jams" are the hallmark of Yumyumjeju, a preserve made from sliced, not ground, eco-friendly produce sourced from across Jeju. Handmade daily in a hot pot, it contains no chemical or synthetic additives. Marmalang incorporates tangerine peels and coarsely sliced pieces, so you can enjoy the texture as if you were eating the fruit itself. The carrots are picked at the peak of their juiciness, the figs are frozen as soon as they're harvested, and the onions used contribute a satisfying crunch and succulence. "Our insistence on using local ingredients reflects our meticulous selection process," Kang says. The jam is made within one to two months, offering a blend of the green tangerines' tartness and the delicate sweetness of the onions.

**"Our marmalang lets you taste the deep flavors of our local produce together with the texture of the raw ingredients, making it a unique gift that can't be found anywhere else. People often ask me whether the word 'marmalang' means 'jam' in the local Jeju dialect, which it does not. My hope, however, is that within the next decade it will become synonymous with Jeju jam."**

## Sharing Jeju Stories with Customers

From the beginning, Yumyumjeju has dedicated itself to evolving into a leading local brand, with one of its pivotal strategies being to foster communication with its customers. Whether selling jams at farmer's markets or through other channels, the company consistently offers tastings, encourages visitors to come into their store, and shares with them the story of Yumyumjeju. The iconic mint color of the company, inspired by the sky and sea of Jeju Island, was collaboratively conceptualized with customers during the initial design phase. Kang is actively engaged in incorporating Jeju stories into the brand's identity. Passionate about listening to farmers' narratives about tangerine cultivation and the Jeju dialect, she compiled these stories into a small but captivating storybook. The illustrations in the book were drawn by an 82-year-old lady who has been growing tangerines all her life in Seonheul-ri, Jocheon-eup.



**stories inspired the creation of products infused with the Jeju dialect, such as *Hayeong*, *Gochi*, and *Monttak*."**

Looking for a more intimate way to connect to her customers, last year she initiated an activity program where customers can pick tangerines and make jam together. While making tangerine jam, carrot scones, and more, participants engage in conversations about Jeju, fostering memorable moments enveloped in the fragrant, rich aroma of tangerines.

Kang hopes to continue to work with local farmers to promote Jeju's agricultural products, elevating the intrinsic value of what is commonplace to the community.

**"I want to continue to live in Jeju, making food from the produce of this island, and integrating the authentic Jeju stories I've heard into my brand and products. I imagine I'll be making jam here even when I'm a grandmother."**



# Im Heung-soon, Artist

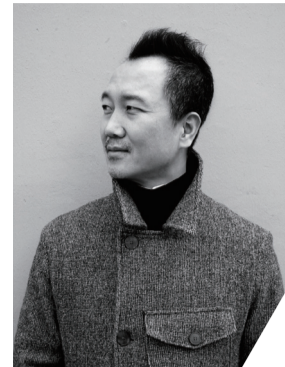
**Im Heung-soon (Born in 1969)**

56<sup>th</sup> Venice Biennale, Silver Lion Award, *Factory Complex* (2015)

21<sup>st</sup> Bucheon International Fantastic Film Festival, Korean Fantastic Audience Award, *Ryeobaeng* (2017)

Since 1998, he has had a total of 15 solo exhibitions, including "Reincarnation" at the Museum of Modern Art in New York City in 2015 and "Things that Do Us Part" at the National Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art in 2017. He has released five feature films, starting with *Jeju Prayer* (2015).

## An Artist's Journey: Dreaming up a "Salt Doll"



From September 16<sup>th</sup> to November 12<sup>th</sup>, the Jeju 4.3 Peace Memorial Hall hosted "Memories, Showers, Seas," a solo exhibition by the acclaimed artist Im Heung-soon, recipient of the Silver Lion at the Venice Biennale—the first for a Korean artist. This marked Im's first solo exhibition in Jeju and covers his decade-long exploration of the April 3<sup>rd</sup> Incident, a massacre of local Jeju civilians by the South Korean government. The artist's thematic focus, which deals with ongoing social issues transcending the limits of space and time, presents the perspectives of women and the socially disadvantaged. This approach serves to dismantle the conventional barriers between the artist and the audience, creating an unorthodox social critique that defies simplistic classification.

## Clothing that Speaks

The "Memories, Showers, Seas" exhibition originated with clothes made by the elderly Kim Dong-il, a descendant of anti-Japanese activists and a key figure during the April 3<sup>rd</sup> Incident. At the age of 16, she was imprisoned for her role as a liaison, branded a "communist," and subsequently forced to flee to Japan in the late 1950s. Until her passing in 2017, she had amassed an extensive collection of clothes with various colors and designs, leaving behind a huge amount of knitting.

In 2015, when filmmaker and contemporary artist Im Heung-soon first interviewed Kim Dong-il for his film,

he was taken aback to discover the large piles of knitting and clothes. During the interview, as Kim explained how she knitted whenever she could as a way to cope with poverty and discrimination in Japan, Im recalls that it was as if the clothes themselves were compelling him to tell their story. Convinced that Kim Dong-il's fragmented memories and jumbled history were contained in the bundles of clothing within her home, with the family's approval, Im returned to South Korea with over 2,000 of her creations, all handmade clothes. Since then, he has dedicated himself to presenting this grandmother's clothing to the world, starting with his exhibition, "Things that Do Us Part – Belief, Faith, Love, Betrayal, Hatred, Fear, Ghost" in 2017.





## Memories Forming a Vast Ocean



*Memories Showers Seas* was a sort of historical debriefing, where the artist shared the meanings he had derived from recounting Kim Dong-il's memories through her belongings. The exhibition also posed questions about how to further expand upon these meanings. On the first day, September 16<sup>th</sup>, a workshop entitled, "The Sunflower and the Dock: 2023 Kim Dong-il Collection" opened the exhibition. Im Heung-soon, having conducted over 20 workshops throughout Jeju based on Kim Dong-il's clothing, inaugurated the exhibition by orchestrating a runway event featuring participants from these workshops. This unique event not only served as a commemoration of Kim Dong-il's memory but also allowed participants to embody and share it in their own way, transforming the moment into a captivating performance. In the first part of the exhibition, visitors encounter Im's new video work, *Sea*. This film delves into the lives of individuals who were forced to flee their country due to colonization, victims of the April 3<sup>rd</sup> Incident after

Korea's liberation, and those who continued to live as part of the diaspora. The video captures the narratives of poet Kim Si-jong, soccer player Ahn Young-hak, and curator Hibino Min-yong. The second part is titled, "Sea of Clothes", representing the main theme of the exhibition. On display were participants' reflections and re-creations

of the "Gotchigla (Run with Me)" program, which was held in advance using Kim Dong-il's relics, along with approximately 1,500 pieces of her clothing. Over 700 pieces, or around half of the collection, were distributed to visitors, and photos were taken to document them wearing her clothes for a related artwork. In the third part of the exhibition, "Sea of Words," the narratives of individuals such as anti-naval base peace activist Choi Sung-hee, Climate Peace March organizer Oum Moon-hee, Jeju *baenyeo* Kim Eun-a, bird watcher Kim Yei-won, and vegetarian/animal rights advocate Lim Ji-in greet visitors like the rising tide. Im attempted to capture their voices and individual stories as subtly as he could, presenting them in this exhibition. *Lighthouse* is the work on display in the main lobby of the exhibition center, a hanging display of 132 knitted items crafted by Kim Dong-il throughout her lifetime. Apply named the lighthouse, it symbolizes that these works, imprinted with her memories, can provide guidance even today, as to a ship sailing across a dark sea.



As an artist, Im is seldom focused on trying to convey a particular message. Rather than consolidating the meanings of her memories into some sort of answer, he opens up the body of her work to further interpretation. As he listens to and gathers various other people's stories, he looks for ways in which there is any overlap with her memories.



### The Impossible Possibility of Art

Im Heung-soon, recipient of the Silver Lion at the 56<sup>th</sup> Venice Biennale in 2015, gained global recognition with his film *Factory Complex*. The film depicts the teenage women who worked at the "Guro Industrial Complex" in the 1970s and 80s, toiling day and night to support their families. The film also portrays the various forms of women's labor today, including the current trend among Asian female workers engaged in low-wage labor markets.

Relying on the diverse voices of the women in the film, Im questions where to begin in order to try to understand the pain and anxiety experienced by modern individuals. He also

examines how capitalism and neoliberalism can be seen to be encroaching on our daily lives. The evolution of the "Guro Industrial Complex" into the "Guro Digital Complex" symbolizes a transformation, where Female Worker 1 and Female Worker 2 in the factory become interchanged with Office Worker 1 and Office Worker 2 in a bustling office landscape. Their past and present, spanning over 40 years, resembles a mirror image. From the women of yesteryear, who couldn't afford Nike sneakers despite working at a Nike factory, to today's women navigating emotional labor, compelled to smile even when sad.

We are reminded that even beyond Korea, a similar past persists in the contemporary realities of other developing countries in Asia.

The faces of the female workers in the film are veiled with white cheesecloth. Aware of the harsh reality that they are judged not as independent individuals but as unspecified women, the artist is cautious about

providing a narrative subject to his interpretation, instead opting to tap into the wider social truth. Striving to convey the voices of the interviewees in their entirety, even if fragmented, the collected interviews form a pattern that provides a degree of solace for everyone.

In his debut feature documentary, which was also about the April 3<sup>rd</sup> Incident, entitled *Jeju Prayer*, Im takes the same approach. As in *Factory Complex*, he meets with female witnesses, listens to their stories, and presents visuals that resonate with their narratives. Enumerating the interviewees' recollections of the past and their lived experiences today, the artist endeavors to make viewers recognize the connection between the April 3<sup>rd</sup> Incident and the issue of naval bases on Jeju Island.

How he grants a voice to the overlooked and silenced individuals in society calls attention to the fact that it remains impossible for them to mention certain things. There is, therefore, a certain elusive quality to all of these interviews. The desire to synthesize disparate experiences or words, to draw conclusions and acquire lessons, and the experience of the impossibility of fulfilling that desire is what Im's artwork aims to do. It is Im's artistic principle to reveal the confusing nature of the words that come from such an experience.

*Memories, Showers, Seas* is significant in how it reflects Im Heung-soon's artistic direction as a contemporary video artist. "All I did was listen—really listen to them until they felt comfortable talking to me. I didn't interview them with the aim of creating an artwork, but merely to empathize with the stories they shared." Im said of this exhibition, commenting that for this project he gave up trying to direct and assumed the role of a mediator.

"In a certain sense, I was searching for a novel way to mourn the passing of Kim Dong-il, this time choosing to move away from drawing on paper, which was the art form I was originally trained in. This exhibition represents a synthesis of all the different things I've been doing, emphasizing that objects with personal narratives can be transformed into artworks, and ordinary citizens can become artists, collaborating through workshops. Beyond the gallery space, my aspiration was for the exhibition to extend into an ongoing dialogue, with people continually participating, expressing, presenting, and working together. Through these interactions, moments will emerge for individuals to comprehend art on their own terms, understand history, and connect it to their own lives."

*Memories, Showers, Seas* is set to unfold again in the homes of the over 700 participants who took Kim Dong-il's clothes with them. Emphasizing embodiment rather than narrative and absorption over perceiving, this process ensures that the mourning of her death and the support for each individual's life will continue. In this, lies the seemingly impossible possibility of art that Im Heung-soon has captured.





# Women Walking in the Time of the Moon

Director Koh Hee-young running barefoot to the *haenyeo*. Photo taken by director of photography, Kim Hyung-sun, during the shooting of *Breathing Underwater*. © HyungS.Kim



"In my hometown of Jeju, some women make their way to work by the sea. Without any equipment, the only way they can remain in the water is by holding their breath."

The feature-length documentary directed by Koh Hee-young, *Breathing Underwater*, begins with this bit of narration. In 2016, when little was known about the existence of *haenyeo* in Korea, let alone overseas, director Koh Hee-young diligently documented the lives of *haenyeo* over a six-year period, capturing their delicate dance between life and death. Now,

seven years later, Koh returns with another *haenyeo*-focused film, this time exploring the cultural significance of Jeju's *haenyeo*, recognized as a UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. Titled *Legend of the Waterflowers*, this new documentary provides a beautiful and tender portrayal of the journey undertaken by Jeju's oldest *haenyeo*, aged 97, and the youngest *haenyeo*, in her 40's, as they travel to a place called "Deulmul-yeo" to witness the legendary water flowers once more. Since its premiere, Koh's latest work has been making waves at the 27<sup>th</sup> Busan International Film Festival, the 20<sup>th</sup> Seoul International Environmental Film Festival, and the 33<sup>rd</sup> Yubari International Fantastic Film Festival.

▼ The term refers to the women of Jeju Island who wear simple wetsuits, diving flippers, and goggles without air tanks to dive into the ocean and collect seafood such as abalone, sea urchin, and conch.

**Q\_ After watching the film, *Legend of the Waterflowers*, I kept thinking of the moon instead of the sea. In the middle of the movie, there were scenes where the moon resembled a painting or a photograph, and the image of the grandmother standing beneath the moon, which loomed large in the black night sky, remains etched in my mind.**

**A\_** Not many people pay attention to the moon in a movie, but you make a very important observation. In fact, the moon takes center stage in this film, as the *haenyeo* live in sync with the cycles of the moon. From the very start, the film begins under the glow of moonlight. The sea, in turn, responds to the moon's influence—the tides,



© Courtesy of film company, Soom:Be

ebb and flow, and tidal variations are all driven by the moon. Therefore, the most important thing to the *haenyeo* is the behavior of the moon. While we follow the sun's time in our daily lives, they are intricately connected to the rhythms of the moon, which dictates when they can or cannot venture into the sea.

**Q\_ That's both mysterious and poetic.**

**A\_** For this movie, I really wanted to capture the moon and the ocean in a single frame. However, achieving the right depiction of the moon was quite a challenge. It took me almost two years of trial and error to get the shot of the grandmother speaking against the backdrop of the moon at the end of the movie.

**Q\_ Since this is your second *haenyeo* film, I'm curious about the reasons behind returning to the subject of *haenyeo* again after making *Breathing Underwater*. What was your intended message behind this film?**

**A\_** If *Breathing Underwater* depicted the unseen community of *haenyeo* that had never been revealed up until then, *Legend of the Waterflowers* is a record of the elements of *haenyeo* culture that have already started to disappear. Through the elderly protagonist, Hyun Soon-jik, viewers learn of the existence of the water flower, identified as the endangered species called the "Dendronephthya." While the water flower symbolizes the swift degradation of the once-pristine marine environment, it also signifies the fading presence of the *haenyeo*. During filming, approximately 4,500 *haenyeo* lived in Jeju, but presently only 3,200 remain—a staggering loss of 1,300 in just six years. Alongside the declining *haenyeo* population and the disappearing Jeju sea, the Jeju language, spoken by the grandmother in the film, faces a similar fate. The Jeju language is officially recognized by UNESCO in four out of the five stages of endangerment. *Haenyeo*, the Jeju sea, and the Jeju language share a commonality: they are all things that we could have preserved, but regrettably were not. They are things that we simply can never get back.

**Q\_ I completely agree with you. In *Legend of the Waterflowers*, there's a scene where the main character, Hyun Soon-jik, takes out handmade clothes from the bottom of her closet and displays them. Watching that, I was reminded of my own mother, and it struck me emotionally because I recalled the practice of our mothers stashing away cherished items in the deepest corners of the closet. Now that cultural tradition is fading away.**

**A\_** Absolutely. The movie carries a certain sense of remorse for the things vanishing all around us, like the little histories tucked away in your grandmother's dresser. That is why the film carries with it such a profound sense of solitude. The elderly people on Jeju Island all grew up told they needed to "Get to work while they could still talk," a belief so ingrained that they've never really had the experience of telling someone about their feelings of sadness or joy. That's why extracting these stories from the elders' minds is a time-consuming process, as it involves unraveling their experiences one by one. That's why it took years to make this movie because without bringing forth their narratives, it would be like interviewing them from outside a door, even after a decade.



© Courtesy of Channel Yes

**Q\_ I'd also love to hear more about your previous film, *Breathing Underwater*. I wasn't exactly sure what the title meant until I watched it myself.**

**A\_** When you hold your breath underwater beyond the length of time you can hold it, it's called "eating your breath," which refers to dying by drowning. It's very strange that the sight of something valuable, like an abalone, occurs only when you surface, out of breath. And once you come back up for air, you lose sight of it so it is difficult to find again and pick up. Hence, the desire to grab it when you can, despite how little breath you have left in you. Interestingly, the act of picking up the abalone, perhaps due to the excitement you feel, creates the sensation of having more air. This behavior, known as eating your breath, is a common cause of fatal accidents among *haenyeos*. What veteran *haenyeos* impart to newcomers is not just the location of abalones but, more importantly, the importance of paying attention to one's breath underwater.

**Q\_ The story of *Breathing Underwater* also appears in your picture book, *Mom is a Haenyeo*. The book was published in several different countries and still remains popular. I understand the illustrations were done by**



**"The *haenyeo* of Jeju believe that the mythical dragon king truly lives in the sea. According to their lore, the push and pull of the waves are caused by the movements of the dragon king himself. I am always struck by the beauty of these sorts of expressions. As I listen to Hyun Soon-jik, she tells me so many things that make me wonder whether there could ever exist another poet in the world quite like her. She says that the moon doesn't "rise," but "sprouts up out of the sea," because to the *haenyeo* the sun always rises from the ocean like a burgeoning shoot from out of the ground.**



**the Spanish artist, Eva Almeron, instead of a Korean artist, which makes it an interesting collaboration. Could you please share a bit about your encounter with Eva Almeron and the genesis of the book?**

**A\_** Eva Almeron, who was in Shanghai for an exhibition at the time, was reading a magazine in her hotel when she saw a picture of a *haenyeo*. Captivated by the powerful yet sorrowful image, she decided to cancel her flight to Barcelona and, instead, went to Jeju Island. There, she spent days on the beach, observing the *haenyeo*, lost in her thoughts. Eva had heard about the movie *Breathing Underwater* from a journalist in Jeju at the time, but was disappointed to hear that the movie hadn't been released yet. So she went back to Spain, and then a story about her experience was published in the newspaper, which I happened to read. Delighted that one of my favorite artists had become interested in *haenyeo*, I sent Eva an email with the film and she wrote the next morning. That's how our relationship started. She expressed her love for the movie and eagerness to work on something together. So I suggested that we put the stories that weren't in the movie into a book with her illustrations. Within a week, Eva flew to Jeju to create the drawings, and that's how the book began.

**Q\_ The connection between you and Eva as artists seems almost destined, with the *haenyeo* serving as the focal point. I can imagine that for Eva, the impact of not only meeting you but also encountering the *haenyeo* must have been profound.**

**A\_** It really was. I still vividly remember the day we were at an elderly *haenyeo*'s house, sharing a meal. Eva was seated on the floor, casually enjoying seaweed, a dish even I struggle with. Despite the language barrier, she was talking back and forth with the *haenyeo*, and then, they suddenly locked eyes and began to tear up. That moment remained a real mystery to me

for some time. Then, at the screening of *Legend of the Waterflowers*, Eva attended and during the conversation with the audience after the film, she shared that she had watched the movie four times and cried on each occasion. She recounted the day of her encounter with the *haenyeo*, saying, "I understand how hard she works, going out to sea in the morning and not eating for hours. Yet, she welcomed me in and served me a meal before even drying herself off. The food was so good and it was such an indescribable feeling that I was just moved to tears."

**Q\_ Listening to your story, I get a sense of the "sisterhood" shared between kindred spirits, mixed with the compassion and longing that the women in that scene must have felt that day. It's sort of sad, but heartwarming at the same time. Lastly, I want to ask about your future plans. When I came in today, there was a considerable amount of construction going on next door.**

**A\_** Yes, I am in the process of creating a film school. A lot of film directors live on Jeju Island as well as a lot of people who want to learn film. Unfortunately, there is currently no film school here. My plan is to build a small building next to my studio and offer free film lectures. I'll run a small film school for two months every spring and fall by inviting esteemed directors and organizing outdoor screenings for the neighborhood. In Jeju, there is a long tradition of something called *ban*, which is to serve food to one's fellow villagers during holidays and rituals, a deeply rooted and cherished practice. It not only fosters a sense of community but also serves as a means to check on elderly individuals living alone while sharing a meal together. In the future, I aspire to live in a way that mirrors this culture-inviting villagers, placing meat and rice cakes on plates, and watching movies together.

**Koh Hee-young:** documentary filmmaker and the director of the film company Soom:Be. Her directorial credits include the feature film documentaries, *Breathing Underwater* (2016), *See-Saw* (2016), *The Breathing of the Fire* (2019), and *Legend of the Waterflowers* (2022). She has authored works that include, *Documentary China* (2014), *Breathing Underwater - The Life and Breath of Haenyeo* (2015), and the picture book, *Mom is a Haenyeo* (2016).

# The Climate Crisis:

## The World Needs to Act Now



“We have a choice: collective action or collective suicide. It is in our hands,” warned UN Secretary-General António Guterres at last year’s Petersberg Dialogue on Climate Change in Berlin, Germany. Over the past two years, the world has witnessed a series of major natural disasters linked to the climate crisis, including unprecedented heat waves, torrential rains, and wildfires. Even more alarming is the fact that these climate catastrophes are occurring as the planet warms by 1.1°C above pre-industrial levels. Despite global commitments to limit the increase to 1.5 °C through the 2015 Paris Agreement, the pace of change remains too slow to avert the impending climate crisis.

### Why Hasn’t the Climate Crisis Been Solved?



As the severity of the climate crisis escalates and disasters become more frequent, people globally have begun to experience climate change first-hand, fostering a heightened sense of “climate anxiety.” A 2021 report by the U.S. think tank Pew Research Center, surveying 17 countries, revealed that the response “I am very worried that the climate crisis will affect me” has increased in most countries compared to 2015. In South Korea, it rose from 32% to 45%, in Germany from 18% to 37%, and in Spain from 36% to 46%.

Why is the climate crisis persisting despite global efforts by major countries, companies, and environmental organizations? One reason, according to experts, is the complexity of the solutions. Initiatives like phasing out or eliminating fossil fuels, the primary contributors to greenhouse gas emissions would require a profound restructuring of the global economic system built upon them. Clearly, there are no straightforward solutions.

A second reason lies in the weakened cooperation and solidarity within the international community. The recent 28<sup>th</sup> Conference of the Parties (COP28) to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) illustrated this point.

One of the key issues on the agenda was the activation of the Loss and Damage Fund, agreed upon at the 27<sup>th</sup> Conference (COP27) the previous year, but negotiations stalled due to differences between developed and developing countries regarding its establishment and funding.

The final reason is more human in nature. Changing people’s behavior is crucial to addressing the climate crisis, and behavioral change is inherently challenging. According to a survey by the Yale Program on Climate Change Communication (YPPCCC), a climate change research organization at Yale University in the US, when asked “How many times a year do you look for solutions to climate change?” 61% of respondents said “never or about once”. Despite increasing global awareness of the climate crisis, it often fails to translate into meaningful action.



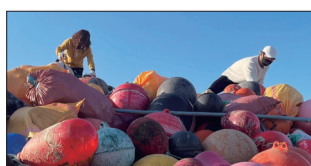
## Jeju’s 2040 Plastic Zero Island (PZI) Declaration, One Year In

In 2012, Jeju Island launched its Carbon Free Island (CFI) policy, setting the stage for global environmental initiatives. Upholding its commitment to carbon neutrality by “acting for the future”, Jeju hosted the Jeju Plus International Environmental Forum 2023 on September 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>, co-hosted by the Ministry of Environment, UNESCO, and Jeju Island. The theme, “The Path to a Plastic-Free, Circular Economy, and Carbon Neutral Society,” echoed the spirit of the prior year’s declaration, “2040 Plastic Zero Island.” The event was held at the Jeju International Convention Center, the same venue where Jeju declared “2040 PZI” in August of last year. At the opening ceremony, Jeju Governor Oh Young Hun highlighted the collective efforts of residents, public institutions in reducing the use of plastics and promoting responsible

resourcing. He emphasized how Jeju will evolve into a citizen-led environmental policy based on citizen participation and speed up the pace toward a resource circular economy society.

“2040 Plastic Zero Island” strives to minimize plastic waste and increase recycling to achieve a zero impact of plastic on the environment. For this purpose, specific action strategies are in place aiming to halve plastic usage by 2040 and recycle 100% of resourceable plastic.

In February, the Plastic Zero Island Promotion Committee was inaugurated, featuring representatives from 232 organizations, including public institutions, businesses, and community organizations.



The committee plays a pivotal role in engaging residents, establishing the Basic Plan for Plastic Zero Island, which incorporates local opinions and policies. Additionally, it organized a rally for plastic-free practices, drawing over 1,500 participants. The primary goal of the “2040 Plastic Zero Island Basic Plan” is to reduce 145,056 tons of plastic waste, constituting 81% of the projected 2040 plastic waste production (178,142 tons), and recycle 100% of the remaining 30,086 tons.

Jeju Island is currently in working consultations with the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) to facilitate joint projects. The challenge of escaping the climate crisis confronts humanity in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. With an international agreement on plastic regulation set for discussion at the United Nations Environment Assembly next year, Jeju’s plastic-free initiative has garnered increased attention. Antonio Abreu, Director of the Division of Ecological and Earth Sciences of UNESCO, who attended the Jeju Plus International Environmental Forum 2023, said, “Jeju Island, a triple UNESCO World Heritage Site, is doing a lot of work with UNESCO and contributing to solving the plastic problem. Please show us that the plastic pollution problem can be solved if the world joins in on the plastic policy being promoted in Jeju,” expressing his hope that the world can unite in embracing similar policies to solve the problem of global plastic pollution.

# 2050 Carbon Neutrality:



**Why Hydrogen is Not Just a Choice, but a Necessity**

Achieving carbon neutrality by 2050 stands as a collective promise and a crucial goal for humanity to avoid a climate catastrophe. The 197 countries that signed the Paris Agreement, committed to limiting global warming to 1.5°C, have pledged to reach carbon neutrality by 2050 through sustained efforts and actions. In particular, there is a keen interest in hydrogen energy, which is emerging as a key technology in realizing this carbon-neutral future. The global shift toward a hydrogen-based society is well underway, with nations leading the way in advancing technologies and nurturing industries related to hydrogen.



## The Present State of Hydrogen in South Korea and Jeju Island

In 2019, South Korea announced its own national hydrogen economy roadmap, marking the commencement of a robust shift toward a hydrogen-based economy. On February 4<sup>th</sup>, 2020, the world witnessed the enactment of the first hydrogen law, establishing a legal and institutional framework crucial for fostering the hydrogen economy. Sectors including hydrogen electric vehicles, hydrogen fuel cells, and power plants have since received substantial support and undergone significant development. Jeju stands out as a leading local government in South Korea dedicated to transitioning to green hydrogen energy. A 3.3-megawatt green hydrogen production facility in Haengwon-ri, Gujwa-eup, Jeju, was established with support from the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Energy. In May, the facility underwent completion inspection and passed the final purity quality inspection. With the addition of the 12.5-megawatt demonstration project designated last year and the recently announced 30-megawatt project, a 50-megawatt green hydrogen production system—the largest in Asia—is in the works. If the complex is completed as planned, it is poised to produce over 3,800 tons of green hydrogen annually by 2030. October 23<sup>rd</sup> marked a milestone achievement when a hydrogen bus, fueled by green hydrogen, became the first in South Korea to officially operate on Jeju Island. The route spans 29 kilometers each way from Hamdeok-ri, Jeju City, home to Jeju's first hydrogen refueling station, to Halla Arboretum, with six to seven daily runs. Jeju Island intends to amplify energy production and utilization of energy by introducing further

green hydrogen buses, aiming to supply 300 hydrogen buses and 200 hydrogen cleaning vehicles for hydrogen use by 2030.

The 23<sup>rd</sup>, coinciding with the launch of the first green hydrogen bus, marked the commencement of the Green Hydrogen Global Forum 2023 at the International Convention Center (ICC Jeju). The three-day forum, organized by the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Energy and the government of Jeju, aimed at exploring strategies for the energy transition to green hydrogen. Over 50 organizations and companies from Korea, the U.S., Europe, Asia, and Africa participated in discussions on policy, the environment, industry, and cooperation. "The development of the hydrogen economy requires an inclusiveness that can encompass all nations," said Rebecca Maserumule, Chair of the International Partnership for Hydrogen Fuel Cells in the Economy (IPHE). "As the African proverb goes, 'If you want to go fast, go alone; if you want to go far, go together,' we must strengthen cooperation to achieve common goals, even if it is slow."

A mere decade ago, the commercialization of green hydrogen seemed distant and uncertain. When Jeju Island announced its plan to build a global hub for green hydrogen in September 2022, many failed to grasp the impending winds of change. However, a monumental movement that promises to reshape our way of life and industry structure has already begun. The anticipation is high for the myriad challenges ahead as Jeju Island takes the inaugural step towards constructing a global green hydrogen hub and realizing the energy transition.



## Carbon Neutrality by 2050 Hinges on Hydrogen

The global focus is on hydrogen and other alternative energies as the world shifts away from a carbon-fueled society.

However, this is not the case for all forms of hydrogen energy. Hydrogen energy is categorized into green, gray, and blue hydrogen based on how it is produced and its environmental impact. Among these, only green hydrogen, produced using renewable sources like solar and wind power, emerges as the environmentally friendly option for achieving 2050 carbon neutrality.

Unfortunately, a staggering 96% of current hydrogen production falls under "gray hydrogen," sourced from fossil fuels due to economic and technological restraints. Nevertheless, hydrogen is still considered the energy of the future because it is the "only" green energy source capable of replacing fossil fuels when considering production, storage, and transportation. Unlike wind and solar, which face significant limitations in storage and transportation, hydrogen—with the right technology—offers nearly unlimited production potential and can be easily stored or transported. Its applications span diverse fields, from industrial basic materials to general fuels, cars, and airplanes.

Internationally, countries are moving toward a hydrogen economy, positioning hydrogen as a primary energy source. Over 50 countries boast national hydrogen economy initiatives, with leaders such as the European Union and the United States spearheading large-scale projects for technology development and commercialization, guided by long-term goals.



# Interview

## Mr. António Abreu

Director of the Division of Ecological and Earth Sciences of UNESCO



*“we can greatly improve the impact and also help to ensure the integrity and identity of the territories.”*

**Q : What's your opinion on the meaning and outcomes of the Jeju Plus International Environment Forum 2023?**

The Forum is an event of the utmost importance, a true international model that illustrates very clearly the most important aspects to be taken into account when tackling environmental and climate problems and the challenges of biodiversity on a global scale. Jeju is a world reference in terms of the integrated approach to the main environmental and sustainable development challenges and the Forum is an instrument for sharing and transferring knowledge and experiences, commitment, awareness-raising and mobilisation for locally-based global action. This initiative, promoted by the Jeju authorities and their local and international partners, results in clear messages and, above all, concrete proposals for action on common and global environmental challenges.

**Q : In your words, you have emphasized that we need to act together and take the fastest route to a plastic-free society. Where should we begin, in terms of actual practice, to make this happen?**

The nature and global impacts of the environmental problems generated by the massive use of plastic also call for concerted global action. The problem and its impacts, whether in terms of pollution or climate change, cannot be tackled only locally or in isolation. For example, even if Jeju manages to achieve all the environmental and sustainability goals it has set itself, it will still be negatively impacted. Co-operation and an integrated approach is therefore a vital element for the success of environmental, climate or biodiversity policies and action. This is, in a way, what Jeju is doing when it promotes initiatives like this Forum, or when it creates a UNESCO Category 2 Centre to improve the management of areas and sites classified under various international systems, or when it helps to foster cooperation networks and projects involving UNESCO Biosphere Reserves, Geoparks or World Heritage Sites.

**Q : As an island, Jeju is intimately connected to the marine ecosystem. This ecosystem, once pristine, is now under severe threat due to climate change and marine pollution. These factors have taken a toll on the productivity of businesses that rely on the ecosystem. To safeguard the marine ecosystem, what steps should Jeju prioritize, and do you have any advice for the island's efforts and strategies? It would also be helpful if you could introduce cases from other regions that Jeju could draw lessons from.**

The sea is the most important biophysical element on the planet, whether it's providing food, regulating the climate or supporting the establishment of coastal and island communities. And, of course, on an island the sea and coastal zones are extremely important areas for the sustainability and quality of life of the population. One of the most important aspects is precisely knowing the structure and dynamics of marine ecosystems, knowing their biodiversity and how ecosystems function in the face of interactions with human activities. In addition to biodiversity, it is also important to understand how coastal dynamics work, erosion and the exposure of infrastructures and socio-economic systems during extreme weather events. A good way of managing and understanding these issues is through the establishment of marine protected areas in which trends and pressures on biodiversity are monitored, the most important physical and chemical parameters are monitored and integrated and sustainable management of resources is promoted, in favour of the well-being and quality of life of human populations. In a way, this is the general model for UNESCO Biosphere Reserves, which can be applied to any territory, regardless of its classification. We can consider any coastal or marine area as transition zones of UNESCO Biosphere Reserve and thus have integrated management that considers conservation as a pillar of socio-economic development.

## 'Jeju Haenyeo Fishery System' Achieves FAO's Global Important Agricultural Heritage Systems Recognition, Winning Three Awards



Jeju's rich traditional culture, the Jeju *Haenyeo* Fishery system, gained recognition as a Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Site (GIAHS) during the 19<sup>th</sup> session of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) General Assembly in Rome, Italy, on November 10<sup>th</sup>.

This achievement followed the submission of three supplementary documents, a process initiated in 2018 and resumed this year after a temporary suspension due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Jeju's *haenyeo* fishery was awarded the prestigious "triple crown" honor of being designated the No. 1 National Important Fishery Heritage in 2015, recognized as the UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage of



Humanity for *Haenyeo* Culture in 2016, and now receiving the FAO GIAHS designation. Meanwhile, ICC JEJU has been supporting the GIAHS listing project for the Jeju *haenyeo* fishery hosted by Jeju

Special Self-Governing Province. In September, ICC JEJU also curated an exhibition called "Living Global Heritage Jeju *Haenyeo*" at the UNESCO headquarters in Paris, France, garnering a great response.

## 'All the Goods in Jeju' Successfully Showcased at ICC JEJU



The platform, All the Goods in Jeju, dedicated to the sustainable development of Jeju's local content, took place at ICC JEJU on weekends from October 21<sup>st</sup> to 29<sup>th</sup>. Organized by ICC JEJU to promote Jeju's local brand, the exhibition gained popularity among visitors as an experiential fair providing an opportunity to immerse themselves in Jeju's culture and resources. Notably, the one-day

class "Everyone's Culture Salon" designed to explore the creative content of Jeju's local talent, and "Blue Night, Jazz Night", a jazz performance and lecture by pianist Cho Yoon-seung, effortlessly incorporated the culture of Jeju and proved to be a great success. The event received acclaim for presenting Jeju's culture and resources through innovative exhibition content.



## Jeju Workation Presentation Attracts Strong Interest from Singaporean Companies

Jeju Island and ICC JEJU jointly organized a presentation on Jeju's business environment and "workation" (a portmanteau word of "work" and "vacation") support system for local companies in Singapore on October 25<sup>th</sup> at Raffles Hotel, Singapore. Officially sponsored by the Singapore Business Federation (SBF) and the

Korean Embassy in Singapore, the event garnered pre-registration from 38 local companies interested in the Korean and Jeju markets. Throughout the session, Jeju's policies and vision for promising industries, such as Urban Air Transportation (UAM) and the establishment of a global green hydrogen hub, were shared, capturing significant interest from Singapore. Notably, participants were particularly intrigued by Jeju's workation environment, and its support system, which seamlessly combines its natural beauty with robust IT infrastructure.



## Sehwa-ri, and Dongbaek Village, Selected as UNWTO Best Tourism Villages

Sehwa-ri in Gujwa-eup and Dongbaek Village (Sinheung 2-ri) in Namwon-eup were honored as winners of the 3<sup>rd</sup> United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) Best Tourism Village Competition held on October 19<sup>th</sup> in Samarkand, Uzbekistan. Since 2021, the UNWTO has been identifying villages that excel in preserving cultural diversity, local values, and traditions, aiming to foster sustainable local tourism and promote balanced development in rural areas, designating them as "Best Tourism Villages". Sehwa-ri actively engages in tourism initiatives with local residents,

highlighting *haenyeo* as an intangible cultural heritage, field walls as an important agricultural heritage, and carrots as the primary local product. As for Dongbaek Village, it has been dedicated to constructing a sustainable tourism system with the help of its local camellia flowers. Jeju Island, in turn, runs the tourism brand Kareumstay and is making efforts to expand on its distinctive local value.



## ICC JEJU Expands Its Marketing Efforts in the 'ASEAN+α' Market



As the global MICE (Meetings, Incentives, Conferences, and Exhibitions) industry continues to recover from the COVID-19 pandemic, ICC JEJU has taken

proactive measures to aid in the revival and resurgence of Jeju's MICE industry. In September, ICC JEJU participated in the 2023 Qingdao MICE Roadshow and IT&CMA Bangkok to showcase Jeju's competitiveness to global buyers. In October, ICC JEJU also engaged in the ITB Asia 2023 Singapore, with a specific focus on the ASEAN+α market. ICC JEJU plans to expand its collaborative efforts with relevant organizations, including the Jeju Office in Singapore and the Korea Tourism Organization's Singapore and Bangkok offices, to build an alliance centered around Singapore.

# Toward the Future Together, Shining Jeju JEJU is the Ideal Location for APEC Summit 2025

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