

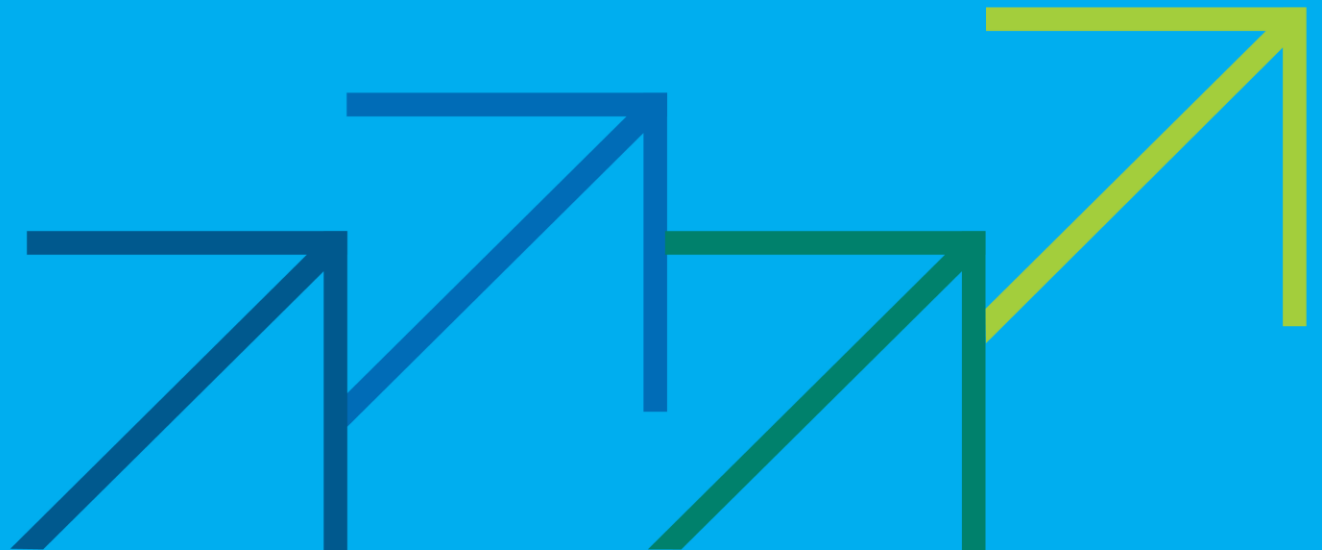


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**Green Growth:  
The Path to  
Sustainable Jobs**

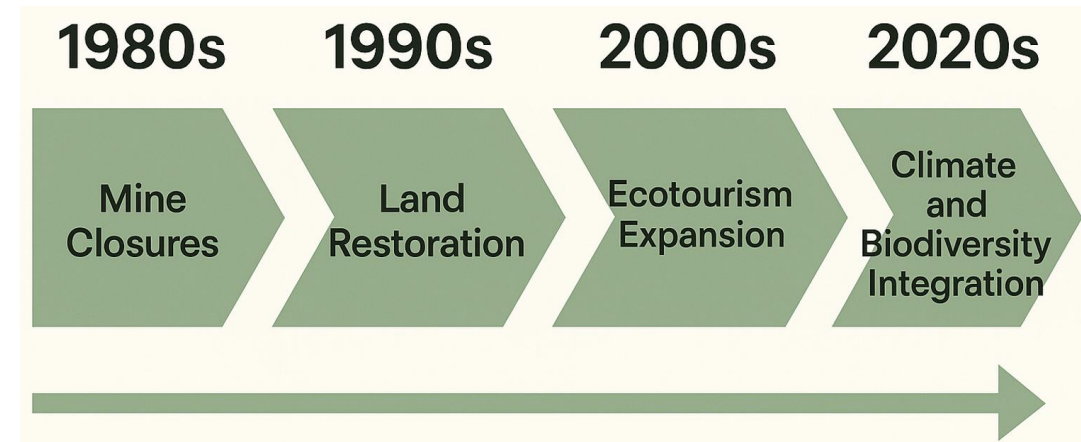
# From Mining Scars to Living Landscapes: Korea's Journey in Mine Rehabilitation

**Sunbaek Bang**, Director, KOMIR (Korea Mine Rehabilitation and Mineral Resources Corporation)



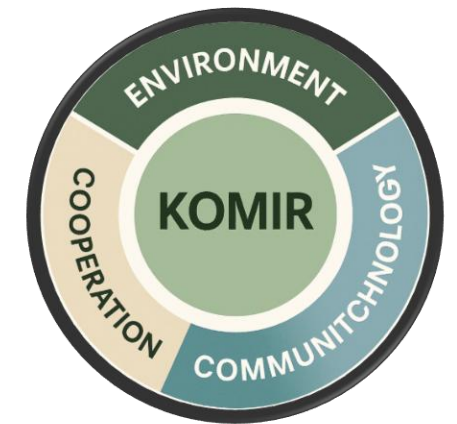
# Overview: Korea's Mine Rehabilitation Journey

- Since the 1980s, Korea has closed over 600 mines, restoring degraded lands across Gangwon, Jeongseon, and Taebaek.
- Rehabilitation integrated biodiversity corridors, recreational parks, and ecotourism ventures.
- These transformations created new economies and local pride in former mining regions.
- KOMIR has led this national program, turning mine closure into a driver of regional renewal.



# Korea Mine Rehabilitation and Mineral Resources Corporation (KOMIR)

- Established to implement mine closure, remediation, and post-mining land reuse.
- Core Work Areas:
  - Customized Technical and Financial Support for Each Stage of the Mining Lifecycle
  - Restoration of Ecosystems through Water Purification, Soil and Forest Rehabilitation in Closed Mine Areas
  - Establishing a Foundation for Self-Reliance in Former Mining Regions through Area-Specific Urban Regeneration and Alternative Industry Development
  - Building a Stable Supply Chain through Strategic Stockpiling and Timely Supply of Critical Minerals
- KOMIR operates under the Ministry of Trade, Industry, and Energy (MOTIE), ensuring national coordination.



# From Abandoned Open Pit Mine to Tourist attraction



- Byeolyucheonji Eco-Tourism Area (Dong Hae)
- Project combined environmental cleanup and cultural tourism.
- Transformed into Taebaeksan Ecological Park, attracting 560,000+ cumulative visitors (2022~)
- The site now hosts annual eco-festivals and school programs on sustainability.
- Local cooperatives manage visitor centers and souvenir markets.
- With tourism infrastructure, improving both environment and local income.
- Safer slopes and a growing tourism economy centered on nature and culture.



# From Abandoned Underground Mine to Tourist attraction

Location : Gwangmyeong Cave, Gwangmyeong-si, Gyeonggi-do



- (Before) Abandoned mine, Entrances, Safety and accessibility issue and regional economic decline
- (Pathway) Securing stability and developing a storytelling-based tourist destination and integrating with local cultural content.
- (After) Revitalization of local service industries, job creation, and serving as an anchor for urban regeneration.
- Combined route integrating the preservation and tourism development of mining assets and infrastructure.
- Stepwise structure of **Restoration (safety, environment) → Content (tourism, education) → Operation → Regional economy (employment, revenue).**

# Restoring Mines, Reviving Life

Korea's experience shows that restoring mines is not just about closing scars — it's about creating new life. Mpumalanga can do the same: transform retired coalfields into green corridors that employ and inspire communities.

# Adapting Korea's Experience to Southern Africa

- Local Ownership Matters: Early stakeholder engagement builds trust and avoids future conflicts.
- Integrated Design: Combining biodiversity restoration, tourism, and education yields multiple revenue streams.
- Technology Transfer: Proven methods for slope stabilization, revegetation, and AMD treatment can be adapted to Mpumalanga's soils and hydrology.
- Capacity Building: Continuous training of provincial and community teams ensures sustainability.

# THANK YOU

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