

Response to 'Forget the Politics, It's Wrong to Ignore the Human Suffering' by Young-Yoon Kim

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First of all, I would like to express my appreciation for the excellent works by Nautilus. By chance I came across the Nautilus website looking for an article by Dr Peter Hayes. Afterwards, I subscribed to the Nautilus mailing list, and I am happy with the articles I have received from it.

The article by Young-Yoon Kim is informative and I thank you for publishing it. Kim mentioned three causes of food shortage in North Korea, with which I totally agree. What I'd like to add to the first cause (flooding) is that it is largely caused by deforestation. One major function of forests is to conserve water from rain. Denudation, however, makes water flow directly into rivers and the sea, which causes floods. According to the Global Forest Resources Assessment 2010 by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN, forest cover in North Korea has been significantly decreased: from 8.2 million hectares in 1990 to 5.7 million in 2010. One reason of deforestation is said to be the conversion of forests into farm land to increase grain production. Paradoxically, this caused flooding and resulted in *decreased* of food production. I once saw a diagram on the concept of the '5Fs' - Flood, Forest, Fire, Fuel, & Food, developed by Victor Teplyakov, a professor at Seoul National University in South Korea. It showed that flooding is 20% more likely in areas with fewer forests than areas with more forests and food production is about 15% lower in deforested areas.

Once again, I would like to say that it is nice to have Nautilus' articles, and I wish the best to the Institute.

All the best,

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