

### **1. Where is the drive for 'restoration' coming from?**

- is it to boost employment,
- is it support construction industry,
- is there a need to change transportation infrastructure?

--> From the government's perspective, justification of this project apparently comes from literally "saving" the rivers, which government contends suffer from annual flooding, drought, water pollution, and ecological deterioration. Of course, they also publicize that this project will boost the economy and create many jobs. We believe none of these claims are legitimate.

### **2. Where is the real information on the project? The government information is a repetitive summary which said nothing about the drivers**

--> You only received a short summary of the project released by the Ministry of Land, Transportation, and Maritime Affairs. I think I mentioned that they also released in June a 61-page "masterplan" of the project. We don't have an English version of the master plan report. What you received is a summary of this report. They seem to release full version of the plan sooner or later, which is said to be several hundred pages long. But we think essentially nothing will change. Basically, government tries to build weirs and levees, along with mega scale dredgings, especially in Nakdong River.

### **3. What is the current status of these rivers - what sections are already modified, canalised and what elements are still natural?**

--> A full scale construction including dredging will probably begin in coming October. What I heard, however, is that some small scale pilot projects are already undertaken in Nakdong River area.

### **4. Who will be the beneficiaries and who will be the losers?**

--> Definitely the beneficiaries will be the construction sector, especially the large construction companies. Because of the downfall of the economy, construction sector is in dire need of government initiated projects, which will improve their profitability. The local governments, especially the governors of some provinces, claim that this project will boost their economies and create many jobs for people in the area. The general election for local governments is less than one year away.

At this moment, local farmers seem to be against the project. Government is trying to expropriate farmers from their agricultural land, which is necessary because of the inevitable submergence of some of these areas adjacent to the rivers. I personally think this process won't be easy, because these farmers are basically getting deprived of the means of their survival. Not to mention, Korean people in general will be huge losers from this project, since huge amount of tax payers' money will be wasted with adverse effects on the overall functioning of our major rivers.

### **5. What alternatives have been investigated?**

--> This is the point we all have been raising throughout this debate. I myself as an economist have emphasized several times through newspaper articles and media interviews that government should seek for alternative ways to achieve the proposed goals of the 4 river project. A responsible government should always weigh pros and cons of alternative approaches, i.e., the importance of opportunity cost. Unfortunately, government does not respond at all to this kind of voice so far.