관계부처합동 보도자료

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Residents Power Prosperous Villages: Nationwide Rollout of "Sunlight Income Villages" Kicks Off

- Selecting more than 500 Sunlight Income Villages this year, with over 2,500 to be established by 2030
- Establishing joint public-private on-site support teams to provide close, on-the-ground support throughout the entire project process

□ The Ministry of the Interior and Safety (MOIS, Minister Yun Hojung) announced that at the Cabinet meeting on Tuesday, March 24, it reported the "Sunlight Income Village Expansion Plan" together with the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (MAFRA, Minister Song Miryung) and the Ministry of Climate, Energy and Environment (MCEE, Minister Kim Sungwhan), and will begin full-scale nationwide expansion of Sunlight Income Villages.

□ Sunlight Income Villages are a model of community solar in which at least 10 local residents form a cooperative to install and operate solar power facilities on idle land within the village, with residents taking the lead and the benefits shared across the community. In particular, amid high oil prices and an energy crisis, the initiative is expected to enhance energy self-sufficiency through expanded solar deployment while also contributing to revitalizing local economies.

○ This plan was established by the MOIS's "Sunlight Income Village Task Force" (launched on February 13), based on the "Nationwide Expansion Plan for Sunlight Income Villages" reported in December last year, and

reflects input from relevant ministries and related organizations.

<Overview of the Sunlight Income Village Project>

▲ (Project entity) A cooperative (general or social) formed by at least 10 village residents based on an administrative village unit
▲ (Project operation) Decisions made by the village community with resident consent, in accordance with bylaws and village general meetings
▲ (Use of profits) Used autonomously for community welfare, individual distribution, etc., based on bylaws and resident decisions
▲ (Facility capacity) Solar installations ranging from 300 kW to 1 MW, primarily on public and village land
▲ (On-site support) Basic local governments participate in consortia, with a joint public-private on-site support system established
▲ (Industrial contribution) Mandatory use of domestically produced equipment such as modules and inverters in Sunlight Income Villages

□ The Task Force plans to select more than 500 Sunlight Income Villages nationwide within this year through a project call scheduled for late March. In particular, the application period will be divided into first and second rounds based on project readiness. (First round: by the end of May; second round: by the end of July)

○ Villages with a high level of readiness, such as those that have already formed cooperatives and secured sites, will be selected by July to enable early results, while villages requiring additional preparation will be allowed to apply through July and given sufficient time to prepare.

* Tentative Schedule for the Sunlight Income Village Initiative

- First round: Application deadline (end of May) → Evaluation (June) → Selection (July) → Project launch (August)
- Second round: Application deadline (end of July) → Evaluation (August) → Selection (September) → Project launch (October)

○ Selection will take into account project readiness, such as the level of

cooperative formation, degree of resident consent, and progress in securing sites and financing, as well as regional demand, while ensuring that no particular region is overly concentrated. Detailed evaluation criteria will be disclosed in the official announcement.

□ To support systematic project preparation for villages wishing to apply, the Task Force will establish and operate joint public-private on-site support teams led by metropolitan governments and involving relevant public institutions, providing close, on-the-ground assistance throughout the entire process.

* Composition of the joint public-private on-site support team: metropolitan and basic local governments, regional environmental offices, the Korea Energy Agency, Korea Electric Power Corporation, Korea Rural Community Corporation, Korea Water Resources Corporation, Korea Electrical Safety Corporation, and social and solidarity economy organizations, among others.

○ Consulting support for cooperative establishment will be provided by connecting villages with social and solidarity economy organizations that have relevant experience and expertise.

○ Project sites will be recommended to be secured primarily on idle village land or public land to reduce costs. The Korea Rural Community Corporation and the Korea Water Resources Corporation will identify and discover idle sites, such as reservoirs and reserved farmland, and provide this information to the joint public-private on-site support teams and local governments. In addition, upon request from villages, prompt support will be provided to assess feasibility for solar installation through site reviews and on-site inspections.

○ In addition, the MCEE is pursuing amendments to relevant laws (the Electric Utility Act and the Special Act on Activation of Distributed Energy) to enable priority grid connection for Sunlight Income Villages,

while also providing support for the installation of energy storage systems (ESS).

○ The MCEE plans to ease villages' initial investment burden by supporting solar installation costs, thereby improving conditions for project initiation. In addition, the government is reviewing ways to enable the use of various funding sources, such as the Local Extinction Response Fund, village enterprise subsidies, and special grant taxes.

□ Following the project call, the Task Force will hold a kickoff meeting for the joint public-private on-site support teams, which are set to begin full-scale operations in April. In addition, outreach efforts, including regional briefings and workshops, will be carried out to promote participation in the program.

○ In addition, experts from social and solidarity economy organizations will be trained as specialized instructors for Sunlight Income Villages, and on-site training programs for village leaders, such as heads of villages and women's associations, will also be operated. Application details for the training will be provided through the Korea Energy Agency website.

□ Minister Yun Hojung emphasized, "Sunlight Income Villages are the starting point for Korea's major energy transition and a new model for regional development that can simultaneously address the climate crisis and the issue of regional decline."

○ He added, "Our Ministry will work with relevant ministries, including the MCEE and the MAFRA, to establish a support and delivery system to ensure smooth implementation of the Sunlight Income Village project at the local level and to drive its nationwide expansion."