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Korea names 40 key techs to protect

August 27, 2007 - Months after initiating a policy that requires government approval to invest in or export certain technologies, the Korean government has narrowed its definition to [40 core "technologies of national interest"](#) in a variety of industries, with DRAM and NAND flash chipmaking at the top of the list.

A committee working with surveys and recommendations from the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Energy, the Ministry of Science and Technology, the Ministry of Information and Communication and the Ministry of Construction and Transportation came up with the final list of 40, according to the *Chosun Ilbo*. Most notably, the law protects the technology for designing/processing/assembling/inspecting DRAM (?80nm) and NAND flash (?70nm) processes. Other technologies under the law relate to vehicle fuel cells, FINEX steel, and shipbuilding for liquid natural gas carriers.

Four technologies were pinpointed in electronics and electrical engineering, eight from the automobile industry, six from the steel industry, seven from shipbuilding, four from nuclear power generation, six from information and telecommunications and four from the space industry, the paper noted.

The government likely laid down the law in these areas to help stem a "technology drain" ongoing for several years, and which has bled into more leading-edge

areas, notes Gartner Dataquest analyst Chang-Soo Ki in a report. Under this new policy, any technology that has received R&D support from the government needs committee approval before it can be sold or moved abroad. Any designated technology that is purely private still needs to report any transaction to the government -- though if the technology is considered to have an impact on Korean security or economy the government can nullify the technology export, or require it be returned to its original condition. Failure to adhere to these steps could mean risking the same penalty assigned to industry spies, the analyst firm wrote.

"With this law in effect, Samsung Electronics and Hynix Semiconductor will likely be directly affected with regard to co-investing, selling or moving their technology abroad," the Gartner analyst noted, adding that the law probably wouldn't derail any upgrade plans for operations already overseas.

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