

F-REDD 2 Newsletter

The Project for Enhancing Sustainable Forest Management in Collaboration with REDD+ Programs and REDD+ Funds (F-REDD 2)
Feb 2022 - Jan 2027

The F-REDD 2 was formulated under the Government of Laos and JICA (Japan International Cooperation Agency), aiming to support access to and the implementation of REDD+ results-based payments, to strengthen the capacity for sustainable forest management through the implementation of the Forest Strategy 2035, and to further promote the implementation of REDD+ actions.

Effort to access GCF REDD+ results-based payments restarted

The climate change measures of Lao PDR achieved emissions reductions and removals of approximately 14 million tCO₂e from Lao forests over the period of 2015 to 2018. With these results in hand, and in cooperation with the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), in September 2020 the Government of Lao PDR submitted a concept note to apply to the REDD+ results-based payment pilot programme of the Green Climate Fund (GCF). Unfortunately, the pilot programme works on a first-come, first-served basis, and other countries were funded by it at that time. Lao PDR thus became one of four 'pipeline countries' waiting for the next phase of the programme to start.

Following four years of consideration, at long last the GCF decided to begin the next phase. At the same time, it made the decision to provide additional funds on an exceptional basis to Lao PDR and the other pipeline countries. In response, JICA, the Department of Forestry (DOF) and F-REDD 2 are working towards submitting their funding proposal, which had been sitting on the back-burner, to the GCF.

Information that has become outdated since the concept note was submitted in 2020 must first be updated



Southern forest landscape to be targeted by a project using the GCF REDD+ results-based payment

and, moreover, discussions between JICA and the DOF need to be reflected in the funding proposal. To this end, a JICA mission visited Vientiane in September 2024 and finalized the funding proposal together with the DOF and other concerned ministries. The proposal is now in the formal approving process between JICA and the Government of Lao PDR and is moving toward submission to the GCF.

Lao PDR has already received REDD+ results-based payment from the Forest Carbon Partnership Facility (FCPF) Carbon Fund (*1). We all hope that this opportunity to receive from the GCF a second results-based payment will be realized, rewarding Lao PDR's REDD+ efforts, and that it will be used for further forest conservation.

*1: For more information on the FCPF Carbon Fund, click here.

https://www.jica.go.jp/oda/project/201904177/en_news/20231103.html



A meeting between the JICA mission and the Government of Lao PDR.

Progress and future plan discussed at the 4th JCC Meeting

Gathering together on December 6, 2024, the fourth meeting of the Joint Coordinating Committee (JCC) was held in Vientiane, where the Government of Lao PDR and JICA aimed to jointly review the progress and achievements made in 2024 and discuss the plan for 2025.

Co-chaired by Dr. Oupakone ALOUNSAVATH, Deputy Director General of Department of Forestry, and Mr. Noriyuki ITO, Senior Representative of the JICA Laos Office, 19 participants attended the meeting in person, representing JCC members, project counterparts and the JICA expert team, with others from JICA headquarters and some project experts joining online.

2024 was a year of great progress for F-REDD 2. Policy updates, such as the Forest Strategy 2035 and the Prime Minister's Decree on Protection Forests, have raised expectations for strengthened sustainable forest management. In July, Laos received its first REDD+ result-based payment — approximately \$16 million — from the Forest Carbon Partnership Facility's Carbon Fund, kicking off reinvestment into forest landscapes in six northern provinces.¹ Additionally, the National Forest Inventory — co-financed with the World Bank and GIZ — has been launched and will survey the state of forests nationwide. Finally, the Provincial Deforestation Monitoring System (PDMS) was approved as the official

national tool by the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry and is moving towards broader extension.²

The Project has reached a turning point. With two years remaining, excitement is building to keep the momentum rolling and, with renewed dedication, ambitiously pursue our goals for Laos' forests and see things through to achievement.

¹ [The Lao PDR received a payment of \\$16 million from the World Bank-administered Forest Carbon Partnership Facility for reducing greenhouse gas emissions](#)

² [The Lao Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry has approved PDMS, supported by JICA, as the official forest monitoring tool for Laos.](#)



4th JCC Meeting

Progress and future plan discussed at the 4th JCC Meeting For-

Twice a year, the Forestry Sub-Sector Working Group (FSSWG) - with support from F-REDD 2 - gets together to meet, providing an opportunity to trade opinions about the forestry sector, with discussions ranging from key policies to developments within the sector. The Department of Forestry (DOF) organized the most recent FSSWG meeting, the 23rd such gathering, which was held in Vientiane on December 11, 2024.

Dr. Oupakone ALOUNSAVATH, who is the Deputy Director General of the DOF, was joined by the Senior Representative of the JICA Laos Office, Mr. Noriyuki ITO, to co-chair the December meeting, which welcomed 56 participants. Among these were representatives from relevant organizations and donors, who were either present at the venue in Vientiane or joined online.

Agenda items, selected in advance, included:

1. Discussion on land tenure security within forest areas
2. Progress of the National Protected Area Roadmap
3. Updates on forest carbon and REDD+
4. [Results of assessment of Laos's forest governance \(2015–2022\)](#)
5. Overview of the GCF REDD+ RBP Funding Proposal

DOF officials and other experts gave presentations on each topic, leading to active discussions — in particular reaffirming the necessity of collaborating with relevant agencies and donors regarding land tenure security inside forests. In Laos, an estimated 3,176 villages are located within forest areas (including production, protection, and conservation forests). The government has a new policy of granting land use rights to people who have traditionally lived and earned their livelihoods within forest areas, with the DOF developing guidelines and preparing relevant information to facilitate this process.



Forest Subsector Working Group meeting

Central Level Training and Implementation Structure Discussed to Support the Nationwide Deployment of PDMS

The Government of Laos issued Prime Minister's Order No. 11 in July 2023 to strengthen the management, protection, development, and use of forests and forestland. In this context, the Provincial Deforestation Monitoring System (PDMS), developed by JICA, has been recognized as an important tool for monitoring deforestation in target forest areas. In May 2024, the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (MAF) officially endorsed PDMS as a national forest monitoring tool. Following this endorsement, efforts have been made to establish a central-level implementation structure to promote PDMS nationwide. The Department of Forestry (DOF), in collaboration with other relevant departments, has been working on drafting the terms of reference (ToR) and proposing team members for national-level coordination.

In March 2025, a PDMS central-level meeting and a Training of Trainers (ToT) session were held with 24 participants from the DOF, Department of Forest In-

spection (DOFI), and Department of Agriculture and Land Management (DALAM). The participants received basic training on PDMS operations and drone use, with the aim of preparing them to serve as trainers for capacity-building activities at the provincial and district levels. Although some participants found the training challenging because of unfamiliar tool, it fostered a strong sense of collaboration and built momentum among departments for promoting PDMS implementation.

During the final session of the meeting, participants discussed the draft ToR and proposed team structure for central-level implementation, and reached a consensus on establishing the central coordination and implementation structure. Based on this agreement, the formal approval process is currently underway. The central level team is expected to play a leading role in promoting and utilizing PDMS for forest monitoring across the country.



Central-Level Training: Practicing Drone Operation



Central-Level PDMS Meeting

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