

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.

Approval of the GCF REDD+ Results-Based Payment and the 5th JCC Meeting

■ Approval of GCF FP282: Rewarding the Lao PDR's Emission Reduction Efforts

On October 30, 2025, during the 43rd Meeting of the Board of the Green Climate Fund (GCF), the project "REDD+ Results-based Payment - Governance, Forest Landscape and Livelihoods Project in Southern Lao PDR (GFLL-SL)" was officially approved. JICA served as the Accredited Entity for this proposal submitted by the Government of Lao PDR. Under this approval, approximately USD 62 million will be disbursed in recognition of approximately 14 million tons of CO₂ emission reductions achieved by Lao PDR between 2015 and 2018.

To secure this funding, JICA, through the F-REDD 2 project, provided extensive support to the Lao government in the preparation of Funding Proposal 282 (FP282). This approval marks a historic milestone, representing the culmination of many years of collaboration on REDD+ between the Lao government and Japan.

■ The 5th JCC: Looking Toward the Final Year and New Horizons

On December 9, 2025, two months after the GCF approval, the 5th Joint Coordinating Committee (JCC) was held. With the project approaching its conclusion, participants reviewed achievements to date and discussed the work plan for 2026, the project's final year. During the meeting, stakeholders expressed high expectations

for reinvesting the newly acquired GCF funds through the GFLL-SL project to advance policy formulation and capacity building at the central-level, and forest conservation efforts across five southern provinces, including Savannakhet.

■ The Virtuous Cycle of REDD+: Linking Results to Sustained Forest Conservation

Lao PDR has already begun receiving results-based payments from the World Bank's Forest Carbon Partnership Facility (FCPF) also with technical support from JICA, making this GCF project the country's second instance of REDD+ results-based payments from public fund. This success proves that the REDD+ mechanism can serve as a powerful incentive for forest conservation in Lao PDR, enabling the reinvestment of payment proceeds into further conservation. This "virtuous cycle" is precisely the outcome that both Lao PDR and its donors have sought as a core objective of their REDD+ efforts. All those involved are deeply encouraged that JICA's support has played such a vital role in achieving this significant contribution.



After concluding the successful conclusion of the 5th JCC meeting, together with the counterparts including the Director General of Department of Forestry, Dr. Somvang Phimmavong (third from the right in the front row)



Aiming for the coexistence of forest conservation and sustainable development for future generations in GFLL-SL target villages

The 4th Lao National Forest Inventory: Mission accomplished!

The Department of Forestry (DOF) of the Lao People's Democratic Republic (Lao PDR) has successfully completed its fourth National Forest Inventory (NFI). The NFI serves as a foundation for Laos to collect and analyze data on forest resources and biodiversity, enabling evidence-based forest management and supporting participation in international carbon markets.

Launched in October 2024, the preliminary results were presented in September 2025. This latest inventory builds on the country's extensive experience in forest monitoring, following the inaugural inventory in the 1990s and subsequent iterations in 2016 and 2019.

The Forest Inventory and Fire Protection Division (FIFPD) led the fieldwork and data analysis, deploying nine teams across the country. These teams were supported by provincial and district technicians, as well as local villagers. The fourth NFI was co-funded by the World Bank, German Agency for International Cooperation (GIZ), and Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA). Technical assistance was provided by Kokusai Kogyo Co., Ltd, which supported the Lao NFIs in 2016 and 2019 also through JICA. Expertise was also contributed by the SilvaCarbon Program (including the US Forest Service and the University of Göttingen) and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO).

This iteration marks a significant milestone in forest resource monitoring, initiating a new cycle of NFIs and paving the way for future efforts. The fourth NFI utilizes a revised methodology to ensure statistical robustness and combines the visual interpretation of satellite imagery for over 6,000 plots followed by field measurement of over 500 ground plots systematically distributed across the entire national territory. Field measurement includes tree species, diameter at breast height (DBH), assessments of Non-Timber Forest Products (NTFPs), and degradation levels. Analysis of this data provides vital information on tree density, biomass, biodiversity, and regeneration potential; subsequent inventories will allow for the tracking of forest resources over time including forest cover change and tree growth.

The NFI is a core pillar of the National Forest Monitoring System (NFMS), which supports the National Forest Strategy 2035. This strategy targets sustainable forest management, the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, and the attainment of 70% forest cover to facilitate access to carbon credits.

The results of the fourth NFI are expected to be officially endorsed by the DOF in early 2026. The data will then be shared with the Lao Statistics Bureau for forest

capital accounting purposes, and a public dashboard will be launched to provide transparent access to the findings.



QA/QC team rechecking the measurement made by the survey team at the plot location



Survey team checking the plot location with the local forestry officers and villagers before the field measurement

Pioneering measures to control forest fires by using satellite data and the PDMS

Every dry season, Laos faces recurrent forest fires and the serious social issues that result: the loss of precious forest resources and severe air pollution, including fine particulate matter (PM2.5). Finding and responding to fires across such vast forested areas is no easy task.

The Provincial Deforestation Monitoring System (PDMS) lies at the heart of the national effort to address this. Developed by JICA, the PDMS has been upgraded this year by integrating active fire data from satellites like NASA/VIIRS and Himawari. This allows for nationwide use and the monitoring of target forest areas in near real-time — rapid detection that helps Laos spot forest fires as early as possible. In fact, between January and mid-March 2026, the PDMS successfully detected 16,395 active fires across the country, providing figures that have even been used in official government reports. Furthermore, the system automatically sends fire alerts directly to local forest officials, enabling them to take quick initial action on the ground.

Turning this data into action requires close teamwork with local forest officials. With support from donors like the World Bank and GIZ/GCF, we have actively held practical PDMS training sessions this year. Starting with a pilot site in Bolikhamxay Province, training has expanded to other provinces, including Oudomxay, Bokeo, Luang Prabang, and Savannakhet. These sessions were designed for the dedicated staff at the Provincial and District Agriculture and Environment Offices (PAEO and DAEO) and even included automated drone flight exercises. Through such training and practice, we are helping build a stronger system that enables local forest officials to assess situations quickly and respond promptly to forest fires.

By bringing the latest technology to Laos through the PDMS and strengthening our local partnerships, major progress has been made in protecting the forests of Laos. However, the local forest officials in the field con-

tinue to face constraints. Even after a fire has been detected, taking immediate action and putting out the flames still remains a challenge. Our plan is to begin by compiling feedback from the field gathered during this dry season's operations, with a view to further improving the functions of the system. With just six months left until the Project ends, we remain committed to the protection of the beautiful forests of Laos, providing support through a combination of powerful satellite data and close-knit collaboration with local forest officials.



Forest fire in Laos

Contact

F-REDD 2/DOF Office

Kouvieng Street, Sisaket Village,
Chanthabouli District,
Vientiane Capital, Laos
Tel & Fax: 021(22)2536

F-REDD 2/FIFPD Office

Phontong Swath Village, House No.
386, Unit 44, Chanthabouly District,
Vientiane, Laos



Ministry of Agriculture
and Environment



Japan International
Cooperation Agency

Facebook

