

F-REDD Newsletter

Sustainable Forest Management and REDD+ Support Project Nov 2015 - Oct 2020

Sustainable Forest Management and REDD+ Support Project (F-REDD)

The purpose of F-REDD is to enhance the capacity of forestry sector through strengthening policies, effective incorporation of REDD+, and improvement of forest resource information as the foundation of sustainable forest management (SFM) in both central and provincial levels (Luang Prabang as the pilot province). The Department of Forest Resource Management, Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MONRE-DFRM), and the Department of Forestry, Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (MAF-DOF) are the implementing agencies of F-REDD.

Joint Meeting of Six TWGs

Lao PDR has established six Technical Working Groups (TWG)*1 to promote REDD+ in Lao PDR. Each of the TWGs plays a key role in designing the national policies and institutions related to its own area. It is also important that the six TWGs jointly address cross-cutting issues and synchronize their efforts.

It is essential for the development of the National REDD+ Strategy to understand the land use and forest cover change and its background. The Forest Type Maps at several time points and the Deforestation and Forest Degradation Drivers Analysis, which are both being developed by the DOF, serve as the base information to analyze the land use and forest cover change. These efforts aim to reveal the status and the challenges Lao PDR has been facing using satellite-based remote sensing technologies.

On 12 January 2017, the REL/MRV TWG hosted a joint meeting of the six TWGs to introduce and discuss the interim results of the abovementioned work by the DOF. Lao experts of the six TWGs and donor and development partners in attendance shared constructive views and advice based on their vast experience. Points for further improvement and the need for consultations with local-level stakeholders were also recognized.



Joint meeting of six TWGs

*1: REL/MRV, Land Use, Enforcement and Implementation of Mitigation, Legal Framework, Benefit Sharing and Social and Environmental Safeguard

District and Village Level Consultations for Provincial REDD+ Planning

Luang Prabang established its Provincial REDD+ Task Force (PRTF) in May 2016 as a hub for promoting REDD+ in the province. The PRTF consists of government representatives from relevant sectors who have a stake in forest management. Over the last six months, F-REDD has collaborated mainly with the provincial level authorities — holding a series of meetings — to analyze the causes of deforestation and forest degradation, social and environmental risks, and other issues associated with the implementation of REDD+. Following the kick-off meeting in July 2016 and the 2nd meeting in December, the 3rd PRTF meeting on 3rd February 2017 discussed the planning process, implementation arrangements, and schedule for the Provincial REDD+ Action Plan (PRAP).

The next step is to ensure the designed REDD+ activities are in line with the agenda of the local-level stakeholders, and support and promote REDD+ safeguards. To verify this, the PRTF members agreed on the need of out-reaching to the district forestry officers and the local communities through multi-layered consultations. The Provincial REDD+ Office (PRO) leads the



Members of the PRTF discussed the roadmap to develop the PRAP

consultation process, and district task units will be set up and will collaborate with the PRO in each district. A series of consultation meetings will start in the coming month, targeting the 12 districts and sample village clusters that are showing high deforestation and forest degradation.

Forestry Sector Indicator Survey Completed

The Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (MAF) is currently formulating the National REDD Strategy and is also revising the Forestry Law. Thereafter, the results are planned to be incorporated into the revision of the Forest Strategy.

F-REDD supports the central level policies and institutions related to REDD+ and the forestry sector in general. As a preparatory step for this entire process, F-REDD implemented the Forestry Sector Indicator Survey to collect and analyze the latest forest-related information in Lao PDR. The survey took two months to categorize the information into eight fields and 26 indicators — including forest area change dynamics and the driving factors, timber logging and export, and afforestation. Also, the report has been finalized by incorporating opinions and comments from the stakeholders concerned.

The survey revealed the continuing trend of deforestation and discovered the expansion of the commercial agricultural production area as its main driver. There seems to be a large gap between the government quota on timber harvesting volume and the data of the timber export volume provided by the United Nations which indicates that, although the situation has been improving in recent years, a large amount of timber is still illegally logged. In addition to a sharp increase of export of white charcoal to Korea and Japan since 2000, the export of black charcoal to China and Thailand has also increased rapidly since 2010, which brings up a concern over deterioration of forest resources. The results will be used as an input when revising the Forestry Law and the Forest Strategy.

1st FSSWG Meeting Held under the New Government Structure



Mr. Saysamon (right) and Ms. Makimoto (left)

The Forestry Sub-Sector Working Group (FSSWG) has not been held since April 2016 due to the government organizational reform of forestry sector agencies. Upon the agreement to integrate the FSSWG under the umbrella of the Sector Working Group of Agriculture and Rural Development (SWG-ARD), led by the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, the 1st FSSWG meeting was held for half a day in the morning of 24th March, 2017.

The meeting discussed the revised ToR, and also agreed to align its work plan to the higher-level forums, namely the Round Table Meeting — the highest level dialogue meeting between the GoL and development partners — and the SWG-ARD. In the meeting, the GoL representatives presented some important topics — the revision of Forestry Law; the review of boundary delineation of three forest categories; the FLEGT negotiation, establishment of domestic timber legality assurance system in compliance with the EU regulations; and the updates on Lao REDD+. The presentations were followed by lively discussions, particularly regarding the revision of the Forestry Law and the methodologies for boundary re-delineation of three forest categories.

Main Activities Conducted

Output 1: Support forestry sector at the central level

- ◆ Forest Sector Indicator Survey (*completed*)
- ◆ Forest Sub-Sector Working Group Meeting (*completed*)

Output 2: Support measurement of emissions reduction and removal through implementation of REDD+

- ◆ 2nd NFI dry season 2016-2017 (*completed*)
- ◆ Survey of years taken for forest regeneration (*completed*)
- ◆ Establishment of the REL drafting team followed by 2nd and 3rd meeting (*completed*)
- ◆ Revision of Forest Type Map 2000, '05, '10, '15 (*ongoing*)
- ◆ Reporting of the Deforestation and Forest Degradation Drivers Analysis (*ongoing*)
- ◆ Setting up of the physical system of the NFMS (*ongoing*)

Output 3: Support National REDD+

- ◆ Joint meeting of six TWGs (*completed*)
- ◆ 3rd REL/MRV TWG meeting (*completed*)
- ◆ Confirmation of ERPD development schedule and role sharing for drafting (*completed*)

Output 4: Support Luang Prabang Province REDD+ Readiness

- ◆ 3rd meeting of Provincial REDD+ Task Force (PRTF) (*completed*)
- ◆ Local consultation at district and village level for developing the Provincial REDD+ Action Plan (*ongoing*)
- ◆ Planning the pilot of the priority forestry policies in line with the PRAP (*ongoing*)

Contact

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Events in the Next Quarter

May.
2nd meeting of Joint Coordination Committee (JCC)
2nd Annual Workshop
4th meeting of REL/MRV Technical Working Group

Jun.
The Forestry Sub-Sector Working Group



MONRE
Ministry of Natural
Resources and Environment



MAF
Ministry of Agriculture
and Forestry



Japan International
Cooperation Agency