

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 and Oudomxay). The Department of Forestry, Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (MAF-DOF) is the implementing agencies of F-REDD.

Two-day REL/MRV training camp was held

One challenge commonly seen across REDD+ countries is limited country ownership of REDD+. This is largely due to the lack of tangible results in terms of payment for carbon credits. Particularly for REL^{*1}, as the object is CO₂, which is 'invisible', it is difficult to motivate the counterparts to learn the complicated accounting rules. In Lao PDR, only a few staff members of the counterparts have a good understanding of the contents of REL report, which was submitted to the UNFCCC in January 2018.

A two-day REL/MRV^{*2} workshop was held in Thalath in August, with the participation of nearly 30 government officers, as an opportunity for intensive learning and discussion on REL and the future MRV plan. The contents of REL report, key issues discussed through technical exchange with the UNFCCC Assessment Team, and the future MRV plan were shared, followed by an exercise to reconstruct REL by using the actual data set. Some participants stated, "This was a useful opportunity to systematically learn about REL and MRV", "I will share what I learned with my colleagues", and "I clearly understood the activities and support carried out by the JICA project".



Groups exercising FREL calculation

*1 REL (Reference Emission Level): also called 'FREL/FRL', this is a benchmark for assessing the performance of the implementation of REDD+ activities.

*2 MRV: is the system to carry out the Measurement, Reporting, and Verification of the results of emission reductions of greenhouse gas.

Forestry Law being revised

The current Forestry Law was revised in 2007. However, it is now under revision again in order to adapt to changing environments, such as those related to the state of forests and their management, and the domestic and global circumstances surrounding Lao forests. The current revision is in progress, with a target for approval by the National Assembly in the first half of 2019.

The main revision points include: the reinforcement and refinement of regulations concerning logging and forest conversion, establishment of a timber legality assurance system in line with FLEGT^{*3}, and development of policies related to forest environmental ser-

vices, including REDD+. In addition, a draft of the Land Law revision that is closely related to the Forestry Law has been disclosed for public comment, and is expected to be deliberated and approved by the National Assembly at the end of 2018.

F-REDD is playing an active role in this revision process, such as by supporting the translation and distribution of the English draft of the revised law, gathering and coordinating input from development partners, facilitating discussion at Forestry Sub-Sector Working Group meetings, and hosting technical meetings with the drafting committee. We will continue to facilitate the revision process to ensure the revised Forestry Law is effective and practical, as well as consistent with the new Land Law.

*3 FLEGT (Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade): an approach developed in EU aiming to reduce illegal logging by strengthening sustainable and legal forest management, improving governance and promoting trade in legally produced timber (partly cited from <http://www.euflegt.efi.int/what-is-flegt>).

Lao PDR participated in a forest monitoring workshop for the Asia-Pacific region

REDD+ countries are required to monitor the state of forests, review related policies, and measure greenhouse gas emissions/removal through their forest monitoring systems. This can be done through the collection of field-based information and use of advanced technologies, such as remote-sensing. Each country needs to find an optimal combination based on its national capacity.

A workshop^{*4} on forest monitoring was held for five days in Cambodia in September, to which five Asian countries (Laos, Vietnam, Cambodia, Nepal, and Papua New Guinea) were invited.

Three government officials and one national staff member from F-REDD participated in the workshop and introduced the forest monitoring system of Lao PDR. They also assessed the current forest monitoring system with a tool prepared by GFOI^{*5}, and discussed which activities will be priorities in the future.

After the workshop, the participants started planning a session to share what they learned and discuss future forest monitoring with their colleagues. F-REDD will also take advantage of this momentum to accelerate our support for forest monitoring by Lao PDR.



Lao participants developing a diagram that shows their forest monitoring system.

*4 “Country Needs Assessment Workshop: Asia-Pacific” co-organized by GFOI and FCPF, 17th - 21st September 2018 in Cambodia.

*5 GFOI (Global Forest Observation Initiative): is an informal partnership to help coordinate international support to developing countries on forest monitoring and greenhouse gas (GHG) accounting for REDD+ and related activities (sited from ‘<http://www.gfoi.org/>’).

Main Activities Conducted

Output 1: Support forestry sector at the central level

- ◆ Drafting the revised Forestry Law (*ongoing*)

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

- ◆ REL/MRV training camp (*completed*)
- ◆ 3rd NFI kick-off meeting (*completed*)

Output 4: Support REDD+ Readiness in Luang Prabang Province and Oudomxay Province

- ◆ Field monitoring of PAREDD sites in Luang Prabang and report compilation (*ongoing*)
- ◆ Socio-economic survey in Oudomxay Province (*completed*)

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<https://www.jica.go.jp/project/english/laos/018/index.html>

Events in the Next Quarter

Oct.
Meeting on draft Forestry Law

Nov.
3rd NFI training
Meeting on draft Forestry Law

Dec.
6th REL/MRV TWG meeting



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