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REDD in Laos

Lao People's Democratic Republic (Lao PDR) is a predominantly mountainous country in Southeast Asia, land-locked by Myanmar, Viet Nam, Cambodia and Thailand. It is made up of three agro-climatic zones: the northern mountainous region; the hilly and mountainous regions of the centre and south; and the plains of the Mekong River (Sophathilath, 2012). It is an extremely biodiverse country; contributing to the high degree of endemism found in the Greater Mekong Sub-region (GMS) as a whole (MAF, 2005; 2010).

In 2011, the population was over 6.2 million (World Bank, 2013). It consists of 49 distinct ethnic groups and a further 200 ethnic subgroups (King & van de Walle, 2010). Natural resources are at

the heart of the economy, with forestry, agriculture, hydropower and minerals comprising over half of the country's total wealth. By 2020, Lao PDR aims to achieve annual economic growth of at least 8% and move out of the "least developed country" list (MPI, 2010). Between 2001 and 2010, the national economy experienced growth of 7.1% per year on average, attributable in part to hydropower and mining (World Bank, 2013). Despite this growth and overall poverty reduction, regional disparity means parts of the country, and the northern region in particular, continue to experience high levels of poverty (Moore et al. 2011).

In 2010, forest cover was estimated at 9.5 million hectares; 40.29% of the total land area (DOF, 2011a). Although this is only slightly lower than the 2002 figure of 9.8 million hectares, which represents 41.5% of the total land area (MAF, 2005), national forest cover is reported to have declined dramatically between 1992 and 2002, at an average rate of 134,000 hectares per year (equivalent to 1.2 -1.3%). This decade also saw widespread deterioration in forest quality, with dense forest declining from 29% to 8.2% from 1992 to 2002, and open forest increasing from 16% to 24.5%. Despite these overall trends, several studies demonstrate high spatial variation in deforestation due to regional variation in soil type, elevation and socioeconomic factors (see: Moore et al. 2011).

Nine activities have been identified as responsible for driving deforestation and forest degradation: natural and human-induced fires; timber extraction (commercial and illegal logging and for household consumption); shifting cultivation; agricultural expansion; forestry plantations; mining; hydropower; infrastructure development; and urban expansion (Mekong Maps, 2010). Of these, wood extraction and shifting cultivation are among the most important drivers of forest degradation, and agricultural expansion and industrial plantations of deforestation (*ibid*). Annual emissions from deforestation and forest degradation are estimated at around 51 million tonnes of CO₂ (DOF, 2010).

Lao PDR has developed a number of policies that address climate change and aim for the sustainable management of the forestry sector including through targets for increased national forest cover, such as the National Strategy on Climate Change and the Forestry Strategy to the Year 2020.

REDD+ has been identified as a key mechanism to increase the national forest area. Lao PDR has been participating in international REDD+ negotiations under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) to push for an agreement on REDD+ since 2007. It is engaged in several multilateral negotiating blocks, including the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN), G-77 and China, and the UNFCCC's Least Developed Countries (LDCs) (DOF, 2011b). The Government supports a flexible yet internationally binding agreement for REDD+ (DOF, 2011b). It aims to adopt fund-based mechanisms in the short-term, allowing for participation in the voluntary carbon market (DOF, 2010). However, it intends to use compliance markets in the longer term once international protocols have been agreed (*ibid*).

Lao PDR is being supported in its preparations for REDD+ implementation by the Forest Carbon Partnership Facility (FCPF), the Forest Investment Programme (FIP), and most recently the UN-REDD Programme (since 2012). It was one of the first 14 countries to become a REDD+ country participant under the FCPF in July 2008 and its REDD Readiness Preparation Proposal (R-PP) grant was requested and signed in October 2009. The R-PP was subsequently developed and a final version accepted by the FCPF Secretariat in late 2011. The R-PP funding was closed in March 2013 and the REDD Readiness grant is expected to be signed in mid-2013 (FCPF, 2013). Lao PDR was selected as a pilot country by the FIP in June 2010 and its FIP investment plan was approved by the FIP sub-committee in October 2011.

As well as these broader programmes, various other bilateral and multilateral donor initiatives are providing substantial financial and technical support for the development of REDD+ in Lao PDR.

There are also numerous subnational activities, including REDD+ feasibility studies and pilot projects.

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Institutional arrangements

The Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (MAF) and the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MoNRE) share responsibility for REDD+ (Phayvanh, 2013). Although previously MAF was the designated authority for overseeing forest land in Lao PDR and acted as the official REDD+ focal point, institutional changes in 2012 saw MoNRE formally adopt responsibility for climate change adaptation and mitigation and assume its role as the leading agency for REDD+. Concurrently, management of the forestry sector more broadly was transferred from MAF to the Department of Forest Resource Management (DFRM) within MoNRE. DFRM also houses the REDD+ Division, which was established with the official mandate of managing REDD+.

Within MAF, the Department of Forestry (DoF) is the key agency responsible for developing the national REDD+ policy and a REDD+ mechanism aligned with international efforts (IGES, 2012). DoF also houses the REDD+ Office, which was established in 2012 specifically to facilitate implementation of the Readiness Preparation Proposal (R-PP).

A multi-sectoral REDD Task Force was created in 2008 through Decree No. 113. The Task Force is chaired by the Director General of DFRM (since June 2013) and coordinates REDD+ readiness in the country. Originally, the Task Force contained 12 representatives at Director or Deputy Director General level, seven of which were from MAF (IGES, 2012). In 2011, the Task Force was reformed to also include representatives from other ministries, such as the Ministry of Planning and Investment and the Ministry of Energy and Mines (IGES, 2012). Further Task Force members are currently being selected (as of September 2013) however the composition is expected to remain similar to what it was before. The Task Force is provided with high-level cross sectoral coordination and policy guidance from the National Environment Council (NEC) (DOF, 2011b), which comprises ministers and vice ministers from 14 key agencies, and is chaired by the Vice Prime Minister with the Minister of MAF as Deputy Chair (IGES, 2012) and is further supported by the REDD+ Office. The Task Force is empowered to establish a number of technical working groups on the development of reference levels; monitoring, reporting and verification (MRV); stakeholder participation and consultation; land-use; and, benefit-sharing. However, as of September 2013, these working groups are not yet in operation. A similar structure is proposed for the provincial level in provinces where REDD+ activities are taking place or where they are planned for the readiness phase; however such

processes are in the early phases and have been largely project driven.

Management of REDD+ activities is split dependent on classification of forest area, with DFRM/MoNRE having jurisdiction over protection and conservation forest areas, and DoF/MAF responsible for REDD+ initiatives in national production forest areas, village forests and plantations.

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9/2013

Stakeholder engagement and participation

In 2011, the REDD Task Force (TF) was expanded to include representatives of several key ministries, as well as two civil society agencies; the National Front for Land Construction and the Lao Women's Union (IGES, 2012). However, in a move towards stronger national ownership of the REDD+ process, the reformulation of the TF also saw the removal of an advisory group containing a variety of international donors.

Meetings of the TF have aimed to provide an avenue for stakeholder engagement by including representatives from NGOs, consultancies and the private sector; however these meetings have reportedly ceased to occur on a regular basis.

The Forest Carbon Partnership Facility (FCPF) Readiness Preparation Proposal (R-PP) was developed with stakeholder consultations at the national level and in selected provinces and districts where REDD+ activities are taking place. The Stakeholder Participation and Consultation Plan (SCP) within the R-PP proposes the establishment of a technical working group under the REDD+ Office and the development of a system for consultation with all stakeholder groups from local to national levels. However, as of September 2013, this has not been achieved. The FCPF states that once the REDD Readiness grant has been signed and the planned Strategic Environmental and Social Assessment (SESA) is underway, additional consultations will commence (FCPF, 2013).

The Forest Investment Programme (FIP) has aimed to develop through a similar process of stakeholder consultation. For example, a consultation workshop, held in September 2011 to finalise the FIP plan involved a variety of stakeholders, including ministry representatives, bilateral and multilateral programmes, domestic and international non-governmental organisations, the private sector, and subnational representatives from provinces where FIP activities were planned to take place (Chokkalingam, 2011a). Similarly, in 2012, an information sharing meeting on the FIP dedicated grant mechanism (DGM) was held involving representatives from civil society, key development partners, multilateral development bank (MDB) partners and the Government of Lao PDR (CIF, 2012).

Further consultation workshops have aimed to enhance private sector engagement in REDD+ (Chokkalingam, 2011b), and to feed into the process of legal reforms in the forestry sector (Forest Carbon Asia, 2011a). On the ground, donor and NGO-supported projects are conducting stakeholder engagement and awareness and capacity building efforts as part of their REDD+ activities. The Forestry Sector Capacity Development Project (FSCAP) funded by the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), has the promotion of stakeholder coordination among government agencies and development partners as one of its key goals (DOF & JICA, 2010). The CliPAD programme in collaboration with the Department of Forestry (DoF) and the Lao Biodiversity Association (LBA) is piloting a Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) process in its demonstration sites (Goetze, 2011), and is now developing a FPIC procedure and tools for jurisdictional REDD+ in selected provinces. The SUFORD project has developed participatory management guidelines for

Production Forest Areas (DOF, 2006a, 2006b) and has implemented it in 1.2 million hectares of production forests so far. Part of the FIP investment plan is to scale up such participatory sustainable forest management in all three state forest categories (DOF, 2011c).

Updated date:
9/2013

Land tenure arrangements and carbon rights

All land and forestland in Lao PDR is owned by the State, which in turn is able to grant certain rights of management, use and exploitation to different entities, with the form of rights dependent on the classification of land. The Land Law dictates that a registered land title is the highest form of property right; analogous to ownership. A land title is the only legal document demonstrating permanent land use rights and grants the holder a variety of rights, such as to use the land as collateral, to transfer the land, and to give the land as inheritance. Such land titles can be granted to individuals or families on up to three hectares.

Although customary land rights historically have not been well recognised, they are acknowledged by land and forestry law related regulations. It is hoped that on-going efforts to amend these laws will afford these rights better legal representation and pave the way for community participation in REDD+. Further to this, legislative changes have allowed for customary land rights to be registered through the issuance of Land Survey Certificates, Land Titles, or Land Certificates, with the first titles registered in 2011 (Moore et al. 2012). These can be granted to individuals, organisations or villages. However as they are in the form of 'land utilisation rights', they convey more limited rights than the land titles described above and do not allow for holders to sell or lease the land, nor use it as security for loans. Despite the limitations described, the granting of collective titles in this way is a sign of progress in terms of increasing tenure security for communities (Moore et al. 2012). Having said this, the strengthening of customary rights is under consideration in the 2013 reform process, which is expected to result in substantial changes in land and forest legislation, with particular reference to land tenure systems (RRI, 2012).

Some forest land is under village management and classified as "Village Use Forests" (VUFs). The management and use of the VUF is the responsibility of village administration authorities who in turn are able to allocate land to community members. For business operations, land is granted for use via lease or concession. For forestland to be converted to other uses or granted for lease or concession it must be classified as 'degraded' or 'barren', the definitions of which have been the source of much controversy. Land concessions granted without effective zoning or participation of local communities has led to numerous land pressures and conflicts (GIZ, 2011).

Measures to improve land use planning, allocation and titling, to increase tenure security and local livelihoods and create a more favourable investment climate have been high on the Government's agenda. In attempts to encourage investment, stabilise shifting cultivation and sustainably manage natural resources, a Land-Use Planning and Land Allocation (LUP/LA) programme has been in place in the country since the early 1990s, however this has not always been met with expected success (Bourgoin and Castella 2011). The programme has been criticised for its limited participation of local communities, resulting in unsustainable land use plans and negative rural livelihood impacts (Lestrelin et al. 2011). In response the Government introduced significant changes to the programme, increasing local participation through a revised Participatory Land Use Planning (PLUP) programme, which aims to expand the issuance of titles. As with LUP/LA, PLUP has been hampered by limited funding and capacity and is therefore being conducted predominantly in places with

sufficient donor funding and technical support, such as through the Northern Uplands Development Programme. Large parts of the country are also undergoing delineation according to processes established by the former National Land Management Authority (NLMA), now within the Department for Land Use Planning and Development within the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MoNRE). However, these also have been constrained by poor capacity and lack of funds. The National Socio-Economic Development Plan 2011-2015 states the Government's target of issuing 1.5 million titles between 2011 and 2015 (USAID, 2013). The above limitations have meant that there has been slow progress in meeting these ambitious targets, with just over 100,000 titles issued in the last six years (Vientiane Times, 2013).

At the subnational level, concerns that implementing REDD+ in the context of land tenure insecurity and weak governance may threaten forest dependent communities have led to attempts to create a more enabling environment (Moore et al. 2012). For example, land use zoning, planning and titling as well as building local capacity to address the issues of land and resource rights have been carried out as part of the Nam Et Phou Louey National Protected Area (NEPL NPA) REDD+ project (*ibid*). While lessons learned from such subnational activities may help inform the national process, it cannot be guaranteed that they will be fully integrated into the national REDD+ framework (*ibid*). It has therefore been recognised that greater support is needed for communal land titling and the clarification of carbon rights to ensure that the potentially negative social impacts of REDD+ are minimised (*ibid*).

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9/2013

Forest management

Forests in Lao PDR are classified into three categories: Production, Protection or Conservation forest areas. Unclassified forest areas have also emerged and include village/communal forests. Production Forest, around 34% of the total forest area is forest and forestland classified for people's livelihoods, for natural economic and social development (*ibid*). The main goal of national production forests is to produce timber on a sustainable basis, while supporting local livelihoods. At the village level, these are referred to as village use forests, which aim to meet local needs for construction, firewood, consumption and the use of non-timber forest products (NTFPs). Protection Forest (around 29% of the national forest area) is forest and forestland for watershed protection, the prevention of soil erosion and natural disasters, national security and environmental protection (Grace et al. 2012). Conservation Forest (37% of the total forest area) is for the conservation and protection of plant and animal species, and of areas of particular importance in terms of research, culture, history, education and tourism (*ibid*).

Prior to institutional reforms in 2011, all forestland was managed by the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (MAF). However in 2011, jurisdiction over Conservation and Protection Forest was granted to the newly established Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MoNRE). Jurisdiction over national Production Forests, village forests and plantations (within the unclassified areas) remained within MAF, with a newly established Village Forestry and Non-Timber Forest Products (NTFP) Division established in 2012 within the Department of Forestry (DoF). The Division is specifically responsible for village and communal forest areas. Management of REDD+ activities in each of these forest areas is therefore split accordingly between DoF (within MAF) and DFRM (within MoNRE).

Related to forest law enforcement and overall monitoring of the forestry sector, the Department of

Forest Inspection (DOFI) was established under the MAF in 2008 and is the primary agency for addressing problems associated with illegal logging, land encroachment and corruption in the forestry sector, as well as the enforcement of forest policies and legislation (Flanagan, 2013). DOFI is unique in that it has the authorities of arrest and confiscation, and to issue fines and prepare cases for prosecution (ibid). However, as DOFI was established outside of the national five-year planning cycle, resources are limited and as a result capacity and activities under DOFI are constrained by governmental budgets (Ratanalangsy et al. 2009).

Enforcement of land laws more generally is the responsibility of MoNRE, which has absorbed the departments of the former National Land Management Authority, whereas the issuance of concessions of rural land is carried out by both MoNRE and MAF, depending on what kind of concession is being granted.

Lao PDR is geographically positioned amongst three of the world's largest timber importers and subsequently engages in high levels of trade in illegal timber with Viet Nam, Thailand and China (EIA, 2012). The Government has attempted to tackle illegal logging and forestry crime in the country and in 2009 began to prepare for involvement in the Forest Law Enforcement Governance and Trade (FLEGT) Voluntary Partnership Agreement (VPA) process with the European Union (EU). In 2012, the government made an official request to commence the VPA negotiation process, with the first session expected at some point in 2013 (FERN, 2013).

With regards to incentives, in established Production Forest Areas, villagers can benefit from employment opportunities, village development grants and timber revenues (Chokkalingam, 2010). The Decree on Sharing Revenue from Timber Harvested in Production Forest Areas states that 70% of revenue is to go to the state, while the remaining 30% is to support forestry management, conservation and protection, and development activities, primarily for production forests and village development. Similar participatory and incentive mechanisms are yet to be established in conservation and protection forest areas. And while the Government has recognised the importance of incentive mechanisms, such as Payments for Environmental Services (PES) schemes, in promoting sustainable socio-economic development, these are not widely practiced (Sopthathilath, 2012). Provision of incentives is restricted by limited funding, however to this end, the country aims to mobilise new channels of climate related finance, such as through REDD+.

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9/2013

Reference levels

To achieve progress in establishing a national reference emission level (REL), the REDD+ Office is to establish a Technical Working Group specifically for REL development. However, as of September 2013, this is not in operation. Lao PDR has opted for a nested approach, in which projects and sub-national activities are nested within a national accounting framework (DOF, 2010). A nested approach requires a national REL, defined sub-national reference regions and nested projects, whose RELs combine to give the national REL. The Readiness Preparation Proposal (R-PP) estimated a preliminary national REL from historical rates of change and forest inventory data along with national development objectives. However, consistent assessments of forest cover change that can be used for establishing a credible REL are still lacking. To remedy this, the Forest Information Management (FIM) Programme has been working on a nationwide forest cover basemap and carrying out field surveys for information on species and other parameters.

A number of other donor driven projects are also aiming to contribute to the development of the

national REL, including the Climate Protection through Avoided Deforestation programme (CliPAD). As part of its regional efforts, the Lowering Emissions in Asia's Forests Programme (LEAF) has been driving the development of reference levels for REDD+ in Lao PDR and has conducted training workshops for national REL development, including one in August 2011 (Forest Carbon Asia, 2011b), and one in September 2012 (Forest Carbon Asia, 2012).

Pilot activities on the ground are developing project-level RELs based on historic analysis, some for certification to voluntary carbon standards. Likewise, some ongoing projects (such as LEAF and CliPAD) are supporting the development of RELs and carbon accounting at provincial levels, also for entry into voluntary carbon markets. Final national REL determination will however depend on parameters decided on by the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technical Advice (SBSTA) within the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

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9/2013

MRV

The REDD Office is responsible for establishing a technical working group for monitoring, reporting and verification (MRV). This is not yet in operation but will be responsible for the development of the national MRV system in Lao PDR.

Since the 1970s, there have been numerous forest cover assessments in Lao PDR, such as the National Forest Inventory (NFI) carried out from 1991-1999. The results of these various initiatives are often incomparable due to discrepancies in the methods, definitions and imagery used (DOF, 2010), complicating the development of a national MRV system for REDD+. The Readiness Preparation Proposal (R-PP) recommends that in the future to improve the basis for an MRV system, a nation-wide forest cover change assessment is conducted at least every five years and an NFI at least every 10 years. Due to past support from the SUFORD project and work done by the National Agriculture and Forestry Research Institute (NAFRI), the information base is better in Production Forests than Protection or Conservation Forest Areas.

Various bilateral development partners, including Germany, the Netherlands, Japan and Finland, have been supporting Lao PDR in capacity building for improved forest monitoring and mapping, and community based carbon mapping (FCPF, 2013). The Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), for example, has been supporting the country through the Forest Information Management (FIM) programme, which has prepared a detailed map for national forest cover in 2010, including information on tree species, diameter, height and density. This project was completed in 2012, and although the results have not yet (as of June 2013) been made publicly available, they will contribute to the national MRV system. The Forest Preservation Programme (FPP), also supported by Japan, is providing capacity and infrastructure support. The USAID-funded Lowering Emissions in Asia's Forests (LEAF) programme has also been contributing to capacity building and better regional collaboration for forest monitoring (FCPF, 2013).

The international I-REDD research project is working with the National University of Laos (NUOL) and NAFRI to assess land cover change and the related emissions, as well as methods for monitoring livelihoods and governance in and around one National Protected Area. Project and jurisdictional-level MRV is being conducted and planned by some pilot projects as part of the required project design documents to be submitted for certification to voluntary carbon standards.

Last updated:

Safeguards

The Government of Lao PDR is committed to developing a range of safeguards for REDD+ implementation, based on stakeholder consultation and participation (DOF, 2010). However, neither a formal system for addressing safeguards nor a safeguards information system (SIS) is yet in place (IGES, 2012). As Lao PDR is engaged in the Forest Carbon Partnership Facility (FCPF) and the Forest Investment Programme (FIP), the country must comply with the safeguard policies of the World Bank. As part of the FCPF, this includes performing a Strategic Environmental and Social Assessment (SESA) of the potential risks and benefits of different REDD+ strategies. The SESA is a two tiered approach to managing the environmental and social risks of REDD+ implementation, which includes the incorporation of environmental and social considerations into the REDD+ strategy; and the development of an Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF), to address the residual impacts of REDD+ implementation. The Terms of Reference (ToRs) for both the SESA and the ESMF have been developed, reviewed by the World Bank Regional Safeguards Secretariat (RSS), and revised accordingly (FCPF, 2013).

At the national level, the Water Resources and Environment Administration (WREA), under the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MONRE) is currently responsible for carrying out Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA) for development projects, which may incorporate REDD+ and the associated safeguards in the future. The investment plan of the FIP references the ESIA of the related SUFORD project. It states that a separate ESIA is to be carried out prior to individual investments using lessons learned from SUFORD. It also notes that safeguard measures will include those for the protection of indigenous peoples and women and to avoid the conversion of natural forests to tree plantations (DOF, 2011c). This is of note as there is no indication yet that the Government intends to remove tree plantations from its current definition of forests. If plantations continue to be considered as 'forest', they may be increasingly established as part of REDD+ initiatives, with potentially adverse implications for biodiversity (GIZ, 2012).

A number of subnational REDD+ initiatives are making progress in the development and implementation of social and environmental safeguards. Included are those REDD+ projects that are applying for verification under voluntary standards, such as the Voluntary Carbon Standard (VCS) and the Climate Community and Biodiversity Alliance (CCBS). The Climate Protection through Avoided Deforestation (CLiPAD) project is supporting the government to develop and implement REDD+ Social and Environmental Standards (SES) in its jurisdictional REDD+ programmes as well as in the development of benefit-sharing mechanisms. It aims to distribute REDD+ payments to the appropriate authorities and villages in order to build capacity and learn lessons for the absorption of greater external funds at a later stage. This project has also pioneered a Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) consultation process with local communities in the Sayabouri Province around the Nam Phui National Protected Area (Goetze, 2011). Other initiatives include the Centre for People and Forests' (RECOFTC) regional Grassroots Capacity Building project which aims to roll out training on Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) in Lao PDR (RECOFTC, 2011), essential if REDD+ is to promote social co-benefits.

Some REDD-relevant safeguard provisions already exist in Lao PDR. These include the "Sustainable Development Criteria for Proposed CDM Projects in Lao PDR" (CDM Decree Annex 1), the Decree on Environmental Impact Assessment 2010, log export bans and other protective measures in forest-related regulations. Mining and hydropower utilities are bound by Concession Agreements that include environmental safeguards, however these are not enforced at present (DOF, 2010).

Lao PDR is in the negotiation phase of a Forest Law Enforcement Governance and Trade (FLEGT) Voluntary Partnership Agreement (VPA) with the European Union (EU) (FERN, 2013), to establish a credible timber legality assurance system in line with EU regulations requiring demonstration of legality of all wood and wood products sold in the EU (EFI, 2012). As well as this, almost 83,000 hectares of Production Forest Areas have achieved Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certification (FSC, 2013), which includes a requirement for the protection of High Conservation Value (HCV) forests, community engagement and other safeguards. There are plans to expand the certified area depending on funding availability and increased demand for certified wood with establishment of chain of custody regulations.

Last updated:
6/2015

Gender Equality

Lao PDR's R-PP identifies gender as an aspect to be taken into consideration by social impact assessments (Section 2d). Further, women are to be targeted in consultation procedures (Section 1b). For example, the Lao Women Union was part of preliminary consultations (Section 1a).

Lao established a National Commission on the Advancement of Women (NCAW) in 2003 which serves as a focal point to mainstream gender aspects into all areas of governance. It also oversees the implementation of the National Strategy for the Advancement of Women 2011-2015. This Strategy outlines how commitments under the Convention for the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) can be practically implemented at a national level. Sub-committees of the National Commission have been set up in all government ministries to supervise the CEDAW implementation process. The 2004 Law on the Development and Protection of Women seeks to create an enabling environment for women's empowerment.

NCAW's sub-unit (CAW-MAF) at the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (MAF) has developed "Management Information System (MIS)" to integrate gender issues into forestry and agriculture operations. MIS is an operating guideline that provides checklist and forms to collect sex-disaggregated data from different sectors, including forestry and climate change.

In 2013, the USAID LEAF project (Lowering Emissions in Asia's Forests) in collaboration with Women Organizing for Change in Agriculture and Natural Resources Management (WOCAN) organized a series of workshops to train state agencies and women constituencies on guidelines for equitable gender inclusions in REDD+. The training aimed to build awareness and results are used to inform training material to national agencies (USAID 2013).

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Forest Carbon Asia



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