



CAMBODIA REDD+ PROGRAMME



Considerations on Cambodian Forest Definition


The Fourth Meeting of the Cambodia REDD+ Taskforce
28 March 2014



Forest Definitions (International)

- (i) **IPCC 2006 Guidelines:** The “Forest Land” category includes all land with woody vegetation consistent with **thresholds** used to define Forest Land **in the national greenhouse gas inventory**. It also includes systems with a vegetation structure that currently fall below, but *in situ* could potentially reach the threshold values used by a country to define the Forest Land category.
- (ii) **UNFCCC Decision 11/CP.7:** “Forest” is a **minimum area of land of 0.05-1.0 hectares** with tree **crown cover** (or equivalent stocking level) **of more than 10-30 percent** with trees with the potential to reach a **minimum height of 2-5 meters** at maturity *in situ*. A forest may consist either of closed forest formations where trees of various storeys and undergrowth cover a high proportion of the ground or open forest. Young natural stands and all plantations which have yet to reach a crown density of 10-30 per cent or tree height of 2-5 meters are included under forest, as are areas normally forming part of the forest area which are temporarily un-stocked as a result of human intervention such as harvesting or natural causes but which are expected to revert to forest

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Forest Definitions (international)

- (iii) **UNFCCC Decision 11.CP19 (COP 19) 4.:** Also decides that national forest monitoring systems, with, if appropriate, subnational monitoring and reporting as an interim measure as referred to in decision 1/CP.16, paragraph 71 (c), and in decision 4/CP.15, paragraph 1(d) should:
- (i) **Build upon existing systems**, as appropriate;
 - (ii) Enable the assessment of **different types of forest in the country**, including natural forest, as defined by the Party;
 - (iv) **FAO (FRA) global definition of forest:** a **minimum threshold for the height of trees (5 m)**, **at least 10 percent crown cover** (canopy density determined by estimating the area of ground shaded by the crown of the trees) and a **minimum forest area size (0.5 hectares)**. Urban parks, orchards and other agricultural tree crops are excluded from this definition – as are agroforestry systems used for agriculture

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Int. Forest definitions thresholds

Parameters	UNFCCC COP7/Marrakech Accord	UNEP/Convention on biological diversity	FAO/FRA
Young stands			
Temporarily unstocked areas			
Forestry land use			
Min. area (ha)	0.05 - 1	0.5	0.5
Min height (m)	2 - 5	5	5
Crown cover (%)	10 - 30	10	10
Strip width (m)			20

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Forest Definitions (national)

- (i) **Law on Forestry** : Defines "Forest" as unit of **natural or artificial forest ecosystem**, in the form of wet, inundated or dry land, covered by mixed vegetation, either natural or planted, including wildlife and other natural resources located therein, which the **main utilizations are the production of Timber Products and Non-Timber Forest Products, and other forest services**. Lands to which this law does not apply include all land designated by the State as permanent agricultural land, including: farms, idle land to be designated for other agriculture production than timber production, industrial areas, and land for urbanization and construction.
- (ii) **National Forest Programme**: "Forest" is the unit of the **natural ecosystem or plantation** in the forms of wetland, low land and dry land which covers by natural stands or plantation trees with a **height from 5 meters on an area at least 0.5 hectares with a canopy of more than 10 per cent**. The plantations such as rubber, oil palm, teak, acacia and eucalyptus and other kinds of trees which fall under the above criteria will also be classified as forests."

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Forest Definitions (national)

- (iii) **Cambodian afforestation and reforestation project activities (AR-CDM) Forest Definition:**

Host Party's selected single minimum:			Host Party's minimum selected values for A/R project activities include:	
A single minimum tree crown cover value between 10 and 30 per cent	A single minimum land area value between 0,05 and 1 hectare	A single minimum tree height value between 2 and 5 metres	Palm trees	Bamboos
10	0.5	5	No	Yes

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Observations

1. The definition and criteria thresholds specified in the current national forest definitions largely fit with the definition and criteria threshold levels defined at the international level.
some considerations:
 1. Possible designation of rubber plantation as permanent agricultural land
 2. Clarity needed on designation of palm tree plantation in UNFCCC definition
 3. Possible consideration for urban parks, orchards and other agricultural tree crops (including Palm tree plantation above) to be excluded from this definition
2. The thresholds in both the CDM definition and NFP definition of forest are: a minimum tree height of 5 meters, a minimum land area at least 0.5 hectares, and a canopy/tree crown cover of more than 10 percent.

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Considerations

1. Some research authors (Malyvanh and Feldkotter, '99) argue that 10% threshold as used by FAO and developed in view of the, by nature, very open African Woodlands appeared to be rather low for the forests in South East Asia.
2. In past case 20% crown cover standard was applied in for forest/land cover maps (including MoE, 2007?)
3. In line with the definitions above it might be preferable the maintain the threshold (a minimum tree height of 5 meters, a minimum land area at least 0.5 hectares, and a canopy/tree crown cover of more than 10 percent) as in the current NFP and CDM definition, with additional clarification on urban parks, orchards and other agricultural tree crops .

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Thank You!

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