

Cambodia National REDD+ Strategy
Fourth Working Draft

Cover Page

Due date for fourth draft:
21 August 2015

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Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Cambodia

MESSAGE

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Preface

Minister of MAFF and Minister of MoE

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Acknowledgement

The Royal Government of Cambodia expresses its sincere gratitude to national ministries and agencies, development partners, non-governmental organizations, academia, the private sector and all stakeholders for their contribution to the development of the Cambodia National REDD+ Strategy (NRS).

The NRS was developed under the overall coordination of the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF), with the active participation of the Ministry of Environment (MoE) and invaluable guidance from the Cambodia REDD+ Taskforce, Technical Teams, Consultation Group and Gender Group. Their participation made the NRS more coherent and aligned to other existing sectoral plans of the line ministries and agencies. The suggestions and comments received from stakeholders at local, sub-national and national level through a series of consultative meetings provided strategic guidance for development of the NRS. A wide range of technical support was provided by several national and international experts for the development of the NRS.

The development of the NRS was made possible with financial support from development partners, namely the United Nations Collaborative Programme on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation in Developing Countries (UN-REDD Programme), the World Bank's Forest Carbon Partnership Facility (FCPF), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)...add more....

Disclaimer:

This fourth working draft of the NRS is prepared by Nguon Pheakkdey, Royal University of Phnom Penh, in collaboration with Chhun Delux, Forestry Administration. The NRS shall be treated as a living document, implying that parts of it are still subject to modifications.

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List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

BUR	Biannual Update Report
COP	Conference of the Parties
ELCs	Economic Land Concessions
ER	Emissions Reduction
FA	Forestry Administration
FCPF	Forest Carbon Partnership Facility
FiA	Fisheries Administration
GHG	Greenhouse Gas
GRM	Grievance Redress Mechanism
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
MAFF	Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries
MEF	Ministry of Economy and Finance
MoE	Ministry of Environment
MRV	Monitoring, Measurement, Reporting and Verification
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
NC	National Communication
NCSD	National Committee for Sustainable Development
NFI	National Forest Inventory
NFMS	National Forest Monitoring System
NFP	National Forest Programme
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organizations
NPASMP	National Protected Areas Strategic Management Plan
NRC	National REDD+ Committee
NRS	National REDD+ Strategy
NSDP	National Strategic Development Plan
PLRs	Policies, Laws and Regulations
REDD+	Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and forest Degradation, conservation of forest carbon stocks, sustainable management of forests, and enhancement of forest carbon stocks
FREL/FRL	Forest Reference Emission Level/ Forest Reference Level
RBP	Results-based Payment
RGC	Royal Government of Cambodia
SIS	Safeguards Information System
SLCs	Social Land Concessions
SPFF	Strategic Planning Framework for Fisheries
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UN-REDD	United Nations Collaborative Programme on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation in Developing Countries
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme

Executive Summary

The Royal Government of Cambodia (RGC) strongly supports the development and implementation of REDD+ as an option to mitigate the impacts of climate change, reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from the forestry sector, contribute to socio-economic development, and promote the shift towards green inclusive development. Current Cambodian national development policies, strategies, programmes, and plans have incorporated REDD+ as part of their strategic agendas. Following decisions adopted by Parties to the United Nations Framework Conventions on Climate Change (UNFCCC), implementation of REDD+ in Cambodia has three consecutive phases: Readiness, Implementation, and Results-Based Payment (RBP) Phase. Cambodia is currently at the end of its Readiness Phase, and plans to transition to the Implementation Phase from 2016. To do so, the Warsaw Framework for REDD+ states that Cambodia shall have in place four interconnected elements: (1) National Strategy or Action Plan (NRS), (2) National Forest Monitoring System (NFMS), (3) Forest Reference Emissions Level/ Forest Reference Level (FREL/FRL), and (4) Safeguards Information System (SIS).

Following the Council of Ministers' guidelines, the Cambodia NRS was prepared following logical steps including the analysis of current and future national development policies and priorities; the formulation of a vision, mission and goals; the development of a strategic framework consisting of strategic objectives and strategies; the identification of a set of actions, institutional arrangements and implementation framework and mechanisms; the analysis of financial resources; and the development of a Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) framework. The vision, mission and goals of the NRS were formulated based on the analysis of institutional capacity, past and current experiences in forest lands management, strategic objectives and strategies to address drivers of deforestation and forest degradation.

Vision: Cambodia contributes to national and global climate change mitigation through improved forest management practices, biodiversity conservation and green inclusive development.

Mission: Improving the functioning and capacity of national and sub-national forest management institutions and its relevant institutions to strengthen implementation of existing policies, laws,

and regulations, in particular forest law enforcement, to achieve green inclusive development while contributing to climate change mitigation.

Goals:

1. Reducing deforestation and forest degradation while promoting sustainable development, conservation and enhancement of forest carbon stock
2. Demonstrating that REDD+ can be one of the measures for Cambodia to shift towards green inclusive development pathway
3. Promoting public awareness and participation in climate change mitigation actions through the forestry sector
4. Fulfilling Cambodia's requirements under the UNFCCC to be eligible to receive results-based payments for implemented REDD+ policies and measures.

To achieve the vision, mission and goals, the NRS has identified four **strategic objectives**:

1. Improve effectiveness of forest resources management
2. Promote sustainable forest harvesting
3. Strengthen capacities to monitor forest resources
4. Enhance capacities, knowledge, awareness, and promote stakeholder participation and benefits

Following a stepwise approach, the NRS has set out a number of actions structured into three phases of implementation.

In the immediate term (2016): During this phase, detailed and prioritised action plan for 2016-2020 will be developed, including a specific action plan for strategic knowledge management and coordination functions. In addition, institutional and financial arrangements for the implementation of the NRS will be established, together with the development of a national M&E framework.

In the medium term (2016-2020): The main focus for this phase is the implementation of the Action Plan. The main goal is to ensure that Cambodia will be able to request RBP for its REDD+

activities. It is important to note that activities implemented during this phase aim to address both deforestation and forest degradation, but only those that are addressing deforestation will be assessed for RBP given current technical scopes and feasibilities of FREL/FRL. Other activities are implemented for two interrelated reasons: 1. to generate lessons on activities to address forest degradation and drivers associated with sustainable forest management, conservation and enhancement of forest carbon stock; and 2. these lessons will be used as opportunities to improve current FREL/ FRL technical capabilities and scopes.

In the long term (Post 2020/ RBP Phase): By the start of 2021, the NFMS, FREL/ FRL and SIS methods and data would be improved, and therefore the NRS shall expand to include implementation of activities that address other drivers of deforestation and forest degradation. Finally, it is crucial that policies and measures to address drivers of deforestation between 2016 and 2020 are closely monitored for their effectiveness, efficiency and equity, through feedback mechanisms in the NFMS and SIS. In addition, methods and activities on the ground need to be continually refined and further developed, as necessary, as lessons are learnt.

The institutional arrangements for the implementation of the NRS recognises the different roles and responsibilities of the various government authorities that have jurisdictional authority over forest resources in the country. The NRS implementation is therefore expected to follow the RGC's agency jurisdictions, with different government agencies contributing to developing REDD+ Action Plan for the different forest areas, based on the existing laws and policies. To oversee NRS implementation, a National REDD+ Committee (NRC) and a Secretariat shall be established in order to:

1. Undertake governance at the national level and coordinate all REDD+ activities in Cambodia;
2. Oversee and accelerate improvements in forest resource governance in order to reduce the rate of deforestation and forest degradation;
3. Ensure effective funding services and fair allocation of incentives for institutions implementing REDD+ activities

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. REDD+ at International Level

Since 2005, Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) have been actively negotiating a policy initiative that entails the development and implementation of activities that would contribute to climate change mitigation through forestry activities. This initiative is now known as **REDD+**, which stands for **R**educing **E**missions from **D**eforestation and forest **D**egradation, and (+) the role of sustainable management of forests, conservation and enhancement of forest carbon stocks in developing countriesⁱ. Under the Cancun Agreements of the UNFCCC, developing countries are encouraged to contribute to climate change mitigation actions in the forest sector by undertaking the following activities, as deemed appropriate by each Party and in accordance with their respective capabilities and national circumstances:

- a. Reducing emissions from deforestation
- b. Reducing emissions from forest degradation
- c. Conservation of forest carbon stocks
- d. Sustainable management of forests
- e. Enhancement of forest carbon stocks

The Cancun Agreements further states that REDD+ activities shall be implemented in phases, beginning with the development of national strategies or action plans (NRS), policies, and measures, and capacity-building, followed by the implementation of national policies and measures and national strategies or action plans that could involve further capacity-building, technology development and transfer and results-based demonstration activities, and evolving into results-based actions that should be fully measured, reported and verifiedⁱⁱ.

The UNFCCC has also established the process, rules and modalities for developing countries to access results-based payments (RBP) for their REDD+ activities. In particular, the recent Warsaw Framework for REDD+ⁱⁱⁱ recalls that for developing countries undertaking actions referred to in the Cancun Agreements to obtain RBP, those actions should be fully measured, reported and verified (MRV). In other words, building on the Cancun Agreements, the Warsaw Framework

states that before receiving RBP, developing countries need to have in place the four elements presented in Figure 1, and ensure that the most recent summary of how the Cancun safeguards have been addressed and respected is provided via the UNFCCC Information Hub. Once all this is established, a country has to follow two distinct procedures to access RBP under the UNFCCC. The first is the technical assessment of the proposed FREL/ FRL and the MRV of anthropogenic forest-related emissions by sources and removals by sinks, forest carbon stocks, and forest carbon stock and forest-area changes resulting from the implementation of REDD+ activities. The second part is reporting of mitigation results through a national Greenhouse Gas (GHG) inventory and a technical annex of the Biannual Update Report (BUR).

1.2. REDD+ in Cambodia

It was announced at the 2007 UNFCCC Conference of the Parties (COP) in Indonesia that “*The Royal Government of Cambodia (RGC) strongly supports the inclusion of GHG emission reduction from forest conservation and avoided deforestation in post-Kyoto regimes*”^{iv}. Cambodia has been making significant progress in its REDD+ readiness phase. Indicators of this progress^v include the production of the following technical papers and studies that provide the groundwork for Cambodia to develop the four components identified in the Warsaw Framework for REDD+^{vi}—NRS, SIS, NFMS, and FREL/ FRL:

- Third Working Draft of Cambodia National REDD+ Strategy ([LINK](#))
- Costs and Benefits Analysis of REDD+ Implementation in Cambodia ([LINK](#))
- Land Cover and Forest Classification Systems of Cambodia ([LINK](#))
- Recommendations on the Land and Forest Classification System of Cambodia ([LINK](#))
- Recommendations on the Preparation of the GHG Inventory in the Context of REDD+ in Cambodia ([LINK](#))
- Satellite Imagery Dataset and Index Maps for the National Forest Monitoring System of Cambodia ([LINK](#))
- Preliminary Review and Approaches to Develop a Safeguards Information System for REDD+ in Cambodia ([LINK](#))
- Tree Volume and Biomass Allometric Equations of Cambodia ([LINK](#))

- Designing Transparent and Accountable Fund Management Arrangements for REDD+ in Cambodia ([LINK](#))
- Preliminary Review and Approaches to Develop a System for Allocation of Incentives and Benefit Sharing for REDD+ in Cambodia ([LINK](#))
- Towards the Design of REDD+ Grievance System in Cambodia ([LINK](#))

Overall, the four components of the Warsaw Framework for REDD+ have been under various stages of development thus far. It is anticipated that by the end of 2015, Cambodia will have the initial design of NFMS, FREL/ FRL, and SIS established. In addition, the REDD+ Taskforce Secretariat with support from the Cambodia National REDD+ Focal Point, REDD+ Taskforce and relevant institutions will facilitate the endorsement of the NRS by the Ministry of Environment (MoE) and Ministry of Agriculture Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF), ideally by the Prime Minister, before presenting it at the COP21 of the UNFCCC in Paris in November-December 2015.

Finally, within the next decade, various Cambodian national development policies, plans, programs and strategies have incorporated REDD+ as part of their strategic agendas and work plans. For example, the third Strategic Objective of the Cambodia Climate Change Strategic Plan (2014-2023) identified REDD+ as a mechanism to ensure climate resilience of critical ecosystems. Within these national documents, REDD+ has been identified by the RGC as one of the means for Cambodia, as a signatory of the UNFCCC, to contribute to addressing global climate change, and thus achieving the ultimate objective of the UNFCCC and fulfil the commitments of the Convention. At the same time, REDD+ has been identified as one of the mechanisms to generate additional financial support for the RGC to develop and/ or strengthen implementation of its national development policies related to sustainable forest management and poverty alleviation^{vii}.

2. VISION

Cambodia contributes to national and global climate change mitigation through improved forest management practices, biodiversity conservation and green inclusive development.

3. MISSION

Improving the functioning and capacity of national and sub-national forest management institutions and its relevant institutions to strengthen implementation of existing policies, laws, and regulations, in particular forest law enforcement, to achieve green inclusive development while contributing to climate change mitigation.

4. GOALS

1. Reducing deforestation and forest degradation while promoting sustainable development, conservation and enhancement of forest carbon stock
2. Demonstrating that REDD+ can be one of the measures for Cambodia to shift towards green inclusive development pathway
3. Promoting public awareness and participation in climate change mitigation actions through the forestry sector
4. Fulfilling Cambodia's requirements under the UNFCCC to be eligible to receive results-based payments for implemented REDD+ policies and measures.

5. STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

Cambodia has established various policies, laws and regulations to adapt to and mitigate the impacts of climate change at national and sectoral/ ministerial level. The Cambodia NRS will be mainstreamed into these policies based on selected key guiding principles.

5.1. Guiding Principles

1. Fulfils Cambodia's contribution to the achievement of the objectives set out in Article 2 and commitments set out in Article 4, Paragraph 3 of the UNFCCC

2. Build on existing RGC's coordination mechanisms and supports implementation of national policies, laws and regulations related to climate change and sustainable development
3. Seeks to provide predictable and substantial finance for implementation and scaling-up of existing forest management strategies
4. Ensures full and effective participation by relevant stakeholders, including those that are most vulnerable such as local communities, indigenous peoples, and women groups
5. Builds capacity within government institutions and non-government stakeholders
6. Is consistent with the international negotiations process under the UNFCCC and methodologies set out by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)

5.2. Strategic Analysis

Alignment with Other National Development Goals and Priorities

The Cambodia REDD+ Readiness Roadmap and achievements from activities conducted during the implementation of the Roadmap were the bases for developing the NRS. The Roadmap is a product of very extensive consultations with various stakeholders from local to international level. In addition, while contributing to current national forest management strategies and programmes, the NRS is closely linked to the current national socio-economic and environmental development policies, strategies, plans, and programs.

It is envisioned that the NRS should support/ complement the implementation of these broader development plans, and not establish parallel or competing plans and management structures for Cambodian forests. In particular, development of the NRS takes into account the following national policies, strategies, and programs:

1. Cambodia Vision 2030 (draft being prepared – some extracts available)
2. Cambodia Climate Change Strategic Plan, 2014-2023
3. Rectangular Strategy Phase III, 2013-2018
4. National Strategic Development Plan (NSDP), 2014-2018
5. Joint Monitoring Indicators, 2014-2018
6. Gender and Climate Change Action Plan, 2014-2018
7. Cambodia's Millennium Development Goals

8. National Policy on Green Growth and National Green Growth Strategic Plan, 2013-2030
9. Cambodia's Initial and Draft Second National Communication under the UNFCCC
10. National and sectoral policies, strategies and action plans

The NRS has been developed in an inclusive and participatory manner involving various stakeholders at different levels. Various key stakeholders were consulted during the drafting of the various chapters that constitute the initial working draft and its subsequent revisions. Cambodia aims to present the NRS at COP21 of the UNFCCC in Paris, to be held at the end of 2015. Table 1 summarises the consultation processes conducted to develop the NRS. Figure 2 situates the NRS within existing sectoral and national policies.

Overview of Cambodia Forest Land Management

Cambodia covers an area of 181,035 square kilometres. The Forestry Administration (FA) of MAFF estimates that forest cover in 2010 was about 57.59 percent^{viii} of the country's total land area. Forests in Cambodia fall under the general jurisdiction of MAFF, with the FA charged as the responsible Government Authority^{ix}. The MoE is responsible for protected areas including core areas of the Tonle Sap Biosphere Reserve^x, while the Fisheries Administration (FiA) of MAFF is responsible for flooded forest and mangrove areas^{xi}. These are set out in Figure 3.

Cambodia defines forests with the following parameters: a minimum tree crown cover of 10 percent, a minimum area of 0.5 hectares, and a minimum tree height of 5 metres^{xii}. Cambodia is classified as a 'high forest cover, high deforestation' country. Between 1990 and 2010, the government estimates that Cambodia lost 22 percent of its forest-cover, or around 2,850,000 hectares of forest. A national forest cover assessment conducted in 2006 found that the total forest-cover had declined from 61.2 in 2002 to 59.1 percent in 2006, representing a loss by conversion of 373,510 hectares of forest^{xiii}. Figure 4 illustrates the changes in forest cover from 1976 to 2006.

Drivers of Deforestation and Forest Degradation in Cambodia

Drivers of deforestation and forest degradation have many causes, and therefore actions to address them are unique to countries' national circumstances, capacities and capabilities^{xiv}. In Cambodia most areas of forest loss occur in the hilly zones and along the mountain ranges where evergreen and semi-evergreen forests are located. Changes to both evergreen and deciduous lowland forests

have also been recorded in the flatlands. Furthermore, forest change hotspots are frequently located in areas bordering Lao PDR, Viet Nam and Thailand^{xv}. Figure 5 presents deforestation hotspots in Cambodia between 1988/89 and 2005/2006. Figure 6 summarises forest cover assessment for 2009-2010. Figure 7 shows areas where forest covers and forest inventories data are available. This illustration demonstrates various forest cover assessment done at the project scale, referring to different forest classification systems.

Overall, studies conducted for the drafting of Cambodia REDD+ Roadmap found that deforestation and forest degradation results from a complex set of processes^{xvi}, including:

- improvements in accessibility to remote forested areas encouraged initially by a rapid increase in commercial logging activity in the 1990s, which ceased when the Government declared a logging moratorium in 2002, and more recently by road-building projects;
- uncertain land tenure, which encourages land-grabbing based on squatters rights, even though illegal under Land Law 2001;
- lack of Government capacity in remote areas to adequately manage forests, which are state public property under Forestry Law 2002, Protected Area Law 2008 and Land Law 2001;
- a rapid increase in agricultural expansion and other large-scale development activities, which lead to widespread clearance of some areas; this is usually driven by declaring economic and social land concessions (ELCs and SLCs);
- increasing regional and global demand for raw materials; and
- rural poverty, which is still widespread in Cambodia.

The drivers of deforestation and forest degradation also derived from sources outside the forestry sector. These drivers include in-migration to forest areas, agro-industrial developments such as land concessions, poor implementation of land laws and subsidiary regulations, economic incentives promoting forest clearance, poor environmental and social impacts assessment regulations, and a lack of state land registration and forest estate demarcation^{xvii}. Table 2 presents the drivers of deforestation and forest degradation identified in the Cambodia REDD+ Roadmap.

Prioritising Drivers to be Addressed through the NRS

Effective, efficient and equitable NRS entails that a set of strategic objectives and strategies are implemented to address the drivers of deforestation and forest degradation, thus resulting in sustainable management of forests, conservation and enhancement of forest carbon stocks. As identified in the previous section, not only that drivers of deforestation and forest degradation come from diverse sources, locate in different administrative jurisdictions, they also occur both within and outside the forestry sector. It would be unrealistic for the NRS to attempt to address all identified drivers of deforestation and forest degradation. Therefore, to identify/ prioritise drivers that should be addressed via the implementation of NRS, four distinct activities were conducted.

The first involved a comprehensive literature review of previous studies on drivers of deforestation and forest degradation, in particular those that were used to develop current national policies such as the National Forest Programme (NFP), Draft National Protected Areas Strategic Management Plan (NPASMP) and Strategic Planning Framework for Fisheries (SPFF). The second set of activities included consultations with relevant technical experts from government and non-government institutions on the socio-political, economic and technological feasibilities to address identified drivers and to track its results via the NFMS. Results from these activities were then discussed with high level government representatives from MAFF and MoE who direct the Cambodia National REDD+ Programme. Finally, consultative meetings were conducted with members of the REDD+ Taskforce, Technical Teams, Consultation Group and Gender Group.

Through these consultative processes, the following table outlined the drivers of deforestation and forest degradation that the NRS attempts to address within the next five years (2016 to 2020). Decisions to address the following drivers were made by considering: 1. the addressability of the drivers; 2. the emissions reduction potentials; and 3. the technical ability to monitor, report and verify results of strategies designed to address selected drivers.

Subsequently, as the NFMS methods and data improve, activities that address other drivers of deforestation and forest degradation will be incorporated. It is important that policies and measures to address prioritised drivers between 2016 and 2020 are closely monitored for their effectiveness, efficiency and equity, through feedback mechanisms in the NFMS and SIS. Additionally, methods

and activities on the ground need to be continually refined and further developed, as necessary, as lessons are learnt; thus, achieving the stepwise approach in implementing, monitoring, feedback, learning, and refinement of the NRS.

Types	Drivers to be addressed between 2016-2020
Direct	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Conversion of Forest Lands <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Economic/ Agricultural Development (e.g. ELCs) b. Settlements and Farm Lands (e.g. SLCs) c. Infrastructure Development (e.g. Road, Dam Constructions) d. Mining 2. Forest Lands Encroachment <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Land Speculation/ Land Grabbing b. Illegal Loggings 3. Unsustainable Forest Harvesting
In-direct	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Limited governance in forest sector and land use sector - Lack of coordination between ministries on land use planning - Rural Poverty - Low levels of stakeholder participation and involvement - Lack of long term finance/ human resources to support forest sector - Insufficient data and evidence to design effective forest crime prevention measures

5.3. Strategic Objectives and Strategies

Strategic Objective 1: Improve effectiveness of forest resources management

Strategies:

- a. Promote effective forest landscape planning at national and sub-national level
- b. Promote forest land tenure security and forest classification/ zoning, demarcation, registration depending on ecosystem functions and significance (e.g. establishment of new protected forests within key biodiversity value)
- c. Promote effective and sustainable management and use of forests and forest lands
- d. Mitigate social and environmental impacts on forest sector from sources originated within and outside the sector
- e. Retain moratorium on ELCs and monitor the status of existing concessions for compliance and strengthen the capacities to monitor ELCs
- f. Contribute to rationalisation (ensuring no duplications of roles and responsibilities) of legal frameworks for land and forest resources
- g. Strengthen management of forest conservation areas (i.e. Protection Forests, Protected Areas, and Fishery Conservation Areas)

Strategic Objective 2: Promote sustainable forest harvesting

Strategies:

- a. Scale-up and strengthen community-based forest management approaches (i.e. Community Forestry, Community Protected Areas, Community Fisheries)
- b. Promote sustainable forest harvesting and planning
- c. Strengthen forest code of practices and governance activities
- d. Address the demands and supplies for wood-based energy sources
- e. Promote sustainable supply chains that provide alternatives to deforestation (i.e. increasing engagement with private sector)
- f. Address social and environmental impacts resulting from harvesting processes
- g. Promote alternative sources of timber supplies from private forest plantations
- h. Enhance afforestation/ reforestation and silvicultural practices

Strategic Objective 3: Strengthen capacities to monitor forest resources

Strategies:

- a. Strengthen forest law enforcement and governance activities
- b. Strengthen capacities and techniques to collect, analyse, model, and interpret forestry and land-use data
- c. Enhance the system for data management, data processing, quality assurance/ quality control

Strategic Objective 4: Enhance capacities, knowledge, awareness, and promote stakeholder participation and benefits

Strategies:

- a. Strengthen institutions and coordination frameworks on land use planning for large scale development/ infrastructure projects
- b. Improve capacities, knowledge and awareness for implementation of policies to reduce deforestation and forest degradation
- c. Enhance institutional coordination mechanisms for coherent policy responses to address deforestation and forest degradation
- d. Promote implementation of NRS to generate additional finance to support forest sector
- e. Mainstream REDD+ policies and measures with relevant national and sectoral policies
- f. Strengthen the role of academic institutions/ research institutes in training, research and technology development on forestry and land-use policies
- g. Encourage public engagement, participation, and consultations as primary entry point for forestry and land-use planning, promoting the involvement of multiple stakeholders including NGOs, community-based organizations, local communities, indigenous peoples, youth, and the private sector
- h. Support livelihoods development programs to optimise diversified benefits

6. ACTIVITIES

The NRS provides a broad framework for the implementation of REDD+ activities in Cambodia. There is a need for the development of a REDD+ Action Plan and relevant implementation framework mechanisms, such as financing mechanism, monitoring and evaluation (M&E) framework, and legal framework to implement the NRS and to provide a solid foundation for mobilizing resources.

6.1. Phases for NRS Implementation

Implementation of the NRS will follow a stepwise approach, as stated below:

In the immediate term (2016): Development of REDD+ Action Plan

During this phase, detailed and prioritized action plan for 2016-2020 will be developed, including a specific action plan for strategic knowledge management and coordination functions. In addition, institutional and financial arrangements for the implementation of the NRS will be put in place, together with the establishment of a national M&E framework. Other activities that need to be completed include:

1. Proposal for development of the Cambodia NFMS for national MRV;
2. Proposal for development of Cambodia FREL/ FRL;
3. Initial development and piloting of NFMS, SIS, and FREL/ FRL

In the medium term (2016-2020): Implementation of REDD+ Action Plan

Within the forestry sectors, the prioritised drivers to be addressed within the next five years are largely addressable through strengthening the implementation of Cambodia's existing forest management programmes such as the NFP, NPASMP, SPFF, and Sub-decrees on ELCs/ SLCs. These documents also include such activities as forest law enforcement, tenure reform and local land-use co-management. Implementation of programmes and activities in these documents is however hindered by the lack of available finance and technical capacities. These financial and technical barriers could be met by supports received under REDD+ RBP. In addition, given that the prioritised drivers are closely linked to and influenced by other broader factors such as natural resource governance, population growth, and economic development activities, the NRS needs to also focus on implementing activities outside the forestry sector.

In terms of technical requirements to prepare Cambodia for REDD+ RBP, by the end of 2020, Cambodia shall have a fully functional NFMS, FREL/ FRL and SIS to be able to account for the emissions reduced via the implementation of activities identified in the REDD+ Action Plan, while ensuring that the Cancun safeguards are addressed and respected.

In order to do so, the following activities will need to be in place by 2020:

1. Formulate policies, standards and various mechanisms related to MRV activities with the approval of the REDD+ Taskforce. These include institutional coordination and data sharing, data harmonisation, quality assurance and control measures, validation of GHG calculations carried out at various levels from local sites to sub-national and national levels. The system will be developed in line with UNFCCC decisions and IPCC guidelines;
2. Compile the national GHG inventory for Cambodia's forest and land use sector, to account for the mitigation impact resulting from the implementation of REDD+ activities at the national level. The GHG inventory will cover all relevant emissions and removals from within the country boundary;
3. Establish a clearing-house for the management and processing of related geographic and other data for access by stakeholders;
4. Synergise the NFMS with the information system for REDD+ safeguards;
5. Operational NFMS to ensure data accuracy on the changes of forest land use and its impact on carbon stocks and other ecosystem functions;
6. Compile relevant data and report the results from REDD+ implementation to the UNFCCC Secretariat through a technical annex of the Cambodia Biannual Update Report (BUR)
7. Build coordinative capacities among NFMS, SIS and FREL/ FRL implementers in relevant REDD+ institutions.

In the long term (Post 2020): Results-based Payments Phase

Following the stepwise approach mentioned previously, by the start of 2021, the NFMS, FREL/ FRL and SIS methods and data would be improved, and therefore the NRS could expand to include implementation of activities that address other drivers of deforestation and forest degradation. A year prior to the end of the implementation phase, there need to be an independent and comprehensive Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) evaluation of the NRS,

NFMS, FREL/ FRL, and SIS. Concomitantly, there needs to be full and effective consultations with relevant government and non-government stakeholders in particular those representing local communities, indigenous peoples and women groups on additional drivers and activities to be implemented in the second phase of NRS.

Furthermore, there needs to be further studies on drivers of deforestation and forest degradation, quantification of these drivers in terms of carbon emissions, prioritisation of key drivers to address after 2020, and consideration of socio-political, economic, and technological opportunities and constraints to address these drivers given the national context and capabilities. Besides, to ensure compliance with international decisions on REDD+, there should be a desk review conducted on policies, decisions, guidelines from institutions such as the UNFCCC and IPCC between 2016 and 2020. Finally, it is crucial that policies and measures to address drivers of deforestation and forest degradation between 2016 and 2020 are closely monitored for their effectiveness, efficiency and equity, through feedback mechanisms in the NFMS and SIS. Methods and activities on the ground need to be continually refined and further developed, as necessary, as lessons are learnt.

6.2. Warsaw Framework for REDD+

To be able to request RBP for the NRS implementation, Cambodia will need to have in place three other elements adopted as part of the Warsaw Framework. The following sections present the current status and future plan for these three Warsaw elements.

6. 2.1. Safeguards Information System (SIS)

According to the UNFCCC COP decisions, for countries to become eligible for results-based payments, they are required to develop a national approach for safeguards to promote and support the seven Cancun safeguards and to establish SIS to provide a summary of information on how the Cancun safeguards have been addressed and respected under REDD+ activities. Meeting these requirements does not only enable eligibility access to results based payments but is also an important means to improve transparency and accountability in REDD+ implementation. This could increase a country's chances of attracting upfront (investment) finance for implementing REDD+ policies and measures.

Status of Activities

1. Development of a national approach to the Cancun safeguards

Principles and criteria for REDD+ safeguards in Cambodia: The RGC sought to develop a set of safeguards principles and criteria, in a manner that fully incorporates stakeholders' perspectives into the approach while limiting the numbers of principles and criteria to keep monitoring and reporting practical and feasible. Accordingly, the RGC conducted a series of subnational and national consultation meetings with a total of 317 stakeholders from relevant government agencies and institutions, civil society organizations, local communities and Indigenous Peoples. These extensive consultations resulted in a final proposal of a set of 7 principles and 14 criteria for Cambodia, which build primarily on the seven Cancun safeguards with inclusion of the terms, "women" and "for planted forests" to Cancun Safeguards (e) and (f) respectively and additional criteria to fully address stakeholders' concerns.

Gap analysis of Policies, Laws, and Regulations: In parallel to these consultation processes, a preliminary analysis was completed to identify potential gaps between existing policies, laws and regulations (PLRs) in Cambodia and the proposed set of safeguards principles and criteria for Cambodia. This work responds to the UNFCCC's decision that countries should provide a summary of information of how the Cancun safeguards are being "addressed". This preliminary gap analysis concluded that RGC already has a number of PLRs that can "address" the proposed safeguards principles and criteria, particularly for social safeguards. It also identified the needs to consider more environmental safeguards to address the risk of reversals and displacement.

2. Proposal of an initial set of indicators and data sources for Cambodia's SIS

Cambodia has proposed an initial set of indicators and data sources to monitor and report how safeguards are being addressed and respected throughout the implementation of the NRS. Further work is required to assess the types of information to be collected and analysed for each indicator, and its feasibility (see steps below).

Challenges/ Constraints

Despite the above achievements, some challenges and constraints remain:

- Lack of decisions on specific sets of strategies to address drivers of deforestation and forest degradation, and barriers to the ‘+’ activities, which constrains development of SIS
- Lack of legal and technical review on proposed PLRs and PCIs and their unbalanced contents (i.e. more environmental safeguards);
- No comprehensive information system for REDD+ among line ministries;
- No grievance redress mechanism (GRM) for REDD+ in place;
- Insufficient human and financial resources to manage and regularly update SIS

Future Plan

Step 1 (2015-2016)

- Further developing a national approach for safeguards: this requires (1) revision of a proposed set of safeguards principles and criteria, (2) closely linking them to concrete policies and measures, and (3) conducting a legal review of a revised set of principles and criteria, to ensure consistency with Cambodian legislation.
- Designing options for the SIS framework: this work entails (1) proposal of a final set of indicators, data sources and data collection methods based on feasibility and practicality and (2) identification of (existing and/or new) institutions and coordination mechanisms to collect, analyse, monitor, archive and report/disseminate safeguards information from local, national to international levels, and vice versa. These proposals will be developed in close coordination with those of MRV, National Forest Inventory (NFI) and NFMS.

Step 2 (from 2017 to 2020)

- Developing GRM mechanisms: In the case of violation of safeguards, the RGC is to take appropriate and immediate actions to bring back the concerned actions into compliance (to meet the requirement to ensure safeguards are “respected”). For this purpose, the RGC plans to identify and build on existing institutions and mechanisms to redress REDD+ related grievances.
- Provision of training to officers in charge of the SIS.
- Secure potential future financial resources for the SIS.
- Test an initial SIS and compile results of the initial SIS.

Step 3 (Post 2020 onwards)

- Collect and analyse the results of practice of safeguards and SIS from line ministries and key stakeholders.
- Collect and analyse results of practice of the GRM for REDD+.
- Review and revise SIS regularly, including its institutional arrangements.
- Find out possible solutions to improve the SIS, PLRs and PCIs.
- Propose to revise PLRs and draft new PLR(s) for REDD+ if necessary.
- Secure human and financial resources for SIS in the long term.

6.2.2. National Forest Monitoring System (NFMS)

According to the Warsaw Framework for REDD+, the establishment of a robust and transparent NFMS is one of the four elements required to make a Party eligible to request RBP. Cambodia's NFMS consists of two functions – MRV and Monitoring.

- The objective of the MRV function is to estimate emissions/removals of GHGs, particularly CO₂, occurring as a result of human activities in the Land Use, Land Use Change and Forestry sector in Cambodia. MRV consists of three elements: Satellite Land Monitoring System (SLMS), NFI and GHG Inventory.
- SLMS is as a mechanism to monitor land use and land use change/cover conditions using satellite images. The SLMS collects activity data for the 'measurement' part of MRV. It can also contribute to the monitoring function of the NFMS.
- NFI is the main national tool to monitor Cambodia's forest cover as well as to provide forest carbon stock data. The NFI will be for a ground-based assessment to collect and update data and analyse forest carbon stocks and changes.
- GHG inventory for REDD+ consists of estimates of emissions/removals of greenhouse gases in the land use, land use change and forestry sector. This inventory is submitted to the UNFCCC Secretariat as a part of national communications (NC) – to be submitted every four years – and BUR – to be submitted every two years.
- The objective of the monitoring function is the monitoring and reporting of REDD+ activities, particularly the impacts and effectiveness of REDD+ policies and measures.
- Technical and financial constraints and constraints related to human resources exist. Thus, development of NFMS will be implemented in a stepwise approach.

Status of Activities

1. National Forest Monitoring System

- Cambodia's NFMS is being designed to focus on land use/cover change between six land use/cover classes, namely, forest land, cropland, grass land, settlement, other land and wetlands, particularly change between forest and non-forest areas and also to monitor the effectiveness and outcomes of REDD+ policies and measures.
- Initial design of NFMS is expected to be completed by the end of October 2015.
- The methodology for monitoring policies and measures will be determined according to the nature of policies and measures.
- A database management system has been created to store and manage data and information required for the NFMS and to ensure that all the relevant stakeholders have access to data and information on the REDD+ process.
- Also a WEB portal is being designed and servers are being configured, to allow for transparent sharing of NFMS-related data.

2. Satellite Land Monitoring System

- The FA has been producing National Forest Cover maps using Landsat images every four years since 2002 and has used the maps for forest development, management and conservation practices. Recently, national forest cover maps of 2006 and 2010 were upgraded by changing land use/cover classes to harmonize with the six land use classes defined by the IPCC. Further, the new 2014 map was made using the same new land use/cover classes used for 2006 and 2010 map upgrading.
- Landsat images will be continued to be used as the basis for land use/cover mapping, because of their cost-effectiveness and utility for land use change detection.
- Remote sensing segmentation method was introduced in 2013 and used to produce a 2014 national land use/ cover map and to upgrade^{xviii} 2006 and 2010 National Forest Cover maps
- In the revision of 2006 and 2010 maps and also the creation of new 2014 map, six land use/cover classes defined in IPCC guidelines, which are Forest Land, Crop Land, Grass Land, Settlement, Other Land and Wetland, were stratified to make 22 classes.
- As for the monitoring of REDD+ activities, other satellite information such as provided on Google Earth will also be used.

3. National Forest Inventory

- A systematic forest inventory covering entire forest does not exist in Cambodia. Forest inventory surveys have been and are being conducted for timber volume estimation by FA or for research purposes by local and international researchers.
- NFI design and field manuals for the NFI ground survey are being compiled now and will be finalized and published in 2015.
- As for the institutional arrangements, FA, FiA and MoE are responsible for NFI for areas under their respective jurisdiction including necessary laboratory analysis. The results of the NFI will be stored and managed by members of the MRV/REL Technical Team.
- Existing tree biomass data were analysed and emission factors were determined for evergreen forest, semi-evergreen forest, deciduous forest, forest regrowth, inundated forest, forest plantation, mangrove and bamboo, which were used for the calculation of an initial FREL/ FRL.

4. Greenhouse Gas Inventory

- The process used for the compilation of Cambodia's GHG inventory for the Land Use, Land Use Change and Forestry sector was reviewed and studied. In addition, training on the use of GHG inventory software tool for the emission calculation was conducted.
- The method to be used in next BUR and NC has not yet been determined.

Medium-term Plan (2016-2020)

1. National Forest Monitoring System

- NFMS will be developed following a phased approach along with future technical development and also capacity development of stakeholders who operate the system.
- A mechanism for the monitoring of policies and measures will be developed (other than those collected by SLMS, NFI and existing RGC information collection mechanisms).

2. Satellite Land Monitoring System

- Land use/cover map for 2016 or 2018 will be produced. Mapping cycle is 2 or 4 years.
- Further revisions of 2006 and 2010 maps based on the 2014 map will be made to ensure full consistency among these maps.

- Develop methodology to detect forest degradation of Cambodia without repeating NFI.
- Capacity building of young general officials in satellite image interpretation.

3. National Forest Inventory

- Implementation of initial NFI in PSPs.
- Review of the results of the initial NFI and modifications will be made if necessary.
- Implementation of full scale NFI.
- Review of NFI design and development of a revised version for its second cycle.

4. Greenhouse Gas Inventory

- Preparation of a national GHG inventory for the third National Communication and the first BUR of Cambodia.
- It is expected that the third NC will be submitted in 20__ and the first BUR will be submitted in 20__.
- Selection of a method – Gain Loss Method or Stock Difference Method.
- Selection of IPCC guidelines to be used.

6.2.3. Forest Reference Emissions Level (FREL/ FRL)

Forest Reference (Emission) Levels (FREL/FRLs) are benchmarks for assessing country performance in implementing REDD+ activities and mitigating climate change through actions related to forests. The FREL/ FRL is one of the four elements that a country needs to develop when aiming to undertake REDD+ activities and to receive REDD+ RBP under the UNFCCC. Developing countries seeking to obtain RBP for REDD+ activities are requested to submit their proposed FREL/ FRL to the UNFCCC for technical assessment. The objective of the technical assessment is to assess the degree to which the information provided meets the UNFCCC guidelines and to offer a technical exchange of information on the construction of the FREL/ FRL.

The UNFCCC allows for a stepwise approach to improve a party FREL/ FRL. FREL/ FRLs can be periodically updated to reflect improvements in data, capacities and/or changes in national circumstances, scope or methodologies. Given that the technical assessment process allows for a technical exchange of information, the process is foreseen to provide guidance of technical

improvement of future FREL/ FRLs. Once a FREL/ FRL has been technically assessed, a developing country seeking result-based payments from REDD+ activities is requested to submit a technical annex to its BUR. This BUR will include a national GHG inventory and be subjected to International Consultation and Analysis, which includes an analysis of the GHG inventory as well as of the impacts of mitigation actions.

Current situation, challenges and constraints

Cambodia's FRL/ FREL is being developed following a stepwise approach. For the initial FREL/ FRL Cambodia is starting with a limited scope of activities. Improved estimates are planned to be incorporated into new FRLs/ FRELs over time as new data and methods become available.

Status quo of the Initial FREL/ FRL development:

- Carbon pools and GHGs: Cambodia will assess CO₂ related GHG emissions, and the Above Ground Biomass and Below Ground Biomass pools.
- Scale: National level FREL/ FRL
- Scope: Deforestation and Afforestation
- Reference period: years 2006-2014
- Activity Data: Spatially explicit observations of land use categories and conversions between the years 2006, 2010, and 2014. Forests and other land uses are stratified according to their types.
- Emission Factors: Country specific emissions for key categories (Tier 2) based on existing forest inventory data, aided with default emission factors for other categories
- FREL/ FRL construction approach: Historical average with review of national circumstances [possible adjustment according to national circumstances, to be decided]

Status of Activities: Cambodia is planning to submit its initial FREL to the UNFCCC by the end of 2015 for technical assessment in 2016.

Future Plans

Plans to address challenges/ constraints mentioned earlier: should focus on anticipated results and activities to achieve these results. Cambodia's FREL/ FRL is being developed following a

stepwise approach. Cambodia's FREL/ FRL will be reviewed periodically to incorporate new data, trends and methods. Areas to be reviewed in the short to medium term include:

- **Carbon pools and gases:** Inclusion of dead wood, litter and soil organic matter as/when/if deemed appropriate.
- **Emission factors:** Inclusion or improvement of existing emission factors as/when/if deemed appropriate.
- **Scope:** Adjustments in scope as/when/if deemed appropriate.
- **FREL/FRL Construction Approach:** If sufficient activity data is collected, historical trends will be analysed as/when/if deemed appropriate.
- **Reference Period:** If sufficient activity data is collected and national circumstances warrant a review, reference period will be adjusted as/when/if deemed appropriate.
- **Update Cycle:** The timing of the first FREL/ FRL update will depend much on the results of the technical assessment of the initial FREL/ FRL and the availability of new data. The inclusion of up-to-date Activity Data (2016, 2018 and 2020), the completion of a Cambodia's first NFI (2016-2020) are major milestones.

6.3. Institutional Arrangement and Coordination

The institutional arrangements for the NRS implementation need to recognise the different roles and responsibilities of the various government authorities that have jurisdictional authority over forest resources. The implementation of the NRS is therefore expected to follow government agency jurisdictions, with different government agencies contributing to the development of REDD+ Action Plan for the different forest areas, based on the existing laws and policies. Implementation will have to be nested within a national framework, because REDD+ requires implementation at the national scale, with national-level reporting to the UNFCCC.

6.3.1. Existing Institutional Arrangements Overseeing NRS Development

The membership of the **Cambodia REDD+ Taskforce** composed of 10 representatives from seven ministries whose mandate is to manage the development of REDD+ Readiness phase. The seven ministries represented in the Taskforce include: (1) MAFF, (2) MoE, (3) the Ministry of Economy and Finance (MEF), (4) the Ministry of Land Management, Urban Planning and Construction, (5) Ministry of Interior, (6) Ministry of Rural Development, and (7) Ministry of

Industry, Mines and Energy. The overall responsibility of the Taskforce is to manage the national REDD+ programme, coordinate national REDD+ activities, ensure government coordinated responses, and integrate REDD+ into national development planning processes.

Four **REDD+ Technical Teams**, established by the Taskforce, have been tasked with the responsibility to develop technical recommendations on particular key issues. Those four technical teams include: (1) safeguards technical team, (2) benefit sharing technical team, (3) demonstration technical team, (4) MRV technical team. Members of these teams include technical officers from different line agencies responsible for the issue under discussion as well as other stakeholders as identified, including civil society and indigenous peoples' representatives. Non-government members are drawn from organizations represented in the Consultation Group.

The **Consultation Group**, established in 2013, is represented by two elected representatives from nine institutions in Cambodia. Those nine institutions include: international non-governmental organizations (NGOs), national NGOs, local NGOs, indigenous peoples, private sector, academic institutions, community forestry, protected area community, and fisheries community. The Taskforce sends reports and decisions to the Consultation Group for their comments, and responds to comments raised. Consultation Group members may also be invited to join Taskforce meetings whenever appropriate.

REDD+ Gender Group was established in August 2014 by the Taskforce in order to: 1) build awareness about gender and women's empowerment concepts and issues among members of the Taskforce, Consultation Group and Technical Teams; and 2) advise on gender in components of the NRS and subsequent implementation guidelines as they are prepared. In total, there are 4 members of the Cambodia REDD+ Gender Group, who come from the following four related institutions: FA and FiA of MAFF, MoE, and Ministry of Women's Affairs.

6.3.2. Institutional Arrangements Overseeing NRS Implementation

The institutional arrangements to administer NRS implementation shall possess the following principles: good governance; inclusiveness by ensuring the full and effective participation of all stakeholders; cost efficiency in achieving strategic objectives; and accountability in all REDD+

implementation activities. A National REDD+ Committee (NRC) supported by a Secretariat will be established as the national institutions to oversee NRS implementation in Cambodia.

National REDD+ Committee (NRC)

The NRC and its Secretariat shall be established by an act of law and will report and be directly accountable to the Prime Minister via the National Council for Sustainable Development (NCSD). The NRC shall be chaired by a Committee Head whose position will be equal to that of a government minister. The NRC will be established for the following purposes:

1. Undertake governance at the national level and coordinate all REDD+ activities in Cambodia;
2. Oversee and accelerate improvements in forest resource governance in order to reduce the rate of deforestation and forest degradation;
3. Ensure effective funding services and fair allocation of incentives for institutions implementing REDD+ activities.

Functions of the National REDD+ Committee

The NRC shall be mandated to perform strategic functions within a thematic coordination framework oriented towards influencing existing operational and coordination processes among various ministries and related institutions at national, sub-national and local levels. The NRC will also decide on the functions of existing institutional arrangements (Taskforce, Technical Teams, Consultation Group and Gender Group), mentioned in earlier section.

In addition, the NRC, supported by its Secretariat, shall be the designated national authority for:

- Preparing the regulatory framework for the implementation of the REDD+ Action Plan
- Accelerating improvements in forest lands governance
- Facilitating capacity building to ensure fair and equitable allocation of incentives for relevant stakeholders
- Facilitating the formation of a National REDD+ Funding Agency and legalising regulatory measures relating to criteria for RBP, management and disbursement of REDD+ finance, as well as allocation of incentives at various administrative levels

- Facilitating the establishment of a National REDD+ MRV Agency, legalising regulatory measures relating to monitoring, MRV-ing and certification of emissions reduction, preserving and increasing carbon stocks as well as overseeing implementation
- Facilitating the development of a framework and information system for REDD+ safeguards implementation, establishing a Safeguard Committee as well as legalising and coordinating the implementation of a REDD+ integrity system involving safeguards and audits in the fields of finance, social interaction and the environment.

Finally, the NRC and its Secretariat should ensure the effectiveness of thematic coordination among various ministries/ institutions and between national and local governments. It should also coordinate the search for resources and identify and remove blockages due to division of authority among ministries and institutions. This can be achieved through:

- Coordinating and synchronising policies and programs among national government institutions/ sectors, in particular those related to spatial planning and land use permitting
- Formulating plans and coordinating law enforcement for protection of forest lands, especially those related to illegal logging, land use, and land clearing
- Facilitating strategic communication and the involvement of all stakeholders both in Cambodia and abroad by:
 - o Developing and implementing effective communication systems to develop productive work relationships with both national and international stakeholders
 - o Coordinating the development of Cambodia's REDD+ positions in preparation for interactions with international fora, including maintaining relationships and good communication and participation in international negotiations.

7. FINANCING RESOURCES

REDD+ finance for countries can be referred to as the payments that a country receives for the successful implementation of actual reductions or removals of forest carbon emissions that have been verified according to the UNFCCC process against an established FREL/ FRL using relevant social and environmental safeguards. A combination of strategic objectives and strategies are needed to achieve REDD+ results. However, it is important to note that while RBP will be made for actual emission reductions (ER) achieved, not all strategic objectives and strategies achieve

ER directly. For example, ensuring a good governance structure for NRS implementation is an important part of the NRS which by itself will not achieve ER, and thus payments. It is rather an important enabling factor to attract funding for the NRS.

7.1. Approach: Fund-based Approach

Despite the advances made in Cambodia's public financial management in recent years, substantial capacity constraints remain that, coupled with the complexity of REDD+ and the notion of results-based payments, can result in suboptimal performance if RBP are managed using country systems exclusively. In addition, experience shows that none of the REDD+ countries so far have opted for budget support as a modality to disburse REDD+ payments but either created independent REDD+ funds or integrated REDD+ into existing forestry or climate change funds. Thus recommendation from a study commissioned by the REDD+ Taskforce^{xix} is that a fund-based approach should be used to manage REDD+ RBP in the first interim phase with a subsequent second phase relying more on country systems and following a transition. However, using a fund-based approach does not mean that it should be completely separate from country public financial management systems. On the contrary, it should rely on the components that have already shown positive results. As an initial step, it could use the government charts of account to report data, enabling the MEF to capture this data for broader planning, budgetary, and reporting purposes^{xx}.

Development of a National REDD+ Funding Agency

To administer management of this fund-based approach for REDD+ RBP, the NRC shall facilitate establishment of a National REDD+ Funding Agency. The Agency shall work with a variety of potential sources and a wide variety of users, be managed with a multi-stakeholder approach, and serve the following purposes:

1. To support the development of REDD+ activities in line with their potential to reduce emissions from forests;
2. To provide an internationally credible funds disbursement mechanism to potential donors and investors interested in facilitating or benefiting from REDD+ activities;
3. To facilitate the efficient distribution of funds and to ensure the fair allocation of incentives from REDD+ activities; and

4. To ensure adherence to the three key safeguards aspects: fiduciary, social and environmental integrity.

Roles of the National REDD+ Funding Agency

In order to operate effectively, the Agency shall be assigned the following roles:

1. Manage REDD+ funds independently, professionally and credibly outside of the state budget system based on globally accepted safeguards and accountability standards
2. Mobilise funds from public and private sector sources through systematic, programmed, professional fund raising
3. Prepare funding mechanisms:
 - a. To support implementation of the NRS, in particular the REDD+ Action Plan
 - b. To support the NRC and its Secretariat's coordination of its functions
 - c. To fund investment pre-condition activities or other activities that contribute to the efforts to reduce emissions and/or facilitate the implementation of NRS
 - d. To remunerate governments, NGOs, communities and other groups for their efforts and performance in developing conditions that enable emissions reduction in their areas through both strategic activities and/or the formulation of supportive policies
 - e. To support human resource and institutional capacity building that directly benefits and supports implementation of NRS
4. Ensure there is a protocol for fiduciary safeguards, and that it is implemented before approval is granted for REDD+ activities
5. Ensure the implementation and fulfilment of the safeguards requirements, whether fiduciary, social or environmental, at the implementation level, before funds are delivered

7.2. Principles

Drawing from stakeholders' inputs from sub-national and national consultations, management of the proposed National REDD+ Funding Agency should incorporate the following principles:

- **Effectiveness:** fund serves to reduce maximum possible emissions;
- **Efficiency:** fund contributes to reducing emissions in a manner that minimises costs;
- **Equity:** fund distribution is done in a fair and equitable manner particularly for the benefit of the most vulnerable groups such as Indigenous Peoples, local communities and women;

- **Adequacy:** fund disbursement should be made when they are needed in order to ensure that revenue flows coincide with expenditure needs to implement NRS;
- **Flexibility:** fund should support diverse activities that contribute to enhance forest carbon stock, reduce emission, improve biodiversity, sustainable forest management, at the same time suitable to each areas' social, economic and cultural conditions, compatible with characteristics of forest ownership and forest land use rights of many types;
- **Transparency:** fund management should remain as a centralise entity at the national level to consolidate costs and logistics, while determination of activities that would need to be supported should be done through inclusive, local, participation of relevant stakeholders including local communities, women groups, and Indigenous Peoples.

7.3. National REDD+ Funding Agency Accountability Mechanism

To maintain the credibility of the REDD+ Funding Agency, an accountability mechanism shall be in place to ensure maximum operational transparency. Independent financial audits will be carried out periodically. REDD+ Funding Agency's financial reports and the audit report for the NRC will be published and available to the public. The Chair of the NRC will forward reports to the minister of the MEF for the purpose of accountability for the funds received through the National Budget and/ or grants in which are recorded as State Revenue.

8. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Developing and mainstreaming the monitoring and evaluation (M&E) framework for NRS will be a long-term effort of strategic relevance, because it will create an enabling environment based on accountability and learning. Improved accountability will facilitate access to new international REDD+ finance, and learning from investments will generate new knowledge critical for future policy development, in particular within the forestry sector. The aim of the national M&E framework for the NRS is to:

- Measure to what extent REDD+ activities have been effective in reducing deforestation and forest degradation, while contributing to sustainable forest management, enhancement and conservation of forest carbon stock;
- Monitor REDD+ contribution to climate change mitigation actions and low-carbon development policies in Cambodia;

- Generate evidence and lessons as a basis for future policy development;
- Facilitate the coherent integration of M&E of NRS in national development planning and key sectors, in particular those related to climate change;
- Provide the information required to fulfil the reporting obligations towards the UNFCCC and development partners.

8.1. Principles

The principles that underpin the M&E framework for NRS are:

- **Using national systems and procedures:** The framework will be integrated with the National M&E System. Indicators and monitoring procedures will rely on data currently monitored by relevant line ministries, where appropriate. They will also be compatible with the guidelines of the Ministry of Planning for the National M&E System. The framework will build on the current initiatives for monitoring and reporting of GHG emissions.
- **Strengthening accountability, equity and transparency:** The framework will provide a way for measuring to what extent resources have been efficiently and effectively used to achieve the targets set in NRS and its Action Plan, thus improving accountability towards the public, state institutions, civil society and international donors.
- **Promoting participatory learning:** Developing and implementing the NRS is a relatively new endeavour in Cambodia and internationally. Generating a solid evidence base of what strategies have proven to be effective is thus essential to informing future policymaking. The framework will hence focus on generating knowledge through participatory approaches and will support identification and sharing of lessons learned.
- **Addressing gender issues:** Women and disadvantaged groups are often among those more severely affected by climate change impacts. The framework will contribute to addressing gender equality, gender-sensitive performance in climate change mitigation actions and gender mainstreaming in climate change responses, particular in the forestry sector.

8.2. Approach

The M&E framework for NRS will be developed by drawing from international best practices. A concept note will be prepared to quantify and mobilise the resources required for fast-starting the development of the framework. The framework will be developed by 2016 and will include: a

theory of change, an indicators framework with baseline and targets for tracking NRS and its Action Plan, procedures for data collection, guidelines for analysis and reporting, guidelines for integration of knowledge management, learning and sharing of results, guidelines for integration within M&E systems of line ministries and agencies, and detailed institutional arrangements and coordination mechanisms. A plan outlining activities, capacity development and costing for long-term implementation and mainstreaming of the framework within line ministries will be prepared.

In the medium term (2016 – 2020) the framework will be operationalised at sectoral level by priority line ministries and activities, selected depending on capacities and resources available. Integration of M&E framework into local planning will be tested. Adequate resources will be frontloaded in the selected activities to cover additional costs for specialised technical capacities in the M&E framework for NRS, collection of baselines, and development of theories of change, learning and knowledge management. In the long term (post 2021) the framework will be revised based on the lessons, and mainstreamed in the relevant line ministries.

8.3. Management and Institutional Arrangements for Implementation

The NRC Secretariat shall coordinate the development and implementation of the NRS' M&E framework. The Secretariat will also be responsible for producing the NRS annual progress report, in coordination with the annual progress review of relevant sectoral and national policies such as the NFP. A unit in charge of the M&E framework shall be established within the Secretariat to coordinate data exchange and the mainstreaming of the framework within line ministries. Indicators, procedures and responsibilities for data collection will be agreed with the concerned line ministries, the National Institute of Statistics, and other parties interested in actively engaging in the process. Partnership with academic research institutions for managing the network of sites for long-term monitoring will be explored. This arrangement could also be used for organising ad hoc evaluation studies of NRS effectiveness based on the data generated by the network.

9. CONCLUSION

The Cambodia National REDD+ Strategy emphasises the veracity that successful implementation of activities to address deforestation and forest degradation while contributing to sustainable forest management, conservation and enhancement of forest carbon stock depends primarily on a series of transformative actions that culminate into reform of the business-as-usual in the management and governance of forest lands in Cambodia. Taking into considerations national circumstances and sovereignty, transformation within the Cambodian forestry sector could only be achieved by instituting a new paradigm, and establishing/ strengthening institutions, regulations, mechanisms, inter-ministerial relationships and governance systems.

It is extremely important that relevant procedures need to be more transparent; enabling systems need to be strengthened to ensure public accountability; data and maps must be integrated; effective and influential thematic coordination must be implementable among the relevant government institutions at all administrative levels. These reforms will require a commitment to the public interests, open-mindedness to cross-cutting issues such as gender and REDD+, and most importantly sense and sensibility on the part of all involved stakeholders. They must find the motivation to change from business-as-usual so that Cambodia can successfully make the shift towards a green inclusive development pathway by reducing deforestation and forest degradation. This is the ultimate aim of the Cambodia National REDD+ Strategy.

10. ANNEX

Annex 1: Tables and figures mentioned in the core text

Figure 1: The four key elements and the decisions providing guidance on REDD+ implementation

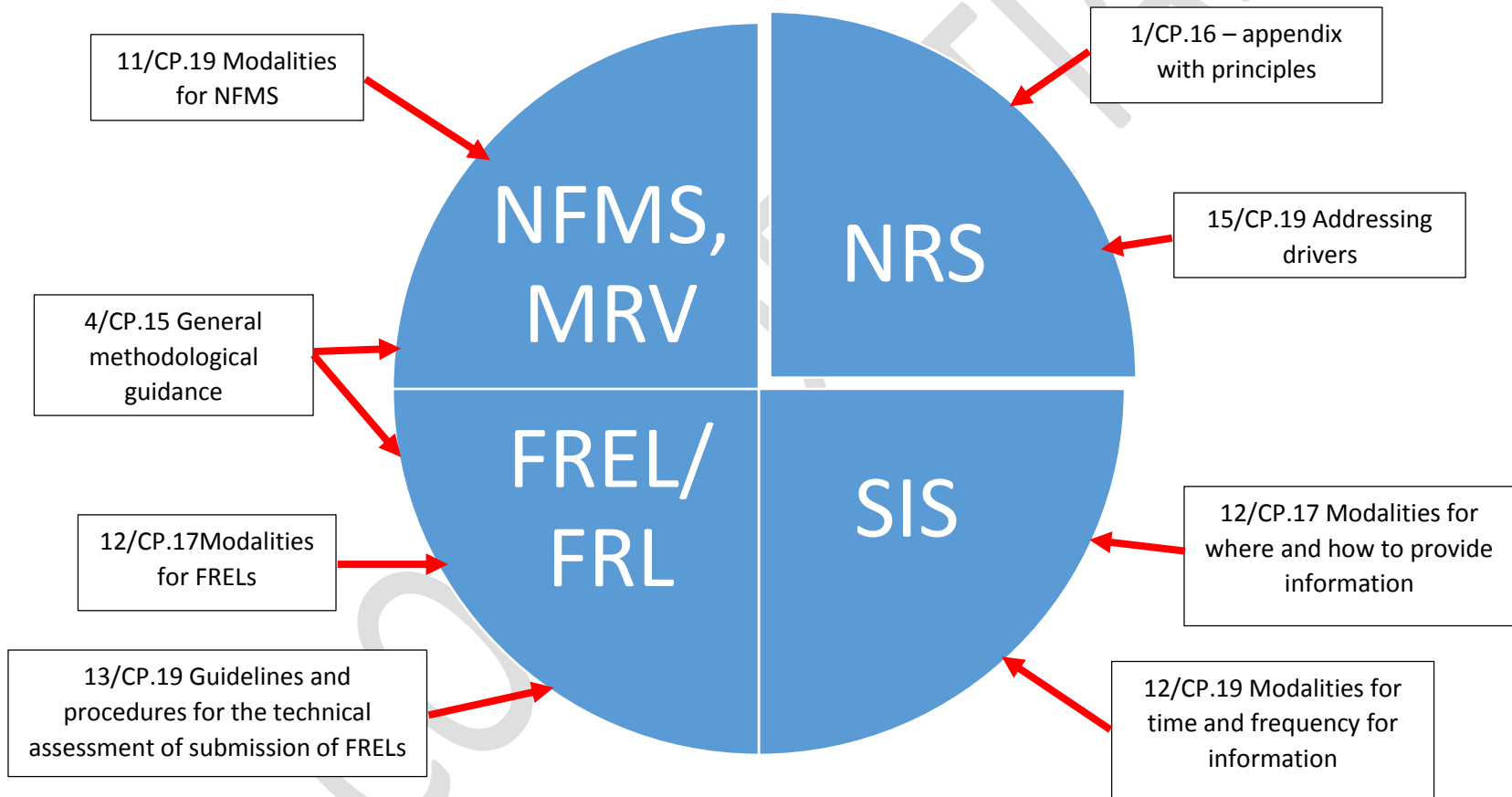
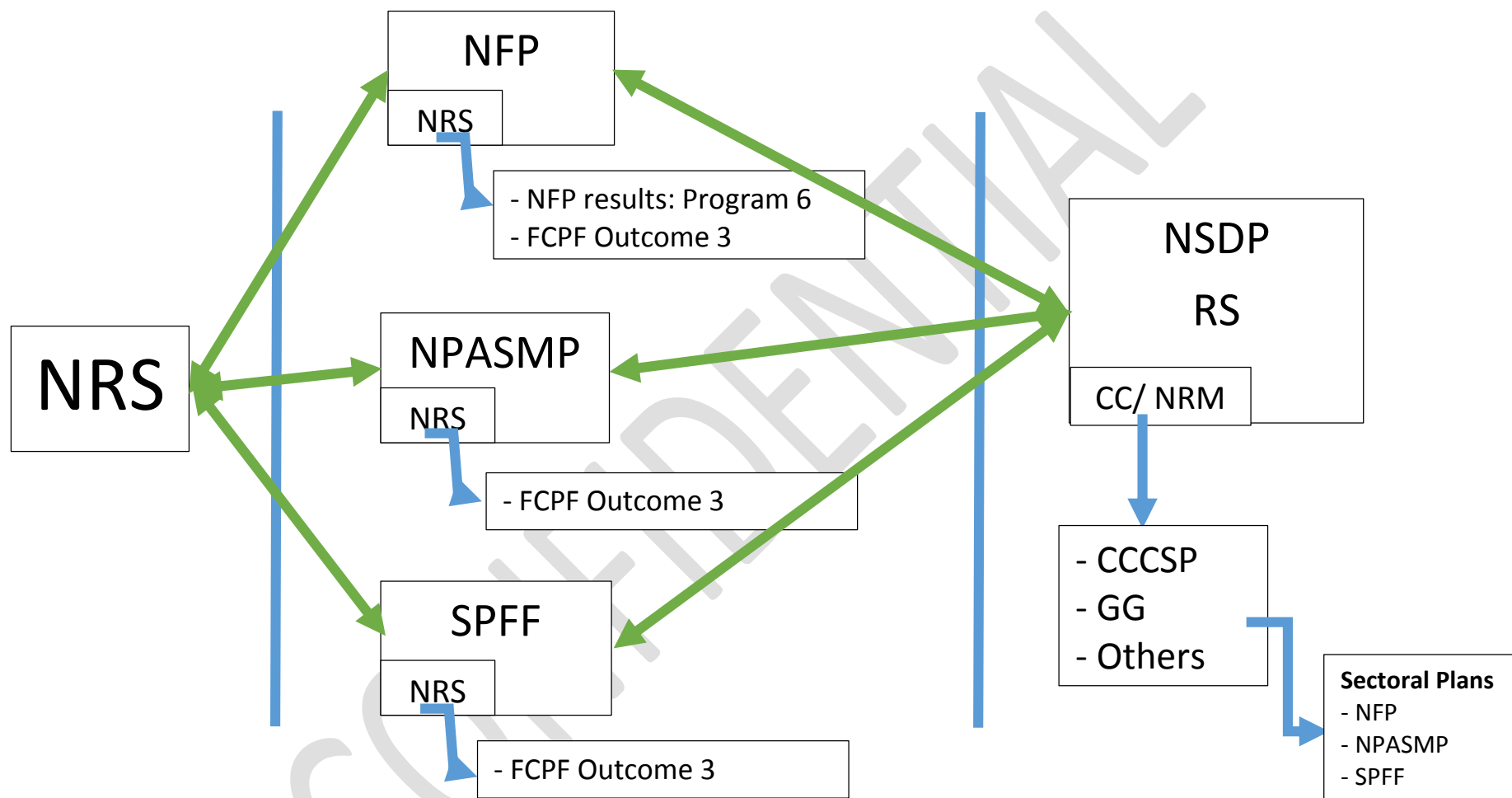


Table 1: Consultation processes conducted to develop the NRS

Working Draft of the NRS	Dates
Skeleton	31 August 2014
Initial Working Draft	31 December 2014
Second Working Draft/ Background Document	10 April 2015
First Consultative Meeting with TF, TTs, CG, GG	20-21 May 2015
Third Working Draft/ Background Document	10 June 2015
Second Consultative Meeting with TF, TTs, CG, GG	6-8 July 2015
Fourth Working Draft/ Background Document	21 August 2015
Four Sub-national Consultative Meetings Kratie Province Sihanouk Ville Province Battambang Province Siem Reap Province Audience (government and non-government officials at provincial level, local communities and indigenous peoples)	08-09 September 2015 15-16 September 2015 22-23 September 2015 29-30 September 2015
National Consultative Meeting/ Phnom Penh Audience (government and non-government officials at national level, development partners, TF, TTs, CG and GG)	Third Week of October 2015
Fifth/ Final Working Draft/ Background Document	06 November 2015
Endorsement by MAFF/ MoE/ PM	Prior to COP 21, Paris
Presentation/ Promotion of NRS at COP21	30 November to 11 December, 2015

Note: TF: Taskforce, TTs: Technical Teams, CG: Consultation Group, GG: Gender Group

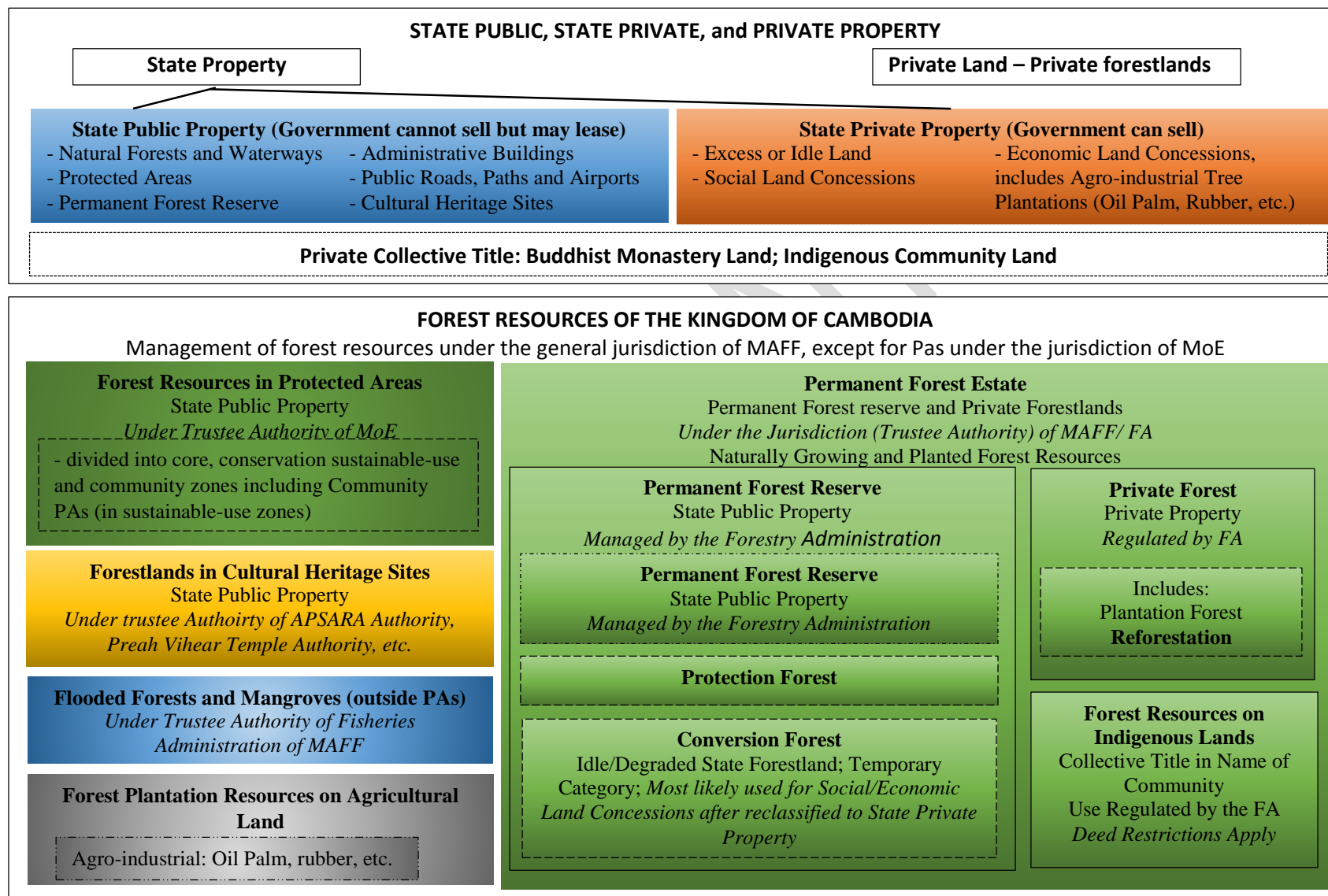
Figure 2. NRS and Existing Sectoral and National Policies



Legend:

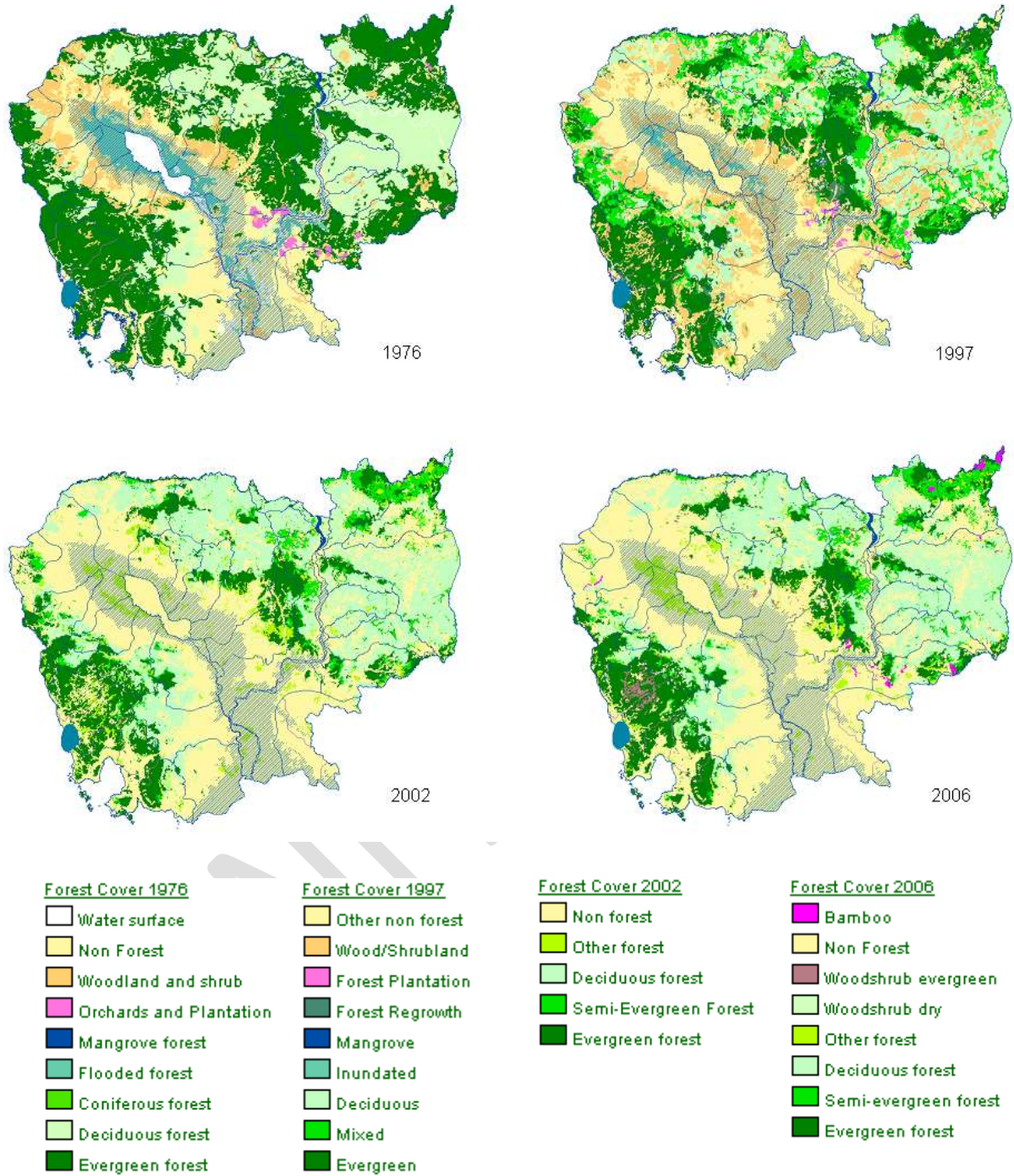
NRS: National REDD+ Strategy; **NFP:** National Forest Programme; **NPASMP:** National Protected Areas Strategic Management Plan; **SPFF:** Strategic Planning Framework Fisheries; **NSDP:** National Strategic Development Plan; **RS:** Rectangular Strategy; **CC:** Climate Change; **NRM:** Natural Resources Management; **CCCSP:** Cambodia Climate Change Strategic Plan; **GG:** Green Growth National Policy

Figure 3: Land Classification – Forestland Management in Cambodia¹



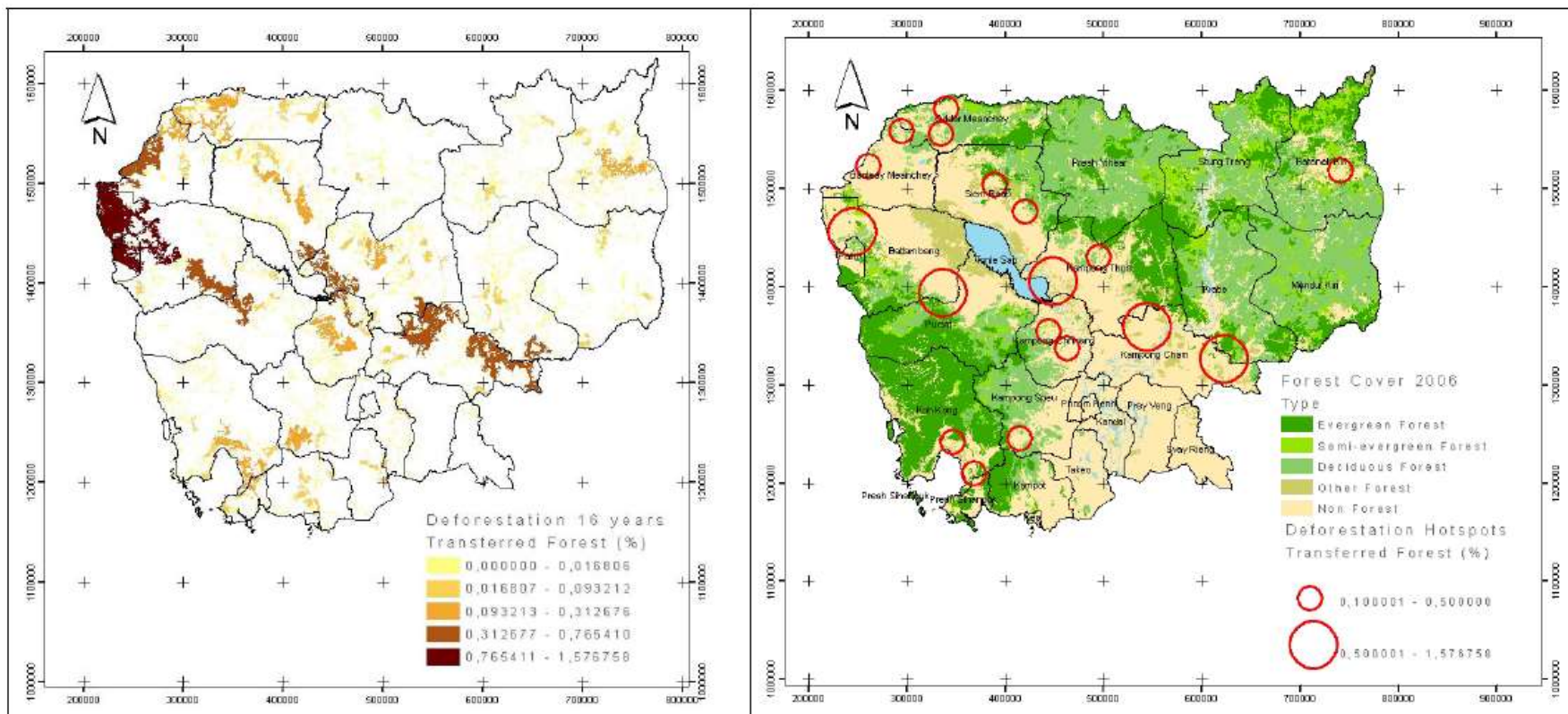
¹ Cambodia REDD+ Roadmap, 2011. Cambodia Readiness Plan Proposal on REDD+.

Figure 4: Changes in forest cover from 1976 to 2006



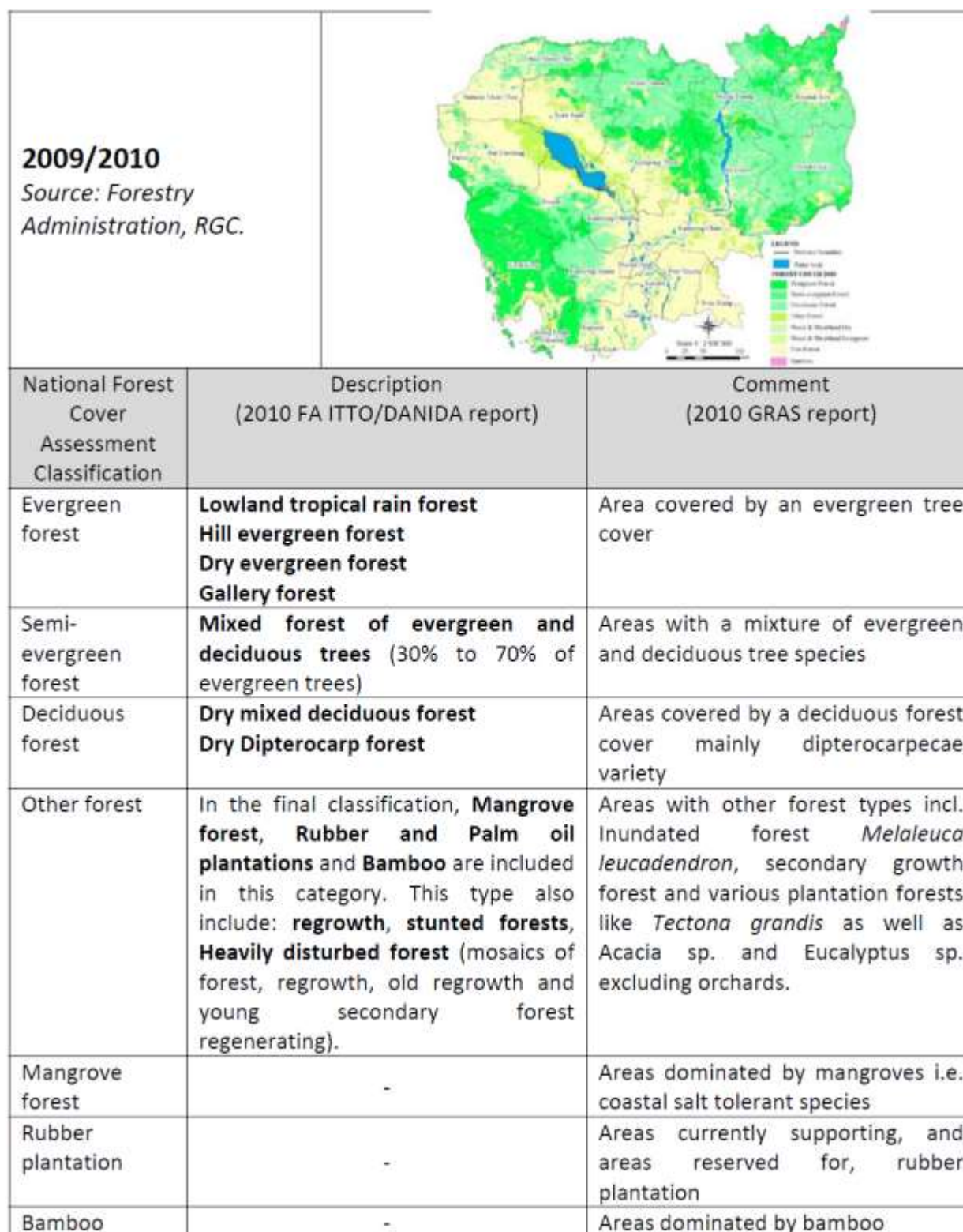
Source: <http://www.cambodiaatlas.com/>

Figure 5. Deforestation hotspots in Cambodia between 1988/89 and 2005/06



Source: Brun (2009).

Figure 6: Forest cover assessment for 2009-2010



Source: FA, MAFF, 2011

Table 2: Drivers of Deforestation and Forest Degradation in Cambodia

	Within the forest sector	Outside the forest sector
Direct	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unsustainable logging; • Fire (role disputed); • Unsustainable woodfuel collection (role unclear). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clearance for agriculture; • Expansion of settlements; • Infrastructure development;
Indirect	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of demarcation of forest areas; • Inadequate forest law enforcement; • Low institutional capacity and weak policy implementation; • Demand for wood energy for domestic and industrial use; • Low efficiency of wood conversion and use for construction, energy production, etc. • Lack of incentives promoting sustainable management of forests; • Lack of finance to support sustainable forest management activities by line agencies, local authorities and local communities • Lack of sustainable or alternative supply of wood and timber, including for wood energy to meet demand; • Weak forest sector governance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Low levels of stakeholder participation and involvement; - Lack of transparency and accountability; - Lack of assessment of social and environmental impacts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Population increases; • Poverty; • Rising incomes and demands for resources; • Increasing accessibility of forest areas; • Low agricultural yields; • Migration into forest areas; • New settlements, including in border areas; • Large-scale agro-industrial developments (including economic and social land concessions and other concessions); • Land speculation; • Regional demand for resources; • Poor ESIA regulations and lack of implementation • Governance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Weak forestland tenure – tenure is weakest in forests and other areas outside residential or farming zones; - Weak enforcement of the law; - Limited implementation of land registration (private and state) - Lack of a fair and transparent conflict resolution mechanism; - Insufficient implementation of land-use planning; - Overlapping/unclear jurisdictions; • Social norms (claiming land through utilisation); • Economic benefits provided by sustainable management of forests at the national level often appear lower than alternative land-uses; • Opportunity costs of sustainable management of forests at the local level; • Low awareness of environmental roles of forests.

Sources: Cambodia REDD+ Roadmap, 2011. Cambodia Readiness Plan Proposal on REDD+.

Footnotes

- ⁱ UNFCCC Conference of the Parties, Decision 1/CP.16. Par. 70
- ⁱⁱ UNFCCC Conference of the Parties, Decision 1/CP.16. Par. 73
- ⁱⁱⁱ UNFCCC Conference of the Parties, Decision 9/CP.19 Par. 3
- ^{iv} Nguon, P. 2014. REDD+ Feasibility Assessment for Community Protected Areas in Cambodia. Ministry of Environment and Adaptation Fund
- ^v For complete report on progress made thus far, see Cambodia REDD+ National Programme Annual Reports (<http://www.un-redd.org/AboutUNREDDProgramme/NationalProgrammes/Cambodia/tabid/6896/Default.aspx>)
- ^{vi} See Chapter 1
- ^{vii} National Climate Change Committee, 2013; National Forest Programme: 2010-2019; National Policy on Green Growth, 2013; Joint Monitoring Indicators, 2014; National Protected Areas Strategic Management Plan (initial working draft, 2014); The Strategic Planning Framework for Fisheries: 2010-2019
- ^{viii} Mid-term Review of the NSDP Update 2009-2013
- ^{ix} Forestry Law 2002, Article 3
- ^x Protected Areas Law 2008, Article 4
- ^{xi} Fisheries Law 2006, Article 3
- ^{xii} National Forest Programme, 2010
- ^{xiii} RGC 2014. Acheiving Cambodia Millennium Development Goals
- ^{xiv} UNFCCC Conference of the Parties, Decision 15/CP.19. Par.2
- ^{xv} Broadhead and Isquierdo. 2010 (Draft). Assessment of land use, forest policy and governance in Cambodia. FAO
- ^{xvi} Cambodia REDD+ Roadmap, 2011. Cambodia Readiness Plan Proposal on REDD+.
- ^{xvii} Cambodia REDD+ Roadmap, 2011. Cambodia Readiness Plan Proposal on REDD+
- ^{xviii} Existing 2006 and 2010 maps have only 8 land use/cover classes. New 2014 map is produced with 22 classes. Parts of land use/cover classes of 2006 and 2010 maps were stratified so that they also have the same 22 land use/cover classes used in new 2014 map.
- ^{xix} Pesti, B., Fach, E., Chhun, D., Boyle, T. 2014. Designing transparent and accountable fund management arrangement for REDD+ in Cambodia.
- ^{xx} Ibid Pesti et al. 2014.