



# Cambodia REDD+ Programme

Forest Carbon Partnership Facilities (FCPF Phase II)

Progress Jan-Mar 2019

## Cambodia Advancement on Safeguard Information System (SIS) and Summary of Information

The SIS is developed to provide information on how safeguard is addressed and respected throughout the implementation of REDD+ activities. After many comprehensive consultations among Cambodian government technical teams, relevant forest institutions and representatives from communities, different elements needed to develop SIS have been finalized. This includes reviewing existing policies, laws and regulation against Cancun Safeguards, clarifying the Cancun Safeguards in accordance to national circumstances, assessing environmental and social impacts and developed management framework, and identifying safeguard institutional arrangements. In addition, a database system for collecting and generating safeguard information from REDD+ implementers has been created. It provides a user-friendly function for each province officers or project implementers to fill in information against safeguard indicators and information needs. Data from the system will be generated on a routine basis to produce Safeguard Summary of Information (Sol) which will be submitted to UNFCCC for the Result-based Payment. Meanwhile, the draft of the 1<sup>st</sup> Cambodia Sol is available for the government endorsement. Its relevant information will be posted on website for public access.



*Community Forest in Oubosleav, Kampong Thom Province*

### REDD+ Implementers are trained on Safeguard

FCPF is supporting the Royal Government of Cambodia (RGC) to develop a Safeguard Information System (SIS) and a Summary of Information (Sol) both expected to be completed by mid-2019. To enhance understanding on how safeguards will be addressed and respected through REDD+ implementations and how information is gathered and reported, a 3 days-training was conducted on 20-21 February 2019 in Siem reap province with technical support from Climate, Law and Policies Firm. There were 35 participants (including 9 women) who were staff members from Ministry of Environment, Forestry Administration, Fishery Administration, Ministry of Women Affairs, Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Land Management, RECOTFC, and NGO Forum. The training was counted as an important step for key staff at national level to advise and lead further safeguard implementation. However, more trainings are needed to reach specific group responsible for implementing, documenting and reporting safeguard information at subnational levels.



*Group Discussion in Safeguard Training*

### **Key Officers from Government and NGOs Received Training on Mainstreaming Gender into REDD+**

Gender equality is a key to effective REDD+ implementation. Therefore, FCPF project fully considers and promotes gender consideration and women's empowerment through all policies, strategy design, and project implementation. Based on the recent assessment on gender mainstreaming into REDD+, which was validated in early Jan 2019, certain recommendations were proposed to address gender gaps and how to improve gender mainstreaming into all relevant project implementations. Through REDD+ implementation, the project implementers shall enhance gender equality and women's empowerment in decision-making processes, increase inclusive participation in REDD+ activities and access to knowledge and technology.

In preparation for subnational implementation, a training workshop was conducted on 25-27 March 2019 in Kep Province, to enhance capacity of government institutions and NGOs on gender in REDD+. The workshop received high-level support from the government with the Secretary of State, Her Excellency Mum Thany, opening the workshop. She expressed strong interest to enhance more gender training activities to both national and subnational staff. Her Excellency also wishes to create a coordinating mechanism to synergize interventions and lessons on gender and mobilized resources to support gender works in natural resources management as well as the whole environmental sector.



*Participants are checking result on identity exercise*

## Advancement of Cambodia National Forest Monitoring System

The advancement of forest monitoring system is not only important for monitoring REDD+ performance, but it is crucial for the government to improve land use planning and overall sustainable forest management. Thus, it is important for Cambodia to keep making improvements on the methodologies and implementation of the NFMS. During the first quarter of 2019, the MRV team finalized the 2018 Land Use map and the ground true validation. In this process, 4 teams including members from Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, Forestry Administration, visited more than 500 points all over the country to finalize the geo-information with the best information available.

As a result, the 2016-2018 Land Use, Land Use Change and Forestry (LULUCF) assessment has been finalized, showing that the rate deforestation has decreased of near 1%. Cambodia has made significant progress in preparation toward the future REDD+ Result-based Payment by publishing forest and land cover change map 2016 in early 2018, which will be available soon, through the National Forest Monitoring System. These results were released to technical officers from forest related institutions in a ceremony in Phnom Penh on 29th March 2019.



*Drone testing-forest monitoring activity*

## **First Cambodia BUR and Technical Annex on Forest is soon to finalize**

As part of the international commitments of Cambodia, the MOE and NCS are working on the Biennial Update Report (BUR). Under this framework, REDD+ has been working on the establishment of the Green House Gas (GHG) inventory for the BUR and the REDD+ Technical Annex, ensuring coherence between the Forest Reference Level and the BUR to UNFCCC. This report will be finalized by June 2019. Finally, REDD+ was included as a key element of the mitigation actions of the Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) of Cambodia as part of the ratification of the Paris agreement.

## **Action and Investment Plan for implementation of National REDD+ Strategy**

In 2017, the Royal Government of Cambodia (RGC) approved its National REDD+ Strategy (NRS). The NRS marks major milestone in Cambodia's transition from REDD+ Readiness Phase to REDD+ implementation. To translate the NRS into action on the ground and provide guidance to sectors to align relevant initiatives with the objective of the NRS, REDD+ Taskforce Secretariat (RTS), with support from Forest Carbon Partnership Facility Phase II project is working to develop the Action and Investment Plan for implementation of NRS (AIP-NRS) for both national and sub-national levels over its 2017-2026 timeframe. The AIP-NRS is the operational implementation plan for the NRS that links existing policies in an implementation framework to enhance coherence and coordination across existing strategies/plans, address gaps to achieve the REDD+ strategic objectives and strategies set out in the NRS. The AIP-NRS sets up the programmatic framework of the investment necessary to reach REDD+ objectives, to define viability of a financial solution and highlight the most appropriate financial tools for a program or a project.

To date the draft of the AIP-NRS has been developed and is under reviews with inputs from in-country and regional experts and will be consulted and validated with stakeholders from government institutions, development partners, civil societies and non-governmental organizations in a national workshop in June 2019.



*Rangers in Patrolling Activity*

## Nested System for REDD+ Implementation

Besides the current progress towards completion of the Warsaw Framework for REDD+ implementation, Cambodia is facing challenges with domestic management and accounting of diverse REDD+ actions implemented by various actors at multiple scales - national, jurisdictional (e.g. provincial) and local (e.g. community) scales.

Indeed, multiple REDD+ actions, that use different methods to measure carbon performance, have already been implemented by various actors at different and overlapping geographical areas and over different periods of time. Furthermore, various REDD+ “demonstration projects” have been approved by different government institutions and are being implemented independently with different accounting methodologies (two VCS projects approved by MAFF, two VCS projects approved by MoE and one JCM project to be endorsed by MoE in 2019). This situation makes it difficult to coordinate and monitor REDD+ efforts, complicates carbon accounting (including the avoidance of double-counting) and, more generally, the overall dialogue on sharing potential REDD+ benefits at multiple levels and across different actors.

While REDD+ activities are implemented at multiples scales, REDD+ results may also be accounted, and benefits may also be shared at multiple scales. In this context, “nesting” or integrating smaller-scale activities into national (or subnational) programs is increasingly being promoted as a strategy of the RGC to consolidate the current and future mitigation actions developed and implemented by multiple stakeholders at multiple scales.

Therefore, besides the development of the four technical pillars of the Warsaw framework for REDD+, Cambodia needs to clarify domestic arrangements to effectively implement and manage REDD+ at various scales, which include (i) practical modalities to incentivize, coordinate and keep record of REDD+ actions on the ground, (ii) rules and methodologies to account for and keep track of ERs at multiple scales, and (iii) an agreed system to share REDD+ benefits at multiple levels.

In this context, the RGC is currently working on the development of a nested system for REDD+ implementation. The overall objective of the nested system is to define how various REDD+ actions implemented by different actors and donors at multiple scales can best be catalyzed, monitored and coordinated to contribute to a larger jurisdictional and/or national scale performance. In parallel, an interlinked objective is to define how best allocate incentives across national, subnational, and local scales/actors.

This overall objective will be achieved through a set of interventions to be undertaken across two phases:

First phase (2019):

- I. Overall design of the nested system, in the context of the country’s rural development objectives, current legal framework for carbon, current public financial management system and forest monitoring systems at national and project levels;

Second phase (2020):

- II. Design of the Benefit Sharing System (BSS);
- III. Design of a REDD+ data management system and/or transaction registry;
- IV. Develop the legal framework for carbon ownership and carbon transactions.

To date, preliminary discussions on REDD+ nesting have been held with the RGC, and an international expert has been recruited to develop options for the development of a nested system for REDD+ implementation in Cambodia. Final report on options for REDD+ nesting is expected to be available in September 2019.