

NSDP, 2006-2010

2.31 Forestry Reform has been ongoing in the few years and has reached a critical stage where institutional strengthening and improvement in coordination among all, is a priority. In accordance with the policy for strategic Forest Management plans and Environmental and Social Impact Assessments of nearby communities, a broad consultation process with the communities has commenced. From 1999 to date, forest concessions granted to 17 companies have been cancelled covering a total forest area of 3.5 million hectares in 24 locations. As of now there are only 12 concessionaries, covering a total area of 3.4 million hectares of forests, who are in the process of planning their concessions. No new forestry concessions have been issued but small salvage operations and other works have continued in accordance with law. In pursuing illegal logging operation, 1,469 illicit sawmill plants, 689 timber processing handicraft, 39 medicine vine powder manufacturing units and such other were removed and destroyed and 441 offenders were apprehended and prosecuted. In June 2004, RGC issued order No 01 BB to prevent, suppress and eliminate forest land clearing and encroachment and has established a National Committee and sub-national committees at the provincial level to implement this order. Additional regulatory instruments and guidelines have been issued to implement the 2002 Forestry law. A new Independent Monitoring to report on forestry crimes and policy implementation has taken over from the earlier one and the work continues. Pilot community initiatives in different parts of the country have commenced and nearly 110,000 hectares have been developed under community forestry arrangements.

4.51 FORESTRY REFORM

The forest sector development is a high priority by the RGC in the development of Cambodia. As stated in the Rectangular Strategy, the goal of the Royal Government's forest sector is to ensure sustainable forestry management based on the following three pillars:

- i. *Sustainable forest management policy*, to ensure the rational and strict monitoring of forest exploitation according to the international best practices in forest management that require adequate forest reserves for domestic consumption, protection against drought and floods as well as wetlands that serve as fish sanctuary.
- ii. *Protected Area System* to protect biodiversity and endangered species.
- iii. *Community Forestry* as a sound, transparent and locally managed program.

To achieve this, the Royal Government of Cambodia is committed to implement a comprehensive National Forest Program with the following priorities:

A: Strengthen Forestry Management and Conservation by:

A1. Developing and monitoring implementation of forest management systems best suited to the local conditions and current context. These could include forest concessions, community forest, annual bidding coupes, joint forest management and other management systems.

A2. Implementing all sustainable forest management and conservation activities with a practical optimum involvement of the private sector and participation of the local population.

A3. Directly supporting the Cambodian millennium goal of "Ensuring Environmental Sustainability" will be directly supported.

A4. Rationalizing and reclassifying the remaining forests to ensure ecological protection and biodiversity conservation and by adopting and strengthening the enforcement of the forestry law and associated regulations.

A5. Strengthening conservation strategies such as protected forests, watershed management, genetic and wildlife resources conservation, eco-tourism, and other special conservation areas with participation of local populations and a proper management plan.

A6. Strictly implementing sound forest management techniques including the sustainable management and use of forestry resources and concessions.

A7. Promoting education and public awareness campaigns on forestry resources.

B: Promote Forestry Contributions to Socio-Economic and Environmental Development and Poverty Reduction by:

B1. Recognizing the forests' vast socio-economic importance, including its poverty alleviation potential, and working, through the Forestry Administration and its development partners, towards maximizing these potentials.

B2. Recognizing the importance of its natural resource heritage and ensuring that the heritage be maintained for future use through sustainable management models, forest gene conservation and protected forests.

B3. Promoting man-made forest plantations to alleviate pressure on the natural forest and to encourage private sector investments in small – medium and large scale plantations.

B4. Establishing, through the FA, tree plantings for the long term environmental and societal benefits like watershed protection, erosion control etc.

B5. Optimizing the productive and protective functions of tree planting through upgrading know-how on site selection, genetic qualities, seed quality, planting and maintenance techniques as well as processing technologies.

B6. Providing technical knowledge to all kinds of tree planters for the maximum utilization of the land's productivity in terms of total economic benefit (environmental and financial returns).

B7. Optimizing the use, processing and marketing system for forestry products to support domestic demand as well as exports.

B8. Implementing legal protection for the traditional rights of local communities in the management of forestry resources to ensure food security and poverty reduction. These rights are protected under the Forestry Law and other regulations.

B9. Ensuring and optimizing local communities' sustainable benefit from the use and management of forestry resources.

C: Strengthening Capacity and Good Governance in Forestry Sectorby:

C1. Strengthening the coordination role of the Forestry Administration within natural resource management and implementing the National Forest Program with the purpose of coordinating activities and partners operating within the forest sector.

C2. Continuing to use the Technical Working Group on Forestry & Environment as coordination and dialog forum with donors and expand its coordinating functions in cooperation within the sector.

C3. Continuing to build and strengthen institutional capacity and human resources of Forestry Administration at all levels for better service provision to the people of Cambodia.

C4. Conducting education, training and public awareness campaigns to people in local communities to encourage their participation in conservation and sustainable forest management.

C5. Strengthening the capacity of Forestry Administration at all levels to perform its duty in cooperation with concerned institutions.