National Forest Program Process in Cambodia

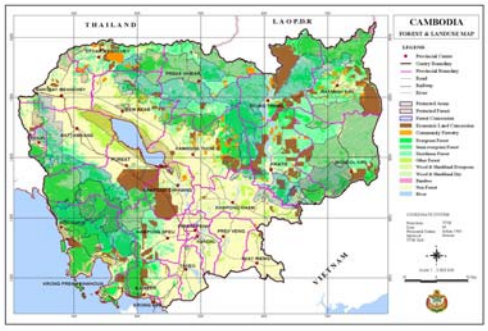
The Forestry Administration (FA), Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries and stakeholders in forest sector in Cambodia are embarking on a process to develop a National Forest Programme (NFP) as a significant step towards sustainable forest management. The National Forest Programme aims to meet local, national and global needs by providing a strategic coherent transparent and effective framework to plan, manage, use, protect and regenerate forest resources in a sustainable manner for the benefit of present and future generations. The NFP is a 20-year programme.

A Task Force with representatives from the FA, relevant government agencies, development partners, non-governmental organisations and private sector, has been established in late 2007 with the main task to promote sustainable forest management through the development of the NFP. In the principle of NFP, the government, represented by the FA, is taking a leading role in the process. The NFP in Cambodia is structured as a Framework Document attached with six specific programmes: Forest Demarcation, National Forest Management and Conservation, Forest Law Enforcement and Governance, Community Forestry, Capacity Building and Research, and Sustainable Forest Financing.

These six programmes have been identified and selected for formulation by the NFP Task Force at the beginning stage. Within the NFP Task Force, six NFP Subgroups have been established and each of them is tasked to formulate one programme mentioned above for further elaboration. The development of NFP is financially supported by the government and development partners including Danida/Dfid/NZaid, FAO and National Forest Programme Facility and technically facilitated by the Forest and Landscape of Denmark.

Local consultations with the wider public on the draft NFP document at local level across the country have been conducted in four locations in March 2009. These four local consultation workshops were organized by the FA with main financial support from National Forest Programme Facility, aiming to raise public awareness and collect feedbacks and comments from local stakeholders on the draft NFP document. In each consultation workshop, there were more than 150 participants representing relevant local government agencies, local communities, local authorities, local NGOs and the private sector.

Feedbacks and comments from the local consultation workshops are being compiled and will be incorporated into the draft NFP document before conducting the next round of consultation, which is to be held at national level in July 2009. It is expected that the NFP document will be finalized in September 2009 and submitted to the Royal Government of Cambodia for adoption. The continued implementation of NFP in Cambodia can be then proceeded in early 2010.



The Cambodian Millennium Development Goal benchmarked for 2015 related to forest resources is as follows:
i. Maintain national forest cover at 60% of the total land area,
ii. Maintain 23 Protected Areas covering 3.3 million hectare of forest,
iii. Maintain six new forest-protected areas covering 1.35 million hectare of forest,
iv. Increase the number of forest rangers to 1200 in protected areas and 500 in forest protected areas,
v. Reduce fuel wood dependency to 52%.

Picture 1: Forest in Cambodia (www.cambodiaatlas.com)

Picture 2: NFP Task Force Meeting

Picture 3: Public consultation on NFP documents