

Terms of Reference

Title of the assignment: National Coordinator for the support to the planning, management and monitoring of the implementation of the National Forest Programme (NFP), and related activities.

1. Summary

The Royal Government of Cambodia (RGC) is committed to the sustainable conservation and management of the country's forest resources. The Technical Working Group on Forestry and Environment (TWG F & E) has adopted a four-year Forestry and Environment Action Plan 2007-2010 that is aligned with the RGC's National Strategic Development Plan. This longer-term plan is complemented by a one year Framework Work Plan and Indicative Budget.

The Forestry Administration (FA) has prioritised the development of a National Forest Programme in 2007-2008 to provide strategic orientation of the sector, improved planning, implementing and monitoring of forestry and forestry-related activities, and to provide a framework for prioritised actions and investments. The TWG F & E has requested assistance from its Development Partners to facilitate the process of developing an enhanced programme based approach for support to the forest agenda in Cambodia. A National Coordinator will be recruited to assist the FA in developing Cambodia's National Forest Programme. The Royal Danish Embassy-Development Co-operation Section/Multi-Donor Livelihoods Facility, as part of its support to the TWG F & E Secretariat, will fund the position for the period 2007-2008.

2. Background

Forests constitute about 60 per cent of Cambodia's total area corresponding to approximately 10 million hectares. It is estimated that the forest area decreases at an annual rate of approximately 1.7 per cent (FAO 2005). This is a serious problem because most rural Cambodians depend on access to forest products to sustain their livelihoods. There is an urgent need to ensure sustainable management and equitable use of forests, to improve rural livelihoods, and to promote a balanced socio-economic development in Cambodia. Past forest management systems have not contributed sufficiently to these broad policy objectives (McKenney et al 2004; Independent Forest Sector Review, 2004; Cambodia: Forest Concession Management and Control Pilot Project. The Inspection Panel - Investigation Report, 2006).

The Forest Administration (FA) is the key government agency in the forestry sector in Cambodia. There are also a large number of other actors including international development agencies, international and national Non Governmental Organisations, and forest-dependent rural communities. Insecure title over forested land and unclear rights to use *de facto* open access forest resources increasingly mitigate efforts to secure livelihoods or to contribute to rural economic growth in Cambodia. This situation reflects a lack of coherence in rural NRM/land management policy, weak capacities of sub-national sector line agency departments, poor service delivery mechanisms and the limited involvement of rural land and resource users in formalized natural resource management procedures. The RGC forest policy is to ensure that forest resources are used in an efficient manner in order to support sustainable and equitable socioeconomic development, protect forests from degradation, and support the decentralization, effectiveness and accountability of forest governance.

Currently forestry activities are rarely co-ordinated, and government sector policies, priorities and plans are not sufficiently developed to encourage and facilitate an aligned and harmonised approach. This hampers the sustainable management and equitable use of forests in the country. The development of a National Forest Programme (NFP) is a critical next step in the FA's efforts to promote sustainable and equitable forest management in Cambodia.¹

3. Developing a National Forest Programme in Cambodia

In 1997 the RGC initiated the process of developing a National Forest Programme (NFP) by establishing a national committee on forest policy reform with support from FAO, UNDP and WB (FAO 2002). In 2002, the secretariat of the committee in collaboration with the GTZ-funded Cambodian-German forestry project formulated a national forest policy statement (RGC 2002). Subsequently, a new Forest Law was promulgated in 2002, a Forestry Administration was established in 2003, and a Sub Decree on Community Forestry adopted in 2005. A temporary Joint Coordinating Committee (JCC), representing RGC and DPs and chaired by the Minister of MAFF, commissioned an Independent Forest Sector Review in 2003. The review resulted in a comprehensive report containing much of the background information necessary to developing a NFP (IFSR, 2004). In November 2004, the RGC established a Technical Working Group on Forestry and Environment (TWG-F & E) to provide a mechanism for government-donor coordination to support and strengthen development activities within the forestry and environment sectors (further details are available at www.twgfe.org).

4. Purpose and key objectives of a National Forest Programme

The purpose of the NFP is to promote the conservation and sustainable management and use of forest resources in Cambodia. The NFP will aim to meet local, national and global needs by coordinating national and international partnerships to manage, use, protect and regenerate forest resources for the benefit of present and future generations of Cambodians. The preparation of a NFP in Cambodia, whilst adopting a consultative approach, will emphasize national sovereignty with regard to the management of the country's forest resources, and the need for country leadership and responsibility. The NFP, as a framework for planning, will provide strategic orientation for the forestry sector in harmony with other sectors of the national economy. As a framework for action and investment, the NFP will also facilitate concerted and coordinated implementation of programmes and activities by all stakeholders based on mutually agreed objectives and strategies. The key objectives of a NFP are to:

- promote inter-sectoral planning involving all relevant partners, in order to resolve conflicts and develop effective policies and programmes to address key problems in the forestry sector;
- raise awareness and mobilize commitments at all levels of forest governance in order to address the issues related to sustainable forestry development;
- increase the efficiency and effectiveness of both public and private actions for sustainable forestry development;
- foster local (village and commune), national, regional and international partnerships;
- mobilize and organize national and international resources to implement prioritised projects and programmes in a coordinated manner;
- plan and implement how forests and the forestry sector could better contribute to the national economy and to complementary global initiatives.

¹ This will ensure compliance with the RGC's commitment to Chapter 11 (Combating Deforestation) of Agenda 21, the action plan of UNCED which invites all countries to prepare and implement NFPs.

5. Objective of the assignment

In spite of earlier initiatives outlined above, the development of a comprehensive national forest policy and a coherent National Forest Programme has yet to be completed in Cambodia. In this context, the FA and TWG F & E need to contract a professional who will assist the FA in developing the structure, contents and a set of coherent documents constituting the key elements of the NFP. The preparation of the NFP will follow a participatory planning approach that encourages the involvement of all forest-dependent actors at village, commune, district, provincial, national and international levels.²

The objective of the assignment is to assist the FA, TWG F & E Secretariat, and a group of Development Partners who will comprise a Task Force mandated by H.E. Ty Sokhun, Director, Forestry Administration to develop the NFP (*cf.* Terms of Reference of the National Forest Programme Task Force). Chea Sam Ang, Deputy Director of the Forestry Administration, will chair the NFP Task Force. The NFP Task Force will report periodically to the TWG Forestry & Environment.

6. Activities

1. Assist the NFP Task Force and TWG F & E Secretariat in preparing, implementing and monitoring the National Forest Programme and attendant action plans prepared by the Forest Administration and its Development Partners in the forestry sector;
2. Assist the FA and NFP Task Force in mobilizing additional resources from Development Partners (financial and human) to assist in the preparation and implementation of the NFP;
3. Assist the NFP Task Force in elaborating operational half-yearly action plans with agreed milestones to be achieved;
4. Prepare working sessions of the NFP Task Force members, and assist the NFP Task Force in elaborating agendas and minutes of meetings;
5. Assist NFP Task Force to maintain effective communication and coordination with Development Partners and other relevant Royal Government of Cambodia agencies collaborating on the development of the NFP;
6. Assist the NFP Task Force to collect and disseminate information as permitted by rules governing disclosure of documents of partner institutions;
7. Assist in creating a NFP Task Force ‘windows’ and in maintaining the Forestry Administration web sites;
8. Coordinate with the FA’s GIS/RS Unit on spatial data capture, storage and use as required by the NFP Task Force;
9. Participate in, and present progress reports at TWG Forestry & Environment meetings;
10. Elaborate and/or comment upon draft Terms of Reference for the commissioning of specific NFP-related studies;
11. Assist in monitoring progress toward agreed NFP milestones, inform the NFP Task Force of problem areas and recommend corrective action;

² Further details are provided in the National Forest Programme Facility, 2003. *National Forest Programme Compendium* (CD-Rom). Rome: FAO.

12. Elaborate technical and financial progress reports on the half-yearly action plans with respect to the fulfilment of the plans, difficulties encountered and milestones achieved;
13. Together with short-term national and international Technical Assistance, prepare and implement relevant training programmes with FA personnel in NFP-related sector programming processes;
14. Support the TWG F & E Secretariat in all activities arising from the NFP action plans;
15. Liaise with other TWGs, especially those developing sector programmes (e.g. TWG-Land) to share experiences and exchange information and lessons learned;
16. Contribute to national and international fora on issues concerning the development and implementation of the NFP in Cambodia;
17. Work together with FA and its Development Partners to identify, systematize and disseminate lessons learned during the preparation of the National Forest Programme.
18. Other tasks as specified by the Chairman of the NFP Task Force and/or TWG Forestry & Environment (e.g. contributions to GDCC Progress Reports).

7. Expected results

While the following results describe the expected outcomes of the work of the National Coordinator of the NFP Task Force, it is understood that their achievement does not depend on him/her alone but requires efforts and inputs from a large number of NFP stakeholders.

1. NFP Task Force Action Plan specifying prioritised tasks and agreed milestones prepared and approved by 30 October 2007;
2. A NFP prepared and approved by 30 April 2009 comprising, at minimum:
 - An updated National Forest Statement specifying the main strategic features of the NFP (visions, objectives, policies and international commitments/obligations);
 - An updated Sector Review encompassing key policy, legislative/regulatory and institutional reforms needed and attendant capacity development requirements;
 - Prioritised sector and sub-sector plans and programmes (*i.a.* forest demarcation, Community/Partnership Forestry, Annual Bidding Coupes, post-concession community-based forest enterprises
 - An NFP Investment Programme and financing strategy;
 - A NFP Management Information System to support effective monitoring and evaluation of the forestry sector;
3. A Training Plan, during and after preparation of the NFP, is elaborated and implemented;
4. NFP Task Force and TWG-Forestry and Environment functioning with suitable availability of information;
5. Development Partner missions are harmonised and organised in conformity with FA Annual Works as agreed by the TWG Forestry & Environment;
6. Progress reports regarding the fulfilment of the NFP Action Plan are elaborated and approved;
7. Results and experiences from the NFP Task Force process are fed into national and international fora.

8. Coordination, communication and contracting

The National Coordinator will work under the overall direction of the Chairperson of the NFP Task Force. He/she will be expected to report periodically to the TWG Forestry & Environment. The National Coordinator will also communicate on a regular basis with other FA departments at national, Inspectorate, Cantonment, Division and Triage levels and with other relevant sector agencies. The TWG Forestry & Environment, using a Long term Technical Advisory Service Contract, will recruit the National Coordinator following a restricted tender committee procedure. The initial three months of the contract will serve as a probation period at the end of which it will either be terminated or continued, based on satisfactory performance, on the basis of a one-year renewable contract.

The National Coordinator will be responsible for the preparation and submission of the following reports:

- NFP Task Force Action Plan, 2007-2008
- Monthly reports for the TWG Forestry & Environment. These reports should include a timesheet to describe daily activities in a concise manner;
- Six-monthly progress reports for the TWG Forestry & Environment;
- Annual technical and financial reports for the TWG Forestry & Environment.

The National Coordinator will work in close collaboration with the NFP Chairperson. He/she will keep the NFP Chairperson informed of all aspects of the NFP preparatory process that are relevant to the fulfilment of the assignment. He/she will provide necessary support in the preparation, approval and implementation of Technical Assistance missions (national and international) contributing to the preparation of the NFP.