

UN-REDD PROGRAMME



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I. SUMMARY OF REQUEST	
Main objective	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Strengthening provincial level forest planning capacity through forest resources assessment 2) Enhancing understanding and capacity of different national stakeholder groups on issues of land tenure and participatory forest management
Main results expected	<p>Output 1. Selected provinces are able to use Collect Earth to assess and update their forest resources for improved forestry sector planning</p> <p>Output 2. National and provincial government authorities, as well as a group of Lao facilitators will be capacitated on issues regarding forest land and resource governance and participatory forest management</p>
Total amount requested (US\$)	178,000
Related Work Area ² as defined in the UN-REDD Programme Strategy 2011-2015	Measuring Reporting Verification (MRV) Governance
Planned period of implementation	July- December 2015
Please select below type of funding as appropriate	
<input type="checkbox"/> Request for funding for REDD + activities implemented in support of existing UN-REDD National Programmes. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Request for funding for REDD+ activities complementary to other nationally-defined REDD+ activities (national strategies, RPP and/or bilaterally funded REDD+ activities) or for initiation of REDD+ activities. (The country has no UN-REDD National Programme.	

REQUEST FOR TARGETED SUPPORT¹

II. BACKGROUND²

As a member of the UN-REDD programme since 2012, Lao PDR would like to request technical support for work on its national forest monitoring system under MRV and on forest land governance work stream for 2015.

<NFMS under UN-REDD work area “MRV”>

Currently, Lao People’s Democratic Republic (Lao PDR) has limited capacity and assistance targeting capacity building of provincial (and other local) level forest resources assessment and planning. The Forest Inventory and Planning Division (FIPD) at the central level conduct national inventories in five-year cycles, which is the basis for provincial forestry sector planning (with exceptions for provinces that receive support from development partner programmes/projects). By applying simple and free (open-source) web-based tools such as FAO’s OPEN FORIS Collect Earth, provinces will be able to assess forest resources with limited training and required skill sets. Collect Earth allows assessment of forest resources through plot-based assessments based largely on medium resolution satellite imagery available through the internet. It is envisaged that by building provincial capacity to assess its forest resources at regular and more frequent intervals than the current five year cycles, provinces and sub-provincial forestry units will have better basis for forestry sector planning, thereby able to effectively and efficiently implement their REDD+ actions. The results of the assessment will be fed back to FIPD who will be able to utilize the results of the assessment for validation purposes for their national forest inventory work. For national level activity data for MRV and for use for the national Forest Reference Levels, the Government is currently looking into alternative methods of wall-to-wall mapping using mid-high resolution remote sensing. In this regard, the data collected from Collect Earth is envisaged to contribute towards national level mapping as data set for internal cross-validation and QA/QC (quality assurance and quality check).

FAO has conducted one national level training on the Collect Earth tool to FIPD and national level proponents, in December 2014, through a project funded under BMUB. FIPD has gained capacity to use the Collect Earth tool, but would like to further customize the tool for application at the provincial level, and has raised this request to UN-REDD.

¹ It is voluntary to use this form in the application process for UN-REDD Programme targeted support. If the country prefers using its own document, this form can be used as guidance on the content that is needed. See also guidance in the [Procedures for Accessing UN-REDD Programme Targeted Support](#).

The requests for targeted support should be presented in coordination with the teams of the participating UN organizations (FAO, UNDP and UNEP) and the Resident Coordinator.

It is recommended that the UN-REDD Country Focal Point submits the request. The request should be sent to the UN-REDD Programme Secretariat (E-mail: un-redd@un-redd.org).

² The work areas are: Monitoring Reporting Verification (MRV), Governance, Stakeholder Engagement, Multiple Benefits, Transparency & Accountability, Green Economy.

² Depending on the phase of the country in its REDD+ efforts, some of these details are relevant. Others may be too detailed and can be further elaborated if the request is approved.

The targeted support will work with FIPD at the central level as trainers to train a few staff of provincial and local level forestry officers starting with five or so provinces in 2015 (tentatively in the provinces of Phongsaly, Bokeo, Xayabouly, Savannakhet and Sekong). Once capacity in the first group of provinces has been demonstrated, FIPD would like to consider expanding the scope of application to other forested provinces, to eventually cover the whole country. Assistance for this expansion will be considered at a later phase.

<Land and resource governance under UN-REDD work area “Governance”>

Lao PDR has been experiencing rapid economic growth in the recent decades through large scale investments capitalizing on its natural resources base; particularly in industrial agriculture, the mining sector, and through hydro-power projects. The economic growth has often come at the cost of natural forests, as Laos has been consistently losing forest cover since the 1990s, despite its increases in plantations.

Earlier studies on REDD+ in Laos identify the following as the main drivers of deforestation; expansion of agricultural and industrial tree plantations, development of hydropower plants and other infrastructure development, mining, and urban expansion. Forest degradation is mainly the result of unsustainable wood extraction and shifting cultivation.

The Government acknowledges the major challenges in addressing these drivers of deforestation and forest degradation, and together with development partners, has set up several REDD+ initiatives as demonstration activities in a number of provinces. While REDD+ alone will not be an economically viable substitute for national development projects, REDD+ can be bundled with other incentive mechanisms, national development strategies and priorities, and regulatory frameworks to shift the trends and processes of investment projects in Laos to be more sustainable. In this regard, issues regarding land and resource governance including tenure security for local communities and their roles in natural resource management have attracted strong interest among Government as well as from the development community, particularly in advancing the revisions of the land and forestry laws. The Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries, and Forestry officially endorsed by the Committee on World Food Security in 2012 has been introduced in this context, through an FAO initiative, which translated the Voluntary Guidelines into Lao language. However, progress has been slow, due to the state of flux in the country’s overall legal domain, pending the review of the Constitution, which is further suspending the review and approval processes of the National Land Policy, and in turn the review of the forestry and land laws. It is in this context that Laos seeks assistance to the UN-REDD Programme in advancing the agenda on participatory forest management and land tenure issues, targeting awareness raising, training and generating dialogue between national and local level stakeholders.

The proposed Targeted Support will work with the central government agencies and national level stakeholders to first establish a common understanding on the different possible modalities of local community participation in forest management in the context of the current legal framework, and the necessary enabling conditions for sustainable forest management, through means of facilitated national level meetings and stock-taking exercises. Using the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible

Governance of Tenure of Land Fisheries and Forests as a conceptual foundation, a set of training modules tailored for the Lao context will be developed to enhance understanding around the concept of governance in land and natural resources anticipating as audience, national and provincial level government staff. One of the mechanisms identified through which this training module can be utilized is the annual training courses for Village Forestry delivered by the Village Forestry and NTFP Division under the Department of Forestry targeting provincial government staff. The Targeted Support will also co-finance and feed into an on-going multi-stakeholder initiative “Integrating Natural Resource Management” which aims to design a curriculum and a teaching toolkit for CSO and government facilitators on natural resource rights information.

III. SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

<NFMS under UN-REDD work area “MRV”>

- Review and customize the Collect Earth and other related tools for Lao PDR
- Conduct trainings in-country to build national capacity on Collect Earth and related tools
- Procurement of computers for provinces
- Implement provincial level trainings and technical back-stopping support on Collect Earth and related tools
- Conduct national workshops to share results and assess the way forward

<Land and resource governance under UN-REDD work area “Governance”>

- Conduct a national level workshop and consultation meetings to discuss and build consensus on the modalities for local community participation in forest management
- Assess the enabling conditions for community participation in forest management with a view to enhancing tenure security and supporting REDD+ implementation.
- Drawing on the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries, and Forestry, develop a set of training modules for enhancing understanding of governance of tenure.
- Use the training modules to train a core group of facilitators.

IV. IMPLEMENTATION

The Targeted Support will be implemented by the FAO Representation in Lao PDR, with the REDD+ Office of DOF as the official UN-REDD focal point will be the overall counterpart for this TS, with the following implementation arrangements;

<NFMS under UN-REDD work area “MRV”>

This component will be implemented by FAO and the Forest Inventory and Planning Division (FIPD) under the Department of Forestry as the main counterpart (through a Letter of Agreement with FAO), and the participation of selected provinces.

<Land and resource governance under UN-REDD work area “Governance”>

This component will be implemented by the FAO Representative in Laos including through Letters of Agreements to be signed with partner organizations, including Village Focus International, who is coordinating the Integrating Natural Resources Management initiative mentioned above.

III. SUMMARIZED WORKPLAN WITH BUDGET AND TIMELINE				
<i>(Please expand space as needed. Alternatively, add Annex with workplan, budget and timeline)</i>				
Description of planned outputs and activities Amount (US\$)		Location	Amount (US\$)	Implementation period <i>(from month /year to month/year)</i>
Output 1. Selected provinces (and district offices) are able to use Collect Earth to assess and update their forest resources for improved forestry sector planning	Activity 1.1 Reviewing and customizing of the Collect Earth and other related tools	Vientiane and Rome	10,000	July – August 2015
	Activity 1.2 Build national capacity on Collect Earth and related tools	Vientiane	10,000	August 2015
	Activity 1.3 Procurement of computers for provinces	n.a	20,000	July-August 2015
	Activity 1.4 Implement provincial level trainings and technical back-stopping support on Collect Earth and related tools	Vientiane and +/-five provinces	30,000	September-October – December 2015
	Activity 1.5 National consultation and workshop on results	Vientiane	10,000	November 2015
Output 2. National and provincial government authorities, as well as a group of Lao facilitators will be capacitated on issues regarding land and resource governance and participatory forest management	Activity 2.1 Stock-taking exercise and documentation of different land and resource governance arrangements involving local communities	Vientiane	12,000	August-December 2015
	Activity 2.2 Development of training modules on governance in land and natural resources	Vientiane	10,000	July – October 2015
	Activity 2.3 Implementation of training to core facilitator’s team	Vientiane and provinces	71,000	September – December 2015
	Activity 2.4 Consultation	Vientiane	5,000	November –

	meetings and workshops		December 2015
Total amount requested (US\$)			178,000

IV. UN-REDD COUNTY FOCAL POINT (name and title): ³	Savanh Chanthakoummane (Mr.) Head, REDD+ Office, Department of Forestry, Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry
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(Signature)

Name and title	Thongphath Vongmany (Mr.) Director General Department of Forestry, Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry
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³ It is recommended that the UN-REDD Country Focal Point submits the request.