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Status of Community Based Forest Management in Lao PDR

By Khamphay Manivong and Phouthone Sophathilath

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RECOFTC

NAFRI

RECOFTC Vision

Local communities in the Asia-Pacific region are actively involved in the equitable and ecologically sustainable management of forest landscapes.

RECOFTC Mission

To enhance capacities at all levels to assist people of the Asia-Pacific region to develop community forestry and manage forest resources for optimum social, economic and environmental benefits.

RECOFTC is an international organization that works closely with partners to design and facilitate learning processes and systems to support community forestry. It seeks to promote constructive multi-stakeholder dialogues and interactions to ensure equitable and sustainable management of forest resources.

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Abbreviations

ADB	Asian Development Bank
AusAID	Australian International Aid Agency
CBF	Community Based Forestry
CBFM	Community Based Forest Management
CBNRM	Community Based Natural Resources Management
CCL	Commite pour la Cooperation avec le Laos
CFM	Collaborative Forest Management
CPAWM	Centre for Protected Areas and Watershed Management
CUSO	Canadian University Services Overseas
DAFEO	District Agriculture and Forestry Extension Office
DED	Deutsche Entwicklung's Dienst
DOF	Department of Forestry
FAO	World Food and Agriculture Organization
GoF	Government of Finland
GoL	Government of Laos
FMU	Forest Management Unit
FOF	Faculty of Forestry
FOMACOP	Forest Management and Conservation Project
FORCAP	Forest Conservation and Afforestation Project
FORCOM	Forest Management and Community Support Project
FMU	Forest Management Unit
FRC	Forest Research Center
GAA	German Agro-Action
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GoL	Government of Lao PDR
GTZ	German Technical Cooperation
IDRC	International Development Research Centre Canada
IFAD	International Fund for Agriculture Development
IFC	International Finance Corporation
IUCN	World Conservation Union
JFM	Joint Forest Management
JICA	Japanese International Cooperation Agency
KfW	Kredit fur Wiederaufabout (Credit for Reconstruction)
Lao PDR	Lao People Democratic Republic
LDC	Least Developing Country
LECS	Lao Expenditure and Consumer Survey
LSFP	Lao Swedish Forestry Programme
LUP/LA	Land Use Planning and Land Allocation
MAF	Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry
m3	Cubic meter
NAFES	National Agriculture and Forestry Extension Service
NAFRI	National Agriculture and Forestry Research Institute
NAWACOP	Nam Gnum Watershed Conservation Project

NBCA	National Biodiversity Conservation Area
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NGPES	National Growth and Poverty Eradication Strategy
NTFP	Non-Timber Forest Product
NUOL	National University of Laos
NZODA	New Zealand Official Development Agency
PAFO	Provincial Agriculture and Forestry Office
PARUA	Poverty Alleviation in the Remote Upland Areas
PFM	Participatory Forest Management
PMO	Prime Minister Office
PMD	Prime Minister's Decree
PROFEP	Promotion of Forestry Education Project
GTZ-RDMA	Rural Development in Mountainous Areas Programme (GTZ)
RECOFTC	Regional Community Forestry Training Center
RD	Rural Deveopment
SFE	State Forest Enterprise
SNV	The Netherlands Development Organization
STEA	Science Technical and Environment Agency
SUFORD	Sustainable Forestry and Rural Development
TERRA	Towards Ecological Recovery & Regional Alliance
TMF	Training and Model Forestry
UNDP	United Nation Development Program
VFO	Village Forest Organization
WFP	World Food Program

Executive Summary

Background: Community involvement in forest management was (first) introduced in the Lao People's Democratic Republic (Lao PDR) in 1989 when the First National Forestry Conference declared the new forest policy direction toward sustainable forest management. In this policy the government officially recognized the importance of local people's participation in forest management. To ensure the new forest policy's direction, the Government developed a Tropical Forestry Action Plan (TFAP) in 1990 and officially adopted it one year later. It was the first forest development program that advocated people's participation in forest management (DOF, 2000). Another important policy instrument that shaped community based natural resource management in the 1990s was the Land Use Planning and Land Allocation Policy, which recognized the rights of local people to use and manage natural resources. It also encouraged local people's participation in the management planning and protection of the forest.

Since then a number of community based forest management (CBFM) models have been developed, tested and applied under different forest and socio-economic conditions in the country. However, whilst various lessons and experiences have been gained from these different models, these experiences have not always been widely documented, exchanged and coordinated.

Objectives: This literature study, conducted under a collaborative framework between NAFRI and RECOFTC, was developed to analyze the status of community contribution to forest resource management in Lao and the modes and extent that communities are or have been involved in the different applied models. The report aims to give an overview of community based forest initiatives up to now, analyze lessons, challenges and opportunities and give guidance for future work. The report can be used to guide the development of community based forestry programs within the country as well as in other countries in the region.

Overview of Forest Management Types: In the report, the various forest management initiatives have been broadly distinguished according to *degree of involvement of villagers in forest management*. Ownership types, functions of the forests, arrangement of responsibilities of partners and benefit sharing systems are other factors that have been looked at. From this the report classifies forest management in Lao PDR according to the following types: 1) Participatory forest management; 2) Collaborative forest management; 3) Traditional forest management systems; 4) Community based forest management for ecotourism; 5) Smallholder plantations; and 6) Industrial plantations. Under each of these types, the report gives an overview of the different initiatives - such as the Forest Management and Conservation Project (FOMACOP), the Lao-Swedish Forestry Programme (LSFP), the Sustainable Forestry and Rural Development Project (SUFORD) etc. - draws out the main components of each initiative and analyses strengths, weaknesses and lessons regarding people' participation.

CBFM related Policies, Laws, Regulations and Guidelines: The mentioned Tropical Forestry Action Plan was the first initiative of the Government of Lao PDR which advocated people's participation, and a number of legal instruments have been developed to form a legal framework for the implementation of the programs identified in the plan. The most relevant of these instruments regarding community participation include the Council of Minister's Decree No. 117 (1989); Prime Minister's Decree No. 169 (1993); Prime Minister's Decree No. 186 (1994); and the Forestry Law (1996). These and other key legal instruments that promote people's participation in forest management are listed in the report.

The National Growth and Poverty Eradication Strategy (NGPES) and the Forest Strategy 2020 are two recent strategies that have emphasized the importance of community participation. The NGPES stresses the importance of forest resources for poverty eradication and highlights the need for community participation in planning and management of environmental resources, as well as cultural preservation. The Forest Strategy 2020, which was adopted in 2005, declares the significance of forest resources for the improvement of local livelihoods.

However, in spite of policies in favor of CBFM and intensive development efforts on a supportive legal framework, some weaknesses are mentioned in the report. The Forest Law, for instance, only allows limited participation of local people in forest management and does not legally ensure sufficient rights or provide incentives, particularly for the management of production forest (World Bank, 2003). In addition, the existing laws and regulations still lack provisions concerning conversion of village forest, for example regulations regarding the process of compensation to villagers in the case of loss of use rights. Some of the other general weaknesses mentioned in the report were:

- Dissemination of information on new legislation is inadequate. It is often unclear which legislation was repealed (invalid) and what new rules replaced them.
- Laws, legislation and rules are disseminated in a top-down manner through the Government administration. Copies of legal documents are often unavailable for staff in the lower levels of government administration.
- There is a shortage of staff and a lack of organizational support to enforce laws, rules and regulations as well as monitoring to ensure that rules are being enforced.

Institutional Arrangements: The report also gives an overview of key governmental institutions with responsibilities in CBFM, including governmental agencies, research and training institutions, communities, civil society, networks and federations, private sectors and donor initiatives.

Main achievements: One of the main achievements mentioned in the report was the variety of CBFM models that have been developed and tested for different forest categories, at different scales and under varying socio-economic conditions. They provide a menu of practical options for sustainable forest management. Some models, especially those developed for state production forests, have increasingly gained recognition as being suitable forest management models and have been used for further development and replication.

Some of the other achievements mentioned in the report are that the practice of CBFM has built a good foundation for rural development as well as for the livelihood improvement of local communities. It has also built local capacity and empowerment in line with the decentralization policy of the Government of Lao PDR. CBFM projects have raised awareness of the importance of forest functions and its values. Through participation in CBFM, local villagers have been empowered, particularly through development of local institutions such as Village Forest Associations, which have been set up to facilitate the management and sharing of benefits of forest resource management.

Lessons: The report draws out some key lessons from CBFM initiatives, including:

- Involving local people in forest management is a long-term learning process, multidisciplinary in terms of subject areas and needs continuous government support from the.
- Level of participation is a key factor affecting communities' contribution to forest management but does not guarantee social acceptance. Partner preferences and resource type influence the decision of scale of application. For example, at present, Collaborative Forest Management gains higher recognition than Participatory Forest Management in state production forest regardless of level of participation.
- Progress in expansion has been slow due to several reasons including insufficient budgets or human capacity, lack of supporting legal instruments, weak legal enforcement as a result of insufficiency of legal and institutional support, ineffective dissemination, etc. Another factor has been the lack of technical instructions and guidelines for the actual implementation.
- Scaled up coverage of CBFM has been attributed mainly to donor funded project support and has not clearly streamlined into ordinary government projects or programs. In spite of increasing CBFM efforts, no proper institutional arrangement has been developed and roles and responsibilities among stakeholders are not clear. Consolidation and institutionalization of these initiatives are needed for wide scale application.

- Forest management systems are not well integrated into the overall land use system. A holistic planning approach combining both forest management system and land use is, therefore, necessary.
- Raising awareness would be an important component of the project to ensure continuity of the initiatives.
- Local leadership is a decisive factor for the success of CBFM.

Challenges: One of the main challenges recognized in the report was the consolidation and institutionalization of the available lessons that have come out from the CBFM initiatives, which would be important for speeding up wide scale application. Likewise, it would need a strong commitment from all stakeholders. Another challenge was that decentralized natural resource management requires strong capacity at the grassroots level. Mobilization of human resources to meet this requirement requires long-term commitment and sufficient funds. And finally, while developing detailed legal instruments is a difficult task, it was recognized that the ability to enforce the legislation and disseminating the information is much more challenging.

Recommendations: Acknowledging lessons learned and the challenges mentioned above, the following key actions were proposed:

- Clear resource boundary is necessary for sustainable forest management. The government should therefore ensure that participatory Land Use Planning and Land Allocation are implemented throughout the country.
- Speeding up the consolidation of a participatory management model for National Biodiversity Conservation Areas, immediately followed by preparation and implementation of operational plans. Inclusion of a conservative income generating project such as an ecotourism project, for example, might be considered.
- Consolidating lessons for the remaining forest categories (village forests, protection forest, etc.), and hastening the institutionalization process. The National Agriculture and Forestry Research Institute (NAFRI) and the National Agricultural and Forestry Extension Service (NAFES) should take a lead in these processes.
- A number of improvements in the legal framework are necessary to support the wider application of CBFM approaches, including:
    - Development and issuance of Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (MAF) regulations on the management of Protection and Regeneration Forests;
    - Clarification of definition and status of village forest in the Forest Law;
    - Preparation of technical instructions and guidelines to implement relevant decrees and regulations such as PMD 59/2002 and MAF regulation No. 0204/2003;
    - Enhancement of dissemination of related legislation to all stakeholders;
    - Simplification of regulations concerning all aspects of tree plantation management from planting to harvesting, transporting and exporting;
    - Establishment of procedures to convert temporary land use certificates to long-term rights (land titles) without undue burden on small holders;
    - Establishment of a clear legal framework covering village land and forest resources that enables effective community based natural resource management including participatory land-use planning at village level reflecting actual land and forest use;
    - Conduct training on legal drafting and implementation for relevant staff in MAF.
    - Institute committees or working groups for different forestry sub-sectors to be involved in consultation or for multi-institutional drafting teams for key legislation
- Capacity building at different levels should be seen as a priority. Particular consideration should be made to the following aspects:
    - Building up capacity of DAFEO and participating villagers in all necessary areas and skills;
    - Allocating adequate financial resources to support the implementation of CBFM;
    - Establishing micro-finance systems for long-term self-support at local level;
    - Providing adequate training to participating villages in sustainable land use and forest resource management.

- Developing mechanism of exchange of information across all associated hierarchical levels as well as between stakeholders to support CBFM at field level.
- Introducing holistic approaches into planning systems.

ບົດສັງລວມຫຍໍ້

ຄວາມເປັນມາ:
ການມີສ່ວນຮ່ວມຂອງປະຊາຊົນໃນການຈັດສັນປ່າໄມ້ ໄດ້ເລີ້ມຕົ້ນຂຶ້ນ ເປັນຄັ້ງທຳອິດຢູ່ໃນ ສປປ ລາວ ໃນປີ 1989 ພາຍຫຼັງ ການປະກາດໃຊ້ນະໂນບາຍປ່າໄມ້ໃໝ່ ໃນກອງປະຊຸມປ່າໄມ້ທົ່ວປະເທດ ຄັ້ງທີ 1 ຊຶ່ງເນັ້ນໃສ່ ການກ້າວໄປສູ່ການຈັດສັນປ່າໄມ້ແບບຍືນນານ. ຢູ່ໃນນະໂຍບາຍ ດັ່ງກ່າວນີ້ ລັດຖະບານແຫ່ງ ສປປ ລາວ ໄດ້ຮັບຮູ້ເຖິງຄວາມສຳຄັນ ຂອງ ການມີສ່ວນຮ່ວມຂອງປະຊາຊົນ ໃນວຽກງານການຄຸ້ມຄອງປ່າໄມ້ຢ່າງເປັນທາງການ. ເພື່ອຮັບ ປະກັນເຮັດໃຫ້ທິດທາງນະໂຍບາຍປ່າໄມ້ ອັນໃໝ່ນີ້ ໄດ້ຮັບການຈັດຕັ້ງປະຕິບັດຢ່າງມີປະສິດທິຜົນສູງ, ລັດຖະບານແຫ່ງ ສປປ ລາວ ໄດ້ ພັດທະນາແຜນການດຳເນີນງານປ່າໄມ້ແຫ່ງຊາດ ຂຶ້ນໃນປີ 1990 ແລະ ໄດ້ຖືກຮັບຮອງ ເອົາ ເປັນທາງການ ໃນປີຕໍ່ມາ. ແຜນການ ດຳເນີນງານດັ່ງກ່າວ ນັບວ່າເປັນ ແຜນການພັດທະນາປ່າໄມ້ ສະບັບທຳອິດ ທີ່ມີລັກສະນະຊຸກຍູ້ສິ່ງເສີມ ການເຂົ້າຮ່ວມຂອງປະຊາຊົນ ໃນການຄຸ້ມຄອງປ່າໄມ້ (ກປມ, 2000). ເຄື່ອງມືທາງດ້ານ ນະໂຍບາຍ ທີ່ສຳຄັນອີກຢ່າງນຶ່ງ ທີເປັນສິ່ງກະຕຸ້ນໃຫ້ເກີດ ມີການຄຸ້ມຄອງຊັບພະຍາກອນທຳມະຊາດແບບມີສ່ວນຮ່ວມ ຂອງປະຊາຊົນ ແມ່ນ ນະໂຍບາຍ ວາງແຜນນຳໃຊ້ທີ່ດິນ ແລະ ມອບດິນມອບປ່າ ຂອງລັດຖະບານ ຊຶ່ງໄດ້ຮັບຮູ້ສິດທິໃນການຄຸ້ມຄອງ ແລະ ນຳໃຊ້ຊັບພະຍາກອນ ທຳມະຊາດຂອງປະຊາຊົນທ້ອງຖິ່ນ ແລະ ລະດົມການເຂົ້າຮ່ວມ ຂອງປະຊາຊົນທ້ອງຖິ່ນ ໃນການວາງແຜນຄຸ້ມຄອງ ແລະ ປົກປັກຮັກສາປ່າໄມ້.

ນັບຕັ້ງແຕ່ນັ້ນມາ, ລະບົບການຈັດສັນປ່າໄມ້ແບບມີສວນຮ່ວມຂອງປະຊາຊົນ ຫຼາກຫຼາຍຮູບແບບ ກໍໄດ້ຮັບການພັດທະນາ, ທົດສອບ ແລະ ນຳໃຊ້ ໃນຫຼາຍສະພາບເງື່ອນໄຂຂອງປ່າໄມ້ ແລະ ຫຼາຍ ສະພາບເສດຖະກິດສັງຄົມ ຂອງປະເທດ. ເຖິງວ່າ ໃນໄລຍະຜ່ານມາ ຈະໄດ້ມີການຖອດຖອນ ບົດຮຽນ ແລະ ປະສົບການ ຈາກການຈັດຕັ້ງປະຕິບັດ ການຈັດສັນປ່າໄມ້ແບບມີສ່ວນຮ່ວມ ໃນ ຫຼາຍຮູບຫຼາຍແບບ ແລ້ວກໍຕາມ, ແຕ່ຍັງເຫັນວ່າ ບົດຮຽນ ແລະ ປະສົບການເຫຼົ່ານີ້ ຍັງບໍ່ທັນ ໄດ້ມີການບັນທຶກເກັບກຳ, ແລກປ່ຽນ ແລະ ປະສານງານ ກັນໄດ້ດີເທົ່າທີ່ຄວນ.

ຈຸດປະສົງ:
ການສຶກສາຕາມເອກະສານຄັ້ງນີ້ ໄດ້ດຳເນີນຢູ່ໃນກອບການຮ່ວມມືທາງດ້ານວິຊາການ ລະຫວ່າງ ສະຖາບັນຄົ້ນຄ້ວາກະສິກຳ ແລະ ປ່າໄມ້ ແລະ ສູນຝຶກອົບຮົມປ່າໄມ້ຊຸມຊົນພາກພື້ນ (RECOFTC) ເພື່ອວິເຄາະສະຖານະພາບ ການປະກອບສ່ວນຂອງປະຊາຊົນ ໃນການ ຄຸ້ມຄອງຊັບພະຍາກອນປ່າໄມ້ ໃນ ສປປ ລາວ. ນອກຈາກນັ້ນ, ກໍຍັງໄດ້ສຶກສາ ຮູບແບບ ພ້ອມທັງ ລະດັບ ຂອງການປະກອບສ່ວນ ຢູ່ໃນຮູບແບບການຈັດສັນປ່າໄມ້ ຮູບແບບຕ່າງໆທີ່ໄດ້ນຳໃຊ້ກັນ. ບົດລາຍງານສະບັບນີ້ ໄດ້ຂຽນຂຶ້ນ ເພື່ອສະແດງໃຫ້ເຫັນພາບລວມຂອງການລິເລີ້ມຕ່າງໆ ກ່ຽວກັບການຄຸ້ມຄອງປ່າໄມ້ ແບບມີສ່ວນຮ່ວມ ຂອງປະຊາຊົນທ້ອງຖິ່ນ; ເພື່ອວິເຄາະບັນດາບົດຮຽນ ແລະ ປະສົບການ; ບັນດາສິ່ງທ້າທາຍ ແລະ ໂອກາດ ທີ່ກ່ຽວຂ້ອງຕ່າງໆ ພ້ອມທັງ ນຳສະເໜີຂໍ້ສະເໜີແນະ ເພື່ອເປັນແນວທາງໃນການດຳເນີນການ

ໃນຕໍ່ໜ້າ. ບົດລາຍງານນີ້ ສາມາດທີ່ຈະນຳເອົາໄປໃຊ້ ເປັນແນວທາງໃນການພັດທະນາ ໂຄງການຄຸ້ມຄອງຈັດສັນປ່າໄມ້ແບບມີສ່ວນຮ່ວມຂອງປະຊາຊົນ ຢູ່ພາຍໃນປະເທດ ກໍຄື ຢູ່ໃນປະເທດອື່ນໆ ຢູ່ໃນພາກພື້ນ.

ພາບລວມຂອງປະເພດຂອງການຈັດສັນປ່າໄມ້:

ບົດລາຍງານສະບັບນີ້ ໄດ້ໃຊ້ແຍກໃຫ້ເຫັນເຖິງ ຄວາມແຕກຕ່າງ ລະຫວ່າງ ວິທີການຄຸ້ມຄອງປ່າໄມ້ ໃນຮູບແບບຕ່າງໆ ອີງຕາມ *ລະດັບການມີສ່ວນຮ່ວມຂອງຊາວບ້ານ ໃນການຄຸ້ມຄອງປ່າໄມ້.* ນອກນັ້ນ, ກໍຍັງໄດ້ເບິ່ງບນດາປດໄຈທີ່ກ່ຽວຂ້ອງຕ່າງໆອີກ ເພີ້ມເຕີມ ເຊ່ນ: ປະເພດຂອງຄວາມເປນເຈົ້າການ, ໜ້າທີ່ຂອງປ່າໄມ້, ການແບ່ງປນໜ້າທີ່ ແລະ ຄວາມຮບຜິດຊອບ ລະຫວ່າງຜູ້ມີສ່ວນຮ່ວມຕ່າງໆ ພ້ອມທງລະບົບການແບ່ງປນຜົນປະໂຫຍດ. ຈາກບນດາມາດຖານ ແລະ ປດໄຈຕ່າງໆ ທີ່ກ່າວມາຂ້າງເທິງ ບົດລາຍງານສະບບນີ້ ໄດ້ຈຳແນກ ການຈດສນປ່າໄມ້ ໃນ ສປປ ລາວ ອອກເປນຫຼາຍປະເພດ ດ່ງນີ້: (1) ການຈດສນປ່າໄມ້ແບບມີສ່ວນຮ່ວມຂອງປະຊາຊົນ; (2) ການຈດສນປ່າໄມ້ຮ່ວມການ; (3) ລະບົບການຈດສນປ່າໄມ້ແບບພື້ນບ້ານ; (4) ການຈດສນ ປ່າໄມ້ແບບມີສ່ວນຮ່ວມເພື່ອການທ່ອງທ່ຽວທຳມະຊາດ; (5) ການປູກໄມ້ລະດບຄອບຄົວ; ແລະ (6) ການປູກໄມ້ແບບອຸດສາຫະກຳ. ນອກຈາກນັ້ນ, ໃນແຕ່ລະປະເພດການຈດສນປ່າໄມ້ ເຫຼ່ານີ້ ກໍຍງ ໄດ້ສະເໜີໃຫ້ເຫນພາບລວມຂອງແຕ່ລະຮູບແບບການຈດສນ ເຊ່ນ: ຮູບແບບທີ່ປະຕິບດການ ໃນໂຄງການຈດສນປ່າຜະລິດແລະອະນຸລກປ່າໄມ້ (FOMACOP), ຮູບແບບຂອງ ໂຄງການ ຮ່ວມມືປ່າໄມ້ ລາວ-ຊູແອດ (LSFP), ໂຄງການຈດສນປ່າໄມ້ ແລະ ພດທະນາຊົນນະບົດ ແບບຍືນນານ (SUFORD), ແລະ ອື່ນໆ ແລະ ພ້ອມນີ້ ກໍຍງໄດ້ ວິເຄາະອົງປະກອບຫຼັກໆຂອງ ແຕ່ລະຮູບແບບ ທາງດ້ານ ຕ້ງໜ້າ, ດ້ານຫຍໍ້ທໍ້, ແລະ ບົດຮຽນທີ່ຖອດຖອນໄດ້ ກ່ຽວກບ ການມີສ່ວນຮ່ວມ.

ບນດານະໂຍບາຍ, ກົດໝາຍ, ລະບຽບການ ແລະ ຂໍ້ແນະນຳ ກ່ຽວກບ ການຄຸ້ມຄອງປ່າໄມ້ ແບບມີສ່ວນຮ່ວມ:

ດ່ງທີ່ໄດ້ກ່າວໄວ້ແລ້ວວ່າ ແຜນການດຳເນີນງານປ່າໄມ້ແຫ່ງຊາດ ເປນຄວາມ ພະຍາຍາມອນທຳອິດ ຂອງລດຖະບານ ແຫ່ງ ສປປ ລາວ ໃນການດຶງດູດເອົາ ປະຊາຊົນທ້ອງຖິ່ນ ເຂົ້າມາຮ່ວມ ໃນການຄຸ້ມຄອງປ່າໄມ້. ພ້ອມນີ້ ກໍມີເຄື່ອງມືທາງນິຕິກຳຫຼາຍຢ່າງ ໄດ້ຖືກສ້າງຂຶ້ນ ເພື່ອເປນກອບ ທາງດ້ານກົດໝາຍ ສຳລບຈດຕ້ງປະຕິບດແຜນວຽກຕ່າງໆ ທີ່ໄດ້ກຳນົດໄວ້ຢູ່ໃນ ແຜນການດຳເນີນງານ ທີ່ກ່າວ. ເຄື່ອງມືນທາງນິຕິກຳ ທີ່ມີຄວາມກ່ຽວຂ້ອງທີ່ສຸດ ກບການເຂົ້າຮ່ວມ ຂອງປະຊາຊົນ, ລວມມີ ດຳລດສະພາລດຖະມົນຕີ ເລກທີ 117 (1969); ດຳລດນາຍົກລດຖະມົນຕີ ເລກທີ 169 (1993); ດຳລດນາຍົກລະຖະມົນຕີ ເລກທີ 186 (1994); ແລະ ກົດໝາຍປ່າໄມ້ (1996). ລາຍການ ເຄື່ອງມືທາງນິຕິກຳເຫຼ່ານີ້ ພ້ອມດ້ວຍ ເຄື່ອງມືອນສຳຄນອື່ນໆ ທີ່ສ່ງເສີມການເຂົ້າຮ່ວມ ຂອງປະຊາຊົນ ໃນການຈດສນປ່າໄມ້ ກໍໄດ້ນຳສະເໜີໄວ້ ໃນບົດລາຍງານສະບບນີ້.

ຍຸດທະສາດ ວ່າດ້ວຍການເຕີບໂຕ ແລະ ລຶບລ້າງຄວາມທຸກຍາກແຫ່ງຊາດ (NGPES) ໄດ້ເນ້ນ ໃຫ້ເຫນເຖິງຄວາມສຳຄນຂອງຊບພະຍາກອນປ່າໄມ້ ຕ່ການລຶບລ້າງຄວາມທຸກຍາກ ແລະ ໄດ້ຊີ້

ໃຫ້ເຫນເຖິງຄວາມຈຳເປນຂອງການເຂົ້າຮ່ວມຂອງປະຊາຊົນ ໃນຂະບວນການວາງແຜນການ ແລະ ການຄຸ້ມຄອງຊບພະຍາກອນສິ່ງແວດລ້ອມ ກໍຄື ການອະນຸລກ ແລະ ປກປກຮກສາ ວດທະນະທຳ ຂອງລາວ. ນອກຈາກນ້ນ, ຍຸດທະສາດປ່າໄມ້ ຮອດປີ 2020 ທີ່ໄດ້ຮບການຮບຮອງເອົາ ໃນປີ 2005 ກໍໄດ້ຖະແຫຼງເຖິງຄວາມສຳຄນ ແລະ ຄວາມຈຳເປນ ຂອງຊບພະຍາກອນປ່າໄມ້ ຕໍ່ການປບປຸງ ຊີວິດການເປນຢູ່ ໃນທ້ອງຖິ່ນ.

ຢ່າງໃດກໍຕາມ, ເຖິງວ່າ ລດຖະບານລາວ ຈະມີນະໂຍບາຍ ແລະ ໄດ້ທຸ້ມເທຄວາມພະຍາຍາມ ໃນການພດທະນາກອບນິຕິກຳ ເພື່ອເປນເຄື່ອງມືຊຸກຍູ້ ແລະ ເອື້ອອຳນວຍແກ່ການຈດສນປ່າໄມ້ ແບບ ມີສ່ວນຮ່ວມຂອງປະຊາຊົນ ຢ່າງຕ້ງໜ້າແລ້ວກໍຕາມ, ແຕ່ບົດລາຍງານສະບບນີ້ ກໍຍງໄດ້ຊີ້ໃຫ້ເຫນເຖິງ ດ້ານຫຍໍ້ທໍ້ໃນວງການນີ້ອີກຕື່ມ. ຍົກຕົວຢ່າງ, ກົດໝາຍປ່າໄມ້ ໄດ້ເປີດໂອກາດແບບຈຳກດ ໃຫ້ປະຊາຊົນ ເຂົ້າມາຮ່ວມໃນການຈດສນປ່າໄມ້ ແລະ ຍງບໍ່ຮບປະກນສິດທິຕາມກົດໝາຍ ຫຼື ຮບປະກນການສະໜອງສິ່ງກະຕຸກຊຸກຍູ້ຢ່າງພຽງພໍ ໃຫ້ແກ່ປະຊາຊົນຜູ້ເຂົ້າຮ່ວມ, ໂດຍສະເພາະ ແມ່ນໃນການຈດສນປ່າຜະລິດ (ທະນາຄານໂລກ, 2003). ນອກຈາກນ້ນ, ບນດາກົດໝາຍ ແລະ ລະບຽບການຕ່າງໆ ກໍຍງບໍ່ມີບນຍດ ກ່ຽວກບ ການຫນປ່ຽນສະພາບ ຂອງ ປ່າໄມ້ບ້ານ, ເຊ່ນຕົວຢ່າງ: ບນດາລະບຽບການ ກ່ຽວກບ ຂະບວນການທົດແທນຄືນ ຕໍ່ຊາວບ້ານ ໃນກໍລະນີເຂົາເຈ້ົາສູນເສຍສິດທິ ໃນການນຳໃຊ້. ສ່ວນຂໍ້ຫຍໍ້ທໍ້ອື່ນໆທີ່ມີລກສະນະລວມ ທີ່ໄດ້ກຳນົດໄວ້ ໃນບົດລາຍງານ ສະບບນີ້ ປະກອບມີ:

- ການເຜີຍແຜ່ຂໍ້ມູນຂ່າວສານ ກ່ຽວກບລະບຽບການໃໝ່ ຍງບໍ່ທົ່ວເຖິງ. ການນຳໃຊ້ ລະບຽບ ການທີ່ມີຢູ່ ມກມີຄວາມສບສົນ ໂດຍບໍ່ຮູ້ວ່າ ລະບຽບການໃດ ໝົດອາຍຸການບງຄບໃຊ້ ໄປແລ້ວ ແລະ ໄດ້ເອົາອນໃດມາປ່ຽນແທນພວກມນ.
- ການເຜີຍແຜ່ກົດໝາຍ, ລະບຽບການ ແລະ ຂໍ້ກຳນົດຕ່າງໆ ໄດ້ນຳໃຊ້ວິທີການ ແບບເທິງ ລົງລຸ່ມ ຕາມສາຍຕ້ງ ຜ່ານອຳນາດການບໍລິຫານຂອງລດ ແລະ ພະນກງານບໍລິຫານລດ ຂ້ນຕ່ຳ ສ່ວນໃຫຍ່ ບໍ່ມີເອກະສານນິຕິກຳໄວ້ໃຊ້ອ້າງອີງ.
- ຂາດພະນກງານ ແລະ ອົງກອນຊຸກຍູ້ດ້ານການບງຄບໃຊ້ກົດໝາຍ, ລະບຽບການ ແລະ ຂໍ້ກຳນົດຕ່າງໆ, ພ້ອມທງຂາດລະບົບ ແລະ ກົນໄກການກວດກາຕິດຕາມການບງຄບໃຊ້.

ສະຖາບນການຈດຕ້ ງ:
ບົດລາຍງານສະບບນີ້ ໄດ້ສະເໜີພາບລວມ ຂອງສະຖາບນການຈດຕ້ງລດຫຼກໆ ທີ່ມີ ໜ້າທີ່ ຮບຜິດຊອບ ໃນການຈດສນປ່າໄມ້ແບບມີສ່ວນຮ່ວມ, ຊຶ່ງລວມມີທງ ອົງກອນຂອງລດ, ສະຖາບນຄົ້ນຄ້ວາ ແລະ ສະຖາບນການສຶກສາ, ບ້ານ, ອົງກອນທາງສງຄົມ, ບນດາເຄືອຂ່າຍ ແລະ ສະມາຄົມ, ພາກເອກະຊົນ ແລະ ຜູ້ໃຫ້ທຶນ ເປນຕ້ົນ.

ຜົນສຳເລດຕ້ົນຕໍ:
ນຶ່ງໃນຈຳນວນຜົນສຳເລດຕ້ົນຕໍ ທີ່ໄດ້ກ່າວໄວ້ ໃນບົດລາຍງານສະບບນີ້ ແມ່ນ ຄວາມສຳເລດ ໃນການພດທະນາ ແລະ ທົດສອບ ຫຼາຍຮູບແບບການຈດສນປ່າໄມ້ແບບມີສ່ວນຮ່ວມຂອງ ປະຊາຊົນ ໃນຫຼາຍສະພາບເງື່ອນໄຂ ແລະ ປະເພດຂອງປ່າ, ໃນຫຼາຍຂະໜາດ ຂອງການດຳເນີນງານ ແລະ

ຫຼາຍສະພາບເສດຖະກິດສງຄົມ. ຜົນສຳເລດເຫຼົ່ານີ້, ໄດ້ເປນສິ່ງສະໜອງ ທາງເລືອກອນຫຼາກຫຼາຍ ກ່ຽວກບ ຮູບແບບການຈດສນປ່າໄມ້ ທີ່ສາມາດຈະນຳເອົາໄປໃຊ້ໃນການຈດສນປ່າໄມ້ແບບຍືນຍົງໄດ້. ໃນຈຳນວນນີ້, ມີບາງຮູບແບບ ໂດຍສະເພາະບນດາຮູບແບບທີ່ໄດ້ພດທະນາຂຶ້ນມາ ສຳລບ ປ່າຜະລິດ ຂອງລດ ແມ່ນໄດ້ນບມື້ນບຖືກຍອມຮບເພີ້ມຂຶ້ນ ວ່າເປນຮູບແບບການຈດສນປ່າໄມ້ທີ່ມີຄວາມເໝາະສົມ ແລະ ກໍໄດ້ຖືການນຳເອົາໄປໃຊ້ຈດຕ້ງຜນຂະຫຍາຍນບມື້ນບກວ້າງຂວາງຂຶ້ນ.

ສ່ວນຜົນສຳເລດອື່ນໆ ທີ່ໄດ້ກ່າວໄວ້ໃນບົດລາຍງານສະບບນີ້ ນ້ນກໍຄື ລະບົບການຈດສນ ປ່າໄມ້ແບບມີສ່ວນຮ່ວມ ໄດ້ສ້າງພື້ນຖານອນດີ ໃຫ້ແກ່ວງການພດທະນາຊົນນະບົດ ກໍຄື ການປບປຸງຊີວິດ ການເປນຢູ່ໃຫ້ແກ່ປະຊາຊົນທ້ອງຖິ່ນ ແລະ ພ້ອມການນີ້ ກໍຍງ ໄດ້ສ້າງຄວາມສາມາດ ແລະ ເສີມສ້າງຄວາມເປນເຈົ້າໃຫ້ແກ່ທ້ອງຖິ່ນ ຕາມນະໂຍບາຍກະຈາຍຄວາມຮບຜິດຊອບ ລົງສູ່ ທ້ອງຖິ່ນຂອງລດຖະບານ. ນອກເໜືອໄປກວ່ານ້ນ, ໂຄງການຈດສນປ່າໄມ້ ແບບມີສ່ວນຮ່ວມ ຂອງປະຊາຊົນທ້ອງຖິ່ນ ຍງໄດ້ຊ່ວຍສ້າງຈິດສຳນຶກ ກ່ຽວກບຄວາມສຳຄນຂອງໜ້າທີ່ ແລະ ຄຸນຄ່າ ຂອງ ປ່າໄມ້. ຜ່ານການເຂົ້າຮ່ວມໃນການຈດສນປ່າໄມ້ແບບມີສ່ວນຮ່ວມ, ປະຊາຊົນທ້ອງຖິ່ນ ໄດ້ເສີມ ຂະຫຍາຍຄວາມເປນເຈົ້າຂອງຕົນເອງ ໂດຍຜ່ານຂະບວນການພດທະນາສະຖາບນການຈດຕ້ງ ທ້ອງຖິ່ນ ເຊ່ນ: ສະມາຄົມປ່າໄມ້ບ້ານ ທີ່ໄດ້ສ້າງຂຶ້ນ ເພື່ອເອື້ອອຳນວຍ ໃຫ້ແກ່ການຄຸ້ມຄອງ ແລະ ແບ່ງປນຜົນປະໂຫຍດ ຈາກການຈດສນຊບພະຍາກອນປ່າໄມ້.

ບົດຮຽນທີ່ຖອດຖອນໄດ້

ບົດລາຍງານສະບບນີ້ ໄດ້ຍົກໃຫ້ເຫນ ບາງບົດຮຽນທີ່ຖອດຖອນໄດ້ ຈາກການພດທະນາ ແລະ ຈດຕ້ງປະຕິບດ ລະບົບການຈດສນປ່າໄມ້ຮ່ວມ ດ່ງນີ້:

- ການນຳເອົາປະຊາຊົນເຂົ້າມາຮ່ວມໃນການຈດສນປ່າໄມ້ ເປນຂະບວນການຮຽນຮູ້ ທີ່ຍືດເຍື້ອ ແລະ ກ່ຽວຂ້ອງກບຫຼາຍສາຂາວິຊາ ສະນ້ນ ການຊຸກຍູ້ຈາກລດຖະບານຢ່າງຕ່ເນື່ອງ ຈ່ງເປນ ສິ່ງຈຳເປນ;
- ລະດບຂອງການເຂົ້າຮ່ວມເປນປດໃຈຫຼກ ທີ່ມີຜົນກະທົບຕ່ການປະກອບສ່ວນ ຂອງປະຊາຊົນ ໃນການຈດສນປ່າໄມ້, ແຕ່ບ່ສາມາດຮບປະກນດ້ານການຍອມຮບຂອງສງຄົມ. ຄວາມມກ ຄວາມຊອບຂອງຜູ້ທີ່ເຂົ້າຮ່ວມ ແລະ ປະເພດຂອງຊບພະຍາກອນ ມີຜົນຕດສິນ ຕ່ຂອບເຂດ ແລະ ຂະໜາດ ຂອງການນຳເອົາຮູບແບບໄປນຳໃຊ້. ຕົວຢ່າງ: ໃນປະຈຸບນ, ການຈດສນປ່າໄມ້ ແບບເອົາ ປະຊາຊົນເຂົ້າມາຮ່ວມ (Collaborative Forest Management) ຈະໄດ້ຮບການຮບຮູ້ດີກວ່າ ການຈດສນປ່າໄມ້ຮ່ວມກນ ລະຫວ່າງ ລດ ແລະ ປະຊາຊົນ (Participatory Forest Management) ໂດຍບ່ກ່ຽວວ່າ ລະດບຂອງການ ເຂົ້າຮ່ວມຈະຢູ່ລະດບໃດ.
- ຄວາມຄືບໜ້າຂອງການຜນຂະຫຍາຍການນຳໃຊ້ຮູບແບບການຈດສນປ່າໄມ້ຮ່ວມ ຍງຊກຊ້າ ຍ້ອນຫຼາຍເຫດຜົນ, ຊ່ງໃນນ້ນ ລວມມີ ການຂາດງົບປະມານ ແລະ ບຸກຄະລາກອນ; ການຂາດເຄື່ອງມືທາງນິຕິກຳເພື່ອຊຸກຍູ້, ການບງຄບໃຊ້ລະບຽບກົດໝາຍຍງອ່ອນ ຊ່ງ ເປນຜົນມາຈາກ ຄວາມຂາດການສະໜບສະໜູນຊຸກຍູ້ ທາງດ້ານນິຕິໄນ ແລະ ດ້ານການຈດຕ້ງ; ການເຜີຍແຜ່ລະບຽບກົດໝາຍ ບ່ມີປະສິດ ທິຜົນສູງ, ແລະ ອື່ນໆ.

ປດໃຈອີກອນນຶ່ງ ແມ່ນ ແມ່ນການຂາດຂໍ້ແນະນຳ ດ້ານວິຊາການ ສຳລບ ການຈດຕ້ງ ປະຕິບດໃນຕົວຈິງ.

- ການຂະຫຍາຍການຈດຕ້ງປະຕິບດການຈດສນປ່າໄມ້ແບບມີສ່ວນຮ່ວມຂອງປະຊາຊົນທ້ອງຖິ່ນ ສ່ວນໃຫຍ່ ແມ່ນ ໄດ້ຈດຕ້ງປະຕິບດຜ່ານໂຄງການຊ່ວຍເຫຼືອຈາກອົງການຜູ້ໃຫ້ທຶນ ແລະ ຍງບໍ່ທນໄດ້ຖືກຈດເຂົ້າມາຈດຕ້ງປະຕິບດ ຢູ່ໃນລະບົບບໍລິຫານຂອງລດຖະບານ ຢ່າງ ເຕມສ່ວນ. ເຖິງວ່າ ວງກງານຈດສນປ່າໄມ້ແບບມີສ່ວນຮ່ວມ ຈະມີທ່າທີນບມື້ນບເພີ່ມຂຶ້ນ ກໍຕາມ ແຕ່ຍງບໍ່ທນໄດ້ມີການຈດຕ້ງຮອງຮບທີ່ແທ້ຈິງ ແລະ ການແບ່ງບົດບາດໜ້າທີ່ ລະຫວ່າງບນດາຜູ້ມີສ່ວນຮ່ວມຕ່າງໆ ກຍງບໍ່ທນຈະແຈ້ງ. ດ່ງນ້ນ, ຖ້າຢາກຂະຫຍາຍ ການນຳໃຊ້ ລະບົບການຈດສນປ່າໄມ້ແບບມີສ່ວນຮ່ວມຂອງປະຊາຊົນ ອອກໄປສູ່ວົງກ້ວາງໄດ້ ມີຄວາມຈຳເປນ ຕ້ອງໄດ້ນຳເອົາຮູບແບບທາງໜີດມາຈດເຂົ້າການ ແລະ ຈດຕ້ງປະຕິບດ ແບບເປນລະບົບ.
- ລະບົບການຈດສນປ່າໄມ້ຍງບໍ່ທນມີລກສະນະເຊື່ອມໂຍງ ເຂົ້າກບ ລະບົບການນຳໃຊ້ທີ່ດິນ ລວມ. ດ່ງນ້ນ, ຈຳເປນຕ້ອງໄດ້ມີລະບົບການວາງແຜນການແບບປະສົມປະສານ ກົມກຽວກນ ລະຫວ່າງ ລະບົບການຈດສນປ່າໄມ້ແບບມີສ່ວນຮ່ວມ ແລະ ລະບົບການນຳໃຊ້ທີ່ດິນ.
- ການສ້າງຈິດສຳນຶກ ເປນສ່ວນປະກອບອນສຳຄນ ຂອງໂຄງການ ເພື່ອຮບປະກນໃຫ້ເກີດ ມີຄວາມຕ່ເນື່ອງ ຂອງ ການນຳໃຊ້ ລະບົບການຈດສນປ່າໄມ້ແບບມີສ່ວນຮ່ວມ ຂອງປະຊາຊົນທ້ອງຖິ່ນ;
- ການນຳພາໃນທ້ອງຖິ່ນ ເປນປດໃຈຕດສິນ ຜົນສຳເລດ ຂອງການຈດສນປ່າໄມ້ ແບບມີສ່ວນຮ່ວມ ຂອງປະຊາຊົນທ້ອງຖິ່ນ.

ສິ່ງທ້າທາຍ:

ນຶ່ງໃນຈຳນວນສິ່ງທ້າທາຍທີ່ຍົກໃຫ້ເຫນໃນບົດລາຍງານສະບບນີ້ ແມ່ນ ການຄດຈ້ອນ ສງລວມ ແລະ ນຳເອົາບນດາບົດຮຽນທີ່ຖອດຖອນມາໄດ້ ຈາກການຈດຕ້ງປະຕິບດ ລະບົບການຈດສນປ່າໄມ້ ແບບມີສ່ວນຮ່ວມທີ່ມີໃນປະຈຸບນ ມາຈດເຂົ້າການເປນລະບົບ ແລະ ປະກາດໃຊ້ ເປນທາງການ ເພື່ອເລ່ງລດການຜນຂະຫຍາຍສູ່ວົງກ້ວາງ ໄປຍງພື້ນທີ່ອື່ນໆ ແຕ່ ພ້ອມດງ່ວກນນີ້ ບນດາ ພາກສ່ວນ ທີ່ມີສ່ວນຮ່ວມທງໜີດ ກໍຕ້ອງໄດ້ອອກແຮງເອົາໃຈໃສ່ ຜນຂະຫຍາຍຮ່ວມການຢ່າງຈິງຈງ. ສິ່ງທ້າທາຍ ອີກຢ່າງນຶ່ງນ້ນ ແມ່ນ ການສ້າງໃຫ້ທ້ອງຖິ່ນມີຄວາມເຂ້ມແຂງ ໃນການຄຸ້ມຄອງຊບພະຍາກອນ ທຳມະຊາດແບບກະຈາຍຄວາມຮບຜິດຊອບລົງສູ່ທ້ອງຖິ່ນ. ແຕ່ການຈດສນກຳລງຄົນລົງສູ່ຮາກຖານ ໃຫ້ໄດ້ຕາມທີ່ຕ້ອງການ ພດຈຳເປນຕ້ອງມີຄວາມເປນເຈົ້າການຢ່າງຈິງຈງ ແລະ ກໍມີງົບປະມານພງພໍ. ສິ່ງທ້າທາຍອນສຸດທ້າຍນ້ນເປນສິ່ງທ້າທາຍທີ່ກ່ງວຂ້ອງກບລະບຽບກົດໝາຍ ຊຶ່ງໃນນ້ນ ກໍໄດ້ຕະໜກວ່າ ການສ້າງເຄື່ອງມືທາງກົດໝາຍອນລະອຽດນ້ນ ເປນວງກທີ່ຫຍຸ້ງຍາກ ແຕ່ ຄວາມສາມາດໃນການຈດ ຕ້ງປະຕິບດ ແລະ ການເຜີຍແຜ່ ພດຍິ່ງເປນວງກທີ່ທ້າທາຍກວ່າ.

ຂໍ້ ສະເໜີ ແນະ:

ບົນພື້ນຖານບົດຮຽນ ແລະ ສິ່ງທ້າທາຍຕ່າງໆ ດັ່ງທີ່ກ່າວມາຂ້າງເທິງ, ໄດ້ສະເໜີແນະ ການດຳເນີນການຕົ້ນຕໍ ບາງຢ່າງດັ່ງນີ້:

- ການກຳນົດເຂດແດນຂອງຊັບພະຍາກອນທີ່ຈະແຈ້ງ ເປັນສິ່ງຈຳເປັນສຳລັບ ການຈັດສັນ ປ່າໄມ້ແບບຍືນຍົງ. ດັ່ງນັ້ນ, ລັດຖະບານ ຄວນເອົາໃຈໃສ່ ແລະ ຮັບປະກັນເຮັດໃຫ້ມີ ການສືບຕໍ່ຈັດຕັ້ງປະຕິບັດການວາງແຜນນຳໃຊ້ທີ່ດິນ ແລະ ມອບດິນມອບປ່າແບບມີສ່ວນຮ່ວມ ໃຫ້ສຳເລັດຢູ່ໃນຂອບເຂດທົ່ວປະເທດ.
- ເລັ່ງມືດຳເນີນການຄັດຈ້ອນ ແລະ ສັງລວມຮູບແບບການຈັດສັນປ່າໄມ້ແບບມີສ່ວນຮ່ວມ ສຳລັບ ວຽກງານຄຸ້ມຄອງປ່າສະຫງວນແຫ່ງຊາດ, ພ້ອມທັງ ສ້າງແຜນການດຳເນີນງານ ແລະ ຈັດຕັ້ງປະຕິບັດແຜນການດັ່ງກ່າວ ໃນທັນທີ. ພ້ອມກັນນັ້ນ, ຄວນພິຈາລະນາ ສອດ ໂຄງການສ້າງລາຍຮັບຈາກການອະນຸລັກປ່າໄມ້ ເຊັ່ນ: ໂຄງການທ່ອງທ່ຽວທຳມະຊາດ ເຂົ້າໃນແຜນການຄຸ້ມຄອງປ່າສະຫງວນແຫ່ງຊາດນຳດ້ວຍ.
- ສະຖາບັນຄົ້ນຄ້ວາກະສິກຳ ແລະ ປ່າໄມ້ ຄວນເປັນຜູ້ນຳໜ້າ ຮັບຜິດຊອບສັງລວມ ແລະ ຄັດຈ້ອນ ບັນດາບົດຮຽນ ແລະ ປະສົບການໃນການຄຸ້ມຄອງປ່າໄມ້ປະເພດອື່ນໆ (ເຊັ່ນ: ປ່າໄມ້ຂອງບ້ານ, ປ່າປ້ອງກັນ, ฯลฯ) ທີ່ມີຢູ່ ແລະ ເລັ່ງລັດຂະບວນການ ເພື່ອປະກາດໃຊ້ ລະບົບການຈັດສັນປ່າໄມ້ ແບບມີສ່ວນຮ່ວມໃຫ້ເປັນທາງການ.
- ເພື່ອຊຸກຍູ້ການຂັນຂະຫຍາຍການນຳໃຊ້ລະບົບການຈັດສັນປ່າໄມ້ແບບມີສ່ວນຮ່ວມອອກສູ່ວົງ ກ້ວາງ ມີຄວາມຈຳເປັນຕ້ອງໄດ້ປັບປຸງ ລະບຽບກົດ ໝາຍຫຼາຍຢ່າງ, ຊຶ່ງລວມມີ:
  - ສ້າງ ແລະ ປະກາດໃຊ້ ລະບຽບການວ່າດ້ວຍຄຸ້ມຄອງປ່າປ້ອງກັນ ແລະ ປ່າຟື້ນຟູ ໃນລະດັບກະຊວງກະສິກຳ ແລະ ປ່າໄມ້;
  - ຂະຫຍາຍຄວາມໃຫ້ກະຈ່າງແຈ້ງຕື່ມ ກ່ຽວກັບ ນິຍາມ ແລະ ສະຖານະພາບ ຂອງ ປ່າໄມ້ບ້ານ ຢູ່ໃນກົດ ໝາຍປ່າໄມ້;
  - ສ້າງຂໍ້ແນະນຳດ້ານເຕັກນິກ ເພື່ອຈັດຕັ້ງປະຕິບັດ ດຳລັດ ແລະ ລະບຽບການ ຕ່າງໆ ເຊັ່ນ: ດຳລັດນາຍົກລັດຖະມຸນຕີ ສະບັບເລກທີ 59/ນຍ (2003) ແລະ ລະບຽບການຂອງກະຊວງກະສິກຳ ແລະ ປ່າໄມ້ ສະບັບເລກທີ 0204/ກປ (2003);
  - ປັບປຸງການເຜີຍແຜ່ລະບຽບກົດ ໝາຍໃຫ້ແກ່ບັນດາພາກສ່ວນທີ່ມີສ່ວນຮ່ວມໃຫ້ທົ່ວເຖິງ
  - ເຮັດໃຫ້ບັນດາລະບຽບການ ກ່ຽວກັບ ການຄຸ້ມຄອງສວນປູກໄມ້ ເລີ້ມແຕ່ຂອດ ການປູກ ໄປເຖິງ ການຂຸດຄົ້ນ, ການຂົນສົ່ງ ແລະ ການສົ່ງອອກ ໃຫ້ມີຄວາມກະທັດຮັດ ສາມາດເຂົ້າໃຈໄດ້ງ່າຍຂຶ້ນ;
  - ສ້າງຫຼັກການ ແລະ ຂັ້ນຕອນ ເພື່ອປ່ຽນສະຖານະພາບ ຂອງໃບຢັ້ງຢືນ ການນຳໃຊ້ທີ່ດິນຊົ່ວຄາວ ໄປເປັນ ກຳມະສິດໄລຍະຍາວ ໂດຍທີ່ບໍ່ໃຫ້ມີຜົນກະທົບ ຕໍ່ຜູ້ຖືຄອງດິນຂະໜາດນ້ອຍ;
  - ສ້າງກອບນິຕິກຳ ກວມເອົາຂົງເຂດ ທີ່ດິນ ແລະ ປ່າໄມ້ຂອງບ້ານ ເພື່ອເອື້ອອຳນວຍ ໃຫ້ແກ່ ການຄຸ້ມຄອງປ່າໄມ້ແບບມີສ່ວນຮ່ວມ ຂອງປະຊາຊົນທ້ອງຖິ່ນ ທີ່ມີ ປະສິດທິຜົນສູງ, ຊຶ່ງລວມເອົາທັງ ການວາງແຜນນຳໃຊ້ທີ່ດິນແບບມີສ່ວນຮ່ວມ

ໃນລະດັບບ້ານ ທີ່ມີຄວາມ ສອດຄ່ອງກັບ ສະພາບຂອງການນຳໃຊ້ທີ່ດິນ ແລະ ປ່າໄມ້ ໃນຕົວຈິງ;

- ຈັດຝຶກອົບຮົມໃຫ້ແກ່ ພະນັກງານທີ່ກ່ຽວຂ້ອງ ຂອງກະຊວງກະສິກຳ ແລະ ປ່າໄມ້ ດ້ານການຮ່າງເອກະສານນິຕິກຳ ລວມທັງການຈັດຕັ້ງປະຕິບັດພວກມັນ;
- ສ້າງຕັ້ງຄະນະກຳມະການ ຫຼື ທີມງານສະເພາະ ສຳລັບແຕ່ລະຂົງເຂດວຽກງານ ໃນຂະແໜງການປ່າໄມ້ ເພື່ອເຂົ້າຮ່ວມ ໃນການປຶກສາຫາລື ຫຼື ເຂົ້າຮ່ວມໃນທີມງານ ທີ່ປະກອບດ້ວຍ ສະມາຊິກຈາກຫຼາຍພາກສ່ວນ ແລະ ສາຂາວິຊາ ເພື່ອຮ່າງ ລະບຽບການທີ່ສຳຄັນຕ່າງໆ;

- ໃຫ້ບູລິມະສິດແກ່ວຽກງານການສ້າງຄວາມເຂັ້ມແຂງຢູ່ໃນທຸກລະດັບ, ໂດຍໃນນັ້ນ ໃຫ້ເນັ້ນໃສ່ເປັນພິເສດໃນດ້ານຕ່າງໆ ດັ່ງລຸ່ມນີ້:
  - ສ້າງຄວາມເຂັ້ມແຂງໃຫ້ແກ່ ຫ້ອງການສິ່ງເສີມກະສິກຳ ແລະ ປ່າໄມ້ເມືອງ ພ້ອມທັງ ຊາວບ້ານຜູ້ເຂົ້າຮ່ວມ ໃນທຸກດ້ານທີ່ກ່ຽວຂ້ອງ;
  - ຈັດຫາ ແລະ ສະໜອງງົບປະມານຢ່າງພຽງພໍໃຫ້ແກ່ວຽກງານຈັດສັນປ່າໄມ້ ແບບມີສ່ວນຮ່ວມ;
  - ສ້າງຕັ້ງລະບົບການເງິນຂະໜາດນ້ອຍ ເພື່ອເປັນພື້ນຖານໃນການເພິ່ງຕົນເອງ ຂອງ ທ້ອງຖິ່ນ ໃນໄລຍຍາວ;
  - ສະໜອງການຝຶກອົບຮົມໃຫ້ແກ່ບ້ານທີ່ເຂົ້າຮ່ວມ ກ່ຽວກັບການວາງແຜນນຳໃຊ້ທີ່ດິນ ແລະ ຄຸ້ມຄອງຊັບພະຍາກອນປ່າໄມ້ທີ່ຍືນນານແບບມີສ່ວນຮ່ວມ;
- ສ້າງກົນໄກສຳລັບການແລກປ່ຽນຂໍ້ມູນຂ່າວສານ ລະຫວ່າງຜູ້ມີສ່ວນຮ່ວມໃນທຸກລະດັບ ກໍຄື ການແລກປ່ຽນ ລະຫວ່າງ ບັນດາຜູ້ມີສ່ວນຮ່ວມໃນລະດັບດຽວກັນ ເພື່ອຊຸກຍູ້ ການຈັດຕັ້ງ ປະຕິບັດລະບົບການຈັດສັນປ່າໄມ້ ແບບມີສ່ວນຮ່ວມ ໃນລະດັບພາກສະໜາມຕົວຈິງ.
- ນຳໃຊ້ວິທີການວາງແຜນການແບບປະສົມປະສານຮອບດ້ານ

1. Introduction

Community Based Forestry Management (CBFM) approaches have been developed, tested and applied in a number of countries and contexts around the world in the last three decades. As a result, examples of tools and methods for successfully implementing community based forestry have been made available for further development and replication to fit into contextually specific conditions.

In Lao PDR, CBFM was not known until the early 1990s. Forest management practices in the past were performed in conventional ways with very limited community participation. This contributed to rapid forest degradation. The new era of forest management in the Lao forests started in 1989 as the First National Forestry Conference declared the new forest policy direction toward sustainable forest management in which the government officially recognized the need for community involvement. It was the entry point for CBFM in Lao PDR.

Within two decades a number of CBFM models were developed, tested and applied in different forest and socio-economic conditions in the country and thereby various lessons and experiences were gained. However, these experiences seem not be well documented, exchanged, coordinated, and promoted widely. In particular, extent and modes of community participation in forest management have not been well analyzed; applicability and suitability of each model for specific contextual situations not been evaluated; and their strengths and weaknesses not been identified. For further development and replication, these kinds of information are deemed necessary.

Thus, a desk study under collaborative framework between NAFRI and RECOFTC was conducted. The main purpose of the study was to develop a status report on community contribution to forest resource management for Lao PDR that can be used to guide the development of community based forestry programs within the country as well as in other countries in the region (see also TOR in Annex 1.

In general, the study focus on analyzing relationship between participating communities, resources made under management, and enabling environments that have influences the effectiveness of sustainable management and people's involvement in line with the existing government policy context and legal framework. In particular, the study emphasizes on the ways and the extent of participation in relation to resource types and the types of forest management used in practice. With regard to benefit sharing, the ways to share and the degree of benefits shared among stakeholders in each type of Community Based Forest Management were also assessed. Finally, the contribution of each type of CBFM in the whole were distinguished and illustrated in terms of number of participating households; forest types and area coverage, and its status in the policy context.

It is important to note that the study is mainly based on reviews of available literature where difficulty to get access to information sources was one of the main limitations. Analysis in the study, therefore, could not cover all CBFM initiatives developed and practiced in Lao PDR, especially for those in which experiences have not been well documented and consolidated, and information was not accessible. In addition, many CBFM initiatives have not been evaluated in such a way that reflects the mode and extent of community contribution, strength and weaknesses. Thus, for these initiatives, only general information on project performance is provided in the report.

For that reason, the authors of this report would like to express our sincere apology for missing this information and for failing to include any initiatives of which information was not accessible during the time of study. Our heartfelt thanks should go for any further comments, improvements and additions to fill up any information gaps in the report.

2. Historical Overview – The Foundations of Community Based Forest Management in Lao PDR

2.1 History

The Lao People's Democratic Republic (Lao PDR), a country with the lowest population density in the region, is rich in natural forests and forest resources. These resources have contributed significantly to the national socio-economic development and local livelihood security throughout the history of the country's development stages. Their utilization and management characteristics have been embedded in the Lao culture and customs, changing along with the economic, social and political alteration.

Forest management in Lao PDR has evolved through a numbers of stages over the course of history (Fujita, 2004). This time span can be divided into three main periods: (i) the period under the rule of local lords to the period of open accessed forest; (ii) the period of state consolidation; and (iii) the current period of decentralized forest management.

In the time period prior to the establishment of the Lao PDR in 1975, forest land and forest resources were openly accessed with very little forest management practices and legal instruments. No large scale forest operations were practiced. Forests were mainly used for household consumption with few small-scale wood processing units. In this period the rate of forest change caused by human activities was low, except for the effects of the American-Vietnam war, when large portions of Lao forests were heavily damaged in many provinces, especially those located along the Ho Chi Minh Trail. In addition, Unexploded Ordnance (UXOs) remained from the war time has created difficulties for forest management in Lao PDR, especially in terms of forest accessibility.

The second period started with the constitution of the Lao PDR 1975 and a growing relaxation of economic restrictions in the 1980s. It was the period of reconstruction and recovery from war. At the same time, it was also the period where forests were heavily logged for export, and forest areas were converted into agriculture lands. The forestry sector's main objective during the period was to utilize forest resources for the welfare and development of the population and to create capital. Nine State Forest Enterprises (SFEs)were established during the period between 1975 and 1980 to meet these objectives.

With donor assistance and the support of the state budget, many SFEs were equipped with modern heavy logging machinery and large-scale wood processing factories. Production forests with an average of 200,000-300,000 ha were allocated to each of these SFEs for general management including planning, harvesting, planting, protection, processing, and export of forest products (MAF, 2004). Forest management practices were generally planned without considering sustainable or environmental measures and their implementation was limited to logging and wood processing. Villagers were hired in some operations as unskilled laborers such as forest guides, line clearing, serving food, etc. Forest regeneration and plantation were mentioned in the management plan, but very little happened in practice. Ultimately, these SFEs were proven to be economically inefficient and dismantled by 1991. The forest management under this system was not thoroughly planned and forests were not systematically managed so it is difficult to assess the magnitude of mismanagement.

The third period is that of the initiation of sustainable forest management, with recognition of the importance of local people's participation in forest management and protection. The major turning point was the First National Forestry Conference held in May 1989, which raised the growing

concern about deforestation. The conference also pointed out the new policy direction for forest management in Lao PDR. This new forest policy called for preservation and conservation of biological diversity by improving management systems, as well as maximizing the use of forest for the country's economic development. The policy also called for the improvement of local people's livelihoods especially in the upland area.

To ensure the new forest policy's direction, the Government of Lao PDR (GoL) developed a Tropical Forestry Action Plan (TFAP) in 1990 and officially adopted it one year later. The action plan identified six major forest associated development programs covering areas of human resource development; alternatives to shifting cultivation; watershed protection; sustainable forest utilization; and development of forest plantation. It was the first forest development program that advocated people's participation in forest management (DOF, 2000).

Another important policy instrument that shaped community based natural resource management in Lao PDR during the 1990s was the Land Use Planning and Land Allocation Policy, which recognized the rights of local people to use and manage natural resources. It also encouraged local people's participation in the management planning and protection of the forest.

The notion of community forestry or community-based forest management began to emerge in Lao PDR in the very early 1990s. In one of the early efforts to respond to TFAP, Department of Forestry (DOF) developed the first guiding framework for sustainable forest management in Lao PDR. Known as the "New System of Resource Management", forests were divided into forest management units called "Forest Management Areas". Besides the development of procedures and operations of sustainable forest management, under the system a new framework for restructuring DOF in line with the sector policy as required by TFAP was developed. It also built the foundation for community involvement in forest management (DOF, 1992).

Within the same framework, the Lao Swedish Forestry Programme (LSFP) further developed and tested "Joint Forest Management" in Dong Khapo State Production Forest, Savannakhet in 1993. Another project which is also well known is the Forest Management and Conservation Project (FOMACOP) which began in 1995 with financial and technical support from the World Bank, the Finnish International Development Agency (FINNIDA), and the Global Environmental Facility (GEF). This project incorporated a participatory forest management model called "Village Forestry" in Dong Sithouane, Savannakhet (FOMACOP, 1996). In addition other projects also supported tree planting, but incorporated the participatory forest management process in their projects such as: the Forest Conservation and Afforestation Project (FORCAP) of the Japanese International Cooperation Agency (JICA) in Vang Vieng, the Industrial Tree Plantation Project of the ADB, the Promotion of Forestry Education Project (PROFEP) in Vientiane by GTZ (Braeutigam 2003), as well as community development projects supported by international NGOs that also assisted the Land and Forest Allocation policy of the central government.

2.2 Status of the natural resource base

In comparison with neighboring countries, Lao PDR, a country with a total land area of 236,800 km^2, is particularly rich in commercially valuable and ecologically unique forests. In 2002, the total forest area was estimated at 41.5 per cent or about 9.8 million ha (DOF, 2003). By law, these forests are classified into five categories: (i) Production Forest, (ii) Conservation Forest, (iii) Protection Forest, (iv) Regeneration Forest, and (v) Degraded Forest (See also Box 1). Production forest covers 33 per cent (3.20 mill. ha) of the forest area, while Protection Forest and Conservation Forest covers 10 per cent (1.03 mill. ha), and 49 per cent (4.8 mill. Ha) respectively. The remaining areas are covered by Regenerated and Degraded Forests. Out of the Conservation Forest, 3.4 mill. ha (about 14.3 per cent of the total land area) are part of the national biodiversity conservation area (NBCA). These forests are rich in species with a high degree of endemism and

biological distinctiveness. For instance, at least 8,100 plant species, 166 species of reptile and amphibian, 700 bird species, and 100 mammal species have been identified in these forests (MAF, FS 2020).

Timber is not the only valuable resource of the forest, hundreds of Non Timber Forest Products (NTFPs) species are also found in Lao forests which provide significant contribution to the country's economy. They are also an important source of food and income for the rural people. Statistics from the NTFP National Survey[1] shows that there are 13 plant species that have high commercial value in the international market. Eight are found in two regions (Northern and Central regions), while the other five species are found in the South (Sophathilath, *et al*, 2005).

In spite of being rich, natural forest resources of the Lao PDR have shown a negative trend in the last two decades. For instance, in the 1940s the coverage of natural forests in Lao PDR was estimated at 70 per cent of the total land area. This declined to 47 per cent in 1992, and 41.5 per cent in 2002. The rate of deforestation between1982-1992 was estimated at 2 per cent per year, while the period between 1992-2006 marked a higher rate of deforestation at 5.6 per cent (DOF, 2003). The decline of forest areas has taken place mostly in the North (10.4 per cent), followed by Central (8.2 per cent) and the South (3 per cent) respectively (DOF, 2003).

Box 1: Definitions of Forest Categories in Lao PDR.

Protection Forest is forest and forest land classified for the purpose of protection of watershed areas and the prevention of soil erosion. It also include areas of forest lands significant for national security, areas for protection against natural disaster and the protection of the environment and other areas.

Conservation Forest is forest and forest land classified for the purpose protecting and conserving animal species, plant species, nature and various other things which have historical, cultural, tourism, environmental, educational and specific research values.

Production Forest is forest and forest land classified for the purpose of satisfying the requirements of natural economic and social development and people's livelihoods, for timber and other forest products on sustainable basis and without significant negative environmental impacts.

Regeneration forest is young fallow forest classified for the purpose of regeneration and maintenance so that it increases in maturity toward a stage of natural equilibrium.

Degraded Forest is forest which have been heavily damaged such as land without forest on it or barren land classified for tree planting and/or allocated to individuals and organizations for tree planting, permanent agriculture and livestock production, or for other purposes, in accordance with national economic development plans.

Source: Forest Law, 1996

Besides the change in coverage, changes are also observed in stocking density, species composition and forest structure and in the decrease in wildlife and plant population. Forests have also become increasingly fragmented with small forest compartments (less than 10 ha) resulting in a decrease of large forest compartments from 88 per cent in 1992 to 54 per cent in 2002 (DOF, 2003). Similarly, forest density decreased dramatically with dense forest declining from 29 per cent in 1992 to 8.2 per cent in 2002. With respect to the structure, forest areas dominated by large trees decreased from 43.6 per cent to 41.3 per cent in the same period. The stocking also declined from 128m3/ha in 1990 to 29 m3/ha in 2000 (FAO, 1990 and 2001 quoted in Chandrasekharan's presentation, 2005)

Along with the degradation of forest areas and the deterioration of forest structure, quantity and quality, other forest resources, especially NTFPs have also decreased. NTFP species growing in

[1] Surveys were conducted in 39 out of 142 districts through out country in 2005.

natural forests have declined in terms of both quantity and quality, but increase was observed with species growing in abandoned shifting cultivation areas (Sophathilath, *et al*, 2005).

There are many factors, both external and internal, that cause decline and deterioration of forest resources. External factors include increasing market demands on timber and NTFP in the region, partially resulting from logging bans in some neighboring countries which caused increased pressure on the Lao forests. Internal factors, on the other hand, comprised of shifting cultivation practices, unsustainable logging due to the lack of sustainable forest management and weakness in law enforcement. The underlying factors behind these causes are poverty, population increase, increasing economic incentives for over harvesting, and ineffectiveness in governance (DOF, 2003).

2.3 Status of population and poverty

The total population of Lao PDR is 5.2 million. The country is sparsely populated with a density of 24 persons per km^2 which is significantly lower than its neighboring countries; 70 in Cambodia, 120 in Thailand, and close to 250 in Vietnam. More than 85 per cent of the total population lives in rural areas with rural poverty incidence at 38 percent in 2003, in contrast to 20 percent in urban areas (NSC, 2004).

According to official statistics, there are 47 ethnic groups in Laos (MAF 2006), which is divided into four main ethno-linguistic groups. There are more than 230 spoken languages, which make Lao PDR highly diverse in terms of culture.

The economy of Lao PDR is primarily based on natural resources. More than 45 percent of GDP is based on the primary sector including agriculture, forestry, livestock and fisheries. Rural households are also dependent on natural resources. NTFPs are an important source of food supply and household income in rural areas, providing a safety net during critical period.

In spite of the growth of the Lao economy during the last decade, with an average of six per cent growth rate per year, Lao PDR is still one of the poorest countries in Asia, with a GDP per capita of $490 in 2005 (World Bank, 2005)[2]. There is an
increasing gap between urban and rural households' economic situation, as well as large geographic variations in terms of the state of poverty and development.

The Government of Lao PDR defines poverty as the lack of basic necessities such as food and clothing, as well as permanent housing. Other indicators include lack of transportation access, as well as public services such as clean water, health and education. For poor families in the rural areas, poverty also means rice insufficiency, lack of large livestock, and susceptibility to illness. Poverty in Lao PDR is not a short-term problem, but a chronic livelihood problem (NGPES, 2003).

In order to combat poverty, the Government has adopted a poverty eradication strategy known as "The National Growth and Poverty Eradication Strategy (NGPES)". Under the strategy, the Government aims to reduce the number of households below the poverty line by half from its current level of 33 per cent, and lead the country out of its Low Development Country (LDC) status by 2020. It also aims to increase GDP up to 7 per cent per annum.

Utilization and management of forest resources are considered important in fulfilling the policy target. In the NGPES, sustainable forest utilization, forest protection and reforestation, with strong involvement of local people, is seen as one of the most crucial strategies for poverty eradication.

[2] However, poverty incidence declined from 46 percent in 1993 to 33 percent in 2003 (World Bank 2005).

This has been further emphasized in the Forest Strategy 2020 policy document which was adopted in 2005.

3. Types of Community Based Forest Management

3.1 Overview of Forest Management Types

Since the 1970's, forest resources have been depleted at an astonishing rate due to several causes (as explained in section 2.2). In partial response, integrated approaches to natural resources management and livelihood improvement for sustainable development have become important measures during the last decade. Several strategies and national programs have been developed to achieve these aims. Within the forestry sector, over the last decade, the GoL together with international agencies has supported local participation in the protection and management of natural resources, especially forests. Land use planning and land allocation began in the beginning of 1990's. This initiative recognized local people's rights to use and manage resources, and has provided a guiding framework for all natural resources management in the country.

Amidst the changing context of participatory forest management since the 1990s, many projects and organizations have sought suitable tools for integrated planning for sustainable forest management. Unlike the conventional forest management, integrated forest management needs to consider the multiple values of forest resources and other factors. Forest management becomes more comprehensive, requiring not only a silvicultural perspective but also economical, social, ecological and environmental perspectives. Consequently, a number of models were developed and tested under a variety of conditions. These experiences have subsequently led to the rise of new types of forest management models based on lessons learned which are differentiated in working steps and model components (see Annex 2).

Box 2: Levels of participation

Type of participation	Characteristics of each type
Passive Participation	People are told what is going to happen or has already happened. This involves a one-sided announcement by project managers, without listening to people's responses. The information being shared is 'owned' by external professionals.
Participation in Information Giving	People participate by answering the questions of external experts and project designers. People do not have an influence on what comes out of the project, as information and ideas are not shared and there is no checking with stakeholders about the accuracy of information.
Participation by Consultation	People are consulted, and external people listen to views. The problems and solutions are designed by external stakeholders, who may change these in the light of people's responses. Such consultation does not give local stakeholders any share in decision-making, as professionals are not required to take on board their perspectives.
Participation for Material Incentives	People contribute resources, for example labour, in return for food, cash or other material incentives. For example, farmers in agricultural research may provide their fields to test a crop, but are not involved in the experimentation or the process of learning. It is very common to see this called participation, but people have no stake in carrying on activities when the project ends.
Functional Participation	Stakeholders are involved after major decisions have been made rather than early in the project cycle. People form groups to meet project objectives that have been developed by external stakeholders, or sometimes an externally initiated body may be set up to coordinate the efforts of local people.
Interactive Participation	Stakeholders jointly analyse the problems, formulate action plans, and work to set up new local institutions or strengthen existing ones with a lead role in decision-making. Interactive participation often has a strong learning component, and involves working with different kinds of knowledge (local-technical, social-scientific) to pick up on different perspectives.
Self-mobilisation	People take the initiative to change systems or practices. They may develop contacts with external institutions to get resources and technical advice, but retain control over how resources are used. Self-initiated programs may sustain rather than challenge local inequities in wealth and power.

Source: *Extracted from Pretty et al., 1995. Participatory Learning and Action: a trainer's guide, IIED, London.*

Based on past experience, forest management has been classified into different categories by different people in the country. Those classifications have generally been based on forest types; for example management of production forest, conservation forest, etc. and sometimes on ownership type, such as management of village forests, private-owned forests etc. In this report, since our focus is particularly on community contribution to forest management in Lao PDR, and participation of villagers is a key to achieving such a contribution, the *degree of involvement of villagers in forest management* is used as an initial step towards classifying the types of forest management. Box 2 above gives an example of how participation can be classified into different levels. Under each of the types at this first level, models of Community Based Forest Management (CBFM) have been further distinguished according to forest ownership types, functions of the forests, arrangement of responsibilities of partners and benefit sharing systems. Additional to participation, purpose of management is also considered to highlight emerging efforts in sustainable management. Under such a mixture of criteria, forest management in Lao PDR has been broadly distinguished in the paper into the following types:

(1) Participatory forest management (PFM);
(2) Collaborative forest management (CFM);
(3) Traditional forest management system;
(4) Community based forest management for ecotourism.
(5) Smallholder plantation; and
(6) Industrial plantation

To describe community contribution to forest management, the ways and degrees that communities get involved in forest management and the status of their involvement, will be viewed against government efforts and initiatives to involve local community in forest management. The applicability of each type of management in the light of current government policies and the number of villages and areas of forest covered will also be discussed. Details of the contribution are discussed in the following sections and a summary table is given in Annex 3.

3.1.1 Participatory Forest Management Systems

Participatory forest management system involves a high degree of participation of villagers in all stages of forest management planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation and also in sharing of benefit. With the increasing recognition of the importance of participatory approach to natural resources management, efforts to develop models or methods for participatory forest management were made by many projects during the mid 1990's (Makarabhirom & Raintree, 1999). The models were developed to manage different categories of forests and with varying objectives. Some focused on the management of state production forests; some on degraded forest land for watershed protection and rehabilitation for the purpose of livelihood improvement; and some on village forests for sustained flow of benefits to the villagers for local socio-economic development. While participation empowering local institutions and capacity building were considered important in all projects, the ways in which villagers were involved in the management of forests and how benefits from the management were shared, varied. Details of each model are briefly described in the following sections:

3.1.1.1 Model for state production forests

Participatory forest management in state forest was tested by the Lao-WB-FINNIDA Forest Management and Conservation Project (FOMACOP) in two state production forests located in southern provinces of Savannakhet and Khammouane, during 1995 to 2001. Under this model, villagers were given extensive rights to manage state forests within their village territory. Responsibilities in resource assessment, management planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation were delegated by the state to a group of villagers that organized themselves into Village Forest Association (VFA). VFA signed an agreement with the Provincial Agriculture and Forestry Office (PAFO) to manage the production forests. During the project period, 33 VFAs were formed (Braeutigam, 2003) in 51 villages (FOMACOP, 2001). Revenues from forest management activities (based on log harvesting in the first 15 villages during 1998-99) after payment of government royalties and taxes (69 per cent), and the costs of tree felling, log transport (19 per cent) and forest management (6 per cent), went to the village association for village development activities (6 per cent). Altogether, land use plans covered 145000 ha and forest management plans were prepared for about 100000 ha of natural forests.

The test identified the strong emphasis of the model on management of forests for timber production, but some important gaps included insufficient consideration given to integrating forest management with village and district development planning and diversification of forest-based income-generating activities. There were also debates over long-term sustainability of the management. Worries were expressed about the capacity of villagers and forestry staff to handle

village forest management responsibilities and some supportive organization structure and legal instruments. Further, although the model was found to be highly participatory with a large number of villagers involved in forest management, the timing was probably too early, as favorable conditions for replication and expansion were inadequate. All activities stopped for a short while after project termination because of unclear direction about the replication and expansion of the model. An important reason was the hesitant government policy support for the full participation approach of the FOMACOP village forestry concept, as indicated in the PM decree no. 11 issued in May 1999. It put all logging operations under the control of the government and nullified all other orders on management, forest operations and businesses that conflicted with this. Varying interpretations of village forestry approaches, due to lack of implementing regulations of the forestry law, were also stated as another reason (UNDP, 2001) for the holdup.

In the context of model development, the model was evaluated to be technically sound, meeting the criteria for forest management sustainability (DOF, 2001) . In addition, it also improved forest conservation and protection; increased village development; and systematically improved capacities of villagers, forestry field staff and other collaborators in forest management. The model developed support for local villagers participating in sustainable forest management and met various government policy objectives including decentralization, rural development, LUP/LA and efforts to reduce shifting cultivation, to alleviate poverty and to improve food security (DOF, 2001). Most lessons of FOMACOP are relevant and in support of the current government policies in decentralized resources management as well as in poverty alleviation. A number of practical methodologies in forestry operations and experiences in social organization in
managing forests and community development gained through the test have been modified, adjusted and replicated in other CBNRM projects notably in the current SUFORD project which follows on from FOMACOP lessons and covers all former FOMACOP sites.

3.1.1.2 Models for village forestry

Participatory village forest management is an implementation step following village land use planning. Two approaches could be distinguished under this type of forest management. One approach collectively considers the management responsibilities over the whole forest land within the same village administrative boundary. Under this approach, all forest lands within village territory are brought under the same management plan called a “village forest management plan”, while another approach separates out management responsibilities for forests outside and inside state forests within the same village territory and has a separate management plan for each category. The latter approach is basically designed for village forests in villages where state forests are enclosed within village boundaries.

The first approach tries to delegate all management responsibilities to villagers. The underlying management plan makes the resource boundaries clear to all villagers, and what they are expected to do and where. It also underlines when and how certain activities are permitted in their village territory.

The village forest model aims to manage forest at the village level for multiple purposes. It also takes into account the benefits from different resources within the village boundary regardless of their tenure rights and status. In most cases, village forests are chiefly managed for food security and livelihood improvement purposes although other aspects including conservation, catchment protection and integrated land use are considered for long term sustainable use and management of communities’ natural resources[3]. Under this model, decisions in different processes are made by villagers with facilitation provided by government or project staffs supporting the initiative. The management plan is either prepared separately or as part of the overall village development plan and may vary from very simple to more technical in structure.

[3] In this management model, the focus of forest management has been on sustainable use of NTFPs including wildlife, fuel-wood, and construction materials.

In implementing the management plan, villagers are generally organized into task groups administered by a village committee or an association of villagers specially formed for the purpose. Responsibilities of the task group can be performed collectively or individually. Under this system, most of the benefits go to individual villagers, groups and to village funds as there is no formal provision on tax or fee collection for most products, except for resource tax on timber for local construction (for local villagers). In addition, some villages also obtain benefits from collection of resource protection fees from outsiders who collect forest products inside its territory. A village forest management model has been tested, modified and replicated by different rural development projects with focus on sustainable use of natural resources in rural areas. However, up to this date only a handful of villages have actually formulated detailed forest management plans (see below for specific reasons behind this). In most cases, villages only have general management rules.

Some important efforts in village forest management include:

Lao-Swedish Forestry Programme (LSFP) phase IV (1996-2001) was the first project that tried to develop specific management plans for forests outside state production forests in one village (Ban Xienglekhok), with technical design assistance from RECOFTC in 1999. The management plan was prepared as an additional component to the one for state production forest in JFM models (see 2.1.2.1 Joint Forest Management Models). During the planning process, an assessment of the forest resources was carried out in a participatory way with the villagers' management problems identified and potentials explored. Management prescriptions and rules for the village forests were elaborated by the villagers with facilitation from the planning team consisting of experts from RECOFTC and government staff from the Department of forestry (DOF), PAFO and Phalanxay District Agriculture and Forestry Office (DAFO). The village forest management plan was not in full shape as it was developed towards the end of the LSFP period. It finally ended with the termination of JFM activities.

The method provided systematic guidelines in village forest management planning and implementation for long term sustainability. However, in a wider development context, the method is considered so technical and requires such highly skilled technical staff in order to be properly implemented, that it is simply unrealistic to expect this model to be rolled out nationwide in a timely manner. Further, it focused on sustainable forest management and did not integrate holistically with other village development programs. It has provided however a conceptual framework as well as many practical technical procedures for subsequent efforts in the development of a participatory village natural resource management. Many components of the model have been taken and further modified by other development projects (e.g. the Paklay Forest Conservation and Livelihood Improvement Project, NAFRI-IUCN promotion of sustainable utilization of NTFPs project, SUFORD, etc.) with strong emphasis on sustainable use of natural resources in areas where peoples' livelihoods are largely dependent on nature, regardless of the forest category.

The Paklay Forest Conservation and Livelihood Improvement Project**,** by drawing on experiences and lessons learned from various preceding CBNRM efforts (notably, JFM, FOMACOP, NAFRI-IUCN NTFP and some other microfinance projects) developed a model to support development in natural resources dependent villages during 2002 to 2004 in Ban Houayhai, Paklay District of Sayabouly province in northern Laos. Under the project, the village developed management plans for each land use type. The model focused on integrated village socio-economic development with strong emphasis on distribution and reinvestment of income from sales of forest products in other production and income as well as development activities. The model aimed at achieving village self-help development. A village land use type-wise management planning approach was adapted. Facilities development, community development and related mechanisms and services in all aspects were also planned to support respective components of planned natural resources management activities.

The model was particularly unique as it aimed to develop a more comprehensive holistic village forest management plan. Multiple forest use was considered for the entire forest land. Village forest management plan was developed through a participatory planning process and was implemented in 2004. The plan takes into considerations all possible potential products (timber and NTFPs) and sources of benefits. It also identifies possible means, services and support mechanisms for different responsible bodies.

The model followed the decentralization policy and applied watershed and area based development approaches. It introduces step-by-step procedural instructions that provide guidelines for DAFEO staff in planning; in mobilizing and organizing villagers; in performing management routines to support plan implementation, in facilitating establishment and management of village development funds and in monitoring and evaluation of locally devised plan.

Unfortunately, a full test of this model could not take place after the termination of the project. In the absence of project support, the model was not developed beyond a village level in spite of the plan to scale up. No follow up has been made on the progress of how far and to what extent the model be adopted in the concerned district. However, the methodology that was developed through the project will be used by CARE in other projects[4].

How practical and to what extent this model can be successfully implemented on the ground is still doubtful. Experience from the training on the methodologies organized for CARE-PARUA and Sayabouly DAFEO staff in Sayabouly in February 2006, showed that it was not easy for the participants to learn and get planning skills within a short period of time, although multidisciplinary teams were formed. Integrated development planning needs vast knowledge and practical experience to efficiently carry out the works. However, several procedures, especially those concerning implementation arrangements, are being taken up to be implemented in the frameworks of the new five year development programs of MAF.

3.1.1.3. Models on sustainable utilization of NTFPs

Over 700 species of plants, insects, and fungi are found to be used for food and other uses in Lao PDR. It is believed that, based on experiences from many other countries, these resources, if sustainably managed, could significantly contribute to conserving forest resources. In recognition of the central importance of food security and security of natural resources for villagers, efforts have been made by the NAFRI-IUCN Sustainable Utilization of Non-timber Forest Products in Lao PDR to develop methods for promoting sustainable economic exploitation of NTFPs at community levels to conserve forest biodiversity.

The key approach in model development is participation, focusing mainly on development of management institutions and techniques to manage specific types of NTFPs in sustainable manner, regardless of forest land category whether they be production, conservation, protection, degraded or regenerated forests. The models developed were essentially village-based with facilitation from government and project staff in resource management planning, implementation, monitoring, local organization and development of supporting mechanisms and systems. Under the project, different ways of managing NTFPs were developed. For example the project introduced sustainable use and extraction of key NTFPs, and devised community based forest management systems with special focus on NTFPs. Furthermore, the project also facilitated development of multi-village co-management for protected areas; development of models on improving well-being to raise interest and capacity for biodiversity conservation (the marketing group on bitter bamboo shoots in Oudomxay); and on conservation zoning (fish and frog); etc. In parallel, the project also facilitated

[4] During the fiscal year 2006, replication of methodology started in one of the totally planned 3 villages in the CARE-Poverty Alleviation in Remote Upland Areas (PARUA) Project in Samed-Saysana zone, Sayabouly district.

the development of processing and handicraft groups, and other support mechanisms to assist local people.

The development was supported by research in technical aspects e.g. resource assessment, domestication; management, environmental monitoring, harvesting and post-harvesting methods. Villagers were empowered to make decisions on management planning and to organize themselves in performing different management tasks and implementing various activities. Levels of detail of the resource management plans developed vary from just the agreements of villagers on some rules and sanctions in managing certain NTFPs to more technical emphasis. Benefit distribution systems have so far mainly been agreed among villagers with little influence from outsiders, depending on the nature and scale of activity, implementing arrangement, type of resource and prevailing regulations. Clear provisions about the use and management of NTFPs are lacking and there is no provision to pay fees or taxes for NTFPs collected for household consumption or from the collector. Only if collected NTFPs are traded (usually for export market), the trader (not the collector) needs to pay resource tax (either as a percentage of sale value or as fixed amount per unit of different types of NTFPs) and revenue tax which may vary from province to province (e.g. 3 per cent and 5.5 per cent of export value, respectively in the case of Sayabouly province). Due to the absence of collectors' fees and taxes, a greater share of benefits therefore went to local villagers under this system.

A total of 40 pilot communities were covered by the NTFP project in three provinces during 1995 to 2001. All the pilot villages were involved in community forestry/sustainable harvesting agreements; 13 villages were involved in domestication trials; and 12 villages were involved in marketing trials. The most known and widely accepted experiences under this type of forest management system is the community based forest management for bitter bamboo, linked with a village marketing group establishment at Ban Nampheng (Box 3).

Box 3: Lessons learned from village marketing group at Ban Nampheng

Ban Nam Pheng of Namo District, Oudomxay province is located approximately half an hour by car to the border with China. Lao Theung from the Khamou Ou, Leua and Rok ethnic groups is the single ethnic group in the village who speak Khamou language.

When the NTFP Project first arrived in 1996, the village contained 43 households with 244 people who were mainly upland cultivators, using the slash and burn methods. Villagers mainly gained cash income from NTFPs collected and bartered on a small scale. Bamboo shoots, in particular, were sold to traders exporting to China and Thailand.

The NTFP Project supported a sustainable harvesting of bitter bamboo starting with LUP/LA process in which a total forest area of 648 ha was allocated to Ban Nam Pheng, of which bitter bamboo forest covered 515 ha. For this forest, a simple management plan was prepared and a bitter bamboo marketing group was organized in 1998. A series of meetings were organized where villagers and project staff collectively gathered information, analyzed problems, decided upon a management structure, elected members for management and agreed on regulations to implement the plan. Anybody that collected bitter bamboo shoots for sale was allowed to join the group, which virtually consisted of all households in the village. The management structure consisted of a Group Committee (which is the Village Committee) and one-person units for monitoring, accounting and trade. All decisions were made collectively in meetings chaired by the Group Committee. Training to develop necessary skills were provided by project staff before and during plan implementation.

An important innovation of the marketing group was to introduce and train villagers on the use of weighing scales. Previously, villagers simply bartered their NTFPs by bunches to passing traders for clothes, condiments, candies and other miscellaneous items. The use of scales has allowed villagers to command higher prices and have more confidence when negotiating with traders.

The marketing group sets the dates for harvesting season each year, based on natural characteristics and regenerative capacity of the NTFP, for which the NTFP Project assisted villagers with ecological information and training. Bamboo shoots collected by individuals were sold directly to the Group Committee. The Group Committee then sells on a larger scale to traders.

Generally, the individual collector takes 85-90 per cent of the final sale, while the remaining 10-15 per cent is put towards an NTFP Fund. For example, in 2001, the marketing group sold bitter bamboo at an average rate of 2000 Kip/kg, of which 1700 Kip went to the collector and 300 Kip went to the NTFP Fund. The NTFP Fund was then used to fund community projects (e.g., improve the village's water supply system, construct a school and purchase of an electric generator); community services (e.g., provide loans and salary to school teacher); and pay salaries to the group committee and other running costs to the monitoring, accounting and trade units. Use of the fund and salary levels are also decided collectively by the marketing group.

Following the success of bitter bamboo, the marketing group organized a similar regime for cardamom. The marketing group was able to raise the local price for cardamom.

The results were impressive. Between 1998 and 2000, the group fund accumulated 17 million Kip through sales of bitter bamboo, and later cardamom as well.

Source: Bitter bamboo and sweet living: Impacts of NTFP conservation activities on poverty alleviation and sustainable livelihoods prepared for IUCN's 3I-C Project on poverty alleviation, livelihood improvement and eco-system management by Jason Morris,November 2002.

The prospects and challenges of NTFP development in Lao PDR

Community based forest management for NTFPs has been found to be a good entry point for community forest management systems (Soydala & Ketphanh cited in NAFRI-NAFES-NUoL, 2005) and has become an increasingly important option in rural development. Upways IUCN-NTFP project impact assessment (2006) revealed that there have been many donors and organizations like Sida, World Bank, GTZ, JICA, ADB, UNDP, AusAID, IFAD, FAO, IUCN, SNV, Lao-Luxembourg development program and many NGOs like CARE International Laos, GAA, Oxfam Australia, CUSO, DED, CCL, etc. that pay attention to NTFP as an important component of their projects. The need for collaborative efforts and networking in different aspects of NTFP development have been widely expressed among more than 50 organizations/projects/bodies (NAFRI, FRC, SNV and RECOFTC, 2004). SNV-NAFRI presently is providing coordination in NTFP networking. Forest management systems with a focus on NTFP seem to cover the largest number of villages compared to other systems with the most commonly widespread method being the one that adopts the agreed rules and rights in NTFP uses e.g. fish conservation zoning. However, NTFP is not segregated but included in other forest management systems in all types of forests in the present day even including the state production forests, conservation forests, village forests, agro-forest, commercial plantation and home garden. The exact extent of its coverage in the country is not known.

Nevertheless, despite an increasing recognition of the importance of NTFP and the felt needs for its sustainable management at several levels, effort to institutionalize NTFP management systems has been very little. Capacity to replicate good lessons is lacking and no formal structure exists to deal specifically with NTFPs in the forestry sector, except in the research organizations (Manivong, 2006). With regard to the legislative framework, Chandrashekaran (2005) stated that there is no specific legislation covering collection, use and management of NTFPs, the sub-sector is left unregulated or is governed by legislation relating to production forestry or customary use. The only law applicable to NTFPs is the Forestry Law of 1996 with its vague and ambiguous provisions which directly relate to NTFPs. Further these available provisions have not been implemented effectively; illegal trade/export in NTFPs seems to prosper since it provides considerable economic benefit. No comprehensive technical regulations and guidelines have yet been developed for NTFPs. All the above-mentioned situations result in continuing depletion and degradation of the NTFP and biodiversity resource of the country, especially those with poor regenerative capacity.

3.1.1.4. Village forestry and NTFP management scheme of the GTZ Rural Development in Mountainous Areas programme.

The Rural Development in Mountain Areas programme (RDMA) has developed village forest management for its project area in Sing and Nalae districts of Luangnamtha province. The approach is based on LUP/LA as a starting point for the development of improved Community Based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM) mechanisms. The process essentially consists of a revision of the LUP/LA process that was developed by the DOF to suit its project area conditions; land use zoning based on the revised LUP/LA process in the project villages; development of CBNRM plans (management plans on village forestry, NTFPs and fisheries); and agreeing on implementation procedures.

All CBNRM activities start with an assessment of existing resources and situational analysis of development trends over the past few years. For the village forestry scheme, the designated village production and use zones of the forest are separated into management blocks with homogenous characteristics. Simple participatory forest inventory are used in resource assessment in which villagers and local DAFO staff work together to identify the current tree species composition in the blocks, the distribution of stem diameters, and the condition of natural regeneration. A Participatory Rural Appraisal exercise is used to facilitate decision making by villagers on local

tree species which are most valuable to them. For each village production forest area, villagers then decide on detailed purposes of management such as timber production, firewood collection, and bamboo forest and so on and targets and management objectives are agreed by the entire population of the respective village or cluster area. Based on these objectives, management regime and other activities are defined and written down in a simple management plan.

A similar procedure is followed to determine the NTFP and fish resources within villages and simple management plans are established for all NTFP collection and main fishing areas within a village.

To avoid having too many committees, the task of overseeing the management of village forests or NTFP or fishing areas is given to the existing LUP/LA committees. Specific responsibility for certain blocks or zones is given to particular task groups e.g. NTFP collection groups.

Based on management plans established by the villagers, formal forestry or NTFP agreements are signed between the head of the DAFO and the village LUP/LA and NRM committees. These agreements are valid for five years and are renewable. During this period villagers must prove they are willing and capable in managing forests and NTFP collection areas in a sustainable way. DAFO staff provides advice, supervision and training.

The project proposed to develop standard formats for the management plans during 2004. The initiative was promising and in line with the current decentralized resource management of the government. Reports giving the extent of coverage and contributions of villagers in managing village forests under this approach is not available to the authors.

Overall, the Participatory Forest Management, although assuring a high level of active participation towards achieving self-management by local communities, has a strong potential for wide scale application in degraded types of forest and NTFP resources. Contribution of local communities in sustainable forest management under this type is although significant but is not concretely visible nationally. Further efforts in consolidation and institutionalization would be needed.

3.1.2 Collaborative Forest Management Systems

Several authors have used the term collaborative forest management system to describe participatory forest management. In this report, collaborative forest management is defined as a type of sustainable forest management where forests are managed by government and stakeholders collaboratively as per the approved forest management plan. The level of participation in this type has elements that could be compared to both “Participation by Consultation”, Participation for Material Incentives” and “Functional Participation” (see box 2).

The collaborative forest management system has been applied mainly in the implementation of state forest management plans. Under this system, the state jointly represented by the Department of Forestry (DOF), the Provincial Agriculture and Forestry Office (PAFO) and the District Agriculture and Forestry Extension Office (DAFEO – formerly known as DAFO) is responsible for the preparation of forest management plans. Villagers are asked to assist in the planning process, particularly providing information and labor for field activities. District Agriculture and Forestry Extension Offices (DAFEO) as responsible for organizing the district Forest Management Units (FMU) which then implements the plans. Villagers must organize themselves into association or committee -though varying in forms, structures and functions in different places- in order to gain legal recognition and sign contracts or agreements to implement forest management

with PAFO. When the plan is implemented, PAFO together with local authorities are mandated to perform guiding, monitoring and controlling tasks. The way the collaborative arrangements were made and the benefits from forest management were shared among different actors varied according to model. In the following sections, the different models along with the contribution of local people in the management of forest under the collaborative systems are described.

3.1.2.1 Models for state production forest

Joint Forest Management Models:

In its effort to develop sustainable forest management systems in Lao PDR, the Lao-Swedish Forestry programme phase IV developed two models as partnership models for the management of state production forests (SPF) during 1994 to 2000. These included "Joint Forest Management Model 1 and Model 2" that were tested in 14 villages around the Dongkapho state production forests (9600 ha) in Savannakhet province. In each model, a contract specifying the rights and obligations of each party as to the implementation of the forest management plan, as well as the distribution of benefits generated by the sale of logs which were different for each model, was signed by three parties: PAFO, the District Agriculture and Forestry Office (DAFO) and the village committee.

Model 1 was tested with one village in one of three management areas of the SPF. In this, a village forest committee called the JFM Association (JFMA), owned by all the families living in the village was formed to represent the village, and given a contract with full rights and responsibilities to implement the whole management plan for one management area, which includes rights to log and sell logs and/or process logs and sell sawn timber. The JFM board, comprising 13 members, was elected to administer the JFMA. Villagers had to pay a royalty to the government per logged volume as per official regulations plus other expenses. For equity reasons, part of the expenses (5 per cent of log sale revenue) also went to a district development fund. Profits[5] from the management went to the JFMA. Sixty percent of this revenue went to a village development fund; 30 per cent was reserved for the implementation of the following years' operations (salaries of board and management team; stationary and equipment, cost for services by DAFO staff; payment for forest work by villagers which include seed collection, raising seedlings, log scaling, survey works, boundary demarcation; log sale operation; and so on); and 10 per cent was paid as a forest protection fee (for villages where logging activity did not take place in a particular year).

JFM model 2 was tested in 13 villages in the remaining two management areas. Comprehensive tests actually took place in only two villages where annual coupes were due for logging operations during the testing period. Other villages were only involved in protection tasks and received their share from the forest protection fee. In this model, villagers were contracted by the PAFO to protect the parts of the forest located inside the village borders and refrain from encroaching on other parts of the state production forest. They were also encouraged to participate in different forest operations, including planting seedlings for SPF. Villagers were organized around a forest volunteer(s) who led activities on forest protection and improvement activities. A Village Natural Resources Management and Development Committee (VRMDC) was organized. The Committee's main role was to facilitate the implementation of the forest protection contract in the village and act as an intermediary between the villagers and the PAFO as well as DAFO staff. The Committee also ensured that various rights of villagers were protected and monitored responsibilities of the villagers to forest protection contracts. Furthermore, the Committee managed a village development fund where PAFO transferred the forest protection fee.

[5] Profit or village net revenue = Sales of logs – (royalties + other taxes + logging labor + log transportation + district forestry development funds)

DOF (2001) confirms that both JFM models were found to be compatible with government policy. They supported the participation of local villagers in sustainable forest management and also proved that villagers have the capabilities to work in partnership with government field staff in various forest management activities and operational planning. JFM models have resulted in improved forest management, improved forest protection from encroachment and shifting cultivation; improved forest conservation; secured budget for forest operations; and increased village development. Among the two models, model 1 was found to be more accepted in terms of villagers' preferences. Model one resulted in greater benefits than model 2 in terms of better incentives for villagers' participation, increased knowledge and sense of responsibility among villagers in sustainable forest management; generating of village funds for socio-economic development as well as cash income to households.

However, at a more detailed operational level, inadequacies were observed in terms of operational arrangement, the lack of supportive regulatory frameworks and degree of participation, especially in model 2. Timber sales under both models were in favor of the old non-transparent system which resulted in losses of national revenue (DOF, 2001). As addressed in the final evaluation of JFM models, equity in benefit sharing is an important issue, and the fact that two models were trialed in the same state production forest caused conflicts among participating villages.

The final project assessment, in general, showed satisfactory achievements in many aspects. However, due to unclear government decisions, as in the case of FOMACOP, implementation of both the JFM models stopped after the Lao-Swedish Programme phase IV ended in 2001. The production forests under JFM were being taken over for sustainable management under the WB/SUFORD approach since 2003.

SUFORD Approach

After the FOMACOP, JFM and other trials ended, there were debates and some studies conducted to convert lessons into official policy for participatory sustainable forest management. New important legal instruments, namely a Prime Minister decree No.59/2002 on sustainable management of production forest; the ministerial regulations No. 0240/MAF.2003 of the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry on establishment and sustainable management of production forests; and No. 0060/2003 that defines principles and technical and legal prescriptions logging and harvesting of forest products were issued which resulted in the emergence of the new LAO-WB-FINNIDA SUFORD project in 2003. Best lessons and experiences from the comprehensive trials in FOMACOP, JFM as well as from other projects such as IUCN-NTFP project have been consolidated by this new project for wider official application.

The SUFORD project will operate up to 31/12/2008 (initially proposed for 2007). It has three main objectives as (1) improve the policy, legal and incentive framework to enable expansion of sustainable, participatory forest management through the country; (2) to bring the country's priority natural production forests under participatory, sustainable management; and (3) to improve villager's wellbeing and livelihoods through benefits from sustainable forestry, community development and development of viable livelihood systems.

Forest management planning at the Forest Management Unit (FMU) level is performed by provincial and district government staff with technical support provided by the Forest Inventory and Planning Division of the Department of Forestry. Villagers are involved to a limited extent in decision making in this process. Prescriptions for forestry operations based on sustainable management principles are made for each FMU and broad guidelines for implementation are developed. NTFPs management is an important part of the forest management system.

Participatory village development planning is an important integral part of the system. The forest management plan has been developed for each village in which a benefit sharing system from sustainable forest management; income generation alternatives; and other development activities

were discussed and agreed upon by villagers. The SUFORD project gives preference to assist poor and small villages as they are more disadvantaged compared with larger and more established villages. Poor and small villages have little access to natural resources; their basic infrastructure and social capital are also limited and weaker. SUFORD provides village development grants of up to 8,000 USD per village during its project phase to support village development activities. The grant can be used to fund development projects of the village. However, the project requires that the disbursement has to be matched by village funds from forest management and other sources.

Benefit sharing from timber sales under this system of forest management follows the provisions made in MAF regulation No.0204/2003 which sets out that:

- Log royalties from competitive sale of timber from production forest shall be transferred to the National budget.
- Additional revenue from log sale shall be distributed as follows:
    - 30 per cent to the National budget;
    - 20 per cent for forest development fund (under forestry law article 47);
    - 25 per cent as annual operational cost for forest management plan implementation; and
    - 25 per cent to local development funds.

To date the project has finalized the development of forest management plans in 8 target state production forests covering about 659000 ha in eight districts and started implementing the plans in 2006. The whole areas under FOMACOP and JFM trials were also brought under the new consolidated system. Within these 8 areas, 18 FMU are established for operational management targeting 400 village forest organizations to participate (Phanthanousy & Sayakoummane in RECOFTC 2005).

Certification is another effort of SUFORD. Experiences from FOMACOP as well as from succeeding Pilot Forest Certification Project (PFCP) during 2002-2003, demonstrate that certification can play an important role in developing acceptable criteria and processes for recognizing local forest management agreements (Litz 2000) and remains an important mid- to long-term strategy for village forestry/participatory forestry management (Markopoulos, 2003). A certification scheme was introduced under SUFORD in some parts of the production forests as "guarantor of village rights and responsibilies' and also to increase revenue from log sale. During the fiscal year 2004-2005, about 35000 ha of Dongsithouane and 10000 ha of Dong Phouxoi production forests were certified. One Sustainable Forest Management Group (SFMG) with five VFAs is involved in Dongsithouane and another one SFMG with ten VFAs in Dong Phouxoi. These are the first participatory forestry initiatives certified in Asia. If it is found effective and compatible with national policy, forest certification will be an ultimate goal of all forestry operations in Lao PDR.

However, amid the various positive anticipated outcomes of certification, worries were expressed about its success. Markopoulos (2003) stated several issues and challenges that need to be seriously addressed for the certification to be successful. Important issues include: security of the structure of SFMG; capacity to implement group certification policy and standards and to maintain the system; reform of sale, marketing and tax policies to maximize basic timber price; organization to support and promote certification; and the adaptation of certification procedures and standards to local needs and capacities of the villagers. Information on how these issues have been addressed and how successful the two SFMGs are in implementing the certification scheme is not available.

The SUFORD approach, although with less people participation in long-term forest management planning, gives high consideration to other forest resources additional to timber and to diversification of forest-based income-generating activities. It also integrates forest resources management with village and district socio-economic development which is highly relevant and in support of the current government policies in poverty alleviation. The system is expected to be adapted in the management of all state production forests in the country. A number of practical

guidelines and procedures are developed by the project to facilitate implementation and to support replication.

Model for degraded forests

Participatory management in degraded forest lands has been tested within other projects. For example, Lao-GTZ Nam Ngum Watershed Conservation Project (NAWACOP) worked in upper part of Nam Ngum Watershed while Lao-JICA (Forest Conservation and Afforestation Project (FORCAP) worked in the lower part of the watershed.

The NAWACOP focused on integrated watershed management for sustainable resources management, poverty alleviation and food security. Sustainable agriculture was placed at the center of food security and poverty alleviation. The project applied a participatory approach for watershed protection. It also incorporated activities to generate additional income for the local people.

Out of 24 project villages in three districts of Xiengkhouang province, forest management was applied in eight villages. The project first developed village land use plans, and planned ways to manage village forest land. Based on this planning exercise, regulations and rules for specific activities were underlined e.g. logging, rehabilitation, fire protection, etc. In order to implement the plans, villagers were organized into forest operation groups such as log sawing groups, protection groups, rehabilitation groups, etc. Meanwhile, DAFEO (or the former DAFO) performed supervisory and advisory tasks.

Under NAWACOP, benefits from the management were allocated to the groups and also to the village development fund. Villagers were also paid for their work input through the "Food-for-Work" scheme of the World Food Programme for some activities e.g. clearing fire lines. Complementary supports were also provided by the project for sustainable integrated agriculture development, village infrastructure development and establishment of a revolving fund.

The model provides good experiences and examples of an integrated approach to watershed management. Mechanisms and efforts to integrate these into the existing structure seem to be insufficient. As a result, only some activities initiated by the project continue after the termination of the project in 2002. Weak staff capability and the unorganized extension service of DAFO, the lack of a government operational budget for follow up support as well as for monitoring, mean few project initiated activities are continuing. Conflict between some project villages and neighboring non-project villages over resource use was reported to discourage villagers in their efforts for sustainable use of the resources due to the sporadic nature of the project activities.

FORCAP has developed technical and management methods to promote forest conservation and afforestation. It also introduced ways to improve the living conditions of villagers in the lower part of Nam Ngum Watershed. Active participation of local people and local government staff in the recovery of degraded forest was strongly emphasized in the project.

Under the project, an action plan for forest management and stabilization of shifting cultivation based on village land use was prepared as a precondition to initiate establishment of plantations in model villages selected by the project. Villagers organized themselves into Village Forest Groups to implement the plan in partnership with local authorities. A benefit sharing system based on 15 year contract between the farmers and district authorities was developed. The district authority will get 25 per cent of the benefits from plantation with the provision that they provide seedlings, materials and extension services to the farmers. The remaining 75 per cent goes to the farmers.

Trial forests and nurseries were established to develop and experiment with different technologies of forest conservation and afforestation. In addition, the project developed incentives for local forest management e.g. development of clean water supply system, aquaculture and alternative income generation activities, agro-forestry, down stream processing, revolving fund schemes, etc.

These activities were introduced to encourage local involvement in forest conservation and protection but also ensuring that those who participated in the activities benefited from forest management. Capacity building and technical know-how transfer were other important components.

In total, 15 villages were engaged in FORCAP activities. There were 213 ha of plantation and 7 ha of agroforestry established during 1997 to 2002 by 300 families. In addition, there were 60 ha reforestation demonstration plots and 6.5 ha enrichment planting plots with 12 indigenous tree species created to demonstrate technical options for degraded land.

Further, about 15 ha of school plantation was established in 15 villages (roughly one ha in each village). A model for watershed protection through safeguarding of natural vegetation, supplemented with enrichment planting to secure continuous clean water supply, was established in five villages. The activity was associated with incentive programs such as gravity water supply facilities development, healthcare and education programs and was collaboratively undertaken by many district offices including health, education and agriculture and forestry with the governor's office provided coordinating tasks.

After the project termination in 2003, activities were taken up by the National Agriculture and Forest Extension Service (NAFES) in collaboration with Vangvieng DAFEO. Although limited in coverage and contribution to the national policy goal in poverty alleviation, FORCAP initiated activities which have moved villagers away from shifting cultivation practices. Participating villagers perceived FORCAP's interventions as being meaningful (FORCAP, 2003: p.22-23) but the limited local budget and the lack of alternative funding source together with the limited broad sector collaboration of the project limited a scaling up effort.

Training and Model Forest of the Faculty of Forestry (GTZ-PROFEP)

The Faculty of Forestry (FOF) with support from the Promotion of Forestry Education Project (PROFEP) established a Training and Model Forest (TMF) at Sangthong District, Vientiane Capital. The purpose was to facilitate practical training and applied research and to demonstrate sustainable management of natural resources focusing on rehabilitation practices, nature conservation, environmental awareness creation and agroforestry.

Within the TMF, the FOF controls the ownership and management of the resource. District authorities and communities participate in the planning, management and protection of the forest resources and get a share of benefit in return. The FOF paid special attention to appropriate technology development related to rehabilitation of degraded forests, agroforestry, conservation and natural forest management.

To reduce pressure on the remaining forest resources and promote sustainable management and conservation of forests outside the TMF which are owned by communities and families, FOF supported the communities through extension services. Technologies developed were disseminated to farmers through demonstration areas established with few model families in each village. Smallholder plantations with indigenous tree species have been strongly promoted. Extension related to agricultural land use to increase productivity was provided. Field staff are posted at TMF areas to provide technical advice.

The TMF covers approximately 4600 ha. Two villages have been involved in TMF activities such as fire line maintenance, tree planting, plantation management and TMF patrol. Villagers get paid for putting in labor and in addition they are also allowed to collect NTFPs in TMF areas according to rules jointly established with FOF. In connection with technology dissemination activities, there are presently 23 model families established in seven villages (including the two involved in TMF). The other 21 families are involved in agro-forestry.

The PROFEP ended in 2003 (after one year extension). FOF continue to follow on with approaches and activities initiated through the project. However, according to the lecturer in

charge, progress has been slow since the project termination, especially activities of model families. Farmers do not have enough time to properly maintain the demonstrations. Some fish ponds dry up or no new investment is introduced. Fruit trees are poorly maintained, etc. These are reported to come from incentives lower than when project support was available due to the limited budget of the faculty.

Participatory NBCA management system

Forests of Lao PDR are rich in bio-diversity. As a result of deforestation and forest degradation, several species of flora and fauna have been and are facing danger of extinction. In 1986, the Department of Forestry established the Centre for Protected Areas and Watershed Management. Besides the initiatives in the forestry sector, a Science, Technology and Environmental Agency (STEA) was established in 1993 under the Prime Minister's office to facilitate cross-ministerial collaboration on environmental protection. Throughout the 1990s, the legal framework for protected area management was also strengthened. Being a signatory to many international agreements related to environment and with the objective of establishing a system capable of protecting, enhancing and managing these valuable resources on a sustainable basis for the benefit of local people and the entire nation, the government, in 1993, instituted a protected area system which comprises 20 National Biodiversity Conservation Areas (NBCAs) – following PM decree 164. Furthermore, 57 provincial and 114 district conservation forests were also delineated. In total, Protected Areas cover approximately 21 per cent of the country's land area (LSFP, 2001).

Recognizing the development needs of the nation as a whole, and local people who are dependent on the natural resource base for their day-to-day livelihoods, participatory NBCAs management system was designed during the 1990's. The system involved a joint responsibility for managing conservation among villagers, NBCAs authority and District officials who were the key stakeholders in the natural resource base. The approach also linked conservation with development in an integrated manner through two-way agreements under which villagers were compensated for restrained resource use. In this system the government was to provide villagers with various incentives, such as: (a) provision of secure and equitable land use rights within NBCAs; (b) assistance for livelihood and community development activities in return for villagers participation in conservation management; and (c) support for sustainable harvesting activities in NBCAs to give guardian villagers an economic stake in the protected areas resources. Four types of villages were involved in this system:

- Enclave villages, where its whole territory falls entirely within the NBCA boundary;
- Straddle villages, where part of its territory falls within the NBCA boundary;
- Adjacent villages whose territory is outside the NBCA but having common boundary with the NBCA.
- External villages whose activities have an impact on the NBCA.

There are more than 1,000 of such villages in the country for which forests and other natural resources in the NBCAs form an important part of their livelihoods (Manivong & Sophathirath, 2006). Most NBCAs are covered by management plans with implementations supported by different projects. Those plans were, however, only for the NBCA as a whole and have not yet been integrated into operational plans at village level. Land use planning and land allocation scheme have been undertaken in some of these villages with the purpose of securing land use rights and improving local livelihoods through effective use of lands for agriculture and forest resources. About 7,200 villages were reported to have completed LUP&LA in the whole country (MAF, 2006) but no disaggregated figure is available for village within and around the conservation forests. Village land use plans developed so far have been reported in various reports to be vaguely followed in most places and not followed by appropriate technical extension.

In addition to LUP&LA activities, several models have been developed and tested to better link conservation with development, to increase benefits for local communities. The government has, given the high potential of hydropower dams in the country, pioneered an approach to use hydropower levies for conservation management. These revenues can provide major benefits for overall management of the NPA system while ensuring direct benefits to local communities, as the funds from the hydropower levy can be used to fund activities related to ecotourism and NTFPs. The NAFRI-IUCN NTFP projects have developed many methods for local villagers living in and around the protected areas to obtain benefits from resource management, as mentioned in section 3.1.1.3. These include sustainable NTFP harvesting, inter-village collaborative conservation management, frog conservation measures and fish conservation zones. Another development effort in this direction is ecotourism. Furthermore, a variety of enforcement agents for NBCAs management were trialed either singly or in combination (more widespread), including those of the military (Phou Khao Khouay), provincial administration and district administration (Nam Phoui); state-owned enterprises (Nakai Nam Theun); village militia and guardian villages (Nakai Nam Theun, Dong Hua Sao, Phou Xiang Thong).

Despite many methods developed and trialed, Integrated Conservation and Development efforts in Lao PDR have not provided strong replicable management models for NBCAs. Although government policies to enable communities to participate in and benefit from natural resource management have been incorporated into many projects supporting biodiversity conservation and environmental protection, they have been mainly donor dependent. Little progress has been made in getting management plans implemented at village level with the decrease of donor project funding support. Further, none of the methods have shown real signs of creating a viable and sustainable participatory management situation in the absence of the project. NBCA management has been experiencing several problems and has been suffering from diverse pressures and threats from different sources. These include, as mentioned in several reports, illegal poaching, destructive collection of forest products due to market demand, destructive fishing, encroachment for timber and land for agriculture due to unclear boundaries, fire, conversion for commercial cash crop cultivation and tree plantation. Icem (2003) also indicated that infrastructure development (hydropower, roads); community growth and aspirations for economic improvement and livestock grazing have been important pressures. Increased income of urban residents and high cross-border demand e.g. from China, Thailand, Vietnam, Japan and Korea (Nooren and Claridge 2001, cited by Icem (2003) put severe pressures on the remaining NBCAs resources. Increased economic activity makes people in remote areas able to access the market. Degradation of NBCA resources has been continuing as a result of these pressures.

A combination of internal (e.g. administrative, policy, socio-political and cultural) and external problems (e.g. project design, donor agendas and technical assistance quality) were found to cause this lack of success of those projects. According to Icem (2003), decentralization and local empowerment is not a guarantee for environmental stewardship. The government's commitment to participatory natural resource management and benefit sharing was found to remain somewhat unclear in practice as mobilization of resources both technical and financial for NBCA management is still major problem. The benefits of biodiversity and watershed protection are undervalued in relation to the traditional "productive" sectors such as agriculture, infrastructure, logging etc. in resource-poor provinces. The current management of protected areas offers little incentive for conservation (UNDP, 2001).

The lack of inter-sectoral planning, unclear boundary demarcation, the lack of clear management plans at village level, tax enforcement of regulations, etc. are other major issues which need closer consideration. Intellectual property rights relevant to the use of forest resources, e.g. ethno-botany and ethno-pharmacology, are also an aspect related to conservation, requiring more efforts in in-depth study. Thus, there is need for quantitative and qualitative improvement of protected areas and to improve the effectiveness of their management.

Other approaches of collaborative forest management:

Besides the initiatives described above, there are also many other collaborative approaches that have been developed by other projects. With some limitations, only brief information about those initiatives is given. Those initiatives include the Village-Based Forest Conservation and Afforestation Project (V-FORCAP) operated in 4 villages of Nam Khanh Watershed, Luangprabang; the NAFRI-FAO-SNV project on marketing system development for NWFPs; Lao–DANIDA Tree Seed Project on community based seed source management and seed collection; etc. Each of these enhances local villagers in sustainable forest resource management by looking at incentive mechanisms that suit particular types of resources, specific project purposes and local requirements. Each has its own strengths and weaknesses but in general supports government policies on decentralized natural resource management. These have enriched CBFM approaches with a wider range of valuable lessons and options that could be readily applied in sustainable forest management in various contexts.

From the above efforts, collaborative forest management is found to gain firm ground for wide scale application especially within the state production forest. There are several options that have been developed through different initiatives, as described above showing a strong replication potential in other forest categories and with other types of resources. Challenges, however, remain and strong commitment of the government and other partners is needed.

3.1.3 Traditional Management Systems

Historically, villages in Lao PDR have a system of traditional ownership of the land and forest resources within village boundaries. The State legally recognizes the customary user rights of villages based on their traditions within the village boundary. Village authorities have the right and duty to enact local rules that are tailored to specific traditions and customary use, and have the right and duty to regulate land use within the village boundary. These rights (See Box 4) govern the traditional management system of village forests. However, participation can be considered lower than other types previously described due to the fact that use of forest resources tends to be individual or family based, without proper plans or much collaboration at other levels in terms of benefit sharing, collaboration on managing the resources, etc.

Under this system of forest management, certain levels of resource use planning might take place but clear forest management planning does not exist, except for certain rules and sanctions which are established by local villagers for certain specific purposes. This customary management system is practiced where government intervention in forest management is not available or is limited. It is found in both types of villages with and without land use planning and land allocation.

A participatory approach was used in land use zoning where Land Use Planning and Land Allocation (LUP/LA) activities took place, however village forests were left to be managed traditionally by villagers. The use of those village forests was based on villager's decisions. Most forests were distinguished according to simple classifications, such as village sacred forest, village use forest, village cemetery (same as sacred forest in many villages), village protection forest and village conservation forest (in some but not all villages). Generally there is no written forest management plan. Instead, rules and regulations are often non-written but mutually respected by the villagers.

In most villages where LUP or LUP/LA is completed, additional rules and obligations on the utilization of land, including forest resources are agreed upon in land use agreement between the district and the village authorities. Level of detail in terms of village responsibilities for forest management varies from place to place. In most cases, the written statement only provides general

Box 4: Customary Forest resource use rights

Forest category	Logging right	NTFP collection	Hunting	Reference law
1. Village Production forest	Maximum 5 m^3 per household for construction of house. Non-prohibited species.	Only non-prohibited species	Only non-prohibited species, in season	Forest law PM Decree 59 Regulation 535 Regulation 822
2. Village Protection forest	None	Only non-prohibited species	Only non-prohibited species, in season	Forest law Regulation 535 Regulation 822
3. Village Conservation forest (spirit forest)	None	Can collect but based on village tradition	None	Forest law Regulation 535 Regulation 822
4. Village degraded forest	None	Can collect	Only non-prohibited species, in season and with legal gear	Forest law Regulation 535 Regulation 822
5. NBCA, Prohibited areas	None	None	None	Decree 64 Regulation 524
6. NBCA, Management areas	Only for household use	Only non-prohibited species,	None	Decree 64 Regulation 524
7. Provincial and District Conservation forest	None	Can collect but refer to local authority	Can hunt but refer to local authority	No regulation at national level

Source: Extracted from NAFRI-NAFES-NUOL (2005). Improving Livelihoods in the Uplands of the Lao PDR. Volume 1. p. 33.

guidelines and rules for resource use and management within different categories of land use. There is no detailed specification on resource use by different zones within the village territory. A key role of the villagers in this type of forest management is protection of the forest from over-exploitation by both the villagers themselves and by outsiders. In the meantime, villagers enjoy their traditional rights for collecting NTFPs, fuelwood, and other materials for household use. Use of timber, however, has to be requested to village committees that will decide on the amount that can be used by individuals for household use, based on the economic status of the requesting family with higher priority to poorer and newly established families. Any violation against the agreed rules or any conflict is to be solved in village meetings. Serious offences and difficult cases are raised to the district level. In most villages, one to two village forest volunteers are appointed to oversee forest management activities. They are also responsible in collecting forest fees (mainly from tree cutting which varies from place to place).

Under the traditional forest management, a combination of factors, including migration, population pressure, increasing commercial value of resources, weak institutional capacity of the village organization often leads to the problem of mismanaged forest. Badenoch (1999) stated that the establishment of village rules which determine customary use is complicated by the long history of migration. There is considerable potential for conflict in determining whose customary rights take priority. Forest land conversion to agricultural land and other uses and change of tenure rights are common due to inefficient management of local authorities in enforcing existing regulations. In practice, there are usually no clear introductions on how to implement and enforce regulations at the village level. Weak institutions often lead to an abuse of power by wealthy individuals and private companies, particularly over the village commons. Severity of problems depends on potential commercial value of land (e.g. for tree plantation, livestock raising, etc.). Conversion of forest land to settlement area also depends on population growth.

Despite several associated problems, a slow pace of replication of a number of CBFM initiatives has resulted in traditional forest management system remaining the most widely followed in the country. According to Sisouphanthong *et al* (UNDP, 2001:76), the systems, however, must change in order to accommodate rapid population growth while also acknowledging the special role of forests in the livelihoods of rural people; the inherent conflict between the short-term interest of rural people and the long-term interests of foresters and the government; and the existence of powerful special interest groups in respect to forest resource.

3.1.4 Contribution of villagers to forest management through ecotourism

A tourism industry has been developed very fast in Lao PDR since 1990 when the country first opened its border for tourism. Tourist arrivals have increased from 14,400 in 1990 to 737,000 in 2000 and in 2005 reached over 1 million, bringing around $US 134 million in earning to the country. There are high demands for nature based tourism activities among the tourists from outside the country. This has led to the development of small scale ecotourism activities in linkage to biodiversity conservation and management with orientation towards conservation awareness raising, in some NBCAs during the 1990's.

The first community based eco-tourism project in Lao PDR actually started in 1999 when UNESCO, through grants from New Zealand and Japan, began the Nam Ha Sustainable Ecotourism Project in Luang Namtha province. The main objective of the project was to assist in poverty reduction in ethnic villages with limited access to social support services, while conserving forest biodiversity. Under this project, ecotourism was used as a tool to provide incentives to local villagers to actively take part in forest conservation. Villagers were directly paid from their involvement either as individuals, groups or villages in ecotourism activities and in return they had to protect natural environment to ensure a continuous flow of benefits. Experiences gained from Nam Ha Ecotourism Project have been widely expanded to most provinces of the country but site development has concentrated in provinces where NBCAs are located. Ecotourism activities (trekking, rafting, village overnight stay, elephant ride, kayaking, mountain biking, training on elephant riding, elephant show, wildlife watching, etc) have been expanded and become more diverse to attract tourists. The National Ecotourism Strategy and Action Plan (NETSAP) was developed in 2003 to further develop and promote ecotourism. The strategy sets out a framework to deliver socio-economic and environmental benefits to rural communities; conservation benefits to the National Biodiversity Conservation Area (NBCA); and, an expanding number of ecotourism products and services for the national and international tourists. A multi-sector Ecotourism Taskforce was established by the Lao National Tourism Authority (LNTA) to oversee and supervise the implementation of the strategy's objectives and action plans.

Up to date, there are eleven main ecotourism projects and programs involved in different aspects of ecotourism development and promotion in the country. Thirty three different stakeholders from government ministries and departments, mass organization, private sector, and in-country NGOs were identified as have been involved in ecotourism development.

A case study on forest based eco-tourism (FBE) in Lao PDR in 2006 revealed that, although varied in extent, FBE has become an important source of benefits. Five categories of beneficiaries comprising government authorities (Ministry of Finance (in form of national tax); tourism authorities at all levels; and NBCA units), tour operators (travel

Box 5: Benefit sharing in Nam Ha Ecotourism project 2001

Revenue items	Per cent
Tour office monitoring fee	5
NBCA trekking permit	7
Provincial guides	29
Village guides	2
Village accommodation	4
Local transportation	15
Food bought in village	12
Food bought in town	7
National tax	1
Guide office operation expenses	10
Village development fund	8

Source: *Steven Schipani1 & Guy Marris based on sample of operational receipt from October –*

agencies; tourism companies; hotels; etc.), private service businesses, villages and households in villages operating FBE, were identified to have directly and indirectly benefited from FBE. There has been no uniform benefit sharing system, either nationally or locally. Different FBE benefits have so far been shared among stakeholders at various hierarchical levels and places. The extent of benefit going to involved parties has varied and been governed by a number of internal and external factors such as sharing of the system, roles, fees and type of service. At the village level, FBE related income has generally been distributed among involved individuals/ households and village. If operated in form of group, the share has also gone to group funds. Box 5 gives examples of a benefit sharing system followed in Namha Ecotourism project, while Box 6 describes benefits of community based ecotourism in general terms.

The case study further revealed that forest based ecotourism has not only generated additional revenue for the country but also has made a substantial contribution to livelihood improvement of forest dependent villagers. It also helped to raise awareness of environmental conservation. Increased private sector involvement is also another key trend in this sector. Most FBE helps maintain good forests in and outside the conservation areas. However, a certain degree of human disturbance (i.e. poaching, encroachment, rubber plantation, etc.) is observed in some sites as villagers remain dependent on forest products for their livelihoods and income.

Nevertheless, since NETSAP has targeted NBCAs and provincial protected areas as main target sites for development, ecotourism is expected to become a more powerful incentive mechanism in conservation awareness raising, which would pull more people into getting involved in sustainable forest conservation activities.

Box 6: General benefits of Community Based Tourism

Benefits of Community Based Tourism	
Development Area	**Potential Development Benefits**
Economic	Sustainable and independent source of funds for community development Creates employment in tourism Increases household income Embeds development in local culture
Educational	Promotes the acquisition of new job skills Creates new professions in the village Imparts and encourages use of new knowledge in the village Cross-fertilisation of ideas with other cultures - promotes respect Fosters and promotes respect for local knowledge and skills
Social	Raises quality of life Promotes gender and age equality Builds capacity for community management organizations Fosters cultural exchange
Health	Promotes good hygiene Increase in and diversification of food production for tourists will improve nutritional status
Environmental	Promotes environmental responsibility Raises awareness of the need for conservation for tourists & villagers Promotes management of waste disposal

Source: Extracted from Upland Source Book, pp. 183

3.1.5 Smallholder plantations

In Lao PDR, communities, under the Forest Law, are given long term rights to use, manage and protect forest lands, either as individuals, groups or villages. Allocation of forest land has to go through a legal process in which interested individuals, groups or villages have to make an official request to concerned authorities with a detailed management plan. Agreement for actual utilization of land, depending on size of forest land and type of management, has to be signed between interested parties and the concerned authorities which would be the District, province, MAF, or Prime Minister Office (after being passed through the national assembly). According to the law, three main categories of forest lands are permitted which include natural forests (specifically for village forest land) for proper management and use by villagers according to an approved management plan, denuded land and unstocked/degraded forest lands for rehabilitation/planting. Allocation of forest land to individual and households is based on the numbers of available labor (i.e. 3 ha per labor) and the village land use plan.

There is little wood from plantations available for processing in Lao PDR (ADB PPTA, 2002). Most of the timber comes from natural forests which have continually been subject to increasing degradation. The government policy strongly promotes community and smallholder forest plantations within the LUP/LA and tree planting promotion schemes to achieve its long term goal 2020. The forestry sector strategy 2020 sets a target to increase forest cover to 53 per cent in 2010 and 70 per cent in 2020. Two main measures i.e. plantation and natural regeneration targeting 500,000 ha and 480,000 ha respectively, were set forth to achieve those challenging goals. The approach in forest plantation was: individual smallholders based plantations operated by farmers and communities as an option for raising family income for poverty alleviation and industrial plantation by private companies. Existing government policies and regulatory frameworks and mechanisms, although in need of improvements, provide an appropriate enabling environment for small scale and household based plantation forestry (ADB PPTA, 2002). Several institutions from central to village levels are mandated to provide legislative and technical advisory and support. Plantation registration is introduced to assure tenure rights. LUP/LA has been used as a tool for community and household based plantation development supported with other incentives mechanisms like land tax exemption, credit, subsidies and technical services.

Most plantations in the country have so far been initiated by individual households and mainly by their own investment. External support through several development projects has played a significant role, but mainly in community plantations. Government loans for tree plantations has also been made available to farmers through the Agriculture Promotion Bank, to promote commercial plantation for poverty reduction e.g. rubber plantations[6] in Louangnamtha (Manivong. K, 2004). The loan approval is based on the investment plan submitted by the village committee or group of farmers or growers association (Alton et al. 2005). Commercial species like teak, eucalyptus, para rubber and agarwood are the most prominent species planted in small monoculture plots. These species are also planted under an agroforestry system, home garden and line planting around homesteads and agriculture fields. Many other NTFP species especially paper mulberry, rattan, bamboo etc. are raised chiefly by households. Plot size varies from very small (few hundred square meters) to around five hectares depending on their resources, capital, land availability and labor. The average plot size of smallholder plantations is about 1.8 ha (ADB PPTA, 2002). The Para rubber study by Alton (2005) showed that well off families tend to have bigger plantations than those less well off, since they have more resources to invest and can also hire cheap local labor for different activities.

There are no statistics available on the number of families and the size of plantation in each village. A survey by ADB (2005) estimated the area of plantation forest to be around 95000 ha across the country with teak plantations in the north as the majority. Considering the increasing

[6] Rubber plantation is considered as forest plantation (as it is presently considered in Lao PDR).

interest and tremendous response by people in the country to planting agarwood and rubber during recent years, it would be quite safe to say the extent of household based plantations is more than 50,000 ha or more than 50 per cent of the total plantation area in the country. These are smallholder plantations, since most of teak was raised under this system. Based on this estimate, the villagers' contribution in forest management looks promising, especially in conserving existing natural forest. It is questionable, however, in actuality. It was reported that teak plantation in Louangprabang province was mostly raised in plots allocated for agriculture and thereby creating land use problems. Many farmers who planted teak ended up encroaching further into unallocated forestland as they had a shortage of agricultural land, particularly for rice production. Several incidences were reported with regards to villagers selling out their teak plantation plots to private companies or wealthier people outside the village. This is likely to instigate other social and management problems.

Smallholder plantations tend to follow unreliable sources of information and the boom over species has been up and down. It involves great risks in many aspects. Experiences from the Lao Tree Seed Project have shown that good quality seeds for preferred species are not enough or not available, or even if available are too expensive for small farmers to invest in. Unreliable quality seeds from whatever sources people could find were widely used for planting. Little considerations have so far been made on site suitability and other technical requirements of the species planted and proper maintenance. All these will inevitably cause a significant loss of revenue at the end. Since this type of forest plantation is an important intended government policy objective in poverty alleviation, necessary support and services from the government will need immediate attention to maintain momentum.

3.1.6 Community contribution to forest management through industrial plantation

The first efforts on industrial plantation in Lao PDR can be dated back to the early 1960s when the first eucalyptus and other fast growing species were planted (FAO cited in Lang, 2001). In 1967, Australia and Laos started discussion on the Lao-Australian Reforestation project. Under this project, Eucalyptus plantations were raised in different parts of the country but most of those failed because of a combination of factors such as poor maintenance, cattle and fire damage (Lang, 2001). The Asian Development Bank (ADB)-funded a "forestry development project" started in 1979 to promote industrial plantation. Eucalyptus was selected because it was already well known. During late 1980's, the Lao-Swedish Forestry program, which has been a major source of funding to the forestry sector, has included silviculture and plantation as important components and provided support to trials in Namsouang. During this period industrial plantation was started on a very small scale by donor project and state forest enterprises. Among the private companies, Burapha Group started *eucalyptus* planting from the beginning of 1990's.

In 1992, research on certain varieties of fast growing eucalyptus and acacia started at Namsouang under the Lao-ACIAR 'Improving and Sustaining Productivity of Eucalyptus in Asia project". In 1993, as a response to a Tropical Forestry Action Plan (TFAP) recommendations which was approved by the government in 1991, the Asian Development Bank funded a study on establishing plantation of fast growing trees for production of industrial wood for export. In the same year, the Plantation Division was set up within the Department of Forestry. This led to the establishment of the Lao-ADB Industrial Tree Plantation Project which started its operations in 1994 and ended in 2003. The number of private companies investing in industrial plantations has been growing since mid 1990s, although some failed during the Asian economic crisis. However, this system of forest management is still in its infancy stage.

Industrial tree plantation is usually initiated by private companies and state enterprises, although few are development projects and institutions (e.g. the Lao-ADB Tree Plantation; FORCAP, PAFO, etc.). Three distinctive forms of arrangement could be identified. These include: self-operated planting, contract planting and promotional scheme in tree planting.

The self-operated planting system is mainly practiced by big private companies on their own plantation sites. They employ villagers in different planting and maintenance operations. Their land has been acquired mainly through long-term lease from the government. This system does not provide any room for participation community. Conflicts with local communities concerning various aspects have been reported (see also Box 7).

Large land areas for continuous tree planting are difficult to acquire in Laos. Small companies generally approach local authorities which are usually district and village authorities for village common lands. Companies having/acquiring insufficient land for their own plantation usually adapt contract planting under which different levels of credit and types of contractual arrangement are practiced by different companies together with local villagers. Within the same company, arrangements can also vary in different locations. In practice, companies generally provide input such as seedlings and fencing materials on credit. They also provide technical advice on planting and maintaining trees, and inform the villagers on market standards for timber when trees are cut. All the costs are deducted from log sales in the year of the harvest. Some companies sell seedlings to households and promise to buy timber from them once they are harvested. In Sing district (Louangnamtha province), Chinese investors provided rubber seedlings for free to planting farmers (Shindele, 2004). Contract planting allows a certain degree of community participation but it is not really known how successful the system is. There are no statistics available on the number of families or extent of plantation areas covered by this system.

An industrial plantation promotional scheme has mainly been undertaken by the government by loan provision through the Agricultural Promotion Bank (APB). It is also found under some donor projects e.g. FORCAP. The scheme is most evident under the ADB loan for tree plantation. Under the Lao-ADB Tree Plantation Project the ADB loan to the government was provided through APB to companies and households willing to grow trees on a per hectare basis. As described in Lang (2001) report, companies have 12 years to repay with six years free of interest, followed by a seven per cent interest rate and have to provide 30 per cent of the money they required before the loan is approved. For farmers, they have no period free of interest and have to pay back 60 per cent of a seven per cent annual interest for the first six years. The entire loan plus interest has to be repaid in the seventh and eighth years. Approval of loan is based on the socio-technical-environmental assessment conducted by the concerned forestry offices in different locations.

Different arrangements practiced by these companies and project have had different degrees of success. Assessment made by ADB in 2003 showed that the growth of eucalyptus planted by villagers was poor due to improper maintenance. It is difficult to provide an exact or even approximate figure of the extent of forest plantation raised under each form of this system. According to ADB PPTA (2002), the ADB tree plantation project covered 12,396 ha during 1997 to 2001 in seven provinces. There were a total of 2621 households, 19 small individual enterprises and eight companies that participated in the project. There are no statistics on large tract of forest planted by private companies.

Contribution of local community to forest management through industrial plantation is seemingly less compared to other types of forest management. Industrial plantation has been mentioned by many sources to cause a number of problems (see some examples in Box 7). Low participation of local community might be an important cause.

Box 7 : Some examples of problems associated with industrial plantation

(1) *Village use/production forests and dense secondary forests are replaced with monoculture eucalyptus plantation:* In Laos industrial plantation is allowed on unstocked forest land which is defined as ***"previously forested areas in which the crown density has been reduced to less than 20 per cent due to logging or disturbances"***. According to Lang (2001), the definition of this unstocked forest allows companies to describe villagers' community forests, grazing lands, fallow land, regenerating forest areas and fields as unstocked forest which they can convert to fast growing tree plantations. This is the case that has happened in many places in Laos.

(2) *It decreases local community's access to NTFP:* NTFP resources which is a safety net for food security and an important source of income for local villagers are destroyed or decreased as forest lands around their villages are converted to plantation. Income of villagers is also reported to be decreased. Study visit report by Lao-Lux Development project revealed that villagers at Ban Phonethong are able to earn an income from planting seedlings (maximum of $2 per day in OJI Company) which are at the beginning of the plantation only. A very limited number of villagers can receive employment on a casual basis in plantation maintenance.

(3) *Loss of housing materials:* the company had cleared the land that the village had traditionally used as a resource stock for housing materials, particularly timber used as flooring beams and rafters.

(4) *Villagers get nothing in compensation for loss of village land:* Oji Company made a one off $50 per hectare payment in compensation to villagers for the loss over a 50 year period of the productive agricultural and forest lands that are presently being cleared. This is far below the market value of the land and the payment of this compensation was not being made directly to the villagers.

(5) *Loss of land for future settlement:* Plantation blocks the expansion of village settlement to suitable sites.

Sources: (1) Lao-LUX Development Project visit report to OJI Paper Company in Bolikhamsay
(2) Lang (2001)

Despite its least participatory approach and problems, industrial plantation tends to further expand. The new ADB project targets seven provinces (Vientiane Capital, Vientiane province, Bolikhamsay, Khammouane, Savannakhat, Salavanh and Champasack) for tree plantation. About 45600 ha are planned to be raised in 14 priority districts of these provinces targeting individual farmers, groups of farmers and smallholders/small enterprises. About 2000 households are targeted to plant trees in 9,600 ha for livelihood improvement by providing full package services. It will support 3-5 ha per household for small scale plantation. For large scale plantation, it will support seven small enterprises. Besides, there are also many large scale plantation companies in operation and on the pipe line (see section 4.5). How and to what extent these companies will involve local villagers in their operations is not clear.

4. CBFM related Policy, Laws, Regulations, and Guidelines

There is no 'legislated', formal policy that exists for the forestry sector in Lao PDR where policy prescriptions are mainly in the form of occasional statements, objectives of plans and program, declarations at national events and so on. This tends to vary in their emphasis (priority) and also in the content, which causes interpretational differences and confusion (Chandrasekharan, 2005).

However, community involvement in managing forests and natural resources has been recognized and strongly encouraged by the Government of Lao PDR since the first National Forestry Conference in 1989, emphasizing that the maintenance of healthy and productive forests is central to the rural livelihoods. In the conjunction, the conference set forth three main policy directions: (i) to preserve, improve, and increase biological capacity of the existing forests by improving existing systems of management and protection; (ii) to rationally use forests and associated resources to improve the country's economy and increase income for local poor; and (iii) to link forest rehabilitation, preservation and expansion with food security, commodity production and creation of permanent economic activities for upland populations. The policy directions were then backed up by the National Forestry Action Plan (NFAP) which was developed in 1990 and approved by GoL in 1991. Following this plan donor support was mobilized to assist GoL to implement six major programs identified. The NFAP was the first initiative of the GoL which advocated people's participation in Lao PDR.

In addition, a number of legal instruments were developed and promulgated to form a legal framework for the implementation of the programs identified in NFAP and support community participation in forest management. The most relevant of these instruments regarding community participation, include the Council of Minister's Decree No. 117 (1989); Prime Minister's Decree No. 169 (1993); Prime Minister's Decree No. 186 (1994); and the Forestry Law (1996). Provisions of these legal instruments were interpreted into a number of ministerial instructions, orders, and guidelines (see also Table 1).

The National Growth and Poverty Eradication Strategy (NGPES) in 2004 also stress the importance of forest resources for poverty eradication and highlight the need for community participation in planning and environmental resource management, and cultural preservation. The Forest Strategy 2020 (FS 2020), which was adopted in 2005, also claims the significance of forest resources for the improvement of local livelihoods, and provides clear policy objectives and targets for sustainable forest development up to year 2020.

Under FS2020, the major objectives are raised as; (i) to maintain a healthy and extensive forest cover as an integral part of rural livelihood support system including stable water supply and mitigation of natural disasters; (ii) to generate a sustainable stream of forest products for domestic processing and consumption, as well as improving export and create employment opportunities, and (iii) to preserve the existence of many species and unique habitats, which are threatened with extinction.

In order to fulfill these policy objectives, village based natural resource management has been brought to the center of the strategy. FS2020 identified a number of programs to guide CBFM actions (see Box 8).

The GoL also recognized rights and duties of villagers on natural resources management and utilization, which include (i) rights and duties of village as an implementing unit of government; (ii) rights and duties on ownership of land and forest resources; (iii) customary use rights of land and forest resources; (iv) rights and duties on village management of land and forest resources; (v)

rights and duties to monitor control and enforce land and forest resources; and (vi) rights and duties for conflict resolution of land and forest resource disputes (Sirivath and Sigaty, cited in Upland Source Book).

To materialize the above mentioned government policy, the GoL has developed and enforced a number of legal instruments to promote people's participation in sustainable natural resource management; and provide options for sustainable development. Those legal instruments are summarized in table 1.

Box 8: Key CBFM related programs and actions in FS2020

Capacity building and village participation:

- Provide adequate training to participating villages in sustainable land use and forest resource management in addition to Production Forest (PF) management.
- Ensure active participation of villages in PF management through explanation of management schemes and study tours to existing management sites.
- Strengthen village capacity to develop sustainable forest resource management especially NTFPs.
- Increase involvement of villagers in sustainable management and use of village forest land and agricultural land through village land use planning and land allocation.
- Establish regular monitoring of logging outside Production Forests, and especially within NBCAs and patches of rich forests, with villagers' cooperation.
- Assist villagers in forming groups or association for collective management of NTFPs including domestication, sales and processing.
- Establish micro-finance systems to support villagers investing in cropping, NTFP domestication and processing, livestock production and so on.
- Promote agro-forestry at household level to generate continuous income flow.

Strengthening legal framework

- Establish procedures respecting customary land and forest use by local people or compensating for losses upon development of commercial tree plantations.
- Consider the development of codes of practice or guidelines for tourism operators to provide a basis for development of responsible ecotourism that benefits rural communities and the environment while generating revenue for the nation.
- Clarify the definition and status of village forestry in the Forestry Law and prepare provisions for conversion of village forests including consultation processes and compensation.
- Establish a clear legal framework covering village land and forest resources that enables effective community based natural resource management including participatory land-use planning at village level reflecting actual land and forest use.

Enhancing planning practices

- Link harvesting plans with forest management plans developed by villages through the Village Land Use planning process.
- Prepare long-term NBCA development and management plans with participation of stakeholders including local villagers.
- Initiate schemes for rehabilitation of degraded watershed areas with villagers' participation.
- Assist villagers in formulating village land and forest management plans on the basis of overall land use plans and focusing on sustainable and equitable use of common land and forest resources, maintenance/rehabilitation of village watershed areas, income generation, etc.

Source: Forestry Strategy 2020

Table 1: Summary of key legal documents related to CBFM

Year	Legislation/Regulation	Effect of Legislation/Regulation	Status
1979	Council of Minister's Instruction No. 74/CM on Forest Management and Protection.	Regulation on national resource ownership; permission of forest conversion and logging; prohibition of shifting cultivation in watershed areas; traditional use by local people and promotion of tree planting for forest restoration.	The first forestry legislation, replaced by Council of Minister Decree No. 117/CM
1989	Council of Minister Decree No. 117/CM on Management and use of forest and forest lands	Regulation on clear definition of MAF's roles and duties concerning forestry, allocation of forest and forestland to villagers and various restrictions on logging by enterprises and local people.	Replaced by Prime Minister Decree No. 169/PM
1993	Prime Minister Decree No. 169/PM on management and use of forests and forestlands	Regulation on forest definition, ownership, forest categorization, contract management of forests (including contract with villagers) and prohibition of development and forestry activities in protection and conservation forests	Replaced by Forestry Law ,1996,
1994	Prime Minister Decree No. 186/PM on Delineation and Allocation of Land and Forest for Tree Planting and Forest Protection	Provides legal framework for the promotion of tree planting including exemption of land tax on tree plantations containing more than 1,100 trees/ha, ownership of planted trees (use, harvest, sale, transfer and inheritance) and exempt from royalty payment amongst other things.	Replaced by Forestry Law ,1996,
1996	MAF Instruction No. 0054/MAF on Right and Traditional Uses of Natural Forest Resources, and MAF Guideline No. 377/MAF	Ensures right and traditional uses of natural forest resources; mandates PAFO and DAFO to ensure that uses in conflict with customary rights; villagers are exempt from natural resource taxes and NTFP sale is permitted provided that villagers form groups or associations for commercial collection and that activities follow DAFO approved management plans.	Valid
1996	Prime Minister Order No. 3 on Continuation and Expansion of Land Management and Land and Forest Allocation	Provides a legal framework and guidelines for implementation of the land and forest allocation program.	Valid
1996	MAF Instruction Nº 822, on Land and Forest Allocation for Management and Use	Provides a legal framework and guidelines for implementation of the land and forest allocation program.	Valid
1996	Forest Law	Coincided with the provision of land law, provides fundamental legal framework for sustainable forest management, including management planning and forest operations that, in principle, permit villages to participate in sustainable management of forests. In addition,	Valid

		Forestry law highlights the government policy to encourage local participation in tree planting through the creation of various incentives, subsidies and regulations conducive to the investment in tree planting. Key relevant incentives and subsidies include the promotion and acknowledgement of ownership of forest plantation and rehabilitation on unoccupied lands and degraded forest land; recognition of property rights over trees and forest planted which can be owned, used, transferred and inherited.	
1997	Land Law	This law is the key legislation related to use and rights to land. Under the law, land can be leased to foreigners and Lao citizens for long-term use, inherited and transferred. Three hectares of land can be allocated per family labor for efficient use and more land may be leased for 30 years with potential extension. The law specifies authorities responsible for land allocation, land leasing and land titling. It also classifies land into categories for appropriate use and management and specifies the extent of land and duration for each use rights. Local administrative authority is given responsibilities to settle dispute and land problems.	Valid
2000	PMO Instruction No. 10/PM on Management of Forestry Operations	Ceased timber export; promoted finished and semi-finished forest products; logging only allowed in forest areas with a proven sustainable forest management plan; made reference to the involvement of local people participation as labor.	No longer valid
2000	Prime Minister decree no. 1, dated 11/3/2000	This decree has the objectives to improve development planning and budgeting systems at the decentralized levels in order to ensure integrity and reflection on actual development needs. The decree defines the province as strategic unit, district as planning unit and village as executing unit and further broadly specifies the roles and duties of each level in relation to planning of the socio-economic development at each level based on the national development strategies; planning and administrating investments and budget for long term, medium term and annual socio-economic development. Household level socio-economic information and existing constraints and potentials of the village were advised to be used as a basis for socio-economic development at the village level but there was no clear indication of how the village plans fit in the district plan.	Valid
2000	Decree No. 128 of the State Planning Committee (SPC)	This decree was an instruction document pursuing the Prime Minister No. 01/PM to instruct the ministers, equivalent organization	Valid

		chairmen, mayor, provincial governors concerning the formation of the province as strategic unit, district as planning unit and village as implementing/ executing unit. The decree defines different types of plans at each level along with guidelines, broad directions, and considerations to be made in its preparation and procedures for approval. Detailed instruction books on the preparation of plan and report writing are also prepared by the State Planning Committee for the district level. Three types of plans were defined for the provincial level, namely provincial socio-economic development plan; provincial investment plan and the state investment in the province.	
2000	Decree on Village fund of the Ministry of Finance No. 1823 dated 24/11/2000	This decree aims to establish the village finance which promotes income generation to the village that would contribute to strengthening the village to become an efficient basic unit in executing government financial plan. The decree authorizes to form a unit attached to the village administration to take responsibilities on village finance and clearly specifies its right, duties and responsibilities in the collection of some prescribed fees and taxes such as land tax, resource tax, tax on bids by entrepreneurs who have income less than 12 million kip a year, tax on river transport, animal registration fees, fees on different documents, income tax from the rent of equipment, income tax from construction enterprises and repair workshops within its responsibilities, market tickets and other duty taxes as officially authorized by the district. The village cannot issue any other special rules for collecting additional income apart from what is authorized by the district. The village, depending on the level of economic development in the area, will get a share from fees and taxes collected which ranges from four per cent for village located in highly developed economy to 50 per cent in remote mountainous villages. The decree highly promotes participation of local villagers and empowers them in resource management.	Valid
2000	MAF Instructions No. 856/AF.2000 on registration of forest plantation	The instruction provides details of procedures in the establishment of tree plantation and its registration to officially recognize tenure rights.	valid
2000	MAF regulation No. 196 on the development and promotion of sustainable	This regulation gives definition of plantation, plantation standards and Socio Technical Profiles requirements for tree plantation. The	Valid

	tree planting (15 August 2000)	regulation gives details on extent of land and permissions required for tree planting on private and public lands. It specifies procedures in tree planting, registration, plantation maintenance, monitoring, and harvesting. Supervising and technical assistance roles of PAFO, DAFO and village volunteer were set out. The regulation also contains provisions on rights over the plantation and details about different taxes related to plantation. The regulations are appropriately promoting tree plantations. However, standards and management referred to ought to be developed and rules related to harvesting and transportation need improvements (ADB PPTA, 2002).	
2001	MAF regulation No. 0535/MAF on Village Forest Management	Provides implementing guidelines for classification of forest land allocated to villages and clarifies the rights and responsibilities of villagers in protecting, conserving and using their forest. In addition, collection of NTFPs for sale is also recognized, with the condition that management plans are formed and approved.	Valid
2004	Politburo's Order No. 09 on the Establishment of Village and Village Cluster	Provides definition of, and directions and criteria for the establishment of villages and village cluster.	valid
2002	Prime Ministry 59/PM on Sustainable Management of Production Forest	Sets the basic principles for establishment and management of production forest areas. It mandates MAF to lead preparation of sustainable forest management plans in coordination with local authorities, to outline detailed implementation procedures and regulations and to determine principles for preparation and approval of detailed management plans. It also provides for delineation of production forest and management planning and acknowledges the participation of villages in all aspects of production forest management.	Valid
2003	MAF regulation No. 0204/MAF	Provides principles for the establishment of participatory sustainable forest in state production forest (SPF); roles and responsibilities of stakeholders in managing SPF; benefit sharing from logs and NTFPs	Valid
2003	MAF regulation No. 360/MAF	Prohibits harvest of NTFPs within NBCAs other than for customary use	Valid
2003	Land Law	Provides the framework for areas of land to be allocated (up to 25 ha can be allocated for agriculture and forestry for each labor unit available (to an organization or individual))	Valid

2003	Prime Minister Decree No. 32/PM	Provides a legal basis for the integration of tourism with forest conservation.	Valid

In addition, there are regulations which define roles and responsibilities of government organizations in CBFM. These are explained in section 5 below.

In spite of policy in favor of CBFM and intensive development efforts on legal framework, insufficiency and drawbacks in this legal framework are unavoidable. The Forest Law, for instance, allows different types of management, as well as regulations and orders. However, it only allows limited participation of local people in forest management and does not legally ensure sufficient rights or provide incentives particularly for the management of production forest (See also World Bank, 2003).

In addition, the existing laws and regulations still lack provisions concerning conversion of village forest. In particular, they do not explain the process of consultation between villages and development agencies, nor on the process of compensating villagers in the case of loss of use rights. More importantly, laws and decrees as stated above have not been further adapted into technical instructions and guidelines for implementing CFBM. In particular, PM Decree no. 59/2002 and MAF regulation No. 0204/2003 require further clarification.

Regardless of deficiencies of the legislative instrument, the general weakness of legal enforcement is observed. The points of weakness are further elaborated as follows;

- Dissemination of information on new legislation is inadequate. It is often unclear which legislation was repealed (invalid) and what new rules replaced them.
- Laws, legislation and rules are disseminated in a top-down manner through the Government administration. However, copies of legal documents are often unavailable for staff in the lower levels of government administration.
- There is a shortage of staff and a lack of organizational support to enforce laws, rules and regulations
- There is no monitoring to ensure that rules are being enforced.
- The existing legal documents (i.e. rules, orders etc.) are not systematically updated. They are often scattered and have not been compiled into an accessible formal document (i.e. one volume of a legislation handbook or kept in one place). This makes it difficult to know what rules apply to particular situations.

5. CBFM Institutional Arrangement and Management Support

5.1 Government agencies

In Lao PDR, there are many government organizations responsible for natural resource management. The Prime Minister's Office is the highest in the government administrative hierarchy. The main responsibilities of the office include coordination of relevant government sectors; development of policy and legal instruments; and to oversee overall implementation of

policy, and legal instruments as well as the implementation of national socio-economic development plans.

The main responsibilities for forest and forest land management, including community forestry, lie within the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (MAF). Responsibilities include: 1) materializing the national forest policy and setting the targets; 2) formulating appropriate policies, strategies, legal frameworks; and 3) supporting conditions to enable sustainable forest management and utilization.

At the national level, MAF is assisted by its line departments including the National Agriculture and Forestry Extension Service (NAFES), Department of Forestry (DoF), the National Agriculture and Forestry Research Institute (NAFRI), while the Provincial Agriculture and Forestry Office (PAFO) and District Agriculture and Forestry Extension Office (DAFEO) provide assistance at local level. While DoF focuses on policy development and legislation, as well as monitoring and evaluation at the macro level, NAFRI and NAFES focus on the implementation of government policies at micro level such as developing, testing, and implementing sustainable forest management models with PAFO and DAFEO, as well as village authorities and village forest associations. In addition, NAFRI and NAFES are responsible to support capacity building for PAFO, DAFEO and other partners at local levels.

With regard to community forestry (especially production forest and village forest), PAFO is responsible for the implementation of sustainable management of production forest areas, and monitoring the implementation of forest management. DAFO, on the other hand, is responsible for the organization of the implementation of forest management plans together with village authorities and Village Forest Associations (VFAs). At this level forest management activities include forest inventory and planning, harvesting and sale of forest products.

Other main government agencies that provide direct support to CBFM include financial banks, especially the APB which provides loan services to facilitate the development process. In addition, mass organizations including the Lao Youth Union, Lao Women Union and the National Reconstruction Front provide significant support to the implementation of CBFM. In particular, support was offered in the areas of community organizing, direct implementation of CBFM projects and development fund schemes, etc.

5.2 Training Institutions

Educational institutions such as the National Universities are also active in support of forest management. Their role in CFBM is described as follows:

1. **University level**

   Currently there are three National Universities including the National University of Laos (NUOL) in Vientiane Capital, Champasack University in Pakse, and Souphannouvong University in Luang Prabang. The former two have Faculties of Forestry while the subject of forestry will be taught in other faculties at the new Souphannouvong University.

   The main role of these universities in CBFM is to build community based forest management into their curricula. In addition, lecturers from the universities can conduct community forestry research and studies; and develop and test community forestry models.

   The Faculty of Forestry at NUOL already has its own research and demonstration sites on community forestry known as “Training and Model Forestry” in Sangthong District of the

Vientiane Municipality (see section 3.1.2.1) which was initially supported by PROFEP. Currently, the site is being used to conduct applied research and studies for students and to demonstrate community forestry models.

2. Non-degree level:

In addition to the universities, there are numbers of vocational colleges and schools that teach forestry. These institutions include;

1. Forestry and Agriculture Technical School in Bolikhamsai province (under the MAF).
2. Luangprabang Agriculture and Forestry College, having a sub-centre in Xieng Ngeun (formerly the Forestry College, under the MAF).
3. Southern Agriculture and Forestry School in Pakse, Champasak (under the MAF).
4. Agriculture and Forestry Training Center, Savannakhet (under the MAF).
5. Agriculture and Forestry Training School, Vientiane (under the Ministry of Education).

These schools and training centers are mandated to teach comprehensive knowledge on forestry with special emphasis on participatory agriculture and forestry approach. Students completing their trainings from these institutions are expected to work as extension staff at DAFEO and village levels.

These institutions also play a key role in providing facilities and training services for members of VFOs as well as local extension staffs on specific skills required for community forestry.

There are numbers of training sessions that are also arranged outside of these institutions for local extension staffs and villagers. However, the majority of trainings are organized by individual projects and programs. These trainings have covered a wide range of topics from technical skills for sustainable forest management, participatory tools and techniques; village organizing, basic management skills, including basic skills needed for small forest enterprises, development and forestry business. These informal trainings are particularly suited for the grass root level.

5.2 Community

In Lao PDR, the village is recognized as a legal entity and a formal unit of the government. It is also one of the four levels of forest management organizations authorized to enact rules and implement the government policy. With this recognition, villages have the right to establish village forest units to assist local authorities in the management, conservation and protection of forests within the village boundary. Villages can form Village Forest Management Associations (VFMA) to participate in the management of state production forests on a contractual basis. In line with government regulation, village authorities also have the right to enact village rules to regulate land and forest resource use within the village boundaries.

The State legally recognizes customary user rights of villages based on their traditions to use natural resources available within the village boundary. The customary user rights allow local people to use five m^3 of timber per household for housing, as well as collection, use and sale of NTFPs. It also allows them to hunt non-protected wildlife species, and use degraded forest for agriculture, planting, and grazing. Customary use rights are applied case-by-case for each forest category.

Local authorities, together with DAFEO can allocate land and degraded forest lands within the village boundary to individuals and organizations for different purposes, such as for converting into rice paddy field (one ha), planting fruit trees (three ha) and other types of trees (three ha),

cultivating upland crops (three ha) and livestock grazing (15 ha)[7]. The size of land allocated to households tends to differ from one village to the other, depending on land availability within each village.

Based on the recognition of authorized rights, communities in Lao PDR have participated and shared benefits from forest management in all forest categories. The mode and level of participation varies depending on government regulation and community's interests in forest management.

In all villages with some forests, a forest management unit is established and is responsible for forest management, utilization, conservation and protection of forests allocated to the villages as well as areas of state forests located within a village boundary. The unit works closely with DAFEO in order to ensure local villagers' rights and to take responsibility in the management.

Village Forest Association (VFA) is another form of village organization participating in forest management. This organized group of villagers mainly participates in the management of state production forests on a contractual basis. Similar participation in the management of allocated village forests is also found in many villages. Individual participation, on the other hand, is mostly found in commercial forest plantation -either on land received from land allocation schemes or on concession lands.

5.3 Civil Society

Unlike in other countries in the region where civil society is developed, CBFM initiatives in Lao PDR have been influenced by government with supports from international organizations, donor community and international NGOs.

5.4 Networks and Federations

Networking in the area of CBFM in Lao PDR has not been well developed. No CBFM associated federation has been formed up to this date. Although CBFM has been recognized for its importance in sustainable forest management, networking and coordination on this issue has been sporadic and very limited.

One of the first efforts on networking and coordination related to community forestry was initiated by DoF in the early 1990s with support of CUSO and TERRA. A Community Forestry Unit was established within the former CPAWM at the Department. However, the initiative was dissolved in 1999 by the restructuring of DoF (Braeutigam, 2003).

Currently, there few functional networking forums in place. One forum was established through the formation of the Lao thematic group on Rural Development and Food Security in 2003 with the support of FAO and other government agencies, bilateral donors, international NGOs, and the media. The main purpose of the formation of this thematic group is to provide an informal inter-agency forum to exchange and share information on best practices in rural development. Sustainable forest resource management is one of the key sub-themes. Some areas of importance have been identified for further discussion within the group including land and forest allocation policy, stabilization of shifting cultivation and its impact on food security and natural resource management planning at village level (Braeutigam, 2003).

[7] Numbers in parenthesis indicate the maximum area allocated per household labor.

A new network on NTFP was established in July 2004 after the Joint Workshop on NTFP Networking in Lao PDR. This workshop was co-organized by NAFRI, RECOFTC and SNV. Currently, SNV is actively running the network.

5.5 Private sector

Although government policy supports private sector development, its role in CFBM remains weak. Direct private involvement in CBFM is still limited to contract plantation and participation in the management of National Biodiversity Conservation Areas (NBCA). While private investors may provide technical services, they are not directly involved in the management of state production forests or village forests.

With government policy supporting forest plantation, private sector involvement in commercial forest plantation in Lao PDR will likely increase (ADB 2005). The government sees plantation as a way to increase the country's forest cover, while contributing to poverty reduction by generating revenue for the national and local economy. Large scale forest plantation also includes community participation to provide benefits for local people. The benefits gained from this kind of intervention tend to vary. For instance, farmers who have lands and are capable can gain benefits by working with the investors. Those families that do not have land will not benefit from the investment. Instead, they will have to sell their labor or rent out their land (and even under some circumstance sell the land) to gain income. Some communities may also benefit from the development of infrastructure including road and other basic facilities provided by private sectors in connection with their investment.

While data is limited there are numbers of private companies involved in the sector including; (i) Bouarapha Group, (ii) Oji Paper Company of Japan, which purchased BGA Lao Plantation Ltd. (about 40,000 ha in Khammouane and Bolikhamxay province), (iii) Phoenix Pulp and Paper Company of Thailand (12,000 ha in Savannakhet province), (iv) Advance Agro Pulp and Paper, Ltd of Thailand (20,000 ha in Savannakhet province), and (v) Aditya Birla Group of India's Pulp and Fiber Business (50,000 ha). There are other companies that have shown interest in forest plantations in Lao PDR.

Furthermore, there are other types of private sector involvement which are emerging in conjunction with ecotourism. The emerging importance of the tourism sector has drawn more attention towards eco-tourism, and numbers of tour operators are seeking opportunities to develop new tour destinations.

5.6 Donors

Many donors have funded projects and program (both bilateral and multilateral) that supported the forestry sector over the last decade. International donors have provided technical and financial support for the development of models on forest management. They have also tested, and developed legal framework, and contributed to human resource development. Furthermore, many projects have supported research on key issues pertaining to forest management.

The main contribution of international donors, and organizations, and NGOs on the development of CBFM are summarized as follows:

Sweden/Sida is one of the main donors that have been providing support to the forestry sector development for more than three decades. For CBFM, Sida provided financial and technical support in developing and testing community based forest management systems such as the "Joint Forest Management" in Dong Kapho State Production Forest, Savannakhet. In addition, Sida supported a forestry sector pilot study that promoted sustainable forest harvesting from 1997-2000. Sida continues to support forestry research through the Lao-Swedish Upland Agriculture and Forestry Research Project, which is housed under NAFRI. A forestry research component of the project is searching for best models for CBFM, and ways to scale up the model.

The **World Bank** has also played a key role in developing the forestry sector in Lao PDR. The first contribution in CBFM was under the Forest Management and Conservation Project (FOMACOP) during 1995-2001. The project developed and tested a participatory sustainable forest management model, known as "Village Forestry" in two state production forests in Savannakhet and Khmaouane provinces. In these provinces, the project also introduced the first sustainable forest certification based on the international standard. Furthermore, the project supported the development of a legal framework on community based forestry.

While FOMACOP was terminated in 2001, the World Bank and the Finland government resumed their support to GoL under a new project, the Sustainable Forest Management and Rural Development Project (SUFORD). The project is currently operating in eight state production forest areas in four southern provinces of the country (Khammouane, Savannakhet, Champasack, and Saravanh). Project activities are similar to the earlier FOMACOP, but a greater emphasis is placed on scaling up Village Forestry approaches coupled with forest based rural development activities.

While Sida, the World Bank and GoF's supports were concentrated in CBFM in state production forests, **ADB** has also been involved in CBFM through an Industrial Tree Plantation Project (ITPP). The project is currently under NAFES. The project has been working with small holder family groups and forest plantation enterprises to plant fast-growing exotic tree species (e.g. Eucalyptus and Acacia) for industrial purposes. The project began 10 years ago in Vientiane Capital, Vientiane, Bolikhamxay, Khammuane, Savannakhet, Saravane, and Champasack provinces. In addition, ADB has also assisted the forestry sector of Lao PDR through a technical assistance project, the Poverty Reduction in Upland Communities through Improved Community and Industrial Forestry.

JICA also supports CBFM through FORCAP and FORCOM projects focusing on watershed management with emphasis on forest rehabilitation and conservation. Similarly, **GTZ** provided support though NAWACOP in integrated rural development activities, part of which was community based forest plantation.

With regards to CBFM related to forest conservation in NBCAs, IUCN and SNV have been active. IUCN supported initiatives (NAFRI-IUCN NTFP project), operated during 1995-2001 in Oudomxay, Champasack and Salavan provinces. The project focused on the conservation of forest bio-diversity by promoting sustainable extraction of non-timber forest products (NTFPs) at community and provincial levels. SNV initiatives are also related to NTFP based CBFM, with a greater focus on NTFP policy development and networking.

Others important supporters of CBFM include FAO with support on marketing system development for NTFPs, and IDRC (Canada) supported research on bamboo and rattan.

5.7 International Research and Training Organizations

A single important regional training organization actively involved in CBFM in the Lao PDR is the Regional Community Forestry Training Center for Asia and the Pacific (RECOFTC). Since its constitution, many Lao forestry staff have been trained at RECOFTC on community forestry. A number of staff have also received support to participate in workshops and conferences organized by RECOFTC to share relevant knowledge and experiences on community forestry. Linkages between MAF and RECOFTC have strengthened, especially through an MoU signed between RECOFTC and NAFRI in June 2006 which will build stronger ties between the two institutions.

5.8 Linkage between the institutions in relation to CBFM

In general, linkages between CBFM related institutions have not been systematically developed and coordinated; but they have been conducted on a sporadic basis at a limited scale. There is no formal network for CBFM. However, individuals and organizations exchange information through informal meetings and workshops. International NGOs also use forums to exchange information on CBFM.

6. Main Achievements, Lessons Learned and Challenges

6.1 Main achievements

With a clear policy direction and commitment of GoL and strong support from a wide range of international partners, significant achievements have been made in the development and application of CBFM approaches in Lao PDR during the last decade.

Main achievements include:

- A variety of CBFM models developed and tested for different forest categories at different scales under varying socio-economic conditions and provide a menu of practical options for sustainable forest management;
- Among the options, some models, especially those developed for state production forests, have increasingly gained recognition as being suitable forest management models and have been used for further development and replication.
- The practice of CBFM has built a good foundation for rural development as well as for the livelihood improvement of local communities, thereby making a contribution on poverty eradication.
- It has also built local capacity and empowerment in line with the decentralization policy of GoL
- CBFM projects have raised awareness of the importance of forest functions and its values.
- Through participation in CBFM, local villagers have been empowered, particularly through development of local institutions such as VFA and the development of these local institutions to share the benefit of forest resource management.
- The CBFM experiences have had a positive impact on social equity. CBFM projects tried to share benefits of natural forest resources among stakeholders in the society
- CBFM contributed to changes of forest management practices and approaches towards sustainable forest management.

- Models have reflected government policy on shifting cultivation stabilization, land use planning and land allocation, rural development, and poverty eradication.
- The experiences of CBFM have built a foundation for MAF, further improvement of forest management, reformation of forest policies, and a significant shift from state led to participatory forestry.
- These experiences helped to develop legal frameworks (Forest Law as well as bylaws, regulations and instructions on forest management) in support of sustainable forest management

6.2 Lessons learned

- Level of participation is a key factor affecting communities' contribution to forest management but does not guarantee social acceptance. The question of who among the partners prefers, and what resource is managed, remain a powerful influence deciding a scale of application. As it is at present, Collaborative Forest Management gains higher recognition than Participatory Forest Management in state production forest regardless of level of participation.
- Many initiatives developed are deemed appropriate for different ecological, environmental and social contexts. Progress in expansion, however, has been slow due to several reasons including insufficient budgets or human capacity, lack of supporting legal instrument, weak legal enforcement as a result of insufficiency of legal and institutional support, ineffective dissemination, and etc. Another factor that has slowed down the pace of CBFM expansion has been the lack of technical instructions and guidelines for the actual implementation, In addition, the scaled up coverage of CBFM has been attributed mainly to donor funded project support and has not clearly streamlined into ordinary government projects and programs. In spite of increasing CBFM efforts, no proper institutional arrangement has been developed and roles and responsibilities among stakeholders are not clear. Consolidation and institutionalization of these initiatives are, therefore, needed for wide scale application.
- Contribution of local communities in SFM seems to be promising, if considered individually for each type of forest management, collectively they are not well integrated into the overall land use system. A holistic planning approach combining both forest management system and land use is, therefore, necessary.
- Replication of good lessons is constrained by limited capability of implementing staff at field level, which is again resulting from limited dissemination and information sharing, as well as capacity building efforts. The lack of appropriate extension system and networks and government services are other significant contributing factors.
- Involving local people in forest management is a long term learning process, multidisciplinary in terms of subject areas and needs continuous support from the government.
- Most projects have an incentive mechanism to encourage participation. Lesser incentive when project draws out brings about a slow progress or failure to continue. Awareness raising would be an important component of the project to ensure the continuity of the initiatives.
- In the present NBCA management, decentralization and local empowerment is not a guarantee for environmental stewardship. The benefits of biodiversity and watershed protection are undervalued in relation to the traditional "productive" sectors such as agriculture, infrastructure, logging etc. in resource-poor provinces. Lack of alternative economic opportunity and weak enforcement mechanisms also lure villagers towards resource extraction rather than conservation.
- Local leadership is a decisive factor for the success of CBFM

6.3 Challenges to Confront

- Decentralized natural resource management requires strong capacity at the grassroots level. Mobilization of human resources to meet this requirement is not only problematic, but requires long-term commitment. Channeling sufficient funds to support the activities is another challenge for the government.
- While developing detailed legal instruments is a difficult task, the ability to enforce the legislation, and disseminating the information is much more challenging.
- Unsustainable land uses and forest management practices remain a threat and pressure to existing forest resources. Speeding up replication of promising CBFM lessons requires a strong commitment from all stakeholders.
- While many useful lessons in involving local communities in SFM are in place, consolidation and institutionalization of those available lessons remain a challenging task to speed up wide scale application.

7. Recommendations

Acknowledging lessons learned and challenges mentioned above, the following key actions are proposed.

- Clear resource boundary is necessary for successful SFM. The government should, therefore, ensure that participatory LUP/LA is completed throughout the country.
- Speeding up the consolidation of a participatory management model for NBCAs. This should be immediately followed by preparation and implementation of operational plans. Inclusion of a conservative income generating project such as an ecotourism project, for example, might be considered.
- Consolidating e lessons for the remaining forest categories (village forests, protection forest, etc.), and hastening an institutionalization process. NAFRI and NAFES should take a lead in these processes.
- A number of improvements in the legal framework are necessary to support the wider application of CBFM approaches. The actions necessary for improvements include:
    - Development and issuance of MAF regulations on the management of Protection and Regeneration Forests ;
    - Clarification of definition and status of village forest in the Forest Law;
    - Preparation of technical instructions and guidelines to implement relevant decrees and regulations such as PMD 59/2002 and MAF regulation No. 0204/2003;
    - Enhancement of dissemination of related legislation to all stakeholders;
    - Simplification of regulations concerning all aspects of tree plantation management from planting to harvesting, transporting and exporting;
    - Establishment of procedures to convert temporary land use certificates to long term rights (land titles) without undue burden on small holders;
    - Establishment of a clear legal framework covering village land and forest resources that enables effective community based natural resource management including participatory land-use planning at village level reflecting actual land and forest use;
    - Conduct training on legal drafting and implementation for relevant staff in MAF.
    - Institute committees or working groups for different forestry sub-sectors to be involved in consultation or for multi-institutional drafting teams for key legislation
- Capacity building at different levels should be seen as priority actions. Particular consideration should be made to the following aspects:
    - Building up capacity of DAFEO and participating villagers in all necessary areas and skills;

- Allocating adequate financial resources to support the implementation of CFBM;
- Establishing micro-finance systems for self-support at local level in the long run;
- Providing adequate training to participating villages in sustainable land use and forest resource management.

- Develop mechanism of exchange of information across all associated hierarchical levels as well as between stakeholders to support CBFM at field level.
- Introducing holistic approaches into planning system.

8. Main CBFM Projects and Programs in Lao PDR

Many projects and programs have contributed to the CBFM in Lao PDR since the early 1990s. These projects and programs have worked on different forms of CBFM, but most efforts have been paid to sustainable forest management in production forests. While some of them are already phased out, many are in operation at the present time. Main figures of the key projects and programs are described below. For additional summary of projects and programs, please see Annex 3.

8.1 Joint Forest Management Project (JFM)

Name of the project:	Joint Forest Management Project (JFM)
Donor support:	Sida, Sweden thorough Lao Swedish Forestry Programme Phase IV
Level and type of financial support:	Grant
Implementing agency:	FIPD/DoF
Project period:	1994-2000
Location and coverage:	Worked with 14 villages in three districts (Xonbury, Phine and Phalansay) with forest area of 9,500 ha.
Long term Objective	To assist the government of Lao PDR in developing models for sustainable forest management to ensure sustainable multiple-use of forest resources adjusted to the social, cultural, economic, and ecological context of the country.
Immediate objectives	• To implement a partnership between the villages and the State for the management of Dong Kapho State Production Forest with Villages around Dong Kapho SPF • To implement participatory land allocation and land-use planning in villages around Dong Kapho State production forest • To implement participatory village planning and management of village forests around Dong Kapho SPF • To facilitate village development in villages around Dong Kapho
CBFM focus	Development and tests of sustainable forest management models with different degrees of local participation in state production forest and village forest, called "Joint Forest Management".
Current status	The project ended in 2000; concept and methodologies have been used for the development of SUFORD initiatives; and all Forest Management Areas (FMAs) have been taken over by SUFORD

8.2 Forest Management and Conservation Programme (FOMACOP)

Name of the project:	Forest Management and Conservation Programme (FOMACOP)
Donor support:	Co-funded by World Bank (Loan); FINNIDA (grant); GEF (Grant); and GoL;
Level and type of financial support:	Mixed between grant and loan; USD 20 millions
Implementing agency:	DoF with collaboration of respective PAFOs, DAFOs, and local authorities
Project period:	1995-2001
Location and coverage:	Worked in two production forests (Dong Sithouane, Savannakhet and Dong Phouxoy, Khammouane) with a total area of about 145,000 ha of natural forest in 51 villages.
Long term objectives	• To expand these systems beyond the pilot sites; and • To continually develop, test and improve other systems elsewhere.
Immediate objectives	• To develop & trial pilot schemes that improve the implementation of sustainable forest management & biodiversity conservation systems • To strengthen villagers' and forestry staff's capacity to implement these systems, and to seek acceptance for the developed systems as a basis for expanding their implementation; • To help develop national strategy guidelines and a legal framework to support village forestry and sustainable forest management
CBFM focus	• Development and testing of models of village forestry and strengthening and enabling the legal framework for village forestry.
Current status	The project ended in 2000 with one more year extension; concept and methodologies have been modified for the development of SUFORD initiatives; and all FMAs have been taken over by SUFORD

8.3 Sustainable Forestry and Rural Development Project (SUFORD)

Name of the project:	Sustainable Forestry and Rural Development Project (SUFORD)
Donor support:	Co-funded by the World Bank (Loan), the GoF (Grant) and the GoL.
Level and type of financial support:	Mixed between grant and loan worth 16.45 millions US Dollars
Implementing agency:	NAFES with collaboration of NAFRI, DoF, STEA, respective PAFOs, DAFEOs, and village authorities
Project period:	2003 -2008
Location and coverage:	Working in eight production forests, covering a total area of about 655.000 ha in 8 districts of Khammouane, Savannakhet, Champasack; and Salavanh provinces with 413 villages
Objective	• To improve the policy, legal and incentive framework enabling the expansion of sustainable, participatory forest management throughout the country by assisting the Govemment in its implementation of policy reforms described in its Letter of Forest Management Policy; • To bring the country's priority natural production forests under participatory sustainable forest management (PSFM); and • To improve villagers' well-being and livelihoods through benefits from sustainable forestry, community development and development of viable livelihood systems.
CBFM focus	Support services for sustainable forest management (sectoral policy reform support; establishment of the production forest area system; forest management guidelines and procedures; strengthening sustainable forest management capacity); (ii) Sustainable forest management and village development (participatory sustainable forest management; and (iii) village development); and Forestry sector monitoring and control.
Current status	Under operation

8.4 NAFRI-IUCN NTFP Project

Name of the project:	NAFRI-IUCN NTFP Project,
Donor support:	The Royal Netherlands Embassy,
Level and type of financial support:	Grant; worth 3.7 US Dollars
Implementing agency:	NAFRI & IUCN
Project period:	July 1995 to September 2001
Location and coverage:	Originally worked in 6 districts of Oudomxay, Champasack, and Salavanh provinces, later on the project expanded into 2 other districts
Long term objectives	• To conserve forest bio-diversity by promoting sustainable economic exploitation of non-timber forest products (NTFP) at community and provincial levels.
Objective	• To remove some of the poverty-related factors that drive over-exploitation of NTFPs by local people; • To empower local people to better control the access and use of forests by outsiders; and • To organize local people to better coordinate their own behavior through institutional building.
CBFM focus	Demonstrating sustainable systems of NTFP use that contribute to forest and biodiversity conservation; developing an expansion strategy; and laying the groundwork for a national management strategy for NTFPs
Current status	Terminated in 2001; results have been used in NTFP policy formulation; and some field experiences have been used in other areas, especially experiences from NTFP marketing group in Ban Nampeng, Oudomxay province

8.5 Nam Ngum Watershed Conservation Project (NAWACOP)

Name of the project:	Nam Ngum Watershed Conservation Project (NAWACOP)
Donor support:	Co-financed, DED, KfW, WFP
Level and type of financial support:	Grant, level of funding not known
Implementing agency:	GTZ & DoF, LGPPDC,
Project period:	1995-2003
Location and coverage:	Worked with 24 villages in three districts (Paek, Khoun and Phaxay districts) of Xiengkhouang Province.
Long term Objective	• To involve people in target areas in sustainable management of natural resources, soil, forests and improve their livelihood system • To develop and implement integrated models for sustainable natural resource management
Immediate Objective	• Create a basis for sustainable management with active participation of the target group. • Promote gender-specific income options. • Improve ability of district and provincial institutions to implement participatory, sustainable resource management. • Inform the target groups about government services and methods of family planning. • Enhance the capacity of national institutions to develop a strategy for watershed management and implementation of land allocation.
CBFM focus	Integrated Watershed Management replaced the old focus on soil conservation issues with a more comprehensive approach focusing on community resources management, poverty alleviation and food security
Current status	Terminated, follow up action is not known

8.6 Forest Conservation and Afforestation Project (FORCAP)

Name of the project:	Forest Conservation and Afforestation Project (FORCAP)
Donor support:	JICA
Level and type of financial support:	Grant, level of funding not known
Implementing agency:	DoF
Project period:	July 1998 – 2003
Location and coverage:	15 target villages in Hinheup district, Vientiane province
Long term Objective	• To contribute to the implementation of the Forest Watershed Management Plan of the Lao PDR by establishing technical and management methods for forest conservation and afforestation in the Nam Ngum Watershed Area. • To prepare a concrete action plan for forest management and stabilization of shifting cultivation. This will be implemented by local people and local governments at model villages in the Watershed Area.
Immediate Objective	• to enhance the full participation of local people in the whole process of Project Cycle Management (planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation); • to promote forest conservation and afforestation activities and improve the living conditions of villagers through village development action plans; • strengthen the capability of local staff through training and the implementation of project activities; and • to enhance the cross-sector coordination at District level.
CBFM focus	Supporting district authorities land allocation and preparation of forest management plans in village forest; developing forestry technology and systems for participatory forest conservation and reforestation; and providing alternative job opportunities to slash and burn cultivation.
Current status	Terminated with no extension

8.7 Nam Ha Ecotourism Project

Name of the project:	Nam Ha Ecotourism Project
Donor support:	NZODA and IFC
Level and type of financial support:	Grant, worth 96,884 US dollars
Implementing agency:	UNESCO-Lao National Tourism Authority
Project period:	October 1999 and October 2002
Location and coverage:	Eight villages in Nam Ha NBCA, Louang Namtha province
Long term Objective	• To create an economically viable ecotourism development model that assists in the fight against poverty and contributes to the conservation and protection of Lao PDR's cultural and natural heritage.
Immediate Objective	• to develop an economically viable community-based ecotourism model that: - Ensures tourism contributes to the conservation of the natural and cultural heritage of Lao PDR; - Involves local communities in the development and management of tourism activities; - Uses tourism as a tool for integrated rural development; - Provides training and human capacity building skills to tourism providers and local communities; - Integrates public and private sector investment in culturally and environmentally sustainable tourism; - Assists communities to establish cultural and nature tourism activities in and around the Nam Ha National Protected Area.
CBFM focus	Development of a model to use tourism as a tool for promoting forest conservation in NBCAs.
Current status	The project is continuing its phase II, and its lessons have been widely extended to other NBCAs.

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11. Web pages used

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- http://www.ecotourismlaos.com/protectedareas.htm
- http://www.jica.laopdr.org/
- http://web.worldbank.org/
- http://www.mekong-protected-reas.org/

Annex

Annex 1: Terms of Reference

1. Objectives of the consultancy

RECOFTC seeks support for the development of a status report on community contribution to forest resource management for Lao PDR that can be used to guide the development of community based forestry programs in Lao PDR, other countries and at regional level.

2. Role of NAFRI

To set up a task leader, a small task team (of 1-2 persons) and a support group. We stress the importance of involving other partners that will include the National Forestry Extension Service (NAFES), the Forest Department and the National University of Laos (NUOL).

NAFRI will coordinate strategic inputs at key points through meetings that involve the wider group.

3. Role of Task Leader

Criteria for selection of the task leader:

- Lao National
- Experience in:
  - ✓ CBNRM
  - ✓ International and Regional Works
  - ✓ Desk Studies
  - ✓ Network of resource persons and institutions
- Skills and Knowledge
  - ✓ English – written and spoken capacity
  - ✓ Ability to write concisely
  - ✓ Analytical ability
  - ✓ Ability to consult other resource persons

5. Specific Tasks

The task leader will work under the broad direction of the NAFRI Director General and be responsible for the following tasks:

- Undertake a review of literature, including relevant project reports. Compile these into a CD Rom if time allows. Provide one copy of all documents to RECOFTC for the regional library and retain the original set in NAFRI.
- Using the template in Annex 2 as a guide, lead the drafting of the Status report of Community Contribution to Forest Resource Management in Lao PDR. The task leader shall seek the support of the other task team members and the broader inter-institutional support group. The task leader may delegate the writing of certain sections to other task team or support group members, but will take responsibility for completing the draft and final versions of the Status Report.

The task leader will ensure that the following points (raised in the meeting of 2nd March) are taken into consideration in the drafting of the Status Report:

- ➢ Linking to the Forest Sector Strategy 2020 Implementation process.
- ➢ The Report will include Non-Timber Forest Products but not broader forms of CBNRM. Fisheries are not to be included.

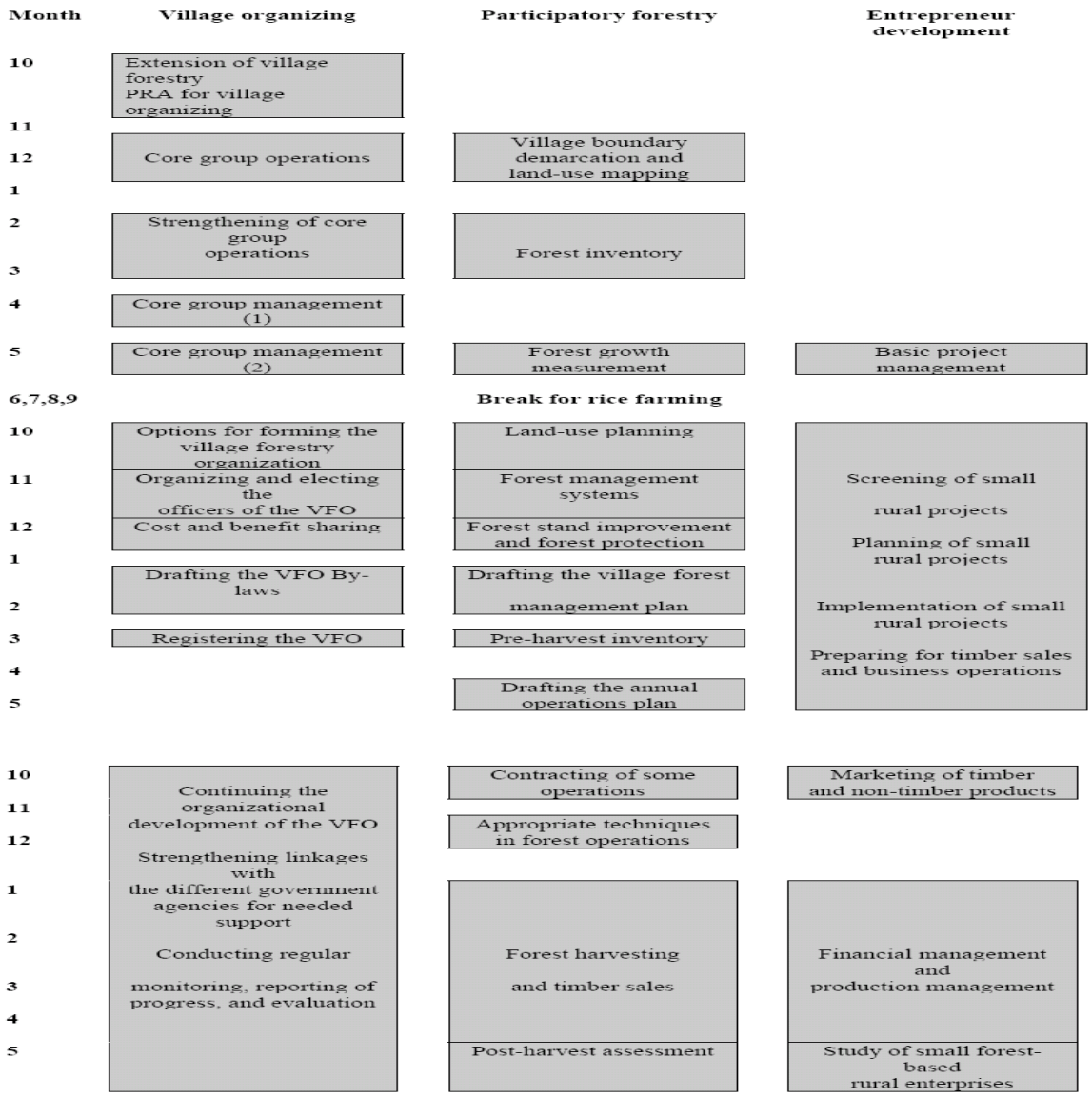
- To look broadly at experiences with community based forest management
- To review and bring together the learning and experience from previous projects.
- The report should consider what is known so far on village forestry contribution to poverty reduction and identify gaps in information, where further research and analysis is needed.
- Socio-economic and natural resource context will be covered under Annex 2, Point 1 on historical overview.
- The Report will incorporate interesting case studies, management guidelines and findings from recent studies such as the SIDA-MFS field study.

6. Outputs

- First draft of status report by 30 June 2006
- Review workshop to present the report and get feed-back from a wider group of key organizations for the final draft.
- Final draft by 31 July 2006

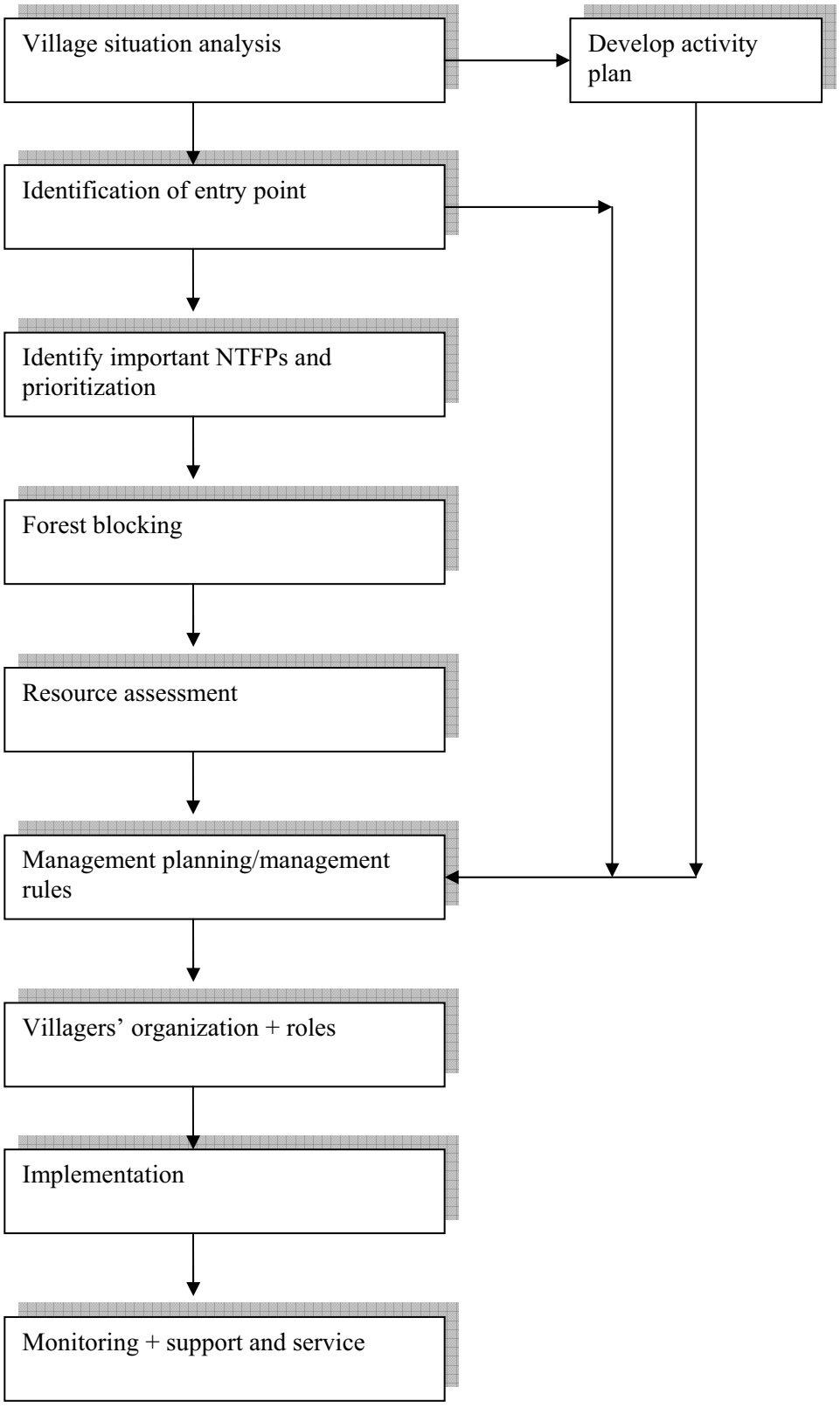
Annex 2: Examples of CBFM processes

2.1 Process of CBFM of Village Forestry under FOMACOP/SUFORD

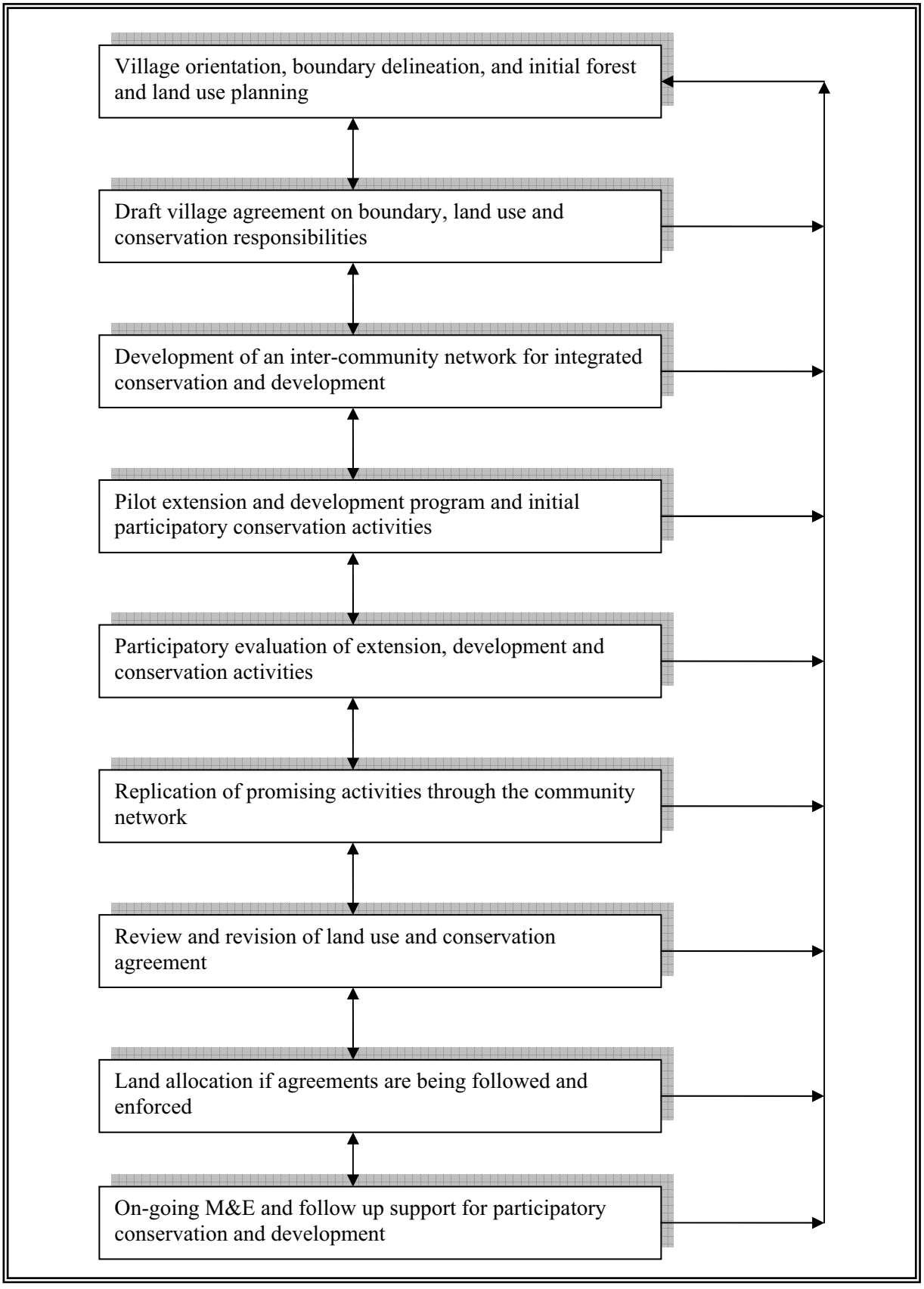


Source: Extracted from Phanthanousy and Manuel

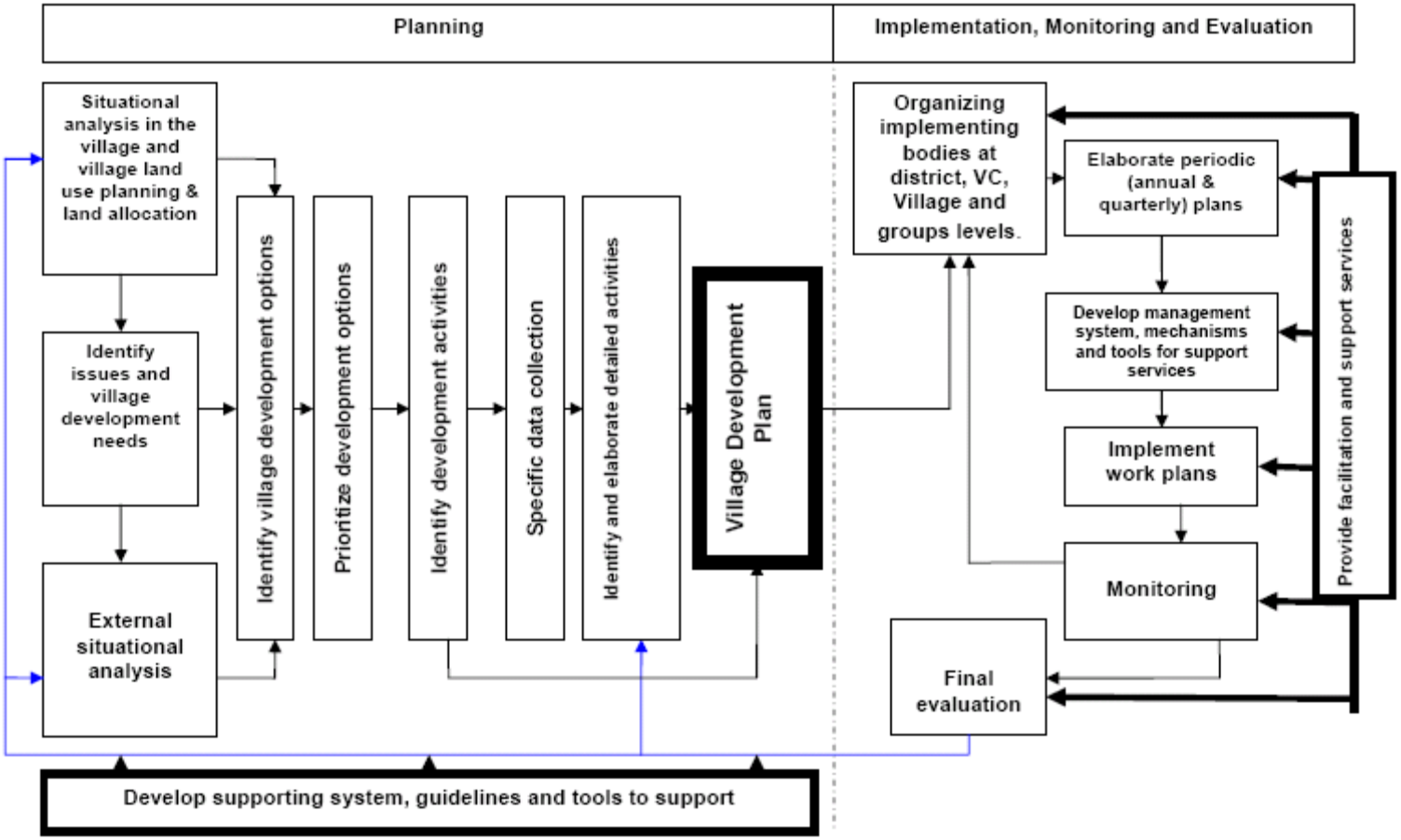
2.2. Process of CBFM for NTFP



2.3. Process of Participatory NBCA management



2.4. Process of CBFM of Village Forestry under CARE project



Annex 3: Comparison of approaches

Approach	Characteristics and level of participation	Target Resource	Implementation arrangements (responsibilities)	Benefit sharing	Contribution and status
Participatory forest management (PFM)					
FOMACOP model	– Participation of villagers in all stages – Villagers were given extensive rights in managing state forests within their village territory – Resource assessment, management planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation by villagers – Village Forest Association (VFA) entered into agreement with the state (PAFO)	Timber and NTFP in state production forest	Government staff trained villagers to be able to take different responsibilities by themselves: inventory, management and operational planning, community organization, development planning, implementation, monitoring, etc.	– Government royalties and taxes (69 per cent) – Tree felling and log transport (19 per cent) – Forest management (6 per cent) – Village development activities (6 per cent)	– 33 VFA in 51 villages – LUP covered 145,000 ha and FMP prepared for about 100,000 ha – Supported villagers participation – Improved forest protection and conservation – Improved capabilities of villagers and staff – High emphasis on timber production. FM not integrated with district development planning and diversification of income generating activities – Highly participatory. – Met criteria for sustainability in forest management – In line with govt. policies (decentralization, poverty, rural development) – Contributed to village development – Many lessons and experiences for participatory production forest management as well as forest areas are taken up by SUFORD project for countrywide replication.

Participatory Village forest manage-ment for areas outside state production forest (LSFP IV)	- Delegated management responsibilities for village forests to villagers where state forests were enclosed within village boundary. - Separate management plans for villages forests. - Did not include management of other land use types in the village.	All forest products in village forest land outside state forest.	- Government staff facilitated all processes and villagers made decisions. - Village formed village forest volunteers and Village Natural Resource Development Committee to carry out different tasks.	All benefits went to village and individual villagers.	– It was the first village forest management model specifically designed for areas outside state forests. – Implementation tested in one JFM village but not in full shape and ended up when LSFP IV terminated in 2001. – It provided systematic guidelines and lessons for village forest management planning that are being replicated, adjusted or modified by many other projects.
Natural resources-based village develop-ment" model (CARE)	- Delegation of management responsibilities over the whole forest land within the village territory to villagers, regardless of tenure rights and status - Management of forest to generate revenue for investing in other production activities. - Main objectives were food security and livelihood improvement while conservation, catchment protection and integrated land use were considered for long term sustainable uses. - Village forest management was core part of overall integrated village development activities.	All forest products and other natural resources	- District planning facilitation team facilitated planning and community organizing. - Villagers were organized into task groups administered by a village development committee (VDC) - Implementation of plan facilitated and supported by village sub-cluster staffs	Most benefits went to individual villagers, groups and to village funds. Certain sale taxes were applied for certain products.	- The approach gave ways to strategize resource management in village clusters and aimed to address poverty eradication goals of the government. It adapted a village centered with professional input approach. It is very much linked to the new administration structure of the agriculture and forestry sector. - The plan was implemented in 1 village. Full test of the model is not in place. There has been no follow up on the progress and to what extent the model has been adopted in the concerned district where it was developed. - Parts of the model is planned to be replicated in CARE-RARUA project in Sayabouly during 2006.

Model on sustainable utilization of NTFPs	- Aimed for sustainable management practices for specific types of NTFPs. - Different management arrangements were developed - Management prescriptions varied from very simple (just agreements on some rules and sanctions) to more technical emphasis.	NTFPs and wild animals in all types of forests.	- Participatory planning - Local villagers are empowered to manage activities.	Benefits distribution systems mainly agreed upon among villagers who depend on the nature and scale of activity, implementing arrangement, type of resource and prevailing regulations	- 40 pilot villages in the NAFRI-IUCN NTFP project. - Methods developed were found to be good entry point for community forest management systems - There is increasing recognition of NTFP at several levels and increasing interest in NTFP management as an option in RD, but few methods have been replicated due to the lack of capability and effort to institutionalize NTFP management systems. - NTFP sector is left unregulated. It is mainly governed by legislation relating to production forestry or customary use under which provisions are vague and ambiguous and not effectively implemented.
Collaborative forest management (CFM)					
JFM models	- Two models (Model 1 and 2) in effort to develop sustainable forest management systems and support the participation of local villagers in SFM; - DOF together with PAFO and DAFEO were respon-sible for the preparation of forest management plans.	Timber in state production forest	Implementation of forest management plans were undertaken by villagers through agreements or contracts. **Model 1:** - DAFO carried out forest boundary demarcation, supported village JFM board in implementing the agreement, provided technical advisory in technical operations; and support in	**Model 1:** - Village net revenue = Sales of logs – (royalties + other taxes + logging labor + log transportation + district forestry development funds). Of village revenues, 60 per cent went to village development funds; 30	– JFM 1 trial took place in 1 village and JFM 2 in 13 villages over 9,600ha of SPF. Activities immediately stopped after the LSFP phase IV terminated. – Both models were found compatible with government policies. – The trials proved that villagers have the capabilities to work in

	- **Model 1**: Full rights for implementation of forest management plan and log sale were given to villagers. - **Model 2**: Villagers participated in forest operations and protection tasks. Village Natural Resources Management and Development Committees (VRMDCs) were organized to facilitate implementation and ensure villagers' rights.		LUP/LA and village development planning and implementation. - Villagers formed JFM Association to implement the agreement. **Model 2:** - DAFO undertook all forest management responsibilities, support in LUP/LA and village development planning and implementation; trained and assisted villagers in necessary aspects to undertake the contract; collect fee from PAFO and manage the district development fund. Village Resource Development Committee and village forest volunteers were formed to lead the implementation of contract. Villagers were hired in different operations.	per cent for operational costs; and 10 per cent for protection fees. **Model 2:** Net PAFO revenue = Log sale-(royalties + other taxes + logging fee + log transportation + district forestry development funds). Of this revenue, 7 per cent went to villages as forest protection fees; 3 per cent to rangers for control tasks; 30 per cent to forest improvement fees; and 60 per cent to province emergency funds. Villagers received logging fees (for labor, VRMDC admin. cost; village development fund) and protection fees (to village development fund)	partnership with government field staff in various forest management activities and operational planning – The trials resulted in improved forest management, improved forest protection from encroachment and shifting cultivation, improved forest conservation, secured budget for forest operations and increased village development. – Many drawbacks were observed at detailed levels e.g. in timber sale system, operational arrangement, the lack of supportive regulatory frameworks, degree of participation, especially in model 2 but many good lessons have been taken up. – The areas have been taken up for management under the new system by SUFORD since 2003.
SUFORD approach (current approach in production forest management in Lao PDR) under the LAO-WB-	• This approach has participatory village development planning as an important integral part of the forest management system. • Grant of 8000$ for village development activities with higher priority in village development is	Timber and NTFP in state production forest	• State represented by DOF, PAFO and DAFEO responsible for the preparation of forest management plan • DAFEO is responsible for organizing the district FMU, who implements the plans. • Villagers organize themselves into association and enter into agreements for implementing FMP	• Log royalties from competitive sale of timber shall be transferred to the National budget. • Additional revenue from log sale shall be distributed as follows: o 30 per cent to the National budget;	– So far completed management plan covering 8 target SPF in about 659,000 ha in 8 districts. FMP started implementation in 2006. – Current system of SPF management – 35,000 ha and 10000 ha in D.Sithouane and D. Phouxoi are certified during 2004-05.

FINNIDA SUFORD	given to poorer, smaller and weaker villages		with PAFO. • PAFO and local authorities perform guiding, monitoring and controlling tasks	○ 20 per cent for forest development fund (under forestry law article 47); ○ 25 per cent as annual operational cost for forest management plan implementation; and 25 per cent to local development funds.	– The approach supports current government policies and expected to be adapted country-wide
NAWACOP approach	• Focused on integrated watershed management for sustainable resources management, poverty alleviation and food security. • Sustainable agriculture was the main focus for food security and poverty alleviation. • Participatory approach was applied in resources management for watershed protection and additional income generation. • Specific forestry operations were prescribed in village forest management plan • Grants for village development fund was provided.	Degraded forests for watershed protection and income generation. Forest and agricultural products and support activities were main targets.	• Villagers were organized into forest operations groups. • DAFEO assisted in planning, performed the supervisory and advisory tasks and provided extension services.	• Benefits went to the groups and village revolving fund. Individual villagers were also paid for their work e.g. clearing fire lines	– Project covers year 2003-2008 – Only 8 out of 24 project villages in three districts had forestry component. – The approach provides good experiences and examples – Mechanisms and efforts to integrate these into the existing structure seemed insufficient – Due to weak staff capability and unorganized extension services of DAFO, the lack of a government operational budget for follow up support as well as for monitoring, the expansion effort stopped when the project ended.
FORCAP approach	• Aimed to promote forest conservation and	Degraded forests	• Action plans for forest management were prepared by government staff	• The district authority gets 25 per cent of the	– 15 villages were involved. – 213 ha of plantation and 7 ha

	afforestation activities as well as improving living conditions • Strong emphasis on active collaboration of local people and local government staff in the recovery of degraded forest etc. to encourage local involvement in forest conservation and protection.	aiming at timber, NTFP and other income generating activities.	and collaboratively implemented by local people and local authorities at model villages. • Experimental forests and nurseries were established to develop and demonstrate technologies to support villagers. • Use incentive driven activities, such as water supply facilities development, healthcare and education, etc .	benefits from plantation with the provision that they provide seedlings, materials and extension services to the farmers. • Farmers get the remaining 75 per cent	agroforest were established by 300 families. – 15 school plantation and 5 models on watershed protection forest were established in 15 and 5 villages, respectively. – The approach helps to initiate activities which have moved villagers away from shifting cultivation practices – Participating villagers perceived project interventions as being meaningful but limited scaling up effort – Activities were taken up by NAFES in collaboration with Vangvieng DAFEO in 2003.
Model Training Forest (FoF-PROFEP)	• Technology development to facilitate training, applied research and demonstration on sustainable management of natural resources focusing on rehabilitation practices, nature conservation and agroforestry. • Involves local communities in TMF activities and protection. • Dissemination technologies through demonstration on model farmer areas. • Extension services related to agricultural productivity improvement.	Degraded forest focused on all natural resources at landscape level. It also considers productivity improvement of agriculture land.	• Local communities and local authorities involved in planning activities as well as in technology development in TMF. • Contract local communities in TMFs activities. • Establishment of model families in villages around TMF to demonstrate technologies. • Provides extension services related to integrated agricultural land use. • FOF field staffs are stationed at TMF where local communities can get various information and easily consulted for technical advice.	• Local communities received perdium from FOF for their work in TMF. • Model families get support from FOF in demonstration work. • Local communities receive technical advises from FOF.	– TMF covered 4,600 ha with 2 villages involved in its activities. – 23 model families were established in 7 villages to demonstrate technologies and 21 families involved in agroforestry. – PROFEP ended in 2003. FOF has continued with follow-up initiatives with limited success, especially in demonstration activities, due to limited budget to support model families.

Participatory NBCA management	• NBCA management plans are prepared by NBCA staff. • Operational planning follow Integrated Conservation and Development approach • The approach comprises several approaches to benefit local communities from conservation forests.	NBCAs and provincial and district protected areas.	• Joint responsibility for managing conservation among villagers, NBCAs authorities and District officials. • Villagers were empowered to implement different programs (depending on the type of activities).	• land use rights of villagers secured • Benefits from livelihood improvement and community development programs	– Most NBCAs are covered with management plan but little progress has been made in getting management plans implemented at village level – Despite that many methods were developed and trialed, Integrated Conservation and Development efforts in Lao PDR have not provided strong replicable management models for NBCAs. – NBCA management has been experiencing several problems and been suffering diverse pressures and threats. – Government's commitment to participatory natural resource management and benefit sharing remain unclear in practice and little technical and financial resources are mobilized for NBCA management. – Decentralization and local empowerment is not a guarantee for environmental stewardship especially in resource-poor provinces. – Degradation of NBCA resources has been continuing.
Traditional forest management systems					
Traditional forest management	– Forest management is governed by Customary forest resource use rights	Timber and NTFP in Village forests.	• Village authorities have the right and duty to enact local rules tailored to specific traditions and customary use and to regulate land use within	– Villagers enjoy their traditional rights for collection of NTFP, fuel wood, timber for	• Greater proportion of villages in the country still follow this system • Land use problems

	– Clear forest management plans in general does not exist – Village forests are put for different uses based on villagers decisions		the village boundary. • Rules for the use and management of these forests are agreed by all villagers • Where LUP or LUP/LA is completed, DAFEO and villagers together agree on general guidelines for resource use and land use management agreement is signed. • DAFO raises awareness on legal issues; helps resolve conflicts; and performs other supervisory and control tasks. Village forest volunteers are appointed to oversee forestry activities.	construction and other materials for household uses.	(conversion) are common due to inefficient management and no clear specific implementation instructions available. • Village Leadership quality is decisive factor.
Community-based forest management for ecotourism					
	Ecotourism is used as tool to provide incentives to local villagers to actively take part in forest conservation.	Natural resources, natural beauty, cultures, facilities, services, etc.	Multi-stakeholder involvement in planning usually initiated with project support. NBCA, district and tourism authorities, and tour operators jointly provide advisory functions, support and monitoring tasks and are often backed up by projects. Villagers are assisted in implementing ecotourism as well as conservation activities. They are given support in logistic/facilities and site development, capacity building in necessary aspects and tour program arrangements.	• Ecotourism has become an important source of benefits to mainly these 5 categories of beneficiaries: government authorities, tour operators, private service businesses, executing villages and households. • Benefits are shared among stakeholders (as above) differently at different hierarchical levels and places in terms of its level, purpose, and	• Ecotourism has become an important source of national income and makes substantial contribution to livelihood improvement of forest dependent villagers, to conservation awareness raising and to local development in many aspects. • Experiences in community based eco-tourism have been widely expanded to most provinces with more concentrated site development in provinces where NBCAs are located. • Ecotourism has proved to be a useful tool to provide incentives to local villagers to actively take

				mechanism. • At village level, ecotourism related income is generally distributed among involved individuals/ households and village development funds. If operated in the form of groups, a share also goes to group funds.	part in forest conservation. It increases involvement of more than 30 multi-stakeholders, either directly or indirectly, in forest conservation. • Ecotourism is expected to become a more powerful incentive mechanism in conservation awareness raising in the near future under the framework of the current National Ecotourism Strategy and Action Plan.
Smallholder plantations					
Smallholder tree plantations	- Mainly own investments in tree planting by individual farmers or by communities. Some plantations may be raised through government promotion programs and project interventions. - Mostly in small plots – Communities are given, under forest and land laws, long-term rights to use, manage and protect forest lands, either as individual, group or village.	Timber, construction materials and other forest products.	• Government creates enabling environments for small scale and household based plantation in terms of policy and regulations. LUP&LA with other incentives mechanisms like land tax exemption, credit, loan, subsidies and technical services have been used as supporting tool. • External support through several development projects	– Tree planters are benefited from land allocation, tax exemption, other incentive mechanisms and revenue from sale of products (3 per cent sale tax is to be paid to government at harvest time). – Government: taxes from sale of products and indirect benefits.	• Village contribution in forest management through tree planting is increasing. Smallholder plantations cover more than 50,000 ha or more than 50 per cent of total plantation area in the country. However, magnitude of contribution is not known as it involves great risks in many aspects (low quality seed; little considerations to site suitability and technical requirements of species) and allocated plots for agriculture are used for planting trees which causes encroachment further into unallocated forest land • Lack of capacity to supply quality seeds of preferred species

					and technical advices and poor management would seriously impact final return. Immediate attention is needed to maintain momentum.
Industrial tree plantation					
Industrial tree plantation	- Mainly big scale monoculture plantations with big investment by private companies and enterprises. - More organized and systematic in management system and generally self-operated by companies.	In principle degraded or unstocked forest land, barren land.	- Three forms of business arrangements are found including contract planting; self-operating with hired labor; and promotion scheme. Most big private companies employ villagers in different operations. Contract planting are generally found practiced by company having/ acquiring insufficient land - Kinds of contract practiced under contract planting include: • Companies providing in kind credit and technical advices on the condition that farmers have to sell logs to them when the plantation is cut • Companies selling seedlings to households and promises to buy the logs/materials at harvest time • Companies providing free seedlings (e.g. rubber planting) at reasonable interest rate loans under the tree plantation program.	• Villagers: Daily wages from employment in different operations, and loans, credits and land tax exemption • Government: revenues from land lease, taxes from sales of products and indirect benefits Government: revenue from land lease, taxes from sale of products.	• Large industrial plantation areas raised by companies and through contract planting but no statistics available. • 12,396 ha were raised under ADB tree plantation project from 1997 to 2001 in 7 provinces in which 2,621 households, 19 small individual enterprises and 8 companies benefited • Currently many large scale plantation companies are in operation and in the pipe line. • New ADB project planned for 45,600 ha in 14 priority districts of 7 provinces targeting 2,000 households to plant trees in 9,600 ha for livelihood improvement by providing full package service. • Least participatory in approach. Several problems has arisen in connection with conflict over land use rights with villagers; villagers access to NTFP; land availability for agriculture, decreased villagers income, insufficiency in land availability for large scale industrial plantation, etc.

Regional Community Forestry Training Center for Asia and the Pacific (RECOFTC)

RECOFTC is an international, non-profit organization that supports community forestry and community-based natural resource management, and receives core funding from the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA) and the Swiss Agency for Development and Corporation (SDC). Through strategic partnerships and collaboration with governmental and non-governmental institutions, programs, projects and networks, RECOFTC aims to enhance capacity at all levels and to promote constructive multi-stakeholder dialogues and interactions to ensure equitable and sustainable management of forest resources. RECOFTC's main geographical focus is the Asia-Pacific region, but it welcomes collaboration with organizations from other regions.

The National Agriculture and Forestry Research Institute of Laos (NAFRI)

NAFRI was established in 1999 in order to consolidate agriculture and forestry research activities within the Lao PDR and develop a coordinated National Agriculture and Forestry Research System. NAFRI aims to contribute to the goals of the Government of Laos by focusing on adaptive research to overcome specific problems limiting production and causing degradation of natural resources. NAFRI seeks to do this by carrying out demand-driven research that supports local peoples' active involvement in their own development. NAFRI works on technology and methodological development, seed multiplication as well as policy based research in order to improve policy impementation. NAFRI is comprised of seven discipline specific research centres and one regional research centre in the North of Laos.

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