

SUSTAINABLE FOREST AND LAND MANAGEMENT IN THE DRY DIPTEROCARP FOREST ECOSYSTEMS OF SOUTHERN LAO PDR

Project Background

The dry dipterocarp forest ecosystems located in Savannakhet Province are recognized as being globally and nationally important for their provision of numerous ecosystems that benefit the people of Lao PDR. In recent decades, dry dipterocarp ecosystems and the species within them have come under increasing threat from large-scale conversion of forest, degradation of the forest ecosystems, unsustainable logging, habitat and species loss.



The unveiled Eld's Deer statues are located in a busy roundabout in the city center of Kaysone Phomvihane. Photo: UNDP Lao PDR/Olga Nilova

In Lao PDR, which retains a large proportion of remaining dry dipterocarp forests in the region, the demand for cash crops is propelling forest conversion, while logging, over-hunting, overharvesting of non-timber forest products, and slash and burn practice all lead to habitat degradation.

Project Summary:

- **Duration:** May 2016 – May 2022
- **Geographic coverage:** Phin District, Thapangthong District, Songkhone District, Xonnabouly District, Phalansay District in Savannakhet Province
- **Focus area:** Environment and energy
- **Implementing partner:** Department of Forest Resources Management

As a measure of the Government of Lao PDR's commitment to the dry dipterocarp landscape, it has selected this area as a demonstration site for testing the implementation of new national policies and processes related to strategic environmental assessment, integrated spatial planning, and high conservation value forests. The Government of Lao PDR has also identified this landscape as suitable for the development and participation in protected area management, ecotourism programs, and livelihoods programs linked to conservation outcomes through formal village conservation agreement mechanisms.

The project seeks to strengthen resource use planning capacities, procedures, policies and regulations that govern them, while simultaneously expanding and strengthening the management of resources on the ground by government agencies, local communities and private sector actors, and also developing innovative financing mechanisms and programs (including ecotourism and livelihood programs) that can ensure the sustainability of land use and resource management approaches.

Main Objectives

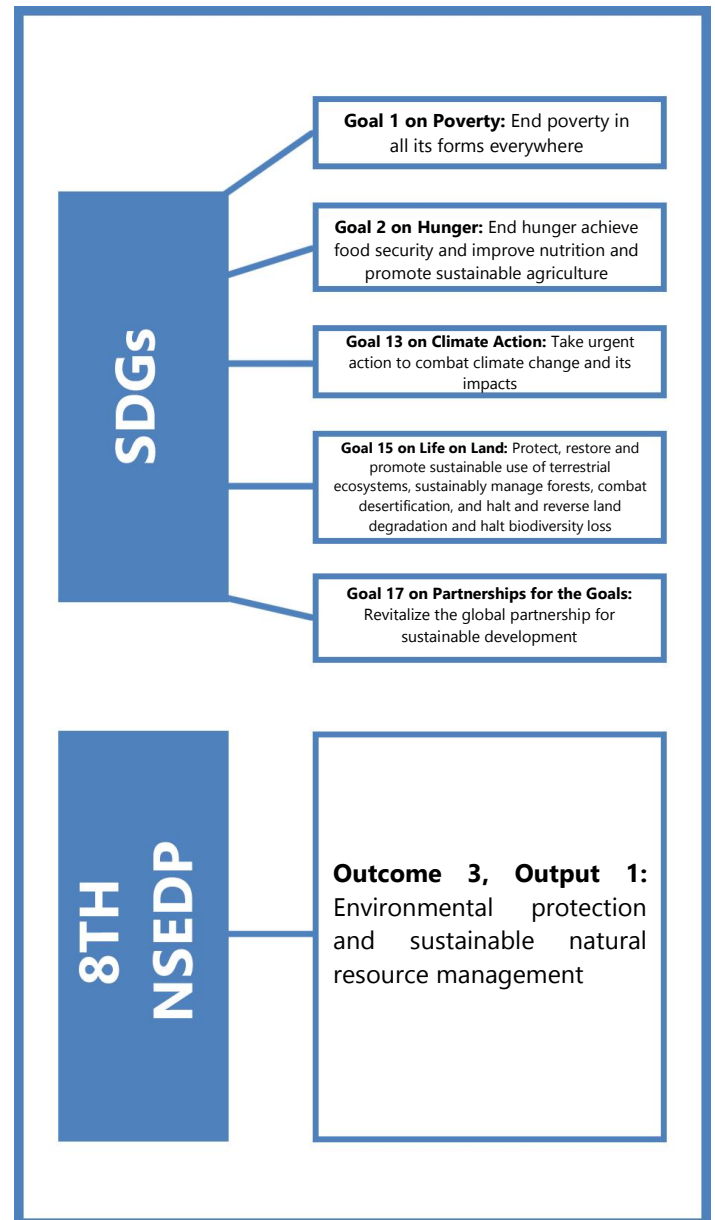
Objective: To demonstrate sustainable land and forest management in the forested landscape of Savannakhet Province in order to secure the critical wildlife habitats, conserve biodiversity and maintain a continuous flow of multiple services including quality water provision and flood prevention.

Results and Achievements to Date

- A Strategic Environmental Assessment was completed for five target districts (Xonnabouly, Phine, Phalanxay,

- Thapangthong and Songkhone districts) by the Department of Environmental Quality Promotion in partnership with the project;
- Additionally, Integrated Spatial Plans were also completed for the five districts which will play an important role in planning of the respective districts activities while incorporating environmental protection, climate change adaption and mitigation;
- Protected Area Management Plans were developed for Dong Phou Vieng, Phong Xang He, Se Ta Noun National Protected Areas and the proposed On Mang National Sanctuary. These management plans included zoning, will ensure improved management and conservation effectiveness;
- 308 hectares of degraded forest areas have been restored through reforestation by local communities;
- Village Forest Management Plans have been finalized for 16 conservation villages and implementation initiated collectively covering 53,948 hectares. They were developed through participatory engagement providing comprehensive guidance for village level sustainable forest management;
- Forty-three personnel were trained on technical enforcement skills to improve their capacity to effectively manage protected areas;
- A Hydrological Water Monitoring Station and Weather Station was constructed along the Xe Bang Xiang River to monitor water availability and flooding occurrence as well as monitor the weather changes;
- One ecotourism site has been developed and is currently operating at Ban Vongsikeo and Ban Nyang within Dong Phou Vieng National Protected Area to improve income generation and earn the benefits of conservation.

Link to Sustainable Development and the 8th National Socio-Economic Development Plan



Funding:

- **Total project budget (2016-2022):** USD 12,079,174
- **Donors:**
 - UNDP (Cash):** USD 1,200,000
 - GEF (Cash):** USD 10,879,174
- **Co-financing:**
 - Government (In-kind):** USD 14,200,000
 - ADB (Parallel):** USD 62,787,100
 - UNDP (Parallel):** USD 606,000
 - WWF (Parallel):** USD 200,000

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