

Civil Society Day

Background Paper on

National Resource Management and Governance

Background

Cambodia has been classified as a country with a “high forest cover”, and a “high deforestation rate”. According to the recent Forest Reference Emission Level (FREL) submission to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) (RGC 2017), Cambodia has approximately 8.5 million ha of forest, constituting 47% of the total land area.

The forest in Cambodia provide diverse services and functions. About 30% of the carbon stock in Cambodia is estimated to be located within forest. Forests offer habitats for wildlife and plants and host critical biodiversity, both flora and fauna. Cambodian forests also support the livelihood of many rural communities including Indigenous People. It is estimated that around 80% of the population resides in rural area, where they mainly rely on rain-fed agriculture. It is also known to mitigate the damaging impacts of droughts and floods by regulating water flows and retaining water underground. Therefore, deforestation and forest degradation does not only adversely affect country’s biodiversity, ecosystems and carbon sequestration but also the livelihoods of many rural people, especially vulnerable people and poor people.

With this rational, the Royal Government of Cambodia (RGC) officially endorsed reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation, conservation of forest carbon stocks, sustainable management of forests and enhancement of forest carbon stocks (REDD+) at UNFCCC conference of Parties (CoP) in Bali in 2007. Besides, RGC has tried to endorse many laws and regulation in order to protect the natural resource of Cambodia such as Fisheries Law 2006, Forestry Law 2002, Land Law 2001, Protected Area Law 2008, 1993 Royal Decree on Creation and Determination of Nature Reserves, 2009 Sub-decree #83 on Registration of Land of Indigenous Communities, sub-degree 05, and so on.

RGC also recognizes the Non-governmental Organization in Cambodia is a partner and has high capacity to provide technical support to government in promoting the awareness-raising related natural resource management in Cambodia.

Key Progress

From year to year, both RGC and Non-governmental organization, foreign NGOs and domestic NGOs, have tried to work out on the natural resource management. They make many achievements on this sector as following:

- Create fisheries law 2006, forestry law 2002, and land law 2001, protected area law 2008
- Enact the sub-decree #83 on registration of land of indigenous communities
- Conduct workshops on the natural resources management
- Protected Area management
- Environmental protection
- Sustainable development and climate change
- Create strategic plan, activity plan, principle, national report and mechanism related to climate change, Biodiversity management and Biomass of green development

- Establish National Council for Sustainable Development and General Secretariat for Promoting Sustainable Development to ensure balance between economic, environment, society, and culture of Cambodia
- Conduct the dialog with development partner such as domestic NGOs, foreign NGOs, private sector, and community based organization in order to mobilize the support and participation to protect environment, natural resource management, biodiversity protection, and sustainable living, especially environmental and natural resource reform
- Monitor the source of environmental pollution in the garment factory regularly
- Cooperate with ministry of education youth and sports to integrate the environmental education in the national curriculum
- Compile Map of Economic Land Concessions in 74 environmental protected area and compile map of 13 protected forest and protected area
- Create draft by-laws guideline and community facilitation mechanism with government agency and relevant stakeholders to create national and sub-national structure of natural protected community in the objective to promote the effectiveness of protection and natural resource management.
- Create draft guideline of creating the eco-tourism in natural protected community

Key Challenges

- Limited of budget, tools and equipment to work on climate change, green economic, biodiversity, science and technology and research is not responded to the need and work
- The necessary Laws and policies in ensuring the natural resource and environmental sustainability are not enough to the current and future needs
- Limited institution capacity and skill in facilitating the implementation of policies, legal document, strategic plan and activity plan to have effectiveness and efficiency
- Limited knowledge and participation from public sector, private sector in promoting the sustainable development
- Cooperation and funding support from development partner are not respond to the need of policies and strategic plan
- Limited knowledge and participation of citizen and relevant stakeholders in protecting the environment
- The conflict of using land in protected area is not completely solved.
- Lack of information and data of biodiversity and natural resource
- Lack of resource person to educate and research on environment in order to promote the environmental friendly
- Lack of resource person and material in defining, analyzing, and reporting of environmental issue

Way forward

- Promote a development of science, technology, human resource to understand the used of green technology and nuclear technology for peace and sustainable development purpose
- Make a better policies and legal documents to increase the renewable energy of Cambodia
- Delegate natural resource and task to sub-national in order to reinforce ownership to ensure the environmental and natural resource sustainability
- Create and support to implement the agenda of researching to ensure sustainable development
- Continue to implement the green city strategic plan in city and rural area

References

- UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM, PROJECT DOCUMENT CAMBODIA
- READINESS PREPARATION PROPOSAL (R-PP) ASSESSMENT NOTE, UNDP
- National Strategic Plan for 2019-2023