

**Kingdom of Cambodia
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**National Report to the Fourth Session of
the United Nations Forum on Forests**

Kingdom of Cambodia

January 2004

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II. Progress and Issues Related to Implementation of IPF/IFF Proposals for Action

General

1. Cambodian forests have always been an essential feature in the patterns of life for its people and continue to be of fundamental environmental, social and economic importance in national development. These forests are valuable for the production of large and small industrial logs, for fuelwood and food for the people living in rural communities, for helping to regulate water flows in the Mekong and other rivers, for controlling erosion of soils, and for the conservation of animal and plant biological diversity. Furthermore, forests are a natural source of wealth and, managed wisely, can continue to provide for future generations, both at the local level and in terms of Government revenues for rehabilitation and development.

In 1969, forests covered 13.2 million hectares, or 73 %, of the country's total land area. Estimates in 2002 from the World Bank-funded Forest Concession Management and Control Pilot Project indicated that forest cover in Cambodia had declined about 11%, accounting for 62 % of the country's total land area.

The Forestry Administration (FA)/Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF) plays the major role in the management of forests in Cambodia. However, responsibilities for national park and wildlife sanctuaries fall under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Environment.

One outstanding achievement of the RGC has been the passage of a new forestry law. Indeed, conservation is considered to of high priority since millions of hectares of forests (over 25% of the total land area of the country) have been allocated for protection as national parks and wildlife sanctuaries.

Conservation of biodiversity and natural resources is reflected in the policies of the second term of the Royal Government of Cambodia (RGC). The RGC has paid particular attention to in-situ and ex-situ conservation, including conservation within forest concession areas. The MAFF/ Forestry Administration has collaborated with international experts and development partners in conducting surveys and designating and managing very large forest areas for this purpose. These initiatives are intended to conserve genetic resources, seeds supply biodiversity, watersheds and water resources, ecological relationships, and the environment. In addition, twenty-three protected areas, which are under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Environment, have been established since 1993.

Another outstanding achievement of the RGC was declaring the Central Cardamom Mountains, which consists of an area of 401,313 ha, to be a protected forest. The forests in the Central Cardamom Mountains are still intact. Moreover, a number of endangered wildlife species are still found there, including elephants, tigers, bear, the hog badger, the Asian golden cat, the marbled cat, the clouded leopard, the gaur, the banteng, crocodiles, and hornbills. Several studies of wildlife and biodiversity have been conducted in different areas in this refuge.

The establishment of the Central Cardamom protected forest (401,313 ha) and the protected forests in the provinces of Mondulhiri (429,438 ha) and Preah Vihear (190,027.00 ha) has increased the country's area of protected forests, national parks, and wildlife sanctuaries to 4.5 million ha. This represents 27% of the total land area of the

country. Cambodia has unquestionably become a leading country with respect to the percentage of its land under protection.

The RGC is party to a number of international conventions and regional agreements related to sustainable development that address issues of environmental protection and regional cooperation. These conventions include the following:

Environmental protection:

- International Convention on Civil Liability for Oil Pollution Damage, 1969
- United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, Montego Bay, 1982 (signed in 1983)
- International Tropical Timber Agreement, Geneva, 1994 (signed in 1995)
- Agreement on Cooperation for the Sustainable Development of the Mekong River Basin, Chiang Rai, 1995 (signed in 1995)
- Convention on Wetlands of International Importance, especially as Waterfowl Habitat, RAMSAR, 1971 (signed in 1999; Kram dated October 22, 1996)
- International Convention for Prevention of Pollution from Ships, 1973 and Protocol of 1978.
- ASEAN Agreement on the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources, Kuala Lumpur, 1985 (signed in 1985, ratified in 1986)
- Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer, Montreal, 1987 (signed in 1988, ratified in 1992)
- Convention on Biological Diversity, Rio de Janeiro, 1992 (signed in 1992, ratified in 1995)
- United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, New York, 1992 (signed in 1992, ratified in 1995, Kram dated October 24, 1996)
- Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora, Washington, D.C., 1973 (signed in 1973, ratified in 1997)
- International Convention to Combat Desertification in those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, particularly in Africa, Paris, 1994 (signed in 1994, ratified in 1997)

Regional cooperation:

• In preparing to join ASEAN, the Council of Ministers discussed the Khmer versions of Asean agreements to ensure compliance with existing laws and norms. A total of twenty-six (26) ASEAN agreements, fifteen of which were approved by the Council of Ministers, were submitted to the National Assembly for ratification. The eleven agreements include:

- 1- Agreement on Cooperation on Culture and Multimedia (1969)
- 2- Agreement on Media Systems and Cultural Activities (1969)
- 3- Agreement on Recognition of Local Driving Licenses by ASEAN
- 4- Agreement on Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (1985)
- 5- Agreement on ASEAN Cooperation in Energy (1969)
- 6- Agreement on Establishment of the ASEAN Centre for Energy
- 7- Basic Agreement on Mutual Recognition and Communique on Procedures of Communication
- 8- Agreement on ASEAN Investment Zones (1998)
- 9- Basic ASEAN Agreement on Facilitating Cross-border Goods Transportation
- 10- Agreement on the Recognition of Goods Transporting Vehicle Licenses and Public Transport Services granted by ASEAN member countries
- 11- Agreement on the Establishment of an ASEAN Fund

12- Kram dated January 17, 1997 approving the Treaty on the Southeast Asia Nuclear Weapons-free Zone.

Considering the value of forest resources within the framework of the sustainable development of Cambodia to be an important national goal, the RGC, through its executing agents (MAFF/ FA), has committed itself to establishing a legal framework for the forestry sector. Accomplishments include the production of:

- The Cambodian Code of Practices for Forest Harvesting
- Guidelines for Sustainable Forest Management (2000) containing
 - Guidelines for Forest Concession Management Planning System
 - Construction Guidelines for Forest Engineering Works
 - Guidelines for Special Management Area Management
 - Biodiversity Conservation Guidelines for the Managed Forests
 - Guidelines for Socio-Economic Surveys of Communities Surrounding Forest Concession Areas
 - Guidelines for Environmental Impact Assessments for Forest Concessions
 - Guidelines for the Evaluation of Environmental Impact Assessment for Forest Concessions

The code of practice gives prescriptive guidelines on forest harvesting work. It includes detailed instructions on operational harvest planning, pre-harvest works (construction works for logging), logging (felling), extraction, landing, and transportation. It contains also requirements and guidelines for weather limitations on logging, camp hygiene, stabilisation of logged areas, training, supervision of operations, equipment and safety, and evaluation of harvesting operations.

The guideline outlines practices that foresters and forestry enterprises must adhere to while carrying out forest management and commercial harvesting operations in Cambodia. Practices that conform with guidelines outlined in the code will assist in the harvest of commercial timber from specified areas of forest in a way that mitigates against the adverse impacts of logging, while contributing towards sustainable forest management.

- *Assessment of the IPF/IFF proposals for action*

The new forestry law was adopted by the National Assembly on 30 July 2002. The Senate concurred with the substance and spirit of the law on 15 August 2002. The forestry law became effective on 31 August 2002 through a Royal Declaration (Preah Reach Kram). The Forestry Administration has subsequently published 50,000 copies of the forestry law for distribution to appropriate agencies, provincial forestry offices, and others. The MAFF/ FA are currently preparing regulations that are addressed in the law in order to implement the new forestry law in an effective and comprehensive manner.

The FA/MAFF, through the Secretariat of the National Committee to Manage and Execute Forest Management Policy, in cooperation with the Cambodian German forestry project, has prepared a statement of the RGC on National Forest Sector Policy. This statement was adopted and published on 26 July 2002.

A Sub-decree on Community Forestry (CF) was adopted by the Council of Ministers on 2, December 2003. Consultation was held in 12 provinces, while 19 meetings of drafting team and two workshops were conducted with participation from local communities, local authorities, relevant institutions, national and international experts, international organizations and NGOs to provide a comprehensive understanding of the issues associated with community forestry.

The objectives within the Sub-Degree are merely broad policy statement on the ultimate goals for the document. It helps to set the tone of the entire document and gives guidance for its implementation and enforcement. The local communities have the rights to harvest mature commercial timber within their community forests. The harvesting may not begin until a Community Forest Management Plan has been in effect for five years. This gives communities the opportunity to build proper capacity and protect the process of community forestry from being overcome by outside interests. Royalties and Premiums for customary use are specifically not required within the forestry law, but the royalties and Premiums for activities greater than customary use may be reduced or waived. Royalties and Premiums should be set after consultation with a Community Forestry Management Committee in order to support community development, equitable benefit sharing, and poverty alleviation. The Community Forest Agreement may last 15 years before being renewed. The Community Forest Management Plan shall be reviewed by the Forestry Administration every 5 years or earlier if necessary; monitoring and evaluation of the Community Forest Management Plan shall include participation of representatives from the Community Forestry Management Committee. Based on the Community Forest Agreement, a Community Forestry has the rights to plant, manage, harvest forest products and NTFPs and sell tree species as approved in a Community Forest Management Plan. The User Rights of Community Forestry members include Customary User Rights; the rights to barter, process, and transport and sell NTFPs, Community Forestry may continue to practice traditional swidden agriculture during specific periods of time as determined in the Community Forest Management Plan, The right to appeal decisions which impact Community Forestry rights, The rights granted under a Community Forest Agreement within a specific area that shall ensure the sustainable use of forest resources. Secondary users may have the rights to access and use a Community Forest consistent with Community Forest Management Plans and Community Forestry Regulations.

Up to now, 153 community forestry associations have been established by NGOs and Forestry Administration and Forestry Administration Cantonments in 16 provinces, 55 districts, 105 communes and 376 villages. There are 48,898 families of community forestry members with the total population of 209,266. The community forests cover a total forest land area 62,798.54 ha.

A number of regulations (Sub-decrees and Prakas) has been approved since July 2002 in order to manage, protect, and conserve former forest concession areas in which investment contracts of forest concessionaires had been cancelled by the RGC. These areas have subsequently been incorporated into the permanent forest estate. These regulations complement the forestry law and contribute to sustainable forest management, watershed protection, and biodiversity conservation.

In additions FA has been prepared a reporting formats and training for ITTO Criteria and Indicators for sustainable Forest Management of Natural Tropical Forests

Forest concession management

If timber harvesting occurred in a legal and controlled manner before the early 1990s, it did so under a system of collection permits and log quotas that originated in French colonial times. Since that period, the RGC has promoted foreign investment in the forestry sector and has introduced private industrial forest concessions as the primary instrument of commercial forest management. Investors have been required to enter into Investment and Timber License agreements with the RGC, which has encouraged capital investment in sawmills and veneer and furniture manufacturing plants. These agreements have required the employment of minimum numbers of Cambodians and the transfer of technology and knowledge.

The first forest concession was granted in 1994, and during the next three years, thirty-three (33) forest concessions were established over almost seven million hectares. Since 1999, fifteen (15) forest concession investment contracts, covering an area of more than three million hectares, have been cancelled to ensure the sustainability of forests that are a significant natural resource and to protect for environmental and ecological purposes.

There are currently twelve (12) valid forest concession investment companies responsible for managing a forested area of 3,365,929 hectares. Since 2002, the MAFF/FA has suspended commercial logging operations and directed those companies to submit comprehensive strategic, copament and operational forest management plans consistent with international standards and to renegotiate their investment agreements with the RGC.

Reforestation

Reforestation activities, conducted by the Government through the Forestry Administration, are managed under a reforestation program whose size and extent is based on Government budget allocations. That budget currently supports the reforestation of about 1,000 hectares every year. In addition, on Arbor Day each year, a tree planting ceremony is held that results in the planting of 1,300,000 trees. A number of forestry plots have also been established to plant and maintain endangered species.

Initiatives planned

The FA/MAFF is planning to implement the following activities:

- Administrative structural reform of the forestry sector
- Publicizing and distributing the new forestry law to increase awareness among municipal provincial forest administrations, local authorities, other institutions, and local communities.
- Developing enforcement regulations referred to in the new forestry law
- Continuing to re-negotiate new investment agreements with remaining forest concessionaires
- Cooperating with neighboring countries to prevent the cross-border illegal trade of forest products
- Encouraging local people to participate in the management of forest resources for sustainable use
- Cooperating with local and international organizations in formulating and implementing forestry projects.
- Continuing forest crime monitoring and reporting activities despite limited financial support from the government

• *Development and implementation of national forest programme and policies*

The forestry sector in Cambodia is currently undergoing a period of comprehensive reform. FA has been organized a stream line structure as directory vertical order for whole country, and divided into hieratical level: central, regional inspectorates, cantonment, division and subdivision. In order to coordinate this reform, particularly with regard to the development of an overall forest policy framework, the RGC has implemented by a sub-decree dated July 3rd 1996 a high level inter-ministerial National Committee for the Development and Implementation of Forest Policy. The committee is chaired by the Prime Minister, while the Head of the Forestry Administration acts as its executive secretary. The committee has the following duties:

- To coordinate consultations between the RGC and international agencies providing assistance on forest policy
- To select and manage technical assistance
- To coordinate consultations among all parties in the forest sector

- To review investment programs in the forestry sector
- To make proposals and plans on forest policy for the country

The FA/MAFF, in collaboration with the World Bank, FAO and UNDP and financial support from the Government of the Netherlands, organized a regional conference in Phnom Penh to re-enforce the implementation of the forestry law in the Lower Mekong Basin. The participants included delegations from the riparian countries in the Lower Mekong basin, representatives of forest concessionaires, government officials, NGOs, and national and international observers. The primary objective of the conference was to enhance cooperation among neighboring countries to reduce the illegal trade of forest products. A significant output of the conference was the agreement of the four countries to implement strategies that were agreed on in the conference that would require:

1. National efforts
2. Regional efforts
3. Bilateral cooperation

The FA/MAFF has participated in a series of Forest Law Enforcement and Good Governance Workshops organized by the Government of Indonesia and the World Bank. in Bali and Jakarta. Cambodian representatives also attended the first meeting of the Asia Forest Partnership meeting that was organized in Tokyo last year.

Constraints

The primary constraints affecting the development of the forestry sector in Cambodia include:

- Poor institutional linkages that impede data sharing
- Restricted applications of information technology for analyzing data
- Limited institutional capacity
- Difficulties with law enforcement
- Adjustments to recent restructuring of the Forestry Administration
- The predominance of short term rather than long term planning
- Limited availability of funds and materials
- Limited technical and financial assistance from the international community
- Inadequate human resources development

Role of enhanced cooperation and policy and program coordination

Valuation of forest goods and services

Natural forests are traditionally considered to be sources of timber and non-timber forest products (NTFPs). Since monocultures have become more prevalent on cultivated land, forests have become the major natural repositories of significant components of the remaining gene pool of plants.

Timber is often considered to be the most valuable forest product, especially with respect to the need to provide foreign currency to the Cambodian government. Large quantities of timber are used in the construction of wooden houses, the manufacture of furniture, and for building bridges, wagons, sleepers, and concrete buildings.

Since 1997, the RGC has banned exports of round logs and crudely sawn timber. Exports of processed forest products and some non-wood forest products, such as rattan, charcoal, and bamboo, however, continues to be allowed.

Currently, most governmental and international agency representatives agree that the sustainable use of timber is of great important to the economic development of Cambodia. Reductions in unsustainable log production promote biodiversity conservation and wildlife

protection. Cambodia's support for this policy is demonstrated by declining log production between 1996 and 2001.

Markets for Cambodian forest products

Markets for Cambodian forest products may vary according to market conditions or political decisions of the RGC based on investment policies. In 1999, Hong Kong was the largest importer of Cambodia's forest products with imports of 39,100 cubic meters, accounting for forty-two (42) percent of all processed forest products exports. In 2000 and 2001, the largest importer of Cambodia's forest products was China, followed by Taiwan.

The FA/MAFF has received considerable support, including academic scholarships, from sponsors and donors for increasing the capacity of their staff either in Cambodia or abroad. This support has included long- and short-term training for Bachelor and Master's degrees and courses designed to accommodate specific requirement associated with the sustainable management of forest resources. It has also included the transfer of technology. Additional training of staff continues to be required, however. The FA/MAFF is currently planning to send staff to be trained in English, the marketing of forest products, timber production management, wood chemistry and anatomy, and forest-based industry development as financial support becomes available.

- *Mechanisms to facilitate stakeholders participation*

Progress toward sustainable forest management

The RGC is endeavoring to implement a coordinated set of laws, programs, action plans, and institutional arrangements associated with forest resources that are directed toward enabling the achievement of national goals of environmental protection, biodiversity conservation, poverty reduction, socio-economic development, and good governance.

The RGC has committed itself to the conservation and sustainable management of the country's forest resources and accepts the results and the follow up processes of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) that was held in Rio de Janeiro in 1992. Indeed, the RGC acknowledges the multiple perceptions, interests, and objectives of the numerous forest interest groups in Cambodia and the Mekong River Basin, as well as at the global level, regarding the conservation and sustainable management of forest resources.

The Forest Concession Management and Control Pilot Project was launched in 2001 with financial support from the World Bank to strengthen the capacity of the Forestry Administration with respect to practices that are associated with the management, monitoring, control, and evaluation of forest concession management operations. These efforts have improved forest law enforcement, as well as the participation of local communities in sustainable forest management, in Cambodia.

Maintaining forest cover to meet present and future needs

In order to ensure sustainable forest management, the RGC has been applying the technical guidance provided in the Cambodian Code of Practices for Forest Harvesting since 1999. These guidelines have been used to complement forest policies and regulations. A forest concession management planning and implementation cycle has also been proposed to provide a structure for integrating the principal elements of long-term forest concession management planning and operational systems. In recognizing these guidelines, as well as related policies and regulations, and applying them in the monitoring and evaluation of forest concession activities, the RGC has cancelled seventeen (17) forest concession investment agreements.

The remaining forest concessionaires were required to submit strategic forest management plans (SFMPs) and environmental and social impact assessments (ESIAs) to the FA/MAFF. The SFMPs and ESIAs were distributed to the public, particularly local communities living in and around forest concessions, to solicit their comments. Forest concessionaires will only be allowed to progress to the next level of forest management planning if their FMSPs and ESIAs are approved by a technical evaluation committee established by the Forestry Administration, and by MAFF. The institutionalization of this process is consistent with the procedures for reviewing and evaluating SFMPs and ESIAs that was developed by national and international experts under the World Bank Forest Concession Management and Control Pilot Project

In order to achieve national development goals directed to the conservation and sustainability of its natural forests, the RGC has recognized processes and commitments resulting from the UNCED Conference that was organized in Rio de Janeiro in 1992 and its follow-up processes. Moreover, the RGC envisions that a long-term national forest program will be implemented in accordance with the framework of the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests/Intergovernmental Forum on Forests promoted by the International Arrangement on Forests with the United Nations Forestry Forum and the Collaborative Partnership on Forests.

In 1994, the RGC joined the Mekong River Commission (MRC) and Mekong Secretariat to cooperate in the management of natural resources in the Mekong River region. With support from the RGC and the MRC, a number of projects have been implemented in Cambodia to ensure the sustainability of forest resource in the Mekong Basin.

The RGC was admitted into the International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO) as a producer country member in 1997. This has provided the RGC with the means to collaborate with international organizations, as well as tropical timber producer and consumer countries, on policies and guidelines that can be applied to member countries in order to achieve ITTO objective 2000.

The Forestry Administration has cooperated with several United Nations organizations, government agencies, and NGOs that have an interest in the sustainable management of natural resources. These organizations include the UNDP, FAO, the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank, Wild Aid, Conservation International, Flora and Fauna International, and the Wildlife Conservation Society.

Other information and emerging issues

In accordance with the national economic program of the RGC and ITTO objective 2000, the RGC has devoted considerable effort to eliminating illegal forest activities. This success of this effort has been achieved with the support and participation of all level of concerned authorities. The RGC has received support from donors and engaged local communities to participate in the sustainable management of forest resources, including the restoration of secondary forests, the rehabilitation of degraded forestland, and the establishment of forest plantations with native and exotic species. Increasing the effectiveness of forest law enforcement is the most important activity that needs to continue to ensure the success of the forestry reform process.

Implementation of the IPF/IFF proposals for action related to thematic issues of UNFF 4

Social and cultural aspects of forests

2. Promoting the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising from the utilization of forest genetic resources and intellectual property rights

MAFF/ FA has evolved from an institution addressing sector environmental concerns to one operating under cross-sector sustainable development principles. These principles include the following:

Principle 1: Recognition of the linkage between poverty and environmental degradation

Principle 2: Recognition of the importance of local communities and a commitment to a participatory approach in considering environmental issues;

Principle 3: Recognition of the need for strengthening institutional capacity and increasing awareness

Principle 4: Recognition of the importance of an integrated approach to environmental planning.

The RGC's agricultural development strategy features a two-pronged framework. The first embraces rapid, sustained, and equitable agricultural growth and empowerment of the poor. The second focuses on improving this groups' access to land, water, and other productive inputs to enhance sustainable livelihoods, food security, and overall socio-economic development.

A brief outline of native customs and traditions that regulate forest use follows:

Spirit forests: As a result of the presence of spirits protecting these forests, people are not allowed to cut down trees or to hunt in these forests. They used to come to these forests to pray when their people were afflicted with life-threatening diseases.

Multiple use forests: These forests are used for hunting and for collecting mushrooms, wild fruits, wild leaves, wild yams, and medicinal plants for personal consumption. When a disease strikes a village, people believe that they have bad luck and that they should move to a new area.

There are no restrictions on collecting NTFP's and people are free to go into forests to collect firewood, poles, rattan, vines, bamboo, and medicinal plants for family use. Timber is used only for constructing personal houses. Currently, there is a community forest for each village to protect and to manage in a sustainable manner.

In order to ensure the most effective reforestation in terms of economic benefits and gene conservation, the Forestry Administration, with support from the Royal Danish Government, has established the Tree Seed project. The primary purpose of this project is to provide genetically superior seeds obtained from seed sources that are collected from the best quality mother trees to meet the requirements of an effective reforestation program. The project also contributes to building capacity at the national level.

3. The role of women in sustainable forest management and utilization

In collecting and using NTFPs, men and women have complementary roles. In general, most men collect timber products, while most women collect NTFPs, including fuelwood, mushrooms, bamboo shoots, wild vegetables, insects, and rattan. These year-round activities are very important to local communities. Children, from eight to sixteen years old, also play an important role in maintaining livelihoods by caring for animals and collecting firewood, insects, rattan, and other NTFPs.

Capacity building

Human resources development and training is an ongoing activity in the forestry sector that is supported by both domestic funding and foreign assistance. The MAFF/FA has

been cooperating with JICA for the past three years in implementing a Forest Sector Capacity Building project with support from the Japanese Government. Its purposes are to strengthen the capacity of the Forestry Administration, improve techniques on forest management restoration and rehabilitation, and transfer knowledge to targeted groups.

The Forestry Administration has received support for staff to study both locally and abroad. This support has provided academic training for Bachelor and Master's degrees, as well as facilitated participation in short training courses, seminars, and workshops.

4. Integrating local and indigenous communities in sustainable forest management programmes, particularly with respect to recognizing and respecting customary and traditional rights and privileges of indigenous and local communities

4. (a) Recognition and respect for the customary and traditional rights and privileges of indigenous local communities

The RGC recognizes and respects the traditional user rights of local communities and indigenous groups. In Article 40 of the forestry law, it states that:

For local communities living within or near the Permanent Forest Reserve, the state shall recognize and ensure their traditional user rights for the purpose of traditional customs, beliefs, religions and living as defined in this article.

The traditional user rights of local communities to collect and use forest products and by-products do not require a permit. Traditional user right as specified in the forestry law consist of:

1. The collection of dead wood, picking wild fruit, collecting bee's honey, taking resin, and collecting other forest by-products;
- 2- Using timber to build houses, stables for animals, fences and to make agricultural instruments;
- 3- Grass cutting or unleashing livestock to graze within forests;
- 4- Using other forest products & by-products consistent with traditional family use;
- 5- The right to barter or sell forest by-products does not require a permit if those activities do not cause significant threat to the sustainability of the forest. Customers, or any third parties, who collect forest by-products from local communities for the purposes of trade, in a manner consistent with the provisions of the forestry law, shall require a permit for forest by-products transportation after royalty and premium payments.

Local communities cannot transfer any of these traditional user rights to a third party, even with mutual agreement or under contract. These traditional user rights shall be consistent with:

- 1- The natural balance and sustainability of forest resources and respect the rights of other people; and
- 2- Allowances and prohibitions under the provisions of the forestry law

4.(b) Participation in decision making regarding the management of forests

The common goal of forest management is to achieve sustainable management and utilization of forest resources. In Cambodia, this is being accomplished by strengthening the review of forest operations through the development of new forest concession management plans consistent with international standards and the renegotiation of forest concession investment agreements according to a model agreement. These processes have

been institutionalized to ensure equity and transparency and to encourage forest certification.

Remaining forest concessionaires were required to submit strategic forest management plans (SFMPs) and environmental and social impact assessments (ESIAs) to the FA/MAFF. The SFMPs and ESIAs were distributed to the public, particularly local communities living in and around forest concessions, to solicit their comments. Forest concessionaires will only be allowed to progress to the next level of forest management planning if their FMSPs and ESIAs are approved by a technical evaluation committee established by the Forestry Administration, and by MAFF.

4.(c) The attainment of secure land tenure arrangements

Under the Land Law, land in Cambodia is divided into five categories, including State Public, State Private, Private, Indigenous Community, and Monastery Property. Forestland is categorized as State Public land.

4. (d) Capacity building and technology transfer for sustainable forest management directed at indigenous and local communities

Human resources development and training is an ongoing activity that is supported by both domestic funding and foreign assistance. The MAFF/FA has been cooperating with JICA for the past three years in implementing a Forest Sector Capacity Building project with support from the Japanese Government. Two of its primary purposes are to improve techniques on forest management restoration and rehabilitation and to transfer knowledge to targeted groups.

During the past year, more than 400 of the Forestry Administration's staff was trained at the JICA-funded Forestry and Wildlife Training Center in:

1. Forestry law;
2. Nurseries;
3. Silviculture;
4. Forest Communities;
5. Forest Measurements; and
6. Forest Management

Traditional forest- related knowledge

5. This section is not applicable to Cambodia .

6. Supporting the application of intellectual property rights and/or other protection regimes for traditional forest related knowledge, and the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the use of traditional forest related knowledge, innovations and practices

Scientific forest-related knowledge

7. Disseminating scientific knowledge to all interested parties, including through new and innovative ways, and strengthening capacity and mobilizing funding for national and regional research institutions and networks

The Forestry and Wildlife Research Science Institute was established in 1999 by a declaration of MAFF. One of the primary objectives of research is to exploit new technologies to improve social conditions and to enhance economic growth. The Forestry

and Wildlife Research Science Institute is constrained from achieving that objective by limited human resources capabilities and inadequate financial support

Nevertheless, the Forestry and Wildlife Research Science Institute has managed to collaborate with research institutions, NGO's and the private sector in studying various aspects associated with forest production and wildlife management. While some of the research has been practical and has been utilized in the field, gaps remain between researchers and potential users.

8. *Enhancing interaction between scientific research and policy processes, including priority setting of research, addressing of knowledge gaps and using scientific knowledge to support decision-making*

In order to enhance interactions between scientific research and the development of policies, the Forestry Administration has cooperated with several international institutions and organizations, as well as NGOs, including FAO, GTZ, JICA, the UNDP, the EU, the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank, and Flora and Fauna International.

Monitoring, assessment and reporting, concepts, terminology and definitions

9. *Improving information on national forest resources, making the information widely available, and assisting other countries in their related efforts*

Monitoring and reporting on forest crimes

Until recently, the Forestry Administration implemented a Forest Crime Monitoring and Reporting Project in collaboration with the Ministry of Environment, FAO and the UNDP. In order to implement the project effectively and efficiently, the project had engaged an independent monitor.

In 2002, the project experienced some financial problems and was suspended by FAO. For various reasons, the project was subsequently terminated. The MAFF/FA, with support from relevant institutions, including the Royal Arm Forces, the National Police, and local authorities, as well as a number of international development partners, including Wild Aid and Conservation International, has still continued to implement the project's activities to eliminate illegal forest crimes. A new independent monitor, SGS, has now been selected to evaluate the compliance of the MAFF/FA program with international standards.

Criteria and indicators of sustainable forest management

10. *Developing and using criteria and indicators of sustainable forest management (at national level and/or subnational level and for policy, planning, management and/or monitoring purposes), and participating in regional and/or international C&I processes*

In Cambodia, the Forest Concession Planning Process developed under the World Bank Forest Concession Management and Control Pilot Project is composed of three stages: A Strategic Forest Management Plan (SFMP), covering a twenty-five year period, at the level of the forest concession.

A medium term, Compartment Forest Management Plan, covering a 5 year period, at the level of the forest compartment; and

An operational Block and Coupe Forest Management Plan that is required to be conducted annually at the level of the forest coupe.

Each Forest Management Plan must be accompanied by an Environmental and Social Impact Assessments (ESIA) at each of these three levels of planning.

Currently, all remaining forest concessionaires have submitted their Forest Management Plans at the first level of planning. In order to evaluate the quality and sustainability of their SFMPs and ESIA's prior to the time that the concessionaire can advance to the next level of planning, the FA has developed comprehensive technical procedures that incorporate the following requirements:

Satellite imagery interpretation

Field checking

Data analysis and sustainability assessment

Checklist of the main significant fields (see the accompanying tables)

Community consultations

Evaluations of ESIA's

The Checklist incorporates a list of criteria that, in addition to the technical evaluation, the SFMPs must fulfill. It includes criteria regarding the structure of the Management Plans, the description of relevant information, the analysis of forest inventories, and the preparation for the next level of planning...

This comprehensive process and those criteria applied in the evaluation of the SFMPs has been recognized to represent an important step in the implementation of sound forest management plans in Cambodia.

III. Preparation of the Report

11. This report has been prepared using the following procedures:

- Identification of the source of required data
- Data collection
- Discussion of the quantity and quality of the data
- Compiling the data and information
- Preparing a draft
- Distributing the draft for comment
- Finalizing the report