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1. Practice area: Environment & Energy

2. Mission period (incl. of travel days)

From: 23-26 February 2016

3. Type of mission: FCPF Readiness Project backstopping

4. Clients:

FCPF PMU, REDD+ Taskforce Secretariat, Forest Administration, Ministry of Environment

5. Purpose of mission:

- Provision of technical and policy support for FCPF implementation

6. Documents, materials, resources:

Mission agenda

7. Mission members:

Joel Scriven

8. Costs:

UNDP/UN-REDD Global Budget

9. Brief summary of the mission:

Cambodia is in the readiness phase of REDD+ implementation. Key milestones in REDD+ readiness include the development of a national REDD+ strategy (NRS) and policies and measures (PAMs) for REDD+ implementation. Cambodia developed its NRS in 2015 and presented a draft version at the 21st Conference of the Parties (COP21) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in Paris, December 2015. REDD+ readiness in Cambodia has received various lines of bilateral and multilateral support, including through the UN-REDD Programme and the World Bank's Forest Carbon Partnership Facility (FCPF). A UN-REDD National Programme ran from 2011 to 2015; a 3-year \$3.8m FCPF readiness grant began implementation in March 2014, with UNDP as delivery partner. A project management unit (PMU), with staff including an international technical specialist and national project manager, was established in the Forest Administration to support FCPF implementation. The objective of the present mission was to backstop the implementation of the FCPF readiness project.

9.a Findings

- Government reforms have led to the absorption of the natural resource conservation functions of the Ministry of Agriculture, Forests and Fisheries (MAFF) to be absorbed into the Ministry of Environment (MOE) (announced by the Prime Minister on 25th February). MOE will be renamed the Ministry of Natural Resources and the Environment. The impact of this reform on the housing of REDD+ development and implementation functions can only be assessed once further details of the reform are available.
- **NRS:** The NRS is undergoing final review in the Forest Administration (FA) of MAFF and MoE; the government restructuring process may delay its official launch / endorsement. Following endorsement, attention will shift to the development of Action Plan(s). There seems to be consensus that the Consultation Group (CG) and Gender Group (GG) provided appropriate and inclusive vehicles to collect inputs from traditionally marginalized groups such as indigenous peoples, local communities and women.
- **NFMS:** We understand that the government has taken a decision to disclose 2010-2014 forest cover change figures, which show a loss of 1.2m ha over this period. The timing and format in which the figures will be released to the public is not yet certain. The UNDP CO is yet to receive a revised proposal for the implementation of FCPF Outcome 4 from FAO; UNDP returned comments on the previous version in July 2015. JICA will fund and lead on the development of a 2016 land use change assessment that will focus on changes rather than be wall-to-wall. A national NFMS guiding document has been drafted and will remain a living document.
- **FREL:** A final draft version of Cambodia's initial FREL is being reviewed by MOE, before submission to the UNFCCC Secretariat for Technical Assessment. The UNFCCC Secretariat have tentatively agreed

to facilitate its assessment in 2016.

- **Safeguards/SIS:** A TOR for a legal group is in development: the work aims to review the work completed to date on safeguards to ensure compliance with Cambodian legislation. A meeting is planned in March to reconvene the Safeguards Technical Team. The work on safeguards is held back by the lack of implementation Action Plans that will detail policies and measures for REDD+ implementation (i.e. the actions to be safeguarded). Cambodia is aiming to develop a safeguards framework that can address multiple safeguards requirements, for example including that of the (possibly forthcoming) Forest Investment Program (FIP) project. The grievance redress mechanism (GRM) will be folded into the overall safeguards work.
- The PMU plans to submit the FCPF mid-term review (MTR) and a proposal for the \$5m FCPF readiness grant top-up in July 2016. An independent consultant will be hired to carry out the MTR, likely to be coordinated by the CO.
- FCPF Outcome 3: demonstration activities have been implemented in five sites across the country by FA, the Fisheries Administration (FiA) and MOE. There is some uncertainty on behalf of NGOs as to the inclusivity of the process undertaken to select these sites. A mid-term review will be undertaken in Quarter 2 that will aim to document lessons from these initiatives to maximise the effectiveness and address issues of inclusiveness and gender. The Oddar Meanchey voluntary carbon market project – not one of the demonstration sites – has sold carbon credits but the revenues remain outside of the country as the government continues to address legal, administrative and procedural issues to receive the funds. A work plan was developed by a consultant for Outcome 3 follow-up actions.
- FCPF Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E): the CO have hired an M&E specialist for three months who will assess the FCPF framework and revise as necessary.
- Communication: The PMU produces and submits quarterly reports on FCPF implementation to the CO. The CO will be requested to share future ones with the RTA as a means to improve the flow of FCPF-related communication.
- FCPF/UN-REDD Project Executive Board (PEB) meeting: The 10th meeting of the PEB will be held on 11th March. This will mark the final UN-REDD meeting; in future it will be the steering committee solely for FCPF (under UNDP CO project management rather than joint programme).
- The UNDP CO will soon hold the Local Project Appraisal (LPAC) meeting to approve a project on environmental governance reform, which will strengthen MOE and the National Council for Sustainable Development (NCSD) and support the development of an Environmental Code. This project could be a timely precursor to NRS implementation and the \$5m FCPF readiness top-up could support the continuation of initiated activities.
- REDD+ Academy: Dr. Saret endorsed the proposal to hold a national REDD+ Academy event in Cambodia. Due to government restructuring and potential impacts on REDD+ coordination, the planning of this activity will be revisited in Q2/Q3.
- JICA is moderating their technical assistance to forestry/REDD+ in mid-2016 through reduced funding but continuation of a policy advisor for REDD+; they are considering continuing mapping support.
- The FIP will send a mission to Phnom Penh in April for follow-up discussions with the government on the implementation of a large-scale forestry support programme. The Asian Development Bank (ADB) is the delivery partner.

9.b Results achieved (key outputs)

- Clear work plan for 2016 that will be adapted as required from impact, if any, of institutional restructuring
- Agreement on next steps and required regional and global inputs for key 2016 activities and deliverables.
- Linkages established between upcoming environmental governance project and FCPF / national REDD+ process – particularly looking towards FCPF phase 2.
- Agreement on need and mechanisms for enhanced communication between PMU and regional office on FCPF implementation and, more broadly, national REDD+ processes.
- Enhanced knowledge of contributions and roles of civil society groups in national REDD+ process.

10. Key counterparts:

- FCPF PMU – Anupam Bhatia (TS), Sovanna Nhem (National Project Advisor), Lun Kimhy (Coordinator)

- REDD+ Taskforce Secretariat
- Forest Administration, Fisheries Administration, Ministry of Environment
- UNDP CO – Chhum Sovanny (Programme Analyst) and Moeko Saito-Jensen (Policy Analyst)

12. Distribution list:

- PMU (Anupam Bhatia, Sovanna Nhem, Kimhy Lun)
- UNDP Country Office (Setsuko Yamazaki, Napoleon Navarro, Chhum Sovanny, Moeko Saito-Jensen)
- UNDP REDD+ Team
- UNDP Bangkok Regional Hub (Gordon Johnson – Environment and Energy Regional Practice Leader, Sharad Neupane – Desk Officer, COSQA)

Annex: Mission agenda

23 February	
AM	Travel BKK-Phnom Penh
PM	Meeting with UNDP CO (PEB planning)
24 February	
AM	Meetings with RECOFTC and WCS
PM	Meetings with Dr Khorn Saret (Head of REDD+ Taskforce Secretariat), Mathieu van Rijn (FAO) and Mr. Hiroshi Nakata (JICA)
25 February	
AM	Meetings with Tek Vannara (NGO Forum) and Moeko Saito Jensen (Policy Analyst, UNDP CO)
PM	Meeting with Ms. Setsuko Yamazaki (UNDP Country Director) and Mr. Napoleon Navarro (Senior Policy Advisor UNDP CO)
26 February	
AM	Planning meeting with FCPF PMU
PM	Attendance of National Council for Sustainable Development (NCSD) workshop on Sustainable Development