

## SWG Reporting

**Name of Sector Working Group: Natural Resources and Environment Sector Working Group (NERSWG)**

**SWG Chair and Co-Chair(s):**

- **SWG Chair: H.E Bounkham Vorachit, Minister to the Natural Resources and Environment, Lao PDR**
- **Co-chair: H.E Annette Knobloch, Ambassador-Designate, Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany to Lao PDR**
- **Co-Chair: H.E Alex Kremer, Country Manager of the World Bank, Lao PDR SWG**
  
- **Secretariat Focal Point:**
- **Government Officials: Mr. Virana Sonnasin, Acting Director General of Department of Planning and Finance, MoNRE**
- **Development Partners: Dr. Christina Seeberg Elcerfeldt, Head of German Development  
Mr. Maurice Andres Rawlins, Senior Environmental Specialist, World Bank**

**Technical Supporting Staff:**

- **Government Officials: Mr. Bounpakone Phongphichit, Director of Planning and Cooperation Division, DPF, MoNRE**
- **Development partners: Ms. Thippavan Senglinthong, Program Officer, German Development Cooperation  
Ms. Souksavanh Sombounkhanh, Program Assistance, World Bank**

## Overview of Sector Performance in 2020/2021

Sector outputs and activities	Update on the Progress/note on situation and relevant information to highlight sector performance	Challenges, opportunities and way forwards
<b>A. Actions/activities relating to the RTIM key recommendations and those highlighted in SSWG Call for Action 2020/2021</b>		
<p>1. Identify clear SDG targets (with baseline data) to be implemented through the National Disaster Recovery Framework and its Action Plan, National Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction and the Green Growth Strategy and propose measures for mainstreaming disaster risk reduction across all sectors.</p>	<p>- Identification of objectives under the Natural Resources and Environment sector in the next five years (2021 – 2025) focuses on maintaining the overall directions of the 10-year Natural Resources and Environment Strategy (2016 – 2025) and supporting the implementation of priority work areas included in the National Socio-Economic Development Plan as well as ensuring adequate level of budget support to deliver tangible results. Main objectives of Five Year Plan of the Natural Resources and Environment Sector (2021 – 2025) are as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Utilize, protect, conserve, and manage sustainable natural resources;</li> <li>2. Promote environmental quality to ensure good quality of life for people and green growth development;</li> <li>3. Enhance adaptation to and coping with the impacts of climate change and natural disasters;</li> <li>4. Enhance regional and international cooperation and integration;</li> <li>5. Enhance institutional capacity.</li> </ol> <p>- Moreover, the Natural Resources and Environment sector has been working with other sectors to deliver the sustainable development goals in particular target:</p>	<p>- Insufficient of public budget to support the implementation of all activities and the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic. Therefore, we request development partners and international organizations to continue support particularly the technical assistance, finance and assist to access the international trust fund.</p>

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	<p><b><u>SDG 11:</u></b> Make cities inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable - the Natural Resources and Environment sector contributes to this goal through the formulation of land allocation master plan and integrated spatial management plans, as well as the air quality monitoring system (PM 2.5) throughout the country.</p> <p><b><u>SDG 13:</u></b> Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts - the Natural Resources and Environment sector has implemented initiatives to address climate change issues such as: (1) revising the National Strategy on Climate Change and completed the revision of the Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC); (2) completed climate vulnerability assessment and risk mapping in 18 provinces; (3) initiated the National Adaptation Planning (NAP) process; (4) initiated and prepared the work on building resilience of urban populations with ecosystems-based solutions in six cities of six provinces such as: Xay District of Oudomxay Province, Phongsaly District of Phongsaly Province, Paksan District of Borlikhamxay Province, Kaisone Phomvihan City of Savannakhet Province, Pakse City of Champasack Province, and Vientiane Capital; and (5) completed drafting the emergency response plan 2021 for the Natural Resources and Environment sector.</p>	

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<b>B. Communication and outreach activities with the Sector Working Group</b>		
<p>- The Natural Resources and Environment Sector Working Groups comprises 3 Sub-Sector Working Groups including Land SSWG, Water Resources SSWG and Climate Change and Environment SSWG.</p>	<p>- The achievement of the Land SSWG are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identification of 13 sub-legislations some of which need to be revised and some of which will need to be developed;</li> <li>• Completion of the revision and approval of a regulation on the use of printed forms of land registration and land titles, No. 3153/MONRE;</li> <li>• Amendment of the draft Guidelines on Survey-Measurement, No. 6035/MONRE and the Land Registration and Titling Procedure, No. 6036/MONRE, which is currently in the final stages of review, will bring in comments from the land sector across the country and related parties soon.</li> <li>• Guidelines on changes in land use rights, No. 500/PMO.LMA and guidelines on the land valuation system No. 035/MONRE are in the process of review and examination to ensure compliance with the revised Land Law.</li> <li>• In addition, other sub-legislations have been continued to be developed and improved, but there are still challenges in many areas, such as the spread of Covid 19 and operating budgets.</li> <li>• Report on the implementation of a pilot project to recognize customary tenure in 3 forest types in 7 target villages of 3 districts, Khammouane province.</li> </ul>	<p>- Due to the lockdown from the Covid-19 situation in Vientiane Capital, the coordination mechanism between NRESWG and their SSWGs was inconvenient. Therefore, the NRESWG secretariat will conduct and set up the quarter meeting via face to face/online meeting with our SSWGs to update the working status.</p>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A meeting to brief on the achievements and lessons learned from the work of recognizing customary tenure in three forest types on 28 January 2021.</li> <li>• For the recognition of customary tenure in three forest types, the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment and the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry have organized a meeting to discuss and make a memorandum of understanding as a basis for the implementation of such work.</li> <li>• The group's activities were initiated by sharing information between sectors and the action plan for the relevant sectors was developed to create a data collection model for all land-related information management systems, harmonization of land use coding between land sector, agriculture and forestry sector, and geographic information.</li> <li>• There is a need to integrate the forest management system from the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry with land use planning and land use recognition in the three forest types, and information on forest area should be updated to suit the actual situation.</li> <li>• Clear legislation is needed as a basis for the exchange and access to information of the relevant sectors.</li> <li>• LUIS as a database program should contain a large amount of data from the relevant sectors in order for the sectors to be involved in the administration of the LUIS database.</li> </ul>	

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	<p>- The achievements of the Water Resources SSWG are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The National Water and Water Resources Management Strategy is ongoing in the process of revision.</li> <li>• Developed River Basins Management and Planning.</li> <li>• Developed the Sustainable Ground Water Management Planning of Savannakhet and Salavan Provinces.</li> <li>• Determines Water Resources Assessment of Nam Sam River Basin.</li> <li>• Developed legislation such as: Water Quality Management, Water Conservation Zones and Wetland Management Agreements.</li> <li>• Drafted Technical Guideline of Water Resources Assessment</li> </ul> <p>- The achievements of the Climate Change and Environment SSWG are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strengthen of planning, coordination mechanisms, monitoring and reporting on climate change adaptation for local and regional sectors;</li> <li>• Strengthen, collect and analyse data to be used in vulnerability assessment, mapping and implementation adaptation measures in 18 provinces and 2 priority sectors: Urban development and Water resources;</li> <li>• Protection and rehabilitation of the Phongsaly River catchment forest, Phongsaly Province to maintain the dry water source and respond to the production of water supply in the city;</li> </ul>	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Climate change management through mainstreaming climate change into socio-economic development and relevant sector development planning (Central and localities);</li> <li>• Develop net Zero emission targets, Update NDC, strategy on climate change and climate change inventory such as: Develop a national report on climate change and periodically update it under Lao PDR obligations under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change;</li> <li>• Develop a Low GHG emission action plan and able to survey GHG emissions in 2 target cities: Kaisorn Phomvihhan city and Pakse city.</li> </ul> <p>- The NRESWG and SSWGs had an annual meeting to discuss on the status of the work implementation and challenges to prepare to the 2021 Natural Resources and Environment Sector Working Group Meeting, and support the High Level 13<sup>th</sup> Round Table Meeting.</p>	
<b>C. Cross-sectoral thematic areas applied to all Sector Working Group</b>		
<b>1. Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation (in accordance to VDCAP 2016-2025) (Only narrative on each principle)</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Ownership: follow the VDCAP particularly dialogue, information sharing and related issues;</li> <li>2. Harmonization and Simplification: following the one country one system principle especially the coordination mechanism;</li> <li>3. Alignment: all projects/programs which were supported by the development partners had aligned and integrated to the 9th NSEDP and sector plan;</li> </ol>	<p>Resource mobilization: Enhanced coordination and proactive in supporting each other between the government agencies and development partners, it can boost resource mobilization in number of sectors. Provisions comprehensive information and respond in timely will help in developing proposals for bilateral organization, trust fund e.g. GEF, GCF.</p>

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	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4. Managing for results: the results of the implementation were based on the benefit sharing and win-win principle;</li> <li>5. Mutual Accountability: aware with the productive and weak of the implementation and result;</li> <li>6. Funding Mobilization: as being awared, MoNRE was assigned by the Government to be the focal point of international fund regarding to environment such as Global Environment Facility (GEF), Green Climate Fund(GCF) and Adaptation Fund(AF) as well as the national fund namely Environmental Protection Fund(EPF);</li> <li>7. South-South Cooperation: strengthening the cooperation with the regional countries such as ASEAN, GMS, ACMECS etc;</li> <li>8. Business as a partner: open and encourage public private partnership to get involve into sector plan.</li> </ol>	
<p><b>2. Innovation and technology</b></p>	<p>Enhancing the management of natural resources and environment and contributing to support green and sustainable development through developing the principle, guideline, capacity, technology innovation such as the green recovery, circular economy and value chain.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Lack of expertise and budget to implement the green recovery, circular economy etc.</li> <li>- This will require the support on capacity development for the relevant government agencies to understand why green growth, circular economy is important as putting on the new five-year plan. More relevant policies should be developed and enforce in parallel with resource mobilization to implement it.</li> <li>- To Shift linear economy to circular economy in moving toward green growth model, it requires to move away from extraction of natural resources in unsustainable way, encourage more responsible investments.</li> </ul>

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<b>3. Promoting gender equality and women's empowerment and accelerating the adoption and implementation of the National Youth Policy</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- All programs and activities under the NRESWG have gender participation.</li> <li>- This was included in the vision, strategy, guidelines, regulations, policy and other documents submitted for minister's endorsement. DPCM participated in training and workshops were comprised of 20% + females. In support of the National Youth Policy, DPCM participated in the University internship program.</li> </ul>	
<b>4. Other emerging issues such as impact of COVID-19 and response</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Due to the Covid-19 situation in Lao PDR affected to the implementation of sector plan. However, the NRESWG will continue accelerating to achieve the objectives.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Limitation of public budget and difficulty to access the international trust fund;</li> <li>- Due to the inconvenient of the transport, the monitoring activities were postponed.</li> </ul>

