

**Minutes of Meeting for the 2022 Natural Resources and Environment Sector Working  
Group Annual Meeting  
16 December 2022, Laotel Hotel**

- The 2022 Natural Resources and Environment Sector Working Group (NRESWG) Annual Meeting was held on the December 16<sup>th</sup> 2022 at the Laotel Hotel Conference Room which chaired by **Ms. Phakkavanh Phissamay**, Director General of Department of Planning and Finance, Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment and Co-chaired by Dr Christina Seeberg-Elverfeldt Head of Development Cooperation at German Embassy to Laos. The meeting also attended by representatives from Round Table National Secretariats, NRESWG secretariats, NRESWG Sub-Sectors, line ministries, embassies, financial institutes, NGOs and private sectors with the total of 50 participants;
- Besides reporting back, the sector's implementation activities and its outcomes for the year 2022, the main objectives of the meeting was to discuss the possibility in order to accelerate the implementation of the Ministry's priority projects especially those that have not reached the goals as initially plan to ensure the alignment of ongoing and future activities through the NRESWG platform, as well as assist and support the sector to obtain access to climate finance and other financing mechanisms namely Global Environmental Facility, Green Climate Fund, Adaptation Funds;
- The meeting began with the presentation by Mr. Sounadeth Soukchaleun, Deputy Director General, Department of Planning and Finance, MoNRE in regards to the establishments as well as the ongoing activities under the Natural Resources and Environment Sector Working Group and its Sub-Sectors where the presentation indicates the implementation to accomplish the goals are being exponentially accelerated in most areas;
- The presentation pointed out several key achievements for all Sub-Sectors under NRESWG (Land, Water and Environment) such as The final Concept Notes for submission to GEF/GCF by an Accredited Entity for the implementation of the BDS was discussed, MRC TbEIA Guidelines has been agreed by three MCs except Lao PDR, development of draft Concept Note for the update Mekong Basin Atlas 2022 and State of Basin Report 2023 have been prepared and discussed, Draft MRC Handbook for Gender Mainstreaming into MRC Core Functions and Activities for 2021-2025 has been finalized and submitted to MCs for no-objection, etc;
- Besides the achievements under the Natural Resources and Environment, Mr. Sounadeth also pointed out he challenges that occurred during the year 2022 where several issues are considered critical and need to be solved immediately so the implementation of the ministry's five year plan can be established effectively in the upcoming year. One of the

major issues that needs attention both by MoNRE itself as well as relevant DPs is the land titling in the remote area of Laos. According to the five-year plan, the mandate of Land Department and MoNRE is to complete the land titling in total of 300.000 plots where the actual number was only 129.000 plots are completed which is equivalent to only 36% of total plan;

- Ms. Phakkavanh Phissamay, Director General of Department of Planning and Finance, MoNRE commented that with all achievements under the NRESWG has been successfully according as plan despite the period of recovery of COVID-19 pandemic. Contribute into the success, Ms Phakkavanh, on behalf of the MoNRE and Chair of NRESWG, expressed her appreciation to Development Partners for providing assistant both technically and financially;
- Furthermore, in regards to the mentioned major challenged, a representative from Land Department provided explanation the cause of delaying in land titling which is due to the lack of equipment as well as the difficulty of identifying the proper land owner, especially in remote areas. The representative from Land Department further explained that the committee and staff have been already been formed train quite some time ago. However, with the lack of equipment the staff are unable to continue with the activities which, in turn, led to the inability to complete the task as plan;
- In addition to the 2022 NRESWG Meeting, Department of Planning and Finance, on behalf of the NRESWG Secretariat, proposed to the floor for comments in regards to the additional Sub-Sector Working Group (Circular Economy and Waste Sub-Sector Working Group) since the topic of Sustainable Consumption Production and related activities play essential part under the Natural Resources and Environment Sector in Lao PDR and it is one of the important issues globally;
- With the above proposal, Dr. Christina Seeberg-Elverfeldt, Head of Development Cooperation, German Embassy to Lao PDR, along with several participants agreed that the issue is very important to the development of Environmental Sector and needs to be considered as top priority in adapting the concept into action. However, Dr Christina felt there is no need to separate into a new Sub-Sector where it will take more efforts to manage a larger community and the proposed new Sub-Sector can actually place under the one of the three existing Sub-Sector namely Climate Change and Environment Sub-Sector Working Group;

- On the other hand, however, if there is the possibility for forming new Sub-Sector Working Group, representative of English Embassy to Lao PDR assures that the Embassy of England to Lao DPR is more than happy to consider becoming Co-Chair Sub-Sector;
- Lastly, Ms. Phakkavanh Phissamay, Director General of Department of Planning and Finance, MoNRE, then conclude in brief the direction of the progress made under the sector in 2022 and the direction of the five-year plan starting 2023 where the plan will focus on waste management and green growth initiative. Ms. Phakkavanh urged development partners to also develop action plan that align with the ministry's five-year plan so both sides can have further cooperation in the future;
- The chair declared the meeting closed at 12:00.

**Ministry of Natural Resources and  
Environment**

**Federal Republic of Germany to Lao  
PDR**

Phakkavanh Phissamay  
Director General

Christina Seeberg-Elverfeldt  
Head of Development Cooperation