INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

FOREST AND LANDSCAPE RESTORATION: MAKING IT HAPPEN

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Forest restoration in community forests in Cambodia– lessons learned from Tbeng Lech and O Soam CF

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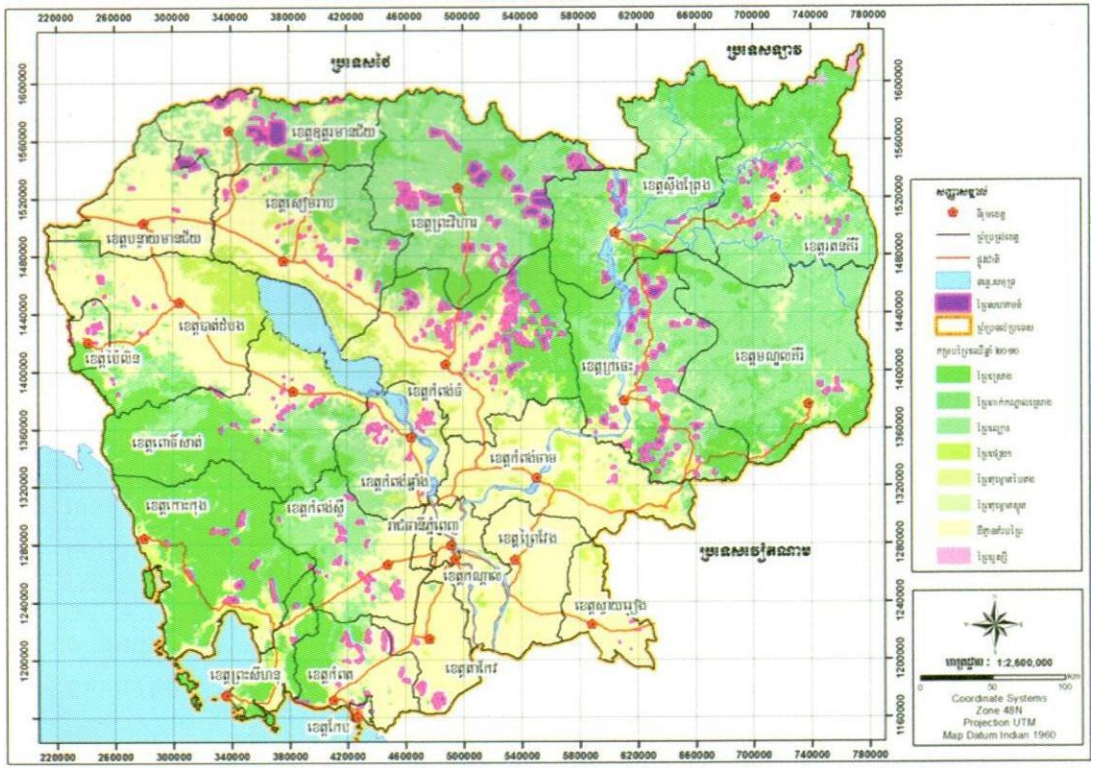
1. Introduction

- ✓610 Community Forests covering a total area of 506, 000 ha.
- ✓Right to manage and sustainably use the forest for 15 years with possible extension.



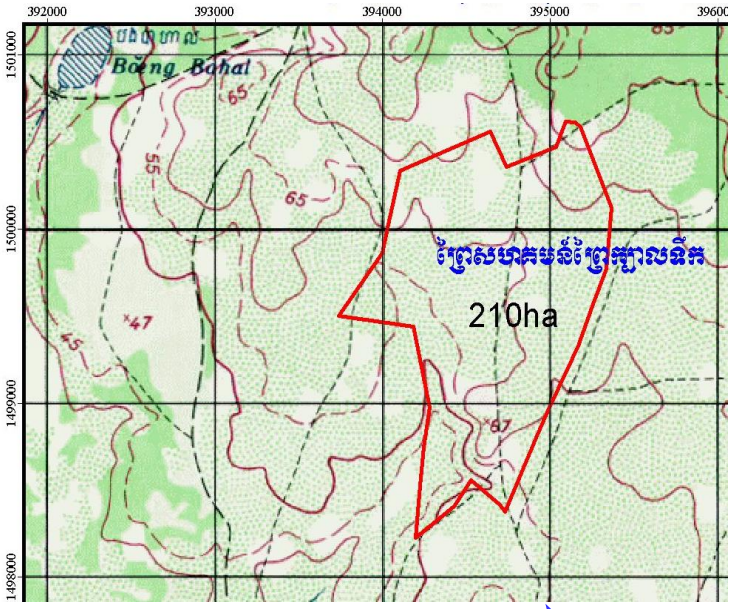
APFNet-funded project “Multi-function forest restoration and management of degraded forest areas in Cambodia” implemented from 2012 through to 2015.

The goal was to rehabilitate the degraded forests in two community forests to a status well stocked with high-value timber species and NTFPs.

Objectives: (i) set up a tree nursery in each community and provide training to CF members on seedling production and forest rehabilitation (ii) establish four 1-ha forest rehabilitation demonstration plots in each CF and rehabilitate 50 ha of degraded forests.

2. Project sites

	Tbeng Lech CF	O Soam CF
Location	Siem Reap province	Kampong Thom province
Started in the early	2000s	
Area	210 ha	307 ha
Management Committee members	11	7
Participating member	386 persons	Over 700 persons
Agreement with the provincial FA	2009	2015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Boeng Bohal
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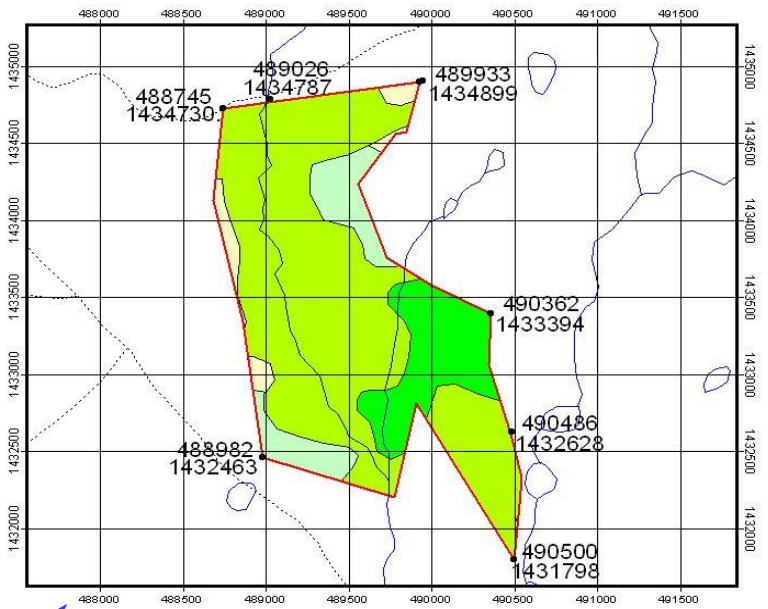
ព្រៃសហគមន៍ព្រៃស្នាលនឹក
210ha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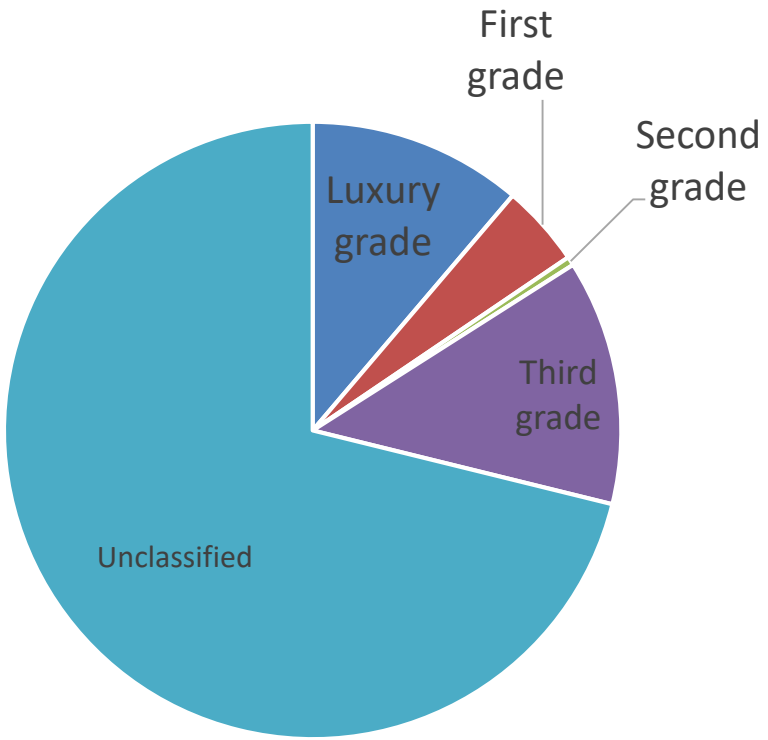
Odar Mean Chay
Preah Vihear
Stung Treng
Ratana Kiri
Bantay Mean Chay
Siem Reap
Battambang
Paylin
Tonle Sap
Kampong Thom
Kratie
Mondul Kiri
Pursat
Kampong Chhang
Kampong Cham
Kampong Speu
Koskong
Kanda
Prey Veng
Svay Rieng
Takeo
Kampot
Shanouk ville
Kep

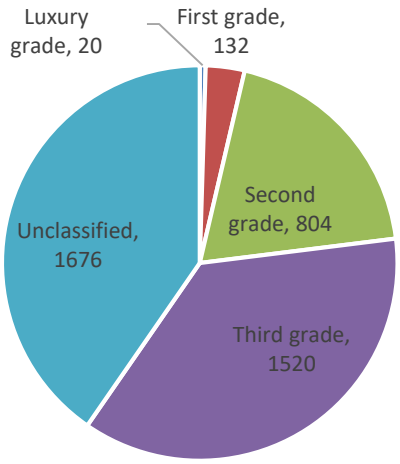
- ✓ Dry evergreen forest in Tbeng Lech and deciduous forest in O Soam
- ✓ Main NTFPs: honey, mushroom, rattan, wild fruits, fish, fuel wood, poles and small timber.
- ✓ Some parts of O Soam CF was illegally occupied by local villagers.

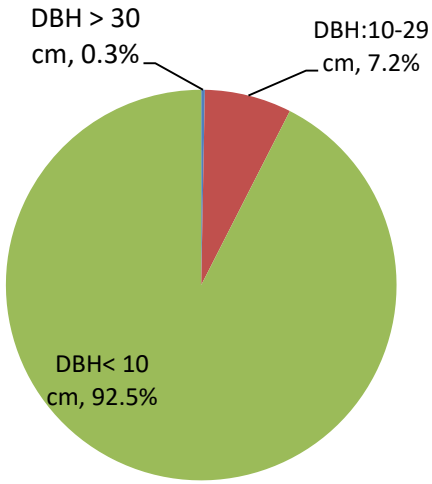
(a)



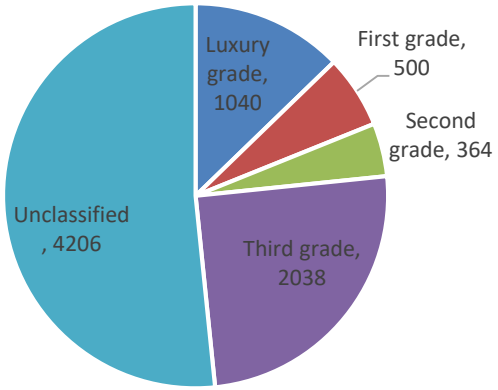
(b)

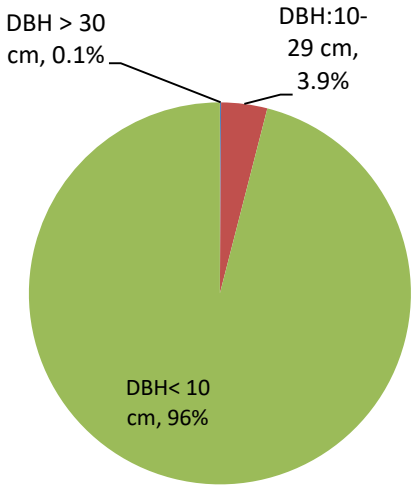
Number of tree species by timber grade (a) and percentage of tree by diameter class (b) in Tbeng Lech CF





Number of tree species by timber grade (top) and percentage of tree by diameter class (bottom) for deciduous forest in O Soam.





Number of tree species by timber grade (top) and percentage of tree by diameter class (bottom) for evergreen forest in O Soam.

- ✓The communities' vision: "A restored forest containing big trees of high-value timber species, non-timber forest products and rich biodiversity that support construction needs, home consumption, income generation and ecotourism industry."

- ✓The gap between the current condition of the forests and the vision is quite big.

- ✓To achieve the visions, the forests must be well protected and forest restoration conducted.

4. Main results

- ✓Two community nurseries, each with a minimum capacity to produce 6,000 seedlings per year.

✓Trainings on seedling production and nursery management for 89 CF members.




✓Four one-ha forest rehabilitation demonstration plots at each site established.

✓50 ha of degraded forests rehabilitated through enrichment planting. 22,600 seedlings planted.




Species identified by CF members: 1) Short term plants, such as pineapple, introduced thru an agroforestry system; 2) Medium term species, such as rattan, and bamboos; and 3) Long term species, timber trees, such as *Dipterocarpus alatus, Hopea odorata, Dalbergia cochinchinensis* and *Pterocarpus macrocarpus*.

5. Project outcomes and achievements, cont.

- ✓ The boundaries of O Soam CF were demarcated on the ground with local authority (commune and district levels) and provincial FA participation.

- ✓ The O Soam's Community Forestry Management Agreement was signed with the provincial FA (in 2015) immediately after project completion.

=> Reduce/eliminate of illegal forest activities (such as land occupation and illegal cutting of trees).

5. Project outcomes and achievements, cont.

- ✓ The project outcome of greatest importance is the capability of local communities to produce seedlings and manage forest rehabilitation.

- ✓ Forest rehabilitation has been carried out by both CFs since project completion. This is because the project created enabling conditions for the communities to rehabilitate their forests – nurseries and capacity building. Tbeng Lech manages to plant about 500 HVT seedlings per year, whereas O Soam plants about 1,600.

- ✓ Local communities have become new partners of the provincial FA and NGOs as they can be suppliers of seedlings and even trainers for other CFs.

5. Project outcomes and achievements, cont.

- ✓ The project created enabling conditions for other development partners to come in to assist the CFs in their respected fields:
  - Construction of dirt road connecting the nursery to the forest by MAFF and GIZ
  - Development of ecotourism mgt plan in Tbeng Lech
  - Updating the CF Management Plan in Thbeng Lech
- ✓ Nursery facility in O Soam has been used for trainings, meetings and visits.

6. Lessons learned

Restricted growth and low survival of seedlings in O Soam CF

Pinus merkusii (left) and *Sindora siamensis* (right)

Support of the community leaders

During the course of project implementation, we received full supports from the leaders of the two communities at every stages of project implementation. The support also means that communities are very keen to learn and committed to rehabilitate their forests.

Active participation of women

It was observed that women actively involved with the implementation of every activities of the project.

In O Soam a women was taking a leadership position as being an active member of the CF committee. She has a good knowledge of the forest and plays a leading role in forest restoration instead of the head of CF which quite often engaged in outside jobs.

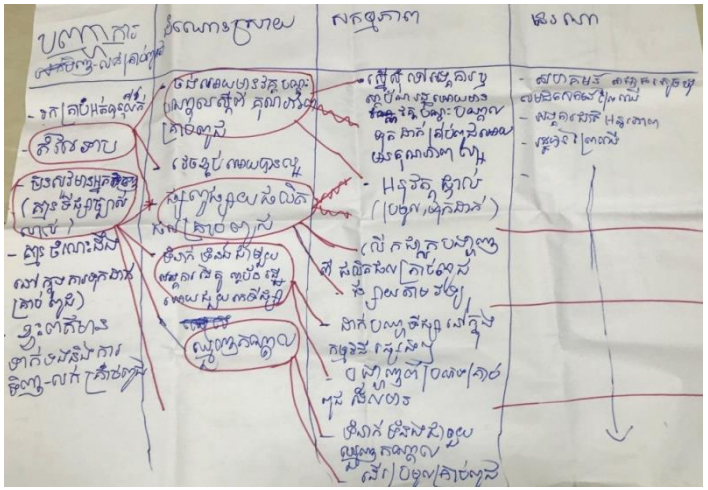
Select the right persons to work with the project

Who want to do something?	No
Who has started doing something! And want to improve that thing	Yes

After project completion, people that are still actively involving in seedling production are *aging members of the community committee*. Unlike young members who have secured long term employment in the cities or migrating to find job opportunity outside the country, these people have difficulties finding job outside the village. Although they are happy to do this job, their physical harshness poses a challenge with some activities, such as seed collection which sometimes require climbing the trees.

Seedling production and sale as additional source of income has proceeded slowly.

In a recent group discussion, community members in O Soam identified advertisement is priority to reaching customers. In addition, they will also amend the internal rule to motivate more community members to involve in seedling production and sale by significantly increasing the share from seedling sale to the seedling production group.



Long term technical and financial supports required

The three-year-project intervention is too short for a project to make any significant impacts considering large area requiring forest restoration. Sine local communities are equipped with knowledge and mean for producing seedlings, it does not mean that they would be able to keep the same pace of forest restoration after project completion.

Local communities are actively protecting their forests from land encroachment, illegal cutting and forest fire even with minimal support from the outsiders.

Require forest rehabilitation to realize their visions.

Long-term support is needed until local communities have financial sustainability.

Thank you