

Summaries of DOF Group Certification for Public Release

1. Available Public Summaries

Summaries of DOF Group Certification for public release in June 2016 include the following:

- Summary of forest management plan of both Xiengxien Village Forestry FMU and Xiengleu Village Forestry FMUs. Both FMUs are located in Bolikhan District of Bolikhamxay Province.
- Summary of forest monitoring results of the two above-mentioned Village Forestry FMUs.
- Preface of the revised PSFM Operations Manual.

2. Summary of Forest Management Plans

2.1 Forest Management Plan Summary of Xiengxien Village Forestry FMU

Xiengxien Village Forestry Management Unit is located in Bolikhan District of Bolikhamxay Province at latitude 18°43'8.36"N and longitude 103°59'44.53"E. Xiengxien Village is engaged in commercial rattan enterprise. Rattan was inventoried in a 3,279-ha compartment and was found to be of commercial quantity. Hence, this forest management plan was formulated by the Xiengxien Village Forestry Committee to support village management of the rattan resources. Forest management plan formulation was provided technical assistance by the Forest Science Research Center of the National Agriculture and Forestry Research Institute (NAFRI-FSRC) together with World Wide Fund for Nature Laos (WWF-Laos) and with support and oversight by the District Agriculture and Forestry Office, Provincial Agriculture and Forestry Office, and the Department of Forestry (DoF) of the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (MAF). The forest management plan covers a 9-year planning period from 2013 to 2021, divided into 3 rattan harvesting cycles.

The forest management objective is to implement sustainable management of rattan resources in Xiengxien Village and ensure yearly rattan harvesting that is consistent with forest ecosystem and biodiversity conservation.

The rattan resource management system prescribes that: (a) maximum annual harvest of rattan is 20% of rattan canes with at least 5-meter length; (b) strict application of rattan harvesting regulation and techniques; (c) protection of rattan resources, especially for rare variety of rattan; (d) natural regeneration of harvesting area; (e) re-planting in low-density area based on post-harvest assessment; (f) prohibition of conversion of the management area to other land uses; (g) and maintenance of the management area to promote regeneration and growth of vegetative resources.

Xiengxien Village contains 3 types of high conservation value Forests (HCVF), including HCVF4: riparian buffer zones with total area of 389 ha and protection forest with an area of 731 ha, HCVF5: rattan livelihood area consisting of 3,279-ha and 1,752-ha compartments, and HCVF6: spirit forest of 7.4 ha. The village prescribes the use, regulation, and maintenance of the HCVFs.

Implementation of this forest management plan will be done in parallel with the annual activities of DAFO and the rattan harvesting group, and under close supervision of PAFO. Participatory and sustainable management is applied for social, economic, and environmental benefits. Risks that have been identified will be mitigated.

This forest management plan will be the reference for implementing future harvesting, management, monitoring, and assessment activities. Updating of this plan will be done at mid-term of the planning period.

2.2 Forest Management Plan Summary of Xiengleu Village Forestry FMU

Xiengleu Village Forestry Management Unit is located in Bolikhan District of Bolikhamxay Province at latitude 18°41'36.15"N and longitude 104°1'44.37"E. Xiengleu Village is engaged in commercial rattan enterprise. Rattan was inventoried in a 1,306-ha compartment and was found to be of commercial quantity. Hence, this forest management plan was formulated by the Xiengxien Village Forestry Committee to support village management of the rattan resources. Forest management plan formulation was provided technical assistance by the Forest Science Research Center of the National Agriculture and Forestry Research Institute (NAFRI-FSRC) together with World Wide Fund for Nature Laos (WWF-Laos) and with support and oversight by the District Agriculture and Forestry Office, Provincial Agriculture and Forestry Office, and the Department of Forestry (DoF) of the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (MAF). The forest management plan covers a 9-year planning period from 2013 to 2021, divided into 3 rattan harvesting cycles.

The forest management objective is to implement sustainable management of rattan resources in Xiengleu Village and ensure yearly rattan harvesting that is consistent with forest ecosystem and biodiversity conservation.

The rattan resource management system prescribes that: (a) maximum annual harvest of rattan is 20% of rattan canes with at least 5-meter length; (b) strict application of rattan harvesting regulation and techniques; (c) protection of rattan resources, especially for rare variety of rattan; (d) natural regeneration of harvesting area; (e) re-planting in low-density area based on post-harvest assessment; (f) prohibition of conversion of the management area to other land uses; (g) and maintenance of the management area to promote regeneration and growth of vegetative resources.

Xiengleu Village contains 3 types of high conservation value Forests (HCVF), including HCVF4: riparian buffer zones with total area of 314 ha and protection forest with an area of 384 ha; HCVF5: rattan livelihood area consisting of 1,306-ha and 2,776-ha compartments, and HCVF6: spirit forest of 9.6 ha. The village prescribes the use, regulation, and maintenance of the HCVFs.

Implementation of this forest management plan will be done in parallel with the annual activities of DAFO and the rattan harvesting group, and under close supervision of PAFO. Participatory and sustainable management is applied for social, economic, and environmental benefits. Risks that have been identified will be mitigated.

This forest management plan will be the reference for implementing future harvesting, management, monitoring, and assessment activities. Updating of this plan will be done at mid-term of the planning period.

3. Summary of Forest Monitoring Results of Two Village Forestry FMUs (Xiengxien and Xiengleu)

Topic	Monitoring results and application
Growth rate study, 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Rattan harvesting plan calculations of both FMUs made use of rattan growth rate results from a NAFRI study on rattan and permanent sample plots established in Khamkeut District ➤ Rattan Growth Rate Study: 190 permanent sample plots covering 38,000 square meters were set up for rattan growth rate measurements for different rattan species were established in March 2015
Pre-harvesting, 2014 and 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Both FMUs were harvested for the first time based on the rattan harvesting plan as indicated in the forest management plan; no rattan pre-harvest inventory was necessary ➤ Second rattan harvests in both FMUs were based on the rattan harvesting plan and rattan post-harvest monitoring
Post-harvest monitoring, 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Rattan post-harvest monitoring in both FMUs took place in November 2014 and the report written in March 2015 ➤ The results as reported indicated that the number of harvested canes was lower by about 5% than indicated in the rattan harvesting plans ➤ Harvested poles or clumps in the harvesting plots were checked; the results for Xiengxien: Plots in the FSC area showed 249 canes collected for both big and small rattan; the results for Xiengleu: Plots in the FSC area showed 172 small rattan canes and 77 big rattan canes collected
Environmental impact of rattan harvesting in HCV area, 2015 Biodiversity Monitoring and Assessment	<p>For both FMUs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The forest management areas are still rich in biodiversity; forest structure contains dense dominant and co-dominant trees and understory vegetation; diverse species composition ➤ Felling of some trees in the village-use forest has impact on rattan canes in the vicinity of the felling area ➤ The focal habitats still have place for wildlife to find food and are without any notable disturbance from the community
Socio and economic Impact study, May 2016, based on interviews of 20 households conducted by PFS-DFU	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Economic impact: None because no harvesting quota was granted for 2015 ➤ Social impact: No negative impact reported from the use by the households of the forest under customary rights
Accident Report, May 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Monitoring form for recording accidents earlier distributed ➤ No accidents happened during the past year so none recorded

4. Preface of the Revised PSFM Operations Manual

The PSFM Operations Manual is a consolidated set of guidelines for the primary use of SUFORD-SU staff in facilitating 'Participatory Sustainable Forest Management' in Production Forest Areas. The guidelines in this technical document are consistent with the Forest Development Strategy, the Forest Law, and all relevant Orders and regulations concerning the management of forest resources, particularly those in Production Forest Areas.

The guidelines included in the PSFM Operations Manual encompass the country's rich experience in the management of production forests, which started with the piloting of PSFM systems and

procedures during FOMACOP in 1996-2000 followed by their wide application during SUFORD (0.66 million ha during SUFORD in 2004-2008, 1.29 million ha during SUFORD-AF in 2009-2012, and 2.30 million ha during SUFORD-SU in 2013 to present). PSFM has proven to be a good system, fitting well the forest management policy of the Lao Government, as well as meeting international standards as shown in the certification by the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) of a number of forest management units (FMUs). Certified FMUs have been located in Dong Phousoi PFA and Nakathing PFA in Khammouane Province, in Dong Sithouane PFA in Savannakhet Province, and also in a number of village-based FMUs in Bolikhamxay Province. FSC certification by the Rainforest Alliance has continued for two consecutive 5-year periods, 2005-2010 and 2010-2015, and is being pursued further in 2016 for another 5-year period (2016-2021).

The Manual originally included the Community Engagement Framework to be followed by SUFORD-SU field staff when engaging communities; description of PSFM operations; development of sustainable agriculture and forestry-based village livelihoods; and forest landscape management. The present version focuses on PSFM operations, since other project manuals cover in greater detail the other aspects mentioned above. However, aspects of capacity development and community engagement are included in the Manual to indicate how a large number of PFAs and administrative territories (provinces, districts, and villages) could be effectively involved and properly engaged in PSFM. The guidelines contained in the PSFM Operations Manual are comprehensive in coverage over different forest management activities in Production Forest Areas. Flexibility is provided for ready adaptation to local conditions.

The PSFM Operations Manual is an integration of pertinent materials taken from the previous version, MAF-DOF guidelines, and various SUFORD-SU project preparation documents, which were prepared with the participation of MAF, DOF and other MAF agencies, World Bank, and Government of Finland officers and consultants. Concepts and processes included are subject to change; hence, the Manual should be considered as a living document, which may be revised to incorporate improvements as experience is gained in its application. The Manual is not subject to single general approval, although at least 95% of the guidelines in the Manual are already approved guidelines. When workshops that use fresh guidelines are proposed to DOF, the approval of the workshop is considered as the go-signal for pilot implementation of the fresh guidelines.

Forest officers are enjoined to use the PSFM Operations Manual in facilitating PSFM in Production Forest Areas. All concerned are encouraged to report to DOF their findings on weaknesses of the guidelines and their recommendations for strengthening the guidelines in future versions.

Vientiane, June 2016
Director General
Department of Forestry

5. Forthcoming Public Releases

DOF is presently revising the forest management plan of FMUs in 41 PFAs supported by SUFORD-SU Project. Once completed, the summary of each of the forest management plans will be made available to the public.

6. Office to Request for Copies of Public Summaries

Requests for soft copy of any of the above documents may be addressed to:

Mr. Phomma Pathoummavong
Department of Forestry
Division of Techniques and Standards Development
Forest Certification Unit
Thatdam Area, Chanthaboury District
Vientiane, Lao PDR
P.O. Box: 2932
Email: p.pathoummavong@yahoo.com