

**Kingdom of Cambodia
Nation Religion King**

Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF)



Land Degradation Neutrality Targets

**Phnom Penh, Cambodia:
January 2018**



**NOTE FROM THE ROYAL GOVERNMENT OF CAMBODIA (RGC)
ON LAND DEGRADATION NEUTRALITY TARGETS**

The Royal Government of Cambodia has adopted Land Degradation Neutrality Targets as it is committed to achieve land degradation neutrality by 2030 to assure ecosystem services and food security of the nation. Cambodia sincerely appreciates the support from UNCCD/ Global Mechanism through the Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN) target setting program (LDN TSP).

Cambodia has formulated LDN targets and measures through a very comprehensive, inclusive process involving various stakeholders with the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF) as the UNCCD National Focal Point spearheading the process.

The Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN) targets and measures provide the starting point that will further be refined with further data advances. The government of Cambodia intends to receive continued support from GM and join hands with other local, national and international organizations to move forward with the implementation of the LDN targets.

I am happy to note that the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF) has taken note of land degradation as a major issue to be addressed within the next few years. We have already established a Technical Working Group to coordinate the implementation of the activities of the National Action Programme (NAP) for Combating Land Degradation in the Kingdom of Cambodia with the objective of meeting the LDN targets.





VENG SAKHON
Minister
Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries

CAMBODIA

Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN) to achieve national priority

Cambodia aims to achieve an economic growth rate of 7% per annum with its aspiration to reach an upper-middle income country by 2030. Cambodia is committed to achieve zero-hunger by 2025. Agriculture continues to be a driver of economic growth and poverty reduction for Cambodia. Achieving a sustainable agricultural growth at 5% per annum is instrumental to address the Royal Government of Cambodia's objectives for food security, poverty reduction, and increased climate resiliency. Food production relies mainly on land and water. Land degradation and water scarcity are real challenges for food security. As one of the UNCCD signatory states, the Royal Government of Cambodia (RGC) has approved the National Action Plan (NAP) for 2018 to 2027 which is the fundamental document for national strategies for combating land degradation in the country. RGC is committed to achieve 17 SDGs including SDG15 which aims to protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss. Target 15.3 clearly states to combat desertification, restore degraded land and soil, including land affected by desertification, drought and floods, and strive to achieve a land degradation-neutral world by 2030.

Sandy materials cover a large proportion of the landscape of the country, on account of the siliceous sedimentary formations that underlie much of Cambodia's territory. They occur in areas of low fertility soils which are also the most prevalent in agricultural lands of Cambodia. In respect with soil erosion, Cambodia has about 4.45 million ha of land under highly erodible class. The drivers of land degradation in Cambodia have been attributed mainly to deforestation, expanding agricultural lands, climate change, pest and diseases, unsustainable land management, and infrastructure development. In recent decade, deforestation has resulted in a significant loss of forest cover from 10.83 million ha (59.64%) in 2006 to 8.52 million ha (46.90%) in 2014 to 10.45 million ha (57.55%) in 2010, to 8.52 million ha (46.90%) in 2014 and to 8.22 million ha (45.26 %) by 2016. Over this period, croplands (Paddy fields, field crops, horticulture, rubber and oil palm) had increased by about 2.69 million ha. Agricultural land is expanding from lowland to upland adding more pressure on forestland. Land Productivity Dynamics (LPD) indicate that in 2010, Cambodia had about 53 thousand ha of land showing early sign of decline in productivity as land use changed from forest to cropland. The soil organic carbon density indicates that for a period of 10 years (2000-2010), Cambodia lost about 1.98 million tons of carbon in top 0-30 cm depth as a result of land use changes from forest to non-forest.

In line with commitments of Cambodia in the UN Framework of Climate Change, UN Convention on Biological Diversity, UNCCD's and related on-going initiatives such as Forest Landscape Restoration (FLR), Restoration Opportunities Assessment Methodology ((ROAM), and Reduce Emissions from Deforestation and forest Degradation in Developing Countries (REDD+), Cambodia is committed to work on combating desertification and land degradation, through the implementation of sustainable land management practices and institutional and legislative measures in order to achieve Land Degradation Neutrality by 2030, with national, regional and international partners.

The LDN Targets set by the RGC are:

Target 1. By 2030, forest cover will be increased to 47% of the total land area (The most recent baseline figure for forest cover is 82,198 sq. km equaling 45.26% of total land cover, as of 2016). This will require an additional gain in forest cover area of about 3,157 sq. km.

Target 2. By 2030, increase in agricultural growth by 5% per annum as compared to 3% in 2016 (ASDP 2014-2018).

Target 3. By 2030, soil organic carbon (SOC) stock in forest and cropland will be increased by 1.2% per year as compared to 2015.

Target 4. By 2030, ecosystems and their services are maintained and enhanced by establishing 23,500 sq. km of protected forest and 3,900 sq. km of production forest; and restoring at least 8% of degraded and depressed protected areas, conservation areas, agroecosystems and forest ecosystems including mangroves. The enhanced ecosystem services are particularly for women, elders and children in local communities and indigenous ethnic minority groups.

Measures to achieve targets on Land Degradation Neutrality:

1. Promote reforestation by intensifying tree planting and forest rehabilitation with 10 million tree seedlings and 233 sq. km per year.
2. Maintain protected forest and wildlife conservation at 390 sq. km per year.
3. Keep forest land for community forest (CF) development by confining area of 783 sq. km and forming 50 CF per year.
4. Restore degraded and deforested landscapes in 3 provinces (Kampong Thom, Preah Vihear and Siem Reab) by implementing FLR and ROAM approach.
5. Reduce conversion of forest land by cessation of economic land concession program.
6. Enforcement of laws by strengthening the coordination, public meeting and dialogues amongst senior forestry officials, military and police officials, and subnational government officials.
7. Increase the productivity of cropland (all kind of crops) at 10% per annum, contributing to achieving 5% agricultural growth per annum, by promoting programs on agricultural land conservation and improvement for sustainable soil management.
8. Apply GAHP (Good Animal Husbandry Practices) in animal production farms that will increase number of pigs by 2%, poultry - 4% and cattle - 1% per year; and to promote animal waste management for soil improvement and rural energy by installing around 1,000 biogas digesters.
9. Strengthen the implementation of rice production and export policy and industrial development policy, especially focusing on improved quality and safety of agricultural produce, and access to national and international markets.
10. Improve land productivity by applying sustainable agricultural practices (Conservation agriculture, organic farming) that will increase soil organic matter content to 4% of cropland (Rice, vegetables, fruit trees) per year.
11. Develop and apply policy and legislations for payment for ecosystem services (PES) to provide incentives for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity.
12. Apply best practices to the identified degraded ecosystems for their restoration and resilience, and assess their contribution to soil organic carbon stock.
13. Strengthen human, institutional, technological, and financial capacity building including legislations and incentives.

The Royal Government of Cambodia (RGC) recognizes that combined efforts to leverage Land Degradation Neutrality into political and development processes, at the national level is the key drivers toward achieving the country's LDN targets. The Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF) as the UNCCD National Focal Point is the lead institution for the implementation and coordination of Land Degradation Neutrality. MAFF is committed to work with all line ministries, in particular the Ministry of Environment and the Ministry of Land Management, Urban Planning and Construction. MAFF will be further developing partnerships with UN agencies, mainly with the UNCCD, FAO, and UNDP.