

Ministry of Forestry The Union of MYANMAR

Combined Safeguards and Sub-
regional Capacity Building Workshop
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A Brief Account of Myanmar Forest

- Myanmar is covered with 48 % or about 31,773,000 ha of forest.
- Of this 3.1 % or 988,000 ha is classified as primary forest, the most biodiverse and carbon-dense form of forest.
- Annual change rate of the total forest area
 - Between 1990 and 2000 was -1.2 %
 - Between 2000 and 2010 was -0.9 %

REDD-plus and the role of Myanmar

- Under the circumstance of global climate change, the term REDD-plus become a new mechanism to mitigate the climate change.
- Myanmar has recognized REDD+ as an innovative concept of adding monetary incentive to forest conservation activities.
- Forest conservation is an age-old practice in Myanmar.
- Myanmar has well established natural structure for SFM and conservation, which are in line with REDD-plus activities.

Legal Framework

- Forest Policy (1995)
- Forest Law (1992)
- Forest Rules (1995)
- Myanmar Agenda 21 (1997)
- Community Forestry Instruction (1995)
- Protection of wildlife and wild plants and conservation of natural areas law (1994)
- National Forestry action plan (1995)
- National code of practice for forest harvesting

Six Imperatives with which Myanmar Forest Policy was formulated

| | |
|------------------|---|
| Protection | - natural resources; forest, soil and water, ecosystems, biodiversity |
| Sustainability | - maintenance and rational use of natural resources |
| Basic Needs | - Providing forest products and services to the people |
| Efficiency | - Harnessing the full economic potential of the forest while controlling socio-environmentally side effects |
| Participation | - Enlisting active participation of people in natural and local efforts |
| Public awareness | - Educating communities generally and more particularly the politicians, decision makers and other stakeholders |

Basic Principles of Forest Law

- To promote the sector of public cooperation in implementing the forestry policy and environmental conservation policy of the government;
- To develop the economy of the State, to contribute towards the food, clothing and shelter needs of the public and for perpetual enjoyment of benefits by conservation and protection of forest;

Community Forestry Instruction

- Opened a new front for local communities to fully participate in planning and implementing forest activities
- About 41,458 ha of community forests have already been established and about nearly 40,000 user members involved by the end of 2009.

Forest Management System of Myanmar

- Myanmar Selection System
- Forest Management Plan
- Elephant Logging

Myanmar Selection System

- The principle forest management applied in managing the natural forests in Myanmar since 1856
- Control measures are girth limit, annual allowable cut and 30-year felling cycle
- Harvesting only increment and leaving the capital without being compromised

Elephant Logging

- The use of elephant in skidding and rafting in transportation of logs are the common practices in Myanmar.
- About 3000 elephants are working for timber harvesting through the country.
- Reduced Impact Logging System

Forest Management Plan

- Short-term and long-term plan
- With which forest districts, management units, are managed
- Revised in every ten year

District Forest

Production
Working
Circle

Plantation
Working
Circle

Local
Supply
Working
Circle

Watershed
Working Circle

Non-wood
Forest
Working
Circle

Reforestation and Afforestation

- A supplement to the natural forest management in Myanmar
- Not the substitution to the existing natural forests
- Large scale plantation forest began in 1980s although small scale started as early as late 1850s in Myanmar.
- Annual plantation programme of about 30,000 ha
- Four types of plantation
 - Commercial
 - Industrial
 - Watershed
 - Village supply

Role of Reforestation and Afforestation

- Restore the environmental condition
- Reduce pressure of heavily depending on remnant nature forest
- Reduce soil erosion
- Enhance the well being of rural community

Status of REDD-plus preparation

- Forest Department established a Core Unit for REDD-plus and AR CDM aiming at to formulate REDD-plus readiness proposal
- FD and UNDP jointly organized two national level workshops in Nay Pyi Taw
 - First workshop was held on April 7, 2010 and attended representatives from line ministries, FAO, UNDP, UN-REDD programme and local NGOs.
 - Second was also held along with the disaster risk reduction workshop in December 19-20, 2010 in Nay Pyi Taw

Although Myanmar has not started yet REDD pilot project, assessment on readiness of major components of REDD-plus has been conducted in cooperation with UNDP and local NGOs.

Components of REDD+ Readiness and Typical Activities in Myanmar

| Management of the REDD+ Readiness process | Status | Remarks |
|--|--------|--|
| Establishment of multi-stakeholder information network | 3 | Already established, need to be strengthened and to be sustained |
| Establishment of coordination mechanism | 2 | Already established, but weak, need to be strengthened and to be sustained |
| Preparation of a REDD+ readiness roadmap | 2 | Two national workshops already held, need to prepare roadmap |
| Analysis of sectoral approaches to REDD+ | 1 | Need to conduct research |

1=very low, 2=low, 3=medium, 4=high, 5=very high

Components of REDD+ Readiness and Typical Activities in Myanmar

| Stakeholder Engagement | Status | Remarks |
|--|--------|--|
| Awareness raising-government agencies | 1 | Very few officials aware about REDD |
| Awareness raising-communities | 1 | Difficult opportunities of awareness |
| Awareness raising-other (industry, armed forces, etc.) | 2 | Few officials aware about REDD |
| Preparation / application of FPIC procedures | 1 | Not yet startedVery few officials aware about REDD |

1=very low, 2=low, 3=medium, 4=high, 5=very high

Components of REDD+ Readiness and Typical Activities in Myanmar

| Implementation Framework | Status | Remarks |
|---|--------|---|
| Mainstreaming REDD+ into planning (Land use and socio-economic development) | 4 | Forest Policy and FD management plan is very inline with REDD, easy to integrate with management plan |
| Design of benefit distribution system (including establishment of REDD+ fund) | 2 | Have experiences in CF but need to explore more |
| Strengthening forest governance- community or social forestry development | 4 | CFI 1995, Forest Policy 1995, Forest Law 1992, Myanmar Agenda 21, CITES |
| Strengthening forest governance- law enforcement and reduction of corruption | 3 | Forest Law 1992, Wildlife Law 1992, Code of Timber Harvesting, C & I for SFM |
| Application of social and environmental safeguards | 3 | Forest Law 1992, Wildlife Law 1992, Code of Timber Harvesting, C & I for SFM |

Components of REDD+ Readiness and Typical Activities in Myanmar

| REDD+ Strategy Setting | Status | Remarks |
|---|--------|--|
| Analysis of drivers of deforestation and forest degradation | 3 | Have reliable data and information, suggestion to conduct for specific area to explore major drivers |
| Analysis of opportunities to enhance forest carbon stocks (Reforestation, Rehabilitation, etc.) | 5 | Reforestation, Afforestation across the country by Govt. and private, annual planting rate of 32000 ha. Per year |
| Identification of options | 4 | Many forest rehabilitation and conservation activities including PAS (5.57% of total area) |
| Preparation of National REDD+ Strategy, including consultation process | 1 | Not yet started, urgently needed |

Components of REDD+ Readiness and Typical Activities in Myanmar

| Reference Scenario | Status | Remarks |
|--|--------|--|
| Analysis of past trends in forest cover and forest quality | 4 | Available RS/GIS images and experts in FD, need specific image for specific area (potential pilot project area) |
| Estimation of biomass equations | 2 | Have experimental scale only, and some experts, but need for comprehensive study for each and every forest type of Myanmar |
| Scenario setting for future trends in forest development | 2 | Need more discussion and consultation to set scenario |
| Estimation of interim reference scenarios | 3 | Available for generalized reference scenario |

1=very low, 2=low, 3=medium, 4=high, 5=very high

Components of REDD+ Readiness and Typical Activities in Myanmar

| National Monitoring System | Status | Remarks |
|---|--------|---|
| Strengthening the national forest inventory process | 4 | Already have but need to strengthen |
| Establishment/capacity building for remote sensing | 3 | Have some experts but need new generation for long term |
| Development of participatory monitoring techniques | 3 | Already established some CF but need to develop the capacity of rural community, have CF training centres and training in regular basis |
| Data management/capacity building for reporting (link to National Communications) | 3 | Need more experts and more new generation for future plan |

1=very low, 2=low, 3=medium, 4=high, 5=very high

Experiences

- Myanmar has not started the REDD+ project so that demonstration experiences are very limited.
- However, FD has a lot of experiences in:
 - Sustainable forest management
 - Reforestation/Afforestation
 - Forest conservation
 - Organizing local people to participate in forest management through community forestry

Experiences

- Forest Department has been managing its natural forests under Myanmar Selection System, which is a system of sustainable forest management, for over 100 years.
- For social aspect, Community Forestry Instructions (CFIs) was launched in 1995 so that Forest Department has over 15 years working experience of community forestry

Involvement of Biodiversity Experts

- REDD⁺ core unit to undertake REDD⁺ related matters has been established.
- Core unit is composed of experts from various fields such as biodiversity conservation, forest management, silviculture, forest ecology, community forestry etc.
- Thus, biodiversity experts involve the core unit as well as national REDD⁺ planning.

Involvement of Indigenous People and Local Communities

- Forest Department invited the local communities (user groups of existing community forests) from potential pilot project sites to attend REDD national level workshop held in 2010 for awareness raising.
- By this way, indigenous people and local communities involve REDD⁺ planning.

Experiences with biodiversity safeguard

- All actions under Myanmar forest management plans are in line with the safeguards outlined in the UNFCCC decision
- Based on the Rules and Law of the Protection of Wildlife and Conservation of Natural Area, biodiversity conservation in Myanmar especially wild flora and fauna in their natural habitats and ex-situ conservation has been implementing.
- In addition, Myanmar has actively participated in international agreements concerning biodiversity conservation such as CITES, CBD, etc.

Experiences with biodiversity safeguard

- Rights of indigenous people in the vicinity of protected area are due considered by establishing buffer zone (zoning management system)
- Ecosystem services are not given full attention in biodiversity conservation due to insufficient information, technology, methodology and strong policy commitment.
- Actions to address the risk of reversals and to reduce the displacement of emission are not described under the Protection of Wildlife and Conservation of Natural Areas Law.

National Capacity for Developing and Applying Biodiversity Safeguards

- Legal Status (NBSAP)
- Human Resources (Government and Local Community Level)
- Financial Resources (Sustainable financing)
- Technology and Management Aspects (Risk assessment, risk mitigation measures, etc...)

Main Obstacles

- Lack of systematic Human Resources development in Biodiversity Conservation (quantity, quality and expert areas)
- Insufficient legal status (Inconsistent and unpredictable policy issues, lack of national land use policy, EL)
- Insufficient financial resources (mostly centralized budget allotment system, PAS entirely depend on external resources)
- Lack of comprehensive master plan

Required concrete capacity building

- Experts for drawing up comprehensive Master Plan (HR requirement)
- Continuous and expeditious Environmental Awareness Programmes in every level from government to grass-root.
(Finance and Experts in EAP)

Main Lessons Learned

- Insufficient long term financial support including field equipments and accessories
- Weak law enforcement
- Low educational standard of local people and their poverty (very low income per household)
- Insufficient well-trained extensionists
- Some external pressure (subjective decisions by concerned authorities)
- Insufficient incentive for indigenous people in biodiversity conservation

The Structure of Organizations

- Ministry of Forestry and National Commission for Environmental Affairs mainly play a cooperation and/or coordinating role in the community-based forest resource and biodiversity conservation projects initiated by the NGOs.
- NGOs are working on community-based natural resource management, biodiversity conservation and climate change issues.
- However, the number of NGOs is still very few.

The Views of Stakeholders

- Stakeholder consultative meetings and workshops organized by the projects are the major platforms through which the views of all stakeholders could be exchanged and coordinated if in need.

The Mechanism through which the Views of Local Communities are considered

- Since long time before, FD acknowledged the rights and privileges of local communities. It has been clearly mentioned in the section 6(b) of the existing Forest Law (1992) as follows:
“The Minister shall in respect of constituting a reserved forest appoint a forest Settlement Officer to inquire into and determine in the manner prescribed the affected rights of the public on the relevant land and to carry out demarcation of the reserved forest.”
- In line with this legal stipulation, Settle Officer must issue prior notice on constitution of reserved forest so that local people can ask for their rights and privileges if affected.

The Mechanism through which the Views of Local Communities are considered

- According to the Community Forestry Instructions, local communities are permitted to establish community forests with 30-year period of land.
- They have to develop management plan on their own, with the guidance of FD.
- They have to manage their forests themselves.

The Mechanism through which the Views of Local Communities are considered

- There are local supply working circles in every District Forest Estate, according to description in certain Management Plans.
- These working circles are formed aiming to provide basic needs of Forest Product to local communities and indigenous people

Concerns related to CBD Articles

- Myanmar has enabling conditions for implementing REDD⁺, such as policy, legal framework and long-lasting sustainable forest management system.
- Although typical REDD⁺ has not been initiated yet, Myanmar acknowledges customary use of biodiversity by indigenous and local communities and has already incorporated these concerns in forest management planning.

Level of Collaboration on REDD-plus

- Myanmar is a member of ASEAN.
- Myanmar always participates ASEAN level REDD-plus workshops, meetings and seminars.
- Myanmar supports ASEAN common position on REDD-plus implementation.

Expected International Supports

- Supports from UN-REDD and FCPF would be very useful for successful implementation of REDD-plus in Myanmar.
- Probably, GEF supports also would be very useful not only for REDD-plus but also for biodiversity conservation in Myanmar.

Indicators to measure biodiversity impacts of REDD-plus

- Myanmar already has Criteria and Indicator (C&I) for sustainable forest management.
- Some Criteria and Indicators are for biodiversity conservation.
- Therefore, it is possible to use these Criteria and Indicators for measuring biodiversity impacts of REDD-plus

Essential Additional Programme

- Existing programmes are not sufficient to assess/monitor the impacts.
- Additional trainings and capacity building programmes are really needed.

Potential Mechanisms for Monitoring the Impacts of REDD-plus on biodiversity and indigenous and local communities

- Intensive resource inventory in each ecological region for biodiversity conservation
- Socio-economic survey at sub-national level and national level mechanisms

National Efforts linked to Regional Biodiversity Efforts

- Myanmar has already established 34 Protected Area System (PAS) which constitute 5.7 % of total land area of the country.
- Legal background and International Agreements related with Biodiversity Conservation
 - Protection of wildlife and wild plant and conservation of natural areas law (1994)
 - Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) in 1997
 - UN Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) in November 1994

Conclusion

- The REDD+ programme in Myanmar is at a very initial stage of preparation
- The above mention slides generally point out that the past, present and the potential for the future from the aspect of current resources, understandings and abilities.

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Thank You