

official documents to be produced in Portuguese. This required more investment than originally envisaged. Finally, broad-based stakeholder involvement at every stage was absolutely essential to develop policies and legislation that are widely supported and promoted.

Other issues that stood out include the following:

- Project duration (3 years) was key to overall success and the establishment of a strong basis to ensure continuity. A shorter effort simply would not have been as effective.
- The iterative nature of the exercise and its various outputs underpinned this initiative. There were multiple stages of drafting, consultation and re-drafting.
- Involving the “right” people was indispensable – involving consultants and experts who had in-depth understanding and appreciation of the local context, the issues involved and the approach desired.
- For countries at an early stage of national development, such as Timor-Leste, emphasis on training and capacity-building is critical and local involvement needs to be mainstreamed within all activities.
- Collaboration and inclusion of diverse sectors need to be foreseen and incorporated throughout the process, starting at inception.

Attempting to do so once the project is underway can prove much more difficult.

In retrospect, greater investment in training, from field staff levels up to officers would have been a valuable contribution. While the project worked at maintaining regular coordination and engagement with other donors to strengthen complementarities and minimize duplication, nevertheless, at the wrap-up workshop, the overall view was that more could have been done in this area. Under this category the need for wider dissemination of project outputs, experiences and lessons learned was emphasized. More weight should have been given to this component as well. But one single feature that made a huge difference to the project’s success was the way the grant was managed – the donor allowed complete budgetary flexibility and fungibility which ensured the agility and responsiveness of project activities *vis-à-vis* changing needs and context. The donor also put less emphasis on reporting, and more on results – thus this project, cost-wise, achieved much more as a result. This approach would be ideal for other projects that are leanly funded.

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National forest programme process in Cambodia

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The Forestry Administration (FA), Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries and stakeholders in forest sector in Cambodia are embarking on a process to develop a national forest programme (nfp) as a significant step towards sustainable forest management. The national forest programme aims to meet local, national and global needs by providing a strategic, coherent, transparent and effective framework to plan, manage, use, protect and regenerate forest

resources in a sustainable manner for the benefit of present and future generations. The nfp is a 20-year programme.

A Task Force with representatives from the FA, relevant government agencies, development partners, non-governmental organisations and the private sector was established in late 2007 to promote sustainable forest management through the development of the nfp. According to the

principle of the nfp, the government, represented by the FA, is taking a leading role in the process. The nfp in Cambodia is structured as a framework document with six specific programmes: i) Forest Demarcation; ii) National Forest Management and Conservation; iii) Forest Law Enforcement and Governance; iv) Community Forestry; v) Capacity Building and Research; and vi) Sustainable Forest Financing.

These programmes were identified and selected for formulation by the nfp Task Force at the beginning stage and six subgroups have been established to formulate one programme each. The development of the nfp is financially supported by the government and development partners including Danida/Dfid/NZaid, FAO and the National Forest Programme Facility.

Local consultations with the wider public across the country on the draft nfp document were conducted in four locations in March 2009. These

four local consultation workshops were organized by the FA with the National Forest Programme Facility providing the main financial support. The workshops were aiming to raise public awareness and collect feedback and comments from local stakeholders on the draft nfp document. More than 150 participants attended each workshop, representing relevant local government agencies, local communities, local authorities, local NGOs and the private sector.

Feedback and comments from the local consultation workshops are being compiled and will be incorporated into the draft nfp document before conducting the next round of consultations, which is to be held at national level in July 2009. It is expected that the nfp document will be finalized in September 2009 and submitted to the Royal Government of Cambodia for adoption. The continued implementation of the nfp in Cambodia can be then move forward in early 2010.

Forest in Cambodia
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