



NINTH EXECUTIVE FOREST POLICY COURSE

**SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS, CLIMATE CHANGE
AND THE FUTURE OF FORESTS IN THE ASIA-PACIFIC**

24 May - 2 June 2016, Yogyakarta, Indonesia

**PREPARATION OF POLICY
BRIEFS**

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WHAT IS A POLICY BRIEF

A Policy Brief is a “short, neutral summary of what is known about a particular issue or problem. Policy briefs are a form of report designed to facilitate policy-making” (Eisele, 2006).

The main purpose is to “succinctly evaluate policy options regarding a specific issue, for a specific policy-maker audience” (Eisele).

Policy-makers need to make practical decisions under time-constraints, so the brief should provide evidence and actionable recommendations (Eisele).



STEPS INVOLVED

- Identification of topic/ issue on which the policy brief has to be prepared.
- Listing of critical decision issues – Generally policy briefs address issues on which decisions need to be taken or views/ opinions are to be formulated.
- Assemble and analyse available information.
- Identify the various options and their implications.
- Prepare a short-list of implementable options.
- Prepare a set of recommendations on what decisions/ actions are to be taken.



PROCESS PROPOSED TO BE ADOPTED

- A provisional list of topics/ issues have been prepared.
- Each group to select one from among the listed topics.
- Identify policy relevant issues pertaining to the topic on which decisions are to be taken.

PROPOSED TOPICS

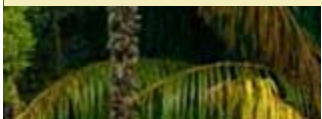
1. Forests role in implementing the Paris Agreement;
2. Making forest policies consistent with the UN Sustainable Development Goals.
3. Challenges in implementing REDD+: What needs to be done to make REDD+ effective?
4. Opportunities and challenges in implementing PES.
5. Improving the formulation of forest policies.
6. Tenure improvement for strengthening community forestry.
7. Reforming the public sector forestry organizations.
8. How to enhance resources for forest rehabilitation and restoration





PROCESS PROPOSED TO BE ADOPTED

- Identify the decision issues.
- Discuss the pros and cons of the issues especially the technical, social, policy, legal, economic and institutional dimensions.
- Develop a structure for the policy brief.
- Each day prepare a part/ section of the policy brief.
- Draft, edit and make a presentation of the brief.



SUGGESTED STRUCTURE

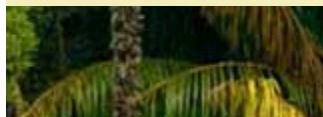
- ❑ As the very name indicates, policy briefs should be very brief and should help to capture attention of key stakeholders within the shortest time.
- ❑ Length: Depending on the topic and the nature of decision being made, policy brief could vary from 1 to 6 pages.
- ❑ In the present exercise we will keep the length as between 4 to 6 pages.
- ❑ Draft, edit and make a presentation of the brief.

Remember that...

Policymakers are extremely busy people, and are probably not specialists in your area.

They are likely to read only something that...

- ❖ Looks attractive
- ❖ Appears interesting
- ❖ Is short and easy to read.



OUTLINE

- ❑ Background (Half page)
- ❑ Issues proposed to be addressed (Half page)
- ❑ Analysis of the issues summarizing available information on different views and ideas (provide facts and figures) - 2 pages.
- ❑ Important conclusions including the options available and their implications (1-2 pages)
- ❑ Recommendations on possible courses of action (half page)
- ❑ References (Literature reviewed and other sources of information) – Half page

ASIA-PACIFIC FORESTS AND FORESTRY TO 2020



ADB



GMS Forest Policy Brief 03

Forest biodiversity conservation

Most of the terrestrial biodiversity within the Greater Mekong Subregion is contained within forests and although other forest areas are important, protected areas are the mainstay for biodiversity conservation. Habitat destruction and extraction of high-value species are major threats. Ecosystem stability is based on interdependence among constituent species and with biodiversity loss, resilience to change is reduced. Awareness raising, stringent environmental impact assessments, and improved law enforcement are required.

While the Greater Mekong Subregion is extremely rich in biodiversity the Indo-Burma biodiversity hotspot, which covers the GMS, is one of the world's most threatened environments (Box 1). A wide variety of ecosystems are represented in the Subregion, including mixed wet evergreen, dry evergreen, deciduous, and montane forests as well as shrublands and woodlands on karst limestone outcrops, and mangroves.

Protected area systems have expanded rapidly in GMS countries. Including locally and provincially managed areas, they cover close to one-fifth of the total land area in Cambodia, Lao PDR and Thailand, but less than one-tenth in Myanmar and Viet Nam. Protected areas are mostly located in forested uplands and have almost all been established within the past three decades. Apart from less accessible and mostly mountainous areas, however, most other forested areas are affected by human activities and these frequently overlap with protected areas.

The area of primary forest in the Subregion continues to fall and reduction of forest cover has greater impact on levels of biodiversity than other threats. Reduction in forest density and forest fragmentation, including through logging, also has severe impacts and can lead to increasing risk of catastrophic fire and a resultant alteration in species loss. Degradation almost always results in local biodiversity loss because secondary forest does not reach parity with primary forest in terms of species richness.

Apart from habitat destruction, the 'empty forest syndrome' threatens the GMS because greater forest access and increasing demands allied with uncontrolled exploitation of wild plants and animals is having a devastating effect on biodiversity. Huge demand for wildlife for food, medicine, pets, display and fashion, particularly from China, has led to increased trafficking and many wildlife species with high commercial value are now endangered. The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) and other international agreements often remain unenforced and much of the supply originates in 'protected' areas.

Box 1. Biodiversity hotspots

A biodiversity hotspot is a geographic region with a significant reservoir of biodiversity that is threatened with destruction. A hotspot contains at least 1,500 endemic species of vascular plants (0.5 percent of the world's total) and at least 70 percent of the original habitat has been lost.

The Indo-Burma hotspot has a high number of endemic species found in tropical forests. This includes 7,000 endemic plant species, 1,300 bird species and six large mammals discovered in the last decade. Indo-Burma is one of the most threatened biodiversity hotspots, due to the rate of resource exploitation and habitat loss. Only about 5 percent of natural habitats remain in relatively pristine condition.

Source: Conservation International 2007.





THANK YOU



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