

SOCIAL FORESTRY

REFORESTATION AND RENEWABLE BIOMASS ENERGY

An efficient approach to reduce pressure on natural forests

OBJECTIVES

- Sustain rural households through preservation and sustainable management of biomass resources;
- Balance conservation and development;
- Promote reforestation in target areas

BENEFICIARIES

- Rural communities
- Rural families and individuals

BACKGROUND

Cambodia has one of the highest deforestation rates in Southeast Asia. At its current level, within 50 years the tropical forests will completely vanish, along with their unique biodiversity and the indigenous cultures that they sustain. Part of the reason for this rapid deforestation is the country's booming economic growth; with few other natural resources, sparse access to electricity and low household incomes, 80% of the population is dependent on the forests to provide for their daily energy needs.

GERES Cambodia's forestry project seeks to tackle the dual challenges of deforestation and rural poverty which are caused by excessive land encroachment, land conversion, fuelwood demand, low productivity of existing farmland and poor forestry management, as well as rural development.

As the demand for wood and farmland grows, local forests cleared and land degraded, people push further into wildlife sanctuaries in search of enough wood and arable land to provide for their families.

GERES Cambodia is committed to a long-term partnership with the people in this region to address the root causes of deforestation: energy demand and poverty. We are currently working with local governments and communities on plantation projects to provide sustainable sources of biomass for economic development.

Since 2008, over 170,000 trees have been planted on community lands, roads, pagoda lands and private farms to reduce pressure

on local forests in the eastern Cardamom Mountains.

GERES Cambodia mainly uses indigenous trees for the plantation to respect the local biodiversity and ensure the long lasting of the production.

Looking beyond, GERES Cambodia has also developed 2 types of nurseries in 2009:

- 1 for community land, providing up to 60,000 seedlings per year;
- 1 for private entrepreneurs, capable of producing up to 10,000 seedlings a year.

Also, 35 micronurseries (producing up to 500 seedlings each) were created in 2009 to support GERES Cambodia reforestation efforts.

This project aims at creating a sustainable and economically viable wood supply chain which will be able to supply some of the current Cambodian demand for fuelwood while reducing pressure on natural forests.

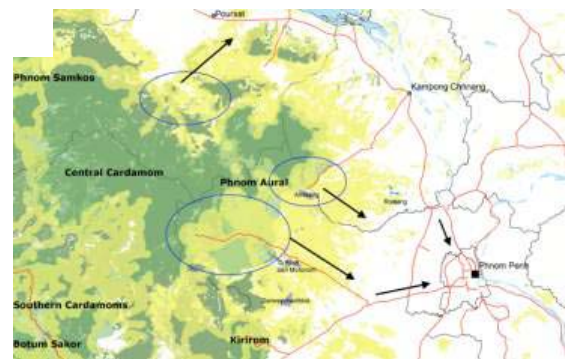


Figure: Agro-forestry projects are mainly in the Aural and Cardamom areas where deforestation is mainly due to land encroachment, conversion and fuelwood energy supply to Phnom Penh.

ISSUES AND EXPECTED OUTCOMES

Economic impacts:

- The generation of new income from sustainably managed local plantations and reforestation
- Reduced dependency of populations on natural forest resources for their daily needs

Environmental impacts:

- Reforestation and "greening" of local communities
- Development of a sustainable chain of fuelwood without further loss of natural resources

Social impacts:

- Improved knowledge of sustainable land management techniques by rural communities
- Improved local farming methods for higher yields and quality of existing farmland
- Improved energy self-sufficiency in the target areas
- Develop proactive involvement of the community in the preservation of their biomass resources
- Develop local entrepreneurship based on sustainable biomass production (tree planting and nurseries)

ACTION PROGRAMME 2009- 2014

Promotion of Reforestation to Farmers

Advocate the advantages of tree plantations to families and communities in rural areas for energy and as protection against flooding, provide shade (natural cooling), creating natural barriers and fences, etc.

Land optimization

Identify degraded lands that can be reforested and validate the plantation schemes with local authorities and communities.

Innovative approaches

- Duplicate optimized reforestation models on larger scales using new tree planting methods and innovative agricultural techniques.
- Plant up to 70,000 trees in 2010 (45,000 on public and private lands, 25,000 on degraded community forest lands)
- Create up to 4 new private nurseries in Meanok area.

Reduce GHG emissions

Mitigate climate change and local pollution by reducing greenhouse gas emissions through reforestation projects.



PARTNERS

- Forestry Administration, Cambodia
- Ministry of Industry, Mines and Energy
- ETC Energy
- EASE (Enabling Access to Sustainable Energy)
- Fondation Ensemble
- United Nations Development Program
- Local rural communities

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