

# Improving Capacity on Forest Restoration in Cambodia (Phase II)

**Project Duration** November 2012 to October 2013

**Project Budget** USD 100,000

## ► Overview

The project “Improving Capacity on Forest Restoration in Cambodia (Phase II)” was a one-year project implemented by Forestry Administration(FA), Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, the Kingdom of Cambodia with financial support from Korea Forest Service, the Republic of Korea. The Implementation Agreement was signed on 29 August 2012.

This project is consistent with the national policy of ensuring the conservation of forest resources through the implementation of a sustainable forest management strategy with the participation of rural communities. One of the project outcomes that is of great significance to the country's sectorial policies is its contribution to poverty alleviation, which is currently being promoted by the Rectangular strategy II of the Government of Cambodia as part of its commitment to the Millennium Development Goals of the United Nations. The government of Cambodia acknowledges the urgent need to sustainably use of the remaining forest resources for the benefit of its population, particularly local communities.

## ► Objectives

**The specific objectives of this project are:**

- to initiate a research study on reforestation of degraded forests by direct seeding
- to promote sustainable practice and poverty reduction of participating communities ; and
- to build technical capacity of FA staff on tissue culture for massive production of seedling to meet the increasing demand of good seedlings in the coming years

## ► What have been done!

- Established three experiments on forest restoration of indigenous tree species established in Siem Reap province
- Established and run laboratory for plant tissue culture



Tissue culture laboratory and nursery, established for improving the capacity of producing quality seedlings and rehabilitating degraded forest area.



## ► The Result

Three experiments on forest restoration were established in Siem Reap province to initiate a research study on the reforestation of degraded forests by direct seeding. The climatic condition of Siem Reap province is characterized by low rainfall and long dry seasons. The selected site represents a large area of the northern ecological region of the country where major reforestation programs have been undertaken. Therefore, the findings can be applicable in the region or areas with similar ecological conditions. The objective of the trial was to compare the growth performance of two planting materials, seed and seedling, under field conditions. This activity aimed to demonstrate a low-cost method of forest restoration - direct seeding of legume species - to wider stakeholders. Between two and four high-value timber species of the legume family were used in the trials. Legumes are used as they are adaptable to sandy soil of the proposed sites owing to their capacity to fix atmospheric nitrogen to support their growth and improve soil fertility. They are also suitable for direct seeding as they have hard-coated seeds which are suitable for handling and long-term storage. Preliminary results from the one-year-old trials will be compiled and published for dissemination. The trials will be maintained for a period of 5 to 10 years and used as demonstration sites for research and education purposes. One of the outcomes from these trials is the adoption of direct seeding of selected species as a method of reforestation programs. By the end of the project, the three experiments on the forest restoration site established in Siem Reap province reached about 0.5 ha each.

The main focus of the proposed project is the running of the laboratory of tissue culture. The preceding AFoCo project (2011-2012) had converted a lecture room at the Forest and Wildlife Training Centre to a tissue culture laboratory and procured some import-

ant equipment. The remaining equipment, tools and supplies were procured through this project. Two laboratory technicians were trained at the Korea Forest Research Institute (KFRI) in March 2013 and a KFRI expert provided technical advice for the laboratory to be operational.

Through this project, a participatory process in forest restoration of community forests was initiated. Sustainable practice and poverty reduction of participating communities was also promoted while building up the technical capacity of FA staff on tissue culture for mass production of seedlings to meet the increasing demand for good seedlings in the subsequent years.

## ► The Future

The FA's proper and timely management of project activities is a key factor in the successful implementation of the project. The initiation stage has been completed and these policies are expected to continue to support forest restoration in Cambodia.

### ① Capacity building on tissue culture

Cambodia is determined to improve capacity building on tissue culture as one of their future development strategies in the forestry sector. However, as the number of experts and capacity building on tissue culture in Cambodia is low as compared to neighboring countries, Cambodia will continue making efforts to strengthening capacity building on plant tissue culture through both national level programs and international collaborations such as AFoCo.

### ② Maintenance of project site

Even after the completion of the project, the future will still be uncertain. If only its establishment is supported and not its maintenance, it may not be possible to achieve fruitful results from the project. Thus, it is crucial to ensure that continuous monitoring and support for the project is maintained.

The ASEAN-ROK Forest Cooperation (AFoCo) is a regional cooperation mechanism in the forest sector between ASEAN Member States and the Republic of Korea. It was formalized by the "Agreement between the Governments of the Member States of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations and the Republic of Korea on Forest Cooperation", which was entered into force in August 2012. The AFoCo aims to tackle the issue of deforestation and forest conservation in the context of sustainable development, and broaden the scope to other Asian countries.

