

Summary of Project Concept in Cambodia

I. Background

This project is developed under the AFoCO Climate-Forest Cooperation Framework (CFCF) and is directly aligned with the AFoCO Strategic Plan (2024–2030) and the 10-year Climate Action Plan (2025–2034). Cambodia has placed strong emphasis on the forest and land-use sector within its Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC), the National Forest Monitoring System (NFMS), and the Safeguard Information System (SIS). REDD+ and afforestation/reforestation (A/R) activities are recognized as critical to reducing emissions, enhancing removals, and supporting rural livelihoods.

Siem Reap and Kampong Thom provinces have emerged as priority landscapes where forest resources and flooded-forest ecosystems are under increasing pressure. In Siem Reap, community forestry (CF) and community fishery (CFi) units link conservation with eco-tourism and small enterprises. The Kampong Phluk CFi manages 12,399 hectares, including 6,035 hectares of flooded forests, and attracts nearly 67,000 tourists annually, generating revenues that already support patrols and restoration. In Kampong Thom, CFs are active in resin production and smallholder agriculture, but face challenges from declining prices and limited market access.

These sites illustrate both opportunities and risks: while communities have functioning governance structures and income streams, persistent threats remain from land tenure insecurity, encroachment, and weak boundary demarcation. The progress of this project therefore depends critically on confirmation of land eligibility and government approval of land allocation. Once secured, these will unlock further cooperation with potential investors under Article 6.2.

Building on the August 2025 AFoCO–Forestry Administration field mission, which confirmed five candidate CF and CFi sites, the project is now positioned to move from pre-feasibility assessment toward full feasibility and concept note development in 2026.

II. Project Profile

1. Title: Cambodia REDD+ and A/R Special Project (Siem Reap and Kampong Thom)
2. Implementing Agency: AFoCO Secretariat and Forestry Administration of Cambodia
3. Project Type: Special Project
4. Duration: Preparatory studies in 2026; project design in 2027; implementation phase from 2028 onward (subject to partner approval and financing)
5. Geographic Focus: Siem Reap and Kampong Thom province
6. Thematic Focus
 - REDD+ in existing forests
 - Assisted Natural Regeneration (ANR) and enrichment planting in CFs
 - A/R on degraded uplands

- Conservation/restoration of flooded forests
7. Potential Partners: Impact Fund, other donors/investors

III. Objectives

1. To demonstrate REDD+ and A/R interventions across CF and CFi sites, including assisted natural regeneration, enrichment planting, and conservation of flooded forests.
2. To diagnose drivers of deforestation/degradation and design preliminary Policies and Measures (PaMs) to reduce risks.
3. To define a preliminary MRV and reporting architecture aligned with Cambodia's NFMS and the ETF.
4. To strengthen community-based institutions by linking safeguards, SIS, and benefit-sharing mechanisms to REDD+/A/R activities.
5. To explore market and blended-finance opportunities through eco-tourism, resin, woodchip, and other NTFP value chains

IV. Expected Outputs and Deliverables

1. Feasibility Study Report: Site-level diagnostics, drivers of deforestation, and intervention options
2. Baseline Carbon Estimates: Initial calculations of carbon mitigation potential.
3. Draft Concept Note: Standardized proposal for CAM and other partners
4. Stakeholder Engagement Records: Documented consultations with CF/CFi committees, cooperatives, and private actors
5. Community Engagement & Capacity Plan: Training packages for safeguards, monitoring, eco-tourism linkages, and NTFP market access
6. Knowledge Products: Technical briefs and policy guidelines for scaling REDD+ and A/R in Cambodia and the AFoCO regionSO

V. Next Steps

1. (Q4 2025 – Q1 2026) Consolidate field survey data and finalize pre-feasibility report
2. (Q2 – Q3 2026) Conduct full feasibility studies and MRV baselines across shortlisted sites
3. (Q4 2026) Draft Concept Note and initiate review process with CAM and government partners
4. (Q1 – Q2 2027) Develop full project proposal, integrating feedback from CAM and government partners
5. (Q3 – Q4 2027) Finalize financing strategy with partners and donors; prepare for implementation phase pending approval