

Review of Community Forestry and Community Fisheries in Cambodia



**Report prepared for the Natural Resource Management and
Livelihoods Programme**

Final Report

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Table of Contents

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	III
ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS.....	IV
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	V
1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND.....	1
1.1 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY.....	1
1.2 METHODS AND SITES SELECTED FOR FIELD VISITS	2
1.3 POVERTY AND NATURAL RESOURCES IN CAMBODIA.....	4
1.3.1 Fisheries, livelihoods and poverty – an overview.....	5
1.3.2 Forests, livelihoods and poverty – an overview.....	5
2. COMMUNITY FISHERIES.....	8
2.1 POLICY, LEGAL FRAMEWORK AND GUIDELINES	8
2.2 CURRENT STATUS AND LEVEL OF IMPLEMENTATION.....	10
2.3 ASSESSMENT OF OVERALL PERFORMANCE.....	11
2.3.1 Natural resources.....	11
2.3.2 Livelihoods	12
2.3.3 Institutional arrangements and local management capacity.....	15
2.3.4 Legal and regulatory issues	16
2.4 SUMMARY	17
3. COMMUNITY FORESTRY.....	20
3.1 POLICY, LEGAL FRAMEWORK AND GUIDELINES	20
3.2 CURRENT STATUS AND LEVEL OF IMPLEMENTATION.....	22
3.3 ASSESSMENT OF OVERALL PERFORMANCE.....	23
3.3.1 Natural resources.....	23
3.3.2 Livelihoods	23
3.3.3 Institutional arrangements and local management capacity.....	26
3.3.4 Legal and regulatory issues	28
3.4 SUMMARY	29
4. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS	31
4.1 OVERALL LEVEL OF COSTS AND BENEFITS TO LOCAL MANAGERS	31
4.2 EQUITY, INCLUSION AND GOVERNANCE.....	32
4.3 LEGAL AND REGULATORY ISSUES	33
4.4 INSTITUTIONAL AND CAPACITY ISSUES	34
4.5 NATURAL RESOURCE ISSUES	35
5. RECOMMENDATIONS.....	36
5.1 ENSURING THE POTENTIAL BENEFITS OF CF AND CFI ARE SECURED AT THE LOCAL LEVEL.....	36
5.2 BUILDING EFFECTIVE GOVERNANCE OF CBNRM INSTITUTIONS.....	37
5.3 PROMOTING PRO-POOR CFI AND CF	38
5.4 ADDING VALUE TO NATURAL RESOURCES THROUGH SUSTAINABLE COMMERCIALISATION MEASURES ..	39
5.5 SUPPORTING INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT AND CO-ORDINATION.....	40
5.5.1 Mainstreaming CBNRM through the D and D process	40
5.5.2 Clarifying the role of government and NGOs	41
5.5.3 Building the capacity of cantonment forestry and fishery staff.....	41
5.6 CREATING A SUPPORTIVE POLICY AND LEGAL ENVIRONMENT	42
5.6.1 Community Forestry.....	42
5.6.2 Community Fisheries.....	43
5.7 SUMMARY	43

Annexes

ANNEX 1: REFERENCES AND BIBLIOGRAPHY	46
ANNEX 2: OVERVIEW OF COMMUNITY FISHERIES IMPLEMENTATION STATUS	48
ANNEX 3: OVERVIEW OF COMMUNITY FORESTRY IMPLEMENTATION STATUS.....	49
ANNEX 4: LIST OF PERSONS MET.....	50

List of Tables

Table 1: Overview of Field Sites Selected for Study – Community Fisheries	2
Table 2: Overview of Field Sites Selected for Study – Community Forestry	3
Table 3: Key Projects and Donors Supporting Community Fisheries	11
Table 4: Guidelines and Cost Estimates for CF Establishment	21
Table 6: Recommendations and Their Relevance to Key Institutions and Stakeholder Groups	45

Cover photos: Woman fisher – Kampong Phhluk Fishing Village, Siem Reap
Woman preparing palm fibres, Pou Kreang village, Mondulkiri
Photos taken by Tom Blomley

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Acronyms and abbreviations

ADB	Asian Development Bank
AECID	Agencia Española de Cooperación Internacional para el Desarrollo (Spanish International Development Agency)
CBNRM	Community Based Natural Resource Management
CEPA	Culture and Environment Preservation Association
CC	Commune Councils
CDRI	Cambodia Development Resource Institute
CF	Community Forestry
CFDF	Community Forestry Development Fund
CFDD	Department of Community Fisheries Development
CFF	Community Commercial Forestry
CFi	Community Fisheries
CFMC	Community Forestry Management Committee
CFO	Community Forestry Office
CPR	Community Property Resource
C/S	Commune / Sangkat
DFID	Department for International Development (UK)
D and D	Decentralisation and Deconcentration
ELC	Economic Land Concession
FA	Forestry Administration
FGD	Focal Group Discussion
FiA	Fisheries Administration
GoC	Government of Cambodia
MAFF	Ministry of Agriculture Forestry and Fisheries
MDLF	Multi Donor Livelihoods Facility
NCFCC	National Community Forest Co-ordination Committee
NGO	Non Governmental Organisation
NFP	National Forest Programme
NRE	Natural Resources and Environment
NRMLP	Natural Resources Management and Livelihood Programme
NTFP	Non Timber Forest Product
NTFP EP	Non Timber Forest Product Exchange Programme for South and Southeast Asia
NTFP WG	Non Timber Forest Product Working Group
NZAID	New Zealand Aid
PF	Partnership Forestry
P-FIN	Provincial Fishery Information Network
REDD	Reduced Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation
TSEMP	Tonle Sap Environmental Management Project (ADB)
TWGF	Technical Working Group for Fisheries
TWG F&E	Technical Working Group for Forestry and Environment
WCS	Wildlife Conservation Society (USA)

Executive Summary

Background

This study was commissioned by the Multi-Donor Livelihoods Facility (MDLF) of the Natural Resource Management and Livelihoods Programme (NRMLP) to review the progress achieved to date with regard to the implementation of community forestry and community fisheries and to assess the degree to which they are contributing to increased security of rights over natural resources, sustainable livelihoods (especially for the poor) and improved natural resources management.

Essentially, the study has the following four key objectives:

- to identify the degree to which community forestry (CF) and community fisheries (CFi) initiatives are delivering impacts at the community or group level (particularly with regard to economic, social and governance benefits)
- to identify the degree to which these benefits are being equitably shared within participating communities and groups
- to identify key obstacles and constraints to achieving greater impact within CF and CFi (in terms of poverty reduction, sustainable natural resource management and improved local governance)
- to generate recommendations on how these constraints might practically be overcome – and based on this, how NRMLP might address them in its subsequent phase

The team visited 7 CFi sites in 5 provinces and 6 CF sites in 3 provinces and had meetings with executive committee members, group members, women, commune councillors and poor members / non-members.

Main Findings – Community Fisheries

CFi appears to have a positive impact on reducing destructive fishing methods (such as “electro-fishing” and use of mosquito nets) as well as introducing sustainable management practices such as the conservation and protection of flooded forests and mangrove areas, the establishment and protection of fish sanctuaries and the creation of artificial reefs. Due to the significant impact of external factors on fish populations (fish migration, dams and climate change to name a few), and the continuation of destructive fishing methods, it is not always possible to establish a clear link between localised protection measures and improvements or stabilisation of fish catches. Seasonal fishers, who are often very poor, were reported in many sites to be increasing in number and having a growing impact on fish stocks within CFi areas. Although they are required to seek permission and register with CFi executive committees, this seems not to be happening, and means that conflicts between non-resident, seasonal fishers and resident CFi members are common.

The primary benefits of CFi appear to be realised at household or individual level through improvements or stabilisation of fish catches. Benefits obtained at the group level appear to be non-financial in nature and include increased participation in local management as well as an increase in social capital, knowledge, policy influence, increased networking and linkages to information and resources from outside the community.

The distribution of benefits from CFi appears to be uneven. Poor people are less able to access the benefits offered by CFi for a number of reasons. This includes their limited capacity to fish in areas far from shore (due to small boats), limited fishing gear, an inability to participate effectively in group activities and an inability to conform with bylaws and

regulations advanced by the group. Richer and more powerful members of CFI institutions (most often executive committee members) appear more able to access the benefits of CFI. This is particularly the case for livelihood activities introduced by external projects for the benefit of members, which are often captured by CFI executive members.

Executive committees provide important services on behalf of their group members (and to fishers outside the group). There are few if any legitimate means for this work to be compensated, due to a lack of group-based income. As a result, this may be creating incentives for poor governance and rent-seeking behaviour (such as informal licensing of illegal fishers and the collection of fines)

Prevailing legislation prevents CFI groups from restricting access to CFI fishing areas by non-members and limits their powers with regard to law enforcement. This is limiting the effectiveness of CFIs to achieve sustainable management of fisheries over the long term.

CFI executive committees appear unclear about their roles and responsibilities. CFI group members appear unclear about the role of their executive committees. There are very limited means for members to interact with, question or review the actions of executive committees. Accountability of CFI executive committees appears to be more upwards (to FiA) rather than downwards (to members)

The CFI registration process is taking a long time to complete in many sites, and in particular in those areas that are unsupported by NGOs or projects. This contrasts with the relatively short time period of validity for signed agreements – which currently stands at three years.

Main Findings – Community Forestry

Community Forestry, when legally registered and approved, appears to increase local tenure rights and reduces the risk that forests will be appropriated by external interests and converted to alternative land uses. In many sites visited, CF appears to have resulted in a reduction in illegal and destructive activities, increased supplies of NTFPs, assisted with forest recovery and regeneration and increased local wildlife numbers and diversity. Despite this, many sites are still seeking to secure legal rights and face considerable risks of losing their land and forests before formal registration.

The primary benefit (or goal) reported in all CF sites visited was securing access to land and rights over forest use in the face of continued loss of land and illegal logging over which local residents have little control. CF provides some limited economic benefits in some sites and its potential to generate greater economic benefits is constrained by the degraded condition of many forests being managed and restrictions placed on commercial harvesting. In those sites that generate economic benefits, these are being captured at both group and household levels

Non-economic benefits reported from CF include spiritual / customary values (in the case of ethnic minorities) as well as benefits gained from collective action (training, social capital, increased networking and external linkages)

The poor appear to be capturing many of the benefits from CF. NTFPs appear to be providing important benefits to poor households in many areas and harvesting is not restricted in the sites visited (although reports from Concern-supported sites are that suspension of NTFP harvesting has placed increased constraints on poor households)

Co-ordination between NGOs and government is mixed. Some sites have experienced significant problems because of a failure of NGOs to follow CF guidelines and to

communicate effectively with FA, while in other sites, NGOs following guidelines correctly are not being adequately supported by FA. In other sites, NGOs are providing important contributions to CF development, such as policy development, piloting, pro-poor approaches, increased “voice”, commercialisation of NTFPs and local capacity development

Partnership Forestry appears to offer many promising opportunities for integrating forestry within the D and D process and gaining important local support from commune councils. Benefits to, and the involvement of, actors at community and household levels needs further clarification and elaboration.

The time taken to approve and formalise CF process is lengthy and cumbersome. Many communities appear to risk losing access to CF sites approved by MAFF because of ELC allocations in their area. Limited local powers to enforce bylaws and impose sanctions are restricting the effectiveness of CF in terms of supporting forest recovery

Recommendations

The report makes a total 20 recommendations covering CF / CFi scaling up, improving governance and equity, the development of pro-poor approaches, institutional and capacity development, supporting decentralisation and deconcentration and legal issues. Key recommendations include:

- Concentrate efforts on supporting CF / CFi sites that have started the legal registration process, but require additional assistance to gain full legal status. Where resources allow, focus on additional sites
- Support registered CFi groups to identify and generate revenues at the group level that can be used to offset management costs in a transparent manner
- Support registered CF / CFi management / executive committees to be more accountable to their members
- Identify and introduce specific measures within CF / CFi planning and implementation that increase benefits and reduce costs to poor households
- Support greater transparency in the regulation and inclusion of non-resident fishers in ways that do not impact negatively on their livelihoods
- Identify established CF sites with potential for pole production and marketing and support the development of management plans for sustainable harvesting
- Scale up piloting of Partnership Forestry to between 10 – 15 communes, based on agreed modalities and revenue sharing proposals
- Support the establishment of provincial and national networks / forums of CFi and CF groups to create platforms for policy debate and exchange of lessons learned
- Expand funding support to Cantonment Forestry and Fishery staff to support registration and approval of CF / CFi sites as well as more effective law enforcement.
- Strengthen the law enforcement role / mandate of commune councils with regard to supporting CF / CFi

Specific recommendations are presented regarding the CF / CFi guidelines and Prakas, which can be found in Sections 5.6.1 and 5.6.2

1. Introduction and background

1.1 Aims and objectives of the study

The Natural Resources Management and Livelihoods Programme (NRMLP), supported by Danida, DFID and New Zealand Aid (NZAID), started in 2007 and Phase 1 comes to an end in December 2010. The immediate objective of NRMLP is “to reduce the vulnerability of poor rural people whose livelihoods are dependent on natural resources”. NRMLP has three components; Natural Resources Management in Decentralisation and De-concentration (NRM in D&D); Civil Society and Pro-Poor Markets; and a Sector and Policy Development, including the National Forest Programme (NFP) and National Fisheries Strategy. This last component consists of three sub-components dealing with forestry, fisheries and land management.

The immediate objectives of the forestry and fisheries sub-components are “**to improve access rights to forests and aquatic resources, and improve service delivery for the rural poor**”. One of the indicators of progress towards this immediate objective is gaining formal approval by the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF) for the registration of around 400 Community Forestry sites covering 310 000 hectares and 303 Community Fisheries sites covering 138 000 hectares by December 2010.

This study was commissioned by the Multi-Donor Livelihoods Facility (MDLF) of the NRMLP to review the progress achieved to date with regard to the implementation of community forestry and community fisheries and to assess the degree to which they are contributing to increased security of rights over natural resources, sustainable livelihoods (especially for the poor) and improved natural resources management. It is anticipated that NRMLP will be extended for a subsequent phase and it is expected that this study will contribute to key decisions regarding whether and how community forestry and community fisheries may be supported in the future. This study compliments two other parallel studies being undertaken that are looking specifically at activities supported by NRMLP and which aim to assess the degree to which activities have been able to reach poor and vulnerable households

Essentially, this study has the following four key objectives:

- to identify the degree to which community forestry and community fisheries initiatives are delivering impacts at the community or group level (particularly with regard to economic, social and governance benefits)
- to identify the degree to which these benefits are being equitably shared within participating communities and groups
- to identify key obstacles and constraints to achieving greater impact within community forestry and community fisheries (in terms of poverty reduction, sustainable natural resource management and improved local governance)
- to generate recommendations on how these constraints might practically be overcome – and based on this, how NRMLP might address them in its subsequent phase

The study was undertaken between January 18th and February 12th 2010 by three consultants:

- **Tom Blomley**, Acacia Natural Resource Consultants Ltd (International Team Leader)
- **Prom Tola**, Agricultural Development International (Community Forestry Specialist)
- **Mam Kosal**, WorldFish Center (Community Fisheries Specialist), assisted by Eam Dyna and Mark Dubois (WorldFish Center)

1.2 Methods and sites selected for field visits

The findings, conclusions and recommendations presented in this study are based on information gathered from a number of sources. Firstly, the team conducted an extensive compilation and review of published and grey literature regarding community forestry and community fisheries in Cambodia. This includes articles, project reports and evaluations, relevant studies and 'lessons learned' documentation. The list of references consulted as part of this review appears in Annex 1. Secondly, the team met with a number of key resource persons from a range of institutions who are involved in practical implementation of both community forestry and community fisheries. Key among these were staff of the Fisheries Administration (FiA) and Forestry Administration (FA) who have overall responsibility for spearheading implementation through their respective national programmes. Thirdly, the bulk of the information presented in this report was gathered from field visits to selected community forestry and community fisheries sites across the country. Undertaken over 10 days, the team visited a total of 13 field sites in 6 provinces (Tables 1 and 2 and Figure 1).

Province	Village / Commune	Key Variables / Criteria for Selection	Legal status / support
Kratie	Oh Long, Kampong Kor Commune, Preak Prasab District,	Floodplain of Mekong River. Major governance and management issues, participation from member appears low, high poverty incidence among members; livelihoods are mixed – not entirely dependent on fishing	CFi initiated in 2003. Documentation submitted to FiA and is awaiting approval. Support from FiA
Siem Reap	Dey Kroahom village, Kampong Phluk Commune, Prasat Ba Kong District	Lake fisheries (Tonle Sap). Management of lake and flooded forest. Eco-tourism potential. Major management and governance issues. High levels of dependence on fishing; poverty levels and migrant fishers	CFi initiated in 2001. Registered in 2008. Support from FiA, ADB and FAO
Banteay Meanchey	Phneat village, Phneat Commune; Serey Sophorn District.	River fisheries - Eco-tourism is being developed, CFI Committee is led by a woman; participation of Buddhist monks	CFi initiated in 2001. Registration submitted to FiA in 2008 but not confirmed. Support from FiA
Kampot	Changhaon Village, Prek Thnaot Commune, Kampot District	Coastal fisheries - mangrove planting and protection, crab bank, saving group	CFi initiated in 2006 with support from FiA and Wetlands Alliance. Documentation submitted to FiA and is awaiting approval
Stung Treng ¹	Sre Krosang village, Srekrosang Commune, Siem Bouk district	River fisheries. Ongoing action research activities with WorldFish	CFi initiated in 2003. Management agreement submitted to FiA at cantonment level . Supported by FiA and CEPA
	Kang Kangouk village, Kang Cham Commune, Thalaborivath district	River fisheries. Ongoing action research activities with WorldFish	CFi initiated in 2003. Management agreement submitted to FiA at cantonment level . Supported by FiA and CEPA
	Koh Khorndin village, Sangkat Samaki Commune, Steung Treng Town	River fisheries. Ongoing action research activities with WorldFish	CFi initiated in 2003. Management agreement submitted to FiA at cantonment level . Supported by FiA and CEPA

Table 1: Overview of field sites selected for study – Community Fisheries

Province	Village / Commune	Key Variables / Criteria for Selection	Legal status / support
Kratie	O'Tarnueng CF Group, Kbal Damrey	Major issues with ELCs, land-use conflicts and illegal harvesting of timber.	Process initiated in 2003. Not yet registered. Facilitated by RECOFTC / FA and national

¹ Communities in Stung Treng province were visited by a team from WorldFish / CEPA who operated concurrently with the main team

	Commune, Sambo District.		NGO
	O'Preas village O'Kreang Commune Sambo district	Partnership Forestry site (RECOFTC / FA support) – Pilot project. Not yet registered. Commune council is management entity.	Process started in 2007 with support from CEPA and FA.
Siem Reap	Prey Kbaltoek village, Tbaeng commune, Banteay Srey District	Community Forestry. Harvesting and selling poles from CF area. Well established and effective systems of benefit sharing developed within community group	Process started in 2000. Registered in 2007. No management plan. Support from Danida / NRMLP and FAO)
	Bos Thom village, Sotr Nikum district	Community Forestry Registered. Commercialised production of poles – using household harvesting allocations	Process started in 2002. Registered in 2007. No management plan. Support from Danida / NRMLP and FAO)
Mondulkiri	O'Chra village, Keo Seima commune, Koesema District	Commercial community forestry (WCS support) – Pilot project. Ethnic minority village. High value timber. Protection Forest. Still under development	Process started in 2008 with WCS and FA support. Not yet legally registered.
	Pou Kreang village, Pechchreada District.	Community Forestry. High value forest but massive threats from loss of land to ELCs and illegal logging of remaining timber.	Process started in 2005 with support from ITTO. Now supported by RECOFTC / CEPA. Not yet registered

Table 2: Overview of field sites selected for study – Community Forestry

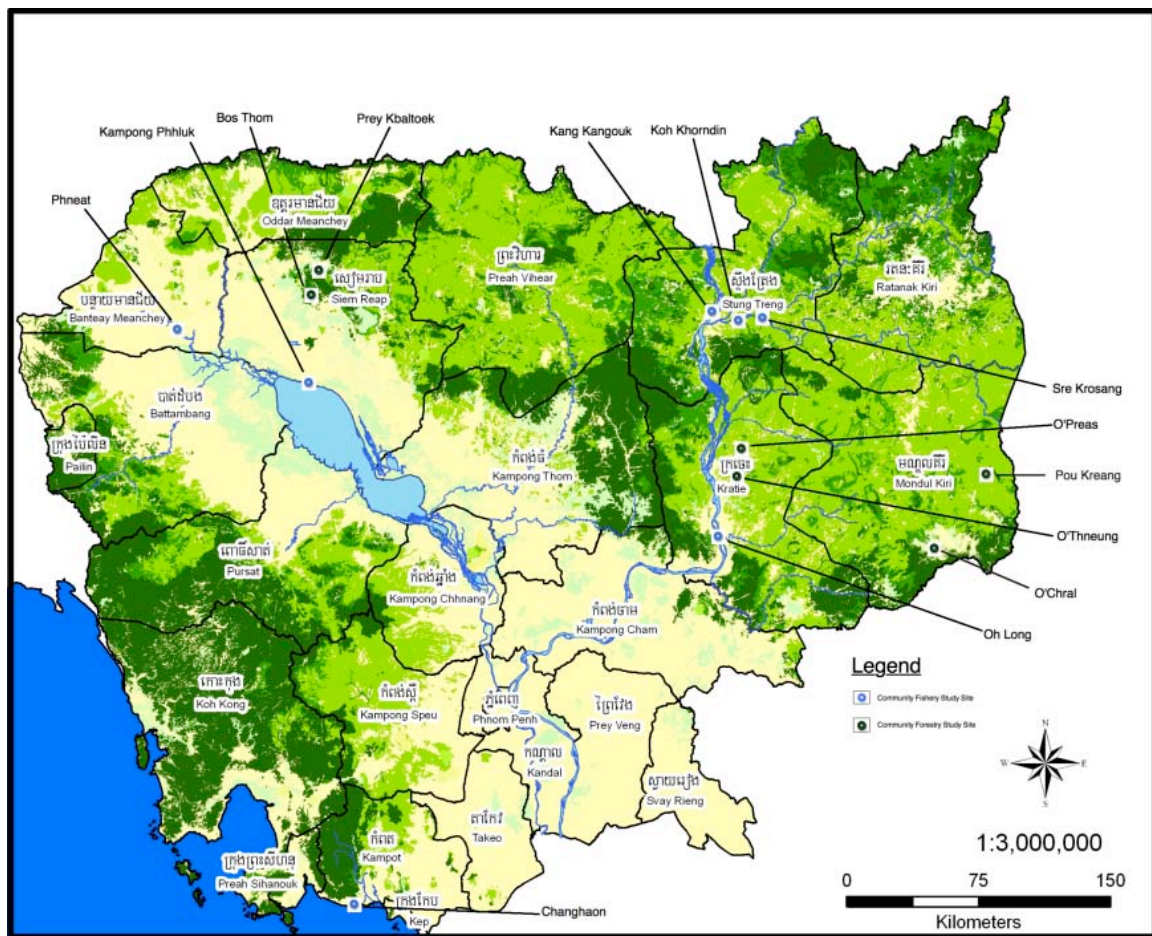


Figure 1: Map showing location of field study sites

At each site visited, separate and parallel focus group discussions were held with members of the executive / management committees and a selection of members. These were supplemented by interviews and discussions with specific groups such as poor natural resource-dependent non-members; commune council representatives; women and NGO / government facilitators. Typically, the team spent a total of three hours in a given community. Each day, the team convened after the field visit and responses and observations were tabulated in a single matrix designed to capture key issues.

Clearly, given the limited time available for the team in individual communities the data gathered must be treated with a certain degree of caution. It is quite likely that many people felt a certain reluctance to discuss sensitive issues such as corruption, elite capture and poor governance. Furthermore, it is quite possible that members who were identified by the executive committee to attend focal group discussions were those who would be more likely to present a positive view. Despite the limitations of the study, a number of key trends appeared across a sufficient number of sites to permit the development of the key conclusions and recommendations presented in this study.

Prior to the preparation of the final report and debriefing with key partners, the team had the opportunity to lead “validation workshops” with staff working within the Community Fisheries Development Department (CFDD) of FiA and the Community Forestry Office (CFO) of FA. This provided an opportunity for informal exchange of ideas as well as an open discussion of initial findings. The inputs received from the separate sessions have been important in the preparation of the final set of conclusions and recommendations. A draft report was circulated to key stakeholders in government and NGO sectors and the comments have been incorporated into this final version.

It is important to note that given the time available for this study, there are some obvious omissions. The team was unable to visit REDD pilot sites (currently being developed in Bantey Meanchey province), and equally time constraints meant that Community Protected Area sites being supported by Ministry of Environment (MoE) were also omitted. Finally, it is important to note that many communities in Cambodia have informal, or traditional management over forest and fisheries resources, particularly in areas where indigenous groups are in the majority. Again, due to time and resource constraints, this study does not take account of traditional, non-formal management of natural resources.

The report is presented in five main chapters. Chapter 2 explores the legal framework and current implementation status of community fisheries in Cambodia and then goes onto to provide an assessment of the degree to which community fisheries appears to be impacting on improved natural resources management, poverty reduction and improved local governance, as well as some of the key constraints identified during field work. Chapter 3 is presented in the same format as Chapter 2, but with regard to community forestry. Chapter 4 draws together the findings from Chapters 2 and 3 to draw conclusions regarding the successes and constraints to date in the implementation of community forestry and community fisheries in Cambodia. Chapter 5 looks forward and provides recommendations for the future. These recommendations are made both to MDLF with regard to future programming directions, but also to other stakeholders outside the NRMLP such as FA, FiA and civil society.

1.3 Poverty and natural resources in Cambodia

A number of studies undertaken in recent years have highlighted the dependence of poor rural households on natural resources such as fish and forests.² Some of the key findings from these studies are summarised below as they are highly relevant to the aims and objectives of this particular review.

1.3.1 Fisheries, livelihoods and poverty – an overview

Fisheries are a central part of the Cambodian rural economy – with one of the most intensive fisheries and highest catches per inhabitant (at approximately 20 kg per annum) of any country in the world. The fisheries sector provides income and livelihood to 46% of the total population, and represents an estimated contribution of around 8-12% of the total GDP. Fish and other aquatic animals typically contribute 60-80% of animal protein in Cambodian diets.

The nexus between fisheries, livelihoods and poverty is a complex one - with livelihood portfolios demonstrating diverse and dynamic characteristics across and within wealth groups. These livelihoods can be considered in many ways as reflecting the spatial and temporal variability of the resource itself. Seasonally, the contribution of fisheries to livelihoods - through providing important safety nets in times of food shortage, such as during floods and droughts – for consumption, sale or exchange, demonstrates an important (yet dynamic) contribution to food and income security.

In the last 60 years, Cambodia's fish production has doubled whereas its population has tripled. Over the past decade, catches (per fishing effort) have been variable, with no clear trends, although pressure on the country's fish resources has increased significantly, giving rise to anecdotal evidence that Cambodia is approaching or at already at maximum production levels. One indicator of this is that we are seeing catch compositional changes - with less large and more smaller fish. Poverty rates among households whose primary income is derived from fishing is 45%, while average rates of poverty among all households surveyed was found to be 38%. Whilst this figure indicates only a slighter higher poverty incidence amongst fishers, any negative impact upon fisheries will be most keenly felt by those most reliant upon the resource.

Poor, fishery-dependent households are heavily dependent on money-lenders and fish traders to advance cash, which are typically repaid at high rates of interest (usually through below-market prices for future fish catches)³.

Poor households are unable to invest in the most effective fishing techniques and are constrained in their ability to access distant (and often more productive) fishing grounds. Their boats are smaller and without motors and they predominantly use less-productive, passive fishing methods such as gill-nets and hooks.

1.3.2 Forests, livelihoods and poverty – an overview

41% of rural households in Cambodia derive between 20 to 50% of their total livelihood value from forest use, while 15% of households derive more than half of their total livelihoods from forest use and harvesting⁴. Poorest households capture the lowest absolute values of forest produce (when compared with other wealth groups), but exhibit the highest

² See for example: CDRI. 2007. Annual Development Review, 2006 – 07; Heov, K.S et al. 2006. The Value of Forest Resources to Rural Livelihoods in Cambodia. CDRI Policy Brief Number 2; Ballard, M. 2007. The Participatory Poverty Assessment of the Tonle Sap: A Summary of Key Findings. CDRI Policy Brief Issue 06.

³ Navy, H. 2005. The Role of Formal and Informal Credit in the Fish Marketing Chain, Cambodia. An output from the DFID-funded Post-Harvest Fisheries Livelihood Project. Department of Fisheries, Working Paper 3.

⁴ Heov, K.S et al. 2006. The Value of Forest Resources to Rural Livelihoods in Cambodia

relative dependence on forests. Richer wealth groups, on the other hand appear to capture higher absolute values from forest use, but this constitutes a relatively lower relative dependence on forests.

In a study of forest-dependency in forest-edge villages, one study undertaken by CDRI established that non-timber forest products (NTFPs) generate 42% of the total livelihood value for lowest income groups (the poorest), while NTFPs generate a total of 30% of total livelihood value for households in the medium income category⁵.

Non-timber forest products generate both subsistence as well as cash-based benefits for poor households, illustrating their importance not only in terms of their safety net function, but also with regard to their potential to generate valuable income, when other sources may be restricted

While the poor are heavily dependent on forest resources, the potential for forests to continue to generate benefits is declining, due to a loss of land (and trees) to economic land concessions or illegal logging.

The poor are often able to derive income from loggers, who engage them to identify and cut trees illegally. While this does provide valuable income, it is a risky activity and increasing law enforcement efforts by government (and also the introduction of community forestry) means that there are high risks of losing equipment and produce, or being forced to pay large bribes to escape punishment.

1.4 Community Based Natural Resource Management in Cambodia

In recognition of the growing pressure on forestry and fishery resources, and the potential benefits of community involvement in natural resource management, FA and FiA have introduced a range of legal reforms over the past decade that provide formalised access and management rights at the community level. These are described in more detail in the following chapters, but it is important to recognise that both FA and FiA are increasingly recognising that a single approach to CF or CFI may not be sufficient to meet the very different social, ecological and cultural variations that exist across the country.

Community fisheries includes community based fisheries management in lake and river ecosystems as well as coastal areas, and in many cases involves a more integrated habitat management approach, involving the management of key areas of flooded forest, mangrove or sea-grass beds in recognition of the role they play as fish breeding and refuge sites. More recently, FiA has been experimenting with the establishment of Community Fish Refuge Ponds, which are essentially fish refuges in areas that are prone to flooding during the wet season. When the water levels rise, the banks of the refuge pond are breached and the fish swim out into adjacent rice fields and immediately start breeding. With careful management of the refuge during the dry season, the seasonal cycle can be maintained, providing important additional benefits to rice farmers. Community aquaculture is another collective approach to the management of fisheries, but is currently classified as outside CFI, (as it is “fish culture” rather than “fish capture”). Latest figures from Fisheries Administration indicate that 469 CFis are being supported and are in various levels of formation and approval. Of these 469 groups, 173 have been legally registered and approved by MAFF and 60 are in the process of securing legal registration, having been submitted for approval.

⁵ Sloth, C., Bottra, K. and H.K. Sreng Non-Timber Forest Products: Their Value to Rural Livelihoods. Cambodia Development Review. Vol 9:4; 1-6.

Community forestry in Cambodia is by definition, a variant of a wider approach to “decentralised forest management”, which covers a number of specific models, some of which have yet to be tested, or legalised on a broader level. Decentralised forest management includes:

- Community Forestry: This is the “mainstream” approach adopted to date and being prioritised by government and projects alike
- Community Commercial Forestry (CCF): An approach being piloted in Monduliri with support from Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS), whose main focus is on sustainable forest management and timber utilisation
- Partnership Forestry: An approach being piloted in one commune in Kratie with support from RECOFTC, where the commune council is the management entity (rather than a CFMC as specified in the CF guidelines and *prakas*)
- Community Forestry in Protected Forests. A parallel approach has been adopted by Ministry of Environment in forest areas under their control and is called “Community Protected Areas” (and covered by a separate legal process)

One other model, which has emerged since the formulation of the NFP is pilots related to linking of CF with REDD (Reduced Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation). PACT, an international NGO, are currently supporting 13 community forestry (CF) groups, comprising 58 villages, to protect and manage protect 67,783 hectares of forestland in Oddar Meanchey province with a view to establishing a functional REDD financing mechanism.

All four approaches emphasis the management or restoration of natural forest *in situ*. However, it is important to recognise the important supportive role that can be played by measures such as agroforestry, plantation of woodlots and enrichment planting within degraded forest areas. Latest records from FA indicate that 420 CF groups are being supported across the country, covering around 400,000 hectares, and that to date, only 94 have been formally approved by MAFF and have signed agreements.

2. Community Fisheries

2.1 Policy, legal framework and guidelines

Mounting conflicts over access to fisheries by rural Cambodians during the 1990s led to the government transforming the sector in 2001, by releasing 538,522 hectares of lake and river area from commercial fishing lots to community management, representing 56.5% of then inland fishery concession area. While the spirit and intention of the reform was well intended, it was not accompanied with a corresponding programme of institutional support and capacity building, or clear legal guidelines regarding roles and responsibilities of different players. As a result, the transfer of resources resulted in some early gains to local fishers, but with no regulation on the fishing methods or the overall fishing effort, many of these initial gains were lost as the fishery began to become less productive due to over-fishing. Up to and after the 2001 transfer a number of organisations and projects had experimented with different models regarding fisheries co-management, including the creation and strengthening of community organisations, rules and guidelines. However, the government recognised the need for more formalised arrangements and guidelines for community fisheries and in 2005, 2006 and 2007 the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF) issued the sub-decree on Community Fisheries Management, the Fisheries Law, and a *prakas* on Guidelines for Community Fisheries, respectively.

The new legal framework meant that in many cases, different models developed at the local level regarding the institutional framework and structures had to be modified to conform with nationally agreed guidelines.

According to the fisheries law of 2006, all Cambodian citizens have the right to form community fisheries in their own areas, which shall not be subject to sale, exchange, hire, donation or sub-division. Article 59 recognizes the rights of all Cambodian citizens to form a CFi in their own area on a voluntary basis as a means to contribute to sustainable management, conservation, development, and use of the fisheries resources. While MAFF has the responsibility to define areas for community fisheries (Article 60), a Community Fisheries (CFi) fishing area shall be defined through a consultative process (Article 61) and a 3 year term for a CF agreement with MAFF needs to be secured with the option for its renewal based on assessment of results by Fisheries Administration (FiA) on CFi management performance (article 62). As stated in article 2, the state has a role of supporting traditional fisheries within the allocated area, but retains overall ownership of the resource.

The Sub-Decree on Community Fisheries Management (2005) stipulates that a community must develop by-laws, internal regulations, a management plan, maps of its area, and an agreement with FiA. The Department of Community Fisheries Development (CFDD) within FiA provides overall support to the development of the CFi process across the country. In practice, CFi sites vary significantly in terms of size and population. In some cases, CFis cover only a subset of the population of an individual village, while in others it may cover a number of villages and include membership of several thousand individuals. While some sites are relatively “closed” (in that fish are restricted from moving in or out of the site for much of the year), the majority of CFis are in large lakes or along major water-courses, and fish move in and out of the CFi area on a seasonal basis.

The sub-decree on CFi stipulates that a CFi organisation has the following responsibilities: (Article 10, Sub-decree on CFi management):

- to participate in the management and conservation of fisheries resources in accordance with provisions of all relevant legal instruments and the by-laws;

- to follow guidelines set by the FiA;
- to establish one or more fish conservation areas (sanctuaries), and to restore the habitats and ecosystems in their area
- to ensure equal access rights by all members and ensure sustainable use of the fisheries resources
- to formulate a CFi management plan
- to secure an agreement with FiA for their area
- to maintain all records on their area.
- to ensure fishing activities by all members comply with the by-laws and prevailing regulations
- to promote information sharing and awareness raising with outsiders
- to report of the progress of activities quarterly to FiA and copy to local authority
- to promote personal and collective accountability for wrong doing including criminal offenses;

The committee is selected at a village meeting with the aim of providing confidential, free, and fair elections, through an absolute majority of the members of the CFi who voted. The candidate who receives the most and second most votes becomes Chief and Vice-chief of the CFi Committee respectively (Articles 14 & 15).

CFi group members have the right (Article. 11):

- to collaborate with FiA and request support from local authorities to assist in the control of illegal activities;
- to use and manage the resource and habitats in accordance with provision of the law and agreement;
- to undertake small scale fishing;
- to participate freely in all activities of the CFi;
- to file complaints to protect the interests of CFi members;

A fully functional and legally recognised CFi is required to complete the following steps:

1. The establishment of a community group and the lodging of a formal request to FiA for the establishment of the CFi;
2. A needs assessment of the potential CFi;
3. Awareness raising and seeking registration of members;
4. Preparation of relevant legal documents;
5. Convening an initial meeting of the members to elect CFi committee;
6. Physical delineation and demarcation of the CFi boundary;
7. Submission of application for approval to MAFF;
8. Signing the CFi agreement (commune, district, province and FiA) and registration of the CFi with MAFF
9. CFi fishing area management planning and its implementation.

The fisheries law recognises the role of the Commune Council (CC) and other local authorities in collaborating on law enforcement and provides a platform to ensure that sufficient authority is at the disposal of local police to ensure security and public order. The C/S council is, for example, also recognised in many articles of the fisheries law as the collaborating partner in designating CFi fishing grounds, and in addressing conflicts within and between CFis. The CC is encouraged in the sub-decree on Community Fisheries Management to collaborate in establishing CFis, in CFi conflict resolution, and in CF committee election. The CFis can make a complaint or provide information on any problem which affects the interests of CFis to the CC (article 13) or in the case of urgency and need, request assistance for law enforcement (article 11).

Overall, while current legal provisions define the role of C/S councils with respect to supporting CFI at the local levels, in practise this appears to be unclear, particularly with regard to law enforcement and conflict resolution – as both FiA and C/S councils appear to play important, but overlapping roles. With increasing prominence of commune councils in the Decentralisation and Deconcentration (D and D) process the role of commune councils are likely to increase.

2.2 Current status and level of implementation

Predecessors of the current form of CFI began emerging in the 1990s, but it was not until 2000 that FiA began the compilation of records regarding the establishment and spread of CFI across the country. By 2000, records show there were 30 CFIs established, and this increased rapidly in 2001 to 165, following the transfer of commercial fishing lots to community levels in this year. By August 2009, FiA records indicate that 469 CFIs are being supported and are in various levels of formation and approval. Of these 469 groups, 173 have been legally registered and approved by MAFF and 60 are in the process of securing legal registration, having been submitted for approval (See Annex 2 for more details).

It is important to emphasise that while a large number of groups appear to be in the process of securing legal establishment, many of these groups were supported before the publication of the Community Fisheries *Prakas*. There is now a concerted effort by both government, as well as organisations supporting the fisheries sector to ensure that these groups conform with the new guidelines – and this has necessitated in many cases, modifying existing systems and structures. Other factors which have delayed the legalisation process appear to be a limited knowledge by facilitators (both within and outside government) on the new guidelines as well as the availability of funding to support their dissemination and adoption. The impact of external financing is well illustrated by the example of the Tonle Sap lake, where Asia Development Bank (ADB) support through the Tonle Sap Environmental Management Project was able to facilitate the legalisation of almost all CFIs operating on the lake by 2008, when the project ended. This is a substantial change from the time in 2005 when only 10% of CFIs in Siem Reap and Kampong Thom, have been approved and formalised for the entire lake (ADB, 2006). Evidence from provinces surrounding the lake suggests that without external support and the clear commitment it is difficult for CFIs to secure legalisation, and internal issues such as the development of internal bylaws and management plans are poorly developed.

FiA records and communication with fisheries officials indicate that support to CFIs is not uniform across the country. Given its high economic value, the Tonle Sap area and selected provinces on the Mekong has consistently received high levels of external support, while other, less high profile sites appear to have been less fortunate. NRMLP, through the Civil Society and Pro-poor Markets component (which works in 12 provinces) has provided significant support to the establishment of CFIs in 12 provinces across the country. Table 3, below, provides an overview of main donors/projects and NGOs supporting CFI in selected provinces of the country:

Province	Organisations, projects or donors supporting CFI / FiA
Battambang	LCJ, VSG, KAWP, AS, KNCED, CSID, TSEMP, TSSMP, UNDP
Koh Kong	PMMR/IDRC, AFSC, SEILA, Wetlands Alliance
Kampot/Kep	DFID/DANIDA (NRMLP), GTZ, DKA, Wetlands Alliance / Corin / WorldFish
Kampong Cham	Vigilance, NAS
Kratie	DFID/DANIDA (NRMLP), CAA, KAFDOC, Wetlands Alliance WWF
Pursat	UNDP, BDASE, VAPSD, TSEMP, TSSMP

Steung Treng	CAA, DFID/DANIDA (NRMLP), CEPA, DPA, Wetlands Alliance / WorldFish
Siem Reap	TSEMP, TSSLP, JFPR, Live and Learn, VSO

Table 3: Key projects and donors supporting community fisheries

2.3 Assessment of overall performance

2.3.1 Natural resources

Given the significant impact of external and seasonal factors beyond the control of CFI institutions (such as the impact of dams, fish migration, fishing in other areas, pollution and climate change), it is extremely difficult to isolate and assess the impact that CFI has on local fishery resources and fish catches. Despite this, a number of important and positive changes were reported across the sites visited. These are summarised below:

- **A reduction in the number and type of illegal/destructive fishing practices.** CFI members from sites in Stung Treng province supported by Oxfam (Sre Krasang) and CEPA (Koh Kordin) describe the incidence of illegal/destructive fishing practices to have dropped dramatically since the introduction of the CFI process. In Koh Khordin village action research results indicate that there were on average 20 households practising these methods before the introduction of CFI and just 3 currently. The research also documents significant changes in behaviour with regard to how people treat the resource and an increased awareness of the importance of effective management for ensuring benefit flows. This can in part, be attributed to the CFI process. While most people reported a reduction in illegal/destructive fishing methods across all sites, it was widely reporting that illegal/destructive fishing continued (albeit at a reduced level) and that this was being carried out by people from both outside and within the CFI group. More worryingly, perhaps, was the report received from some villages that illegal fishing was being carried out by “powerful” people.
- **The establishment of fish sanctuaries (no-fishing zones),** which many people reported had an important impact on fish productivity and biodiversity through provision of dry season refuge and spawning sites. In Phneat village (Bantey Meanchey) and Koh Khornden village (Stung Treng), residents reported improved fish catches in the floodplain and surrounding the sanctuaries. In Phneat, this was developed on a portion of a stream running across the community fishing area and in Stung Treng a number of deep pools in the main river channel are under co-management arrangements with state and civil society partners.
- **Protection of sea-grass beds** (in coastal areas), which in the case of one CFI visited on the coast (Changhoan village) was being used by local populations of dugong.
- **Environmental improvements in adjacent areas.** This includes mangrove forests along the coast and flooded forests around Tonle Sap, both of which are important breeding grounds for fish stocks

While most people consulted during this study agreed that fishing techniques had changed since the introduction of CFI (from illegal/destructive to legal/sustainable methods) and wider measures adopted such as fish sanctuaries, mangrove management and flooded forest protection, the impact of these positive measures on fish catches was less clearly visible. Many of those consulted in Kampong Phhluk in Tonle Sap said that they were experiencing an overall decline in fish catches⁶, particularly due to the growing number of non-resident, migrant fishers, whose access and use of the resource they were not allowed, under law, to regulate (other than to ensure compliance with rules and bylaws). Residents in this village appear to be highly dependent on fishing, with few other opportunities for a secure

⁶ Note: This was a decline in fish catch expressed as “per unit fishing effort”

livelihood. Reducing fish catches was creating interest in accessing land for production of rice – and a proposal had been made recently for the clearance of flooded forest and conversion of this area to rice cultivation. CFI appears to be more effective in providing secure, or stable fish catches, with regard to the management of resident (non-migratory) fish, which are less impacted by external factors outside the CFI area.

While the imposition of restrictions within CFI areas appears to be having a positive impact on fish productivity within these areas, it was apparent from a number of sites that these regulations were not applied to areas outside the CFI. So while improved management within the CFI has important ecological impacts, unsustainable practices appears to be the norm in non-managed areas, which undermines local efforts.

2.3.2 Livelihoods

2.3.2.1 Overall benefits derived at community level

For those CFI groups who had achieved legal status and full registration, it was clear that one of the most significant benefits realised was a sense of increased local management rights and responsibilities, and an ability to influence (if not completely determine) fisheries management. In many of villages visited, however, CFIs were still un-registered, and as a result this was a goal they were working towards, and had partially achieved, but which was still not realised. With regard to more tangible benefits many reported improved income from higher fish catches, but as discussed in section 2.3.1, fish catch was in some cases reported to be declining, largely due to external factors and the influx of non-resident fishers. Where other natural resources had been conserved (such as flooded forests or mangroves) additional benefits were reported such as improved supplies of firewood and improved protection from storms.

An additional and important benefit that CFI has created in a number of sites, are associated initiatives, often supported by projects, designed to diversify livelihoods and raise income. These are benefits that are often available only to members of the group, and therefore are clearly associated as CFI-generated benefits. Concrete examples of these types of benefits include savings and credit schemes, aquaculture, crab-banks and eco-tourism. The presence of these types of initiatives was very site specific, and depended very much on the presence of specific projects and external funding. In areas supported by FiA alone (without external support) such initiatives appeared rare or non-existent.

Economic benefits reported across all sites tend to be realised at the household or individual level, (as a result of fishing), and very few groups reported economic benefits being realised at the level of the group. Some CFIs had attempted to introduce the payment of membership fees, as a means to develop group-based, collective income streams, but this had largely failed. This is discussed in more detail in the following sections.

When non-economic benefits were discussed with group members, a key aspect that emerged was the benefits gained from group-based, collective action. In a post-conflict society such as Cambodia, this is clearly an important element of re-building wider social norms and a sense of community. An example of a form of collective action in Stung Treng (Koh Korndin) is an action research initiative known locally as *Sala Phoum*⁷. Specifically, people mentioned the benefits of the approach as providing opportunities for engaging in local policy negotiations, networking and increased contact with outside agencies and institutions, and increased access to information and training. The *Sala Phoum* covers a range of topics some on fisheries and NRM issues and others that were quite un-related (such as traditional culture, medicinal plants and health and disease). In this instance it is

⁷ Sala Phoum is an action learning initiative co-ordinated by Wetlands Alliance that develops participatory, community-driven research initiatives around livelihoods, ecology, institutions and collective action

not that collective action and social capital can be considered an output (result) of CFI, but rather the *Sala Phoum* research process acted as a pre-condition for CFI processes to function effectively. It will be important to assess the *Sala Phoum* and its potential more broadly in supporting effective CBNRM.

Many participants reported to have greater understanding of the law and in particular with regard the provisions of the fisheries law and the CFI regulations and also their associated rights. It was reported that prior to the introduction of CFI, there were high levels of local conflict between water users and in general, fishing methods were destructive and non-sustainable. The introduction of CFI, and the training that has accompanied this process, appears to have raised support and understanding for sustainable management practises and a longer-term perspective.

2.3.2.2 Distribution of benefits within participating communities

One of the aims of this study was to assess how the costs and benefits of community based natural resources management were distributed within and outside community institutions. This task was made considerably harder by the extremely fluid nature of group membership seen across many CFIs. In almost all cases, it was difficult to assess accurately the actual number of members, as membership registers did not appear to exist or were unavailable. Many CFI executive committee members reported that “*all the people in this village are members*”. While CFIs are legally required to formally register members during formation, (and in many cases this appears to have happened) these lists have now been lost or neglected. One possible explanation of this tendency is perhaps the rather undefined benefits that are created as a result of membership. Fishing rights are not defined by membership – these are (by law at least) public rights and open to all Cambodians, be they members or non-members alike. In CFIs supported by external projects, where associated projects have been developed for members, this does tend to create incentives for membership, but this appears to be in a minority of sites.

Despite this methodological challenge, there was considerable evidence from a number of sites that the degree to which benefits are realised from membership and participation in CFI activities is determined by factors such as wealth and power.

Many poorer households explained how their personal circumstances forced them to fish in non-productive ways (such as passive techniques and fishing in areas close to shore). These were often the most unproductive and over-fished areas of the local fishery resource. Richer households, however, by virtue of bigger, stronger boats and more costly (but effective) fishing techniques were able to penetrate sites further away and had a clear advantage over poorer households. Poor households on the Tonle Sap had devised a number of coping strategies to compensate for their lack of fishing gear, including making temporary housing in the shallow waters of the late during the dry season

In addition to the economic advantages richer fishers have in comparison to poorer ones, there is also strong evidence that executive committee members have been able to use their positions to accumulate a relatively high share of benefits available across the group. Some group members said quite clearly that the CFI was “*owned by the committee members*”. Ways in which committee members have been able to capture benefits as a result of their position are presented below:

- For those groups with specific micro-projects for members (such as alternative livelihood activities, savings groups and so on), in many cases, the primary beneficiaries of these projects has been executive committee members.
- Informal licensing of non-members, particularly those who use illegal fishing methods

- Fining of illegal fishers (not informally licensed) and sharing the revenue with other law enforcement agents (such as police or Fisheries Administration staff)

It may be hard to distinguish to what degree the tendencies presented above constitute “elite capture” (the accumulation of resources by the rich at the expense of the poor), or rather whether this represents a rational response to the fact that the work of executive committee members is often un-rewarded and difficult. Executive committee members often cited the problems they faced in performing their role. This included the very real risks of patrolling and confronting illegal fishers, the costs involved of patrolling (in terms of time and fuel) and the hostility they faced from members of their own community from attempting to introduce and enforce new fishing rules. In the absence of a formalised system of generating group-based revenues – and the allocation of this revenue to offset the costs of management – it is quite possible that executive committee members are pursuing alternative (non-formal) means to secure compensation.

In a number of CFI sites visited, interviews with poor non-members helped illustrate the barriers faced by the poor in accessing and benefiting from community institutions and initiatives. A frequent problem faced by the poor is the lack of time available to attend meetings and participate in group-based activities, due to the constant demands to make ends meet from one day to the next. One poor group member in Changoan village, Kampot had said that she had joined the savings and credit group, but dropped out due to her inability to maintain the minimal level of monthly contributions required.

Others highlighted the fact that the only fishing methods that they could employ were classified as “illegal” by the bylaws and regulations of the CFI group. Compliance was simply beyond their means (See Box 1)

Box 1: Too poor to participate?

One fisherman, from the very poorest wealth group in Oh Long village, Kratie, explained that he had tried to join the CFI group that had started in his village, but found that he was too poor to afford the equipment that was needed if he was to comply with fishing regulations of the group. The only equipment he had was mosquito netting – which the CFI had banned. However, he had no money to buy fishing nets or gear that complied with CFI rules. As a result, he had no choice but to continue to fish “illegally” and faced a continuous risk of his gear being confiscated, or being forced to pay fines he could not afford.

Despite these findings, a number of groups do appear to be providing benefits to poorer households. Although not a deliberate “pro-poor” measure, in Changhaon village, Kampot, the CFI had established an artificial reef. This constituted a navigational hazard for larger boats (including foreign trawlers), and the area was suited to small-scale fishing only. This created an important fishing zone for poorer households. Other groups reported establishing “social funds” (often from the interest payments made on the revolving credit and savings facility) which could be used

to support poorer families in times of economic crisis (such as a sick relative needing medical treatment)

Given the high investment costs required to participate in fishing, many persons consulted mentioned the important role that informal financial services play. While the very poorest households are completely unable to secure any form of credit (as they are considered too high risk, are often non-resident and are at risk of having their equipment confiscated), medium-poor fishing households access credit from a range of sources, including money lenders, but most commonly from traders, who advance credit in lieu of fish catches sold at substantially reduced prices. While financial services supported by NGOs have begun to make an important impact in many fishing communities, many people commented that the time taken to access these funds is often prohibitive, while other sources of financing are

accessible immediately (albeit at high rates of interest). For people facing severe financial stress, instant access is highly valued.

Women appear to be increasingly playing a more central and important / larger role in the community development work. There is particular division of labour they mostly engaged in the fisheries related activities such as fish processing and trading but also in other CFI related support project such as on water, saving and micro credit, and home gardening

2.3.3 Institutional arrangements and local management capacity

While CFI groups had the basic building blocks of functional community institutions (an executive committee, bylaws, management plans and so on), discussions with both members and committee members points to wide range of challenges that will need to be addressed if they are to become effective and representative. Among these challenges are:

- Limited understanding of the role and responsibilities of the executive committee, both by committee members themselves and members
- Unclear membership procedures and inability to maintain a system of fee paying
- Limited interaction between executive committees and members
- Lack of record keeping
- Limited transparency regarding the identification of potential candidates for the executive committee
- Non-compliance with the requirement for election of committee members every five years
- Dependency on external support from projects and donors

A number of capacity gaps were identified within CFI institutions, with regard to the understanding of members of the role, function, rules and bylaws of the CFI itself. Training provided to CFI members is often centred around the preparation of bylaws and management plans, but little attention is paid to “softer” aspects such as effective management and leadership, record keeping, facilitation and communication.

In the sites visited as part of this review, there were low levels of representation on executive committee members by women. Where they were elected, there were instances of women dropping out of the committee, often as a result of workload and domestic responsibilities, but also due to the decisions being made predominantly by men and the limited opportunities for women to genuinely influence management outcomes. While women rarely undertake patrols, it was reported that women are highly effective, and are often successful in persuading offenders to either surrender illegal equipment, or sign agreements to stop illegal fishing.

Membership of the executive committee appeared to be largely determined by income and education. In many cases, this was deliberate, and members emphasised the importance of electing representatives that had the time available to perform the duties required of them, as well as being able to interact with institutions at a higher level. Interestingly, however, CFI group members mentioned that potential benefits, and risks of electing more influential and powerful persons to the executive committee. In cases where power and influence was used in the interests of the members, this tended to produce positive outcomes (such as increased support from commune councils). Equally, there was a risk that by electing more powerful and influential committee members, their power could be used against the interest of members – by for example co-opting (or being co-opted by) government staff involved in law enforcement.

An additional important challenge facing community fisheries is the complex and often overlapping or even contradictory roles being played by the wide variety of government

institutions involved in community fisheries development⁸. This appears particularly the case with regard to issues of law enforcement. Current legislation does not permit CFI representatives to undertake law enforcement, and this remains a role of government (either FiA or in some cases commune councils). In cases where FiA was able and willing to support CFI members to enforce laws and bylaws fairly and effectively, this was strongly appreciated by executive committees and members alike. Patrolling is often seen as a risky undertaking and the protection and support offered from FiA was valued. However, on a number of other occasions, law enforcement was not such a clear-cut affair, and there were many examples of executive committee members colluding with law enforcement agents (such as police or FiA staff) to extract fees or fines from fishers. Similarly, there were many cases where FiA staff were simply too far, or poorly equipped to be able to respond in a timely and effective manner. This tendency appears to have undermined the willingness of CFI members to report illegal activities. A further challenge with law enforcement is that even when FiA staff apprehend illegal users, they may go unpunished because in many cases local courts do not yet fully understand the legalities of community fisheries.

There were a number of cases where support had been provided to CFI groups through the D and D process. Commune councillors interviewed as part of this study mentioned that there were a growing number of applications for support to CFI. Despite this positive tendency, there appeared to be a number of constraints that prevented the allocation of D and D funding to communes to CFI processes. This included the general tendency towards supporting infrastructure projects, a preference towards household level livelihood activities such as improved agriculture and the feeling from many councillors that CFI processes were being supported through central government agencies who had existing financial support. Despite the challenges of securing financial support, commune councils did appear to be playing a growing role in CFI processes. For many at the community level, communes were seen as “close to the people” and more aligned to their interests, whereas national agencies working at local level (such as FiA), were viewed largely as serving the national interest and often inaccessible.

Within FiA, constraints appear to be related to staffing numbers (which in many areas are clearly insufficient if CFI processes are to be supported effectively) as well as skills. There has been little effort at an institutional level to “re-tool” and re-orient fisheries officers to the new demands of community fisheries. As a result, many fishery officers have yet to fully internalise more participatory approaches. Despite these new demands, FiA maintains responsibilities for law-enforcement. As CFI areas expand, demands on FiA staff grows too – and in many areas this is placing high demands on staff who are constrained with low resources. Another growing demand on FiA and other government staff, is the need to support conflict resolution processes. This is a new skill for many in government, as traditionally decisions have been passed down without consultation.

2.3.4 Legal and regulatory issues

Many people consulted during this review, both within CFIs and those working to support them stated that one of the biggest challenges facing community fisheries is the lengthy and complex process required to achieve full legal recognition. As discussed earlier in this chapter, one aspect that has contributed to delays has been the need, in many CFIs, to go back and re-do much of the establishment process to ensure conformity with the CFI guidelines issued in 2007. Community members particularly felt a sense of helplessness with regard to the registration process, and that it had to pass across so many different departments at different levels. Where projects or NGOs were active it was clear that the

⁸ Research conducted by WorldFish on Tonle Sap on institutional mapping within community fisheries identified 14 separate government institutions with legal mandates for fisheries and aquatic resources, many of which were overlapping and conflicting.

process was in many cases supported and most importantly members were kept informed about the stage their particular application had reached. However, in the absence of external support, there was a feeling in some communities that the process was grinding to a slow halt, and that there was no assurance that registration would be given.

A number of the community sites visited as part of this study were yet to be registered, but pursuing the steps required to secure registration. During this registration period, members expressed frustration that while they understood the benefits of community fisheries, they were, as yet, unable to fully access its benefits. In discussions with those who had registered, there was a general fear that since their agreement was valid for only three years, there would be further delays regarding the extension of their agreement once it expired.

The CFI regulations place a number of reporting requirements on the CFI executive with regard to FiA, and in many cases appear to have created an upward accountability to government. The regulations require very little reporting requirements from the executive committee to its members, and this may have reduced downward accountability of CFI committees.

A further constraint identified by many executive committee members was unclear institutional mandates and roles with regard to law enforcement. Community structures are not empowered to arrest and fine illegal fishers, and as mentioned earlier the response and support received by CFI groups from FiA and commune council staff appears to be very mixed. The effective regulation of the CFI area is weakened by the inability of the CFI to regulate the overall level of fishing effort – particularly with regard to non-resident fishers. As seen in many sites (and in particular on Tonle Sap), this appears to be impacting negatively on overall fish catches and reducing incentives for continued participation by members and executive committee members alike.

The impact of seasonal fishers on the ability of the CFI to regulate access and fishing effort appears to be considerable. Under Cambodian law, CFIs cannot restrict access to fishing grounds by outsiders. However, they are required to register with the CFI executive committee. In reality this seems to be happening only rarely, and in a few cases observed in Steung Treng province, it seems that migrant fishers are reporting to commune councils, and paying “fees” to facilitate access. This is a worrying development and restricts CFI executive committees’ ability to generate their own funds and regulate fishing in their areas.

The Fisheries Law and CFI Guidelines state that CFI is for family and traditional fishing only. This places emphasis on fishing for domestic purposes and home consumption. The reality of small-scale fishing, even for very poor households is that much of the fish catch is sold and is therefore for “commercial” purposes. Although this legal inconsistency appears not to be negatively impacting small scale fishers, it is an area that needs to be addressed in the future.

Finally, a number of CFIs appear to be experiencing boundary conflicts. This is sometime caused by a simple lack of knowledge by many members regarding the exact location of the boundaries. In other cases, boundaries may not be physically marked (with pillars) which means that disputes are common. However, in other cases, it seems that boundaries as agreed with FiA are overlapping and could be avoided with better planning and verification at national level.

2.4 Summary

- CFi appears to have a positive impact on reducing destructive fishing methods (such as “electro-fishing” and use of mosquito nets) as well as introducing sustainable management practices such as the conservation and protection of flooded forests and mangrove areas, the establishment and protection of fish sanctuaries and the creation of artificial reefs.
- Despite this positive development, illegal fishing continues across many sites, driven by individuals from both inside and outside fishing communities.
- Due to the significant impact of external factors on fish populations (fish migration, dams and climate change to name a few), it is not always possible to establish a clear link between localised protection measures and improvements or stabilisation of fish catches.
- Seasonal fishers, who are often very poor, were reported in many sites to be increasing in number and having a growing impact on fish stocks within CFi areas. Although they are required to seek permission and register with CFi executive committees, this seems not to be happening, and means that conflicts between non-resident, seasonal fishers and resident CFi members are common.
- The primary benefits of CFi appear to be realised at household or individual level and revolve around a secure and stable fish catch
- Benefits obtained at the group level appear to be non-financial in nature and include an increased security of tenure over fish resources as well as an increase in social capital, knowledge, policy influence, increased networking and linkages to information and resources from outside the community
- The distribution of benefits from CFi appears to be uneven. Poor people are less able to access the benefits offered by CFi for a number of reasons. This includes their limited capacity to fish in areas far from shore (due to small boats), limited fishing gear, an inability to participate effectively in group activities and an inability to conform with bylaws and regulations advanced by the group.
- Richer and more powerful members of CFi institutions (most often executive committee members) appear more able to access the benefits of CFi. This is particularly the case for livelihood activities introduced by external projects for the benefit of members, which are often captured by CFi executive members.
- Executive committee members are providing important services on behalf of their group members (and to fishers outside the group). There are few if any legitimate means for this work to be compensated, due to a lack of group-based income. As a result, this may be creating incentives for poor governance and rent-seeking behaviour (such as informal licensing of illegal fishers and the collection of fines)
- Overlapping mandates and conflicting jurisdictions of government institutions, particularly with regard to law enforcement, appears to be limiting the effectiveness of CFi to regulate illegal activities
- Prevailing legislation prevents CFi groups from restricting access to CFi fishing areas by non-members and limits their powers with regard to law enforcement. This is limiting the effectiveness of CFIs to achieve sustainable management of fisheries over the long term.

- Commune councils appear to be playing an increasingly important role in supporting CFI processes
- CFI executive committees appear unclear about their roles and responsibilities. CFI group members appear unclear about the role of their executive committees. There are very limited means for members to interact with and question or review the actions of executive committees.
- Accountability of CFI executive committees appears to be more upwards (to FiA) rather than downwards (to members)
- The CFI registration process is taking a long time to complete in many sites, and in particular in those areas that are unsupported by NGOs or projects. This contrasts with the relatively short time period of validity for signed agreements – which currently stands at three years.
- Boundary conflicts between adjacent CFI areas were reported in some sites. In some cases this was caused by poor physical marking of boundaries, while in others it appears to have been caused by errors made during registration.

3. Community Forestry

Since the 1990s community forestry approaches have been in under development, with support from a large number of international NGOs and donor funded projects. During the 1990s and early 2000s a range of different approaches were developed and a number of individual sites were supported, with about 100 sites identified by 2002. Growing interest in supporting CF approaches and the lack of clear guidelines and a legal framework prompted the government to introduce a range of legislative reforms in the mid 2000s. By 2010, CF initiatives are either under development or legally established across 420 sites and covering around 400,000 hectares of forest. With the support from international NGOs such as RECOFTC, WCS and PACT, FA is now piloting new approaches to community forestry with a view to developing new models such as Community Commercial Forestry, Partnership Forestry and REDD. These are described in more detail below in the following sections.

3.1 Policy, legal framework and guidelines

Key legal steps taken by the Government of Cambodia with regard to supporting community forestry include:

- The Forestry Law (2002)
- Sub-decree on Community Forestry (2003)
- Community Forestry Guidelines (*Prakas*) issued by MAFF in 2006

In 2008 and 2009, FA, together with other stakeholders in the forest sector developed the National Forest Programme (NFP) as a strategic planning document, designed to establish a framework for implementing these and other key legal and policy reforms. The NFP was formally approved by MAFF in early 2010 and is being promoted by government and development partners alike as a key guiding document for the sector. Community Forestry is identified as one of the seven implementation programmes within the NFP. Three sub-programmes are identified as follows:

- Community Forestry Identification and Formalisation: To legalise CF registration using a participatory process
- Community, Institutional and Livelihoods Development: To play an active role in engaging and supporting the development of community forestry, especially to provide capacity building to management committees and members.
- Community Forestry Development Support: To develop CF networks and coordination, information management, conflict resolution, and policy development and the regulatory framework

Community Forestry is one of four basic models of “decentralised forest management⁹” approaches that have (or are being) developed in Cambodia:

- Community Forestry: This is the “mainstream” approach adopted to date and being prioritised by government and projects alike
- Community Commercial Forestry (CCF): An approach being piloted in Monduliri with support from Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS), whose main focus is on sustainable forest management and timber utilisation.

⁹ Kingdom of Cambodia. 2009. Cambodia's National Forest Programme. Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries.

- Partnership Forestry: An approach being piloted in one commune in Kratie, where the commune council is the management entity (rather than a CFMC as specified in the CF guidelines and *prakas*)
- Community Forestry in Protected Forests. A parallel approach has been adopted by Ministry of Environment in forest areas under their control and is called “Community Protected Areas” (and covered by a separate legal process)

One other model, which has emerged since the formulation of the NFP is pilots related to linking of CF with REDD (Reduced Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation). PACT, an international NGO, are currently supporting 13 community forestry (CF) groups, comprising 58 villages, to protect and manage protect 67,783 hectares of forestland in Oddar Meanchey province with a view to establishing a functional REDD financing mechanism.¹⁰

The National Community Forestry Programme Co-ordination Committee (NCFPCC), established in 2007 as part of the NFP formulation process has played an important role in the linking of NGOs and government efforts, as well as providing an institutional framework for the co-ordination of CF efforts across the country. After a period of inactivity it now seems to have been re-launched with support from RECOFTC and other former committee members.

Table 4 presents the key steps required for legal establishment of CF as well as cost estimates for each of the 11 steps required.

CF Establishment Steps		Proposed by D&D		Comments from CFO/FA	
		# day	Total (\$)	# day	Total (\$)
Step 0	CF Area identification and approval	-	-	10	1,800
Step 1	CF formulation	20	3,000	20	3,600
Step 2	Information collection (PRA and others)	-	-	40	7,200
Step 3	Develop CF Management Committee	30	5,000	15	2,700
Step 4	Develop internal rules of CFMC	45	4,000	15	2,700
Step 5	Boundary demarcation and planning	30	7,000	60	10,800
Step 6	CF Regulations	30	5,000	15	2,700
Step 7	CF Agreement	80	3,000	10	1,800
Step 8	CF Management Planning and Inventory	135	15,000	100	18,000
Step 9	Enterprise / livelihood development	-	-	-	-
Step 10	Management plan implementation	-	-	-	-
Step 11	Monitoring and Evaluation	20	5,000	20	3,600
Totals		390	47,000	305	54,900

Table 4: Guidelines and Cost Estimates for CF Establishment (Source: FA, 2010)

Official approval from MAFF is required at Step “0” (identification of CF area) and Step 7 (CF Agreement). Before submission of the CF agreement to MAFF for final approval, the agreement must first be signed by authorities at commune, district, provincial levels as well as FA. This means that the process can be lengthy, particularly if revisions are required, or if the application does not conform to current legal requirements.

¹⁰ For more information , see: Bradley, A. 2009. Communities and carbon. Establishing a community forestry-REDD project in Cambodia. PACT.

Table 4 suggests that the total cost of CF establishment and registration is around US\$55,000 per site, with Step 8 (for the development of the management plan) taking up a large portion of the time and costs. Discussions with both government staff at different levels as well as NGOs indicate that costs of CF establishment vary significantly from site to site, according to the size of the area being managed, as well as the number of beneficiaries and if they come from dispersed settlements. Others stated that where there were known conflicts over land-use (such as Economic Land Concessions – ELCs), the time taken to establish CF, as well as the costs, were likely to be higher.

The Sub-decree on Community Forestry stipulates that CF agreements are renewable, but have a fixed term of 15 years. The extension of the 15-year contract is dependent upon “compliance with the community forestry agreement and management plan”, and the sub-decree makes clear that any agreement may be revoked or terminated based on non-compliance. Moreover, the agreement may be terminated at any time (subject to six months notice being given by FA), where the government considers that the land, or natural resources being managed under a CF agreement can provide a “*higher social and public benefit to the Kingdom of Cambodia*” through alternative land uses, (Article 31).

3.2 Current status and level of implementation

In 2002, CDRI estimated that there were approximately 100 CF sites established across the country, most of them supported by local or international NGOs. The latest figures available from FA suggest that by 2010, this figure has grown substantially and now numbers around 420 sites covering almost 400,000 hectares.

A breakdown of CF sites by province and their stage in the approval process appears in Annex 3. Critically, the data shows that about 49% of the sites (covering over 72% of the total area proposed) are currently awaiting approval from both FA and MAFF. As seen with community fisheries, there have been strong moves since the promulgation of the CF *Prakas* to ensure that sites supported prior to 2006 are assisted to conform to the new legal requirements. This has tended to create a backlog of sites awaiting approval at the national level. A further reason appears to be the tendency of cantonment staff to submit applications to national authorities in batches, a number of which have been submitted in the past 6 months, creating pressure on national authorities to screen and approve a large number of potential sites. Discussions with different stakeholder groups indicate that there are a number of bottlenecks in the approval process (including district and provincial governors, FA and MAFF) and views vary according to who is consulted. When interviewed as part of this study, MAFF implied that they were not able to approve many agreements because the applications did not comply with existing legislation in the CF sub decree and parkas and were sent back for further detailing.

There are many national, international NGOs and donor funded projects supporting community forestry development in Cambodia, through a variety of means, such as CF establishment at the local level, piloting new approaches, policy development, capacity building, enterprise development and networking. The Civil Society and Pro-Poor Markets component of the NRMLP provides funding to many national and international NGOs working in 12 provinces. Some of the key NGOs involved in CF development include: WCS, PACT, Concern, Oxfam GB, The Asia Foundation, RECOFTC, Worldwide Fund for Nature, Conservation International and Non Timber Forest Product Exchange Programme. Key donors supporting CF processes include Danida/DFID (through the NRMLP), AECID (through RECOFTC) Japan Social Development Fund / World Bank (through RECOFTC), EU (through Oxfam GB and Ockenden) and UNDP-GEF (still at planning stages).

3.3 Assessment of overall performance

3.3.1 Natural resources

Forests are under heavy pressure in Cambodia and there are a number of powerful forces driving deforestation and land-use change. Across all the sites visited during this review, the impact of ELCs was apparent and had resulted in the loss of land, forest resources (and consequently livelihoods) to communities in many sites. Furthermore, given that many of the sites selected as part of this study were yet to be approved and registered, but were in the process of establishing CF in their communities, it is difficult to say conclusively the degree to which CF reduces the risk of forest clearance and conversion to alternative land uses. However, discussions with resource persons and facilitators involved in CF promotion, as well as with community members from registered CF sites would suggest that when the full legal registration process is completed (up to, and including Step 7 – CF Agreement), CF is an effective tool in securing land tenure and preventing the loss or clearance of forest land to external parties such as ELCs. As seen with CFI initiatives, however, its impact on reducing deforestation or forest conversion was dampened by the long time taken between starting the CF process and getting final approval. In Kratie, villagers at one CF site explained how an area of forest that they had identified (and received initial approval from MAFF to proceed with CF establishment) was effectively lost during the registration process (Steps 1 – 7) as the land was allocated to ELCs in the interim.

Many of the CF sites visited reported a reduction in illegal activities within forest areas that they were managing or beginning to manage, as a result of reduced use by residents (particularly unsustainable practices) as well as outsiders as a result of improved protection and law enforcement. In particular, many communities reported a significant reduction in illegal logging and clear signs of forest recovery through regeneration. Supplies of non timber forest products (NTFPs) such as rattan, yams, mushrooms and bamboo were reported to be improving and experiencing recovery across a number of sites. Although few CF sites appear to have introduced rules or bylaws restricting trapping and hunting, a number of sites also reported an increase in diversity and presence of wildlife such as deer, monkeys and wild pigs.

An equally important finding in this regard, however, was the view that a number of sites visited were already heavily degraded, with much of the high value produce (such as timber) extracted. Some communities attributed the reduction in illegal activities less to their own enforcement efforts and more to the fact that there were few valuable resources left to harvest. Furthermore, while many communities reported concerted efforts to reduce and regulate use within areas under CF, it seemed that this contrasted markedly with forest areas outside the CF area, where such restrictions appeared not to apply. It is questionable therefore whether CF in its current form is producing widespread improvements in forest condition, or whether unsustainable practises are simply being displaced from one site to another.

3.3.2 Livelihoods

3.3.2.1 Overall benefits derived at community level

Across all CF sites visited during this review, the primary incentive (and benefit) reported from CF was gaining secure access to land and natural resources. Community members expressed a deep sense of frustration and helplessness over the continued loss of lands to powerful interests and outsiders, particularly through the establishment of ELCs and illegal logging. CF offered one opportunity for communities to secure access and control over land and forests in the face of these mounting threats.

Economic benefits reported from CF were limited, in comparison to community fishery sites. This was for a number of reasons, but was mainly because the forest area was of limited economic value and required a period of recovery before harvesting would be possible, but also because many sites visited had yet to be legally registered. In many sites, the collection of NTFPs continued and the types of products available for harvesting tended to vary across different sites, but included resin, honey, rattan, bamboo shoots, mushrooms, yams, medicinal plants, poles, wildlife, wild fruit and vegetables. These products were collected for domestic consumption while other, more high-value products such as resin, honey, rattan and bamboo were frequently sold. Discussions with poor households confirmed the important role that NTFPs play in terms of proving an important safety net function, and generating limited but important revenue streams in times of crisis.

The two CF sites visited in Siem Reap (Bos Thom and Tbeng Lech) had been legally established and had been able to harvest and sell poles from within their CF area. This had generated benefits at both group and individual levels.

Under the Community Commercial Forestry (CCF) pilot in Mondulhiri being facilitated by WCS, plans are being developed to generate significant annual revenues to villages living within the Seima Biodiversity Conservation Area through the sustainable harvest of high value timber species within a 12 750 hectare area. Although harvesting of timber has yet to start, arrangements are being developed for the establishment of a social enterprise that would oversee the sale of timber and distribution of revenue to participating communities and commune councils (once management costs payable to FA had been taken off).

FA, with support from CEPA, is piloting an alternative model to CCF, but one that also aims to generate sustainable revenues from timber harvesting. This model, called Partnership Forestry (PF) and originally proposed in 2004 as part of the Independent Forest Review process¹¹, designates commune councils as the legal management entity and the recipient of any forest revenues created through sustainable management. Discussions with commune councillors showed a high level of interest at this level and a tentative agreement on benefit sharing (whereby 50% of the funds are allocated to forest triage staff as a management fee, while 50% will be allocated to the commune council – of which 60% will be spent on rural development and 40% will go to administration and support at the commune council). However, as with the CCF pilot it is too early to assess whether these plans will materialise as the legal process is still on-going. Furthermore, it is unclear what role (if any) lower level community groups will play in this arrangement, how they will benefit and to what degree they will be expected to participate in management.

Additional benefits from CF are being generated in some areas through the establishment of community based savings and credit schemes. In Bos Thom and Tbeng Lech (Siem Reap), revenue generated from the sale of poles was used to establish a small credit facility, as well as providing small grants to members hit by crisis (such as sick children, death and so on). The amounts lent tend to be small, varying from 50,000 – 400,000 Real (USD 12 – 100).

Markets for many products harvested from forests are often poorly developed, or heavily dominated by a limited number of traders, who tend to depress prices for producers. A number of projects have embarked on market development for a number of key products such as honey, rattan and resin. The development of brands such as “Mondulhiri Wild Honey” and “NatureWild” brands are creating new opportunities for poor forest-dependent communities in many parts of the country. Discussions in Bos Thom village indicated that even without external support from NGOs, local honey hunters have created their own

¹¹ IFSR. 2004. Independent Forest Sector Review. The Forest Sector in Cambodia. Part I: Policy Choices, issues and options

association and are able to supply an estimated 500 – 700 litres per annual to restaurants and small business in Siem Reap town.

In addition to the relatively modest economic benefits reported from the CF initiatives visited, additional, less tangible, but equally important benefits were identified. In Mondulhiri, where 52% of the population is from indigenous ethnic minorities, the forest has traditionally played an important role in maintaining cultural values and traditions. In particular, the protection of spirit forest areas and ancestral burial grounds were considered important benefits that CF provided. Finally, increased social interaction and group-based activity was also seen by many as a positive benefit in building social capital at the local level.

3.3.2.2 Distribution of CF benefits within participating communities

A specific aim of this study was to establish the degree to which benefits from CF were distributed across different wealth groups within participating communities, and specifically if poorer households were losing out following the introduction of CF management practises.

The study confirmed the important role played by NTFPs in supporting the livelihoods of poor and very poor households. It is an activity that does not require investments such as land or expensive equipment (such as with fishing), and the heavy demands on time and labour mean that it is rarely of great interest to richer households, who tend to focus more on agriculture and small businesses. A number of poor households emphasised the role played by NTFP collection in times of stress (such as floods or poor harvests). In Bos Thom, poor households mentioned how they had been able to trade wild yams for rice and thereby ensure limited food security.

In all sites visited by this team, the introduction of CF had not resulted in harvesting restrictions on NTFPs, and in general, those who were accessing NTFPs before the introduction of CF were able to continue to do so afterwards. This contrasted with reports from sites supported by Concern Worldwide (in Pursat and Kampong Cham provinces) where the heavily degraded nature of CF sites had resulted in the suspension of harvesting of key resources harvested by the poor, such as rattan, and negatively impacted a number of vulnerable households.¹² Informal tenure systems (whereby resin collectors mark and claim the rights to resin trees) have also persisted following the introduction of CF and provide an additional protection of resources to poorer households.

In the few sites where commercial harvesting of wood-based forest products (such as poles) was undertaken, it did seem that equity issues had been taken account of. In Tbeng Lech, the sale of poles was overseen at the management committee level and the benefits used to offset overall management costs as well as the establishment of a savings and credit scheme for members. The management committee engaged members to cut the poles and this provided additional employment for poor households. In Bos Thom, the total annual pole harvest was shared between members of the group – with each member receiving an allocation of 100 poles. Members could either harvest and sell their own share, or purchase shares from other members. In both sites, poor households were provided with access to harvest poles free of charge for house construction. As with Tbeng Lech, a share of the total revenue generated from sales in Bos Thom was allocated to the executive committee as a management fee (5%) while and additional 35% was deposited in a savings and credit scheme for the benefit of members.

¹² Concern Worldwide Cambodia. 2006. Evaluation of CF–CF/ClI Programme Final Report. Cecilia Luttrell - Overseas Development Institute, London UK.

Despite these positive signs, it is important to note that poor households across all sites were observed to be participating less in meetings and had less information and understanding of the role and activities of the group and executive. Furthermore, some households indicated how the loss of forest access due to the advance of ELCs had pushed them out of traditional NTFP collection into illegal timber harvesting (See Box 2)

Box 2: From NTFP collection to illegal logging

Mr. Chorn is a household head of 6 members in O'Preah commune, Kratie. He has no land, no draft animals and lives in a simple house. Prior to 2002, his primary source of income was the collection of resin from trees in the nearby forest. At that time, he had rights to around 300 resin trees, from which he was able to collect 150-200 litres of resin per trip and from this, earn enough income to support his family. In 2003, all of the resin trees were lost to an ELC which was allocated in the area. As a result, he lost his income. Since then the only option available to him has been to sell his labour to illegal loggers. This puts him in conflict with the village and means he cannot join the CF group who now see him as an "illegal logger"

The participation of women in the management committees was seen to be very limited, apart from where deliberate moves had been taken to promote this (such as in the WCS facilitated CCF sites in Mondulkiri). In some cases, where women had been elected for positions within the management committee, their participation dropped and they were reported to have left – largely due to their domestic responsibilities and heavy workloads. Despite this, focal group discussions with women illustrated the particular interests that women have with respect to forests and forest management. The collection of certain NTFPs (such as wild yams, fruits and other food

products) seemed to be of particular importance for women, as well as their involvement in the processing of key products. Women-headed poor households reported their involvement in the collection of NTFPs for sale (such as resin and honey), often with the participation of male family members for protection.

In direct contrast to many CFI sites visited as part of this review, where seasonal migrant fishers placed heavy additional demands on resources, there appeared to be less of a problem of external, non-resident users in many CFI sites. The exception to this rule was in sites with higher value forest resources (such as O'Chral in Mondulkiri CCF pilot) where there were continued reports of illegal logging by outsiders (often supported by powerful interests such as the army or police). Some villages included migrant families who had come to settle and find land – and in many cases, deliberate measures had been taken to include these new residents within the membership of the CF group (such as in Pou Creang village, Mondulkiri, where recent Cham migrants had been invited to join the CF group).

3.3.3 Institutional arrangements and local management capacity

This review has clearly illustrated the great variety of form and function that community forestry is taking in different parts of the country. Some of the variations seen include:

- **Size of CF groups.** This varied significantly from a sub-group within a particular village or community, to all the members within a given village to multiple villages, up to the whole commune (in the case of Partnership Forestry in Kratie). WCS is experimenting with the creation of a new inter-village structure modelled on a social enterprise, which would oversee forest management and the sharing of benefits.
- **Size of area being managed.** This varied from relatively small forest areas of a few hundred hectares, seen in Kratie, up to several thousand hectares (in the case of the CCF pilot site in Mondulkiri).

- **Condition of the resource:** In most areas visited forest areas were heavily degraded, apart from some sites which had been selected for their potential to generate more significant high value produce (such as timber in Mondulkiri and poles in Siem Reap). The value of the resource also determines in large part the objectives of management – be they sustainable timber harvesting objectives, or low level NTFP collection.
- **Effective governance and group dynamics.** In some cases, and in particular where NGOs had supported specific activities designed to build local capacity and good governance, groups were seen to be functioning effectively. Elections were held regularly (every five years) and members appeared to be well informed about the activities of their management committee. In other areas (particularly where problems relating to registration had stalled activities) there seemed to be a number of management issues, regarding roles and responsibilities and relationships between the management committee and members.

Box 3: Supporting CF legalisation – Siem Reap

In 2009, The Cantonment Forestry Office in Siem Reap was provided with a grant from the Technical Working Group for Forestry and Environment (TWG – F&E) to support the process of registering and approving community forestry sites, which were under various stages of development. With a relatively modest grant of US\$ 20,000, FA staff have been able to support registration and approval processes in over 50 CF sites in three provinces. Furthermore, they have been able to assist CF groups in Oddar Meanchey whose CF area “overlapped” with an ELC, by mediating between foreign investors and local CF Group members.

Interestingly, in the one Partnership Forestry site visited, the involvement of the commune council appeared to be delivering important benefits from increased support. Given that the commune council stood to benefit financially from the establishment of Partnership Forestry, they were very engaged in championing the overall process as well as lobbying higher levels of government for the rapid transfer of forest land and protection from potential external interests (such as ELCs which are widespread in Kratie). Similarly, when FA support was forthcoming from cantonment level, the process of registration and

approval appeared to be moving at greater speed in areas where this support was not available (Box 3). This is exemplified from Siem Reap, where a relatively modest grant made available through the Technical Working Group for Forestry and Environment (TWG F&E) appears to be delivering important benefits across a number of CF sites that have “stalled” in their approval process recently¹³.

FA staff at cantonment level emphasised the challenges faced in terms of meeting the growing demands for community forestry, many of which are now coming up through commune planning processes. Many of the skills required to support extension and CF promotion (effective facilitation and communication) were missing among many of their staff and they had few opportunities for re-training and orientation. Furthermore, the “double-role” played by FA staff at sub-national level (promotion CF and law enforcement) presents particular problems to many at the community level, who continue to view FA staff with some level of suspicion and fear.

With regard to the involvement of NGOs in supporting CF, very different experiences were observed across different sites, and appear to be very dependent on the type of NGO support provided, their knowledge of CF processes and their willingness to engage with government. In Kratie province, where communities had worked with a local NGO (before the arrival of RECOFTC), they had been supported to develop community forestry, but the

¹³ It is important to note, however, that the total budget of USD 20,000 refers to some of the key steps involved in legal registration (Step 7) and does not include the costs of steps 1 to 6.

failure of the NGO concerned to liaise with FA and the non-adherence to CF guidelines meant that when ELCs were allocated land in the area identified for community forestry development, the community was powerless to make any counter-claim, due to a total lack of any documentation or evidence that they were implementing CF activities. As a result, the community concerned lost their land and were forced to identify a new area and start the whole process again, this time with the support of FA, through RECOFTC. Despite this rather negative picture, it is important to stress the important role that NGOs are playing in supporting CF implementation in many parts of the country, and in particular their contribution to:

- Piloting new approaches of CF (such as CCF and PF)
- Supporting the formulation of enabling policy and legal environment
- Working on “softer” issues such as pro-poor approaches, inclusion and effective governance
- Market linkages and development
- Increasing “voice” of CF groups to engage with government

3.3.4 Legal and regulatory issues

Box 4: Community Forestry vs Economic Land Concessions?

In one focal group discussion in Kratie Province, villagers understood that CF and ELCs were both being promoted by the same ministry (MAFF). However, despite this, there seemed to be little co-ordination between different departments. *“How is it possible”, one CF member asked, “for us to get approval to start CF in one area, only to have the same area taken away by ELCs?”* He went on: *“Why is it that ELCs can complete their legal process in weeks, while we have to wait months or years to complete ours for CF?”*

One of the most pressing concerns regarding the establishment of community forestry is the long process reported across many sites in order to get initial approval for the CF process (from MAFF), but also the lengthy interim period between approval and legal registration. In two sites visited (in Kratie and Mondulkiri) villagers described how they had been successful in getting initial approval (Step “0” in the current process) from MAFF, but then while they were pursuing the steps

required for registration (Steps 1 – 7), they had lost their land to ELCs, which were allocated in the interim (See Box 4).

A further problem that was raised during a number of focal group discussions was the 15-year, fixed term of their CF agreements. A number of people said that 15 years was the time that they would require to return their forests to a productive level, and feared the loss of their forests to more powerful interests once value had been restored.

It was not possible to visit any sites that were in the process of preparing management plans. However, discussions with resource persons from a number of NGOs involved with the preparation of management plans (such as RECOFTC) highlighted the cost and time required to comply fully with prevailing guidelines.

The current guidelines place restrictions on commercial use of CF produce, by placing a ban on commercial harvest during the first five years following registration, and the requirement to pay royalties as well as transport fees. Despite this, there is growing interest in commercialisation and the sale of NTFPs in many areas is providing important local incomes. In Siem Reap, where pole harvesting had been allowed, this was allowed only with special permission from MAFF, and on a case by case basis.

Law enforcement was cited by many CFMCs as an ongoing challenge, in particular due to the limited powers held by committee members to enforce bylaws and impose sanctions.

Under current legislation, law enforcement can only be done by government agencies such as FA, the police or commune council triage staff. In remote sites the ability of government to respond and apprehend illegal loggers is limited and constrained by lack of fuel or vehicles.

3.4 Summary

- The current CF legal framework (sub decree and prakas) provides a number of restrictions on the duration of agreements (15 years), a ban on “commercial” activities within CF sites for five years after registration and complex requirements for management planning.
- Community Forestry, when legally registered and approved, appears to increase local tenure rights and reduces the risk that forests will be appropriated by external interests and converted to alternative land uses
- In many sites visited, CF appears to have resulted in a reduction in illegal and destructive activities, increased supplies of NTFPs, assisted with forest recovery and regeneration and increased local wildlife numbers and diversity
- Despite this, many sites are still seeking to secure legal registration and face considerable risks of losing their land and forests before formal registration
- Many sites identified for CF are degraded and much of the high value timber has been already logged-out
- There are signs from a number of sites that unsustainable harvesting practices continue in forest areas outside CF sites
- The primary benefit (or goal) reported in all CF sites visited was securing access to land and forests in the face of continued loss of land and illegal logging over which local residents have little control
- CF provides some limited economic benefits in some sites, but its potential to generate greater economic benefits is constrained by the condition of many forests being managed and restrictions placed on commercial harvesting.
- In those sites that generate economic benefits, these are being captured at both group and household levels
- Non-economic benefits reported from CF include spiritual / customary values (in the case of ethnic minorities) as well as benefits gained from collective action (training, social capital, increased networking and external linkages)
- The poor appear to be capturing many of the benefits from CF. NTFPs appear to be providing important benefits to poor households in many areas and harvesting is not restricted in the sites visited (although reports from Concern-supported sites are that suspension of NTFP harvesting has placed increased constraints on poor households)
- There is limited participation of women on CFMCs and in decision-making generally
- Co-ordination between NGOs and government is mixed. Some sites have experienced significant problems because of a failure of NGOs to follow CF guidelines and to

communicate effectively with FA. Furthermore, sites selected for support by some NGOs appear to have been far from optimal due to the presence of external threats from ELCs.

- In other sites, NGOs are providing important contributions to CF development, such as policy development, piloting, pro-poor approaches, increased “voice”, commercialisation of NTFPs and local capacity development
- Partnership Forestry appears to offer many promising opportunities for integrating forestry within the D and D process and gaining important local support from commune councils. Benefits at community and household level and the involvement of actors at this level needs clarification.
- FA staff lack the skills, manpower and resources to support CF effectively and respond to the growing demands coming from commune councils.
- The time taken to approve and formalise CF process is lengthy and cumbersome. Many communities appear to risk losing access to CF sites approved by MAFF because of ELC allocations in their area.
- Many communities expressed frustration that ELCs seem to be getting more support than CF.
- Limited local powers to enforce bylaws and impose sanctions are restricting the effectiveness of CF in terms of supporting forest recovery

4. Summary of findings and conclusions

4.1 Overall level of costs and benefits to local managers

Overall, community fisheries appears to be delivering more tangible and direct benefits than community forestry, although comparisons between the two sectors must be treated with caution due to the inherent differences in the resource itself, and the period of time that both programmes have been operational. Benefits from CFi tend to be focused most strongly on securing or stabilizing fish catches, but other associated benefits generated through sustainable natural resource management also seem to be increasingly important in a number of sites. In general, benefits from community fisheries tend to be generated at individual level, with limited group-level revenues from legitimate or legal sources.

Although the impact of CFi on fisheries is largely context/site specific, most agree that the current situation has greater potential for improved management through securing access and rights over management than the contemporary 'open-access' management regime that pre-dated the introduction of CFi. The ability of CFi to deliver clear benefits to local managers is constrained by a number of factors such as:

- External factors impacting on the resource (such as hydropower, migration of many key fish species, climate change)
- The difficulties of assessing fish numbers and trends (visibility issues)
- Much of the value of the CFi activities are realised outside the CFi area – and accrue to people far from the management area
- Limited opportunities for small business enterprises focused on fish processing

Community forestry on the other hand appears to be delivering a broader range of benefits – including group benefits as well as individual benefits – but with more limited economic value. One of the primary benefits reported from CF was increased security of tenure over land and natural resources (and to a lesser degree with CFi). Interestingly, in many other countries where community based natural resource management has been successfully promoted, secure land tenure is a *precondition* for success, while in Cambodia, secure land tenure appears to be an *outcome or goal*.¹⁴

When legally registered, community forestry does appear to provide a degree of protection over land and natural resources. However, a number of communities consulted during this review said that during the long process required for registration, they had lost land areas identified for community forestry. This finding is confirmed from work being implemented by Oxfam GB, who are currently supporting community forestry establishment in 35 900 hectares of forestland across 6 provinces – but have indicated that in 27% of this area, there are overlaps with proposed ELCs that have arisen since the work on community forestry was initiated¹⁵.

The ability of community forestry to generate significant income benefits appears to be constrained by two main factors. Firstly, the general condition of much of Cambodia's forest resources (and in particular, those areas identified as suitable for community forestry) is such that most of the high value assets have been removed. As such, a significant investment of time and effort is required if these assets are to be restored to a state that will generate significant revenue flows to local managers. Secondly, prevailing legislation on community forestry emphasizes low level, subsistence based use and places restrictions on

¹⁴ With thanks from Edward Pollard of WCS for this observation

¹⁵ Oxfam-GB monitoring data

commercial use. This severely restricts the degree to which communities can sell forest products such as timber, and generate revenue flows locally.

4.2 Equity, inclusion and governance

Governance challenges in forestry – appear to be more at the stage of identifying and approving land areas for potential CF sites – and the conflicting interests of ELCs and community interests. Once established, it does seem that poor people are not directly losing out as a result of the introduction of CF. This is quite probably largely due to the fact that the economic value of the resource within CF has largely been lost – and as a result there is little dispute. Those resources that are left are of little interest to richer, more powerful members of society

There are a number of ways in which the introduction of community based natural resources management may potentially have a negative impact on poor and vulnerable households. These different pathways are identified – and then assessed within the context of community forestry and community fisheries in the Cambodian context.

One of the primary ways in which poor people are marginalized by community fisheries is through the tendency towards “elite capture” or the concentration and accumulation of benefits by richer more influential executive committee members at the expense of less powerful members. This is probably explained by two main factors. Firstly the value of the resource being managed is higher – and therefore the economic gains to be made are greater. However, a secondary and equally important factor may also explain this tendency. This is that the work of the executive committee is fairly demanding. They are required to oversee and often undertake regular patrols, and in some cases confront fishers who may be aggressive or in some cases dangerous. The benefits that they provide through their action benefit not only their members – but fishers across a wide area, due to the mobile nature of the resource. Furthermore, many executive committee members said that they felt in many cases by becoming executive committee members they risked becoming unpopular (particularly in the early stages of CFi establishment when the benefits of moving from open access to regulated management regimes were far from clear to many members). As indicated earlier, the main benefits generated from CFi activities are realized at the household level, and there are few legitimate or legal revenues generated at the group level. As a result, their efforts are both demanding and un-rewarded. In such circumstances it is perhaps unsurprising that executive committees seek alternative pathways in which their work can be rewarded. For whatever reason, however, the end effect of this tendency is the same – a concentration of resources and power in the hands of a few – and the potential for exclusion of others – most generally the poor and powerless.

A second way in which the poor may be excluded from community fisheries in particular is through the introduction of new rules and regulations designed to curb illegal and unsustainable fishing. The introduction of CFi has had the effect of casting them as illegal fishers – but at the same time they are unable to afford the equipment necessary to allow them to fish within the new rules of the group. They therefore find themselves in an impossible dilemma – continue fishing the only way they can – but face confiscation of equipment and the imposition of fines or sanctions from patrols and fisheries staff. With regard to forestry, it would seem that poor households tend traditionally to depend on the extraction of NTFPs – such as resin, bamboo and honey. In all cases visited as part of this study, harvesting of NTFPs seems to have been unaffected by the introduction of

community forestry and as a result, these livelihood benefits appear not to have been negatively impacted.¹⁶

The third way in which the introduction of community based natural resources management has been demonstrated to have negative impacts on the poor is as a consequence of the exclusion of non-resident users. In many cases these are seasonal migrants who are deemed as “outsiders” and therefore considered not to have a legitimate stake or claim over the resource in question. Within the context of community fisheries, this seems to be less of a problem, because as stated in Article 14 of the CFI Sub-decree – fish resource users who are not members of the CFI have the right to “*enter, leave and use the fisheries resource but must comply with internal regulations*”. Within the context of CF, persons from outside the commune in which the CF is situated have no access rights to community forests and “*do not have the privilege to collect timber or non timber products in the CF area*” (Article 39 CF Regulations).

With regard to the use of CFI resources by non-residents, there are important trade-offs to be made with regard to the long-term integrity of the resource (and its ability to continue to generate sustained benefits) and wider social benefits to poor and vulnerable migrant households. On one hand, opening of the resource to all users – whether resident or non-resident ensures that benefits are shared widely and poverty reduction / safety net impacts are maximized – while on the other hand the natural limits of the resource mean that over time, a continued expansion of use will inevitably lead to a reduction in its overall productivity. Furthermore, managers of the CFI resources mentioned on many occasions that they felt that the use of the resource by outsiders (who contributed nothing to management costs) was inherently inequitable – and placed additional costs on themselves.

The fourth way in which CBNRM may result in limited or negative impacts to the poor is through their inability to participate in and access the benefits offered through membership. One concrete examples of this is through the “livelihood” interventions that some groups offer, as a means to diversify livelihood options as well as reduce risk. The ability of poorer households to access or take advantage of such interventions is well documented. One clear example of this came from a fishing community in Kampot province, where a poor woman said that she had tried to engage with the savings group, but was expelled from the group because of her inability to contribute the minimum amount of financing required by the group members. Another reason as to why they may not be able to access such benefits is because more powerful members (such as committee members) restrict and control access to these benefits – either by offering these benefits to themselves only, or to those favoured by them through patronage networks.

4.3 Legal and regulatory issues

This review has highlighted a number of legal and regulatory issues that constrain the potential of community forestry and community fisheries to meet the overall goals of sustainable natural resource management and poverty reduction.

One of the most challenging issues relates to effective law enforcement. Cambodian law prevents community institutions (such as CFI executive committees or CF management committees) from enforcing rules and imposing sanctions and fines – and requires that this function is undertaken by appointed law enforcement officers within forestry or fisheries administrations. In situations where staff from these agencies are available, adequately resourced and willing to perform this role effectively, community members appear happy to

¹⁶ Discussions with Concern Worldwide staff indicate that in the two provinces of Pursat and Kampong Thom where forest resources are highly degraded, restrictions placed on the harvesting of rattan following the introduction of CF has resulted in negative impacts on the poorest households.

cede this responsibility, due to the often risky nature of the task. However, the review has highlighted that on many occasions key staff are distant from the resource in question, under-equipped and unable (or in some cases unwilling) to perform this role – leaving community members unable to effectively regulate unsustainable practices. Findings from both forestry and fisheries sites indicate that communities are willing in a number of cases to challenge and prevent illegal activities and confiscate equipment and produce, but that are often unable to challenge more powerful interests such as the police, army or local leaders who may be engaging in such activities.

The effectiveness of community forestry and community fisheries is further restricted by its inability to regulate access to resources by non-members. From a positive perspective, this does ensure that the benefits of community management are spread far and wide – and often to poor and highly vulnerable households, it does place extreme pressures on resources being managed. With regard to community fisheries, the fact that the resource being managed is mobile means that community fishery groups are in effect providing ecological services to a large number of people living far from the resource, as well as to non-members who access the resource locally. This notion of “free-riders” (people who enjoy the benefits of local management without contributing to management) does undermine local natural resource management. This is clearly evidenced by the failure of many groups to successfully introduce or maintain membership fees, as the additional benefits of membership are far from clear.

A further challenge identified in this review is the significant time taken to formally register and legalise community management — due to the number of approvals required, conflicting interests over land use and resource (particularly with regard to ELCs in the case of forestry) and the arduous and complex process of management planning and inventories. Many of the community forestry sites visited were in areas where the formal legalisation process was ongoing – and community members feared that they may lose either land (from ELCs) or valuable resources (such as timber) during this long transition period, and were totally powerless to prevent this.

Interestingly, while the community forestry guidelines appear to be fairly rigid and provide only a single “model” by which community managers can legally access and use forest resources, a number of different models or approaches are emerging across the country based on pilots being developed in collaboration with NGO partners. Some of the initiatives that are being developed show considerable promise and potentially could guide the future evolution of community forestry in the country.

4.4 Institutional and capacity issues

This review has highlighted the important role that NGOs can and do play in delivering services at the local level, and the potential role they can play in piloting new approaches, addressing issues such as inclusion, advocacy, capacity building and pro-poor development. Linking international and local civil society groups and communities with state institutions, (through programmatic funding and capacity development) this type of support has clear potential as a mechanism for delivering poverty and CBNRM solutions.

Equally, however, the review has highlighted how NGOs have in some cases undermined the work of government, by failing to build linkages between community groups and government and by poor facilitation of community forestry processes. Clearly, then, it is essential to ensure effective and complimentary links between government and NGOs, and to ensure that roles and responsibilities are clarified and reinforced. Furthermore, the review has shown that when government agencies at cantonment level are provided limited funds for facilitating CBNRM (such as the grant from NRMLP to Siem Reap forestry staff

through the Technical Working Group on Forestry and Environment), the process of approval and legalisation can be speeded up.

Secondly, this review has pointed to the importance of involving commune councils within community forestry and community fisheries processes – and the important role they can play in acting as local champions of community interests, providing limited law enforcement services (when district or cantonment forestry or fishery staff are unavailable) and in some cases, providing additional resources through decentralised funding¹⁷. The increasing emphasis being placed on commune councils within the D and D process means that engaging with commune councils in the future will become particularly important

Both forestry and fisheries administration staff at national and sub-national level indicated the challenges faced in supporting community based natural resources management at local levels – in terms of adequate manpower, suitable skill sets (such as participatory approaches) and adequate resources to enable them to participate effectively in law enforcement activities. Interviews with stakeholders at the community level have highlighted the critical role that supportive government staff can play in facilitating community based natural resource management – and equally well the way in which de-motivated or corrupt government staff can derail or destabilise local initiatives.

4.5 Natural resource issues

This review has highlighted the way in which poor and vulnerable households depend upon natural resources such as fish and forests for a variety of products. Furthermore, the ability of the poor to access these resources appear to be declining, due to a range of factors. This includes:

- the rapid spread of ELCs which results in clearance of forest and/or the exclusion of traditional users
- increasing pressure on existing fishery and forest resource areas
- illegal and unsustainable harvesting of fish and forest products, often driven by powerful interests
- exclusion from accessing specific natural resources within new common property regimes (particularly with regard to community fisheries), due to new rules regarding harvesting

This review has indicated the importance of external factors in influencing local level natural resource management outcomes. This is particularly the case for community fisheries, where the resource being managed is mobile and in many cases migratory. The construction of dams has been shown to impede fish migration and wider environmental variables appear to be having further impacts on fish stocks and health (such as climate change, pollution levels and so on). With regard to forestry, the increasing scarcity of high value timber, linked to rising domestic and international prices for this timber is placing increasing pressure on remaining forest resources – and has the potential to undermine local management efforts.

¹⁷ See also: Nathan, I., Boon, T.E., Sovatha A and K. Hansen. Commune Councils as Potential Forest Managers. Cambodia Development Review. Vol 10: 4. 1-6

5. Recommendations

This chapter provides broad recommendations for community forestry and community fisheries initiatives in Cambodia. These recommendations are not specifically targeted at any one institution or programme – but are general in nature and should be relevant to organisations in both the public and non-governmental sectors. However, in Section 5.7, the recommendations are summarised, and tabulated to indicate their relevance for the key players (FiA, FA, Development Partners, NGOs and commune councils / local governments).

5.1 Ensuring the potential benefits of CF and CFi are secured at the local level

This study has shown that when established CF and CFi legalisation and registration offers important benefits to rural communities and households with regard to securing access and limited tenure rights over land/forest and water/fish resources. The study has also shown that many of the sites being supported are in the process of securing registration, and that more worryingly, many sites have “stalled” due to lack of support or the ending of specific projects. This represents a lost opportunity, wasted investment and most importantly leaves poor rural communities in a precarious position, having invested their own time and resources, with no clear result. As a result, the team’s primary recommendation is as follows:

Recommendation 1: Concentrate efforts on supporting CF / CFi sites that have started the legal registration process, but require additional assistance to gain full legal status. Where resources allow, focus on additional sites

Recommendation 1 should also be taken to include the completion of current on-going pilots related to CCF, partnership forestry, Community Forestry in Protected Forests and REDD, including an assessment of their potential for scaling up and legalisation.

Given the limited funding available from government and from development partners it is recommended that emphasis be placed on supporting the legalisation process of CF and CFi institutions that are currently in process, before embarking on further expanding roll-out and coverage in new sites. An important aspect of this recommendation will be to support the development of management plans for CF sites, in ways that allow for revenue generation and sustainable utilisation (See recommendations 7 and 8). If and where additional funding is available, this can be targeted at the identification of new sites for both CF and CFi.

In addition to this, recommendations are given under five broad headings and are directed to supporting registered CF / CFi groups:

- Building effective governance of CBNRM institutions (in particular CFi sites)
- Promoting pro-poor CF and CFi
- Adding value to natural resources through sustainable commercialisation measures (especially CF sites)
- Supporting institutional capacity development and co-ordination
- Creating a supportive policy and legal environment for CF and CFi

These recommendations are explored in more detail below in the following sections.

5.2 Building effective governance of CBNRM institutions

This review has pointed to the significant gaps that have appeared between community fishery executive committees and the wider members who they are mandated to represent. This tendency may be due both to the absence of group-based revenues to offset the management costs incurred by the executive committee (and hence their search for alternative sources of income) as well as a limited accountability mechanisms through which members can hold their committee members to account.

Two broad recommendations are proposed with which to support greater effectiveness and accountability of executive committees. While these recommendations are directed mainly at CFi groups – it is important to emphasise that they apply equally to CF groups as well.

Firstly, opportunities should be sought for generating legitimate flows of revenue to executive committee members to offset their management costs. Many groups (both forestry and fisheries) have experimented with the introduction of membership fees, but with little success. With the harvesting of resources available to both members and non-members, there is little incentive to join the group or pay membership fees. Some community forestry groups selling (or planning to sell) products collectively such as honey, resin, poles, timber and more recently carbon have introduced revenue sharing schemes where a small share of the total revenue generated is retained by the management committees designed to cover management costs. Article 37 of the CF regulations provide for the establishment of a Community Forestry Development Fund (CFDF) at the CF level, whereby revenues captured at the group level can be deposited, recorded and used. Few if any known examples of this fund have yet to be established, but it represents an important opportunity for CF groups that are now beginning to generate funds from harvesting.

Recommendation 2: Ensure that CF groups that are generating income establish a CFDF and that revenues are transparently recorded and communicated to members

Given the fact that benefits from fisheries are largely accrued at the individual level, creative opportunities will be need to be devised for generating similar group-level revenue flows – such as overheads from eco-tourism, crab banks, collective aquaculture, savings, group-based fish processing initiatives, registration fees for outside fishers and so on. What is important though, is that these fees are developed and agreed jointly with members in an open and transparent way. It might be advisable to pilot this in some sites to learn lessons on how this might work in practice.

Recommendation 3: Support CFi groups to identify and generate revenue at the group level that can be used to offset management costs in a transparent manner

This leads to the third recommendation under this heading, namely the introduction of measures designed to reinforce downward accountability of the executive committee to its members. There are many tried and tested measures used in community based natural resource management processes used in other countries that could easily be adopted in Cambodia in this regard. However, key among these will be:

- building an understanding of roles and responsibilities of members and executive committee members
- creating opportunities for broader participation of members in decision making
- providing space for executive committees to report on progress and financial expenditure and providing opportunities for members to question the actions of their committee
- raising awareness among members on their rights and responsibilities under current fisheries law relating to the CFi

Recommendation 4: Supporting registered CF / CFi management / executive committees to be more accountable to their members

5.3 Promoting pro-poor CFi and CF

This study has shown that in some cases – and in particular with regard to community fisheries, poor people, who depend heavily on fishing as a means to secure their livelihood – may lose out from its introduction. Furthermore, livelihood interventions being promoted are often captured by better-off households and exclude participation by vulnerable households due to heavy demands on time and high levels of risk involved. Finally, the review has highlighted how poor households in CFi groups¹⁸, and to a lesser extent CF groups, are dependent on traders as informal money-lenders. Furthermore, the very poorest are completely beyond any form of financial service and as a result prevented from moving out of poverty. In some countries, the identification of specific areas that are allocated for poor and vulnerable households has been an effective way to ensure access by these groups. However, this may contradict current laws, particularly with regard to fisheries which allow anyone to fish, so long as they comply with existing regulations and bylaws.

In order to reduce the potential negative impacts of CF and CFi on poor and vulnerable households, and to maximise opportunities for their inclusion, it is proposed that specific measures are taken such as:

- to identify and monitor impacts of CF / CFi on the poor
- during CF / CFi establishment, explore how the introduction of CF and CFi might displace or negatively impact on poor natural resource households (eg harvesting restrictions)
- develop and implement mitigation measures such as:
 - providing poor households with targeted pro-poor livelihood interventions
 - zoning fishing areas according to the fishing gear used (and in this way, ensure that those techniques favoured by the poor are provided for)
 - creating rules and bylaws within the management plan that provide particular support to poorest households (special access rights or areas, waiving of fees etc)
 - helping poor groups to articulate their concerns to management / executive committee members
 - critically review “alternative livelihood” packages being promoted to assess how accessible they are to poor households, and where necessary make modifications
 - support savings and credit groups for poor households

Recommendation 5: Identify and introduce specific measures within CF / CFi planning and implementation that increase benefits and reduce costs to poor households

With regard to the integration of migrant users of both forest and fishery resources it will be essential to consider different options for regulating access but in ways that minimise poverty impacts. This is particularly important for community fisheries, where increasing numbers of seasonal fishers are accessing CFi areas, have little understanding of CFi rules and regulations and often conflict with resident CFi group members. Specific measures that could be undertaken include:

- Identifying areas where seasonal fishers have traditional access rights

¹⁸ See for example: Navy, H (2005). The Role of Formal and Informal Credit in the Fish Marketing Chain, Cambodia. An output from the DFID-funded Post-Harvest Fisheries Livelihood Project. Department of Fisheries.

- identifying fishing / harvesting areas within the CF / CFi area that are allocated for use by migrants / non-residents
- ensuring that migrants register with the CFi executive (and not commune councillors or local fishery officers) and that a small fee is levied which is recorded and used in a transparent way to offset management costs
- communicating to non-resident / migrant fishers regarding local rules and bylaws to avoid them conflicting with CFi regulations
- awareness raising to non resident fishers/CCs/local authorities that fees are only legitimate if levied by the CFi committee according to their local rules for doing so.

Recommendation 6: Support greater transparency in the regulation and inclusion of non-resident fishers in ways that do not impact negatively on their livelihoods

5.4 Adding value to natural resources through sustainable commercialisation measures

Community forestry in Cambodia has since its inception been strongly focused on meeting subsistence needs – and the current legal framework provides a number of obstacles to commercialisation (such as royalty fees, transport levies and the prohibition of commercial use until five years after the signing of CF agreements). Furthermore, markets for forest products tend to be poorly developed and in some cases dominated by a few, powerful traders. NTFPs have been identified as an important income source and “safety net” for poor and very poor households¹⁹

CF experiences from Siem Reap offer useful lessons on the potential benefits of focusing on pole production in areas close to urban markets. Poles, being relatively fast growing provide more immediate benefits than timber and are less likely to be lost through illegal logging due to their relatively lower value. The potential for scaling up lessons from Siem Reap to other CF sites (recovering their stocks following increased protection) are evident.

The CCF project in Mondulhiri being facilitated by WCS is providing valuable lessons regarding the creation of more significant revenue flows, management planning and inventories and options for revenue sharing.

Projects such as the NTFP Exchange Programme and the PACT CF initiative are demonstrating the importance of focusing on specific commodities such as honey, resin and rattan, and how market chain analysis can increase revenues and market share at local levels. Initiatives should be identified that do not require significant investments of capital or do not expose members to high levels of risk – both of which will deter the participation of poorer households.

Recommendation 7: Identify established CF sites with potential for pole production and marketing and support the development of management plans for sustainable harvesting

Recommendation 8: Scale up support to NTFP marketing at local, regional and national level, through initiatives such as the NTFP-EP and the NTFP Working Group

If increased revenues are to be created at the local level it will be necessary to revisit the current CF guidelines with a view to providing a more supportive environment to the sustainable commercialisation of forest products such as NTFPs, poles and timber. Specific recommendations on legal aspects are provided in Section 5.6.

¹⁹ Whereas medium rich households obtain 30 percent of their total livelihood from NTFPs, poor households obtain as much as 42 percent (Source: Sloth et al, 2005)

5.5 Supporting Institutional capacity development and co-ordination

5.5.1 Mainstreaming CBNRM through the D and D process

Existing experiences from the D and D process has demonstrated that communes are relatively reluctant to invest in community forest and community fisheries and are more likely to invest in “private good”, livelihood-based activities such as pig-rearing projects, and income generating activities²⁰. This is caused by a range of factors such as:

- the limited availability of natural resource areas (lakes, rivers, forests) or viable resource base (e.g. assemblages of fish, amphibians, crustaceans etc.) available for community management
- the presence of conflicts over land use (particularly from planned or existing ELCs)
- the absence of qualified local service providers to facilitate the process
- commune planning processes do not provide opportunities for the integration of NRM and short planning horizons (one year) are too short for longer-term, multi-year planning cycles required for facilitating CF and CFi.
- the lack of earmarked funding for NRM at C/S level outside NRMLP-supported provinces.
- The relatively high costs of CF and CFi, when compared to the potential returns (and in the case of CF, the period before returns can be secured)
- limited co-ordination and communication between line agencies and C/S authorities

This review has shown that when communes identify directly with community forestry and community fisheries – through a direct engagement or understanding of the multiple benefits and in particular if communes stand to gain financially through increased revenue flows, they are more likely to pursue funding and prioritise this in planning. Taking two examples; one from fisheries the other from forestry. In Stung Treng where several CFi’s are informed and linked to processes of locally led research (*Sala Phoum*), we see that Commune Investment Plans are prioritising investments in NRM. However, in order for this more community driven approach to priority setting to be adequately assessed, it will be important to consider other similar approaches elsewhere in Cambodia. The initial piloting of Partnership Forestry (currently in one commune in Kratie), also looks promising but it will be necessary to pilot this approach across more sites to make a more objective assessment of its potential (particularly where some of the limiting factors discussed above are not present)

Recommendation 9. Scale up piloting of Partnership Forestry to between 10 – 15 communes, based on agreed modalities and revenue sharing proposals.

This review has highlighted the fact that many CF and CFi sites appear to be “stuck” in their approval process due to discontinuation of a particular NGO project or lack of funds from FA FiA to advance the process at the local level.

Recommendation 10: Prioritise the allocation of Commune Council funding to support service delivery to existing CF / CFi sites, rather than embarking on identification of new sites for support.

²⁰ See: NCDDDS, 2009. Process and Benefits - Evaluation Study of NRM in D&D. Mekong Thinktank Ltd.

5.5.2 Clarifying the role of government and NGOs

The review has highlighted the importance of ensuring complementarity between the work of NGOs and central government in supporting community forestry and community fisheries. Where possible central government agencies should be supported to provide services such as identification and authorisation of sites suitable for community management, supporting the legal registration and necessary steps required to achieve compliance with prevailing guidelines and finally support to law enforcement and monitoring. NGOs on the other hand can assist with providing some of the “softer”, less technical aspects such as support to community management institutions, effective governance, work to secure the participation of the poor, networking of user groups and regional / national advocacy.

Recommendation 11: Support establishment of provincial co-ordination forums between sub-national line agencies, D and D staff and NGOs, to ensure that support provided to CF and CFi is co-ordinated and complementary

The work of the NRMLP component 2 (Civil Society and Pro-poor Market Development) has illustrated how the creation of horizontal linkages between user groups involved in the use and management of forest and fishery resources is having beneficial impacts on the sharing of lessons and experiences between groups, as well as identifying opportunities for joint action (such as collective marketing, or lobbying government for a more favourable legal and regulatory environment). As the number of community fishery and forestry groups continue to expand across the country, it is recommended that opportunities are sought for the development of provincial and national networks. These are already beginning to emerge in many areas, such as the provincial fishery information networks (P-FIN) being developed in some parts of the country, and moves by the NFTP-EP to support local and national coalitions of producers of natural products)

Recommendation 12: Support the establishment of provincial and national networks / forums of CFi and CF groups to create platforms for policy debate and exchange of lessons learned

5.5.3 Building the capacity of cantonment forestry and fishery staff

There is much work to be done with regard to equipping FA and FiA staff at sub-national level with the skills and tools with which to support the effective roll-out of community forestry and community fisheries. The task is made more challenging by the fact that traditionally both FA and FiA staff have assumed a role of law-enforcement and exclusion from natural resource management and access. Re-orienting the skills and particularly attitudes of government staff towards embracing and supporting community approaches takes time and patience. RECOFTC are playing an important role in increasing capacity of FA staff, but much needs still to be done.

Recommendation 13: Provide targeted training to FA /FiA staff at sub-national level on community forestry / community fisheries law and practice

Cantonment forestry and fishery staff play an important role in supporting the process of identifying and approving areas suitable for community management. Consequently, it is critical that staff at this level are provided with funding to enable them to support key stages of initial identification of suitable areas, and approving registration as well as supporting law enforcement efforts before and after approval is given.

Recommendation 14: Expand funding support to Cantonment Forestry and Fishery staff to support registration and approval of CF / CFi sites as well as more effective law enforcement at established CF / CFi sites

5.6 Creating a supportive policy and legal environment

5.6.1 Community Forestry

A number of concerns were raised during meetings with both CF groups and facilitating organisations relating to the successful implementation of community forestry processes. Some of the key issues raised are as follows:

- the long time taken for approval of CF areas by MAFF (Step “0” of the guidelines) - and wider concerns over the impacts of ELCs on planned CF sites
- the long process of approval of CF registration, from commune, district, provincial, and national authorities (FA and MAFF)
- concerns from registered groups that the CF agreements will not be renewed after expiring after 15 years, but that 15 years is the time needed to restore forests to a productive state, where real benefits can begin to flow (Article 27 of CF Sub-decree/Article 31 CF Prakas)
- management planning and inventory processes are complicated and place too many technical demands on local managers (Guideline of Development Process of CF Management Plan)
- implementation of royalty rates and taxes (transport) are unevenly applied
- concerns over the “5 year rule” for harvest and sale of forest products (Article 12 CF Sub-decree) and “customary” rights (Art 47 CF Guidelines)
- Limited powers of law enforcement (“detain” culprits only – Article 52 of CF Regulations), which restrict the ability of CF members to control illegal and destructive harvesting

Seven specific recommendations on legal adjustments are presented below, with relevance to CF Sub-decree, *Prakas* and Guidelines:

Recommendation 15.1: To undertake an analysis of exactly where bottlenecks in CF approval and registration processes are, and based on this, agree jointly with government mechanisms for streamlining.

Recommendation 15.2: FA to be assisted to identify, map and earmark forested areas suitable for future support to community forestry, that do not conflict with ELC areas and that ensure the 2 million CF target can be reached.

Recommendation 15.3: CF agreements should be extended from 15 years to a minimum of 30 years in duration

Recommendation 15.4: The management planning process should be simplified. Lessons learned from neighbouring countries, as well as practical experiences from implementing the management plan (eg: through RECOFTC support) should inform this process

Recommendation 15.5: Clarify, standardise and simplify royalty fees and transport taxes from products harvested in approved CF areas

Recommendation 15.6: “Plain language” printed materials prepared and disseminated for FA staff and local communities on current rules and regulations regarding royalties and taxes

Recommendation 15.7: Strengthen and clarify the law enforcement role / mandate of commune councils in CF areas

Recommendation 15.8: Remove “5 year rule” for commercial harvesting – and instead ensure that harvesting is determined by condition of forest area and management objectives.

5.6.2 Community Fisheries

As noted with community forestry (Section 5.6.1), one of the most significant bottlenecks to securing registration and legalisation of CFi groups is when the agreement is forwarded from FiA to MAFF for final approval.

Other constraints noted in the field and through discussion with NGO facilitators include:

- The limited duration of CFi agreements (currently three years) (Article 61 of Chapter 11 of the Fisheries Law), and fears over security of tenure over the medium term
- Problems faced by CF members in law enforcement such as the considerable distance of FiA staff from the CFi area.
- Concerns with an overly rigid and complex approach to management plan development
- Limited or no powers of enforcement particularly in detaining and fining offenders
- Strong focus of current law on “family fishing” and subsistence based use, which does not match with the reality that most households fish for both subsistence and commercial use
- Unofficial usage fees and fines limiting the capacity of CFis to deliver benefits.
- Difficulties in enforcement when offenders are from powerful groups or the police
- CFis located adjacent to commercial fishing lots appear to be providing important services to commercial fishing lot owners (in terms of fish sanctuaries), but receiving little compensation for their work

Recommendation 16.1: Extend the duration of CFi agreements from three to a minimum of ten years and introduce verifiable measures with which to determine decision to extend or discontinue

Recommendation 16.2 Strengthen law enforcement role / mandate of commune councils with regard to supporting CFi

Recommendation 16.3: Introduce annual (performance-based) payments from fishing lot owners to adjacent CFis for services rendered with regard to fish conservation and supply

Recommendation 16.4: Remove mention of family based / small scale fishing in current fisheries law, and recognise the fact that households fish for both subsistence and commercial objectives

Recommendation 16.5: Undertake assessment of where delays and bottlenecks are in CFi approval and registration process and based on this agree measures to speed up or simplify

5.7 Summary

A matrix is provided below summarising the recommendations made in this section together with key responsibilities for implementation or support

No.	Recommendation	FiA	FA	DPs	NGO	CC
1	Concentrate efforts on supporting CF / CFi sites that have started the legal registration process, but require additional assistance to gain full legal status. Where resources allow, focus on additional sites	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
2	Ensure that CF groups that are generating income establish a CFDF and that revenues are transparently recorded and communicated		✓			

3	Support CFi groups to identify and generate revenues at the group level that can be used to offset management costs in a transparent manner	✓		✓	✓	
4	Support registered CF / CFi management / executive committees to be more accountable to their members	✓	✓		✓	
5	Identify and introduce specific measures within CF / CFi planning and implementation that increase benefits and reduce costs to poor households	✓	✓			
6	Support greater transparency in the regulation and inclusion of non-resident fishers in ways that do not impact negatively on their livelihoods	✓				
7	Identify established CF sites with potential for pole production and marketing and support sustainable harvesting		✓	✓	✓	
8	Scale up support to NTFP marketing at local, regional and national level, through initiatives such as the NTFP-EP and the NTFP Working Group		✓	✓	✓	
9	Scale up piloting of Partnership Forestry to between 10 – 15 communes, based on agreed modalities and revenue sharing proposals.		✓	✓	✓	
10	Prioritise the allocation of Commune Council funding to support service delivery to existing CF / CFi sites, rather than embarking on identification of new sites for support.					✓
11	Support establishment of provincial co-ordination forums between sub-national line agencies, D and D staff and NGOs, to ensure that support provided to CF and CFi is co-ordinated and complementary	✓	✓		✓	
12	Support the establishment of provincial and national networks / forums of CFi and CF groups to create platforms for policy debate and exchange of lessons learned	✓	✓		✓	
13	Provide targeted training to FA /FIA staff at sub-national level on community forestry / community fisheries law and practice	✓	✓	✓		
14	Expand funding support to Cantonment Forestry and Fishery staff to support registration and approval of CF / CFi sites as well as more effective law enforcement at established CF / CFi sites	✓	✓	✓		
15.1	To undertake an analysis of exactly where bottlenecks in CF approval and registration processes are, and based on this, agree jointly with government mechanisms for streamlining		✓	✓	✓	
15.2	CF agreements should be extended from 15 years to a minimum of 30 years in duration		✓			
15.3	FA to be assisted to identify, map and earmark forested areas suitable for future support to community forestry, that do not conflict with ELC areas, that ensure the 2 million CF target can be reached		✓	✓		
15.4	The management planning process should be simplified. Lessons learned from neighbouring countries, as well as practical experiences from implementing the management plan to inform this process.		✓			
15.5	Clarify, standardise and simplify royalty fees and transport taxes from products harvested in approved CF areas		✓			
15.6	“Plain language” printed materials prepared and disseminated for FA staff and local communities on current rules and regulations regarding royalties and taxes		✓		✓	
15.7	Strengthen law enforcement role / mandate of commune councils with regard to supporting CF		✓			✓
15.8	Remove “5 year rule” for commercial harvesting – and instead ensure that harvesting is determined by condition of forest area and management objectives		✓			
16.1	Extend the duration of CFi agreements from three to a minimum of ten years and introduce verifiable measures with which to determine decision to extend or discontinue	✓				✓
16.2	Strengthen and clarify the law enforcement role / mandate of commune councils with regard to supporting CFi	✓				

16.3	Introduce annual (performance based) payments from fishing lot owners to adjacent CFIs for services rendered with regard to fish conservation and supply	✓				
16.4	Remove mention of family based / small scale fishing in current fisheries law, and recognise the fact that households fish for both subsistence and commercial objectives					
16.5	Undertake assessment of where delays and bottlenecks are in CFI approval and registration process and based on this agree measures to speed up or simplify	✓		✓	✓	

Table 5: Recommendations and their relevance to key institutions and stakeholder groups

Key: FiA: Fisheries Administration
 FA: Forestry Administration
 DPs: Development Partners
 NGO: NGOs supporting CBNRM
 CC: Commune Councils and D and D process

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Annex 2: Overview of community fisheries implementation status

Province	# of CFI established	# of CFI with by-law	# of CFI with maps	# of CFI with Agreement	# of CFI with Mgt Plan	# of CFI with Fish Sanctuaries	# of involved HHs	# of members
Kg. Thom	31	31	31	31	31	46	7,841	10,676
Siem Reap	22	22	22	22	22	18	15,013	21,821
B. Meanchey	21	15	15	6	6	21	8,478	29,522
Battambang	42	42	40	40	40	43	10,864	15,438
Pursat	34	28	27	27	27	20	8,101	20,867
Kg. Chnang	52	52	52	52	52	38	6,585	13,146
Kandal	30	28	10	10	4	4	3,107	3,171
Takeo	18	16	16	2	2	5	16,505	16,505
Prey Veng	25	10	10	10	2	1	10,983	54,201
Kg. Cham	28	22	16	17	12	7	11,710	11,710
Kratie	57	41	18	10	10	10	8,770	31,757
Phnom Penh	1	1	1	1	0	1	838	838
Steung Treng	56	45	45	13	13	6	5,077	21,336
Ratanakiri	5	5	5	5	2	13	435	435
Preah Vihear	2	1	0	0	0	0	830	830
Mundukiri	2	1	1	1	1	1	135	135
O. Meanchey	6	6	0	0	0	0	2,964	15,584
Kampot	9	9	9	7	7	5	2,213	2,213
Kep	3	2	2	2	1	0	250	250
Sihanoukville	14	14	14	9	9	5	3,607	3,607
Ko Kong	11	10	10	10	4	5	2,184	3,002
Total	469	401	344	289	254	249	126,490	277,044

Note: Data from FiA records, dated June 2009.

Annex 3: Overview of community forestry implementation status

Province	Total (All sites)		In FA		In MAFF		Approved by MAFF		CF Agreement	
	CFs	CF Area	CFs	CF Area	CFs	CF Area	CFs	CF Area	CFs	CF Area
Ratanakiri	28	37,815	28	17,857	–	–	–	–	–	–
Mundulkiri	9	12,401	5	–	4	4,176	–	–	–	–
Kratie	35	52,154	14	2,657	21	35,407	–	–	–	–
Stng. Treng	6	14,838	–	–	6	14,838	–	–	–	–
Kg. Cham	10	3,480	5	–	5	1,783	–	–	–	–
Sv. Rieng	2	504	–	–	–	–	2	504	–	–
S. Reap	37	18,122	–	–	–	–	37	18,122	27	13,708
O.Meanchey	14	68,878	–	–	2	8,401	12	60,477	11	59,628
B.Meanchey	11	4,970	–	–	–	–	11	4,970	10	4,439
Kg. Thom	68	68,555	20	27,709	–	–	48	40,866	46	35,769
Pr. Vihea	21	44,950	–	–	21	44,950	–	–	–	–
Batambong	17	5,415	4	–	13	3,531	–	–	–	–
Pailin	4	858	–	–	4	858	–	–	–	–
Pursat	52	6,260	14	–	38	2,783	–	–	–	–
Kg. Chhnang	33	10,910	–	–	28	5,399	5	5,511	–	–
Kg. Speu	22	12,915	–	–	22	12,915	–	–	–	–
Kohkong	13	15,093	–	–	–	–	13	15,093	–	–
Kampot	23	10,648	14	5,185	9	5,477	–	–	–	–
Takeo	13	10,606	12	6,338	1	557	–	–	–	–
Kep	2	426	1	–	1	60	–	–	–	–
Totals	420	399,798	117	59,746	175	141,135	128	145,543	94	113,544

Note: Data from FA CF Database. Date: February 2010

Annex 4: List of persons met

Name	Position	Institution
Long Ratanakoma	Deputy Director	Forest Administration
Sok Srun	Co-ordinator	TWG F&E
Phan Kamnap	Co-ordinator, Community Forest Office	Forest Administration
Ty Sokhun	Chief of Forestry Administration	Forest Administration
Chan Ratha	CFO Staff	Forest Administration
Seng Kimsoy	CFO Staff	Forest Administration
Yim Heng	CFO Staff	Forest Administration
Tong Sokunthea	CFO Staff	Forest Administration
Phom Sophay	CFO Staff	Forest Administration
Narong	CFO Staff	Forest Administration
Lao Sethaphel	DD DLE	Forest Administration
Chan Danith	Co-ordinator	TWGF
Kaing Khim	Deputy Director General	Fisheries Administration
Ly Vuthy	Deputy Director	Fisheries Administration
Lieng Sopha	Deputy Director	Fisheries Administration
Pich Sereywath	Deputy Director (DCFD)	Fisheries Administration
H.E. San Vanthy	Under Secretary of State	MAFF
Thor Savoeun	Provincial Facilitator	Ockenden
Nhov Nharn	Regional Facilitator	Ockenden
Kim Miratori	Regional Facilitator	Concern
Mary O'Neill	Assistant Country Director	Concern
Praivan Limpanboon	National Facilitator	Asia Foundation
Duong Sokun	National Facilitator	Asia Foundation
Veronique Salze-Lozach	Regional Director	Asia Foundation
Dorie Meerkemp	Programme Officer	Asia Foundation
Yolande Wright	Natural Resources Adviser	MDLF
Jacob Jepsen	Counsellor	Danish Embassy
Barry Hall	Natural Resources Adviser	NCDD
Eric Vandenbrink	Regional Facilitator	Catholic Relief Services
Moul Samneang	Senior Programme Officer	Asia Foundation
Joel Rodriguez	Regional Facilitator	Oxfam GB
Francis Perez	Country Director	Oxfam GB
Bun Chantrea	Forestry Policy and Programme Development Lead	Oxfam GB
Nhem Sovanna	Adviser	UNDP / PSDD
Tom Evans	Deputy Director	Wildlife Conservation Society
Olivier Joffre	Associate Researcher	WorldFish Center
Dr Eric Barahan	Research Scientist	WorldFish Center
Andrew Watson	Managing Director – Nature Sector	DAI, USA
Sopheap Ly	Legal Advisor	DAI MSME Project
Paul Dodds	Regulatory Adviser	DAI MSME Project
Amanda Bradley	National Facilitator	PACT
Chhith Sam Ath	Executive Director	NGO Forum
Hean Bun Hieng	Forestry Project Officer	NGO Forum
Tom Evans	Programme Co-ordinator	WCS Cambodia
Edwin Payuan	CTA, CBSFLMP	RECOCTC – Cambodia
James Brampton	Programme Co-ordinator	RECOFTC – Bangkok
Thorn Riguan	Project Officer	Fisheries Action Coalition

Ouch Mara	Programme Co-ordinator	Team (FACT)
Ron Jones	Technical Adviser	FACT
Sophie Allebone-Webb	Researcher	FACT WCS Cambodia
Tom Clements	Research and Policy Adviser	WCS, UK
Penpunna Ravuth	Cantonment Fisheries Officer, Kratie	Fisheries Administration
Chhneang Kivuruth	CFMNEC Co-ordinator	RECOFTC – Cambodia
Leng Doeun	Provincial Community Forestry Partnership Co-ordinator (Kratie)	RECOFTC – Cambodia
Heng Da	Provincial Community Forestry Partnership Co-ordinator (Mondulkiri)	RECOFTC - Cambodia
Hing Mesa	Commercial Community Forestry Specialist	WCS Mondulkiri
Em Tray	Community Forestry Specialist	WCS Mondulkiri
Pieh SaoRa	Volunteer Staff	WCS Mondulkiri
Edward Pollard	Project Adviser	WCS Mondulkiri
Hong Chhaey	Community Forestry Facilitator	CEPA
Roeun Narith	Community Forestry Facilitator	CEPA
Prak Marina	Deputy Director, Siem Reap Forestry Cantonment	Forestry Administration
Chheang Tola	Chief of Forestry, Siem Reap Forestry Cantonment	Forestry Administration
Kong Boravuth	Siem Reap Forestry Cantonment	Forestry Administration
Lim Sothy	Siem Reap Forestry Cantonment	Forestry Administration
Nov Leang	Chief of community fishery unit, Cantonment	Fisheries Administration, Bantey Meanchey
Tep Bunnarith	Executive Director	CEPA
Femy Pinto	Country Facilitator	Non-Timber Forest Products Exchange Programme
Jemme de Beer	Executive Director	NTFP - EP
Francis Perez	Country Director	Oxfam GB
Khieng Sochivy,	Policy and Programme Development Manager	Oxfam GB
Bun Chantrea	Forestry Lead	Oxfam GB
Bun Sieng	Forestry Programme Officer	Oxfam GB
So Sovannarith	Research Fellow, Poverty Agriculture and Rural Development Programme	CDRI
Kim Sour	Research Associate, NRE Programme	CDRI
Lonn Pich Dara	Research Assistant, NRE Programme	CDRI
Chhim Sokun	Deputy Director General	LMC
Seng Loth	Deputy Director	LMC
So Thay	Technical Officer	LMC
Koen Everaert	Attaché	European Union
Prak Angkeara	Deputy DG	MLMUPC
Yen Run	Staff member	CEPA
Gnim Signam	Staff member	DPA
Pal Bunnarak	Staff member	Oxfam GB
Chiv Vibol	Staff member	DPA
Touch Serie	Staff member	Oxfam Australia
Kry Solany	Staff member	CED

