

Good afternoon, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen!

On behalf of the Forestry Administration of the Cambodia, it is my great honor to be invited to share Cambodian experience and update on policy and legal reforms around REDD+ development in Cambodia with you all here today.

Let me briefly give you some background on forestry development in Cambodia. Forestry has played socially and environmentally important roles in economic development and environmental integrity in Cambodia. Cambodia has a total forest cover of 10.7 million ha or about 59% of the country's total land area. About more than 80% of Cambodia's 14 million people are farmers whose daily cooking energy depends almost entirely on fuel wood collected from the forests. As population growth is still high and deforestation and forest degradation continue, Royal Cambodian Government under the leadership of Prime Minister Hun Sen has embedded reform of the forestry sector within the Cambodian National Strategic Development Plan (NSDP) 2009-2013. Under the policy of the fourth legislature, six activities need to be implemented in order to ensure and advance sustainable forest management and development of our forests for their contribution to poverty alleviation enhance livelihoods, economic growth and environmental protection, including conservation of biological diversity and out culture heritage. Besides banning logging for the present, the Royal Government has established protected and biodiversity conservation forest areas,

undertaken reforestation, formed forestry communities up to 2 million hectare, taken up proper boundary demarcation and strict measures to prevent, reduce and eradicate illegal encroachments and occupation of forest land by private individuals.

Ladies and gentlemen!

In terms of forest land use, Cambodia forest land were classified in to Permanent Forest Reserves that are managed according to their function, with emphasis on sustainable production forest, protection forest, establishment of wildlife habitat, community forestry, rehabilitation, research areas and natural resource conservation through related legal framework supports, especially those based on the Forestry Law 2002 and other forest-related regulations. Cambodian government committed itself to managing Cambodia's forests through win-win solutions. Cambodia fully supports the inclusion of REDD+ in a post-Kyoto climate regime. The Cambodian Prime Minister has stated clearly that “we must protect our forest, by not only stopping logging for export, but by protecting the forest for selling carbon credit and using these revenues for better forest management and rural poverty alleviation.” Accordingly, Forestry Administration has been designated to execute the sale of the forest carbon in Cambodia. So far, one REDD project in Cambodia was approved, two more projects were developed for voluntary carbon markets, and feasibility studies on few more projects are being carried out.

Now, let me update on policy and legal reforms around REDD+ development in Cambodia.

In addition to adopting forestry laws and sub-decree on community forestry, the National Forest Program 2010-2029 has set the overall objective as follow: “The forest resources provide optimum contribution to equitable macro-economic growth and poverty alleviation particularly in rural areas through conservation and sustainable forest management, with active participation of all stakeholders.” Two of the 9 specific objectives directly refer to the management of forest resources in Cambodia for climate change mitigation and for carbon-based revenues. In order to fully participate and benefit from the REDD+ scheme, Cambodia established in January 2010 the multi-agency technical REDD+ taskforce comprising of members from the Forestry Administration, the Ministry of Environment, several relevant ministry and other agencies such as Civil society (NGO), local community, indigenous people, Private sector under the leadership of Forestry Administration. The outstanding achievements of the taskforce were the development of REDD+ Roadmap and UN-REDD Program in 2011.

For the next 2-3 years starting from late 2011, the taskforce will develop the REDD+ Readiness Roadmap; this is a national plan for Cambodian government and relevant stakeholders to move and develop the REDD+ readiness with approval from the stakeholders. In so doing, a taskforce secretariat was set up and supported by four technical teams, namely technical teams of consultation and safeguards, benefit sharing, REDD+ demonstration, and MRV/REL. This secretariat will start to function fully in early 2012.

Ladies and gentlemen!

Identifying the drivers of deforestation and forest degradation and policy actions, and demarcating the forest boundaries are of utmost important for implementing and achieving the REDD+ projects and therefore sustainable forest management. Through stakeholder consultation processes, the taskforce will identify the drivers and policy actions (including law enforcements), while boundary demarcation, land classification, and registration will be achieved under the 2010-2029 national forest program. Furthermore in the next few years, the taskforce will also develop the reference emission level (REL) and MRV system. Finally, capacity building and awareness rising at all levels are also crucial for the successful implementation of the REDD+ projects, and that what our REDD+ taskforce and forestry administration are committed to achieve.

Thank you very much for your kind attention!