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Lao People's Democratic Republic



Empowered lives.  
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# 1<sup>st</sup> Quarterly Project Report

## January – March 2015

Mainstreaming Biodiversity in Lao PDR's Agricultural and Land Management Policies, Plans and Programmes

21 April 2015

### Basic Project Information

*(Basic information can be completed by UNDP before sharing the report with the partner)*

<b>Project Title:</b> Mainstreaming Biodiversity in Lao PDR's Agricultural and Land Management Policies, Plans and Programmes (ABP) Project	
UNDP Award ID	00060069
UNDP Project ID	00075435
Project Duration	11 April 2011 - 10 April 2016 (possibly extended to end 2016)
Reporting Period	1 January – 30 March 2015
Implementing Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Department of Planning and Corporation (DoPC) of Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (MAF)</li> <li>- FAO (CTA and short term consultants – though LoA)</li> <li>- Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MoNRE)</li> <li>- Ministry of Justice (MoJ)</li> </ul>
National collaborating agencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Institute of Traditional Medicine (ITM), (Ministry of Health (MOH)</li> <li>- Other GOL &amp; MAF organizations and institutions</li> <li>- Non Profit Association (NPAs), Community Based Organizations (CBOs)</li> <li>INGOs, Mass Organizations, and Private Sector</li> </ul>
Other UN/International collaborating agencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- FAO</li> <li>- International Conservation Union (IUCN)</li> <li>- DARWIN Initiative</li> <li>- Asia Regional Rice Initiative (FAO)</li> <li>- FAO Regional Vegetable Programme</li> <li>- GEF (in-cash)</li> </ul>
Cost-sharing third parties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- UNDP (in-cash and in-kind)</li> <li>- FAO (in-kind)</li> <li>- SDC (in-kind/"parallel")</li> </ul>
UNDP Programme Analyst	Ms. Chitlatda Keomuongchanh
UNDAF and Country Programme Outcome	<p><b>UNDAF Outcome 7:</b> By 2015, the government ensures sustainable natural resources management through improved governance and community participation.</p> <p><b>Output 7.3:</b> Communities are more engaged in the management of natural resources.</p>

## Background

### ABP<sup>1</sup> long term solution and Objective

## 1. Project Implementation Status and Key Results

### Implementation Status Summary at Outcome level *(This needs to be completed by the project)*

- ❖ *What development condition has changed in the country under this outcome area with or without UNDP support (maximum 150 words) - Outcome-level changes including changes in institutional capacity and performance, changes in capacities, attitudes, and behavior among individuals or groups, and changes in enabling conditions such as social, economic, political, governance conditions, policies, legislation, power relations, norms, etc.*

The government has made good progress in ensuring sustainable use of natural resources. Recently, it was agreed (cabinet meeting 22 December) to issue a Prime Ministerial Order to amend the forest management and timber trade regulations. The amendment aims to impose tougher measures on the timber trade and forest protection in a bid to ensure the efficient use of natural resources and preserve the nation's forests and is likely to add more strict management measures through better follow-up and monitoring. The Government continues to encourage tree planting activities to increase forest cover. The draft next five year Agriculture and Forestry Strategy has been approved by Minister of the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry in early 2015. The document (being translated into English) will be presented to the National Assembly in June 2015 for approval. The document includes important elements in guiding the production forest management that will contribute to food and nutrition security in Lao PDR.

- ❖ *What was UNDP's specific contributions to these changes at this Outcome level during the reporting period? Please note that the contributions can be from the work that the project did prior to this year but the results take place this year*

The ABP Project does not have direct contribution to the change. However, part of the project outputs and activities indirectly contributed to the implementation of the promotion of sustainable use and conservation of agro-biodiversity. For instance, the project has promoted and provided financial and technical support to a number of agro-biodiversity sub-projects that promotes conservation and sustainable use of local biodiversity including local vegetables, mushrooms, native rice, fish, wild tea, etc. by providing training to farmers and local government officers. In addition, the project, in partnership with TABI/SDC project is providing technical material and on-the-job training on participatory land use planning at village level. The result of this activity will be verified and approved village based Land Use Plans will serve as part of the implementation of the National Assembly Instruction on the re-classification of the forest type/category.

- ❖ *What are your project's key Output level results during the reporting period?*

#### *Background*

The long term solution of the Agro-biodiversity project is that Lao PDR's biodiversity, including agro-biodiversity, is maintained, protected and sustainably used as a key to poverty alleviation and adaptation to climate change impact. Within this solution the overall goal is conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity resources in agro-ecosystems in Lao PDR for the attainment of food security and sustainable economic development.

To a large extent the project takes its departure from the Convention of Biodiversity which has three priority goals i.e. conservation of biological diversity (biodiversity), sustainable use of its components (including agro-biodiversity) and fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from genetic resources.

The ABP project supports the strengthening of policies and strategic interventions in biodiversity in agro-ecosystems through long-term capacity development across the involved sectors and includes planning, implementation, monitoring, awareness building, communication, production, extension and research, and market support.

Agricultural biodiversity or Agro-biodiversity embraces all components of biological diversity of relevance to food and agriculture, and all components of biodiversity that constitute the agro-ecosystems – the variety

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<sup>1</sup> Earlier abbreviated MBA

and variability of animals, plants, macro-fungi and micro-organisms. Thus, the agro-biodiversity covers both cultivated/raised species and wild organisms.

The ABP project is fully aligned with the National Agro-biodiversity Programme (NABP, 2004), which includes five main thematic components: 1) crop and crop associated biodiversity; 2) livestock; 3) Non Timber Forest Products (NTFP); 4) aquatic resources; and 5) household agriculture and production systems).

An inception report was approved in November 2011. As per project document, a close FAO collaboration has been pursued and in June 2012, a Letter of Agreement was signed between MAF, FAO and UNDP outlining FAO's support to project implementation. The Agreement describes that FAO takes key technical responsibility and become a close partner in project implementation providing the services by a Chief Technical Adviser (CTA) and national and international technical short-term consultants and other technical support by FAO technical officers based at Headquarters and the Regional Office in Bangkok. The total LoA budget for the CTA, national and international consultants and support costs is US\$884,326. An updated of fielded and planned short term TA is provided in Annex 19.

The project operates with a central office in MAF (three staff plus CTA) and a part-time National Project Coordinator sharing his work with the Agro-Biodiversity Initiative Project (TABI). At district level a hired District Facilitator (DF) is coordinating field activities together with a part-time national ABP-DAFO District Coordinator, assisted by a part-time accountant/administrative assistant. The DFs and accountant/administrative assistants are placed in DAFO Phoukout District and Nambor Technical Service Center in Phonexay District, respectively.

The 2012 re-organization of the old WREA and MAF has resulted in several departments have moved to the new Ministry of National Resources and Environment (MoNRE) and ABP are cooperating with the Department of Forest Resources Management (DFRM) and CBD focal point, for participation and guidance of Provincial Agro-biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan. With effect from beginning July 2014 the ABP eventually moved from the Permanent Secretary Office to the Department of Planning and Cooperation (DoPC). The new National Project Manager/Coordinator (NPM/C) is coordinator for both TABI and ABP.

A GEF mid-term Technical Review took place mid of 2014 listing a number of recommendations of which all was approved by the Steering Committee on 27 February, see Annex 17. One of the recommendations was a revised result framework (Annex 18) which will be incorporated in the next annual work plan.

The DF position at Phoukout District has been vacant since mid of January with an expectation of being re-filled by mid of April. Further, following the recommendation of the mid-term review, a new position as Technical and Operational Manager has been announced.

Objective	Indicator & Target
The project objective is to provide farmers with the necessary incentives, capabilities and institutional support framework to conserve agricultural biodiversity within the farming systems in Lao PDR.	Area of provincial agro-biodiversity conservation and sustainable use <b>End target:</b> 100,000 ha, <b>Accumulated by Q1 2015:</b> 300 ha

The project key target of achievement of 100,000 ha of provincial allocation of conservation and sustainable use of agro-biodiversity much depends on local commitments to follow-up on the targets set in the local PBSAPs. Further, at village level, the initiated village based Land Use Plans (see below) will allocate and officially approve village conservation areas (community forest areas) and will significantly contribute to the achievement of the target of the overall indicator. By including the district governments' approvals of village plans for conservation of village community forests, the target is achievable.

The ABP project is structured around three interrelated components/outcomes, in short: a) Legal Framework Support, b) Local Agro-biodiversity support and 3) Project Management.

**Outcome 1: Legal Framework Support.** The mainstreaming of biodiversity considerations into agricultural and land management legislation, including the development and promotion of policies that encourage and support sustainable use of agro-biodiversity in agricultural landscapes implies a primary focus on the agriculture and natural resources and includes the legal framework related to environmental friendly management of aquatic and terrestrial resources and ecosystems supporting the livelihoods of rural people. The project outcome one is pursued under four thematic headings/outputs:

- 1) Integrating agro-biodiversity into policies

- 2) Promoting coordination on agro-biodiversity
- 3) Enhancing institutional capacity for agro-biodiversity
- 4) Increased understanding among key stakeholders of agro-biodiversity and its significance.

**Outcome 2: Local Agro-biodiversity Support.** It emphasizes on the development of incentives and capacity for the conservation and sustainable use of agro-biodiversity particularly at Community, District and Provincial levels. The project outcome two is pursued under six thematic outputs:

- 1) Strengthening the capacity of PAFO and DAFO to act on agro-biodiversity management and to adapt extension packages and services, including diversified farming systems
- 2) Conducting Participatory Land Use Planning including the development and implementation of Participatory Natural Resources Management plans at village level in order to be able to identify products for sustainable use and niche marketing
- 3) Establishing in-situ conservation areas for agro-biodiversity in order to be able to protect local biodiversity hotspots
- 4) Promotion of biodiversity-friendly farming approaches in two pilot sites such as organic farming and a reduction in pesticide and fertilizer use, while encouraging the use of important regional, national and local biodiversity to sustain fertility and land and water resources
- 5) Identification and development of market incentives for agro-biodiversity for farmers and agribusiness
- 6) Linking with the private and public sector through agro-biodiversity planning agreements.

**Outcome 3: Project Management.** The purpose of this component is to ensure that the project is implemented in a timely manner and is cost effective under the principles of adaptive management (plan-do & evaluate-adjust and learn), whereby lessons learned during its implementation as well as lessons from other initiatives/projects are fed into a refined and cost-effective project implementation. There is only one output under this component:

- 1) Improved capacity of implementing partners for integrated planning, management, monitoring and evaluation of programmes.

*During this reporting period (1 January to 31 March 2015) the following key interventions have taken place:*

#### **Component 1: Legal Framework Support**

The progress on achieving the indicator target of the outcome 1/component 1 (number of new national plans, policies, strategies, and guidelines with agro-biodiversity concerns) is on track. End target is 6 and achieved number is 4. The project has provided comments to several policies, strategies and plans as follows:

##### **1.1 Integrating agro-biodiversity into policies**

###### *1.1a National Agro-biodiversity Programme NABP II*

Since 2013, ABP has been closely working with NAFRI to prepare the 2<sup>nd</sup> NABP. In consultation with NAFRI a new international consultant has been recruited and started his assignment from February 2015 and a revised list of content was agreed and summary of the result framework were discussed at workshop mid of February (22 participants, 3 females). The further revision of the draft document is ongoing with essential inputs and data from five technical working groups. The next draft is expected during the second part of April and a stakeholder meeting is expected to take place in May.

###### *1.1b Provincial Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (PBSAP) Xieng Khouang*

The PBSAP for Xieng Khouang Province was prepared in Lao language during the first part of 2013 and approved by the Provincial Governor mid-2013. The editing of the draft English version has been finalized by CTA and a national consultant and will be sent to IUCN for their comments beginning of April. A follow-up meeting is scheduled in April to assess progress and to make recommendations for follow-up and possible ABP support.

###### *1.1c Provincial Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (PBSAP) for Luang Prabang Province*

The local government in Luang Prabang has expressed their interest and requested ABP to support the development of PBSAP for Luang Prabang Province. Initial meetings have taken place with MoNRE and PoNRE. The latest meeting (November, 2014), the local government provided initial ideas forward including



data and analysis. A detailed agreed work plan, ambition level and detailed budget is still to be made taking the lessons learned from the PBSAP in Xieng Khouang Province into consideration.

## **1.2 Promoting coordination on agro-biodiversity**

### *a) Sector Working Group Meeting on Agriculture and Rural Development (SWG ARD)*

The first meeting of the SWG ARD was held on 31 March 2015 and participants were informed that the Agricultural Development Strategy and vision 2030 has been approved by the prime minister on 20 February 2015. Also at this meeting, the Vice minister emphasized on the importance of conservation and sustainably use local (agro) biodiversity. The chair of the sub-sector working group on agro-biodiversity is being changed from DoPC to NAFRI and with FAO as a likely co-chair.

## **1.3-4 Enhancing institutional capacity for agro-biodiversity and increased understanding among key stakeholders of agro-biodiversity and its significance**

### *a) Information and awareness strategy and action plan*

A comprehensive Information and Awareness Strategy and Action Plan has been prepared (see Annex 8) and its implementation will mainly be carried out by external consultants with technical inputs from the project.

### *b) Posters and handbooks*

Prepared by the Law Division of MAF, 18 posters (300 copies each) depicting the key environmental issues in the agriculture sector are continuously been distributed to actors in the sectors and to the targeted provinces. Also by the Law Division, a handbook containing seven laws under MAF i.e. the Agriculture Law (2005), Forestry Law (2007), Fisheries Law (2009), Law on Plant Protection (2008), Law on Animal Raising and Veterinary Matters (2008), Irrigation Law (2012), and Aquatic & Wildlife Law (2007) has been printed in 1,000 copies. Distribution is ongoing.

### *c) CDs on ongoing field activities*

Since mid of 2014 the Information Centre of MAF has been engaged to make four CDs (in Lao language) on NTFPs, vegetables, aquatic resources and fish conservation, and oyster mushrooms cultivation. The first version of the CDs was presented on 17 March 2015 to UNDP and ABP and UNDP. A list of proposed changes have been forwarded by UNDP.

### *d) ABP Brochure*

An updated ABP brochure have been printed 500 copies in Lao and English (250 copies each) of which some have been distributed at the annual review cum steering committee meeting on 27 Feb 2015.

### *f) Ethno-botanical theme plots at Pha Tad Ke Botanical Garden*

Established in 2008, the Pha Tad Ke Botanical Garden in Luang Prabang is well underway to the first Botanical Garden of Laos. A proposal to establish 3-6 ethno-botanical plots (plants to cure skin diseases, disorders, fractures and digestion, dying and fiber) is being considered by the project. On average each plot will contain some 30 local species, used by Lao people.

### *g) Communication and awareness strategy and implementation plan*

Following the recommendation of the mid-term review of being more visible, a comprehensive Communication and Awareness Strategy and Implementation Plan has been prepared. The objective of the strategy is to timely communicate important agro-biodiversity of Lao PDR and the key interventions of ABP and to make key agro-biodiversity information easy available for a wide range of stakeholders. The strategy and implementation plan outlines a systematic and step by step approach with clear target groups and messages and carefully monitored. It includes technical reports, brochures, fact sheets, success stories, posters and videos with specific target groups and time lines, see Annex 8.

## **Component 2: Local Agro-biodiversity Support**

The progress indicator for outcome/component 2 (number of farmers adopting skills and techniques promoted through farmer field days) has reached some 350. With the on-going FFS/IPM activities another 400 is planned this year and it is likely the end target of 1000 can be met at the end of 2016.

## **2.1 Capacity development support to DAFO and Technical Service Centres**

The capacity development support to the technical service centres (TSCs) has shifted from basic development training to technical on-the-job training including on-the-job training in formulation of Agro-biodiversity Interventions (ABDIs) as well as to support to local coordination, implementation and monitoring of approved interventions. Currently, six TSCs are actively involved in locally implemented project activities. In most cases, however, district staff takes the leading role in the local implementation with the TSCs having delegated responsibilities. During the reporting period in Phonexay District, the Nambor TSC has been very active in supporting oyster mushroom cultivation in four villages and also hosting a small lab for producing spawns. Vegetable IPM/FFS is carried out with support from two TSCs (Nambor and Phonthong) as well as DAFO. Further, during the reporting period Nambor has jointly prepared a Melientha proposal whereas the upcoming fish conservation is backstopped from Donkham and Phongthong TSCs. In Phoukout District, the local officers from DAFO is continuing implementing, IPM, organic production of KKN rice, Fish Conservation and Wild Tea in close collaboration with Ladngai, Phengthong Phienglouang and Ang TSC whereas the medicinal plants sub-project started beginning with key implementation responsibility by the Phoukout District Health office.

## **2.2 Participatory Land Use Planning/Forest and Agricultural Land Use Planning, Allocation and Management (FALUPAM)**

ABP has jointly with TABI in finalizing the Land Use Plans in Phoukout District (Kheung Long-Hang, Tai and Long Khang clusters) and in Phonexay District (Sopjia, Donekham and Chomjieng clusters) by purchasing satellite imagery for the land use validation for 46 hamlets. TABI is responsible for the technical backstopping. By the end of dry season (Q2) earlier 2015, it is expected that 36 villages FALUPAM will be formally approved by the district governors.

Following the recommendation of the GEF technical review, initial discussions have been made with the Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity (TEEB) project of UNEP for possible study on ecosystem services for sustainable use of the local agro-biodiversity and TOR will be prepared with TABI as a partner for providing socio-economic data from the two provinces.

## **2.3 Local ABD In-situ conservation Interventions**

The Conservation and Management of Wild Tea sub-project (Gnodphae village, Phoukout District) started mid of 2014 and includes conservation of nearby forests with wild tea. Villagers are showing great interest and additional to 63 families are receiving technical support to plant about 30 ha of wild tea. Similarly, the ongoing Fish Conservation and the upcoming Medicinal Plants sub-project include allocation of areas for biodiversity conservation.

The Oyster Mushroom cultivation in four villages (Nambor, Huayno, Huayman and Thapho) in Nambor Cluster, Phonexay District progressing well not least to excellent technical support from the Mushroom Cultivation Unit of the Plant Protection Centre, Vientiane. The harvest from 1<sup>st</sup> batch is nearly completed (75%-98% of bags are harvested) and will reach some 4.5 tons, sold (13,500 - 20,000 Kip/kg) at farm gate, local, district or Luang Prabang markets. At the last technical backstopping visit another 28,000 bags were prepared (mixing raw material, sterilization and inoculation) and a few new houses were constructed. The four villagers have deposited more than 35,6 million Kip in the bank equal to some 60% of total cash income. Part of savings will be used for buying raw material for the 3<sup>rd</sup> batch. The technical backstopping report no 8 is provided in Annex 14.

The Organic Rice (KKN) sub-project is ongoing covering an area of some 120 ha and six villages (Bong, Mixay, Yai, Choy, Lethong, and Gnodpae). As a result of the project farmers are expecting are selling their 2014 crop as organic rice (receive certification) and in early 2015, the project will provide labeling and market support to the farmers. Evaluation workshop is scheduled during Q2. The activity will end during the second quarterly 2015 - and some follow-up activities are expected for next season crop.

The results of the "baseline survey" of the Improvement of Aquatic Resources in Ngum River ABDI sub-project from five villages in Phoukout District underlined earlier statements of reduced harvests compared to 10 years ago, reasoned by overharvesting including the use of illegal fishing gear and non-protection of spawning areas/deep pools. The survey also revealed that the biodiversity measured by the a total of 15 fishes species, 18 prawn, 9 crab and 10 snail species are still relatively high, see Annex 15. Nevertheless, there is an urgent need for agreeing on fishing rules and regulation including establishment of fish conservation zones as well as awareness, information and monitoring activities

## **2.4 Capacity Development of Farmers through FFS/IPM**

### **a) FFS/IPM Vegetables/ABD FFS/IPM**

After TOT and refresher training, the FFS/IPM Vegetables started beginning of January in both Phoukout and Phonexay districts and will finish in April 2015. In Phoukout the five FFS running smoothly with good

## Implementation Progress Summary at Output level

GEF Outcome and OUTPUT <i>In line with QWP/AWP</i>	INDICATOR (including Baseline and Target at the end of the project as per Project Document)	MILESTONE (Target of the current reporting year)	STATUS OF TARGET (Achieved, On Track or Off Track)	PLANNED ACTIVITIES <i>List all activities to be undertaken during the period as stated in QWP/AWP</i>	ACTIVITY PROGRESS TO DATE <i>Give detailed explanation of the status. Provide justification if delayed and new schedule planned and provide response strategy if any</i>	RESULTS ACHIEVED <i>Describe concrete, key results (policy, publication, key event etc.) achieved so far, vis-à-vis the specific targets set in the QWP/AWP. Please provide data/evidence to support the results</i>	BENEFICIARY <i>Approximate number of beneficiaries reached by project activities (disaggregated by sex/age), etc.</i>
Outcome 1 National policy and institutional frameworks for sustainable use, and <i>in-situ</i> conservation of biodiversity in agro-ecosystems.	1. Number of new national plans, policies, laws, strategies, and guidelines with agro-biodiversity concerns. <i>End Target: 6 Achieved: 4</i>	2015 Target: 3 Achieved: 0	On track	See below	<i>In progress</i> Feed-back on new Agricultural Development Strategy to 2025 and Vision to 2030 (ADS 2025) have been done through the UN system.	Central and local governments	
Output 1.1 BD Conservation incorporated into Government policies, Laws and others legal instruments.	1.1 Number of national workshops with biodiversity content. <i>End Target: 10 Achieved: 10</i>  Baseline 1.1: Land use policies and legal instruments do not include focus on biodiversity (especially agro biodiversity), b) Emphasis on agro-biodiversity in BD strategy and action plan (N/BSAP) is weak, c) Agriculture Law does not incorporate emphasis on biodiversity, including ABD, and d) Integration of biodiversity related criteria into ESIA	Target: 4 Achieved: 0	On track	1.1.1a Update Status & Action Plan on (A)BD Legislations.  1.1.1b Provide Agrobiodiversity related technical inputs to the final draft of NBSAP II (participate in meetings)  1.1.2 Support NAFRI in preparing NABP (II)	Completed in 2014 – used in NABP II  <i>In progress</i> Meeting conducted by MONRE in March without participation of ABP. Written comments provided by CTA.  <i>In progress</i> 19 <sup>th</sup> Feb 2015 working group w/s at NAFRI with 22 participants (3 females)	NA  Workshop participants at central and local governments  NA	
				1.1.3 Develop PBSAP for Luang Prabang	<i>In progress</i> Two local meetings carried out in 2014 and province keen to play a key role in preparation.	Next meeting needs detailed inputs from IUCN and ABP for a) agreed detailed list of content & local b) and	

<sup>2</sup> Please note that for GEF projects, GEF Outcomes are actually Outputs in UNDP context

attendance, once a week by both farmers and trainers, see field visit report in Annex 11. However, some of the FFSs (particularly in Nambor Cluster) in Phonexay District (11 FFS including 3 at Schools) are having problems of trainer attendance thus the important regular visits and trainings. The issue has partly been solved by two visits to the NPC and one visit of the CTA. Overall, the farmers and teachers are happy with the support and would like to receive more FFS support particularly on fertilization and disease control, see Annex 12. A follow-up visit was carried out by the DF of which some of the problems have been solved, see Annex 13.

b) *FFS/IPM Rice/ABD FFS/IPM*

The TOT on rice cum ABD ended late October 2015 and included recommendations farmer training during 2015 season and a brief refresher training may be relevant. A draft TOT Technical Report was received mid of January expected to finalized during Q2. The Refresher training report is provided in Annex 9.

**2.5-6 Market linkages and private-public partnerships**

Market support related activities have so far been an integral part of the FFSs and the other local agro-biodiversity interventions (ABDIs), As part of the TOT IPM/FFS on Vegetable, Rice and ABD, trainees (all females) have been introduced to market/pricing mechanisms and trained in rearing crickets (insects), testing rice cum local fish cultivation (sales and consumption), as well as using local plants for producing bio-pesticides, which will then be introduced to next round of Farmer Field Schools. Further, in the organic (KKN) rice and Oyster Mushrooms sub-projects farmers are being trained in market/pricing mechanisms. The project will strengthen its market support in 2015.

**Component 3: Project Management**

The indicator target of the outcome 3 of receiving strategic recommendations from the Agro-biodiversity Steering Committee on 17 February (end Target 6) eventually got feed-back from MAF leadership resulting in 13 recommendations of which six (continuation of pLUP, improved M&E, better overall coordination, more involvement of other line ministries, consolidation rather than starting-up new activities, and increased local emphasis on agro-bio-diversity) can be seen as strategic. The minutes of the meeting is provided in Annex 17. Another key recommendation from the review on project extension to end of 2016 is being pursued provided the project can provide solid justification.

**Highlights of main activities and achievements of Quarter 1, 2015**

**Outcome 1**

- a) Recruited 2<sup>nd</sup> team of consultants and agreed with NAFRI on revised list of content of NABP II. Formulation is ongoing in close collaboration with 5 technical teams
- b) Prepared and printed project brochure in English and Lao version
- c) Prepared comprehensive communication and awareness strategy and implementation plan for remaining part of ABP.

**Outcome 2**

- d) Started up Vegetable FFS/IPM in two districts
- e) Started-up two sub-projects (ABDIs), Fish Conservation and Medicinal Plants
- f) Continuing Oyster Mushrooms , Wild Tea and KKN Organic Rice

**Output 3.1**

- g) Comments on Spot Check and Annual Audit Report
- h) Organized 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Review Meeting cum 1s Steering Committee Meeting



	guidelines are poor.					detailed external inputs needed and c) realistic work plan.	
<p><b>Output 1.2:</b> Institutional coordination of agro-biodiversity enhanced at national level.</p>	<p><b>1.2</b> Number of yearly agro-biodiversity inter-sectorial coordination meetings. <i>End target: 2x2 (SWG/)/year</i></p> <p><b>Baseline 1.2:</b> 1.2 Currently, there is no formal coordination mechanism for agro biodiversity conservation.</p>	<p><b>2015 target:</b>2 SWGs: 2 sSWG ABD):2 <b>Achieved: 1</b></p>	<p><b>On track</b></p>	<p>1.1.4 Support district and/or provincial workshops on status and action plans as follow-up on N/PBSAP in Xieng Khouang Province.</p> <p>1.2.1a Coordinate with TABI and to implement the ABD activities at the national and local level.</p> <p>1.2.1b Agree w. TABI and others agencies/projects to develop a ABD data base and possible contributions</p> <p>1.2.2a Agrobiodiversity issues raised at SWG ARD and SWG ENR</p> <p>1.2.2b Provide support to sSWGs work-plans of SWG of ARD and ENR and particular sSWGs.</p>	<p><b>In progress/delayed</b> English version edited by ABP, but still needs feedback from IUCN, particularly on Section One. Follow-up meeting with district authorities is waiting.</p> <p><b>In progress</b> The current coordination efforts are mainly done through the preparation of the NABP, planned to be put on the agenda for next sSWG ABD.</p> <p><b>In progress/strategy</b> Initial discussions with TABI were made to identify possibility for collaboration. However, still have no agreement. <i>New schedule: Q2 of 2015.</i> <i>Response strategy: Suggest bring-up at next sSWG ABD.</i></p> <p><b>In progress</b> At last meeting (30 March) the chairman (Vice Minister) underlined the importance of sustainably making use of the indigenous agro-biodiversity.</p> <p><b>In progress</b> The national chairmanship of sSWG ABP is expected to move to NAFRI with the likelihood of FAO as the new co-chair. <i>New schedule: Q2 of 2015</i></p>	<p>Provincial and ABP partners incl. IUCN, MoNRE, PoNRE-LPB, PAFO, DAFO</p> <p>None</p> <p>None</p> <p>None</p> <p>None</p> <p>None</p>	

<p><b>Output 1.3:</b> Institutional capacity of MAF to plan for, implement, and effectively communicate on agro-biodiversity enhanced at national level.</p>	<p>1.3: Number GOI officers participated in meetings where agro-biodiversity issues are discussed. <i>End Target: 400 Achieved: 500</i></p> <p><b>Baseline 1.3:</b> Institutional and staff capacities of MAF to mainstream bio-diversity into agriculture and land use policies are low.</p>	<p><b>2015 Target:</b> 300, <b>Achieved:</b> 100</p>	<p><b>On track</b></p>	<p>1.3.1 Identify/update and threats &amp; barriers and incentives to ABD in general and in XK and LB provinces.</p>	<p><b>In progress</b> Will be brought up in ongoing discussions and formulations of NABP, NBSAP and PBSAP (LPB). TOR will be prepared during Q2</p>	<p><b>NABP</b> - Included in working paper &amp; briefly discussed in 2<sup>nd</sup> draft. <b>NBSAP</b> - Eng versions edited &amp; contains threats to ABD. <b>PBSAP (LPB)</b> – Detailed list of content to be agreed with LPB.</p>	<p>NA</p>
<p><b>Output 1.4:</b> Key stakeholders understanding and capacity to respond to agro-biodiversity conservation and sustainable use enhanced.</p>	<p>1.4 Number of tools developed to support and enhance incorporation of ABD into national and institutional frameworks. <i>End target: 6 Ach.:4</i></p> <p><b>Baseline 1.4:</b> a) Land use policies and legal instruments do not include focus on biodiversity (especially agro biodiversity); b) Emphasis on agro-biodiversity in BD strategy and action plan (N/BSAP) is weak); c). Agriculture Law does not incorporate emphasis on biodiversity, including ABD, and d) Integration of biodiversity related criteria into ESIA guidelines are poor</p>	<p><b>2015 target: 4</b> <b>Achieved: 1</b></p>	<p><b>On track</b></p>	<p>1.4.1 Prepare communication and awareness strategy action plan and implementing its actions plan e.g. printing awareness material - brochure, factsheets, videos, etc.</p> <p>1.4.2 Conduct field assessments on importance of aquatic resources in rice based ecosystems</p> <p>1.4.3 Conduct field survey on knowledge and use of wild mushrooms, with TABI and Darwin projects (travel, material)</p> <p>1.4.4 Support LPB Botanical Garden with demonstration gardens</p>	<p><b>In progress</b> Comprehensive strategy and action plan prepared. ABP project brochure both in Lao &amp; Eng version prepared with slight revision from 2014 version. 4 CDs on field activities by MAF drafted on 17 March and received suggestions for approval from UDNP.</p> <p><b>In progress</b> Biodiversity data received from TOT IPM/ABD is being analyzed. Follow-up on the 2013 survey may be needed.</p> <p><b>In progress</b> In planning process, with more focus on identification of edible and poisonous species, particularly brittlegills and matsutake.</p> <p><b>In progress</b> Proposal being finalized</p>	<p>Document</p> <p>500 brochures in Lao &amp; Eng version</p> <p>4 CDs on editing by UNDP</p> <p>2013 report</p> <p>Initial survey reports</p> <p>Draft proposal</p>	<p>NA</p> <p>Distributed to ABP implementation partners</p> <p>NA</p> <p>National and international community (2013 Report)</p> <p>Farmers and local people in PX and PK districts</p> <p>Visitors including students</p>

<p><b>Outcome 2:</b> Capacities and incentives to mainstream biodiversity, especially agro-biodiversity, at the Provincial, District and community levels</p>	<p>Number of farmers adopting skills and techniques promoted through farmer field days <i>End target: 1,000</i> <i>Achieved: 350</i></p>	<p>Target 2015: 400 Achieved: 0</p>	<p><b>On track</b></p>	<p><b>On track</b></p>	<p><b>In progress</b> In 2014 TOT vegetables FFS/IPM/ABD and rice TOT FFS/IPM/ABD were completed. IPM/FFS in vegetable/ABD in PX and PK are ongoing. Farmer field days in Q2.</p>	<p>Draft TOT report and refresher reports submitted incl. proposal for FFS and Farmer Field Days.</p>	<p>2014: 350</p>
<p><b>Output 2.1</b> Capacity and accountability of provincial and district governments mainstream biodiversity into agriculture increased</p>	<p>2.1 Number of Technical Service Centers with ABD conservation and sustainable use activities. <i>End Target: 4</i> <i>Achieved: 2</i> <b>Baseline 2.1</b> Existing tools such as training, extension, communication and mapping do not incorporate (agro) biodiversity conservation issues.</p>	<p>2015 Target: 3 Achieved: 3</p>	<p><b>On track</b></p>	<p>2.1.1 Update land use planning tools (LUP, zoning, niche crops, conservation areas, domestication, etc. for PAFOs and DAFO/TSC (in close collaboration with TABI) 2.1.2 Perform on-the-job training/ implementation/ monitoring guidance of ABDIs (linked to output 2.2)</p>	<p><b>In progress/delayed</b> There seems to go well in Phoukhout whereas there has been less progress in Phonexay. Request TABI on progress</p>	<p>NA</p>	<p>Nambor: 8 officers w 3 F Naxaithong: 2 officers w 1 F Ladyai: 2 officer</p>
<p><b>Output 2.2</b> Participatory land use plans integrating agro-biodiversity developed</p>	<p>2.2 Number of cluster villages with pFLUP plans <i>End Target: 8,</i> <i>Achieved: 0</i> <b>Baseline 2.2:</b> Existing area with participatory land use plans and participatory NRM plans are low and do not include agro-biodiversity conservation.</p>	<p>Target 2015: 4 Achieved: 0</p>	<p><b>On track</b></p>	<p>2.2.2 Prepare participatory village land use plans/PAFLUP (with TABI, MAF &amp; M/PoNRE).</p>	<p><b>Delayed/Response strategy</b> Activities continued in Q2. Final village LUP expected in Q2. <b>New Action</b> Ask TABI for up-date and if necessary assist speeding up</p>	<p>Satellite imagery of districts area</p>	<p>Villagers and local authorities</p>
<p><b>Output 2.3</b> In situ conservation for important agro-biodiversity.</p>	<p>2.3 Number of districts with in-situ agro-biodiversity conservation plans. <i>End target: 8</i> <i>Achieved: 0</i></p>	<p>2015 target: 4 Achieved: 0</p>	<p><b>On track</b></p>	<p>2.3.1 Identify potentials for non-farming and farming areas suitable for ABD conservation in pilot districts (together w. 2.2.2 and 1.1.4)</p>	<p><b>In progress/delayed</b> Discussions held with MoNRE for leading the process on following-up on PBSAP in XK and guiding the PBSAP in LPB together with IUCN. <i>Response strategy</i></p>	<p>No result yet</p>	<p>Provincial and District officers (meeting in August)</p>

	<p><b>Baseline 2.3:</b> Currently, there are no existing allocations of land for in-situ conservation of ABD</p>		<p>2.3.2a Support provinces and districts to prepare ABD conservation planning including agro-ecosystem concerns (on-the-job training)</p> <p>2.3.2b Identify and formulate interventions (incl. ABDs) for conservation and sustainable use of ABD</p> <p>2.3.3 Carry out a study on value of ecosystem services for Phonxay and Phoukout Districts (Inter &amp; Nat cons, travel and materials)</p> <p>2.3.4 Formulation, implementation, monitoring and follow-up on pilot ABD interventions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Organic Rice (KKN)</li> <li>b) Wild tea (PK)</li> <li>c) Oyster mushrooms (PX)</li> <li>d) Fish Conservation (PK)</li> <li>e) Medicinal Plants (PK)</li> <li>f) Fish Conservation (PX)</li> <li>g) Melienta (PX)</li> <li>h) Medicinal Plants (PX)</li> </ul>	<p>An overall planning meeting with MoNRE is planned early Q2</p> <p><b>Ongoing</b> will be addressed later in 2015</p> <p><b>In progress</b> Detailed action plan needs to be made and agreed upon in Q2 of 2015.</p> <p><b>In progress/delayed</b> KKN (PK), ongoing, but unclear how much has been certified. Evaluation, impact and follow-up needed. <b>Response strategy</b> Consolidated report followed-up by larger meeting.</p> <p><b>In progress</b> Wild Tea (PK), ongoing. Considering Chinese experts on production/marketing and taxonomy.</p> <p><b>In progress</b> Oyster Mushrooms (PX), ongoing and second start-up of harvest is being prepared.</p> <p><b>In progress</b> Fish Conservation (PK), ongoing Follow-up needed.</p>	<p>See 1.1.6</p> <p>Training materials (Lao) Certified rice</p> <p>Plant nursery</p> <p>4.3 tons of harvest 13 million kip savings</p> <p>Draft baseline report</p>	<p>5 villages, 156 families 88ha</p> <p>1 village 61 families 30 ha</p> <p>4 villages 23 families</p> <p>5 villages</p>
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<p><b>Output 3.1:</b> Capacity of implementing partners for integrated planning, management, monitoring, and evaluation of programmes improved.</p>	<p>3.1 Number of MAF-organized cross project meetings</p> <p>End target: 10 Achieved: 20</p> <p>Baseline: 3.1 Lack of programme management capacity in general and integrated programmatic approach in particular.</p>	<p>2014 target: 4 Achieved: 4</p>	<p><b>On track</b></p>	<p>3.1.2 Organize other meetings</p>	<p><i>Delayed</i> Two monthly meetings canceled</p> <p>Reason: Busy schedule of NPC</p> <p>Response strategy: Re-appoint</p>	<p>NA</p>	<p>NA</p>
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### 3. Project Management and Oversight

*(This section should be completed by project in coordination with UNDP)*

*During the reporting period responses have been made on 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> draft of mid-term technical review report. Further, a number of field visit have taken place assess field progress (see Annex 11-13. In the future more emphasis will be put on assessing progress on indicator targets both for the ABD and for local interventions. However, it should be stressed that some parts of the year, it has been difficult to reach some of the targeted villages.*

*At provincial and district level overall coordination meetings chaired by governor offices and where project issues are brought up. So far key decisions, relevant to the project are made available. The project should be represented at these meetings and key issues should be reporting in weekly reports by the district facilitators.*

*A part from day-day management, project oversight is mainly taken place at monthly ABP meetings with active participation of UNDP and FAO.*

- **Monitoring and Evaluation**

Monthly meetings do only to limited effect provide monitoring oversight and needs more focus. Final project evaluation is expected during 2016.

Mid-term review was conducted from June to August 2014. The report was finalized and management response has been draft in collaboration with MAF, UNDP and FAO.

Regular field monitoring by the National Project Coordinator and CTA have taken place and six visits have been carried out during Q1.

- **Risk management** *(Actual/ anticipated operational, political and environmental risks)*

The project focus of support to local agro-biodiversity i.e. sustainable use of indigenous species are constantly addressed, but often met with some resistance as preferences often goes to traditional agricultural input supply.

- **Communication and advocacy**

A comprehensive Communication and Awareness Strategy and Implementation Plan has been prepared (Jan 2015) and will be implemented during the remaining part of the project.

### 4. Management Responses and Recommendations

UNDP staff continues to provide strong oversight of the project and a new position has been announced to support day-to-day operations.

UNDP to be discussed with FAO on how to report on the expenditure of the FAO in order to ensure that UNDP is able to report to GEF and ensure that expenditure are in line with LOA and Project Document.

UNDP will support MAF and FAO in estimating and reporting on the annual actual co-financing.

Introduce procedures for follow-up on pending issues at monthly meetings

Investigate steps for improving internet and/or consider other solutions.

❖ *Update on the implementation of audit, Spot Check recommendations & management responses to project evaluation.*

❖ *Highlight if there any key issue that require the attention of management / steering committee in the next quarter. - Assess if all audit recommendations have been satisfactory addressed (notes to the file regarding use of project cars).*


In 2013 ABP was have 16 qualified audit observations, some of them were found in 2012 Audit. ABP has been closely satisfactory addressed all issues in consultation and collaboration with UNDP and FAO and MAF to complete implement all audit action plan and officially submitted to UNDP in early December 2014. Now,

the project staffs are committed to the NIM rule and procedures in implementing the project activities.  
Audit done 2-3 March 2015 and ABP received 1<sup>st</sup> draft of the report

**5. Annexes**

- Annex 1: Combined Delivery Report (provided by UNDP & validated by UNDP & IP)
- Annex 2: Budget Analytical Review of the quarterly 1, 2015
- Annex 3: Yearly Work Plan for 2015
- Annex 4: Internal monitoring of deadlines of reports and other deliveries
- Annex 5: Project Risk Log for quarterly 1, 2015
- Annex 6: Project Lesson Learned Log for the quarterly 1, 2015
- Annex 7: Project Issue Log for the quarterly 1, 2015
- Annex 8: Communication and Awareness Strategy and Implementation Plan
- Annex 9: Refresher Training Report (reduced annexes)
- Annex 10: Field Trip Report Xieng Khouang, handover of DF and follow-up on field activities
- Annex 11: Field Visit Report on Progress of IPM/FFS Activities in Xieng Khouang
- Annex 12: Field Visit Report on Progress of IPM/FFS Activities in Luang Prabang
- Annex 13: DF Field Visit Report on Findings and Follow-up on IPM/FFS, Phonexay District
- Annex 14: Technical Backstopping Report No 8 on Oyster Mushroom Cultivation
- Annex 15: 2<sup>nd</sup> Technical Backstopping Report, 1<sup>st</sup> Assessment of Medicinal and Food Plants
- Annex 16: Technical Baseline and Technical Backstopping Report Improved Aquatic Resources
- Annex 17: Minutes of Annual Review cum Steering Committee Meeting
- Annex 18: Revised Results Framework
- Annex 19: Updated List of FAO Short-term Consultants

Drafted by APM and CTA

  
Date: 22/4-2015

Date:

PREPARED BY NPC



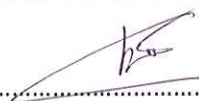
Date:

APPROVED BY NPD

  
Date: 

Mr.Somphanh CHANPHENGXAY

RECEIVED AND REVIEWED BY UNDP



Date:

the project staffs are committed to the NIM rule and procedures in implementing the project activities.  
Audit done 2-3 March 2015 and ABP received 1<sup>st</sup> draft of the report