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INTEGRATED NATIONAL STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN ON FIRE MANAGEMENT IN MYANMAR

January 2020

SDGs:



Countries:

Myanmar

Project Codes:

TCP/MYA/3608

FAO Contribution:

USD 100 000

Duration:

1 January 2019 – 31 December 2019

Contact Info:

FAO Representation in Myanmar

FAO-MM@fao.org

Implementing Partners

Environmental Conservation Department, Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation (MoNREC), Government of Myanmar .

Beneficiaries

Environmental Conservation Department, MoNREC.

Country Programming Framework (CPF) Outputs

CPF for Myanmar (2017-2022), Priority area C: Enhanced resilience of local communities and farming households to natural and humanitarian disasters, climate change and transboundary and emerging infectious disease risks.



BACKGROUND

In Myanmar, wildfires are a serious problem, with local and wide-reaching regional impacts. The country has the highest burn rate in Southeast Asia, and ranks 11th globally in terms of forest fires. Between 2003 and 2012, more than 17.732 million hectares burned in the country. In addition to wildfires, urban and rural fires caused by human activities, including the traditional slash-and-burn cultivation system (*taungya*) and the burning of agricultural land with debris after harvesting, are also critical causes of air pollution, biodiversity losses, and environmental deterioration. To address these issues, the Government of Myanmar requested that FAO assist in developing an integrated strategy and action plan on fire management, leading to the subsequent development and implementation of a landscape fire management system in the country.



IMPACT

The project contributed to increasing national capacity, and laid the groundwork for the implementation of an Integrated National Strategy and Action Plan on Fire Management. It is expected that this will lead to an enhanced enabling environment in Myanmar for addressing wildfires and the resulting transboundary haze pollution in the region.

ACHIEVEMENT OF RESULTS

Overall, the project contributed to increasing the capacity of government officials and enhancing an enabling environment in Myanmar to address wildfires. However, the duration of the project was reduced from two years to twelve months, owing to administrative delays. As a result, it was not possible to implement or complete all the envisaged outputs and activities. Although the development of the Integrated National Strategy and Action Plan on Fire Management in Myanmar was significantly set back by the shortened duration of the project, a draft framework of the strategy and plan was developed; a review of relevant legislation and roles and responsibilities of stakeholders was undertaken; and valuable information and inputs on fire hazard, relevant policy, legal and institutional frameworks, and traditional land management knowledge and practices related to fire management were compiled and analysed. A proposal for funding to complete the national strategy is being prepared, which was informed by the final workshop that took place. In addition, stocktaking of actions regarding the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Agreement on Transboundary Haze Pollution was undertaken; and a draft for the Transboundary Haze Pollution Action Plan was prepared, setting out the intended activities.

A multistakeholder platform was formed, comprising relevant independent forest monitoring (IFM) stakeholders in Myanmar, in order to guide the process of developing an IFM strategy and action plan. The inception meeting, first multistakeholder meeting and final workshop brought the stakeholders together and started the processes of engagement and collaboration on fire management in the country.



IMPLEMENTATION OF WORK PLAN

As mentioned above, the original two-year time frame was shortened to twelve months, owing to administrative delays. This greatly affected the implementation of the work plan and the related budgeting. All the originally planned activities were not accomplished because of the limited duration of the project.

FOLLOW-UP FOR GOVERNMENT ATTENTION

It is highly recommended that the Government actively seek donor funding to finalize the Integrated National Strategy and Action Plan on Fire Management in Myanmar and prepare its implementation plan; and to: i) update stocktaking and analysis; ii) finalize the compilation of traditional land management knowledge and practices related to fire management; iii) integrate the actions laid out in the ASEAN Agreement on Transboundary Haze Pollution into the IFM strategy and action plan; iv) carry out the identification of options for positive change; v) initiate regular multistakeholder platform working groups meetings, and develop a regular meeting and work plan for the multistakeholder platform working groups; vi) set up pilot project areas, to gather more insights on the underlying fire issues and develop realistic solutions with local communities on the ground; and vii) conduct fire vulnerability assessments, which will be a key mechanism for informing the Integrated National Strategy and Action Plan on Fire Management in Myanmar.



SUSTAINABILITY

1. Capacity development

Given that the national fire management strategy was not finalized during the project, the identification of roles and responsibilities is incomplete. The effort to clarify and then embed roles and responsibilities can be undertaken during the next phase; for which funding should be sought. During the project, the Multistakeholder Platform was formed with representatives from MoNREC and the Environmental Conservation Department; the Ministry of Home Affairs; the Ministry of Education; the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement; the Ministry of Foreign Affairs; the Ministry of the Office of the Union Government; the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation; the Ministry of Transport and Communications; the Ministry of Health and Sports; Naypyitaw City Development Committee; the Ministry of Border Affairs; and Myanmar Environment Rehabilitation-conservation Network. The coordination with the government focal department (the Environmental Conservation Department, MoNREC) greatly supported the implementation of the project.

2. Gender equality

As a result of the planning process that took place during the project, awareness of local practices and capacities was developed. With the finalization of the action plan on fire management, content and knowledge would be strengthened.

Fire management in Myanmar is at an early stage, and agency and fire management governance need developing. The capacity of stakeholders to further implement is reasonable, but the support of fire management expertise, particularly in planning and community-based fire management, is required. It is recommended that the Government actively seek donor funding for this purpose.

DOCUMENTS AND OUTREACH PRODUCTS

- Inception Workshop Report. May 2019.
- Multistakeholder Platform Workshop Report. September 2019.
- Final Workshop Report. December 2019.
- Baseline information for a National Fire Management Strategy in Myanmar.
- Education presentation on Integrated Fire Management.

ACHIEVEMENT OF RESULTS - LOGICAL FRAMEWORK

Expected Impact	Increased capacity and enhanced enabling environment in Myanmar in addressing wildfires and the resulting transboundary haze pollution in the region		
Outcome	Integrated strategy and action plan on fire management in Myanmar developed, leading to subsequent development and implementation of landscape fire management system in the country		
	Indicator	Integrated action plan on fire management in Myanmar.	
	Baseline	No plan exists.	
	End Target	Integrated Action Plan on Fire Management in Myanmar.	
Comments and follow-up action to be taken	The original two-year time frame was reduced to 10 months, owing to administrative delays. Thus, during the project, only the draft content of the Integrated National Strategy and Action Plan on Fire Management in Myanmar was achieved. It is urged that funding source options be sought, in order to undertake follow-up actions for the finalization and implementation of the strategy.		
Output 1			
Stocktaking and analysis made on relevant policy, legal and institutional framework, as well as existing fire management practices			
	Indicators	Target	Achieved
	Carry out stocktaking report.	Analyse existing traditional land management knowledge and practices related to fire management, conduct stocktaking of actions undertaken to date regarding the ASEAN Agreement on Transboundary Haze Pollution, assess existing policy, legal and institutional framework related to fire management, and identify options to facilitate positive change.	Partially
Baseline	No stocktaking report exists.		
Comments	Despite the time constraint, significant compilation of relevant materials and information was achieved. If funding is secured, stocktaking and analysis should be updated in the next phase.		
Activity 1.1			
Conduct analysis of existing traditional land management knowledge and practices related to fire management			
	Achieved	Partially	
	Comments	Owing to the reduced duration of the project, it was not possible to undertake sufficient consultation and engagement on traditional knowledge and practices. If funding is secured, the compilation of traditional land management knowledge and practices related to fire management should be finalized in the next phase.	
Activity 1.2			
Conduct stocktaking of actions taken to date regarding the ASEAN Agreement on Transboundary Haze Pollution			
	Achieved	Yes	
	Comments	Myanmar prepared a draft Transboundary Haze Pollution Action Plan, which set out the intended activities. It is recommended that donor funding be sought to integrate the actions laid out in the ASEAN Agreement on Transboundary Haze Pollution into the IFM strategy and action plan.	
Activity 1.3			
Assess existing policy, legal and institutional framework related to fire management and identify options to facilitate positive change			
	Achieved	Partially	
	Comments	A review of relevant legislation and roles and responsibilities was undertaken. Consultation in the multistakeholder forum enabled further clarification, but was not sufficient to clearly identify options for positive change. If funding is secured, the identification of options for positive change should be carried out in the next phase.	

Output 2	A multistakeholder platform developed to enhance enabling environment in support of emerging climate-smart fire management		
	Indicators	Target	Achieved
	A multistakeholder platform is formed.	A multistakeholder platform/group is in place, which can steer and guide the process of developing an IFM strategy and action plan. The platform comprises all relevant IFM stakeholders in Myanmar, providing the relevant input and information.	Yes
Baseline	No multistakeholder platform on IFM exists.		
Comments	A multistakeholder platform was officially formed on 5 August 2019. Since that time it has only met once. It is recommended that regular multistakeholder platform working groups meetings be initiated in the next phase, if funding is secured. In addition, it is advised that the multistakeholder platform working groups be government-oriented; i.e. they should be seen as routine working group meetings among the cooperating ministries and departments, and should not be based on project funding only, as a sustainability perspective for the working group. Once funding has been secured for the next phase, a regular meeting and work plan for the multistakeholder platform working groups should be developed.		
Activity 2.1	Implement a multistakeholder process to determine roles and responsibilities of relevant stakeholders		
	Achieved	Yes	
	Comments	The inception meeting, first multistakeholder meeting and final workshop brought the stakeholders together and started the processes of engagement and collaboration on fire management in Myanmar. If funding is secured for the next phase, the multistakeholder platform will be a key mechanism for finalizing and implementing the Integrated National Strategy and Action Plan on Fire Management in Myanmar.	

Output 3	Integrated National Strategy and Action Plan on Fire Management in Myanmar developed		
	Indicators	Target	Achieved
	Integrated national strategy and action plan on fire management in Myanmar.	An Integrated National Strategy and Action Plan on Fire Management in Myanmar is developed.	No
Baseline	No strategy and plan exist.		
Comments	<p>The development of the Integrated National Strategy and Action Plan on Fire Management in Myanmar was significantly set back by the reduced duration of the project. However, a draft framework of the strategy and plan was developed, roles and responsibilities of stakeholders were clarified, and basic information on fire hazard, legal frameworks was analysed.</p> <p>It is recommended that funds be sought to set up pilot project areas, to gather more insights on the underlying fire issues and develop realistic solutions with local communities on the ground.</p>		
Activity 3.1	Conduct fire vulnerability assessments at national and regional levels		
	Achieved	No	
	Comments	<p>It was not possible to conduct fire vulnerability assessments, owing to the reduced duration of the project.</p> <p>If funding is secured for the next phase, fire vulnerability assessments will be a key mechanism for informing the Integrated National Strategy and Action Plan on Fire Management in Myanmar.</p>	
Activity 3.2	Develop Integrated National Strategy and Action Plan on Fire Management in Myanmar		
	Achieved	No	
	Comments	<p>Although the development of the strategy was significantly set back by the reduced duration of the project, some valuable information and inputs were compiled and analysed.</p> <p>If funding is secured for the next phase, it will be possible to complete the inputs, and to finalize the Integrated National Strategy and Action Plan on Fire Management in Myanmar.</p>	
Output 4	A project proposal formulated to implement Integrated National Strategy and Action Plan on Fire Management in Myanmar		
	Indicators	Target	Achieved
	Formulate project proposal to implement integrated national strategy and action plan on fire management	Project proposal formulated to implement Integrated National Strategy and Action Plan on Fire Management in Myanmar	No
Baseline	No proposal to implement an Integrated National Strategy and Action Plan on Fire Management in Myanmar has been developed.		
Comments	<p>The development of the strategy was significantly set back by the reduced duration of the project, and it was not possible to formulate a proposal for its implementation.</p> <p>If funding is secured for the next phase, the implementation plan for the Integrated National Strategy and Action Plan on Fire Management in Myanmar will be prepared, once the strategy has been completed.</p>		
Activity 4.1	Develop a project proposal for the implementation of an integrated national strategy and action plan on fire management in Myanmar aimed to access GEF or GCF financing.		
	Achieved	No	
	Comments	<p>Given the constraints mentioned above, it was not possible to finalize the national plan or to prepare a proposal. However, a proposal for funding to complete the national strategy is being prepared, which was informed by the final workshop.</p>	

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