

Concept note and agenda for REDD+ Forest Reference Level (FRL)

Capacity Building Workshop for Thailand

Proposed Dates: 21-23 November 2018

Venue: The Regent Cha Am Beach Resort

BACKGROUND

The Kingdom of Thailand has signed a Grant Agreement (GA) with the World Bank, under the Readiness Fund of the Forest Carbon Partnership Facility (FCPF), with the aim of supporting the efforts of the Royal Thai Government (RTG) in improving their ability to measure and monitor forest and forest change, estimate GHGs from forests, and account for, as part of the Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) to the Paris Agreement.

One of the objectives of the GA is to support the RTG, particularly the Department of National Parks, Wildlife and Plants Conservation (DNP) of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MoNRE), in establishing a Forest Reference Level (FRL) for REDD+. The activities necessary to develop the FRL will also contribute to the institutionalization of Thailand's National Forest Monitoring System (NFMS) and build national capacity for national Measurement, Reporting and Verification (MRV) of Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions and removals from the forest and land use sector.

The REDD+ FRL will require the analysis of recent historical data on forest land dynamics and other relevant land uses, including –as appropriate- the analysis of national circumstances and policies and plans expected to affect forest dynamics in the future to set a benchmark for assessing Thailand's performance of REDD+. The FRL will be developed by combining emission factors with activity data, and will also include an assessment of whether an adjustment to the FRL is needed to adequately take into account Thailand's national circumstances.

As part of the work plan for this technical component of the Grant Agreement under the FCPF Programme, DNP proposes to convene an inaugural FRL capacity building workshop. Capacity building on FRL will be based on a guided dialogue with country experts on the following aspects:

- Forest definition
- Scope (Activities)
- Scale (National / Sub-national)
- Data and Methodologies (including national circumstances and the need for adjustments)

Aside from capacity building, this FRL workshop will assess Activity Data, Emission Factors, and National Circumstances, and establish a roadmap to compile the necessary technical elements for FRL construction.

Many forest countries pursuing participation in REDD+ are interested in developing a national FRL. There are several good reasons to do so:

- Domestic: FRLs are useful for national governments to measure progress or outcomes on policy changes or implemented activities;
- International: The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) has invited countries to submit FRLs, which can measure a country's mitigation contribution,

including progress towards goals under Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) to the Paris Agreement;

- Potential finance: If a country wishes to access potential future “results-based finance” for REDD+ actions, FRLs are needed.

FRLs should be closely tied to a REDD+ strategy and action plan. Since FRLs should be used to measure progress or outcomes, discussions on FRL scope should be guided by which actions a country plans to take (e.g. a decrease in timber removal from forests due to increased enforcement policies and implementation; increased forest cover from plantations or natural regeneration; or decreased emissions from deforestation due to improvements in agricultural productivity). This knowledge will help to inform what a country wants to assess before developing FRLs.

FRLs should also be consistent with, and build upon, a country’s forest inventory, monitoring system and GHG inventories. Development of FRLs requires data and information about historic forest cover change, existing forest types and emission factors. It requires a robust knowledge of drivers of deforestation and forest degradation.

The focus of this workshop will be capacity building, however a FRL roadmap will also be elaborated for Thailand to guide subsequent in-country work.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

- 1) Provide information on international guidance that has been provided on designing and constructing REDD+ FRLs (focusing on guidance from the UNFCCC);
- 2) Discuss key elements critical to development of REDD+ FRLs and begin consideration of what may be appropriate for design of a FRL in Thailand including:
 - a. Forest definition: What is the current definition of forest used in Thailand?
 - b. Scope: What activities, pools and gases to include in a FRL?
 - c. Data analysis: Assessment of existing data on historic forest cover and change; capacity to assess current and future emissions
 - d. Structure: What are options for FRL methodologies?
 - e. Scale: National, subnational and/or nested?
- 3) Provide examples of how other countries are designing FRLs;
- 4) Begin to identify data and capacity gaps that are needed in order to establish a FRL in Thailand;
- 5) Construct a FRL roadmap for Thailand to prescribe follow up activities.

TARGET PARTICIPANTS

The workshop will be technical and intensive. FRL design is a decision of the government. The main target participants are technical government officers who have been involved in REDD+ readiness especially in MRV, GHG inventory and NFI. Number of participants should be limited to 20-25 to keep the workshop size appropriate for effective discussions.

Resource persons: Donna Lee (FAO consultant and international FRL expert); Ben Vickers (FAO Regional REDD+ Coordinator, Bangkok); Mathieu van Rijn (Forestry Officer REDD+, Bangkok)

Programme for Thailand FRLs workshop (tentative)

Day One: 21st (Wednesday) Nov 2018			
Time	Event	Organization	Speaker
7:30-10:00	Travel to venue		
10:00 – 10:30	Arrival and registration		
<i>Launching and Opening Session</i>			
10:30 – 10:50	Welcome address	DNP	TBC
10:50 – 11:10	Welcome address	FAO	TBC
11:10 – 11:30	Opening remarks	DNP	TBC
11:30 – 11:50	Introduction to FAO's role in assisting Thailand [Including with FRLs]	FAO	Mr. Ben Vickers
11:50 – 12:10	Brief presentation of Thailand's progress on REDD+	DNP	TBC
12:10 - 12:30	Group Photo		
12:30 – 13:30	Lunch		
<i>Workshop Session Day 1</i>			
13:30 – 14:20	Basic intro to FRLs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What is a FRL (vs. FREL?) and what purposes can it serve? - Why is it useful for a country in the UNFCCC context? - Global overview of FRL submissions Questions & discussion First considerations for Thailand	FAO	Ms Donna Lee
14:20-15:00	Introduction: Key elements to construct a FRL Forest definition: Why it matters Scope: What REDD+ activities to include? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Precedents under the UNFCCC & other initiatives - What are other countries including in their FRL and why? - Considerations for choice Questions & discussion First considerations for Thailand	FAO	Mr Mathieu van Rijn
15:00-15:30	Break		
15:30 – 16:30	Group work. Four groups to discuss the following elements, including a proposed action plan for each: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forest Definition • Scope 	All	All (facilitation by FAO advisers)

16:30 – 17:00	Back reporting of group sessions	All	Groups
17:00-17:15	General discussion and review of day 1	FAO	Mr Ben Vickers
Day Two: 22nd (Thursday) Nov 2018			
Time	Event	Organization	Speaker
<i>Workshop Session Day 2: Developing a country action plan toward FRL construction</i>			
9:00-9:30	Recap of discussions from first day and introduction to second day	FAO	Mr Ben Vickers
09:30-10:45	FRLs in the context of Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) to the Paris Agreement, Green Climate Fund (GCF) and beyond	FAO	Ms Donna Lee
10:45-11:15	Break	All	All
11:15-12:30	Activity data: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What is required? - What is available in Thailand? [Develop road map to fill gaps/needs]		Mr Abu Mahmood
12:30-13:30	Lunch		
13:30-14:15	Emission factors: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What is required? - What is available in Thailand? [Develop road map to fill gaps/needs]		Mr Mathieu van Rijn
14:15 – 15:30	Group work.	All	All (facilitation by FAO advisers)
15:00-15:30	Break	All	All
15:30-16:30	4 Groups report back with discussions and input from whole group (15 mins each with discussion) → Discussion on data needs?	All	All
16:30 – 17:00	UNFCCC submission process	FAO	Ms Donna Lee



Day Three: 23rd (Friday) Nov 2018			
Time	Event	Organization	Speaker
<i>Workshop Session Day 3: Developing a country action plan toward FRL construction</i>			
09:00-09:30	Recap of discussions from second day and introduction to third day	FAO	Mr Ben Vickers
09:30 – 10:30	Methodology: What are the different types of FRLs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Historic average or projected trend? - What choices have countries made and why? - Considerations for choice from a policy & technical perspective <p>Questions and discussion</p>	FAO	Ms. Donna Lee
10:30-10:45	Break		
10:45-11:45	Scale: Subnational or national? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What scale have other countries chosen and why <p>Questions and discussion First considerations for Thailand</p>	FAO	Ms. Donna Lee
11:45-12:45	Final comments from FAO Follow up plans, including support to FRL development in Thailand	FAO	Ben Vickers
12:45-13:00	Closing comments from host (Thailand)	DNP	TBC
13:00-14:00	Lunch		
14:00	Departure		