MID-TERM REVIEW

The Agro-biodiversity Initiative (TABI) Phase 4

Julian Gonsalves, PhD and Yayoi Lagerqvist, PhD
Consultants

30 November 2018

Table of Contents

LIST OF ACRONYMS

ABD	Agro-Biodiversity
AFC	Agriculture & Forestry Colleges
AFS	Agriculture and Food Security
CBD	International Convention on Biological Diversity
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
DALAMD	Department of Agricultural Land Management and Development
DOF	Department of Forestry
DOLF	Department of Livestock and Fisheries
DoPLA	Department of Policy and Legal Affairs
FALUPAM	Forest and Agricultural Land Use Planning, Allocation and Management
FCZ	Fish Conservation Zone
GOL	Government of Lao PDR
KKN	Khao Khai Noi
MAF	Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry
MEA	Multilateral Environmental Agreements
MONRE	Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment
MTR	Mid-Term Review
NAFRI	National Agriculture, Forestry and Rural Development Research Institute
NFE	Non-Formal Education
NTFP	Non Timber Forest Product
SDC	Swiss Development Corporation
SPA	sub-Project Agreement
SRI	System of Rice Intensification
SURAFCO	Support to the Reform of the Agriculture and Forestry College in Luang Prabang
TABI	The Agro-Biodiversity Initiative
UARC	Upland Agriculture Research Center

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This is the main report for the mid-term review of the Agro-Biodiversity Initiative's (TABI) Phase IV (April 2017- September 2020). The review was carried out by a team of two international, i.e. Dr. Julian Gonsalves (team leader) and Dr. Yayoi Lagerqvist (land use planning), and two Lao experts, i.e. Khampu Phouyavong (NAFRI), Thitsadee Chounlamountry (DALAM) during 8 October and 2 November 2018 in Laos.The overall aim of the review was to assess the progress of three outcome areas of TABI Phase IV and provide practical recommendation for finalisation of the project. The main method employed by the team includes review of project documents, in-country stakeholder workshops and meetings, interviews with key informants and field visits to TABI's focal provinces in Luangprabang, Xiengkhouang and Houapanh. The review is in two parts, consisting of the main report and an annex report focusing on TABI's land use planning.

Overall, the review team finds high relevance of TABI's extension activities supporting local communitites to improve agro-biodiversity and its complementary effort to improve land use planing in the upland communities. Reviewers also find that TABI has extensive but underutilisedinformation based on its nearly a decade of experience in Laos. During this final phase of TABI, the project and its partners will need to shift the focus from implementing more activities in the field into consolidating and generating materials for disseminationto convey the key learnings of TABI experience. It also needs to strategicallyengage in national dialogue on the significance of agro-biodiversity in improving forest-agricultural interface and rural livelihood. Finally, considering the importance of TABI's achivements,SDC will also need to continue to support the communication of TABI experience to further faciliatate greater learningacross its Mekong Programme.

BACKGROUND OF THE MID-TERM REVIEW[1]

"The Agro-Biodiversity Initiative" (TABI) project is part of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) Agriculture and Food Security (AFS) portfolio. It is implemented by the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (MAF) through the **National Agriculture, Forestry and Rural Development Research Institute (NAFRI)** with the technical support of **NIRAS**.

TABI was launched in 2009 and since has identified, tested and disseminated a large number ofAgro-BioDiversity (ABD) livelihood models, based on specific product value chains such as crispy river weed, specialty tea, honey or traditional varieties of sticky rice. Moreover, TABI developed a participative approach for forest and land use planning and management (pFALUPAM). As an initiative, one of TABI's core approaches is to work with partners, helping them adapt to and adopt ABD-focused practices.

The actual TABI phase IV (April 2017 to September 2020) objectives are:**"To contribute to poverty alleviation and improved livelihoods of upland communities through sustainable management and use of agro-biodiversity in multifunctional landscapes".**

Taking into account the huge amount of knowledge, activities, results and documents that TABI has generated through the implementation of its multiple initiatives over the past two phases, this last and final phase aims at analysing, rationalizing and capitalising all the gained experience and good practices, and disseminating this to a wider audience, which will influence actors and stakeholders involved in rural development and ABD development.

In order to meet these objectives of the project, three outcomes are defined:

Outcome 1: Developed options and systems for ABD-based livelihoods are sustainably applied by upland farming communities in TABI target provinces, enhancing their resilience.

During this last phase, the focus is on the consolidation of on-going small projects and on the documentation of the methods to enable other actors to continue the support through the mechanisms in place; and to look for out-scaling opportunities in the form of partnerships with other projects or with the private sector, aiming at improving economic opportunities, through the development of viable value chains. This outcome, organised around three outputs, will focus on the sustainability of existing small projects as well as the out-scaling of the most promising ABD value chains or livelihood opportunities.

[1] Taken from the Terms of Reference for the mid-term review of the project.

Outcome 2: pFALUPAM procedures provide increased production, equitable benefits, strengthened tenure and good land and forest governance and sustainable management.

TABI has developed an improved, comprehensive methodology - pFALUPAM. Its outputs promote productive and sustainable forest and land use management in multi-functional upland landscapes and provide strengthened tenure for villagers to undertake ABD-based livelihoods in these areas. The community-organized upland rotations that result from using the methodology are an important precursor to the development of permanent agro-forestry systems. Five outputs are proposed to further develop, disseminate and institutionalize the approach under the new phase.

Outcome 3: ABD data, information, knowledge, tools and concepts are capitalized and disseminated to local, national and international levels, verifying and documenting TABI findings and impact; and advocating for the integration of ABD in planning, decision making and policy development.

The aim of this outcome, through nine outputs, is to lift TABI experience and lessons learnt to a higher level by focusing on the production and dissemination of information products, making a systematic link between the information produced and its use, aiming at embedding ABD issues in policy and decision-making processes, planning and implementation. Finally, this outcome has the ambition to actively engage Lao Institutions in the analysis and production of communication materials in order to move from a project-driven approach to Lao ownership, also contributing to an increased international recognition of the role of ABD in upland livelihoods).

TABI Phase IV **Intervention Strategy**

This fourth and last phase has a duration of 3 years and 6 months (April 2017 to September 2020), the project then coming to an end of its life cycle after roughly twelve years of operation. This timeframe will allow enough time to sustain TABI activities after the project completion.

In order to ensure the sustainability of TABI, this final phase of the project is focusing on inserting ABD lessons, ideas, models and approaches into national policy dialogues and advocating for ABD principles to be embedded into other projects and programs. This will allow sufficient time to achieve significant results and to transfer all functions and knowledge from TABI to MAF line departments at national and local level (including the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment - MoNRE), by using the in-country systems already in place.

The intervention strategy, guided by the outcomes and practical considerations and lessons learnt, emphasises on:

Completion of ongoing activities: This includes both activities related to the implementation of small projects, including their linkage with value chain development, and land-use planning activities.

Consolidation of methods and tools to ensure their future application and use: New activities/projects initiated during phase IV are very limited, and the foreseen out-scaling will focus on the consolidation of lessons learnt.

Capitalising knowledge to ensure a long-term change in perception and understanding of ABD: Knowledge and experience are documented, capitalized upon and disseminated in order to impact local, national and international decision making and practices. This corresponds to outcome 3.

Capacitate stakeholders to ensure the continued application of TABI concepts and methods in decision making and implementation: The sustainability of promoted ideas, models and approaches is also expected to be achieved thanks to the human capacities built amongst Government staff, but also farmers, who have been exposed to and participated in project activities.

Exit strategy: TABI phase IV tries to strengthen management structures along with its continuous inclusion in the country systems that are expected to be functional once the project finishes. The project staff is progressively handing over functions to MAF line departments at local and national levels. Regular and already ongoing training and coaching of GoL staff are performed in terms of technical know-how and management capacities (including fund raising).

The project's defined **direct beneficiaries** are Upland farmers (30'000 Households - HH) and producer groups in the targeted geographical areas (Louangprabang, Xiengkhouang and Houaphanh provinces), the MAF, the MoNRE, the National University of Laos (NUoL) and the 5 national Agriculture & Forestry Colleges (AFC) supported by SDC's SURAFCO project. The **indirect beneficiaries** identified are the neighbouring upland communities, the private sector - individuals and companies who provide support and marketing services for ABD products, relevant Government of Laos (GoL) bodies (national assembly, ministries, research institutes, platforms), general public and young generation, civil society, non-government agencies and stakeholders involved in the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) forum and International science-policy actors.

The mid-term review was seen as an opportunity to assess progress, update approaches and ensure that TABI is on track to handover to different agencies. The review consisted of

two reviewers, Dr. Julian Gonsalves (team leader) and Dr. Yayoi Lagerqvist, who was brought in because of her special expertise on land use and planning (outcome). In addition to the international reviewers, two Lao national reviewers including Khamphou Phouyavong (NAFRI) and Thitsadee Chounlamountry (DALAM) joined the assessment. The review consists of two parts, the main report and a separate and complementary report focusing on land use planning. This main report focuses on a review of the three outcome areas, with emphasis on knowledge management and capitalization and use of TABI products and key lessons in dialogue and uptake/scaling events.

Map of LAO PDR

Source: Chamberlain (2008). Taken from Ironside, J. (2017). *The Recognition of Customary Tenure in Lao PDR*. MRLG Thematic Study Series #8. Vientiane: MRLG.

INTRODUCTION

1. The aim of the Agro-Biodiversity Initiative (TABI) is to leverage the country's rich agro-biodiversity into a mechanism that realises development goals in the near term without jeopardising future capacity to do the same, based on the assumption that the concept and practice of agro-biodiversity can play an important role in supporting farmers to respond and adjust to the rapidly changing contexts. It seeks to conserve, enhance, manage and sustainably utilise the biological diversity found in farming landscapes in order to improve the livelihoods (being food, income and materials for use) of upland farming families in Laos.TABI Phase 1 lasted from 2009 to 2012 and was designed on principles drawn from the implementation of Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEA), such as the International Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). The major thrust set out for in the start of TABI was to support the Lao PDR in implementing the specific CBD aspects related to food, nutrition, dietary diversity, hunger and poverty reduction. TABI early focus was on conserving and managing agro-biodiversity in different agro ecosystems in the targeted Northern provinces.

2. TABI Phase 2 continued the work from Phase 1 but with a slightly revised goal and focus: "To contribute to poverty alleviation and improved livelihoods of upland communities through sustainable management and use of ABD in multi-functional landscapes". This shift is to be noted: the TABI portfolio responded with a major emphasis on livelihoods and the role of ABD with a complimentary emphasis on land use planning and management (with had its own implications for poverty reduction by improving access to productive land and forest resources).

A bigger emphasis was laid on the role of ABD and the integration of ABD principles into national strategies and plans, rather than CBD and other global initiatives. This was done by developing ABD-based livelihoods options and sustainable forest and agricultural land use planning. The intention was to build an evidence base that could lead into improved policies and strategies as well as improved livelihoods and management of land and ABD resources. Participatory land use planning and management received special attention. TABI recognises that land planning must be based on the real situation and modern tools for spatial mapping were deployed. Proper delineation of the resource base into meaningful categories (zones) was undertaken. Improved land use categories were arrived at in consultation with local authorities and villages thus bringing in the participatory dimension of local planning. Spatial databases were set up at provincial level. Maps are available on line and capacities are in place at provincial and district levels for future outscaling work.

3. The Agro-Biodiversity Initiative (TABI), a joint program of the Lao Government and the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), seeks to conserve, enhance, manage and sustainably utilise the biological diversity found in farming and forest landscapes in order to improve the livelihoods of upland farming families in northern Laos.

TABI is different from other projects in that it is an "initiative" that develops and facilitates opportunities to integrate agro-biodiversity and agro-ecosystems into relevant programmes and policies by providing funding and technical support to on-going programmes and new initiatives in agriculture, environment, livelihood, education, health, etc., with the intention of embedding Agro-Biodiversity issues in decision making processes at the national and local levels.

The ***project hypothesis*** is that agro-biodiversity based development offers a viable alternative to large-scale, unsustainable monoculture and concession-based agriculture development in the uplands of Laos to the benefit of upland populations, and contributes to **increased food security and resilience; and reduced poverty and inequity.**

Since 2009, the first two phases of TABI have identified, tested and disseminated more than 20 ABD-based livelihood models and developed a participative approach for forest and land use planning and management (pFALUPAM).

The ***project goal*** for Phase 3 is "*to contribute to poverty alleviation and improved livelihoods of upland communities through the sustainable management and use of ABD in multi-functional landscapes*."[2]

TABI **Phase 3** is organised around **three outcomes**, complementing each other to reach the project goal:

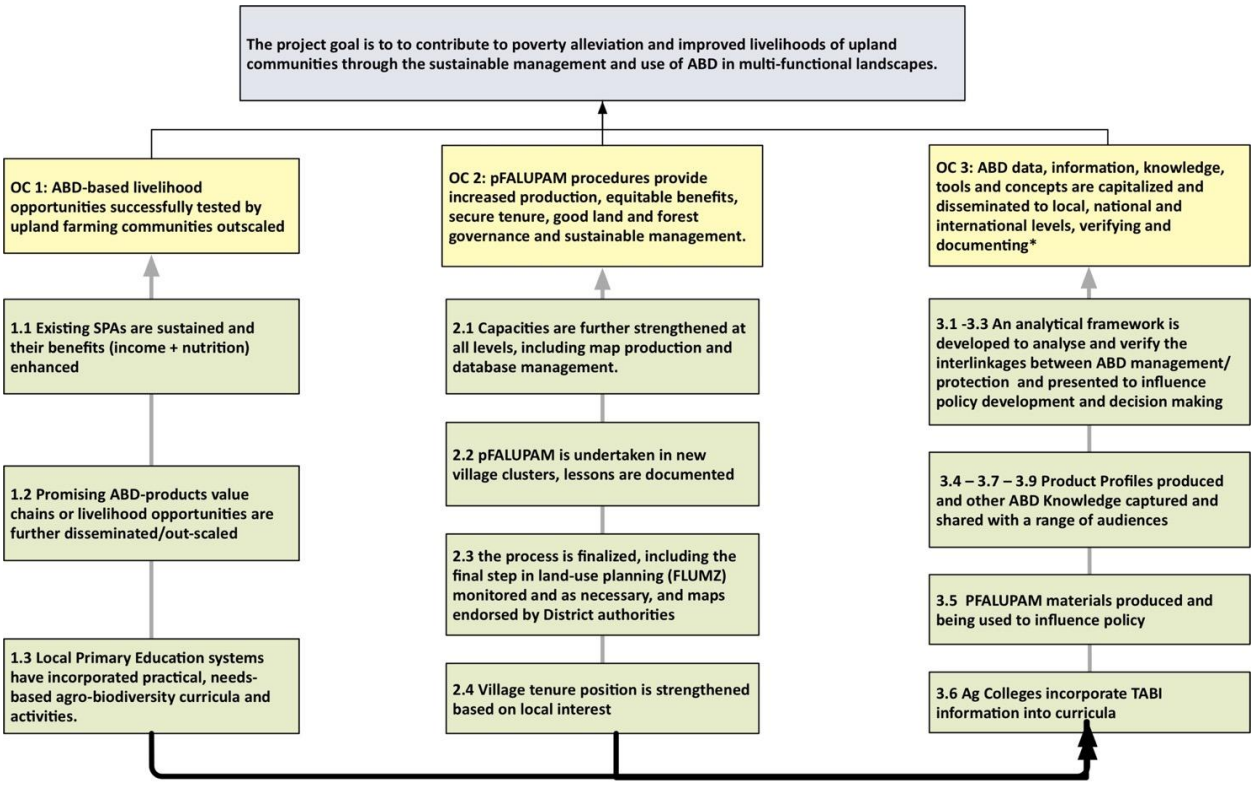
- *Outcome 1 – Livelihood;* "Developed options and systems for ABD-based livelihoods are sustainably applied by upland farming communities in TABI target provinces, enhancing their resilience".
- *Outcome 2 – Forest and Land-Use Planning;* "pFALUPAM procedures provide increased production, equitable benefits, secure tenure, good land and forest governance and sustainable management".
- *Outcome 3 – Knowledge generation;* "ABD data, information, knowledge, tools and concepts are capitalised and disseminated to local, national and international levels, verifying and documenting TABI findings and impact, and advocating for the integration of ABD in planning, decision making and policy development."

Outcomes 1 and 2 aim to demonstrate the validity of ABD approaches, with a range of partners in different agro-ecological niches in the Uplands of Lao PDR. Outcome 3 provides the tools and approaches to generate and share evidence-based knowledge on (a) how ABD practices are supporting changes in local livelihoods (income and nutrition), natural resource management, ecosystems services and ABD itself; (b) how far ABD-based livelihood options provide alternatives to mono-crops and industrial agriculture in the perspective of the development of a sustainable agriculture contributing to poverty reduction. Communication

[2] Taken from The Agrobiodiversity Initiative (TABI) Phase 3, Annual Workplan Year 22018-2019.

and advocacy for the integration of ABD in socio-economic development models will be emphasized at decentralised, national and international levels (outcome 3).[3]

Figure 1. TABI GOAL, OUTCOME AND OUTPUTS[4]



Tactics to institutionalise TABI results[5]

For its final two years of work, TABI identified a range of tactics and mechanisms to ensure results can be sustained after the project ends as shown in the following diagram, a focus is on linking TABI's considerable field experience to policy dialogue at the national level. In Year 1, TABI drafted analytical framework and created linkages to the re-imagined Socio-Economic Research Centre and Policy think tank of NAFRI and the newly established Department of Policy and Legal Affairs. Since then, there have been changes and the policy development responsibility was shifted to the newly created unit (DOPLA) in the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry. NAFRI retains the critical research support role. TABI works with both institutions to develop a series of research initiatives which link to policy dialogue. Results will be fed into a range of policy dialogues through the sub-sector working on agro-

[3]Taken from The Agrobiodiversity Initiative (TABI) Phase 3, Annual Workplan Year 22018-2019.
[4]Taken from Program update: What will be TABI's legacy? 10th National Steering Committee Meeting, June 27, 2018.
[5]Taken from The Agrobiodiversity Initiative (TABI) Phase 3, Annual Workplan Year 22018-2019.

biodiversity, the land use planning working group, and discussions on Lao PDR's commitment to the Convention on Biological Diversity and the National Agro-Biodiversity Action Plan. One other area is to use the substantial data that TABI has collected to show the importance for ABD on agriculture and forestry statistics.

In addition, emphasis will be placed on providing a greater role for MAF government line agencies to have ownership over key activities. For work on FALUPAM this will include ensuring DALAM is the main lead on all related activities and the Department of Forestry and Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment are more actively engaged. NAFRI will lead knowledge capitalisation and communication activities. For field level activities, specific government agencies will be asked to provide expertise to help steer activities.

At the field level, TABI has evaluated ABD livelihood activities and selected the most promising of these for model development and investments. All activities chosen have partnerships of some form so that activities can continue after TABI ends. In some instances, TABI has already handed over activities to other projects or the province itself. Another tactic has been working with other projects to carry on work after TABI ends.

One area that TABI will work on at the provincial and district level this year is developing mechanisms and approaches to incorporate ABD priorities into district and provincial socio-economic plans.

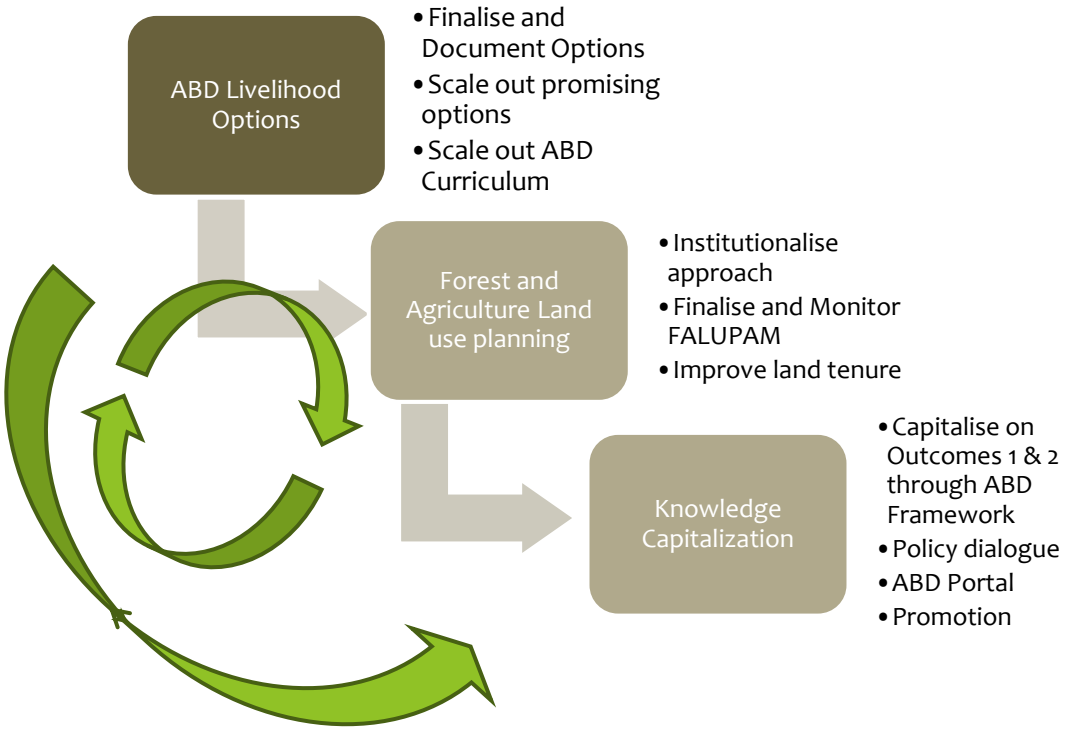
TABI is often requested to by other projects to learn from its current set of livelihood activities and how they might potentially be able to use them. TABI will develop a 'catalogue' of activities so that projects and others can easily access the knowledge and experience developed after 10 years.

Finally, TABI has produced a large quantity of information which has not been made readily available. We will repackage and share this information more actively through briefs, presentations at meetings, extension materials, TABI website and development of the Pha Khao Lao platform. Linkages will be made with extension to ensure farmers and district staff can access results in format they can use.

TABI in its last two years is expected to capitalise on the experiences and lessons generated in the first two phases (ABD relevance and options for livelihoods). The MTR reviewed these efforts and the findings and recommendation are presented in the main report.

The graphic below is a very useful representation of TABI's effort to ensure capitalisation. It served as a framework during the MTR and should be considered again in any future/final review of TABI.

Figure 2. Institutionalising and capitalising on TABI outputs and outcomes (in its last phase)



Source: Program update: What will be TABI's legacy? 10th National Steering Committee Meeting, June 27, 2018

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION (by outputs and beyond)

A. Outcome 1: Developed options and systems for ABD-based livelihoods are sustainably applied by upland farming communities in TABI target provinces, enhancing their resilience.

1. Output 1.1 Existing SPAs are sustained and their benefits (income and nutrition) enhanced based on a problem-solving bottom-up approach, identified opportunities, lessons learnt from previous phases and sustainability analysis.

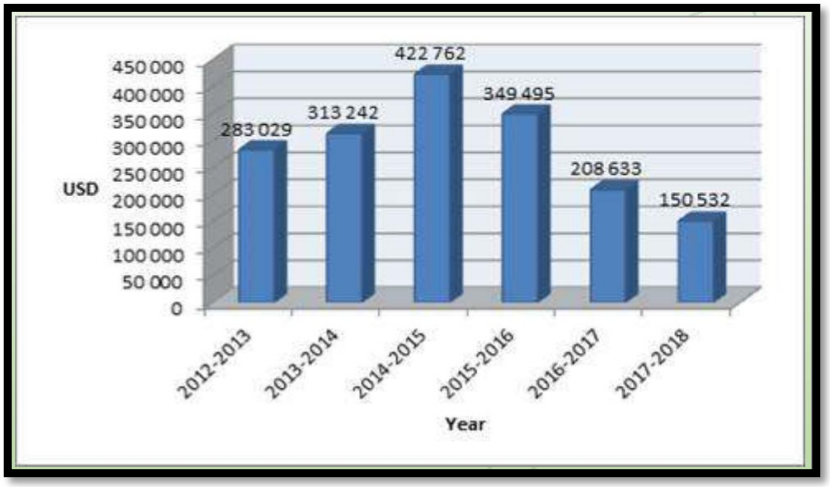
2. Output 1.2. Promising ABD product value chains or livelihood opportunities are further disseminated/out-scaled to new areas through GoL agencies and, where possible, the private sector.

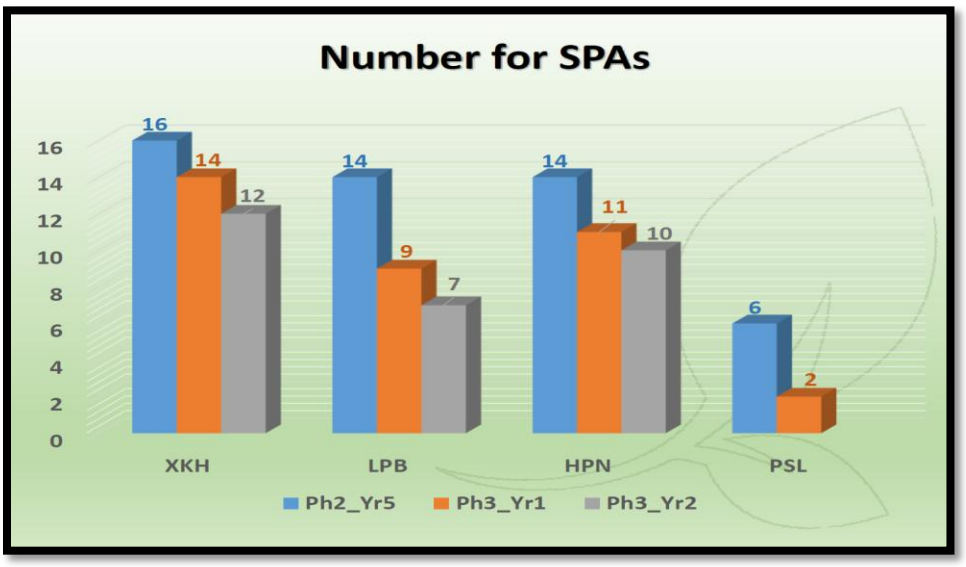
3. Output 1.3. Local Primary Education systems have incorporated practical, needs-based agro-biodiversity curricula and activities.

Findings for Outcome 1

1.1 The ABD oriented SPAs are in effect "action research" activities (even if they were not designed to be research oriented TABI has consistently placed an emphasis on evidence as basis for scaling).At the core of the NTFP livelihood development is the idea of conservation of ABD through sustainable use.This sets the TABI approach from some other NTFP approaches while focus only on value addition and market linkages. Equally important is the idea of conservation of forests and fallows. By making considerable investments targeted to districts levels TABI brought huge attention to agro-biodiversity education and conservation.

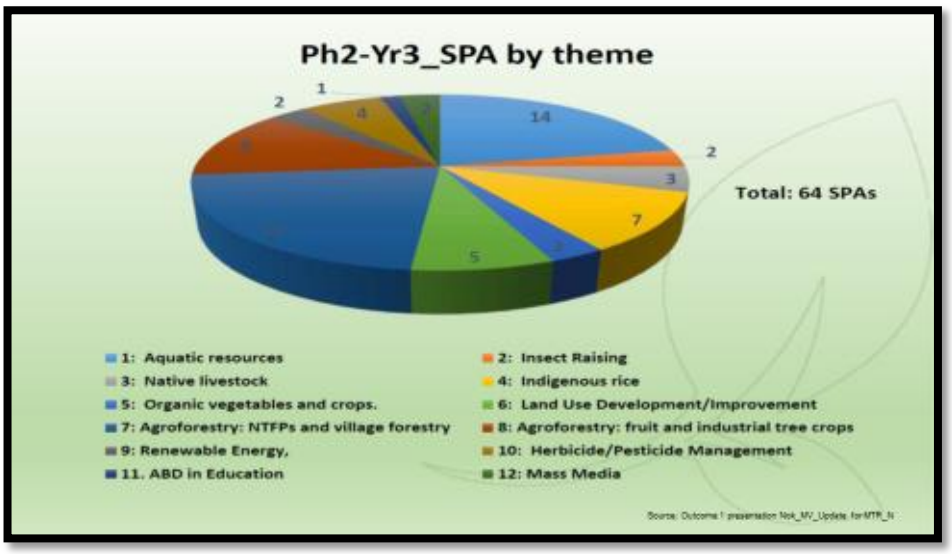
VALUATION AND VALUE ADDITION OF AGROBIODIVERSITY:

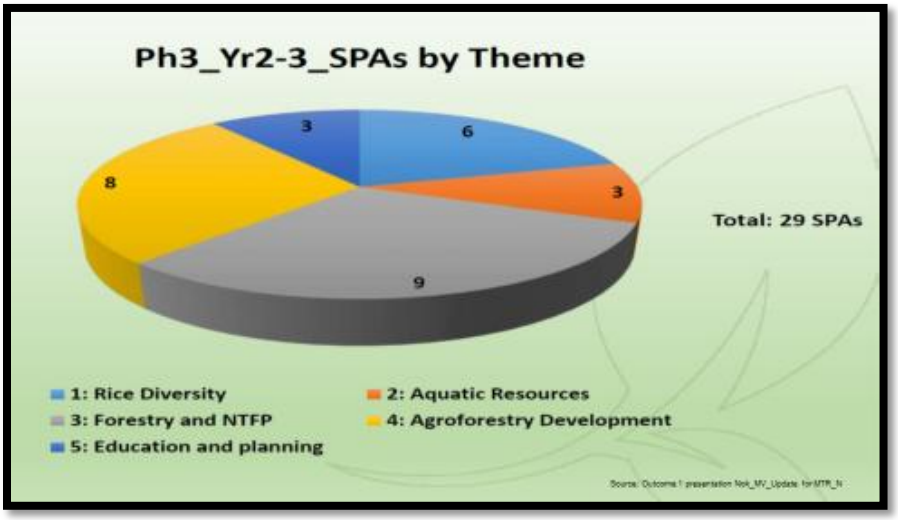




Taken from Outcome 1 presentation Nok_MV_Update for MTR_N

As result of the large SPA portfolio TABI engaged in, districts were able to test and only later reduce both the thematic coverage and scope of the ABD SPAs.TABI has to be commended for not using a blueprint approach. This reduction of the SPA portfolio was the result of feedback from users and strong evidence of ground level outcomes.Thus the SPA approach over the years had an iterative dimension. The current portfolio is the "narrowest" of any year since TABI started.





1.2 Resulting from widescale field testing of SPAs a priority short list of ABD have been arrived at (mushrooms, bamboo shoots, honey, oranges, coffee, etc.).Notable is the fact that ALL the current NTFPs (ABDs) being tested are products that local people were familiar with and usually a key component of local livelihoods and/or food systems. These enterprises relied on the local natural resource base and the comparative advantage of local communities.As a result, the chances for sustainability are high (assuming sustainable use principles continue to be advocated and is monitored by local authorities)as most of the ideas TABI build on(and supported) were promising pre-existent local livelihoods.

1.3 There have been multiple benefits of NTFP as discussed above from perspective of income, conservation, food, nutrition and conservation. However, TABI has also generated higher level outcomes of relevance to programming for ABD.

1.4 A rich database on ADBs has been accumulated over TABI's multiple phases. An accompanying effort to generate knowledge products (e.g. product briefs,videos, etc.)has served to bring ABD and

NTFP in the radar of provincial and district authorities. The electronic platform Pha Khao Lao is further helping bring these to the wider public including students and consumers.

RECOMMENDATION:

- **TABI must ensure that its rich database on ABD, accumulated over multiple phases, remains accessible – as a public good – forfuture use.An appropriate home should be considered either at NAFRI or at the DOF in the Village Forestry Unit.**

1.5 TABI has brought prominence to the importance of NTFPs associated with forests and fallows. This has resulted in a "valuation" of the resource base where these NTFPs are located. This "enlightenment" of the role and importance of NTFPs and a recognition of their conservation (amongst district and provincial authorities) is important given the country's recent focus on community forests and NTFPs. The conservation through use agenda and need to designate zones for conservation is now fairly widely recognised.The TABI focus on FALUPAM-zoning has also bring recognition of the niche for NTFPs: forest and fallow lands. CDE support and guidance has been critical to ensure high quality evidence to support the case for conserving NTFPs.

1.6 The MTR were fortunate to have had a chance to meet with Dr. Oupakone Alounsavath of the Department of Forestry's new initiative on village forestry(started in 2014).In this regard, village boundries and zoning has special importance.There is now increasing GoL recognition of the importance of villages managing their forest and NTFPs resources. There is now a "common" approach to village forestry (8 steps for village forest management). There was an expressed interest to collaborate with TABI and utilise the rich repository of ABD resources/information/database. The DOF has a forestry training center that could also benefit from links with TABI in this last year. TABI has accumulated evidence on the ground and via support studies which can be used for dialogue events with policy makers to understand that fallows are productive and contribute to both food and income security.The Working Group on Village Forestry/NTFP is one logical platform for TABI to engage with in an effort to capitalise on its rich ABD /NTFP resource base. TABI has this opportunity (pathway) with DOF that it should seriously explore, including as partner in the conduct of dialogue events on NTFP and ABDs.TABI should consider "sponsoring" one of the DOF/Village Forestry Working group meetings at one of its target provinces. An initial meeting with the German donor community associated with this DOF initiative should also be considered.

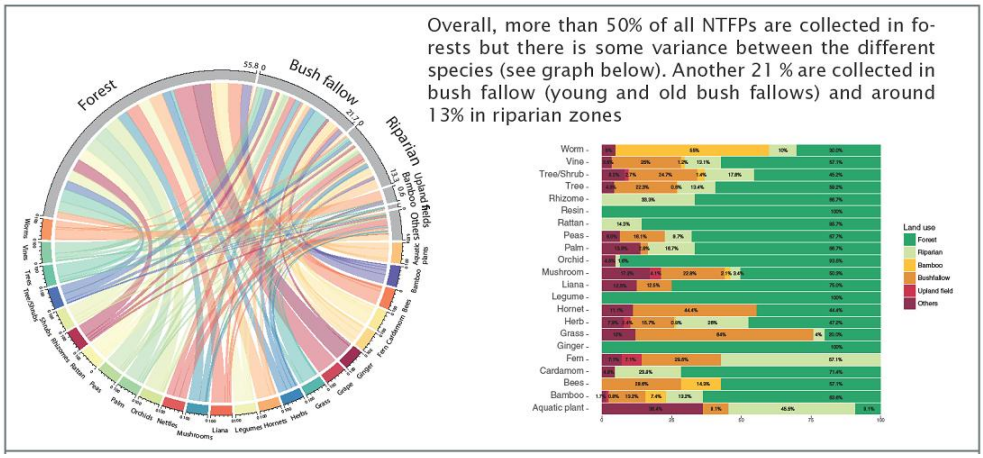
RECOMMENDATION:

- **TABI should seriously explore partnering with the DOF in the conduct of dialogue events on NTFP and ABDs.It should engage with the Working Group on Village Forestry**

/NTFP and improve information exchange linkages with Forestry Training Centers. This engagement will require building relationships with champions like Dr. Oupkhakone.

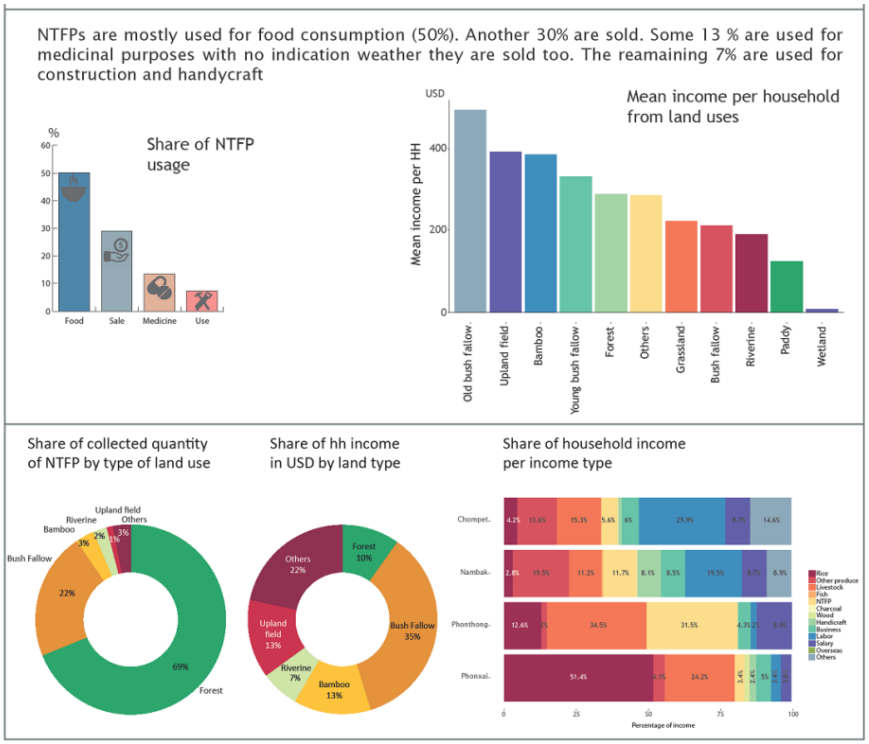
1.7 Reseach evidence and policy briefs (such as the graphics that follow) are powerful tools for policy influence.Better use is envisage in the last two years:to support policy briefs, media briefings and dialogue platforms.

TABI-NTFP CONTEXTUALISATION



Source: The Agro-Biodiversity Initiative (TABI) Phase 2. Year 5 Progress Report.

1.8 The food and income contributions of NTFP are also now well documented by TABI and also important to be highlighted with the the DOF for its village forestry initiatives (see graphics below for examples of visualisation and key messages). TABI data collected from multiple locations,when featured in policy briefs and dialogue events can serve national well. These evidence based briefs are not to be limited to national level events but should be considered just as important for provincial and district level advocacy.



Source: The Agro-Biodiversity Initiative (TABI) Phase 2. Year 5 Progress Report.

1.9 TABI supported a large number of SPAs that brought attention to agroforestry based options: tea, oranges, coffee and bananas. All these commodity oriented SPAshave relied on local resources and indigenous knowledge base.TABI has build on local practice that had been*previously "discovered"*/initiated, nutured or incubated by farmers themselves. These tree-based commodities are often associated with forest margins niches andincreasingly, in former shifting cultivation areas. Agroforestry-based SPAs that TABI has managed have demonstrated the potential to address both conservation and improved land use/management goals, while also improving the asset and income base of household. New opportunities for enhancing tenurial rights to village forestry resources are emerging as result of this effort and have been noted during the MTR. These sites also might continue to serve as lighthouses for learning and sharing in out-scaling efforts.

Domestication of forest tea in degraded forest margins.

RECOMMENDATION:

- **Case studies might be considered which provide evidence on how tenurial rights are improving as a result of an engagement in agroforestry. Both the case of tea and coffee might be considered.**

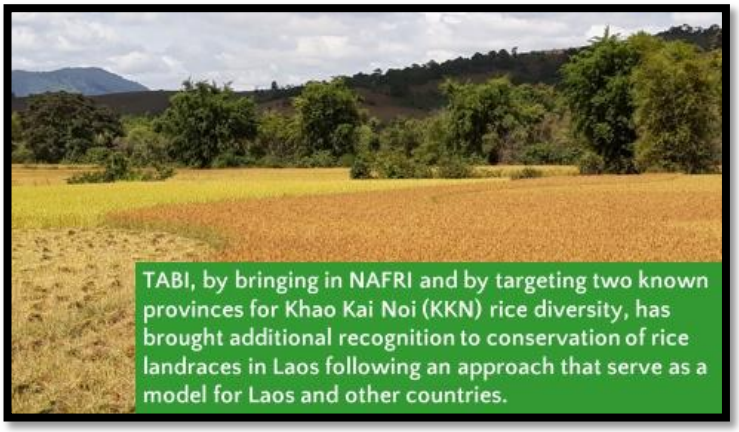
Native oranges – a commercial agroforestry option

Coffee in the shade of forests

1.10 The agroforestry initiatives that TABI initiatedprovided capacity development(e.g. study tours to learn best practices) and which TABI supported financially are very likely to be sustained over the longer period. This is the result of action research, the focus on value chain, product development and market linkages, etc. TABI initiated many of these efforts by providing community support facilities (all the nurseries the MTR visited were sustained even after TABI turned over the initiative).The capacity development contributions at district level resulting from this engagement are significant and bringing about local change:there is strong evidence of uptake of agroforesty and associated support systems in at least two provinces. In Louangprabang, the local district authorities have a plan to expand forest coffee to 30 villages. Tea is also being prioritised by district authorities. The ABD curriculum in schools is now being expanded in HPN and Louangprabang with government. Many similar examples can be quoted. Some risks were also noted:there are some livelihoods that are dependent on the health of natural resources (water quality and flows in the case of the river weed enteprises). Seasonality is an issue. In many of the areas the group membership of local organisations appears to have declined (broom grass, river weed). Whether this is a natural trend, resulting from consolidation of enterprises, or it is the resultof elite capture, is unknown. These and other risks associated with groups everywhere, including capture by villlage elite, need to be monitored by local authorities (it is out of the purview of TABI) if equity, social inclusiveness and economic empowerment of the poor are to be prioritised.

1.11 Laos is known for its rich rice biodiversity. In fact, it is a centre of diversity for upland rice. It is the second largest contributor of rice germplasm to IRRI's global seed collection. Thus, rice agro-biodiversity conservation remains a priority consideration in Laos-based agro-biodiversity work. TABI has supported some very innovative work on well-known traditional lowland rice varieties **Khao KhaiNoi (KKN),**supporting clean seed systems. The TABI, NAFRI work on KKN is exceptional and needs to be more widely shared.

1.12 One study(presented below) supported by TABI clearly draws attention to the richness of rice agro-biodiversity in Laos. Ethnicity, risk reduction, spreading out labour requirements and addressing the unique and special rice based food needs might explain why farmers retain such diversity. A mix of rice with different maturity periods helps distribute labour needs and to mitigate risks from climate (e.g. *short* duration varieties might escape unseasonal drought or floods). Refer to the table below for a snap shot of the richness of rice agro-biodiversity.



RICE DIVERSITY: A TWELVE-VILLAGE STUDY IN NAM DAK DISTRICT,LAOS

(Highlights only)[6]

Table 1: Rice richness in terms of number of rice varieties per village, in 12 villages of Nam Bak district. The table (adapted from the original) is based on village surveys undertaken in 2018.

No	Village	Number of Varieties
1	Houayhit	37
2	Lankang	30
3	Namai	22
4	Longchok	20
5	Khanloum	15
6	Pakkhan	14
7	Khantheung	14
8	Douantai	13
9	Phouker	12
10	Houaykong	11
11	Phathong	11
12	Houayseua	10
e	**Total**	**209**
	Average	**17.4**

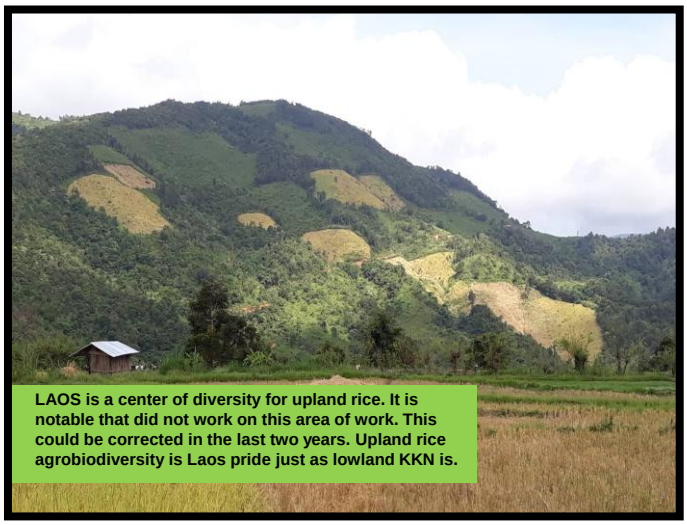
A total 123 rice varieties were recorded during the March 2018 survey in 12 villages in Nam Bak district. Of these, were 86 upland and 37 paddy field varieties, 106 (86%) were sticky/and 17 (14%) non-sticky. A total of 62 varieties (50%) were late maturing, against 37 (30%) early maturing and 23 (20%) medium.

Location	Type	Maturation Time			All	%
		Early	**Medium**	**Late**		
Upland	**Sticky**	15	12	50	77	63%
	Non-Sticky	8	1		9	7%
	Subtotal	**23**	**13**	**50**	**86**	70%
	% of total	*19%*	*11%*	*41%*	*70%*	
Lowland	**Sticky**	12	8	9	29	24%
	Non-Sticky	2	3	3	8	7%
	Subtotal	**14**	**11**	**12**	**37**	30%
	% of total	*11%*	*9%*	*10%*	*30%*	
ALL	**Total**	**37**	**24**	**62**	**123**	100%
	%	30%	20%	50%	100%	

[6]The data presented in this table are extracted from the March 2018 Survey (Joost, et al, 2018.).

Most of the varieties cultivated in the 12 villages belong to the late maturing upland sticky rice type. There were large differences in the number of varieties cultivated per village, ranging from 37 varieties in Houay Hit village (highest rice richness) to 10 in HouayXeua (lowest). The average number of varieties per village was 17.4.

1.13 TABI's *limited* engagement in the area of agro-biodiversity of ***upland*** rice (especially since Laos is the world's #1 centre of diversity for upland cultivars)is a concern. The plans to do some community seed banking work next year is noted and considered important. The concept of buffer seed stocks of traditional local upland varieties might be worth looking at. (NAFRI and UARC are also engaged in a survey of upland rice supported by TABI. The impression the MTR had were that this was to "update" the collection in the gene bank at NAFRI.)



It is important to note that some of the widely reported trials in the past in the uplands used traditional non-glutinous varieties in trials, comparing them with non-glutinous "modern" varieties, thus leading to such conclusion as 'improved non-glutinous varieties out yielded traditional varieties in both high and low yielding environments in northern Laos" (Saito, et al).

With agro-biodiversity conservation and food culture/security as primary important criteria, new work might be considered on *glutinous* cultivars in the upland ecosystems. Identifying promising upland glutinous varieties (a typical upland village is reported to grown an average of 3-5 varieties).Agronomic practices – already known – can help improve their productivity through simple management, e.g. use of micro-doses of fertilisers or spot

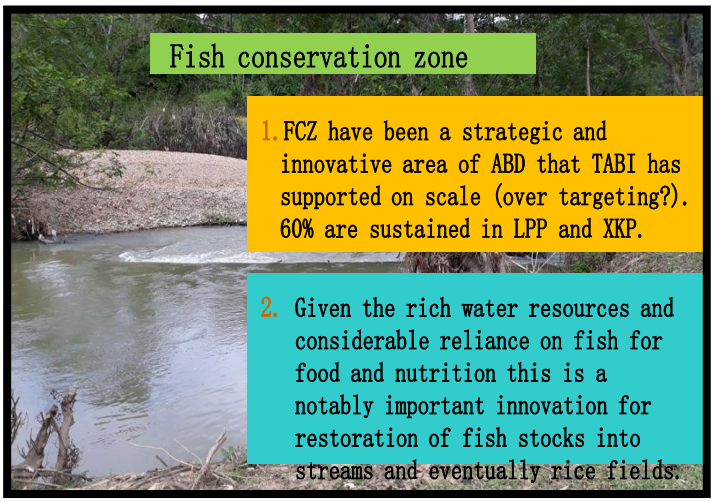
application of compost with reduced number of "clean" seeds dibbled 30 cm. apart can easily increase yields by 30%. Such approaches might offer a new opportunity to conserve these varieties. NAFRI with TABI support, should seriously consider using the SPA program for bringing attention to this area of agro-biodiversity conservation. Climate change challenges in the uplands can provide yet another argument for work on drought resistance in upland rice. During the MTR visits, officials from UARC, Dr. Khamdok SongyiKhang, Dr. Somphet Phengchanh, and Dr. Chantakhon, Head of RRC, NAFRI expressed interest in exploring further work of more applied nature. Researchers are aware that there are promising local upland rice varieties (market-oriented) that have not received attention (in recent years).

With Laos achieving near self-sufficiency in lowland rice, it is conceivable that such a shift in *emphasis* to upland rice and associated ecosystems would be easily noted and supported. TABI can incubate this over the 2019-2020 periods.

RECOMMENDATION:

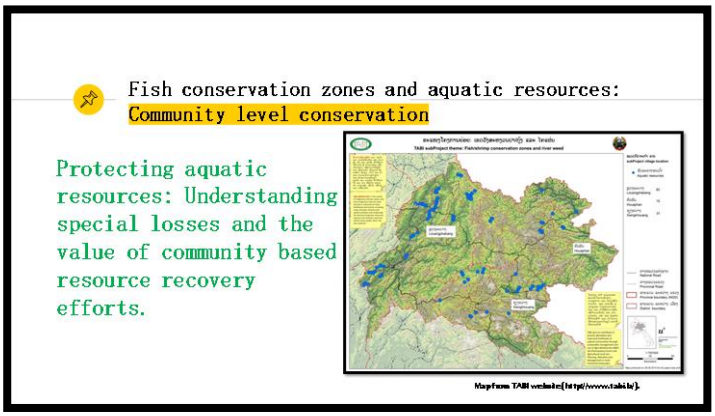
- **NAFRI, with TABI support, should consider a short cycle action research activity aimed at bringing attention to agro-biodiversity conservation of upland rice varieties. Climate change challenges in the uplands can provide a strong argument for work on drought resistance in *upland* rice.**

Fish Conservation Zone

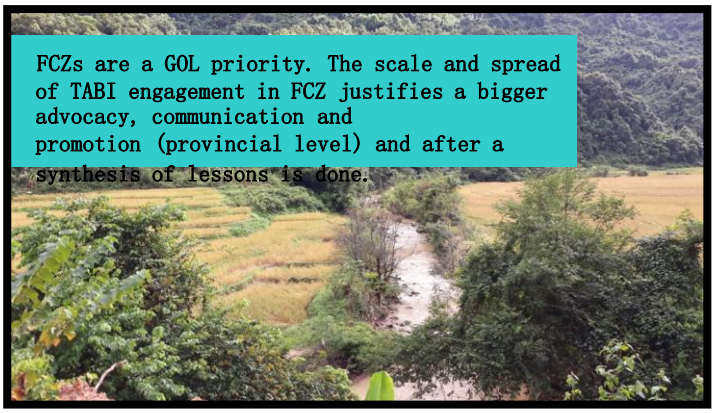


1.14 Fish Conservation Zones or FCZ have received a significant share of TABI resources especially in Louangprabang and Houaphanh. FCZs are expected to help conserve aquatic biodiversity, especially fish. This was a response to the declining fish stocks rivers (from overfishing, pesticide use, etc.).TABI sponsored a meeting in

February 2017 in Louangprabang which brought participants from nine (9) provinces (they reported 899 FCZ, of which 411 are from the three target provinces of TABI). TABI has invested heavily on FCZ thus bringing attention to an important dimension of agro-biodiversity: fish. The 2017 workshop involved fishery authorities from national and provincial levels.



The MTR visited FCZ in LP and XNP. The scale of TABI engagement in FCZ is significant. LP for example, started modestly in one district in 2013 and then it expanded to five districts. In 2018, LP reported at least 106 FCZ in 30 villages. They (self-rated) that 20% were very well maintained and half were moderate to good shape. Those on small streams and closer to the village were in better shape. Five villages dropped out. This modest rating by provincial authorities was viewed favourably by the MTR (i.e. realistic). In HPN, FCZ were established in 25 villages in eight districts. These are significant critical mass of FCZ in a single province. There is a strong local interest in FCZ with districts exerting co-ownership of FCZs. TABI's continuous engagement and investment (with some over-targeting) has helped ensure a degree of sustainability.



<u>RECOMMENDATIONS</u>:

- **Better assessment and documentation of the processes, benefits and impacts of these FCZ might be considered.**

A list of proof of concept sites and an associated listing of FCZ champions for each province might be considered so that these can serve as learning centres and lighthouses for continued advocacy.

Those FCZs that are considered of good standards should be provided with sign boards announcing their location (only one of the FCZ visited had signboard).

If one is to take full advantage of these FCZ they need to be better demarcated, announcements and rules and regulations posted at the sites. A listing of fish species reported locally (even if not comprehensive) might be considered.

TABI is working with the Department of Livestock and Fisheries (DOLF) in developing regulations. The MTR were told that the FCZ need a stronger government mandate and wider recognition. This is important work and could contribute to increasing capacities and ensuring sustainability.

TABI should prepare a summary of its extraordinarily important past work, lessons and recommendations on FCZ for eventual publishing as learning brief. A workshop of 12 to 15 best performing districts could be organised with support from an expert consultant documenter.
TABI should consider a major national (or international, similar to the workshop on honey) event with DOLF, WWF, and others as an end-of-project event. In preparation for this event, TABI might consider hiring a consultant to help design, organise and manage such an event given the specialised nature of FCZ.


Rice fish systems are supported by efforts to establish community based fish conservation zones.

1.15 It is fairly rare to see managed rice-fish system (where rice fields are stocked) in Asia. This work is therefore exceptional. In XKP, TABI has supported traditional rice-fish systems by supporting district breeding centres and propagation centres.). In that district,20 villages are engaged in fish farming. During a visit to the district farm we were told that 200 households and 15 traders had benefited from fingerlings the previous year: seven fish species are featured (TABI assisted in reintroducing two local species).The farm now earns 40 million KIP and is self-sufficient. TABI has supported district farms to revive their fish breeding efforts mainly through the

provision of support of strategic investments (e.g. water quality enhancement and species re-introduction. In another village, Naveed in HPN rice-fish systems (see pictures) have characterised farming systems with refuge ponds in strategic areas. The combination of good rice seed, SRI methods and fish integration has resulted in yields of 4 to 5 tonnes per hectare. The village is now totally self-sufficient in rice. The encouragement of traditional rice-fish systems is also expected to benefit IPM efforts directed towards reducing chemical use (though in the lowlands visited by the MTR, lowland systems in these highlands are still predominantly organic, possibly due to their reliance on KKN traditional rice varieties. The fact that most of these systems are nested in small rice valleys might also account for high and sustained rice yields (nutrient flows from forests surrounding these small valleys).

In the village of Naveed, all the lowland farmers raise fish. The district authorities provide fingerlings in April. These are stocked in on-farm ponds or bomb craters. The first harvest is in July and the second harvest is in October. Local fish species survive in ponds. Carps and tilapia are provided by the district. No pesticides are used in this village. This village is a proof of concept site: farmers can achieve 4 to 5 tonnes with integrated KKN varieties, SRI and fish systems.

1.16 TABI's work on honey is a good example (there are too many to elaborate in a MTR report) of long standing engagement on a single NTFP related enterprise: TABI initiated work on honey in 2013.Honey enterprises were one way of conserving forest bees and protecting livelihoods! Honey production was a traditional enterprise for those dwelling around forests. Laos honey is unique as it is "forest honey". As result of the TABI project, honey gathers are now bee raisers. Small improvements were made in hive methods, honey extraction methods, purifications, standards and market linkages. The work was initiated in HPN but QNP became engaged, soon emerging as the more promising province (likely due to the presence of champions, strong advocates, etc.). Market and value chain studies were undertaken. A centralised learning centre, processing facilities and market outlet has been

set up. Bees provide ecosystem services (e.g. pollination services for coffee). SPAs are targeted to districts (they wrote the proposal) and ownership is consequently assured. TABI provided multiple year grants to the districts that generated promising results. TABI assisted in establishing a honey network. A policy brief was prepared. A highpoint for the honey was the conduct earlier this year, of a sharing and learning event, co-sponsored with NTFP EP where honey efforts from other countries were presented (India, Indonesia, and Cambodia).Sixteen provinces from Laos were also represented. The meeting was held in QNP where the TABI action is. This is probably one of the best examples of the value chain approach used by TABI and a good example of how local action research is linked to national/global networking.

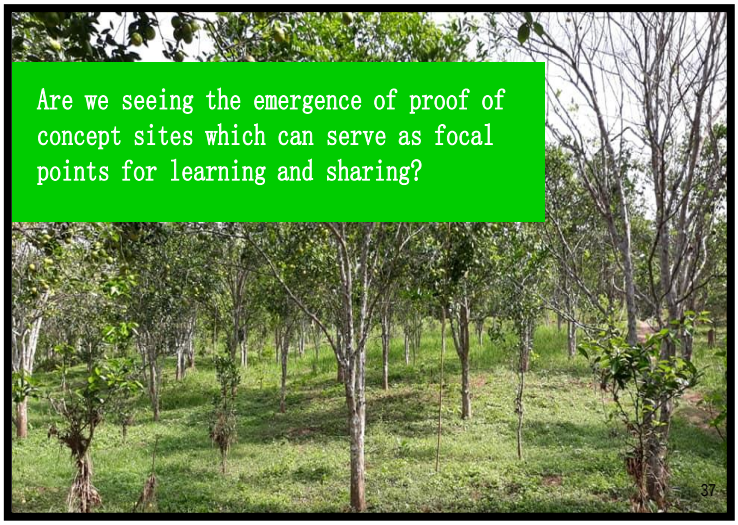
RECOMMENDATION:

- **End-of-the project major events similar to the honey networking event might be considered for FCZ and rice-fish integration (with the DOLF, WWF and IUCN) for agroforestry (with LURAS, others, with emphasis on coffee, orange, tea and bananas and associated crops like cardamom and bamboo) in the last two years of TABI. These are advocacy events aimed at mainstreaming and institutionalising TABI work in these two major areas.**

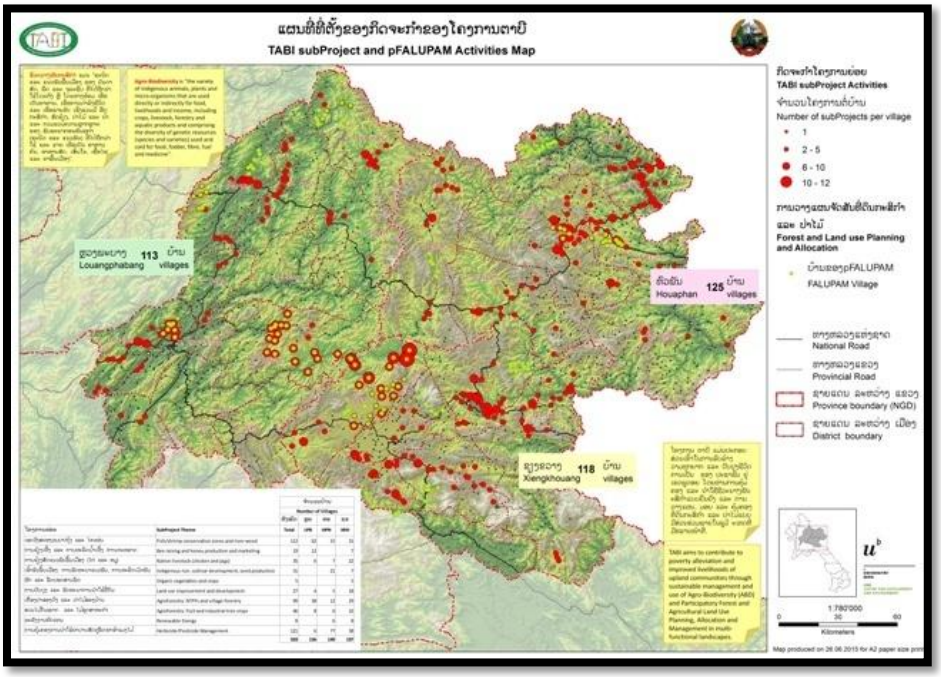
From honey gatherers to beekeepers: conserving forest bees and livelihoods.

1.17 From the earlier discussion, it is now fairly certain that a significant number of ABD activities (honey, coffee, tea, broom grass, mushroom, bamboo shoots, banana, oranges, KKN rice, FCZ and rice-fish systems, etc.) are emerging as promising livelihoods with multiple benefits.i.e. these could be proof of concept sites for ABD where conservation, developed value chains, and income and nutrition outcomes can be demonstrated.These proof of concept sitescan serve as focal points for district/provicial level sharing beyond TABI's life. In such areas, clusters of villages engaged in enterprises are in place. For an effective proof of concept site aside from demonstration of evidence, there has to be scale of adoption

(clusters of 15 to 20 families engaged in a specific location) and presence of social capital (to serve as local resource persons).Best practices are evident in these sites and sustainability and scaling is noted.



There are few similar efforts such as that of TABI withthe scale, geographic distribution, local district engagement and length of engagement in specific enterprises. With the current new programming in the area of nutrition sensitive agriculture it is highly likely that future activities can build on further on work started by TABI. Much of TABI work in the past has been "by default" nutrition sensitive.



RECOMMENDATIONS:

- **TABI should consider designating exemplary sites for each district and provinces (e.g. for FCZ, agroforestry, honey, broom grass, etc,). TABI can engage in a consultation effort to identify which sites can serve as "lighthouses".**

- **TABI team would be in a position to create a directory of ABD champions (resource persons, farmer experts, etc.). District level maps could be prepared and accompanying inventories of local champions and resource person would support future work.**
- **TABI should organise a workshop with the Working Group on Nutrition Sensitive Agriculture in Laos. An exhibition of knowledge outputs and knowledge resources, the ABD curriculum work in the domestication of nutritionally relevant ABD, etc. A half day event would suffice.**

B. Outcome 2: pFALUPAM procedures provide increased production, equitable benefits, secure tenure, good land and forest governance and sustainable management

(Note: A more detailed and comprehensive report with recommendations on Outcome 2 is presented as Annex 2 to this report. Some aspects of FALUPAM communication and knowledge management dimensions are, however, discussed under Outcome 3 below.)

1. Output 2.1. Capacities are further strengthened at all levels regarding pFALUPAM including map production and database management.

1.1 DALAM is constrained by limited human resources. However, they have the capacity to carry out land use planning activities. It continues to work with CDE and with local authorities in TABI focal provinces to consolidate FALUPAM activities.

1.2 DALAM and CDE will need to develop a database for monitoring land use activities and provide training for its use at TABI focal provinces.

2. Output 2.2. pFALUPAM is undertaken in 6 selected new village clusters, further improving the approach efficiency, and iteratively integrating lessons learnt.

2.1 As mentioned in 1.1, DALAM has limited human resources and given the complexity of land use context in some of the new areas, FALUAPM activities are not all completed in new and non-TABI provinces.

2.2 DALAM should retract from FALUPAM in non-TABI provinces and where the context of land use planning is highly complex. However, it should continue to engage non-TABI provinces in dissemination workshops.

3. Output 2.3. The pFALUPAM has been initiated, the process is finalised, monitored and maps endorsed by district authorities.

3.1 Not all villages in TABI focal provinces have finalised FALUPAM activities and have received village books and signboards. Considering the importance of these final products to village communities, DALAM will need to prioritise on finalisation of FALUAPM in TABI provinces.

4. Output 2.4. Village tenure position is strengthened based on local interest: surveys are conducted as precursors to land registration and to the issuing of community land titles and taxation issues considered and discussed.

4.1 The issues surrounding communal tenure is complex, and highly variable. It is important for TABI to finalise FALUPAM as suggested in 3.1. above, and further generate key lesssons learnt about the issue for discussion.

C. Outcome 3: ABD-data, information, knowledge, tools & concepts are capitalized and disseminated at local, national and international levels, documenting TABI experience and influencing the integration of ABD in policy development, decision making, planning and implementation.

1. Output 3.1. An analytical framework is developed and used to analyse inter-linkages between ABD management, livelihoods and ecosystems services.

2. Output 3.2. Report papers and briefs produced highlight benefits on ecosystems services, income and nutrition resulting from ABD models developed under TABI; disseminated nationally and internationally, influencing the understanding on multifunctional landscapes, policy decisions and implementation positively impacting population livelihood.

3. Output 3.3. Evidence-based information on ABD-based models developed under TABI are presented through policy briefs and recommendations, influencing policy development and decision making at national and international levels.

4. Output 3.4. Detailed products' profiles and descriptions of ABD-based livelihood opportunities, including potentials for value chain development, are produced and disseminated to GoL agencies, farmers, development partners (IDA, CSO) and relevant private sector actors, to support the promotion of ABD products or/and livelihood ABD-related opportunities.

5. Output 3.5. pFALUPAM manual(s) finalized with GoL partners, Lessons learnt and good practices on pFALUPAM capitalized and disseminated to GoL agencies and development partners, improving the management and use of ABD in multi-functional landscapes.

6. Output 3.6. The 5 Agriculture& Forestry Colleges (AFC) incorporate practical, needs-based agro-biodiversity curricula and activities.

7. Output 3.7. A network of stakeholders are actively engaging in discussion and collaboration on ABD related issues and activities, through various social media channels, facilitating personal contacts in the short and medium term and encouraging implementation of ABD-based activities.

8. Output 3.8. Local media (television, radio, newspapers) are disseminating information and raising awareness of the general public on ABD and its importance for livelihoods, nutrition and ecosystem resilience.

9. Output 3.9. GoL activities promoting ABD are supported.

Findings for Outcome 3

3.1 TABI has accumulated a wide range of information education and communication materials in the past few phases. The nature, content, format of these materials have differed from phase to phase. Posters and videos have been produced. These materials have served the project well to support capacity development efforts at district levels. Some of them are available on the website.

Information-communication materials support to the TABI project: ABD topics

1. An impressive range of materials have been developed (posters, leaflet, newsletter, video, etc.) primarily on ABD species and products (awareness building and instructional).
2. Formats, presentation styles and coverage have differed substantially. Work plan suggests more of the same are planned (including more videos and product briefs).

There is a need for TABI to shift focus to support policy events and other mainstreaming activities in 2019 to 2020. A reduced engagement in ABD topic videos, posters and leaflets is suggested.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- **Given the priorities for the last two years (refer to Figure 2) the TABI team should be very selective in its future knowledge management work. The current communications-information work plan needs to be reviewed to bring about the needed shifts to advocacy, mainstreaming and policy support communications.**

Taken from TABI website, http://www.tabi.la/

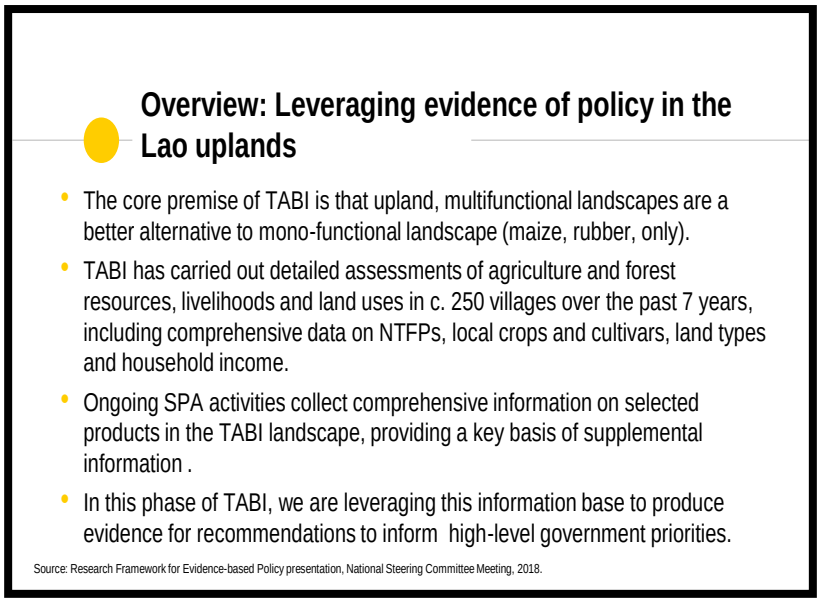
- **Thematerials produced in by past by TABI should be packaged as multimedia packages, for distribution to a target audience of district and provincial authorities (and resourcecenters.The Department of Education NFE at national levels might also be considered as target for four packages as suggested: FCZ, NTFP, agroforestry, rice and rice-Fish and land use and management. These packages are a combination of printed resource materials, videos and electronic resources which *already* exist.**

3.2 The best of TABI ABD efforts should be presented as one single ABD resource book compilation.This should be the best of TABI's ABD/NTFP efforts over the phases.This single compilation would be targeted to agriculture and forestry colleges, schools and 17 NFE provincial centers.Only **one** or **two** of each commodity would be featured in this resource book;the value chainproduction-to-markets using a case study format and not product briefs (which TABI already has a lot of). A resource list would be featured at the end.

RECOMMENDATION:

- **A writeshop should be organised to feature the best of TABI's ABDs experiences: one or two resource persons per commodity topic, e.g.honey, mushroom, coffee. Case studies or synthesis pieces should be considered, not technological guides(TABI has a lot of this already). Obviously, this has a bearing on the type of contributors for this resource books. Contributors would be provided with guidance in advance of the writeshop and would be encouraged to submit drafts to the TABI team which would provide feedback in advance of the writeshop. Following such an approach, fairly advanced drafts are expected. Editing support is provided to authors. Presentations are encouraged in order to ensure there is a "peer" review element.**

3.3 The last phase puts a premium on the communicating successes of FALUPAM to policy makers, donors and educators at national levels.



This current phase is intended to identify and leverage opportunities for policy influence. The MTR had an opportunity to assess what some of these opportunities are. A reality testing of what can be achieved with the limited TABI staff capacity is needed as recommendations are made. Visits were made with MAF DOPLA. Discussions were undertaken with NAFRI policy researchers.

Policy briefs, dialogue events and conventional workshops are already being considered by TABI. There is also a need for harmonising efforts in this area of work between DOPLA and NAFRI. First, there is a need to agree that not every engagement of TABI merits a policy brief. Topics must be carefully selected. There is a need to distinguish a policy brief from a learning brief (two categories endorsed by the MTR team).

A policy brief is a concise summary of an issue or a short summary of research or similar activity. The audience needs to be clarified (i.e. targeted) and kept in mind when writing such a brief. Invariably, there are recommendations or suggested actions. The IFPRI series of policy briefs might serve as a useful prototype of policy briefs.

A learning brief is another type of brief. Audiences are intentionally more diverse. Learning briefs result from reflection and analysis. Such briefs reflect learning. Sometimes these can be the result of synthesis (e.g. combining field learning and literature reviews). TABI is expected to have a wider engagement in this area of work.

The current format used by NAFRI is a good model for learning briefs. NAFRI learning brief format does follow some international standards. Learning briefs would provide a wider platform for TABI, CDE and NAFRI to compile and discuss issues, share findings and recommendations.

Ideally, topics would be commodity or technology focused. Broader themes such as the conservation and use of agro-biodiversity, valuation of NTFPs in forest and fallow land, land use planning and management, property rights and tenure, etc., are examples of the nature of topic coverage being proposed.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- **A team prioritisation exercise with DOPLA and NAFRI Policy teams is suggested so that there is agreement and clarity on what audiences and topics will be targeted and to determine the category (policy or learning briefs) for these proposed topics. Given the need to engage DOPLA and NAFRI in this process of conceptualisation and design, one has to be realistic of what can be done.**
- **Six to eight policy briefs and no more than a dozen learning briefs are suggested for the next two years. Many of these are already in the pipeline. A review of the proposed topics is suggested.**

3.4 Dialogue events are suggested for the last years of TABI. However, there is a need to clarify that dialogue events are for purposes of fostering discussion, improved understanding and exchanges (not necessarily culminating in decision or recommendation). Dialogue events should not be confused with "consultation" events. These events are designed to leverage the policy influence of research (in this case TABI's action research). Dialogue events to be effective, must feature the sharing of evidence. It provides the opportunity to share outputs and briefs. Dialogue events should not be confused with multi-stakeholder platforms or public consultation efforts. Dialogue event have a targeted audience and purpose.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- **Dialogue platforms should be targeted to a narrow audience of decision makers and stakeholders. Every dialogue event would feature a few targeted agencies, e.g. DOF for NTFP, MAF/DOF/DALAM for FALUPAM, Department of Education for ABD curriculum, Department of Fisheries and Livestock for FCZ, etc.**
- **There would be a few and well selected national dialogue events: say 6 over the last two TABI. DOPLA and NAFRI would be co-sponsors with the respective government agency being targeted.**
- **In addition to dialogue events, there could be other thematic workshop (ABD curriculum, FCZ and agroforestry and FALUPAM as discussed above). These are best targeted for conduct at the provincial level to ensure effective uptake and mainstreaming by line agencies. They would rely on TABI's community of practice and foster networking and exchanges.**

3.5 TABI'sexperience in developing and implementing a tool for land use planning have generated powerful set of information.

Update: overall activities and achievements

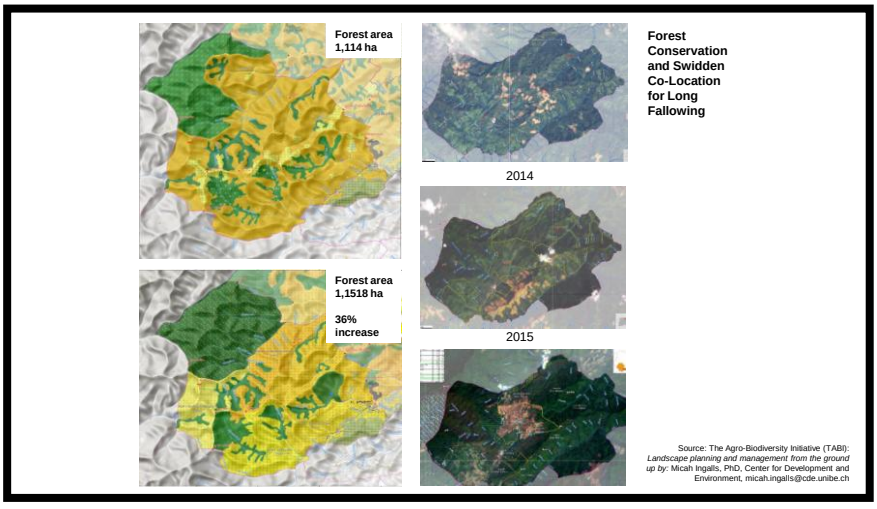
No	Province	Villages	P-FALUPAM				Handling Over (books and signboard maps)
			I	II	III	IV	
1	Luangphrabang	66	66	62	61	61	6
2	Xiengkhuang	73	73	67	67	48	23
3	Huaphan	43	43	43	39	27	18
4	Phongsaly	69	69	58	15	15	7
5	Borkeo	6	6	6	6		
6	Bolikhamxay	7	7	5	3	3	
7	Savannakhet	3	3	3	3	3	3
8	Saravan	12	12	12	12	4	4
9	Sekong	13	13	13	13	5	5
10	Atthapeu	5	5	5	5	4	
11	Oudomxay	4	4				
12	Xaysomboun	8	8				
13	Champasak	6	6				
	Total:	**315**	**315**	**274**	**224**	**170**	**66**

Progress update presented by Phaythoun Philakhone, Agriculture Land Use Planning Center (DALaM), P-FALUPAM coordinator. October 8, 2018.

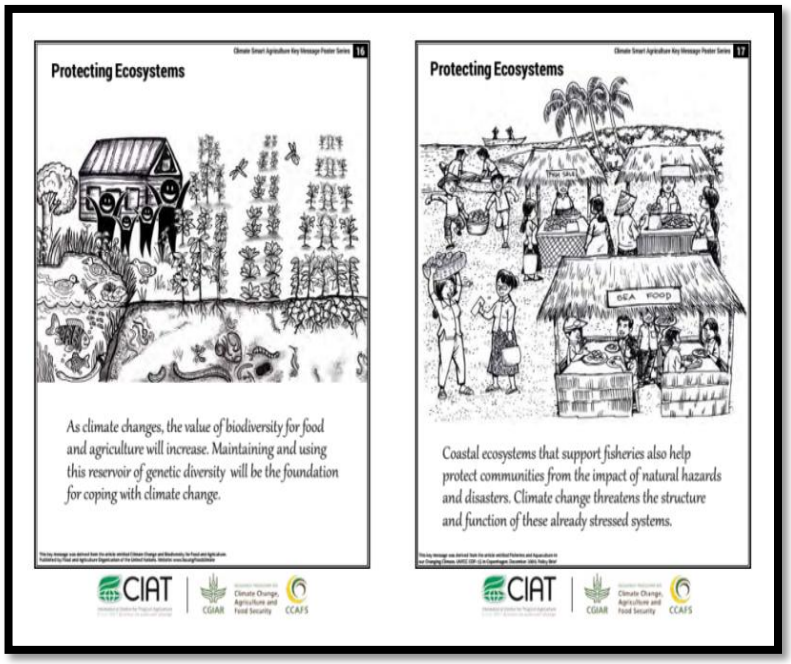
RECOMMENDATION:

- **Information on land use planning tools and processes will need to be packaged strategically for local policy makers and adminis trators, as well as for public future use. TABI and its partners will also need to develop dissemination materials including policy and research briefs, as well as media briefing packages to showcasethe importance of detailed land use planning in facilitating improvement of agro-biodiversity, forest conservation and communal tenure to land and natural resources. Such material should also effectively highlight key messagesadvocating FALUPAM.**

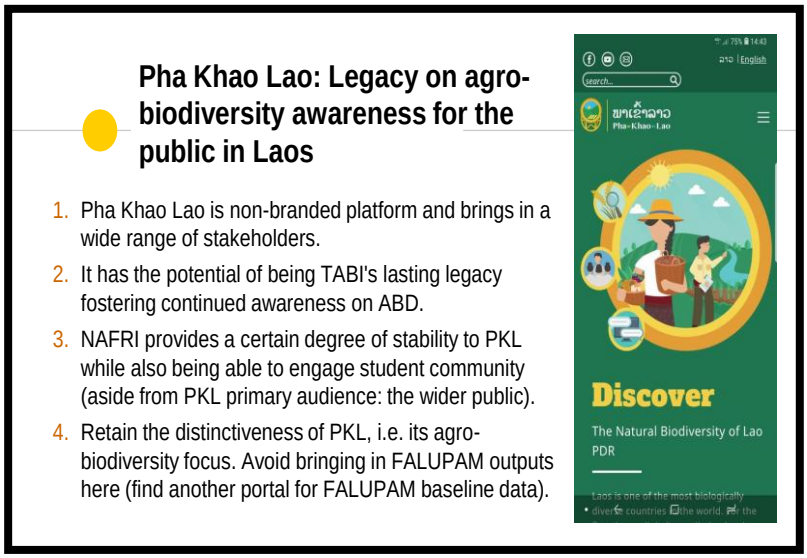
The reliance of TABI on spatial mapping



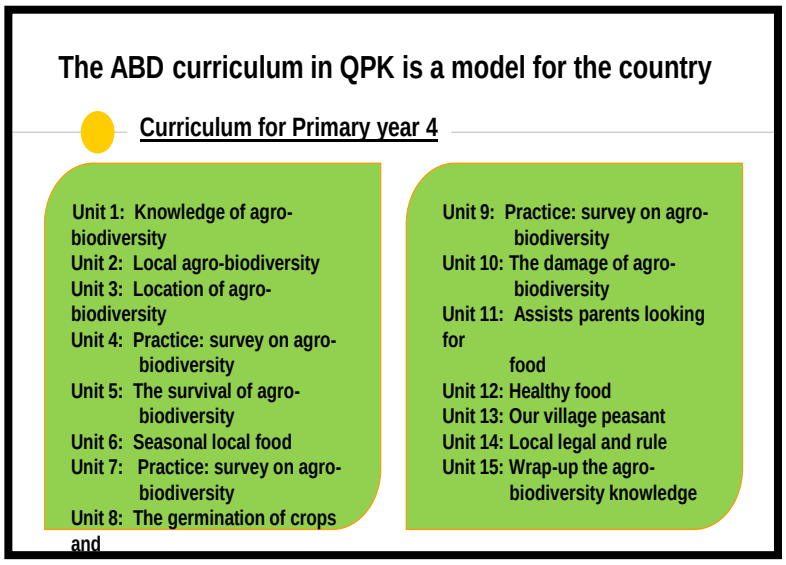
3.6 Key message posters can also be generated (higher level messages) related to ABD conservation and use, multifunctional landscapes, land use and management, etc. Key message posters are best generated through workshops. A limited number of posters should be considered for use in multiple settings (mostly schools, district and provincial offices). Some samples presented below. Such key message posters are used primarily to inform the public. These posters are not instructional in nature, but used more for advocacy purposes.

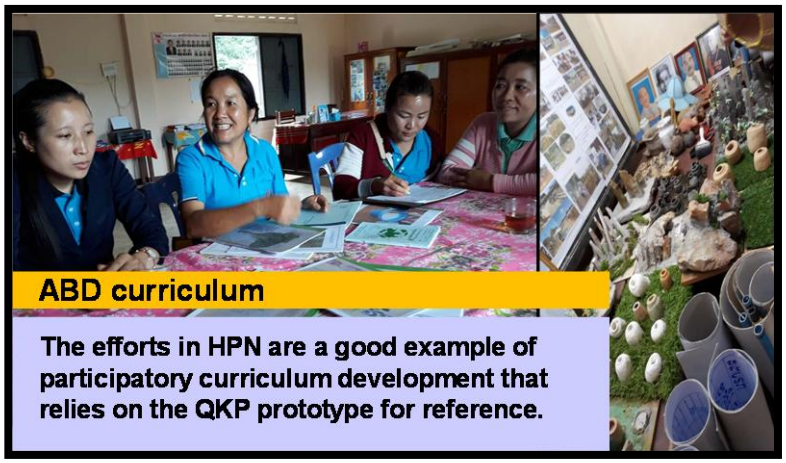


3.7 The Pha Khao Lao platform has been an exceptional contribution of TABI and NAFRI.It will likely be among TABI's long lasting legacies to Laos. The engagement of NAFRI as host has been an excellent sustainability mechanism. Plans are underway to deepen the engagement of student interns in this effort further promoting the ABD conservation through sustainable use agenda. The neutrality of Pha Khao Lao must be maintained so that TABI is only viewed as a facilitator. To ensure this happens special efforts must be exerted to seek and secure contributions from other players in the country. The current focus on the wider public as the primary target group must also be retained (this means limiting the focus on techical discussions). There is little more to say than to congratulate TABI and NAFRI for this exceptional effort.



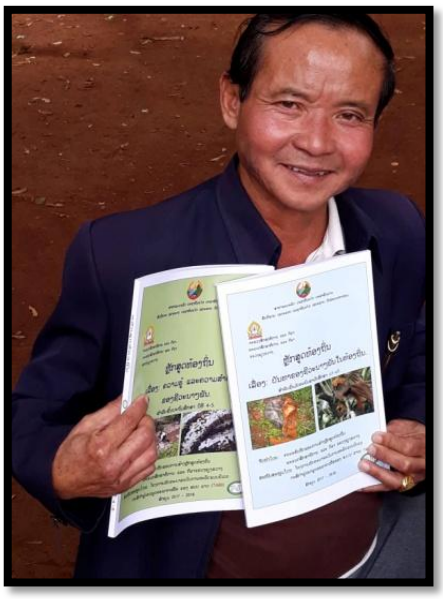
3.8 The reviewers were fortunate to have been able to meet with key players in Houaphanh and Xiengkhouangworking on ABD curriculum on schools. The initial effort and





the original champions of the ABD curriculum are based in Xiengkhouang (picture below) where 21 schools in two districts are currently using the ABD curriculum. The MTR visited the district authorities to review the content of the ABD curriculum (Xiengkhouang). These are structured exercises (with considerable efforts to localise with photos, examples, etc.). The scope and content of the instructional units are exceptional in their emphasis on agro-biodiversity topics. The curriculum manuals have already received provincial approval. Other provinces have sought the help of the Xiengkhouang authorities. The Houaphanh efforts are based on the initial prototype for Xiengkhouang: they are currently being pre-tested and being used to generate materials that are tailored to the agro-climatic and cultural specificities of Houaphanh. The processes used by teachers in Houaphanh are very participatory (and time consuming) in nature and continuously evolving. The two fairly different approaches in two provinces were both commendable and complementary. The value of Xiengkhouang model is that it gives other provinces a prototype on which to build on. Structured exercises with set recommendations for instruction are sometimes more relevant in scaling out within the educational system.

RECOMMENDATIONS:



- **TABI might consider organising a national workshop (targeted to the Department of Education representatives at national and provincial levels) for promoting the Xiengkhouang approved ABD curriculum. The Houaphanh participatory processes might also be featured for those wanting to be more creative.**
- **TABI might take advantage of such an event for engaging the *Non-Formal* Education Division in the Ministry of Education as well, inviting them to this national event. The NFE engagement is for out-of-school settings, to be viewed as complementary to work with the *formal* school system. The printing and distribution of ABD curriculum manual would be undertaken prior to this meeting. Resource persons from a few schools (30+ schools are currently testing the ABD curriculum) could be invited to share their experiences and good practices (e.g. teachers that the MTR met in Viengxay district, Xiengkhouang).**

3.9 Visits were arranged to the NFE unit in the Vientienne Department of Education. The potential for TABI to intensify its links (for purposes of dissemination of its ABD NTFP outputs) is considerable. The government is prioritising NFE centers in support of life-long learning principles, targeted to out-of-school young adults(nearly half of the 6.5 million Laos population are "youth"). Currently, there is a network of 17 provincial, 27 district and 317 community centers across Laos. TABI outputs would be well served if TABI were to use this NFE pathway for disseminating its multimedia packages, the ABD curriculum and the ABD resource book (referred to above). TABI has links with the NFE unit since 1989 in Xiengkhouang and HNP. The NFE national coordination office considers TABI work to be contributing directly to SDB 4 and the government increasing emphasis on adult education and life-long learning. TABI should considerthis opportunity as a low hanging fruit: a pathway for disseminating already existing materials on ABD.

RECOMMENDATION:

- **TABI might consider a single training of trainors event targeted to the provincial and district NFE center coordinators (using a structured curriculum: the Xiengkhouangcoordinator might be considered to develop more simplified modules for NFE community centers building on the existing ABD curriculum package.**

REFERENCES

Ingalls, M. **The Agro-Biodiversity Initiative (TABI):***Landscape planning and management from the ground up.* Center for Development and Environment, micah.ingalls@cde.unibe.ch

Ironside, J. (2017). **The Recognition of Customary Tenure in Lao PDR**. MRLG Thematic Study Series #8. Vientiane: MRLG.

Joost, F. et al, (2018). **Towards a Village Agro-Biodiversity Score-card**: ***Draft*** *Technical Report for the TABI Project*. September 2018. TABI, Laos.

K. Saito, G. N. Atlin, B. Linquist, K. Phanthaboon, T. Shiraiwa, and T. Horie. **Performance of Traditional and ImprovedUpland Rice Cultivars under Nonfertilized and Fertilized Conditions in Northern Laos.** Published in Crop Science Vol. 47:2473–2481 (2007).doi: 10.2135/cropsci2006.12.0779.

Outcome 1 presentation Nok_MV_Update for MTR_N.

Program update: What will be TABI's legacy? 10th National Steering Committee Meeting, June 27, 2018.

Progress update presented by Phaythoun Philakhone, Agriculture Land Use Planning Center (DALaM), P-FALUPAMcoordinator. October 8, 2018.

The Agro-Biodiversity Initiative (TABI) Phase 2. Year 5 Progress Report.

The Agrobiodiversity Initiative (TABI) Phase 3, Annual Workplan Year 22018-2019.

Annex 1. Agenda of MTR TABI Phase IV

Dates	AM	PM	Where	MTR Team	TABI
7-Oct-18 Sunday	Arrival		VTE		
08-Oct-18 Monday	Discussing at NAFRI with Michael, Pheng, Micah	Kick off meeting with NAFRI and DALAM-Formal meeting. - Intro-Michael, OC1, OC2, OC3, - Discussion - Presentation on approach and what the MTR is about - Invite key people: DALAM, DoF, DoPLA, CDE, NAFRI-RRI-FRC, DOLF	NAFRI, VTE	Julian	All staff
09-Oct-18 Tuesday	Meet with Outcome 3 team 9am: NAFRI, PoPLA, Micah, Michael Lunch	2pm: Meet with SDC/Brice @ SDC	VTE	Julian	
10-Oct-18 Wednesday	9am: Meet with Dr. Bounthong 10.30: Meet with Chanhsamone at NAFRI Lunch	2pm: Meet with DoF –Oupakhone and Khamnouy @ DoF 5pm: Flight to LPB	VTE	Julian	Michael
11-Oct-18 Thursday	Meeting with PAFO and TABI team Discussion on ADB Scorecard - Khamdok	Visit Chomphet-Ban Sam Or and Huay Orn - Integrated FALUPAM with Mushroom, watershed management, NTFP	LPB	Julian	Pheng, Michael, Somphet

12-Oct-18 Friday	Travel to Nambak (Oranges, Crispy River Weed, Tea, Honey, FALUPAM)	Visit Nambak, Overnight in Nambak	Nambak	Julian	Pheng, Michael, Somphet
13-Oct-18 Saturday	Visit Phonexay - Ban Sopjia, Ban Phakhok - broomgrass, NTFP Management, Village Forestry, FALUPAM, Forest Fire Control	Visit Phonexay, overnight in Phonexay, Discussion with Deputy District governor	Phonexay	Julian	Pheng, Michael, Somphet
14-Oct-18 Sunday	Fianlize visit and then return to LPB Yayoi arrive	Fly to VTE		Julian	Pheng, Michael, Somphet
15-Oct-18 Monday	Yayoi to arrive Debriefing wtih Julian and key people and team	Yayoimeet with Micah, Thisadee, Julian and Michael	VTE	Yayoi/ Thisadee/ Julian	Michael/Micah
16-Oct-18 Tuesday	9am: Meet with CCL on pFALUPAM Experience (Anthony Guergin) 11am: Meet with WWF (Bouavanh)	1.30 Meet with GIZ (Julian) 3.00 Meet with THPC (Jeff Milgate)	VTE	Yayoi/ Thisadee	
16-Oct-18 Tuesday	9am: Meet with Dr. Chanhtakhone (NAFRI) 10.30: Meet with Simone (NAFRI)	1.30 – Meet with DoLF (Chanthatboune and Chamsinh) 3.30 – Meet with Andrew Barlett (LURAS)	VTE	Julian & Khamhung	Michael
17-Oct-18 Wednesday	9am: Meet with IWMI (Oulavanh and Diana) 11am: Meet with Mr. Khamphone of DALAM	1.30pm: Meet with DoF/REDD	VTE	Yayoi/ Thisadee	
17-Oct-18 Wednesday	9am Meet with AFC (Souvanpheng) 11am Meet with	1.30pm Meet with Non-formal Education/MOE (Dr. Lamphoune and Phanhmaha)	VTE	Julian & Khamhung	Michael

	DECA (Soutsada)	3.30pm: Meet with DoPLA (Phanxay)			
18-Oct-18 Thursday	Open	Depart of XHK Meet with PAFO	XHK	Yayoi/ Julian/ Khamphou & Thisadee	Chanhsamone, Michael, Pheng, Micah, Phan or Phay
19-Oct-18 Friday	Field work in XHK	Field work in XHK	XHK	Yayoi/ Julian/ Khamphou & Thisadee	Chanhsamone, Michael, Pheng, Micah, Phan or Phay
20-Oct-18 Saturday	Field work in XHK	Field work in XHK	XHK	Yayoi/ Julian/ Khamphou & Thisadee	Chanhsamone, Michael, Pheng, Micah, Phan or Phay
21-Oct-18 Sunday	Travel to HPN Visit Kor Hin Nor Loy	Rest	XHK/HPN	Yayoi/ Julian/ Khamphou & Thisadee	Chanhsamone, Michael, Pheng, Micah, Phan or Phay
22-Oct-18 Monday	HPN	HPN	HPN	Yayoi/ Julian/ Khamphou & Thisadee	Chanhsamone, Michael, Pheng, Micah, Phan or Phay
23-Oct-18 Tuesday	HPN	HPN	HPN	Yayoi/ Julian/ Khamphou & Thisadee	Chanhsamone, Michael, Pheng, Micah, Phan or Phay
24-Oct-18 Wednesday	travel back or fly to VTE		HPN/VTE	Yayoi/ Julian/ Khamphou & Thisadee	Chanhsamone, Michael, Pheng, Micah, Phan or Phay
25-Oct-18 Thursday	Write up presentation	Write up presentation	VTE	Yayoi/ Julian/ Khamphou & Thisadee	
26-Oct-18 Friday	Debriefing with SDC, TABI	Julian depart for Manila	VTE		
27-Oct-18 Saturday					
28-Oct-18 Sunday		Yayoi to LPB	LPB		

29-Oct-18 Monday	Meet with FALUPAM Team	Visit to Phonexay Overnight Phonexay	LPB	Yayoi, Thisadee	Luck, Phany/Phay, Micah?
30-Oct-18 Tuesday	Phonexay	Travel to Nambak, overnight Nambak	LPB	Yayoi, Thisadee	Luck, Phany/Phay, Micah?
31-Oct-18 Wednesday	Nambak	Namabk	LPB	Yayoi, Thisadee	Luck, Phany/Phay, Micah?
01-Nov-18 Thursday		Travel back to VTE	VTE	Yayoi, Thisadee	Luck, Phany/Phay, Micah?
02-Nov-18 Friday	Debriefing with TABI and FALUPAM Team			Yayoi, Thisadee	Luck, Phany/Phay, Micah?
03-Nov-18 Saturday	Start report preparation	Yayoi Departs		Yayoi, Thisadee	Luck, Phany/Phay, Micah?
15-Nov-18 Tuesday	Report and PPT Due			Yayoi, Thisadee	Luck, Phany/Phay, Micah?

Annex 2. Review of TABI/FALUPAM

TABI Phase III Mid-term Review 2018

Annex 1 Review of TABI/FALUPAM

27 November 2018

Authored by: Yayoi Lagerqvist and Thitsade Chounlamontry

Authors

Yayoi Lagerqvist and ThitsadeeChounlamontry

Disclaimer

The views and perspectives expressed in this report are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the opinion of SDC and the TABI project.

Contact

Swiss Cooperation Office for the Mekong Region - Lao PDR

192/1 Sibounheuang Road

Vientiane Capital, Lao PDR

Tel: +856 21 251 794

Fax: +856 21 251 797

E-mail: vientiane@eda.admin.ch

Web: www.eda.admin.ch/mekong

Vientiane, 2017

Acknowledgement

Both authors have received various help from numerous people for the current review. Although we are unable to name all individuals that assisted the review in communities, and at the district and provincial levels, we are truly grateful for the time and insights. TABI team from the Vientiane office and provincial, as well as district offices have provided unstinted support for the review team, and we benefited tremendously from their insights into the workings of the project. We are particularly grateful for the support from Michael Victor (NIRAS), Dr. Luck Bounmixay (TABI/FALUPAM), and PhanyasoukKeoluxay (DALAM). We are also thankful for individuals from different organisations and their time in responding to our questions during interviews and other meetings. These include KhamphoneRasachack (DALAM), PhaytheunPhilakone (DALAM), Julian Derbidge (GIZ), Anthony Gueguen (CCL), BouavanhPhachomphonh (WWF), Dr. Oupakone Alounsavath (DOF), Noriyoshi Kitamura (JICA), Akiko Inoguchi (FAO), VanxaySuathephaxay (THPC), Dr. Diana Suhardiman (IWMI), Dr. OulavanhKeovilignavong (IWMI), Jonas Kramp (Wageningen University), Dr. Micah Ingalls (CDE), Dr. Michael Epprecht (CDE), Rasso Bernhard (CDE), Jonas Novén (NIRAS), Björn Hansson (NIRAS), Andrew Bartlett (LURAS), Dr. Thoumthone Vongvisouk (FoF/NUoL), Dr. SithongThongmanivong (FoF/NUoL)and Joost Foppes. It leaves without saying that any errors and omission in the current report are of our own.

This report is part of the mid-term review of TABI (the Agro-Biodiversity Initiative)'s third and final phase. It focuses on assessing the progress of land use planning activities designed by TABI, which culminated into participatory forest and agriculture land use planning, allocation and management (FALUPAM) and how the overall approach contributes towards improving land and resource governance in Laos. We strongly believe that FALUPAM as a proof of concept for participatory land use planning has been highly relevantfor upland communities where swidden agriculture is dominant part of the landscape. Widespread demand to carry out FALUPAM beyond TABI's three focal provinces in norther Laos also attest to the usefulness of the approach beyond the original scope of TABI. This further elucidates the overall importance and the immediacy of land use planning across the country and highlights the important contribution of TABI's land use planning approach towards recognition of communal land and resource tenure in Laos.Intricate land use planning introduced by TABI also suggests that detail matters, and the context in which the land use planning occurs is also important. There is much to be learnt from TABI's nearly decade of experience, and it is particularly important for TABI and its partners at this juncture toreflect on the main achievements and strategically communicate the key learnings to different groups of audience. TABI is uniquely positioned to utilise its experience and the rich repository of information to lead evidence-based policy dialogue on land and natural resource governance in Laos. This report synthesizes project documents, in-country interviews and observations from field visit and identifies critical gaps that needs to be considered in finalising activities pertaining to land use planning. It also provides framework to further institutionalise and capitalise experiences of land use planning led by TABI and provides a list of seven key recommendations and their priorities for the project and its partners.

> ***"If one's goal is to have title deed at the end of land use planning, there is no need to delve into fine-grained detail of land use types, as well as various resources used by households. FALUPAM process collects far too much information.Do we really need "Mercedes" of land use planning?****- a question raised by one of the respondents*

Table of Contents

List of figures and tables

Acronyms

CCL	Comité de Coopération avec le Laos
CDE	Centre for Development and Environment, University of Bern
DAFO	District Agriculture and Forestry Office
DALAM	Department of Agricultural Land Management
DONRE	District Office of Natural Resource and Environment
FALUPAM	Forest and Land Use Planning, Allocation and Management
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation
GIZ	GesellschaftfürInternationaleZusammenarbeit GmbH
IWMI	International Water Management Institute
JICA	Japan International Cooperation Agency
LUP/LA	Land Use Planning and Land Allocation
LURAS	Lao Uplands Rural Advisory Service
MAF	Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry
MONRE	Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment
MTR	Mid-term Review
NAFRI	National Agriculture and Forestry Research Institute
NTFP	Non-timber Forest Products
PAFO	Provincial Agriculture and Forestry Office
PONRE	Provincial Office of National Resource and Environment
SDC	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
TABI	The Agro-biodiversity Initiative
THPC	TheunHinboun Power Company
UNREDD	The United Nations Programme on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation
WWF	World Wildlife Fund

1. Background

The Agro-Biodiversity Initiative (TABI) project is part of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) Agriculture and Food Security (AFS) portfolio, which was launched in 2009. It has been led by Ramboll Natura/NIRAS Sweden AB and implemented through the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry in Laos. The current mid-term review was carried out by a team of two international consultants and two Lao government-staff from the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry to assess overall progress and appropriateness of thethird and the final project phase (April 2017 - September 2020). The in-country review of TABI activities took place in Laos during 8 October- 2 November 2018 (Table 1). This report particularly focuses on the assessment of TABI's land use planning approach (Outcome 2)[7]otherwise known as participatory Forest and Agriculture Land Use, Planning, Allocation and Management (hereafter FALUPAM)[8] approach which was developed and delivered by TABI since 2011 in partnership with the Department of Agricultural Land Management of the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry and the Centre for Development and Environment (CDE) of the University of Bern. It is important to remember that what became to be known as FALUPAM was envisaged by TABI as a multi-step strategy to contribute towards evidence-based land use planning (Heinimann et al. 2017). TABI developed processes and tools that enabled government agencies to monitor forest and land use particularly in the uplands where shifting cultivation was prominent. It was an approach that intended to capture the reality of local land use practices especially in shifting cultivation areas and develop a realistic village land use plan. From the beginning, the approach proposed by TABI included monitoring and adaptation of village land use plan as part of the four-tiered processes (see also Victor and Rasachack 2018). In the development and delivery of this approach, TABI has worked in collaboration with provincial and district line agencies of both the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (MAF), and the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MONRE).

1.1 Aim and objective

The main aim of this report is to assess and review the progress of TABI's land use planning activities and how the overall approach contributestowards improving resource governance in Laos[9]. Three main objectives of the report include:

1) to assess and review the progress of land use planning activities, and adoption of the FALUPAM approach by stakeholders, particularly in relation to policy dialogue on forestry and land related issue;

[7] Outcome 2 of TABI's Phase 3 is stated as such: "pFALUPAM procedures provide increased production, equitable benefits, strengthened tenure and good land and forest governance and sustainable management (SDC 2018b)."

[8] This is sometimes referred to as pFALUPAM emphasizing on the participatory aspect of the process. However, in this report we will refer to the land use planning activities and approach developed by TABI as FALUPAM.

[9]For explanation on the different stages of forest and agriculture land use planning, please refer to Victor and Rasachack (2018). Dwyer and Dejvongsa (2017) also provides detailed analysis of FALUPM. The current report therefore, omits assessment of FALUAM in detail, and instead focuses on the overall assessment of TABI's land use planning activities and approach.

2) to assess how land use planning approach developed by TABI, e.g. FALUPAM is addressing local land governance related issues and provide recommendations for how it can better address emerging land governance concerns;
3) to assess progress and provide recommendations on the institutionalization, capitalization and finalization of land use planning activities.

1.2 Key questions

In order to assess TABI's land use planning activities and approach, the reviewers asked following set of questions:

- How were activities supporting village-based land use planning delivered in focal provinces of the project and beyond?
- How do various stakeholders perceive and adopt FALUPAM as an approach to land use planning?
- How doTABI's land use planning activities and approachinfluenceland and forest resource management practices in Laos?
- What were the main learnings of land use planning experience in TABI, and how have they been communicated?
- How are information gathered through TABI's land use planning activities shared and utilised by others?
- How has TABI engaged in a broad policy dialogue on issues pertaining to land and natural resource governance drawing on key lessons learnt from its land use planning activities?

In the following section, we briefly explain the method of our review, followed by key findings in Section 3. We also identify key gaps and areas for further consideration in Section 4 and draw our main conclusion in Section 5. Based on the conclusion, we providea list of seven key recommendations in Section 6.

We strongly believe that FALUPAM as a proof of concept for participatory land use planning has been highly relevant in illuminating the intricate agriculture and forest interface in upland regions of Laos. Widespread demand to carry out FALUPAM beyond TABI's three focal provinces in norther Laos also attest to the usefulness of the approach beyond upland areas. This growing demand for TABI's land use planning demonstrates the overall importance and the immediacy of revisiting land use planning in Laos, and the need to recognise communal tenure over land and forest. While recognisingthe important contribution of TABI's land use planning tothe issue of land and resource governance in Laos, it is particularly important for TABI in its final phase to reflect on its achievements and communicate the key learningsto different groups of audience. TABI is uniquely positioned to utilise its experience and rich repository of information to lead evidence-based policy dialogue on land and natural resource governance in Laos.

2. Method

The current mid-term review of TABI's fourth and final project phase was carried out by a team of two international consultants (Julian Gonsalves, Yayoi Lagerqvist) and two Lao national consultants (KhamphouPhouyavong, National Agriculture and Forestry Research Institute;ThitsadeeChoulamontry, Department of Agricultural Land Management). Review of land use planning activities was specifically delegated to Yayoi Lagerqvist and ThitsadeeChoulamontry. We reviewed project documents and other

relevant literature andconducted in-country interviews and field visits. The in-country review of TABI's land use planning activities took placein Laos during 15 October and 2 November (Table 1).

Following interview with organisations based in Vientiane, the review team visitedthree focal provinces of TABI including Xiengkhouang, Houaphanh, and Luangprabang. Wecarried out interviews with TABI team and local authorities, and furthermorevisited total of eight communities where FALUPAM activities were carried out (Figure 1). As part of the in-country review process, we also presented our preliminary findingsto TABI team on 26 October and participated in strategic planning meeting on 2 November (see also MTR Review presentation slides dated 26 October 2018 and TABI/FALUAPM: key observation slides dated 2 November 2018).

Interviews with international organisations and government agencies were mostly carried out in English and Lao[10].Both Yayoi and Thitsadee alternated in asking interview questions based on list of semi-structured and open-ended questions. The two reviewers took notes separately and exchanged viewsorally on daily basis during the in-country review. Yayoi was responsible for organisingthe final report, which was written in English, while Thitsadeewas responsible for reportingback key observations to the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry. The current report also serves asan annex to the main mid-term review report prepared by Julian Gonsalves (Gonsalves and Lagerqvist 2018).

3. Main results

3.1 Delivery of land use planning activities

3.1.1 Overview of FALUPAM in TABI provinces

Based on the overview data prepared by the Department of Agricultural Land Management for the mid-term review (DALAM 2018), more than 70 percent of villages (133 out of 182 villages) in three target provinces including Xiengkhouang, Houapanh and Luangprabangcompleted all four stages of forest and agriculture land use planning (Table 2).We learnt from our interviews with provincial TABI teams and community representatives that not all villagesreceived the final village book and signboard with forest and agricultural land use and managementzones (Figure 2)[11].

FALUPAM as a process and tool for land use planning is generally well received in communities and by local authorities involved. We observed that where FALUPAM was carried out, some villages have lost their extended areas of upland agricultural land to forest land, while others have gained recognition of their extended upland agricultural system that includes fallow forests of up to seven or eight years. Such variation indicates that the TABI's land use planning approach considers local context and adapts management practices accordingly. Despite the loss of agricultural land, and initial skepticism towards new forest and agricultural land use management zones, there appeared to be community buy-in of TABI's land use planning activities in all eight villages that were interviewed. All the villages that were reviewed highlighted visible improvement in forest fire management, and labour saving in upland agricultural activities, i.e. upland

[10] Interviews with Japanese experts at JICA and FAO were carried out by Yayoi in Japanese.
[11] Reviewers are unable to ascertain the status of village handover, which includes transfer of village book authorised by district authority and village signboard, as the overview data provided by DALAM (2018). However, TABI's Progress Report for 1 April -30 September 2018 suggests that 47 villages in TABI's focal provinces and 19 villages in non-TABI provinces have received village books and signboards (TABI 2018b).

rice farming and large livestock rearing. Community representatives generally expressed their satisfaction with the level of detail embedded in the proposed forest and agricultural land use management zones[12].

Community representatives particularly highlighted the importance of detailed and reiterative process, which was built-in TABI's land use planning approach. Table 3 summarisescommunity's perception of land use planning introduced by TABI. In contrast to the previous land use planning, the process introduced by TABI enabled community members to identify different parts of the village; provided a record of how the community has been using the land and forest; and who had access to them. Although reaching consensus on forest and agriculture land use and management zones(FLUMZ) were at times difficult, it appeared that community representatives recognised the advantage of having a detailed zoningbased on assessment of socio-economic data and existing land use practices[13]. Monitoring process that are also built-in to TABI's land use planningalso appeared to allow communities to tryout and adapt their land use practices overtime. While the ways in which FALUPAM landed in communities differed, the overall impressions were positive in all eight villages (see Section 3.2.1).

We also learnt that community representatives also placed importance in the final products of land use planning process including village book and signboard. It was perceived particularly important to have both productsin the villageat the end of FALUPAM as theyprovided a tool to legitimatise their communal access to and use of land and forest resources in the absence of formalised communal title (see also Seidel et al 2007; Heinimann et al. 2017; Dwyer 2017; Dwyer and Dejvongsa 2017).We will further discuss how FALUPAM and TABI's land use planning approach contribute towards institutionalisation of natural resource management in local communities in Section 3.2.

Considering the importance of the final products generated through participation to FALUPAM activities, it is particularly important for TABI and its partners to complete FALUAPM in focal provinces and handover both village books and signboards. Table 2 indicates that while nearly 90 percent of villages in Luangprabang have completed all four stages of FALUPAM, Xiengkhouang and Houpanhlag at 60 percent[14]. It was apparent during our discussions with provincial TABI team that even in Luangprabang, not all villages have received the final village books and signboards.It is therefore essential for TABI to assess the most up-to-date status of FALUPAM, and prioritise its limited financial and human resources during the next 18 months to complete village handovers especially in three focal provinces.

<u>Recommendation 1: Prioritise FALUPAM activities in TABI focal provinces. Make sure all four stages and village-handovers are completed in TABI focal provinces during the next 18 months.</u>

[12]Reviewers asked community representatives to explain about different zones and how they are managed, to gauge their understanding of the zones introduced through FALUPAM process.
[13] The detail in the management plan also assured local authorities that communities had clear line of responsibilities, which made it easier for local authorities to follow-up and monitor.
[14]During our meetings with provincial and district TABI/FALUPAM team, it was explained that the lag was due to delay in monitoring communities, and finalising village book.

3.1.2 Success of FALUPAM as proof of concept

Beyond the three focal provinces, TABI's support for land use planning reached 11 additional provinces and nearly 130 villages, which are at various stages of completion (Table 2). The spread of land use planning beyond TABI's focal provinces indicate a keen interest inthe approach promoted byTABI. It's spread across regional Laosbeyond areas where shifting cultivation is the dominant landscape, as well as its growing interest among various organizations, demonstratethe overall success of FALUPAM as a "proof of concept" of participatory forest and agricultural land use planning.

Among the organisations that requested to trialFALUPAM include provincial government agencies, civil society organisations, as well as private sector companies. Table 4 summarisesperspectives of organisations that participated in FALUPAM.Organisations decided to trial FALUPAM as they faced challenges in effectively managing commercially valuable resource, e.g. forest tea, cardamom, rattan, etc.and land. They particularly considered using FALUPAM as they sought to better understand existing realities surrounding the use of land and forest. They also hoped that detailed land use planning can be used as a mechanism to resolve persisting conflicts over access to and control ofnatural resources and land.

Similarly, interviews with Director and Deputy Director of DALAM both highlighted the urgency of detailed land use planning across the country.DALAM is regularly approached by provincial authorities to carry out FALUPAM in regions where shifting cultivation is not particularly dominant. The request is generally borne out of increasing conflicts over agriculture and forest lands, and the critical need to clarify management responsibilities.Although it is within DALAM's remit to respond to such requests from provincial authorities, DALAM is also currently constrained by limited human resources to effectively train and oversee detailed land use planning across the country and tailoring FALUPAM beyond what was tested in TABI's focal sites. For example, application of FALUPAM may be easier in Phongsaly, where the landscape and issues are like TABI's focal provinces. On the other hand, in large dam resettlement villages, or communities with complex history of migration and land concessions, application of FALUPAM need to be carefully considered. This suggests that not all villages outside of TABI focal provinces will be able to complete full stages of FALUPAM during the next 18 months.

<u>Recommendation 2: FALUPAM in non-TABI provinces. Unless they are near completion (Stage 4), and the resources are available, avoid spreading TABI's human and financial resources to complete FALUPAM activities in non-TABI provinces during the next 18 months.</u>

3.1.3 Relevant but littleunderstoodamong the policy makers

Despite the support that were observed at the local levels, the relevance of TABI's land use planning approachand its achievements were less well understood among policy makers at the central leveland among other organisations engaged in forest and land management in Laos. Table 5 captures perspectives of these organisations on the land use planning activities carried out by TABI. It seems that despite several existing documentation and published articles about the land use planning activities introduced by TABI (Heinimann et al. 2017; Dwyer and Dejvongsa 2017; Victor and Rasachack 2018), as well as information available via the project website (http://www.tabi.la/activities/land-use-planning/land-use-planing/), representatives of various organisationgenerally felt that not enough about the benefits and achievements of TABI's approach to land use planning were communicated widely at the central level.

Representatives of organisationsexpressed interest in learning about key lessons learnt from TABI's approach, and how detailed land use planning can contributetowards agro-biodiversity and forest conservation in Laos. Many also questioned FALUPAM's cost and its effectiveness as a land use planning approach, as well as the need for detailed information. This suggests that the vast trove of information mined by TABI for its land use planning activities have not yet been fully utilised to demonstrate the benefits. It is therefore particularly important for TABI and its partners to focus on generating key learnings from the land use planning experience and sharing the information as widely as possible to debunk the prevailing myths of FALUPAM.

Some of those that were interviewed during the reviewparticularly raised interest in accessing and information, includingconformity rate of households to the new management zones, geo-referenced data on village management zones, as well asdata on various non-timber forest products used by communities.As pointed out by Foppes et al. (2018) the information collected by TABI for its land use planning activities should be cleaned and made more widely accessible so that others can utilise the information.

Recommendation 3: Strategically communicate and share information. TABI will need to revisit its communication strategy for FALUPAM during the next 3 months. TABI and its partners also need to generate information packages including written communication material and cleaned data set to communicate the relevance of detailed information collection involved in TABI's land use planning during the next 6 months.

3.2 FALUPAM and instituionalisationof land and forest management

3.2.1 Incremental improvement of resource tenure in village level

In their report on Strategic Analysis of FALUPAM, Dwyer and Dejvongsa (2017) highlight that "By investing resources in realistic and concrete land-use plans at village and district levels, even in the absence of communal titles, FALUPAM seems to be creating a form of communal *tenure* that is likely to stand up well to outside challenges (p. 28, emphasis in italics by Dywer and Dejvongsa)." Tenure is referred to as socially constructed relationship with respect to land and associated natural resources (Dwyer 2017). Rule of tenure can be based on a mix of tradition and formal law, and more importantly such ruledefines how access to resources are granted to various individuals and groups and the conditions in which they are granted. It is important to remember that tenure is not set in stone, and while it can be secured at a point in time, it can also be also violated. Tenure is subject to changeamidst the on-going changes to peoples' livelihood, governance and the socio-economic environment.

Our observations in eight villages across three provinces also concur with the above view shared by Dwyer and Dejvongsa (2017) in that through participation to FALUPAM and completion of four stages, community representatives sensed an incremental improvement of tenure security. While community representatives were fully aware that the state of tenureover land and forest assured through FALUPAM could change in the future, they felt that having a detailed record of their resource use and rules of management provided

valuable tool to legitimatise their access to land and forest resources[15]. In some communities, it also provided a temporary safeguard against state-land concession and ensured communities' land access for basic food production.

Our community interviews highlight the importance ofrecognising different contexts in which land use planning occurs. In each of the eight villages that were visited during the review, the circumstance in which community members used and manage natural resources differed as well as physical features of land and forest. This meant that land use plans had to also adapt and incorporate different needs in each community.

1) O An village, Pek district, Xiengkhouang. Forest tea and FALUPAM.FALUPM included initiative to mark individual tea trees in the forest and agricultural land use management zones. The process facilitated households to take active interest in improving the management of tea trees in forest environment. FALUPAM also identified areas suitable for new tea plantation. Households' increased financial and labour commitment towardstea production also meant that they were no longer able carry out swidden as before. At the same time, zoning introduced by FALUPAM consequently enabled families to share agricultural labour more easilyfor swidden cultivation.
2) Mien village, Phoukout district, Xiengkhouang. FALUPAM and support for agrobiodiversity-based livelihood activities.The village participated in FALUPAM in anticipation for receiving support for livelihood activities. They trialled new zoning that reflected longer fallow practice in the uplands. Not everyone in the village was keen to consolidate their swidden. However, when they trialled the consolidated swidden, people realised it was much more"fun" to work in a bigger group andsaved family labour for upland rice cultivation. The new zoning also enabled families to look after livestock more easily. There was also visible reduction of forest fire after the new zoning.
3) Kheung village, Phoukout district, Xiengkhouang.FALUPAM as an update to the previous land use plan. FALUPAM helped to updatevillage boundaries and land use plan, which was developed as part of LUP/LA process with funding from the Asian Development Bank. Households are not dependent on swidden cultivation in this village. There was relatively little friction within the village when the new zoning was introduced.
4) Peung village, Xamneua district, Houapanh. FALUPAMas precursor to agricultural land titling. FALUPAM was introduced in the community, which re-designated parts of swidden fallow into agricultural land. Following the new zoning, the community further worked with DONRE to ascertain individual claims to agricultural land by issuing land titles. While households can sell such land, it is registered as agricultural land and is not easily transformed into other land. In order to convert agricultural land into non-agricultural land, individuals will need to apply for government approval.
5) Na Meuang village, Viengxay district, Houapanh. FALUPAMas means to customary rights to land and forest. After completion of FALUPAM, neighbouring villagers encroached into the village forest to conduct upland rice farming. Village management rules and agreement on village boundaries wereused to resolve conflict at the district level.However, the local government was unable to fine the culprit, as they were brought down from the mountains to resettle in the neighbouring village andwere too poor to pay for the damage.

[15]Village book that was handed over to communities not only included detailed resource map and management tools, but also included baseline record of households' access to land, as well as their use of natural resources. This also was an important information to legitimatise community members' claim to land and forest resources.

6) Phonexay village, Viengxay district, Houapanh. FALUPAM applied in multi-ethnic community with different settlement history. The new zoning introduced by FALUPAM was not well understood by different members of the community. However, as they trialled the new zoning people eventually came to see the benefit of working together in consolidated swidden fields. They observe notable reduction in forest fire. There is also some flexibility in the overall design of forest and agricultural land use management zones, which allows communities to work out issues each year according to their needs.
7) Houay hit village, Nambak district, Luangprabang. FALUPAM in concession landscape (40 years concession with Sino-Rubber), and multi-ethnic setting. FALUPAM was introduced in a community with limited swidden area. This was largely due to series of agricultural concessions in the community. Households' main source of income, sales of rubber to the Sino-Rubber company in the district.
8) Namai village, Nambak district, Luangprabang. FALUPAM was carried out in concession landscape and in community with waves of migration. In this community, competition for land has intensified during the last decade. As land was precious, it was already a common practice in the village to buy and sell land prior to the introduction of FALUPAM. Zoning introduced by FALUPAM was perceived as a kind of land distribution, and villagers that purchased the land from others prior to FALUPAM were not happy to let others use their land without charge. In this community they were only able to identify four main areas for swidden. People felt that four-year cycle of rotation was not enough for upland rice cultivation. However, despite the scepticism, representatives of the community also understood the benefits of having detailed land use planning in the village. Community members resent rubber concession even though rubber tapping and sales of latex to Sino-Rubber Company is now the main source of household income. The main source of resentment is that villagers feel as if their land was taken by the state and the foreign investor for free, and that they are merely providing free labour for the investor. This experience made community members particularly keen to ensure that they have legitimate access to remaining land in the village for food production and for other purposes.

What we can draw from these experiences is that TABI's land use planning activities that culminated into FALUPAM is not merely a tool to distinguish areas of forest for conservation within village landscape, but a process that sheds light on the complex reality of land and resource use and the issue of tenure in each community. The process recognises swidden and fallow system in the upland, which has long been classified as "unstocked forest," and assumed as an area without any agricultural activities. This has often led to the misconception of the upland landscape as an idle and unoccupied land, resulting in widespread promotion of investment and 'development' of such land through concessions and land leasearrangements(See also Heinimann et al. 2017).Our interviews in eight communities demonstrated how approaches such as FALUPAM helps to strengthens local tenure over forest and land overtime. However, our interviews with communities also highlighted that the process of adopting FALUPAM was not always simple.

There are potential for TABI and its partners to utilise detailed information collected during the land use planning activities to contribute in the discussions that question ecologically and economically value of swidden and fallow system (Broegaard et al. 2017;Vongkhamho and Ingalls, forthcoming; Kallio et al. 2019).Revisiting this age-old question with new set of information will shed a light on how swidden and fallow system continue to serve as the basis of household safety net in ensuring food and income sufficiency.

Recommendation 4: TABI and its partners need to reflect on how TABI's land use planning strengthened communal tenure of land and natural resources in different contexts and share the key learning during the next 18 months.

3.2.2 District and provincial land use planning and monitoring

In addition to shedding light to the reality of land use planning on the ground, TABI also developed a process of land use planning at the local levels involving government-staff from both line agencies under the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, and the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment.Department of Agricultural Land management (DALAM)trained local government-staff, and over the course of years rolled out numerous land use planning activities that culminated into FALUPAM. The overall experience provided on-the-job training for local government-staff both at provincial and district levels.

We believe thatDALAM will continue to play a critical role inoverseeingthe monitoring processes at both provincial and district levels. However, for DALAM and its line agencies to effectively monitor the land use planning activities into foreseeable future, there appears to be two areas in need of improvement.

1) First area is information management at the local level. Currently, all information collected in the field is sent from district and provincial offices to DALAM and CDE that compiles the central data base.Although this is useful for the purpose of streamlining information for analysis, for local authorities to continue monitoring land use activities in communities over time, DALAM and CDE will need to set-upa structured database that is also accessible for provincial and district staff.

2) Secondly, information of TABI's land use planning have not been effectively shared with local policy makers, i.e. district chiefs, and head of both DAFO and DONRE, as well as provincial governors and head of PAFO and PONRE. While some at provincial offices of agriculture and forestry, as well as natural resources and environment were familiar with TABI's activities, not all of them grasped entire land use planning activities taking place in their provinces. It would make sense for TABI, DALAM and CDE to compile information package, i.e. land and forest management atlas; digital archive of village books; and forest and agricultural land management database.

Finally, during our interviews with provincial authorities, some particularly emphasised the importance of completing FALUPAM manual, and having this authorised by the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry. This was deemed essential in order to justifycross-sectoral collaboration forland use planning, and continued implementation of FALUPAM approach beyond TABI villages.

Recommendation 5: Prioritise on completing database management structure for long-term monitoring in TABI provinces and share relevant information to the local policy makers during the next 12 months.

3.2.3 Institutionalising detailed process of land use planning at the national level

Over the years, TABI presented about its land use planning activities in various workshops and produceddocuments. However, our interviews with different organisations at the central level highlighted that little is known about TABI and the outcomes of its land use planning (see also Section 3.1.3). It is

therefore essential to generate dissemination materials and strategically communicate the outcomes of land use planning activities, particularly on howthe approach introduced by TABI contribute towards the improvement ofland and natural resource governance in Laos.

It is important to reflect on the fact that TABI's land use planning activities rolled out beyond its focal provinces, in areas where upland agriculture was not the dominant landscape. For instance, FALUPAM was sometimes carried out in communities with predominantly lowland fields, as well as in dam resettlement villages. As the initial intention of TABI's land use planning was designed with the notion of uncovering swidden landscape, its widespread rollout in areas outside of the original scope, raises the question of how the principles of land use planning was applied and what important lessons can be learnt.

In addition, as highlighted in Section 3.2.2,finalisation of FALUPAM manual by DALAM and its authorisation through the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry is deemed essential. This is not only essential for local authorities seeking to justify widespread rollout of FALUPAM in their provinces, but also for TABI, CDE and DALAM to use the manual as the basis to facilitate wider policy discussions on the importance of understanding intricate agriculture-forest interface to improve forest conservation and encourage agro-biodiversity.

Recommendation 6: Prioritise on completing FALUPAM manual and other key communication material to engage in policy dialogue during the next 18 months.

3.3 Utlisation and capitalization of land use planning experience

During this final period of the project, TABI and its key partners including DALAM and CDE will need to join forces todraw out key lessons learnt from the land use planning experience, and package data and other information for different groups of audience. What separates TABI's land use planning from others is the rich depth of information collected during the process. This not only helps to elucidate the reality of forest and agricultural land use in communities, but is a critical asset of TABI, which enables long-term monitoring of socio-economic wellbeing and communities' resource use practices. Although the depth of information collected by TABI is sometimes disparaged as unnecessary, it is a powerful asset that TABI and its partners have thus far not fully utlised.

The rich repository of information is not only deemed important for local authorities monitoring land use plans, but for others seeking to analysethe state of resource governance and forest in Laos. While it is important for TABI and its partners to fully analyse the information and lead policy dialogue backed by strong evidence, it should also welcome other researchers and organisations to carry out independent studies in the project sites to facilitate further learnings. One such example is the group of IWMI researchers studying about communal land tenure in communities where FALUPAM was implemented. Their study helped to uncover resource governance issues yet to be addressed by TABI. Such studies should be encouraged as being complementary in drawing out key lessons of TABI's land use planning. Rather than seeking to analyse the information entirely on its own, during this final phase of the project, TABI and its partners should focus on cleaning and packaging its information. This will facilitate further capitalisation of information beyond the project life of TABI.

For example, TABI can share its GIS based information with other projects such asSustainable Forest Management and REDD+ Support Project supported by JICA, which is currently developing a pilot forest monitoring system using European Space Agency's Sentinel satellite images. Such collaboration may open doors for TABI, CDE and DALAM to further engage in policy dialogue with central level policy makersand international donors on how land use planning could be effectively designed in the future to facilitate long-term forest conservation.

Recommendation 7: Prioiritise on generating key lessons learnt and engaging in both informal and formal dialogue during the next 12 months.

4 Discussion

This section focuses on three critical gaps including the issue of leading evidence-based policy dialogue and generating learnings from TABI's experience of land use planning, and resource constraints in finalising land use planning for TABI.

4.1 Leading evidence-based policy dialogue on forest-agriculture interface

As pointed in the previous sections, the rich repository of information is a fundamental asset ofTABI andis particularly underutilised (Hansson 2018). During the next 24 months, the project and its partnerswill need tostrategically use this information asset to engage in evidence-based policy dialogue at different levels, and pave ways for future capitalization of information. In order to make the best use of information asset, TABI and its partners will need to map out key line of products for the next 24 months and develop a plan for packaging information for different groups of audience.

TABI is well positioned to lead discussion on the importance of better understanding intricate forest-agriculture interface. In order to lead the policy dialogue especially at the central level, TABI and its partners will need to communicate key learning of TABI's land use planning experience in both informal and formal forums and prepare information packages as highlighted in the previous sections, which includes FALUPAM manual, documentation on key lessons learnt, and cleaned database.TABI can also strategically invite other researchers and ogranisations to use and analyse trove of information collected through TABI's land use planning activities. Lessons learnt from external studies can be incorporated into the wider discussion led by TABI and its partners.

4.2 Learning from the experience to address land governance issuesin Laos

During the interviews, many have commented on FALUPAM's clunky acronym, and fixation on certain details of land use planning process. In the coming months, it would be wise for TABI and its partners tostep-back from detailed discussions on methods. Instead, TABI and its partners will need to demystify the approach and clearly explain where the approach departs from other land use planning, and why this matters to improve land and forest governance in Laos. This is particularly important as after nearly a decade of TABI in Laos, some people at the central level of government and other development partners are still not entirely aware of what TABI is and its approach to land use planning.

In addition, it is crucial to broaden the scope of discussion.Broadening the scope of discussion to address issue of land and forest governance will allow TABI to move away from discussionsmerely focused on the cost of FALUPAM, and the extensive nature of information collected in the process[16].Some areas in which FALUPAM was trialled include areas where shifting cultivation was not the dominant landscape, and in highly complex communities as result of dam resettlement and series of state-land concessions. Therefore, drawing out key lessons from the land use planning experience is particularly crucial in addressing the broad issue of land and forest governance.

What is clear from our review is that there is a wide demand for detailed land use planning across Laos, and it is important to raise the question of how TABI's land use planning such as FALUPAM, which was originally conceived to address land management issues in the uplands, contribute towards improving communal tenure security in communities that are not particularly dependent on swidden agriculture and fallow system. Addressing such question may require TABI and its key partners to consider factors beyond communities that directly and indirectly influence communities' access to land and forest resources, e.g. government policies, access to market, changes in livelihood. Addressing "big questions" will also enable TABI and its partners to contribute in leading national discussions on the future of landand forest governance in Laos.

4.3 Equity and gender

Aspects of gender and equity in TABI's land use planning approach was not particularly evident during our review process. From our interviews in communities, and project documentation, including the recent progress report (TABI 2018b) we understand that both genders attended series of village meetings, as well as different members of ethnic groups in the community. However, discussions with IWMI researchers and results of ABD score-card trial (Foppes et al 2018) suggest that these issues were not fully captured in the process of FALUPAM implementationdespite the intention to address them. We understand that complex migration history of communities, various social norms and languages co-existing in communities and fundamental power asymmetries within the communities all complicate the issue of equity and are not entirely within the remit of FALUPAM. However, it is important to analyse how the issue of equity and gender were approached and addressed (or not) in TABI's land use planning activities, and what can be learnt from the experience. Considering the limited human resource available within TABI, such topic can be carried out in collaboration and/or outsourced to other researchers and organisations to generate further learnings[17].

4.4Resource gap

TABI and its land use planning activities are closely aligned with the Swiss Government's strategic objectives of supporting challenges of environment, food security and development (SDC 2018a). The land use planning approach developed by TABI strengthened democratic participation of local communities and contributed in improving local communities' access to resources and smallholder tenure security. In the absence of

[16]At the same time, it is important to debunk some of the myths surrounding FALUPAM.

[17]Study on communal tenure and land titling is an interesting subject that examines the issue of equity. The new initiative with the Village Focus International may potentially be an opportunity to reflect on the various settings in which communal tenure is formed. This might be an opportunity to uncover the issue of equity in villages where FALUPAM was carried out; however, TABI will also need to assess availability of its own resources.

communal tenure to land and forest, land use planning activities and approach developed by TABI is particularly significant. This is also reflected in the recent assessment on the state of land carried out by CDE and its associates (Ingalls et al. 2018). Considering the high demand for land use planning in Laos, and its importance of ensuring tenure security for smallholders,SDCshould continue to supportconsolidation ofFALUPAM activitiesand use the experience to further facilitate national and regional dialogue.To this end, SDC shouldsupport clear communication of outcomes at provincial and district levels in areas where FALUPAM rolled out[18], and further sharing TABI's experience and learnings to other projects and programmesacross the Mekong Region.Where possible, SDC should provide additional resources and othersupport to facilitate broader discussions on how detailed land use planning contribute towards building of inclusive and resilient society (See also Section 6 on Recommendation).

5 Conclusion

5.1 Prioritisation and consolidation

During this final phase, TABI and its partners will need to prioritise its limited human and financial resources allocated for land use planning.As mentioned in the previous sections, DALAM will need to particularlyprioritiseand focus on completing FALUPAM, especially in TABI's focal provinces and handover village books and signboards to communities that participated in the process. DALAM with the support of CDE will also need to set-up database management structure at local levels to enable TABI provinces and districts to monitor the land use planning activities in the future. In addition, CDE and DALAM need to developinformation packages for local policy makers and administrators.

In addition to prioritising and consolidating FALUPAM activities in focal provinces, TABI will need to draw out key learnings from its land use planning experience. Consolidation of vast information collected by TABI isparticularly essential for leading evidence-based policy dialogue at the central and regional levels. Part of the consolidation for TABI Phase IV Outcome 2 includes developing information packages for different groups of audience. For example, developing policy and research briefs that draw on strong evidence, as well as data packages for government agencies and for public access. TABI in collaboration with key partners will therefore need to develop a strategic communication plan for its land use planning activities.

5.2 Proof of the pudding after the eating

The review has highlighted that land use planning approach developed by TABI, which culminated into FALUPAM was successful as a proof of concept. However, TABI together with its key partners including DALAM and CDE will need to quickly switch gears from implementing FALUPAM to generating learnings and facilitating further discussions based on analysis of information. As highlighted in this report, there is much to be learnt from TABI's land use planning experience. We understand that there is limited human resources available to engage in full-fledged analysis of information collected by TABI, and therefore, recommend TABI toencourage partnership with other projects to carry out analysis and together facilitate greater learning outcomes of the project's approach.

[18]This specifically includes launch of FALUPAM manual, and information package, i.e. land and forest management database, land and forest management atlas, etc.

6 Recommendation

This final section draws on the recommendations shared during in-country meetings on 26 October and 2 November (see also Table 6), and further incorporates recommendations suggested in Section 3 of the report. The main recommendation is for TABI isto strategise its communicationplan for the next 18 months together with its key partners including CDE and DALAM. In the process, TABI and its partners will need to consolidate key learnings from the land use planning experience and disseminate information to different groups of audiencein order to ensure long-term insitutionalisation of land use planning approach, and capitalisation of its knowledge.

6.1 Village level

At this level, the focus of institutionalisationshould be placed on monitoring village land use plan in focal provinces and completing FALUPAM activities. This is particularly important in those villages that have completed stages 3 and 4 of FALUPAM. Monitoring should be carried out and completed by no later than April 2019 to ensure the handover of village books and signboards during the remainder of 2019. Handover should include a process of distributing village books formally authorised by district authority and village level discussions on future land use and management. In each village, there should be at least two copies of final village books. Additional copies should be made available upon request from villages and at minimal fee. Digital copies should be archived through DALAM and its line agencies and made accessible to district and provincial offices.

Key Recommendation: Prioritise consolidation of FALUPAM in TABI province andavoid FALUPAM in non-TABI province. See also Recommendation 1, and 2 below.

6.2 District and provincial level

At the provincial level it is essential to launch the FALUPAM manual and discuss key lessons learnt from TABI's land use planning activities. This should take place by June 2019. DALAM and CDE need tocompile information package, including 1) agricultural land and forest management atlas;2) agricultural land and forest management database, which can be used by local authorities to continuously access data base and monitor forest and agricultural land management plans; and 3) digital archive of village books. The information can be shared and demonstrated during the launch of FALUPAM manual at provincial and district levels. Such opportunities can be also used to invite representatives from non-TABI provinces as well as other donor projects to learn about TABI's land use planning experience.

Key Recommendation: Prioritise data sharing and information dissemination for local policy makers. See Recommendation 5 and 6 below.

6.3 Central level

At the central level, it is essential for TABI and its partners to consolidate information and lead strategic policy dialogues with central policy makers and donor agencies. As highlighted earlier this will require DALAM to finalise FALUPAM manual and seek authorisation from the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry. This can be further used to facilitate discussions on how detailed land use planning in communities can contribute towards improved communal tenure, and conservation of natural resources. TABI and CDE will

also need to generate information packages anddevelop policy and research briefs that draw on strong evidence. It is also essential for TABI and its partners to package the vast trove of information collected through the project and make them accessible for different groups of users. Where necessary, the project should also seek additional financial support from SDC and other agencies to run series of workshops, i.e. data use and analysis, writing workshops,dissemination workshop, etc.

Key Recommendation: Prioiritise on developing communication strategy and consolidate information to lead policy dialogue. See Recommendation 3, 4 and 7

Recommendation 1: Prioritise FALUPAM activities in TABI focal provinces. Make sure all four stages and village-handovers are completed in TABI focal provinces during the next 18 months.

TABI team and DALAM will need to prioritise completion of FALUPAM in TABI focal provinces. They will need to ensure that final budget is available to complete the activities. If there is a lack of resources, TABI will need to communicate with other partners for additional funding and seek human resources.

Recommendation 2: FALUPAM in non-TABI provinces. Unless they are near completion (Stage 4), and the resources are available, avoid spreading TABI human and financial resources to complete FALUPAM activities in non-TABI provinces during the next 18 months.

DALAM will need to retract from implementing FALUPAM activities in non-TABI provinces during the next 18 months, particularly in places where the implementation requires additional training of local staff. Together with SDC, TABI will need to seek alternative mechanism to support the growing interest in TABI's land use planning approach.

Recommendation 3: Strategically communicate and share information. TABI will need to revisit its communication strategy for FALUPAM during the next 3 months. TABI and its partners need to generate information packages including written communication material and cleaned data set to communicate the relevance of detailed information collection involved in TABI's land use planning during the next 6 months.

TABI will need to revisit its communication strategy and platform to share information generated through FALUPAM activities. It will then need to work with its partners to generate targeted information packages for different audiences. CDE and DALAM should work on database structure for monitoring land use planning activities in TABI provinces where FALUPAM were carried out. CDE and DALAM will also need to clean data set for public access.

Recommendation 4: TABI and its partners need to reflect on how TABI's land use planning strengthened communal tenure of land and natural resources in different contexts and share the key learning during the next 18 months.

In close relations with Recommendation 3 above, TABI and its partners will need reflect on various cases of FALUPAM and how they strengthened communal tenure in different context. TABI should help produce communication material based on the key learnings, and SDC can support the distribution of key learnings across the Mekong region through its different projects and programmes.

Recommendation 5: Prioritise on completing database structure for long-term monitoring in TABI provinces and share relevant information to the local policy makers during the next 12 months.

CDE and DALAM will need to prioritise on completing database structure for long-term monitoring of land and forest use and management plans during the next 6 months. In addition, TABI together with CDE and DALAM will need to produce information packages including agricultural land and forest management atlas, and digital archive of village books for provincial and district policy makers in TABI provinces and launch them accordingly. TABI can potentially seek additional support from SDC to launchfinal products of FALUPAM in provinces by bringing in other provinces, projects and donors that are interested in the outcomes of TABI supported land use planning.

Recommendation 6: Prioritiseon completing FALUPAM manual and other key communication material to engage in policy dialogue during the next 18 months.

DALAM and TABI will need to prioritise on completing FALUPAM manual and having this authorised by MAF during the next 3 months. In the meantime, TABI and CDE need to focus on developing communication material during the next 12 months. These materials can take in the form of policy or research briefs,reflecting on key learnings of FALUPAM and addressing broader issues of land and forest governance. Some thematic area that may be relevant include, managing swidden and improving forest conservation, strengthening communal tenure and improving forest conservation, detailed land use planning to improve agro-biodiversity in communities, gender and equity in land use planning, etc. These communication materials can used to facilitate policy dialogue with national agencies, and donors, as well as used for information exchange across SDC-funded projects/programs in the Mekong Region.

Recommendation 7: Prioiritise on generating key lessons learnt and engaging in both informal and formal dialogue during the next 12 months.

TABI and DALAM will need to pro-actively seek both informal and formal occasions during the next 12 months to meet and discuss with key actors involved in land and forest governance issues in Laos. They will need to share more information about TABI's land use planning experience and its various information packages.One area that TABI's land use planning activities have not fully uncovered and falls within the scope SDC's strategy in the Mekong Region is the issue of gender and equity. Where resources are available, TABI and CDE, together with external researchers and organisation can still shed light on this issue with additional funding support from SDC.

References

Broedgaard, R. B., et al. (2017). "Wild food colelction and nutrition under commercial agriculture expansion in agriculture-forest landscapes." Forest Policy and Economics84: 92-101.

Department of Agricultural Land Management (2018). Overview_pFALUPAM_Implmentation_Status_070818. Vientiane, The Agro-Biodiversity Initiative.

Dwyer, M. (2017). Land and Forest Tenure in Laos: Baseline Overview 2016 with Options for Community Participation in Forest Management, UN-REDD Programme.

Dwyer, M. and V. Dejvongsa (2017). Forest and Agricultural Land Use Planning: A Strategic Analysis of the TABI Approach in Laos. A review of TABI commissioned by the SDC. Vientiane, Swiss Cooperation Office for the Mekong Region - Lao PDR.

Foppes, J., et al. (2018). Towards a Village Agro-Biodiversity Score-card. Technical Report for the TABI project. Vientiane, TABI.*Draft version*

Gonsalves, J. and Y. F. Lagerqvist (2018). Mid-term Review: The Agro-biodiversity Initiative (TABI) Phase 3. Vientiane, Swiss Development Cooperation.

Hansson, B. (2018). The Agro-Biodiversity Initiative (TABI), Phase III. First Quality Assurance Report. Stockholm, Sweden, NIRAS.

Heinimann, A., et al. (2017). Putting upland agriculture on the map: The TABI experience in Laos. Shifting Cultivation Policies; Balancing Environmental and Social Sustainability. M. Cairns. Wallingford, United Kingdom, CABI: 819-835.

Ingalls, M., et al. (2018). State of Land in the Mekong Region, Centre for Development and Environment, University of Bern, and Mekong Region Land Governance (PROJECT), with Bern Open Publishing.

Inoguchi, A. (2018). Viet Nam-Lao PDR Bilateral Exchange: Collaboration in Sustainable Forest Management and Addressing Regional Displacement under REDD+. Vientiane, UN-REDD; FAO; UNDP; UNE.

Kallio, M. H., et al. (2019). "The colour of maize: Visions of green growth and farmers perceptions in northern Laos." Land Use Policy80: 185-194.

Seidel, K., et al. (2007). Study on Communal Land Registration in Lao PDR. Land Policy Studies. Vientiane, Lao-German Land Policy Development Project.

SDC (2018a). Swiss Cooperation Strategy Mekong Region 2018–2021. Berne, Swiss Agency for Development Cooperation.

SDC (2018b). Terms of Reference for the Land Use Planning Consultant: Mid-term Review of the Agro-Biodiversity Initiative. Swiss Development and Cooperation Agency. Vientiane.

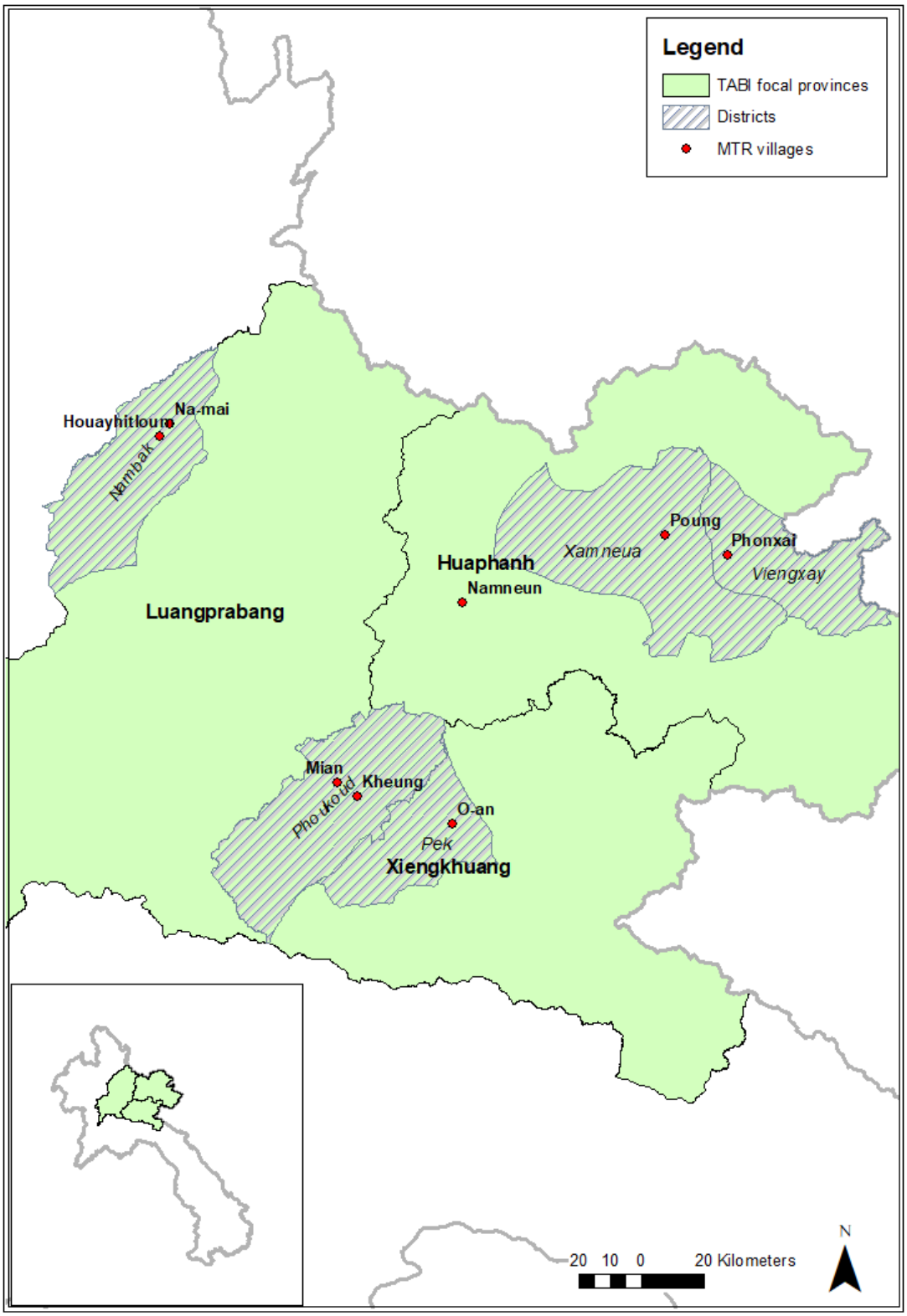
TABI (2018a). "Land Use Planning." from http://www.tabi.la/activities/land-use-planning/land-use-planing/.

TABI (2018b). The Agro-Biodiversity Initiative (TABI-Phase 3): Progress Report. Vientiane, TABI, NIRAS.

Victor, M. and K. Rasachack (2018). Putting Upland Agriculture and Biodiversity on the Map: An Overview of the Forest and Agriculture Land Use Planning and Management (FALUPAM) approach. Vientiane, The Agro-Biodiveristy Initiative.

Vongkhamho, S. and M. L. Ingalls (forthcoming). Negotiating the Forest-Fallow Interface. Farmer Innovations and Best Practices of Shifting Cultivation Systems in Asia-Pacific M. Cairns, Earthscan.

Figure 1 Map of TABI villages and review sites



Source: MTR (2018)

Figure 2 Village handbook and signboard

Left: Final copy of a village book from B. Mien, Phoukhout district in Xiengkhouang which contains agreed village boundaries, and series of maps including current land use as well as forest and agricultural land use management zone. The book also contains management rules agreed by district authority, and detailed household data. Right: Village signboard of forest and agricultural land use management zone in B. Kheung, Phoukhout district in Xiengkhouang. Photo credit: Y. Lagerqvist

Table 1 In-country review of TABI/FALUPAM

Dates	Organisaiton/activities	People
15 October, Monday	Afternoon Debriefing with the mid-term review team	Julian Gonsalves, Michael, Thisadee
16 October, Tuesday	Morning Interview with CCL Interview with WWF Afternoon Interview with GiZ Land Management and Land Program	 Anthony Gueguen BouavanhPhachomphon Julian Derbridge
17 October, Wednesday	Morning Interview with DALAM Interview with IWMI Afternoon Interview with THPC (via phone)	 PhaytheunPhilakoune Diana Suhardiman, OulavanhKeovilignavong, Jonas Kramp VanxaySuanthephanxay
18 October, Thursday	Morning Interview with DoF Afternoon Travel to Xiengkhouang Meeting withprovincial and district TABI team	 Ouphakhone Alounsavath
19 October, Friday	Morning Interview with PAFOXiengkhouang Afternoon Visit Or An village, Pek District	
20 October, Saturday	Morning Visit Mien village, Phoukhout Afternoon Visit Kheung village, Phoukhout district	
21 October, Sunday	Travel to Houaphanh	
22 October, Monday	Morning Interview with PAFO Houapanh andprovincial TABI team Afternoon Visit Pheung village, Xamneua district	
23 October, Tuesday	Morning Interview with DAFO,Viengxay district Visit Na Meuang village Visit Phonexay village	
24 October, Wednesday	Return to Xiengkhouang	
25 October, Thursday	Preparation for debriefing	
26 October, Friday	Debriefing with TABI team	Julian, Yayoi, Khamphou, Thitsadee, Michael, Micah, TABI team,
28 October, Sunday	Travel to Luangprabang	Yayoi, Thitsadee, Luck
29 October, Monday	Morning Interview with provincial TABI/FALUPAM team Interview with PONRELuangprabang Afternoon Interview with PAFOLuangprabang	
30 October, Tuesday	Morning Interview with DONRE/DAFO in Nambak Visit Houay Hit village, Nambak district Afternoon	

Dates	Organisaiton/activities	People
	Visit Na Mai village, Nambak district	
31 October, Wednesday	Return to Luangprabang Return to Vientiane	
1 November, Thursday	Morning Meeting with CDE Afternoon Meeting with JICA/Sustainable Forest Management and REDD+ Support Project Meeting with NIRAS team	 Michael Epprecht NoriKitamura Jonas Novén, Björn Hansson, Michael Victor
2 November, Friday	Morning Interview with DALAM Afternoon Meeting with NIRAS/TABI and DALAM/CDE team Meeting with FAO UNREDD+	 Khamphone, Thitsadee, Luck Michael Victor, Micah Ingalls, Rasso Bernhard, Luck Bounmixay, ThitsadeeChoulmountry, Jonas Novén, Björn Hansson, TABI team Akiko Inoguchi
3 November, Saturday	Morning Meeting with TABI consultant on ABD scorecard	 Joost Foppes

Table 2 Implementing FALUPAM

Project focus	Provinces	No. district	No. clusters	No. villages	No. of villages completing all four stages of FALUPAM	Note
TABI provinces	Luangprabang	6	14	66	61	Not all signboards are completed
	Xiengkhouang	5	13	73	45	Majority completed stage 3, except Namxiem cluster, with limited numbers of signboards
	Houapanh	6	12	43	27	Majority completed stage 3, with limited numbers of signboards
TABI sub-total (1)				182	133	
Non-TABI provinces	Phongsaly	2	10	69	15	Majority completed stage 2
	Bokeo	1	3	6	0	Majority completed stage 3
	Bolikhamxay	2	4	7	3	Majority completed stage 1 and some stage 2
	Savanakhet	1	3	3	3	Status of signboard not certain
	Saravanh	1	3	12	4	Completion up to stage 3
	Sekong	1	2	13	5	Completion up to stage 3
	Atapeu	2	2	5	4	Completion up to stage 3
	Oudomxay	1	1	4	0	Completion up to stage 1
	Xaysomboun	1	1	3	0	Completion up to stage 1
	Champasak	1	1	6	0	Completion up to stage 1
	Xayaboury	1	1	2	0	Not yet started
Non-TABI sub-total (2)				130	34	
Total (1) + (2)				312	167	

Sources: DALAM (2018)

Table 3 Community perception of land governance

Aspects of land governance	Before FALUPAM	FALUPAM
Boundary demarcation	Done by project/government. LUP/LA process. Some have signed and agreed village boundary document.	Boundaries were revisited and updated together with members of neighbouring villages and local authority.
Assessment of existing land and resource use	General assessment of livelihood basis and existing land use practices carried out by the local authority.	Thorough and detailed assessment of household background, existing land and resource use practice at plot level carried out by the local authority.
Zoning	Rough zoning generally following the forest categories outlined in the Forest Law.	Detailed zoning based on assessment of existing land use practice in the village.
Management plan	General management plan following the Forest Law.	Detailed management plan developed for each category of land in the community.
Formalisation of rule	General rule following the Forest Law.	Rules of use and management are developed for each type of land involving representatives of local communities and the local authority.
Monitoring	No systematic monitoring following the village boundary delineation and zoning.	Monitoring at the beginning and end of agricultural season to oversee land use plan, e.g. before swidden cultivation (January-March) and monitoring at the end of the year (October-December) to assess the actual use.
Recognition of rights	Recognition of rights to use resources and land in the village, but villagers are also made accountable to protect and manage forest.	Once the monitoring is complete, village boundary and management rules are approved at the district level.

Source: Group interviews with members of communities (October 2018)

Table 4 Why FALUPAM? Perspectives of organizations that participated in FALUPAM

Organisation	Advantages	Disadvantages	Notes
CCL	• FALUPAM appeared to be one of the best options for community-based land use planning. • Allows for nuanced understanding of the swidden and swidden fallow. • Helps to identify areas that are crucial for sustainable harvesting and management of commercially valuable NTFPs such as forest tea, and cardamom.	• No disadvantage observed at this stage.	• Concern over enforcing upland cultivation regardless to the soil condition. Some land may not be suitable for cultivation, and this may create inequity among households. • Purchase of maps in the process. Is it necessary to buy maps when farmers can understand digital representation of their community on screen? • Most of the costs are associated with DSA paid to the field-staff. Are there any ways to minimise the cost?
WWF	• FALUPAM appeared to be one of the best options for community-based land use planning. • Helps to define clear boundary of resources and use the maps to discuss sustainable land and resource use and management with local stakeholders.	• Shortage of technical staff at DALAM and its line agencies and their availability to help with land use planning process in timely manner.	• Ideally, WWF would like to apply the process in all areas where they are promoting sustainable harvesting and management of rattan and bamboo before they become extinct.
THPC	• Enables to clarify village boundary and identify various land, i.e. agricultural land, grazing land, orchard, etc. that were not previously identified and allocated to households.	• The process is new for the company and requires more assistance in understanding the tool and its effective use.	• THPC's main obligation to resettlement villages was completed. The company has limited financial and human resources to engage in land use planning. • Although resettlement was completed,resettled households are not satisfied with agricultural land allocation. • Resettled households have different needs for agricultural land, and it is difficult to establish a cohesive land use management in a large community. • In some resettlement villages, there are limited areas of forest.

Source: MTR interviews (2018)

Table 5 What do you know about FALUPAM?Perspectives of otherorganisations

Organisation	Advantages	Disadvantages	Notes
GIZ	• FALUAPM encourages staged process of land use planning and this enables participants to digest and reflect on various information. • Detailed information about the various land use types: "*It is likeMercedes of land use planning."* • Fantastic maps and documentation compared with the ones produced by GIZ.	• If one's goal is to have title deed (or securing tenure) at the end of land use planning, there is no need to delve into fine-grained detail of land use types, as well as various resources used by households. FALUPAM process collects far too much information. • There is also a philosophical difference of FALUPAM approach from other land use planning in Laos. FALUPAM incorporatesswidden and fallow system, and this sometimes goes against the government policy to eradicate shifting cultivation and increase forest cover to 70% by 2020. • Long-term sustainability of the process. Land use planning process should not be too dependent on external donors and experts.	• It is impossible to standardize process of land use planning in Laos. However, it is possible to agree on the key principles of land use planning. • Is land use planning more important than securing tenure to encourage investment in land?
JICA	• Visited a community in Nambak district, Luangprabang to see FALUPAM on the ground to understand its difference from PARRED approach (See also Inoguchi 2018)	• Do not have good understanding of what TABI does and benefits of FALUPAM. • A question was asked during the trip to Nambak district, but it was not well answered, e.g. conformity rate of local households to new forest and agriculture land use management zone, etc. • TABI/FALUPAM and its achievements are not particularly known among the members of forestry sector working group. There could be a better communication andcoordination at the central level, e.g. DoF, DALAM, DoL to discuss about forest-agriculture interface.	• Even with improved technology, it is still difficult to accurately assess swidden and fallow system. Based on JICA's assessment forest change, areas of swidden have not changed over the years despite the significant land use change. Current assessment of natural forest is approximately 58 % of the land cover. In order to increase the forest cover, discussion on swidden landscape management will be critical. • JICA is currently piloting forest monitoring system using European Space Agency's Sentinel satellite data. JICA is happy to use GIS-based land use zones and monitor forest changes.
FAO	• Keen to learn how communities can manage forest through detailed land use planning. • Visited a community in Nambak district in Luangprabang to see FALUPAM on the ground (See Inoguchi 2018)	• For REDD and REDD+, detailed forest categorisation is not essential, if country/communities can achieve results: overall increase of forest cover. However, in order to improve forest cover, improved land use planning is perhaps necessary.	• Significant funding opportunities supporting REDD and REDD+ in Laos i.e. Carbon Partnership Facility, Global Climate Fund • Ensuring long-term land security for communities is within the remit of REDD+. • Interested in interpretation of land categories

	• Is familiar with FALUPAM through publication, e.g. Dwyer and Dejvongsa (2017)		and collective rights to land in the new Land Law.
IWMI	• Land use planning that is nuanced and recognisesswidden and fallow land scape. • Detailed information collection that enables analysis over time: suitable for monitoring and further studies.	• Question of participatory nature of the process. Power asymmetry exist in communities, and FALUPAM like other resource management practice can entrench inequitable access to land and resources among community members through mapping and zoning. Without attention to power asymmetry based on gender, ethnicity and socio-economic status, the process may further aggravate the economic gap between households.	• Communities have different settlement history and there are layers of customary rules and practices of resource management. There could be greater effort made at the beginning of land use planning process touncover different customary rules and practices. • Potentially fixing land use and management practice on the map.
Village Forest and NTFPs Management Division, Department of Forestry	• FALUPAM recogniseslocal communities that reside within the national forest categories. • It also provides support to local communities and promotes sustainable land use practice and forest conservation. • It identifies critical non-timber forest products in the community and seeks to promote conservation. • FALUPAM enables detailed collection of information about village land use and forest resources.	• Information collected by TABI has not been fully shared. • Forest and land management rules developed through FALUPAM may need to be re-visited to ensure that it follows the national guideline.	• Village Forest and NTFPs Management Division was created to support local communities, especially at the *Khum Baan*level. There accords with the government policy of*sam sang*, which encourages cross-sectoral coordination at local level. • National regulations and government strategies particularly emphasise on working with local communities, and that local communities are also accountable to national regulation. • The division is also reviewing existing land use planning processes and synthesising a principle on land use planning.

Source: MTR interviews (2018)

Table 6 Recommendations on institutionalisation and capitalization

Levels	Institutionalisation	Capitalisation	Gaps in capacity and resources
Central	• Finalise the manual (now-March 2019) • Prioritise and complete critical dissemination document (now-May 2019) • Strategic dialogue with state and non-state actors and share key lessons learnt (Aug-Dec 2019)	• Develop information and data packages • Disseminate data and other information packages through publicly accessible on-line links • Encourage others to study and utilise information collected by the project • Run trainings and workshops on data analysis and writing • Publish and disseminate	• Need for more human resources to analyse and develop relevant information packages • Need for financial resources to support data training, writing and disseminating workshops.
Provincial	• Launch the manual and discuss key lessons learnt and principles of land use planning (April-June 2019) • Demonstrate information package (April-June 2019)	• Collate basic information on land use planning for the provincial government and set-up data management system (now-March 2019)	• Need for additional financial resources to develop information package. • Need for additional financial resources to launch FALUPAM manual in provinces • Need additional human and financial resources to train provincial/district staff on use of land and forest management data base.
District		• Collate basic information on land use planning for the district government and set-up data management system (now-March 2019)	
Village	• Monitor villages in focal provinces and finalise FALUPAM (now -April 2019) • Complete village books and signboards (now-April 2019) • Organise handover meetings in villages (April – December 2019)	• Distribute final village book and set up signboards (now-August 2019)	• Need for additional financial resources to issue village books and organising handover meetings.

Source: MTR interviews (2018)

Table 7 Priority of recommended activities for TABI

Levels of priority	Recommended activities	Notes
High	<u>Recommendation 1: Prioritise FALUPAM activities in TABI focal provinces. Make sure all four stages and village-handovers are completed in TABI focal provinces during the next 18 months.</u> TABI team and DALAM will need to prioritise completion of FALUPAM in TABI focal provinces. They will need to ensure that final budget is available to complete the activities. If there is a lack of resources, TABI will need to communicate with other partners for additional funding and seek human resources. <u>Recommendation 3: Strategically communicate and share information. TABI will need to revisit its communication strategy for FALUPAM during the next 3 months. TABI and its partners need to generate information packages including written communication material and cleaned data set to communicate the relevance of detailed information collection involved in TABI's land use planning during the next 6 months.</u> TABI will need to revisit its communication strategy and long-term platform to share information generated through FALUPAM activities. It will then need to work with its partners to generate targeted information packages for different audiences. CDE and DALAM should work on database structure for monitoring land use planning activities. CDE and DALAM will also need to clean data set for public access. <u>Recommendation 5: Prioritise on completing database structure for long-term monitoring in TABI provinces and share relevant information to the local policy makers during the next 12 months.</u> CDE and DALAM will need to prioritise on completing database structure for long-term monitoring of land and forest use and management plans during the next 12 months. TABI together with CDE and DALAM will also need to produce information packages, e.g. land and forest management atlas, for provincial and district policy makers in TABI provinces, and launch them accordingly. SDC can also support the launch of the final products in provinces by bringing in other provinces and partners that may be interested in the outcomes of TABI supported land use planning. <u>Recommendation 6: Prioritise on completing FALUPAM manual and other key communication material to engage in policy dialogue during the next 18 months.</u> DALAM and TABI will need to prioritise on completing FALUPAM manual and having this	• Assess budget requirements to address Recommendation 1, 5 and 6 and compare against remaining fund allocated for Outcome 2. If the estimated budget requirements exceed the remaining fund, seek alternative sources of support where possible. • Develop clear communication strategy to lead evidence-based policy dialogue. • Assess budget requirements for Recommendation 3 and 7 and consider whether they can be managed with sources within TABI's remaining funding, or elsewhere (i.e. SDC)

Levels of priority	Recommended activities	Notes
	authorised by MAF during the next 3 months. In the meantime, TABI and CDE need to focus on developing communication material during the next 12 months. These materials can take in the form of policy or research briefs, reflecting on key learnings of FALUPAM and addressing broader issues of land and forest governance. Some thematic area that may be relevant include, managing swidden and improving forest conservation, strengthening communal tenure and improving forest conservation, detailed land use planning to improve agro-biodiversity in communities, gender and equity in land use planning, etc. These communication materials can used to facilitate policy dialogue with national agencies, and donors, as well as used for information exchange across SDC-funded projects/programs in the Mekong Region. <u>Recommendation 7: Prioiritise on generating key lessons learnt and engaging in both informal and formal dialogue during the next 12 months.</u> TABI and DALAM will need to pro-actively seek both informal and formal occasions during the next 12 months to meet and discuss with key actors involved in land and forest governance issues in Laos. They will need to share more information about TABI's land use planning experience and its various information packages. One area that TABI's land use planning activities have not fully uncovered and falls within the scope SDC's strategy in the Mekong Region is the issue of gender and equity. Where resources are available, TABI and CDE, together with external researchers and organisation can still shed light on this issue with additional funding support from SDC.	
Medium	<u>Recommendation 4: TABI and its partners need to reflect on how TABI's land use planning strengthened communal tenure of land and natural resources in different contexts and share the key learning during the next 18 months.</u> In close relations with Recommendation 3 above, TABI and its partners will need reflect on various cases of FALUPAM and how they strengthened communal tenure in different context. TABI should help produce communication material based on the key learnings, and SDC can support the distribution of key learnings across the Mekong region through its different projects and programmes.	• This is closely linked to Recommendation 3 and 6 above. Seek collaboration with other organisations, and additional sources of funding if necessary.
Low	<u>Recommendation 2: FALUPAM in non-TABI provinces. Unless they are near completion (Stage 4), and the resources are available, avoid spreading TABI human and financial resources to complete FALUPAM activities in non-TABI provinces during the next 18 months.</u>	• Considering the limited remaining funds available for Outcome 2, it is recommended to retract

Levels of priority	Recommended activities	Notes
	DALAM will need to retract from implementing FALUPAM activities in non-TABI provinces during the next 18 months, particularly in cases that are highly complex and time consuming, as well as in cases where the process requires additional training of local staff. TABI and SDC will need to seek alternative mechanism to support the growing interest in TABI's land use planning approach.	from implementing FALUPAM in non-TABI provinces. However, engage and involve interested parties in non-TABI provinces to forums and workshops where lessons learnt from FALUPAM are shared.Match the interested parties to other potential donors, and projects.

Source: MTR interviews (2018)