



Basics on Forest Protection

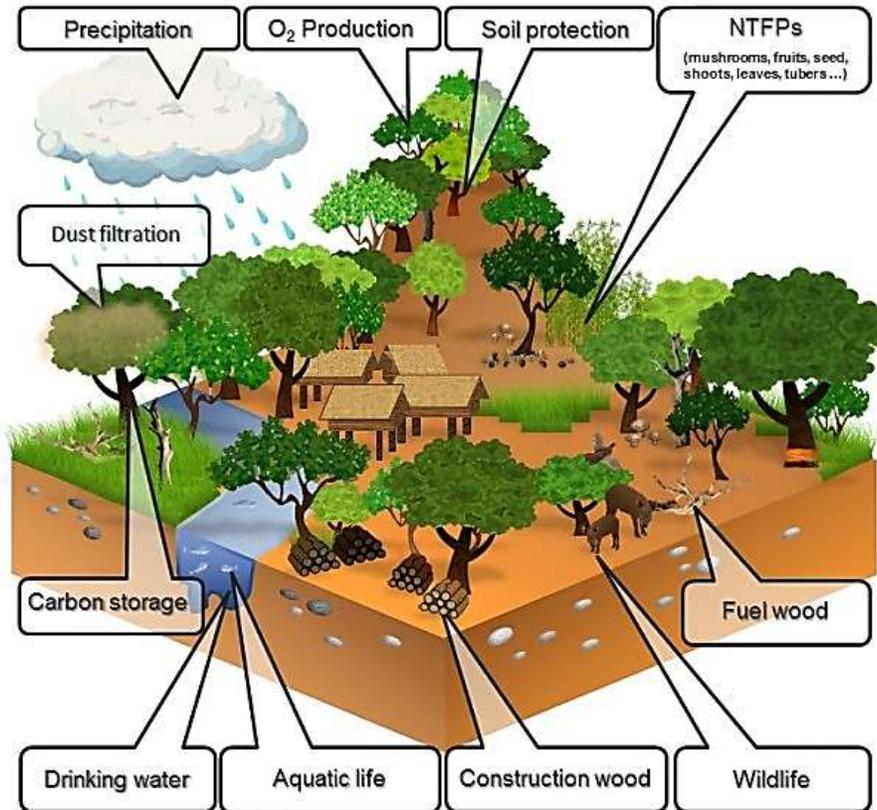
How can local communities be motivated to participate in forest management and conservation efforts in village forests? The CliPAD (Climate Protection through Avoided Deforestation) project provides incentives aiming to stabilize the landscape as well as reducing deforestation and forest **degradation in two districts in Houaphan province. To date, 25 'Village Forest Management Plans'** have been developed and 45 villages will follow by mid-2018. Each of the 25 villages has an **'Annual Village Forest Operational Plan'** which outlines detailed activities to stabilize and improve forest conditions including boundary establishment and demarcation, forest fire control, forest patrols and silvicultural related measures such as thinning, stand improvement etc.



To ensure a harmonized implementation of the 'Annual Village Forest Operational Plans' with a high standard of quality in all pilot villages, 14 officers from the Provincial Office of Agriculture and Forestry (PAFO) and the District Offices of Agriculture and Forestry (DAFO) of Sam Neua and Houameuang were trained as trainers for villagers for three days by CliPAD technical staff and an officer of the Department of Forestry.

The main topics of the training of trainers were the clarification and legal framework of 'Village Forest Management', rights and responsibilities of villagers to manage land and natural resources as well as practical implementation lessons of silvicultural related activities.

In a second step, provincial and district forest officers will conduct trainings for two villagers from each pilot village (members of the Village Forest Management Committee), who will supervise and guide the implementation of the annual plans accordingly. Hence, the villagers will be responsible for the implementation. If further forest related training measures are being provided, the approach would finally lead to the set-up of a village forest service which would create more ownership among villagers themselves and, at the same time, a support for understaffed district and provincial forest offices in the long term. The first training for villagers took place as a pilot and was completed successfully in Houameuang district; which also the attending Vice Governor highly acknowledged.



Finally, a new illustrative 'Village Forest Management and Implementation Manual' was created to guide forestry officials and villagers in the implementation of the forest management plans. The manual was officially approved by PAFO Houaphan with the request to "[...] use it intensively in the field". The manual was written and richly illustrated by a CliPAD Intern and his Lao counterparts.

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