



Climate Protection through Avoided Deforestation

Context

Laos has one of the highest forest cover rates in Southeast Asia and is rich in natural resources like water and minerals. Over 70% of the population lives near forests, relying on them for 20% of their livelihood. Since the 1960s, however, forests have diminished dramatically due to agriculture, infrastructure development, and timber exploitation, contributing 78% of national greenhouse gas emissions and threatening biodiversity and livelihoods. To combat this, the Government of Laos has introduced ambitious Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) targets, a timber export ban, a new forest law, and large-scale REDD+ (Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation) projects. The six provinces targeted by CliPAD account for over 40% of Laos' deforestation and forest degradation in the past 15 years.



Project Title	Climate Protection through Avoided Deforestation (CliPAD)
Commissioned by	German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)
Project regions	Houaphan, Sayabouly, Luang Prabang, Luang Namtha, Oudomxay and Bokeo
Leading executing agency	Ministry of Agriculture and Environment (MAE)
Duration	January 2019 - March 2027

Objective

Laos succeeds in reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation by promoting sustainable forest management and fostering the conservation and enhancement of forest carbon stocks.

Approach

With €51.1 million from the Green Climate Fund (GCF) and €11.5 million from BMZ, CliPAD covers six provinces in northern Laos, aiming to mitigate 11.7 million tCO₂eq

and protect two million hectares of forest. Beyond environmental benefits, the project also improves rural livelihoods and promotes gender equality by providing women with access to training, leadership roles, and decision-making opportunities within forest management initiatives.

Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD+) is a key strategy for the Lao Government to substantially reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions.



The project strengthens the enabling environment for REDD+ implementation by:

- Enhancing the availability of financing to transform forest management
- Revising and improving the legal and regulatory framework or forestry
- Improving the enforcement for the new regulatory framework (governance)

It also supports deforestation-free agriculture and agroforestry by:

- Enhancing the productivity of village agriculture
- Increasing farmers' integration into agriculture value chains
- Improving access to finance and private sector participation for better land management, reducing pressure on forests

In addition, the project supports the implementation of sustainable forest management, land forest landscape

restoration across more than 1.5 million hectares of degraded land.

Impact

By 2025, CliPAD achieves reductions in land conflicts, supports households in adopting sustainable farming techniques that boost yields and incomes, and builds climate resilience across northern Laos.

• Reduced Land Conflicts

Participatory Land Use Planning (PLUP) and Village Forest Management Plans (VFMP) have cut boundary disputes by 30% and improved cooperation on fire prevention and forest regeneration, supported by a Measurement, Reporting, and Verification (MRV) system.

• Improved Farming Practices

Through Promoting Sustainable and Deforestation-Free Agricultural Practices (PSAP), 80% of farming households have adopted improved production systems and supply chains. These sustainable methods have empowered communities, increasing crop productivity and household incomes.

• Strengthened Climate Resilience

By advancing financing mechanisms and enhancing legal and regulatory frameworks, the project strengthened the environment for REDD+ implementation and reduced barriers at national and sub-national levels. As a result, over 270,000 people benefit from greater resilience to climate impacts through better-managed forests and diversified livelihoods.

• Restored Forest Ecosystems

Reduced shifting cultivation has revitalized forests, resulting in a 35% increase in Non-Timber Forest Products (NTFPs). This has boosted biodiversity and supported local economies.

Partners

In partnership with the Government of Lao PDR, CliPAD works alongside BMZ, Asian Development Bank, Japan International Cooperation Agency, International Fund for Agricultural Development, KfW Development Bank, World Bank, and the private sector, fostering broad-based support.



Community members participate in a village vote on sustainable agricultural activities ©GIZ/Chaykeo Bounphengphanh

About GIZ Laos

GIZ, as part of German Development Cooperation, has been active in Laos since 1993, mainly on behalf of German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ). Currently, GIZ is implementing numerous projects in four core areas: a) rural development, b) conservation of nature and natural resources, c) sustainable economic development and d) good governance.

Please visit <https://www.giz.de/en/regions/asia/laos> for further information.

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