



## **Alternative Futures: Multi-function or Mono-function?**

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The Uplands of Lao PDR is a diverse mosaic of ethnic groups, landscapes and biological diversity. Seeking a more sustainable future for the Uplands is clear and central to the Government of Lao PDR's national development priorities. However, the sustainable development of the uplands hangs in the balance, caught between two competing and often mutually exclusive vision. This poster summarizes findings of a process to develop scenarios which could help planners better address challenge facing the uplands.

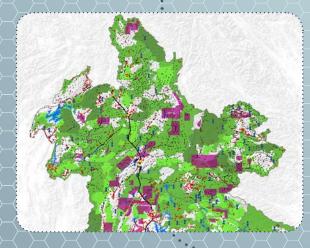
## Development Goals:

- 1/ Turning Land Into Capital- FDI investment in land
- Agricultural intensification & commercialization
- Poverty eradication
- Regional connectivity & integration
- The "Battery of Southeast Asia"



# Conservation Goals:

- Forest Strategy 2020: 70%
- SDG 15: Life on Land
- Stabilization of shifting cultivation
- **Biodiversity & Protected Areas** Sustainable agriculture, niche markets
- Complex overlay of foreign direct investments & policy constrain upland livelihoods





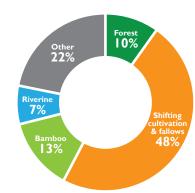
860 foreign direct investment projects mainly for mining hydropower & agriculture

8 of all villages oin Lao PDR fall



area designated protection forest Large scale transportation: railway & road networks

Shifting cultivation landscapes create a multifunctional landscape and largest proportion of livelihood and income to upland farmers who are poorest and most vulnerable.



## Developing Scenarios Using Critical Uncertainties

#### Scenario 1:

Governance & land management (Policy planners)

Sustainable

► Sustainable land use Chaos ▶ Increase income & productivity

▶ Little control or regulation ▶ Increase forest cover ▶ Weak capacity & staff ▶ Good well being ▶ Monitoring & evaluation ▶ Poverty reduction efforts weak & little enforcement

► Land degradation and soil

▶ Limited access to land

▶ Reduction in agriculture

labour force, migration

infertility

resources

successful ▶ Equitable decision-making Governance Capacity ----- High **Desertification** 

#### Inequitable but steady growth ▶ Low productivity

- ▶ Income in short terms ▶ Negative impact on
- environment & human health ▶ Monopsony

**Green Society** 

Unsustainable

# Scenario 2:

Access to markets & land (Foreign Advisers)

Green Green & Fair (Bhutan) Isan Scenario ► Clear standards/rules ▶ Large scale/high value nice ► Clean/organic products & ▶ Corporate agriculture ▶ Wage labour ▶ Locally driven ▶ High costs of Upland ► Independent Resources ▶ Focus on well being ► Expensive Food ▶ Self organized farmers ▶ Tenure security Equitable Access to Productive Land & Natural resources **GDP Driven Business as usual** ► Marginal land

► Moderate high growth

- ▶ Migration (rural to urban) ► Cash crops-high inputs No secure tenure ▶ Mono-cropping of low ▶ Unclear policies value crops
- ▶ Policy implementation gaps ▶ Land conflict Contaminated food ▶ Rule of law issues

**Brown** 

Access to technologies & increased capacity (researchers & academics)

Scenario 3:

High **Grey Growth Green Society** ▶ Learning process & skill of ▶ High income, prosperity local people increased, but ▶ High production, good quality not expansion

▶ Good living condition ► Mass of development ▶ Environment secured growth was slowly expended

There were risks on environ-

▶ Peace, security, higher resilience ▶ Less of risks

Yellow growth

▶ Technologies accessible

▶ Investment and extension

▶ Availability and access of new technology & technique

# Technologies & Technology Development

Low

#### ▶ Low benefit, not sustainable

**Red Growth** 

▶ Low production, low quality

ment & health

- ▶ Lack of food security
- ▶ The production faced to
- high risk ▶ Environment degraded

- were not functioning

#### Successful Interventions that Cut Across Scenarios

- ▶ Inclusion of youth: Greater investments in providing youth opportunity for new businesses is needed.
- ▶ Investments in locally established social enterprises and agrientrenpeurship. Continue promoting market access with a focus on niche markets. Large scale industrialization provided short-term profit but little long-term sustainability.
- ▶ Participatory land use planning approaches which secure land tenure arrangements of local people in relation to large-scale land investments.
- ▶ Improved result-based management systems which reward innovation and hard work rather than business as usual budgeting and projects.
- ▶ Institutional strategies are needed at all levels to improve Rule
- ▶ Farmer organizations with clear purpose, focusing on single activity.
- ▶ Support to bottom-up development processes, making sure that ideas and plans come from the local level.

# Lessons Learned

- ▶ Scenarios based on uncertainties are useful as they help uncover different world views, and help to look at multiple factors, opening up different possibilities.
- ▶ Alternative pathways entail gains and losses, we need to find ways to manage trade-offs and minimize impacts on most vulnerable.
- ▶ Institutional reforms should rely on individuals with high capacity who belong to these institutions. Transformations initiated and managed from within, not from outside.
- ▶ Need to take a systematic approach looking at larger issues of governance, marketing systems and natural resource management.
- ▶ Focus on incentives (markets, policies), indicators and results based systems in addition to technical capacity building as main features of projects.
- ▶ Results of engaging with private sector investment to improve agricultural output have been mixed and in many instances led to negative impacts on livelihoods, human health and the environment. Clear policy guidelines and standards need to be put into place and rigorously applied.







