



Practitioner's and policy-makers exchange on climate change adaptation in agriculture

Lao P D R

Khamphone Mounlamai

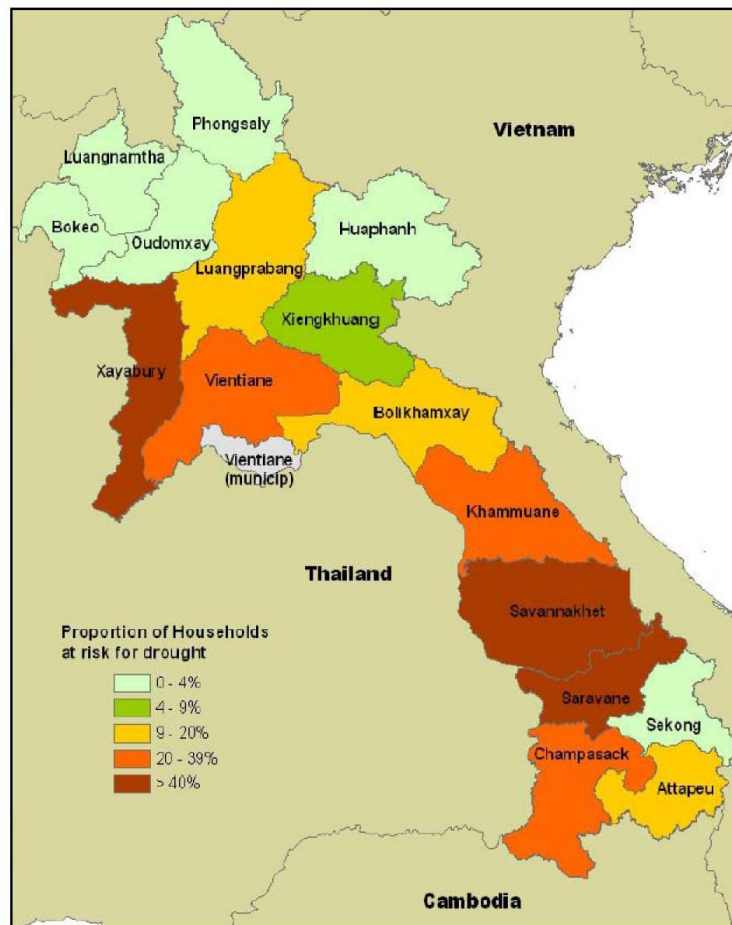
Bounthee Saythongvanh

1. Major crop agricultural industries and production systems

- **Natural resources:** timber, hydropower, gypsum, tin, gold, gemstones
 - **Industries:** copper, tin, gold, and gypsum mining; timber, electric power, agricultural processing, construction, garments, cement, tourism
 - **Land use:** arable land: 4.01%, permanent crops: 0.34%, other: 95.65% (2005)
 - **Irrigated land:** 1,750 sq km (2003)
 - **Agriculture - products:** sweet potatoes, vegetables, corn, coffee, sugarcane, tobacco, cotton, tea, peanuts, rice; water buffalo, pigs, cattle, poultry
 - **Subsistence agriculture:** dominated by rice cultivation in lowland areas, accounts for about 30% of GDP and provides 80% of total employment
 - **Export commodities:** wood products, coffee, electricity, tin, copper, gold
 - **Ethnic groups:** Lao 55%, Khmou 11%, Hmong 8%, other (over 100 minor ethnic groups) 26% (2005 census) with a mix of traditional agriculture and livelihood systems: burn and slash agriculture, shifting cultivation, animal husbandry, hunting, gathering, fishing, forest products etc
- **Agriculture in Lao PDR seen in context of overall Natural Resources Management**

2. Current and emerging climate-related threats/risks to food security

FIGURE 9. Households in Lao PDR at risk of becoming food insecure because of droughts (excluding chronically food insecure)



- Chain of evidence at global, regional and local level that indicates that Climate Change takes place in Lao PDR (as in the whole of the Mekong river basin), and will have - gradually or ad-hoc – impacts on the country in general, and the agriculture sector specifically.
- Most certainly the rainfall pattern will change extensively and pose a specific challenge to water management, agriculture, disaster management (floods, flash-floods, droughts, typhoons, wind storms, erosion)
- Because of its geographic features the country is exposed to multiple climate hazards.
- Economic and demographic developments will influence the country's adaptive capacity and overall resilience of the agricultural sector.
- Given the level of poverty in the country (especially in rural and remote areas) the ongoing and anticipated changes may strike such poor groups beyond the level of any adaptation option.
- Some groups of the society, some agricultural production systems, or some geographical areas, may benefit from the anticipated changes of the climate.

3. Current and emerging climate-related threats/risks to food security

- Indicative data forecasts more rainfall events in the centre and the north of the country during the first half of the century and an expansion of climatic conditions at present prevailing in the south, these slightly shrinking again in the second half of the century.
- The country would have two distinct climatic zones only, at present there are three.
- These expected changes will require well-development resilience and early gained adaptive capacity of the agricultural sector and the farmers to cope with the situation.

4. Existing risk management and adaptation efforts: policies

Important policies and policy documents are:

- The GoL's Strategy for Climate Change, March 2010, with adaptation and mitigation options for 7 key priority areas including agriculture sector / food security
- The National Communication on Climate Change, the first report was published in October 2000, the second is presently under preparation
- The National Adaption Programme for Action / NAPA, published in 2009, outlining priority programmes and actions for Lao PDR, including agriculture / food security
- The National Growth and Poverty Eradication Strategy (NGPES)
- The National Sustainable Development Strategy (NSDS)
- The GoL's 'Strategic Vision for the Agriculture and Forestry Sector' (1999)
- MAF 4 Goals and 13 Measures', four development targets are identified, including food security
- In collaboration with UNEP an Environmental Law is presently in preparation.
- in the last stage of finalization is an inter-ministerial agreement on conversion of agricultural land for other purposes.

5. Existing risk management and adaptation efforts: further action

- Mainstreaming Climate Change in policies, strategies, plans
- Enhancing Conservation Agriculture
- Improving water management and flood control
- Priority Action: community based measures
- Funding and finance instruments
- Country specific, sector-based research on macro and village level
- Quality information dissemination and extension support
- Cooperation among sectors, regional and international cooperation



6. Questions

- What do you hope to learn at this event?
 - Exchange strategic and practical experience on agriculture adaptation on the ground
 - Exchange practical experiences on community engagement related to AA2CC
 - MAF/NAFRI being a part of a regional AA2CC network with focus on policy development and practical application in the field

Kop Chei Leilei. Thank you.