

Community Coherence Assessment

Prey Lang Forest Protection Communities

DANMISSION AND MOSAIC PROJECT

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Project Overview

This project was undertaken in advance of new legislation affecting the Prey Lang Forest. A Protected Area sub-decree initiative was originally drafted by MAFF with support of USAID in 2011. At that time, there were antagonistic relationships between MAFF, the FA, and PLCN at this time. PLCN was more radical in their approach toward illegal loggers, Chut Vutty was still alive, and there were hostilities. When USAID came in as the main donor, funding Winrock, who also funded RECOFT and Conservation International, they were bound to work with MAFF and FA who had jurisdiction over Prey Lang. PLCN report that since that time, the close relationships they had with other villagers living around the forest who would join in forest patrols, has disintegrated. CF committees were explicitly told they could not patrol in the Prey Lang and that PLCN was working against the law.

Cambodia's Ministry of Environment (MoE) ratified 5 new Protected Forest Areas previously designated 'Production Forests' by the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries (MAFF). The largest of these is the Prey Lang forest. The MoE is planning to develop co-management arrangements for these new protected areas that will put more authority for forest protection and governance in the hands of the community. There are currently deep divisions between the various communities who were involved in forest protection activities. This preliminary research assessment was conducted to better understand the relationships between forest protection communities in Prey Lang. Our objectives are to find ways toward cooperation and communication, to prepare communities for coming co-management initiatives, and to have community-level data with which to draft those co-management initiatives.

For this report, in lieu of an executive summary, we present the common themes we found across the provinces in an easy-to-read bullet point outline. We provide a brief discussion of our methods, followed by details and evidence for our assessments through descriptions of activities in each province. We then offer some recommendations for enhancing community cohesion.

Common Themes

Loss of forest around villages and in Prey Lang for various reasons

- **ELCs/companies**
 - There are 45 Economic Land Concessions (ELC) and Mining Concessions (MC) inside the Prey Lang forest. ELC are outside the boundary of the new Wildlife Sanctuary, but MC remain inside the protected area boundary.
 - Even though ELC are outside the boundary, their sawmills drive illegal logging inside the protected area.
 - The currently most aggressive companies are:
 - Think Biotech: Kratie Province
 - CRCK: Kompong Thom Province
 - Thy Nga, PNT, HengFu: Preah Vihear

- **Corrupt local officials:**
 - All provinces report difficulties with some officials at the local level. When local level officials are involved in logging or in plantation clearing it affects the efforts of all groups involved in forest protection activities.
 - We collected evidence of illegal land sales, illegal logging, and bribery and graft from all provinces.
 - CF and Resin patrol groups are most directly affected by corrupt local officials because of the close relationship between major donors supporting their patrols and the government.
- **Villagers – people have little idea about land rights or forest laws; neither the takers nor the losers of resources are aware of the laws.**
 - Logging is a widespread livelihood strategy in all four provinces.
 - Middlemen pay from \$1-300 USD per cubic meter of sawn lumber and most villages report 70-80% of men engage in this occupation.
 - It is universally believed that local people would not cut if there were no one to easily sell to.
 - Timber and Plantation cutting
 - Inside Community Forests
 - Plantation clearing inside, encroachment from outside, illegal timber extraction
 - Plantation and timber cutting is legal inside the CF, but must be done with committee approval
 - Inside Prey Lang
 - Illegal logging, plantation encroachment, and resin tree cutting
 - Immigration into the forest
 - Driven by land loss from ELC (Think Biotech)
 - Driven by desire for increased plantation land- cassava prices
 - Perceived need to protect resin forests, cut homestead land close to resin trees
 - Homesteads of illegal loggers with plantation land
 - Migrants seeking land and being called to ‘buy’ land

One important point about forest loss is that in ALL community forests—places where the destruction has slowed way down—saplings of hardwoods and luxury trees are coming up. Some CF report saplings over 2 meters high and 10-15 cm in diameter. The forest returns.

Patrolling*

- **PLCN**
 - Established in 2002 through community initiatives and with NGO help to stop the destruction of Cambodia’s forest concessions.
 - Conducting regular patrols with their core group
 - 1 patrol/month for core zone of each province- 4-5 days per patrol
 - 4 patrols/year to bring 4 provinces together for a meeting in core zone
 - funding provided by CPN/CDPS: Approx. \$500 per patrol per province

* All groups are provided with equipment by donors. A full accounting of what equipment is held by which groups will not be provided here, but should be compiled for subsequent stages of this process.

- Forest criminals are required to thumbprint documents agreeing to stop illegal activities, chainsaws are confiscated, and timber is either confiscated or destroyed.
- Membership is up, due to Protected Area status and increases in forest crimes.
- Some cooperation with CF and Resin patrol groups, but the deliberate segregation of these groups from PLCN activities decreases their effectiveness.
- Communicate with local officials and FA before patrols and request assistance and co-patrolling. Only Kampong Thom has regular participation from local officials, but it is often only one police officer.
- Report limited funds; should be patrolling 3-4 times per month.
- **Community Forests and Resin Patrols**
 - CF established between 2010-2014 by Forest Administration in cooperation with RECOFT, and at different stages European Union and USAID (Winrock).
 - Resin Patrols established in December 2015 in Stung Treng and in January 2016 in Kratie (patrol teams reports).
 - Report regular patrolling (because we did not stay with them, we cannot verify how often they actually patrol).
 - CF - 8 patrols/ month- 1-2 days per patrol
 - Funding by Winrock \$5 per patrol
 - Tumring REDD+ project also provides funding, \$50/month, for selected CF in Kampong Thom- their patrol schedule is the same.
 - Resin – 3 patrols/ month- three days per patrol
 - Funding by CI, through Winrock grant; 2.5/person/day for food; \$5 per day for gas
 - Report limited rights
 - Only allowed to patrol within CF boundaries
 - Only allowed to protect resin trees in resin forests, not other trees
 - Only able to talk to illegal loggers and take pictures of crimes.
 - Not allowed to confiscate, although some report using wood for a school.
 - Fear of breaking the law when they confront illegal forest clearing or logging.
 - Report limited resources
 - Money does not cover loss of income for time spent patrolling
 - Not enough time to go on patrols due to primary job (e.g. resin patrols in *Stung Treng*)
 - Not enough members to go on patrols (e.g. *Prey Preah Roka Network* losing young members who travel for work or studies)
 - Report concern over Prey Lang
 - Resources spent on protection of CFs and resin forests, while Prey Lang is getting raided and devastated
 - Co-management of the entire area was supported by all participants.
 - Some are involved in corruption and forest crimes
 - Research team found chainsaws and lumber at the homes of CF chiefs.
 - CF committee members discussed joining patrol efforts where corruption happened.
 - Misrepresentation of CF integrity and land use, data gathered in the interview did not match what researchers found in the forest.

- **PLFCN**

- PLFCN is a new group established in 2015 and supported by Kampong Thom Provincial Governor with activities primarily in Kampong Thom
- With the removal of both the provincial and district governors, their activities have slowed (new information from meeting 6 June 2016).
- Members from CF committees that reported patrolling with PLFCN (referred to as the ‘government’ group) reported the solicitation of bribes and no confiscation of timber or equipment from illegal loggers.
- The only CF that did not report patrolling with PLFCN were those whose members were named in the agreement with the provincial governor. Named members of PLFCN did not report their own activity.

Communication

- **Flows of communication are strained all across the region.**

- *Community Forest Committee*
 - Do not have each other’s contact information.
 - Never call upon each other and do not meet together unless there is a workshop called by an external organization or government.
- *Resin Patrol groups*
 - New patrol groups.
 - Steung Treng formed at the time of this research the Kratie groups were just being formed, but none of the members of PLCN were contacted to join.
 - PLCN was contacted to connect CI to the resin communities
 - Steung Treng resin patrol groups were reluctant to join with PLCN because of directives from CI about where they could patrol and what they could do.
- *PLCN*
 - Members of PLCN know of CF locations and contact some committee members to patrol with them.
 - We were told that, “when PLCN calls us to go on patrol, we go”. They are not called very often.
 - Between PLCN members there is some mistrust and accusations of illegal activity across provinces. No group is spared in these accusations both making and receiving them.
 - They do share contact information and there are communication flows between the steering committee members.
 - They do connect and share information through social media. They do not seem to plan via social media, but do share information.

Methods

Research for this report was conducted from March-May 2016 and is also informed by fieldwork in the region since January 2015.

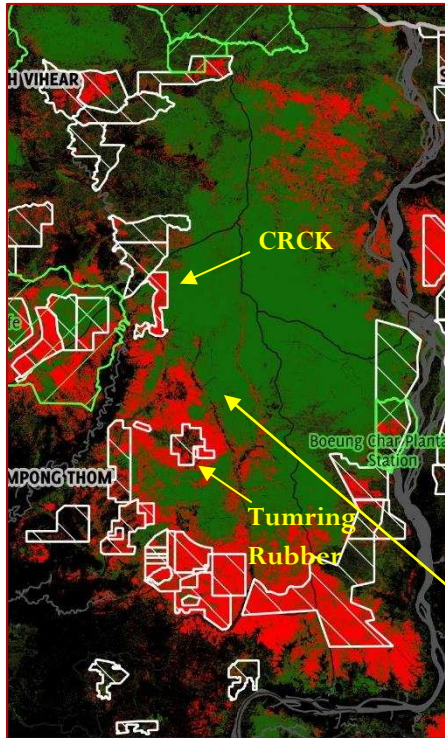
All interviews were conducted in Khmer and the research team traveled with members of the PLCN to conduct focus group discussions, do key informant interviews, and draw village maps at CF and with Resin Patrol groups in Kampong Thom, Kratie, Steung Treng, and Preah Vihear. We also accompanied PLCN on forest patrol in February and March of 2016, where we interviewed members of PLCN as well as illegal loggers encountered while on patrol.

This is not a comprehensive study. We visited 14 of the 43 Community Forests identified by PLCN (2014) and met with 3 resin patrol groups. The resin patrol groups were not yet active in Kratie at the time of our research, so the data from resin comes from only Steung Treng. Additionally, this report focuses on a grassroots assessment and does not present the views of local authorities, donor organizations, NGOs, or national level government.

Provincial Studies

Kampong Thom

Forest Loss



Companies/ ELC/ SLC

Kampong Thom is the home of the first ELC to enter the deep forest after the end of forest concessions. This is the Tumring Rubber company, established in 2007. In the years after this several other ELC for rubber were established in the area. The most recent ELC in Kampong Thom is CRCK, a subsidiary of the Vietnamese Rubber Group (VRG). The close-up of LICADHO concession map laid over University of Maryland map of forest loss between 2000 - 2014, shows the extent of forest loss (in red) in the region as a result of the land-use changes started by ELC.

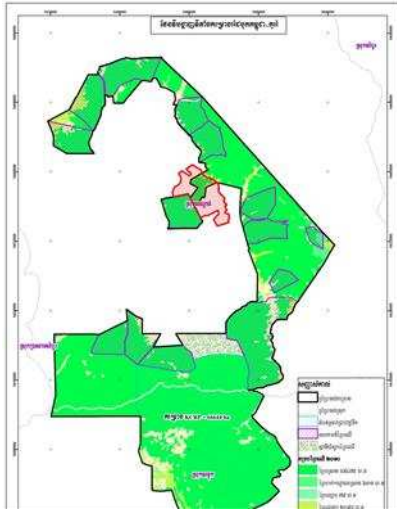
This 2014 forest loss map does not show the deforestation from a 2123.99 ha Social Land Concession (SLC) issued in 2013. Clearing in the concession did not begin until 2015, around the same time a REDD+ project was instituted in the area. This SLC is known in the area as Company 95. It now has a sister Company 95 inside the ThyNga concession in Preah Vihear, to be discussed below. From our interviews with illegal loggers conducted while on forest patrol in Kampong Thom with PLCN we

learned that they were all selling their wood to middlemen working for Company 95.

Below is Company 95. The arrow illustrates forest cover in 2014. The satellite image below comes from June 10, 2016, (Global Forest Watch



<http://www.globalforestwatch.org/map/>). The extent of the clearing is visible in this image. The dark green square is a community forest that forms part of the Tumring REDD+ project. According to the sub-decree, this SLC was issued with the purpose of giving land to landless individuals, but to date there is no evidence of any landless individuals making homesteads in the area. The only thing visible are sawmills, trucks, roads through the CF, and roads into the deep forest behind the SLC. Below is a map of the REDD+ project, with the boundary of the SLC in red.



The satellite image above shows clearing beyond the boundaries of the SLC, to the southeast, just as the University of Maryland deforestation map shows clearing beyond the boundaries of ELC. One CF committee member told us, “There’s no NGO to help protect prey lang. The SLC will come take all the trees down from Prey Lang... they take trucks every day along the new road...” (FGD Hong Jamtet, Feb 2016).

We traveled through this region during our research with the CF committees. The photographs we took of the company and the surround area confirm the claims we make about land use inside the concession and spreading degradation into the villages beyond.

Local Officials

Recent changes to provincial and district level governors in Kampong Thom have yet to reveal their effects. PLCN members report improvements over past corruption, but remain watchful. We gathered evidence concerning the



Photos by author, Feb 28, 2016



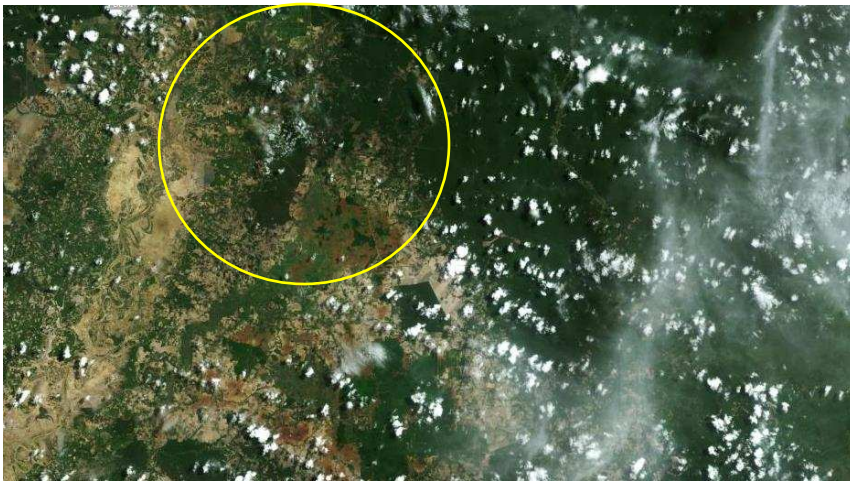
Sawmill area (above)
Degraded area outside SLC (left)
SLC road leading into Prey Lang (below)



involvement of the Mien Rit commune chief (along with RECOFT staff and Winrock staff) in attempts to decrease the size of Kabal Clas CF in order to excise areas illegally converted to plantation land (Interview CF Chief, Kabal Clas, Feb 2016). We confirmed a new sawmill in Trapiang Tralak that was run by a deputy village chief with protection by FA. We heard reports of village chiefs involved in forest patrols after which loggers were encouraged to meet the village chief to buy their chainsaws back (FGD Jam Svay village, Feb 2016). We also heard reports of turning illegal loggers into the FA and having them “released in 5 minutes” (FGD O’Das Skor, Feb 2016).

Villagers

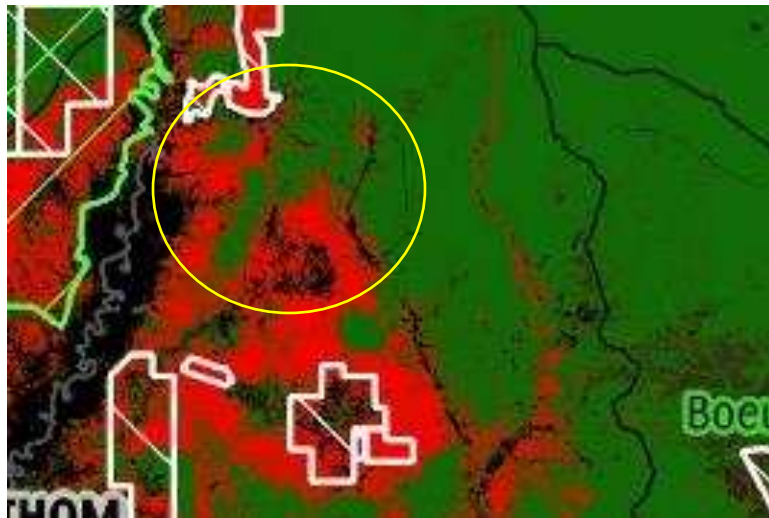
Growing cassava is an important livelihood in Kampong Thom. The price is lower this year than last (400-490r/kg and 600-650r/kg respectively) but there has been dramatic land



conversion to cassava in the Sandan district. Comparing the 2016 satellite data with the 2014 forest cover map, we can see dramatic changes to the forest cover. Our trips through the circled area on these maps revealed extensive new clearings for cassava plantations.

Additionally, wood cutting is an important occupation. 6 of the 7 CF reported that most villagers cut and sell wood to company 95 middle

men. While on forest patrol, we encountered one large village, with 12-15 homes and 2 small stores. These people all report making their living from the new plantation land they have cleared. None report logging as an occupation.



Villagers also report the widespread selling of resin trees to loggers. This is a new problem. As most of the large trees have been cut from the nearby forests, the only large trees left are the resin trees, which have been protected by of the 2002 Forestry Law (article 29; article 98, part 2, #5). In the current era, the legal protection of resin trees has less weight

than before and people say that they are selling their trees before someone comes and cuts them. Most of the felled trees we saw on our 2 patrols have been resin trees, all illegal loggers say they are working for middle men who have secured permission from the tree’s owner.

Patrolling

PLCN, PLFCN, and CF

PLFCN and PLCN share very good communication. They are from neighboring villages and Heun Sopheap, the elected Steering Committee representative for PLCN, and Som Sean, the appointed head of PLFCN, are in fairly regular communication. Som Sean maintains an elected position within PLCN.

Sean was supported by the provincial governor who gave \$100 month for forest patrol (food and moto repair) and 100 liters of gas. Many who are in his group and police who accompanied Forest patrol in February report that this group extorts money and does not prevent forest crimes. This is such common knowledge that people joke about it together and are not keeping it secret. From 6 different sources (FGD with Kbal Clas, To Tey, Hong Jamnet, and O’Kranuan, Feb 2016; Field notes (2 sources) Forest Patrol, Feb 2016) interviewed independently and at different times and locations, we received the same information about bribery and collusion between PLFCN and illegal loggers. At the time of these interviews, all CF in Kampong Thom were aware of two patrol groups, except the group at Kbal O Kranhak—some of whose names are on the list of PLFCN members signed by the governor.

All CF report patrolling 4 times per month, 8 days, with money received from Winrock (\$45/month- \$5 per patrol) and \$50/month received from the Tumring REDD+ project. They typically patrol with 7-10 people and go one day. Typically, they will go two days in a row or may wait and go another day. CF committees report few problems inside their CF, especially if they have their boundaries marked.

Not all CF accurately reported the negative effects to their CF. In Kbal O Kranhak they reported one plantation cutting, but our drone photo revealed another quite large plantation cutting inside the forest. Hong Jamtet and ToTey also under-reported the degradation of their forests, and O Bos Leuv did not mention the very large road cut by Company 95 through their forest—it goes out the back end of the concession to the main road.

The unsolicited sentiment from all but one CF in Kampong Thom (Kbal O Kranhak) was that the CF are in fairly good shape and that the real problem in is the Prey Lang, which has no protected status. CF committees report having no rights to patrol outside their forest and worry about the Prey Lang.

PLCN patrols once per month and is adamant that this is not enough. They believe that what they would need is 4-8 times per month in order to properly keep the logging at a minimum. Patrols typically have 20 motorbikes with 25-30 people and last 5 days and 4 nights. They are supported by CPN/CDPS approx. \$500 per patrol. The destruction in the Prey Lang increases each year and it becomes more and more dangerous. The PLCN has requested that authorities accompany them on patrol. On a patrol in Aug 2015 PLCN was accompanied by 3 soldiers, 1 police, and was met by one representative of the FA. During our patrols in Feb and March 2016, we were accompanied by 1 police. When we stopped a group of 4 tractors hauling wood out of the forest, we created a traffic jam. We moved aside and counted 10 empty tractors headed into the forest.

Communication

PLCN and CF

The PLCN members did not have any contact information for CF committee members. They knew where all the forests were and knew about their challenges, but could not contact the members except to go there.

There are channels of communication, however. For instance, the committee at Kbal Clas were notified during the night that there was someone cutting new plantation from their CF. They were able to go the next morning and investigate. This came from someone in the PLCN sharing info with the CF.

CF committee members do not have each other’s contact info and do not work together. When asked, they all thought this would be good. Where there were older members, they told us that there used to be better

communication between PLCN and the people who are in the CF. All CF report that they will follow the other groups on patrol “when they call”, but none initiate patrols or contact other members. They don’t get called very often.

PLCN and PLFCN

There is a lot of communication between these two groups. Now that the PLFCN is no longer being funded and legitimized it is perhaps less important. They have all been active in PLCN from the early years and their current division is part of the fall-out from the CF initiative with Winrock. It is significant that the only group that did not acknowledge that there were two patrol groups in Kampong Thom was the CF committee from Kbal O Kraynhak, who were part of the PLFCN. Additionally, they were the only CF group to outright lie about the plantation cutting in their CF. As co-management committees are constructed in the coming months, this should be taken into account.

Cohesion in Kampong Thom is the most fraught of the areas. We see the remnants of a group of cooperating forest protectors. The PLCN knows many of the people in the CF committees, but they don’t share contact information. We heard from some CF committees that they used to patrol with PLCN, but not anymore. Others told us that when PLCN calls they go to patrol, but they don’t call very often. At the time of our research the PLFCN was active, but already becoming less so. There was a brief initiative in which village chiefs were encouraged to find 5 workers to go patrolling with the PLFCN (see also notes from Kratie). This gathering of volunteers and patrolling happened in Feb and March, we do not know how many patrols they did. Nonetheless, it served to teach many people involved in forest protection about this ‘other’, this ‘official’ way of patrolling. There were some who thought it was fun and funny (Prey ToTay) and others who were disgusted and very disappointed (Prey Hong Jamet, Prey O Kranuang). CF committees all reported funding for their activities coming from Winrock, and those in the REDD+ area received extra funding from that project. PLCN reports funding for patrols from CPN/CDPS. None of the groups feel there is enough funding, but the CF groups were concerned that patrols were funded so often for the CF. “Why do we patrol the CF 8 times when no one protects Prey Lang?” CF reported that they were ‘not allowed’ to patrol in the Prey Lang, this was also of concern. Going on patrol with PLCN in the Prey Lang was different from taking CF tools and funding to do Prey Lang patrols. There was widespread enthusiasm for the idea of co-management among CF committees.

Kratie

Forest Loss

ELC

The main concern from ELC clearing now in Kratie is from the Chhun Hong Rubber plantation and the Think Biotech company. Neither company conducted environmental impact assessments, nor did they consult with communities before beginning operations. Consultations only occurred after communities protested. Both companies promised infrastructure, schools, and health centers that have not materialized since they began operations in 2012.

The Chhun Hong rubber company cut the swidden and rice fields of communities living outside the concession boundaries. The loss of nearby forests and of rice fields creates extreme hardships for the community, many of whom now work for the plantation or work in the illegal wood trade. Attempts for compensation for losses results in communities being accused of “occupying company land”. This concession also causes fertilizer run-off into local

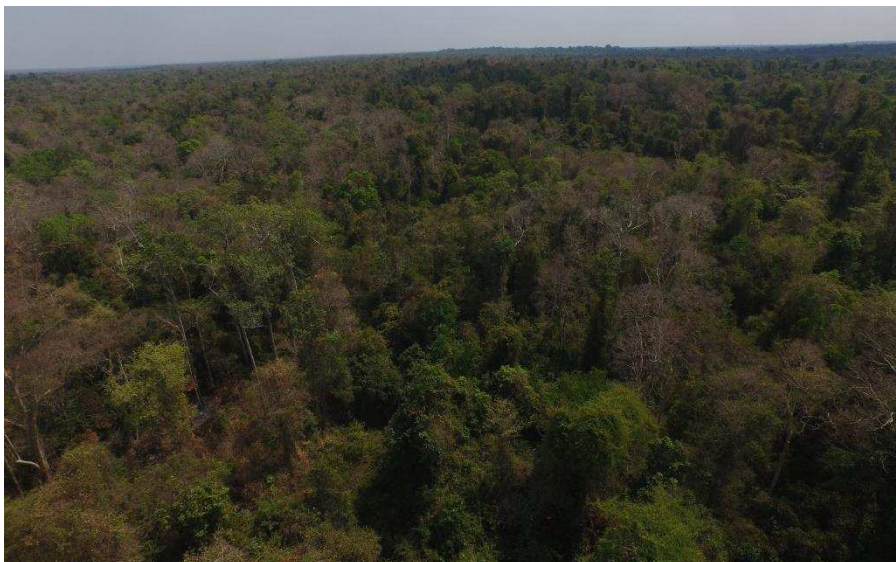
water sources and their sawmills and logging roads contribute to illegal logging outside their concession boundaries. These characteristics are fairly typical of all concessions in and around the Prey Lang forest.

Think Biotech is a special case and the author will make it the subject of a special report. Think Biotech was issued a 37,004 ha “forest restoration” concession in 2010. The company started clearing the concession in 2012, with intensified activities in 2014. The forest restoration project was supposed to be in “degraded forest” according to a letter from the FA to MAFF in 2010. Additionally, the company was supposed to plant diverse forest species in the degraded area after clearing the existing forest. The only area that could be considered “degraded” in the company’s concession were the swidden fields and rice fields used by the community living in the concession. These fields were cleared first by the company, leaving many homeless and landless.

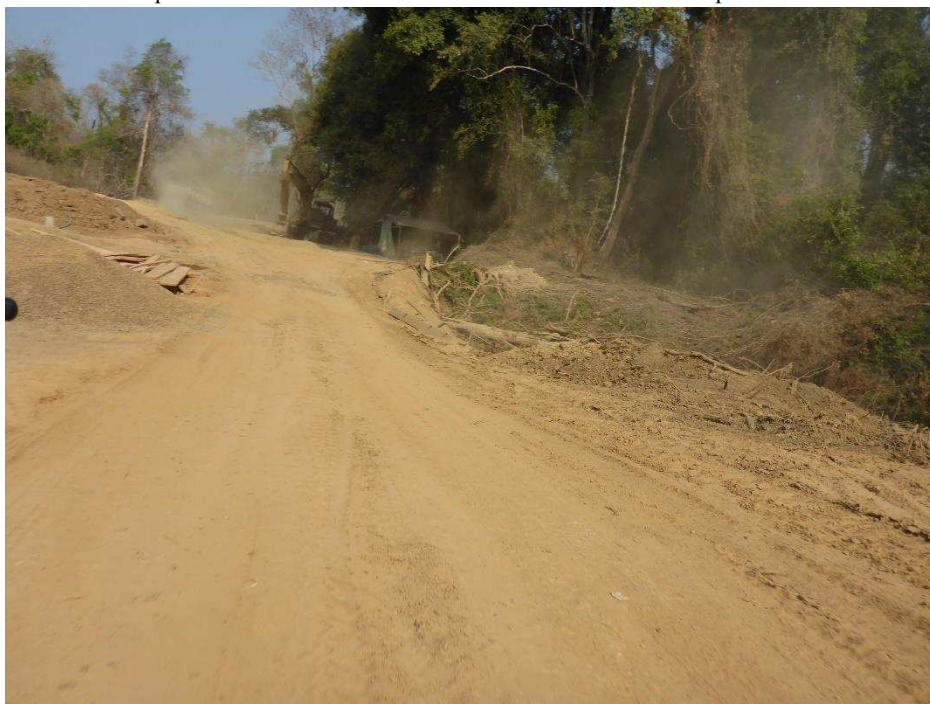
In the areas cleared, there is no ‘forest restoration’ activity, and the area looks like a tree plantation, with rows upon rows of monocrop Acacia saplings.



There are 4 CF inside the concession boundary and the forest in the northern areas of the concession are quite rich with numerous resin trees.



The companies have both constructed new roads that lead deep into the forest. These roads facilitate local movements into the deep forest.



Local Communities

There is extensive plantation deforestation in the areas surrounding the companies and extensive evidence of selective logging. This is mainly along the company roads, which were being upgraded and expanded when we were there.

We met with communities living in illegal settlements inside PL. They report moving into the forest to cut homesteads for two reasons. The first reason is the land grab by Think Biotech,

many who live here lost their land to the company and moved out here to start over. They are involved in rice and cassava farming, resin collection (and some logging judging by timber behind houses, although they swore they never did that). There are also some who came for mining opportunities. There is a gold mine run by Indochine company and locals come to do small scale mining as well. They don't work for the company. The mining is not profitable and has high overhead, so most are now cutting plantation land. Despite their obvious logging activities, they all professed willingness and desire to protect the forest from their village.

Local officials

This community located deep in the forest says that they are unofficially, and temporarily approved by the FA and provincial prosecutor to make their village here. There are at least two individuals living here that are known to be middle men for the illegal wood trade. There is also a member of the military police who has land in this village. The villagers here report good relationships with the FA and with the police.

New elections were held semi-secretly for the Prasat Teuk Chmou CF. Standing CF chief was not informed about new elections conducted by the village head and representatives from Flo. They have new patrol groups and also new clearing inside the CF. 5 one hectare plots have been cleared and when we passed by we saw trees marked as if they were ready to be cleared. The old CF chief reported that one of the four patrol groups traveled nightly to the forest for patrol, they did not communicate to the other patrol groups. We were unable to meet with the CF committee chief for this group. There is suspicion within the group and PLCN that the CF is in danger.

Patrolling and Communication

There are far fewer CF in Kratie and 5 of the 6 are inside the Think Biotech concession. 4 are fully inside the concession and the 5th is partially affected. There has been a lot of work and cooperation between PLCN and the CF committees and efforts are being made to ensure they are not cut by the company. There are some CF members who refuse to be involved with PLCN and only patrol inside their CF.

In Pum Sang Tleak, the village chief got 5 members and went to patrol with PLFCN group. They met a guy with a big tractor full of wood and charged him 3 meun (about \$12.50) and did not take the wood or any logging tools. They also stopped a truck carrying 18 keep of wood and kept the wood (these are from patrol on 5 March 2016). We heard a report that Som Sean had taken \$700 from a wood truck on March 9. PFCN is understood by the Kratie team to have INGO support, which is not really accurate. The Winrock supported eco-tourism site in Kampong Thom is run by Som Sean, but the PLFCN does not receive direct support from Winrock. It is important, however, that the work of Winrock and their supported projects in the area carries this stigma, regardless of the facts of their engagement.

During our fieldwork representatives from CI had just been in the area to start resin patrol groups. They did not meet with PLCN and there was not much news from this, except concern that yet another group would be funded to do limited patrolling and the Prey Lang remained unprotected.

Steung Treng

Forest Loss

There are no ELC in Steung Treng and the main issues with forest loss come from corrupt officials and villagers.

Local officials

There are two large areas being cut from the forest by the commune chief of Khaing Cham commune. He claims that these are SLC, but we are unable to uncover the appropriate documentation and believe they are illegal. This cutting is next to villages of indigenous people who have lived in the forest since after Pol Pot. The affected area is deep in the forest and quite large, nearly 4 square km in the location pictured here.



There is evidence of extensive plantation clearing. We found a very large plantation clearing in the forest south of Oh Long village. When we mentioned it to Gum Li (CF chief of Samakie forest) he said it was villagers. This was a huge

area and did not look like the work of villagers. Mr. Li is regularly accused of complicity with illegal loggers by other PLCN members and in this case he was adamant about the clearing being villagers. When we pressed him further he admitted that he suspected it was the commune chief. The extent of plantation clearing suggests complicity, complacency, or both on the part of local officials.

Villagers

We went to investigate recent reports of cut resin trees. There were many small plantations cut in the deep forest. Around one the resin trees had recently been cut, 10 trees around the plantation. Mr. Heng (our guide) tried to keep us from seeing the cut trees and we believe that they were his trees. He did not admit this but he said, "It is so hard now, and people think that if they don't sell their resin trees they will lose them anyway." Additionally, we found resin tappers who were moving their homesteads closer to their resin trees so they can protect them. Moving the homestead entails cutting a homestead from the forest- about .5 ha. There is reason to believe that these families are involved in illegal cutting.

Patrolling and Communication

In Steung Treng we met explicitly with Resin Tapper patrol groups and also stayed in the home of Mr Kim Li, the CF chief for Samakie CF in Siembok village. Mr Li was leading the CI team with a group from Japan into the forest [he did not know the purpose of this trip, but I know that Japan is attempting to start a REDD+ project in Prey Lang and CI will be the intermediary if it goes through]. They have a big problem in Siembok with illegal loggers. "People see that there is no law enforcement and they just do it. It's all company land here now. If we protect it and the company comes, then we have nothing."

The CI resin project was instituted with help from Brum Vihear Toa. They signed papers to join this group in December 2015. The purpose was to protect Resin and wildlife for their children and to diversify their livelihoods with animal farming and cashew trees. CI expects them to count and GPS their resin trees + report at the end of every month. They send 10-15 people per patrol. They have 3 different groups and patrol 2 times per month (for up to 4 days) (conflicting info- one said 3x5 times/mo). Receive funding and equipment. Not supposed to use these tools for activities outside the project while it's running, but after the project is over they can have it for community use.

The patrol group will patrol just the resin forest and will not join with PLCN. They can only protect the area of the resin forest; they can protect only the resin trees, nothing else in the forest are they entitled to protect; they have no rights to prohibit or ban anyone from cutting and are encouraged to seek the help of the authorities. they can't do anything but lecture them. Many in the Resin Patrol group used to patrol with PLCN. Now they cannot mix the groups, CI says that they don't join with other groups. The community has no authority over their data. Must ask CI to share it. "We don't need such a big group to go to the resin forest- we should be protecting Prey Lang with this big group".

PLCN in Steung Treng has about 50 members who come to patrol. There were more before but people don't want to join now. They feel like only the core members get any benefit, and all the others just go on patrol. They believe they could revitalize them.

The community forest Samaki is 2431 ha and is not a forest. It is rice fields and Chamkar. They told me in O' Lang (FGD, O Lang Dec. 14) that the NGO Brum Vihear Toa, came first in 2010. They said to make a CF in this place with the rice fields. The people said, no way. They went away. In 2012 they came back and said, where do you want CF and they marked out a nice piece of real forest and made a protection group. When the NGO came back with the

FA, they said that the rice field forest was all they could have—take it or leave it. So they took it. They do not patrol it.

Preah Vihear

Forest Loss

ELC

The most dramatic ELC activity in Preah Vihear is from the HengFu sugar concessions. The clearing has been aggressive and the company is supported by local and national level officials. This is their factory, beyond which the forest is visible.



The ThyNga company has not been so aggressive in clearing their concession, but they do have a new branch of Company 95 from Kampong Thom. This sawmill began operations in 2015, according to local reports. It is heavily guarded and located at the eastern boundary of the concession- next to the forest.





Local Villagers

We have two important things to report about the deforestation activities of local villagers in Preah Vihear. The first is that furniture making sawmills are very prevalent and not at all hidden from view. The second is that on the forest side of Thy Nga concession is a substantial village of illegal loggers. We did not visit this village.

Right now people working for company 95 in Thy Nga concession are cutting both inside and outside the concession. 90% of villagers in Rovieng district are employed transporting wood for the company and 70% of families have sawmills at their homes. “If they stop the big traders, you close the market. The small people will have to follow and stop selling. All villagers will be able to find other ways of making a living- all the old ways are still there, planting rice, growing vegetables, climbing trout trees, collecting resin, raising livestock, doing small plantations...” (CF committee chief).

Patrolling and Communication

PLCN in Preah Vihear is not as strong and we could not reach Hong. We worked with Svay Poern. It was not ideal, because we had only one PLCN rep. We have less good data about the composition of the Preah Vihear PLCN members, but met with CF committees next to the ThyNga company and next to HengFu company. We also met with the network in Prey Preah Roka.

Svay Poern was patrolling with PLCN in late April and they retrieved 6 chain saws. They called FA like they usually do to give back the chainsaws. FA refused to take the chainsaws, saying it was not their responsibility, but it was the job of MoE- called the guys from MoE who sent 8 people to go pick up the chainsaws- way more than is usual. Poern thinks that they should hold press conferences in each province and invite local officials to join with them to discuss publicly about co management.

Some of the CF committee members we interviewed had been to the workshop with CEDT and were very excited about co-management and had good ideas for working together. One CF committee member said, “we must protect the forest now. We shouldn’t break between Prey Lang and the CF. There are only a few people protecting Prey Lang and the CF have lots of people. They should work all together. We want to think only of one forest – Prey Lang forest. One CF committee has 7 members and 112 volunteers willing to help when there is a problem.”

All CF report support from Winrock and 8 patrols per month. CF report problems with illegal logging inside the CF, but they had neither the rights nor the capacity to stop people. When they called the FA, they received no assistance. There is lots of new cutting happening since Nov 2015, both cutting plantations and cutting individual trees.

Some CF reported increased cutting as a result of receiving official status and the construction of a plaque designating the CF. These were right up next to the ThyNga company and people felt that the plaque signified that their forest was in danger from the company and so they cut it. There were also problems with the location of the forest that crossed commune boundaries. The CF committee was from one commune and the cutting of the forest happened from the other side.

The group in Prey Preah Roka have connections with PLCN members and while they are busy patrolling their own forest, they have worked with PLCN in the past and value this relationship. Because of recent activity from the HengFu company, they have not patrolled the forest as often. They have been busy protesting against the company. There is more cooperation between the groups in Prey Preah Roka and the CF nearby. This could be due to the sugar plantation that affects communities next to Prey Preah Roka and also affects the CF that are inside the concession. They would welcome more cooperation across the various forest protection groups.

Recommendations for Community Cohesion

Based on our research and our conversations with CF committees and resin forest patrol groups, we feel that the PLCN can provide cohesion and stability where there is currently disjuncture. Many CF and resin patrol groups were very happy to have PLCN members coming to discuss their situation with them. They were able to express their frustrations about patrolling and the difficulties of working with donor organizations and the difficulties of protecting our forest resources.

Because of the close relationships with FA and local authorities in the CF and Resin patrol groups, they are all riddled with corruption and ‘status quo’ forest protection methods. There are members who join in the money making and others who are disturbed by this. Further complicating the matter is the fact of so many household level sawmills and people making furniture right in the villages. There is corruption and profiteering everywhere and almost all are involved in some way. Members of PLCN are accused and accuse each other of being involved. Nonetheless, none would dare to take bribes while on patrol with PLCN.

The moral code of the PLCN patrols is the network’s greatest strength. As leaders, however, they will have to be strong among themselves. There is a lot of mistrust within the network and a lot of accusations from one province to another. This is a problem. It hinders communication. When PLCN members are face to face they are typically polite—or silent. This silence stalls decisions and keeps mistrust alive. They are not always silent and our research team witnessed one lengthy conversation in which accusations were traded face to face. PLCN will not be able to be leaders in the coming co-management process if they cannot address their internal divisions. If the leaders are talking behind each other’s backs, there will be no followers. Bringing others into the strategy of PLCN patrolling and protection methods is vitally important for co management to succeed.

One of the main challenges is the extent to which CF committees, and now Resin patrol groups, are involved in illegal logging and abusing their positions. It will be difficult to say that some members CF or Resin patrol groups can join with PLCN in co-management and some cannot. At the same time, it is important that corrupted people not be allowed access to patrolling. There are those who follow, they follow corruption or they follow integrity. There are those who lead, they lead with corruption or they lead with integrity. And there are those who mostly behave with integrity, but sometimes falter, or have faltered in the past. This report does not focus on problems with corruption of local authorities from all groups: village and commune chiefs, FA and MoE rangers, police, and soldiers. The influence of these authorities is a terribly important dynamic that PLCN has little influence over.

The problem of corruption, both within and without the PLCN is the most difficult issue for community cohesion. One recommendation is for the network create some mechanisms for dealing with corruption. The current method of accusations and silence destroys solidarity and hinders effectiveness. If there are accusations, they need to be made publicly. They need to be brought before the community, evidence provided, and testimony received from all parties. From a position of full public disclosure, a public vote can be taken that will determine an individual's inclusion or exclusion from the network.