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Preface

Forests have great influence on the welfare and development of human society. In Least Developed Countries the linkage between forests and the people is more intense due to higher dependence of the rural population for the fulfillment of their daily needs. But today the forest ecosystems have become fragile and the forest sector development faces some challenges in the very *changing* world of globalization in technology, climate change, the rapidly growing demand for energy and water, and others. Therefore, in this changing environment, the needs and demands for a better understanding about almost all aspects of forestry continue to increase on local, regional and global scale of importance.

The forestry research during the past century has been focusing on the basic disciplines of silviculture, forest product utilization, wood technology, entomology, pathology, mensuration and soil science, etc. Though all these are of immense relevance for furthering the development of forestry science, today the additional focuses have to include to research which can generate benefits for the poor people and bring quick change to the sustainable development, leading to meet the Millennium Development Goals.

The purpose of carrying out forestry research today should be to undertake high quality researches that improve the well-being of forest-dependent people, reduce poverty, and ensure the health of the forests. The issue "to separate facts from fictions" is also an agenda of forestry research. And among other topics, Forests and Livelihoods, Environmental Services and Sustainable Use of Forests are today focuses for forestry research.

As Research is a significant determinant for Development in its national forest policy, the RGC is endeavoring to implement capacity building and research programs in forestry sector. In acknowledging this need, the RGC's development partners, particularly Japan has supported some technical and financial assistance for building & strengthening capacity in forestry sector. Among other things, the Forestry and Wildlife Science Research Institute of Cambodia's Forestry Administration and the Forestry and Forest Product Research Institute of JAPAN have jointly implemented a research project on "Changes of Water Circulation in Mekong River Basin", which is a part of the Revolutionary Research Program under the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, Japan entitled as "Coexistence of People, Nature and the Earth (RR 2002)". The main purpose of this research program is to develop Simulation Models for Hydrology and Water Resource Changes in the Mekong River Basin due to the natural changes and human modification for 20 years in the past and for 20 years in the future. After making predictions of water resources changes in the Mekong River Basin based on various scenarios such as climate change, socio-economic development and institutional options, the basic framework for countermeasures and strategies will be recommended. The research's results are expected to be useful for watershed management solutions in Mekong Basin. Over last 4 years, the project has set up the permanent study fields, including a 60 meter- weather observation tower in Cambodia. The forest environment data, soils, ground water level, stem flow, rainfall and other related data have been continuously measured since 2003.

I would like to conclude my words by taking an advantage of this opportunity to express our sincere appreciation and gratitude to Japan and other donors for their valuable contribution to the Cambodia's forestry sector. I would also like to recognize here and highly value the friendly and good cooperation that has been established between Forestry and Forest Products Research Institute of Japan and Forestry and Wildlife Science Research Institute of Cambodia's Forestry Administration, and many thanks to Dr. SAWADA Haruo, organizers and other resource persons. I sincerely hope that outcomes from the project will make an effective contribution to the problem solutions for Sustainable Watershed Development in Mekong River Basin.

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