

Advancing enhanced wood manufacturing industries in Laos and Australia



Key details

Location

Lao PDR

Duration

Start Apr 2017

End Nov 2022

Budget

AUD 3,099,839

Commissioned organisation

The University of Melbourne

Partners

Australian National University; Luang Prabang Teak Program; National University of Laos; Queensland Dept of Agriculture & Fisheries

Project Leader

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Program

Forestry

Project code

FST/2016/151



Overview

This project aimed to help the Lao PDR and Australia to develop innovative wood processing industries to enhance markets for planted timber resources.

The wood manufacturing industries in Lao PDR are in their infancy compared with those in neighbouring countries. There is already some 215,000 ha of planted teak, rubber, eucalyptus and acacia for which there are limited markets, but the wood processing sector has not yet adopted new processing technologies widely used in Vietnam and China.

Research and development are needed to support the development of new processing capabilities and a range of Engineered Wood Products (EWPs) that can

be produced from small-diameter timbers. Specific skills and knowledge are lacking on the processing of wood for appearance, structural and housing construction purposes and on enhancing termite and decay resistance in the timber products. Further research is needed on aspects of the timber value chain between the plantation and processing industry to ensure an efficient supply of wood resources and provide necessary information to support investment in new processing facilities.

Expected outcomes

- An improved policy, regulatory and administrative environment for appropriate plantation development, more efficient value chains and the expansion of an internationally competitive Laos PDR forest industry.
- Improved knowledge of plantation timber resources together with more effective policy and regulatory arrangements facilitates new investments in innovative wood processing facilities in Lao PDR.
- Expanded, more diverse and profitable Lao PDR forest industry, and benefit from the production of EWPs for domestic markets.
- Expanded the Australian wood processing industry through the production of innovative EWPs.
- Improved livelihoods of plantation growers, and greater and more secure opportunities for employment in the plantation wood processing sector.



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