

# E-NEWSLETTER



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HIGHLIGHT UPDATE ON LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCE ISSUES IN LAOS

UPCOMING UPDATE AND EVENTS  
FROM JANUARY - APRIL 2024!





## LIWG Activities and Meeting

### Community of Practice on Women Land Rights in Phongsaly



The WLR-CoP conducted a 3-day coaching visit to World Renew in Phongsaly. The purpose of the visit was to coach the WR team and its partners to empower women towards their land rights by using the LIWG awareness raising toolkit on WLR so that their awareness and understanding of land rights. After a refresher training completed, the team visited the LaoSeng and Akha communities in Ban Chomchaekao and Ban Chomchaemai. Debriefings refined the approach for future visits, ensuring continued impact in the Akha village of Ban Chomchaemai. This collaborative effort equipped women with knowledge and confidence to participate meaningfully in local land governance, paving the way for a future where their land rights are recognized and respected.

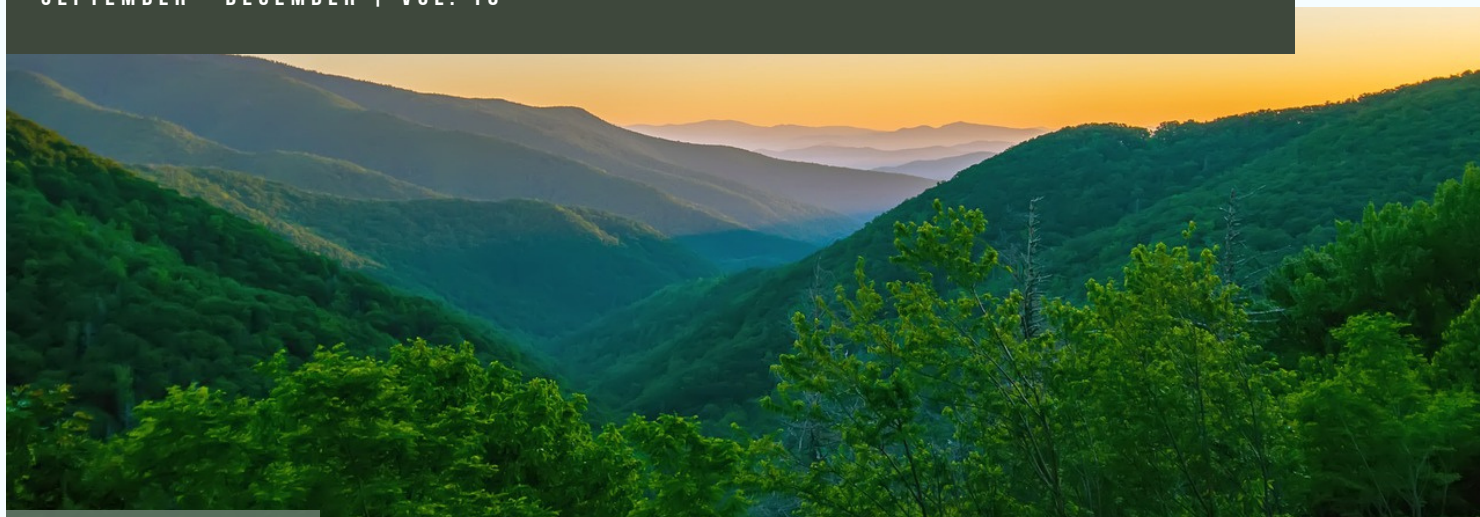


### Community of Practice Focal group on Responsible Agriculture Investment Meeting

The LIWG Responsible Agriculture Investment Community of Practices (RAI-CoP) convened on 9 October 2023 to chart a strategic course for the future and warmly welcome new members from Local Civil Society Organizations (LCSOs). With sights set on the end of 2024, the meeting focused on identifying top RAI priorities in Laos and crafting action plans for the CoP itself. Members delved into key roles the CoP can play in advancing responsible investment in agriculture, and collaboratively laid out concrete plans for achieving them throughout 2023-2024. The discussion also embraced fostering the LCO community, understanding their capacity building needs, and confirming continued membership in this growing network.







## CSO Fair 2023



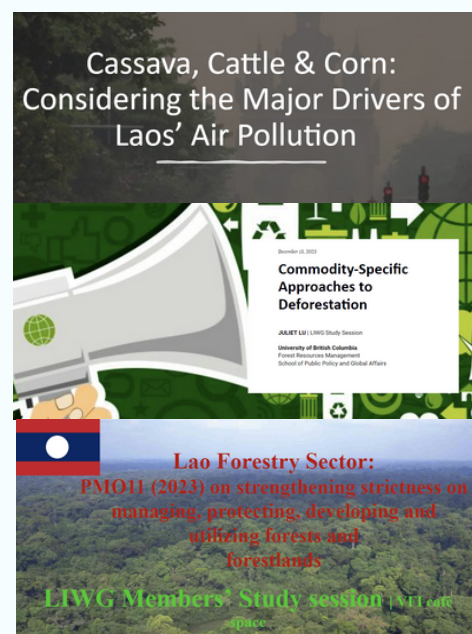
On the weekend of November 25 - 26, 2023, there are wonderful celebration of civil society organization work in Laos, with over 50 participating organizations and more than 2,000 guests. This presents to exhibition of products and performance results of Civil Society organization across Laos. The LIWG secretariat team was an active participant, setting up an informative exhibition to share knowledge about network initiatives. We also engaged the audience in presenting activities to raise awareness about land information, natural resources reaching a wider visitors.

## LIWG Study Session

On December 15, 2023, LIWG launched a study session and highlighted 3 topics the presence of research findings and reflections on two key topics in Laos:

- **“Commodity-Specific Approaches to Deforestation”**, presented by Dr. Juliet Lu from University of British Columbia
- **“Addressing the Drivers of Worsening Air Pollution in Laos’ Agriculture Sector”**, presented by Dr. Danny Marks and Ian Baird
- **“PMO11 (2023) on strengthening strictness on managing, protecting, developing and utilizing forests and forestlands”**, presented by Dr. Somvang DDG from Department of Forestry, MoAF

Congratulations and thanks to our guests speaker who have contributed and shared the success of various projects to our members organization and this would be further good impact on land information and natural resources in the future.





## Update on the PIASVC Project

### PIASVC Project Memorandum of Understanding Signing Ceremony

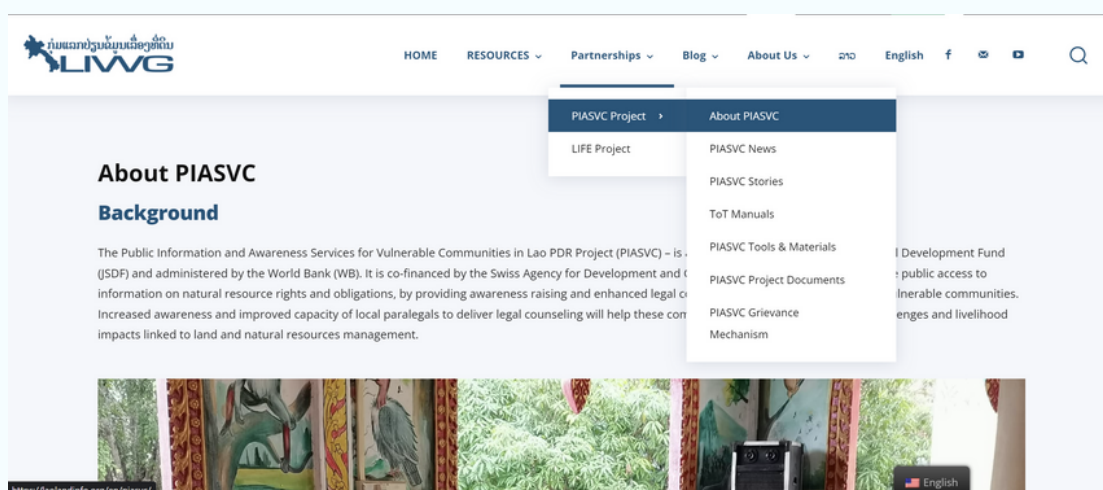
The Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed by Mr. Virana Sonnasinh, Director General of the Department of Land at the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment, and Mr. Jesper Lauridsen, Helvetas Laos Country Director. The signing was attended by key representatives from various ministries, including Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Home Affairs, Lao Front for National Development, Lao Women's Union and by the Heads of the six PIASVC Civil Society Organization (CSO) sub-grantees as well as by the World Bank, the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, and Helvetas Laos. This ceremony precedes the 60th, [Read more...](#)



### PIASVC Project Tab in LIWG Website

We, LIWG, would like to announce that the PIASVC Project information is now officially ready and available to use in our website : <https://laolandinfo.org/en/>

You can get to the PIASVC Project pages under the "Partnerships" menu, in the main menu as shown in the picture. Or you can visit the main page of PIASVC Project through this link : <https://laolandinfo.org/en/piasvc/>







## Legal Calendar 2023 Taskforce

### ToT on Legal Calendar 2024

Between 08 - 10 November, 2023, LIWG organized a training of trainer on "dissemination of the Legal Calendar 2024" for the PIASVC project, which was led by the trainer team from the LIFE project with co-trainers from MCC and PSNUA. This training focused on different topics from the legal calendar 2024. Moreover, the participants exchanged about situation and issues while implementing trainings at actual sites. The most important thing was that the participants demonstrated a training with feedbacks from other participants and the trainers.



### Legal Calendar 2024 Launching Event

On November 30, 2023, the opening ceremony of the 2024 Legal Calendar Launching Event was held at the Meeting Room of Training Center of Lao Front for National Development in Vientiane Capital. The meeting was chaired by Ms. khankham Douangila, the LIWG SC and were participated by various government sectors, CSOs and the press media. The event aimed to disseminate basic legal information drawn from various legislations to encourage individuals and all stakeholders to engage in sustainable development, contribute to publicizing regulations, requirements, and laws established by the party and the state, enabling the public to recognize, understand, and proactively implement them, as stipulated in Article 6 of the Constitution, provide promotional support for local government agencies in utilizing media to spread awareness about land management, natural resources, and the environment, improve accessibility of information for those in remote areas etc.

These efforts will ultimately help reduce misunderstandings or conflicts that may arise between investors and local communities impacted by various development projects."





17 November 2023, Lao Plaza Hotel Vientiane

ຍິນດີຕ້ອນຮັບເຂົ້າສູ່ກອງປະຊຸມຂະແໜງການຍ່ອຍທີ່ດິນ!

Welcome to the Land Subsector Working Group Meeting!

## Land Sub-Sector Working Group

### Land Sub-sector Working Group Meeting



on November 17th 2023, the second meeting in 2023 of Land Sub-sector Working Group was organized and chaired by Mr. Virana Sonnasinh, Director General of Department of Land, MoNRE. Co-chairing alongside Mr. Sonnasinh were Mr. Jesper Elias Lauridsen, representing Helvetas/LIWG, and Ms. Annette Schramm, representing GIZ. This aimed to tackling crucial topics like land-finance linkages, project updates, and forest land rights recognition. Over 50 participants delved into tax collection challenges, discussed the Country Action Plan for forest land rights, and brainstormed ways to strengthen inter-sectoral collaboration. Recognizing land's cross-cutting

nature, the LSSWG emphasized closer ties with the Natural Resources Working Group and contributions to the 9th National Socio-Economic Development Plan. The meeting prioritized knowledge exchange and collaboration between partners, paving the way for a more coordinated and impactful land sector in Laos.

## Partners

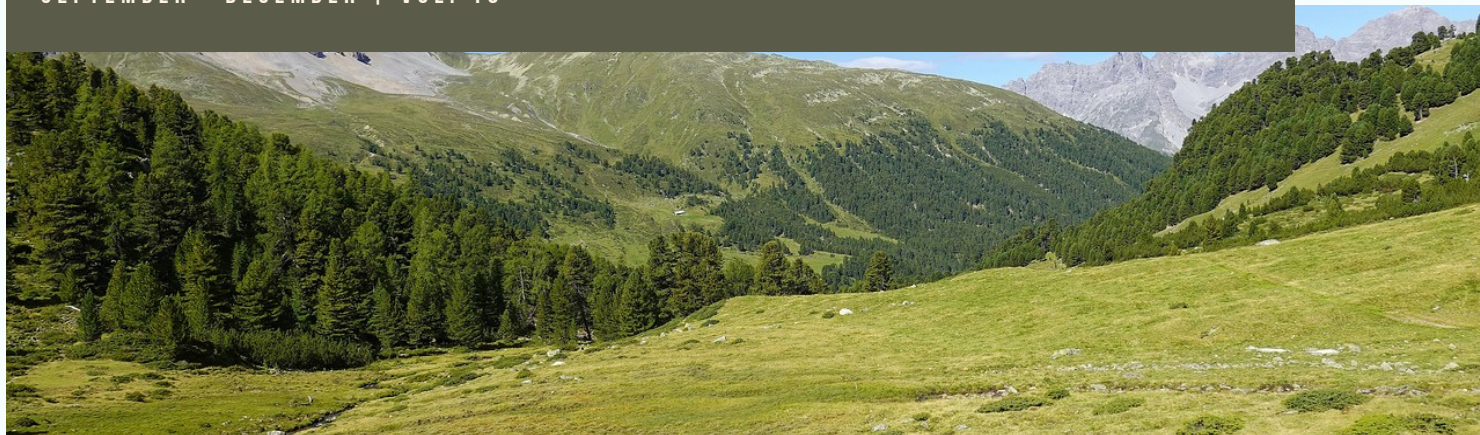
### ODI & LIWG Online Session on Data Security

In the November of 2023, LIWG with ODI (Open Development Initiative) co-held 3 online learning sessions about Data and AI (Artificial Intelligence) of today's technology and how they are used in the Land Sector.

- On the 7th of November, "How is technology built, designed and governed, and where do people sit in these frameworks?"
- On the 14th of November, "Introduction to Artificial Intelligence (AI)"
- On the 28th of November, "Data Sovereignty and Approaches to Reclaiming Narratives through Technology"

There were 28 participants from several different Civil Society Organizations joining us during those 3 days





## What's in the news!

### Country Action Plan on the Tenure Rights in Forest in Lao PDR

LIWG had the opportunity to provide comments on the Country Action Plan (CAP) for the Tenure Rights in Forest which was collaboratively developed by the Ministry of Natural Resources, Department of Land, the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, Department of Forestry, Department of Agricultural Land Management, and the Department of Forest Inspection, throughout 2023, with the support of PROGREEN through the World Bank. The document describes the government's plan and approach to recognize and formalize the land use rights of all 3,167 villages located in the three categories of state forestlands (Conservation, Protection and Production forests).

See the full article at <http://tinyurl.com/ah2dc2nz>, <http://tinyurl.com/y85k8c9m>

### Laos aims to become electricity source of Southeast Asia

Laos is making efforts to increase electricity exports to neighbouring countries in Southeast Asia and promoting the development of renewables, with the hope of becoming "the battery of Southeast Asia" in the near future.

According to data from the Ministry of Energy and Mines of Laos, the country currently has 94 power plants, including 81 hydroelectric ones, with a total installed capacity of more than 11,600 MW.

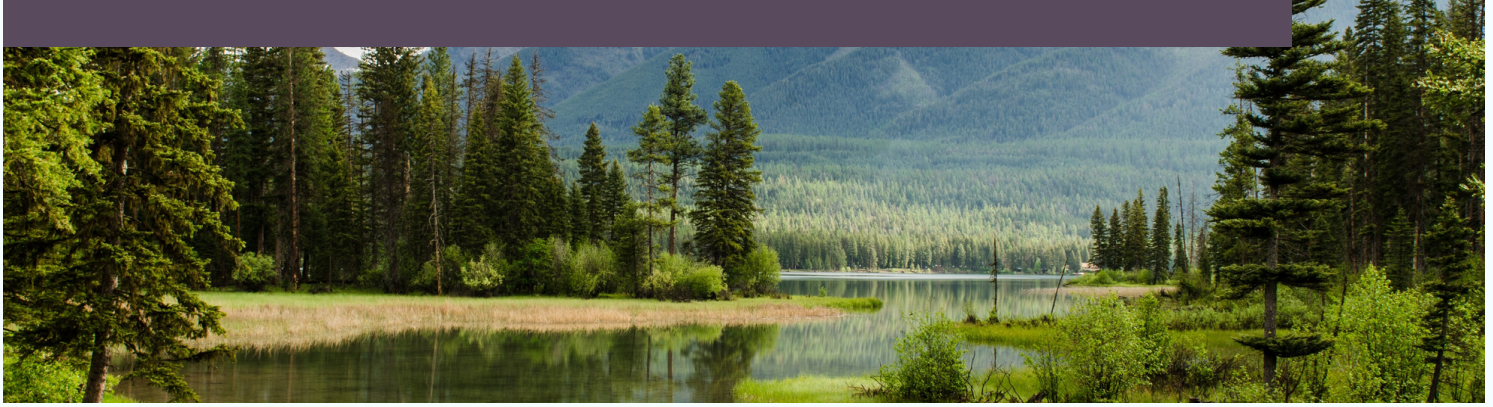
In 2022, electricity exports brought in over 2.3 billion USD in revenue for Laos, while the country had to spend just more than 40 million USD on electricity imports. Laos currently sells electricity to six countries, namely ... See the full article at <http://tinyurl.com/y62mdmmr>

### ASEAN - sustainable minerals investment destination

The 9th ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Minerals (AMMin) was held recently in Phnom Penh with the theme of "Promoting ASEAN as a Sustainable Minerals Investment Destination".

The meeting adopted a declaration on promoting ASEAN as an investment destination for sustainable minerals development, which highlights ASEAN's shared commitment to develop its mineral resources and contribute to securing an adequate and steady supply of metals and minerals to meet rising minerals demand and to fuel industrial expansion across ASEAN while encouraging responsible sourcing of mineral inputs and products to boost the region's... See the full article at <http://tinyurl.com/4kzadsvy>





## COP28 Ends With Historic Deal to 'Transition Away' From Planet-Warming Fossil Fuels

The COP28 climate talks in Dubai ended in a historic deal that committed the world to a transition away from all fossil fuels for the first time.

The president of this year's U.N.-sponsored summit, the UAE's Sultan Al Jaber, brokered an agreement that was strong enough for the U.S. and European Union on the need to dramatically curb fossil fuel use while keeping Saudi Arabia and other oil producers on board.

See the full article at <http://tinyurl.com/4427denf>

## In Laos, forest loss and carbon emissions escalate as agriculture intensifies

As the government of Laos continues to prioritize a hydropower-heavy agenda to generate export revenues while striving toward greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets, it may be overlooking soaring carbon emissions from intact forest loss right under its nose.

A new study published in Environmental Research Letters indicates a recent expansion and intensification of shifting cultivation in Laos, resulting in direct loss of forests, degradation of important carbon sink ecosystems, and substantial increases in carbon emissions.

See the full article at <http://tinyurl.com/6zptzhwz>

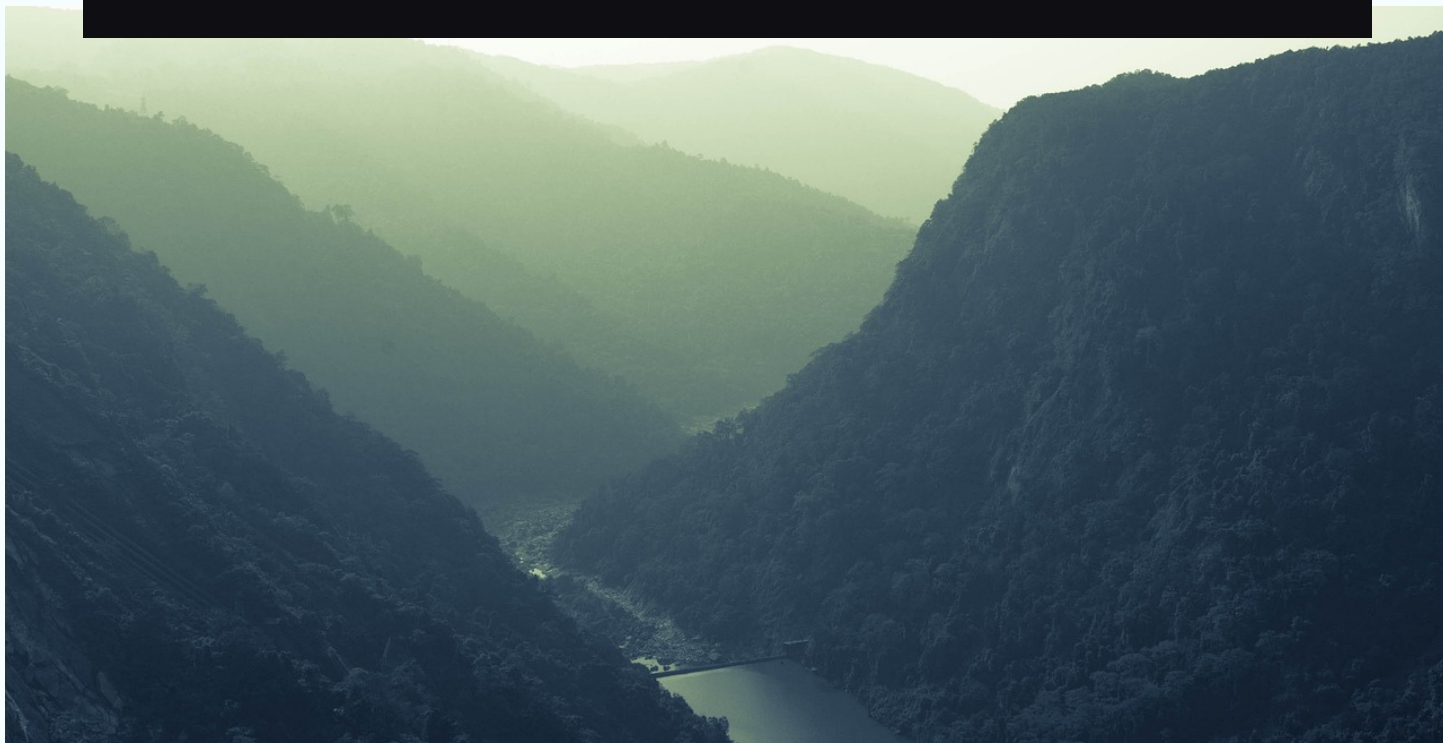
## UK, Australia Boost Laos' Green Energy with Floating Solar Workshop

Laos, with support from the British and Australian governments, is gearing up to boost its renewable energy initiatives after a three-day workshop focusing on floating solar technology.

Organized by the United Kingdom's Mission to ASEAN and the British Embassy in Laos, the event, from December 11 to 13, aimed to boost the capabilities of the Lao Holding State Enterprise (LHSE), a state corporation primarily engaged in financing the energy industry, in implementing vital floating solar projects.

See the full article at <http://tinyurl.com/5udv2zn8>





## UPCOMING ACTIVITIES ( JANUARY — APRIL 2024 )

- PIASVC IMC Meeting
- LIWG Online SharingEvent
- LIWG Annual General Meeting 2024
- CoP on Woman Land Rights field visit
- LIWG Retreat 2024

**Thank you for reading our newsletter!**

