

Session 1: Alternative Futures in the Lao Uplands: Multi-function or Mono-function?



Looking back to better understand the future

Competing visions for the uplands



Sustainable/green Agriculture

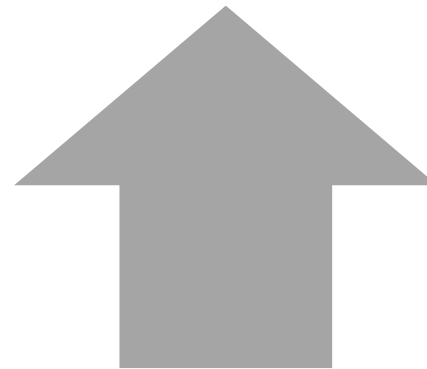
- Small holder driven
- High value niche market products
- Builds on local diversity

How can these co-exist and negative impacts be managed?

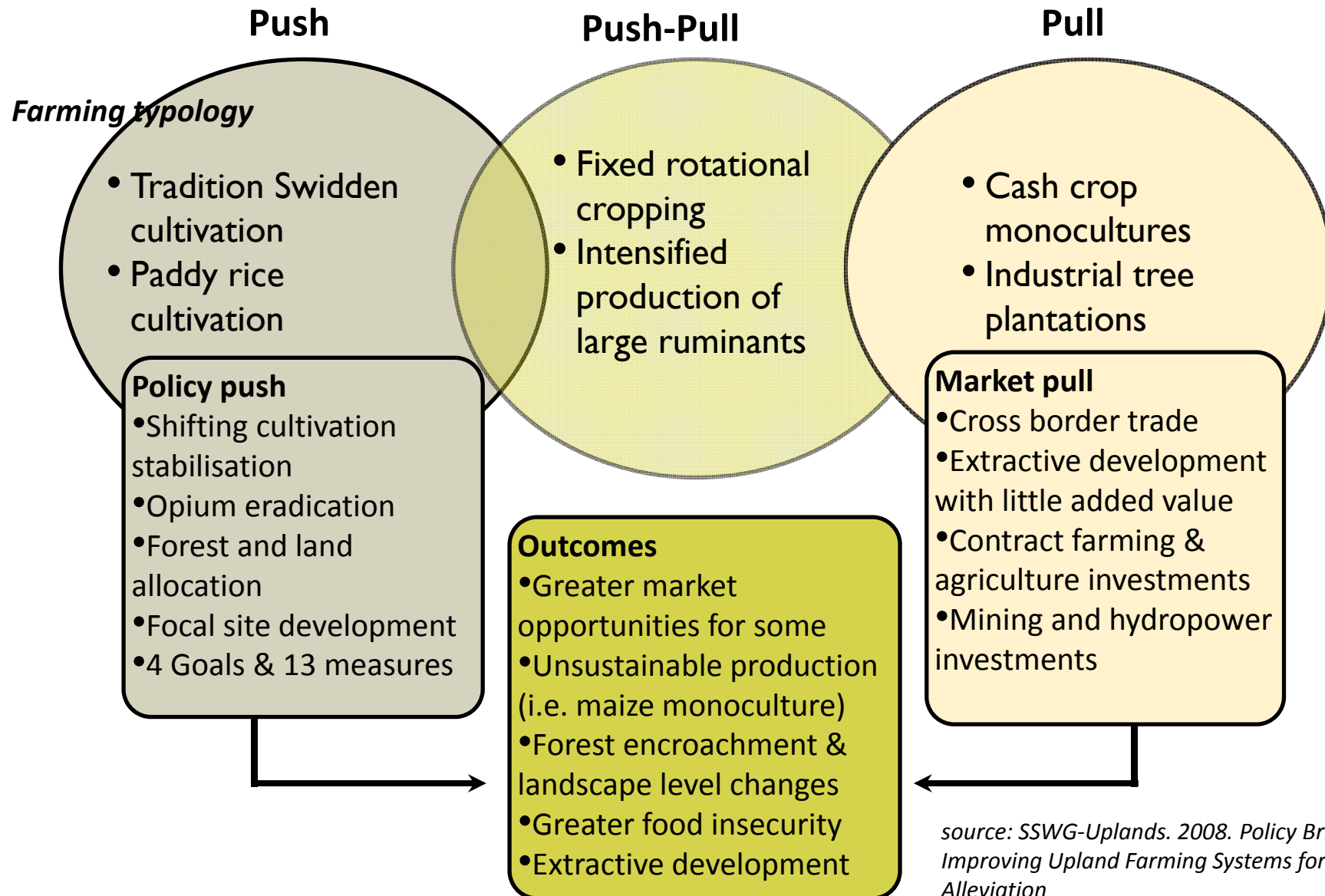
Industrial development

Industrial Agriculture:
Rubber, Bannas, Cassava,
Maize

Large-scale infrastructure development : train, hydropower, mining



Visions are not new – similar questions 10 years ago? From 2008



Scenarios that were identified in 2008

Stay the course	Crisis situation	Sustainable Scenario
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large FDI investments with few regulations • Watershed level impacts because of industrial agriculture (rubber, maize) • The development of a hydropower and mines impact availability of agricultural land. • Continuing consolidation of villages leads to out-migration to other provinces • Land use planning and allocation still problematic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rising fuel prices and recession in world economy impact on food prices and food availability • Inflation increases • Lack of investment from regional countries (i.e. Vietnam, Thailand, China) lead to decrease in FDI • Labour migrations from China and Vietnam to work as labourers lead to conflicts in the North 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regulation and management of foreign investments reduce negative environmental impacts and result in more equitable development • Adaptive policy allows for specific interventions in different locations • Coherent land use planning system used for strategic decision-making at province and district levels • Farmers have better access to government services, production inputs and more on- and off-farm options

source: SSWG-Uplands. 2008. Policy Brief #1: Improving Upland Farming Systems for Poverty Alleviation

What vision do we have for the uplands and Lao food systems?



Healthy, resilient landscape



Outcome:
Balanced diet,
high nutrition
based on local
biodiversity

Monoculture cropping system

Outcome:
Imported,
processed, mass
produced, low
nutritional value
food



Session purpose

- Take a macro look at drivers of change and potential scenarios in the uplands:
 - What is driving change within Agriculture and NRM sector?
 - What are external drivers of change?
 - How will these impact agriculture development and small holder farming in the Uplands?
- What does “green growth” potentially mean in practice for the uplands?
- How can competing visions be managed
 - What are the trade-offs?
 - How can negative impacts be mitigated

Session outline

- Three presentations:
 1. Green Growth and Upland Development in Lao PDR, Syviengxay Oraboune, NIER
 2. Contexts of large scale investments in lands, Mr. Vong Nanthavong, and Dr Michael Epprecht, CDE
 3. Informing the multi-functional/mono-functional debate: Insights from the northern uplands, Dr. Micah Ingalls, CDE/TABI
- Questions using Slido
- Panel discussion to present variety of perspectives