**Introduction**

*Cambodia*

Cambodia is in mainland SEA and is bordered by Laos (NE), Thailand (NW), Vietnam (E), and the Gulf of Thailand (SW) (Figure x). The country has a surface area of 176,520 km2 (UNCTAD, 2020) and is located at latitudes 10-14deg north of the equator and thus has a tropical monsoon climate (McSweeney et al. 2010).

Between 1975 and 1992 Cambodia suffered enormous civil unrest, civil war, and foreign occupation, which resulted in almost complete economic collapse. Yet by 2006 Cambodia’s economy was one of the fastest growing economies in the world and represents a good example of a country’s ability to move from post-conflict status to full integration within a dynamic regional economy (Cambodia’s economic transformation report).

Cambodia’s economy can be described as “economic transformation”. During 1990’s – 85% of population were subsistence agriculture, with small garment sector. Low productivity. After 2001 (Forestry Law and Land Law) shift towards agro-industry. Private sector grew exponentially, mostly due to investments in tourism, manufacturing, and mining. Between 2000 and 2006 economy grew by an average of 8.7%, but this increase was driven primarily by manufacturing, (especially garment manufacturing), construction, services, and tourism. These industries geographically limited to Phnom Penh, Siem Reap, and their surrounds. During this period 55% of population remained in agriculture, with almost all of the growth in the agricultural sector driven by the industrial agricultural sub-sector.

At the start of the century 41.9% of Cambodia’s land area was forested, and by 2012 the total forested area had been reduced by 19.8%, equating to over 1.3 million hectares (Davis et al 2015). Only 25 other countries lost more forest than Cambodia between 2000 – 2012 (Hansen et al 2013).