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# アジア太平洋地域のコミュニティ・フォレストリ

平成7年3月

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国総研セミナー

テーマ：アジア太平洋地域のコミュニティ・フォレストリ

日時：平成7年3月6日 14:00-16:00

場所：国際協力総合研修所

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## 要 約

東南アジアをはじめアジア、太平洋地域でひろく、森林所有、資源経営の主体を巡って全域的な規模でおこっている中央集権化と、地域社会の貧困化が鋭く対立している。中央集権化とは森林資源、林地の国有化であり、森林政策の国家管理である。こうした政策が実施された結果、古くから森林にすんでいた住民は森林の不法滞在者においやられ、伝統的な森林資源利用の途が禁止され、いっそうの貧困化においやられた。それは森林破壊を誘発させることとなった。

このような破壊された森林を再生し、住民を救済するために、林業政策の社会性に着目する必要が1970年代につよく主張された。第一世代の社会林業はインドで始まったが、その主要な点は森林破壊に対処するための植林政策であり、住民雇用による現金収入確保策であった。政府の森林担当官庁が植林計画を立案し、住民を参加させようと企てたものであった。植林は早生樹種など、造林樹種によるプランテーションを目標としており、植林作業に住民を雇い入れようとしたにすぎない。政府の関心は植え付け本数であり、植林面積であった。住民が自ら発意することのない、こうした計画は住民の必要を満たすものではなかった。住民は依然として不法滞在、不法占拠の状態におかれ、自然林の破壊はやむ気配はなかった。

社会林業政策は必ずしも成功であったとはいえないが、政府がはじめて住民と対話の機会をもったことは大切である。われわれが学んだことは、住民が自らのために森林資源の経営に関わらねばならないということである。社会林業にかわるべきものとして、コミュニティ・フォレストリ(強いて訳するとすれば共同体的森林経営とでもできようか)が登場する必要があった。住民が自ら考案し、実践している森林資源の経営システムはかれらによって確実に遵守され、地域の森林資源の持続的な経営に有効にはたらく。住民自身の手になる森林資源経営は地域の生態的、文化的、社会的特徴に根ざしている。それは水土保全であり、聖域保持であり、資源の共同利用である。

アジア、太平洋の森林保護区、野生動物保護区、国立公園などには必ずひとびとが棲んでいて、村落がある。近代的な森林政策が実施される以前から住民が林内に生活していた。かれらの生活は経済的には貧しく、森林資源を利用しなければならないようになっていた。森林資源が利用できないと、かれらはたちまち困窮し、年利60パーセントの高利貸しのもとに走らねばならない。ひとびとを森林から追い出すことは森林にとっても、住民にとってもけっしていい結果をもたらさない。

賢明な住民による森林資源の共同経営、コミュニティによる森林経営に委ねて、森林がみごとに蘇った例をいくつもみることができる。かれらは森林を火から守り、育て、保全する。カセートサート大学アジア太平洋地域コミュニティ・フォレストリ研修センター(RECOFTC)は住民に森林生態、森林管理、森林利用のトレーニング・プログラムを用意しているが、住民自身の智慧はときに、ところによって科学的な知識よりすぐれていると感じることがある。

住民が真に参加するコミュニティ・フォレストリがようやく国の森林資源政策のなかでとりあげられるようになってきた。社会林業でなされたように国が植林計画をたて、住民を雇いあげるといふ方式に住民はそっぽをむく。森林資源政策が真に住民のものになるためには、森林全体が住民の生活の一部になっていることを理解しなければならない。住民が森林資源経営にトータルに参加するのでなければならない。

だからコミュニティ・フォレストリは、

1) 生物多様性に富んだ森林資源を、主として天然更新によって創出することを目指し、

2) 地域社会が主体的に参加し、利益を地域に還元するものでなければならない。

このようなコミュニティ・フォレストリの理念と実践をひろめるため、カセートサート大学に1987年に設置されたのがアジア太平洋地域コミュニティ・フォレストリ研修センター (Regional Community Forestry Training Center at Kasetsart University, RECOFTC) である。1970年にジャカルタで開かれたアジア太平洋地域の社会林業に関する会議の席で、この地域に社会林業あるいはコミュニティ・フォレストリに関する研修機関設立の必要性が討議されたのをうけたものである。

センターをバンコクに設置したのは、この地がアジア太平洋地域のほぼ中央にあり、地域のひとが集まりやすいことと、タイには野生動物、生態環境、社会生活など身近に解決すべき課題があって、研修の教材として利用しやすい利点があるからである。

その目的はコミュニティ・フォレストリの中級専門職の再教育、トレーニングにある。参加者は林学、農学、社会科学あるいは関連科学の大学卒業程度の学力が要求されるが、もちろん大学卒でなくとも林業などの職歴があれば受け入れてきた。

主な活動は4ヶ月間のトレーニングコース、10日-1ヶ月間のトピックコースの実施である。参加者は南、東南アジア、太平洋、アフリカ諸国の森林政策の立案、実施に直接タッチしている森林官、研究者、NGOなどである。

教授陣には林学、社会科学の大学研究者、森林官などがあたってきた。

このほか国際ワークショップ、セミナーも組織してきた。

RECOFTCは対外プログラムも用意している。研修コースを必要に応じて、求めに応じて近隣諸国でも実施するのである。これまでに中国、ラオスなどでおこなった実績がある。

活動の成果はつぎつぎと出版しているが、またニューズレターも発行している。センターはFAOのFORESTRY AND PEOPLE (林業と住民) 誌の印刷と配布を一手に引き受けている。出版物はアジア太平洋諸国の1,500箇所配布されているが、センターがアジア太平洋地域のネットワークの中心になりうることを示している。

センターはさらに自立した活動が可能になるように、財政的にも法制的にも確固とした基盤にたてるよう努力をつづけているが、いっそうのご支援をお願いしたい。

(文責 荻野和彦)



Monday, 6th March, 1995

## **“COMMUNITY FORESTRY IN ASIA AND THE PACIFIC”**

Dr. Somsak Sukwong  
Director, Regional Community Forestry  
Training Center  
Kasetsart University  
Bangkok, Thailand

It is my great pleasure to have an opportunity to be here today.

I will introduce the present status of the community forestry in Asia to you.

Obviously our today's environmental problems require the local efforts to solve. First of all, I would like to say that the forestry problems are a result of globalization. Secondly the rural people in Asia still do practice sustainable forestry on their own initiative, which is called “indigenous forestry”. We have learned many lessons from the rural people in Asian countries. Thirdly: I would like to talk about many lessons from the first attempt to get the rural people involved in forestry, which is called “social forestry”.

The problem of globalization affects two aspects. First: the type of the resources to be managed. Second: the institutional framework of many countries in Asia. The laws of many Asian countries say that “all forests are government properties.”

About a hundred years ago, in my country, forestry became under control of the Central Government. The right of the forest is also extended to trees outside the forest land: e.g. teak, no matter where it grows, is a reserved material; you must apply for permission to cut, even if it grows on the private land. This led to the illegal encroachers, because all forests are declared to be governmental properties.

By these legislative activities nearly ten million people become illegal encroachers. In the Philippines and Vietnam, there are more than that. And in Indonesia, far more than that.

This illegality caused the rural poverty. The people who live illegally in the forest lands cannot earn much. They grow cassava, but the yield is unstable and price fluctuates year after year. They don't have the right to land, therefore

they cannot get the governmental bank loan. They are forced to go to the money lenders. They have to pay the interest of 60 percent per year.

In 1970 a new movement began. In 1970, the World Forestry Congress was held in Jakarta. The theme of the congress was the "forests for the peoples".

In the past, in Thailand, forestry served mainly for two; the first for national economy, the second, for the politics. Very little attention was paid to the rural people and the environment. The first attempt was the approach known as "social forestry" in India, in 1970.

In the first generation of social forestry, people's participation was very limited; merely focussing on planting outside the forest lands, e.g. planting along the roadside, on degraded lands, and along the canals.

It was not for the people but for foresters, governmental officials. In Thailand, there is some planting and they call it "community forestry", but just by name only. The rural people don't know anything at all. So, it was called "foresters manage; people follow" activities.

We found the first social forestry programmes are not much different from conventional forestry. Because major part of the program was designed by foresters. The program placed much emphasis on the number of trees. Sometimes the target was too much the number of trees, too large the area of land and too quick in time.

The activities depended on the outside input by the donation from other organizations, not much depending on the inside capability, not depending on the strength of the people.

What is the result of the first effort in social forestry? We have found that trees came up where not needed. There are some conflicts between planting programme of the Forestry Department and the rural people. Sometimes the rural people would like to keep the land as the natural forest so that they can collect food, firewood, and so on. Consequently there happened to occur conflict between rural people and the planting activities. Pressure on forest lands was still at work; people still go into the natural forests, illegal cutting still continued. The first attempt of the "social forestry"

was not successful.

However, it was the first friendly contact between foresters and the villagers. Formerly, forestry policy used to be a closed system against the people. And the initiation of effort had a good effect. The foresters, for the first time in hundred years, went out of the forestry offices to talk, to work with the people.

It was a rediscovery of the people's practical indigenous forestry management system on site. In the villages in Asia, people have their own way of management of their forest resources. They have indeed held their rules in common, informal but practical and effective in controlling the way of the people's use of the forest. The system of the people is diversified; in accordance with local needs and conditions.

What was done in the northern Thailand was different from what was practiced in the north-east, and probably different from Nepal, from Cambodia and so on. Entirely depended up on local conditions. In Thailand, people protect the forest uphill as a watershed forest, so that they can supply enough water for paddy fields downstream.

They protect the forest as the holy ground, like the shrine groves in Japan where they can pray and perform religious ceremonies. They keep the piece of forest land as a communal woodland where they collect and use a certain forest resources. The management systems are dynamic and adaptable to change. We learned a lot from them.

This slide is the typical villages in the forest, in the wildlife sanctuary and in the national park. The people are very poor. About 60 percent of them are land-less. Without their own use of the forest resources, they have to go to the money lenders for money at 60 percent interest per year.

However the typical example of community forestry will be found in north-eastern Thailand. This area used to be the cassava field before. The village committee protected the areas from fire by themselves. The natural regeneration came up as you see here after twenty years. It was a very good example for forest to regenerate secondary forest. Many mushrooms emerged, which people collect for food.

Another forest in the north-eastern Thailand reestablished on a former cotton field. The villagers protested against the Forestry Department's policy for Eucalyptus plantation but wanted to keep it as a community forest. The forest was reestablished by natural regeneration. They have the rules to regulate those who use this forest.

This is another example of a teak forest in northern Thailand. This is a community forest. During the dry season when a forest fire was found, any villager warned to the others of the fires. They immediately went to the place to put out the fire. They have set the rules, to control the forests.

In the southern part, near the Malaysian border, you can see the rubber plantations. The community forests were protected by the villagers. But the national forest reserves were not well protected, and susceptible to destruction. The community forests were regulated by the community committee. Inside the forest looked in good healthy conditions.

The conventional forestry programme put emphasis only on tree planting, often regardless of biodiversity.

We have a programme at the Regional Community Forestry Training Center to train the local people who are interested in managing the forest resources. The training programme is a ten-day course on sustainable management of forest resources. The target of the training course is the representatives from the village and NGOs. We appreciate the JICA Reforestation Center to have accepted us as a training site for the villagers last year. Not only forest sustainability, I also trained the people on forestry, ecology, and cutting methods as techniques. But in fact, they know much, in some cases they know better than I do. We trained the villagers how to survey and map their own community forest. We taught them how to confirm the forest regeneration. We count the number of seedlings for regeneration.

A Japanese student is now working with me in a village, near the wildlife sanctuaries in northeastern region. We try to encourage the farmers to set up a community forest in an area between the wildlife reserve and the village. As I have mentioned earlier, the social forestry programme in many countries is just became aware of the first attempt. The first trial of the social forestry

resulted only in unsatisfiable achievement mainly because of the people's limited participation. It was needed new approach toward the integration of social development and forest resource conservation, the "community forestry". The community forestry is aiming at the control and management of forest resources by rural people as an integration of forestry with their farming systems.

Through the experiences accumulated in Asian countries so far, a new direction of community forestry could be summarized as follows: 1) More attention shall be paid to natural regeneration, which produces more biomass and more diversity, and brings the people more benefit than mono-culture plantation, 2) More attention shall be paid to the participation of local organization rather than established governmental officers.

The social forestry or community forestry underwent a remarkable change from recovery plantings on degraded land to the conservation of forest reserve. This is the joint forest management of the Forestry Department and the villagers. In India, the Government empowered the people to manage the forests. When the trees reach the rotation, the farmers shall receive 75 percent, and the Government, 25 percent of the profit arising from the yield.

The community forestry moves into the protected areas. More than 90 percent of the national parks and the wildlife reserves were inhabited with local people. Such a model to protect the area of national parks etc., by expelling people out, will little contribute to world conservation. Because we cannot find any lot to accept the people who are driven out of the protected areas, e.g. national parks, etc.. And in the future, there will be more and severer conflicts.

Take Thailand as an example. There happen to occur a great many conflicts about the people in the protected areas. The Government is planning to enlarge the protected area from 15 percent to 25 percent of land area. The enlargement of the national parks covers the planted areas of the farmer. Last year, about 600 people got together to have a meeting on this problem in Chiang Mai. They invited me to join the meeting. I think it necessary, in the future, to find out another way, more important and collaborative management of forest resources in the protected areas.

Let me conclude the present status of the community forestry. In principle, our forest areas can be better managed with community participation. But in reality, the process is rather slow in applying the new approach. In some cases, the clock seems to turn back to a hundred years ago. There is a separation between human beings and forests. In many cases, people are evicted out of the land; many activities taken by officials are antagonistic to people. I am afraid that we are losing the opportunities to learn how to live in equilibrium with nature.

I would like to introduce the activities of the Regional Community Forestry Training Center (RECOFTC). "Regional" means the area of the Asia and the Pacific. The Center was founded at Kasetsart University in 1987.

On the occasion of Jakarta Meeting, in 1970, it was concluded that many people in the Southeast Asian countries need this kind of training center. It took me five years in setting up the center in looking for sponsors.

Why is it in Bangkok? Because it is the central location in the Asia and Pacific region. The countries which send the participants to our Center count Afghanistan, India, Nepal, in South Asia to Southeast Asia, and extend to the Pacific region, e.g., the Solomon Islands, Fiji, etc.. And in Bangkok, there exist the resources and examples to study, e.g., wildlife of ecological zones, people's life.

The objective of the Training Center is to train a middle level professional in community forestry. The participants of the training course of the Center would usually be required a bachelor's degree in forestry, in agriculture in social science or in any related field. But in some countries in the region a bachelor's degree is not available like in Cambodia or in several other countries in the Pacific. Only certificates in forestry are available. But if they have working experience, they are admitted to the course.

The activities of the Training Center is to organize: 1) the training courses in community forestry, 2) the international seminars or workshops for the regions, and 3) the technical assistance, information exchange and networkings.

In the Training Course, there is a four-month course, after completion of the course the participants will receive certificate in community forestry. It

provides opportunities of participants to field practice, to cover all the important topics of the community forestry.

The topic course varies from ten days to one month. It focuses on specific topics, especially on the hot issues in the region. Let me show you the example of the topic course. Regional Community Forestry Extension Course in four weeks. Last year we had one participant from Japan, who used to work in Nepal.

A conflict resolution in three weeks. Many conflicts are arising in many countries, but forestry departments don't know how to solve them. Villagers occasionally protest or demonstrate, sometimes, to the Prime Minister's Office about the forestry problems and conflicts. We developed this course last December. Many governments try to send many people to attend this Course. A marketing of non-timber trees and forest products was also very important.

RECOFTC is developing but it has only five persons at work.

The teaching staff of RECOFTC were recruited from Asia, Europe and America. If we want to further develop the RECOFTC in every field, it needs to build up a new university. We want to invite the resource persons from everywhere of the world to assist us in teaching. We have teaching staff from India, the Philippines, China, the U.S.A., the Netherlands, and so on. RECOFTC has a mixture of teaching staff from many countries.

The participants of RECOFTC are both from governmental and non-governmental. We try to bring non-governmental organization, because many non-governmental in the region work hard for community forestry, and they need trainings. We have got fellowships from donors who give their support to the NGOs and to women. RECOFTC can earmark the money for the people who go home to work for community forestry.

The regional/international seminar, are also used to be organized by RECOFTC. We have organized research policy in community forestry in 1990; sustainable and effective management system for community forestry in 1992; policy and legislation in community forestry in 1993; community development and conservation of forest biodiversity through community forestry in 1994; and in this year, 1995, we plan to organize this income generation through

community forestry in October.

Let me talk a little about a new course to be developed in RECOFTC to meet the local needs. RECOFTC needs the programme development. It focusses on pioneering of new frontier of the Center; new topics of training course, publication and regional networking. RECOFTC publishes a newsletter distributed to more than 1,500 addresses throughout Asia, including Japan, Europe and America, forming a regional networking. The proceedings of the international regional workshops are also published.

An FAO publication programme, "forestry and people" is distributed through RECOFTC network over Asia. RECOFTC gets the diskette from Rome and is responsible for printing in Bangkok and delivering over Asia. Those who live in Asia can receive every "Forestry and People" through RECOFTC.

We have Thailand Community Forestry Outreach Programme, an extension programme to the local villagers. This is a collaboration programme to organize the training course for NGOs and community leaders in management of forest resources. RECOFTC often plays a role as a neutral place. RECOFTC is the place where the villagers can come and talk every topic they want. We listen to them and convey their idea to the higher level. The higher level sometimes visits us to get the people's points. RECOFTC can act as a neutral negotiator between villagers and the policy-makers.

We want to become a self-sustaining organization in near future. Our goal is to work for the improvement of the lives of the people living in the region and for the rehabilitation of the environment of our planet. In other words our goal is to seek for the linkage of development and conservation.

To become an autonomous international training center, we have to have our own Board of Directors and our own Charter. We have drafted our first version of charter and passed it to Thai Government.

To become self-sustaining, autonomous organization is not easy. RECOFTC is seeking for resources to support, as follows:

- 1) Raise fund for service and for course fees so that more participants can join the RECOFTC activities.



- 2) A specially purposed grant; some donors are willing to support RECOFTC for specific activities. For example, the Australian Government assists RECOFTC in developing the curriculum.
- 3) Supply from Thai Government; every year Thai Government supports RECOFTC to expedite running cost of RECOFTC.

I think this is all what I would like to talk to you for the seminar today. I am looking forward to collaborate with Japanese institutions along with the community forestry.

Thank you for your kind attention.

### [QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION]

**QUESTION:** Thank you very much, Dr. Somsak, for the very valuable lecture on community forestry.

My question is directed to the relation between market economy and community forestry. For instance, in your slides there were the community forests converted from the cassava fields and also there were the community forests converted from cotton fields.

When the fields were covered with cassava and cotton, the community people got the cash income. But the converted community forests are still very young. My impression is that they don't have cash income from that community forest. In general, the market economy intrudes into the rural community. What is their major cash income expected at two communities you mentioned specifically?

**SOMSAK:** Thailand is an agricultural country. Many farmers grow rice. Rice needs a lot of water. In many cases they practice paddy farming. They call the minor watershed management, so that they can conserve the water. They can benefit from having the community forestry to the farming system.

By protecting the forests, by watershed management the villagers can yield better crops.

At the same time, in Thailand, many people collect food directly from forest. The income from the agricultural crops alone is sometimes not enough

to support a family. Farmers go into the forests to collect some food, plants, animals and mushrooms. Community forests belong to everyone in the village. The conservation of community forests will benefit the farming system for water, and the farmers for direct products for food etc..

**QUESTION:** But there should be time lag between reforestation and output timing. The cassava and cotton used to cover the whole area. After the reforestation the field changed into forests. But for those fields to become productive forests, it takes time. I think there should be some time gap. And for the time being, how do the people in the community live?

**SOMSAK:** The area or lot of community forestry usually is in a forest reserve. It's not the farmers' own land. The farmers practice their cultivation on their farmland. But in some cases no forest reserves are available for farmers to establish the community forests. When community forestry is to be applied on the farmer's own fields, it appears as a sort of agro-forestry.

If we encourage the community to practice the community forests in the forest reserves, it is the community forestry in true sense, if I understand correctly.

**QUESTION:** Thank you very much for your updated and distinguished presentation.

As you are concerned about the community forests, I am curious to know the background of Thailand related to the "community land," i.e., who owns the land, whether villagers can own the land, or Government has land.

As I understood the background of the land ownership, we can clarify private land, government land, and community land. And in Thailand, many villagers have a legitimated access to the community forests if the villagers would like to organize community forestry activities?

**SOMSAK:** At present, the legislation on land ownership is the major obstacle of the community forestry development in Thailand. All forests are under government-ownership. By law, it's not allowed to collect the products from the forests. It is more strict in the national parks or in the protected areas.

Now a movement to improve and to amend the laws is arising. There are two versions. The first version was proposed by Royal Forest Department.

Similar to the other departments, the law was drawn and proposed by the forester. The other version is proposed by the people. They call the people's version. This is drafted by the people. The NGOs and some professors of various universities joined. There are two laws to meet at the higher levels. At present, when the community committee manages the forest, the Royal Forest Department tries not to act in accordance with what the law prescribes.

I think it is time in Thailand to have the so-called "Community Forestry Law", so that the people have a legal empowerment, to manage the community forestry.

**QUESTION:** My first question is partly related to the first two questions. And what I would like to know first is the socioeconomic status of the communities around the forests. For effective or sustainable management of forests, we live in cash economy, where whatever money a farmer has in the pocket will determine how he utilizes or manages his resources. That is one very important thing. For their other needs, apart from food, Thailand depends on agricultural economy, and needs expenditures such as school fees, and medicine except medical herbs from forests. What is their status?

The second question is on wood energy. Also for sustainable forest management or resource management, in most of the developing countries or the least developed countries, we find that the resources tend to be transferred from the rural areas to the urban areas. Specifically here, I am referring to wood energy. Now, what is the status in Asia, for example?

**SOMSAK:** To the first question; the people who live around the protected areas: I found from my recent studies, that the rural people occasionally turned into the tools of forest destruction. Many people behind became the tools. Their poverty caused the destruction of the forest resources. In some places, even the economic growth was negative. This fact was found by one of the course participants from Kenya.

And this is a reason why we think that if we want the people to be aware of environmental conservation, they must have a certain standard of living. That's why we want to improve the people's life. We try to look for the linkage between development and conservation. In certain cases, these people

should be allowed to utilize certain resources of the areas. It may sound unfair for the people who live in the area adjacent to the forest to protect forest for the world sacrificing their standard of living.

If we can have a mechanism to subsidize them, not to destroy the forest, or if we allow them to utilize at certain degrees in a sustainable way, conservation shall be achieved more smoothly.

In the past, the tendency of the local people was to go to the big cities like Bangkok to live. But that only led to many slums in the urban area. In the forested area on the contrary the people go to the forest for food-gathering. And now the Government tries to distribute the opportunities for living to the rural areas.

If the environmental conditions are more fitted in the rural areas, they have enough products from their farms from the forests. I believe community forestry can play a major role in the farming system of the rural people.

Community forestry means much more than firewood, much more than mushrooms. If the rural communities learn how to manage their forest resources, they would know how to solve their problems. And if they learn the way of community forestry, they know their way to share their love to people each other and to the nature. It means that they share the sympathy with each other. This is a high merit of the community forestry.

**QUESTION:** Thank you, Dr. Somsak, for your very comprehensive presentation.

So, in the Asian region, what you call "community forestry" or "social forestry" is a new thing because there is not enough information and data available in the Asian region. Do you have any idea about establishing what you call "data bank" or "database" of community forestry in Asia?

**SOMSAK:** We have a documentation center at RECOFTC. And I think this is one of the best collections of the community forestry in the region. We have established what you call the Community Forestry Documentation Center. In the Center we have about 4,000 to 5,000 documents of the topics concerned with every country in Asia.

I agree with what you have said. To implement community forestry, the difficulty is to change the attitudes of the foresters. In my country, we try to

have a special training providing new idea and new concepts for foresters. In Thailand, the national park management concept is to follow the Yellowstone model in US. Everybody who lives on site must go out of the area. They are using guns to protect the park. And some people said in a meeting that they want to equip even a bomb to protect the park. I cannot agree with such a model, rather I should say we need collaboration.

What is the new strategy? RECOFTC occasionally organizes a training course for the foresters to change their attitudes.

**QUESTION:** You said in your lecture that it's very important to develop a collaborative management system in various stages of degradation. Could you tell me your idea on the stages of degradation? How many stages are there?

**SOMSAK:** What I meant is the need for collaboration from deforested areas to the forest reserves, which partially belong to the national park, these are unexploited areas. Certain degrees of degradation from the arable land to the forest, to the climax forest. The concept of community forestry can be applied to every case.

Formerly, the social forestry meant tree planting scheme on the degraded areas only, not including the forests. But it's changing.

**QUESTION:** My first question is: if the land is degraded, you encourage people to plant trees like exotic species?

And the second question is: How do you actually formulate community in the village? If somebody wants to join or if somebody doesn't want to join, how do you give them incentives to keep the forests?

**SOMSAK:** The first question: In the degraded areas, the natural regeneration still works well, if the areas are well protected. Villagers protect the areas by themselves. Because many forests in Southeast Asia, and in South Asia, are resistant to falling.

I will take an example from India. One of my friends came from India to see me last year. He told me in Pehan, India, where teaks are growing vigorously like weeds. I asked him; Why teak comes out like weeds? He replied; 1) the villagers protect the species, and 2) they protect themselves from repeated cutting. In many cases, degraded forests are in fact very viable to

natural regeneration. Even in northeastern Thailand, you can see the vigorous seedlings or sproutings of various species. The natural regeneration can reestablish the forest. But we can improve the composition of the forests by enrichment planting.

Second question: We are very interested in how to organize the villagers. This is not an easy question. In fact, community forestry is just at the beginning.

To organize the groups is very important, that is: how to invite the interested group in the community; how to set up the group to protect. The villagers often destroy the forests. I think many things have to be learned more in the future.

We, RECOFTC, plan to organize the training not only in Thailand but in other countries, too. We are now exploring the possibility to organize a job training course in Nepal. RECOFTC will play a role as a catalyst, using the available human resources in the region as much as possible.

It's challenging to learn more now about the villages forming.

The incentive, your last question. The most important incentive is the benefit sharing. If people can get benefit from what they have done, that will be the permanent incentive. In my country, sometimes they plant the trees for the television documentary only, but after that the trees may die. It seems to me that the best incentive for the villagers is the benefit sharing.

**QUESTION:** I would like to ask you about training curriculum in your Training Center. I saw the mapping exercise in the slide. I suppose it is the PRA or rapid rural appraisal, is that true?

**SOMSAK:** They participate only in mapping.

**QUESTION:** Well, can the trainees learn how to apply those participatory approaches? I mean, do you have the course in the Training Center?

**SOMSAK:** Yes, we do.

**QUESTION:** Would you tell me a little about how you apply, how you provide the course?

**SOMSAK:** In the course we teach them social science modules about PRA. We select a village, and then send the participants to the village for about three

weeks for data collection and hearing. The data will be analyzed and they come up with the plans to solve the problems by community forestry.

We teach the participants how to learn the community forestry by themselves.

**QUESTION:** For those practices, did you invite someone, some specialists in participatory approach from abroad?

**SOMSAK:** We invite resource from Kasetsart University. In fact, my colleagues there are also associate scientists.

We are also looking forward to collaborate more with the Japanese scientists along with this field. My dream is that in some days your projects may help RECOFTC in developing a new curriculum or a new training course that can be applied in the region.

I am sure what we teach in our courses are never taught in regular university's curriculum, e.g., the conflict resolution. But when the people go out and work in the fields, they meet with several problems. They don't know how to solve the problems.

Another example is the collaborative management of protected areas that we are going to develop a new course in this December. In the ordinary forestry schools, they teach on the parks, outdoor life, recreation, tourism, but not on the problems with the people in the park.

RECOFTC first tries to organize such training course. Then, we would like to publish the materials. I think there are many pilot projects around the world, but that can be useful in developing a new training course that can be useful to education in our region in the future.

**QUESTION:** A very simple question. What is your view on the women in the community forestry? I personally think the women's role is very important.

**SOMSAK:** I think, women's role is very important. Women are the user of the forest resources. We have to take a woman's viewpoint into consideration into planning of community forestry.

Another importance is that women can do a very good job in community forestry. But unfortunately, every year each government tries to send only men to our Training Center. I don't know why they don't send women. So last

year I requested the British Embassy in Bangkok to sponsor some women and some NGOs to come to the Training Course. We think that NGOs are very important as well. In the past, I couldn't find the fellowship to support them.

Last year, after the request, we were lucky because we could sponsor some NGOs and some women to attend the Training Course. So, I think this kind of support is very useful to the development of people in our region.

**QUESTION:** It's not clear for me to understand the terminology "community forestry" and "social forestry". Could you explain, again, the difference between them?

**SOMSAK:** For me it seems that there is not too much difference, as long as they have two things. One is people's participation; the other is benefit sharing.

If the people have benefit sharing and if they have participation in the programme, it can be called in either way. Some people think that social forestry is broader. Sometimes it is top-down. But "community forestry" means approach from the bottom-up. It's formulated by the communities, by the people. But "social forestry" sometimes takes top-down approach.

**QUESTION:** Both cases do not include agro-forestry or agricultural activities?

**SOMSAK:** Yes. Because the community forestry is dealing with the management of forests and tree resources. Tree resources mean trees planted by the farmers, and it can be agro-forestry.

**QUESTION:** According to the pamphlet, RECOFTC provides no agro-forestry courses, right?

**SOMSAK:** Agro-forestry is a part of community forestry courses. In four-month courses, we teach agro-forestry for about two weeks. Agro-forestry can be a useful tool in community forestry.

**QUESTION:** For my curiosity, in your Training Center, how many agronomists are working together with foresters?

**SOMSAK:** In my Training Center? Now only one. We have just employed her this year, from our collaborative project with Dr. Ogino. Formerly we had only five persons. In fact, we need more personnel to work with. But we bring teaching resources from other institutes, from Chiang Mai, from India, and from the U.S.A.



**QUESTION:** This is just a comment about the future of your programme. You talked about self-sustaining. And you mentioned that there is fee collection from the participants, and there are special grants from donors, and then, of course, from the government. That is your aim. I think, particularly the last two may not be very appropriate. So, maybe your Organization should think of other ways, maybe investment that would in turn bring about income, because government has even been observed by various organizations. Also, donors, at times, tend to let people down. So, maybe you should try to rethink about that.

**SOMSAK:** Yes, self-sustaining takes some time. However, we think Thai Government as a host country, and we have the cases that our Government supports many international organizations established in Thailand.

Now we have got a support. So far we have the support from Asian Development Bank, from the Government of Switzerland, and from Thai Government. We think that our Government should be there. We are working hard because of this.



# 資 料



# Can Sustainable Tropical Forest be Achieved?

*Dr. Somsak Sukwong\**

Many of our forestry problems are result of "globalization", which affect the type of communities for which the resources on to be managed. Food shortages during World War II and industrialization in agriculture in the 1950's and 1960's resulted in the promotion of food and cash crop production for industrial processing and/or export in many countries of Southeast Asia.

In this period, agricultural products like cassava, corn, rubber, sugar and kenaf were grown mainly for export and forestry production of the commercial timber species became top priority. Agriculture and forestry became more and more separated and as a consequence tree stocks maintained by local people for all kind of subsistence products were effectively ignored by the respective government departments (Arnold, 1992).

Globalization also affect the institutional framework controlling the management and use of forest resources. In all Asian countries the forest law states that "forests are government property" and in many countries the property rights are extended to selected tree species outside forest land. By such laws millions of people are living on forest lands, leading to illegal encroachers. In many cases these result in rural poverty and further degradation of forest land.

## ***Forest Reserves and Farmers***

A two-year study in thirteen villages in an area classified as forest reserve bordering Khao Yai and Tab Laan National Parks of Thailand, showed that most of the villagers migrated and settled in these areas 30 years ago and that poverty, indebtedness and land tenure were their main problems (RECOFTC, 1992).

The common cultivation of cash crops such as maize and cassava has not brought much prosperity to the small farmers. The intensive cultivation of these crops year after year has exhausted and degraded the soil, reducing agricultural productivity. To maintain the level of output farmers have to use increasing amounts of costly fertilizers. As most small farmers lack the capital for the initial investment, money has to be borrowed. However, commercial banks, including the Bank for Agriculture and Agricultural and Cooperatives (BAAC), require land or other assets as guarantees for issuing loans. So these farmers, without official land title, are mostly not eligible for bank loans and have to borrow money from money lenders at very high monthly interest rates of 5% or more, representing an annual interest rate of more than 60%!

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With one crop failure and the combined debt of the initial borrowed amount plus the loan for the next crop, the farmer's debt will, after the harvest of the crop in the second year, have reached such a height to make repayment almost impossible.

The lack of land security prevents farmers from making any costly or long term investment to improve their farms, such as soil conservation measures or tree planting, because they can be evicted before they have seen any benefit. Declining soil fertility, erosion, inappropriate land use practices such as ploughing up and down the slopes (enhances erosion), removal of trees, etc., and consequently, reduced productivity and increased indebtedness, are the results.

How can this vicious circle be broken and at the same time ensure farmers are given a fair chance to earn a decent living?

The answers can partly be found by the farmers themselves. They started to plant fruit trees in their agricultural fields to diversify their sources of income and they formed occupational groups to help themselves and each other. Fruit tree groups are identifying the most appropriate varieties and promulgate grafting while others are involved in agriculture, livestock, fishponds, etc. Also, savings groups have been formed in which villagers together try to break the vicious circle of poverty, indebtedness and dependency on middlemen. Strengthening these local organizations and initiatives will be the most appropriate alternative as it will give due recognition to villagers' efforts and their feeling of being responsible for proper management of their resources. Besides, it will be the most cost effective way as development work can largely be implemented by villagers themselves.

### **Local Practices**

In contrast to the national forest reserves, which are viewed as open-access common property and which are extensively encroached and settled, several community forests organized and managed locally still remain. What has been learned during decades of forest destruction is that forest and trees in rural areas are part of a complex resource and social system. Trees and forests play a vital role in determining the total productivity and the living standards of the local communities. In mountainous areas, with narrow valleys for rice cultivation, maintaining the water supply through communal forests is an essential part of subsistence farming systems. In northern Thailand, three types of community-protected forest have been described (Ganjanapan, 1992). First, the watershed forest, which is usually the head of the watershed, is strictly protected by the communities with minimal use of forest products. Second is the sacred forest which is reserved for ceremonial purposes, as a shrine or cremation ground. The third type is a communal woodland delineated by the community for grazing or collecting forest products like mushrooms, leaves, flowers, fruits, firewood, etc.

To date, there are several rural communities managing their own community forests. Formal organizations such as village councils, sub-district councils or special organization groups are set up to manage and formulate rules and organize patrols to safeguard the community forests. In northern Thailand, 150 cases of locally initiated community forest have been reported (Anon and Santita, 1991). Other classical cases have been reported in other parts of Thailand, such as Dong Yai Forest in the Northeast, Pa Grad Forest in the South, and Baan Laang Forest in the East. Experience in these cases shows that the disturbed natural forests, even

after cultivation, can regenerate under community protection, and are more productive than plantations. There are also several documented cases in Nepal of villagers developing management systems themselves in response to depletion of forest resources even when they had no legal authority over the land (Gilmour, 1989).

## **Change Agent**

There is another point of view, put by Wignaraja (1984) that:

*"A truly participatory development process cannot be generated spontaneously given the existing power relations at all levels and the deep rooted dependency relationships. It requires a catalyst or initiator who can break this vicious circle, who identifies with the interests of the poor and who has faith in people..... Through a process of awareness creation, initiators mobilize people into self-reliant action and assist in the building up of collective strength."*

A good example from Thailand of using a change agent (community organizer) in participatory forest management is the case of Sam Mun Highland Development Project, covering the Pai Watershed of Mae Hong Son and Chiang Mai Provinces (Limchoowong, 1992). Changes from conflict to cooperation and from open forest access to community - organized access control can be achieved. One major change is land use that can encourage highland villagers to abandon ridgetop and upper slope, opium and rice cultivation and to shift their homes and fields to the mid slopes and lowlands. A system of regulations and rules to govern communal resource use was set up through village committees. Agroforestry was adopted by the local people and good natural forest regeneration is occurring on the abandoned ridgetop and upper slope fields. The community also decided to ban chainsaws. The experience gained from the Sam Mun Project illustrates the opportunity for Thailand to work with local communities to protect forest resources without disturbing their ways of life.

Several NGO work also deserves attention. In these cases project staff are the change agents. In the Sup Tai Project of PDA integrated rural development for conservation of Khao Yai National Park is undertaken, including a loan program for village environmental protection society members, soil conservation, livestock and fish raising, fruit tree cultivation, cooperative stores, improved sanitation and health practices, and a small park trekking program for tourists. Education programs have been designed to improve environmental awareness and to inform villagers about park regulations. Trees have been planted in the hills above the village to mark the park boundary. Previously, there were few signs that park encroachment was decreasing, but agricultural encroachment ended after the trees were planted (Wells and Brandon, 1992).

## **Traditional Ways of Living**

There are examples of people coexisting with forests. Sanepong is a Karen villages situated in Thung Yai Naresuan Wildlife Sanctuary of Kanchanaburi Province which was established 18 years ago, although the Karen have been occupying the area for more than 200 years. The surrounding forests are very well

intact. The village is green with many kinds of fruit trees and other herbaceous plants including their favorite chili. They also practice the fallow system of upland rice cultivation. The Forest Department perceived them as destructive to the Wildlife Sanctuary so the Karens were threatened with possible relocation. Wildlife Fund Thailand (WFT-NGO) now working in the village, provides the bridge between villagers and government. With the help of WFT, the villagers have institutionalized their traditional and local codes of forest conservation into a written form. It is evident that the Karens of Sanepong are good conservationists and managers of forest resources.

### ***Lessons from First Generation of Social/Community Forestry Project***

Many of the initial efforts in social forestry in Asia were oriented toward the planting of large number of trees outside forest lands, as well as in heavily degraded on the production of seedlings of species that could survive under the difficult sites and could easily be produced and planted out on a large scale. This may have been one reason that much emphasis was laid on limited number of species such as *Eucalyptus*.

Often the operations did not differ much from that in conventional forestry operation and has been characterized as (Shingi et al., 1996) as: I manage, you participate. The results were that in many cases tree came up where not needed, village lands still degraded and pressure on forest lands still go on. However, one positive effect is that foresters for the first time in 100 years or more, now came out of the forest to talk to villagers. It's the first step of "opening up" of the forestry system.

### ***Development of Knowledge Base***

The literature on community forestry since 1978 World Forestry Congress on "Forests for Peoples" held in Jarkarta, has not grown only in quantity (as over 3,000 publications largely from Asia in RECOFTC Documentation Center) but we believe also in quality. We have more actors (University, NGOs) involved in action research, using interdisciplinary approaches and many pilot projects. This contributes to many steps in which villagers are empowered to manage the forest lands through community or joint management schemes (as in Nepal and India or in Thailand).

With these experiences, there are new directions in community forestry.

- More attention given to natural regeneration which produce more biomass, more diversity and more benefit to villagers than planting.
- More attention given to working with local organization, than establishment of plantation.



- Much greater emphasis on management of forests in various stages of degradation, including co-management of villagers of protected areas and other areas in better condition than heavily degraded areas on which initial attempt focused.
- Also emphasis on processing and marketing of variety of non-timber forest products.

## ***The Future***

Though we are much concerned about the disappearance of the forest there is hope for sustaining this ecosystem.

Discussion with villagers in several areas has shown that they understand well the function and the importance of the forest. They believe that forests provide them with a better environment for farming and several kinds of forest products useful for their subsistence. They attribute the decline of their crop yields to the disappearance of the forest. People, to date, want to protect the remaining forest. Forty-one percent of community forests managed and protected by rural communities in Northern Thailand were established because villagers wanted to protect their nearby forests from outsiders taking away the local resources e.g. by logging, and 21% for environmental reasons (Ramitanond et al., 1993). There are several cases in the region indicating that people have awareness and readiness to protect and manage natural forest. With proper government policy and good understanding of the problems for government officers, forest management systems involving the cooperation of local people can be developed.

We believe that tropical forest can be managed sustainably if local people's stomachs are not empty, if they having alternative ways of living other than natural resource destruction, and if they have active participants in natural resources management.

In principle, many of our forest areas in S. E. Asia can be better managed with community participation. However, in practices there is a rather slow process of applying the new approaches. If we do not succeed in linking our global concern with the local concern, we turn the clock back to another century, and we miss the opportunity to develop human and natural resources in a mutually beneficial interaction.

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