

## Preface

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The goal of the forest conservation project is to develop strategies appropriate for forest conservation and sustainable forest management. To achieve this goal, the project has set out to develop the following guidelines and recommendations to promote the participation of local people in forest management as a means of realizing both poverty alleviation and sustainable forest management :

- (1) Village Action Guidelines (VAG) for villagers and other stakeholders at the village level.
- (2) Local Policy Guidelines (LPG) for local (provincial or district) governments and other stakeholders at the local level.
- (3) National Policy Recommendations (NPR) to ensure the effective application of international treaties on local participation in forest management at the national level. Local governments as well as stakeholders at the local and national level can make full use of these recommendations in order to promote the process of decentralization.

Research is carried out using two interrelated approaches, namely, a 'local approach' and an 'international approach', focusing on Indonesia, Laos and the Russian Far East as case studies. These two approaches are combined and synthesized in discussions with local governments, especially in the process of elaboration of Local Policy Guidelines (LPG).

Initially, our strategy was to develop a set of Local and National Guidelines and Policy Recommendations. However, due to the unexpectedly rapid progress of decentralization in case study countries, local governments are increasingly playing a more prominent role in the policy making process, and the focus has now shifted to the development of Local - as opposed to National - Policy Guidelines.

The outcome of this work will be published in local languages as well as in English in order to support and facilitate the participation of local people in forest management, for target countries/areas such as Indonesia, Laos and the Russian Far East.

The aim of the *Policy Trend Report* is to disseminate information on aspects of our research activities to all interested parties, as well as to provide a basis for discussion on the development of guidelines and recommendations. All papers included here - contributed by full-time staff, visiting researchers and research collaborators - have been reviewed by project members.

Any comments or suggestions on this report would be welcomed. Please contact the following person by post, facsimile or e-mail :

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