

SCOPE OF THE RESEARCH ON PARTICIPATORY FOREST MANAGEMENT

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1. Target

The main target is to propose feasible strategies to facilitate participatory forest management at local and national levels. The PM sub-team also provides information to the LA sub-team of the Forest Conservation Project for the purpose of developing forest strategy at global level.

2. Background

2-1. Importance of participatory approach

Since the late 1970's a lot of social forestry projects have been practiced in the tropics because professional foresters noticed that they could not manage the forest sustainably under the principle of conventional and industrial forestry. Social forestry, as a principle or a concept of forest policy, can be defined comprehensively as participatory forest related activities with the object of sustaining and improving economic and social welfare of the people living in and around the forests. Under the concept/principle of social forestry, we can choose appropriate policy means, such as community forestry (community based), group forestry (group based), and farm forestry (individual and household based).

Many social forestry projects, however, have not been successful. One of the most important reasons was the lack of consideration of distinctive feature of economic, social, and cultural aspects of the project area. Another was that the project could not satisfy the needs of the residents because most of the project's activities had been limited to forest and forestry sector. Nowadays it is recognized that a forester should play a role of development facilitator in social forestry projects.

2-2. Levels of participation

A term of "participation" can not tell us actual level of participation because meaning of the term varies too wide. A wide spectrum of participation can be categorized into three as follows;

(A) "Participatory top down approach": blue print approach where residents are considered to be wage laborers, volunteers, fund providers, etc.

(B) "Professional-guided participatory approach": relatively flexible blue print approach where drafts of the plan made by professional planners are examined by the residents and citizens and modified through discussion, workshop, etc.

(C) "Endogenous bottom up approach": learning process approach where professionals just act as facilitators.

We have possibility to do formal institutional arrangement for "endogenous bottom up approach" in some places: application of "professional-guided participatory approach" seems to be reasonable in other places. In any case "participatory top down approach" should be avoided because this approach is usually considered to be nominal and fake. As a matter of fact, this approach should not included in participatory approach.

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For the time being, however, we would like to take the word of "participation" in the broad sense including all the three levels, because sometimes the government regards even "participatory top down approach" as participatory approach. Then various types of existing social forestry program in Southeast Asian countries can come into view.

3. Items to be investigated

(A) Forest utilization by the local peoples

- (1) general description of the research sites: geographical information, population, and administrative organization
- (2) customary forest (or land) management system: land category recognized by the residents, soil category, land tenure system by land category, including the distribution of the rights to forest and land within communities of forest users and among communities of forest users, usufruct of trees, motivation to set up communal forest, conflict over land
- (3) present state of the utilization of forest products: list of forest products utilized by the residents, difference of forest utilization among income or social classes, difference of forest utilization among land/forest categories
- (4) changes in forest utilization
- (5) evaluation of forest utilization from the view point of sustainability

(B) National forest policy and land policy from a view point of participation

(C) External constraint on local participation: gap between the real state of forest utilization by the local peoples and national policy

(D) Characteristics of economic, social, and cultural aspects

- (1) economic condition : income sources, labor opportunity, effect of development project, function of moneylenders and banks
- (2) social organization : labor organization for agriculture and resource management, reality of the community, local institution/group, reciprocity system in daily life, state of leadership, function of informal leader, effect of development project, function of outsiders (government, NGOs, etc.)
- (3) cultural attributes : social norm to establish and maintain organizational relation, norm of action, residents' recognition of forests and trees, cultural activities related to trees and forests, effect of development project

(E) Feasible forest management unit/initiatives

(F) Internal/immanent constraints on local participation: constraints originated in each community

(G) National forest policy of developed countries from a viewpoint of participation as comparison to Southeast Asian countries

(H) Feasible options for institutional revision to facilitate participatory forest management at three levels of participation

4. Schedule (see Fig.2)

4-1. 1st year (FY 1998)

- to clarify (A)
- to analyze (B)

- to carry out preliminary survey for (D)

4-2. 2nd year (FY 1999)

- to identify (C) in the international workshop held in September
- to clarify (D)
- to examine (E)
- to identify (F)
- to analyze (G)

4-3. 3rd year (FY 2000)

- to carry out supplementary survey for (D)
- to hold a series of workshops in each target country to present and discuss the draft of strategies
- to complete and release (H)

5. Target places

5-1. Principle for site selection

Basically we would like to select two research sites in each country. One of them is the region which is still abundant in forest. Another is the region where most of the forests have already been deteriorated. The reason why two sites will be investigated is that it seems different between the system to conserve rich forest and the system to rehabilitate degraded land.

5-2. Target places in each country

(1) Thailand: 2 sites

- Chiang Mai Province : forest abundant area
- Ubon Ratchatani Province : rather degraded area

(2) Lao P.D.R.: 2 sites

- Sang Thong District: training model forest (TMF) of the university covered with natural forest
- Vang Vieng District: degraded area, and now under JICA project

(3) Vietnam: 2 sites

- Tam Dao National Park : rich in forest
- Son La province : degraded area

(4) The Philippines: 2 sites

- Ifugao Province : rich in forest including communal forest, terraced rice field
- Isabela Province : logged over forest area where government just introduced forest management program

(5) Indonesia: 3 sites

- Maluku: abundant in forest and existence of local resource management system called "sasi."
- East Kalimantan: forests are under pressure by industrial plantation (HTI) and forest fire.
- southern part of central Java: fuelwood utilization in the national forest, and mixed garden

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