



SPARK newsletter

Promoting community-based approaches in natural resource management in South East Asia



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Produced by Voluntary Service Overseas Philippines and Environmental Science for Social Change (ESSC)

From the editor

Collaborating with Communities for Effective NRM

In efforts to protect and conserve the environment and natural resources, it is possible to lose sight of the communities whose livelihoods depend on them. Development strategies and various government interventions often focus on economic growth, increasing production and competing in international markets. Unknowingly, these interventions may be doing more harm than good.

Some cases however, such as in this quarter's Significant Change story, show that government interests do not have to be in direct opposition to the community, that in fact, these can both be met through appropriate policies and arrangements. The story from the Philippines shares the experience of community members learning about the possibility of having well run plantations that do not abuse the environment, but rather protect and conserve it. Businesses, such as plantations do not necessarily have to have a negative impact on the environment, or on the neighboring communities.

These stories show that natural resource management (NRM) is not simply about protecting and conserving the environment. Rather, it is also about harnessing the potential of the communities and working with them to achieve an enhanced and productive environment and improved livelihoods. These objectives do not have to be mutually exclusive.

Perhaps the message this issue would like to convey is the importance of recognizing the human factor involved in all aspects of natural resource management. Communities have a critical role to play in NRM, but their needs should also be recognized and given attention.

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The SPARK newsletter is a quarterly publication produced in Thai, Bahasa Indonesia and English aimed at practitioners of community-based natural resource management in Thailand, Indonesia, and the Philippines. It is received by about 900 organizations in these countries. The newsletter is intended to serve as a networking tool to encourage the sharing of knowledge, experiences, ideas and cooperation amongst different groups implementing CBNRM activities in the three programme countries.

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SPARK Significant Impact on CBNRM in the Northeast of Thailand

By Panpilai Kitsudsang

For the past two years, the SPARK programme has provided opportunities for stakeholders engaged in CBNRM to learn and share knowledge and experiences through various activities. In Thailand, there has also been an effort to apply their learning to their work through post activity support. Support activities consisted of small projects on

water resources management, community forestry festivals, trainings on holistic NRM, and the facilitation of a community forest network linkage. The fund to support the Community Mapping network organized by Sustainable Development Foundation (the HUB organization) and its network was also granted. In Thailand, there are three significant changes in CBNRM as a result of these activities. There is now *a broader perspective on CBNRM, better understanding towards partnership, and the emergence of a learning network.*

Broader Perspective on CBNRM

Staff members of local NGOs like GRID Foundation and Local Research Network Center (LRNC) participated in study tours and in the SPARK Regional workshop on conflict management in CBNRM. These experiences helped improve the quality of their assistance to the Tam-Moon (local word for wetlands of Moon



Different stakeholders in Northeast Thailand met at the village center to discuss collaboration on natural resource management activities.

CCTMW is at a turning point. With the right support, the organization could evolve into a prime mover for CBNRM. The work ahead remains a major challenge.

Better Understanding towards Partnership

Suspicion and opposition between government staff, local people and NGOs in areas of the Northeast has now eased. The effort to apply conflict management concepts and to increase

participation in SPARK and VSO- Thailand activities has helped create better understanding and friendship. There are initiatives to start cooperation between communities (Assembly of the Poor) and the Regional Forest Office in Ubon.

Holistic NRM training was organized by VSO/SPARK for VSO placement staff, regional and provincial Forest Offices in Ubon, local NGOs, and implementers in buffer zone areas of the Western complex forest of the Chaiyaphum and Loei provinces. These activities will help to develop cooperation and partnership.

Emergence of learning network

Learning networks developed among local communities and CBNRM implementers at field levels. This began during the Regional Workshop on Tension and Conflict Management. The process to strengthen the learning

SPARK Significant Impact Continued from page 2

network was facilitated and supported by VSO/SPARK and local NGOs. There are now three clusters of learning networks.

The first cluster involves cooperation among 6 primary schools in Tungkula Ronghai, Roi-et, in Environmental Education. Tongpoom, a primary school teacher who joined the study trip to the Philippines, initiated this. Cluster two focuses on research on three wetland areas by the LRNC. The comparative study will link three significant wetlands areas (The Lower Huai Luang in Nongkhai province, Rasrisalai in Srisaket and Surin provinces, and Songkam in Loei province). This will also link local communities in these areas so that they can learn and support each other. Meanwhile, Wisoot of the Regional Forest Office in Ubon (covering 5

provinces in the Northeast), with support from LRNC, will prepare a proposal for the linkage of local communities on wetlands areas in Roi-et, Surin, Srisaket. The third learning network consists of implementers in Buffer zones of the Western complex forest of the Chaiyaphum and Loei provinces. This was initiated through SPARK training on holistic NRM. These people are from WWF in Thailand and Phukiew EU projects (in support of RFD).

Learning networks provide opportunities to improve knowledge. This can help strengthen community rights to manage their own resources. Successful cases are critical for Environmental Policy Change. The network of school teachers will try to integrate environmental education into the school curriculum for the northeast.



This is part of the effort for Educational Policy change.

Significant impact on CBNRM was generated from the opportunity of people to participate in various workshops on CBNRM. These individuals have tried to go beyond their limited resources and boundaries to move towards cooperation and partnership. VSO/SPARK Thailand commits to continue supporting CBNRM stakeholders in this on-going learning process.

Panpilai Kitsudsang is a Programme Officer of VSO Thailand. She helps in coordinating the SPARK programme in Thailand. coordinator in Indonesia. For more information about the article, please email <Panpilai.Kitsudsang@vsiont.org>.

Benefits from joint forest management

By Tabitha Yulita and Ronet Santos

Kuningan, Indonesia - Pak Rashim, a 51-year-old father of five, intends to plant kacang (peanuts) in between pine trees in a small piece of land (less than 3,000 square meters) inside a state forest this year.

He has already planted nilam (shrub yielding fragrant oil-used for cosmetics), banana, pineapple, mahogany trees and a few avocado trees between the pine trees. The distance between each pine tree is 3 meters, enough to insert the planting of a few crops. He himself planted the pine trees in 1995. During that time, the forest area was still managed by the Perhutani. The PT Perhutani is a state controlled company that is responsible for managing (meaning harvesting and replanting trees) state forests in Indonesia.

The forest is dominated by teak and pine. Teak is used for making furniture and the sap from pine is used for manufacturing paint. The Dutch introduced teak in the area in the 14th century. When Pak Rashim planted the trees in 1995, he was just a laborer of the Perhutani. He was allowed to plant a few annual crops between the trees then but he could not plant perennials such a fruit trees, not even banana and cassava. Now he can plant perennials and he has also been granted long term security to plant annual crops in the forest unlike before. How did this happen? In 2000, the Indonesian government enacted a law on joint forest manage-

ment, called PHBM (Pengelolaan Hutan Bersama Masyarakat or Joint Forest Management Law).

Kuningan was one of the first local government to implement this law with the help of NGOs, specifically LATIN and Kanopi. LATIN is the hub organization of SPARK in Indonesia, and Kanopi is a local NGO based in Kuningan.

LATIN, who has been promoting community forestry for a long time, organized several workshops amongst local NGOs, local government units, Perhutani workers, and Dinas (government agency responsible for forest and agriculture). The series of workshops resulted to the production



Benefits from...Continued from page 3

of a manual for local facilitators who can help farmers to organize themselves, do basic resource inventory through community mapping, formulate a resource management plan, and conduct negotiations with the Perhutani.

The work of LATIN and Kanopi produced more than 20 facilitators who so far have helped organized 20 forest user groups in the 141 forest dependent

villages (Kuningan has 380 villages and a population of about a million people). Each forest user group, called KPH (Kelompok Petani Hutan), has a written agreement with the local government and the Perhutani whereby they can plant non-timber producing crops in the forest and they get a share in the harvesting of timber. They get 25% from timber production and 80% from fruit trees while they get 100% from annual crops.

The facilitators have been organized into a group called LPI (Lembaga Pelayanan Implementasi or Foundation to Assist with Implementation). The LPI got a 200 million rupiah funding from the local government for 2003. Pak Slamet Wastra, of the Dinas Kehutanan dan Perkebunan, is very supportive of the PHBM. He says that the PHBM has enhanced the sense of responsibility of the community to protect the forest. And this is proven by what Pak Rashim says.

Pak Rashim is a member of the KPH in the village of Linggasana. Their KPH has 52 members. Their agreement with the Perhutani covers less than 20 hectares of forestland, but they are involved in the management of about 100 hectares of forestland in their village.



Pak Rashim preparing the land to plant peanut between pine trees.

The PHBM has further diversified Pak Rashim's sources of income. The major addition to his sources of income is the planting of perennials in the forest. Before PHBM, his sources of income are gardening (210 square meters of land), carpentry, tending a few goats (fed with grass from the forest) and chicken and the planting of annuals in the forest.

"PHBM is a better system because I do not only get to plant fruit trees and other crops in the forest, I also get a share from the harvest of timber and the sap of pine," Pak Rashim muses. "I am therefore happy to spend some of my time helping manage the forest in our village (less than 100 hectares and management includes the following activities: rehabilitation, maintenance, soil and conservation and establishing an eco-tourism programme). He says his father was also a poor petani penggarap (farmer in the forest). His father could only afford to send him to elementary school. He therefore does not have a lot of options in terms of sources of income beyond farming and carpentry.

His eldest son, who is now 24, has only finished junior high school and will most likely become a petani penggarap like him. Like his father, his income was

not enough to pay for the education of his children. Children of farmers like him are adding to the already high number of farmers who are dependent on the forest.

With the PHBM things might change though. This access to the forest has diversified and increased Pak Rashim's income. He thinks that he might now be able to afford to send his other children to higher

education, which would give them, give more livelihood options in the future.

Tabitha Yulita is the SPARK coordinator in Indonesia <spark@vsoint.org>. Ronet Santos is the SPARK Regional Programme Coordinator <ronet.santos@vsoint.org> SPARK supported the production of the manual for PHBM vacillators. For more information (in Indonesian) about Kuningan, please contact Kanopi, <kanopi_kng@yahoo.com>

SPARK is encouraging CBNRM practitioners and advocates, especially those from local communities to contribute articles and announcements to the newsletter. We are looking for stories that (1) focus on changes in people's lives and (2) show how intervention of SPARK and other similar programmes are affecting people's lives. Articles should not be longer than 800 words and should be accompanied with pictures saved in JPEG format (with 300 dpi resolution) or a figure about the article. If you have any articles or announcements, kindly submit it to the hub organization in your country on or before 15 June 2003. You can send it in the address provided on page 8.



If they can do it in Bukidnon why can't they do it in Davao City

By Jimmy Betil, Narciso Balucos and Darren Evans

From 3-5th December 2002 the Davao River Conservation Coordinating Committee (DRCCC) and Catholic Relief Services (CRS) conducted a cross visit to look at two models for sustainable agricultural development. The first was Mt. Kitanglad Agriventures (MKAVI) Banana Plantation. MKAVI has been accredited by the International Tropical Forest Alliance. The second area was the research site of the International Center for Research in AgroForestry (ICRAF) in Lantapan, Bukidnon, and other communities where they are promoting sloping land sustainable agricultural technology or Natural Vegetative Strips (NVS).

Participants on the visit were NGO partners of the DRCCC and CRS as well as community members from an area of Davao City where banana and pineapple plantations have been expanding in recent years. The following are experiences shared by two community participants and some general observations.

Narciso Balucos

Narciso Balucos is the Barangay Captain (elected village leader) of Barangay Gumalang in Baguio District, Davao City. The Bagobo, an indigenous community and other settlers occupy the area. Plantations were established since the Japanese war occupation when Abaca was grown. Before being elected captain, Narciso worked on a local farm.

Narciso described the 1995 influx of plantations with promises of employment and infrastructure development. He feels however that



Jimmy Betil, local people's organization leader

these promises were unfulfilled, and that though some have benefited, most have not. He says there are negative impacts from the plantations: decreased availability of basic foodstuffs and health impacts of sprays. There is also a feeling that pesticide use has harmed other crops.

Recently the plantations within Baguio District have been looking to expand. This has met opposition from local groups including some barangays, NGOs and Peoples Organizations. The plantations require the barangay and barangay official's approval. Before the visit, Narciso opposed further expansion of the plantations.

The MKAVI plantation implements international social and environmental and as a result commands premium prices for its produce. Narciso was impressed that the plantation did not

convert all the land to bananas but grew windbreaks, planted trees in the gully, and minimized chemical use through agronomic practices. The labor standards and staff training also impressed him. Narciso was against expansion if current practices were maintained. However, he would be supportive if plantations adopted some of the management practices of MKAVI. As he said "if they can do it in Bukidnon why can't they do it Davao City?" He plans to meet the captains and the environmental chairman from the barangays in Baguio District to relate his experiences and to lobby for legislation to require plantations within the city to adopt improved management practices, such as those in Bukidnon. He also wants to implement ICRAF practices in his own farm.

Jimmy Betil

Jimmy is a Peoples Organization leader from Cadalian, a neighboring barangay to Gumalang, in Baguio District. He is a member of the Djangan peoples; an IP group who he states has always lived in this area growing corn, upland rice, coffee and banana. Unfortunately, due to dealings with settlers, the IPs lost their land. The IPs during one bad harvest were given food and told to move into the upland areas. When they returned their land had been claimed. This was the land Jimmy says was sold to the plantations when they moved into the area in 1998.

Some IPs welcomed the plantations, in the hopes of getting employment. Only a few benefited, however since the jobs were not promised, people were not unduly disappointed. Although he says that



Forest and mountain in Kuningan District

Although he says that some see the benefits, of plantations, there are also negative environmental impacts: increasing flooding and pollution from chemicals.

He thinks that people would be happy with plantation expansion as long as there are financial returns. Before the cross visit Jimmy was in favor of the plantations leaving the area, and returning the lands to the IPs.

The MKAVI plantation impressed Jimmy. He saw that they could have positive as well as negative effects on local communities. He would like the local plantations to adopt the same practices. However, his own position remained the same, he would still like them to leave.

He was impressed by the ICRAF sites and by conversations with local farmer leaders during the visit. He has already shared his experiences with his PO members and is looking to prepare a proposal on using NVIS to IDIS, one of the participant NGOs on the trip.

Observations

Cross visits are useful for sharing knowledge and techniques and challenging beliefs. Before the trip, many of the participants believed that plantations had mostly negative impacts on the environment and social infrastructure. On seeing the MKAVI

plantation these views changed. While it does not mean that people now wanted plantations (as in Jimmy's case), it did show that people would consider having a well-run plantation. The visit demonstrated that plantations could be run more sustainably, and that people could campaign for changes in plantation management rather than outright removal.

The cross visit also demonstrated the value of finding good local examples. Bukidnon is adjacent to Davao City. Almost all of the participants had the question "if they can do it Bukidnon why can't they do it Davao". In fact, this became the slogan of the trip. Cross-country visits, or even visits to other regions are not necessary, if there are local examples of best practice in sustainable management. By using local visits it demonstrates that in the same institutional conditions such interventions can thrive. This empowers people by giving them the confidence that they can achieve the same.

The interviews were conducted by Darren Evans of DRCCC and VSO SPARK. The interviews were conducted on the 19th December, two weeks after the cross visit, in Baguio District at the Sangguniang Barangay Hall and at the home of Jimmy Betil. Observations were made by Darren Evans. The cross visit was part-funded by the SPARK Programme.

Good Practice for Sustainable Agriculture:

A Case Study of Mr. Matorpae Ratee in Sai Buri Watershed, Southern Thailand

By Sintu Kamsin

Mr. Matorpae Ratee, commonly known as Tor Pae is 34 years old. He lives in Yala Province where he was born. He completed Primary 6 for his education. His knowledge of agriculture is a result of the amount of time he has spent in the forest.

Tor Pa owns a land area of 12 *rai* or 1.92 hectares. The first 6 *rai* is suitable for mixed crops. The second area is used for house construction, as well as mixed farming and livestock raising. Both of these areas used to belong to Tor Pa's grandfather and were once a rice field where traditional tree species such as *nitta tree*, *ground nitta tree*, *Teen Ped*, *Kam Cham* could be found. Since Tor Pa has managed the area, he has grown more varieties of plants and crop to increase the plot's diversity.

Because of the small land area, Tor Pa says he needs to maximize its use when possible. Crops or trees have to be useful from roots to their tips. Food security is also one of the primary factors that influenced his decision to practice integrated agriculture. But his view of the environment is also shaped by belief in generosity and sharing with others.

Tor Pae plants crops that are complimentary to each other. He plants mangosteen, *durian* and *sator* (plungent flat bean) together. This is advantageous, because if one dies,

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The Model farmer in Klongyan River Basin

By Wangpen Petchong

Mr. Chuchart Senan is 44 years old. He lives in Pak Han village, BanYang sub-district, Kiriratnikom district, Surathani province. He graduated secondary school grade 3. He is married with two sons.

He started farming 4 *rai*, which he inherited from his parents. He then bought 2 more plots, the first plot is 10 *rai* and the second is 7 *rai*. He grows rubber in the first plot and grows pampelo, lemon, bamboo, santol and banana in the second plot. In 1979, he spent 3000 baht left from the wedding, to buy 2 more plots of 17 *rai*. At that time, the land price was very cheap. The soil is sandy loam and good for planting. Basically he divides his land into 3 parts: house lot and water source, rubber orchard and mixed orchard. For the 4 *rai* next to his house, he practices mixed farming using diverse crops such as coconut, betel nut, nitta tree,

• rambutan, jackfruit, neem and rubber.
• He also grows local vegetables. He has a fish pond in which he raises catfish. He also has a chicken and 2 pigs, which he obtained from the Praseang cooperative. It is observed that he managed the land intensively and effectively in 4 *rai* of land.

• In his 10 *rai* land, he grows rubber. He earns about 9000 baht a month. He grows other crops in his other plot, which can be sold if the rubber price goes down. He can harvest all year round.

• The main challenge he experiences is debt. Because his children are studying, most of the expenses are for education and therefore he is unable to further develop his farm. The main concept behind Mr. Chart's practices is to produce mainly for household consumption. That which is not used for the household is sold. The crop diversity in Mr. Chart's land is unique

• and this is one of the keys for self-reliance and for sustaining their domestic needs.

• Mr. Chart's example shows the advantages of practicing mixed agriculture rather than monocropping. This protects him from the fluctuations in market prices. Because of his good practices, they have secure food supply and are not dependent on the market. His family has also increased their income and production from their farm.

• *Wangpen Petchong is a staff member of the River Basin Management through Community Organization and Networks in Southern Thailand. For more information about the article, please contact: <ekkachai@hatyai.inet.co.th>.*

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another plant will be left. This helps to ensure greater chances for survival. Tor Pae cultivates about 80 per cent of the plants that he has. Another 10 per cent is obtained from his neighbors who have shared the rare varieties when available. Another 10 per cent is purchased elsewhere. For instance, when he joined a study tour, he had an opportunity to buy new plant varieties to test in his area. He cultivates plants in large numbers so he can share these with others.

He also experiences some challenges. His area lacks funding that would help develop and improve the water system. This is also especially important because

• of the change in climate that has lengthened the dry season. Because the area is isolated, it is also difficult for him to get a large amount of soil to nourish his crops at the early stage.

• Tor Pae can earn sufficient income from his agricultural activities. Most of the expenses he incurs are for clothing and other necessities, as well as education for his children. Expenses for agriculture purposes are relatively minimal. His farming activities ensure food security for his family.

• Tor Pae's story shows the importance of developing good agricultural techniques, as well as the advantage of

• sharing with other farmers. Selecting useful crops, and local plants is a good practice.

• *Sintu Kamsin is the Executive Director of the River Basin Management through Community Organization and Networks in Southern Thailand, an organization which support natural resource management in 4 river basins in Southern Thailand. For more details about the article, please email the author at <ekkachai@hatyai.inet.co.th>*

RESOURCES

Building Lessons from the Field: Conference on Protected Area Management in the Philippines. 378 pp.

HARIBON Foundation, Department of Environment and Natural Resources. Davao City, Philippines

This book contains in compact form the outputs of the very first conference of planners, managers, implementers, participants, beneficiaries, and even those opposed to protected areas in the Philippines. It attempts to capture the wealth of wisdom, hands-on experiences, variety of lessons, depth of insights, and breath of analysis of over two hundred presenters and reactors.

Email: science@haribon.org.ph

Learning from Change: Issues and Experiences in participatory monitoring and evaluation

Edited by Marisol Estrella with Jutta Blauert, Dindo Campilan, John Gaventa, Julian Gonsalves, Irene Guijit, Deb Johnson and Roger Ricafort. Intermediate Technology Publications Ltd, 2000 and the International Development Research Centre IDRC on the Web: http://www.idrc.ca/booktique/index_e.cfm

Environments and Livelihoods: Strategies for Sustainability

Koos Neefjes. Oxfam Publications, 2000
email: publish@oxfam.org.uk
mail: Oxfam Publishing, 274 Banbury Road, Oxford OX2 7DZ, UK

EVENTS

THE REGIONAL COMMUNITY FORESTRY TRAINING CENTER FOR ASIA & THE PACIFIC (RECOFTC) TRAINING COURSES

Managing Conflict in Community Based Forestry

(7-23 May 2003)

Deadline for submitting applications: 12 April 2003

Facilitation Skills for Community Forestry

(16 - 27 June 2003)

Community Forestry in the International Certificate Course

(2 September - 29 October 2003)

Deadline for submitting applications: 1 August 2003

The power of the pen: Sharpen your analysis and writing skills

(19 Nov. - 2 Dec. 2003)

For details, please contact:

The Regional Community Forestry Training Center for Asia & the Pacific (RECOFTC)

Mailing address: PO Box 1111, Kasetsart University, Bangkok 10903, Thailand

E-mail address: contact@recoftc.org

CBCRM FESTIVAL: CELEBRATING THE GAINS, REFLECTING ON CHALLENGES AND ADVANCING THE CBCRM MOVEMENT

2-4 June 2003

Subic, Zambales, Philippines

For more information about the Festival, please contact

The CBCRM Festival Organizing Committee
13-A Maaralin Street, Central District,

Diliman, Quezon City, Philippines 1101

Telfax: (632) 920-3368

Email: cbrm.festival@cbrmlearning.org

Deadline: 15 April 2003

ALTERNATIVE APPROACHES TO FISHERIES MANAGEMENT: THE RELEVANCE OF CO-MANAGEMENT"

October 6 - November 21, 2003

Wageningen, the Netherlands

International Agricultural Centre (IAC), in

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For details and application forms contact:

The Director, International Agricultural Centre, P.O. Box 88, 6700 AB Wageningen, the Netherlands

Fax: (+)-31-317-495395

E-mail: training@iac.agro.nl

Website: www.iac.wageningen-ur.nl

SPARK (Sharing and Promotion of Awareness and Regional Knowledge) is a five-year programme that started in January 2000 that aims to promote community-based approaches to natural resource management and sustainable livelihoods in the Philippines, Indonesia, and Thailand. SPARK comprises an integrated package of complimentary components to support existing organizations and communities in implementing community-based natural resource management (CBNRM) activities. These components include volunteer development workers (VDWs), small grants, conferences and workshops, research, study tours, secondments, scholarships, programme newsletter, and directory of CBNRM practitioners.

The implementation of the programme in each country is informed by an advisory group comprising four key proponents of CBNRM, two local employers of VSO volunteers, and two VSO volunteers. SPARK also works closely with a hub organization in each country to ensure that the benefits gained during the five-year life span of the project will remain within the CBNRM network in each country.

SPARK Hub Organizations:

- Philippines: Environmental Science for Social Change (ESSC), c/o Mariel de Jesus: esscsprk@mozcom.com
- Thailand: Sustainable Development Foundation (SDF), c/o Revadee Prasertchoroensuk: preecha@m Mozart.inet.co.th
- Indonesia: The Indonesian Tropical Institute (LATIN), c/o Arif Aliadi:



Environmental Science for Social Change (ESSC)
SPARK Hub Organization, Philippines
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