

Local Community Utilization and Conservation of Biodiversity in Lao PDR



Souvanpheng Phommasane and Joost Foppes

AFC Agroforestry Consultants

<https://afclaos.wordpress.com/>

sphommasane.aima@gmail.com

jfoppes@gmail.com



Souvanpheng Phommasane (L)



Somkhit Panyasiri (R) and
Oulathong Vorveunkham (M)

Introducing AFC

AFC Agroforestry Consultants:

- Started as NGO in 2011
- Registered as company in 2013
- Network of 40 Lao associate biodiversity experts
- Focus: Capacity building of communities getting out of poverty based on biodiversity resources
- Partners: ACB, UNDP, GIZ, Helvetas, Oxfam, LIWG, VFI, LBA, CEDA, ARMI, etc.

3 cases of community-based biodiversity:

1. Bio-based Products



1. Protected Area Co-Management



1. Community Bird Conservation

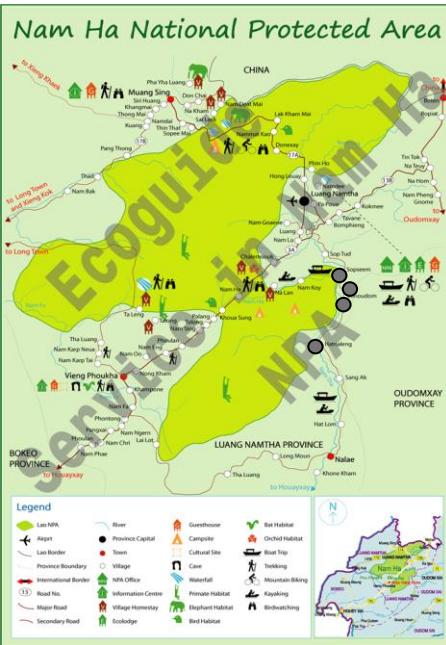




giz

german
cooperation

DEUTSCHE ZUSAMMENARBEIT



Approach 1: Bio-based Products

Context: Regional Project on Biodiversity Based Products (BBP) supported by GIZ, coordinated by the Asean Biodiversity Center (ACB) in Laos, Vietnam and Cambodia

Location: Nam Ha ASEAN Heritage Park in Luang Namtha, Northern Laos (2,224 km²: core zone 1,555 km², buffer zone 669 km²)

Participants: 97 out of 251 households in 4 communities in the bufferzone of the park

Initial Gap Analysis:

1. Forests are important sources of food (bamboo-shoots) and income (cardamom)
2. Villagers hunt and collect NTFPs because they have no other sources of income
3. People are not motivated to

Intervention logic: protect biodiversity

Create a new biodiversity-based occupation based that will reduce hunting and shifting cultivation



Bamboo Handicraft Value Chain

Study tours and market analysis

- Existing value chains: cardamom, orchids, mushrooms: prices fluctuate, short season.
- Bamboo handicrafts and furniture products selected as most promising

Group Formation

4 handicraft and 4 furniture groups, total 8 groups, 97 members.

Business Plans

- Cost/benefit analysis made by each group.
- Average income target \$1,500 per member household per year

Resource Inventory

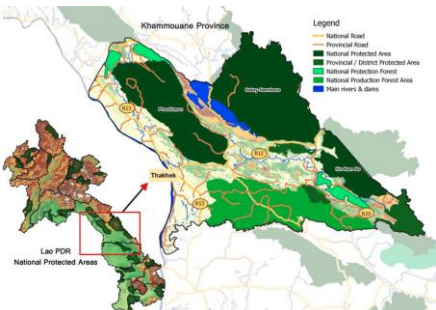
- Each village delineated a bamboo resource forest, total 200 ha
- Sustainable off-takes calculated

Capacity Building

- product design
- bamboo processing ovens
- furniture making

Impact on biodiversity

1. 200 ha forest protected
2. Less slash-and-burn (50 ha)
3. Hunting reduced



Approach 2: Protected Area Co-Management

Context: GIZ supports co-management in Hin Nam No NPA (9,600 km²) in Khammouane, a proposed World Heritage Site

Problem: Park authorities lack staff (1 officer, 20 volunteers) and budget to manage the area. How to involve 19 local communities?

Step 1: Participatory Governance Assessment

Step 2: Set up multi-level co-management system and governance structure

Step 3: Participatory Zonation, (Delineate zones of responsibility per village inside the NPA)

Step 4: Agree on collaborative agreements and get them approved by District

Step 5: Involve local people as additional protected area manpower

- Payment of village rangers who to patrol trails regularly
- Tourism: village roles in site management and benefit sharing in tourism services

Approach 3: Community Bird Conservation

Case 1: Mekong sandbars, Sangthong

- *Context:* Mekong river bank north of Vientiane is 1 of 27 Important Bird Areas (IBA) in Lao PDR
- *Problems:*
 - IBA too large to manage, needs local scale solutions
 - local hunting of rare dry season breeders is a key threat
- *Solution:* Set up a local *Women Conservation Committee* convincing their men to stop catching birds
- *Donor:* Samdhana Foundation
- Key factor: District Gov. support

Case 2: Nitsavanh, ASEAN Bio-Hero

- *Context:* Large pig farm owner Mr. Nitsavanh was given award in August 2017 for supporting bird conservation in Phou Panang NPA
- *Problem:* company cannot work in all villages in the bufferzone
- *Solution:* AFC wrote a proposal for collaborative management between local communities, company and protected area to protect birds
- *Key factor:* private sector initiative





Conclusions

Drivers for community biodiversity conservation:

- Stable income from biodiversity products and tourism
- A sense of ownership for village forests used for food gathering
- Adopting conservation as tomorrow's lifestyle

How communities can support biodiversity conservation:

- Bio-based Producer Groups managing resource areas
- Community Conservation Committees looking after parts of Protected Areas
- Village Forest Use Rules
- Biodiversity Monitoring (e.g. village rangers)
- Providing tourism services through benefit sharing

THANK YOU!