

# THE SUITABLE SOLUTION OF COMMUNITY RIGHTS ON MANAGEMENT AND UTILIZATION THE NATURAL RESOURCES AND COMMUNITY FORESTS

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## ABSTRACT

*The concept of forest preservation for the benefit of the public has been developed and operated continuously for years, the results of the development and maintenance of forest resources have played a role in the formulation of policies and treatment of forest resources in a manner that is consistent with the ecological, economic, social and political environment of the country which has changed over time. Therefore, this research aimed to investigate the suitable solution of Community Rights on management and utilization of the Natural Resources and Community Forests by holding at Ban Dong Yang Community, Ko-eh sub-district, Amphur Khuang Nai, Ubon Ratchathani Province, Thailand. The instrument was an in-depth interview of 12 key-informants and focus discussion for 12 persons and using the content analysis for analyzing data. The research results found that; there was a suitable solution namely; t (1) Internal factors of the cooperation and strength of community leaders, community forestry committees, child and youth network partners, civil society, religious organizations, and educational institutions. (2) External factors that give the support and promotion were government agencies, local government bodies, the Forest Resources Management Office, the private sector, associations, foundations, community forest network organizations, and partners. And (3) the conditional factors for success include awareness of community forest values, positive community attitudes, community involvement, forest management knowledge, volunteerism, and community unity.*

## Keywords:

*Suitable Solution, Community Rights, Management, Natural Resource and Forest Management*

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## Introduction

Forests are natural resources that benefit humanity in many ways, directly to life and indirectly by enabling humans to live in a peaceful world. Forests are natural resources that can be managed for benefit under the appropriate system on a regular and continuous basis. However, humans are the beneficiaries of forests, so human use behavior is responsible for the existence of forest resources which forests can benefit humanity as a whole. The concept of forest preservation for the benefit of the public is a concept that has been developed and operated continuously, the results of the development and conservation of forest resources have contributed to the formulation of forest policies and practices in the form of the designs that are tailored according to the ecological, economic, social and political

environment of the country which changes with the times (Komon Prakthong, 1991:5). The community forest policy is a solution to the country's forest resources management, especially the Economic Incentive that the community expected from the conservation of the forest. The common problem is that humans are less concerned with future benefits and costs than current benefits (Economic Benefit). Forestry is a long-lasting cost, although preserving it may mean creating costs today, on the other hand, it means that the villagers can use the resource management system together for the benefit of now and in the future. Reducing opportunity costs by providing community incentives to benefit from forest management is essential in the form of Direct and Indirect Benefits, both as a food source

and a cultural and traditional source of the community (Bundit Siriraksophon, 2011).

The community forest management If comparing the economic characteristics of the product, it is found that it is a common pool resource (Ostrom, 1990; Suthawan Sathirathai, 1995; Somsak Sukwong, 2009), in other words, deprivation of human access is difficult, and the use of one person reduces the resource of the next, and at the same time, cooperation in resource management is like a public good, to face the problem of survival in which individuals will not cooperate (free rider) because they do not care, but benefit (Chol Bunnag, 2011), it is therefore necessary to establish rules and regulations concerning both conservation for resource restoration and control of resource utilization at an appropriate level. The community forest management is therefore a matter of behavior both at the individual level and collective action, which is to improve social institutions in accordance with local contexts, communities, both ecological and social conditions that involvement with the members of the Covenant will lead to an acceptance and cooperation in order to ensure the sustainability of the peaceful coexistence between humans and nature. The approach to community forest management is a social process that requires knowledge for integrated management and development, the use of knowledge, limited to one science, cannot lead to sustainable development. Therefore, the participation of communities or individuals in the community in the management, maintenance, and utilization of natural resources and the environment is essential to the presence of external agencies at the local and state levels. It can be said that community rights are not absolute ownership, community rights value only individuals who live and care for resources for their survival, the community rights are based on sustainability and fairness principles, as evidenced by forest management, water management that requires participants to access and equate resources, thus, the community could be able to survive, it must be based on sustainable resources.

Therefore, community rights are therefore a struggle with the goal of becoming a democracy or a society that respects diversity or has a policy for each locality and various groups in society to have the freedom to dictate the rules of the way of life, economy, resources according to their ecological and cultural landscape. On the basis of the common responsibility of society, community rights arise not from state power, but by customs and social phenomena that government themselves have a duty to enact legislation, they must recognize local wisdom, recognize the right of communities for the management and sustainable use of resources, and ensure the right to preserve the way of life and culture of the community (Jakkrit Kuanpoth, 2007: 3). The government needs to establish policies that support the community to freedom of rules, resource management rights systems, their own economy, their way of cultural life, and have mechanisms to support the strength of the community. Therefore, by giving the right of the community, the right of the person, to participate with the state and the community in the protection and preservation of environmental quality, it is for the people of the community to raise awareness of the ownership of natural resources and to cooperate in the conservation of the environment. The birth of community rights is truly fair.

The Ban Dong Yang Community Forest, Tam Kao, Khueng Nai District, Ubon Ratchathani Province, has an area of 839 rai, is a community forest in the area of responsibility of the Ban Dong Yang Community Forest Committee, Moo 8 and Moo 12, it is a forest with abundance, completely with various types of wood such as Yang tree, Siamese Sal, Burmese Sal, etc., The ground is sandy loam, the area adjacent to the river important is "Lasebk river" serves to nourish the forest and the land, the community forest is common property, all members of the community have equal rights in the management and use of forests as food sources, herbal medicine, big shopping malls of the community. However, at the same time, community rights have faced

management and exploitation problems (Boonmee Totum, 2019), it consists of an unstructured work problem, a participation problem, lack of external support, lack of management approach and long-term development plan, and lack of public relations to build knowledge and understanding about community forest areas, violation of community rights from foreign persons, disrespect for community rights in food, Illegal logging in the forest, the absence of clear terms, agreements and timelines on the right to use community forest resources, the community lacks knowledge and understanding in extending the right to utilize natural resources, which is still a problem for the community to find solutions together.

Therefore, based on this issue and its importance, it is necessary to study appropriate approaches to addressing the issue of community rights in the management and utilization of natural resources and forests, as part of this research on the topic of “the community rights to manage and utilize natural resources and forests: Case Study of Ban Dong Yang Community Forest, Ko-eh sub-district, Ubon Ratchathani Province”, this will lead to building cooperation with communities in the management and utilization of the community's natural resources and forests in the area.

### Research objectives

To find the suitable solutions to the problem of community rights in the management and utilization of natural resources and community forests of Ban Dong Yang, Ko-eh sub-district, Ubon Ratchathani Province.

### Research scopes

The area scopes: this research was qualitative research focused on the area of Ban Dong Yang community forest, Ko-eh sub-district, Ubon Ratchathani Province.

Data source scope: the sample group in this research was 12 users and stakeholders in the management of natural resources and forestry in Ban Dong Yang Community consist of 2 village leaders, 2 villager representatives, 3 community forestry committees, 1 villager philosopher, 2

forestry scholars, 1 local government leader, 1 religious leader monks. And a small group discussion of 10 people was conducted using Purposive Samplings.

Content scope: the appropriate approaches to solving the issue of community rights in the management and utilization of community natural resources and forests.

Times scope: the duration of this study was one year or 12 months between 2019 and 2020.

### Research Methodology

This research was qualitative research with the following methods of research.

**The population and sample:** the sample group in this research was 12 users and stakeholders in the management of natural resources and forestry in Ban Dong Yang Community consist of 2 village leaders, 2 villager representatives, 3 community forestry committees, 1 villager philosopher, 2 forestry scholars, 1 local government leader, 1 religious leader monks. And a small group discussion of 10 people was conducted using Purposive Samplings.

**The research instrument:** (1) Interview on the issue of community rights in the management and utilization of community natural resources and forests. And (2) Participatory and non-participatory observations of community rights in the management and use of community forest, ritual practices, and community behavior or groups of participants involved in community forest management.

**The Data analysis:** Data from the study of documents and the key informant, the researcher used the Content Analysis method, which had the following steps. (1) Word Grouping, (2) Explanation, (3) Interpretation, and (4) Description.

### Research results

The appropriate approaches to solving the issue of community rights in the management and utilization of community natural resources and forests were found 3 main factors which are;

**1. Internal factor** is the cooperation and strength of individuals, organizations, and network partners consisting of:

1.1 the community leader: Community leaders must be knowledgeable and competent in the activities offered in the community and with integrity, such as generosity is acceptable in the community, have a commitment to work, able to coordinate and negotiate various matters, and being sociable or well-connected and having power or social influence can influence people in their community.

1.2 the community Forests Committee: It is a collaboration between the community and government officials to provide boundary signs or other marks, establish regulations on community forest management, establish guidelines for individual admission to community forest and centralized property management of community forest, jointly maintain community forest, maintain and restore community forest, promote education, learn and raise awareness about conservation and restoration of natural resources - environment and biodiversity in community forests, and mediate or compromise when there is a conflict in community forest management.

1.3 the community and civil society: it is a gathering of community forest management committees or community forest members who have a common goal to learn and build understanding, including the exchange of experiences to contribute to the sustainable management of community forests

1.4 Children and Youth Network: It is a network of young people who will be a vital force in conservation. Rehabilitation of the community forest, which is an opportunity for children and young people to learn and understand the true value and benefits of the forest until they realize their love for the community forest that is their home country, love and cherish, do not want others to destroy and serves to inherit the will from generation to generation

1.5 Religious institute: It is the integration of religious doctrines in forest conservation

management so that people and forests coexist in nature, to build relationships between nature and people in the community to create support for one another by not hiding one another, Have mercy on nature, including the awareness of the value of the forest that occurs in the area and help each other take care of it may have joint activities. Such as the ordination of forests, classified as sanctuaries, etc.

1.6 Educational institution: It is a source of incubation and transfer of knowledge-wisdom to children and youth who come to study in educational institutions in both primary, secondary, and higher education levels, including academic knowledge in managing and utilizing community forests, using a variety of natural learning resources, it is an ecotourism destination for the community, where educational institutions are responsible for instilling knowledge, wisdom, and guiding local communities to sustainable development.

**2. External factors:** the support and promotion of public and private organizations consisting of

2.1 Government agencies / local government organizations / Bureau of forest resources management: promote and support the consideration of community forest establishment requests, expanding community forest areas or delisting of community forests, approve the community forest management plan, give an approval to supervise, remove, the community forest management committee, appoint and remove community forest workers, community forest regulations. the committee also monitors and evaluates the results of community forest management by giving advice and advice to the committee on community forest management.

2.2 Private Sector/Association/Foundation: This is to create cooperation and support the operation of community forests through a model of participation activities such as community natural resource conservation activities, reforestation activities, natural resource management activities, networking to conserve the natural resources of the community forest, etc.

2.3 Organization groups and community forest network partners: It is an activity in the form of integrating community forest management together with the community forest network partners, which may be in the form of a study visit for the model community forest, or a well-managed community forest to improve and develop their own local community forest in exchange for learning and doing joint activities according to agenda and opportunities for the strength of community forests.

**3. Community self-management** consists of

3.1 Awareness of community forest values: In particular, people in the community realize the value and benefits of the forest that the community should receive as a food source, habitat, and medicine of people in the community and animals, as a recreation, and it is a natural learning resource for people in the community and others who are interested in studying. When the community and society recognize this value, it can be the basis for sustainable community forest management.

3.2 the community attitude: It is the concept of forest that communities need to understand that they do not need ownership of forest areas, but have the right to manage and use them together, which is not just about planting trees or promoting forest conditions, but on people and the relationship between people and communities and the environment in connection with community forestry development, it is an action by the community for the benefit of the community that is coexistence between people and trees, where the community has to set the correct direction of attitude towards community forest.

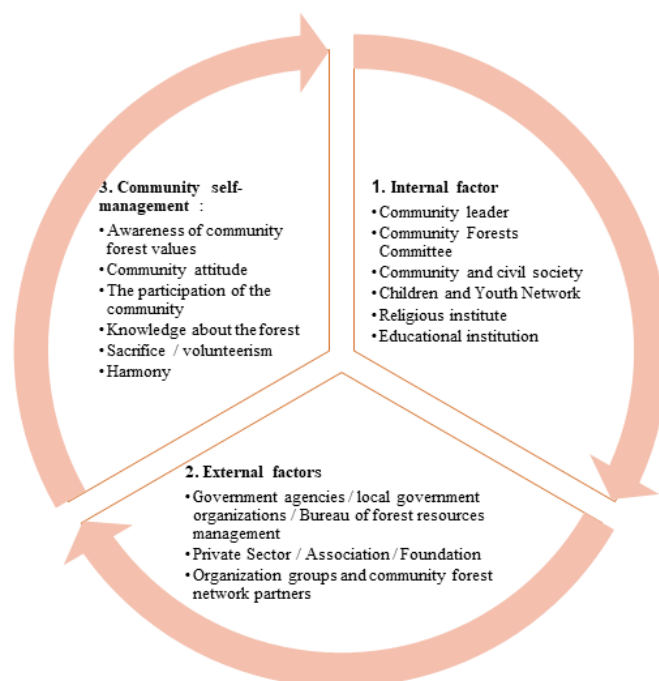
3.3 The participation of the community: The administration is organized from participation in decision-making, discussing community forest issues, attending meetings to solve problems and making decisions and proposing solutions, participating in the review of community forest regulations, participating in benefiting, participating in monitoring, and evaluating. Conducting community forest activities, jointly assess forest utilization and related problems and obstacles.

3.4 the knowledge about the forest: the community forest management an indispensable thing that a community must have is a knowledge of forests, which can be knowledge of local wisdom or community culture, as well as modern knowledge in the management, conservation, restoration, and utilization of community forests, such as knowledge of plant conservation, proliferation, reforestation, maintenance, etc.

3.5 the sacrifice/volunteerism: the communities need to be selfless and volunteer to take care of the forests together, which is one of the key conditions for successful community forest management, especially participating in community forest activities in conservation, rehabilitation, maintenance. Therefore, the community must join as a member or sacrifice to act as a community forest committee, etc.

3.6 the harmony: It is a collaborative effort of all sectors such as community forest committee members, community forest members, community leaders, monks, as well as public and private agencies need for unity to promote community forest, jointly maintain, conserve and restore in accordance with the functions of the respective parties.





**Figure I: the appropriate approaches to solving the issue of community rights in the management and utilization of community natural resources and forests**

### Research Discussion

From the study of appropriate approaches to solving the problems of community rights in the management and utilization of community natural resources and forests, it was found that the issues that could be discussed were as follows:

1. The management of problem solving according to the problem situation is necessary to rely on the relevant government agencies to help build the capacity of the community in relation to the management, especially the community forest committee and community leaders, to become more professional. Build participation in community forest management at all levels by formulating common development strategies, starting from identifying strengths, weaknesses, crises and opportunities for conservation-restoration-preservation and utilization of community forests. Establishing a database of forest resources with biodiversity of community forests such as trees, wildlife and vegetation, as well as transfer and development of local wisdom in forest management together with modern knowledge to accommodate the problems and obstacles that will be arise in the future, consistent with the research of Phawadee Thakairach (2018)

found that the preparation of a community forest resource rehabilitation program at the village level began with the establishment of a community forest committee and development of community leaders' potential, promote the integration of community groups in the management of community forests, coordinating with local authorities, increase roles and restructure the work of different sectors, Develop an up-to-date database system, and improve the community forest database system that matches reality. Consistent with the concept of Piyanuch Rungsaengsupan et al (2007) and Nirut Tuongnark (2007) said that the Community Forestry Community is a key mechanism for managing community forests, creating a roadmap for improving the quality of life of people in the area, adopting the sufficiency economy philosophy, cultivating the awareness of community forest preservation for children and youth is a guideline for sustainable forest management.

2. Utilization of Community Forest is the right to define the rules and penalties to make it clear to the benefit of local communities in the vicinity or elsewhere so far, the community forest

membership defines guidelines for forest use by clearing community forest boundaries along with measures to prevent and suppress loggers, Establish rules for the use of resources, especially important, rare and endangered resources such as some herbs and some types of wild animals, etc. This is due to the lack of awareness and understanding of the community forest members and villagers in the surrounding communities with clear regulations, rules, and penalties, along with the lack of awareness of the true benefits of community forests, it is imperative to set rules and create shared awareness. Consistent with the study of Kobkul Samakkee et al (2004) It was found that participation in natural resource management was a clear understanding of who had the right and who had no right to use the resources. However, the way to enable community forest members to take advantage of resources is where their representatives have regular opportunities to meet so that their dissatisfaction can be vented, resolve conflicts and make decisions, and set the rules together. And consistent with the research of Kanjana Kumsap (2015) It was found that communities were grouped into forest preservation organizations and jointly established rules or institutions to regulate utilization behavior in accordance with the principles of design rules for sustainable management of public resources.

3. The appropriate approaches to solving the problem of community rights in the management and utilization of community natural resources and forests should be based on the three main factors that contribute to solving the problem namely; (1) Internal factors are the cooperation and strength of individuals, corporate partners, civil society networks, community leaders, community forestry committees, youth networks, religious and educational institutions. (2) External factors are the support and promotion of government agencies, local government organizations, forest resources management bureaus, private sectors, foundations associations, organization groups, and community forest network partners. And (3) Community self-

management, which includes awareness of community forest values, community attitudes, community participation, knowledge of forests, voluntary sacrifice, and community unity. These three factors are strengthening from the inside and outside together, together with all sectors becoming the same organ of the body. Consistent with the concept of Uaychai Wata (2006: 85–90) said that the role of community organizations plays an important role in the conservation of community forest resources by establishing regulations for managing community forest in the area, promoting the people in the area with information, which local and provincial guidelines are: coordinating with local government agencies to conserve and restore community forest resources. And consistent with the concept of Newton Peter, et al. (2015: 27–37) who said that successful forest management requires the cooperation of educational institutions to research forestry work, and to support the staffing rate of community forest management. In order to create ways to reduce conflicts with local residents, it is necessary to consider appropriate policies, laws, and practices on the management of various forms of community deforestation.

### Suggestions

1. Suggestions for the use of research results: The results of the research revealed that the strength of community leaders, community forest committees, civil society network partners, support and promotion of government agencies, local government organizations, Forest Resources Management Office is a conditional factor for success Manage and utilize natural resources and forests. Consequently, the relevant agencies should promote and develop participation in community forest management at all levels and in all sectors by jointly establishing a common development strategy in all community forest development processes. In addition, all concerned agencies need to be aware of driving community forest development by recognizing custom and community rights and taking into account the common interests of its members, including the

creation of social justice for the sustainability of the production system and the ecological balance, and the love and cherishing of common resources.

2. Suggestions for further research: There should be studies on ways to raise the potential of community forests towards ecotourism, and There should be a comparative study of the results of the management of a community forest model.

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