



Annual Report

Community forests: Centres of people power and networks of support

2019–2020



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Cover photo:

Villagers patrol the Muong Phu Community Forest in Thong Thu Commune, Que Phong District, Nghe An, Viet Nam. In the rainy season, community forest members check the forest quality once a month. In the dry season, they do it twice a month.

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Community forests: Centres of people power and networks of support

Annual Report 2019–2020

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Welcome to the 2019–2020 annual report



The entry point for our work is community forestry. But the benefits are far broader than healthy forests and landscapes.



Nur Masripatin
Chair, RECOFTC Board of Trustees

It is an honour to share highlights of RECOFTC's work from October 2019 to September 2020. It was a year of immense challenges for us all. As we release this report, COVID-19 is still ravaging the Asia-Pacific region. And we continue to experience rising temperatures, erratic and extreme weather and threats of food insecurity, flooding and other natural disasters.

Against this landscape, I take to heart the stories in this report. You will meet individuals and communities who, empowered by the benefits of community forestry, are helping to achieve our collective vision of communities living equitably, securely and sustainably in and beside healthy, resilient forests.

The entry point for our work is community forestry. But the benefits are far broader than healthy forests and landscapes. They include food security, gender equality, inclusion of marginalized groups, good governance, biodiversity protection, conflict resolution, secure land and resource tenure, improved livelihoods and mitigation and adaptation to climate change. It is important for subnational, national, regional and international jurisdictions to acknowledge these contributions to meeting their commitments on climate change.

COVID-19 restrictions have affected our work, but we have remained fully operational and even expanded our services in some crucial areas. Early in the crisis, we transformed our operations rapidly to connect virtually with our partners and communities through communication and information technologies. We delivered information, masks, disinfectants and other support to remote

rural communities. In addition, we launched e-learning courses and virtual training.

Before I sign off on 2019–2020, a special word of thanks to our donors, sponsors, Board of Trustees and partners for their extraordinary flexibility in this pandemic, which has allowed us to adapt rapidly to changing circumstances, and to our communities for their continued confidence and trust. At RECOFTC, we look forward to working with you to capitalize on the potential of community forestry for building back fairer and greener during and following the COVID-19 pandemic.

Community forestry is a nature-based solution



Investment in community forestry is a winning formula for building back fairer and greener after the pandemic.



David Ganz
Executive Director, RECOFTC

The world is enduring another year of the COVID-19 pandemic—and the social, economic and environmental costs are incalculable. Yet, in the midst of these challenges, we see a beacon pointing a way ahead, a path for reducing the frequency of zoonotic pandemics and for increasing the resilience of Asia's poorest and most marginalized people to social, economic, environmental and climatic shocks. The same path enables us to protect biodiversity, achieve gender equality and enhance food security. This path is community forestry: a community-driven, nature-based solution.

RECOFTC's preliminary research on the impact of COVID-19 on forest communities, conducted with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, shows that community forests are centres of people power and networks of support. When crisis strikes, they can make the difference between tragedy and resilience.

These findings reinforce the directions we took in our Strategic Plan for 2018–2023. As we enter year four of the five-year plan, the relevance of community forestry is increasingly clear. Without a doubt, investment in community forestry is a winning formula for building back fairer and greener now and after the pandemic and for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and climate goals. And community forestry's principles are a solid foundation for achieving the United Nations Decade on Ecosystem Restoration, which is a global rallying cry to heal our planet.

The stories in this annual report show those principles in action across the region: Clear and strong tenure and resource use rights.

Meaningful and inclusive engagement. Trust, accountability, transparency and mutual respect. Good governance. Fair benefits. And gender equality.

We are grateful for the strong support, trust and guidance of our donors, sponsors, partners and communities. On behalf of RECOFTC, we wish everyone good health, safety and stability in the time of COVID-19.



RECOFTC by numbers

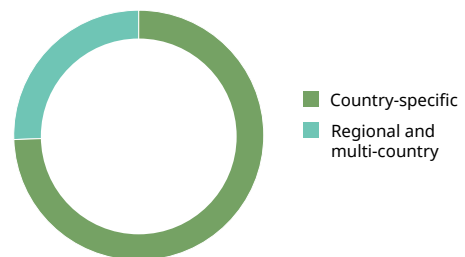
RECOFTC’s 104 team members based in seven focal countries partnered with 188 organizations and 63,164 households in 2019–2020. As COVID-19 hit our region, we worked together throughout the year to strengthen community forestry and resources rights. Our support to communities and countries bolstered their efforts to achieve sustainable development and climate change goals.

Our collaboration increased people’s resilience to the shock of the pandemic-related restrictions by enhancing the human and social assets that underpin sustainable livelihoods. Preliminary research we conducted in 2020 in seven Asian countries and expanded in the following year showed that communities with the rights to use and manage forests were more resilient to the crisis. To cope during the lockdown, more than 3 million community forest members across the lower Mekong region depended significantly on the savings they accrued by selling community forest products.

Our teams organized more than 600 events and reached more than 20,800 people through study tours, in-person and online training, learning events, workshops and technical support. Participants included

women, Indigenous Peoples and other marginalized groups. Around 600 of them were women who held leadership positions within community forest user groups.

Geographic scope of initiatives and reach 2019–2020



51 initiatives in 2019–2020

25% involved two or more countries in Asia-Pacific

607
events

20,844
people reached

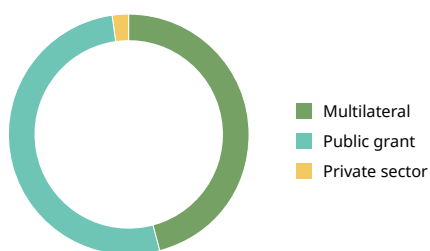
587
women leaders
in community forestry

336
communication and
knowledge products

Our partnerships included multilateral institutions, governments, the private sector, non-governmental organizations and local communities. As a trusted broker in the Asia-Pacific region, we combined diverse funding sources to implement 27 flagship projects and many other initiatives.

We continue to be financially sustainable, providing secure jobs for employees, secure investment for donors and reliable services for partners and communities. During 2019–2020, we received total revenue of US\$9.28 million from core donors, projects and other income sources.

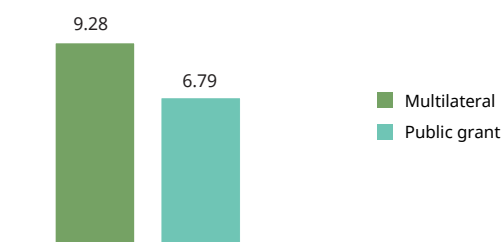
Donors and partners 2019–2020



Funding sources from Asia-Pacific, Europe and North America

52% from public grants

Financial stewardship 2019–2020 in US\$ million



2020

US\$9.28 million revenue

69% from projects and other income

188
partner organizations

85
smallholder entrepreneurs

49
community-based enterprises

26
community partnership agreements



Community forest members collect firewood from the forest to use at home in Trapeang Tortim Village, Preah Vihear Province, Cambodia.



Community forests boosted resilience during pandemic

Study reveals the role of community forests during crises.

When COVID-19 went global in early 2020, Chanthy Khammoungkhoun was confident that he and his neighbours in Koklouang Village in Lao PDR were in a good place. He says his community's dependence on forests and its rights to use them gave them an advantage over other village and urban dwellers during the pandemic.

"We have teak, water, bamboo and other non-timber forest products," he says. "Our community has lived with the forest for a long time, so we can find food in it. By contrast, people in the city need money for living and are at greater risk from COVID-19."

His words echo those of hundreds of people RECOFTC surveyed in Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Nepal, Thailand and Viet Nam. RECOFTC undertook the study with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations in 2020 and 2021.

The study found that, under the right conditions, community forests can increase people's resilience in times of crisis. It also recommended ways that pandemic recovery plans can strengthen community forestry and contribute to action in support of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the Paris Agreement on climate change and the United Nations Decade on Ecosystem Restoration.

Social cohesion an important factor

"When COVID-19 arrived in their countries, many community forest committees used their knowledge and contacts to coordinate with local governments and obtain support from external partners," says RECOFTC's Senior Strategic Advisor Ronnakorn Triraganon. "They were able to access and distribute information

and supplies of masks and hand sanitizer and to mobilize personnel to enforce health and travel restrictions and protect forests.

This, together with strong community cohesion, translated into high levels of compliance with public health advice. In all the communities RECOFTC surveyed, most people quickly adopted preventive measures, such as wearing masks, washing hands and social distancing. These actions contributed to there being no recorded cases of COVID-19 in any of the 14 communities RECOFTC surveyed during December 2020 and January 2021.

Beyond responding to the immediate threat to health, community forest committees continued their regular activities, including regulating access to forest resources, resolving conflicts, managing funds and organizing patrols to protect forests from illegal harvesting, poaching or encroachment.

This helped ensure that community forests across all seven countries in the survey were able to sustain people and livelihoods during the pandemic. By providing food and medicinal plants, firewood and, in some cases, timber, these forests reduced household expenses and generated income.

Protecting forest resources for all

“During the pandemic, people could still harvest forest products, even when there were travel restrictions,” says Lo Thi Hien, head of the Muong Phu Women’s Association. “The community forest maintained sustainable

livelihoods by providing free vegetables to feed ducks and pigs and herbs and mushrooms to sell.”

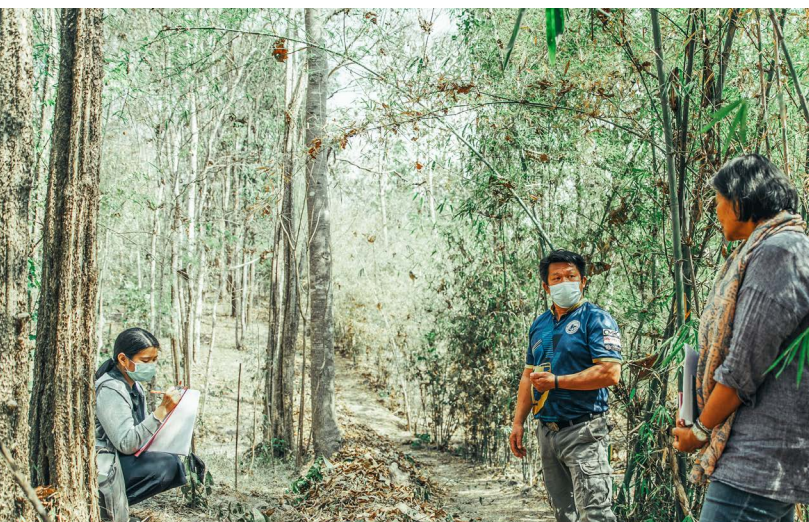
Thanks to training courses that RECOFTC provided, community forest members acknowledge the significance of the community forest and know how to protect it.

“Even though people have lower incomes than before COVID-19, they do not violate the forest,” says Lo Thi.

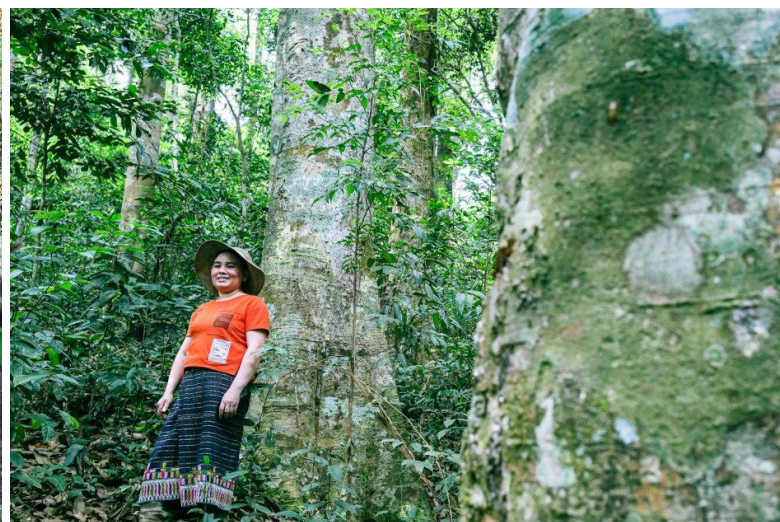
Community forest committees often acted to ensure that the lowest-income members could access forest resources. In Lao PDR, for example, village leaders exempted marginalized groups from paying fees for timber and firewood from the village forests.

Daya Laxmi Shrestha was head of the Shreechhap Deurali Community Forest in Sindhupalchowk District when COVID-19 began spreading in Nepal. She and her colleagues swung into action. Working closely with the local government and community forest user group, they set up quarantine centres and went door to door informing households on how to stay safe during the pandemic. They implemented social distancing protocols for their community forest meetings and activities.

“We worked wholeheartedly for the community,” says Shrestha. “Our community forest also contributed to the disaster management trust, which provided food to poor households that were having a tough time feeding themselves.”



In Thailand, RECOFTC conducted the survey in the community of Mae Tha, near Chiang Mai. The survey included field visits to the forest with local officials and forestry officers from Mae Tha.



Lo Thi Hien walks in the forest near her house in Muong Phu Village, Thong Thu Commune, Que Phong District, Nghe An, Viet Nam.

Community forests as financial safety nets

Extrapolating from its survey findings, RECOFTC estimates that personal savings accrued by selling timber and non-timber forest products have helped about 3 million people in the lower Mekong region cope during the first months of lockdown. Many community forest committees also manage credit schemes that provide low-interest loans, which also have helped during the crisis.

“The credit scheme is an alternative way for our members to borrow during the pandemic,” says Ton Mean, the chief of Samaky Trapang Totim Community Forest in Cambodia’s Preah Vihear Province. “Training and support from RECOFTC made the process possible for our community during this difficult time. We hope that as the credit capital increases, it will enable the community forest to contribute more to the community.”

Study recommendations

Despite the positive findings, the study also found that not all community forests have had such positive experiences. Some lack networks, external sources of support or credit schemes. Others have received little or no training. And some communities voiced concerns about the effectiveness of their community forest leaders. The extent to which community forests could support livelihoods also varied with the size and quality of the forests and the rights communities have to benefit from them.

Taken together, these findings can inform responses to this pandemic and future crises that are equitable and sustainable for communities living in and near forests and that contribute to action on climate change, ecosystem restoration and the SDGs.

Contributions of community forestry to COVID-19 response and recovery

RECOFTC surveyed community forest members to understand how community forestry generates different livelihood assets and how these assets have helped communities cope during the pandemic. Read the full technical report.



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“Our research showed the importance of expanding community forests and improving land tenure systems to ensure that local community members have clear and strong rights over forest resources,” says Triraganon.

“We also recommend ramping up capacity development programs for community forests so that they are able to raise and manage more funds, restore and improve the quality of the forest resources they manage, recognize and address social disparities and find ways to help their communities through COVID-19 and any future crises.”



Daya Laxmi Shrestha, right, visits a community member who received goats as part of a program the community forest committee introduced to support marginalized groups in the village. After the devastating 2015 earthquake in Nepal, the committee distributed 25 cubic feet of wood for each family in the community for free.



Community Forest Chief Ton Mean shows documents in a discussion with RECOFTC’s provincial coordinator during the COVID-19 survey, in Samaky Trapang Totim, Romtom Commune, Rovieng District, Preah Vihear Province, Cambodia.



Change the training, change everything

A green and sustainable future will depend on women having an equal say in forests, in workplaces, in homes and in solutions to move beyond the pandemic damage.

For 30 years, RECOFTC has worked with women and men in forest communities to empower them to manage and conserve the forests and wetlands they depend on to survive and thrive. But despite RECOFTC's efforts on gender equality, men in those communities have continued to make the bulk of the decisions about the future of people and their forests.

In the forestry and natural resource management sectors, national commitments on gender equality had hit an invisible wall, says Kalpana Giri, a forester who leads the WAVES initiative at RECOFTC.

"No one says, 'I don't want to work on gender equality'," she explains. "They say, 'Yes, gender equality is very important, but there is zero budget to do this'."

Two years ago, Giri began looking for ways to break down that invisible wall.

First, she decided to throw one-off gender training out the window. WAVES became a

three-year leadership and training network with technical, financial and psychosocial support.

Then, the WAVES approach drew inspiration from the relational leadership model, which emphasizes the relationships among people. Relational leadership values inclusion, empowerment, purposefulness, ethical behaviour and process orientation.

The first WAVES workshop focused on each individual's personal growth. Thirty participants who had been carefully selected as WAVES gender leaders learned to look inward and analyse their own biases. From there, they were shown how to consider the societal conditioning of other people and how their biases are products of their socialization. Grasping these concepts led the gender leaders to change how they related to others.

The workshop participants ranged from technical experts to high-level government officials from Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Myanmar,

Nepal, Thailand and Viet Nam. They included government officers, politicians, academics, directors of civil society organizations, business managers and a journalist.

They were mostly women, but there were men as well. Some among them had gender development in their job title or description. Others had heard the term gender equality but knew little about it.

For many of them, it was a life-changing five days.

Change begins with the self

“The initial discussions at the workshop focused on mindfulness and self-awareness,” says Mardha Tillah, then the executive director of the RMI-Indonesian Institute for Forest and Environment. “At first I didn’t understand how these topics related to leadership.”

Within the first day, Tillah had texted her organization, her mother and her husband with excitement.

“The training emphasized the gendered self and looking inward to identify preconceptions of what it means to be male or female as the first step towards becoming a stronger leader,” she says. “In those five days, I was thinking about other leaders having this kind of opportunity for enlightenment.”

Khin Nyein Khan Mon wondered for a long while about why the training had opened with

emphasis on self-awareness. Upon returning to Myanmar, where she worked as a technical specialist with the Myanmar Environment Rehabilitation-conservation Network, she had sudden clarity.

“Women in my country and in my workplace are treated unequally,” says Mon. “But we don’t know it. We accept it. We think it’s normal. We think it’s ordinary. But actually, it is not normal, it is not ordinary. So, we need to understand that first. If we don’t understand that, how can we work for equality?”

Vocabulary matters

Deepa Oli is a forester and the focal point for the Gender Development Unit in Nepal’s Ministry of Forests and Environment. She left that first WAVES workshop with an expanded vocabulary and an expanded understanding of the barriers that had been frustrating her for too long. She also learned how to handle discrimination and bias more constructively than with anger.

Oli heard for the first time the term ‘socialization process’. She came to realize that it was what she and other gender equality advocates ultimately were up against: The people who resisted her ideas or challenged her were products of their upbringing and their social environments.



This awareness changed how she interacted with anyone who worried that talking about gender would create competition between men and women.

“I hit at the barriers instead of at the person,” she says, explaining how she often jumped to anger and frustration. “Being calmer and composed is doing the same thing in a different way. It is confronting in a strategic manner. And people now hear what I am saying.”

Men as gender leaders

Mai Quang Huy heard plenty of unfair comments and jokes about women as he rose to the directorship of Phong Dien Forestry. The company produces and trades timber, resin, forest seedlings and herbs in Viet Nam. He always felt his colleagues’ and clients’ prejudices about the roles and responsibilities of women in forestry were wrong.

Since joining WAVES, Huy has directed his company to follow gender-sensitive policies, eliminate gendered divisions of labour and include gender analysis in annual reports. His company now requires that women are included in community meetings and that contracts include the names of both wives and husbands.

“My peers and colleagues asked me why I was interested in gender issues and why I did not focus on forest encroachment or forest fire prevention and control,” Huy says. “I responded that gender issues are a root cause of these problems and solving gender issues helps to address them.”

In his early days as a gender advocate, The Chhun Hak talked about women’s rights,

the global United Nations agenda and national pressure to follow through on global commitments. Today, he is the director general for the Gender Equality and Economic Development division within Cambodia’s Ministry of Women’s Affairs.

Tackling climate change needs gender equality

Forests are vital to tackling climate change. But if we are to succeed in our efforts to save the Earth, we must think beyond conservation, biodiversity and the number of planted trees. We must make gender equality a core business.



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“WAVES taught me to be transformative,” he says. “I realized that a fundamental shift could be achieved if young people learned about equality and leadership before they became leaders.”

In 2020, Hak initiated the Youth Leadership Lab for Gender Equality, which includes self-awareness topics. The Lab is now a one-year coaching program for cultivating leadership and gender equality among youth. He also established a leadership campaign within the Ministry of Women’s Affairs to attract and invigorate the junior ranks.

“It has created a dynamic image of the Ministry among students and young people who now seek employment there,” he says. “They are inspired because they can see



Deepa Oli



The Chhun Hak

that gender equality is not just a narrow understanding of women's issues but something broader that leads to making real change for their society."

Personal support builds confidence

The WAVES initiative is comprehensive. It offers three years of training, technical assistance and limited funding for projects that gender leaders want to pursue. WAVES also established a focal point in each of the targeted seven countries to check in with the gender leaders through group chats or one-on-one conversations.

Giri often engages in the group chats and has opened her door to each gender leader. The psychosocial support "makes us feel we are not alone," says Hak. "It's not a big investment but it's a big support for us. It gives us more confidence to know that somebody has our back."

Ripples make future waves

After the first WAVES training, the participants felt empowered to make changes, even small ones that could have a big impact in the future.

One gender leader in Indonesia changed the stipulation that pregnant women could not attend training and set up a day-care facility for trainees' children. Another leader integrated gender issues into her university's forestry curriculum. In Cambodia, gender leaders influenced the country's gender action plan and strategy. In Nepal, they aim to cultivate 300 gender leaders in their field over the next two years through training, webinars and career counselling.

Perhaps most importantly, WAVES has helped give technical legitimacy to the term 'gender equality'.

"It is no longer considered to be something everyone can do," said independent evaluator Dibya Gurung at an online WAVES workshop. "It used to be common practice for anyone to give input on gender-related documents or platforms or events. Now organizers make sure that someone has knowledge or experience before they give input. That kind of legitimacy, that kind of value, is slowly being given.

But much of the WAVES work has taken place during the COVID-19 pandemic, often constricting the reach of the gender leaders' plans and interactions.

"In general and globally, the pandemic has been disproportionately harsh for women and girls," says Giri. "It has endlessly demonstrated how deeply gender inequality remains in the world's economic, political and social systems. It is clear that the future, and especially pandemic recovery plans, must equally include women in the forests, in workplaces and in the home and create transformative solutions that are needed to move beyond the pandemic damage."



Promoting fairness, safety and sustainability in the timber sector

The Voices for Mekong Forests project helps civil society collect evidence to advocate for social change in forest governance.

Small businesses in Lao PDR's timber sector have struggled in recent years. In 2016, Prime Minister Thongloun Sisoulith issued an order called PMO15 to crack down on illegal logging and related trade.

While PMO15 was well-intentioned, it caused many small sawmills and wood-processing factories to close. In 2018, the Vientiane Times reported that more than 1,000 of 1,178 family-based furniture plants had closed as a result of the order.

PMO15 came amid Lao PDR's ongoing negotiations with the European Union towards the Voluntary Partnership Agreement on Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT). The agreement would commit Lao PDR to verifying the legality of its timber product exports to the European Union. But by strengthening controls over the supply chain, the agreement is likely to have big implications

for small businesses and the women and men working in them, just as PMO15 did.

Voices for Mekong Forests (V4MF)

Voices for Mekong Forests (V4MF) is a European Union-funded project that aims to strengthen the participation of non-state actors in forest landscape governance. RECOFTC leads the project in partnership with WWF-Greater Mekong, the East-West Management Institute-Open Development Initiative (EWMI-ODI), Nature Economy and People Connected (Preferred by Nature), the NGO Forum on Cambodia, the Lao Biodiversity Association, the Myanmar Environment Rehabilitation-conservation Network (MERN), Raks Thai Foundation and People and Nature Reconciliation (PanNature).

Legal requirements prove costly

Conscious of risks and opportunities, RECOFTC set out in 2019 to assess gender equity and social inclusion in small businesses in the context of the voluntary partnership agreement.

“We focused our study on Xayaboury Province,” says Manilay Thiphalansy, Project Officer for RECOFTC’s Voices for Mekong Forests (V4MF) project. Of 111 wood-processing factories there, 57 had closed voluntarily because of PMO15. Another 28 factories were closed by the authorities because they did not meet regulatory standards. Only 26 remained open.

“We found that some officials believe many businesses closed to avoid having to abide by

the law,” Thiphalansy says. “But the research suggests that it was actually because these companies lacked the resources needed to comply with the legal requirements and meet the costs of registrations and inspections.”

Gender roles have deep roots

The researchers also found big differences between the wages of men and women, even those doing similar work. In one business, women received 1.5 million Lao kip (US\$158) a month on average, but men got 2.8 million Lao kip (US\$290). Although many women received less pay than men, the men were often exposed to greater risks of injury because of the jobs they were assigned and a lack of safety training.

Facilitating flourishing partnerships

In Lao PDR, villagers are often eager to take advantage of opportunities to better manage their forests, find buyers for their sustainable forest products and improve their livelihoods. To do this, they need fair prices and stable markets for their products. But they are limited by their inability to engage constructively with private sector companies.

RECOFTC has been working with communities, the private sector and government agencies to develop sustainable trading relations that help to guarantee forest protection. In 2018, for example, RECOFTC brokered a partnership agreement in Bokeo Province among communities in two villages, a wood-processing company and the local government. Since then, there has been a complete turnaround in the management of the teak forest.

“Villagers are finally getting a fair price for their labour in teak plantations,” says Chay Senkhammoungkhoun, RECOFTC’s field coordinator in Lao PDR. “They can now afford to improve their homes, and their livelihoods are more secure. The Singthoun wood-processing company is also satisfied because it has a legal, sustainable and secure supply of teak. And the government benefits from improvements in the value chain, increased transparency and regenerated forests.”



“Lots of injuries occur here,” said a production line worker who spoke anonymously. “But no induction training was implemented.”

“Disparities in men’s and women’s roles, salaries and safety are rooted in broader cultural and social arrangements,” says Kalpana Giri, senior program officer at RECOFTC. “Forestry work is seen as hard work and men are assumed to be ‘fit to do this hard work’. This affects what roles men and women are given.”

Defining ‘legality’ so small businesses survive

The Lao legal framework says men and women should have equal pay and equal rights to employment opportunities and safety at work. But there is limited awareness of these rights, particularly among smaller companies. And the labour law is only weakly enforced.

The voluntary partnership agreement could help. That’s because the negotiation process involves developing timber legality definitions and a related assurance system based on selected and revised laws and regulations that apply throughout the supply chain. The V4MF study provided evidence that civil society networks have used to advocate for legal reforms throughout the voluntary partnership agreement negotiation process. The aim is to achieve social goals, such as safeguarding against risks of small companies closing, and improving work conditions.

“We have clear proposals on what indicators are needed and why,” says Giri. “The voluntary partnership agreement needs to safeguard small businesses, which tend to lose out because the existing policy and market discussions favour scale.”

Civil society increasingly shapes forest laws in the Mekong region

In recent years, governments of Mekong countries have increasingly listened to the concerns of communities and civil society organizations that represent their interests as they reshape policies and laws governing forests.



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For example, the timber legality definitions require businesses to define the rights and entitlements of male and female employees, including with respect to equal pay, use of personal protective equipment and provision of training.

Giri says that while legal compliance is desirable, a voluntary partnership agreement could still raise new challenges during its implementation.

“As experience with PMO15 shows, there is potential for small businesses to face unforeseen harm,” she says. “If the voluntary partnership agreement is to address gender inequality and social inclusion, it will be certain to impose more demanding standards. While larger companies would be able to meet such requirements, the smaller ones are likely to struggle.”

Incentives, training and monitoring are key

Thiphalansy says the government should provide incentives to mitigate against this risk. Incentives could include tax breaks for companies, particularly smaller ones, that comply with policies and laws. She also says the government should monitor how policies affect workers and businesses and provide training on workplace safety and on how to produce high-quality, finished products.

“Companies need clear policies that ensure all new staff are trained and understand occupational health and safety so they can ask for protective equipment when it is not provided,” says Thiphalansy. “Companies must also be transparent about wages for different types of work. This could motivate women to take on new roles, not just sanding wood and finishing products.”



Khamphoui Xaythalath from the Participatory Development Knowledge Agency is in discussion with Mali Inthirathongsy from the Gender Development Association at the civil society meeting before the fourth FLEGT VPA negotiation between Lao PDR and the European Union in Vientiane, 11 August 2020.



Restoring Viet Nam's bamboo forests

The FLOURISH project is harnessing market power to improve lives and the environment.

For generations, villagers like Nong Thi Huong have relied on lung bamboo for their livelihoods. Huong calls her lung forest in the mountains of Viet Nam's Nghe An Province a "bank in the backyard".

"Whenever I need money, I can harvest and sell it," she says.

Lung bamboo (*Bambusa longissima* sp. nov) is versatile. It is used to make items ranging from toothpicks to garden fences, baskets and lanterns. Growing international demand for such products nets Viet Nam approximately US\$300 million a year.

But Nghe An's bamboo forests have been rapidly shrinking due to overharvesting, a trend exacerbated by insecure land rights. Because lung bamboo is a major source of household incomes in the mountains of Nghe An, replanting and sustainable management are urgently needed.

Reversing a downward trend

A few years ago, local bamboo forests were at risk of disappearing entirely. Nghe An's provincial government set a goal of restoring 6,000 hectares of lung forest and planting another 270 hectares with lung bamboo by 2025. But progress was slowed due to the lack of effective propagation methods.

Since 2019, RECOFTC's forest landscape restoration initiative FLOURISH has been helping the local government reverse the trend. By harnessing the power of market demand for sustainable products, the initiative is helping villagers take steps to restore bamboo forests. This will allow them to develop decent livelihoods and play a part in slowing down the rate of climate change.

The initiative is showing how to achieve social, economic and environmental goals at the landscape scale. And, in an unexpected test, it is helping communities withstand the economic shock of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Introduction to forest landscape restoration

This easy-to-use guide explains the fundamentals of forest landscape restoration (FLR) and serves as a starting point for future exploration and design of FLR initiatives. The guide is available in English, Laotian and Vietnamese.



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Training boosts production – and prices

To test solutions, FLOURISH began working with Huong's village in Quy Chau District and four others nearby.

With funding from the German government through the International Climate Initiative, RECOFTC partnered with the local government's Nghe An Forest Protection and Development Fund and the International Bamboo and Rattan Organisation. The goal is to help communities restore their bamboo forests and use them to secure sustainable livelihoods.

So far, FLOURISH has trained hundreds of villagers on bamboo management, harvesting

and primary processing techniques. They have also learned to use a method for propagating bamboo called offset planting that can aid restoration efforts. Huong was among those trained.

"The technique for propagating bamboo is so easy to learn and apply," says Huong. "My transplants have grown well. Their survival rate is about 80 percent."

The initiative has also supported smallholders in all five villages to negotiate and sign partnership agreements with the Duc Phong Co., LTD, a handicraft company. Under these partnerships, the company commits to buy bamboo at agreed prices, guaranteeing sales for people with few other options for generating income.

"I can observe our lives becoming better," says Huong. She says average incomes from selling lung bamboo have doubled to 15 to 17 million Vietnamese dong per year since the project began.

A global demand for sustainable forest products

Duc Phong Co. makes bamboo lampshades and baskets for export to Europe. This trade with Europe promotes sound management of bamboo forests thanks to sustainability provisions in the 2019 European Union-Viet Nam Free Trade Agreement. This should help communities like Huong's, which are



Local woman makes bamboo strips at the bamboo pre-processing unit of Duc Phong Co., Chau Thang Commune, Nghe An Province.

restoring their bamboo forests, to participate in international supply chains for sustainable products.

“The partnership agreements aim to promote sustainable bamboo production and trade,” says Luong Van Phi, head of the Ban Village lung harvesting farmers’ group in Chau Thang Commune. “As well as agreeing on the terms of business, both parties commit to working together to manage and protect lung bamboo forests so that they can be harvested sustainably.”

The agreements proved vital when COVID-19 reached Viet Nam and the government imposed restrictions that limited people’s ability to generate income.

“Thanks to the agreements, the local communities were more economically resilient than others because they could at least still sell bamboo to the Duc Phong company,” says Trang Hoang, who coordinates the FLOURISH project.

Securing land rights is vital

But for livelihoods to be truly sustainable and for villagers to have incentives to restore their bamboo forests, they need secure rights to forest land.

“To prosper, people who depend on forests must be able to use, manage and benefit from forests,” says RECOFTC Executive Director David Ganz. “They must also be secure in the knowledge that they will be able to carry on doing so for the foreseeable future.

But across Southeast Asia, these rights are insecure or absent.”

Tenure and social forestry in ASEAN Member States

Tenure arrangements in the ASEAN region are complex and often contentious. This report provides an overview of customary and statutory tenure arrangements in ASEAN countries and identifies the challenges and opportunities that these arrangements present.



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To address this, FLOURISH has been training community members in Nghe An Province on how to apply for a Red Book, which formalizes a 50-year title to forest land. By the end of 2020, the project had helped 241 households obtain their Red Book, covering a total of more than 1,550 hectares of forest land.

“The project helped my community conserve lung and sustain our livelihoods,” Huong says. “We now know how to harvest lung and then replant it. Overharvesting of bamboo has been stopped, and the rate of illegal bamboo harvesting has significantly dropped, compared with what it was before the project. We have benefited from the partnership between community members and Duc Phong company, which buys all the lung that we harvest at a stable price.”



Nong Thi Huong leads the way as her community harvests lung bamboo.



Credit scheme boosts livelihoods in Cambodia

A community-managed fund is helping its members grow more food, increase their incomes and make their forests safer.

The 613-acre O Taneung community forest is about 65 kilometres from Kratie City in eastern Cambodia. Here, local people can manage and protect the forest and harvest foods, medicines and fuelwood without fear of conflict.

It wasn't always this harmonious. Community forest chief Pao Kosal recalls being attacked by illegal loggers some years ago.

"Previously, the commune and authorities didn't support our community," says Pao. "But now, we're not worried. The attacks and the threats don't happen anymore."

That is partly because local authorities have embraced the community's efforts to protect the forest and build it into an economic asset, with support from RECOFTC.

Cambodia's Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries officially recognized the community forest in 2012. Three years later, community members received a 15-year land lease guaranteeing access to the forest, as long as they implement an official forest management plan.

The community forest in 2020 had 245 members, more than a third of the population of Kbal Damrei Commune in Sambour District, Kratie Province.

In Cambodia, communes are the third-level administrative division. They can consist of as few as three or as many as 30 villages, depending on the population.

Building community resilience

RECOFTC and partners have been working with O Taneung and other community forests through an eight-year project called the Partnership for Forestry and Fisheries Communities. The project aims to improve communities' resilience to economic and natural shocks through community-based natural resource management.

The initiative is already bearing fruit. The community forest group is pioneering a deadwood-harvesting program that could provide a blueprint for sustainable timber, pole and firewood production from community forests nationwide. Villagers think deadwood could one day be the forest's most valuable product.

"If you don't do anything, the deadwood will burn," says community forest member Rey Seakla, pointing to the risk of wildfires. "Instead, we can sell it and make extra money to invest in our community forest."

Credit supports a range of activities

Since 2018, O Taneung members have been managing a community forest credit scheme that they launched with US\$1,000 in funding from RECOFTC and the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation. The fund

grew to more than US\$3,000 by 2020 serving 35 families. Most households have used their loans to buy seeds, fertilizers and other agricultural materials.

"I hope everyone in the community can borrow in the future," says Tuy Sophon, the credit scheme's chief.

The loan application process is faster and simpler than that of a bank or microfinance institution, and it requires no collateral from borrowers. And the interest that borrowers pay is only a little higher than what a microfinance institution or bank would charge. However, the proceeds of these loans stay firmly in the community, where they are reinvested in the credit scheme and in forest management.

As with other credit schemes that RECOFTC has supported, this one is empowering women and helping to address forest crimes. Community members can now use money from the scheme for petrol, food and other supplies for forest patrols.

As the scheme's capital grows, community members hope it will be able to fund more ambitious projects. They are discussing a seedling nursery for reforestation, a firebreak to prevent the spread of forest fires, and improved roads to allow them to respond faster to illegal activities in their forest.



Rey Seakla is ready to mark the log for the next cut. She joined the deadwood harvesting program in 2020 and is also a member of a community forest credit scheme.

Collaboration increases security

Kbal Damrei Council Representative Tom Them says the commune leadership is proud of the community forest group's work. He says the commune has worked with the group's emerging leaders to provide support or seek out partnerships.

So far, the commune has devoted some of its law enforcement capacity to addressing issues in and around the forest. The commune and the community forestry group have also collaborated on a bridge built with timber from the community forest. In exchange for

the timber, the community forestry group secured a portion of the fees that outsiders pay to cross the bridge.

Community forest chief Pao Kosal acknowledges that security has increased through working with the local and district authorities. And he appeals for even deeper partnerships in the years ahead.

"Although we have come a long way after starting with nothing, we still need support," he says. "The community alone can't do it all yet. But we're going to climb the mountain. We're going to get to the top."

Empowering women and tackling forest crimes

Community forest credit schemes are opening spaces for Cambodian women to participate in decisions about forests like never before. One began in 2015 in five communities in Kampong Thom Province near the Prey Lang landscape, one of the world's most important biodiversity hotspots located in northern Cambodia.

RECOFTC created the credit scheme with Cambodia's Forestry Administration, with support from the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation. The scheme expanded to 32 communities by September 2020. Almost half of its 1,105 members are women.

In Thbong Domrei, a village near Kampong Thom's provincial capital Stueng Saen, women have leadership positions in the committee that manages the credit scheme.

"When women participate in the community forestry credit scheme, they are able to engage more in the management process," says Lok Lai Seurng, the scheme's deputy chief. "This is because they are better informed about what is happening and can decide how the credit scheme funds are used to best manage the forest."

She says that thanks to the fund, the community has a budget to pay people to protect the forest to prevent illegal logging. It is a similar story elsewhere in Kampong Thom Province. In the Prey Kbal Bey Community Forest, for example, most participants in the credit scheme are women and forest patrols are also a priority.

"I am now more aware of what we can do to manage the forest because I join the monthly credit meetings," says Say Am, secretary of the community forest management committee.

The scheme generates around US\$58 each month, which pays for twice-monthly patrols and tree planting in degraded areas. So far, community patrols have halted illegal activities five times. They have confiscated a boat and 500 illegally harvested poles of timber.



Lok Lai Seurng, left, patrols the community forest with funds from the community forestry credit scheme.



Sustainable enterprises are key to resilience

In Indonesia, community forestry and agroforestry helped villagers weather the financial shocks of the COVID-19 pandemic.

In the forests of Indonesia's South Sulawesi, where small-scale farmers often struggle to make a living, 38-year-old Marni has been thriving. She has a new tin roof on her house and enough money to send her daughter to university and her sister to teachers college. Marni is reaping the rewards of a decision she made years earlier to develop a coffee farm in harmony with the forest.

"Now I am grateful that I can earn more money and even expand my farm," she says at her village in Bantaeng District in the island's southern tip.

As with countless households in Indonesia, the COVID-19 pandemic has harmed Marni's livelihood. But the sustainable and profitable nature of her enterprise means she has weathered the financial shocks better than many others have.

What is community forestry?

Community forestry is a broad term for approaches that empower communities to manage, protect and benefit from local forests. These approaches have different names in different places, for example: social forestry; village forestry; participatory forestry; community-based forest management; and people-centred forestry. Different approaches to social forestry vary in the extent to which they give communities rights to use and benefit from forest resources. Some allow communities only the right to use forest resources for subsistence, whereas others allow communities to set up enterprises and sell forest products including timber commercially.

Marni's success is the culmination of a decade of RECOFTC's work in the remote district of South Sulawesi. Its aim is to build community forestry for local people living in and around forests.

RECOFTC has been at the heart of collaborative efforts to strengthen the livelihoods of impoverished, Indigenous Peoples and other marginalized groups. As a result, these communities have been given a greater mandate by the government to manage the forest landscapes they depend on for survival.

Over the years, RECOFTC has built partnerships with local communities, forestry and agricultural officials, university and civil society. Together, they have worked to obtain land permits for villagers, organize training in agroforestry and build small enterprises. These activities have encouraged villagers to shift away from traditional slash-and-burn agriculture that causes forest degradation and soil erosion.

Expanding collaboration

In 2020, RECOFTC and the Indonesian government signed a memorandum of understanding to expand this collaboration for another five years. Under the agreement, RECOFTC will continue to build up the knowledge, skills and capacities of stakeholders.

It will also develop cooperatives among communities across Indonesia modelled on a successful farmers' group that RECOFTC helped establish in South Sulawesi. With more than 90 members, including Marni, the Akar Tani Cooperative helps coffee farmers secure better access to markets and higher prices for their beans.

Since joining the cooperative, Marni has learned improved harvesting and processing techniques, such as picking only ripe, red berries and sorting them properly. She also knows how to care for her arabica coffee plants and the 3 hectares of land on which they grow.

"We know we have to plant more trees to shade the coffee plants, otherwise they won't survive," she says. "So we planted jackfruit, mahogany and many other trees."

Improving her enterprise has brought rewards. Before the pandemic depressed prices, Marni was selling 1 kilogram of her coffee beans for 120,000 Indonesian rupiah (US\$8.50), compared with 20,000 rupiah (US\$1.40) when she first started 10 years ago.

Agroforestry critical for success

Community forestry has successfully spread in Southeast Asia over the past 10 years. Between 2010 and 2020, the total area of community forestry more than doubled, to



13.8 million hectares. And ASEAN countries are committed to further build on this.

This success is largely a result of concerted efforts by RECOFTC and others. They have worked together to undertake research, build capacity and help governments develop new laws that give communities greater management of landscapes.

As part of these efforts, RECOFTC developed a manual in 2020 to help officials, extension workers and practitioners deliver knowledge and skills to farmers wanting to develop agroforestry. Agroforestry allows coffee and other crops to grow within and around forest areas, providing sustainable livelihoods for communities. The system also supports biodiversity because forests are left standing and thus sequester carbon from the atmosphere.

Tenure and social forestry in ASEAN Member States

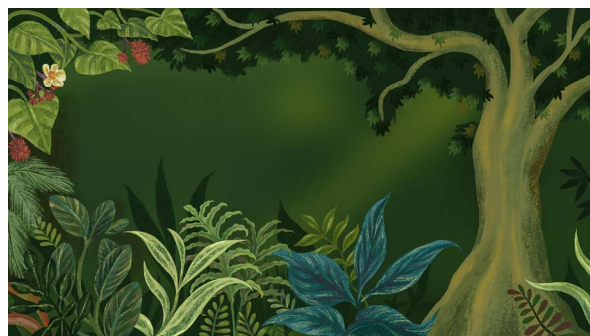
Tenure arrangements in the ASEAN region are complex and often contentious. This report provides an overview of customary and statutory tenure arrangements in ASEAN countries and identifies the challenges and opportunities that these arrangements present.



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A decade-long partnership between the government of Switzerland and ASEAN focused on producing new policy documents and guidelines to help governments introduce community forestry and address climate change.

Dian Sukmajaya is a senior officer in the Food, Agriculture and Forestry Division of the ASEAN Secretariat. He credits the Swiss partnership with strengthening community forestry and advancing agroforestry more broadly in the region. "The ASEAN guidelines for agroforestry development have been adopted by all countries, and some countries are now developing their national agroforestry road map," says Sukmajaya.



Tool provides step-by-step guidance for policy makers on social forestry

The Knowledge Tree is a tool for decision making for effective, efficient and equitable social forestry. This interactive resource is available in RECOFTC's Learning Centre.



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Urgent and new challenges

But challenges remain for the region that has seen decades of forest destruction and degradation. When the Swiss partnership ended in 2020, RECOFTC surveyed stakeholders to determine how it could build on the success of the past 10 years.

Stakeholders said the most urgent priorities were helping communities adapt to climate change and increase food security. Growing the size and type of forest areas managed by communities was also critical, along with securing tenure rights for those people.

Yurdi Yasmi led the formation of the Swiss-ASEAN partnership while working at RECOFTC. He says that unlocking the potential of community forestry required governments to trust communities with tenure of the landscapes on which they worked. Governments also needed to give communities support and legal frameworks to build up their farms and other sustainable forest enterprises.

"If you open local communities to markets, they are very creative," says Yasmi. "If you provide them with information on how to design products consistently, how to target specific markets or niche markets for certain products, then they will benefit. When you

put money into the pockets of the local community, they will be happy. They will conserve your forest.”

Coping with COVID-19

Many forest communities were able to cope with the initial financial shocks of COVID-19. Research undertaken by RECOFTC in 2020 showed communities were hit hard by travel restrictions, and by lower prices and fewer buyers for their forest products. But personal savings from their enterprises provided a safety net.

In Indonesia, communities surveyed for the research said they were grateful they were able to use the forests during the pandemic. They continued agroforestry and relied on forests for water, food and building materials for personal use or for sale. These resources provided a buffer against the impacts of lockdown.

Community members said they want assistance to buy machinery to improve their enterprises and to become even more resilient to national crises in the future.

In South Sulawesi, coffee farmer Marni is among those determined to improve on her success that she secured before the pandemic and to build back better.

“It’s not going to affect me,” Marni says of the pandemic.

The Akar Tani Cooperative, for the moment, is buying less. But Marni has found other buyers and even coffee shops willing to buy from her directly. She is washing and drying the beans using simple machinery on her farm. And she has even tried roasting them in a kitchen wok.





Bridging the digital divide during the COVID-19 crisis

A pandemic-related survey reveals technology gaps in Thailand's forest communities and points the way for RECOFTC to help address them.

In April 2020, the Thai government asked the public to comment on subordinate laws supporting the National Parks Act and the Wildlife Protection Act. The invitation was part of the government's consultation process to determine how it would grant land tenure to local communities.

But with the region gripped by COVID-19-related restrictions, the comments had to be submitted online. Rural and remote communities, with poor internet connections, were left struggling to participate.

That same month, RECOFTC conducted a survey to understand how the pandemic was affecting forest communities in Thailand. It found that most faced rising living costs and reduced incomes as markets shuttered and lockdowns kept people at home and away from their land.

"Every village has been locked down," one smallscale farmer told the researchers. "Everyone is worried because this directly affects our livelihoods."

Poor connectivity increases marginalization

Just as important, the survey revealed that forest communities were left marginalized because poor internet connectivity made it difficult to get vital news and information.

Face-to-face community meetings, networking and business transactions came to a halt, forcing people to try to participate online. But two-thirds of the people surveyed reported having unstable mobile connection. Others lacked knowledge about online meeting tools. As the pandemic presented new hardships for

already-poor forest communities, RECOFTC forged ahead by building up their capacity to address them.

“The survey findings helped us understand how we can support local people and our network members,” says RECOFTC Thailand Director Warangkana Rattanarat. “For example, we recognized a need for training on how to use online meeting tools. We also better understood the challenges forest communities face in accessing online information provided by the government.”

Community forestry vital for global goals

RECOFTC’s work to empower local communities to sustainably manage the forests on which they depend is more relevant than ever.

The world is on course to miss the 2030 deadline for the environment-related Sustainable Development Goals targets. Biodiversity loss and climate change continue to deteriorate. And although areas of land worldwide are increasingly conserved, they are not necessarily effectively managed and equitably governed, the United Nations has warned. Improvements are needed to further stem ecosystem degradation and bolster progress on the United Nations Decade of Ecosystem Restoration.

Strengthening community forestry can be key towards achieving these goals. Improving the ability of Indigenous Peoples and other local communities to manage forests they rely on for food and livelihoods can protect landscapes, increase incomes and reduce poverty. Well-managed forests also preserve biodiversity and capture and store carbon, bolstering efforts to halt climate change.

Technology training crucial

The RECOFTC survey found that, along with poor connectivity, many forest communities struggle with a broader lack of general knowledge about technology.

In response, RECOFTC supported training courses, including one from February to June 2020 on reading, understanding and using data. Community leaders can now use data-visualization tools to help them improve the way they advocate for their rights and for better forest governance.

In the forested mountains of Thailand’s Nan Province, RECOFTC is working with 39 communities that lack government-recognized title to some or all of the land where they forage for food and gather firewood. Villagers say they have been managing the local forests and using them to meet their daily needs for more than 100 years. The government’s decision to change the way it decides tenure in and around



Maliwan Agkara is secretary for the mapping project in Nam Khae Village, Nan Province, Thailand.

national parks required action from the communities.

As part of the RECOFTC Voices for Mekong Forests project, communities have been trained to use geographic information system technology to map their land. The villagers hope that by submitting maps and community boundaries, they will be granted a permit to remain on the land.

Villagers save wetlands with social media

In the country's northern region, another forest community proved that the internet can be a powerful tool in the fight against proposed changes to its landscape.

Villagers of the Boon Rueang Wetland Forest Conservation Group have long managed wetlands that provide them with firewood and fish and protect them from flooding during annual rains.

A four-year European Union-funded project has empowered the villagers to work with local networks and authorities to protect the wetlands. With RECOFTC's support, the group convinced the government to abandon its plan to infill the wetlands and turn the area into a special economic zone.

The group used advocacy and social media campaigns to showcase their community forestry model. The group also submitted academic research to show how vital the

wetlands are to the local ecosystem and for mitigating disasters.

Authorities eventually withdrew the proposal, saving the wetlands that are crucial for the villagers' food security and that also pull carbon from the atmosphere.

In 2020, the group won the United Nations Equator Prize for community efforts to reduce poverty through the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity.



Boon Rueang wetlands in Thailand.



Securing healthy and productive forest landscapes through research and education

A new research network, improved forest education and more e-courses are on RECOFTC's horizon in the year ahead.

As southeast Asian nations continue to fight the COVID-19 pandemic, they must also focus on mitigating climate change, restoring ecosystems and ending poverty and inequality. The next few years will be crucial, and forests have a big role in what needs to be done.

RECOFTC is responding to these challenges by boosting its efforts to build strong partnerships among forest communities, governments and the private sector. As always, these partnerships will be forged based on trust, accountability, transparency and mutual respect.

With its focus on community forestry, RECOFTC will contribute to equitable and effective progress under the post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework, the United Nations Decade of Ecosystem Restoration 2021–2030, the Sustainable Development Goals and the Paris Agreement on climate change.

Here are just a few of the initiatives on RECOFTC's horizon in the year ahead.

World's first forest landscape governance research network

Governments across Southeast Asia increasingly see the need to tackle environmental and development challenges at the landscape scale. But policymakers often lack knowledge about forest landscape governance and balancing different interests in these landscapes to ensure sustainable outcomes.

To fill some of these gaps, RECOFTC and the Center for International Forestry Research launched a research network and community of practice in October 2020 called Explore. The network will help universities and researchers

work with policymakers, civil society, the private sector and communities to co-create and apply emerging knowledge.

Explore will first focus on Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Thailand, the Philippines and Viet Nam. It will support researchers working on forest landscape governance as it relates to gender, climate change, the environment, human rights, poverty alleviation and COVID-19 recovery.

Express interest in joining Explore



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Improving forest education in the Asia-Pacific region

Education about forests is vital for the transition to a sustainable future. It provides the knowledge, skills and societal understanding needed to protect forests, their biodiversity and their roles in mitigating climate change and ensuring human health and security.

RECOFTC, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the International Timber Trade Organization conducted research that revealed significant gaps in all levels of education about forests across the Asia-Pacific region. These include challenges with curriculum content, exposure to forests, resource levels, practical experience and pathways to forest-related jobs. These gaps threaten efforts to limit climate change, conserve biodiversity and achieve sustainable development.

RECOFTC reached these conclusions after tapping into its regional network and surveying 435 teachers, lecturers, university students and professionals in forest-related jobs. This effort was part of FAO's Global Assessment of Forest Education. The findings will help to shape and improve forest education through a new initiative led by the Collaborative Partnership on Forests.

Strengthening capacity with free e-courses

Southeast Asian countries have ambitious targets for community forestry, which is a broad approach to forest management that empowers communities to manage and

benefit from local forests. If these targets are met, communities will be managing around 30 million hectares of forests by 2030.

But as RECOFTC has shown, formal social forestry education is lagging, potentially jeopardizing the commitments.

RECOFTC has more than 30 years of experience as a knowledge hub for community forestry in the Asia-Pacific region. It is helping to strengthen capacity for community forestry among university staff and students, researchers, civil society groups and decision-makers at all levels. The Community Forestry 101 e-course, an example of this commitment, can be found on RECOFTC's Learning Gateway.

"I am applying my enhanced knowledge of community forestry principles and practices gained through the course in my day-to-day work in Indigenous advocacy," says June Cadalig Batang-ay, who works with Tebtebba Foundation, the Indigenous Peoples' International Centre for Policy Research and Education in the Philippines.

Some 1,160 people registered to take the course and 155 learners have completed the first enrolment round that launched in November 2020. Next up are new e-courses on policy analysis and forest governance and on inclusive community-based enterprises, which is a powerful solution for safeguarding forests and empowering communities that depend on them.



RECOFTC Learning Gateway



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K	Management Board for Forestry Projects, Viet Nam	Nan Forest Center, Thailand
Kampuchea Women's Welfare Action, Cambodia	Mekong Region Land Governance	Nan Provincial Environment and Natural Resources Office, Thailand
Kasetsart University, Thailand	Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, Cambodia	National Trust for Nature Conservation, Nepal
Kehutanan, Indonesia	Ministry of Environment, Cambodia	Nghe An Forest Protection and Development Fund, Nghe An
Kesatuan Pengelolaan Hutan Lakitan Bukit Cogong, Indonesia	Ministry of Forests and Environment, Nepal	Ngao Master Association, Thailand
Kesatuan Pengelolaan Hutan Lempuing Mesuji, Indonesia	Ministry of Natural Resources and the Environment, Thailand	NGO Forum, Cambodia
Kesatuan Pengelolaan Hutan Tanjung Jabung Barat, Indonesia	Ministry of Women's Affairs, Cambodia	Nippon Koei Co.,Ltd.
Khanh Tam Company, Viet Nam	Ministry of Women Empowerment And Child Protection, Indonesia	Non-Timber Forest Products, Cambodia
Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau, Lao PDR		P
L	Mlup Baitong Capacity, Cambodia	Pa Leaw Community Forest, Thailand
Land Information Working Group, Lao PDR	Muang Ling Family's Forest Network, Thailand	Pa Leaw Luang Subdistrict Administrative Organization, Thailand
Lao Biodiversity Association, Lao PDR	My Village, Cambodia	Pa Leaw Village, Thailand
	Myanmar Environment Rehabilitation-conservation	Parami Development

Network, Myanmar	Provincial Office of Natural Resources and Environment, Bokeo, Lao PDR	Sustainable Development Foundation, Thailand
Pasaxon Newspaper, Lao PDR		Sustainable Forestry Management, Lao PDR
People and Nature Reconciliation, Viet Nam	Provincial Office of Natural Resources and Environment, Xayaboury, Lao PDR	
Phong Subdistrict Administrative Organization, Thailand	Pusat Penyuluhan Kementerian Lingkungan Hidup dan Kehutanan, Indonesia	T
Phonxay District Governor's Office, Lao PDR		Tanaosri Mountains Conservation Network, Thailand
Phoukoud District Governor's Office, Lao PDR	R	Tetra Tech, Inc.
Phu Quy Company Limited, Viet Nam	Radio Narayani, Nepal	Thai-EU FLEGT Secretariat Office
Ponkham Temple, Thailand	Raks Thai Foundation, Thailand	Thai Rubber Wood Business Association, Thailand
Ponlok Khmer, Cambodia	Rights and Resources Initiative	Thang Nam Company, Viet Nam
Practical Action, Nepal	Rimbawan Muda Indonesia	The Agro-Biodiversity Initiative, Lao PDR
Preferred by Nature, Viet Nam	Royal Forestry Department, Thailand	Thin plywood industry and sheet material, Thailand
President Chure-Terai Madhesh Conservation Development Board, Nepal	Royal Government of Cambodia	Tree bank Chumphon Province, Thailand
Private Forest Plantation Cooperative Limited, Thailand	Royal University of Agriculture, Cambodia	Tree bank Nan Province, Thailand
Prize of Wood Co., LTD., Thailand	Rubber Farmers Association, Thailand	Tree bank, Thailand
ProFLEGT- GIZ		
Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification, Thailand	S	U
Provincial Office of Agriculture and Forestry, Bokeo, Lao PDR	Santisuk Land-use Network, Thailand	United Nations
Provincial Office of Agriculture and Forestry, Xayaboury, Lao PDR	Singthoun Wood Processing Factory, Bokeo, Lao PDR	United Nations Collaborative Programme on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation
Provincial Office of Information, Culture and Tourism, Bokeo, Lao PDR	SNV	United Nations Development Program
Provincial Office of Information, Culture and Tourism, Xayaboury, Lao PDR	Sob Yang Village, Thailand	United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
	SSS Pundi, Indonesia	
	Stock Exchange of Thailand	
	Sulawesi Community Foundation, Indonesia	United States Agency for International Development

United States Forest Service,
USA

University of Hasanuddin,
Indonesia

V

Vietnam Administration of
Forestry, Viet Nam

Village Focus International, Lao
PDR Vinh University, Viet Nam

Vinh University, Viet Nam

W

Wildlife Conservation Society

Women's Media Center,
Cambodia

Women Mobilizing for
Development, Lao PDR

Women's Union Chau Hanh
Commune, Viet Nam

Women's Union Chau Thang
Commune, Viet Nam

Women's Union Dong Van
Commune, Viet Nam

Women's Union Thong Thu
Commune, Viet Nam

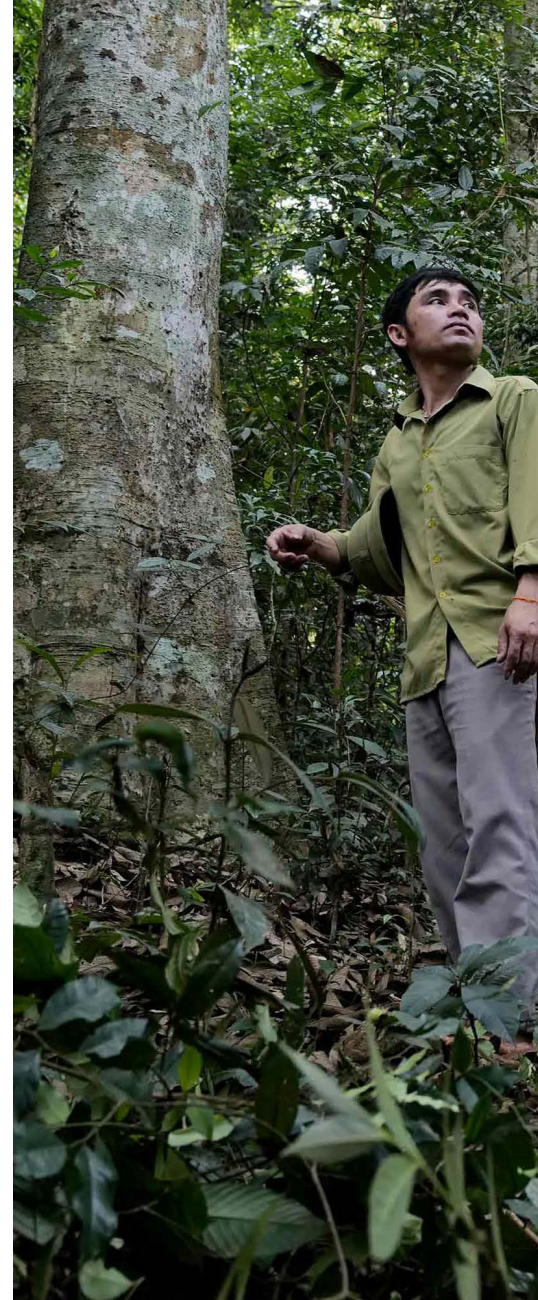
Wood Business Association,
Thailand

World Research Institute

World Wide Fund for Nature



At RECOFTC, we believe in a future where people live equitably and sustainably in and beside healthy, resilient forests. We take a long-term, landscape-based and inclusive approach to supporting local communities to secure their land and resource rights, stop deforestation, find alternative livelihoods and foster gender equity. We are the only non-profit organization of our kind in Asia and the Pacific. We have more than 30 years of experience working with people and forests, and have built trusting relationships with partners at all levels. Our influence and partnerships extend from multilateral institutions to governments, private sector and local communities. Our innovations, knowledge and initiatives enable countries to foster good forest governance, mitigate and adapt to climate change, and achieve the Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations 2030 Agenda.



RECOFTC

PO. Box 1111
Kasetsart Post Office
Bangkok 10903, Thailand
T +66 (0)2 940 5700
F +66 (0)2 561 4880
info@recoftc.org

    @RECOFTC



recoftc.org

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