



# Building resilience through community forestry

Annual report 2017–2019

 **RECOFTC**

## **Building resilience through community forestry: Annual report 2017–2019**

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A man checks bamboo plants before cutting down stems to make furniture in the hills of a community forest, Thit Site Pin Village, Nyaung Shwe, Myanmar 2019.

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July 2020





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# Welcome to the 2017–2019 annual report



**Doris Capistrano**  
Chair, RECOFTC Board of Trustees

Since 2018, when we launched our Strategic Plan for 2018–2023, the area of forest managed by communities in RECOFTC’s focal countries has increased by 51 percent.

In times of crisis, we need vision and tools to guide us. As we strive to adapt and accelerate our work to serve forest communities during the COVID-19 pandemic, we rely on RECOFTC’s 2018–2023 Strategic Plan for guidance. Launched in October 2018, it establishes a clear vision: We believe in a future where empowered people live equitably and sustainably in and beside healthy, resilient forests.

To achieve our vision, we serve the poorest and most marginalized rural communities in the Asia-Pacific, where more than 450 million people depend on forests to survive. In collaboration with our partners, we support Indigenous Peoples, ethnic groups and other marginalized and vulnerable people, particularly women and youth. We help them build their capacity to secure their rights to land and

resources, stop deforestation, restore degraded landscapes, overcome poverty and hunger and advance gender equity and social inclusion.

Our Strategic Plan focuses our energy and investments on achieving four strategic goals that are aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Paris Agreement on climate change.

## 1 **Landscape collaboration in a changing climate:**

Rights of local people in forest landscapes are protected and exercised through collaborative management. Local people will manage forests, integrated together with other sectors within their landscapes to meet climate change mitigation

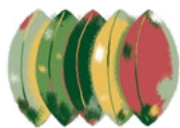
commitments and address adaptation challenges and opportunities as part of their livelihood strategies.

## 2 **Governance, institutions and conflict transformation:**

Governments, the private sector, communities and others in forest landscapes adhere to the principles of good governance, which include being accountable for their actions and transparent in their processes. RECOFTC will strengthen relationships through mutually beneficial strategies and develop appropriate skills and responsive services to prevent and transform forest-based conflicts through strong institutions, relationships, strategies and services.



## Innovation



## Adaptation



## Collaboration



## Commitment



## Sustainability



## Inclusion and equity

RECOFTC core values

### 3 Private sector engagement and enterprising communities:

The economic value of forests and landscapes for communities is increased through sustainable investment, community-based enterprises, certification schemes and/or mutually beneficial partnerships among governments and large-scale private sector and community enterprises.

### 4 Social inclusion, gender equity and public action:

Rights, capacities and economic opportunities of women and other marginalized people are enhanced. Public awareness is raised, and norms and behaviours are changed to support people-centred forests and land policies.

We are making progress towards achieving our goals. Since 2018,

when we launched our Strategic Plan for 2018–2023, the area of forest managed by communities in RECOFTC's focal countries has increased by 51 percent, from 8.2 million to 12.4 million hectares. We are almost at the target of 14 million hectares that we aimed to achieve with partners by 2023. The number of households managing community forests rose from 4.2 million to 7.3 million. This exceeds the target we set in our five-year strategy. We have also enhanced the capacity of representatives of nearly 1,000 organizations to promote participation, dialogue and conflict resolution in forest governance. This achievement represents 40 percent of the target we aimed to attain by the end of 2023.

RECOFTC's Strategic Plan does more than set direction. It also formalizes our values that determine our priorities and approaches. I am proud to say that our values guide

us as we respond to COVID-19. Our highest priorities in this time of crisis are the well-being of our employees, the communities we serve and our partners on the ground. We are working remotely to ensure the safety of employees and communities. We are adapting and expanding our work to ensure that the world's solutions to two global emergencies, COVID-19 and climate change, respect the rights and aspirations of forest communities and promote their well-being.

I believe the stories we share in this annual report demonstrate that we are organized and able to meet these challenges. You will meet RECOFTC's alumni who were inspired by our early training to use community forestry as the entry point for making significant changes in the policies, forests and lives of forest communities in their home countries. You will learn how there is a growing movement to

improve forest governance in the Mekong region and that the voices of communities are increasingly considered as governments make and revise forest laws. You will read about young journalists reporting on forest issues, gender champions reshaping the forest sector and forest communities and user groups forming their own influential associations to attain their aspirations.

These and other stories show how community forestry builds the planet's and humanity's resilience to pandemic diseases and climate change as well as our ability to overcome poverty and foster a just, equal and inclusive society.

We are grateful to all the RECOFTC employees and partners who made the achievements behind these stories possible and to our sponsors and donors who share our vision.



# We are building resilience through community forestry



**David Ganz**  
Executive Director, RECOFTC

We are intensifying and expanding our efforts to build strong, legitimate partnerships among forest communities, governments and the private sector based on trust, accountability, transparency and mutual respect.

Many of you reading our annual report will have participated in the consultations to develop our new Strategic Plan for 2018–2023. When we worked together to shape our Strategic Plan, we did not imagine that the gains Indigenous Peoples and local communities have made through community forestry could be derailed or set back by the COVID-19 pandemic. Yet, this is indeed happening.

The novel coronavirus does not differentiate between peoples. It attacks both the rich and the poor. But the communities we serve are far less able to protect themselves from COVID-19 than others, and they have the least access to provisions and healthcare. These communities are poised to pay a higher price for the pandemic than the rest of humanity in loss of livelihoods and income. This is also

true for the other human-made emergency, climate change.

Therefore, at RECOFTC, we must fight two crises, COVID-19 and climate change, at the same time and with the same solution: community forestry.

We are thinking beyond the pandemic to see how investments in community forestry can spur achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals and the climate change goals of the Paris Agreement. We believe that through innovation and a realignment of global priorities, there are new opportunities to overcome the most persistent and neglected inequalities in the world. But we will only succeed when solutions respect the views, aspirations and tenure rights of forest communities. They must participate in all decisions

about policies and laws that affect their present and future welfare. This is essential not only to protect and empower forest communities but to protect us all.

We know that when the rights of Indigenous Peoples and local communities are clear and strong, they are the best stewards of our forests and other precious ecosystems. Research proves this. They are also better able to take care of themselves during times of crisis, less vulnerable to disasters and less reliant on 'outsiders' for food, medicines and other essentials.

But the benefits of secure tenure and rights go far beyond their communities. Indigenous Peoples and local communities can also take care of others. When they have secure rights, they are more able to make long-term investments in their





RECOFTC accompanies Swiss and Swedish donor delegations on a site visit to Nan Province, Thailand, April 2019.

lands and to produce products that feed and support urban populations. In this way, forest communities reduce the dependence of regions and countries on imported products, not only in good times but when borders are closed. Forest communities build social safety nets for us all while mitigating climate change and other disasters.

In this time of crisis, governments must protect all poor and vulnerable rural people and recognize how forest communities and community

forestry build resilience to disasters for us all.

In the post-COVID-19 world, we must support meaningful engagement among forest communities, the government and the private sector so that they can find and build on shared interests to design sustainable and fair solutions to pandemics, climate change and other disasters. To achieve this, we must build and strengthen the capacities of forest communities, civil society and government at the

local level so that communities can negotiate and secure an equitable share of benefits. Otherwise, we will return to rampant deforestation and further perpetuate inequalities.

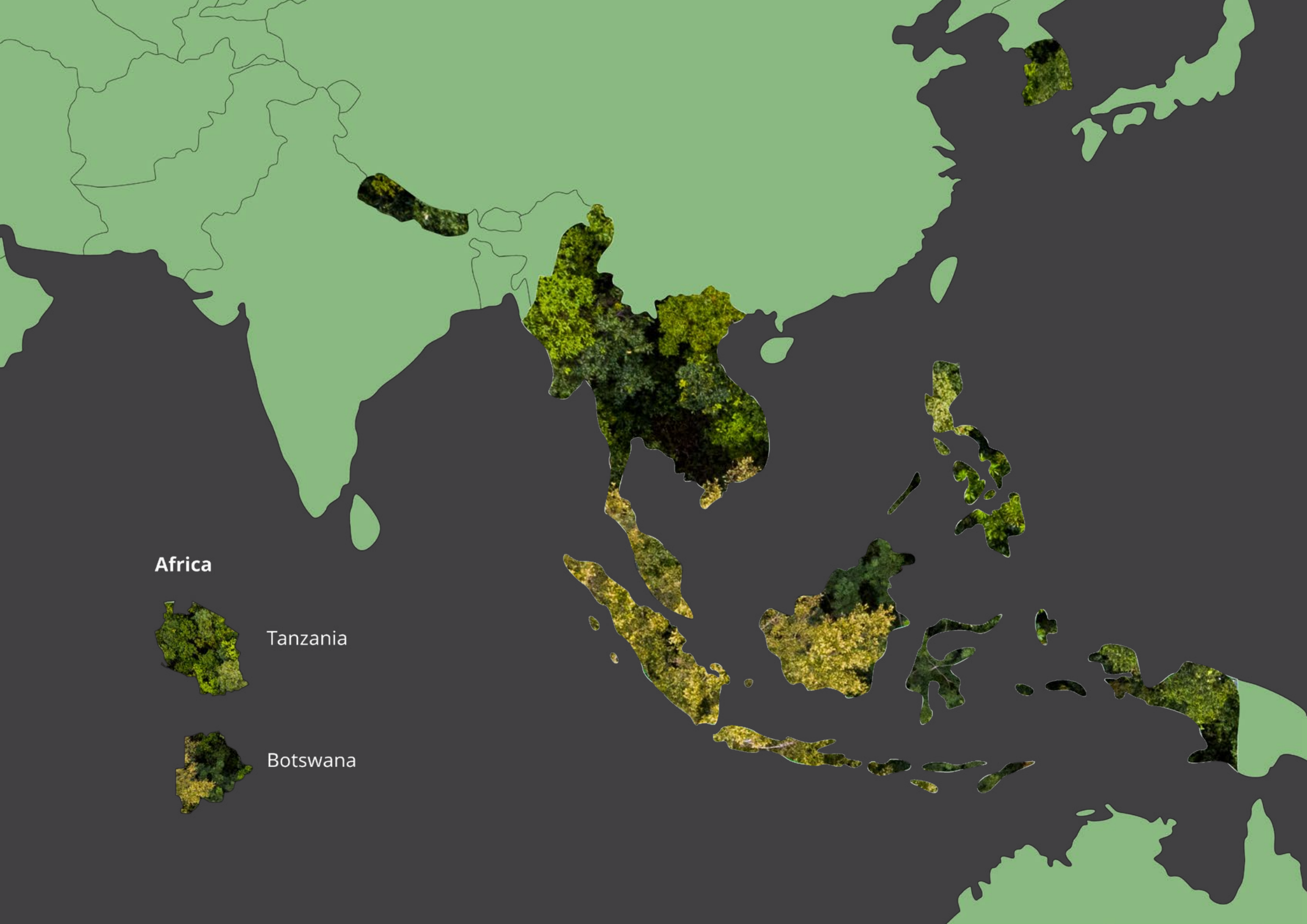
This is where RECOFTC can apply its strengths. And this is how RECOFTC is responding to the challenge of COVID-19 and climate change. As a neutral convener and capacity builder of all, we are intensifying and expanding our efforts to build strong, legitimate partnerships among forest communities,

governments and the private sector based on trust, accountability, transparency and mutual respect.

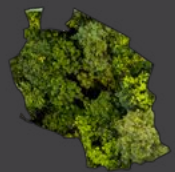
I invite you to learn about our approaches and achievements by reading the stories in this report and to join us in our mission.

On behalf of RECOFTC, we wish everyone's families and friends good health, safety and stability in the time of COVID-19.





**Africa**



Tanzania



Botswana

# Where we worked 2017–2019

Our work bridges people and landscapes.

We believe in a future where people live equitably and sustainably in and alongside healthy, resilient forests. To get there we crossed geographies and cultures in our work from October 2017 to September 2019 to build partnerships among communities, governments and responsible investors to overcome poverty, combat climate change, increase food security and foster gender equity and inclusion.

We bridged social and political landscapes to secure land rights and build capacity for all, from the highlands of South Sulawesi, Indonesia to the Malay Peninsula, the Sacred Himalaya in Nepal and to the forests of Tanzania.

We transformed conflict and strengthened cooperation, securing rights to land and resources for women, Indigenous Peoples and other marginalized groups. Through dialogue we enabled reforms in community forestry in partnership with alliances, such as the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), headquartered in Indonesia and the South African Development Community based in Botswana.

Our work continues, coordinated from our main office in Bangkok and offices in seven countries throughout the Asia-Pacific.





# RECOFTC by numbers

| We are growing community forestry in the region.

RECOFTC's 132 team members partnered with 166 organizations and 56,197 households. We invested almost 3 million hours to support communities and countries achieve sustainable development and climate change goals by strengthening community forestry and tenure rights. Together, we contributed to the growth of community forest areas, the foundation for achieving many of the Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations 2030 Agenda and the Paris Agreement.

Our teams organized more than 1,000 events and reached more than 20,000 people through training, learning events, workshops, study tours and technical support to strengthen lives and landscapes across the Asia-Pacific. Forty percent of the participants were women, Indigenous Peoples and other marginalized groups. More than 500 held leadership positions within community forest user groups.

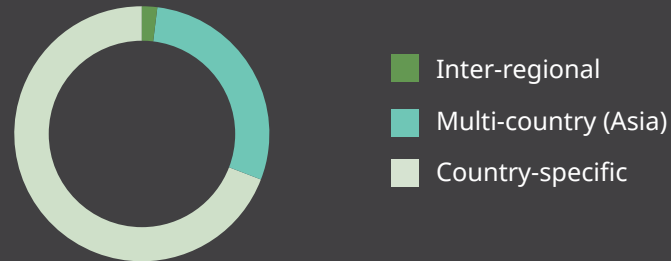
Our partnerships extended from multilateral institutions to governments, the private sector, non-governmental organizations and local communities. A trusted broker in the Asia-Pacific, we combined diverse funding sources to implement 11 flagship projects and many other initiatives.

We continue to be financially sustainable, providing secure jobs for employees, secure investment for donors and reliable services for partners and communities. During 2017–2019, we received a total revenue of US\$18.42 million, including funds from core donors, projects and other income sources. Over the two years covered by this report, we experienced a growth of 65.3 percent in our project-based and other income sources.

...



## Geographic scope of events and reach 2017–2019



42 initiatives in 2017–2019

30% involved two or more countries in Asia

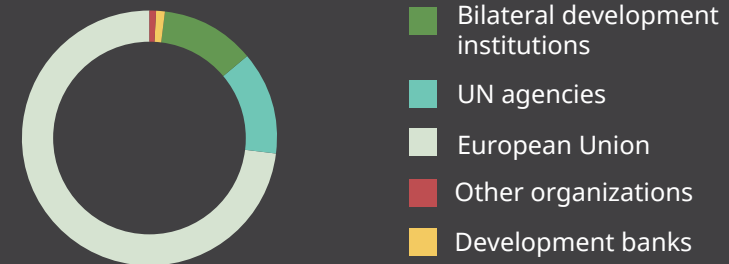
**1,000**  
events

**20,000**  
people reached

**40%**  
women, Indigenous Peoples and other marginalized groups

**128**  
communication and knowledge products

## Donors and partners 2017–2019



26 funding sources from Asia-Pacific, Europe and North America

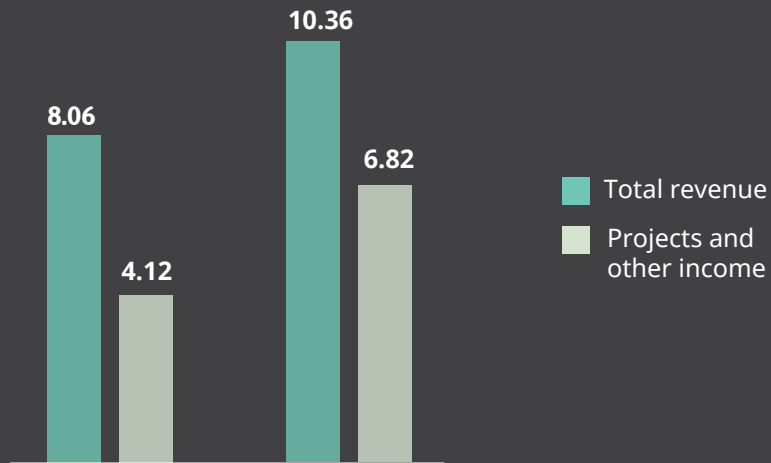
**444**  
community forest user groups

**119**  
smallholders

**166**  
partner organizations

**14**  
community-based enterprises

## Financial stewardship 2017–2019 in US\$ million

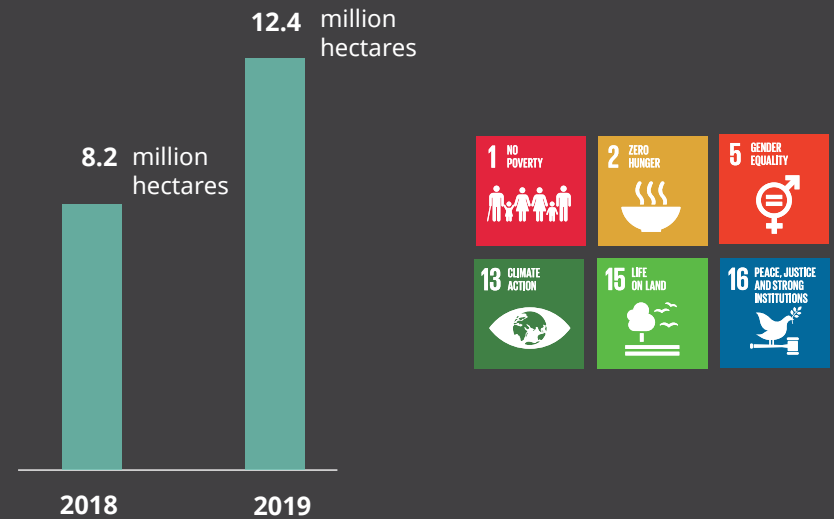


US\$18.42 million total revenue for 2017–2019

59.4% from projects and other income sources

**65.3%** growth of project-based and other income

## Community forest area is rising in RECOFTC’s focal countries



51.2% increase in community forest area since 2018

**7.3** million households involved in local management of forests in 2019

Source: Governments in RECOFTC's focal countries





# RECOFTC alumni forge community forestry path

They are pioneers of community forestry: Officials who spent years strengthening lives and landscapes throughout Southeast Asia. Now these officials reflect on the importance of their early learning with RECOFTC.

Pulling out his mobile phone, Kim Sarin proudly shows photos of smiling foreigners in a Cambodian forest. The ecotourism business, the official says, is a good example of how villagers can make a living from the environment they are empowered to protect.

“Many people come to the community to learn about the Cambodian way of life,” Kim says of the Chambok Community Protected Area venture in Kampong Speu Province. “The villagers show them how they manage the forest themselves and how they benefit from it—and the importance of self-sufficiency.”

For more than two decades, Kim has worked to develop and implement community forestry in Cambodia, an approach that allows people who depend on local forests to manage forests. A crucial part of the approach is supporting communities

to not only protect the landscape but find new opportunities within the forests to sustainably improve their livelihoods.

As a young official in Cambodia’s environment ministry in the 1990s, Kim says RECOFTC’s training courses were instrumental in teaching him how community forestry can have positive social, environmental and economic impacts.

“I started to believe that community forestry can work because I could see the benefits that people can get from the forest,” says Kim, now a senior ministry official. “I still remember these important trainings.”

RECOFTC has spent more than three decades strengthening the capacity of officials throughout Southeast Asia to develop and implement reforms, policies and laws on community forestry. RECOFTC has trained more than 60,000 people since 1987.



Kim, top left, was one of the first 20 members of the Forestry Administration and Ministry of Environment to be trained in Cambodia, 1997. The first training was supported by the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) and RECOFTC.

### Learn about Kim's experience



Scan to watch

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=005T-7jvyBNA&feature=youtu.be>

With Southeast Asia's forests under continuous pressure from population growth and rapid development, RECOFTC's training courses, research, pilot projects and other work are more relevant than ever. Moreover, strengthening community forestry can help countries make progress not only on forest protection but also on climate change and the Sustainable Development Goals.

For the villages in Kampong Speu Province, the ecotourism venture has meant years of planning and perseverance. Kim, who works with villagers in what are known as Community Protected Areas, started supporting the venture in 1998

through a feasibility study. The six villages have collaborated to build up the business, including by agreeing how much income should be allocated to each household and how much should be set aside for conservation and for patrolling the forest.

"There are sometimes conflicts among the villagers over the money, and there are other issues, such as encroachment on the land," Kim says. "But we keep working with them, learning by doing and facilitating meetings so that we can come up with a solution."

### Women can lead the way

Meaningful participation by all stakeholders is a crucial part of successful community forestry, says Vong Sopanha, another graduate of RECOFTC's training courses in the early 1990s. Women and other marginalized groups and others must therefore be included in discussions on forest governance and be empowered to act, says Vong, now one of the most senior women in Cambodia's Forestry Administration.

"The male leaders make the decisions about their communities. They need to understand the benefits of including women in their plans because women are one of the main users of forests."

"I say to them, 'If you list the activities that need to be done, there are so many that women can manage,'" says Vong, a deputy director general of the Forestry Administration. "It's not just about protection or cracking down on illegal logging."

Vong, who has spent years encouraging and training women to become involved in forest management, is developing a national gender strategy for the Forestry Administration, with assistance from Cambodia's RECOFTC office.

"If we do something without strategy and without guidelines, then we have no clear direction," she says.

While inclusive management and other good governance practices are key, so too are clear and secure land tenure and rights of local communities to use the forest and its resources. Even then, conflicts arise, given the intense competition for land and the complexity of the issue.

### Diffusing conflict

Malaysian forestry official Ricky Alisky Martin has implemented a string of initiatives over the years in Sabah State on Borneo island to resolve conflicts between national park officials and local communities

who have long relied on the forests for survival.

RECOFTC's community forestry courses help officials manage disputes, including by providing tools and strategies to promote discussion and collaboration among stakeholders.

Martin, one of the first Malaysian forestry officials to graduate from a RECOFTC course in 1988, recalled setting up Sabah's first community forestry committee that meets several times a year to resolve conflicts between villagers and forestry officials in Deramakot Forest Reserve.

### Learn about Vong's experience



Scan to watch

<https://youtu.be/ZQz38ce4zZE>





“

We need social forestry in Sabah as a stabilizer or harmonizer for the conflicts that we have.

**Ricky Alisky Martin**

In one area caught in dispute, community leaders agreed to help manage and conserve the nearby forest, while Deramakot forestry officials agreed to pipe water from a forest stream into their homes and provide training on forest fire safety and other initiatives.

“From RECOFTC, I learned that good communication among all parties must be available,” says Martin, now head of the Social Forestry Section within the Sustainable Forest Management Division, Sabah Forestry Department. “We need social forestry in Sabah as

a stabilizer or harmonizer for the conflicts that we have.”

Like Martin, many of the early alumni returned from their RECOFTC training and set about driving forward community forestry, then a relatively new concept in the region. They transferred their new knowledge to colleagues and developed networks across the board, seeing it as a solution to safeguarding forests and uplifting low-income communities. Community forestry today covers 13.8 million hectares in the region.

**Education is the future**

But their work is far from over. The region faces new challenges from climate change along with ongoing problems of deforestation, inequality and tenure. Knowledge transfer and education about how to tackle these issues is as important as ever. For Thailand’s Surin Onprom, that means focusing on the next generation of officials and practitioners.

“Students are the future policymakers,” says Onprom, who teaches forest resource management at Kasetsart University in Bangkok. “If we want to change things in the future, we need to start with today’s generation.” Onprom, who has worked in community forestry for more than



In 1989, RECOFTC hosted its first certificate course on community forestry. Martin, junior forest officer at that time, attended the course and applied the lessons to his experience in Sabah, Malaysia.

20 years, including nine at RECOFTC, says it is crucial to ensure that students understand that tenure and other challenges need to be tackled in different ways, including by learning from local people, because each community and forest are unique.

He regularly draws on RECOFTC’s field work and case studies, especially in Thailand, to show his students how this can be achieved. “If we have diverse communities, students need to be aware of

different solutions that might be needed. There is not just one way,” says Onprom.





# An unprecedented journey towards better forest governance in the Mekong

The Voices for Mekong Forests project fills gaps in forest governance, empowering communities, civil society and the private sector.

Big changes are under way in the forests of the Mekong region in Southeast Asia. Countries are cracking down on illegal logging, increasing community control over forests and ensuring that decision-making processes are more inclusive.

These efforts are supported by the Voices for Mekong Forests (V4MF) initiative, funded by the European Union (EU). The project is strengthening the participation of non-state actors in forest landscape governance.

RECOFTC leads the project in partnership with World Wide Fund for Nature-Greater Mekong, the East West Management Institute-Open Development Initiative (EWMI-ODI), Nature Economy and People Connected (NEPCon), 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).

Through V4MF and other initiatives, governments across the Mekong are giving communities more rights and opportunities to protect and benefit from local forests. This shift could transform the lives of millions of people. Done right, it will enable the development of sustainable rural livelihoods based on forests that are well managed for the benefit of current and future generations. But it is becoming clear that challenges often emerge when it comes to implementing community forestry policies.

Some countries are beginning to crack these challenges. In recent



Pat Nab, a local community member, patrols the Srepok Wildlife Sanctuary in Cambodia's Mondulkiri Province, November 2019. The province borders Viet Nam and contains Cambodia's largest tracts of Protected Areas. It is a hotspot for the illegal cross-border timber trade.



It is essential that governments listen to the voices of communities and civil society, and incorporate their views in policy.

**David Ganz**

years, all five countries in the Mekong region have made progress in devolving legal rights over forest resources to local people. By the end of 2018, the total area transferred into community hands surpassed 6.7 million hectares. And that's just the start. These countries have ambitious targets for increasing the area in community control.

RECOFTC Executive Director David Ganz says it is essential that governments listen to the voices of

communities and civil society, and incorporate their views in policy. That means listening to a diversity of marginalized groups, especially Indigenous Peoples, youth, the elderly and women. This matters because, while good forest governance is about moving forward in a positive direction, it is also about trying to ensure that no one is left behind.

As the impacts of climate change become clearer, the case for

protecting forests and managing them sustainably grows stronger.

"We must do this in ways that are fair and beneficial to local people, while also protecting biodiversity," says Ganz.

As the EU and other markets increasingly demand legal timber and commodities whose production has not entailed deforestation, the economic incentives for better forest governance should continue to

## The Mekong's natural riches

The natural wealth of the Mekong and its forests is hard to quantify because scientists are still cataloguing it. A new species is discovered there every two days on average. That includes more than 2,200 new vertebrate and vascular plant species that scientists have discovered since 1997. Overall, the region is home to more than 430 species of mammals, 800 species of reptiles and amphibians, 1,200 species of birds and 1,100 species of fish. There are also 20,000 species of plants, more than 10 percent of which have been described

by scientists in just the past 20 years. Tigers and elephants roam these forests in numbers found in few other places. But they are far from safe. More bird and large mammal species went extinct in the 20<sup>th</sup> century in this continental region than any other. Tigers could follow them soon. Their numbers plummeted by more than 80 percent over the past 10 years. As few as 200 now remain. How forest governance develops in the Mekong countries will determine the fate of these big cats as well as that of many other species.



grow. In 2019, for example, the EU launched an initiative to protect and restore the world's forests. It also launched the European Green Deal, which provides a basis for more action on forests.

There are challenges, of course, and some are deeply entrenched. But there are also examples of truly significant progress. By learning from each other, scaling up successful initiatives, continuing to

involve all stakeholders in decision-making and building capacity, the Mekong countries can hope to balance economic development with forest protection. If they succeed, the whole world will benefit.



**Special report: Overcoming threats to the Mekong's forests and people**

Five countries strive to meet the challenge of forest governance. This special report covers progress, problems and promising solutions.

Scan to read

**Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade**

The EU and some countries in the Mekong region are working together to address illegal logging and associated trade, under an EU initiative called the Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT) Action Plan. The EU sees FLEGT as a means to promote sustainable forest management, which illegal logging and associated trade has long undermined.

Under FLEGT, the EU adopted its Timber Regulation, which prohibits anyone from placing illegally harvested timber into the market

and requires companies to use due diligence to mitigate the risk.

The EU is also negotiating trade deals called Voluntary Partnership Agreements (VPAs) with timber-exporting countries. Under a VPA, a country commits to exporting only verified legal timber products with FLEGT licenses, which automatically meet the requirements of the EU Timber Regulation. VPA countries do this by bringing forest stakeholders together to agree on how to define legality, then developing systems and procedures to control the timber

supply chain and verify that timber products comply with the VPA's legality definition.

Of the countries in the Mekong region, Cambodia has not entered a VPA process. Myanmar is in the pre-negotiation phase, exploring whether to pursue a VPA. Both Lao PDR and Thailand are negotiating VPAs with the EU, and Viet Nam has now started to implement its VPA commitments.

VPA processes can take many years. Viet Nam began negotiations in

2010 and signed its VPA with the EU in 2018. The Parties ratified the VPA in 2019 and are now working to put their commitments into action. It is likely to be some years before the VPA's timber legality assurance system is fully operational.

**RECOFTC**  
The center for people and forests

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สุขุมวิท 55 กรุงเทพฯ

PEOPLE AND  
FOREST FORUM  
2020

In partne





# Young journalists learn about forest roles for good governance and social justice

Young reporters discover how strong forest governance helps to overcome poverty and social justice, protect biodiversity and fight climate change.

Kulthida Sittiruechai never imagined that northern Thailand's disappearing forests could have an impact on her city life hundreds of kilometres away.

But her participation in a three-day workshop with other young journalists in 2019 forever changed her understanding of forests and their importance for all communities.

"This workshop made me aware of the many challenges facing our forests and how the forests relate to all our lives," says Sittiruechai, one of 15 participants at the workshop. "As reporters, we need to gain more in-depth knowledge in order to report correct information to the public."

The Young Thai Forestry Journalists Workshop, organized by RECOFTC and Raks Thai Foundation, brought

together not only the young reporters but more senior journalists along with forestry professionals and members of forest-dependent and ethnic communities.

They examined the many roles of forest management, including how it can benefit local communities' livelihoods. They discussed how effective management can foster public participation and awareness of forests, protect rights of ethnic minority groups and their habitats, improve natural resource management and help fight climate change for all.

Sittiruechai, from Thammasat University in Bangkok and writing for Thailand's web-based magazine *The Momentum*, explored how an ethnic Karen community near Kaeng Krachan National Park coexists

with the forest and how changes to Thailand's national park laws can impact their lives.

The young journalists were selected from more than 50 candidates across the country studying forestry, mass media and communication. The workshop was organized through Voices for Mekong Forests (V4MF), a five-year project funded by the European Union.

V4MF aims to strengthen the power of non-state actors, such as civil society, Indigenous Peoples, the private sector and local community groups, to engage in and influence forest governance in Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Thailand and Viet Nam.

At the workshop, *Way Magazine* Editor Kowit Potisarn, the BBC Thai section's Bangkok Editor Kultida



This workshop made me aware of the many challenges facing our forests and how the forests relate to all our lives.

**Kulthida Sittiruechai**



In 2019, 15 young journalists and journalism students learned from one another and from leading experts in their field about reporting on forest governance and environmental issues.



### Reporters break news that stops illegal logging

Do Doan Hoang, a journalist from *Lao Dong* newspaper, published evidence of illegal logging and information on the causes of deforestation in Viet Nam after participating in the training for field investigations organized by V4MF-partner PanNature.



Scan to read

Samabuddhi and *the Momentum* Editor Chatrawee Sentanissak shared their experiences on covering environmental issues.

The workshop was valuable even for those with solid knowledge of forests. Prapawin Phuttawanna, from Kasetsart University's Faculty of Forestry, says her understanding deepened after speaking directly with ethnic minorities and conducting field research. She learned how the Pakakayor ethnic group can help preserve forests while fostering their livelihoods.



Classroom knowledge about forests is not enough for working in the real world. This project inspired me to learn more.

### Prapawin Phuttawanna

"It was an eye-opening experience," says Phuttawanna from Chiang Mai. "Classroom knowledge about forests is not enough for working in the real world. This project inspired me to learn more."

During the workshop, Warangkana Rattanasarat, director of RECOFTC Thailand, motivated the young journalists to dig deep into forest issues. "They can create public understanding based on new knowledge, through their reports," she says.

Nattawut Loisa, of Chiang Mai University's Faculty of Mass Communication, was able to combine a workshop field assignment on improving livelihoods with his own research on bamboo reforestation.

"I could learn about forestry and quality-oriented production processes and techniques," Loisa says. He subsequently published a story for RECOFTC on a community in Mae Chaem District that is diversifying and investing in community enterprises to turn bamboo into a cash crop.

Other journalists also reported on their new understanding of forestry issues, producing 13 articles and two videos.





# Communities combat climate change and improve their lives through community forestry

Myanmar's gains in community forestry through a Norway-funded project and many other initiatives are helping to mitigate climate change, reduce conflict and establish foundations for democracy.

For Myint Shwe and local communities in Rakhine State's Gwa Township, securing tenure to the forests they depend on for survival was the foundation they needed to overcome poverty.

In Rakhine State and other parts of Myanmar, rapid development, illegal logging and other encroachments were degrading and destroying forests and marginalizing poor people and ethnic groups who could not prove ownership.

RECOFTC's work in Myanmar helped change that. With funding from the Royal Norwegian Embassy in Yangon, the Scaling UP Community Forestry (SUCOMFOR) project from 2014 to 2018 provided more than 5,000 training sessions in Rakhine State and throughout Myanmar on securing land tenure, natural resource management, forest

governance, gender equity, social inclusion and other topics for communities, government officials and civil society organizations.

During the four-year project, Myanmar transferred 19,000 hectares of forests to almost 100 villages. Members of more than 5,000 households received certificates of tenure. Eighteen of those villages were in Rakhine's Gwa Township where the government issued land certificates for almost 5,000 hectares of forest to communities in 2017.

The certificates gave the communities legal and secure tenure rights—the foundation they needed to manage the forest and to establish sustainable enterprises to benefit from the forest's resources. They began harvesting rattan, which grows naturally in the forests, to sell to companies making furniture.



A member of Shwe Yoma Community Forest Enterprise in Gwa Township carries semi-processed rattan, Myanmar 2018.

"In the past it felt like the forest was so far away," says Myint Shwe, chair of the Shwe Yoma Rattan Enterprise. "Now the forests are part of us again. We have the laws to help us, the support, the skills and knowledge as well as products to sell."

In their first year of business, Shwe Yoma Rattan earned 24 million kyat, or US\$15,000 selling semi-processed rattan to local companies.

In addition to enhancing livelihoods, secure tenure helped to combat climate change by enabling the community management of forests and avoiding carbon emissions. This, in turn, helped Myanmar achieve its commitments to the Paris Agreement on climate change.

The contribution to combating climate change was especially clear in the coastal communities of Long Kyo in Rakhine that obtained secure tenure over threatened mangrove forests. This strengthened their ability to protect the mangroves, which store

carbon, support rich biodiversity and halt storm surges that are increasing in frequency and intensity due to climate change.

Myanmar's gains in community forestry through SUComFOR and many other initiatives are also helping to reduce conflict and to establish foundations for democracy.

"In Myanmar, community forestry builds a platform for the development of a democratic society," says Maung Maung Than, director of RECOFTC Myanmar. "Through our capacity-

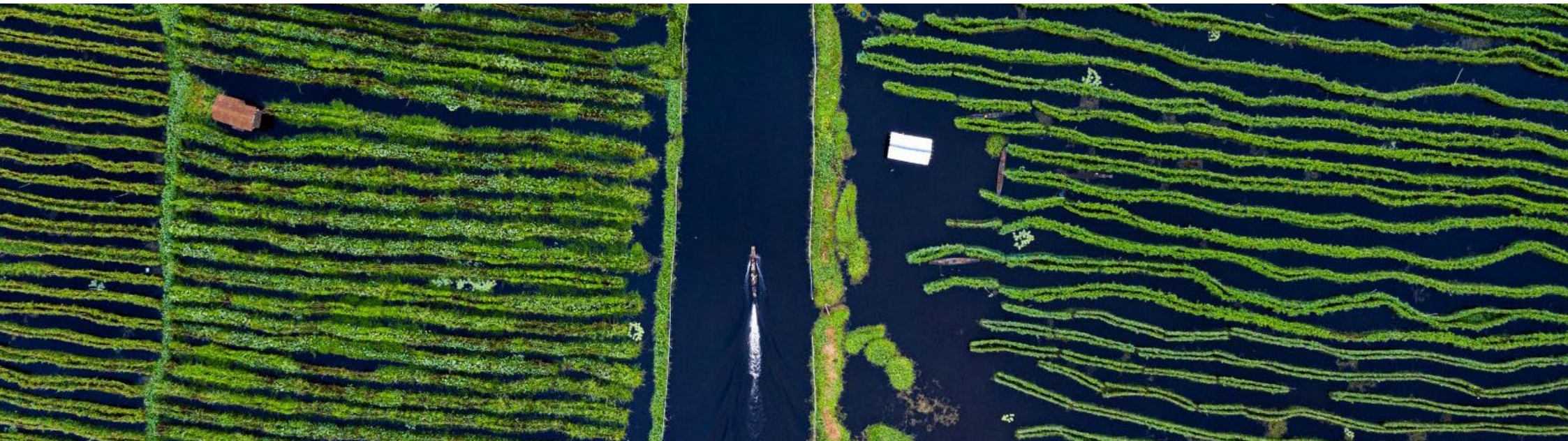
building efforts, forest stakeholders in Myanmar grew to understand the importance of good forest governance. In this way, democracy became more firmly rooted in the country."

### Fighting floods in Nepal

In Nepal's Sarlahi District, communities living along the base of the Chure Hills already feel the effects of climate change. As monsoon rains intensified over the past decade, heavy floods ravaged communities in the southern

mountain range. Deforestation in the Chure Hills worsened the effect as rivers and streams inundated the forest areas at the mountain base that communities manage for their livelihood.

With RECOFTC's support, a women's community forest group in the village of Bishnupur built flood barriers along a nearby river to fight the floods and protect their communities and landscapes. They used bamboo poles from the forest and planted shrubs in jute bags to hold back the mud and prevent the



Floating gardens, Inle Lake, Myanmar 2019.

forest area from flooding. “All the women participated to put up environment-friendly flood barriers,” says Rama Paudel, president of the local chapter of HIMAWANTI, a grassroots association engaging women in the management of natural resources. “We mapped out the area and prioritized a few points where the river makes the most impact.”

In a training on flood control provided by RECOFTC, they also learned about government services they are entitled to receive.

“The women said that no one took them seriously before, but you can’t give up,” Paudel says.

The training was supported by RECOFTC’s Trees and Bees initiative to introduce beekeeping and livelihood-generating activities for climate change adaptation among the most marginalized communities in Nepal.

The pilot initiative was launched in 2016, in continuation of the USAID-funded Adapt Asia Pacific program that empowered local

women in Bishnupur, Nepal, to protect the forest and its resources and build community resilience to climate change. The government-led conservation program for Chure Hills has since scaled up the Trees and Bees initiative to 800 households in neighbouring communities.



Watch “Fighting floods our way”



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<https://youtu.be/Bs3CTwE1Odk>



## Protecting Myanmar’s Inle Lake

Teeming with fish and clean water, Inle Lake was the source of life for rural communities in Shan State. But development, population growth and climate change degraded the lake. Through the Norway-funded SUCOMFOR project, RECOFTC strengthened the role of local communities in managing the surrounding forests to help them improve their livelihoods, protect the forests and protect Inle Lake. RECOFTC trained 1,900 people, many of them women, in 30

communities living on the eastern part of Inle Lake to manage 6,000 hectares of forest. RECOFTC also piloted credit schemes that enabled communities to secure low-interest loans, which they used to improve agricultural practices and manage the forests.

“Local participation is key to conserving forests around Inle Lake,” says Htay Maung, deputy director of the Forestry Department in Shan’s Taunggyi District.



In the Inle Lake landscape, RECOFTC has empowered local communities to manage the surrounding forests. Myanmar 2019.





# Unlocking the potential of social forestry in Southeast Asia

With the support of the ASEAN-Swiss Partnership on Social Forestry and Climate Change, ASEAN Member States have developed and implemented new forestry laws that are unlocking the potential of social forestry.

In villages across Southeast Asia, communities are finding new opportunities to improve their lives and protect the environment by managing the forests that surround them. Some are selling sustainably harvested timber. Others are attracting eco-tourists. In one village in Indonesian Borneo, people increased their combined average monthly income from US\$170 to more than US\$2,730 by selling crabs, honey and coconut-shell charcoal.

These opportunities are coming their way through social forestry, which recognizes that people who depend on local forests are best placed to look after them and that allowing communities to manage and use forest resources can have positive social, environmental and economic impacts. Social forestry is a broad term and has different names in different places. Some

examples are community forestry, village forestry, participatory forestry, community-based forest management and people-centred forestry.

Over the past nine years, ASEAN and the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation have worked together to help ASEAN Member States develop, reform and implement social forestry policies. The results of this ASEAN-Swiss Partnership on Social Forestry and Climate Change (ASFCC), which closed in April 2020, are remarkable.

“This work brought together people, often for the first time, to hear each other’s opinions and understand the evidence presented by organizations involved in the partnership,” says Doris Capistrano, senior adviser to the partnership. “This, in turn, has led to widespread improvements

in policies and practices across the region.”

As a result of new laws and policies introduced by ASEAN Member States, the social forestry area has more than doubled, from 6.7 million to 13.8 million hectares, and continues to rise. If Cambodia, Indonesia, Myanmar, Philippines, Thailand and Viet Nam reach the targets they have set, the total forest area managed by local communities will exceed 30 million hectares by 2030. That’s almost a 500 percent increase in just 20 years.

“The countries increasing forest cover are those with social forestry,” says Capistrano. “You can see it on satellite imagery.”

In Myanmar and Lao PDR, recently revised laws lay the foundation for using social forestry as a mechanism



Through this program, I came to learn about the potential for social forestry to support climate change mitigation and adaptation.

**Ei Ei Swe Hlaing**



Community members in Bokeo Province, Lao PDR harvest teak. Under the revised forestry law in Lao PDR, community members can sell their teak commercially and establish community-based enterprises. Lao PDR 2018.

### Watch "Social forestry rising"



Scan to watch >



<https://youtu.be/NH3Bt-TtRhHE>

for community-based enterprises. These laws, along with other policies passed in Thailand and Indonesia, suggest that ASEAN Member States have also changed the way they view and implement social forestry. Ten years ago, the focus was on conservation, subsistence, conflict resolution and better governance and the management of forests. Today, they recognize social forestry as a way to adapt to and mitigate climate change. They also place greater emphasis on gender equality and on economic development.

"Through this program, I came to learn about the potential for social forestry to support climate change

mitigation and adaptation," says Ei Ei Swe Hlaing, Assistant Director of Myanmar's Forest Research Institute and one of the national focal points who received training under ASFCC. "Being a member of the Forest Department's community forestry unit, I could share and apply my knowledge in formulating the Community Forestry Instructions 2019, the Community Forestry Strategic Plan for 2018–2020 and the Community Forestry Guidelines."

By empowering communities to manage and protect forests, ASEAN Member States can support sustainable livelihoods, improve food security and draw carbon out of the atmosphere. Doing so can help them meet their national development goals as well as their international commitments under the Paris Agreement on climate change.

Despite remarkable changes in policy and practice, communities still face challenges that prevent them from gaining the benefits of social forestry. People need the knowledge and skills to manage forests sustainably and to set up and manage enterprises. But there are also structural problems, such as regulatory barriers, poor infrastructural links with markets and limited access to capital. For

many, tenure rights are still weak and unclear.

To address these problems, participants in the ASFCC provided technical support to create the 2018 ASEAN Guidelines for Responsible Investment in Food, Agriculture and Forestry. They also coordinated with senior ASEAN officials on the ASEAN Multisectoral Framework on Climate Change: Agriculture and Forestry Towards Food Security, which has provided a path to accelerate progress on social forestry, says Capistrano. Only with the right conditions in place, she says, can social forestry meet its true potential to bring social, environmental and economic benefits and help countries tackle climate change.

"All of that will need to happen," she says. "For social forestry to play the kind of role it can under favourable conditions, governments will need to create those conditions in large enough areas. The ball is in the court of Member States."



### Special report: Communities are improving lives and landscapes in Southeast Asia through social forestry

More than a local solution, social forestry can help countries achieve the Sustainable Development Goals and climate goals.



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We act for equality

We make decisions together

We empower each other



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FOR GENDER EQUALITY  
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# Turning gender work into gender WAVES

WAVES leaders are reviving and driving the gender agenda in the forestry sector, reminding their societies that the goal is inclusion and social justice.

When the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action was agreed 25 years ago, the gender agenda it sparked was expected to open up economic sectors as well as leadership and education opportunities for marginalized groups, largely women and girls, but also men.

Without a doubt, there has been good progress. But we are nowhere near where we need to be. Especially if we want to stop climate change and ensure that vulnerable groups do not bear the greatest impacts.

RECOFTC launched a program in 2019 to cultivate gender champions and deepen their influence and impact. The three-year Weaving Leadership for Gender Equality initiative, known as WAVES, has built a network of 31 gender leaders who are influencing gender equality in climate change, REDD+ and forestry, law enforcement, governance, trade policies and

processes in seven Asian-Pacific countries.

“The approach to gender mainstreaming has been failing to achieve the vision of the Beijing Platform for years,” says Kalpana Giri, a forester and social-environmental specialist with RECOFTC who leads the WAVES program. “We need to correct that with a paradigm shift that makes gender equality the core business of development cooperation everywhere, including forestry.”

“WAVES leaders are proving what can be done,” Kalpana says.

The leaders include academics, journalists, government officials and directors of civil society organizations from Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Nepal, Thailand and Viet Nam. They are reviving and driving the gender agenda and reminding their societies that the goal is inclusion and social justice.

Through WAVES, leaders are applying the guiding call of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda. They believe that women and men must access and benefit from the world’s resources fairly and equally and in ways that improve their well-being and that of their communities and the environment.

WAVES leader Novaty Dungga, a lecturer at Hasanuddin University in Indonesia, has integrated a gender lens into her curriculum.

“I’m changing the popular narrative about gender in my country so that more people will know that gender is not only about violence against women,” Dungga says. “It is also about providing equal opportunity to everyone in the community to enjoy the benefits of development in ways that are just and sustainable.”

According to UN Women, 39 percent of employed women are

working in agriculture, forestry and fisheries globally, but only 14 percent of agricultural landholders are women. Policy changes needed to correct these injustices are slow because not enough women are moving into governing positions where they can effect change.

“My main goal is to make stakeholders understand that gender equality is the work of everyone and that it will benefit everyone,” says The Chhun Hak, WAVES leader and Director General at the Ministry of Women’s Affairs, Cambodia.



**Read the full story and meet the WAVES leaders working to achieve gender equality**



# Securing futures and forests: FLOURISH supports farmers across the region

FLOURISH paves the way for communities long mired in poverty to increase their income while restoring and preserving local forests, which helps to combat climate change.

Holding their certificates, some grinned broadly, others looked proud. But all of the more than 80 villagers gathered recently at a ceremony in Lao PDR understood the potential impact of the document on their futures.

The villagers grow teak trees on small plots in the country's northwest, where local forests have become severely degraded.

But without support and registration certificates from the government, many have faced hurdles earning a living. The certificates grant local communities commercial rights to harvest their trees, thereby encouraging them to sustainably manage their plantations. The certificates also open the door to forge partnerships with sawmills and other buyers, paving the way for increased incomes for local

communities long mired in poverty. "I hope the certificate will make it easier to sell the trees, gain a better price and improve my livelihood in the future," says Sy Oudompone, one of the villagers who took part in the ceremony with local officials in Xayaboury Province.

RECOFTC's FLOURISH project is supporting villagers to obtain these

documents, including by helping them meet official preconditions, such as surveys and mapping of their trees and land. Planting, thinning and other farming techniques are also being taught to allow more efficient management of the plantations.

The co-signing of teak certificates by husbands and wives is encouraging women to become more involved in forest management.



## Profile: Chin Phanthavy

Chin Phanthavy is one of 80 teak farmers in Lao PDR who received a certificate from the government. Phanthavy, who lives in Pakhoung village in Xayaboury Province, has been planting teak since 2006 on half a hectare of land.

Her 450 teak trees contribute to her annual income of US\$3,300 to US\$4,400. Phanthavy is also chair of the Lao Women's Union in Pakhoung Village.



Find out more  
about FLOURISH

Khamdy Thitlangsy from Nakong Village in Lao PDR harvests her teak, November 2019. She received a certificate from the Lao government under the FLOURISH project.



I want to sell the trees in the future and use the income to expand my plantation.

**Xiengchanh**

The project works to improve livelihoods and restore and preserve the local forests. Villagers often used to cut the trees when they needed money. But with new skills, knowledge and security, they can manage plantations for the future, including by letting some of their trees grow large enough to reach their full potential value, a process that takes years. Such plantations fit with the government's policy of increasing forest cover to 70 percent of the country's land area by 2020

while also helping to combat climate change because larger trees store more carbon.

RECOFTC has supported community forestry in Lao PDR for decades, recognizing that the people who depend on local forests are best placed to look after them. More than 70 percent of the Lao population lives in rural areas and relies on forest resources to support their incomes. The FLOURISH project focuses on teak farmers. It builds on the successful

efforts in remote Bokeo Province to secure land and ownership rights for teak smallholders and ensure sustainability of their plantations.

More than 80 land smallholders from five villages in neighbouring Xayaboury Province have now also received certificates, bringing the total with RECOFTC's support to almost 300.

"I want to sell the trees in the future and use the income to expand my



Luong Thi Dao, a member of the Thai ethnic minority in Viet Nam, demonstrates cutting techniques for Lung bamboo that avoid waste and yield a high-quality primary product for farmers to sell to factories, Xet 1 Village, Lao PDR, August 2019.

### Flourishing across borders

In the forests of northern Viet Nam, a prized species of bamboo has grown naturally for generations. But after years of cutting down stands without proper planning or cultivation, the forest is becoming depleted. The FLOURISH project is helping a cluster of villagers in Nghe An Province reverse this trend, including by managing the forest more sustainably and efficiently. For

example, villagers with smallholder plantations are learning how to cut the bamboo cleanly with a saw and closer to the ground to maximize the value of the timber sold at market. Through this work, FLOURISH is helping to preserve and restore the forest in this area and improve its productivity, thereby increasing local livelihoods.



plantation,” says Xiengchanh from Xayaboury, who also received his certificate at the group ceremony in September 2019.

Across the border in Thailand and Viet Nam, where forest degradation is also a problem, the project, funded by the German government’s International Climate Initiative (IKI), supports local communities to develop forest enterprises such as bamboo plantations.

The four-year project is encouraging collaboration between local communities and the private sector, with government support. In Bokeo Province, communities with certificates have formed a partnership with a local sawmill, allowing the teak supply chain to become more organized. The finger-jointing equipment purchased as a result of the partnership allows smaller pieces of teak to be joined together at the mill rather than wasted. This has

increased the incomes for farmers and buyers. Similar consultations with stakeholders are under way in Xayaboury Province.

“We want to address the root causes of deforestation and forest degradation, which is mainly poverty.”

“By helping people secure livelihoods from productive forests, we can actually set up a dynamic where healthy forests produce improved income and well-being, and the whole thing becomes driven by market dynamics,” says FLOURISH project coordinator Trang Thu Hoang.



Seated eagerly around wooden tables in northern Thailand, forest communities gathered to learn new business skills, such as how to reach new markets with their local products. Most are already involved in producing forest goods, such as biodegradable plates made from banana leaves. But all want to learn more, including how to further develop their local, specialized

knowledge of the forest to improve their livelihoods while maintaining sustainable, healthy and productive landscapes. The training is part of FLOURISH’s work in Nan Province, where it supports development of business partnerships between communities and the private sector.



Naparee Sennanta participates in a training on market analysis in Nan Province’s Santisuk District, September 2019.



# Viet Nam's forest farmers unite to overcome poverty and climate change

Forest owners are bringing their concerns to authorities with one strong voice.

For ethnic minority farmer Phung Thi Tui, securing the right to grow and harvest trees in the forest did not immediately mean a better life. Although tenure reforms that started in the 1990s in Viet Nam were widely welcomed, Phung lacked information about the changes while climate change was also reducing yields from her traditional way of farming.

Like other poor and disadvantaged farmers, Phung, who lives in Viet Nam's high mountains, needed a way to better understand the reforms, learn how to adapt to climate change and develop new farming techniques to improve her livelihood.

Phung joined a national network in 2017 called the Viet Nam Forest Owners Association that was formed two years earlier to help farmers like her fully benefit from the new

policies. VIFORA was created by RECOFTC, government officials, forest owners and civil society groups.

With support from RECOFTC and the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation-funded Mekong Regional Land Governance Project (MRLG), the association developed a program that focused on building the capacity of farmers to network and to fulfill their rights and obligations under the reforms.

"I am not alone like before," says Phung from the Dao ethnic minority, among the poorest groups in Viet Nam. "I can share and learn from others about forest policies that matter to us."

The VIFORA program began in the provinces of Quang Ninh, Son La and in Phung's province of Phu Tho and soon had more than 100 members.

Those farming the same plants and trees began sharing information and experiences via the network.



I am not alone like before. I can share and learn from others about forest policies that matter to us.

## Phung Thi Tui

RECOFTC trained members who passed on their new skills and knowledge to others using the train-the-trainer model. The training included workshops and study tours that built understanding of farming techniques, forest governance and ways to access market information and financial instruments.

Watch "Forest owners prosper through networking"



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Farmers learn about developing and marketing forest products during a training. VIFORA, with the support from RECOFTC, regularly organizes capacity-building events for its members, 2018.

“

The forest owners are small-scale and disadvantaged people in society. They need to work together to raise their voices and protect their interests.

**Dinh Duc Thuan**



Phung Thi Tui leads fellow farmers to see her forest land during a field trip organized by VIFORA, Phu Tho Province, 2018.

“After joining the training provided by RECOFTC, I now can arrange my planting schedule,” says Phung. “I know how to fertilize so that trees can grow well. I learned what kind of tree is in demand and profitable. I learned skills that help me make important decisions about borrowing money to buy land to generate more income for my family. If I did not join the association, I would not have the knowledge to make those decisions.”

Since the 1990s, the government has increased tenure rights, including allocating forest land to households, with the aim of improving forest management and local livelihoods. Households are able to obtain certificates, secure land-use rights, manage and even transfer or mortgage their forest land under the Forest Land Allocation scheme. Households with crop lands can exercise these rights for 20 years, while those with forest land are given 50 years, provided they follow regulations in the law.

Subsequent reforms have recognized local communities as a legal entity so they can receive forest land and become a forest owners.

Today, VIFORA has 420 members in five provinces who pay just US\$3

a year in fees. The association enables members to discuss issues and bring their concerns to the government with one strong united voice. It took part in the ongoing review and development process of guidelines of the new 2019 Forest Law.

“The forest owners are small-scale and disadvantaged people in society,” VIFORA committee member Dinh Duc Thuan says. “They need to work together to raise their voices and protect their interests.”





# Coffee cooperative creates fair prices and resilient forests

Akar Tani, a coffee cooperative in Indonesia, has raised the quality and price of coffee for local farmers in Indonesia's South Sulawesi Province while protecting the environment.

Ramli has known about coffee his whole life. In 1986, his father planted the first trees on the family's land in Indonesia's South Sulawesi Province. But by the time Ramli started growing his own coffee in the hills of Bantaeng District, it seemed the price had not improved despite its high value on the global market.

The problem lay with the two buyers who dominated South Sulawesi's coffee market. They would use intermediaries to purchase coffee from the farmers, at times resorting to predatory tactics and tricking farmers into harvesting their coffee too soon. This would damage the beans' potential and lower the price.

Many of Bantaeng's communities rely on coffee and other crops for their income. The communities are therefore vulnerable to climate change and land degradation, which

threatens to exacerbate the district's already high poverty rates.

"The dominance of these two big players means that the price of coffee can never go up," says Adam Kurniawan, director of the Balang Institute in South Sulawesi, which works with local communities.

Ramli saw an opportunity to increase the price in 2016 when he joined the newly formed Akar Tani Cooperative.

"The reason I wanted to join the cooperative is because it agreed to buy the red beans only," says Ramli. "The importance of picking red beans is that the coffee is not damaged, and the coffee is good."

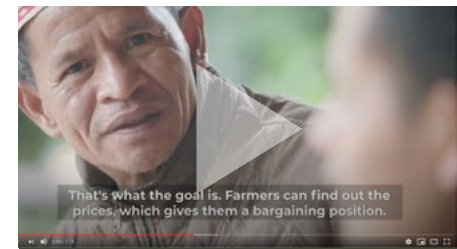
The cooperative provides an alternative market for local coffee farmers while also improving the highland's land-use practices.

"Akar Tani Cooperative is unique because it supports the improvement of upstream land by using coffee-based agroforestry schemes," says Hasri, the director of Akar Tani. "It always pays attention to the environment and how to improve its condition."

Initially, Akar Tani struggled to compete with more experienced traders. The cooperative was new to business development and lacked financial support. It also needed help with its sustainability initiatives. RECOFTC, which had worked in the region for almost 10 years on tenure security and agroforestry, was well positioned to assist.

"RECOFTC has been a great partner and has continuously supported us by facilitating meetings with the government and conducting training on business planning and financial management," says Hasri.

Watch "Brewing local entrepreneurship"



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A member of the Akar Tani Cooperative harvests coffee to sell to the market, Bantaeng District, South Sulawesi, Indonesia 2019.



There are a lot of benefits for the community. If there is some profit with the cooperative, it will be returned to the farmers.

**Ramli**

He explained that RECOFTC's support helped the cooperative obtain a five-year loan for US\$130,000 from the Ministry of Environment and Forestry to improve local coffee production.

By 2017, Akar Tani was close to achieving its mission. Agreements had been secured with several coffee shops to supply local coffee, and prices for farmers had increased. The cooperative's price for 2017 was 3,000 Indonesian rupiah, or US\$0.20, more per kilogram than the price given by the intermediaries.

Akar Tani, however, had hoped to expand the business with a new loan.

The international specialty coffee market was one option, according to their research. But it was difficult for farmers and Akar Tani to meet the quantity required for this overseas market, which also emphasized quality.

RECOFTC trained farmers on agroforestry land management, coffee harvesting and processing to help them increase the quality of production.

Akar Tani has also been working with financial management tools introduced by RECOFTC and with an external evaluator. Farmers took part in a training in 2019

using the Green Value Tool, which provides guidelines for community enterprises.

Akar Tani now works with 95 farmers and is profitable, with a 31 percent rate of return. Members can use the Green Value Tool to assess the viability of future business decisions as they work to improve their livelihoods.



Akar Tani Cooperative works with farmers from Bantaeng District to harvest and sell high-quality coffee using agroforestry models. Indonesia 2019.



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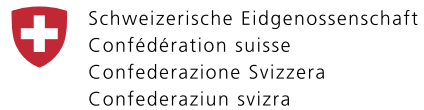
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Asia-Pacific Network for Sustainable Forest Management and Rehabilitation (APFNet)	Culture and Environment Preservation Association (CEPA), Cambodia	District Office of Information, Cultural and Tourism, Xayaboury, Lao PDR	Finnish Consulting Group (FCG)
Asian Venture Philanthropy Network (AVPN)		District Office of Public Works and Transport, Houayxai, Lao PDR	Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations (FAO)
Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR)		District Office of Public Works and Transport, Paktha, Lao PDR	Forest Resource Studies and Action Team, Nepal
	<b>D</b>	District Office of Public Works and Transport, Xayaboury, Lao PDR	Forest and Farm Facility
<b>B</b>	Daen Mueang Village, Thailand	Du Phong Subdistrict, Thailand	Forest Department, Myanmar
Balang Institute, Indonesia	Department of Forestry, Lao PDR	Du Phong Village, Thailand	Forest Protection Department, Viet Nam Administration of Forestry, Viet Nam
Bunrueang Village, Thailand	Department of Land, Ministry of Natural Resource and Environment, Lao PDR	Du Phong Community Forest, Thailand	Forest Protection and Development Department, Thua Thien Hue Province, Viet Nam
	Development and Partnership in Action, Cambodia	Duc Phong Company Limited, Viet Nam	Forest Resource Environment Development and Conservation Association (FREDA), Myanmar
<b>C</b>	District Office of Agriculture and Forestry, Paktha, Lao PDR		Forest Stewardship Council (FSC)
Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR)	District Office of Agriculture and Forestry, Phiang, Lao PDR		Forest Action Nepal
Center for Sustainable Development in Mountainous Areas, Viet Nam			
Chawa Village, Thailand			

Forestry Administration, Cambodia  
 Forest Restoration Research Unit  
 Chiang Mai University (FORRU-CMU),  
 Thailand  
 Forum Komunikasi Kehutanan  
 Masyarakat (FKKM), Indonesia  
 Forum Syd  
 Future Light Youth Development  
 Organization (FLYDO), Myanmar

**G**

Give2Asia  
 Global Alliance of Community  
 Forestry (GACF)  
 Government of Nepal  
 Government of the Lao People's  
 Democratic Republic  
 Government of the People's Republic  
 of China  
 Government of the Republic of  
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 of Viet Nam  
 Government of the Union of  
 Myanmar  
 Grassroots Capacity Building for  
 REDD+, Indonesia  
 Green Community Development  
 Association, Lao PDR  
 Green Governance Nepal, Nepal  
 Group for the Environment,  
 Renewable Energy and Solidarity  
 (GERES)

**H**

Helvetas–Swiss Intercooperation Lao  
 PDR  
 Helvetas–Swiss Intercooperation  
 Nepal  
 Himalayan Grassroots Women's  
 Natural Resource Management  
 Association (HIMAWAN), Nepal  
 Holistic Development Nepal, Nepal  
 Huai Mo Village, Thailand  
 Hue University of Agriculture and  
 Forestry, Viet Nam  
 Hug Muang Nan foundation,  
 Thailand

**I**

Indigenous Knowledge and Peoples  
 Foundation (IKAP), Thailand  
 Inter Mountain Peoples Education  
 and Culture in Thailand Association  
 (IMPECT), Thailand  
 Ing People Council, Thailand  
 Inntha Literature, Cultural and  
 Regional Development Association –  
 (ILCDA), Myanmar  
 Institute of Biodiversity and  
 Environment for Local and ASEAN  
 Development, Chiang Rai Rajabhat  
 University, Thailand  
 International Finance Corporation  
 (IFC)  
 International Forestry Student  
 Association (IFSA)

International Network for Bamboo  
 and Rattan (INBAR)

International Union for Conservation  
 of Nature (IUCN)

International Union of Forest  
 Research Organizations (IUFRO)

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**K**

Kasetsart University (KU)  
 Kemitraan, Indonesia  
 Khanh Tam Company, Viet Nam  
 Khrueng Tai Village, Thailand  
 Kon Rak Tin, Thailand

**L**

Land Core Group, Myanmar  
 Land Issues Working Group, Lao PDR  
 Lao Biodiversity Association, Lao PDR  
 Lao CSO FLEGT network  
 Legal Scholar, Thailand  
 Lembaga Alam Tropika Indonesia  
 (LATIN)  
 Living River Association, Thailand

**M**

Mae Tha Subdistrict Administrative  
 Organization, Thailand  
 Mae Tha Sustainable Agriculture  
 Development Institute, Thailand  
 Mae Ying Houmchai Pattana, Lao PDR

Mekong Community Institute,  
 Thailand

Mekong Region Land Governance  
 (MRLG)

Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry  
 (NCAW), Lao PDR

Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and  
 Fisheries, Cambodia

Ministry of Foreign Affairs and  
 International Cooperation, Italy

Ministry of Environment and  
 Forestry, Extension and Training HR,  
 Indonesia

Ministry of Environment, Cambodia

Ministry of Forests and Environment,  
 Nepal

Ministry of Natural Resources and  
 Environment, Thailand

Ministry of Women's Affairs,  
 Cambodia

Mlup Baitong Capacity, Cambodia

Ministry of Foreign Affairs and  
 International Cooperation, Italy

Muang Chum Village, Thailand

Mueang Ling Family's Forest  
 Network, Thailand

Myanmar Environmental  
 Rehabilitation-conservation Network  
 (MERN), Myanmar

Myanmar Rattan and Bamboo  
 Entrepreneurs Association (MBREA),  
 Myanmar

**N**

Na Lao Community Forest, Thailand  
 Na Lao Village, Thailand  
 Nam Phrae Village, Thailand  
 Nan Community College, Thailand  
 Nan Forest Center, Thailand  
 Nan Provincial Environment and Natural Resources Office, Thailand  
 National Trust for Nature Conservation, Nepal  
 Ngam Mueang Village, Thailand  
 Ngao Master Association, Thailand  
 Nghe An Forest Protection and Development Fund, Nghe An Department of Agriculture and Rural Development, Viet Nam  
 NGO Forum, Cambodia  
 Non-Timber Forest Products, Cambodia

**O**

Oxfam

**P**

Pa Bong Village, Thailand  
 Pa Leaw Community Forest, Thailand  
 Pa Leaw Luang Subdistrict, Thailand  
 Pa Leaw Village, Thailand  
 Pak Ing Village, Thailand  
 Pang Mot Daeng Village, Thailand

People and Nature Reconciliation, Viet Nam

Parami Development Network (PDN), Myanmar

Participatory Development and Training Centre, Lao PDR

PEFC in Southeast Asia, Thailand

Phayao TV, Thailand

Phong Subdistrict, Thailand

Phu Quy Company Limited, Viet Nam

Ponlok Khmer, Cambodia

Poung Phaya Phayao Institute, Thailand

President Chure-Terai Madhesh Conservation Development Board, Nepal

Princeton in Asia (PiA)

Private Forest Plantation Cooperative Limited, Thailand

ProFLEGT- GIZ

Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification (PEFC)

Provincial Office of Agriculture and Forestry, Bokeo, Lao PDR

Provincial Office of Agriculture and Forestry, Xayaboury, Lao PDR

Provincial Office of Information, Culture and Tourism, Bokeo, Lao PDR

Provincial Office of Information, Culture and Tourism, Xayaboury, Lao PDR

Provincial Office of Natural Resources and Environment, Bokeo, Lao PDR

**Q**

Que Phong District People's Committee, Viet Nam

Quy Chau District People's Committee, Viet Nam

**R**

Rakhine Coastal Region Conservation Association (RCA), Myanmar

Raks Thai Foundation, Thailand

Responsible Asia Forestry and Trade (RAFT)

Rights and Resources Initiative (RRI)

Royal Forestry Department, Thailand

Royal Government of Cambodia

Rubber Farmers Association, Thailand

**S**

San Ton Phueng Village, Thailand

Santisuk Land-use Network, Thailand

Sao Wa Village, Thailand

Si Don Chai Village, Thailand

SilvaCarbon

Singthoun Sawmill, Bokeo, Lao PDR,

Sob Yang Village, Thailand

Sulawesi Community Foundation, Indonesia

Sustainable Development Foundation, Thailand

**T**

Ta Village, Thailand

Tanaosri Mountains Conservation Network, Thailand

Thai-EU FLEGT Secretariat Office

Thai Rubber Wood Business Association, Thailand

Thailand Research Fund, Thailand

Thang Nam Company, Viet Nam

The Border Consortium, Thailand

The Forests Dialogue (TFD)

The Learning Institute, Cambodia

The Nature Conservancy (TNC)

Thung Ang Village, Thailand

Thung Ngio Village, Thailand

Thung Si Koet Village, Thailand

Tom Dong Village, Thailand

Tong Gao Village, Thailand

Tree bank Chumphon Province, Thailand

Tree bank Nan Province, Thailand

Tree bank, Thailand

Tropenbos Indonesia

- U**
- United Nations
  - United Nations Collaborative Programme on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (UN-REDD)
  - United States Forest Service, USA
  - University of Hasanuddin, Indonesia
  - University of East Anglia, United Kingdom
- V**
- Viet Nam Forest Owners' Association (VIFORA)
  - Vietnam Administration of Forestry, Viet Nam
  - Village Focus International, Lao PDR
  - Vinh University, Viet Nam
- W**
- Wageningen University
  - Wang Sila Village, Thailand
  - Wiang Tai Village, Thailand
  - Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS)
  - Winrock International
  - Women Organizing for Change in Agriculture and Natural Resource Management (WOCAN)
- Wood Business Association, Thailand
- World Agroforestry Centre (ICRAF)
- World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF)
- Y**
- Yayasan Komunitas Belajar Indonesia, Indonesia





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.

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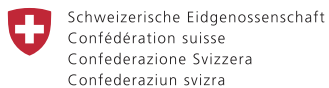
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