

FEASIBLE REFORMS FOR THAILAND'S FOREST GOVERNANCE SYSTEM

by

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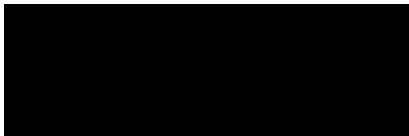
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CANDIDATE'S DECLARATION

I certify that the substance of this thesis has not already been submitted for any degree and is not currently being submitted for any other degree or qualification.

I certify that any help received in preparing this thesis and all sources used have been acknowledged in this thesis.

I declare that to the best of my knowledge and belief the law as stated in this thesis is current until 23 December 2013.



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ABSTRACT

This thesis aims to propose feasible reform directions for forest governance in Thailand that will provide greater social and environmental benefits from forestry and help overcome identified forest governance deficiencies.

A review of the literature on forest governance suggests that ‘good’ governance plays a key role in ensuring sustainable natural forest management. Thailand has laws and institutions that, arguably, ought to ensure sustainable use of forest resources. Unfortunately, these forest governance actions to safeguard Thailand’s forests have not achieved the expected result of reducing the destruction of forests, nor have they ensured social equity in the use of forest resources. This thesis draws on academic literature, legal sources and informal media – such as newspaper articles – and blends these with the ‘voices’ of directly involved stakeholders to diagnose the issues and arrive at a view about where reform is needed for the forest governance system in Thailand.

The research is, therefore, underpinned by an engaged policy research methodology. Such a philosophy equally values the contribution of experts and of stakeholders in helping to define the issues and possible solutions to problems within a system and enables the development of a reform program that is more likely to deal with the full suit of relevant issues.

The literature review and interviews emphasised that Thailand’s current forest governance systems fails to meet a number of components of the criteria for good forest governance:

1. Rule of law – the Thai forest governance is complex, inconsistent, and only partially enforced.
2. Lack of transparency, lack of accountability and lack of stakeholder participation – all factors that can lead to corruption.
3. Effectiveness of forest governance systems; these are compromised because of a lack of monitoring and lack of capacity.
4. Inefficiencies caused by frequent changes to government policies; competitive practices among state agencies; and poor definition of stakeholder rights, which all cause increases in unintended costs.
5. Fairness and equity are compromised because of lack of: clear definition of forest rights; recognition of forest-related knowledge; inequitable sharing of benefits from forest resources; and poor involvement of the younger generation.
6. Coordination of objectives and strategies to guide forest governance is poor.
7. Capacity building and incentives are not well utilised.
8. Stakeholder relationships are often strained.

The thesis makes ten feasible recommendations, together with possible implementation actions, to improve Thailand’s forest governance system.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ALRO	Agricultural Land Reform Office (Thailand)
BE	Buddhist Era
BMA	Bangkok Metropolitan Administration (Thailand)
BSI	Botanical Survey of India (BSI)
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CBI	Central Bureau of Investigation (Brazil)
CDM	Clean Development Mechanism
CDRU	Contract of Real Right to Use (Brazil)
CFMB	Community Forest Management Bureau (Thailand)
CFUGs	Community Forest User Groups (Nepal)
CIFOR	Center for International Forestry Research
C&I	Criteria and Indicators
DC	Deputy Commissioner (Bangladesh)
DCT	Development Communications Trust (Malawi)
DEC	District Ecology Committee (India)
DENR	Department of Environment and Natural Resources (Philippines)
DEQP	Department of Environmental Quality Promotion (Thailand)
DFID	Department for International Development
DFO	Divisional Forest Officer (Bangladesh)
DLA	Department of Local Administration (Thailand)
DMC	Department of Marine and Coastal resources (Thailand)
DNWPC	Department of National Parks, Wildlife and Plant Conservation (Thailand)
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
EAC	Environmental Appraisal Committee (India)
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)
ESA	Ecologically Sensitive Area (India)
ESZ	Ecologically Sensitive Zones (India)
EU	European Union
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations
FFGR	Analytical Framework for Forest Governance Reforms
FLEGT	Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade
FOIP	Forest Operations Information Program (Ontario, Canada)
FRA	Forest Rights Act (India)
FSI	Forest Survey of India
GFI	Governance of Forests Initiative
GHG	Green House Gas
GSTF	Global Science and Technology Forum
GTZ	German Agency for Technical Cooperation
Ha	Hectare
HRD	Human resource development
ICMBio	Conservation of Biodiversity
IFA	Independent Forest Audit (Ontario, Canada)

IFCRE	Indian Council of Forestry Research and Education
IIED	International Institute for Environment and Development
INCRA	National Institute for Colonisation and Agrarian Reform (Brazil)
ITTA	International Tropical Timber Agreement
ITTO	International Tropical Timber Organisation
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature
IUFRO	International Union of Forest Research Organisations
KFS	Division of Kenya Forests Service (Kenya)
LD	Land Department (Thailand)
LDD	Land Development Department (Thailand)
MCOT	Mass Communication Organisation of Thailand
MFW	Ministry of Forestry and Wildlife (Kenya)
MNR	Ministry of Natural Resources (Ontario, Canada)
MOAC	Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives (Thailand)
MOEF	Ministry of Environment and Forest (India)
MOI	Ministry of Interior (Thailand)
MNRE	Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (Thailand)
MP	Montréal Process Working Group on Criteria and Indicators for the Conservation and Sustainable Management of Temperate and Boreal Forests
NEB	National Environmental Board (Thailand)
NESDB	National Economic and Social Development Board (Thailand)
NESDP	National Economic and Social Development plan (Thailand)
NGO	Non Government Organisation
NLBI	Non-legally Binding Authoritative Statement of Principles for a Global Consensus on the Management, Conservation and Sustainable Development of all Types of Forests
NTFPs	Non-Timber Forests Products
OKMD	Office of Knowledge Management and Development (Public Organisation) (Thailand)
OPM	Office of the Prime Minister (Thailand)
ONEP	Office of the Natural Resources and Environmental Policy and Planning (Thailand)
ONHRC	Office the National Human Rights Commission (Thailand)
ONRC	Office of National Research Council (Thailand)
PAO	Provincial Administrative Organisation (Thailand)
PCD	Pollution Control Department (Thailand)
PFM	Participatory Forest Management Programme (India)
PNG	Papua New Guinea
PRD	Public Relations Department (Thailand)
PROFOR	Program on Forests
Rai	Unit for Land Measurement in Thailand
RECOFTC	Center for People and Forests
REDD	Reduction Emission from Deforestation and Forest Degradation
RFD	Royal Forest Department (Thailand)
RRI	Right and Resources Initiatives

SFL	Sustainable Forest Licence (Ontario, Canada)
SFM	Sustainable Forest Management
SSHRC	Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council
STK	Sor Tor Kor (certificates of rights to cultivate) (Thailand)
TAO	Tambon Administrative Organisation (Thailand)
TGO	Thailand Greenhouse Gas Management Organisation
TRF	Thailand Research Fund
USA	United States of America
UN	United Nation
UNCCD	United Nations Conference on Desertification
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UN-REDD	UN Collaborative Programme on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation in Developing Countries
WB	World Bank
WGEA	Western Ghats Ecology Authority (India)
WGEEP	Western Ghats Ecology Expert Panel (India)
WII	Wildlife Institute of India
WPA	Wildlife Protection Act (India), 1972
WRI	World Resources Institute
WWF	World Wide Fund for Nature
ZSI	Zoological Survey of India