

dissecting the workshop themes



The mobile workshop focused on three major themes which built on earlier MMSEA symposia outcomes and took into account participants' needs and interests.

1. Land use change
2. Local livelihoods, markets and trade
3. Resource governance

Based on their particular interests as well as other considerations, the participants were divided into three thematic working groups; each group was guided by two thematic coordinators (see Annex 3).

During the field visits, participants also worked in groups, with each field group having a mixed membership from among the three thematic groups for greater cross-fertilisation of ideas and experiences.

The workshop process and programme (see Annex 2) was designed to provide significant time for thematic working group interactions, reflections, synthesis, sharing and feedback, as follows.

17 January, Xishuangbanna

The three thematic working groups met during the morning to review participants' contributions for the workshop, to share experiences and expectations, and to identify key issues/questions to probe during the workshop. In the afternoon, there was a presentation of group outcomes for feedback and discussion.

21 January, Luang Prabang

During the afternoon of the mini-workshop, each thematic group formulated and presented a preliminary synthesis of findings and outcomes, to stimulate further discussion, feedback, and enrichment.

25 January, Chiang Mai

Thematic groups completed the final synthesis of workshop outcomes and learning in the morning, then presented for feedback in afternoon.

The following matrix was suggested as a tool to analyse and synthesise the major conditions, drivers, and responses under each of the three major themes, as well as

any cross-cutting themes such as indigenous knowledge within a regional or country context.

	Land use	Local livelihoods /markets and trade	Resource governance
Xishuangbanna			
Northern Laos			
Northern Thailand			
MMSEA			

In addition, the participants were asked to consider the following list of questions during the course of the workshop.

How are these three themes interlinked?

Are there any important cross-cutting themes (e.g., indigenous knowledge)?

What are the major regional/transboundary issues?

Can we come up with a better framework?

On 17 January, a two-step process was followed to initiate exploration of the three workshop themes. First, the thematic coordinators introduced the themes, situating them within the MMSEA context, and stimulating discussion and feedback. Second, the thematic working groups met separately to discuss their themes, relate them to their own experiences, and identify issues and for further inquiry. Report-backs enabled further discussion and refinement.

Land Use Change

In introducing this theme, the coordinators, Dr. Jeff Fox and Dr. Horst Weyerhaeuser, pointed out that to analyse land use changes within MMSEA it is important to examine the following:

- land use history
- status quo
- change
- drivers
- markets
- future prospects
- roads
- population growth/decline
- linkages among land use, livelihoods and governance

They also suggested that certain questions be considered.

What is the future scenario for land use and land use change in MMSEA?

What are the drivers? What and who can change land use?

Who lives in those areas?

How do the three themes link together?

In the ensuing discussion, participants provided useful feedback as summarised below.

- Specific guidelines should be provided to limit the scope of enquiry
- A comparison of the land use policies in different countries would illustrate the impact of policy in terms of



Group work on land use change

How do scientists impact policy?

How does policy impact land use cover?

How does land use study contribute to policy?

- While it was agreed that it is advisable to use standard terminology for land use study, in practice this is difficult. One method of validating results and ensuring that people are actually referring to the same thing is to cross-checking their different stories.

Through deliberations and discussions, the land use change group came up with the following key issues and questions to guide the group's work in the field.

- There is a need to identify the differences in rubber management systems between state rubber farm and household rubber farms. How is information/technology being transferred between state and local farmers. What changes have taken place between the 1950s and the 1970s and the 1990s and beyond?
- What is the relationship between changes in production from subsistence crops to rubber and changes in migration/population?
- It is necessary know if there have been changes over time in markets due to location, prices, infrastructure, and processing of products. What are the possible sources of information regarding such changes (market, government)? Villagers' perceptions of the term 'markets' also needs to be understood.
- It is important to be aware of peoples' perception of the future in terms of rubber and its market prospects, markets, population, land use, technology, conservation/environment, and sustainability.

- It is important to find out if village land use changes over time (maps can be used to plot such changes). What are the key drivers of household land use patterns: tenure, government policy, geography, markets, customs/culture?
- Likewise, how are the land use decisions of the state rubber farm affected by policy, markets, and geography?

Local Livelihoods, Markets and Trade

The coordinators of this group, Dr Yayoi Fujita and Ms Su Yufang, introduced the livelihoods, markets and trade theme by highlighting the key issues that the group should examine:

- tourism and other related activities
- off-farm production activities
- processing/value-adding
- international/regional trade agreements
- land use and livelihood systems
- drivers of livelihood changes
- social equity

Two main points emerged from the discussion. Firstly, off-farm activities should also receive attention, together with livelihood systems and land use change. The drivers of change need to be clearly understood. Secondly, it is important to look at how households are making land and resource use decisions. For example, how do local farmers make decisions with regard to changes in markets?

During working group discussions, the thematic group noted some key points and outlined certain expectations.



Cross-border trade in non-timber forest products between China and Laos

What changes in livelihoods, markets and trade have taken place and how?
What are the linkages between livelihoods and markets?
What is the impact of local cultures?
How does the expected impact of market integration on local livelihoods compare to the actual impact?

The group hoped to

- reach a consensus on priorities;
- generate new ideas on how to respond to changes in livelihoods, markets and trade;
- identify key successful interventions by governments, private sector, and NGOs to improve local livelihoods; and
- agree on a shared list of priorities for future action; and
- identify key issues for improving livelihoods against the background of land use change and market influences

The following were identified as the main questions to be answered.

What is the impact of markets on commodity production systems and labour?
What types of changes in livelihoods, markets and trade are happening?
Who is buying? What? Where? How is the commodity market changing?
What is the level of peoples' knowledge about the market chain?
Do people have access to market information?
What are the main reasons for livelihood changes? What are the actual changes in livelihoods?
If livelihood, market, or trade problems are encountered, then



Working group discussions

- What kind of intervention is necessary?
- Are people becoming more vulnerable or more successful? Why?
- What are the appropriate roles of researchers?
- How can researchers help understand and mitigate negative impacts?

The key areas that the livelihoods group decided to focus on during the workshop were:

- rubber systems
- NTFPs
- agro-industry
- migration
- timber
- water use

The group also formulated the following questions to be considered during the field visits to the three sites in Mengla, Xishuangbanna.

Mengxing State Rubber Farm

- What is the major livelihood portfolio of families in the state farm?
- How have livelihood portfolios changed? Why?
- What is the interaction among local farmers?
- What is the rubber market chain?
- Are there any problems or conflict?

Nan Yang Village (lowland Dai)

- What are the income sources?
- What kind of products do you sell in the market? Where? Who buys?
- Was there any change in livelihood activities during the last 10 years? If yes, what caused the change?
- Identify service providers; can you access extension services? Credit? Markets? Inputs?
- What are the problems in terms of livelihoods? What are the government coping strategies to deal with those problems?

Paozhuqing Village (upland Yao)

- What are the income sources?
- Who do what kinds of livelihood activities? Where? When?
- How have land use decisions been taken? and why?
- What are the livelihood issues in upland shifting cultivation communities?

Resource Governance

Professor Walt Coward and Professor Xu Jianchu coordinated the resource governance group. They introduced the theme by defining resource governance as the rules that affect people and their decision-making. They pointed out that governments sometimes make resource governance rules that are invisible to both insiders and outsiders. These rules reflect the worldviews of those who make them and an analysis of resource governance needs to understand the rationale underlying the governance rules. They further pointed out that it is important to consider governance from a market-driven point of view.

Accordingly, they identified the following questions as essential for understanding resource governance.

- What are the rules?
- Who makes the rules?
- What worldview/rationale lies behind the rules?
- Who or what authority makes the rules?
- What is the governance-marketing interface?

This introduction sparked considerable discussion and participants contributed additional questions for further inquiry.

- Who interprets the rules?
- Who implements the rules?
- Who monitors these rules?
- How do rules change with land use changes?
- How do rules affect cultural identity?
- How do local people respond to these rules?
- How does government restructuring (e.g., decentralisation) affect governance?

In their group discussion, the first task given to the thematic group was to better understand the meaning of governance. To obtain country-specific perceptions, participants from different countries were asked to define governance in their own languages and words and then summarise the meaning in English. Their responses are listed below.

- **Thai participants:** Governance is the setting of rules. It means working together with agreed principles, which are accessible, in setting rules.
- **Chinese participants:** The meaning of governance is to deliver policy, as well as management.



Field interview in Yao village, Xishuangbanna



Field visit in Laos

- **Lao participants:** Governance is the involvement of different organisations in the development and management of policies.

It was agreed that 'good governance' should have a scientific and development perspective, include social security, adapt to change, and bridge scales at different levels. Governance should be people-centred and sustainable. It is also important to note that governance and government are not the same.

The group also identified a list of questions to guide their field work in Mengla.

In the state rubber farm, who makes the rules?

In the Dai village, what is considered common property? What rules are present, and how are changes made?

In the Yao village, who decided to plant rubber on sloping upland areas? What are the government rules for leasing land? How do farmers decide to lease land and what are the specific tenure arrangements?

How do the Yao communicate via social networks?

Are there conflicts in resources management? If so, how can these problems be solved?

What are the local concepts of conservation?

What is the local/outside interpretation of resource policies (by age, gender, and other types of social group such as water management group or women's group)?