INDIVIDUAL PROJECT TITLE: THE ROLE OF SUB - DISTRICT COUNCIL IN
                            COMMUNITY FOREST DEVELOPMENT : A CASE
                            STUDY OF TAMBOL SUAN MORN, AMPHOE
                            MUNCHAKHIRI, CHANGWAT KHON KAEN.

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ABSTRACT

This research had three objectives : 1) to study roles and
methods of a sub-district council toward a community forest deve-
lopment, 2) to study effects of the community forest development
implemented by the council, and 3) to study opinions of the
households located nearby the forest toward the forest development
approaches of the council. The study applied both qualitative
and quantitative methods. For the qualitative research, it took
the researcher over a year to collect the field data while
working with the community organizations. The quantitative
research was conducted by randomizing 259 household samples from
those resided near the forest to elicit their opinions and parti-
cipation in the council's forest development.

The research results showed that Tambon Suan Morn consists of 14 villages comprising 1,480 households with the population of 6,681. It has 12,000 rai of community forests excluded from Khok Luang National Reserved Forest; the forest area comprises both natural and Eucalyptus economic forests under the responsibility of the sub-district council committee who plays active roles due to legislation of sub-district councils and organizations. To develop the community forests, these important methodes was applied : specifying community forests and having them registered, conducting forest conservation and maintenance by reforestation, regulating rules, sharing benefits from selling economic trees to operate the village development fund by allocating fair budgets to every village so that each can spend its money on development activities or loan it with low interest rates to the households, or support the housewives'group and support an infrastructure construction. To eliminate conflicts in the local areas, the sub-district council tried to make a compromise with the villagers who encroached the community forests. In case of strong conflicts, the government agencies would be asked to help solve the problems.

The outcome of the community forest development was that the participation of the households located nearby forests was at a high level. They cooperated by not encroaching, not cutting trees, keeping alert to problems and reporting them to the committee. They also participated in the reforestation and forest maintenance, and conformed to the council's rules. The

development has incrased a community income at two levels. At the household level, the economic status of the households has been improved through income from planted trees. At the community level, the community received fair funds for village development. The setting up of a local organization network for the community forest development showed that the neighboring households and villages recognized the planting of economic trees (Eucalyptus), and planted the trees in their public and private properties. They agreed not to let their animals graze in the forest planted less than a year, and they helped advertise the work accomplished. The villagers'opinions on the capability of the implementation, fund administration, and the forest management approaches of the council were at high level. The council coordinated well with government agencies, defined the boundaries of the forests clearly, and shared the benefits justly. In addition, the villagers suggested that the council set the community forest development program in the five-year sub-district development plan.They pointed out that the community forest management should be legislated and supported with adequate budget. In addition, the sub-district council should build up awareness of needs for community forests, provide practical guidelines, and extend the ideas to other communities and peoples at all levels.