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PISAN THANASANSOMBOON: THE LOCAL PEOPLE PARTICIPATION IN CONSERVATION OF CULTURAL ENVIRONMENT: A CASE STUDY OF KOH SICHANG, CHONBURI PROVINCE. THESIS ADVISORS: LADAVAL THONGNOP, M.P.H. PAKAIRAT SUKUMALCHART, M.S. PIYAKARN TEARTISUP, M.Sc. UKA SUNTARASARATUL, DIP. 271 p. ISBN 974-662-476-8

The objective of this research was to study the levels of the local people's participation in cultural-environment conservation, factors affecting the local people's participation and the problems of the cultural-environment conservation within Koh Sichang, Chonburi Province. Two methodologies were used in this study. The quantitative study used questionnaries collected from 248 residents, choosen by accidental sampling and the qualitive study was carried out by in-depth interviews of 22 key-informants, participatory observation and a literature review.

The results of the quantitative study showed that the majority of the local people's participation in conservation of cultural-environment was low. It was found that age, place of origin, value appreciation on cultural-environment and knowledge of cultural-environment conservation were statistically significant factors affecting the local people's participation in cultural-environment conservation. Local people whose age more than 52 years old, who originated in Koh Sichang, who had high value appreciation on cultural environment and high knowledge of cultural-environment conservation had higher level of participation in cultural-environment conservation than other groups. The results of the qualitative study showed that the local people's participation started from the individual awareness and co-consciousness in cultural-environment conservation and then developed into the conservation groups which conduct continuous activities and projects in cultural-environment conservation. The problems and obstacles of cultural-environment conservation were identified as the unclear government conservation policy in Koh Sichang, The lack of support to the local people to participate in cultural-environment conservation and the conflicts among the local people groups.

Recommendations arising from the research are that ways and means must be found to encourage the local people to co-operate and participate more in cultural-environment conservation. The government should have a clear policy to support local people's participation including knowledge provision on cultural-environment conservation. Awareness raising, self-consciousness along with continuous conservation activities should be encouraged. The participation in management of Koh Sichang cultural-environment sites by the local people and local administration should be supported. Law enforcement must be strengthened through the announcement of Koh Sichang as a conservation zone for sustainable cultural-environment development in Koh Sichang.