

Natural forest resources are important to human life and to the way of life especially people who live close to the forest. Forest provides them with the necessities of life and source of income. At present, the total forest area in Thailand is rapidly decreasing which greatly affects the ecological system and thus, causing problems in economic, social and political structures of the country. It can be said that forest resource management undertaken by the government under present law and policy defines that the forest belongs to the government and that only the government can utilize it. This forest law and policy cause natural forest area to decrease to only 30% of total land over in Thailand.

The solutions to these problems should be based on the fact that these ideas must be changed. People should be given make opportunity to participate in forest resource management. Facts and experiences of the past show that forest can remain for a long time and may even increase in some areas particularly in communities which are efficient in forest maintenance and utilization with out adverse impact to the forest environment, example can be seen in the village of Baan Thungyao, Tambol Sribuaban, Muang District, Lamphun Province and in some other isolated areas in the country.

This trend in participation of the people in the forest resource management is show in the Sixth National Economic and Social Development Plan. However, in the actual implementation of this idea, there has been no law granting authority to the people to implement the plan. From the results of this study, it was found that providing authority in forest resource management to community organizations under the law using regulation set up by members of the community themselves, can help develop forest resources with high efficiency and could give greater benefits to the community.