

**Nested Interconnection: Transgressing Community-Based Natural Resource Management  
towards Innovating Collective Landscape Mobilization**

A case of Boonrueng Wetland Forest Conservation against Land Conversion for  
Special Economic Zone in the North of Thailand

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## **Abstract**

This is a case about innovative approach of Boonrueng wetland forest conservation against land conversion for Special Economic Zone. Boonrueng wetland forest is the largest seasonal flooded forest in the Ing watershed located in the North of Thailand. It provides the high ecological functions and qualities of the tributary in the downstream Ing River, out-flowing into the Mekong River. The conversion of land for the economic regionalization in Chiang Khong district is geared up in 2015 and Boonrueng wetland forest was identified as an area for Special Economic Zone. In response, the collective mobilization of across different villages within the community is activated. The innovative approach in Boonrueng case which has succeeded to secure its wetland management rights and communal land tenure is the transgression from community-based movement and networking towards a more integrated synergy of mobilization at the landscape level.

**Key Words:** collaborative governance, collective action, landscape mobilization, innovation, interconnection

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Overview OF Boonrueng Community**

The Boonrueng community is located within the wetland forest located in northern Thailand. Topographically it consists of flat land sloping from east to west where it becomes incorporated into the Ing watershed where the Ing River serves as the natural border line between Boonrueng and Huaysor sub-districts. The community itself consisting of 10 villages including 6,716 people – 3,323 men and 3,393 women in 2,401 households are under the administrative jurisdiction Boonrueng sub-district, Chiang Khong district of Chiang Rai province as in Figure 1 and is approximately 95 kilometers from Chiang Rai city. This community is one of the strategic development frontier communities of the province.

The ethnicity of Boonrueng villagers is Tai Yuan, the majority in Northern Thailand, with Lanna-Kham Mueang dialect (Boonrueng Wetland Forest Conservation Group, 2017). The main livelihood source is agriculture, mostly rice paddy field farming. Other facilities available include 3 primary schools, 1 secondary school, 3 early childhood development centers, 1 local hospital, 9 temples and 1 church. The whole sub-district is fully equipped with electricity and water infrastructure. The area is connected with the main highway which links through the Fourth Thai-Lao Friendship Bridge over the Mekong River from Chiang Khong district to Houayxay of Bokeo province in Lao PDR (RECOFTC, 2017c).

Five of the ten villages are situated adjacent and with direct access to Boonrueng wetland forest and the focus of this paper is centered on Boonrueng village number 2 consisting of 695 people in 288 households who rely on the rich wetland resources for their livelihoods, second only to agriculture (RECOFTC, 2017a).

**Figure 1: Location of Boonrueng community in Thailand**

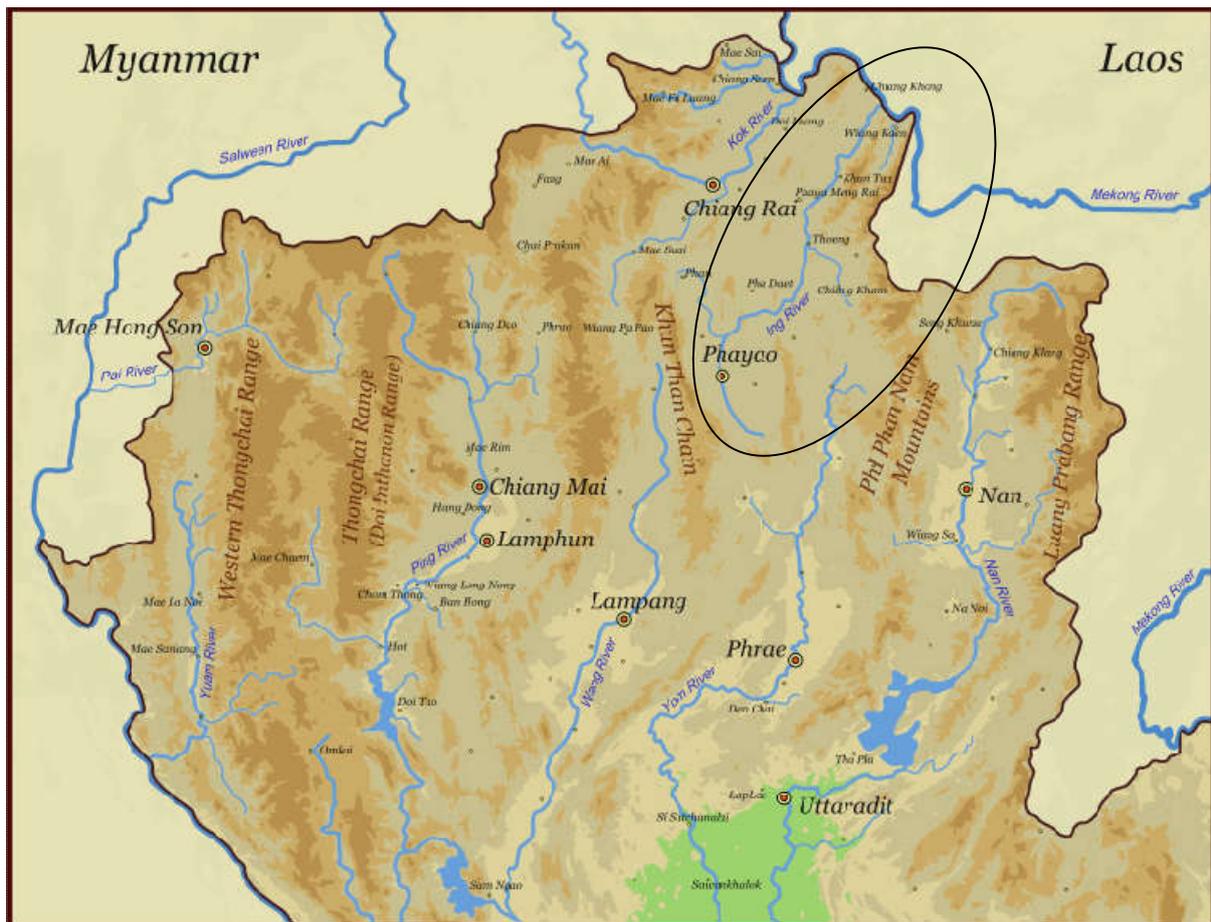


**Source: Google Map**

## **1.2 General Context to the Ing Watershed**

The Ing River is the tributary of Mekong River. Throughout its 260 kilometers length, it is composed of 12 brooks from the upstream forests in Phayao province to the downstream at Pak Ing village in Chiang Khong district, Chiang Rai province, covering a watershed area of 7,388 square kilometers (738,800 hectares) and more than 400 wetlands (Living River Association, 2017) as geographically shown in Figure 2. The Ing watershed can be zoned into the upstream, midstream and downstream. The upstream Ing watershed is the source of water from Phayao lake and Nong Leng Sai wetland. The midstream forms the flood plains fertile for the production of rice and wetland ecosystem with the unique forest structure and biodiversity. The downstream is characterized by the riparian forest which is seasonally inundated and thence most flora and fauna in this area are flood-resistant. Boonrueng wetland forest is located in the downstream Ing watershed which is important fish breeding and nursing ground. During the raining season, fishes from the Mekong and the Ing Rivers migrate into the wetlands in downstream Ing to lay eggs. This seasonal flow shapes the key physical characteristics of lower Ing River as it is larger and deeper than the midstream (Ibid., 2017).

**Figure 2: Location of Ing River and Watershed**



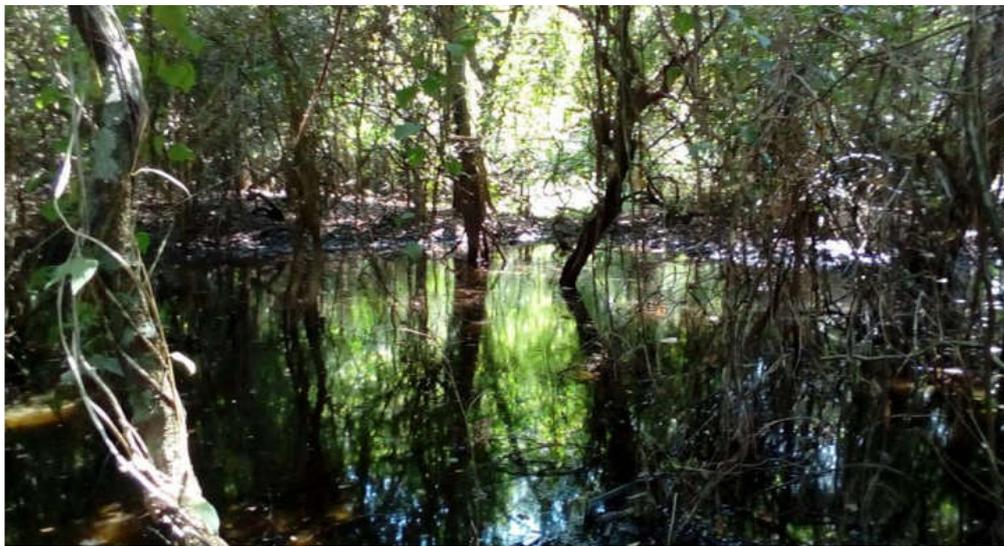
**Source:** Wikimedia Commons

### 1.3 Ecological Value of Boonrueng Wetland Forest

Boonrueng seasonal wetland forest, covering an area of 236 hectares (equivalent to 1,473 rai), is the largest in the Ing watershed. It provides high ecological functions and qualities of the tributary in the downstream Ing River, out-flowing into the Mekong River. Basically, it serves as the natural water retention basin that combines the uniqueness in a mixture of forest and river, widely known as riverine forest landscape and ecosystem (RECOFTC, 2017b). The seasonal inundation, which has become irregular over the past 5 years due to the reservation of water in upstream Mekong, is an annual phenomenon during July and August. The seasonal flooding, at times as high as 6 meters of flood, brings biodiversity and fertility to the lives of the people in the area, providing a source of food security, livelihoods, medicinal herbs, firewood and a nursery ground for aquatic creatures from the Ing River. Figure 3 and Figure 4 display the comparison of flooding and dry seasons in Boonrueng wetland forest. Boonrueng community has for more than 200 years lived and managed this forest with a sense of traditional and customary ownership (RECOFTC, 2016).

A study jointly conducted in 2015 by the research team and community members under the European Union-funded Empowerment of Networks and Local Authorities for Sustainable Inland Watershed Management project found at least 276 species of flora and fauna in Boonrueng wetland forest (RECOFTC, 2015). There are 87 species of local fish species and 16 exotic species as well as 49 food plants and 41 medicinal plants (Ibid., 2015). In addition, the above ground carbon study found the wetland forest has the potentials of 26 ton carbon storage per 0.16 hectare, comparatively doubling the capacities of the mixed deciduous forest. Boonrueng wetland forest has totally stored above the ground carbon of 17,247 tons (Living River Association, 2017).

**Figure 3: Boonrueng wetland forest inundated during rainy season**



**Source:** Boonrueng Conservation Group (in Dansriboon T. and Promprakai P., 2017)

**Figure 4: Boonrueng wetland forest in dry season**



**Source:** Boonrueng Conservation Group (in Dansriboon T. and Promprakai P., 2017)

#### **1.4 Livelihoods Contribution of Boonrueng Wetland Forest**

A study conducted by Dansriboon and Promprakai (2017) on the values of Boonrueng wetland forest revealed the monetary value of roughly 125 million Baht generated per year (3.5 million USD) in total. Based on the finding of this study, the villagers of 5 villages with direct access to Boonrueng wetland forest can secure an equivalent income of 14 million Baht annually from the collection of non-timber forest products and freshwater fisheries. The data was generated based on the quantity of collected forest products transferrable into the present market values and added with the labor cost (hours spent on the collection multiplied by a minimum daily wage rate) of 127 household samples in Boonrueng village number 2. Accordingly, the data from the sample size was used to approximate the whole value Boonrueng wetland forest and the estimation of extra individual household income or saved expenses of 23,178.37 Baht annually (740 USD) (Dansriboon T. and Promprakai P., 2017). Boonrueng wetland and riparian forest also provide ecosystem services in the form of 200,000 tons of carbon stock per year, over 2 million cubic meters of water retention in 21 swamps of Boonrueng wetland forest (equivalent to the monetary value of 329,073 Baht or 10,515 USD annually), aquatic animals' nursery and wildlife habitat amounting to 111 million Baht (Sukkumnoed, 2017).

#### **1.5 Methods and Framework**

The paper is substantively developed based on the information made available in the reports and documents for the European Union-funded Empowerment of Networks and Local Authorities for Sustainable Ing Watershed Management Project 2015-2018, led by the Center for People and Forests (RECOFTC) with its implementing partners – namely The Institute of Biodiversity and Environment for Local and ASEAN Development, Chiang Rai Rajabhat University; Puang Paya Payao Institute<sup>1</sup>; Phayao Development Foundation<sup>2</sup>; and the Ing Watershed People's Assembly.<sup>3</sup>

Furthermore, the additional data is collected from a focus group discussion with the Boonrueng Wetland Forest Conservation group and representatives from Women's Group, followed by the in-depth interviews with women leaders, during December 24-25, 2017. There were 10 members present at the focus group discussion – 6 men and 4 women as listed in Annex 1.

Forested Landscapes Governance Assessment Indicators developed by Colfer and Feintrenie (2011) are partly referred to as the guide for the interview questions. In their efforts to develop a

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<sup>1</sup> A local civil society organization active in public communication and media literacy on the issues pertaining to Phayao Lake and Ing Watershed

<sup>2</sup> A non-government organization active in Phayao province with the focus on capacity building and youth training

<sup>3</sup> A people-based mechanism and structured platform represented by members of different communities in the Ing Watershed to facilitate the participatory process of local communities in the Ing watershed management, to partake in the policy formulation and in the bottom-up approach of the Ing watershed management, and to create a learning network and community-based learning center of natural resource conservation.

pragmatically evolving tool for a rapid assessment of local-level governance in the contextual landscape as an additive part of the Center for International Forestry Research's (CIFOR) Adaptive Collaborative Management (ACM), the Governance Assessment Tool (GAT) indicates 3 sections of assessment with scored observation ranging from 1 (no/no functioning well/not at all) to 5 (yes/functioning effectively/consistently well/very well). These sections are:

1) Stakeholders and their relationships with the aim to evaluate whether the inputs and voices of marginalized groups have been ensured in decision-making process, thence the questions focus on existing mechanisms and the functionality, the actual access of each stakeholder category and their voices in decisions that affect them.

2) Formal access to resources covering a bundle of rights to land and forests – access, withdrawal, management, exclusion and alienation – and whether these rights are legally secured.

3) Structure and function of governance examining the formal and customary governance structures whether they are supportive or complementary and effective in their functions of day-to-day management, the sanctions when community-based rules and regulations governing the natural resource management are breached, the management and acceptability of conflicts, levels of trusts among different stakeholders in the landscape, and the links between the community and outsiders.

## **2. LAND GOVERNANCE CONTROVERSY IN BOONRUENG WETLAND FOREST**

### **2.1 Background**

In 1967, the wetland forests, including Boonrueng, in Ing watershed were designated public utilization land under a declaration by the Ministry of the Interior after the public land survey and inventory for rural road construction. The Public Land Deeds no. 2540/2510 (1967) dated December 20<sup>th</sup>, 1967 is the official document of land rights governing Boonrueng forest and covering an area of approximately 485 hectares (RECOFTC, 2015). This category of state land is reserved and allocated for communal use in a way that best aligns with the characteristics of the land and resources, including traditional usage of livestock grazing. Such a governance structure is grounded in the fact that communities have long before this ministerial declaration jointly and customarily managed the land. Thence the Boonrueng community rights and access to land and resources are secured within this formal governance arrangement. Boonrueng community has maintained the historical anecdotes of their villagers' migration, settlement and livelihoods which included an elaboration on wetland forest management agreement, mostly for livestock grazing and habitation. The community members developed the irrigation system, zonation and harvest rules. Their history showed encounters with wild animals as well as traditional beliefs in forest spirits in the nature. These have formed the basis of community's cherishment, Conservation and sustainable use of their forest (RECOFTC, 2017c) that

transcend the physical resources and foster bonding as well as a sense of ownership and appreciation of Boonrueng forest in their lives (Mekong Community Institute, 2017).

The community-based natural resource management in Boonrueng wetland forest was formalized in the period of the first National Economic and Social Development Plan in 1960s. Because of the increased density of population followed by the growing needs for natural resources, the villagers came together to expand the agreements and harvest rules governing more resources in the wetland forest. The official designation of Boonrueng wetland as public utilization land guaranteed the communal land governance structure and security to certain extent. The customary rules and regulations overseeing the conservation of Boonrueng wetland forest are (Boonrueng Wetland Forest Conservation Group, 2017):

1. Prohibition of cutting the trees with diameter larger than 6 inches; in any case of the need for timber harvest, an approval at the village meeting is required. Any breach will be publicly informed at the meeting to determine the appropriate fine.
2. Only branches and twigs can be used for firewood, not the trunk.
3. In case of standing dead trees, the removal and transportation out of the forest require an approval from the village meeting where community members will determine the appropriate price to raise deposits for village fund.
4. Bamboo can be harvested for household consumption; commercial use or processing for sale is prohibited. Any breach will be publicly informed at the meeting for initial warning and other community measures to address the issues, including the appropriate fine.
5. Bamboo shoot can be harvest for household consumption only; commercial sale is prohibited. Any breach will be publicly informed at the meeting to determine the appropriate fine.
6. Prohibition of Inthanin (Queen's Crape Myrtle) and wild orchid for sale; any breach will be fined and prosecuted in court.
7. Any insects, wasp and bees are allowed for collection.
8. Fishing methods of electrocution, explosion and poison are prohibited in all areas. Any breach will be fined by the village meeting and prosecuted in court.
9. Prohibition of fishing in the designated zone. Fishing is prohibited in conservation zone or commonly used area. Any fish caught in this zone will be reported at the village meeting and dealt with measures determined by the community members.
10. Prohibition of catch or shoot any animal in the conservation zone.

Social sanctions and fines are enforced as the basic penalties of these rules. They can be revisited and revised in compatible with changing context and situations as seen in the prohibition of new illegal fishing methods. The revision must be approved by the popular vote at the monthly village meeting in which the voices of all community members from different stakeholder groups are sought equally.

## **2.2 Expropriation of Boonrueng wetland forest for Chiang Khong Special Economic Zone**

The intensification of economic growth and regional connectivity under the Greater Mekong Sub-region Economic Corridor Cooperation, accelerated by the establishment of the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) in 2015, intertwines and interconnects the border communities with the force of globalization more intensively. In order to drive this process, the Thai government has since 2007 boosted the investment and concession for large scale infrastructure development projects, starting with the construction of highway and transportation hubs to bolster trade and accommodate the conveyance of goods. The completion of 250-kilometer long, R3A<sup>4</sup> Highway for the North-South Economic Corridor, with support from the Asian Development Bank linking Kunming in China with Chiang Khong in Thailand through Lao PDR cuts across many communities and causes natural landscape fragmentation (RECOFTC, 2017c).

Subsequently the conversion of public land in preparation for the economic regionalization under AEC in Chiang Khong district is geared up. In 2015, Boonrueng wetland forest and the whole Chiang Khong district were identified as parts of Chiang Rai Special Economic Zone (SEZ) development due to its competitive strategic location favorable for regional logistics and transportation with neighboring countries both inland and waterways channels as shown in Figure 5. Under the Chiang Rai SEZ Development Master Plan, Chiang Khong district is indicated to be the Logistic Hub for international merchandise warehouse and distribution centers, agricultural products' trading center, transportation services and industrial estate at the core (Department of Provincial Administration, n.d. and Boonrueng Wetland Forest Conservation Group, 2017). Chiang Rai provincial administration then took the lead in demarcating and enlisting the public land use categories as a preparatory process for the implementation of the Master Plan.

### **Figure 5: Chiang Rai Special Economic Zone**

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<sup>4</sup> R3A is the highway code: R stands for ROAD; 3 means 3 countries – Thailand, Lao PDR and China; A stands for ASIA.



**Source:** A Guide to Investment in the Special Economic Development Zones (Office of the Board of Investment, 2015)

The Boonrueng wetland forest was hence declared without any prior consultation with the community as the target zone for state land development by separating the forest into 2 land-use types: 1) industrial estate covering an area of 288 hectares, and 2) Maejo University covering an area of 192 hectares. In this process, the legal status of public utilization land (Public Land Deeds) under the Ministry of Interior secured for communal use since 1967 will be revoked and prepared to be transferred into the designation of *Rachapatsadu* land under the Ministry of Finance. According to the *Rachapatsadu* Land Act 1975 (B.E. 2518), this category of land means ‘*every kind of immovable property which is State property except...(land) reverted to the State according to the land law; and (land) in use for the people or reserved for the common use of the people such as foreshores, waterways, highways, lakes*’ (Office of the Council of State, 1997). This forms a stepwise procedure, in a

process to transfer the land and resource rights for private lease, to convert the physical asset of land, its governance, rights and authorization power from the community to serve industrial and economic purposes. It is considered as the ‘dispossession’ of communal land-use rights granted earlier by the State (Sukkumnoed, 2017).

### **3. COLLECTIVE LANDSCAPE MOBILIZATION**

#### **3.1 Collective mobilization at the Boonrueng community level**

The attempt to expropriate Boonrueng Wetland Forest for other land uses within the SEZ has triggered land-use and land governance conflict in Boonrueng community. In August 2015, the local leaders at the district level joined the Boonrueng monthly meeting to share the information on the Industrial Estate and SEZ development. They called upon the villagers to attend the briefing session with the real estate agency in the following week. The villagers, in response, organized urgent meeting to discuss the issue internally and a large number of them were the hometown returnees from working in the industrial estates. They had experienced first-hand the detrimental nature of industrialization and seen how it can cause social and environmental disruptions in the community. Moreover, the fill-up of wetland with compact ground surface is expected to result in the loss of natural water retention and in the diverted flood route to villagers’ agricultural lands and residence. The village meeting therefore concurred on an act of activism to communicate publicly their disagreement and opposition to the wetland forest conversion and the establishment of industrial estate. Their presence and concern was voiced at the meeting with the real estate agency, however, no solid solution, clear direction, or information on the types of industries was proposed and shared (Boonrueng Wetland Forest Conservation Group, 2017).

The collective mobilization across different villages within the community and communication with members who live in other places, particularly in Bangkok, through social media and chat groups has been activated. Funding had been raised and a number of communication materials such as the large vinyl sign stating “No to Industrial Estate” had been placed in Boonrueng community and wetland forest; the T-shirts with opposition message are worn by the villagers. The “Boonrueng Wetland Forest Conservation group” was formed, initially as the ad-hoc group, to lead and coordinate a variety of strategic mobilization and collective actions against wetland forest conversion and expropriation.

Given the involvement and support of many actors in the alliance building, a divergent pool of mobilization tactics has been adopted. Within Boonrueng community and under the coordination of Boonrueng Wetland Forest Conservation group, numerous sub-groups across social classes have been formed, including women’s group, youth’s group, and senior’s group. These stakeholder groups are operating as the volunteers without any payment. They are active in their own capacities in working with external partners and in communicating their agenda to the wider public.

- The women's group, though still carrying their conventional gender roles such as cooking and preparing food provision for visitors (Mekong Community Institute, 2017), has a breakthrough of women's engagement in forest conservation in Thailand. In collaboration with the Mekong Community Institute, the Boonrueng women leaders are vocal through alternative media platforms to voice their opinions and stories in a video series published on Youtube.<sup>5</sup> Women have been represented in all existing thematic committees (such as management, communication, etc.) to engage in public activities on par with men. They acknowledged that the changing situation requires active participation and engagement from both men and women; and that they are responsible to communicate and transfer knowledge on food security, cultural rituals and domestic conflict mediation. The Boonrueng women's group also partakes in the establishment of Ing Watershed Women Network (RECOFTC, 2017a) and plays very active role in the Ing Watershed People's Assembly. It is important to note that eventually women who are active in public sphere will face with time constraints to their other gender roles' commitments and thence when the situation is less intense, women are more likely to withdraw from leadership roles.

- The youth group takes leadership on the interactive Facebook platform administering the "Boonrueng Wetland Forest Conservation" page which has around 1,700 members: 80% of which are in the Ing landscape and the rest are from the media, academics, and other agencies (Ibid., 2017a). The Facebook group was created as the communication tool on the issues and activities with the young generation who are living outside but still have concerns over their homeland development trends and threat to natural resources (Boonrueng Wetland Forest Conservation Group, 2017). Paradigmatic shift among the young generation is visible in the case of Boonrueng community in which homeland attachment and belonging is firm. The outmigration for work and study is deemed temporary and consequently they have strong sense of responsibility and ownership of the forest.

- The senior members are active in re-vitalizing and re-packaging the customary traditions of wetland forest conservation practices and rituals. They also drive the involvement of religious institutions and spiritual ceremonies as the approach to draw the community members together.

Basically the cross-generational social groups adopt different tools and channels to communicate the same message to their target audience.

Under the strong support from these informal social groups and community members, the formal leadership of the village headman can demonstrate and voice the opposition at the sub-district and district levels, claiming the representation from the community. Through the set-up of these locally organized social groups, more frequent gathering and communications happened. Consequently new rituals, events and activities were collaboratively organized such as forest and river ordainment, forest spirit worshipping and fish release ceremonies, exchange and learning dialogues, forest trail,

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<sup>5</sup> Examples of youtube video can be found here: <http://www.mekongci.org/>

community-based research with partners, universities and schools on Boonrueng historical anecdotes in living with the wetland forests and biodiversity, exhibitions, etc. in which official leaders and government agencies were invited to interact, visit and learn more about Boonrueng community. An example of important event worth highlighted here was organized in November 2015 in which the Boonrueng community brought together the Chiang Rai provincial governor with relevant government agencies and private sector, National Human Rights Commissioners, various professors from different universities in Chiang Rai, representatives from the Center for People and Forests (RECOFTC), other civil society organizations and networks to Boonrueng community to exchange information on how industrial estate can cause tremendously adverse impacts on the wetland ecosystem and traditional culture of the community.

Due to the intense conflict on the issue of SEZ, the case of Boonrueng community and its mobilization were known to the environmental reporters' team. Journalists from different media outlets visited Boonrueng community to broadcast and produce their stories. There have been increasing numbers of visitors from key organizations, such as the King Prajadhipok's Institute and Swedish ambassador through the Center for People and Forests (RECOFTC), etc. for field visit and morale support to the community (Ibid., 2017).

Boonrueng community's proposition has not entirely against the development of SEZ per se but simply opposed to the massive scale industrial estate without the participation of local community in the making and design. The definition and perception of SEZ is distinct between the government and the community in which the former is looking only at boosting private investment and the latter aspires for the ecologically-sound community-based entrepreneurship such as organic rice and other natural resource production enhancement.

### **3.2 Mobilization at the Ing Watershed landscape level**

The innovative approach in Boonrueng's case, which has succeeded to secure its wetland management rights and communal land tenure, is the transgression and transition from a community-based movement and networking towards a more integrated synergy of mobilization at the landscape level. As part of their advocacy strategies, they also organize into a technical, team-based structure to work to communicate and raise their agenda with stakeholders outside the community. The Boonrueng Wetland Forest Conservation group, for instance, once established joined the Ing Watershed People's Assembly. Through the Assembly, it has gained access to increased leverage, institutional partnership and community organizations' networks, academic and research support, as well as funding. These mobilization strategies include representation and boycott in relevant public hearings and referenda, joint submission of a letter to the Chiang Rai governor and the National Human Rights Commission with the Ing Watershed People's Assembly and other partners, symbolic activism, the strategic use of integrated and scientific knowledge generation for a community database

using GIS, to mention a few (Boonrueng Wetland Forest Conservation Group, 2017). The approach is obviously and affirmatively on the non-violence path without any antagonism against the government and military regime but firmly grounded on making the evidence- and research-based claim of their agenda in peaceful and collaborative manners.

Not only reaching out to the Ing Watershed People's Assembly, the Boonrueng community took initiative in collaborating with and seeking support from other civil society organizations and universities. Representatives from Boonrueng community made contact and network with the Chiang Khong Conservation Group to jointly address the development of SEZ in the district (Ibid., 2017). Representatives from Boonrueng community took their issue to share at the landscape level and met with former senator in Chiang Rai province. They also participated in provincial forum on Chiang Rai SEZ, together with other communities in the protest against the industrial estate, and submitted joint statement with the Ing Watershed People's Assembly and partners to Ching Khong district chief, media and other relevant government agencies. In addition, they were actively present in academic and policy forums at the northern regional levels such as attending alternative policy dialogue for SEZ in the context of multi-cultural ASEAN at Chiang Mai University.

### **3.3 Current status and impacts**

Chiang Rai provincial office withdrew the proposition to have Boonrueng wetland forest as the site for industrial estate and shifted to another area instead. The decision has been well received among the communities in the Ing watershed because the inefficient use of financial resources that the conversion of wetland could cost beyond the breakeven point in investment. Apparently the real estate investors would have to spend a large amount of money to fill up the wetland, notwithstanding the social cost associated with community and public resistance. In this particular case, it is evident that active citizen and community's engagement in policy making is of highly significant in order to achieve the thorough and comprehensive analysis of costs, benefits and impacts.

At the end of this exposure and mobilization, the community members pointed out the high level of trust and unity among themselves and even with those out-migrated. They also mentioned higher level of trust and engagement with other communities and partners at the Ing watershed landscape. The mobilization has resulted in the effective links to internal and external resources in terms of skills and talents, fund-raising, information and knowledge as well as networking. Through these experiences and movements, the community members are very confident in public communication and situational analysis referring to participatory action research finding. Of these social groups established in Boonrueng community, all have their own fund raised from donation and implementation of certain activities and fund management initiative. A pool of research and academe support to organize and generate local knowledge database has been fostered and playing key roles. These stakeholders have built into strategic networks and partnership.

Challenges remain as how to ensure all stakeholders along the upstream to downstream Ing watershed are in the same page and have common vision regarding joint sustainable watershed management with shared value in partnership at the landscape level. In the next step to upscale the mobilization to register the Ing watershed, including Boonrueng wetland forest, as the international wetland site for global protection status, it requires comprehensive database and support from all relevant stakeholders and communities along the Ing River.

## **CONCLUSION**

This nested interconnection approach in mobilization is the result of a paradigmatic shift in a way that communities are forced to tackle with the larger transnational economic development and industrialization. In addition, it shows a sense of belonging, interconnectedness and identity at the higher structure of landscape. The narrative and justification are that the impacts of land conversion in Boonrueng wetland will affect the entire watershed landscape. Boonrueng community members have reiterated the stronger ties and trust built within the community through this experience as well as the solidarity with the other communities in the landscape of Ing watershed. The mobilization has become more consolidated and the experiences of their struggles created a sense of unity in which the Boonrueng community is active and willing to support and become a part of movements in the Ing watershed. At the community and landscape level, the plan is to development Boonrueng wetland forest learning center as the living museum and exhibition for community members, particularly the young generation, and visitors. At the international level, the joint collaboration is moving towards the internationally-recognized registration of Boonrueng wetland and the whole Ing watershed for its global protection status.

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## **Annex 1: Name list of participants in the focus group discussion and interview**

### **Boonrueng Wetland Forest Conservation Group Members**

- 1) Mr. Srongpol Jantharueng, Chairperson
- 2) Mr. Suwit Karahun, Vice Chairperson
- 3) Mr. Somkiet In-rueng, Secretary
- 4) Mrs. Janram Ruengwilai, Secretary
- 5) Mr. Jaran Thammawong, Treasurer
- 6) Mr. Sumet Jeen-namsai, Public Relations
- 7) Mr. Pichayesapong Kuruprus-shamak, Cordinator

### **Boonrueng Women's Group Members**

- 1) Mrs. Neam Jantharueng, Chairperson
- 2) Mrs. Kannikar Jinasam, Vice Chairperson
- 3) Mrs. Lamyai Jeen-namsai, Member