

Phatcharaporn Sakhom. 2009. **Cultural Capital for Forest Resource Management: A Case Study at Pa-Sakae Community, Tumbol E-pum, Amphur Dansai, Loei Province.**
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ABSTRACT

This research is conducted through qualitative research methods with objectives to analyze the cultural capital components in the contexts of Thai-Laos bordering community and to analyze the process to transform these cultural capitals to be mechanisms in community-based forest management. The theoretical concepts of the research were community cultural, cultural capital and community forest management. The field methods and tools used in the research were in -depth interview, semi-structured interview, focused group discussion as well as participatory and non-participatory observations.

Research found that Pa Sakae community was formally established in 1928 or around 80 years back. The community was surrounded by rich natural resources and good environment in the past and people were highly and continuously dependence on and utilized forest resources for their main livelihoods. As a result, environment and natural resources were highly degraded due to over harvesting and forest encroachment from people inside and outside the community to turn vast amount of land into mono-cropping especially Para rubber and maize. These resulted with natural disasters which had then raised people's awareness in environmental and ecosystem rehabilitation to reduce those impacts, especially forest as the primary source of other resources and as crucial watershed area to serve local livelihoods. Therefore, the cultural capitals have become an important tool in this community-based forest management process, these cultural capitals derived from two types of cultures 1) the internal cultures such as the believes of ancestors' spirit which practiced through rituals called 'leang ban', 'pa dong hor' or sacred forest, as well as other wisdoms or knowledge, and 2) cultures that adopted from outside such as the relationship systems and social networks which have been adjusted and reproduced the values to become cultural capitals to strengthen and empower community-based forest management. Consequently these cultural capitals have been transformed towards four components of

community-based forest management including forest utilizations, rules and regulations, community organizations and external supports. These were recognized as “innate knowledge” which hold the sense of local institutions and become appropriate mechanisms of forest management. Considering economic aspects, the process like this benefits to not only for community but to individual household to become resilience towards the rapid changing situations, at the same time such process can be applied to resolve other problems in the community to maintain unity and sense of local cooperation, back up with their long term cultural history.

This process reflects local resilience and efforts to maintain their livelihoods under the rapid changing environment as well as empowering themselves to respond to government policies which emphasize bringing external inputs, capitalism and declaring more protected forest areas. The community at Pa Sakae has developed their own cultural mechanisms that can be used as the tools in community-based forest management through traditional forest management system which included local traditional cultures along with the recent developed management systems for more effective and efficiency in community-based sustainable forest management.

