

Community Organizations in Mangrove Forest Management, Paklok Bay, Phuket, Thailand.

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Abstract

This paper focuses on the foundation and the role of community organizations and mangrove forest management in the area of Paklok Bay, Phuket, Thailand. The research was quality research, by interviewing, observation, and using documentary. The study result was found that the foundation of community organization can be classified in two step. The first step, beginning to realize the problems of deterioration of mangrove forest after severe trespassing of economy for trade, and then jointly established conservation group. The second step, making the stability to members and villagers. Role of community organization there are 2 kinds of organization, that are direct managing organization such as coastal resources reservative organization and youth club and indirect managing organization, making the stability that villagers such as saving group, rice group, etc.

Keywords: community organization, mangrove forest management, Paklok Bay

1. Introduction

Thailand is a resourceful, diverse, bio complexity country. Diversities of forest system cover many parts of the country from mountain in the north to the coast in the south as the Thai proverb “in water have fish in field have rice”. Diversities accentuate Thailand full of cultural diversity and develop to folk wisdoms for maintaining their live under the natural state in each area. (Visut Bimai, 2005)

Due to the diversities, some reflect from the mangrove forest. Mangrove forest is a forest which is the aquaculture place for much kind of animals such as shrimp, fish, scallop and many more, and also be the fishing place for villagers. Mangrove forests in Thailand cover many parts of Eastern, Central, and both side of Southern Thailand. Mangrove forest in the south cover 40% of coastal area, and most usually found in the west coast. From the report in 2004, the number of mangrove forest area is 1,133,634 Rai in the Andaman provinces where are Ranong, Phang - Nga, Satul, Trang, Phuket and Krabi. (UNEP, 2005)

By the way, the growth of single linear economy which is supported by the government since the first national economic and social development plan, causes mangrove forest in the country decline. In the period of the seventh national economic and social development plan, the area has been decline 8000 Rai per year in average (Office of the National Economics and Social Development Board, 1997). In the period of the ninth national economic and social development plan, there are only 1.5 million Rai of mangrove forest (Office of the National Economics and Social Development Board, 2003). Even though the direction from the king requires people to save remain mangrove forest and coastal ecological resources, and combine with policies in the tenth national economic and social development plan which tend to operate the sustainable development concept. But Researcher still doubt in the practical process because government’s development plans still contrast each other in term of policy and practical process.

In the previous, mangrove forest management as same as the community management which operated by government, usually use “the state culture” (Anan Kanjanapan, 1995) which is under the state idealism or capitalism, and bring to use as the key point for the operation. These ideals classified as the advantage ideal which convert state

natural resources as the value than the precious. Moreover, single linear management, exclusiveness, exclusion concepts also usually be adapted in the operation. The government thinks that duty of the management should be controlled by units from the government only. They block the participation from the community people, think like colonial concept which always set a precedent to the community and reject any community traditions. (Anan Kanjanapan, 2006)

In case of Phuket's mangrove forest in 1987, after the age of tin mining which stand alongside Phuket for long time ago. It was necessary to find out new economic resources. They found that Phuket's coastal areas were covered with natural resources and very attractive. These things pushed Phuket became a new travel place where promoted by the government since the fourth national economic and social development plan as well. (Phiket Environment Club.,1998). This reason causes the coastal area are bought by capitalists to settle resorts, hotels, marinas, etc. At the same time, the exported fishery such as shrimp farming has grown rapidly (Nakarin R-sawai, 2,008), and causes mangrove forest then is occupied and destroyed continually.

Area which impact from problem is Paklok bay. Paklok bay is in the Paklok sub-district, Talang district, Phuket province. Paklok bay is one of the 14 bays in Pang Nga bay and cover 23,650 Rai or 38 square kilometers. Paklok sub-district has 9 villages where all settle close to the coast. This area is still a diverse cultural place. 90% of villagers are Muslim (Paklok TAO, 2009). The villager's way of life is impacted by mangrove forest destroying and the exported fishery. They have to waste their lands, money and leaving their home to be labour in the big cities. Moreover, drug problem comes back to the community again and everything looks worse. Consequently, Paklok villagers from many villages have to find the solution by themselves. They later set up the Community organization to operate the direct and indirect mangrove forest management, and secure the stability of people in the community.

2. Purpose of Study

The purpose of this study are studied the foundation of the community organization and Paklok's mangrove forest management. And analyzed the role of community organization and Paklok's mangrove forest management

3. Design and Methods

This research is a qualitative approach. The unit of analysis is community organization in Ban (village) Paklok and Ban Bangrong, Paklok sub-district, Talang district, Phuket province. The two community have a rich mangrove forest This research uses the collecting data methods by interviewing villager's leader and both leaders and members of both community organizations, making non-participatory observation from community organization's activities and reviewing related documents.

4. The Context of Paklok Bay.

Phuket, which had famous for world – class travel, is Thailand' largest islands, and surrounded by 32 smaller island that as the island has a total area for 570.034 square kilometers. The west coast to mountainous and many of beautiful white-sand beach, and east land soil and mangroves. The main industry of Phuket as tin (it has slowed after 1985 when the price of tin fell by half), rubber, fishing, and tourism which has become the biggest earner for Phuket, and continues to grow. (Phuket provincial officer, 2012)

Paklok Bay is locate east of the Phuket island, Thalang district, Paklok sub-district. Paklok sub-district has 9 villages, however, the village that contact with the Paklok Bay a 4 villager as Ban Pak-Cheed, Ban Paklok, Ban Bang-Rong, and Ban Yar-Mu.

For geographical of Paklok Bay, the west side of the community is the mountain which for conservation of natural forest. And, it has a orchard as durian, SaTo, mangoteen, etc. which is a source of income and resource to sustain the entire province of Phuket. Next, it is the street number 4027 (Thao Thep Krasatri and Thao Sri Soon Thorn Monument Junction to Paklok Bay and Muang Mai – New Town). Is the location of housing and shop along the route, then, the coconut plantation, and mangrove forest. Final, it was the sea as Paklok Bay which with an area of approximately 1,000 acres of sea grass and dugongs. For this reason, the main occupation of the original. From the mountain to the sea is connected with nature.

The various ethnic groups living together in the Paklok Bay Community such as Buddhists, Muslims, and Chinese. The majority of Muslims, followed by the Buddhist. However, the two have a great relationship together, and the religious influence of the mangrove forest management

5. Result

5.1 *The foundation of community organization and the mangrove forest management*

In this research pays attention only 2 villages above as case studies due to the strong management they are about mangrove forest and studied the differences as per detail

5.1.1 Ban Paklok, this is the first village in Paklok Bayt where realized on the impact of the way of life due to the development and take too much natural resources. The foundation of the organization can be classified into 2 steps that are

The first step: Paklok sea and coastal resources reserve organization has taken place in 1997 by villagers who did fishery. They saw the capitalists started using high technology fishing devices such as trawl and floating seine. The shrimp farming has started and destroy mangrove forest where is the aquaculture place for sea animals. In 1998, the community concerned that the official unit did not pay attention on this. They then recruited volunteers to seize the intruded capitalists by themselves. They seized an excavator and sent to the police. Unfortunately, the police rejected a case and refused to do anything and released the intruders. Villagers realized that no one could help them and they then established the reserve group by developed from the voluntary group. Non-government organization (NGO) officials came to help them set up the group and took them to talk to the governor to convince him announced Paklok's mangrove forest as the reserve area. The negotiation was successful. Then villagers made field study trip to Laem makham village, Sikau district, Trang province where a model of mangrove forest management was. In 2000, villagers developed their group to be the Paklok sea and coastal resources reserve organization by having 20 committees to issue laws and regulations.

The second step: Making the stability to members and villagers because "the reserve" was a voluntary job but they still needed money for living, so the organization started set up activity groups to help villagers which are:

1) The saving group, this unit was set by villagers and NGO. Taking them field study trip to Songkhla province. Most of villagers supported the project and wanted to operate, but some disagreed because they gave reason that many same kind of units which supported by the government have failed before. By the way, this unit was set in November, 1996 with 50 members but increased rapidly to 455 members or 60% of villagers in Ban Paklok in 2008.

2) Fishing device foundation, set in 1999 and received the financial support by Fishery department in the first step for THB100,000. At first, the group would give the financial loan to member but money was not enough to operate. Then they used this money to buy fishing devices and sold to members as they requested. Members could pay by installments with the 1% of interest rate to the group. The group allowed member stocked the share. Each share worth THB100, and not allowed to hold over 5 shares per member. The yearly profit shared to everyone by 6 of committees received THB500 each, and paid back to members 50-60% of yearly profit.

3) Rice bank, set in 2000. This project took place after the field study trip at Ban Sompoj, Trang province. They used money which given by her majesty in 1999 and bought the rice from the intown of Phuket province and sold to member less than other price markets.

4) The group of making curry, set in 2000 as same as rice bank. Members first were 10 and most of them were old women. This group faced the obstacles because some had to raised children, so this caused members decreased to 6. No administrative structure, all members helped to do curry together as per the market requested. The markets are in Phuket and Bangkok. The income they got would share in the group. By the way, the incomes have decreased due to raw materials which were very expensive in the present.

5) Ruk Ban Rao youth club, Veerasatree Anusorn school, this club established by a student. He angered villagers because his father was captured due to illegal fishery. He then set up the club to compete with the Paklok reserve organization. At first, the club did some activities like planting and keeping garbage. They then created youth camp "Ruk Ban Rao youth camp" and did activities alongside the community as well. By the way, a leader of Paklok reserve organization had been shot in 2000. This issue made their parents concerned about their security. The club then had to change new role by paying attention to do mass media for the reservation. They were trained by NGO for 1 month and received many rewards such as the green world prize in 2008.

5.1.2 Ban Bangrong, community organization was set follow the successful of Paklok community organization. Bangrong villagers realized on the impact which occurred in the community. Their mangrove forest would destroy rapidly. Government offered the concession to capitalists for making wood charcoal, shrimp farming, and tourism also. Some of villagers got the impact such as losing their land, drug and started leaving their home. These problems made the leaders talked each other to solve problems by using the mosque as the meeting place. From a little talk to

formal meeting, they assumed that even activities which occurred in the village would develop the village's economy, but it would affect long term negative impact to village and had to find out the solution to save their way of life.

Firstly, the organization provided activities and information to let villagers knew about the problems and did activities together such as planting. But later numbers of member decreased gradually and might get downtrend in the future. Leaders brainstormed their thinking to find out the way which could connect between the reservation and the livelihood because villagers felt that the activities they did could not help them full. They needed money to live. Then the organization started new activities about mangrove forest management though little community organization which villagers set up before. They both did activities each other by used the mosque as the center. Some profits which each group received would bring to the mosque for managing the service to the community. The groups they have are:

- 1) Al Amanah saving group, this is the first group that were set in the village for solving the dept problem and the unsecured live due to the destroying of mangrove forest. This group operated under Islamic regulation that was there's no interest. Some profits shared to members and did advantages to the community such as building mosque.
- 2) Eco-tourism group was in tourist service center. Members used this place to greet the visitors and there were activities around the place. For instant, restaurant which used raw materials within the village and cooked by 4 of housewives daily. Moreover, kayak group would serve tourists visit islands in Pang Nga bay also.
- 3) Moreover, the organization has rent the pier from Paklok community organization and used for the small boats which took the visitors to islands in Phang-Nga bay such as Yao island, Na Kha island. The rate for rent was THB 25,000 per year.

5.2 Role of community organization and Paklok's mangrove forest management

There are difference between role of community organization and Paklok's mangrove forest management, that are

5.2.1 Ban Paklok, there are 2 kinds of organization which are related to mangrove forest management, that are

- 1) Direct managing organization, there are 2 which are Paklok sea and coastal resources reservative organization. This group's responsibility is to save mangrove forest and issue the regulation. Another is Ruk Ban Rao youth club, Veerasatree anusorn school. This group's responsibility is to provide information and stimulate villagers realizing the essential of mangrove forest.
- 2) Indirect managing organization, which are Paklok cooperative group, fishing device foundation, rice bank, making curry group. Role of these groups are to make the stability that villagers will have income to live and have suitable compensations to them and community.

5.2.2 Ban Bangrong, community organization does not relate to mangrove forest management directly, but they first pay attention to the stability of villager in the community. The organization tries to point the advantages of being organization to villagers from the mangrove forest. Moreover, they provide the understanding to visitors through the Eco-tourism group. Showing their activities in the community to the visitors. Most of villagers use this place to share ideas and meeting also. This organization can make the income and compensation to community, giving scholarship to their children, building the mosque and many more.

6. Discussion and Conclusion

This study reveals that Ban Paklok is the first village where realize on the impact of losing mangrove forest from the development by state and capitalists. The community organization was set from the cooperation between villagers in the area, and guided by NGO and the state unit. They adapted concepts they got from other villages, and use it create community organization which related to mangrove management and villagers stability.

For Ban Bangrong, community organization occurred by villagers who faced problems such as dept and poverty. They first started with a little talk in the mosque, and watched the success of Paklok community organization. They then set up the group and link the connection to area surround them. The main objective was to make the stability and provide suitable compensation to villagers by used mosque as the center of the group.

In case of the role, Ban Paklok have 2 kinds of organization which are related to mangrove forest management. One is the direct managing organization that are Paklok sea and coastal resources reserve organization and Ruk Ban Rao Youth Club, Veerasatree Anusorn school. Another is the indirect managing organization. This organization tends to make the villager stability to the community. For Ban Bangrong, the community organization tends to the stability of villager in the community first. Villagers have to spend the income to live, making the occupation and compensation

to villagers.

From the study above, found that both villages are the community organization which have essential functions to mangrove forest management, and were models for other organizations that interested to study such as the student groups – Ruk Ban Rao Youth Club, Veerasattree Anusorn secondary school – are show there projects to the public and media. Moreover, still reward for achievement as Green Planet award from PTT. (Petroleum Authority of Thailand) Public Company Limited. The achievement they got cause from these reasons:

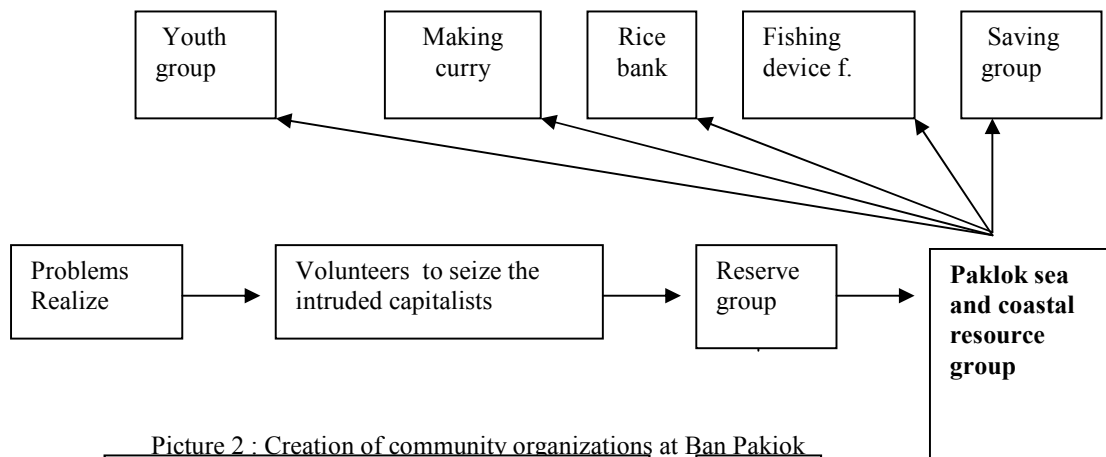
1. Community organizations occur from the villagers who realize on the impact of losing mangrove forest. Even the environment surround the communities are quite different, but they can adapt the advantages from other villages and use efficiency.
2. Community organizations always review themselves by doing meeting several times to prepare the situation that change everyday. The organizations step forward very well due to the close relationship between villagers and community.
3. Community organizations have to make the villager stability to villagers when they participate the organization. The organization's advantages must conform to villager's advantages also.
4. There are the differences of the foundation of 2 organizations. Paklok organization first tend to solve the intruded mangrove forest by the capitalists, but Bangrong organization started with the making of the saving group, to make villager stability. But there is same purpose that is to save the mangrove forest.

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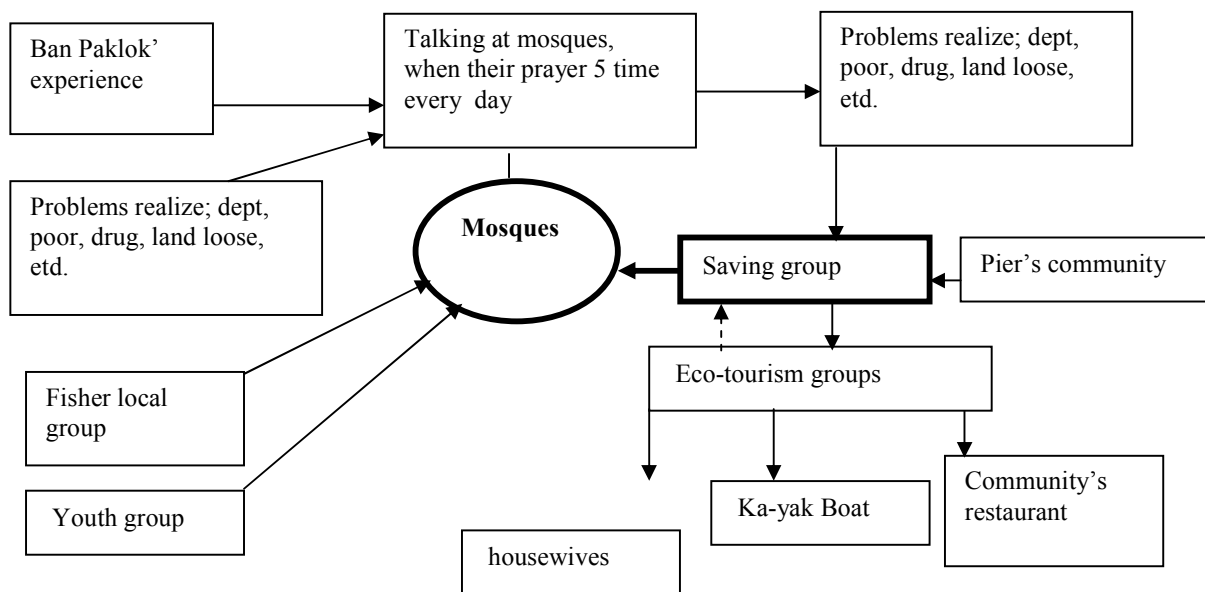
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Picture 2 : Creation of community organizations at Ban Paklok
To talk with governor, field study trip → NGO



Picture 3 : Creation of community organizations at Ban Bangrong

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