

Planting *Pandanus* palm to protect mangroves

Peeling *Pandanus* leaves for processing, Krabi, Thailand © S Sereepawong



LOCATION

Ban Khlong Yang, Koh Lanta, Krabi, Thailand

PRIORITY PWS

- Economic Valuation
- Sustainable Livelihoods
- Sustainable Business Practices

DURATION

May 2009 to November 2010

MFF GRANT AMOUNT

US\$9,696

Objectives

This project had three specific objectives:

- ① to demarcate a “no encroachment” area of mangroves;
- ② to ensure sufficient *Pandanus* supplies to support weaving and handicrafts production aimed at increasing community incomes; and
- ③ to increase conservation awareness and capacity among youth groups and community members.

Background

The area around Ban Khlong Yang in Koh Lanta district of Krabi province is predominantly flat land, suitable for rubber and oil palm plantations. The coastal ecosystem is a combination of wet forest and mangroves.

The Coordinating Centre of the Conservation Network for Mangrove Protection was established in 2005 by village volunteers from three villages. The Network aims to protect local marine and coastal resources. To scale up conservation activities, the volunteer

group has reached out to 11 villages in the area. Through regular conservation and sustainable use activities, one of the villages was recognized by Krabi province as a model village for environmental conservation in 2008.

Target beneficiaries

People in 188 households earning a living from working on rubber and oil palm plantations, small-scale fishing, and trade and services.

Outputs

- ▶ Organisation and facilitation of a community forum for 90 stakeholders to introduce the project’s objectives and approaches, and to gain support and agreement from local landowners and government officials.
- ▶ Establishment of a no-encroachment boundary line extending about three kilometres across local mangroves and marked on large-scale maps.
- ▶ Planting of 2,700 *Pandanus* plants (with an 80% survival rate) along the boundary line to protect about one hectare of mangroves.

Accomplishments and challenges

Community leaders, government officers and landowners came to a mutual understanding regarding the use of marginal land to be planted with *Pandanus*.

Demarcating the mangrove area indirectly helped to reduce water pollution and improve the condition of the mangroves.

Community members now have an adequate supply of *Pandanus* for use in weaving and handicrafts, and as a result have started to gain some supplementary income.

Lastly, local youth group members have a better understanding of the value of conserving mangroves and coastal resources.

Challenges

Unclear boundaries between private land and public mangrove areas were a challenge. Because of disputed boundaries, several landowners did not allow any *Pandanus* planting. The project organized negotiations with these landowners in open fora that included women and youth groups. These were successful in several cases, allowing the project to plant *Pandanus* on private land.

Contributions to cross-cutting themes

Gender equality

The local *Pandanus* Weaver Women's Group took the lead in the project's handicraft support activity.

Lessons learned

The *Pandanus* Weaver Women's Group managed to generate some income from the products they sold, as well as pass on their knowledge to youth groups in the community

school. Members of the group demonstrated their skills in weaving with enthusiasm, even though it is a time-consuming activity. Producing a mat of two square metres takes about 10 days, for example. However, the returns are thought to be worth the effort, particularly as prices are strong. The current price of dyed *Pandanus* fibre is about US\$13–17 per kg.

Project beneficiaries will continue to monitor and prevent any encroachment in the reforested *Pandanus* areas, promote supplementary income generation, especially through weavers' groups, and teach local knowledge about *Pandanus* weaving in community schools to instil conservation awareness in younger generations.

Partners and their contribution

The participating communities made an in-kind contribution valued at US\$10,750, and the Khlong Yang Sub-district Administrative Organization contributed US\$734 in cash.

CONTACT INFORMATION

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Pandanus leaf products, Krabi, Thailand © P.Thongkong

"The community set up a good example for conservation. It is difficult to see how this project could be replicated or scaled up successfully within a few years, unless there is practical policy support and systematic enforcement."

— MR PHISIT THONGKHONG
PROJECT MANAGER