

Food Security, Tenure Security and Community Forestry in Burma

Oliver Springate-Baginski, UEA



The problems

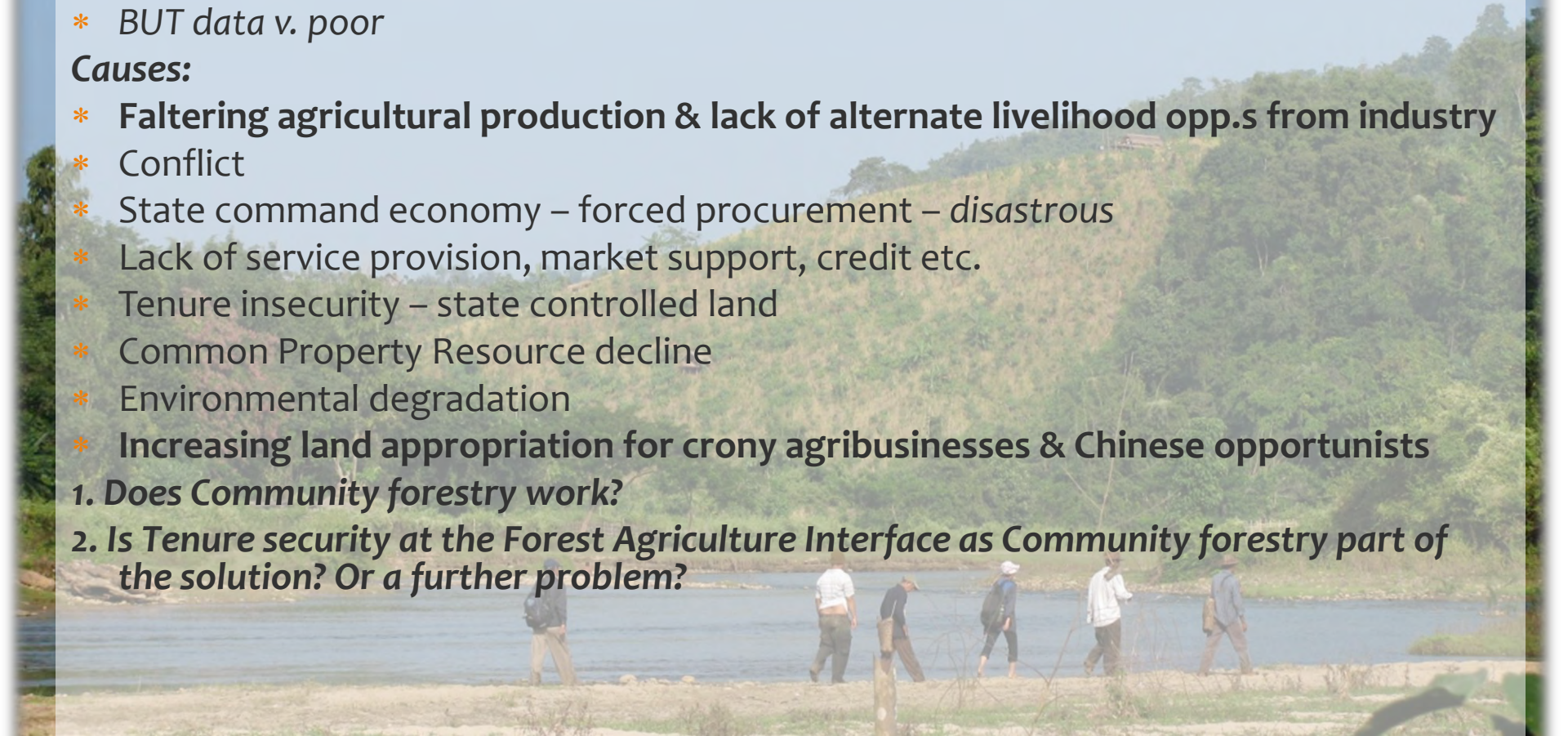
- * **One of Southeast Asia's and the World's poorest countries** (UNDP 2007/2010).
- * poverty headcount: 32% across the ~59 m population
- * 10% below the UNDP's food poverty line.
- * Rural poverty is significantly higher than urban poverty (36% / 22%)
- * In Chin State, (upland North), 73% are poor, and 40% fall below the food poverty line.
- * moderately underweight children 34% nationally, 60% in Rakhine State
- * *BUT data v. poor*

Causes:

- * **Faltering agricultural production & lack of alternate livelihood opp.s from industry**
- * Conflict
- * State command economy – forced procurement – *disastrous*
- * Lack of service provision, market support, credit etc.
- * Tenure insecurity – state controlled land
- * Common Property Resource decline
- * Environmental degradation
- * **Increasing land appropriation for crony agribusinesses & Chinese opportunists**

1. Does Community forestry work?

2. Is Tenure security at the Forest Agriculture Interface as Community forestry part of the solution? Or a further problem?



Outline of lecture

1. Burma's unique context:
 - * geographical, historical, recent changes
2. Food security issues, Forests and Forest-Agriculture Interface
3. Study of Community forestry

1. The Context

Geographical Context

Agro-ecological zones

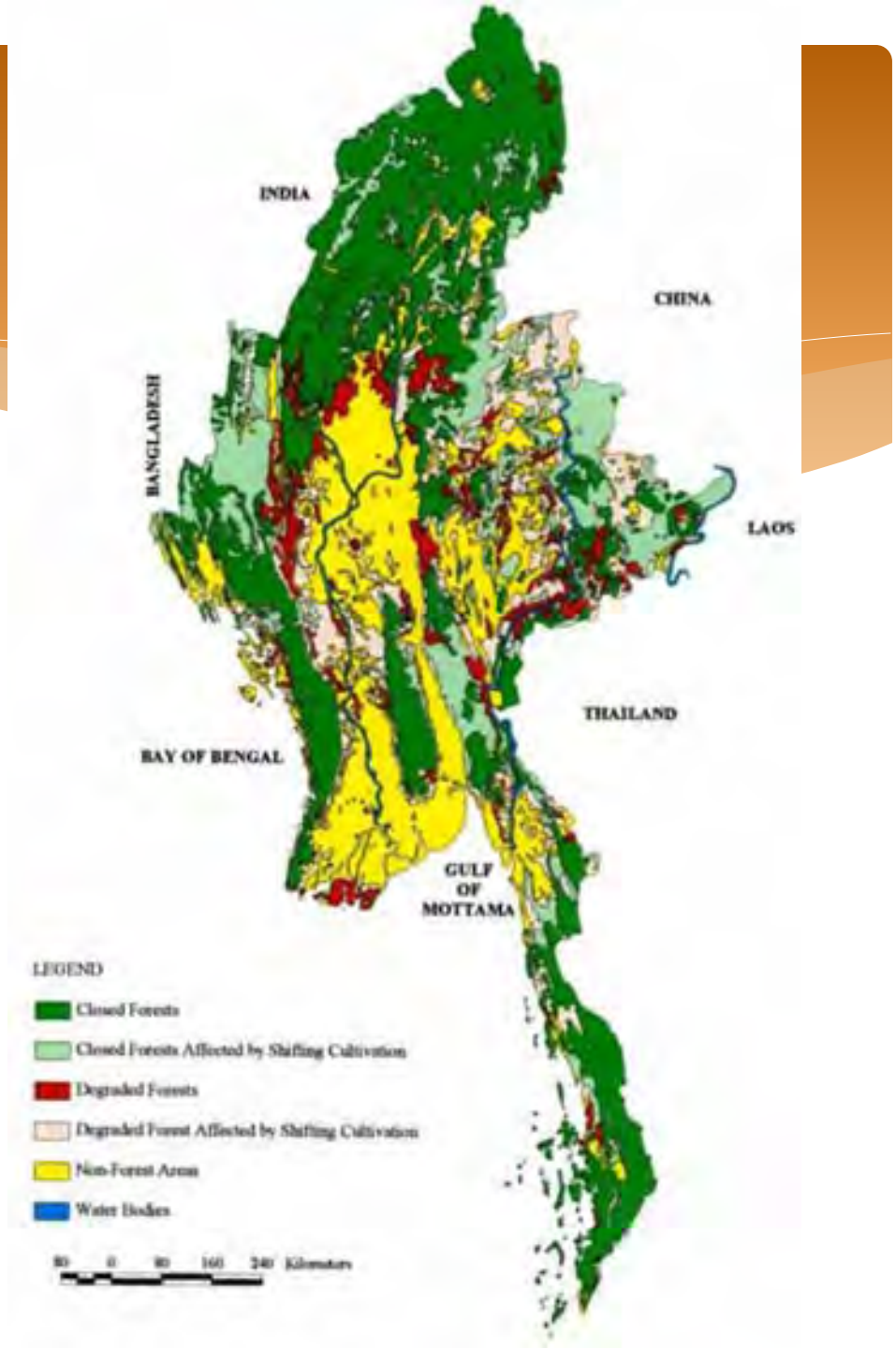
1. **Uplands**- fallows cultivation (*taungya*) – biod. hotspot
2. **Irrawady Basin** – ‘dry zone’
3. **Lower Irrawady & delta** – *rice basket*
4. **Coastal zone** – fisheries

Ethnic groups

- * Bamar majority – 60-70%
- * Minority Ethnic groups 30-40%

Conflict areas

- * Kachin / Karen / Shan / Chin / ... (uplands!)



Historical Context : Timeline –to 30s

9th C - emergence of Burmese state – around Irrawaddy Basin –
Bagan – domination of pre-existing Pyu & Mon groups

Succession of Dynasties - 16th C reunified under Konbaung dynasty -
sacked Ayutthya , capital of Siam 18th C

19th C -British colonisation progressively: 3 wars: 1824-6 / 1852 / 1885
Timber a major motivation (1858 – Forest Dept initiated under Brandis)

Decapitation of prior regime ⇒ political vacuum

Ruled as part of India - divide & conquer policies hills / plains

Late 19th Century on - Lower Burma agricultural boom – forests
cleared for paddy – in-migration– worlds largest rice exporter

Emergence of Independence movement along Indian Congress lines –
more Bose than Gandhi – trained with Japanese on Hainan

1932 Hsaya San insurrection

Timeline – 2nd WW to 1990

1939-45 – very destructive Japanese / British war

Independence movement sided with Japanese then British /

hill ethnic groups allied with British throughout

1947 Panglong agreement – Ang San agreed major hill groups

1947 Ang San & key leaders murdered

1948 Independence

1950s – leading SE Asian country - key players in Non-Aligned Movement / Bandung Conf. 1955 – but growing civil unrest

1962 Military coup - ‘caretaker’ military govt. under Ne Win introduced autarkic socialist planning– mismanagement

1988 Mass democratisation movement – military massacres of 1,000s of protestors - new SLORC Military coup

1989 SLORC held elections – National League for Democracy under Ang San Su Kyi won 80% of seats – results rejected

Liberalisation policies – incl. timber marketing & export



Recent developments

2007 Demonstrations ‘Saffron Revolution’

2008 February - Constitutional reform began

2008 May – Cyclone Nargis ~200,000 dead –
‘unprecedented’ mismanagement of relief

2010 National & regional (managed) elections ⇒
Parliament under new ex-military President
Thein Sein (NLD boycotted - didn’t seek to
register)

2011 Rapid quasi-democratisation – release of
political prisoners / legalisation of labour
unions / Chinese dams stopped ‘will of people’
/ Wikileaks US ‘dramatic NGO influence ...

**Ang San Su Kyi & Pres Thein Sein ‘working
together** - ‘cautiously optimistic’;

Myint (economic adviser) calling for concerted
policy action and international support to
address poverty and food insecurity (2011).

**Extensive policy reform process ongoing – esp.
LAND, AGRICULTURE, FORESTS ...**

Threats from power elites / cronies

‘Burma Burnout’ – Dr Nay Win Maung



2. Food security & Forest Agriculture Interface issues

food security issues

- * *68% of the labour force agro-based (Hudson-Rodd & Htay 2010)*
- * **Rural livelihoods** -smallholder agriculture, complemented by
 - * forestry and forest product collection, livestock keeping, fishing, labouring, petty trade, remittances (Fujita *et al.* 2009).
- * very limited non-agricultural employment alternatives.
- * **smallholder agriculture in crisis**
- * **Conflict & militarisation** created very weak institutional governance, extreme corruption, lack of trust, chronic underfunding for service delivery and consequent lack of capacity.
- * Increasing prevalence of *female-headed households and feminisation of the rural* workforce, particularly in ethnic areas.
- * ***very little reliable data on key factors***

production, marketing, credit

- * **Faltering agricultural production:**

- * *In the 1930s Burma was the world's largest rice exporter (~3.3m tonnes /yr: Govt. of Burma 1965), but production has since stagnated under heavy state control & mismanagement. **Very little prod. data***

- * **Marketing and pricing problems:**

- * *Emerging only slowly from the pre-1988 era of state controlled prices and distribution, limited market information, high transportation costs and instability in food and commodity prices.*
- * **Only in 2003 forced cropping patterns and obligatory sale to GoM below market price annulled,**
 - * although now technically illegal it is still practiced throughout the country by local officials.
- * **rural majority can't afford to access food through the market**
- * **Land poverty, plot fragmentation and landlessness:**
 - * over 60% of farmers own less than 2 ha, with patches under 0.4 ha increasing by 152% from 1993 to 2003, but under 2 ha is considered below food security levels generally in Myanmar (Myanmar agricultural census 2003)
- * **Farmer debt crisis:**
 - * *indebtedness is a chronic problem in many areas, exacerbated by climatic factors, e.g. monsoon failures in the dry zone and flooding and tsunamis in the delta region.*
 - * Crop failures can lead to consumption loans, which in the absence of formal credit markets can have monthly interest rates over 20%, and the poorest, with less collateral, face the highest rates.

Land grabbing:

- * Upland cultivation is therefore now highly vulnerable to increasing land dispossession by agribusiness (FSWG 2010).
- * *as land values grow through accelerating economic activity,* private companies are increasingly appropriating land with military-state support:
- * asset-stripping smallholders with little or no compensation - pauperise smallholders and exacerbate social conflict. (FSWG 2010, Kramer & Woods 2011).
- * >1.7 m acres have been officially appropriated so far (DAP 2010).
- * Prevalent problem throughout Asia (Lao, Vietnam, Indonesia)

Forest Agriculture Interface :

Decline of customary land institutions

- * *especially for northern uplands: shifting cultivation (taungya) has been historically depended on customary tenure regimes, which do not fit into formal agriculture or forest administrative categories***
- * *marginalised by both administrations.***
- * *local social institutions have been heavily strained, with customary rights and traditional land management correspondingly undermined.***
- * *lack of respected and trusted authority and poor enforcement previously communally-managed land are becoming de facto open-access resources whose overuse is eroding their ecological integrity.***
- * *Land degradation: much of Myanmar's agricultural land is vulnerable to degradation, and as production has intensified and management weakened soil is deteriorating (NCEA /UNEP 2009).***

Forests

- * Of 67.6 m ha land area, forests currently cover around 48%,
- * declining trend for the last century, particularly dramatic for dense forests, more than halved in the last twenty years
- * The long -term decline due to;
 - * commercial timber harvesting (and the indirect effect of increasing accessibility through road construction),
 - * change of land use (especially land hunger from the growing population),
 - * intensifying pressure on remaining forests for livelihood needs especially fuelwood.
 - * Lack of regulated use
- * Forest reservation was initiated by the British from 1856, creating a national forest estate but taking over control of many villages' forests in the process.
- * Posts 1962 - Military nationalisation of all land compounded this process

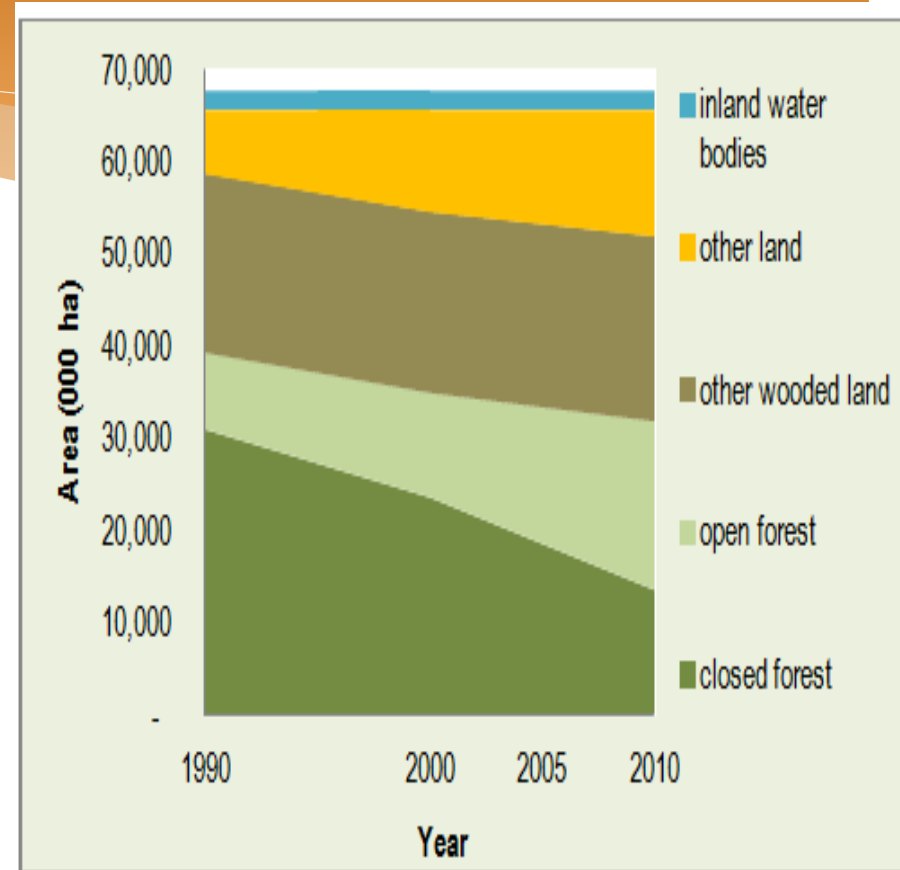


Figure 1: Land Use Change in Myanmar

- * Timber harvesting, marketing & export liberalisation after 1988, and associated revised forest laws 1995 have legalised cut & run forest harvesting across the country



4. Community Forestry in Burma

Emergence of Community Forestry Policy in Burma

- * Returning control of the management rights and responsibilities for village forests to the villages became seen by policy makers as critically important in the 1990s
 - * to mobilise communities to protect and regenerate forests,
 - * to ensure their forest product needs fulfilled locally
 - * (*But no reference to taungya!*)
- * Community Forestry Instruction (CFI) issued in 1995
- * Based on Nepal model – ‘forest users’ self organise, develop management plan & seek approval from DFO – 30 yr lease
- * Policy commitments for up to 20% of forest lands to be ‘handed over’ – **10% of country**

Donor supported CF implementation

United Nations Development Programme 'Human Development Initiative (HDI)' 1994-2002

- * in **Southern Shan State, Dry Zone and Ayeyawady** Division.

Japanese International Cooperation Agency (JICA) "Community Forestry Training and Extension Project"

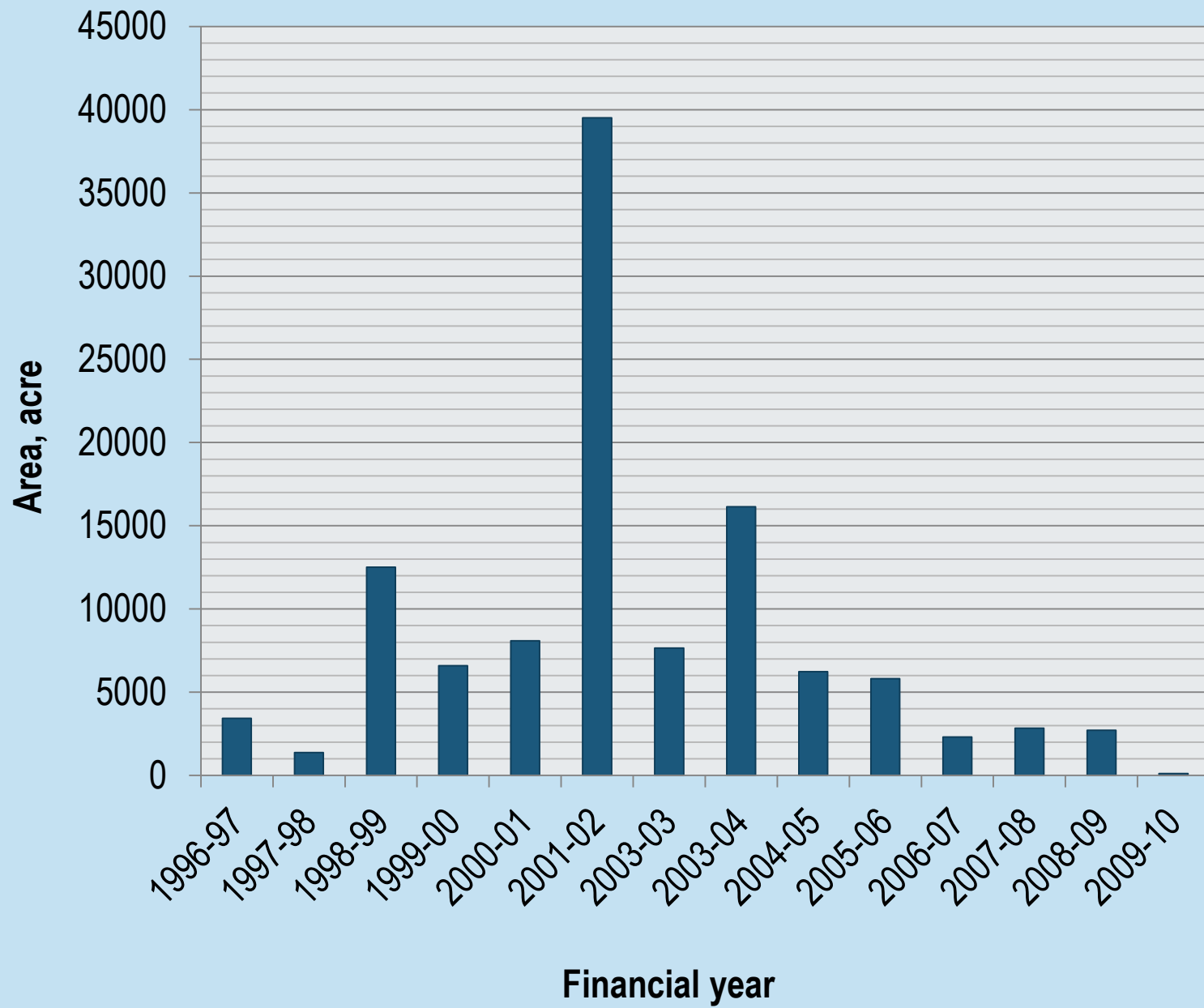
- * with the Forest Department in the **Dry Zone** 2003-2006
- * formed 117 users' groups-area of 12,728 acres of community forests. 26 got cert.

UK Government Department for International Development 'Pyoe Pin' 2009-2011

- * supported CF in **Kachin** State through two NGOs
- * Two CFs have been granted certificates so far, and the remaining ~60 CFs are still awaiting.

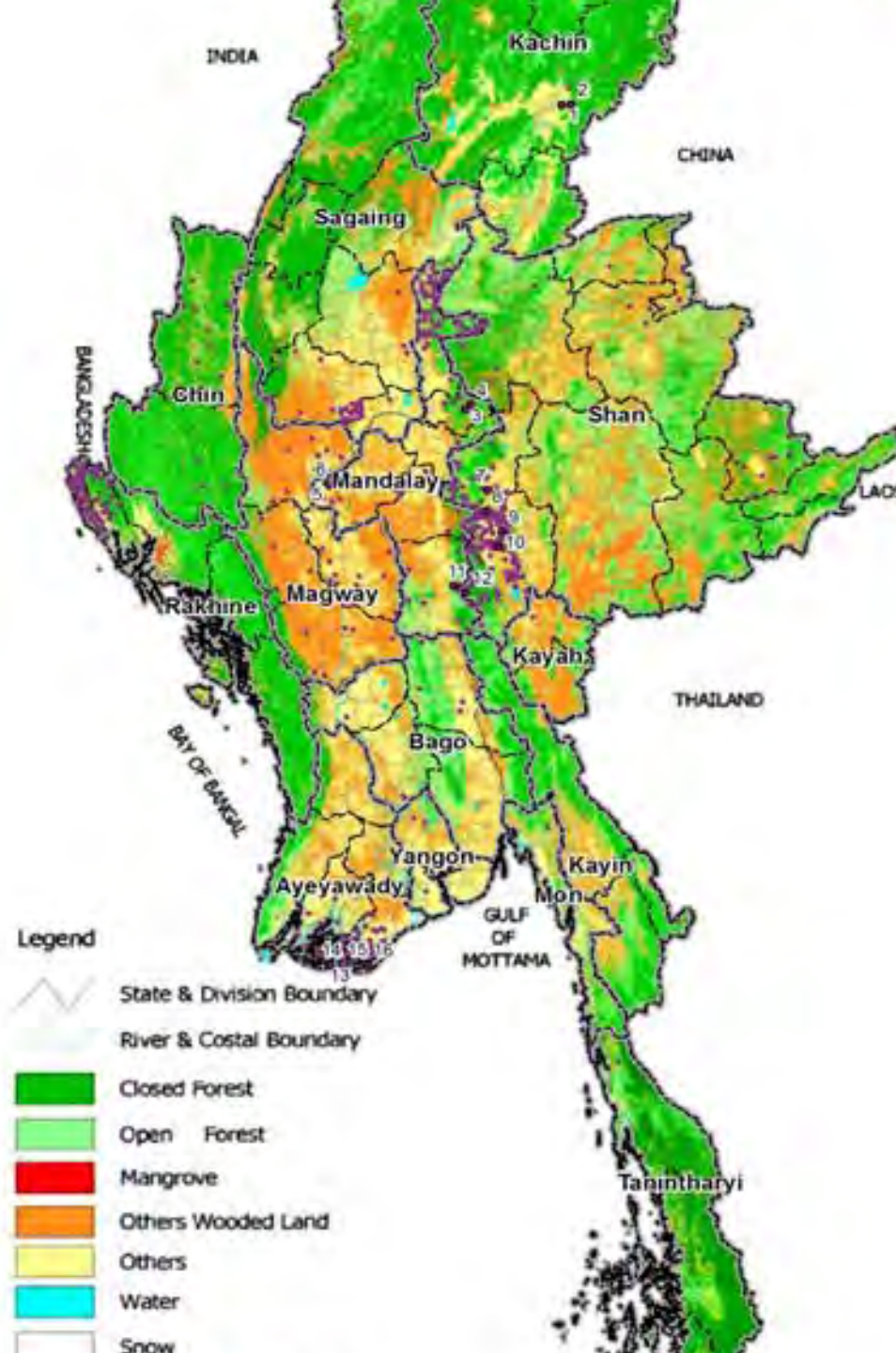
Forest Resource Environment Development and Conservation Association (FREDA) 'Mangrove Reforestation Project'

- * FREDA has been implementing this project phase by phase in the **Ayeyawady Delta** since 1999 in cooperation with Action for Mangrove Reforestation (ACTMANG) of Japan.
- * established 7,892 acre of mangrove community forests.



Map of FUGs granted certificate

No data on how many provisional
CFs, awaiting approval by Military
Governor for certificate
In Kachin >50, only 3 have certificate



4 Study of CF

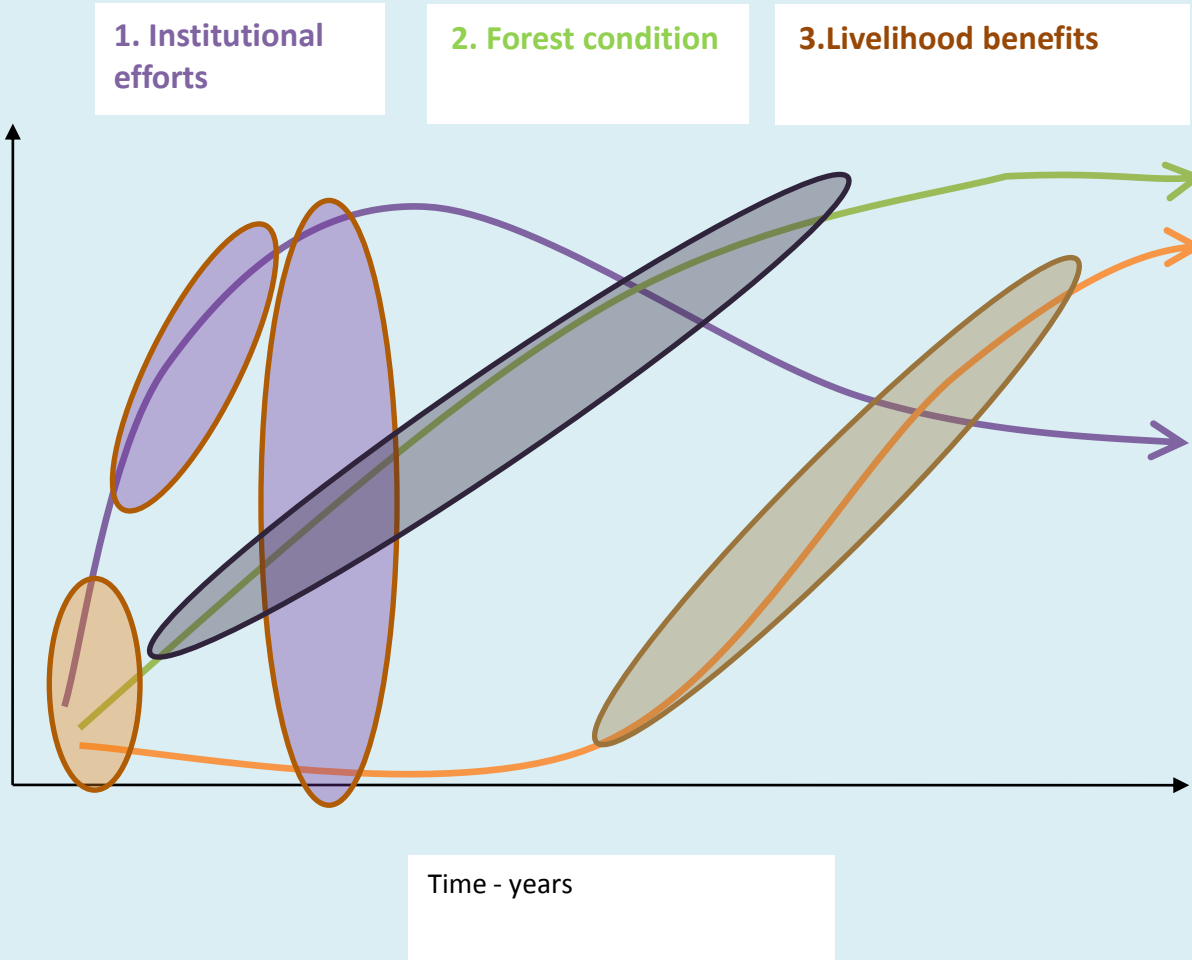
Research method

Study of 16 FUGs selected across 4 divisions/states

- * field team – 3-6 days each site
- * Multi-disciplinary approach:
 - * Institutional– PRA with FUG MC
 - * Forest - assessment
 - * Livelihood assessment – Household survey



CF – *in theory*



1. What was the **pre-formation situation**?
2. Are FUG groups becoming **institutionalised**?
3. have they been able to **protect and manage** forests?
4. Has this led to regeneration and **improvement** in forest condition?
5. Has forest regeneration led to **livelihood benefits**?
6. Are the benefits (& costs) **fairly shared**?
7. **Is it sustainable**?

Range of FUGs

1. Wuyan FUG – Kachin State

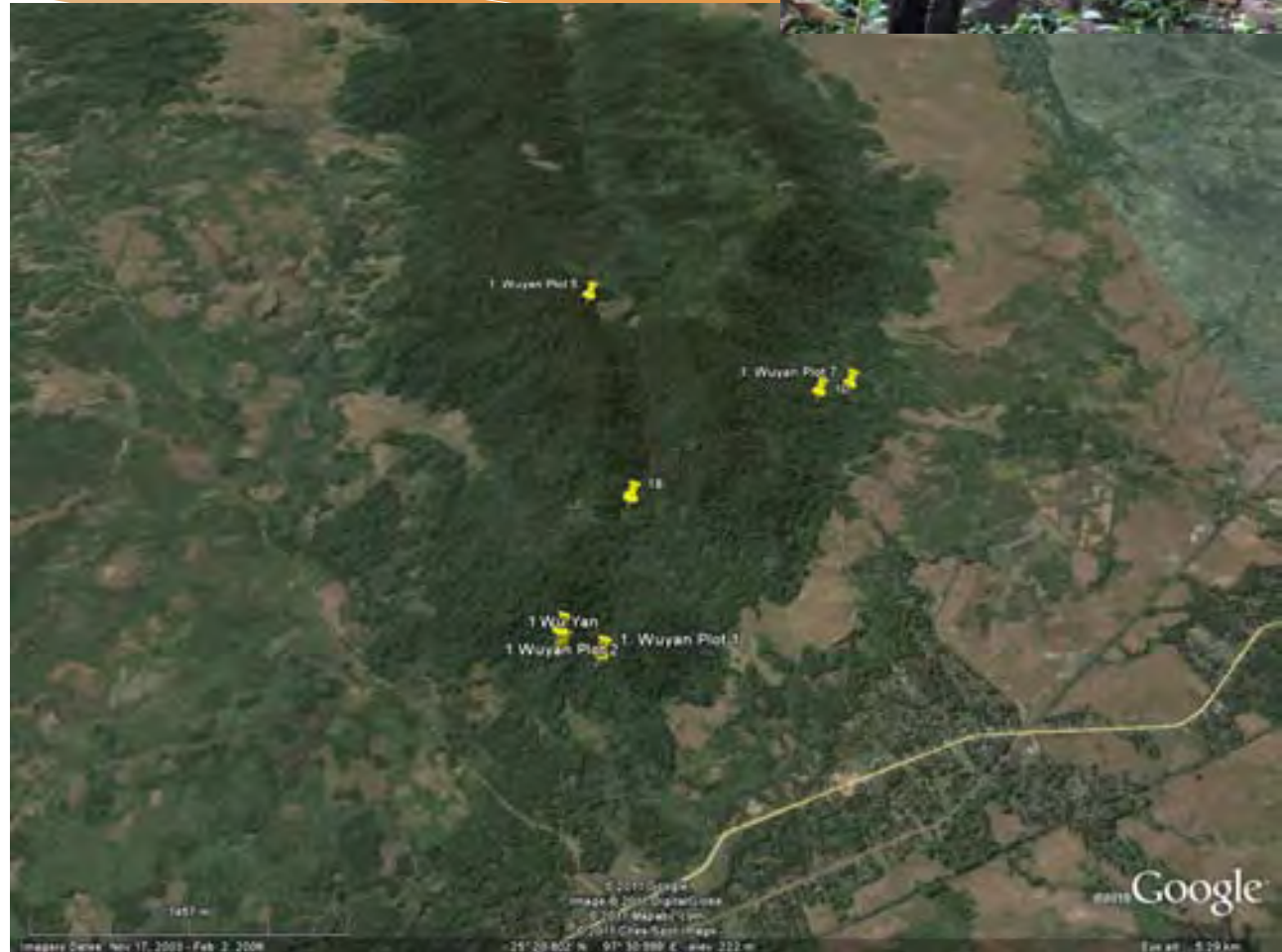
200 of 600 hhs

1200 acre 'forest'

2006 formed with
help from NGO/
DFID

Major motivation –
defend against
land-grabbing

Taungya not in
management
plan – but
continuing



6. Let Pan Te FUG – Mandalay Div. – Dry zone

100% of 222 hhs

56 acre woodlot – protected

Formed 2003 with JICA

Poor formation process

Very slow regeneration

Village losing interest





9. Lwai Nyeint FUG – S. Shan

100% of 157 hhs

600 acres

Formed with UNDP in 1997





Byankikone FUG

Ayeyarwady

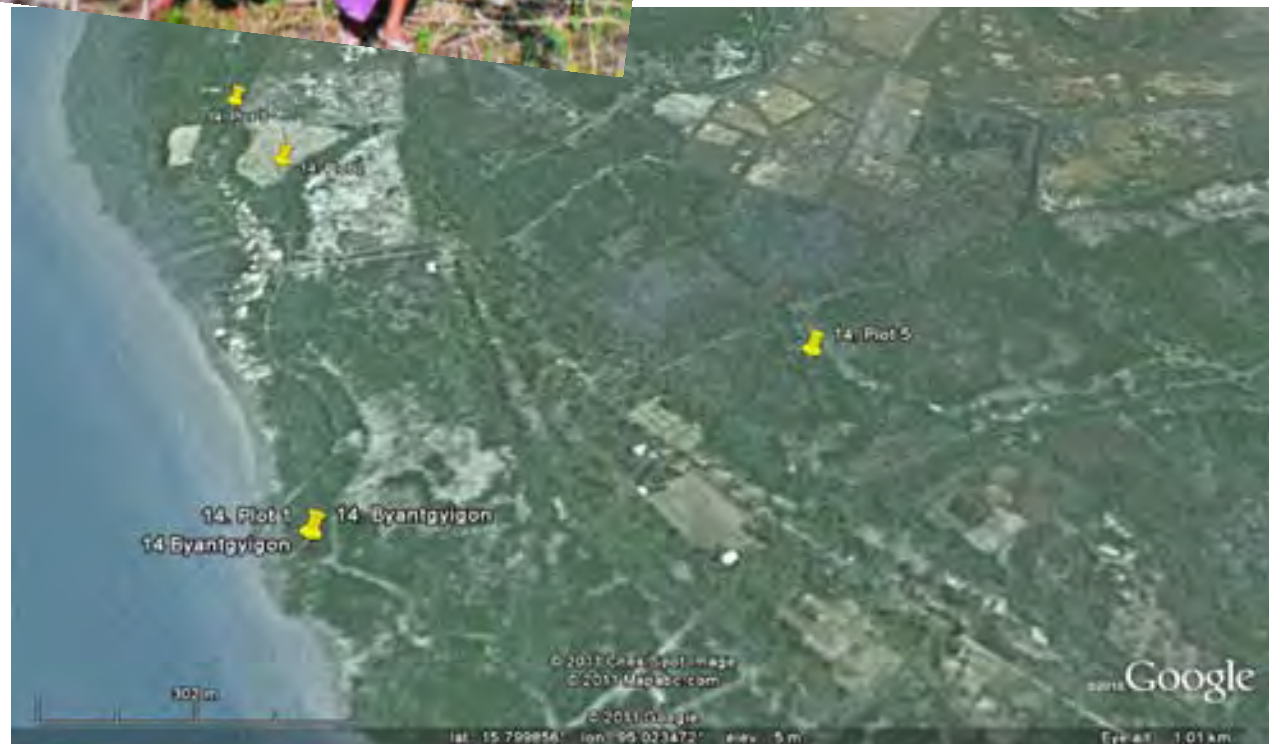
32hhs of 35 in village

513 acres

Low-level land use
conflict between
farmers (agric.) &
forest department /
fishers (mangrove)

Self initiated in 1995 by
village leader U
Thein Myint

Ecosystem service life-
saver!



Summary of Findings

1 Pre-formation situation

FUG:	State/ div.	Forest access
1 Wuyan	Ka	~ open
2 Gweyutyan	Ka	~ threat
3 Shwe Myin Thar	Ma	-
4. Yatketkyi	Ma	open
5. Myay-thintwin	Ma	open
6. Letpante	Ma	open
7. MineIn	Sh	open
8. Pway Hla	Sh	?
9. Lwei Nyeint	Sh	?
10. Nau-taungkya	Sh	-
11. Kone shine	Sh	open
12 .Taung Kya	Sh	taungya
13 .Nyaung-tapin	Ay	Ex-paddy
14 .Byankikone	Ay	Open/pad
15 .Telbinseik	Ay	Ex-paddy
16. Warkone	Ay	paddy

(estimates)

Access:

- * mix of open access / occupation for agriculture / shifting cultivation / threat of land grab

Forest condition:

- * **generally poor across all the sites**
- * declining trend
- * But not uniform pattern within forests – some mosaic forest landscapes

2. Are FUGs becoming institutionalised?

FUG:	State/ div.	Initiation	FUG formed
1 Wuyan	Ka	NGO / DFID	2006
2 Gweyutyan	Ka	NGO / DFID	2007
3 Shwe Myin Thar	Ma	Self	2003
4. Yatketkyi	Ma	FD	2000
5. Myay-thintwin	Ma	FD / DGD / JICA	2003
6. Letpante	Ma	JICA	2003
7. MineIn	Sh	UNDP / FD	1996
8. Pway Hla	Sh	UNDP	?
9. Lwei Nyeint	Sh	UNDP	1997
10. Nau-taungkya	Sh	UNDP	1997
11. Kone shine	Sh	UNDP	2005
12 .Taung Kya	Sh	UNDP	2005
13 .Nyaung-tapin	Ay	NGO / JICA	2002
14 .Byankikone	Ay	Self	1995
15 .Telbinseik	Ay	NGO / JICA	1999
16. Warkone	Ay	NGO / JICA	2000

Initiation

- 13 of 16 through donor projects (UNDP, JICA, DFID), 2 self, 1 FD

Indicators of institutionalisation:

- Awareness & understanding
- Appropriate users included
- Mobilised : meetings & activities held



But - staying institutionalised?

FUG:	State / div.	Currently active?
1 Wuyan	Ka	✓
2 Gweyutyan	Ka	✓
3 Shwe Myin Thar	Ma	✓
4. Yatketyi	Ma	✓
5. Myay-thintwin	Ma	~
6. Letpante	Ma	✗
7. MineIn	Sh	✗
8. Pway Hla	Sh	✗
9. Lwei Nyeint	Sh	~
10. Nau-taungkya	Sh	~
11. Kone shine	Sh	✓
12. Taung Kya	Sh	✓
13. Nyaung-tapin	Ay	~
14. Byankikone	Ay	✓
15. Telbinseik	Ay	~
16. Warkone	Ay	✓

Continuing to work once formed?

- * Yes for half; but half stagnating esp in Shan
- * Only 5 reliably submitting annual report
- * Awareness good in 5; poor in 4; v. bad in 7
- * They need help to overcome challenges:
- * Conflicts esp. over enforcement widespread ; severe problems in 5. (although 3 strong at resolving conflicts)

Adequate post-formation support?

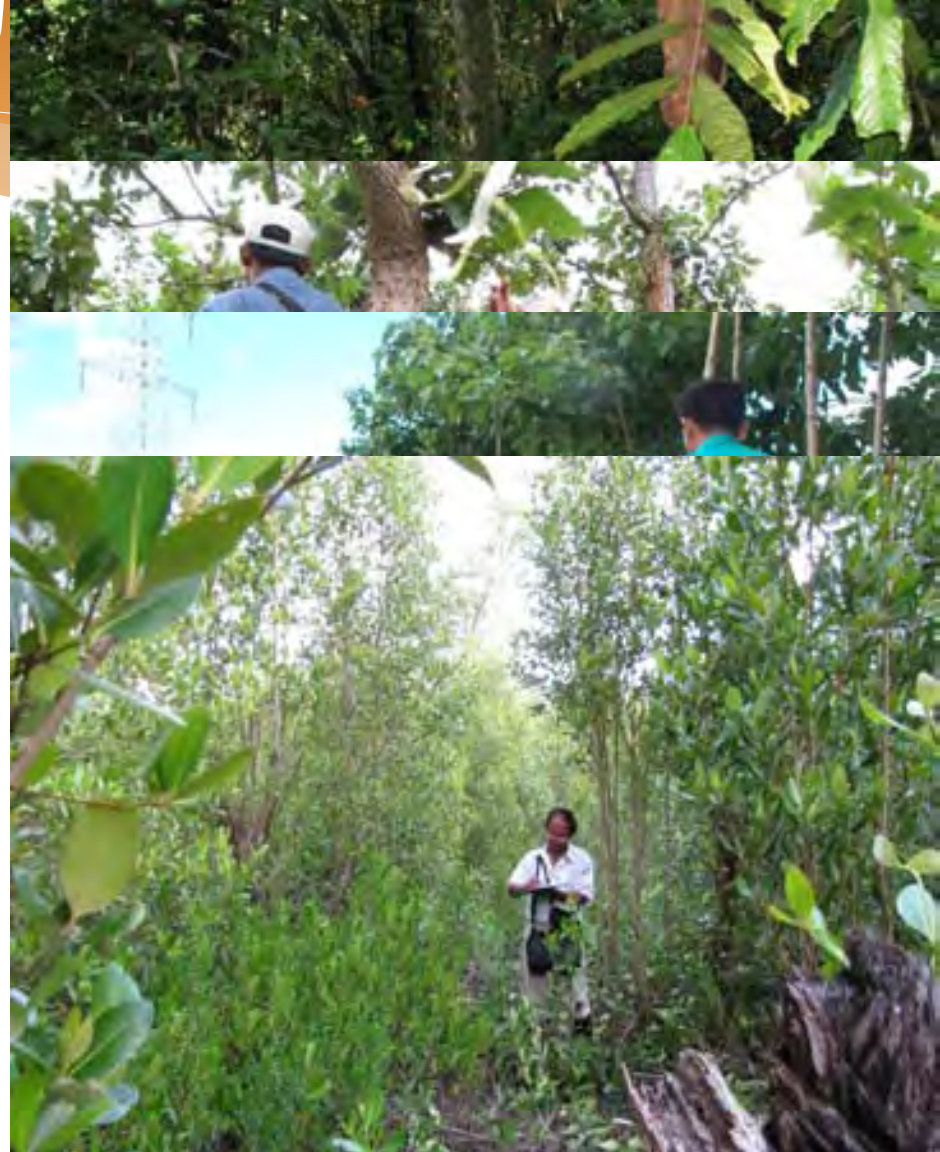
- * There has been post-formation support, & post project support from FD,
- * this has been modest or inadequate for all but 2 (eg Kachin)
- * FD lacks post-formation monitoring & support orientation

External shock : Nargis was a massive shock to Delta FUGS. Many households were wiped out – major discontinuity

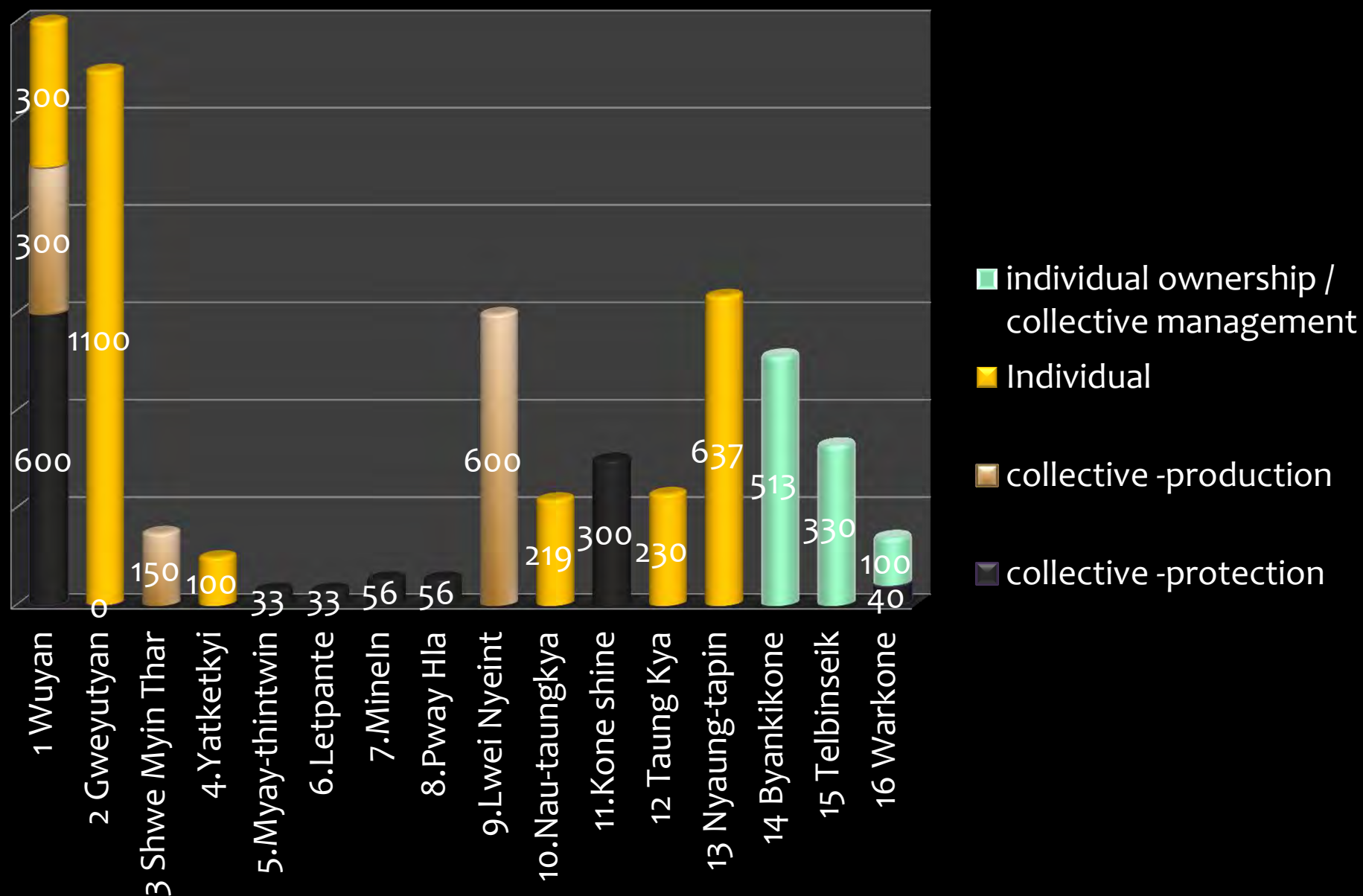
3) have FUGs managed & protected forests effectively?

Management regimes

1. Collective – protection for natural regeneration
2. Collective- plantation
3. Individual plots - agroforestry (*taungya*)
4. Collective management / individual plots (only Ayeyarewady)



CF by management regime (acres)



Is forest protection effective?

FUG:	State/ div.	3 Forest protection effective
1 Wuyan	Ka	~
2 Gweyutyan	Ka	~
3 Shwe Myin Thar	Ma	✗
4. Yatketkyi	Ma	~
5. Myay-thintwin	Ma	~
6. Letpante	Ma	✓
7. MineIn	Sh	~
8. Pway Hla	Sh	~
9. Lwei Nyeint	Sh	✓
10. Nau-taungkya	Sh	~
11. Kone shine	Sh	✗
12 .Taung Kya	Sh	✓
13 .Nyaung-tapin	Ay	~
14 .Byankikone	Ay	~
15 .Telbinseik	Ay	~
16. Warkone	Ay	~

Most FUGs have introduced effective forest management.

- * only 3 of 16 fully effective
- * 11 moderately effective – enough for natural regeneration
- * 2 not effective

Protection - remains a challenge:

- * Neighbouring villages & specific groups cutting, land occupation & forest conversion,
- * spread of fire from adjacent agricultural land
- * Villages reluctant to get into conflictual relations
- * FUGs look to FD – who are often not able to back them up

**OVERALL PROTECTION GENERALLY
QUITE EFFECTIVE**

4) Has CF management led to improvement in forest condition?

FUG:	State/ div.	4 Forest Condition improving
1 Wuyan	Ka	✓
2 Gweyutyan	Ka	✓
3 Shwe Myin Thar	Ma	✗
4. Yatketyi	Ma	✓
5. Myay-thintwin	Ma	~
6. Letpante	Ma	✓
7. Mineln	Sh	~
8. Pway Hla	Sh	✓
9. Lwei Nyeint	Sh	✓
10. Nau-taungkya	Sh	~
11. Kone shine	Sh	~
12 . Taung Kya	Sh	?
13 . Nyaung-tapin	Ay	~
14 . Byankikone	Ay	~
15 . Telbinseik	Ay	✓
16. Warkone	Ay	✓



YES - Forests are generally improving across 14 of 16 (see ecological study!)

Communities confirm regeneration occurring indicated by improving ecosystem services

* Communities are thus significantly contributing to the national re-greening objectives enshrined in the CF Instruction

5) Are there livelihood benefits?

Regenerated forests are providing a increased range & quantity of benefits, & anticipated future ones:

Ecosystem services including

- * Water – eg springs recovering in dry zone
- * Soil protection
- * habitat (e.g. for fish spawning in delta)
- * storm protection in the delta saving

Products:

- * timber, poles etc
- * fuelwood,
- * fodder
- * bushmeat
- * Range of other NTFPs & MAPs
- * Food & other crops from agroforestry systems
- * Products being privately & collectively utilised

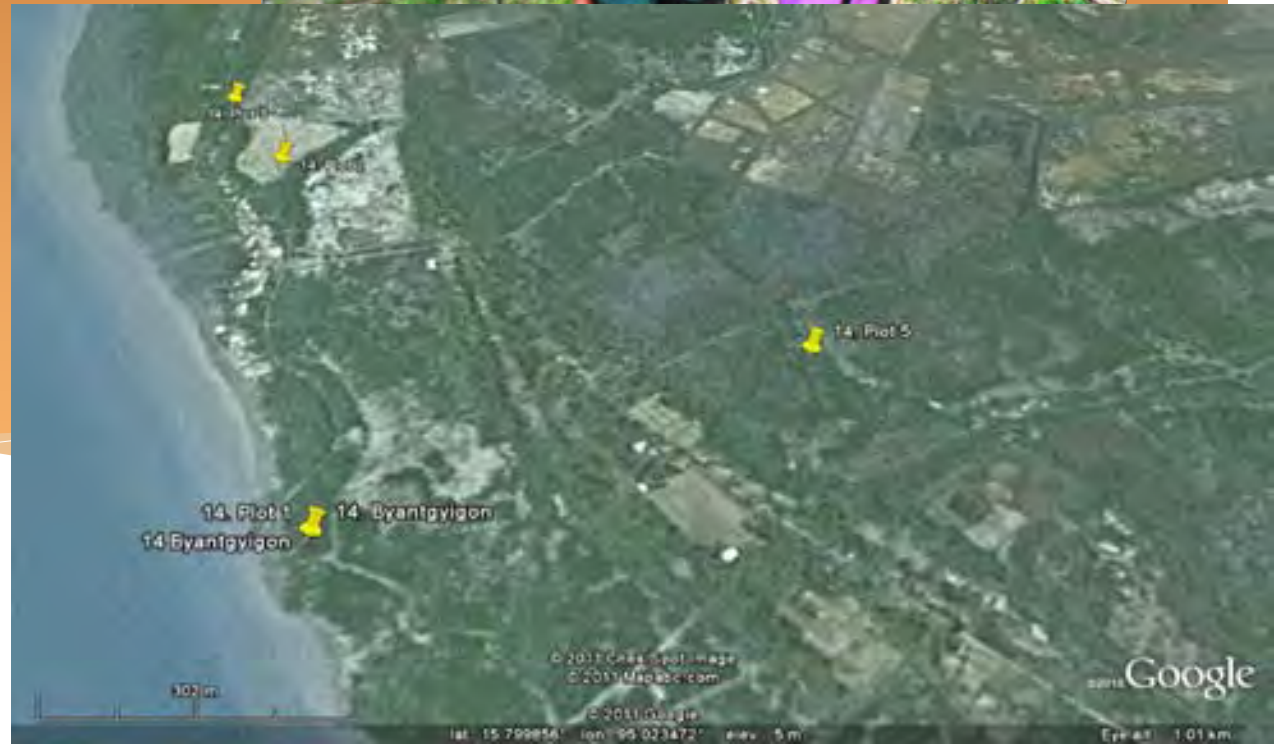
³⁷ Too early for some FUGs to distribute much

FUG:	State/ div.	5 Benefits
1 Wuyan	Ka	✓
2 Gweyutyan	Ka	✓
3 Shwe Myin Thar	Ma	✓
4. Yatketkyi	Ma	✓
5. Myay-thintwin	Ma	~
6. Letpante	Ma	✓
7. MineIn	Sh	~
8. Pway Hla	Sh	✓
9. Lwei Nyeint	Sh	✓
10. Nau-taungkya	Sh	~
11. Kone shine	Sh	✓
12 . Taung Kya	Sh	✓
13 . Nyaung-tapin	Ay	✓
14 . Byankikone	Ay	✓
15 . Telbinseik	Ay	✓
16. Warkone	Ay	✓

		Products								Costs	Env Services			
FUG:	State/ div.	Timber, poles etc	Fuel-wood	fodder	Wild food	medicinal plant	bamboo	other NTFP	agric	Exclusion	spring improved	soil protection	Aesthetic	Env. protection
1 Wuyan	Ka	↑	↑	↑	↑						↑	↑		
2 Gweyutyan	Ka	f?	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑				↑	↑		
3 Shwe Myin Thar	Ma	↑		↓					↑	↓	↓	↓		
4. Yatketkyi	Ma	f?		↓					↑	↓	↑	↑		
5. Myay-thintwin	Ma		↑	~		↑						↑	↑	
6. Letpante	Ma		↓			↑					↑			
7. MineIn	Sh										↑	↑	↑	
8. Pway Hla	Sh	↑	↑			↑		↑			↑	↑	↑	
9. Lwei Nyeint	Sh	↑	↑											
10. Nau-taungkya	Sh		↑	↑		↑								
11. Kone shine	Sh	↑	↑					↑						
12 . Taung Kya	Sh					↑		↑	↑					
13 . Nyaung-tapin	Ay	↑	↑						↓					↑
14 . Byankikone	Ay		↑											↑
15 . Telbinseik	Ay	↑	↑					↑						↑
16. Warkone	Ay	↑	↑			38		↑						↑

Environmental Protection at Byankikone FUG: *'The Community Forest saved our lives'*

- personally initiated formation of CFUG after hearing radio report on the CF initiative in 1995.
- Thirteen years later, when Cyclone Nargis hit the Delta region in 2008 the mature community forest took the brunt of the impact
- all villagers here survived,



Livelihood benefits – *method issues*

- Skimmed the surface
- difficult without baseline to know & attribute changes to different households – rely on subjective reflection of respondents,
- Shifted pressure to non FUG areas not addressed in our study

10 Nau-Tangkya



Wider social benefits

- * Security of access / tenure
- * Deliberative social processes
 - * Social cohesion & confidence
 - * Social development initiatives
 - * Skill development – incl. Leadership

Generally occurring - with exceptions

- * *Where users excluded*
- * *where conflicts not being effectively managed*
- * *And where lack of post formation support leading to stagnation*

6. Is the benefit distribution (and costs) equitable?

FUG:	Stat e/ div.	Eq uity	
1 Wuyan	Ka	✓	all village satisfied
2 Gweyutyan	Ka	✓	Small FUG group benefiting at cost of village
3 Shwe Myin Thar	Ma	✗	small group from large village
4. Yatketyi	Ma	~	inclusive
5. Myay-thintwin	Ma	✓	Fairly good
6. Letpante	Ma	~	Rich donated land. But now neighbours taking benefits
7. MineIn	Sh	~	Fuelwood shared equally- but unclear
8. Pway Hla	Sh	~	Equitable & pro poor
9. Lwei Nyeint	Sh	✓	Moderately fair
10. Nau-taungkya	Sh	~	Earlier fair, now MC taking more
11. Kone shine	Sh	~	Small FUG taking benefit, wider village losing
12. Taung Kya	Sh	✗	Hhs lost paddy lands before CF – product distrib fair
13. Nyaung-tapin	Ay	~	Not all benefits equally shared across village – poorest cant participate
14. Byankikone	Ay	~	Poorest non-members also getting substantial benefit from seed & propagule sale
15. Telbinseik	Ay	✓	v. fair- -non members get needs too
16. Warkone	Ay	✓	All village approve

Discussion

- * **OVERALL – COMPLEX - MIXED FAIR / SOMETIMES UNFAIR**
- * Self-selecting group structure – may be ideal to get FUG going – only interested / motivated participate
- * Poorer are risk averse & lack time to participate, but may be depending on the open access resource
- * And therefore need alternate livelihood opportunities
- * But as FUG succeeds other villagers become interested

In several FUGs

- * Community development initiatives
- * Pro-poor & pro-non-member initiatives in some villages (eg. Ayeyarwady)
- * Inclusion processes over time (forming new groups)

Overall

FUG:	State/ div.	1 Prior Forest condition	2 Institut- ionalised?	3 Forest protection effective	4 Forest Condition improving	5 Benefits	6 Equity
1 Wuyan	Ka	✗	✓	~	✓	✓	✓
2 Gweyutyan	Ka	~	✓	~	✓	✓	✓
3 Shwe Myin Thar	Ma	✗	✗ mis	✗	✗	✓	✗
4. Yatketyi	Ma	✗	✓	~	✓	✓	~
5. Myay-thintwin	Ma	✗	~	~	✓	~	✓
6. Letpante	Ma	✗	~	✓	~	✓	~
7. MineIn	Sh	✗	~	~	~	~	~
8. Pway Hla	Sh	?	✗/?	~	✓	✓	~
9. Lwei Nyeint	Sh	✗	~	✓	✓	✓	✓
10. Nau-taungkya	Sh	✗	~	~	~	~	~
11. Kone shine	Sh	✗	✓	✗	~	✓	~
12 . Taung Kya	Sh	~	~ mis	✓	?	✓	✗
13 . Nyaung-tapin	Ay	✗	✓	~	~	✓	~
14 . Byankikone	Ay	✗	✓	~	~	✓	~
15 . Telbinseik	Ay	✗	✓	~	✓	✓	✓
16. Warkone	Ay	✗	✓	~	✓	✓	✓

Key policy implications

- * CF is working – but sustainability in question
 - * Much of early achievements threatened by declining activity..
 - * Stronger groups in Kachin; Ayeyarwady
 - * Weaker across Mandalay / Shan
- * Formation / handover – not yet leading to ‘critical mass’
 - * slow handover process – prohibitively expensive without donor
 - * Occasionally not according to original guidelines – elite domination
- * FUGs face major challenges post formation / post project , which if they don’t get support for can lead to stagnation:
 - * Conflicts esp. over illicit extraction
 - * FD not permitting timber harvesting – loss of interest
 - * Disruptions not recovered from (esp. leadership change)

Convergence of motivations?

- * In all areas improved tenure security a major incentive
- * But imposing 'forestry' land use delegitimizes shifting cultivation and therefore can threaten food security
- * NEED legitimate administrative category for ***Taungya***

Thanks!

