

**COMMUNITY FORESTRY IN TATKON,  
PYINMANA AND LEWE TOWNSHIPS**

**PhD DISSERTATION**

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## **Abstract**

Forest resources in Myanmar were properly managed under the Myanmar Selection System of scientific method in the past. Forest management, conservation and rehabilitation of forest plantation, and systematic production were carried out by the State. With the growing population and the increasing demand for forest products, forest resources have been decreased both in quantity and quality. In order to support economic development of the country, to fulfill the basic needs for local communities, and to regain environmental stability, Forest Department has made many positive changes reflecting the present situation of forests. In the 1990s, the emphasis of forest management shifted from revenue oriented management to resource management which requires forests and forest products as well as environmental stability. To increase forest land cover and improve the environment, natural forest regeneration and forest plantation are urgently needed to rehabilitate the degraded land. Therefore, Forest Department introduced the Community Forestry with the participation of the people for forest plantation, protection, utilization and management themselves. Community forests can generate benefits such as natural environment protection, basic needs for local people, and socio-economic development of local communities. Although the Government gives hope and support for of Community Forestry concepts with the changing economic policy, they cannot be implemented everywhere and some of the established community forests are not yet satisfied. This paper attempts to reflect on the community forestry experiences, from the geographical perspectives of resource management, environmental sustainability through forest conservation and draws on experiences mostly from the study area. To know why these processes happen, the investigation of this work is done from the geographic point of view. It is clear that, people participation is important in forest conservation and rehabilitation of degraded forest. Based on the knowledge and awareness of local people's perception, sustainable management of forest resources can be assessed. In this paper, Tatkon, Pyinmana, Lewe townships which are located between the Bago Yoma and Shan Highlands of mixed deciduous areas (Teak zone of Myanmar) were selected as the study area to find out the process of community forests establishment. The urgent need to restore and sustain the health and quality of natural and human

environment is elaborated in the environmental and socioeconomic situations. The present situation of forest resources, forest degradation and forest conservation activities in Tatkon, Pyinmana and Lewe townships is studied. The identification of Community Forestry and practical implementation of the study area are observed. Community Forestry development process and involvement of Forest Department and User Groups are critically assessed by four case studies. Integrated development strategy for sustainable forest management through community participation is reviewed. Perceptions of villagers on Community Forests established in the study area are also emphasized. Problems and difficulties encountered in Community Forestry activities are uncovered and feasible solutions are suggested. The paper ends with future prospects of Community Forestry and conclusion. People's participation in Community Forestry is necessary and it should lead them in improving their living conditions especially with regard to the use of trees, forests and forest products. Many people live in villages inside the reserved forests, and their livelihood is deeply dependent on forest resources. Therefore, sustainable utilization of forest and forest products is a critical concern.

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