Deutscher Tropentag, October 11-13, 2005, Hohenheim

"The Global Food & Product Chain—
Dynamics, Innovations, Conflicts, Strategies"

Evolution of Sustainable Upland Agroforestry Systems — Case Studies from the Philippines and Viet Nam

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Abstract

Productive and sustainable use of sloping uplands is the major challenge currently facing developing country agriculture. Development of agroforestry and farm forestry systems which control erosion has been difficult to achieve because of biophysical and socio-economic constraints. This contribution reviews approaches used in Mt Kitinglad Range Natural Park, Mindanao, Philippines and Tam Dao National Park, Viet Nam, working with disadvantaged groups. The development of farm models with erosion control contour banks planted with a variety of trees, food and fodder crops, and their extension to other farmers is outlined. The introduction of improved germplasm is an important component in developing farmer commitment. Women's livelihood improvement was addressed at the same time, with plant nursery development, clean vegetable production, tree planting, training and information centres as some of the components. Improved supply chain systems for farm products were developed at the same time. The importance of an integrated approach combining participatory approaches on-farm with local government agency involvement and networking with National Research Agencies is stressed. New extension approaches based on train-of-trainers down to the village extension worker along with provision of key inputs for new farming systems are in process of development in Viet Nam. Development of integrated and sustainable management of natural resources requires careful planning, the flexibility of action research, and commitment to a realistic time frame.

Keywords: Buffer zone management, upland agroforestry systems, farm models, erosion control, women's livelihood, natural resource management

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