Developing agroforestry around Myanmar’s Inle Lake, supporting small-scale farmers and the local ecosystem

**Introduction & motivations:**

Development of agroforestry practices around Inle Lake’s watershed area, in the Shan State of Myanmar, in collaboration with the local community-based organization PHECAD (PweHla Environment Conservation And Development)

Motivated by:
- On-going environmental degradation
- Livelihood decrease of the local small-scale farmers

**Objective & methods:**

Investigate whether and how agroforestry practices can benefit small-scale farmers and their households around PweHla’s watershed area, and the specific biosphere of the Inle Lake

- 43 individual interviews
- 8 key informant interviews
- 6 focus group discussions
- Observations & field visits
- In-field trainings
- Farmer field schools

**Results:**

1. What are the existing agricultural/forestry practices and the challenges faced by the farmers?
   - Rice, potatoes, vegetables & avocado, fruit trees, silver oak, tea, coffee
   - Sole cropping (farmland) & intercropping (home-gardens)
   - Income from selling the harvest on the local markets
   - Challenges: climate change, deforestation, lack of money

2. What are the benefits of trees for the farmers and the environment & motivations/reluctances of farmers to start agroforestry?
   - Benefits & motivations: climate regulation, increased income, a mean of overcoming farmers’ challenges
   - Reluctances: shadow, long time to wait to reap the benefits of trees

   ![Pie chart showing percentages of farmers interested in testing agroforestry](chart.png)

3. Which are the best fitting tree species and agroforestry designs to the small-scale farmers?
   - Avocado, silver oak, coffee, tea, jengkol, macadamia
   - Trees in line inside the field (in alternance with rows of crops); trees on the external borders of the field (with the crops growing inside)

4. How can the farmers be supported in turning into agroforestry?
   - Further trainings with PHECAD
   - In-field trainings & farmer field schools

**Conclusion:**

- Lack of technical knowledge of the farmers regarding further benefits of agroforestry
- High enthusiasm and interest of the farmers to overcome the challenges faced, and learn about a more sustainable production system
- Environmental conditions well adapted to implement agroforestry
- Significant potential of developing agroforestry in the Inle Lake watershed area

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**Participant approach**

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