

# Co-production of Buddhist Agroecological knowledge in Thailand

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## Introduction

Despite the critical role of local knowledge in agroecology, few studies have incorporated traditional ecological knowledge (TEK) into research and decision-making processes for natural resource management. This gap is significant given the limited research on how the values and ethics of TEK are applied in such contexts. The ideological roots of Thai agroecology can be traced to food sovereignty concepts, the sufficiency economy philosophy (SEP) and engaged Buddhist perspectives. This research aims to understand how Buddhist agroecological knowledge is incorporated into discourse, identities and social actions in rural development for the development of agroecology in Thailand, using the notion of co-production as an approach.

## Materials and methods

This research takes the Sufficiency Economy Development Zones for Sustainable Development Goals (SEDZ) project in Thailand as a case study. Actor-network theory (ANT) is used to investigate the process of co-production, taking place in this collaborative project. The focus is on the notion of “translation” (i.e., the transformation of objects after entering into the network).

Data Collection: In-depth Interview

Sampling method: purposeful sampling

Province	Number	Participants
Chonburi	15	Members of Mab Aueng Natural Agriculture Center



## Result

**Problemization**

- Farmers were facing with many complexed problems. Intensive agriculture based on capitalist concepts depends on chemical use which has impacts on natural resources, and health of farmers and consumers.
- The natural agriculture was proposed as a solution to the problems and was introduced as a way to achieve self-reliant community.

**Interessement**

- The strategy to persuade other actors is to demonstrate successful cases.
- A voluntary system is used to mobilize engagement from other actors based on the shared ideology and the common interest.
- The natural agriculture is also introduced as an alternative for Buddhist laypeople to practice Buddha's teachings.



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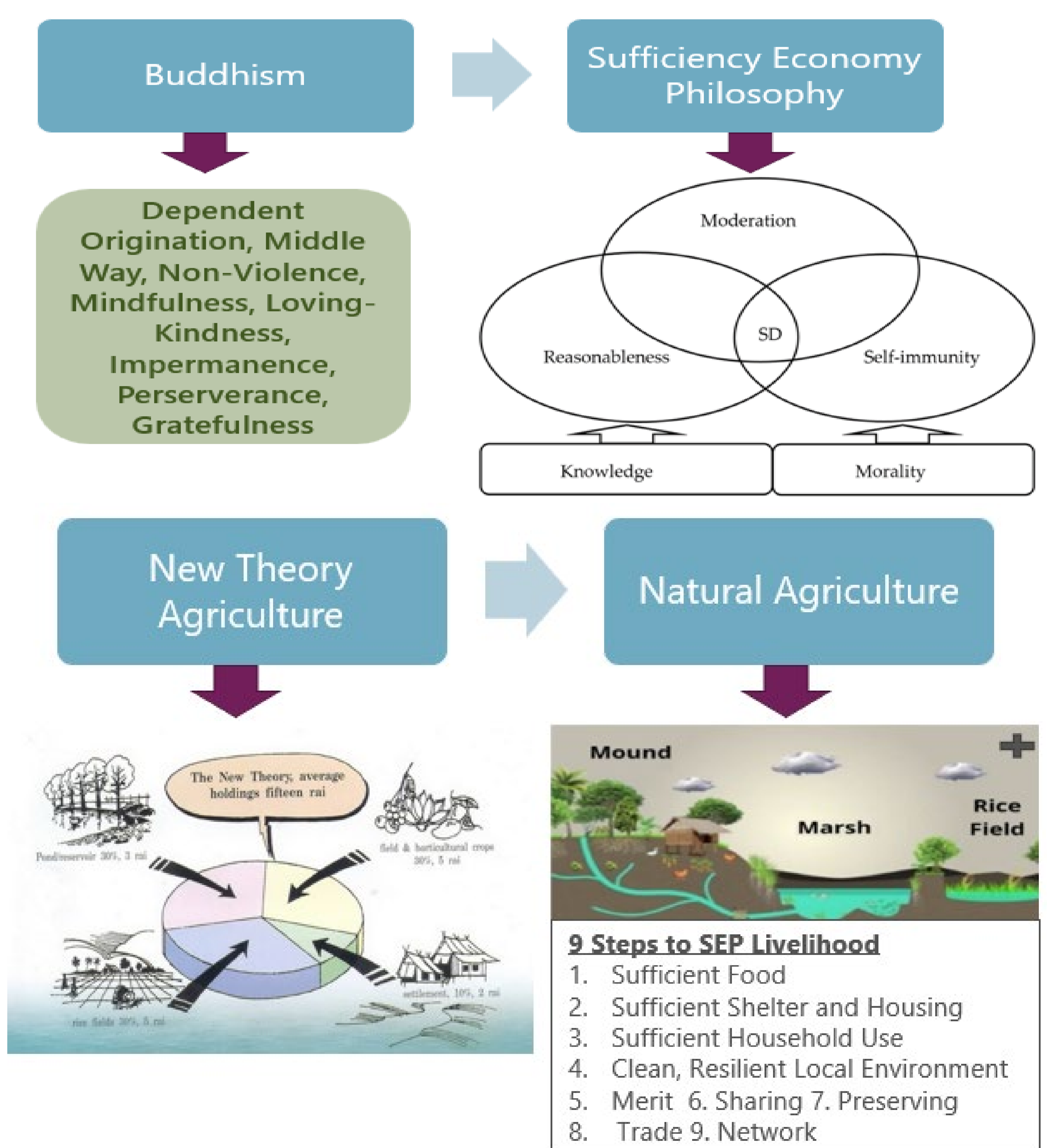
## Result (cont.)

**Enrolment**

- More diverse groups of people beyond agriculture sector engaged more in the network.
- ‘Bovorn’ community model (community, temple, school/local government) is established as a main implementing model in the local levels.

**Mobilization**

- The natural agriculture is considered as a solution to interwoven crises, namely economic, health, environmental and political crises for the country
- Rural communities are encouraged to develop themselves to be self-reliant and help each other to solve their problems.



## Conclusion

- Buddhist morals and SEP-based knowledge has been incorporated into rural development of the country. The discourses have been shifted toward crisis response topics, such as water management in agriculture.
- Rural communities are encouraged to adopt Buddhist morals and practices, particularly interdependence between human and nature and SEP-based knowledge, especially human development and networking aspects which increase their resilience and capacity in crisis response.