

Final Report

Introduction

The first planning workshop of the Santchou Forest Reserve Buffer Zone Regeneration Project took place in Santchou in November 2003. The workshop brought together traditional chiefs of the villages in the buffer zone of the Santchou forest reserve, village representatives, members of the wildlife and environmental education clubs, students and staff members of the Government High School (the lone institution of higher learning in Santchou) and officials of the Ministry of the Environment and Forestry that manage the Santchou Forest Reserve.

The Secretary-General of CCDD visited the villages of the Santchou region to plan the workshop. The relevant administrative officials of the Santchou Sub Division were briefed on the project and invited to the workshop. The dates and venue of the workshop were agreed on by all the stakeholders.

Agenda

The following points were discussed during the workshop:

- a) Briefing of the Santchou Forest Reserve Buffer Zone Regeneration Project
- b) Identification of tree species
- c) Location of degraded zones
- d) Tree nursery sites
- e) Planning of project activities
- f) Drawing up of communication plan

Activities

Explanation of the project

Dr Nde briefed participants on the importance of the project. He pointed out that the Project plans to regenerate the buffer zone of the reserve by involving the local people to nurse tree seedlings and plant them in the seriously degraded areas. The Project will provide the needs of the local people (fuel wood, medicinal plants and forest non timber products) and thus reduce the pressure on the forest reserve.

Tree species identification

It was necessary to identify the tree species that would be planted in the buffer zone. This was so because the local people would be encouraged to plant the trees on their farms. The ecological zones should be considered in choosing tree species. This is so because there are four distinct ecological zones in Santchou: low land

forest, montaine forest, wetlands and savannah. One participant proposed eucalyptus. It was explained that the ecological zones should be managed as such and not altered. Wetlands should not be destroyed. It was difficult for participants to decide on the species of trees. We therefore discussed what species participants needed as individuals. After brainstorming, various tree species were selected.

Degraded zones

In order to know which parts of the buffer zone needed to be regenerated, participants were asked to appraise the forest round their villages. Levels of degradation ranged from 5-70%.

Villages in the buffer zone

Participants identified a dozen or so villages that are situated in the buffer zone of the Santchou Forest Reserve. These villages would play an active role in the implementation of project activities.

Tree nursery sites

Using a map of scale 1:50 000, participants took part in a session to identify where the nurseries were to be located. Some criteria were taken into consideration such as availability of water, manpower, location in relation to other villages, etc. It was agreed that a nursery be located at the premises of the Ministry of the Environment and Forestry in Santchou. This nursery would serve as a main training centre as there would be backup provided by staff of the Ministry. Three other locations for tree nurseries were agreed.

Work plan

A work plan was established during the workshop which describes which activity will be carried out when and by whom. The project is expected to take from December to September. Having decided what will be done, a committee was set up to supervise the project. The following five members make up the management committee:

- a) Chief Ngang of Ngang village
- b) Along of Mokot village
- c) Ajonn of Mokot village
- d) Fosson Jules of Ndematok village
- e) Conservator of Santchou Forest Reserve

Communication plan

Most projects fail because of poor monitoring and evaluation and dissemination of information. All the stakeholders need to be involved in all aspects of the project including monitoring, evaluation and management of information. In a brainstorming and focused group discussion session, a communication plan was

adopted for the project which ensures that all taking part know who is responsible for what activity.