

Community-Based Coastal Resources Management in Cambodia

Kim, Nong

Wetland, Watershed and Coastal Zone Natural Conservation and Protection, Ministry of Environment, Cambodia

The Participatory Management of Mangrove Resources (PMMR) research team has been working on one of Cambodia's 23 protected areas, Peam Krasaop Wildlife Sanctuary (PKWS), Koh Kong Province, since 1997. This inter-disciplinary research team, composed of national staff from the Ministry of Environment and Koh Kong provincial staff from the Departments of: Environment, Fisheries, Women's Affairs and Rural Development, has been working together with community members from isolated coastal fishing communities on issues pertaining to resource management, protection and livelihoods.

PKWS is 23 750 ha and boasts a relatively pristine mangrove ecosystem. there are three districts, under which there are 8 communes and 24 villages. These coastal communities are dependent upon the rich resources found in this wildlife sanctuary. Many villagers came to PKWS thinking that they could make their livelihood there. However, abundant resource extraction activities threaten the sustainability of people's livelihoods: destructive fishing gear, extensive mangrove cutting for charcoal production and areas cut for shrimp pond culture serve as examples of unsustainability. Such activities threaten the ecosystem, biodiversity and the communities living standard.

Phase 1 of this research project focused on local communities resource use patterns, community resource mapping, small-scale aquaculture initiatives, social analysis, management options, and perhaps most importantly, in establishing connections and an interest in community-based coastal resource management (CBCRM) at relevant nodes: local, provincial, national and international.

Phase 2 of PMMR project began in July of 2000 and is expected to continue until June 2003 in PKWS with continues on: to design and assess participatory planning and management strategies, to evaluate forms of organization by which local people can participate in the management, to assess sustainable livelihood options for communities, to promote the participation of communities in the protection, conservation and monitoring of mangrove and fishery resources through environmental education, and to build the capacity of the project research team, local people and relevant institutions to address issues of community-based coastal resource management and to strengthen local, national and international institutional linkages.

The purpose of the PMMR research project is to present a community-based coastal resource management concept of event leading up to the protected area announcement, sustainable using of coastal resources and to describe subsequent co-management and

participatory research activities undertaken by local people, government officers and others in support of the project.