

The struggle over Asia's forests: an overview of forest conflict and potential implications for REDD+

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SUMMARY

The management of Asia's forests affects diverse stakeholders and interests, inevitably resulting in conflict. This study focuses on conflicts between local communities and outsiders: the underlying causes, conflict management approaches, and eventual outcomes. Field data was collected through interviews and focus group discussions in seven community-outsider conflict cases across five countries. While many direct conflict triggers were observed, at least three underlying and interrelated factors enabled conflict: contested statutory and customary tenure, exclusionary conservation and economic development policies, and poor coordination between land use planning agencies. The range of observed conflict management techniques (negotiation, mediation, coercion, avoidance) reflected varying power relationships and political contexts. The techniques' success in all cases was relatively low due to the complexity of addressing tenure and exclusion issues. The results underline the need to involve local people in the design of the evolving REDD+ mechanism, as well as to ensure their rights and benefits.

Keywords: local communities, outsiders, conflict, conflict management, Asia, REDD+

La lutte pour les forêts de l'Asie : aperçu des conflits forestiers et conséquences possibles pour la REDD +

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La gestion des forêts en Asie affecte des parties prenantes et des intérêts très divers, diversité qui entraîne inévitablement des conflits. Cette étude porte sur les conflits entre communautés locales et acteurs extérieurs : causes profondes, approches de gestion des conflits, et résultats éventuels. Des données de terrain ont été collectées au moyen d'entretiens et de discussions de groupe dans sept cas de conflit entre des communautés et des acteurs extérieurs dans cinq pays. De nombreux facteurs déclenchant à l'origine de conflits directs ont été observés; néanmoins, au moins trois facteurs fondamentaux et interdépendants se dégagent: droits fonciers statutaires et coutumiers contestés, politiques de conservation et de développement économique conduisant à l'exclusion, mauvaise coordination entre les agences d'aménagement du territoire. La panoplie des techniques de gestion des conflits observées (négociation, médiation, coercition, évitement) est le reflet de situations différentes au regard des relations de pouvoir et des contextes politiques. Quelles que soient les techniques employées, elles se sont toutes soldées par un échec relatif, en raison des difficultés posées par la résolution des questions foncières et celles liées à l'exclusion. Les résultats soulignent la nécessité d'impliquer les populations locales dans la conception du mécanisme de la REDD + en pleine évolution, et de garantir leurs droits et leurs avantages.

La lucha por los bosques de Asia: una visión general de los conflictos forestales y las posibles implicaciones para los REDD+

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La gestión de los bosques de Asia afecta a múltiples actores e intereses diversos, desembocando inevitablemente en conflicto. El presente estudio se centra en conflictos entre las comunidades locales y elementos foráneos: las causas subyacentes, los enfoques de gestión del conflicto y los resultados obtenidos. Los datos de campo, fueron recogidos a través de entrevistas y discusiones llevadas a cabo en grupos de enfoque en el marco de siete conflictos, identificados entre comunidades locales y elementos foráneos, en cinco países. Entre los resultados obtenidos, se observó que mientras las causas desencadenantes de conflictos pueden ser diversas, la interrelación entre tres factores fundamentales se puede considerar causa propicia de conflictos los que provocaron los conflictos: disputas entre el reglamento existente y el régimen de propiedad de la tierra, políticas de desarrollo tanto económicas como de conservación excluyentes con respecto a las comunidades locales, y una coordinación pobre entre las agencias de planificación territorial. El rango de técnicas de gestión de conflictos observadas (negociación,

mediación, coerción, elusión) refleja diferentes relaciones de poder y contextos políticos. El éxito de las técnicas en todos los casos fue relativamente bajo debido a la complejidad a la hora de hacer frente a los problemas de régimen de propiedad y exclusión de las comunidades locales. Los resultados subrayan la necesidad de involucrar a la población local en el diseño de los mecanismos de REDD+, así como para garantizar sus derechos y beneficios.

INTRODUCTION

Asia's forests have long been a battleground between various interests (Peluso and Vandergeest 2001, Goodall 2006, Hares 2009). According to Mola-Yudego and Gritten (2010), Asia is a forest conflict hotspot. As natural forests are declining rapidly, their ability to provide economic, ecological, and social benefits is also declining (Percival and Homer-Dixon 1998, Homer-Dixon 1999, Adams *et al.* 2003). This leads to heightened competition among interest groups for forest resources, and has prolonged conflict and violence in many parts of the region (Sikor 2004, Bosak 2008). Consequences of forest conflict include eviction of local and indigenous people from their land, casualties, and environmental degradation (Peluso and Watts 2001, Yasmi 2007). With renewed global interest in tropical forests to address issues related to climate change, particularly through REDD+, the resource struggles in Asia's forests may become more daunting (Angelsen 2009, Agrawal *et al.* 2010, Blom *et al.* 2010, Phelps *et al.* 2010).

A common type of conflict in Asia occurs between local communities and external stakeholders, e.g. government agencies, logging concessions, and plantation companies – hereafter simply called community-outsider conflict. Often, this conflict occurs at the village level in very remote areas. These conflicts can be small in scale and are seldom heard by the media (Gritten *et al.* forthcoming). They are also somewhat less explored by scholars when compared to “bigger” conflicts at national or international levels such as those over illegal logging, forest fires, hazes, and timber export (Schroeder-Wildberg and Carius 2003, Murdiyarso *et al.* 2004). Regardless, community-outsider conflict seems to be on the rise (NGO Forum on Cambodia 2010, Wulan *et al.* 2004). A closer look at this type of conflict is necessary, particularly in regards to the increased awareness of the importance of the region's forests for climate change mitigation.

This paper analyses seven selected cases of community-outsider conflict in five countries across Asia. It focuses on understanding three important elements of conflict: underlying causes, conflict management approaches, and conflict management outcomes. Such knowledge is crucial to inform policy makers and forest practitioners to improve forest governance. The potential implications of the findings for REDD+ in Asia are highlighted in the concluding remarks.

ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK

Conflict and conflict analysis

Conflict is commonly defined as differences or incompatibilities in interests, goals, or perceptions (Cosser 1967, FAO

2000, Bartos and Wehr 2002). In a forestry context, Raitio (2008) suggests that forest conflict can be understood as a frame-conflict, a conflict in which disputants differ in their views, experiences, or understandings of conflict. In a similar vein, Gritten *et al.* (2009) uses an ethical analysis to analyze forest conflict drivers that include interests, values, and principles of the conflict parties. Glasl (1999), Marfo (2006) and Yasmi and Colfer (2011) consider conflict to be defined by impairment: a situation in which an actor feels impaired or restricted by the behaviour of another actor due to differences in interests, perceptions, and goals. In this paper, impairment is used as the qualifier of conflict.

There is no single analytical framework for studying conflict (Brown 1992, Bartos and Wehr 2002). Depending on the main objective of the study, conflict analysis may focus on themes such as actors, underlying causes, escalation process, conflict management approaches, outcomes of conflict management efforts, and impacts of conflict (Pondy 1967, Pruitt and Rubin 1986, Escobar 2006, Yasmi 2007). In-depth studies tend to focus on one theme, while broad analysis investigates two or more themes with the intention of providing a general overview of the conflict. The current study examines specific actors (i.e. community and outsiders) and analyses three themes – underlying causes, conflict management approaches, and the outcomes of conflict management efforts – and their important inter-linkages.

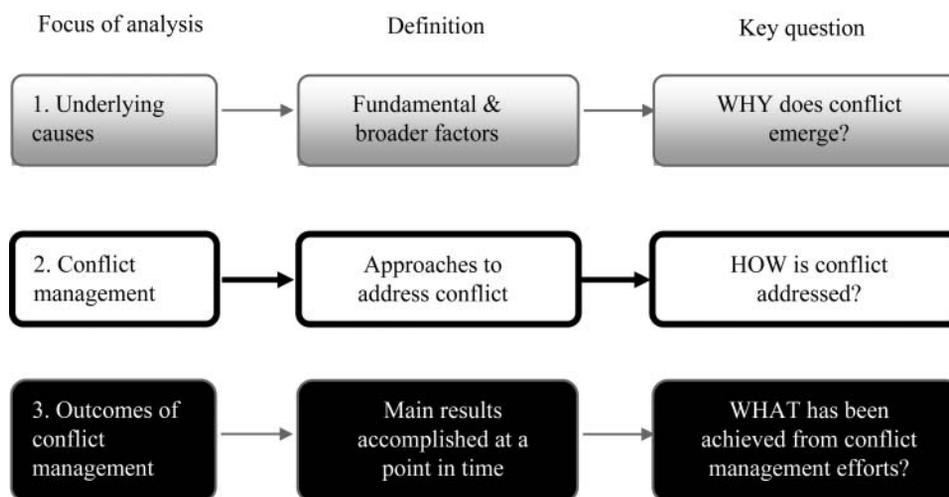
Underlying causes, conflict management approaches and outcomes

The underlying causes of conflict refer to the fundamental issues being contested by actors (Hellstrom 2001, Nie 2003, Yasmi 2003). These underlying causes are broad and relate, for instance, to policy and institutional environments (Pace 1992, FAO 2000). Analysis of the underlying causes aims to understand what enables the conflict to emerge in the first place. In conflict analysis, direct causes are also analyzed. Direct causes are the immediate factors that trigger the conflict in specific locations (Nie 2003).

Conflict management broadly refers to all efforts to address the conflict (Skutsch 2000, Ramirez 2001). It relates to how conflict is handled. Six common approaches are usually described in conflict management literature: negotiation, mediation, adjudication, arbitration, coercion, and avoidance (Isenhardt and Spangle 2000, Engel and Korf 2005). The first four strategies require that both parties agree to the course of action; the latter two are unilaterally decided by one party.

Outcomes of conflict management can be defined as the main result at a point in time from various efforts that have been devoted to addressing the conflict (Plowman 2005). Possible results include an agreement between conflicting actors

FIGURE 1 Conceptual and analytical framework



to end their conflict, a consensus to jointly find a solution to the issue, a new way of engagement in relation to resource management, or no agreement at all (Wall and Callister 1995). In short, an assessment of outcomes focuses on what has been achieved. Based on the concepts described above, Figure 1 depicts our analytical framework.

CASE STUDY SELECTION

Actors on the “community” side of the conflicts include shifting cultivators, indigenous people, and local residents in and around forest areas. Local communities are treated as a single entity in the conflict, with the assumption that they face some collective threat from external actors. However, the fact that local communities may not necessarily be homogenous and may have different interests in the conflict is recognized in this study (Agrawal and Gibson 1999). The generic classification of local communities as an entity is mainly for the purpose of actor identification. As described later, various dynamics and interests exist within local communities.

On the other side of the conflict are the “outsiders.” These actors vary from place to place and from conflict to conflict. In Asia, there are at least four common actors directly

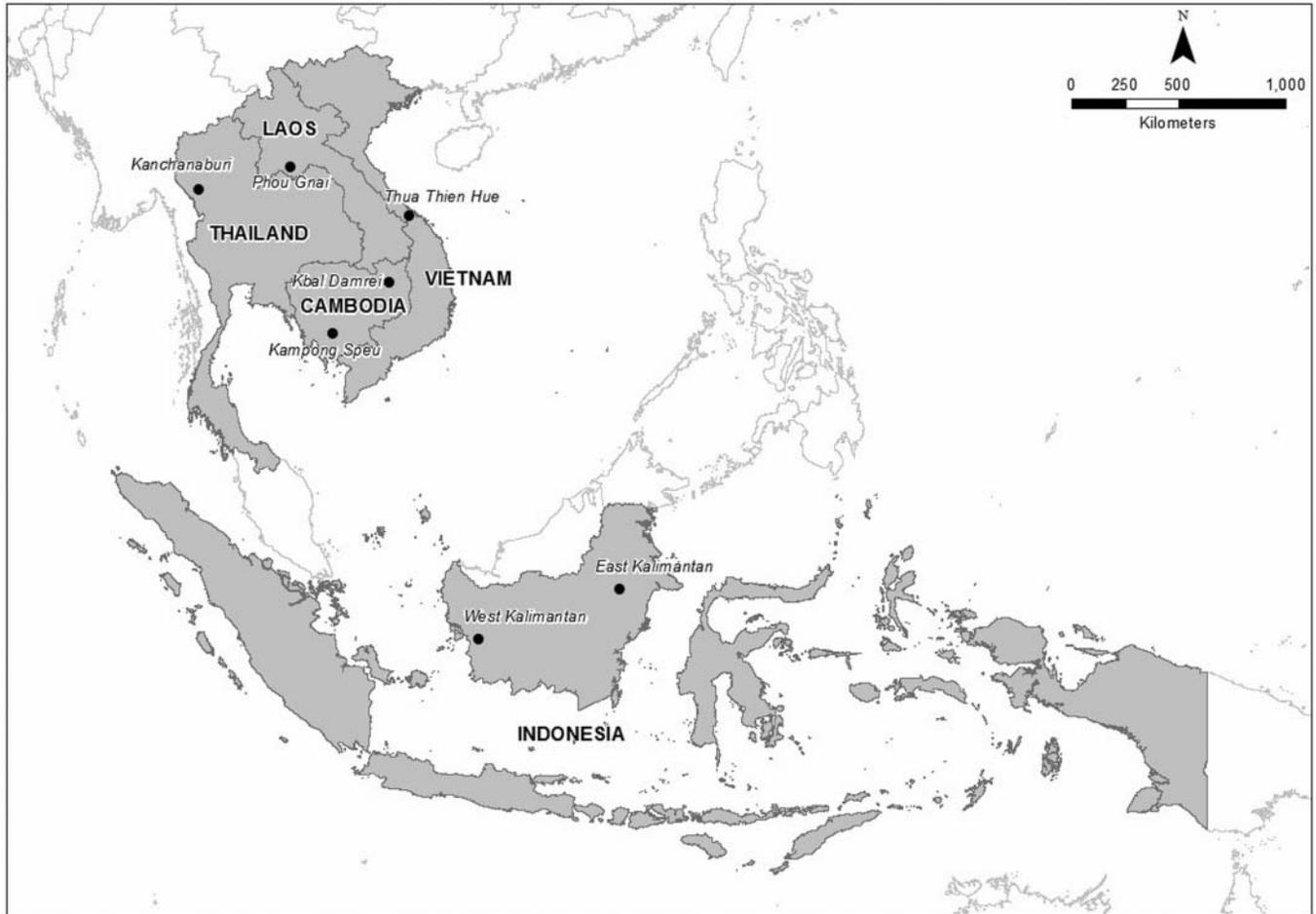
involved in forest management conflicts: logging concessionaires, mining companies, plantation owners and operators, and government conservation agencies (Doornbos *et al.* 2000, Hotte 2001, Maikhuri *et al.* 2001). While recognizing there are a diversity of actors outside as well as inside communities, we identified four types of conflicts on the basis of these commonalities: local community vs. logging, local community vs. mining, local community vs. plantation, and local community vs. conservation.

Cases were selected through the framework presented in Table 1. As the research was mainly funded by RECOFTC – The Center for People and Forests, we identified potential cases by consulting RECOFTC’s collaborators in five countries where RECOFTC has an existing research program: Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Thailand, and Vietnam. Other considerations in the selection of our cases include the accessibility of the site, cost-effectiveness, and the safety of the field researchers. Thus, sampling was largely purposive in nature. As much as possible, efforts were made to cover all four types of conflict. Ultimately, seven cases were identified for the study (Table 1). With an exception of Type 1 conflict, all other conflict types consist of two cases. The location of conflict cases is given in Figure 2. Data for this study was

TABLE 1 Framework for case study selection of community-outsider conflict

Outsider	Conflict type	Selected case
1. Logging company	Type 1 conflict Local community vs. logging company	• East Kalimantan, Indonesia
2. Mining company	Type 2 conflict Local community vs. mining company	• Kampung Speu, Cambodia • Thue Thien Hue, Vietnam
3. Plantation estate	Type 3 conflict Local community vs. plantation company	• Kbal Damrei, Cambodia • West Kalimantan, Indonesia
4. Government conservation agency	Type 4 conflict Local community vs. government conservation agencies	• Phou Gnai, Lao PDR • Kanchanaburi, Thailand

FIGURE 2 Case study locations



collected between April and November 2009.¹ National partners conducted interviews with randomly selected representatives of the conflicting parties. Focus group discussions were also conducted with community members. Findings from each case study were discussed during an international workshop in November 2009 where feedback from peers and experts was received.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF EACH CONFLICT CASE

This section provides a brief overview of each conflict case in which causes, conflict management efforts and outcomes are described. The description is developed based on the data gathered during the fieldwork.

Type 1 conflict: local community vs. logging company

East Kalimantan, Indonesia

This conflict involved five villages of indigenous *Dayak* and a logging concession. A company was granted a logging

concession in early 1980s in an area overlapping with community territory. Local residents report that they were not employed in the logging concession and were evicted from their land. The logging operation is said to have destroyed trees and community graveyards, leading to river pollution. Under the centralised political structure in Indonesia at the time (the Soeharto regime), it is likely that the company could operate without interruption. Our evidence from community interviews suggests that communities started to struggle to get back “their” forests as soon as the Soeharto regime collapsed in 1998.

They demanded the concession company pay attention to their needs. They asked the company to provide boats and chainsaws, in addition to compensation of fifty billion Rupiah (approximately \$US six million) for the damage to the communal land. The company refused to comply with any demand and tension increased. With more pressure and threats from the villages, the company was forced to halt its operations. Various negotiations about compensation to villages took place involving local police, local governments, and traditional leaders, but no agreement was reached and the

¹ The following institutions are our partner institutions in this research: The NGO Forum on Cambodia; Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CAAAS); CIFOR; TNC East Kalimantan, Indonesia; National Land Management Authority Lao PDR; and Hue University of Agriculture and Forestry Vietnam.

conflict continued. The company laid off staff due to threats from the villages. Mediation was initiated by the local government and with the help of a professional mediator. Finally, after two decades of conflict a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed where joint forest management with benefit sharing arrangement were agreed, marking an end to the conflict.

Type 2 conflict: local community vs. mining company

Kampung Speu, Cambodia

This conflict involved two main actors: a local community comprised of three neighbouring villages and a rock mining company. On the one hand, the local community was in the process of obtaining legal title for their community forest from the Forestry Administration (FA). Amid community efforts to establish the community forest, a rock mining company – one community members report to be backed by the military – bought plots of land from community members on land adjacent to the community forest. After purchasing those plots, the company obtained a mining license from the Ministry of Industry, Mines and Energy (MIME), which allowed them to begin developing the area for mining. As soon as the company started to clear land, conflict began. The company cleared trees and crops in what the community perceived to be their forest, causing dust and noise pollution. From the company's perspective, their land claims were valid because they had purchased this land from villagers.

The community's demands for compensation for crop damage and tree loss, and for cessation of logging activities were unsuccessful. Sixty-five members of community went to the site where land had been cleared, bearing knives, sticks, and poles, and forcibly seized the bulldozer. The bulldozer driver panicked and called the company's community representative to meet with community. The discussion became tense, with the company's community representative arguing that the land did not belong to the community and with community members threatening to burn down the bulldozer if the company did not cease land-clearing completely. Following discussions with the commune chief, the company decided to temporarily suspend their activities. At the end of the field work for this study, conflict was ongoing.

Thue Thien Hue, Vietnam

This conflict centered on the operations of a sand mining company that affected local water supply, damaged burial grounds, and destroyed a community's forest plantation. In 2005, a silicate company came to the village with a license from Department of Natural Resources and Environment. Initially, many community members expected the company would create local jobs. Later, it was found out that the company would not employ locals. At the same time, mining operations began to threaten community forests, century-old graveyards, and a community water reservoir (the company used water from the reservoir for its operation). Compensation for the damage to acacia plantations and indigenous trees was low because the local community did not possess a legal land use certificate despite having managed the area for 400 years.

Key moments of conflict escalation include the company's use of the community's water reservoir, government approval of the company's plan to expand the operation into the community's forest, and the start of company operations near the graveyard. Various attempts at negotiation have failed.

Type 3 conflict: local community vs. plantation company

Kbal Damrei, Cambodia

This conflict involved a rubber plantation company and community. The former started operations on land that the community had already demarcated as being part of a community forest under development, but did so with a concession permit that had been granted by the provincial governor. The community was not aware that the permit had been granted to the company, and reported to the forestry office that the company operation overlapped with community forest. The land clearing damaged the community's forest, farmland, and burial site. The company employed workers from outside the community, causing further grievances.

More than 200 villagers assembled to demand that the company stop clearing what they believe to be their land. The villagers were concerned for their farmland, their burial ground, and their proposed community forest of 2 725 ha. During the protest, villagers refused to return to their homes and demanded a definitive resolution from the local authorities. Villagers found an old CK holding six rounds near the company's staff cottage, of which policemen took control. Only following long discussions and mediation between villages and commune councillors, a facilitator from a local NGO, and the commune chief of Kbal Damrei, – as well as a promise to resolve the conflict – did the protesters agree to return home. The conflict is ongoing.

West Kalimantan, Indonesia

Three main actors were engaged in the conflict over forest land in West Kalimantan: an oil palm company and two local communities. The district government granted a permit to an oil palm company to operate in a designated location that overlapped with community land and forests, without the community's knowledge. When the company met with the community, they gave them only three days to decide to accept or reject the proposed benefit-sharing arrangement. Though some community members pushed for development, community representatives rejected the company's land compensation proposal, believing they stood to lose too much and feeling that the offer, which would have given them two parts profit of ten, was unfair. But the next month, the company moved a tractor into the community, and started land clearing and nursery. They claimed that the land actually belonged to a neighbouring community, and told the community that the neighbouring community had agreed to their plan.

The first community protested in a series of letters: to the company, to the district head, to the district police, and to the head of the customary council. They argued that the land is historically theirs, lent only provisionally to the neighbouring community. But they did not receive any response and their

invitations to meetings were refused. Three months after the company moved onto the land, the members of the first community confiscated a company tractor. More letters were sent, including one to the Governor of West Kalimantan Province. More meetings were refused, by both the company and the neighbouring village. During this time, a leader from the first community was called in twice by district police. The conflict is ongoing.

Type 4 conflict: local community vs. conservation

Phou Gnai, Lao PDR

The government aimed to establish a buffer zone and protected area that overlaps with a community territory. There has yet to be any clear information on compensation, and the community had been asked to discontinue planting eaglewood (*Aquilaria malaccensis*) in the area thus far delineated. According to villagers, they have occupied the forest near Phou Gnai for generations, practicing traditional farming including shifting cultivation. However, there has been no clear demarcation of community territory and the government claims it as state land. Since 1999, landowners have tried to formalize their customary use right and they have paid land use taxes accordingly. However, the demarcation has never been done properly.

Community members also report that the government designated the area as protected area by putting up boundary markers and signing boards without consulting the community beforehand. Although community members generally agree with the idea of forest conservation, they want to be assured that their land is not demarcated without their consent and that their livelihoods are not jeopardized by conservation. The community has organized itself to protect its forest by showing the government evidence of land management and locations of previous fallows. Negotiation between community and the government is ongoing

Kanchanaburi, Thailand

This conflict involved a local community and government actors associated with two protected areas. In 1981, the government designated two protected areas, the Sri Nakarin Dam National Park and the Chalerm Rattanakosin Forest Reserves. At the time, it declared that the protected area had been managed by the community for over twenty years. Yet the establishment of the national park did not involve consultation with the local community; indeed, boundaries between village territory and the national park were overlapping. Per the National Park Act, all collection activities in the park were made illegal, including swidden farming.

As a result, community members have been arrested. Violent quarrels between forestry officers and villagers are reported to have become increasingly common. The conflict escalated over twenty years, with arrests and disputes gradually increasing through the late 1980s and 1990s, culminating in 1999 when community members trapped forestry officers in the village without food or water. After this incident, a local NGO became involved as a third party to establish dialogue between community members and park officials. The conflict

was resolved using a joint management solution that allows villagers moderate resource use in the protected areas.

UNDERLYING CAUSES

Based on the brief description of each conflict case above, we can observe that there are various immediate issues that triggered the emergence of the conflicts, including damage to communities' land (crops, graveyards and trees), pollution, lack of employment opportunities for local residents, and lack of consultation. Several fundamental factors or underlying causes allowed such things to take place, including contested statutory and customary tenure, poor coordination between state agencies, exclusionary conservation, and economic development policies. Table 2 summarizes the underlying causes of conflict in each location.

Contested tenure was a primary driver of conflict in every single case, beginning with a shift in access. On the one hand, states retain many resource rights and control over much of the forests and land on the basis of statutory claims. On the other hand, communities often invoke customary claims. When governments invoke their statutory rights to grant forests to logging concessions, mining companies, and plantation estates, they generate a change in access that directly conflicts with how local communities have historically used land. Such action is possible due to the fact that governments claim much forestland as state property. Simultaneously, community land claims are rooted in generations of inhabitancy and management. For example in Thu Thien Hue, communities have lived in the area for 400 years, developing a cultural connection to the land and forests (e.g. graveyards). Sand mining jeopardized this connection.

Exclusionary policies were another underlying cause observed in all conflict cases. First, communities were not consulted prior to most of the activities that affected their land. If they were consulted, for example in the West Kalimantan case, they were not given sufficient time to consider the proposal for land use change. Communities identified such deliberate exclusion as a cause of conflict. Second, communities were considered illegal settlers when the protected area was declared. They were forced to comply with restrictions limiting their access to forests (i.e. in the Phou Gnai and Kanchanaburi cases).

Poor coordination between state agencies was another underlying cause of conflict. As shown in the two cases from Cambodia (conflict between local communities and logging and rubber plantation), state agencies issued overlapping permits on the same piece of land. Poor coordination resulted in the situation hostile to the development of community forests, and led to forest destruction by mining operations and land clearing for rubber plantation.

CONFLICT MANAGEMENT APPROACHES

Actors have used multiple techniques to manage conflict in all seven cases (Table 3). Four main approaches were applied:

TABLE 2 *Underlying causes of conflict*

Conflict type	Case study	Underlying causes
Type 1 conflict Local community vs. logging company	East Kalimantan, Indonesia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contested statutory and customary tenure Exclusionary economic development policies
Type 2 conflict Local community vs. mining company	Kampung Speu, Cambodia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contested statutory and customary tenure Exclusionary economic development policies Poor coordination between state agencies
	Thue Thien Hue, Vietnam	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contested statutory and customary tenure Exclusionary economic development policies
Type 3 conflict Local community vs. plantation company	Kbal Damrei, Cambodia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contested statutory and customary tenure Exclusionary economic development policies Poor coordination between state agencies
	West Kalimantan, Indonesia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contested statutory and customary tenure Exclusionary economic development policies
Type 4 conflict Local community vs. conservation agency	Phou Gnai, Lao PDR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contested statutory and customary tenure Exclusionary conservation policies
	Kanchanaburi, Thailand	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contested statutory and customary tenure Exclusionary conservation policies

negotiation, mediation, coercion, and avoidance. Additionally, co-management, a form of joint management in which actors share roles and responsibilities regarding forest management, is not commonly described in conflict management literature but was central to successful mediation process in two cases. In this hybrid approach, mediators encouraged conflicting parties to jointly work out how to manage the forests with clearly defined roles and responsibilities, as well as to agree upon benefit sharing arrangements. Neither arbitration nor adjudication was used in the cases studied.

Regardless of conflict type, negotiation was attempted in all cases except Kbal Damrei, Cambodia. This means that conflicting parties attempted to engage in direct communication to resolve their issue. In Kampong Speu, Cambodia, for example, local leaders negotiated with the rock mining companies as the location for the mining site overlaps with a community forest. Both parties were willing to meet face-to-face to discuss the issue. Likewise, in most other cases,

communities were represented by their leaders in negotiations with outsiders. In the Kbal Damrei case, however, no negotiation took place because the rubber plantation company refused to meet local leaders. The company rigidly maintained that they had received a legitimate permit to plant rubber in the area and that this right was not up for negotiation. This led the conflict to escalate to a mass protest.

Avoidance, though likely exercised by varying actors at varying points in time, was not a common overt or collective strategy in these seven cases. This suggests that conflict stakes are very high in the region and that resolution is sought despite possible negative repercussions. The use of avoidance as an overt and long-lasting strategy in East Kalimantan may be attributed to power differences during Soeharto's authoritarian dictatorship, in which community dissent was commonly repressed. This provides further evidence that conflict, whether overt or not, may often be present when the formal access to forests changes.

TABLE 3 *Conflict management approach applied in study areas*

Conflict type	Selected case	Conflict Management Approach			
		Negotiation	Mediation	Coercion	Avoidance
Type 1 Local comm. vs. logging company	East Kalimantan, Indonesia	Yes	Yes*	Yes	Yes
Type 2 Local comm. vs. mining company	Kampung Speu, Cambodia	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
	Thue Thien Hue, Vietnam	Yes	No	No	No
Type 3 Local comm. vs. plantation company	Kbal Damrei, Cambodia	No	Yes	Yes	No
	West Kalimantan, Indonesia	Yes	No	Yes	No
Type 4 Local comm. vs. conservation	Phou Gnai, Lao PDR	Yes	No	No	No
	Kanchanaburi, Thailand	Yes	Yes*	Yes	No

*Mediation by third party combined with co-management

Mediation was also used in four cases after negotiations failed. In conflict situations, government agency officials were often expected to mediate – at least at the beginning of the mediation process. However, communities felt that governments sided with companies and that they therefore had to seek alternative mediators, e.g. NGOs. In the conflict in Kanchanaburi, an international project consortium mediated the conflict. In both East Kalimantan and Kanchanaburi, mediation was combined with co-management to resolve conflict.

In five out of seven conflict cases, coercion was used by one if not both actors. In the conflict between an oil palm company and local people in West Kalimantan, for example, military and police backed up the company and threatened local people with arrest. Likewise, in the conflict between local people and national park staff in Kanchanaburi, community members were arrested and forced from their homes. In both instances, the company and the national park staff used military or police to coerce local communities and indigenous people. Community members themselves resorted to coercion when attempts at negotiation failed, as evidenced by the mass protest (involving poles and knives) in Kampong Speu, Cambodia.

OUTCOMES OF CONFLICT MANAGEMENT EFFORTS

Table 4 provides an overview of the result of various conflict management efforts in the study locations. In two cases, East Kalimantan and Kanchanaburi, conflicts were successfully resolved through a combination of co-management and mediation, which enabled parties to reach an agreement to end the conflict. In both, this agreement took more than two decades. Despite the various strategies attempted up to this point, co-management arrangements seemed to be a defining factor enabling conflict resolution. Governments provided policy flexibility and support for decentralized solutions in

TABLE 4 *Outcome of conflict management efforts in study locations*

Conflict type	Selected case	Agreement
Type 1 Local comm. vs. logging company	East Kalimantan, Indonesia	Yes
Type 2 Local comm. vs. mining company	Kampung Speu, Cambodia Thue Thien Hue, Vietnam	No No
Type 3 Local comm. vs. plantation company	Kbal Damrei, Cambodia West Kalimantan, Indonesia	No No
Type 4 Local comm. vs. conservation agency	Phou Gnai, Lao PDR Kanchanaburi, Thailand	No Yes

these two cases. Coupled with credible and neutral mediators, mediation process helped re-establish trust and dialogue, which later helped resolve the conflicts.

In Kanchanaburi, a 1998 Thai Senate provision paved the way for resolution by allowing the practice of subsistence livelihoods in protected areas, provided that villagers had settled in the area *prior* to the declaration of the protected area. Beginning in 2004, a local NGO helped facilitate discussions between villagers and park officials with the aim of establishing trust and dialogue. The two parties eventually worked together to mark forests areas for the villagers' use within the boundaries of the two protected areas. The boundaries now clearly exclude swidden lands. Within the new boundaries, the sustainable collection of non-wood forest products (e.g. medicinal plants, leaves, mushrooms, fruits) is permitted according to regulations established by a village institution and agreed upon by park officials. Similarly, the willingness of the local government in East Kalimantan to support the mediation and co-management efforts was key to the success of achieving agreement after more than two decades of conflict between local communities and logging concession.

In five other cases, at the time of fieldwork, conflicts were ongoing and no agreement had been established between the various actors. Poor governance helps to explain why conflict management has failed. Local stakeholders expected local government officials to act as a neutral party and support conflict negotiation and mediation, but this was rarely the case. In West Kalimantan, local communities sent several letters to their district government and one to the provincial governor asking for help in resolving conflict with the oil palm subsidiary, but never received a reply. In the two cases in Cambodia, companies hired armed military guards to protect their operations, a fact ignored by local leaders. Many community members believed that the commune chief was actually involved with the company. Distrust of leaders undermined negotiation outcomes. It may also help to explain why communities did not seek legal recourse to their conflicts through adjudication or arbitration: they may not have believed the system would support fair solutions.

DISCUSSION

The study indicates that while there are many immediate triggers of community-outsider conflict, three fundamental and interrelated causes underlie the conflict, namely: overlapping statutory and customary tenure, the exclusion of local communities in land use decisions, and poor coordination between state agencies. This finding suggests that despite the diversity of contexts of each case, some underlying causes of community-outsider conflict are relatively common. This was true regardless of the diversity of outsider groups or conflict types (Hellstrom 2001, Nie 2003, Yasmi 2003). For example, two underlying causes were observed in all cases: overlapping statutory and customary tenure, and the exclusion of local communities in land use decisions related to economic development and conservation policy. In Cambodia, poor

coordination between state agencies was also an important issue. While the issue was not directly observed in other cases of this study, it must not be discounted as a contributing factor of conflict in other countries.

Furthermore, this study illustrates the tendency of actors to engage in conflict resolution in almost all situations (Skutsch 2000, Ramirez 2001). Negotiation was a common strategy in these cases, and elsewhere (Engel and Korf 2005). Less common was avoidance: while individual community members may have utilized this strategy at various stages in different conflicts, only in the East Kalimantan case did it serve as an ongoing collective strategy. In that situation, communities had no other option but avoid direct confrontation with more powerful outsider, something at least partially explained by the authoritarian political context at the time. The difficulty of resolving community-outsider conflicts is highlighted by the observation that settlement was reached in only two of seven cases, each taking more than two decades to achieve. The involvement of third party mediators in these cases furthermore points to the need for more skilful mediators (Wall and Calliester 1995, Ramirez 2001).

The findings give some critical insights as to why managing community-outsider conflict can be so difficult. First, addressing tenure is a challenge in and of itself (de Koning *et al.* 2008). Different actors use different bases and arguments to legitimize their claims. Whose claim should dictate the proper course of action is delicate. In this situation, the willingness of actors to discuss their differences is key to successful conflict management. It is also important for more powerful actors to realize and acknowledge local realities before trying to impose abstract and top-down policies on local communities. Developing an understanding of the crucial cultural relationships that local communities have with their resources can help to avoid some conflict, as well as enable more successful conflict management. Where governments or more powerful actors are flexible in their positions, solutions are possible. Indeed, the co-management option reasonably satisfied both parties in two cases.

Second, the study suggests that excluding communities from decision-making can result in conflict (Goodall 2006). As long as economic development and conservation-oriented policies exclude local communities as an important partner, conflict will likely continue. Shifting towards a more inclusive means of development and conservation would not only be pragmatic, but also morally imperative. Early consultation is an important prerequisite for governments and companies. Fortunately, in many countries there is a growing decentralization process taking place, strengthened by with the increasing presence of civil society). This will hopefully ensure more inclusive land-based development and conservation. Finally, inter-sectoral coordination must be pursued. Government agencies should work in partnership, rather than in silos.

CONCLUDING REMARKS – POTENTIAL IMPLICATION FOR REDD+

The study findings have various implications for the emerging REDD+ initiative in the region. First, it seems that REDD+

will face similar challenges if tenure is not clarified or at least explored and addressed in fair ways. Tenure will be a strong determinant of who benefits from REDD+ and how. REDD+ will raise many important questions regarding ownership of trees, carbon, and decision-making power. Unless discussed and addressed from the beginning of any development, REDD+ may displace those with customary tenure, inadvertently resulting in new conflict or exaggerating existing conflict (Phelps *et al.* 2010).

Second, the findings suggest that any REDD+ initiative needs to involve communities early and often to understand and accommodate their needs and rights. This will require approaches to REDD+ strategy development that allow local stakeholders to participate in REDD+ discussions and deliberations (TFD 2010, Peskett 2011). Many conflicts would not escalate if local communities were consulted at the earliest stages of development planning. Consultations allow for the consideration and incorporation of their interests, and increase the effectiveness of conflict management. Participatory processes and transparency should therefore be institutionalized. Development projects that fail to follow due process must be sanctioned to avoid a culture of impunity that encourages disrespect towards local communities.

Finally, coordination between sectors and integrated land use planning will define the success of REDD+, for climate change mitigation will require a portfolio of activities across the landscape. The case studies suggest that if demand for land for REDD+ is not coordinated with other land demands, forest conflict may increase. Integrated planning across line agencies is rare, and forest development is often initiated by national or international companies with the support of a single government agency. Most countries lack the capacity to track and monitor all land-based developments at the national level. The two cases from Cambodia demonstrate how this shortcoming can result in inconsistencies in the granting of land rights and ultimately conflict. While this study does not focus on REDD+, it points to the need for future research to explore the relationships between forest conflict and REDD+.

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