

Preface

The present working report titled “Approach to the Sustainable Forestry of Indigenous Tree Species in Northeast Thailand“ is organized to show the fruits of the initial 5 year phase of joint research project on “Development of techniques for nurturing beneficial indigenous tree species and combined management of agriculture and forestry in the northeast of Thailand, tropical monsoon regions” by the collaboration between Royal Forest Department (RFD) and Japan International Research Center for Agricultural Science (JIRCAS) since 2006.

Thailand once was well known as the Country of Forest. The rich forest covered more than half of nation’s territory until early 1960’s and supported livelihood of Thai nation by the mutual combination with agriculture and fishery, and nursed rich culture as well. This country, however, has experienced quite rapid deforestation down to less than 30% at the end of the 20th century due to the drastic socio-economical change. This loss in the northeast region was the most obvious among all regions of Thailand, in particular.

Thai government had paid great effort to recover such critical loss of nature and promoted planting of fast growing tree species as the fast aid and successes apparently. The fast growing species plantation, however, offers only pulp or fuel wood. The recovery of high ecological service that rich forest used to produce can’t be expected. Royal Forest Department therefore has launched on the research to develop the sound technique to convert plantation of fast growing tree species to endogenous high economic valued species stand since late 1980’s as the following step to re-install rich forest ecosystem to the northeast. Introducing to plant national symbolic tree species, Teak, to the northeast was also one of the challenges to root firm source of supporting livelihood with rich forest ecosystem to the region. Our collaborative research project has been piling up various useful results upon the accumulation of experience and findings from those previous trials. We pay deep respects to the initiators of those trials.

We JIRCAS are honestly proud on our collaboration which has been woven with Thai forest scientists both of RFD and the other institutions, forest officers as well as plantation owners. Our challenge toward the great goal has just launched on. We expect further keen collaboration over another five years and farer for obtaining highly user-friendly results and the contribution to society with smooth use of the knowledge. We hope the Working report can contribute to the development of emerging small scaled private forestry in Thailand.

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