



# Understanding communities and marine conservation in the Myeik Archipelago, Myanmar

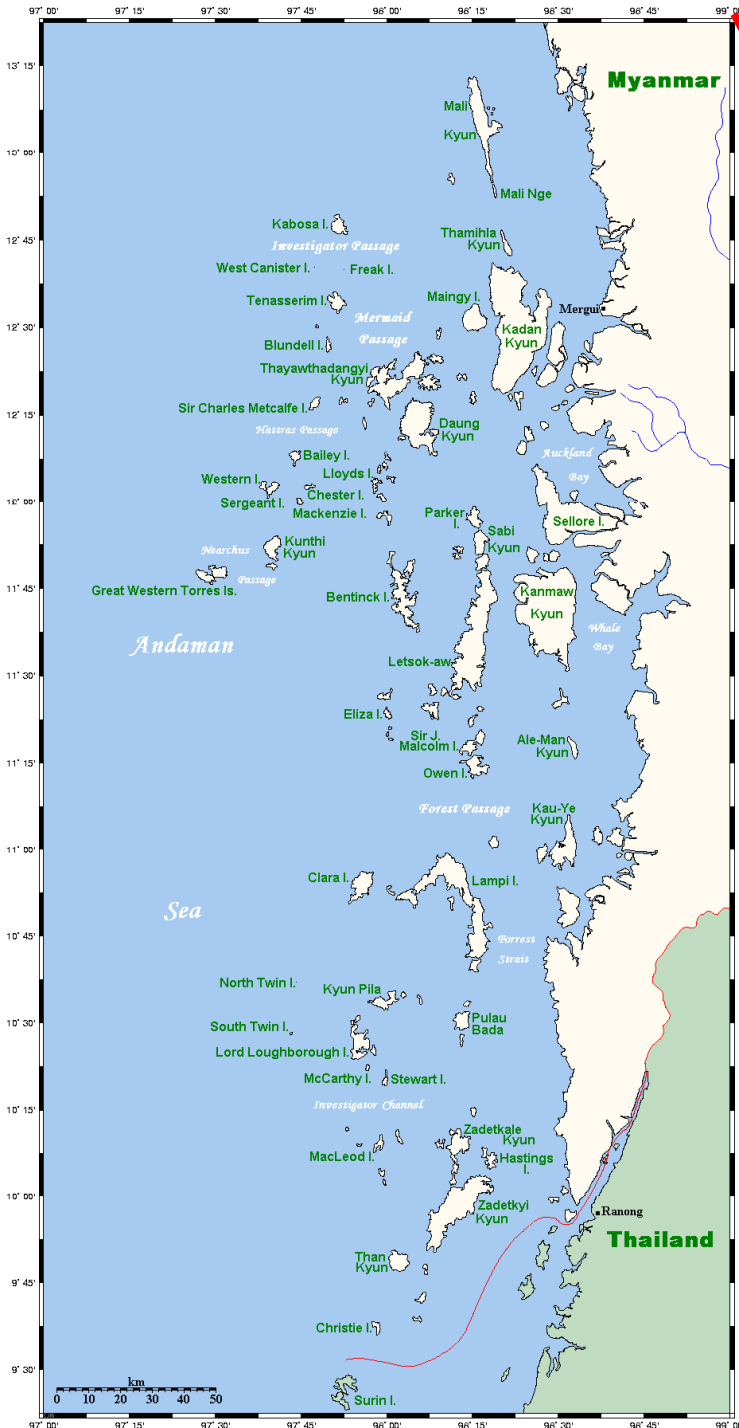
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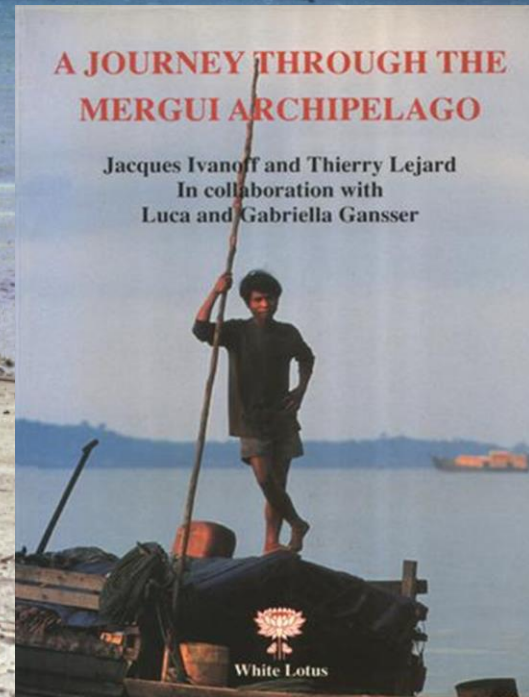
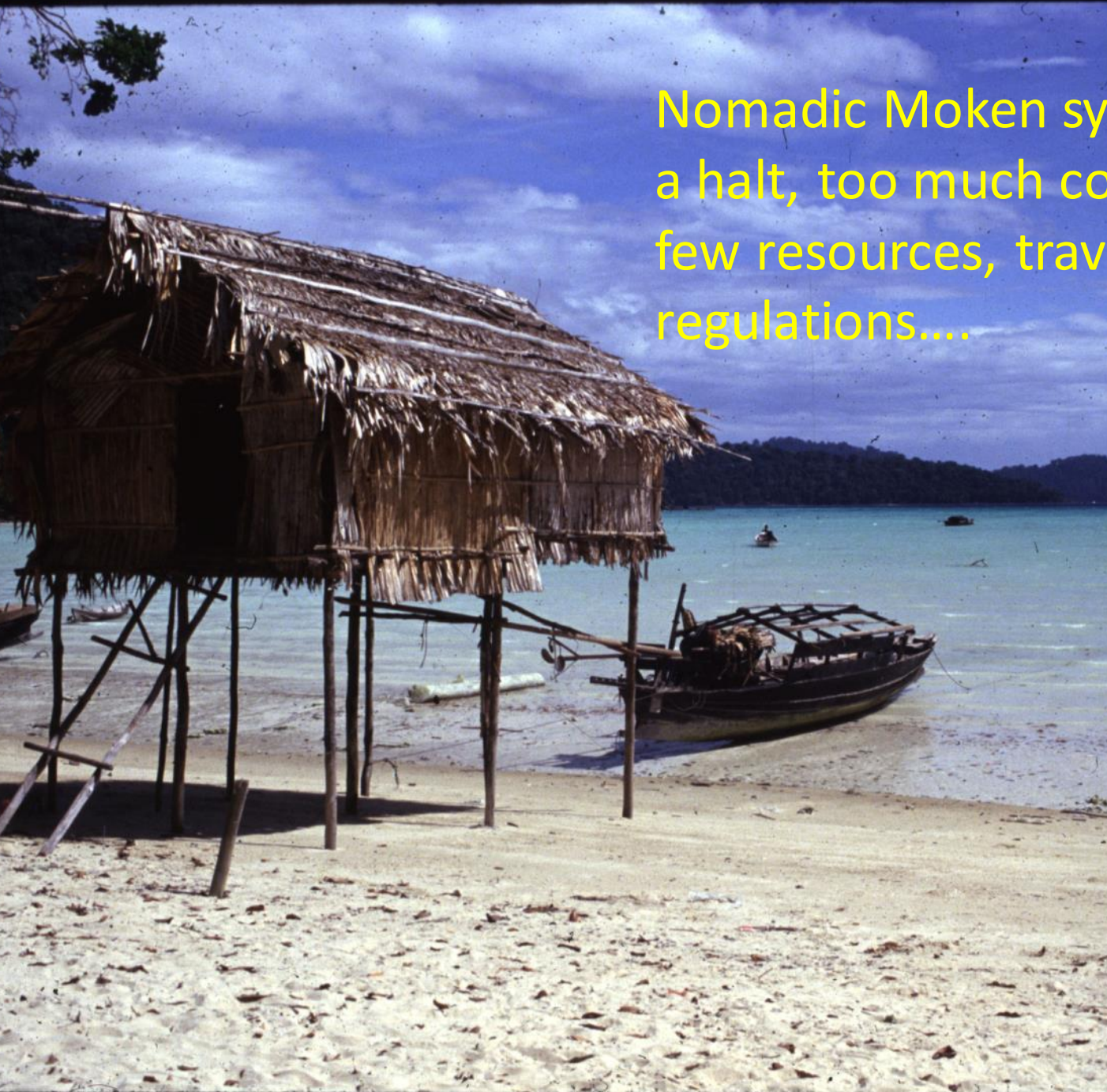
Dearden P. 2018 The times they are a changing: adaptation and MPA establishment in the Myeik Archipelago, Myanmar, *Biodiversity*: <https://doi.org/10.1080/14888386.2018.1467793>

# Myeik Archipelago

~800 Islands along 400km N-S axis



Nomadic Moken system grinding to a halt, too much competition, too few resources, travel restrictions, regulations....

















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- A landscape photograph showing a valley with a dense forest. In the center of the valley, there is a cleared area, possibly a field or a small settlement. The background shows rolling hills and mountains under a hazy sky. The foreground is dominated by green grass and some bare trees. The text is overlaid on the left side of the image.
- The slash and burn agricultural system grinding to a halt...and moving into the parks
  - Parallels with Moken
  - Systems have to change





- Karen, most conservation oriented of the Hilltribes
- Small number had migrated from the hills to the Islands of Myeik and established a couple of settlements

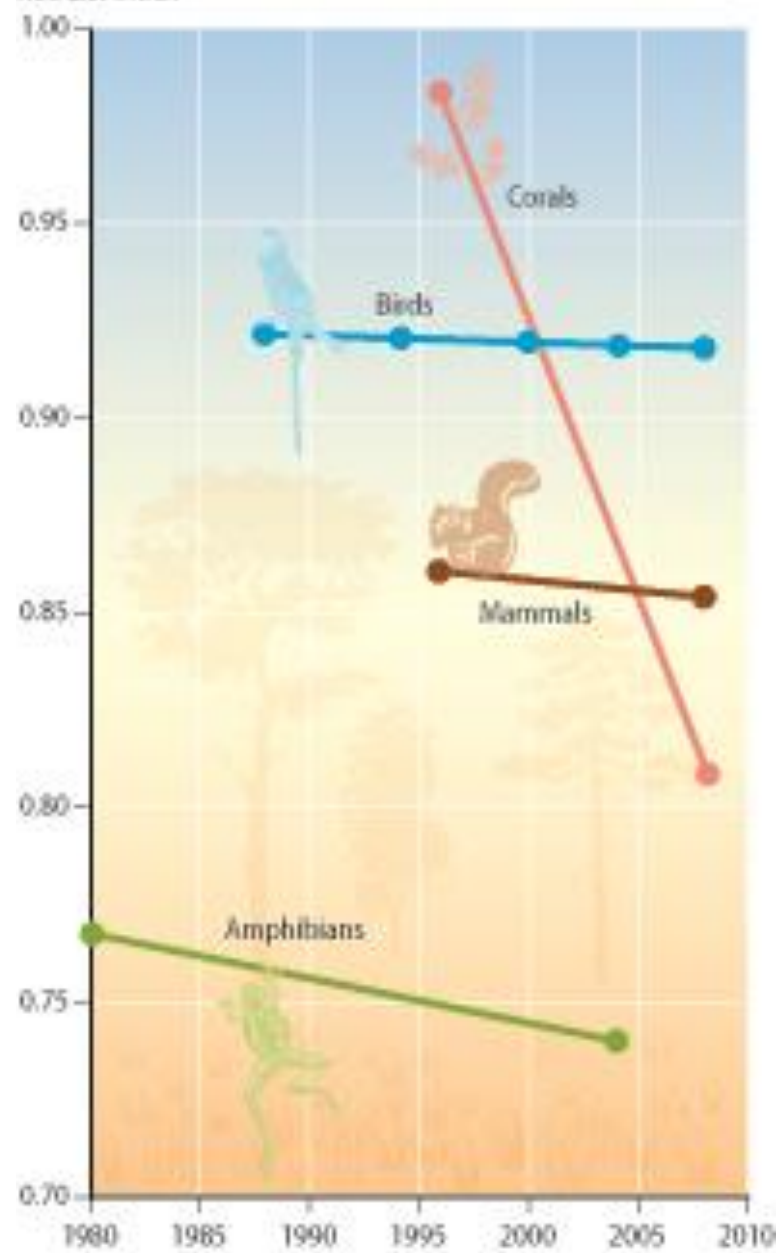








### Red List Index



Unsustainable fishery:  
90% drop in pelagic  
biomass in 20 yrs



# Fishing down the food chain

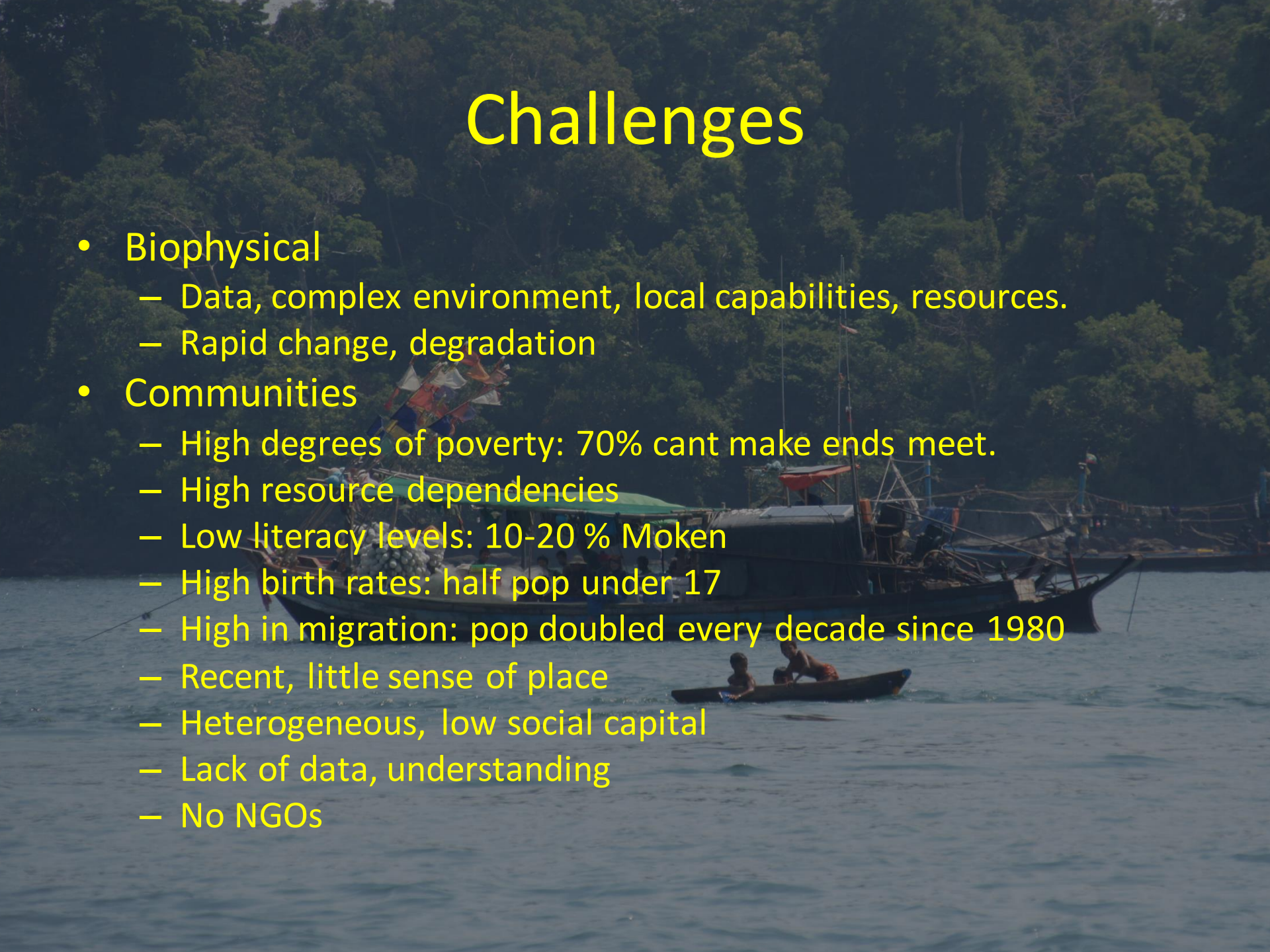




# The Cultural Dimension

- Need to understand cultures and their history
- But things change...
  - Slash and burn
  - Marine collecting/hunting
- People move....people stop moving
- Adaptability is good, but...
- Livelihoods and Conservation, the “EEE”  
bottom line

# Challenges

- Biophysical
    - Data, complex environment, local capabilities, resources.
    - Rapid change, degradation
  - Communities
    - High degrees of poverty: 70% cant make ends meet.
    - High resource dependencies
    - Low literacy levels: 10-20 % Moken
    - High birth rates: half pop under 17
    - High in migration: pop doubled every decade since 1980
    - Recent, little sense of place
    - Heterogeneous, low social capital
    - Lack of data, understanding
    - No NGOs
- 
- A large wooden boat with a green canopy and colorful flags is on the water. In the foreground, a smaller boat with two people is visible. The background is a dense forest.

# Challenges II



- Governance
  - Many not citizens
  - No tradition of participation
  - High corruption
  - Low leadership capabilities
  - No enforcement capabilities
  - No policy
  - No legislation
  - No plan
- Time...academics, NGOs and the Big Boys

# But on the Bright Side....

- Decentralisation, regional governments
- Participation idea increasing
- Problems recognised unanimously
- Learn from others' mistakes
- Ethnic bridging
- Karen community conservation ethic
- Stunning area
- Thailand

