

# Redefining priorities and reassigning responsibilities for forest management in Doi Mae Salong

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## Key message

- Doi Mae Salong (DMS) was in the past one of the most sensitive areas of the Golden Triangle of Northern Thailand and is even today under the direct control of the Supreme Command Office (SCO) of the Royal Thai Army. The SCO is also responsible for forest management, which includes the reforestation of degraded land.
- Ethnic minority people have utilized the forest area to fulfill their agriculture land needs, which in the past included the cultivation of opium. DMS, though classified as reserved forest, became seriously deforested.
- The initial response to this problem was the usual command and top-down approach of relocating settlements from protected areas and reforesting degraded areas with fast-growing and useful species. In the case of DMS, this approach was facilitated by the power monopoly of the Royal Thai Army.
- Unusual is the recent adoption by the SCO itself of a conservation-oriented multi-stakeholder participatory approach to reforestation activities and forest management which involves local people, NGOs, and academic groups such as the Forest Restoration Research Unit (FORRU) of Chiang Mai University, one of the partners of the MMC Project.
- The main objectives of the new approach to planting trees in DMS are: 1) increasing biodiversity through forest restoration, 2) improving livelihoods through agroforestry, 3) managing landscapes sustainably through zoning and land allocation.

## Multiple forest plantation schemes for improved livelihood opportunities

Forest Restoration- Framework Species Technique (FORRU-CMU)

Landscapes and Livelihoods Strategy (IUCN)

Planting 3 kinds of trees, getting 4 types of benefits approach (Agro-forestry)

Simple zoning scheme developed by military  
Upper slopes: Reforested land  
Lower slopes : Crop land

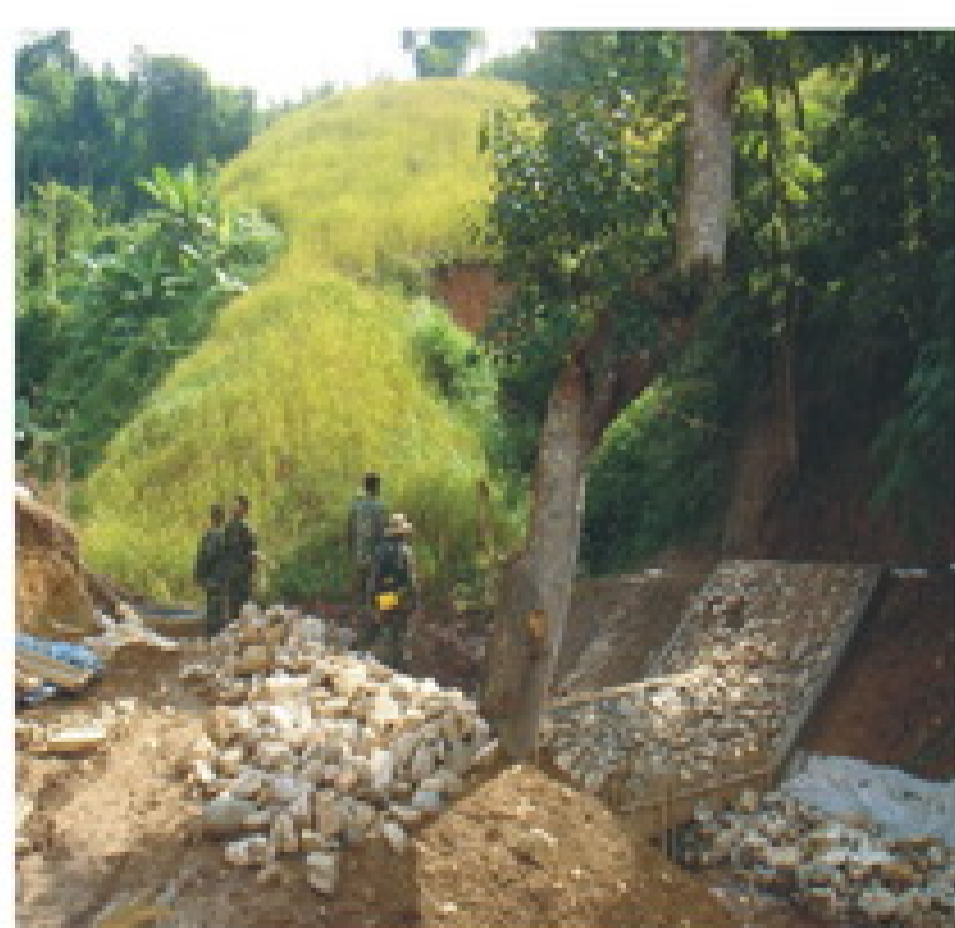


Land use mosaic in DMS

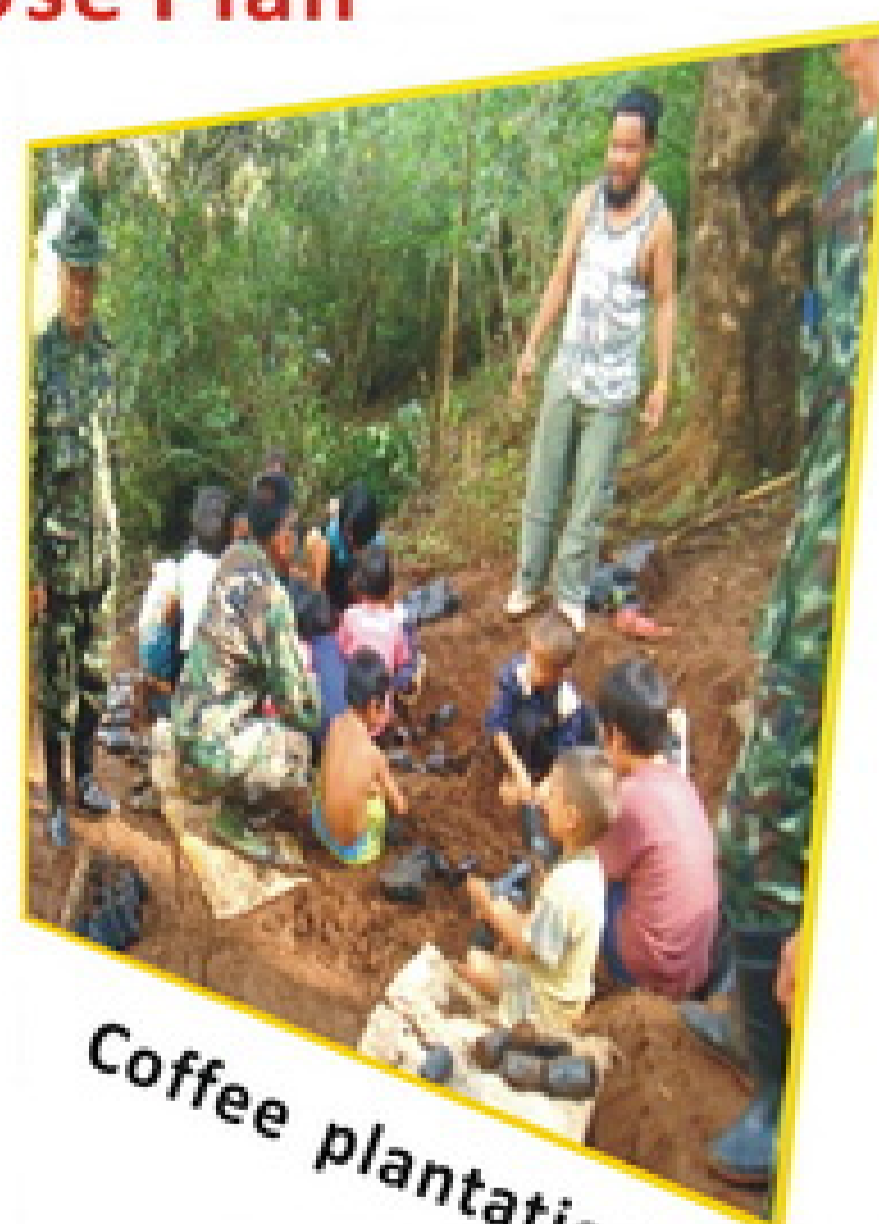
## Generating appropriate Land Use Plan



Bamboo plantation



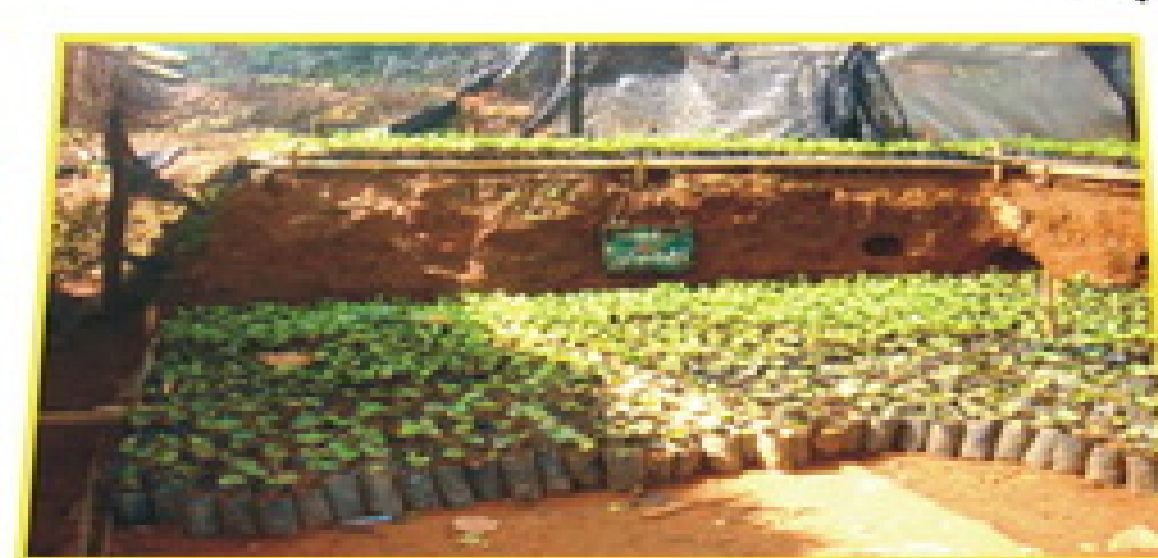
Irrigation canals



Coffee plantation



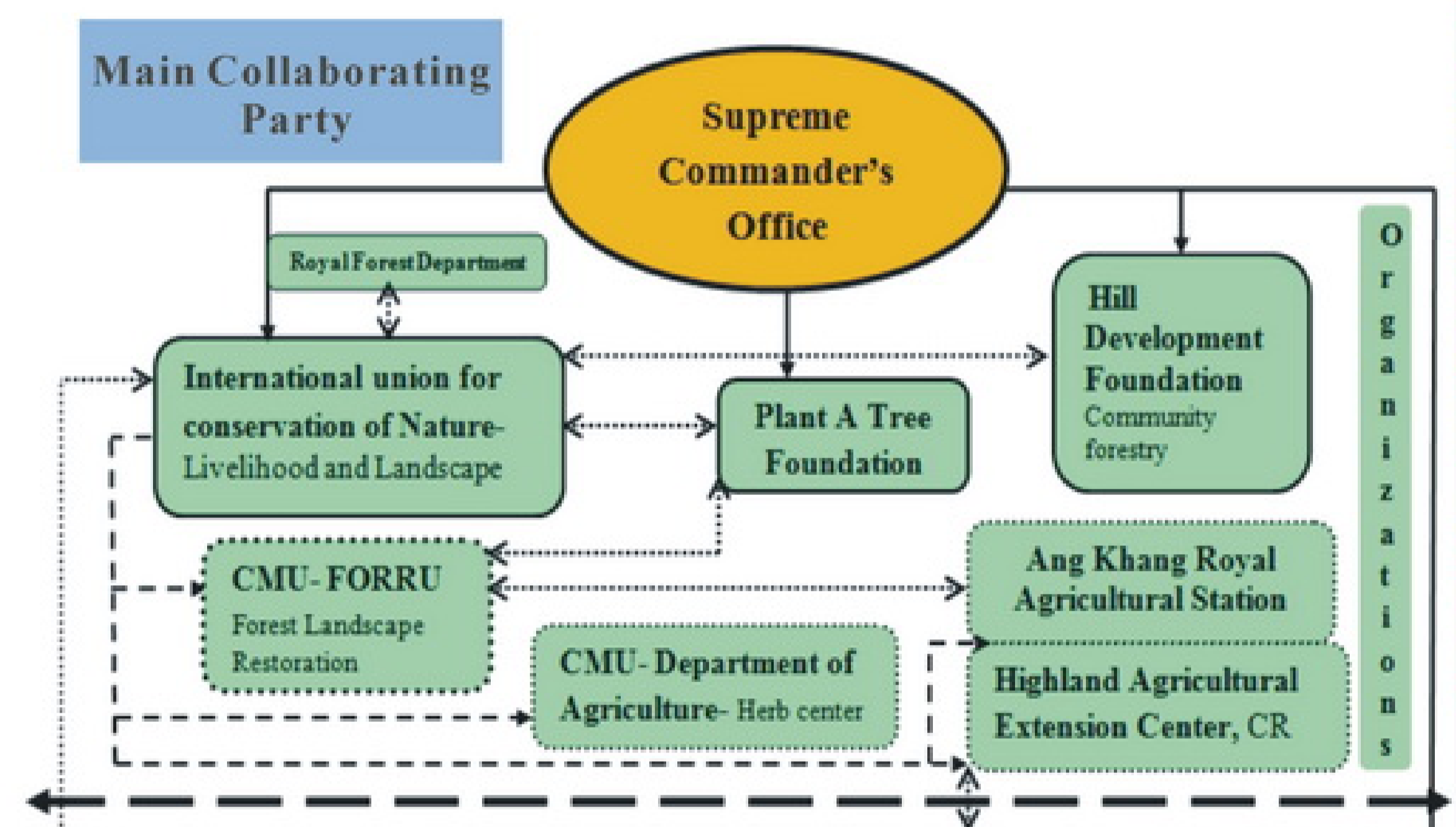
Agro forestry practices



Nursery practices

Change in Reforestation Strategy

## Multi-stakeholder working group designed For collective and effective decision making



Extensive support from Government and non governmental agencies

## Outcomes of the Approach

- Local people identify with what they consider a “new approach executed by the army” realizing that something new is happening
- Information flow from the authorities to the local level through the village heads is now effective.
- Appropriate land allocation as compensation for people who were relocated (and who are hoping to eventually obtain permanent land rights)
- Observed contributions: Decline in slash and burn cultivation accompanied by a shift to agro-forestry (coffee, fruit trees) ; improved irrigation facilities; income diversification through NTFP trading, eco-tourism, and timber substitution (bamboo plantation).
- Greatest influence evident in enhancing social cohesion i.e. reducing conflicts and distrust between locals and authorities

Decreeing a multi-stakeholder approach to deal with forest and people problems in a sensitive area