

Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD+)

Projects and Indigenous People:

Comparative Study between Vietnam and Nepal

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A Thesis Submitted to
Saint Mary's University, Halifax, Nova Scotia
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for
the Degree of Master of Arts in International Development Studies

November 2015. Halifax, Nova Scotia

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Abstract

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The thesis investigates how Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD+) projects involve forest-dependent people, especially indigenous people, in Vietnam and Nepal by utilizing a community-based approach. At the state level, the Government of Vietnam actively promotes REDD+ project implementation, and the international expectation towards Vietnam is high. However, Vietnam has problems of land rights of indigenous people, which negatively affect REDD+ implementation in terms of community participation. On the other hand, Nepal is said to be a successful case of community forest management. The government of Nepal provides a large portion of the forest management rights to local communities, which is proven to be effective in the REDD+ projects. The thesis compares the two cases and makes recommendations to achieve equitable REDD+ implementation, especially for Vietnam.

November 27, 2015.

Acknowledgements

Firstly, I would like to express my deepest gratitude to my supervisor, Dr. Marty Zelenietz, for his continuous support of my thesis research, for his tolerance, cooperation, and invaluable knowledge. Without his supervise, I would not be able to complete this thesis. I would like to thank the rest of my thesis committee: Dr. Kate Ervine and Dr. Rylan Higgins, for their thoughtful advice and comments to my thesis.

To Jamie and other staff members at the Writing Centre, thank you for your assistance in grammar corrections. As an international student, it is hardly possible to write my thesis in English without your assistance. My sincere thanks also goes to Hasinur Rahman Ghazi, who helped me elaborating my thesis.

My friends in Canada, Japan, and all over the world, thank you for your encouragement and support. To my IDS friends, conversations with you were not only great opportunities to deepen my knowledge but made me relax during the busy days. Finally, I would like to thank my family for their understanding and letting me study at Saint Mary's University. You helped me when I am upset and depressed. Without your help, I would not be able to accomplish my research.

Table of Contents

Abstract.....	2
Acknowledgements.....	3
Acronyms.....	7
1. Introduction.....	9
1.1. Backgrounds	9
1.2. Research Questions.....	12
1.3. Thesis Statement	14
1.4. Thesis Structure	14
1.5. Methodology	15
2. REDD+ in the International Arena	17
2.1 Environment and Development	17
2.2. Sustainable Development.....	19
2.3. The Myth of Participatory Development	22
2.4. Carbon Markets.....	25
2.4.1. The Kyoto Protocol.....	25
2.4.2. The Clean Development Mechanism.....	27
2.5. Payments for Environmental Services	30
2.6. Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation.....	32
2.6.1. History of REDD	32
2.6.2. History of REDD+	34
2.6.3. Concepts of REDD+	36
2.6.4. Mechanism and Benefit Distribution	39
2.7. REDD+ and Development	41
2.7.1. REDD+ and Indigenous People’s Rights.....	41
2.7.2. REDD+ and Community Participation	43
2.8. REDD+ and Community Forest Management (CFM)	45
3. REDD+ in Vietnam	49
3.1. Introduction.....	49
3.2. Basic Data	49
3.3. The government, Forest Policies, and Forest Management.....	52
3.3.1. The Government and the Society.....	52
3.3.2. The Government and Ethnic Minorities	53
3.3.3. Forest Policies and Land Tenure (Present)	56
3.4. REDD+ Projects from the Official Position	60
3.4.1. Institutions in Vietnam, the UN-REDD Programme and the FCPF	61
3.4.2. The Government and Ethnic Minorities in REDD+	64
3.5. Community Participation and Land Tenure in Vietnam.....	66
3.5.1. Forest Allocation from Ethnic Minorities’ Perspective	66
3.5.2. Forest Rights, Ethnic Minorities and REDD+	73
3.5.3. Attempts to Establish a REDD+ Benefit Distribution System	77

3.6. Summary	81
4. REDD+ in Nepal.....	83
4.1. Introduction.....	83
4.2. Basic Data	84
4.3. Forest and Land Policies, and REDD+ from the Official Position.....	86
4.3.1. The Government and Indigenous People.....	86
4.3.2. History of Forest Management Policies.....	89
4.3.3. Community Forest Management Policies and Community Forest User Groups (CFUGs)	92
4.3.4. REDD+ Projects from the Official Position	96
4.4. REDD+ Projects from the Local Community Perspective	103
4.5. Summary	108
5. Discussion	110
5.1. Governments' Control over Forests and the People	110
5.2. Governments and Forest Policies.....	115
5.3. REDD+, Governments and Indigenous People	117
5.4. Devolution or Recentralization?	119
5.5. Benefit Distribution System.....	120
5.6. Community Participation and Community Forest Management	122
6. Conclusion	125
6.1. Recommendations	128
Works Cited	134

Figures

Figure #1. Map of Vietnam.....	50
Figure #2. Trends in forest area and cover 1943-2007.....	57
Figure #3. Percentage of forest area managed by different groups.....	67
Figure #4. Map of Nepal.....	84
Figure #5. Forest area (sq. km and percentage).....	90

Tables

Table #1. The relationship of forest land tenure types and users.....	68
Table #2. Difference between statutory law and customary law.....	70
Table #3. Rights and responsibilities of CFUGs provided by the Forest Act 1993 and Forest Regulation 1995.....	93

Acronyms

AIPP	Asia Indigenous People's Pact
BDS	Benefit Distribution System
CCF	Community-Controlled Forests
CDM	Clean Development Mechanism
CER	Certified Emission Reduction
CERDA	Centre of Research and Development in Upland Areas
CFM	Community forest management
CFUG	Community Forest User Group
COP	Conference of the Parties
CSDM	Centre for Sustainable Development in Mountainous Areas
DFO	District Forest Office
DRV	Democratic Republic of Vietnam
DoF	Department of Forests
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FCPF	Forest Carbon Partnership Facility
FCTF	Forest Carbon Trust Fund
FECOFUN	Federation of Community Forest Users, Nepal
FPIC	Free, Prior and Informed Consent
FUG	Forest User Groups
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GHG	GreenHouse Gas
HIMAWANTI Association	Himalaya Grassroots Women's Natural Resource Management Association
IET	International Emissions Trading
INGO	International Non-governmental Organization
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
IPCCA	Indigenous Peoples Biocultural Climate Change Assessment
JI	Joint Implementation
MARD	Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development
MRV	Measurement, Reporting and Verification
MoF	Ministry of Finance
MoFSC	Ministry of Forests and Soil Conservation
NEFIN	Nepal Federation of Indigenous Nationalities

NFDIN	National Foundation for the Development of Indigenous nationalities
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
NORAD	Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation
NRAP	National REDD+ Action Programme
NTFP	Non-Timber Forest Products
PAMB	Protected Area Management Board
PD	Participatory Development
PES	Payments for Environmental Services
PFES	Payments for Forest Environmental Services
PFMB	Protection Forest Management Board
PRA	Participatory Rural Appraisal
R-PIN	Readiness Plan Idea Note
R-PP	Readiness Preparation Proposal
REDD	Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation
REDD Cell	REDD-Forestry and Climate Change Cell
RVN	Republic of Vietnam
RWG	REDD+ Working Group
SBSTA	Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice
SFE	State Forest Enterprises
SOC	State-Owned Companies
SRV	Socialist Republic of Vietnam
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
VNFOREST	Vietnam Administration of Forestry
WCS	World Conservation Strategy
WMO	World Meteorological Organization

1. Introduction

1.1. Backgrounds

Climate change attracted the attention of both developed and developing countries in the late twentieth century as it has great impacts on human activities. The rise of sea level and the desertification of areas are a few examples of the impacts. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) was established by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) in 1988, to provide “the world with a clear scientific view on the current state of knowledge in climate change and its potential environmental and socio-economic impacts” (IPCC). The IPCC states in the Fourth Assessment Report: Climate Change 2007 that “Warming of the climate system is unequivocal, as is now evident from observations of increases in global average air and ocean temperatures, widespread melting of snow and ice and rising global average sea level” (30). The IPCC also concludes that “[m]ost of the observed increase in global average temperatures since the mid-20th century is very likely due to the observed increase in anthropogenic GHG concentrations” (5), which expresses the necessity of urgent adaptation and mitigation to climate change.

Another institution that is crucial for the issues of climate change is the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). The UNFCCC is built on the scientific evidence of the IPCC’s First Assessment Report in 1990, and was signed at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in 1992 in Rio de Janeiro (FitzRoy and Papyrakis 105). Since the

ratification, annual conference meetings of the parties called the Conference of the Parties (COP) are held. In 1997, the Kyoto Protocol was adopted at COP 3. Both developed and developing countries had their own interests and were reluctant to sacrifice themselves, and the conference ended up with the agreement that industrialized nations (Annex I countries) would reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by an average of 5% during 2008-2012 compared to 1990 levels, which Felix FitzRoy and Elissaios Papyrakis state as “very modest” (106). Furthermore, the United States, which emitted a considerable amount of GHG did not ratify the Protocol, and Canada became the first state that withdrew from the Protocol.

The Kyoto Protocol lacked a financial incentive for developing countries to reduce deforestation (Leggett and Lovell 116). Deforestation and forest degradation, mainly conversion of forest land to agricultural land, account for approximately 20% of the total GHG emissions. Therefore, to achieve reducing emissions from the forest sector is crucial in mitigating climate change (UN-REDD “About REDD+”; UNFCCC “Reducing Emissions”). This led to the proposal that requests rewards to developing countries generated from carbon finance. This is called Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation including the role of conservation, sustainable management of forests and enhancement of forest carbon stocks (REDD+), which was first introduced by Papua New Guinea and Costa Rica at the Conference of the Parties 11 (COP 11) in 2005. The main objective of REDD+ is “to provide positive financial incentives to countries to reduce emissions through avoided deforestation and forest degradation, and to compensate these countries based

on their performance” (Brockhaus, Gregorio, and Mardiah 1).

REDD+ is supposed to benefit developing countries, by offering opportunities for developing countries to participate in carbon markets, and ultimately get benefits not by high-cost technical innovation that would impact economic growth, but by avoiding reduction of forests. However, a number of problems arose. One of them is the structural shortages of REDD+ and involved institutions. As REDD+ involves a number of different stakeholders, such as international organizations and the private sector, the mechanisms of REDD+ is becoming more preferable to the North and the private sector, which regard carbon as commodity and ignore the change of local communities’ livelihoods. Furthermore, at the project level, a lack of community participation, which is the focus of this thesis, is reported. Projects of REDD+ are decided at the state level, and the implementation is carried out at the local level, which means that it requires active community participation. REDD+ projects limit the use of forest and forest resources, and the scheme provides rewards directly to those who successfully reduce carbon emissions by maintaining or enhancing the carbon sequestration (Larson et al. 679). This means that the clear distinction of land right holders is essential, which is often lacking in developing countries.

In this thesis, I will conduct comparative research on REDD+ projects in Vietnam and Nepal, highlighting the issues of community participation and land tenure security, and analyze the implementation in both countries respectively. Secure tenure is essential in REDD+ implementation since REDD+ rewards and compensates

those who avoid reducing carbon sequestration of forests. If tenure of local communities in forests is not secured, a possibility occurs that they are excluded from benefit allocation (Larson et al. 679). In Vietnam, the national level REDD+ discussion is actively promoted. In fact, the reliance of the UN-REDD Programme on Vietnam in terms of piloting various projects shows the international expectation of REDD+ in Vietnam. However, the projects have some problems of land tenure, which are mainly unequal land allocation to indigenous people in forests and the discrepancy of territorial boundaries between customary law and statutory law that causes insufficient community participation, while Nepal is said to be successful in terms of community participation. I will analyze the factors that impede the REDD+ implementation in Vietnam.

1.2. Research Questions

There are three research questions that I would like to address. First, I ask ‘how local community members, especially indigenous people, are involved in REDD+ projects in Vietnam and Nepal?’ Indigenous people, or ethnic minorities, which the government of Vietnam officially calls them, are an important component of local communities yet are often economically and politically marginalized. However, as mentioned, REDD+ projects are implemented at a local level, so it is essential that local community members, including indigenous people, understand and cooperate with and benefit from the projects. In order to promote their understanding, persistent effort is necessary from various actors, such as local officials and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), who want to introduce REDD+ projects in a

certain community. However, I argue that these attempts are not sufficient in Vietnam due to the insecure land tenure of and unequal forest land allocation to local community members.

The second question is ‘which factors make a difference between the Nepal and Vietnam REDD+ projects?’ Both countries are classified as developing in Asia, and are members of both the UN-REDD Programme and the World Bank’s Forest Carbon Partnership Facility (FCPF), the two leading institutions of REDD+.

However, as analyzed later, from the local community perspective, Vietnam is not as successful as Nepal in promoting and encouraging community participation, especially due to failure in securing community members’ forest and forest resource use rights. Investigating both cases will clarify what is necessary and should be considered when implementing the projects. There could be several factors: a clear land rights definition or effective relationships among actors, such as indigenous people, NGOs, and local governments. By analyzing these issues I expect that root causes of a lack of community participation in Vietnam will be disclosed.

My third issue is ‘how can benefits be distributed equally and equitably in the Vietnam and Nepal pilot project areas?’ This issue is a common problem that both countries have. One of the major problems of benefit distribution systems (BDS) is how to decide who should be paid and how much. Obviously, benefits are one of the critical factors that local community members take into account. Therefore, equal and equitable benefit distribution is important. Since local community members have to limit their use of forest and forest resources and devote their time to meetings or

measuring emission reductions, sufficient compensation should be paid. If they find that the projects are not beneficial compared to the opportunity costs, it is unlikely that they will cooperate with the project implementation.

1.3. Thesis Statement

This thesis will argue that community participation in Vietnam is inadequate compared to that of Nepal. This is due to top-down policy-making processes by the government that lack the consideration of local community members, especially indigenous people, and avoid establishing a common understanding of legal land rights between the government and indigenous people. Therefore, issues of land tenure of indigenous people have existed before REDD+ projects were launched in the country, and leaving the preexisting issues complicates the REDD+ implementation in terms of community participation.

1.4. Thesis Structure

The first chapter contains the background, research questions, and the thesis statement. The second chapter includes a review of the theoretical framework surrounding REDD+, the history and mechanism of REDD and REDD+, and REDD+ and indigenous people. The chapter focuses on the establishment of REDD and REDD+ and their internal and external structural problems. The chapter attempts to show how REDD+ has been promoted with insufficient development of framework and agreements.

The third and fourth chapters analyze the REDD+ projects in Vietnam and Nepal respectively. In Vietnam, land and forest laws do exist, which clarify who owns

the land management rights. At the same time, the gap between customary law and statutory law, and unequal forest distribution are reported, which discourages active participation by people in forests to REDD+. In Nepal, the government legislated Community Forest User Groups (CFUGs) in the early 1990s, thus facilitating community people to manage and control forest use while the land is owned by the government. This legislation is said to be successful both in community forest management and REDD+ projects. I will analyze how REDD+ in Nepal involves CFUGs.

In the fifth chapter, I develop my comparative analysis. By comparing the two countries, the problems that prevent Vietnam from successful implementation of REDD+ will be discussed. In the last chapter, I will make some recommendations mainly for the REDD+ projects in Vietnam on how to promote community participation.

1.5. Methodology

This research is based on library research, which includes scholarly articles and books about REDD+ projects as well as publications by international organizations, NGOs, and governments of Vietnam and Nepal. In the first part of both Chapter 3 and 4, I analyzed the documents published by the governments of Vietnam and Nepal respectively, international organizations, such as UN-REDD Programme, and NGOs. Next, I analyzed scholarly articles that show the outcomes of field research conducted in the two countries and NGO reports. By doing this, it became possible to find contradictions between the statement of the state governments and the

actual implementation on the ground, in terms of protecting local community members' rights on forest and forest land and promoting local participation.

This research aims to find causes of a lack of community participation in REDD+ in Vietnam by exploring how local community members, specifically indigenous people who have resided in forest areas for extensive periods of time, are involved in REDD+. Also, it aims to find how the state governments consider the importance of indigenous people's participation. In order to provide the holistic REDD+ debate at the international level, I discuss how REDD+ was formed and the important mechanisms surrounding REDD+, which are carbon markets and Payments for Environmental Services (PES). However, because my focus is on REDD+ on the ground and not on the mechanisms of REDD+, these topics are briefly discussed.

Considering my research objectives, to analyze how indigenous people participate in REDD+ projects, it would be the best to conduct field research. However, because of time limitations, I decided to examine the problems by conducting a comparative analysis between Vietnam and Nepal. Even though it was hard to locate sources expressing indigenous opinions, I expected that I would be able to find the problems faced by REDD+, from indigenous peoples' perspective by analyzing other scholars' research. The study will help find better ways to implement REDD+ by emphasizing the necessity of structural change from a top-down to a bottom-up approach in decision-making processes of REDD+.

2. REDD+ in the International Arena

This chapter provides literature review about environment and development, debates surrounding climate change agendas, and history and concepts of REDD+ at the international level as well as REDD+ and indigenous people. In order to discuss REDD+, it is important to analyze how the discourse of sustainable development was formed, how international debates on climate change have been discussed, and how those debates reflect the intention of developed countries.

Through the chapter, I discuss how REDD+ was formed within the neoliberal agendas, which are the commodification of carbon and the intention of developed countries to maintain their economic growth, and how it impacts indigenous people in developing countries. I argue that since the mechanisms of REDD+ prioritize climate change mitigation through carbon trading, it does not consider the livelihoods of indigenous people, which possibly leads to the destruction of their inherent culture and tradition.

2.1 Environment and Development

Development, which came into the English language in the eighteenth century, is used both “descriptively” and “normatively” (Adams 8). Despite its complex pedigree, the world had seen the standardization of the meanings of development in the second half of the twentieth century. The process of development – i.e. “industrialized, urbanized, democratic and capitalist” – re-create the modern West across the world (ibid). “[I]t was assumed that rapid industrialization and improvement in the material conditions of life could quickly be achieved... by

following the formula that had worked in reconstructing war-ravaged Europe” (qtd. in Adams 9), and as a result of this assumption, a one-size-fits-all conceptualization of development was created (Adams 9).

A number of scholars confirm the link between development and environment (see Adams 19). Much of human-induced environmental change was created under the name of development, and “human-induced environmental change arising from development has been mostly negative” (Wilson 3-4). According to Gordon Wilson, the problem of development is its unevenness, which means that it does not benefit the population equally; it often produces “winners” and “losers” (4). In the context of climate change, one of the environmental issues created under the name of development, it is poor countries which will be impacted the most by climate change. In particular, the poorest people in developing countries are the most vulnerable to deteriorating environments due to a lack of equipment to cope with the issue (FitzRoy and Papyrakis 64). For example, human-induced climate change impacts the most on those who are vulnerable to environmental change, such as forest-dependent people in low income developing countries. This is because climate change produces effects like forest fires due to reduced rainfall and increased frequency of droughts. The forest-dependent people rely on their livelihoods on forests and forest resources, but ironically, those who need forests the most often do not have influence on decision-making processes in national and international debates.

2.2. Sustainable Development

The term ‘sustainability’ has been one of the most popular terms in the environmental discourse for the last three decades. The first international-level forum that sustainable development was brought into was the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment held in Stockholm in 1972 (Adams 59). After the Conference, the sustainable development debate began to be influenced by concerns about poverty in the developing world (64). The first document that codified sustainable development for the first time is *The World Conservation Strategy (WCS)* in 1980, and the term was further developed through the Brundtland Report, *Our Common Future* (59). The most common definition of sustainable development is provided by *Our Common Future*: “...development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs” (Brundtland and WCED 43).

Our Common Future was followed by the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in Rio in 1992 (Rio Conference) (FitzRoy and Papyrakis 46). Kathleen McAfee argues that those who promoted the Conference, such as the conservationists and policymakers, “had added ‘Development’ to the title” in order to “win the support of global-South countries” (242). As a result, William Adams states that *Agenda 21*, which was adopted at the Rio Conference, “... bears the strong inheritance of its predecessors,” such as its emphasis on economic growth as a crucial factor of sustainable development (94). Indeed, the World Bank Environment Department officials emphasized the importance of applying the experiences of

growth and development by industrialized countries (Isla 21). This means the continuous existence of the conflicting concepts of economic growth and environmental conservation. Economic development is most likely to be harmful to the environment and induce environmental degradation, yet international agenda on climate change, which was led by developed countries, prioritized their economic growth rather than compromising it.

Sustainable development concerns both the limited environmental resources and robust economic growth. FitzRoy and Papyrakis argue that “sustainable development addresses concerns about the feasibility of continuous economic development on a planet of limited resources and fragile ecosystems” (45). Ana Isla states that “[t]he idea of sustainable development is that there must be an exchange process between those with money to buy and those with natural capital to sell” (22). These hold the idea of neoliberalism. David Harvey defines that neoliberalism is:

A theory of political economic practices proposing that human well-being can best be advanced by the maximization of entrepreneurial freedoms within an institutional framework characterized by private property rights, individual liberty, unencumbered markets, and free trade. The role of the state is to create and preserve an institutional framework appropriate to such practices (22).

The neoliberal political economy was applied to nature after the recognition of the ecological crisis (Isla 20). The international conferences on sustainable development were processed under the neoliberal dominance. The ideas of sustainable development

were formed, but its definition is ambiguous, which leads to the different understanding among different actors (Adams 6-7). The ambiguity of the definition causes a different understanding by different actors, such as environmentalists, politicians, and business leaders. The result is that sustainable development for business elites ends up “making our business sustainable,” which results in the continuation of ‘business-as-usual’ (ibid).

Arturo Escobar agrees with Adams. Escobar argues that in the discourse of sustainable development, the Western-centric ideas that “the benevolent (white) hand of the West will save the Earth” (Escobar 193) clearly exist. This discourse ignores the Third World, which is also influenced by unsustainable economic activities, and establishes sustainable development as the issue that should be managed by the Western way. Moreover, Escobar argues that nature is no longer external, but internal to capital: nature “become[s] stocks of capital” (199). Sustainable development contains the emphasis on economic growth and the neoliberal – and also Western – idea that considers nature as commodity. The international level decisions on sustainable development are dominated by developed countries that intend to force the burden of environmental degradation caused by economic activities of developed countries on developing countries. Climate change debates have this characteristic. As shown later, in carbon markets, which are one of the tools to promote GHG emissions reductions to mitigate climate change, the Western intention is clearly reflected. REDD+, which aims to provide opportunities to developing countries to get benefits from joining into carbon markets by avoiding deforestation and forest degradation,

contains a neoliberal idea of looking at nature as commodity. Furthermore, it emphasizes benefits and lacks consideration to the livelihoods and social situations of indigenous people. Their rights are not always secured by law in terms of land tenure, and they are often marginalized economically and socially, which ultimately causes a lack of protection by the state governments. Therefore, the very nature of neoliberal characteristics of REDD+ is not beneficial but harmful to indigenous people.

2.3. The Myth of Participatory Development

As mentioned, the REDD+ projects will distribute rewards to those who cooperate with the projects and successfully reduce CO₂ emissions from avoiding deforestation and forest degradation, and the community members' use of forest and forest resources will be limited. "Community" participation is promoted in the projects, which Ilan Kapoor argues is a trend in development programs. Kapoor states that Participatory Development (PD) represents "a more inclusive and 'bottom-up' politics" (1203), which mainly takes two institutional forms. First is Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA), of which objective is to empower local communities. Second is "country 'ownership' of development programmes," which means that the state or international agency promote the involvement of civil society for policy making (ibid).

However, PD reflects the Western complicity and desire (Kapoor 1204). PD, which is supposed to be for the locals, contains the Western idea that the West helps the Third World and the West is more knowledgeable than the Third World, which forms the thought that PD is implemented "with a clear conscience" (1206).

Participation is a trend, and more importantly, it is an institutional brand, which makes PD essential in the development community due to its marketability and fashionability (1211-12). Western organizations that promote PD are able to get support from the public by appealing its participatory approach in their development activities.

Another merit of promoting PD is that it can emphasize the Western organizations intention to protect human rights by diverting to bottom-up approach from conventional top-down approach in local development. However, consequently, the Western intention is still clearly reflected to PD in the Third World. Moreover, Kapoor argues that PD may strengthen the patriarchal structure (1203-04). This is crucial because this implies that objectives of elites in local communities decide PD programs, which possibly end up disregarding of other community members' opinions.

The absence of community members in PD programs is discussed by other authors. Citing Nelson and Wright, Giles Mohan and Kristian Stokke state that "community" is conceptualized by states and organizations, not the people themselves (253). This leads us to consider "community" as homogenous, which is not applicable since "community" is an aggregate of people from different genders, races, social hierarchies, and so on. Consensus possibly strengthens the already powerful elites' interests (253). PD is intended to promote every community member's participation, but the consensus often does not reflect opinions of marginalized people. This is a critical failure of PD and it reveals the First World's lack of consideration about the

structure within communities. Escobar's critique against development helps to understand the failure of PD. He states that:

Development was – and continues to be for the most part – a top-down, ethnocentric, and technocratic approach, which treated people and cultures as abstract concepts, statistical figures to be moved up and down in the charts of “progress.” Development was conceived not as a cultural process... but instead as a system of more or less universally applicable technical interventions intended to deliver some “badly needed” goods to a “target” population. It comes as no surprise that development became a force so destructive to Third World cultures, ironically in the name of people's interests (44).

The First World carries out PD in the Third World under the name of ‘benevolence’. However, there is a threat of manipulation by the First World of local communities in the Third World and the ignorance of people who have power due to its view of ‘community’ as concept and not substantial existence.

How does this relate to REDD+? The approach of REDD+ applies PD. It strongly reflects the desire of the First World to utilize carbon markets to allow itself to emit more GHG for their economy. Furthermore, through introducing REDD+ projects to local communities in the Third World, the First World's intention penetrates the communities without respecting indigenous knowledge of forests and forest resources. This is destructive to the traditions and cultures of the communities. It is no wonder that REDD+ has negative impacts on indigenous people since it

prioritizes how to benefit from carbon markets rather than helping indigenous people.

2.4. Carbon Markets

2.4.1. The Kyoto Protocol

One of the most famous agreements on climate change mitigation and adaptation is the Kyoto Protocol, agreed in 1997. The Protocol was agreed at the Third Meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP 3), with the ratification by 192 parties (191 States and 1 regional economic integration organization) (UNFCCC “Status of Ratification”). It is the first international agreement that attempts to mitigate climate change through GHG emissions reductions, and the first to employ the flexible global markets to global environmental management (Dumanski 257). The Conference recognized that developed countries are mainly responsible for GHG emissions due to their industrial activities, and the Protocol imposed a heavier burden on developed countries under the principle of “common but differentiated responsibilities” (UNFCCC “Kyoto Protocol”). Developed countries were categorized as Annex I countries, and they agreed to reduce GHG emissions as a whole by at least 5% during 2008-2012 (Dumanski 258). However, the objective of the reduction is insufficient. The failure of the Kyoto Protocol includes that it did not impose reduction obligation on developing countries including China and India that already emitted a great deal of GHG, the United States, the largest emitter of GHG, did not ratify it.

Furthermore, the insufficiency reflects the hardship of reaching an international agreement with all participants’ strong motivation. At COP 3, both

developing countries and developed countries, except a few of them, were reluctant to take a strong action against carbon emissions, because no country was willing to sacrifice its economic development for the environment (FitzRoy and Papyrakis 106). Moreover, developing countries were not convinced to limit their economic activities to reduce GHG emissions since it is developed countries which should own the responsibilities. In addition, a country can easily change its priority to economic growth, rather than to protect the environment, as “The Tragedy of the Commons” effectively indicates. Garrett Hardin argues that common lands that are open to everyone will ultimately be destroyed due to the insufficient management. Hardin states that if a pasture is open to all, it is expected that every herdsman tries to keep cattle as much as possible. The result is that it causes a overgrazing in a limited pasture, which ultimately results in a ruin of all land (Hardin 1244). Climate change can be explained in this argument. Since there is no concrete property right over atmosphere, each country emits GHG to try to maximize their benefits rather than protect the environment. Consequently, countries shift the responsibility to each other, and global warming continues to proceed.

The Kyoto Protocol introduced three facilitating mechanisms, which are: Joint Implementation (JI); the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM); and International Emissions Trading (IET). JI and IET are the mechanisms made for developed countries to achieve their reduction targets, whereas the CDM is both for developed and developing countries. In this thesis, the CDM will be discussed since it relates more on developing countries, and thus REDD+ projects.

2.4.2. The Clean Development Mechanism

The CDM projects are made to assist developing countries to achieve sustainable development by receiving investment from developed countries (Biswas 6). Also, the mechanism allows that the governments or private parties of developed countries to get the benefit in terms of Certified Emission Reductions (CER), carbon credits that can be credited against their emission reduction targets through investing in emission reduction projects in developing countries (1). Therefore, the mechanism is argued to be a 'win-win' system for developed and developing countries. However, the CDM has been so controversial that even among developing countries, which have undertaken emission reduction projects, views were divided when it was introduced. Some countries concerned about land use rights when carbon sinks, offset from carbon sequestration by trees, were included, while others looked at the possibility that would bring about resources and investment in the forestry sector (Gutiérrez 639, 644). For example, many countries in Latin America and Africa showed interest since sinks can be a source of income (ibid.).

However, in reality, it can be explained as a tool created by developed countries to integrate developing countries "into the global carbon market primarily as producers and sellers" of carbon credits, "intended to aid Northern countries in meeting their mandated reductions" (Ervin 653). In fact, Tienhaara states that even though carbon projects are supposed to be 'win-win', many of them "have resulted in the displacement of local populations or the reduction or elimination of the ability of forest-dependent communities to access crucial resources" in developing countries

(552). The Kyoto Protocol recognized that the main carbon emitter has been developed countries, but it is developed countries who have power to determine the global actions to mitigate or adapt to climate change. As a result, threats of climate change that should be seen as the ecological impacts on the most vulnerable stakeholders, developing countries, have been treated as economic threats to developed countries (Ervine 656). The CDM was created under this background, which necessarily has led to the Mechanism to be neoliberal.

Another issue surrounding the CDM is the complexity of the mechanism. The UNFCCC reached an agreement about the rules and procedures on how to govern the new market in emission reduction credits, but Guitiérrez states that the delegates “had created a scheme that even they could hardly understand” (640). Not only the scheme but also how to calculate carbon emission is problematic. Many scholars found it impossible to accurately calculate how much carbon is sequestered in a specific land-use or industrial technology intervention (McAfee 245). There are four main issues of the CDM from the perspective of carbon sequestration: *baseline*, *additionality*, *leakage*, and *permanence*.

Baseline is the existing situation of carbon one would expect under business as usual conditions without any carbon policies or projects (Murray, Sohngen, and Ross 136). To establish a reliable baseline is essential, but this depends largely on the stakeholders’ interests due to the fact that there is no way to prove the actual baseline since it is a hypothesis. This means that possibly, the baseline was set higher than the actual emissions level, which would generate more credits than the actual credits that

one is supposed to get.

Additionality relates to baseline. It is the indication that demonstrates the projects cannot be realized without CDM. Project proponents have to show the proposed measures reduce emissions, and exclude those would have been introduced without CDM (Biswas 17). To prove additionality, which is a significant measure for projects to be confirmed, is complex and difficult.

Another problem is leakage. *Leakage* means that as a result of a certain project, unexpected GHG emissions occur at or are shifted to the outside of the boundary of the project (Murray, Sohngen, and Ross 132). Even though a project successfully reduces GHG emissions, it ends up a failure if the emissions of outside of the boundary have increased. Therefore, how to prevent emissions from outside of the boundary is crucial.

The last issue is *permanence*. GHG emissions that were successfully reduced should be stored permanently and not be re-emitted in the air (Murray, Sohngen, and Ross 129). However, it possibly happens that the sequestered emissions are re-emitted, which means a project failed to reduce emissions.

These are the problems of the CDM. The debates surrounding the CDM and carbon markets are complicated. The North-South relationship, the differences in ideas among developing countries, the private sector, NGOs, and local communities – are all involved in the mechanism. The views are different even within same groups. Some consider that markets are, at least potentially, efficient and fair. Others argue that markets are necessarily inequitable (McAfee 251). REDD+ has the same

problems as the CDM. I would like to emphasize that the REDD+ projects have been carried out even though they have a number of problems as above. Marketing GHG emissions is not easy, though developed countries continue to pursue it under the name of climate change mitigation.

2.5. Payments for Environmental Services

Payments for Environmental Services (PES) is a mechanism that attempts to reward farmers or landowners who have agreed to take action to manage their land for environmental services they provide (IIED; Petheram and Campbell 369). PES should be transferred from the beneficiaries of certain environmental services to the providers (Mayrand and Paquin 1). Even though there is no universal definition of PES (5), Sven Wunder defines five criteria of PES. They are: “a voluntary transaction”; “a well-defined environmental service”; at least one buyer; at least one provider; and the continuous provision of the service by the provider (Wunder 50). Lisa Petheram and Bruce Campbell, and Sango Mahanty, Helen Suich, and Luca Tacconi acknowledge that many researchers agree with Wunder’s PES criteria (Mahanty, Suich, and Tacconi 39); however, they argue that PES schemes do not meet every criterion nor is PES that simple in reality (Petheram and Campbell 369).

PES schemes are designed to correct the market failure of considering environmental services by internalizing benefits and creating incentives for provision of them (Mayrand and Paquin 2). Karel Mayrand and Marc Paquin mention the necessity of protecting marginalized people and suggest strategies to this end (37-38), but they fail to indicate how to improve the current challenges that PES schemes

have. One of the challenges, for example, relates to the ownership of the land. Pham Thu Thuy analyzed several PES schemes in Vietnam and reports that it is difficult for poor people to obtain land use right certificates due to the time-consuming processes and the necessity to pay informal money to the head of the commune and village for permission to obtain the certificates (389). Moreover, Petheram and Campbell argue that although the schemes are promoted as a “win-win” solution for conservation and development, few examples of successful schemes are reported, and whereas they are supposed to replace top-down approaches to natural resource management, they remain one-way (369-70). PES is a market-based mechanism, and it tends to remain unsuccessful in protecting minorities’ rights to benefits.

How does PES connect to REDD+? Mahanty, Suich and Tacconi argue that “PES has emerged as a likely mechanism to link national level REDD+ payments to sub-national resource management activities” (39). Randy Bluffstone, Elizabeth Robinson, and Paul Guthiga state that “REDD+ at its core is an example of a system that provides payments for environmental services” (44). In order to make PES scheme effectively be implemented on all private, state, and communal lands, rights of land use need to be formally recognized (Mahanty, Suich and Tacconi 45). However, at the same time, it would be costly in terms of finance and labor for participants when introducing PES schemes (42), which could be more expensive than the returns. In fact, Mahanty, Suich and Tacconi analyzed seven PES schemes and found that all of them had significant up-front costs, such as for introducing new land management practices and for tree planting. Furthermore, local people are not

provided sufficient information by the beneficiaries, which leads to misunderstanding of concepts and rules by local people (ibid). PES schemes are seemingly applicable to REDD+ projects, but in terms of local participation, sufficient information as well as land use rights protection is essential. These conditions are often found to be difficult to achieve.

2.6. Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation

2.6.1. History of REDD

In this section, I will analyze the establishment of REDD. REDD was, as mentioned, established to allow developing countries to enter carbon markets through reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation. Why do forests matter? Forests covered 31% of the total land area of the earth in 2010, and about 13 million hectares of forests had been changed to other uses, such as agriculture, every year from 2000 to 2010 (FAO *Global Forest Resources 10*). Indeed, forests stock more than 650 billion tons of carbon, which is more than the entire atmosphere does (11). Because of this, degradation and deforestation of the world's tropical forests contributes to 10% of net global carbon emissions (REDD Desk "What is REDD+?"). The importance of forests is not only as a climate change mitigation tool but also as a means of conservation of biodiversity and protection of the livelihoods of forest dependent people (ibid). Therefore, protecting forests from deforestation and forest degradation is crucial in multiple dimensions.

As mentioned above, the Kyoto Protocol did not provide financial incentives to developing countries to reduce deforestation. Furthermore, the Protocol considered

that only afforestation and reforestation activities were eligible for generating carbon credits under CDM. This was succeeded to the Marrakesh Accords under COP 7 (REDD Desk “What is REDD+?”). Under this circumstance, the agenda “Reducing emissions from deforestation in developing countries and approaches to stimulate action” was first introduced at COP 11 in Montreal in 2005. The governments of Papua New Guinea and Costa Rica submitted a proposal including the conception of REDD, aiming that developing countries enter carbon markets by generating credits from reducing emissions from deforestation (REDD Desk “What is REDD+?”). The proposal states that the Marrakesh Accords (which were agreed upon at COP 7) include crediting afforestation and reforestation activities, but do not refer to reducing emissions from tropical deforestation. Tropical deforestation is the largest factor of emissions in the developing world (PNG and CR 8). The proposal was supported by other members of COP. This was the starting point of REDD, which came to attract international attention.

In 2007, the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA) of the UNFCCC suggested a draft decision policy approaches and positive incentives on issues relating to REDD+, which was further discussed at COP 13 in 2007 (Thompson, Baruah, and Carr 101). Taking over the recommendation by the SBSTA, COP 13 adopted the Bali Action Plan (Visseren-Hamakers and Verkooijen 137). The Bali Action Plan recognized that the parties mitigate climate change at the national and international levels by considering policy approaches and positive incentives on issues about REDD, and the role of conservation, sustainable

management of forests, and enhancement of forest carbon stocks in developing countries (UNFCCC COP 3). However, the Plan did not provide a precise definition of demonstration activities (IGES 6). The inclusion of the role of conservation, sustainable management of forest, and enhancement of forest carbon stocks reflects the consideration toward countries such as China and India, which had already succeeded in reducing deforestation rates and demanded financial rewards for forest conservation. This was the birth of the concept of REDD+. In the next section, the history of REDD+ from its birth to present will be discussed.

2.6.2. History of REDD+

The mandate of REDD has been extended to include conservation, sustainable forest management and enhancing carbon stocks in developing countries. The debate on REDD+ was further promoted with increasing interests both at international and national levels. COP 15 in Copenhagen decided the methodological guidance for activities relating to REDD+ (UNFCCC, *Key Decisions* 6). COP 16 in Cancún in 2010 was especially important for the REDD+ negotiations because of the decisions made (Denier et al. 24; IGES 4). At the conference, the parties decided on a phased approach to REDD+ implementation (Denier et al. 24).

Furthermore, the Decision 1/CP.16 requested developing countries that were interested in REDD+ to develop a national strategy, a national forest reference emission level, an adequate national forest monitoring system, an information providing system regarding the safeguards, and consideration to the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People (IGES 4-5; Allan and Dauvergne 1314). In the

agreement, it includes “the most comprehensive package ever agreed by governments” that was intended to support developing countries tackling climate change, and ultimately, to achieve low emission economies (UNFCCC “Milestones”).

The REDD+ debate was further continued at COP 17 in Durban in 2011 by agreeing that developing countries update their forest reference emission level and/or forest reference level periodically. Moreover, the parties agreed to provide information on safeguards through national communications (IGES 5). Also, financial planning including market credits and creating intergovernmental funds were discussed. This Conference accepted market-based mechanisms for the first time by deciding to raise funds from both private and public organizations (Allan and Dauvergne 1315). At COP 19 in Warsaw in 2013, the Warsaw Framework for REDD+ (which is a set of new decisions under discussion until then) was approved. The decisions were the requirements to developing countries (Denier et al. 25), and the core decisions are to “provide guidance to ensure real, long-term emissions reductions from REDD+ activities, the foundations for transparency and integrity of REDD+ actions, and clarify ways to finance relevant activities and improve the coordination of support” (IGES 5). The decision was crucial as both developed and developing countries reached the agreements to further promote and establish solid rules of REDD+. To date, the framework of REDD+ is still under discussion and has yet to be solidified. There are a number of challenges that REDD+ faces, including how to establish safeguards to protect indigenous people’s rights and livelihood.

2.6.3. Concepts of REDD+

The Kyoto Protocol excluded emissions reductions by avoiding deforestation from its carbon accounting and trading scheme. The main objective of REDD+ can be defined as to provide positive financial incentives to developing countries to reduce emissions by avoiding deforestation and forest degradation, and to provide performance-based compensation to these countries (Brockhaus, Gregorio, and Mardiah 1; McDermott et al. 64; Pistorius 638). Therefore, the basic economics is “simple” (Maraseni et al. 37). In other words, REDD+ is the mechanism that provides opportunities for developing countries to get carbon credits by avoiding cutting trees, which is regarded as ‘avoiding deforestation’, and sell the credits to international carbon markets. The carbon credits are, however, mainly sold in the voluntary carbon markets (Carbon Trade Watch), and it is voluntary and not a part of a legally-binding global agreement. REDD+ was expected to be beneficial as it was a cost-efficient scheme to decrease emissions when first introduced (Visseren-Hamakers and Verkooijen 137). Moreover, the ‘plus’ part “also enhanced the potential for REDD+ to achieve co-benefits such as poverty alleviation, improved governance, biodiversity conservation, and protection of ecosystem services” (Denier et al. 24) when it was declared at COP 15.

In theory, market-based REDD+ would solve conflicts among developed countries and developing countries regarding the relative responsibilities on global warming (McAfee 238). However, as the international debate continued, REDD+ activities on the ground became more complex than the original idea of the

compensation mechanism. Also, many stakeholders were disappointed with the negotiations since “the modalities for participation in the compensation mechanism are still unclear and the compensation payments remain out of sight” (Pistorius 638). As a result, the REDD+ framework is yet to be concreted. Furthermore, stakeholders not only include international organizations, state governments, and forest-dependent people, but also environmental NGOs and the private sector since REDD+ accepts funding from private investors, make the debate complicated due to their different intentions and understanding about REDD+ implementation.

Mary Thompson, Manali Baruah, and Edward Carr argue that REDD+ is functioning as a form of governance by conceptualizing governance as “a set of social norms and political assumptions that will steer societies and organizations in a manner that shapes collective decisions about the use and management of forest resources” (100). Joanna Cabello and Tamra Gilbertson further argue that the framing “comes largely from international bodies seeking technical and market fixes” and it ignores the restructuring of the very foundation that created the issue of the market-oriented REDD+ framework (164). The authors argue that the international climate change agenda is manipulated by neoliberal and corporate-friendly ideas (ibid), which put more emphasis on how to benefit from carbon markets. Under the REDD+ scheme, forests, which are the basis of indigenous people’s livelihoods, are commoditized, and considered as the objects that humans dominate for economic profits (163). As a result, REDD+ indirectly allows the oppression on the South by the North, which is regarded as an example of carbon colonialism (Nielsen 274).

Another crucial point is suggested by McAfee. Noting that this is less often acknowledged, the author argues that inequality between the North and the South is built into the framework of carbon trading. This is because offset credits can be gotten cheaper in economically poorer regions since opportunity costs are smaller where labor and land are cheaper; “investment in greening in the global South is economically ‘efficient’ because nature and human lives are cheaper” (McAfee 246). This is problematic because the framework supposing inequality between the North and the South may ultimately cause the persistent unequal power structure between the two, at least in terms of carbon trading, and the exploitation of people and nature in the South.

I discussed in the previous section that the Kyoto Protocol and CDM have neoliberal characteristics in their mechanisms. In addition to the two crucial arrangements on climate change, REDD+ allows commercial logging operations in old-growth forests and territories of forest-dependent people, including indigenous people, under the name of sustainable forest management (Cabello and Gilbertson 166). In fact, Anne Larson argues that the priority of REDD+ is not on poverty-alleviation, which is said to be one of the merits of REDD+, but on climate-change mitigation, and the needs of poor people in forests are not believed to be as important as how to reduce carbon emissions (541). Even though the original idea was generated by the two developing countries, the framework reflects the intentions of industrialized countries more than those of developing countries. The framework of REDD+ has been formed by developed countries to allow them to emit more carbon

by transferring emissions reductions efforts to developing countries, particularly forest-dependent people and indigenous people living in local communities. The neoliberal nature of REDD+ does no good but harm to those people as it commoditizes carbon, hence forests in local communities, without taking into account their livelihoods and culture and tradition.

2.6.4. Mechanism and Benefit Distribution

In this section, the general procedures of REDD+ implementation and its finance will be discussed. As mentioned, the final agreement of the REDD+ mechanism has not been reached yet, so in order to implement REDD+, participant countries have to undertake activities based on a phased approach. The United Nations Collaborative Programme on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation in Developing Countries (UN-REDD Programme) sets out the three phases in the report, *The UN-REDD Programme Strategy 2011-2015*, as follows:

- Phase [I]: Development of national strategies or action plans, policies and measures, and capacity building
- Phase [II]: Implementation of national policies and measures and national strategies or action plans that could involve further capacity building, technology, development and transfer, and results-based demonstration activities
- Phase [III]: Results-based actions that should be fully measured, reported and verified (3)

For example, Vietnam finished the first phase of REDD+ readiness in 2012. Phase I in Vietnam focused on a pilot project in Lam Dong Province, Free Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) initiatives, and how the private sector would participate (Tran and Bayrak 110). At the time when the second phase started in December 2012, which was the first to launch the phase, the pilot projects were implemented in six provinces. Phase II also included the establishment of a Measurement, Reporting and Verification (MRV) system, mainstreaming REDD+ into national and regional planning, consulting with the forest-dependent people on implementation and the benefits, and afforestation and reforestation activities. Phase II will continue for three years (110-11).

To achieve REDD+ successfully, adequate, predictable, and sustainable finance of REDD+ is fundamental (GCP 68). Globally, REDD+ accepts funds from public, private, national and international sources as well as different revenue mechanisms such as taxes and carbon markets (Streck and Parker 116). Almost 90% of REDD+ finance was provided by the public sector. Bilateral funds manage more than half of finances pledged since 2006, whereas the multilateral funds, including the UN-REDD Programme and the FCPF, cover one-third of the funds (Norman and Nakhooda 2). For example, the UN-REDD Programme has raised USD 245 million from donor countries, such as Norway, between 2008 and 2014 (UN-REDD *Progress Report* 45). 21 countries pledged almost 5 billion USD through bilateral agreements between 2006 and 2014 (5). The private sector is expected to participate in REDD+ finance more actively; however, the current policies do not provide sufficient

incentives for the private sector to invest in REDD+ (Streck and Parker 118). The funds are mainly disbursed to “readiness activities such as capacity building, training workshops, strengthening in-county institutions and developing national REDD+ policies and strategies” to the REDD+-implementing countries and NGOs (qtd. in Norman and Nakhooda 26).

An important thing in REDD+ finance is a benefit distribution to local community members. However, currently, a great amount of the funds is used in preparation of the projects. Approximately 40% of the total public funding is channeled as ex-post payments on performance, but the great portion of the payments is likely to be used in readiness activities (Norman and Nakhooda 2). It is crucial to ensure that the payments for reduced emissions reward those who implement the projects. Also, a mutual understanding within a developing country in a vertical relationship, which means the relationship among national, regional, and communal levels, is essential for establishing the necessary financial institutions and decisions. Financial assistance would be a strong motivation for developing countries and implementers of REDD+ projects. Therefore, the financial issues have to be treated as an urgent topic.

2.7. REDD+ and Development

2.7.1. REDD+ and Indigenous People’s Rights

The thesis has suggested that REDD+ has negative impacts on indigenous people’s rights. REDD+ restricts indigenous people’s use of forest resources, which the people consume as firewood, fodder, and other Non-Timber Forest Products

(NTFPs). This limitation directly impacts the people's livelihoods, and therefore, their compensation for the loss is absolutely necessary. However, the compensation is said to be inadequate. Bhaskar S. Karky and Golam Rasul analyzed the potential for benefits before Nepal implemented the REDD+ projects. The authors calculated three patterns of activities: business as usual, business as usual plus carbon management, and carbon management only. Business as usual here means that "communities manage their forest for meeting their subsistence needs" (Karky and Rasul 111). The authors found that carbon management without normal activities would be the most costly (115). If the cost would be more than the benefit, there would be no motivation for indigenous people to carry out the projects.

Clarifying and strengthening land tenure can contribute to reduce deforestation and forest degradation. Researchers argue that tenure insecurity induces forest clearing, unauthorized land use, and land grabbing, and states that secure tenure can lead to forest conservation and investment in forests (Larson, Brockhaus, and Sunderlin 155-156). Regarding these arguments, it is clear that secured tenure will contribute to the implementation of REDD+ in terms of promoting reduction of deforestation and forest degradation, and securing tenure itself can protect the livelihoods of indigenous people. However, protecting land tenure is often difficult, especially in developing countries, which tend to lack necessary regulations. William D. Sunderlin et al. examined REDD+ and land tenure issues in Brazil, Cameroon, Tanzania, Indonesia, and Vietnam. Stating that people tended to have overlapping and insecure forest tenure in developing countries, they found that every country above

had some problems with the land rights of indigenous people at different levels. The authors cite land competition, conflict, ease of revoking rights, and a lack of right to exclude outsiders (Sunderlin et al. 40-41).

In addition to the land tenure issues, indigenous people are often not fully informed about carbon rights. An incident representing the issue of a lack of information held by indigenous people occurred in Papua New Guinea. There, landowners have strong rights to their land, and the vast majority of the lands and forests are customarily owned (Leggett and Lovell 120). However, due to landowners' lack of awareness of their rights, questionable carbon project developers called 'carbon cowboys' appeared, and landowners started signing over carbon rights to them. The landowners were not aware of the implication of what they were doing, and signed without knowing any legal framework within which to do it. This incident attracted media interests and was reported widely in Papua New Guinea in 2008 and 2009 (Larson et al. 680). Indigenous people often do not have proper access to information. What is worse is that they do not realize that they do not have adequate information, and thus it is easy for outsiders or even government officials to take advantage of their ignorance.

2.7.2. REDD+ and Community Participation

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) defines participatory forestry as “processes and mechanisms which enable people with a direct stake in forest resources to be part of decision-making in all aspects of forest management, including policy formulation processes” (FAO). Community

participation in forest management requires members' involvement and legal rights to be involved in forest management activities as well as their involvement in decision-making processes (Suharti 233). Not only are physical contributions by communities such as labor and cash considered important, initiative is also included in the concept of community participation (237). Also, community participation is crucial to get benefits from REDD+ projects so that local community members are not excluded from the benefit distribution. In addition to their involvement in decision-making processes, their participation in forest monitoring is important in REDD+. The effectiveness of community participation in REDD+ is confirmed by scholars. The first quantitative research of REDD+ community participation was conducted in 2013. The research found that half of the official REDD+ projects did not engage local communities in monitoring activities, but communities successfully produced forest monitoring data, which was accurate, legitimate, and cost-effective (Langford 2013). This suggests the potential usefulness of a community as an official unit of a project implementer, which has been a topic in international debate but has yet to be solidified.

The involvement of local communities and indigenous people into REDD+ means the necessity of protecting rights and benefits of them. In order to get indigenous people involved in REDD+ projects, providing them with sufficient information is essential. Max Ooft argues that the rights and participation of indigenous people have to be taken into account more seriously in forest management policies (21), which is often stipulated, but not always applied (23). This applies to

REDD+ projects. Even though international level discussions often take indigenous people's right protection seriously, it has yet to be achieved on the ground.

In fact, indigenous people and other local community members do not necessarily welcome REDD+ projects in their territories. Coalitions of indigenous groups have condemned REDD+ as “cover for a new phase of land enclosure and dispossession of the poor” (qtd. in McAfee 239). Also, some scholars argue that REDD+ enables states to recentralize their control over land and resources (McAfee 244). As a result, Anti-REDD+ movements are being held by indigenous people in many areas. The ‘No rights no REDD’ movement condemned climate negotiations as it failed to secure a binding commitment to indigenous people's rights and safeguards (Larson et al. 679). However, Cabello and Gilbertson argue that the voices of the people who are directly affected by REDD+ are silenced (162). As long as the rights of indigenous people on their land are insecure and safeguards are not established, REDD+ remains harmful to them. Even though the international level discussions on REDD+ recognize the necessity to protect the rights of indigenous people and other forest-dependent people, the issue is not taken seriously since REDD+ is one of the mechanisms that allows developed countries the continuous economic growth by shifting their emission reduction responsibilities to developing countries.

2.8. REDD+ and Community Forest Management (CFM)

Community forest management (CFM) is the concept that “refers broadly to forest use and governance arrangement under which the rights, responsibilities, and authority for forest management rest, at least in part, with local communities”

(Newton et al. 27). CFM has been proved to contribute to reducing the rate of deforestation (31) and poverty alleviation (Neupane and Shrestha 78). There are three reasons why CFM discussion is worth considering in the context of REDD+. First is its importance in developing countries; about 25% of forests are controlled by communities. Second, community-controlled forests (CCFs) are substantial for people in rural area in developing countries, but they have failed to fully realize the value of forests, and forests end up being converted to other uses. Third, households are dependent on forests for their livelihoods, such as use of fuelwood, forest fruits and vegetables, and fodder (Bluffstone, Robinson, and Guthiga 44). One of the characteristics of REDD+ is its requirement of involving local communities, and considering the number of CFM areas and local communities' contribution to forest management, to utilize CFM will be effective for REDD+ projects.

In most developing countries, forests have been owned by governments. However, in Nepal, for example, the state government found it impossible to adequately control forests due to a lack of funds for monitoring and regulating the people, which caused the deforestation and forest deterioration (Bluffstone, Robinson, and Guthiga 45). This is because the people did not have a sense of ownership and regarded the land as open access. The state government decided to decentralize the forest management and control rights. This is how CFM has been launched in Nepal. In general, CCFs can be categorized between private property and state property. This is because while communities are entitled by the government to manage forests, forests are still owned by the government (ibid). Therefore, CCFs are not completely

the property of communities although they do manage and base their livelihoods on CCFs.

There are several reasons why CFM is attractive for REDD+ project proponents: CCFs are in a relatively good condition; community people know how to manage forests with interacting government officials, civil society organizations, and projects; and the institutional capacity for implementation is ready (Newton et al. 33-34). In other words, CFM has “a sound framework” that REDD+ can utilize to provide financial and livelihood benefits to the communities that manage forests (Bluffstone, Robinson, and Guthiga 48). A trend of utilizing CCFs for REDD+ implementation may accelerate the increase of projects in developing countries.

However, at the same time, this means that there is a risk that REDD+ may rely on CFM areas for easy and quick implementation. Problems may occur if REDD+ fails to establish adequate safeguards on indigenous people’s livelihoods and benefit distribution system while imposing costs on them. Also, it could restrict traditional forest resource use of forest-dependent communities, which may be destructive to ecological and socioeconomic equilibrium (Newton et al. 28) that has been fostered in the communities. Moreover, REDD+ may result in re-centralization of forest control (Bluffstone, Robinson, and Guthiga 47) due to its funding mechanisms. CCFs account for 25% of all forest areas in developing countries, but this is only a portion of the total forest areas. In the long term, REDD+ is required to establish a framework that is adaptable to every forest management type regardless of whether strong CFM systems exist or not.

In summary, I argued in this chapter that REDD+ and its surrounding frameworks reflect the intention of developed countries to emit carbon for their economic growth. This is shown in how the Kyoto Protocol and carbon markets were formed. In terms of REDD+, developed countries try to get carbon credits by limiting forest and forest resource use of forest-dependent people in developing countries, without considering their livelihoods. Despite movements against REDD+ by indigenous people, their voices remain silenced by those who seek to benefit from REDD+. In the next chapter, I analyze the REDD+ projects in Vietnam, which is implementing the projects actively, and the international expectation is high. However, in terms of the involvement of indigenous people, it is not necessarily the case. I examine how the country attempts to implement the REDD+ projects and how they consider community participation and indigenous people.

3. REDD+ in Vietnam

3.1. Introduction

In this chapter, REDD+ projects in Vietnam will be analyzed. The historical context of the policies regarding indigenous people formed by the government and forest policies and forest management before the implementation of REDD+ projects are discussed in order to understand the current situation. The forest area in the country was rapidly declining; however, it started to recover after the 1990s. The government tried to deal with deforestation and forest degradation, and the country is a member of both the UN-REDD Programme and the FCPF. Vietnam actively sets policies of REDD+ and establishes relevant institutions for REDD+ implementation. The government's activities reflect interests in the projects. The expectation of Vietnam at the international level, especially that of UN-REDD Programme, is high. Still, the government fails to take indigenous people's rights into account, and REDD+ is promoted despite the lack of consideration to indigenous people. Since the government of Vietnam officially calls indigenous people as ethnic minorities, I will use the term ethnic minorities in this chapter. In the next section, I introduce the basic data of Vietnam, history of the relations between the government and indigenous people, and forest policies and forest management. Then, finally, I analyze the REDD+ projects and indigenous people of Vietnam.

3.2. Basic Data

Vietnam is a communist state that is categorized as a part of Southeast Asia, located at the Southeast edge of Indochina Peninsula, facing the South China Sea, the

Figure 1. Map of Vietnam



Source: Maps of World. "Political Map of Vietnam." Compare Infobase. 19 Dec. 2014. Web. 05 Apr. 2015.

Gulf of Thailand, and the Gulf of Tonkin (CIA “Vietnam”). Above is the map of the country.

The country declared independence after the World War II, though France continued to rule until 1954. The population is about 94 million in 2015, and most of them are the Kinh, which is a major ethnic group that accounts for more than 85%. Other minor ethnic groups are: Tay (1.9%), Thai (1.8%), Muong (1.5%), Khmer (1.5%), and other groups follow. The official language is Vietnamese, and mountain area languages, such as Mon-Khmer and Malayo-Polynesian, are spoken. The real growth rate between 2012 and 2014 is around 5.5% per year, which ranks 37th in the world (CIA “Vietnam”).

Ethnic minorities living in the highlands are called ‘highlanders,’ and there are mainly two categories to divide them geographically: those minorities and indigenous people living in the central highlands and those in the northern highlands. Approximately 70% of ethnic minorities live in these areas (Dang 4). Many of the highlanders are thought to have arrived at the region more than 2,000 years ago, long before the arrival of the Kinh. Since the northern part is far from the markets, subsistence farming is the norm. The people in the central highlands are divided into at least thirty different ethnic groups that speak different languages. Some of them are Catholics or Protestants. This is due to the fact that the country was colonized by France and French missionaries entered into the highlands for education and commercial activities (MRGI). Historically, ethnic minorities in the highlands were disempowered by external powers, such as France, and, after World War II, the

government of Vietnam and the United States. In the next section, the history of the people in the highlands will be briefly discussed because it is essential to understand the relationship between the government and the people in the highlands, which deepens the understanding of the relationship of them in the context of REDD+.

3.3. The government, Forest Policies, and Forest Management

3.3.1. The Government and the Society

In this section, I briefly discuss the relationship between the government and the society. The current situation in Vietnam is becoming more complex in terms of the relationship between the government and the society, which is one of the important perspectives of the governance in Vietnam in addition to its relationship with ethnic minorities, which will be discussed through this chapter. Vietnam is a party-state, which is led by the Vietnamese Communist Party (VCP). This gives an impression that the country has the ability to strongly direct and regulate society. However, despite its superficial ability to control, the government continues to deteriorate (Fforde 146). David Koh argues that society plays an important role in policy implementation, stating that “state-society interaction and mutual influence in the shaping of policies” is characterized as “a constant ebb-and-flow pattern” (283).

Corruption often happens. The research on Vietnam’s poverty-reduction in 2004 conducted by Adam Fforde shows that “resources meant for the poor often ended up in the pockets of others” (150). Local officials usually have ways to get unofficial income through corruption due to the low salary they get (Koh 284). As mentioned, Vietnam takes an initiative with REDD+ at the international level, but that

does not mean that it has the ability to effectively implement the projects at the local level, considering the domestic situation of its inability in policy implementation and corruption. Yet, its policies on ethnic minorities have been relatively strict, which is discussed in the following section.

3.3.2. The Government and Ethnic Minorities

When hearing the word ‘Vietnam’ and ‘forest’, one may imagine the Vietnam War, which is infamous for the use of Agent Orange, a chemical defoliant used by the United States to eliminate forest cover to expose Viet Cong and North Vietnamese troops using the cover and crops possibly provided to them. Ultimately, the United States military forces sprayed more than seventy million liters of herbicides over 1.8 million hectares of land from 1961 to 1972. The operation not only devastated the forests but also caused health issues for people living there and the U.S. soldiers (History.com). During and after the war, ethnic minorities living in the highlands were affected by the country’s policy of assimilation and war attacks.

Prior to this, Vietnam was divided south and north after the Indochina War. Under the government of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam (DRV), which was founded in 1945 in the northern part of current Vietnam, ethnic minorities, or highlanders, were characterized as backward, ignorant, stagnant, and superstitious, traits which only the ethnic Vietnamese could overcome (McLeod 370). Official literature did not mention the possibility that Vietnamese could learn from highlanders’ culture and its value (ibid).

In the south, the Republic of Vietnam (RVN) under the leader Ngo Dinh

Diem recognized French influence in the central highlands and set policies that the RVN would incorporate the highland areas and force highlanders to obey the same laws and administrative structures as lowland Vietnamese (Hickey 55; McLeod 373). Diem sent Vietnamese officials to the highlands to govern the area and other Vietnamese to settle there for national security and economic development (McLeod 373), which means they displaced the highlanders who owned the land. Typical of the opinions that the highlanders had was that “[t]he Vietnamese talk equality, but they don’t mean what they say. In their hearts they want to dominate us. They are colonialists” (Hickey 67).

The assimilation policy revived the hostility between highlanders and lowland Vietnamese in RVN. During the Vietnam War, the highlanders were trained by the United States army, with some of them used to monitor the infiltration routes of the enemy (McLeod 379). Also, the area became a battlefield during the war, and a number of highlanders lost their homes and lands (385).

After the war, North and South Vietnam were unified and the Socialist Republic of Vietnam (SRV) was founded. The government of SRV promoted settlement of the Vietnamese to the highlands and highlanders to the lowlands (McLeod 386). Due to the assimilation promoted by the government, the ethnic minorities in the central highlands became frustrated by the loss of lands, threats to their culture and language, and limited access to education and health, leading to huge protests in 2001 and 2004 (MRGI). Even though about forty years have passed after the unification, highlanders and other ethnic minorities are treated unequally by the

government and their dissatisfaction still remains.

As though there is no unified definition, the term “indigenous people” is generally understood to refer to “small populations relative to the dominant culture of their country.... usually have (or had) their own language.... distinctive cultural traditions that are still practiced.... [and] own land and territory” (Cultural Survival). In Vietnam, “many indigenous communities define themselves as “indigenous,” with respect to their ancestral territories which are being invaded by settlers” (Erni and Nilsson 451). However, the government does not use the term indigenous people, instead, it classifies people living in highlands as “ethnic minorities,” and there is no legislation that “define[s] ethnic minorities as a distinct group of people” (Lizduong *n.pag.*). This means that the Government of Vietnam has not fully recognized indigenous people’s culture and tradition, which has led to the destruction of those culture and tradition.

The central highlands occupies 16.3% of the total area of Vietnam, and more than half of the area is covered with forest, making it the most densely forested part of the country. The area is rich in minerals and used for agriculture, such as coffee and pepper, which are important commodities in Vietnam for its economy (ISL). Most of the ethnic minorities inhabit the interior mountains and highlands, and a large number of them are dependent on the forest for their livelihoods (MRGI; Hoang et al. 65). Even though the country achieved rapid economic growth, the level of development of ethnic minorities is still low; ethnic minorities constituted more than half the total poor population in 2009 (Luong 3). The people living in the forest have had their own

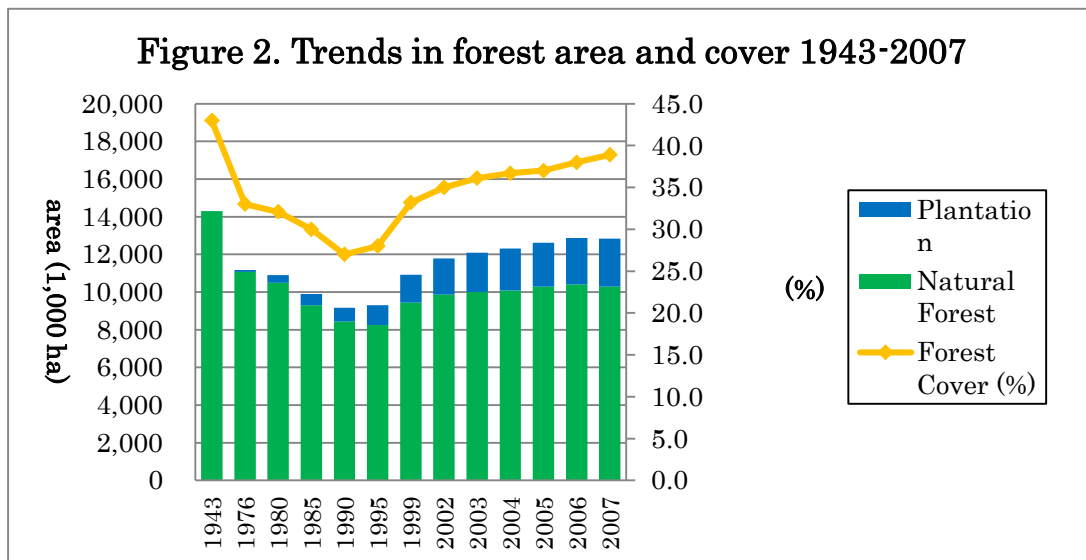
customary law on forest that defines owners of the forest land and its territorial boundaries. Even though the government acknowledges the importance of protecting the land rights of ethnic minorities, some contradictions can be identified between their recognition of the rights and the actual policy implementation. The use of the term “ethnic minorities” means that the government does not recognize their existence as “indigenous,” thus their policies on ethnic minorities apparently attempt to protect their rights, but the root of its recognition does not have the notion of conserving their inherent knowledge and tradition, which causes the persistence of uneven treatment of ethnic minorities.

3.3.3. Forest Policies and Land Tenure (Present)

In Vietnam, deforestation was severe during the 1970s until the early 1990s, but the country has also experienced the rapid reforestation after the period (Meyfroidt and Lambin “Impacts” 1320). The total forest area has decreased from more than 43% in 1943 to 20% in 1993. Since then, the forest cover has recovered to 39.7% in 2009, mainly due to an increase in plantations and natural forest regrowth (UN-REDD, *UN-REDD Vietnam* 14). Even though the total forest cover has increased since 1993, the quality and biodiversity of the forests were found to be decreasing; the area of natural forest that is classified as rich and medium decreased between 1999 and 2005 (REDD Vietnam; Meyfroidt and Lambin, “Impacts” 1327). Figure 1 shows the forest transition from 1943 to 2007 in Vietnam.

Vietnam has set policies on the land and forest. The main institution that is responsible for the state administration of forests and forestry land is the Ministry of

Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD). Under the MARD, the Vietnam Administration of Forestry (VNFOREST) was established for advising the Minister about state management and dealing with domestic forestry matters. Until the 1990s, policies of forest protection and management were weak due to the government's emphasis on rebuilding the country and agricultural expansion (UN-REDD, *UN-REDD Vietnam* 96). In the 1950s and 1960s, the government of DRV nationalized large part of the land in the midlands and highlands (Sikor 1). Thomas Sikor argues that forestry management by the state was unsuitable. The causes include unresolved conflicts between local people and state forest enterprise, and inadequate investment funds and innovation (2). Since then, the government established a number of policies and initiated several programs.



Source: United Nations, Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). *Vietnam Forestry Outlook Study by Forest Science Institute of Vietnam (FSIV)*. Bangkok. Food and Agriculture Organization. 2009. Web. 10 Apr. 2015. The United Nations, Food and Agriculture Organization. *Global Forest Resource Assessment 2010. Country Report: Vietnam*. Rome. Food and Agriculture Organization. 2010. Web. 10 Apr. 2015.

Since 1994, the government has issued policies to allocate forestry land to individual households and economic enterprises to promote law and regulations on forestry land rights and achieve sustainable forest management (CERDA and CSDM 13). In Vietnam, there are three types of forest categories. The first is Production Forests, managed by State Forest Enterprises (SFEs), which is being transformed to State-Owned Companies (SOCs), yet individuals and communities are sub-contracted to manage the forests. This forest category is for commercial purposes. Second is Protection Forests, which are managed by SFEs and individual households and categorized for watershed and environmental protection. Third is Special Use Forests that are managed mostly by Protected Area Management Boards (PAMBs). Their purpose is primarily for biodiversity conservation (UN-REDD, *UN-REDD Vietnam* 100). Only 1% of the Production Forest is allocated to communities and 29% to households (CERDA and SCDM 16). Policies of the Protection Forests were set to promote the participation of local community members in forest protection and to get benefits; however, due to a lack of access to policy information, they have not been effective (7).

The Constitution states that all land belongs to the people, and the state administers on behalf of the people, which means there is no legal status for individuals, communities or companies in terms of the land ownership. However, the actors are able to obtain land use rights and transfer those rights. Decision 187 set up a process by which forest land is allocated to households, and those who secure the Red Book, which is a certificate of land use that is valid for fifty years (UN-REDD,

UN-REDD Vietnam 15). There are eight different groups that are entrusted with forest management by the government: SFEs; individual households; Protection Forest Management Board (PFMBs); management boards for Special Use Forests (PAMBs); commune level people's committees; local communities; joint venture enterprises; and army units (*UN-REDD, UN-REDD Vietnam* 97-98).

The Prime Minister's Decision 145-2005-QD-TTg of 15/6/2005 confiscated productive forestry land from state-owned enterprises and redistributed it to ethnic minority households (CERDA and CSDM 13). Do Dinh Sam and Le Quang Trung emphasize that households and individuals have legal rights to own forest and forest land. The authors state that the participation of households, individuals, and local communities illustrated in Vietnam's forestry sector, plays an important role in forest development, and that through the changes in policy, "Vietnam has achieved favourable results in forestry" citing the increase in forest cover as shown in the above figure (Do and Le 73). Due to deforestation until the 1990s, the government has tried to improve the forest situation and set policies on protecting forests. The success of the policies imposed for forest development is shown by the increase of forest cover. However, the causes of forest expansion remain controversial. Other claims include that higher productivity of agriculture or illegal timber imports from other countries is the primary cause (McElwee "Payments" 417). However, the forest cover data does not show how people living in forests have been protected, or whether they were treated equally with the Kinh. The government agencies, such as SFEs, hold better quality of land. In the Central Highlands, as Pamela McElwee reports, less than two

percent of the total forest land is held by households, and in Dak Lak province of the Highlands, the farm lands of almost half of ethnic minorities' households were inadequate for their food production needs in 2002 (417-418). Vietnam succeeded in increasing forest cover at a state level, but under the forest policies, there are an exclusion of ethnic minorities and prioritizing government agencies to hold better quality of forests. This will be further discussed later in this chapter.

3.4. REDD+ Projects from the Official Position

The Government of Vietnam states that the country “is considered among the most vulnerable countries to the adverse effects of climate change,” and therefore, “the country has much to gain by joining the international efforts to mitigate global climate change” (UN-REDD, *UN-REDD*, 13). Most recently, Vietnam has started introducing REDD+ projects in 2009. In this section, in order to analyze how the state government regards community participation and land tenure issue in REDD+ projects, the reports of the UN-REDD Programme in Vietnam will be assessed. The UN-REDD Programme in Vietnam is supporting VNFOREST to establish and manage an effective, transparent, and equal implementation of REDD+ programs (RCFEE 3). By analyzing the reports published by the UN-REDD Programme in Vietnam, it becomes possible to understand how the government deals with the projects, how the related government institutions evaluate their efforts to promote local participation, and how the institutions justify their project management in terms of community participation.

The reports by non-governmental organizations (NGOs) will be assessed to

support the arguments of the government in REDD+ projects. This enables me to find the contradiction between the understanding of the government on community participation and land tenure, and how it is emphasized in the actual implementation.

3.4.1. Institutions in Vietnam, the UN-REDD Programme and the FCPF

Vietnam is one of the original pilot countries of the UN-REDD Programme. Moreover, Vietnam is the first country that officially launched Phase II of the UN-REDD Programme (UN-REDD “Viet Nam”). The objective of the UN-REDD Programme in Vietnam is “to support the Government in developing an effective REDD implementation mode and contributing to reducing greenhouse gas emissions and climate change in the region and all over the world” (CERDA and CSDM 26). Cooperating with the UN-REDD Programme, Vietnam started Phase I to achieve REDD+ readiness in 2009. This included the development of institutional infrastructure and REDD+ policy, contribution to formulation of reference levels and design of an MRV system, initiation to consult, and designing awareness-raising processes. Consequently, the Programme has succeeded in establishing the National REDD Network, the National REDD Steering Committee, the development of the National REDD+ Action Programme (NRAP) and other framework needed to implement REDD+ (UN-REDD, *UN-REDD Vietnam* 18-19).

In addition to being one of the members of the UN-REDD Programme, Vietnam is one of the first participants that received approval of its Readiness Plan Idea Note (R-PIN) by the FCPF. The FCPF is a World Bank institution that assists developing countries to prepare for REDD+, and it establishes a framework and

procedure for REDD+ readiness (REDD Desk “Forest”). The Readiness Preparation Proposal (R-PP) of Vietnam was approved by the World Bank and the Bank is performing due diligence on activities that are grant-financed (UN-REDD, *UN-REDD Vietnam* 19). Phase II and the R-PP are inter-linked, and the two institutions, the UN-REDD Programme and the FCPF, have designed collaborative activities and frameworks (19-20). Vietnam has consistently submitted necessary documents and proposals, such as Country Progress Sheets that explains the institutional improvements within the country, demonstrating the government’s positive attitude to REDD+.

The Government assigns roles to appropriate governmental organizations, such as forestry sector to the MARD and VNFOREST, and coordinate stakeholders’ efforts and activities through the Vietnam REDD+ Steering Committee (REDD Desk “Vietnam: Actors”). Vietnam opened the Website “REDD Vietnam,” in Vietnamese and English, to provide information of events and legal documents related to REDD+ projects in Vietnam, enabling users to find documents they need.

In 2012, the Prime Minister approved the NRAP. The overall aim of the Programme is to contribute to the successful implementation of national strategy on climate change and poverty reduction goals towards sustainable development (Vietnam 2). The decision stipulates the objective of poverty alleviation through REDD+ implementation. Furthermore, one of the specific objectives in the period of 2011 to 2015 refers to “raising awareness and capacity of relevant parties to participate proactively in REDD+ activities” (Vietnam 3), which includes not only

national and province level parties but also community level parties. Clearly, the government acknowledges the importance of the education and training of parties at the community level, indicating its intention on holistic inclusion of all stakeholders. However, it is not really the case on the ground. Some criticize that community participation and training is not sufficient in REDD+ activities. This will be fully discussed in the later section.

The UN-REDD Phase II Programme aims at testing and developing participatory monitoring, which includes collecting improved data with reduced costs and increasing participants' commitment to the projects (UN-REDD, *UN-REDD Viet Nam* 21). Phase II will provide capacity building required for the REDD+ activities at the local levels: village, commune and district level (24). The Programme will support the NRAP and development of national REDD+ systems (21). The Programme is expected to generate six outcomes related to the implementation of REDD+: the establishment of capacities for an operational NRAP; ensuring that the six pilot provinces, Lam Dong, Ca Mau, Binh Thuan, Ha Tinh, Bac Kan, and Lao Cai, are able to plan and implement REDD+ actions; the operationalization of the national forest monitoring system for MRV and the national REDD+ information system on safeguards; ensuring that stakeholders receive positive incentives; the establishment of mechanisms to address the social and environmental safeguards; and the enhancement of REDD+ implementation in the Lower Mekong Sub-Region through regional cooperation (24-25). The second outcome mentions that different provinces have taken different land allocation processes, which led to the different land tenure

arrangements, and the country already has experienced that land allocation processes take time and consultation with local stakeholders and local authorities is essential. The Programme is expected to result in improved land tenure arrangements in the six pilot provinces through its work with provincial to village level authorities (37).

3.4.2. The Government and Ethnic Minorities in REDD+

According to the report provided by the FAO, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), and Vietnam, the government of Vietnam acknowledges that the coordination of the government and ethnic minorities is sometimes not sufficient in terms of engaging the minorities in poverty alleviation activities. The report concludes this is due to a lack of communication with minorities on new laws and programs, cultural differences, and interpretation of the poverty alleviation activities. The government understands that ethnic minorities are important stakeholders in REDD+ as they depend on natural forests for their livelihoods and they have customary land and forest tenure. Also, the government maintains that it has paid attention to ethnic minorities' land use rights on forest land and issued Decisions and Resolutions (FAO et al. 16). This indicates that the government recognizes the different understanding from the ethnic minorities in terms of new law enforcement and has made efforts to implement REDD+ projects with taking their rights into account.

The Centre of Research and Development in Upland Areas (CERDA) and the Centre for Sustainable Development in Mountainous Areas (CSDM), which assist Vietnam in REDD+, investigated the relationship between REDD+ and ethnic

minorities. They found that REDD+ gives priority to ethnic communities especially in mountain areas and recognizes that the communities are essential participants (CERDA and CSDM 19), and the government “has paid great attention to the rights of ethnic minorities to forest and forestry land as evidenced by the nationwide policy on forest and forestry land allocation” (27). However, they also refer to the fact that the division of forest into three types and forestry land allocation to different users has disturbed the customary forest management systems (30). This is one of the important factors that complicate REDD+ implementation. The gap between policies and customary laws, which existed long before the current government-issued policies on land and forest rights, is a serious problem since it directly affects individuals’ rights to forest and forest resources and benefits expected through the implementation of REDD+. This issue will be further discussed in the next section.

Overall, Vietnam has been the pioneer of REDD+ projects. It became one of the first participants of the UN-REDD Programme and received approval of its Readiness Plan Idea Note from the FCPF. Moreover, the country is the first to launch the Phase II Programme and provide a practical example of the application of FPIC principles in REDD+ (UN-REDD, *Lessons Learned* 10). Vietnam has carried out a number of policy reforms and pilot projects of REDD+, and evaluated those impacts. The government acknowledges the issue of land rights allocation to ethnic minorities, and it seems that the country is one of the closest to successful implementation of REDD+. However, the government still lacks some consideration to the ethnic minorities. These issues include the difference between statutory law and customary

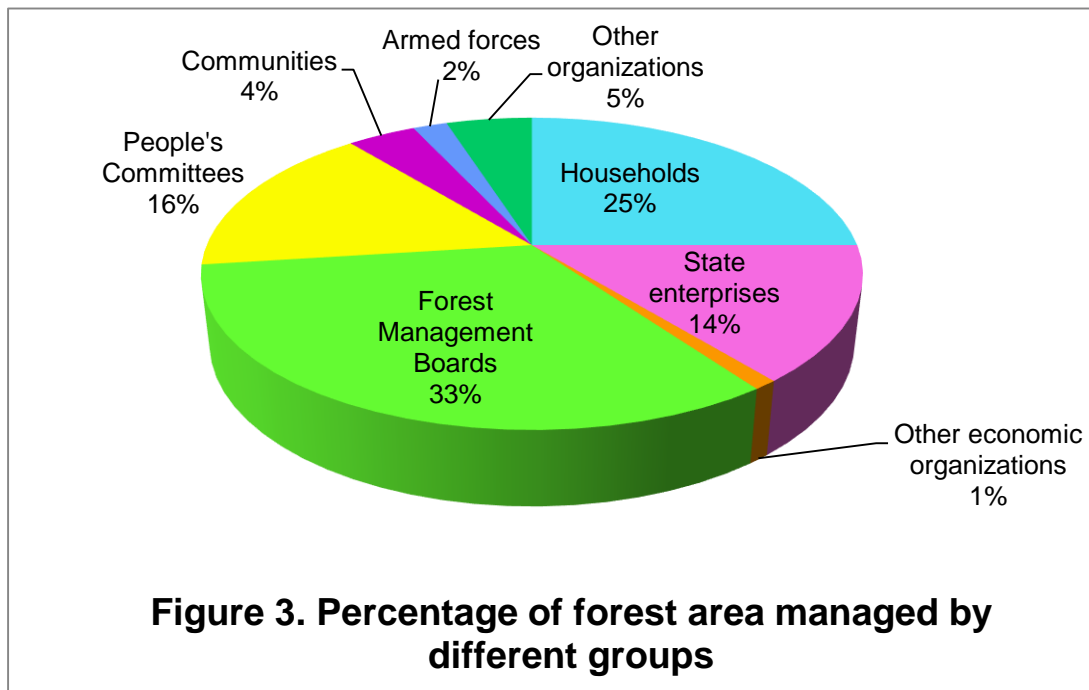
law, and the quality of the lands that are allocated to minorities. In the next section, I will develop the debate on land tenure issue with mainly employing NGOs' reports and scholars' articles.

3.5. Community Participation and Land Tenure in Vietnam

In this section, I will first discuss forest policies, especially how the regulations regarding to three types of forests have impacts on ethnic minorities and the gap between statutory and customary law from an ethnic minority perspective by utilizing international NGOs' reports. Second, I will use field research on local communities conducted by scholars and NGOs to analyze how the insecurity and ambiguity of land tenure affects community participation in REDD+ activities. It became clear that the issues the government and the ethnic minorities had before starting REDD+ still persist and have negative impacts on the community participation. These are mainly unequal land allocation to ethnic minorities and the difference between statutory law and customary law.

3.5.1. Forest Allocation from Ethnic Minorities' Perspective

As explained, forests are categorized into three different types: Production Forests, Protection Forests, and Special Use Forests. Figure 1 shows the percentage of forest area (regardless of the types of forests) managed by different groups. 33% of forest land is allocated to the PAMBs and PFMBs, which occupies 4.6 million ha (To and Tran 9). Village communities and households are only allocated 29% of total forest land. Figure 2 shows that almost half of the total forest land is allocated to state organizations.



Source: To Xuan Phuc, and Tran Huu Nghi. *Forest Land Allocation in the Context of Forestry Sector Restructuring: Opportunities for Forestry Development and Upland Livelihood Improvement*. Hue, Vietnam: Tropenbos International Viet Nam, June 2014. Web. 26 Apr. 2015.

According to Do Trong et al., households and individuals have the rights of access, use, management, and alienation on their Production Forests, but they have fewer rights in Protection Forests and Special Use Forests, especially compared to the government (3). Details are in Table 2 below. It is clear that rights of individuals and households are limited mainly to Production Forests whereas state agencies hold most of the rights.

In addition to standard forest land allocation, households and individuals are provided contract-based allocation. Standard forest land allocation is between the state and local people, and contract-based allocation of forest and forest land occurs between forest companies or Forest Management Boards and local people (To and

Tran 5). The state agencies allocate Production Forest land for commercial purposes, or Protection Forest land for conservation purposes (23). That is, the state will allocate a part of the forest land to state agencies, such as SFEs, PAMBs, and PFMBs, not directly to individuals and households. The agencies will then allocate the forest land to individuals and households, which complicate the process of forest land allocation.

Table 1. The relationship of forest land tenure types and users

User	Access			Use rights			Management			Alienation		
	PDF*	PTF*	SUF*	PDF	PTF	SUF	PDF	PTF	SUF	PDF	PTF	SUF
State agencies	●	●	●	●	●		●	●	●	●	●	
Individuals and Households	●	●		●	●		●			●		
Communities	●	●		●	●		●	●				
Economic Entities	●	●		●	●		●			●		

Note. PDF: Production Forests; PTF: Protection Forests; SUF: Special Use Forests
 Source: Do, Trong H, Catacutan D, Vu Thi H, Lai Tung Q. “Will Current Forest Land Tenure Impede REDD+ Efforts in Vietnam?” Policy Brief No. 27. Nairobi: ASB Partnership for the Tropical Forest Margins, World Agroforestry Centre. 2012. 1-3. Print.

Despite the government’s emphasis on poor people and ethnic minorities in forest policies, it is often difficult for households and individuals, especially poor, to receive high quality forest and forest land. The problem of the standard forest land allocation is that the government allocates Protection Forests, Special Use Forests, and Production Forests that are categorized as natural forests to state agencies, whereas households and individuals will be allocated only poor Production Forests

and bare lands. To and Tran reported that that 53% of the total area allocated to households was the natural forest, but more than 70% of them was “poor”, which reduced possible benefits from the forest (34). Additionally, one of the issues of the contract-based allocation is that it provides fewer rights to recipients than standard allocation (27).

Not only the allocation system itself, but also Vietnam has a problem of an unequal allocation among households. Forest land allocation depends greatly on communal power structures; “governmental’ households” had better access to relevant information, and after all, they got more accessible land plots whereas poor households were allocated less land. In terms of the ethnicity, the Kinh group received more benefits than ethnic minorities (To and Tran 45). Therefore, forest land allocation possibly further marginalizes the poor and minorities.

The laws relating to forest rights sometimes are inconsistent with customary law. Customary law defines how rights are ruled, allocated, and preserved, and customary tenure is defined as “the access, control and use of land according to long-standing principles operating outside the formal legal system” (Nguyen et al. 26). People in rural communities put importance on customary law of forest land tenure, but administrators at different levels tend to be unaware of, or “consciously ignore” (CIRUM 11), the importance of customary law for controlling land and resources, making it difficult to incorporate customary law into formal land management practice (Nguyen et al. 26). Furthermore, statutory law is often too difficult for community members to understand and may be inaccessible due to its complexity

(CIRUM 55). Table 2 summarizes the differences between statutory law and customary law.

Table 2. Difference between statutory law and customary law

	Statutory law	Customary Law
Owner of the land	People (The state administers the land on behalf of people)	Gods (Invisible and supreme owners of forest land and resources)
Units of land right holders	The state agencies, economic entities, and individual households	Village
Information distributed from	The state officials	neighborhood network
Allocation	The state	First-come, first-serve
Rights of exclusion	Right holders have the right to exclude others. The government enforcement may be weak which possibly causes conflict. This may result in weakened tenure	Communities have the right to exclude others.
Benefit sharing	Regulated by state regulations	Among community members
Land use	Users cannot freely change the use purpose of land allocated to them	Communities can decide the use of the forest land.
Rights to control	The state. Forest owners have limited rights to control	Community head or land guardian
Tenure security	A forest land use title valid for 50 years	When community members recognize

Source: Nguyen, Quang Tan, Nguyen Van Chinh, and Vu Thu Hanh. *Statutory and Customary Forest Rights and their Governance Implications: The Case of Viet Nam*. Hanoi: International Union for Conservation of Nature. 08 Jul. 2008. Web. 28 Apr. 2015.

Statutory law brought about changes to villagers, and the government policies has changed local people's ways of life. Before 1960, forest land belonged to

communities, and community members managed their land according to customary law. People did not have conflict over natural resources due to low population density and ample resources (CIRUM 49). However, the government had launched a land reform program, took and gave the land to villagers, which caused conflicts between villagers and the local government (Hickey 360). The government then started an economic renovation (*doi moi*) in 1986, which incorporated villagers into the international market by favoring cash crop production. Hickey describes the case of Khanh Hau, which had a homogenous way of life among villagers. After many of the villagers lost land, the land was redistributed to them, and they started producing rice for the international market. The relative isolation of Khanh Hau was dispelled by the increase of village members and proliferation of modern communications (Hickey 362-363). Hickey states that “homogeneity in style of life, attitudes and values, social expectations, and livelihood activities” diminished (363).

One of the crucial differences between statutory law and customary law is the units of land right holders. In statutory law, the forest land rights are mainly distributed to individuals and households. On the other hand, in customary law, villages have been the units of the rights holders of forest land and forest resources. The difference of units means that traditional community land ownership and rights of use had to be transferred to households, and most of the land has been distributed to other state organizations and economic entities including current national parks, which strictly limit the use of forest resources by people (Nguyen et al. 27). The above table shows a part of the differences of the two: statutory law often ignores

customary law, and the inconsistency of the two laws has negative impact on the local community members.

Ta Phin commune is an example that shows how statutory law changed indigenous forest management. The research was conducted in 2010 in Lao Cai province, which is located in the Northern part of Vietnam. There, 449 households out of 475 households were ethnic minorities, and the remaining were the Kinh. The two majority ethnic groups in the area, the Dzao and the Red Dzao people, migrated to the area between the 13th century and the 1940s, and they held on to their traditional cultures (CIRUM 39). The smallest administrative unit was the village, and a village leader was responsible for public administration before 1960. Forests were considered as belonging to the community, and every household owned a part of the forest (44). However, after the national land reforms were carried out, “existing community boundaries and their local cultures and customs were neglected totally and the people who entirely depended on forests were denied access to the lands and forests they perceived to be their own and their ancestors” (55). To date, the statutory law does not fully recognize the land management rights of communities, which is the major difference from the customary law (*ibid*). The forest was sustainably managed by the village members through customary law before statutory law was imposed on them. However, after the nationalization of forests, the deforestation rate increased and indigenous customs, such as rituals, were lost due to the allocation of forests to state entities. While not unique, the Ta Phin case is an excellent example that highlights how the government promulgated laws without considering indigenous knowledge

and culture.

These are the problems surrounding forest land rights of ethnic minorities. The government expresses its concern over ethnic minorities and other poor people, yet that concern is not fully reflected in law implementation. The unequal land allocation between the state agencies and individuals clearly reduces individuals' possible benefits if they were allocated high quality forest land the same as the state agencies. It would be difficult for the government to acknowledge the conflict especially at the micro-level (such as the one between households), but it is their role to regulate at the state level so that local authorities can follow the state policies on land allocation and conflict resolution. Also, the government should impose laws that are congruent with customary law, not excluding it. Ethnic minorities already have customary law that functions well for them. It is possible to improve the situation in the highlands if the government makes use of the existent customs on land and forest use as an aid to implement statutory law. Yet, the problems continue to be barriers for ethnic minorities to establish their rights on forest land, which also limit REDD+ work in the pilot provinces.

3.5.2. Forest Rights, Ethnic Minorities and REDD+

The problems of forest policies have great impacts on REDD+ implementation. Ethnic minorities are excluded from state level decision-making processes on forest policies, resulting in unequal land allocation. I will analyze how the issues of forest land allocation discussed above are perceived by communities and what kind of problems they have in addition to the issues previously discussed.

The differences between statutory law and customary law continue to be a problem in REDD+ implementation (Larson et al. 682). Tran Nam Tu and Mucahid Mustafa Bayrak conducted research in Hieu commune, Kon Plong district and found that the land allocated to the village did not correspond to the customary boundary. The authors report that the village received a total of about 4,000 ha of natural forest land. However, the villagers' customary boundaries covered about 6,000 ha, and the land that was not allocated to them was managed by the SFE and the Watershed Management Board, an agency of the provincial government. The discrepancy between the land allocated and customary boundaries would possibly cause conflicts between the communities and the formal actors who manage the land. Therefore, in this case, the villagers requested the local authorities to correct the discrepancy under the REDD+ project before the issue becomes more serious (Tran and Mucahid 113). The authors did not report the outcome of the negotiation, so it is not clear if the request by the villagers were accepted.

Another issue that REDD+ in Vietnam has is forest management contracts between state agencies and local households. Nguyen Quang Tan reported a lack of community participation in decision-making processes of forest management. The Participatory Governance Assessment for REDD+ (PGA) was launched in Lam Dong province. It is supported by the UN-REDD Programme and produces credible information on specific governance issues and can be used to improve REDD+ project implementation (Nguyen 1). In Lam Dong, one of the REDD+ pilot areas, the majority of forest areas are managed by state forest organizations, and local people

enter into forest contracts for forest protection, restoration, plantation establishment or forest management with state forest organizations (Nguyen 7). The author confirmed a lack of participation of local people due to ignorance of their rights to participate in the process of forest contracts; only ten out of 33 interviewed groups of households knew two of their fundamental rights, which are “the right to information about forest contracts and to vote for which households get forest contracts.” Nine of them knew none of their rights (29-30). Instead, the state forest organizations took initiative in the process (32). This top-down manner in making forest contracts curtails the limited rights to forest and forest resources of local community members. Moreover, the research found that customary law has not been incorporated into the legal frameworks, which often leads to continuation of conflicts over forests and forest resources (59).

In terms of the actual REDD+ implementation, some problems of the FPIC activities in REDD+ are reported. Pham et al. define FPIC as follows: ‘free’ means that “consent is given freely and voluntarily, with no coercion, manipulation, or intimidation and following a process directed by the community, respecting the time requirements of indigenous consultation/consensus processes”; ‘prior’ indicates that “consent is to be sought in advance of any activities, at the early stages of development”; and ‘informed’ means that “communities have been provided with complete information and understand the potential impact” (“FPIC” 2407). In the REDD+ projects carried out within territories of indigenous people, FPIC is the fundamental step to involve indigenous people.

The research on FPIC was carried out by Pamela McElwee in Lam Dong. An interviewee, who was the head of the provincial agricultural extension service, answered that “FPIC is taken from a foreign model, and it’s not really suitable for Vietnam. FPIC is based on the idea that communities have rights and voice [over forests]” (McElwee “Conservation”10). In Vietnam, communities’ rights to forest management are not secured, as shown in the little allocation of forest land to them. Therefore, the model that REDD+ applies does not fit the form of forest management at a community level in Vietnam.

Moreover, about FPIC meetings at a village level, McElwee reported that it was only a couple of hours to get consent for REDD+, and only forty-five minutes allocated for question time (“Conservation” 11). Pham et al. conducted research in Lam Dong, Thai Nguyen, and Nghe An provinces and report that local people had limited influence on information selection; project proponents decided the training content and methods without asking community members (“FPIC” 2416). McElwee reports that what was problematic in the meeting was that the participants were offered information of positive aspects of REDD+, but possible risks and costs of participation were not explained to them (“Conservation” 11). This was also shown by Pham et al. The authors found that villagers in Lam Dong and Thai Nguyen were provided information of only the positive impacts of REDD+ (Pham et al. “FPIC” 2417). The manipulation of information causes a fundamental problem of a lack of understanding by local participants. FPIC, which should be the first step of promoting local participation in REDD+ projects, maintains a top-down approach of information

provision, which disadvantages local participants in the process of the implementation.

The cases of Hieu commune and Nguyen's report of Lam Dong province indicate the possible conflicts over land rights of the communities if the formal boundary and customary boundary are different, which may limit the use of forest and forest resources by the community members. In the case of Hieu commune, the members could at least claim their traditional territorial boundaries, but it also shows that REDD+ may face this kind of issue when being implemented. Therefore, REDD+ not only has to clarify who owns the land, but also on what basis a land manager claims that the land belong to him/her.

3.5.3. Attempts to Establish a REDD+ Benefit Distribution System

The government stated that a state level approach to a local benefit distribution system (BDS) would be tested and developed (UN-REDD, *UN-REDD Viet Nam* 24). Also, it said that “[an] efficient, equitable and transparent benefit distribution system (BDS) is considered of vital importance to the success of REDD+” (UN-REDD, *Consultations* 7). Moreover, it acknowledged the necessity of establishing BDS to provide incentives to beneficiaries at a provincial level and declares that the Programme would carry out BDS in piloted areas (UN-REDD, *UN-REDD Viet Nam* 47). Indeed, VNFOREST has been working on establishing a BDS since 2009, and it coordinates capacity building activities at provincial and district level; however, they are not carried out at a community level (Stephenson et al. 13).

Moreover, Vietnam has experiences with PES. The government issued

Decision 380/QĐ-TTg on piloting Payments for Forest Environmental Services (PFES) in 2008. This decision is intended to request users of environmental services, such as hydropower plants, to pay for providers of environmental services to protect forests (Pham “Policy” 387). Following the Decision, Decree 99 was issued in 2010, which defines the process of PFES. The Decision “creates the foundation for REDD policies development in Vietnam” (388). Even though the pilot projects of PES is new and not adequate to provide solid lessons of how the payments and performance can be linked in the REDD+ BDS, the government expects that the PES pilot projects can indicate a possible institutional structure of REDD+ BDS through further testing and assessment of the pilot projects (UN-REDD, *UN-REDD Viet Nam* 134).

REDD+ projects in Vietnam have not transferred any fund to participating localities (McElwee “Conservation” 10). How to establish a sound BDS has been a critical issue in order to provide sufficient rewards for local community members. The government is relying on its experience with the payment for conservation of the environment by local people. It is true that PES experience is beneficial for REDD+ BDS discussions as the government can apply the scheme of PES to REDD+. However, some problems within existent PES were found. First, it is difficult for local households to obtain land use right certificates for state owned land under PES schemes because of the complicated procedures (Pham “Policy” 389). Second, the contract and the level of payment were mainly decided by the buyers under PES scheme (390). Third, the payments are often too small to offer local households a positive incentive to protect the forests or ease poverty (393). In the PES schemes, the

marginalization of local households is confirmed. Unless these problems are solved, utilizing PES to REDD+ BDS will generate the same issues of unequal decision-making rights of local households.

The absence of local participation in both forest land allocation and decision-making processes in PES contracts and insufficient payment make it difficult to create positive incentives of local community members. For those reasons, it will be problematic if the government just diverts the PES schemes to REDD+. In this sense, it is important for the government to review the land tenure policies along with the REDD+ implementation to enhance local participation in the projects.

The problems discussed in this chapter all show the tight control by the government. It can be seen not only in land allocation but also in how media dealing with REDD+. In Vietnam, media is under control of the government, and “[t]he role of the media is to spread propaganda about state policies and politics, and to promote patriotism and socialist ideology” (Pham “REDD+” 3). Pham Thu Thuy conducted research on how media in Vietnam discusses REDD+ and found that the debates on REDD+ were mainly at the international and national levels, and the topics were predominantly politics and policy making, such as Decision 380/QD-TTg on piloting Payments for Forest Environmental Services (12, 17). Indigenous groups were not featured in any newspaper (20). Given that the media in Vietnam serves as propaganda of the government, it is no wonder that most of discussions were policy-related. Therefore, it is difficult for mass media in Vietnam to criticize REDD+ (28), which lead to insufficient information provision to people.

Unequal land allocation has been an issue in REDD+. The fact that state agencies manage the highest-quality forests, and non-state actors were allocated poorer-quality forests is problematic in several ways. First, even though the government aims at poverty alleviation by implementing REDD+, no substantial change among poor people's livelihoods will occur if the land allocated to poor people has low productivity. Second, poor people with poor quality forest land may receive less funds from REDD+ than the state agencies so the actual forest managers receive little payment and the government monopolizes most of the funds (Larson et al. 683). In fact, monopolization of access to land by local elites and forestry entities cause a problem of elite capture of benefits (Pham "Policy" 389). This directly leads to worse situations for local communities in two ways. First, the possibility will arise that local community members cannot participate in planning activities, MRV, and receiving and managing rewards (Larson et al. 683). Second, in addition to the absolute gap between the government and local communities' land rights, benefit distribution for local communities will be inadequate because of the poorer quality forest land allocated to them. The state will be rewarded, since it is one of the stakeholders, leading to the decrease of potential benefits from REDD+ distributed to each household. These two factors may make it hard to motivate local community members to participate in forest protection (To and Tran 57). This is why insecure tenure rights of local communities will negatively effect their participation in REDD+ implementation and the consequent insufficient benefit distribution.

3.6. Summary

In this chapter, I investigated the causes that inhibit community participation in REDD+ projects in Vietnam. The country has a long history of government attempts to manipulate ethnic minorities. The government forced the Kinh, the major ethnic group, to migrate to the uplands, where ethnic minorities had lived. These former lowlanders became local elites, who exploited the traditional ethnic minority highlanders. The forest, which is the home to a number of forest dependent people, mostly ethnic minorities, had continued to decline until the mid-1990s.

The government has set a number of policies to protect forests and improve the situation of forest degradation. According to the Constitution, all land belongs to the people, and the state administers on behalf of the people. The state allocates the land to state agencies, economic entities, individuals and households. Due to the land reform previously implemented and the country's initiative on REDD+, it seems that Vietnam is successful in implementing the projects. However, the tight control of the government creates unequal land allocation between state agencies and local people. Also, the issue of statutory law and customary law should be highlighted in REDD+ implementation since it affects the territorial boundary and recognition of land tenure that ethnic minorities hold. Failure in land allocation and defining the territorial boundaries possibly causes a lack of motivation of local communities to participate in REDD+ projects and unequal and insufficient benefit distribution to those communities.

The challenge that Vietnam has is how to solve the land tenure issue and

motivate people to actively participate in the projects. Can it learn from Nepal, a country which is said to be a successful case in terms of community forest management, and is also one of the REDD+ participant countries? In the next chapter, REDD+ projects in Nepal will be analyzed. The aim of the research is to find lessons Vietnam can learn from the cases of Nepal.

4. REDD+ in Nepal

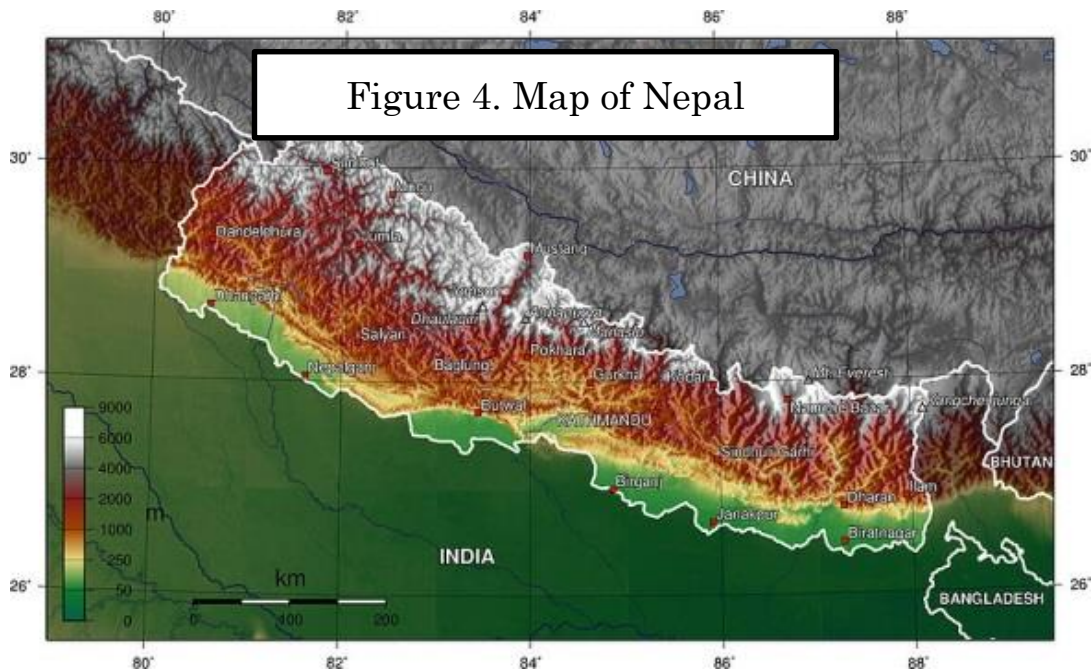
4.1. Introduction

In this chapter, I will analyze how REDD+ projects in Nepal are implemented, particularly in respect to how they address the rights of local community members. Nepal, officially the Federal Democratic Republic of Nepal, is considered by numerous scholars as a successful case of REDD+ implementation in terms of community participation. Research reveals the active participation of local community members. Moreover, international organizations, such as the UNEP, emphasize the success of community forestry in Nepal. Policy reforms of forestry were launched in the late 1970s with the government acknowledging its failure in forest management. Since then, communities have formed community forest user groups (CFUGs) and have managed forests, exercising a broad range of forest use rights, including the right to self-governance and to benefit from forest resources. The CFUG system is utilized in REDD+ implementation in Nepal as it is regarded as efficient and effective.

In the next section, I will first provide the background of Nepal, specifically the geographic and demographic data and the political history. Secondly, forest policies set by the government will be discussed; thirdly, community forest management before REDD+ implementation will be investigated; and lastly, community participation in REDD+ projects will be analyzed from both the official position and local community perspective. The aims of this chapter are to reveal the reasons why Nepal is said to be a successful case of community forest management,

what motivates community members to actively participate in forest management, and how the community members are involved in REDD+ projects.

4.2. Basic Data



Source: Nepal International Arts Programme. "Maps." Web. 08 May. 2015.

Nepal is located in Southern Asia, between China and India, and the elevation is from 60 to 8848m above sea level (Ito et al. 453). Geographically, Nepal is divided into three zones: the High Mountain, Middle Hill, and Siwalik (Sherpa et al. 140). Nepal is one of the least developed countries in the world, and about a quarter of the population lives below the poverty line (CIA "Nepal"). The main industry is agriculture, on which Nepal depends for many of the people's livelihood (ibid). Despite the fact that people are heavily dependent on forest resources, the percentage of forest area was only 25.4% in 2005 (World Bank "Nepal"). Therefore, sustainable forest management is extremely important for the livelihood of people

living there (Ito et al. 454).

Nepal has a history of protests against monarchy. The country was an absolute monarchy from the establishment of the Shah dynasty in 1769 until 2008 (Naturally Nepal). In 1951, the Nepali monarch was overthrown and a cabinet system that brought political parties into the government was started (CIA “Nepal”). However, by 1960, King Mahendra dissolved Parliament. A people’s movement occurred in 1990, which led King Birendra to accept constitutional reform and establish a multiparty parliament (Naturally Nepal). The Maoist parties declared the People’s War in 1996, which resisted monarchy and the elected government. But the King had power again in 2002 (ibid). In 2006, huge protests occurred against the new King, which led the King to abandon his power, and the prime minister and the Maoists signed the Peace Accord. Finally, in 2008, the Constituent Assembly declared Nepal a federal democratic republic and abolished the monarchy that had existed for 240 years (ibid).

Nepal is an ethnically diverse country. The largest ethnic group is Chhettri, which forms 16.6% of the population. The second most populous group is the Brahman-Hill, which is 12.2%. Other ethnic groups make up the rest of the population with each group comprising less than 10%. In 2011, 125 caste and ethnic groups were reported. The official language is Nepali, but 123 languages are spoken. The major religion is Hindu, which accounts for more than 80% of the population (CIA “Nepal”). The number of indigenous people is said to be between 35% to more than 50% of the total population. Yet, historically, “indigenous peoples have been

marginalized in terms of language, culture, and political and economic opportunities” (IWGIA). In the National Foundation for the Development of Indigenous Nationalities (NFDIN) Act-2002, fifty nine indigenous groups were identified (IWGIA; Sherpa et al. 140). The country’s attempts to recognize indigenous people and cultural diversity are still under way.

4.3. Forest and Land Policies, and REDD+ from the Official Position

4.3.1. The Government and Indigenous People

Nepal has a history of exclusion and marginalization of indigenous people, and the socio-economic differences are clear among different ethnic groups (CCD 1). Indigenous people have resided there since time immemorial, but they lost their autonomy and ancestral lands when King Prithviraj Shah integrated the country in 1769. The first national legislation promulgated in 1854, the *Muliki Ain* (Civil Code), was predatory to indigenous people since “it legally categorized indigenous peoples as the *Matwali* or liquor-drinking caste, second in the four-fold caste hierarchy, and further subdivided into the “unslavable” and “slavable”” (Bhattachan 3). Starting from the first Constitution in the 1940s, the constitutions have not recognized the social, cultural, and religious diversity of indigenous people (ibid). Nepal oppressed indigenous people during the monarchy, and this power structure still continues today even though the government recognizes the necessity to protect the rights of indigenous people.

The government after the 1950s did not adequately address the issues of indigenous people (Sherpa et al. 152). Indigenous people in Nepal reside in rural areas

and depend on agriculture for their livelihood. More than half of the indigenous people remain below the poverty line, and the poverty stems from structural discrimination, lack of political representation, and lack of access to education and employment opportunities (CCD 4). The recognition of multi-ethnicity has increased especially after 1990, when the Constitution of the Kingdom of Nepal declared that the country is a multi-ethnic and multi-lingual country. The government officially recognized indigenous people for the first time, but still it is not sufficient as it could not address the issues of indigenous people's rights (Sherpa et al. 153).

The NFDIN Act-2002 defined indigenous people as “having its own mother language and traditional rites and customs, distinct cultural identity, distinct social structure and written or unwritten history” (NFDIN). The Interim Constitution was promulgated in 2007, which allowed “the inclusion of positive provisions to address indigenous peoples’ political, cultural, economical and social rights” (Sherpa et al. 153). The Interim Constitution also declared that it would promote the political participation of marginalized and indigenous people at all levels (Sherpa et al. 155). Yet, indigenous leaders complained that representation in the Constituent Assembly was inadequate (UN General Assembly 15). The government officials recognized the need to promote the revision of existing legislation to conform to international agreements regarding the rights of indigenous people (8). The government acknowledges the necessity of improving the situation of indigenous people, but the full recognition of the rights of indigenous people and their culture is still not complete.

However, it seems difficult to achieve the improvement of the recognition to indigenous people due to the political instability continued from the late 1990s. Nepal experienced an insurgency led by the Maoists against the monarchy since 1996. The civil war between the Maoists and the government forces continued for a decade, and the country was driven into chaos at the time. Even though the peace accord was signed in 2006, the political situation has yet to become stable. As of April 2015, the government is still discussing a new constitution due to disagreement over federal restructuring (CIA “Nepal”).

The political instability impacted government responses to the magnitude 7.8 earthquake of April 25, 2015. Gabriel Domínguez reports that the authorities and energy services seemed to have been overwhelmed, and the preparation for the earthquake was not enough despite the fact that it was not unpredictable considering the geology of the country. The government admitted its insufficient preparation for the disaster. Moreover, the poor economic situation results in people living in houses with poor construction, and this led to the wide-spread destruction of buildings (Domínguez). The insufficient preparedness by the government may lead to the dissatisfaction of the people, which may perpetuate the instability of the country.

The point in common between the government’s attempts to improve the situation of indigenous people and a lack of preparation for the earthquake is a lack of a strong initiative by the government due to the political instability. What should be emphasized in this section is that even though the government has tried to address the issues of indigenous peoples’ rights, such as attempting to promote indigenous

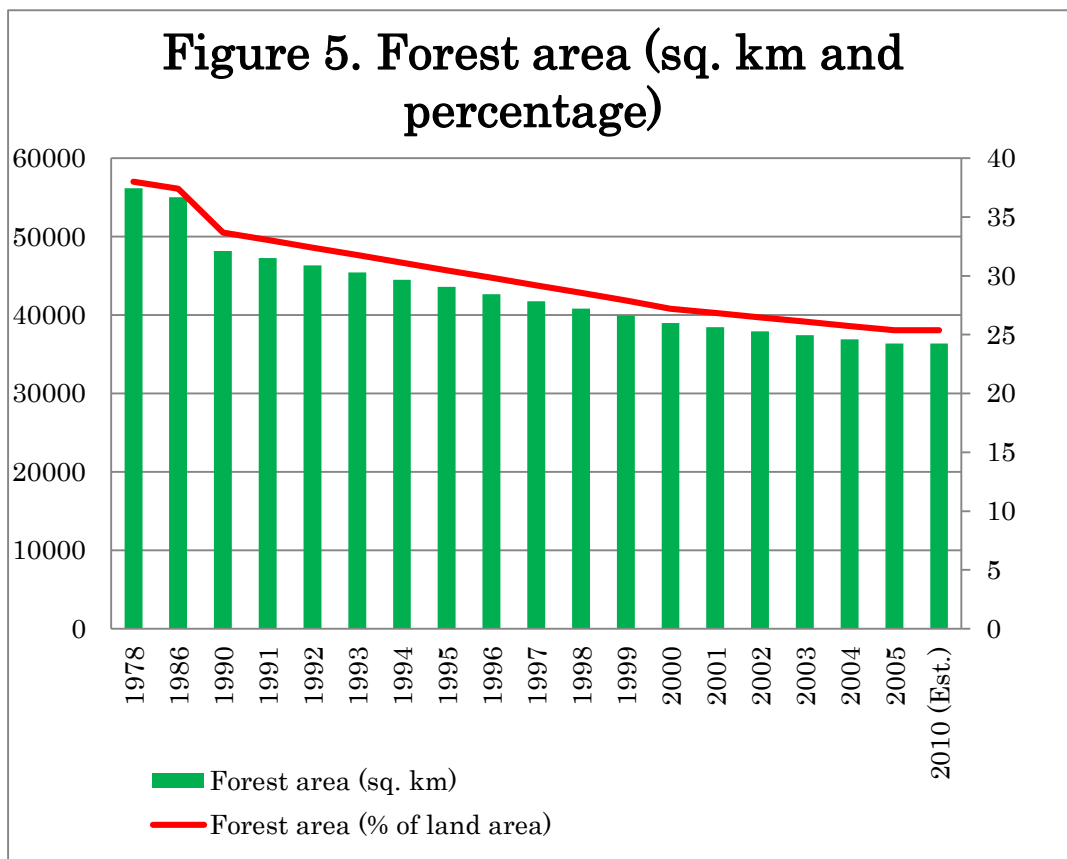
people's participation in all tiers of the state asserted in the Interim Constitution (Sherpa et al. 155), the political and economic situation delays a solution to the issues.

4.3.2. History of Forest Management Policies

Even though the central government's weakness negatively affects the full recognition to indigenous people, the situation is somewhat different in the context of forest management. The country has attempted to transfer the forest management rights to local communities. In this section, the policies that established community forest management systems will be analyzed. The land that is covered by forest in Nepal is, as explained, less than 30%. Forest resources are essential for the people as they use them as fuel wood, timber and fodder (FAO, *Nepal 5*). Because of this, deforestation has occurred rapidly. The forest land ratio was 38.0% in 1978/79, which decreased to 29.0% in 1990/91 (Sherpa et al. 145). Figure 5 shows the change of forest covered land from 1978 to 2010. The data of 2010 is an estimation cited from the Forest Resources Assessment published by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations.¹ As shown, the land area covered by forest has been decreasing.

The government nationalized the forests to manage them as national wealth which would benefit all citizens. Forests and forest resources were nationalized through the Private Forest Nationalization Act 1957 (Maharjan 35; Sherpa et al. 149). However, local people perceived it as if their forest use rights and customary law were

¹ The actual data will be provided in the Forest Resources Assessment 2015, which is expected to be published in 2015.



Sources. World Bank. "Nepal." The World Bank Group. 2015. Web. May 12. 2015. International Centre for Environmental Management, International Institute for Environment and Development, and School of Environmental Science and Management. *Strategic Environmental and Social Assessment Report*. 6 Aug. 2014. Web. 18 May. 2015.

usurped by the government, which led to the weakening awareness of ownership and accountability in forest management (Maharjan 35-36). Moreover, the forests were converted into agricultural land: local communities intentionally cleared the forests and cultivated the land so that they could claim the land as their property (Sherpa et al. 149). Consequently, the forests decreased and degraded rapidly due to the fact that local people harvested as much as possible since the forests were open access (Maharjan 36; Sherpa et al. 149). In the late 1970s, the government officially admitted that it failed to protect the forests because of the lack of active cooperation of forest-

dependent people (Ojha, Persha, and Chhatre 7). In response to the past failure of forest management, in 1988 the Master Plan for the Forestry Sector was introduced. It was to promote participation by local people in forest management (Dahal and Chapagain 66).

The Forest Act 1993 significantly changed forest management in Nepal. It “provide[s] legal measures with aims to protect the forests and involve the local people in the conservation and development of forest resources” (Sherpa et al. 159). The main objective is “[t]o achieve sustainable management of forest resources by converting accessible national forests into Community Forests on a phase wise manner” (MoFSC “Community Forestry”). The forests in Nepal are being divided into community forests managed by local communities, and national forests managed by the Department of Forest and Soil Conservation (Maharjan 36). Forest Regulation 1995 was also enacted to further promote the local communities’ access to forest resources (Sherpa et al. 159). The two regulations provide local communities significant rights of forest management. These include the right of self-governance of forests and the right to forest management and utilization (Ojha, Persha, and Chhatre. 8). To organize local communities, the Community Forest User Groups (CFUG) to participate in forest management, were formed. Nepal began to achieve sustainable forest management by implementing CFUGs and involving local communities which have long lived in the forest area.

4.3.3. Community Forest Management Policies and Community Forest User Groups (CFUGs)

Due to the introduction of the CFUG system, Nepal is considered “a pioneer” of decentralization of forest management (SANDEE *n.pag.*). Community forestry is the second largest forest management entity in Nepal (UNEP). In fact, community forestry has improved the rural livelihoods in a number of communities, and promoted democracy at a local level (Ojha, Persha, and Chhatre 1). The success of establishing community forestry in Nepal is partly due to “the creation of appropriate institutional structures at local, meso, and national levels that included downward accountability and relatively unrestricted [decision-making] at the local level” (Ojha, Persha, and Chhatre 9). This section discusses what rights CFUGs are given and how CFUGs have improved local livelihoods and changed the country’s forest management.

The Forest Act 1993 provides a number of rights to CFUGs. Table 3 summarizes the rights and responsibilities of communities. As seen, CFUGs are entitled the rights of self-governance to forest practices and making decisions about their forest resources. After the long history of failure in forest management, the government has provided strong forest management rights to local communities. Yet, all of the forest land is still owned by the government. As of 2010, around one third of the total forests were managed by communities whereas most of the rest was managed by the government (REDD Desk “Statistics”). The number of CFUGs have continued to increase, and as of 2011, there were 17,685 CFUGs with 2,177,858 households

participating, and they managed a total of 1,652,654 hectares of forests (MoFSC “Community Forestry”).

Table 3. Rights and responsibilities of CFUGs provided by the Forest Act 1993 and Forest Regulation 1995

Rights
Rights to self-governance
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communities have rights to form CFUGs • Forest boundaries will not be restricted to existing administrative or political boundaries • CFUGs can decide executive committee members and revise their constitution anytime
Rights to forest management
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CFUGs can decide operational rules on protection, utilization, and infractions • Users can enter community forests as per rules • CFUGs can decide prices of forest products without intervention of the government • CFUGs can operate enterprises and make profits • CFUGs can decide which area, persons or development activities they invest
Responsibilities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Users have to pay a membership fee • CFUGs have to pay taxes to the government for their external profits gained from their forest products • Users have to participate in meetings • Users should join obligatory community activities which are: tree planting, thinning, and so on

Sources: Ojha, Hemant, and Lauren Persha, and Ashwini Chhatre. "Community Forestry in Nepal: A Policy Innovation for Local Livelihoods." IFPRI Discussion Paper 913. 2009. Web. 13 May. 2015, South Asian Network for Development and Environment Economics. “Community Forestry in Nepal Management Rules and Distribution of Benefits.” *Policy Brief 1-04. N.pag.* March 2004. Web. 13 May. 2015.

In order to form community forestry, it is necessary to involve forest user groups (FUG) and the staff of the District Forest Office (DFO) and NGOs, as supporters (Ito et al. 454). When a group of households want to form a CFUG, they

have to prepare a constitution under the provisions of the Act and submit it to the local DFO (Ojha, Persha, and Chhatre 3). CFUG members share rules and ideas on community forest management while they learn from DFO staff members objectives and significance of forest management and are provided technical assistance by NGOs for forest management (Ito et al. 454 : Ojha, Persha, and Chhatre 3). Ito et al. argue that the formation process is the most important step of community forestry (Ito et al. 454). The right to self-governance starts from the formation of a group and designing a constitution. The structure promotes active involvement of local community members who wish to form CFUGs. This is significant because it gives more opportunities to local communities to learn the mechanism and practice of forest management.

CFUGs manage forests to benefit the members' livelihoods. In addition, they have become "a local agency for community development, social inclusion, and democratic civic engagement" (Ojha, Persha, and Chhatre 5). Hemant Ojha, Lauren Persha, and Ashwini Chhatre report that they identified development in infrastructure, such as the improvement of irrigation canals and water distribution and construction of public buildings by using forest products through CFUG activities (5). Ganga Ram Dahal and Apsara Chapagain agree. They state that many CFUGs improved public services in the local communities by using income from the sale and distribution of forest products. For example, Prajapati Forest Use Group built a connecting road from the village to the highway, and Sati Karnali Forest User Group started operating an ambulance service in its area (Dahal and Chapagain 74). CFUGs have played an

important role in initiating development of social services essential for improving local communities' welfare.

Furthermore, Ojha, Persha, and Chhatre and Dahal and Chapagain state that CFUGs have contributed to poverty alleviation. Ojha, Persha, and Chhatre indicate how CFUGs have impacted the livelihoods of 2,700 households from 26 CFUGs. Even though the authors acknowledged the limited certainty over the outcomes due to issues of research design, they found that 46% of the households improved their status to better well-being categories through participating in CFUGs that supported livelihood improvement and capacity-building activities between 2002 and 2008. For example, citing the research conducted by Chapagain and Banjade, Ojha, Persha, and Chhatre found that among the ethnic minorities originally categorized as relatively very poor, 36% of them improved to relative poor. On the other hand, few of the households changed to a lower status (Ojha, Persha, and Chhatre 13-14). Another study found that CFUG members' annual household income increased by 113 percent on average between 2003 and 2008. Even though the research did not prove that the income increase was solely attributed to CFUG activities (13), it is worth considering the positive impacts on households.

In addition, Dahal and Chapagain state that CFUGs have been making an effort to establish more beneficial activities to poor households, such as free forest provision of forest products to poor households in Bans Bari Forest User Group and allocation of a part of the funds from income-generating activities for them in Gyansee Forest User Group (Dahal and Chapagain 74-75). These indicate the

possibility that CFUGs have worked positively in terms of poverty alleviation and livelihood improvement. This result can motivate other local community members to actively participate in CFUGs since they are likely to get higher income from CFUGs.

The success of CFUGs is acknowledged at the international level. For example, the United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP) regards CFUGs as a success story, citing their contribution to income generation from forest production and nature conservation. Also, the UNEP states that community forestry induces inclusive growth by, for example, initiating a scholarship program for low income people (UNEP).

However, even though CFUGs are recognized as a successful case of community forest management, there are some problems reported. This includes exclusion of some households within a CFUG, depending on one's caste status, conflicting interests of resource use, and unequal offering of labor by individuals (Maharjan 37). Yet, the research conducted by Maharjan also found that both annual entitlement of forest products and animal holding in 2000 increased in all ethnic/caste group except one group compared to those of in 1990 (38). How to improve the situation will be a key for further development of CFUGs.

4.3.4. REDD+ Projects from the Official Position

Community forest management in Nepal has a relatively long history. CFUGs are also involved in REDD+ projects, and in this section, the official position on the implementation is analyzed.

Nepal became a member of the FCPF in 2008 and the UN-REDD

Programme in 2010. The UN-REDD Programme provides targeted support in establishing the design of an effective, efficient, and equitable fund management system for the government of Nepal. The Programme also assesses policies and measures for addressing drivers of deforestation and forest degradation. The FCPF supports the country's capacity development process on overall REDD+ Readiness (UN-REDD "Nepal").

The government states that "Nepal has always shown her commitment to meet international obligations" and it "has been working on the REDD process through the support of various donors and funding organizations" (Nepal, *REDD+ in Nepal n.pag.*). The government established a three-tiered structure for REDD coordination: the Apex Body (REDD+ Multi-sectoral, Multi-stakeholder Coordinating and Monitoring Committee); the operational level institution (REDD+ Working Group (RWG)); and the coordinating entity (the REDD-Forestry and Climate Change Cell) (ICEM Asia et al. 122). The REDD-Forestry and Climate Change Cell (REDD Cell) stated in the Country Progress Sheet submitted to the FCPF that indigenous people are engaged in all the tiers, and Dalit (untouchable caste) in Multi-stakeholder Forum (Nepal, *REDD+ Annual 5*). In the report, the REDD Cell emphasizes the involvement of indigenous people, which is consistently shown in other reports (discussed shortly) submitted by the institution. The inclusion of indigenous people is also identified by scholars who conducted field research on REDD+ projects in Nepal, which will be discussed in the later section.

Nepal has a number of institutions to support implementing REDD+ other

than the REDD Cell. For example, the Ministry of Forests and Soil Conservation (MoFSC) is the leading institution that undertakes REDD+ Readiness activities and holds responsibility for coordinating REDD+ (MoFSC “Introduction”; ICEM Asia et al. 123). The Ministry of Finance (MoF) is a supporting institution for the MoFSC, and the Department of Forests (DoF) is the largest department of the MoFSC implementing REDD+ at the district level through DFO (ICEM Asia et al. 123). The MoFSC aims to reduce GHG emissions from deforestation and forest degradation “by addressing the [livelihood] concerns of poor and socially marginalized forest dependent people, and by establishing effective policy, regulatory and institutional structures for sustainable development of Nepal’s forests under the forthcoming new constitutional framework” (MoFSC “Introduction”). International Centre for Environmental Management Asia et al. lists twenty one institutions including governmental organizations and non-governmental organizations that operate in the forest sector (123-26), showing the Nepal’s high interests in and commitment to REDD+.

The REDD Cell is also an important institution. The REDD Cell has been established to coordinate the REDD+ readiness process under the FCPF and other REDD+ projects (Forestry Nepal). The officers of the REDD Cell participate in national and international conferences, training activities, and workshops that enhance their knowledge and skills to initiate REDD+ readiness processes. However, one staff expressed doubts about their capacity to effectively take part in REDD+. Due to the fact that REDD+ is a new idea, the staff need time to understand the issues (ICEM

Asia et al. 123). The REDD Cell conducted research on REDD+ pilot projects in Nepal and reports that the five pilot projects positively impacted on the mobilization of the Federation of Community Forest Users, Nepal (FECOFUN), indigenous communities, and women and Dalits (ICEM Asia et al. 89), which was confirmed by other scholars (see Maraseni et al.; Shrestha et al.). In the report, the REDD Cell analyzed the five pilot projects, which are: Design and establishment of a Governance and Payment System for Community Forest Management under REDD+; REDD-Reducing Poverty in Nepal; Plan Vivo; Grassroots Level Capacity Building on REDD+ in Asia and the Pacific; and Climate Change and Partnership Programme.

All of the five projects except REDD-Reducing Poverty in Nepal targeted either CFUGs or indigenous people. Due to their relevancy, I will pay particular attention to the Grassroots Capacity Building Programme and the Climate Change and Partnership Programme. The Grassroots Capacity Building Programme involved sixteen districts and targeted CFUGs, local stakeholders, civil society, and other groups. The Climate Change and Partnership Programme covered forty districts mostly from mid-hills and Terai region and involved indigenous people in the project areas (ICEM Asia et al. 121). To analyze the two projects from the official position will reveal the scope of the projects and how they addressed local community members' rights, motivated them for REDD+ implementation, and utilized the CFUG system.

The Grassroots Capacity Building Programme was launched in August 2009, and it was implemented originally in three countries: Indonesia, Lao PDR, and Nepal.

The goal of this Programme is to ensure that the grassroots forest sector stakeholders contribute to the success of REDD+ and receive benefits for local socio-economic development (Nepal, *Study 15*). The Programme is expected to be inclusive and participatory in every process of planning and implementation (Nepal, *Study 16*). The awareness of the stakeholders at grassroots level towards REDD+ has been raised through training programs (RECOFTC 8). The training was carried out in the forms of knowledge sharing events, street play, puppet shows, and so on. The Programme has created a number of materials for stakeholders' learning, such as training manuals, question and answer booklets, and so on (RECOFTC 2). However, the languages used were only the national language, Nepali, and English. The absence of local language materials were recognized by the government (Nepal, *Study 18*), but those were not translated in the project. Instead, the issue was treated as lessons learnt (32).

Nepal involved more than 20,000 individual stakeholders to community level awareness raising events from 2010 to 2012. The next largest number was Lao PDR, with 3,770 participants from 2011-12 (RECOFTC 10). The REDD Cell states that the Programme has a means to smooth implementation since the Programme has been implemented through FECOFUN, which has a wide network. Moreover, it argues that the Programme in Nepal "can be considered as pioneer in developing training manual for developing overall awareness on REDD+ plus, trainers and creating awareness at community level" (Nepal, *Study 17*). The REDD Cell indicates the issues of the Programme, such as the small scale of the pilot area and weak coordination with other projects. However, the REDD Cell did not recognize any issue related to community

participation. Rather, it found that trainers have involved the communities for raising awareness on REDD+, indigenous people and Dalits participated in training and workshops, and an effective coordination among CFUGs (18). All of the analysis by the REDD Cell on the Programme indicates its positive attitude towards the Programme in terms of the involvement of local communities, especially CFUGs, and its expectation to the role of CFUGs as effective units of REDD+ implementation.

Another programme is the Climate Change and Partnership Programme carried out by the Nepal Federation of Indigenous Nationalities (NEFIN) in partnership with the IWGIA, Asia Indigenous People's Pact (AIPP), and Indigenous Peoples' International Centre for Policy Research and Education (REDD Desk "Climate Change"). The Programme was launched in 2009, and the goal was to "contribute to the development and implementation of approaches in national REDD strategies that take both long-term forest conservation and the rights and concerns of indigenous peoples into account" (IWGIA and AIPP 1). The Programme was implemented in the same three countries as the Grassroots Capacity Building Programme and Vietnam. The Programme aims to increase awareness on climate change and capacity building of indigenous people for community-based forest management and to promote REDD+ partnership between other stakeholders (Nepal, *Study 19*). The Programme carried out Training on Trainers (ToT) at the national and sub-national level, development of education materials of REDD+, and development of training manual for indigenous people, among others (19). The REDD Cell stated that NEFIN's network with indigenous peoples made it easy to plan and implement

the Programme, and the network contributed to effective project activities (20).

Moreover, it reports that NEFIN members understood that REDD+ impacts on indigenous people's rights and responsibilities (22). The Climate Change and Partnership Programme only targeted indigenous people, an important component of CFUGs. Therefore, the Programme is critical for improving the rights of indigenous people by providing knowledge and training.

Overall, the REDD Cell concluded that in most of the five projects, training of local leaders on social and technical aspects of REDD+ has been successful, noting that the projects' coverage was limited. Also, it states that CFUGs, REDD+ networks and partners are well coordinated (23). The REDD Cell emphasized the strong networks connecting local stakeholders and supportive organizations and the necessity to establish the interconnection among projects. The REDD Cell is satisfied with the projects' involvement of local communities to promote their understanding of REDD+ for active participation in REDD+ projects. Its expectation of the networks held by CFUGs and other institutions, such as NEFIN, is enormous since those connections can be utilized for national REDD+ strategy development and implementation. This is how the REDD Cell, a leading institution of REDD+ projects in Nepal, considered how community participation is addressed in the projects. In the next section, how local community members actually perceive REDD+ projects will be analyzed.

4.4. REDD+ Projects from the Local Community Perspective

From the government's perspective, it emphasizes that the REDD+ project implementation has been effectively involving local communities and utilizing CFUG and other local entities' networks. In this section, the actual involvement of local communities will be discussed by analyzing secondary data, mainly scholars' field research on pilot project areas. The research shows that community members were participating in the REDD+ projects, such as meetings and monitoring activities, which indicates their effective involvement in REDD+. The success of community forest management and CFUGs in Nepal is evaluated by scholars (Nawir et al.; Bluffstone, Robinson, and Guthiga; Maraseni et al.), and they conclude that the legal basis of community forestry can be a basis to secure communities' share of REDD+ funds (Nawir et al. 2).

Harisharan Luintel et al. argue that capacity building at grassroots level is particularly crucial for REDD+ implementation since it "has to be implemented in a complex local environment, shaped by multiple land use systems, sharply divided politics, conflicting policies, different levels of forest dependencies of communities, complex social relations, unclear governance and tenure structures, and differential climate impacts" (2). In the context of Nepal, the key factors that affect the REDD+ implementation are the high importance of forest and forest resources for forest dependent people, CFUGs that are legally entitled the right to self-governance by the state government, and vulnerability to climate impacts due to varying altitudes. In Nepal, capacity building of the community members is extremely important for

REDD+ implementation, considering the CFUGs' effectiveness and efficiency in forest management.

In capacity building projects, FECOFUN, Himalaya Grassroots Women's Natural Resource Management Association (HIMAWANTI), and NEFIN actively take an initiative (Luintel et al. 5), promoting local communities, women, and indigenous people to be engaged in the projects and protect their rights in REDD+ implementation. Rabindra Roy et al. confirmed the effective methods to increase the understanding of local community members in the Grassroots Capacity Building Programme by interviewing grassroots stakeholders, government and NGO officials, civil societies, CFUGs, and indigenous people organizations (2). The authors introduce the voice of a member of FECOFUN; "partnership with FECOFUN is an effective way of integrating global knowledge of climate change and REDD+ into the local context and build understanding accordingly, which can be disseminated at grassroots level quickly" (Roy et al. 3). Moreover, the authors state that collaboration between local institutions such as FECOFUN and district and local government was confirmed (Roy et al. 3-4). The Programme offered opportunities for local community members to learn the concepts of climate change and REDD+, local institutions to interact with local government, and the cooperation among local institutions for efficient project implementation. The report is consistent with those of the government in terms of community participation: grassroots capacity building and awareness raising projects are successful in Nepal.

Peter Newton et al. state that the most holistic pilot project in Nepal is the

“Design and Establishment of a Governance and Payment System for Community Forest Management under REDD+”, also known as the Forest Carbon Trust Fund (FCTF) project, implemented between 2009 and 2013 (29). The project was carried out in the watershed of Charnawati River in Dolakha District, Ludikhola River in Gorkha District and Kayarkhola River in Chitwan District. The project covered more than 10,000 ha with 112 community forests and 90,000 forest users. The Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD) has distributed seed grants to CFUGs. The aims of the project were “to demonstrate an innovative mechanism for governance and benefit sharing of REDD+ payments in the community forestry sector” (Shrestha et al. 2427). The project implementation process included awareness raising and capacity building of stakeholders, base line survey, methodology designing and testing, and finalizing methodologies and sharing (Nepal, *Study 5*). The major activities included designing an equitable payment system and an efficient reporting system, and the operationalization of a REDD+ governance and payment system for a sample communities (5-6).

As a result of the implementation, the number of women and socially marginalized communities participating in the executive committees increased (Shrestha et al. 2430; Maraseni et al. 43). Moreover, the benefit distribution system effectively addressed marginalized people. The benefit distribution system adopted a multi-criteria approach based on performance and socio-economic variables (Shrestha et al. 2431; Nawir et al. 4). 40% of the payment to CFUGs was based on the amount of carbon successfully stored and sequestered. 60% was paid depending on the ratio

of participation of indigenous people (10%), Dalits (15%), women (15%), and poor households (20%) (Shrestha et al. 2431). The total payments in three years were USD 285,000, and among that, the project provided indigenous people households USD 26,330, Dalits and women USD 39,495 each, and poor households USD 52,660. For community forests' carbon stock and carbon increment, it provided USD 63,192 and USD 42,128, respectively (2432). This approach was to make sure that participation of marginalized people received recognition by payments to some extent, even if they did not achieve high performance in carbon sequestration (2431). In fact, CFUGs devoted most of the fund to pro-poor activities including income-generating activities, support for poor and under-resourced students, and loans for the members who want to work abroad (Maraseni et al. 42). Moreover, Shrestha et al. report that carbon sequestration in the three pilot areas increased between 10 and 33 t/ha over three years (2434). The benefit distribution system provided social benefits as well as introduced performance-based incentives to the participant communities (Newton et al. 30).

However, using the NORAD example, Ani Adiwinata Nawir et al. indicate that sustainability of the scheme, especially in terms of funding, is a major challenge. The funding from NORAD to the project was a three year contract, and as of February 2015, the funding ended and thus there was no money to pay the stakeholders (Nawir et al. 5). Maraseni et al. also indicate that the cost in time and money that community members spent on the REDD+ activities were more than the payments they received (43), which may reduce the local community members' motivation for the projects. Participating in REDD+ means that local community members gave up using forests

and forest resources or harvesting to make profits. The local community members should be compensated for the opportunity costs generated by REDD+ implementation.

The studies on the “Design and Establishment of a Governance and Payment System for Community Forest Management under REDD+” indicates the potential of REDD+ to promote active participation of indigenous people, women, Dalits, and other marginalized people by devising the variables calculated for the payments. This ultimately may reduce poverty among marginalized people. In addition, since the project has utilized the CFUGs (the groups created for community management), it made it easier to adopt REDD+ projects. However, a new wrinkle that has appeared due to CFUGs’ positive role in implementing the project is that the payment may not be sufficient relative to the time and money local members have to spend on REDD+ activities given the lack of secure and continual funding.

Overall, the REDD+ pilot projects in Nepal were found to involve local community members. The projects were devised to promote indigenous people, women, Dalits, and other marginalized people to participate in the meetings and monitoring. Moreover, an important fact of the case in Nepal is that the BDS is already tested in some pilot projects. The payments were based both on performance and the extent to which marginalized people participated in the projects. The future challenge is to sustain the participation of those people so that the system will not be used to get more benefits without actual participation of them. Furthermore, ensuring sufficient funding is another challenge that Nepal has to deal with. However,

insufficient funds have been an issue at the international level discussion, thus Nepal has to cooperate with other international institutions to solve the problem.

4.5. Summary

In this chapter, the REDD+ implementation in Nepal in terms of community participation was discussed. The political history was introduced to suggest Nepal's long journey to achieve democracy, which is still under way. The history of the recognition process of the indigenous peoples by the government, with highlighting the continual instability of the government, reveals its ongoing process to fully acknowledge the rights of indigenous peoples.

The government's handover of the forest management right to local communities has been recognized internationally as a successful case of community forest management. It was innovative at the time that the government admitted its failure of forest management and offered the management and control rights on forest to local communities. Even though the CFUGs have to consult with the DFO staff, the right to self-governance and benefit from forest and forest resources has increased local community members' recognition of the ownership of forests. Also, CFUGs have promoted democracy at the local level. Community forest management has achieved reduction in deforestation and poverty. Critiques indicate the exclusion of marginalized people, but it is widely recognized and started to be improved, as seen in REDD+ projects in the country.

The government emphasizes its active involvement in REDD+ and established well-organized institutions, such as the REDD Cell. Moreover, the

government promised that it would address the issues of poverty of marginalized people. The pilot projects were implemented for capacity building and awareness raising at the grassroots level, and the REDD Cell confirmed the engagement of local community members. The projects efficiently utilized the CFUGs and CFUG networks for the projects. Scholars also confirm the active participation of local communities. Indigenous people, women, and Dalits were encouraged to join meetings. The BDS adopted both the performance-based and rights-based approaches so that the participation of those people was ensured. The problem is not a lack of community participation, but rather to assure sustainable funding. Even though the motivation of local communities to REDD+ projects is high, insufficient payments may cause their reluctance to further participate in the projects. In the next section, the comparative analysis between Vietnam and Nepal will be discussed. The focus is on the causes of a lack of community participation in Vietnam with analyzing the factors contributed to the successful implementation in Nepal.

5. Discussion

Both in Vietnam and Nepal, forests are owned by the government, and rights of management of parts of the forests are allocated to local communities and individual households. However, while REDD+ in Nepal successfully involves community people in the implementation processes, REDD+ in Vietnam maintains a top-down decision-making manner that excludes community participation. The chief differences between the two countries are mainly the historical attitudes of the governments towards indigenous people and the extent to which the government has power to control the people. Moreover, the history of forest policies has set the stage for the relationship between forest management systems and indigenous people. In Nepal, the introduction of CFM enhanced local community members' participation in forest management, while the government of Vietnam maintained centralized forest management. This chapter analyses forest management and REDD+ in the two countries.

5.1. Governments' Control over Forests and the People

The government of Vietnam maintains tight control on rights of forest management since a large part of the forests are allocated to SFEs and SOCs, which then are given to individual households through forest contracts. Historically, the government did not recognize indigenous people, whom it calls 'ethnic minorities,' and assimilation policies imposed on them in the past continue to influence the livelihoods of these indigenous people. The government's uncompromising attitude towards indigenous people is also shown in its lack of respect for long-standing

indigenous customary law. This has been a problem long before REDD+ projects were launched, and although the government acknowledges the importance of protecting the rights of indigenous people, this is not necessarily reflected in the forest policies. However, Vietnam has taken initiative for REDD+ implementation, including the role of the first implementer of Phase II in UN-REDD projects. REDD+ in Vietnam consequently inherited the issue that the government neglected to solve.

In addition to the government ignoring customary law, the quality of the lands allocated to individuals and households is another problem that should be emphasized in REDD+ implementation. High quality land is allocated to governmental management boards and state-owned companies while poor quality land is allocated to individual households.

In spite of the government's failure to integrate or incorporate customary law into statutory law and inequitable land allocation to individual households, Vietnam is considered to be a pioneer of REDD+ projects. Why are the UN-REDD Programme and the FCPF promoting new pilot projects in Vietnam despite non-participation of indigenous people, who are one of the essential stakeholders of the projects? I suggest that this is because the combination of the neoliberal idea of REDD+ and the central authority of the government of Vietnam.

I stated earlier that REDD+ and carbon markets were created under a neoliberal-dominated agenda that was led by the First World. Carbon markets were made for the First World to decrease their obligation to reduce CO₂ emissions through pressuring the Third World to increase emission reductions and join carbon trading.

The Indigenous Peoples Biocultural Climate Change Assessment (IPCCA), an international organization pursuing indigenous research, declared that “REDD+ is a neo-liberal, market-driven approach that leads to the commodification of life and undermines holistic community values and governance” and that “REDD+ threatens the survival of Indigenous Peoples” (Lang *n.pag.*). By its very nature, REDD+ commodifies the environment. However, in the environment it commodifies, there are people who rely on forests and forest resources for their livelihoods. REDD+ apparently recognizes the necessity of protecting their rights; however, its priority is still on climate change mitigation, and ultimately, benefits from the carbon markets. Therefore, protection of local livelihoods remains unachieved. This is problematic since indigenous people have less voice at the international level than other stakeholders of REDD+, such as government officials, the private sector, and NGOs. This structural problem makes it difficult to truly focus on protecting the rights of indigenous people and further marginalizes them from decision-making processes.

In addition to the neoliberal nature of REDD+, the government of Vietnam maintains top-down decision-making processes that discourage local participation. As discussed previously, the government controls mass media. In order to analyze the extent to which the government influences decision-making processes of policy events, Pham Thu Thuy et al. conducted research on how different stakeholders were involved in the processes. The policy events studied were: Decision No. 380/Decree No. 99; the establishment of the UN-REDD program in Vietnam; and the creation of REDD+ subtechnical working groups. The researchers conclude that participation

does not necessarily mean involvement in decision-making processes, and found that many international NGOs (INGOs) and donors answered that they only had a limited political influence and were not involved in decision-making processes of the Decision and Decree (Pham et al. “REDD+” *n.pag.*). Interviewees from NGOs, INGOs, donors, and the business sector answered that the Decision and Decree were formed in top-down processes led by the central government (*ibid*). Furthermore, Pham et al. found that there were no representatives of indigenous people in the consultation processes and local NGOs had a limited influence. This power structure of decision-making processes did not fully reflect opinions of institutions other than the government. This might have made it possible to make decisions in a simple and easy way for the government, and thus Vietnam became the first country which launched some of the important REDD+ projects, but this ultimately caused the REDD+ projects in Vietnam to proceed without indigenous peoples’ opinions. I argue that the fact that the top-down approach, which lacks other stakeholders’ opinions, causes the speedy policy decisions by the government in REDD+ policy making and that the government’s historical attitude that does not recognize ethnic minorities as indigenous people ultimately makes it possible to implement REDD+ projects as a pioneer in the country. The reliance of UN-REDD Programme and other international institutions on Vietnam comes from this very characteristic of the government of Vietnam: the tight control on the people and the top-down approach to indigenous people.

The situation differs in Nepal. There, the Constitution declared that the

country is multi-ethnic and multi-lingual, and the government has recognized indigenous people. This is strikingly different from Vietnam, which has not recognized people living in forests as indigenous people but as ethnic minorities, the definition of which does not recognize the traditional and cultural values of the people.

Another difference between the governments of Vietnam and Nepal is stability of the government. In Vietnam, the government maintains a tight control on the people; however, in Nepal, the government is unstable, which causes a delay of adopting a new constitution. The failure of the government recognizing the rights of indigenous people, though it does recognize their existence, is attributed to its instability and that delays the creation of a new constitution.

Community forest management means less influence by the central government. Local communities promote self-governance of their forest resources, cooperating with local governments. In addition to this characteristic of CFM, the central government being weak might have enhanced local community members' exercise of their rights on forests and forest resources. The major differences between Vietnam and Nepal are their legal recognition of the people living in forests ('ethnic minorities' in Vietnam and 'indigenous people' in Nepal), and the political stability. The differences between the governments cause different influences on forests and forest land that ultimately decides the extent to which indigenous people can enjoy their rights.

5.2. Governments and Forest Policies

Both Vietnam and Nepal had nationalized forest land and experienced deforestation and forest degradation. Both countries' state forestry policies have failed; in Vietnam, it was "a disaster for Vietnam's forest resources" and forest cover decreased at 3% per year between 1973 and 1985 (Sikor 1). In Nepal, local communities did not regard the forests as their property and started to exploit forests and forest resources. However, after acknowledging deforestation and forest degradation, the two countries adopted different policies on land and forests which led to different outcomes. Nepal launched CFM, which succeeded in increasing forest cover and income generation, in part by making local communities stakeholders in the process. On the other hand, in Vietnam, the state has continued state-owned forestry that excludes indigenous people from decision-making processes.

In Nepal, the government admitted its failure in sustainable forest management and launched CFM with devolving a large part of management rights. Even though the area covered by CFUGs is limited (around one third of the country), the positive outcome of CFM is evident. Unlike Vietnam, forest cover continues to decline, but the rate of deforestation has also slightly decreased since the introduction of CFM. The REDD+ projects in Nepal utilized the basis of CFM, and it turned out to be evident that the system works well. This implies that it is not REDD+ itself but rather CFUGs that succeeded in promoting community participation in REDD+ projects. The decision of the government to devolve the forest management rights to indigenous people ultimately led to the positive role of CFUGs in REDD+, which is

not seen in Vietnam.

On the other hand, in Vietnam, land redistribution had disregarded traditional land use and territories of indigenous people in rural areas and implemented policies to incorporate them into free markets and globalization. As a result, Vietnam has achieved rapid economic growth. The GDP increased from 6.3 billion USD in 1989 to 171 billion USD in 2013 with the annual growth rate between 5-8% (World Bank “Vietnam”). This economic growth succeeded, in part, by sacrificing indigenous people’s traditional cultures: they were forced to change their lifestyles, abandon tradition, and adopt the national economic-centered policies.

At the same time, Vietnam succeeded in increasing forest cover. However, in fact, this success is built upon the increasing importation of forest products from abroad. Patrick Meyfroidt and Eric Lambin reported in 2009 that the displacement of forest exploitation to abroad accounted for about 39% of the regrowth of forests between 1987 and 2006 (“Displacement” 16139). This is due to the governmental policies to severely restrict domestic logging, and this caused an increase of illegal logging mainly in Cambodia and Laos (ibid). Vietnam (illegally) imports wood, and the amount of export value-added to processed wood, such as furniture, has been rapidly increasing since the 2000s (16140-41). In fact, Vietnam should not be considered a successful case of increasing forest cover. Rather, the country has displaced deforestation to other countries for achieving both economic growth and stopping local deforestation. This is one of the problems that REDD+ has, which is *leakage*, explained in the second chapter. Although Vietnam is promoting REDD+

projects, it imports wood including illegal products that caused deforestation of other countries. Dealing with this issue is as important as processing REDD+ projects in Vietnam.

5.3. REDD+, Governments and Indigenous People

It became clear that both in Vietnam and Nepal, existing forest management systems and policies significantly influence the REDD+ project implementation. In Vietnam, there are a number of pilot projects aiming to enhance indigenous people. Some projects, such as the FPIC projects, specifically emphasize the necessity of local participation. Yet, there are relatively fewer organizations engaged in capacity building for enhancing social safeguards in Vietnam, and most of the project activities on capacity building for social safeguards are at national and sub-national level (Stephenson et al. 14). On the other hand, a number of organizations, including government agencies, NGOs, and academic institutions, are involved in capacity building for REDD+ policy making (12). This implies the Vietnamese government's emphasis on, or the government's priority of, a national level REDD+ capacity building rather than empowering the awareness of indigenous people.

Additionally, even though the government recognizes the protection of forest and forest land rights of indigenous people and implements grassroots capacity building projects, the core of the issue of absence of local participation is rooted not in a lack of knowledge about REDD+ by indigenous people but in forest policies that the government has set. Vietnam has a long history of assimilation of indigenous people into the dominant Kinh, and the government did not accept the inherent tradition and

culture. As a result, customary land tenure was not incorporated into statutory law, which caused the current conflict between the government and indigenous people on land boundaries. Moreover, the government assigned high quality land to state agencies. Individuals have to deal with complex and cumbersome processes to contract the forest management rights with state agencies. Therefore, the government should not only promote REDD+ activities but also reconsider the regulations of forest land boundaries and forest contracts.

In Nepal, even though the efforts are not enough to fully recognize the indigenous people's rights, the government acknowledges the necessity of empowering indigenous people. The introduction of CFUGs promoted self-governance, which enhances the participation in decision-making processes of indigenous people within their respective CFUGs. Although there is still an issue of a lack of participation of women and indigenous people within CFUGs and improvement of their status is necessary, CFM successfully raise awareness of their responsibilities on forest management.

We can analyze the differences between the two countries by utilizing the idea of "stakeholders". The UN-REDD and the FCPF define stakeholders as "those groups that have a stake/interest/right in the forest and those that will be affected either negatively or positively by REDD+ activities" (1). They explicitly state that the definition includes indigenous people. Therefore, indigenous people in Vietnam and Nepal are clearly stakeholders of REDD+ projects. As discussed, historically, the government of Nepal regarded indigenous people as stakeholders in forest

management by allowing them to form CFUGs, while the government of Vietnam maintained powerful control of forest management after both countries witnessed domestic deforestation and forest degradation. The governmental document of REDD+ in Vietnam promises that special efforts to ensure participation of ethnic minorities, with recognizing them as stakeholders, would be made in Phase II of the Programme (UN-REDD, *UN-REDD Viet Nam*, 55). However, considering its long history of assimilation of indigenous people, whether they will be provided proper information of project implementation and contracts, and regarded as stakeholders, who have a right to participate in and benefit from the projects, are not clear.

5.4. Devolution or Recentralization?

Devolution of forest control was the first step of successful CFM in Nepal. “[D]ecentralized forest management system at the local level... is one of the most effective forest governance systems in developing countries” (Neupane and Shrestha 72). However, REDD+ can cause recentralization of forest management since its mechanism is financially driven. The government may capture most of the benefits generated by the project implementation, and therefore, REDD+ may make the poor forest dependent people worse off (ibid). In the case of Vietnam, the tight control of the central government may cause the capture of the majority of benefits from REDD+ and lead to limited distribution of the benefits to local community members who actually implement the projects.

REDD+ may negatively affect communities if the tenure rights of the communities are not clear (Neupane and Shrestha 78). Therefore, in Vietnam, which

has marked discrepancies between customary law and statutory law, communities may be excluded from benefit distribution or provided limited benefits with limited use of forest resources.

The issue of recentralization of forest management systems potentially influences local communities in Nepal as well. Bluffstone, Robinson, and Guthiga indicate that REDD+ may negatively impact poor people in terms of access to forest products, public transportation and fairness (47). The possibility of recentralization of forest management should be investigated at the international level to remove the threat of benefit hijacking by the state governments.

5.5. Benefit Distribution System

The Vietnamese government has experiences of PES other than REDD+. Based on its experiences, the government has launched the establishment of a sound BDS of REDD+. It states that PES is a new idea and further research is needed to apply it to REDD+ BDS, but it seems that PES will become one of the core components of organizing BDS. What has to be kept in mind when elaborating REDD+ BDS is shown by Pham. He indicates the problems of the absence of local community members in decision-making of contracts. I argue that this is attributed to the members' lack of knowledge of PES and other related information, and fundamentally, a lack of education of local community members is what influences their understanding on the climate change mitigation mechanisms. In fact, low standard education levels in the villages of Lam Dong, one of the pilot areas of REDD+, is reported (Enright 6). This suggests the possibility of people's inability to

understand REDD+ and REDD+ BDS.

On the other hand, in Nepal, although the projects were pilot level, they achieved equitable payment systems at a local level. The FCTF pilot project used a nested approach for the financial transfers, which made it possible to provide funds from the central to community level (Shrestha et al. 2431). The payments were not only performance-based but were also right-based, which successfully emphasized the rights of marginalized people, including indigenous people, and provided them payments. The success of piloting BDS is largely attributed to the existence of CFUGs, which have sufficient experiences of forest management, self-governance, and cooperation with government officials. Future REDD+ BDS projects should focus on how to ensure sufficient funds for benefit distributions at the local level, since their cost of participating in REDD+ projects (in terms of lost opportunities) were found to be more than they receive from the projects.

What should be emphasized is that there are no clear standards of benefits that local communities can receive by REDD+ implementation at the international level. Also, who and how to receive benefits remains controversial, and REDD+ continues to focus on the national level (Neupane and Shrestha 78). The experience of BDS is different from country to country, such as PES in Vietnam and CFM in Nepal, which means there are different solutions in each country. How to make use of their experiences will be a key to accelerate the discussion of REDD+ BDS.

5.6. Community Participation and Community Forest Management

Utilizing existing CFUGs in Nepal makes it easier for REDD+ to organize local community members and encourage them to participate in the projects. CFM is definitely a component that should be taken into account in the REDD+ debate in terms of community participation. In Vietnam, CFM projects have been implemented. Unallocated community forests in four villages in the northern mountain region were selected as the project site, and the villagers secured joint ownership of community forest land (Pinyopusarerk, Thi, and Van 258). Khongsak Pinyopusarerk, Thi Thu Ha Tran, and Van Dien Tran found that CFM brought about a decrease in illegal logging and positive changes in the livelihood and environment, including enhancement of equality within community members (260). Economic benefits were minor, but planting and new plantations held the possibility to generate future income (260-61). The authors conclude that the project indicates the possibility of ensuring forest use rights of indigenous people by implementing CFM in Vietnam. Therefore, Vietnam should analyze the possibility of whether CFM can be utilized in REDD+ projects.

Overall, I discussed the possible success of utilizing CFM in REDD+ projects by analyzing CFUGs and REDD+ in Nepal. However, it does not mean CFM is a panacea for REDD+, or CFUGs in Nepal are a perfect example of enhancing community participation. In fact, CFUGs in Nepal have an issue in terms of gender equality. Maraseni et al. found that female participation in meetings in the communities studied in Nepal increased after REDD+ was implemented. However, it does not mean that all women are provided the opportunity equally. In fact, Khadka et

al. note that the majority of women have unequal access to resources and decision-making processes in CFUGs (201). They found that the FCTF does not address gender issues in its meeting agendas at a local level and only occasionally at a central level (Khadka et al. 204). Poudel et al. argue that the Dalit women were severely disadvantaged; they lacked proper information about REDD+ including its potential benefit, and they did not know they qualified as recipients (193). Women are more dependent than men on forests and forest resources for daily consumption due to household tasks and collecting fire wood. Therefore, it is women who are more affected by REDD+ implementation, but they are not adequately involved in the decision-making processes of the projects. The gender issue is not the main focus of my research, and I will not further develop my argument on it, but this is one of the major problems of REDD+ in Nepal (in addition to BDS). Even though the CFUG-based REDD+ projects improved the situation of women as a whole, there are still women who do not fully participate in the projects.

Another issue of REDD+ projects in Nepal is its dependency on CFUGs. As explained, the total area managed by CFUGs is only one third of the total forest area. All REDD+ projects are implemented in this small percentage of forest areas. It is clear that utilizing CFUGs in REDD+ is efficient and speedy as they have strong networks with a local government and know-how of self-governance, know how to cooperate with government agents, and have valuable experience of collective forest management. However, the tendency to depend on CFUGs may result in ignoring of other government-managed forests to launch REDD+ projects. It is not clear whether

the government will include those forests in REDD+ despite them being the majority of the total forest area. Also, there is little evidence of CFUGs being created by the implementation of REDD+ (Newton et al. 33). The government should establish the mechanisms to implement REDD+ projects in those forests or accelerate CFUG formation if it plans to expand its scale.

6. Conclusion

One of the essentials of REDD+ is the involvement of forest-dependent people (who are often indigenous people who have been politically and economically marginalized in developing countries), so it is valuable to examine REDD+ and the extent to which it involves local community members.

The concept of REDD+ is new, and its framework is still being formed. The framework of REDD+ is changing as new issues, such as protecting indigenous people's rights and establishing MRV systems, emerge. Recently, REDD+ has recognized the necessity of safeguarding livelihood benefits as an important the factor of the initiative, and the UN-REDD and the FCPF “view carbon, biodiversity, and livelihood goals as being inseparable, and these multiple conservation and development objectives are intertwined within the REDD+ discourse” (Newton et al. 27). REDD+ has started to establish safeguards to protect indigenous people. However, its characteristics of a top-down manner of decision-making processes still remain. Whether REDD+ will successfully be implemented or not in terms of community participation depends on whether its surrounding institutions correct their top-down approach, and whether REDD+ can be promoted with protecting the livelihoods of indigenous people who live in the project areas.

The case study in Vietnam revealed that the government of Vietnam has allocated the land with high productivity to the state management boards and state-owned companies. At the individual level, only local elites receive the high quality land, and other individual households are allocated relatively lower productivity land

with limited management rights. Even though individuals can make contracts with the state agencies, transferring the management right makes the structure of the ownership more complicated. Moreover, individuals do not fully understand the right to participation in decision-making on forest contracting (Nguyen et al. 62). This may cause exploitation of the future benefits generated from REDD+ by state agencies and forest companies.

Discrepancy between customary law and statutory law has become another obstacle for REDD+ implementation in Vietnam. Even though the government states that it pays great attention to protect the rights of ethnic minorities (FAO et al. 16), it does not seriously try to solve the issue despite recognizing it before launching REDD+. Regarding the historical backgrounds of the relationship between the government and indigenous people, reflected by the enactment of assimilation policies and the fact that the government does not recognize them as “indigenous people” but as “ethnic minorities,” it seems that this history of exploitation affects the current attitude of the government towards indigenous people. The problem of traditional territorial boundaries was ignored under the policies that put priority on economic growth and involved indigenous people in international markets. As a result, the boundary issue still exists in Vietnam. The discrepancy of territorial boundaries means ambiguity of the responsibilities on the land. This directly causes conflict when allocating the benefits that the land generates. In order for equitable benefit distribution of REDD+, solving the issue of territorial boundaries is of utmost priority.

It is also notable that the government of Vietnam maintains a tight control on forest management and the people. The initiative of the state government has led to the rapid policy development of REDD+ and a number of pilot projects. International expectation of Vietnam in REDD+ remains high, especially that of the UN-REDD Programme, considering its selection of Vietnam as the first Phase II-implementing country. Moreover, the research on media shows that media mainly represents the propaganda of the government and there is little reporting on REDD+ that reflects the community perspective. The government's tight control is effective at a national level discussion of REDD+, but the top-down manner of decision-making processes disregards the opinions of indigenous people. The efforts to involve community participation are worth considering, but the government fails to solve the essential issues of land allocation and boundaries.

In contrast to Vietnam, in Nepal, communities' self-governance has been established as one of the elements of CFUGs. Even though the burden on individuals is more intense than state-managed forest areas, since individuals in CFUGs have to decide everything about forest management, they will be motivated if their opinions on forest management are reflected within the communities they belong to. It seems that the unstable state government control on land and the people does not reach to a local level, creating a conducive situation for CFM in Nepal to practice self-governance.

REDD+ in Nepal showed its involvement of indigenous people. This is mainly due to the fact that Nepal has a solid framework of CFM. REDD+ utilizes

CFUGs' network with the local government and their principle of self-governance effectively works in REDD+, promoting community participation.

I described how CFM will be effective in REDD+ implementation through analyzing the case of REDD+ in Nepal. In Vietnam, there are pilot projects that investigate the possibility of CFM in the country. The projects proved the effectiveness of CFM in ensuring forest management rights of indigenous people. The government should continue the projects and utilize the systems in REDD+ projects.

In terms of benefit distribution systems, the UN-REDD Programme is supporting the design of BDS in partner countries, especially in Vietnam (UN-REDD, *Asia-Pacific*). In Vietnam, the PES schemes will be the key to REDD+ BDS. However, it became clear that insecure land tenure of indigenous people is one of the major obstacles of PES in Vietnam. Utilizing the existing schemes is a quick and easy way to implement REDD+, but the problems of the exclusion of local participation due to insecure land tenure have to be solved before utilizing PES to REDD+ BDS.

6.1. Recommendations

The recommendations for REDD+ in Vietnam will be at a state level. This is because the problems analyzed in this thesis are insecure tenure and discrepancy between the statutory and customary law, which are highly difficult to solve at an individual or a local level. The recommendations are as follow.

First, the government of Vietnam should consider incorporating customary law with statutory law. The rewards of REDD+ implementation are performance-based, so a clear demarcation on who owns the right to forest management is

essential. Local community members will be reluctant to cooperate with the implementation if the tenure is not secured. At the same time, monitoring the flow of benefits to prevent elite capture is necessary. Also, clarifying the management rights of forests will help other areas that are not pilot areas of REDD+. There has been conflict where a territorial boundary defined in statutory and customary law is not consistent. It is a good opportunity for the state government to review the land regulations. The government should change its way of thinking against traditional and cultural value that indigenous people have and cooperate with them to identify customary land tenure.

The second recommendation for the government of Vietnam is to simplify the procedure of forest contracts between state forest owners and individual households and provide broader forest management rights to individual households. Forest contracts between state entities will provide opportunities for individuals to receive the right to forest management of higher-quality forest land. However, currently, due to a lack of understanding of individuals about rights to decision-making of forest contracts, individuals are disadvantaged in the processes. Even though some of individuals participate in forest contracting, only half of them thought their opinions were reflected in the final decision of the process (Nguyen et al. 33). It is crucial to facilitate awareness-raising events for individuals to improve their understanding on forest contracts.

In addition to a lack of understanding of individuals, the complexity of forest management rights provided by forest contracts is problematic for REDD+. The

existence of state-owned forest companies is additional to the direct allocation from the government to individuals. This may cause the exploitation of benefits of REDD+ by state agencies. Even if there is no exploitation, it is obvious that the benefit distribution system will be more complex as there are more stakeholders of the forests which are allocated based on forest contracts. Therefore, the state government has to prepare a sound framework of the benefit distribution systems for this type of forest management structure.

Third, the application of CFM to REDD+ should be considered. The research shows that CFM can improve the situation of indigenous people, which may lead to the improved status of indigenous people in an unequal forest allocation system. If the pilot projects of CFM are completely proved to be effective and efficient, it should be utilized in REDD+ projects for protecting local community members' rights in forest management.

However, CFM in Vietnam is different from CFM in Nepal. In Nepal, as discussed, REDD+ was easily implemented in the CFM areas due to CFUGs' well-developed networks and know-how of forest management, providing a solid foundation for REDD+. As CFM in Vietnam is still in its infancy, it is not clear if the positive results of the research conducted by Pinyopusarerk et al. will be sustained for the long term. What the government of Vietnam can do is to analyze CFM in Nepal, of which a form of forest ownership and management system is similar, and utilize CFUGs' governance structure. Particularly, it is urgently necessary to establish the self-governance from the perspective of community rights protection. Self-

governance motivates community members' participation, and it is expected that participation in meetings and MRV of REDD+ will be enhanced. Moreover, I believe that working not as individuals but as a group would empower community members in decision-making processes of REDD+ with the local government.

One obstacle to CFM in Vietnam is “the lack of enabling and experience embedded within local authorities to implement government policy,” which causes local communities to ask for help from external institutions (Pinyopusarerk et al. 262). This can be solved by the intervention of NGOs. As seen, a number of environmental NGOs support REDD+ projects in Vietnam and will potentially be able to support CFM pilot projects in Vietnam. This does not mean that NGOs are necessarily the solution, but sometimes it is beneficial to utilize them as a support. At the same time, it is crucial that local authorities are educated so that they can establish CFM pilot projects without help of external organizations. What is important is, first, to analyze the relevant data of CFM in Nepal, and second, to implement CFM and REDD+ at the same time for efficiency. This may enable the protection of land tenure of indigenous people and reduce poverty among them in REDD+ project implementation.

Fourth, in order to establish a sound framework of BDS, the government of Vietnam has to review lessons learned from the domestic experiences of PES. The issues found in PES are consistent with those of REDD+ in Vietnam itself: insecure land tenure of indigenous people and complicated processes and a lack of local participation derived from it in forest contracts. Therefore, the recommendation to REDD+ BDS is the same as above: to solve the issue of different traditional territorial

boundaries between customary and statutory law, and to simplify the processes of forest contracts. In addition, simplifying the hierarchy of land management right holders will further ensure distribution of the benefits to local households. Since local households are largely unfamiliar with forest contracts, supports from external organizations, such as NGOs, will be necessary.

Fifth, improvement of education of indigenous people will improve their participation in REDD+ and understanding of land tenure. Sufficient time should be taken on explanation and consultation since the idea of REDD+ is new. Also, REDD+ projects are long term contracts. Members should be given enough information, both positive and negative, to understand what projects are and how they are involved.

Finally, the utilization of CFUGs in REDD+ in Nepal should be considered carefully. It is true that REDD+ in Nepal successfully involves indigenous people, but REDD+ projects' dependence on CFUGs may result in the reluctance on implementing REDD+ in other state-owned forest areas. Therefore, the government must develop and evaluate the long-term national strategy that can be utilized in those forest areas.

Future research should focus on how the government will deal with the issues of land boundaries and how BDS will be established in the Phase II of UN-REDD in Vietnam. Will BDS emphasize the necessity of ensuring land tenure of indigenous people and simplifying the forest contract processes? By analyzing them, it will become possible to evaluate how the government emphasizes protecting the rights of indigenous people on forest land management and decision-making processes.

The idea of REDD+ is innovative as it provides opportunities for developing countries to join carbon markets and to reduce carbon emissions through avoiding deforestation and forest degradation. However, REDD+ has to consider more about indigenous people since they are one of the participants and beneficiaries of the rewards generated by REDD+. Currently, debates surrounding REDD+ focus more on technical aspects than protecting rights of indigenous people. Whether REDD+ successfully involves indigenous people in project implementation depends on how REDD+ policy makers learn lessons from the current pilot projects, especially those aim at the empowerment of local community members, and emphasize the indigenous people's rights in REDD+ principles.

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