

SUMMARY

COMMUNITY CONSULTATIONS TSPH

Location: Cuc Duong and Than Sa Communes, Vo Nhai District, Thai Nguyen Province

Date: 1-2/4/2021

Participants: total 79 participants, of which 65 of male and 14 female, number of indigenous people / ethnic minority: 77 (Tay: 66; H'Mong: 8; Nung: 2; Dao: 1)

Overview

During the data collection stage of SFMP development in Than Sa Phuong Hoang Nature Reserve (TSPH-NR) community consultations were conducted to reconfirm initial findings through the local SFMP consultant team (Silviculture Research Institute -SRI). Due to geographic feature of different communes, no centralized event was organized; but rather commune-specific consultation event. The events were carried out jointly by SRI, GIZ consultants and TSPH-NR representatives (forest rangers) – with SRI taking a lead role adapting the GIZ-proposed consultation approach to local circumstances.

The overall agenda was as follows:

Time	Activity	Notes
08:30 - 08:50	Introduction & Ice Breaker	
8:50 - 10:00	Local knowledge & data	Participatory mapping exercise in groups
10:00 – 10:15	Break	
10:15 - 11:00	Moderated discussion of key issues	Reporting back & discussion on findings from mapping exercise
11:00 - 11:45	SFMP objectives & measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Oral presentation of overall SFMP objectives• Discussion on options to address key issues/needs of communities through SFMP measures
11:45 – 12:15	Summary, closure & next steps	
12:15 -	Lunch	

In a participatory mapping exercise, participants used the map print-outs to identify the boundary of settlement areas, infrastructure, forest areas (Special-use forest, Production forest, forestland, etc.), which are owned by different entities. Furthermore, potential threat & current NTFP collection areas were identified.

Main issues identified:

- **Forestland encroachment & land allocation**

The population has been growing led to not enough land for agricultural cultivation, particular with young generations. Besides that, local people also need more forestland for their free grazing of cattle and goats.

Besides increasing pressures, Forest Land Allocation (FLA) is slow and often in-appropriate lands get allocated (i.e. difficult to access, far, unfertile land – instead of empty plots nearby the communities). Communities acknowledged that this is not within the ability of TSPH MB itself but the responsibility of the respective provincial & commune authorities. voiced the need to identify use-agreements.
- **Demarcation & Overlap of forestland boundaries**

In many cases (during both discussion & mapping exercise) it was voiced and observed that there is no clear demarcation of land ownership. With the boundaries of TSPH-NR managed lands and community owned forestland being unclear, unintended land use violations hap-pen regularly.
- **Unmanaged NTFP harvesting**

NTFPs were stated as key livelihood (bamboo shoots, honey, etc.) and income source for local ethnic people. Only informal agreements between forest protection staff and local communities exist – both sides agree that these generally work well. NTFP collection is mainly unmanaged/unplanned and both local community representatives & forest rangers noted a rapid decline in availability of NTFPs – resulting in either collection in further distances or reduced income. There was a clear need for improvement of the current situation stated from either side (through use-agreements, sustainable harvesting guidelines, alter-native livelihood development).
- **Forest Protection & Illegal logging of high-valued timber**

All the participants have participated in forest protection through forest protection contract between TSPH-NR and individual household or communities. These have been widely appreciated as additional income source, noting that the current financial returns are rather limited, nonetheless.

A mismatch between household/community location and the respected forest protection area has been voiced (protection areas are far away, hence cannot be controlled as effective as neighboring forest areas – and require higher time inputs). However, due to forests located far away from their family/community, Illegal cutting of valued timber is still happening regularly, with assumed perpetrators from other locations. In addition, the mismatch of forest protection areas to local communities' locations requires them to use a comparably larger part of the forest protection value for fuel costs.

Takeaways for integration in the management pls

In relation the above four key issues, the following options were jointly discussed and identified for potential integration in the management plan:

- Sustainable NTFP development was identified as one of the main cooperation options and an area with high needs & potential for improvement. This includes, but should not be limited to:
 - Formalization of use agreements
 - Capacity building und sustainable harvesting techniques
 - Identification of alternative NTFP options
 - Support on sales/marketing of collected NTFPs¹

- Both sides understand the need for participatory forest boundary demarcation to reduce potential future conflicts

- Both sides understand the need for FLA and/or use agreements instead of informal arrangements (cattle grazing, NTFP/firewood collection) and intend to formalize this in the scope of SFMP implementation.

- There is a need to re-arrange protection areas. While is this understood as a very complicated and complex issue (partly outside of TSPHs responsibility), alternatively the cost norms of forest protection contracts should be increase from VND 600,000 to VND 800,000 per ha/year

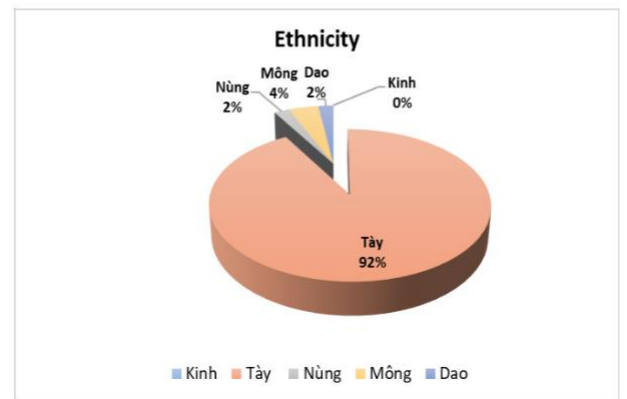
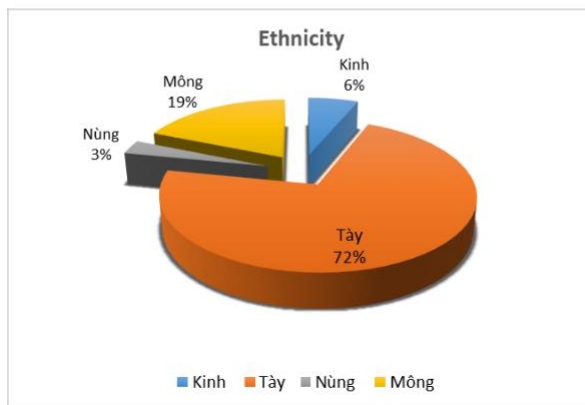
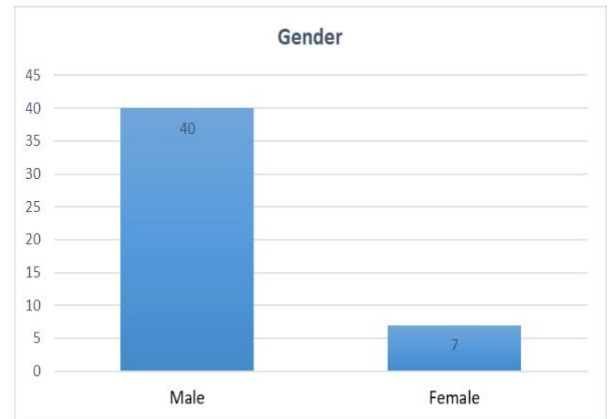
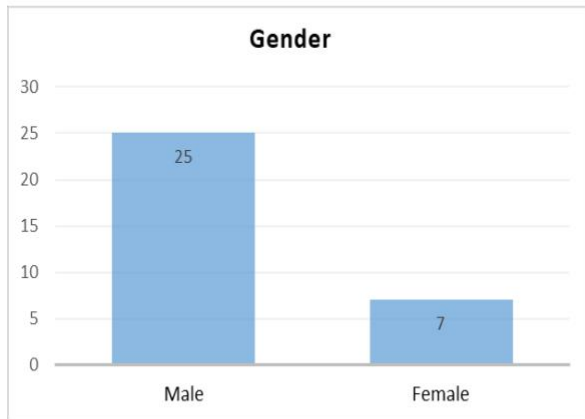
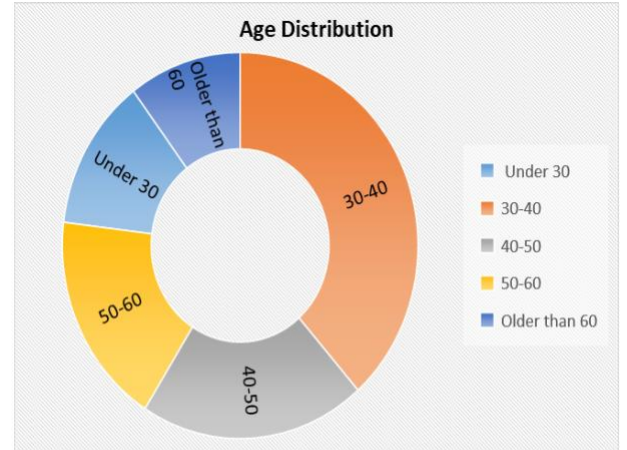
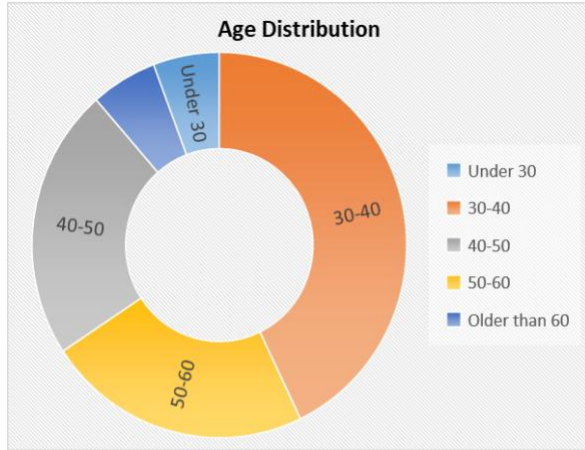
- Development of alternative livelihood models (unspecified) to reduce the pressures on forest areas through grazing, NTFP collection and logging.

¹Note: on side of the TSPH-NR the consultants identified a need for a technical guideline/plan for sustainable use & development of NTFPs as well as a value chain assessment of existing and potential other NTFPs

Participants overview

Cuc Duong Commune

Than Sa Commune



Impressions

