

# The Third Montane Mainland South East Asia (III MMSEA) Conference

Yunnan, 25 - 28 August 2002

## **Main Topic**

Indigenous Knowledge, Sustainable Livelihoods and Creative Means of Resources Governance. Concepts, strategies and action on Mountain Cultures and Biodiversity in Montane Mainland South East Asia.

## **Main objective**

To provide an opportunity for researchers, decision-makers, development workers and local actors (indigenous specialists and leaders) from mountain areas of South-East Asia to present and exchange their findings and ideas, to obtain new insights by learning from each other and from field experience and to develop and design jointly an action plan for MMSEA.

The two previous conferences (1995 and 2000 in Chiang Mai) have achieved very important academic exchanges between researchers from all over the world, who are focusing on natural and cultural aspects of the mountain areas of South East Asia.

With the III MMSEA we want to achieve an action-oriented conference, which produces academic exchange, policy recommendations and its application towards development action in Mountain areas. Action orientation is a challenge for all of us, as we are used to consume, but hesitate to commit to partnership and design of joint learning processes. At the same time many participants of conferences end up frustrated, because recommendations and action plans are not realised due to daily tasks and business, or due to new topics and conferences.

During CUBIC 2000 (Conference on Cultures and Biodiversity in Yunnan) the participants designed and approved The Yunnan Initiative as a guiding document on Cultures and Biodiversity. It is a very dense document of practical principles and action, but it requires that we evolve and adapt it to our mountain areas in SE-Asia through consultation and implement it through individual and institutional commitments.

The outcome can support the efforts of the International Mountain Year and the International Year of Ecotourism by providing a regional agenda, a view from below, a contribution of dialogue and partnerships between academics, policy-makers and local villagers often belonging to marginalized ethnic minorities.

## **Sub-topics**

We aim for establishing a red thread of three main themes for MMSEA III, which will cross-cut the six sub-topics of the Conference:

### *I. Indigenous Knowledge Systems vs./plus/and Scientific Knowledge Systems*

The range of issues in this overall main theme offer space for detailed descriptions of indigenous and scientific knowledge systems (with regard to one of the 6 sub-topics), the value and limitations of different knowledge systems, the ways of knowing and experiencing, knowledge, actors and social organisation, knowledge and values embedded in particular cultures according to different cosmovisions. It also creates a platform for the discussion of the relations and options for interaction between knowledge systems:

domination and resistance, instrumentalizing other people's knowledge, learning from other knowledge systems and also an intercultural dialogue and mutual learning. Comparison of urban and rural livelihoods and how the different population groups can benefit from each other without exploiting each other.

## *II. Globalisation vs./or/and localization*

What are the trends of globalisation in terms of markets, information and values, tourism, bio-resources and property rights, international conventions and development models like CBD (Convention for Biodiversity) or Agenda 21 on Sustainable Development with corresponding political agendas, international agencies and funds? How local livelihoods and cultures can and will cope with the outside pressures, what are opportunities and initiatives for social and cultural survival as well as improvement of livelihoods based on local values and categories.

## *III. Methodology of Research and Development: the challenge of bridging systems, worldviews, cultures through participation and dialogue*

We aim to invite presenters linked to a range of methodological aspects: from ethics to R&D-approaches to concrete tools and field experiences. Codes of conduct supporting respect to other cultures, especially indigenous cultures. The practical tools of PRA and of an application of the Gender Perspective in MMSEA. The strategic role of culturally sensitive education programs. How to develop intercultural dialogue (in each of the 6 sub-topics), which not only creates mutual respect and mutual learning, but also highlights mechanisms for conflict resolution in a constructive and peaceful manner. Participatory Technology Development as a tool to bridge knowledge systems and to create authentic and local innovations for the improvement of mountain livelihoods. Facilitation as an instrument for democratisation of decision making, joint learning and planning, conflict resolution and authentic participation of local people in the development policy, and related to it the role of outsiders, like politicians, researchers, development workers or evaluators-consultants.

All communication with regard to the Conference and registration direct to Ms. Wang Yu, CBIK at [cbik03@public.km.yn.cn](mailto:cbik03@public.km.yn.cn) . You can register easily on-line at [www.cbik.ac.cn](http://www.cbik.ac.cn). Any comments on topics and contents send to Xu Jianchu ([cbik@public.km.yn.cn](mailto:cbik@public.km.yn.cn) ) and/or to Timmi Tillmann ([timmi@public.km.yn.cn](mailto:timmi@public.km.yn.cn)).