

Teak logging for the new parliament: case study

The topic of logging and timber plantation is not on the spotlight from public awareness due to the issue of teak wood harvesting from timber plantation area for the new parliament construction

Prime minister, General Prayuth Chan-O-Cha, has ordered the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment to bring back this plantation to be reserved forest and to not make any progress upon teaks under the plantation area

Thailand forest resources administration is divided into 2 categories

- 1) National reservation forest which are divided into zone C, A and E. In zone C, this the area that has been left from reservation areas, national park areas and wildlife reservation areas. In zone E, economic forests which are areas that allow civilian to make benefit from, concession or manage by authorities such as the Forest Industry Organization to make an economic forest in respondent to timber demand. Zone A is forest areas that are suitable for agriculture.
- 2) Conservation forest consists of 2 categories: 1) Legal Conservation which are areas that were declared as national park, wildlife protection area, wildlife restriction area. Those areas are conserved to protect ecological system, biodiversity, wildlife protection and national scenery for tourism. The state could not allow anyone the make benefit out of it. The authorities that are responsible for these areas are the Department of National Parks and the Department of Marine and Coastal Resources under the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment. 2) Conservation forest according to cabinet consensus on 10 and 17 March 1992 that determined 25% of all forest areas of the country in to be Conservation forest.

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The timber plantations that are responsible by the Forest Industry Organization. The plantations are managed through sustainable process with strict academic guideline such as local labor employment. The Forest Industry Organization plants hundreds of thousands teak wood every year. The construction only require 4,534 logs of teaks which is a few compared from what they grows every year.

The problem is that timber plantation of Royal Forest Department planted in only some of the areas and the woods are not yet huge enough to sell unlike the plantation areas of Forest Industry Organization and private owned areas.

Therefore, the minister of Natural Resources and Environment Ministry should order for a check for Royal Forest Department's plantation areas to find out how much space are there that are teak plantation and also the number, age and size of teaks. If the plantations are not in the conservation areas therefore the areas must be used for plantation; and if they are; they should be used as teak reproduction.

In the issue of parliament construction, the people who are involved such as architects and workers should be praised because they understand the context of Thai society because teak indicates Thai identity. Mr. Chuan Leekpai, former prime minister, is one of the significant people who gave his advice in designing the parliament.

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