

**GREATER MEKONG SUBREGION (GMS)
BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION CORRIDORS**

**Ngoc Linh – Xe Xap –Huong Hoa Biodiversity Corridor
SOCIALIST REPUBLIC OF VIET NAM**

Commune Profile and Investment Plan

Thuong Long Commune, Nam Dong District, Thua Thien Hue Province

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PART A: COMMUNE PROFILE

1. LOCATION

Thuong Long is a mountainous commune 16 km west from the central part of Nam Dong District in Thua Thien Hue Province, Vietnam. The provincial road, 14B, is situated north of this commune. Thuong Long is bordered on the East by Thuong Nhat Commune, Thuong Quang Commune in the West, Huong Huu Commune in the North, and Hien Commune of Quang Nam Province in the South.

The total land area of Thuong Long Commune is 5,134.68 ha with eight villages: Ka Dong, A Xang, Cha Ke, A Gon, Ta Vac, A Chieu, A Dai, and A Prung.

GPS coordinates are _____ with elevation of _____ masl.

2. SOCIO-CULTURAL PROFILE

Table 1 presents the summary of socioeconomic profile.

Table 1. Summary of socioeconomic profile in Tuong Long Commune

PARAMETER	RESPONSE/ ENTRY
Population	
Total population	2,400
Population density	2 persons per ha
Household population	510
Household size	6
Male population	1,167
% Male population	49
Labor force	1,118
Education	Mostly primary
Poverty and livelihood	
Average income	6 million VND/ annum/working adult (average working adult per HH = 3)
Source of income	Forest plantation, farming and small business
No of Poor Households	185
Poor Population	871
% poor population	36.3
Poor HHs with Male head	156
Poor HHs with Female head	29
Ethnic Minority	
Total EM population	Co Tu 2,304

2.1 Population and labor

Thuong Long has a total population (2010) of 2,400 and 510 total number of households. Population density is low at 2 persons per hectare though average household size is high at six persons per household. Active labor force is 1,118 persons.

Children of school age generally enter kindergarten. However, they quit school early after finishing 7th or 8th grade. Hence, most completed only up to the primary level. More males usually reach high school than women.

2.2 Ethnic Composition and main characteristics

There are two distinct ethnic groups in the commune --- the Co' Tu (96%) and the Kinh (4%). Other groups are similarly present though brought about by intermarriage (like the Pako, Ta Oi, and Pa Hy) to the Co' Tu and Kinh.

These groups are distinct in terms of language, modes of celebrating rites of passage, attire, and architectural design in houses and other buildings. The Co' Tu Festival for instance is observed every lunar new year and buffaloes are slaughtered as part of rituals

along with merriment in the community.

In the past, the Co' Tu practiced shifting cultivation to produce upland rice. However, in 1995, they stopped practicing slash and burn agriculture. At present, they engage in both upland and wet rice production.

2.3 Gender Analysis

Approximately 49% of the population are males. As the commune is predominantly Co' Tu, families are largely patrilineal where the males are considered heads of households and that inheritance is through the male line of descent. In terms of social interaction, there is equity between males and females, especially with the significant influence of the Women's Union. Women have more opportunities to join community and social activities. In fact, the women are more active in attendance to community meetings.

In terms of reproductive activities (household labor allocation), women have more tasks on hand which include child rearing / child care, cleaning and laundry work, fuel wood gathering, fetching water, and collecting animal feed. The men do house repairs. Gathering of forest products is the domain of the male, though some women also engage in such activities at a lesser scale.

All facets of access to and control over resources are male dominated, to wit: use of forest products, land / land titling, decision on production inputs, access to information/technology, support services for production, production benefits, and decision-making in crop production. All leadership positions, except for Women's Union are occupied by males.

2.4 Dimensions of Poverty

The major sources of income are forest plantation development (rubber and acacia), farming (banana, cassava, cattle, and poultry), small business, and as government employees. Average income according to the leadership of the commune, is 6 million VND/annum/working adult (average working adult per HH = 3). Main expenditure item is on food (60%). People are considered wealthy within the commune when they have a house, buffalo, private forest, motorbike, land for rubber, monthly income of more than 10 million VND/person and if their children are schooling. High status is accorded one who has regular income as government employee.

Based on the MOLISA poverty line criteria (average income of less than 200,000 VND per person per month) in defining poverty, there are 185 poor households (36.3%) within the commune. These households largely are male-headed (refer to Table 1).

Unemployment though currently not quantified is deemed high as documented from the consultation. There accordingly are minimal employment opportunities in the commune especially among the youth and women.

3. BIO-PHYSICAL CONDITIONS

3.1 Climate

Thuong Long Commune experiences the valley tropical monsoon climate with two distinct seasons. Dry season is from April to September, with Southwest monsoons and high temperature (average temperature ranging from 24.8°C to a maximum 38°C). Long periods of maximum temperature occur at times affecting some agricultural production activities. Rainy season is from September to March characterized by Northeast monsoon winds, rain and cold temperature over a long period largely due to the presence of the Truong Son mountain range. Average rainfall is 4,147 mm / year mostly during October and November resulting to floods and erosion. Atmospheric humidity is 86.6%.

There are two dominant wind directions. The first is from the Southwest with a medium

vibration frequency of 22 - 48% occurring in July. The Southwest wind creates a long period of high temperature affecting agricultural productivity, especially rice and maize. The Northeast wind on the other hand is from October to March, which creates too much rain and low temperatures that similarly affect agricultural production that now includes cattle.

3.2 Topography and physical features

The commune is mountainous with several streams and valleys.

3.3 Rivers and water bodies

There are two big streams namely the Aka and Aron streams. Aka Stream flows from Thuong Long Commune to Thuong Nhat Commune while Aron Stream is from Thuong Quang Commune to Thuong Long Commune. These streams supply the necessary water requirements for agriculture lands. Households within the commune use water from these streams for bathing, washing, and drinking. There are other several minor streams.

Lakes and ponds are also found within the commune and the total area for these bodies of water is about 4.0 ha.

4. LAND AND FOREST RESOURCE USE

4.1 Land Cover and Present Land Use

With a total commune land area of 5,134.86, approximately 2,095.7 are agricultural lands (including forest), 173.72 ha are non-agricultural lands, and 404.22 ha are bare lands. Total forestlands amount to 1,168.2 ha (Table 2).

Table 2. Landuses in Thuong Long Commune

Land use types	Coverage area (ha)	Percentage (%)
Total natural area	5,134.86	100
A. Agriculture Land	2,095.7	40.8
1. Rubber land	621.35	12.10
2. Rice land	43	0.80
3. Fruit land	45.90	0.90
4. Forestry land	1,168.20	22.80
4. Cassava land	191.5	3.70
5. Peanut land	25.7	0.50
B. Non agriculture land	173.72	3.40
1. Rural settlement	94.47	1.80
2. Specific land	23.85	0.50
3. Aqua land	50.70	1.00
4. Cemetary land	4.10	0.10
C. Unutilized land	404.22	7.87

(Source: Thuong Long CPC, 2010)

4.2 Forest Resource

About 60.2 ha are allocated for forest protection.

Please check: Perhaps we can add other uses of the forest as well as dominant species of both natural and plantation forests within the commune???

4.3 Biodiversity assets

The natural forest in Thuong Long is recognized as rich in terms of biodiversity with many wild species of flora and fauna. Sightings of big mammal species that have just been discovered such as the Saola (*Pseudoryx nghetinhensis*) and *Megamuntiacus vuquangensis*. Gibbon species in particular are noted in this area such as *Hylobates gabriellae*, *Pygathrix nemaus* with a great number of individuals.

5. ECONOMIC SITUATION

5.1 Farming system

With a population density of 2 persons per ha, there is available agricultural lands for everyone. Aside from wet rice production, households also maintain home gardens planted to fruit trees, vegetables and animal husbandry (chicken, duck, pig, cow, buffalow, etc.).

Some households have hill gardens planted to cassava, maize and intercropped with Acacia. However, areas of cassava are decreasing and areas of Acacia are increasing. Other households plant rubber generating stable and good income.

Threats to agricultural production are: (i) insufficient water supply for irrigation especially during the dry season (summer), (ii) lack of irrigation canals, (iii) other agricultural inputs like fertilizers specifically manure, (iv) flooding and erosion at a rate of about 3-5 times a year, and (v) outbreak of diseases affecting poultry and cattle.

5.2 Markets, enterprises, and industry

There is one market, 700m from center of Thuong Long Commune. However, locals seldom patronize this market because the selection of commodities is extremely limited. The district market is preferred where they sell their products and purchase household and farm supplies. Their products are also bought by middlemen but at low prices.

As for local enterprises/industries, there are eleven small establishments and coffee shops. A cement company was established in 2009 and a gold exploration company is expected to commence by July 2010. These companies have contributed to the employment of local people.

5.3 Financial services and access to credit

Credit is available to all households in Thuong Long Commune. The Bank of Social Policy offers simple processes and requirements at low interest rates, to wit: (i) 0.65% for poor households to be utilized for employment, and reforestation WB3; (ii) 0.9% for difficult areas and clean water; (iii) 0.5% for students; (iv) 0.25% for housing; and (v) 0% for impoverished households, mostly ethnic minorities.

There is also the Agri Bank but collaterals are needed. The maximum loanable amount is 30 million VND payable in 60 months.

6. PHYSICAL AND SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE

6.1 Physical infrastructure

The 14 B is the main road to Thuong Long and is good condition for cars, motor bikes and bicycles. Inter-Village roads (8 km) are similarly stable as all weather, but feeder roads are not and are hardly passable during rainy season. Farm to market roads are limited.

As for water supply system, all households use water from streams for drinking, washing and irrigation. Almost all households are electrified though not reliable.

6.2 Social Infrastructure

Table 3 provides data on availability of school facilities and Table 4 other social infrastructure found within the commune.

Table 3. School facilities in Thuong Long Commune

School	No. of Schools	No. of Rooms	No. of teachers
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Nursery Schools	4	19	18
Primary Schools	1	12	22
Secondary Schools	1	8	23
Highschool	0	0	0

Table 4. Social infrastructure in Thuong Long Commune

Commune infrastructures	Response / Entry
Community Meeting Hall	1
Number of Village meeting houses	8
Number of commune health clinics	1
Number of solid houses	10%
Number of semi-solid houses	80%
Number of temporary houses	10%

7. OTHER ONGOING/PLANNED PROJECTS/PROGRAMS

Several projects and programs of government and NGOs have and continue to support Thuong Long Commune as follows:

- (i) Program 134 - government program to allocate land and houses to ethnic minorities as well as develop agricultural production and water supply (2005-2010),
- (ii) Program 135 - government program on socioeconomic development for most vulnerable communes of ethnic minorities located in mountainous areas (first period 1997 - 2006, second period 2006-2010),
- (iii) ADB - support for poverty alleviation,
- (iv) WB3 - support for reforestation,
- (v) ECO (Holland) - investment to develop infrastructure,
- (vi) Green Corridor Project - support to set up nursery, planting of indigenous trees.

As a result of participation to such programs/projects, local capacities and skills have been enhanced.

PART B: COMMUNE INVESTMENT PLAN UNDER BCI PHASE II

1. Commune PRIORITIES AND RANKING

Small scale infrastructure	Priority	Quantity
Water supply for drinking and washing	1	1 system
Roads for production	2	2 km
Irrigation canals	3	2 km
Toilets for households	4	50 households
Small bridges (crossing streams)	5	2 bridges

2. LIVELIHOOD OPTIONS

ITEMS	AREA (ha)	Households benefiting
Rubber plantation		
Home gardens	50	500
Animal production		
Bamboo production		
Developing natural forests		

3. REFORESTATION

ITEMS	AREA (ha)	Households benefiting
Village nursery	0.5	5
Enrichment planting, gap filling	150	65
Restoration (large strips)	60	48
Assisted natural regeneration	20	-

4. OTHERS

ITEMS	SIZE OF INVESTMENT	NO. OF JOBS
Agro-processing	\$10,000	10

5. Cost estimates

ITEMS	US\$
a) Small scale infrastructure	100,000
b) Livelihood options	50,000
c) Forest restoration	100,000
TOTAL	250,000

Source: ADB R-PPTA 2010