

SUMMARY

Vuong Xuan Tinh - Bui Minh Dao. *Traditions and changes in land tenure among ethnic minorities in Vietnam upland area.* Community land ownership has a long tradition among ethnic minorities of Vietnam. Community ownership has co-existed with private ownership in land, which appeared quite early among some ethnic groups in the valley regions, such as the Tay and Nung. For various social and historical reasons, both community and private ownership in land were hardly affected by the land policies of the pre-colonial and colonial regimes, especially in the uplands. Land tenure in the uplands has undergone more significant changes only more recently, under the influence of the Vietnamese state's policies on resettlement, sedentarization, agricultural collectivization, and, most importantly, the 1993 Land Law.

Thomas Sikor. *Basic concepts and issues in the study of land tenure.* The article presents a brief overview of the international literature on land tenure. It begins with a brief review of basic concepts in the study of land tenure, illustrating them with practical examples from Vietnam. The article then proceeds to discuss three issues with particular relevance to the Vietnamese uplands: the social foundations of land tenure, the relations between land tenure and agriculture, and the role of land tenure in forestry.

Tran Ngoc Thanh. *Does devolution really influence local forest institutions? (study in Đắk Lắk province).* The authorities of Dak Lak province have initiated a program of devolving authority over natural forest to local people. Up to date, 14 villages have received legal titles to forests in their vicinity. Devolution, or forest land allocation as it is called in Vietnam, is a radical departure from previous government policy, which reserved control over forests to the state. This paper examines the changes in local forest institutions that have occurred after allocation in two villages of Dak Lak. The two village studies suggest that allocation has modified local forest institutions, though to a much lesser degree than expected. Local people have been eager to claim legal titles to local forests, yet they face significant problems to translate legal rights into rights-in-practice. Above all, local people need support in the enforcement of their rights against encroachment by outsiders. In addition, gaps between forest management regulations and local forest institutions continue to exist, creating possibilities for conflicts within villages and between villages and the state. The paper thus suggests that devolution opens up opportunities for local people to improve their access to and control over forests, but that legal interventions are not sufficient to create supportive local forest institutions.

Nguyen Quang Tan. *Do local people benefit from forest devolution? (Evidence from Dak Lak province).* Proponents of devolution typically presume that local people benefit from devolution. The rationale is that devolution provides local people with access to and control over forest resources that make important contributions to local livelihoods. This paper subjects this assumption to empirical analysis through a study of two villages in Daklak province. The study's main objective is to examine the benefits generated by devolution of forest for local people. It includes attention to both

the distribution of benefits and the mechanisms that differentiate benefits between households. Research results demonstrate that the benefits from forest devolution may significantly differ between villages. In addition, local households displayed stark differences in their capacities to benefit from forest devolution.

Quach Thi Oanh. *The influence of traditional social institutions on contemporary land tenure in a Muong village (A study of De 1 village, Van Mieu commune, Thanh Son district, Phu Tho province).* The article analyzes the effects of traditional social institutions related to kinship and lineage on contemporary land tenure in a Muong village. It highlights different degrees and forms of influence by historical institutions on land tenure in wet rice fields and hilly land. As private ownership in wet rice fields was well established in the village before agricultural collectivization, land tenure on wet rice fields quickly returned to strong private control in the 1980s. Consequently, land tenure on wet rice fields has become highly fragmented, not only in the villages of Van Mieu commune but beyond. The influence of historical institutions on contemporary land tenure therefore calls for an active role of local state authorities in reconciling national policy with local traditions.

Nguyen Hong Quan - Pham Xuan Phuong. *A proposal for a policy framework supportive of community forest management in Vietnam.* The article analyzes forest policy concerning community forest management in Vietnam, and its application at the provincial level. It points out a discrepancy between the existing legal framework and actual practice in forest management. On that basis, the authors propose a revised policy framework and outline necessary steps for encouraging community participation in forest development, protection and management. They call upon the state to give village communities legal status, recognize communities as legal forest owners to be protected under the law, and treat them equally in forest management like social organizations.

Janet Sturgeon. *State policies, ethnic identity, and forests in China and Thailand.* The article examines the history of land tenure in Akha villages of China and Thailand over the last century, especially its second half. Different policies have effected different changes in forest management, livelihoods, and ethnic identity of this ethnic group in the two countries.

Tran Dang Tuan. *Land inheritance among the Muong (A study of Xe II village, Van Mieu commune, Thanh son district, Phu Tho province).* Implementation of land and forest allocation has influenced land inheritance practices among the Muong in Xe II village. Inheritance practices differ between land types because of differences in the way land was allocated by the state. Inheritance also reflects the influence of traditional Muong conceptions of land and kinship. Wet rice fields have been allocated to households on the basis of their membership. Consequently, parents tend to give both sons and daughters a share of the household's fields when those form their own household. In contrast, housing and forest land has not been allocated to households on the basis of membership. Parents therefore pass on housing and forestry land to sons only, perpetuating the customary preference given to sons in land inheritance and causing inequality between sons and daughters.