

# Dynamic of Local People Organization and Land Occupation Movement in Suratthani Province, South Thailand

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Published by AMRC (2013)

## **1. Background of Land Occupation for Agriculture in Suratthani Province**

### **1.1 Background**

Surat Thani is the largest of the southern provinces of Thailand, on the western shore of the Gulf of Thailand. The province comprises 19 districts, 131 subdistricts, 1,061 villages, 272,001 households and 816,016 people. There are farmers for 159,411 households and labor in agriculture sector for 401,378 people.

Suratthani has land total of 12,891.47 square kilometers or 8,057,125 rai<sup>1</sup>. which can be classified into several sectors as following:

- Land for agriculture	4,800,081 rai
- Land for conservative forest	3,416,637 rai
- Land for national forest (25 forests)	3,157,088 rai
- Land for economic forest	2,008,650 rai
- Land for household	101,516 rai
- Land for uncultivated	1,810,368 rai
Total land	15,293,340 rai

Remark: currently Suratthani has plenty forest of 1,191,125 rai

National forest, economic forest and land for household are overlapping. Agricultural land, land for household of small farmers and land that capitalists used are located in national forest and conservative forest of over 100,000 rai. As a result, total land is 7.23 million rai more over number of land than true number of land<sup>2</sup>.

## **2. Land possession of Large Palm Gardening Business<sup>3</sup>**

There are 15 major palm oil estates in the province. Those are Saha palm oil industry public limited company (41,349 rai), Jew Kang Jui limited company (1,351 rai), Ruamchaiburi golden palm and Thai palm agricultural limited company and individual possession (15,000 rai), Sakol Sappayakorn limited company (3,000 rai), Thai Boonthong limited company (3,000 rai), Surat golden palm limited company ( 1,168 rai), Thuksin palm

limited company (15,000 rai), Univanish palm oil limited company (43,153 rai), Numbie agricultural development limited company 10,000 rai.

In 2003, land reform for southern poor people network found that the contract of Surat golden palm limited company was expired in 2001. In 2012, Suratthani governor (Mr. Therayut Iamthakul) arranged 120 land plot to small farmers with 2 rai per farmer, and used 10 rai for road. Altogether it was 250 rai and still remain the land for that company **for 918 rai**. The contract of Numie agricultural development limited company was expired in 1999. In 2003, land reform for southern poor people network inspected and took possession half of land to small farmers for rent with 7-9 rai per farmer. However, there were around **5,000 rai** inoccupation.

10) Kuilim agricultural development limited company 15,000 rai. which was expired in 1999. In 2003, land reform for southern poor people network inspected and took possession half of land to small farmers for rent with 7-9 rai per farmer. However, there were around **7,500 rai** inoccupation.

11) Prajukwiwat limited company 10,600 rai (expired in 2014)

12) Samchai palm garden limited company 1,850 rai

The company invaded some areas and had altogether 3,750 rai and was inspected and took possession 1,900 rai, but it still remains 1,850 rai to distribute to small farmers and **925 rai** possessed by the company.

13) Sangsawant palm oil limited company 20,000 rai

14) Thai palm oil industry limited company 8,250 rai

15) Phusawad limited company 700 rai

Altogether, total land inspected and took possession was 175,746 rai. However, there are several large palm garden companies that were not inspected because of limited time. Numbie agricultural development limited company, Kuilim agricultural development limited company and Samchai palm garden limited company rent the land from Ratchaphatsadu Land office, Department of Treasury since 1999. They had to hand in the land to the government according to the cabinet resolution on August 26, 2003<sup>4</sup>.

### **3. Related Law and Policies that are lack of people participation**

The Thai government has issues several laws 3.1 Related Law

3.1.1 Conservative Forest Act 2507 has legal provision that allows private sector to use land in conservative forest as following:

**Article 16:** director-general with approval of minister can allows any people to use or live in conservative forest as following:

1) People are allowed to use or live in conservative land at least 5 years and not more than 30 years. In case of the users are governmental offices or state enterprises, they are waived rental fee or partial rental fee.

2) In case of use the land for legal mining, tenants can rent no longer than 10 years with exemption the fee for forest stuff gathering and mineral royalty for white clay or white rock in case by case.

**Article 20:** regarding article 16 – bis, director-general with approval of minister can allow any person to conserve forest or cultivate trees in decadent forest within duration and conditions that are declared in approval. Except the case of over 2,000 rai which has to be approved by the cabinet. Ministry of Agriculture and cooperative can determine the rental fee according to the announcement of the ministry.

3.1.2 Royal decree of land boundary

Land in Saisopa, Bang Sawan, Saikung, I-pan, Sinchalearn, Prasang subdistrict, Prasang district; Klongnoi, Songplak, Chaiyaburi, Saithong subdistrict, Chaiyaburi district, Suratthani province were declared in governmental gazette, volume 11 section 60A to be land reform on December 23, 2537. This government gazette is related to the following events:

- On July 25, 1993, department of forestry handed over Saiton and Klong Song forests of 98,025 rai to land reform for agricultural office to organize.

- On August 23, 1993, meeting 3/1993 of land reform for agricultural office committee decided the rationale of land arrangement of land reform for agricultural office.

- On March 1, 1994, the government allowed land reform for agricultural office to arrange decadent land in conservative forest.

3.1.3 Land reform for agricultural act 1975

Land reform for agricultural act 1975 was released after the Movement of Thai Farmers in 1974 – 1976. It is concerned with rationale and practical guide lines for land reform in order to distribute land possession and endorse farmer rights in land used. At national level, land reform for agricultural committee with minister of Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperative as a chairman comprises 6 farmers and government officers as committee members. This committee would work on land reform policy determination, effectiveness of production development, income improvement and protect benefits of farmers and farmer organizations.

Furthermore, the committee also response on land reform for agricultural fund. At provincial level the provincial land reform committee with provincial governor as a chairman comprises 4 farmers in certain province and related government offices as committee members. The committee has duty of writing action plans to propose to national level committee.

### 3.2 Prominent policies

#### 3.2.1 Resolution from the cabinet on August 26, 2003: problem solving approach on land possession in palm gardens in conservative forest.

1) Provincial governors of three provinces: Suratthani, Krabi and Nakornsrihammarat, appointed an inspection team which comprised the representatives of provinces, national park, wide life and flora division staff, forestry department, agricultural promotion department, department of agriculture, cooperative promotion department, land reform for agricultural office, land department, treasury department, contractors and distressed people to inspect land rental contracts of private sectors within 15 days.

2) The results of the inspection would be used to design framework and procedures to management that land with the following guidelines:

- Terminate expired contracts.
- Pause the contracts that broke the rules and charge those contractors regarding legal and orders.
- Reconsider all contracts within time frame.

Land from expired contracts and breaking the rule contract would be arranged to landless peasants who live in those areas under the conservative forest act 1964 by national park wild life and flora division, provincial governors and local committees.

- National park wild life and flora division, department of agriculture and treasury department were assigned to consider appropriate land rental fees for both private sector and peasants.

- Permanent secretary of Ministry of Interior was assigned to explain the provincial governors of three provinces to understand on policies and resolution approaches on August 27, 2003. Then, the provincial governors were responsible to explain to distressed peasants.

- The provincial governors had to report solutions and problems of policy making without participation of people sector to the cabinet.

3.2.2 The order of Prime Ministry office number 71/2009 on March 9, 2009 on the appointment of directing committee for land reform resolution problem solving in Thailand (SFA started to join the national movement with land reform network of Thailand in January 2009)

This committee had Prime Minister as a chairman, representatives of related ministries, and representatives of farmers (11 people) as committee members to determine policies, working approach, codes and budget for land reform network problems under the constitution. Then, the committee appointed seven steering committees in order to solve land occupation and law cases of peasants that related with any ministries, such as Ministry of Treasury, Ministry of Interior and Ministry of Natural Resource and Environment. Furthermore, the committee appointed a sub-committee for studying on land occupation approaches according to land title deed 2010 and comments on progressive tax, land bank and community rights on land management. In case of SFA members' problems, five members from SFA were appointed as steering committee members.

3.2.3 Prime Minister regulations on community land title deed 2010 started on June 12, 2010.

The committee meeting on December 24, 2012 on community land title deed considered to change the name of regulation to be “ The Regulation of Prime Ministry Office on Community Right Endorsement and Promotion 2013”. This regulation promotes land and

ecological management by community as communal possession in order to protect land cost speculation in order to support landless and poor people to obtain land. However, this regulation would not be used in general but it is applied regarding to readiness of community members to manage communal land possession.

3.2.4 Pua Thai's government policies on agriculture, natural resources and land presented at the cabinet on August 23, 2011: "... land would be managed with just and sustainable distribution and through community land and natural resource management—communal land title deed...".

3.2.5 Orders of Ministry of Interior number 18/2012 on committee of just land occupation project appointment on January 12, 2012 by Mr. Youngyut Wichaidit, Minister of Interior Ministry. All committee members are people of Pua Thai party network with Police Lieutenant General Chalong Sonjai as a chairman. The committee has authority to study on situations of problems and related law, conduct brainstorming forums among government officers and farmers in order to gather problems and requirements, inspect working processes, and develop action plans and proposal to hand in the Ministry of Interior.

3.2.6 Orders of Prime Minister Office number 15/2012 on just solutions for people organizations committee appointment on January 15, 2012 by Prime Minister, Yingluk Chinnawattra.

This committee has deputy prime minister (Police Captain, Chalerm Yubumrung) as a chairman, 10 ministers from related ministries, such as Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Industry, Ministry of Energy and Ministry of Culture, and 17 farmers in order to create people movement for just society (PMS). The committee has duties as following:

- 1) To determine policies, working approach, codes and budget for working on the suggestions of people movement for just societies under constitution and government policies.
- 2) To direct any activities and follow up working of government and related organizations.
- 3) To appoint sub-committee and steering committee to support any activities.

4) To conduct meetings among representatives of government offices and people in order to develop their understanding and hand in documents to the government.

5) To conduct any activities according to assignment of ministries.

The committee, sub-committee and steering committee members who are not government officers would get allowance, accommodation, transportation and etc. under government regulations.

#### **4. A Decade of Land Occupation Movement (2003 – 2013)**

##### **4.1 Political economic context**

Regarding people movement in May 1992 for pushing dictatorship government and calling for Prime Minister from election, a constitution draft council and new draft constitution with participation of people in all areas were established. People organizations which comprise both middle class and grassroot people were founded and joint hands to prepare new draft constitution which was approved on 11 October 1997. The constitution approval was delayed because of the conservative government from Democrat party occupying from 1993 – 1995.

The new constitution rules that the Prime Minister has to be a member of political party and come from election. Furthermore, the new constitution endorses all areas of human rights including individual, community and local administrative organization rights which have rights to participate in environmental and natural resource management. Regarding the new constitution, people organizations focusing on environmental and natural resource management have been vigorous in local resource protection. The activeness of the organizations is also because of the official information act 1997 which declares that official information is also owned by people. As a result, people have right to use the information—to explore and copy.

In agriculture section, small shrimp farms located in eastern coast of southern region have encountered with lost and bankrupt because of the decadence of environment and diseases spreading. Cultivating land in Samui island has been invaded by tourism businesses—hotels and resorts. Farmers have been a labor and lost their land. They have been difficult in searching cultivating land in forest areas. This is because the rigorous of officers according to the national forest master plan 1985 which set up to increase 40 per cent of

forest area (25% of natural forest and 15% of cultivating forest). Furthermore, labor with over 35 years old has been insecure because industrial section has not preferred to hire them.

Regarding above factors, the land occupation movement has been expanded to other provinces in upper south of Thailand in order to inspect land ownership and call for land right. Furthermore, in mid 2003, the movement has also occupied government land that was possessed by businessmen—large palm garden companies with over 200 rais in Suratthani, Krabi and Chumporn where are major areas of palm production of Thailand.

#### 4.2 From starting to current

Over 10 years, the land occupation movement in Suratthani province and other movement in nearby provinces have fight for land rights. They have passed difficult time, gotten a lot of pain experience, and lost valueless assets and lives. More than 10 people died regarding of land right fighting. There were 12 times that the government and businessmen with an underground troop attacked the people groups. There were nine times that they could conquer over the movement and three times that the movement could protect themselves with tactic plans, and coordination with government and the national human right committee. As a result, Suratthani governor came to reconcile at Santipattana community.

In a case of Klongsaipattana community, an underground troop with 40 people including two subdistrict leaders destroyed 60 of 120 households with two tractors. After that two community leaders were assassinated on January 11, 2010, and community was under pressure through shooting, defaming in the night time. As a result, 60 households moved out. In late 2011, there were five to seven households tried to survive and some members had to maintain their life by being businessmen side and the gang. Therefore, this is an issue for new leader to solve.

Later, Klongsaipattana community has been improved by some leaders trying to gather community members from other districts in Suratthani, Krabi and Nakornsridhamarat. New community leaders are members of Southern Farmer Assembly (SFA) from Santipattana community. The movement has used not only direct reaction with business section, but it has also used a legal method. The movement has charged with both civil court and criminal

court with altogether 30 cases from six groups/organizations. There were around 155 people who did not have land were defendants.

#### 4.3 Lesson learnt: land possession in 2003 - 2008

On May 25, 2002, around 3,000 farmers held a meeting on cultivating land problems and solutions. They wrote a letter of the problems and solutions to Prime Minister at Ban Klongklam house of priest, Tha-u-tae subdistrict, Kanchanadid district. On the next day, 50 representatives of the meeting which were led by Mr. Sad Sudnak, submitted the letter to Prime Minister (Thaksin Chinnawatra) through Mr. Prodprasop Surussawadee, director-general of Forest Department when he came to cultivate mangrove forest in Donsak district, Suratthani province.

This can be considered as starting of the movement in fighting with capitalists for land occupation for cultivation. The movement has been work under the name of “Suratthani people network organization” which was changed the name to be “Land reform for southern poor people network”. This is because they have members from many provinces.

On February 10 – 13, 2003, over 10,000 people held together at Suratthani province town hall and requested to open a negotiation forum with the government. The content of the negotiation on those days was push into cabinet resolutions on August 26, 2003.

On April 22, 2003, Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment released order 123/2546 which was concerned with steering committee appointment for forest resolution, the case of calling for land occupation from people. The committee comprised 14 of 25 members from people sector, and did not have any meeting.

On June 17, 2003, steering committee from people sector and over 300 members of the network went to inspect 13,950 rai of land in conservative forest in Kao Keaw forest and Kuan Ying Woa, Na Nean subdistrict, Oaluk district, Krabi province where Jitthawat palm garden company used. The company was approved to use the land from 23 January 1985 to 2000, but it has used the land until now.

According to the first inspection and the last inspection of land used by Thai Ruam Pattana Kranpaopook company at Moo 4, Kaokean subdistrict, Plaipraya district, Krabi province, on October 13, 2003 by land reform for southern poor people network, it is found that palm garden capitalists have taken advantages over the land with low rental cost of 10 baht per rai. In sum, land use inspection and land overrunning aim to equally distribute land to farmers.

Land reform for southern poor people network has over 20,000 landless farmers from 10 provinces including Chumporn, Suratthani, Ranong, Pang-nga, Krabi, Nakornsrihammarat, Pattalung, Songkla, Satul and Trang. The network can move as star distribution approach to overrun over 100,041 rai of land possessed by 17 palm gardening companies. These activities took five months to overrun the land and push a major impact on large palm gardening capitalists who have illegally possessed the land.

Information from Suratthani and Krabi province forest offices has shown that there was over 200,000 rai of conservative land in Suratthani and over 80,000 rai in Krabi were rented by Thai and foreign private sectors. The contracts of around 70,000 rais were overdue. The results of inspection can be summarized as following:

- 1) Private sectors have invaded and possessed the land with approval by government.
- 2) Private sectors have possessed the land over the approval.
- 3) Private sectors have taken over the land after the contracts expired.

### **Government and aggressiveness**

On October 14, 2003, Thuksin Shinnawatra's government sent Mr. Thonglor Polkod, spokesman of Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment and Mr. Jatuporn Pompun, political advisor of Mr. Prapat Panyachatrak, Minister of Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment to be representatives of the government to negotiate with peasants to step back from palm gardens of Thai Ruam Pattana Kranpaopook company. The government came with police force of over 1,000 borderline policemen and arms—shields and clubs. The peasants would not get any answer from the government about land inspection in the palm gardens within 15 days. However, the police force moved out from the gardens at 7pm. Then, on October 15, 2003, over 2,000 police force and borderline policemen and

forest voluntary officers came to seize the land in Kao Keaw conservative forest—Kuan Ying Wao forest in Kao Kean subdistrict, Plaipraya district, Krabi province, where possessed by Thai Ruam Pattana Kranpaopook company from 2,000 landless peasants.

This violent human rights event was control by Mr. Thonglor Polkod and Mr. Jatuporn Pompun. The peasants were ordered to take out shirts and lied on the ground like October 6, 1976 event at Thammasart university. As a result, 12 landless peasants at the event and a person at a village were arrested, some peasants were injured and their assets were seized and destroyed.

Then, on December 28-29, 2003, several government force teams came to conquer the land of Ratchaphatsadu land that Worakran garden palm company and C. Krietchaleart company used. Lastly, on December 30, around 2,000 official force with arms came to disintegrate peasants at land reform for southern poor people camp at southern sea board junction on state road number 41, Naderm district, Suratthani province. Three people were arrested, one person surrendered oneself to police, and other people were recorded and released.

Three times of big disintegration and arrest of leaders ruined and restrained the movement. Furthermore, land reform for southern poor people network was completely terminated, but the movement has to run on<sup>5</sup>.

### **Lesson learnt and mistakes in 2003 – 2008**

From beginning, in terms of approach strategy, the government resolutions on August 26, 2003 included the requests of the movement, but in terms of tactic methods, the movement was reacted. This is because of moral of members and understanding in goals of members. The movement focused more on temporary benefit which involved to loss in strategic support groups. In other words, the movement lost socio-political view allies and later physical space. This is because the movement was established on shared benefits rather than disciplines and ideal. As a result, the movement was easily ruined as bees were destroyed their hive. Furthermore, leaders were also ruined. This would take long time in rebuilding.

#### 4.4 Initial success:

The government resolution on August 26, 2003 pointed to arrange the land with 40:60 system which allows private sector to use 40 per cent of the land and arrange 60 per cent of the land to farmer to rent via treasury department. As a result, in 2006, land under Ratchaphatsadu Land office in Ban Saded subdistrict, Kienza district, Tapan subdistrict, Punpin district, Suratthanee was opened to rent with short-term contract of 100 baht per rai. Currently, there were 6,100 people rented the land with 9-10 rai per plot. However, around 120 people who did not join the movement, were under care taking of sheriff, subdistrict leaders and village leaders got the rental. Thus, 120 members had to push away from Kien Za, Phunphin district to live in Sai Thong, Chaiyaburi district where is far and conservative forest. This land was also rent by Thai Bunthong company until 2000. Even though, it is far, around 100 peasants who were not a movement member got the land for 8 rai per person with 22 baht rental cost at the first year only<sup>6</sup>.

#### 4.5 Foundation of Southern Peasants' Federation of Thailand(SPFT) in 2008

**Southern Peasants' Federation of Thailand(SPFT)** was found based on five objectives as following:

- 1) To analyses current situations and economic trend at both national and world wide level

Regarding the analysis, people have found that even though the growth of capitalism economy could develop technology and production potential to benefit mankind, the capitalism economy influences fleeced production system, centralized land possession and natural resource using, and ruins ecological system. Furthermore, small farmers become labor in an agricultural system or migrant to big city. The capitalism economy also ruins diversity of nature to be controlled large overseas companies<sup>7</sup>.

- 2) To summarize experience and lesson learned on people movement for democracy and farmer movement since 1932.

- 3) To study on experience and lesson learned on land occupation movement at national wide level. SFA has studied on in Brazil (Movimento Dos Trabalhadores Rurals

Sem Terra;MST), a movement in Mexico (Zapatista), some movements in India, and world farmer movement (La via campesina). Furthermore, SFA has learned working approaches of people in China, Lao, Vietnam and Cambodia in order to understand current situations and plan for future movement.

4) To study and follow up people movement, and expanding the movement to call for democracy since after a coup on September 9, 2006.

5) To summarize lesson learned of land occupation movements from several areas, such as land reform for southern poor people network, southern farmer development organization, Ruk Ban Kerd group, Kanjanadit land reform, etc.

## **5. Southern Peasants' Federation of Thailand(SPFT) in the role of land occupation movement<sup>8</sup>**

### 5.1 Background concepts and rationale

**Human right** is rights of human being.

**Democracy**: freedom in politic, equality of economy, fraternity of cultures which all ethnic groups can be relative with each other. There is no racism regarding skin color, tribe, religion, etc.

### **Definition of farmer in capitalism from labour perspective.**

Farmer is agricultural entrepreneur which can be divided into many branches—paddy field, crop, garden, traditional fishery, livestock or integrated areas. Currently, Thailand has very few farmers who are independent producers. Most farmers became labor in their own land to produce materials, such as rubber, palm oil, rice, maize, soy bean, sugarcane, and tapioca, for factories. The income from crops is labor and land rental fee. Then, farming becomes contract farming and farmers become labor in large farms, such as shrimp farm of CP, large palm oil companies.

In terms of political economy, contract and labor farmers is called “farmer class”. As a result, anyone who works for contract farming and labor in large farms are defined as who earn income from their own workforce for agricultural production, food processing, contract farming, farming with land rental, hired farmer, and natural resource depending.

Furthermore, farmers are people who use their own land and governmental land (land in communal land deed) for production<sup>9</sup>.

Farmers could not be considered only regarding production factor possession, but also they could be considered from sources of income. However, an important factor to build farmers is labor using and consciousness of being farmers. This means that farming would do with own workforce and family workforce, and some machines. For consciousness of being farmers, it would be shown in terms of understanding, farmer dignity and farmer rights, such as land and natural resource for agricultural rights, bio-resources, and right to set yield's price. In another word, farmers are who understand themselves, their class, their class benefits and how to obtain class benefits.

In addition, farmers mean people who produce both thought and products. They have to accumulate realization of movement for a farmer class in order to protect farmers and release a farmer class from the inequality of production system. The one who works out for thought and ideal creation for labor and production class is called "Organic Intellectual" which is prominent for the movement.

Therefore, farmers are who use workforce to produce basic factors for daily life, to process food, and to create thought, believes and ideal instead of only standing for protecting their rights. In other words, farmers have also rights and dignity as people in other sectors. Farmers must have rights in self-governance or rights to design their own future. Farmers are workforce for "farmer class" which has mission of social development in every era. They can be viewed as true historical creators.

5.2 **Southern Peasants' Federation of Thailand(SPFT)** developed a movement with focusing of basic foundational elements as 5 indicators as following:

- 1) A number and quality of masses.
- 2) The movement has set up with disciplines.
- 3) Conducting educational programmes in order to develop shared ideal.
- 4) Having protests for both economy and politic.
- 5) Creating allied network.

5.3 **Southern Peasants' Federation of Thailand(SPFT)** Purpose, policies, approaches and disciplines<sup>10</sup>

#### **Standpoint of Southern Peasants' Federation of Thailand(SPFT)**

**Southern Peasants' Federation of Thailand(SPFT)** was founded by the collaboration of several people and allies, especially poor farmers who did not have land. Thus, SFA focuses on protecting and calling for the rights of farmers, poor people and workforce without land. SFA strongly refuses to provide benefit for politicians, political parties and capital class. SFA also refuses to search for benefit for particular person, groups.

#### **Purpose of Southern Peasants' Federation of Thailand(SPFT)**

##### 1) Long term purpose

The long term purposes are to create democratic societies and communal culture for agricultural societies. They would have communal production and materials management. Furthermore, they would be equal in terms of production and power in order to achieve solidarity, fraternity, freedom, equality and peace societies.

##### 2) Medium term purpose

In the medium term, Bureaucrat policy, constitution and law that were developed from coup would be withdrawn. Law and justice systems that violate human rights, and oppress and fleece people would be also withdrawn.

##### 3) Short term purpose

Short term purpose is to reform agricultural sector in all areas, such as land possess and distribution, water resource conservation, genetic conservation in order to develop food security, equality and power in agricultural product price negotiation for equal political economy. Furthermore, social welfare would be created in order to develop quality of small farmers and labor which are concerned with dignity of production class.

#### **Policies of Southern Peasants' Federation of Thailand(SPFT)**

##### 1. External policies

1) Conduct campaign on land possession and distribution, and farmer right in land possession under communal land title deed.

2) Push policies that underpin land reform by communities.

- Land banks at community and national level

- Protect cultivation land including flora and fauna genes, natural resource management wisdom and farmers.
  - Progressive properties tax
  - Land title deed.
- 3) Promote community participation in land management and natural resource management.
  - 4) Collaborate with other movements that focus on farmer rights and community rights protection, and democracy development.
  - 5) Campaign on power of people in economy, social, politic and culture.
  - 6) Expose land possession by elites and inappropriate land possessing network.

## 2. Internal policies

1. Develop leaders, staff and member development programmes in scientific thinking, agricultural production science and ecological system.
2. Promote pilot garden in order to demonstrate food production for food security and economic food production.
3. Enlarge a number of members and allies to educate public on land reform by community.
4. Establish community organizations, and disciplines and mandates with community member participation.
5. Create democratic environment in the organization and influence all members in decision process and management systems of the organization.
6. Promote collaborative work among members for production, material procurement, community welfare services, and agricultural land reform fund or community land bank.
7. Promote gender equality in economic, social, politic and cultural.

## **Movement Approaches**

1. Focus on freedom regarding a democratic system.
2. Based on human rights, farmer rights and peaceful means.
3. Strengthen people movement power through social just promotion with public.

4. Possess physical land and social space.
5. Transform thoughtfulness to be material power.
6. Use concept that people can obtain their right and future through fighting.
7. Focus on objectives and methods relation with rationale, benefit and conditions.
8. Focus on land reform and land management by community through land title deed.
9. Shift the movement from economic movement to political movement. Members would not only participate in farmer and community right campaign, but also participate in politic and class struggle.
10. Expand membership and protect members' life.

#### **Disciplines of Southern Peasants' Federation of Thailand(SPFT)**

1. Respect assembly mandate and consensus of meetings of managerial team.
2. Based on equality of all levels—committee, operational staff and members
3. Focus on communal and kindness for people rather than self-benefit.
4. No gambling, no drug and no liquor before and on work processes.
5. No scold, no beat, aggressive manner and oppress to influence disharmony.
6. Respect human rights, gender rights and sex ethic. No molest and take advantages on women.
7. No fraud and embezzlement organizational properties and financial system should be accountability.
8. Assets from movement would be possessed by communal and used for benefit of the organization and all members.
9. Focus on scientific education which integrates theories and practice in order to free self-thought and mission of new social creation with freedom in politic and equality of economy.
10. Challenge to do self-evaluation and other evaluation, and adjust themselves to suit with societies, politic and mission of people movement.

#### **5.4 Strategies and tactic**

Land transform from capitalists to communities is associated with both strategies and tactics. However, people would also transform social spaces and a political stance in order to create long term security. Agriculture is considered as basic need for life and tool that all

members can achieve by themselves. It is movement that is associated with farmer life and provides benefit for both short term and long term, and for other sectors.

Farming in the land on possessing right struggling can be shown the thought of farmers. Southern Farmer Assembly said “whenever people integrate their own force with production factors (land) for improving yields, the production factors and yields would be belonged to the one who use their workforce”.

Up to now, you may have questions—“capitalists should get palm gardens because they have invested in forest department land and land reform”. I would answer that “the capitalists would not use their workforce. They have only hired labor and declared ownership. The question is where and how they earn big money. An answer is they have earned by monopoly-consession on natural resources, such as land, forest, mineral, aquatic animals, radio and TV waves, etc. These allow the capitalists to earn money and accumulate power. Could we conclude that the large amount of accumulated capital did not come from capitalists’ diligence, but it came from monopoly natural resource management and labor fleecing. These influence capitalists to be richer and labor to be poorer. Thus, we have to challenge ourselves to directly analyze and critic, and expose bad issues. In other words, people have to use freedom in democracy for class struggling.

In order to make this ideal come true policies and action, Southern Farmer Assembly (SFA) has called for members to use every space of land for food security for security of battle. SFA has pointed out effect of agriculture which can be grouped into 7 points as follow:

1. Agriculture gives both economic values and support daily life activities of families that underpin members to join the movement.
2. Agriculture in the form of shared labor for farming is a tool for land possess fighting between farmers and capitalists.
3. Agriculture is a tool for community system management. It can be criteria to gather members and test farmers’ attributes.
4. Agriculture provides income for the organization to work on campaign and protesting.

5. Agriculture influences farmers to recover balance of an ecological system, increase diversity of flora and fauna, and food security of communities.

5.5 Establishment: There are 10 basic concepts for the establishment.

- 1) Use shared problems to gather peasants to the movement and explain the important of being move in group and setting up the movement or organization.
- 2) Strengthen the organization with quality instead of quantity. However, in the beginning, new member gathering focuses on quantity by using members who were trained to excite new member.
- 3) Conduct political education programmes to develop members' ideal, standing points and attitude.
- 4) Create solidarity of the organization.
- 5) Integrate theories and practical methods in order to avoid mistake and risk.
- 6) The organization must have disciplines in order to strengthen the organization.
- 7) Create intra-organization relationship in both vertical and horizontal.
- 8) Use group orientation to develop individual responsibilities and create decision system with a committee system comprising several divisions, such as political division, economic division, cultural division, agricultural division, etc.
- 9) Promote democracy and criticism in organization with all member can share opinions and participate in organization management. Members have to vote for leaders and committee members. Members have to accept critic from others and themselves.
- 10) Establish unit cells as a base of the organization. The organization would be developed through a number of unit cells.
- 11) At least half of all forms of capital for the organization come from members and other parts come from allies.
- 12) The establishment of organization should have intellectual who work with peasants and being members of the organization. In other words, they do not have any privilege in order to maintain disciplines and rules.

5.6 Movement for temporary problem solving, land reform, democracy reform and mass problem solving. The requests are as following:

- 1) Distribute land possession which the first target is the land with expired contracts.
- 2) Land that was invaded by capitalists and businessmen was push to land reform.
- 3) Community right in land management.
- 4) Use progressive land tax system.
- 5) Establish land bank.

The last three issues are in the process of legislation—Act of Parliament (gathering opinions from people and signature of 10,000 people)

5.7 Problems and barriers: collaboration of local and regional capitalists, politicians, mafia and government officers.

There are 5 dimensions/levels of mass movement:

1. Initially, people realized that they were a part of movement establishment to struggle on hungers, insecure in food and life. In order to achieve this mission, they have to work out with other four dimensions.
2. To fulfill the weak point of organization in lack of knowledge and experience on politic.
3. To solve the problem of power seeking of leaders with local capitalists who use people to obtain power and benefits.
4. To fight with local and regional mafia who work closely with governmental officers.
5. To fight with government and capitalists who control the bureaucratic policy.

## 5.8 Prominent lesson learned and dangerous trend

1. Lesson of law and policies for people pushing: a large number and quality of mass were power of negotiation. Thus, shifting movement focus from economy or temporary issues to political issues changed the movement from protecting side to be overrunning.
2. Lesson of land transforming from capitalists: people had to study on the situation of problems, establish working team, have disciplines, and be strong with collaboration within organization.
3. Lesson of working team establishment—focusing on people-to-people which the movement has to study on current problems of people in perspective of science. Then, the real problems have been linked to concept. In other words, the phenomena develop the true and movement of the true. However, the analysis has to be based on equality—learning and sharing in the battle.
4. Lesson of allies—the organization should have higher power over allies in order to control power and benefit of each side.

## 5.9 Cautiousness of peasantry class is old problems of current farmer movement are still barriers of the future movement.

- 1) Peasants are pragmatism and resist to theory leading.
- 2) Peasants are authoritarianism and single leader working style, and lack of democratic environment.
- 3) There are unequal for benefit arrangement of justice protest, because some leaders call for justice only for their problems.
- 4) Peasants have limited political experience and can view only their own benefits.
- 5) Peasants do not pay attention to disciplines and the mandate of SFA.
- 6) Peasants trust on person rather than an organization.
- 7) Peasants lack participatory organization management skills.
- 8) Peasants lack of scientific thinking system.

**6. Analysis: land occupation and democratic movement is a movement for economy and politic, and SFA has landless workforce and workforce in agricultural sector as mass of movement.**

The movement of land occupation in upper southern region of Thailand since 2003 is different from the movement of community rights in forest areas where the government declared as conservative forest (crashing with cultivation areas). There are three elements of the difference as following:

- 1) SFA is a movement of landless workforce working in agricultural sector in both rural and suburban, and workforce in an agricultural sector. They have called for factors of production which requested the government in land occupation for landless farmers and poor people instead of monopoly use by capitalists who support conservative political parties.
- 2) Currently, the movement was changed from protecting community to movement setting up for land occupation in strategic areas, such as new areas outward conservative forest (where middle class and natural and environment conservative activists would support the movement of land occupation). Even though most protesting of the movement was disintegrated, the movement can still maintain their organization and strengthen organization and communities in an economic aspect.
- 3) Deceiving natural resource management policy in General Pream Trinnasulanon's government influenced the movement to face with election canvassers who are palm industry businessmen at both local and national levels. These businessmen have connection with local officers, local mafia and political party which obtain the vote in southern region for long time. As a result, their land possession and vote of the political party would be stable and security. This match with the rule of economic base underpin political sector and vice versa. Thus, the political party has no investment cost because it take advantages of state factors. It has taken over 100,000 rai of state land according to General Pream Trinnasulanon's government who came to be Prime Minister without election for long time (March 3, 1980 – April 29, 1988). He was invited by parliament—sovereignty—because the constitution did not declare to select the Prime Minister from the members of parliament. After the parliament was terminated, General Pream Trinnasulanon got

appointment to be a privy councilor since August 23, 1988 and appointment to be president of privy council on August 4, 1998<sup>11</sup>.

Regarding three decade of centralized land possession in the southern region of Thailand, local government and capitalists have more power. However, the movement has used subjective power to reach its goal—land occupation for landless farmers. The movement has obtained outcome less than members' effort because the quality of movement establishment and political education are critical success factors of the movement. However, the movement could not neglect external factor analysis—events, situation and circumstance. Events mean activities occurring, meanwhile, situations mean activities in process, and circumstance means aspects of activities (Three families war translated by Chunnawatra company in 2009). Especially, economic politic, culture, law and policies could effect to the movement. The movement has to create strategies for those situations and circumstances. Land issues are concerned with economic and political dimensions. Thus, the movement of land occupation has to shift the movement from economic issue to political issue with appropriate integration of both issues. This is because political power groups are the one who make decision on natural resource, and natural resources involve power, such as information power and annual government budget. In sum, political strategies of people movement and current situations influence to complete movement in democracy of people because democracy allows people in natural resource management and equal economic system. These are challenge issues for people movements.

Notes:

1. 1 Rai is 1600 sq m
2. [www.suratthani.doae.go.th](http://www.suratthani.doae.go.th) and [www.forestinfo.forest.go.th](http://www.forestinfo.forest.go.th)
3. Document of Department of Forestry and Inspection Report of SPFT.
4. Interviewed Mr. Petcharat Wecharn , former leader of Land Reform for Southern Poor People Network on February, 2013
5. from the book “the true on forest garden inspection by Sayamol Kraiyuwong, land reform for southern poor people network, July 2006
6. Interviewed Mr. Pratep Rakangthong, (event participation), Managerial committee of Southern Peasants' Federation of Thailand [SPFT]
7. Seminar on Current situations and economic trend analysis on 29 – 30 November 2008 at Saowaluk hotel, Muang district, Suratthani province
8. Introduction of Southern Peasants' Federation of Thailand [SPFT] pamphlet.
9. Human right declaration in section 3, 4, 66, 67 of constitution 2007
10. Document of Southern Peasants' Federation of Thailand [SPFT]
11. [politicalbase.in.th](http://politicalbase.in.th) and [www.sanook.com](http://www.sanook.com)

