

SFRT 2006-07

Impact of Theune Hinboun Hydropower Electricity on Agricultural Production and Communal Natural Resource Management

Silinthone Sacklokham

The research project was conducted in five villages along the Hinboun River of Hinboun district, Khammouan province of Lao PDR, and examined the impact of the Theune Hinboun Hydropower Project on agricultural production and use of natural resources. The study found that, since the hydropower project began operating in 2000, the floods became more frequent and longer, affecting wet season rice production. Also, the erosion of riverbanks destroyed the home gardens along the rivers, while capture fishery was likewise negatively affected. The villagers tended to turn to swidden agriculture, which was however less productive and not a sustainable means of livelihood. The study recommends using part of the state income from the export of electricity to help improve the livelihood of the affected local communities.

Keywords: natural resource management, agro-ecology, hydropower electricity