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MANGROVE FOREST IN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

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by

SILUCK PUNNOUM

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**ABSTRACT**

The project is concerned with the depletion of world environmental resources and the philosophy of sustainable development as a desirable approach for the protection and conservation of resources. A further interest is also paid to the environmental problems facing developing countries and to the issue of how these nations have responded to their environmental degradation at the sustainable level with special reference to Southeast Asia. Moreover, the project deals particularly with the problem of the mangrove forest depletion in this region. The major issues raised include benefits of the forest, its pressures and impacts, responses on the sustained yield basis towards the mangrove degradation and some recommendations on sustainability, based on the experiences of the Philippines, Malaysia and Thailand.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

#### BACKGROUND

In the wake of the degradation of the world environment as well as the running-out of natural resources, many countries have pursued sustainable development for the sake of the protection and conservation of these resources so that they can remain productive as longer generation as possible. Already, some faunal resources are extinct, and environmental degradation has become more intense and widespread. Acceptance of practice of sustainability is urgent to take care of the remaining resources.

In developing countries where socio-economic heavily relies on natural resources, and the rapid population growth and poverty problems remain unchanged, the issue of sustainable development has attracted considerably official attention in this region. This does not mean that development activities pursued by developed countries are always harmless. Evidence shows that despite a number of sound environmental policies and management and the development of new technologies to lessen danger on the environment, high needs and aspirations have intensified resource uses in developed countries.

According to the influential report of the Brundtland Commission (Fri 1991:1), sustainable development is defined as a process of change in which the exploitation of resources, the direction of investments, the orientation of technological development and institutional change are all in harmony and enhance both current and future potential to meet human needs and aspirations. The Commission made it clear that to succeed, several factors must be taken into account. These include the issue of population growth, equitable opportunities for all people to reach their basic needs, the development of new technologies, and the conservation and enhancement of natural resources.

In this research project, the focal interest is on the issue of the conservation and enhancement of natural resources with special reference to mangrove forests in Southeast Asia.

Extensive mangrove forests are found in Southeast Asia and the region contains the most productive forests in the world. The mangrove resource is fragile but of enormous importance to human livelihood as well as ecosystem. Unfortunately, the forests have been overexploited for years due to the lack of knowledge of their significance. During the period 1961 to 1986, the forests in Thailand, for instance, were denuded at an annual rate of 6,858.8 ha (decreasing from 367,000 ha in

1961 to 196,429 ha in 1986) while in the Philippines, the total denuded mangrove forests of 217,935 ha or about 40 percent of the entire area existing in 1920 was recorded over the last 60 years.

#### THE RESEARCH PROJECT OBJECTIVES

The project's interests cover the status, causes and impacts of resource degradation, and the responses of these nations to achieve sustainable development of the mangrove forest. Accordingly, the objectives are five-fold:

-to discuss the concept of environment and sustainable development as well as the situation of the world environmental resources.

-to examine the environmental degradation facing developing countries and their policies and management as responses towards the degradation with special reference to the region of Southeast Asia.

-to discuss the places of the mangrove forests in Southeast Asia. This includes benefits and uses of the forests, their pressures and causes and impacts of the degradation in Southeast Asia nations.

-to present approaches of three examples of the Southeast Asia region - the Philippine, Malaysia and Thailand - towards their mangrove forests on the sustainable development purpose.

-to make some recommendations concerning the achievement of the mangrove sustainable yield.

#### ORGANIZATION OF THE RESEARCH PROJECT

main parts. Firstly, it deals with the concept of environment and sustainable development as a desirable approach, including the reason why the concept of sustainable development is necessary. Then, it is concerned with the world environmental situation. Some reasons underlying the allegation of developing countries as a potential environmental stressor are also discussed. These issues are reviewed in Chapter 2.

Chapter 3 provides a review of environmental problems confronting developing countries, covering their causes and effects with special reference to Southeast Asia countries. The chapter also examines environmental policies and management as government responses towards their resource depletion.

The third part of the project presented in Chapter 4 is concerned with the place of mangrove forests. The major issues raised cover benefits and uses of the resource, its pressures and causes and impacts of the degradation in Southeast Asia.

Lastly, in Chapter 5, the project gives a explanation of the concept of the mangrove sustainable development. A review of approaches towards the resource degradation on the sustained yield in this region is included. However, due to constraints of time and available information the review is concerned with only

three countries, the Philippines, Malaysia and Thailand. The chapter concludes with some recommendations on sound guidelines for the achievement of the mangrove sustainable development, based on these three countries' experiences.

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