

Rubber Industry Sustainable Development and Responsible Investment in Laos

Rubber booming in Laos during period of 2005 - 2015 due to the high price and increasing demand for natural rubber was one of investment promotion together with hydroelectric dam and mining. Foreign Direct Investment - FDI in rubber production from China in the Northern, Thailand in the Central and Vietnam in the Southern parts of the country by land concession grants from the government and provinces played an important role and significantly contributed to the industry development

The majority of the rubber production areas in Laos is the concession by foreign companies comprises of about 70%, and only 30% owned by smallholders. Therefore, the rubber production also causes many issues on land, labor and environment

The rubber production comes to the country too fast and the government at the different level were not ready and has not well prepared in advance for this development.

The rubber management and governance in the country is still weak. The responsible authority related to rubber not well developed and coordinated. The Lao Rubber Association has been recently established, but not yet well organized and functioned. The foreign investment in rubber and rubber import countries play crucial role in rubber sustainable development. The presentation will highlight the challenges in rubber industry development in Laos and attempts to make policy recommendations to the government for better governance and fair benefits sharing among stakeholders in the sector.





Bio



Dr. Bounthong BOUAHOM has extensive experience and long-standing employment history with Lao Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry. He was Deputy DG and subsequently held DG position in the Ministry's National Agriculture and Research Institute (NAFRI), addressing agricultural and forestry research strategy and leading the implementation of 4 research programs: agriculture biodiversity conservation and sustainable use, productivity improvement, climate change adaptation and agriculture policy research.

He was co-founder of National Agriculture and Forestry Research Institute established in 1999. He leads NAFRI to celebrate its 20th anniversary in April, 2019 with significant achievement contributing to agriculture and forestry development in the country.

He has co-authored several papers, the most recent of which is "Enhancing Sustainable Development on Diverse Agriculture in Lao PDR (2005). Dr. Bounthong is the author of the first Southeast Asian Agriculture and Development Primer Series: Lao PDR (2010). He currently serves as Vice President of Lao Rubber Association, a member of the Council of the National University of Laos and a member of National Research Fund Committee. He has been elected to be a member of TWAS – The World Academy of Sciences in 2019 in Agriculture.