



TV

UNITED NATIONS NATIONS UNIES

UN In Action

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LAOS - IN THE LAND WHERE THE BONG TREE GROWS

VIDEO

INCENSE STICKS

SCRAPING TREE

AUDIO

NATSOT

(MUSIC: The Light Descends by Feet on Wood, Art List)

NARRATION:

Thousands of incense sticks are burned daily at Buddhist shrines like this one on the shore of the Mekong River in the Lao People's Democratic Republic. (10)

(MUSIC: The Oracle by John Keltonic, Omni Music)

They're made from the bark of the bong tree, popular in South East Asia. (5)

Bong trees were once abundant here, but over-exploitation is threatening their existence. In 2008, the Lao Government declared the bong tree was facing extinction. (13)

In response, a project supported by the United

MAN IN FOREST

Nations' International Fund for Agricultural Development, or IFAD, has been encouraging villagers to grow Bong trees as a cash crop. (11)

KAN NONE ON-CAM

KAN NONE: (In Lao) F

"The project provided us with bong tree plantations which has been a really good activity for us and has helped me to provide sufficient food for my family." (11)

(MUSIC: Lotus Flower, Omni Music)

NARRATION:

KAN NONE IN FOREST

Kan None belongs to the Pacoh people, a tribal group of 17,000 living in a remote mountain region close to the Vietnamese border. (9)

The Pacoh are some of the nation's poorest people. Until recently, many of them lived by bartering, rarely using money. (8)

GLOBE

For centuries, they've survived by subsistence farming, growing their staple food - rice, on the hillsides using the slash and burn method. (10)

When the land is exhausted, they move on. (3)

BARK FROM THE BONG TREE

But now, for the first time the Pacoh have been provided with permanent land certificates and persuaded to stay on the

same piece of land, growing rice alongside the Bong trees. (15)

After seven years, one hectare of Bong trees can generate an annual income of about one thousand US dollars. Once harvested, they're exported to neighboring Vietnam. (12)

CHILDREN/GRINDING MEAL

The trees yield bark for up to 50 years. And perhaps most importantly, since the land is permanently registered in their names, it's protected from potential exploitation by foreign companies. (15)

NARRATION:

The Pacoh now have enough food for their families. // And with healthier diets and a regular income, poor farmers like Kan None are now able to build a more secure future. (13)

(MUSIC: The Light Descends by Feet on Wood, Art List)

KAN NONE ON-CAMERA

KAN NONE: (In Lao) F

"I have a new house now. In the past, my house was just a temporary dwelling but now I have a permanent home." (11)

HOMES

NARRATION:

IFAD is now providing processing facilities for incense production in Laos to keep profits in the land where the Bong tree grows. (10)

UN LOGO

This report was produced by Declan
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