

**Resilience, Vulnerability and Regime Shifts:
Metamorphoses of A High Biomass Society in Sarawak, Malaysia.**

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The equatorial zone has accumulated the highest concentration of biomass in the biosphere due to greater insolation and heavier rainfall. The region has also been the most fertile ground for natural resource utilization from the age of commerce to industrial capitalism. No other climate or vegetation zone competes with the tropics in terms of plant density and regeneration pace. Such a tropical zone with several hundred million years of history has gone through fast-paced metamorphoses in the past several decades and changing status of the biomass.

This presentation looks into the resilience and a regime shift of a high biomass society in Southeast Asia, by looking into the case of a riverine community of northern Sarawak, Malaysia, over the past 140 years. It is concerned with the transformation of a forest dwelling society with its encounter with the maritime mercantilism and terrestrial capitalism, both colonial and post-colonial. The historical development of global commodity chains, newly established symbiosis between plywood and plantation industries, forms of labor mobilization, and their relations to local communities are issues at stake.