

“Ironwood” utilization and its changes in Vietnam and Indonesia

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Vietnam, Indonesia

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Research background

For people living within a tropical rain forest, timber is an important resource that is deeply connected to their life. “Ironwood” is one category of useful tree species, which contains multiple different tree species. Because the wood is very hard (like “iron”), it has been recognized as a useful tough material and used by local people. But now its biomass is feared to be decreasing drastically. In order to clarify the importance of “ironwood” for local people, I already have started research about the timber utilization and its changes by local people in East Kalimantan Indonesia. I made clear that Borneo ironwood (*Eusideroxylon zwageri* Teijsm & Binn.) has been supporting their lives as their house foundations and poles since long ago.

Research purpose and aim

The research purpose is to clarify the importance of timber for local people by focusing on “Ironwood” utilization as a house material. I selected two research sites, Kontum, Vietnam and East Kalimantan, Indonesia. There are different tree species which are recognized as “ironwood” in the two sites. I conducted research in the form of interviews with households and the timber stores.

Results and achievements of the fieldwork

In Vietnam, local people recognized Trắc (*Dalbergia spp.*) as “ironwood”, and used it for the house foundations and poles on their houses and the community house. People use ironwood logs for house foundations in Vietnam. On the other hand, people use ironwood timbers for house foundations in Indonesia. Picture1, 2 show their construction. The house in Vietnam was built about 30 years ago, and the foundations have been in use since the house was built. But ironwood foundations were changed to other species of timber or cement (Picture3) in several households because local minority people being encouraged to move to other places because of the government settlement policy. Furthermore, the change of forest management policy also might change their ironwood utilization because people can not use their conventional forest areas.

Implications and impact on future research

I hope to conduct research about what influence local forest management changes have on local timber utilization by local people. Furthermore, the conventional rule and ownership system of village forest will also be studied. I will discuss the importance of sustainable native timber utilization at the local level.



Picture 1 House, Kepran village, Kontum, Vietnam



Picture 2 Community House, Mo nai village, Kontum, Vietnam



Picture 3 House using cement, Korban Village, Kontum, Vietnam