From Maize to Haze

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AIMS

• Look at the dynamics of maize production in Thailand

• Relate this to:
  • Land use trends in northern Thailand
  • Haze and associated issues
  • The role of farmers and the private sector
MAIZE PRODUCTION IN THAILAND

• 95% domestic production for animal feed
• Thailand is the fourth largest exporter of poultry products globally
• Numerous multinationals involved
• CP
  • Largest global producer of animal feed

Broiler production in Thailand (Data source: Thai Feed Mill Association)
LAND USE FOR MAIZE IN THAILAND

*Area harvested (in hectares) for maize production in selected Southeast Asian countries (Data Source: FAOSTAT)*
**LAND USE FOR MAIZE IN THAILAND**

**Area harvested (in hectares) for maize production in selected Southeast Asian countries (Data Source: FAOSTAT)**

**Average price of maize in Thailand (baht/kg) per growing season (June-May)**

*(Data source: Office for Agricultural Economics)*
Land use in maize production (as area harvested) by province in 2008, 2013 and 2018 (data source: OAE, 2020; vector map acquired courtesy of Free Vector Maps.com)
FROM MAIZE TO HAZE

• Clearing land for new plantations
• Burning stubble for a new growing season

• Greenpeace Southeast Asia. (2019). *A haze-free ASEAN by 2020 – are we there yet?*
  • December 2018- May 2019
  • 6,879 fire hotspots within maize plantations in Upper Northern Thailand
  • 14,828 hotspots within plantations in Shan State, Myanmar
ASSOCIATED ISSUES

1. DEFORESTATION
   • Narrative against farmers from military, urban middle-class environmentalists, Buddhist activists, royalist think tanks
   • Junta forest reclamation policy 2014-19
     • Rise to 40% forest cover

2. CROSS-BORDER HAZE
A DEMONISED SMALLHOLDER

- Land squeeze
- Corporate push
- Lack of technical support
WHAT ABOUT THE PRIVATE SECTOR ROLE?

Hit by 'bald mountain' claims, CP vows "to make everything right"

28 Mar 2016 at 19:48 1 comments
WRITE: TERRY PREDNICKSON
ORIGINAL SOURCE: PENCHAN CHARENSUTHPAN

Embattled Charoen Pokphand (CP) Group will launch a social enterprise in Nan province to encourage farmers to grow cash crops other than maize.

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Agro-giants 'must own up to North haze'

Locals get blame for hazard, Bio Thai says

Bangkok Post 10 Apr 2016 PARITTA WANGKIAT
WHAT ABOUT THE PRIVATE SECTOR?

- Domestic policy response
- Sustainable greenwashing
- Regional extension and expansion

Organic coffee project in Ban Sop Khun, Nan Province

Newly prepared soil for maize planting has been turned over to avoid a need for burning, Banlang Sub-District, Khorat Province

An infographic from CP on their maize traceability scheme
WHAT TO DO? – OPPORTUNITIES

• Corporate face matters
• Support farmers
  • Use of stubble as biofuel
  • Crop relaying (with legumes)
  • Improved land tenure rights
  • Proper technological support
THE MAE CHAEM MODEL – A CAUTIONARY TALE

• Centre of deforestation and hotspots

• Multi-stakeholder program on land use, resource management and forest conservation
  • District officials, academics, local communities, private sector
  • Significant drop off in burning by 2015

• New local authorities moved to zero-tolerance policies
  • Return of the burn