



Dynamic Land Use Change in Sing District, Luang Namtha, Lao PDR

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PRIPODE

Background

- High poverty in rural areas
- Transition from subsistence to market economy
- Regional trade and development



Study Site: Sing district

Elevation: 600-1,850 m asl.

Total area: 1,650 km²

5 Sub-districts

94 Villages

Population: 30,300

Ethnicity :

47 % Akha, 41% Tai



Key issues

- Demographic and land use change
- Cash crop production and land use change
- Land tenure and social equity



Objective of the study

- Patterns of demographic and land use change
- Driving forces of land use change
- Impact on livelihood and resource tenure



Research questions

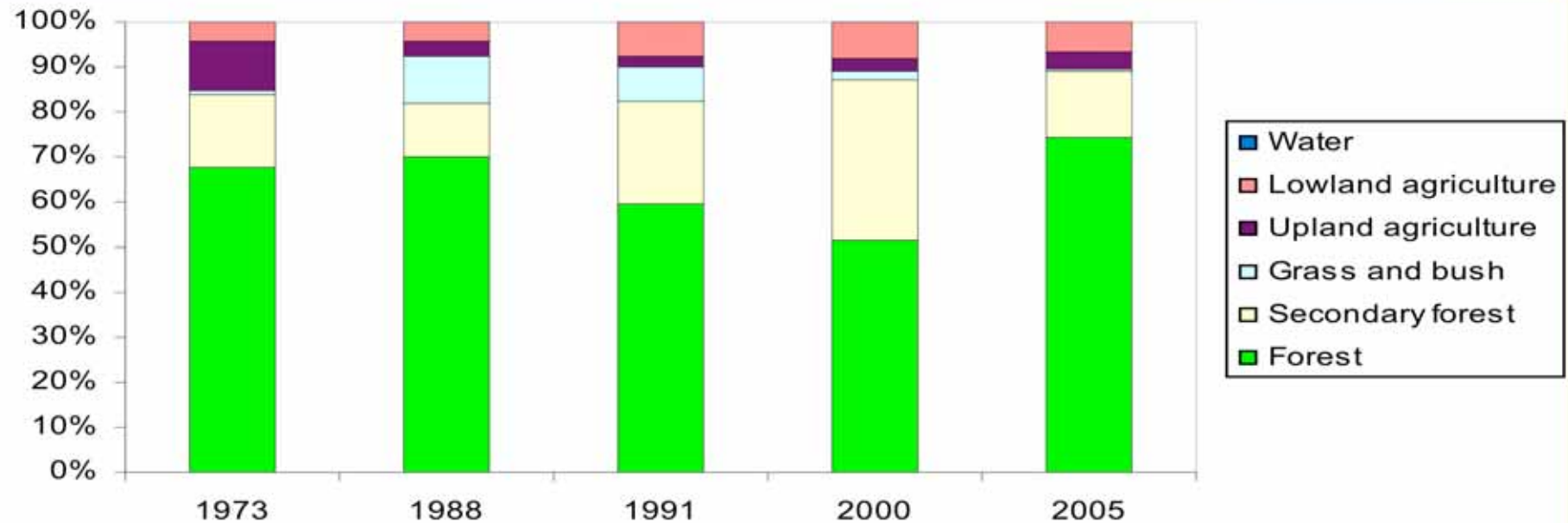
- What is the historical pattern of land use change in Sing district? What are the main causes?
- How does introduction of cash crops change livelihoods of farmers? What are the implication for resource management?

Methods

- Spatial analysis
 - Demographic change
 - Forest cover change
- Policy review
- Village land use history
- Household survey
- Participatory mapping

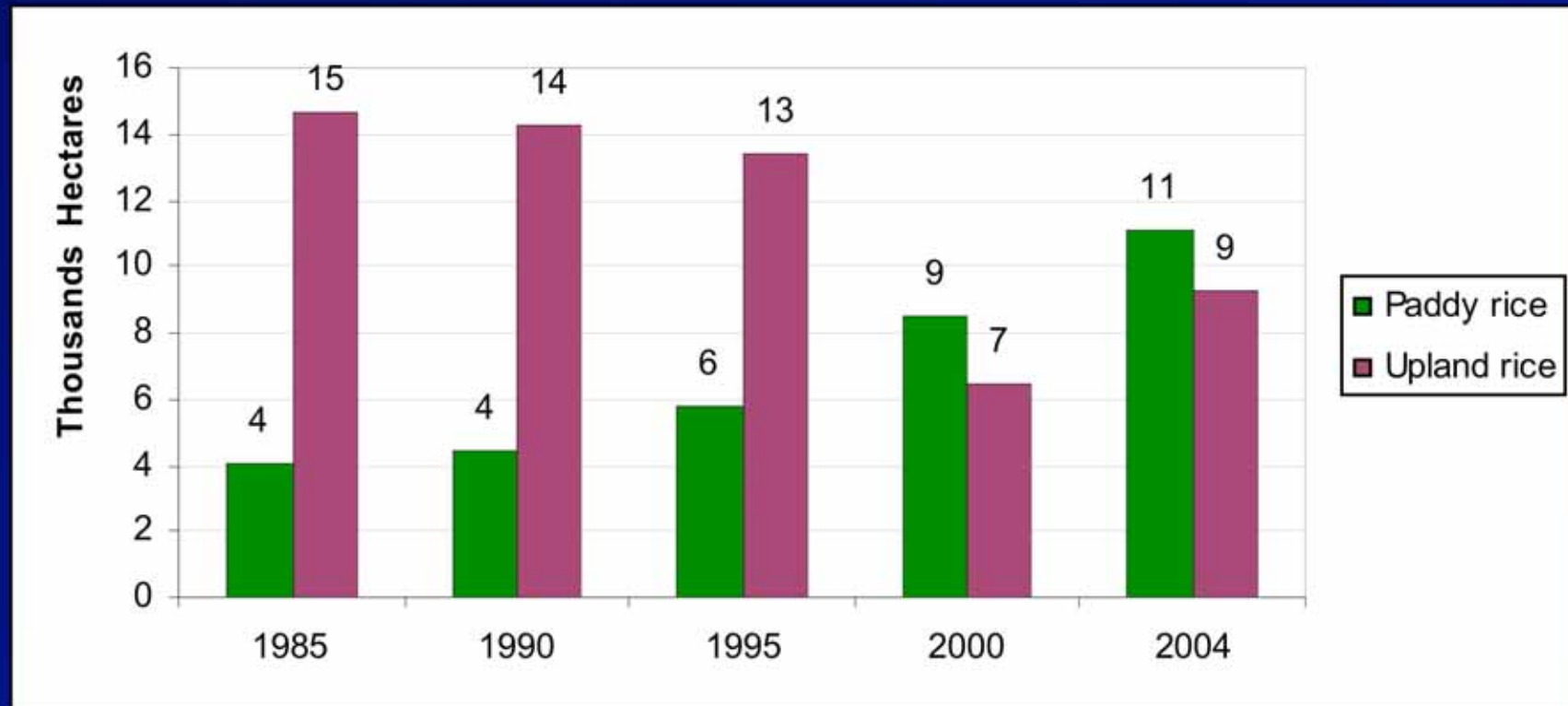


Landuse and land cover change



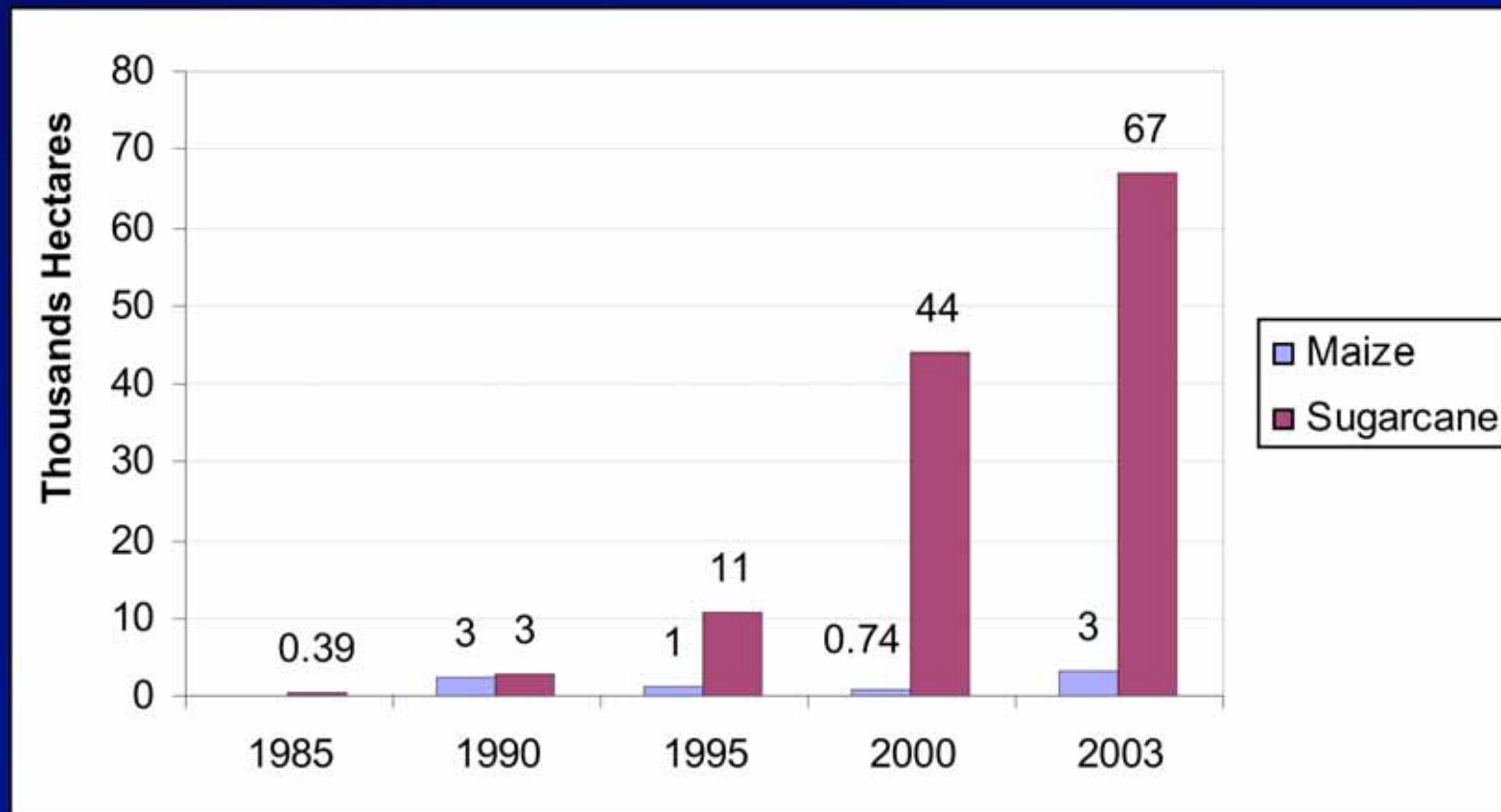
Source: based on Landsat images classification

Rice production area



Source: DAFEO (2004)

Cash crop production area



Source: DAFEO (2004)

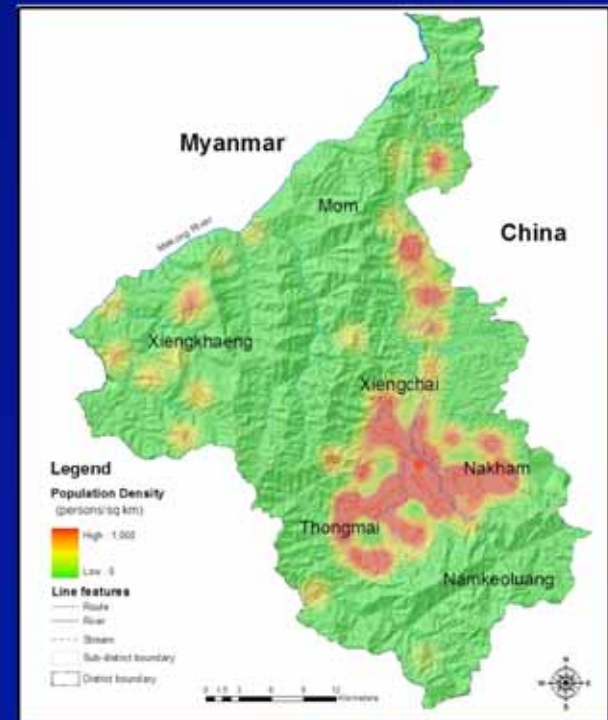
Demographic change: 1995-2005



1995



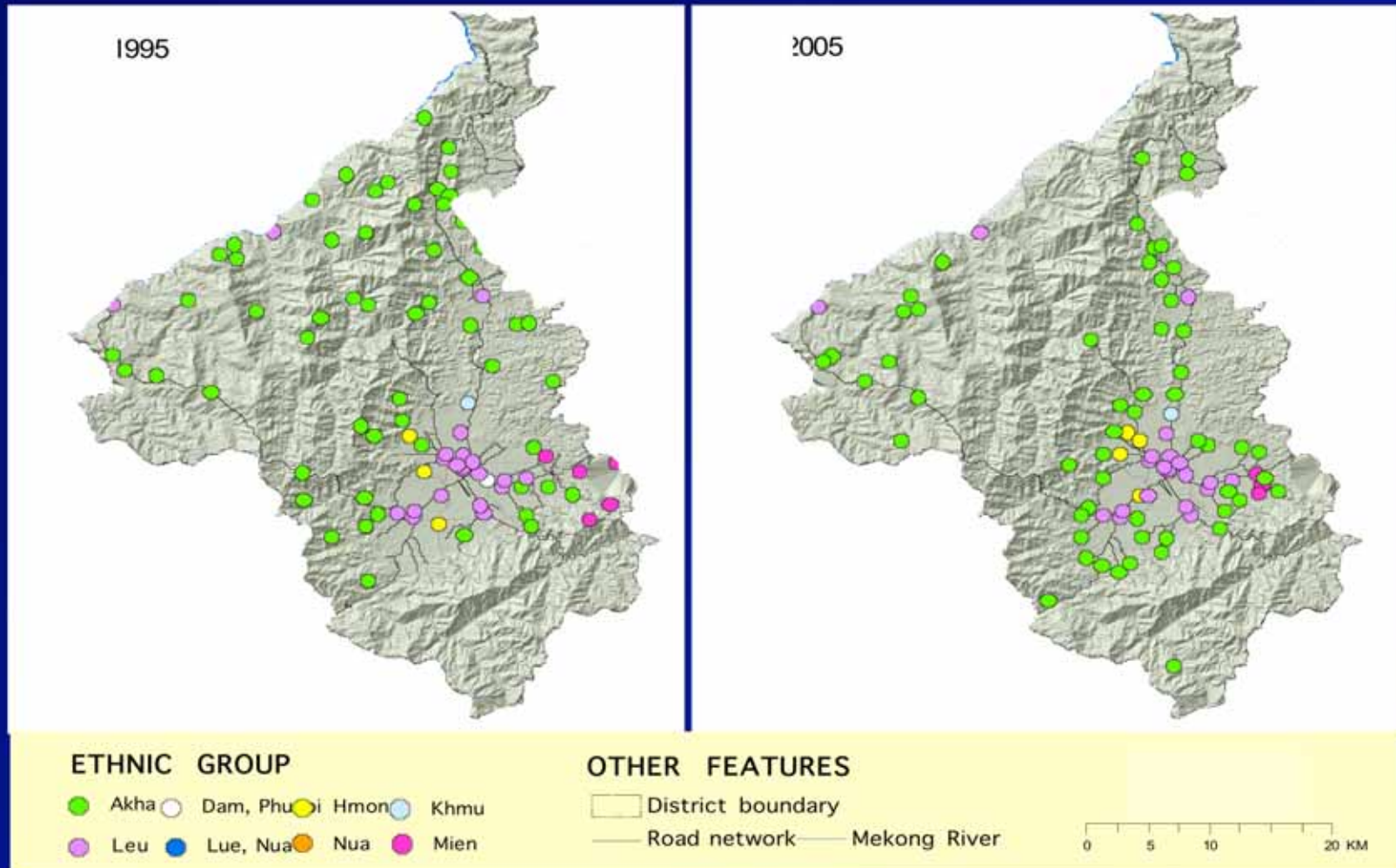
2001



2005

Source: based on population census and district population data

Ethnic distribution

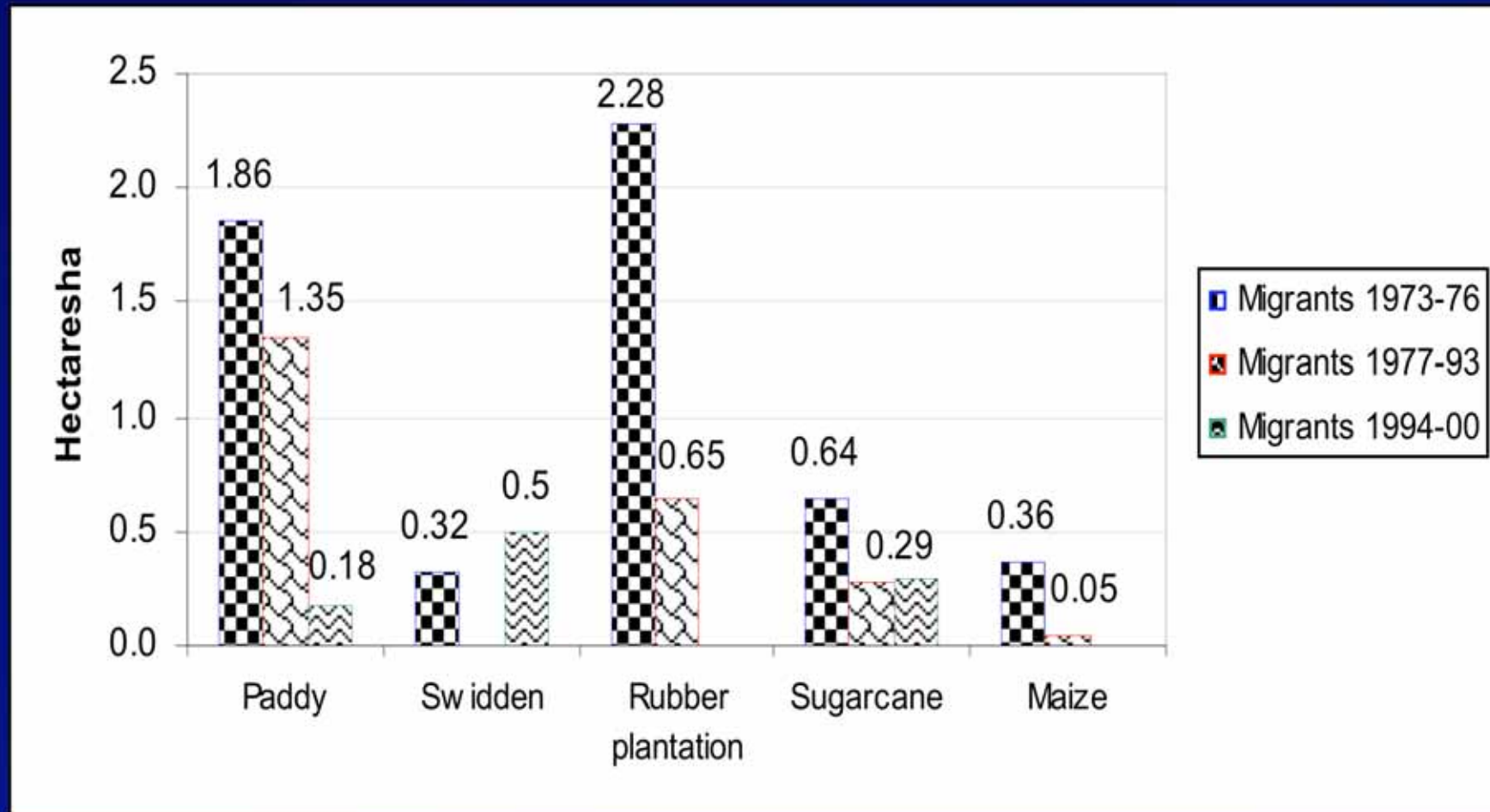


Source: NGD and field survey

Policy Changes

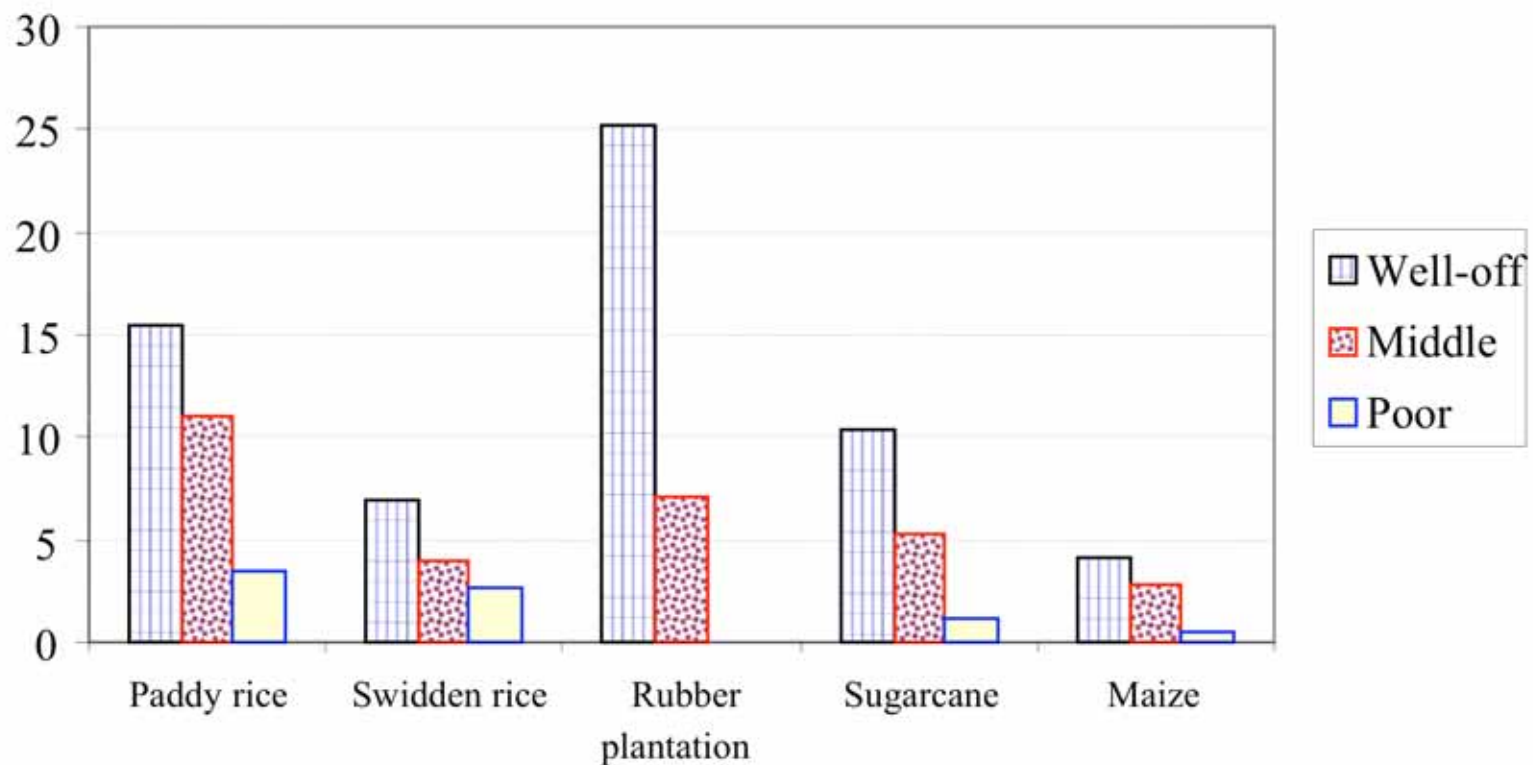
Periods	Social Economy	Resource Management
1980s	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Market liberalization	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Logging ban■ Food self-sufficiency
1990s	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Focal site development	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Shifting cultivation stabilization■ Land and forest allocation
2000s	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Regional trade■ Poverty alleviation■ Foreign investment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Commercial agricultural/forestry production■ Opium eradication

Land Holding in Mom village



Source: Fieldwork (2005)

Land holding by social class (%)



Source: Fieldwork (2005)

Conclusion

- Population concentration in the lowland areas increase land scarcity and competition over land
- Government policies affect upland livelihoods
- Regional trade accelerates cash crop production
- Increased vulnerability of upland farmers
- Increased privatization of land
- Inequitable access to land

Recommendation

- Balance economic growth and natural resource conservation
- Promote integrated farming system
- Screen foreign investment arrangements

Recommendation

- Ensure local participation in land use planning process
- Consider demographic factors in land use planning
- Strengthen local agencies' capacity to coordinate in resolving conflicts

**Thank you for your
kind attention!**