

Rapporteur's Report on Day 1 (December 2, 2019)
International Conference on Resources and Human Mobility

Rapporteur: Dr. Walter Persaud and Dr. Wimon Siri Hemtanon
Mahidol University International College, Humanities and Language Division

Registration started at 9 am

Opening Remarks by the Assoc.Prof.Chulathida Chomchai, the Dean of Mahidol University International College

Followed by Prof.Keiko Sakai, the Dean, Center for Relational Studies on Global Crises, Chiba University.

Dr.Watcharas Leelawath, Executive Director of Mekong Institute delivered the Keynote Speech which focus on the migrant as resources and human mobility issues under GMS and ASEAN Framework. Dr.Watchara shared the in depth information on International Migration, Regional Economic Integration and the trend of International Migration in the Global scales.

PANEL 1

“Cross-Border Mobility of Agro-based Workers” chaired by Michiko Takagaki from Chiba University.

Speaker 1: Nyein Chan (Kyoto University) on the topic “Impacts of Out-migration on Traditional Swidden System: Case studies in Southern Chin State, Myanmar” focusing on the traditional swidden Agriculture. The paper focuses on the impact of the out migration in two village (T and P village) in South Chin State in Myanmar. Both villages experienced out migration of young people to work in other countries where labors needed such as Malaysia, the USA and India as well as in other region on Myanmar. The studies found that the area of traditional swidden agriculture decreased because the young man decided to work outside the areas which can in turn the increase in forest cover and the local level.

Speaker 2: Teeranong Sakulsri (Institute for Population and Social Research, Mahidol University) and Robert Nurick on the topic “Challenge of Labour Migrants with the New Regulations: Case study of Agro-Based Workers”. This paper focuses on the challenges of migrants in Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar and Thailand based on the bilateral agreement to promote cross boarder “cooperation for the employment of workers” between the sending and receiving countries in the Mekong River Flows. Points of studies covered the safety of

migration and how to exchange information about standard practices and decent work for migrant workers.

Speaker 3: Akira Kato (Chiba University) on the topic “Precision Agriculture and Forest Management using Unmanned Aerial Vehicle and Artificial Intelligence”. This presentation introduce how artificial intelligence has been integrated to the high frequent data using the Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV). Two Cases had been studies, the first was the island famous for camellia oil production and another one was the tree growth detection. Both cases applied the drone and 3D technology with AI and turned out to be the good potential to open a new era for local resource management.

PANEL 2

“Territories and Environment as Resources” chaired by Ken Ishida from Chiba University.

Speaker 1: Housam Darvisheh (Institute of Developing Economics) on the topic “Egypt-Sudan Relations Amidst Shifting Hydro Political Powers in the Nile River Basin” focusing on changing of geopolitical landscape since 2011 in the Nile Basin and Red Sea region which positioned Sudan and Ethiopia as influential actors instead of Egypt in the Nile Basin and allowed them to assume important positions in the new regional alignments in the Middle East. The paper discussed on the issue of water insecurity and its impact on authoritarian stability

Speaker 2: Mohamed Abdin (Gukushuin University) on the topic “Water and Sudanese Foreign Policy: The Case of Nile River Basin”. The Focus of this study is about the bargaining power among river Nile riparian state which based on the 1959 Nile Water Agreement. This presentation shared the political and economic motivations that triggered the shift of Sudan’s position, and the consequences of the shift on the recent power dynamics on the Nile water issues as well as shed the light on Sudan’s stand from the major changed in 2014 on the Nile Water Agreement and the recent fall of former president Omar al-Bashir in April 2019.

Speaker 3: Kampanad Bhaktikul (Faculty of Environment and Resource Studies, Mahidol University) on the topic “Transboundary Issues on Natural Resources Conflicts in Southeast Asia & Challenge”. This presentation raised the urgent awareness on Southeast Asia on transboundary issues especially the Lower Mekong Basin countries. The natural resources conflicts along this area have been review but still very challenge to assess, evaluate and synthesize relevant information. Even though numbers of activities and actions had been arise for climate changes issues but the identification country gaps still needed.

PANEL 3

“Land and Human Mobility in Africa” chaired by Takehiko Ochiai from Ritsumeikan University.

Speaker 1: Junko Maruyama (Tsuda University) on the topic “Mobility and Indigeneity: Land Issues Among the San Hunter-Gatherers of Southern Africa” which analyzing the historical struggle for the land rights of San in Central Kalahari Botswana. Also this study discusses paradoxes of the indigenous land rights movement of San.

Speaker 2: Toru Sagawa (Keio University) on the topic “Land Rush and Food Security in East African Pastoral Societies”. The Focus of this study is about the Daasanach, an agro-pastoralist in the lower Omo valley of Southwestern Ethiopia on their land which referred to the unused/marginal land. The presentation analyzed the various local responses to land rush which can be considered as the negative influences on activities and social relation in the area. The large-scale development projects in the region were introduced.

Speaker 3: Clemens Greiner (Global South Studies Center, University of Cologne) on the topic “Migration, Land and Belonging in Africa – A Translocal Perspective”. The presenter sketch the concept of translocality in Southern and Eastern Africa to problematized the notion and explore the interrelation between various factors: migration, land, and others. Case of small-scale farmers and pastoralist were shared. The presentation elaborated the circular migration and remittance are crucial to everyday life and embedded in local history.

PANEL 4

“Labour Migration and Resources” chaired by Reiko Ogawa from Chiba University.

Speaker 1: Souknilanh Keola (Institute of Developing Economics) on the topic “Cross-boarder Movement of Factor Endowments and Development of Export-Oriented Agriculture in Laos” focusing on the cross-border movement of factor endowments and the emergence of non-traditional, mid-to large scale export-oriented agriculture in Laos through analysis of remotely sensed data and ground-based statistics. The demanding of the neighboring countries, foreign capitals, internal and cross-border movement of labors as well as the availability of local land resources are crucial to the grow of export-oriented plantation in both northern and southern Laos. High market like China will play a major role based on bilateral agreement and cross-border movement will still keep growing.

Speaker 2: Wimon Siri Hemtanon (Mahidol University International College) on the topic “Out of the Ordinary: Thai Language as Social and Cultural Capital of Female Migrant Workers in Little Myanmar, Mahachai, Thailand”. The focus of this study is about how Myanmar female migrant workers in the area apply Thai language as their social and cultural capitals while staying in the host country. This presentation shared the narratives of the successful cases of Myanmar migrant workers who already established their life firmly in Thailand from their zero knowledge of Thai language. The study found that the language skills they derived from Sunday class in the public spatial uplift their capitals and being used as one of the factors for their career paths as well as assimilation process in Thai society.

Speaker 3: Analiza Liezl Perez-Amurao (Mahidol University International College) on the topic “Religion and Philippine Migrant Work in Thailand”. This presentation raised another point of concern, noneconomic factors such as religion, when studied about the Philippine Migration in Thailand. The paper helps address question on the migration trajectories that are observed in the Filipino teachers’ mobility in Thailand. The study discussed the role of religious toward Filipino teachers’ mobility to Thailand and how it plays the role once the Filipino workers (OFWs) find themselves in need in Thailand

Day 1 End by Campus Tour and Reception Dinner at Music Square