

Rationale: Existing analyses of land use and vegetation cover change in the uplands of mainland Southeast Asia have been done either at a macro-level (the region as a whole) or at very small scales (the micro-level of the territory of a single village or district). Each approach has advantages and disadvantages. Large-scale analyses can reveal major trends in changes in land use and vegetation cover. But the spatial scale is so gross that it is very difficult to identify differing patterns within different parts of the region or to relate observed trends to social variables that may be driving the process of change; in the second case, resolution is high allowing fine-grained analysis but the ability to make generalizations that apply beyond the specific locality studied is extremely limited. A possible way to overcome these inherent limitations of the existing studies may be to make a meta-analysis of a large sample of local level studies done in various parts of the whole region. Such a meta-analysis would have three main objectives:

1. To identify common patterns of land use and land cover change in either the whole sample or in subsets of the sample
2. To identify common causal variables (“driving forces”) that may explain changes in the sample as a whole or in specific subsets of local sites.
3. To examine relationships between local-level and macro-level trends.